

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN (*Dai jūgo shō* 第十五章)

### ROOT CASE<sup>1</sup> 【本則】

第十五祖、迦那提婆尊者、謁龍樹大士、將及門。龍樹知是智人、先遣侍者、以滿鉢水、置於座前。尊者觀之、卽以一針投、而進之相見、忻然契會。

The Fifteenth Ancestor, Venerable Kāṇadeva, calling on Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva, was about to reach the gate.<sup>2</sup> Nāgārjuna knew that this was a wise person. In advance, he sent an acolyte to take a bowl full of water and place it before the dharma seat. The Venerable [Kāṇadeva] saw it, took a single needle, cast it into the water, and advanced to have a face-to-face encounter. In delight, their understandings matched.

### PIVOTAL CIRCUMSTANCES 【機縁】

師は

The Master [Kāṇadeva]<sup>3</sup>

南天竺國の人なり。姓は毘舍羅。初め福業を求む。兼て辨論を樂む。

was a man of a country in South India. His clan was vaiśya. Initially he sought meritorious action and enjoyed disputation.

<sup>1</sup> Root Case (*C. benze* 本則; *J. honsoku*). The Chinese passage quoted here is nearly identical to one that appears in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* (T 2076.51.211b2-6).

<sup>2</sup> gate (*C. men* 門; *J. mon*). It seems that, in the imagination of the Chinese who authored this passage, the gate in question was the mountain gate (ceremonial main gate) of a monastery where Nāgārjuna was abbot, was attended by acolytes, and took the dharma seat in a dharma hall to engage in question and answer with members of the assembly. From the standpoint of modern scholarship, however, that is entirely anachronistic: the monastic arrangement assumed in the passage was that of Song dynasty China, which bears little resemblance to that of Buddhist monasteries in ancient India.

<sup>3</sup> The Master (*Shi wa* 師は). The block of text that follows these words is a Japanese transcription (*yomikudashi* 読み下し) of an identical Chinese passage that appears in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* under the heading “Fifteenth Ancestor, Kāṇadeva”:

《景德傳燈錄》南天竺國人也。姓毘舍羅。初求福業兼樂辨論。(T 2076.51.211b2-3).

龍樹尊者、得法行化して

Venerable Nāgārjuna, having attained the *dharma*, was carrying out conversions and

南印度に到る。彼國の人多く福業を信ず。尊者の爲に妙法を説くを聞て、遽に相謂て曰く、人に福業あるは世間の第一なり。徒に佛性を言ふ、誰か能く之を觀ん。龍樹曰く、汝佛性を見んと欲すや、先づ須らく我慢を除くべし。彼人曰く、佛性は大か小か。龍樹曰く、佛性は大に非ず小に非ず、廣に非ず狹に非ず。福なく報なく、不死不生なり。彼れ理の勝れたるを聞て悉く初心を廻す。

arrived in South India.<sup>1</sup> Many people of that country believed in meritorious action. Hearing the Venerable [Nāgārjuna] explain the sublime *dharma* to them, they spoke back to him: “For people, to have meritorious action is the most important thing in the world. You pointlessly speak of the *buddha-nature*. Who is able to see it?” Nāgārjuna said, “If you wish to see the *buddha-nature*, first you must eliminate your arrogance.” Those people said, “Is *buddha-nature* large or small?” Nāgārjuna said: “The *buddha-nature* is neither large nor small, neither broad nor narrow. It is neither blessings nor retributions; it does not die and is not born.” Upon hearing the superiority of this principle, they all turned back to their beginner’s minds.

其中の大智慧、迦那提婆、

Among them was a man of great wisdom, Kāṇadeva.

龍樹大士に謁す。乃至、忻然として契會す。

Calling on Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva ...and so on, down to...<sup>2</sup> In delight, their understandings matched.

即ち半座を分て居せしむ。恰かも靈山の迦葉の如し。

<sup>1</sup> arrived in South India (*minami Indo ni itaru* 南印度に到る). The block of text that begins with these words is a Japanese transcription (*yomikudashi* 読み下し) of an identical Chinese passage that appears in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* under the heading “Fourteenth Ancestor, Venerable Nāgārjuna”:

《景德傳燈錄》至南印度。彼國之人多信福業。聞尊者爲說妙法遽相謂曰。人有福業世間第一。徒言佛信誰能觀之。尊者曰。汝欲見佛性先須除我慢。彼人曰。佛性大小。尊者曰。非大非小非廣非狹。無福無報不死不生。彼聞理勝悉迴初心。(T 2076.51.210b1-6).

<sup>2</sup> and so on, down to (*naishi* 乃至). This expression indicates that part of this repetition of the Root Case has been elided to save space, but that the intention is to quote the entire thing.

[Nāgārjuna] divided the seat in half and had him [Kānadeva] sit alongside, just like Kāśyapa at Vulture Peak.<sup>1</sup>

龍樹即ち爲に説法す。座を起たずして月輪の相を現す。師、衆會に謂て曰く、此は是れ尊者佛性の体相を現じて、以て我等に示す。何を以て之を知る。蓋しこれば無相三昧は、形満月の如し。佛性の義、廓然虚明なりと。言ひ訖て輪相即ち隠る。

Nāgārjuna then preached the dharma to him. Without arising from his seat, he [Nāgārjuna] manifested the sign of the moon's orb.<sup>2</sup> The Master [Kānadeva] spoke to the assembly, saying: "Here the Venerable [Nāgārjuna] manifests the substance and attributes of the buddha-nature, and thereby instructs us. How do we know this? Because the signless samādhi is like the shape of a full moon. The meaning of the buddha-nature is expansive, empty brightness." When he finished speaking, the orb sign disappeared.

復た本座に居して偈を説て言く、「身現圓月相。以表諸佛體。説法無其形。用辨非聲色。」是の如くなるが故に、師資分ち難く命脈即通す。

He [Kānadeva] returned to his original seat and recited a verse, saying:

His body manifests the sign of a perfectly round moon,  
thereby displaying the essence of buddhas.  
The preaching of the dharma has no shape,  
which shows that it employs neither sound nor form.

Being like this, master and disciple are hard to separate; the vital bloodline passes through them.

<sup>1</sup> like Kāśyapa at Vulture Peak (Ryōzen no Kashō no gotoshi 靈山の迦葉の如し). Sakyamuni Buddha is said to have shared his seat with Mahākāśyapa to demonstrate that the latter was his leading disciple and dharma heir. According to the *Tiansheng Era Record of the Spread of the Flame*, the place where the Buddha shared his seat was the Stūpa of Many Sons, and that is what the *Denkōroku* itself says in Chapter 1. Here, however, the place is identified as Vulture Peak.

<sup>2</sup> Without arising from his seat, he manifested the sign of the moon's orb (za wo tatazu shite gatsurin no sō wo genzu 座を起たずして月輪の相を現す). The Shūmuchiō edition of the *Denkōroku* (p. 98) defines "sign of the moon's orb" (gatsurin no sō 月輪の相) as the full moon, or the aspect of one entered into samādhi. The idea seems to be that Nāgārjuna transformed his own body into the form of a moon.

## INVESTIGATION 【拈提】

適來の因縁、是れ尋常に非ず。最初に道に合し来る。龍樹も一言の説なく、提婆も一言の問なし。故に師資存し難く、賓主如何が分たん。是に依て、殊に迦那提婆、宗風を擧説して、遂に五天竺の間、提婆宗と謂はれしなり。謂ゆる銀盃に雪を盛り、明月に鷺を藏すが如し。

The aforementioned episode is not typical. From the very first they [Nāgārjuna and Kānadeva] came to merge in the way. Nāgārjuna did not have a single word of explanation, and Kānadeva did not have a single word of questioning. Therefore, it is difficult to recognize master and disciple: how can guest and host be distinguished? Accordingly, Kānadeva in particular propagated the lineage style, so that eventually throughout the five regions of India it became known as the Deva Lineage. It was like the so-called “filling a silver bowl with snow, hiding an egret in the bright moon.”<sup>1</sup>

是の如き故に最初相見の時、即ち満鉢の水を以て座前に置しむ。豈表裏を存し、内外を存せんや。已に是れ満鉢、終に虧闕なし。亦是れ湛水虚明なり。通徹して純清なり。彌満して靈明なり。故に一針を投じて契會す。須らく徹底徹頂なるべし。正なく偏なし。此に到りて師資分ち難し。類すれども齊きことなく、混ずれども跡なし。

Because this is so, when they met face to face for the first time, a bowl full of water was placed before the dharma seat. How can external and internal exist; how can inner and outer exist? The bowl was completely full, ultimately lacking nothing. Likewise, this was calm water, empty and clear. Thoroughly understood, it was entirely pure. Filled to the brim, it was numinously clear. Thus [Kānadeva] cast a single needle into it, and their understanding matched. It must have been clearly discerning from bottom to top. There is no “upright” and no “inclined.”<sup>2</sup> Upon arriving at this point, master and disciple were difficult to distinguish. Although they

<sup>1</sup> “filling a silver bowl with snow, hiding an egret in the bright moon” (*ginwan ni yuki wo mori, meigetsu ni ro wo kakusu* 銀盃に雪を盛り、明月に鷺を藏す). A line of verse from the *Jewel Mirror Samādhi*. → “silver bowl filled with snow, bright moon hiding an egret.” The original Chinese saying reads: “Silver bowl filled with snow, bright moon hiding an egret” (C. *yinwan sheng xue, mingyue zang lu* 銀盃盛雪、明月藏鷺). The Japanese transcription (*yomikudashi* 読み下し) given in the *Denkōroku* slightly misconstrues the grammar of the original. This line is also quoted in Chapter 27 of the *Denkōroku*. The thrust of this metaphor in the present context is that Nāgārjuna and Kānadeva were barely distinguishable from one another.

<sup>2</sup> no “upright” and no “inclined” (*shō naku hen nashi* 正なく偏なし). → upright and/or inclined.

were the same type, there was no equating them; although they were mixed together, there were no traces of that.

揚眉瞬目を以て此事を現ぜしめ、見色聞聲を以て此事を表す。故に聲色の名くべきなく、見聞の捨つべきなし。圓明無相にして、清水の虚廓なるが如し。靈理に通徹し、神鋒を求むる時に似たり。處處鋒を露はし來り、明明として心を通じもて去る。水も流れ通じて、山を穿ち天を浸し去り、針も囊を透し芥子を刺しもて來る。然も水、遂に物の爲に破れず、豈跡を作すことあらんや。針も他の爲に堅きこと金剛にも過たり。

The raising of eyebrows and blinking of eyes manifest this matter, and seeing forms and hearing sounds reveal this matter. Therefore, there is nothing to be called *sound* or *form*, and no *seeing* and *hearing* to be discarded. Fully clear and *signless*, it is like the vast spaciousness of clear water. It is like when one thoroughly understands the *numinous principle* and seeks a *supernatural sword*. One comes to bare the sword-tip in this place and that, then proceeds perfectly clearly to pass it through the *mind*. Water also flows through, piercing mountains and going on to soak the heavens. Needles also come to penetrate sacks and pierce mustard seeds. However, since water does not end up ripped apart by objects, how can it leave any traces in it? Needles also have a hardness in dealing with others<sup>1</sup> that exceeds even diamond.

恁麼の針水、豈是れ他ならんや。即是汝等が身心なり。吞盡の時は唯是れ一針なり、吐却の時は又是れ清水なり。故に師資の道、通達して全く是れ自他なし。故に命脈即通して、正に廓明なる時、十方に藏むべきに非ず。恰も胡蘆藤種葫蘆を纏ふが如し。攀來り攀去る、唯是れ自心なるのみなり。然も諸人、清水を知り得たりとも、子細に覺觸して、底に針あることを明むべし。若し錯まりて服することあらば、果して咽喉を破り來らん。

<sup>1</sup> in dealing with others (*ta no tame ni* 他の爲に). It is not clear what “others” refers to in this context. The “other” could mean other *things*, such as sack cloth or mustard seeds, that a needle can penetrate better than a diamond, thanks to its very thin, sharp point. Or, the “other” could be Nāgārjuna, who initiated an exchange with Kānadeva by setting out a bowl of water. Kānadeva’s response was to drop a needle in the bowl, which temporarily disturbed the purity and stillness of the water, but communicated his understanding of Nāgārjuna’s intent. If the water symbolizes *buddha-mind* (i.e. *original nature*), then the needle thrown into it could represent acknowledgement of it (i.e. *seeing the nature*). Such an exchange, while nonverbal, still operates at the level of *signs*, which are ultimately false. Because the needle drops to the bottom of the bowl and leaves no trace in the water, however, it represents the most minimal and fleeting sort of signification of the ultimate failure of signs. That, in any case, seems to be the gist of Keizan’s explanation here.

As for this kind of needle and water, how could they be “other”? That is, they are your *bodies and minds*. When drinking it all in, it is only a single needle; when spitting it all out, again, it is pure water. Thus, the way of *master and disciple* merge, with absolutely no self or other. Thus, when their *vital bloodlines* flow and are truly transparent, it cannot be concealed anywhere within the *ten directions*. It is just like “*spreading vines of the bottle gourd entangle the bottle gourd*.” Climbing coming and climbing going,<sup>1</sup> there is only your own *mind*. Nevertheless, you must not merely understand the pure water but also must *wake and feel it in detail* and clarify that there is a needle at its bottom. If you swallow it by mistake, as a result it will come to injure your throat.

然も是の如くなりと雖ども、兩般の會を作すこと勿れ。只須からく吞盡吐盡して子細に思量して見よ。設ひ清白にして虚融なりと覺すとも、正に是れ廓徹堅固なることあらん。水火風の三災も侵すことなく、成住壞空劫も移すことなけん。

Although matters are like this, one must not form a *dualistic understanding*. All that is necessary is, while drinking in everything and spitting out everything, to *think in detail* and see what you see. Even if you perceive that things are pure, vacant and pervasive, in truth that would still be a concrete existent that extended everywhere.<sup>2</sup> There would be no<sup>3</sup> assaults by the three disasters of flood, fire, and wind, and there would be no movement through the *kalpas* of formation, abiding, destruction, and emptiness.

故に這箇の因縁を説破せんとするに更に卑語あり。大衆、聞かんと要すや。

Thus, in order to explicate this episode, I have some *humble words*. Great assembly, do you wish to hear them?

<sup>1</sup> **climbing coming and climbing going** (*yoji kitari yoji saru* 攀來り攀去る). A play on the expression going and/or coming. Presumably the “climbing” referred to is that done by the vines of the bottle gourd.

<sup>2</sup> **concrete existent that extended everywhere** (C. *kuoche jianggu* 廓徹堅固; J. *kakutetsu kengo*). In other words, if one conceives of some *thing* that can be called “vacant and pervasive,” then that will be a dualistic understanding that will block one’s freedom of movement, as if empty space had congealed into a solid mass.

<sup>3</sup> **There would be no** (*koto naken* ことなけん). The thrust of the argument here is that because, in fact, there *are* disasters, and there *is* movement through the four *kalpas*, there cannot be any kind of “concrete existent that extends everywhere” (C. *kuoche jianggu* 廓徹堅固; J. *kakutetsu kengo*).

VERSE ON THE OLD CASE 【頌古】

一針釣盡滄溟水。猙龍到處難藏身。

The fishhook of a single needle uses up all the water of the ocean.  
A ferocious dragon arrives at the place, his body difficult to conceal.