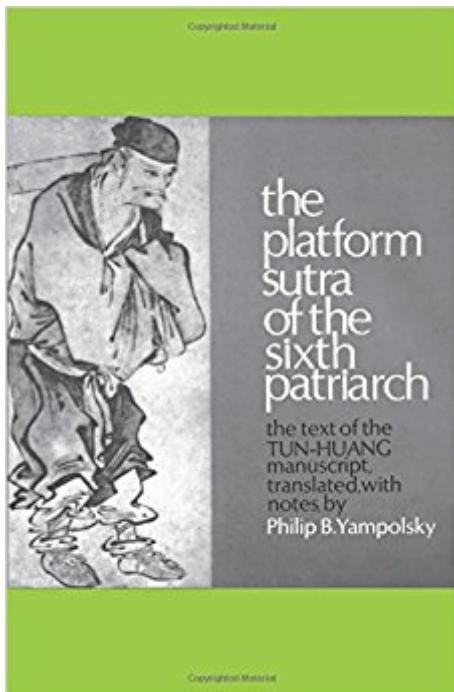


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# The Platform Sutra Of The Sixth Patriarch



## Synopsis

The Platform Sutra records the teachings of Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch, who is revered as one of the two great figures in the founding of Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism. This translation is the definitive English version of the eighth-century Ch'an classic. Phillip B. Yampolsky has based his translation on the Tun-huang manuscript, the earliest extant version of the work. A critical edition of the Chinese text is given at the end of the volume. Dr. Yampolsky also furnishes a lengthy and detailed historical introduction which contains much information hitherto unavailable even to scholars, and provides the context essential to an understanding of Hui-neng's work. He gives an account of the history and legends of Ch'an Buddhism, with particular attention to the traditions associated with Hui-neng, quoting or summarizing the most important narratives. He then discusses the various texts of the Platform Sutra, and analyzes its contents.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

(This) translation of one of the most famous of all Chinese Ch'an texts is certainly the best rendition so far. Without sacrificing scholarly accuracy, Yampolsky has produced a lucid and idiomatic translation which even the layman can enjoy. (Books Abroad) Remarkable... Dr. Yampolsky's study is characterized by a clarity of presentation and a thoroughness of exploration of Chinese and Japanese sources. (Literature East and West) As an initiation into the international field of foundational scholarly research on the Platform Sutra Yampolsky's detailed and illuminating

introductory remarks to his carefully annotated translation remain indispensable... (T.H. Barrett, SOAS, University of London Journal of Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies)

The Platform Sutra records the teachings of Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch, who is revered as one of the two great figures in the founding of Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism. This translation is the definitive English version of the eighth-century Ch'an classic. Dr. Yampolsky also furnishes a lengthy and detailed historical introduction that provides the context essential to an understanding of Hui-neng's work.

Another addition to the list of translations of this sutra, this one by an acknowledged scholar of Chinese literature. Hui Neng is presented within the context of history and Buddhist traditions. There is little reason to doubt the accuracy of the translation, which appears to be free of the imbedded commentary of other versions. This one is based upon a manuscript found in the Tun Huang cave and is somewhat briefer than others. The text is an excellent introduction to the School of Sudden Awakening or Southern School of Ch'an Buddhism, which is often called Original Zen.

Yampolsky was a professor in Eastern Studies at Columbia and his translations of Chinese and Japanese Chan and Zen texts are superior. More neutral in presentation than the more recent translation by Red Pine (Bill Porter) who takes a more personal and idiosyncratic view point toward translation, both works are excellent and illuminate one another. This work is a particular favorite of mine. I give this translation my highest rating.

Many thanks! excellent

This was one of several books used for a college course took on Buddhism. This would be good for groups discussion or independent study. The sixth Chinese patriarch of this line of Buddhism has a very interesting story. This book has the sutra in English and Chinese, plus a kind of biography on the patriarch. I am Buddhist myself, and this book contained a very moving phrase for me. "Because Originally there is earth, From this earth seeds bring forth flowers. If from the outset there were no earth, From where would the flowers grow?" -page 176. The whole book is a deep read, and it would be great for your interest in Buddhism!

This is the version that my college professor at CSUS required back in the late 80's for a class on

Zen Buddhism, and I feel it is still one of the best versions. I just bought Cleary's version last week as I could not find my copy of this book and was greatly disappointed. As usual his translations are vague, inaccurate and obtuse at times. This one is still worth the extra price.

Hui-neng (Eno) is the Sixth Ancestor of Zen in China. This Grand Master is considered by all Zen schools as second in importance only to Bodhidharma (The First Ancestor of Zen in China). Many consider this record by Hui-neng as THE point in Zen history when the universal elements of Buddhism achieved its first thoroughly Chinese expression. That is to say, the point where the Zen became Zen. Phillip B. Yampolsky's translation continues to be the standard (although Thomas Cleary's translation is excellent also) of this classic record, which is the only acknowledged Buddhist text composed in China to achieve the status of sutra (scripture). Yampolsky's translation is from the earliest text in existence - the Tun-huang manuscript. This book includes an in-depth introduction introducing the reader to the historical aspects of its creation, the various versions, and an overview of the fundamental concepts of Hui-neng's Zen teaching.

This volume is a great entry to the Chinese take on Buddhism. It consists of a hefty introduction/historical background section as well as the text in translation and the original. The translation of the text is one of the smoothest I've read of Chinese, which must be a confluence of the material and the translator. The Platform Sutra itself consists of more than metaphysical exposition, going into the biography of Hui-neng and the context of his teaching (both of which are at least as interesting as the religious part of the text). If you want to broaden your understanding of the quest for understanding, this book would be a great addition to your library.

We began using this text in our Buddhist Sutra Study group only to find that this translation is missing so much of the text it is almost impossible to compare it to other translations. It may have been that the translator was working off a fragmentary text but most of the Sutra is missing from this translation. If you are looking for a full translation, you should likely be looking at one of the many other excellent full translations either on or elsewhere online.

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