

Preface

In the centuries following its founding by the Buddha Śākyamuni around the fifth century B.C.E., the Buddhist tradition gradually spread from its homeland in India throughout the vast reaches of the Asian continent. In response to the diverse cultures it encountered there, new forms of Buddhist thought, practice, and institution were produced, many of which became vital and self-sustaining traditions in their own right. When we speak of Buddhism today, we generally do so in terms of three broad regional legacies, each of which is identified by a common written language, canonical literature, and institutional culture. They include the Buddhism of East Asia (i.e., China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam), the Theravāda tradition of Southeast Asia, and the Vajrayāna or “tantric” Buddhism of the Himalayas.

The work at hand is a translation and study of a major section of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* or “[Treatise on] the Great Calming and Contemplation” by the Chinese monk Chih-i (538–597). Chih-i himself is revered as the principal founder of the T’ien-t’ai school, one of the most influential and enduring traditions of East Asian Buddhism.¹ As the terms “calming” (*chih* or *samatha*) and “contemplation” (*kuan* or *vipaśyanā*) in the title indicate, his *Great Calming and Contemplation* is primarily a treatise on meditation or religious practice. It is styled the “great” (*mo-ho* or *mahā*) calming and contemplation because it sets forth the “perfect and sudden” (*yüan-tun*) approach to Buddhahood, a distinctively East Asian conception of the Buddhist path regarded by Chih-i and his contemporaries as the epitome of the Buddha’s teaching.² This fact, together with the text’s

1. The tradition takes its name after Mount T’ien-t’ai in southeast China, the mountain on which Chih-i established the school’s first major monastic center. In Korea the Chinese name is read “Chōntae,” and in Japan, “Tendai.”

2. The earliest editions of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* circulated by Chih-i’s disciple

extraordinary comprehensiveness, has not only made the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* the foremost treatise of the T'ien-t'ai school but has also earned it the respect of virtually every school of East Asian Buddhism. Such an illustrious history and catholicity of appeal secures it a place alongside of Buddhagosa's *Visuddhimagga* and Tsong-kha-pa's *Lam-rim chen-mo* as one of the great classics of Buddhist spirituality.

The original text of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* consists of ten main chapters distributed over a total of ten fascicles—the equivalent of some four or five volumes in English. The present book contains a translation of the first chapter of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan*, together with the influential preface composed and attached to the text by Chih-i's disciple, Kuan-ting (561–632), the man originally responsible for recording and editing the work. This opening chapter is itself known as the Synopsis (*ta-i*), for the simple fact that it rehearses in condensed form the basic structure and thematic content of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* as a whole, with certain variations. Because of its self-contained character, T'ien-t'ai exegetes have treated it almost as a work unto itself. We are thus not without precedent in choosing to publish the Synopsis chapter as a separate translation.

The work that follows is based on a 1976 dissertation written by Neal Donner for his doctorate at the University of British Columbia. In 1989, Peter N. Gregory proposed adding it, as revised by Dan Stevenson, to the Kuroda Institute's Classics in East Asian Buddhism series, which is published in conjunction with the University of Hawaii Press.

Our translation relies on the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* edition of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan*,³ together with a collection of four major interlineal commentaries—one Chinese, three Japanese—issued under the title *Makashikan*, 5 vols., Bukkyō taikai series nos. 22–26.⁴ The four include (1) *Chih-kuan fu-hsing ch'uan-hung chüeh*, by the ninth Chinese T'ien-t'ai patriarch, Chan-jan (711–782);⁵ (2) *Shikan bugyō shiki*, by the eminent twelfth-century Tendai exegete Shōshin; (3) *Makashikan bugyō kōgi*, by the late Tokugawa-period Tendai monk Chikū (1780–1862); and (4) the

and editor, Kuan-ting, were actually titled “The Perfect and Sudden Calming and Contemplation” (*Yüan-tun chih-kuan*). It was not until the third and final edition that Kuan-ting settled on the current title.

3. T no. 1911. The *Taishō* text is based on a Ming-dynasty printed canonical edition, with alternate readings provided through collation with Sung- and Tokugawa-period printed texts.

4. Bukkyō taikai kanseikai (Iwada Kyōen, chief ed.) *Makashikan*, 5 vols., Bukkyō taikai series no. 22–26 (Tokyo: Bukkyō taikai kanseikai, 1912, 1919, 1932, 1933; reprinted by Nakayama shobō busshorin, 1978). The same four commentaries, with the original text, have been republished together in Tada Kōryū, ed., *Tendai daishi zenshū: Makashikan*, 5 vols. (Tokyo: Nippon bussō kankōkai, d.u.).

5. Also found in T no. 1912.

Makashikan bugyō kōjutsu, by the nineteenth-century Tendai priest Shudatsu (1804–1884).⁶

Various modern Japanese renderings of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* have also proved helpful. Donner originally had at his disposal Sekiguchi Shindai's two-volume *Makashikan* published in the popular Iwanami bunko series (1966).⁷ Since then, several additional translations have become available, including those by Muranaka Yūjō⁸ and Nitta Masa'aki.⁹ Two other recently published reference tools indispensable to the study of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* also deserve mention. One is the *Makashikan ichiji sakuin*,¹⁰ a massive single-character concordance to the text; the other, a comprehensive listing of scriptural citations in the *Mo-ho chih-kuan*.¹¹

With Peter Gregory's encouragement and coordination, Donner in 1989 went back through his dissertation and made numerous corrections and improvements. Over the next year, Stevenson compared the translation line by line with the original text, consulting along with it T'ien-t'ai commentaries and modern Japanese translations. Various minor adjustments to wording and phrasing were made throughout the translation, but substantial revisions were limited only to select sections—a point testifying to the durability of Donner's original work. The most significant changes introduced by Stevenson occur in the chapter on the four sa-mādhis, which deals with the ritual practices that are his specialty.

Stevenson also revised the footnotes, with the aim to place the content of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* more within its traditional exegetical framework. Hence, where Donner had previously paraphrased or explained, Stevenson introduced extensive citations from Chan-jan's commentary (*Chih-kuan fu-hsing ch'uan-hung chüeh*) and other T'ien-t'ai sources.¹²

6. Chikū and Shudatsu were both influential figures associated with the Anraku-ha, a late Tokugawa-period movement on Mount Hiei that sought to curb the influence of esoteric *hongaku* thought and to revive the "classical" traditions of Tendai monastic discipline and exegesis.

7. Sekiguchi Shindai, *Makashikan*, 2 vols., Iwanami bunko series, 33-309-2 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1966).

8. Muranaka Yūjō, *Makashikan*, Daijō butten no. 6 (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1988).

9. Nitta Masa'aki, *Makashikan*, Butten kōza no. 25 (Tokyo: Daizō shuppansha, 1989).

10. Yamada Kazuo, ed., *Makashikan ichiji sakuin* (Tokyo: Daisan bunmeisha, 1985).

11. Chūgoku bukkyō kenkyūkai, ed., *Makashikan inyō tenkyō sōran* (Tokyo: Nakayama shobō busshorin, 1987), previously published in serial form in *Tendai* 2-6 (1981-1983). This list of references is derived almost verbatim from the four commentaries contained in Iwada, ed., *Makashikan*, Bukkyō taikai series nos. 22-26. Certain attributions remain tenuous.

12. Citations from the *Chih-kuan fu-hsing ch'uan-hung chüeh* are introduced by

Diverse technical terms are generally rendered literally. Some superfluous distinctions may thereby be retained, where a single English equivalent could possibly have communicated the meaning more efficiently. But the careful reader will not be misled. On the other hand, a one-to-one correspondence between Chinese and English technical terms simply cannot be preserved for such a common term as *fa* ("dharma," "teaching," "psycho-physical constituent," or simply "thing"), where range of meaning and/or frequent repetition make it difficult to stick to a single equivalent. In instances when a knowledge of the original Chinese term is useful it has been transliterated in parentheses. A glossary of these terms (with character equivalents) is provided following the translation.

The *Mo-ho chih-kuan* is a notoriously terse and uneven text—a condition that probably reflects the fact that it began as a set of lecture notes taken down by Chih-i's disciple Kuan-ting. Around many of the work's internal rifts have grown exegetical systems and controversies that have occupied T'ien-t'ai readers for centuries. For us as translators to gloss over or resolve these difficulties without due attention to interpretive tradition would be to obscure many of the very features that have contributed to the work's ongoing vitality. Hence, significant inconsistencies and ambiguities in the text (especially when they have proved problematic for later T'ien-t'ai tradition) are deliberately preserved in the translation and highlighted in the footnotes. Major intrusions in the translation are signaled by the use of brackets.

The translation of obscure T'ien-t'ai technical terms or expressions has been based, where possible, on definitions within the writings of Chih-i or within the particular body of sūtras and treatises that he and his contemporaries are known to have used. Otherwise Chan-jan was taken as the authority. There are two reasons for relying so heavily on the latter in the text and the notes. First, it is at best tenuous to attempt any systematic reconstruction of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* apart from Chan-jan's commentary, given the lack of early materials as well as the enormous impact that Chan-jan's work has had on shaping the current text.¹³ And second, since Chan-jan's version of the text and commentary became the normative one for virtually all of East Asia, adopting his reading at least puts us within the mainstream of later T'ien-t'ai exegetical discourse. Chapter subheadings in the translation follow Chan-jan, as do most (but not all) decisions on variant textual readings.

the words, "Chan-jan says (or states, etc.)," followed by the respective *Taishō* reference. Additional sources consulted include works of Hui-ssu (515–577), Chih-i (538–597), Kuan-ting (561–632), and Chan-jan (711–782), as well as Sung-period figures such as Chih-li (960–1028) and Tsun-shih (963–1032).

13. See Satō Tetsuei's work on the development of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* as summarized in his *Tendai daishi no kenkyū*.

The main body of this work is preceded by a foreword and three introductory chapters. The foreword is composed by the Reverend Yamada Etai, the current archbishop of the Japanese Tendai school. The first of the three introductory chapters, by both Donner and Stevenson, provides background for certain key T'ien-t'ai concepts as well as for the design of the Synopsis Chapter and its relationship to the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* as a whole. The second and third chapters, by Stevenson, provide an overview of the cultural history of the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* and reflect on issues concerning its role as a sacred text in the T'ien-t'ai tradition.

In the course of completing this project we have benefited from the support of numerous sponsors, friends, and colleagues. Special gratitude goes to Yamada Etai, archbishop of the Tendai school on Mount Hiei, for his generous support in the form of a subvention to help defray the publication costs of this project (as well as for kindly supplying the calligraphy of the title that graces the cover and frontispiece of the book); and to Maezumi Roshi, President of the Kuroda Institute, for his continued interest and moral support.

Peter N. Gregory, Executive Director of the Kuroda Institute and Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, has given generously of his time to offer editorial guidance, to proofread successive drafts, and to help produce the final manuscript. Without his kindness and encouragement (not to mention his patience) the work would never have seen completion. Our thanks also go to Barbara E. Cohen for her labor in copyediting the manuscript and in compiling the index.

Much of Stevenson's work on this project was completed while in residence at the University of Michigan under the combined support of the University of Michigan Institute for the Study of Buddhist Literature and the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, Taipei. The stimulating company of Professors Luis O. Gomez, Donald S. Lopez, Jr., and T. Griffith Foulk of the University of Michigan Buddhist Studies program has contributed to his effort in numerous untold ways.

I (Dan Stevenson) wish to thank two persons for their very special roles in this enterprise. One is the Venerable Sheng-yen, President of the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, who has steadily encouraged my studies over the years and without whom I would have no real inkling of the depth and vitality of the Chinese Buddhist tradition. The other is my wife, Miwa. Her loving support and her willingness to put up with the extraordinary pressures that a project like this brings have been un-failing. My personal labors are above all dedicated to them.

And I (Neal Donner) would like to thank the family that has helped make me me: my late father Otto Donner, who loved me too much to protest my aberrant career choices; his second wife Maria Donner, who so much enriched his latter years; my former wife Carol Linnell, who has

never forgotten her co-parenting role; my children Erich Donner and Rebecca Donner, who taught me as much as Buddhism has; my brother Michael Donner, who never stopped loving me despite our differences; and my mother Jane Donner Sweeney and her second husband Vince Sweeney, who have blended the search for enlightenment with the honoring of family connections better than any human beings I have ever known.

DANIEL B. STEVENSON
NEAL DONNER