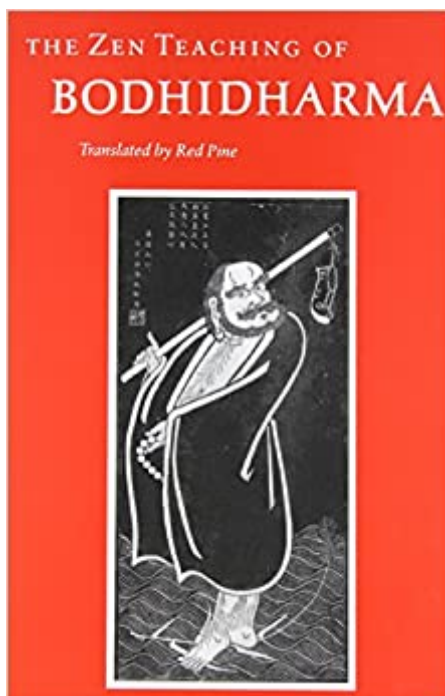


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The Zen Teaching Of Bodhidharma (English And Chinese Edition)



Synopsis

A fifth-century Indian Buddhist monk, Bodhidharma is credited with bringing Zen to China. Although the tradition that traces its ancestry back to him did not flourish until nearly two hundred years after his death, today millions of Zen Buddhists and students of kung fu claim him as their spiritual father. While others viewed Zen practice as a purification of the mind or a stage on the way to perfect enlightenment, Bodhidharma equated Zen with buddhahood and believed that it had a place in everyday life. Instead of telling his disciples to purify their minds, he pointed them to rock walls, to the movements of tigers and cranes, to a hollow reed floating across the Yangtze. This bilingual edition, the only volume of the great teacher's work currently available in English, presents four teachings in their entirety. "Outline of Practice" describes the four all-inclusive habits that lead to enlightenment, the "Bloodstream Sermon" exhorts students to seek the Buddha by seeing their own nature, the "Wake-up Sermon" defends his premise that the most essential method for reaching enlightenment is beholding the mind. The original Chinese text, presented on facing pages, is taken from a Ch'ing dynasty woodblock edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: Chinese, English

Red Pine lives and work in Taiwan. He is the translator of The Collected Songs of Cold Mountain.

I had to buy another copy after I gave my first one to a friend. I truly enjoy this book, it comes across as very plain spoken and is quite accessible, even to those who aren't particularly familiar with common Buddhist (or Taoist) terminology. I really enjoy all of Red Pine's translations, they always read crisply and often come with a good deal of commentary to deal with translation choices and the meanings and contexts of the various pieces of his translations.

Great insight, great translation by Red Pine

While the interleaved Chinese might be helpful to scholars, I think it is just attractive filler. The text itself is four sermons attributed to Bodhidharma. The language is often confusing, as when words like 'form' or 'mind' are used to refer to different concepts in the same sermon. I use this book in a sangha discussion group, so there is plenty of opportunity for clarification, but to read it alone without any teaching resource might create some frustration. The text itself is a very valuable contribution to Buddhism in the West, like so much of what Red Pine does.

The Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma This is a very worthwhile contribution to the literature of "enlightenment". The book covers 4 items: Outline of Practice; Bloodstream Sermon; Wake-up Sermon & Breakthrough Sermon. By far the most interesting are the Bloodstream & Wake-up Sermons. The 4th item is of marginal interest since it simply presents a more or less standard view of the Mahayana Dharma in relation to mind and form. The wake-up sermon provides many clues for use by the "somnambulant" designed to make them aware of their status and the Bloodstream contains useful viewpoints concerning states of mind. Perhaps the most striking thing about these two chapters (shorn of Buddhist terminology) is the extent to which the material parallels comments made by Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj. There is the same sense of spontaneity and freedom about the statements and it makes one wonder why the last chapter of the book is so different from the others. It is almost as if the last chapter represents the tendering of Bodhidharma's dues to the Mahayana group with which he was associated and, in turn perhaps he was permitted to teach a Dharma based almost exclusively on his own insights. Who is to know? Highly recommended, 5 stars. The Journey To Enlightenment

Fundamental read for anyone interested in Chan or Zen Buddhism. Cuts right to the core of the zen (chan) practice.

This is a wonderful book, containing sermons from ancient Ch'an sifu Bodhidharma (or someone else..it really doesn't matter)I gotta say, I love all of them, mainly because they're all concise and to the point, but the "Wake-up" sermon is worth building a life around. The author/speaker gives useless (and exclusionary and divisive) questions from attending monks short shrift (I paraphrase): "How can someone possibly create karma by butchering for meat and still become a Buddha?" Bodhidharma's answer: ""I only talk about seeing your nature"." Another was: "These laymen have sex all the time, how can THEY possibly become buddhas?" Answer: "I only talk about seeing your nature". Red Pine has given the world a gift, that stands with the Dhammapada in its elegant simplicity. That said, those poor folks who require ritual, hierarchy, pecking order and the trappings and minutiae of organized religion to give their lives meaning will ignore it.. There's not much here to argue, discuss, pick-apart, write theses on, etc, etc...ad infinitum. Why we have chosen to muddy the waters of such a razor-sharp, perennial and crystal clear philosophy as Gautama's seems to have been ("Correct your mental defects through your own efforts") is beyond me. This book is a welcome reminder for me to return to simplicity.

By all means, avail yourself of Red Pine's translation of Ta-Mo. Then go to John Bright-Fey's "Whole Heart of Zen" for an in-depth expounding of Ta-Mo via the oral tradition. There's more to the story than meets the proverbial eye! The Whole Heart of Zen: The Complete Teachings from the Oral Tradition of Ta-Mo (The Whole Heart series)

Again, Red Pine nails it. Good notes on just about every term for those new to the philosophical Sanskrit vocab.

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