



RECORDS OF THE TRANSMISSION OF THE LAMP

VOLUME 8

CHAN POETRY AND INSCRIPTIONS

TRANSLATED BY

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Records of the Transmission of the Lamp
Up to the Era of Great Virtue [of the Song Dynasty 1004–8
CE]

(Jap: Keitoku Dentōroku)

Compiled by
Daoyuan

of the Chan School, of the Song Dynasty
in 30 fascicules.



The Hokun Trust is pleased to support the eighth and final volume of a complete translation of this classic of Chan (Zen) Buddhism by Randolph S. Whitfield. The Records of the Transmission of the Lamp is a religious classic of the first importance for the practice and study of Zen which it is hoped will appeal both to students of Buddhism and to a wider public interested in religion as a whole..

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Preface

The many incarnations of the Chinese Buddhist Canon are a treasury of human wisdom we cannot do without. Similar to treasuries from other spiritual traditions, the perennial appeal of the *Records of the Transmission of the Lamp* (CDL) stands outside the tortured vicissitudes of the local mundane conditions that engendered it; even when its integrity is still imputed through having been produced by the very desire and hunger for power which its own contents decry, it still comes up unsullied, like the proverbial lotus emerging from the mud.

This eighth and final volume of the translation of the *Jingde Chuandeng Lu* (CDL) is really a celebration of its liberation from the confines of an arcane, classical Chinese accessible to almost no one, into a universal language available to an English-speaking world that can now appreciate this core Chan (Zen) Buddhist work as a whole for the first time.

It is the contents of this masterpiece of Chinese Buddhist literature that have necessarily occupied me during its translation, but there is clearly a way to go yet in appreciating the scope and depths of this work.¹ The study and practice of Buddhism was the forte of the cream of the Chinese monks and laymen of old who became translators and scholars of the first rank. They managed the perilous equilibrium of balancing an awakened in-depth-appreciation of Buddhist practice with the rational faculty of doubt requiring proof through experience; these two truly human faculties merged and produced works still relevant today.

There are still people who think that 'Zen' came from Japan: they do not realise that the word is indeed Japanese, but is the pronunciation of the Chinese word 'Chan' (itself a transliteration of the Indian word *dhyāna*) which means 'meditation'. When Buddhism found a new home in China at the beginning of the Christian era (a parallel development), it took some time to grow into the new soil, despite its similarity to the agnostic humanism of the original teaching of Confucius.² The Chan phenomenon, a Buddhist meditation practice, way of life and literary legacy unique to China, later spread to many countries: to Korea, to Japan, to Tibet, to Mongolia, later to the United States and to Europe, where it is still flourishing today.

This work is a summation of proto-Chan works that had gone before and an introduction to the vast corpus of Chan / Zen literature that was to follow. Since it is still of interest to us today, might this be due to actual human experience and insight emerging from centuries of Confucian, Daoist and Buddhist study and practice, expressed so consistently in this all-encompassing Buddhist work? The fine blend of an authentic life, the co-evolution of cosmos and consciousness, is the subject of these records.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Who said the ancient mirror
Is without form?
Ancient, modern, coming, going
What gate?
The gate when you look
But can't see it
Just this
Is your naked manifestation
Complete³

Buddhist China in the fifth and sixth centuries of the common era was a golden age of meditation practice and austerities, at least seen from an eleventh century Song dynasty in the throes of a major technological revolution, looking back with nostalgia to that early halcyon period, seemingly far away in the mists of a protean past. Buddhahadra, Bodhidharma, Sengzhao, Daosheng and many others were followed by Ven. Baozhi, Mahāsattva Fu Daishi, Meditation Master Huisi and Tiantai Zhiyi, more or less contemporaries, men who played a vital role in establishing a new phase of Chinese spiritual and social culture. For example, the great influence of Ven. Baozhi (418-514 CE?), also referred to as Bao Gong, a Buddhist priest at the court of Emperor Wu (r.502-549 CE), founding father of the Liang dynasty (502-557 CE), persisted for centuries after his death. He was invoked more than four hundred years later by the first two Song Emperors as a kind of talisman, as is clearly reflected in the number of

poems attributed to him at the head of this last book of the CDL.

‘According to prophecies circulated in 963 and 966, the sixth-century *thaumaturge* Baozhi predicted that twenty-one rulers of the Zhao clan would reign for 799 years. The prophecies were taken seriously. In 980, his [Taizu’s] successor and younger brother Taizong (r. 976–997) founded a new temple in the capital of Kaifeng to store the mummified body and silver staff of Baozhi, and in 982 he gave a posthumous title to Baozhi after seeing Baozhi’s apparition in the palace. In this newly established state, then, appealing to Buddhist prophecies to justify their claim to legitimacy and consolidate their power proved an irresistible attraction for the founding emperor and his brother.’⁴

Four years after the fall of the Liang dynasty (557 CE), Dharma-master Huisi met his end, without illness and Song Toutuo (alias Bodhidharma?)⁵ entered quiescence at Lingyan Temple on Mount Ke (柯山靈巖寺). Mahāsattva Fu Daishi then predicted, ‘The honourable Song awaits me in Tuṣita, remaining here will certainly not be long.’ (**27.2; 1.1**)

The Song dynasty’s support of Chan Buddhism is revealed in the imperially sponsored compilation of the CDL, the first and most influential of Chan texts, incorporated into the canon in 1011 CE. Looking back on its progress over the last thousand years, it seems clear now that something had to be preserved, an extract ephemeral, delicate and yet malleable enough to accommodate all kinds of interpretations into a distant future. These records had also put a brake on the urge to trivialise such wisdom writings into consumable bytes that digest too easily. Their durability, their very indigestibility, was proof against such reductive activity, its original language a formidable and protective barrier that preserved its pristine message

through the centuries. Even so, the somewhat arduous descent to mine the depths of the message contained in the CDL has already paid rich dividends in scholarly activity and meditative insight in both the East and the West. On this way there are these signposts, the very writings preserved from of old, which we learn slowly to appreciate by undertaking the journey, now in a fresh change of clothes. This first complete translation of the CDL is itself a rebirth.

The rebirth also means that the study and exegesis of the CDL as an organic whole is yet to begin, composed as it was in an arcane Chinese in which its chief redactors, Yang Yi, already presented at court as a child prodigy at the age of eleven, and Li Wei, were masters. Yang Yi later became a government minister, advisor to two emperors, Hanlin academician, ennobled Duke, poet and discoverer of Li Shangyin, China's most exotic and difficult poet. He was also a Chan master,⁶ as well as one of the chief architects of the early Song dynasty's policies for building a new world, then in the throes of a social and technological upheaval only comparable to events in the twenty-first century.

Yang Yi's team also 'clarified' the Chan School's family tree, the CDL. The usual story of the genesis of the work itself tells of how Chan monk Daoyuan, the first to compose the work, had entitled it *Anthology of the Uniform Practice of Buddhas and Patriarchs* (佛祖同參集, FZTCJ). Although the work has not survived, Yang Yi's Preface to it has (translated in vol. 5 of the present work), in which he states that Daoyuan's original work contained *twenty* chapters. When Yang Yi and his team redacted the FZTCJ, they renamed it the *Jingde Chuandeng Lu* (CDL) and expanded it to *thirty* chapters, with a new preface by Yang Yi (translated in vol. 1).⁷ The story concludes with the thirty-chapter Chinese text published in 1011 CE, which has for centuries been the root text of the Chan School. There were updates following from the CDL, which spawned a completely new genre of

Buddhist literature, but they lack the originality of the root text, perhaps due, not only to the redactor and his team's literary mastery, but also to the fact that Yang Yi himself had personal contacts with many eminent Chan masters of his day, especially the remarkable Fenyang Shanzhao, master of paradoxes, for whom he also wrote a preface to this master's Record (T. 1992) at the same time as he was redacting the CDL.

* * *

Let us try now to catch a bird's eye view of the contents of the CDL as a whole, beginning with the frequently met rhetorical question, 'What is the meaning of Patriarch Bodhidharma coming [to China] from the West?' The first thing to note with regard to this question is that the responses in the CDL use a vocabulary wholly unfamiliar to a Western world brought up on Christian concepts, though the insights are universal.⁸ The term *Śūnyatā* and its many other names, such as the *Dharmakāya*, the Void, the Ancient Mirror, Emptiness, Thusness, Buddha-nature, the Original Nature, the Dao, The Great Ocean, the True-Face-before-mother-and-father-were-born, the Heart-seal and the Sun Buddha Vairocana⁹ occur repeatedly, not only in this volume of poetry but throughout the whole of Chinese Chan Buddhism, including the CDL.

The root of Buddhism is called *śūnyatā*, in Chinese *xukong* 虛空, translated as voidness or emptiness. The key image here is the *mirror*. This voidness of many names has been described as a sentient holosphere of resonating synchronicities whose one characteristic is a total connectedness beyond any human capacity to envision, though not to embrace.¹⁰ Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch of Chan, adds the human touch by telling us that the [original] nature rays out wisdom, a self-seeing, self-knowing depth (28.2).¹¹

If the root of Buddhism is *śūnyatā*, the key function of this ancient mirror is to reflect. Bodhidharma's wall is an example of this wonderful function. The nature of Thusness is purity, wisdom reflected inexhaustibly, Master Shenhui tells us (**30.6**). It is always and everywhere intimately near (Xuansha Shibe, **29.8**), though we are not directly aware of this. Being energetically connected to each other and to all that is, in a morphogenetic field in which any gain or loss, anything done or left undone is reflected back to us, has effects resonating like shock waves throughout the sphere, irrespective of a time and space constructed *ad hoc* by an enclosed and fragile human consciousness. Outside of this fragile enclosed consciousness, we do reflect each other constantly, in the smallest ways; it is called relatedness. The Chan master is a bright, accurate, high-definition reflector. This capacity to mirror accurately, without gross personal biases, is called in Chan 'the great functioning'. It is called great because this function has been decoupled from the entanglements of an enclosed consciousness and can therefore reflect the more truly.

The message the CDL expounds then, is that we all live in and from this mystery difficult to fathom (Danxia, **30.20**). From this numinous realm, three-dimensional holographic *homo sapiens*, bubbles of flesh and blood, are rayed out, creating a seeming *alter orbis*, a discontinuous world of birth and death, which we experience as our reality.

Initially due to the raindrops, water became bubbles
But by virtue of the wind's arousal, bubbles return to water
Unknown is that the nature of bubbles and water are not
different

But by following other paths they are taken to be different
(from Ven. Lepu, *Floating Bubbles Song*, **30.16**)

This bubble world takes on the characteristics of materiality and solidity, the only realm, ironically, where the Buddhist

(or any other) practice can be undertaken, if being alive is defined as the gift of sentience at its most focussed. Due to the existence of the border created by this rain sent from the Void, we are naturally not aware that our physical bodies are an outcrop projected by the deep embeddedness of the heart, another name for the Void within: we are our own bubble, scintillating with the life of original voidness.¹² This scintillating life, the most mysterious thing, which exists as a no-thing, is our physical existence. Being fluid, it is naturally subject to birth and death, to impermanence. No wonder then, if we *wholly* identify with our bubble, that we become confused and frustrated, for genuine awareness does not, cannot, belong to a bubble except by proxy. A material bubble, itself full of emptiness, performs actions somehow permeated by all kinds of *karmic* proclivities. So the confusion is actually double: the physical bubble is confused and disorientated by obvious impermanence, whilst the heart / sun / void is ever of a shining lucency, even in the realm of a cloudy world, and is in no way deluded by its own confusions: yet both inhabit the same 'body' and this body, sentient by proxy, knows the Way! Perhaps this is what the Channists are pointing to with their extraordinary use of language, which itself comes from the Void: that this material world is only one side of the coin, the same as 'my' bubble created by the rain. My bubble is cast by something that it has not yet become aware of. Woe is me! I can neither grasp my own bubble nor grasp the Void within that is raying out my own reflection of myself! No surprise then that the Chan masters have such fun with words! Again, how could we ever become aware of the Void within, without this bubble? Why do we need to become aware of it? What really *is* the meaning of Bodhidharma coming to our world? Where has he come from? What exactly is the transmission? Does this journey really lead us

into a region of the inconceivable, where all borders become an open pass – no gates? No words?¹³

Texts do have a vital role in this live play (Liu Fei, **30.27**). The CDL, although its records are laden with political *karma*, has its origin in the wisdom gained by experience. The clear warning contained in the work is that we should not cover this inner wisdom with too much outwardness, chasing rainbows, because then the source of the luminosity is lost, whilst the two aspects of awakening, clarity and profundity, are the main essential of awakening. (Daochang Weijin, **29.11**).

Inwards, having once looked into the face of this mystery, uncertainty is put to rest, making room for realisation as an ever-ongoing process. As Chan master Fenyang Shanzhao said, ‘When there is accord with the innate endowment, there are no shadows,’ – which is the entry into the realm of reality.¹⁴

A perforated holo-man¹⁵ seemingly separated from the Void within / without and from its self-seeing, self-knowing depth, is quite a formidable burden to be carrying around. The border (perforated)¹⁶ between these two intellectually separated realms is referred to, by another analogy, as ‘the river’ or, ‘the stream’ in Buddhist texts. In order to cross this stream to the other shore bound for the motherland of *prajñā*, a raft is necessary; the Buddhist teachings. Yet once the crossing from this shore has been made with the aid of the raft, the raft is laid down. It is not carried on the back, is not an object of attachment, but is left by the shore so that the one who has made the crossing into the unmapped spaces of the beyond within, euphemistically called ‘the other shore’ in conventional Buddhism, can make further use of the raft, by returning, ferrying himself and others backwards and forwards from the realm of birth and death, braving the dangerous currents of the river, to the ‘other’ shore of openness, where there are no gates. This

unimaginable to and fro activity of the Chan masters, this not being stuck in the one realm or the other, renders both sides of the shore even and equal, and the river itself becomes a navigable stream which has lost many of its terrors though none of its dangers.

The Sixth Patriarch said, 'From the very beginning not a thing is.'¹⁷ The realm of the liberated heart is also referred to as vast openness. Yet it is not the purpose of the Buddhist way of liberation to produce even 'enlightened' *clones*, all marching in unison. Clones belong to the shadow world of the bubble, where lust for power reigns. Openness, an attribute of the heart, is total relatedness; there is no centre (there are many suns), there are no permanent knots of *karma* and yet, unlike 'infinity', this openness is not an abstraction but expresses itself optimally through the living *physical* body.¹⁸ The Buddhas point the Way into this openness, where nothing is mapped or absolutely known, where everything is numinous, naked and revealed as being just as it is, where only the truly human attributes can flourish - awe, wonder and appreciation.

The CDL then, an aggregation of insight teachings from disparate sources, Chinese, Indian and beyond, took on its own life with government sponsorship. Its skilful editing managed to find room, within its original confines in eleventh century China, to side-step the control of a powerful bureaucracy trying to manipulate common human cultural property in order to bolster a new dynasty's prestige. The CDL's prestige, its truth, its *simplicity*, has always been current and influential across dynasties in China¹⁹ - and in Japan, where it was adopted, it took root and was studied intensively for its political, spiritual, cultural and literary nutrients, for seven hundred years. From China the CDL went to Japan, from where it was carried to the West in the early twentieth century. It has not ceased being

valued as a precious source of Chan / Zen lore. Now the work is accessible in its entirety in a modern universal language for the first time. Of course, the translation of such an exotic text from an 'archaic' language poses its own problems, for,

'The basic error of the translator is that he preserves the state in which his own language happens to be instead of allowing his language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue. Particularly when translating from a language very remote from his own, he must go back to the primal elements of language itself and penetrate to the point where work, image, and tone converge. He must expand and deepen his language by means of the foreign language ...' ²⁰

In this regard, it is fairly clear that not only was life rather different a thousand years ago but that the human intellect too was a rather different tool to what it is today. Have we not moved from an education nurturing a life of feeling and sensibility closely connected with natural forces both inner and outer, to an analytical-material-scientific mode of discourse in which objectivity is the new standard? The human being is now judged to be merely a slightly more evolved animal living in a mechanical universe rather than seen as a spiritual being living in a mysterious and *sentient* cosmos. Yet in the CDL the 'ancients' are often invoked; it was not so unusual a thousand years ago to look up, or back, to patriarchs with respect, as being founts of *living* knowledge passed down through the generations, rather than viewing them as spent senecents out of touch with the dead letter of information technology that changes from moment to moment.

Anyway, Bodhidharma and the CDL have come to the West, perhaps first in the luggage of a young Daisetz Suzuki, who

always carried a copy of the [Chinese] CDL on his travels. The Parliament of World Religions opened in Chicago in 1893 and Suzuki accompanied Zen Master Soyen Shaku (1860–1919), ‘the first American ancestor of Zen’, to that gathering. In 1925 Ohasama Faust published his *Zen, Der Lebendige Buddhismus in Japan* with excerpts from the CDL translated into German. In English, Chang Chung-yan’s *Original Teachings of Ch’an Buddhism Selected from The Transmission of the Lamp* (1969) was for a long time the standard, in which he says, ‘The inner experience of the Void is the foundation of the spiritual structure of Buddhism.’ (p. 6). In 1990 came *The Transmission of the Lamp*, a bold translation of the first ten chapters of the CDL by Sohaku Ogata, edited by Prof. Paul F. Schmidt. Then came the work of Christian Wittern with more extensive German translations (YCB; AUL) and in English, Albert Welter’s wide-ranging investigations into the whole ‘Lamp’ genre, which have cast much light on the provenance of this work.

* * *

Finally, to read the poems in this volume aright, in which we are constantly admonished to have no thoughts, to shun the world, to find a suitable cave on a mountain side to live in, to feed on herbs and drink from a nearby stream, with only one threadbare set of clothes for covering, a discerning eye is useful. If study and practice are the two legs needed for walking the Buddha’s way, we tend to take ‘study’ rather too literally, as a purely intellectual activity divorced from any experience of practice on the Noble Eightfold Path. Yet this practice, even without a direct non-discursive vision of emptiness (*śūnyatā*), inevitably alters our understanding of the world and of what we are capable of, whilst the shape-shifting of analytical insight underpinned by practice, facilitated by such as the Chan *gong’an*, becomes the creative aspect of impermanence. Nothing is fixed, least of

all insight. So perhaps these poems are another mirror, reflecting our own face, in which we can see, in a poetic form, our enormous potential and innate thirst for freedom, for insight, for wisdom and compassion, which we all have to find for and in ourselves. Buddhism rests on the cultivation of giving, moral rectitude, forbearance, great effort, meditation and wisdom.²¹ Reading and pondering these poems and texts, antidotes to disbelief in times when 'the sages seem remote, wrong views run deep ...and there is much violence,'²² their contents reveal a state of Being developed to its full human potential. Deep faith in our own humanity, as mapped out in Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path, is surely one of the fundamentals for building a humane future, however long that road may be. All roads, according to these poems, lead back to the human heart.

May the Buddhist poems and inscriptions in this volume fulfil their original intention to inspire and gladden our hearts on this long and inclusive road!

Abbreviations

Primary Sources:

- DS - *Dong Chansi Ban* (Tōji) edition (1080 CE), The Eastern [Chan] Temple Edition [of the CDL] 東禪寺版 edited by 四口芳男
- FG - *Foguang Dazang Jing* 佛光大藏經, 1983
- T - Taishō *Shinshū Daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經常, 55 volumes, edited by Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, (1912-1926). (The Taisho CDL, T.51, no.2076 is the Yuan edition published 1316 / 1360 CE based on the *Sibu Congkan* 四部叢刊, A Collection of The Four Branches of Literature of 1134 CE)
- X - Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzokyo, 卅新纂大日本續藏經 Tokyo, Kokusho Kanokai, 東京, 國書刊行會
- XY - *Xinyi Jingde Chuandeng Lu* 新譯經得傳燈錄 A New Translation of the Records of the Transmission of the Lamp, translated and annotated by Gu Hongyi 顧宏義, published by *Sanmin Shuju* 三民書局 Taipei, 2005. 3 vols. This edition is a collation based on the *Sibu Congkan* 四部叢刊 edition of 1134 and is the main source for the present translation.
- ZTJ - *Zutang Ji* 祖堂集 Anthology from the Patriarchal Hall by *Jing* 靜 and *Jun* 筠 *Zhonghua Chuban* 中華出版, 2 vols. 2007

Secondary Sources:

Chinese:

ZGFJS - *Zhonguo Fojjiao Shi* 中國佛教史 (History of Chinese Buddhism), by Ren Jiyu, 任繼愈, 3 vols. Beijing, 1981, 1985, 1988

Japanese:

KIK - *Kokuyaku issai-Kyō; Wa-kan senjutsu-bu* 國譯一切經 The Chinese and Japanese section of the Japanese Tripiṭaka, containing the Japanese translations of the Chinese Buddhist texts written in Kambun, with introductions and footnotes by Japanese scholars, vol. 82. Tokyo, 33rd year of the Shōwa 昭和 period (1959)

KDI - *Keitoku Dentoroku* 景德傳燈錄, books 7-12 annotated under the supervision of Irya, Yoshitaka 入矢義高昂, 2 vols, Kyoto, Institute of Zen Studies (Zenbunka Kenkyujo), 1993

KTS - *Keitoku Dentoroku Sakuin* 景德傳燈錄索引 compiled by 芳澤勝弘 *et al*, 2 vols. Kyoto, Zenbunka Kenkyujo, 1993

Western:

AUL - *Jingde chuandeng lu. Aufzeichnungen von der Übertragung der Leuchte aus der Ära Jingde*, by Christian Wittern, Insel, 2014

BCA - *Buddhism in Central Asia*, by B. N. Puri, Delhi, 1987

BCC - *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, by E. Zürcher, Leiden, 1972

BCR - *The Blue Cliff Record*, translated by Thomas and J. C. Cleary, 3 vols., Boulder, 1977

BDT - *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600- 1400*, by Tansen Sen, Honolulu, Hawai'i, 2003

BICC - *Buddhism in Chinese Society*, by Jacques Gernet, Columbia, 1995

- BFSS - *Beacon Fire and Shooting Star: The Literary Culture of the Liang (502-557)*, by Xiaofei Tian, Cambridge, Mass., 2007
- CBD - *A Chinese Biographical Dictionary*, by Herbert Giles, 1898, Rprt. Taipei, 1975
- CL - *Chinese Letterkunde*, by Wilt Idem and Lloyd Haft, Amsterdam, 1985, (in Dutch)
- DCBT - *Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, by W. E. Soothill & L. Hodous, London, 1937
- DOTIC - *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, by Charles O. Hucker, Stanford, 1985
- DPPN - *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, by G. P. Malalasekera, London, 1974
- GEB - *Geography of Early Buddhism*, by B. C. Law, London, 1932
- HCB - *Handbook of Chinese Buddhism*, by E. J. Eitel, Hong Kong, 1888
- HCC - *A History of Chinese Civilization*, by Jacques Gernet, Cambridge, 1982
- HIB - *A History of Indian Buddhism*, by Etienne Lamotte, translated by Sara Webb-Boin, Louvain, 1988
- HRFD - *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*, by Ouyang Xiu, translated by Richard L. Davies, Columbia, 2004
- IB - *Indian Buddhism*, by Hajime Nakamura, Delhi, 1987
- LS - *The Lotus of the Good Law*. Translated by H. Kern. Oxford: Sacred Books of the East, vol. 21, 1884
- MRL - *Monks, Rulers, and Literati: The Political Ascendancy of Chan Buddhism*, by Albert Welte, Oxford, 2006
- MT - *The Mystique of Transmission*, by Wendi L. Adamek, New York, 2007
- NJ - *A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka*, by Bunyiu Nanjio, Oxford, 1883
- PSSP - *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, by Philip B. Yampolsky, Columbia, 1967
- SBCR - *Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record. Zen Comments by Hakuin and Tenkei*, translated by Thomas Cleary,

Boston, 2000

SH - *A Study of History*, by Arnold Toynbee, 12 vols. Oxford, 1934-61, Rprt. 1979

TZC - *Two Zen Classics*, translated by Katsuki Sekida, New York, 1977; rpt., 1985

YCB - *Das Yulu des Chan-Buddhismus: Die Entwicklung vom 8.-11. Jahrhundert am Beispiel des 28. Kapitels des Jingde chuandenglu (1004)* by Christian Wittern, Bern, 1998

ZS - *Zen Sand*, by Victor Sogen Hori, Hawai'i, 2003

Book Twenty-Nine

- 29.1** Venerable **Baozhi** (*Hōshi*) of the Liang Dynasty
- 29.2** Venerable **Baozhi** (*Hōshi*) of the Liang Dynasty
- 29.3** Venerable **Bao Gong** (Baozhi (*Hōshi*) of the Liang Dynasty)
- 29.4** Chan Master **Guizong Zhichang Zhizhen**
- 29.5** Chan Master **Xiangyan Xideng Great Master Zhixian** (*Kyōgen Chikan*)
- 29.6** Venerable **Dongshan Liangjie**
- 29.7** Venerable **Longya Judun**
- 29.8** Great Master **Xuansha Shibei Zongyi**
- 29.9** Great Master **Zhaoqing Shengcheng Zhenjue** (a. k.a. **Jingxiu**)
- 29.10** Venerable **Zhanzhou Luohan Guichen**
- 29.11** Chan Master **Nanyue Banzhou Daochang Weijin**
- 29.12** Venerable **Yingzhou Linxi Jingtuo**
- 29.13** Chan Master **Fayan Wenyi**
- 29.14** **Bai Juyi**
- 29.15** Chan Master **Tong'an Changcha**
- 29.16** **Yunding Shan Seng Defu**
- 29.17** **Sengrun**

Laudatory Verses 讚頌偈詩

29.1 Venerable Baozhi (*Hōshi*) of the Liang Dynasty²³

Ten Poems in Praise of the Great Vehicle of the Mahayana

1.

Great Dao, ever before the eyes²⁴
In front of the eyes yet difficult to behold
If you wish to awaken to Dao's real essence
Do not abandon sound, form or the word

Just the word is the Great Dao²⁵
But it does not help to cut off afflictions
For afflictions are originally void
And deluded feelings entangle each other

All things are like shadows, like echoes²⁶
Is it not known, what is good, what is bad?
A heart grasping at appearances as real
Knows certainly that original nature is not seen

Wishing to create *karma* to search for Buddha²⁷
The *karma* of birth and death will be endlessly long
Birth and death *karma* accompany a body forever
Prison of darkness, no light of dawn arising yet

Awakened to reality is original Thusness²⁸
After awakening, who would be early, who late?

Dharma-realm's measure co-equals the Great Void
Living beings know, the personal heart is small

Only if 'I', 'me' is unable to arise²⁹
Can nirvāṇa's sustenance be forever enjoyed

2.

An illusory body approaches a mirror reflecting³⁰
Reflection and illusory body are not different
Only wanting the reflection to go, the body to stay
Is not to know that the body is originally like space

The body is originally no different from the reflection³¹
Impossible that one exists without the other
Wanting one and discarding the other
Will ever be far from the true principle

More, loving the sacred, despising the profane³²
Is sinking in ocean's stream of birth and death
Since afflictions root in a closed heart
Open-hearted,³³ where could they reside?

Not to labour at grasping distinctions³⁴
In an instant then the Dao is obtained
In dreaming a dream, all is actions
Awakened to awakening's realm, nothing remains

Pondering the awakened state and the dream³⁵
Turned around, both are seen the same
To exchange delusion, grasping awakening for profit
What is the difference with a pedlar selling to shoppers?

Action and inaction - abolishing both is peace forever³⁶
A naturally unified harmony with the totally other
If you say living beings are different from Buddha
This is far, far away, ever alienated from Buddha

Buddha and living beings are not two³⁷
Ultimate reality harbours no superfluity

3.

Dharma-nature, originally ever quiescent³⁸
Immense, no boundaries, going on forever
Even a settled heart is dizzied
Caught between grasping and discarding

Reverently silent, enter Chan meditation³⁹
Absorbed quiet heart, wake up and see
When will a wooden puppet practising the Dao
Ever succeed in reaching the other shore?

All dharmas, originally void, are immaterial⁴⁰
Realms like floating clouds, gathering, dispersing
Suddenly awaking to original nature's Voidness
Is exactly like perspiring from a fiery fever

Do not speak of this before the unwise⁴¹
Your body beaten into scattered particles

4.

Declared to you is living beings' straight way⁴²
It is neither existent nor non-existent
Not existent nor non-existent are not two
So why engage in empty words?

Foolish hearts set up names of Being, non-Being⁴³
Once broken, nothing is left over
Two names made from your emotions
Without such emotions is original Thusness

If you desire to live with these emotions and see Buddha⁴⁴
Take a net to the mountaintop to catch fish!
Effort spent in vain is without profit

So much work is work in vain!

Not to realise that just this heart is Buddha⁴⁵
Is truly like searching a donkey mounted on a donkey
Not to be partial, not to hate anything
This is the time of afflictions eliminated

Eliminated, then body must be eliminated⁴⁶
Body eliminated there is no Buddha, no causality
Arrived at no Buddha, no causality
Then all is natural, no dharmas, no beings

5.

The Great Dao does not come from practice⁴⁷
Expounding practice as power, is for foolish worldlings
Arrived at principle, looking back on practice
Is to begin to know labour in vain

Not yet awoken to full penetration of the great principle⁴⁸
It is necessary to talk of practice as a support
Impossible it is to grasp another's insight
Reflected original light is completely useless

Can someone explain insight in these words?⁴⁹
You should enquire of yourself
See for yourself old faults
Eradicate the five desires as warts

Liberation is roaming in freedom⁵⁰
Free as the wind, giving freely
Who can buy the aspiration of the heart?
Then be without cares, just like me

6.

Inward looking, outward looking, all are bad⁵¹
Buddha's Way, Mara's Way, both are wrong

Through these two great demons
Suffering will be more, need of medicine too

Awakened from birth-death to the essential void⁵²
Where would Buddha and Mara find a place?
Only by separation from confused feelings
Is there no connection with the last or next birth

The revolving wheel of the six destinies does not stop⁵³
Knotted *karma* cannot be extirpated
So roaming adrift in birth and death
All is randomly experienced, superficially

The body is originally void, of no substance⁵⁴
Who acts appropriately in returning to the source?
Being and non-Being is determined through me
Do not toil at predictions with a foolish heart

The body of living beings is like the Great Void⁵⁵
Where could afflictions find a place?
Only when there is absolutely nothing to seek
Do afflictions of themselves dissipate

7.

How laughable, the wriggling manoeuvres of men⁵⁶
Each grasping a different point of view
Only wanting to bake rice-cakes in their own pan
Without realising the common origin of dough

The dough is the source of good and bad⁵⁷
Made into a hundred different kinds by men
So it is necessary to move randomly, unhindered
Without relying on any biased friendship

Non-attachment then is liberation⁵⁸
To be in search is to come into a net

A compassionate heart is all neutral
A real manifestation of the bodhisattva

If the two hearts of you and I are held to⁵⁹
The face opposite cannot see the Buddha-face

8.

How many are the silly people in the world⁶⁰
On the Way, yet still searching for the Way
Broadly seeking all meanings, confused
Unable even to save themselves

Only searching others' confused writings⁶¹
Better to take oneself to the profound essence
A whole life passed in endless futility
Is everlasting aeons sunk in birth and old age

Not to reject defiled heart-attachments⁶²
Afflicts the pure heart of wisdom itself
The sanctuary of the absolute dharma-realm,
Becomes an overgrown wasteland of thorns and brambles

Only grabbing autumn leaves, taking them for gold⁶³
Is not awakening to reject searching gold treasure
So to run around crazy, losing all sanity
Is to abuse strength, dressed up as the goodly

Reciting *sutras* in the mouth, commentaries too⁶⁴
Makes the heart inside ever withered and dry
One morning, awakening to original heart's voidness
Then everything is *bhūtatathā*, nothing lacking

9.

A *śrāvaka's* heart, is a heart severed from doubt⁶⁵
Able to cut it off, the heart becomes a thief
Thief to thief transmit mutual annihilation

When can the original word awaken in silence?

Sutras in the mouth, a thousand chapters recited⁶⁶
Questioning their supreme essence without understanding
Not liberated by Buddha-dharma's complete penetration
Vain labour seeking practice on paper

Ascetics practise bitter austerities⁶⁷
Hoping for merit in a life to come
But that hope bars the sacred
How then to accomplish the Great Dao?

Example: crossing a river in a dream⁶⁸
The boatman ferries to the other shore
Suddenly awaking in bed, sleepy-eyed
All trace of the ferrycrossing is gone

The ferryman and the ferried⁶⁹
Are not really known to each other
Living beings, shackled by confusion, fall over
Here, there in three worlds, completely tired

Awaking, birth and death are like a dream⁷⁰
And the ever-searching heart itself is at ease

10.

Awakened understanding is *bodhi*⁷¹
There is no ladder to realising the origin
Mortal man wilts with many a groan
Eighty years old, not going beyond

A useless life is quickly passed⁷²
Night and day changing, unawares
Looking up, seeing the teacher's mouth
Just like a lost infant seeking the breast