

# THE DENKŌROKU

## THE RECORD OF THE TRANSMISSION OF THE LIGHT

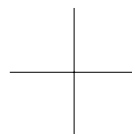
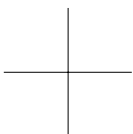
Begun on the twelfth day of the first lunar month, 1300,  
as a result of a request made to Master Keizan for further  
instruction.

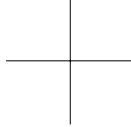
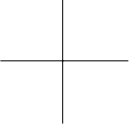
### CHAPTER 1.

#### SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA, THE AWAKENED ONE.

Upon seeing the morning star, Gautama became *Shakya-  
muni Buddha* when He ***was, is and will be awakened*** to His  
TRUE SELF and ***said, says and will say***, “*I was, am and will  
be enlightened*, together *with* the whole of the great earth  
and all its sentient beings, simultaneously.”

Gautama belonged to the Indian Nisshu (S. Sūryavamśa)  
line which traced its lineage to the sun; in His nineteenth year  
He escaped over the palace wall at midnight and fled to Mount  
Dandoku (S. Daṇḍaka) where He shaved His head and spent the  
next six years engaging in harsh ascetic practices. Ultimately  
He sat upon the Diamond Throne, which is for realizing enlight-  
enment, whilst spiders spun their webs between His eyebrows  
and jackdaws took up residence in a nest atop His head; reeds  
grew about His sitting place as, in tranquillity, He sat erect and  
immovably still for six years. In His thirtieth year, on the eighth





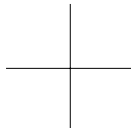
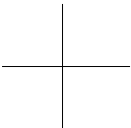
## 2 *Denkōroku*

day of the twelfth lunar month, the month of the winter sacrifice, He suddenly realized enlightenment and gave forth the words above like a lion thundering forth its first roar.

From then on, for the next forty-nine years, He was never alone even for a single day; with His Kesa and His begging bowl always accompanying Him, He never ceased from expounding the Teaching for the benefit of those who gathered about Him and preached the Dharma at more than three hundred and sixty assemblies. In time, He Transmitted the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW to Makakashō (S. Mahākāśyapa, ‘The Great One of the Tortoise Clan’), ITS Transmission flowing down to us even today. Indeed, our practice of the True Teaching, which has poured out through India, China and Japan, is founded upon IT.

His lifelong conduct is the standard for His spiritual heirs, heiresses and descendants. Even though He possessed the thirty-two major marks and the eighty secondary signs of a Buddha, He had, beyond question, the appearance of a dear and venerable monk who in no way differed from other people therefore, from the time when He dwelt on earth through the three periods of the Teaching, the true, the counterfeit and the final, those for whom His Dharma is precious model themselves upon His behaviour, experiencing what He experienced without, even for a moment, giving a thought to themselves whilst moving, standing, sitting or reclining. Buddha after Buddha, Ancestor after Ancestor, have Transmitted the TRUE LAW directly from person to person without interruption as His life, as recounted above, clearly indicates. Over forty-nine years, at the more than three hundred and sixty assemblies, His methods for pointing out the matter varied, yet none of His stories, metaphors and turns of phrase strayed from this principle.

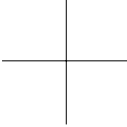
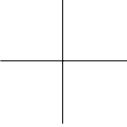
This ‘I’ of which He spoke is not Gautama; *Shakyamuni Buddha* has come forth from this ‘I’ and it is not only *Shakyamuni Buddha* who has come forth, the whole of the great earth



and all its sentient beings have come forth from IT as well. When a great net is hauled up from the sea, all the openings in the net are hauled up with it so, likewise, when Gautama became *Shakyamuni* and **realized, realizes and will realize** enlightenment, the whole of the great earth and all its sentient beings also **realized, realize and will realize** enlightenment. Further, not only **did, does and will** the whole of the great earth and all its sentient beings **realize** enlightenment, all the Buddhas in the three worlds of past, present and future also **did, do and will realize** enlightenment.

Since this is so, do not hold to a false notion of Gautama becoming *Shakyamuni* and realizing enlightenment; do not see *Shakyamuni Buddha* as apart from the whole of the great earth and all its sentient beings. Even though the great earth with its mountains and rivers may flourish luxuriantly in its myriad forms, nothing is excluded from the EYE of Gautama. All of you, too, arise within the EYE of Gautama. Not only do you arise there, you are interchanging with everyone else existing at this very moment, all within all: the EYE of Gautama becomes your very body of flesh, the whole body of each person being a sheer cliff wall that rises straight up for eighty thousand feet. Do not imagine, therefore, that from of old until now there was His bright EYE with people distinct and separate from IT. All of you **were, are and will be** the EYE of Gautama and Gautama's EYE is the whole body of every one of you.

As this is how it is, what shall we call the principle that underlies realizing enlightenment? Let me put the matter to you this way, **did, does and will** Gautama become *Shakyamuni Buddha* and **realize** enlightenment together with you, the community of monks, or **did, do and will** you all **realize** enlightenment together with Gautama when he becomes *Shakyamuni Buddha*? If you were to say that you all **did, do and will realize** enlightenment together with Gautama when he became *Shakyamuni Buddha* or that Gautama, on becoming *Buddha*, **did, does**

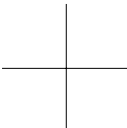
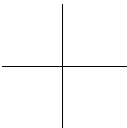


4 *Denkōroku*

***and will realize*** enlightenment together with all of you, either answer would in no way be ‘Gautama’s realizing enlightenment’ and you cannot make either be the principle that underlies ‘realizing enlightenment’. If what you want is a direct understanding of the principle of realizing enlightenment, you should rid yourself at once of ‘you’ and ‘Gautama’ and quickly grasp what the ‘*I*’ is. What is together with the ‘*I*’ is the whole of the great earth and all its sentient beings. The ‘*I*’ of the ‘*I*’ and ‘*with*’ is not that venerable One Gautama. Examine this point carefully, consider it in detail so that you may clarify what the ‘*I*’ is and grasp what ‘*with*’ means. Even though you may clarify what the ‘*I*’ is, if you fail to clarify what ‘*with*’ means, you will be seeing with only one eye.

The ‘*I*’ and ‘*with*’ are neither the same nor different. Indisputably, the skin, flesh, bones and marrow of all of you is entirely ‘*with*’ whilst THAT which dwells within as the Lord of the House is the ‘*I*’. HE does not take on skin, flesh, bones and marrow nor is HE bound to the four elements or to the five skandhas. In short, if you wish to make the acquaintance of THE UNDYING ONE WITHIN THE HERMIT’S HUT, how can you possibly separate HIM from this bag of skin? Do not construct some intellectual understanding of ‘the great earth and all its sentient beings’.

Even though the seasons change and the great earth with its mountains and rivers differs over time, you must realize that this is nothing but ‘the venerable One Gautama raising His eyebrows and blinking His eyes’; it is a matter of ‘a body as exposed as a dewdrop amidst the myriad phenomena’ which discards all things worldly and does not discard them. As Meditation Master Hōgen (C. Fa-yen) said, “What is there to discard or not discard?” and as Meditation Master Jizō (C. Ti-ts’ang) said, “And what, pray, would you make ‘the myriad phenomena’ to be?” Practise broadly and deeply, therefore, never give up, keep persisting until you succeed. To



be sure, you must clarify what ‘Gautama, upon becoming *Shakyamuni* and realizing enlightenment,’ really means and grasp what your own realization of enlightenment is. Take a careful look at this case as presented at the beginning and, one by one, let your response to it flow forth from your heart without borrowing words from the Ancestors or from anyone of the present day. At our next meeting, express its principle with words that show you have made it to the turning point.

This mountain monk feels that he would like to add his own humble words to what is happening in this story. Would you all like to hear them?

Unsurpassed in the beauty of its graceful form  
is the old Plum Tree;  
Its spiny branches, when the season is ripe,  
will burst forth in bloom.

CHAPTER 2.

THE FIRST ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED MAKAKASHŌ.

One day, the World-honoured One offered up a flower with a twinkle in His eye; Makakashō’s face broke out in a smile. The World-honoured One said, “I have the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW, the wondrous HEART of nirvana, which I Transmit to Makakashō.”

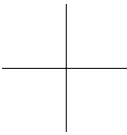
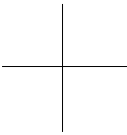
Makakashō belonged to the Brahman caste; his Indian name was Kāśyapa which means ‘He of the Tortoise or of the Black-toothed Clan’ whilst here in our country he is known as ‘The Victorious and Esteemed Drinker of Light’. When he



6 *Denkōroku*

was born, a golden light filled the room, its rays pouring into Makakashō's mouth, hence the epithet, 'The Drinker of Light'. His body possessed a golden hue and had thirty of the fortunate marks, lacking only the fleshly protuberance (S. *uṣṇīṣa*) upon the crown of his head and the tuft of white hairs between his eyebrows; he first met the World-honoured One in front of the Shrine of Many Sons. No sooner had the World-honoured One addressed him, saying, "Welcome, mendicant monk," than Makakashō's hair and beard were forthwith removed and a kesa was draped about his body; he was then entrusted with the Eye and Treasury of the True Law. He practised the twelve austerities so as to control worldly desires and let the Mind of Truth show itself, not spending a moment of the twenty-four hours of a day in vain pursuits. The assembly was startled and had misgivings when they saw how terribly emaciated his body had become and how coarse and shabby his robes looked and, as a result, on each occasion when Shakyamuni preached the Dharma, He had Makakashō share His teaching seat with Him. From that time he was the most senior monk in the assemblies however, he was not only the senior monk in Shakyamuni Buddha's community, he had also been the non-regressing senior monk in the communities of all the past Buddhas as well. You should know that he is spoken of as an ancient and revered Ancestor so do not group him amongst all those disciples who only pursued the Buddha's words.

At the time when, on Vulture Peak (J. *Ryōjusen*; S. *Gṛdrakūṭa-giri*), before an assembly of eighty thousand, the World-honoured One offered up a flower with a twinkle in His eye, none grasped His frame of mind and all remained silent except for Makakashō who alone broke out in a smile. The World-honoured One said, "I have the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW, the wondrous HEART of nirvana, the perfectly pure and bright DHARMA-GATE that has no signs of restriction. I have Transmitted IT completely to Makakashō."



The ‘offering up of a flower’ on that occasion has been passed on from Ancestor to Ancestor; those outside the Ancestral line are never allowed to know about it without good cause. It is not a matter for Scriptural scholars and teachers of philosophical debate, nor is it something for many teachers of meditation to be concerned with for, indeed, the Ancestors knew that such persons do not understand wherein the TRUTH of it lies. Be that as it may, most of today’s Transmission case histories do not speak of THAT which occurred at the assembly atop Vulture Peak but rather present the words spoken at the Transmission before the Shrine of Many Sons for what is recorded in such works as *The Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* and *The Record of the Universal Lamp*, regarding what was said before the assembly on Vulture Peak, is in error. In the first place, when the Buddha Dharma was Transmitted to Makakashō there was this ceremonial, the offering up of the flower, therefore, if you are not an Ancestor or Master who Transmits the Buddha-Mind Seal, you will not understand what is happening on these occasions of ‘offering up the flower’, nor will you have clarified for yourselves what this ‘offering up of the flower’ means. You who know the merits of meditation should meditate deeply upon this and scrutinize the matter carefully until you personally know that Makakashō is Makakashō and have clarified for yourselves that Shakyamuni is Shakyamuni, then individually Transmit, person to person, the profound, perfectly pure and bright WAY.

Let us put aside for the moment the ‘offering up of the flower’ to clarify what this ‘twinkling in the eye’ is. There is not a hairbreadth of difference between an ordinary, everyday raising of your eyebrows and winking and Gautama’s offering up the flower with a twinkle in His eye, nor is there in any way a hairbreadth of difference between your speaking with a smile and Makakashō’s face breaking into a smile however, if you have not clarified for yourself what IT is that ‘raised His

eyebrows and blinked His eyes', then Shakyamuni and Makakashō remain in India whilst your skin, flesh, bones and marrow remain within your own minds like so many flowers beclouding your eyes and so much dust floating about! Untold aeons will have come and gone but you will still not be libeated so, for aeons to come, you will be swamped by the waves of unceasing births and deaths. Once you become conscious of the LORD OF THE HOUSE then, to be sure, Makakashō will be able to wriggle his toes in your sandals. Do you not know that Gautama completely vanished at the very moment when 'Gautama raised His eyebrows and blinked His eyes' and that Makakashō realized his TRUE SELF at the very moment when 'Makakashō's face broke out in a smile'? This is not the delusion of a personal substantive self! To the contrary, the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW has been completely entrusted to you yourself; therefore, whatever name you give IT, do not call IT Makakashō's or Shakyamuni's.

There is no Dharma to impart to another nor any to receive from another—this is what I call the TRUE DHARMA. To express this Shakyamuni held the flower aloft to let it be known that IT *was, is and will be* immutable and indestructible whilst Makakashō broke into a smile to let it be known that IT *was, is and will be* beyond beginning or end; in this way Master and disciple met face to face and their life-lines flowed into each other. Their perfectly pure, bright, full understanding has nothing to do with 'thinking in the mind'.

Beyond doubt, Makakashō, through meditation, severed the roots of mentation and entered Cock's-Foot Mountain (J. Keisokusan; S. Kukkuṭapāda-giri) where he *was, is and will be waiting* for the distant coming of Miroku (S. Maitreya), the Compassionate Sage, which is why Makakashō has not yet entered nirvana.

O monks, if you devote yourselves to studying the Way by meditating deeply and training hard, you will find that not only



is Makakashō not dead but Shakyamuni, too, continues on unending. Hence, before any of you were born, the TRUTH *was, is and will be Transmitted* from person to person by a direct pointing to ORIGINAL NATURE and, from the distant past to the very present IT *was, is and will be reverberating* throughout the universe striking a resonant chord in all trainees wherever they may be. Therefore, O monks, do not yearn for the ancient days of two thousand years ago; if you are prompt to practise the Way right now, Makakashō will not enter Cock's-Foot Mountain but can come forth into the world and actually reside here in the Land of the Red Hibiscus; Shakyamuni's fleshly body will still be warm today and Makakashō will smile anew.

If you can reach this state, then you will all be heirs to Makakashō and he will receive the Transmission from you for not only does the VERY TRUTH come down to you from the Seven Buddhas but you can discover that you *were, are and will be* the Ancestors and Masters to the Seven Buddhas. Here, without beginning or end, beyond past, present and future IT will reside, ever Transmitting the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW to all.

Accordingly, Shakyamuni likewise received the Transmission from Makakashō who now resides in the Tushita Heaven just as you, too, reside immutable within the assembly atop Vulture Peak. Have you not read the verse in the *Lotus Scripture* which says:

“Ever do I abide on Vulture Peak  
As well as in my other dwelling places;  
Come the time when sentient beings see the aeon spent  
And great fires consume the world,  
This land of Mine will be safe and peaceful,  
Filled with heavenly beings and humans.”

Vulture Peak is not His only dwelling place, as He said, so how could India, China and our land possibly be left out?

The Tathagata's TRUE DHARMA has flowed out through Transmission and not even a single bit of it has ever been lost. Since this is so, this community of ours must be the assembly on Vulture Peak and Vulture Peak must be this community. The Buddhas will appear or disappear in accordance with whether you are diligent or not. Today as well, if you persist in your practice of the Way, thoroughly penetrating into It, the venerable Shakyamuni will forthwith make an appearance. Shakyamuni entered nirvana in the distant past simply because you were not clear about your TRUE SELF. You are already His disciples, children of the Buddha, so why do you kill Buddha? Quickly practise the Way and immediately come face to face with your COMPASSIONATE ONE.

As always, the VENERABLE ONE SHAKYAMUNI and you walk, stand, sit and lie down together; HE talks and visits with you without the two of you ever being separated even for an instant. If in this lifetime you do not lay eyes on this VENERABLE ONE, then you will all be thoroughly undutiful beings. Already you *were, are and will be* children of Buddha so, should you be undutiful, not even the hands of a thousand Buddhas will be able to assist you.

Today, as a descendant of the Mahayana tradition of Daijō Monastery, I again have some humble words that try to point out the principle in this story. Do you all wish to hear them?

Know that hidden deep within  
the cloud-enshrouded valley  
There still remains the SACRED PINE  
enduring through the chill of time.

CHAPTER 3.

THE SECOND ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED ANANDA.

Ananda asked Makakashō, “My elder brother in the Dharma, when the World-honoured One Transmitted the kesa of gold brocade to you did He pass on anything else?” Makakashō called out, “Ananda!” When Ananda acknowledged the call, Makakashō said, “Chop down the flag pole in front of your temple gate!” and Ananda awakened to his TRUE SELF.

Ananda was a member of the caste of warrior-nobles in the city of Rajagriha; his father was Lord Kokuhan (S. Droṇodana, ‘He Who Is as a Valley Stream’). Ananda was, in fact, the World-honoured One’s cousin and his name (S. Ānanda) means ‘He Who Is a Delight’ or ‘He Who Is a Joy’; he was born on the night that the Tathagata realized enlightenment. His classically handsome form and face were without equal in any of the sixteen nations of India and everyone who saw him was filled with joy and delight, whence his name. He was unsurpassed in learning as well as quick in memory and bright, to say nothing of being highly esteemed for his broad learning. For twenty years he was the Buddha’s attendant; there was nothing that the Buddha had preached which he could not repeat for he had constantly studied how the Buddha departed Himself. At the same time that Shakyamuni Transmitted the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW to Makakashō, He also entrusted (but did not Transmit) IT to Ananda, saying, “Please assist him in his Transmission of IT.” Because of this, Ananda attended on Makakashō for the following twenty years and it was never said of him that he failed to communicate the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW completely and in every way possible.

It should be evident that the Way of the Ancestors and Masters is different from the other Buddhist traditions. Ananda was already the one who had heard most of what the Buddha had taught, had broad learning and was quite erudite; many were the times when the Buddha personally expressed His approval of him even though He had not yet Transmitted the TRUE LAW to him since he had not clarified what the foundation of his mind was. At the time when Makakashō was assembling the Buddha's legacy of teachings for the benefit of the conclave meeting at Hippara Cave (S. Pippali, 'Pepper', Makakashō's childhood nickname), Ananda was denied entrance to Makakashō's quarters as he had not yet realized for certain. Reflecting upon this in private, Ananda suddenly realized the fruits of arhanthood. When he then sought to enter, Makakashō said, "If you have now realized for certain, you should be able to enter through a display of your spiritual powers." Ananda made himself very small so that he might enter by the keyhole, that is, his display of genuine humility served as the 'key' to unlock the door for him, and he thus entered Hippara Cave after all.

The disciples said to Makakashō, "As the Buddha's attendant, Ananda heard more of what the Buddha said than any other and has thoroughly retained it; it is just as if it were water that has been poured from one vessel into another without a drop being spilt. We pray that you will invite Ananda to repeat what the Buddha preached." Makakashō told Ananda, "As the community has chosen you, please ascend the Dharma seat and once again proclaim what He preached." Ananda, keeping to himself that he had received the Tathagata's entrustment, rose upon this request from Makakashō, bowed at the feet of the community, ascended the Dharma seat and proclaimed the Teaching, beginning, "Thus have I heard: once when the Buddha was residing at..." After he had repeated all the Sacred Teachings from the Buddha's lifetime, Makakashō asked the disciples whether any of these differed from what the Tathagata

had preached; the disciples answered that they did not differ from what the Tathagata had taught even by as much as a single word. All these disciples were great arhants who had the three forms of clarity, namely, recollection of previous lives, ability to see future births and recognition of the extinction of defilements, and the six spiritual powers, that is, the preceding three plus clairvoyance, clairaudience and knowledge of the thoughts and intentions of others, and did not miss a word of what was said. They were all in agreement that they could not tell whether it was the Tathagata come back again or Ananda preaching; they personally praised him, saying, “The waters of the great ocean of the Buddha Dharma have flowed into you.” What Ananda proclaimed is, even now, the flowing forth and passing on of what the Tathagata had preached.

We know for a fact that this Way of ours does not depend on how much you have heard or on having realized for certain, as this instance should make evident. Ananda attended on Makakashō for twenty years but did not have a great awakening to his TRUE SELF until the occasion cited in the opening story. Since he had been born on the night when the Tathagata realized enlightenment, he had not heard the preaching of such Scriptures as the *Avatamsaka Scripture*; even so, once he had entered the samadhi that a Buddha awakens to, he could relate even what he had not heard directly. His earlier lack of success in entering the Way of the Ancestors and Masters is not one bit different from our own failure to enter it.

Long before in the remote past, Ananda had given rise to the heart of true and perfect enlightenment to the TRUTH (S. anuttara-samyak-sambodhi) at the same time as Shakyamuni Buddha had when He was known as the Lord of the Period of Cosmic Emptiness, but Ananda, through being partial to accumulating knowledge, had not yet realized perfect, TRUE ENLIGHTENMENT whereas Shakyamuni Buddha, having devoted himself to training, realized PERFECT ENLIGHTENMENT.

You must really understand that pursuit of learning, as evinced here, is an obstacle on the path to enlightenment, which is why it says in the *Avatamsaka Scripture*, “Pursuit of erudition, by analogy, is like a greedy pauper who keeps counting up the treasures of others whilst having not a halfpenny of his own.” If you intend to settle the matter of enlightenment point-blank, do not be partial to the pursuit of erudition but forthwith be daring, brave and persistent in your training.

Ananda was so certain that something besides the kesa must have been Transmitted to Makakashō that he asked, “My elder brother in the Dharma, when the World-honoured One Transmitted the kesa of gold brocade to you did He pass on anything else?” Makakashō recognized that the critical moment had been reached and called out, “Ananda!” When Ananda acknowledged this, Makakashō, in response, said, “Chop down the flag pole in front of your temple gate!” Responding to his voice, Ananda awakened to his TRUE SELF and the Buddha’s Kesa descended naturally onto Ananda’s head. That golden Kesa is, beyond any doubt, the Kesa that *was, is and will be Transmitted* by the Seven Buddhas.<sup>1</sup>

The EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW was not Transmitted to both monks; it was Makakashō alone who received Transmission from the Tathagata. Ananda attended on Makakashō for twenty years, although he had been entrusted by the Tathagata, before he was given charge of the TRUE LAW and thus Transmitted; as a result, you must understand that our tradition has a Transmission outside of, and apart from, doctrinal teachings, however, in recent times the two have been foolishly considered to be identical. Were Transmission and doctrinal teachings identical, why would Ananda, as an arhant with the three forms of clarity and the six spiritual powers, have received the Tathagata’s entrustment (not His Transmission) and be called the Second (not the First) Ancestor? Could anyone now possibly outdo Ananda in desiring to comprehend Scriptural doctrine? Were there someone who surpassed Ananda, we

should have to admit that the comprehended essence of doctrinal teachings is identical with that of our tradition, however, if we should say that the two are simply one and the same, then why would Ananda have bothered to be Makakashō's jisha (Abbot's attendant) for twenty years and then have the great matter clarified upon hearing the phrase, 'Chop down your temple flag pole'? We must recognize that the comprehended essence of both Scriptures and doctrinal teachings, from the outset, is not to be considered the same as the WAY OF THE ANCESTORS AND MASTERS. It is not that the Buddha was not a true Buddha. Although Ananda served the Buddha as His attendant he had not pierced through to his BUDDHA NATURE, so how could he have Transmitted the MIND-SEAL?

You must grasp that realization does not depend on erudition and broad learning. Because you are sharp of mind and keen of ear, you may be able to hear, comprehend and retain all manner of books and sacred teachings without leaving out even a single word but, if you fail to penetrate to their ESSENCE, you are like the one who vainly counts his neighbour's treasures. It is not that this ESSENCE does not exist in Scriptures and doctrinal teachings but, regrettably, Ananda had not yet penetrated to IT. How much more do people in China and Japan try to unlock meaning by depending on the words and fail to get to the ESSENCE of Scriptures!

You should be well aware that the Buddha Way is not to be treated lightly; Ananda, being thoroughly well-versed in the Buddha's lifetime of sacred teachings, proclaimed them as the Buddha's disciple so who would not go along with what he said? Nevertheless, you should know that, only after he had attended on Makakashō as his follower and had his great awakening, did he once again proclaim the teachings and it was just like fire uniting with fire! Clearly, if you want to participate in the true Way, discard your false view of self as well as your old emotions, pride and arrogance and turn the naïve mind you had as a child to meeting with the Buddha's WISDOM.

As to what is happening in today's story, Ananda had long cherished the notion that there was nothing beyond Makakashō's receiving the gold brocade kesa and being the Buddha's disciple however, after having been Makakashō's follower and his most intimate attendant, he realized that something more had been communicated. Makakashō, recognizing that the time was ripe, called out, "Ananda!" and, just as an echo follows a cry in a valley, Ananda responded; it was like a spark flying off from a flint. Although Makakashō had called out, "Ananda!" he was not calling Ananda and Ananda's responding was not an answer.

The matter of 'chopping down the flag pole in front of the temple gate' is as follows. In India the custom was that, when the Buddha's disciples entered into a debate with non-Buddhists, both sides would raise a flag. When one side was bested, their flag was taken down; the defeat was thereby signalled without recourse to sounding drums and bells. In today's story, too, it is as though Makakashō and Ananda had raised flags in debate. At this point, were Ananda to emerge victorious, Makakashō would have to lower and roll up his flag for, when the one comes forth, the other disappears. In the present story, however, this was not what happened. 'Makakashō' is one flag pole and 'Ananda' is another. As long as both are 'temple flag poles', the UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE will not manifest ITSELF. When one flag pole *was, is and will be* chopped down, the temple's FLAG POLE will manifest.

When Makakashō instructed Ananda to chop down the flag pole before his temple gate, Ananda had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF because master and disciple had merged in the Way. After this great awakening, 'Makakashō' was also chopped down and 'the mountains and rivers' all disintegrated; as a result, the Buddha's Kesa descended naturally onto Ananda's head. Based on what is happening in this story, however, do not be content with this glob of red flesh rising



like a wall ten thousand feet high; do not get stuck with being pure and clean! Go on further and know what the ECHO is; all the Buddhas, one after the other, have emerged in the world as Ancestors and Masters and have pointed to IT generation after generation. This is all that matters, IT being Transmitted by IT; ultimately, it is not what people think it is.

Although the globs of red flesh which have manifested as Makakashō and Ananda have appeared in the world both as one face and as two faces of THAT PERSON, do not consider that just Makakashō and Ananda are of THAT PERSON. Each and every one of you here now is a wall soaring up eight thousand feet, one of the thousand changes and ten thousand transformations of THAT PERSON. If you become conscious of THAT PERSON, you will all, in a twinkling, completely disappear from view so do not seek outside yourselves for a flag pole to chop down.

Today, this Japanese descendant of the Mahayana tradition of Daijō Monastery wishes once again to append his words. Would you all like to hear them?

When the vines have withered,  
the trees have fallen  
and the mountains have crumbled away,  
The valley stream, in cascades,  
will gush beyond its banks  
and the very rock will pour forth fire.

---

1. The following passage appears in the earliest known manuscript copy but is possibly an interpolation as it interrupts the flow of the chapter, however it may have been part of Zen Master Keizan's original lecture.

There are three theories about this Kesa. The first is that the Tathagata was wearing It when He came from the womb; the second is that It was respectfully

presented to Him by His guardian deity from the Heaven of Immaculate Dwelling upon His becoming a monk; the third is that It was a cloak proffered to Him by a hunter after He had leapt over the palace wall to seek refuge on Mount Dandoku. There have been several other types of Buddha kesas as well. The kesa passed on from Bodaidaruma to Sōkei Enō (C. Ts'ao-hsi Hui-neng), the Sixth Chinese Ancestor, was a midnight blue cotton robe with an azure blue lining added after Bodaidaruma arrived in China; it is now kept in a small shrine beside the Sixth Ancestor's stupa and is considered an important national treasure. This is the very kesa of which Nagyaarajuna speaks in his commentary on the *Mahaprajnaparamita Scripture* where he says, "The Tathagata wore a patchwork robe of coarse cloth." Makakashō's gold brocade kesa was a felt robe with gold threads woven into it and is the same as that about which one of the Scriptures says, "The Buddha's aunt made with her own hands a wool kesa with gold thread added which she gave to the Buddha." These are just a couple among several kesas.

In the Scriptures there are numerous stories, like the following, of extraordinary spiritual effects associated with this kesa. Long ago, the Sainted Bashashita, the Twenty-fifth Ancestor, met with difficulties caused by a wicked king who had the kesa thrown into a fire where it shot forth light rays in five hues. After the fire had died out, the Buddha's kesa was unharmed and the king was convinced that it was indeed the Buddha's robe which will be passed on to Maitreya.

CHAPTER 4.

THE THIRD ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED SHŌNAWASHU.

When Shōnawashu asked Ananda, “What kind of thing is the fundamental UNBORN NATURE of all things?” Ananda pointed to the corner of Shōnawashu’s kesa. Then, when he again asked, “What kind of thing is the fundamental NATURE OF THE ENLIGHTENED WISDOM of all the Buddhas?” Ananda took hold of the corner of Shōnawashu’s kesa and gave it a pull. At that moment Shōnawashu had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Shōnawashu (S. Śāṇavāsa, ‘He of Hempen Clothing’) was a person from Mathura; in India he was called Shanaka which here means ‘He Who Is Naturally Clothed’ since he was born fully clad; this clothing later proved cool in summer and warm in winter. When his intention to realize enlightenment arose and he left home to become a monk, his clothing spontaneously changed into a kesa just as in the case of the female monk known as ‘She with the Hue of the Lotus’ who lived during the Buddha’s lifetime. This condition was not restricted to his present life for, in a distant past life, Shōnawashu had been a merchant who, out of respect, gave a hundred lengths of woolen cloth to a hundred Buddhas; as a result of this, he was naturally clad over many lifetimes. Although people are unclad during the intermediate existence—that period after people die but before they are reborn—Shōnawashu continued to be clothed even during such times.

‘Shanavasa’ is a Sanskrit term for a type of fibrous grass we call ‘the nine-branched splendour’. Whenever a saintly person is born, this grass sprouts up in virgin soil. At the time of Shōnawashu’s birth, this grass also sprouted up, whence his

name; he was born after having dwelt in his mother's womb for six years. Some time before this, the World-honoured One, pointing to a verdant grove, commented to Ananda, "This grove is named Uruda (S. Urumaṇḍa, 'Enrobed in Excellence'). A hundred years after my death there will be a mendicant monk, Shōnawashu by name, who will turn THE WHEEL OF THE LAW here." Shōnawashu was born there a century later; he received Ananda's Transmission and abided in this grove where, by turning THE WHEEL OF THE LAW, he humbled a fire-dragon. In submitting, the fire-dragon gave the grove as an offering, out of deep respect, just as the World-honoured One had accurately predicted.

At first Shōnawashu was a hermit who lived in the Himalayas; what happened in today's story occurred at the time when he joined Ananda. His question, "What kind of thing is the fundamental UNBORN NATURE of all things?" is actually one that no one had ever asked before; it was Shōnawashu alone who posed it. Everyone has the fundamental UNBORN NATURE of all things but they do not know that they have IT and so they never ask. Why is IT called the UNBORN NATURE? Even though the myriad phenomena that comprise the universe are all born from IT, this NATURE is, ultimately, not something that is born which is why IT is called 'UNBORN NATURE'. Therefore everything is completely the fundamental UNBORN NATURE; a mountain is not a mountain and a river is not a river; this is why Ananda pointed to the corner of Shōnawashu's kesa.

'Kesa' (S. kaśāya from which it comes) means 'muddied colour' or 'the colour of the UNBORN'. You should actually not look upon it in terms of colour. One way to regard it is as the 'colouration' of the outer karmic conditions and the inner karmic tendencies of everything from the Buddhas on high down to the mole-crickets, ants, mosquitoes and horseflies. As they are not sounds, forms and colours however, there are no

three realms of desire, form and beyond form to abandon and no fruition of the Way to attest to.

Although Shōnawashu comprehended the matter in this way, he nevertheless put a second question to Ananda, “What kind of thing is the fundamental NATURE OF THE ENLIGHTENED WISDOM of all the Buddhas?” From the limitless stretch of time of past aeons, this NATURE has been unmistakable but our vision will be fatally obstructed if, at some time, we do not recognize ITS existence. To be clear, therefore, as to the place from whence the Buddhas come, Shōnawashu put the question as he did. In order to get him to know that, in response to his call, BUDDHA answers and, in response to his knock, BUDDHA appears, Ananda deliberately took hold of the corner of Shōnawashu’s kesa and gave it a pull; at that moment Shōnawashu had his great awakening to his TRUE SELF. Truly, even though this NATURE has been unmistakable from the limitless past, if you do not experience IT at least once, you will not know that you yourself are the mother of the enlightened wisdom of all Buddhas. This is why all the Buddhas, one after the other, have appeared in the world, and the Ancestors and Masters, generation after generation, have pointed IT out. The PROFOUNDLY ALONE DHARMA is not something that you confer on another or receive from another, that would be like searching your face to find your nose.

The practice of meditation must be your very own training in enlightenment. When you fully awaken to your TRUE SELF, you will meet that PERSON; if you fail to meet HIM, you will be like a restless, disembodied spirit vainly clutching at reeds or clinging to trees for support. Truly, lest you practise your meditation to no avail and spend your life in vain, you should clarify what today’s story of Shōnawashu is about. Do not waste your time giving forth opinions on whether things arise independent of cause or are predestined; do not put your own self-centered views or your attachments to the past foremost.

Should you entertain the notion that ‘since the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors selects individuals according to their innate capabilities, there is no place where I am equal to the task’, you should know that, of all foolish ideas, this is the most foolish. Who amongst the ancients was a person not born of father and mother? Who did not desire affection or crave fame and gain? Nevertheless, once they had undertaken to practise, to be sure they practised thoroughly.

From India to our country, therefore, even though the length of the three periods of teaching, the authentic, the superficial and the degenerate, may differ, the saintly and wise, who have proven fruit of their spiritual realization, rival mountains in greatness and fill oceans; thus, you, who all possess sight and hearing, are no different from the ancients. Wherever you may go, in truth, you are this PERSON and you are Makakashō and Ananda; since the four elements have never changed and the five skandhas are still five, how can you possibly be different from the ancients when it comes to the Way?

By failing to penetrate to this PRINCIPLE and to carry through with practice in the Way, not only will you, to no purpose, completely lose your human body but you will ultimately fail to realize that there is the TRUE SELF. Having had the Buddha pass on to him that he was not to behave idly in this regard, Ananda took Makakashō as a second teacher and also accepted Shōnawashu as his disciple for, thereby, the Way of master and disciple was Transmitted.

The EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW, the wondrous HEART of nirvana, which has flowed down to us in this manner has in no way differed from when the Buddha was in this world, therefore do not feel bitter or regret that you were not born in the land where the Buddha lived; do not be sad that you never met the Buddha whilst He was alive. Long, long ago you set down good roots in great abundance and created strongly favourable conditions for acquiring spiritual wisdom; as a

result, you are now gathered here into the community of Daijō Monastery: truly it is as though you are standing shoulder to shoulder with Makakashō and kneeling knee to knee with Ananda. Although we may be host and guest for just this one day, in a later life we will be Buddhas and Ancestors. Do not get all wrapped up in past and present feelings. Do not stagnate in the phenomena of sound, colour and form. Do not pass your days and nights idly. Carefully practise and train in the Way that you may realize the ULTIMATE REALM of the ancients and receive the Seal and prediction of Buddhahood this very day.

As I wish to make clear what is happening in the present story, here again are my humble words. Do you wish to hear them?

From atop a ten-thousand-foot cliff  
the WATER WITHOUT SOURCE,  
Piercing through rock, sweeping away clouds,  
comes seething and gushing forth;  
Though scattering the snow and flower petals,  
making them fly in wild disorder,  
This CLOTH-LIKE STRIP, pure white as cotton,  
Is beyond the drab world of dust.

CHAPTER 5.

THE FOURTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED UBAKIKUTA.

Ubakikuta attended Shōnawashu for three years before he shaved his head and became a mendicant monk. One day, Shōnawashu asked him, “Did you leave home to become a monk in body or in mind?” Ubakikuta answered, “I truly left home to become a monk in body.” Shōnawashu said, “What

does the wondrous LAW of the Buddhas possibly have to do with body or mind?" whereupon Ubakikuta had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Ubakikuta (S. Upagupta, 'The Concealed One') was from the kingdom of Dali (S. Pātaliputra) and was a member of the serving caste; he came to train under Shōnawashu when he was fifteen and, at seventeen, became a monk. When he was twenty-two, he showed the fruit of enlightenment. Whilst travelling about converting others, he arrived at Mathura and the number that he led into monastic life was extremely large; as a result, the demon palace so trembled and quaked that Mara, The One Who Delights in Destruction, became anxious and fearful. Each time that someone realized the TRUTH Ubakikuta would throw a bamboo tally, that was a hand's span in length, into his stone hut which was eighteen ells deep and twelve ells wide, one ell being equal to one forearm. At his cremation these tallies, which he had accumulated during his lifetime of leading others into monastic life, were burned along with his body. The number of those that he had so led was just as great as that when the Tathagata was in the world, therefore everyone called him 'The Excellent Buddha Who Shows Not One of the Major or Minor Marks'.

Mara, moved by resentment, watched and waited for some occasion when Ubakikuta was in samadhi so that he, Mara, could exercise all his destructive powers and thereby interfere with the True Law, but Ubakikuta, whilst in samadhi, observed what he was up to. When Mara espied his chance and, stealthily carrying a jewelled necklace, placed it around Ubakikuta's neck, the saintly one conceived of a way to subdue him. Rising from his samadhi, he chose the corpses of a human, a dog and a snake and transformed them into a flowering wreath. Speaking gently, he pacified Mara, saying, "You have presented me with a jewelled necklace which is truly singular and wondrous;



I have a flower wreath which I wish to give you in recompense.” Mara was greatly pleased and stretched forth his head to receive it whereupon it reverted to the three foul-smelling corpses which festered with crawling vermin and maggots. Terribly distressed by this, Mara was filled with loathing and disgust but, though he employed all his destructive powers, he could not get rid of it by either disentangling himself from it or shifting it onto Ubakikuta.

Seeking release from it, he rose up through the six heavens of the realm of desire telling all the various celestial lords what had happened as well as calling on the Celestial Lord of Purity, Brahma himself. One after the other, the celestial lords told him, “This is a spiritual transformation done by one of the Buddha’s disciples who has his Lord’s ten powers. Since we are ordinary and humble beings, how can we remove it?” When Mara said, “Then what, pray, am I to do?” Brahma replied, “You must take refuge with, and surrender your heart to, Ubakikuta; then you will be able to rid yourself of it.” Brahma then spoke this verse, offering its merit for Mara’s benefit,

“If, due to the mundane, you fall,  
Then, by means of the mundane, must you rise;  
Were you to seek to rise by keeping aloof  
from the mundane,  
This would ultimately be contrary to TRUTH.

Return and seek your deliverance from the disciple with the ten powers.”

Having received these instructions, Mara departed from the celestial palace and, filled with remorse and repentance, prostrated himself at Ubakikuta’s feet. The saintly one said, “From this time forward will you ever again try to make sport of, or interfere with, the True Law of the Tathagata?” Mara replied, “I vow not to. I offer the merit of this vow to the Buddha’s Way and, for evermore, I will cease from doing what is not

good.” Ubakikuta said, “If this is so, you must, on your own, say openly that you take refuge in the Three Treasures.” The demon king, hands in gasshō, chanted the Three Refuges thrice and the wreath completely went away. This is how Ubakikuta showed the awesome effects of the Buddha Dharma just as the Tathagata had done during His earthly sojourn.

When, at seventeen, Ubakikuta shaved his head, Shōnawashu asked him, “Did you leave home to become a monk in body or in mind?” For Buddhist monks there have always been two ways of leaving home, in body and in mind. ‘Leaving home in body’ means that they have cast off feelings of obligatory ties and affectionate cravings, separated themselves from home and native place, shaved their heads, dyed their robes, refrained from keeping male or female servants, have become either a male or female monk and thereafter continue to persevere in their practice of the Way twenty-four hours a day. As a result of this, whatever the time, they do not pass it in idleness nor do they wish for anything other than what they have; they do not take satisfaction in being alive or fear death for their minds are as pure and innocent as the autumn moon, their eyes as clear and undimmed as a bright mirror. They do not seek after the ETERNAL or hanker for their BUDDHA NATURE; they neither sanctify TRUTH nor attach themselves to worldly matters. Behaving in this way, they do not abide in the states that ordinary people stay in or embroil themselves with those of clever and worldly-wise ranks but, indeed, are followers of the Way that goes beyond the human mind. These are the ones who have left home in body.

Those who have ‘left home in mind’ do not shave their heads or dye their robes; even though they reside at home and remain with their worldly toils, they are like lotuses unsullied by the dirt of life or jewels undulled by worldly dust. Even though they may have karmic ties, such as a spouse and children, they look upon them as if they were refuse or dust; they do not give

way to a lustful heart even for a moment nor are they ever covetous. Seeing what is tranquil, whilst living within the clamour of the market-place, they are as the moon hanging in space or a ball rolling around on a tray. Whilst being in the midst of the three worlds, they have a clear understanding of THAT which is beyond time. They have realized that attempting to cut themselves off from, or do away with, defiling passions is what sickness is and see clearly that trying to devise an idea of what ULTIMATE REALITY is is a perversion; nirvana, as well as birth and death, are, for them, but empty flowers of the mind and they are not controlled by attachment to either enlightenment or defiling passions. Such are those who have left home in mind.

It was this understanding that lay behind Shōnawashu's asking Ubakikuta whether he had left home in body or in mind for, if it were not the one or the other, then his leaving home would not be a true 'leaving home to become a monk', hence Shōnawashu's question however, Ubakikuta replied, "I truly left home in body." In saying this he was not thinking about 'Mind' or expounding on 'the Buddha Nature' or talking about 'That Which Is Profound and Mysterious'; he just knew that what left home to become a monk was a body composed of the four elements and the five skandhas. Without carrying anything around with him, he was able to arrive at the TRUTH and, therefore, clarify for himself what 'absolute freedom' (J. *nyoi soku*; S. *ṛddi-pāda*) really is; he had realized IT without seeking for IT and therefore was clear about THAT WHICH IS BEYOND ATTAINING which is why he said that he had left home in body.

An explanation is needed, however, from the stand-point of the wondrous LAW of the Buddhas, which is why, in order to point to the TRUTH, Shōnawashu had said that none of the Buddhas had left home in body or in mind nor, in fact, should they be viewed or attested to thus; they *were, are and will be liberated* along with the holy and the mundane, the

wise and the foolish. Having dropped off body and mind alike, they are like empty space which has no inside or outside, they resemble the water in the ocean which has neither surface nor interior. Even though the innumerable wondrous principles and the untold Dharma-gates come in a thousand different ways with ten thousand variations, Shōnawashu expounded only this one issue.

Do not say that the words spoken by Siddhartha at his birth, “Only I alone am honoured,” refers to His becoming a Buddha since the phrase actually means “Only the ‘I’ alone is honoured.” Do not say that there is no coming or going. Who can speak of the time ‘before “father and mother” were invented’ or of the time ‘before the period of cosmic emptiness’? When you reach this state, you transcend both birth and no-birth and are liberated from both mind and no-mind.

IT is like water conforming to the shape of a vessel, like space following the contours of an object: though you may grasp at IT, your hand will never be filled with IT, though you may search for IT, you will find no trace of IT—this is the wondrous LAW of the Buddhas. When you reach this stage, Ubakikuta has never existed and Shōnawashu has never come about so there is nothing to discuss in terms of movement or stillness, coming or going. Even though there is an ‘is’ and an ‘is not’ as well as an ‘other’ and a ‘self’, they are as sounds at the bottom of the ocean or resemble the unboundedness within space. If you do not personally experience this at least once, then even the millions of Dharma Gates and the incalculable number of wondrous principles will be nothing more useful than the streaming of past life karma into consciousness.

When Shōnawashu thus spoke about this, Ubakikuta immediately awoke to his TRUE SELF just like a raging fire spewing forth from the great earth. Once the thunderclap had resounded, not only were the roots of Ubakikuta’s hearing severed but the roots of his very life were instantly forfeit. The

raging fire suddenly blazed up and the Dharma-gate of the Buddhas, along with the true countenance of the Ancestors and Masters, was completely reduced to ashes. When these ashes appeared, they were given the name of the Sainted Ubakikuta; they were as hard as a rock and as black as lacquer. In ridding so many people of their 'true' self, smashing their whole bodies to bits, he idly calculated emptiness by tossing the tallies into his stone hut, and left behind traces of emptiness by incinerating emptiness.

Today this descendant of the Mahayana tradition of Daijō Monastery feels that he would like to search beyond the clouds for those traces and paste up some words on the azure sky. Would you all like to hear them?

With the house demolished and the self o'erthrown,  
no inside or outside remains  
So where, pray, are body and mind  
to conceal their forms?

CHAPTER 6.

THE FIFTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED DAITAKA.

Daitaka said, "The one who leaves home to become a monk has no attachment to a self or to a world of selves; his Original Nature is not born nor does It perish, this is the way things are in truth. All the Buddhas are also just like this; Their Original Nature has no form or characteristics and Their bodies are no different." Ubakikuta said, "You must awaken to your own TRUE SELF; you must penetrate all the way to IT!" whereupon Daitaka had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Daitaka was from the kingdom of Magadha and, just after he was born, his father dreamt that a golden sun shone forth from his house illuminating the heavens and the earth with its splendour whilst, before him, rose a huge mountain bedecked with all manner of jewels; atop the mountain a spring gushed forth in great abundance, flowing down in all four directions.

When Daitaka called upon Ubakikuta for the first time he recounted the above straightway. Ubakikuta interpreted the dream in this manner, “I am the large mountain whereas the gushing spring is your giving rise to that enlightened wisdom and discernment whose Teachings are inexhaustible. The sun streaming forth from the house is your present entering the monastic path; the illumination of the heavens and the earth in splendour represents the pre-eminence of your enlightened wisdom and discernment.” Although Daitaka was originally named Kōzō (S. Gandhahastin, ‘He Who Is Like an Impassioned Elephant’), his name was changed to Daitaka (S. Dhītika), which in our country means ‘He Who Is Intimate with the Magnanimity of TRUTH’, after receiving this interpretation.

Upon hearing Ubakikuta’s interpretation, Daitaka composed this verse which he recited to Ubakikuta,

“The towering mountain,  
 bejewelled with the seven gems,  
 Ceaselessly gives forth  
 a spring of discerning wisdom;  
 Flowing out,  
 its flavour is that of the true Teaching  
 Whose power liberates  
 all who are karmically drawn to It.”

Ubakikuta responded with a verse of his own,

“My Teaching will be Transmitted to you  
So that you may manifest your great wisdom  
and benevolence  
Just as the golden sun shone forth from the house  
To illumine all heaven and earth with its splendour.”

Thereupon Daitaka paid reverence to Ubakikuta and became his follower, immediately seeking to leave home and become a monk. Ubakikuta asked him, “Since your intention is to leave home to become a monk, are you leaving home in body or in mind?” Daitaka replied, “I am seeking to leave home for the sake of neither body nor mind.” Ubakikuta said, “If you are not seeking to leave home for the sake of your body or your mind, who, then, is leaving home?” Daitaka answered as in the opening story, and continued until he had his great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

One who has truly left home reveals the SELF which is selfless therefore IT is not something to be differentiated in terms of body or mind. This SELF which is selfless is nothing other than the way things are in TRUTH for IT is not something measurable in terms of life or its cessation, hence IT is neither the Buddhas nor sentient beings and is in no way the four elements or any of the five skandhas, to say nothing of the three worlds of time or the six realms of existence, for ORIGINAL NATURE has no form or characteristics. Even though there is seeing and hearing as well as experiencing and comprehending, in the last analysis, IT is neither something that comes and goes nor something that moves or is still. He who has come to see things in this way, that is, the sort of person who has an ‘understanding’ of Original Nature, is still one who, it must be said, has worked things out on the basis of hearsay.

Although Daitaka had resolved matters in this way, Ubakikuta, in order to point this out, said, “You must awaken to your own TRUE SELF and you must penetrate all the way to IT!” This resembles the putting of the imperial seal on commercial goods;

when you see the royal seal, you know that the object is not poisonous, mislabelled or restricted to official use and is therefore available for anyone to make use of; this is the way things are when the paths of master and disciple coincide. Even though, beyond question, you have understood IT in principle and, without a doubt, have clarified that IT is the Way, nevertheless, only when you have had a great awakening to your TRUE SELF will you, of necessity, realize what IT is for the very first time. If you have never awakened to your TRUE SELF, you will be an outsider with a useless intellectual grasp, one who has not penetrated to his very foundation. If, therefore, you have still not escaped from your own views of what 'Buddha' is and your own opinions of what 'Teaching' is, when will you be free from your bondage to 'self' and 'other'?

Even though you do not leave out a single word of what the Buddha bequeathed from His forty-nine years of preaching, do not stumble over a single teaching with regard to the Three Vehicles for carrying someone to the Other Shore and the Five Vehicles of practice which convey one to more karmically favourable rebirths, it would be nigh on impossible to acknowledge you as a real monk if you have never had a great awakening to your TRUE SELF. Even though you may be able to lecture on a thousand Scriptures and ten thousand commentaries so effectively that you get a Buddha to respond by appearing before your audience, make the whole earth tremble and shake for them and cause heavenly flowers to rain down in profusion upon them, you still have the perspective of a lecturer and are not yet a real monk.

Do not try to comprehend what a Scriptural phrase, such as 'the three temporal worlds are nothing but Mind' and 'all phenomena are themselves Ultimate Reality', means; do not try to understand 'all things have the Buddha Nature' or 'all is absolutely empty and quiescent' for then a term like 'Ultimate Reality' will still be involved in some speculative form of



category; 'all is empty' will be no different from nihilism, 'all things having the Buddha Nature' will resemble the notion of a soul and 'nothing but Mind' will not escape confusion with discriminative thought. If someone, wishing to search after the great matter, seeks for IT within the thousand Scriptures and the ten thousand commentaries, alas, he is like the prodigal fellow in the *Lotus Scripture* who abandoned his father and ran off in all directions. At the moment, therefore, when each of you, one by one, opens wide the Treasure House and carries out the whole of the GREAT CANON, the Holy Scriptures will naturally be yours.

If you do not approach the matter in this way, the Buddhas and Ancestors will be as enemies to you: this is why the monk Godai Hima (C. Wu-t'ai Pi-mo) said, "What deceiving demon urged you to leave home and become a monk? What evil creature counselled you to journey abroad seeking a teacher? Whether you can say what IT is or not, you will perish beneath my staff!" Because Daitaka understood in this way he said that his leaving home to become a monk was not for the sake of his body or his mind for, though he had worked out the matter in this way, he was still not a real monk. When Ubakikuta again pointed out the Way to him, he awoke to his TRUE SELF and succeeded in piercing through to the TRUTH.

Therefore, O virtuous monks, carefully practise in the Way and be meticulous in your endeavour. Never depend on the written word to unravel meaning or depend on acquired knowledge to discern the spiritual; completely demolish such concepts as 'Heaven and Earth', 'the sacred and the mundane' and 'external karmic conditions and internal karmic tendencies', then, even though you move back and forth between past and present, you will meet not the least shred of obstruction and, even though you go seeking wisdom from those above you or give spiritual succour to those below you, there will not be the slightest disparity between the two. Make a hole in emptiness, make

waves on the barren earth, catch sight of the Buddha's FACE, experience for yourselves the path of waking to your TRUE SELF, to your own bright ORIGINAL NATURE. Just as a bottle-gourd becomes entwined in its own vines and a jewel becomes encircled with a halo of light, so will you, personally and directly, know THAT which lies within the Hall of the Buddhas and Ancestors and immediately realize IT for yourself.

I would venture to append my humble words to today's story. Do you wish to hear them?

Reach the VERY MARROW  
and you will know the splendour and clarity  
of THAT which you have realized;  
Even so, the master artisan Lun-pien  
encountered such wondrous subtleties  
that they lay beyond his expression!

CHAPTER 7.

THE SIXTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED MISHAKA.

One day, Daitaka said, "The Buddha said, 'When one pursues the supernormal powers of a rishi or devotes himself to the study of the Lesser Vehicle, he becomes like someone entangled in, and dragged along by, a rope.' Know for yourself that, when you leave such rivulets behind, you immediately arrive at the GREAT OCEAN; by all means, confirm the UNBORN for yourself." Mishaka, as a result, had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Mishaka (S. Micchaka, 'He Who Knows Pain') came from Central India and was the leader of eight thousand rishis, that is, Indian 'holy men' who live as hermits and cultivate

supernormal powers. One day, with his followers in tow, he came to pay his respects to Daitaka, saying, “Long ago in a previous life we two were born in Brahma’s heaven. Upon meeting the rishi Ashita (S. Asita), I received his training in supernormal powers whilst you came in contact with one of the Buddha’s disciples who had the ten powers and learned how to practise meditation; after that, our karmic paths diverged and six aeons have now passed since we went our separate ways.” Daitaka said, “So many aeons have we indeed withstood our separation! How true your words; no falsehood in them. Now you can abandon your pursuit of supernormal powers and return to the Upright Way thereby entering the Buddha’s Vehicle.” Mishaka replied, “In that distant past Ashita made a prediction that after six aeons I would meet a former fellow student and realize the fruits of immaculacy. Now, indeed, we have met face to face, surely this is a karmic connection from our past lives. I humbly pray that you, Reverend Monk, out of your compassion and benevolence, will liberate me.” Daitaka ordained him as a monk, giving him the full Precepts. At first the rest of the band of rishis were haughty and filled with conceit but, when Daitaka displayed his great spiritual faculties, they all gave rise to the intention of realizing enlightenment and the desire to become monks; thus the eight thousand rishis became eight thousand mendicant monks. It was on the occasion of their becoming monks and followers of Daitaka that he spoke the words quoted above and, as a result of hearing this, Mishaka realized his TRUE SELF.

Even though, through a study of the way of the rishi, you may succeed in prolonging your life and acquire astounding uses of spiritual powers, you will only attain a thorough knowledge of the past eighty thousand aeons and the future eighty thousand but you will never be able to consider anything more remote either before or after then. Even if you train yourself to abide in a state where there are no intentional discriminations and only naturally arising thoughts, or enter into the samadhi

that goes beyond all mental thoughts, alas, you will simply be reborn in the celestial world of no perception and become a long-lived heavenly being; although you may have been able to dispose of your corporeal body, you will still be subject to an influx into your consciousness of past life karma and will not be able to come in contact with a Buddha or persevere in the Way. When the effects of this past life karma are exhausted you will fall into the Avichi Hell of incessant suffering, therefore you will be as one entangled in, and dragged along by, a rope, a state which is decidedly not liberation.

Those who study the Lesser Vehicle may realize the first, second, third and fourth fruits as well as the self-enlightenment of a pratyekabuddha but this is still training within body and mind, practice of the Way within the duality of delusion and enlightenment. Sainly ones who realize the first fruits become Bodhisattvas who arouse their first intention to realize enlightenment once eighty thousand aeons have passed; those who realize the second fruits become such Bodhisattvas once sixty thousand aeons have passed; those who realize the third fruits become such Bodhisattvas once forty thousand aeons have passed. Pratyekabuddhas enter the Way of the Bodhisattvas once ten thousand aeons have passed; although they return as Bodhisattvas due to good conditions from their past lives, their turning of the wheel of karma has, unfortunately, not ended. This, too, resembles being entangled in, and dragged along by, a rope for they are not a genuinely liberated persons.

Even though you actually destroy not only the eighty-eight defilements which arise from opinions and personal concepts but also the subtler defilements as well as untold delusions so that not a speck of dust finds a place to perch or a shred of delusion remains, this is an effort that is tied to phenomena and does not constitute the immaculate fruit of Buddhahood; such spiritual practices as 'going back to the Root', 'returning to the Source', 'waiting for enlightenment' and 'keeping to the rules'

are all completely akin to this kind of effort. O monks, do not long for emptiness or else, sad to say, you will be like those non-Buddhists who fall into the bottomless void of nihilism. Do not tarry in the beginningless past before the period of cosmic emptiness for this is like being a dead person whose vital spirit has still not completely departed. Do not contemplate bringing to a halt the empty flowers of illusory phenomena in order to reach 'the True Nature of Reality' for this is akin to the saintly person who would annihilate ignorance in order to realize enlightenment thereby giving rise to clouds where none exist, creating flaws in that which is flawless; such a one is no different than the person who, having left home to wander in foreign lands, becomes a penniless outsider drunk on the wine of his own ignorance and delusion.

Do you believe that, because you are a 'somebody', there is any need to speak of 'before birth' and 'after death'? What past, present and future exists? For vast aeons there has never, not even for a second, been any disparity; from birth to death there is only THAT WHICH IS; nevertheless, if you do not personally experience IT at least once, you will be led by your senses and their objects into vain delusion without your ever knowing the TRUE SELF; you will be alienated from THAT which is right before your eyes; you will not know from whence arises body and mind or understand from whence flow out the myriad phenomena; for no apparent reason you will decide to sweep away one thing and desire to seek after another. As a result, you have kept the Buddha busy appearing in the world and have induced the Ancestors and Masters to obligingly confer the Precepts on you but, even though they hand you the Precepts, you remain deluded by your own personal views, replying that you did not know or do not understand. Actually, you are neither in the real darkness of ignorance nor, like a box with its lid, are you in real contact with the TRUTH but idly reside within your own opinions and judgments, discriminating between right and wrong.

Do you not realize that all of you respond when called to and go where you are pointed toward? This is not something that arises from discriminative thought or from the natural responses of consciousness for, beyond question, the 'you' is THE LORD OF THE HOUSE. That LORD has neither countenance nor bodily features yet there is no time when HE ceases to move. As a result, this LORD comes forth and is given the name of 'body'. After this 'body' has appeared, the four elements and the five skandhas, the eighty-four thousand pores and the three hundred and sixty bones join together and the 'you' is a body just as a jewel has its sparkle or a sound is armed with its echo. Therefore, from the coming into birth to the going into death, there is never a moment when you lack anything, never a moment when you have any excess. With such 'birth and death' as this, though you are born, your birth has no beginning, though you die, your death leaves no traces; you are no different from waves in the ocean which rise and fall, leave behind no mark yet never cease in their rising and falling: they subside yet, in their subsiding, they go to no special place; such is the ocean, large and small waves arise ceaselessly.

THE LORD OF THE HOUSE is no different; never does HE cease in HIS moving. HE manifests HIMSELF as skin, flesh, bones and marrow and uses HIMSELF as the four elements and the five skandhas. HE manifests as peach blossoms and green bamboo as well as the apprehension of TRUTH and the clarification of what ORIGINAL NATURE is. HE works in all sorts of sounds, colours and forms and is apprehended in different ways through seeing and hearing. HE functions as 'wearing clothes' and 'eating food' and operates as speech and action. HE divides and, though divided, is not separated from HIMSELF; HE appears and, though visible, is not limited to any physical form or by any characteristic. HE resembles a stage illusionist performing his various illusory arts or as someone giving rise to divers images in a dream. Within a mirror ten thousand forms may

go through a thousand changes and a myriad transformations but, if you do not know that it is still only a mirror and therefore vainly pursue supernormal powers or devote yourself to the study of the Lesser Vehicle, you have no chance of being liberated.

O monks, nothing fetters you, so what need is there to be released? From the first there has been no delusion or enlightenment, no bondage or liberation. Is this not what the UNBORN is? Is this not what the GREAT OCEAN is? Where are there any 'rivulets'? All lands, countless as the particles of dust or as the atoms in those particles, are the OCEAN OF THE DHARMA-REALM. The flowing forth of valley streams, the cascading of waterfalls, the snaking of rivers are all but lively shifts on the surface of this OCEAN. There is no rivulet to abandon, no GREAT OCEAN that need be gained. As this is the way it is, all of Mishaka's misunderstandings straightened out on their own and his former opinions, all at once, changed; he abandoned his pursuit of supernormal powers and became a monk which is nothing more than an emergence of his past life karma.

If you practise in this way, come what may, so that what is in your mind corresponds with what you say, it will truly be like old and dear friends meeting face to face, SELF nodding to SELF. All of you will swim together in the OCEAN OF ORIGINAL NATURE without ever, not even for an instant, being separated or estranged from each other. If you are, in truth, so deeply moved that you explode into awareness, then this must be your past life karma manifesting itself. Do you not see this? As Great Master Baso (C. Ma-tsu) said, "No sentient being has, for untold aeons, ever left the samadhi of DHARMA NATURE. Since we are always in the samadhi of DHARMA NATURE, we wear clothes and eat food, converse and make respectful replies, for the functioning of the six sense organs and the carrying out of all activities are, without exception, nothing but the DHARMA NATURE." Hearing what he is saying, do not take it to mean that

'sentient beings' have an existence within a 'Dharma Nature'. To distinguish between 'Dharma Nature' and 'sentient beings' is like distinguishing between water and waves; we may use the words 'water' and 'waves' in our speech but, really, how much difference is there between the two?

This morning, in order to explain what is happening in this story here are, once more, my humble words. Do you in the community wish to hear them?

“Even though there may be an everyday purity,  
silt-clear as a river's water in autumn,  
How can it possibly compare with a luminous spring night,  
the moon softened by haze?”  
Many are the houses where people thus speak,  
yearning for a spotlessly clean life  
But, however much they sweep this way and that,  
their hearts are still not emptied and clear.

CHAPTER 8.

THE SEVENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED BASHUMITSU.

Bashumitsu placed his wine cup before Mishaka, prostrated himself and then arose whereupon Mishaka asked him, “Is this VESSEL yours or mine?” Whilst Bashumitsu was reflecting on this, Mishaka said, “If you consider the cup to be mine, it is your Original Nature; if, on the other hand, the vessel is yours, it is fitting that you receive my Teaching.” Upon hearing this Bashumitsu awoke to his UNBORN ORIGINAL NATURE.

Bashumitsu (S. Vaṣumitra, 'He Who Is an Excellent Friend') was from Northern India, a member of the Harada clan (S. Bhāradvāja, 'Those as Swift as a Skylark'); always



immaculately dressed and with a wine cup in hand, he would wander about the villages humming or whistling. As people were wont to call him bizarre, he did not tell them his name. When Mishaka was travelling about converting others, he arrived in Northern India where he saw an auspicious golden-hued cloud rising above the city's parapets. Mishaka addressed his followers saying, "This is the aura of a man of the Way, undoubtedly the Noble One who will inherit my Teaching." He had barely finished speaking when Bashumitsu arrived and asked him, "Do you know what I have in my hand?" Mishaka replied, "It is an unclean vessel since it stands against the ONE THAT IS IMMACULATE." Bashumitsu placed his wine cup before Mishaka and what is related above happened up to the point where Bashumitsu awoke to his UNBORN ORIGINAL NATURE. At that moment the wine cup suddenly vanished.

Mishaka said, "If you tell me your name, I will undertake to describe the past life causes that lay at the root of our meeting." Bashumitsu answered in verse,

"For aeons beyond reckoning  
Up to my present birth in this land,  
My family name has been Harada,  
My personal name Bashumitsu."

Mishaka said by way of explanation, "My Master Daitaka told me that, when the World-honoured One was travelling through Northern India, He told Ananda, 'Within this country, three hundred years after my parinirvana, there will be a saintly one whose family name is Harada and whose personal name will be Bashumitsu; he will become the Seventh Ancestor in the lineage of the Meditation tradition.' As the World-honoured One deigned to predict this of you, you should, in response, leave home and become a monk." Upon hearing this, Bashumitsu said, "I recollect that once, during a former aeon, I acted as a donor who presented a Tathagata with a jewel. That Buddha made me a prediction saying, 'You will continue the saintly line

within the Dharma of Shakyamuni Buddha during His fortunate aeon.’” Bashumitsu promptly took his place as the seventh in the line of Ancestors.

Before Bashumitsu had encountered Mishaka he had carried his wine cup around with him throughout the whole of the day without ever letting go of it. In truth, it was an expression of him for he felt he could not possibly do without this cup morning or night; he made liberal use of it: indeed, he was that cup! This is why, at the very start of his training under Mishaka, he asked, “Do you know what I have in my hand?” Even though you already comprehend what ‘mind is enlightenment’ really means and are clear about what ‘body is Buddha’ signifies, you are still ‘an unclean vessel’ and, therefore, as an unclean vessel, you are, without doubt, standing against the ONE THAT IS IMMACULATE. Even though you know for certain that IT has existed from the past to the present and have discovered for yourselves that, from the first, IT is sufficient, you are all unclean vessels so what is this ‘past’ you speak of or this ‘present’? What is this ‘beginning’ that you talk of or this ‘yet to come’? Such personal views, of necessity, stand against the ONE THAT IS IMMACULATE. Once Bashumitsu heard of, and realized, the superiority of this PRINCIPLE, he put down his wine cup as an expression of his return to the ONE THAT IS IMMACULATE. Because of this, Mishaka asked him, “Is this VESSEL yours or mine?” This is actually not a question about something being in the past or the present nor is it separate from a spacial perspective of something that comes and goes. At this moment can one say whether IT is ‘mine’ or ‘yours’? Whilst Bashumitsu was reflecting on its being neither ‘mine’ nor ‘yours’, Mishaka said, “If you consider the cup to be mine, then it is your Original Nature” (hence it is not Mishaka’s VESSEL), “if, on the other hand, the vessel is yours, then you shall receive my Teaching,” (therefore it is not Bashumitsu’s CUP). The VESSEL is neither ‘mine’ nor ‘yours’. This is why

the cup is not the VESSEL and why it disappeared from their sight.

What is happening in this story, from beginning to end, is truly not something that people today can readily grasp. Even though you train and train until you arrive at that place where not even the Buddhas, Ancestors and Masters have the power to reach, you will still be an unclean vessel and, of necessity, will stand against the ONE THAT IS IMMACULATE.

When it comes to the truly PURE ONE, the term 'immaculacy' is inadequate as well as the word 'vessel'. This is why the paths of Master and disciple coincided; the road they traversed was freed of obstacles. Because of this you shall receive my Teaching but, because your ORIGINAL NATURE is yours, there is not a single thing to receive from someone else, not a single thing to be accorded to another.

When you have meditated in this way and penetrated deeply into the matter, you can speak of 'master' and 'disciple'; the disciple climbs up above the head of the master whilst the master descends to the disciple's feet. At that moment there are not two separate beings and nothing to be differentiated between them. This is why it was nigh on impossible for them to speak of the cup since the cup had disappeared from their sight as an expression of their traversing this path.

Today, too, if you can reach this stage, there is no body or mind existing from the past, therefore it is difficult to talk of existing across time from the past to the present; how much less can we speak of 'birth and death', 'coming and going'! How can there ever have existed skin, flesh, bones and marrow? Truly, this is the realm where emptiness congeals into a single mass without front or back, inside or outside.

Today again I wish to take up what is happening in the previous story by appending my humble words. Do you in the community want to hear them?

He is like the bell at the break of an August morning  
which, being struck, reverberates and echoes forth.  
On such a 'Festival for the Dead' as this,  
who needs an empty wine cup?

CHAPTER 9.

THE EIGHTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED BUTSUDANANDAI.

Upon meeting Bashumitsu, Butsudanandai said, "My reason for coming here today is to debate with you as to what 'Truth' is." Bashumitsu responded, "Good sir, when there is a debate, then there is no TRUTH; when there is TRUTH, then there is nothing to debate. If you propose to debate as to what TRUTH is, then there cannot be a debate." Realizing that Bashumitsu's TRUTH had bested him, Butsudanandai awoke to the principle of the UNBORN.

Butsudanandai (S. Buddhanandi, 'He Who Is the Joy of the Buddhas') was from Kamala and belonged, like Shakyamuni, to the Gautama clan; upon the crown of his head was a fleshy protuberance ('uṣṇīṣa'); Shakyamuni had one also. His cleverness in debate was unrestrained. Bashumitsu, whilst travelling about converting others, arrived at Kamala to propagate Buddhism. Butsudanandai stood in front of Bashumitsu, who was on his teaching seat, and said, "I am called Butsudanandai and my reason for coming here today is to debate with you as to what 'Truth' is." Bashumitsu responded, "Good sir, when there is a debate, then there is no TRUTH; when there is TRUTH, then there is nothing to debate."

Real TRUTH is not debatable and genuine debate is not concerned with TRUTH; therefore, if you attempt to 'debate as to what TRUTH is', you end up with neither TRUTH nor debate. This is why Bashumitsu said, "If you propose to debate as to what TRUTH is, then it will not be a true debate." Ultimately there is not a single thing to consider as TRUTH, not a single thing to debate. For the Buddha there were not two ways of talking, that is, one for expressing TRUTH and one for debating opinions. Seeing the words uttered by the Buddha is seeing the 'body' of the Buddha; to see this Buddha body is to understand what the Buddha spoke with His own tongue. Therefore, even though He taught that ORIGINAL NATURE and the phenomenal world are not two separate entities, this teaching is still not His debating as to what REALITY is. Even if someone asserts that nothing changes, this assertion will still not be the TRUTH. Even though you may say that IT is beyond any words of description or any principle to be manifested, this is still not 'piercing to the TRUTH'. Although He taught that TRUE NATURE is what is REAL and ORIGINAL NATURE is what is ABSOLUTE, this is not debating. Even though you say that the mind and the objects it lights upon have been transcended, this is still not debating what REALITY is. Even if the mind and its objects have not been transcended, this again will not be TRUTH therefore, although He explained the meaning of 'guest' and 'host' and of 'are one' and 'are the same', this again is not true debating.

Even the noble Monju's (S. Mañjuśri) teaching, without using words or speech in the *Vimalakirti-Nirdesha Scripture*, was not some proclaiming of what REALITY is, nor was the noble Yuima's (S. Vimalakirti) sitting in silence some 'meaningful discussion of TRUTH'. It is as though, having reached this point, Monju was confused over what he saw and Yuima over what he should say. Even less did Sharihotsu (S. Śāriputra), with all his unsurpassed enlightened wisdom and benevolence, or Mokkenren (S. Maudgalyāyana; P. Moggallāna) with all his

unequalled transcendent faculties, ever see this TRUTH even in their dreams; they were just like someone born blind who sees not the colour and shape of things. The Buddha Himself said that BUDDHA NATURE is something that shravakas and pratyekabuddhas do not even dream of.

In the chapter on 'The Tathagata's Nature' in the *Nirvana Scripture* the Buddha says,

“O good disciples, a BUDDHA NATURE such as this only a Buddha can know; it is beyond the ken of shravakas and pratyekabuddhas.”

Bodhisattvas in any of the Ten Abiding Places of Bodhisattvic Wisdom, upon seeing a crane far off in the distance, may be uncertain and confused as to whether it is water or a crane that they see. Even though, after giving the matter considerable thought, they conclude that, yes, it is indeed a crane they see, still they lack certainty.

In the same chapter of the *Nirvana Scripture* the Buddha says,

“O good disciples, consider the analogy of a parched man crossing a vast plain who, spurred by his thirst, wanders off in all directions seeking water when suddenly he sees, far off, a clump of bushes wherein roosts a white crane; the man, in his delirium and agony, is unable to distinguish whether it is a pool of water or a clump of bushes; peering more sharply he sees that it is indeed a white crane and that it is a clump of bushes. O good disciples, any Bodhisattva in the Ten Abiding Places of Wisdom who catches a glimpse of the Tathagata's NATURE and thereby has some knowledge of IT is just like this man.”

Bodhisattvas in the Ten Abodes are still not completely certain that they have seen BUDDHA NATURE.

In the same chapter of the same Scripture the Buddha says,

“Even though Bodhisattvas in the Ten Abodes have seen the Tathagata’s NATURE within their own beings, again it is still not absolutely clear to them that they have done so.”

Whilst the Tathagata preaches and, knowing that their own NATURE exists, such Bodhisattvas say in delight, “For untold aeons we have transmigrated through births and deaths; our failure to discern THAT which eternally abides has been due to our bewilderment and delusion about THAT which is beyond self.”

Again, in the same chapter of the same Scripture, the Buddha says,

“Although they are within the Ten Abodes, they still cannot see the BUDDHA NATURE in all respects. Once the Tathagata has explained the matter, they are able to see a little of IT; once Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas succeed in seeing IT, then they exclaim with deep and selfless feeling, ‘How exceedingly wondrous IT is! O World-honoured One, we have undergone untold births and deaths, constantly bewildered about THAT which lies beyond self.’”

Even though you say that you have cut yourself free from seeing and hearing, forgotten about body and mind, stayed aloof from delusion and enlightenment and kept clear of defilement and purity, you cannot see this TRUTH even in your dreams, therefore do not seek IT by turning toward emptiness or search for IT in forms, to say nothing of hunting for IT in Buddhas and Ancestors!

O monks, for vast aeons up to this very day, how many cycles of birth and death have you passed through? How many times have body and mind come to arise and disappear? On the other hand, you may feel that the coming and going of this cycle

of birth and death is but a dream, an hallucination, a phantasm. How comical! What kind of fairy tale is this? In the first place, is there any 'person' that comes and goes through birth and death? What does 'real human existence' mean? What are you referring to as 'a dream, an hallucination, a phantasm'? Do not conceive of existence as a sham or as a reality. If you reach a state where you think of it as a sham or as a reality then this is false through and through. It is imperative that you resolve this prime matter by penetrating deeply into IT through meditation; do not deceive yourself by imagining that such a place is to be reached by equating IT with emptiness or with absoluteness. Even though you are certain about ITS being like untroubled water pure and clear, or like the empty sky unstained with pollution, you have still not succeeded in clarifying what this PLACE is.

The Reverend Monk Tōzan (C. Tung-shan), who trained under Isan (C. Kuei-shan) and Ugan (C. Yün-yen), said that, when he suddenly became one with the myriad phenomena, everything in the whole universe preached the Dharma; nevertheless, this was still not good enough. As a result, Ugan, out of his compassion, urged him on, saying, "You must take care to attend to this great matter." As a consequence, he separated himself from Ugan for a while since doubt still remained; whilst on his way to other parts, he was crossing a river when he saw his reflection in the water and promptly realized the TRUTH whereupon he composed this poem:

Truly I should not seek for the TRUTH from others  
 For then IT will be far from me;  
 Now I am going alone.  
 Everywhere I am able to meet HIM;  
 HE is ME now,  
 I am not HIM.  
 When we understand this,  
 We are instantaneously with the TRUTH.



Through his understanding the matter in this way, he immediately became, as Ungan's heir, the root and foundation of the Tōzan line. Moreover, not only did he comprehend that the whole body of the universe preaches the Dharma, but also that the temple pillars and the votive lanterns, as well as every particle of dust, do so; every moment in time does so, every atom does so. Although he said that he had come to realize that everything in the three worlds preaches the Dharma, there was still that PLACE which he had not yet reached and so was urged on by Ungan.

People today comprehend through their personal opinions and views that 'the mind is Buddha' or 'the body is Buddha' whilst failing to grasp what the Way of the Buddha is! They see the Way merely as 'blossoms opening in the spring' or as 'leaves scattering in autumn' or think about it as 'all things are abiding in their natural Dharma state'. These views are laughable for, were this what the Buddha Dharma is, why would Shakyamuni have appeared in the world or Bodaidaruma come from the West? From the Venerable Shakyamuni down through the Ancestors and Masters of T'ang China and those since, there has been no distinction of rank among the Buddhas and Ancestors. Which did not have a great awakening to his TRUE SELF? If every one of them had understood what TRUTH is by merely relying on the written word, or considered TRUTH to be a matter for debate, how many Buddhas and Ancestors would there have been? If you discard such notions and train yourself to penetrate to that PLACE, you will quite naturally succeed in becoming one of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

Above all, if you do not awaken to your TRUE SELF and pierce through to the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors, you will not be a REAL PERSON, hence do not abide in absolute purity or in the bright clarity of the immaculacy of emptiness. This is why the Reverend Monk Sensu (C. Ch'uan-tzu) said, "There is a PLACE that has no whereabouts in which to store

oneself and do not store a self in that PLACE which has no whereabouts. For thirty years I stayed on Medicine Mountain and was clear only about this one thing: absolute purity is, indeed, not a place in which to store yourself.” Although you may say that you have transcended both the mind and the objects it lights upon, still, as Sensu said, do not store yourself in such a place.

To reiterate, there is no need to argue over things past and present or debate about delusion and enlightenment. When, through meditation, you have penetrated to IT, there are no walls in all the ten quarters to fall down, no barrier gates in any direction. Everywhere IT is stripped bare and is pure as a dewdrop, therefore act with the utmost care and do not be precipitous.

This morning I have some humble words that attempt to break open what is happening in this story. Do you wish to hear them?

Subhuti and Vimalakirti  
did not reach IT through their conversations  
And Moggallana and Shariputra  
saw IT as though blind.  
If anyone personally wishes  
to understand the meaning of this,  
When will a pinch of salt to season the experience  
not be suitable?

CHAPTER 10.

THE NINTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED FUDAMITTA.

Fudamitta heard Butsudanandai say in verse,

“When your speech is congenial with the LORD of your heart,  
Even the tender affection of parents cannot begin to compare  
with it;  
When your actions are in accord with the WAY,  
The hearts and minds of all the Buddhas will be so also.  
Should you seek outside yourself for some flesh-and-blood  
Buddha,  
He will bear no resemblance to you;  
Should you wish to perceive your own BUDDHA NATURE,  
IT will be neither comparable to, nor separate from, His.”

Thereupon Fudamitta had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Fudamitta (S. Buddhamitra, ‘He Who Is a Friend of the Buddhas’) was a member of a merchant family in the country of Deiga (S. Daigya). When Butsudanandai was travelling about converting others, he went by the merchant’s house in the city of Deiga and saw a white light rising from the top of that dwelling so he said to his followers, “There certainly must be a holy person within this house. Untoward words have never passed his lips and thus he is truly a vessel for the Mahayana; knowing that contact would be polluting, he has not permitted his feet to tread through dirt; he will be my Dharma heir.” No sooner had he finished speaking than the aged head of the family came out to greet him, saying, “What is your wish?” Butsudanandai replied, “I am seeking an attendant.” The old man responded, “I have but one child who is already fifty years old and has never spoken an untoward word or taken a wayward

step.” Butsudanandai said, “If he is as you say, then he is truly the disciple I seek.” When Fudamitta saw Butsudanandai and his father talking and heard what they said, he suddenly rose to his feet and then, whilst making a prostration, recited the following verse,

“If my father and mother are not the closest to me,  
With whom then would I be the closest?  
If the Buddhas are not those with whom I should tread  
the Way,  
With whom then am I to congenially tread the path?”

Butsudanandai replied with the poem quoted above. Upon hearing that wondrous poem Fudamitta immediately took seven steps and Butsudanandai said, “Long ago this child of yours once met a Buddha and made compassionate vows that were great and far reaching; because the renouncing of the loving affections of his parents has been too painful for him even to consider, he has not spoken an untoward word or taken a wayward step.”

One’s father and mother are truly not one’s ‘PARENT’ and the Buddhas are not the ‘WAY’; if you wish to know THAT which is genuinely closest to you, IT is not something to be compared with a father or mother; if you wish to know what the WAY really is, IT is not something that needs learning from the Buddhas. Why is this so? Because you do not need to borrow another’s eyes and ears to see and hear with and others do not need to employ your hands and feet with which to make their movements. Sentient beings are such as they are, Buddhas are such as They are; the former studying the latter, or the latter studying the former, is ultimately not what closeness is. How could such activity possibly be considered the WAY? Because Fudamitta was maintaining and preserving such a principle, nothing improper passed his lips and his foot took no wayward step whilst some fifty years went by; truly a vessel of

Mahayana, he had no wish to abide where contact could defile him.

“If my father and mother are not the dearest to me” were, indeed, your very words, Fudamitta, and they go hand in glove with your mind. In saying “If the Buddhas are not the WAY for me” you succeeded in not taking a false step, this is indeed your practice and accords with the WAY for to seek outside oneself for a flesh-and-blood Buddha is forthwith not the way to practise. This is why the Ancestors and Masters have carried on our tradition by not depending on texts but directly pointing to ORIGINAL NATURE in another and realizing Buddhahood through seeing their own NATURE. As a consequence they have no other method than to get people to realize IT by directly pointing to IT personally on a one-to-one basis. They proceed simply by having people sit in order to cut the roots of discriminative thinking completely and ‘let the moss grow round their mouths’. This does not mean that speech is taboo or silence is to be extolled; it is nothing other than trying to get you to realize that your ORIGINAL NATURE is THAT WHICH IS.

ORIGINAL NATURE is like clear water or empty space, pure and still, interpenetrating all things without the least obstruction; there is not a single thing to be revealed outside your own ORIGINAL NATURE, not a single particle of dust to hamper your own TRUE NATURE. ITS brilliance completely surpasses that of any gem; do not liken ITS luminosity to that of sun and moon, do not compare ITS eye with the sparkle of a fiery gem. Have you not seen where it says, “The brightness of people’s own brilliance is like the shining of a thousand suns. Those in the dark search for IT outside themselves whereas those who are bright do not even think to look within. Think about this at some quiet and relaxed time: there is nothing to consider within as close, nothing to consider outside as far away.”

Although it has been this way from past to present, do not let yourself become arrogant or willful. This is why, in all

kindliness, Butsudanandai and Fudamitta met each other face to face; in such a way they merely encountered each other which is why they had so few disciples. Clarify this by means of today's story, which is not saying that you must arrive at IT as the result of confirmed practice or that you must investigate IT thoroughly through training and study; to put it simply, your ORIGINAL NATURE is intimate with you and you, beyond any doubt, are the WAY. There is no need to seek for some flesh-and-blood Buddha outside yourself, no need to search for some abstract Buddha. There is really no need to ask with whom you are at one or from whom you are separated since, ultimately, there is no 'being at one with' or 'being separated from'. Even though we may speak of IT as 'body', IT is not separate from us; even though we may speak of IT as 'Original Nature', IT is not something united with us. Although you arrive at such a realization, do not search for ORIGINAL NATURE outside your body. Even though we are born and die, come and go, this is not something our minds and bodies do.

All Buddhas have realized THAT WHICH IS and always attest to IT in the three periods of past, present and future; all Ancestors realize THAT WHICH IS and have thus appeared in the three countries of India, China and Japan. Because all of you good monks will also realize THAT WHICH IS, do not behave outside the proper limits of the Precepts or get confused about what is going on throughout the day and night since the twelve conditions of dependent origination are the turning of the Wheel of the Law. When you reach this REALM, your rebirths through the five other realms of existence are nothing but the revolving of the axle of the Great Vehicle. Receiving the karma from the four forms of birth is undoubtedly the workings of the TRUE SELF. Even though we talk of something being 'sentient' or 'non-sentient' these are different names for the same thing just as the Japanese words *me* and *manako* both mean 'eye': even though we speak of 'sentient beings' and 'Buddhas' the

difference between them is as that between the Japanese words *kokoro* and *i* both of which signify 'mind'; do not think that *kokoro* is superior since it sometimes signifies 'ORIGINAL NATURE' and *i* is inferior since it sometimes signifies 'the discriminative mind'. How can you possibly hold the word *manako* in contempt because it refers to the organ of sight whilst esteeming *me* which sometimes means 'spiritual insight'? In the last analysis, this 'REALM' is neither some territory delimited by the sense organs and their objects nor some region mapped out by the thinking mind and its ideas. Everyone is, without exception, nothing but the WAY and there is nothing that has ever been other than ORIGINAL NATURE.

This morning here again are my humble words which try to point out what is happening in this story. Do you in the community wish to hear them?

Do not say that speech or silence  
is the way to manifest the wondrousness of the HEART  
For how can your sense organs and their objects  
ever possibly defile your own SELF NATURE?

#### CHAPTER 11.

#### THE TENTH ANCESTOR, THE SAINTED BARISHIBA.

Barishiba faithfully attended on Fudamitta for three years without ever resting. One day Fudamitta was reciting a Scripture and lecturing on the UNBORN; upon hearing this, Barishiba realized enlightenment.

Barishiba (S. Pārśva, 'He Whose Ribs Remain Upright') was from Central India; his name was originally Nanshō

(S. Durjata, 'He Whose Birth Was Difficult'); just before he was born, his father dreamt of a white elephant with a jewelled seat on its back; in the seat lay a lustrous pearl the light of which illumined monks and laity, male and female; upon his awakening, his son was born.

Fudamitta arrived in Central India whilst travelling about teaching others. At the time a wealthy elder, whose name signified 'He Who Is a Fragrant Canopy', came with his son and, reverently bowing to Fudamitta, said, "My son was in the womb for sixty years, hence he was named 'He Whose Birth Was Difficult'. I once met a rishi who told me that my son was no ordinary person and thus would undoubtedly become a vessel for the Teaching. Now that I have met you, a sainted one, it is proper that he leave home and become a monk." Fudamitta shaved the son's head and gave him the Precepts.

Barishiba did not give rise to his resolve to realize enlightenment until he had been in the womb for sixty years and then matured for an additional eighty years for a total of one hundred and forty years; he was already a very old man when he became a very old monk. This is why, when he undertook to arouse his resolve, everyone rebuked him, saying, "Since you are already a very old person, why waste your time trying to leave your footprints in the clear stream of the Sangha? After all, there are two types of monks; those who train through meditation and those who chant Scriptures. You are not fit to do either." When Barishiba heard these disparaging remarks made by worldly people he made a vow to himself, saying, "I have left home to become a monk; until I have thoroughly studied and mastered the Three Treasure Houses of the Canon and have realized the three types of spiritual clarity, I will not let my ribs touch my mat." Pledging himself in this way, he studied and recited the Scriptures during the day and then meditated, or spent time in reflective recollection, during the night without ever drifting off into sleep.



When he first undertook to leave home and become a monk an auspicious light illumined wherever he sat and, as a consequence, he felt as though the twenty-one fragments of the Buddha's remains were before his very eyes. Because of his diligent devotion he forgot all about his fatigue during the three years it took him to thoroughly study and master the Three Treasure Houses of the Canon and open himself up to the three types of spiritual clarity. Then one day, whilst Fudamitta was reciting a Scripture and lecturing on the UNBORN, Barishiba realized enlightenment; ultimately he was ranked as the Tenth Ancestor.

Understand that Barishiba forgot his fatigue because of his diligent devotion. He studied and recited the Scriptures, as well as meditated and recollected, doing all of this as the meritorious undertakings of a Buddha and Ancestor. The Ancestors and Masters always recited Scriptures as well as lectured on the UNSURPASSED, 'Scriptures' here referring to the genuine Mahayana Scriptures. In like manner Barishiba would never recite anything if it was not a Mahayana Scripture even though it was something that the Buddha had expounded. He never had recourse to a Scripture that was not completely faithful to the TRUTH: true Mahayana Scriptures do not expound on 'sweeping oneself clean of defiling dirt' or talk of 'ridding one's mind of erroneous concepts'. Of necessity, completely faithful Scriptures not only thoroughly clarify abstract principles as well as subtle points of meaning, they also make completely clear the Great Matter that teaches one how to practise. By 'making completely clear the Great Matter' I mean that they explain in full detail how the various Buddhas gave rise to Their resolve to realize enlightenment, how They realized the nirvana of enlightened wisdom and how They preached both the Three Vehicles for conveying sentient beings to the Other Shore, the Five Vehicles for conveying them to their karmic rewards and what the times and places were wherein They lived, as well as the

names They went by among other things. This is what ‘being completely faithful’ means. Be aware that this is what Buddhist Scriptures are like.

Even though you can utter a phrase or show familiarity with some principle, it would be all but impossible to acknowledge you as a Buddha and Ancestor if you do not see a whole lifetime of study through to the end, therefore forget your fatigue through your diligent devotion, withdraw from the mundane by giving rise to your resolve to realize enlightenment, abstain from debating and theorizing about training, pursue your meditation and practice with care, examine everything in detail, persist day and night, raise your resolve and awaken your strengths, fully discern why the Buddhas and Ancestors have long cherished the desire to appear in the world and clarify the purpose for which you are responsible. ‘Becoming a Buddha and Ancestor’ means that never, in your whole life, do you have to say that you did not penetrate to the PRINCIPLE or that you did not make every effort in the great practice. In recent times the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors has become unfashionable and, inasmuch as practice and study have consequently lost their verity and credibility, there are those who feel that it is enough just to be familiar with some term or well versed in some principle; such trainees are undoubtedly of the same ilk as those arrogant braggarts on Vulture Peak who walked out whilst the Buddha was preaching. Stand in dread of such people!

Have you not seen the passage where Ōryū Enan (C. Huanglung Hui-nan) says, “The Way is like a mountain which, as you climb it, seems higher and higher; virtue is like an ocean which, as you enter into it, seems deeper and deeper.” By entering into what is deep you reach the bottom, by climbing what is high you reach the top; not until then will you be a true disciple, a child of Buddha. Never casually neglect your body and mind since everyone is, through and through, a vessel for the Teaching. Every day is a favourable day!

You will be someone who penetrates all the way to IT or not simply on the basis of whether you practise carefully or not; it is not a question of someone being chosen or some time being more propitious as you should realize from today's story. Barishiba was already very old, old by being more than a hundred and forty years but, because his resolve was unrivalled and, in his devotion, he forgot about his fatigue, he ultimately brought the training and study of his lifetime to a conclusion. As the story says, he served Fudamitta unswervingly for three years without resting despite his truly pitiable old body. Since people nowadays, especially as they grow older, become disinclined or negligent, you should identify with such former venerable and wise ones of times long past and not look upon winter's cold as 'How cold it is!' or summer's heat as 'How hot it is!'; do not dwell on whether your life will suddenly be cut off or wonder whether you are mentally up to going on. If you do your training in this way and do it well, then you will be someone who really trains, someone who practises the Way. If there is true training and practice of the Way, which of you will not be a Buddha and Ancestor?

As said earlier, Barishiba recited Scriptures but 'reciting Scriptures' does not simply mean reciting Them aloud or holding a copy of Them in your hand whilst skimming through the pages; reciting in the Hall of the Buddhas and Ancestors is not some mechanical manipulation of sounds or an occasion to wander off into the dark womb of inattention; it is vital that you recite Scriptures by arousing enlightened wisdom and discernment at every point and by bringing Their light and clarity to the foundation of your mind at all times. When you comport yourself in this way twenty-four hours a day as though you were not concerned with anything else, then you cannot help but penetrate to the very core of ORIGINAL UNBORN NATURE.

Have you not realized that, although we come to be born, there is nowhere that we come from and, although we depart in death, there is, again, no place into which we go? We emerge

in life in the here and now and then completely pass away from everywhere. As this rising and passing away is not neglected for a single moment, what we call ‘birth’ is not birth nor is ‘death’ death however, as trainees and students, do not let ‘birth and death’ get trapped in your heads, do not let your seeing and hearing estrange you from your TRUE SELF. Even though IT becomes seeing and hearing as well as sound, shape and colour, IT is your own brilliantly luminous TREASURE HOUSE. When you let loose this brilliance through your eyes, you bathe the Buddha body and Buddha land in splendour; when you set this luminosity free through your ears, you can hear the sounds and voices of the Buddhas at work; when you let the radiance pass out through your hands, you change yourself as well as others; when you let it pass out through your feet, you put yourself into action, now stepping forward, now stepping back.

Again today I would like to append my humble words in the interest of pointing out what is happening in this story. Do you wish to hear them?

Turning page after page,  
oh how many volumes of Scripture there are!  
Dying here, being born there,  
is but chapter and verse.

## CHAPTER 12.

THE ELEVENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED FUNAYASHA.

Whilst Funayasha stood in gasshō before Barishiba, the latter asked, “Where do you come from?” Funayasha answered, “My mind travels nowhere.” Barishiba then asked, “Where do you reside?” Funayasha replied, “My mind resides

nowhere.” Barishiba asked, “Then things are not settled for you?” Funayasha said, “It is just as it was for all the Buddhas.” Barishiba said, “You are not ‘all the Buddhas’, moreover it is a mistake to refer to anyone as ‘all the Buddhas’.” Hearing this statement, Funayasha trained diligently with it for three weeks until he recognized for himself the DHARMA NATURE OF THE UNBORN; he then announced to Barishiba, “It is a mistake to regard anyone as ‘all the Buddhas’ and to regard you as a ‘Sainted One’.” Barishiba approved of this and Transmitted the True Teaching to him.

Funayasha (S. Puṇyayaśas, ‘He of Virtuous Renown’) was of the Gautama clan in the country of the City of Flowers (i.e., Patna); his father was Hōshin (S. Ratnakāya, ‘He Whose Body Is a Treasure’). Barishiba, upon his arrival in Patna, sat down beneath a tree to rest and, pointing his right hand at the ground, said, “When this earth takes on a golden hue, a Saintly One will come and join us.” No sooner had he finished speaking than the ground changed to a golden colour and, at that very moment, Funayasha, the son of a wealthy man, stood in gasshō before Barishiba and what is related in this story occurred whereupon Barishiba said in verse,

“This earth has changed to a golden hue  
That we might recognize the coming of a Holy One  
Who will doubtless sit beneath the Bodhi Tree of Wisdom  
Where enlightenment will flower as he realizes PERFECTION.”

Funayasha replied in verse,

“The Master sits on gold-tinted ground,  
Always preaching the authentic TRUTH.  
May He turn His light to illumine me  
And help me enter samadhi.”

Barishiba, aware of Funayasha’s motives, guided him in his leaving home to become a monk and gave him the full Precepts.

In this story Funayasha was, from the first, a 'Holy One' which is why he said, "My mind travels nowhere, my mind resides nowhere just as with all the Buddhas." This is, however, still a dualistic view for he understood the situation as 'My mind is like this and all the Buddhas are likewise so'. This is what prompted Barishiba 'to drive off the ox from the plowman and snatch away the food from the ravenous man', that is, to separate him from what he deemed most precious. Since even people who have had a genuine realization are still unable to help themselves, how much less can they depend on 'all the Buddhas'! This is why Barishiba said, "You are not 'all the Buddhas'." This is not something that you can know through acquired knowledge and reasoning or discern by the absence of some characteristic or other; it is not something that you can comprehend even if you had the wisdom of all the Buddhas, nor is it something that your own intellect can fathom. This is why, after hearing Barishiba's statement, Funayasha sat in training and practised walking meditation for three weeks without letting the matter rest. The day finally came when all conditions ripened and he awoke; beyond question he forgot about 'my mind' and was freed from attachment to 'all the Buddhas'; this is what is called 'recognizing for yourself the DHARMA NATURE OF THE UNBORN'. He had finally penetrated to THIS PRINCIPLE and, in order to express his realizing of that unbounded state which is 'without anyone inside or outside', he said, "It is a mistake to regard anyone as 'all the Buddhas' and to regard you as a 'Sainted One'."

The Way of the Ancestors and Masters is not something that can really be reached by reasoning or discerned with the discriminative mind, hence, do not consider that 'Dharma-Body' or 'Dharma Nature' or 'the myriad phenomena are nothing but the One Mind' adequately express IT; do not speak of IT as 'unchanging', do not hold in your mind that IT is 'immaculacy' to say nothing of conceiving of IT as 'emptiness' or working out

in your head that IT is ‘the Supreme Principle’. When the holy and wise ones of all our Buddhist traditions, upon fully arriving at this state, reverted to the naïve mind that they had as a child and once again let loose the light of clarity upon the foundation of their minds, they directly passed onto the entry road and quickly smashed to bits their own personal views. You can grasp this through today’s story. Because Funayasha was already a ‘Holy One’, the ground changed upon his arrival; the unseen force of his virtue had the power to create a stir in things. Even so, he still trained for three weeks before he reached this awakened state. Therefore good monks like you must clearly discern IT and not describe the essential point of our tradition as reliance on middling virtues, small insights or personal opinions and feelings. If you are extremely careful you will realize IT for the first time.

Again, this morning, I gratefully offer my humble words in the hope that you may comprehend what is happening in this story. Do the community wish to hear them?

My ORIGINAL NATURE is not the Buddha nor is IT you,  
And all my comings and goings abide therein.

CHAPTER 13.

THE TWELFTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED ANABOTEI.

Anabotei asked Funayasha, “I want to know Buddha but what precisely is Buddha?” Funayasha said, “So you want to know what BUDDHA is; THAT which does not know is BUDDHA.” Anabotei asked, “Since Buddha does not know, what knows what Buddha is?” Funayasha responded, “Since you do not know BUDDHA, what knows that it does not know?”

Anabotei said, “This is what ‘being like the teeth in a saw’ means.” Funayasha said, “This is what ‘being a felled tree’ means” adding, “What does ‘the teeth in a saw’ mean?” Anabotei replied, “That you and I are lined up together as equals, Master. What does ‘the felled tree’ mean?” Funayasha said, “You have been sawn free by me.” Anabotei awoke at once to his TRUE SELF.

Anabotei was from Harana (S. Vārāṇasī); he was also called ‘He Who Is Superior in Meritorious Effort’ because he was unsurpassed in all manner of virtuous deeds in both the worldly and the monastic sense. When he went to train under Funayasha, the first thing he asked was, “I want to know Buddha but what precisely is Buddha?” Funayasha replied, “So you want to know what BUDDHA is; THAT which does not know is BUDDHA.”

In your training the very first matter that you must reflect on, and inquire into, is what BUDDHA is. All the Buddhas in the three worlds of past, present and future, as well as the numerous generations of Ancestors and Masters, are all referred to as persons who pursued the question of what BUDDHA is; those who do not inquire into what BUDDHA is are called non-Buddhists. HE is not something to be sought through the saying of the word or something to be hunted for in forms or through characteristics, nor will it do to think of BUDDHA in terms of the thirty-two major and eighty minor auspicious marks. This is why Anabotei asked, “I want to know Buddha but what precisely is Buddha?” Pointing right at him, Funayasha replied, “So you want to know what BUDDHA is; THAT which does not know is BUDDHA.”

‘THAT which does not know’ refers, of course, to none other than Anabotei himself for how could it possibly be anyone else? Be it at a time before you knew HIM or at the time when you know HIM, there will be no special way that HE will be nor will HE have some different appearance for, from the beginning



of time to the present, HE has been as this: Sometimes HE possesses the thirty-two major marks, accompanied by the eighty minor marks of a Buddha, takes on the three heads and eight arms of a guardian deity or is submerged in the five signs of corporeal decay and the eight forms of emotional distress of a dying celestial being; at other times HE is covered in hair and crowned with horns like some animal or is burdened down with iron chains and trussed up with iron shackles like some being in hell. HE continually dwells in the Three Worlds of desire, form and beyond form, shouldering the responsibility for the way HE comes forth, emerging from, and disappearing within, HIS OWN NATURE, taking on different faces. When HE comes to be born, we do not know who HE is; when HE passes away in death, we do not know who HE was. Although we try to give HIM some shape and form, HE is not something that can be manufactured by us; although we try to content ourselves by giving HIM a name, HE is not something that can be created by us. This is why, from aeon to aeon, HE is never known; even though HE accompanies us, going hand in hand with us, HE is never wholly discernible.

Hearing this story, many interpret it by saying, “Whatever is knowable to us will be different from what Buddha is; what we cannot know or discern will surely be what Buddha is.” Such people are going from one form of darkness into another. If this is what Funayasha meant by ‘not knowing BUDDHA’, why, pray, did he point it out in such a complicated manner? Because this is simply not the way the matter is, Funayasha pointed directly to the right way by saying, “THAT which does not know is BUDDHA.” Since Anabotei was still not clear about this and interpreted what had just been pointed out to him as referring simply to the conventional notion of ‘not knowing’, he said, “Since the Buddha does not know, what knows what Buddha is?” to which Funayasha again pointed the matter out by saying, “Since you do not know BUDDHA, what knows that it does not know?” HE is not something to search for outside of

yourself. How can you possibly say that the statement, 'THAT which does not know is BUDDHA' is incorrect?

Anabotei said, "This is what 'being like the teeth in a saw' means." Funayasha said, "This is what 'being a felled tree' means," adding, "What does 'the teeth in a saw' mean?" Anabotei replied, "That you and I are lined up together as equals, Master. What does 'a felled tree' mean?" Funayasha said, "You have been sawn free by me." Anabotei awoke at once to his TRUE SELF. You are truly no different from those two, nor am I; Funayasha opened up the matter fully and gave it out to all. Neither you nor I need to receive a speck of it; neither you nor I have the smallest fragment that we need to lend; this is why we are lined up together as equals just like the teeth in a saw, and this is also why, when Anabotei described their relationship as being just like the teeth in a saw, Funayasha said, "This is what 'being a felled tree' means" for, in the vast unbounded darkness, nothing at all need be known; not a speck is added by the master, not a fragment of knowing is borrowed by the disciple. One is just like a felled tree, or a temple pillar, in its 'mindlessness' for, ultimately, there is nothing that needs to be discriminated about; this is why Funayasha, understanding the matter in this way, said, "This is what 'being a felled tree' means."

However, having had the explanation put to him in this manner, Anabotei still had a lingering potential for defiling passions to arise for he did not understand what the master meant. Out of his compassion, Funayasha, once again in order to help Anabotei, asked what 'the teeth in a saw' meant and Anabotei answered, "That you and I are lined up together as equals, Master." At this point, in order to thoroughly understand what the Way is, he asked, "What does 'being a felled tree' mean?" Funayasha again gave him a helping hand by saying, "That you have been sawn free by me." The path of master and disciple had merged, erroneous thoughts and feelings past and

present had been destroyed and, making a pathway through his dreams, Anabotei had marched forward into the UNBOUNDED which is why Funayasha said, “You are sawn free by me.” Reaching this juncture, Anabotei was immediately freed from the stagnation of ‘mindlessness’ and, leaving the cavern of brilliant clarity, he awoke to his TRUE SELF. Ultimately he was ranked as the Twelfth Ancestor.

Funayasha told his monastic community, “In ancient times this Noble One was the king of Bishari (S. Vaiśālī). In that kingdom were a tribe of people who, like horses, went about quite naked. The king, through his spiritual powers, ‘divided his body up to make silkworms’, that is, he used whatever resources he had to produce silk, so that the people might be given clothing. He was later reborn in Central India and given the name of Anabotei (S. Aśvaghōṣa, ‘He Who Gave Voice to the Horses or Naked People’) since the people, moved by their gratitude, had given such voice to their grief at his previous passing. The Tathagata made a prediction about him, saying, ‘Six hundred years after my parinirvana there will be a virtuous and worthy person named Anabotei in Bishari who will break down and humble those who follow mistaken paths. Humans and celestial beings far and wide will he ferry to the Other Shore and they will be beyond count. He will be a successor to me and help others to convert.’ Now is that very time!” So saying, Funayasha transmitted the Tathagata’s EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW to Anabotei.

Do not rashly consider this story to mean either that we will not realize TRUTH unless we perceive HIM or that HE cannot be perceived. Even though you do not perceive HIM, look carefully when you are meditating as if you had not yet been conceived in your mother’s womb, that is, before dualistic thinking arose, otherwise you will not succeed even if you feel the features on the face of a Buddha or an Ancestor, nor will you succeed even if you search the faces of humans, demons or animals. HE is not

something that is either unchanging or fluctuating or that is ever empty; it is not a matter of HIS being inside or outside nor is it one of distinguishing between absolute and relative. If you perceive beyond doubt that HE is your own ORIGINAL FACE, then, even though HE may appear as an ordinary living being, a sainted one or splits into outer karmic circumstances and inner karmic tendencies, all comes and goes with HIM, rises and disappears with HIM. This is like the arising of waves on the ocean's surface; though swelling up more and more, they never increase by even a single drop of water; though subsiding more and more, they lose not a drop of water.

Among humans and celestial beings HE may be called, for the time being, 'the Buddha', 'a demon' or 'a beast'. This is as though the faces of all sentient beings were, for the nonce, manifest upon a single face but, if you think that any specific face is the face of BUDDHA, you are mistaken.

When it comes to setting up a method for teaching and helping others to convert, there is a knocking by the disciple and an answering by the master. We cultivate our samadhi as if all were fantasy and do the work of a Buddha as if in a dream; this is why the Indian methods of conversion through non-attachment and all-acceptance have flowed down unbroken through the three countries of India, China and Japan, thus turning ordinary people into sainted ones. If you really turn yourselves around and do your training in such a manner, then you will be neither ignorant of, or estranged from, your faults nor be deluded about your own life and death. You will truly be a REAL MONK.

Today I have some humble words to illustrate what this story is offering to you. Do you want to hear them?

In the country village the peach blossoms  
 did not know that they were red  
 Yet they taught Ling-yün  
 how to arrive at certainty.

CHAPTER 14.

THE THIRTEENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED KABIMORA.

One day Anabotei was speaking about the OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE, saying, “Mountains, rivers and the great earth all arise in accordance with IT; the three forms of clarity and the six spiritual powers manifest themselves by proceeding from IT.” Kabimora, upon hearing this, awoke to the TRUTH.

Kabimora (S. Kapimala, ‘He Who Is as the Bodily Excretions of a Monkey’) was from Patna, the City of Flowers; at first he was a non-Buddhist with three thousand followers and was well versed in non-Buddhist teachings and doctrines. Anabotei was in Patna, turning the marvellous Wheel of the Law, when an old man, who was standing right in front of Anabotei’s seat, suddenly fell to the ground. Anabotei said to the assembly, “This is no common, ordinary person for there is certainly something different about him.” No sooner had he finished speaking than the old man disappeared from sight and, in the twinkling of an eye, a radiant, golden-hued person sprang up from the ground only to change again, now becoming a young girl. Pointing her right hand at Anabotei, she recited a verse to the assembly,

“I prostrate myself before this saintly elder  
Who surely has received the Tathagata’s approval;  
He must now, in this very place,  
Proclaim the foremost TRUTH.”

Having finished her recital, she disappeared from sight. Anabotei said, “The daemon is about to come forth again to test his powers against mine.” A moment later, a violent wind, with heavy rains, arose and the heavens and earth were thick with

their darkness. Anabotei said, “This is indeed a sign that the daemon has come. I certainly should suppress him.” Accordingly he pointed to the sky and a huge golden dragon appeared displaying such awesome powers that it set the mountains to trembling. Anabotei solemnly sat in samadhi and, by and by, the daemon’s activities died out.

A week later a tiny bug, no larger than a mite on a mosquito’s eyelash, appeared and hid itself beneath Anabotei’s seat. Anabotei caught it in his hand and, pointing to it, said to the assembly, “This is what a daemon changes himself into when he wants to hear, and thus steal, my Teaching.” He let the creature go so that it might depart but the daemon was unable to move. Anabotei spoke to it, saying, “If you take refuge in the Three Treasures, you will obtain spiritual powers.” The daemon resumed his original shape and, bowing before Anabotei, was contrite. Anabotei asked him his name and how many followers he had. The daemon replied “My name is Kabimora and I have three thousand followers.” Anabotei said, “What change can you bring about when you employ your powers to the fullest?” Kabimora answered, “It is a very small matter for me to change the vast ocean into what I will.” Anabotei said, “Can you change the OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE?” Kabimora replied “What do you mean by the ‘Ocean of Buddha Nature’? I am not yet familiar with that term.” Anabotei then expounded on the OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE for his benefit, saying, “Mountains, rivers and the great earth all arise in accordance with IT; the three forms of clarity and the six spiritual powers manifest themselves by proceeding from IT.” Kabimora, upon hearing this, awoke to the TRUTH.

Truly, from the time when the old man fell to the ground up to the moment when he became a tiny bug, the daemon’s display of his daemonic powers was truly measureless; he even said that transforming the vast ocean was extremely easy to do. Even though, by manifesting his daemonic powers again and

again, he could change an ocean into mountains and mountains into an ocean, he still had no knowledge of even the term 'Ocean of Buddha Nature', much less could he change IT! Furthermore, in that he had no inkling of THAT which mountains, rivers and the great earth really were, Anabotei explained to him that these were transformations of the OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE and that IT was also the three forms of clarity and the six spiritual powers.

SAMADHI takes countless forms, such as the samadhis mentioned in the *Shurangama Scripture* and the *Shurangama Samadhi Scripture*, as well as those that give rise to the six spiritual powers, such as the 'divine eye' of clairvoyance and the 'divine ear' of clairaudience; these samadhis have neither beginning nor end; the world is full of them and is, in fact, them themselves. When IT raises up mountains, rivers and the great earth, SAMADHI changes ITSELF into earth, air, fire and water and transforms ITSELF into mountains, rivers and vegetation. IT also changes ITSELF into skin, flesh, bones and marrow and transforms ITSELF into a body with a head and four limbs; there has not yet been even a single action or a single phenomenon that comes from elsewhere. Throughout the twenty-four hours of the day no effort that is made is cast aside as useless and none of the features in one's personal appearance, which have come into existence over untold births and deaths, is to no purpose. There is no limit to what our eyes may see or our ears hear and, no doubt, even the wisdom of a Buddha may be incapable of measuring the extent of such seeing and hearing for how can they fail to be transformations created by the OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE?

All things, even all the dust motes, are boundless, in no way reducible to number or extent; they are the OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE which is why they are as they are. To see your present body is to see ORIGINAL NATURE; to know ORIGINAL NATURE is to attest to your body since body and ORIGINAL NATURE are

truly not two separate things. How can you distinguish between BUDDHA NATURE and characteristics? Kabimora, whilst within non-Buddhist ways, revealed daemonic powers of transformation none of which were apart from his BUDDHA NATURE, nevertheless, he did not personally know that IT was what Anabotei called the 'OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE'; he had doubts about himself and mistrusted others as a result. Since he did not understand the true nature of what exists, he had no awareness of THAT which is fundamental to existence and used all his powers to play games. When his daemonic powers were finally exhausted, he found it nigh on impossible to create his transformations; he then renounced his willfulness and took refuge in another, putting an end to his competitiveness by giving expression to the TRUTH.

Even though you intellectually grasp what is meant by 'mountains, rivers and the great earth', do not get vainly bound up in sounds, colours and forms. Even though you have clarified what your own ORIGINAL NATURE is, do not confine yourself in learned knowledge; learned knowledge is nothing but a face or two of the Buddhas and Ancestors, just as walls, cliffs, tiles and pebbles are. ORIGINAL NATURE has nothing to do with knowledge learned from seeing and hearing; IT is not connected with either movement or stillness however, from the perspective of the OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE, of necessity, movement and stillness, coming and going, are never excluded from IT; skin, flesh, bones and marrow are made manifest at the appropriate time. To speak from the standpoint of THAT which is the FUNDAMENTAL, whether IT manifests as seeing and hearing or as sound, colour and form, such phenomena do not arise from anything other than IT, therefore, when we strike empty space, reverberations are created and all sounds are thus made manifest. When you transform empty space, all things are made manifest and thus are forms differentiated. Do not think that empty space is devoid of forms or sounds. Once you have



reached this stage and are probing deeply into the matter, you will not consider IT as 'emptiness' or as 'existence' nor will you regard IT as something invisible or visible or as something that is 'self' or 'other'. What is it that you call 'other'? What is it that you consider to be 'I'? IT is as the absence of every single thing within empty space; IT resembles all the waves appearing on the great ocean; this has never changed from the past to the present. How can coming and going possibly be paths that diverge on their own?

When IT makes ITSELF visible, not a single speck of anything has been added and, when IT has concealed ITSELF, not a single hair is lost. When the mass of elements are combined, they become these bodies of ours; when phenomena are utterly destroyed, we speak of them as the 'WHOLE OF ORIGINAL NATURE'. Do not seek outside yourself to clarify what the 'Way' is or to confirm ORIGINAL NATURE. Quite simply, when the breath and light of one's own FUNDAMENTAL GROUND manifests itself, others may call it the face of a 'human', a 'daemon' or a 'beast'. Seppō (C. Hsüeh-feng) said, "If we wish to comprehend this matter, it is as if there were an ancient mirror inside us. When those who are foreign come, they are reflected in it; when our own come, they are reflected in it." All are fantasy figures within SAMADHI, going on without beginning or end, therefore, when mountains, rivers and the great earth arise, they all appear in accordance with IT; when the three forms of clarity and the six spiritual powers are manifested, they also proceed from IT. Do not view a single inch of the great earth as lying outside your own ORIGINAL NATURE; do not add even a single drop of river water from outside the OCEAN OF BUDDHA NATURE.

This morning I again wish to append my humble words in response to this story. Do you want to hear them? (Some time passed before Keizan spoke.)

Upon the vast expanse of water  
the billowing waves are set free  
to dash up and meet the sky;  
Always immaculate  
is the water of this OCEAN!  
How can IT ever possibly change?

CHAPTER 15.

THE FOURTEENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED NAGYAARAJUNA.

One day, when Kabimora paid a visit to the Lord of the Naga-dragons at the latter's invitation, he received the wish-fulfilling Nyoï Pearl. Nagyaarajuna said to him, "This Pearl is the most treasured thing in the world; does it have a form or is it formless?" Kabimora replied, "You only know what 'having form' or 'not having form' is; you do not understand that the PEARL has neither form nor is without form, furthermore, you have not yet grasped that the PEARL is not a pearl." Upon hearing this, Nagyaarajuna was profoundly enlightened to TRUTH.

Nagyaarajuna was from Western India and was also known as 'He with the Strength of a Naga-dragon' and 'He Who Has Overcome the Naga-dragons'. At the time when Kabimora arrived in Western India, having already become a monk and had the Teaching Transmitted to him, there was a prince named Unjizai (S. Megheśvara, 'He Who Is Lord of the Clouds') who, out of respect for Kabimora's reputation, invited him to the palace so that he might present the sainted one with various offerings. Kabimora said, "The Tathagata taught that a mendicant monk was not to socialize with ruling families, ministers of

state and other people of powerful influence.” The prince said, “Just north of my capital is a large mountain in which there is a cave. Would the Master be able to practise His meditation there?” Kabimora said yes and, accordingly, travelled several miles into the mountains where he chanced upon a huge python. As Kabimora proceeded straight on without turning his head to take a look, the python came after him and coiled itself around the monk’s body. Kabimora gave the Three Refuges to the python who departed after hearing Them.

When Kabimora was just about to enter the cave, an old man, wearing plain white clothes, came out from the cavern and, with hands in gasshō, made a deep bow. Kabimora said, “Where do you live?” The old man replied, “Long ago I used to be a mendicant monk who greatly enjoyed his peaceful solitude and lived in obscurity within a mountain forest. From time to time a novice monk would come asking for instruction but, as I regarded answering questions to be a nuisance, I would give rise to indignant and angry thoughts. After my death I was reborn in the body of a python and have lived in this cave for nigh on a thousand years, now, having chanced to meet you, O Sainted One, I have heard your Teaching of the Precepts and have accepted Them therefore I have come simply to offer you my thanks.” When Kabimora asked him whether there were any others who had taken up residence on the mountain, the man answered, “A few miles north of here there is a huge tree that gives shelter and protection to five hundred great Naga-dragons. The lord of that tree is called Nagyaarajuna (S. Nāgārjuna, ‘He Who Is a Sheltering Tree for Naga-dragons’). He is continually giving teaching for the benefit of his dragon community. I also go just to hear and receive his teaching.”

Kabimora then called on Nagyaarajuna amidst his assembly of followers. Nagyaarajuna came forth to greet him saying, “The deep mountains are solitary and deserted except for the dragons and pythons that reside here. Why does a great, sainted

and supreme one like you turn his holy feet in our direction?” Kabimora replied, “I am not a ‘supreme one’ but someone who has come to pay a visit to a virtuous and worthy person.” Nagyaarajuna fell silent as he wondered to himself, “Could this master have realized certainty and clarified what the Eye of the Way is? Is this great and holy one heir to the genuine Vehicle?” Kabimora said, “Although you are talking things over in your mind, I already know what your thoughts are. Just handle the matter of your becoming a monk. Why concern yourself over whether I am sainted or not?” After Nagyaarajuna heard this, he thanked Kabimora contritely and asked to become a monk. Kabimora therewith had him free himself from his defilements; his community of five hundred Naga-dragons received the full Precepts as well.

Subsequently Nagyaarajuna became Kabimora’s follower and, after four years had passed, Kabimora paid an invited visit to the Naga Lord who bestowed on him the wish-fulfilling Pearl. When Nagyaarajuna asked him about this Pearl being the most treasured thing in the world, what is recounted above occurred up to the moment when Nagyaarajuna realized the TRUTH. Ultimately he became ranked as the Fourteenth Ancestor.

Nagyaarajuna had followed non-Buddhist ways in his studies and possessed wondrous spiritual powers; he was continually going to the Naga-dragon palace to see the Scriptures and writings of the Seven Buddhas: by just looking at their titles he understood the spirit and essence of these Scriptures and customarily taught these to his five hundred dragon followers. The Naga Lords Nanda and Upananda, as well as the others in the Naga palace, were indeed all equally enlightened Bodhisattvas. At the behest of the former Buddhas, they had respectfully enshrined all Their various Scriptures; when the present Great Master Shakyamuni’s Scriptural teachings have exhausted their effectiveness in transforming humans and

celestial beings they too will be collected together in the palace of the Nagas.

Even though Nagyaarajuna had great and awesome powers and was continually visiting the great Lords to converse with them, he was not a true follower of the Way for he had only studied as a non-Buddhist does, but once he had taken refuge in Kabimora he was truly a great person with enlightened vision. People think of Nagyaarajuna not only as the Fourteenth Ancestor of our Ancestral tradition but also as an ancestor and master of various other Buddhist families; Shingon consider him their original ancestor and Tendai do likewise. Yin-yang fortune-tellers and silk producers, among others, also regard him as the fountainhead of their practices but these are all various arts that he engaged in much earlier and which he abandoned after he entered the Ancestral ranks; even though disciples of these arts claim him as their founder, they are companions in sorcery or bestial types who, fancying that they are Nagyaarajuna, confuse and mix up truth with error being unable to distinguish jewels from stones. Nagyaarajuna's Buddha Dharma was properly Transmitted only to Kanadaiba after he had discarded all other traditions; you can infer this from today's story.

Although Nagyaarajuna guided the learning of an assembly of five hundred dragons, still, when Kabimora arrived, he came out, bowed low to greet him and then tried to put the Master to the test. For a while Kabimora was guarded and did not disclose his TRUE NATURE. Nagyaarajuna fell silent wondering to himself whether Kabimora was a great, sainted one who had inherited the genuine Vehicle. Kabimora said, "Just handle the matter of your becoming a monk. Why concern yourself with whether I am saintly or not?" whereupon Nagyaarajuna was filled with shame which led to his becoming Kabimora's heir. You should be clear about this from today's story.

Nagyaarajuna said, “This Pearl is the most treasured thing in the world. Does this jewel have a form or is it formless?” Actually, from the outset, Nagyaarajuna knew about Kabimora’s receiving the Pearl; his wondering whether it had form or not was due to his holding on tightly, out of his confusion, to the duality of the existent versus the non-existent and this is why Kabimora said what he did. Truly, even if it had been a worldly jewel, when it comes to speaking of TRUTH, IT is neither existent nor non-existent; IT is simply the PEARL. The wondrous, inborn pearl that hung between the brows of the powerful champion wrestler, the pearl that was hidden within the folds of a Universal Monarch’s turban, the pearl that was held tight within the fleshy folds of the dragon king’s neck and the pearl that was sewn into the lining of the drunken man’s cloak, are what people think of as jewels and it is difficult indeed for them to tell whether such things have form or not; we should understand that these ‘pearls’ are all worldly gems and not at all THAT which is the most treasured within the Way. How much less are such people able to grasp that this PEARL is not a pearl? Truly you must understand clearly!

Gensha (C. Hsüan-sha) said. “The whole of everything is the PEARL but whom should I let know this?” He also said, “The whole universe in all ten directions is this single, lustrous PEARL.” Truly, IT is not something that can be discerned from the vantage point of humans or celestial beings, however, even were it some worldly ‘pearl’, it is not something that comes from outside but makes its appearance completely from within people’s own hearts. Because of this Shakra, Emperor of the Heavens, has made use of it as the wish-fulfilling Pearl or ‘Mani-jewel’. If you can employ this Jewel when you are sick, your illness will be cured forthwith; if you swallow this Jewel when you are anxious, beset or sad, the worry will ebb away on its own. The manifesting of spiritual faculties and transformations depend on this Jewel; among the seven treasures of a

Universal Monarch there is a Mani-jewel; all rare and precious treasures issue forth from it and its use is inexhaustible. In this way there are the differences as well as the superior and inferior aspects that follow upon the karmic consequences of being a human or a celestial being.

The wish-fulfilling Pearl among humans has also been called 'rice' since we consider that to be a treasured jewel. When compared with the jewels of a celestial being, rice is considered something manufactured or produced, however, we still consider it to be a jewel. When the Buddha Dharma becomes extinct, the Buddha's remains will become treasured, wish-fulfilling Jewels, pouring down on everything and turning into rice to succour sentient beings. Even though IT may manifest as the Buddha-body, as rice, as the myriad phenomena or as a single, tiny pellet, when your own ORIGINAL NATURE manifests ITSELF, IT becomes your fathom-high body, a figure with three heads, some form covered with hair and crowned with horns or any, and all, manner of thing in the whole universe; thus it is imperative that you discern that PEARL OF THE HEART.

Do not wish for peaceful solitude or desire to hide yourself away in some mountain forest as monks of yore did. Truly this was a mistake that those not yet enlightened made in earlier times; it is also a mistake that those not yet enlightened are still making in our day. They say that, because rubbing shoulders with others and being involved with various forms of social intercourse keep them from being tranquil, they wish to retire to a mountain forest and placidly meditate and practise the Way all by themselves. Saying such things, many sequester themselves on mountains and in valleys arbitrarily doing their practices and, for the most part, veering off onto false paths. This happens because they do not know what TRUTH is and have vainly put themselves first. They also say, "Meditation Master Daibai Hōjō (C. Ta-mei Fa-ch'ang) sat in the smoke from his

pine fire doing his meditation with an iron pagoda atop his head which, should he nod off, would waken him by its falling; Meditation Master Isan Daien (C. Kuei-shan Ta-yüan) cultivated the Way deep within the mountain clouds and mists along with tigers and wolves; we too should train and practise in like manner.” This is truly laughable. You should understand that these ancients had all realized enlightenment and received the Seal and prediction of their future Buddhahood from true masters so, for a while, they trained in this way in order to ripen their understanding of what they had awakened to as they awaited the right circumstances for offering their Teaching. These events occurred after Daibai had received the true Seal from Baso (C. Ma-tsu) and Isan had been Transmitted by Hyakujō (C. Pai-chang); they are not what the deluded see them to be. Ancients such as Inzan (C. Yin-shan) and Razan (C. Lo-shan) never lived alone prior to their realizing enlightenment. They displayed such exemplary conduct during their lifetimes that they have left their names to posterity; they were clear-eyed and great, sainted men, REAL PERSONS who had realized TRUTH. If you fail to practise what you should practise or reach what you should reach whilst living in some mountain recess, you will be just as the monkeys are that live there; this is the epitome of one whose heart has not realized enlightenment.

If their EYE OF ENLIGHTENMENT is not clear and bright, those who do their training in the harmonization of mind and body in isolation become shravakas or pratyekabuddhas and will destroy the seed of their future Buddhahood. A destroyed seed is one that has been overroasted; they have let the seed of their Buddhahood die; therefore, O good monks, carefully do your training in the monastery, continue to practise with your spiritual teacher over a long period of time, become thoroughly clear about the great matter for which you train until you have, beyond doubt, completely and clearly discerned your TRUE SELF and then, for a while later on, deepen your spiritual roots



and tighten up your training that you may become a successor to the former generations of Ancestors. Eihei Dōgen, the founder of our lineage, has admonished us against living alone lest people stray onto false paths. His successor, Koun Ejō, said, “My disciples, do not live alone. Even if you have realized TRUTH, you should do your training in the monastery; how much less should those who are still studying the practice live alone. Those who would turn their backs on this admonition are not true branches and leaves of my tradition.” Meditation Master Engo (C. Yüan-wu) said, “After the ancients reached the purpose of their training they went off to live in stone huts deep in the brambled mountains and ate their rice cooked in stub-footed iron pots, forgetting about the world of humans for ten or twenty years, taking their leave of the workaday world of dust and dirt. Nowadays we dare not crave for this.” Ōryū Enan (C. Huang-lung Hui-nan) said, “After you have become old guarding the Way whilst living in some mountain forest, how will you compare with those who have led multitudes into the monastery?” In recent times all masters have had no fondness for solitary living. How much less are people’s talents inferior to those people of long ago! Simply stay in the monastery, do your training and keep up your practice. There is a story of a man of long ago who, recklessly enjoying only his peace and quiet, was negligent in this way of living alone; when novice monks came to seek instruction from him, he did not answer what should be answered and gave rise to indignant wrath. Truly, if your body and mind are not yet in harmony, you must realize that you should not live alone and apart from your spiritual teacher. Even though you preach the Dharma as Nagyaarajuna did, you will only reap the karmic consequences of this.

O monks, because of your putting down good roots in great abundance, you can now surely hear the Tathagata’s True Law; do not become the intimate of rulers of nations and their great

ministers, do not take pleasure from solitary living, simply devote yourself to the workings of the Way and concentrate on penetrating to the SOURCE of the Dharma. These are the true Transmission words of the Tathagata.

Today I have some humble words to offer you about this story. Do you want to hear them?

ITS solitary light, wondrously vast,  
is never darkened  
For the wish-fulfilling MANI-JEWEL  
shines forth illumining everywhere.

CHAPTER 16.

THE FIFTEENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED KANADAIBA.

This is what happened when Kanadaiba had his first audience with Nagyaarajuna, the Noble One. No sooner had Kanadaiba entered the gate than Nagyaarajuna realized what an astute person he was so he dispatched his jisha to fetch a bowl filled to the brim with water and place it in front of where they were sitting. Nagyaarajuna gazed at it, held up a needle which he plunged into the water and then offered the bowl to Kanadaiba. Their eyes met and Kanadaiba, in great joy, realized his ORIGINAL NATURE.

Kanadaiba (S. Kānadeva ‘The Single-eyed Deva’) was a man from Southern India; he was of the merchant caste and, above all, sought after profitable actions which he combined with a delight in persuasion. Nagyaarajuna had arrived in Southern India to teach and guide others after having realized the TRUTH; many of the people in this area put their trust in profitable actions so, when they heard him expounding the

wondrous Teaching, they said amongst themselves, “Actions that produce profitable effects are what are of primary importance in the world; he speaks, to no purpose, of some Buddha Nature. Who can lay eyes on that?” Nagyaarajuna said, “If you wish to see BUDDHA NATURE, you must first rid yourselves of your self-pride.” Someone asked, “Is this Buddha Nature something large or something small?” Nagyaarajuna answered, “BUDDHA NATURE is neither large nor small, broad nor narrow; IT is beyond profit or recompense and IT is undying and unborn.” Once they had heard of the superiority of this PRINCIPLE they completely reverted to their beginner’s mind. Among them was the highly perceptive Kanadaiba who sought an audience with Nagyaarajuna and, as stated above, realized his ORIGINAL NATURE in great joy. Following this Nagyaarajuna offered half his preaching seat to Kanadaiba just as Shakyamuni had shared half His with Makakashō on Vulture Peak. Nagyaarajuna, whilst remaining seated for his expounding of the Teaching, manifested the appearance of the lunar orb. Kanadaiba addressed the assembly, saying, “Behold the saintly Nagyaarajuna! By displaying the form of BUDDHA NATURE he points IT out for us. How do I know this? Because the samadhi that goes beyond aspects is, in form, like a full moon, and the term ‘Buddha Nature’ signifies THAT which is utterly clear, pure and immaculately luminous.” After Kanadaiba had finished speaking, Nagyaarajuna concealed the circular form. Kanadaiba now took his seat beside Nagyaarajuna and spoke in verse,

“His body displayed the form  
of the perfectly full moon  
By means of which the BODY  
of the Buddhas is shown;  
Expounding the Dharma has no fixed shape  
But one must still take pains to make clear  
that IT is neither sound nor form.”

In consequence of these events it is difficult to distinguish master from disciple; their life-lines interpenetrate. What is happening in this story is in no wise conventional. From the very first Kanadaiba had been at one with the Way; since Nagyaarajuna had not preached a single word and Kanadaiba had not heard a single one, it is all but impossible for 'master and disciple' to exist for how can 'guest and host' be differentiated? As a direct result of this Kanadaiba began to expound that tradition of training which ultimately became known throughout all parts of India as the Daiba (S. Deva) Tradition which is the same as saying 'He piles snow upon a silver plate, he hides a heron in the bright moonlight.' Because of this Nagyaarajuna had a bowl placed before them filled full of water when they met face to face for the very first time. How could there possibly be any front or back, inside or outside? Since the bowl is full, it accordingly lacks for nothing; this water that completely fills it is pure and clear. Although pierced through and through, it remains absolutely pure; although completely full, it remains wondrously bright. This is why Nagyaarajuna held up a needle and, subsequently, Kanadaiba realized his ORIGINAL NATURE. You must, by all means, pierce through to ITS very bottom, pierce through to ITS very top; IT is neither absolute nor relative. At this juncture there is no way to differentiate between master and disciple; although they are similar they are never the same; although they have become intermingled there is no trace.

Shakyamuni made this matter manifest by raising His eyebrows and blinking His eyes; Reibun (C. Ling-yün) displayed it upon seeing the form of a peach blossom and Kyōgen (C. Hsiang-yen) upon hearing the sound of a pebble hitting bamboo, however, there is nothing that can be called 'sound' or 'form' and there is no seeing or hearing to be discarded. IT is completely perfect, luminous and formless and is like the transparency of clear water; IT resembles the moment when you

have pierced through to the wondrous PRINCIPLE and seek ITS sharp spiritual point. IT bares ITS sharp point everywhere, penetrating your mind and heart with ITS brilliance. ITS water flows everywhere and permeates everything, boring through mountains, flooding the heavens; ITS needle penetrates sacking and pierces a mustard seed. Since ITS water is not overcome by anything, how can a wake ever be created in IT? ITS needle surpasses all others, even a diamond, in its hardness.

How can such a needle, or such water, possibly be something that belongs to someone else since they are nothing other than your own body and mind? When you have completely swallowed IT, IT is simply a single needle. When you have vomited IT back up, IT is again this clear water. This is why, when the paths of master and disciple interpenetrated, there was no self and other whatsoever. At the very moment when their life-lines merged they became a pure, immaculate luminosity; IT could not be quenched anywhere in all the ten quarters; they were entwined just as a bottle-gourd vine entwines its fruit when nurturing it. Climbing here, climbing there, IT is simply your own ORIGINAL NATURE.

Although all of you may have succeeded in knowing about the Clear Water, you must grasp what IT is directly through your own experience and make clear to yourselves that, at ITS very bottom, there is the needle. If you ever, by mistake, become attached to IT, you will end up with ITS ripping out your throat as you might expect. Do not create some kind of duality. Just try to swallow IT completely, and disgorge IT completely, strive meticulously. Even though you perceive ITS utter immaculacy and ITS complete and all-encompassing pervasiveness, there will, without doubt, always be ITS vastness and hardness. If you realize this, the three calamities of flood, fire and wind, i.e., inundating defilements, raging passions and misleading delusions, will never violate you and you will remain unmoved during the four cosmic time periods.

Here again are my humble words which attempt to divulge what is going on. Do you wish to hear them?

Once the SINGLE NEEDLE has fished up  
all the sky-blue waters of the ocean,  
The FIERCE DRAGON, wherever HE may go,  
will not conceal HIMSELF.

CHAPTER 17.

THE SIXTEENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED RAGORATA.

Ragorata was attending on Kanadaiba when, upon hearing about karmic cause from a past life, he experienced his ORIGINAL NATURE.

Ragorata was a man from Kapilavastu; the issue of the karmic cause from a past life arose in the following manner. Kanadaiba, after realizing enlightenment, was travelling about converting others when he arrived at Kapilavastu. In the city there resided a prosperous elder citizen named Bomma Jōtoku (S. Brahmāsuddhagaṇa, 'He Who Is the Pure Virtue of Brahma') in whose garden, one day, a tree had sprouted a large, ear-shaped mushroom with an exceedingly fine flavour; only he and his second son, Ragorata (S. Rāhulata, 'He Who Has Been Seized') by name, picked and tasted it. From wherever they picked a piece, the mushroom would regrow; after they had picked it all, it sprouted anew; no others in the household were able to see it. Kanadaiba called on the family because of his awareness of the karmic cause of this mushroom from their past lives and, when the old man asked the reason for the mushroom's appearance, Kanadaiba replied, "Long ago your

family gave alms to a monk but the monk vainly consumed the alms from the faithful without having succeeded in opening his Enlightenment-seeking Eye and, because of this, he became a tree mushroom in his next life as recompense. Since only you and your son have given alms with untainted sincerity, only the two of you have succeeded in acquiring this mushroom; the rest of your family have not.” Kanadaiba then asked the old man his age and the latter replied that he was seventy-nine. Thereupon Kanadaiba preached in verse,

“Having entered the Way  
but failing to pierce through to the PRINCIPLE,  
The monk was reborn  
to return the alms from the faithful.  
When you are eighty-one years old  
The tree will cease to put forth its ear mushroom.”

Hearing this poem only increased the old man’s respect and admiration for Kanadaiba and he said, “Your disciple is too feeble and old to be able to take you as his teacher; I vow to give up my second son so that he may follow after you and become a monk.” Kanadaiba said, “Long ago the Tathagata predicted that this son of yours would become a great spiritual leader and teacher during the second five-hundred years of the Law. Our encounter today is the result of karmic causes from a past life.” He then shaved the head of Ragorata who, in time, became the Sixteenth Ancestor.

Many of past and present, who have awakened to their enlightenment, have drawn upon what is happening in this story to admonish those who vainly enter the pure stream of monastic life whilst lacking a sense of shame or embarrassment when idly accepting alms from the faithful without any sense of awareness, or comprehension, of what they are doing. Such persons should truly be ashamed of themselves. As monks you have given up your families to enter the Way; where you dwell

is not your own nor is any of the food that you eat. The robes you wear are not yours; not a single drop of water, not a single blade of grass can be accepted and used as though your own. The reason for this is that all of you were born nationals of this country: there is no water or land under the heavens, or upon the earth, that does not totally belong to the ruler of this country. Whilst living at home you should make yourself useful to your parents; whilst in the service of your country you should respectfully serve your sovereign. At such times heaven and earth offer their divine protection and you naturally receive the benevolent blessings of yin and yang, however, if you rashly claim that you aspire to the Buddha's Teaching and do not serve your parents who ought to be served, or do not respectfully give service to your sovereign who ought to be served with respect, how will you recompense your father and mother for their kindness in giving birth to you and how will you repay the country's ruler for his blessings of water and land? Were you to enter the Way without having your Enlightenment-seeking Eye, it would be just the same as being a traitor to your country. As the ordination verse says, "Now that I have discarded worldly attachments and have entered the immaculacy of nothingness, I have left behind the Three Worlds."

Now that you have left home to become a monk, you no longer pay homage to your father and mother or to your nation's ruler for you have exchanged your worldly form for that of a Child of Buddha and lodged yourself within the pure stream of the Sangha. Even though you may receive alms from a former spouse or child, they are in no wise the same as something that you received from such a person whilst you were in lay life; in no way can you say that these are not alms from the faithful. As someone of old said, "If your Enlightenment-seeking Eye is not yet bright, even a single grain of rice is difficult to bite through, but, when your Enlightenment-seeking Eye has brightened, even though the vault of heaven were your



begging bowl and Sumeru your mountain of rice which you came to accept day after day and night after night, you will never be caught up by these alms from the faithful.” Without examining yourselves as to whether your Enlightenment-seeking Eye is completely perfect or not, were you so reckless as to think “Now that I have become a monk I am entitled to receive the offerings of others,” then, were these offerings to become scarce, you would seek them in vain from your fellow humans. You must keep in mind that, since the time when you gave up your families and separated yourselves from the places where you were born, you have wandered about alone, as exposed as a dewdrop, without a single grain of rice or even a shred of clothing to call your own.

Simply give yourself over completely for the sake of your Enlightenment-seeking Eye; give up your life for the sake of the Teaching. How could you possibly arouse your will to realize enlightenment in the vain cause of fame and gain or for the sake of food and clothing? It is pointless to ask others; just call to mind your own original intention to realize enlightenment and reflect upon whether this is what you are now concerned with or not. It has been said, “Restraining yourself later on is far harder to do than at the beginning.” If you truly keep to your first intention, how can you not become one who has realized the TRUTH? Even though all of you, male and female, may have become monks, you will have done so in vain and become traitors if you forget your original intention. Why is this so? Although the Enlightenment-seeking Eye of the monk of long ago was not yet bright, he did not regress from his religious training so, in recompense for the alms, he became a tree mushroom. When the lives of monks such as this have finally come to an end, Yama will not be able to exonerate them. The rice gruel they eat today will become a broth of molten iron or red-hot iron pellets; when they swallow these, their bodies and hearts will glow crimson with searing inflammation.

Meditation Master Umpō Bun'etsu (C. Yün-feng Wen-yüeh) said, "Do you not see? The Ancestors and Masters have said that when you enter the Way, but do not pierce through to the PRINCIPLE, you are then reborn to return the alms from the faithful. This sort of thing is a foregone conclusion so do not doubt it. All you senior monks must be frugal with your days; time waits for no one. Do not wait for the morning when the light in your eyes fails. If you do not do a single winnowing fan's worth of work in the fields of monastic training, you will sink into the sufferings that come from a hundred penalties and be within the hellish ring of iron mountains. Do not say that no one told you!" O monks, thanks to your good fortune, you have met with the Tathagata's Wheel of the True Law which is surely rarer to encounter than a tiger in the market place or a glimpse of an udumbara tree in bloom. Strive meticulously, carefully meditate and learn the Way until your Enlightenment-seeking Eye is clear and bright!

Do you not see? Today's story is not about sentient and non-sentient beings; do not separate things into inner karmic tendencies and outer karmic conditions. A monk in a previous life duly became a tree mushroom in a present life. Whilst a tree mushroom, he did not know that he had been a monk and, whilst a monk, he did not know that he had manifested as a myriad things so, even though you are now sentient and have a bit of awareness and comprehension of what you are doing and can distinguish somewhat between a pain and an itch, you have never been in any way different from a tree mushroom. The reason for this is that the tree's not knowing you is, beyond doubt, dark ignorance, and your not knowing the tree mushroom is exactly the same thing; this is why people make distinctions between the sentient and the non-sentient as well as between outer karmic conditions and inner karmic tendencies. When you clarify what TRUE SELF is, what is there to call sentient, what is there to call non-sentient? IT is not past, present or future

nor is IT the sense organs, their fields of perception or their types of perceptual consciousness and IT neither cuts itself off from these nor can IT be cut off from them. IT is neither self-made nor made by others. You will see by training thoroughly, probing deeply and dropping off body and mind.

Do not vainly brag about your having the appearance of a monk or, in confusion, stop your training once you have left mundane life. Even supposing you do evade the calamity of flood, you will be afflicted with the calamity of fire: although you may have broken away from the turmoils of everyday living, they are still difficult to avoid even for a Buddha so how much more is this so for those who are not like this but chase after things and become infatuated with others? Such people are like threads of gossamer or drifting dust; they gallop off hither and thither, rising and falling in and out of favour with the court and public opinion, their feet never treading the TRUE GROUND, their hearts never reaching their TRUE PLACE. Not only do they cheat themselves in this life, they also vainly pass through life after life. Do you not realize that, from the far past to the very present, you have never done wrong, you have never been separated from your ORIGINAL NATURE? Because you have not realized IT directly, you are like drifting motes of dust. If you do not do your utmost today, when will you do it?

Here are my humble words that try to express what is happening in the preceding story. Do you wish to hear them?

How sad that his Enlightenment-seeking Eye  
was not clear and bright!  
Deluded as to TRUE SELF, he sought to repay others  
and, in recompense, is ceaselessly born  
again and again.

CHAPTER 18.

THE SEVENTEENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED SŌGYANANDAI.

One day Ragorata gave instruction to Sōgyanandai in verse,

“Because I am already beyond self,  
You should see the WE  
For, if you take me as your master,  
You will know that ‘I’ is not this WE.”

As a result of hearing this, Sōgyanandai’s heart suddenly opened to a determination to be liberated and he sought to cross to the Other Shore.

Sōgyanandai was the son of King Hōsōgon (S. Ratnavyūha, ‘He Whose Treasures Are Magnificent’), ruler of the castled city of Shravasti; being able to talk from birth, he continually eulogized the activities of the Buddha. By the age of seven he so despised worldly pleasures that, in verse, he announced to his father and mother,

“I humbly bow to you,  
my most compassionate father,  
And reverently make gasshō to you,  
mother of my blood and bones;  
I would now leave home  
to become a monk  
And pray that, from your pity,  
you will so permit me.”

His father and mother were so adamant in their refusal that he finally stopped eating; they relented but permitted him to be a monk only on the condition that he remain within the palace. He was given the name of Sōgyanandai (S. Sanghanandi, ‘Friend

of the Sangha') and the monk Zenrita ('He Whose Profits from Meditation Are Many') was assigned to him as a teacher. He had still not given up nineteen years later and continually reminded himself that he could not truly be one who had left home as long as he was living in the palace. One evening, as the glow of the setting sun was fading, he saw, to his surprise, a level road which he felt drawn to travel down. After walking a few miles he arrived before a massive cliff in which there was a cavern; he rested peacefully in its interior. The king, discovering that his son was missing, banished Zenrita and went out into the countryside in search of the young man but did not learn of his whereabouts.

Ten years later Ragorata, whilst travelling about converting others, arrived at the city of Shravasti. There was a river there named Kinsui (S. Hiraṇyavatī, 'Golden Waters'); he found the flavour of its water to be most delicious and saw, in mid-stream, the outline of five Buddhas. Ragorata reported this to his followers and added, "The source of this river lies about a hundred and fifty miles from here; a holy person, Sōgyanandai by name, resides there. The Buddha predicted that, a thousand years after His parinirvana, this person would undoubtedly become a sage." After relating this he led his followers upstream and, upon their arrival at the source, they saw Sōgyanandai sitting serenely in deep meditation. Ragorata, along with his retinue, waited for him. Three weeks later Sōgyanandai emerged from meditation and Ragorata asked him, "Is your samadhi one of body or one of mind?" Sōgyanandai replied, "Both my body and mind are in samadhi." Ragorata said, "If both your body and mind are in samadhi, how do you manage to go into, and come out of, it?" To be sure, if you say that both your body and mind are one with samadhi, how can there be anything to enter or leave? It is not yet TRUE SAMADHI if you pursue it with an eye to body and mind. If it is not TRUE SAMADHI then, of course, there will be a going into, and a coming out of, samadhi; if there

is a going into, and a coming out of, samadhi then it must be said that such a state is not TRUE SAMADHI. Do not seek after body or mind when facing the place of stillness. To practise meditation has always been to drop off body and mind so what is there to be called body, what is there to be called mind?

Sōgyanandai said, “There is, to be sure, a going into, and a coming out of, samadhi but the characteristic of samadhi is not lost; it resembles a bucket in a well, the intrinsic quality of such a bucket being its stillness and immutability.” Ragorata said, “Apart from whether this bucket of yours is in the well or outside it, since the bucket itself does not move, what is it that goes into, or comes out of, the well?” If there is any ‘going in’ or ‘going out’ this is not the TRUE BUCKET whether the ‘bucket’ moves or not.

Still not grasping this principle Sōgyanandai said, “By saying, ‘Since the bucket can both move or be still, what is it that goes in and comes out?’ you are admitting to the bucket’s going in and coming out, however, the bucket itself is not affected by either its moving or not moving.” The bucket has no movement or stillness. If you say that there is any ‘going into’ and ‘coming out of’, you still have a dualistic view of the situation and this is why Ragorata then said, “If that bucket of yours is in the well you cannot maintain that what has come out is the bucket; on the other hand, if you maintain that the bucket has come out of the well, what is it that is in the well?” The outside is not ultimately turned loose within and the inside is not discharged without. When out, it is completely out, when in, it is completely in, so how can it be in the well and at the same time outside it? This is why Ragorata said, “You cannot maintain that what has come out is the bucket. What is it that is in the well?” Missing this point, Sōgyanandai answered, “Were the bucket to come out of the well, whatever remained inside would not be the bucket; were it to stay in the well, it would not be what comes out.” What he said reveals that he did not

truly understand the REAL NATURE of 'the bucket', therefore Ragorata said, "These assertions of yours are not right."

Although it had seemed as if Sōgyanandai were in TRUE SAMADHI and had grasped what its PRINCIPLE is, he still held to a dualistic view of 'objects' and 'I', therefore he said, "Your point is not clear." Sōgyanandai's assertions do lack TRUTH; they are like threads of gossamer floating wherever the winds may blow them. Because they lacked TRUTH, Ragorata responded, "Beyond question, your assertions miss the point." Sōgyanandai replied, "Your reasoning is inconclusive." Ragorata, from the depths of his great benevolence and compassion, added emphatically, "Your saying that my reasoning is inconclusive is evidence that my reasoning is conclusive!" Because Sōgyanandai's understanding of 'No-self' lacked foundation in experience, he replied, "You may say that your reasoning is conclusive but the Dharma teaches that all things lack a self, so..." Ragorata said, "My assertion is already conclusive because the 'my' has no self." Although Sōgyanandai truly comprehended intellectually that each and every thing is without a self, he did not know the REAL TRUTH so he said, "What assertion is made conclusive because the 'my' has no self?" To make Sōgyanandai understand on a deeper level, Ragorata said, "Because the 'my' has no self, the assertion of 'you' is brought to a conclusion."

Truly, the four great elements are completely without a self and the five skandhas, from the first, do not exist. It is in this sense that Sōgyanandai had some intellectual comprehension that there is Real Self where there is no self so he asked Ragorata, "With what sage as your teacher did you, sir, obtain this knowledge of No-self?" In order to get Sōgyanandai to understand that the Way of master and disciple is not arbitrary, Ragorata said, "It was with the great Noble One, Kanadaiba, as my master, that I attested to this NO-SELF." Sōgyanandai said in verse,

“I humbly bow before your master Kanadaiba  
And would go forth, sir, as your disciple.  
Because you, sir, have no self,  
I desire you for my master.”

Ragorata replied in verse,

“Because I am already beyond self,  
You should see the WE  
For, if you take me as your master,  
You will know that ‘I’ is not this WE.”

The person who can see TRUE SELF has no ‘own self’ so how can any of the myriad things possibly disturb his vision? Seeing, hearing, perceiving and knowing are ultimately not separate from each other nor is any single event or thing separate from all others; this is why there is no division into the wise and the ordinary and why the Way of master and disciple unites as one. When you can grasp this point, you know what is meant by meeting the Buddhas and Ancestors face to face; you will make your TRUE SELF the master and make the master your TRUE SELF; not even a sword or an axe will be able to sunder the two. Because Sōgyanandai was able to open up suddenly to this very principle he sought to cross to the Other Shore.

Ragorata said, “Your heart, as well as mind, is free; it is not bound by ‘I’.” Having spoken thus, Ragorata then raised a golden bowl in his right hand and brought it to the heavenly palace of Brahma where he received an offering of fragrant food. Just as he was about to offer it, in turn, to the great assembly of monks, a feeling of distaste arose in their hearts. Ragorata said, “Your distaste is not due to some fault in me but to your own karma;” he then had Sōgyanandai sit beside him and share the food. The assembly were surprised at this so Ragorata told them, “The reason why none of you can partake of this food is this: he who shares this seat with me



was formerly the Tathagata Sharajuō (S. Śālarājā, ‘Lord of the Shala Trees’); he has been reborn out of his pity for all things. You, my companions, had already reached the third stage of non-returner during the preceding Glorious Era of the Thousand Buddhas but have not yet realized the UNDEFILED.” The assembly of monks murmured, “Whilst we trust our master’s spiritual powers, we venture into doubt when you say that Sōgyanandai was a Buddha in the past.” Sōgyanandai, realizing that the assembly was filled with pride, said, “In the World-honoured One’s day the world was flat for there were no hills; the water in rivers and canals was completely sweet and delicious, vegetation grew luxuriantly, the land waxed fruitful, the eight kinds of suffering did not exist and people practised the ten good deeds. In the eight hundred years or so since the Buddha’s parinirvana between the twin sala trees the world has become a burial mound, the trees have withered, arhants no longer appear among the people, right mindfulness is sneered at or belittled and trust in TRUE BEING has been replaced by greed for spiritual powers.” He ceased speaking and, little by little, pushed his right hand down into the ground until it reached the diamond sphere at the very bottom of the earth where he then gathered up the Water of the Sweet Dew in a porcelain bowl and, holding it aloft, offered it to the Sangha. All in the great assembly, seeing this, took refuge and submitted themselves in repentance.

How pitiful that things had come to such a state eight hundred years after the worldly life of the Tathagata and more is the pity that, in these present final centuries of the Law when the words ‘Buddha Dharma’ are rarely heard, people are unaware of what their PRINCIPLE is. Because they have no bodies or minds that have realized IT, no one even asks what IT is. Even when THIS is realized no one comes to guard and preserve IT. Although there are intelligent people who have some slight awareness and understanding because of great,

compassionate and benevolent teaching, some are invaded by laziness and procrastination whilst others lack faith in, and understanding of, the TRUTH. As a result, genuine seekers of enlightenment are lacking and there is also no one to awaken in the hearts of others the resolve to realize TRUTH. Truly, we have encountered such times as these as a result of the decadence of the last days of the Law and, due to past life karma, our own ineptitude which surpasses shame and regret. What a pity that you were not born during the period of the True Law, or even that of the counterfeit law, be it as a master or as a disciple. Nevertheless, you should keep in mind that the Buddha's Dharma did come east and has reached Its final days; it is a mere fifty or sixty years that the True Law of the Tathagata has been heard in our own country so think of this as just a beginning and never say that there is any place where the Buddha's Teaching has reached that It has not flourished. You have all given rise to your intention with bravery and devotion without confusing your self with REAL SELF. If you directly attest to NO-SELF, quickly realize THAT which is beyond mind, not get caught up in the machinations of body and mind, not get bound up in thoughts of delusion and enlightenment, not remain in the cave of life and death and not be ensnared in the net of sentient beings versus Buddha, you will then know the REAL SELF which has been unchanging for the incalculable aeons of the past and will continue so into the future forever.

I say these words to cap this story:

The mind machine persuasively  
calls itself the way mind is  
And, as a result, how many times  
has the WE come forth  
wearing a different face?