

# The One Mind

## Huang-po

Huang-po Hsi-yun (?-849) was a Chinese Zen Master, and the teacher of Lin-chi.

This translation is found in Stephen Mitchell's *The Enlightened Mind - An Anthology of Sacred Prose*, Harper Perennial, 1991.

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All Buddhas and all ordinary beings are nothing but the one mind. This mind is beginningless and endless, unborn and indestructible. It has no colour or shape, neither exists nor doesn't exist, isn't old or new, long or short, large or small, since it transcends all measures, limits, names, and comparisons. It is what you see in front of you.

Start to think about it and immediately you are mistaken. It is like the boundless void, which can't be fathomed or measured. The one mind is the Buddha, and there is no distinction between Buddha and ordinary beings, except that ordinary beings are attached to forms and thus seek for Buddhahood outside themselves. By this very seeking they lose it, since they are using Buddha to seek for Buddha, using mind to seek for mind. Even if they continue for a million eons, they will never be able to find it. They don't know that all they have to do is put a stop to conceptual thinking, and the Buddha will appear before them, because this mind is the Buddha and the Buddha is all living beings. It is not any less for being manifested in ordinary things, nor any greater for being manifested in Buddhas.

This pure mind, which is the source of all things, shines forever with the radiance of its own perfection. But most people are not aware of it, and think that mind is just the faculty that sees, hears, feels, and knows. Blinded by their own sight, hearing, feeling, and knowing, they don't perceive the radiance of the source. If they could eliminate all conceptual thinking, this source would appear, like the sun rising through the empty sky and illuminating the whole universe. Therefore, you students of the Tao who seek to understand through seeing, hearing, feeling, and knowing, when your perceptions are cut off, your way to mind will be cut off and you will find nowhere to enter. Just realize that although mind is manifested in these perceptions, it is neither part of them nor separate from them. You shouldn't try to analyse these perceptions, or think about them at all; but you shouldn't seek the one mind apart from them. Don't hold on to them or leave them behind or dwell in them or reject them. Above, below, and all around you, all things spontaneously exist, because there is nowhere outside the Buddha mind.