Hui-chih (fl. 676–703 A.D.), a Brahmin Born in China

Introduction

In the following pages I have attempted to collect and discuss what little information is available about Hui-chih 慧智, a Buddhist monk who was the son of a brahmin ambassador in China in about the middle of the 7th century. Hui-chih seems never to have left China, the land of his birth, and so it is natural that he assimilated the Chinese language and culture. The education he received in China was, however, in keeping with his origin. We know for certain that he acquired a perfect knowledge of Sanskrit and that he had as a teacher in his Buddhist studies a monk from the Indian cultural area.

Unfortunately it is not possible to find out many details about Hui-chih’s life. The sources are very laconic indeed. For this reason the Buddhist historians do not take him into account, and his name is seldom mentioned in the specific dictionaries. And yet he was certainly the most highly committed of those who carried on the task of translating Sanskrit texts into Chinese in the period between 682 and 703, a period which we know to have been one of the most intensive in the history of the translations, that is to say, of the Chinese attempt to assimilate Indian and Central Asian Buddhism. If for no other reason than this, Hui-chih would be worthy of memory.

I started collecting information about Hui-chih for the purpose of making out a file-card for convenient and rapid use in other work. But there were some items that surprised me and aroused my curiosity. His teacher was a “brahmin who prolongs the years [of one’s life]”, namely someone who was believed to possess the secret of the elixir of long life. In 677 or at the beginning of 678 Hui-chih interviewed the legendary Buddhapāli, who was said to have gone to China with the intent of visiting Mount Wu-t’ai, the abode of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. Lastly, Hui-chih is perhaps the only poet from the Indian cultural area who we know for certain wrote in Sanskrit in Chinese territory: he sang the praises
of Avalokiteśvara, drawing his inspiration from a wall-painting in one of the finest monasteries in the China of the time. I have attempted, although with meagre results, to make clear the circumstances in which these events took place and to interpret them.

_Hui-chih and the "Brahmin who prolongs life"

All we know about Hui-chih’s birth and childhood is contained in the scanty biographical data published by Chih-sheng in 730:

«Śramana Hui-chih. His father was Indian of brahminic caste. The latter came to China as an envoy and thus it was that Hui-chih was born here. Hui-chih as a child was attentive and diligent and expressed the intention of entering religion» 1.

The father’s name is not given. As for the term Yin–tu 印度 (India), used to indicate his homeland, it refers to the extremely vast area that was known as the “Five Indies” (wu Yin–tu 五印度, wu T’ien–chu 五天竺) which, as Hsüan-tsang remarks, included more than seventy countries 2. It is not very likely, then, that we would be able to find some trace of this “envoy from India”, and of the period he spent in China, etc. Moreover, did he settle in China? How are we to explain the fact that Hui-chih was born in China? Was his mother Chinese? All these are questions to which it is impossible to give an answer.

We have just as little information about Hui-chih’s religious training and the monastic circles he frequented:

«In the time of T’ien-huang 天皇 he was ordained by imperial decree (ch’ih–tu 劫度) by a (or: the) “life-prolonging brahmin monk” whose disciple he became» 3.

T’ien-huang, Celestial August One, was the title which Kao-tsung, the third T’ang emperor, took in 674 and which he bore until his death

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1 KYSCL ix 565b29–c1; cf. also T. LV 2152, 369b16–17 and SKSC ii 719b14–15.
2 T. LI 2087 ii 875b27–29; Watters, I, p. 140; Mizutani, p. 57. Bukkyō daijiten, (1914, p. 366c), Ōmura (1918, p. 260), Mikkyō daijiten (1931, p. 152a) and Hōbōgirin (1931, p. 132b; 1978, p. 244b) maintain that Hui-chih’s father came from Central India. The only source I know of that gives this detail is Cheng-yüan hsien–ting shih–chiao mu–lu 貞元新定釋教目録 of the second half of the 8th century: cf. T. LV 2157 xiii 865c28. I think it must be an error, also because in the manuscript of the Shōsōin the term “central”, does not appear: ib. p. 865, note 6.
3 KYSCL ix 565c2; SKSC ii 719b15–16. On one of the reasons for Bagchi’s erroneous interpretation of this passage, see note 8.
in 683. Since Kao-tsung's posthumous title until 749 was T'ien-huang Ta-ti 天皇大帝，and in 730 Chih-sheng did not use it, it is likely that the use of the title T'ien-huang has reference to the period in which it was actually borne. If this were the case, Hui-chih would have been ordained after 674. This is a mere conjecture which does not rule out the possibility of the term T'ien-huang simply being a reference to Kao-tsung, who reigned from 649 till 683, and thus Hui-chih could have been ordained before 674.

The fact that Hui-chih was "ordained by imperial decree" (ch'i-hu 諕度) shows that he lived outside the monastic circles controlled by the Chinese clergy and that, being a protégé of the emperor, most likely due to his father's status, his ordainment was exceptional. After all, the man who ordained him and was his teacher was undoubtedly an exceptional person, a "life-prolonging brahmin monk".

What is the meaning of the expression ch'ang-nien p'o-lo-men seng 長年婆羅門僧 (brahmin monk who prolongs the years [of one's life]) and to whom does it refer in particular?

Let us try to answer the first question. There can be no doubt that the term seng refers to a Buddhist monk. Hui-chih, as we shall see, was certainly a Buddhist monk and therefore it is obvious that it was also a Buddhist monk who ordained him and who was his teacher.

The term p'o-lo-men 婆羅門 is the transcription of brāhmaṇa and refers in the first place to brahmins as a caste. Thus, for instance, we have already seen that Hui-chih's father was of brahminic caste (p'o-lo-men chung 婆羅門種). But in China the term p'o-lo-men came to mean "Indian". Hsüan-tsang is quite clear about the equivalence between Yin-tu 印度 and P'o-lo-men kuo 婆羅門國 and explains why this is so: «Among the various castes and clans of India, the brahmins were especially pure and esteemed. Because of their excellent reputation which has been handed down for so long as to become a commonplace, without speaking of the distinction of the frontiers, [the various countries which form India] are all called "brahmins' country" (P'o-lo-men kuo 婆羅門國) »

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4 For the adoption of the title T'ien-huang, see TCTC 202.6372. The posthumous name T'ien-huang Ta-ti 天皇大帝 was conferred upon him straight after his death (CTS 5.112; HTS 3.79). It was changed to T'ien-huang Ta Sheng Huang-ti 天皇大聖皇帝 on 4th July 749 (TCTC 216.6896).
5 T. Li 2087 ii 875b24-26; Mizutani, p. 57, note 5, gives other examples of the use of the term and suggests an original Brāhmaṇa-deśa; Watters, I, p. 140, does not translate the phrase "without speaking of the distinction of frontiers". On the term P'O-lo-men, cf. Hōbōgirin, 1929 s.v. Baramon, pp. 51-54; for the Brahmins' country, cf. ib. p. 54.
This usage was also adopted by the authors of non-Buddhist historical texts. It is, however, significant that, whereas CTS 198.5306 notes that India is also called “land of the brahmans” (p’o-lo-men ti 婆羅門地), HTS 221A.6236 simply states that P’o-lo-men is another name for India. To give an example of the use of P’o-lo-men with the meaning of “Indian” during the T’ang period, we may recall that, with regard to the expression “P’o-lo-men chou 婆羅門咒” (brahmin spells) mentioned in TCTC 209.6633, Hu San-hsing (1230–1287) explains: “Nowadays they are called T’ien-chu shen-chou 天竺神咒 (Indian spells)”.

P’o-lo-men therefore has the same meaning as Yin-tu 印度 (India) or T’ien-chu 天竺 and, like these two terms, indicates the “Five Indies”. Hence people coming from regions that are contained roughly within the area of modern Afghanistan and Pakistan can be called P’o-lo-men. In this connection we may mention the case of Li Wu-ch’ian 李無詁, a native of Lampāka, who is called a “P’o-lo-men official” 婆羅門臣 in a document of the year 693 6 and the case of Dharmacandra, a native of Uḍḍyāna, who is called a “P’o-lo-men monk” in a preface written by Po-lun in 697 7.

In short, Hui-chi’s teacher was a Buddhist monk from one of the “Five Indies”.

As for the term ch’ang-nien 長年, it should certainly be interpreted here as “to prolong the years [of one’s life]” because, as we shall see, it is applied to persons possessing the secret formula of the elixir of long life, which is also called ch’ang-nien yao 長年藥 in Chinese, “a drug to prolong the years [of one’s life]” 8.

At this stage we shall try to identify Hui-chi’s teacher. There are two “brahmans” we know of at the time of Kao-tsung who possessed this secret recipe.

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6 Cf. Forte, 1976, p. 172. Demiéville, 1952, p. 25, note 3, rightly remarks that the term P’o-lo-men seng “pour les chinois signifie simplement un moine indien”, but the reference to Hôbôgîrîn, p. 54 gives the impression that he thinks it is a “terme désignant certains brahmanes qui pratiquèrent le bouddhisme”. This is perhaps a conjecture that it would be worthwhile trying to verify. For the moment let us confine ourselves to the conclusion that “brahmin” has the same meaning as “Indian”.

7 Cf. T. XX 1057, 83c6–7. See the appendix for Dharmacandra; see Forte, “Ma-nicintana”, for Li Wu-ch’ian.

8 This explanation is necessary because the term ch’ang 長 has been interpreted as “long” instead of “lengthen” or “prolong”. And perhaps it is also on account of this simple slip that Bagchi misunderstands the whole passage that is translated above: “En ce moment le bonze hindou (p’o-lo-men) de l’Empereur avait atteint le vieil age. L’empereur lui demanda donc de prendre Houei-tche comme disciple” (Bagchi, 1938, II, p. 516). Cf. also Chavannes, 1894 p. 21, who translates “à la longue vie (ayoushman)” and Pelliott, 1923, p. 278.
The first is Nārāyaṇasvāmin, whom the travelling ambassador Wang Hsüan-ts'e 王玄策 took to China in 648 and who attempted to concoct the recipe for immortality for T'ai-tsung. Nārāyaṇasvāmin is called *ch'ang-nien p'o-lo-men* 長年婆羅門 "the brahmin who prolongs years" in TFYK 46.11–12 (p. 525), while in the imperial letter addressed to him in 648 he is called *ch'ang-ming p'o-lo-men* 長命婆羅門 "the brahmin who prolongs life". The Emperor T'ai-tsung died in the following year, 649, thus dealing a hard blow to Nārāyaṇasvāmin's reputation. In 657 he was still at Ch'ang-an and, according to some sources, he died there, but it is not known when. It was, in fact, in 657 that the Emperor Kao-tsung, who succeeded T'ai-tsung in 649, turned down Wang Hsüan-ts'e's pressing invitations to avail himself of Nārāyaṇasvāmin's services.

If Kao-tsung did not trust Nārāyaṇasvāmin, it was because he was suspected of having caused the death of his father T'ai-tsung, and not because the elixir of long life held no attraction for him. This is clearly shown by the efforts he made to have another "brahmin who prolongs life" brought to China. The famous pilgrim I-ching tells how, during the Lin-te era (664–665), Hsüan-chao 玄照 who was at Lo-yang was ordered by Kao-tsung to go to Kashmir (Chie-shih-mi-lo) to fetch the "brahmin who prolongs life" Lokāditya. At the North Indian border Hsüan-chao met a Chinese imperial envoy who had preceded him and

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9 Cf. Wieger, p. 1371, 1372; Pelliot, 1912, p. 353, note and pp. 375–377; Pelliot 1923, pp. 277–279; Waley, 1930–32, pp. 22–23, unlike Pelliot, is convinced that Nārāyaṇasvāmin "certainly returned at least once to India". Putting the question "where, outside China, do we first meet with the idea of eating the product of alchemic fusion?", and noting that the idea is to be found in the 10th-century pseudo-Nāgārjuna, Waley believes that Nārāyaṇasvāmin may have introduced it into India from China; Needham (1954, pp. 211–212) stresses the fact that Nārāyaṇasvāmin knew mineral acids or (1976, p. 160) alkalis; see also Needham (1980, pp. 197–198) for a recent translation of the passage from the *Yu-yang isa-tsu* on Nārāyaṇasvāmin and for other remarks on his mineral acid. In addition to the sources quoted by Pelliot and Waley, see THY 52.899, 100.1787.

10 Chavannes, 1894, pp. 21, 23 restores as Lokāyata the transcription Lu-chia-i-to 盧迦溢多 given by I-ching. In note 1 on p. 21, Chavannes remarks that by analogy with the transcription Shih-lo-i-to 罗婆多 for Šilāditya, Lu-chia-i-to 盧迦溢多 could be restored as Lokāditya, but that this hypothesis must be rejected because i溢 is the transcription of ya or ye and not di. Ōmura, 1918, p. 262, also restores as Lokāyata. However, the non-Buddhist historical texts always transcribe 盧迦溢多 (cf. THY 51.887; TCTC 201.6356; HTS 115.4216 and HTS 221A.6239). CTS 84.2799 is even more precise as it even indicates the long vowel a: Lu-chia-a-i-to 盧迦阿逸多. Pelliot, 1923, p. 279, note 1, although he only knew I-tsing's transcription, had therefore guessed rightly in considering the restoration Lokāditya more likely than Lokāyata. See also Waley, p. 23.
was taking Lokāditya to China. Lokāditya then convinced Hsüan–chao, the envoy and his suite to go to West India to seek “the drug that prolongs life (ch'ang–nien yao 長年藥)”. Lokāditya knew the recipe, then, but did not have the ingredients. Hsüan–chao was not to return to China because he died in India. We know nothing about Lokāditya’s arrival in China, but it is certain that he was there in 668 because in TCTC 201.6356 we read the following information:

«Winter, 10th month, wu–wu day (7th day) [of the first Tsung–chang year] (16th November 668). Lokāditya (Lou–chia–i–to 埌迦逸多), ‘brahmin’ of the Wu–t’u 嶽荼 country, was appointed ‘Grand General whose concern is the civilizing transformation [brought about by China] (Huai–hua ta chiang–chün 恢化大將軍)’.”

The text goes on to say that Lokāditya maintained he could concoct the drug of long life and that the emperor wished to take it, but an official by the name of Ho Ch’u–chün 郝處俊 dissuaded him from doing so by reminding him of the unfortunate event of T’ai–tsung’s death soon after swallowing Nārāyaṇasvāmin’s drug.

The question we put ourselves is: can one of the two “brahmins” have been the Buddhist monk who ordained Hui–chih and was his teacher? There is nothing in the relevant passages of the TCTC to indicate that Nārāyaṇasvāmin and Lokāditya were Buddhist monks. I–ching’s text, which only refers to Lokāditya, could lead us to think that he was a Buddhist monk because it was Hsüan–chao, a monk, who was given the task of going to fetch him. But this is too little to go by, and Lokāditya’s status cannot be understood from I–ching’s text either. There are, however, in the CTS and the HTS two pieces of biographical information on Ho Ch’u–chün, the official who dissuaded Kao–tsung from taking Lokāditya’s drug. Both sources repeat the Lokāditya episode in more or less the same terms as the TCTC, but they also give the information, which is not found in I–ching’s text nor in the TCTC, that Nārāyaṇasvāmin and Lokāditya were both Buddhist monks.

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11 T. 2066 i 2a; Chavannes, 1894, pp. 21–23; Ōmura, 1918, pp. 261–262.
12 In THY 51.887 the information is less detailed but already gives the date as 16th November 668. See also the text translated in Wieger, p. 1374.
13 A title created by the T’ang for conferring upon foreigners from the tributary countries. The title-holders were considered third-rank mandarins of the first class: cf. des Rotours, 1948, p. 100, note 2.
14 CTS 84. 2799 calls them both seng 僧 (usually: Buddhist monks); HTS 115.4216 calls them fu–t’u 浮屠, the transcription of Buddha, a term which HTS uses to indicate Buddhist monks.
In conclusion, either Nārāyaṇasvāmin or Lokāditya could have been Hui-chih's teacher. Considering, however, Kao-tsung's preference for Lokāditya, it was most likely the latter who ordained Hui-chih.

As for Lokāditya's origin, THY 51.887 and HTS 221A.6239 state that he was from the Wu-ch'a 魁 茶 country in Eastern India. Chavannes, who was acquainted with this source, thought that Orissa was meant. The TCTC, as we have seen, gives the name Wu-t'u 魁 茶, without specifying its geographical position, but there is a note in Hu San-hsing's commentary which states that this country is also called Wu-ch'ang 魁 茶, that India is to the South (?), and that it is situated between Pu-lü 勃律 in the East (at a distance of 600 li) and Chi-pin 陽 賔 in the West (at a distance of 400 li). It is clearly Uḍḍyāna 16 that is meant. Furthermore, we must remember that, according to I-ching, Hsüan-chao was told to go and look for Lokāditya in Kashmir, and it is therefore probable that Lokāditya had gone to Kashmir from the nearby country of Uḍḍyāna rather than from Orissa. Now, Uḍḍyāna was thought of by the Chinese as North India. Therefore, when THY and HTS locate Lokāditya's place of origin in East India, they clearly mean Orissa. It is probable that, by overlooking the fact that the transcription could refer to Uḍḍyāna, the authors of these two works added the specification "eastern" that did not exist in their source.

Of course, Hui-chih's teacher could have been someone else, other than Nārāyaṇasvāmin and Lokāditya. But this type of "brahmin" cannot have been very common. Moreover, the fact that Chih-sheng states precisely that Hui-chih was ordained by imperial edict clearly indicates that the person who ordained him was a monk connected with Kao-tsung. I think, then, that we may assume that Hui-chih's teacher was Lokāditya.

This hypothesis is borne out by the fact that it must have been Lokāditya who administered the Bodhisattva Rules 17 to the most famous of the Avatamsaka masters, Fā-tsang (643–712), when the latter was about 25 years old. The text giving this information does not mention Lokāditya by name, and only speaks of a "life-prolonging brahmin", the same

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15 The character t'u 魁 (T'ang pronunciation: d'uo) can also be pronounced ch'a (T'ang pronunciation: d'a): cf. Karlsgren, no. 82x. It is used as the transcription of Sanskrit da or qha: cf. Hōbōgirin (1983, p. 565a).

16 This passage by Hu San-hsing is probably based on the paragraph on Uḍḍyāna in HTS 221A. 6239–6240, translated by Chavannes, 1903, pp. 128–129. As for the expression 直天竺南 that Chavannes, ib., note 4, rightly finds incomprehensible, perhaps it is to be understood as "bordering upon India which lies to the South".

17 Hōbōgirin (1930, pp. 142a–147a) on the meaning of the Rules of the Bodhisattvas.
two terms, in inverse order, as are used in Hui-chih’s biography. The date at which the event took place, however, indicates that it must refer to Lokāditya. In fact, the text has “beginning of Tsung-chang”\(^{18}\). The Tsung-chang era goes from 22nd April 668 to 26th March 670. “Beginning of Tsung-chang” must mean “the first Tsung-chang year”. This is the same year that Lokāditya received the military title referred to previously.

Like Hui-chih, Fa-tsang was another person of non-Chinese origin – he was a Sogdian – who enjoyed imperial patronage. He was a contemporary of Hui-chih’s and he helped with, and sometimes contributed to, the translation of the texts brought by Divākara and Devendraprajña\(^{19}\). As we shall see shortly, Hui-chih also had a part in this translation work. Furthermore, both Fa-tsang and Hui-chih had close connections with the T’ai-yüan Monastery.

*Hui-chih as a reviser of manuscripts and translator*

Chih-sheng is extremely parsimonious in the information he gives about Hui-chih. Luckily we have some other sources which, being primary ones, are a great deal more important. The first certain date we have with regard to Hui-chih goes back to 676. In a colophon of 15th December 676 he is indicated as the third reviser of the manuscript copy of the 5th *chüan*, *p’in* 品 14–17, of the *Saddharmapundarika sutra*. At the time he was a member of the Ch’an-lin Monastery 禪林寺\(^{20}\). We may also infer from this colophon that Hui-chih had some sort of relationship with the monks from the T’ai-yüan Monastery 太原寺 of Ch’ang-an which was founded six years previously by Wu Chao 武曌, Kao-tsung’s wife, for the names of four of these monks also appear in the colophon. On the other hand, in later years too, Hui-chih was to appear as being closely attached to the T’ai-yüan Monastery and, in general, to the Buddhist circles involved in the political rise of Wu Chao.

*a) Collaborator of Divākara from Central India.*

From the second half of 682, or slightly later, until 685, Hui-chih contributed to the ten translations done by Divākara in the Kuei-ning yüan 歸寧院 of the T’ai-yüan Monastery of Ch’ang-an\(^{21}\). Sometimes it was his task to check the Sanskrit (*cheng fan–yil* 澄梵語)\(^{22}\), and some-

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\(^{18}\) T. L. 2054, 283b.

\(^{19}\) Forte, 1974, p. 142; 1979, p. 293.

\(^{20}\) Cf. Giles, no. 2817, p. 77. On this monastery, see below, note 41.

\(^{21}\) Forte, 1974, pp. 142–143.

\(^{22}\) KYSCL ix 564a18; SKSC ii 719a25–26.
times he was "translator" (i-yü 詩語) \(^{23}\). The sources never give the name of the monastery he belonged to in this period, but we may presume he continued to be a member of the Ch'an-lin ssu 禪林寺 \(^{24}\).

Divākara was the official Master of the Tripitaka. As early as August 685 he had gone to Lo-yang, where the imperial court had moved \(^{25}\). It is likely that Hui-chih, one of the empress' protégés and Divākara's collaborator, also moved to Lo-yang at about this same date. All we know for certain is that between March 687 and January 688, at the T'ai-yüan Monastery 太原寺 of Lo-yang, he helped Divākara to translate once again the Usnīṣavijayadhāranī, the text of which had been brought to China by Buddhapāli \(^{26}\). Hui-chih is the only one whose name is given as collaborator in this translation.

b) Collaborator of Devendraprajña from Khotan

After Divākara's death his place in the translation office of the same Lo-yang monastery was taken by Devendraprajña. It is with Devendraprajña that Hui-chih collaborated in the years 689-691 in his usual position as "translator" (i-yü 詩語) \(^{27}\). I have already spoken elsewhere \(^{28}\) on the meaning of the activity of the group of persons who gathered around Devendraprajña in this period, that was a crucial one for the political rise of Wu Chao – it was on 16th October of the year 690 that the new Chou dynasty was proclaimed. And so Hui-chih, who was one of the group, also worked for the political success of his dānapati, Wu Chao, who was well on the way to impersonating the figure of Cakravartin.

c) Translator of the Odes to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara

It is not mere chance that, even before the empress officially took the title, Hui-chih describes her as Cakravartin of the Golden Wheel at the end of the work Odes in praise of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Tsan Kuan-shih-yin p'u-sa sung 譚觀世音菩薩頌) which he translated during the 2nd Ch'ang-shou year (14th December 692 – 2nd December 693) \(^{29}\). If we go by what the Chinese bibliographers say, this is the only translation that Hui-chih did on his own \(^{30}\).

\(^{23}\) T. LI 2073 i 154c23.
\(^{24}\) He was certainly still living there in 677 or 678: see below.
\(^{25}\) Forte, 1974, p. 143.
\(^{26}\) Ib., p. 144.
\(^{27}\) T. XLIV 1838, 64a2; KYSL 9 ix 565b24.
\(^{28}\) Forte, 1979, pp. 289-297.
\(^{29}\) Concerning this colophon and the significance of this translation, see below, p. 19, sq.
\(^{30}\) We shall see, however, that there is at least one other work that can practically
d) Collaborator of Dharmaruci from Southern India.

In 693 Hui-chih, as "checker of the translation" (cheng i-yü 譯譯語), was also a member of the large team of translators of the Ratnamegha sūtra 31 and the other translations done under the supervision of Dharmaruci at Lo-yang during that year 32. In the colophon of the translation of the Ratnamegha sūtra Hui-chih is given as the śramaṇa of the Monastery of the Prophecy of the Buddha (Fo shou-chi ssu 佛授記寺) of Lo-yang. That is to say, he belonged to one of the two monasteries – the other one being the Great Fu-hsien Monastery – that were the most powerful in China and the most highly committed in the ideological support of the Chou dynasty.

e) Collaborator of Manicintana from Kashmir

It is most likely that Hui-chih’s collaboration with Manicintana also goes back to the same year 693, but this is not specified by our sources. Actually, after this date we hear nothing more of Hui-chih until 703 when he appears as "checker of the Sanskrit text" (cheng fan-wen 譯梵文) for the Chinese edition of the Dhāraṇīsūtra of the only fundamental letter of Mahāyāna (Wen-shu-shih-li ken-pen i-tzu t’o-lo-ni ching 文殊師利根本一字陀羅尼經, T. XX 1181) supervised by Manicintana 33.

This is the last date concerning Hui-chih. Since his name is missing in all the later colophons of works translated both at Lo-yang and at Ch’ang-an, it is likely that he died about this time. His competence and experience in translating probably made him a person of great value that it was not easy to do without 34.

be considered as a translation done by Hui-chih alone (see below, p. 12). Apart from this I have found no trace of other translations or works attributed to Hui-chih. A work entitled Yin-ming lun ihsi ch’ao ltu ch’ian k’o 明論義略釈六卷科 in two chüan is attributed to Hui-chih 惠智 in the catalogue of the Korean Ue-c’ön 義天 (1055-1101) (cf. T. LV 2184 iii 1176a11), but I have no idea whether it refers to our Hui-chih.

32 Ib. p. 80.
33 In 693 Manicintana translated two works. With regard to Hui-chih's part in the translation of the first one, see below, p. 17; concerning his part in the second one, see Forte, "Manicintana", note 38. On his collaboration in the 703 translation, see the same article.
34 Tsan-ning entitles his biographical note as follows: "Biography of Hui-chih of the Monastery of the Prophecy of the Buddha in the Capital Lo under the Chou" 周洛京佛法授記寺惠智傳(SKSC ii 719b14). If Tsan-ning's source was a gravestone, we could deduce that Hui-chih died before 705, the date of the fall of the Chou dynasty, and that he lived to the very end in the Monastery of the Prophecy of the Buddha. But, since his biographical note is the same as Chih-dheng's in 730, we must conclude that the title was given by Tsan-ning on the basis of its content.
It would be hard to give an opinion on the role played by Hui-chih on the sole basis of the information given so far. He seems a colourless and insignificant enough figure. It would appear that his role is merely that of a translator from Sanskrit into Chinese. But this very circumstance is to some extent noteworthy because Hui-chih is not just an ordinary translator. As Chih-sheng wrote in 730:

«Being Indian (Fan-jen 袈人) by descent, Hui-chih was able to learn the writing and the language of India (T'ien-chu shu yü 天竺書語) well. Moreover, being borne in the Land of the T'ang 唐國 (China), he was able to master our language» 35.

We have seen that he took part in the translations done by Divākara, Devendraprajña, Dharmaruci and Manicintana. Now, although the Buddhist bibliographers and historians speak of the translations by Divākara, etc., none of these masters knew Chinese, nor have we any information that any of the Chinese collaborators had a perfect knowledge of Sanskrit. Therefore we may rightly suppose that Hui-chih, together with some other bilingual foreigners 36, had a much more important role than he generally seems to have had. It is well to bear this in mind so as not to be misled by the official bibliographers who, in making their attributions, only paid attention to the person in charge who vouched for the orthodoxy of a text and not to who had actually translated it, the translator (i-yü 笔受) to be precise, or to who had written the text in Chinese (pi-shou 筆受).

Apart from this more or less important role played by Hui-chih as a translator, there are some elements which we have not yet taken into account that may throw new light upon him.

The interview with Buddhapāli from Chi-pin

In the first place there is a document that only came to light in 1784 in Japan, after having lain buried for several centuries. It is an actual interview that was given by one Buddhapāli from Chi-pin at Ch'ang-an, where he had arrived a short time before, in the 2nd I-feng year (8th

35 KYSCL ix 464c2-3; cf. also T. LV 2152, 369b17; SKSC iii 719b17-19. It is also probable that when Chih-sheng says that Hui-chih learnt “the writing and the language of India” (T'ien-chu shu yü 天竺書語), he wished to emphasize that he learnt the spoken language and the written language (Sanskrit).
36 I am thinking in particular of Li Wu-ch'an from Lampāka: cf. the information about him collected in the article mentioned in note 33.
February 677 to 27 January 678). From what is said at the beginning of the text, straight after the title, it is clear that the interviewer was one Ming-hsün 明徇, a monk from the Ch'án-lin Monastery 禪林寺 in the Western Capital (Hsi ching 西京), that is to say, Ch'ang-an, and that the «Master of the Law (fa-shih 法師) Hui-chih 慧智, an Indian monk from the same monastery Ch'án-lin, transmitted the translation (chuan-i 傳譯)» 37. In other words, Hui-chih acted as interpreter during the interview and it was his translation that Ming-hsün wrote down.

The text of the interview and the note at the beginning are important with regard to the events connected with the legendary Buddhāpāli, who was to become famous in China some twenty years later and whose name has since then been permanently linked with the abode of Mañjuśrī on Mount Wu-t'ai and the magic formula of the protuberance on the skull of the Buddha. I shall speak of this in a separate work, merely restricting myself here to a few provisional remarks 38.

Who was Ming-hsün 明徇, the interviewer who, according to the note at the beginning, faithfully wrote down the questions and the replies? All we know of him is that he held the position of “checker of the meaning” (cheng-i 證義) in the team of translators under Divākara’s supervision who translated ten works at the Kuei-ning yüan of the T'ai-yüan Monastery in Ch'ang-an in the years 683–685. Ming-hsün was one of the ten bhadantas who by edict formed part of the team 39. Was he perhaps one of the “Ten Bhadantas” (shih Ta-te 十大德) of the time? 40 We also know that he was called Ta-ch'eng Hsün 大乘徇, Hsün of the Great Vehicle, and that he was the teacher of Shen-k'ai 師楷, a monk of the Ch'ung-fu Monastery 崇福寺 of Ch'ang-an 41.

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37 Cf. Z. II, xv, 5 (vol. 110, p. 417 verso a).
38 In 1974 I had prepared a short article for the journal East and West on Buddhāpāli and the transmission of the Uṣṇīṣavijayadhāraṇī in China. But, considering the article quite inadequate to the importance of the subject and the existing evidence, I decided to rewrite it and hope to complete it shortly. I shall confine myself here to recapitulating a few facts on the matter.
39 KYSCL ix 564a19–21; SKSC ii 719a28; xiv 791c5; Forte, 1974, p. 142.
40 On the difficulty of correctly understanding the meaning of this expression in the texts, cf. Forte, 1979, p. 294, note 1.
41 SKSC iv 730c. Both Ming-hsün and Hui-chih belonged to the same Ch'ān-lin monastery in 677 or 678. We have seen above that Hui-chih lived there in 676. Is there anything else we know about this monastery? It is hardly mentioned in the sources and ignored by the dictionaries. It was one of the two subprefectural monasteries of Ch'ang-an founded in 583. Sung Min-ch'iu 宋敏求 (1019–1079) reports in his note on the Hsien-t'ien Monastery 先天寺 in the Chu-te quarter 居德坊 of Ch'ang-an (A4): “Hsien-t'ien Monastery. Originally Pao-kuo Monastery 寶國寺. In the 3rd K'ai-huang year (583) of the Sui dynasty it was decreed that a monastery be founded.
The purpose of Ming-hsün’s interview was most likely to test Buddhapāli’s theories and his personality and to find out, on the emperor’s behalf, to what extent he might be useful. The sources on Buddhapāli make it quite clear that he was not one of the many monks that were invited by the Chinese court because of their renown, but that he had gone to China on his own initiative. We do not know how things actually stood, but at any rate, considering the important role that Buddhapāli was destined for, Ming-hsün cannot have been just an ordinary person. Unfortunately it is not possible to find out anything else about him or about the circumstances in which the interview took place.

To come back to Hui-chih, was he restricted to acting as interpreter or was he more than that, a mediator between certain Uḍḍyāna and Kāpiṣṭi circles and the Chinese court? 42 This we do not know. What we do know for certain is that Buddhapāli, after having been to Mount Wu-t'ai went back to Chi-pin with the incredible pretext of going to get the text of the Dhāraṇī of the Sinciput of the Buddha, without which it was

in each of the two subprefectures Ta-hsing 大興 and Ch’ang-an 長安, and thence the two monasteries Pao-ch’ang 寶昌 and Ch’an-lin 聖林 were established, opposite each other, in the East and in the West. At the time they were called subprefectural monasteries (hsien ssu 縣寺)” (cf. Ch’ang-an chih 長安志 x 9a [TCRS, p. 120]; Hsü Sung 徐松, T’ang liang-ching ch’eng fang k’ao 唐兩京城坊考, iv 25a [TCRS, p. 52]).

The sources mention that in the Sui period at the Ch’an-lin Monastery the “great assembly” (ta tsi 法集) and the “assembly of the Dharma” (ta tsi 法集) took place in about 587 and 602 (cf. T. L 2060 xvi 559b4, xi 510b21).

In about 663 Hui-tse 慧澤 belonged to this monastery. Together with Tao-hsüan 道宣 he helped with the translations done by Puṇyodaya, a monk from Central India (T. LV 2152, 368b18; KYSCL ix 563b12). Puṇyodaya arrived in China in 655. In 656 he was sent by Kao-tsung to the countries of the South Seas to go and collect rare medicinal herbs. He was a famous scholar who, before going to China, had been invited to Tokhistan. For biographical information about Puṇyodaya and the works translated by him, see the interesting article by Lin Li-kuang, “Puṇyodaya (Na-t’i), un propagateur du Tantrisme en Chine et au Cambodge à l’époque de Hiuán-tsang”, Journal Asiatique, 1935, pp. 83-100. Upon his arrival in 655 as well as in 663 upon his return to China from the South, Puṇyodaya lived at the Tz’u-en Monastery 慈恩寺 of Ch’ang-an, the same monastery as Hsüan-tsang, whose rivalry he encountered. It is likely that Hui-chih knew Puṇyodaya. It is interesting to note here that, of the monks from the Ch’an-lin Monastery, Hui-tse in 663 and Hui-chih from 676 onwards came into contact with exponents of tantrism from India. It is also likely that Hui-chih’s teacher, the “life-prolonging brahmin” was a tantric master. Like Puṇyodaya he possessed the knowledge of medicinal drugs and the art of concocting them.

42 Buddhapāli came from Chi-pin (Kāpiṣṭi) and knew Uḍḍyāna (cf. the text of the interview). If Lokadītya, who came from Uḍḍyāna, was Hui-chih’s teacher, there could be some connection Lokadītya – Hui-chih – Buddhapāli.
hard to understand how the Chinese had managed to get along until then. Indeed, Buddhapāli maintained that on Mount Wu-t'ai he had met an old man with a long white beard who was no other than Mañjuśrī in person. The latter had told him of the Chinese pressing need for this Dhārāṇī, he had shown amazement and almost anger that Buddhapāli had come to China without bringing it with him and, consequently, he had ordered him to go immediately to Chi-pin to fetch the text. Buddhapāli went and got the text, made the long journey back to China and handed over the text to the Chinese. The translation of the text he had brought was presented on 20th February 679. Strangely enough, it was not attributed to Buddhapāli but to two lay officials of inferior rank. To find out exactly what did happen in connection with Buddhapāli and his famous dhāraṇī is a real brain-teaser. We come up against a religio-political muddle that it is not easy to untangle. The first document concerning the dhāraṇī dates to 3rd July 682. Neither Buddhapāli nor Hui-chih is mentioned in it, but this silence is probably not due to chance. The purpose of the document is only to explain why Divākara should have carried out the revision of a work that had been published on 20th February 679. The only names mentioned in connection with this first translation are those of two petty officials, Tu Hsing-i 杜行頴 who belonged to what could be called the Foreign Office of the time, and an obscure general by the name of Tu-p’o 度婆. It is strange that nothing is said about the origin of the text, this being an essential factor for establishing whether a work was orthodox or not. Furthermore, if Divākara had revised the translation, what need was there for him to make a new one at Lo-yang between March 687 and January 688, just before his death? Is it not strange that Hui-chih was Divākara’s only collaborator on this occasion? As we have seen, he had contributed to the first translation that Divākara had made of this dhāraṇī. It seems that it was of particular concern to him. In short, it is likely that the first translation of 679 had been made precisely because of Hui-chih’s concern. If this is how things stand, Hui-chih acquires a stature that is far greater than that of a mere collaborator in translations. The episode of Buddhapāli and his dhāraṇī is in fact an integral part of a far-reaching political project whose aim was to transform China from a peripheral to a central area of Buddhist civilization.

Hui-chih’s work in verse and the wall-painting that inspired it

There is another circumstance which gives us a glimpse of how important the political and religious powers considered Hui-chih to be. I have already spoken above of the work Tsan Kuan-shih-yin p’u-sa sung 譜觀世音
(Odes in praise of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara) that Hui-chih translated on his own in 693. Well, this translation had the privilege of being included immediately among the canonical works, and we find it already registered in the Canon of 695 43, in spite of the fact that Hui-chih was not a Master of the Tripitaka and that it was neither a sūtra nor a work of vinaya or abhidharma. It is classified by Chih-sheng amongst the "Collections and biographies translated from Sanskrit originals" (Fan-pen fan-i chi chüan) 44. In short, the work has the honour of being classified together with Asvaghoṣa's Buddhacarita, the Yogācārabhūmi, and the biographies of Asvaghosa, Nāgārjuna, etc. We wonder whoever could have been the author of this Sanskrit work that was considered so important as to be translated into Chinese and included among the canonical works, even though it did not form part of the "Three Baskets"? No bibliographer says so explicitly, but it is sufficient to read the work to realize that the author is no other than our Hui-chih who, being inspired by a wall-painting of the image of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, sings his praises. He himself tells us so in verse, towards the end:

«Upon seeing the image of Avalokiteśvara painted on the wall,  
The whole vision of the colours and the forms and the virtues  
appeared before me,  
I could see the Great Sovereign of Supernatural Penetrations;  
This is why I have undertaken to praise with the utmost sincerity  
All the virtues that he possesses» 45.

43 T. LV 2153 x 436c25. It is because this is a canonical work that in 730 Chih-sheng, as is customary with him, gives us the brief biographical note about its translator that we made use of entirely in this article.  
44 KYSCL xiii 623c5–6.  
45 T. XX 1052, 68a1–3. Referring to the Chinese translation, Chih-sheng (KYSCL ix 565c6) uses, exceptionally, the expression tzu i 亡. The most obvious way of understanding this expression is that Hui-chih "translated personally", i.e. in the first person, the work. This is because, just before, Chih-sheng had remarked that Hui-chih had helped others in translating and thus it seems that he uses the expression by way of contrast. But it is possible that we should take it to mean "he himself translated [his work]" or even, in the reflexive sense, "he translated himself". At the time in which Chih-sheng was writing, it was obvious to everybody that the author of the Odes was Hui-chih, and so the expression tzu i was perhaps not so ambiguous as it appears to us today.  

As for the place where Hui-chih saw the wall-painting, the Fo shou-chi Monastery naturally comes to mind because it was where Hui-chih lived. But, apart from this, we have no other evidence and it is therefore quite likely that it was located elsewhere. One thing is certain, however: that Chang Yen-yüan, who was to go to Loyang
The work can be divided into two parts. In the first one Hui-chih describes the details of the image. The beauty of the colours and the expressiveness with which it is portrayed inspired him with words of sincere religious devotion. In the second part he praises the effectiveness with which Avalokitesvara intervenes with loving kindness when besought, dispelling anxieties and dangers. In his brief note on this work in the Great Dictionary for the Explanation of Buddhist Works, Kanbayashi Ryūjō pointed out that the model by which the author – Kanbayashi did not realize that it was Hui-chih – seems to have been inspired was the verse part of the “Samantamukha parivarta” (P'u-men p'in) of the Lotus Sūtra, where Avalokiteśvara’s virtues are extolled. 46 “The Gateway to Everywhere”, as Hurwitz (1976, p. 311) translates the title of this famous chapter in the Lotus Sūtra that is devoted to Avalokiteśvara, was certainly too well known for Hui-chih not to bear it in mind, and there are indeed some resemblances between his Odes (stotra?) 47 and the gathās of the other work. I do not think, however, that these resemblance are any more than the coincidence of some of Avalokiteśvara’s virtues and the fact that they are expressed in verse. Apart from this, the differences are considerable, starting with the verse form used by Hui-chih: the lines of his Odes have seven characters whereas in the various Chinese versions of the gathās of Avalokiteśvara in the Lotus Sūtra, the lines consist of five characters. Above all, Hui-chih’s Odes include a description of the wall-painting which, of course, is lacking in the gathās. Now it is precisely due to this description, in spite of its brevity, that we understand that the painted image was of Amoghapāsa Avalokiteśvara, a tantric deity whose cult was introduced into China in the Sui period (581–618), but which seems to have been more fashionable than ever at this time. Indeed, in the same year in which Hui-chih composed the Odes, two different versions of tantric texts concerning the cult of the deity were rendered by two masters of the Tripitaka, Mañjicintana from Kashmir and Dharmaruci from South India. In Kashmir especially Amoghapāsa Avalokiteśvara seems to have been held in very high esteem and, of the two texts translated, Mañjicintana’s is the more substantial. In Mañjicintana the tantric element is decidedly predominant: all the texts he translated were tantric ones. 48

before 845 and visit every inch of the Fo shou-chi Monastery, does not mention this painting (perhaps because it was not accessible to the public?).

46 Ono, 4 (1933), p. 154c–d.

47 Nanjio, 1883, p. 357a, supposes that the original title of the work was Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva stotra. In this regard we point out that the Odes were even included in the Śūtra-piṭaka in the Ming Canon described by Nanjio.

48 Cf. Forte, “Mañjicintana”.
and the first one of these to be translated was precisely the Amonghapāśa-kalparājāsūtra. Manjicintana's 693 version was to be excluded from the 695 Canon, perhaps by the very reason of its esotericism which made it a "secret text", and it was to be included only in 712, thanks to Shih-li, a well known representative of the Sect of the Three Stages. As early as 700, however, another translation, which was most likely based on the Sanskrit original brought to China by Manjicintana, was made on the initiative of some Chinese and Koreans by a Buddhist layman, a tribal chief from the Laghman region in Afghanistan who had a close relationship with Manjicintana. This version was not published until a mission that had been sent to Kashmir to the master Sanghamitra had been able to check that it corresponded with the Sanskrit original.

But let us come back to 693. In his description of the wall-painting, Hui-chih seems to have been inspired by the non-canonical, "secret" version by Manjicintana, rather than by the previous ones or by Dharmaruci's canonical version of the same year. I say "seems" because Hui-chih's description is not a detailed one, nor have I had time to make a careful comparison between his description and that of the four versions still in existence that had been translated by 693. Until such a comparison can be made, and confirm whether or not it was Manjicintana's version that gave rise both to the wall-painting and to the Odes, it is perhaps worth-while asking ourselves at this point how Hui-chih could have echoed Manjicintana's version if it had never been made public. I think that Hui-chih was probably the intermediary between Manjicintana, who, being a newcomer to China, certainly had no knowledge of the language, and Te-kan who did not know Manjicintana's language, just as he had acted as interpreter sixteen years previously between the new arrival Buddhapali and the person who can be considered the Te-kan of the time, namely Ming-hsün. No information has come down to us about Manjicintana having been interviewed upon his arrival at Lo-yang, as Buddhapali had been, but the chance finding of the text of Buddhapali's interview shows quite clearly that the information it contained was not to be made public. Nor were the texts that Buddhapali and Manjicintana brought with them, and which they considered of the utmost importance, a matter for public knowledge. Both in the case of the Dhāranti-sūtra of the Sinciput of the Buddha and the Dhāranti-sūtra of Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara, the two texts were translated in a confidential fashion and they were not allowed to be circulated for a certain period.

49 Forte, "Brevi note".
50 T. XX 1093, 1094, 1097, in chronological order.
The Chinese Buddhists' "borderland complex"

When one is afraid of dangers and impending harm, Avalokiteśvara can give calmness and courage. On the open sea or in the midst of mountains, in a fire or at the height of a storm in the forest, Avalokiteśvara intervenes eagerly. He is even able to free one from the iron chains with which one has been bound by "evil bandits, by the T'u-chüeh (sic) and by the mlecchas", as wicked and ruthless as Rākṣasa". During the Yung-ch'ang era (689) the T'u-chüeh Mo-ch'uo (Qapagan Qagan) had violated the frontier and was to invade Ling-chou (靈州) on the 30th January 694, a few months after the composition of the Odes. At that time the T'u-chüeh were the most immediate and most dreaded enemies and it is normal that Hui-chih should mention them expressly by name. But the Chinese knew that many other enemies were a threat to their security and to order in the T'ien-hsia. By calling these enemies, present and future ones alike, by the name of mleccha, Hui-chih appeals for an alliance of pan-Buddhist defence; Amoghapāsa Avalokiteśvara would protect the armies employed in the campaigns under way and in future ones. Last of all, Hui-chih does not fail to mention, perhaps out of loyalty to his master's teachings, that Avalokiteśvara can give the ability to prolong life (ch'ang-sheng shu). Why didn't Hui-chih write his Odes directly in Chinese? There can be no doubt that he was perfectly capable of doing so, having been born in China, as Chih-sheng points out. Furthermore, that he was capable of doing so is quite clear from the fact that he translated the work entirely on his own. Did he write in Sanskrit out of a feeling of pride in his cultural roots? This may be so. But there is also another likelihood that we must keep in mind, not only because it is the most obvious one, but also because it fits perfectly into the religious political and cultural setting in which the work was produced: namely, that it was written in Sanskrit so that it would circulate in India and Central Asia, that is to say, in all the coun-

51 Mi-lei-che, frontiersmen, wicked people who do not follow Buddhism, barbarians.
52 T. XX 1052, 67c7-8.
53 CTS 183.4742; TCTC 204.6458.
54 TCTC 205.6493.
55 The Commander (Ta tsung-kuan) of the operations against the T'u-chüeh was in both cases the Buddhist monk Huai-i. It is certainly a strange coincidence that Huai-i was at home in the monastery where Hui-chih lived and where the wall-painting of Avalokiteśvara was perhaps located. As regards Huai-i, see the biography in CTS 183, translated by Forte, 1980, pp. 164-170.
56 T. XX 1052, 67c28.
tries where Chinese was not known and Sanskrit was the language of the Buddhist texts, the language par excellence of Mahāyāna Buddhism, just as Latin was for Christians. The reader may well ask: for what purpose?

In the very same year in which Hui-chih composed his *Odes*, Brahmā, a “śramaṇa envoy of the king of Central India”, came to China together with Dharmaruci and other influential persons. Some of the persons are listed in the colophon to the translation of the *Ratnamegha sūtra* that was made shortly after their arrival. Hui-chih, too, as we have seen, played an important part in the translation of this work. I have already put forward the hypothesis elsewhere that the interpolation at the beginning of the Chinese version of the *Ratnamegha sūtra* had already been made in the Sanskrit original that Dharmaruci took with him to China. I have explained that the interpolation had been made to show that Wu Chao was the lawful sovereign of China. That is to say, it served to stabilize her in the position that she had won three years earlier by declaring herself “emperor”. It is, however, probable that the interpolation had a much bolder and more ambitious aim and that it was intended to have effect outside of China. In other words, it was possibly a means of propaganda intended for Buddhists all over Asia who were to be convinced thereby that the Cakravartin they were all eagerly awaiting was to be found in China.

I am not in a position to judge the poetical worth of Hui-chih’s work, but it was most likely included in the Canon on account of its political and ideological qualities rather than for its literary merits. Hui-chih’s Sanskrit poem perhaps fulfilled the same purpose as the interpolation in the *Ratnamegha sūtra*. At the end of the poem we read:

«I lift up these *Praises to the merits of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara* so that they may be of help to Her Majesty Sheng-shen Huang-ti 聖神皇帝, the Sovereign who turns perfectly the Golden Wheel. Her charm, her strength and her life will be eternal and inextinguishable; the retribution of her knowledge and of her wisdom is unimaginable. May she ever rule over the Jambudvīpa long remaining in China; may she aid and protect the Triratna with benefit to all mankind and may all beings be granted holy bliss».

Hui-chih calls Wu Chao by the name of Sheng-shen Huang-ti, a title which she bore until 12th October 693. Although the title Golden Wheel had not yet been officially adopted, Wu Chao is already described

58 Ib., p. 135.
59 T. XX 1052, 68a8-12.
as a Cakravartin of the Golden Wheel who rules over the Jambudvipa. This seems natural if we bear in mind that the Buddhists of Lo–yang were anxious to spread the idea of Wu Chao as Cakravartin.

I had already noted some years ago the passage translated above and I had understood it in the sense I have just mentioned 60. It seemed evident to me that the author was Hui–chih, but I thought it was something he had added at the end of the translation. This was because I had no idea who the author of the Sanskrit text of the Odes was. Now that it is clear that the author was Hui–chih himself, it is also clear that the passage translated above was first written in Sanskrit. One must admit that the propagandistic effect caused by a work written in Sanskrit by an Indian, praising the Cakravartin who has chosen Lo–yang as the capital of the Jambudvipa, cannot have been insignificant. Wu Chao and the opinion leaders of her entourage—which we must not forget was made up of Buddhist experts from diverse countries—were not satisfied with a Buddhist legitimization justifying the sovereignty of the empress over China, but they aimed much higher, namely at the legitimization of Wu Chao as sovereign of the whole Jambudvipa.

The interpolation at the beginning of the Ratnamegha sūtra and the composition in Sanskrit of Hui–chih’s Odes have one thing in common: viz. the use of Sanskrit to project the personage Wu Chao on to the international scene at the head of the whole Buddhist world. If we bear in mind that Hui–chih was the "checker of the translation" (cheng i–yü 證譯語) of the Ratnamegha sūtra, that is to say, he undoubtedly checked that the Chinese translation of the interpolation was true to the Sanskrit text of it, then it is not mere chance that this common factor exists 61.

At the moment we are not able to say exactly how important a part Hui–chih played in the episode of Buddhapāli from Chi–pin, but we may take it for certain that, if it is to be interpreted as an operation in order to transform and legitimize throughout the Buddhist world China as a sacred place of Buddhism, Hui–chih could not remain indifferent to such an attractive project. The creation of the legend of Buddhapāli and his Dhāraṇī was also, like Hui–chih’s composition in Sanskrit of the Odes

60 Forte, 1976, p. 144.
61 We also come to ask whether there might be some connection between the ambassador Brahmā, the envoy of the king of Central India, and the Indian ambassador in China who was Hui–chih’s father. It is also possible that the personal relationship which his father and he himself had with the court of their homeland made them a very useful element in the relations between the two countries. Unfortunately it is not possible to say anything at all about the origin of Hui–chih’s father. It is clear, however, that the special protection that Kao–tsung granted Hui–chih right from his boyhood could have been due to his very origin.
to Avalokiteśvara, part of the one logic and the one programme: to make
China a sacred place of Buddhism and her sovereign a Cakravartin.

At this point our thoughts go naturally to what we may call the "borderland complex" of the Chinese Buddhists in relation to India, and we
think especially of a passage from the life of Hsüan-tsang that has already
been pointed out, for other reasons, by Grousset in his *Sur les traces du Bouddha* \(^{62}\) and by Needham in his chapter "Travel of Ideas and Techni-
ques" in volume I of *Science and Civilization in China*. Hui-li, the author
of the biography of Hsüan-tsang, reports that, when the latter decided to
return to China, the monks of Nālandā were amazed and asked him to
stay, with these words:

« "India is the land of Buddha's birth, and though he has left the world,
there are still many traces of him. What greater happiness could there
be than to visit them in turn, to adore him and chant his praises? Why
then do you wish to leave, having come so far. Moreover, China is a
country of mlecchas, of unimportant barbarians, who despise the religious
and the Faith. That is why Buddha was not born there. The mind of
the people is narrow, and their coarseness profound, hence neither saints
nor sages go there. The climate is cold and the country rugged—you must
think again."

The Master of the Law replied, "Buddha established his doctrine
so that it might be diffused to all lands. Who would wish to enjoy it
alone, and to forget those who are not yet enlightened? Besides, in my
country the magistrates are clothed with dignity, and the laws are every-
where respected. The emperor is virtuous and the subjects loyal, parents are
loving and sons obedient, humanity and justice are highly esteemed, and old
men and sages are held in honour. Moreover, how deep and mysterious is
their knowledge; their wisdom equals that of spirits. They have taken the
Heavens as their model, and they know how to calculate the movements
of the Seven Luminaries; they have invented all kinds of instruments, fixed
the seasons of the year, and discovered the hidden properties of the six
tones and of music. This is why they have been able to tame or to drive
away all wild animals, to subdue the demons and spirits to their will,
and to calm the contrary influences of the Yin and the Yang, thus procuring
peace and happiness for all beings... How then can you say that Buddha
did not go to my country because of its insignificance?" ».

Whether it be true or imaginary, this episode is a perfect expression

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\(^{62}\) Grousset, pp. 188–189.

of a feeling of uneasiness and a state of dilemma which could only be solved by showing that China, too, was a sacred land of Buddhism, that is, by overcoming the "borderland complex". It could also be interpreted as a reproach, as well as a challenge, to the political powers for not being aware of the universality of Buddhist ideology as compared with the limited spread of ideologies like Confucianism and Taoism and, therefore, for not realizing the danger that this unawareness could cause the loss of the much proclaimed centrality of China and thence of her cultural and civilizing vocation.

The extent to which Hsüan-tsang suffered from this complex, due to a clear perception of the image of China seen from afar, especially from India, is shown by another episode that occurred only two years after his return and which should ideally be connected with the Nâlandâ episode. In 647 Hsüan-tsang found himself in serious difficulty. The Emperor T'ai-tsung was convinced that the Indians ought to become acquainted with Lâo-tzu's famous classic, the Tao-te ching. Hence he ordered Hsüan-tsang to translate it into Sanskrit. Hsüan-tsang's discontent and embarrassment can clearly be seen from the text of the dossier that records the controversy arising with the Taoists over the Sanskrit words to be used to translate certain fundamental terms in the revered text. On reading the dossier, which has been brilliantly translated and meticulously annotated by Pelliot and which is interesting for several reasons, we also get a glimpse of the little regard that Hsüan-tsang had for Taoism, the mere attempt at comparison with Buddhism being unthinkable. In spite of obstacles and controversies, he managed to complete the translation into Sanskrit. But his patience wore thin and he burst into a rage when he was also asked to translate into Sanskrit the preface, which the Taoists regarded very highly. When the Taoist Ch'êng Ying declared: « Le livre saint de Lao-[tseu] est obscur et mystérieux. Si on doit le connaître, il faut que ce soit avec tout son appareil; sans la "prélude", comment pourra-t-on en pénétrer le sens? Je demande qu'on traduise [la "prélude"] pour en faire profiter ces barbares des frontières » 64, Hsüan-tsang lost his temper and retorted sarcastically: «... Quant à la préface où on "claque des dents" et où on "avale la salive" (dietetic recommendations), cette préface est vraiment faite pour effrayer les hommes; elle est semblable aux refrains scandaleux des sorciers et va de pair avec les ruses grossières des bêtes brutes. J'aurais peur qu'a la faire connaître en occident dans les pays étrangers, il n'en résultat de la honte pour notre patrie ». Upon being denounced by the Taoists and questioned by the President of the Department of the Great Imperial Secretariat, he was not afraid to declare, amongst

64 Pelliot, 1912, pp. 409-410. Italics mine.
other things: «Si on traduit la préface de Lao[-tséu], ces gens-là (fo-
reigners) certainement en feront une forêt de rires» 65.

Hui-li was still alive at the end of October 676 66. Although it is
not possible to establish the date when he wrote the part referring to Ná-
landa, granted that he was the author and not Yen-tsung before June 688 67,
we cannot help noting that Buddhapâli reached China in 677 with the
intention of making a pilgrimage to Mañjuśrî on Mount Wu-t'ai. The chal-
lenge had been accepted: the Buddhapâli episode marked the most im-
portant step in an escalation of propaganda both at home and abroad
that was to lead to the proclamation of Wu Chao as Cakravartin of the
Golden Wheel in 693. Just before the adoption of this title, Hui-chih,
an Indian of brahmanic descent, replying to his fellow Buddhists in Ná-
landa of half a century earlier, was able to declare in Sanskrit, without
fear of being contradicted, that China was no longer a land of milecchas,
no longer a borderland, but the actual centre of the Buddhist world.

But I-ching, in his Memoirs, which were completed a year or two
before Hui-chih’s Odes, already shows that he is full of optimism on this
point when, in addressing the Chinese monks, he states: «... it may be
said that you all, sitting side by side (in the monastery) on the Shao-
shih mount (in China), make yourselves as lofty as (those on) the Vulture
Peak (in India), and that you are as if gathering together in the city of
Râjagriha and also communicating with all those in the Imperial seat
of China. The Large River (Hwang Ho in China) unites its pure stream
with the lake Mukilinda (in Buddhagayâ). The Slender Willow (Hsi-lew)
joins in its splendour with the Tree of Bodhi... » 68.

Almost 40 years after I-ching wrote these words, Chih-sheng was
to regard the problem as obsolete and smugly applies the idea of “border-
land” to Korea. Regardless of the interpretation that may be given on
how the passage should be understood 69, there can be no doubt that
Chih-sheng no longer has this complex; he does not feel that he is living
on the outskirts of the Buddhist world, but he feels perfectly at ease in
the very centre of it.

Buddhist China was not, of course, the only country to have the
“borderland complex”, although we may suppose that it was the country
that suffered from it most dramatically, having previously elaborated a

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65 Ib., p. 414.
66 Cf. the two colophons in Naba, 1936, pp. 524, 527.
67 This is the date that appears in the preface. Yen-tsung completed the work
that Hui-li had left unfinished.
68 Takakusu, pp. 70-71.
69 Forte, “Brevi note”.
complex and refined ideology about its own centrality. All the countries
to which Buddhism spread were affected to some degree by this complex,
and it may be pointed out as being the origin of an idea that was especially
dear to the Buddhists of Eastern Asia, namely the idea of the "gradual
advance eastwards" (tung-chien), whose significance at an internal and
international level has still to be evaluated. Centuries earlier the "advance"
had been westwards and, à propos of this, I should like to conclude these
hasty observations of mine with the well-considered remarks made by
Przyluski some sixty years ago: "Quand le bouddhisme se fut répandu
dans l'ouest (i.e. Mathurā and Kashmir) les nouvelles communautés firent
figure de parvenues à côté des anciennes. Elles n'eurent pas de repos qu'elles
ne se fussent créés des titres à l'admiration des fidèles. La légende du Bouddha
étant déjà fixée dans ses traits essentiels, on ne pouvait songer à déplacer
vers l'Ouest le lieu des principales scènes de sa vie. Il fallut imaginer
de nouveaux épisodes afin de prouver la sainteté des terres récemment
converties. On prétendit que le Bouddha, peu de temps avant sa fin, avait
visité la région du Nord-Ouest, qu'il y avait opéré des miracles et prédit
la venue de Madhyāntika et d'Upagupta".

Conclusion

Hui-chih grew up under the personal protection of Kao-tsung and
Wu Chao and, all things considered, it is normal that he did everything
he could for his benefactors. After Kao-tsung's death in 683, Hui-chih
continued to devote himself to the cause of Wu Chao, whom he saw in
the guise of the Cakravartin, and therefore to help towards her political
rise. He was certainly not alone in this undertaking. All the monks of
the Great Fu-hsien Monastery worked eagerly at the programme. These
monasteries were real international centres where Buddhist monks from
many different countries lived together and were engaged in common
activities. Amongst these monks Hui-chih was a very particular person
as he was an "Indian" who had assimilated Chinese culture. This pecu-
liarity placed him in an ideal position for acting as a go-between between
the exponents of the two cultures, in an attempt to achieve their fusion
and synthesis to the furthest possible extent, a problem which Hui-chih
perhaps felt to be of the utmost importance, and an existential one to
him on account of the circumstances of his life.

This does not mean that Hui-chih was the mind that organized and
directed this fusion. Not only are we quite definitely unable to deduce

70 Przyluski, 1923, p. 2.
such a thing from the sources, but it would be quite unrealistic even to think so. I do not, however, think it an exaggeration to maintain that Hui-chih may have been a valuable instrument in this fusion. The slender thread joining the events concerning him has been useful to us here, more than any thing else, as a pretext for trying to fit together scattered and apparently disconnected facts and elements, but perhaps it is not mere chance that, even through a person that at first sight seems insignificant, it is possible to glimpse ties that link up to the predominating ideas of an epoch.

APPENDIX

Hui-chih and Tantrism

There are several factors of greater or lesser importance that make us think of placing Hui-chih, if we really must place him in a trend of thought, in the sphere of tantrism: viz. he was of brahmin caste; he belonged to the Ch’an-lin Monastery of Ch’ang-an, one of whose exponents was, in 663, in contact with the tantric master Punyodaya, an expert in medicinal drugs; he was ordained by Lokāditya, a Buddhist monk from Uḍḍyāna who was skilled in the preparation of life-prolonging drugs; he was in contact with and frequented the tantric masters Buddhāpāli of Chi-pin and Manicintana of Kashmir; lastly, he composed a work singing the praises of Amoghapāsa Avalokiteśvara. Moreover, his work is included amongst the tantric works in the catalogue of Annen of the 10th century 71 and in the Taishō edition of vol. XX published in 1928 72.

If I have not insisted on Hui-chih’s connections with tantrism in the foregoing pages it is because I did not want to confine his activities to this one aspect. Indeed, it seems to me that if Hui-chih was a follower of tantrism, it was not in an exclusive and limited way but with the broad-mindedness that was typical of the time and environment in which he lived, and this made it possible for him to contribute towards the translation of Buddhist works of various kinds.

Having said this, I have the impression that the authors who have considered him as belonging to tantrism have not always had sufficient reasons for doing so. Ōmura (1918, pp. 259–260) includes Hui-chih in his History of the development of tantrism, but the reasons why he includes him escape me, especially as Ōmura thought that the Odes translated by

71 T. LV 2176, 1130a20.
72 T. XX 1052.
Hui-chih had been lost and therefore he cannot have realized how closely they are related to the cult of Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara.

The *Great Dictionary of Tantrism* has a separate entry, albeit a very brief one, on Hui-chih, but it seems to be based on Ōmura as it also says that the *Odes* have been lost.  

Lastly Osabe, the author of the only article I know of about tantrism at the time of Wu Chao, maintains that Hui-chih was a tantric translator on the ground of a piece of information in the ninth *chiuan* of the KYSCP of 730. But in reality there is nothing, in the brief note on Hui-chih in the ninth *chiuan* of this work, to indicate that he should be considered as such. Osabe is even able to give the complete Chinese transcription of Hui-chih’s Sanskrit name which was, according to him, Chan-to-p’an-jo-t’i-p’o (Cand[ra]prajñādeva?). I, however, am decidedly of the opinion that he is making a colossal blunder and that he is mistaking three, or even four, different persons for one.

Let us see why this is so. Osabe maintains that the collaborators of this Chan-t’o-p’an-jo-t’i-p’o, alias Hui-chih, were Tao-ch’eng, Po-ch’en, Chia-shang, Yüan-ts’e, Ling-pien, Ming-hsün, Huai-tu. However, the ninth *chiuan* of the KYSCP by no means says that these were Hui-chih’s collaborators, but Divākara’s. In short, Osabe wrongly interprets a passage of the biographical note on Divākara, where ‘all it says about Hui-chih is that he “checked the Sanskrit terms”. The sentence in question does not mean: ‘the śramaṇa Chan-t’o-p’an-jo-t’i-p’o, which is translated (i-yü) into Chinese as śramaṇa Hui-chih, checked the Sanskrit’, but ‘the śramaṇas Chan-t’o (Cand[ra]) and P’an-jo-t’i-p’o (Prajñādeva) translated the words [of the Sanskrit texts into Chinese], the śramaṇa Hui-chih checked the Sanskrit.”

Chan-t’o is certainly the same person who, in the years 689–691, helped with the translation done by Devendraprajña and who appears in the colophon of the translation of the *Ratnamegha Sūtra* which was completed on 7th October 693, when he belonged to the Chi-fa Monastery of Ch’ang-an. He also collaborated with Śikṣānanda in the translation of the *Avataṃsaka sūtra* that was completed in 699. He should pro-

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74 Osabe, 1982, p. 3.
76 In the article on Divākara I had restored the Sanskrit names as Canda and Prajñādīpa instead of Cand[ra] and Prajñādeva.
77 Forte, 1979, p. 293.
78 Forte, 1976, p. 172.
79 T. LI 2074, 176b6; he is not mentioned, however, in the colophon of P. 2314.
bably be identified with Ta-mo-chan-t’o (Dharmacand[ra]) who is mentioned by Po-lun in a preface written in about 700, where it says amongst other things that he belonged to the Monastery of the Prophecy of the Buddha (Fo-shou-chi ssu) of Lo-yang and that he was a "brahmin (i.e. Indian) monk" from Wu-chang-na, i.e. Uḍḍyāna 80.

As for P’an-jo-t’i-p’o, I think he is the same person whose name is abbreviated as P’an-jo in the colophon of the Ratnamegha sūtra of which the translation was completed on 7th October 693 81. Like Candra, he also took part in the translation of the Avarānisaka sūtra in the capacity of i-yū, "translator", as in Divākara's team. This time, however, his name is abbreviated as T’i-p’o (Deva) 82.

There are, then, at least three persons, Hui-chih, Chan-t’o (Chand[ra]) and P’an-jo-t’i-p’o, (Prajñādeva) whom Osabe mistakes as only one. I say 'at least' because I am not at all sure that the four character P’an-jo-t’i-p’o refer to only one person and not two different ones: P’an-jo and T’i-p’o. If I have preferred to refer the four characters to one person for the time being it is only because there were usually no more than two persons in a group of translators who held the position of i-yū "translators". But we must be careful because, for instance, in the colophon of 706 of the Ratnakuta sūtra there are indicated as many as four persons with the position of i-fan-wen "translator of the Sanskrit text" 83, which corresponds to the office of i-yū.

**LIST OF QUOTED WORKS**

*Abbreviations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTW</td>
<td>Ch’üan T’ang wen, completed in 1814 under the direction of Tung Kao (1740–1818) and others. Chü bun, Kyoto 1976, reprinted edition of the original imperial printed edition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLY</td>
<td>Cheng-yüan hsin-ting shih-chiao mu-lu, by Yuán Chao, completed in 800. T. LV 2157.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYSC</td>
<td>K’ai-yüan shih-chiao lu, by Chih–sheng, completed 730. T. LV 2154.</td>
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<tr>
<td>P.</td>
<td>Chinese manuscripts in Fonds Pelliot Chinois Touen-houang, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, catalogue number.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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80 T. XX 1057, 83e6–7; CTW 913,5b5–6 (19.12005). The character chang is erroneously written as fa in T. XX and fu in CTW.


82 T. LI 2074, 176b6.

83 Yôro, p. 388a.
SKSC = Sung kao-seng chuan, by Tsan-ning, completed 988. T. L 2061.
T. = Taishō shinshū daiökyō, Tokyo, 1924–1935.
TCTC = Tzu-chih t'ung-chien, compiled by Ssu-ma Kuang (1019–1086), presented to the throne in 1084. Chung-hua shu-chū edition, Peking, 1956, which includes Hu San-hsing's commentary (reprinted in Hong Kong in 1971).
Z. = Dai Nihon zokuzōkukyō, Žokyō shoin, Kyoto, 1905–1912.

Manuscripts

P. 2314

Works in the Taishō shinshū daiökyō (T.) not listed among the Abbreviations. See Hōbōgirin 1978, catalogue number.

T. XVI 660.
T. XX 1052, 1057.
T. XLIV 1838.
T. LI 2074.
T. LI 2074.
T. LV 2152, 2153, 2176, 2184.

Other works

Ch'ang-an chih (A Monograph on Ch'ang-an), by Sung Min-ch'iu (1019–1079), Ching hsüên t'ang ts'ung-shu edition reproduced in TCRS, no. 6, pp. 89–121.
Chavannes, Edouard, 1894 Mémoire composé à l'époque de la grande dynastie T'ang sur les religieux éminents qui allèrent chercher la Loi dans les Pays d'Occident par l-tsing, Leroux, Paris.
Ch'eng Hung-chiao, 1897. T'ang liang-ching ch'eng fang kao chiao pu chi (Collation and Additional Notes to Walls and Quarters of the Two Capitals of the T'ang) (see Hsu Sung, 1848), completed 1850, published in 1897 in the Ngou xiang ling shih collection. TCRS, no. 6, pp. 75–87.


Ukai Tetsujō, see Yōro Tetsujō.


