



ASSOCIATION ZEN
INTERNATIONALE
FONDATEUR MAÎTRE TAISEN DESHIMARU

“ Why do things exist? Why is there something rather than nothing ? “

Huang Po Hsi Yun, in Japanese, Obaku Kiun, transmitted the Dharma to Rinzaï Kigen, who had himself received it from Hyakujo, of whom Baso was the master. Baso had received transmission from Nangaku, who was, with Seigen, one of the two successors of the sixth Chinese patriarch Daikan Eno. The Rinzaï school was born with Nangaku; The Soto school was born with Seigen. Both schools being the two principle zen schools who have prospered right up to modern times.

Pei Hsiu, a cultured Chinese man met Obaku Kiun and transcribed their meetings. Obaku didn't talk about the practice (Dhyana) in the strict sense, because his audience were Buddhists inclined to already know, and certainly able to practice Dhyana.

Here is a short extract from a mondo between the two men.

Pei Shiu (questions) Obaku (response):

Question: What is the Way? And what must we do to follow it?

Response: The Way must be something objective for you to want to follow it?

Question: What are the teachings transmitted by various masters for practicing Dhyâna and studying The Way?

Response: Never be proud of using words designed to attract those of an obtuse intelligence.

Question: If such teachings are designed to attract people of obtuse intelligence, then I have not heard the Dharma designed for people of high value.

Response: If these people are truly of great capacity, who might they find to direct them? If they search inside themselves, they will find nothing tangible, they'll find even less looking elsewhere. You shouldn't pay any attention to that which is designated as Dharma in teachings destined for others, for what kind of Dharma could we find there?

Question: Must we then search for nothing at all?

Response: There's a point of view! Which, if adopted, will save you a lot of mental work.

Question: If everything is found to be thus eliminated, is it possible there is nothing there?

Response: Who taught there is nothing! What is this nothing!? It would seem from your question you're looking for something?

Question: If searching is itself useless, why do you say we must eliminate nothing?

Response: Don't look for anything, that's all! Who told you to eliminate something. Just look at vacuity, in front of you! Now, what are you going to do to eliminate that?

Question: This Dharma, will it reveal itself to be something like Vacuity, if I obtain it!

Response: When did I say to you that Vacuity was either similar or different to anything?

When I spoke to you of a "Vacuity" it was as a temporary expedient, but you've begun to reason, taking literally this temporary expediency.

Question: You think one should not reason thus?

Response: I'm not preventing you from doing anything, all I'm saying is reasoning is inextricably linked to attachment, and when attachment appears, wisdom disappears.

Question: Is it not permitted that attachment might appear as part of our search for Dharma?

Response: If not attachment appears, who will be able to distinguish between that which is true and that which is false?

Question: Where is my fault in the questions I have just posed to your Reverence?

Response: You are someone who doesn't understand what is said to them. In relation to what are you speaking of error?

Question: Everything you have said up to now has been nothing but a refutation, nothing you have said has been any indication of the nature of the true Dharma.

Response: There is no trace of confusion in the true Dharma but with your question you are creating confusion in yourself. What real Dharma are you looking for?

Question: Because my question(s) are only creating confusion, can you tell me what answer your Reverence would give to my problem?

Response: Observe things just as they are. Don't worry about everyone else.

He added: "Think of a mad dog who barks at everything that moves. He barks at everything!

Even the leaves and grass agitated by the wind. "

