

The Transmission
of the Mind
Outside the Teaching

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The Fourth Generation After The Patriarch Hui Neng: Ch'an Master Huang Po, Also Called Hsi Yun and Tuan Chi

MASTER Huang Po was a native of Fu Chou (capital of Fu Chien province). When he arrived at Lo Yang for the first time, he begged for food (in the street) grumbling, 'Please give one more bowl.'

An old woman came out of her retreat, saying 'What an insatiate man!' The master retorted, 'You have not given me rice, how can you blame me for being insatiate?'

The old woman laughed and shut the door. The master found her unusual and asked to see her. During their conversation he heard her words which revealed (the truth). After a while he took leave of the old woman who said, 'You should go to Nan Chang to call on the great master Ma (Tsu).'

When the master arrived at Nan Chang, Ma Tsu had passed away. Hearing that Ma Tsu's stūpa was erected at the stone gate (of Nan Chang) he went there to pay reverence to the great master. At the time Ch'an master Ta Chi of Pai Chang (monastery) was staying in a hut by the side of the stūpa, and Huang Po (on seeing him) told him of his first intention to call on Ma Tsu and of his wish to hear about the impact of the great master's (revealing) words.

Pai Chang asked, 'Where does the eminent and dignified one come from?'¹

1. Pai Chang posed this question to see if Huang Po knew anything about his own mind that had ordered him to come to the stūpa.

Huang Po replied, 'The eminent and dignified one comes from Ling Nan (i.e. Kuang Tung province).'

Pai Chang asked, 'What is the purpose of the eminent and dignified one's visit?'

Huang Po replied, 'The purpose of the eminent and dignified one's visit is not for anything else.' He then knelt down to pay reverence to Pai Chang.

Pai Chang then related the story of his second visit to Ma Tsu during which while he was standing by his side, the great master Ma looked at the dust-whisk hanging on his bed (stead). He continued, 'I asked the great master, "Is it precisely this functioning (yung) which should be kept away?"' The great master asked, "Later what will you do when you move the two pieces of skin² to receive others?" I took the dust-whisk which I held up, and the great master said, "It is precisely this functioning which should be kept away."³ I then hung the whisk back in its previous place. Thereat the great master gave a loud shout which made me deaf for three (successive) days.'⁴

When Huang Po heard this, he put out his tongue (in astonishment).

2. A Ch'an idiom which means the two lips or the mouth that talks to callers.

3. This is known as Ma Tsu's technique of 'ta chi ta yung' (lit. great in function and great in potentiality) which consists of using the master's strong functioning or the power of his absolute mind to awaken the great potentiality of a disciple so that the latter can absorb the truth. This can be done only when an enlightened master meets a student of exceptionally high spirituality.

When using this absolute functioning to awaken a disciple, this functioning should not be clung to in order to avoid the duality of subject and object, hence 'This is precisely this functioning which should be kept away.'

The word 'It is precisely this functioning' are spoken while the dust-whisk is being held up, and the words 'which should be kept away' are spoken when the dust-whisk is being hung back in its original place.

4. The digit 3 in 'three days' stands for the three karmic conditions of body, mouth and mind. Pai Chang meant that Ma Tsu's loud shout i.e.

Pai Chang asked, 'Will you be a successor to the great master Ma?'

Huang Po replied, 'No, it is only to-day that I have heard from you about the great master Ma's (technique of) great functioning in response to a great potentiality. Moreover, I did not meet him before. If I succeeded to him, I would bring about the destruction of my (Dharma-) descendants.'⁵

Pai Chang said, 'If your competence equals that of your master, you will reduce his merits by one half; you seem to surpass your master in functioning.'

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(One day) Pai Chang asked Huang Po, 'Where do you come from?'

Huang Po replied, 'From the foot of Ta Hsiung mountain where I went to pick mushrooms.'

Pai Chang asked, 'Did you see the great worm?'⁶

Thereat, Huang Po gave a tiger's roar and Pai Chang picked up a hatchet threatening to attack Huang Po who then gave him a slap in the face.⁷

Pai Chang giggled and returned to the abbot's room.

(That evening) in the meeting hall Pai Chang said, 'There is a tiger at the foot of Ta Hsiung mountain; you all should see it. To-day I have been bitten by it.'

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(One day) as the community went out to open up new land,

his great functioning, suddenly liberated him from the three karmas of deed, word and thought which no longer held him in bondage. The digit 3 also means sense organs, sense data and consciousnesses which are disconnected.

5. A succession from an unknown master will not benefit one's own disciples for lack of a spiritual link from master to pupils.

6. Tigers were called great worms in China in the old days.

7. This explains why later Lin Chi slapped the face of his master Huang Po in continued use of the great functioning technique. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Second Series*, page 86. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

Pai Chang said to Huang Po, 'Venerable Ācārya,⁸ it is not easy to open up waste land.'

Huang Po replied, 'I just follow others to work.'

Pai Chang said, 'Please speak of functioning.'

Huang Po replied, 'How dare I shirk responsibility?'

Pai Chang asked, 'How much land have you opened up?'

Huang Po hit the ground thrice with his mattock. Thereat Pai Chang gave a loud shout and Huang Po shut his ears and withdrew.

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Nan Ch'uan one day asked Huang Po, 'Who lives in a citadel made of gold with silver walls?'

Huang Po replied, 'The abode of holy men.'

Nan Ch'uan asked, 'There is another man, what is his place of abode?'⁹

Huang Po went near Nan Ch'uan, brought his palms together and stood still.

Nan Ch'uan said, 'If you cannot say who, why don't you ask the old teacher Wang?'¹⁰

Huang Po then asked (the same question:)' 'There is another man, what is his place of abode?'

Nan Ch'uan replied, 'What a pity!'¹¹

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(One day) the master went to the meeting hall, and as soon

8. Ācārya: a teacher, instructor.

9. This refers to the mind inherent in man.

10. Nan Ch'uan's lay surname was Wang and as he liked to joke, he called himself 'Old teacher Wang'. This is probably the origin of the present title given in Japan to Zen masters who are called 'Roshi' or 'old teacher'.

11. Huang Po gave the correct answer because the acts of going near Nan Ch'uan, of bringing his palms together and of standing still revealed the functioning of the mind.

The literal meaning is, 'It would be a pity if there were another man beside the above one as revealed by his functioning because this extra man

as the monks had gathered there, he took a staff to hit and disperse them. He then called them and when they turned back their heads, he said, 'The crescent is like a bent bow, very little rain but only strong winds.'¹²

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One day the master clenched his (right) fist and said to the assembly, 'The monks all over the country are here (in my fist). If I venture to speak of this you are all at sixes and sevens. If I do not venture to speak of this, it is not worth a clenched fist.'

A monk asked the master, 'What is it if you venture to speak of it?'

The master replied, 'All at sixes and sevens.'

The monk asked, 'What is it when you do not venture to speak of it?'

The master replied, 'Everywhere.'

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One day chancellor P'ei Hsiu invited the master to his official residence and showed him his notes on his understanding (of the Transmission).

The master received the notes and put them on a seat without even looking at them. After a long while, he asked the chancellor, 'Do you understand?'

P'ei Hsiu replied, 'It is unfathomable.'

would be an illusion'. The living meaning is the mind the functioning of which spoke these three words.

The above dialogue should not be interpreted literally for the gist of it is to reveal the mind by means of its functioning which all students of The Transmission outside the Teaching should realize in order to leap over the realm of illusion and suffering.

Readers should refer to the technical terms *T'i yung* - substance and function - fully explained in my book *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Second Series*, page 62. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

12. The winds stand for stirrings in the mind which give no result i.e. the rain or the realization of self-nature and attainment of Buddhahood.

The master said, 'If you so understand it is worth something but if you express it in ink and on paper, where then is our sect?'

P'ei Hsiu then presented the following poem to the master :

Since a Bodhisattva has once transmitted the mind-seal to you,
With a pearl in the forehead of your seven foot body
You have stayed for ten years in Szu Chuen province.
Today you have sailed to the coast of Chang Chou
Followed in your high footsteps by a thousand elephants
and dragons
Who have come from very far away to form a propitious cause
By offering to serve as your disciples
But knowing not who your successor will be.

The master was, however, not elated by this gāthā that praised him but from then on the House of Huang Po prospered in the region south of the Yang Tse river.

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(One day) a monk asked the master, 'What is Tao and how is it practised?'

The master asked back, 'What Tao do you want to practise?'

The monk said, 'If so what is the purpose of Ch'an training and of the study of the Tao handed down from master to master of the Ch'an sect?'

The master replied, 'All this is to receive and guide men of dull roots and is not reliable.'

The monk asked, 'If this is to receive and guide men of dull roots, what will you teach to men of superior roots?'

The master replied, 'If they are men of superior roots, what can you teach them to (help them) seek their own selves. If their own selves cannot be found, what is the Dharma which can match this (state)? Have you not read this in the sūtra, "What do the Dharmas look like?"'

The monk said, 'If so, there is no need to seek anything.'

The master said, 'You can thus save your strength.'

The monk said, 'If so, this is almost complete annihilation but does not show (its) non-existence.'

The master asked, 'Who teaches its non-existence? What is it you want to seek?'

The monk asked back, 'If you do not formulate the search for it, why do you say it should not be annihilated?'

The master replied, 'If you do not search for it, that is all; who teaches you its annihilation? You see (empty) space before you; how are you going to annihilate it?'

The monk asked, 'Is this Dharma identical with space?'

The master replied, 'Does space tell you day and night whether it is identical or different? As soon as I speak of it you immediately give rise to your (discriminative) interpretation.'

The monk asked, 'Do you even forbid interpretation?'

The master replied, 'I have never hindered you. Besides interpretation pertains to feeling and feeling screens wisdom.'

The monk asked, 'Is it correct that no feelings should arise?'

The master asked back, 'If no feelings arise, who says it is correct?'

The monk said, 'As soon as I speak, (you seem to) call it a slip of the tongue.'

The master asked, 'The truth is that you do not understand my words; what slip do you mean?'

The monk said, 'So far all your words are to contradict others but you have not taught the real Dharma.'

The master asked, 'The real Dharma is not upside-down but your questions give rise to inversion. What real Dharma do you search for?'

The monk asked, 'If my questions give rise to inversion, what about your answers to them?'

The master said, 'Just look into things that concern yourself but be unconcerned about other people's.' He added, 'This is like a mad dog barking when there is motion without even

distinguishing between the wind in the grass and that among the trees.'

He further said, 'This Ch'an sect of mine, inherited from past generations, has never taught people to seek knowledge and interpretation. It formulates the study of Tao only to receive and guide beginners, but in reality Tao cannot be learned, for the study of it (is a passion that) screens the Tao. Tao has neither direction nor location, and is called the Mahāyāna-mind. This mind is neither within nor without nor in-between, and is beyond direction and location. The most important thing is to avoid knowing and interpreting. It is only said that the capacity of passion is where the Tao lies, and when this capacity is exhausted the mind is beyond direction and location. This Tao is the Bhūtatathatā and is nameless. Worldly men do not understand this and deceive themselves by staying in the midst of passions.

This is why the Buddha appeared in the world to bare this matter. In case people do not understand it, it is expediently called Tao but you should not cling to (the word) Tao thereby giving rise to interpretation. Hence the saying, 'When the fish is caught, forget all about the trap' and then your body and mind will attain to the Tao of themselves.

He who knows his mind and reaches its source is called a śramaṇa.¹³ The śramaṇa-fruit results from quieting passions but not from study. Now if you use the mind to seek mind, this is relying on the outside to learn (and copy) something from it; what then will you achieve?

13. Śramaṇa: ascetic of all kinds, or a Buddhist monk who has left his family and passions behind. Śramaṇa also means very difficult achievement, diligent stilling of the mind and the passions, purity of mind, and poverty. A Śramaṇa must uphold the Truth, guard well every uprising of desire, be uncontaminated by external attractions, be merciful to all and impure to none, not be elated by joy nor harrowed by distress and be able to bear whatever may come.

Śramaṇa should not be confounded with śrāmaṇera, a male novice and śrāmaṇerikā, a female novice.

The ancients had sharp minds and as soon as they heard of a (teaching) word, they immediately stopped learning; hence they were called 'Men of Tao in their non-active and beyond learning states'.¹⁴ Nowadays, people want to widen their knowledge and interpretation by gathering meanings in the scriptures, and call this their practice without appreciating that wide knowledge and interpretation can turn into obstruction (to their realization of the Truth). This is like giving too much butter to a baby without knowing if it can digest it or not. Students of the Three Vehicles (of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas and Bodhisattvas) are all like this and are called those who do not digest what they eat.

Therefore, all knowledge and interpretation which are not assimilable, are poisons, for they drive people into the realm of birth and death. There is no such thing in the absolute state of suchness (Bhūtatathatā). Hence it is said that "in my royal storehouse there is no such sword."

You should banish from and empty yourself of all previous (knowledge and) interpretation; this is the void Tathāgata Store. If the Tathāgata Store is empty of even the finest dust (that was there before) this is wiping out what is and means the Dharma-rāja (the King of the Law or the Buddha) appearing in the world, which also means "When the Tathāgata was with Dīpaṃkara, He did not obtain anything from the Dharma".¹⁵

This (last) sentence serves to empty yourself of all passionate interpretation and knowing capacity, and by exhausting all feelings within and without so that nothing remains, you will become an unconcerned man.

The teaching of the Three Vehicles are only medicines

14. Quote from Yung Chia's Song of Enlightenment (first two verses). Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Third Series*, page 116 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

15. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Series One*, page 172, last paragraph. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

prescribed to responsive potentialities. All preachings according to circumstances and all temporary methods of teaching differ from one another. If you are clear about them, you are not deceived by them. The most important thing is not to cling to individual capability and special teaching words, in order to interpret the scriptures. Why so? Because "there is no fixed Dharma the Tathāgata can expound".¹⁶

This sect of mine does not discuss all this. It will suffice to know how to rest the mind (and nothing else), for there is no need to think of yesterday and to worry about the morrow.'

The monk asked, 'It is always said that mind is Buddha but I do not know which mind is Buddha.'

The master asked back, 'How many minds do you have?'

The monk asked, 'Is the wordly mind or the holy mind Buddha?'

The master asked back, 'Where are your worldly and holy minds?'

The monk said, 'The Three Vehicles speak of the worldly and holy minds; how can you say they are not?'

The master said, 'The Three Vehicles clearly say that both the worldly and holy minds are false. You do not understand the teaching and now regard both as existing. You take what is false for the real, is this not wrong? Because you are wrong, your mind is deluded. But just banish both the worldly and holy states and there will be no other Buddha outside your mind.

The Patriarch came from the West to give a direct indication that all men are wholly Buddhas. Now because you do not know this, you grasp the worldly and the holy and let your mind wander outside thereby deluding itself. Hence you are told that mind is identical with Buddha. As soon as

16. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 168, 4th paragraph. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

a worldly thought arises, you immediately slip into heterodoxy.

Since time without beginning, the mind has never differed from what it is today. Because there is no different Dharma, it is called supreme enlightenment (samyaksambodhi).'

The monk asked, 'What is the reason for your use of (the word) identical?'

The master replied, 'What reason do you search for? As soon as there is some reason, your mind will differ (from what it fundamentally is).'

The monk asked, 'You have said that since time without beginning it has never differed from what it is today; what does this mean?'

The master replied, 'It is because of your search for it that you differ from it. If you do not search, what is the difference?'

The monk asked, 'If it has never differed, why did you say that it is identical?'

The master replied, 'If you do not hold on to the worldly and the holy (states) who will tell you about the identical? If the identical is no longer identical, the mind also will no longer be mind, thereby banishing both the identical and the mind, then where will you make your search?'

The monk asked, 'As falsehood screens the self-mind, what should be used to wipe out falsehood?'

The master replied, 'The false (idea) of wiping out falsehood is also a falsehood. Falsehood is rootless and springs from discrimination. Now if you only cease discriminating between the worldly and the holy, falsehood will be no more. How then can you wipe it out? You should refrain from even the least clinging to it, and this is the meaning of the sentence, "I give up my two arms¹⁷ and am bound to be a Buddha."

The monk asked, 'If there is no clinging, what then is to be transmitted (from master to pupil)?'

17. Two arms here stand for the dual conception of things.

The master replied, 'The mind is used in this transmission (of mind).'

The monk asked, 'If the mind is used in the transmission of mind, then why did you say that there is no mind?'

The master replied, 'The non-acquisition of a single thing is called the transmission of mind. If you are clear about this mind, there is no mind and also no Dharma.'

The monk asked, 'If there be neither mind nor Dharma (thing) what does the transmission stand for?'

The master replied, 'When you hear about the transmission of mind, you wrongly think that there is something to be gained. Hence the Patriarch said:

Only when the nature of the mind is realized
Can one say that it cannot be conceived.
Nothing, clearly, can be realized
For if it be, there's no awareness of it.'¹⁸

'How can this be taught fittingly to awaken worldly men?'

The monk asked, 'Is the space in front of us an object? Is it possible to perceive the mind without being shown its object?'

The master said, 'Which mind teaches you to perceive itself by means of its object? Even if you could perceive it, it would be a (subjective) mind which sees its object. This is like a man looking at his face in a mirror. Although he sees clearly his eyebrows and eyes, they are just an image. What connection does this image have with your mind?'

The monk asked, 'If its reflection does not come into play, when can the mind be perceived?'

The master said, 'If this implies a cause, which means that you must always rely on objects, when will you be awakened (to the absolute mind)? Have you not read these lines:

18. The gāthā of transmission chanted by the 23rd Indian Patriarch Haklena. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Second Series*, page 46. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

“Suddenly it resembles you but there is not a (real) thing. It is sterile to discuss it in several thousand ways.”

The monk asked, ‘When it is thoroughly known, is it true that there is nothing (that can be) reflected?’

The master replied, ‘If there is nothing, what is the use of reflecting? Do not open your eyes while talking in your sleep.’

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(One day) the master ascended to the Ch’an hall and said to the assembly, ‘Hundreds of kinds of knowledge cannot compare to the absence of desire which is unsurpassable. The man of Tao is one who is unconcerned in everything. In reality there are not so many sorts of minds and there is not even that unconcerned (state). The meeting is now dismissed.’

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(One day) a monk asked the master, ‘What is worldly truth?’¹⁹

The master replied, ‘What is the use of talking about creepers?’²⁰ That which is fundamentally pure and clean, is beyond word, speech, question and answer. The absence of all sorts of (different) minds is called transcendental wisdom.

In your daily activities, whether walking, standing, sitting or reclining, your words and speeches should be disengaged from the worldly way of life thereby (causing) all your utterances to become transcendental (non-dual) in the twinkling of an eye. At present, in this Dharma ending age, most students of Ch’an cling to all sorts of sounds and forms. Why do not they, together with me, reduce the mind to the state of empty space, of a withered log, of a stone, of cold ashes and extinct fire? Only then can there be some little

19. As contrasted with the truth in reality as taught by the Buddha.

20. Creepers: clinging vines that hide the trunk of a large tree or the real thing that counts.

degree of responsiveness (to the absolute thatness), otherwise they will have later to be flogged by Yama (the god of the hell for their sins).

You will have only to keep from all that *is* and *is not* so that your mind will be solitary like the sun in midheaven, bright and shining by itself. Does not this save a great deal of vigour? When you reach this stage, there will be no fixed abode to stay at as you tread the Buddha path, which means 'developing a mind which does not abide in anything'.²¹ This is your pure and clean Dharmakāya which is called Anubodhi (Supreme Enlightenment). If you do not awaken to it, although you may gather wide knowledge and have done austerities by wearing clothing made of grass and by eating wild plants, your non-cognizance of the mind is called heresy and you will join the retinue of heavenly demons. What advantage do you gain from such practice? Hence Ch'an master Pao Chih said, 'Buddha being basically the self-mind, how can it be found in books?'

Even if you succeed in learning the three virtuous stages,²² the four grades of Hīnayāna saintship,²³ and the ten highest stages of Bodhisattva attainments²⁴ your whole mind still remains within the worldly and holy realms. Have you not read this sentence: 'All phenomenal changes belong to the

21. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 173, paragraph 5 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley)

22. The three virtuous stages: (a) the ten practical stages of Bodhisattva-wisdom; (b) the ten lines of Bodhisattva action; and (c) the ten acts of dedication. Cf *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra* pages 167-170 (Rider, London).

23. The four grades of Hīnayāna saintship: śrota-āpanna-phala, one who has entered the stream of holy living; sakṛ-dāgāmi-phala, once more to come, or be born; anāgāmi-phala, a non-coming or non-returning arhat who will not be reborn; and arhat, a saintly man, the highest type or ideal saint in Hīnayāna in contrast with a Bodhisattva as the saint in Mahāyāna.

24. The ten highest stages of Bodhisattva attainment (Daśabhūmi). Cf *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra*, page 172. (Rider, London).

realm of birth and death' and also (the following verses:)

With force expended, a spent arrow is bound to fall and cause
Distasteful things to follow in the next incarnation.
How can it then compare with the wu wei reality,
Which ensures a leap straight to the Tathāgata stage?²⁵

Since you are not a man of such calibre you should follow the converting instruction devised by the ancients in order to widen your knowledge and interpretation.

Ch'an master Pao Chih said, 'If you do not meet with an enlightened master appearing in the world, you will vainly take the Dharma-medicine of Mahāyāna.'

Now if you only learn to develop unmindfulness at all times while walking, standing, sitting and reclining, you may fail, in the course of time, to leap over (to Reality) solely because of your insufficient strength; but if you so continue for another three, five or ten years until you enter (reality), you will surely awaken to it (in the end). It is because you cannot do so that you set your mind on the study of Ch'an and Tao, which is irrelevant to the Buddha-Dharma.

Hence the sūtra says, 'I have not gained even the least (bit of) Dharma, and this is called supreme enlightenment.'²⁶ If you understand this, you will realize that the realm of Buddha and that of demons are both false and that the real is fundamentally pure, clean, immaculate, neither square nor round, neither great nor small, neither long nor short; it is transcendental and non-active (wu wei) and neither deluded nor enlightened (because)

To him who sees clearly that there is not a thing,
There is not a man and also not a Buddha.

25. Quote from Yung Chia's Song of Enlightenment. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Third Series*, page 127. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

26. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 197, third paragraph. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

Countless worlds in the great chiliocosm are only bubbles
In the sea (while) all saints and sages are but lightning
flashes.²⁷

For nothing can compare with a mind set on Reality. From time immemorial until now (your) Dharmakāya has not differed from those of the Buddhas and Patriarchs; where then is a deficiency of the size of a minute hair? If you understand this, you should strive (to realize it) during your present lifetime because (impermanence is quick to come and) an out breath does not guarantee the following in breath.'

The monk asked, 'Why did the Sixth Patriarch who (was illiterate and) did not even know the sūtras, inherit the patriarchate whereas Shen Hsiu did not, although he taught the 500 monks of the community of which he was the head and had expounded thirty-two sūtras and śāstras?'

The master replied, 'Because he (Shen Hsiu) kept a worldly mind and his practice and realization were also on an earthly plane. Hence the Fifth Patriarch transmitted the robe to the Sixth Patriarch who intuitively agreed with the Buddha's profound revelation which was esoterically handed down to him; this is why he inherited the Dharma. Have you not read the following gāthā (of transmission):

The Dharma's fundamental Dharma has no Dharma,
The Dharma of No-Dharma is Dharma too.
Now that the Dharma of No-Dharma is transmitted,
Has there ever been a Dharma?²⁸

Only when you understand this gāthā can you be called a home leaver and practise (the Dharma). If you do not believe me, ask yourself why when Hui Ming in pursuit of the Sixth Patriarch arrived at Ta Yu Ling (mountain range),

27. Quote from Yung Chia's Song of Enlightenment. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Third Series* page 144 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

28. Śākyamuni Buddha's transmission gāthā. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Second Series* page 31 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

the latter asked him, 'What do you want, the robe or the Dharma?' Hui Ming replied, 'I do not come for the robe but for the Dharma.' The Patriarch said, 'Think of neither good nor evil (to stop the thinking process); at this very moment (when no thoughts arise in your mind) what is the Venerable Hui Ming's fundamental face before he was born?'

Hearing these words Hui Ming suddenly awakened intuitively (to Reality) and paid his obeisance to the Patriarch, saying, 'It is like drinking water which the drinker alone knows whether it is cold or warm. I have stayed with the Fifth Patriarch for thirty years and only today do I realize that I have wasted all my time to no purpose.' The Patriarch said, 'It is so.'²⁹

It is at that very moment (of awakening) that one knows that the real purpose of the Patriarch coming from the West was to point direct at the mind for the perception of self-nature and attainment of Buddhahood. All this does not lie in words and speech.

Have you not read that when Ānanda asked Mahākāśyapa, 'What Dharma did the World Honoured One especially hand down beside the kāśāya robe?',³⁰ Mahākāśyapa called, 'Ānanda'. Ānanda answered, 'Present!' Mahākāśyapa then ordered him, 'Pull down the flagpole in front of the monastery.'³¹ This is the Patriarch's pattern of mind transmission.³²

Ānanda who was the Buddha's attendant for thirty years during which he acquired a very wide knowledge of the

29. A term of approval of the pupil's awakening.

30. Kāśāya: a robe embroidered with gold.

31. Ānanda's word 'Present!' reveals the mind which directs him to answer Mahākāśyapa's call. Mahākāśyapa's order to pull down the flagpole reveals the functioning of Ānanda's mind. Hence Ānanda realizes both the substance and function of his Buddha-nature which manifest when the mind is pure and clean.

32. This is Ānanda's great awakening which entitled him to be the second Indian Patriarch of the Transmission of Mind outside the Teaching. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Second Series*, page 32 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

Dharma, was (later) scolded by the World Honoured One who said, 'Your one thousand days devoted to the study of prajñā cannot compare to a day of practice of Tao. If you do not train in Tao you will be unable to digest a drop of water.'

A home leaver should be clear about the aim (of the Transmission of Mind) which has been handed down from time out of mind. For instance, Niu T'ou who was a disciple of the Fourth Patriarch and could preach (the Dharma) in many different ways, did not yet know the upper keystone the Eye of which alone enables one to distinguish between heterodoxy and orthodoxy and the unauthentic and the authentic. And those who cannot awaken (to the absolute) learn only words and speech, turn their attention to the skin bag (the human body) and then proclaim everywhere they go that they know Ch'an. Can they really help you escape from birth and death? These careless old masters will fall into hell with the speed of a (flying) arrow.

'As soon as I see them enter the door I immediately know them. Do you understand this? Waste no time and strive to realize the truth. Do not treat this question lightly. Do not spend your life aimlessly and do not allow yourself to be a laughing stock for those who see clearly. Later you will not escape from being deceived by worldlings. You should ponder over all this carefully and see to whom it is a matter of concern. If you understand it, you will grasp it here and now but if you do not, go away and take care of yourself.'

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When a monk asked the master, 'What is the aim of the coming from the West?' the master gave him a stroke of the staff.

From then on his teaching was for disciples of high potentiality. As to those of medium and low spirituality, they were unable to fathom his Dharma.

During the Ta Chung reign (847-860) of the T'ang dynasty, the master passed away on Huang Po mountain. The emperor conferred upon him the posthumous title of Ch'an master Tuan Chi (Cutter of Time) and upon his stūpa the epitaph of Kuang Yeh (Extensive Deeds).

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From the Wan Ling record

Chancellor Pei Hsiu asked the master, 'There is on the mountain a community of four to five hundred persons; how many of them have realized the Dharma as expounded by the Venerable Master?'

Huang Po replied, 'The number of those realizing the Dharma is unaccountable. Why is it so? Because Tao is realized by the mind and not (by means of) words and speech, for words and speech serve only to convert beginners'.

Pei Hsiu asked, 'What is Buddha?'

Huang Po replied, 'Mind is Buddha and unmindfulness is Tao (the path). Just refrain from stirring the thinking process and from setting the mind on what *is* and *is not*, long and short, the self and others, and subject and object. Mind is fundamentally Buddha, and Buddha is basically mind. Mind is like empty space; hence it is said that the Buddha's true Dharmakāya is like empty space. There is no need to seek it elsewhere, for all longing results in suffering. Even if you pass aeons as countless as the sand grains in the Ganges to practise the six perfections (pāramitā) and a myriad lines of Bodhisattva conduct in order to realize the Buddha-bodhi, it will not be the ultimate one. Why? Because it is causally produced and when its cause comes to an end, it will return to the condition of impermanence.

Hence it is said, 'The Sambhogakāya and Nirmāṇakāya are not real Buddhas and are not the preachers of the Dharma.' Just recognize the self-mind, free from selfness and otherness, as fundamentally Buddha.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'A saintly man who is unmindful is a Buddha, but does a worldly man who is unmindful sink into emptiness?'

Huang Po replied, 'The Dharma is neither worldly nor saintly; it also does not sink into emptiness. Fundamentally the Dharma *is not* but do not hold the view of its non-existence. The Dharma is fundamentally not non-existing but do not hold the view of its existence. For *is* and *is not* are wrong views created by passion, like things seen by a bad eye. Hence it is said:

"Seeing and hearing are like optical illusions;
While the illusory knower becomes a living being."³³

Our Patriarchs' sect formulates only the resting of potentiality and the end of all views. Hence the resting of potentiality causes the Buddha-truth to prosper whereas discrimination causes the army of māras (demons) to flourish.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'If the mind is fundamentally Buddha is it still necessary to practise the six perfections (pāramitā) and the myriad lines of Bodhisattva conduct?'

The master replied, 'Awakening comes from the mind and does not concern the six pāramitās and myriad lines of Bodhisattva conduct. For the six pāramitās and myriad lines of Bodhisattva conduct are concerned with the conversion and guidance of living beings for their salvation.

Even bodhi, the absolute (suchness), reality, liberation, Dharmakāya, the ten highest stages of Bodhisattva attainment and the four states of Hīnayāna sainthood, are all doors to liberation but are irrelevant to Buddha and mind, for mind is but Buddha. Hence of all doors to liberation, Buddha and mind are the highest. If we only refrain from setting the mind on birth and death, kleśa (troubles), etc., there will be

33. Quote from Mañjuśrī's gāthā. Cf *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra* page 143 verse 8 and page 148 verse 15.

no need for bodhi, etc. Hence it is said, 'The Buddha preaches all sorts of Dharmas to deliver all sorts of discriminating minds, but (if) I am free from such minds, what then is the use of these Dharmas?' From Buddhas to Patriarchs nothing was discussed beyond the one-mind which is also called the one-vehicle. Hence there are no other vehicles for all seekers (of the Truth) in the ten directions. This vehicle is twigless and formulates only (one) reality. Hence it is not easy to believe this doctrine.

When Bodhidharma came to this country, in the two kingdoms of Liang and Wei that he visited he found only the great master Hui K'o who believed in the self-mind and awakened to it upon hearing the (Indian) patriarch's words. Cognizance of the self-mind as Buddha with the non-existence of body and mind, is the great Tao (great way) which is fundamentally universal. Hence the profound belief that all sentient beings are of one real (underlying) nature. When self-mind and self-nature do not differ from each other, the self-nature is but the mind. When the mind does not differ from the self-nature it is called the Patriarch. Hence it is said,

Only when the nature of the mind is realized
Can one say that it cannot be conceived.³⁴

Pei Hsiu asked, 'Did the Buddha (actually) liberate living beings?'

The master replied, 'There were really no living beings whom the Tathāgata could liberate.³⁵ If even myself (my ego) cannot be found (to exist) how can those who are not myself (my ego) be found (to exist)? For both Buddha and living beings cannot be found (anywhere).'

34. The first two verses of the 23rd Indian Patriarch Haklena's transmission gāthā. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Second Series*, page 46 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

35. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 198, paragraph 4 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

Pei Hsiu asked, 'The Buddha appeared in the world with thirty-two physical marks to liberate living beings; how can he be said to be non-existent?'

The master replied, 'Everything with form is unreal; if all forms are seen as unreal, the Tathāgata will be perceived.'³⁶

For Buddha and living beings are all created by your perverse views. It is because you do not know your fundamental mind that you hold the view of Buddha which hinders you. As soon as you hold the view of living beings, you are hindered by it. The views of the worldly, of the saintly, of purity and impurity, if you hold on to them, all hinder your mind which will subject you to transmigratory existences. This is like the monkeys one has caught; if one monkey is released and another is caught, there will be no end to this series of freeing and catching.

It is most important for the student to stop all studies and to keep from both the worldly and the saintly, purity and impurity, big and small (things) as well as from all mundane activities in order to achieve the one-mind which should be expediently embellished by moral actions.

Even if you succeeded in studying the three vehicles and the twelve divisions of the (Mahāyāna) canon, you should relinquish all views and interpretations; hence the emptying of the house (of all attendants and furniture except) a sick bed for Vimalakīrti to lay on.³⁷ This means the non-rising of all sorts of views and the non-acquisition of anything whatever in order to be released from Dharma-hindrances and to leap over and beyond all worldly and saintly states in the three worlds (of desire, form and beyond form). Only then can one become a Buddha appearing in the world. Hence

36. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 165, paragraph 7 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

37. Quote from the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, Chapter 5, Mañjuśrī's call on Vimalakīrti page 49, paragraph 4 (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London).

‘I bow to Him who, like space, relies on nothing!’³⁸ – thereby leaping over heresies.

When the mind does not differentiate, the Dharma also is free from discrimination. When the mind is inactive (wu wei) the Dharma is also non-creative. For all things are just transformations of the mind. So when ‘my’ mind is void, all dharmas (things) are also void, with the result that thousands and tens of thousands, of various things come to an end. Space in the ten directions being pervaded by the substance of the one-mind, when the latter does not differentiate, all things (in space) are non-discriminative.

It is only your views and interpretations which differ from each other. This is like the gods using the same precious vessels when they take their meals, but the colour of the rice they eat differs according to the degree of their meritorious achievements.

The Buddhas in the ten directions did not really win the least bit of Dharma, and this is called Anubodhi³⁹ which is not variegated forms and is just the one-mind that is neither bright nor dull and neither wins nor loses (anything). It does not win and so is not in the form of a Buddha, and it does not lose so is not in the form of a living being.’

Pei Hsiu asked, ‘If the mind is formless, do you mean that the Buddha does not have the thirty-two physical marks and eighty accompanying excellent characteristics when he appears to convert and deliver living beings?’

The master replied. ‘The thirty-two physical marks pertain to form, and all forms are unreal.’³⁹ The eighty accompanying excellent characteristics belong to the material (body) and he who seeks to perceive the Buddha by means of his body

38. Quote from *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, Chapter One, The Buddha-land, page 8, the last verse of Ratna-rāśi’s gāthā of praise to the Buddha (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London)

39. Quote from *The Diamond Sūtra*. Cf *Ch’an and Zen Teaching, First series*, part III (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

treads the heterodox path and is unable to perceive the Tathāgata.³⁹

Pei Hsiu asked, 'Is the Buddha-nature identical with or different from the nature of a living being?'

The master replied, 'Their natures are neither identical nor different. According to the Teachings of the Three Vehicles (of śrāvakas, pratyeka-buddhas and Bodhisattvas), there are the Buddha-nature and the nature of a living being. Therefore, the law of causality as taught by the Three Vehicles, specifies both identical and different natures. But the Buddha-vehicle and the Transmission handed down from past patriarchs, do not discuss this; they only point to the One-mind which is neither identical nor different, and is neither cause nor effect. Hence it is said that there is only one vehicle with neither a second nor a third one⁴⁰ unless the Buddha preaches in an expedient (upāya) way.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'Why did the Boundless Bodied Bodhisattva fail to perceive the crown of the Buddha?'

The master replied, 'Really it cannot be seen. Why? Because the Boundless Bodied Bodhisattva is just the Tathāgata who should not be seen further.⁴¹ This is only to teach you not to hold on to the view of Buddha in order not to fall into the (objective) Buddha realm; not to hold on to the view of living beings in order not to fall into the (objective) realm of living beings; not to hold on to the concept of *is* in order not to fall into (objective) existence; not to hold on to the concept of *is not* in order not to fall into (objective) non-existence; not to hold on to the worldly view in order not to fall into the (objective) worldly realm; and not to hold on to the holy view in order not to fall into the (objective) holy realm, for he who keeps from all views is the Boundless Bodied Bodhisattva. He who is immersed in views is a heretic, for heresy delights in all sorts of views. As to the

40. Quote from the Lotus Sūtra.

41. In order to keep from the duality of subjective seer and the objective seen.

Bodhisattva, he remains immutable when confronting all views. For 'Tathāgata' means the suchness of all dharmas (things).⁴² Hence it is said, 'Maitreya is also in this suchness, and all saints and sages are equally in this suchness.'⁴³ This state of suchness is beyond birth and death and is above seeing and hearing. The crown of the Tathāgata is neither a perfect nor an imperfect view and, therefore, does not fall on the side of perfection.⁴⁴ Hence the Buddha-body is wu wei (non-creative) and does not fall into fate and destiny.

It is expediently compared to space and referred to as integral as the great emptiness which is neither deficient nor excessive, and is truly carefree and at ease. All arbitrary speculation about its state belongs to consciousness. Hence it is said, 'The (concept of its) perfection results in a slip into the sea of consciousness and will cause you to drift about like straws floating (in water). Then you will be led to proclaim, 'I know it', 'I have succeeded in practising it', 'I am awakened to it', 'I am liberated' and 'This is the noumenon'. When you are approved by others you are joyful but when you are criticized you are angry. Thus you seem to interpret correctly but what is the usefulness of all this?

I now tell you, 'Be carefree and at ease' and do not deceive yourself by the wrong use of your mind. 'Do not seek the real, but your false views lay down'.⁴⁵ Therefore, all views, both inner and outer, are wrong. The Buddha-path and the demon-path are both evil. Hence for giving rise to a dual view Mañjuśrī was banished to the two iron mountain ranges

42. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 190 last paragraph. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

43. Quote from *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, Chapter 4, page 37. Maitreya meeting Vimalakīrti. (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London).

44. Perfection and imperfection are the two extremes of a duality which is illusory.

45. Quote from the Third Patriarch's gāthā 'Have faith in your Mind'. Cf *Practical Buddhism*. (Rider, London; Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, USA).

that encircles the world. Mañjuśrī symbolizes the absolute wisdom and Samantabhadra symbolizes the expedient (upāya) wisdom. Both absolute and relative wisdoms are opposites to and are used to set off each other, but in reality there is neither absolute nor expedient wisdom. For there is only the One-mind which is neither Buddha (enlightened) nor living being (unenlightened) and is free from differentiated views. As soon as a view of Buddha arises, it is immediately followed by that of a living being. The rising views of *is*, of *is not*, of permanence and of impermanence become the two iron mountain ranges (that obstruct wisdom).

Hence the Patriarch points direct to the very substance of the mind of all living beings which is fundamentally Buddha, and which cannot be realized by practice and which does not come about gradually step by step, for it is neither light nor darkness. Because it is not light it is beyond enlightenment, and because it is not darkness it is above unenlightenment. Hence it is beyond both ignorance and the end of ignorance.⁴⁶

On being initiated into this sect of mine you should ponder over all this. Your skill to see (things) in this way is called Dharma, and he who sees into the Dharma is called Buddha. He who no longer holds on to both Buddha and Dharma is (a member of the) Saṅgha, also called a non-creative (wu wei) order or the Three Gems in One Body. For a seeker of the Dharma does not hold on to Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. He should seek nothing, for non-seeking of Buddha is the non-existence of (the objective) Buddha; non-seeking of Dharma is the non-existence of (the objective) Dharma; and non-seeking of the Order is the non-existence of (the objective) Saṅgha.

Pei Hsiu asked the master, 'The Venerable Sir sees people preach the Dharma; then how can he say there is neither Saṅgha nor Dharma?'

46. Quote from the Heart Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 216, paragraph 5 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

The master replied, 'If you think there is a Dharma that can be preached, this is (what the Diamond Sūtra) calls "Seeing me in sound".⁴⁷ If you see me, this implies a place (which is wrong). Dharma also is not really Dharma, for Dharma is but the mind. Hence it is said:

As this Mind-Dharma is now transmitted
Which Dharma is the real one?
Only when Dharma and self-mind vanish
Can Mind-Dharma be understood.

For in reality there is not a single Dharma that can be realized; this is called sitting in a bodhimaṇḍala (a holy site). By a holy site is meant the non-rising of views. Awakening to the Dharma which is fundamentally immaterial is called the noumenal Tathāgata store (k'ung ju lai tsang).

If you gather the true meaning of the following two lines of verse you will rise above and beyond all discussion:

In essence there is not a thing;
On what then can dust gather?⁴⁸

Pei Hsiu asked, 'Is not the absence of objects precisely that state where, in essence, there is not a thing?'

The master replied, 'Absence is also not correct, for bodhi is beyond location and above knowledge and understanding.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'Then what is Buddha?'

The master replied, 'Your mind is Buddha and Buddha is but mind. Mind and Buddha do not differ from one another, hence it is said that mind is identical with Buddha. For apart from the mind there is no Buddha.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'If the mind is Buddha, how could the

47. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 199, The Buddha's gāthā. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

48. Quote from the Sixth Patriarch's gāthā. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Third Series*, page 24. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

Patriarch who came from the West hand down the Transmission?’

The master replied, ‘The Patriarch coming from the West transmitted only the Mind-Buddha, and pointed directly to your mind which is essentially Buddha. He whose mind does not differentiate is a Patriarch. If you understand (experience) this you will leap over the Three Vehicles (of śrāvakas, pratyeka-buddhas and Bodhisattvas) and all stages of Bodhi-sattva development (into Buddhahood). For you are fundamentally Buddha, and this cannot be attained by practice.’

Pei Hsiu asked, ‘If this is so what Dharma did the Buddhas preach when they appeared in the world?’

The master replied, ‘The Buddha in the ten directions appeared in the world to proclaim only one Mind-Dharma which Śākyamuni Buddha handed down to Mahākāśyapa. The substance of this one Mind-Dharma pervades all immaterial and material worlds and is the doctrine proclaimed by all Buddhas. How then can you understand it by means of words and letters in your discussions? Moreover it cannot be realized by means of a single potential or a single field of mind. For it can only be experienced intuitively. This is the non-creative (wu wei) Dharma-door (to enlightenment). If you really want to realize it you should know that unmindfulness can result in sudden awakening to it. If you use your (discriminating) mind to study it you will keep yourself far away from it. If your mind is free from crookedness and from accepting or rejecting, and if it is as insensible as a piece of wood or a stone there will be some chance for you to study the Tao.’

Pei Hsiu asked, ‘Are we not full of wrong thoughts now? How can you speak of thoughtlessness?’

The master replied, ‘Falsehood has no substance of its own and arises from your mind. If you recognize that mind is Buddha and is free from falsehood, how can falsehood arise in the mind to be clung to? If you do not stir the mind and

do not give rise to thoughts, naturally there will be no falsehood. Hence it is said, "When the mind arises, it creates all things; and when the mind stops arising all things come to an end".'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'When false thoughts arise where is the Buddha?'

The master replied, 'Now as you are aware of the rise of false thoughts, the awareness of that which is not false is awareness of the Buddha. When your false thoughts come to an end even the idea of Buddha is no more. Why so? Because when you stir your mind with the idea of Buddha you think of Buddhahood which can be attained. If you hold the view of living beings you will think of living beings who can be liberated. Therefore, the stirring mind and rising thoughts are the causes of your differentiated views.'

If you are free from all sorts of views, where can the Buddha be located? Therefore, when Mañjuśrī gave rise to the view of Buddha he was banished to the second range of iron mountains that encircle the world.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'At the time of enlightenment where is the Buddha?'

The master replied, 'Where does your question come from and where does your awareness arise? For speech, silence, motion and stillness as well as all sounds and forms proclaim the Buddha-truth. Where else do you want to seek Buddha? Do not put another head on your own head, and do not place another mouth on your own mouth. Just do not give rise to differentiated views, for mountains are mountains, rivers are rivers, saṅgha is saṅgha, and the laity are laity, because mountains, rivers, the great earth, the sun, the moon, stars and planets are not outside your mind. The great chiliocosm (tri-sahasra-mahā-sahasra-loka-dhātu) arises from your own self. Where then are so many things? Because outside the mind there is not a thing. Before your eyes are blue mountains, empty space and the world at large, but clearly there

is not a thing as tiny as a speck that is an object of your (distorted) views. Hence it is said that all sounds and forms (reveal) the Buddha-wisdom. For no dharma (thing) can arise of itself but depends on an (objective) field to manifest, thereby giving rise to a number of wisdoms based on the number of (appearing) phenomena. So the Dharma is preached the whole day long but what Dharma is actually spoken? The Dharma is heard the whole day long but what Dharma is actually heard? Hence Śākyamuni Buddha preached the Dharma for forty-nine years without actually speaking a single word.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'If so where is Bodhi?'

The master replied, 'Bodhi is nowhere. The Buddha does not win Bodhi and living beings do not lose it, for Bodhi cannot be realized by the body and cannot be sought by the mind. All living beings are the expression of Bodhi.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'How then can one develop the Bodhi-mind?'

The master replied, 'Bodhi means the non-winning of anything. If you now set your mind on gainlessness with decisively not a thing to be won, this is Bodhi-mind. For Bodhi has no abode which explains its gainlessness. Hence "when I was with Dīpaṃkara Buddha, I did not gain anything from the Dharma. This is why he predicted my future attainment of Buddhahood."⁴⁹ It is quite clear that fundamentally all living beings possess Bodhi; they should not acquire it once more. Now that you hear about developing a Bodhi-mind you think of using a mind to study aspiring to be a Buddha in order to tread the Buddha-path. Even if you pass three asaṅkhyā (endless aeons) for your practice and training you will achieve only the states of Sambhogakāya (reward body) and Nirmāṇakāya (transformation body) which have nothing in common with your fundamental self-

49. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 190 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

natured Buddha. Hence it is said that to seek an external Buddha having a form does not give rise to one even resembling yours.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'If man is fundamentally Buddha, how can there be four types of rebirth, six different realms of existence and different forms and shapes?'

The master replied, 'The substance of all Buddhas is perfect and neither increases nor decreases (in any circumstance). It remains perfect when entering upon the six worlds of existence; so everyone of the myriads of species is Buddha (in essence). This is like quicksilver poured on the ground which scatters in drops that are all round in shape. Before being poured it was a lump which illustrates (the state of) one in all and all in one. The various forms and appearances are like dwelling places to change which is like leaving a stable for donkeys to enter a house for man, or leaving a human body to enter the body of a deva or that of a śrāvaka, a pratyeka-buddha, a Bodhisattva or a Buddha. These different houses result from the accepting and rejecting mind and consequently differ from one another; but the fundamental nature is changeless.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'What is vīrya (unfailing progress)?'

The master replied, 'The unstirred body and mind are the most vigorous vīrya. As soon as the mind is set on outer quest, this is Kalirāja who is fond of hunting, and if the mind is not set on externals this is Kṣāntiṛṣi.⁵⁰ When both body and mind are no more, this is the Buddha-path.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'Does one win (Bodhi) if one is unmindful when treading this path?'

The master replied, 'Unmindfulness already means treading this path. Why do you still suggest winning and non-winning? The rise of a thought in your mind creates an object; if you

50. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First series*, page 182 last paragraph. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

Kṣāntiṛṣi: a Ṛṣi who patiently suffered insult, i.e. Śākyamuni, in a former life, suffering mutilation to convert the hunter Kalirāja.

are unmindful this is the absence of the object while your mind will come to an end and cannot be searched for.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'What should one do to get out of the three worlds (of desire, form and beyond form)?'

The master replied, 'Think of neither good nor evil and you will get out of the three worlds now at this very moment. The Tathāgata appeared in the world to cut off the (concept of) three worlds of existence. If one gets rid of all sorts of (differentiating) minds the three worlds do not really exist. This is like a speck of dust broken into a hundred parts; if ninety-nine parts are wiped out leaving behind one part which exists, the aim of Mahāyāna is not attained. If all the hundred parts are wiped out the Mahāyāna goal is achieved.'

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The master once ascended to the meeting hall where he said to the assembly:

'Your very mind is Buddha. From all the Buddhas above to all sentient beings including wriggling worms below all possess the Buddha-nature and belong to the same substance of mind. Hence Bodhidharma came from the West to transmit only the One-mind Dharma according to which all living beings are fundamentally Buddhas and the state of Buddha is not attainable by practice. Now just (strive to) cognize your self-mind in order to perceive your self-nature (Chinese, *chien hsing*; Japanese, *kensho*) and do not seek anything else.

How do you cognize your self-mind? That which is speaking now is your mind. If you do not speak and also cease all activities, the substance of mind is like empty space without form and shape and without location and position; it has never been non-existent but is existing without being visible. Hence it is said, 'The mind-ground of true nature has neither head nor tail; its timely conversion of living beings is expediently called wisdom (*prajñā*). When it responds to

ripening potentials it cannot be said to be existing or non-existent (but) at the time of its responsiveness it leaves no traces.

Now that you are aware of this, you should abide in nothingness, and this is called treading the path of all Buddhas. The sūtra says, 'You should develop a mind which does not abide in anything.'⁵¹

All living beings are subject to birth and death in their endless transmigrations because they use the sixth consciousness to move without pause through the six realms of existence thereby enduring all sorts of sufferings. Vimalakīrti said, 'Since the minds of those who are difficult to convert are like monkeys various methods of teaching are devised to check them so that they can be completely tamed.'⁵² Hence it is said that when the mind stirs all things appear and when it ceases moving all things vanish. Therefore, we know that all things including the six worlds of men, devas, asuras, hells, etc. are all created by the mind.

Now you should learn only unmindfulness to wipe out all causality and refrain from giving rise to discriminatory thoughts in order to eliminate (all concepts of) selfness, otherness, desire, anger, like, dislike, gain, loss, etc. to recover the self-nature which is fundamentally pure and clean; this is the practice of Bodhi, Dharma and Buddhahood. If you do not understand this, although you may widen your knowledge, practise austerities, live on wild fruit and nuts and cover your body with grass and leaves, you will fail to realize your mind; this is just heterodoxy practised by heavenly demons and heretics,⁵³ and by ghosts and spirits in water and on land. What advantage can you expect from such practice.

51. Quote from the Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 173 paragraph 5 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

52. Quote from *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, Chapter 10 (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London).

53. Both enemies of Buddha-truth.

Ch'an master Pao Chih said, 'Our fundamental substance is the self-mind; how can it be sought in books?' Now just cognize the self-mind and stop your thinking process, and kleśa (troubles) will come to an end. The *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* says, 'There was only a sick bed on which Vimalakīrti lay',⁵⁴ which means that the mind rests like a sick man on a bed whose clinging and perverse thoughts have come to an end; this is but Bodhi.

Now if your mind is unsettled, you may study the Three Vehicles, the four stages of Hīnayāna attainments and the ten degrees of Bodhisattva development into Buddhahood, but you will find yourself between the two extremes of the worldly and saintly states. And when your practice stops, its effects also come to an end like a flying arrow with force expended, which is bound to fall, and you will continue to transmigrate through the realms of birth and death. Is not such a practice, which fails to conform with the Buddha's teaching and causes aimless hardships and sufferings, a grave mistake?

Ch'an master Pao Chih said, 'He who has not met an enlightened master appearing in the world, wrongly takes the Mahāyāna medicine!'

Now at all times while you are walking, standing, sitting and reclining, practise only unmindfulness free from all differentiation, reliance and clinging, and pay no heed to anything, like a stupid man whom nobody wants to know and who does not want others to know him, with a dull mind like an insensible rock without fissures, which no externals can enter; if your mind is so intractable and does not cling to anything there will be some chance for you to fall in line (with absolute Reality) thereby leaping over the three worlds. Only then can you (aspire to be) a Buddha appearing in the

54. Cf *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, Chapter 5. (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London).

world (to liberate living beings). This passionless (anāsrava)⁵⁵ mind is called transcendental wisdom which will prevent you forming the (good) karma of men and devas and the (evil) karma of the hells, and will eliminate all causes that affect the mind. Your body and mind will be those of a kingly man; this does not mean that you are bodiless but that you can create a body at will (manomaya).⁵⁶ This is what the sūtra says about Bodhisattvas who can transform their bodies at will. If you are unable to realize unmindfulness and if you still cling to form, you will form the demonic karma. Even in your practice of the Pure Land (school) you will create a karma called the Buddha-screen which veils your mind thereby subjecting you to the law of causality; you will not be free to come and go (as all Bodhisattvas do). Hence all Dharmas including Bodhi do not actually exist but were expounded by the Tathāgata to convert worldlings like yellow leaves given to children as gold coins to keep them from crying. Therefore, there is really no Dharma called Anubodhi (Supreme Enlightenment).⁵⁷

Now that you have understood all this, what is the use of roaming about (in your quest of the unreal)? Just adapt yourself to prevailing circumstances to requite your karmic debts but do not form fresh karma which will bring about new calamity. Thus the mind will be serene after all former views and interpretations have been thrown away. This is what Vimalakīrti meant by emptying his house of all his possessions.⁵⁸ The Lotus Sūtra says, 'For twenty years the son was

55. Anāsrava: passionless, outside the stream of transmigratory suffering; transcendental.

56. A Bodhisattva is able to take any form at will to liberate living beings.

57. Quote from The Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, part III, The Diamond Cutter of Doubts. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

58. Quote from *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, Chapter 5 (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London).

ordered to remove excrement from the house' which means removing all views and interpretations from the mind. This sūtra also says, 'Remove the excrement of sophistry.'

So the Tathāgata store is fundamentally void and still and does not contain a single thing. Hence the sūtra says. 'The Buddha-lands are also void.'

He who claims that the Buddha-way can be attained by study and practice, makes an interpretation which is wholly irrelevant. When confronting some potentiality or situation he raises his eyebrows or winks in seeming response thereto and then claims that he awakens to and realizes the Ch'an Dharma. If someone fails to understand his claim he will accuse him of ignorance. If someone says that he wins Bodhi he is filled with joy. If someone criticizes his wrong claim he is filled with sorrow. If he so uses his intellect to practise Ch'an what relevancy does this bear? Even if you seem to realize something this something is an object of your (subjective) mind and has nothing in common with the Ch'an Dharma. This is why Bodhidharma faced the wall to show to others how to cut off all views (arising from the mind).

Hence the saying, 'Forgetfulness leads to the Buddha-path whereas discrimination drives to the demon-state.' Your self-nature is neither lost when you are deluded nor won when you are enlightened. For the self-natured Bhūtatahatā⁵⁹ fundamentally is neither deluded nor enlightened. The great emptiness in the ten directions basically stands for the (boundless) substance of our one-mind. Even if you move to do something you cannot get away from this great emptiness which fundamentally is neither great nor small, neither passionate nor creative, neither deluded nor enlightened, sees into everything but finds not a thing, not a man and also not a Buddha, thus wiping out space completely without leaving behind even an atom of it, which means its freedom from all reliance and attachment. That is the one-way which is

59. i.e. permanent reality underlying all phenomena.

pure and eternal, the self-mind, and the patient endurance of the uncreate (anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti). How can it be subject to debate and inference? For the real Buddha is mouthless and does not expound the Dharma, and the real listener is earless; who then hears it (for him)?

‘Take good care of yourselves.’⁶⁰

*

When a monk took leave of Ch’an master Kuei Tsung, the latter asked him, ‘Where are you going?’

The monk replied, ‘I am going to some other places to learn the five flavoured Ch’an.’⁶¹

Kuei Tsung said, ‘Other places teach the five flavoured Ch’an but here I have only the one flavoured Ch’an.’

The monk asked, ‘What is (your) one flavoured Ch’an?’

Kuei Tsung struck the monk who said, ‘Oh, I am awakened, I am awakened . . .’

Kuei Tsung ordered, ‘Speak, speak!’

As the monk was about to open his mouth to answer, Kuei Tsung struck him again.

Later the monk came to Huang Po who asked, ‘Where do you come from?’

The monk replied, ‘From Kuei Tsung monastery.’

Huang Po asked, ‘What were Kuei Tsung’s words?’

The monk related the encounter he had had when taking leave of Kuei Tsung.

Huang Po then went to the main hall and related the above story to his disciples, saying, ‘The great master Ma (Tsu) had 84 good followers who, when asked questions, exposed their vulgarity except Kuei Tsung who was something (uncommon)’.

*

60. Usual words spoken by a Ch’an master at the end of each meeting, which mean, ‘Take good care of your mind.’

61. The 5 kinds of concentration, i.e. that of heretics, ordinary people, Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna and the Supreme Vehicle.

Huang Po was at Yen Kuan (monastery) where the (future) emperor Ta Chung⁶² had been a novice. (One day) the master went to the main hall to pay reverence to the Buddha when the novice asked him, 'If one should seek neither the Buddha nor the Dharma nor the Saṅgha, what does the Venerable Sir seek in his worship here?'

The master replied, 'I am seeking neither the Buddha nor the Dharma nor the Saṅgha and am in ceaseless worship of this (state of mind).'

The novice retorted, 'What then is the worthiness of such worship?'

The master slapped the face of the novice who said, 'What an unrefined act!'

The master said, 'What is this place where you can speak of the refined and the unrefined?' and gave another slap to the novice who then ran away.

*

Master Huang Po was on a long journey on foot (to visit monasteries) when one day he arrived at Nan Ch'uan.⁶³

At mealtime, he held a bowl and ascended to Nan Ch'uan's seat where he sat. When Nan Ch'uan came he saw Huang Po and asked him, 'What was the year when the Venerable Sir began to tread the Way?'

Huang Po replied, 'Before the advent of Bhiṣma-garjita-ghoṣa-svara-rāja.'⁶⁴

Nan Ch'uan said, 'So you are a descendant of old teacher Wang.'⁶⁵

*

62. Emperor Ta Chung of the T'ang dynasty, A.D. 847-860.

63. A mountain where Ch'an master Pu Yuan stayed after he succeeded Ma Tsu; he was called after the mountain.

64. The King with the awe-inspiring voice, the name of countless Buddhas appearing during the kalpa free from calamities.

65. Nan Chuan's lay surname. See page 124 note 10.

Thereat Huang Po descended from the seat and withdrew.⁶⁶

*

One day Huang Po was sitting in the tea-hall when Nan Ch'uan came and asked him, 'What is the meaning of the teaching that the Buddha-nature is perceived only when samādhi and wisdom are in equilibrium?'

Huang Po replied, 'It means forsaking all attachments during the twelve hours of the day.'⁶⁷

Nan Ch'uan asked, 'Is it not the result of the Venerable Sir's insight?'

Huang Po replied, 'I dare not say so.'⁶⁸

Nan Ch'uan said, 'Let us put aside the cost of the sauce, but who is going to pay for your straw sandals?' At that Huang Po stopped talking.⁶⁹

Later Kuei Shan referred to the above dialogue and asked Yang Shan,⁷⁰ 'Is it true that Huang Po failed in his trick (to entrap Nan Ch'uan)?'

Yang Shan said, 'No, one should know that Huang Po has the capability to entrap tigers.'

Kuei Shan exclaimed, 'How fast your insight is developing!'

66. Huang Po lost because he spoke of time which Nan Ch'uan wiped out, but he descended from the high seat to wipe out space and withdrew to return functioning (yung) to substance (ti).

67. In ancient China a day was divided into twelve hours, instead of 24 as at present.

68. A very polite term in Chinese which means, 'Yes, it is.'

69. Nan Ch'uan meant, 'If you talk nonsense like that your patrons will refuse to pay for your straw sandals.' Huang Po stopped speaking to return functioning to substance, which showed his realization of the mind.

70. Kuei Shan and Yang Shan were master and pupil who founded the Kuei Yang Sect. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Second Series*, page 57. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

One day five visiting monks came (to the monastery). One of them did not pay reverence to the master but drew a circle on the ground and stood inside it.

The master asked him, 'Do you know a good hunting-dog?'

The visitor replied, 'I come to scent the ling yang (antelope).'

⁷¹

The master asked, 'The antelope has no smell, how do you scent it?'

The visitor said, 'I come to find its footprint.'

The master asked, 'The antelope leaves no footprint, where do you find it?'

The visitor said, 'I come to find its track.'

The master asked, 'The antelope is trackless, where do you find its track?'

The visitor said, 'If so, it must be a dead antelope.'

At that the master stopped the dialogue.

⁷²

The following day at the end of a meeting in the main hall, the master called the antelope-seeking-monk to come forward. As the monk came the master asked him, 'Yesterday I did not say my last word, what would you say of it?'

As the monk did not reply, the master said, 'I thought you were a true monk of our sect but you are only a monk seeking the dead meaning of words.'

*

After dismissing the community the master went to K'ai Yuan monastery at Hung Chou. One day chancellor Pei

71. Ling Yang is an antelope with big horns found in Northeast China. It is said that at night it hangs itself up in the branches of trees to avoid being caught by flesh-eating animals. Hence it cannot be found at night and so symbolizes the profound meaning of Chinese poetry which is not easy to grasp and also the living meaning of Ch'an texts which followers of other Buddhist schools cannot understand.

72. The visitor's reply means, 'If so there is no mind.' His reply is correct and the master abruptly stops the dialogue to return function to substance.

Hsiu came to the monastery where he saw pictures on the wall.

Pei Hsiu asked the abbot, 'What pictures are these?'

The abbot replied, 'Pictures of eminent monks.'

Pei Hsiu asked, 'Their pictures are here, where are these eminent monks?'

As the abbot did not reply, Pei Hsiu asked him, 'Is there a Ch'an master here?' The abbot replied, 'There is one.'

Pei Hsiu then asked to see Huang Po and when he saw the master he related his dialogue with the abbot, and asked the master the same question (about the whereabouts of the eminent monks whose pictures were on the wall).

Huang Po called, 'Pei Hsiu' and Pei Hsiu replied, 'Yes.' Huang Po asked, 'Where are you?' Upon hearing this question, Pei Hsiu immediately experienced a minor awakening (satori) and then requested the master to preach in the main hall. (The following is his sermon:)

A student of the Tao should first give up all causal studies and should develop a (dogged) determination not to seek and grasp anything. To him the hearing of the profound Dharma is like a breeze that lightly touches his ears and passes away. If he then refrains from chasing it this is his deep entry into the Tathāgata's serenity which prevents him from giving rise to an expectation of liberation from birth and death.

All past patriarchs handed down the Transmission of One-mind only and of no other Dharma, thus pointing out that mind is Buddha for a sudden leap over and above both the stages of universal enlightenment and wonderful enlightenment.⁷³

Only by a strong determination not to harbour a thought differing (from this One-mind) can one aspire to be initiated into our sect. Can such a Dharma be studied on the spur of

73. For detailed explanation of these two kinds of enlightenment cf *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra* pages 172-173 (Rider, London).

the moment? And so it is said that when you think (of it) you are tied up to the thinking demon. When you do not think (of it) you are tied up to the non-thinking demon. When you are not non-thinking you are tied up to the demon who is not non-thinking. These demons do not come from without but are within your own mind.

Only the footsteps of Bodhisattvas who do not possess (the objective) supernatural powers cannot be found. If your minds habitually give rise to the view of permanence, you are heretics clinging to permanence. If you see all phenomena as empty thereby giving rise to the view of voidness you are heretics clinging to the view of annihilation. Therefore, the three worlds (of desire, form and beyond form) arise solely from the mind and all things (phenomena) come from consciousness. The above states are spoken of when addressing those heretics who hold perverse views.

The Dharmakāya is spoken of as ultimate realization when addressing Bodhisattvas of the three classes of virtuous stages and ten saintly ones.⁷⁴

So the Buddha wipes out the two forms of delusion, the fine and subtle barriers of the known.⁷⁵ If the Buddha himself takes up this attitude, what can be said about (the so-called) universal and wonderful enlightenment?

Since everybody likes to face the light and nobody wants to confront darkness, and because everybody seeks awakening and nobody likes ignorance and *kleśa* (trouble), it is said that Buddhas are enlightened and that living beings are un-enlightened. If you hold on to such an interpretation you will pass hundreds of aeons and thousands of transmigrations through the six worlds of existence which will never come to an end. Why is it so? Because you have slandered the

74. The three virtuous stages are the ten practical stages of Bodhisattva wisdom, ten lines of Bodhisattva action, and ten acts of dedication. The ten saintly stages are the ten highest stages of Bodhisattva development into Buddhahood. Cf *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra* pages 167–169 and 172.

75. Both forms of delusion arise from regarding the seeming as real.

fundamental source of the self-nature of all Buddhas, which clearly reveals that Buddhas are not enlightened while living beings are not unenlightened, for the Dharma is neither enlightened nor unenlightened; that Buddhas are not strong while living beings are not weak, for the Dharma is neither strong nor weak; and that Buddhas are not wise while living beings are not unwise, for the Dharma is neither wise nor unwise.

Thus you always come forward to claim that you understand Ch'an and when you open your mouths to speak you are already stricken with (some kind of) disease, so that you speak of twigs instead of roots, of enlightenment instead of delusion, of function (yung) instead of substance (ti). (In the absolute state) there is no room for your talk and discussion, for all Dharmas, fundamentally non-existent, are also not inexistent at the moment. They are non-existent when (relevant) causes prevail and they are not inexistent when these causes cease. Their root is also non-existent, for it is unreal. And the mind also is not really mind for it is unreal; and form (rūpa) is not really form, for it is false as well. Hence it is said, 'Only when neither Dharma nor self-mind exist, can the Mind-Dharma be understood.' For Dharma is identical with that which is not-Dharma (its opposite), and that which is not-Dharma is identical with Dharma, and where there is neither Dharma nor that which is not-Dharma (its opposite) can the Mind-Dharma, in the twinkling of an eye, develop an insight which reveals all illusions and transformations thereby giving access to past Buddhas who were really non-existent; to future Buddhas who are not non-existent and are not called the future enlightened ones; and to present Buddhas the thought of whom does not stay for an instant, and as a result of which they are not called present Buddhas.

If the idea of Buddha arises do not think of him as enlightened or unenlightened and as either good or bad, and do not accept or reject him. This is like a thought arising in the twinkling of an eye, which neither a chain of a thousand

(strong) rings nor a rope of a hundred thousand feet can bind. This being so how can you think of destroying or stopping it? It is quite clear to you that it is your burning consciousness, so what are you going to do to annihilate it? It is like a mirage; if you think it is near, you will not find it anywhere in the ten directions, and if you think it is distant, it is in front of you. If you want to seek it it will run from you, and if you want to avoid it it will pursue you. You will fail if you want to either grasp or reject it. It being thus we should know that the underlying nature (Dharmatā) of all things is self-so (or so of itself) and that there is no need to be sorry and anxious about it.

The highest teaching of the Three Vehicles is said to be that the preceding thought is worldly and the following one is saintly like turning the palm of a hand up and down, but according to our Ch'an sect neither the preceding thought is worldly nor is the following one holy; neither is the preceding thought a Buddha nor the following one a living being.

Hence all forms are Buddha-forms and all sounds are Buddha-sounds. When you speak of a noumenon all noumena are the same. When you see a phenomenon you see all phenomena. When you see one mind, you see all minds. When you see a Tao (or path) you see all Taos, for to you there is not a place where there is no Tao. When you see a speck of dust you see all the worlds with their mountains, rivers and great earths in the ten directions. When you see a drop of water you see the element of water in all worlds in the ten directions. When you see all dharmas (things) you see all minds.

All things being fundamentally void the mind is not non-existent. That which is not non-existent is *The Wonderful That Is* (i.e. the absolute reality).

Absolute reality is also non-existent and that which is non-existent is identical with that which exists and with absolute voidness. The *Wonderful That Is* (i.e. the absolute reality)

being so, all worlds in the ten directions are not outside our One-mind and lands as countless as specks of dust are not outside a single one of our thoughts.

This being so what can be delineated as inside and outside? It is like the nature of honey which is sweet and is such that all kinds of honey are equally sweet, for we cannot say that one (kind of) honey is sweet whereas the rest is bitter, which is sheer nonsense. Hence it is said that empty space is neither inside nor outside nor in the center; likewise the underlying nature of all things (Dharmatā) is so by itself.

Therefore, living beings are identical with Buddhas and Buddhas are identical with living beings, for fundamentally living beings and Buddhas, mortality and nirvāṇa, passion and passionlessness and worldlings and saints including the six worlds of existence, the four types of birth, mountains, rivers, the great earth and those who possess self-nature and those who do not possess it, are all of the *same* substance. The word *same* (in this context) is also empty (for it does not possess a nature of its own). And *is* and *is not* are also empty. All the worlds as countless as the sand grains in the Ganges are fundamentally void. If so, where are Buddhas delivering living beings and where are living beings delivered by Buddhas? Why is it so? Because the underlying nature of countless things is in the absolute state of suchness.

If you hold on to the view that things happen spontaneously you will slip into the way of heretics bent on spontaneity.⁷⁶ If you hold on to the view of the absence of ego and its object you will fall into the three classes of virtuous states and the ten saintly stages.⁷⁷

Now how can you use feet and inches to measure empty space which clearly tells you that all phenomena are not mutually related for they are all empty by themselves? Hence wherever they manifest they are identical with reality by themselves. Because of the voidness of body this is called

76. Heretics who deny the law of causality. 77. See page 162 note 74.

Dharma-voidness⁷⁸ and because of the voidness of mind this is called mind-voidness.⁷⁹ Because of the emptiness of both body and mind this is called Dharmatā-voidness.⁸⁰ And so even if it is expressed in a thousand ways it cannot be separated from your fundamental mind.

Now as to Bodhi, Nirvāṇa, the absolute Buddha-nature, śrāvakas, pratyeka-buddhas and Bodhisattvas as preached, they are all like (yellow) leaves given as gold (coins) and the (empty) fist shown to babies to keep them from crying. But when the hand is wide open everybody sees that the fist contains nothing. Hence it is said:

In essence there is not a thing;
On what then can dust gather?⁸¹

If fundamentally there is not a thing, the three periods of time (the past, future and present) are also empty.⁸² Therefore, a student of the Tao should enter directly (into the absolute state) equipped with only a sharp chopper (of wisdom); he should know this step before he can succeed (in his quest for the Tao).

Hence the great master Bodhidharma, after arriving from the West, passed through many states before he succeeded in finding only one man, the great master Hui K'o⁸³ to whom he secretly transmitted the mind-seal which is your fundamental mind used to seal the Dharma which in turn seals your mind. Thus both mind and Dharma are sealed, and are just the Dharma-nature (Dharmatā) in the region of reality.

78. i.e. the emptiness of things.

79. i.e. the emptiness of mind.

80. i.e. the emptiness of the underlying principle of all things.

81. The last two lines of the Sixth Patriarch's gāthā. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Third Series*, page 24. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley)

82. This wipes out both time and space to reveal the absolute state free from dualities, relativities and contraries.

83. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, Second Series*, page 50 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

Within this Dharma-nature, who is the foreteller of future realization of Buddhahood, who is the realizer of it and who is the winner of the Dharma? It clearly tells you that Bodhi cannot be won by the body which is (essentially) formless, by the mind which is (also) formless, and by the self-nature which is the fundamental self-natured Buddha at the source. For the Buddha cannot realize further Buddhahood; formlessness cannot be more formless; voidness cannot be more empty; and the Tao cannot realize another Tao. This is because fundamentally there is nothing that can be realized; and this non-realization also cannot be won. Hence it is said that there is not a thing that can be won.

You are only taught to cognize your fundamental mind, and when you do there should be no notion of such cognition. There should also be no notion of non-cognition and of not non-cognition. He who understands such a Dharma will win it right away, and he who acquires it neither feels nor knows it. And he who does not acquire it also neither feels nor knows it. Since such a (profound) Dharma was handed down from the past how many are those who know it? Hence it is asked, 'All over the country how many are those who are unmindful of themselves?'

Now what difference is there between a student who, in spite of his six (discriminatory) sense organs gathers the idea of this (profound Dharma) while confronting a potentiality, an object, a sūtra, a doctrine, a world, the (element of) time, a name, a word, and an (insensitive) wooden puppet? If suddenly a man comes forward and abstains from interpreting every name and form, I say this man cannot be found (again) in all worlds in the ten directions, because there is not a second man (like him). Hence he is an heir to the Patriarchate and is also a genuine disciple of Śākyamuni Buddha.

Therefore, it is said that 'when the prince realizes Bodhi his heir will also withdraw from the world.'⁸⁴ It is very

84. See page 106 last paragraph.

difficult to grasp the deep meaning of this but you are only taught not to seek anything, for if you seek you will miss the point. You will be like a stupid fellow who shouts on the top of a hill and, hearing an echo in the valley, rushes down but finds nothing. He then shouts again and hearing an echo on the top of the hill, he rushes up to find nothing. He will thus pass through a thousand transmigrations and ten thousand aeons to chase after his voice and its echo thereby wasting all his time in the realm of birth and death. If you only stop shouting no echoes will be heard, for Nirvāṇa is beyond hearing, knowing and sound and is without footsteps and tracks. If you can do so you will be close to the patriarchs.'

Dialogue

(*A monk's*) question. Please explain to me the sentence, 'It is like a royal storehouse which does not have such a chopper.'

(*The master's*) answer. 'The royal storehouse stands for voidness, that is the self-nature which contains all worlds in the ten directions of space. These (worlds) are not outside your mind which is also called the Bodhisattva in the empty house. If you discriminate between what *is* and *is not* and between what neither *is* nor *is not* they are all horns of the antelope which are what you search for'.⁸⁵

Question. 'Is there a real chopper in the royal storehouse?'

Answer. 'It is also the antelope's horn.'

Question. 'If fundamentally there is no real chopper in the royal storehouse, why is it said that the heir to the prince held a real chopper from the royal storehouse and went to a foreign state? How can you say that it does not exist?'

Answer. 'The holder of the chopper who went abroad stands for the Tathāgata's messenger. If you say that the heir to the prince held the real chopper from the royal storehouse

85. See page 160 note 71.

in order to go away, that storehouse would have become empty; its nature being fundamentally void, it cannot be taken away by an alien. What do you really mean by your words? And if really there was an alien he is also the antelope's horn'.

Question. 'Mahākāśyapa received the mind-seal from the Buddha, was he a conveyor of (His) words?'

Answer. 'Yes'.

Question. 'If he was a conveyor of words, he could not part with the antelope's horn'.

Answer. 'Since Mahākāśyapa recovered his fundamental mind, he was not the antelope's horn. If he had won the Tathāgata's mind, perceived the Tathāgata's thoughts and seen the Tathāgata's physical form, he could have been the Tathāgata's messenger and was, therefore, a conveyor of His words. Hence Ānanda who was the Buddha's attendant for twenty years and saw only the Tathāgata's physical form, was scolded by Him who said, 'If you only look to the deliverance of living beings, you cannot part with the antelope's horn'.

Question. 'What about Mañjuśrī holding a sword in front of Gautama?'

Answer. 'Five hundred Bodhisattvas realized their power to know all forms of previous existences of self and others,⁸⁶ and became aware of their former karmas. *Five hundred* stands for the five aggregates that make your body. Since they saw these (five kinds of) obstructions in their former life they sought Buddhahood, Bodhi and Nirvāṇa. For this reason

86. The fourth of six supernatural powers (pañcābhijñā) which are: (1) divyacakṣus, deva-vision, instantaneous view of anything anywhere in the realm of form; (2) divyaśrota, ability to hear sound anywhere; (3) paracitta-jñāna, ability to know the thoughts of all other minds; (4) pūrvanivāsānusmṛti-jāñāna, knowledge of all former existence of self and others; (5) ṛddhi-sākṣātkriyā, power to be anywhere or do anything at will; (6) āsṛavakṣaya-jñāna, insight into the ending of the stream of transmigration.

Mañjuśrī used the sword of discerning wisdom to kill the mind set on seeing the Buddha; hence his was called skilful killing’.

Question. ‘What is this sword?’

Answer. ‘It is the discerning mind.’

Question. ‘If the discerning mind is the sword which kills the mind that holds the view of Buddha, it can only kill that false view; how then can the mind be cut off?’

Answer. ‘Your non-discriminating wisdom should be used to cut the discriminating mind which holds views.’

Question. ‘If the sword of non-discriminating wisdom is to kill the mind which sees and seeks Buddhahood, what about the (subjective) sword of wisdom which remains?’

Answer. ‘If there is no (need of the) non-discriminating wisdom to kill the duality of existing and non-existing views (which does not arise), this non-discriminating wisdom is also undiscoverable.’

Question. ‘(What will result) if wisdom cannot kill and the sword cannot cut itself?’

Answer. ‘The sword that cuts and the wisdom that kills itself are both undiscoverable. Thus both mother and child vanish in the same way.’⁸⁷

Question. ‘What is the perception of self-nature?’⁸⁸

Answer. ‘The self-nature is identical with seeing and seeing is identical with the self-nature. The self-nature cannot be used for further seeing of self-nature. Hearing is identical

87. See page 106 last paragraph.

88. Perception of self-nature (Chinese, chien hsin; Japanese, kensho): seeing the under-lying nature of self and its surroundings. Bodhidharma came from the West to teach his Chinese disciples ‘to be clear about the mind in order to perceive the self-nature and realize Buddhahood.’ Therefore, the first step is to be clear about the mind, and when the mind is cognized the student will see his self-nature which leads to his Bodhi or enlightenment. Some modern pundits who have acquired some knowledge of the Japanese Buddhist vocabulary, have wrongly stated that awakenings (Chinese wu; Japanese satori) to the mind come after the perception of self-nature (Chinese, chien hsin; Japanese, kensho); this is

with the self-nature and the self-nature cannot be used for further hearing the self-nature. If you presume that the self-natured seeing can hear and see its (underlying) nature you will give rise to the idea of oneness and otherness,⁸⁹ for it is clearly said, "That which is visible cannot further be (an object of) seeing."⁹⁰ Why do you place (a second) head on your own head? It is clearly said that this is like a tray on which round pearls, big and small, roll separately in all directions without knowing and hindering one another; when they start rolling they do not announce the beginning and when they cease rolling, they do not declare the end.

Therefore, the four types of birth and the six worlds of existence have never been in a condition different from the state of suchness. Moreover, living beings do not see Buddhas and Buddhas do not see living beings; realization of the four grades of Hīnayāna saintship does not see the training in the

like putting the cart before the horse. Readers are urged to read the Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch who only realized satori when he chanted his first gāthā:

‘In essence Bodhi has no tree
And the bright mirror has no chest.
In essence there is not a thing;
On what then can dust gather?’

The Sixth Patriarch awakened only to nothingness, which was his major satori but was still not fully enlightened. It was only when the Fifth Patriarch quoted this sentence from the Diamond Sūtra, ‘One should develop a mind which does not abide anywhere’ that Hui Neng perceived his self-nature and exclaimed, ‘Who would have expected that the self-nature is fundamentally pure and clean, is fundamentally beyond birth and death, is fundamentally complete in itself, is fundamentally immutable and can create all things!’ Cf *Ch’an and Zen Teaching, Third Series*, part I, The Altar-sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch. (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

89. Oneness and otherness: ekatva-anjatva, unity-cum-differentiation, one and many, monism and pluralism.

90. Mañjuśrī’s reply to Vimalakīrti’s words of welcome for his visit. Cf *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* page 50 (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London).

four Hīnayāna states, and vice-versa; the three classes of virtuous states and the ten highest degrees of Bodhisattva achievements do not see supreme enlightenment and wonderful enlightenment, and vice-versa; even the element of water does not see the element of fire and vice-versa; the element of earth does not see the element of air and vice-versa; and living beings do not enter the Dharmadhātu (the physical universe) while the Buddhas do not leave it. Hence the Dharmatā (the underlying nature of all things) neither comes nor goes and is beyond subject and object. If perception is such (i.e. absolute and beyond all dualities, relativities and contraries) how can you still say, “I saw and heard (this) at a kalyāṇamitra’s place where I experienced it, because he expounded it to me like the Buddhas who appear in the world to preach it to living beings?”

For this reason Mahākātyāyana was scolded by Vimalakīrti for using his mortal mind to preach immortal reality.⁹¹ Vimalakīrti’s rebuttal clearly shows that since all things are fundamentally free from ties, what need is there to untie them, and since they are basically free from pollution, what need is there to purify them? Hence it is said, “Such being the characteristics of Reality, how can it be expounded?”⁹²

Now you have filled your mind with (dual conceptions of) right and wrong and purity and impurity, and after acquiring wrong knowledge and false interpretation, you go everywhere and when you meet people you try to pick up those who (you think) have acquired the mind-eye and to distinguish between strong and weak (minded) people. If so there is already a gulf as deep as that between heaven and earth; what then can be said of the perception of self-nature?

Question. ‘You have said that self-nature is perception and

91. Cf. *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* page 29 (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London).

92. Cf. *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* page 22. (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London).

that perception is self-nature. Now if self-nature is free from obstruction and limitation, why is an object unseen when it is screened by something and why in open space are things seen when they are near and unseen if they are far away?’

Answer. ‘This is because you give rise to heresy. If you say that screened objects are unseen and unscreened objects are seen because the self-nature is subject to screening, what relevance is there in your question? Moreover, the self-nature is neither that seeing nor that unseeing; and dharmas (things) are also neither that seeing and that unseeing. To him who has perceived his self-nature, where is a place which is not his fundamental nature? For this reason the six worlds of existence, the four types of birth, mountains, rivers and the great earth are all identical with the pure and clear substance of his self-nature. Hence it is said, “Seeing form (rūpa) is just seeing mind” for form and mind do not differ from each other. Because of your attachment to form you give rise to seeing, hearing, feeling and knowing but if you disengage yourself from the objects in front of you, thereby realizing (the faculty of) seeing you will slip into the two vehicles of śrāvakas and pratyeka-buddhas who have access to this seeing.

If objects in open space are seen when they are near and unseen when they are far away, this is the interpretation by heretics, for the Tao is neither within nor without and neither near nor distant. That which is near and is unseen is the (underlying) nature of all things. If you do not even see something which is near, I do not see your point when you ask about distant things which are unseen by you.’

Question. ‘I do not understand all this; will you please teach me?’

Answer. ‘I do not have a single thing myself and have never given a single thing to others. Since time without beginning you have been taught by others to search for agreement and understanding; is this not what happens when

“both teacher and pupil are bound to suffer from the miseries inflicted by the royal law?”⁹³

You should know that if you are unmoved by the second aggregate of reception in the time of a thought your body (rūpa, the first aggregate of form) becomes free from responsiveness (vedanā).

If you are unmoved by the third aggregate of conception in the time of a thought, your body becomes free from conception (sañjñā).

If you are determined to be unmoved and non-active in the presence of the fourth aggregate of discrimination, your body becomes free from differentiation (saṃskāra).

If you stop thinking and judging, your body is clearly free from consciousness, the fifth aggregate (vijñāna).

Now if you give rise to a discriminating thought you will slip into the twelve links in the chain of existence which begins with “from ignorance, disposition” and ends with “from birth, old age and death” with causes and effects alternating with one another.⁹⁴ This is why Sudhana, in search of teachers, called at 110 places but found himself searching for these twelve nidānas.⁹⁵ Finally he met Maitreya who urged him to call on Mañjuśrī.

Mañjuśrī is your fundamental Dharmakāya in delusion. If your mind is set on wandering outside in search of men of good counsel, as soon as a thought of yours arises, it ends immediately, and as soon as it ends it arises again. Hence the

93. Quote from *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra*, Chapter VIII, The Buddha’s warning to his disciples against wrong practice of the Dharma. (Rider, London).

94. For detailed explanation see *Practical Buddhism* pages 7-8 (Rider, London; The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, USA).

95. The fifty-five men of good counsel (kalyāṇamitras) mentioned in the chapter ‘Entry into the Dharmadhātu’ of the Avataṃsaka Sūtra.

Sudhana called on 55 men of good counsel for instruction and won 55 marks in his practice of the Dharmas received from them. As he made progress and advanced to higher positions he won another 55 marks, or 110 in all.

Buddha says, “Oh ye, bhikṣus, you are born, age, decay and die at the same time.” As causes and effects succeed one another in endless succession, they are just the five rising and falling assemblages, also called the five aggregates.

If no thoughts arise, all the eighteen dhātus (six sense organs, six objects and six consciousnesses) are empty and your body is the flower and fruit of Bodhi and your mind is the spiritual wisdom, also called the mysterious observatory.

If there is a dwelling place, your body becomes a corpse, also called a ghost guarding a dead body’.

Question. ‘Vimalakīrti kept silent without saying a word and Mañjuśrī praised him and said, “This is true initiation into the non-dual Dharma”’;⁹⁶ what does all this mean?’

Answer. ‘The non-dual Dharma is your fundamental mind. Speaking and non-speaking show a duality of rise and extinction. Because speechlessness shows nothing (because it shows no discrimination) Mañjuśrī praised Vimalakīrti (for his correct interpretation of the absolute state)’.

Question. ‘When Vimalakīrti did not speak was voice (sound) annihilated?’

Answer. ‘Speech is identical with silence and silence is identical with speech, for both are non-dual (by nature). Hence it is said that the real (underlying) nature of sound is indestructible. Mañjuśrī’s (faculty of) hearing is also indestructible. For the same reason, the Tathāgata always preaches and never stops preaching. What the Tathāgata preaches is the Dharma, and the Dharma is (His) preaching, for Dharma and preaching are not a duality. Even the two bodies of Sambhoga and Nirmāṇa, Bodhisattvas, śrāvakas, mountains, rivers, the great earth, waters, birds and groves, all preach the Dharma.⁹⁷ Hence speech preaches it and speechlessness also preaches it. Such preaching continues all the time but (in

96. Cf *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, page 100. (Shambala, Berkeley; Routledge & Kegan, London).

97. For they are all created by the mind and should be looked into in the quest for the Dharma.

reality) no preaching actually takes place. In spite of all this, silence is the root.'

Question. 'The śrāvakas can hide their forms in the three worlds (of desire, of form and beyond form) but cannot do so (in the state of) Bodhi. Why is it so?'

Answer. 'Form is matter. The śrāvakas, by forsaking views and practice⁹⁸ are able to escape from kleśa (trouble) but cannot hide themselves in (the state of) Bodhi; hence they are caught by the king of māras (demons).⁹⁹ For during their silent meditation in the groves, they still hold on to the subtle view of Bodhi-mind (i.e. relative Nirvāṇa).'

The Bodhisattvas are determined not to accept or reject anything in the three worlds as well as in (the state of) Bodhi. They do not accept anything and are free from the influences of the seven elements (of earth, water, fire, wind, space, view and consciousness); so they cannot be found in these seven elements. They do not reject anything and are not caught by external demons.

If you hold on to something, a seal is formed to imprint the six worlds of existence and four types of birth. If you cling to the void, the imprint of emptiness appears.

You should know that when one is determined not to stamp anything this seal is space which is neither unity nor diversity, for space, though void, is fundamentally not empty and because the seal is basically non-existent. He will see Buddhas appearing in the ten directions of space like flashes of lightning.¹⁰⁰ To him (even) living beings that crawl and wriggle are like (shadows and) echoes, and all lands countless as specks of dust in the ten directions, are like a drop of water

98. Inverted views and practice of them.

99. The lord of heavenly demons in the sixth heaven of the realm of desire who hinders human beings in their practice of the Dharma.

According to *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra* some Bodhisattvas also appear as lords of heavenly demons to convert living beings. Cf *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra* (Rider, London).

100. Without clinging to Buddhas.

in the sea. When he hears all the very profound Dharmas, they are like illusions and transformations.¹⁰¹ When the mind does not differentiate and the Dharma is beyond diversity, (you will see that) thousands of sūtras and tens of thousand of śāstras deal only with your One-mind. If you can forsake all forms you can, as the saying goes, use all expedient means diligently to solemnize your One-mind.'

Question. 'What is the meaning of the sentence, "In a past life my body was mutilated by Kalirāja . . ."?'¹⁰²

Answer. 'The immortal seer (Kṣāntiṛṣi)¹⁰³ is your mind and Kalirāja is craving. The inability to keep the royal position is (caused by) the desire of gain. This is like students who nowadays, instead of accumulating merits (derived from the practice of morality and discipline) want to follow what they see (around them); what difference is there between them and Kalirāja? For seeing form injures the seer's eyes, hearing sound impairs his ears, and feeling and knowing are also harmful and are called the dismemberment of body.'

Question. 'If the seer could abide in his patient endurance there should be no dismemberment, for it is not possible to have one mind which can endure and at the same time another mind which cannot endure.'

Answer. 'Your view of the non-create (the absolute) and your interpretation of patient endurance and of non-seeking, are all harmful.'

Question. 'When the seer was mutilated, did he feel pain? Further, if there was no (ego) to feel the pain, who suffered the torture?'

Answer. 'If you do not feel pain, what do you search for by rearing your head?'

101. Which are not worth his attachment.

102. Quote from The Diamond Sūtra. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 182 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

103. The immortal seer was Śākyamuni Buddha who, in former life, suffered mutilation to convert Kalirāja. Cf *Ch'an and Zen Teaching, First Series*, page 182 note 4 (Rider, London; Shambala, Berkeley).

Question. 'When Dīpaṃkara Buddha foretold (Śākyamuni's) coming enlightenment, did he mean it would occur in or after 500 years?'

Answer. 'There was no prediction of enlightenment in 500 years for enlightenment implies the non-relaxation of your determination neither to reject saṃsāra nor to accept Bodhi. You have only to realize the unreality of the world for which there is no prediction either during or after 500 years.'

Question. 'Does not this mean that awakening to the non-existence of the three periods of time (the past, future and present) has been achieved.'

Answer. 'There is not a thing which can be achieved.'

Question. 'Why is it repeatedly said that passing through these 500 years requires an extremely long time?'

Answer. 'These 500 years were an extremely long time because Śākyamuni was still a seer but when Dīpaṃkara Buddha foretold his coming enlightenment, there was not the least Dharma which could be won.'

Question. 'The sūtra says:

'Which helps me to root out wrong thoughts that have been held for untold aeons

And teaches me how to realize Dharmakāya in an instant.'¹⁰⁴
What is the meaning of these two lines?'

Answer. 'If three endless aeons¹⁰⁵ were passed in the practice of the Dharma nothing would be achieved, but if in a kṣaṇa¹⁰⁶ the Dharmakāya is won thereby achieving an insight into the self-nature, this is still the ultimate stage according to the Three Vehicles. Why is it so? Because of the (subjective) seeing into the (objective) Dharmakāya which still belongs to the partial revelation of the Truth.'

104. Quote from Ānanda's gāthā. Cf *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra* page 82 (Rider, London).

105. According to the teaching three endless aeons are required to 1, hear the Dharma, 2, practise it and 3, realize it.

106. Kṣaṇa: the shortest measure of time; 60 kṣaṇa equal one finger-snap, 90 a thought, 4,500 a minute.

Question. 'Does he who suddenly perceives the Dharma understand the aim of the Patriarch ('s Transmission)?¹⁰⁷'

Answer. 'The Patriarch's mind is beyond the great emptiness (i.e. immeasurable).'

Question. 'Does it have limits?'

Answer. 'Limits and limitlessness pertain to relativity as regards measurement. For the Patriarch said, "It is neither measurable nor immeasurable, and neither not measurable nor not immeasurable, thus wiping out all relativities. Nowadays you students are still unable to leap over the teaching in the Three Vehicles; how can you be called Ch'an masters? You are taught clearly that the Transmission forbids loose talk which only creates heresy. This is like drinking water which the drinker alone knows whether it is cold or warm. Just do not stray from the one uniform act (of body, mouth and mind) and from the one resting place (in the absolute) for a kṣaṇa in which no differentiating thoughts arise. If you cannot do this, it will be impossible for you to escape from the wheel of Saṃsāra."'

Question. 'The Buddhakāya is transcendental (wu wei) and does not fall into fate and destiny; why then were there 8 bushels and 4 pecks of relics in his (the Buddha's) body?'

Answer. 'If you hold such a view the relics you see are false and are not real.'

Question. 'Do the relics exist fundamentally or do they come from merits?'

Answer. 'They neither exist fundamentally nor result from merits.'

Question. 'If they neither exist fundamentally nor result from merits, why can the Tathāgata's bones, which were subliminated and brought to perfection, be preserved until this day?'

The master scolded the questioner, saying: 'If you hold on

107. This refers to the aim of Bodhidharma who came from India to transmit the Mind-Dharma to his Chinese disciples.

to such a view and interpretation, how can you be called a Ch'an practiser? Do you see bones in the great emptiness? The minds of the Buddhas are like the great emptiness; where can you search for bones?'

Question. 'Then what are the relics we now see?'

Answer. 'They are created by your wrong thinking mind.'

Question. 'Do you have relics? Please show them to us.'

Answer. 'Real relics are not easily seen. If you (can) use your ten fingers to pulverize Mount Sumeru, then you will see real relics.'¹⁰⁸

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(One day the master said to the assembly), when inquiring into Ch'an and studying the Tao, one should keep from developing a mind wherever one may happen to be, and all consideration should be confined to unmindfulness which results in the prosperity of the Way of the Buddhas, for discrimination helps the growth of the army of demons. The ultimate end is that not a Dharma as tiny as a hair can be gained.

Question (by a monk). 'To whom did the Patriarch (Bodhidharma) transmit the Dharma?'

Answer (by the master). 'No Dharma was transmitted to anybody.'

Question. 'What did the second Patriarch (Hui K'o) mean when he asked his master (Bodhidharma) to quieten his mind?'

Answer. 'If you say there was a second patriarch, this is identical to finding the mind, but since the mind could not be found, his master said, "I have quietened your mind", for if the mind could be found it would belong to the state of birth and death.'

Question. 'Did the Buddha put an end to ignorance?'¹⁰⁹

Answer. 'Ignorance is where all Buddhas achieved enlightenment. Therefore, everything that arises from conditional

108. If you wipe out illusions you will see real relics.

109. The first of the twelve links in the chain of existence.

causation is the Bodhimaṇḍala.¹¹⁰ And a speck of dust or any form that is seen is nothing but boundless absolute nature. The rising and lowering of a foot¹¹¹ does not stray from the Bodhimaṇḍala which means that nothing can be gained. I now tell you this, “When nothing is won this is sitting in the Bodhimaṇḍala”.’

Question. ‘Does ignorance pertain to brightness or darkness?’

Answer. ‘Ignorance is neither brightness nor darkness which are two alternating states (having no independent nature of their own). Moreover, ignorance is neither bright nor dark. It is not bright now but was fundamentally bright. (The non-dual profound meaning of) the sentence, ‘*It is neither bright nor dark*’ confuses the eyesight of men everywhere. Hence it is said that if people all over the world are (as wise as) Śāriputra and join together to exhaust their thinking and figuring they will never be able to fathom the Buddha-wisdom, for His unhindered wisdom exceeds the boundless empty space in which there is room for you to speak and discuss. (It is said that) the Buddha’s boundlessness equals the great chiliocosm. Suddenly a Bodhisattva comes forward to bestride the great chiliocosm but fails to come out of Samantabhadra’s pores; now what sort of ability are you going to use to learn from and imitate all this?’

Question. ‘If nothing can be realized by study (and practice), why is it said:

Though all return to One nature at the source,
There are many expedient methods for the purpose?¹¹²

Answer. ‘The first line means that the real (underlying)

110. A holy site. Cf *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* pages 38–41 and footnote 1 of page 39.

111. Raising a foot is returning function (yung) to substance (ti) and lowering it is leaving substance to perform its function.

112. Quote from Mañjuśrī’s gāthā. Cf *The Śūraṅgama Sūtra* page 143 lines 15–16 of the gāthā (Rider, London).

nature of ignorance is the (fundamental) nature of all Buddhas. The second line means that śrāvakas see the birth and death of ignorance; pratyeka-buddhas see only the destruction of ignorance but not its birth, thereby realizing the subsidence and extinction of all rising thoughts; and the Buddhas perceive the constant birth of all living beings who are not really born and their death without their being really dead. That which is beyond birth and death is the ripening Mahāyāna-fruit. Hence it is said, "When the fruit ripens Bodhi is complete, but when the flowers are in full blossom, the (illusory) world arises." For raising a foot is (the state of) Buddha and lowering a foot is (the state of) living beings.¹¹³ It is said that the Buddha is the most honoured among two-footed beings¹¹⁴, that is one foot standing for noumenon and the other for phenomenon which implies living beings, birth and death and all (external) things. Since you discard (this unimpeded interaction of noumenon and phenomenon) all your thoughts are now geared to the study of Buddhahood because of your dislike of living beings which vilifies all Buddhas in the ten directions.

For this reason the Buddha (Śākyamuni) appeared in the world to teach people how to hold implements to sweep up ordure, the ordure of sophistry, that is to teach you to wipe out all concepts of study and views, and to get rid of them completely in order not to slip into sophistry. This is also called sweeping up ordure so that you will not set your mind (on anything), and if your mind stops arising you will realize great wisdom which will decisively prevent you differentiating between Buddhas and living beings. Only when differentiating ceases can you be initiated into our Ts'ao Ch'i sect.¹¹⁵

113. The term 'raising a foot' and 'lowering it' has been explained in note III of page 181.

114. A title of the Buddha who is most honoured among men and devas who are two-footed beings.

115. The sect founded by the Sixth Patriarch at Ts'ao Ch'i. Cf *Ch'an*

For this reason since time of old past saints said, "Less action is required for our Sect which formulates non-action as its point of departure, this is the non-differentiating One-mind into which most people dare not enter when they reach it. I do not say that no one succeeds in realizing it but that only a few people get through it, and those who so succeed, are all Buddhas."

Take good care of yourselves (i.e. of your minds).'

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Question. What should one do to avoid slipping into gradation?

Answer. Everyday you take your meals without the idea of chewing a grain of rice, and everyday you walk without being tied up to the concept of trampling on the ground; thus you will be free from the notion of selfness and otherness. All day long although you are in the midst of activities you do not allow yourself to be deceived by them; only then can you be a sovereign being who does not see all forms. Do not cling to the three (periods of) time because the past has not gone, the present does not stay and the future will not come. So you will be at ease to sit erect in a laissez-faire attitude; only then can this be called liberation. Strive to realize this.

Of thousands and tens of thousands of disciples of our sect only three to five succeed in achieving their aim. If you do not strive now you will bring calamity on yourself later. Hence it is said, 'If you do not strive to settle all this in your present lifetime, who will endure (for you) untold miseries for endless aeons?'