

HIRAI Shun'ei 平井俊榮, *Hokke mongu no seiritsu ni kansuru kenkyū* 法華文句の成立に関する研究 [Studies on the formation of the *Fa hua wen chū*]. Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1985. xii + 571 pp., with an index and English Preface and Table of Contents, ¥15,000.

It is a well known fact among Buddhist scholars that most of the works attributed to Chih-i (538–597) were not actually written down by him but were transcribed by his disciple Kuan-ting (561–632), a notable exception being the commentary to the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra* [T. 38, 519–62] written shortly before his death. The question remains as to how much of the content in these transcribed texts can correctly be attributed to Chih-i, and what parts were revised or supplemented by Kuan-ting. This question becomes acute in many cases when one realizes that, as Kuan-ting admits in his preface to the *Fa hua wen chū*, twenty-seven years passed after the time these lectures on the *Lotus Sūtra* were given by Chih-i and before they were compiled in their final form (T. 34, 1b19). Until recently it was assumed that there was no sure way of attributing specific passages or ideas to either Chih-i, Kuan-ting, or otherwise, and this is still true to a great extent. Hirai's remarkable study, however, shows that the works of Chi-tsang (549–623), the San-lun scholar, were used to a great extent to supplement Chih-i's commentaries, and the *Fa hua wen chū* in particular. As Hirai writes in his English Preface, "There was conspicuous evidence, almost without exception, of references in Chih-i's treatises being based on Chi-tsang's works and [I] also confirmed that the reverse did not exist. Needless to say, most of the extant commentaries and treatises believed to be the work of Chih-i could not possibly be his and a great portion of the lectures recorded by his disciples are suspect as well. Rather, it is evident that following the completion of Chi-tsang's treatises, Kuan-ting and the other disciples referred to them as the foundation for their writings attributed to Chih-i The problem is no longer confined to one of partially borrowing sentences and passages, but rather poses unprecedented difficulties concerning established T'ien-t'ai doctrinal tenets. In other words, by compiling numerous T'ien-t'ai commentaries and treatises, particularly *Fa hua wen chū*, under the disguise of Chih-i's name, later T'ien-t'ai scholars endowed Chih-i, a rare epoch-making practitioner, with the additional status of traditional commentator on sūtras. . . ." (p. 4–5). This is quite a challenge to the long cherished belief in Chih-i's creative genius. What evidence does Hirai have to make such provocative claims?

This study is in three parts, the first dealing with various problems with regard to Chih-i and Chi-tsang's commentaries on the sūtras. Hirai compares the commentaries on sūtras attributed to Chih-i to those of Chi-tsang and Hui-yüan of the Ching-hsiang ssu 淨影寺慧遠, another major contemporary scholar, showing that there are no works of Chih-i for which there are no corresponding works by either or both of these two scholars. Certainly part of this correspondence can be attributed to the popularity of certain texts in a given age such that it could be expected that major Buddhist scholars would comment on these texts, but it can also be interpreted as an indication that only texts with available commentaries were chosen by Chih-i's disciples in

compiling texts which were then attributed to Chih-i. Hirai also takes up Chih-i's commentary on the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra*, supposedly written by Chih-i himself in his last years on Mt. T'ien-t'ai and, according to the *Kuo ch'ing pai lu* 國清百錄, delivered to the court soon after his death (T. 46, 810c8-10). However, Hirai casts doubt on this report, pointing out that many sections in this commentary attributed to "a certain person" 有人言 are very close to sections in Chi-tsang's commentaries to the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra*. Hirai argues that, since Kuan-ting spent three years in the capital of Chang-an soon after Chih-i's death, during a period when Chi-tsang's works were widely circulated, it is possible that even this commentary is not free of borrowing from Chi-tsang (p. 69-71). Finally, a detailed comparison is made of Chih-i's *Fa hua wen chü* and Chi-tsang's *Fa hua hsüan lun* 法華玄論 (T. 34, 361-450), concluding that the *Wen chü* was modeled on the *Hsüan lun* (p. 135).

Part two discusses various problems concerning the background and tradition of the *Fa hua wen chü*. Hirai examines the circumstances surrounding Chih-i's lectures on the *Lotus Sūtra* and its compilation into the *Fa hua wen chü*, its transmission to Japan, and points out further similarities between the *Wen chü* and the *Hsüan lun* such as a close correspondence in the sources (sūtras and other authorities) quoted by the two texts.

The nuts and bolts of Hirai's case are found in part three, almost half of the book, which extensively quotes and contrasts sections of the *Wen chü* and *Hsüan lun* to show where and how often the *Wen chü* utilizes the work of Chi-tsang. Page after page of such examples tends to overwhelm the reader, but it is important to take a step back and contemplate exactly what is being proven here. Certainly Hirai leaves no doubt that someone has incorporated Chi-tsang's scholarship into the *Wen chü*. A close examination of these sections is not possible in a short review such as this, but my impression is that these examples, mostly from the later half of the *Wen chü*, do not compromise Chih-i's reputation as a creative and original thinker, nor cast doubt on his contribution to the development of Chinese Buddhism. I would not go so far as Durt in saying that Hirai "destroys his (Chih-i's) reputation as an original commentator" (Durt 1986, p. 279). Chih-i's disciples may have supplemented his lectures and fabricated textual commentaries to buttress their master's scholarly reputation, but the central doctrinal contributions and insight of Chih-i, such as the threefold truth 三諦, threefold contemplation 三觀, fourfold teachings 四教, and ten modes of contemplation 十乘觀法 as presented in the *Fa hua hsüan i* 法華玄義 (T. 33, 681-814) and the *Mo ho chih kuan* 摩訶止觀 (T. 46, 1-140) remain unchallenged (unless Hirai can prove the same with regard to the central sections of these later works as he has done with the *Wen chü*). As I have shown in my doctoral dissertation, Chih-i's threefold truth (and threefold contemplation) provides the structure for his philosophy and practice, and these concepts are quite different from Chi-tsang's handling of the two truths, the San-lun equivalent in this area (Swanson 1985).

Hirai has pulled off quite a coup in clearly showing that many sections in works attributed to Chih-i are in fact based on the scholarship of Chi-tsang.

One may even venture to admit that Chi-tsang was the more thorough and meticulous textual commentator. However, we still have no compelling evidence to disagree with the judgement of history that Chih-i's insight was more original, his vision broader, and his synthesis of the Buddha dharma more persuasive.

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