

Soto Zen Text Project

© 2007 Sotoshu Shumicho

Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma

Book 44

The Way of the Buddha

Butsudō

TRANSLATION

The old buddha of Caoqi once said to the assembly, "There are forty ancestors from Huineng to the Seven Buddhas."¹

In investigating these words, [we should understand them to mean that] from the Seven Buddhas to Huineng there are forty buddhas. This is the way to count in counting the buddhas and ancestors. Counting in this way, the Seven Buddhas are seven ancestors, and the thirty-three ancestors are thirty-three buddhas. Such is the import of Caoqi's [saying]. It is the instruction of a buddha of correct descent: only a direct heir to the correct transmission correctly transmits this way of counting.

From the Buddha Śākyamuni to Caoqi there are thirty-four ancestors. This succession of buddhas and ancestors is in each case like Kāśyapa encountering the Tathāgata, like the Tathāgata gaining Kāśyapa.²

Just as the Buddha Śākyamuni studied under the Buddha Kāśyapa, so do the masters and disciples living now; therefore, the treasury of the eye of the true dharma [transmitted from Śākyamuni to Mahākāśyapa] has actually been passed down to us from heir to heir. The correct life of the buddha dharma is nothing but this correct transmission. Because the buddha dharma is thus correctly transmitted, [the masters and disciples] are each the direct heir of the [Buddha's] bequest.

Thus all of them have been fully endowed with the virtues and the essential functions of the way of the buddha. Transmitted from the Western Heavens to the Eastern Earth [i.e., from India to China], [this tradition spans] 18,000 *li*; transmitted from [Śākyamuni's] lifetime to the present, [it continues] over two thousand years. A group that has not studied this principle rashly and mistakenly says [the following]. The treasury of the eye of the true dharma, the wondrous mind of nirvana, correctly transmitted by the buddhas and ancestors, they rashly call the "Zen school." They call the ancestral masters "Zen ancestors"; they call the students "Zen masters" or "Zen preceptors"; or they call themselves "lines of the Zen houses." These are all but "branches and leaves" that have taken a biased view as the "root." When, throughout the Western Heavens and Eastern Earth, from ancient times till the present, there has not been the term "Zen school," rashly to call oneself [by this term] is to be a demon who would destroy the way of the buddha, an unbidden enemy of the buddhas and ancestors.

* * * * *

In the *Linjian lu* by Shimen [i.e., Juefan Huihong], it is said,

When Bodhidharma first went to Wei from Liang, he proceeded to the foot of Mt. Song, where he stopped at Shaolin. There he just sat facing a wall. This was not the practice

of *dhyāna* [i.e., *zen*, “meditation”], but after a while others, unable to fathom what he was doing, held that Dharma practiced *dhyāna*. This *dhyāna* is but one among various practices; how could it suffice to exhaust [the practice of] the holy ones? Nevertheless, people of the time took it in this way; the historians followed this and recorded him with those that practiced *dhyāna*, thus making him a confederate of the partisans of “dead wood and cold ashes.” Be that as it may, the holy ones do not stop at *dhyāna*, and yet they do not oppose *dhyāna*. It is like “change,” which is beyond *yin* and *yang* and yet does not oppose *yin* and *yang*.

[Bodhidharma] is called the twenty-eighth ancestor when [Śākyamuni’s disciple] Kāśyapa The Great One is taken as the first ancestor; from the Buddha Vipāśyin, he is the thirty-fifth ancestor. These Seven Buddhas and twenty-eight ancestors have never taken *dhyāna* to exhaust the verification of the way; therefore, our ancient forebear [Huihong] says here, “*Dhyāna* is but one among various practices; how could it suffice to exhaust [the practice of] the holy ones?”

This ancient forebear has seen something of the person [of Bodhidharma], has entered the interior of the hall of the lineage of the ancestors; therefore he has these words. Nowadays, throughout the entire land of the Great Song, [his type] would be difficult to meet, would be welcome indeed. Even if [Bodhidharma were practicing] *dhyāna*, we should not call [this practice] the “*Dhyāna* [or *Zen*] school,” much less [consider] *dhyāna* to be a general essential of the buddha dharma.

Yet, there are those who speak of the great way correctly transmitted from buddha to buddha as the “Zen school.” They have never seen the way of the buddha even in their dreams; they have never heard of it in their dreams; they have never participated in its transmission in their dreams. We are not to acknowledge that those who call themselves the “Zen school” have the buddha dharma. Who ever spoke of a “Zen school”? There has never been a buddha or ancestor who spoke of a “Zen school.” We should realize that the name “Zen school” is a name used by Māra Pāpīyān; and those who use Māra Pāpīyān’s name are the minions of Māra, not the progeny of the buddhas and ancestors.³

* * * * *

When the Bhagavat, before an assembly of a million on Sacred [Vulture] Peak, took up an *udumbara* flower and winked, the assembly was silent; only Kāśyapa the Worthy smiled. The Bhagavat said, “I have a treasury of the eye of the true dharma, the wondrous mind of nirvana; together with my *saṃghāṭī* robe, I bequeath it to Mahākāśyapa.”⁴

In the Bhagavat’s bequeathal to Kāśyapa The Great One, [he said] “I have a treasury of the eye of the true dharma, the wondrous mind of nirvana.” He did not go on to say, “I have a ‘Zen school,’ which I bequeath to Mahākāśyapa.” He said, “Together with my *sāṅghāṭī* robe,” not “together with the ‘Zen school.’” Thus, we do not hear of the name “Zen school” during the Bhagavat’s lifetime.

* * * * *

The First Ancestor [Bodhidharma] addressed the Second Ancestor [Huike], saying,

The unsurpassed wondrous way of the buddhas takes vast *kalpas* [æons] of spiritual fortitude, practicing what is difficult to practice, enduring what is difficult to endure. How could one of little virtue and little wisdom, of frivolous mind and vain mind, think to aspire to the true vehicle?

He also said, “The seal of the dharma of the buddhas is not obtained from another.”

And he said, “The Tathāgata bequeathed the treasury of the eye of true dharma to Kāśyapa The Great One.”

Both the “unsurpassed wondrous way of the buddhas” and the “treasury of the eye of the true dharma” spoken of here are the “seal of the dharma of the buddhas.” At this time, there is no mention at all of a “Zen school,” nor does one hear of reasons to speak of a “Zen school.” The “treasury of the eye of the true dharma” here is what has been personally bequeathed in “raising the eyebrows and blinking the eyes,” what has been conferred in the “bones and marrow of body and mind,” what has been received in the “bones and marrow of body and mind.” It is what has been transmitted and received “before the body and after the body,” what has been transmitted and received “beyond the mind and outside the mind.”⁵

One does not hear the name “Zen school” in the assembly of the Bhagavat and Kāśyapa; one does not hear it in the assembly of the First and Second Ancestors [Bodhidharma and Huike]; nor does one hear it in the assembly of the Fifth and Sixth Ancestors [Hongren and Huineng], or in the assemblies of [Huineng’s two major disciples,] Qingyuan and Nanyue. No one knows when or by whom this name originated. Probably it comes from scholars, unworthy of the name, who secretly sought to destroy the dharma or to steal the dharma. For later students rashly to use a name never acknowledged by the buddhas and ancestors will be the ruin of the house of the buddhas and ancestors. Moreover, [such use] suggests that there is some dharma called the “Zen school” other than the dharma of all the buddhas and ancestors. If there were [a dharma] other than the way of the buddhas and ancestors, it would be a dharma of those outside the way [i.e., non-Buddhists]. As progeny of the buddhas and ancestors, we should study the “bones, marrow and countenance” of the buddhas and ancestors. We should throw ourselves into the way of the buddhas and ancestors, not shrink off to study what is outside the way. We enjoy the rare opportunity of having the body and mind of a human, due to the [karmic] power of past pursuit of the way; having received this beneficent power, mistakenly to serve those outside the way is no way to repay the beneficence of the buddhas and ancestors.

Recently in the Great Song, the common classes throughout the country hear this false name “Zen school,” and the lay followers compete to spread talk of such false names as the “Zen school,” or the “[Bodhi]dharma school,” or the “Buddha Mind school,” till they would corrupt the way of the buddha. This is the corrupt way of those who have never known the great way of the buddhas and ancestors, who have not seen or heard, believed or accepted even that there is a treasury of the eye of the true dharma. Who, knowing the treasury of the eye of the true dharma, would use a false name for the way of the buddha?

* * * * *

Therefore,

The Great Master Wuji of Shitou Hermitage on Mt. Nanyue [i.e., Shitou Xiquian] ascended the hall and addressed the assembly, saying, “My dharma gateway has been transmitted from prior buddhas. It doesn’t concern meditation or vigour; it merely masters the buddhas’ knowledge.”

We should know that the buddhas and ancestors who have the correct transmission from the Seven Buddhas, from the various buddhas, talk in this way. [Here, Shitou] expresses the words “my dharma gateway has been transmitted from prior buddhas”; he has no expression of the words, “my Zen school has been transmitted from prior buddhas.” He does not distinguish the items “meditation or vigour”; he makes “the buddhas’ knowledge” “merely master.” He does

not dislike vigour and meditation; [they are] “the buddhas’ knowledge” “merely mastered.” This is [equivalent to Śākyamuni’s saying] “I have a treasury of the eye of the true dharma . . . I bequeath it.” [Shitou’s] “my” is [Śākyamuni’s] “I have”; [Shitou’s] “dharma gateway” is [Śākyamuni’s] “true dharma.” This “my,” “I have,” and [Bodhidharma’s saying] “my marrow” are the “I bequeath it” of [Bodhidharma’s saying] “you have got.”⁶

The Great Master Wuji was the only child of the Eminent ancestor Qingyuan; he alone entered the interior of the [ancestor’s] hall. He was a dharma heir through tonsure of [Qingyuan’s master,] the Old Buddha Caoqi. Thus, the Old Buddha Caoqi was both his grandfather and his father; and the eminent ancestor Qingyuan was both his older brother and his teacher. The only “hero of the ancestral seat” on the way of the buddha was the Great Master Wuji of Shitou Hermitage; only Wuji “merely mastered” the correct transmission of the way of the buddha. In the expressions of his words, every point and every line is the agelessness of an old buddha, the long presence of an old buddha. We should take him as the eye of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma; we should not compare him with others. Comparisons with Jianxi Daji [i.e., Shitou’s contemporary Mazu Daoyi] by those who do not know this are in error.

Thus, we should know that, in the way of the buddha transmitted and received by prior buddhas, they do not speak of *dhyaṇa*, much less, needless to say, of the term “Zen [or *Dhyāna*] school.” We should clearly understand that using the term “Zen school” is an extreme error. A shallow group, thinking that it is like the [scholastic doctrinal categories] “school of being” or “school of emptiness,” lament that, without a name for the school, there would be nothing to study. The way of the buddha is not like this. We should be firmly convinced that the term “Zen school” was never used.

* * * * *

Nevertheless, the mediocre types of recent generations are stupid and do not know the ancient style. Those without transmission from the prior buddhas mistakenly say that, within the buddha dharma, there are the teaching styles of the five schools. This is a natural decline and diminution. There has not been one or a half to salvage it. My former master, the old buddha of Tiantong [i.e., Tiantong Rujing], was the first to take pity on them. It was good fortune for people; it was mastery of the dharma.

My former master, the old buddha, ascended the hall and addressed the assembly, saying,

Nowadays everyone just talks of [the five houses of] “Yunmen, Fayan, Weiyang, Linji, Caodong.” To have distinctions of house styles is not the buddha dharma; it is not the way of the ancestral masters.

The expression of these words is hard to encounter in a thousand years; my former master alone said them. They are hard to hear throughout the ten directions; [those at] the “perfect seat” alone hear them. This being the case, among one thousand monks, there is none with the ears to hear it, none with eyes to see it. How much less are there those who will take up the mind and hear it, those who will hear it with the body? Even though they hear it with their own full body and mind for one hundred million ten thousand *kalpas*, they will not take up my former master’s entire body and mind and hear it, verify it, believe it, and slough it off. It is pitiful that, throughout the ten directions of the one land of the great Song, all have thought that the local elders and such are of equal stature with my former master. We cannot take the group that thinks like this as “equipped with the eye”; we cannot take them as “unequipped with the eye.” Again, they have thought that Linji [i.e., Linji Yixuan] and Deshan [i.e., Deshan Xuanjian] were the equal of my former master. We have to say that this group has also not seen my former master, has not met Linji. Before I had paid obeisance to the old buddha, my former master, I

thought to investigate the dark import of the five schools. After paying obeisance to the old buddha, my former master, I knew the import of the corrupt term “five schools.”

Thus, when the buddha dharma flourished in the land of the great Song, there was no term “five schools,” and there were no ancients who raised the term “five schools” or heard of “house styles.” Ever since the buddha dharma became weak, we have this arbitrary term “five schools.” It is like this because people are stupid in their study and do not become intimate with pursuit of the way. To monks who would seek to investigate the real thing, I offer this strict prohibition: do not note or retain the false term “five houses”; do not note or designate the teaching styles of the five houses. How much less are there [such catch phrases of the house styles as] “the three darknesses” or “the three essentials,” “the four considerations” or “the four illuminations and functions,” “the nine girdles,” and so on. How much less are there “the three phrases” or “the five ranks” or “the ten identical true wisdoms.”

The way of old master Śākya is not a small measure like this and does not take something like this as a great measure. It does not express it in words, nor is it heard in Shaolin or Caoqi. It is pitiful, something said now by little shavepates of the last age who have not heard the dharma and whose bodies and minds and eyes are dark. Descendants of the buddhas and ancestors, do not utter such words! In what the buddhas and ancestors keep, one has never heard these mad words. One has never heard these mad words from those occupying [the positions of] buddhas and ancestors. Recent little teachers, those who have never heard of the entire way of the buddha dharma, who lack the entire reliance on the way of the ancestors, who are ignorant of their original lot, boasting of one or two little parts, set up such names of schools. Ever since they set up the names of schools, the little children, because they do not study the way that seeks out the root, vainly follow the branches. Lacking the aspiration that yearns for the ancient, they have the conduct that blends with the secular. Even the secular warn that following [the ways of] the secular world is base.

* * * * *

King Wen [of Zhou] asked the grand duke [Lü Shang], “What about the lord who labors to elevate the wise but does not garner the effect, so that the disorder of the world increases to an extreme that becomes dangerous?”

The grand duke said, “He elevates the wise but does not use them. This is because he elevates the names of the wise and does not get the reality of the wise.

King Wen said, “Where is the fault?”

The grand duke said, “The fault is in using what the worldly praise and not getting the really wise.”

King Wen said, “What is using what the worldly praise?”

The grand duke said, “To listen to the praise of the worldly is to take the unwise as the wise, to take the unintelligent as the intelligent, to take the disloyal as the loyal, to take the unfaithful as the faithful. If the lord takes as wise and intelligent those praised by the worldly and takes as unworthy those reviled by the worldly, then the majority party will advance and the minority party will retreat. Thus, when the wicked group together, they obscure the wise; the loyal ministers die without crime, and the wicked ministers seek court ranks with flattery. Thus, the disorder of the world increases to an extreme, and as a result, the country cannot avoid peril.” [From the early Chinese work of martial strategy, the *Liu Tao*.]

Even the secular lament when the way is imperiled for their country; when the dharma of the buddha and the way of the buddha are imperiled, the children of the buddha should naturally lament. The basis of the peril is the indiscriminate accord with the secular world. When one

listens to what the worldly praise, one fails to get the truly wise. If one would get the truly wise, one should have the wisdom to illumine behind and see ahead. What the worldly praise is not always wise, is not always holy; what the worldly disparage is not always wise, is not always holy. While this is the case, where we thrice examine the wise inviting disparagement and the inauthentic being praised, we should not confuse them. Not to use the wise is a loss to the country; to use the unworthy is a regret for the country.

To set up the name “five schools” is a confusion with the secular world. Though there are many who follow the secular world, there are few people who understand the secular as secular. The holy should convert the secular; to follow the secular is extremely stupid. Those that would follow the secular — how could they know the correct dharma of the buddha? How could they become buddhas or become ancestors? What has been received from the legitimate heirs of the Seven Buddhas — how could it be like setting up the five divisions of the rules by the bunch in the Western Heavens who “rely on the texts to understand the meaning”?⁷

Thus, we should realize that the ancestral masters who have taken the correct life of the buddha dharma as the correct life have never said that there are houses of the five schools. Those who learn that there are five houses in the way of the buddha are not legitimate heirs of the Seven Buddhas.

* * * * *

My former master addressed the assembly, saying,

In recent years, the way of the ancestral masters has declined. The beasts and minions of Māra are many. Again and again they bring up the teaching styles of the five houses. Painful. Painful.

Thus, we know clearly that the twenty-eight generations of the Western Heavens and the twenty-two ancestors of the Eastern Earth [from Huike to Rujing] never proclaimed the houses of the five schools. The ancestral masters that are ancestral masters are all like this. Those who set up the five schools and claim that each has its own message are deluded worldly types, the sort with little knowledge and shallow understanding. If, within the way the buddha, we set up our own separate ways, how would the way of the buddha have reached us today? [The First Ancestor] Kāśyapa would have set up his own; [the Second Ancestor] Ānanda would have set up his own. If the principle of setting up one’s own [way] were the correct way, the buddha dharma would have quickly disappeared in the Western Heavens. Who would “yearn for the past” of the messages set up by each [faction]? Who could judge the truth or falsity of messages set up by each? If we cannot judge its truth or falsity, who could say this is the buddha dharma or this is not the buddha dharma? If this principle is not clear, it is difficult to call it the buddha dharma. The name “five schools” was not set up during the time of any of the ancestral masters. After the perfect quiescence of the ancestral masters who are called the ancestral masters of the five schools, perhaps branches of their followers, those whose eyes were not yet clear, whose feet had not yet walked, without asking their fathers, opposing their ancestors, set up this name. The point is clear. Anyone should recognize it.

* * * * *

The Chan master Dayuan of Mt. Dawei [i.e., Weishan Lingyu] was a child of Baizhang Dazhi [i.e., Baizhang Huihai]. He lived on Mt. Wei at the same time as Baizhang. He never said that the buddha dharma should be called the Weiyang school [i.e., the school named after Weishan and his disciple Yangshan Huiji]. Nor did Baizhang say, “[since] you lived on Mt. Wei, from your time on, [your line] should be called the Weiyang school.” Neither the master

[Weishan] nor the ancestor [Baizhang] used the name. We should realize it is a false name. Even though it is wilfully used as a school name, we should not necessarily trace this to Yangshan. Were personal names supposed be used [for schools], they would have been used; since personal names should not be used, personal names were not used in the past, and we do not have personal names [for schools] today. We do not say “the Caoxi school” [of the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng]; we do not say “the Nanyue school” [of the Sixth Ancestor’s disciple Nanyue Huairang]; we do not say “the Jiangxi school” [of the master Mazu Daoyi]; we do not say “the Baizhang school [of the master Baizhang Huihai].” When it comes to Weishan, it cannot be that he is different from Caoxi; he should not be superior to Caoxi; he should not be equal to Caoxi. One word and half a phrase spoken by Dawei is not necessarily “one staff carried by two people” with Yangshan. If one were to set up the name of the school, one should call it the Weishan school, or one should call it the Dawei school; there is no reason to call it the Weiyang school. Were it supposed to be called the Weiyang school, it should be have been called that when both the venerable worthies were alive. Because of what obstacle was it not called what it should have been called when they were alive? Those who would go against the way of their father and grandfather and call it what it was not called when the two were alive are unfilial children and grandchildren. This is not the original desire of the Chan master Dawei; it is not the genuine intention of the old man Yangshan. It has no correct transmission of a correct teacher; it is clearly the false name of a false faction. Do not spread this in the entire realm of the ten directions.

* * * * *

The great master Huizhao [i.e., Linji Yixuan], casting aside a house that explicates scripture, became a follower of Huangbo. Three times he tasted Huangbo’s stick, altogether sixty staffs. Visiting Dayu [i.e., Gaoan Dayu], he had an awakening. He subsequently resided at the Linji cloister in Zhenchou. While he may not have fully investigated Huangbo’s mind, he has no saying of one phrase, no saying of a half phrase, that the buddha dharma he inherited should be called the Linji school; he does not raise his fist [to it]; he does not take up his whisk [to it]. Nevertheless, immediately mediocre factions among his followers, without protecting the work of the father, without protecting the buddha dharma, mistakenly set up the name “Linji school.” Were it constructed during the life of the Great Master Huizhao, since it goes against the words of the ancient ancestor, there should have been prior discussion about setting up that name.

Moreover,

When Linji was indicating his extinction, he entrusted the Chan master Sansheng Huiran, saying, “After my transformation, do not let my treasury of the eye of the true dharma be extinguished.”

Huiran said, “How could I let the venerable’s treasury of the eye of the true dharma be extinguished?”

Linji said, “If someone suddenly asks you, what will you answer?”

Huiran shouted.

Linji said, “Who could have known that my treasury of the eye of the true dharma would have been extinguished around this blind donkey?”

Such is what master and disciple had to say.

Linji does not say, “Do not let my Zen school be extinguished.” He does not say, “Do not let my Linji school be extinguished.” He does not say, “Do not let my school be extinguished.” He just says, “Do not let my treasury of the eye of the true dharma be extinguished.” Clearly, we should realize that the great way correctly transmitted by the buddhas and ancestors should

not be called “the Zen school,” should not be called “the Linji school.” We should have no dreams of calling it “the Zen school.” Even though “extinguished” is the principle and shape of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma, this is how it is bequeathed. The “extinguished” “around this blind donkey” is truly the “who would have known” of the bequeathal. Among the followers of Linji, Sansheng is the only one. He should not be compared with, or ranked with, his elder and younger dharma brothers. Truly, he is to be “placed under a bright window” [as a superior student]. The story of Linji and Sansheng is [an instance of] the buddhas and ancestors. The bequeathal of Linji today is the bequeathal of Vulture Peak in the past. Therefore, the reason we should not call it the Linji school is obvious.

* * * * *

The great master Kuangzhen of Mt. Yunmen [i.e., Yunmen Wenyan] in the past studied with the venerable worthy Chen [i.e., Muzhou Daozong]; he would have been a descendant of Huangbo. Later, he succeeded Xuefeng [i.e., Xuefeng Yicun]. This master did not say that the treasury of the eye of the true dharma should be called the Yunmen school. His followers, not realizing that the false names Weiyang and Linji were false names, newly established the name “Yunmen school.” If the message of the great master Kuangzhen had aspired to a name that established a school, it would be difficult to acknowledge him as the body and mind of the buddha dharma. When [his teaching] is now called by the name of a school, it is like calling the emperor a commoner.

* * * * *

The Chan master Great Fayen of Qingliang cloister [i.e., Fayen Wenyi] was a legitimate successor of Dizang Yuan [i.e., Lohan Guichen]; he was a dharma grandchild of Xuansha Yuan [i.e., Xuansha Shibei]. He had a message and lacked mistakes. “Great Fayen” is the teacher’s title of his signature. In his thousand words he had not a single word, in his ten thousand phrases he had not a single phrase, in which he said that the name “Fayen school” should be established as the name of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma. Nevertheless, his followers established the name “Fayen school.” If Fayen were converting people today, he would erase the term for the current falsely named Fayen school. With the Chan master Fayen already departed, there is no one to save us from this calamity. Even a thousand or ten thousand years later, people who would be filial to the Chan master Fayen must not take the name “Fayen school” as a name. This is basic filiality toward the Chan master Fayen. In general, Yunmen and Fayen are the distant descendants of the eminent ancestor Qingyuan. They transmitted the bones of the way; they transmitted the marrow of the dharma.

* * * * *

The eminent ancestor great master Wuben [i.e., Dongshan Liangjie] succeeded to the dharma under Yunyan [i.e., Yunyan Tancheng]. Yunyan was the legitimate heir of the great master Yueshan [i.e., Yueshan Weiyang]; Yueshan was the legitimate heir of the great master Shitou. The great master Shitou was the one child of the eminent ancestor Qingyuan. There are not two or three of comparable stature; he correctly transmitted the work of the way. It is on the strength of the great master Shitou’s transmission without loss that the correct life of the way of the buddha still remains in the Eastern Earth.

At the same time as the old buddha Caoxi, the eminent ancestor Qingyuan adopted Caoxi’s teaching methods at Qingyuan. Seeing that he was put forward in the world [as a teacher] and that his advancement was in the same generation [as Caoxi], he must have been the legitimate descendant among legitimate descendants, he must have been the eminent ancestor among eminent ancestors. It is not a case of a manly student and weak advancement. Those of his

stature at his time would be prominent today. This is something students should realize.⁸

On the occasion when the old buddha Caoxi was teaching humans and gods by manifesting his complete nirvana, from the last seats Shitou came forward and requested a master on whom to rely. On that occasion, the old buddha indicated that he go visit Si [i.e., Qingyuan Xingsi]; he did not say that he go visit Rang [i.e., [Nanyue Huairang]. Therefore, the treasury of the eye of the true dharma of the old buddha was correctly transmitted to the eminent ancestor Qingyuan alone. Though we may grant that they were equally “spiritual feet” [i.e., disciples] who attained the way, the eminent ancestor was still the “sole pace of the real spiritual foot.” The old buddha Caoxi had Qingyuan make a child of [Caoxi’s] child; the father of the child would be the father of the father; that he attained the marrow is obvious; that he was the legitimate heir of the ancestors is obvious.

* * * * *

The great master Dongshan, as the legitimate heir in the fourth generation of Qingyuan, correctly transmitted the treasury of the eye of the true dharma and opened the eye of the wondrous mind of nirvana. Beside this, there is no separate transmission, there is no separate school. The great master never had a “fist” or a “blink of the eye” in which he instructs the assembly that they should be called the Caodong school. Among his followers as well, because they were not corrupted by mediocre types, there was no follower who called them the Dongshan school, much less said it was the Caodong school.

The name Caodong school likely includes the name “Caoshan” [of Dongshan’s disciple Caoshan Benji]. If this is the case, Yunju [i.e., Dongshan’s disciple Yunju Daoying] and Tong’an [i.e., Yunju’s disciple Tong’an Daopi] ought also to be included. Yunju was a guide among humans and the heavens above, more revered than Caoshan. We know of this name “Caodong” that the stinking skin bags of a marginal faction, seeking to be of equal stature, called themselves by this name “Caodong.” Truly this is a case where, “though the white sun is bright, the floating clouds cover below.”

* * * * *

My former master said,

Nowadays, while there may be many who ascend the lion seat, many who would be the teachers of humans and gods; there are none who understand the principle of the buddha dharma.

Therefore, those competing to establish the schools of the five schools, those mistakenly stuck in the phrases of words and phrases, are truly the enemies of the buddhas and ancestors. Again, the faction of the Chan master Nan of Huanglung [i.e., Huanglung Huinan] has been called the “Huanglung school,” but it will not be long before this faction is known to be mistaken. More generally, when the Buddha was present, he never called [his teachings] “the Buddha school,” or called them “the Vulture Peak school,” or spoke of “the Jetavana school,” or spoke of the “My Mind school,” or spoke of the “Buddha Mind school.” Where in the words of the Buddha does he use the name “Buddha school”? Why do people today use the name “Buddha Mind school”? Why would the World Honored One necessarily call the mind a school? Why would a school necessarily be the mind? If there is a Buddha Mind school, there should be a Buddha Body school, should be a Buddha Eye school, should be a Buddha Ear school, should be a Buddha Nose or Tongue school, should be a Buddha Marrow school, Buddha Bones school, Buddha Feet school, Buddha Kingdom school, and so on. Now, there are none of these. We should realize the fact that the name “Buddha Mind school” is a false name.

When the Buddha Śākyamuni takes up the real mark of the dharmas throughout the buddha lands of the ten directions and preaches of the buddha lands of the ten directions, he does not preach that he has constructed some school in the buddha lands of the ten directions. If the designation “school” is the dharma of the buddhas and ancestors, it should be in the kingdom of the buddha; if it is in the kingdom of the buddha, the buddha should preach it. The buddha does not preach it; we know it is not a tool of the kingdom of the buddha. The ancestors do not talk of it; we know it is not a furnishing in the region of the ancestors. Not only will you be laughed at by people [if you speak of your school]; you will be prohibited by the buddhas and laughed at by yourself. I beg of you, do not call [yourself] a school. There is no such thing as the five houses in the buddha dharma.

* * * * *

Lately, there was a little child named Zhicong [i.e., Zhicong Huiyan], who collected one word or two words of the ancestral masters, said they were the denominations of the five houses and called it *Rentian yanmu* [“The Eye of Humans and Gods”]. People not knowing how to assess it, beginners and late comers think it true, and some even keep it hidden in their robes. It is not “the eye of humans and gods”; it blinds the eye of human and gods. How could it have the virtue of blinding the treasury of the eye of the true dharma?

This *Rentian yanmu* was collected by trainee Zhicong, in the twelfth month of Chunxi, [in the year] *wushen* [1188], at the Wannian monastery on Mt. Tiantai. Though it is a late production, if its words were right, we should attend to it. It is craziness; it is foolishness. It lacks the eye of study; it lacks the eye of pilgrimage. How much less could it have the eye that sees the buddhas and ancestors? We should not use it. He should not be called “Zhicong” [“Wise and Bright”]; he should be called “Yumeng” [“Stupid and Dull”]. He who does not know “that person,” who does not encounter the person, in collecting words and phrases, does not pick words and phrases of the person who would be that person. We know that he does not know the person.

* * * * *

That those who study the teachings in the land of Cīnasthāna [i.e., China] called themselves schools was because there were others of equal stature. Now, the treasury of the eye of the true dharma of the buddhas and ancestors has been bequeathed from heir to heir; there are none of equal stature, there are no others that could be confused with it.

Despite this, the illiterate elders nowadays always rashly call themselves a school; scheming for themselves, they show no fear of the way of the buddha. The way of the buddha is not your way of the buddha: it is the buddha’s and ancestors’ way of the buddha; it is the way of the buddha’s way of the buddha.

The grand duke said to King Wen, “The realm is not one person’s realm: it is the realm’s realm.” [From the *Liu Tao*.]

Thus, even the secular gentleman has this wisdom, has these words. Children in the quarters of the buddhas and ancestors must not arbitrarily follow “Stupid and Dull” in calling the great way of the buddhas and ancestors by the names of schools they establish. This is a major violation; not [worthy of] people of the way of the buddha. If we should use the term “school,” the World Honored One would have himself used it. When the World Honored One did not himself use it, how as his descendants can we use it after his extinction? Who is more skilled than the World Honored One? Were [he] not skilled, [we] would not benefit. Again, when you turn against the traditional way of the buddhas and ancestors and independently establish

your own school, which of the descendants of the buddha would take your school as a school? We should study by illuminating the past and observing the present. Do not be reckless. Trying not to differ one hair from [the dharma] when the World Honored One was in the world, to lament our failure to reach even one part in a billion, to rejoice in reaching it, to aspire not to differ [from it] — only this is what the disciples left behind make their repeated thought. So we should vow to meet and serve [him] for many lives; so we should aspire to see the buddha and hear the dharma for many lives. Those who, violating the teaching style when the World Honored One was in the world, would intentionally set up the name of a school are not the disciples of the Thus Come One, are not the descendants of the ancestral masters; [their misdeed] is heavier than the weighty violations [of monastic rule]. Taking lightly the unsurpassed bodhi of the Thus Come One, impulsively to devote oneself exclusively to one's own school is to neglect antecedents, to depart from antecedents. We must say [such people] do not know the antecedents. They do not believe in the virtues of the days of the World Honored One. In their dwelling, there can be no buddha dharma.

Thus, in correctly transmitting the work of the way of studying Buddhism, we should not see or hear the term “school.” What buddha after buddha and ancestor after ancestor bequeath and correctly transmit is the unsurpassed bodhi of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma. The dharma possessed by the buddhas and ancestors has all been bequeathed by the buddha; there is no further additional dharma. This principle is the bones of the dharma, the marrow of the way.

*Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma
Way of the Buddha*

Number 44

Presented to the assembly, sixteenth day, ninth month, first year of Kangen (*mizunoto-u*) [1243],
At Kippōji, Yoshida District, Etsu Province