

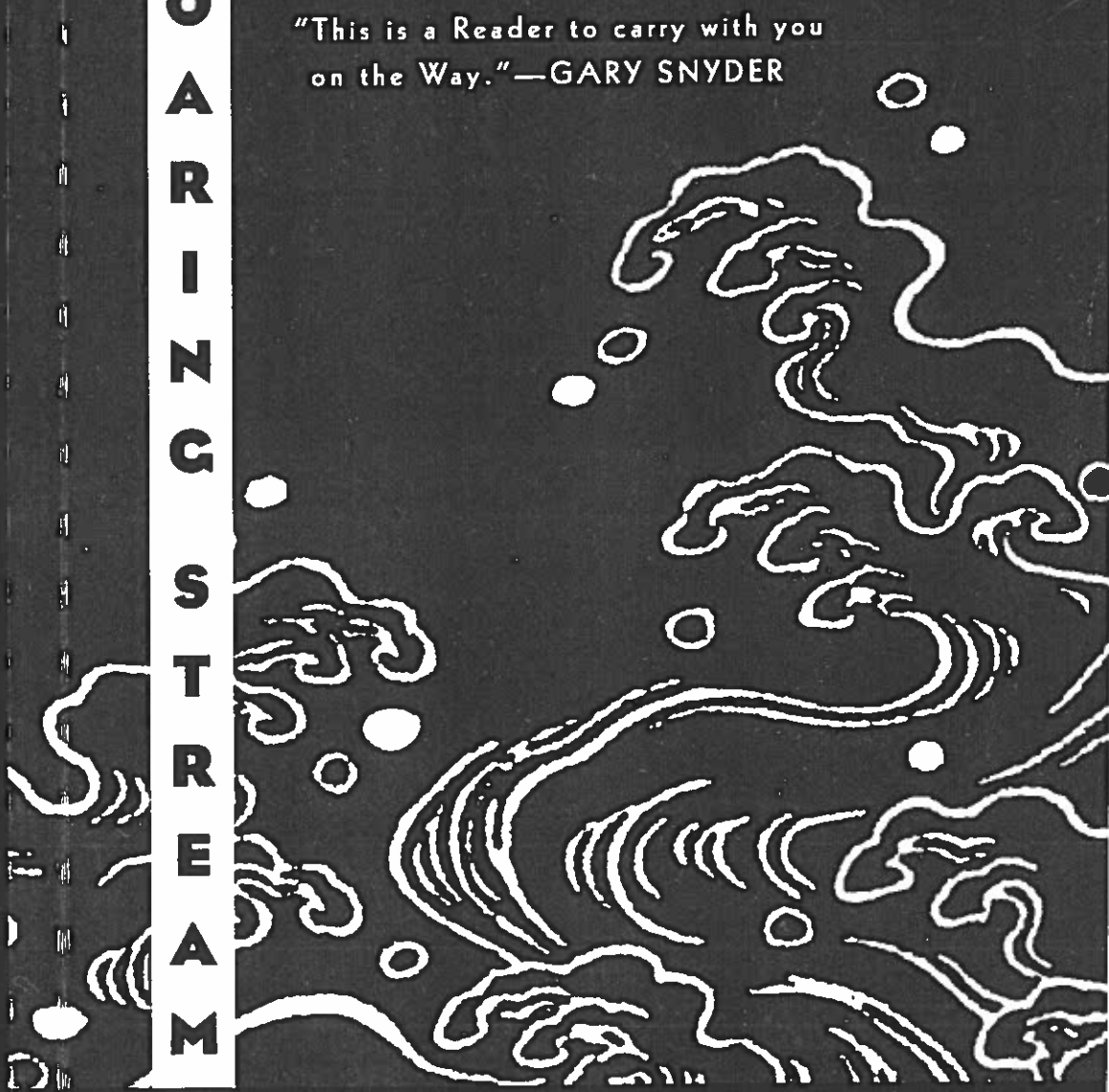
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**A New
Zen Reader**

"This is a Reader to carry with you
on the Way."—GARY SNYDER



**Edited by Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker
With a Foreword by Robert Aitken**

Huang-po

(D. 850)



P'ei Hsiu, the same high official who visited Kuei-shan for instruction, figured prominently in the career of Huang-po Hsi-yün, serving as both his sponsor and his amanuensis. In 843, P'ei wrote, he asked Huang-po (J. Ōbaku) to join him in residence at a monastery in Chün-chou and there, "day and night, I questioned him about the Way." Six years later, P'ei invited Huang-po to the district he was then governing, of Wan-ling, and installed him in a monastery built expressly for him. The master, obviously pleased, named the new place for the mountain where he had lived as a novice monk, and the name stuck, first to the monastery and then to him: Huang-po.

Here, the two men resumed their discussions, and as he had on the earlier occasion, P'ei took the trouble to write down what he had heard. Thus we possess for Huang-po, unlike other masters of the age, an authoritative and contemporaneous document of his words. He would probably not be pleased by this, judging from his reaction one day when P'ei presented him with a poem:

He took it in his hands, but soon sat down and pushed it away. "Do you understand?" he asked.

"No, Master."

"But why don't you understand? Think a little! If things could be expressed like this with ink and paper, what would be the purpose of a sect like ours?"

Huang-po seems to have exercised a measure of deference in teaching P'ei, as Nan-ch'üan did with his well-placed lay disciple, but as a rule he practiced the no-holds-barred teaching method pioneered by his Dharma grandfather, Matsü, frequently swatting or bellowing at students in an attempt to open their eyes. The most outstanding instance of such behavior came when Huang-po encountered a novice monk at a Dharma assembly conducted in a government complex. As P'ei reports this event:

The [novice] noticed our Master enter the hall of worship and make a triple prostration to the Buddha, whereupon he asked: "If we are to seek nothing from the Buddha, Dharma, or Sangha, what does Your Reverence seek by such prostrations?"

"Though I seek nothing from the Buddha," replied our Master, "or from the Dharma, or from the Sangha, it is my custom to show respect this way."

"But what purpose does it serve?" insisted the [novice], whereupon he suddenly received a slap.

"Oh," he exclaimed, "How uncouth you are!"

"What is this?" cried the Master. "Imagine making a distinction between refined and uncouth!" So saying, he administered another slap. . . .

What makes this incident remarkable, *The Blue Cliff Record* explains, is that the inquisitive novice was a future emperor, hiding himself in the Ch'an *sangha* until his political troubles receded. When he emerged and took power, "he bestowed on Huang-po the title of Uncouth Ascetic. Later, when Prime Minister P'ei Hsiu was at court, P'ei advanced the proposal that Huang-po be granted the [posthumous] title, "Ch'an Master Without Limits"—a positive twist that was duly accepted.

This free-wheeling teacher, by all accounts, cut a very impressive figure. P'ei describes him as extraordinarily tall, with "a small lump shaped like a pearl" in the middle of his forehead. (Huang-po seems to have made prostrations before the Buddha a regular part of his practice, and other writers suggested that this protuberance resulted from so frequently touching his head to the floor.) *The Blue Cliff Record* notes that "When Huang-po first met Pai-chang, Pai-chang said, 'Magnificent! Imposing! Where have you come from?' Huang-po said, 'Magnificent and imposing, I've come from the mountains.'" P'ei observed that Huang-po's "words were simple, his reasoning direct, his way of life exalted, and his habits unlike the habits of other men."

At some point, Huang-po trained under his Dharma uncle Nan-ch'üan, but the bulk of his preparation was with Pai-chang, and it was the latter he succeeded in the Dharma. Upon acknowledging him as an heir, Pai-chang made a statement that has reverberated ever since through the halls of Ch'an and Zen: "If a student's insight is equal to the teacher's, the student will have merely half the teacher's capacity. Only a student whose insight exceeds the teacher's is worthy of receiving transmission." Huang-po apparently took this injunction to heart, in due course producing thirteen successors of his own, among them one of the greatest Ch'an masters of all time, Lin-chi (Chapter 17). 88

FROM THE CHÜN-CHOU RECORD

The Master said to me: All the Buddhas and all sentient beings are nothing but the One Mind, beside which nothing exists. This Mind, which is without beginning, is unborn and indestructible. It is not green nor yellow, and has neither form nor appearance. It does not belong to the categories of things which exist or do not exist, nor can it be thought of in terms of new or old. It is neither long nor short, big nor small, for it transcends all limits, measures, names, traces and comparisons. It is that which you see before you—begin to reason about it and you are once fall into error. If it is the Buddha, these words cannot be fathomed.

or measured. The One Mind alone is the Buddha, and there is no distinction between the Buddha and sentient things, but that sentient beings are attached to forms and so seek externally for Buddhahood. By their very seeking they lose it, for that is using the Buddha to seek for the Buddha and using mind to grasp Mind. Even though they do their utmost for a full eon, they will not be able to attain to it. They do not know that, if they put a stop to conceptual thought and forget their anxiety, the Buddha will appear before them, for this Mind is the Buddha and the Buddha is all living beings. It is not the less for being manifested in ordinary beings, nor is it greater for being manifested in the Buddhas.

The building up of good and evil both involve attachment to form. Those who, being attached to form, do evil have to undergo various incarnations unnecessarily; while those who, being attached to form, do good, subject themselves to toil and privation equally to no purpose. In either case it is better to achieve sudden self-realization and to grasp the fundamental Dharma. This Dharma is Mind, beyond which there is no Dharma; and this Mind is the Dharma, beyond which there is no mind. Mind in itself is not mind, yet neither is it no-mind. To say that Mind is no-mind implies something existent. Let there be a silent understanding and no more. Away with all thinking and explaining. Then we may say that the Way of Words has been cut off and movements of the mind eliminated. This Mind is the pure Buddha-Source inherent in all men. All wriggling beings possessed of sentient life and all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas are of this one substance and do not differ. Differences arise from wrong-thinking only and lead to the creation of all kinds of karma.

Our original Buddha-nature is, in highest truth, devoid of any atom of objectivity. It is void, omnipresent, silent, pure; it is glorious and mysterious peaceful joy—and that is all. Enter deeply into it by awaking to it yourself. That which is before you is it, in all its fullness, utterly complete. There is naught beside. Even if you go through all the stages of a bodhisattva's progress towards Buddhahood, one by one: when at last, in a single flash you attain to full realization, you will only be realizing the Buddha-nature, which has been with you all the time; and by all the foregoing stages you will have added to it nothing at all. You will come to look upon those eons of work and achievement as no better than unreal actions performed in a dream. That is why the Tathāgata said: "I truly attained nothing from complete, unexcelled Enlightenment. Had there been anything attained, Dipankara Buddha would not have made the prophecy concerning me." He also said: "This Dharma is absolutely without distinctions, neither high nor

1. This quotation refers to the *Diamond Sutra*, as do many of the others either directly or indirectly. Dipankara Buddha, during a former life of Gautama Buddha, prophesied that he would one day attain to Buddhahood!

low, and its name is Bodhi." It is pure Mind, which is the source of everything and which, whether appearing as sentient beings or as Buddhas, as the rivers and mountains of the world which has form, as that which is formless, or as penetrating the whole universe, is absolutely without distinctions, there being no such entities as selfness and otherness.

Q: From all you have just said, Mind is the Buddha; but it is not clear as to what sort of mind is meant by this "Mind which is the Buddha."

A: How many minds have you got?

Q: But is the Buddha the ordinary mind or the enlightened mind?

A: Where on earth do you keep your "ordinary mind" and your "enlightened mind?"

Q: In the teaching of the Three Vehicles it is stated that there are both. Why does Your Reverence deny it?

A: In the teaching of the Three Vehicles it is clearly explained that the ordinary and enlightened minds are illusions. You don't understand. All this clinging to the idea of things existing is to mistake vacuity for the truth. How can such conceptions not be illusory? Being illusory, they hide Mind from you. If you would only rid yourselves of the concepts of ordinary and enlightened, you would find that there is no other Buddha than the Buddha in your own Mind. When Bodhidharma came from the West, he just pointed out that the substance of which all men are composed is the Buddha. You people go on misunderstanding; you hold to concepts such as "ordinary" and "enlightened," directing your thoughts outwards where they gallop about like horses! All this amounts to beclouding your own minds! So I tell you Mind is the Buddha. As soon as thought or sensation arises, you fall into dualism. Beginningless time and the present moment are the same. There is no this and no that. To understand this truth is called compete and unexcelled enlightenment.

Q: Upon what doctrine does Your Reverence base these words?

A: Why seek a doctrine? As soon as you have a doctrine, you fall into dualistic thought.

Q: Just now you said that the beginningless past and the present are the same. What do you mean by that?

A: It is just because of your seeking that you make a difference between them. If you were to stop seeking, how could there be any difference between them?

Q: If they are not different, why did you employ separate terms for them?

A: If you hadn't mentioned ordinary and enlightened, who would have bothered to say such things? Just as those categories have no real existence, so Mind is not really "mind." And, as both Mind and those categories are really illusions, wherever can you hope to find anything?

If you would spend all your time—walking, standing, sitting or lying down—learning to halt the concept-forming activities of your own mind, you could be sure of ultimately attaining the goal. Since your strength is insufficient, you might not be able to transcend *samsāra* by a single leap; but, after five or ten years, you would surely have made a good beginning and be able to make further progress spontaneously. It is because you are not that sort of man that you feel obliged to employ your mind “studying dhyāna” and “studying the Way.” What has all that got to do with Buddhism? So it is said that all the Tathāgata taught was just to convert people; it was like pretending yellow leaves are real gold just to stop the flow of a child’s tears; it must by no means be regarded as though it were ultimate truth. If you take it for truth, you are no member of our sect; and what bearing can it have on your original substance? So the sutra says: “What is called supreme perfect wisdom implies that there is really nothing whatever to be attained.” If you are also able to understand this, you will realize that the Way of the Buddhas and the Way of devils are equally wide of the mark. The original pure, glistening universe is neither square nor round, big nor small; it is without any such distinctions as long and short, it is beyond attachment and activity; ignorance and enlightenment. You must see clearly that there is really nothing at all—no humans and no Buddhas. The great chilocosms, numberless as grains of sand, are mere bubbles. All wisdom and all holiness are but streaks of lightning. None of them have the reality of Mind. The Dharmakāya, from ancient times until today, together with the Buddhas and Ancestors, is One. How can it lack a single hair of anything? Even if you understand this, you must make the most strenuous efforts. Throughout this life, you can never be certain of living long enough to take another breath.

FROM THE WAN-LING RECORD

Q: But what if in previous lives I have behaved like Kalirāja, slicing the limbs from living men?

A: The holy sages tortured by him represent your own Mind, while Kalirāja symbolizes that part of you which goes out *seeking*. Such unkingly behaviour is called lust for personal advantage. If you students of the Way, without making any attempt to live virtuously, just want to make a study of everything you perceive, then how are you different from him? By allowing your gaze to linger on a form, you wrench out the eyes of a sage [yourself]. And when you linger upon a sound, you slice off the ears of a sage—thus it is with all your senses and with cognition, for their varied perceptions are called slicers.

Q: When we meet all suffering with sagelike patience and avoid all mind-slicing perceptions, that which suffers with resignation surely cannot be the One Mind, for that cannot be subject to the endurance of pain.

A: You are one of those people who force the Unbecoming into conceptual molds, such as the *concept* of patient suffering or the *concept* of seeking nothing outside yourself. Thereby you do yourself violence!

Q: When the holy sages were dismembered, were they conscious of pain; and, if among them there were no entities capable of suffering, who or what did suffer?

A: If you are not suffering pain now, what is the point of chiming in like that?

During his travels, our Master paid a visit to Nan-ch’üan. One day at dinner-time, he took his bowl and seated himself opposite Nan-ch’üan’s high chair. Noticing him there, Nan-ch’üan stepped down to receive him and asked: “How long has Your Reverence been following the Way?”

“Since before the era of Bhishma Rāja,” came the reply.¹

“Indeed?” exclaimed Nan-ch’üan. “It seems that Master Ma has a worthy grandson here.” Our Master then walked quietly away.

A few days later, when our Master was going out, Nan-ch’üan remarked: “You are a huge man, so why wear a hat of such ridiculous size?”

“Ah, well,” replied our Master. “It contains vast numbers of chilocosms.”

“Well, what of me?” inquired Nan-ch’üan, but the Master put on his hat and walked off.

Once, when our Master had just dismissed the first of the daily assemblies at the Kai-yuan Monastery near Hung-chou, I [P’ei Hsiu] happened to enter its precincts. Presently I noticed a wall-painting and, by questioning the monk in charge of the monastery’s administration, learnt that it portrayed a certain famous monk.

“Indeed?” I said. “Yes, I can see his likeness before me, but where is the man himself?” My question was received in silence.

So I remarked: “But surely there *are* Zen monks here in this temple, aren’t there?”

“Yes,” replied the monastery administrator, “*there is one.*”

After that, I requested an audience with the Master and repeated to him my recent conversation.

“P’ei Hsiu!” cried the Master.

“Sir!” I answered respectfully.

“Where are you?”

Realizing that no reply was possible to such a question, I hastened to ask our Master to re-enter the hall and continue his sermon.

¹ This translates that he had been upon the Way many eons before the present world cycle began.

Chao-chou

(778-897)



In a time when human life expectancy was considerably shorter than it is today, many Ch'an masters enjoyed remarkable longevity—but none to compare with the 120-year span of Chao-chou Ts'ung-shen. The Methuselah of Ch'an began his practice early, seeking out Nan-ch'üan in his mountain-top retreat while still an unordained novice of seventeen. Chao-chou accompanied Nan-ch'üan when he accepted Lu Hsüan's invitation to head a monastery and continued his training there until the master's death in 834, when Chao-chou was fifty-seven. After the three-year period of mourning prescribed by Chinese culture, he wandered on pilgrimage for two decades before taking up residence at Kuan-yin Temple in the northern city and district that gave him the name Chao-chou. It must have been nice to rest his feet, but at eighty, he still had a forty-year teaching career ahead of him.

From this point on, people came to *him* rather than the other way around—and they came in large numbers, many of them from great distances. Two things drew them besides the teacher himself. The city boasted a stone bridge erected in the first or second century (and still standing today) that his compatriots regarded as one of the world's engineering wonders. In addition, the city's location made it a way station for travelers destined for Mt. Wu-i'ai, revered by Buddhists as the abode of Mañjuśrī, the Bodhisattva of Great Wisdom. Two hundred monasteries were built there, of which fifty-eight remain even now. References both to the bridge and to Wu-i'ai occur repeatedly in Chao-chou's record.

Sightseers often feel disappointed by much-ballyhooped attractions—by the discrepancy, that is, between expectation and reality—and it was no different in ninth-century China. One monk came to the master and said that he had heard of the stone bridge of Chao-chou for a long time, but now had come and found just a simple wooden bridge. "You've only seen the simple wooden bridge," responded Chao-chou. "You haven't seen the stone bridge." When the monk then asked what the stone bridge was, Chao-chou answered, "Donkeys cross, horses cross."

This exchange exemplifies the "Ch'an of lips and tongue" for which the venerable master became known. What began as a complaint about the bridge—and, by implication, about Chao-chou himself—he deftly transformed into a direct presentation of the subtle bridge of Mind, over which not just donkeys and horses but all things pass. Speaking to his assembly one day, Chao-chou declared, "When I teach, I go directly to the core of the matter. If you saw I should

use the various techniques to fulfill your various needs, [you should] go to those who employ all the methods and teach all the doctrines." Plain speech was his way, and teachers ever since have expressed awe at his ability to illumine the great matter with a few ordinary words suited perfectly to the situation.

Chao-chou did not try to impress the crowd or even the high and mighty. At least two governors and various other officials called on him, offering support, but unlike Kuei-shan and Huang-po, he declined improvement or expansion of his small, rundown temple. In matters of social rank, Chao-chou consciously stood the norms on their heads: when people of high status came, he received them sitting where he was, but when people of low status came, he got up and went to meet them outside the temple gate.

Noteworthy in this connection is the unusually large number of women who appear in his record, most of them in settings outside the temple compound. Men still predominate numerically, but Chao-chou seems either to have appealed more to female students or to have made himself more accessible to them than did other T'ang-dynasty masters. The women he met seem well equipped for the encounter:

When Chao-chou was outside of the monastery one day, he came across an old woman carrying a basket. He immediately asked, "Where are you going?"

The old woman said, "I'm on my way to steal Chao-chou's bamboo shoots."

Chao-chou said, "What will you do if you run into Chao-chou?"

The old woman came up to Chao-chou and gave him a slap.

Eloquent and accessible though he was, Chao-chou left no successors who could meet Pai-chang's standard of bettering their master, and his line—indeed, the entire line of Nan-ch'üan—petered out after just a few more generations. Some commentators suggest that Chao-chou's "flavorless words" were too subtle for disciples to apprehend or to equal. Perhaps the stream of inquirers through the temple, together with his efforts outside the gate, made it impossible to give deserving students the sort of close and sustained training that Chao-chou had received from Nan-ch'üan. In any case, the old wizard's words spread far and wide, influencing all five houses of Ch'an in their formative stages, and they continue to befuddle and delight practitioners today. 88

FROM THE TRANSMISSION OF THE LAMP

Master Ts'ung-shen of the Kuan-yin Temple of Chao-chou was a native of Hsiao County of Ts'ao State. His family name was Ho. While still a young boy his head was shaved as a novice under a teacher of Hu-i'ung Temple of that state. Before he accepted the precepts he went to Ch'ih-yang to study Ch'an under Master Nan-ch'üan.

When he arrived, Nan-ch'üan was lying down and asked him, "Where have you come from lately?"

Ts'ung-shen replied, "I have just come from Shui-hsiang Temple."

Nan-ch'üan asked, "Have you seen the famous statue [of the Buddha there]?"

He said, "I have seen no celebrated image; I see only a reclining [Buddha]."

Nan-ch'üan asked, "Are you a novice under a master, or without a master?"

He replied, "I am a novice with a master."

Nan-ch'üan demanded, "Where is your master?"

Ts'ung-shen said, "The midwinter cold is now very severe. I am so happy to see you enjoying such good health, Master."

Nan-ch'üan recognized him as a promising vessel [of the dharma] and admitted him into his room for training in Ch'an.

On another occasion Ts'ung-shen asked, "What is the Tao?"

Nan-ch'üan replied, "Your everyday mind is the Tao."

He asked, "Can one reach towards it?"

Nan-ch'üan answered, "If you try to reach towards it, you will miss it."

Ts'ung-shen argued: "If I do not try to reach it, how can I know the Tao?"

Nan-ch'üan said, "The Tao has nothing to do with knowing it or not knowing it. Knowing it is merely deluded consciousness, and not knowing it is but nondifferentiation. When you enter the real Tao without doubt, it will be like the great sky, the vastness itself. How could it be right to argue within oneself whether it is right or wrong?"

One day Ts'ung-shen asked, "Where should he take rest who knows that he has it?"

Nan-ch'üan replied, "He should become a buffalo at the foot of the mountain."

Ts'ung-shen thanked him for this instruction, and Nan-ch'üan remarked, "In the middle of last night the moon appeared at the window."

Ts'ung-shen was made responsible for the fire at the monastery. One day he set fire to some wood and fastened the door; the smoke billowed up inside the roof.

Then he yelled, "Help! Fire! Help! Fire!"

When all the monks came rushing up, he shouted out, "If anyone can say a word of Ch'an I will open the door."

Not one of the monks made an answer, but Nan-ch'üan passed the lock to him through the window and Ts'ung-shen opened the door.

The Master was planning a visit to Wu-t'ai [sometimes called Ching-liang: a sacred mountain dedicated to Marjushri and his golden lion]. Another monk wrote a poem to discourage him from going. It read:

What green mountain anywhere is not a place of training?

Why bother to trudge with a staff to Mt. Ching-liang?

Even if the Golden Lion reveals itself in the clouds,

This is not auspicious when looked at with the true eye.

The Master asked him, "What is the true eye?" The monk could find no answer.

After the Master had poured the influence of his Tao over the northern land, he was invited to live in Kuan-yin Temple of Chao-chou.

Mourning the dais in the dharma hall, the Master delivered this sermon to the congregation: "I feel as though a clear crystal is held in my hand. When a Mongolian comes before me, a Mongolian appears; when a Chinese man comes before me, a Chinese appears. I hold up a blade of grass to make use of the golden-bodied Buddha, sixteen feet high, and I hold up a golden-bodied Buddha, sixteen feet high, to make use of the blade of grass. The Buddha is distress and distress is the Buddha."

There was a monk present who said, "I wonder whose distress is the Buddha."

The Master replied, "The Buddha distresses himself for the sake of all other people."

The monk asked, "How can he get rid of it?"

The Master said, "Why should he get rid of it?"

When Master Chao-chou was sweeping the floor, a man observed, "You are a good Ch'an master. How is it that dust accumulates?"

The Master said, "It comes from outside."

The man said, "This is a pure clean monastery; how could there be specks of dust?"

The Master exclaimed, "Here comes another one!"

A monk on his way to visit Wu-t'ai Monastery asked an old woman, "Which way should I go for Mt. Wu-t'ai?"

The old woman answered, "Walk straight on."

The monk went on, whereupon the woman remarked, "He, too, has gone that way."

The monk mentioned this incident to the Master, who said, "Wait a little, I will inquire from the lady."

Next day the Master went out and asked the woman, "Which way must I follow for Mt. Wu-t'ai?"

She replied, "Walk straight on." As the Master was going, she remarked, "He, too, has gone that way."

The Master returned to the monastery and said to the monks, "I have tested the woman for you."

When the Master had gone out from the monastery, he met a woman who asked, "Where do you live, Venerable Sir?" He replied, "In the *hsi* of the Eastern Monastery of Chao-chou." The woman said nothing.

When he returned to the monastery, the Master asked the monks, "Which meaning of *hsi* should be applied?"

Some suggested *hsi* meaning "west" and others insisted on *hsi* meaning "dwelling."

The Master remarked, "You should all be judges in the administrative office."

The monks inquired, "O Master, why do you say that?"

The Master replied, "You are all literate."

A monk asked, "What is the treasure in the bag?"

The Master replied, "Keep your mouth closed."

A newly arrived monk had an interview with the Master and was asked, "Where do you come from?" He replied, "From the South, Sir."

The Master said, "Every form of Buddha-dharma is preserved in the South. What do you expect to gain by coming here?"

The monk said, "How could the dharma differ in the north or south?"

The Master remarked, "Even if you have come from Master Hsiieh-feng or Master Yin-chü, you still carry a board on one shoulder [have a one-sided view]."

A monk asked, "What is the Buddha?"

The Master replied, "The one in the shrine."

The monk protested, "But isn't the one in the shrine a clay figure made from mud?"

"Yes, that's right," said the Master.

"Then what is the Buddha?" asked the monk.

The Master said again, "The one in the shrine."

The monk asked, "What is my self-being?"

The Master said, "Have you had your breakfast?"

The monk replied, "Yes, I have."

The Master said, "Then wash your bowl."

All of a sudden the monk was enlightened!

When a monk was leaving the monastery, the Master asked him, "Where do you intend to go?"

The monk replied, "I am going to Hsiieh-feng Monastery."

The Master said, "If [I-'s un of] Hsiieh-feng suddenly asks you, 'What message has your teacher?' how will you answer?"

The monk confessed, "I could not say, Please, Master, tell me."

The Master told him, "If it is winter, say 'How cold it is!' If it is summer, say 'How hot it is!' Then he continued, 'Hsiieh-feng may also ask you what the ultimate matter is.'"

The monk said, "I could not answer that."

The Master advised him, "Simply confess that you are not a messenger although you have really come from Chao-chou."

When the monk visited Hsiieh-feng, everything happened according to plan.

Hsiieh-feng remarked, "This can only have been devised by Chao-chou."

A monk asked, "What is the message of Bodhidharma?"

The Master knocked the leg of the Ch'an seat.

The monk queried, "Is it not the one thing only?"

The Master said, "If that is so, take it away."

Someone asked, "Master, will you enter into Hell?"

The Master answered, "[I'll be] the first to enter it."

The man said, "Why should a great and good Ch'an master enter Hell?"

The Master said, "Who would transform you through the teaching if I had not entered it?"

One day the Prince Governor of [the] Prefecture came with the royal princes and scholars to visit the temple. Remaining seated, the Master inquired, "Great Prince, have you understanding of this?"

The Prince replied, "No, I cannot grasp it."

The Master said, "Since my youth I have kept a vegetarian diet and my body is already aged. Even if I see people, I have no strength to descend from the Ch'an seat."

The Prince felt great admiration for the Master. The next day he sent a general to the Master with a message, and the Master came down from the seat in order to receive him.

Afterwards the Master's attendant said, "Master, you did not come down from the Ch'an seat even when you saw the great Prince coming to visit you. Why did you descend from it for the general who came to see you today?"

The Master said, "The general is not your attendant. When a superior

class of man comes, I deal with him from the Ch'an seat; when a middle grade of man comes, I get down to deal with him; and for dealings with men of the low grade, I step outside the temple gate. . . ."

The profound teaching of the Master spread widely across the country, and whenever people heard the name of Chao-chou they were all inspired to surrender themselves.

On November 2nd in the fourth year of Ch'ien-ning of T'ang [897], the Master laid himself down on his right side and passed away. He was 120 years old.

Once a man had asked the Master, "How old are you?" and he had replied, "There are numberless beads on the string of the rosary."

Later he received the posthumous title of Chen-chi Ta-shih [Great Master of Extreme Truth].

Te-shan

(780-865)



Te-shan Hsüan-ch'ien went down in annals of Ch'an as the unlikely savior of the line of Shih-t'ou, the person who kept the line alive at a time when it had begun to weaken, thus making possible the houses of Yün-men and Fa-yen. No one would have guessed this outcome when he set out for southern China in the first decades of the ninth century. Scholarly by nature, he had made his living until then as a Dharma lecturer, specializing in the brief text whose title, *The Diamond-Cutter Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, is usually abbreviated to the *Diamond Sutra*. Surnamed Chou, he knew this ancient Indian scripture so well and spoke about it so frequently that people had nicknamed him Diamond Chou.

Like Tsung-mi, Po Chü-i, and many others hearing from afar about the Ch'an explosion that had occurred West of the River and South of the Lake, Te-shan (J., Tokusan) evidently felt concerned that the Dharma he dearly prized was being misrepresented. For a century or so, Hui-neng's descendants had advertised the *Diamond Sutra* as the Sixth Ancestor's favorite text, so Diamond Chou may have perceived these developments in the south as a professional affront or challenge. *The Blue Cliff Record* depicts him charging off in a considerable huff—and quickly getting his compeupance at the hands of a little-known pair of "southern devils," an unnamed wise woman and the master Lung-t'an Ch'ung-hsin.

The latter was a Dharma grandson of Shih-t'ou, the former perhaps a student beyond the monastery walls. The question that she posed to Diamond Chou about his beloved sutra manifested the southern Ch'an approach of "direct pointing to the mind" and opened him up for the later ministrations of Lung-t'an (J., Ryūtan). Like Yung-chia, Te-shan is purported to have spent a single night under his teacher's roof, but in his case, the result was a complete religious turnaround, not just the confirmation of a prior realization.

The larger-than-life quality of this account marks it as a matter of mythos rather than of sober history, especially if one contrasts it with Chao-chou's forty years of training under Nan-ch'üan—or with the difficulty that we moderns have in changing our ways. Yet mythos and history rise, inevitably, from the same sources and hold much in common. Regard it as a mole or a pearl or a callous from bowing, but there probably was something unusual in the center of Huang-po's forehead. Likewise, the abrupt and thoroughgoing character of Te-shan's conversion experience, if we may use that term, probably has a basis in

Certainly it has doctrinal underpinnings going back to eighth-century debates about sudden and gradual enlightenment, but Ch'an writers have long remarked a psychological consistency in reports of Te-shan's life, a pattern that lends them a measure of historical credibility. In virtually every image the records give us, he demonstrates a peculiarly unyielding, even absolutist temperament. In his performance as a teacher, this characteristic expressed itself in an inclination either to keep silent or to apply his staff to students' backs, declaring "If you say a word, you get thirty blows. If you don't say a word, you get thirty blows." Whatever we make of this, the man who came to be called the Master of the Thirty Blows had an odd and successful career, capped with the development of two superb Dharma heirs, Yen-t'ou and Hsüeh-feng (Chapter 19). 88

FROM THE BLUE CLIFF RECORD

Originally Te-shan was a lecturing monk, expounding the *Diamond-Cutter Scripture* in western Shu [Szechwan]. According to what it says in that teaching, in the process of the knowledge attained after diamond-like concentration, one studies the majestic conduct of Buddhas for a thousand eons and studies the refined practices of Buddhas for ten thousand eons before finally fulfilling Buddhahood. On the other hand, the "southern devils" at this time were saying "Mind itself is Buddha." Consequently Te-shan became very incensed and went traveling on foot, carrying some commentaries; he went straight to the South to destroy this crew of devils. You see from how aroused he got what a fierce keen fellow he was.

When he first got to Li-chou [in Hunan], he met an old woman selling fried cakes by the roadside; he put down his commentaries to buy some refreshment to lighten his mind. The old woman said, "What is that you're carrying?" Te-shan said, "Commentaries on the *Diamond-Cutter Sutra*." The old woman said, "I have a question for you: if you can answer it I'll give you some fried cakes to refresh your mind; if you can't answer, you'll have to go somewhere else to buy." Te-shan said, "Just ask." The old woman said, "The *Diamond-Cutter Sutra* says, 'Past mind can't be grasped, present mind can't be grasped, future mind can't be grasped'; which mind does the learned monk desire to refresh?" Te-shan was speechless. The old woman directed him to go call on Lung-t'an.

As soon as Te-shan crossed the threshold he said, "Long have I heard of Lung-t'an [Dragon Pond], but now that I've arrived here, there's no pond to see and no dragon appears." Master Lung-t'an came out from behind a screen and said, "You have really arrived at Lung-t'an." Te-shan bowed and withdrew. During the night Te-shan entered Lung-t'an's room and stood in attendance till late at night. Lung-t'an said, "Why don't you go?" Te-shan bade farewell, lifted up the curtain, and went out; he saw that it was dark outside, so he turned around and said, "It's dark outside." Lung-t'an lit a paper lantern and handed it to Te-shan; as soon as

Immediately he bowed to Lung-t'an, who said, "What have you seen that you bow?" Te-shan answered, "From now on I will never again doubt what's on the tongues of the venerable teaching masters of the world."

The next day Lung-t'an went up into the teaching hall and said, "There is one among you with teeth like a forest of swords and a mouth like a bowl of blood; even if you hit him with a staff, he wouldn't turn back. Another day he will ascend to the summit of a solitary peak and establish my path there." Then Te-shan took all his commentaries in front of the teaching hall and raised a torch over them, declaring, "Even to plumb all abstruse locutions is like a single hair in the great void; to exhaust the essential workings of the world is like a single drop of water cast into a vast valley." Then he burned the commentaries.

Later he heard the Kuei-shan's teaching was flourishing, so he traveled to Kuei-shan to meet him as an adept. Without even untying his bundle, he went straight to the teaching hall, where he walked back and forth from east to west and west to east, looked around, and said, "Nothing, no one." Then he went out. Tell me, what was his meaning? Wasn't he crazy?

This old fellow Kuei-shan still was not taken in by that [Te-shan]; anyone but Kuei-shan would have been crushed by him.

On his way out Te-shan got as far as the monastery gate, but then he said to himself, "Still, I shouldn't be so coarse." He wanted to bring out his guts, his innermost heart, in a Dharma battle with Kuei-shan; so he went back in with full ceremony to meet him. As Kuei-shan sat there, Te-shan lifted up his sitting mat and said, "Teacher!" Kuei-shan reached for his whisk; Te-shan then shouted, shook his sleeves, and left. How extraordinary!

Te-shan turned his back on the teaching hall, put on his straw sandals, and departed. Tell me, what was his meaning?

Afterwards, this old fellow [Kuei-shan] was unhurried; when evening came he finally asked the head monk, "Where is that newcomer who just came?" The head monk replied, "At that time, he turned his back on the teaching hall, put on his straw sandals, and left." Kuei-shan said, "Hereafter that lad will go up to the summit of a solitary peak, build himself a grass hut, and go on scolding the Buddhas and reviling the Ancestors."

FROM THE TRANSMISSION OF THE LAMP

In the beginning of the T'ai-chung era [847-860], Hsueh Yen-wang, the governor of Wu-ling [in Hunan], restored the monastery on Mt. Te and called it the Meditation Abode of Ancient Worthies. He was going to look for a man of knowledge to dwell there, when he heard of the master's practice of the Way. Though he repeatedly invited him, the master did not come down from the

the master of having violated the laws regarding tea and salt. Having taken the master into his domain, he looked up to him with reverence and insisted that he dwell there, and reveal the way of the sect.

In the hall, the master said, "There is nothing in the self, so do not seek falsely; what is attained by false seeking is not real attainment. You just have nothing in your mind, and no mind in things; then you will be empty and spiritual, tranquil and sublime. Any talk of beginning or end would all be self-deception. The slightest entanglement of thought is the foundation of the three mires [hell, animality, hungry ghosthood]; a momentarily aroused feeling is a hindrance for ten thousand eons. The name 'sage' and the label 'ordinary man' are merely empty sounds; exceptional form and mean appearance are both illusions. If you want to seek them, how can you avoid trouble? Even if you despise them, they still become a great source of anxiety. In the end there is no benefit."

Hsüeh-feng asked, "In the immemorial custom of the sect, what doctrine is used to teach people?" The master said, "Our sect has no words; in reality there is no doctrine to be given to mankind."

Yen-t'ou heard of this and said, "The old man of Mt. Te has a spine as strong as iron; it cannot be broken. Even so, when it comes to the way of expounding the teaching, he still lacks something."

Before his death he said to his disciples, "Grasping emptiness and pursuing echoes wearies your mind and spirit. When awakened from a dream, you realize it was false; after all, what matter is there?" When he finished speaking, he died sitting at rest.

Lin-chi

(D. 867?)



Just as Te-shan is known for his blows and Chao-chou for his simple eloquence, Lin-chi I-hsüan is known for his shout—a roar sounding something like KHAT! that he issued as a presentation of Buddha-nature. While each of these reputations is deserved to a degree, they are grossly reductionistic. Lin-chi's below was no more than a small part of his rich, inventive, and highly effective teaching. His lively and extensive discourse record undercuts the popular image of him as a sort of Dharma thug, displaying his mastery of Mahāyāna sutras and his creativity in utilizing and interpreting them. He did shout at, beat, and berate his students, but he also originated some of the most sophisticated, even lovely, expressions of the fundamental matter ever to appear in Ch'an. And it was all to the same end: to introduce us to, as he put it, "the true person of no rank who is constantly going in and out the gateways of your face."

Born and raised in the north, Lin-chi (J., Rinza) traveled far south to study with Huang-po and eventually received transmission from him. According to Lin-chi's record, three years passed before he even dared to approach Huang-po with a question, and when he did, he got no more than a taste of the old master's stick. Frustrated, supposing his way was blocked by bad karma, he decided to leave. Huang-po referred him to another teacher, Kao-an Ta-yü, who is reported to have brought him to awakening with a few well-chosen phrases. Lin-chi continued his training with Huang-po for an unspecified period thereafter, making at least one excursion to Mt. Kuei, where he had exchanges with both Kuei-shan and Yang-shan. He also studied with Te-shan at least for a while:

The Master [Lin-chi] was standing in attendance at Te-shan's side. Te-shan said, "I'm tired today!"

The Master said, "What's this old fellow doing talking in his sleep?"

Te-shan struck the Master a blow.

The Master grabbed the chair Te-shan was sitting on and turned it over.

Te-shan let the matter end there.

Later, Lin-chi sent one of his best students to check on Te-shan, and Ch'an analysts link the two masters closely for reasons of style and disposition as well as for

Lin-chi returned north to teach at a small temple called Lin-chi-yüan, the Monastery Overlooking the Ford, which was not far from the city of Chao-chou and likewise on the route to Mt. Wu-t'ai. Though older than Lin-chi, Chao-chou had not yet hung up his traveling staff at Kuan-yin Temple and paid a call before he did. Lin-chi's record says he was washing his feet when his visitor arrived, but Chao-chou put his question anyway, inquiring, "What's the meaning of Bodhi-dharma's coming from India?"

"I happen to be washing my feet just now," Lin-chi replied. Chao-chou came closer and made as if listening intently. "In that case, I'll ladle out another dipper of dirty water!" exclaimed Lin-chi. Chao-chou promptly took leave.

Scholars cannot pin down dates for Lin-chi, but he probably moved to the temple by the ford in about 850, at the age of about forty. By that time, political changes had created new circumstances in the north, helping open the way there for southern Ch'an. Northern Buddhist institutions had been hurt by the An Lu-shan Rebellion (755-763), and they suffered outright repression in the early 840s, climaxing with the all-out Hui-ch'ang persecution of 845. During this latter period, monks and nuns were defrocked en masse, some even executed, and thousands of monasteries and temples were destroyed. Southern Ch'an was largely protected from these developments by its distance from the capital, its relatively high degree of economic independence, its good standing with local officials, and a weakening of imperial authority that had occurred after 755. This last factor gave provincial rulers increased latitude to exercise their own prerogative, and the officials who welcomed both Lin-chi and Chao-chou to their new positions undoubtedly were doing exactly that.

Lin-chi's teaching was cut short by his death in 866 or early 867, when he was in his middle fifties. Despite his relatively brief tenure and isolated location, he had twenty-one successors and received the posthumous imperial honors that were becoming customary for noted Ch'an masters. Among his heirs, Hsing-hua Ts'ung-chiang established the lasting line that came to be thought of as the house of Lin-chi and that remains alive today, best known in the Rinzai Zen of Japan. Another successor, San-sheng Hui-ian, compiled the master's lectures and dialogue into a sparkling record that spread Lin-chi's influence far and wide. 88

FROM THE RECORD OF LIN-CHI

The Master instructed the group, saying: "Followers of the Way, the Dharma of the buddhas calls for no special undertakings. Just act ordinary, without trying to do anything particular. Move your bowels, piss, get dressed, eat your rice, and if you get tired, then lie down. Fools may laugh at me, but wise men will know what I mean.

"A man of old said 'People who try to do something about what is outside

themselves are nothing but blockheads.' If, wherever you are, you take the role of host, then whatever spot you stand in will be a true one. Then whatever circumstances surround you, they can never pull you away. Even if you're faced with bad karma left over from the past, or the five crimes that bring on the hell of incessant suffering, these will of themselves become the great sea of emancipation."

"Students these days haven't the slightest comprehension of the Dharma. They're like sheep poking with their noses—whatever they happen on they immediately put in their mouths. They can't tell a gentleman from a lackey, can't tell a host from a guest. People like that come to the Way with twisted minds, rushing in wherever they see a crowd. They don't deserve to be called true men who have left the household. All they are in fact is true householders, men of secular life.

"Someone who has left household life must know how to act ordinary and have a true and proper understanding, must know how to tell buddhas from devils, to tell true from sham, to tell common mortals from sages. If they can tell these apart, you can call them true men who have left the household. But if they can't tell a buddha from a devil, then all they've done is leave one household to enter another. You might describe them as living beings who are creating karma. But you could never call them true men who have left the household."

Someone asked, "What do you mean by the true Buddha, the true Dharma, and the true Way? Would you be good enough to explain to us?"

The Master said, "Buddha—this is the cleanness and purity of the mind. The Dharma—this is the shining brightness of the mind. The Way—this is the pure light that is never obstructed anywhere. The three are in fact one. All are empty names and have no true reality."

"Suppose you yearn to be a sage. Sage is just a word, *sage*. There are some types of students who go off to Mt. Wu-t'ai looking for Mañjuśrī. They're wrong from the very start! Mañjuśrī isn't on Mt. Wu-t'ai. Would you like to get to know Mañjuśrī? You here in front of my eyes, carrying out your activities, from first to last never changing, wherever you go never doubting—this is the living Mañjuśrī!

"Your mind that each moment shines with the light of nondiscrimination—wherever it may be, this is the true Samantabhadra. Your mind that each moment is capable of freeing itself from its shackles, everywhere emancipated—this is the

1. From a poem attributed to the eighth-century Ch'an master Ming-tsan, or Lan-tsan, of Mt. Nan-yüeh.

2. The five crimes are usually given as (1) killing one's father, (2) killing one's mother, (3) killing an arhat, (4) doing injury to a buddha, and (5) causing dissension in the Monastic Order. Any one of these condemns the doer to suffer in the *Avichi* hell, the hell of incessant suffering.

3. *Ch'i-chia*, to leave the family or the household life, is the common term in Chinese for becoming a monk or nun.

method of meditating on Kuan-yin.⁴ These three act as host and companion to one another, all three appearing at the same time when they appear, one in three, three in one.⁵ Only when you have understood all this will you be ready to read the scriptural teachings."

Someone asked, "What was Bodhidharma's purpose in coming from the west?"⁶

The Master said, "If he had had a purpose, he wouldn't have been able to save even himself!"

The questioner said, "If he had no purpose, then how did the Second Ancestor manage to get the Dharma?"

The Master said, "Getting means not getting."

"If it means not getting," said the questioner, "then what do you mean by 'not getting'?"

The Master said, "You can't seem to stop your mind from racing around everywhere seeking something. That's why the Ancestor said, 'Hopeless fellows—using their heads to look for their heads!'⁷ You must right now turn your light around and shine it on yourselves, not go seeking somewhere else. Then you will understand that in body and mind you are no different from the Ancestors and Buddhas, and that there is nothing to do. Do that and you may speak of 'getting the Dharma.'

"Fellow believers, at this time, having found it impossible to refuse, I have been addressing you, putting forth a lot of trashy talk. But make no mistake! In my view, there are in fact no great number of principles to be grasped. If you want to use the thing, then use it. If you don't want to use it, then let it be.

"People here and there talk about the six rules and the ten thousand practices, supposing that these constitute the Dharma of the buddhas.⁸ But I say that these are just adornments of the sect, the trappings of Buddhism. They are not the Dharma of the buddhas. You may observe the fasts and observe the precepts, or carry a dish of oil without spilling it, but if your Dharma-eye is not wide open, then all you're doing is running up a big debt.⁹ One day you'll have to pay for all the food wasted on you! . . .

4. The method of calling on the saving power of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, or Kuan-yin, described in chapter 23 of the *Lohan Sutra*.

5. The three bodhisattvas represent wisdom (Mañjuśrī), religious practice (Samantabhadra), and compassion (Kuan-yin). At different times one or the other takes the leading role, with the other two acting as attendants.

6. A standard inquiry in Ch'an practice, similar to the question "What is the basic meaning of Buddhism?"

7. The identity of the Ancestor and source of the quotation are unknown.

8. The ten thousand practices are various kinds of devotional acts.

9. Monks were expected to fast from noon until morning of the following day. The practice of filling a dish with oil and carrying it on the head for a given distance without spilling any is . . . an exercise for cultivating concentration of mind.

"As for those who go off to live all alone on a solitary peak, eating only one meal a day at the hour of dawn, sitting in meditation for long periods without lying down, performing circumambulations six times a day—such persons are all just creating karma.¹⁰ Then there are those who cast away their head and eyes, marrow and brains, their domains and cities, wives and children, elephants, horses, the seven precious things, throwing them all away.¹¹ People who think in that way are all inflicting pain on their body and mind, and in consequence will invite some kind of painful retribution. Better to do nothing, to be simple, direct, with nothing mixed in.

"Followers of the Way, don't take the Buddha to be some sort of ultimate goal. In my view he's more like the hole in a privy. Bodhisattvas and *arhats* are all so many *caryages* and chains, things for fettering people. . . .

"Followers of the Way, there is no Buddha to be gained, and the Three Vehicles, the five natures, the teaching of the perfect and immediate enlightenment are all simply medicines to cure diseases of the moment.¹² None have any true reality. Even if they had, they would still all be mere shams, placards proclaiming superficial matters, so many words lined up, pronouncements of such kind.

"Followers of the Way, even if you can understand a hundred sutras and treatises, you're not as good as one plain monk who does nothing. As soon as you acquire a little of such understanding, you start treating others with scorn and contempt, vying and struggling with them like so many *asuras*,¹³ blinded by the ignorance of self and others, forever creating karma that will send you to hell. You're like the monk Good Star who understood all the twelve divisions of the teachings but fell into hell alive, the earth unwilling to tolerate him.¹⁴ Better to do nothing, to leave off all that.

When you get hungry, eat your rice;
when you get sleepy, close your eyes.

10. Circumambulating a statue of the Buddha and paying obedience to it at six fixed times, three in the daytime and three at night.

11. As the ruler did who is described in chapter 12 of the *Lohan Sutra*. The seven precious things in the *Lohan Sutra* are gold, silver, lapis lazuli, seashell, agate, pearl, and carnelian.

12. The Three Vehicles [are the three main streams of Buddhism]. The five natures, a doctrine of the Fa-hsiang school, divides human beings into five groups according to their innate capacity for enlightenment. The teaching of the perfect and immediate enlightenment is the One Vehicle doctrine of Mahāyāna Buddhism, especially as expounded in the T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen schools.

13. [The *asuras* are fighting titans, one of the six forms of being in classical Buddhism, here (as customary in Ch'an) interpreted as representing human experience.—Eds.]

14. Good Star, or Sunakshara, was a disciple of the Buddha who was proficient at reciting the scriptures but could not understand their true meaning. As a result of his mistaken views he fell into hell while still alive. (See Chapter 12 of the *Nirvāna Sūtra*.)

Fools may laugh at me,
but wise men will know what I mean.¹⁵

"Followers of the Way, don't search for anything in written words. The exertions of your mind will tire it out, you'll gulp cold air and gain nothing.¹⁶ Better to realize that at every moment all is conditioned and without true birth, to go beyond the bodhisattvas of the Three Vehicle provisional doctrines.

"Fellow believers, don't dawdle your days away! In the past, before I had come to see things right, there was nothing but blackness all around me. But I knew that I shouldn't let the time slip by in vain, and so, belly all afire, mind in a rush, I raced all over in search of the Way. Later I was able to get help from others, so that finally I could do as I'm doing today, talking with you followers of the Way. As followers of the Way, let me urge you not to do what you are doing just for the sake of clothing and food. See how quickly the world goes by! A good friend and teacher is hard to find, as rarely met with as the *ndambara* flower.¹⁷

"You've heard here and there that there's this old fellow Lin-chi, and so you come here intending to confront him in debate and push him to the point where he can't answer. But when I come at students like that with my whole body, their eyes are wide open enough but their mouths can't utter a word. Dumbfounded, they have no idea how to answer me. Then I say to them, 'The trampling of a bull elephant is more than a donkey can stand!'¹⁸

"You go all around pointing to your chest, puffing out your sides, saying, 'I understand Ch'an! I understand the Way!' But when two or three of you turn up here, you're completely helpless. For shame! With that body and mind of yours you go around everywhere flapping your two lips, hoodwinking the village people, but the day will come when you'll taste the iron cudgels of hell! You're not men who have left the household—you belong, all of you, in the realm of the *asuras*!

"Followers of the Way, if you wish to be always in accord with the Dharma, never give way to doubt. Spread it out and it fills the whole Dharma-realm, gather it up and it's tinier than a thread of hair.¹⁹ Its lone brightness gleaming forth, it has never lacked anything. 'The eye doesn't see it, the ear doesn't hear it.'²⁰ What shall we call this thing? A man of old said, 'Say something about a

15. From the poem by Ming-tsan, or Lan-tsan, of Mt. Nan-yüeh.

16. It has been suggested that the person "gulps cold air" because he is reading aloud, though the meaning is uncertain.

17. The *ndambara*, an imaginary plant often mentioned in Buddhist writings, blooms only once in three thousand years.

18. Lin-chi is quoting from the end of chapter 6 of the *Vimalakirti Sutra*.

19. From the *Chieh-kuan lun* by Niu-tou Fa-juang (594-677).

20. From the *I-no-ko* or "Sons of One Alms Bowl" by the Ch'an master Pi-t'i.

thing and already you're off the mark."²¹ You'll just have to see it for yourselves. What other way is there? But there's no end to this talk. Each of you, do your best! Thank you for your trouble."

The Master said to a nun, "Well come, or ill come?"²²

The nun gave a shout.

The Master picked up his stick and said, "Speak then, speak!"

The nun shouted once more.

The Master struck her.

The Master said to Hsing-shan, "How about that white ox on the bare ground?"²³

Hsing-shan said, "Moo, moo!"

The Master said, "Lost your voice?"

Hsing-shan said, "How about you, Reverend?"

The Master said, "This beast!"

One day Constant Attendant Wang called on the Master and together they went to look at the monks' hall.

Constant Attendant Wang said, "This hallful of monks—do they read sutras perhaps?"

The Master said, "No, they don't read sutras."

"Do they perhaps learn how to meditate?" asked the Constant Attendant.

"No, they don't learn how to meditate," said the Master.

The Constant Attendant said, "If they don't read sutras and they don't learn how to meditate, what in fact do they do?"

The Master said, "We're training all of them to become buddhas and Ances-tors."

The Constant Attendant said, "Gold dust may be precious, but if it gets in the eye it can blind.²⁴ What about it?"

The Master said, "And I always thought you were just an ordinary fellow!"

21. The words of Nan-yüeh Hwai-juang (677-744).

22. In early Buddhism, novices entering a monastery were greeted with the words, "Well come, monk!" Lin-chi is playing on the conventional phrase.

23. Hsing-shan is Chien-juang of Hsing-shan in Cho-chou, a Dharma heir of Yin-yen T'an-sheng (780-841). Lin-chi is referring to the parable in chapter 3 of the *Lotus Sutra*, in which a rich man, in order to lure his unwary children out of the burning house where they are playing, offers them a beautiful carriage drawn by a white ox, promising to give it to them after they get out of the house. The burning house represents the realm of delusion or ignorance, the carriage with the white ox is the One Vehicle of the Buddha's teaching as set forth in the *Lotus Sutra*, and the "bare ground" is the area outside the house, the realm of enlightenment.

24. A translation of the Chinese characters of the passage of the burning house is taken

The Master went to see Feng-lin.²⁵ On the way he met an old woman. "Off somewhere?" she asked.

"Off to Feng-lin," the Master said.

"I think you'll find that Feng-lin isn't in right now," the old woman said.

"Off somewhere?" said the Master.

The old woman walked away.

The Master called after her. She turned her head, whereupon the Master walked away.

LIN-CHI'S "FOUR PROCEDURES"

The Master gave an evening lecture, instructing the group as follows: "At times one takes away the person but does not take away the environment. At times one takes away the environment but does not take away the person. At times one takes away both the person and the environment. At times one takes away neither the person nor the environment."²⁶

At that time a monk asked, "What does it mean to take away the person but not take away the environment?"

The Master said, "Warm sun shines forth, spreading the earth with brocade. The little child's hair hangs down, white as silk thread."

The monk asked, "What does it mean to take away the environment but not take away the person?"

The Master said, "The king's commands have spread throughout the realm. Generals beyond the border no longer taste the smoke and dust of battle."

The monk asked, "What does it mean to take away both the person and the environment?"

The Master said, "All word cut off from Ping and Fen—they stand alone, a region apart."²⁷

The monk said, "What does it mean to take away neither the person nor the environment?"

The Master said, "The king ascends his jeweled hall; country oldsters sing their songs."

25. The identity of Feng-lin is not known.

26. *Ching*, the word translated here as "environment," could perhaps better be rendered as "circumstances" or "surroundings" in many contexts, but [Watson] translated it as "environment" throughout because it is such a key concept in Buddhist thought.

27. Ping and Fen are outlying regions in northern China. In Lin-chi's time, local military governors often defied the central government and established their areas as virtually independent states.

Tung-shan

(807-869)



Lin-chi's life coincided almost exactly with that of Tung-shan Liang-chieh. Principal source of the Ch'an house known as Ts'ao-tung (J., Sōtō). Over the next several centuries, the Lin-chi and Ts'ao-tung houses solidified into sects clearly distinguishable by their diverging approaches to practice and, later, by their institutional structures. A rivalry developed between them, especially in Japan, but it seems to have no basis in the lives, words, or methods of their founders. Tung-shan and Lin-chi literally walked the same paths as they took part in the great Dharma free-for-all of the late T'ang period. Their backgrounds, natures, and teaching styles differed, yet they shared a genius for expressing the Way in direct, impromptu exchanges, and both felt a call to synthesize from the ever-growing store of Ch'an teachings and metaphors a few succinct and subtle formulations that future generations came to revere. These include Lin-chi's "Four Procedures" and Tung-shan's "Five Degrees of Honor and Virtue," the final text of this chapter.

Having grown up in far eastern China, Tung-shan journeyed not south but west to reach the flourishing nexus of Ch'an established by Shih-t'ou and Ma-tsu. He visited both Nan-ch'üan and Kuei-shan before settling down to study in earnest with Yün-yen T'an-sheng (780?-841). A Dharma grandson of Shih-t'ou, Yün-yen (J., Ugan) lived in a stone chamber on the mountain that gave him his name. The phrase in Tung-shan's record describing the master's domicile (translated in our selection as "linked caves") indicates a series of interconnected hermit cells hewn in a cliff face; such cells remain not merely in evidence but in active use in China today. The colony of hermits dwelling there constituted Yün-yen's assembly.

This was the right place for Tung-shan to pose the burning question that motivated his search: how can inanimate things teach the Dharma? In one form or another, such questions were in the air: "Does a dog have Buddha-nature?" one of his contemporaries asked Chao-chou, drawing the famous "No" (Ch., *wu*; J., *mu*) that would, within a couple of centuries, come into play as a koan. Tung-shan's record quotes both Kuei-shan and Yün-yen answering his question in the affirmative and citing Mahāyāna sutras in support of their position. But the idea that inanimate things teach the Dharma was a new one, and both masters bent the letter, and probably even the spirit, of the texts they quoted. Later Ch'an firmly resolved this matter in favor of inanimate things both having and expressing

Its doctrinal weaknesses notwithstanding, Yün-yen's teaching on this question evidently sufficed to open young Tung-shan's eyes, for his record continues with a poem expressing what he realized. The word used here is the Chinese for *gāihāi*, but Tung-shan's verse scarcely resembles the *gāihāi*s of old. Rather, it belongs to a new genre of enlightenment poems that arose about this time and soon became a fixture in Ch'an and Zen literature. Such poems were later termed *lōu-chi-chieh* (J., *tokinzei*), which translates as "gāihāi of mutual understanding"¹—poems that reflect a true meeting of minds. The minds involved are those of the student and the teacher but also, implicitly, of the student and all enlightened Dharma ancestors, of mind and Mind.

Tung-shan was just thirty-four when Yün-yen died, and he had already taken leave to continue on pilgrimage. He is said to have practiced after Yün-yen's death with Tao-wu Yüan-chih (J., Dōgō Enchi), who was Yün-yen's brother through ties of both blood and Dharma lineage. Tao-wu's biography puts his demise six years before Yün-yen's, however, so one chronicler or another has obviously erred. In any case, Tung-shan did study further, resting and sharpening his insight through many encounters on the road. A great second awakening occurred one day when he glimpsed his own reflection as he crossed a river, and again he marked the experience with a *gāihāi*, this one manifesting his delight at seeing Yün-yen truly eye to eye, everywhere he looked.

Tung-shan's record contains a number of other poems as well, both long and short, doctrinal and occasional. His doctrinal poems hark back to those of his Dharma ancestor Shih-i'ou, while the occasional verses anticipate the flowering of Ch'an poetry yet to come. His legacy also included twenty-six successors, of whom Ts'ao-shan Pen-chi (Chapter 20) came to be considered co-founder of the Ts'ao-tung house. The only enduring Ts'ao-tung lineage, however, flowed from Yün-chü Tao-ying (J., Ungō Dōyō), who figures more conspicuously in Tung-shan's record than any other successor and developed the widest reputation as a teacher. Tung-shan himself, again like Lin-chi, seems to have risen in prominence after his death, but he was known well enough in his own day to attract correspondence from Po Chü-i and receive the usual imperial honors marking his career.²⁸

FROM THE RECORD OF TUNG-SHAN

The Master, whose personal name was Liang-chieh, was a member of the Yü family of Kuei-chi. Once, as a child, when reading the *Hear Sutra* with his tutor, he came to the line, "There is no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind." He immediately felt his face with his hand, then said to his tutor, "I have eyes, ears, a nose, a tongue, and so on; why does the sutra say they don't exist?"

1. The *Hear Sutra*, an abbreviated Perfection of Wisdom text, is a body of thought central to much of the Mahāyāna tradition. It teaches, in part, the ultimate emptiness of all things, including the phenomenon of the ear. Buddhist sutra teaching.

This took the tutor by surprise, and, recognizing Tung-shan's uniqueness, he said, "I am not capable of being your teacher."

From there the Master went to Wu-hsieh Mountain, where, after making obeisance to Ch'an Master Mo, he took the robe and shaved his head.²⁹ When he was twenty-one he went to Sung Mountain³⁰ and took the Complete Precepts.

[After visiting Nan-ch'üan,] the Master made a visit to Kuei-shan and said to him, "I have recently heard that the National Teacher Chung of Nan-yang³¹ maintains the doctrine that nonsentient beings expound the Dharma.³² I have not yet comprehended the subtleties of this teaching."

Kuei-shan said, "Can you, Acarya, remember the details of what you heard?"

"Yes, I can," said the Master.

"Then why don't you try to repeat it for me?" said Kuei-shan.

The Master began, "A monk asked Hui-chung, 'What sort of thing is the mind of the ancient buddhas?'"³³

"The National Teacher replied, 'It's wall and tile rubble.'"³⁴

"Wall and tile rubble! Isn't that something nonsentient?' asked the monk.

"It is," replied the National Teacher.

"The monk said, 'And yet it can expound the Dharma?'"

"It is constantly expounding it, radiantly expounding it, expounding it without ceasing," replied the National Teacher.

2. Wu-hsieh Mountain is located in Chu-chi hsien, Chekiang. Ch'an Master Mo (747-818), a member of the second generation of Ma-tsu's line, made this his center, becoming known as Ling-mo of Wu-hsieh.

3. Sung Mountain, which is in northern Teng-feng hsien, Honan, is the central peak of China's "Five Peaks" and the location of the Shaolin Temple with its ordination platform.

4. Chung of Nan-yang is Hui-chung (d. 775), a disciple of Hui-neng. According to his biography, until he was sixteen, he never spoke, nor did he leave the immediate vicinity of his house. However, when he saw a Ch'an monk passing his house one day, he began speaking and requested ordination. As a result, the monk directed him to Hui-neng. He is said to have lived forty years on Po-yai Mountain in Nan-yang, modern Honan, without leaving. However, by 761 his fame had spread, and he was summoned to the capital, where he received the title "National Teacher" (*kuo-shih*).

5. The question of whether nonsentient beings possess Buddha-nature and thus, by extension, are capable of expressing Dharma—a major controversy in early Tang China—grew out of differing interpretations of the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, particularly the line, "All beings, without exception, possess Buddha-nature." Hui-chung was a prominent spokesman for the belief that nonsentient beings are included under "all beings." On one occasion he cited the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, "The Buddha's body completely fills the Dharma-realm and is manifest to all beings." Often cited in opposition to this is the following passage from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*: "Such nonsentient things as walls, tile, and stones lack Buddha-nature. All else can be said to have Buddha-nature." Hui-chung could not have been unaware of this passage when he used wall and tile rubble as examples of the mind of the ancient Buddhas.

6. "Ancient buddha" is a term commonly used in Ch'an literature to refer to distinguished former masters.

7. Chuang-tzu, when asked whether the Tao was found among the lowly, replied that the Tao "exists in the earth, in the stones, in the trees and birds, and in shit and piss."

"The monk asked, 'Then why haven't I heard it?'"

"The National Teacher said, 'You yourself haven't heard it, but this can't hinder those who are able to hear it.'

" 'What sort of person acquires such hearing?' asked the monk.

" 'All the sages have acquired such hearing,' replied the National Teacher.

"The monk asked, 'Can you hear it, Ho-shang?'"

" 'No, I can't,' replied the National Teacher.

"The monk said, 'If you haven't heard it, how do you know that nonsentient beings expound the Dharma?'"

"The National Teacher said, 'Fortunately, I haven't heard it. If I had, I would be the same as the sages, and you, therefore, would not hear the Dharma that I teach.'

" 'In that case, ordinary people would have no part in it,' said the monk.

" 'I teach for ordinary people, not sages,' replied the National Teacher.

" 'What happens after ordinary people hear you?' asked the monk.

" 'Then they are no longer ordinary people,' said the National Teacher.

"The monk asked, 'According to which sutra does it say that nonsentient beings expound the Dharma?'"

" 'Clearly, you shouldn't suggest that it's not part of the sutras. Haven't you seen it in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*? It says, "The earth expounds Dharma, living beings expound it, throughout the three times, everything expounds it." ' " "The Master thus completed his narration.

Kuei-shan said, "That teaching also exists here. However, one seldom encounters someone capable of understanding it."

Tung-shan said, "I still don't understand it clearly. Would the Master please comment?"

Kuei-shan raised his fly whisk,⁹ saying, "Do you understand?"

"No, I don't. Please, Ho-shang, explain," replied Tung-shan.

Kuei-shan said, "It can never be explained to you by means of the mouth of one born of mother and father."

Tung-shan asked, "Does the Master have any contemporaries in the Way who might clarify this problem for me?"

"From here, go to Yu-hsien of Li-ling where you will find some linked caves."¹⁰

8. *Avatamsaka Sutra*. The "three times" are past, present, and future, i.e., always.

9. The fly whisk usually consisted of the tail hair of some animal attached to a handle. According to tradition, the Buddha had approved of its use by the monks as a means of brushing off bothersome insects without killing them. However, because there was a tendency to use rare and expensive materials to construct the whisk, the Buddha stipulated that only certain ordinary materials be used: felt, hemp, finely torn cloth, tattered items, or tree twigs. Paintings of Buddhist monks indicate that in China this stipulation was ignored. In Chan it was a symbol of authority, generally held, when teaching, as an indication that the teaching was the correct Dharma.

10. Yu-hsien of Li-ling is in the northwest part of Ch'ang-sha in modern Hunan.

Living in those caves is a man of the Way, Yün-yen.¹¹ If you are able to 'push aside the grass and gaze into the wind,'¹² then you will find him worthy of your respect," said Kuei-shan.

"Just what sort of man is he?" asked Tung-shan.

Kuei-shan replied, "Once he said to this old monk,¹³ 'What should I do if I wish to follow the Master?'"

"This old monk replied, 'You must immediately cut off your defilements.'

"He said, 'Then will I come up to the Master's expectation?'"

"This old monk replied, 'You will get absolutely no answer as long as I am here.'"

Tung-shan accordingly took leave of Kuei-shan and proceeded directly to Yün-yen's. Making reference to his previous encounter with Kuei-shan, he immediately asked what sort of person was able to hear the Dharma expounded by nonsentient beings.

Yün-yen said, "Nonsentient beings are able to hear it."

"Can you hear it, Ho-shang?" asked Tung-shan.

Yün-yen replied, "If I could hear it, then you would not be able to hear the Dharma that I teach."

"Why can't I hear it?" asked Tung-shan.

Yün-yen raised his fly whisk and said, "Can you hear it yet?"

Tung-shan replied, "No, I can't."

Yün-yen said, "You can't even hear it when I expound the Dharma; how do you expect to hear when a nonsentient being expounds the Dharma?"

Tung-shan asked, "In which sutra is it taught that nonsentient beings expound the Dharma?"

Yün-yen replied, "Haven't you seen it? In the *Amiṭābha Sūtra* it says, 'Water birds, tree groves, all without exception recite the Buddha's name, recite the Dharma.'"¹⁴

Reflecting on this, Tung-shan composed the following *gāthā*:

How amazing, how amazing!

Hard to comprehend that nonsentient beings expound the Dharma.

11. T'an-sheng of Yün-yen (780-841), although in the third generation of the Shih-to'u line, began his career as a monk together with Kuei-shan under Pai-ch'ang in the Ma-tsu line. He remained with Pai-ch'ang for more than twenty years before going to Yao-shan, a disciple of Shih-t'ou. Yün-yen Mountain is in T'an-chou, modern Ch'ang-sha, Hunan.

12. "To push aside the grass and gaze into the wind" is a play on a line from the Confucian *Analects* suggesting the ability to distinguish the superior man from ordinary people. "The superior man's deportment is like the wind; ordinary people's is like grass. When the wind blows over it, the grass bends."

13. "This old monk" is a self-deprecating term often used by monks to refer to themselves.

14. The sentence quoted from the *Amiṭābha Sūtra* is part of Shakyamuni's description of the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss, the Western Paradise. Thus, since Yün-yen could not have been unaware of this fact, it must be assumed that he has facetiously equated this world with the Pure Land.

It simply cannot be heard with the ear,
But when sound is heard with the eye, then it is understood.

Tung-shan said to Yün-yen, "I have some habits that are not yet eradicated."

Yün-yen said, "What have you been doing?"

Tung-shan replied, "I have not concerned myself with the Four Noble Truths."

Yün-yen said, "Are you joyful yet?"¹⁵

Tung-shan said, "It would be untrue to say that I am not joyful. It is as though I have grasped a bright pearl in a pile of shit."

Tung-shan asked Yün-yen, "When I wish to meet you, what shall I do?"

"Make an inquiry with the chamberlain," replied Yün-yen.¹⁶

Tung-shan said, "I am inquiring right now."

"What does he say to you?" asked Yün-yen.

Just before leaving, Tung-shan asked, "If, after many years, someone should ask if I am able to portray the Master's likeness, how should I respond?"¹⁷

After remaining quiet for a while, Yün-yen said, "Just this person."¹⁸

Tung-shan was lost in thought. Yün-yen said, "Chieh Achārya, having assumed the burden of this Great Matter,¹⁹ you must be very cautious."

Tung-shan remained dubious about what Yün-yen had said. Later, as he was crossing a river, he saw his reflected image and experienced a great awakening to the meaning of the previous exchange. He composed the following *gāthā*:

Earnestly avoid seeking without,

Lest it recede far from you.

Today I am walking alone,

Yet everywhere I meet him.

He is now no other than myself.

But I am not now him.

15. The Chinese term for "joyful" translates the Sanskrit, *pramudhā*, the name of the first of ten levels (*bhūmi*) attained by a bodhisattva in his ripening to perfect enlightenment. Though he attains sainthood at this level, certain defilements remain.

16. "Chamberlain" was a title used during various dynasties, including the Tang, for the court official who waited on the emperor and served as an intermediary between him and the court nobility.

17. Traditionally, a disciple was allowed to draw his master's portrait only when the master acknowledged that the disciple had received the transmission of his Dharma.

18. "Just this person" is a variant of "just this man of Han." According to medieval Chinese legal custom this is the phrase by which a criminal formally confessed his guilt in court. Comparison with other occurrences of the phrase in Ch'an works suggests that it expresses a thoroughgoing assumption of responsibility for one's being.

19. "Having assumed the burden" was another expression used when a criminal acknowledged his crime and personally accepted responsibility for it.

It must be understood in this way
In order to merge with Suchness.

Yün-yen, addressing the assembly, said, "A son exists in a certain household who always answers whatever is asked."

The Master came forward and asked, "How big a library does he have in his room?"

Yün-yen said, "Not a single word."

The Master said, "Then how does he know so much?"

"Day or night, he never sleeps," replied Yün-yen.

"Is it all right to ask him a question?" asked the Master.

"He could answer, but he won't," said Yün-yen.

When the Master first set out on a pilgrimage, he met an old woman carrying water. The Master asked for some water to drink.

The old woman said, "I will not stop you from drinking, but I have a question I must ask first. Tell me, how dirty is the water?"

"The water is not dirty at all," said the Master.

"Go away and don't contaminate my water buckets," replied the old woman.

Once, while the Master was on pilgrimage with Shen-shan, they saw a white rabbit suddenly cross in front of them. Shen-shan remarked, "How elegant!"

"In what way?" asked the Master.

"It is just like a white-robed commoner paying respects to a high minister."

"At your venerable age, how can you say such a thing!" said the Master.

"What about you?" asked Shen-shan.

"After generations of serving as a high official, to temporarily fall into reduced circumstances," replied the Master.

When Shen-shan had picked up a needle to mend clothes, the Master asked, "What are you doing?"

"Mending," answered Shen-shan.

"In what way do you mend?" asked the Master.

"One stitch is like the next," said Shen-shan.

"We've been traveling together for twenty years, and you can still say such a thing! How can there be such craftiness?" said the Master.

"How then does the venerable monk mend?" asked Shen-shan.

"Just as though the entire earth were spewing flame," replied the Master.

The Master asked Yün-chü, "Where have you been?"

"I've been walking the mountains," replied Yün-chü.

"Which mountain was suitable for residing on?" asked the Master.

"None was suitable for residing on," said Yün-chü.

"In that case, have you been on all the country's mountains?" said the Master.

"No, that isn't so," said Yün-chü.

"Then you must have found an entry-path," said the Master.

"No, there is no path," replied Yün-chü.

"If there is no path, I wonder how you have come to lay eyes on this old monk," said the Master.

"If there were a path, then a mountain would stand between us, Ho-shang," said Yün-chü.

The Master said, "Henceforth, not by a thousand, not even by ten thousand people will Yün-chü be held fast."

A monk said, "The Master normally tells us to follow the bird path. I wonder what the bird path is?"²⁰

"One does not encounter a single person," replied the Master.

"How does one follow such a path?" asked the monk.

"One should go without hemp sandals on one's feet," replied the Master.

"If one follows the bird path, isn't that seeing one's original face?"²¹ said the monk.

"Why do you turn things upside down so?" asked the Master.

"But where have I turned things upside down?" asked the monk.

"If you haven't turned things upside down, then why do you regard the slave as master?" said the Master.

"What is one's original face?" asked the monk.

"Not to follow the bird path," responded the Master.

One time when the Master was washing his bowls, he saw two birds contending over a frog. A monk who also saw this asked, "Why does it come to that?"

The Master replied, "It's only for your benefit, Acharya."

The Master asked a monk, "What is the most tormenting thing in this world?"

"Hell is the most tormenting thing," answered the monk.

"Not so. When that which is draped in these robe threads is unaware of the Great Matter, that I call the most tormenting thing," said the Master.

The Master went up to the hall and said, "When looking upon, what is it? When serving, what is it? When accomplishing, what is it? When accomplishing mutually, what is it? When there is the accomplishment of accomplishment, what is it?"

A monk asked, "What is 'looking upon'?"

"When eating, what is it?" replied the Master.

"What is 'serving'?" asked the monk.

"When ignoring, what is it?" replied the Master.

"What is 'accomplishing'?" asked the monk.

"When throwing down a mattock, what is it?" replied the Master.

"What is 'accomplishing mutually'?" asked the monk.

"Not attaining things," replied the Master.

"What is the 'accomplishment of accomplishment'?" asked the monk.

"Nothing shared," replied the Master.

The Master offered the following *gāthā*:²²

The sage kings from the beginning made Yao the norm;
He governed the people by means of rites and kept his dragon-waist bent.
When once he passed from one end of the market to the other,
He found that everywhere culture flourished and the august dynasty was
celebrated.

For whom do you wash your face and apply makeup?

The sound of the cuckoo's call urges one home;

Countless multitudes of flowers have fallen, yet the cuckoo's call is not stilled;

Going farther into the jumbled peaks, in deep places its call continues.

The blooming of a flower on a scarred old tree, a spring outside of kalpas;

Riding backwards on a jade elephant, chasing the *ch'i lin*.²³

Now hidden far beyond the innumerable peaks,

The moon is white, the breeze cool at the approach of sunrise.

Ordinary beings and Buddha have no truck with each other;
Mountains are naturally high, waters naturally deep.
What the myriad distinctions and numerous differences show is that
Where the chukar cries, many flowers are blooming.

20. "The bird path," an image encountered throughout Buddhist literature, is used to describe the path of an enlightened being.

21. The image of one's original face appears in the *Hsing-yü* section of the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Ancestor*.

22. [This passage has come to be known as Tung-shan's "Five Degrees of Honor and Virtue." — Eds.]

23. The *ch'i lin* is a mythological beast, with the characteristics of a dragon, a deer, and the Greek Pegasus. It is traditionally regarded as the mount of slybits.

Can't stand head sprouting horns anymore?²⁴
 When the mind rouses to seek the Buddha, it's time for compunction.
 In the unimpeded vista of the *Kalpa* of Emptiness, when no one is perceived,
 Why go south in search of the fifty-three?²⁵

Hsüeh-feng

(822-908)



Ch'an historians rank Hsüeh-feng I-t's'un along with Tung-shan's successor Yün-chü as the two most eminent teachers of their generation. What makes this remarkable in Hsüeh-feng's case is his epic struggle to gain the Way, two decades of traipsing about the Ch'an mountains in a determined quest for certainty. *The Transmission of the Lamp* preserves dozens of unflattering reports about these efforts, noting his nine fruitless trips to see Tung-shan and three sojourns with the master T'ou-tzu Ta-t'ung, during which he was four times branded a "black lacquer bucket"—short-hand for *dinwui*. Hsüeh-feng stands out in Ch'an history as a plodding student who became a teacher of great effectiveness and importance, and that undoubtedly explains the chronicles' close attention to his misfortunes. Failure is the Way, his life has reminded later students, or as one Ch'an proverb says, "A superior vessel takes a long time to complete."

Hsüeh-feng (J., Seppo) lived for some years at Te-shan's monastery and won himself a place among the stars of Ch'an chefdom by serving in the position of head cook there, as he also had at Tung-shan's. Though Ch'an genealogies list him as one of Te-shan's successors, the last word was still eluding him when the Master of Thirty Blows died in 865. His turning point, according to *The Blue Cliff Record*, came during a pilgrimage with a fellow monk, the brilliant Yen-t'ou Ch'uan-huo (828-887), when the two got snowed in on Tortoise Mountain. Yen-t'ou (J., Gantō), also regarded as an heir of Te-shan, used the opportunity to catch up on his rest, while Hsüeh-feng sat meditating hour after hour. When Yen-t'ou chastised him for imitating a clay statue and urged him to get some sleep, Hsüeh-feng gestured to his chest and confessed that his heart was not at peace.

This moment of candor led Yen-t'ou to propose that he review his elder colleague's prior Ch'an experience for him. Hsüeh-feng then laid out the glimmers of insight he had gotten as a novice studying with one of Ma-tsu's heirs, upon reading Tung-shan's poem about crossing the river, when Te-shan hit him with his stick. . . . Finally Yen-t'ou burst out, "Haven't you heard that what enters through the gate is not the family treasure? Let it flow forth from your breast, covering heaven and earth!" Suddenly Hsüeh-feng came to and rejoiced, saying over and over, "Today Tortoise Mountain has finally gained the Way! Today Tor-

24. Nan-ch'üan asks Tao-wu, "What can you say about that place that knowledge does not reach?" Tao-wu replied, "One should absolutely avoid talking about that." Nan-ch'üan said, "Truly, as soon as one explains, horns sprout on one's head, and one becomes a beast."

25. The "fifty-three" is a reference to Sudhana's fifty-three teachers in the *Gandavyūha* section of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*.

Dōgen

(1200–1253)



Slowed by geographical, sociopolitical, and linguistic barriers, Ch'an took half a millennium to reach Japan. Dōgen Kigen was by no means the first Japanese monk to travel to China or even to study Ch'an in depth with a Chinese master. Indeed, several others preceded him in receiving formal recognition as Dharma heirs in one or another Ch'an lineage, and history recognizes one of his early teachers, Myōan Eisai (1141–1215), as the founder of Japanese Zen. Yet Dōgen opened the country's first Zen monastery, produced its first Zen record, established its first enduring line of succession, and stood head and shoulders above near-contemporaries in his contribution to Zen literature.

Dōgen's early life, like his teaching, defies simple or certain exposition. He was born into a time of extraordinary upheaval, marked by bitter competition for power between the imperial court and the shogunate, within the nobility and the rising samurai class, and among the Buddhist sects that served and depended on these groups. Maneuvering in Kyoto court circles probably accounts for both the liaison that produced him and the doubt that surrounds his parents' identities; all this remains subject to scholarly conjecture. His ancestry was certainly aristocratic, however, and after his mother's death in 1207, he grew up in the household of a high-ranking courier from the powerful Minamoto clan. His upbringing included extensive tutelage in literature and the arts, the lifeblood of Kyoto society, and he is said to have demonstrated an extreme precocity in reading the Chinese classics.

Legend depicts the boy Dōgen realizing the impermanence of all existence and resolving to pursue a religious vocation as he watched clouds of incense billow over his mother's ashes. Disastrous events of the previous century—earthquakes, fires, famines, and epidemics as well as war—had put many of his compatriots in an apocalyptic mood, eager to adopt new forms of religious expression, but guided by family connections, Dōgen began his religious career in the Tendai sect, which then predominated in the imperial capital. Many details elude us, but by the time he was seventeen, Dōgen's quest had carried him to Tendai headquarters on Mt. Hiei, where he formally entered the Way, and back to Kennin-ji, in Kyoto, where the eminent Eisai had established a beachhead for Zen study. Along the way, no doubt, he got a look at Mt. Hiei's warrior-monks, a conspicuous manifestation of the rivalry and violence that infected Japanese Buddhism in those tempestuous times.

Whether this young monk of privileged background arrived soon enough and had sufficient entrée to meet Eisai himself is another of the enigmas in Dōgen's biography, but within two years of the old man's death, Dōgen did embark on Zen studies with Eisai's successor, Myōzen (1184–1225). Eisai had twice made the trip to China, had succeeded to the Huang-lung school of Lin-chi Ch'an, and had passed this teaching on to Myōzen, all while remaining within the Tendai fold. Myōzen took the same course to avoid an affront to Mr. Hiei, but his heart plainly lay with Zen. He and Dōgen formed a close bond during the six years they spent studying in Kyoto, and they sailed together to China in 1223, a difficult venture to execute but one that would give them firsthand access to the vaunted Chinese tradition.

When they arrived, the fall of the Southern Sung dynasty lay yet a century and a half in the future. Disembarking in easternmost China, they found the Yang-ch'i branch of Lin-chi still holding sway and descendants of Ta-hui directing most of the prominent temples. These included the big T'ien-t'ung monastery that Hung-chih had restored, where Eisai had later practiced and which they themselves soon entered. Myōzen settled down to practice, but Dōgen who seems to have had no affinity with Wu-chi Liao-p'ai, the master here, spent part of his first two years in China visiting other monasteries, perhaps searching for a more suitable teacher. In 1225, he lost both the one he had—Myōzen, who suddenly died—and gained another, the man he later revered as "the old Buddha." This was the monastery's incommo abbot, a T'sao-tung master of exceptional repute, commonly known as T'ien-t'ung Ju-ching. (The final selection in Chapter 32 gives a portrait of Ju-ching.)

The fact that Dōgen hit it off with the new abbot had nothing to do with lineage. Ju-ching (1163–1228) is said to have concealed his dharma pedigree, never saying whose heir he was until shortly before he died, preferring to regard himself, by Dōgen's testimony, as "the total storehouse of the Buddha-Dharma." Dōgen also reports that Ju-ching rejected not only the practice of categorizing Ch'an into schools and houses but even the view that Ch'an was one of many Buddhist sects. It is not surprising that Dōgen, having witnessed sectarianism at its violent worst in Japan, adopted this stance on the indivisibility of the Dharma, maintaining in his later preaching and writing that he taught the way of buddhas and Ancestors, not merely Zen, much less Sōtō Zen. It appears that Dōgen absorbed as well Ju-ching's perspective that false teaching had become pandemic and his emphasis on long and fervent practice of zazen, an emphasis traceable to Hung-chih and K'u-mu.

After a powerful awakening experience but less than two years of study with Ju-ching, Dōgen sailed home, taking Myōzen's ashes and a transmission document acknowledging him as Ju-ching's successor. The next three years he spent at Kennin-ji, probably with the hope of preaching Ju-ching's brand of Zen there or of obtaining an appointment to direct another established temple. No such opportunity materialized, however, and his work as a Zen master did not take off until he moved outside Kyoto in 1230 and began developing an independent

base of activity at a small temple made available by unidentified patrons, perhaps members of his extended family. Within six years, he had succeeded in getting a monk's hall built, a major step toward transplanting the Chinese monastic model to Japanese soil. The phenomenon of monks sitting immobile for long hours in a hall dedicated to that purpose so intrigued Kyoto residents that they flocked to see it for themselves.

No doubt such notoriety drew the ire of the Buddhist establishment, but it also brought Dōgen political and financial support that he sorely needed in lieu of the official sponsorship or estate revenues other temples enjoyed. Judging by his early writings, he geared much of his teaching at this time to religiously inclined aristocrats who might back his efforts—and who were, after all, his own people. Perhaps the first piece of writing he prepared for distribution was a meditation manual, patterned after a century-old Chinese text, providing zazen instruction in relatively straightforward manner. He chose to write another early piece not in Chinese, the language of learning, but in Japanese and employed a question-and-answer format as an engaging means of introducing the practice and dispelling common misunderstandings. A third, highly accessible product of this initial phase of his teaching, *The Record of Things Heard*, consists of brief, informal talks on a wide range of subjects.

In these contexts, Dōgen made strong statements about lay practice that he would subsequently set aside, asserting that what mattered was not one's standing in the world but simply one's eagerness for the Way:

In Sung China, kings and ministers, officials and common people, men and women, kept their intention on the ancestors' way. Both warriors and literary people aroused the intention to practice Ch'an and study the way. Among them, many illuminated the mind-ground. From this you should know that worldly duties do not hinder the Buddha-Dharma.

Rejecting all other practices as secondary or worse, Dōgen promoted zazen as "the front gate" of the Dharma, the practice for one and all, irrespective of intelligence, education, rank, or gender:

Such universalism aligned him, nominally, with the Pure Land movement that had taken hold in a populace driven to despair by the era's continuing crises, but he mercilessly ridiculed the Pure Land (and Tendai) practice of repeating the Buddha's name: "People who chant all the time are just like frogs croaking day and night in the spring fields. Their effort will be of no use whatever." Dōgen's anti-sectarianism in no way restrained him from this sort of criticism, instead, it led to another kind of impartiality—a readiness to denounce everything as a deviation from true Buddhism except *shikaniza*, pure sitting.

As time wore on, perhaps to correct the ideas of some monks who came to his community after prior training in Zen, Dōgen turned his fire increasingly on Zen methods that he considered deleterious, chief among which was Ta-hui's technique of "contemplating sayings." In a real sense, however, what Dōgen did

was simply go Ta-hui one better: now koan study rather than silent illumination had become the *idée fixe* and thus a serious obstacle to genuine practice and realization, so Dōgen set out to eliminate it. That he had no fundamental objection to the contemplation of sayings in a larger sense is readily apparent from his own formal lectures, later polished and gathered under the title *Eye Treasury of the True Dharma*—the same title Ta-hui had chosen for his investigation of koan.

These were lectures prepared for delivery either to his growing assembly of monks or to devoted lay students and patrons, and he gave increasing attention to them as his first decade of teaching progressed. Ultimately, he intended his text, like Ta-hui's and like Yuan-wu's *The Blue Cliff Record* before it, to contain an even one hundred chapters and to present its author's most penetrating insights in a very elegant form. Dōgen did not live long enough to complete the full complement of essays, but those he finished are inventive, consummately crafted explorations of public cases, persistently urging and challenging his students to examine the old sayings in detail and from diverse perspectives. Among the chapters are "The Sound of the Valley Stream," inspired by Su T'ung-po's enlightenment poem (Chapter 24), and "Dragon Howl," a meditation on the famous dead-tree metaphor (Chapter 26).

"One Bright Pearl," a chapter completed in 1238, the same year as *Record of Things Heard* exemplifies the prose of the *Eye Treasury*. Poetic almost to the point of mystery, it abounds in twists, reversals, unexpected juxtapositions, and questions designed to surprise and illumine an unguarded mind while foiling any attempt to extract merely logical meanings. Dōgen often took extreme liberties in achieving these effects, misquoting texts, lifting passages out of context, mixing Chinese and Japanese characters in a single sentence, playing with grammar and syntax, and so forth. How much he owes his style to his Dharma ancestor Hung-chih will be seen by looking back at Chapter 26, especially by comparing Dōgen's "Lancer of Seated Meditation" with Hung-chih's verse of the same name.

Abruptly, but obviously with forethought, Dōgen and most of his monks left the Kyoto area in 1243, relocating without explanation to the mountainous, rural province of Echizen. In the year or so prior to this move, he had twice twitted the religious hierarchy by lecturing in the capital under the protection of his most prominent patrons, and this may have provoked an attack from Mt. Hiei. Indeed, one Tendai document claims that the sect drove Dōgen off to Echizen, and though no other records bear out this report, it probably contains a germ of truth. His teaching had come under criticism in the imperial court, and growing weary of defending himself, he may well have opted to remove the community from the spotlight. The news that a Lin-chi master of Japanese descent had been tapped to open a large monastery nearby probably weighed heavily in his decision, too. (See Chapter 30.)

In leaving Kyoto, Dōgen abandoned not only his hometown but whatever hopes for prominence he may still have harbored. On the other hand, he fulfilled a perception he had expressed three years before in "The Mountains and Rivers Sutra," a celebrated chapter of the *Eye Treasury*: that mountains are the natural

dwelling place of sages. Whatever else it may have meant, the move to Echizen constituted a change of Dōgen's economic base from the Kyoto nobility to the samurai class—and in particular to Hatano Yoshishige, who represented the shogunate in the capital and whose property became the site of Dōgen's new monastery, Eihei-ji. Hatano, a one-eyed veteran of many battles, was such a sincere disciple that he oversaw clearing for the new building himself and eventually joined the monkhood. Dependence of this sort had its consequences, however. In 1247, Dōgen was obliged to interrupt his work for seven months to answer Hatano's summons to Kamakura, the seat of the shogunate, and in decades to come, the direction of Sōtō Zen would be greatly affected by the line's historic tie to the Hatano family and other rural patrons.

Dōgen produced many new chapters of the *Eye Treasury* before his death in 1253, along with exacting regulations on how his monks should eat, wash, dress, interact, use the library, and otherwise comport themselves. Dōgen obviously saw these very different kinds of text as serving his long-term goal of establishing the Way in Japan, and they form the bulk of his literary remains. Dōgen lives on as well in his *Record*, a transcript of his remarks to the Eihei-ji monks, and in the Sōtō tradition that he established, the largest of the Zen schools in Japan. Though he is now regarded as a genius, his name and work fell largely into obscurity a few generations after his death, and six centuries passed before the government, in a fit of nationalist pride, honored him with the title *daishi*, great master. ☸

FROM THE RECORD OF THINGS HEARD

One day a student asked: "I have spent months and years in earnest study, but I have yet to gain enlightenment. Many of the old Masters say that the Way does not depend on intelligence and cleverness and that there is no need for knowledge and talent. As I understand it, even though my capacity is inferior, I need not feel badly of myself. Are there not any old sayings or cautionary words that I should know about?"

Dōgen replied: "Yes, there are. True study of the Way does not rely on knowledge and genius or cleverness and brilliance. But it is a mistake to encourage people to be like blind men, deaf mutes, or imbeciles. Because study has no use for wide learning and high intelligence, even those with inferior capacities can participate. True study of the Way is an easy thing.

But even in the monasteries of China, only one or two out of several hundred, or even a thousand, disciples under a great Ch'an master actually gained true enlightenment. Therefore, old sayings and cautionary words are needed. As I see it now, it is a matter of gaining the desire to practice. A person who gives rise to a real desire and puts his utmost efforts into study under a teacher will surely gain enlightenment. Essentially, one must devote all attention to this effort and enter into practice with all due speed. More specifically, the following points must be kept in mind:

"In the first place, there must be a keen and sincere desire to seek the Way. For example, someone who wishes to steal a precious jewel, to attack a formidable enemy, or to make the acquaintance of a beautiful woman must, at all times, watch intently for the opportunity, adjusting to changing events and shifting circumstances. Anything sought for with such intensity will surely be gained. If the desire to search for the Way becomes as intense as this, whether you concentrate on doing zazen alone, investigate a koan by an old master, interview a Zen teacher, or practice with sincere devotion, you will succeed no matter how high you must shoot or no matter how deep you must plumb. Without arousing this wholehearted will for the Buddha Way, how can anyone succeed in this most important task of cutting the endless round of birth-and-death? Those who have this drive, even if they have little knowledge or are of inferior capacity, even if they are stupid or evil, will without fail gain enlightenment.

"Next, to arouse such a mind, one must be deeply aware of the impermanence of the world. This realization is not achieved by some temporary method of contemplation. It is not creating something out of nothing and then thinking about it. Impermanence is a fact before our eyes. Do not wait for the teachings from others, the words of the scriptures, and for the principles of enlightenment. We are born in the morning and die in the evening; the man we saw yesterday is no longer with us today. These are facts we see with our own eyes and hear with our own ears. You see and hear impermanence in terms of another person, but try weighing it with your own body. Even though you live to be seventy or eighty, you die in accordance with the inevitability of death. How will you ever come to terms with the worries, joys, intimacies, and conflicts that concern you in this life? With faith in Buddhism, seek the true happiness of nirvana. How can those who are old or who have passed the halfway mark in their lives relax in their studies when there is no way of telling how many years are left?"

Think of those who gained enlightenment upon hearing the sound of bamboo when struck by a tile or on seeing blossoms in bloom. Does the bamboo distinguish the clever or dull, the deluded or enlightened; does the flower differentiate between the shallow and deep, the wise and stupid? Though flowers bloom year after year, not everyone who sees them gains enlightenment. Bamboos always give off sounds, but not all who hear them become enlightened. It is only by the virtue of long study under a teacher and much practice that we gain an affinity with what we have labored for and gain enlightenment and clarity of mind.

The most important point in the study of the Way is zazen. Many people in China gained enlightenment solely through the strength of zazen. Some who were so ignorant that they could not answer a single question exceeded the learned who had studied many years solely through the efficacy of their single-

inded devotion to zazen. Therefore, students must concentrate on zazen alone and not bother about other things. The Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors is zazen alone. Follow nothing else.

At that time Ejō asked: "When we combine zazen with the reading of the texts, we can understand about one point in a hundred or a thousand upon examining the Zen sayings and the koan. But in zazen alone there is no indication of even this much. Must we devote ourselves to zazen even then?"

Dogen answered: "Although a slight understanding seems to emerge from examining the koan, it causes the Way of the Buddhas and the Ancestors to become even more distant. If you devote your time to doing zazen without wanting to know anything and without seeking enlightenment, this is itself the Ancestral Way. Although the old Masters urged both the reading of the scriptures and the practice of zazen, they clearly emphasized zazen. Some gained enlightenment through the koan, but the merit that brought enlightenment came from the zazen. Truly the merit is in the zazen."

The basic point to understand in the study of the Way is that you must cast aside your deep-rooted attachments. If you rectify the body in terms of the four attitudes of dignity, the mind rectifies itself. If at first you uphold the precepts, the mind returns itself. In China it is the custom among laymen to show their filial gratitude towards a deceased parent by assembling at the ancestral mausoleum and pretending to weep so earnestly that eventually real tears of grief would fall. Students of the Way, even though they do not have the mind that seeks the Way at the outset, eventually arouse this mind merely by a steadfast love and study of Buddhism.

Students who have been moved to study the Way should merely follow the rest of the assembly in their conduct. Don't try to learn the essential points and the examples from the past right away. It is best, however, that they be fully grasped before you go alone to practice in the mountains or conceal yourself within a city. If you practice by doing what the assembly does, you should be able to attain the Way. It is like riding in a boat without knowing how to row. If you leave everything up to a competent sailor, you will reach the other shore, whether you know how to row or not. If you follow a good teacher and practice together with the assembly and have no concepts of the Self, you will naturally become a [person] of the Way.

Students, even if you gain enlightenment, do not stop practicing, thinking that you have attained the ultimate. The Buddha Way is endless. Once enlightened you must practice all the more.

Every action of a [person] well versed in Buddhism shows deep thought, whether that action seems good or bad. This, ordinary people do not understand. One day

the Abbot Eshin' asked a man to beat and drive away a deer that was eating grass in the garden. At that time someone remarked: "You seem to have no compassion. Why have you begrudged the grass and tormented this animal?"

The Abbot replied: "You do not understand. If I did not chase the deer away, it would soon become accustomed to people. If it came near an evil person, it would surely be killed. That's why I chased it away."

Although chasing the deer seemed to show a lack of compassion, it was motivated by a deep compassion.

While the late Abbot Eisai was living at Kennin-ji, a poor man from the neighborhood came and said: "My home is so poor that my wife and I and our three children have had nothing to eat for several days. Have pity and help us out."

This was at a time when the monastery was completely without food, clothing, and money. Eisai racked his brains but could think of no solution. Then it occurred to him that just at this time a statue of Yakushi³ was being built at the temple and that there was a bit of copper that had been hammered out to make the halo. Eisai broke it up with his own hands, made it into a ball, and gave it to the poor man. "Exchange this for food and save your family from starvation," he said. The poor man left overjoyed.

His disciples were critical: "You've given the halo of a Buddhist statue to a layman. Isn't it a crime to make personal use of what belongs to the Buddha?"

"You are right," the abbot replied, "but think of the will of the Buddha. He cut off his own flesh and limbs for the sake of all sentient beings. Certainly he would have sacrificed his entire body to save starving people. Even though I should fall into the evil realms for this crime, I will still have saved people from starvation." Students today would do well to reflect on the excellence of Eisai's attitude. Do not forget this.

LANCET OF SEATED MEDITATION

Essential function of all the Buddhas,

Functioning essence of all the Ancestors—

It is present without thinking,

It is completed without interacting.

Present without thinking.

Its presence is inherently intimate;

Completed without interacting.

Its completion is inherently verified.

Its presence inherently intimate,

It is ever without any stain or defilement;

Its completion inherently verified,

It is ever without the upright or inclined.

Intimacy ever without stain or defilement,

Its intimacy sloughs off without discarding;

Verification ever without upright or inclined,

Its verification makes effort without figuring.

The water is clear right through the earth,

A fish goes along like a fish.

The sky is vast straight into the heavens,

A bird flies just like a bird.

ONE BRIGHT PEARL

Great Master Tsung-i of Mt. Hsüan-sha, in Fu-chou, in great Sung China, had the Buddhist name Shih-pei, and the family name Hsien.⁴ Before he became a monk, he loved fishing, and floating along on the River Nan-t'ai in his boat, he learned how to fish from other fishermen. He never expected the Golden Fish, which is never hooked but jumps into the boat of itself. In the beginning of the Hsien-t'ung era, during the Tang dynasty,⁵ he suddenly wished to leave the world and seek the Dharma]. He abandoned his boat and went off into the mountains. He was thirty years old, awakened to the dangers of this impermanent world, and aware of the loftiness of the Buddha Way.

He finally ascended Mt. Hsüeh-feng and, practicing with Great Master Chen-chüeh [i.e., Hsüeh-feng I-t's'un], pursued the Way day and night. Once, in order to practice with other masters elsewhere and get to the bottom of the whole matter, he got together his traveling gear and was in the process of descending the mountain when his toe struck a rock and began to bleed. In pain, he had an awakening experience and said, "The body does not exist. Where does the pain come from?" Then he returned to Mt. Hsüeh-feng. Master Hsüeh-feng asked him, "What is this Ascetic Pei?" Replied Hsüan-sha, "Henceforth, I shall not deceive people."⁶ Hsüeh-feng was delighted with this answer and said, "Everyone has the capacity to utter those words, but no one expresses them [as Shih-pei does]." Hsüeh-feng asked, "Ascetic Pei, why aren't you going on the

3. Hsüan-sha Shih-pei, or Hsüan-sha Tsung-i (835-908) was a successor to Hsüeh-feng I-t's'un (822-908) and seventh in the Ancestral line of Ch'ing-yüan Hsing-su.

4. That is, soon after 860, the beginning of the Hsien-t'ung era.

5. "Ascetic" is the translation of the Japanese *zūta*, which originally is the Sanskrit *dhūta*.

6. Okada Gihō says . . . that this is an alternate form of "To say something is to miss the mark." Hsüan-sha is thus denying that he is really Shih-pei as far as the ultimate truth is concerned. Hsüeh-feng's question is an alternative for the classic "What is it that thus comes?"

1. Otherwise known as Genshin (941-1003). A famous priest of the Tendai Sect, he lived at Yokawa on Mt. Hiei, near Kyoto.

2. Bhaiṣajya, the Healing Buddha.

pilgrimage?" Hsüan-sha answered, "Bodhiharma did not come East, the Second Ancestor [Hui-k'o] did not leave [for India]." This answer especially pleased Hsüeh-feng.

Having been a simple fisherman, Hsüan-sha had never encountered the many sutras and treatises even in his dreams, but when he put his determination foremost, he manifested a spirit that surpassed that of others. Hsüeh-feng considered him to be superior to others and praised him as an outstanding disciple. His clothes were of cloth, and because he always wore the same ones, they were covered with patches. His underclothes were of paper and he used mugwort [for padding]. Apart from his practice with Hsüeh-feng, he had no other teacher. However, he experienced the power of succeeding to his teacher's Dharma straightaway.

After attaining the Way, he would instruct others by saying, "The whole universe is one bright pearl."⁷ Once a monk asked him, "You have a saying, 'the whole universe is one bright pearl.' How can a student [like me] understand that?" The master replied, "What is the use of understanding that the whole universe is one bright pearl?" The next day the master asked the monk, "What is your understanding of 'the whole universe is one bright pearl?'" The monk said, "What is the use of understanding that the whole universe is one bright pearl?" Hsüan-sha said, "I know that you are alive among the demons in the Dark Cave."⁸

This expression, "The whole universe is one bright pearl," originated with Hsüan-sha. Its deep meaning is that the whole universe is neither vast and expansive nor minute and small. It is not square or round, middle or true. [Its dynamic workings are] neither the lively darting of fish⁹ nor the disclosure of forms distinct and clear. Moreover, because it is not birth-and-death or arrival-and-departure, just so it is birth-and-death, arrival-and-departure. Because this is the way it is, it is the past departing from here, the present appearing from here. If it is penetrated to the very bottom, who will see it as limited to being a movement from life to death? Who can see it as being nothing but stillness?

"The whole universe" is the unresting pursuit of things as the self and the pursuit of the self as things.¹⁰ Answering "separated" to the question, "When 7. "One bright pearl" translated *ihka myün*, the title of this piece. *Myó* is "bright," "brilliant," "clear," and so on. *Ju* means such things as "bead," "jewel," and so on. It is a round beadlike object such as those found on Buddhist rosaries (*juzi*). . . .

8. This is an old Zen expression denoting abysmal ignorance. It recurs in a number of Zen stories, *mondo*, and elsewhere. Hsüan-sha means that even here, in the Dark Cave inhabited by dreadfully ignorant beings, the bright light of the pearl exists.

9. "Lively darting of fish" is a translation of the Chinese *huo p'op'oi*. . . . It seems to be a pre-Sung colloquialism, used, for instance, by Lin-chi in his recorded sayings, where English translations such as "brink and lively" and "vividly alive" can be found. . . .

10. "Unresting pursuit of things." The *Monge* commentary says, "When one pursues things as the self, the self becomes the standard and things are not established. This is the place apart from forms.

feeling arises, is one separated from understanding?" is a turning of the head and an alteration of facial expression, an expanding of the problem and a seizing of opportunity.¹¹ As a result of pursuing the self as things, it is an unresting "whole universe." Because of its priority over its functional manifestations, this principle remains as something ungraspable even in the midst of its functioning.

"One bright pearl" thoroughly expresses it even though it is not itself revealed in its name, and we can recognize it in its name. "One bright pearl" directly transcends the eons, and because in the eternal past it never ceased to be, it reaches up to the eternal present. Though there is one's mind now and one's body now, they are just the one bright pearl. This grass or that tree are not grass and tree, nor are the mountains and rivers of the world mountains and rivers; they are one bright pearl.

The expression, "How can a student understand that?" makes it seem as if [the question] originates in the student's deluded karmic consciousness, but in reality it is the Great Model itself manifesting as this functional appearance. Continuing, you can make a foot of water into a one-foot wave, which is to say, make a ten-foot pearl into a ten-foot brilliance.

In expressing what can be expressed, Hsüan-sha says, "The whole universe is one bright pearl. What is the use of understanding that?" This expression expresses the fact that Buddha succeeds Buddha, Ancestors succeed Ancestors, and Hsüan-sha succeeds Hsüan-sha. Even if you try to avoid succession, you can not do it, because even if you avoid it for a while, any expression [such as 'what is the use of understanding?'] is, after all, the occasion of its manifesting.

The next day, Hsüan-sha asked the monk, "What is your understanding of 'the whole universe is one bright pearl?'" This expresses "Yesterday I spoke the fixed Dharma [in asking, 'What is the use of understanding that?'], and today I use a different approach [and ask 'What do you understand?']. Today, I speak the unfixd Dharma, turning my back on yesterday with a smile."

The monk said, "What is the use of understanding that the whole universe is one bright pearl?" This is nothing but a mimicry of Hsüan-sha; that is, "riding the thief's horse in pursuit of the thief." In speaking as he did for the sake of the monk, Hsüan-sha was conducting himself in the form of a different species.¹² Reverse the light and illumine within yourselves; how many are there of "what is the

Also, pursuing the self as things is the situation in which things are the measure and the self is not established. This is great and vast, life and death."

11. "Expanding the problem" is a reference to the technique of the *mondo* exchange between Zen master and disciple. "Seizing the opportunity" refers to the teacher's intuitive grasp of the student's problem and responding accordingly. This is sometimes done by "expanding the problem," exemplified in the text by the teacher's response of "Separated" to a student's question.

12. Hsüan-sha's taking on the form of a different species is a reference to a bodhisattva's assumption of a nonhuman form, such as that of an animal, in order to conduct the compassionate activities of a bodhisattva.

use of understanding?" If I try to express it, there may be seven sugar cakes or eight herb cakes, but this is reaching and practice north of the Hsiang [River] and south of the T'an.¹³

Hsüan-sha says, "I know that you are alive among the demons in the Dark Cave." You should understand that the faces of the sun and moon have not changed since time began. Because the sun's face always appears as the sun's face and the moon's face always appears as the moon's face, even though I say that my name is "Exactly Now" while it is summer, this does not mean that my name is "Hot."¹⁴

Thus, the bright pearl, existing just so and being beginningless, transcends changes in time and place. The whole universe is one bright pearl. We do not speak of two or three pearls, and so the entirety is one True Dharma-eye, the Body of Reality, One Expression. The entirety is Brilliant Light, One Mind. When [the bright pearl] is the entirety, nothing hinders it. Round [like a pearl], it rolls around and around. The merits of the bright pearl being manifested in this way, Avalokitesvara and Maitreya therefore exist now, and old Buddhas and new Buddhas appear in the world and preach the Dharma.

When it is just so, it hangs suspended in space, it is hidden in the linings of clothing, it is held under the chin [of a dragon], and it is worn in the hair topknot.¹⁵ All these are the one bright pearl as the whole universe. It is its nature to be attached to the lining of clothing, so never say that it is attached to the surface. It is its nature to be guarded under the chin [of a dragon] or kept in a topknot, so do not think that it is found on the surface. When you are drunk, a friend will give you the pearl, and you must give the pearl to a friend. When you

13. This phrase refers to the omnipresence of buddha, in what is called the "one bright pearl" in the present essay. The expression can be found in *The Blue Cliff Record*, case 18, and Dogen has used the same expression in *Eihei kōroku*, section 1, where he says, "Yellow gold is found in the land south of the Hsiang and north of the T'an. Ordinary people beyond number are engulfed in it." . . .

14. An allusion to a *wandō* recorded in the *Wū teng hui yüan*: "Li-ao asked Yüeh-shan, 'What is your family name?' Replied Yüeh-shan, 'Right Now.' Li-ao did not understand and later asked the head monk, 'Recently I asked Yüeh-shan what his family name is and he said "Right Now." Just what is his name?' The temple master told him, 'His family name is Han [i.e., "cold." Yüeh-shan's family name was "Han," but written with a different character and having a different meaning]. When Yüeh-shan heard about this, he said, 'The temple head does not understand the difference between good and bad' [or anything else]. When Li asked his question, it was cold, so the temple head said 'cold.' I suppose that had it been summer, he would have said 'hot.' " According to Okada, the reason Dogen alludes to the *wandō* is Yüeh-shan's expression. "Right Now." Despite such phenomena as "hot," "cold," "summer," and "winter," all time is just one bright pearl. This is Dogen's meaning in the essay; Okubo's text (*Zenichū*) has "nature" where I have "family name" in the translation.

15. The four images are allusions to four stories: (1) in the sutra named *P'u-sa ying-fo ching* a passage speaks of a jewel suspended in the air and emitting a brilliant light; (2) a story in the *Lotus Sutra* tells of a man placing a precious jewel in the lining of the clothing of his drunken friend, who, upon awakening, is unaware of his wealth; (3) Chuang-tzu, the Taoist, speaks of a jewel guarded beneath the chin of a dragon; and (4) the *Lotus Sutra* tells of a grateful king who rewarded his military commander with castles, gold, and other things but would not part with a jewel that he wore in his topknot.

receive the pearl from a friend, you surely will be drunk. Because this is so, it is the one bright pearl as the whole universe.

Thus, though on the surface there may seem to be change or no change [i.e., enlightenment or no enlightenment], it is the one bright pearl. Realizing it is so is itself the one bright pearl. The shapes and sounds of the bright pearl are seen in this way. Saying to yourself, "It is so," do not doubt that you, yourself, are the bright pearl by thinking, "I am not the bright pearl." Confusion and doubts, affirmations and negations, these are nothing but the ephemeral, small responses of ordinary folk; however, still, they are [the bright pearl] appearing as small, ephemeral responses.

Should we not appreciate it? The bright pearl's colors and brilliance are boundless. Color after color and every scintillation of light are the merit of the whole universe. Could anything ever snatch them away? Would anyone ever toss away even a simple roof tile in the marketplace [while looking for the pearl]? Do not be anxious about being reborn in one of the six realms of cause and effect. The bright pearl, which from beginning to end is essentially uninvolved [with cause and effect], is your original face, your enlightened nature.¹⁶

However, you and I, unaware of what the bright pearl is and is not, entertain countless doubts and nondoubts about it and turn them into indubitable fodder for the mind. But Hsüan-sha's expression has made it clear that our own minds and bodies are the one bright pearl, and so we realize that our minds are not "ours." Who can be anxious as to whether birth and death are or are not the bright pearl? Even if there is doubt and anxiety, they are the bright pearl. There is not a single activity or thought that is not the bright pearl, and, consequently, both advancing and retreating in the Black Mountain Cave of demons is nothing but the one bright pearl.

16. "Uninvolved" is *fu-i*, which is literally, "does not taste." Here it is an abbreviation for *fu-i inga*, "not involved in cause and effect." Hence, my interpolation in the translation. The one bright pearl does not experience cause and effect.