CHAPTER FORTY-THREE (Dai yonjūsan shō 第四十三章)

ROOT CASE【本則】

第四十三祖、大陽明安大師、因
The Forty-third Ancestor, Great Master Taiyang Mingan, on one occasion asked Reverend Liangshan, "What about the signless place of practice?" Liangshan pointed to an image of Avalokiteśvara and said, "This was painted by Retired Scholar Wu." The Master [Taiyang] was thinking over what to say when Liangshan interjected, saying, "This one has signs. Which is the signless one?" At these words, the Master [Taiyang] gained insight.

PIVOTAL CIRCUMSTANCES 【機縁】

師諱は警玄。傳燈等に載る處、時の皇帝の名に依て警延と云ふ。然れども實の諱は是れ警玄なり。
The Master’s [Taiyang’s] personal name was Jingxuan. According to what is written in the Transmission of the Flame and other texts, because of the

1 Great Master Taiyang Mingan (C. Taiyang Mingan Dashi 大陽明安大師; J. Taiyō Myōan Daishō) A name, possibly a posthumous honorary title, for Taiyang Jingxuan 大陽警玄 (J. Taiyō Kyōgen; 942–1027), a.k.a. Taiyang Jingyan 大陽警延 (J. Taiyō Kyōen), renowned as the abbot of the monastery on Mount Taiyang in Yingzhou.

2 asked Reverend Liangshan (wen Liangshan Heshang 問梁山和尚; J. Ryōzan Oshō ni tou 問山和尚に問ふ). The block of Chinese text that begins with these words is nearly identical to one that appears in the Collated Essentials of the Five Flame Records under the heading “Chan Master Jingxuan of Mount Taiyang in Yingzhou”:

《五燈會元》初到梁山。問。如何是無相道場。山指觀音像日。這箇是呉處士畫。師擬進語。山急索日。這箇是有相底。那箇是無相底。師於言下有省。

The same question and answer is also found as Case #242 in Dōgen's Treasury of the True Dharma Eye in Chinese Characters (DZZ 5.252), and in many other Chan/Zen records.
name of the emperor at that time, he was called Jingyan. However, his actual personal name was Jingxuan.

He was a son of the Zhang Clan in Jiangxia. He went forth from household life under Chan Master Zhitong. At nineteen, he became a fully ordained monk and listened to the *Explicit Meaning of Perfect Awakening*. No one attending the lecture could com-

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1 *because of the name of the emperor at that time* (toki no kōtei no na ni yotte 時の皇帝の名に依て). According to a number of historical records, during the Dazhong Xiangfu Era (大中祥符; 1008–1016) in the reign of the Song dynasty emperor Zhenzong 真宗, the monk Jingxuan 警玄 (J. Kyōgen) changed his name to Jingyan 警延 (J. Kyōen) to "avoid a taboo national name" (C. bi guohui 避國諱; J. kokki wo sakeru 国諱を避ける) or to "avoid a taboo mortuary name" (C. bi miaohui 避廟諱; J. byōki wo sakeru 廟諱を避ける). That is to say, because the second glyph of his name, xuan 玄 (J. gen), became taboo due its use in an imperial name, he changed it to yan 延 (J. en).

2 *He was a son of the Zhang Clan in Jiangxia* (Kōka Chōshi no ko 江夏張氏の子). The quoted block of text that begins with this sentence is a Japanese transcription (yomikudashi 読み下し) of a nearly identical Chinese passage that appears in the *Collated Essentials of the Five Flame Records* under the heading "Chan Master Jingxuan of Mount Taiyang in Yingzhou":

3 *listened to the Explicit Meaning of Perfect Awakening* (Engaku ryōgi wo kiku 圓覺了義を聞く). It is clear from the following sentence that what Taiyang listened to at age nineteen was a lecture on the *Explicit Meaning of Perfect Awakening*, a text better known as the *Sūtra of Perfect Awakening*.
pare with him. After that, he wandered about, and when he first arrived at Mount Liang, he asked [the abbot Liangshan], “What about the signless place of practice?” ... and so on, down to... the Master [Taiyang] thereupon gained insight. Then he [Taiyang] made prostrations, returned to his original place, and stood. Liangshan said, “Why not speak a single phrase?” The Master [Taiyang] said, “It is not that I refuse to speak, but I am afraid it will be written down on paper.” Liangshan laughed and said, “These words are likely to be inscribed on a stele!” The Master [Taiyang] presented a verse, which said:

我昔初機迷學道、萬水千山覓見知。
明今辨古終難會、直説無心轉更疑。
蒙師點出秦時鏡、照見父母未生時。
如今學了何所得、夜放烏鶴帶雪飛。

Long ago as a beginner, I was a deluded student of the way; in myriad waters and thousands of mountains, I looked to see and know.
To clarify the present and discern the past, finally, was hard to do; straight talk of no-mind just increased my doubts.
But my master brought out the Qin Era mirror; reflected in it I saw the “time before my father and mother were born.”

1 No one attending the lecture could compare with him (kōseki ni yoku oyobu mono nashi). The expression jiangxi 講席 (J. kōseki) means “seated for the lecture” (i.e. in attendance at the lecture), not the “lecturer’s seat” (or “at the lectern”), as some translators have assumed. The biography of Taiyang Jingyan in the Biographies from the Sangha Treasure of the Chan Community says in part:

[Jingyan] listened to [a lecture on] the Sūtra on the Explicit Meaning of Perfect Awakening and asked the lecturer, “What is called perfect awakening?” The lecturer said, “‘Perfect’ means perfectly interfused with that which is contaminated; ‘awakening’ means awakening exhaustively, with nothing remaining.” Jingyan laughed and said, “If it is empty of all existence and non-existence, then what is called perfect awakening?” The lecturer sighed and said, “This boy is so young, yet has awareness as brilliant as this. How can what I have suffice to benefit him?”

2 and so on, down to (naishi 乃至). This expression indicates that part of this repetition of the Root Case in Japanese transcription has been elided to save space, but that the intention is to quote the entire thing.
Nowadays my studies are finished, but what is attained? Released into the night, the black rooster flies, covered in snow.1

山謂く、洞山の宗倚るべしと。一時に聲価籍籍たり。山没して、塔を辞して大陽に至り、堅禪師に謁す。堅、席を譲て之に主たらしむ。

Liangshan said, “Dongshan’s lineage can rely on you.” At once, his [Taiyang’s] fame spread far and wide. When Liangshan died, he [Taiyang] bade farewell to his [Liangshan’s] stūpa and went to Taiyang, where he called on Chan Master Huijian. Huijian relinquished the abbacy, making him [Taiyang] head of the monastery.

其れより洞山一宗盛に世に興る。人悉く風に走る。

From then on, Dongshan’s entire lineage flourished throughout the world. People all ran to its style.

師、神觀奇偉、威重あり。兒稚の時より日に祇だ一食し、自ら先德附授の重きを以て、足限を越えず、隨帯に至らず。

The Master2 [Taiyang] had a spiritual appearance that was uncanny and extraordinary, with great dignity. From the time of his youth, he ate only one meal each day. Taking upon himself the burden that the previous worthy had entrusted him with,3 his feet never crossed the boundary of the monastery and his ribs never touched a mattress.

1 the black rooster flies, covered in snow (C. wuji dai xue fei 鸚鵡帶雪飛; J. ukei yuki wo obite tobu 鳥鶏雪を帯びて飛ぶ). This plays off a saying attributed to Caoshan Benji, “A black rooster moves on snow” (C. wuji xue shang xing 鳚鶏雪上行; J. ukei setsuyō ni yuku 鳥鶏雪上を行く) (T 1987A.47.527a25), which is said to symbolize the third of the five ranks. Taiyang implies that he has reached the fifth rank, in which principle (C. li 理; J. ri) and phenomena (C. shi 事; J. ji) are “both conjoined” (C. jiandai 兼帶; J. kentai), for he describes himself as the black rooster “covered in” or “conjoined with” (C. dai 帶; J. tai, obite 帯びて) snow. → black rooster.

2 The Master (C. Shi 師; J. Shi). The quoted 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 Collated Essentials of the Five Flame Records under the heading “Chan Master Jingxuan of Mount Taiyang in Yingzhou”:

The Master and phenomena (C. shi 事; J. ji) are “both conjoined” (C. jiandai 兼帶; J. kentai), for he describes himself as the black rooster “covered in” or “conjoined with” (C. dai 帶; J. tai, obite 帯びて) snow. → black rooster.

3 burden that the previous worthy had entrusted him with (C. xiande fushou zhi zhong 先徳付授之重; J. sentoku fujin no omoki 先德付授の重き). That is to say, the heavy responsibility of the abbacy, which the previous abbot, Huijian, had handed over to him.
Arriving at his eighty-second year,¹ he [Taiyang] was still like this. At the end,²

he ascended the seat, bade farewell to the congregation, and passed away.

INVESTIGATION 【拈提】

実に夫れ参學、尤も切要とすべきは便ち是れ無相道場なり。形を帯びず名を受けず。故に言に関からずと雖も、必ず果然として明らかなる所あり。謂ゆる父母未生の時の形貌なり。

Truly, with regard to study, what we should consider most essential is this “signless place of practice.” It is not bound by appearances, and it accepts no name. Thus, although it is unrelated to language, it is definitely, as one would expect, a place of clarity. It has the shape of what is referred to [in the Pivotal Circumstances] as the “time before my father and mother were born.”³

¹ Arriving at his eighty-second year (toshi hachijūni ni itatte 年八十二に至て). According to the biography of “Chan Master Jingxuan of Mount Taiyang in Yingzhou” in the Collated Essentials of the Five Flame Records, Taiyang was in his eightieth year when he died:

His feet never crossed the boundary of the monastery and his ribs never touched a mattress [until] he was eighty years old. [part elided] On the 19th day of the 7th month of the 5th year of the Tiansheng Era [1028], the Master [Taiyang] ascended the seat, bade farewell to the congregation, and manifested extinction.

² At the end (tsui ni 終に). The remainder of the sentence that begins with these words is a gloss in Japanese of a similar Chinese passage that appears in the Collated Essentials of the Five Flame Records under the heading “Chan Master Jingxuan of Mount Taiyang in Yingzhou”:

³ “time before my father and mother were born” (C. fumu weisheng shi 父母未生時; J. bumu mishō no toki 父母未生の時). The text of the Denkōroku here repeats and explains a phrase from Taiyang’s verse, which is quoted above. Taiyang, in turn, borrowed the expression from earlier Chan records. → “time before one’s father and mother were born.”
Thus, to try to demonstrate this standpoint, [Liangshan] pointed to the image of Avalokiteśvara that Retired Scholar Wu had painted, just as if he were holding up a mirror [for Taiyang to look at himself in]. What he [Liangshan] meant to say was: “You have eyes, but do not see; you have ears, but do not hear; you have hands, but do not grasp; you have mind, but do not think; you have a nose, but do not breathe; you have a tongue, but do not taste; you have feet, but do not walk. It is as if the six sense faculties had no function, and your entire body were just a collection of unused furniture. It is just as if you were a wooden doll, or an iron [statue of a] man.” At that time, he [Taiyang] had already completely escaped from seeing forms and hearing sounds. Here, just as [Taiyang] was hesitating about what to say, he [Liangshan], so as not to allow him to remain tethered to a wooden post, quickly interjected, saying, “This one has signs. Which is the signless one?” By means of these unused things, he [Taiyang] was made to know the one “without a face.” It is just like looking into a bright mirror to know self.

昔し秦時に鏡ありき。彼鏡に向へば身中の五臓六腑、八萬四千の毛孔、三百六十の骨頭、皆悉く見るが如し。耳目あれども用ゐざる所に、身心を帯せざる所を看见す。有相の千山萬水、悉く破れ来るのみに非ず、無心無分別の暗昏速に破れ、天地と分れず、萬像都て萌さず、了然として圓具す。實に是れ洞上の一宗、一時の聲價、是の如くなるのみに非ず、累祖見得する皆以て是の如し。

1 What he meant to say was: “You have eyes, but do not see” (iwayuru manako are-domo mizu 謂ゆる眼あれども見えず). This statement is predicated on the notion that when Liangshan had Taiyang look at the painting of Avalokiteśvara, it was just as if the master had the student look in a mirror. The point Liangshan wanted to make with that gesture, Keizan suggests, is that just as the eyes of a painted Avalokiteśvara exist but do not see, Taiyang himself (or the image of himself he sees in the imaginary mirror) has eyes but does not see.

2 these unused things (kono fuyō tei 此不用底). The reference is to the “six sense faculties” that are said above to be as if they “had no function,” and to the “entire body,” which is likened to a “collection of unused furniture.” It was “these unused things” that Taiyang saw when he looked in the metaphorical “Qin era mirror.”
Long ago, during the Qin Era, there was a mirror. If you faced that mirror, it was as if you could see everything inside your body: the five organs and six viscera, the eighty-four thousand hair pores, and the three hundred and sixty bones. Although you have ears and eyes, in the place where they are not used, you see that which is not bound by body or mind. Not only will the thousand mountains and myriad waters that have signs all crumble away, but also the complete darkness of mindlessness and non-discrimination will quickly dissipate, heaven and earth will not be divided, none of the myriad phenomena will sprout, and, in a perfectly clear way, everything will be whole and complete. Truly, this is not something that was only claimed like this at one time in the one lineage of Dongshan’s Tradition. In every generation of ancestors, those who are able to see all regard matters in this way.

After he [Taiyang] understood the point of this and was [abbot] on Mount Taiyang, there was a monk who asked,1

如何是和尚的家風。師曰。滿瓶傾不出。大地沒饑人。

“What is the Reverend’s house style?” The Master [Taiyang] said, “The full pitcher tips, but does not spill; on the great earth there are no starving people.”

實に是れ此田地。傾くれども出さず。推せども開かず。挑ぐれども起さず。触るれどもなし。故に耳目の至る處に非ず。語默動静に伴ひ來れども曽て動静に礙ぜられず。此事。唯祖師獨り具足するのみに非ず。盡大地の人、一箇も具せざるなし。故に謂ふ。飢たる人なしと。

Truly, it is this standpoint which, even when tipped, does not spill; even when probed does not open up; even when lifted, does not raise up; and even when touched, does not exist. Thus, it is not a place that ears and eyes reach. Although it comes accompanied by speech and silence, movement and stillness, it has never been obstructed by movement or stillness. This matter is not something that just the ancestral teachers alone are fully equipped with; among people all across the great earth, there is not a single

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1 asked (toite iwaku 問て曰く). The question and answer that follows these words is a Japanese transcription (yomikudashi 読み下し) of an identical Chinese passage that appears in the Collated Essentials of the Five Flame Records under the heading “Chan Master Jingxuan of Mount Taiyang in Yingzhou”:

《五燈會元》如何是和尚家風。師曰。滿瓶傾不出。大地沒饑人。（CBETA, X80, no. 1565, p. 288, b2-3 // Z 2B:11, p. 261, c11-12 // R138, p. 522, a11-12).
one who is not fully equipped with it. That is why [Taiyang] said, “There are no starving people.”

That being the case, Zen worthies, fortunately you are descendants of Dongshan’s House and have already encountered the house style of the old buddha. When you attentively and thoroughly inquire until you arrive at understanding; accede to the own self of the time “before your father and mother were born” and before the arising of form and emptiness; reach the place where not even an iota of signification remains; and gain sight of the place where there is not even an infinitesimal mote of an external thing; then, even if you grope for them for thousands of lives over myriads of kalpas, the four primary elements and five aggregates cannot be found. Throughout the twelve periods of the day, if you are able to clarify that place where nothing is lacking even for a moment, then truly you will be a descendant of Dongshan’s House and an heir of Qingyuan.

Now, how can I communicate this principle? Do you wish to hear?
**VERSE ON THE OLD CASE**

圆镜高悬明映彻。丹艧盡美畫不成。

The round mirror hangs high, clearly reflecting everything. Its pigments¹ are most exquisite, but a painting will not do.²

¹ **pigments** (C. *danhuo* 丹艧; J. *tankaku* 塗色). According to HYDCD, one meaning of *danhuo* 丹艧 is “decorative colors” (*tushi secai* 塗飾色彩), translated here as “pigments.” Some confusion has arisen from the fact that *danhuo* 丹艧 also represents a homonym that is written as *danhuo* 丹雘 (i.e., with the radical for the second glyph written with the cinnabar 艈 element instead of the boat 艋 element). If written in that way, both glyphs of *danhuo* 丹艧 (J. *tankaku*) refer to a red color. Ishikawa (p. 736) mistakenly interprets the second glyph (*kaku* 艈) as referring to “a model boat or decorative boat” (*kazari fune* 飾り舟). Other commentators and translators also follow these erroneous lines of interpretation. Cook (p. 220), for example, translates *tankaku* as “vermilion boat.”

² **a painting will not do** (C. *hua bucheng* 畫不成). The “painting” (C. *hua* 畫; J. *ga*) referred to here is the image of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara mentioned in the Root Case of this chapter. In the Investigation section above, Keizan says that “[Liangshan] pointed to the image of Avalokiteśvara that Retired Scholar Wu had painted, just as if he were holding up a mirror [for Taiyang to look at himself in].” The expression *bucheng* 不成 (J. *fusei*) can also mean “incomplete,” or “a failure, an abortive attempt.” Thus, in this line of the verse Keizan states the obvious fact that a painting cannot really function in the same way as an ordinary mirror, even if the two are said to be similar in some metaphorical way. Moreover, only the “round mirror” (i.e. the *buddha-mind*) can “clearly reflect” that which is ultimately real: no painting or written words — “brush strokes” (C. *hua* 畫; J. *ga*) — can do that.