

THE SUN OVER
THE SEA OF ENLIGHTENMENT
Gakhae illyun

The Sun over the Sea of Enlightenment: *Gakhae illyun*

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The Samboryun (Three-Jewel-Wheeled) symbolizes the ideas of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism: this symbol involves the faith in Three Jewels of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Samgha and Two Traditions of Seon (Meditation) and Gyo (Doctrine); and means harmonizing all the clergy and laypeople and realizing the Pure Land of Buddha by way of religious propagation.

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Korean Buddhism Library
Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism

THE SUN OVER
THE SEA OF ENLIGHTENMENT
Gakhae illyun

by Baek Yongseong
Annotated Translation and Introduction by Suh Junghyung

Series Editor
Kim JongWook, *Dongguk University*



Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism

Foreword

Culture communicates. Culture flows smoothly just like the wind blows, clouds drift, and the birds fly in the air. So it did, even in the old times when lofty mountains and deep valleys interrupted the course of people's mutual exchanges. Culture flows in like a stranger, but as people share it, their individual gazes, touches, and breaths embody it with different appearances. Furthermore, it brings their gazes, touches, and breaths to their neighbors in a way that is meaningful to them. The culture exchanged is one and yet two; two and yet one.

Such is the case with Korean Buddhism. Buddhism, having originated in India, came to be one of the East Asian religions as Buddhist literature was translated into literary Chinese in China. Korea, a land neighboring China, acquired literary Chinese from the third to fifth centuries of the Common Era, which enriched its cultural vitality. Importing the translated Buddhist scriptures, Koreans established a Buddhist tradition themselves and expressed the essence of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism in their own way. Korea also played a dynamic role as a cultural messenger in transmitting Buddhism to Japan.

In this manner, Korean Buddhism was formed and continually evolved through lively exchange with Chinese Buddhism, and in the process developed the characteristic form of Korean Buddhism.

Buddhist culture flourished in the Unified Silla period (668–935) and this early Korean state established itself as a center of contemporary East Asian Buddhism. The Goryeo dynasty (918–1392) adopted Buddhism as the state religion and employed it as the state ideology. As a result, Korea currently has various forms of Buddhist cultural treasures, such as Bulguksa 佛國寺 Temple, the Dabotap

多寶塔 and Seokgatap 釋迦塔 Pagodas, Seokguram 石窟庵 Grotto, and exquisite statues of Buddhist figures seated in the pensive pose (半跏思惟像), as well as *Essentials of the Buddhas and Patriarchs Pointing Directly to the Essence of Mind* (*Buljo jikji simche yojeol* 佛祖直指心體要節) which is the earliest extant text printed by metal type, the *Goryeo Buddhist Canon in Eighty Thousand Woodblocks* (*Palman daejanggyeong* 八萬大藏經), and paintings of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara which are the acme of religious aesthetics.

In the Joseon dynasty, in which the Korean alphabet (Han'geul) was invented, a foremost state project was to translate the whole corpus of Buddhist scriptures into Han'geul. In the second half of the fifteenth century the Office for Sūtra Publication (Gan'gyeong dogam 刊經都監) was eventually established and published Buddhist canonical texts in the Korean language.

In 2010, the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism published the *Collected Works of Korean Buddhism* in thirteen volumes, English translations of *Han'guk jeontong sasang chongseo*, for the purpose of introducing the excellence of Korean Buddhism to the world. This collection was compiled by carefully selecting representative works from the *Complete Works of Korean Buddhism* (*Han'guk Bulgyo jeonseo* 韓國佛教全書) from the Unified Silla through Joseon periods. These include *Wonhyo*, *Chinul*, *Hyujeong*, *Hwaōm* (I, II), *Doctrinal Treatises*, *Gongan Collections* (I, II), *Seon Dialogues*, *Seon Poems*, *Korean Buddhist Culture*, *Exposition of the Sutra of Brahma's Net*, *Anthology of Stele Inscriptions of Eminent Korean Buddhist Monks*. Although the works in the collection are not enough to reveal the whole picture of Korean Buddhism, I hope that the collection helps people understand main features of premodern Korean Buddhism.

Now we have selected ten works of modern Korean Buddhism and translated them into English to introduce them to an international audience. During the early twentieth century, a turbulent era in East Asia, such Korean Buddhist monks and laymen as Gyeongheo 鏡虛 (1849–1912), Yongseong 龍城 (1864–1940), Seokjeon 石顛 (1870–1948), Manhae 正海 (Han Yongun, 1879–1944),

Choe Namseon 崔南善 (1890–1957), Yi Neunghwa 李能和 (1869–1943), Go Yuseop 高裕燮 (1905–1944), published many works in various fields. This period in East Asia witnessed the influx of Western civilization and the imperial expansion of Japan, which was then ahead in the modernization process, resulting in some countries becoming colonized by Japan. As Korean Buddhism endured along with Korean people and shined its capability at every crisis in history, it developed its own identity accepting the current of the modern times on the one hand and confronting external challenges on the other. The efforts made in the darkest times in Korean history to maintain the Korean tradition will be not only a precious asset of Korean Buddhism but also a significant record of East Asian Buddhist history.

For the current project of English translation focusing on modern Korean Buddhist works, we have selected ten documents that have significance in terms of the modernization process of Korean Buddhism as well as being representative works in their own right. These works include the writings of Buddhist lay thinkers as well as the discourse records or treatises of Buddhist monks, cover various subjects such as comparative religion, editorial writing, criticism on current affairs, literature, history, art, and so forth. A Korean proverb says that “even the easy pace of a cow finally makes a thousand miles” (*ubo cheolli* 牛步千里) or that “a journey of a thousand miles must begin with the first step.” Although it is impossible to express the rich and complicated features of Korean Buddhism through only these ten volumes, I hope that readers will regard the project as a second step taken by the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism toward the globalization of Korean Buddhism.

Most of the writings from the period covered by this series are written in literary Chinese, but some employ Korean vernacular endings along with literary Chinese, and some are written all in the Korean vernacular script. The importance of modern Korean Buddhism lies in the fact that Korean Buddhism was conducted through the Korean language. The full-fledged usage of Korean

language in Buddhist activities was the achievement of modern Korean Buddhism, and Korean culture was thereby enriched. However, it is not easy for non-Koreans to understand such works in their original form. Therefore, the translation of the works into English—the international language—is an unavoidable task in our cultural communications, just as medieval East Asians shared literary Chinese—the common literary language of the time—to communicate and understand each other.

I really appreciate the translators who have sympathized with the aspiration of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism and have completed their translations despite various difficulties. I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of the other contributors to each volume for their valuable comments, reviews, and corrections. Lastly, I would like to thank the members of the Editorial Board for spending time and effort at the initial stage of planning the project and selecting the works and to Dongguk University Press for their constant support in the publication of the series. My special thanks go to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Korea for providing strong support to the Publication Committee of Modern Korean Buddhism.

With the Palms of My Hands Joined in Reverence

Haebong Jaseung 海峰 慈乘

The 34th President of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism
President, Publication Committee of Modern Korean Buddhism

Editor's Preface

One thousand seven hundred years have passed since Buddhism, which originated in India, arrived on Korean Peninsula via China. The goal of Buddhism in ancient India was the attainment of enlightenment with respect to the dharma and the realization of Buddhahood, which was based on consistent religious practice in the repetitive cycle of birth and death. When Buddhism was transmitted to China, the goal of Indian Buddhism was accepted in a transformed form. For Chinese people, who also aspired to attain Buddhahood but, unlike Indians, were both temporally and geographically separated from the Buddha, the Buddhist doctrine that all living beings have innate Buddha-nature emerged as one of the most efficient ideas. It is in this context that in Chinese Buddhism “enlightenment” (覺) is mostly interpreted as “original enlightenment” (本覺); “Buddha” is often regarded as “Buddha-nature” (佛性); and the fundamental doctrine of dependent origination (緣起) is sometimes replaced by the “the (unconditioned) arising of the (original) nature” (性起). The unique transformation of Buddhism in China, which is oriented to the idea of original Buddha-nature, led to the emergence of distinctive Chinese Buddhist schools, such as the Tiantai and Huayan schools that focus on doctrines and the Chan and Pure Land schools that emphasize practices.

These Chinese schools, along with the foundational doctrine of original Buddha-nature, were accepted in Korea and Japan, neighboring countries that also used classical Chinese as their literary language. In the case of Korea, the way in which Buddhism was adopted has a distinctive feature, which is an ecumenical tendency to synthesize various teachings or harmonize contrasting doctrines of the schools as much as possible. We see this ecumenical

tendency of Korean Buddhism in several cases. For example, Wonhyo 元曉 (617–686), the pioneer of Buddhist scholasticism in Korean Buddhism, sought to harmonize various schools. Jinul 知訥 (1158–1210), the founder of Korean Seon school, also advocated the unity of Buddhist practice and doctrine (禪教一致). The attempt to unite Hwaeom and Seon teachings in Buddhist educational system during the Joseon period (1392–1910) is another example. If Chinese Buddhism is marked by its establishment of individual schools on the basis of the idea of original nature, Korean Buddhism may be characterized by its consistent attempts to synthesize the schools by embracing their doctrinal distinctions.

The decline of the Joseon dynasty and subsequent colonization by Japan, however, brought contemporary Buddhists a double task: they had to preserve the identity of Korean Buddhism on the one hand and accommodate traditional Buddhism to Western modernity on the other. Until the liberation day arrived, Korean Buddhists endured nationwide hardships together with all Korean people and also steadily carried out the challenging task by inheriting traditional Buddhist culture as well as transforming it into a modern form. In spite of such problems as incessant foreign incursions and disruptions at the end of Joseon period and an identity crisis in Korean Buddhism derived from the forced importation of Japanese Buddhism, prominent Buddhists of those days left remarkable writings. In this way, they contributed to the process of developing the received Korean Buddhist tradition and shaping the ground for modern Korean Buddhism after liberation.

In 2012, the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism published the English Edition of the *Collected Works of Korean Buddhism* as a project promoting the globalization of Korean Buddhism with the support of Korean government. This is a collection of representative Buddhist works selected from the *Han'guk Bulgyo jeonseo* 韓國佛教全書, a compilation of three hundred and twenty three Korean Buddhist writings from the Silla to Joseon periods. To succeed and further develop upon this project, we are translating and publishing

representative Buddhist writings by modern Korean intellectuals in English and introducing them abroad. The fruit of this initiative is the Translation-Publication Project with Representative Works of Modern Korean Buddhism, which the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism has been administering since 2013 with the support of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. The collection contains selected works of modern Buddhist literature written by eminent Buddhist monks and scholars, such as Gyeongheo 鏡虛 (1849–1912), Yongseong 龍城 (1864–1940), Seokjeon 石顛 (1870–1948), Manhae 訾海 (1879–1944).

The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism established several organizations to facilitate the project: a publication committee chaired by Ven. Jaseung, a management group chaired by Ven. Jin-Gak, and an editorial board chaired by me, Prof. Kim JongWook. In particular, the editorial board, which was entrusted with the work of translation and publication, surveyed more than three hundred and twenty Korean Buddhist writings written between 1900 and 1945 and carefully selected significant works in several genres, compiling them in ten volumes. For instance, *The Gyeongheo Collection, Sun Over the Sea of Enlightenment*, and *An Anthology of East Asian Commentaries on the Nyāyapravēśa* belong to the genre of philosophy or intellectual thought; *Sheaves of Korean Buddhist History* to history; *A Study of Korean Pagodas* to art; *Harmonizing the Hundred Teachings* to comparative; *The Temple of Words: An Anthology of Modern Korean Buddhist Poetry* to literature; *Essential Compendium for Buddhists: A Modern Buddhist Liturgy* to rituals; *Tracts on the Modern Reformation of Korean Buddhism* and *A Collection of Modern Korean Buddhist Discourses* to social criticism. The broad range of materials selected from various genres is intended to exhibit a dynamic picture of modern Korean Buddhism in multiple aspects.

The Gyeongheo Collection, the collected dharma-talks and Seon poetry by Gyeongheo, the figure responsible for reviving modern Korean Seon Buddhism, is a significant text in that it shows us the mode of the transformation of Korean Buddhist thought during the interim period until modern times. Yongseong's *The Sun Over the*

Sea of Enlightenment, one of the most representative works of this time, represents the author's earnest intent to reform and modernize Korean Buddhism. This work also elucidates essential points of Seon practice and Buddhist doctrine. Seokjeon's *An Anthology of East Asian Commentaries on the Nyāyapravesa*, a variorum text on Buddhist logic, is an important Buddhist philosophical text that shows the research level of modern Korean Buddhism in Buddhist logic. Gim Yeongsu's *Sheaves of Korean Buddhist History*, a Buddhist historiography, provides chronological accounts of Buddhist history since the first transmission of Buddhism during the Three Kingdoms period. The text also provides a systematic description of the history of Korean Buddhist orders and schools, including the "Five Doctrinal [schools] and Nine Mountains [traditions of Seon]" (Ogyo Gusan 五教九山) and the "Five Doctrinal [schools] and Two [Meditative] Traditions" (Ogyo Yangjong 五教兩宗). Go Yuseop's *A Study of Korean Pagoda*, which contains explanations of Korean stone pagodas from the perspective of their architectural style, is a monumental work in the field of Korean Buddhist art history because it not only established in scholarship the standard style of Korean Buddhist pagodas but also created the basic framework in the periodization and appreciation of Korean pagodas.

Yi Neunghwa's *Harmonizing the Hundred Teachings*, a work that compares Buddhism to other eleven religions, such as Confucianism, Taoism, Christianity, Islamism, Brahmanism, and so on, reveals the level of religious studies during the modern period in Korea. Choe Chwiheo and An Jinho's *Essential Compendium for Buddhists: A Modern Buddhist Liturgy*, the earliest modern text on Buddhist rituals, shows not only how Buddhist rituals changed during the modern times but also how Buddhism was popularized and modernized. *The Temple of Words: An Anthology of Modern Korean Buddhist Poetry*, a compilation of Buddhist verse written by modern Buddhist poets such as Han Yongun, Seo Jeongju, and Jo Jihun, demonstrates that the Buddhist spiritual world served as the foundation of poetic lyricism for the modern intellectuals. *Tracts on the Modern Reformation of*

Korean Buddhism is a collection of essays written by modern Buddhist reformers, such as Gwon Sangro, Han Yongun, Yi Yeongjae. These writings reflect these Buddhists' awareness of the contemporary need to respond the changing times with the appropriate transformation of Buddhism. These texts show us the social and historical situation that Korean Buddhism had to confront in modern times. *A Collection of Modern Korean Buddhist Discourses*, written by such modern Korean thinkers as Choe Namseon, Kang Yumun, Gwon Sangro, Gim Beomin, Gim Yeongsu, Gim Taeheup, and so forth, is a collection of editorials that discuss issues related to the Korean Buddhist tradition and its modernization. These writings may be said one of the most representative Buddhist works of the time because they contain discourses on immediate social and ideological problems of the day.

For each of the ten volumes, the Editorial Committee invited a specialist in each subject and entrusted them with the responsibility of the translation. Both domestic and foreign scholars participated in proofreading and reviewing the translation, by comparing the draft to the original and checking the appropriateness of English expressions. In this way, the Editorial Committee has done its best so that both accuracy in translation and the translators' intention are preserved. The translators of the volumes include David McCann, John Jorgensen, Tonino Puggioni, Seonjoon Young, Pori Park, Suh Junghyung, Kim Sung-uk, Lee Seunghye, Ham Hyoung Seok, and Dan B. Jung. Those who worked as the proofreaders and reviewers are Richard D. McBride II, Mark Nathan, Cho Eun-su, Yun Woncheol, Kim Yongtae, Kang Hosun, Lee Sumi, Koh Seung-hak, Kim Jongjin, Park Inn-Suk, Kim Sooyoun, Hyeon Seo Seunim. Kim Junghee, the coordinator of the current project, has been devoted to her role throughout the process of translation and reviewing. Yi Deokyeol carried out the editing work during the final process of publication. Shim Jongsub worked for binding and printing the volumes. Yoo Hanrim, head of the publication department, supervised the whole process of publication. The project was only possible with the enthusiastic effort and selfless dedication of all of

these people.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without saying about the consistent interest and support from Ven. Jaseung, president of the Jogye Order, and Ven. Hyeoneung, president of Education Bureau of the Jogye Order. Ven. Jaseung, as president of Publication Committee, superintended the entire project in a responsible way. Ven. Hyeoneung particularly spared no pains to offer his helpful advice from the beginning stages of planning through the final publication. I would like to express my gratitude for his insightful assistance and encouragement whenever we were in need. Ven. Jin-Gak, chair of Executive Committee, and Ven. Su-Kyoung, director of Research Institute of Buddhist Studies, served as consultants to facilitate the process of planning, editing, and publication. Lee Seog-sim of Department of General Affairs contributed to maintaining a cooperative relationship with the government during the planning and implementation phases of the project. Park Yong Gyu and Ko Sang-hyun, and Choi Ae-Ri as well, resolved administrative issues and problems in a timely manner.

Without the dedicated participation and concerted effort of all these people, this project would not have been completed successfully. At this moment, we cannot but contemplate the Buddhist truth of dependent origination that everything comes to arise through mutual relationships based on numerous conditions. Lastly, as chair of the Editorial Board, I sincerely hope that the publication of the *Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism* contributes to the rediscovery of the value of Korean Buddhist culture by informing the whole world of the fact that Korean Buddhism absorbed the impact of modernity in its own way and thereby preserved its traditional identity throughout one thousand and seven hundred years of history.

Kim JongWook

Professor, Department of Buddhist Studies, Dongguk University

Series Editor & Chair of the Editorial Board,

Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism

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Acknowledgments

May I take refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.

It is my honor that I was given the opportunity to take part in this project of translating modern works of Korean Buddhism into English, which, I suspect, is one of the greatest enterprises attempted by Korean Buddhism ever since Buddhism was transmitted to this land nearly two thousand years ago.

First of all, I must pay homage to the great Seon master, Baek Yongseong, the author of *Gakhae illyun* (*The Sun over the Sea of Enlightenment*), who inspired me to delve into the profundity of Buddhism a step further. I would also like to express my appreciation to all my teachers of Buddhism; scholars, Buddhist priests and even ordinary people in my everyday life, particularly, my benevolent teacher, the late professor Shim Jaeryong.

Special thanks is due to professor Koh Seunghak for proofreading the manuscript, and to professor Robert Buswell, who gave me very detailed and even ‘provocative’ suggestions so that I could improve the readability and perspicuity of the translation. If there still remains any ambiguity, the incompetence is mine. In addition, I would like to express my thanks to my wife Kim Sukyeon, whose unwavering devotion has helped me to recover from serious disease, allowing me to discharge my responsibility.

Finally, I would like to thank those in charge of publication at Dongguk University Press, and Dr. Kim Junghee whose ‘calm’ pressure on my work has been undoubtedly successful.

Seoul, August 31, 2017

Conventions

HBJ: *Hanguk Bulgyo jeonseo* 韓國佛教全書 (Complete Works of Korean Buddhism). 14 vols. Seoul: Dongguk Daehakgyo Chulpanbu, 1979 (–2004).

T: *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 (Taishō Edition of the Buddhist Canon). Edited by Takakusu Junjirō et al. 100 vols. Tokyo: Taishō Isssikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1935.

X: *Xuzang jing* 繢藏經 (Hong Kong reprint of the *Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō* 大日本續藏經 [Kyoto Supplement to the Canon. Kyoto, 1905–1912]). 150 vols. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Buddhist Association, 1967. (Sequential numbers of texts established according to listing in *Shōwa hōbō sōmokuroku* 昭和法寶總目錄, vol. 2.)

Ch.: Chinese, Jp.: Japanese, Kor.: Korean, Skt.: Sanskrit

Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism series uses the standard Romanization systems for East Asian Languages for the transcription of them: Pinyin for Chinese, Revised Hepburn for Japanese, and Revised Romanization for Korean, with slight elaboration in some cases.

Proper names of persons, sites, and other cultural practices or institutions are transcribed according to their nationality and the provenance of the text, but translators transcribe and translate them considering specific contexts they are dealt with. (Translators may have their own transcribing conventions specific to their translations in each volume.)

Citations from the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* are listed as follows: title (with Sanskrit title, if relevant, in parentheses) and fascicle number, T[aishō] and Taishō serial number, Taishō volume number, page number, register (a, b, or c), and, if applicable, line number(s)—e.g., *Shoulengyan jing* (*Śūramgama-sūtra*) 2, T 945.19.110a1. In citations from the *Hanguk Bulgyo jeonseo*, the Romanized Korean title will be mentioned first and then volume number, page number, register (a, b, c, d), and if applicable, line number(s) such as the *Seon'ga gwigam*, HBJ 7.637a21–22.

As of the Romanization of Korean terms and names, this series has some exceptions for its application as far as the Revised Romanization system allows. Firstly, in case that persons' names mentioned in any parts of the book have their own English spellings, they are spelled as they are regardless of transcribing them under Revised Romanization System. Secondly, to avoid the phonetic confusions, hyphens and apostrophes are used in some cases: an apostrophe usually lies in between letters not to join and make a phoneme, but a hyphen does specifically in a person's name. Lastly, the given names of Kang, Noh, Shin and Yi are alternatively transcribed as such to avoid supposedly uncomfortable implications or phonetic confusions of their Romanized names.

The original texts used to get translated for this *Collected Works of Modern Korean Buddhism* series have minor misprints and typos in their early twentieth century printed copies. Most of the translators did researches and studies to correct and revise them in the course of translation, with the Editorial Board's support and consultation. Translators usually never missed noting significant changes in translation from the original texts, but might have left minor revisions and corrections without footnoting them.

THE SUN OVER
THE SEA OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Introduction to the Text and the Author

1. My Encounter with the *Gakhae illyun*

It was around twenty years ago that I first picked up this book, *Gakhae illyun* 覺海日輪, from a bookshelf in my neighbor's room. Although I had heard of the author, Baek Yongseong, I knew little about his works and life story except the fact he was one of the signatories to Korea's Declaration of Independence from Japanese colonial occupation in 1919. Without knowing much about him, I assumed at that time he was a stereotypical monk who had faithfully followed the antiquated tradition of Buddhism. The flimsy design and poor binding of the book only encouraged my prejudice. I did not expect anything great from the *Gakhae illyun*.

As I turned the pages of the book, however, it was gradually revealed to me that the *Gakhae illyun* was one of the most extraordinary works ever written by a Korean Buddhist author. Yongseong's way of expression, as well as the clear messages he tried to convey, was totally different from those of so-called 'great monks' of today, whose discourses are often vague and off-message. It also differs from essays written by scholars, who stress the accuracy of literary evidence and logical consistency rather than empirical reality. What is the reason for this difference? Readers of the book, I am sure, will certainly notice that his words derive from his own practice and enlightenment. Flowery words and scholarly erudition cannot replace personal experience when it comes to explaining Buddhism. Owing to the substance (體) of his experience, he was able to freely make use (用) of words. That is the source of the convincing force of Yongseong's text. Another impressive point of the text lies in the compassion and expedients demonstrated by the author. In order to help his readers understand the subtle doctrines

of Buddhism, Yongseong poses issues on their behalves and offers his own answers to those questions. Of course this methodology is not his own invention, but an age-old means popularly employed even in traditional Buddhist treatises. Yet his consideration is so detailed and practical that readers may improve their understanding in both the doctrine and practice of Buddhism.

Yongseong also has a good command of parables and metaphors, which he uses as an effective strategy to explain knotty points of Buddhism. It is true that Buddhist philosophy sometimes seems too difficult to explain in ordinary language. In particular, the supreme truth may seem to have nothing to do with common sense and ordinary reasoning. There are two ways to break through this predicament: one is to give up the effort to make people understand complicated Buddhist doctrines intellectually, and the other is to exploit parables and metaphors. He was very tactful in the latter. Their use also enhances the value of his text.

2. The Thought of the *Gakhae illyun*

Gakhae illyun consists of 4 chapters. So far as the contents are concerned, chapter 1 and 2 are not much different each other. They are divided into 45 sub-themes, which are not closely associated one another. The titles of chapter 1 and 2 were arbitrarily given while the text was being compiled, therefore they do not mean much. On the other hand, Yongseong himself titled chapter 3, which deals with a single topic, Seon practice. Because chapter 4 is a selection of excerpts from the *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch* (六祖壇經), I will not deal with it in these introductory remarks.

The main concept of chapter 1 and 2 is the nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性), which hereafter I will refer to as the buddha-nature (佛性), for reasons that I will clarify below. The buddha-nature is also the main theme of chapter 3, because the ultimate goal of Seon practice is nothing but realization of the buddha-nature. It is evident that the buddha-nature forms a central

axis penetrating the whole text of *Gakhae illyun*. That is why first I will analyze buddha-nature from various points of view. Next, I will analyze contemplation of the hwadu, the theme of chapter 3, which is one means to realize the buddha-nature.

Let me first offer a few words about the rest of the text, particularly about the destiny of sentient beings who incessantly transmigrate. I think the question of transmigration and the existence of an intermediate realm between births should not be taken lightly. There have been a lot of different views on this matter among Buddhist scholars. Even many Buddhist monks regard the discourse about rebirth as an expedient. Although Yongseong's descriptions about transmigration are impressive enough to attract our interest and are even instructive, I will not examine them in detail here.

As a matter of course, the reality of transmigration has not been 'scientifically' verified. In my own private opinion, sentient beings transmigrate and an intermediate realm exists as much as this world does. Since sentient beings cannot but live in the 'here and now', it is unwise to have too much concern about past and future lives. Even so, I believe the creed of transmigration is not a superstition, nor a heretical doctrine, nor an expedient. Even though there are lots of reasons and circumstantial pieces of evidence that have led me to accept the doctrine of transmigration, it may not be proper to argue this issue at length now.

1) The nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性)

As I mentioned above, the theoretical frame of *Gakhae illyun* is composed of four categories: definition, substance, aspect, and function of the buddha-nature. The goal of religious practice culminates with realization of the buddha-nature. The understanding of *Gakhae illyun* is none other than understanding the buddha-nature. From now on, I will delineate the buddha-nature from three different points of view: cosmology, terminology, and metaphors.

|| Cosmology ||

In general, we regard the tenet of dependent origination (緣起) as the supreme insight of the Buddha. Nevertheless, the explanation of the term often remains within formulaic definitions. Yongseong, however, by combining buddha-nature with the tenet of dependent origination, offers a great, concrete, and practical cosmology that includes sentient beings.

The nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性), the original mind, is common to all sentient beings in the world. As cognitive nature lies dormant, insentient nature is revealed, and the four elements of earth, water, fire, and wind are established. Hence there are mountain, rivers, and cliffs. When the sea of the eight cognitions fluctuates, it transforms itself into perception. Hence sentient beings of the six pathways of existence appear. Insentient nature turns into continents, and the element of perception is transformed into sentient beings.

As stated above, insentient beings are also manifestations of buddha-nature, just as are human beings. The former, as the cognitive nature lies dormant, remains insentient things, whereas the latter is transmuted from the eighth consciousness, the *ālayavijñāna*, the origin of which is the nature of great and perfect enlightenment, i.e. buddha-nature. Yongseong explains it from the perspective of energy:

Everything that has form is originated from formless energy, and the latter in turn is originated from the seed of *ālayavijñāna*. Again, the formless *ālayavijñāna* is generated from the true nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性), which is beyond words and conceptual thought, and is not empty. The nature of original enlightenment does exist, just as the nature of electricity fills the universe, even though we cannot see it.

Meanwhile Yongseong shows in reverse order how the myriad things

come into being:

From the original nature of perfect enlightenment (大覺本源性) *ālayavijñāna* is initiated; from *ālayavijñāna* space unfolds; from space the energy of the five elements of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, is produced; and from the energy of the five elements the numerous continents are produced. From the different seeds (種性) stored in the *ālayavijñāna*, the distinction of air and the five elements are caused and their flow maintained. In short, when the energy of the five elements that fills space mixes, all things and materials are generated.

This is a kind of philosophical cosmogony. Yongseong confirms that the origin of everything is the true nature of great and perfect enlightenment. Because it cannot be known by human cognition, it may not be the object of scientific research. But buddha-nature has been the object of philosophical argument from the advent of so-called *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. The controversial point is whether or not the buddha-nature is a substance that is incompatible with the non-substantialism of Buddhism. This is the question of the identity of Buddhism. In my view, however, the question is moot, because buddha-nature is by definition neither existence nor non-existence. Being non-existence (非有), it may be called emptiness (空), while being not non-existence (非無), it may be called buddha-nature, which is the middle way (中道). Depending on causes and conditions, buddha-nature generates and transmutes itself into all things and sentient beings in the universe. This is the so-called dependent origination of the *dharmadhātu* (法界緣起) or of *tathatā* (真如緣起). Yongseong says:

Even though the essential nature of Great Enlightenment is free from name and form, it is not nonexistent. Since it is not an object of perception and thought, we cannot call it mind, or Buddha, or Dharma [truth], or *Saṅgha* [Buddhist community]. Even if it is neither spirit, nor gods, nor space, its reality is extremely great, on the one

hand, and extremely small, on the other. And though it seems to be empty, it is numinous. Though it is strong and powerful, it is, at the same time, soft and delicate. As such it totally defies human ideation.

| Terminology |

In *Gakhae illyun*, Yongseong uses various synonyms for the buddha-nature in accordance with the context. Among Buddhist terms, buddha-nature is a most difficult one to define accurately. That is why it has so many synonyms. At the same time, these various synonyms may help readers to understand the concept.

‘A thing’ that we cannot indicate by means of name or characteristics may have forced upon it the names original nature (本然性), marvelous enlightenment (妙覺), marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心), the true nature of marvelous and perfect enlightenment (妙圓覺性), the true enlightenment (眞覺), or the true nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性), and so on. There are too many names to enumerate here.

Other synonyms of buddha-nature may be listed as follows:

- a. Great enlightenment (大覺): When capitalized, this term designates the Buddha; it also refers to the religion (大覺教) that Yongseong founded.
- b. The essential nature of luminosity (光明體性): Light is emphasized, as with the Dharmakāya.
- c. Marvelously bright, true nature (妙明眞性): Mind (心) in the marvelously bright, true mind (妙明真心) was changed into nature (性).
- d. The nature of original enlightenment (本覺性): As enlightenment is inherent, it is called ‘original’ (本). It is equivalent to the nature of original perfect enlightenment (本圓覺性).
- e. The nature of numinous wisdom (靈覺性): The cognitive function of buddha-nature is emphasized.

Here these three terms—enlightenment (覺), nature (性) and mind (心)—are compatible with one another. This is a possible conclusion of the mind-only philosophy. Within this monism of thought, the discrimination between the mind of *tathatā* (真如心) and the mind of production and extinction (生滅心) is not a fundamental difference, just like sea water and waves. According to mind-only philosophy, all varieties in the universe are transmutations of buddha-nature. On this basis, Yongseong asserted that materialism is not different from the mind-only doctrine.

|| Metaphors ||

Yongseong frequently resorts to citations from Buddhist scriptures and more often to metaphors to explain his understanding of the Buddhist world view. Here are his favorite metaphors illustrating dependent origination and buddha-nature together:

a. A match fire: A unique simile of dependent origination adopted, so far as I know, first by Yongseong. Just as the nature of fire pervades the whole space, so too does the buddha-nature penetrate the whole of the *dharmadhātu*. When causes and conditions are not combined, fire cannot exist (非有). Only if causes and conditions are interdependent will fire come into being (非無).

When a man scratches a match, the flame will appear. In the same manner, everyone can make a match light by scratching it everywhere in the world. We may safely infer from the observation that fire does not exist in a fixed, specific place and condition. Ever since immeasurable kalpas till today, whenever one strikes a match, fire always arises. Therefore, it is evident that the nature and condition of fire, which pervade the whole of space and the *dharmadhātu*, do not change and do not abide at a particular site.

b. Phonograph: The capacity of *ālayavijñāna* is often compared to storage. Buddha-nature, like invisible, infinite storage that is as great

as space, conserves everything in the universe, transcending time and space.

Do you know a phonograph? Even if a voice is recorded on the machine, we cannot see any shape or trace of it. So how is it that myriad things in the universe are imprinted on the essential nature of luminosity (光明體性)? What is stored in it will be eternally preserved in the future. [...] Whether you talk loudly or in whispers, the voice, through the nature of electricity in the air, generates waves, and in a flash the sonic waves fill up the space of the ten directions, or the whole dharmadhātu.

c. Electricity: Buddha-nature is omnipresent but it is invisible. Electricity is a very good metaphor for explaining dependent origination and emptiness. It also seems to be a unique metaphor invented by Yongseong.

Where does electric light come from when it's turn on? And where does it go when it's turned off? It comes without a trace and goes without a trace. It appears when cause and conditions combine, and when they fall apart, it disappears. Do you know that the nature of electricity, filling the dharmadhātu of empty space, exists without production and annihilation?

d. Space: Although buddha-nature is something like the background of things and phenomena, it is not affected by them just as is the case with space.

Even if all things, including the mountains and rivers and the earth itself, in dependence on this space, are transformed impermanently, space itself is not changed in the least.

2) Mind Training: Absence of Cognitive Mind

It is not too much to say that the heart of Buddhist practice in

general may be the negation of thought. When contemplating the hwadu, practitioners also should avoid cognitive mind, and instead raise a doubt on the hwadu in question. Every controversy over contemplation of the hwadu, such as the question of the live hwadu and dead hwadu, the ten maladies of contemplating the hwadu ‘mu’ 無, the obstacles of demons, and so forth, are caused by whether the cognitive faculty operates in a practitioner’s mind or not.

|| Description of ‘the thing’, buddha-nature ||

The primary concern of a meditator is to know personally what he seeks to discover. If, for instance, he wants to know the buddha-nature, first of all, he needs to firmly grasp what it is. Otherwise, he may not even set out on the path of practice. Although he knows a little about it, if his knowledge is not thorough, he may lose his way to the ultimate goal. That’s why this chapter begins with descriptions about ‘the thing,’ that is buddha-nature or the nature of great and perfect enlightenment.

Each person has something that, on one hand, swallows the entire universe and the whole of space, and something that cannot fill even a grain of dust, on the other. It is brighter than the sun and the moon in its brightness, and darker than pitch in its darkness. Even if this thing is working during daily life, such as when we are wearing clothes, eating meals, and sleeping in our beds, we cannot name it or draw its face. [...] It is neither mind nor no-mind; it is neither thought nor no-thought; it is neither buddha nor non-buddha; it is neither heaven nor not-heaven: it is neither a spirit nor a non-spirit; it is neither space nor non-space: it is neither a thing nor no-thing. Even if it is indefinable, everything is established by it. It is extremely bright, mysterious, void, great, minute, strong, and flexible.

All beings, we are told, are in possession of the thing and make use of it in daily life. However it is mysterious enough to stimulate our curiosity as described above. If it is not known by name or form, how

can we ever take any better approach to the thing? There is a typical hwadu blocking all possibilities of speculation: “It is neither mind, nor thing, nor enlightenment. So, what is it?” Here, the idiomatic syntax of ‘neither-nor,’ which negates the principle of contradiction, is adopted to describe the thing. If a thing is not mind, it must be belong to no-mind. Nonetheless, no-mind is also negated. What on earth is it?

| Doubt |

Although descriptions of buddha-nature are mysterious and enigmatic, their message is quite clear: the negation of thought. Buddha-nature may be something revealed when the cognizing faculty calms down. Thus, even sages do not know in the ordinary sense of knowledge. If it is not the cognizing mind, then with whatever thing do we deal it? In contemplation of the hwadu, that which replaces the cognitive mind is doubt. Practitioners should take hold of a hwadu by means of the concentrated power of a doubt.

It is not confirmed by words or silence. Just raise the doubt and ask, “What is this?” Even sages and wise men do not know it. How can you ever be aware of it by means of conceptual thought? [...] All the studies and practices in this world are carried out through the function of knowing. The practice of hwadu, however, focuses on doubt in order to know the ‘one thing.’ It may be impossible to know the thing through speculation even for tens of thousands of years [...] To sum up, do not try to know and search for the answer, but concentrate instead on doubt when you contemplate the hwadu.

The criterion to distinguish between a live hwadu and a dead hwadu is the presence of the cognitive mind. When a doubt on the hwadu is dominant, there can be no room for the cognizing faculty. This is called the live hwadu.

Don’t give rise to the cognitive mind, but concentrate on the question

that is like a mass of flame. If you are confronted by the silver mountain and iron wall, just try to penetrate through to the realm that cannot be seized. [...] When a practitioner carries the hwadu as a fireball free from any cognizing faculty, it is called a live hwadu. Whenever you arouse the cognizing mind, every hwadu becomes dead.

|| Ten Maladies ||

Ten maladies practitioners frequently experience when they contemplate the hwadu are fundamentally caused by cognizing mind. Yongseong classifies the maladies originating from thought as follows:

These maladies, which are obstacles to the path, originate from awareness, the faculty of cognition. On the basis of that awareness, practitioners may hear, assume, and know. So they have four kinds of maladies: to seek for the true nature with mind, with no mind, with words, and with silence. From the four maladies there arise ten sorts of maladies: to confirm the thing by means of existence and nonexistence; by means of absolute nothingness; by means of reasoning; by means of speculation; by means of demonstrating it through one's behavior; by means of words; by means of being stuck in involuntariness; by means of erroneous approval of the supreme truth upon hearing insightful wits of Seon masters.; by means of validation through written doctrine; by means of simply waiting for enlightenment. These are the ten maladies.

|| Demons ||

Whether internal demons or external ones, the obstruction of demons is basically made from mind. The former is equivalent to the defilements of mind; the latter infiltrate into the human mind when it is agitated so that the cognizing mind reacts to them. Only if practitioners concentrate on the doubt will there be no obstacles of demons.

As every ordinary person has eighty-four thousand defilements, each person has his or her own eighty-four thousand demonic states of mind. External demons penetrate into the human mind when there is a crack in one's awareness, just as wind comes in through a crack in the wall. I hope all practitioners will be afraid of or pleased with nothing, just like a wooden puppet who sees flowers and birds. [...] Nevertheless, if your mind is agitated, you will be hindered by demons. [...] Those who cultivate the path should single-mindedly raise a doubt regarding the gongans inherited from the ancient masters, and get rid of all cognizing habits.

3. A Brief Biography of the Author

1) The Ordination and Enlightenment of Baek Yongseong (白龍城, 1864–1940)

Yongseong's secular name was Baek Sanggyu 白相奎, and his dharma name was Jinjong 震鍾; Yongseong was his Buddhist cognomen. He was born in Jangsu-gun, in North Jeolla Province, Korea. At the age of sixteen, he became a Buddhist monk as a disciple of the Venerable Hwaweoil 華月 at Geungnak-am of Haein-sa. Afterwards, under the guidance of the Venerable Hyeweol 慧月, at Dosol-am of Bogwang-sa in Yangju, he practiced repentance to remove the karmic obstacles accumulated in his previous lives by reciting the mantra of Avalokiteśvara, through which he had a unusual experience. He would recall the mysterious phenomenon, “I felt it as if the bottom of a wooden barrel fell out all of a sudden. It is really indescribable!” This was his first enlightenment experience.

He attained his second enlightenment while contemplating the hwadu ‘mu’ 無 at a unknown monastery on Geumgang Mountain. It is regretful that no detailed record of the circumstances surrounding his second enlightenment has been passed down. Later on, he was reading the *Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (傳燈錄) at Samil-am of Songgwang-sa, and awakened again while reading the passage, “The moon looks like a curved bow. It rains little, while winds are

prevalent.” This was his third enlightenment. Finally, at the age of twenty-three, when passing by the Nakdong-gang after completing a summer retreat, he achieved a great enlightenment and composed a verse of emancipation:

The moon as old as a thousand springs shines over the Geumo-san,
 Billowing waves as high as ten-thousand *li* rise in the Nakdong-gang,
 Wherever is the fishing boat?
 As usual, it is lying under the reed flowers.

金鳥千秋月
 洛東萬里波
 漁船何處去
 依舊宿蘆花

After his full enlightenment, Yonseong wandered around the country preserving his realization. During this journey, he also witnessed the evil customs of so-called Buddhist monks of high virtue. Yongseong severely criticized them in *Gakhae illyun* for misleading their followers:

There are maladies not only of disciples but also of teachers. If you do not know the path, do not teach others. This transgression is not permissible in the world because it may mislead practitioners, which is not a small sin. Today, there are few real sages, even though many self-styled sages teach in this world. They only seek transient fame, but this results in fallacies that lasts for innumerable kalpas. [...] If practitioners happen to have erroneous views, they are bound to be heretics. As the heretics propagate themselves by saying that they have realized supreme truth, some of them have many disciples. It is tragic, just as worms born in grain harm the grain.

Having seen the miserable reality of the Korean Buddhist Order, Yongseong realized the urgent necessity of a movement to share the right way of Seon practice with fellow practitioners and the next

generation of Buddhist adherents. First of all, for the sake of the restoration of the Korean Seon tradition, in 1903 (when he was 40 years old), he organized ‘Suseon-hoe’ (修禪會, the Community of Seon Practice) at Sangbiro-am on Myohyang-san, where he instructed Seon practitioners as a grand teacher. Subsequently he opened Seon meetings one by one at monasteries across the country.

Meanwhile, in 1909 (when he was 46 years old), he also founded a community named the ‘Mita-hoe’ (彌陀會, the Community of Amitābha), encouraging the practice of chanting the name of the Buddha (念佛). In *Gakhae illyun*, Yongseong reminded practitioners of the importance of understanding the right definition of the practice of chanting the Buddha’s name.

Examining the Chinese characters for “reciting the name of the buddha” (*yeombul* 念佛), it is evident that the practice does not refer to loud recitation but reflecting on (*yeom*) the buddha (*bul*). Accordingly we should think or imagine the images or merits of the buddhas through the meditation on the standing buddha, the *ūrṇakesā*, or the sunset. You should practice those meditations with reference to Buddhist scriptures. [...] Without practicing meditation, how could we destroy the deeply engrained habits of sentient beings that are stronger than diamond? This way of truth may not be fulfilled by advanced intelligence, or by higher writing skills, or by outstanding oratorical talents, or by even supernatural powers.

In fact, Yongseong’s practice career is peculiar in its variety: he had an unusual experience through the practice of mantra; was enlightened by means of contemplation of hwadu ‘mu’ 無; had another awakening while reading the Seon lineage record, the *Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (傳燈錄); and finally he attained full enlightenment when he was passing by the Nakdong river. He engaged in several major practices of Buddhism. Moreover, he also recommended practitioners to practice chanting the Buddha’s name. Yongseong’s peculiarity lies in his open attitude in embracing all kinds of practice without

discrimination.

I think his confidence and generosity are attributed to his realization of the true nature, which is great enlightenment (大覺). In 1927 (when he was 64 years old), he officially declared the establishment of the Religion of Great Enlightenment (大覺教). Then he notified Haein-sa and Beomeo-sa of his withdrawal from the Korean Buddhist Order because, at that time, during the Japanese colonial administration, the Korean tradition was dominated by Japanese Buddhism. Japanese Buddhism allowed priests to marry and to eat meat, which was, according to Yongseong, not orthodox Buddhism. Thereafter Yongseong, as a monk of the Great Enlightenment religion, devoted his whole life to the reformation of Korean Buddhism and the Korean independence movement.

At dawn on the twenty-fourth of February, 1940, after a bath, Yongseong called his disciples together and said, “You all did well. I am now going.” And he immediately passed away at the age of 77, after spending 61 years as a Buddhist monk. He left a verse regarding his *nirvāṇa*:

All dispositions are impermanent,
The myriad things are all quiescent by nature.
A gourd flower sticking out from the fence,
Leisurely lies down on a hemp field.

諸行之無常
萬法之俱寂
匏花穿籬出
閑臥麻田上

2) The Reformation of Korean Buddhism and the Independence Movement

Upon hearing of the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910, Yongseong left the monastic life in mountain monasteries to travel to the city of Seoul. Next year, he founded Daegak-sa (大覺寺, Monastery of Great Enlightenment), which became the center of both

the reformation of Korean Buddhism and the Korean independent movement. These two life-long missions were interconnected with one other. He believed that the independence of Korea could be realized through education and the religious life. From the standpoint of Buddhism, the religious life embraces seeking after one's own enlightenment and helping others to be enlightened as well. In sum, by reforming the corrupt Korean tradition of Buddhism, he thought Korean sovereignty could also be restored. Yongseong himself carried out his commissions as long as he lived. In this regard, he was both a nationalist activist as well as a religious leader.

In 1919, he took part in signing the Declaration of Independence of Korea as one of the thirty-three national representatives. He was jailed by the Japanese Government General, but was released from prison after 18 months. As far as his resistance against Japanese Imperialism is concerned, he was a lifelong activist. He consistently supported the Korean Provisional Government in China by providing money and support for patriotic martyrs such as Yoon Bong-gil. Even at the age of 75 (1938), he is reported to have organized a joint military operation between the Chinese army and a Korean national militia to attack a Japanese military base in Korea. This plan was not put in practice and two years after its failure, Yongseong passed away.

Yongseong happened to see a Christian minister reading a Korean translation of the Bible and, shocked, he vowed to translate the Buddhist canon into Korean. In 1921, right after his release from prison, he established the Samjang Yeokhoe (三藏譯會, the Association for Translation of the Tripitaka) and began to translate the Buddhist canon himself. His first translation was the *Diamond Sūtra*. He translated a total of around thirty Chinese scriptures into Korean. In addition to the job of translation, he wrote about thirty volumes of Buddhist essays, such as *Simjo manyu-ron* 心造萬有論 and *Gakhae illyun* 覺海日輪. Yongseong also translated Buddhist ritual into Korean vernacular, which must be the first such attempt in the history of Korean Buddhism. The enterprise of translation became the basis for

the popularization of Korean Buddhism.

As Japanese imperialism was getting stronger on the peninsula, Japanese Buddhism also encroached on Korean Buddhist culture. Yongseong fought against the infiltration of secularized Japanese Buddhism. In 1926 (when he was 63 years old), in order to protect the identity of traditional Buddhism, he twice submitted a petition to the Japanese authorities to prohibit meat-eating and clergy marriage. His efforts, however, resulted in failure. From that point on, Yongseong was committed to the reformation of Korean Buddhism, which he carried out through the restoration of Buddhist legitimacy and the popularization and modernization of the Buddhist tradition.

At the beginning, Yongseong organized the Religious Society for Ten Thousand Days of Meditation (參禪萬日結社會) at Chilbul-sa in Jiri-san. The main members of the association were Buddhist monks. He continued to hold the meeting for collective Seon practice across the whole country. He then expanded the assembly to include ordinary people. In 1918, he organized a Seon society for women at Muju. It was an epoch-making event for Yongseong to encourage women to practice Seon meditation.

Daegak-sa, the headquarters of his new Religion of Great Enlightenment, was built in downtown Seoul as a symbol of the urban propagation of the dharma, probably for the first time since the Goryeo dynasty, some five hundred years earlier. Yongseong taught the public Buddhist doctrine and Seon meditation in the center of the capital. It was the beginning of ‘meditation halls for citizens’ (市民禪房). Thereafter, the term *chamseon* (參禪, meditation) and such expressions as ‘meditation in daily life’ (生活禪) and ‘public meditation’ (大衆禪) came to be widely known to ordinary people.

Yongseong was also interested in propagating Buddhism to children. He published *Bul Il* (佛日, the *Sun of the Buddha*) along with Park Hanyeong. He also opened a Buddhist Sunday school for children. He even composed the first Buddhist hymn, titled “Song of Rebirth in the Pure Land” (往生歌). It may be said that it was Yongseong who initiated the modern propagation of Buddhism in

Korea.

Finally, Yongseong was concerned with the economic independence of Korean Buddhism in an era of capitalism. He advocated the concurrent development of Seon and agriculture to solidify a self-supporting economy in the monasteries. He founded a self-supporting farm named 'Hwagwa-won' 華果院 at Hamyang and ran a production-consumption union. In Manchuria, he built a Daegak monastery and cultivated wastelands. He even ran a mine to financially support overseas organizations for Korean national independence. Based on his wide range of activities, he was truly a pioneer in a turbulent age.

PREFACE

The Buddha, the Enlightened One, said, “What you can return to others does not belong to you. However, what you cannot return to others does belong to you, doesn’t it?”¹ And he also said, “When I raised my golden fist, you should have been enlightened to your innate true nature that is intrinsically bright. How are you so foolish, Ānanda!”²

And he said, “By way of a metaphor, the space that is formless embraces the forms of all things.” Again he said, “Boundless space is the manifestation of enlightenment. And he said, “Anytime and anywhere should you not give rise to delusory thoughts. Even if they arise, never try to suppress them. You should not pretend to know the truth when you stick with delusory thoughts. And also you should not judge the truth when you do not know it.”³

And he said, “Just as a wisp of cloud rises into space, so too does space arise in your mind.”⁴ And he said, “What is not spontaneity, not causation, and neither spontaneity nor causation is, being unrelated to all forms, represented in everything.”⁵

And he said, “The nature of enlightenment, which is like the sea, is pure and perfect. Perfect enlightenment is truly mysterious. Even if the intrinsic brightness flashes over the land of sentient beings, there is no nature of shining.”⁶ That space comes into being within great enlightenment is just like a bubble forming on the sea. Innumerable lands where sentient beings live took shapes in space. Just as bubbles that arise and disappear on the sea do not exist in themselves,⁷ space does not originally exist. So, how can the Three Realms of Existence⁸ that are created in space exist at all?”⁹

Also he said, “Suchness, not holding its own nature, gives rise to things and phenomena according to cause and conditions.”¹⁰

I, having read these discourses of the Buddha in the scriptures, came to have a firm conviction in his teaching; that is, the source of the Dao [the Truth] originates from the enlightenment of the Buddha. What is meant by the title of this book, the Sun (日輪) over the Sea of Enlightenment (覺海)? What is enlightenment? Original enlightenment, initial enlightenment, and final enlightenment are all equally perfect and identical one another;¹¹ that is the nature of enlightenment. What is the sea? The realm of enlightenment is, just like the sea, so deep and wide that it is immeasurable. The sun's orb represents mysterious and wonderful wisdom that illuminates every place in the whole world. After all, because Buddhism is endowed with the morality of religion, the philosophy of truth, and the causality of science, this book is titled “The Sun (日輪) over the Sea of Enlightenment (覺海).



CHAPTER I

THE BUDDHA AND SENTIENT BEINGS

1. The true nature of Great Enlightenment (大覺)

Question [hereafter **Q**]: Why is our religion named Great Enlightenment?

Answer [Yongseong/hereafter **A**]: Let me clarify this for you in two different ways.

First: The Meaning of Great Enlightenment.

The greatest things for us are sky, earth, and space. Yet what is called 'great' in our religion does not refer to these sorts of natural things. The true nature of our mind is not relatively great when compared with those things such as sky, earth or space, but it is ultimately great, since there is nothing to which it can be compared. Enlightenment also has the sense that there is nothing to which one needs to be enlightened. In this manner, the true nature of Great Enlightenment transcends both conceptual thought and formal descriptions.

Space is penetrated by the nature of electricity, and the sea is permeated by the taste of salt. Even so, we cannot see or hear their reality. In the same way, we cannot see, or hear, or even think of the essential nature of the Great Enlightenment that is devoid of both name and form.

Even though the essential nature of Great Enlightenment is free from name and form, it is not nonexistent. Since it is not an object of perception and thought, we cannot call it mind, or Buddha, or Dharma [truth], or Saṅgha [Buddhist community]. Even if it is neither spirit, nor gods, nor space, its reality is extremely great, on the one hand, and extremely small, on the other. And though it seems to be empty, it is numinous. Though it is strong and powerful, it is, at the

same time, soft and delicate. As such it totally defies human ideation.

Even if the true nature is without name and form, it penetrates throughout time and space, it embraces the Six Coordinates (六合)¹, and it commands the hosts of heaven, earth, and human beings to be the king of the myriad things. Infinite and indeterminate (蕩蕩), it does not allow comparison with anything. And towering and majestic (巍嵬), it is without peer. Having existed prior to heaven and earth, it exists without beginning, and, as it will exist until the end of the universe, it exists without end.

In view of the true nature of great and perfect enlightenment, nature and I have the same origin in common; also the myriad things and I have the same body as a whole. The true nature of the saints is not superior to that of common people, and that of common people is not inferior to that of the saints. Even if it is free from generation and annihilation, and devoid of every form, such as being rectangular and round, long and short, or big and small, it creates the heaven when it associates with heaven, it produces earth when it associates with earth, and it begets humans when it associates with human beings. Such is the operation of the true nature of great enlightenment.

Second: Practice and Realization of Great Enlightenment. Ultimate enlightenment can be achieved by enlightening oneself realizing [自覺] and enlightening others [覺他]. A fresh wind blows beneath everyone's legs, and a bright moon shines in front of everyone's faces.² This is a metaphor for the fact that everyone is endowed with the fundamental enlightenment.

Even though one may have this nature of enlightenment, one may be called an ordinary person when one has not yet realized it. Why is this? It is just like refining gold. If gold is not tempered many times in a furnace, it cannot be pure gold. And once it becomes pure gold, it would never again return to its former condition. In the same manner, the true nature of mind, if it is once achieved through practice, is never lost. This stage of practice is called

initial enlightenment. Since fundamental enlightenment and initial enlightenment are not different, both are called the ultimate enlightenment. When these three stages are fulfilled, we call it Great Enlightenment.

2. The holy title of the founder of Great Enlightenment

Q Who is the founder of the religion of Great Enlightenment?

A The founder of our religion is called “Capable of Benevolence (能仁), Calm Illumination (寂默), and Enlightenment.”³ Why is he called the Capable of Benevolence? “Capable” refers to competency in skill-in-means. “Benevolence” means that, because of the great capacity of one’s compassionate heart, one is able to save sentient beings through great lovingkindness and great compassion. “Calm Illumination” symbolizes the great wisdom that clarifies truth. Both illumination and serenity are completely fulfilled within the great wisdom. “Enlightenment” suggests the realization of truth in the realm where the dichotomy between subject and object disappears. This is the implication of the title of “Capable of Benevolence, Calm Illumination, and Enlightenment.”

Q When was he born?

A As we all know, he was born 2,473 years ago in the Indian city of Kapilavastu.

Q Why is your religion called “the Great Enlightenment”?

A It is so called because original full title of the founder is “Capable of Benevolence, Calm Illumination, and Enlightenment.”

3. On the Enlightenment of “Capable of Benevolence, Calm Illumination, and Enlightenment”

Q When did Great Enlightenment [the Buddha] achieve his supreme enlightenment?

A As a matter of fact, he attained *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* (supreme unexcelled right enlightenment) innumerable kalpas ago, as many as dust-motes made of ink sticks. He in the long run appeared in this world to save sentient beings just as the moon that rises in the sky shines over thousands of rivers.

Q What do you mean by “ kalpas as many as dust-motes made of ink sticks” (塵墨劫)?

A Suppose you pulverize the four continents of this world (四天下)⁴ into innumerable dust-motes, and from these make Chinese ink sticks as many as there are motes of dust. Again suppose you grind up the ink sticks to make ink, and use that ink to mark a dot. Now then, how many dots would there be? As many kalpas as there are dots are the so-called “ kalpas as many as dust-motes made of ink sticks.” The Buddha achieved perfect enlightenment innumerable kalpas ago to deliver sentient beings in accordance with their karma or causes and conditions, appearing in myriad lands. It is just like the moon in the sky, shining over all things and creations. The moon in the sky is compared to the Dharmakāya (法身), and the images of the moon reflected in rivers are the Nirmāṇakāya.⁵ Even though the moon in the sky is reflected in every river, it is still the one and the same moon. In the same way, the true body (真身)⁶ of Great Enlightenment, even though it manifests as ten of billions of incarnations, is one and the same.

4. Sentient beings are different from one another, and yet one and the same with respect to the fundamental nature

Q All sentient creatures in the universe are different from one another. Is their numinous and bright intellection singular or varied?

A The origin of the image of the moon reflected in the Dongjeokgang 銅赤江⁷ is the moon in space. If people in the world draw water in vessels from the river, the images of the moon will be reflected in each vessel. These moons in those vessels are simply the images of the moon in space. Depending on three causes and conditions—i.e. vessels, water and the moon—images of the moon appear in every vessel. In this case, even though the vessels are different from one another, the moon is not different at all. In the same way, even though the karma and sentience of beings are different, the original body of dharma is not different.

Metaphorically, in the case of making translucent beads, no matter how many beads you make, the material and substantial nature of the beads does not change. Also, no matter how many candles you light from a single candle in a vacant room, each candle light is not different. In this way, one is all and all is one (一卽多多卽一, or 一卽一切多卽一).⁸ Although there is infinite differentiation of sentient beings among the six rebirth destinies (六途輪廻)⁹ and the four modes of birth (四生),¹⁰ the nature of numinous awareness is not different. Their many varieties is a matter of a distinction in their karma, not of their original nature.

5. Are all sentient beings ultimately One Reality or not?

Q If all sentient beings become enlightened, wouldn't they all then be identical [lit. singular] ? To use a metaphor, when you spill mercury that is in a bottle onto the floor, numerous drops of mercury will be scattered over the floor. And when you sweep them together into a heap, they return to being a single drop, wouldn't they? In the same way, even though all the saints in the past may have had various names and forms, they are originally one and the same, aren't they?

A The rationale behind this tenet is hard to explain. The simile that I made use of is not a conventional metaphor in the Buddhist tradition but a description of various phases of the true nature. The simile that the true nature is compared to the saltiness of water illustrates that the true nature is not annihilated but obviously exists. Being existent, we cannot see or hear it, since it has no name or form. The true nature is also compared to the nature of electricity, which permeates space without name or form. Even though they have nothing to do with the three periods of time (三世) or past and present, electric waves can light up electric lamps, send telegrams, enable phone calls and the wireless telegraph, through which people talk to others living hundreds of miles away.

In this same way, the original dharma body¹¹ of sentient beings that permeates the realm of reality (dharmadhātu) achieves everything in accordance with causes and conditions. The similes of candle light and mercury explain the principle that one is many, and many is one. The simile of the moon in the sky reflected in the thousands of rivers shows that the true body (Dharmakāya) of Śākyamuni Buddha is the moon in the sky and the Nirmāṇakāya is the reflections of the moon

in those rivers. In sum, there are distinctions among sentient beings, but they are one and the same from the standpoint of the nature.

As was stated above, the referents of these metaphors are evident. How can't you understand the principle as it is? Just as with mercury drops and rice cake powder, if the sages of the past and future become a single body without individualities, there will not be the personalities of you and I, or the distinctions between the Buddhas and sages¹² of the three time-periods.

The contention that the origin of all existence is one and the same entity is indicative of the heretical view of eternity.¹³ If it is so as you insist, there would not be the history in which all Buddhas and sages practice for innumerable kalpas ascending the fifty-five stages¹⁴ [of the bodhisattva path] until they finally attain perfect enlightenment, nor various names such as Śākyamuni, Maitreya,¹⁵ Amita,¹⁶ Avalokiteśvara,¹⁷ and so on.

Do not give rise to any delusive thoughts or false views as to what is free from name or form. Nevertheless, I cannot but answer your question. In short, even though the original nature of perfect enlightenment is one and the same, individualities are different from one another. Let me introduce the simile of beads again: suppose that here there are one thousand bright beads. It is true that the substantial nature and transparency of every bead are not different. This is different from the sameness as a mass of powder made of grounded beads.

The light of a candle lights up an entire room. Two, three, or hundreds of candlelights, of which the brightness is not different, fill the room without impeding one another. The brightness of each and every candlelight is not blended or mixed. So it is with our original nature. My enlightenment, which embodies the bright essential nature (光明體性), also pervades the realm of space and the *dharmadhatu*.¹⁸ So is it the case for all the sages of the past from the viewpoint of the capacity that discriminates.¹⁹

It is just like the beads woven in Indra's net. The brightness of every bead is reflected in each bead, and at the same time, the light

of each bead shines on every beads on the net. So it is with the light of the essential nature of the enlightened one. Nevertheless, the sages, Śkyamuni, Maitreya, Amita, Avalokiteśvara, Manjuśrī or Samantabhadra, when they have entered the samādhi of enjoying the dharma for themselves (自受用三昧), cannot see or recognize one another. Never arouse suspicions with all your delusions and absurd views, not knowing the reality of the mysterious realm!

6. Observation on Cause and Conditions

Q How does everything come into being and disappear?

A (Striking a match, he inquires:) How come this match light comes into being? (Having blown out the match, he inquires again:) How has this match light disappeared? In my speculation, everything exists depending on the combination of cause and conditions, and disappears when they fall apart. When a man scratches a match, the flame will appear. In the same manner, everyone can make a match light by scratching it everywhere in the world. We may safely infer from the observation that fire does not exist in a fixed, specific place and condition. Ever since immeasurable kalpas till today, whenever one strikes a match, fire always arises. Therefore, it is evident that the nature and condition of fire, which pervade the whole of space and the *dharmadhātu*, do not change and do not abide at a particular site.

Q If, as you assert, space is full of fire, would not everything on the earth, such as the sun and the moon, stars, humans and animals, trees and grasses, and so on, be burnt down?

A (Laughing, he replies:) You do not understand the causality and nature and characteristics of the dharma. (He asks, while striking a match:) The whole body of the fire may be called the substance of fire. A round and long shape with sharp ends may be called the characteristics of fire. Red is the color of fire. Hotness is the nature of fire. Brightness is the light of fire. “Fire” is the name of fire. (Blowing out the fire, he asks:) Where did the fire go? (Taking a look at the confused visitor, who is blinking his eyes and pondering about it, Yongseong gravely

deplores him:) How pitiful creatures sentient beings are! Without a bit of true wisdom, they solely rely on discriminative thoughts.

Q The fire disappeared because the cause and conditions for the fire dispersed, didn't they?

A How did you know the fire has disappeared?

Q Since I was neither able to see the form, light, or heat of the fire after it had been extinguished, nor able to find the fire in the match stick and sulfur paper, I came to know the fire does not exist.

A In a sense, you are right. Now then, do you maintain that the fire does not exist ultimately, or absolutely?²⁰

Q No, absolutely it does not.

A If that were so, are you then in favor of the heretic view of annihilationism?²¹

Q What else can exist after the fire has been extinguished?

A (Igniting the match fire again, he asks:) If the fire has been completely extinguished, how does this fire arise again? If one doesn't know this cause, he will fall in the heretical camp, which maintains the doctrine of annihilationism. Though it is devoid of name, characteristics, brightness, or heat, the original nature of fire pervades the whole *dharma-dhātu*. Since the nature of fire has no form, light, or heat, how can it burn down trees and grasses on earth? Just like space, the original nature of fire has no fixed time, motion, or abode. Solely depending on cause and conditions, fire exists or does not exist. Accordingly, we cannot decisively assert that the original nature of fire either exists or does not exist.²²

Religious people, philosophers, and scientists in both ancient

and modern times didn't know this dichotomy of existence and non-existence. This conclusion is not the product of my prejudice but the result of the rational and useful speculation. It is regrettable that every religion only teaches either the theory of nihilistic spontaneity or the heretic view of eternalism so that they never understand that my original nature is neither empty nor existent (但空但有).

We cannot affirm that the original nature of fire decisively does not exist, or that absolutely, ultimately, truly it exists. It arises and disappears only dependent upon cause and conditions. When a man focuses sunrays on hay through a magnifying glass, a fire would break out. Everyone will get an equal effect because the existence of fire just depends on cause and conditions.

Q Aside from fire, what about water?

A There is a kind of pearls from which clear water trickles out when it is touched by moonlight. But without the jewel or moonlight, there would not be a water stream. The water thus does not exist in either the jewel or the moonlight. If water comes from the moon, it flows out wherever the moonlight falls, even without the jewel. Also, if the water flows out of the jewel, water trickles out all the time, even without moonlight.

Considered in this way, there arises a stream of water when the two factors come together. And when these cause and conditions fall apart, there is no water flow. Whoever gets the jewel, he would get the water stream also. It has nothing to do with fixed time and space. It is evident that the original nature of water, which is without name or form, permeating the whole of space and the dharmadhātu, either exists or does not exist dependent on cause and conditions.

Q Aside from water, what about wind?

A When a man uses a folding fan, wind rises. And when everyone

in the world uses a fan at a same time and same day, wind will rise simultaneously. The original nature of wind also does not stay in any specific place or time, and it does not have name or form. Pervading the whole world of the ten directions, it arises when cause and conditions come together, and it disappears when cause and conditions fall apart.

Q How come the earth exists?

A A lump of clay, which is a mass of dust, becomes the earth. And when a heap of dust is scattered, the earth will disappear. The true nature of earth is neither existence nor non-existence. Nevertheless, it permeates the whole of space so that, if only the cause and conditions are put together, it establishes all continents where sentient beings dwell, and when it falls apart, the continents will disappear.

Q If so, where does the dust come from?

A A man of wisdom, looking at two horns jutting out over a fence, knows that a cow is passing outside, and also he knows, looking at smoke over the hill, that a fire has broken out. How witless you are! It is too troublesome for me to explain this principle, but let me try it again.

The true nature that is so profound and mysterious accomplishes everything depending on cause and conditions. The universe and everything in the past and present are nothing but the creation of the mind, or consciousness. According to the *Śūramgamasūtra* (*Lengyan jing* 楞嚴經), Great Enlightenment (i.e., the Buddha) said, “You should know that the space created in your mind is like a wisp of cloud that dots the vast sky. How much smaller must all the worlds within that space be!”²³ Thus we come to know that the true mind is much bigger than space, and space is bigger than all the continents as a whole.

The marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心) is truly brilliant;

there is no division between subject and object. Metaphorically, we do not know the instant when a whisp of a cloud that has arisen in space comes to cover the whole world, and also we do not know the instant when the cloud is cleared away so that the blue sky is revealed.

In this same manner, I do not know when a thought by chance flashes across in the true nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性) which is our origin, to establish the universe and myriad things. I do not know when the whole universe collapses by means of the three disasters of water, fire and wind. Let me give you a familiar example: Even though a thought forms in the mind, I do not know the indications prior to its origination because I cannot notice the occurrence of it. Likewise, when a thought disappears, I do not know the indications prior to its disappearance, because I cannot even notice the indication of it. In this way, when myriad things are generated, I cannot predict their generation, and when myriad things are terminated, I cannot predict it.

Q How have the earth as well as mountains and rivers been made from the beginning?

A Everyone knows that water freezes to ice. How come they do not know that original nature of ours made the universe and myriad things! Let me make it clear: “A thing” that we cannot indicate by means of name or characteristics may have forced upon it the names original nature (本然性), marvelous enlightenment (妙覺), marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心), the true nature of marvelous and perfect enlightenment (妙圓覺性), the true enlightenment (真覺), or the true nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性), and so on. There are too many names to enumerate here. It cannot be described by words or thoughts because it is ineffable. Indeed the true nature that is truly empty and bright is so numinous and mysterious that it has nothing to do with time, beginning and end, generation and destruction, and transmigration by nature. The function of the

marvelous wisdom of true emptiness (眞空妙智) is just like that of the space in which a whisp of cloud appears and disappears incidentally. Such is the boundless phenomena originating from the true nature depending on cause and conditions. Let me show you the doctrine of dependent origination.

Figuratively speaking, just as various things, both big and small, are generated in the space which is fundamentally different from things, this variety of universe stems from the nature of original enlightenment (本覺性), which is in itself neither cause and condition, nor spontaneity, nor forms. It is like a law of nature that water turns into ice. The state in which the marvelously bright and true mind (妙明真心), the brightest, falls into delusion as soon as a thought suddenly occurs is called the transformation of the eighth ālayavijñāna.²⁴ By and large, things in the world are created from the eighth consciousness. Since this consciousness is pure and empty like space itself, it is also called the indeterminate consciousness (無記識, *avyākrtavijñāna*).²⁵ To use a metaphor, it is like a mirror that, reflecting everything in front of it without discrimination, cannot discern between long and short forms or different colors.

Let me cite another metaphor: Just as a cloud arising in the space covers the sun, so to the delusion of ālayavijñāna veils the nature of original enlightenment. Dark and bright sides of the nature of original enlightenment result from delusion. In other words, just as a cloud, blocking the sun, darkens the sky and rain falls, so to the delusive mind conceals the nature of original enlightenment to make my own nature inert space (頑空), which constitutes the dark basis. On the other hand, the marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心) delusively constitutes the bright basis. When the darkness of inert space and delusive brightness clash together, a wind arises. At this time, the darkness of inert space turns to earth and delusive brightness becomes water. And when the mobile power of the wind provokes dim energy in space, the energy makes metal. When the mobile power of the wind gets tough and strengthens to strike against the iron, hot energy is produced, which is fire. When the

fierce force of fire and the strengthened air clash, the energy of metal melts, this being the source of water. Through the pressure and collision of air, when the power of fire gets intensified, a dim energy is generated, which is the origin of earth.

All creatures, humans, and animals in the universe, are caused by formless air. And air is caused by inert space, which is based on the brightness of enlightenment, which again exists depending on original enlightenment which is called the marvelously bright true mind or the true nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺體性). Even though it cannot be named in any way whatsoever, for the sake of communication it is given various names. People and religious thinkers, not knowing the reality, maintain that flowers bloom, leaves come out, and fruits ripen of themselves. How absurd it is!

Q Who on earth commands the natural phenomena such as the change of seasons, day and night, blossom and fruits? Aren't they achieved spontaneously?

A Don't you know the principle of the turn of seasons? Winter starts from the day of the summer solstice, when the sun gradually becomes lower in the sky so that the positive element decreases, and the negative element increases. On the other side, summer starts from the day of the winter solstice, when the sun rises in the sky so that the energy of the sun strengthens, and the negative element decreases. These are not by the decree of God or ghosts. Flowers bloom when they meet the positive element, and they wither when the negative energy prevails. No matter how many conditions, such as soil, water, and seed, are fulfilled, without the warm positive energy, a flower would not bloom. How can you say these are not by cause and condition but by themselves! Therefore Great Enlightenment said: "All things arise depending on cause and conditions, and they vanish depending on cause and conditions."

A (He strikes a match again and says:) Look! This light is arising depending on cause and conditions, such as stick, sulfur, my hands, and so forth, isn't it? Nothing exists in the universe that is not dependent on cause and conditions. (He again fills a bowl with water and asks:) Take a look at this! The moon in the sky is reflected on this bowl. (He throws out the water and asks again:) Where has the moon gone? Is it that you can't you see the image of the moon because the moon in the sky has gone?

Q The moon in the sky is still there just as before. I cannot see the image of the moon because there is no water in the bowl.

A So it is. When the cause and conditions come together, it appears, and when they fall apart, it disappears. It is not because there is no moon but because there are no cause and conditions that enable you to see the image of the moon. Even though all creatures, humans, and animals are born and perish according to cause and conditions, their true nature is not born and does not perish. It is like an image reflected on the surface of water. The image moves in accordance with the action of the man. Suppose the man moves to another place and see himself in a mirror, his form and action will all be the same as before. In this way, our cognitive mind appears in the present body when the cause and conditions of parents meet, and it would take rebirth in another place when the destiny of the present body terminates.

Q Don't say such a thing. It is a superstition. Once a person dies, all is lost. Who in heaven ever saw rebirth?

A (Gravely deplored him:) People in the world only know things that are at hand and never know what is the most important thing for them. In the afterlife, as you assert, one cannot see; but do you, who are very much alive now, see yourself? Now, you and I are looking face to face, talking, blinking our eyes, moving our arms and legs.

It is reasonable to think that behind these activities there must be something that prompts these actions. How can you see it?

If I ponder over something while sitting still here without any motion, do you see what I am? When you are awake, and I fall asleep wandering about in a dream, do you see me in the dream?

Q Of course not. The body has a form, but the mind does not. How can I see a formless thing?

A If we cannot see each other even sitting face to face, how much less would this be the case after death? Just awake immediately! The twenty-four hours of a day rotate; the twelve months of a year rotate; the world rotates in the order of formation-abiding-decay—emptiness (成住壞空);²⁶ the human body rotates in the order of birth-aging-illness-death (生老病死), the mind rotates in the order of production-abiding-changing (or decay)-destruction (生住異滅). There is nothing that does not rotate in the world. How come you assert that our minds will disappear like smoke after death?

(He strikes match again:) Where did this flame come from? (He blows out the matchlight:) Where has the flame gone? Do you know where the flame has gone? This fire exists or does not exist according to cause and conditions. However, the true nature of fire stays permanently without generation or annihilation. Everything in the universe is the same. Thus do not arouse a wrong view!

7. The creation of the world

The nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性) is so broad and spacious that it is boundless, and so deep and profound that it is bottomless. Space cannot be compared to it, how much less so heaven and earth! The calm substantial nature, though entirely empty, is inexhaustible and unchangeable. So its sublime function is also infinitely mysterious, inexhaustible, and unchangeable. Great Enlightenment also said, “The space created in your mind is like a wisp of cloud that dots the vast sky.” He emphasizes that the true mind is much bigger than space, and space is bigger than all the continents.

In addition, marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心), being not faithful to its nature, is so bright to be stable that the truly bright nature turns to dark mind which is called ignorance. It may be compared to pure seawater that is calm and still-looking from outside, but internally there is an obscure current that is incessantly flowing through it. It is just like the marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心) that generates subtle cause and conditions.

What shakes subtly is called *ālayavijñāna*. As the eighth consciousness is agitated, internally is concealed the profoundly bright true mind, and externally is generated all phenomena. In this manner the profoundly bright true mind turns into the eighth *ālayavijñāna* before the space, continents, and things are established. Among those saints and common people in this mundane life, no one knows the *ālayavijñāna*. Only the great saint [the Buddha] thoroughly uncovered the truth in the *samādhi* of great calm light (大寂光三昧). Figuratively, it is just like ordinary persons cannot see the minute dust-motes that are constantly floating around in

the air. However, when the sunray breaks through the window crevice, he can clearly see the dusts. Only through the samādhi of great calm light can one observe the minute agitation of the eighth consciousness. Since the substance of this consciousness is calm and clean like the space, it is called pure consciousness. It is also called the consciousness of directive mind (lit. “mind-king consciousness,” 心王識) as it creates every forms and things.

The vague and empty factor of ālayavijñāna becomes the space and its property of motion turns into the air. Because this consciousness embraces all elements of the air and all seeds of sentient and insentient beings, it is called the storehouse consciousness. And as is liable to mature differently, it is also called the consciousness of different maturities (異熟識, *vipākavijñāna*). The way that the marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心) turns to ālayavijñāna is like the revolution of the sun. When the sun rises, the space and myriad of things are shrouded in the sunlight; and when the sun sets, the whole universe is left in darkness.

In the middle of the inert space, dim energy brings about various elements from which, through immeasurable transformation, the universe is created. As the marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心) itself is thoroughly empty, we cannot confirm it to be existent. Nevertheless, because the mind is deluded, ignorance arises. And from the ignorance cognitive mind evolves the objective world, on account of which the original bright nature comes to be concealed. Consequently inert emptiness and perceptive cognition are divided. Ideation (想) is then hidden so that it is indeterminate and neutral elements are formed therefrom. The world of insentient beings is then constituted. The perceptive cognition, being agitated, produces sentient beings.

In other words, when deluded thoughts are coagulated, the neutral air generates all elements of insentient things. Deluded thoughts, generating perception, give rise to sentient beings. It is not the wonders of the gods or spirits that creates the world and everything on it. The nature of originally perfect enlightenment,

so profound and mysterious, by giving rise to every cause and conditions boundlessly, establishes the world and sentient beings. Don't be confused ever!

Where do the Four Great Elements—earth, water, fire, wind—spring from before the beginning of the universe? As the substantiality of the *ālayavijñāna* is stubbornly void, its energy either turns to be dim and dark, or turns to be pure and illusively bright. Its dark energy is the element of earth, its bright energy the element of water. The dark energy is mirky, while the bright energy is light. The dark energy has two different properties: one is the negative element of earth, the other the positive element of earth. The bright energy also has two different properties: one is the negative element of water, the other the positive element of water. When these two different properties are intermixed, wind is generated between them.

In sum, the mysteriously bright, true mind turns into the *ālayavijñāna*, which again generate inert voidness. Out of the voidness comes both dark and bright energy. When these two different energies cross each other, wind is created. This is the process in which the universe of form is established. Human beings as well as the sun, the moon, and the stars move by means of the power of the wind. As a result, the continents of the lowest worlds are created.

The moving energy turns into wind or wood. When the negative element of wood in the wind is intermixed with the negative element of earth, both the negative and the positive elements of metal come into being. When the positive element of metal and the negative element of wood are combined, both the positive element of fire and negative element of fire are created together. When the positive element of fire and the negative element of metal are intermixed, both the positive element of water and the negative element of water are generated. Again, when the positive element of water and the negative element of fire are intermixed, both the positive element of earth and the negative element of earth are created. In this manner,

when the Five Elements co-exist, myriad things are produced, whereas when they conflict with one another, they would annihilate everything in the universe. All these phenomena are created and transformed through the mysterious function of the mind, not by the creation of a divinity. Let me summarize the point in a verse.

A verse says:

As the pathway of words and speech is broken off,
 And the scope for mind is absent,
 How could I delineate *its* reality?
 Even if one, taking the space for a mouth,
 And letting the light of the earth send forth,
 Exhausts one's occult power,
 He would not portray what *it* is?
 The supreme dharma body is like space.
 The profound wisdom of true emptiness resembles the sun and the
 moon.
 The substantial body, so clear and bright,
 Is mysterious and profound.
 Since it has no beginning or end, and no generation or extinction,
 How is there the cycle of transmigration?
 The true nature is bright and bright.
 The mind is empty and empty.
 The process of time is cut off.
 The bright nature is so profound,
 That it does not follow its own nature.
 So, as waves are rising on a great sea,
 Boundless cause and conditions break out.
 If, in the mind of no cognitive wisdom,
 The waves of the cognitive mind arise,
 Despite the nature that is devoid of generation or annihilation,
 One cannot but undergo the suffering of duality, which is life and
 death.

The true and the deluded are united,
 To become the eighth consciousness.
 When being calms, it becomes space,
 When being is agitated, it turns into continents.
 Dark energy changes into earth,
 Bright energy changes into water.
 On the basis of the combination of soil and water,
 The interaction of the Five Elements commences.
 Two energies, bright and dark, come together,
 And collide with each other,
 To stir up a great wind wheel,
 Which turns into three-eight wood.²⁷
 As the dark wood of shade and the soil of light are combine,
 The metal of light and the metal of shade are generated.
 The metal of light and the wood of shade get married,
 To give birth to two-seven fire.²⁸
 As the fire of light and the metal of shade come together,
 One-six water²⁹ flows.
 A gigantic rain falls,
 In space.
 A boundless great wind wheel,
 Supports it firmly from below.
 A great ocean takes shape,
 Which is billions of *yojanas* [leagues] deep.
 Having been pure and serene without moving,
 A great wind rises all of a sudden,
 To shake the seawater,
 And waves overflowing the sky are swelling over.
 As wind and water crashes together,
 Innumerable bubbles,
 Begin to arise.
 It is infinitely thick and dense,
 And immeasurably vast and spacious.
 It is getting hard to be a solid matter,

Which makes the world of the seven jewels such as gold, silver, and lapis lazuli.

They are so mysterious and clear.

The forceful wind power

Casts the world into space,

Which is the Akaniṣṭha realm³⁰ of the plane of form (rūpadhātu).

After innumerable years have passed,

As the volume of the water diminishes,

Down to hundreds of thousands yojanas,

A great wind wheel revolves again,

To make heavenly world of seven jewels,³¹

Which is solemn and magnificent.

In this grand scale,

After eighteen levels of heavenly worlds,

was consecutively established,

Descending one by one downwards,

Six levels of heavenly palaces,

Were majestically constructed.

From here down to various continents,

Layer upon layer were constructed

On which the six realms of desire were established.

Again, great winds strike together,

And the huge earth on which we live,

Was roughly established.

Innumerable worlds like this

Are inexhaustibly amassed one upon another,

Hanging in the space.

Infinite and boundless is the Lotus-Womb World,³²

And inconceivable is the Great Buddha [King] World,³³

In which live myriads of saints and common people.

Even though one tries to count the number of them for innumerable

kalpas,

He may not count them at all.

The orderly establishment of worlds,
And its variety of conditions and shapes, round and rectangulare, long
and short,
Is limitless.

Between the forming world,
And the vanishing world,
The distinction of order is not known.

Even though all the continents are formed of themselves,
It is in fact the combination of the four elements of earth, water, fire,
and wind.

All sentient being are equally formed
From the four elements.

Since water turns into ice
Ice, as it is, is water.

As the bright nature of mind arises,
To change into the worlds,
The worlds, as they are, are mind.

It is evident that the whole world is made of mind.
Because fettered sentient beings do not know the truth,
Turbid heretical tenets are rampant.

8. The origin of sentient beings

A verse says:

The nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性), the original mind,
Is common to all sentient beings in the world.
As cognitive nature lies dormant,
Insettent nature is revealed,
And the four elements of earth, water, fire, and wind are established.
Hence there are mountain, rivers, and cliffs.
When the sea of the eight cognitions fluctuate,
They transform themselves into perception.
Hence sentient beings of the six pathways of existence appear.
Insettent nature turns into continents,
And the element of perception is transformed into sentient beings.
In a great ocean, being a single entity,
Immeasurable waves overflow,
Each of which is differentiated.
Likewise, though ingenuous nature is only one,
Dependent origination of the pure and the impure is endless.
Hence there are the distinction of continents, and that of sentient beings,
The distinction of forms and that of mind.
What the Buddha said infinitely on this matter,
I can't fully delineate them.

After the continents were established,
Sentient beings begin to transform,

Just like spring rain,
Gathered in a pot for a long time,
In which worms breed.
Long time after the establishment of continents,
The human race comes into being.
Take a look at this clearly, all of you!
The three realms are mind-only,
Myriad things are cognition-only.
Isn't it clear?

9. The reason why sentient beings continue to exist even after transformation

A verse says:

You love me,
And I love you.
Since the passion for hundreds and thousands of kalpas,
Succeeds one after another,
The fate of parents and children matures,
To get together in repeated transmigrations.

I kill you,
You kill me.
Bearing a grudge against each other,
I take my revenge,
You take your revenge.
We are enemies to each other in repeated transmigrations.
A goat dies to be reborn a man,
A man dies to be reborn a goat.

In this manner, they transmigrate incessantly.
If one commit a fraud, a usurpation, and a theft,
He is to be reborn a slave or an animal, a cow or a horse,
Filling all the continents.
One who observes the five Buddhist precepts³⁴ will be born in the realm of human.

One who practice the ten virtues³⁵ will be born in the heavens.³⁶
One who practice meditation (*dhyāna*) associated with the outflows (有漏禪定),³⁷
Is born in the four *dhyāna* heavens (四禪定)³⁸ or the four formless

heavens (四空定).³⁹

One who commits severe greed, anger, or ignorance,⁴⁰
Is to be born the three evil destinies, the hells, hungry ghosts, or
animals.

Transmigration in the three realms, just like a pulley of a well,
Never ceases even after trillions of kalpas.

A virtuous act is one in dream and phantasm,
An evil act is also one in dream and phantasm.
If one comes out of the vast dream of the three realms,
And has insight into one's true nature,
Transmigration in samsara will fundamentally not occur.

10. Why are there sentient beings?

The true mind itself, which is free from form, wisdom, or cognition, and does not keep its own nature, materializes everything according to cause and conditions. In this way, the original nature that is free from birth and death creates birth and death. Birth and death is combined with non-birth and non-death. Thus what is neither birth and death nor non-birth and non-death is called the *ālayavijñāna*, which is also called non-enlightenment, original ignorance, or the eighth consciousness. This consciousness is as pure and clear as space, and its dimension is similar to the original nature.

This *ālayavijñāna* evolves into the three refined, or subtle conceptions. Because one, being ignorant of this true nature, is not able to keep its original disposition, the waves of cognition arise to become subtle conceptions, the subtlest of which is called the unenlightened condition of ignorance (無明業相).⁴¹ Due to this subtle condition of ignorance, the ability to perceive phenomena arises. This is called the condition of transition (轉相), which is so-called because it is revealed out of ignorance to be perceptive characteristics. Subsequently, as the faculty of vision is separated from the subtle conception of ignorance, the empirical world appears. This is the object, or target of the perceiving subject. This is called the condition of appearance (現相), which is so-called because internally the body of six sense organs and externally all things in the world delusively appear.

These three are called the three subtle conceptions (三細)⁴² depending on which the six coarser concepts (六麤)⁴³ are revealed. Sentient beings, not knowing that empirical phenomena are created from their minds, are mistakenly attached to the actual existence of

things. This is the so-called attachment to things (法執), of which there are two sorts: one is the characteristic of knowledge (智相),⁴⁴ the other is the characteristic of continuity (相續相).⁴⁵ The former implies cognition, by which one is firmly attached to everything as truly existing. Because sentient beings attach to the external world from birth to death, it is called attachment to things as inborn delusion (法執俱生惑).⁴⁶ And the aspect of continuity (相續相) points out continuous discrimination based on the attachment to things. These two, knowledge and continuity are closely associated.

Knowledge and continuity are divided again into two sorts. One is attachment to “I,” which is one of the attachments to things. The attachment to self (我相) is again divided into two aspects: One is the attachment to self (我執). Because sentient beings from birth to death do not abandon the attachment to self, it is called the attachment to self as inborn delusion (我執俱生惑). The other is assigning names (計名字相). Because sentient beings for a lifelong time do not give up the discriminative point of view on the basis of the attachment to self, it is named the attachment to self as acquired delusion (我執分別惑).

In this manner, sentient beings, being attached to self, give rise to a discriminative mind distinguishing likes and dislikes (憎愛取捨心). As a result, the three poisons of greed, hatred, and ignorance prevail, and they receive the retribution of good and evil for the deeds (karma) in previous lives. Thus the six coarser stages arise from the three subtle conceptions.

11. The mind-only tenet

Behold! What is it that speaks and keeps silent, lifts hands and feet, sits, lies, sleeps, comes and goes, sees and hears, and perceives and knows? If you say it is the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and body that performs all those functions, then why can't a dead body do them? It is therefore the mind that does all those things. Sitting in a deep room with one's eyes closed, the mind alone can travel to and from thousands miles away and freely comes and goes between mountains, rivers, and cliffs. What else can be there?

You argue in favor of materialism now. If that were the case, would external things, rather than mind, contend with right and wrong, good and evil, and bring about the three poisons? Someone on a bed has a dream in which he experiences various things, heaven and earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars, and so on. Is this what material things do? What makes the distinction is not your mind but external things? Indeed your mind is different from stones or wood.

From ancient times to the present, what has developed in the world such fields of learning as religion, ethics, philosophy, and science? Except for the mind, material things alone cannot create those great works. Before everything else, what is it that advocates materialism? Isn't it your mind? Because insentient wood and stone do not have perception, there is nothing they can do.

In my opinion, the most important thing in a lifetime lies in the realization of the nature of original perfect enlightenment by means of such states of mind as the ardent passion to know one's bright nature, and unbiased, steadfast, progressive attitude. With open eyes, we should clarify past, present and future, and should observe the highest truth in the universe through bright vision.

The fundamental tenet of the religion of the Great Enlightenment was not settled in a code of laws. It is just like the order of nature. In spring, we do the work of spring. In fall, we do the work of fall. If one tries to go against this general order, it would not be possible.

The *Lotus Sūtra* (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka Sūtra*) says, “By means of innumerable skillful means (*upāya*), I deliver sentient beings.” Skillful means, being applied to help one enter the path, are not an attachment to dharma. In order to cross a sea, we need a boat. Great Enlightenment just wished to lead all sentient beings to the other shore, i.e., the land of truth, through countless skillful means as many as the sands of Ganges. He deceives sentient beings not in the least.

The mind is the subject of all. If it wants to sit, one sits. If it wants to lie down, one lies down. If it wants to go, one goes. Millions of works are carried out in accordance with the motivation of the mind. On the other hand, if the mind takes a rest, nothing will happen. It is not the original nature of mind that it gives rise to the mind of greed, hate and ignorance, being infatuated with eternal objects. This occurs because of adherence to repeated habits of the evil passions, which one has developed in numerous lives, kalpa after kalpa.

Owing to cold weather, the river turns into ice, which is not its original substance. Likewise, it is not because of one’s own nature but because of chronic habits that the original nature is changed into that of ordinary person. A stupid man is liable to be fascinated by a beautiful woman and he is also apt to be greedy for money. In these cases, it isn’t the woman and money that attract the man. If you agree with this and still support materialism, what is it that supports materialism? The nature of our original perfect enlightenment (本圓覺性) is neither spontaneous nor conditionally caused; but at the same time, it is neither non-spontaneous nor non-conditionally caused. Because it is free from (離) any fixed form, it pervades each and every form.

Q It is said that sentient beings come into being when energy gets

together and that they perish when it falls apart. What causes them to be born and die?

A You have said that the births and deaths of sentient beings are owing to energy, denying the existence of mind. In that case, does the so-called energy have the numinous awareness (靈知)? If so, the power is omnipresent in air, in electricity, and in everything, so that anywhere the energy is present, sentient beings spring up. Otherwise, how does insentient energy make sentient beings who have the numinous awareness? It is absurd of you to think this!

Q When trees are burned, smoke flies away and the trunk is reduced to ashes. Likewise, what else is left over after a person has died?

A As the nature of original perfect enlightenment (本圓覺性), the essential nature of luminosity (光明體性), and our *ālayavijñāna* are universally embracing, pervading the dharmadhātu of empty space, all continents of the universe are established for as long as immeasurable kalpas. The shape of the continents, the creation, abiding, decay, and vanishing of the universe, the distinction in shape and voice of all sentient beings and so forth—everything was sealed in the storehouse of the *ālayavijñāna* and the nature of bright substantiality (essential nature of luminosity). Nevertheless, its nature, like a great sea, does not decrease or increase. Do you even know such a mysterious thing?

Do you know a phonograph? Even if a voice is recorded on the machine, we cannot see any shape and trace of it. So how is it that myriad things in the universe are imprinted on the essential nature of luminosity (光明體性)? What is stored in it will be eternally preserved in the future. You may not believe what I have said. Whether you talk loudly or in whispers, the voice, through the nature of electricity in the air, generates waves, and in a flash the sonic waves fill up the space of the ten directions, or the whole dharmadhātu. Following

the sonic waves, the nature of electricity, which pervades the dharmadhātu of empty space, is imprinted on the storehouse of the ālayavijñāna of the nature of original enlightenment, without leaving any shape. The substance of the voice is imprinted so that it will never disappear.

Not only the voices of a person but also all the voices of sentient beings, of insentient beings, and of animals from the far-distant past to the infinite future are vividly maintained there so that they do not cease to exist throughout the three periods of past, present, and future, and they entirely permeate the space of the ten directions. I can prove it right away. Wherever you place a radio, it contacts electric waves and transmits voices, irrespective of distance or direction. It is really mysterious. If you turn off the radio, even though the voice fills the entire world, you cannot see or hear it.

It is not merely the case with a voice. For instance, when someone, sitting alone in an innermost room, is thinking about something, he may well think that only he knows what he thought to himself. However, in no time all the saints of the ten directions would clearly know his thought. Whatever in the universe, including all phenomena and sentient beings, is imprinted on the original nature of the dharmadhātu, will never be gone in the future.

Look! Where does electric light come from when it's turned on? And where does it go when it's turned off? It comes without a trace and goes without a trace. It appears when cause and conditions combine, and when they fall apart, it disappears. Do you know that the nature of electricity, filling the dharmadhātu of empty space, exists without production and annihilation? Do you know that all things made of earth, water, fire, and wind live and die, on the one hand; and that, permeating all the time the universe and space, they never die, on the other hand? Do you know that, even though all sentient beings are born and die incessantly, in fact they exist forever without being born or dying? Do you know that the human body is like a bubble and the mind is like seawater, so that while bubbles burst, the seawater remains as it has always been? Likewise, do

you also know that, while the body may be destroyed, the mind is maintained all the time? Do you know that, while a cloud arises and disappears, empty space is not changed? Most of all, do you know that materialism and the mind-only doctrine are one and the same?

Great Enlightenment said, “The four great elements (四大) and the five aggregates (五蘊)⁴⁷ are nothing but the Diamond Realm (金剛界).”⁴⁸ Diamond is a simile for indestructibility, that is, it is free from birth and death. Materialism is not different from the mind-only doctrine. To use another simile, although seawater is pure and clean, it necessarily has a salty taste. Although space looks empty, it certainly has the nature of great enlightenment that is the origin of the space. Does it not exist just because you cannot see it with your eyes? Even though the nature is contained in things, you can hardly see it. Fire is hot. Pepper is hot, too. The grain of wood is either smooth or tough. All things have their own properties, you cannot find them out with your vision alone.

Everything that has form is originated from formless energy, and the latter in turn is originated from the seed of *ālayavijñāna*. Again, the formless *ālayavijñāna* is generated from the true nature of great and perfect enlightenment (大圓覺性), which is beyond words and conceptual thought, and is not empty. The nature of original enlightenment does exist, just as the nature of electricity fills the universe, even though we cannot see it.

Another metaphor: A cloud appears in the sky. A breeze arises and calms down. Even if all things, including the mountains and rivers and the earth itself, in dependence on this space, are transformed impermanently, space itself is not changed in the least. When seawater turns into waves, that water is identical with the waves, and vice versa. Just as water and waves are not different, so too is it that there is no enlightenment outside the mind, and vice versa. In this manner, as everything in the three worlds is a creation of mind or consciousness, I do not see materialism and the mind-only tenet as being different things.

12. On the natural chemical process

Q So far you have discoursed on the formation of the world and the destiny of sentient beings. Now then, by what principle do various flowers having thousands of forms with a thousand petals or a single petal come into being?

A From the original nature of perfect enlightenment (大覺本源性) $\bar{a}layavij\bar{n}\bar{a}na$ is initiated; from $\bar{a}layavij\bar{n}\bar{a}na$ space unfolds; from space the energy of the five elements of, wood, water, fire and earth, is produced; and from the energy of the five elements the numerous continents are produced. From the different seeds (種性) stored in the $\bar{a}layavij\bar{n}\bar{a}na$ the distinction of air and the five elements are caused and their flow maintained. In short, when the energy of the five elements that fills space mixes, all things and materials are generated.

This is to say that, by means of the energy of the five elements as well as that of movements of the sun and the moon, the variety of all phenomena is disclosed. When modern chemists produce materials, they know the differences in the processes that produce rice nectar and rice wine. Likewise, the seeds stored in the $\bar{a}layavij\bar{n}\bar{a}na$, combined with air, the energy of the five elements and molecules, and the complete natural chemistry in accordance with the quantities of the materials, manifest various forms and colors of things.

In the primitive stage, all things are established from $\bar{a}layavij\bar{n}\bar{a}na$; after creation they propagate in three ways: the transmission by root, by seed, and by transformation. A peony transmits its progeny through its roots. However, even though you anatomize the root, you cannot find the stalks, leaves or flowers of the peony. If so, where has the peony come from? In the beginning, when the root forms,

it takes the energy of the seed of karma in *ālayavijñāna* to mature the cause and conditions for blossoming into a peony by means of natural chemical process; then, when it is associated with water, soil, and warmth, it grows to form sprouts, leaves, and finally flowers splendidly.

On the other hand, there are plants that transmit its species through seeds. The energy of the seed of karma in *ālayavijñāna* is brought to the root, which is brought to the plant, which is again brought to the stalks and leaves of a plant. In the end, flowers and fruits spring up. Inside of a fruit there are seeds, and inside of a seed there is the kernel of the seed. From the kernel of the seed of karma in the *ālayavijñāna*, which is the primal cause, a plant comes into being. Look at the pine tree! Even though its seed is so tiny, from it a tall pine tree comes into existence. Now that I have introduced such instance as this, there is nothing further to say.

Q It seems that there is no difference between the seeds of a plant and the eggs of an animal from the viewpoint of transformation from mind or consciousness. What, then, is the reason that from the former comes insentient things and from the latter comes sentient beings?

A You may well ask this. There are two kinds of seeds in *ālayavijñāna*: One is the seed of intelligence and the other is the indeterminate seed. From the former comes out sentient beings and the other non sentient things.

13. The Inconceivable supernatural powers of Great Enlightenment⁴⁹

Q I have heard that Great Enlightenment has inconceivable supernatural powers. But I am afraid it is a kind of nonsense that I find unbelievable.

A Who on earth does not have supernatural powers? However, the supernatural powers of humans and other sentient beings are different according to their capacities. These are nothing but the functioning of the mind. A crow flies and a deer runs. All these activities are natural mysteries and supernatural powers are devoid of artificiality. What else do you want but this miracle? Nonetheless, let me introduce the supernatural powers of saints and ordinary people.

Ordinary people are different in their various grades of wisdom and stupidity. Here I will only take wise people into consideration. Westerners invented many machines through precise research and development. Making use of the nature of air, water and fire, they manufactured steamships gliding on the water, trains running along railroad tracks, and airplanes flying in the air. All these achievements are owing to mental activities of sentient beings, which are a kind of divine power that is then applied to instruments and materials. The mental activity of sentient beings is also applied to the invention of radio, which receives messages and songs broadcast by radio stations. So is it with telegraph, telephone and other electric machines. All these things are produced by mental processes.

The equally supernatural powers of Great Enlightenment is not a weird magical trick but the un-created marvelous function (無作妙用) which is originally endowed in our fundamental natures. Comparing the supernatural power of Great Enlightenment with that of heavenly

beings, the former is like the sun and the moon, the latter like the glow of a firefly. Let me introduce the six supernatural powers of Great Enlightenment.

The divine vision of Great Enlightenment has nothing to do with discrimination and artificiality. Nonetheless, he can see the entire dharmadhātu of empty space because his vision is free from distance. Why? The body of Great Enlightenment, as an embodiment of the original nature of light (本源自性光明性體), is not transmuted. And since his whole body is an eye per se, it pervades the dharmadhātu. Thus he clearly sees the three periods of past, present and future, as well as the entire dharmadhātu of empty space.

Q It is absurd and incredible that he hears every sound of the ten directions. How can he see all the phenomena of past and future, which are formless?

A (Laughing) Do you know that all things are made of earth, water, fire, and wind?

Q Yes, I do.

A Now then, do you know the reason why all beings come into being and perish?

Q I think only the saints would know.

A Following the summer solstice, as the sun gets lower in the sky, the heat and light of the sun weakens. Subsequently fall comes as the positive element becomes rarefied while the negative element of the north strengthens, when the five grains and hundreds of fruits ripen. Finally winter comes when trees and plants shed their leaves, wither away, and are buried under the snow. These are the cause and conditions of the death of beings. With the advent of winter,

as the sun gradually ascends in the south, the sun's rays are fortified. Through these cause and conditions, all trees and plants burst out in leaves and flowers. In sum, the positive energy gives rise to beings; and when the negative energy prevails, beings perish away.

After plants wither and decay, do they die out forever? No, they don't. When they decay, the element of water, by the scorching heat of the sun, evaporates into the air to be united with rivers, streams, or seawater. They never disappear even after thousands of millions kalpas. And the dull substance of the decayed plants is altered into the element of earth, which remains forever. So too is it with the elements of wind and fire, which, as if they seem to disappear into space, return to their original nature. In this way the natures of earth, water, fire, and wind are always full in space, and never disappear.

So too is it with the human body and the continents, which, as if they seem to disappear due to the three calamities,⁵⁰ the original nature of the four elements, filling the dharmadhātu, never cease to exist. Not knowing the truth, people in the world foolishly enough believe that one disappears forever after death. As mentioned above, if the continents and insentient plants would never disappear, how much less our original mind and nature!

Whenever you record any sound on a phonograph, it never fades out but remains in that vinyl for even a thousand of years. Do you know that what you said for your whole life fills the space of dharmadhātu and never disappears forever? Every sound, loud or quiet, in accordance with air and electricity, fills space. Metaphorically, it is like a stone fallen into the middle of a river creating ripples that eventually reach the river's shore.

Another metaphor: A literary person and the like must have stored various information in their minds for their entire lifetimes. Nevertheless, we cannot find the place where the information is kept. Likewise, all the forms of material and mental activities of sentient beings, even if we cannot see them, always exist in the dharmadhātu eternally.

Even though all these mental and physical phenomena arise from

the original nature, there is no arising. Also, when they disappear, there is no change at all within space, which is calm and still all the time. So too is it with the original nature, the origin of everything, which is beyond any transformation whatsoever.

The differences of sentient beings' forms, sounds, and species are imprinted on the nature of original enlightenment. It is just like the principle of a phonograph, in which various sounds are stored without any trace. Even though we cannot see or hear the sound in the phonograph, when it is turned on, the sounds are clearly reproduced. Knowledge of religions, sciences and philosophies, which are stored in our minds but invisible to us, are eventually revealed according to cause and conditions because they are imprinted on the nature of dharmadhātu.

The materials that produce all forms are designated as earth, water, fire, and wind, or as metal, wood, water, fire, and earth.⁵¹ If it were not for these elements, all forms in the universe would not exist. Plain, bitter, sweet, hot, and salty tastes are the property of things: the propensity of submerging in the taste becomes the negative energy, while that of floating over the taste becomes the positive energy. Solidity and softness, straightness and curvature belong to energy; the five colors, of blue, yellow, red, white, and black, are connected with light; rectangular, round, long, and short constitute shapes; purity and impurity are the basis of negative and positive energy.

Water flows downward, while fire always flares upward. Fire is hot, while water wet. These forces are unchangeable in the universe. The properties of floating and submerging, emptiness and fullness signify the negative and positive energy. Owing to the friction of fire, electricity is generated, which fills space. Electricity, which depends on the nature of electricity, becomes a telegraph, telephone, and lamp, according to practical applications.

In this manner, the natures of elements, such as water, earth, and wind, penetrate all of space and coexist without disturbing one another before they possess forms, substances, and qualities. It is like

thousands of lamps in a room, which do not disturb one another. The dharmadhātu of empty space is full of these formless natures of things depending on the ālayavijñāna, which stores the seed-natures. The quantity of the seed-natures is innumerable. All seed-natures possess the seeds of their own karma.

Through the boundless transformations of the ālayavijñāna, every seed-nature and the seeds of karma are reified by means of a natural chemical effect. Hence, there are distinctions between things, sentient beings, and their voices. How can I enumerate those wonders!

All these are the chemical effect of the mysterious distinction of karma seeds in ālayavijñāna, which is set up by the original enlightenment of the bright essential nature. If we do away with ignorance of cognition, and conform to the nature of original perfect enlightenment, we can see and hear every phenomenon in the entire dharmadhātu of space as clearly as if they were bright jewels in our palms. It is by no means a kind of magic trick. Even though all sentient beings are endowed with this capacity, because their true natures are obscured by the darkness of ignorance, they are bound to fall into blindness.

Great Enlightenment, having realized the original nature, utilizes the inconceivable six supernatural powers, as well as others. How does it happen? We cannot see minute dust-motes under normal circumstances. However, when sunrays stream through the cracks in a door, we can see the minute dust-motes clearly. Likewise, when the minds of sentient beings are pure, we can see, hear, and know everything in the universe in an instant, without obstacles.

14. On the intermediate existence⁵²

Q Is the intermediate existence real?

A There is no such thing as intermediate existence in the nature of original perfect enlightenment. However, the propensities caused by the karmic delusion of a sentient being are condensed into the intermediate existence. To use a metaphor, it is like the water of a river, which is not an ice in itself, but freezes into ice due to the cold weather.

Q Why is it called “the intermediate existence” (中陰身)?

A It is an intermediate existence between death in this life and rebirth in the next life. Since the five aggregates (shade) the marvelously bright true nature (妙明真性), the word “shade” (陰) is adopted.

Q What then is the shape of the intermediate existence?

There are two kinds of intermediate existences. One is well-featured, and the other is ugly. The intermediate-existence bodies of those bound for the hells is as dark as burnt zelkova wood. The color of the intermediate-existence bodies of those bound for the animal realms is similar to smoke. The intermediate-existence bodies of those destined for the realm of sensuality (Kāmadhātu)⁵³ is tinged with a golden color. The color of the intermediate-existence bodies bound for the subtle-form realm (rūpadhātu)⁵⁴ looks good and clean. There is no intermediate-existence body for those bound for the formless

realm (arūpadhātu).⁵⁵

Some of the intermediate-existence bodies bound for the six rebirth destinies (gati) have two hands and two feet, some of them have four feet, some have many, and others have no feet. According to the karmic power of the present life, human beings raise the thought of being reborn as humans, and animals raise that of animals. It is just like a dream, in which all motions, such as walking, standing, sitting and lying down, are identical to those in one's waking hours.

Q Does everyone acquire an intermediate-existence body after death?

A Those who have grave evil karma go to the evil bourns⁵⁶ immediately after their deaths, and those who have very good karma go to rebirth in good places. Those who are in between acquire intermediate-existence bodies. The term of the intermediate existence is unsettled: some stay ten years and others one hundred.

Q Some claim that spirits may be delivered even after death. Isn't this absurd?

A No, it is not. Since those who turn into ghosts after death are innumerable, rulers control them, just as in human society. In some cases, if the descendants of the dead would offer three kinds of charity⁵⁷ to help the spirits of the deceased, they would definitely be delivered by this postmortem act of charity.

There are four reasons why the dead could be delivered: first, the authority of all the saints in the ten directions; second, the dharma power of the master in charge of the rites; third, goods offered to lonely spirits in the ten directions who may or may not have descendants; fourth, dharma offered to lonely spirits in the ten directions who may or may not have descendants. Owing to offering either goods or dharma, spirits could be delivered, which is a way for

their descendants to demonstrate filial piety. People in the world who don't know the truth would allege this is superstition.

Q Is there birth and death in the intermediate existence?

A The intermediate-state beings are usually born and die as humans are. If a ghost goes to rebirth in another realm, it is a death of the ghost, on the one hand, and the birth of another sentient being in the next realm, on the other. From the viewpoint of the dead, birth is nothing but a dream, and from the viewpoint of the newborns, death is just a dream. Therefore the three realms of existence and the six rebirth destinies are no more than a dream.

Q Intermediate-existence beings are probably formless. How do they see?

A Intermediate existences are different from ghosts. During the forty-nine days after death, sentient beings are called intermediate existences. After forty-nine days, some of them turn into ghosts, whose shapes and conditions are too multifarious to describe in detail. Some of them get married and bear children just like human beings. Still some of them wander about the streets and over the fields. Being ghosts, they can clearly see one another. Even though their existence are as real and evident as the wind, human beings cannot see their forms. Since human beings live in the positive realm and ghosts in the negative realm, they are not able to interact with each other. It is just like one cannot find shade in a sunny place.

Ghosts are called *gongjung*, *myeongdo*, or *taeju* according to the region. When an exorcism is performed, men and women obsessed by ghosts make sounds, but their form is invisible. They might be seen by a conjurer. Occasionally a person of weakened energy may see the ghosts. Also, saints in great concentration⁵⁸ can see the ghosts as easily as they see human beings.

Q Please illustrate the circumstance under which intermediate existences go to the six rebirth destinies.

A Intermediate-existence beings locate their realm according to their karma. Those who bound for the heavens fly high with their heads upwards. Those who bound for the animals⁵⁹ creep like cows and horses. Those who bound for the hells walk with their heads downwards. Intermediate existence beings, possessing supernatural powers, are able to go wherever they want in an instant.

15. All sentient creatures have consciousness

Q They say all sentient creatures have consciousness, which is formless. What then is the substance of that consciousness?

A To use a metaphor, even though wind is invisible, we can confirm its existence when it shakes a tree. Likewise, even though the substance of consciousness is invisible, when it makes contact with objects, cognition occurs. If one comes across what is disgusting, consciousness knows it is disgusting, whereas if one comes across what is lovely, consciousness knows it is lovely. Consciousness is by definition that which knows. So when the body touches objects, that which knows (i.e. consciousness) appears, and when the eye comes into contact with objects, that which knows is revealed. Refer to the simile of the wind. What sees, hears, and knows is consciousness. But we ordinary human beings cannot see the substance of consciousness even if we dissect our eyes, ears and bodies.

16. On cause and effect

Q I was told that Great Enlightenment clarified the tenet of cause and effect. However, I do not understand how a cause made in this life can produce an effect in the next life.

A Why do you misunderstand the tenet of cause and effect? In this world, there is nothing beyond the principle of cause and effect. All the things in heaven and earth, the order of the four seasons, and the daily activities of mundane life are all governed by a causal relationship. Summer, as an effect, is caused by spring, and fall is caused by summer, and so on. Retributive justice working in the universe also is a part of the causal principle. As the old saying goes, an onion will not produce a rose.

Haven't you ever seen people haunted by a spirit or a *gandharva*?⁶⁰ Usually their faces and their personalities are changed into those of others, but we cannot find any traces of the spirits in their bodies. Those who have kept doing good conduct generally look peaceful and virtuous, but we cannot find the whereabouts of that goodness in their bodies.

This is the result of the work of formless consciousness, which, owing to virtuous deeds, planted the seeds of felicities in the field of the mind. It is beyond a doubt that they would certainly receive good rewards in the next life. Suppose we now stand in a garden covered with cinnamon trees and aromatic trees. If a breeze blows through the trees, we smell a wonderful scent. It is because formless wind conveys that formless scent to us. In this way, the formless consciousness of a sentient being carries the formless good karma to the next life to grant him boundless bliss.

Those who commit evil deeds, even though the trace of bad karma is invisible, also produce similar consequences.

Though human being's consciousness is formless and traceless, it imprints evil karma on the *ālayavijñāna* and carries it to next life. Suppose we are standing on a hill and there are impure things such as a rotten corpse, on the other side of the hill. If a breeze blows over those things, we will smell a foul odor. Here, the wind is compared to formless consciousness and the foul odor to evil karma. Though evil karma committed throughout one's life is formless, the formless consciousness of a sentient being carries the formless evil karma to the next life in an evil direction.

17. The relative lightness or heaviness of sensibility (情)⁶¹ and perception (想)⁶² determine the next life in the three realms of existence

Q What is the reason why sentient beings are born in different worlds within the three realms of existence with different bodies?

A The human mind includes sensation and perception. According to the weight of these two factors, they are born in either a good destiny or an evil one. It is not originally determined, but is associated with desire and lewdness. Why? Although there is no discrimination between purity and impurity in the mind by nature, in accordance with the actions one has done, there is a dichotomy between purity and impurity.

In general, foodstuffs that are fragrant and delicious tend to be good for a person, while what is bad smelling and tasteless tends to be poisonous. Some food makes the mind clear and others dull. Though the mind, which is inherently pure, is not fettered at all, it gets intoxicated by liquor. That's why Great Enlightenment prohibited intoxicants and the five pungent roots.⁶³ If one drinks too much, one's mind becomes turbid. The five pungent roots, if eaten raw, tend to enhance one's irritability. And if eaten cooked, they tend to serve as an aphrodisiac. If one's three poisons, of greed, hatred, and ignorance, are getting heavier, he is liable to go the three evil bourns.

Why? To use a metaphor, if one mixes pure water in a bowl with mud, the water gets muddy. Impurity is compared to sensation and purity to perception. If the bowl is kept still for a time, the mud will settle on the bottom, while clean water will appear at the top. If the ratio of the pure portion is more than the impure part, one is liable to take rebirth in a human or heavenly realm. On the other hand, if the ratio of the impure portion is more than the pure portion, one

is liable to go to the three evil bourns. Another metaphor: It may be compared to a bird with its feet bound by a thread. The bird is compared to perception and the thread to sensation. If the bird is bound with a thread, it would not fly up but would be pulled down. This is a simile for one bound for rebirth in the three evil bourns. If the bird is not bound with a thread, it will freely fly up in the sky. This is a simile for one bound for rebirth in the heavenly realms.

18. The rationale for the formation of physical body in the next life

Q How is a sentient being to be incarnated in the next life?

A When a sentient being passes away, the wind energy that activates the body and the fire energy that warms the body float upwards to disperse into air. The flesh rots and is transformed into water and soil. What is left over in the end is the intelligent spirit (神識),⁶⁴ which is formless consciousness. It is also called the faculty of the mysterious pure form (淨妙色根),⁶⁵ which ordinary sentient beings can hardly make out. Ghosts see, hear, and know through this organ. Let me use a metaphor: You must have had a dream. Are the activities such as seeing, hearing, feeling, knowing, moving, speaking and so on that occur in a dream any different from those that occur during waking hours, or not?

Q There is not much difference between them.

A It is because one sees, hears, and knows in the dream through this faculty of mysterious pure form. Great Enlightenment is able to see this organ as clearly as he sees human beings. As the intelligent spirit, like a wind, is a formless reality, it goes everywhere in an instance without obstacles. Before this spirit is combined with a material basis, a physical entity, it stays in the substance of the dharmadhātu, only possessing the capacity to think. When this intelligent spirit has the cause and conditions to be united with a physical body, a sentient being comes into being. No matter how far away it may be from the future parents, it arrives there in a moment.

What knows is called cognition (識). Just like a sprout coming out

of a seed, the formation of a body is caused by consciousness. The difference between sentient beings originates from the distinction in cognition.

Cognition is so called because it cognizes all distinct objects, including pain and pleasure, good and evil. As a sprout comes from a seed to grow into a large tree, a human body is built up from cognition. In due time, the cognition leaves the body, which is called death, to move to another body in the future life. It is compared to a face that is formerly reflected in a mirror and later reflected in a surface of a river. The face on the mirror represents the union of cognition and parents. Also the face on the river represents the transference of the cognition to the next existence. The generation of things are caused by the transformation of *ālayavijñāna*, of which people in the world are ignorant.

There is a plant named Jijeok-cho (知跡草)⁶⁶ (“Knowing Footsteps Plant”) in India. Its flower, which is huge, beautiful, and delicious, perceives the sound of footsteps. If a man comes over to pick it, the flower knows that sound and folds its petals. Doesn’t it have cognition? A certain plant, if birds or spiders sit on its leaves, closes its leaves to digest them. Such insentient things in appearance seem to have *ālayavijñāna*; how much more is this the case with human beings!

Cognition, intelligent spirit, evidently exists. However we don’t see its reality just as the distinctive features of an unborn child are unknown. Nonetheless, the mother feels the quickening of the fetus in her womb. Cognition has nothing to do with the duality of pure and impure. It is just like sunshine and its objects. Even though the bright sunrays shine on excrement, the light is not defiled. Even though it shines on clean glass, the light is no brighter.

Cognition receives and stores impressions without losing them. Once those impressions come across the appropriate cause and conditions, they are activated. From the seeds planted in the field, various forms, such as hot, bitter, and sweet, come into being according to the temper of their karma. Likewise, the faces of those

who kept on doing good are disposed to be decent and blessed. On the other hand, the faces those who have committed evil deeds are in general not graceful and look unfortunate.

When the intelligent spirit leaves the body, it does not go out through specific openings, such as the eye socket, auditory canal, the mouth, or skin pores. There is no particular passage through which the intelligent spirit comes in or goes out of the body. It is just the same as the cognition in a dream. In a dream, a sentient being sees objects, hears the sounds of human beings or of animals, and wanders about the mountains and streams as one pleases. On waking up from the dream, however, there is nothing left. It is similar to the shift of cognition.

You should know cognition in depth. The volume of *ālayavijñāna* is almost identical to the true nature or the whole of space. Thus the sixth consciousness (*vijñāna*), which is pure and fluid, penetrates everything in the universe. Also it accommodates all the seeds of myriad things in order to receive and reproduce the good or evil karma, through natural chemical effects. According to karma, the whole of creation in the universe occurs. This is the mysterious capacity of the true nature as well as the natural chemical effect of the *ālayavijñāna*.

Do you know eggs? They have no eyes or nose, and seem as if they do not have any cognition. Nonetheless they are, as a live thing, *ālayavijñāna* per se. If separated from *ālayavijñāna*, they decay to death. In a warm temperature, a live creature comes out of the seemingly dead egg. A tall pine tree with trailing branches derives from a tiny seed. A big fish stirring up the great waves in the sea also derives from a small spawn. A hawk freely flying in the sky derives from a small egg. Though an egg looks like something dead, it certainly is a live thing.

There are two conflicting energies: one gives life to other things, and the other restrain other things. It is also the faculty of *ālayavijñāna*. Therefore the creator of the universe and things is in fact the mind, that is, the *ālayavijñāna*. If one mixes the aromatic

grass of India, named Cheombara-hwa 詹婆羅花⁶⁷ with black sesame, and steams it to extract oil, it is very fragrant. As the fragrance of the grass transfers to the oil, so too is it with the cognition of sentient beings.

Q During one's life, one can see things with one's eyes. After death, how is one able to see?

A How is a blind man able to see objects?

Q It is groundless to say that a blind man sees something.

A At night, what do you see?

Q I see nothing but darkness.

A Just as you see darkness at night, so too a blind man also see darkness. When the blind man sees a colorful world in a dream, does he see with his naked eyes? I don't think so. What sees is his bright mind. Even if a man loses his life, the bright mind would never die.

Q How are we aware of cognition?

A There is no storage of cognition, which is formless. In due course, however, it would take a shape. Another metaphor: A sprout comes out of a seed. If the seed is spoiled, the sprout would not come out. From a seed, a sprout comes out and grows into a big tree, which again blooms with flowers and bears fruit. In the fruit, seeds ripen. Even so, no matter how thoroughly one may dissect the whole tree, one would never find the spot whence the seeds come out. In this same manner, although a human body comes out of the cognition, you would not find the abode of the cognition within the body. At the same time, without that cognition, the body would not exist.

When fruit ripens on the tree, you can find seeds in the fruit.

However, the fruit and the seeds have originally existed in the tree. It is the same as the case of human beings. When a person passes away, cognition alone leaves the body, giving up one's family and all one's own possessions.

This cognition, though formless, clearly sees its own body, which is the intermediate existence. This cognition, excited by lewdness, accommodates and attaches to objects, which are the future parents. It combines with objects through either good cause and conditions or evil ones, in accordance with its karma. Sometimes influenced by wisdom, it takes a new existence in the next life. When there is the cognitions of parents whose bodies are engaged in sexual intercourse, the cognition of the future son or daughter joins with them to cause pregnancy. It is like the relationship between a mirror and a face. When one of the two, the mirror or the face, is absent, the face may not be reflected in the mirror. Only when both are present does the face appear in the mirror.

When cognition takes a new body, felicity or sin also accompanies it in accordance with its karma. It is just like a honey bee that, greedy after the flavor of honey, moves from flower to flower. Sometimes it moves from a good flower to a bad flower, and sometimes from bad one to good one. Likewise, ascending into the heavens or descending into the hells depends on the karma of the cognition. The fate of a sentient being is not determined by anyone or anything else.



CHAPTER II

THE PRINCIPLE OF MIND-ONLY PHILOSOPHY

19. Suffering and happiness are created by mind-only

Q They say consciousness creates all types of suffering and happiness. I find this hard to believe.

A The narrow-minded are said to be suspicious. I am afraid this might be the case with you. Let me give you an analogy. There are herbs in the Himalaya mountains. When the milk of the cows that graze on that herb is mixed with other medicines, it makes a wonderful elixir. In the same way, the karma that cultivated good deeds helps the consciousness so that it reproduces beneficial results in future lives. Here, the milk is a metaphor for the human body; the combination of various medicines is a metaphor for the practice of good karma; the healthy body gained by a dose of that medicine is a metaphor for the effect of the felicities produced by the influence of good karma. But if one takes a medicine made from a wrong prescription, it does the person harm. The medicine, even though it does not have eyes, nose, ears and mouth, is either able to help people or harm people. It is just like good and evil karma, which determine the places of rebirth.

It is beyond conceptual thought that consciousness is transmuted in accordance with karmic influences. Consciousness, despite having no eyes, nose, or mouth, is able to see, hear, smell, and taste even in a dream or in the intermediate existence between death and rebirth. Those who practice the ten good deeds will be incarnated in the six heavens of the Kāmadhātu.¹ Those who practice the four dhyānas or the eight dhyānas will be born in the eighteen heavens of the rūpadhātu. Those who practice the four dhyāna of the arūpadhātu are born into the arūpadhātu. It is the consciousness that takes

rebirth in accordance with the karma one accumulated.

Q Do you follow the instructions of Great Enlightenment in order to gain rebirth in the heavens?

A No. The consciousnesses of all sentient beings meander through the heavens and the hells depending on karmic influence and according to what they reify. However, since the true nature of those who are enlightened to the truth of Great Enlightenment, being free from the cognition of consciousness, is pure and serene without hindrance, how can they seek rebirth in the heavens? No matter how great the happiness of the heavens may be, it will surely collapse in the long run.

Q Could you describe the circumstances under which the consciousness ends up in the heavens?

A When muddy water is kept still for a considerable time, the clean water floats to the surface and the muddy portion sinks to the bottom. In the same way, the impure passion sinks, while the pure mind rises up to the heavens. At that time, that which knows (i.e. consciousness) cognizes the sounds of a human body with flesh, hands and feet just as if it were seeing a living human body. It looks like a person in a dream. The consciousness, seeing the boundless magnificence of the heaven, is to be born there. The vision in this case depends on the dharmadhātu² of his own, not on his physical body.

Q How does that which knows, which is formless, assume either a large or small physical existence in the various destinies of the three realms of existence?

A Even though the wind is also formless, it is able to move mountains and cause waves to billow on the surface of the ocean.

The ability of the formless consciousness is so mysterious that when it takes the body of a mosquito or a flea, it functions as the host. When it takes the body of a lion, it also functions as the host. The consciousness is either infinitely large, on the one hand, or so small, on the other, that it can hardly fill a particle of dust.

Metaphorically, just as a bright lamp pervades a whole room regardless of the room's size, so too is consciousness able to operate within various sizes of bodies, which differ from each other in their forms and colors in accordance with karmic influence. It is evident that every fate is determined by the consciousness's karma, and not by the king of heaven or spirits. To illustrate, whether a thirsty man finds and drinks fresh spring water or not, depends on his karma; nobody gives him water, nor can anyone prevent him from drinking it. It is clear that, according to the karmic influence, one undergoes pleasure and pain.

All the seeds of myriad plants sprout from the earth in dependence on moisture and heat from the sun, and gradually ripen. Likewise, according to the virtue accumulated in past lives, one becomes wealthy and enjoys every kind of pleasure and happiness. Take look at the people in the world. Although they are engrossed in getting riches and honors all the time, they may not possess those things as they please. And no matter how smart and excellent a person may be, one could not escape from despotic authority. There must be rational reasons why these events occur.

Look at other instances. A man who has served as a life-long employee in order to be well off in retirement, may pass away as soon as he achieves his goal. And another man who has had coarse food for a long time may have a stomachache just before a sumptuous feast. There is, therefore, an old saying: "For the unlucky, even an egg has bones in it."

Q Do you mean that a lucky man may well live an idle life?

A How are you so stupid to say that? It is recommended that you

should: observe filial piety toward your parents; respect your teachers and seniors; have fraternal love with your brothers and harmonize with your family; clean your dwelling place; suppress your selfish desire for the sake of the public interest according to your capacity; widely propagate the truth of Great Enlightenment and get rid of superstition to seek righteousness; be happy with others who get on in the world just as you do; and vow to offer salvation to people who suffer from poverty and disease whenever you offer food on the altar of the Buddha. If you do not commit evil but practice every kind of good, you will then receive felicities.

Q Another old saying has it that the family that accumulates good gets auspicious things for its descendants and that the family that accumulates evil brings catastrophes on its descendants. Isn't it true that the fate of a family depends upon the stealthy benefaction of its ancestors?

A Attention please. Since Gu Sou 訾瞍,³ the father of Emperor Shun 舜,⁴ never accumulated good deeds, his descendants should have suffered disaster. However, his progeny was Emperor Shun. And since Emperor Yao 堯⁵ was a sage, his descendants should have received auspicious blessings. How could he have produced the unfilial son Danzhu 丹朱?⁶ It was the same with Emperor Shun, who produced the disobedient son Shangjun 商均.⁷ The sage Confucius should have had fortunate affairs. How then could he have suffered starvation for seven days while traveling between the states of Chen 陳 and Cai 蔡? Such cases as these are as innumerable as the number of the grain of the sands in the Dongjeokgang.

Q I cannot trust the argument that those who practice good are rewarded with good fortune and that those who commit evil are punished by calamities. Why is that so? In my own observation, evil persons should have been ruined, but they are instead often prosperous. On the other hand, those who commit evil behavior

should have enjoyed lucky rewards, but are often degenerated. I do not know why this is the case.

A It is because you do not take the principle of cause and effect into account. Cause means the beginning of an incident, and effect indicates the result of the thing. Cause is likened to sowing in the spring, and effect is likened to harvesting in the fall. Your remark is as absurd as to harvest in the spring. In the same way that you work hard for seven or eight months to harvest, in the present life you receive the result of the cause matured in previous lives. Some get the reward in this life for the deeds of this life. Some get the result after three lives. And others get the result right after the cause is created. There is infinite variety as to the workings of cause and effect.

Some practice good in the beginning and commit evil in the middle. Some practice good in the middle and commit evil in the end. And others commit evil in the beginning and practice good in the end. Someone's good karma is superior to one's evil one; someone's good karma is inferior to one's evil one. The ratio of good and evil karma of the others is similar. Since the causes are different, the effects are also diverse. The stupidity of Yao's and Shun's sons, the hardships Confucius endured while traveling between the states Chen and Cai, Yan Yuan's 顏淵 premature death,⁸ Zi Qian's bad mother⁹—all these were caused by karmic conditions initiated in previous lives. Those who made that karma are its recipients.

Q This seems to make sense. In the traditional period, when a person committed a grave crime, his whole clan was exterminated. And if a person rendered distinguished service, the reward would continue down to his descendants. Consequently, isn't it evident that the family that accumulates good brings auspiciousness to its descendants, and the family that accumulates evil brings catastrophe on its descendants?

A Don't you know the difference between discrete karma (別業) and

collective karma (同業)? Since the people of a nation have collective karma, they are born in the same country. Since parents and their children have collective karma, they live together in the same house. All kinds of beasts, birds, fishes and insects have their own collective karma. Hence when a country encounters a disaster, all people of the nation fall into misery; when parents have a joyous occasion, their offspring celebrate it; when parents are attacked by diseases, their sons and daughters are sorrowful. All these cases are examples of collective karma.

What, then, is discrete karma? When one district in a country is in turmoil, while another is peaceful; when a catastrophe strikes one place, while the another place is all right; when ten people enter the jaws of death, while one or two persons return safely; an elder brother in a family is rich, while a younger brother is poor; a whole family including servants and livestock live in a same house, while there is still distinction of high and low rank: these are instances of discrete karma amid collective karma. Because ordinary people do not know this principle, a noble and wealthy man, being arrogant, despises others. Doesn't he realize that, when his good karma is exhausted, his fortune may be replaced by misery?

Q If the fate of a sentient being is determined by consciousness, please illustrate these circumstances in detail.

A Let me offer a metaphor. When the seed of a fruit is sowed in soil, a fruit will eventually hang from the twig of the tree. But the fruit neither comes out of the root or the branch. Even if you chop down the tree, you would not find the fruit. In this way, both good karma and bad karma depend on the body, but even though the body decomposes, you cannot find the slightest trace of that karma. Here is another example. As a person's shadow is immaterial, you cannot grasp or bind it up. Even though it follows the motion of the person, you cannot see the shadow coming out from the body. In the same manner, even though karma abides by a person's body, you

cannot see or grasp it.

Another metaphor: a good medicine help the body to eradicate the source of disease and to keep the skin glowing. However, you cannot see the effects of medicine, as they are formless. Similarly, formless karma affects the fate of sentient beings. What good karma offers is as follows: providing an abundance of clothes, foods and property; decent appearance of hands, feet and face; magnificence of dwellings. What evil karma offers is as follows: birth in the realms of beasts, hungry ghosts, and the hells; living in destitution and misery even as a human being; the pain of a handicapped body.

Another metaphor: a bright mirror reflects a human face whether it is lovely or ugly. The face in the mirror, which is devoid of substance, cannot be grabbed. It is the same with consciousness: even though it reveals good and evil nature depending on karmic influences, you cannot take hold of its reality.

Q What is the situation in which consciousness operates large and small bodies?

A In terms of consciousness, the size of the body is irrelevant. Whether consciousness abides in a large or small body, it works according to the size. You may suppose that a small insect knows very little. But when it departs from its tiny body and is reborn in a huge body as big as a mountain, consciousness works on a large scale, in accordance with this new dimension.

To use a metaphor, when a hunter shoots an elephant with a poisoned arrowhead, the poison passes into the blood and kills the animal. There is enormous difference between the volume of an elephant's blood and that poison. After the death of the elephant, however, the poison is transferred elsewhere. Likewise, when the consciousness in this body leaves to transfer to another larger body, all the empirical entity accumulated in this life is discarded and departs for the next life in accordance with karmic effect.

Another metaphor: there were two dragon kings, Nanda and

Upananda, whose bodies were so long that they could coil three times around Mt. Sumeru (須彌山).¹⁰ When they took a deep breath, Mt. Sumeru quaked and the ocean water turned poison. The Dragon Kings' size may have been huge, but their consciousnesses were no different from those of mosquitoes or mayflies. Despite the tremendous force and capacity of the Dragon Kings, a tiny germ of poison could kill them. Although our consciousnesses may appear to be tiny, if they occupy a body as big as a huge castle, they will be able to manage the body accordingly. On the other hand, if they take a body as tiny as a mosquito, they also will do the same.

Another metaphor: although the seed of a pine tree is small, large lumber is produced from out of it. There is no real comparison between the size of the seed and the pine tree. But you cannot find a pine tree in the seed; at the same time, without the seed, there would be no pine tree. In the same manner, a sliver of bright consciousness is able to generate a gigantic body.

Q Consciousness seems to be unbreakable. How can it stay within a human body, which will decay before long?

A Let me give a metaphor: suppose a poor man happens to obtain a wish-fulfilling jewel (*cintamāni*). Using the jewel, he would be able to enjoy every kind of pleasure; but should he lose it, his life of splendor would vanish like a spring dream. Likewise, though consciousness is firm and unbreakable, the body generated from that consciousness easily disappears.

Q How can consciousness, the extremely subtle and sublime cognizer, penetrate through the body, which is an impure and solid entity?

A Though the substance of water is very soft, running water penetrates hard soils and rocks. Likewise, consciousness, a highly subtle and sublime cognizer, is able to penetrate into a solid body

when consciousness accepts karma, and will depart from it for another body.

Q After sentient beings pass away, where is it better to be reborn, the heavens or a Buddha-land?

A No matter how happy they may be, the heavens are also subject to transmigration within the three realms of existence. When their felicitous karma runs out, those sentient beings inevitably fall down to be born in worse worlds. Because those with superior capacities who practice the truth of the Buddha are suddenly enlightened, they are free from coming or going. In this stage, the perfect enlightenment (圓覺) extensively illuminates everything, and all dualities vanish. Not only heavens but all lands of the Buddha look like illusory flowers which are fulgently arising and disappearing. From the standpoint that these worlds are neither identical to, nor separated from, each other, all sentient beings are originally enlightened.

Why is this so? The inherent nature of perfect enlightenment embraces all worlds and space, is neither generated nor annihilated, is neither going nor coming; it is intrinsically emancipated from the sea of suffering of the three realms of existence. If some inferior sentient beings recite the six-letter mantra “*Om mani padme hum*” or the mantra of the Enlightenment of Immeasurable Life, “*Amitābha*,” with their whole hearts, they may be reborn in the buddha land of the *Nirmāṇakāya*, because their minds are not confused at their last moments. However, even though they enjoy immeasurable pleasure in the heavens, it would be far inferior to that of the worst buddha land. Furthermore, the pleasure of the heavens is bound to decay when their felicitous karma runs out and they inevitably return to the sea of suffering.

Q What are the circumstances under which sentient beings fall into the hells?

A Since the karmic burden of the sentient beings who are subject to rebirth in the hells is very heavy, they are liable to be very sorrowful at the moment of death. They would think, "I am dying now. How sad and pitiful that I leave forever family and the relatives whom I love so much!" I cannot enumerate how terrible is the experience of these people.

Those who go to the hell of Mahābrahmā¹¹ go to hell with their heads downward and feet upward. Meantime the knower (i.e. consciousness) sees the sea of blood. On account of karmic influence, it quickly drinks up the blood, gets a taste for it, attaches itself to it, and finally is born in that hell. Because of the impure attractive force, i.e., the karmic power, the consciousness relies on corrupted fluid. It may be compared to a worm's habit of infesting stinky, foul-smelling water.

Q What is the form and color of the sentient beings in the hells?

A The color of the sentient beings born in that hell is blood-red because they were attracted by blood. The body color of sentient beings born in the Tapana Hell (火湯地獄)¹² looks like a dark cloud. Sentient beings born in the Yutangha Hell have mixed and variegated colors. Their bodies are as smooth as an infant and taller than an eight-year-old boy.¹³ Their mustache and hair are so long as to be dragging along the ground. And their faces as well as their hands and feet are totally abnormal.

Q What do they eat?

A Meal time in the hells is not pleasant at all. Because they drink melted copper, their inner organ and joints are burnt out. And because of the karmic influence, they are born and die ten thousand times in a single day and night. Their pain is beyond description, but because Great Enlightenment already delineated it, I need not to repeat it here.

All these tragedies are solely of their own making. If our cognizer, being infected by external objects, repeatedly give rises to deluded thoughts and keeps on being infatuated on them, then that attachment brings brand new products into existence. Therefore when you think of delicious food, your mouth is watering, and when you part with your lover, you shed tears. These are because of the knower, who is affected by external phenomena so that it accumulates female (yin, 陰) energy.

When a man attaches himself to property, then his whole body becomes lustrous as this attachment arises in his mind; when people are overcome with lechery, secretions flow out from their reproductive organs. It is the knower (i.e., consciousness) that, depending on outward objects, creates sexual desire originating from delusion. Attachment is the cause of the production of water, the nature of which is to flow downwards. Attachment itself spontaneously calls out for those karmic propensities, and makes the knower transmigrate. On the other hand, when the mind is harassed by passion, or is outraged, a fire breaks out. In this case, the knower is taken into the flames of hell.

In case a person's mind is free from attachment and defilement and is clean and pure, the consciousness (i.e., the knower) goes up to be reborn in the heavens, just as the clear energy rises upward. Among them, those who practice virtue and wisdom and make a pure vow to be enlightened will see the Buddha and be reborn in the Pure Land. If one's pure intention is superior to one's impure one, one would be reborn as either a fairy or a vigorous spirit, or a Yakṣa 夜叉,¹⁴ or Rāksasa 羅刹,¹⁵ flying around the Heaven of the Four Great Kings without any obstruction. Those who have good vows and good intention, protect the right law of Great Enlightenment, and observe Buddhist precepts and train their own mind will be reborn at the seat of Great Enlightenment.

When one's pure and impure intentions are even, one is not able to go upward or downward and finally is reborn into the world of human beings. Those who have pure intention are smart, and those

who have impure intention are stupid. If one's impure intention is greater than one's pure one, they drop into the world of beasts or insects. Those who have a heavy mind become hairy beasts and those who have a light mind become winged animals. When the impure and pure intentions are in a ratio of seven to three, the consciousness is attracted downward to become a hungry ghost, influenced by the intensive fire between the wheel of water and the wheel of fire. Because they are being burnt all the time by fire, whenever hungry ghosts drink water, it turns into fire. Their terrible pain of thirst and starvation, which lasts incessantly for hundreds and thousands of kalpas, is beyond expression.

When the impure and pure intentions are in a ratio of nine to one, the consciousness is attracted between the wheel of wind and the wheel of fire. Those who committed venal sin fall into the intermittent hells, and those who committed serious sin fall into the interminable hell. When one's intention is entirely impure, one falls into the Great Avīci Hell.¹⁶ If entirely impure beings in addition slander the Mahāyāna teaching, transgress the Buddhist precepts, deceive people in the world by conveying wrong views, and commit the five heinous acts (五逆)¹⁷ and the ten grave evil deeds (+重),¹⁸ they will transfer to the Avīci Hell of another world at the period of the three great disasters (天地大三災)¹⁹ during which the world vanishes. So far, I have briefly mentioned the reality of the hells.

20. With attachment as the seed, thought enters the womb²⁰

Q I would like to know how viviparous birth occurs.

A When sentient beings are inflamed by sexual desire and seek intercourse with the opposite sex, their minds have various tendencies, so some travel upright and the others travel recumbently. The former become human beings or spirits, with their heads facing toward heaven and their feet treading on the earth, while the latter are born in the world of animals, moving with their heads and bodies recumbent because their mind is so oriented.

Q How do these sentient beings penetrate the womb?

A If you know the reason why they depend upon the womb, you will understand the principle that governs their transfer to be reborn in another realm. Even though a father's sperm combines with a mother's egg, unless the consciousness of the child has causal affinities with his parents, the pregnancy will not occur. According to the *Sūtra of the Original Acts* (本事經),²¹ "Sentient beings do not cut off ignorance, get rid of greed and attachment, or cease accumulating karma; for the three reasons, they are bound to accept rebirth as an embryo in the womb. Karma corresponds to the field; consciousness corresponds to the seed; attachment corresponds to moisture." *The Treatise on the Stages of Yogic Practice* (*Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*) says, "At the parents' sexual climax, since the three conditions are fulfilled, the rich essence and blood are combined to cause conception in the womb of the mother. It is likened to milk, which coagulates when it is boiled. In this manner sentient beings accept bodies depending on

the *ālayavijñāna*.²²

Generally speaking, the lifeblood of parents is imbued with the energy of water and soil. But without fire and wind, even though the life bloods of the parents are united, the organism cannot mature; and since the energy cannot circulate, the sense organs will also be impassable. Let me cite four instances: some worms emerge out of grass. The grass itself is not the worms; nevertheless, without the grass the worms would not exist. Since the grass is cooperating with causes and conditions, the color of the worm is tinged with green. It is the same as with the formation of this body.

Another kind of worm comes into being depending on cow-patties. The cow-patty is not the worm; however, without the cow-patty there would not be such a worm. Since the cow-patty is cooperating with causes and conditions, the color of the worm is tinged with yellow. It is the same as with the formation of this body.

Another kind of worm springs out of jujube. The jujube is not the worm; however, without the jujube there would not be such a worm. Since the jujube is cooperating with causes and conditions, the color of the worm is tinged with red. It is the same as with the formation of this body.

Another kind of worm comes into being depending on cheese. The cheese is not the worm; however, without the cheese there would not be such a worm. Since the cheese is cooperating with causes and conditions, the color of the worm is tinged with white. It is the same as with the formation of this body.

However, if the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and wind are not integrated, this body cannot be formed: earth is solid; water is wet; fire is hot; wind is in motion. In case earth is not united with water, it cannot make a lump; if there is solely water without earth, the unobstructed water will simply flow away. The case in which there are only earth and water without fire is likened to the situation in which fish stored in a cave are liable to decay in hot weather. When there are only earth and water without wind, then production of glass bottles is impossible because the worker cannot evacuate the

inside of the bottles. Accordingly, if the four great elements are not integrated, our body may not be produced.

Q For what reason does consciousness enter the womb?

A When the knower leaves this body to transfer to another body in the intermediate state, as soon as it locates its future parents, no matter how far away they are, it arrives at the site in the twinkle of an eye. If the intermediate body has a male latency, it loves the woman and hates the man. If that man leaves, it thinks to itself, I will see that woman. In the meantime, the sexual desire becomes intense like a flame and, not knowing the presence of the man, it feels delight at the sight of the woman alone. At this time, it sees the sexual intercourse between its future parents. When their bodily fluids are released, the intermediate body regards them as its own fluid and becomes pleased. As a result, the intermediate body, getting filthy and heavier, enters the womb while kneeling, embracing its mother on the right side.

If the intermediate body has a female latency, it loves the man and hates the woman. If that woman leaves, it thinks to itself, I will see that man. And passing through the same process as with the male latency, it goes into the womb while kneeling, turning its back on its mother on the left side. Each and every viviparous sentient being is born triggered by sexual desire in the consciousness. Therefore the sage said, “Attachment flowing from the mind produces the seed, and thought accepted in the womb becomes the embryo.”²³

Q Isn’t it ludicrous to claim that offspring are related to their parents because of their sexual desire?

A At the time of death, only the spirit leaves this body. From the viewpoint of the spirit, it has nothing to do with its future parents. Consciousness, which is characterized by numinous awareness, is unable to overcome the dispositions developed during past lives,

and therefore integrates cause and conditions to create ties between parents and children and establish the relationship between them. Thereupon, social relationships, such as propriety and moral laws governing the family, should be established. Right after you are born, those beings become your parents. Before the body is formed, you need not bring sexual desire into question. In other cases of sages and spirits, they may enter the womb by means of psychic power and stay there for six or eighty years before they are born; this is, however, exceptional.

21. Frivolousness of thought leads to oviparous birth

Q Would you explain how birth occurs for egg-laying animals?

A Oviparous animals transmigrate owing to the feature of karma. As karma itself does not recognize its retribution and retribution does not recognize its original karma, sentient beings have no idea of their birth and death in advance. The unstable and constantly moving karma of thought produces oviparous animals. Their intercourse does not occur through their flesh but by the energy of laying eggs. There are some rare kinds of oviparity, such as with snakes, terrapins, and turtles, in which intercourse takes place through the flesh. When they engage in intercourse, intermediate bodies take part in the process and make lubricant masses which subsequently become eggs. As only the *ālayavijñāna* is laid up in these eggs, should the *ālayavijñāna* disappear, the eggs would not be viable and would rot away. Since the energy of thought is light, they are able to fly up and down. When their energy of thought subsides, they descend to the forests. Fishes, in the same principle, are able to rise and fall in the water. Their fates depend on their defilements and the ups and downs of their thought, not the command of a heavenly god.

22. Stagnant attachment leads to moisture-born life

What transmigrates is mind. Due to the fault of the mind, sentient beings fall into the sea of suffering without any expectation of freeing themselves from that misery. When impure thoughts and pure ones are almost equivalent, the being is reborn into the realm of human beings. A preponderance of impure thought and little pure thought leads to the beasts. When the force of karma is unbiased, moisture-born lives come into existence.

For the consciousness of those who enjoy and attach themselves to the fragrance of incense without accumulating good deeds, at the moment of death, it delusively smells pure and delicious scents coming from a filthy ditch. Feeling delight, it hurries there to cling to the odor, and becomes moisture-born life. Owing to deluded thought, which repeatedly tosses and turns innumerable times, moisture-born lives tend to move sluggishly. These are all caused by the mind.

23. Beings born by transformation or metamorphosis

Q Would you explain how sentient beings are born by transformation or metamorphosis?

A Beings born by transformation ardently crave to transfer their old body to a new one. A sluggard, for example, may be enthusiastic to become a cicada that eventually achieves its goal singing and flying freely in the shade of trees. In the long run, however, it is destined to face corruption. It is just like a long dream in spring.

A caterpillar metamorphosizes into a butterfly and a bird is transformed into a clam, and so forth. There are too many examples to enumerate. As the old being is transformed into a new one, this is called “beings born by transformation.” Sentient beings in the heavens and the hells are also born by transformation because the latter deeply cling to a fishy smell and the former are infatuated by clean dwellings. All causes and effects, whether good karma or evil ones, are of your own making. Who else on earth is to blame for that?

24. Beings of the Realm of Form associated with brilliant luster

Q How does one become a being of subtle form?

A People in the world, not knowing the right path, believe in religion. Some of them believe in the sun, the moon, water, and fire. In the pursuit of bright luster, they always bow down before altars to the sun, the moon, water, and fire. Also they heartily contemplate on pure, bright luster. Since they practice the samādhi associated with the realm of subtle form, their consciousnesses are transformed into light. Possessed with light, after death, their consciousnesses become a shining object. It may become the moon, the sun, and the stars in the ten directions (i.e. universe); or it is transformed into a gem that emits light at night, or a crystal, or a wish-fulfilling gem. Take look at the clam: on a bright moonlit night, it admires the moon, thus forming a pearl inside the clam. In this same manner, all these things are manifested by the mind.

There are various religions in the world. You should select your religion very carefully. Even though you transform yourself into a shining object, such as the sun, the moon, and the stars, as long as you cannot realize the nature of perfect enlightenment, you are bound in the long run to fall into the sea of suffering. No matter how brilliant existences may be, they are without exception generated from the mind. All things that take form eventually end up with nothing.

25. Disfavoring existence, one clings to voidness and falls into nothingness

Q Who are the sentient beings of the Formless Realm?

A Some people of the world, not knowing the true religion, look forward to being born in the formless realm, by practicing the dhyānas associated with the formless realm. They may think that their bodies are the source of trouble and that they would not need to undergo suffering if they had no physical body. How foolish for them to think such speculation! Being engrossed in this idea, they train themselves to annihilate their bodies and achieve the effect of having no physical bodies.

Even though they have no physical bodies, as there still remain the functions of discerning, of will, and of cognition, they are deluded and create wrong views. Their mental faculties, depending on obstinate darkness, are incorporated into the nature of darkness. It is like to a person sitting in pitch darkness who, though he cannot see, is still able to think. For the reason, because he depends on darkness, being free from the physical body, the result is he is born into the formless realm. Although it may be a superior form of rebirth, it is nothing but a heresy.

They have only mental functions without physical bodies. Since their minds are deeply deluded, the substance of their minds is united with darkness, and the knower's (i.e., consciousness) mind is associated with the unseen negative force (陰). The mind disperses into emptiness, and any conception of materiality has vanished. There are a group of spirits who rule space. They do not have definite forms, because their energy is undetermined, but the substance of karma remains. Even though they fill all of space, ordinary persons cannot see them. Even these sentient beings are the product of mind.

26. Indulging in delusion, they have ideation without form

Q What is a sentient being of the form realm?

A Ordinary people of the world, without sound mind, draw or make images of spirits to pray for felicities, longevity, and rebirth in the heavens after death. During their lifetimes, they are engrossed in worshipping idols from moment to moment. As a result, without taking a body having form, they merely rely on shrine of spirits or the sanctuary of idols after death. How pitiful they are!

Q Do you mean that Christianity is not a sound religion?

A There are two kinds of idols: one is a formless idol, the other is the idol that has form. The former is much more harmful than the latter. Why is that? Believers in Christianity pray anytime and anywhere to God for happiness in this life and for being born in heaven after death. Their idol does not have form, but is supposed to be omnipresent. In the case of worshippers of idols that have form, they pray at the place where the images of those idols are enshrined, such as the shrine of the mountain spirits or the shrine of the village spirits. That is reason why idols that have form are less harmful.

Christians pray incessantly to this formless God deep in their hearts for the sake of their salvation, for the expiation of sin, and for receiving felicities. Outwardly, there seems to be no idol at all in Christianity, but in fact, this religion has an awful idol.

Q What then is the reason why your religion worships an idol?

A Ours is the statue of an ancient sage. It is far different from the invisible idol of Western religion. Great Enlightenment said, “Good and evil as well as fortune and misfortune are one’s own making, not given by others.” In addition, he said, “Since what has form is false, do not be infatuated with idols.” The matter of idols was already mentioned by the Buddha three thousand years ago. The issue did not come to the fore today.

According to the *Diamond Sūtra*, “Those who wish to see the Tathāgata in form or by means of reciting the name of buddhas are all heretics. They would never see the Tathāgata.”²⁴ This means that the inherent nature of everyone is the path. Therefore, even though the disciples make and pay homage to images of the Buddha in order never to forget him, they are not attached to the statues because they know that all things are manifestations of mind and their true natures themselves are the path.

Q In general, spirits are said to rely on idols. What is the case with a Buddha image?

A Statues of the Buddha are made differently from idols. When statues are made, divine dhāraṇī of protection are recited to expel evil spirits, and mantras are stored in the statue’s abdomen. Furthermore, the officiants reflect the sun’s rays through a big mirror to illuminate the eyes of the Buddha statue, which is called dotting the pupils; thus, all devils and evil spirits are expelled far away. Hence there is no such spirits around the Buddha statues.

However, Buddha statues are enshrined for the purpose of commemorating the sage and paying respects to him, so no one ever clings to these statues. It is also not imperative that these statues be enshrined in a temple. How can there be an attachment to it? If one knows that one’s own nature is the path, one would train only one’s own nature, without depending on external objects. Having realized one’s own dignity, one would not pray to others for good fortune and longevity.

Whatever fortune and longevity occur are your own production. If you understand that the nature of all sentient beings is equivalent to yourself and you deliver them with a compassionate mind; if you do not commit evil deeds and practice all kinds of virtuous behavior; if your mind is pure without any wicked intention; if your mind is calm and serene, and is not disturbed at any occasion; if your wisdom is brilliant and devoid of ignorance—then, having achieved myriad merits, you will receive good fortune and longevity even without seeking them.

Our natures are intrinsically pure, calm and serene, spacious, constant over the three time-periods, perfectly embracing the whole world without leaving any trace, invisible even in a grain of dust, brighter than any other celestial body. Our nature's psychic power and transformative abilities are infinite and boundless. It is so self-sufficient that there is no need to pray to God for rebirth in heaven.

Since we consider the truth of Great Enlightenment to be a moral principle, it is not superstition even if we pay homage to the Buddha statue, or even if we worship space. On the other hand, even if we do not worship anything for thousands of years, it may not be arrogance. What matters is the principle of the right path, and not trivial behavior.

Q Nonetheless, isn't it desirable to get rid of rites of worship and offering services?

A I don't think so. You do not know the principle of cause and conditions. The meaning of worship lies in showing respect for your own true nature, in the abolition of ignorance, and in proclaiming your affiliation with all buddhas in the past. In this manner, you will have opportunities to encounter sages. All things and phenomena are established by means of cause and conditions. Who can be delivered except by the Buddha's cause and conditions of salvation?

In our tradition, filial piety is the most sublime value. Devoted offspring take care of their parents, noticing when they go in and

out of doors, inquiring after them in the morning and evening, serving them with clothes and food. In the same way, we worship Great Enlightenment. If it were not for the Buddha, how could we expect emancipation from the sea of suffering? Therefore, it is not a superstition but a discipline and courtesy between a master and disciples that we bow down to the statue of the Buddha in the morning and evening, and dedicate offerings in the seventh watch of the day. Even though a person prays in front of the images of the sages, this derives from his own aspiration. It is totally different from the prayer of a believer in another religion, who depends on deities and spirits to pray for felicities.

As all things in the world are manifestations of my mind: when my mind is straightforward and faithful, my wish will be fulfilled. However, since reverence for the Buddha statue is no more than a mere traditional rite, there cannot be any attachment whatsoever. So it is quite different from that of heretics in the world where they pray to idols that either have form or are invisible. In our religion, when we worship, we reflect on our inherent natures rather than being infatuated with external objects. Since both the mind and external objects are void, there is nothing to perceive while mysterious cognition is clear and bright, which is totally different from inanimate existence. When you have no reliance on external objects at all, mutual responses spontaneously take place, just as shadow follows the body.

Ignorant persons, however, cherish in their mind idols that either have form or are invisible, and thus depend on those vain objects. Being deluded regarding those idols, they are swayed by innumerable chaotic thoughts, and finally are unconscious of their own inherent natures. Under these circumstances, they do not rely on physical bodies, but are led by delusive ideation to be born in the realm of dreary ghosts or unstable spirits, who have only thoughts without physical bodies.

27. Retaining stubborn ignorance leads to existence that is without ideation

Q What are the cause and conditions that generate sentient beings who are without ideation (asāmjñika)?

A As sentient beings believing in religions do not know the right path, they stupidly train themselves to be restrained from thought and to keep themselves free from ideation, like inanimate objects. Since they cling to no-thought, their souls are transformed into soil, trees, metal, or stone. It is said that some human beings have in fact been transformed into stones, trees, and so on.

28. Form that are dependent on others are originally formless

Q What is the reason that there are sentient beings whose forms are dependent on others?

A Dependent sentient beings who, owing to their evil karma, are accustomed to relying on others, perceive themselves to be incorporated into the group of jellyfish, which have no definite form. When a jellyfish encounters and embraces a shrimp, the eyes of the latter are transformed into those of the former, who then has the capacity of vision. These are sentient beings having form that is dependent on others. All worms and parasites that rely on others are sentient beings whose forms are dependent on others.

29. Beings that are originally formless, as they are degraded to be materialized, are not formless

Q What is the cause and conditions through which formless sentient beings materialize?

A Those who wish to practice divination recite mantras so as to be able to make the heavenly kings blow wind and rain, move mountains, and cross the ocean. Even though they seek for mutual responses with heavenly beings, as their distracted minds rely solely on the mantra, they become spirits or fairies after death. Although they do not have physical forms, by means of karmic induction, they are materialized as bodily existences. That's why they are called materialized formless sentient beings.

30. Beings without ideation form disparate bodies

Q How do beings without ideation come into existence?

A Some sentient beings have a causal propensity to deceive others in order to appropriate their properties; in their retributive factor also, they tend to appropriate others' properties. For instance, a caterpillar of the mulberry tree used to be indifferent to becoming a butterfly before a butterfly (*Ammophila infesta*) carries the caterpillar in its mouth to another place, where it is touched and buzzed repeatedly. In the end, the mulberry caterpillar transforms into a butterfly and identifies itself as a butterfly. There are plenty of such kinds of beings.

31. Beings who are not free from ideation are born to enact revenge

Q What is the cause and conditions for the birth of sentient beings who are not free from ideation?

A For both human beings and beasts, the relationship between parents and children is associated with a grudge formed in their past lives. Hence, they are beings who are not free from ideation. Some women in this world get an abortion, both mother and child die during or after birth, sons and daughters distress their parents by squandering property, or offspring force their parents to undergo dreadful experiences by committing grave transgressions. These examples all illustrate that they are implacable enemies, and they are born as parents and children in order to enact revenge on each other. Among beasts, an owl brings forth its young by embracing a clod of earth and the owlet prey on its mother. There is another kind of beast that eats up its parents. Those twelve kinds of sentient beings,²⁵ deluded by its habitual dispositions, ceaselessly transmigrate in the sea of suffering without any expectation of being emancipated.

32. Being reborn in the six heavens of the Kāmadhātu

Q What should I practice in order to be reborn in the six heavens of the Kāmadhātu?

A There are too many circumstances to enumerate that lead to rebirth in those heavens. Let me briefly introduce some of them to you here. Suppose some human beings practice the ten good deeds, are respectful to their spouses, have appropriate intercourse, and never transgress the vow of chastity. Because the pure thought of these people is superior to impure ones, they are bound to be born in the continent of the Four Heavenly Kings. Another group of people who practice the ten good deeds more faithfully and are less passionately engaged with sexual desire than those of the Four Heavenly Kings are likely to be born in the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods.

Another group of people who practice the ten good deeds and have less sexual lust than those of the Heaven of the Thirty-three are born in the Yama heaven, because their minds are calm and serene without any disturbance. Another group of people who practice the ten good deeds and have little sexual desire are born in the Tuṣita heaven. Another group of people who practice the ten good deeds and usually have no sexual lust except for occasional composed sexual intercourse with their spouses are born in the Nirmāṇarati heaven (化樂天). Another group of people who practice the ten good deeds and have no sexual desire without any greedy passion in this world are born in the Paranirmitavaśavartin heaven (他化自在天).

33. Being reborn in the eighteen heavens of the rūpadhātu through practicing the ten good deeds (+善) and dhyāna

Q Who will be reborn in the eighteen heavens of the rūpadhātu?

A Those who observe the ten precepts without lust, purify the three types of action via by body, mouth, and mind, practice dhyāna, prefer superior worlds to inferior ones, cling to their own physical bodies, meditate on impurity as well as on bleached skeleton will be born in the Brahmapāriṣadya heaven. The beings whose purity of body and mind is superior to the beings of the Brahmapāriṣadya are born in the Brahmapurohita heaven. The beings whose purity of body and mind is superior to the beings of the Brahmapāriṣadya heaven and of the Brahmapurohita are born in the Mahābrahma heaven. Sentient beings in the Brahmapāriṣadya, the Brahmapurohita, and Mahābrahma heavens, by doing away with the eight types of suffering,²⁶ enjoy serene and happy circumstances as the rewards of their karma. However, since they do not realize the nature of enlightenment, when these felicities run out, they finally will backslide.

Beings who practice śīla, samādhi, and prajñā and brighten their minds to a small degree are born into the Parītta-ābhā heaven. If their practice is more earnest so that they illuminate each other like glasses, they are born into the Apramāṇa-ābhā heaven. Furthermore, as their practice becomes even more profound and their light is transformed into voices that discourse on the dharma, they are born into the Ābhāsvara heaven. These beings in the heavens of the second dhyāna may also backslide when their felicities are exhausted, since they do not realize the nature of perfect enlightenment.

As the practice of beings in the heavens of the second dhyāna

gets even more abstruse when they achieve the absolute serenity of mind accompanied by minor power of samādhi, they are born in the Parīttaśubha heaven. Next, when the mental capacities of those beings become infinite, they are born into the Apramāṇaśubha heaven. In addition, if they achieve the boundless pleasure of serenity within pure, void consciousness, they are born into the Śubhakṛtsṇa heaven. These beings in the heavens of the third dhyāna may also backslide when their felicities are exhausted, since they do not realize the nature of perfect enlightenment.

As the practice becomes even more profound, beings eliminate both pleasure and suffering, eradicate coarse delusions, and produce pure felicities; they then are born into the Puṇyaprasava heaven. As practice becomes even more subtle, getting rid of obsession with external objects and purifying their superior understanding, beings transmute defiled samādhi into undefiled behavior; they then are to be born in either the Bṛhatphala or Asamjñisattva heavens. When beings are not attached to biased views and their pure blessings brighten, they are born into the Bṛhatphala heaven. If they regard having biased views as samsāra and not having biased views as nirvāṇa, those beings bodies become desiccated trees and their minds cold ash; they then are born into the Asamjñisattva heaven.

All these heavenly beings, who reside in the heretical heavens, maintain respiration with applied thought (*vitarka*) and sustained thought (*vicāra*); therefore they are not able to do away with the three disasters of water, fire and wind. *Vitarka* refers to coarse thought and *vicāra* to subtler types. As the beings in the Brahmapāriśadya and Brahmapurohita heavens have both coarse and subtle delusions, they are not able to escape from the three disasters of fire, water and wind. Because the beings of the Mahābrahmā heaven have subtle delusion, they are not able to avoid the disaster of fire. (Such are the cases with beings of the first dhyāna heavens.) Since the beings of the Parītta-ābhā, Apramāṇa-ābhā and Ābhāsvara heavens have delicate pleasure, they also cannot escape the disaster of water. (Such are the cases with beings of the second dhyāna heavens.) Besides, as the beings in the

Parīttaśubha, Apramāṇaśubha, and Śubhakṛtsṇa heavens still retain respiration, they are not able to eliminate the disaster of wind. (Such are the cases of beings of the third dhyāna heavens.)

Sentient beings, by getting rid of both self and objects, thereby sever defilements and are born into the Avṛha heaven. As their practice has gotten more profound, they cut off even subtler defilements and are born into the Atapaa heaven. Further, if beings, by eliminating conditional images, can see mysteriously and brightly, they are born into the Sudarśana heaven. Moreover, when their wisdom of vision appears to be like a mirror, they are born into the Sudṛśa heaven. Finally, when their nature of rūpa reaches its extreme, the beings are born into the Akaniṣṭha heaven.

Into these five sectors of heavens (from Avṛha to Akaniṣṭha) are born the *anāgāmin* (never-returner) among the four stages of sanctity (mārga). These heavenly beings do not return to the world, so they are called the five never-returners or the gods of the Pure Abode (Śuddhāvāsakāyika). The beings of the lower heavens are told that there are beings in the four dhyāna heavens, but they cannot see them. All these beings in the heavens of the rūpadhātu also may backslide when their good fortune is exhausted since they do not realize the nature of perfect enlightenment. However, those who are born through the vow of the great sage are excluded.

34. Beings who take rebirth in the Formless Realm (arūpadhātu) by practicing the four dhyānas of emptiness (四空定)²⁷

Q Could you explain the beings of the Four Formless Realms?

A Above the heavens discussed earlier are the beings of the four Formless Realms. They are so called because these beings do not have physical bodies. The first is Realm of Endless Space (Ākāśānantyāyatana). Those who practice meditation to return to total voidness, because they hate the physical body, which is the source of suffering, would abide in emptiness and be born into Endless Space after death. The second is the Realm of Infinite Consciousness (Vijñānānantyāyatana). Beings in Infinite Consciousness rely on consciousness instead of voidness. The third is the Realm of Nothing Whatever (Ākiñcayanyāyatana). Those who do away with consciousness in addition to form and voidness would abide in Nothing Whatever. The fourth is the Realm of neither Perception nor Non-perception (Naivasamjñānāsaṁjñāyatana). Since beings annihilate consciousness depending on unmoving cognitive consciousness, even though they annihilate consciousness, it is not true annihilation. Since they reveal exhaustion in the midst of non-exhaustion, there is neither existence nor non-existence. That is what the beings of Neither Perception nor Non-perception are.

The beings in the Formless Realm do not have a form derived from karma but instead from samādhi. Some dull arhats or some heretics of the Asamjñisattva heaven may abide in these heavens. These heavenly beings, no matter how powerful and boundless their supernatural power may be, and no matter how bountiful their bliss may be, are nothing but sentient beings who do not realize the nature of perfect enlightenment. So they too may be backslide into

the sea of suffering when their bliss runs out.

As mentioned above, this religion of Great Enlightenment does not encourage its followers to be born into the heavens. The goal of this religion lies in realization of perfect enlightenment, by which all sentient beings are emancipated from the sea of rebirth forever.

Q What then makes you describe the heavens at such length?

A I have explained them at great length to show the realm of heretics to the followers of this religion.

35. Caring for a patient and deliverance of the spirit

Q Birth and death are truly momentous matters for human beings. What do we do when our parents or relatives are about to die?

A First, you should clean the room of a patient and the entire house. Then burn a stick of incense; prohibit meat, fish, wine or the five forbidden pungent roots; recite the Mahāyāna scriptures; do not chatter about mundane topics; always tell the patient the words of the Buddha; do not weep and do not show sorrowful expressions to the patient. From a conventional standpoint, it may not seem proper for sons and daughters not to weep at the moment of their parents' deaths. In fact, however, it is terribly unfilial to weep in front of their deathbeds. Why so? When a patient is becoming seriously ill, he or she suffers severe torment all over the body, and fears the coming of death. In such a circumstance, if the patient's offspring and acquaintances grieve and weep, it stimulates the mind of the patient, who, being sorrowful and perturbed, gets attached to this world, and is bound to go to an evil land after death. Isn't that unfilial? Instead, you should tell the patient about impermanence of all existence to make him renounce his attachment to this world. He then would arouse a lofty state of mind and recite the name of the buddha in order to take rebirth in the Pure Land.

Q You say that on account of mere attachment or defiled thought a patient may suffer evil transmigration. How is that possible?

A It is entirely possible. Birds in the sky and fish in the water are not able to freely fly or swim if they have any qualms whatsoever.

Likewise, when a spirit departs from this world, leaving behind its family, friends and property, if it should cling to any hindrance, it may not be reborn in salutary lands. When one's mind is pure and serene without disturbance, one would be reborn in the Pure Land. Otherwise, if one's soul is hindered by and attached to wailing sounds, he would lose his way and he might end up either a ghost in space or fall into the three evil bourns. From the viewpoint of the spirit, they are nothing but foes.

Therefore, when a patient gets ill and is near the end, you should remind him of the discourses in the scriptures to help him return to the original nature of great enlightenment. Ordinary people in the world do not know this reality; they make it their business to weep during three years of mourning. For a socially accepted norm, it might be inevitable to express grief at the death of the member of a family. However, in our religion, in order to help the spirit be reborn in the land of bliss, we prohibit the ingestion of wine, meat, the five forbidden pungent roots, and every impure thing, or the destruction of life.

After death, people in the world invoke the spirit so as to usher it into the house and serve it for three years, by serving it meals every morning and evening. However, we consider it to be very ominous if spirits stay in the house. On the contrary, when parents pass away, we recite the Mahāyāna sūtras and chant the name of the buddha and do not make a loud, wailing sound. At the filial mourning after forty-nine days or three years, we purify mind and body and recite Mahāyāna sūtras to deliver the spirit so that it will go to better rebirths.

Q Is it superstitious to think that a spirit survives after death?

A What makes you sure that the spirit does not exist? If you do not have definite proof that the spirit exists or not, you, as a son or a daughter, had better do whatever is beneficial to your parents.

36. Realization of the Hīnayāna teaching through the cultivation of insight

Q Sentient beings in the three realms of existence, owing to a mental fault, are bound to transmigrate in the sea of suffering without any hope of salvation. Their chronic habits, which have been repeated for innumerable kalpas, cannot be broken even by a diamond club. How can we destroy these intractable habits so that they may be emancipated from the sea of suffering?

A All the heavens in the three realms of existence, devilish heretics, and the four modes of birth among the six rebirth destinies are none other than the manifestations of mind, that is, the attachment to consciousness. How then could we, having removed cognition, realize the true nature? First, what is the means by which Hīnayāna followers emancipate themselves from the sea of suffering? Even though there are numerous ways to practice, let me introduce them briefly.

They should practice the contemplation on the four foundations of mindfulness (四念處觀):²⁸

- 1) Meditation on the impurity of the body: From the beginning, the seed itself is impure. Why? The body originates from the karmic cause of carnal desire and it is produced from the semen of the father and the blood of the mother. When it enters into the matrix, it settles between the organ of generation (生臟) and that of maturity (熟臟).²⁹ Out of the nine pores of the body, filthy excretions flow all the time. Inside of the body, there are all sorts of worms and thirty-nine kinds of impure things. After death, the body decays into mush. In sum, the body is really impure.

This is the reality of the impurity of the body. In the case of meditation, however, you should meditate on the body with complete concentration and without confusion. First of all, if you relax body and mind like the space, and incessantly contemplate the body with calmness during the four postures of walking, staying, sitting, and reclining, you finally will find that the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and wind are void and that there is no self. This meditation is a suitable expedient for sentient beings who are dominated by greed.

- 2) You should meditate on the fact that sensations are nothing but suffering. This body of mine is the source of pain because it experiences the suffering of birth, old-age, and death, starvation and thirst, cold and heat. Even pleasure is eventually transmuted to pain, and joy to sadness. Even if you get what you desire, it might bring pain to you. If you contemplate on the principle of cause and effect, you will realize the four great elements are void and there is no self after all. This meditation is an appropriate expedient for those sentient beings who are liable to cling to the five sensual pleasures.
- 3) You should meditate on the impermanence of states of mind. Pleasure arises at a certain time and rage arises at another. Human feelings of joy and anger, sorrow and pleasure are incessantly changing. There is nothing that is permanent. When you meditate serenely on the impermanence of states of mind, you never fail to notice the voidness of the four great elements as well as their lack of self. This meditation is suitable for those who are attached to the notion of a perduring self.
- 4) You should meditate on the fact that there is no self in mental factors. Take a look at yourself. What makes you? The body, which is made of the four great elements of earth, water, fire and wind, and is finally destined to decay, is not yourself. The mind, which is very changeable and discriminative, and is incessantly arising and ceasing, is not yourself, either. There is not a single thing in this world that is considered to be yourself. Thus you

should meditate on the principle of no-self or no-object. Then you will realize the truth of the emptiness of things and no-self. This meditation is effective expedient for those who cling to notions of self and objects of self.

These four types of expedients are called the “four foundations of mindfulness.”

Furthermore, beings who suffer from distraction should practice the meditation on counting respirations. In this meditation, you count the exhalation and inhalation respectively from one to ten. While counting them closely and attentively, you will realize the voidness of the four great elements and no-self.

Because sentient beings in the three realms of existence transmigrate for innumerable kalpas, their habits are also immeasurable; without practicing meditation, they will never be emancipated from the sea of suffering.

Q What teaching has the Hīnayāna school mastered?

A Externally, the myriad things in the universe are all void; internally, the self associated with the six sensory organs and the six sensory consciousnesses, along with the seventh consciousness of ego, is also void. If one realizes the voidness of self and things, one will be emancipated forever from the endless suffering of transmigration. One will also have command of inconceivable supernatural power that enables one to see the entire universe in a single cherry, to travel billions of miles in an instant, and to know everything that happened over eons.

The Hīnayāna school teaches sentient beings that all things are like the images in a mirror, the moon in the water, bubbles, or heat waves. It also teaches that all things are impermanent and that there is no pleasure, self, or purity. In this manner, Hīnayāna teachings reject all kinds of form to reveal reality.

Q Why is it called the Hīnayāna (lit. Lesser Vehicle)?

A A vehicle is a simile for a mode of transportation. It is called the Lesser Vehicle because it holds the biased view that self is void whereas things (*dharmas*) are not void.³⁰ They only know that all things are impermanent, impure, or unpleasant. On the other hand, they do not know that all things, in their truest sense, are permanent, pleasant, true, and pure. In other words, the Hīnayānists do not realize that the sacred and the profane are harmoniously united and that all things exist forever without production or cessation.

They study the four noble truths of suffering, the origination of suffering, the extinction of suffering, and the path. Since sentient beings do not know the cause of their misery, let me explain it. The hell denizens, hungry ghosts, and beasts receive every sort of suffering. Where then do these come from? On account of the impurity of the three karmas made with body, mouth, and mind in both past and present lives, sentient beings accept the effect of grave pain. Without getting rid of the cause of evil karma, they teach that we cannot avoid pain in this world. Therefore the Hīnayāna school teaches that we should purify our body through the observance of precepts and bring defiled delusion to an end.

37. The contemplative practice of invoking the name of the Buddha leads to the pure land

Q People reflect on Amitābha the Enlightened One (無量壽覺)³¹ in order to be reborn in the Pure Land. How does that practice work?

A Just reciting the name of Amitābha with your mouth may bring a chance seeing the Buddha. It however is far too slow of a practice. It is better to engage in contemplative practice when you recite Amitābha. Let me explain briefly: Visualize the standing statue of the great saint Avalokiteśvara bathed in golden light, with its left hand touching its chest and its right hand lower. This is called the *pratyutpanna-samādhi* (般舟三昧).³²

In general, when people recite Amitābha, they usually arouse ideation all day long and follow external objects. This is the wrong way. When invoking the buddha, if you do away with all discrimination and calmly practice meditation, all distracted states of mind will disappear and the mind will be stable and purified. Owing to this capacity of samādhi, such practitioners would be reborn in the Pure Land of Amitābha.

Some of practitioners visualize either the setting sun or the body of the sun or the light of *ūrmakeśa* (hair tuft) of the Buddha statue. Even though there are various means of meditation, the principle is one and the same: visualize the image of the Buddha serenely, without a discriminative mind.

38. Four techniques for reciting mantras (神呪)³³

Q People often recite mantras. What are the specific techniques for reciting mantras?

A If you decide to recite mantras, first of all, you should refrain from sexual desire, drinking, and sensual pleasure. Also you should purify your body and, burning pure incense, concentrate your mind to recite wholeheartedly. There are four techniques for reciting mantras: 1) Recite the mantra loudly, while reflecting on the agent who recited it. 2) Recite the mantra quietly in the mouth, while reflecting on the agent who recited it. 3) Recite the mantra inwardly without moving the mouth and tongue, while reflecting on the agent who recited it. 4) Recite the mantra while visualizing the Sanskrit word “Om,” imagining it is clear and bright like the moon.

If you recite a mantra in this manner, the mind, now free from all defilement, will become spontaneously pure and omniscient, and you will realize the true nature of the mind. This is the right way of recitation, in which one’s own efforts and those of others are united. When one realizes the truth, the boundless, mysterious power of truth would be fulfilled.

39. Becoming a **pratyekabuddha** through contemplation of causes and conditions

Q I would like to know the features of the **pratyekabuddhas**.

A There are two kinds of **pratyekabuddha**. One is the enlightened being who, having heard the discourse of the Buddha, realized all things in the universe are nothing but illusion. The other is the enlightened being who has a sharpened capacity to realize the truth by himself, without listening to the teaching of the Buddha. Looking externally at leaves and flowers coming out of a tree, he realizes that everything is delusion. Internally seeing his body undergoing birth, aging, illness and death, as well as his mind constantly changing, he realizes that everything is the result of the twelve links of the chain of causality (*pratityasamutpāda*).

The twelve links (nidāna) of the chain of causality are as follows:

- 1) Ignorance (avidyā): inherited passion from the beginningless past.
- 2) Dispositions (saṅskāra): the good and evil karma of past lives.
- 3) Consciousness (vijñāna): a form of perception.
- 4) Name and form (nāmarūpa): the body and mind evolving in the womb.
- 5) Six sense organs (śaḍāyatana): six organs of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind on the verge of birth.
- 6) Contact (sparśa): contact of inner sense organs with the corresponding external sense objects.
- 7) Sensation (vedanā): receptivity to feelings caused by the contact of the sense organs with objects.
- 8) Craving (trṣṇā): an attachment to what they desire.

- 9) Grasping (*upādāna*): the urge for sensuous existence.
- 10) Being (*bhava*): forming the substance of future karma.
- 11) Birth (*jāti*): the completed karma ready for rebirth.
- 12) Old age and death (*jarā-maraṇa*): referring to the next life.

Q What then should we do in order to be sages free from the suffering of the world?

A If you wish to eliminate defilements, meditate on the twelve links of the chain of causality. You should attentively contemplate the fundamental cause of the twelve links. It is like tracing the source of a stream instead of following the Dongjeokgang from the Diamond Mountains to the Western Sea. This is the way the pratyekabuddhas realize the mysterious truth of the undefiled dharma. Realization of the path lies not in the words but in actual practice.

Q In spite of your explanation, I am not able to understand what you said. Would you please clarify it in detail again?

A Each link of the twelffold chain of causality involves the five aggregates (*skandha*), which consist of form, sensation, conception, disposition, and consciousness. Because all things are intrinsically void, there is nothing to cling to. As all objects are transient, like a drifting cloud, there is nothing to grasp. Because sentient beings do not know the reality, they cannot but crave for what they desire.

Not knowing the truth indicates *avidyā* (darkness without illumination). By reason of attachment to affection, *samskāra* (disposition) is formed. By reason of discrimination of objects, *vijñāna* (consciousness) is formed. By reason of accumulation of the consciousness, *nāmarūpa* (name and form) is formed. Depending on name and form, the six sense organs (*śaḍāyatana*) are formed. Impinging on their sense objects, contact (*sparśa*) is established. Commanding contact, sensation (*vedanā*) is formed. Receiving it willingly, craving (*trṣṇā*) is formed. Being bound to craving, grasping

(upādāna) is formed. By reason of grasping, being (bhava) that accepts karma is formed. Building the five aggregates means birth (jāti). Transformation of the five aggregates indicates old age, and collapse of the five aggregates signifies death (jarā-maraṇa). What is not agreeable to the consciousness is called anxiety, which intensifies to become grief. What cause discomfort to the organs of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind, and consciousness is called suffering. Also the mind feeling agony is called distress. This is the aspect of the twelve links of the chain of causality.

If one, thoroughly understanding the ground of the twelvefold chain of causality, practices meditation, one will have insight into the voidness of all causes and conditions as well as of one's own original nature. This is a rough summary of the features of the pratyeka-buddha.

40. The Mahāyāna school engages in cultivating the three-fold contemplation

Q What kind of practice does the Mahāyāna teaching advocate?

A There are numerous methods practiced in the Mahāyāna schools. Let me give you a brief introduction. According to the *Yuanjue jing* (*Sūtra of Perfect Enlightenment*), there are three kinds of meditations; meditations on calm, illusion, and quietude. What is the meditation on calm? Letting go of all views, cognitions, and discriminations, when a practitioner contemplates the grand void and calmness, not only the practitioner oneself but also all the universe would become calm and serene. At this time, the nature of enlightenment also pervades the entire universe. When the nature of enlightenment pervades the universe, the practitioner knows even the minds of individual sentient existences.

Another name for this meditation is “the pure meditation of the annihilation of forms,” which means that all forms are void and the spirit of the subject should be purified. In short, this meditation is intended to contemplate the voidness and calmness of all forms. By means of this meditation, the mind of the practitioner becomes serene and one eventually realizes the fundamental enlightenment.

What is the meditation on illusion? The goal of this meditation also lies in contemplating the great wisdom. From the non-abiding substance (*che*), non-abiding functioning (*yong*) is generated. Through the skill-in-means of the Buddha, one practices samādhi and makes a grand vow to realize right enlightenment and deliver all sentient beings. This is called “the non-object meditation of the insight into illusions,” which means that a practitioner annihilates all objects through the insight into illusion. This meditation is not solely

focused on the substance, but is also accompanied by extensive functions.

What is the meditation on quietude? This is also called the meditation of the middle path that eliminates the two extremes. It is at the same time called the concurrent practice of both *samādhi* and *prajñā* as well as both substance and function. Since both substance-function and *samādhi-prajñā* are pacified, leaving not a single trace in the mind, it is called the meditation of paired quietude. It is also called the meditation of unconditional spiritual mind. “Unconditional” refers to the quietude of the pair of substance and function; “spiritual mind” means perfect illumination of both *samādhi* and *prajñā*. Because both substance and function are unobstructed and thereby the non-abiding substance of mind is mysteriously illumined, there is neither the pair of substance and function nor the middle path; simultaneously, the pair of substance and function are harmoniously united to reveal the middle path. Therefore realizing the three goals is called perfect enlightenment (*yuanjue*).

The *Yuanjue jing* says, “If sentient beings wish to practice *samādhi* and *prajñā*, at the beginning they should, having kept their bodies decent and made their intentions righteous, repeatedly count the breaths from one to ten. In due course, if the practitioner incessantly and attentively counts the number of breaths, distraction would disappear, and the level of quietude will become deeper and more stable. If the practice becomes even more profound, the practitioner will know the number of thoughts that arose and ceased while going, staying, sitting, and lying down. In the long run, one is even able to count the number of rain drops in the whole universe as clearly as one sees ordinary things in front of oneself.”³⁴

There is a system of training in the three meditations on dharmadhātu from the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. First, the practitioner meditates on the alienation of all forms, which is truly void. Second, there is no obstruction between principle and phenomena. Third, the practitioner meditates on the fact that the true nature of the

dharmadhātu permeates all phenomena of the universe so that they interpenetrate each other. The venerable Zhiyi of Mt. Tiantai set forth the three meditations of emptiness, unreality, and the middle, based on the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*, which are meditations on the emptiness of the own being of things, on the different nature of causality and on no discrimination between these two extremes. In addition, there is another sublime meditation that involves tracing sound back to the source of hearing: when a practitioner hears any sound whatsoever, one should not follow after the sound but should trace it back to the agent that hears the sound. By incessantly tracing sound back to agent with attentive concentration, one will realize the all-pervading realm. The Tripitaka in general introduces contemplation as mind training. Even though there are lots of contemplation methodologies, I have dealt with only a few examples.

41. Merely reciting scripture without engaging in contemplation achieves nothing

These days, those who read, recite, or preach on Buddhist scriptures identify themselves as followers of the Hwaeom or Beophwa schools. To me, this is ridiculous. Does this mean that great writers of this world must be sages? If a Buddhist is a real scholar of the Hwaeom school, one should not only study the Hwaeom scriptures but also practice the three meditations on the dharmadhātu. And if a Buddhist is a real scholar of the Beophwa school, one should practice the three meditations of emptiness, unreality, and the middle. Besides, they should also practice other meditations delineated in the *Yuanjue jing*, and so on.

If they do not practice meditation but only talk about scriptures, they are no more than the birds in the spring or the worms in the fall that make sounds when attracted by the energy of wind. The dharma masters of today recommend that Buddhists recite the name of the buddha. Examining the Chinese characters for “reciting the name of the buddha” (*yeom-bul*, 念佛), it is evident that the practice does not refer to loud recitation but reflecting on (*yeom*) the buddha (*bul*). Accordingly we should think or imagine the images or merits of the buddhas through the meditation on the standing buddha, the *ūrnakeśa*, or the sunset. You should practice those meditations with reference to Buddhist scriptures.

Great Enlightenment, for the sake of delivering all sentient beings, adopted various skill-in-means to help them attain buddhahood. Did he recommend that they recite or memorize his teaching? If dharma masters do not lead their followers to the right path, it will be a great misdeed for them both. Therefore, dharma masters should be very careful when they teach lay people.

Without practicing meditation, how could we destroy the deeply engrained habits of sentient beings that are stronger than diamond? This way of truth may not be fulfilled by advanced intelligence, or by higher writing skills, or by outstanding oratorical talents, or by even supernatural powers.

42. The absurdity of bleaching clay

Even if all the people in the world train in Daoist practices and become Daoist hermits, if they do not realize the nature of perfect enlightenment, they would not avoid transmigration and will ultimately fail. Furthermore, even though people may be reborn in the heavens through practicing the ten good deeds and the four dhyānas and eight samādhis, if they do not realize their true nature, these beings will eventually degenerate and fall into the sea of suffering. As stated above, the teaching of this religion neither advise one to be reborn in the heavens, or to become Daoist ascetics who are said to move mountains, or blow wind and rain as they like.

43. Fulfilling right enlightenment through brightening the mind

Our definitive goal lies in realizing perfect enlightenment so that we may escape from incessant transmigration for myriad kalpas and become a king of dharma who can deliver all sentient beings. Through meditation on mind training, we can break down the accumulated defilements and ignorance that have lasted for eons, and each of us also may acquire the mysterious capacities, such as the six supernatural powers, which are transmuted from the six consciousnesses, as well as *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *prajñā*, which are transformed from greed, hatred, and ignorance, respectively. Furthermore, we will be able to transform earth into gold and rivers into milk gruel. All these are not magical powers but abilities latent in the original nature of our minds.

Hsüan-chueh of Yung-chia (永嘉玄覺, 665–713) said, “The six mysterious functions are neither void nor not-void. The perfect illumination (of the function) is also not-illumination. To attain the five powers through purifying the five eyes is known to the enlightened man, not to ordinary people.”³⁵ And he said, “The three bodies (三身) and the four wisdoms (四智)³⁶ are embraced in the substance; the eight understandings (八解)³⁷ and the six powers are sealed in the ground of the mind.”³⁸

One who realizes perfect enlightenment is able to put Mt. Sumeru into a mustard seed without changing its size. But Mt. Sumeru also maintains its form just as before. Even the Four Heavenly Kings and divinities in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, the inhabitants of Mt. Sumeru, do not know what happened. Only the enlightened one who realize perfect nirvana are aware of that. The supernatural powers latent in our enlightened natures are too

numerous to enumerate here even for one or two kalpas. Each sentient being has boundless treasures of one's own. Where are they looking for them?

44. Clarifying profound passages from the Buddhist teachings

Q What are the most profound and sublime passages among the teachings of the tripiṭaka?

A Every teaching of an enlightened person is sublime. However, deluded persons will think silly all teachings, whether mundane or supramundane, while enlightened people will find sublime both mundane and supramundane discourses, are sublime. To those who are in a dream, everything they see or hear is a dream. But to those who have woken up from the dream, nothing is a dream any longer. Nonetheless, let me give you a few instances.

An ancient sage said, “If one does not sleep or doze, he won’t dream. If one’s mind is not deluded, there would be nothing erroneous in the world.”³⁹ So you should listen to me very attentively. (Raising his fist, he asks:) do you see it? (Hitting the ground, he asks:) do you hear it? What is it that sees and hears? If you are aware of it, indeed it would be profound and mysterious.

The *Diamond Sūtra* says, “When you do not grasp at any forms, they would be unmoving, just as they are.”⁴⁰ And, “If one tries to find me through my face, or my physical body, or my voice, one is a heretic. The person would never find me.”⁴¹ And, “Everything is like a dream, a puppet, a bubble, a shadow, a clasp of thunder, and a bolt of lightning. You should think of it in just this way.”⁴² And, “You are not able to seize the mind of the past, of the present, or of the future.”⁴³

Another sage said, “A man who says that the Buddha preached sermons does not understand me. A man who says that the Buddha did not preach sermons also does not understand me.” And, “That

there is no definitive teaching is the lesson of the Buddha; that there is no definitive teaching is *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*.⁴⁴ Once realized, these teachings are really wonderful.

The *Śūramgama Sūtra* (*Lengyan jing*) says, "What you can return to others naturally does not belong to you. However, what you cannot return to others does belong to you, doesn't it?"⁴⁵ And, "If there are wrong views about true knowledge and vision, that is the origin of ignorance. But if there are no wrong views regarding true knowledge and vision, that is right view." And, "Just as space, which is formless, embraces all things that have form, so too does the nature of sentient beings." And, "Our original nature is neither created by causality nor spontaneous, but it is also not something that is neither created by causality nor spontaneous. It is unrelated to any form/characteristic and is identical to all dharmas."⁴⁶ To realize this is really mysterious.

The *Yuanjue jing* says, "If you know it is a phantasm, just let it go. Even that expedient is not needed. Eliminating any phantasm itself is enlightenment. There is furthermore no gradual sequence."⁴⁷ And, "To realize the nature of perfect enlightenment is equivalent to seeking a flower in the sky. Your body and mind do not experience transmigration because they have no inherent nature."⁴⁸ And, "It is not space, because it is the original nature of space, because it is forever not unmoving, because the nature of great and perfect enlightenment is neither produced nor annihilated, because it is unassociated with any views, and because it, being perfect and complete, permeates the ten directions as the nature of the dharmadhātu."⁴⁹ And, "Do not arouse a delusive mind at any time, but at the same time, do not try to eliminate a delusive mind. Do not abide in the state of delusion and add no cognition thereof. Do not distinguish between truth and falsity where cognition does not exist."⁵⁰ This stage is truly profound.

According to the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, "The entire past preaches this sermon, the entire present preaches this sermon, the entire future preaches this sermon, the land preaches this sermon, sentient beings

preach this sermon, every single thing, each flower and each grass, preaches this sermon. Just take a look at the nature of the one true dharmadhātu. The ten dharmadhātus, along with all sentient and insentient beings, are the product of the great light of the one true mind.”

45. To turn consciousness into wisdom

Q Due to the transformation of consciousness, sentient beings, revealing myriad forms, transmigrate within the three realms of existence. How do we practice in order to gain liberation?

A In order to cross over the great sea, we have to get aboard a ship. Likewise, on some occasions, we should apply an expedient. Open your eyes, and you can see all the forms and colors: rectangular and round, short and long, as well as blue, yellow, red, and white. Close your eyes, and you only see darkness. If you cast your mind back closely and attentively to the source that see both things and darkness, finally you may only see the voidness in which all forms disappear.

Again, look at the agent that see the voidness. Then both the agent and object of sight disappear at once, the state of which is beyond description. From that state where eyes cannot see the eyes, where the sword cannot slice the sword, and water cannot wash the water, if you precede one more step, mysterious form and true emptiness will be united, and there will be never again be either production or cessation. At that stage, mountains are mountains, rivers are rivers, and a dharma staff is nothing but the dharma staff. So there remains nothing to teach.

There is another state of mind: the substance of enlightenment, that is, true emptiness, and mysterious existence are altogether in perfect harmony, just like the sun and the moon co-existing. What then is the mysterious wisdom in true emptiness, and what is the substance of original enlightenment? It points out that name and form in which name and form are no longer relevant.

Moreover, there are two kinds of sound: active and silent. What is active sound? The sound of wind, water, human beings, and clashing things are all active sounds because they are produced by active cause and conditions. When you are not attracted by each and every sound, turn back to what hears. Then you may hear the sound of flowing water. This is the sound of silence. And if you go on meditating, utmost silence is informed. This is called hearing the sound of silence.

It is like finding the source of a river. If you want to find out the origin of Dongjeokgang, you should not follow the stream to the Western Sea; instead, you have to go up northward via Ttukseom. Continuously following the flow of the river, you will finally find its origin in a certain valley of the Geumgangsan. In this same manner, you should not follow external sounds but trace them back to the agent that hears; then, you will find only emptiness.

If you meditate on the agent that sees emptiness, both the agent and object of sight again become empty, and the two extremes and the three time-periods as well as even the middle path entirely disappear. Again, you should trace back every thought of the past, present, and future. In the end, you should return all thoughts to the one mind. In general, when consciousness does not work to discern good and evil, the mental function is dulled. So you should always meditate closely and attentively on the origin of consciousness, and your thoughts will be emptied out like space. Once more, if you meditate on the agent that sees emptiness, the duality of subject and object will vanish for good.

Now then, I have only explained three means of meditation, via eyes, ears, and mind. The rest of meditation remains. Meditate by means of one of the three organs, and you will be liberated from the eighteen dharmadhātu and fulfill the highest truth. If a practitioner practices meditation with a concentrated mind, he will definitely achieve his goal within ten or thirty years.

Q I was told that the Sixth Patriarch was first awakened to the mind

by hearing a recitation of the *Diamond Sūtra*, and was enlightened a second time by the Fifth Patriarch's discourse on the same sūtra. How did this happen?

A (Yongseong suddenly raises his staff and asks:) How do you know that?

Q (The Questioner hesitates to reply.)

A (Yongseong storms like a thunderbolt:) If we argued the question, it is bound to be irrelevant.

Q I am slow-witted, so I hardly understand you. Please clarify it in detail.

A How dare I clarify this! Nevertheless, I will explain it as far as possible. There are no distinctions in the depth of the dharma, but there are differences in the capacities of sentient beings. (Raising his staff, he asks:) Does this exist or not?

Q It does.

A What, if I have set fire to the staff and have even blown the ashes away. Does the staff exist then, or not?

Q (The questioner realizes the staff does not exist, nor do mountains, rivers, fields, myriad things, his own body, the six objects, six organs, or even the seven consciousnesses. Having realized the suchness of the emptiness of self, he asks:) Is there anything else?

A (Yongseong raises his staff again and asks:) Does this exist, or not?

Q (Thereupon realizing that the staff and everything including both mundane and supra-mundane dharmas, exist as just phantasms, the questioner asks:) I understand that all things exist as phantasms. Is my realization

final? I doubt it.

A At first, you realized the suchness of emptiness of self in the Hīnayāna school. And secondly, you realized that the twelve links of causation exist as phantasms.

Q I want to hear a little more.

A (Raising his staff once more, he asks:) Does this exist?

Q This staff is empty and what is empty is the staff. The form of the staff and emptiness are non-dual. Originally there is not a single thing to present to you. This is beyond negation and affirmation. Isn't there any other possibility?

A The sixth patriarch, on hearing the passage, "One should give rise to a mind that is free from attachment," realized there is not a single thing. To explain it in terms of Buddhist doctrine, he realized that there is no duality between subject and object, and no difference between substance and function, which is the emptiness of self and phenomena.

Q Is there anything else?

A (Raising his staff again, he asks:) Does this exist or not?

Q (The questioner, having been enlightened, replies:) Mountains are mountains, rivers are rivers, and a staff is nothing but the staff. (He shouted loudly.)

A That is a good shout.

Q (The questioner leaves his seat brusquely.)

A (Calling him back:) The Sixth Patriarch, on hearing the passage

of the *Diamond Sūtra* that “one should use give rise to a mind that is free from attachment” was enlightened in the hall of the Fifth Patriarch, and exclaimed: “Who would have ever known that the inherent nature is intrinsically pure, fundamentally neither generated nor extinguished, naturally self-sufficient, fundamentally without movement, and that all things are the manifestation of the inherent nature!” Thereupon the Fifth Patriarch certified his enlightenment. What you realized is not different from that. Do not doubt it.

Q For the sake of later generations, I would like to ask something more. How do you explain it in terms of the teaching in the scriptures?

A In the Lotus Sūtra (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka Sūtra*), the Buddha revealed the samādhi of immeasurable meaning, the pure nature of the dharmadhātu, when the light of the form of the *ūrṇakeśa* illuminates eastward the eighteen thousand worlds. The form of the *ūrṇakeśa* indicates the mysterious illumination of the *ūrṇakeśa*, the light signifies the mysterious wisdom of the *Ekayāna* (one vehicle), the eighteen thousands worlds implies the eighteen sensory elements (*dhātu*), and the direction of the east indicates the unmoving substance. Illumination from the *Avīci* Hell up to the *Akaniṣṭha* Heaven is the revelation of the form of phenomena in the dharmadhātu, which shows the interpenetration between all things without obstruction. The Buddha continues that all forms of quietude are beyond description. Nevertheless, the form of the mundane world abides within the substance of dharma. In other words, all the phenomena of the mundane world exist permanently, without production and cessation.

Q All things are empty and that emptiness is also empty and without trace. Is what is empty without trace not our nature?

A No, it is not. Because all sentient beings are firmly attached to the form of things, the Buddha, in order to deliver them from the

sufferings of the three realms of existence, makes them realize the emptiness of both self and others. And because the Hīnayānists are attached to the view of emptiness, the Buddha, by breaking down the biased view regarding emptiness, makes them realize the emptiness of things. Also, out of fear of their attachment to the emptiness of things, the Buddha then makes them realize that there is neither emptiness of self nor that of things. In this manner, the Buddha removes the half-letter teaching to advocate the full-letter teaching, by slaying all the buddhas and all the masters sitting at the end of a hundred-foot pole who do not dare to take one final step.

Q What are the half-letter and full-letter teachings?

A The half-letter teaching says that all things are impermanent, unpleasant, non-self, and impure. “Half-letter” is a simile for the Chinese character “tian” (天). In writing the character “tian,” if one only writes “er,” the part meaning “two” (二), without writing “ren,” the part meaning “man” (人), the “er” (二) may be called a half-letter. The full-letter teaching represents that all things are intrinsically permanent, pleasant, true, and pure. “Full-letter” is a simile for writing the character “tian” in full, adding “ren” to the “er.”

Q With respect to name and form, is it relevant that my own nature is empty?

A Recently those who assert that they have realized the nature maintain solely the emptiness of things, and regard the state that is beyond verbal expression and consideration as being enlightenment. Our religion, however, is not of this kind. To use a metaphor, even though the taste of salt pervades sea water, we cannot see or hear it. Is there no salty taste because it is not seen or heard? In reality, the whole of sea water is salty. It is the same with our nature. The one, true mind itself is enlightenment, and enlightenment itself is no other than the one, true mind. As true emptiness, which

is enlightenment, is equivalent to the entire universe, it exists permanently, without being either produced or annihilated.

There is no true emptiness separate from enlightenment, nor any mysterious existence separate from enlightenment. Sometimes, true emptiness is preached in advance and mysterious existence is preached later, and at other times mysterious existence is preached in advance and true emptiness is preached later. And sometimes, both true emptiness and mysterious existence are affirmed, and at other times both are rejected.

Our religion of Great Enlightenment does not regard the realization of empty nature as enlightenment to the nature. With respect to the substance of enlightenment, all the buddhas of the three worlds are at a loss for words. Because it is beyond conceptual thought, my explanation is inherently needless and illogical. Nevertheless, let me introduce a simile again: it is like the sun and the moon shining in the sky. The substance of space is a metaphor of enlightenment; the sun and the moon are metaphors for true emptiness and mysterious existence. No matter how enormous space may be, without those celestial bodies, it is insufficient. No matter how bright those celestial bodies may be, without space, they cannot be accepted. It is the same with this path of ours. Since the substance of enlightenment, which is true emptiness and mysterious existence, is perfect and without obstruction, the Buddha said, “Because the three truths are realized, it is called perfect enlightenment.”

Q Does training the mind signify the realization of the original nature through the destruction of defilements and ignorance by means of wisdom?

A The standpoint that the goal is to destroy ignorance by wisdom belongs to the view of the Hīnayāna. For those who have realized the intrinsic nature, defilements are none other than bodhi (菩提). They are fundamentally pure and nondual.

Q Without training in samādhi and emancipation, how can we see the nature?

A As the Sixth Patriarch said, we should discuss only the nature of enlightenment, not samādhi or emancipation. Samādhi and emancipation are two different things, so they are not the truth of enlightenment. Let me apply the metaphor of the ocean and waves: each wave billowing on the ocean is water, and simultaneously water is equivalent to the waves. Another simile: water is wet. Even though the water flows, billows into waves, or it is either pure or impure, its moist nature is unchanging. Ordinary people regard the five aggregates and the eighteen sensory elements (*dhātu*) as two different entities. The wise, however, have insight into the non-duality of the two. As the Fifth Patriarch said, “The non-dual nature is the true nature.”



CHAPTER III

THE RIGHT PATH OF MIND TRAINING

1. On the maladies in practicing the hwadu 話頭,¹ “What is this?” (是甚麼)

Practitioners who train their minds should look closely into the way of practice, to secure the right way, lest they go astray. You practitioners should listen to me carefully. Each person has something that, on one hand, swallows the entire universe and the whole of space, and something that cannot fill even a grain of dust, on the other. It is brighter than the sun and the moon in its brightness, and darker than pitch in its darkness. Even if this thing is working during daily life, such as when we are wearing clothes, eating meals, and sleeping in our beds, we cannot name it or draw its face.

It is neither mind nor no-mind; it is neither thought nor no-thought; it is neither buddha nor non-buddha; it is neither heaven nor not-heaven; it is neither a spirit nor a non-spirit; it is neither space nor non-space; it is neither a thing nor no-thing. Even if it is indefinable, everything is established by it. It is extremely bright, mysterious, void, great, minute, strong, and flexible. This thing does not have name or form; but at the same time, it is wrong to conclude that it does not have name or form. This thing may not be known by either mind or non-mind, or known by either words or non-words. You should raise a doubt, asking yourself, “What is this thing?” If you go on inquiring incessantly into this question, just like a hen brooding over her eggs, you are sure in the long run to realize your own intrinsic nature.

Listen to me, dear practitioners. This practice has nothing to do with the Tripitaka and the twelve types of discourse.² We only succeed to the Seon 禪³ tradition: The Buddha shares his seat with Kaśyapa in front of a stūpa;⁴ the Buddha held a flower in his hand;⁵ after nirvāṇa, the Buddha stretches his feet out of the coffin between

twin śāla trees.⁶ You ambitious persons had better raise a doubt regarding this matter. However, all the wise men such as Śāriputra and so on, the great scholars of this world, and even the enlightened ones in the three periods⁷ are not aware of this thing. So, what on earth is this thing?

You Buddhist practitioners, if you know this thing, submit it to me right away; otherwise, try to raise this doubt. You should not follow what you see or hear to know the thing. Do not struggle with what is bright and intelligent within you. Do not try to fathom your thoughts with your thoughts. Do not fluctuate according to whether your practice progresses or retrogresses. Do not settle for tranquility and comfort. Do not regard the voidness that might arise in the course of practice to be enlightenment. Any concept or doctrine among the eighty-thousands of Buddhist scriptures cannot describe this thing. Just harbor this doubt: “What is this?”

Q What makes you advise that “you should not follow what you see or hear to know the thing,” and “do not struggle with what is bright and intelligent within you,” and “do not fathom your thoughts with your thoughts”?

A When each of the six sense-organs contacts its object, discriminating function occurs. If a practitioner chases after these objects to know what they are, his mind is bound to be confused and he cannot concentrate on the hwadu. In this case, the practitioner is liable to mistake the cognizer that is working along with six sense organs for his original face, that is, his true nature. In other words, he may mistakenly regard the state of quietude as being the true nature; or he may wrongly regard emptiness as the true nature; or he may mistake abiding in serenity as being the realization of enlightenment.

Even though mind does not cling to the notion that it is bright and intelligent, how can you tell that it is? You should not look into where your thoughts arise. Sometimes you may abide in a state that is bright and pure. However, even though you may have realized the

emptiness of thought, it is still not a thorough, full enlightenment. The Sixth Patriarch said, “I have one thing that has neither name nor letter. However, it is a huge column that props up heaven and earth. It is as bright as the sun and the moon; it is as dark as black pitch. Though it is working all the time, it cannot be grasped. Can any one of you dare to tell me what this thing is?”⁸ Also, he once asked the Chan master Huairang, “What thing has come here?”⁹ In mute astonishment, Huairang was unable to say a word. After eight years’ contemplation, he eventually attained full enlightenment. This is the way to contemplate the hwadu.

This thing exists forever regardless of the existence of the body that includes the six sense organs, regardless of knowledge, and regardless of voidness or non-voidness. Even if space disappeared, this thing would not cease to exist. It is brighter than the sun and the moon; at the same time it is darker than black pitch. It is tremendous indeed; even if the thing swallows the universe and all of space, it would not leave any trace. It is extremely tiny; even though the thing might enter into a minute grain of dust, it could not be found there.

You should just raise this doubt: What on earth is this thing? Don’t give rise to the cognitive mind, but concentrate on the question that is like a mass of flame. If you are confronted by the silver mountain and iron wall, just try to penetrate through to the realm that cannot be seized.

Q That which “swallows the universe and all of space” refers to the nature of original enlightenment, doesn’t it? Isn’t it my own true mind?

A Isn’t it just your conceptual understanding? Have you truly realized your own nature? You may be likened to a foolish man who, having never visited Seoul, has heard about Seoul. Even if he knows about the South Gate, Jongro, and the royal palaces in Seoul through others’ verbal accounts, it is not his own empirical knowledge. Likewise, conveying the words of the Buddha to others does not

make you a buddha. The original nature has never contended that it is the original nature. Asserting that it is the original nature or the true mind is nothing but a type of naming. What, then, is it before it is named? It is your mission to verify and identify the existence of this thing. It is not confirmed by words or silence. Just raise the doubt and ask, "What is this?" Even sages and wise men do not know it. How can you ever be aware of it by means of conceptual thought?

It is profound indeed; to say that the sages do not know this thing does not mean that they really do not know it. Even though I say that the sages do know the thing, it does not definitively mean that they know it. Since the thing is fundamentally different from ordinary things, it is beyond description. Do you know it? Although it is indescribable, those who have actually realized it know clearly what it is. Let me offer a simile; suppose that there is a railroad out there, with a train on it, a smokestack on the train, and charcoal and water in the burner. Although charcoal is burned to push the piston, the train does not move. Why? The train would not move unless a driver operates it.

Q That's right. Human beings control their bodies while walking, standing, sitting, and reclining. Is it the body that activates itself?

A No. I think it is the same as with the train.

Q What then makes the body move?

A You had better not ask me about the matter. You should find out for yourself what controls your body, and ask what it is. Why are you ignorant of yourself? Please hurry up to find out. Remember that the body is likened to a dew drop in the morning and your life to the sun setting in the evening.

2. Is there one hwadu that is more effective than others?

Q Do you think there is one hwadu that is more effective than all the others?

A Do not say that. I don't think there is.

Q I thought the hwadu "what is this" (henceforth WIT) is inferior to the hwadu 'mu' 無.

A Do not take such a wrong view. The distinction between good and bad belongs to human beings, not to hwadus. For the last forty years, I have been wandering all over the country looking for practitioners of high virtue to rely on. Though I wore ragged clothes and begged for my meals, I was satisfied with my sacred mission. I happened to call on a practitioner to ask about truth. He told me, "The hwadu WIT is a dead phrase (死句); the hwadu 'mu' is a live phrase (活句)."¹⁰

Thereupon I replied, "I dare not honor your instruction. That is impossible! The hwadu WIT is neither dead nor alive. When the Chan master Huairang came from the mountain of Sungshan, the Sixth Patriarch asked, 'What thing has come here?' Thereupon Huairang, not knowing what to say, pondered the question for eight years before he was fully enlightened and became the legitimate successor of the Sixth Patriarch. How could such a person, who became the main successor in the school of live phrases, have attained buddhahood through a dead hwadu?"

Is the hwadu, then, a live phrase? Let me refute the claim. One day the Holy Master said to the assembly, 'I have one thing that has no name and no letter. However it is a huge column that props up

heaven and earth. It is as bright as the sun and the moon; it is as dark as black pitch. Though it is in motion all the time, it cannot be grasped. Are any one of you able to tell what this thing is?" Shenhui, at the age of seven, stepped out of the crowd and said, 'It is the source of all buddhas, and the buddha-nature of Shenhui.' The Sixth Patriarch reproved him saying, 'Even if you teach disciples as a senior master of our school, you will be no more than a scholar of conceptual understanding.' How could Shenhui, who was enlightened in the school that endorses live phrases, be the disciple of a school that endorses dead phrases? It is evident that the distinction between live and dead phrases belongs to practitioners, not to the hwadu."

The practitioner then said, "The hwadu WIT has lots of problems."

I asked, "What do you mean?"

"Many practitioners who contemplate on WIT tend to insist that they have realized buddhahood," he said.

"What do you think is WIT?," I asked.

"What is this?," he retorted.

"What do you mean by 'what'?", I asked in return.

"What is this bright and intelligent thing?," he replied. "And what is this thing that sees and hears, and what is this thing that thinks? That's what I pointed out."

I exclaimed, "It is really deplorable for you to understand the hwadu like this. It is no wonder that you say this hwadu has a lot of problems. If a practitioner asks "what is it?" whenever his sense organs encounter their objects, it is only the shade of the consciousness aggregate flickering in the mind. And if a practitioner asks "what is it?" by looking at the root of thought with thought, he cannot help but fall ill. It is the sickness either of emptiness or purity. There are so many kinds of sickness that result from keeping a bright and intelligent state. This is not the right way to ensure the supreme truth. The methodology of contemplating the one thousand and seven hundred hwadus is one and the same."

3. Is the hwadu ‘what is this?’ the root of all others?

Q If the question “what is it?” is not involved, then I guess every hwadu is invalid.

A I do not understand what you mean.

Q Framing the question ‘what is this?’ is imperative when you contemplate any hwadu. For example, in the case of the hwadu ‘mu’ 無, in order to make this hwadu work, you should ask what ‘mu’ is.

A Who taught you to contemplate hwadus in this wise?

Q A notable master today is teaching the public to raise the hwadu in this manner.

A It is really a shame that those who do not know how to practice hwadu teach others contemplation. It is like a blind man leading others to a fire pit. If that’s the way hwadus are to be contemplated, then when you contemplate the hwadu ‘a cypress tree in the courtyard’,¹¹ you should ask what this cypress tree is; when you contemplate the hwadu ‘three *geun* of hemp’,¹² you should ask what three *geun* of hemp are; when you contemplate the hwadu ‘a dried dung stick’,¹³ you should ask what a dried dung stick is. It is really absurd. Do you ask this question because you do not know what those things are? This is the wrong way to contemplate the hwadu. Since each hwadu generates its own doubt, you do not need to adopt “what is this?” in order to arouse doubt.

4. Each hwadu has its own doubt and its own malady

The hwadu “what is this thing?” is a means by which a practitioner may raise doubt. The ‘thing’ encompasses all the universe and everything in space. What on earth is this? This is not known as either existing or not-existing. Also it may not be called either one-thing or not-one-thing. It is not known by either conceptual thought or nonconceptual thought. Then, what is it? This is the manner in which you raise doubt on the hwadu “what is this?” Otherwise, if you speculate when you practice the hwadu, it would end up with a malady. You should only doubt what it is. It is the same with all the other hwadus.

The Korean word designating the hwadu ‘mu’ is a vernacular interpretation of the Chinese character. The general premise of the hwadu is that “although all wriggling creatures containing spirit have the buddha-nature, Zhaozhou¹⁴ instead said, ‘they don’t have it’ (‘wu,’ 無).” The concise inquiry “why did he say ‘wu?’” is the brief premise. Even though the Buddha said that all sentient beings have the buddha-nature, Zhaozhou denied it. What made him deny the Buddha’s teaching? This is the core question of this hwadu.

Recently lots of Seon masters in Korea maintain that if practitioners doubt the hwadu in the Korean language, for instance, asking in the Korean vernacular “why did he deny it?” or “what made him say they don’t have it?”, it would be a dead phrase based on speculation regarding Zhaozhou’s meaning, which would be the wrong way to practice. Instead, if they contemplate the hwadu in such a way as they include the Chinese character ‘wu’ in the inquiry, for example, “why did he say ‘mu’,” or “what is ‘mu?’”, then it would be a live phrase leading to the right practice of the hwadu. This is a

sheer nonsense. Right or wrong practice of a hwadu has nothing to do with whether a practitioner uses Chinese characters or not. It is really shameful for Seon masters to teach practitioners in this way.

What makes a hwadu live or dead? Let me clarify it for you. Tell me; can you draw space with complete fidelity?

Q Space is so void and infinite that we cannot wet it with water, cannot burn it with fire, and cannot move with wind. Such is space.

A Has space ever told you this is how it is? Your definition is nothing but your own ideation. Once space was transmuted by your discriminative ideation, the true nature of space becomes dead. Please take this simile into account and you will understand the criteria for discerning live and dead hwadus. When a practitioner carries the hwadu as a fireball free from any cognizing faculty, it is called a live hwadu.

Whenever you arouse the cognizing mind, every hwadu becomes dead. If you inquire about ‘mu’ by asking ‘what is mu?’, the question is useless. Do you ask ‘what is mu?’ because you are ignorant of the character ‘mu’? If you contemplate the hwadu ‘mu’ in this manner, no matter how many times you recite it, there would remain nothing but the sound ‘mu.’ Do you make the sound ‘mu’ in order to fasten your thought? If so, what is the difference between reciting ‘om’ and ‘mu’? This is a common mistake in practicing the hwadu.

The fatal error in hwadu practice involves carrying no doubt. There is old saying to the effect that Great Doubt brings Great Enlightenment. Recently a Seon practitioner came to me for instruction. I asked him, “How have you practiced hwadu lately?”

He then answered, “Having written the character ‘mu’ in my heart, I contemplated it all the time.”

I said, “This is not meditation. You had better practice the sunset meditation or the meditation on the *ūrñakeśa* described in Buddhist scriptures.

Q (Another practitioner asked:) I ask myself what kind of ‘mu’ it is,

because the ‘mu’ is neither the ‘mu’ of existence and non-existence nor the ‘mu’ of real nothingness.

A You are very smart, since you prepared a prescription before contracting a disease.

Q I’m afraid I don’t understand what you mean.

A Practitioners who do not practice faithfully would conjecture using just their conceptual understanding that Zhaozhou declared ‘the dog has no buddha-nature’ in order to make a contrast with ‘all beings have buddha-nature.’ The thesis that all beings have buddha-nature confirms the existence of the nature of enlightenment, whereas the thesis that the dog has no buddha-nature signifies the original emptiness of the buddha-nature. Nothingness is presented in order to eliminate two unbiased views.

There are those who maintain that ‘mu’, true nothingness, negates both existence and non-existence because both existence and non-existence are inherently void. So I negated true nothingness itself. That’s why I said you prepared a prescription before contracting a disease. You should not make such an assumption but should bear in mind this doubt; “Why did Zhaozhou say ‘mu’?” What made him declare that a dog does not have the buddha-nature? What was his intention in saying so? Just keep in mind this doubt on the hwadu.

Q (Another practitioner asked:) According to the *Dahui shuzhuang* (Letters of Dahui, 大慧書狀),¹⁵ a monk asked Zhaozhou, “does a dog have buddha-nature, or not?” Zhaozhou answered, ‘wu’ . Taking this account into consideration, we should concentrate on the character ‘wu’. What is the use of doubt?

A Alas! There are too many fallacies to enumerate here. Do you see the ‘mu’ through your eyes or your mind? By answering ‘mu,’ Zhaozhou suggests that practitioners carry a doubt regarding his true

intention.

There is another famous hwadu, “cypress tree in the courtyard.” A monk asked Zhaozhou why Bodhidharma¹⁶ came from the West. Zhaozhou replied, “Cypress tree in the courtyard.” Why did Zhaozhou refer to a cypress tree when he was asked about the mission of Bodhidharma? Carrying the doubt is key to meditation on the hwadu.

Another hwadu is “a dried dung stick.” A monk asked Yunmen,¹⁷ “What is enlightenment?” Yunmen answered, “A dried dung stick.” Why did Yunmen say a dried dung stick when he was asked the meaning of enlightenment? Just ponder on the reason why Yunmen answered in that way.

Another hwadu is “your true face before your parents gave birth to you.” Weishan¹⁸ asked Xiangyan,¹⁹ “If you bring me your true face before your parents gave birth to you, I will take care of you.” Your parents gave birth to your physical body, not your true nature. What in the world is your true face? Keep that doubt in your mind.

Q Are you suggesting that I should recollect what my identity was in my previous life; a dog or a human being?

A No. Your parents, even if they wanted to, would not be able to produce your true nature. Even heaven and earth would not be able to do so, either. The true nature is never known to us. What is the true nature before your parents gave birth to you? You should keep this doubt in mind. There is also the hwadu, “The myriad things return to one; to what does the one return?” Bear this question in mind.

5. Cautions when meditating on the hwadu

The fundamental source of maladies is the faculty of cognition. The cognitive mind resembles a fly moving from place to place. It, however, is not able to sit on a flame. So too is it with the cognitive mind of sentient beings. The cognitive mind has two kinds of maladies. One is too much confidence in the cognitive ability. This type of practitioner thinks himself to be smart and tries to know the Buddhist truth by means of conceptual speculation. The other malady is generated by a biased view that the Buddhist truth cannot be grasped either through words or thoughts. Out of these two divisions derive four maladies.

First: The malady of the existence of mind. Some practitioners regard keeping the cognizing ability through the senses of sight, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking to be the method of meditation. Others consider what is bright and intelligent to be the path. This is no other than clinging to the bright numinosity of the six senses. In this case, metaphorically the practitioner is mistaking a host for a guest. And others suggest that practitioners should look back on emptiness and regard the realization of emptiness as being the path. All such advice involves different types of maladies.

Second: The malady of stupidity. Some Seon masters teach practitioners that, in order to become sages, they should accumulate merit through observing precepts, building monasteries, and performing Buddhist rituals. However, the nature of beings cannot arbitrarily be forced to change. Take a look at space. Is it made by human beings? No matter how long you may think about it over and over again, ideation has nothing to do with the path.

Third: Is the ignorant mind the path? Some masters consider no-mind to be the path. So they on purpose disguise their minds as being dead and void as a dead tree or cold ashes, which is a fatal malady of practice. Others regard no-thought as the path; others advise practitioners to rest their minds so that no thoughts arise. All these views seem to be a result of misunderstanding Bodhidharma's teaching to Huike, the second patriarch²⁰: "If you wish to know the path, outwardly you should get rid of all causes and conditions; inwardly you should make your mind like a wall without vacillation. Thereby, you will enter the path." At this guidance, Huike attained buddhahood. Bodhidharma only suggested as a skillful means that Huike eliminate the fluctuations of his mind. He never advised his followers to make their minds like dead trees or stones. Some Seon masters regard contemplation of purity to be the path. They are heretics guarding the eighth consciousness, which has nothing to do with the path to liberation. They teach Buddhist adherents as follows: "Just let your mind follow its own way, freely and arbitrarily" or "Leave your mind alone whether it arises or perishes. What does it matter?" This is called the heresy of spontaneity. This standpoint is also associated with the malady of the two extremes, those of ignorance and knowledge.

There are maladies not only of disciples but also of teachers. If you do not know the path, do not teach others. This transgression is not permissible in the world because it may mislead practitioners, which is not a small sin. Today, there are few real sages, even though many self-styled sages teach in this world. They only seek transient fame, but this results in fallacies that lasts for innumerable kalpas.

Finally, some practitioners, without faithful practice, want to know the path through signs, letters, and words, which is absurd. How is the supreme truth obtainable by conceptual thought or by mere dumb silence? My original nature cannot be known through either silence or words.

Q The Sixth Patriarch said, “This thing props up heaven and earth.” Does it mean that this thing fills up the space of the universe?

A No, this is not what the simile means. Let me give you an interpretation: since it props up heaven like a column, heaven is not able to cover everything without it; since it is erected on earth like a column, earth is not able to support everything without it. How can the thing solely prop up heaven and earth? It subsumes the whole world, space, and the dharmadhātu.

Q They say the hwadu ‘mu’ has ten maladies. Do other hwadus also have ten maladies?

A Every hwadu has them.

Q Would you please give us a detailed account of these maladies?

A These maladies, which are obstacles to the path, originate from awareness, the faculty of cognition. On the basis of that awareness, practitioners may hear, assume, and know. So they have four kinds of maladies: to seek for the true nature with mind, with no mind, with words, and with silence. From the four maladies there arise ten sorts of maladies: to confirm the thing by means of existence and nonexistence; by means of absolute nothingness; by means of reasoning; by means of speculation; by means of demonstrating it through one’s behavior; by means of words; by means of being stuck in involuntariness; by means of erroneous approval of the supreme truth upon hearing insightful wits of Seon masters; by means of validation through written doctrine; by means of simply waiting for enlightenment. These are the ten maladies. In terms of the scriptural teachings, maladies may be considered to be wonderful teachings. In the Seon tradition, however, they are serious diseases.

Q Please give me some detailed illustrations.

A Let me explain them to you one by one.

1) To mistake ‘mu’ for relative nonexistence

The maladies of a Seon practitioner lie in misunderstanding that he is enlightened. When one is not fully enlightened, he inevitably has fallacies. You had better contemplate on the hwadu without holding any views. Previously I, Yongseong, questioned a Seon practitioner who had insisted he had realized the meaning of the hwadu ‘mu’. This is our conversation:

Yongseong: What have you realized and how did you do it?

Practitioner: All sentient beings have the buddha-nature, which confirms the nature of enlightenment. I think that ‘mu’ denies the existence of the nature of enlightenment. On the other hand, the nature of enlightenment does not exist, because it is void and there is nothing whatever. What then do we call mind, enlightenment, or nature? That is the reason I say ‘mu’ describes nonexistence.

Yongseong: Your view may make sense in terms of the verbal instructions of the Buddha. However, it is a fatal fault with respect to the practice of hwadu. You should not mistake ‘mu’ for nonexistence.

2) To mistake ‘mu’ for absolute nothingness

Yongseong asked another Seon practitioner who insisted he had realized the meaning of the hwadu. He replied:

Practitioner: I realized that my true nature is sheer nothingness, which transcends both existence and nonexistence.

Yongseong: A sūtra says, “When both existence and nonexistence are eliminated, right enlightenment is revealed.” So your view may be permissible within the scriptural tradition. However, it is erroneous as far as hwadu practice is concerned.

3) To seek for the thing through reasoning

The practitioner asked again:

Practitioner: As you do not approve these two cases, I would like to suggest another approach to enlightenment.

Yongseong: How did you realize it?

P: What if I say I realized it as a mystery.

Y: What do you mean?

P: It is a mystery because it cannot be known through words or speculations. The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* says, “Hold on! I do not want to say a word. My teaching is so subtle and mysterious that it cannot be speculated upon.” So it is with Zhaozhou’s ‘mu.’

Y: It is not erroneous from the standpoint of the teaching of the scriptures. However, from the perspective of the contemplation of hwadu, this is a grave fallacy. You should not speculate on it through reasoning.

4) To seek for the thing through speculation

Since I, Yongseong, said that speculation is another malady, the practitioner was confused and began to think about the meaning. I at once told him off, saying, “You are a suspicious fox spirit! What are you thinking about?” So you should not try to find out the thing through speculation.

5) To demonstrate it through one’s behavior, such as raising the eyebrows or blinking one’s eyes

I, Yongseong, asked another Seon practitioner who claimed to have realized the meaning of the hwadu. He answered:

Practitioner: The meaning of the hwadu ‘mu’ is truly difficult to explain. So I cannot but demonstrate the function of the thing.

That is the reason why I embody the true nature by raising my eyebrows or blinking my eyes.

Yongseong: (Loudly rebuking him) Why do you blink your eyes in vain to imitate the sages of old instead of realizing your own true nature right away? You should know that this is not the right way to contemplate the hwadu 'mu'.

6) To practice the path through words

It should be unnecessary to comment on this topic.

7) To be stuck in involuntariness

Another practitioner definitely told that he had been enlightened. I asked how he had realized buddhahood. He answered as follows:

Practitioner: I came to realize that there is nothing to be done at all. If one eliminates all discriminative, confused states of mind, one will be settled in the peace of nonaction. This state, I am sure, may be called 'mu' (無).

Yongseong: You should destroy 'mu' through actual practice. If you do not realize your own nature, there should be nothing left to do. Give me another answer. What is the true meaning of the 'mu' presented by Zhaozhou?

Practitioner: As I see it, the hwadu indicates that there is nothing to be done.

Yongseong: How dare you claim to achieve the supreme truth while holding a trifling view like this? There are so many practitioners these days who have such an erroneous view as yours. They freely amuse themselves, eating meat in restaurants and drinking liquor in public houses. Is this proper for religious people who have allegedly realized the path? You should not be stuck in such lethargy.

8) Erroneous approval of the supreme truth upon hearing insightful wits of Seon masters

Since the practitioner was unresponsive to my answer, I, Yongseong, asked him again:

Yongseong: A monk asked Zhaozhou whether the dog has the buddha-nature, or not. Zhaozhou answered, 'mu'. Thereupon the monk paid homage to Zhaozhou. Why do you think the monk bowed down? Did he bow down without knowing Zhaozhou's intention, or did he approve of Zhaozhou's answer?

Practitioner: I guess he approved.

Yongseong: Was he aware of it, or not?

Practitioner: [Shouting]

Yongseong: I thought I was going to hook a dragon, however, to my disappointment, I just caught a tiny terrapin. Give me another answer!

Practitioner: [Keeping silence]

Yongseong: [Laughing] You dumb fool. Not knowing the profound meaning, you just keep silent. You are all mixed up.

Practitioner: [Just sitting absent-minded]

Yongseong: [Shouting] Do you want to know the supreme truth by means of trivial skills? When Seon masters cite the supreme dharma of the ancient saints, some practitioners, having got the point of the teaching, approve it right away. That's too bad! So you should not erroneously approve the supreme truth by following the traces of Seon masters.

9) Validation through the written doctrine

The practitioner, quoting various passages from scriptures, tried to validate his view. I, Yongseong, told him: "You had better express your view very carefully, even though it comes from your heart. It is, needless to say, what is written in the scriptures. So you should not

try to validate the truth through the written doctrine.”

10) Simply waiting for enlightenment

The practitioner asserted in his delusion that he would simply wait until enlightenment came. I told him: “To wait for enlightenment is really a deadly malady. It is an obstacle to the path to liberation to have impatient mind.”

All the above are details of the ten maladies that may occur in the course of practicing the ‘mu’ hwadu. Someone suggests that the meaning of ‘mu’ is unknown just as a child does not know its toy’s name, and another argues that ‘mu’ is simply ‘mu,’ just as mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers. All these are erroneous views.

Those who was ordained in this school of Seon Buddhism should only contemplate the hwadu, and never arouse their cognitive minds. None of the invincible heroes and great philosophers of this world realized the nature of their minds. Only the Buddha, the thirty-three holy, and the masters of the five lineages of Chan were thoroughly enlightened. How can you know the mind? Do tell me!

Q It is, in my view, permanent and never transformed.

A It is not. Heaven and earth are both created and destroyed. The four seasons alternate. All things in this world are both produced and annihilated. Past, present, and future continue on incessantly. All these phenomena are nothing but illusions. You should not insist they are permanent. Your body, just like the morning dew, is not permanent. What about your mind? Your impermanent feelings, such as joy and anger, sorrow and pleasure, are ever-changing. How can they be permanent? Is your nature then permanent? If it is permanent, nothing would be produced at any time or place.

Let me ask you once more. What is your nature? If it is void, it would be void eternally. If it is pure, it would be always pure and

never impure. If it is good, it would be always good and never evil. If it is evil, it would be always evil and never good. If the nature is static and unchanging, a sage would be a sage at all times, and an ordinary person would be an ordinary person forever. If that were so, no one would ever be able to arouse the aspiration for buddhahood.

There is an old saying, “As the true nature is extremely subtle and profound, it, by not keeping its own being, produces everything according to causes and conditions.” The thing is said to be spiritual, serene, and mysterious. How can it be defined as nothing? It is not a principle, because all principles are established by mind. It is not energy, because all energies, such as perception, air, electricity, water, and fire, are void by nature. It is not cause and conditions because it is not compounded. It is not spontaneity either, because there is no absolute pure existence.

Q When all forms of energy are gathered together, a person comes into being, and when they are dispersed, he or she passes away. Is it worth seeking out?

A Where does energy come from? Does energy have self-awareness, or not? If it has self-awareness, all forms of energy, space, electricity, water, fire, and even trees and stones should also have self-awareness. Is that true? You have to contend either that all these things have self-awareness or that a person comes into being without self-awareness.

If, as you have said, a person is born and passes away through the coalescence and dispersion of energy, then is self-awareness contained within energy, or is energy contained within self-awareness? Is energy revealed by means of self-awareness, or is self-awareness revealed by means of energy? Where does energy come from? Where does self-awareness come from? What is the basis of self-awareness? What are the forms and properties of self-awareness? Just investigate the hwadu “What is this thing?” Please do not doze off when you practice meditation.

6. How to contemplate the hwadu

Q You suggest to have doubt regarding a hwadu. How do I raise doubt?

A Let me introduce some metaphors. Someone has lost his precious jewel, which he was carrying with loving care. As he does not know where his jewel is, he will be anxious to look for it everywhere. With such a passion should you contemplate the hwadu. Another metaphor: A man picks up a strange thing in a road. Since it was before sunrise, he was unable to identify what it was, so he had very strong curiosity. You should embrace doubt on the hwadu in this manner.

When you contemplate the hwadu, it is as if sometimes you pull a donkey into a well; sometimes, defiled passion springs up like boiling water; sometimes, your mind does not arise like frozen ice; sometimes, contemplation proceeds smoothly like sailing with the wind. But you should not worry about whether your practice progresses or retrogresses. Without looking around, just concentrate on the doubt regarding your hwadu.

Do not indulge in a serene state of mind by sitting quietly. Do not exercise, speak, or move during practice. Do not make your mind stiff like a wall, or make it void like space, because these are heretical ways of practice. Heretics who are engrossed in vain emptiness, even though they are alive, are no more than dead men.

Just doubt on the thing you do not know. If you go on concentrating on your doubt, before long all objects you see or hear will be totally tranquilized. And eventually you will forget the discrimination between yourself and phenomena so that mountains and rivers disappear and even space will evaporate. At this stage, the ignorance of pitch darkness

will be broken down.

Q I have lots of deluded thoughts. How can I do away with them?

A Do not try to eliminate deluded thoughts, whether they arise or not in your mind. Leave them alone. If you try to get rid of them, they will become even more intense. Just take hold of your hwadu, regardless of whether deluded thoughts appear or disappear. Then they will calm down spontaneously just like holding a runaway cow. At that time, you should not attempt to get rid of deluded thoughts by depending on the hwadu. Even though you try to concentrate on the doubt regarding the hwadu, deluded thoughts would not be brought into submission. So put down your hwadu in this case and put your mind to rest so that you restore your calm mind before you take hold of the hwadu again.

When contemplating the hwadu, you should entirely relax and pacify your body and mind. If you have too much enthusiasm, your physical energy will be activated and you will feel pressure in your chest, and sometimes you will even have a headache or a nose bleed. These symptoms are caused by a hasty and impatient mind. On the other hand, when you take hold of a hwadu too loosely, you are liable to forget it. Therefore you should not hold the hwadu either too tightly or too loosely. Just like playing a lute, when its strings are properly adjusted, it makes a harmonious sound.

All the studies and practices in this world are carried out through the function of knowing. The practice of hwadu, however, focuses on doubt in order to know the ‘one thing.’²¹ It may be impossible to know the thing through speculation even for tens of thousands of years. If you decide to contemplate the hwadu, do not try to find pleasure in the practice. Here is another metaphor suggesting the way of practice of hwadu: imagine a mosquito alighting on an iron cow. It tries to pierce repeatedly the skin of the cow. Once it begins to penetrate the iron skin, finally its entire body will get all the way into the cow. To sum up, do not try to know and search for the answer, but concentrate instead on doubt when you contemplate the hwadu.

7. Demons appearing in the course of practice

Practitioners first of all should know the demons who delight in this ordinary world. They sever people's wisdom, destroy the good dharma, and attach themselves to the five desires. Demons have three evils: when others harm them, they never fail to take revenge; even though others do not harm them, they afflict innocent people; even though others grant them favors, they repay good with evil. In the three realms of existence, the demon kings are the most heinous of beings.

Q Whom do you call the demon king?

A This world involves six rebirth destinies, in which the dichotomies of good and evil as well as right and wrong exist. Since long ago, the kinds of demons have been too many to enumerate. Now I will introduce some of them as delineated in the sūtras: presiding over the six heavens of the kāmadhātu,²² prior to the rūpadhātu,²³ is the palace of the demon king, which is as wide as six thousand yojanas.²⁴ The felicities they used to enjoy are equal to those in the heavens of the kāmadhātu.

Q How many kinds of the worlds of demons are there?

A The many demons stem from two basic types. One is the demon that originates from the mind; the other are those that appear externally. The demons of the mind are as follows:

- 1) the demons of the five aggregates of being, 2) the demons of

defilements, 3) the demons of confusion, 4) the demons of obscenity, 5) the demons of greed, 6) the demons of anger, 7) the demons of pleasure, 8) the demons of sorrow, 9) the demons of conceit, 10) the demons of knowing, 11) the demons of arrogance, 12) the demons of “shade,” the aggregates of being, 13) the demons of heaven that are created by mind, 14) the demons of controversy that are created or not created by mind, 15) the demons of refuting the principle of cause and effect, 16) the demons of wrong views.

As every ordinary person has eighty-four thousands of defilements, each person has his or her own eighty-four thousand demonic states of mind.

External demons penetrate into the human mind when there is a crack in one’s awareness, just as wind comes in through a crack in the wall. I hope all practitioners will be afraid of or pleased with nothing, just like a wooden puppet who sees flowers and birds. They all should be careful of demons.

8. Demons undermine morality

Q Why do you think demons ruin morality?

A The *Lengyan jing* says, “When you enter into samādhi, if the minds of all the bodhisattvas and undefiled great arhats in the ten directions are pacified and purified, all demons and heavenly beings of the kāmadhātu visualize with their heavenly eyes that their palaces collapse, their lands fall apart, and their waters rise up without any reason. Seized with panic, they cannot help running away in a huddle. Though human beings do not know the misery, the heavenly beings, because they have the five supernatural powers,²⁵ catch sight of the scene and, being frightened, struggle to make practitioners give up their practice.”²⁶ It also says, “If any one of you returns to the nature of original enlightenment, space in all the ten directions will disappear. How is that the worlds within it would not be destroyed?”

9. Demons dare not harm the path

Great Enlightenment says again, “Even enraged demons are also obsessed by defilements and delusion, whereas you are blessed with marvelous enlightenment. They would not be able to destroy the path no matter how eagerly they might try, just as the wind cannot blow away the sunlight or a sword cannot cut off flowing water. Nevertheless, if your mind is agitated, you will be hindered by demons. Otherwise the heavenly beings of the kāmadhātu, demon kings, and other spirits cannot stand against you, just as ice is melted down by boiling water.”²⁷ Those who cultivate the path should single-mindedly raise a doubt regarding the gongans inherited from the ancient masters, and get rid of all cognizing habits. Once you have fallen into the baleful destinies, you would never be able to get out, just like oil dropped in flour cannot be removed.

10. Ringleaders of the heretics

These days, there are many heretics among Buddhist monks and so-called spiritual mentors.

Q How would spiritual mentors happen to be heretics?

A Practitioners today, though having not awakened to the gongans presented by the ancient patriarchs and teachers, insist they have so awakened and take pleasure in teaching others. It is deplorable for them to blind their hapless followers.

Q How many kinds of heretics are there?

A There are twenty kinds of powerful heretics. Let me introduce them briefly: if practitioners happen to have erroneous views, they are bound to be heretics. As the heretics propagate themselves by saying that they have realized supreme truth, some of them have many disciples. It is tragic, just as worms born in grain harm the grain. Let me give you some other similes: there is a mountain composed of the five aggregates, outside of which there is another mountain named Great Enlightenment. This mountain, which has sheer iron cliffs, is so steep and rugged that no one could get a secure footing on it. Only a narrow path leads to the mountain through the mountain of the five aggregates.

The distance from the flatlands to the summit of the mountain measures five hundred *li*. There is a road at the front and center of the mountain. Only if one follows that road will he definitely arrive at the mountain named Great Enlightenment. From both sides of

the main road, fifty byways branch off. On the rough byways, there are many caves hiding beasts and serpents who prey on passersby. I do not elaborate on this simile since its analogies are clear.

11. Ten types of phenomena appear after the aggregate of form (*rūpaskandha*) melts away

In cold weather, water freezes into ice. It is the same with the mind: when human being's minds are agitated, it creates predispositions (*vāsanā*) that are called the five "shades."²⁸ (The aggregate of form is one among these five "shades.") Why are they called, literally, "shades"? They are so called because, just as clouds shade the sun, the five shades veil the pure mind. If you cultivate your mind enthusiastically, the shade of form, which has congealed into predispositions, would melt away. At this time, ten kinds of mysterious phenomena may be made manifest:

- 1) He goes and comes freely without obstruction, regardless of the presence of mountains, rivers, and cliffs.
- 2) Since his body becomes transparent as glass, he can pull worms out of his body without inflicting a wound or leaving any trace.
- 3) He hears Buddhist sermons coming from the sky. All the sense organs of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind lose their objects when the shade of form melts away.
- 4) The realm of enlightenment appears, where the whole world is brightly illuminated.
- 5) Space is transformed into the color of jewels, because his ordinary mind is suppressed.
- 6) His dark house becomes bright as daylight. As his mind gets gradually cleaner, he can penetrate the darkness.
- 7) He does not feel pain when burnt by fire or stabbed by a knife, because his body is emptied of the four great elements of earth, water, fire and wind. The five sense objects of form, sound, smell, taste, and touch are also melted away.

- 8) His faculty of awareness visualizes the whole world as the buddha land since he, disgusted by the five evil realms of impurity,²⁹ takes pleasure in the world of enlightenment.
- 9) He sees everything, including mountains, rivers, and cliffs, in the middle of the night and regardless of their distance from him, because his mind becomes transparent.
- 10) He is possessed by external demons. Drawing on the supernatural power of those demons, he appears to be either a spiritual mentor, or a buddha, bodhisattva, spirit, a beauty, a tiger, or a lion.

In this manner, the various types of phenomena that might appear are immeasurable. These phenomena may hinder his practice or make him insane. If practitioners encounter mysterious symptoms, they should not be afraid of or delighted by them. If they concentrate on practice without caring for external phenomena, such demons will retreat of themselves. And they can then make progress in their practice. Otherwise, if they do not understand these mysterious phenomena, they may ruin their lives. Above all, practitioners should not be disturbed by external phenomena.

12. Ten kinds of demons appear when the aggregate of sensation (*vedanāskandha*) melts away

When the “shade,” or aggregate, of sensation, melts away following the shade of form, ten kinds of demonic spheres appear, to which all practitioners should pay attention. Because receiving is the attribute of sensation, when it is melts away, inside and outside altogether become empty and interfused. If the shade of sensation, however, does not melt away, the practitioner, just like a paralyzed man, will not be able to move his body, even though he can see and hear. When the shade of sensation melts away, the practitioner is able to come in and out freely without being obstructed by external objects. Moreover, his mind also comes in and out of the body and enters into and out of his house, just as he likes. When the shade of sensation melts away, ten kinds of mysterious phenomena also may appear:

- 1) When the shade of sensation melts away, the mind leaves his body to travel freely among innumerable worlds in an instant. At this time he may misperceive that he has achieved the final goal of truth and begin to feel sorry for other sentient beings. Even at the sight of a mosquito, he sheds tears as if were thinking of his only son. He is obsessed by the demon of sorrow.
- 2) His mind becomes much too brave and aggressive so that he holds sages in contempt. At this time, he is obsessed by the demon of lunacy.
- 3) When the shade of sensation has not completely melted away, although the practitioner may have some power of concentration, he has little wisdom. Because he is anxious to find dependence in vain, he feels thirsty.

- 4) He is satisfied with what he has achieved and thinks he requires no further practice. He is obsessed by the demon of self-sufficiency.
- 5) He is so oppressed by worry that he does not want to live. He is obsessed by the demon of worry.
- 6) He always feels uncontrollable pleasure. He is obsessed by the demon of pleasure.
- 7) He is full of self-conceit and audaciously says, “Look at Buddha statues. They are nothing but idols made of gold, copper, clay or wood. Look at Buddhist scriptures. They are made of paper and ink. People do not respect what is most authentic, which is a human being’s body; instead, they worship gold and wood. Isn’t it ridiculous? To pay obeisance to a Buddha statue is no more than a skillful means.” He is obsessed by the demon of heresy.
- 8) The practitioner feels boundlessly comforted, so that he sings and dances. He is obsessed by the demon of lightness.
- 9) Considering himself to possess the void and pure nature, he insists that there is no principle of cause and effect. He is obsessed by the demon of voidness.
- 10) As his practice deepens, he feels intense affection, which is followed by grave avarice. He is obsessed by the demon of covetousness.

You should not be deceived by such demons.

As I mentioned before, there are many demons among spiritual mentors today. They deceive lay Buddhists and spoil the authentic Buddhist teaching. As the Seon master Dahui said, there are so many erroneous teachings that one cannot tell a precious jewel from a fish eye.³⁰ Fake teachers instruct you to watch over what you see and hear. They mislead you to recognize sensations produced by the six sense organs. They may also teach you to fully repose and relax, which, they emphasize, is true practice. This, however, is no different from maintaining deathlike serenity. Again, they may teach you to control

your sixth and seventh consciousnesses (*vijñāna*) in order to illuminate the eighth *vijñāna*. These mistake the pure side of the eighth *vijñāna* for the path. The so-called Seon masters teaching these doctrines are no more than a demonic clan.

13. Ten kinds of demons appear when the aggregate of conception (*saṃjñaskandha*) melts away

After the shade of sensation has melted away, there still remains the shade of conception. When the shade of conception melts away, ten kinds of demonic phenomena are revealed. The shade of conception refers to vacillating delusion, which manifests as thoughts in the daytime and dreams at night. Therefore, when the shade of conception has melted away, dreams disappear and the mind of the practitioner would at all times be as pure as clear space. At that time, the malaises of the demons become more impetuous. Practitioners need to pay attention to them:

When a practitioner's shade of sensation has completely melted away, he earnestly clings to whatever is pure. At that time, a heavenly demon, by taking advantage of his obsession, settles in his heart and liver, performing tens of thousands of mysterious transformations. The demon make the practitioner speak fluently, take the body of the Jade Emperor, or that of a woman, and so forth. He emits light, and, seeing this brilliance, people believe him to be a great sage, violate their religious precepts, and secretly have sexual intercourse with this demon.

Furthermore, depending on the demon, he performs various tricks: he produces the suffering of diseases, the disasters facing the different kalpas, and sometimes creates auspicious affairs. Pseudo-religious leaders con the people so they can appropriate their property. It is very pitiful for them to drive people into false religion. You should not follow those evil discourses.

As I mentioned above, the most fatal malady in Buddhist contemplative practice lies in awareness. When the shade of conception melts away,

ten kinds of mysterious phenomena may also appear. However, as they are similar to the cases of the shade of sensation, it would be too tedious to list them again, so I skip them here.

In any circumstance, if you are not confused by external phenomena, demons will not dare to approach and harm you. Whenever you expose your weakness and show any desire to know about or seek anything, your practice would be inevitably accompanied by demonic obsessions. What is worse, when practitioners are not deceived by demons, they might try to tempt their friends or relatives into hardship.

Owing to the tricks or enticements of demons, a practitioner may gain various abilities: to know things and events belonging to the past and the future; to go and come back from a distance of thousands of *li* in an instant; to visualize beings in their heavens, and in the realms of human beings, the hells, hungry ghosts, and beasts. Deluded practitioners mistakenly presume that these supernatural powers are a product of their own moral power and thus tend to pursue those phenomena, ending up falling into the family of the demons. Some practitioners obsessed with such demons would deny the Buddhist precepts, saying that sexual desire, the five prohibited pungent roots,³¹ drinking intoxicants, and eating meat are all allowed. It is really deplorable! Even bright-eyed persons can hardly discern the difference between sages and demons, let alone ordinary people. You should not be deceived by their teaching.

14. Varieties of heretics

Among Buddhist practitioners, those who renounce their practice halfway are apt to become weighty heretics. The path leading to the truth of Great Enlightenment is realized through the practice of the mind. How then do they lose their way and fall into the path of the heretics? Listen to me attentively.

When a practitioner trains himself in the Buddhist path to achieve a state that is as tranquil as a large mountain, his shade of form begins to melt away; he then is able to pass freely through mountains, rivers, and cliffs. At this time, the practitioner, thinking he realized the supreme truth, commits various evil acts. Specifically, when his shade of sensation melts away, his mind leaves the body to wander about everywhere and returns to his body, just like a man leaves and comes back to his house. At this time, he also mistakenly presumed that he has achieved complete liberation. The heavenly demons and others seize this opportunity to seduce him as they like. Not knowing the maneuvers of these demons, the practitioner cannot but fall into the hands of the demons.

Or otherwise, when the shade of his volition (*samskāraskandha*) melts away, he may attain the state of the serene, pure mind, which is as clear as the sky. He then does not have dreams, because thoughts in daytime turn to dreams at night. At this stage, even though all the heavenly demons and others are not able to ruin the path, the practitioner still settles himself in the realm of demons.

Since the shade of volition is the foundation of all phenomena that are subject to production and cessation, the practitioner visualizes the source of all twelve types of life,³² including viviparous, oviparous, moisture-born, and metamorphic beings. Owing to this

ability of vision, he falls into heretical realms because he does not know that the shade of volition is also impermanent and that the shade of form is the origin of life.

15. Heretics whose shades of volition and form have yet to melt away

- 1) When practitioners' shades of form, sensation, conception, and volition are void, they come to know the circumstances of the rebirths of all sentient beings. However, they only know the world eighty thousand kalpas in the past, and do not know the world eighty thousand kalpas in the future. They become deniers of causality, because they claim there is no origination cause for the universe eighty thousand kalpas in the past.
- 2) The heretic proposes that beings are never transformed. According to him, human beings are human beings, and beasts are beasts, by nature. Crows are black and herons are white. Humans and heavenly beings walk, and beasts crawl. Since he argues that all things are without cause, he is called a heretic who denies causality by nature.
- 3) When the shade of conception melts away, since mind and its objects both vanish, the practitioner knows everything in the world over tens of thousands of kalpas. Having wiped away the impermanence inherent in production and cessation, he advocates the view of permanence. For the reason, he is called a heretic who, having removed impermanence, advocates permanence.
- 4) Another heretic regards transitoriness as permanent. Even though beings are born and perish depending on the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and wind, he argues that the four elements are never annihilated. He is called a heretic who, knowing all things and events over tens of thousands of kalpas, advocates the view of permanence.
- 5) Another heretic attaches himself to the eighth consciousness that

is as pure as space. This is not the path, but the root of ignorance. Nonetheless he is able to know the things and affairs of the world over eighty thousand kalpas.

- 6) Another heretic holds to wrong views of permanence. He misunderstands the transitoriness of birth and death as belonging to the shade of conception. After the shade of conception has melted away, he thinks that the nature of permanence belongs to the shade of volition, which is ridiculous since the shade of volition is none other than the origin of impermanence. He is also called a heretic who holds the view of permanence.

16. Heretics of permanence and impermanence

Some advocate permanence and others impermanence. In fact, the pure nature of beings, which pervades the whole world, never ceases to exist. All sentient beings appear and disappear within that pure nature of beings. Therefore, those who argue that I alone am permanent while others are impermanent are heretics who cling to the eighth *vijñāna*. Heretics throughout all ages have never deviated from holdings views that involve either permanence or impermanence.



CHAPTER IV

SELECTED TRANSLATIONS FROM

THE *PLATFORM SŪTRA OF THE SIXTH PATRIARCH*

1. The *Platform Sūtra* is the Foundation of Our Religion

Having been awakened to Buddhism at an early age, I used to travel on pilgrimage all over the country with a single robe and begging bowl, just like a crane flying in the sky. In the meantime, I happened to get the *Platform Sūtra* at Goryeongsa in Yangju-gun, Gyeonggi-do, on the 8th of April, Buddhist Era 2910 (1883). Thereafter I have sought after Buddhist truth by relying on this sūtra as my teacher. Now, taking this sūtra as the spiritual heart of the religion of Great Enlightenment, I translate it here for the benefit of all sentient beings.

2. Transmission of the Dharma to the Sixth Patriarch

When the Holy Master (the Sixth Patriarch) stayed at Baolin monastery in Weiike, the governor of Shaozhou and around one-thousand sixty laymen paid homage to him and asked him to preach on the profound truth of Buddhism. Thereupon the Holy Master delivered the following discourse:

“All of you should purify your mind and generate great wisdom. The inherent nature is pure by itself, and by making use of this mind we can achieve buddhahood directly.”

“[After a pause] Now let me tell you about my own life. My father had been dismissed from his official post and exiled to Xinzhou in Lingnan. Unfortunately, he died when I was very young, leaving little property to my mother and me. Later we moved to Nanhai, where we suffered grave poverty.”

“One day, I was selling firewood in the market. In the evening, having received the payment for firewood, I was going to return to my home, when I found a man reciting a sūtra. When he reached the passage, ‘One should arouse a mind that does not abide anywhere,’ my mind became enlightened. I asked him: ‘What is the title of the scripture you were reading?’ He replied:

“This is the *Diamond (Vajracchedikā) Sūtra*. I came from Dongshan monastery in the Huangmei district of Chizhou. Chan master Hongren 弘忍,¹ the fifth patriarch, is in charge of the monastery. He used to encourage his disciples and the laity to recite this sūtra in order to realize their own inherent nature and thereby reach buddhahood. That’s why I keep reciting this sūtra all the time.””

“It must be due to my good karma in past lives that I met someone who gave me ten taels, which enabled me to have my

mother taken care of by a maid. Eventually I left for Huangmei. It took me less than thirty days to reach Dongshan monastery. Upon arriving, I went to pay homage to the Holy Master, who asked me: 'Where have you come from, and what do you seek?' 'I am a layman from Xinzhou. I am here to get nothing but buddhahood,' I replied."

"To test my capacity, the Holy Master deliberately asked me, 'You are a native of Lingnan, just a barbarian from the south. How dare you expect to get enlightenment?' I immediately responded: 'Although there are northerners and southerners, how do north and south have any differences in their nature of numinous enlightenment (靈覺性)?² Even though a barbarian may be physically different from Your Holiness, there is no difference in our natures of numinous enlightenment.'"

"To avoid his disciples' jealousy, he intentionally told me, 'That's enough. Just go to the backyard to work.'"

"I retorted nonchalantly, 'If I, your disciple, is not alienated from the inherent nature, I may be called a field of merit.³ Whatever work would Your Holiness order me to do?' 'This barbarian is too smart,' he remarked. 'Just go work in the mill.'"

"I then withdrew to the backyard and was told to split firewood and pound rice."

"Around eight months after, one day the Holy Master came to me and said, 'I have to refrain from speaking to you, lest evildoers should do you harm. Do you know that?' 'Yes, sir, I do,' I replied. 'Because I understood your intent, I dared not go near your room.'"

"The Holy Master one day assembled all his disciples and said: 'You are only looking after the field of merit instead of trying to get out of this bitter sea of birth and death. If your inherent nature is veiled, no matter how much merit you may gain, you would never liberate yourself. Go and write me a stanza. If anyone of you proves your realization of the path, he will be given the title of the sixth patriarch. Do not rely on speculations. To use a metaphor, the man who has realized the inherent nature is just like an intrepid commander with a sword in his hand on the battlefield.'"

“Having heard this instruction, the disciples withdrew and talked among themselves: ‘There is no need for us to write the stanza since the patriarchy is bound to be won by Shenxiu 神秀,⁴ our instructor, who will teach us in the future.’ In the end, all the disciples gave up writing the stanza.”

“Knowing their thoughts, Shenxiu said to himself, ‘As no one else is willing to write a stanza, I have no choice but to write something. If I do not submit a stanza to the Holy Master, how can he determine the depth of my wisdom? If my goal is getting dharma, my motive is a good one. If I were after the patriarchy, it would be evil. This is a really embarrassing situation to decide!’”

“Having composed a stanza, Shenxiu tried to submit it to the patriarch several times, but whenever he went near his residence, he was so confused that he sweated profusely. For three days he attempted in vain to submit it to the Holy Master. Embarrassed, he thought himself: ‘There are three corridors in front of the patriarch’s hall. It would be better for me to write my stanza on the wall of the corridor and let the Holy Master see it for himself.’ During the third watch in the night, he went secretly to write the stanza on the wall of the south corridor, and returning to his place to think himself: ‘If the Holy Master approves my stanza, I shall tell him that I wrote it; but if he disapproves of it, I shall have wasted several years on this mountain, receiving undeserved homage from others.’”

The stanza read:

Body is the tree of bodhi,
And mind a bright mirror stand,
Earnestly wipe it at all times,
So it will not gather any dust.

“In the morning, the Holy Master sent for Lu, the court artist, and went with to the south corridor to have the painting of the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* posted on the wall. Seeing the verse, he said to the artist: ‘You don’t have to post the picture on it.’ Then he assembled

his disciples and said: 'If you recite this stanza, you will be saved from the misery of the baleful realms of existence.'"

"At midnight, the Holy Master sent for Shenxiu to come to his hall, and asked him: 'Did you write this stanza?' 'Yes, I did,' replied Shenxiu. 'But I dare not expect to receive the patriarchate.' 'Your stanza shows that you had not yet entered the gate of enlightenment. Your understanding is hardly sufficient to gain supreme enlightenment. To attain supreme enlightenment, one should know one's own inherent nature, which is neither created nor annihilated. One should be able to realize the inherent nature in every moment of thought and at all times. Once *tathatā*⁵ is known, one will be free from delusion forever, and in all circumstance one's mind will experience absolute truth. If you can see things in such a state of mind, you will have achieved supreme enlightenment. You had better go back to think it over again for a couple of days, and submit another stanza to me.' Shenxiu, however, was so distracted that he was not able to write a stanza."

"In the meanwhile, a boy who was reciting Shenxiu's stanza passed by the mill where I was pounding rice. As soon as I heard the verse, I knew that the author of the stanza had not yet realized the path. 'What are you reciting?,' I asked the boy. 'How can a barbarian like you understand it! The Holy Master told his disciple that incessant birth and death is of great concern for people of this world, that those who wished to inherit his robe and bowl should write him a stanza, and that the one who realized the path would be made the sixth patriarch. Venerable Shenxiu, our teacher, wrote this stanza of impermanence (無常偈).' I told the boy. 'I also wish to recite the stanza so that I might create an affinity with its teaching in future lives. Please take me to this stanza.' The boy took me there. I asked him, 'As I am illiterate, would you read it for me?'"

"Just at the time, a district officer named Zhang Riyong, happened to be there, so he read it to me. Having heard it, I said to him, 'I also would like to compose a stanza. Please write it down for me.' The officer replied. 'How strange it is for a barbarian to compose

a stanza?' 'If you want to learn supreme enlightenment,' I replied, 'do not ignore beginners. You should know that the lowest class may have the highest wisdom, while the highest may be worse than the lowest. If you slight others, it will be an enormous transgression.'"

"The officer apologized and said, 'Just recite your stanza. I will write it down for you. If you attain the dharma, please save me first.'

My stanza read:

There is neither a tree of wisdom,
Nor a bright mirror stand,
As there is not a single thing,
Where can dust alight?

"All the disciples and others, looking at the stanza, were greatly surprised, and said to one another, 'We should not judge people by their appearance. How have we made a saint work for us?' Seeing this, the Holy Master was afraid of that jealous supporters of Shenxiu might commit evil deeds, so he rubbed the stanza off the wall with his shoe and said, 'Whoever has composed this stanza has not yet realized the inherent nature.' Those present there swept away all suspicions."

"The next day, the Holy Master secretly came to the back of the monastery to see me. Seeing that I was pounding the rice with a stone pestle, he said to me, 'The seeker of the path risks his life for the dharma.' Then he asked, 'Is the rice ripe?' 'The rice has been ripe long ago.' I replied. 'I'm only waiting for it to sieve.' The Holy Master knocked the head of the rice mill thrice with his stick and left."

"Knowing what he meant, I went to his room through a back door during the third watch of the night. The Holy Master veiled the windows with his robe, and explained the *Diamond Sūtra* for me. When he reached the sentence, 'One should arouse a mind that does not abide anywhere,' I experienced a great enlightenment and exclaimed as follows: 'Who would have ever known that the inherent

nature is intrinsically pure! Who would have ever known that the inherent nature is fundamentally neither generated nor extinguished! Who would have ever known that the inherent nature is naturally self-sufficient! Who would have ever known that the inherent nature is fundamentally without movement! Who would have ever known that all things are the manifestation of the inherent nature! ”

“Knowing that I had realized the inherent nature, the Holy Master transmitted the dharma to me in secret. He said to me, ‘Now you have become the sixth patriarch. You should take care of yourself and save as many sentient beings as possible. Preserve and disseminate the dharma, and never allow it to come to an end.’ Then he recited a stanza for me:

When sentient beings sow the seeds of emancipation
 On the causal ground, they will reap the fruit,
 Insentient beings, however, devoid of buddha-nature,
 Will not sow or reap anything whatsoever.”

[Yongseong's comment: This is described in terms of phenomena (事).]

“And again:

As there is no sentience or seeds
 Both buddha-nature and generation are denied.”

[Yongseong's comment: This is described in terms of principle (理).]

“He went on, ‘When Great Master Bodhidharma came to this land long ago, people had not much confidence in him, so he transmitted this robe as testimony of the dharma. However the dharma is transmitted from mind to mind. Do not transmit the robe and the bowl any longer. Though the robe and bowl may be nothing more a symbol, they may cause fatal disputes or even endanger your life. You should go quickly. I am afraid evil men may harm you.’ ”

“‘Where should I go?’ I asked. The Holy Master replied, ‘When you encounter the land of Huai 懷, you may stay there. When you

arrive in Hui 會, seclude yourself.”

“He then accompanied me to Jiujiang depot, where we found a small boat. He ordered me into the boat and took the oar to row. I said, ‘Your Holiness, while I was deluded, it was right for you to help me across the river. However, now that I am enlightened, I can cross the river by myself. Though the description “to cross” may be the same, the application is different according to the conditions.’ The Holy Master agreed, ‘In the future, this dharma of mine will flourish through you. Three years after your departure, I shall leave this world. You may go to the south. But do not be in a hurry to preach. The truth of Buddhism will be spontaneously propagated in the world, just as flowers bloom and leaves sprout when causes and conditions mature in spring.’”

“After saying farewell to me, the Holy Master did not go into the dharma hall for several days. The disciples proceeded to him to ask, ‘Is Your Holiness ill or discomfited?’ The Holy Master just told them, ‘The robe and the bowl have gone to the south.’ ‘To whom did you transmit them?’ the assembly asked, and the Holy Master replied, ‘To Huineng.’”

“After saying goodbye, I left for the south. In about two months, I arrived at Dayou. There were hundreds of disciples of the fifth patriarch in pursuit of me to rob me of my robe and bowl. Among them was a monk named Chen Huiming 惠明, who had a rough manner and was hot tempered. He was the most vigilant in searching for me. When he was about to overtake me, I threw the robe and bowl on a rock and told him, ‘These are just symbols of the dharma, so it is meaningless to take them away by force. Take them as you please, if you want to.’ Then I hide myself in the bushes.”

“Huineng tried to pick them up, but, much to his surprise he couldn’t. At last he changed his mind and shouted out, ‘I came for the dharma, not for the robe and bowl. Please teach me a way out of my miserable life!’ I then came out and sat down on the rock. Huiming bowed and said to me, ‘Please preach for me, lay brother.’ I said, ‘If you came for dharma, just lay down all cause and conditions

and do not arouse a single thought. I will then preach to you.' After a considerable pause, I continued, 'Do not think of good, and do not think of evil. At such a moment, what is venerable Huiming's real nature?' Through this question, Huiming experienced a great awakening."

"He asked me again, 'Other than esoteric sayings and esoteric meanings, as you have now expressed, are there any other secret meanings?' I said, 'What I have preached to you is not esoteric. If you illuminate inwardly, you will find the esoteric is on your side.' Hui-ming said, 'Although I have stayed at Dongshan monastery in the Huangmei district for a long time, I could not realize my true nature. Today, thanks to your instruction, I realized it as clearly as a man who drinks water knows whether it is cold or warm. Indeed you are my teacher.' I said, 'We share the same teacher, Hongren. Do not say that again.'"

"Huiming then asked again where he should go. I answered, 'You should stop at the land of Yuan 袁, and stay at Meng 蒙.' Huiming returned via the route he came and met the group that had come after me. Waving his hands, he said to them, 'I could not find any traces of him in these deep and steep mountains. You had better try searching by another route.' They all did as they were told."

"Thereafter I reached Caoqi 曹溪, where I was again chased by evil people. I had to take refuge in the Sihui district, where I stayed with a party of hunters for as long as fifteen years. During this time I occasionally preached the dharma to the hunters. They used to have me check their nets, but I always set free any living creatures I found therein. At mealtimes, I put vegetables in the pan in which they cooked their meat. Some of them asked me why I did so, and I answered, 'I will eat vegetables only after they are cooked with the meat.'"

"One day, I realized that the time had come to preach the dharma for the salvation of sentient beings. Finally I left the mountain and went to Faxing monastery (法性寺) in the Canton district where Dharma Master Renzong 仁宗 was lecturing on the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* to

around one thousand disciples. At that time, the wind was blowing and a banner was waving. Observing the scene, one monk said that the wind was moving, while another monk said the banner was moving. They argued on and on, so I came forward and said, ‘What is moving is neither the wind nor the banner. It is your minds that are moving.’”

[Yongseong's comment]

Q What is the profound meaning of this episode?

A The monk who said that the wind is moving is attached to the nature, in that the nature of wind moves without the banner. The monk who said the banner was moving adhered to the banner's form, in that without the banner there would be no indication of the wind. The Holy Master's comment that 'neither the wind nor the banner was moving' points out the moving of the great light of mind-only. When one monk thought the wind was moving, what was really moving was his mind. When the other monk thought the banner was moving, what was really moving was his mind.

“Thereupon Renzong invited me to take a seat of honor and asked me about the meaning of cryptic points in the scriptures. Knowing that my answers were precise and accurate even though they did not depend on written letters, Renzong said, ‘Lay brother, you must be an extraordinary man. I heard that the inheritor of the robe and bowl of Master Hongren at Huangmei came to the South. Indeed you are the person.’ He then made obeisance and politely asked, ‘Please show us the robe and bowl.’ I brought them forth to show the assembly, which in surprise made obeisance to me.

“Renzongng asked me further, ‘Did you hear any other instructions from Master Hongren?’ I answered, ‘He only discussed realizing inherent nature, and did not refer to dhyāna and emancipation.’ ‘Why did he not discuss dhyāna and emancipation?’ To Renzong's question I replied, ‘Dhyāna and emancipation make two ways. However there

cannot be two ways in the dharma, which is nondualistic.””

““What is the nondualistic dharma?’ he asked again. I said, ‘I know you are lecturing on the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. In the case of the sūtra, clearly seeing true nature designates the nondualistic dharma.””

“Renzong asked, ‘Do those who break the four major prohibitions (四重罪)⁶ and commit the five perverse transgressions (五逆),⁷ as well as the *icchantikas* (incorrigibles), eradicate their good potential and their buddha-nature?’ I answered, ‘Great Enlightenment said that there are two types of good potentials. One is permanent and the other is impermanent. The buddha-nature is neither permanent nor impermanent. Since the buddha-nature is nondual, the good potential is not eradicated. There are also good and non-good. Since buddha-nature is in neither good nor non-good, it is nondual. The five skandhas and the eighteen sensory elements (*dhātu*)⁸ are seen as dualistic by ordinary people, but the wise comprehend their nature to be nondual. The nondual nature is none other than buddha-nature.’ Highly pleased with my answer, Renzong praised me, ‘My preaching on the sūtra is as worthless as broken roof tiles, while yours is as valuable as genuine gold!””

3. On the Title of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra*

The Holy Master said, “If one purifies one’s mind and eliminates doubts, one is no different from a sage. It is because of delusion that sentient beings fail to realize their inherent nature. So far as the buddha-nature is concerned, there is no difference between enlightened persons and ignorant ones. Now let me explain the teaching of the *Great Perfection of Wisdom* (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā*) for you, audience, so that you will all attain the highest wisdom. Listen carefully.

“The word *mahāprajñāpāramitā* is Sanskrit, which means ‘great wisdom by which one crosses over the sea of transmigration and reaches the opposite shore of nirvana.’ What matters is not to recite it with our mouths but to put it into practice with our minds. If we do both, our minds will go along with our recitation. Enlightenment is realized within our own nature. Apart from the nature there is no other buddha.”

“Mahā means ‘great.’ The mind is as great as space, which is infinite. It has neither up nor down, round nor square, long nor short, blue nor yellow, red nor white, right nor wrong, good nor evil, angry nor happy, neither first nor last. All buddha lands are as empty as space. So is our own nature. Hearing my discourse, someone who is dull may attach himself to emptiness. You should not fall into such a wrong view. If one sits quietly thinking nothing, one falls into the voidness of indifference.”

“To use a metaphor, just as space, which is without forms and names, establishes the myriad things, so too our inherent nature is not barren voidness, but is the mysterious wisdom of genuine emptiness. Because our nature embraces all things, we say it is great.

And because it does not discriminate between or become attached to what is good or bad, we call it great. If practitioners sit quietly and try to keep their minds blank and refrain from thinking, as if they were trees and stones, they commit a fatal error. Because the mind is spacious in capacity, it pervades the whole dharmadhātu. When we use it, we can clearly know about everything, and eventually we know all in one, one in all. This is called *prajñā* (wisdom) in that our minds work without hindrance, and they come and go freely. All *prajñā* comes from the inherent nature. Everything is truthful when one is truthful. If we keep our thoughts free from foolish desires and act wisely on all occasions, then we may be called men of *prajñā*.”

“*Pāramitā* means ‘crossing to the opposite shore.’ When one, clinging to the mind of birth and death, undergoes the misery of the sea of suffering, such a state is called ‘this shore.’ If one, ascends to the paradise of the saints, like a running stream that is without the mind of defilement, it is called the ‘opposite shore.’”

“He who does not practice is an ordinary person. He who practices is a buddha. A sentient being himself is equal to the Buddha, and defilement is nothing but enlightenment. Once deluded, he is a sentient being; once realized, he is a buddha. In my teaching, one *prajñā* produces eighty-four thousand wisdoms, which copes with that number of defilements. When one is free from defilements, wisdom reveals itself and would not be separated from the inherent nature. Those who realized this dharma, just like a bright mirror that reflects myriad things, will be free from delusive thoughts, from attachment to desire, and from falsehood. They will always realize *tathatā*, through which they can contemplate all things like a great mirror without discrimination. This is called Great Enlightenment.”

“When we turn introspective through wisdom, we are illumined within and without, and get to know our own minds. This is liberation, *prajñā*, and no-thought. What then is no-thought? It is to see and to know all things without attachment. In no-thought we purify our mind so that the six consciousnesses, in passing through

the six sense-gates, will be neither defiled by nor attached to the six sense objects. Also we attain samādhi⁹ and prajñā,¹⁰ when our minds work freely without any obstacles. This is called no-thought. This is totally different from the view of heretics, which aim at suppressing all thoughts and forgetting all forms and names. Those who understand the truth of no-thought would know everything and eventually attain buddhahood. Listen to my stanza:

The penetration of teaching and the penetration of discourse,
 Are like the sun located in space.
 I transmit only the dharma of seeing the nature,
 And destroy false teachings.
 There are no sudden and gradual teachings in the dharma,
 It is delusion and enlightenment that are slow or fast.
 It is this teaching of seeing the nature
 That stupid people cannot comprehend.
 Though we may explain it in myriad ways,
 All those explanations may be traced back to one principle.
 Even in the dark house of defilements,
 We should set up the light of wisdom.
 When false views arise, the māra¹¹ of defilements comes.
 When correct views arise, the dharma king of bodhi appears.
 When both of them are discarded, we become truly pure.
 If we try intentionally to eliminate both, it is erroneous.
 If we keep right mind, there are no obstacles.
 Always see our own errors,
 Then we are in accordance with the path.
 Since every species of life has its own way of salvation,
 They will not interfere with one another.
 If we leave our own way and seek some other way,
 We shall never find it forever.
 Though we plod on till death overtakes us,
 We shall find only penance in the end.
 If you wish to find the true Way,

You should keep right view.
Those who tread the path in earnest,
Do not see the mistakes of the mundane lives.
When we are free from the extremes of hatred and clinging,
We can sleep in peace.
The dharma of Great Enlightenment is not apart from this world.
To seek after the path by separating ourselves from this world,
Is as absurd as to search for a rabbit's horn.
When all views, whether right or wrong, are discarded,
Then the permanent Way would be fulfilled."

After listening to the Sixth Patriarch's sermon, the audience vowed to attain enlightenment, to save all sentient beings, and to spread Buddhism all over the world, saying, "How wonderful! Who would have expected that a buddha was born in Lingnan!"

4. The Difference between Spiritual Merits and Worldly Felicities

One day, Prefect Wei, in company with other officials, after bowing reverently, said, “I have some doubts. I hope you will answer them for me.”

“If you have any doubts, please ask,” the Holy Master replied.

“I think your teaching is the fundamental principle taught by Bodhidharma, isn’t it?” “Yes,” the Holy Master answered.

Prefect Wei said, “I was told that when Bodhidharma met Emperor Wu of Liang,¹² he was asked what merit the emperor would gain for his life’s work in building monasteries, allowing new monks to be ordained, giving alms, and supporting the order. Bodhidharma’s reply was that these things would bring no merit at all. I cannot understand why he gave such an answer. Please explain it for me.”

“These would bring no merit at all,” answered the Holy Master. “Never doubt the words of the sage. Emperor Wu’s mind was under an erroneous impression, so he did not know the orthodox teaching, but tried to accumulate worldly felicities, which should not be taken for spiritual merit. Even though felicities made in this life will be rewarded in future lives, they have nothing to do with real merit (*gongde*, 功德), which involves the realization of one’s inherent nature.”

“Seeing the inherent nature is *gong* (功), and cultivating equal mind is *de* (德). When our mental activity works without any impediment, so that we are in position to know constantly the true state and the mysterious functioning of our own minds, we are said to have *gongde*. Inwardly keeping the mind in a humble manner is *gong*, and outwardly behaving oneself according to propriety is *de*. That all things are the manifestation of the inherent nature is *gong*, and that the essence of mind is free from deluded thoughts is *de*.

Not to be alienated from the inherent nature is *gong*, and not to contaminate the mind in using it is *de*. If you seek for merits within the dharmakāya, just do as I have just said and you will obtain real merit.”

“Those who work for real merit do not look down upon others. They treat elders with respect, and care for juniors. Those who make a habit of despising others have not left behind the erroneous idea of self, which indicates a lack of *gong*. Because of their egotism and habitual contempt for others, they do not know the real nature of mind, which shows a lack of *de*. When our mind works without impediment, it is called *gong*, and when our mind works in a righteous way, it is called *de*. Training our mind is *gong*, and training our body is *de*. Merit is to be sought within the inherent nature. It cannot be acquired by almsgiving, hosting the monks, and so forth. Therefore we should distinguish between worldly felicities and spiritual merit. There is nothing wrong in what the holy master said. It is Emperor Wu himself who did not know the true principle.”

5. On the Existence of the Pure Land

Prefect Wei then asked, “I guess it is common practice that people recite the name of the Buddha Amitābha in the hopes of being reborn in the Pure Land of the West. I am uncertain whether the Pure Land¹³ exists, or not.”

The Holy Master said: “I will explain it for you. Listen to me carefully. According to the sūtra spoken by the World-Honored One in Śrāvasti, it is evident to those of inferior capacity that the pure land is certainly far away from here, but to those of superior capacity it is quite nearby. Although the dharma is the same, sentient beings vary in their capacities. As they differ from one another in their degree of enlightenment, some of them understand the dharma quicker than others. The dharma, however, is exactly the same.”

“The ignorant recite the name of Amitābha and pray to be reborn in the Pure Land, while the enlightened purify their minds, for as the *Vimalakirtinirdeśa* says, ‘To the extent that the mind is pure, the buddha land is also pure.’¹⁴ When people of the East commit transgressions, they could recite the name of Amitābha¹⁵ and pray to be reborn in the West. However, where do people in the West who commit transgressions seek to be reborn? Although you are a native of the East, if your mind is pure, you are free from transgressions. On the other hand, even if you were native of the West, your impure minds could not free you from transgressions. Ordinary people understand neither the inherent nature nor the Pure Land within themselves, so they wish to be reborn in the West. To the enlightened, however, everywhere is the Pure Land. As the sūtra says, ‘Wherever they may go, they are always safe and happy.’ If the mind is free from evil, the West is not far from here. But if the mind

is impure, it is difficult to be reborn in the Pure Land by invoking the name of Amitābha.”

The Holy Master further said to the assembly, “Now, how would you like it if I move the Pure Land right in front of you, so that all of you might see it?” All the people present there made obeisance and asked the Holy Master to show it to them. The Holy Master said, “You should not seek for it elsewhere. This physical body of ours is a city of the Pure Land. Our eyes, ears, nose, and tongue are the four great gates of the city. Inwardly, ideation is the gate of the palace and the mind is the ground. The inherent nature is the king who lives in the domain of the mind and controls all its affairs. If the king, the inherent nature, is bright, the land of mind is peaceful and realizes the Pure Land. Because the inherent nature is internal, our body and mind exist. If the inherent nature were external, our body and mind would fall apart. We should seek for buddhahood within the inherent nature, and should not look for it outside.”

“Those who are ignorant of their inherent natures are sentient beings. Those who are enlightened to their inherent natures are buddhas. Being merciful is Avalokiteśvara.¹⁶ Taking pleasure in almsgiving is Mahāsthāmaprāpta.¹⁷ Realization of pure life is Śākyamuni. Embodiment of equality is Amitābha. These buddhas and bodhisattvas are manifestation of the inherent nature. The idea of self and being is Mount Sumeru.¹⁸ The evil mind is the ocean. Defilements are the billowing of the waves. Wickedness is the evil dragon. Falsehood is the ghost. Weariness is the aquatic animals. Greed and hatred are the hells. Ignorance is the beasts.”

“If you perform the ten wholesome ways of action,¹⁹ paradise will appear to you at once. If you get rid of the idea of self and being, Mount Sumeru will collapse. When the mind is no longer deluded, the ocean will dry up. When you are free from defilement, the waves will calm down. When you are not obsessed by wickedness, fish and evil dragons will die out. Within our minds, there is a Tathāgata²⁰ of inherent nature who sends forth a bright light that illuminates externally the six sense gates and purifies them. This light is strong

enough to pierce through the six heavens of the sensual realm. And when it turns inwardly it eliminates the three poisons, drives away our transgressions that might lead us to the hells or other baleful destinies, and enlightens us thoroughly within and without, so that we are no different from those born in the Pure Land of the West."

Having heard what the Holy Master said, the assembly clearly comprehended their inherent natures, which, being perfectly bright and peaceful, embrace myriad things in the universe without generation or extinction. Thereupon, they made obeisance and made a vow, "May all sentient beings in the universe achieve full enlightenment."

The Holy Master said, "Those who train themselves at home as well as monks in the monastery will enjoy happiness in the Pure Land of inherent nature." Prefect Wei asked, "How should we train ourselves at home? Please teach us." The Holy Master replied, "In terms of the path, whether you cut your hair or not, it makes no difference. Listen to my stanza.

When one has equal mind, the observance of precepts is not necessary.
 Once one's deeds are righteous, practicing meditation is unnecessary.
 Because of gratefulness, we support our parents filially.
 Because of fidelity, the superior and inferior care for each other.
 Because of humbleness, senior and junior are on affectionate terms
 with one another.
 Because of perseverance, we do not quarrel about the right and wrong.
 If we practice meditation until the fire of samādhi is obtained,
 The pure lotus will bloom from the mire.
 What is of bitter taste is bound to be good medicine.
 What sounds unpleasant to the ear is surely faithful advice.
 If one amends one's mistakes, one gains wisdom.
 Those who used to find fault with others,
 Are likely to have unsound mind.
 We should always practice altruism in daily life,
 Even though buddhahood is not to be obtained by charity.

Bodhi is to be found within our mind.
How can we look for the path outside?"

Having chanting the stanza, the Holy Master said, "Now I am going back to Caoqi. If you have any questions, you may come there to ask me."

6. The Unity of Samādhi and Prajñā

[Yongseong's comment]

When the mind is serene, unmoving, and free from confusion, it is called samādhi; when the mind is not deluded, so that its bright wisdom is revealed, it is called prajñā. The scholars of future generations should know the relationship between the two.

The Holy Master said to the assembly, “Samādhi and prajñā are not two principles; they are inseparably united. Samādhi is the substance of prajñā, while prajñā is the function of samādhi. At the moment we gain prajñā, samādhi is accomplished, and vice versa. So you should thus understand the equality of samādhi and prajñā.”

“The *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* says, ‘Straightforwardness is the hall of practice, the pure land.’²¹ Don’t let your mind be crooked. You should practice straightforwardness and should not be attached to anything. Those who are ignorant are obstinately infatuated with the characteristics of dharmas and the single-practice samādhi, which they define as sitting quietly and continuously without letting any thought arise in the mind. It is, however, just like being an inanimate object, so it is an obstacle to the right path.”

“Samādhi and prajñā are analogous to a lamp and its light. The lamp is the body of the light, and the light is the function of the lamp. Their name may be two, but their is one and the same. It is the same case with samādhi and prajñā.”

“My teaching takes no-thought (無念) as its fundamental principle. No-thought means not to arouse any thought even in the course of mental activities. Nonconception (無想) means to be alienated from ideas during the activities of ideation. Nonabiding

(無住) is the characteristic of our inherent nature. All things, good or bad, pleasant or ugly, enemy or friend, should be treated as void, and we should never be attached to them. If we are never attached to anything, we shall gain emancipation. Therefore I take nonattachment to be our basic principle."

"To keep our minds free from defilement under all cases is called no-thought. Our minds should not be influenced by any circumstances. However it is a great mistake to suppress our minds so as not to think of anything. There may be someone subject to delusion who boasts that he has realized the inherent nature, but once exposed to circumstances, ideas rise in his mind, followed by erroneous views, which are the source of all the false notions and defilements. In the inherent nature, there is nothing to be attained. To say that there is attainment is an erroneous view and a defilement. For this reason, we take no-thought as the fundamental tenet of my teaching."

"What then should we fix our mind on? We should fix our mind on our original nature of true suchness (*tathatā*, 真如本性), for *tathatā* is the essence of thought, and thought is the function of *tathatā*, for it is the essence of *tathatā* that gives rise to thought. In reality, essence and function are ultimately one and the same, and mind and body also are not different things at all."

7. Striving for Mind Training

The Holy Master said, “Spiritual friends, what is sitting meditation? In this teaching, ‘sitting’ means to gain absolute freedom so that mentally one is not perturbed by outward circumstances. ‘Meditation’ means to realize inwardly the immovability of the inherent mind. What then are *dhyāna* and *samādhi*? *Dhyāna* means to be free from attachment to all external objects, and *samādhi* means to attain inner peace. When we are in a position to deal with *dhyāna* and to keep our inner minds in *samādhi*, then we are said to have achieved *dhyāna* and *samādhi* (禪定). The *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* says, ‘If one is enlightened, one could return to the original mind.’ The *Bodhisattva-sīla Sūtra* says, ‘Our inherent nature is intrinsically pure.’²² If you are never deluded at any time, you will finally attain buddhahood.”

“In this teaching, we are not attached to the mind, immovability, or to purity. As for attachment to mind, the mind cannot be seized; since we know it is only a phantasm, there is nothing to which we can be attached. As for attachment to purity, our mind is intrinsically pure, and so far as we get rid of all delusive ideas there will be nothing but purity in our nature because it is the delusive idea that obscures *tathatā*. If we direct our minds to dwell on purity, we are only creating another delusion, the delusion of purity. There is no delusive idea in itself. What one is attached to becomes delusion. Those who truly acquire immovability would be indifferent to discrimination between right and wrong or good and evil. This is called the immovability of the inherent nature.”

8. Transmission of the Five Incenses of the Dharmakāya

The Holy Master addressed the assembly of scholars and lay people from all directions: “The Buddhist teaching begins with the inherent nature. At all times we should purify our mind from one thought to another, practice the path through our own efforts, realize our own true nature of dharmakāya, realize the buddhahood inherent in our own minds, and deliver ourselves by observing śīla (precepts). Since all of you have come from afar, this meeting shows that there must be a good relationship between us. Now kneel down and allow me to convey to you the five incenses of the dharmakāya.”

“The first is the śīla incense, which means that our minds are free from greed, hatred, ignorance, evil, misdeeds, jealousy, and erroneous thoughts.”

“The second is the samādhi incense, which means that our minds are not perturbed by any circumstances, whether favorable or unfavorable.”

“The third is the prajñā incense, which means that our minds are free from all obstructions; that we do not commit evil deeds by means of introspection into our inherent nature at all times; that, even though we perform all kinds of good deeds, we do not let our minds become attached to such actions; and that we are respectful toward our elders, take care of our juniors, and are sympathetic to the poor and the four less fortunate types of people, that is, widowers, widows, orphans, and old men without dependents.”

“The fourth is the incense of emancipation, which means that our mind is free from attachment to anything, whether good or evil.”

“The fifth is the incense of knowledge, which means that, even though we do not cling to either good or evil, we should not dwell

upon just vacuity but enlarge our knowledge and abilities, so that we have insight into our own minds, understand the principles of Buddhism, get rid of the idea of self and of beings, and realize that, up to the time when we attain bodhi, the true nature is always immutable."

"These are the five kinds of incense of the dharmakāya that should be developed within our own minds, and should not be sought from outside."

9. On the Formless Repentance

The Holy Master said, “Now I will convey to you the formless repentance, which will expiate your transgressions committed in past, present, and future lives, and purify your karma committed via thought, word, and deed. Please follow me and repeat together what I recite.”

“We repent of all our transgressions and evil deeds committed through delusion or ignorance. May they be expiated at once and may they never arise again.”

“May we disciples be always free from the contaminations of arrogance and dishonesty. We repent of all our arrogant behavior and dishonest dealings in the past. May they be expiated at once and may they never arise again.”

“May we be always free from the contaminations of envy and jealousy. We repent of all our transgressions and evil deeds committed in an envious or jealous spirit. May they be expiated at once and may they never arise again.”

“This is what we call formless repentance. Now then what is the meaning of repentance (*chanhui*, 懺悔)? *Chan* (懺) refers to the repentance of past transgressions so that they do not occur again in the present or the future. *Hui* (悔) refers to the repentance concerning our future conduct. However, ignorant common people, not knowing to refrain from committing transgressions in the future, only know to repent from transgressions committed in the past. Because they are not concerned about their future conduct, they commit new transgressions before the past transgressions are expiated. How can this be repentance?”

10. The Great Four Vows

The Holy Master said, “We have repented from our transgressions. Now pay attention to my discourse. You should declare that you ‘vow to deliver an infinite number of sentient beings in your own minds.’ Who are the sentient beings in your minds? They are the delusive mind, the evil mind, and so forth. All these are the sentient beings in your minds. Each of you has to deliver yourself by means of your own mind. This is genuine deliverance.”

“There are many great masters and good friends to guide sentient beings. Now, what does it mean to deliver oneself by one’s own mind? It means the deliverance from the wrong views, defilements, and ignorance arising in your mind by means of right views. Through right views and *prajñā* wisdom, each of you can deliver yourselves by your own efforts and directly achieve great enlightenment. Let wrong be delivered by right, delusion by enlightenment, ignorance by wisdom, and malevolence by benevolence. Such is true deliverance.”

“We vow to sever innumerable defilements’ means to substitute our delusive mind with the *prajñā* wisdom of our inherent natures. ‘We vow to learn countless dharma teachings’ means to realize the right dharma through insight into our inherent natures. ‘We vow to attain the incomparable path to buddhahood’ means to observe the true and orthodox Buddhist teachings on all occasions, and to give rise to *prajñā* in our mind, so that we do away with truth as well as falsehood; then we will attain buddhahood. These are the four great vows.”

11. The Trinity of the Three Bodies (*Trikāya*)

The Holy Master said, “Our pure dharmakāya is the same as the inherent nature. All things are its manifestation. How could this be? Good deeds and evil deeds are just the result of good and evil thoughts. So the inherent nature gives rise to all things. To use a metaphor, when the sun and the moon are in the sky, we clearly see all things in the world; but once they are veiled by clouds, the whole world would be dim. However, as soon as the clouds are blown away, the brightness reappears and all things are fully illuminated. Our evil habits may be likened to the clouds, while brightness and wisdom are the sun and the moon. When we are attached to external objects, our inherent natures are clouded by wanton thoughts, which prevent our wisdom from sending forth its light.”

“If we hear the orthodox dharma from sages and pious teachers, we may get rid of ignorance and delusion, so that the true nature of all things manifests within our inherent nature; this is called the pure dharmakāya. Those who take refuge in something other than the pure dharmakāya are heretics. We should remove the evil mind, the jealous mind, the flattering and crooked mind, egotism, deceit and falsehood, contemptuousness, snobbishness, fallacious views, arrogance, and all other evils that may arise at any time. We must be constantly on alert for our own mistakes and refrain from criticizing others’ merits or faults. As our minds are pure by nature, there is nothing in it, but this description of ‘nothing’ is also empty. That which is beyond the realm of consciousness and wisdom is expediently called the pure dharmakāya.

“When one single evil thought arises, as if a cloud appears in the sky, it can make a hell, whereas a good thought from that same

source can expiate all our transgressions and create the palace of heaven. A single thought of hostility would make a warrior, a single thought of benevolence would make a bodhisattva, a single thought of wisdom would make a superior heaven, and a single thought of ignorance would make an inferior land. Innumerable indeed are the transformations of the inherent nature! People under delusion do not understand that. They always bend their minds toward evil, and practice evil as a rule. But if they turn their minds from evil to righteousness, even for a moment, *prajñā* would instantly arise. This is what is called the *nirmāṇakāya* of the Buddha of the inherent nature. If one's wisdom is perfect in every single thought so that one may realize the nonduality of good and evil, the light of great wisdom would be peerlessly radiant. This is called the perfect *nirmāṇakāya*."

"In short, when even a single thought does not arise, the inherent nature would be like space; this is called the *dharmakāya*. The function of mind generated from the *dharmakāya* is called the *sambhogakāya*. As original wisdom and acquired wisdom are not different, everything, both within and without, is turned into the single light of wisdom, which is called the perfect *nirmāṇakāya*. Here is a stanza:

Those who are under delusion accumulate mundane felicities,
But do not tread the path.
They insist that accumulating felicities and treading the path,
Are one and the same thing.
Even though their merits accrued from almsgiving and offerings are
enormous,
The ultimate source of transgression still lies in their minds.
Although they wish to expiate their sins through these accumulated
merits,
Felicities may survive in future lives,
But they have nothing to do with the expiation of transgressions.
If you want to get rid of your transgressions in your own minds,
Just repent from them in your inherent nature.

If you are going to look for the dharmakāya,
Do away with the characteristics of dharmas,
And your mind will be pure.”

Having heard the discourse of the Holy Master, the whole assembly
happily accepted the teaching and put it into practice.

12. Questions and Answers

When the Holy Master returned to the village of Caohou in Shaozhou, he was still unknown figure, and it was a Confucian scholar named Liu Zhiluë who gave him a warm welcome. He had an aunt named Wujinzang (Inexhaustible Treasury), who was a bhikṣunī (a nun in the Buddhist order), and who used to recite the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. Upon hearing the recitation for a short moment, the Holy Master understood its profound meaning and explained it to her. Whereupon she picked up the scripture and asked him the meaning of certain words. The Master said, “I am illiterate. If you want to know the gist of the sūtra, ask me.” The bhikṣunī asked, “How can you know the meaning of the text when you do not even know the words?” The Holy Master answered, “The profound truth taught by Great Enlightenment has nothing to do with written language.”

She was so surprised by the patriarch’s answer that she realized that he was not an ordinary bhikṣu. She finally made his presence widely known to the pious elders of the village, who then came to him to tender homage to him and to ask about the path. There happened to be there the historic Baolin monastery, destroyed by war at the end of the Sui dynasty and reduced to ruins. The villagers rebuilt it on the old site and asked the Holy Master to stay at the monastery, where the master stayed nine months.

The evildoers in Shenxiu’s lineage from the North traced the master and tried to persecute him again. The master did not resist them but instead took refuge in a nearby forest. Thereupon the villains set fire to the forest, but he escaped by making his way to a rock. The rock, which has since been known as the Rock of Refuge,

has the knee prints of the Holy Master and also the impressions of the texture of his robe. Recollecting the instruction of his master, the Fifth Patriarch, that he should stop at Huai and seclude himself at Hui, he made these two districts his places of retreat.

Fahai 法海 was a native of Zhujiang of Shaozhou. In his first meeting with the Holy Master, he asked the meaning of the popular Chan saying, “I don’t understand what it means when they say ‘mind is buddha.’ What does it mean?” The Holy Master answered, “Not to let the previous thoughts arise is ‘mind.’ Not to let forthcoming thoughts be annihilated is ‘buddha.’ To manifest all kinds of phenomena is ‘mind,’ to be free from all forms is ‘buddha.’ If I were to give you a full explanation, the theme could not be exhausted even if I took the whole of the kalpa. Listen to my stanza.

Mind is prajñā, enlightenment is samādhi,
When samādhi and prajñā are equal, your thought will be pure.”

[Yongseong’s comment]

If the previous thought does not arise, the basis of all things, which is intrinsically void, is not activated. If the forthcoming thought is not annihilated, both enlightenment and wisdom will be perfectly bright. This refers to prajñā, which is equivalent to samādhi. The passage “to be free from all forms is buddha” refers to samādhi, which is equivalent to prajñā. This is explained in terms of samādhi and prajñā. There is another illustration: that water is wet illustrates that the whole mind is enlightenment. “What is wet is water” illustrates that the whole enlightenment is mind. If you realize this principle, then whether you are a sage or an ordinary person, you would well understand the truth of nondualism.

Fada 法達, a native of Hongzhou, joined the order at the age of seven. He used to recite the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*. When he came to pay homage to the Holy Master, he did not lower his head to the ground. The Holy Master, knowing Fada’s mind, asked, “You

must have something in mind.” Fada said, “I have read the whole text of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* three thousand times.” The Holy Master reproved him, “How are you so arrogant as to bow without touching the ground. If one has the illusion of selfhood, transgressions will be generated. Destroy that merit accumulated by reciting the scriptures, and one’s blessings will be beyond measure.” The master also said, “Your name is Fada, Dharma Penetration, but when have you ever penetrated the dharma? Listen to my stanza.

Your name is Fada.

Diligently you have recited the dharma.

But lip repetition of the sūtra just follows the pronunciation of the words.

If you are enlightened by grasping the meaning,

You would be a genuine practitioner indeed.

If you just believe that Buddha speaks no words,

Then the lotus will blossom in your mouth.”

Having heard this stanza, Fada felt deep remorse and said, “Hereafter I will be humble and polite to all people. Please pardon my arrogance. There are parts I do not quite understand in the sūtra. Would you kindly give me a brief explanation?” The Holy Master replied, “As I cannot read the sūtra, please recite the sūtra for me.” Fada recited the sūtra. When he came to the chapter ‘Parables,’ the Master stopped him and said, “The gist of this sūtra is to expound the aim of a buddha’s incarnation in this world. What is the aim? The sūtra says, ‘It is for a sole and lofty aim that the Buddha appears in this world.’”

“Because ordinary people are deluded externally, they attach themselves to objects. Because they are deluded internally, they fall into the wrong idea of emptiness. When they are able to free themselves from attachment to objects and from the fallacious view of annihilation through the doctrine of emptiness, they will be totally free from both internal and external delusions. Those who

understand and are enlightened to this principle are said to have opened their eyes to see the buddha-knowledge. Let me analyze this under four parts: to open the eyes to see enlightenment-knowledge; to show the sight of enlightenment-knowledge; to awaken to the sight of the enlightenment-knowledge; to be firmly established in the enlightenment-knowledge.”

“If we are able to grasp thoroughly the teaching of enlightenment-knowledge, then our inherent nature, which is enlightenment-knowledge, would manifest itself. You must not misinterpret the text and assert that buddha-knowledge is something special to the Buddha and not common to us. You therefore should accept the interpretation that buddha-knowledge refers to that of your own mind and not that of any other buddha.”

“Being infatuated by sense objects and shutting themselves off from their own light, all sentient beings act as slaves to their own desires. Seeing this, the Buddha rose from his samādhi in order to exhort them with earnest preaching of various kinds to suppress their desires and to help them refrain from seeking happiness in external world. Never forget, therefore, that you should not seek outside. I also advise people to open their eyes to the buddha-knowledge within their own minds. But because of their perversity, they commit transgressions in delusion and ignorance. They are kind in words, but wicked in mind. They are greedy, malignant, jealous, crooked, flattering, egoistic, offensive to human beings, and destructive to inanimate objects. In this way, they voluntarily open up the ‘knowledge of worldlings.’ If they convert their thought so that wisdom arises, the mind that is involved in introspection and evildoing would be replaced by the practice of good; then they would initiate themselves into the ‘buddha-knowledge.’ You should always open your eyes not for the mundane knowledge of worldlings but for the supramundane buddha-knowledge.”

“If you stick to recitation as a daily exercise, you are infatuated, like the yak is with its tail. One who recites the sūtra with the tongue and puts its teaching into actual practice with one’s mind recites the

sūtra. However, one who recites it without putting it into practice is recited by the sūtra. Listen to my stanza.

When our minds are deluded, the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka Sūtra*, recites us,

With an enlightened mind we instead recite the sūtra.

If we recite the sūtra without knowing the principle, all our efforts will be in vain.

When there is no contamination, thoughts will be righteous.

When there is contamination, thoughts will be wrong.

One who is beyond existence and non-existence will ride the white bullock cart.”²³

Having heard the stanza, Fada was enormously enlightened and asked again, “The sūtra read, ‘From śrāvakas²⁴ up to bodhisattvas,²⁵ even if they were to speculate with combined efforts, they would be unable to comprehend the buddha-knowledge,’²⁶ I am afraid I do not know the meaning. Please teach me, sir.” The Holy Master answered, “The reason why they cannot understand the buddha-knowledge is because they speculate on it through human reasoning. So, the more they speculate, the farther they are from the truth. As for those who cannot accept the doctrine he expounded, the Buddha let them leave the assembly. To those who are already riding in the white bullock cart, it is no necessary to go out to look for the other three vehicles.”²⁷

“The sūtra also says, ‘There is only the buddha vehicle and no other vehicles, such as a second or a third. It is for the sake of this one vehicle that Buddha had to preach to us with innumerable skillful means, using various reasons and arguments, parables and illustrations.’²⁸ The other three vehicles are provisional, for the past only, while the one vehicle, the buddha vehicle, is the ultimate, meant for the present. You should abandon the provisional and hone to the ultimate. If you hone to the ultimate, you will find that even the name ‘ultimate’ disappears. You should know that you are the

only owner of these jewels. You have no more conception of father and son. This is the right way to recite the sūtra. Then, from kalpa to kalpa, the sūtra will be in your hands, and from morning to night you will be reciting the sūtra all the time.” Highly pleased, Fada praised the Holy Master with a stanza:

The merit attained by reciting the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* three thousand times,
 Has been dispelled by an utterance of the master of Caoqi.
 If I do not realize the object of a Buddha’s rebirth in this world,
 How can I put to rest the passions accumulated for many lives?
 The three vehicles yoked by goat, deer, and cow are provisional only,
 Whereas the three stages are well expounded.
 Who has recognized that, within the burning house,
 The king of dharma is to be found!

Bhikṣu Zhitong 智通, a native of Shaozhou of Anfeng, had read the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* a thousand times to find the profound meaning of the sūtra. In the end, he could not understand it and came to pay homage and ask the Holy Master. The Master said, “The pure dharmakāya is your inherent nature, the perfect saṃbhogakāya is your wisdom, and the myriad nirmāṇakāyas are your activities. If you argue that these three bodies are separate from your inherent nature, there would be three bodies without the four prajñās.²⁹ If you realize that these three bodies have no essence of their own, it is called the bodhi of the four prajñās. Listen to my stanza:

Because the three bodies are subsumed within the inherent nature,
 Through cultivation, the four prajñās are achieved.
 Then, without eliminating what you see and hear,
 You may ascend directly to the stage of enlightenment.”

“May I hear the meaning of the four prajñās?”, asked Zhitong. “If you understand the three bodies,” said the Holy Master, “you should

understand the four *prajñās* as well. When then do you ask me? If you deal with the four *prajñās* separate from the three bodies, there will be *prajñās* without the three bodies. In this case, although there are the four *prajñās*, in reality, there are not the four *prajñās*. Listen again to my stanza:

The perfect mirror wisdom is pure by nature,
 The equality wisdom is free from the disease of mind,
 The mysterious discerning wisdom sees things without delusion,
 The all-achieving wisdom is the same as the perfect mirror.
 The first five consciousnesses (*vijñāna*) and the *ālayavijñāna*,³⁰
 Are transmuted to *prajñā* in the fruition stage (buddha stage),
 While the sixth and seventh *vijñānas*,
 Are transmuted in the causal stage (the bodhisattva stage).
 All these transmutations of *vijñāna* are only matters of appellation,
 They are devoid of substance.
 If you are free from infatuation when transmutations take place,
 You will abide eternally in *samādhi* in the midst of them.”

[Yongseong's comment]

It is by means of the transmutation of the eighth *vijñāna* that one realizes the *dharmakāya*; it is by means of the transmutation of the seventh *vijñāna* that one realizes the *sambhogakāya*; it is by means of the transmutation of the sixth *vijñāna* that one realizes the *nirmāṇakāya*. Realizing the perfect mirror wisdom by transmuting the prior five *vijñānas* is identical to the eighth *ālayavijñāna*, so they do not need to be mentioned respectively. When one realizes the three bodies, one achieves the four *prajñās*, which also do not need to be elaborated one by one. As the eighth *vijñāna* itself, like space, embraces myriad things in the universe, when the eighth *vijñāna* is transmuted, the *dharmakāya* would be soundly made manifest. If one able to transmute the seventh *vijñāna*, which is the faculty of constant speculation, one will achieve the *sambhogakāya*. If one is able to transmute the sixth *vijñāna*, which is the faculty of sensory activities, one will achieve the *nirmāṇakāya*. What is

reflected in the gates of the five sensory organs are the prior five vijñānas. And since the latter is one and the same as the eighth vijñāna, there is no need for them to be separately delineated.

Zhitong, having realized the three bodies and the four prajñās, submitted a stanza to the Holy Master:

The three bodies are inherently within my body,
 And the four prajñās are bright within my mind.
 When the three bodies and the four prajñās identify with each other,
 We shall be able to respond to all forms of beings.
 Trying to realize the three bodies and the four prajñās is delusive.
 Also keeping emptiness and serenity is not the right way.
 Owing to the Holy Master, I am now able to grasp the profundity of
 the meaning.
 Henceforth I will never contaminate my inherent nature.

Zhichang 智常, a native of Guiqi of Xinzhou, one day asked the master Datong 大通, “What is my inherent mind and true nature?” Datong replied, “Do you see space?” “Yes, I do,” answered Zhichang. “Does space have any particular form?” Datong asked again. “No, it doesn’t.” Datong then said, “Your inherent mind is like space. To realize that nothing can be seen is right seeing. To realize that nothing is knowable is true knowledge. To realize that it is neither green nor yellow, neither long nor short, that it is pure by nature, and that its essence is perfect and clear is to realize the inherent mind and thereby attain buddhahood, which is also called the buddha knowledge.”

Zhichang, however, was not able to understand what he said, and later went to pay homage to the Holy Master and asked, “I did not understand the Venerable Datong’s teaching. Please enlighten me.” The Holy Master answered with a stanza:

To realize that nothing can be seen,

But to retain the view of invisibility,
 Is like huge clouds veiling the sunlight.
 To realize that nothing is knowable,
 But to retain the view of this unknowability,
 Is likened to a lightning bolt flashing in the sky.
 Once these arbitrary views arise in your mind,
 It shows that you are deluded.
 How can you understand skill in means to realize it?
 If you realize that these arbitrary views are wrong,
 Your own spiritual light will shine forth permanently.

Having heard the stanza, Zichang was at once enlightened, and submitted a stanza to the Master:

Through the views of invisibility and unknowability arise in the mind,
 I have sought after bodhi without freeing myself from attachment to
 forms.
 How is the impression of enlightenment of a confused mind,
 Different from delusion!
 The essence of the inherent nature,
 Takes rebirth in accordance with cognition.
 If I had not called on the residence of the patriarch,
 I should have remained bewildered.

Bhikṣu Zhidao 智道 was a native of Nanhai of Guangdong. Since he joined the order, he had read the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* for around ten years, but he had not grasped its main idea, and asked the Holy Master to teach him. “Which part of it do you not understand?” Zhidao said, “What I doubt is this: all sentient beings have both a physical body and the dharmakāya. The former comes into being and then perishes, while the latter, which is permanent, neither knows nor feels. According to the sūtra, ‘When their origination and annihilation come to an end, that cessation becomes bliss.’ I do not know which body ceases to exist and which body enjoys

that bliss. It cannot be the physical body that enjoys it, because when it dies the four material elements will disintegrate, which is suffering, the opposite of bliss. If it is the dharmakāya that enjoys that bliss, then how does the state of cessation, which is like trees and stones, enjoy that bliss? Moreover, the dharma nature is the substance of origination and cessation, and the five aggregates are the function of origination and cessation. That is, one substance has five functions. How can it be possible in this case that the process of origination and cessation will ever last? Arising indicates that functions derive from substance, just as waves arise from out of the sea. Ceasing indicates that functions return to the substance, just as waves subside into the sea. If rebirth is admitted, there would be no cessation of transitoriness, as is the case with sentient beings. If rebirth is not admitted, then things will remain forever in a state of lifeless substance, like inanimate objects. In this case, under the state of nirvāṇa, even existence will be impossible to all beings. Whoever would then enjoy that bliss?”

The Holy Master said, “As a disciple of the Buddha, how can you have become so captivated by the two extreme views, eternalism and annihilationism? You are arguing that apart from the physical body there is a dharmakāya, and that perfect cessation of transformation, which is nirvāṇa, may be sought apart from becoming and cessation. If you presume that nirvāṇa is everlasting, it shows you indulge in worldly pleasures. The Buddha preached the real bliss of nirvāṇa for those ignorance people who identify the five aggregates as the self and regard other things as non-self, who crave for individual existence and have an aversion to death, who drift about in the stream of rebirth without realizing the voidness of mundane existence, and who mistake the state of everlasting joy of nirvāṇa for a mode of suffering.”

“Nirvāṇa never involves either the phenomena of the origination of origination and cessation, nor the cessation of origination and cessation. It is the manifestation of the perfect cessation of rebirth, but even at the manifestation, there is not a concept of manifestation.

It is called everlasting pleasure, and there is no one who enjoys it. There is neither one substance nor five functions. It is slandering the Buddha and the dharma when you assert that under such restriction of *nirvāṇa*, existence is impossible for all beings. Listen to my stanzas:

The supreme mahāparinirvāṇa,
Is perfect, calm and illuminating.
Ignorant people misunderstand it to be death,
While heretics hold that it is annihilation.
Those who belong to the two vehicles, śrāvaka and *pratyekabuddha*,³¹
Regard it as non-activity.
All these are just intellectual speculations,
And the basis of the sixty-two fallacious views.³²
Since they are mere temporary names,
They have nothing to do with supreme truth.
Only those of superior mind,
Can understand thoroughly what *nirvāṇa* is,
And take up the attitude of neither attachment nor indifference
toward it.
They know that the five aggregates and the self
Arising from the unity of these aggregates,
Together with all external objects and forms,
And the various phenomena of sound and voice,
Are equally unreal, like a dream or an illusion.
They make no discrimination between a sage and an ordinary person,
Nor do they have any arbitrary concept of *nirvāṇa*.
They are beyond affirmation and negation,
And they break through the barrier of the past, present, and future.
They use their sense organs whenever necessary,
But the concept of using does not arise.
They may discriminate between all sorts of things,
But the concept of discrimination does not occur.
Even though the disastrous fire of the *kalpa* burns down to the
bottom of the ocean,

Or the disastrous wind of the kalpa collapses mountains,
 The real and everlasting bliss of the cessation of transmigration,
 Nirvāṇa, remains in the same state.
 Here I am trying to describe to you something ineffable,
 So that you may get rid of your fallacious views.
 If you follow my words without arousing erroneous views,
 You may learn a little bit of the meaning of nirvāṇa!"

Having heard this stanza, Zhidao was profoundly enlightened, made obeisance, and departed.

Bhikṣu Xingsi 行思, born at Anzheng of the Chizhou Liu family, asked the Holy Master, "What does a practitioner do in order not to be rated by the stages of progress?" The master in turn asked, "What stages of progress are you in?" Xingsi answered, "What stages of progress can there be, when I do not care about even the noble truths taught by the Buddha?" Hearing this response, the patriarch evaluated him highly and made him the leader of the assembly. One day the Holy Master told him that he should propagate the dharma in his own district, so that the teaching might not come to an end. Thereupon he returned to Chingyuan Mountain and widely spread the teaching of the Holy Master.

Bhikṣu Huairang 懷讓 was born into the Tu clan in Zhinzhou. After he made obeisance, the Patriarch asked him, "Where did you come from?" "From Songshan," he replied. "Give me another answer. What thing is coming here?" asked the Holy Master. "Even if I say it is a certain thing, it would not be proper," he replied. Thereupon the patriarch said, "Is it attainable by practice?" "It is not impossible to attain it by practice. But it is quite impossible to contaminate it." This was Huairang's reply. Thereupon the patriarch exclaimed, "This is exactly the unpolluted thing that all buddhas take good care of. It is so for you, and so for me as well. Patriarch Prajñādhara of India³³ predicted that under your feet a colt would be born and trample on

the people of the whole world. Keep this oracle in your mind and do not publicize it." Being thereby enlightened, Huairang became his attendant for fifteen years, and day by day his wisdom got deeper. Afterwards, he returned to Nanyue Mountain, where he widely spread the teaching of the Holy Master.

Xuanjue of Yongjia 永嘉 玄覺 in his youth studied the sūtras and śāstras, and was well versed in the teachings of the Tiantai school. Through reading the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, he realized the basis of the mind. Xuance 玄策, a disciple of the patriarch, happened to visit him. After long discussion, Xuance noticed that Yongjia's words agreed with the sayings of the patriarch. Then, Xuance asked, "May I know the name of your teacher?" Yongjia answered, "I realized the Buddhist path through reading the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*. I have not yet had any teacher to verify my enlightenment." Xuance said, "Even before and since the time of Bhiśmagarjitaḥośasvarāja,³⁴ one who attains enlightenment without the aid of a teacher is a heretic." "Would you certify my attainment?," asked Yongjia. "My word hold no weight. But there is the Sixth Patriarch in Caoqi. Great numbers of practitioners come from every direction to receive the dharma. Why don't you go there to be certified?"

Finally they arrived at Caoqi and met the patriarch. Xuanjue, having circumambulated the Holy Master three times, stood still in front of him, holding a Buddhist staff in his hand. The Patriarch said, "A Buddhist monk should observe the three-thousand moral precepts and eighty-thousand minor disciplinary rules.³⁵ I wonder where you come from and what makes you so arrogant?" Xuanjue replied, "The matter of incessant rebirth is a really momentous one, and death may come at any moment." "Why don't you take the truth of non-origination to solve the question of impermanence?" The patriarch retorted, "As the substance is not originated, when the fundamental truth is realized, the question of impermanence no longer exists." The Holy Master exclaimed, "That's right, that's right!"

Then Xuanjue payed homage to the patriarch in full rites and,

after a while, was going to leave. “You are leaving too quickly,” the Holy Master said. “How can there be quickness when motion does not exist? Don’t you know that motion does not exist?” “You are intentionally discerning it,” said Xuanjue. “You have already realized the meaning of impermanence.” “How does impermanence have any meaning?” The Holy Master replied, “Without meaning, how can you discern it? Discernment is not the meaning.” The Holy Master finally said, “Very good. Delay your departure and spend a night here.” Thereafter Xuanjue was called “the enlightened one who had spent a night with the patriarch.”

Bhikṣu Zhihuang 智隍 had kept up sitting meditation for twenty years. Xuance, a disciple of the patriarch, heard about him and paid a visit his residence. Xuance asked him, “What do you do here?” “I am engaged in samādhi all the time.” “If so, are you engaged in samādhi consciously or unconsciously? If you are engaged in it unconsciously, it means that all inanimate objects, such as plants, grass, roof tiles, and stones, could attain samādhi. On the other hand, if you are engaged in it consciously, then all animate objects and sentient beings would be in samādhi as well.” “When I engage in samādhi, I am neither conscious nor unconscious.” “If it is so, it is perpetual samādhi, in which one neither enters nor leaves samādhi. If there is neither entering nor leaving, it cannot be called great samādhi.”

Zhihuang was not able to answer. After a long while he said, “Who is your teacher?” Xuance answered, “My teacher is the Sixth Patriarch of Caoqi.” “How does he define dhyāna and samādhi?” “According to his teaching, the dharmakāya is perfect and serene. Its substance and function are in suchness. The five aggregates are inherently void and the six sense objects are non-existent. There is neither entering nor leaving samādhi. There is neither quietude nor perturbation. The nature of dhyāna is nonabiding, so we should get beyond the state of abiding in the calmness of dhyāna. The nature of dhyāna is uncreated, so we should get beyond the notion of creating a state of dhyāna. The state of the mind is likened to space, and it is

simultaneously also not likened to space.”

Having heard Xuance’s remark, Zhihuang called on the Holy Master to pay homage. He told the patriarch in detail the conversation he had had with Xuance. “What Xuance said is quite right,” said the patriarch. “Make your mind like infinite space, but do not be attached to the idea of vacuity. Let it function freely. Whether you are in activity or at rest, let your mind abide nowhere. Forget the discrimination between a sage and an ordinary person. Ignore the distinction between subject and object. Let the inherent nature and all phenomenal objects be in a state of suchness. Then you will be in *samādhi* all the time.” Thereupon Zhihuang was fully enlightened and what he had attained for past twenty years became useless. On that night the inhabitants of Hebei heard a voice in the air that said, “Today Zhihuang attained great enlightenment!”

One day Shenxiu 神秀 said to his disciple Zhicheng 志誠, “You are intelligent and smart. You may go to Caoqi to attend the lectures on my behalf. And try to remember what you hear in the lectures so that, when you return, you can repeat it.” Following his teacher’s instruction, Zhicheng went to Caoqi, where he did not identify himself and joined the assembly to call on the Holy Master. “Someone got in secretly among the assembly to purloin my lecture,” said the patriarch. Thereupon Zhicheng came out, made obeisance, and told him his intent. “How does your teacher instruct his disciples?” asked the patriarch. “He tells us to meditate on purity, to maintain the sitting position all the time, and not to lie down,” answered Zhicheng. The patriarch said, “To meditate on purity creates a mental disease, not *dhyāna*. To restrict oneself to the sitting position all the time ends up being of no profit. Listen to my stanza:

A live man sits and does not lie down,
 While a dead man lies down and does not sit up.
 With this foul body of ours,
 How can we get meritorious achievement!”

Making obeisance twice, Zhicheng said, “Although I have studied for nine years under the instruction of the master Shenxiu, my mind has not yet been awakened in the least. However when you speak to me, my mind is enlightened right away. As the matter of rebirth is fatal, please give me further instruction.” The Holy Master asked, “How does your teacher define the three trainings in *śīla*, *dhyāna*, and *prajñā*?” “According to him,” answered Zhicheng, “to refrain from all evil deeds is *śīla*, to practice what is good is *prajñā*, and to purify our minds is *dhyāna*.” The patriarch said, “The way your teacher teaches is good, but my exposition is different from his.” “How can it be different if your listings of the three trainings are one and the same?,” Zhicheng asked.

“The teaching of your master,” replied the Holy Master, “is for the guidance of followers of the *Hīnayāna* school, while mine is for those of the *Mahāyāna* school. Some realize the dharma more quickly and deeply than others. This is the reason there is a difference in the interpretation. Listen and see whether my instruction is the same as his. The dharma that I expound does not deviate from the principle of the inherent nature. To say otherwise would indicate that the speaker’s inherent nature is deluded. The true teaching of the three trainings in *śīla*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi* should be based on the principle that the function of all things derives from the inherent nature. Listen to my stanza:

To remove impurity is the *śīla* of the inherent nature.
 To remove disturbance is the *dhyāna* of the inherent nature.
 To remove ignorance is the *samādhi* of the inherent nature.
 To neither increase nor decrease is the diamond of the inherent nature.
 Regardless of rebirth, there is always *samādhi*.

Zhicheng, having heard the verse, apologized to and thanked the patriarch for his instruction. He then submitted a stanza:

The self is nothing but an illusion created by the union of the five aggregates.

How does illusion have anything to do with absolute reality!
To seek after tathatā,
Is another impure dharma.”

Approving his stanza, the Holy Master told him, “If one realizes the inherent nature, one dispenses with such doctrines as bodhi, nirvāṇa, and the knowledge of emancipation. Only those who do not possess a single law can establish all sorts of law. It makes no difference to those who have realized the inherent nature whether they formulate a system of law or dispense with all of them. They have the liberty to come or to go at will. They are free from any obstacles. They take appropriate actions according to circumstances. They give a suitable answer in accordance with the propensities of inquirers. They see that all nirmāṇakāyas are one with the inherent nature. They attain liberation, psychic powers, and samādhi, which are called the realization of the inherent nature.”

“How are we guided to dispense with everything?” asked Zhicheng.

“When our inherent nature is free from impurity, infatuations, and disturbances,” replied the Holy Master, “when we look back on our minds from moment to moment with prajñā, and when we do not cling to phenomenal objects, we are liberated. Why should we establish any system of law when our goal can be reached by turning to any direction? Since the practice as well as the realization of the law is to be done instantly, the establishment of any law is unnecessary. As all dharmas are intrinsically serene, how can there be steps?” Zhicheng made obeisance and volunteered to be an attendant of the patriarch.

In due time, the followers of Shenxiu intended to make him the sixth patriarch. But they were concerned with the rightful claim of the Holy Master Huineng who had inherited the patriarchy. So they told Zhang Xingchang 張行昌, “Stab Huineng to death and deprive him of the robe and begging bowl.” With his psychic power of mind, the Holy Master foresaw that Xingchang would come to kill him and

knew that he owed Zhang Xingchang ten taels from a past life. He put ten taels by the side of his seat and waited for him. One evening, Xingchang entered the patriarch's room with a dagger. The Holy Master outstretched his neck and said, "Feel free to cut my neck as you please." To his surprise, Xingchang cut it thrice but the patriarch's neck was not in the least wounded. The Holy Master then addressed him:

"A righteous sword is not wicked, while a wicked one is wrong,
I owe you only money; I do not owe you a life."

Greatly frightened, Xingchang fell down to the floor. After a while, he repented from what he tried to do. Handing him ten taels, the Holy Master said, "Take this money and go away from here. When my disciples takes notice of this incident, they will do you harm. Come to see me in disguise at another time. Then I will take care of you." Thereupon Xingchang stole away in the night. Subsequently, he joined the Buddhist order.

Later on he called on the patriarch and paid homage to him. "I have been waiting for you all the time. Why do you come so late?" asked the patriarch. "Owing to Your Holiness's compassion in pardoning my crime," said Zhang, "I have become a bhikṣu. But how can I spread the dharma for the salvation of sentient beings. I have studied the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* for a long time, but I cannot understand the meaning of permanence and impermanence. Would you please give me an explanation?" The Master said, "What is impermanent is the nature of enlightenment. What is permanent is the discrimination between good and evil, and so forth." "I am afraid your definition contradicts the sūtra," said Zhang. "How dare I contradict the sūtra," replied the Holy Master, "as I inherited the seal of the Buddha-mind."

"According to the sūtra, the buddha-nature is permanent, while all good and evil dharmas, including the *bodhicitta*,³⁶ are impermanent. However, your explanation is totally different from that. It is confusing to a beginner like me."

The patriarch said, “Don’t you understand? If the buddha-nature is permanent, it would be of no use to talk about good and evil dharmas. Sages would eternally remain sages, while common people would eternally remain common people, and until the end of the kalpa no one would arouse *bodhicitta*. Therefore, when I say ‘impermanent,’ it is exactly what the Buddha meant by ‘permanent.’ And, if all dharmas are impermanent, then everything would have a nature of its own to suffer death and birth. In this case, it would mean that the inherent nature, which is truly permanent, does not pervade everywhere. So when I say ‘permanent’ it is exactly what the Buddha meant by ‘impermanent.’”

[Yongseong’s comment]

This paragraph is so difficult to comprehend that I supplement the original text when I translate it. Let me use a figurative illustration. If the ocean has no motion, the waves cannot arise. The ocean itself is nothing but waves, and waves are nothing but the ocean. The whole ocean is wet, also all the waves are wet. The waves are a metaphor for phenomena, while the ocean refers to the nature of enlightenment. As the ocean water is impermanent, it creates myriad waves; and each wave itself is the whole ocean water, which is entirely wet. It is likened to the permanent nature that pervades everything.

“Because ordinary persons and heretics believe in the heretical view of permanence, and because śrāvakas mistake the permanence of *nirvāṇa* for something impermanent, eight inverted views arise. In order to refute these biased views, the Buddha preached in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* the ultimate doctrine of the Buddhist teaching, that is true permanence, true happiness, true self, and true purity. Since you have now misinterpreted the Buddha’s instruction, even though you may read the sūtra a thousand times, what benefit will you get out of it?”

All of a sudden Zhang awoke to full enlightenment and submitted a stanza:

In order to refute the biased view of impermanence,
 The Buddha preached the permanent nature.
 He who does not know that such a preaching is only a skillful means,
 Is likened to the child who picks up pebbles and considers them to be
 jewels.

Without any effort of my own,
 The buddha-nature manifests itself.
 This is not what my master gave me,
 Also I attained nothing.

“You have now thoroughly realized,” said the Holy Master, “and hereafter you should name yourself Zhiche 志徹.” Zhiche paid homage to the patriarch and departed.

Shenhui 神會 then was a thirteen-year-old boy. He came from Yuchuan to pay homage to the Holy Master. “Did you bring along your original face? If you did, you may know the owner.” “As Shenhui holds the principle, what is seeing is the owner,” Shenhui replied. “How does a novice dare to say so!” Thereupon the Holy Master struck him three times and asked, “Do you hurt or not when I strike you.” “Hurt or no hurt,” said Shenhui. “I also see or I do not see,” the Holy Master replied. “How is it that you see or you do not see?” Shenhui asked again. The patriarch addressed him:

“What I see are my own faults. What I do not see are right and wrong, good and evil, done by others. This is what I see and I do not see. Now tell me what you mean by ‘hurt or no hurt.’ If you do not hurt, you would be like a piece of wood or stone. On the other hand, if you hurt and anger is aroused, then you are the same as ordinary person. To see and not to see are two extremes. Also to hurt and not to hurt are origination and annihilation. Not seeing the inherent nature, how dare you argue over the dharma?” Shenhui deeply apologized and made obeisance.

One day the Holy Master said to the assembly, “I have one thing that has no name and no letter. However, it is a huge column that

props up heaven and earth. It is as bright as the sun and the moon; it is as dark as black pitch. Although it is in the motion all the time, it cannot be grasped. Can any of you tell me what this thing is?” Shenhui stepped out of the crowd and said, “It is the source of all the buddhas, and the buddha-nature of Shenhui.” “I have told you in advance,” said the Holy Master, “that it has no name or letter. Nevertheless you named it the source of all the buddhas, and the buddha-nature. Even if you become a master of our school and deliver sentient beings, you will be a dhyāna scholar of conceptual understanding.” Later Shenhui went to Luoyang, where he widely propagated the teaching of the Caoqi school.

Emperor Zhongzong of the Tang dynasty sent the courtier Xuejian 薛簡 with an edict to invite the Holy Master. But the master declined the royal invitation, feigning illness. “Dhyāna masters in the capital,” Xuejian said, “unanimously advise people to meditate in the sitting position to attain samādhi. May I hear the teaching of Your Holiness?” The Holy Master answered, “The path is to be realized by the mind, and does not depend on the sitting position. The sūtra says that it is wrong to assert that Great Enlightenment sits or reclines. Why? Because the Tathāgata’s dhyāna of purity implies neither coming nor going, neither arising nor ceasing. All dharmas are calm and empty, and such is the Tathāgata’s seat of purity. Why do you consider knowledge to be the path!”

Xuejian said, “When I return to the capital, His Majesty will certainly ask me to give a report. Please give me the essence of your teaching so that I can convey it to the His Majesty and Buddhist scholars in the capital. As the flame of one lamp may kindle hundreds or thousands of others, so the ignorant will be enlightened and light will produce light without end.” “The Path implies neither light nor darkness,” replied the Holy Master. “Light and darkness signify the idea of relativism. Saying that light produces light without end is not correct, because there is an end. Therefore the *Vimalakirtinirdeśa* says, ‘The path is incomparable, since it is beyond all relativity.’”³⁷ “Light signifies wisdom,” argued Xuejian, “and darkness implies defilement.

If a practitioner of the path does not eradicate defilements with the aid of wisdom, how can he free himself from the beginningless wheel of birth and death?" "Kleśas (defilements) are bodhi," replied the Holy Master, "and the two are the same and not different. To break up kleśas with wisdom is the teaching of the two vehicles, of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas."

"What is the teaching of the Mahāyāna school?" asked Xuejian. "From the point of view of ordinary persons," replied the Patriarch, "enlightenment and ignorance are two separate things. Wise men who realize thoroughly the inherent nature know that they are of the same nature. This nondual nature is what is called the real nature, which neither decreases in the case of ordinary persons nor increases in the case of the enlightened sage and which is neither disturbed in a state of annoyance nor calm in a state of samādhi. It is neither permanent nor impermanent; it neither goes nor comes; it is not to be found outside or inside, or in the space between the two. It is beyond existence and nonexistence; its nature and its phenomena are always in a state of suchness; it is permanent and immutable. Such is the path."

Xuejian asked again, "How is your teaching different from the teaching of the heretics?" "In the teaching of heretics," answered the Holy Master, "nonexistence means the end of existence, while existence is used in contrast with nonexistence. What they mean by nonexistence is not actually annihilation and what they call existence does not really exist. What I mean by 'beyond existence and nonexistence' is this: ultimately it does not exist, however it exists in a conventional sense because it exists dependently. If you wish to know the essential point of my teaching, you should free yourself from all thoughts, good ones as well as bad; then your mind will be in a state of purity, calm and serene all the time, and its efficiencies will be as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges." Xuejian suddenly attained enlightenment, and returned to the royal palace to report what the patriarch had said to His Majesty.

In the same year, on the third day of the ninth moon, an edict

was issued praising the Patriarch, which reads:

On account of old age and illness, the patriarch declined our invitation to come to the capital. Devoting his life to the practice of Buddhism for the benefit of people, he is the nation's field of merit. Like Vimalakīrti in Vaiśāli, he widely spreads the Mahāyāna teaching, transmits the doctrine of the Dhyāna school, and expounds the nondual law. Through the medium of Xuejian, to whom the patriarch has imparted the buddha-knowledge, we are fortunate enough to have a chance to understand for ourselves the teaching of the Supreme Vehicle. In appreciation of the graciousness of the patriarch, we present to him herewith a monastic robe and a crystal bowl. The prefect of Shaozhou is hereby ordered to renovate his monastery, which is to be named Guo'en.

13. The Nirvāṇa of the Holy Master

In the seventh moon of the year of Renzi, the first year of the Taiji, the Holy Master urged them to finish the construction of Guo'en monastery, with the instruction that the work should be completed as soon as possible. In the sixth moon of the following year, the construction was finished. On the first day of the seventh moon, the Holy Master assembled his disciples and addressed them, “I am going to leave this world by the eighth moon. If you have any doubts, please ask me in time so that I can clear them up for you. After my departure, there will be no one to teach you.”

Hearing this, all the disciples shed tears except Shenhui who remained unperturbed. The patriarch addressed them as follows: “Shenhui is the only one here who has attained the stage of mind that sees no difference between sorrow and happiness. What are you crying for now? I know where I shall go. Otherwise, I could not tell you beforehand what will happen to me. If you know whether I shall go, you won’t cry. In the dharma nature, there is neither coming nor going. Listen to my stanza:

All things are unreal,
 So you need not suffer hardship to discover reality.
 He who believes in the reality of objects,
 Is bound by this concept, which is entirely illusive.
 He who realizes the inherent nature within himself,
 Knows that the true mind is to be sought apart from phenomena.
 If one’s mind is bound by illusory phenomena,
 Where is reality to be found, when all phenomena are unreal?
 Sentient beings are in motion,

While inanimate objects are stationary.
 He who trains himself to be motionless,
 Gets no benefit other than making himself an inanimate object.
 If you find true immobility,
 It would be found within activity.
 In inanimate objects, the seed of buddhahood is not to be found.
 One who is adept in the discrimination of various characteristics of
 dharmas,
 Abides immovably in the first principle.
 Seeing in this way, all is the functioning of *tathatā* (suchness).
 Practitioners of the path should not attach yourselves to birth and
 death.
 Disputes are alien to our school,
 For they are incompatible with the path.”

(Abbreviated translation)

Having heard the stanza, they concentrated their minds into authentic practice and refrained from religious controversies. The Holy Master further addressed them, “Hereafter, the robe and begging bowl are no longer to be transmitted, because you are all faithful in carrying out the lofty goal of our school. According to the stanza of the First Patriarch, Bodhidharma, the robe and begging bowl need not be handed down. The stanza reads:

The object of my coming to this land,
 Was to transmit the dharma for the deliverance of sentient beings.
 When five petals come out of one flower,
 The fruit will be produced spontaneously.

The Holy Master added, “Those who wish to attain the all-knowing knowledge of a buddha should know the *samādhi* of specific objects and the single-practice *samādhi*.³⁸ In all circumstances, we should free ourselves from attachment to objects, and our attitude toward them should be neutral and indifferent. Let neither success nor

failure, neither profit nor loss, worry us. Let us be calm and serene, simple and dispassionate. On all occasions, whether we are standing, walking, sitting or reclining, let us be absolutely straightforward. Then, remaining in our sanctuary, and without the least movement, we shall virtually be in the kingdom of Pure Land. Such is the single-practice samādhi.

“One who has perfected these two forms of samādhi may be liken to ground where seeds have been sown. The seeds receive nourishment and spontaneously develop, just as these two samādhis do. My preaching to you also may be likened to the seasonable rain, and the buddha nature within you may be likened to the seed. So all of you will certainly attain the fruition of buddhahood. Here is my stanza:

The land of mind embraces all seeds,
 Which will sprout upon the coming of the rain.
 Once the flower of the doctrine is realized,
 The fruit of enlightenment is bound to be reaped.

The Holy Master said again, “The dharma is nondual, and so is the mind. The path is pure and beyond all forms. You should not meditate on quietude or keep the mind blank.” On the eighth day of the seventh moon, the Holy Master gave the sudden order to his disciples, “I am going to return to Xinzhou; get ready for my trip.” All the assembly entreated the patriarch to stay. “It is natural that I should go, for death is the inevitable outcome of birth, and all buddhas have to go through death in this world. My body also must be laid down somewhere,” answered the Holy Master. “After your visit to Xinzhou,” asked the assembly, “will you eventually return here?” The master replied, “Fallen leaves return to where the root is. When I come back, there will be no leaves.”

On the third day of the eighth moon of the year of Guizhou, the second year of the Xiantian era, the Holy Master addressed his disciples at Guo’en monastery, “All of you please sit down. I am going

to say good-bye.” Thereupon, Fahai spoke to the patriarch, “Your Holiness, please leave to posterity definite instructions so that people in delusion may realize the buddha-nature.” “Listen carefully,” the Holy Master replied, “If people realize the buddha-nature of sentient beings, they will attain enlightenment; otherwise, they will fail to attain buddhahood, no matter how many eons of time they spend. Now let me demonstrate the inherent nature and the enlightenment of the inherent nature. Knowing buddha means nothing more than knowing sentient beings. It is sentient beings who are ignorant of the buddha; it is not the buddhas who are ignorant of sentient beings.”

“When sentient beings realize the inherent nature, they are buddhas. If a buddha is deluded in his inherent nature, he is then an ordinary person. When purity in the inherent nature of mind is crooked or depraved, you are an ordinary being with buddha-nature latent in you. On the other hand, when you direct your mind to purity and straightforwardness even for one moment, you are a buddha. If the buddha is not to be sought within our mind, where else shall we find the real buddha? Never doubt that buddha is within your own mind. Since all things or phenomena are the products of our minds, the sūtra says, ‘When the mind arises, things come into being; when the mind disappears, they too cease to exist.’³⁹ Before imminently parting from you, I will leave you a stanza. Those who understand its meaning will realize the inherent nature of mind and attain buddhahood.

The inherent nature, or *tathatā*, is the real buddha,
 While heretical views and the three poisons are Māra.
 Provided with the right views, enlightenment is within us.
 When our nature is dominated by the three poisons,
 We are said to be possessed by Māra.
 But when right views eliminate these poisons from our minds,
 Māra will be transformed into a real buddha.
 The dharmakāya, the sambhogakāya, and the nirmāṇakāya,
 These three bodies emanate from one another.

One who is able to realize this fact intuitively,
 Has sown the seed, and will reap the fruit of enlightenment.
 It is from the nirmāṇakāya that our pure nature emanates,
 Within the former, the latter is to be found.
 Guided by pure nature, the nirmāṇakāya treads the right path,
 And will someday attain to the sambhogakāya, perfect and infinite.
 The pure nature is an outgrowth of our sensual instincts;
 By getting rid of sensuality, we attain the pure dharmakāya.
 When our temperaments are such that we are no longer the slaves of
 the five sense objects,
 And when we have realized the inherent nature even for one moment
 only,
 Then truth will be known to us.
 If we are so fortunate as to be the followers of the sudden school in
 this life,
 All of a sudden we shall see the lord (*bhagavat*) of our inherent nature.
 One who seeks the buddha by practicing certain doctrines,
 Does not know where the real buddha is to be found.
 One who is able to realize the truth within one's own mind,
 Has sown the seed of buddhahood.
 One who has not realized the inherent nature and seeks the buddha
 outside,
 Is a fool motivated by wrong desires.
 I have hereby left to posterity the teaching of the Sudden School,⁴⁰
 For the salvation of all sentient beings who care to practice it.
 Hear me, future disciples,
 Your time will have been badly wasted
 If you neglect to put this teaching into practice.”

Having recited the stanza, he further said, “Take care of yourselves. After I have passed away, do not follow worldly custom and cry and lament. Those who accept messages of condolence and wear mourning clothes are not my disciples. These are contrary to the orthodox teaching. You should know your own minds, or the

buddha nature, that neither rests nor moves, is subject to neither origination nor annihilation, neither comes nor goes, neither affirms nor denies. Lest you should fail to catch my meaning, I repeat it again. After my death, if you carry out my instructions and practice them, my absence will make no difference. On the other hand, if you go against my teaching, no benefit would be obtained, even if I continued to stay in this world." Then he uttered another stanza:

Being composed, the enlightened one cultivates no good.
Being vivacious, he commits no evil.
Calm and serene, he severs seeing and hearing.
Without hindrances, his mind clings to nothing.

Having recited his death stanza, he sat upright until the third watch of the night, when he told his disciples, "Now I am going," and after a while passed away. At this time a strange fragrance pervaded the monastery and a white rainbow arose from the earth. The trees turned white and the birds and beasts cried mournfully.

(Translation of the rest is omitted)

Notes

Preface

1 *Lengyan jing* (楞嚴經, *Śūramgama Sūtra*) *Taisho Tripitaka* (T) 945:19. 111a24. “諸可還者，自然非汝。不汝還者，非汝而誰？” The main theme of the *Śūramgama Sūtra* is presented in a dialogue of the Buddha and his disciple Ananda as follows: (The Buddha answered), “Every phenomenon and thing has its own basis (or reason) of existence (or its existential cause). However, to what does your marvelously bright true mind (妙明真心) belong, which perceives those things and events? What belongs to the external world is definitely not you, whereas what does not belong to external world is nothing but you, isn’t it?” In other words, the true nature is beyond the realm of existence. Even if it rejects conceptual thoughts and words, it is not totally nothing, because it produces myriad things in this world depending on cause and conditions.

2 This does not seem to be the precise citation but the description of the scene from the *Lengyan jing* in which the Buddha inquires of Ānanda as he raises his golden fist. (See “問環師此處亦云，金拳舉處，直下要識本明塵相，未除依舊認賊爲子，豈不徹了此意。” X275:12. 207a07.) The mind that recognizes objects is not one’s true mind but the shadow of the mind. That is, conceptual thought is entirely different from the true mind. Sentient beings, deluded by conceptual thought, lose their true nature of mind and fall into everlasting transmigration.

3 *Yuanjue jing* T842:17. 917b09. “居一切時不起妄念，於諸妄心亦不息滅。” This discourse is preceded by the Mahāyāna doctrine of non-duality [不二]. According to the Mahāyāna principle of emptiness [空], ignorance is not different from wisdom; ignorance itself is nothing but liberation. Therefore, whenever delusive mind occurs, one should not suppress it but try to see the true nature of mind.

4 *Lengyan jing*, T945:19. 147b4. “當知虛空生汝心內，猶如片雲點太清裏。”

5 The *Lengyan jing* advocates the tenet to the effect that the true nature of mind is the fundamental basis of all beings. It is not an existence in the

ordinary sense of the word because it is devoid of name or form. It is made neither by spontaneity nor by cause and conditions. At the same time, it is by spontaneity or cause and conditions that all things are originated from the true nature of mind. Obviously the true mind is different from things, but as it is manifested in them, they are not different from them. See “當知，如是 精覺妙明，非因非緣，亦非自然，非不自然，無非不非，無是非是，離一切相，卽一切法。” T945:19. 112c27.

6 The *Lengyan jing* says, “The world of dharma is filled with the nature of enlightenment that is pure and serene. Truly how marvelous the world of enlightenment is! In the beginning, the brightness of wisdom illuminates objects. Then the bright nature of true mind disappears when objects emerge. Owing to delusion, the space comes into being. Depending on the space, the world is established. Because of conceptual thought, lands of sentient beings are created. Due to perception, sentient beings come into being.” T945:19. 130a14. “元明照生所，所立照性亡。迷妄有虛空，依空立世界。想澄成國土，知覺乃衆生。”

7 A metaphor for causality (Skt. *pratītyasamutpāda*), or the *Mahāyāna* world view. A bubble does not have its own being [Skt. *svabhāva*] because it is produced by cause and conditions. Therefore in the strict sense, we may say, a bubble does not exist with respect to its inherent nature.

8 The Three Realms of Existence signify the realms into which sentient beings are reborn: viz., sensual, form, and formless realms. See “覺海性澄圓，圓澄覺元妙；元明照生所，所立照性亡。空生大覺中，如海一漚發，有漏微塵國，皆從空所生；漚滅空本無，況復諸三有？” T945:19. 130a17.

9 The true nature of mind is to the space what the sea is to a bubble. A bubble forms on the sea, so the bubble is one thing and the sea another. Nevertheless, the bubble is not different from the sea as the former is not independent of the latter. In the same manner, space is not an entity independent of mind, much less the things in that space. As the *Lengyan jing* says: “If even one person among you finds the truth and returns to the source, then all of space in the ten directions is obliterated. How could the worlds within that space fail to be destroyed as well?”(汝等一人發真歸元，此十方空皆悉銷殞。云何空中所有國土而不振裂?) T945:19. 147b04. (English translation from the Buddhist Text Translation Society's draft, *Shuragama Sutra*, by Hsuan Hua.

10 The Huayan ontology of causation as described in the verse of the *Huayan isheng fajie tu* 華嚴一乘法界圖 Abbr. *Faxing ji* 法性偈 “不守自性隨緣成” T191:32.

11 A *Mahāyāna* tenet mainly delivered in the *Treatise on the Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* 大乘起信論.

Chapter I The Buddha and Sentient Beings

- 1 The six coordinates (六合) refer to the “four cardinal directions” of north, south, east and west, plus the “zenith” and “nadir.”
- 2 This passage is quoted out of a Zen verse reading “人人脚下清風拂箇箇面前明月白” by Hamheodang Gi Hwa (涵虛堂 己和, 1376–1433) in his *Geumgang-gyeong-ogahae-seoleui* 金剛經五家解說宣
- 3 In the printed edition of the text, Calm illumination [寂默] appears as Calm silence. [寂默] I believe this is a misprint.
- 4 The earth is divided into four continents in each of the cardinal directions: Videha (east), Jambudvīpa (south), Godānīya (west), and Uttarakuru (north).
- 5 The Threefold Bodies [Trikāya] or nature of the Buddha, i.e. the Dharmakāya (法身), Sambogakāya (報身), and Nirmāṇakāya (化身). The three are defined respectively as the Buddha-body in its essential nature (自性身); his body of bliss (受用身), which he receives for his own use and enjoyment; and his body of transformation (變化身), by which he can appear in any form.
- 6 The corpus of truth, or Dharmakāya.
- 7 Dongjeokgang; Another name for the Hangang 漢江, that runs through Seoul. It is also called the Dongjakgang 銅雀江.
- 8 Expressing the essential unity of all things; a tenet of the Huayan and Tiantai schools.
- 9 Six rebirth destinies: (六道): 1) naraka-gati (地獄道), the hells. 2) pretagati (餓鬼道), hungry ghosts. 3) tiryagyoni-gati(畜生道), animals. 4) asura-gati (阿修羅道), malevolent nature spirits. 5) manusya-gati (人道), human existences 6) deva-gati (天道), heavenly existence.
- 10 The four modes of birth (catur-yoni, 四生): 1) 胎 or 腹生, jarāyuja, viviparous, as with mammals; 2) 卵生 andaja, oviparous, as with birds; 3) 濕生 or 寒熱和合生, sarīsvedaja, moisture- or water-born, as with worms and fishes; 4) 化生, aupapāduka, metamorphic, as with moths from the chrysalis, or devas, hell denizens, and the first beings born into a newly evolved world.
- 11 Here dharma body refers to the original nature.
- 12 Lit. kalyāṇamitra (正士, 善知識): a friend of virtue, or spiritual mentor.
- 13 A view in traditional Indian thought that advocates a permanent reality, such as ātman or brahman.
- 14 fifty-five stages (五十五位); There are other versions, and numbers and

character of the stages vary in different schools. This is the process of becoming a Buddha; of these fifty-one are to bodhisattvahood, the fifty-second to Buddhahood. The order and content of fifty-two stages are as follows; ten stages of faith (+信) - ten stages of abode (+住) - ten stages of practice (+行) - ten stages of transference of merit (+回向) - ten stages of ground (+地) - the stage of equal enlightenment to the Buddha (等覺) - marvelous enlightenment (妙覺).

- 15 Maitreya (彌勒): lit. “friendly, benevolent.” The next Buddha, now in the Tuṣita heaven, who is to come 5,000 years after the nirvāṇa of Śākyamuni, or, according to another reckoning, after 4,000 heavenly years, i.e. 5,670,000,000 human years. His two epithets are the Benevolent One (慈氏) and Ajita (阿逸多), Invincible.
- 16 Amitā/Amitābha (阿彌陀): lit. “boundless, infinite.” Translated as “immeasurable” (無量). “Amitābha” (阿彌陀) “boundless light” (無量光佛) or “boundless age” (無量壽佛). His mercy and wisdom are perfect. On his left is Avalokiteśvara (Guanyin, 觀音菩薩), who is the embodiment of great compassion; On his right is Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Dashizhi, 大勢至菩薩), the embodiment of wisdom.
- 17 Avalokiteśvara (觀世音): Regarder of the world’s sounds, or cries, the so-called Goddess of Mercy.
- 18 Dharmadhātu (法界): 1) A name for “things” in general, noumenal or phenomenal; for the physical universe, or any portion or phase of it. 2) The unifying underlying spiritual reality regarded as the ground or cause of all things, the absolute form which all proceeds. It is one of the eighteen dhātus. There are categories of 3, 4, 5 and 10.
- 19 The capacity that discriminates (自證分): The Dharmalakṣana school (法相宗) divides the function of cognition into four, i.e. mental phenomena (相分), discriminating such phenomena (見分), the capacity that discriminates (自證分), the proof or assurance of that capacity (證自證分).
- 20 The heart of the Buddhist causality lies in the abovementioned word “truly” (absolutely or ultimately). Things, which arise depending on cause and conditions without their own being do not exist “truly.” Also when things disappear, as the cause and conditions that support them vanish, they are not truly non-existence. This is the ontological middle path (中道) of Buddhism, that is, neither permanently existent nor non-existent (非有非無), but conditionally generated.
- 21 The view of annihilationism (斷見). An extreme view, in distinction to its counterpart eternalism (常見). The former indicates the view holding that things perishes forever when cause and conditions fall apart. The latter

means the view holding that things exist forever irrespective of cause and conditions.

22 It refers to the middle path (中道) of being neither existent nor non-existent (非有非無). Fire exists when cause and conditions come together, while it disappears when they fall apart. As it depends on cause and conditions, we cannot say it is truly existent (非有). Since whenever cause and conditions come together it appears, we cannot say it is truly non-existent (非無). The middle path further denies the state that is neither empty nor existent (但空但有) as cited below.

23 T945:19. 147b4. “當知虛空生汝心內，猶如片雲點太清裏，況諸世界在虛空耶?” Translated by Hsuan Hua. (Buddhist Text Translation Society's draft, *Shuragama Sutra*)

24 Ālayavijnāna (阿賴耶識): The receptacle intellect or consciousness. It is the store or totality of consciousness, both relative and absolute, impersonal in the whole, temporally personal or individual in its separated parts, always reproductive. It is described as the fundamental mind-consciousness of conscious beings, which lays hold of all the experiences of the individual life; and which as a storehouse holds the seeds of all affairs; it is at the root of all experiences, of the skandhas, and of all things on which sentient beings depend for existence. Mind is another term for it, as it both stores and gives rise to all seeds of phenomena and knowledge.

25 The eighth consciousness is called indeterminate because it is neutral between good and evil.

26 Four kalpas: 1) vivarta-kalpa (成劫), consisting of twenty small kalpas during which worlds and the beings on them are formed. 2) vivarta-siddha kalpa (住劫), kalpa of abiding or existence. The sun and moon rise, sexes are differentiated, heroes arise, the four castes are formed, social life evolves. 3) saṁvarta-kalpa (壞劫), that of destruction, consisting of sixty-four small kalpas when fire, water, and wind destroy everything except the fourth dhyāna heaven. 4) saṁvarta-siddha kalpa (空劫), the kalpa of complete annihilation.

27 三八木: In the principle of the five elements, the number 'three' indicates the positive wood, and 'eight' the negative wood.

28 二七火: In the principle of the five elements, the number 'two' indicates the negative fire, and 'seven' the positive fire.

29 一六水: In the principle of the five elements, the number 'one' indicates the positive water, and 'six' the negative water.

30 The highest heaven of the plane of form.

31 Saptaratna (七寶): gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, agate, rubies of red pearls,

cornelian.

32 The Lotus-Womb world (華藏世界): the Pure Land of Vairocana. Also the Pure Land of all Buddhas in their sambogakāya, or enjoyment bodies. Above the wind or air circle is a sea of fragrant water, in which floats the thousand petal lotus with its infinite variety of worlds; hence the meaning is the Lotus which contains a store of myriads of worlds.

33 Referring to the “trichiliocosm” (Tri-sahaśra-mahā-sahaśra-loka-dhātu, 大千世界=三千大天世界): Mt. Sumeru and its seven surrounding continents, eight seas, and ring of iron mountains from one small world; ten of these form a small chiliocosm (小天世界); a thousand of these small chiliocosms form a medium chiliocosm (中天世界); a thousand of these form a great chiliocosm (大千世界), which thus consists of 1,000,000,000 small worlds. The 三千 indicates the above three kinds of thousands, therefore 三千大天世界 is the same as 大千世界, which is one Buddha world.

34 The five lay precepts (五戒) prohibiting killing (殺生), stealing (偷盜), adultery (邪淫), lying (妄語), and intoxicating liquors (飲酒). The observance of these five precepts ensures rebirth in the human realm.

35 The ten virtues or good deeds (+善), defined as the non-committal of the ten evil deeds (+惡), such as killing (殺生), stealing (偷盜), adultery (邪淫), lying (妄語), double-tongue (兩舌), fancy talk (綺語), filthy language (惡語), covetousness (貪), anger (瞋), perverted views (邪見).

36 Considering the context here, “heaven (天堂)” must be indicating the four heavens of the realm of desire (欲界四天).

37 Āsrava (有漏) means outflow or discharge of the afflictions (煩惱, *kleśa*). So whatever is afflicted is āsrava. All conditioned things are of this nature, hence it means whatever is in the stream of birth and death, and thus involves mortal life. And dhyāna (禪定) is meditative absorption, a subsection of concentration (samādhi (三昧)).

38 The four dhyāna heavens (四禪天): The division of the eighteen brahmalokas into four dhyānas. The disciple attains rebirth in one of these heavens according to which of the four levels of dhyāna one has experienced in the previous lifetime.

39 The four immaterial or formless heavens (四空 or 四無色界), arūpadhātu.

40 The three poisons (三毒): concupiscence or greed (貪); anger, hate, or resentment (瞋); and stupidity or ignorance (痴). These three are the source of all the passion and delusions.

41 This condition is considered to be in primal action, the stirring of the perceptive faculty.

42 The three refined or subtle conceptions in contrast with the six cruder

or coarser concepts, in the *Awakening of Faith* (大乘起信論). T1666:32. 577a7–21. The three are ignorance (無明業相), ability to perceive (能見相) and the object perceived (境界相). Among the three, the first is associated with substance (體), the second and the third with function (用), but both must co-exist just like water and waves.

43 The six coarser stages arising from the three finer stages (三細) which in turn are produced by the unenlightened condition of ignorance (無明). A list of six stages is enumerated in the text.

44 Knowledge or consciousness of like and dislike arising from mental conditions.

45 Consciousness of pain and pleasure causes continuous responsive memory.

46 Attachment to things (法執) means holding to things as realities, i.e., the false tenet that things are real. Inborn delusion (俱生惑) means inherent doubt in contrast to acquired doubt or delusion. Thus 法執俱生惑 indicates “the attachment to things as inborn delusion.”

47 The five aggregates (pañcaskandha, 五蘊=五陰): The five aggregates that combine to form a sentient being, and especially a human. 1) rūpa (色), form, matter, the physical form related to the five organs of sense; 2) vedanā (受), reception, sensation, feeling, the functioning of the mind or senses in connection with affairs and things; 3) sañjñā (想), conception, or discernment, the discriminative function of mind; 4) saṃskāra (行), conditioning factors, the functioning of mind in its processes regarding like and dislike, good and evil, etc.; and 5) vijñāna (識), mental faculty in regard to perception and cognition, discriminative of affairs and things. The first is said to be physical, the other four mental. The second through fourth elements are associated with mental concomitants (心所); the fifth element is associated with the faculty or nature of the mind (心王, *manas*).

48 Vajradhātu (金剛界): It is the wisdom of Vairocana in its indestructibility and activity. It arises from the Garbhadhātu (胎藏界), the womb or store of Vairocana. Vajradhātu and Garbhadhātu are depicted by the esoteric school as two *mandalas*.

49 Abhijñā, or ṣaḍabhijñā (神變=神通): The six supernatural powers (六神通) or universal powers acquired by a Buddha or Arhat through the fourth degree of dhyāna. The southern Buddhists only have first five (五神通, pañcābhijñā), which are also known in China. The sixth is the āśravakṣaya-jñāna (漏盡通), supernatural consciousness of the waning of vicious propensities. The five are: 1) divyacakṣus (天眼通): deva-vision or instantaneous view of anything anywhere in the form-realm, viz., clairvoyance. 2) divyaśrotra (天耳通): the ability to hear any sound anywhere, viz., clairaudience. 3) paracitta-jñāna

(他心通): ability to know the thoughts of all other minds,, viz., telepathy. 4) pūrvanivāsānusmṛti-jñāna (宿命通): knowledge of all former existences of self and others. 5) ḥddhi-sāksātkrīyā (神足通): power to be anywhere or do anything at will. Powers similar to these are also attainable by meditation, incantations, and drugs, hence heterodox masters also may possess them.

50 The Three Calamities (三災): they are of two kinds, minor and major. The minor, appearing during a decadent world-period, are sword, pestilence and famine; the major, which lead to destruction of the world, are fire, water and wind. Here the term refers to the major kind.

51 This is the Sinitic version of the five elements. Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy includes another classification: the five greats (五大) of earth, water, fire, air, and ether (or space 空).

52 The intermediate existence (中陰身, *antarābhava*): the transitional stage between death in the current life and rebirth in the subsequent life. This stage varies from seven to forty-nine days. According to Younseong, however, some intermediate existences may stay in the stage for tens of years.

53 Kāmadhātu (欲界): The first realms of the *trailoka* (三界). The realm of sensuality, or desire for food, sleep, and sex, consisting of souls in the hells, hungry ghosts, animals, asuras, human beings, and the six heavens of the sensual realm. It is so named because the beings in these realms are dominated by sensuality.

54 Rūpadhātu (色界): It is also named rūpāvacara or rūpaloka and refers to the second of the *trailoka* (三界). It is divided into four *dhyānas* and nineteen heavens which are the first *dhyāna* of Brahma's group consisting of Brahmakāyika (梵身天), Brahmapāriṣadya (梵衆天), Mahābrahma (大梵天); the second *dhyāna* consisting of Parītta-ābhā (少光天), Apramāṇa-ābhā (無量光天), Ābhāsvara (光音天); the third *dhyāna* consisting of Parīttaśubha (少淨天), Apramāṇaśubha (無量淨天), Śubhakṛtsna (遍淨天); and the fourth *dhyāna* consisting of Anabhraka (無雲天), Punyaprasava (福生天), Br̥hatphala (廣果天), Asamjñisattva (無想天). and Śuddhāvāsakāyika (five heavens of the Pure Abode, 淨居天). The names of the Pure Abode are Avṛ̥ha (無煩天), Atapa (無熱天), Sudṛ̥ṣa (善現天), Sudarśana (善見天), and Akaṇiṣṭha (色究竟天). The life of beings in this realm lasts from one-fourth of a *mahākalpa* to 16,000 *mahākalpas*, and their average stature is from one-half a *yojana* to 16,000 *yojanas*. The inhabitants have transcended the desire for sex or food.

55 Arūpadhātu (無色界): The formless heavens, which are immaterial and consisting only of mentality in meditative absorption. It is also divided into four realms, which are Ākāśānāntyāyatana (Endless space, 空無邊處天),

Vijñānānāntyāyatana (Infinite consciousness, 識無邊處天), Ākiñcayanyāyatana (Nothing whatever, 無所有處天), Naivasamjñānāsaijñāyatana (Neither perception nor non-perception, 非想非非想天).

- 56 The three evil bourns (惡趣) of animals, hungry ghosts, and hell-denizens; to which some add asuras as a fourth.
- 57 The three kinds of dāna, i.e., charity (三檀布施=三施): giving of goods (財施), of the dharma (法施), of fearlessness (無畏施, abhaya).
- 58 The samādhi which the Tathāgata enters (大定=大寂定). The samādhi of perfect tranquility and concentration with total absence of any perturbing element.
- 59 Tiraygyoni (傍生): Born of or as an animal. Born to walk on one side, i.e., belly downwards, because of transgressions in a past existence.
- 60 Gandharva (乾闥婆): In Indian Hindu, Buddhist, and even Jain mythology, gandharvas are related to the wilderness as well as to the creative arts, particularly music.
- 61 Sensibility (情): feelings, passions, desires, affections, sentience. Especially in Mahāyāna Buddhism, it denotes phenomenal or empirical cognition as in “情有理無,” which means empirically existing, in reality non-existent.
- 62 Perception (想): to think or to reflect. Also one of the five skandhas.
- 63 The five forbidden pungent roots (五辛菜 = 五葷): garlic, three kinds of onions, and leeks. If eaten raw, they are said to cause irritability of temper, and if eaten cooked, to act as an aphrodisiac; moreover, when reading the sūtras, the breath of the eater will drive away the good spirits.
- 64 The intelligent spirit (神識) is identical to cognition or consciousness (識).
- 65 The faculty of mysterious pure form (淨妙色根): The intermediate-existence body, which is invisible to the naked eyes of ordinary human beings.
- 66 Jijeok-cho (知跡草): Its scientific name is unknown.
- 67 Cheombara-hwa (詹婆羅花): probably a native Indian herb.

Chapter II The Principle of Mind-Only Philosophy

- 1 The six heavens of the realm of subtle form (Kāmadhātu, 欲界六天): Cāturmahārājika (the four great kings, 四天王), Trāyastriṁśa (the heaven of the thirty-three gods, 三十三天 or 小忉利天), Yāma (夜摩天), Tuṣita (兜率天), Nirmāṇarati (化樂天), and Paranirmitavaśavartin (他化自在天).
- 2 In this context, dharmadhātu signifies original nature, or true mind.
- 3 Gu-sou (瞽瞍): the father of Emperor Shun. According to legend, Shun was treated very badly by his father, step-mother, and his half-brother, so that he had to flee to Lishan. He later returned and fed his hungry step-mother during a period of draught, forgetting all former injustice.
- 4 Emperor Shun 舜: In Chinese mythology, a legendary emperor (23rd century BCE) of the golden age of antiquity. Confucius singled him out as a model of integrity and virtue. His name is often associated with Emperor Yao 堯, his legendary predecessor.
- 5 Emperor Yao 堯: a legendary ruler in ancient Chinese mythology. At the age of fifteen, Yao began to assist his elder brother Emperor Zhi who gave the throne to Yao out of admiration for his ethics and talent. Later Yao handed over the crown to Shun.
- 6 Danzhu 丹朱: the son of Emperor Yao and his wife. He was considered incapable and not morally fit to inherit the throne. That is why Shun inherited the throne from Yao.
- 7 Shangjun 商均: the son of Emperor Shun. He, being unwise, failed to inherit the throne.
- 8 Yan Yuan 顏淵: He is better known as Yan Hui 顏回. Confucius's favorite student. He was younger than Confucius by 30 years. He became Confucius's disciple when he was very young. When he was 29, his hair turned completely white, and at age 32 he died. Confucius was deeply grieved over his early death.
- 9 Min Zi-Qian 閔子騫, a disciple of Confucius, lived in the country of Lu (魯) during the Spring-Autumn period (春秋時代, 770–476 B.C.). When he was young, his mother died and his father remarried. His step-mother had two children. In winter, she clothed her two sons in warm jackets made of cotten but Zi-Qian in a thin jacket made of reed. Later, his father noticed her cruelty and decided to divorce her. Thereupon Zi-Qian told his father crying, "With mother in the family, only one child suffers coldness. Should she be gone, all three children would freeze!" Having heard it, his step-mother repented her fault.

10 Mt. Sumeru (須彌山): Sumeru-parvata. The central mountain of every world system, of wondrous height and brilliance; at the top are Indra's heavens, below them are the four deva-lokas; surrounding it are eight circles of mountains and between them the eight seas, the whole forming nine mountains and eight seas.

11 Mahābrahmā (大梵天): the ninth heaven of the rūpa-dhatu. In this context, it might be an error of Mahāpadma or Padma, which are appropriated as names of hells. Mahāpadma (摩訶鉢特摩) is so called because the skin of inhabitant in the hell is frozen like great red lotus buds. In Padma (鉢特摩) the skin is frozen and bursts open like red lotus buds.

12 Tapana Hell (火湯地獄): the hell of liquid fire.

13 “生乳湯河者，身點斑雜作種種色。體極軟脆，猶如貴樂孩之身，其身長大過八肘量。” *Dabaoji jing*. T310:11. 616c10. As seen in the scripture, the being is said to be as tall as 8 cubit (肘), approximately 360 Cm.

14 Yaksā (夜叉): demons in the earth, or in the air, or in the lower heavens. They are malignant and violent, and devour human flesh.

15 Rākṣasa (羅刹): malignant spirits, demons; sometimes considered inferior to Yaksas, sometimes similar. They are described as terrifying, with black bodies, red hair, and green eyes, and as devourers of men.

16 Avīci Hell (阿鼻): the deepest of the eight hot hells, where the culprits suffer, die, and are instantly reborn to further suffering without interruption (無間). Thus, the Interminable Hell (無間地獄) mentioned above is identical to the Avīci Hell (阿鼻地獄).

17 The five heinous acts (pañcānantarya, 五逆): There are several versions under the same category according to schools or traditions. I. One of the most common listings include: patricide, matricide, killing arhat, shedding the blood of a Buddha, and causing schism in the saṅgha or monastic fraternity. The lightest of these sins is the first; the heaviest the last. II. Another group: 1) sacrilege, such as destroying temples, burning sūtras, stealing a Buddha's or a monk's things, inducing others to do so, or taking pleasure therein; 2) slander or abuse of the teaching of śrāvakas, pretyeka-buddhas, or bodhisattvas; 3) ill-treatment or killing of a monk; 4) any one of the five deadly sins given above; and 5) denial of the karmic consequences of ill deeds, acting or teaching others accordingly, and living an unceasingly evil life.

18 The ten grave evil deeds (daśākuśala, 十重 = 十惡 = 十不善): killing, stealing, adultery, lying, double-tongue, coarse language, filthy language, covetousness, anger, and perverted views. These acts produce the ten resultant evils.

19 The great three disasters (天地大三災): They are of two kinds, minor and major. The minor, appearing during a decadent world-period, are sword,

pestilence, and famine; the major, causing world-destruction, are fire, water, and wind.

20 Viviparous birth is the first of the four modes of birth (catur-yoni, 四生); the other three will be explained below.

21 '本師經' in the original text seems to be misprint. See "所謂無明, 未永斷故, 愛未棄故, 業未息故, 由是因緣, 能感後有. 所以者何, 業爲良田, 識爲種子, 愛爲溉灌, 無明無智, 無了無見之所覆蔽, 識便安住, 欲有色有, 無色有處." T765:17. 689c03.

22 "爾時, 父母貪愛俱極, 最後決定各出一滴濃厚精血. 二滴和合住母胎中合爲一段, 猶如熟乳凝結之時, 當於此處, 一切種子異熟所攝, 執受所依阿賴耶識和合依託." T1579:30. 283a01.

23 *Lengyan jing*, T945:19. 147b4. "流愛爲種 納想爲胎"

24 "若以色見我, 以音聲求我, 是人行邪道, 不能見如來." T235:08. 752a17.

25 *Lengyan jing*, T945:19. 139a10 "如土梟等附塊爲兒, 及破 鏡鳥以毒樹果抱爲其子, 子成, 父母皆遭其食, 其類充塞. 是名衆生十二種類."

26 Birth, aging, sickness, death, parting with what one loves, meeting with what one hates, unattained aims, and all the ills of the five skandhas.

27 The four dhyānas of emptiness (四空定=四無色定): The last four of the twelve dhyāna heavens. In the first, the mind becomes void and vast like space; in the second, the powers of perception and understanding are unlimited; in the third, the discriminative powers of mind are subdued; in the fourth, the realm of consciousness (or knowledge) without thought is reached. These four are considered both states of dhyāna, and heavens into which one who practices these forms of dhyāna may be born.

28 The four foundations of mindfulness (四念處觀): contemplating 1) the body (身), as impure and utterly filthy; 2) sensations (受), as always resulting in suffering; 3) states of mind (心) as impermanent, since they are merely one sensation after another; 4) mental factors (法), as being dependent and without a nature of their own. These four types of mindfulness negate the ideas of permanence (常), joy (樂), personality (我), and purity (靜).

29 It is not clear what the words, the organ of generation (生臟) and that of maturity (熟臟), mean.

30 The translater omitted a sentence, 'as they realize emptiness and formless of myriad things....' as it is incorrect viewed in the definition of the term.

31 The Enlightened One Amitābha Buddha (無量壽覺=無量壽佛) is equivalent to Amitābha Buddha, the Buddha Limitless Life.

32 *Pratyutpanna-samādhi* (般舟三昧): the samādhi in which the Buddhas of the ten directions are seen as clearly as the stars at night. Also called the constantly walking samādhi (常行三昧) because of the length of time

required, from seven to ninety days.

33 Mantra (神呪): divine or magical incantations.

34 *Yuanjue jing* T842:17. 921b12. “若諸衆生修於禪那，先取數門，心中了知生住滅念，分齊頭數，如是周遍四威儀中，分別念數無不了知，漸次增進乃至得知百千世界一滴之雨，猶如目覩所受用物；非彼所聞一切境界終不可取，是名三觀初首方便。”

35 *Yongjia zhengdaoge* 永嘉證道歌 T2014:48. 395c22. “六般神用空不空，一顆圓光色非色，淨五眼得五力，唯證乃知難可測。”

36 The four wisdoms (四智): the four forms of wisdom of the buddhas as presented in the Dharmalakṣaṇa school. 1) the great perfect mirror wisdom of Akṣobhya (大圓鏡智) 2) the universal wisdom of Ratnaketu (平等性智) 3) the profound observation wisdom of Amitābha (妙觀察智) 4) the accomplished wisdom of Amoghasiddhi (成所作智).

37 Abbr. of 八解脫 (aṣṭa-vimokṣa). 1) having form, he sees forms (內有色想觀諸色) 2) not perceiving inward form, he sees outward forms (內無色想觀外色) 3) he becomes resolved on what is lovely (淨解脫身作證具足住) 4) the station of endless space (入無邊空空無邊處具足住) 5) the station of infinite consciousness (入無邊識識無邊處具足住) 6) the station of nothing whatever (入無所有無所有處具足住) 7) the station of neither perception nor non-perception (入非想非非想處具足住) 8) the cessation of perception and feeling (入想受滅身作證具足住).

38 Ibid. T842:17. 395c29. “三身四智體中圓，八解六通心地印。”

39 *Dahui shuzhuang* T47. 822a28. “上堂，祖師道，眼若不睡諸夢自除，心若不異萬法一如。”

40 T235:08. 752b27. “不取於相，如如不動。”

41 Ibid. 752a17. “若以色見我，以音聲求我，是人行邪道，不能見如來。”

42 Ibid. 752b28. “一切有爲法，如夢·幻·泡·影，如露亦如電，應作如是觀。”

43 Ibid. 751b27. “過去心不可得，現在心不可得，未來心不可得。”

44 Ibid. 749b13. “無有定法名阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，亦無有定法，如來可說。”

45 *Lengyan jing*, T945:19. 111b09. “諸可還者自然非汝，不汝還者非汝而誰？”

46 Ibid. 112c27. “如是精覺妙明，非因非緣，亦非自然，非不自然，無非不非，無是非是，離一切相，即一切法。”

47 *Yuanjue jing*. T842:17. 914a20. “知幻即離，不作方便；離幻即覺，亦無漸次。”

48 Ibid. 913c03. “如來因地修圓覺者，知是空花，即無輪轉，亦無身心受生死，非作故無，本性無故。”

49 Ibid. 913c07. “是則名爲淨覺隨順。何以故？虛空性故，常不動故，如來藏中無起滅故，無知見故，如法界性究竟圓滿遍十方故。”

50 Ibid. 917b09. “居一切時不起妄念，於諸妄心亦不息滅，住妄想境不加了知，於無了知不辨真實。”

Chapter III The Right Path of Mind Training

1 Hwadu (話頭, Ch. huatou) is a story, dialogue, question, or statement, which is used in Seon practice to provoke the “Doubt” and test a student’s progress in Seon practice. It developed during the Tang dynasty (618–907) from the recorded collections of Seon masters, which quoted many stories of famous past Seon teachers’ encounter with their disciples or other interlocutors and then offering his own comment on it. Those stories and the accompanying comments were used to educate students, and broaden their insight into the Buddhist teachings.

Hwadu is also known as kong-an (公案) literally meaning “public notice,” or “public record” which serves as a metaphor for principles of reality beyond the private opinion of one person. There are said to be 1,700 kong-ans in all. The two major collections are the *Biyan lu* 碧巖錄, consisting of 100 kong-ans selected and commented on by a Chinese priest, Yuanwu (圓悟, 1063–1135), in 1125 on the basis of an earlier compilation; and the *Wumen guan* 無門關 a collection of 48 kong-ans compiled in 1228 by a Chinese priest Huikai (慧開, 1183–?).

2 The twelve types of discourse (+二部經典): 1) sūtra 2) geya 3) gāthā 4) nidāna 5) itivṛttaka 6) jātaka 7) adbhuṭa-dharma (abhidharma) 8) avadāna 9) upadeśa 10) udāna 11) vaipulya 12) vyākaraṇa.

3 Seon (禪: Ch. Chan, Jp. Zen) is a school of Mahāyāna Buddhism that originated in China during the Tang dynasty. Chinese Chan school was strongly influenced by Taoism and developed as a distinguished school of Chinese Buddhism. From China, Chan Buddhism spread, northeast to Korea, east to Japan, and south to Vietnam. Seon traces its roots to the Indian practice of Dhyana (“meditation”). Seon emphasizes insight into Buddha-nature. The teachings of Seon include various sources of Mahāyāna thought, especially Mind-only philosophy, the idea of tathāgatagarbha and the Huayan world-view, with their emphasis on Buddha-nature, totality, and the Bodhisattva-ideal. The Prajñāpāramitā literature and the Middle path also have been influential in the shaping of the tradition of Seon Buddhism.

4 One of the three places where Śākyamuni is said to have transmitted his teaching direct and without speech to Kāśyapa (三處傳心): The Buddha shares his seat with Kāśyapa in front of a stūpa (多子塔前半分坐).

5 The Buddha transmitted his teaching to Kāśyapa by a smile holding a

flower(拈花微笑) at Gr̥dhrakūta which is one of the three places mentioned in note 4.

6 Also one of the three places is under the twin Sāla trees where the Buddha after parinirvāṇa transmitted dharma to Kāśyapa by putting his feet out of the coffin (櫛示雙趺).

7 The three periods (三世): past, present and future.

8 *Junzhou dongshan wubenshansi yulu* T1986:47. 511a05. “有一物，上挂天下挂地，黑似漆，常在動用中，動用中收不得，且道過在甚麼處，”

9 *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* T2008:48. 357b19. “懷讓禪師，金州杜氏子也。初謁嵩山安國師，安發之曹溪參扣讓至禮拜，師曰：甚處來？曰，嵩山。師曰，什麼物，恁麼來？”

10 The distinction between good and bad, live and dead belongs to human beings, not to hwadus. The most important point in the contemplation of hwadu is whether it gives rise to real doubt (真疑) or not. That which creates real doubt is so called a live hwadu.

11 “趙州因僧問。如何是祖師西來意？師曰。庭前柏樹子。” X1295:65. 587b15.

A monk asked Zhaozhou “Why did Bodhidharma come from the West?” Zhaozhou said, “Cypress tree in the courtyard.”

12 “洞山初因僧問。如何是佛？師曰。麻三斤。” X1295:65. vol. 36.

A monk asked Dongshan, “What is Buddha?” Dongshan said, “Three *geun* of hemp.”

13 “雲門因僧問。如何是佛？師曰。乾屎橛。” X1295:65. 682a22.

Full conversation is represented in the text.

14 Zhaozhou (趙州, 778–897) was ordained as a monk at the age of 18. When he met Nanquan (南泉, 748–835) a successor of Mazu (馬祖, 709–788), Nanquan asked Zhaozhou, “What is the Way?” At the height of the dialogue between them, Zhaozhou attained enlightenment. Zhaozhou continued to practice under Nanquan until the latter’s death.

Subsequently, Zhaozhou began to travel throughout China, visiting the prominent Chan masters of the time. At the age of eighty, he finally settled in Guanyinyuan 觀音院, a ruined temple in northern China, for the next 40 years. Zhaozhou is regarded as the greatest Chan master of Tang dynasty. His lineage, however, died out quickly due to the many wars and frequent suppressions on Buddhism in China at the time. Many kong-ans in both the *Biyan lu* 碧巖錄 and the *Wumen guan* 無門關 concern Zhaozhou, with twelve cases in the former and five in the latter. He is, however, probably best known for the first kong-an in the *Wumen guan*: A monk asked Zhaozhou, “Has the dog Buddha-nature or not?” Zhaozhou said, “Wu (無).”

15 Dahui (大慧, 1089–1163) was a desciple of Yuanwu (圓悟, 1063–1135), and

was the 12th generation of the Linji school (臨濟宗) of Chan Buddhism. Dahui introduced the practice of kan-huatou (看話頭), or “harboring the phrase” of a kong-an story. This method was called the ‘Kanhua Chan’ (看話禪). Dahui’s letters in the *Dahui shuzhuang* 大慧書狀 to lay people reveal a compassionate teacher, who believed that the enlightenment promised by the Buddha was available to all people, regardless of their daily activities. The best way to achieve this was through the use of kong-ans as a daily meditation device. Dahui was a vigorous critic of what he called the “heretical Chan of silent illumination” (mozhao-xie-chan, 默照邪禪) of the Caodong school (曹洞宗).

16 Bodhidharma 菩提達磨: According to Buddhist tradition, Bodhidharma, the first Chan patriarch of China, came to visit Emperor Wu of Liang (梁武帝) around A.D. 520. The emperor told Bodhidharma that he had built temples and given financial support to the monastic community, and asked the patriarch how much merit he had gained for these actions. Bodhidharma replied, “None whatsoever.” Perplexed, the emperor then asked the patriarch “What is the highest meaning of the holy reality?” Bodhidharma replied, “Clear and void, no holiness.” The emperor said, “Who are you in front of me?” Bodhidharma said, “I don’t know.” Bodhidharma then left the imperial court to continue his travels throughout China. The encounter between Emperor Wu and Bodhidharma was first recorded around A.D. 758 in the appendix to a text by Shen-hui 神會, a disciple of Huineng.

17 Yunmen (雲門, 864–949) was a major Chinese Chan master in Tang dynasty. He was a dharma-heir of Xuefeng (雪峰, 832–908). Yunmen founded the Yunmen school (雲門宗), one of the five major schools of Chinese Chan. The name is derived from Yunmen monastery of Shaozhou where Yunmen was abbot. The Yunmen school flourished into the early Song dynasty, with particular influence on the upper classes, and eventually culminating in the compilation and writing of the *Biyan lu* 碧巖錄. The school would eventually be absorbed by the Linji school (臨濟宗) later in the Song. Refer to next note 18.

18 Weishan (鴻山, 771–853) was a Chinese Chan master and the founder of the Weiyang school (鴻仰宗), one of the Five Schools of Chinese Chan Buddhism.

19 Xiangyan (香嚴, ?–898) was a Tang dynasty Chan master of the Weiyang school. He was a dharma-heir of Weishan 鴻山. The story of Xiangyan’s enlightenment is rather famous in the Chan tradition. According to his enlightenment story, he had been an accomplished scholar of Buddhist sūtras, but for many years had made very little progress in his meditation

practice. One day, his master asked him what his original face was before birth, to which he could not respond. Thereafter this question became his hwadu, and he subsequently burned his sūtras and set out to settle the matter. One day, while working, he heard the sound of a tile striking the ground and attained enlightenment.

20 Huike (慧可, 487–593) is considered the Second Patriarch of Chinese Chan and the twenty-ninth since Gautama Buddha. As with most of the early Chan patriarchs, very little data is available about his life. As a scholar in both Buddhist scriptures and classical Chinese texts, including Taoism, he met Bodhidharma at the Shaolin Monastery (少林寺) in 528, when he was about forty years old and studied with Bodhidharma for several years.

Legend has it that Bodhidharma initially refused to teach Huike. And he stood in the snow outside Bodhidharma's cave all night, until the snow reached his waist. In the morning Bodhidharma asked him why he was there. Huike replied that, despite his erudition, he still feels unrest. Thereupon Bodhidharma rebuked, saying, "how can you hope for true religion with little virtue, little wisdom, and an arrogant mind? It would just be a waste of effort." Finally, to prove his resolve, Huike cut off his left arm and presented it to the First Patriarch as a token of his sincerity. Bodhidharma then accepted him as a disciple, and changed his name from Shenguang 神光 to Huike.

21 One thing (—物): Buddha nature, which is ineffable, is beyond words or conceptual thoughts. Nonetheless, it has many different names in terms of either ontological or epistemological point of view. 'One thing' is one of them. As buddha nature is devoid of name and form, one thing is nothing but a meaningless designator.

22 The kāmadhātu (欲界, the desire realm) is one of the trailokya or three realms in Buddhist cosmology into which a being transmigrating in samsāra may be reborn. The other two are the rūpadhātu (色界, the form realm), and the arūpadhātu (無色界, the formless realm). Within the desire realm are either five (Theravada Buddhism) or six domains (Mahāyāna Buddhism) of god, asura, human, animal, hungry ghost, and hell.

23 The inhabitants of rūpadhātu (色界, form realm) have a location and bodies composed of a subtle substance which is invisible to the inhabitants of the Kāmadhātu. They are not subject to the extremes of pleasure and pain, or governed by desires for things pleasing to the senses, as the beings of the Kāmadhātu are. And their bodies do not have sexual distinctions. The arūpadhātu (無色界, formless realm) would have no place in a purely physical cosmology, as none of the beings of the realm has either shape or

location; and the realm has no location either. This realm belongs to those devas who attained and remained in the Four Formless Absorptions (catuh-samāpatti) of the arūpadhyānas in a previous life, and now enjoys the fruits. There are four types of arūpadhātu devas, corresponding to the four types of arūpadhyānas.

24 Yojana (由旬): The length of the yojana varies depending on the different standards adopted by different Indian astronomers. In an Indian literature of the 5th century, a yojana was equivalent to around 8 km. However, in the 14th century, a yojana was defined to be about 13 km. Most of traditional Indian scholars give measurements between 6.4 km and 8 km.

25 The five supernatural powers: See note 49 of chapter 1.

26 Lengyan jing T945:19. 147b12. “十方菩薩及諸無漏大阿羅 漢，心精通當處湛然；一切魔王及與鬼神諸凡夫天，見其宮殿無故崩裂，大地振坼水陸飛騰無不驚懼。凡夫昏暗不覺遷訛。彼等咸得五種神通唯除漏盡，戀此塵勞，如何令汝摧裂其處？是故神鬼及諸天魔魍魎妖精，於三昧時僉來惱汝。”

27 Ibid. 147b18. “然彼諸魔雖有大怒，彼塵勞內，汝妙覺中，如風吹光如刀斷水了不相觸，汝如沸浪彼如堅冰，煖氣漸隣不日銷殞，徒恃神力但爲其客，成就破亂由汝心中五陰主人，主人若迷客得其便；當處禪那覺悟無惑，則彼魔事無奈汝何。”

28 The five shades (五陰) is an older form of the five aggregates, or skandhas (五蘊) of being: 1) Rūpa (色) is form or matter; something material that can be sensed. In early Buddhist literature, rūpa includes the Four Great Elements (earth, water, fire, wind) and their derivatives which are the first five faculties (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body) and the first five corresponding objects (form, sound, odor, taste, tangible things). 2) Vedanā (受) is a physical or mental sensation that we experience through contact of the six faculties with the external world. It is important to understand that manas (mind or intellect) is a sense organ or faculty, just like an eye or an ear. 3) Samjñā (想) is the faculty that recognizes. Most of what we call thinking fits into the aggregate of samjñā, which literally means “knowledge that puts together.” It is the capacity to conceptualize and recognize things by associating them with other things. For example, we recognize shoes as shoes because we associate them with our previous experience, or other things, or context with shoes. 4) Saṃskāra (行): All volitional actions, good and bad, are included in the aggregate of mental formations, or All volitional actions, good and bad, are included in the aggregate of mental formations, or samskara, that is associated with karma, because volitional acts create karma. Samskara also contains latent karma that conditions our attitudes and predilections. Biases and prejudices belong to this skandha, as

do interests and attractions. 5) *Vijñāna* (識) is a reaction that has one of the six faculties as its basis and one of the six corresponding phenomena as its object. For example, aural consciousness (viz. hearing) has the ear as its basis and a sound as its object. Mental consciousness has the mind (manas) as its basis and an idea or thought as its object. It is important to understand that this awareness or consciousness depends on the other skandhas and does not exist independently from them. It is an awareness but not a recognition which is a function of the third skandha, *samjñā*.

29 The five evil realms of impurity (五濁惡世): 1) The kalpa in decay (劫濁) when beings suffer deterioration and give rise to the ensuing form; 2) Deterioration of view (見濁) arising; 3) The defilements and delusions (煩惱濁) prevail; 4) In consequence human miseries (衆生濁) increase; 5) Human lifetime gradually diminishes to ten years (命濁). The second and third are regarded impurity in itself, while the fourth and fifth its results.

30 *Dahui shuzhuang* T47. 918b14. “瞎眼漢，錯指示人，皆是認魚目作明殊。”

31 See chapter 1. note 63. “the five prohibited pungent roots”

32 Twelve types of life (十二類生): viviparous (胎), oviparous (卵), moisture-born (濕), metamorphic beings (化), beings of the Realm of Form (有色), beings of the Formless Realm (無色), beings having ideation without form (無色有想), beings without ideation (無想), beings, though having form, originally formless (非有色), beings not without form (非無色), beings without ideation (非有想), beings not free from ideation (非無想).

Chapter IV Selected Translations from the *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*

- 1 Hongren (弘忍, 602–675) was one of the most significant figures in the development of early Chinese Chan. As with all the early Chan patriarchs, many of the details of Hongren's life are uncertain and much of his biography is layered with legend added after his death. Hongren was the 5th Patriarch in the traditional lineage of Chinese Chan. He is said to have received Dharma transmission from Daoxin 道信 and passed on the symbolic bowl and robe of transmission to Huineng 慧能, the Sixth and last Chinese Chan Patriarch. The teachings of both Daoxin and Hongren became known as the “East Mountain Teachings (東山法門)”, but Hongren was the more prominent of the two.
- 2 The nature of numinous enlightenment (靈覺性) is one of descriptions emphasizing intellectual, or cognitive aspects of buddha nature.
- 3 The Three Jewels of Buddhism, parents and the poor are metaphorically called the field of blessedness (福田, *punyaśkṛta*) because they are objects of kindness, charity, or virtue one may offer to accumulate felicities.
- 4 Shenxiu (神秀, 605?–706) was one of the most influential Chan Buddhist masters of his day as a patriarch of the “East Mountain Teaching (東山法門)” which was given the more recent designation as the “Northern School (北宗)” by Shenhui (神會, 670–762). He was honoured by Empress Wu Zetian (測天武后, r. 690–705) of the Tang dynasty, and alleged author of the *Guanxin lun* (觀心論, “Treatise on the Contemplation of the Mind,” written between 675–700), a text once attributed to Bodhidharma.
- 5 Tathatā (真如) is variously translated as “thusness” or “suchness”. It is a central concept in Mahāyāna Buddhism. It has a particular significance in Chan Buddhism as well. The synonym dharmatā is also often used. Tathāgata (refer to note 20) may be interpreted as “One who has arrived at suchness”. Tathatā in the East Asian Mahāyāna tradition is seen as representing the supreme reality.
- 6 The four grave prohibitions, or sins (四重罪): killing, stealing, carnality, and lying.
- 7 The five perverse transgressions (五逆): patricide, matricide, killing an arhat, shedding the blood of a Buddha, and destroying the harmony of the Buddhist community.
- 8 Eighteen sensory elements (*dhātu*) are: 1) The Six External Bases; 2) The

Six Internal Bases; 3) The Six Consciousnesses which function through the five aggregates. These dhātus can be arranged into six triads, each triad is composed of a sense object, a sense organ, and sense consciousness. In regards to the aggregates: The first five sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body) are derivatives of form. The sixth sense organ (mind) is part of consciousness. The first five sense objects (visible form, sound, smell, taste, touch) are also derivatives of form. The sixth sense object (mental object) includes form, feeling, perception and mental formations. The six sense consciousnesses are the basis for consciousness.

- 9 The term ‘Samādhi’ derives from the root sam-a-dha, which means ‘to collect’ or ‘bring together’, and thus it is often translated as ‘concentration’ or ‘unification of mind’. In the early Buddhist texts, samādhi is also associated with the term samatha (calm abiding). In general, samādhi is defined as one-pointedness of mind. It is a meditative absorption or trance, attained by the practice of dhyāna. In samādhi the mind becomes still and serene. It is a state of being totally aware of the present moment; a one-pointedness of mind. In Buddhism, it is the last of the eight elements of the Noble Eightfold Path.
- 10 Prajñā (Pali; paññā): In the Pāli Canon, paññā is concentrated insight into the three characteristics of all things, namely impermanence, suffering and no-self, and the Four Noble Truths. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, the importance of prajñā was stressed in combination with karuṇā, compassion. It took a central position in the lineage of Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras, such as the Heart Sūtra. Prajñā is considered as the principal means of attaining nirvāṇa, through its insight into the true nature of all things, viz. emptiness.
- 11 Māra (天魔) is the demon that tempted Gautama Buddha by trying to seduce him with the vision of beautiful women who, in various legends, are often said to be Mara’s daughters. In Buddhist cosmology, Mara is associated with death, rebirth and desire.
- 12 Emperor Wu of Liang (梁武帝) was well read himself and wrote poetry and patronized the arts. Being a ruler of a Confucian empire, he also embraced Buddhism as well. He himself was attracted to many Indian traditions. He banned the sacrifice of animals and was against execution. It was said that he received the Buddhist precepts during his reign, earning him the nickname ‘The Bodhisattva Emperor.’ He reigned over the land of Liang between 502–509. Refer to note 14 of chapter 3 “Bodhidharma.”
- 13 The Pure Land (淨土) is the celestial realm or pure abode of a buddha or bodhisattva in Mahāyāna Buddhism. The term is particular to East Asian Buddhism and related traditions; in Sanskrit the equivalent concept is called

a “buddha-field” (buddhakṣetra). The various traditions that focus on pure lands have been given the ‘Pure Land Buddhism’.

- 14 “若菩薩心淨，則佛土淨。” *Vimalakirtinirdeśa Sūtra* T475:14. 538c06.
- 15 Amitābha (阿彌陀佛) is a celestial Buddha described in the scriptures of the Mahāyāna Buddhism. Amitābha is the principal Buddha in the Pure Land school, a branch of Buddhism practiced mainly in East Asia. According to the scriptures valued in the Pure Land sects, Amitābha possesses infinite merits resulting from good deeds over countless past lives as a Bodhisattva named Dharmakāra. “Amitābha” is translated as “Infinite Light,” hence often called “The Buddha of Infinite Light.” Amitābha Buddha is frequently depicted standing between Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta.
- 16 Avalokiteśvara (觀音菩薩) is the bodhisattva who embodies the compassion of all Buddhas. He is the most widely revered bodhisattva in East Asia where the bodhisattva is known as Guanyin (觀音), which appears as female manifestations.
- 17 Mahāsthāmaprāpta (大勢至菩薩) is a bodhisattva that represents the power of wisdom, often depicted in a trinity with Amitābha and Avalokiteśvara (Guanyin), especially in Pure Land Buddhism. His name literally means “arrival of the great strength”. Mahāsthāmaprāpta is one of the Eight Great Bodhisattvas in Mahāyāna Buddhism, along with Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, Avalokiteśvara, Akasagarbha, Kṣitigarbha, Maitreya and Sarvanivarana-Vishkambhin.
- 18 Mount Sumeru (Sanskrit) or Sineru (Pāli) is the name of the central World-mountain in Hindu cosmology, but differs from the Hindu concept in several particulars. Etymologically, the proper name of the mountain is Meru (Pāli Neru), to which is added the approbatory prefix su-, resulting in the meaning “excellent Meru” or “wonderful Meru”. According to Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, Sumeru is 80,000 yojanas tall. (Refer to note 22 of chapter 1 “Yojana”) It also descends beneath the surface of the surrounding waters to a depth of 80,000 yojanas, being founded upon the basal layer of Earth. Sumeru is often used as a simile for both size and stability in Buddhist texts.
- 19 See note 35 of chapter 1. “The ten wholesome ways of action (+善).”
- 20 Tathāgata is a Pāli and Sanskrit term that the Buddha of the Pāli Canon uses when referring to himself instead of using the pronouns me, I or myself. It means either “One who has thus come (tathā-āgata),” or “One who has thus gone (tathā-gata).” This is interpreted as signifying that the Tathāgata is beyond all coming and going, beyond all transitory phenomena. It also implies that the teaching is uttered by one who has transcended the human

condition, endless cycle of rebirth and death. However there are other interpretations and the precise original meaning of the word is not certain.

21 “直心是菩薩淨土” *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra* T1775:38. 335b15.

22 “即時豁然，還得本心。” *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra*. T0475:14. 541a08. p.). “諸法，本來自性清淨。” *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra* T220:07. 299b26.

23 The white bullock cart (白牛車) as the universal vehicle of salvation of sentient beings which is depicted in *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*.

24 Śrāvaka (聲聞) literally means “hearer” or, is applied to the personal disciples of the historical Buddha, sometimes distinguished as mahā-śrāvakas. Its general connotation in Mahāyāna Buddhism relates it to Hinayāna disciples who do not understand the unreality (emptiness) of phenomena. In Jainism, the term śrāvaka indicates lay Jain, or the Jain community.

25 Bodhisattva (菩薩): In Mahāyāna Buddhism, a bodhisattva is an enlightenment (*bodhi*) being (*sattva*). Traditionally, a bodhisattva is anyone who, motivated by great compassion, has generated bodhicitta (菩提心), which is a spontaneous wish to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. A bodhisattva, unlike a Buddha, refrains from entering nirvāṇa until all sentient beings have attained enlightenment.

26 “諸佛弟子衆，曾供養諸佛，一切漏已盡，住是最後身。如是諸人等，其力所不堪，假使滿世間，皆如舍利弗，盡思共度量，不能測佛智。” *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* T262:09. 5c28.

27 Metaphorically vehicles are conveyances which carry sentient beings to ultimate enlightenment. In general, the Three vehicles (Triyāna, 三乘) are defined as śrāvaka (聲聞), the hearer or obedient disciple; Pratyekabuddha (緣覺), the enlightened for self; those are described as Hinayāna because the goal of the both is personal salvation; the third is Bodhisattva (菩薩) of Mahāyāna Buddhism because the objective is the salvation of all sentient beings. They are also depicted as three wains, yoked by goat, deer, and cow. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* declares that the three vehicles really the One Buddha-vehicle.

28 *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* T262:09. 8a17–8c04. “十方佛土中，唯有一乘法；無二亦無三，除佛方便說 [. . .] 如是諸世尊，種種緣譬喻，無數方便力，演說諸法相。是諸世尊等，皆說一乘法，化無量衆生，令入於佛道。”

29 The four prajñā: See chapter 2. note 30, “The four wisdoms.”

30 Consciousness only (唯識) school of Mahāyāna Buddhism maintains that external phenomena do not really exist, while it assumes that all experiences of sentient beings are nothing but transmutation of consciousness. It therefore postulates all embracing storage consciousness, ālayavijnāna, which is the final basis of individuals. That storage consciousness contains

all the impressions of previous experiences, which form the seeds (bija) of future karmic action.

31 In the early stage, the translation of *pratyekabuddha* was rendered 緣覺, i.e. the enlightened through the insight into dependent origination. Later it was rendered 獨覺, the enlightened individually living apart from others, in contrast with the altruism of the bodhisattva principle.

32 Sixty-two fallacious views (六十二邪見): There are two different versions in Mahāyāna Buddhism; one is the categories proposed in the 1) *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra* and the other in the 2) Tiantai school.

- 1) Each of five skandhas under four views, of permanence, impermanence, both, or neither in terms of past time make 20 cases. Again, in terms of present space, whether each skandha is finite, infinite, both or neither, which makes 20 heretical views. Again in terms of future destination, whether each sustains, or not, both or neither, which makes also 20 views. Finally two views, whether body and mind are a unity or different, are added amounting to 62 fallacious views.
- 2) Tiantai school takes the view of personality, or self (我見) as the basis of fallacious views. Each of the five skandhas has four aspects e.g. a) *rūpa*, the organized body, as the self; b) the self as apart from the *rūpa*; c) *rūpa* as the greater, self the inferior, and self is dwelling in the *rūpa*; d) the opposit of c). And the views of permanence and impermanence are added to make total 62 wrong views.

33 The Patriarch Prajñādhara of India: According to a legendary record of Chinese Chan tradition, Prajñādhara was the twenty-seventh Brahmin patriarch of Indian Buddhism, which means he or she might have been the teacher of Bodhidharma, the twenty-eighth patriarch. An oral tradition of the southern India says that Prajñādhara is a woman and she sent Bodhidharma to China.

34 Bhiśmagarjitaghoṣasvarāja (威音王): A title of buddhas in the empty kalpa (空劫). The king with the awe-inspiring voice and majestic appearance is depicted to preach *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* in the same scripture, emerging at the end of formal period of Buddhist teaching. It is said that countless buddhas with the same name successively appear during the declining kalpa (壞劫).

In Seon Buddhism, the name symbolizes the boundary between conventional world and supreme truth of no thought, as “before” the period of Bhiśmagarjitaghoṣasvarāja.

35 The three-thousand moral precepts (三千威儀): A bhikṣu's regulations are amount to about 250 precepts; these are multiplied by four conditions

of walking, standing, sitting, and lying down and thus make 1,000; again multiplied by three periods, past, present and future, they become 3,000 regulations. The eighty-thousand minor disciplinary rules imply bodhisattva's duties.

36 *Bodhicitta* (菩提心) literally means enlightenment or awakening (*bodhi*) mind or spirit (*citta*). In Mahayana Buddhism, it denotes the intense aspiration to save all sentient beings by following the bodhisattva path to enlightenment. See note 25 “Bodhisattva.”

37 “法無有比，無相待故。” *Vimalakītinirdeśa Sūtra* T475:14. 540a10.

38 The *samādhi* of specific objects (一相三昧) refers to a state of *samādhi* in which two extremities such as hate and love are repressed, and the mind reaches an indifferent, calm state. The single practice *samādhi* (一行三昧) generally means entire concentration (一行) of the mind on Buddha. Specifically, it is a Buddhist practice to realize that the nature of all buddhas is the same.

39 “所謂心生故種種法生，心滅故種種法滅。” *Zhancha shane yebaojing* T839:17. 907b29.

40 As the Sudden School (頓教) is merely a relative concept of the Gradual school (漸教). However, those who identify themselves to be the latter do not actually exist. As the sixth patriarch sets forth, “there are no sudden and gradual teachings in the dharma.” The only difference recognized is that by nature some men are quick-witted, while others are dull in understanding. Those who are enlightened realize the truth in a sudden, while those who are under delusion have to train themselves gradually. But such a difference will disappear when we know our own true nature.

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