

Q: What texts are available that Bodhidharma has written?

To know the answer to that you would have to become a fully ordained and transmitted monk because much that Bodhidharma wrote is found only in the transmission papers that come from master to disciple. Because they have been handed down for centuries from Bodhidharma to his disciple Taisho Eka and from him to his disciple, they have been added to, but whenever something is added, the new name has to be put in. How many more? There are fifty more written by Dogen. I translated them out of the original. Transmission comes from Shakyamuni and he passed it on to Makakasho and he passed it on to Ananda. There were forty actually from Bodhidharma; the rest are from Ananda and Dogen. They may not be published. Actually what Bodhidharma wrote really was a very comprehensive excellent prayer book or scripture book if you like, for the decedents of Zen, and it is tradition that it passes from master to disciple and everybody has to copy it out. It really is a pity Bodhidharma didn't publish because he is quite a fascinating writer and his sense of humour is delicious. You get the feeling that he was quietly sitting there digging at the Chinese who were labouring thoughtfully, "Now will this happen or will that happen," and he would not even bother about that; he just wanted to get on with it. Apropos of this business with Bodhidharma, I would like to make a few other things clear. Zen did not start with Bodhidharma. It started with Shakyamuni Buddha himself through Makakasho through Ananda and directly through the actual line Shakyamuni Buddha through Bodhidharma to Wei Neng, who is Daikan Eno in Japanese, to Mansan straight down to the present day. So it is not something that started with any specific Chinese; it started much earlier. Roughly speaking the other big split where things seem to have specific timing in character took place at the time of Nagyaarajyuna. Nagyaarajyuna was the first one who started the other school, including the Tendai and Shingon. You will get more of the actual Chinese flavour from them than you will from Bodhidharma. Actually from there you will find some of the actual Indian sentences in it.

Most people in England came to Zen with it in connection with Rinzai, and Rinzai is the last evolution of Zen, not the first. The first is Soto after which came Obku and Rinzai himself was Obaku's disciple. Now Obaku made a big mistake in Buddhism in that although he had gone a tremendously long way he either didn't have a very good press agent or he wasn't very good in expressing himself on paper. I'm not completely sure. It was one or the other. He went off into, I suppose, you would call heresy - I hate the use of that word in England because it has some rather nasty connotations. Anyway, what he did was go off into the idea that the only thing that existed was mind, and that Buddha and everything was just mind. Now Rinzai realised that this was wrong but he went off into the opposite extreme, which was bound to happen, which you didn't need a Buddha - which is true. But the fact remains that unless you can recognize that there is something greater than yourself, you are going to end up a tyrant. Now Soto, the oldest form of Zen, always says, "Yes you yourself are Buddha, but Shakyamuni did it before you; therefore you must give your gratitude and your reference to him," - hence the fact that you always bow in the temple. Therefore since you already know that you are Buddha, you must always recognize that there is always someone greater than you, so you do not get into the tyrant syndrome. And that is very important, and that is why I always hammer into people when they come to us that they must be willing to bow to the altar. They are not worshipping. It is a very important point and it is one of the most fundamental points in Buddhism. Yes, you are God, but for crying out loud don't go around behaving like it or remember if you do the dangers you

are playing with yourself and with other people. It is one of the reasons Rinzai could be such a danger, and it is Rinzai that we hear most about over here. Now there is nothing wrong with Rinzai, there is nothing wrong with Obaku. They are stages of development on the way. But Soto has always been much more difficult, and any attempt to make it easier forces you to fall into one of these mistakes of extreme on either side. Sorry if that sounds awfully complicated but I think most of you know what I am talking about. Now that we have sorted out Bodhidharma, maybe we can go on to something else.

When you know that you are free, that you literally have always been free, that you can do whatever you wish, then you know your own Buddha Nature. It is symbolized, oddly enough, by two swastikas. At your Transmission you get a huge silk certificate which has two swastikas - one going that way and one going this way, and you can choose which way you want to turn it. One goes towards the way of the world (cruelty) which is the same one that Hitler used, or you can turn it to the right which means compassion, love, and wisdom. You can choose whichever way you wish but understand that they are only symbols, that is, as the world understands Buddhism. You yourself are literally above this and when you know that, you have the responsibility of knowing it. Therefore you must bow; otherwise you could do great harm. As you develop your meditation you can really see how most of the time you selfishly use your will, and for the first time it really becomes your possession - to decide what your life is going to be, which way it is going. This is when you get the two swastikas because on that knife edge is where you choose whether you are going to be a tyrant or a priest. And every minute of the day you make this choice. You can go back to being deluded, but you have to choose to be deluded this time, which makes it a lot worse. In fact, it is a very frightening place to be at because once you get there, there is nowhere you can go without so choosing. The problem that you have with truth is that you are thinking of truth as the opposite of falsehood. Truth and falsehood can never be untangled but there is something else. Everything that exists is real. It is impossible to have something which contradicts itself in reality even though you can have it in language, in logic, or what you like conceptually. When you understand reality in a situation which is not a truth or falsehood situation, then it is all yours and you have to do whatever is going to be done.

What about dreams? A dream is a dream. In the dream you are still in control. You are still responsible. People control their own dreams although they never think so, and this is why you have to take the Precepts before anybody will teach you this. Otherwise you are just unleashing a bunch of monsters. You have to be given the Precepts and make them your blood and bones completely and utterly before you can even begin to be taught. There is a part of this which I think needs to be brought out, and that is choosing evil. What we call evil is to choose something which in fact doesn't exist and that forces us back into delusion. Because within our own nature we are good, in the conventional sense of the word. When a trainee comes to the monastery he is given the sixteen Precepts, which start off with, "I'll try not to kill, I will do everything to train myself not to steal," etc. which are really a rule of thumb. After he's been at it, really trying seriously, he suddenly cottons on that it is impossible to keep these ten because every time he opens his mouth and eats a cabbage, he is killing something and so it goes on. So then he starts thinking of this thing on a much deeper level. You see he has no alternative and then he starts taking it as - "Okay, what I really have to try and do is cease from evil and do good and do good for others, realising that at some time I am going to break one of these precepts, but I must always consider what is going on, the outcome for others, not the outcome for me. If in breaking it I do something I shouldn't do, I take the blame for having done it." So responsibility comes into this thing. And when you have gotten that far, you are

living completely as a responsible human being. Then the consequences of what you get up to, doing as little harm as possible, you realise that even the "Cease from evil and do only good" and "do good for others" need to be pushed further. How do you know? When can you tell? So you come to the final three Precepts, "Take refuge in the Buddha, take refuge in the Teaching, take refuge in the Sangha". Who is the Buddha but your own heart, the thing that tells you that you yourself are doing right or wrong. You must always look to the Scriptures.

You think of others instead of yourself. You have a series of rules of thumb, then you find the underlying principle, and then you find the underlying principle to that. In the end it means you are completely free of conceptual conditioning; you are doing the best you can at all times, and in all places. Is that spontaneous? Yes. But more than spontaneous. Then and only then will you start learning religion. That is when you start learning it, not when you finish. What are you doing, in effect, is considering the effect your actions having, what you are actually creating. Are you creating a monster? Are you living for yourself? But remember you must also live for yourself as well as living for others. Otherwise you end up a do-gooder and that is a heck of a lot worse - self debasement, knocking yourself out. And when you make a mistake, as in my early days in Japan, you honestly go up and say you are sorry - "I did wrong, I am sorry. I will do better. I will try again." That is when you are ready to take somebody and start them in the study of Zen. That is not the end of it. It is the beginning. The Far East get very worried by us over here in the West with some reason because this is half the reason Zen got such a bad name when first started out. They took people who came from the West and presumed they had already gotten this sorted out and that is where they started from. Most of them had not gotten their moral sides sorted out at all and so - "Complete freedom! Wonderful! And now all I have to do is go off and get up to anything that sounds handy." That is not what it is. You have to get all of that dealt with first. You are living a completely and utterly moral life unfettered by morality because that is your natural way to be. Then you can start studying religion. That is the beginning of it, not the end of it. It takes us a lot further on. To be free is not to be a slave to your desires. There is something very important about this faith in yourself. It is faith in yourself to do the best you know now, which does not mean tomorrow morning. Not faith that it is absolutely right but that we cannot do better than the best we know now. If you do it with that faith you will find out better, immediately. Even if you do the same thing - done with more knowledge, with more faith. Everytime you do something with faith it strengthens it, whether it turns out that you were right or wrong. It leads on, you see. You start off - okay, the first few attempts you make, you make mistakes. What is right today is wrong tomorrow and right the day after. Each time you make a mistake you take the consequences of the action and go on from there. There is no way you can't learn from your mistakes. You know quite well what happens when you make them. There is no way you can't deepen. That deepening is how you continue the flow of your own training. The real Buddhist is an extraordinary responsible human being. It is not quietism. It is not "I float away into the crystal sea--blah, blah, blah--how wonderful it is!" It is not imagination. It is acceptance of you as you are now, saying, "Okay, I'm in a mess, I'm going to do better, but I honestly believed in what I did and I tried to do the best I could." And pick yourself up from there every minute. So you have a very positive attitude of mind towards your everyday life and towards everybody else's. You don't go around saying, "Oo, what a mess I'm in, there is nothing I can do about it." Don't look at the mess and sit and look at the mess and feel miserable about it. Say, "Yes, I am in a mess, let's start cleaning it up." It is a totally different attitude of mind - instead of turning the wheel that way, you turn it this way. There is not a state that you cannot clean up. The beauty of the

Denkoroku, which is why I have put chapters of it in my book, is that every one of the Patriarchs would have been a candidate for the world's prize rat, and most of them would of won it. It is very useful to know that the saints were like that.

You don't get rid of delusion, you transcend it. I mean you only see it for what it truly is, and then you can go beyond it. You use delusion, in practical ways, at all times. The tree fires, greed, hate, and delusion, are real enough to the people who suffer from them. The problems they bring to me are real problems. Now one of the best known ways of the Buddhist world to cure people of the three fires, greed, hate, and delusion, is to use greed, hate and delusion positively. 'Oo, these papers are unavailable how can I get hold of them?' somebody may say. So he starts training himself to become a monk so he can get hold of the papers. So he has used his greeds positively because it is the delusion in his head that there is something he can get that someone else hasn't got. You see how you use it positively? To him the delusion is very real. But at a later date he will see that is was the use of delusion positively that forced him to do something about himself. Is it a delusion to you? There is no such thing as a delusion. There is no such thing as greed and there is no such thing as hate. They are states of mind through which we go, all of which can be very useful to help people improve themselves. But if they are not used positively, if they are used negatively, which is what most people do, it's soap opera. Do you know what soap opera is? It is the sort of thing that goes on on TV. Tune in tomorrow and see what happens to this poor wretch who has all of these things wrong with him. They are seen through the eyes of the people concerned. And they seen very real. But at a later date they will see that they are not. As they learn to cope with them they find that they are not complicated. You will still find that one day, when you solve that problem, although you felt it was a problem then, it is not a problem now. Therefore you have transcended it. You have transcended it into something totally different. There is another side of it, and that is a very rich man who keeps hoarding money and one day dies; he has hoarded it with the idea that he owned it. But he couldn't take it with him. He did not own it. You can say that he was wiser today but that doesn't mean to say that he wiser yesterday. It is the process of delusion, a process of coming out of the fog. Imagine that you were going around in a deep fog and the fog is steadily clearing. Do you get the meaning? There is always a little fog hanging about and it gets less and less and less. It is the old Buddhist saying that the pond is always clear and the Buddha Nature is in the bottom of it, but we ruffle the water to such an extent on the top that we can't see. But when the water is calm, we can see. You want to make distinctions between being deluded at one time and not being deluded at another. It becomes obvious that all of your states of mind, before, during, and after, are exactly the same kind. What you think is going on is never exactly what is going on. Your mind is not adequate to encompass the whole world. But your mind is entirely adequate to be positive about it, all the time.

You may think you are deluded but even that is not delusion. What is it? Why do you think that we have religion? That's the point. The only way the answer is given, the only answer is personal experience. And the only thing Buddhism teaches at all is what is meant by gaining the experience yourself. I can say anything in Buddhism is considered a mistake, because you will never put your finger on it. Are you satisfied with your own experience? It is much better to have a good look and see what you want. Look, really what it means to be in a fog and nothing else. Delusion is really a bad word. It really means to be in a fog about something. Basically no one is in a fog, nobody suffers from hate, and nobody suffers from greed. But the crux of the situation is that our ideas, opinions, situations place us in a fog. No what I mean is, if they don't get worried

about it, if they just continue to do the best they can at all times, the fog gradually clears. What isn't basic about this? Mind you that it proves in a very short period of time that you can. As I said, the word delusion is a bad word. I like the idea of the fog. If you are in a fog, you are in a fog, and you have to keep fighting through it until you are out of the fog. They are real in one form or another, all right. No doubt about that one. You actually don't want to look at it and then you pretend to yourself that you want to look at it. That's one type of fog. Another type of fog is that you look somewhere that you can't see. You try and look into the future but try and not look very far. One the favourite questions often asked by trainees is 'What is a priest?' 'How do I know that I am a priest?' The answer is that you never know when you are a priest but you will always know when you are not. You always know, but you don't always want to admit that you know. That's your problem. Because when you admit that you know, you get this incredible responsibility settling down on your shoulders.

You put your hand into a glass of water and you know that it's cold. If you don't know the language, you can't tell anybody. How do you explain a glass of cold water to somebody who has never had one? How do you know when to wake up in the morning or why water is wet? People do like the word 'faith'. 'Faith' is a worrying word. I don't have to believe these things - I have to know. How do you know have to wake up in the morning? What proof have you got? Absolutely none. You think you probably know. But you don't know. There is no proof. And that is 'faith'. You believe it will happen. But we really don't know that we will wake up in the morning. We know when it is light. We know some things. We know that to wake up in the morning is not something that we know. That is why most people like to remember their childhood. They can remember when there was not a fog. And that is the knowing that we talk about in Zen which is not the knowledge of faculty development. Can you raise your right hand? How did you do it? What kind of explanation would you like? You can give me any explanation you like but you can never tell me how you did it. Biological function on a mechanical level? The thing about it is, even if you could give me an explanation, it will not raise your right hand, because before you ever knew an explanation, before you ever conceived that there could be an explanation, you knew how to raise your hand. Zen doesn't need an explanation in exactly the same way. If you know how to do it, do it. You don't need to explain to people how to do it; just show them how.

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Lecture and Discussion at Durham University Buddhist Society

(Continued)

What have we been doing all this time since you arrived? Well, I have been making people's self hungry so that they can use it positively. It is a very good Buddhist trick to make people hungry for what they want. To make you do something about you. Understand that the old monk does nothing. All he does is point. He says, 'Fine, you want to do something, go straight down there;' and you do it all because the Zen master is not a psychiatrist. He does not take over your will. In fact every time you try to give it to him he hands it right back to you with a clap on the skull. 'Here, this is yours; you left it lying about'. And you can use hate positively for the same reason. All the Seniors have yellow rakksus, only Junior ones have black ones and you see them walking around and one of them has just been raised to a Senior. They could kick him for they haven't got it. 'Ah yes, how do I get that far?' So his greed and hate are both working... 'What has he got that I haven't got!..' and that is the delusion. What has he got that I haven't got and the answer is exactly nothing except that he works harder.

Well when do people get yellow rakksus? The answer to that is that the man is ready when he doesn't want that anymore and when he doesn't suffer from that anymore, when you are doing the best you can.. You should be happy that people are doing better than you while you are still doing the best you can. Helping people whether they are behind you or ahead of you, then you're training. If, on the other hand, you are thinking, 'How can I catch up with him?' you are not training. That is why the scripture says, "never try to bring the teacher's teaching down to your level". Always recognise that you have to go up. So there is nothing wrong with greed, hate and delusion. It depend what you do with them. You can make people really work like mad if you use them properly.

What about the perfect person who doesn't have any greed, hate and delusion? Everybody has some... Shakyamuni Buddha was very seriously deluded as you can tell by the fact that he left his wife the day after his son was born; he named his son the equivalent of a damned nuisance. There is a tendency to think that someone like a Roshi has to be perfect; if so there was no reason for him to go out and look for enlightenment when he already had it. And he only found it when he realised that he was not going to find it as a result of ascetism, discussion and the like. He found it when he said, "What I have discovered is complete peace of mind". What did he do to get it? He put himself back into the frame of mind when he was seven. Just sitting quietly, watching his thoughts come and go without getting involved in them, and then he makes it. For a long time after, he never thought he was in anything to be out of. He had no experience to fall back on. You have to do it from your own experience. Everyone of you at some time has had a moment when you have had a fantastic view of the whole world that you never had before, and most people have this. The thing of it is that you don't recognise what it is for the first few times. When you recognise it you can do it again systematically and keep it up more permanantly. It is not always completely changing over. Once you change over, you stay changed over. But you can keep up this thing if you practice. I think all of you had the experience, more than likely. One of the things you are first taught when you start meditation is to sit and watch the traffic go by, which is your thoughts going back and forth, without getting involved in the traffic. Now this can lead to quietism, which is a possibility. As soon as someone starts enjoying the traffic going by he gets the job of

being Chief Junior which means that he then has to go off and join the traffic and not get highjacked in the process, if you follow the meaning. Too many people can too easily get highjacked; but a person does not have to buy that. He doesn't have to jump in the car when people offer to give him lifts. He has to drive his own car back and forth. In other words he has to learn responsibility and still maintain the attitude of mind of sitting beneath the bridge very quietly but able to join the flow of the traffic. Now when you are a child you sit beneath the bridge and watch the traffic go by because you have no experience to know what it is. When you are an adult you can still sit beneath the bridge quietly and peacefully and still join the traffic. So you have the peace, the naivete, the beauty of the child mind with the adult experience, and that is the basic result, that is really what you're up to, that is the value of meditation - why people must meditate; but they must also remember that everything else they do is a form of meditation. When they are working they are working. Don't think that meditation is only sitting in the meditation hall. Everything you do has to done to the same intensity, the same singleness of purpose. Love the thing without being possessed by it.

A big problem for priests for example is that in the beginning the attitude is, 'I must have bacon and eggs for breakfast', and it gets to the state, if you start working on yourself, 'It would be nice to have bacon and eggs for breakfast'. And next there is, 'Oh there is no bacon and eggs for breakfast, never mind, what is there?' as opposed to 'Where are my bacon and eggs, I can't start the day without my bacon and eggs'. That's greed speaking. The other is living naturally.

The chief cook is supposed to be so single minded as not to discriminate between one thing and another. So you give him a cabbage. There are dirty leaves, ouu. He throws them away. Ahh, there are the nice leaves, I'll put them in the pot. So there is discrimination. After he has done a bit of meditation, ah yes, compost - food. Then it gets a bit further, he isn't discriminating, he is making each thing do it's rightful job. And that is the attitude of mind that you have to get to. It's transcended discrimination.

Discrimination is not between 'this is good' and 'this is bad'. It's 'I'll use this for that and find something else later'. There is no squirm as you see an extra large slug eating away at one of the leaves. Everything has its use perfectly as it is. Everything has the Buddha Nature which brings me back to what I said earlier about the importance of bowing. The Buddha will bow to a table because it has held the plate for its food. Everything is Buddha Nature. It has given it self for him and he to it. The whole thing is the Buddha Nature. You bow to the Buddha in the temple out of gratitude because he gave you the teaching which has enabled you to find true peace and your own ability within yourself and to look at the statue which has allowed itself to be carved in the image that we must become, so you see it gives you the opportunity to be grateful. After all this table gives me the right to lean on it. I haven't got the right. I am grateful it's here. But it gave itself that I may lean on it. It isn't complaining. It is performing magnificently as a table and as such deserves to be bowed to. Everything is magnificent as it is within the Buddha Nature and unless you can develop the sort of mind that bows instinctively to everything and anything including the toilet and the chap who's got bad breath next door to you, until you can develop that attitude of mind you are not going to know the peace of Buddhism. And you will always be stirring up these things, 'Well I don't like this and I don't like that', It all comes down to this cabbage business I told you about.

The table has something else very good to teach you. It is willing to be used but doesn't require to be used. It is accepting. Why are we trying to do something useful? We are trying to improve ourselves. To go back to the table - I can be used but I don't have to be used. We have to take the same attitude in our training, that we are only in training to do something for ourselves and other people. We do not believe that the world is required to be grateful to us. We should be prepared either to do good without reward, or when it is really not wanted, not to do it. This is known as the Great Grief (Kokurokonashiku) But one must occasionally speak out, and when one does, recognise that as a responsible human being you take the consequences of having spoken out. You cannot avoid the responsibility of what you do. It is not a comfortable religion.

I will add something else if I may and that is when you read Naagaraguna or Bashubanzu, notice that we frequently have to use philosophical terms. We are trying to express ourselves in a medium which does not really lend itself to that which comes from the heart. You cannot apply normal philosophical meanings or arguments to these words. Bashubanzu's teaching, for example, were first torn to pieces when they were first translated into Western languages simply because they were using the normal rules applied for what they called argument. They didn't realise that these were men of faith talking about spiritual things, trying to put them into language when there was no language to put them into.

What about my book? All it was was my own private studies. I was extraordinarily lucky in that the chap who was given to teach me was the Emperor's own teacher. He and the Archbishop of Tokyo, who was my teacher, would translate it into modern Japanese, and I would translate it from modern Japanese into English, write it down, translate it back into modern Japanese. We would take it to the Archbishop who listened to it in modern Japanese to see if it fitted with the ancient Japanese and then it could be used. This is still from my own personal studies; it lasted ten years but that is beside the point. This is not a translation. It is an explanation of the text. I wasn't translating the thing. I just wanted to understand it. It is a totally different matter. What it comes to is instead of translating words and sentences, this is a way of communicating the same thing in a different language. First you have to know what it is about. Then you have to write it yourself. There is no way you can do it by any other means. It wouldn't make any sense. Suppose you saw a notice in the newspaper which says, "Only great dragons and elephants who doubt that this is True Buddha come forth and test and make sure". And you say, "What the heck. He's flipped out of his head". Until you know, the great dragon is the defender of the faith in Buddhism and the great elephant is the great saint. It only comes out as, "Only the defenders of the faith and the saints of Buddhism who doubt that this one really understands can ask him. Come and examine him in public". And that has to happen for any priest to be made a Roshi. Long before. It is put out in the Japanese newspapers and something like thirty or sixty monks turn up to the temple on a specific day complete with a couple of examiners to really see if the chap knows. He has to stand at the altar as the living Buddha, the Emperor, our parents and all people. And everybody was happy and then the next day I changed it; The Buddha, the President, President Nixon, our parents and all people. Our temple was seething with rage. We are not going to share our food with the President. It was okay with the Emperor, that was a different matter. So when you bring the thing down home you make it real and you get everybody yelling who can open his mouth. Because unless you can understand that it is by the government, the king or whoever it is that the country

is kept peaceful for you to be able to study; unless you can see that you have the right to sit as a result of the government or whoever is in charge of the country; unless you can be grateful for that, your heart is going to be seething politically. You have to understand the peace of mind that comes out of being grateful for the actual fact that you are physically able to pray.

What about Buddhists in Vietnam who burnt themselves? The answer to that - I said that to the Archbishop of Japan because it happened when I was over there and his answer to me was, 'Anyone who does that is not a Buddhist'. And that was a Buddhist speaking. He was quite right because under no circumstances can you kill yourself. If you kill yourself you commit the greatest crime of all. This is one of the worst things in Buddhism. Anyone who tells another person that there is anything to be gained by his death, whether it is for him or anyone else, - out. That is Rule Number One. Because we offer our food to President Nixon does not mean that we condone Watergate. The idea of our offering to President Nixon is the hope that if we train properly, someone may learn from us and prevent another one. The president is the symbol of the government. If there was no government there would be civil chaos. He asked him why I was grateful to him as a Buddha. And my answer was, 'He is teaching me how to behave'. That is teaching. It all depends on the attitude of mind, how you will get it. A very valuable piece of teaching. So long as you go in the right direction which is taught to you within your own heart, and when you go in the wrong direction, pick yourself up and say, 'Oops I made a mistake, I'll try again', and take the consequences of your actions, and this is the thing that nobody is prepared to do. They are prepared to go against the legal system, they are then going to say that the legal system is rotten. If you think that it is not the people but the structure itself that is wrong, get into the structure above what you want to change and then you can change it. What it comes down to is the kind of situation. You have to decide what you are going to do and do it. But if you had the chance to kill Hitler, as a situation, and you are trying to make a decision, you have to control it and you have to have the guts to control it. The problem is that most people are prepared to fight but they aren't prepared to take the consequences of their actions.

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