

禪宗略說

A Brief Introduction to the Chan School

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禪宗為佛教五大宗之首，傳佛心印，直指人心，見性成佛；達摩西來，極力提倡。當時佛教崇尚文字般若，互作詞句之較賽；講經則爭長論短，說法則己是人非。各立門戶，舌戰紛紜；獨樹異幟，巧辯無礙。著書立說，抑人揚己；捨本逐末，教理縱橫。生公受謗虎丘，頑石點頭；宣師隱跡終南，天人送供。智者演教觀，廬山弘淨土；傳者尚之，學者迷之。莫衷一是，無所適從；歧路徘徊，望洋興嘆。故我初祖，救偏補漏，慈示離言。不立文字，即心是佛；衣裏寶珠，非從外得。集中精神，專心致志；迨一旦豁然貫通，則衆物之表裏精粗無不到，而吾心之全體大用無不明。大徹大悟，返本還原；始信世尊拈花，金色頭陀破顏微笑，原來如此。以心印心，教外別傳；自性自度，如筏喻者，豈有他哉？

【白話解】

現在講水鏡回天錄的第二卷，這頭一個題目，就是「禪宗略說」：略略的講一講這個禪宗的大概。學佛法的人都知道有禪宗，究竟禪是怎

The Chan School is foremost among the five major schools of Buddhism. It transmits the Buddha's mind seal and points directly to the practitioner's mind. Upon seeing the inherent nature, one becomes a Buddha.

Bodhidharma came from the west and actively promoted the Chan School. At that time, Buddhists esteemed only literal *prajna*, and they competed with each other in their writings (poems and essays). When lecturing sutras, they competed to be the best speaker. When giving Dharma talks, they criticized others and praised themselves. They established their own sects and engaged in verbal war. They raised their special flags and were highly skillful and had no obstructions in debate. They authored books and proposed new schools of thought to put down others and praise themselves. They renounced the fundamental and went after the superficial instead. They misinterpreted the doctrines of Buddhism.

Venerable Dao Sheng was defamed on Mount Hu Qiu, and rocks nodded their heads. Venerable Dao Xuan hid on Mount Zhongnan, and a *deva* offered him food. Venerable Zhi Zhe expounded teachings and contemplations, while Venerable Hui Yuan of Mount Lu promoted the Pure Land School. Teachers praised their own teachings, and students were confused. They didn't know which one was right and which one to follow. They stopped and waited at the junction, not knowing which path to take. Looking at the sea, they could only sigh. Therefore, our First Patriarch saved the biased and patched the leaks. He kindly taught without talking; he used no words. Just the mind is the Buddha. The precious pearl has always been inside the clothes, it cannot be found outside.

Focus your attention, be single-minded, and never forget your resolve.



麼回事呢？不太清楚！所以略略說一說。

「禪宗爲佛教五大宗之首」：禪宗是真正的佛教五大宗之首。禪、教、律、密、淨這五大宗，禪就是禪宗，教就是講經說法，律就是修持戒律，密就是專門持咒的，好像喇嘛的密宗。「傳佛心印」：它是真正傳佛心印的，以心印心。

「直指人心」：直接的，一點也不彎曲，就是只說你那個心就是佛。「見性成佛」：你見到佛性，就會成佛的；這是一點權巧方便也沒有的，就說你這個心就是佛。

「達摩西來」：本來在早期，中國也有禪宗這個道理，好像覺賢法師，他們也都傳禪宗，不過沒有專門研究這個禪宗，所以等達摩祖師(初祖達摩)從印度到中國來。西來，是從印度到中國來。「極力提倡」：他就專門提倡禪宗，說假如你不參禪，就不是根本法；參禪是最扼要、最要緊的一個法。

「當時佛教崇尚文字般若」：當時中國的佛教，人人都尊重法師，這法師是最高的了，禪師沒有人理睬的，崇尚文字般若。「互作詞句之較賽」：這就是好像你們在草創、討論、潤色，這麼較賽。你們以後不要爲了潤色，發脾氣胡鬧吵架；這不是一定一回就是的，你要記得這個「較賽」！不過你也要把它做得過得去，不能說：「我這樣對，你那樣不對，要用這個字！」不是的！你看哪個文通順，上下一念，可以過得去的，這就可以了。

待續

Then, all of a sudden, when a breakthrough occurs, you will penetrate the inside and outside, as well as the details of all things, and will completely understand all functions of the mind. Once greatly enlightened, you will return to your original source and will then understand the state of the Golden Ascetic who broke into a smile when the World Honored One held up a flower. Aha, so it is! It can only be transmitted from mind to mind: it is a special teaching, totally different from the others. You should cross over your self-nature on your own. It is like the analogy of a raft. Is there more to say?"

Commentary:

Now we'll start the second volume of the *Reflections in Water and Mirrors*. The first topic is "A Brief Introduction to the Chan School". Students of Buddhism all know about the Chan School; however, most of them do not know exactly what Chan is. This is why I'd like to explain it briefly here.

The Chan School is foremost among the five major schools of Buddhism: The five major schools are the schools of Chan, Teaching, Vinaya, Esoteric, and Pure Land. The Teaching School focuses on giving sutra lectures and Dharma talks. The Vinaya School emphasizes upholding precepts. The Esoteric School emphasizes reciting mantras. **It transmits the Buddha's mind seal:** it genuinely transmits the Buddha's mind seal – from mind to mind. **It points directly to the practitioner's heart:** directly, not the least bit crooked – it says that just your mind is the Buddha. **Upon seeing the inherent nature, one becomes a Buddha:** once you see your Buddha nature, you immediately become a Buddha. There is no skillful expedience at all; it simply says that just your mind is the Buddha. **Bodhidharma came from the west:** originally the Chan School existed in China. For example, Dharma Master Jue Xian and others also transmitted the Chan School; however, none specialized in it. When the First Chan Patriarch Bodhidharma came from the west, from India to China, **and actively promoted the Chan School:** he specialized in promoting the Chan School. He said that if you don't practice Chan, then you don't practice the fundamental Dharma. Investigating Chan is the quickest and most important practice. **At that time, Buddhists esteemed only literal *prajna*:** at that time, all Buddhists in China respected Dharma Masters and regarded them most highly. However, they looked down on Chan Masters. They esteemed literal *prajna*; **and they competed with each other in their writings:** This is exactly like you people competing on the first draft, while correcting and polishing it. From now on, you should not argue and get angry. It may take more than one meeting to finish it. You should not insist that only your words and not others' are the right choice. If it reads alright, then it is acceptable.

To be continued