

CHAPTER 19.

THE EIGHTEENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED KAYASHATA.

Once, whilst Kayashata was serving as a jisha to Sōgyanandai, they heard a sound as the wind blew a temple bell. Sōgyanandai asked Kayashata, “Is that the sound of the bell or the sound of the wind?” Kayashata answered, “Neither the wind nor the bell, merely the sound of the TRUE NATURE.” Sōgyanandai asked, “And who is the TRUE NATURE?” Kayashata responded, “The REASON why all alike are silent and still.” Sōgyanandai exclaimed, “Excellent! The disciple to inherit my Way is none other than you!” Accordingly he gave the Treasury of the Law to Kayashata.

Kayashata was from Magadha; he was of the clan of Udraka Ramaputra, one of the Buddha’s teachers before His enlightenment. His father was Tengai (‘A Heavenly Canopy of Light’), and his mother was Hōsei (‘Saintly in All Ways’); she had become pregnant after having dreamt of a great deva holding a mirror—about seven days later she gave birth to Kayashata. The lustre of his body was like porcelain: even before he was given his first bath he was clean and sweet smelling.

From the time of his birth it was evident that the child had the Completely Perfect Mirror which accompanied him wherever he went. He was always fond of quietude and was untainted by worldly attachments, that is to say, whenever the child sat down the Perfect Mirror was before him; everyone knew that the doings of Buddhas of every age floated across this Mirror, It was brighter than a mind illumined by Scriptural teaching. Wherever the child went this Mirror followed him like a halo yet without the child’s form being concealed by It. When

the child lay down to sleep, the Mirror would cover his bed like a heavenly canopy of light. In short, this Mirror accompanied him everywhere, whether he was walking, standing, sitting or lying down.

Now at this time Sōgyanandai was on a preaching tour. Upon reaching Magadha a cool breeze suddenly arose and swept over him and his entourage bringing great pleasure to their bodies and spirits. Since his followers did not know why this should be so, Sōgyanandai said, “This is the wind, or breath, of religious virtue. There must be some saintly person who, having renounced the world, continues on as heir to the Lamp of the Ancestors.” Having spoken thus, he led his great assembly of followers through the mountains and valleys by means of his divine powers. By mealtime they had reached the base of a mountain peak and he addressed them, saying, “Over the summit of this peak is a purple cloud that hangs like a canopy; a saintly person must surely reside thereabouts.” So, for some time, he travelled on with his great assembly until he caught sight of a mountain dwelling and the child in possession of the Perfect Mirror. The boy walked directly up to Sōgyanandai who asked him, “How old are you?” The boy replied, “A hundred years old.” Sōgyanandai then said, “But you are still a child. Why do you say that you are a hundred years old?” Kayashata answered, “I do not know the reason why: it is just that I am a hundred years old.” Sōgyanandai asked, “Are you skilled in the liberating activities of a Buddha?” Kayashata answered, “The Buddha says that if a man were to live a hundred years without having comprehended the liberating activities of the Buddhas, it would still not equal living a single day and being able to settle the one great issue for good.” Sōgyanandai asked, “And That which is in your hand, what does It show?” The child replied, “The Great Perfect Mirror of the Buddhas has no flaw or blemish inside or out: all people will be able to see IT alike because the

eyes of the TRUE NATURE all resemble each other.” When his parents heard their child speaking in this manner, they allowed him to leave home and become a monk. Sōgyanandai led him back to his own homeland where he gave him the Precepts and named him Kayashata (S. Sanghayaśas, ‘The Renowned of the Sangha’). Then came the time that he heard the sound made when the wind blew the temple bell; he was given the Treasury of the Law and ultimately became the Eighteenth Ancestor.

After the child became a monk his Perfect Mirror was suddenly no longer visible for this is, in fact, a part of everyone’s LIGHT. Like a perfect mirror, IT is right now, without blemish or flaw inside or out: such is the TRUE NATURE of all of us without exception.

Right from his birth Kayashata continually extolled the doings of Buddhas and did not mix in worldly matters. In his Bright Mirror he could see what Buddhas did in past and present. He truly understood that the eyes, hearts and minds of all resemble each other but, even so, he felt that he had not yet met with the liberating activities of Buddhas which is why he had said that he was a hundred years old. To meet the Buddhas, be it for just one day, surpasses not only a mere hundred years but also countless lifetimes. This is why he ultimately relinquished the Perfect Mirror.

You should understand through what has been related here that the Buddhas do not neglect, or treat lightly, accounts of the Great Undertaking. When you really comprehend the meaning of the Great Perfect Mirror of the Buddhas, what is left to be understood? Yet this is not the very bottom of TRUTH. After all, why should there be a Great Perfect Mirror of the Buddhas and why should any two people be able to see IT alike? What is there that has no flaw or blemish inside or out? What comprises a blemish or a flaw? How can the eyes possibly resemble each other? Faced with such questions he forgot about his Perfect Mirror but how could this be different from the child’s

‘forgetting about his skin and flesh’? Even if you share this viewpoint by realizing that there is no distinction amongst eyes, and that all persons see IT alike, this viewpoint is actually dualistic and hardly the basis for clarifying what the TRUE SELF is.

Do not hold to an opinion of what ‘perfect’ is or what ‘body’ is. It is imperative that you look into your mind and probe deeply into yourself so that you can quickly break through your outer karmic conditions and your inner karmic tendencies to realize that your TRUE NATURE is beyond intellectual knowing: unless you reach this stage you will simply be a karmically conditioned sentient being who has not yet comprehended the liberating activities of Buddhas. In this manner, Kayashata repented his past wrong-doings and bowed in gratitude, whereupon he became a monk and received all the Precepts. After this he spent his years in training and in serving Sōgyanandai as a jisha.

Once, when he heard a sound as the wind blew the bell in the temple hall, Sōgyanandai asked Kayashata, “Is that the sound of the bell or of the wind?” What is happening here must indeed be studied carefully. Although Sōgyanandai never actually saw either bell or wind, still he put the question as ‘Is THAT the sound of the bell or the sound of the wind?’ because he wanted to get Kayashata to know this ‘THAT’. This ‘THAT’ cannot be grasped in terms of wind or bell; they are not the everyday ‘wind’ and ‘bell’ for this would amount to saying, “There was a bell that hung in the corner of the hall which was called the Great Bell and such a bell now hangs in a temple tower in the Southern Capital of Nara,” since this is the way in which people discriminate among such things as humans and buildings. Originally, in the Northern Capital of Peking they used to hang a Great Bell in a temple building, but in our time this custom has fallen into disuse and lost its meaning. Nevertheless, in India, whenever the wind blew the Great Bell in this manner, this kōan was signified.

When Kayashata answered, “Neither the wind nor the bell, merely the sound of the TRUE NATURE,” he truly understood at last; he had no need to set up boundaries for even a single mote of dust. Hence, were someone to say, “The wind makes no sound nor does the bell, but if you think there is a sound, then there is a sound,” with such a view there would still be no silence in the mind. This is precisely why he said, “It is the TRUE NATURE that resounds.”

People, hearing this story, misinterpret it. They have in their heads that it is not necessarily the resounding of the wind, that it is ‘merely a resounding in the mind’, which is why, they suppose, Kayashata put the matter the way he did but, if you are truly in a naïve and spontaneous state wherein all things have no arising, how can you even say, “It is not the bell’s resounding”? Thus he said, “It is the TRUE NATURE that resounds.”

Kayashata and the Sixth Chinese Ancestor Enō are separated by a long distance in time; on the other hand, they are not separated at all. Thus the latter said, “The wind and the banner do not move; it is ORIGINAL NATURE, kind sirs, which moves.” Now, when all of you likewise pierce through the foundation of your mind, the three temporal worlds will, from the first, not be separated into past, present and future and the Transmission from heart to heart will be continuous through all ages, so what differences do you discern? Do not discriminate from your everyday viewpoint. From the beginning you can know IT by ITS not being the wind’s resounding or the bell’s resounding. If you feel you want to know what IT is, you must realize that ‘it is ORIGINAL NATURE which is resounding’.

The appearance of that resounding is like the pinnacles of a mountain being high or the depths of an ocean being deep; the towering up of plants and trees, the brightness in people’s eyes, are forms of ORIGINAL NATURE resounding, but you must not think that it is a sound that is resounding, although a sound, as well, is ORIGINAL NATURE resounding. The four elements, the

five skandhas and every single one of all the ten thousand things are the ORIGINAL NATURE resounding; there is no time when ORIGINAL NATURE does not resound throughout everything; ultimately there is not a tinge of a reverberation. IT cannot be heard by the ears because the ears themselves are the resounding which is why Kayashata said, "All is silent and still."

When IT appears like this, all the ten thousand elements are nowhere to be seen; there is no mountain form or ocean form and no taking on the appearance of a single element. It is just as if, in a dream, one is sailing the ocean deep in a magnolia blossom for a boat. Whether you are raising your pole to part the waves or stopping the boat to take note of the current's flow, there is no sky to float in or ocean bottom to sink to.

What mountains and oceans can we make rise on the outside and what self can we set afloat within the boat? Though we have eyes, they never listen, though we have ears, they never see, therefore it cannot be said that the six organs of perception merge into each other; the six organs need not be tinged with one another, all is silent and still.

When you try to grasp the six sense organs there are none to grasp; when you try to abandon the six fields of perception there are none to abandon. Ridding oneself of all sense objects, we forget both mind and fields. When we look closely, there are no sensory objects to abandon or any mind or fields to put an end to, this is true tranquillity, no discussion of sameness or difference, no feeling of inside or outside. When you really arrive at such a stage you will truly be in charge of the Buddhas' Treasure House of the Law and rightly take your place among the ranks of the Buddhas and Ancestors.

If you do not develop in this way, even though you understand that the ten thousand elements are fine just as they are, this still preserves an idea of self; you will speak of there being 'others' and then discriminate and organize those 'elements'.

If you are busy discriminating and structuring things, how will you approach the Buddhas and Ancestors and communicate with them? It will be just as if you are thrusting boundary walls into the sky to divide space. How serene the sky must be! We ourselves alone make the boundaries and the obstructions; once the bounding ridge of a rice paddy is broken through, what is there to distinguish an inside from an outside? At this juncture even the Great Master Shakyamuni is not the beginning nor are you the end; all the Buddhas *were, are and will be* faceless, all people *were, are and will be* without form. When you reach this stage, just like clear water giving rise to waves, the Buddhas and the Ancestors go on, one after the other, arising and flourishing. Although the Scripture says, 'increasing not, decreasing not', the water goes on flowing and the waves go on churning up. Since this is the case, look into your heart and probe deeply into yourself so that you will reach such a stage.

From beginningless time, and extending forever into the future, we may keep on creating boundary ridges and string out time into past, present and future yet, aeon after aeon, it is all simply thus. You cannot comprehend this clear and unequivocal ORIGINAL NATURE by working your flesh off or discern IT by means of physical movement or stillness; this state cannot be grasped by body or mind, IT cannot be understood by movement or stillness. IT can be found, first of all, by looking into your mind and probing deeply into yourself, by living fully at peace within your own still heart and by realizing the TRUTH for yourself. If IT is not clear to you in this way, you will be carrying your body and mind about futilely as if bearing a heavy load on your shoulders twenty-four hours a day; neither body nor mind will ultimately grow tranquil.

If you let body and mind drop off, whilst keeping your mind open and empty of any deliberate thought, you will find a state of the utmost normalcy, however, even though you may be in such a state, if you cannot give expression to, and illumine,

what 'ORIGINAL NATURE resounds' is about in the fortuitous events related in the previous story, you will not understand the arising and flourishing of the Buddhas nor will you understand sentient beings' finding Buddhahood. Because of this I wish to append my humble words to express the resounding of ORIGINAL NATURE:

Silent and still, ORIGINAL NATURE resounds,  
reverberating in a myriad ways,  
Sōgyanandai and Kayashata  
as well as wind and bell.

CHAPTER 20.

THE NINETEENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED KUMORATA.

Kayashata pointed out the following to Kumorata, "Long ago the World-honoured One prophesied that, a thousand years after His entry into nirvana, a great scholar would appear in Tokhara who would pass on the Marvellous Transmission. Your meeting me at the present time fulfills this most propitiously." As a result of hearing this, Kumorata awakened his ability to see his former lives.

Kumorata (S. Kumārata, 'The Youthful One') was from a Brahman family in Tokhara. In the far past he had been a deva in the sixth heaven in the realm of desire; whilst there he saw a Bodhisattva's necklace of precious stones and suddenly felt a craving for it. Having thus lapsed, he was reborn in Trayastrimsha, the second heaven in the realm of desire; there he heard Indra of the Kushikas expounding *The Scripture of Great Wisdom* and became persuaded of its Truth; as a result of



this, he ascended to Brahma's heaven in the realm of form. Because of his great intelligence he skillfully expounded the essentials of Buddhism and all in that heaven so respected him that they made him their teacher. When the time came for the Ancestral rank to be passed on he descended to Tokhara.

Kayashata, whilst on a preaching tour, arrived at Tokhara where he noticed that one of the Brahman's lodgings had a distinctive air about it. Kayashata was about to enter that house when Kumorata asked him whose follower he was. Kayashata replied, "I am a disciple of the Buddha." When Kumorata heard the Buddha's name he grew extremely frightened and immediately slammed the door shut. Kayashata knocked at the door for some time before Kumorata answered, "No one home!" Kayashata asked, "Who then is this that replies 'No one!'" When Kumorata heard these words he knew that Kayashata was no ordinary person, so he quickly opened the door and invited him in. As related above, Kayashata told him of the Buddha's ancient prophecy and he realized his ability to know his previous lives.

What is happening here needs to be handled carefully. Even though you may have a clear grasp of what the words teach or may comprehend that birth and death, coming and going, comprise the true human body, if you do not understand that your TRUE ORIGINAL NATURE is void of substance, luminous, unimaginable and unclouded, you do not know what IT is that the Buddhas have realized. Therefore, were you to see the light that streams from a Bodhisattva, you would be startled; were you to see the countenance of some Buddha, you would be attracted to it. Why is this? Because you would still not have rid yourself of the three poisons of greed, anger and delusion.

Now when we look at the account of Kumorata's previous lives, we see that he regressed and descended to the Trayastrimsha heaven because of a covetous attraction; moreover, according to the story of his former life, having been stirred by

the preaching of the Dharma by Lord Indra, he ascended to Brahma's heaven and later was reborn in Tokhara. His accumulation of merit and his piling up of virtues was not without fruit; having been aroused by Kayashata, he had awakened to his ability to see his former lives.

'The ability to see one's former lives' is conventionally understood as meaning to know the past and the future, but of what use would that be? If you become aware that your original and unchanging TRUE NATURE is neither enlightened, unenlightened or a delusion, then the hundreds of thousands of gateways to the Teaching, along with their immeasurably profound meanings, are all seen to be wellings-up in the mind. Both the stumblings of sentient beings and the realization of enlightenment by the Buddhas lie within your own breast; in no way are they the elements of sense objects nor are they 'mental phenomena'. When you arrive at this state, what is to be taken as past, what as present? What pertains to the Buddhas, what to sentient beings? Not a single object blocks the eye, not a single speck of dust comes in touch with the hand; there are just the qualities of being, void of substance and luminous, simply being unclouded, free of everything and boundless. The Tathagata who realized enlightenment in the distant past is in fact the sentient being who, by nature, does not swerve. Even when someone awakens to the TRUTH in this way, nothing is added; likewise, whilst someone has not yet realized the TRUTH, he lacks nothing.

To touch upon the awareness that it has been like this since time began is what is meant by 'awakening to one's ability to see former lives'. If you have not reached this state, you will be needlessly disturbed by a nature that is a mixture of delusion and enlightenment; so caught up will you be in past and future that you will not know what your TRUE NATURE is and will not see clearly that your TRUE ORIGINAL NATURE does not err. If you are thus, you will be wont to play at being a Buddha in an

attempt to attain the supraworldly or play at being a Bodhisattva in an attempt to take unjust possession of His 'coming far off from the West'. The original impulse to renounce the world and the original intention to 'come from the West' were simply for the sake of these deluded actions and not for any other purpose. By all means take heed of the above account and know that the actions of Kayashata and Kumorata were spiritually alive and bright-mindedly frank. To know THAT which has radiance from the first is called 'the ability to see one's past lives'.

Do you want to hear my humble words today? I trust that they will convey the underlying principle.

Clinging to a body from a past life,  
made ever so remote by the passage of time,  
We suddenly meet face to face  
with the ONE from ancient days.

CHAPTER 21.

THE TWENTIETH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED SHAYATA.

One day Kumorata pointed out to Shayata, "Although you already believe in the three types of karma, you still have not awakened to the fact that karma is born from confusion, that confusion results from consciousness, that consciousness depends on the sleep of ignorance and that the sleep of ignorance depends on ORIGINAL MIND. ORIGINAL MIND is naturally pure and unstained, IT is not born nor does IT die, IT does not concoct things, IT does not reward or punish, IT does not gain or lose anything; IT is utterly still and utterly vital. If you enter this gate to the Dharma, you can be the same as the Buddhas. All good and evil deeds, whether intentional or

unintentional, are like dreams and fantasies.” When Shayata heard these words, he grasped their import and realized the wisdom that was stored up from his past lives.

Shayata (S. Jayata, ‘The Victorious One’) was from Northern India. His wisdom and understanding were as the silent depths of the ocean, his persuasive instruction and spiritual guidance were beyond measure. One day, whilst in Central India, he met Kumorata and asked him, “My parents have always had faith in the Triple Treasure but they have continually been subject to illnesses and all their endeavours have come to naught, whereas our neighbour, who persists in behaving like Chandala the Outlaw, has always been fit and healthy and his undertakings successful. Why has he had such good fortune and where have we gone wrong?” Kumorata replied, “Why do you entertain such doubts? The karmic effects of good and bad actions will come to fruition in one of three temporal phases. In general, people see that the benevolent may suffer untimely or violent deaths whilst the cruel may live long, or that the wicked may be fortunate whilst the morally upright meet with misfortune. As a result of this they say that there is no cause and effect and that vice and good deeds are empty words. Above all they do not understand that consequences follow upon actions which are influenced by even the slightest vacillations, that even were a thousand million kalpas to elapse these consequences would still not be wiped away and that cause and effect are, of necessity, in accord with each other.” By the time Shayata had heard these words his doubts had forthwith been clarified. It was then that Kumorata said the words quoted above and Shayata, as a result, realized the wisdom that was stored up from his past lives.

As practitioners of meditation, you should handle this passage with care. Consider the section that says, “They have always had faith in the Triple Treasure but have continually

been subject to illnesses and all their endeavours have come to naught, whereas our neighbour, who persists in behaving like Chandala the Outlaw, has always been fit and healthy and his undertakings successful.” In effect Shayata was saying, “By believing in the Buddha’s Teaching our lives ought to be long; by dint of the Buddha’s Teaching our bodies ought to be in continual good health. Experiences ought to accord with what we fancy but they do not; our body falls victim to illness. What have we done wrong? From the outset Chandala committed evil acts and cultivated no good deeds whatsoever yet his body was fit and healthy; assuming here that this is a significant ‘favourable sign’, how is this good fortune possible?” People still think this today; even some of you monks harbour such thoughts to say nothing of lay people who are all prone to this kind of thinking. This is why Kumorata asked, “Why do you entertain such doubts? The karmic effects of good and bad actions will come to fruition in one of three temporal phases.”

In general people observe that others, who are basically benevolent, are in the midst of calamities whilst some violent one is living a long life; even ‘getting away with’ grievous offences may be viewed as a sign of good luck whilst one who is deeply moral is suffering misfortunes. Such spectators are not awake to the past and do not comprehend the future. Seduced by just what is before their eyes, they think that cause and effect do not exist, that vice and good deeds are empty words. Nothing could be more foolish and deluded. They think this way because the path to enlightenment seems too dull or trifling for them.

The three types of karma are, first, the karma that affects the present life by producing good and bad karmic consequence in this life; second, the karma that affects the next life by yielding its fruits in the next life—the five grievous offences and the seven rebellious acts, for instance, will undoubtedly yield their fruits in the next life—and, third, the karma that affects lives

following the next by producing a karmic consequence within the next three or four lives up to untold lives. Since this is so, even though people receive good effects in the present life due to past good karma, it is nevertheless possible that, due to karma from some past life, the present karmic effects can be altered. Those who have purely good or bad karmic causes will feel purely good or bad effects in their present life; those who have mixed good and bad karmic causes will receive mixed good and bad karma. The strength of their practice of the Buddha's Teaching can turn heavy karma around so that they incur light karma and can turn light karma around so that it comes to naught in the present. What are called the bad causes from past kalpas are experienced as heavy suffering in the future but, when people's practice of the Buddha's Teaching is strong, their experience of such suffering is light; some are cloaked in illness, some do not get what they wish for, some find that what they say is not taken seriously by others; these are all cases of future heavy suffering received lightly in the present life. Thus, the strength of your practice of the Buddha's Teaching should be ever more relied upon. The fruits of practice from the distant past will make everything seem sprightly simply because of your dauntless devotion to training.

As practitioners of meditation you comprehend what the Way is yet some of you may receive bad reputations whilst others may not get what they desire as an occupation and still others may not have fit and healthy bodies. This being so, if you wish to turn heavy karma around and incur light karma, never resent others even though they despise you, never find fault with others even though they revile you. Even though you always respectfully bow in the face of their slanders, do not despise them, for your practice of the Way will thereby be spoiled and the good karma that you have stored up from past lives will, in time, vanish. By all means keep on practising until you master this in full.

Although you may already believe in the three types of karma, you may still not know the roots of your karma. Karma is distinguished by its good and bad fruit the quality of which differs for ordinary people and sages. The three temporal worlds, the six realms of existence, the four modes of birth and the nine blissful abodes are the fruit of karma; this karma arises from delusion. 'Delusion from being infatuated and wandering off the path' means to desire, or hate, that which we ought not to desire or hate, to judge as right or wrong what we ought not to judge as right or wrong, whereas 'delusion from being confused' means to perceive as masculine that which is not masculine and to perceive as feminine that which is not feminine; these states set you apart and separate others. 'Ignorance from being asleep' means not to know the roots of self, not to know the birthplace of all ten thousand things that comprise the universe, whereas to be bereft of wisdom at every turn is called 'ignorance from being in the dark'. These states lack prudence and fail to recognise sensory pollutants.

The SOURCE of this mind, being pure and unstained, never runs counter to residual conditions. To turn this mind in the opposite direction is called 'being unenlightened'; when you awaken to this 'being unenlightened' you realize that the SOURCE of your own mind is pure and unstained, that your own TRUE NATURE is vital and luminous. When you can 'see' in this way, ignorance is, of course, routed, the turning of the wheel of the twelve stages of dependent origination is at last fruitless and the four types of birth and the six realms of existence quickly vanish; everyone's ORIGINAL NATURE is thus. Because of this there is no longer the distinction of birth and death; difficulties disappear, hence there is no hate or desire, no increasing or decreasing, just stillness and vitality.

If you feel you would like to gain a glimpse of your ORIGINAL NATURE, give up everything, cut all ties, think of neither good nor evil, let your eyes look down the ridge of your

nose for a while and look into your ORIGINAL NATURE. When your whole mind is still, all appearances will come to an end and your ignorance of that SOURCE will be on the point of being routed; the branches and leaves, karma and its fruit, in fact, do not exist. Do not grow stagnant, therefore, in the place of non-discrimination, do not be caught up in the moments when discriminating thoughts do not arise. IT is neither immutable nor impermanent, neither ignorant nor immaculate; IT makes no distinctions among the Buddhas and treats all sentient beings alike. When you arrive at this clear, white, perfect, luminous state, only then will you be a true kesa-clad monk. If you are like this, you will be the same as all the Buddhas.

At this stage, all that you encounter, whether intentionally or unintentionally, will be like a dream or a fantasy. Try to grab hold of IT, your hand will be empty; try to see IT, your eyes will have nothing to connect with. When you have reached this stage you will have awakened to the principle that the Buddhas have not yet entered the world and will have arrived at the state where sentient beings have not yet become confused and contrary. Unless your practice of meditation has reached this point, even though you worship the Buddha throughout the day and harmonize your body and mind whilst engaged in the four dignified activities of walking, standing, sitting and lying down, you will merely experience the superior effect of being a human or a deva which is the karmic recompense of being in a heavenly state whilst still afflicted with defiling passions. Such a condition is like a shadow following a form; it exists but it is not the TRUTH. Therefore, everyone, arouse your vigour that you may awaken to your TRUE NATURE.

As usual, I affix my humble words. Do you wish to hear them?

The camphor tree, as of old,  
grows up into the sky;  
Its branches and leaves, roots and trunk  
flourish beyond the clouds.



CHAPTER 22.

THE TWENTY-FIRST ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED BASHUBANZU.

One day Shayata said to Bashubanzu, “Even though I may not seek after enlightenment, I do not act contrary to it; even though I may not be doing prostrations before the Buddha, I am not spiritually negligent; even though I may not be sitting in meditation, I am not lazy; even though I may not eat just one meal a day, I am not gluttonous; even though I may not know what is enough, I am not covetous. In my heart there is nothing that I seek; I call this the Way.” When Bashubanzu heard this, he realized the WISDOM that is free from all defilements and desires.

Bashubanzu was from the city of Rajagriha; his family name was Bishagi (S. Vaishāka, ‘of the clan of Vishāka,’ Shakyamuni’s leading female lay disciple). His father was Kōgai which means ‘A Canopy of Light’ and his mother was Gon’ichi which means ‘Foremost in Spiritual Adornments.’ Although rich, they had no children, so his parents prayed at the Buddha’s stupa for an heir. One night his mother dreamt that she had swallowed two pearls—one bright, one dark—and, when she awoke, she was pregnant. Seven days later an arhant named Kenshu, which means ‘The Assembly of the Wise’, arrived at their home. When Kōgai greeted him with ceremonial courtesy, Kenshu accepted this without moving from his seat but, when Gon’ichi entered and bowed to him, Kenshu arose saying, “I return the bow to the Splendid One of the Dharma-body.” Kōgai could not fathom the significance of this behaviour. He then chose a valuable pearl and offered it to Kenshu on bended knees. After examining its genuineness, Kenshu took it but without any outward display of humble

gratitude. Kōgai, unable to tolerate this, remarked, “I am the husband here, yet, when I proffered you respect, you took no notice of my bow. What virtue does my wife have that the Arhant shuns me?” Kenshu replied, “I received your show of courtesy and accepted the pearl simply out of respect for the fact that you have been blessed with good fortune; your wife, however, is carrying a great master within her. When he is born he will be the sun of wisdom who is a lamp unto the world, therefore I have kept aloof from you but not out of greater esteem for women.” Kenshu then added, “Your wife will give birth to two children. The first is to be called Bashubanzu (S. Vasubandhu, which means ‘Excellent Friend’) and it is to him that I have paid honour. The second is to be called Sūni, that is, ‘The Child of the Jackdaw.’ Long ago, when the Tathagata was once training on a mountain in the Himalayas, a jackdaw was nesting on the peak. As the Buddha had already realized enlightenment, your son Sūni will receive some karmic recompense from that encounter; he will become king of the land of Nadi. The Buddha prophesied that, when the second five-hundred-year period arrived, Sūni would be born into the Bishagi family in Rajagriha in the same womb with a sage.” There was no mistake; one month later she gave birth to two sons.

Upon reaching his fifteenth year Bashubanzu was ordained as a monk by the Arhant Kōdo (‘Bright Emancipation’); several Bodhisattvas gave him the Precepts. When Shayata arrived at Rajagriha, whilst on a preaching tour to spread the doctrine of sudden enlightenment, he found there a group of scholarly students who concentrated solely on debating; foremost among them was Bashubanzu. He took only one meal a day and never lay down; six times a day he made prostrations to the Buddha. He was imputed by the group to be chaste and without desires. Shayata, preparing to lead him to the Other Shore, began by questioning the group, “This busy ascetic is able to practise morality but is he capable of finding the Buddha’s Path

to enlightenment?” The crowd replied, “Our teacher is diligence itself. Why could he not?” Shayata then said, “Your teacher is far from the Path. Even if he were to practise his asceticism for endless kalpas, it would be nothing but a source of vain delusion.” The crowd asked, “And what virtuous practices have you piled up that you should so disparage our teacher?” As stated above, Shayata answered, “Even though I may not seek after enlightenment...” until Bashubanzu realized the wisdom that is free from all defilements and desires. With great joy he praised Shayata. Once again Shayata addressed the crowd, “Did you not comprehend what I was saying? I said it because his mind was too eager in its search for enlightenment just as a sitar string is wont to snap when tightened too quickly or tautly. That is why I did not praise him but had him abide in a peaceful state so that he might enter the WISDOM OF THE BUDDHAS.”

What is happening here is indeed a key to the path of learning for, when you think “I must achieve Buddhahood, I must find enlightenment” or “I am piling up all this merit and virtue by observing dietary rules, keeping to morally pure actions, meditating for long periods without resting, performing rituals to worship the Buddha and reciting Scriptures in order to find enlightenment,” all you are doing is raining down flowers in a flowerless sky or making holes where there are none. Even if you were to spend infinite kalpas upon kalpas doing such things, you would not comprehend emancipation. Beyond question, to have no desire in your heart for anything whatsoever is what enlightenment is. So, even if contentment is what you desire, this still amounts to a greed. If you are habitually partial to long meditations this is being attached to body. Trying to get along on only one meal a day is still discrimination in what you view as food; also, making efforts to do rituals or read the Scriptures is creating flowers in your eyes. Because of this, each and every one of these thoughts, words and actions is above all a source of the unreal and false and is in no way something arising from your true ORIGINAL NATURE.

If you think sitting for long periods is enlightenment, sitting for ten months in the womb would be enlightenment; why would you seek to do it a second time? If regulating your diet were enlightenment, were you to become ill and be unable to set your meal times, would you then cease to be an enlightened person during that period? Indeed, such thought is enough to make someone burst out laughing. It is like a disciple of the Buddha setting up various standards of preceptual purity for his daily life based on the chaste conduct of the Buddhas and Ancestors; were he to form attachments to these standards, and become one-sided, they would all change into afflictions. Furthermore, were you to seek ever harder to realize enlightenment because you had become weary of birth and death, coming and going, you would not be able to sever the beginningless cycle of dying in one place and being born in another for you would still be cherishing the hope that somehow the opportunity to realize enlightenment would arise. Similarly, you may feel that you want to pursue enlightenment because you are all entangled in your day-to-day affairs. Know that such approaches are a complete mistake.

Again, what Buddhahood do you think can be found? What sentient being can be deluded? There is not one person who is deluded; there is not one teaching that can be awakened to. Although we say that, upon their conversion, delusion becomes enlightenment and the ordinary becomes sanctified, this is all talk for people who are not yet awakened. What is unconverted that needs to be converted? What is deluded that needs to be enlightened? Because of this the reverend monk Raizan (C. Chia-shan) said in verse,

“Quite clearly there is no awakening to TRUTH;  
 ‘Awakening to TRUTH’ is a phrase  
 that only misleads others all the more.  
 If I always just stretch out both legs and sleep,  
 There will be no false and no true.”

Such is truly the substance of enlightenment. Even so, both novices and experienced monks should meditate upon these matters carefully so that they can reach a state of equanimity for, if you yourself have had no practical experience, you can be misled by the words of someone else. Therefore, if you are tempted to roll your eyeballs up into their sockets to see what you can see, you invite the assault of illusory Buddhas and demons.

Even though you listen to what I am saying here and claim you realize that there is, of course, nothing to be found, you may still have some sort of intellectual understanding which you will justify as being necessary for acquiring the Teaching. When, if illusory Buddhas or demons come, you say that there is a Teaching that you still need to master, your mind, to be sure, will move to understand but instead will fall into error; if, however, now having received the correct instructions of the Buddhas, you look into your mind and probe deeply within yourself, you too will undoubtedly reach a state of ease and self-confidence. Once you know this level of ease you will be exactly like someone who has eaten his fill; although others may speak of IT as a royal feast, you will not long for IT. This is why it is said that delectable food is not what a satisfied man eats. People of old used to comment, "If you have become troubled, by and by you will be at ease."

Come, look sharply; your own ORIGINAL NATURE does not see Buddha nor does IT see sentient beings, so how can IT possibly hate delusion and seek awakening?

When the First Ancestor came from the West in order to help such people see directly, he did not speak of having wisdom or of lacking it, nor did he speak of some ancient lore or new learning; he had people sit up straight for a bit and dwell in peace within themselves for this is none other than the gateway to the GREAT TRANQUILLITY. Therefore, from past kalpas up to that of the present day, you people have all thought

to be an error THAT WHICH IS WITHOUT ERROR. Pay no heed to the frost glistening atop someone else's gate; just keep in mind the TREASURE that lies beneath your own roof. Right now you are all on the verge of meeting a CLOSE FRIEND; do not fix your enlightenment at some day in the far distant future. To put it simply, do not go around waving your monastic robes or start seeking out the opinions of others just when you are about to begin scrutinizing your own mind. If your training is done in this way, not only hundreds of thousands of gateways to the Teaching but also the boundless actions of the Buddhas will all flow forth from it and will go forth over all the heavens and the earth.

Be keen to avoid seeking after enlightenment; just pledge yourself to the TRUE SELF only. From past kalpas you have carried IT with you wherever you went and have never even, for a moment, been separated from IT. Even so, not to recognise that you have a TRUE SELF is like searching for something hither and thither whilst you are holding it in your hand. What an error that is! It is tantamount to forgetting your TRUE SELF. In examining this matter now, the wondrous Way of the Buddhas, as well as the genuine Transmission of the Ancestors, are what this undertaking is about; have no doubt about it whatsoever. Whenever people reach this stage, they can no longer harbour the slightest doubt about what the ancient masters have said.

As the story stated, 'When Bashubanzu heard this, he realized the WISDOM that is free from all defilements and desires'. If you wish to realize the stage of being free from defilements and desires, just pledge yourself to the TRUE SELF. If you wish to pledge yourself to the TRUE SELF from birth until old age, think that IT is just THIS THAT IS; there is not even a speck of dust that can be thrown out, not even a single atom that can escape from IT. To reiterate, do not hold on to any special desire to attain the WISDOM that is free from all defilements and desires.

Now, as usual, there are my humble words; I trust that they amplify the account just given. Do you want to hear them?

The wind blows across the vast sky,  
making the clouds expose the mountain peak;  
Worldly affairs and yearnings for enlightenment  
are both of no concern.

CHAPTER 23.

THE TWENTY-SECOND ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED MANURA.

When Manura asked Bashubanzu, “Just what is the enlightenment of the Buddhas?” Bashubanzu answered, “It is none other than your ORIGINAL NATURE.” Manura then asked, “What is ORIGINAL NATURE like?” Bashubanzu replied, “The eighteen realms of the senses (i.e., all experiences) are void, unstained and pure.” When Manura heard this, he understood enlightenment.

Manura (S. Manorhita, ‘Good for Mankind’) was the son of King Jōjizai (S. Saśvateśvara, ‘The Eternally Free One’) of the country of Nadi; he was in his thirtieth year when he met Bashubanzu who had arrived in Nadi whilst on a preaching tour. This king, who called himself the Eternally Free One, had two sons; the first was named Makara which means ‘The Leviathan’ and the second Manura. The king asked Bashubanzu, “How do the customs of your native Rajagriha differ from those here?” Bashubanzu answered, “In that land there have been three Buddhas who have renounced the world. In your Majesty’s kingdom there are at present two teachers to instruct

and guide others.” The king said, “Who are these two teachers?” Bashubanzu replied, “The Buddha prophesied that, in the second five-hundred-year period, there would be a noble being of great spiritual power who would leave home to become a monk and perpetuate holiness; he is none other than your Majesty’s second son. Of the two teachers, Manura is one and, although my good roots are meagre, I venture to say that I am the other.” The king said, “If what you say is true, then I must give up my son so that he can become a monk.” Bashubanzu said, “Excellent! Your Majesty has strengthened the Buddha’s intention.” Accordingly, he had Manura take the Precepts and, after that, Manura attended on Bashubanzu. One day he asked Bashubanzu, “Just what is the enlightenment of the Buddhas?” and Bashubanzu answered, “It is none other than your ORIGINAL NATURE.”

This question is truly one that should be asked at the beginning of anyone’s study of the Way. Since ‘enlightenment’ is synonymous with the Way, the meaning of this question is, “What is this Way?” Because people today never ask about the Teaching with open minds, or come to teachers with a beginner’s heart, they do not ask this question. If your aspirations are genuine, you should not behave in this way. What you should first ask is, “Just what is Buddha?” and then you should ask, “Just what is the Buddha’s Way?” This is why Manura raised the first question in the present instance whilst Bashubanzu pointed the way by saying, “It is none other than your ORIGINAL NATURE.” Because Manura was not in the mind of duality or clinging to even a single hair, he then asked, “Just what is my ORIGINAL NATURE?” and Bashubanzu answered, “IT is nothing but the immaculacy of emptiness of the eighteen realms of the senses,” whereupon Manura understood enlightenment.

What we call ‘Buddha’ is your ORIGINAL NATURE. Ultimately ORIGINAL NATURE cannot be grasped by the intellect or



perceived by the senses for, beyond doubt, IT is the SUPREME WAY. Since this is so, IT is without form or location. To be sure, 'Buddha' and 'the Way' are terms of convenience; thus, 'Buddha' is not 'that which knows everything', 'the Way' is not 'something to be cultivated' and 'ORIGINAL NATURE' is not 'that which perceives things'. In this state neither perceived objects nor sensory organs exist wherein consciousness can arise. This is why Bashubanzu said, "The eighteen realms of the senses are void, unstained and pure." Since this is so, do not talk about this state in terms of 'mental objects', do not try to grasp it in terms of 'perceptual, or sensory, knowledge'.

When you reach this state, the Buddhas no longer appear in some form and the ineffable Way needs no cultivation. Furthermore, granting that seeing, hearing and knowing show no traces of their whereabouts, neither can sound, colour or motion have boundaries. Therefore, as a verse says,

“Even though this sight and hearing  
are not sight and hearing,  
Even more is it impossible  
to present you with sound or colour.  
If you fully grasp  
that there is nothing whatsoever within these,  
What difference does it make  
whether you distinguish ULTIMATE REALITY  
from ITS functioning or not?”

In this context, do not explain 'sound' in terms of tone and pitch; do not think of 'colour' in terms of blue, yellow, red or white; do not treat 'seeing' as something corresponding to 'the light of the eyes'; do not consider 'hearing' as a faculty of the ears. No one has eyes that respond to colour or ears that relate to sound. If you say that the ear is allied to sound or the eye is connected to colour or form, you are not clear about 'sound' and ignorant about 'eyes' for, if you say that there is some element

responded to, some object related to, then how could sound possibly enter the ear or form and colour be seen by the eye? Unless the relationship is like space merging into space or water merging into water, hearing and seeing are impossible but, because this is not so, the eye merges with form and colour and the ear with sound; they blend without creating boundaries, mix without leaving traces. This being so, even a sound that makes heaven and earth reverberate enters an ear barely an inch square; how could this be other than the extremely large being the same as the small? With an eyeball, barely an inch square, you flash over the whole world; how could this be other than the extremely small being the same as the large? Is it not that the eye is colour and form, that sound is the ear? This is how we perceive; this is how we discern. This 'ORIGINAL NATURE' has no borders, boundaries, sides or surfaces. Needless to say, the eye never 'gains' anything; colours and forms likewise cannot be divided. Are not these three categories of sensory information, sense organs and perceptions all void, unstained and pure? Therefore, when you reach this state, you can speak of 'sound' and of 'eye' and of 'consciousness'. 'Thus' is all right to use; 'not thus' is all right; 'thus' and 'not thus' are both all right together. There is not even the tiniest speck of anything that enters the senses from outside; not the least bit of distinction that is brought forth from within the mind, therefore, when people speak of 'sound', hearing and speaking become distinguished within sound; when they speak of 'form and colour', both a perceiver and a perceived are established within form and colour. There is no basis whatsoever for these judgments.

Not having mastered this principle, you may fancy that sound, form and colour are chimera that arbitrarily arise. You must by all means sweep away such a notion as 'ORIGINAL NATURE is by nature immutable and, moreover, cannot change or move' for this is quite laughable. For that matter, what is there that changes or does not change? What is there that is real

or not real? If you do not see these matters clearly, not only are you in the dark about sound, form and colour, you have still not mastered 'seeing' and 'hearing'. As a result you roll your eye-balls up into their sockets and believe you do not see; you stop up your ears so that you cannot hear. This is nothing more than marching on whilst you bind yourself with a rope that does not exist or fall into a hole where there is none, hence it is difficult for you to avoid defiling feelings flowing out from the senses. Since this is so, train yourself thoroughly; if you penetrate to the bottom of this so that your seeing of your ORIGINAL NATURE is clear and unmistakable, you will reach the very heights without hindrance.

Again I trust my humble words illustrate what is happening in this story. Do you wish to hear them?

The spirit of SHUNYATA  
is neither inside nor outside;  
Seeing and hearing, sound and form,  
are all as the empty sky.

CHAPTER 24.

THE TWENTY-THIRD ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED KAKUROKUNA.

One day Manura observed, "Here is the UNSURPASSED TREASURE OF THE GREAT LAW, hearken to IT, accept IT and in the future teach IT." Upon hearing this, Kakurokuna realized enlightenment.

Kakurokuna (S. Haklena) was a Brahman from the kingdom of Kushana; his father was Senshō which means 'A Thousand Victories' and his mother was Kinkō which means 'Golden

Light'. Because she was childless, she prayed before the golden banners of the Seven Buddhas whereupon she dreamt of a holy child atop Mount Sumeru, holding a gold ring, who said, "I have come." When she awoke she found that she was pregnant.

When Kakurokuna was in his seventh year he wandered off to a village where he saw some people worshipping a heathenish deity. He entered their shrine and scolded them, saying, "You are deluding people by recklessly indulging yourselves in your prosperity and misfortunes; year after year you squander animals in sacrifices." No sooner had he spoken of their harmful behaviour than the shrine suddenly crashed to the ground; as a consequence his fellow villagers called him the Holy Child. When he was in his twenty-second year he left home to become a monk and in his thirtieth year he met Manura who gave him the name of Kakurokuna.

*Rokuna* is a transcription of the Sanskrit word *lena* meaning 'flock'; *kaku* comes from the Chinese character for 'crane'; by combining the two his name means 'He of the Flock of Cranes': he was called this because all sorts of cranes flocked after him. Now when he first met Manura various extraordinary events occurred; although I should relate each and every one of them, I shall cite just one here.

Kakurokuna asked Manura, "Why is a flock of cranes attracted to me?" Manura answered, "At one time, during the fourth period of cosmic emptiness, you were a monk. Once, when you were about to pay a visit to the Dragon Palace, your disciples wanted to go with you but you saw that not one amongst your five hundred followers was in a condition to be entrusted with the wondrous offerings of the King of the Dragons. At the time your disciples said, 'You have always preached the Dharma that those who are equals when it comes to eating are also equals when it comes to the Teaching. What is so sacred in this situation that you refuse to let us come with you?' As a result of this you let them attend. After you

died, you were reborn so as to convert many countries but your previous five hundred followers were reborn among feathered creatures because their merit was slight and their virtue scant. Now, sensing your benevolence, they have become a flock of cranes and follow after you.” Hearing this explanation, Kakurokuna said, “By what skillful means am I to liberate them?” Manura answered, “Here is the UNSURPASSED TREASURE OF THE GREAT LAW....”

Actually, the principle of equality in food and equality in the Teaching makes no distinction between sages and ordinary people but it should be kept in mind that, even though both the master and his followers paid a visit to the Dragon Palace, those slight of merit and scant of virtue were in no condition to receive the wondrous offerings so they became feathered creatures. What happened here should really be a warning to neophytes in training.

Now there is no discrimination in the preaching of the Dharma and there should be equality with regard to food but there are some who can digest the donations of the faithful and there are others who are harmed by those gifts; at this point it may seem that they are not equals. A distinction needs to be made for, when you look at food or at the Teaching, even if you see them as equal for all or understand that they are one and the same for all, you are still making a distinction of seeing something as ‘food’ and something as ‘the Teaching’; you have not escaped from a dualistic view. Infatuated and deluded by their covetous and indulgent hearts, those disciples followed after their master and, as a result, ultimately became feathered creatures. They had not arrived at the principle of equality in food and equality in the Teaching; they were undoubtedly fettered by names and appearances.

For instance, the UNSURPASSED GREAT TEACHING of which we have been speaking has nothing to do with what we call ‘food’ or call ‘the Teaching’. What is it that we can designate as

'holy', what as 'ordinary'? IT is nothing that can be arrived at through forms and their shadows. It is even difficult to call IT ORIGINAL NATURE. After all, this TEACHING is not something bestowed by the Buddhas or Ancestors; IT is not imparted to one's children or inherited from one's father, IT is nothing that can be called 'self' or 'other'. Where could such terms as 'food' and 'Teaching' have come from? Moreover, is there any place to go to when invited? Is there ever any turning into a flock of cranes? Therefore, fix your eyes upon this carefully, exert yourself in your meditation and, above all, know that your own ORIGINAL NATURE is marvellously clear, vast and wondrously bright; know that by preserving well and devoting yourself to fully ripening, there will be a Transmitting of the LIGHT of the Buddhas and Ancestors which you will undoubtedly find.

Even if you are clear about the meaning of your ORIGINAL NATURE and are already liberated the same as the Buddhas and Ancestors, there is still the UNSURPASSED TREASURE OF THE GREAT LAW that you must listen to attentively: IT will quite transform your future. This is not the principle of ORIGINAL NATURE, much less the spheres of sight and hearing; IT goes far beyond past and present feelings or sensations, and, of course, has never abided on the side of sentient beings or of Buddhas. Therefore, in designating what is the REAL PERSON, you should not consider HIM a Buddha or an ordinary person.

Even when such a PERSON is not sitting upright in the meditation hall, HE never lapses into leaning to either side; neither HIS shadow can be found nor any trace of HIM be located. When you have reached this threshold, what is 'ORIGINAL NATURE'? What is enlightenment? In one cough, spit it all out; in one spurt, empty it all out. When you can do it like this, you are an adult beyond measure. If you have not reached such a point, you are still an ordinary person, ultimately a sentient being transmigrating in samsara. Because of this, you should all scrutinize carefully, and aspire to, shouldering the

UNSURPASSED TREASURE OF THE GREAT LAW; this will be nothing other than our venerable master Shakyamuni, His flesh still warm. Do not get attached to this name or labour over appearances. In practising meditation and studying the Way you must, without fail, discern what is REAL.

These are my humble words which I hope point to this principle:

A whitened wall breaks through the clouds,  
snow on its massive crags;  
Perfectly pure and without a blotch,  
it stands out against the blue sky.

CHAPTER 25.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED SHISHIBODAI.

Shishibodai asked Kakurokuna, “As I wish to pursue the Way to enlightenment, how should I exert my mind in order to do it?” Kakurokuna answered, “If you would pursue the Way, there is no situation where you need to exert your mind.” Shishibodai asked, “If I do not exert myself, who will perform the work of Buddha?” Kakurokuna replied, “If you are involved in exerting, there will be no merit or virtue; if you do not make yourself perform, then that is ‘the work of Buddha’. A Scripture says, ‘The merit and virtue in what I perform is due to there being no egocentric ‘I’.’” When Shishibodai heard these words he entered the Buddha’s WISDOM.

Shishibodai (S. Simhabodhi, ‘The Wisdom of the Lion’) was a Brahman from Central India; originally he had studied non-Buddhist teachings and had a reputation for being well

versed in them. He met Kakurokuna and the above dialogue ensued whereupon he was straightway exposed to the state where he did not exert his discriminative mind and so immediately entered the Buddha's WISDOM.

One day Kakurokuna suddenly pointed toward the northeast and asked, "How do those forms in the sky appear to you?" Shishibodai answered, "I see a vaporous cloud, like a white rainbow, stretching from heaven to earth with five trails of black clouds running across it at right angles." Kakurokuna asked, "What does this portend?" Shishibodai replied that he did not know. Kakurokuna said, "Fifty years after my death difficulties will arise in Northern India which will assail your body. In spite of this, you will Transmit the TREASURE OF THE LAW so that others can be converted in the future." Having received this personal prediction, Shishibodai went to preach in Kashmir where he met Bashashita whom he made his spiritual heir and told him, "My master made a prediction to me, in private, that I would meet with difficulties and my body would be attacked; I will not try to get round this in any way. I will remain here so that you can be endowed with my Way to enlightenment and travel to different countries to convert others." He then imparted the Kesa and the Teaching to Bashashita.

The ruler of Kashmir at that time, although deeply devoted to Buddhism, was still mired in appearances, moreover, there were two non-Buddhist men in the country, named Mamokuta (S. Māmukta) and Torakusha (S. Tulakṣa), who had studied the arts of trickery hoping to stir up rebellion. They had stolen some robes, dressed up as disciples of the Buddha and sneaked into the royal palace, saying to themselves, "Should we not succeed, the blame will fall back on the Buddhists." When their enterprise failed, the enraged king said, "From the very first I have committed my heart and mind to the Triple Treasure. Why have Buddhist monks tried to bring harm to me? All they have



achieved is that I order their monasteries to be destroyed and the host of Buddhists to be eradicated.” Then, sword in hand, he went to where Shishibodai was staying and demanded of him, “Have you found the immaculacy of emptiness of the skandhas or not?” Shishibodai answered that he had. The king then asked, “Are you beyond birth and death?” Shishibodai answered that he was. The king said, “Since you are beyond birth and death, you can give me your head.” Shishibodai replied, “Since this body is not mine, why should I begrudge you its head?” whereupon the king decapitated Shishibodai with his sword. White milk spurted several feet into the air from the wound. The king’s right arm twisted off and he fell to the ground; a week later he died. Shishibodai, for his part, had remained constant.

The first time Kakurokuna and Shishibodai met the latter had asked, “As I wish to pursue the Way to enlightenment, how should I exert my mind in order to do it?” Kakurokuna had replied, “If you would pursue the Way, there is no situation where you need to exert your mind.” When you sincerely seek the Way, how can the Way have any connection with mental exertion? We die in one place and are reborn in another. Although people may sporadically aspire to the Way and pursue the Teaching, they have not yet made that True Returning due to their mental exertions. So, if you want to be instantly in accord with the Buddha’s WISDOM, you must not only free yourself from the four false views (i.e. that the phenomenal world is permanent, is a source of pleasure, is pure and has a self) and the three poisons of greed, hate and delusion, but also let go of such notions as the Three Bodies of Buddha and the four types of enlightened wisdom (i.e. the great perfect mirror-wisdom, the wisdom of equality, the wisdom of wondrous perception and the wisdom of accomplishing transformations). When you go forth in this way, it will be difficult to classify you as being among the ranks of the ordinary or to extol you as one on the level of a Buddha. Going far beyond the state in which you feel that you

are holy or are ordinary, you will have forthwith left behind your judgments of being different from, or the same as, others. It is said that even the Buddhas and Ancestors found it hard to reach the place of DARK WONDER; it is not only difficult for the Buddhas and Ancestors to arrive here, whenever this place comes up for discussion the Buddhas and Ancestors always, in the end, cease to exist. Reaching such a realm is truly considered a signpost in seeking the Way.

Until you have reached this realm, even if you can make flowers rain down from the sky, make the great earth move, expound on ORIGINAL NATURE and discourse on the DARK WONDER, you have never caught sight of even the tiniest bit of IT whilst upon this truly wondrous Way. Even so, the virtues from your meditation can reach a place as ineffable as this and make clear THAT which the successive generations of Ancestors have borne on their shoulders.

As usual there are my humble words which try to explain a little of this principle. Do you wish to hear them?

If you want to manifest the ABSOLUTE,  
do not conceal IT;  
Indefinable in ITS emptiness, pure in ITS tranquillity,  
IT has been evident from the first.

CHAPTER 26.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED BASHASHITA.

Shishibodai said to Bashashita, “I am now Transmitting the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TATHAGATA’S TRUE LAW to you; guard IT well that you may be able to make IT flourish everywhere in the future.” Having had his inherent karmic cause

from a past life revealed to him, Bashashita received, unseen, the SEAL.

Bashashita was a Brahman from Kashmir; his father was Jakkō which means ‘He Whose Deeds Are Silent’ and his mother was Jōanraku which means ‘Always at Ease’; she became pregnant after having had a dream in which she received a divine sword. When Shishibodai arrived in Kashmir to preach, there was a man called Barika (S. Parikara, ‘He Who Assists’) who had already been practising meditation and contemplation. As a consequence he had five groups of followers: those who practised meditation, those who sought after knowledge, those who were attached to appearances, those who rejected appearances and those who said nothing. Once Shishibodai had undertaken to assist the five groups, his reputation spread far and wide.

Whilst he was still searching for a Dharma heir, he was approached by a householder, holding his son by the hand, who said, “My son’s name is Shita (S. Sita, ‘The Pure, Bright One’). He was born with his left hand clenched in a fist and even now, when he has grown to boyhood, he still cannot open it. I beg you to reveal the karmic cause of this.” Shishibodai looked at the boy, then taking hold of his hand, said, “Give me back the jewel!” The boy immediately opened his fist and presented him with a jewel. The whole assembly were astonished. Shishibodai then said, “When I was a monk in a previous life I had a youthful attendant named Basha (S. Vaśya, ‘The Dutiful One’). Once, whilst paying a visit to the Feast of the Western Sea, I received, as an alms gift, a pearl which I entrusted to him. Now he has returned the jewel to me, which is only right.” The householder then gave up his son, allowing him to leave home and become a monk. Shishibodai then gave the boy the Precepts and named him Bashashita (S. Vaśyasita) because of their karmic connection. Finally, when making him his Dharma heir,

Shishibodai said to him, “I am now Transmitting the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TATHAGATA’S TRUE LAW to you; guard IT well that you may be able to make IT flourish in the future.”

‘His having had his inherent karmic cause from a past life revealed to him’ refers to his having already been the child called Basha in a previous life and having been entrusted with Shishibodai’s jewel; then, having entered a womb to be born into the family of a householder, he still guarded the jewel and finally presented it to Shishibodai. This account is not necessarily saying that, with the disintegration of the fleshly body, just the TRUE BODY remains. If his physical body were perishable, how could he still have held on to the jewel? Thus, we should understand that ‘abandoning life and receiving life’ is not fundamentally a matter of the body perishing.

At this point we should not say that the physical body breaks up and scatters whilst something tranquilly continues on as an eternal spirit. What kind of thing could such an ‘eternal spirit’ possibly be? It is only a matter of manifesting the abandonment of one body and the receipt of another, therefore we should say that ‘before’ and ‘after’ are not two separate things for past and present are not different. Thus, IT should not be called the body nor should IT be called the mind. Since IT is not divided into body and mind, we should not divide IT into past and present. Therefore, IT is THAT WHICH IS.

Not only was Basha like this, every single, solitary person, without exception, in reality, is like this, hence there is nothing that is born, nothing that dies; it is simply a matter of changing heads and faces over time, and it does not necessarily involve a changing of the four basic elements or a remaking of the five skandhas. There is not something that comes wrapped in a piece of flesh or something that arrives supported by even the tiniest bit of bone. Even though IT comes in thousands of forms and has tens of thousands of types, all are the ORIGINAL LIGHT; not realizing this, we consider one person young and another old. There is no ‘old body’ whatsoever nor any ‘youth’ to begin

with. If this is the way things are, how do we determine birth and death or distinguish before from after? Accordingly we might point out that the Basha of a past age and Shita of the present are not two separate bodies; what is involved is nothing but an inherent karmic cause from a past life, therefore the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TATHAGATA'S TRUE LAW was Transmitted to Bashashita and he made IT flourish in the future.

What we should understand from this is that all the Buddhas and all the Ancestors, from the first, have never been enlightened and all ignorant people have ultimately never been deluded. Sometimes we cultivate spiritual practices, sometimes we awaken the will for enlightenment; enlightenment and awakening the will are, basically, neither the end nor the beginning. Sentient beings and Buddhas are fundamentally neither inferior nor superior, so, from the beginning of time, it has always been a matter of guarding well in this way and not ignoring past karmic causes.

Now, as usual, here are my humble words to point up what is happening here.

Whilst blossoming flowers and falling leaves  
may display themselves directly,  
The LORD of healing herbs and trees  
ultimately possesses no particular flavour or aroma.

CHAPTER 27.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED FUNYOMITTA.

When Funyomitta was a crown prince, Bashashita asked him, "Since you wish to leave home to become a monk, what activities would you undertake to do?" Funyomitta said, "Were I to leave home to become a monk, it would not be to do

anything in particular.” Bashashita then asked, “What would you refrain from doing?” Funyomitta answered, “I would refrain from pursuing worldly activities.” Bashashita asked him, “What activities ought you to do?” Funyomitta replied, “I would undertake the activities of Buddha.” Bashashita then said, “Prince, your enlightened wisdom reaches the heavens; you are no doubt a descendant of the sages.” Thereupon, Bashashita permitted him to become a monk.

Crown Prince Funyomitta (S. Puṇyamitra, ‘A Friend of the Virtuous’) was the son of a king in Southern India who called himself ‘The Victorious One’. After Bashashita had succeeded in converting Mugasongai (S. Anātmānātha, ‘He Who Is Destitute of Spiritual Knowledge and Lacking a Master’) in Central India, he had gone on to Southern India where that country’s ruler, King Tendoku (S. Devaguna, ‘He of Heavenly Virtue’), had welcomed him and given him offerings of food and clothing. The king had two sons; one brutal and physically powerful, the other gentle but afflicted with long-standing ill health. After Bashashita had explained the effects of karma for their benefit, the king’s doubts had been immediately resolved.

Upon King Tendoku’s death, his elder son, Crown Prince Dokushō, ascended the throne. Persisting in his non-Buddhist ways he made trouble for Bashashita and had his son, Crown Prince Funyomitta, arrested for protesting his actions. Then, unexpectedly, the king demanded of Bashashita, “Since my kingdom has always cut itself off from the weird and the strange, I want to know what sort of doctrine you are propagating.” Bashashita replied, “From ancient times your Majesty’s country has indeed kept itself from false teaching by this practice. As to what I am Transmitting, it is nothing other than the Teachings of the Buddha.” The king said, “The Buddha has been dead now for twelve hundred years so from whom did you

obtain that Teaching?” Bashashita answered, “Great Master Makakashō personally received the SEAL from the Buddha and IT has been passed on through twenty-four generations. I received IT from Shishibodai.” The king then said, “I have heard that the monk Shishibodai was unable to escape execution, so how was he able to Transmit the Teaching to a successor?” Bashashita said, “Before my master’s difficulties had arisen, unseen by others he entrusted me with the Kesa of Faith and the Teachings in verse; these represent what I have received from him.” The king said, “Where is that robe?” Bashashita took the Kesa from Its case and showed It to the king who commanded that It be burned. Five colours blazed forth from the flames but, when the tinder was exhausted, the Kesa was as It had originally been. The king, in repentance, prostrated himself before Bashashita for it was quite clear that he was Shishibodai’s true successor. The king then pardoned the crown prince who now sought to leave home and become a monk. Bashashita asked him, “Since you wish to leave home to become a monk, what activities would you undertake to do?” and the dialogue related above took place up to the point where Bashashita permitted him to become a monk. After that Funyomitta served as steward to Bashashita for six years. Later, whilst Transmitting to him the EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TATHAGATA’S TRUE LAW, Bashashita said, “Beginning with the Tathagata, IT has been entrusted to successor after successor; now that you have received IT, you must convert all sentient beings.” Having received this private comment, Funyomitta was illumined in body and mind.

The preceding account indicates that Funyomitta was not acting for the sake of anything, that is why, when Bashashita asked him, “Since you wish to leave home to become a monk, what activities would you undertake to do?” he had answered, “I would undertake the activities of Buddha,” but ‘activities’, as Bashashita had used the word, meant ‘worldly activities’.

You must understand that here 'leaving home to become a monk' has indeed always implied 'not for the sake of anything'. Funyomitta's reference to 'activities of Buddha' meant 'something not done for self or for others' and so he said that his becoming a monk was not being done with worldly activities in mind. Even though people shave their heads, dye their robes and assume the outer form of a disciple of the Buddha, they are still not exempt from notions of self and other. If they have not detached themselves from the appearance of male and female, whatever they do are worldly activities, not the activities of Buddha. When, at any moment, people speak from the point of view of ORIGINAL NATURE, there are no 'activities of Buddha' or 'worldly activities'. Not to know ORIGINAL NATURE at a particular moment is called 'worldly activities', to be already awakened to ORIGINAL NATURE is what is called 'the activities of Buddha'.

When someone actually finds direct knowledge of ORIGINAL NATURE, there is no longer the appearance of birth or of extinction, much less of a deluded person or of an enlightened one! When you actually see in this way, the four elements and the five skandhas no longer exist so how can the three temporal worlds and the six realms of existence remain? There is no home to leave and no one that must be left behind; this is called 'leaving home to become a monk' for there is nowhere that one can dwell, home has been broken up and the person is gone. Birth and death, as well as nirvana, disappear all on their own without having to be swept away; enlightenment and defilement naturally depart without having to be set aside. From kalpa to kalpa IT is unmoved throughout the four cosmic periods of formation, existence, disintegration and emptiness and is not fettered by the four phenomenal forces of birth, life, change and death. Being open, IT is like space, lacking inside and outside; being pure and unsullied, IT resembles water, having neither surface nor depth; each and every person's ORIGINAL NATURE is like this.



Do not fear to remain at home nor be proud of leaving home; just stop searching outside yourself and progress onward by turning to face yourself. By all means try not to squander your time on this and that. When you do not look around in all directions but keep yourself carefully focused, what is there to designate as self, what is there to designate as other? There is no longer a confrontation of self and other. What can be called good or bad? If you are like this, ORIGINAL NATURE will, of course, manifest ITSELF as bright as the sun and moon; nowhere is it too dark for IT to illumine.

Again, here are my humble words which offer an analogy with what is happening in the preceding story. Hearken to them!

The ORIGINAL GROUND, at all times,  
is without even a single blade of grass;  
Where do a monk's personal explanations  
add or subtract anything?

CHAPTER 28.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED HANNYATARA.

One day Funyomitta asked Hannyatara, "Do you recall any events from your past lives?" whereupon Hannyatara answered, "I remember living in the same place as you during a distant aeon; you were expounding on *The Scripture of Great Wisdom* as I was reciting from that most profound of Scriptures. Today's events undoubtedly tally with that ancient karmic cause."

Hannyatara was a man from Eastern India. At the time that Funyomitta came to Eastern India its king was called 'The Steadfast One'; he followed non-Buddhist ways, having taken

as his teacher a young, long-nailed Brahman ascetic. Just before Funyomitta's arrival, both the king and the ascetic saw a white vapour pierce the sky from top to bottom. The king asked the portent of this. The ascetic already knew that Funyomitta had entered the region and, fearing the king would shift his favours, replied, "This is surely an omen that a demon is coming; it bodes no good." Later on, the ascetic gathered together his followers and told them, "Funyomitta is about to enter the capital. Who is capable of crushing him?" One of his disciples said, "Every one of us is skilled in sorcery by which means we can shake the heavens and the earth as well as pass through fire and water unharmed. What have we to fear?" When Funyomitta reached the capital he immediately saw an aura of blackness encircling the palace walls and said, "Just a minor problem!" and then went straight to where the king was. When the king asked him why he had come, Funyomitta replied, "To ferry all sentient beings across to the Other Shore." The king then asked, "By what Teaching will you accomplish this?" Funyomitta answered, "I shall ferry each across according to his kind." When the ascetic heard these words he could not control his anger and used conjury to make a giant mountain appear on top of Funyomitta's head. Funyomitta pointed at it and, in a twink, it was atop the heads of the ascetic's followers. The ascetic and his retinue were all frightened and committed themselves to Funyomitta who, out of compassion for their foolish delusions, again pointed at the mountain and it vanished. He then expounded the essentials of the Teaching for the king's benefit, enabling him to advance quickly to the True Vehicle. Funyomitta also told the king, "In this country there is a holy one who will succeed me."

At the time there was a certain young Brahman of about twenty who had lost his parents in infancy and did not even know his surname so he had given himself the name of Yōraku (S. Keyūra, 'Necklace'); as a result of this, people called

him the Necklace Child. He used to wander the countryside, spending the day begging alms like a sort of Bodhisattva Mahasthamaprapta. When people asked him why he was in such a hurry, he would reply, “Why are you going so slowly?” or, if they asked him his name, he would answer, “The same as yours.” People did not know why he said these things.

One day, whilst the king and Funyomitta were riding together in a carriage, they saw the Necklace Child who prostrated himself before them. Funyomitta asked him, “Do you recall any events from your past lives?” and, as the above account describes, their meeting tallied with an ancient karmic cause. Funyomitta then told the king, “This youth is none other than the Bodhisattva Mahasthamaprapta; this holy one will be followed by two disciples; one will convert Southern India, the other will have karmic ties to China. After four or five years the latter will want to return here.” He then gave the youth the name of Hannyatara (S. Prajñatāra, ‘The Pearl of Wisdom’) because of their ancient karmic ties.

The Ancestors and Masters who have Transmitted the SEAL OF THE BUDDHA, those holy ones—some of whom were arhants and others Bodhisattvas—with minds open and bright, are of the inviolate, uncaused WAY; they are the eternally enlightened Tathagata. Even though you may seem to be a beginner or an experienced practitioner, the instant you turn your natural inclinations around, they will reveal their inherent merits; without anything, not even a single hair, being left in the dark, you will be the same as the Tathagata and in harmony with the Ancestors.

It is not a matter of one person emerging as another disappears or of both together reaching forth with a single hand; there is not a multiplicity of types nor are there separate branches, therefore to see today is to see the long past; to look back upon the long past is to contemplate today. IT is born together with you and dwells together with me; not even the

tiniest bit separates us from IT, never for a moment does IT not accompany us.

When you succeed in arriving at this state, there is not a thing that is past, present or future; there is nothing that pertains to sense organs, their objects or the consciousness thereof. This is why it is said that the inheritance of the Teaching transcends all three periods of time and the mutual realization between master and disciple has continued unbroken from the past to the present; because this is so, the golden needle and the jade thread run through all, unseen. When you look carefully, what is of the present, what is of the past? Which is other, which is self? No loom is to be found nor does the thrust of the shuttle ever show. At this point there is sitting room for everyone and, in addition, it is always shared. This is why Funyomitta said in the preceding account, “You were expounding *The Scripture of Great Wisdom* as I was reciting from that most profound of Scriptures.”

When form is immaculate, the omniscient BUDDHA-WISDOM is immaculate; there are no differences, no distinctions. Sentient beings are the BUDDHA NATURE; the BUDDHA NATURE is sentient beings. Nothing is put in from outside, nothing is brought out from within. Even though the two are distinguished from each other in this way, ultimately there is no difference in number; this is why he was called Hannyatara, ‘The Pearl of Wisdom’, just as Bashashita had earlier obtained his name in accordance with a past karmic cause. Past and present cannot be separated. How can SHUNYATA and existence be different? This is why someone of old said, “If you understand the middle way between these two, you will be quite tranquil; it does not matter whether you distinguish between ULTIMATE REALITY and ITS functioning or not.”

When we consider SHUNYATA to refer to the ULTIMATE REALITY of the myriad forms that comprise the universe, then there is not even the tiniest bit of anything that lies before us; when we consider that the myriad forms that comprise the

universe refer to the functioning of SHUNYATA, then there is not even the slightest difference in the ways to enlightenment. It is at this juncture that the Way of master and disciple is Transmitted. To comprehend that even the Seal of approval of the Buddhas and Ancestors is of many kinds is like saying that it has subdivisions; even if you understand that there is no duality, this is still a one-sided view. When you examine these matters closely and weigh them carefully, the heron and the snow in which it stands are not the same colour; the bright moonlight and the white reed flower do not resemble each other. Treading the path in this way, you carry with you your piling up of snow on the silver plate, your hiding of the heron in the bright moonlight.

I have some humble words which try to discern what is happening in the foregoing account. Do you all wish to hear them?

The light of the moon, reflected in the depths of the pool,  
is bright in the sky;  
The appearance of the water, as it flows toward the horizon,  
is thoroughly clear and pure;  
Even though you trawl through IT again and again,  
knowing full well that IT does exist,  
IT is so spacious and empty, yet discoverable everywhere,  
that any attempt to grasp IT is completely futile.

CHAPTER 29.

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ANCESTOR,  
THE SAINTED BODAI DARUMA.

One day Hannyatara asked Bodaidaruma, "Amongst all things, which is without any characteristics?" Bodaidaruma replied, "The NON-ARISING is without characteristics."

Hannyatara asked, “Amongst all things, which is the greatest?” Bodaidaruma answered, “The DHARMA-NATURE is the greatest.”

Bodaidaruma was of the warrior caste. Originally his name was Bodaitara; he was the third son of King Kōshi of Southern India. This king, whose name means ‘He Whose Fragrance Excels All Others’, had a reverence for Buddhism far exceeding that of his companions and had once bestowed a priceless pearl on Hannyatara. His three sons he had named Gatsujōtara (S. Candravimalatāra, ‘The Bright Pearl of the Moon’), Kudo-kutara (S. Puṇyatāra, ‘The Pearl of Meritorious Virtue’) and Bodaitara (S. Bodhitāra, ‘The Pearl of Supreme Enlightenment’). Hannyatara, wishing to test the spiritual wisdom of these three princes, showed them the pearl and asked, “Can anything rival this pearl?” The first and second sons replied, “This pearl is the most honoured amongst the seven precious objects and is truly unrivalled. If not someone with your Worship’s spiritual prowess, who better to receive it?”

Bodaitara said, “This is a worldly treasure so it still falls short of being considered supreme; amongst all treasures, the DHARMA TREASURE is considered above them. This jewel has a worldly lustre so it still falls short of being considered supreme; amongst all lustres, the lustre of ENLIGHTENED WISDOM is considered supreme. This pearl has a worldly brightness so it still falls short of being considered supreme; amongst all forms of brightness, the ORIGINAL NATURE’s brightness is considered supreme. The splendour of this jewel cannot shine in, and of, itself; of necessity you must borrow from the LIGHT OF ENLIGHTENED WISDOM to perceive its shining. When you have fully discerned this, then you will know that THAT is the JEWEL. When you have come to know that JEWEL, then you will be clear about what that TREASURE is. If you are clear about what that TREASURE is, a treasure will, in itself, not be

the TREASURE. If you have discerned that JEWEL, a jewel, in itself, will not be the JEWEL. A jewel, in itself, will not be the JEWEL when we invariably use the JEWEL OF ENLIGHTENED WISDOM to differentiate amongst worldly treasures; a treasure, in itself, will not be the TREASURE when we invariably use the TREASURE OF ENLIGHTENED WISDOM to be clear about the DHARMA TREASURE. Because Hannyatara's Way is the TREASURE OF ENLIGHTENED WISDOM, you are now conscious of the worldly treasure, however, since the master keeps the Way, this TREASURE then manifests ITSELF; should sentient beings keep the Way, the TREASURE will also manifest ITSELF for them."

Hannyatara, upon hearing such eloquence, knew that Bodaitara was karmically descended from a sage. Although he discerned that Bodaitara was certainly his Dharma heir, for the time being he kept silent about it and did not single him out. This is why he asked him, "Amongst all things, which is without any characteristics?" to which Bodaitara had replied, "The NON-ARISING is without characteristics," whereupon Hannyatara had asked, "Amongst all things, which is the loftiest?" to which Bodaitara had answered, "The TRUE SELF is the loftiest." Hannyatara had then asked, "Amongst all things, which is the greatest?" to which Bodaitara had said, "The DHARMA-NATURE is the greatest." Although they carried on their discussion in this manner, with the minds of the master and his disciple in communion, Hannyatara still held back for a while on his bringing Bodaitara's spiritual potential to maturity.

Later, when his father the king passed away and everyone was bewailing his death, Bodaitara sat alone before the bier and entered into samadhi. After seven days had passed, he emerged and then went to Hannyatara and asked to become a monk. Hannyatara, realizing the time was ripe, let him become a monk and had him take all the Precepts. After this Bodaitara stayed in Hannyatara's abode doing seated meditation for seven days.

Hannyatara instructed him extensively on the subtle principles of seated meditation; upon hearing them, Bodaitara gave rise to unsurpassed wisdom.

Hannyatara then pointed out to him, “You have already attained the full measure of the Dharma Teaching. Since ‘dharma’ has a meaning of ‘all-pervasiveness’, it would be well to give you the name of Daruma (S. Dharma),” consequently his name was changed to Bodaidaruma (S. Bodhidharma, ‘He Whose Enlightenment Is All-Pervasive’). Upon becoming a monk and receiving the Transmission of the Law, Bodaidaruma asked Hannyatara on bended knees, “Now that I have received the Teaching, to which country should I go to carry out the activities of Buddha?” Hannyatara said, “Although you have received the Teachings, you should stay in Southern India for a while. Wait until my parinirvana at age sixty-seven, then, by all means, go to China and make contact with those of great character.” Bodaidaruma said, “Will I be able to find noble beings with the capacity for the Teaching in that land and, after a thousand years, will troubles also arise there?” Hannyatara said, “In that land you will leave behind countless people who will realize enlightenment. There are some small difficulties that will arise; you would do well to submit to them. When you reach China, do not abide in the South; there they are only fond of the achievements that are found in the transient world and fail to perceive the ruling principles of Buddhism.” He then recited a verse for Bodaidaruma,

“In travelling the road, you will traverse the waters  
and encounter sheep;  
All by yourself, and agitated,  
you will cross the river in darkness.  
The most pitiable under the sun  
will be a pair—an elephant and a horse.  
Two young cinnamon trees will there be  
whose glory will prosper far into the future.



Whilst in a meditation grove you will witness a man on the verge of finding the FRUITION OF THE WAY.” He also said in verse,

“Though China is vast, there is no other road for you  
If you would have disciples follow in your footsteps;  
Since the Golden Cock  
    knows how to hold a grain of millet in his beak,  
He will nourish worthy monks in all ten directions.”

Through such verses Bodaidaruma received the SEAL and the detailed predictions of his activities; he served and trained closely under Hannyatara for forty years. After Hannyatara entered parinirvana, a fellow trainee named Butsudaisen (S. Buddhasena, ‘He Who Is Dependent on the Buddha’), who had also received confirmation and predictions from Hannyatara along with a monk named Shōta, divided Hannyatara’s followers up into six schools by comparing their teachings with those of Hannyatara. Bodaidaruma, through his own teaching, reformed the six groups for which act his name was universally revered.

As he approached his sixties, he knew that his karmic connection with China had ripened, so he went to the king, who held non-Buddhist views, and told him, “Revere the Triple Treasure and you will thrive and prosper in the blessings of the Buddha. My karmic connections with China have ripened. When my work there is finished, I will return.” The king, weeping like one in mourning, said, “What offences has this our country committed? What is so felicitous about their land? Well, if you must go, you must but, once you have finished your work in China, please return to us quickly; do not forget the land of your parents.” The king himself saw Bodaidaruma off, accompanying him to the very seashore.

Bodaidaruma sailed for three whole years, crossing the Southern Sea to arrive at Nankai (C. Nan-hai), on the south

coast of China, on the twenty-first day of the ninth lunar month in the year 527 C.E. during the Liang Dynasty, the era name having changed from Futsū (C. P'u-t'ung, 'The Common Way') to Daitsū (C. Ta-t'ung, 'The Great Universal Way') in the third month. First he had an audience with Emperor Bu (C. Wu) of Liang, as the familiar story goes, which was what Hannyatara had alluded to when he said, "Do not abide in the South."

He went north to the kingdom of Wei; it is said that he floated there on a reed. Literal-minded people fancy that this refers to a reed stalk and portray him as floating on a reed shaft, which is inaccurate. A 'reed' is what a small passenger boat was called because of its shape; it was not an actual reed. In Hannyatara's verse, 'encountering a sheep' refers to Emperor Bu of Liang and 'crossing the river in darkness' refers to Bodaidaruma's crossing of the Yangtze River which separates the two kingdoms. In this way he quickly reached Shōrin-ji (C. Shao-lin-ssu), on Mount Sū (C. Sung), where he stayed in the monastery's East Gallery. No one could fathom what he was doing because he sat cross-legged throughout the day; as a consequence they called him 'the Brahman Who Contemplates the Wall'. Thus he passed nine years without ever preaching in a harsh or critical manner and without being quick to point things out. After the nine years he handed down his 'skin, flesh, bones and marrow', respectively, to his four disciples Dōfuku, Dōiku, Sōji and Eka (C. Tao-fu, Tao-yü, Tsung-ch'ih and Hui-k'o) for he knew their spiritual potential had already ripened.

At that time there were two heretical Buddhists named Bodairyūshi (S. Bodhiruci, 'He Who Longs for Enlightenment') and Vinaya Master Kōzu (C. Kuang-t'ung, 'He of the Lineage of Light'). Seeing Bodaidaruma's religious virtue spreading through the country and people everywhere paying their respects to him, they could not restrain their resentment. Not only did they throw stones at him and knock out his front teeth but they also tried to poison him five times. When they proffered a

poisonous drug for the sixth time, Bodaidaruma spread it out upon a huge boulder which immediately crumbled to pieces.

When he saw that his spiritual mission had already been completed, he thought to himself, "Upon receiving the SEAL and the predictions from my former master I saw a great spirit in China and knew for certain that there would be someone capable of receiving the Teachings of Mahayana. However, following my encounter with Emperor Bu of Liang, occasions have not been suitable for winning people over. In vain have I sat in silence for only the Noble One (that is, Eka) has realized the DIVINE LIGHT and to him I have passed on all that I have derived from the Way. My work has now been disposed of and my karmic connection completed. It is time to pass on." So saying he sat erect and died; he was buried on Bear's Ear Peak (J. Yūjihō; C. Hsiung-erh-feng). It is said he met Sōun (C. Sung-yūn) later on in the Onion Range (that is, the Belaturgh Mountains of Turkestan); however, he is actually buried on Bear's Ear Peak, this is correct. Just as Hannyatara had predicted, Bodaidaruma became the first Ancestor in China.

At the time when he was still a prince, Bodaidaruma had held forth upon the pearl. As a result of this Hannyatara had asked him, "Amongst all things, which is without any characteristics?" and he had answered, "The NON-ARISING is without characteristics." Truly, even though some say that IT is void and tranquil, such a view is not free of characteristics which is why he had said that the NON-ARISING is without characteristics. Because of this you should understand that IT towers above all like a steep cliff soaring into the sky; you should comprehend that IT is clear and bright within the hundred grasses and realize that nothing is other than IT, however, everything, simply by its very nature, abides in its phenomenal state and yet is not the NON-ARISING, and is not, therefore, free of characteristics. When Heaven and Earth have not yet been separated, how can

the sanctified and the ordinary possibly be differentiated? At this stage nothing will give rise to anything, not a speck of dirt will be able to stain or soil anything.

This does not mean that originally there was nothing at all; IT is truly vast and clear like the sky, wondrously alert and resplendent. Because IT is beyond comparison and is never accompanied by anything, IT is the very maximum. This is why they say that the GREAT is called unimaginable and the UNIMAGINABLE is called the DHARMA-NATURE. Not even the priceless pearl could compare with IT; not even the clear light of the mind resembles IT. This is why Bodaidaruma said of the pearl, "It has a worldly lustre, so it still falls short of being considered supreme; the lustre of ENLIGHTENED WISDOM is supreme." This is how he divined IT.

What he said truly arose from his inherent intelligence, nevertheless he sat in meditation for seven days whilst being instructed in the marvellous principles of seated meditation and gave rise to the wisdom of the unsurpassed Way. You should know that, after you have found a thorough understanding of this and completely made real such a state, you will know THAT which the Buddhas and Ancestors were talking about and, having gained a clear understanding of THAT which the Buddhas of the past have already borne witness to, you will be a direct descendant of the Buddhas and Ancestors, a fact that the Venerable Bodaidaruma, in particular, exemplifies.

Although he was like one who already has naturally enlightened wisdom, he also gave rise to the wisdom of the Unsurpassed Way. Still later he trained thoroughly in meditation and probed deeply into what efforts he should make to preserve and maintain it in the future; for forty years he served his master Hannyatara, scrupulously performing his duties without forgetting Hannyatara's predictions for his future. Having lived sixty years, he spent three whole years of winters and summers upon the billows of the vast sea until at last he reached

a foreign land then, during his nine years of sitting in silent meditation, he found a great vessel for the Teaching and for the first time propagated the True Law of the Tathagata in China as well as disseminated the great blessings of his former teacher. His hardships were more severe than those of any other; his austerities were greater than those of any other.

Our times are decadent and frivolous and people's abilities are mediocre so many trainees today, as might be expected, desire easy attainments. Those of this ilk who lay claim to what they have not yet found must be companions to those conceited braggarts on Vulture Peak who thought their spiritual prowess was sufficiently so advanced that they did not need to stay to hear the whole of the Buddha's Teaching.

If you meditate carefully and probe deeply into what is happening in the previous story, your understanding of these lofty matters will continue to increase; if you 'wear your brains out and discard your body' by training with a good will, you will have the subtle fragrance of the Buddhas and directly match what was apprehended by the Buddhas and Ancestors. Do not think that some bit of wisdom or a partial comprehension is sufficient.

Again, here are my humble words. Do you wish to hear them?

There is no location, boundary or surface,  
So how can anything even as minute as autumn down  
possibly exist?

## CHAPTER 30.

THE TWENTY-NINTH ANCESTOR,  
THE GREAT ANCESTOR AND GREAT TEACHER  
EKA.

Whilst serving and training with Bodaidaruma, Eka one day told him, “I have by now severed all my karmic ties.” Bodaidaruma said, “You are not denying the law of karma, are you?” Eka answered, “No, I am not.” Bodaidaruma asked him, “And how can you be sure of this?” Eka replied, “Clearly, and beyond doubt, I have always known; words cannot approach IT.” Bodaidaruma said, “This is the ORIGINAL NATURE which the Buddhas have apprehended; do not let yourself doubt IT ever again.”

Eka was a man from Burō (C. Wu-lao), his family was of the Ki (C. Chi) clan to which the legendary Yellow Emperor had also belonged. Before Eka was born, his father, whose name was Seki (C. Chi, ‘The Silent, or Solitary, One’), had often told himself, “Since my family respects what is good, how can it be that I have had no offspring?” For a long time he prayed for a child then, one night, he became aware of a strange light illuming his bedroom and his wife, consequently, became pregnant. Whilst growing up, the boy was given the name of Kō (C. Kuang, ‘He of the Light’ or ‘The Radiant One’) because of the auspiciousness of the illumined room. Even from childhood, his spirit did not follow that of the herd. For a long time he lived in the area between the rivers I and Raku (C. I and Lo), near the ancient capital, and was an avid reader; he took no interest in family affairs but preferred to wander the countryside. Constantly lamenting that the teachings of Confucius and Lao-tzu were merely rules and regulations for social manners and arts

and that the writings of Chuang-tzu and *The Book of Changes* had still not covered the subtler truth completely, he left home to become a monk and took the Precepts under Meditation Master Hōjō (C. Pao-ching, 'He Who Treasures Quietude') of Dragon's Gate (J. Ryūmon; C. Lung-men) on Fragrant Mountain (J. Kyōzan; C. Hsiang-shan).

He floated around listening to the discourses of various teachers, extensively studying the principles of both the Greater and the Lesser Vehicles. One day, whilst reading a Buddhist text on prajna, he rose above its literal meaning and grasped its deeper significance. After that, he passed eight years sitting in meditation day and night until, in the midst of his tranquil silence, he saw a solitary divine being who addressed him, saying, "You are on the verge of receiving the effects of your training, so why tarry here? Supreme enlightenment is not far off; go to the South." Realizing that this was spiritual guidance, he changed his name to Shinkō (C. Shen-kuang, 'He of the Divine Light' or 'The Divinely Radiant One'). The next day his head ached as if it had been pierced with a spike. When his teacher tried to heal this, a voice from out of the air said, "This is an altering of the skull bones; it is not an ordinary pain." Shinkō, at length, told his teacher about his having seen a deva. When his teacher examined Shinkō's skull it looked as if it had the five peaks of Mount Sū (C. Hsiu) upon it. Thereupon he said, "You have an auspicious sign; undoubtedly you will realize an authentic enlightenment. The deva's commanding you to go to the South refers to Great Teacher Bodaidaruma at Shōrin-ji. Without doubt you will become a master."

Having received this instruction, Shinkō travelled to Shōrin-ji on Mount Sū, arriving on the ninth day of the final month in 528 C.E. Bodaidaruma would not permit him to enter as his disciple so Shinkō stood outside the window. That night it snowed heavily; standing in the snow he awaited the dawn. The snow drift buried his hips, the bitter cold pierced him to

the bone, his teardrops froze as they fell. Seeing his own tears only increased his feeling of coldness and regarding his reflection in the window, he thought, “Those of old who sought the Way broke open their bones to let others feed upon the marrow, pierced their veins to slake the thirst of others, wove their hair into a mat to protect the Buddha’s feet from the mire or threw themselves down some precipice to feed tigers. If those in the past acted thus, how should I behave?” Through such reflections he unflinchingly spurred his resolve; upright he stood without moving. At dawn, Bodaidaruma, seeing that Shinkō had stood in the snow all through the night, asked him, out of compassion, “What do you seek that you would stand in the snow for such a long time?” Shinkō answered, “Only that out of your compassion you will deign to open the Gate of Sweet Dew to me so that I may ferry all types of sentient beings throughout the world to the Other Shore.” Without giving him so much as a look over his shoulder, Bodaidaruma retorted, “The Unsurpassed, Wondrous Path of the Buddhas requires kalpas of effort and diligence, being able to practise what is difficult to practise, enduring what is hard to endure. How can you, with your meagre virtues and puny understanding, with your frivolous heart and lazy mind, dare to wish for the True Vehicle; in vain do you strive and toil!” Shinkō, hearing this compassionate instruction with tears streaming down his face, was ever more eager in his determination to seek the Way. Unseen by Bodaidaruma, Shinkō took a sharp sword and cut off his own left arm at the elbow. Bodaidaruma, realizing that Shinkō was a vessel for the Teaching, told him, “All the Buddhas from the first sought the Way. For the sake of the Teaching they disregarded their bodies; you have now cut off your arm in my presence. You are capable of seeking It.” Because of this act, Bodaidaruma changed Shinkō’s name to Eka (C. Hui-k’o, ‘He with the Capacity for Wisdom’) and finally allowed him to enter as a disciple. Eka served Bodaidaruma unswervingly for eight years.



Once, Eka asked Bodaidaruma, “Great Teacher, may I hear what you have to say about the Dharma-Seal of the Buddhas?” Bodaidaruma answered, “The Dharma-Seal of the Buddhas cannot be obtained from another person.” On another occasion Bodaidaruma told Eka, “Outwardly, sever all karmic ties; within your mind, do not pant after things. When your mind is like a wall you will be able to enter the Way.” As Eka was wont to speak of Original Nature without connecting this with the underlying principles of the Way, Bodaidaruma would simply cut off his errors and, for his sake, did not discuss the ORIGINAL NATURE of the mind which is free from discriminative thought. It says in the *Indescribably Skillful Devices from Within the Master’s Quarters* (J. ‘Shitsuchū Genki;’ C. ‘Shih Chung Hsüan Chi’), ‘Once, whilst Eka was attending Bodaidaruma, they were climbing Scant Houses Peak (J. Shōshihō; C. Shao-shih-feng) when Bodaidaruma asked, “Which way does the path go?” Eka replied, “If you will please go straight ahead, that is it.” Bodaidaruma responded, “If you try to go straight ahead, you will not be able to move even one step.” When Eka heard this, he realized enlightenment.’

At the time when, as related above, Eka told Bodaidaruma that he had by now severed all karmic ties and Bodaidaruma had replied that he should not let himself doubt IT ever again, he at last gave Eka both the Kesa and the Teaching, saying, “Inwardly, Transmit the DHARMA-SEAL by which the validity of enlightenment is realized within the heart; outwardly, pass on the Kesa by which the authenticity of our line is established.” Accordingly, after Bodaidaruma entered perfect rest, Eka continued to spread the profound Teaching of his master’s line. When giving the Teaching to Sōsan, he said, “I still have residual karmic troubles that I must by all means pay for.” Having entrusted the Teaching and the Kesa to Sōsan, Eka began to preach the Law in the nearby capital city of Yeh since circumstances seemed appropriate; members of all four

groups—male and female monks, lay men and women—took the Refuges. He passed thirty years in the following way. He would hide the LIGHT, cover his traces, change his appearance, enter some wine-shop, pass through a butcher's doors, stop to listen to the local gossip or go about with the humblest of menials, the outhouse cleaners. Someone once asked him, "You are one who has realized enlightenment so why do you behave like this?" Eka replied, "What I am doing is scrutinizing ORIGINAL NATURE but how does this concern you?"

Later, when Eka was expounding the essentials of the Dharma outside the main gate of Kyōkyū-ji (C. K'uang-chiu-szu) in Kanjō (C. Kuan-ch'eng), a veritable forest of monks and lay people, male and female, gathered about him. At the time Dharma Master Benwa (C. Pien-ho) was lecturing within the temple on the *Nirvana Scripture* but his flock, learning of Eka's preaching of the Dharma, left, one by one, to go and hear him. Benwa, persistent in his resentment, gave vent to slanderous accusations against Eka before the district magistrate Teki Chūkan (C. Ti Chung-k'an). Having been led astray by these improper remarks, Chūkan used unlawful means to inflict capital punishment on Eka who submitted to all this with a cheerful spirit. This occurred during the Sui Dynasty, on the sixteenth day of the second lunar month, 591 C.E.

Superior and inferior are not distinguished when it comes to the exalted virtues of the Ancestors; even so, Eka ranks as one esteemed among the esteemed, revered among the revered for the reason that, even though Bodaidaruma came from the West, it would have been difficult for our lineage to come down to us today had Eka not passed on the Transmission. His hardships have exceeded those of others, his determination in pursuing the Way has surpassed that of others. Even Bodaidaruma did not speak for a long time as he waited for Eka's genuine potential to ripen; above all he did not point out, or explain, anything for him, he just said, "Outwardly, sever all karmic ties; within your

mind, do not pant after things. When your mind is like a wall, you will be able to enter into the Way.” When you can truly bring a halt to deliberate thought in this way, you will manifest your ORIGINAL NATURE. Hearing what I have just said, you may try to become ‘mindless’ like a blank wall, but this is not taking a close look into your mind. This is why Eka said, “Clearly and beyond doubt, I have always known.” If you can be exactly like this, this is the significance of ‘what the Buddhas have apprehended’.

When you are able to sever all karmic ties to the outside, the myriad deliberate thoughts will cease to exist within. Be alert and IT will not be obscured from you; rest beyond doubt and IT will be clear to you as the SOURCE. Do not distinguish between past and present, do not separate self from other. Without departing even the slightest from what the Buddhas have realized, or from the heart-to-heart Transmission of the Ancestors, IT has come harmoniously, therefore IT was Transmitted from India and the West to the lands of the East and spread from China to Japan. This is how it was in the past, this is how it is now. Do not yearn for the past or idle away the present, just train! Do not think that the time is long gone since Shakyamuni, the Wise One, passed away. Do not give up on yourself.

Here are my humble words that try to express an example of this. Do you wish to hear them?

Empty yet resonant,  
all earth-bound thoughts exhausted,  
IT is, beyond doubt, alert and clear,  
always still and bright.

## CHAPTER 31.

THE THIRTIETH ANCESTOR,  
GREAT MASTER KANCHI SŌSAN.

Upon meeting Eka, Sōsan asked him, “My body is riddled with disease; please, Reverend Monk, cleanse me of my defilement.” Eka replied, “Bring me your defilement and I will cleanse you of it.” Sōsan thought long and hard about this, then said, “I have searched for my defilement but cannot find it.” Eka replied, “I have cleansed you of your defilement. It is fitting that you dwell in accord with Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.”

Sōsan was a man from parts unknown; his first meeting with Eka was as a lay person when he was in his forties. Without giving his name, he had suddenly come forward, bowed and put his request to Eka to cleanse him of his defilement. The above dialogue ensued up to where Eka said, “It is fitting that you dwell in accord with Buddha, Dharma and Sangha,” whereupon Sōsan said, “Seeing you, Reverend Monk, I realize that you represent the Sangha, but I have not yet ascertained what are meant by Buddha and Dharma.” Eka replied, “Your ORIGINAL NATURE is BUDDHA, your ORIGINAL NATURE is DHARMA; DHARMA and BUDDHA are inseparable. What I have said is also true for the SANGHA TREASURE.” Sōsan said, “Today, for the first time, I realize that the true nature of defilement does not exist within or without or in-between; it is the same as ORIGINAL NATURE; Buddha and Dharma are inseparable.” Eka, seeing how profound Sōsan’s capacity for the Teaching was, shaved his head, saying, “You are my treasure; it is fitting for me to give you the name Sōsan (C. Seng-ts’an, ‘The Resplendent Jewel of the Sangha’).” On the eighteenth day of the third lunar month of that year Sōsan took the Precepts in Kōfuku-ji (C. Kuang-fu-ssu). From then on, his disease gradually subsided.

After Sōsan had spent two years attending on Eka, the latter said one day, “Great Master Bodaidaruma came from India to this land and gave me both the Kesa and the Teaching; I now give them to you.” He added, “Although you have already obtained the Teaching, for the time being you should go deep into the mountains and not teach or guide others since some political troubles are about to arise.” Sōsan said, “Master, since you already know what is going to happen, please deign to give me some instructions.” Eka replied, “This is not something that I personally know about; it is a prediction by Hannyatara which Bodaidaruma passed on to me as, ‘Even though the receipt of the Teaching is auspicious within the heart, outwardly it will bring misfortune.’ These are the troubles that he meant. When I compare this prediction with the number of years that Bodaidaruma spoke of, it applies directly to you. By all means examine what has just been said and do not get caught up in worldly difficulties.”

After this, Sōsan sought seclusion on Mount Kankō (C. Huan-kung) where he spent over ten years; this was during the time that Emperor Bu (C. Wu) of the Chou Dynasty outlawed Buddhism and, in consequence, Sōsan took up residence on Mount Shikū (C. Ssu-k’ung). Whilst staying there he had no fixed abode and his physical appearance underwent a transformation. Whilst acting in this way he came in contact with the novice Dōshin whom he later told, “After my late master Eka Transmitted the Teaching and the Kesa to me, he went to the capital city of Yeh where he lived for thirty years. Now that I have found you, what is to hold me here?” Accordingly he went to Mount Rafu (C. Lo-fou) but later returned to his former dwelling place where both the educated and the common people hastened to prepare charitable offerings for him. For the sake of the monks and laity, male and female, Sōsan preached extensively on the essence of mind then, during a Buddhist ceremony, he passed away whilst sitting in gasshō under a large tree. His

poems, such as 'What Is Engraved on the Heart That Trusts to the Eternal', have been recorded and to this day are still circulated as Teaching. Later he was given the title of Great Master Kanchi (C. Chien-chih, 'He Whose Wisdom Is a Mirror').

The disease that plagued Sōsan's body at the time of his first meeting with Eka was leprosy but, after meeting Eka, his karmic disease suddenly disappeared. There is nothing special about what is happening in this story. Having understood that the true nature of defilement is ungraspable, Sōsan had awakened to the fact that ORIGINAL NATURE is pure and unstained. This is why, upon hearing that BUDDHA and DHARMA are inseparable, he had said that ORIGINAL NATURE and DHARMA were also inseparable.

When you can truly discern ORIGINAL NATURE, there is no longer any difference between dying in one place and being born in another: how much less is there discrimination between the good and bad roots of defilement. This is why the four elements and the five skandhas ultimately do not exist; from the very beginning we are free of skin, flesh, bones and marrow. The disease that afflicted him therefore disappeared and his ORIGINAL NATURE manifested ITSELF.

Sōsan preached widely on the essentials of the Teaching following a set sequence; after talking on the text, 'The Ultimate Way is not hard; simply reject picking and choosing', he would expound on 'The power of words fails to describe IT for IT is not of past, future or present'. Truly, there is no inside or outside and there is no in-between. What is there to choose, what to reject? You cannot grab hold of IT or discard IT. Once you are beyond hatred and desire, IT is crystal clear and unmistakable; nothing is lacking at any time nor is there anything in excess. Nevertheless, look, and probe deeply, into yourself until you find the ungraspable place which is beyond imagining or description. Never deny the law of karma or be a veritable log or stone; strike space hard and make it reverberate, tether the

lightning and make it take form, carefully set your eyes on the place that has no traces and never hide yourself there. If you are like this, although we say that IT is not some object which is before your eyes or which the sense organs settle on, you will discern IT without deviating even as much as a dust mote.

So, how am I to discriminate and write some words about what is going on in this story?

The ORIGINAL NATURE of things  
is void, unstained and pure,  
without inside or outside,  
Hence neither defilements nor virtues  
leave any traces therein.  
ORIGINAL NATURE and BUDDHA  
are fundamentally the same;  
Both DHARMA and SANGHA  
are, in themselves, clearly wise.

CHAPTER 32.

THE THIRTY-FIRST ANCESTOR,  
MEDITATION MASTER DAII DŌSHIN.

Bowing before Great Master Kanchi, Dōshin said, “Please, Reverend Monk, I beg you, from your compassion, to impart to me the Dharma Gate of liberation.” Kanchi said, “Who is preventing you from entering?” Dōshin answered, “No one is preventing me.” Kanchi said, “Then why do you seek liberation from me?” At these words Dōshin experienced a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Dōshin (C. Tao-hsin, ‘He Who Trusts in the Way’) was his personal name; his family name was Shima (C. Ssu-ma).

He lived first in Kanai (C. Ho-nei) but later moved to Kōsai (C. Kuang-chi) in the provincial district of Kishū (C. Ch'i-chou). From his very birth he far excelled others; in his boyhood he practised various teachings on liberation taught by the schools that taught about shunyata as if this were some habit inherited from a previous life. When he had just entered his fourteenth year, he met Great Master Kanchi and made his plea for the priest's compassion until he had a great awakening upon hearing Kanchi's reply. Dōshin worked hard serving Kanchi for nine years and, after receiving the Precepts in Kishū, he respectfully held to them with marked conscientiousness. With the utmost subtlety, Kanchi would often test him. When he recognised that Dōshin's condition was ripe, he passed on the Kesa and the Teaching. Dōshin pursued Kanchi's approach to training with full concentration and without sleeping; for almost sixty years he never even lay down.

In 617 C.E., during the Sui Dynasty, Dōshin, together with his followers, arrived at Kichishū (C. Chi-chou) where a gang of bandits had been holding the city in its grip for seventy days. The whole populace was terrified so Dōshin took pity on them and taught them how to recite *The Scripture of Great Wisdom*. Some time later the robber band, whilst peering through the openings in the parapet wall, saw what looked like phantom soldiers inside and said amongst themselves, "There must be some extraordinary person within the city; we ought not to attack." As a consequence they gradually withdrew.

In 624 C.E. Dōshin returned to Kishū. During the spring, when he was living on Split Head Mountain (J. Hatōzan; C. P'ou-shan), a company of monks gathered about him like clouds. One day, whilst on the road to Ōbai Mountain, (C. Huang-mei, 'Yellow Plum Tree'), he met Kōnin and, from the east side of Ox Head Summit (J. Gozu; C. Niu-t'ou), on Split Head Mountain, produced a branch of his line.



In 627 C.E. Emperor T'ai-tsung (J. Daishū) of the T'ang Dynasty, drawn toward Dōshin's practical approach to the Teaching, desired to pay his respects to Dōshin in person so he had him summoned to the capital. Dōshin humbly declined the emperor's invitation. This summons was sent three times with Dōshin finally pleading illness. With the fourth summons the emperor commanded his emissary to bring back Dōshin's head if the monk really would not come. When the emissary reached the mountain and made known the emperor's instructions, Dōshin, with great dignity, stretched out his neck to receive the blade. Finding this behaviour extraordinary, the emissary returned to report what had happened. The emperor's admiration for Dōshin only increased. He sent the monk a gift of rare silks and left him to his own resolves.

In 651 C.E., on the fourth day of the ninth lunar month, Dōshin suddenly gave the following admonition to his disciples, "Each and every single, solitary thing, without exception, is liberated; every one of you must keep this in mind, then let IT flow out and transform others in the future," whereupon he stopped speaking and, sitting tranquilly, passed away in his seventy-second year. His body was placed in a stupa on the mountain where he had lived. The next year, on the eighth day of the fourth lunar month, the door to the stupa opened by itself from no apparent cause. Dōshin looked just as he had when alive and, after this, his disciples did not dare to close the door again. Later Dōshin was given the title of Meditation Master Great Physician (J. Daii Zenji; C. Ta-i Ch'an-shih).

To be sure there is no superiority or inferiority in the behaviour of any master; Dōshin had followed the teaching on shunyata from boyhood just as though he had done so in a previous life. Throughout his life he avoided rulers and their ministers. Once having discovered the Way, he trained resolutely without ever turning back. From the very first he proclaimed the Dharma Gate to Liberation and, at the time of his death, he

opened the Dharma Gate to Liberation to let it be known that, ultimately, no one is ever bound by birth and death. He was truly an extraordinary person, one met with only in a thousand years.

The practice of the teaching on shunyata has, from the first, been called the Dharma Gate to Liberation. Why is this? Neither being alive, nor being a Buddha, ever fetters you. Furthermore, what birth or death is there in which you can participate? Since this is so, this is something that cannot be analyzed or measured in terms of body or mind, or something that can be differentiated in terms of delusion and enlightenment. Even if you talk about mind and external objects or defiling passions and perfect enlightenment, all are but different names for the self. This is why mountains and rivers have no disparity. The karmic effects from the past that manifest as one's environment and as one's body and mind have no differences. Accordingly, O Acharyas, when it is cold, it is cold enough to kill you; when it is hot, it is hot enough to slay you. When you have crossed through the barrier gate, this principle will not apply. In other words, there is neither bondage nor liberation, neither this nor that; things do not set up their names; objects do not discriminate between their forms. You find fully the effects of your training so how can you possibly be concerned with what is 'phenomenal' or 'noumenal'? Ultimately there is no distinction between 'sitting upright in the meditation hall' and just living. Do not abide in time, space and dualistic views. When you can see things in this way, you no longer need to use the word 'liberation'. How can you despise anything as 'fettering you'?

Furthermore, you truly have a radiance; we call this 'that which sees the three worlds'. Your tongue has a sense of taste; this is named 'that which harmonizes with the six flavours'. You emit light everywhere and prepare a feast at all times. As you come to taste IT, there is a deeply rich flavour in THAT which has no flavour. As you come to see IT, or go to see IT,

there is a true form in THAT which has no characteristic of form. Thus there is no need to associate with rulers or ministers of state, no obligation for body or mind to sit or lie down.

If you can reach this stage, Great Master Dōshin will be none other than each and every one of you and you will all be Great Master Dōshin. Is this not what is meant by ‘all things, without exception, being gates to liberation’? Is this not what is meant by ‘letting the TRUTH flow out and transform others in the future’? The door and windows of the Seamless Stupa suddenly fly open and ONE with the features of an ordinary being emerges genially.

Now here again are my humble words. Do you all wish to hear them?

ORIGINAL NATURE is empty, ITS unsullied wisdom  
holds no thought of right or wrong;  
Within ITSELF, IT recognises nothing  
as being fettered or free;  
Even though we may distinguish five skandhas  
and four elements,  
Sight and hearing, sound and form  
are ultimately nothing other than IT.

CHAPTER 33.

THE THIRTY-SECOND ANCESTOR,  
MEDITATION MASTER DAIMAN KŌNIN.

When Kōnin encountered Dōshin on the road to Ōbai, Dōshin asked him, “What is your clan name?” Kōnin said, “I have a NATURE but I do not have a conventional clan name.” Dōshin asked, “And what is IT?” Kōnin replied, “It is the BUDDHA NATURE.” Dōshin queried, “So you have no clan

name?” Kōnin answered, “Because ORIGINAL NATURE is empty, I do not.” Dōshin fell silent realizing that Kōnin was a vessel for the Teaching and that it was to him that he would Transmit the Teaching and the Kesa.

Kōnin (C. Hung-ren, ‘He of Magnificent Endurance’) was a man from Ōbai in the provincial district of Kishū (C. Ch’i-chou); in a former life he had been an itinerant forester who planted pine trees on Split Head Mountain. During that time he had once asked Dōshin to explain to him how he could realize enlightenment in accord with the Teaching. Dōshin had answered, “You are already quite old; even were you to hear it, how could you propagate it in order to convert others? However, were you to return in another lifetime, I would still be waiting for you.” The forester departed. As he came to the edge of a river he saw a lone young woman washing clothes and, greeting her, he asked if he could lodge with her for the night. The woman replied that she had a father and an elder brother whom she could ask. He replied that, if it was all right with her, he would venture to go with her. The young woman agreed and, afterwards, returned to her task.

The young woman was the very plum of her entire clan so, when she suddenly discovered upon her return home that she was pregnant, her parents, in rancour, drove her out of the house. Since the woman had no home to return to, she hired herself out as a spinner in the village during the day and spent her nights inside the public tavern. Ultimately she gave birth to a son but, because having him seemed misfortunate to her, she cast him into a muddy stream. He was not carried away by the current but stayed afloat whilst his body remained dry. For seven days divine beings protected him from harm; in the day these divine beings were two birds whose wings stretched out to cover the child, at night they were two dogs who crouched down beside him as guardians. When his mother saw that his vitality

and body were luminous and his six faculties had remained completely undimmed, she thought how wondrous this was so she picked him up and nurtured him.

When he grew large enough, he took to begging along with his mother. People called him the lad with no clan name, but one astute person remarked facetiously, “Since this child lacks seven of the most fortunate marks, he does not quite match a Tathagata who has all thirty-two.”

Later on the boy and his mother encountered Dōshin traveling on the road to Ōbai Mountain. Seeing that the child’s features were strikingly handsome and not like those of conventional children, Dōshin asked him what his name was and the dialogue given above ensued to the point where Dōshin remained silent, realizing Kōnin’s capacity for training. As a result, he asked the mother’s permission for Kōnin to leave home and serve as his jisha. At that time Kōnin was in his seventh year.

From the time that he crossed to the Other Shore so that he might receive the Kesa, and left home to become a monk so that the Dharma could be Transmitted to him, there was not a single day or night when he lay down, even for an hour or so, during the whole twenty-four hours. He was wont to sit in this manner although never putting a limit on his other duties. Finally, in the year 675 C.E., he remarked to his disciples, “My work has come to an end, therefore I must take my leave.” So saying, he passed away whilst sitting.

There is a name that is not received from one’s father or from the Ancestors, one not passed on from the Buddha or from the Ancestors; we call it the BUDDHA NATURE. The purpose of training in meditation and practising the Way is basically to realize THIS; it is for the sake of making your ORIGINAL NATURE still and bright. If you have not found the SOURCE, you will live in vain and die in vain, bewildered by yourself, bewildered by others.

As to what is called ORIGINAL NATURE, each and every one of us is born and dies over and over again yet, even though face and form may differ, never at any moment do any of us not possess this clear and distinct wisdom. The truth of this can be realized from what happened in the present story. Long ago a forester sought the Dharma Path but, up to the point where, as a child of seven, the Kesa and the Teaching were Transmitted, understanding, of necessity, had not changed because of rebirth; your TRUE NATURE never changes just because your form does!

Meditation Master Wanshi (C. Hung-chih) wrote in an inscription on a portrait of Great Master Kōnin, “Before and after, two bodies; past and present, one NATURE.” Even though two bodies have been supplied, you must understand that the past and the present do not have different natures. It has been this way for immeasurable kalpas so, if you would find the BODY of this ORIGINAL NATURE, from the outset do not try to categorize that NATURE to accord with social distinctions. Because the four social classes are of the same NATURE and your ORIGINAL NATURE is like this, when those of any of the four classes leave home and become monks they are referred to alike as belonging to the Shakya clan in order to make them aware of this absence of disparateness. I am truly not a separate being, nor are you; we merely take on the faces of self and other, just as do past and present bodies. If you cannot discern things in this manner and clarify your understanding, you will, in your confusion, pretend that what is before your very eyes exists and make a distinction between your own body and those of others. As a result you will have emotional attachments to all sorts of things and be infatuated with, or confused by, the times in which you live but, once you can realize this state, even though you were to change your form and alter yourself, how could that possibly disturb the TRUE SELF or alter IT?

You can realize this through the account of the forester and the boy. Since the latter was born without having a legal father,

you must understand that people do not necessarily receive the name of both their parents when they are born so, even though you have emotional attachments to what you see as a physical body, hair and flesh received from your parents, still you should understand that the BODY of which I speak is not the five skandhas. When you have understood that this BODY is like this, then there will be nothing at all that accompanies an 'I', nor has there been anything different from yourself even for an instant. This is why someone of old said, "No sentient being, from kalpas immeasurable, has ever emerged from meditation on the DHARMA-NATURE." When you obtain a physical body and practise in this way, you will quickly succeed in coming face to face with Daiman Kōnin; there will be no distinction between people of different nationalities or differences between past and present times.

Now, how can I make a vital comment that will correspond to this principle?

The moon is so resplendent, the water so pure,  
the autumn sky so clear;  
How could there be even a whisp of cloud  
to bespeck the GREAT IMMACULACY?

CHAPTER 34.

THE THIRTY-THIRD ANCESTOR,  
MEDITATION MASTER DAIKAN ENŌ.

One night, whilst Enō was hard at work in the rice shed at Ōbai, Daiman Kōnin entered and asked, "Is the rice indeed white?" Enō replied, "It is white but it has not yet been winnowed." Daiman struck Enō's rice-pounding mortar thrice with

his staff; Enō shook the rice in the winnowing fan three times then followed Daiman to his quarters.

Enō was of the Ro (C. Lu) clan and originally came from Han'yō (C. Fan-yang). His father, whose name was Gyōtō (C. Hsing-tao, 'Wielder of the Jewel-studded Sword'), had served during the Budoku (C. Wu-te) era, 618–627 C.E., as an official for the provincial district of Jinshū (C. Hsin-chou) in the city of Nankai (C. Nan-hai) where he remained after he lost his government position. Following his father's death, Enō, mindful of his obligations, took care of, and supported, his mother. For a long time the family was painfully destitute with Enō earning a pittance as a wood gatherer. One day, whilst carrying a bundle of kindling into the market-place, he heard a stranger chanting the *Diamond Scripture*. At the point where it says, 'Enkindle that attitude of mind which does not dwell anywhere in particular', he experienced an awakening to his TRUE SELF. Having heard this, Enō asked the stranger what the Scripture was and from whom he had received it. The man answered, "It is called the *Diamond Scripture* and I received it from the acknowledged great teacher Daiman of Ōbai." Enō hastened home to tell his mother of his intention to seek out a teacher for the sake of the Dharma.

Immediately upon his arrival in Shōshū (C. Shao-chou) he met the eminent scholar Ryō Shiryaku (C. Liu Chih-lüeh) who befriended him. Shiryaku's mother-in-law was none other than the female monk Mujinzō (C. Wu-chin-tsang, 'The Inexhaustible Treasure House'). Her custom was to recite the *Nirvana Scripture* and, after Enō had listened to her for a while, he began to comment to her on its meaning whereupon she held out the scroll and asked about a particular word. Enō said to her, "As I do not know how to read characters, please just ask me about the meaning." Mujinzō said, "If you do not know how to read characters, how can you understand the meaning?" Enō



replied, “The wondrous PRINCIPLE OF THE BUDDHAS does not depend on written characters.” Mujinzō, startled by this reply, told the village elders that Enō was a man who was practising the Way and therefore should be given provisions. After this, the residents vied to come and pay their respects to him. There was, in the vicinity, the ancient site of the former Hōrin-ji (C. Pao-lin-ssu, ‘The Precious Grove Monastery’) near Canton, and the people agreed to rebuild it so that Enō could live there. Monks and laity, male and female, gathered like thick banks of fog and, in less than no time, transformed it into a monk’s Treasured Residence.

One day Enō suddenly said to himself, “I am seeking the Great Teaching so how can I possibly stop half-way there?” The next day he left for the hermit retreats in the western caves of Shōraku County (C. Ch’ang-lo) in Szuchuan Province where he met Meditation Master Chien (C. Chih-yüan, ‘He Whose Wisdom Is Far-reaching’) and asked for his assistance in realizing the Way. Chien replied, “I can see from the look of you that your spiritual resources are clearly outstanding and that you are really an extraordinary person. I have heard that Bodaidaruma of the Western Regions has Transmitted the SEAL to Daiman on Ōbai Mountain. You should journey there to investigate how you can resolve the matter of realizing enlightenment.” Enō took his leave and went straightway to Ōbai where he sought an audience with Daiman Kōnin who asked him, “Where do you come from?” Enō answered, “From south of the Southern Pass.” Daiman asked, “What do you want above all else?” Enō replied, “I seek only to become a Buddha.” Daiman then said, “Southerners do not have the BUDDHA NATURE, so how can you realize Buddhahood?” Enō answered, “Amongst people there are Southerners and there are Northerners; what has the BUDDHA NATURE to do with that?” Daiman recognised that here indeed was no ordinary person but, chiding, told him to go to the rice-pounding shed. Enō bowed low and left for the shed

where, for eight months, he laboured hard pounding rice day and night without ceasing.

Daiman, realizing that the time for Transmission had arrived, told his assembly of monks, “The True Teaching is hard to explain; it is not enough to vainly memorize what I say and proclaim it as your own. Let each of you compose a poem according to your own understanding. The one whose phrases tally most profoundly with the intent of the Teaching will receive both the Kesa and the Teaching.” At that time Jinshū (C. Shen-hsiu, ‘He of Spiritual Excellence’), a senior monk in charge of ceremonial training for the more than seven hundred junior members of the Sangha, was well versed in the inner and outer meaning of doctrines so the assembly looked up to him. They all excused themselves from writing a poem, pleading that if it were not the worthy Jinshū, who could possibly be more suited to this task. Jinshū, hearing of the community’s adulation, composed a poem without giving it a second thought. When it was completed he wished to present it to the master and tried to do so several times, but each time that he arrived outside the master’s room his mind became confused and his body broke out in a sweat. Although he was determined to present his verse, he was unable to bring himself to do so. Over the next four days he tried thirteen times to present it but could not. Jinshū then thought, “Why not write it on the corridor wall where the master will see it when passing? If the master should chance to say that it is satisfactory, I can come forth, bow and say that I had composed it; if the master should say that it is inadequate, I can bow to that, then go into the mountains and pass my years there; after all, having received such reverence and respect from others, what better way to train?” That night, at midnight, without informing anyone, he wrote his verse by lantern light on the wall of the south corridor, presenting what his mind had perceived. His poem read,

Our mind is a bodhi tree,  
Our mind like a dressing-stand with its clear mirror;  
Time upon time let us strive to wipe it clean  
And let not dust or dirt abide thereon.

Daiman suddenly spotted this poem whilst passing through the corridor and, upon reading it, knew that it was the work of Jinshū. He praised it, saying, “If succeeding generations put the Teaching of this poem into practice, they too will find the surpassing fruits of Buddhahood,” and had everyone recite it aloud from memory. In the rice shed, Enō overheard the recitation of the poem and asked a fellow lay trainee what the verse was. The trainee replied, “Do you not know that Reverend Master is seeking his Dharma heir and has therefore asked everyone to compose a poem that expresses what is in their heart, and that this is the one that Jinshū has composed? Reverend Master has praised it deeply; he will undoubtedly Transmit the Kesa and the Teaching to him.” Enō asked how the poem went and the trainee recited it. After a long silence, Enō remarked, “It is indeed beautiful but it is not quite complete.” The trainee ridiculed Enō saying, “What does a Southerner know? Do not spout such nonsense!” Enō replied, “You do not doubt what I say, do you? Pray, show your understanding with a poem.” The trainee did not reply; they just looked at each other and smiled. That night Enō asked a boy attendant in the temple to lead him to the selfsame corridor. Then, whilst he himself held a candle, he had the boy write down the following poem next to Jinshū’s:

BODHI is truly not a tree  
Nor is the CLEAR MIRROR a mirrored dressing-stand;  
From the first not a single thing exists  
So from where is dust or dirt to arise?

After seeing this poem, everyone in the monastery, high and low, was saying, “This is truly a poem by a flesh-and-blood

Bodhisattva!” boisterously praising it up and down. Daiman, knowing full well that it was a poem by Enō, made a point of saying, “Who wrote this? To be sure, someone who has not yet seen his TRUE NATURE!” and erased it. As a result everyone in the assembly paid no more heed to it.

When night fell, Daiman entered the rice shed in secret and asked Enō, “Is the rice indeed white?” to which Enō replied, “It is indeed white but it has not yet been winnowed,” whereupon Daiman struck the rice-pounding mortar thrice with his staff and Enō shook the rice in the winnowing fan thrice then followed Daiman to his quarters. Daiman remarked, “All the Buddhas have renounced the world for one great reason; to lead and guide others to the Other Shore in accordance with their natural abilities, great or small. Over time instructions have arisen on the Ten Stages of a Bodhisattva’s development, the Three Vehicles, the sudden and the gradual approaches and so forth as gateways for teaching. Furthermore, the unsurpassed, subtle and profound, perfectly clear, genuine and true EYE AND TREASURY OF THE TRUE LAW was imparted to the Buddha’s senior disciple, the Venerable Makakashō. In turn, IT was Transmitted down through twenty-eight generations of Indian Ancestors to Bodaidaruma. After he arrived in this land he found Great Teacher Eka who, having received IT, passed IT on until IT reached me. Now, by means of the Dharma Treasure and the Transmission Kesa, I hand IT on to you. Guard well, do not let the line become extinct.” Enō, kneeling to receive the Kesa and the Teaching, spoke, “The Teaching I have already received; on whom shall I bestow the Kesa?” Daiman replied, “Long ago, when Bodaidaruma first arrived, there was none who yet had the faith so he passed on the Kesa to make clear that the recipient had realized the Teaching. Nowadays faithful hearts are already ripe and the Kesa may prove a pretext for squabbling and strife. Let it stay with you and do not pass it on further. Moreover, you should seclude yourself in some far

distant place and bide your time until you begin to teach and convert others; the life of him who receives the Kesa hangs as if by a single thread.” When Enō asked where he should hide, Daiman replied, “Wherever it suits you. When coming in contact with others, you would do well to conceal It.” Enō bowed low and, having already offered up the Kesa, took his leave.

There was a river crossing at the foot of Ōbai Mountain; Daiman personally came down to see Enō off. Bowing, Enō said, “Reverend Master, you should return quickly. Having already found the Way, I should ferry myself across.” Daiman replied, “Although you have already found the Way, I should still be the one who ferries you across.” So, taking the pole, Daiman crossed to the far shore with Enō and then returned alone to the monastery. None of the assembly knew of these events.

After this, Daiman no longer gave lectures. Whenever people came to him with their questions, he would reply, “My Way is gone.” When someone asked who was to receive the Master’s Kesa and Teaching, Daiman replied, “The able one has obtained them.” Based on this people speculated on the fact that Layman Ro’s name was Enō (which means ‘The Able One’), but when they went looking for him he had already vanished. Connecting this with the preceding, they guessed that he had obtained the Kesa so they all went hunting for him.

At the time there was a former general of the fourth rank who had awakened to the mind of enlightenment, Emyō (C. Hui-ming, ‘Bright Compassion’) by name. He proceeded to Great Granary Peak (J. Daiyuhō; C. Ta-yu-feng) ahead of the others where he was about to overtake Enō who said to himself, “Since this Kesa symbolizes faith, how can It possibly be taken by force?” Placing the Kesa and his bowl on top of a boulder, he hid himself in the deep grass. When Emyō arrived and tried to remove the Objects he could not lift them, try as he might. Trembling all over, he said, “I have come for the sake of the

Teaching, not for the sake of a robe.” Enō then emerged and sat on a huge rock. Making an obeisance, Emyō said, “I hope the layman will point out the essentials of the Teaching for me.” Enō said, “At the very moment when you are not thinking of either good or evil, what, Senior Monk Emyō, is your ORIGINAL FACE?” Hearing these lucid words, Emyō had a great awakening. He then asked, “Apart from these profound words and their profound meaning, is there anything more of even deeper import?” Enō replied, “What I have spoken for your sake is by no means profound. If you look within, you will find that the PROFOUND lies within you.” Emyō said, “Although I was at Ōbai with Daiman, I had not yet truly taken notice of my own FACE; now that I have received your instructions, it is like drinking water and knowing for oneself whether it is hot or cold. Now, layman, it is you who are Emyō’s master.” Enō replied, “If this is the case, then you and I are fellow disciples of Daiman of Ōbai.” Emyō bowed deeply and returned to Ōbai. Later, after he had been promoted to abbot of the temple, Emyō was to change his name to Dōmyō (C. Tao-ming, ‘He Whose Path is Bright and Unclouded’) in order to avoid the use of the same first syllable as in Enō’s name. When anyone came to train under him personally, he would send them to train under Enō.

Following his receipt of the Kesa and the Teaching, Enō hid himself among a group of hunters in Shie County (C. Ssu-hui) where he passed ten years. Then, on the eighth day of the first lunar month in 676 C.E., he arrived at the southern coast where he met Dharma Master Inshū (C. Yin-tsung, ‘He Who Is Kindred to the Seal’) who was lecturing on the *Nirvana Scripture* at Hosshō-ji (C. Fa-hsing-ssu). Enō had taken up lodging on a verandah when a strong wind began to flap the temple banner, whereupon he heard two monks engaging in an argument with each other. One was saying that it was the banner that was moving, the other that it was the wind that was moving. The debate went back and forth without their being able to agree on the principle. Enō said to them, “Might a member of the laity be

permitted to call a quick end to this lofty debate? Frankly, it is not the wind or the banner that is moving, kind sirs, it is your minds that are moving and nothing more.” Inshū, unseen, heard these words and was dumbfounded by their extraordinary nature. The next day he invited Enō to come to his quarters and questioned him on the meaning of his remark about the wind and the banner. After Enō had explained the principle in detail, Inshū instinctively rose to his feet and said, “O layman, you are indeed no ordinary person. Who is your teacher?” No longer concealing anything, Enō openly related the circumstances of his receiving the Teaching whereupon Inshū made the obeisance of a disciple and asked to be given the essentials of meditation. He told the monks and laity, male and female, who were his followers, “I am just a completely ordinary fellow but I have now met a flesh-and-blood Bodhisattva,” and, pointing to Layman Ro seated amidst the laity, said, “That is he.” He then asked Enō to bring out the Kesa of Faith which had been passed on to him and had everyone bow in reverence before it.

On the eighth day of the second lunar month Enō took the full Precepts from Vinaya Master Chikō (C. Chih-kuang, ‘The Light of Wisdom’) at Hosshō-ji. The altar used for the Precepts ceremony was the very one placed there during the Sung Dynasty by Gunabhadra, the Doctrine Master and a translator of Scriptures who had written in his record of the event, ‘Later there will be a flesh-and-blood Bodhisattva who will take the Precepts at this altar’. Paramartha, another Doctrine Master and translator of Scriptures at the end of the Liang Dynasty, planted two bodhi trees with his own hands on either side of the altar and told the assembly, “After a hundred and twenty years there will be a great, enlightened man who will expound the Unsurpassed Vehicle under these trees and ferry immeasurable numbers of sentient beings to the Other Shore.” Enō took the Precepts under those trees and subsequently opened a monastery on Tōzan (C. Tung-shan) just as had been previously predicted.

A year later, on the eighth day of the second lunar month, Enō suddenly said to the assembly, “I do not wish to remain here; I would like to return to my old hermitage.” Inshū, along with many thousands of monks, accompanied Enō to Hōrin-ji. Ikyo (C. Wei-chū), the governor of Shōshū Province, asked him to turn the Wheel of the Wondrous Dharma at Daibon-ji (C. Ta-fan-ssu) as well as to let him take the Precepts without characteristics (i.e., the Three Refuges). Disciples took down a record of his talks and called them *The Platform Scripture* which they propagated to the world. When this was accomplished he went back to his monastery by the River Sōkei (C. Tsao-chi, ‘Cordial Valley’) and poured down a great rain of Dharma. Those he awakened numbered at least a thousand. During his seventy-sixth year, after having bathed and cleansed himself, he sat in meditation and died.

At the time of Daiman’s transferring the WATER OF THE SPIRIT to Enō’s vessel, Daiman had asked, “Is the rice indeed white?” These grains of rice are indeed the spiritual seedlings of the DHARMA LORD, the life roots of both sage and ordinary person. Although in a wild field whose weeds went unclipped, they once grew tall on their own; now stripped clean of their husks and polished white as the dew, they absorb no dirt or stain, yet, even so, they have not yet been winnowed. If you winnow them back and forth, you will thoroughly know what is within and what is without; up they are tossed, down they are shaken. In Daiman’s striking the mortar thrice, the rice grains automatically fell into their proper place and in a twinkling the power of ORIGINAL NATURE was made manifest. In Enō’s winnowing the rice three times, the department of the Ancestors was Transmitted. Since then, the night when the mortar was struck has not yet known a dawn, the day when Enō’s hands imparted the Dharma has not yet seen a twilight.

Reflect on this! Great Teacher Enō had indeed been a wood-cutter from the South and Layman Ro in the rice shed. He had



wandered the mountains plying his hatchet for a living. Then, even though he had had no formal education or studied the classics in order to illumine his mind, nevertheless, upon hearing a single line of Scripture, he brought forth that attitude of mind which does not dwell anywhere. Even though he toiled in the rice-pounding shed, devoted to pestle and mortar, even though he had not sat in formal training or resolved the matter through spiritual dialogues with a master, in a bare eight months he had, by his diligent industry, nevertheless illumined his mind to the point where he knew that 'the CLEAR MIRROR is not a mirrored dressing-stand'. As a result the imparting of the Teaching was carried out in the middle of the night and the life-line of the Ancestors was continued on. Whilst he did not necessarily require many years of meritorious practice in austerities, clearly it took his concerted and diligent efforts at least for a time. The finding of the Way by the Buddhas has never been something to be measured in terms of long or short periods of time so how could the Way of Transmission for Ancestors and Masters ever be understood in terms of such divisions as past and present?

Over the past ninety days of this summer I have lectured in breadth and depth, given commentaries on things past and present and, employing both rough speech and soft words, called attention to the Buddha and the Ancestors. If you enter into the vague and the picayune or fall into duality or plurality, the customs of our religion will be besmirched and what is unseemly in our monastic family will be elevated. Thus, even though I feel that you have all grasped the principles and gained in strength, in all kindness it would seem that you are still not in perfect accord with the intentions of the Ancestors nor does your deportment entirely resemble that of the ancient sages. Due to great good karma, we have met each other face to face like this. If you are diligently committed to the practice of Buddhism, you will fully realize its fruits but many of you have still not reached the Other Shore, you still have not peeped into

the Hall Within. It has been long since the time of the Buddha; your occupation with the Way is not yet finished. Physical life is difficult to sustain; why trust this matter to the last days of your life? Autumn has begun, summer has already ended; the season has come for you to go your ways, be they to east or west, and, as of old, scatter hither and thither. Having memorized the random word or partial phrase, will you now attempt to parrot it as what I have taught of the Dharma? Will you put forward some smattering of knowledge and call it the conveyance to the Gateway of the Great Vehicle? Even if you have fully found the strength to carry such a load, what is unseemly in our monastic family will still be spread abroad; how much the more so if you preach a foolish, incoherent or dubious brand of Buddhism! If you feel that you want to be truly scrupulous in this matter, do not idly fritter away your days and nights or carry random bits of knowledge away with you.

The mortar struck, its sound piercing high  
beyond the empty blue;  
The clouds are winnowed away,  
the bright moon, deep in the night, shines clear.

## CHAPTER 35.

THE THIRTY-FOURTH ANCESTOR,  
GREAT MASTER SEIGEN GYŌSHI.

Gyōshi, whilst training under Enō at Sōkei-ji, asked his master, “To what should I pay attention so that I do not fall into some category of spiritual attainment?” Enō responded, “What were you doing before you came here?” Gyōshi answered, “I was continually failing to put the Noble Truths into practice.” Enō asked, “In what category are you now?” Gyōshi replied,

“Since I am still not putting the Noble Truths into practice, in what category does that place me?” Enō had a deep feeling that Gyōshi was a vessel for the Teaching.

Gyōshi (C. Hsing-ssu, ‘Mindful of Practice’) came from Anjō (C. An-ch’eng) in Kichishū (C. Chi-chou) and was a child of the Ryū (C. Liu) clan; he left home to become a monk at a very young age. Whenever discussions of Buddhism became lively he would just remain silent; later he heard about the Dharma seat at Sōkei-ji and went to pay his respects whereupon he asked to what he should pay attention in order to avoid falling into some spiritual category and the above dialogue took place up to the point where Enō felt deeply that Gyōshi was a vessel for the Teaching. Although Enō’s disciples were numerous, Gyōshi had pre-eminence among them, not unlike Eka who had remained silent when Bodaidaruma had referred to him at Shōrin-ji as the one who already had his marrow.

One day Enō addressed Gyōshi, saying, “Up until now the Kesa and the Teaching have been passed on together, imparted successively from master to disciple; through possession of the Kesa the faith was displayed and, as a result, the Teaching made its imprint on the hearts and minds of others. I have now acquired so many followers that there is no need for me to grieve that no one may possess faith. Ever since I received the Kesa I have encountered many hardships and, further, the wrangling and rivalry of later generations will undoubtedly be great. The Kesa will therefore remain here to keep watch over the monastery. In your turn, share the Teaching by converting others, and see that the line of succession does not die out.”

After having obtained the Teaching, Gyōshi took up residence in Jōko-ji (C. Ching-chū-ssu) on Seigen Mountain (C. Ch’ing-yüan) in Kichishū; he equalled Enō in converting others. After he accepted Sekitō as his disciple, he was unexpectedly joined by an abundance of his late master’s former

disciples with their colleagues following at their heels. Indeed, he was regarded as the shining light of the Great Mirror as Enō was posthumously called. On the thirteenth day of the twelfth lunar month of 740 C.E., he entered the meditation hall, announced his death to the assembly, then passed away whilst sitting in lotus position. Later he was given the posthumous title of Great Teacher Gusai (C. Hung-chi, 'Liberal in Helping Others').

To remain exceptionally quiet in the face of gregariousness was Gyōshi's extraordinary way of practising Buddhism. With the strength from his efforts at holding his mind attentive he had, in this way, come to ask Enō, "To what should I pay attention so that I do not fall into some category of spiritual attainment?" Take a very close look at this statement; there is ultimately nothing contrived about it. Realizing this, Enō promptly attempted to bring about Gyōshi's awakening by asking him, "What were you doing before you came here?" Without keeping his 'awl' in its tote bag, Gyōshi suddenly showed how sharp its point was by answering, "I was continually failing to put the Noble Truths into practice." This is hearing what is hard to hear, meeting what is difficult to meet. Even when you cease from contrivances, a degree of holding on to a notion of self may persist and this is to make a mistake for you will surely have fallen into the deep pit called 'liberation'. For this reason this state has been known from the past to the present by the name of 'attachment to the Teaching'. Ummon (C. Yün-men, 'The Cloud Gate') called it 'the twofold sickness of the Dharma-body' which arises from not having penetrated beyond this state.

In the above situation Gyōshi not only took responsibility for his duties and obligations, he also came to penetrate beyond them. This is why Enō had asked, "In what category are you now?" For one who is truly in such an ineffable state, there is ultimately neither outside nor inside; no axe blade can ever split

open an edge in the PROFOUND ULTIMATE and this is why Gyōshi asked what categories there were. Having penetrated to such an unclouded state, he had come as far as inquiry could take him, so he said, “Since I am still not putting the Noble Truths into practice, in what category does that place me?” Truly, even were you to try to establish categories or levels of spiritual attainment, since boundary walls have never existed within VOID, against what ledge would you rest your ladder? Those who take this point literally have, from ancient times, succumbed to the view that all phenomena are null and void and have fashioned an interpretation that denies the existence of anything and everything in the whole universe. Since Gyōshi had already proclaimed that he did not put the Holy Truths into practice, how could he possibly limit himself to the notion that phenomena are null and void?

Look carefully to the very essence of this matter! This stage of clarity and open-mindedness is brighter than the full sun. This mysterious, vast and silent TRUE NATURE is not some product of intellectual discrimination, yet IT possesses a clear, distinct, completely bright WISDOM. Although IT does not take on bones and marrow, most assuredly IT has a BODY that conceals nothing. This BODY is no more discernible by movement or stillness than this WISDOM is discernible by perceptual cognition but, because perceptual cognition is also this WISDOM, movement and stillness are likewise not something apart from this BODY. Because of this, even Bodhisattvas who have, step by step, reached the tenth stage of a Bodhisattva’s development may still not see the BUDDHA NATURE clearly. Their seeing the BUDDHA NATURE is not clear because, as the Buddha said, they still maintain that there is a dharma nature and persist in setting up fixed ways to train. Because Buddhas, in the last analysis, do not have fixed ways to train or possess ‘spiritual natures’, their seeing of the BUDDHA NATURE is clear and distinct.

So, without relying on your seeing or hearing and without involving yourself in knowledge of the objective world, try to see THAT which is underneath all this. Beyond doubt there is an alert and astute WISDOM which does not ask anything of others; you will receive the evidence of IT in ways beyond your expectation.

Now, what words can be added to what is happening in this story? When you reach this stage, if you can add some words to the story, then let the TONGUELESS ONE speak. If you can hearken to this principle, then quickly let the EARLESS SOURCE hear and let that PERSON nod and talk and laugh!

A bird in its passage  
leaves no traces of its flight,  
So why look for stages  
on that dark and solitary road  
which leads deep within?

## CHAPTER 36.

THE THIRTY-FIFTH ANCESTOR,  
GREAT TEACHER SEKITŌ KISEN.

When Sekitō went to train with Seigen Gyōshi the latter asked, “Where do you come from?” Sekitō answered, “I come from Sōkei Monastery.” Gyōshi raised his fountain sceptre and asked, “Do they still have this sort of thing at Sōkei?” Sekitō replied, “Not only do they not have it at Sōkei, it also does not exist in India.” Gyōshi said, “But, my child, you have never gone to India, have you?” Sekitō said, “If I had gone, then it would be there!” Gyōshi said, “That is not good enough; go on and say more!” Sekitō replied, “Reverend Monk, you should also take on half the talking; do not depend wholly on this

neophyte!” Gyōshi said, “I do not shirk from talking to you about IT, but I fear lest, afterwards, there will be no one to grasp what IT is.” Sekitō responded, “It is not that no one will grasp IT but that no one will be able to speak about IT!” Gyōshi struck Sekitō with the fountain sceptre whereupon Sekitō had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Sekitō’s personal name was Kisen (C. Hsi-ch’ien), meaning ‘He Who Hopes for Improvement;’ he was an offspring of the Chin (C. Ch’en) clan of Kōan (C. Kao-an) in Tanshū (C. Tuan-chou); whilst his mother was carrying him she took no pleasure in eating meat and other proscribed foods. As a babe in arms, he proved no trouble for his nurse-maid. When he was a young boy, there was a horde of night hunters in a country grotto who were sacrificing cattle and distilling liquor for their many debauched rituals of appeasement which they regularly practised to allay their fear of demons and gods. Sekitō, without warning, went and demolished their deserted hall, snatched away their cattle and returned home. He repeated this a full ten times without the country elders being able to stop him.

In his fourteenth year Sekitō went to Sōkei Monastery where he entered monastic life but without, as yet, taking the Precepts. When Enō was on the verge of announcing his death, Sekitō asked him, “Reverend Monk, since I may still not be able to get at the Truth even after a hundred years from now, on whom ought I to rely?” Enō answered what Sekitō understood as, “Go ponder this.” After Enō had passed from this world, Sekitō sat straight and proper in a quiet place every day, as tranquil as if he had forgotten about life. At that time the chief monk, Reverend Monk Nangaku Ejō (C. Nan-yüeh Huai-jang, ‘He of South Peak Who Surrenders with All His Heart’), asked him, “Since your master has passed away and his seat is now vacant, what are you doing?” Sekitō replied, “I received his dying instruction so I am pondering.” Ejō said, “You have an

elder monastic brother who is a master, Reverend Monk Gyōshi by name, now dwelling on Seigen Mountain. You have a karmic connection with him. What Reverend Master Enō said to you was quite straightforward; it is only you yourself who have wandered off into delusion by taking ‘hsin-ssu ch’ü’ (Go ponder this) for ‘Hsing-ssu ch’ü’ (Go to Gyōshi).”

On the basis of this, Sekitō bowed before the Ancestral altar and went straightway to Seigen Mountain where Gyōshi asked him, “Some say that there are tidings from south of the Onion Range (i.e., from India)?” Sekitō replied, “Some do not say that there are tidings from south of the range.” Gyōshi said, “If that is the case, then where did the Great Treasure House and the Small Treasure House come from?” Sekitō replied, “They have come completely from THAT which is within.” Gyōshi acknowledged that this was so. After this confirmation, it became customary for them to have spiritual dialogues.

One day, Gyōshi raised his fountain sceptre and asked, “Do they still have this sort of thing at Sōkei?” Sekitō replied, “Not only do they not have it at Sōkei, it also does not exist in India.” In the past as well as in the present the fountain sceptre is raised to reveal its direct CAUSE, to incite someone to thrust open locked doors to enlightenment, to cut someone off from taking a side road or to get someone to proceed directly to IT quickly. Gyōshi was also making such a display, in this case to test Sekitō’s understanding. However Sekitō had not yet grasped what Gyōshi meant by ‘this sort of thing’ and still kept his focus on the raised sceptre; thus he said, “Not only do they not have it at Sōkei, it also does not exist in India.” After all, by raising a sceptre in this way, what kind of ‘Sōkei’ or ‘India’ can you give rise to? What is viewed in this manner still amounts to a verbal understanding of external things. This is why Gyōshi, restraining himself, said, “But, my child, you have never gone to India, have you?” Even then, Sekitō did not grasp what was being said and, without forgetting himself for even a



moment, quickly replied, “If I had gone, then it would be there!” Although you may have already manifested enlightenment, if you do not know that IT exists, then you are not an ‘enlightened’ person. Therefore, again displaying IT, Gyōshi said, “That is not good enough; go on and say more!” He was truly acting with great benevolence and compassion, dragging IT through the mud and water so that he could display IT in greater detail. As there was no way for him to anticipate this remark, Sekitō said, “Reverend Monk, you should also take on half the talking; do not depend wholly on this neophyte!” Since they had met each other face to face in this way and had conversed in this manner, how could the whole of IT ever be expressed in words even if both Transmitted a half? Even were the whole universe to collapse and the SUBSTANCE of the raising of the sceptre alone be revealed, this would still be going only half-way there. This place is still to be found by yourself, not by your borrowing from the resources of another; how can you get someone else to understand if you do not depend on them absolutely when you would subtly communicate your unseen message to them as you advance one step to go the second half of the way?

Simply, you have always had IT from the first. This is why Gyōshi said, “I do not shirk from talking to you about IT, but I fear lest, afterwards, there will be no one to grasp what IT is.” You may talk about what is painful or describe what is bitter but, if someone else has no experience of pain piercing his bones or of bitterness splitting his tongue, then, in the end, there is no way for him to grasp what you are talking about; this is why there is no way to grasp what IT is through words. Because this is the way that things are, it is common sense not to use words arbitrarily, or perform meaningless actions, in an attempt to display IT; in this way we come to protect IT. Sekitō, being still attached to his understanding that IT is something separate from things, did not realize that a subtle point was being conveyed. Unable to discern IT carefully, he said, “It is not that

no one will grasp what IT is but that no one can speak about IT!” Sekitō may well have spoken like this but, upon reaching this stage, how could someone not have something to say? Upon reaching this stage what has he grasped? He was still seeking outside himself; he had vainly separated himself from the INNER PROOF. Therefore, to make him realize quickly that THIS SORT OF THING exists, to make him know immediately that he has an ORIGINAL HEAD, Gyōshi struck him with the fountain sceptre; because he ‘beat the grass and startled the snake’, Sekitō had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

By means of this story thoroughly investigate the whole of what was perceived from beginning to end as well as Sekitō’s penetration of the TRUE PROOF so that you know in detail what was seen and are intimate with the understanding Sekitō had found. When Sekitō said, “Not only do they not have it at Sōkei, it also does not exist in India,” he succeeded in splitting apart Heaven and Earth and making his TRUE BODY completely visible. Even so, he still recognised a self which was unfortunate; that is why he could talk in such a grand way. In the end he knew that when the sceptre was raised his TRUE BODY was completely visible and when he was hit he also knew that IT exists.

In recent times people who come to meditate feast idly on sounds, forms and colours or chase after what they see and hear. Although they have memorized the sayings of the Buddha and Ancestors and have involved themselves to some extent with the thread of meaning that runs through the thoughts, they have still realized nothing even though they may say, “Not in India or at Sōkei.” If you are like this, despite the fact that you have shaved your head and dyed your robes in order to resemble the Buddha, you will never emerge from the chains that imprison you in the three temporal worlds. How will you be able to call a halt to your comings and goings in the six realms of existence if you are thus? What a pity it is to vainly hang a monk’s robe on a wooden figure! The heart of this lies in the Buddha’s saying,

“They are no longer disciples of the Buddha; they are nameless and no different from a wooden figure!” If you meaninglessly squander the alms of the faithful all your life, you can expect great grief when you have to swallow red-hot iron balls in some hell. At that time the karmic fruits of repentance will be many indeed!

If you look into your mind thoroughly and probe deeply within yourself until you can reach that point where you make your TRUE BODY completely visible as Sekitō first did, you will find that neither Sōkei nor India exists so where do you come from or go to? At this stage where there is freedom from wrong views, the monastic robe is not worn arbitrarily. Sekitō, upon being struck with the sceptre, realized that IT does exist and promptly forgot the self in knowing the SELF. In the midst of death he was capable of life; within the darkness his TRUE EYE was revealed. This is the very subtle issue that lies beneath a monk’s kesa.

Because Sekitō now perceived and understood things in this way he often went to the South Temple on Ox-yoke Mountain (J. Kōzan; C. Heng-shan). This was from the beginning of the Tenbō (C. T’ien-pao, ‘Heavenly Treasure’) era of the T’ang Dynasty, 742 C.E. To the east of the temple there was a huge stalagmite that resembled a lookout tower whose top formed a small retreat; it was here that he received the name of Sekitō Oshō (C. Shih-t’ou Ho-shang, ‘The Stony-headed Monk’). One day, whilst reading *The Discourses of the Monk Chō* (J. ‘Chōron;’ C. ‘Ch’ao Lun’) he came to the place where it says, ‘Does only a sage understand that the myriad things which comprise the universe are his self?’ He thumped his desk and said, “A sage has no self and there is nothing that is not of the SELF. The DHARMA-BODY is beyond form; who speaks of self and other? The PERFECT MIRROR is wondrously clear and bright; within it myriad images appear spontaneously with the mystery of the SUBSTANCE. The objects of perception and the

enlightened wisdom that contemplates them are not one and the same thing. Who says they come and go? How did he arrive at such wondrous words?" He then rolled up the scroll and, before he was aware of it, fell into a sleep in which he dreamt that he and Enō were riding together on the back of a turtle which was swimming about inside a deep body of water. Upon awakening he interpreted his dream as follows, "The marvellous turtle is ENLIGHTENED WISDOM, the sea is the BUDDHA NATURE. Our Ancestor Enō and I were riding on the Divine Wisdom which wanders where It will through the waters of the BUDDHA NATURE." Shortly after that he composed his poem 'Sandōkai' which has been widely circulated.

His spiritual wisdom was truly equal to that of Enō's and no different from that of Gyōshi's. He once said in a lecture to the monks, "My gateway to the Teaching is one passed down to me from the first Buddha; by realizing the enlightened awareness of Buddha, without making an issue of zeal in meditation, the BODY ITSELF is BUDDHA. The terms 'Original Nature', 'Buddha' and 'sentient beings', as well as 'enlightenment' and 'defiling passions', may be different but their SUBSTANCE is one and the same. You should all know that the SUBSTANCE of your own intelligence is separate from annihilation or permanence; your TRUE NATURE is neither dirty nor clean. Profound and clear, perfect and complete, the mundane and the saintly are one and the same; IT functions freely apart from will, intention and consciousness. The three temporal worlds and the six realms of existence are merely ORIGINAL NATURE manifesting ITSELF like the moon in water or images in a mirror; how could there possibly be birth and death? If you can realize this, there will be nothing that is not perfect." The above really makes Heaven and Earth collapse in ruins; had he not had his personal vision, he could not have spoken in this way. By having grasped why he was struck, and by clearly making IT evident, he took his place as the Thirty-fifth Ancestor. How can

the SPIRITUAL NATURE of anyone be separated from that of any other? According to whether or not you have given rise to the intention to find your TRUE NATURE and to whether or not you have met an enlightened master, the forms that the vicissitudes of your life will take may differ, the quality of your pain and pleasure may not be the same.

What can we see in this previous account? Do you people wish to hear?

A single raising of the fountain sceptre  
gave rise to everything possible,  
Yet Sekitō never climbed even a smidgeon  
beyond the proper limits.

CHAPTER 37.

THE THIRTY-SIXTH ANCESTOR,  
GREAT MASTER YAKUSAN IGEN.

When Yakusan went to train under Sekitō he said to the master, “I have a rough understanding of the Three Vehicles and the Twelve Divisions of the Scriptures but I have heard that, in the South, they directly point to a person’s ORIGINAL NATURE so that he may see IT and become Buddha. I really do not comprehend this yet and beg, on bended knees, that you, Reverend Monk, out of your compassion, will point IT out to me.” Sekitō responded, “You will not find IT if I assert that ‘IT is indeed like this’, nor will you find IT if I assert that ‘IT is indeed not like this’ and you will certainly not find IT if I assert that ‘IT is and is not like this’. What will you do to bring IT forth?” Since Yakusan was at a loss as to how to handle this question, Sekitō said, “Your spiritual relationship with a master does not lie here with me. Go and see Great Teacher

Baso (C. Ma-tzu).” When Yakusan once again posed his question, this time to Baso, the latter replied, “There are times when I make HIM raise HIS eyebrows and blink in surprise and there are times when I do not do so; there are times when it is good for HIM to raise HIS eyebrows and blink and there are times when it is not. What are you doing to bring IT forth?” At these words Yakusan had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF and, without ceremony, bowed to Baso who said, “What principle have you seen that you bow like this?” Yakusan replied, “When I was with Sekitō I was like a mosquito climbing over an iron ox trying to find a place to bite.” Baso said, “You already have; guard well! Even so, your master is Sekitō.”

Yakusan’s personal name was Igen (C. Wei-yen, ‘Dignity Personified’); he was of the Kan (C. Han) clan in Kōshū (C. Chiang-chou). In his seventeenth year he left home to become a monk under Meditation Master Saizan Eshō (C. Hsi-shan Hui-chao, ‘He of the Western Mountain Who Confers Illumination’) in Chōyō (C. Ch’ao-yang). After having taken the Precepts from Vinaya Master Kisō (C. Hsi-ts’ao, ‘He Whose Restraint Is Extraordinary’) of Ox-yoke Peak, he gained acclaim for being well-versed in the Scriptures and the Commentaries as well as for his strict adherence to the Precepts and the monastic rules. One day he lamented to himself, “A virtuous person ought to lay aside the Dharma and purify himself. Who can crunch through all the trifling details of conduct as if they were so many crumbs to be wiped up with a napkin?” He immediately went to Sekitō’s quarters where he said to him, “I have a rough understanding of the Three Vehicles and the Twelve Divisions of the Scriptures” continuing up to the moment when Baso said for him to guard well.

He attended on Baso for three years then, one day, Baso asked him, “Speaking from your own perspective, what are you doing these days to bring IT forth?” Yakusan replied, “My skin

has been completely cast off; there is only the ONE REALITY.” Baso said, “What you have realized can be called the harmonization of body and mind and it has spread throughout your body. Since you have already realized such a condition, brace up your abdomen with three lengths of bamboo splint and go into the mountains to find some suitable abode from which to teach.” Yakusan replied, “Who am I to presume to call myself an abbot of a mountain monastery?” Baso answered, “If you do not do so, you will still not have a constant going on without stopping nor a constant abiding without going in and out. Even though you may want to benefit others, there will be no way for you to benefit them; even though you may want to practise, there will not be anything for you to do. You should build your boat to ferry sentient beings to the Other Shore and not stay here for long.” Having heard what Baso said, Yakusan returned to Sekitō.

One day, whilst Yakusan was sitting in meditation, Sekitō sat down beside him and asked, “What are you doing here?” Yakusan replied, “I am not doing anything at all.” Sekitō remarked, “If that is the case, then you are idling.” Yakusan replied, “Were I idling, then I would be doing something.” Sekitō responded, “You say that you are not doing anything; what kind of thing is ‘not doing’?” Yakusan replied, “Even a thousand sages have not perceived IT.” To praise Yakusan, Sekitō composed a poem:

Though from the beginning WE have dwelt together,  
yet I know not HIS name;  
Together, riding the tide, WE just go on;  
Since ancient times the eminent and lofty  
have never perceived IT  
So how can the ordinary run of people,  
with all their hustle and bustle,  
possibly discern IT?

Later, whilst handing down Teaching, Sekitō said, “Speech and actions have no connection with IT.” Yakusan commented, “Silence and inactivity also have no connection with IT.” Sekitō said, “With me, the mosquito jabs his needle but it does not penetrate.” Yakusan said, “With me, it is like planting flowers atop a stone.” Sekitō agreed with this. Yakusan later took up residence on Medicine Mountain (J. Yakusan; C. Yüeh-shan), whence his name, in Hōshū (C. Feng-chou) where a mass of disciples gathered about him like clouds.

From the preceding account it should be clear that the two branches of Seigen (i.e., Sekitō’s master) and Nangaku (i.e., Baso’s master) are in no wise different. Actually they are the two horns of Enō (i.e., master of both Seigen Gyōshi and Nangaku Ejō), the white ox glistening far off in a field of dew. Yakusan was trained by one and enlightened by the other, he was Transmitted by the former and was the successor of the latter; there is not a hair’s difference between the two.

Yakusan had first asked, “I have a rough understanding of the Twelve Divisions of the Scriptures but what is the principle of the direct pointing to a person’s ORIGINAL NATURE so that he may see IT and become a Buddha?” To express this state properly, Sekitō had replied, “You will not find IT if I assert that ‘IT is indeed like this’, nor will you find IT if I assert that ‘IT is indeed not like this’ and you will certainly not find IT if I assert that ‘IT is and is not like this’.” At this juncture there is nowhere for Yakusan to set up a self and no way for him to doubt the OTHER which is why Sekitō had explained the matter as he did. Even so, Yakusan, at this stage, duly clung to what is ungraspable and, as a consequence, did not understand the import of Sekitō’s words; he just stood and thought for a while. Sekitō then sent Yakusan west of the Yangtze River so that Baso could explain the matter in his stead.

Baso, grasping Yakusan’s frame of mind, said in Sekitō’s place, “There are times when I cause HIM to raise HIS eyebrows



and blink in surprise and there are times when I do not do so; there are times when it is good for HIM to raise HIS eyebrows and blink and there are times when it is not.” When Baso had explained to Yakusan that IT varies according to the occasion, Yakusan, at that moment, awoke to SPIRITUAL REALITY and he knew that, truly, from the raising of the eyebrows and the blinking of the eyes to seeing, hearing, experiencing, knowing, moving, utilizing, coming and going, all exist, so, when he bowed abruptly, Baso said, “What is the principle that you have seen that you should bow like this?” Yakusan replied, “When I was with Sekitō I was like a mosquito climbing over an iron ox trying to find a place to bite.” There was nowhere for him to stick in his needle-like nose; his views and opinions had come to an end, his judgments and explanations had vanished. Although he himself did not realize it, he was already a REAL PERSON.

Later, Baso asked him, “What are you doing these days to bring IT forth?” Now able to perceive that not a single mote of dust remained, that not a hairline flaw existed, Yakusan said, “My skin has been completely cast off; only the ONE REALITY remains.” It is exceedingly difficult to reach this state in one’s training, this is why Baso praised him so by saying, “What you have realized can be called the harmonization of body and mind and there is no place within your body that it has not reached, nowhere it has not permeated.” Up until the time when he could express the fact that he was not doing anything at all he knew that, even though his experiences and activities had been infinitely varied, they nevertheless had been like flowers planted atop a stone, they left no traces.

At first he had been suspicious of the direct pointing to a person’s ORIGINAL NATURE but, through seeking after this, he was shown the ONE who raises HIS eyebrows and blinks and this caused his great awakening. When preaching the Dharma to assemblies he would say, “I am now speaking these words

to you in order to reveal the depths that lie beyond words for THAT which lies beyond has no countenance with eyes, ears or any other sense organ.” Because his good and virtuous behaviour actually had its true place at the beginning (with his training under Sekitō) and in the middle (with his training under Baso), in the end his good and virtuous behaviour revealed its true place for the sake of saving others. Since this is so, you who have come here to train and study should apply yourselves as Yakusan did.

Whilst it is true that Ancestors and Masters are not superior or inferior to each other in the virtues, nevertheless Yakusan was notably lofty in his handling of the potential of others and was especially abstemious in his personal observances of Precepts and monastic rules. This is why it is said that he had fewer than twenty in his community. That he had so few was due to this abstemiousness; people could not endure the hunger and the cold. Even so there were many monks and laymen who practised the Way under him, including Ungan, Dōgo and Sensu (C. Yün-yen, Tao-wu and Ch’uan-tzu), as well as the novice Kō (C. Kao), the layman Ji (C. Erh) and Lord Ri Kō (C. Li Ao). Thus, as students of the Way, you should make thorough and skillful practice your primary endeavour and, above all, pay no attention to worldly preferences. Monks such as Ungan, Dōgo and Sensu were like this and alike in their determination so they spent forty years without resting their ribs on their platforms. Unless you have a congregation that practises the Way, you do not have monks like this. Thus, as fine practitioners of meditation, you should pray to be brothers to Ungan and Dōgo and expect to train hard until you reach the level of Baso and Sekitō.

Do you not see? THAT which causes the eyebrows to raise and the eyes to blink is fine and is not fine! This stage leaves no room for doubt; people are already perfect just as they are. When you attempt to know this place, such forms as ears or eyes no longer exist; this is why HE is not something that can

be discerned by seeing or hearing. All, without exception, is 'without doing anything'. Furthermore, from the very beginning HE has always been dwelling with you; even though you ultimately do not know HIS name, nevertheless HE carries you along with HIS tide. There is this also. HE causes you to be born, HE causes you to die, HE causes you to come and go, to move and use things, HE causes you to see and hear, realize and know. HE is undoubtedly the THAT WHICH IS.

Do not seek the TRUE LAW outside yourself. How can you possibly hope to see your BUDDHA NATURE at some other time than right now? Granting that the Three Vehicles and the Twelve Divisions of the Scriptures point to this PRINCIPLE, no sentient being whatever is cut off from experiencing IT, so why would you possibly seek evidence of IT elsewhere than within yourself? Know that you are, right now, raising HIS eyebrows and making HIS eyes blink! If you but take a look at the ONE who sees and hears, realizes and knows, none of you will doubt what is on the tip of the tongues of the old monks.

Now, how can I leave a footnote for this principle?

That lively STRANGER  
who is always so vigorous and bold;  
Whenever you call to HIM, you make HIM be the ONE  
whose eyebrows raise and eyes twinkle.

CHAPTER 38.

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ANCESTOR,  
GREAT MASTER UNGAN DONJŌ.

Ungan first trained, and served under, Hyakujō for twenty years. Later, after Hyakujō's death, he went to train under Yakusan who asked him, "What Teaching did Hyakujō stress?"

Ungan replied, “Once Hyakujō entered the meditation hall to give a lecture. The great assembly were standing there when, brandishing his staff, he all at once sent them scurrying out. He called them back and, as they turned their heads toward him, he said, ‘What is IT?’” Yakusan responded, “Why did you not say this sooner? Today, thanks to you, I have been able to lay eyes on my elder brother Hyakujō.” Upon hearing these words, Ungan had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Ungan was an offspring of the Ō (C. Wang) clan of Kenshō (C. Chien-ch’ang) in Shōryō (C. Chung-ling); whilst still young he left home to become a monk at Sekimon (C. Shih-men). He studied with Meditation Master Hyakujō Ekai (C. Pai-chang Huai-hai, ‘He of the Thousand-foot Mountain Who Is a Sea of Affection’) for twenty years but without forming a binding master-disciple relationship. Later, when he had an audience with Yakusan and was asked where he came from, Ungan answered, “I have come from Hyakujō.” Yakusan inquired, “What words or phrases did Hyakujō have for pointing out the BUDDHA NATURE to his assembly?” Ungan replied, “He was wont to remark, ‘I have a saying that all the hundred flavours are complete in themselves.’” Yakusan said, “Brackish water has a salty flavour, fresh water is flavourless, what is neither brackish nor fresh is the CONSTANT FLAVOUR. What does the saying that all the hundred flavours are complete in themselves mean?” Ungan had no reply. Yakusan said, “What are you doing about birth and death which are right in front of you?” Ungan said, “There is no birth and death right in front of me.” Yakusan said, “How long were you with Hyakujō?” Ungan replied, “Twenty years.” Yakusan said, “Twenty years with Hyakujō and you still have not rid yourself of your worldliness!”

On another occasion, when Ungan was attending on Yakusan, the latter again asked what Teachings Hyakujō stressed.

Ungan answered, “Sometimes he would say, ‘Eliminate everything except the three questions that point to the BUDDHA NATURE; understand that IT is outside the six logical categories of substance, quality, motion, generality, particularity and inherence.’” Yakusan said, “You have gone three thousand miles and still have not made the connection with THAT which is good.” He also asked, “What other Teaching did Hyakujō stress?” Ungan replied, “Once Hyakujō entered the meditation hall to give a lecture,” continuing up to the point where Ungan, having heard Yakusan’s words, had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

Now meditation practice in Buddhist training has always taken, as its essential focus, the seeing of ORIGINAL NATURE clearly and spiritually grasping ITS purpose. This is why the monk Ungan had gone to study under Hyakujō for twenty years, nevertheless the two did not form a binding master-disciple relationship; afterwards Ungan trained under Yakusan. Do not extol long training and rigorous study on the basis of this, just make realizing ORIGINAL NATURE clearly the foundation of your efforts. Fulfilling the relationship does not depend on a beginner’s attitude of mind or on the attitude of mind of one already seasoned; it is the result of past life karma. It was not that Hyakujō was not ‘the right person’, only that he was not suited to fulfill the relationship.

Being a good teacher is not a matter of assembling disciples and nurturing them; it is simply a matter of trying, as the REAL PERSON, to get them to penetrate directly to the ROOT SOURCE and quickly grasp that their ORIGINAL NATURE is. This is what was behind the ancients asking someone where he came from. Pilgrimages were undertaken to try out teachers, so teachers endeavoured to keep in mind where a person was coming from. They would also ask why the person had come so as to discern the depth of his resolve and try to learn how far he had distanced himself from worldly affairs, thus, in the

present instance, Yakusan asked Ugan where he had come from.

So that it would be clear that he had not come on a whim whilst wandering about the countryside aimlessly visiting monasteries, Ugan answered, “I have come from Hyakujō.” Yakusan and Hyakujō were both serving as heads of temples representing, respectively, the Seigen and Nangaku lineages and this fact was behind Yakusan’s asking what Hyakujō was teaching his assembly. At this point, if Ugan had already realized the TRUTH, he would have offered the depth of his own understanding based on what he had learned from listening to Hyakujō instead of only parroting the master by saying, “He is wont to remark, ‘I have a saying that all the hundred flavours are complete in themselves.’” This single saying is indisputably complete, indisputably perfect, but are you people capable of hearing this explanation? To help Ugan discern more carefully, Yakusan said, “Brackish water has a salty flavour and fresh water is flavourless; what is neither brackish nor fresh is the CONSTANT FLAVOUR. What does the saying that all the hundred flavours are complete in themselves mean?” Sure enough, Ugan had heard the saying but he had not got to the bottom of it; in a fog, he had used the ears that he was born with and no more knew the answer than he would have by vainly listening to the croaking of a bullfrog. This is why Yakusan had asked, “What are you doing about birth and death which are right before your eyes?” This is really something of the utmost importance to beginner and seasoned monk alike! Change is swift in coming and the matter of birth and death is grave indeed. Even though you set out on a pilgrimage with fresh intentions and are decked out in monastic robes and hood, if you are not clear in your mind about this matter of birth and death and do not find the path to liberation, you will not know that secretmost issue which lies beneath a monk’s kesa. As a result, you will never step out from the bird-cage of the

three worlds of time and will find it hard to escape from your slavish attachment to birth and death. In truth, this is like donning monastic robes for no good purpose and holding out your begging bowl under false pretences. Therefore, in order to make Ungan a person who had indeed realized the TRUTH, Yakusan did not have him idle away his time by asking him the first question that popped into his head. Accordingly, Ungan answered, “There is no birth and death right in front of me.” When you have arrived at the place where you yourself are at ease and have completely achieved the original intention of your pilgrimage, you will not have a viewpoint like this.

When Yakusan asked, “How long were you with Hyakujō?” he was asking, “Up until you went on your pilgrimage, how many years had you trained in the Way?” Accordingly, Ungan replied, “Twenty years.” He had truly been training hard for the sake of the Way of the Ancestors without being idle for a second through the whole twenty-four hours of a day yet now it seemed as if he had vainly squandered twenty years of his life. This is why Yakusan had declared, “Twenty years with Hyakujō and you still have not rid yourself of your worldliness!” Even if you comprehend that there is no birth and death, have come to see that there is no self or other but, from such a viewpoint, do not perceive your own ORIGINAL HEAD, you are certainly not at the point of ‘letting go of your grip upon the cliff’s edge’. If you do not turn yourself around quickly to the period between death and rebirth, you will still not have rid yourself of your worldliness; you will not have broken free from your perceptions and feelings, much less escaped from their prison. How sad this is!

Because of this Yakusan repeatedly questioned Ungan with great care in order to get him to arrive at the Other Shore but Ungan was still not at the point where he had awakened to the realization of this. Even though he had gone beyond the six categories of logic, an iron hammer-head without a handle hole

does not make for a model to copy; even though he had disconnected himself from the crossroads of a myriad distinctions, he still was not living in his own ORIGINAL BRIGHTNESS. By saying, “You have gone three thousand miles and still have not made the connection with THAT which is good,” Yakusan pointed out to Ungan once again that his coming and their meeting face to face seemed empty and useless. At this point Ungan had cited Hyakujō’s question about the monks departing from the meditation hall but still this was something that had been passed on via the tongue of another; Ungan had not reached his own place of proof, however, even as he brought up this story, what he told in no way diverged from the traditions of Zen. This is why Yakusan had replied, “Why did you not say this sooner? Today, thanks to you, I have been able to lay eyes on my elder brother Hyakujō.”

The meaning of ‘The great assembly were standing there when, brandishing his staff, he sent them scurrying out’ is actually this; he was causing them to be independent and non-attached. There is no need to concern ourselves with inquiring further into the significance of this but, even so, had he let it go at this, it was likely that in the end they would not have gained anything from his Teaching even if incalculable kalpas were to pass. As a consequence, in order to create a gap and startle them, he called out to the great assembly in a loud voice. When you deliver a blow to the south side, you get the north side to move, hence they instinctively turned to look; it seems that they were nodding their heads as if they comprehended but without ultimately giving a thought to spiritual awakening. This is why Hyakujō said, “What is IT?” Regrettably, not one of Hyakujō’s disciples understood the least bit of what he was doing and saying. Although in that immediate situation no one had said a word, far off, Yakusan was to remark, “Thanks to you I have been able to lay eyes on my elder brother Hyakujō.” Actually, when one ancient master came out with a phrase like this about



such an enlightened state, another master would say that the two of them had indeed met face to face. This truly resembles sayings such as ‘A thousand miles apart, yet the same wind blows on each of us’ and ‘Not even a thread separates us’.

Thus it was that Ungan trained first with Hyakujō and then succeeded in scaling Mount Yakusan until finally, without any gap between master and disciple, the two met and there was a realization of the TRUTH. When you grasp what this state is, not only will you yourself have no doubts about the ETERNAL, you will also be able to see with a single glance, and cut down with one sweep of your scythe, all the Buddhas in the three worlds, the Sixth Chinese Ancestor Enō and any kesa-clad monk that has nostrils, right away meet face to face with Yakusan and Hyakujō and straightway stand eyeball to eyeball with Ungan and Dōgo.

Now, how am I to convey this principle? Do you all wish to hear?

The solitary boat, without rocking and pitching,  
advances toward the moon;  
If you but look back, behold,  
the duckweed that floats beside the old shore  
is still not moving!

CHAPTER 39.

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH ANCESTOR,  
GREAT MASTER TŌZAN RYŌKAI.

Whilst training under Ungan, Tōzan asked him, “Who can hear the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient?” Ungan replied, “The NON-SENTIENT can hear the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient.” Tōzan said, “Reverend Monk, do

you hear it?” Ungan said, “If I could hear it, you would not be able to hear my teaching of the Dharma.” Tōzan said, “If that is the way things are, then I, Ryōkai, indeed do not hear the Reverend Monk’s teaching of the Dharma.” Ungan said, “If you have not yet heard my teaching of the Dharma, how can you possibly expect to hear the teaching of the Dharma by the NON-SENTIENT?” Thereupon Tōzan had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF and presented Ungan with a poem:

Wondrous, wondrous indeed!  
The Dharma teaching of the NON-SENTIENT  
is beyond imagining or words;  
Listening with your ears,  
you will find IT hard to comprehend  
But, hearing ITS sound with your eyes,  
you can know IT directly!

Ungan gave his approval to this.

Tōzan’s personal name was Ryōkai (C. Liang-chieh, ‘The Good Servant’); he was from Kaikei (C. Hui-chi) and his family was of the Yu (C. Yü) clan. When still a child, he was once following a teacher, reciting *The Scripture of Great Wisdom*. When he reached the passage that says, ‘There is no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind’, Tōzan immediately felt his face with his hand and said to the teacher, “I have eyes, ears, a nose, a tongue and so on; why does the Scripture say that I do not?” The teacher, startled by this, said with regret, “I am not the teacher for you.” Thereupon he directed the boy to Meditation Master Reimoku (C. Ling-mo, ‘He of Courteous Bows’) at Five Springs Mountain (J. Gosetsuzan; C. Wu-hsieh-shan) where he donned the robe of a novice and shaved his head. At twenty-one, he went to Mount Sū Monastery where he took the full Precepts.

Tōzan was his mother’s favourite; his elder brother was already dead, his younger one was penniless and his father had

also passed away. Once Tōzan had become attached to the teaching of shunyata, he took leave of his mother, vowing that he would never return to his former home or see his relatives again until he had realized enlightenment. Having made such a vow, he left his home town and, once he had completed his monastic training and studies, took up residence on Tōzan, whence his name. His mother, it seems, had no one to take care of her now that she was separated from her only child; day after day she searched for him until finally she was reduced to beggary and wandered about with others in her condition. Learning that her son was living on Tōzan, she went there and, driven by her yearnings for him, tried to see him. Tōzan firmly refused to meet with her and locked himself in the abbot's quarters so that she could not enter; this was done to avoid a face-to-face meeting. As a result of this, his mother was filled with regret and died of grief outside this room; after her passing, Tōzan himself went out to her. He found among her effects three cupfuls of rice which she had begged so he mixed this into the monks' customary morning gruel which he offered to them as a memorial for his mother that she might be reborn in some heaven. Not long after, his mother appeared to him in a dream and said, "Because you held firm to your intention and therefore would not see me, my deluded feelings of covetous attachment have been instantly severed and, due to the strength of such good karmic roots, I have been reborn in the Trayastrimsha heaven."

Among Ancestors and Masters there are none better or worse in their virtue. Yet Tōzan, as an ancient Ancestor of this gateway of ours, specifically revived a custom of our religious branch through his strength of resolve to leave family behind in order to hold firm to his intention to realize enlightenment. With this strength of resolve as the foundation of his practice and study, he first visited Nansen's (C. Nan-ch'üan) community just at the time of their memorial commemorating Baso's death. Whilst making preparations for the service, Nansen said to his

assembly, “Tomorrow, when we make our food offering at Baso’s memorial, I wonder whether Baso will return or not.” None in Nansen’s congregation replied so Tōzan came forth and said, “He is waiting until he has a companion, then he will come.” Nansen said, “Although young, you are quite a fit gem for cutting and polishing!” Tōzan replied, “Reverend Monk, pray do not repress what is good and make it worthless.”

Afterwards he went to Isan (C. Kuei-shan) and told him, “I recently heard National Teacher Echū (C. Hui-chung, ‘Faithful to Compassion’) of Mount Nan’yō (C. Nan-yang) give a talk on the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient. I have still not pierced its subtlety.” Isan asked him if he recalled the talk and Tōzan replied that he did. When Isan then asked him to recount the event, Tōzan gave the following account:

A monk asked Echū, “What is the NATURE of the ancient Buddhas like?” Echū replied, “Fences and walls, tiles and pebbles.” The monk commented, “But are not fences, walls, tiles and pebbles non-sentient things?” Echū answered that they were. The monk asked, “Do they comprehend what teaching the Dharma is?” Echū said, “They constantly teach, vigorously teach, ceaselessly and without rest.” The monk said, “Then why can I not hear them?” Echū replied, “Just because you fail to hear cannot prevent others from hearing.” The monk said, “It is not clear to me who can hear them.” Echū said, “All who are saintly can hear them.” The monk replied, “Reverend Monk, do you hear them?” Echū said, “No, I do not.” The monk said, “Reverend Monk, since you do not hear them, how do you know that the non-sentient comprehend what teaching the Dharma is?” Echū replied, “Hopefully I do not hear them for, if I heard them, I would be just like all the saintly and then you would indeed not hear my preaching of the Dharma.” The monk said, “If that is so, then are they irrelevant for sentient beings?” Echū said, “It is for the benefit of sentient beings that I teach the Dharma, I do not teach it for the benefit of the saintly.” The

monk asked, “What happens after sentient beings hear them?” Echū said, “They are no longer sentient beings.” The monk said, “On what Scriptural text is ‘the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient’ based?” Echū said, “Obviously, what I say has to accord with Scriptures otherwise you gentlemen would not discuss it. Surely you have seen in the *Avatamsaka Scripture* the passage, ‘Temples teach, sentient things teach; everything in the three worlds of time teaches’.”

When Tōzan had finished the whole account, Isan said, “I have IT here with me too, only it is rare to encounter a REAL PERSON.” Tōzan respectfully asked, “Since I am not yet clear about the matter, would you please instruct me?” Isan raised up his fountain sceptre and asked, “Do you comprehend?” Tōzan said, “No, I do not. Pray, Reverend Monk, explain it to me.” Isan replied, “Speech born of father and mother will never explain IT for you.” Tōzan asked, “Is there anyone else who longed to seek the Way at the same time as you?” Isan said, “Go to Reiryō (C. Li-ling) in Shūken (C. Yu-hsien) where you will find, in a hermit’s cave, Ungan, a man who has attained the Way. If you can sweep away the wild weeds of evil passions and look head on into the winds of the Dharma, without fail you will dispose of the matter that is important to you.” Tōzan said, “What kind of person is he?” Isan answered, “He once asked me what a disciple should do who wishes to be obedient to his master after he is no longer with him. I told him that, straight off, he should sever any remaining attachments and karmic hindrances that he may find within himself. He then asked whether he would be able to avoid breaking the principles of his master. I told him no and, above all, he should not tell people that I am here.” Tōzan then left Isan and went straight to Ungan.

Referring to what had happened previously, Tōzan asked Ungan, “Who can hear the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient?” Ungan said, “The NON-SENTIENT can hear it.” Tōzan said, “Reverend Monk, do you hear it?” Ungan said, “If I heard

it, you would indeed not then hear my teaching of the Dharma.” Tōzan said, “Why do I not hear it?” Ungan raised up his fountain sceptre and said in response, “Do you hear it?” Tōzan said, “No, I do not.” Ungan said, “If you have not yet heard my teaching of the Dharma, how can you possibly expect to hear the teaching of the Dharma by the NON-SENTIENT?” Tōzan said, “What Scripture talks about the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient?” Ungan said, “Have you not seen in the ‘Amida Scripture’ the part that says, ‘Water and birds, trees and forests, all, without exception, invoke the Buddha, invoke the Dharma?’” At this Tōzan had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF and told Ungan the story of his meeting with National Teacher Echū continuing up to the point where he arrived at the TRUTH under Ungan and subsequently presented his poem which began ‘Wondrous, wondrous indeed!’ and ended with ‘But, hearing ITS sound with your eyes, you can know IT directly!’ Tōzan then said to Ungan, “I have old, residual habits that have still not come to an end.” Ungan said, “What were you once doing that these should come about?” Tōzan said, “I was not holding to the Four Noble Truths.” Ungan said, “Are you joyful yet?” Tōzan said, “I am very joyful indeed, just like someone who has found a lustrous pearl atop a dung heap.” Tōzan then asked Ungan, “When I wish to have a face-to-face meeting with the LORD OF THE HOUSE, how should I go about it?” Ungan said, “Ask the LORD OF THE HOUSE.” Tōzan said, “I will ask when I see HIM.” Ungan said, “I wonder what HE will say to you?”

When Tōzan was taking his leave from Ungan he respectfully inquired, “After a hundred years, if someone were to ask me to describe the TRUTH that you taught, how exactly should I reply?” After a long pause Ungan responded, “Just say that THIS is IT.” Tōzan sank deep into thought. Ungan said, “Ryōkai Acharya, in order to understand the TRUTH, investigate the matter thoroughly.” Tōzan was still embroiled in his doubts

but later, as he was crossing a river, he caught a glimpse of his reflection in the water and, greatly enlightened as to this previous principle, composed a 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.

Tōzan had realized what he had spent his life training and studying for and his lingering doubts had quickly departed; what is happening in this account is truly correct.

These accounts of the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient should include one about a lay worker named Chōfun (C. Chang-fen) who was working at Nan'yō Monastery. Prostrating himself before National Teacher Echū, he said, "I have heard the Reverend Monk speak of the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient; I still do not comprehend this matter. I beg you, Reverend Monk, to instruct me." Echū said, "If you inquire into the teaching of the Dharma by the non-sentient, you will then comprehend other non-sentient things and be able to hear my teaching of the Dharma directly. However, when you have heard the teaching of the Dharma by the NON-SENTIENT, pray depart!" Chōfun said, "At the moment I am bound to skillful means for the sentient; how does this relate to the non-sentient?" Echū said, "If, right now, within all your actions, the two classes of the mundane and the holy do not in the least bit arise or pass away, then this involves a TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS which does not depend on being or non-being and is ablaze with keen perceptual awareness; hearken to the fact that there are no delusionary emotional feelings or binding attachments.

Because of this the Sixth Chinese Ancestor Enō said, ‘When the six sensory roots are engaged in discerning boundaries and discriminating between objects, one should know that such thought is not the TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS.’” This comment by Enō is indeed what is behind Nan’yō Echū’s remarks about the teaching of the Dharma by the NON-SENTIENT when he said, “If, right now, within all your actions, the two classes of the mundane and the holy do not in the least bit arise or pass away, then this involves the TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS which does not depend on being or non-being and is ablaze with keen perceptual awareness.”

People, however, usually think that ‘non-sentient’ refers to such things as fences and walls, tiles and pebbles, lamps and winnowing baskets, dewdrops and pillars. This is not what National Teacher Echū is talking about in the present instance; it is a TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS in which what is seen by ordinary and saintly people has not yet been differentiated, and emotional attachment to notions of delusion and enlightenment has not yet emerged; likewise, there is not the least degree of emotional judgmentalism or intellectual discrimination, nor any signs that birth and death, coming and going, are actively functioning. I assure you this TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS keenly perceives and is aware but is not attached to emotional consciousness. This is why Tōzan said, “You must comprehend HIM in this way so that you can dedicate yourself at once to THAT WHICH IS.” This is also why someone of old once said, “There is no enlightened wisdom which is apart from the ETERNAL that the ETERNAL illumines; there is no ETERNAL which is apart from enlightened wisdom that enlightened wisdom studies.”

THAT WHICH IS is steadfast and unmoving, a clear, bright, constant KNOWING. This is why it is said that complete knowing, which is perfect and bright, does not depend on intellectual thought; this direct perceptual awareness is not an entanglement



or an attachment. As Isan said, “Speech born of father and mother will never explain IT for you” and as Echū said, “If sentient beings can hear IT, then they are not sentient beings.” Having received this kind of instruction from several teachers, Tōzan comprehended the true meaning of ‘the non-sentient’ so do not arbitrarily interpret it as fences and walls. As long as your thoughts and feelings do not delude or entangle you, and your sight and hearing are not scattered or spread all over, this TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS will be bright and undimmed, clear and aware.

Were you to try to seize this state, you would never realize IT because IT takes on no form, IT is ‘non-existent’. Were you to try to be rid of IT, you could not separate yourself from IT because IT has accompanied you from the very beginning of time; IT is not ‘non-existent’. Still, IT is not feelings or perceptions, knowledge or thought, much less does IT partake of the four elements and the five skandhas. This is why Wanshi said, “There is an enlightened wisdom apart from emotional judgmentalism and intellectual discrimination; there is a BODY that is not comprised of the four elements and the five skandhas.” In short, there is this TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS.

‘Continually and vigorously teaching’ means that, at no time, does IT not manifest ITSELF; this is called ‘teaching’. IT makes the eyebrows raise and the eyes blink; IT makes you walk, stand, sit and lie down. Hurrying about, stumbling and falling, dying here, being reborn there, partaking of food when hunger arises, getting sleep when exhaustion comes, all are ‘teaching’. Speaking, working, moving, stopping, acting with dignity are ‘teaching’. It is not only spoken and unspoken teaching; there is THAT which wholly comes forth openly, which most clearly does not conceal anything. Because everything down to the croaking of bullfrogs and the mumbling of earthworms comes to be revealed, it is continual teaching, energetic teaching, without ceasing. Just look carefully and,

without fail some day, like our lofty Ancestor Tōzan, you will be able to be a model for others.

Now, how am I to expound this principle?

The humble TRUE CONSCIOUSNESS  
is not emotional attachment  
And every day of the week  
IT causes IT to teach energetically.

CHAPTER 40.

THE THIRTY-NINTH ANCESTOR,  
GREAT MASTER UNGO DŌYŌ.

When Ungo went to train under Tōzan, the latter asked him, “What, Dōyō Acharya, is your name?” Ungo replied, “Dōyō (C. Tao-ying, ‘Sustainer of the Way’).” Tōzan said, “Look up higher and say something more!” Ungo responded, “Were I to speak on a higher level, then I would not call myself Dōyō.” Tōzan said, “When I was with Ungo my own respectful reply was no different.”

Ungo was a native of Gyokuden (C. Yü-tien) in Yūshū (C. Yu-chou); his family was of the Ō (C. Wang) clan and, when still but a small child, he left home for Enju-ji (C. Yen-shu-ssu) in Han’yo (C. Fan-yang). At twenty-five he became a full monk and his teacher had him learn the Vinaya rules. As this approach was not to his liking, he abandoned it and wandered from temple to temple until he came to Master Suibi (C. Ts’ui-wei) from whom he inquired of the Way. After a while a certain monk from Yoshō Province (C. Kiang-su) came to the monastery and spoke so enthusiastically in praise of Tōzan’s Dharma centre that, in consequence, Ungo went there.

When Tōzan asked him where he had come from, Ungo answered, “I come from Suibi.” Tōzan asked, “What words or phrases does Suibi have for directing his disciples?” Ungo said, “Once, when Suibi was preparing a food offering for the arhants, I respectfully asked him, ‘By making a food offering to the arhants will they come or not?’ Suibi replied, ‘What do you eat every day?’” Tōzan said, “Did this conversation really take place?” When Ungo said it had, Tōzan commented, “What, Dōyō Acharya, is your name?” and what is given above followed to the point where Tōzan said, “When I was with Ugan my own respectful reply was no different.” Ungo awoke to the Way upon catching sight of the Tō River (C. Tung). When he informed Tōzan of the purport of his awakening, Tōzan said, “My Way, thanks to you, will flow on, perpetually Transmitted.”

There was a time when Tōzan said to Ungo, “I hear that Great Master Shi (C. Ssu) was born in Japan and became their king. What do you think? Is this so or not?” Ungo replied, “If it is the proverbial ‘great teacher’ called ‘shi’ (which means ‘discriminative thought’) that you are talking about, this is not the BUDDHA let alone the ruler over anyone!” Tōzan assented to this.

One day Tōzan asked Ungo where he had been and Ungo answered that he had been walking upon a mountain. Tōzan asked, “Was that mountain fit to live on?” Ungo said, “What mountain is not fit to live on?” Tōzan said, “If that is so, then everything within the whole land must have been tried out by the Acharya.” Ungo said, “Not so.” Tōzan said, “Well then, you must have found the right roadway.” Ungo said, “There is no roadway.” Tōzan said, “If there is no roadway, how will you meet with me face to face?” Ungo said, “If there were a roadway, then I would indeed break off my life with you and leave!” Tōzan said, “Although a thousand men, nay, ten thousand men may take hold of this disciple of mine, they will not stop him from going on!”

One day when Ungo was following behind Tōzan as they were fording a river, the latter asked, “Is the water deep or shallow?” Ungo replied, “It is not wet.” Tōzan remarked, “What a rude fellow you are!” Ungo said, “Please, Master, you say what it is.” Tōzan said, “Not dry.”

Tōzan addressed Ungo saying, “Nansen once asked a monk, ‘What Scripture do you lecture on?’ The monk replied that it was *The Scripture on Maitreya’s Rebirth*. Nansen said, ‘When will Maitreya be reborn?’ The monk replied, ‘Well, you see He is now in the Heavenly Palace of the devas; when it is proper for Him to come, He will be reborn.’ Nansen responded, ‘There is no Maitreya in heaven or on earth.’” Ungo asked Tōzan, “If there is no Maitreya in heaven or on earth, I wonder who has been given the name?” No sooner had Tōzan been asked this than he felt his meditation platform shake so he said, “Dōyō Acharya, when I was with Ugan, I once asked the elder a question that set the censer shaking; now no sooner have I been asked this question by you than my whole body is bathed with the Water of the Spirit.” In the dialogues between Master Tōzan and his disciple Ungo there was no point at which they differed. Within the whole community no one equalled Ungo.

Ungo later built a hut on Three Peaks Mountain (J. Sanpō-zan; C. San-feng-shan) and, for ten days, did not come to the temple. Tōzan asked him, “Why have you not been taking meals with your fellow monks recently?” Ungo replied, “Every day there is a deva who brings me offerings.” Tōzan said, “I was just about to say that you were a REAL PERSON but you are still persisting in forming these one-sided, personal views. Come this evening.” When Ungo arrived that night, Tōzan called to him, “Hermit Dōyō!” When Ungo responded with a yes, Tōzan said, “Without giving rise to thoughts of ‘good’ or ‘bad’, what is IT?” Ungo returned to his hut and sat completely still in meditation. When the deva came to visit, Ungo was not

visible to the deva. After three days like this, the deva ceased coming.

On another occasion, Tōzan asked Ungo, “What are you doing?” Ungo answered, “I have been mixing up bean paste.” Tōzan asked, “How much salt did you use?” Ungo replied, “I put in just a bit.” Tōzan asked, “How is the flavour?” Ungo said, “Just right.” Tōzan asked, “When a great ‘incorrigible one’ commits the five heinous crimes, where is his sense of filial piety and caring?” Ungo said, “Not until then does he show filial piety and caring.” After this, Tōzan let Ungo be his senior monk in the meditation hall. When Ungo retired to Three Peaks Mountain his conversions at first were still limited. Later he began to preach at the monastery on Ungo Mountain, whence his name, and monks and laity, male and female, gathered about him in great numbers. After Ungo had joined Tōzan’s community following his audience with Suibi, he and Sōzan (C. Ts’ao-shan) were like brothers.

Through the foregoing dialogues, the settling of doubts by master and disciple was brought to a conclusion. Tōzan had already predicted, “My Way, thanks to you, will flow on, perpetually Transmitted.” These words have not been spoken in vain for IT has rolled on and on in trust down to this day. The waters of the River Tō (C. Tung) flowed on and truly came to Transmit IT, although its river-bed in China is now parched dry and cracked. IT has come down to you who are Transmitted through our pure and undefiled monastic family; ITS well-spring to this very day has not dried up, ITS waters are cool and crystal clear.

When Ungo posed his question he displayed his great potential; this is why Tōzan’s meditation platform shook and his whole body was bathed in the Water of the Spirit as well. This is something rare in the past as well as in the present. Yet, in that Ungo resided in a hermit’s hut on Three Peaks Mountain and was gifted with heavenly sustenance, Tōzan had to comment,

“I was just about to say that you were a REAL PERSON but you are still persisting in forming these one-sided, personal views.” When Ungo came to call that night, Tōzan addressed him as “Hermit Dōyō” to which Ungo responded with a yes. That which responds like this is indeed that which is incapable of receiving heavenly sustenance. Calling out to him, Tōzan said, “Without giving rise to thoughts of ‘good’ or ‘bad’, what is IT?” in order to sever Ungo’s doubts. When you have realized thus and can see in this way, there is no road upon which devas can strew flowers, nothing shows for demons or outsiders to secretly peep in at or wish for. Still more, at such a point in time the Buddhas and Ancestors think, “This is a true arhant.” Ultimately even the watchful eye of a Buddha does not get a glimpse of you.

When Ungo had grasped the matter in this way he ‘was making bean paste’ and had put in ‘just a bit’, thus he had gone out of his way not to be dependent on others. At that moment an incorrigible Ungo was ‘killing father and mother’, ‘slaying Buddha and Ancestors’, repeatedly committing ‘the five heinous crimes’; at such a moment ‘filial piety and caring’ did not exist for him. Tōzan, attempting out of kindness to test such a viewpoint, asked him what feelings of filial obligation he had and Ungo had replied that not until then does such a one show feelings of filial obligation which agrees in general with what Sōzan has said.

This is why, according to the story, Tōzan had deliberately asked Ungo, when he entered the meditation hall as senior monk, to receive the Transmission by saying, “Acharya, what is your name?” When one witnesses the face-to-face meeting between master and disciple, the master does not go on former feelings and so Tōzan asked Ungo what his name was. Obviously Tōzan knew Ungo’s name; even so he still put the question to him and not without reason. Ungo had said in reply, “Dōyō.” Even if one goes on asking this question in

a thousand different ways and in myriad forms, still it must be like this; you must never invent a reason or be concerned with the why of it. Tōzan was not refusing to acknowledge the vision by acting this way; he just wanted to see whether or not Ungo possessed the ability to pierce through this barrier and let go of limitations, so he said, “Look up higher and say something more!” Ungo’s six sense organs were already insufficient and his consciousness was imperfect, just as with a delirious patient or a straw dog discarded after a festival, so he said, “Were I to speak on a higher level, then I would not call myself Dōyō!” Reaching this stage is extremely difficult. If your training and study have not yet reached this level, then you are not a monk with the potential to be an heir in our line; you are in some way being distracted by the entangling tendrils of theorizing. Because Ungo’s preserving and taking responsibility for this went deep, in the end he and Tōzan had their dialogue about the great incorrigible one without transgressing any of the Precepts. If you all break through the barrier of consciousness, then you will be the thoroughly REAL, LIVE MONK.

Now, again what words are there that can break through the barrier of consciousness to show what is happening in this story? Again, do you wish to hear them? After a silence I speak:

Name or form IT has never come to assume  
So how am I to speak of higher or lower levels?

## CHAPTER 41.

THE FORTIETH ANCESTOR,  
GREAT MASTER DŌAN DŌHI.

Ungo once pointed out, “Since you wish to realize such a thing, undoubtedly you must be such a person; since you are such a person, why fret about such a thing?” Hearing this, Dōhi spontaneously awakened to his TRUE SELF.

Where Dōhi (C. Tao-p’i, ‘Distinguished in the Way’) came from is not known. He trained under Ungo and, over the years, served as his jisha. One day Ungo entered the meditation hall and gave a lecture, saying, “When you members of our community begin to speak you give vent to your feelings. You should have a reason for speaking; do not give way to being neglectful. What sort of place is this here? How can you consider taking it easy? Whenever you ask about this matter, you should be at least a bit discerning of what is right and wrong.... First of all, do not bring anything along with you into your meditation; if you do, it will bear no likeness to that which you seek.... If someone is a person of depth who knows that he has, he will naturally know enough to guard well for, in the end, it is not something at all simple; ten times he may begin to speak but nine times leave off and remain silent. Why so? Because it will probably be something of no benefit to others. He of profound comprehension has a mind as useful as a fan in deepest winter; he easily acquires a growth of moss around his mouth from lack of speaking. He does not do this by forcing himself; it arises in this way as a natural occurrence.” He then said, “If you wish to realize such a thing” and continued as above until he said, “Why fret about such a thing? For then such a thing will be hard to realize.” Hearing what Ungo had put forth in this way, Dōhi dispelled the doubts in his mind and finally disposed of the matter that had occupied his whole life.



Dōhi later took up residence in Dōan-ji (C. Tao-an-ssu) on Phoenix Nest Mountain (J. Hōseizan; C. Feng-hsi-shan) in Kōshū (C. Hung-chou) and became a meditation master who energetically lectured on Ungo's approach to training. One day a trainee asked him, "How can I stop wandering off in my head when I catch sight of its reflections?" Dōhi said, "Who are you telling this to?" The monk replied, "What?" Dōhi said, "If you search for IT by following after others then you will be even farther from IT." The monk then said, "How about when I do not search for IT by following after others?" Dōhi said, "Where is your head?"

Another monk once asked, "Reverend Monk, how would you characterize your approach to training?" Dōhi answered,

"The Golden Cock\* (sun), harbouring Its brood,  
Returns to the River of Heaven;  
The Jade Hare\* (moon), having become pregnant,  
Enters the starry abode of the Lord of Heaven."

The monk asked, "When I unexpectedly encounter the arrival of a guest, how should I respectfully attend to him?" Dōhi answered,

"The Golden Fruit,\* early in the morning,  
Is plucked off by a monkey;\*  
The Jade Flower,\* late in the evening,  
Is brought in the beak of a phoenix.\*"

Having first dispelled all his doubts in accordance with what his former master had pointed out to him, Dōhi had said, in order to elucidate the approach to training of his monastic family, that the Golden Cock returns to the River of Heaven and the Jade Hare enters the starry abode; also, when instructing a trainee, he had said that the Golden Fruit is plucked off daily

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\* These terms are from the code sometimes employed in Buddhism.

and the Jade Flower every evening is brought back in the bird's beak. Whilst there is nothing superior or inferior in any of the accounts we have given of training and study, it would be well to look with particular care at what is happening in the stories just narrated for, when you wish to realize 'such a thing', then you are 'such a person'. Even though you wander off in your head and seek after things, it is still your head. As the Founder Eihei Dōgen said, "Who is the one who says 'I'? It is the non-egocentric *I* who says 'Who'?"

When the scholar Ryōsui (C. Liang-sui) came to call on Mayoku (C. Ma-ku), the latter, seeing him coming, conveniently shut the gate. When Ryōsui knocked at the gate, Mayoku asked, "Who is it?" Ryōsui answered, "Ryōsui." Upon reciting his own name he suddenly awoke to his ORIGINAL NATURE and consequently said, "Reverend Monk, do not take advantage of Ryōsui. Had I not come to pay my respects to you, I would have blissfully spent my whole life being swindled by my discursive approach to the Twelve Divisions of the Canon." Mayoku opened the gate and had Ryōsui pass on to him the cause of his awakening, finally giving it the Seal of confirmation. Upon his return to his lecture hall, Ryōsui dismissed his classes, telling his students and followers, "What all of you know, I already know; THAT which I know, none of you knows." Truly, this 'THAT which I know' lets no winds of judgmentalism blow through IT, so, when all of you meditate and probe deeply into yourselves, you will find that you have been complete from beginningless time and have never, for a moment, been lacking. Even though you may try to make judgments by using the measurements of discriminative thought, this is nothing but the non-egocentric *I* of which Dōgen spoke; further, it is an absence of 'other'. Although you shine of yourself, it is an absence of discrimination; this is again nothing but the non-egocentric *I* and is nothing novel. This is to use your eyes, ears or mouth, to manipulate your hands or to move your feet, this is completely the non-egocentric *I*. From the first, IT is not something to be

grasped with the hands or seen with the eyes; IT is not something that can be discussed in terms of sound or form, nor is IT something that ear or eye can perceive. When you people practise carefully, without fail you will know that there is the non-egocentric *I*: you will know that there is the TRUE SELF. First of all, in endeavouring to know this condition, completely ignore 'right' and 'wrong', do not depend on anything, do not be concerned with 'other'. When you are thus, this ORIGINAL NATURE alone will be bright with a brightness more resplendent than the sun and the moon together; this ORIGINAL NATURE will be pure and white with a pureness whiter than frost or snow. Hence IT is not that darkness of unawareness wherein one is oblivious to right and wrong; IT is that crystal clear purity in which the TRUE SELF spontaneously manifests ITSELF.

Do not, any of you, think that there is nothing apart from speaking and silence, movement and stillness, or nothing that does not have skin, flesh, bones and marrow; do not wish to make your mind so resolute and independent that, with total indifference, you have no thought for yourself or word for another; do not wish to be like a stump with your whole being relying on nothing or wish to be as mindless as grass and trees. From the first there is neither self nor other however the view that 'not one single thing exists' is the same as the non-Buddhist view that death ends life and the Hinayanist view that adheres to literal emptiness. How could the ULTIMATE PRINCIPLE possibly be the same as that which non-believers or Hinayanists think about?

When you have been completely scrupulous and have truly brought the matter to a conclusion, you will see that IT is not something that can be called 'existent'. Because the VOID is sonorous, IT is not something that can be called 'non-existent'; because ITS resplendence is clear and bright, IT is not something that can be split up into body, speech and mind, nor can IT be discerned by feelings, thoughts or perceptions. How am I ever to communicate this principle?

Empty-handed, I sought IT on my own  
and, empty-handed, have returned;  
Since, from the first, there was nothing to realize,  
now, being satisfied, I have realized!

CHAPTER 42.

THE FORTY-FIRST ANCESTOR,  
THE LATTER GREAT MASTER DŌAN KANSHI.

Whilst studying under Dōhi, Kanshi said, “Someone of old remarked, ‘I do not desire what worldly people desire.’ I wonder what you desire, Reverend Monk?” Dōhi replied, “I have already realized such.” Upon hearing these words, Kanshi had a great awakening to his TRUE SELF.

The latter Dōan’s personal name was Kanshi (C. Kuan-chi, ‘He Who Examines His Intentions’); very little is recorded about his doings; he studied under Dōhi and his achievements were profound. When Dōhi was on the verge of death he entered the meditation hall and said in verse,

“In front of the Shrine of Many Sons  
A child of our line towered above the rest;  
Before the Peak of the Five Elders  
How does the matter go?”

Although he spoke this three times, still no one responded. Finally, Kanshi came forth and said in verse,

“The night is bright outside the bamboo blind  
Where they stand lined up in rows;  
For ten thousand leagues their song reverberates  
Expressing the GREAT TRANQUILLITY.”

Dōhi said, “This donkey of a fellow will find IT first!” After this Kanshi resided on Dōan Mountain and was called the latter Dōan.

The line ‘In front of the Shrine of Many Sons a child of our line towered above the rest’ refers to the face-to-face meeting between Shakyamuni Buddha and Makakashō which occurred before the Shrine of Many Sons. Once the two had met face to face, the Kesa and the Teaching had been Transmitted; after that Makakashō practised the twelve austerities and later shared the seat of Teaching with Shakyamuni. Although Makakashō was not present at the meeting that took place at the time of the Buddha’s parinirvana, all the Buddha’s followers were entrusted to him; this is the sense of ‘a child of our line towered above the rest’.

Dōan Dōhi was the legitimate descendant of Tōzan so the tradition of Seigen’s line is traced back to here. When Dōhi was about to die he endeavoured to discover his own legitimate heir by saying three times, “Before the Peak of the Five Elders (J. Gorōhō; C. Wu-lao-feng) how does the matter go?” As none in his assembly comprehended this, none replied. Since lofty Mount Sumeru towers above the crests of the host of other mountains in its range whilst the sparkling sun shines before the multitude of forms, Kanshi said, “The night is bright outside the bamboo blind where they stand lined up in rows.” Truly, there is no one to compare with this fellow Kanshi; since he was liberated and truly independent he had no second even approaching him and this is why he said ‘in ten thousand leagues’ to eradicate all the fine dust. So, where are the clever ministers and brave generals now? Singing, singing, all is ‘the GREAT TRANQUILLITY’. Kanshi is indeed a wondrous monk. Study and train that you may reach this stage for only then will you find IT. Such preeminent conduct and surpassing realization preceded Kanshi’s manifesting his character and integrity that he said, “I do not desire what worldly people desire. I wonder what you desire, Reverend Monk?”

The phrase 'what worldly people desire' refers to their desires for themselves and others; as their desires gradually ripen, they become attached to their outer karmic conditions and their inner karmic tendencies; their desires deepen more and more as they continue to hold on to them. They add iron shackles to those that they already have by clinging to Buddha and Ancestors; in this way the taint of their desires increases their pollution. As a result, the karma-producing acts of sentient beings continue on uninterrupted. From the first they are born in slavery and die bound in a slavery which they carry off with them; this is simply the consequence of these desires. Such things as sentient beings and Buddhas, males and females, the sentient and the non-sentient derive from a desire for such forms as these; you should quickly sweep them away.

When you become completely indifferent, be it to rules and regulations or to any single thing, so that you do not discern, know or perceive anything, you have a desire attachment to formlessness; do not linger here for, if once you give rise in your heart to seek the Way whilst still attached to forms, you may involuntarily end up attached to formlessness! If you cling to the perspective of formlessness and get stuck in the world beyond form, regretfully you will fall into the incessant Avichi hell after long kalpas have passed and your life span in this heaven has expired; this is what is meant by 'no-mind' when understood as the annihilation of thought. Such form and formlessness are what worldly people crave over and over again,—to see a self and others within forms or to forget self and others within formlessness—both are totally wrong. So, as you practitioners of meditation, both novices and more experienced monks, all mercifully the descendants of the venerable Shakyamuni, have received for your use what the Buddha received for His, how can you possibly want the same things that worldly people desire?

First of all liberate yourselves from all false views which discriminate between right and wrong, good and bad, male and female. Next, do not abide in the land of calm oblivion which is passive, safe and devoid of forms. If you wish to grasp what IT is at this moment, do not look to others or seek outside yourself. Fix your eyes closely on THAT which existed before you received this body of yours, before you even showed signs of having a body; without fail IT will never show the least sign of the thousand distinctions or the ten thousand differentiations. Do not become like a demon's cave in a black mountain on a pitch-dark night. This ORIGINAL NATURE is wondrously bright from the first, brilliant without ever dimming; this ORIGINAL NATURE, devoid of all obstructions, is perfectly luminous. Within IT there is not even a shred that is ultimately connected with skin, flesh, bones or marrow to say nothing of the six sense organs and their six fields of perception, delusion, enlightenment, defilement and purity.

The Buddha never preached for your benefit nor are you ever doing your training for the sake of your teacher. Not only is IT not distinguished by sound and form, IT possesses neither eyes nor ears. Even so, when the TRUE NATURE, gleaming brightly, shines through like the moon, your eyes, as vivid as patterns embroidered on brocade, will open wide like blossoms. If you are completely scrupulous in your training, you will be in accord with this.

O practitioners of meditation, how will you be able to comprehend this PRINCIPLE? I will add a word on your behalf. Quickly, by all means, keep your eye on its SUBSTANCE.

The moon-like TRUE NATURE  
and the blossoming in the eyes,  
how fine their light and colour are!  
They open outside the aeons of time  
so who is there to take pleasure in them?