

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR (*Dai sanjūyon shō* 第三十四章)

### ROOT CASE 【本則】

第三十四祖、弘濟大師、參曹溪會。

The Thirty-fourth Ancestor, Great Master Hongji,<sup>1</sup> sought instruction in the assembly of Caoxi.<sup>2</sup>

問曰、當何所務即不落階級。祖曰、汝曾作甚麼來。師曰、聖諦亦不爲。祖曰、落何階級。師曰、聖諦尚不爲、何階級之有。祖深器之。

He [Qingyuan] asked,<sup>3</sup> “By what striving can I avoid falling to a lower level?” The Ancestor [Huineng] replied, “What have you done up to now?” The Master [Qingyuan] said, “I have yet to practice the noble truths.” The Ancestor [Huineng] said, “What level will you fall to?” The Master [Qingyuan] said, “If one is not even practicing the noble truths, what levels could there be?” The Ancestor [Huineng] recognized him as a deep vessel.

### PIVOTAL CIRCUMSTANCES 【機縁】

師は

The Master [Qingyuan]<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Great Master Hongji** (C. Hongji Dashi 弘濟大師; J. Kōsai Daishi). This is the posthumous honorary title of Qingyuan Xingsi 青原行思 (J. Seigen Gyōshi; -740), a leading dharma heir of the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng.

<sup>2</sup> **assembly of Caoxi** (C. Caoxi hui 曹溪會; J. Sokei e). The followers of the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng, who was abbot of the Baolin Monastery on Mount Caoxi, and whose sobriquet was “Caoxi.”

<sup>3</sup> **He asked** (C. wenyue 問曰; J. toite iwaku 問て曰く). The Chinese passage that begins with these words is nearly identical to one that appears in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* under the heading “Chan Master Xingsi of Mount Qingyuan in Jizhou” (T 2076.51.240a19-22).

<sup>4</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 a nearly identical Chinese passage that appears in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* under the heading “Chan Master Xingsi of Mount Qingyuan in Jizhou Prefecture”:

《景德傳燈錄》安城人也。姓劉氏幼歲出家。每群居論道師唯默然。後聞曹谿法席乃往參禮。問曰。當何所務即不落階級。祖曰。汝曾作甚麼。師曰。聖諦亦不爲。祖曰。落何階級。曰聖諦尚不爲。何階級之有。祖深器之。會下學徒雖

吉州安城、劉氏の子なり。幼歳にして出家し、群居して道を論ずる毎に、師は唯默然たり。後に曹溪の法席を聞て乃ち往て参禮す。問て曰く、當に何の所務か即ち階級に落ちざるべき。乃至、祖、深く之を器とす。會下の學徒衆しと雖も、師、首に居す。亦猶ほ二祖の言はざれども、少林之を得髓と謂が如し。一日、祖、師に謂て曰く、從上衣法雙び行ず、師資遞ひに授く。衣は以て信を表し、法は乃ち心を印す。吾今は人を得たり、何ぞ信ぜられざるを患へん。吾れ衣を受てより以來、此多難に遭ふ。況や後代の爭競必ず多からん。衣は即ち留めて山門を鎮せん。汝、當に化を一方に分て斷絶せしむることなかるべし。師、既に法を得て吉州の青原山靜居寺に住す。

was a son of the Liu Clan of Ancheng City in Jizhou Prefecture. He went forth from household life as a boy, and whenever people discussed the way at large gatherings, the Master [Qingyuan] alone remained silent. Later, he heard of the *dharma* seat at Caoxi and went to seek instruction and pay his respects. He asked, “By what striving can I avoid falling to a lower level?”...and so on, down to...<sup>1</sup> The Ancestor [Huineng] recognized him as a deep vessel. Although there were many students congregated in the community of disciples, the Master [Qingyuan] held the head place. Indeed, it was like the case of the Second Ancestor, who despite not speaking was said by Shaolin<sup>2</sup> to have “gotten the marrow.” One day, the Ancestor [Huineng] spoke to the Master [Qingyuan], saying: “Until now, the robe and *dharma* were treated as a paired set and handed down from master to disciple. The robe has been used to manifest proof,<sup>3</sup>

眾師居首焉。亦猶二祖不言少林謂之得髓矣。一日祖謂師曰。從上衣法雙行師資遞授。衣以表信。法乃印心。吾今得人何患不信。吾受衣以來遭此多難。況乎後代爭競必多。衣即留鎮山門。汝當分化一方無令斷絶。師既得法。住吉州青原山靜居寺。(T 2076.51.240a17-28).

<sup>1</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.

<sup>2</sup> Shaolin (J. Shōrin 少林). A sobriquet of the Founding Ancestor, Bodhidharma, who resided at Shaolin Monastery. When he questioned his four disciples about the *dharma*, Huike remained bowed in silence, whereupon Bodhidharma made him the Second Ancestor of the Chan/Zen Lineage in China.

<sup>3</sup> The robe has been used to manifest proof (*e wa motte shin wo hyōshi* 衣は以て信を表し). The “proof” (C. *xin* 信; J. *shin*) referred to here is proof of *dharma* inheritance. Because the *buddha-mind* that is said to be handed down in the Chan/Zen Lineage is avowedly *signless*, there is in principle no way of using a person’s words or actions to judge whether or not that person has inherited that *mind-dharma*. When Huineng

and the *dharma* seals the *mind*.<sup>1</sup> Now that I have found a person [as *dharma heir*], why should I worry if that fact is not proven [by possession of the robe]? Ever since I received the robe, I have encountered many difficulties concerning it. How much more so would it be in subsequent generations, when there would likely be even more wrangling over it?<sup>2</sup> The robe, accordingly, will remain here and protect this monastic community. You must allocate your proselytizing in another direction<sup>3</sup> and not allow [the trans-

was selected as the Sixth Ancestor, for example, he could not have passed an exam that tested his knowledge of Buddhist *sūtras*, mastery of monastic rites and procedures, or proficiency in meditation, for as an illiterate lay postulant who husked rice all day he had no experience in any of those areas of monkish discipline. Thus, the Fifth Ancestor, Hongren, gave him a robe as “proof.” That *kāśāya*, in Keizan’s day, was said to have originally belonged to the Buddha Śākyamuni, been handed down through the twenty-eight ancestral teachers in India, and brought to China by Bodhidharma.

<sup>1</sup> **the dharma seals the mind** (*hō wa sunawachi shin wo in su* 法は乃ち心を印す). This expression employs the metaphor of stamping an official document with a signature seal (C. *yin* 印; J. *in*) belonging to a person in authority, which authenticates and validates it. The idea is that a Chan/Zen master transmits the *buddha-mind* (i.e. awakening) by directly “stamping” or “sealing” the *mind* of his disciple with the *seal of the buddha-mind* (C. *foxin yin* 佛心印; J. *bussan in*), leaving an “impression” or exact replica of awakening on it. This metaphor helps to explain a transmission that, in principle, does not rely on language, while also conveying the sense of a “seal of approval.”

<sup>2</sup> **would likely be even more wrangling over it** (*sōkyō kanarazu ōkaran* 争競必ず多からん). The main narrative reason that transmission of the robe had to stop with the Sixth Ancestor is that the Chan/Zen Lineage is said to have branched out in the generations following Huineng. According to traditional histories of the lineage, Huineng had two main *dharma heirs*: Qingyuan Xingsi 青原行思 (J. Seigen Gyōshi; -740), who is featured in this chapter, and Nanyue Huairang 南嶽懷讓 (J. Nangaku Ejō; 677–744), the teacher of Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一 (J. Baso Dōitsu; 709–788). The spiritual descendants of Xingsi and Huairang were equally prominent in Song and Yuan dynasty China and Kamakura period Japan. The notion of a unique robe being transmitted along with the *dharma* only works when the lineage is conceived in terms of strict primogeniture, with only one fully legitimate heir in each generation.

<sup>3</sup> **allocate your proselytizing in another direction** (*ke wo ippō ni wakachite* 化を一方に分て). The translation here is tentative. The object of the verb “distribute,” “divide,” or “allocate” (*wakachite* 分て) is definitely the act of “converting” people or “proselytizing” (*ke* 化), but the force of the adverbial expression *ippō ni* 一方に is unclear. One possible interpretation is that *ippō* means “another direction,” which is to say, “not here, but over there.” Another possible interpretation is that *ippō* means “to one side” or “in one direction.” Traditional histories of the Chan Lineage, starting with the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame*, depict Xingsi as having but a single *dharma heir* in the first generation, namely Shitou Xiqian (700–791). However, they say that Xingsi has 21 *dharma heirs* in the second generation, 23 in the third genera-

mission of dharma] to be cut off.” The Master [Qingyuan], having gotten the dharma, became abbot of Jingju Monastery on Mount Qingyuan in Jizhou Prefecture.

乃ち曹溪とてく化を並べ、卒に石頭を接せしより、夥く曹溪の鱗下に投ぜしやから、踵を繼で来る。尤も大鑑の光明とす。

Thereafter, he measured up to Caoxi as an equal in proselytizing. In the end, after he connected with [his disciple] Shitou, a great many people who had joined the ranks of Caoxi came to follow in his footsteps. They regarded him as Dajian’s [Huineng’s] most radiant [dharma heir].

乃ち唐の開元二十八年庚辰十二月十三日、陞堂して衆に告て、跏趺して而して逝す。後に弘濟大師と謚す。

Then,<sup>1</sup> on the 13th day of the 2nd month in the 28th year of the Kaiyuan Era<sup>2</sup> of the Tang Dynasty, Senior Metal Year of the Dragon, he ascended to the dharma hall, addressed the congregation, and died while sitting cross-legged. Later, he was conferred the posthumous title of Great Master Hongji.

#### INVESTIGATION 【拈提】

實に群居論道せず。殊に默然たる不群の行持なり。是の如き功夫用心の力、曹溪にして問来るに、當に何の所務か階級に落ちざるべきと云ふ。實に是れ子細に見得して、聿に趣向の處なし。祖また彼れをして速に所證を打著せしめんとて、爲に問て曰く、汝、曾て甚麼をか作し来る。卒に錐、囊にこもらず、鋒、既に露はれ、來て曰く、聖諦も亦た爲さず。

tion, 17 in the fourth generation, 86 in the fifth generation, and so on. In short, Xingsi and his many heirs represent “one side” (*ippō* 一方) of the Chan/Zen Lineage in the generations after the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng, while Nanyue Huairang (677–744) and his many heirs down through the generations represent the “other side” (*ippō* 一方) of the lineage.

<sup>1</sup> Then (*sunawachi* 乃ち). The block of text that follows these words is a Japanese transcription (*yomikudashi* 読み下し) of a nearly identical Chinese passage that appears in the *Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame* under the heading “Chan Master Xingsi of Mount Qingyuan in Jizhou Prefecture”:

《景德傳燈錄》唐開元二十八年庚辰十二月十三日。陞堂告衆跏趺而逝。僖宗謚弘濟禪師。(T 2076.51.240c4-5).

<sup>2</sup> 13th day of the 2nd month in the 28th year of the Kaiyuan Era (C. *Kaiyuan ershiba nian gengchen shier yue shisan ri* 開元二十八年庚辰十二月十三日; J. *Kaigen nijūhachi nen kōshin jūni gatsu jūsan nichī*). The date corresponds to April 13, 740.

Truly, he [Qingyuan] did not discuss the way at large gatherings.<sup>1</sup> His was a uniquely silent, peerless style of *sustained practice*. With the power of this kind of *concentrated effort* and *attentiveness*, he came to Caoyi and asked, “By what striving can I avoid falling to a lower level?” Truly, having been able to see in detail, he no longer had any place he was heading toward. The Ancestor [Huineng] also, in order to make him [Qingyuan] quickly hit upon what was verified, inquired of him, saying, “What have you been doing so far?” Finally, the awl was not hidden in its bag, its sharp point was already exposed, and he [Qingyuan] came to say, “I have not been practicing the noble truths.”

是れ聞き難きを聞き、逢ひ難きに逢ふなり。設ひ趣向やむとも、尚ほ自己を保任する分あり。若し能く此の如くなれば、則ち是れ錯まりて解脱の深坑に落ちぬべし。故に古今此處を名けて法執とす。雲門は法身一種の病と謂へり。實に此處に徹通せざるに依てなり。

This is hearing what is “difficult to hear,” and encountering what is “difficult to encounter.”<sup>2</sup> Even if one stops heading toward anything, the part about taking responsibility for one’s own self still remains.<sup>3</sup> If one is well into a state like this,<sup>4</sup> then one is likely to make a mistake and fall into the deep pit of liberation.<sup>5</sup> Thus, both in the past and present, this place has been given the name of “dharma attachment.” Yunmen called it the “two

<sup>1</sup> he did not discuss the way at large gatherings (*gunkyo rondō sezu* 群居論道せず). As we know from the preceding Pivotal Circumstances section, “whenever people discussed the way at large gatherings, the Master [Qingyuan] alone remained silent.”

<sup>2</sup> “difficult to hear... difficult to encounter” (*kiki gataki... ai gataki* 聞き難き... 逢ひ難き). It is said in many sūtras that to encounter a buddha and hear the dharma is an extremely rare opportunity that should not be wasted. → “difficult to encounter, difficult to hear.”

<sup>3</sup> the part about taking responsibility for one’s own self still remains (*nao jiko wo honin suru bun ari* 尚ほ自己を保任する分あり). That is to say, there is still something very important left to do. A comparable statement appears in Chapter 21 of the *Denkōroku*: “Earnestly avoid seeking the way. You need only take responsibility for your own self” (*setsu ni imu, michi wo motomuru koto wo. tada jiko wo honin subeki nomi nari* 切に忌む、道を求むることを。只自己を保任すべきのみなり).

<sup>4</sup> If one is well into a state like this (*moshi yoku kakuno gotoku nareba* 若し能く此の如くなれば). That is to say, if one is in a state where one has ceased heading toward anything, but has yet to take responsibility for one’s own self.

<sup>5</sup> deep pit of liberation (*gedatsu no shinkyō* 解脱の深坑). A state in which a degree of spiritual liberation has been attained, but one is again imprisoned by objectifying and clinging to that very state.

kinds of sickness concerning the *dharma body*.<sup>1</sup> Truly, it [the “deep pit of liberation”] is caused by not breaking through this place [of sickness].

然るに今本分に承當するのみに非ず、透關し來る。故に祖曰く、何の階級にか落ちんと。實に幽玄の處は幸に表裏を存することなく、深極の際には曾て刀斧斫れども開かず。故に曰く、什麼の階級か有らんと。恁麼の田地に通徹してくもりなく、究到して盡し來る。故に曰く、聖諦すら尚ほ爲さず。何の階級か之れ有らんと。

However, now he [Qingyuan] had not only acceded to his original disposition but also passed through this barrier. Therefore, the Ancestor [Huineng] said, “What level will you fall to?” Truly, this place of profound obscurity has no surface or interior; in the border of its ultimate profundity, “there is no opening, even when chopped by an axe.” Therefore he [Qingyuan] said, “What levels could there be?” His thorough understanding reached such a standpoint that, with no cloudiness, he came to exhaust the investigation. Therefore, he said, “If one is not even practicing the noble truths, what levels could there be?”

實に設ひ階級を立せんとすると、空裏に本より界畔なし。梯磴何れの處にか安排せん。此處を依文解義するやから、昔より一切法空の見到に落ち、萬法泯絶の解を爲す。既に喫て聖諦すら尚ほ爲さずと云ふ、豈法空に住まるべけんや。

Truly, even if one tries to establish levels, in space there are fundamentally no boundary lines: in what place could one build a stone stairway? The bunch who rely on texts to understand this place have, from long ago, fallen into the view that “all dharmas are empty,” and they set up the interpretation that the myriad dharmas are extinguished. Having already exclaimed that he was “not even practicing the noble truths,” how could he [Qingyuan] possibly dwell in the emptiness of dharmas?

子細に精到して見よ。此虛明の田地、杲日よりも明らかなり。此靈廓の眞性、了剎に非ざれども了了たる圓明の智あり。骨髓を帶せざれども、明明として覆藏せざる身あり。此身、動靜を以て辨すべきに非ず。此知、覺智をもて辨すべきに非ず。覺知も此智なるが故に動靜亦他に非ず。

Fully arrive, meticulously, and look! This transparent standpoint is brighter than the shining sun. This real nature, numinous and vacant, does not

<sup>1</sup> “two kinds of sickness concerning the *dharma body*” (*hosshin nishu no yamai* 法身二種の病). This refers to a well-known *kōan*, which appears as Case #11 in the *Congrong Hermitage Record*. The “sicknesses” alluded to here are subtle forms of attachment to the *dharma body*, as suffered by advanced practitioners who have broken through the attachment to external entities as really existing dharmas. → “Yunmen’s Two Sicknesses.”

consist of *discriminating cognition*, but it has a wisdom that is perfectly complete and fully clear. Although it does not encase bones or marrow, it has a body that is clear and obvious and not concealed. This body is not anything that can be discerned on the basis of movement or stillness. This knowing is not anything that can be distinguished on the basis of awareness. Because perceiving and knowing, too, are this wisdom, movement and stillness likewise are not other [than it].<sup>1</sup>

故に階級して十地に至る菩薩も、尚ほ佛性を見ること明了ならず。其故は何ぞ。佛の言く、尚ほ法性を存する故に、尚ほ行處を立する故に、佛性を見ること明了ならず。諸佛は卒に行處なく、性地あらざる故に、佛性を見ごとと了了なり。

Therefore, even bodhisattvas who, being involved in levels, reach the tenth stage, still do not clearly understand what it is to see buddha-nature. What is the reason for this? The Buddha said<sup>2</sup> that because people still regard

<sup>1</sup> This knowing is not anything that can be distinguished on the basis of awareness. Because perceiving and knowing, too, are this wisdom, movement and stillness likewise are not other (*kono chi, kakuchi wo mote benzubeki ni arazu. kakuchi mo kono chi naru ga yue ni dōjō mata ta ni arazu* 此知、覺智をもて辨すべきに非ず。覺知も此智なるが故に動靜亦他に非ず). The English translation of these two sentences makes little sense, but it accurately renders the Japanese of the Shūmuchiō edition of the *Denkōroku*, which faithfully follows the 1885 edition by Ōuchi Seiran 大内青巒 (1845–1918). The Kenkon'in manuscript edition of the *Denkōroku* contains slightly different wording, in which the glyphs “knowing” (*chi* 知) and “wisdom” (*chi* 智) are transposed in the first sentence, such that the expressions “this wisdom” (*kono chi* 此智) and “perceiving and knowing” (*kakuchi* 覺知) appear in both sentences:

This wisdom is not anything that can be distinguished on the basis of perceiving and knowing. Because perceiving and knowing, too, are this wisdom, movement and stillness likewise are not other [than it] (*kono chi, kakuchi wo mote benzubeki ni arazu. kakuchi mo kono chi naru ga yue ni dōjō mata ta ni arazu* 此智、覺知をもて辨すべきに非ず。覺知も此智なるが故に動靜亦他に非ず).

This latter version is evidently the correct one, for a few sentences earlier the text says that the real nature “has a wisdom” (*chi ari* 智あり) and that it “has a body” (*shin ari* 身あり). The text then proceeds to explain that “this body (*kono shin* 此身) is not anything that can be discerned on the basis of movement or stillness,” so (to maintain the parallel structure) the next topic must be “this wisdom” (*kono chi* 此智), which “is not anything that can be distinguished on the basis of perceiving and knowing.” The Kenkon'in version also has the virtue of making sense, both in Japanese and in English. The point is that wisdom does not derive from perceiving and knowing, but rather is the ground on which perceiving and knowing are possible.

<sup>2</sup> The Buddha said (*Hotoke no notamawaku* 佛の言く). These words appear to introduce a direct quotation of a sūtra, albeit one in Japanese transcription (*yomikudashi* 読み下し). However, the particle “to” (と) that generally marks the end of quotations

*dharma-nature* as existing, and because they still establish a place for practice, they do not clearly understand what it is to see *buddha-nature*. Because *buddhas*, after all, have no place where they practice, and have no stages in their nature,<sup>1</sup> their seeing of *buddha-nature* is perfectly complete.

(大般涅槃經卷第八、如來性起品に云く、

(The *Sūtra of the Great Nirvāṇa*, Folio #8, “Section on the Arising [of Phenomena] from the Tathāgata-garbha,” says:<sup>2</sup>

無量の菩薩具足して諸波羅蜜、乃至、十住を行ずと雖も、猶ほ未だ所有の佛性を見ること能はず。如來既に即便少見と説きたまふ。乃至、善男子、是の如く菩薩位階十地、尚ほ明了に佛性を知見せず。何況や聲聞緣覺の人能く見るを得んや。)

“Innumerable bodhisattvas, although they are fully equipped with practice of the various perfections and have reached as far as the tenth abode, are still unable to see the *buddha-nature* they possess.” The Tathāgata definitively explained that they rely on inadequate vision ...and so on, down to, “Good sons, thus it is for

in the *Denkōroku* is missing, and a digital search of the Buddhist canon (using the reconstructed phrases 存法性 and 立行處, etc.) does not turn up a Chinese passage that could have served as the basis for a Japanese transcription. Perhaps the sentence that begins with these words is simply a paraphrase of a *sūtra* passage, or perhaps the quotation is of a *sūtra* that is no longer extant.

<sup>1</sup> have no stages in their nature (*shō chi arazaru* 性地あらざる). That is to say, there are no “stages” (C. *di* 地; J. *chi*) in the “nature” (C. *xing* 性; J. *shō*) of *buddhas*, which is the *buddha-nature*. The expression *xingdi* 性地 (J. *shōchi*), in Tiantai school doctrine, is a technical term that refers to the “stage of nature”: it is the second of the ten stages as defined by the shared teaching (C. *tongjiao* 通教; J. *tsūkyō*) of the three vehicles (DDB, s.v. 性地). In the present context, however, where the theory of stages in the *bodhisattva* path is presented as an obstacle to seeing *buddha-nature*, that Tiantai meaning of the term is obviously irrelevant.

<sup>2</sup> says (*uvaku* 云く). The block of text that follows these words is a Japanese transcription (*yomikudashi* 読み下し), albeit with a section of the original Chinese elided, of a nearly identical passage that appears in the *Sūtra of the Great Nirvāṇa* (the elided section is set in a more angular font):

《大般涅槃經》無量菩薩雖具足行諸波羅蜜乃至十住。猶未能見所有佛性。如來既説即便少見。是菩薩摩訶薩既得見已。咸作是言。甚奇世尊。我等流轉無量生死。常爲無我之所惑亂。善男子。如是菩薩位階十地。尚不明了知見佛性。何況聲聞緣覺之人能得見耶。(T 375.12.652c8-14).

<sup>3</sup> and so on, down to (*naishi* 乃至). This expression indicates that part of the passage from the *Sūtra of the Great Nirvāṇa* that is being quoted here has been elided to save space, but that the intention is to quote the entire thing. The full passage reads as follows:

*bodhisattvas* who are ranked at the level of the *tenth abode* and still do not clearly know or see the *buddha-nature*. How much less, then, can people who are *śrāvakas* or *pratyeka-buddhas* get to see it?)

然れば見聞に依らず、境智を縁せざる時、試に其下を見よ。必ず惺惺として人に問はざる智あり。覺へず證契することあらん。

This being so, when you do not rely on seeing or hearing, and are not involved with objects and cognition, try to see what is under this. There is definitely a perfect alertness, a wisdom that you do not ask other people about. Unexpectedly, you will verify and tally with it.

且らく此因縁をして如何が言を著ることを得ん。此田地に至て若し且らく此の因縁をして、如何が言を著ることを得ば、即ち無舌人を以て解語せしめん。若し此理を聞き得ることを得ば、早く無耳根をして聞持せしめて、方に那人をして點頭語笑せしむることあらん。

Beyond this, what words can be attached to this episode? Arriving at this standpoint, if in addition you are able to attach any words to this episode, then you will make a tongueless person unloose speech. If you gain the ability to hear *this principle*, then you will quickly make one who lacks the *faculty of hearing* hear and obey, and naturally will make that person nod in assent, speak and laugh.

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“Innumerable *bodhisattvas*, although they are *fully equipped* with practice of the various *perfections* and have reached as far as the *tenth abode*, are still unable to see the *buddha-nature* they possess.” The Tathāgata definitively explained that they rely on inadequate vision. These *bodhisattvas*, these *mahāsattvas*, immediately were able to see. Together, they said, “How extraordinary, O World-Honored One. All along, we have been bewildered by [the doctrine of] *no-self*” [The Buddha said,] “Good sons, thus it is for *bodhisattvas* who are ranked at the level of the *tenth abode* and still do not clearly know or see the *buddha-nature*. How much less, then, can people who are *śrāvakas* or *pratyeka-buddhas* get to see it?”

《大般涅槃經》無量菩薩雖具足行諸波羅蜜乃至十住。猶未能見所有佛性。如來既說即便少見。是菩薩摩訶薩既得見已。咸作是言。甚奇世尊。我等流轉無量生死。常爲無我之所惑亂。善男子。如是菩薩位階十地。尚不明了知見佛性。何況聲聞緣覺之人能得見耶。(T 375.12.652c8-14).

VERSE ON THE OLD CASE 〔頌古〕

鳥道往來猶絕跡。豈堪玄路覓階級。

Going to and fro in the way of birds,<sup>1</sup> it is as if there are no tracks [to follow].

How, then, could one possibly seek levels along the *hidden path*?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **way of birds** (C. *niaodao* 鳥道; J. *chōdō*). A metaphor for an unmarked, indeterminate path of spiritual progress that one must explore by oneself, without following in other people's footsteps (even though it is a Chan/Zen master who tells students to follow that path). The metaphor was made famous by Dongshan Liangjie (807–869), who said: "I have three paths for guiding people: the way of birds, the hidden path, and extending a hand" (C. *wo you sanlu jie ren, niaodao xuanlu zhanshou* 我有三路接人、鳥道玄路展手). → "Dongshan's three paths."

<sup>2</sup> **hidden path** (C. *xuanlu* 玄路; J. *genro*). The second of "Dongshan's three paths." See the preceding note.