CHAPTER THREE (Dai san shō 第三章)

Root Case1【本則】

第三祖、商那和修尊者、問阿難陀尊者、何物諸法本不生性。阿難指和修袈裟角。又問、何物諸佛菩提本性。阿難又取和修袈裟角引。時和修大悟。

The Third Ancestor, Venerable Śānāvāsin, asked Venerable Ānanda, “What kind of thing is the fundamentally non-arising nature of dharmas?” Ānanda pointed to the corner of Śānāvāsin’s kāsāya. Śānāvāsin again asked, “What kind of thing is the original nature of the bodhi of buddhas?” Ānanda took the corner of Śānāvāsin’s kāsāya and pulled it. At that moment, Śānāvāsin greatly awakened.

Pivotal Circumstances2【機縁】

師は、摩突羅國の人なり。梵には商諾迦といひ、此には自然服といふ。和修生まれしとき、衣を着て生る。其れより以後、夏は涼き衣となり、冬は暖かなる衣となる。乃ち發心出家せしとき、俗服自から袈裟となる。佛在世の蓮華色比丘尼の如し。唯、今生恁麼なるのみに非ず。和修昔し商人たりしとき、百佛に氎百丈を奉つる。其れより以後、世世生生の間自然服を著す。大凡一切の人、本有をすて当有に到らざる間を名けして中有とす。其時の形悉く皆衣をきず。今、和修尊者のは如きは、中友にしても衣を著す。

The Master [Śānāvāsin] was a man of Mathurā. The Sanskrit “Śānaka” has the meaning here3 of “spontaneously clothed.”4 When Śānāvāsin was

1 Root Case (C. benze; J. honsoku). The passage given here is a block of Chinese text, but no part of it can be found in extant Chan/Zen texts that predate the Denkōroku, so the source that Keizan is quoting is unknown.
2 Pivotal Circumstances (C. jiyuan; J. kien). This section consists largely of Japanese transcriptions (yomikudashi 読み下し) of material that is found in Chinese in the biography of the “Third Ancestor, Śānāvāsin” in the Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame (T 2076.51.206c25-207a29). However, because the material has been reorganized to some degree, strictly speaking it is not a direct quotation of a Chinese original. For the Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame biography in question, → Śānāvāsin.
3 here (koko ni 此に). That is, in East Asia, where Chinese is the language of Buddhist scriptures.
4 The Sanskrit “Śānaka” has the meaning here of “spontaneously clothed” (Bon ni wa Shōdaka to ii, koko ni wa jinen fuku to ii 梵には商諾迦といひ、此には自然服といふ). This is a transcription into Japanese (yomikudashi 読み下し) of a line from the biography of Śānāvāsin in the Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame: 梵云

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born, he came forth wearing a robe. After that, in summer it became a cool robe, and in winter it became a warm robe. When he aroused the thought of bodhi and went forth from household life, his secular clothing spontaneously became a kāsāya. It was just like Utpalavarnā Bhikṣunī, of the Buddha’s time in the world.¹ However, it was not only like that for his current lifetime. During a long-ago life as a merchant, Śānāvāsin had presented a hundred buddhas with a hundred bolts of cloth. Thereafter, life after life, birth after birth, he was spontaneously clothed. Generally speaking, all people go through a period called the intermediate existence after abandoning this existence and before arriving at their future existence. Their bodies during that time are all completely without clothes. But those like this Śānāvāsin wear clothes even during the intermediate existence.

Moreover, “Śānāvāsin” is the name of a grass in the regions west of China called the nine-leaf hemp. Whenever a sage is born, this grass grows on pure ground. When Śānāvāsin was born, the plant sprouted along with

¹ just like Utpalavarnā Bhikṣunī, of the Buddha’s time in the world (Butsu zaise no Rengeshiki Bikuni no gotoshi 像在世の蓮華色比丘尼の如し). These words echo a phrase from the Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom that Dōgen quotes in the chapter of his Treasury of the True Dharma Eye entitled “Merit of the Kaśāya” (Kesa kudoku 袈裟功德): “As is explained in the Jātaka Sūtra of Utpalavarnā Bhikṣunī, during the Buddha’s time in the world, this bhikṣunī attained arhatship with the six supernormal powers.” For the full context, → Utpalavarnā Bhikṣunī. It is fairly certain, therefore, that Keizan was referring by proper name to the nun featured in that sūtra and mentioned by Dōgen, not to any other nun who belonged to the generic category of “lotus-blossom hued” (C. lianhua 莲華色; J. rengeshiki). However, the story of Utpalavarnā Bhikṣunī that Keizan alludes to says nothing about her being spontaneously clothed. The point of her story, rather, is that her eventual attainment of arhatship was the karmic result of having once, in a former life as an actress, donned a nun’s robe in jest. There is another nun mentioned by Dōgen in his “Merit of the Kaśāya” who is said to have been spontaneously clothed, life after life, as the result of a good deed done in a former existence; her name is Śuklā Bhikṣunī. Keizan appears to have had the latter bhikṣunī in mind, but he confused her with Utpalavarnā Bhikṣunī.

² wear clothes even during the intermediate existence (chū ni sbite mo e wo chaku su 中有にしても衣を著す). For a discussion in sūtra and Abhidharma literature of the phenomenon of being spontaneously clothed even during intermediate existence, → Śuklā Bhikṣunī.
him, and on that account he was given his name. He was born after spend-
ing six years in the womb.

昔世尊一つの青林を指して、阿難に語て曰く、此林地を優留茶と名く。我滅後一百年に、比丘商那和修といふ者あらん、此處にて妙法輪を転ぜんと。一百年いまま師こそに生る。遂に慶喜尊者の付嘱を受く。乃ち此林に住まる。法輪を転じて火龍を降す。火龍帰伏して此林を奉つる。是れ實に世尊の来記たがはず。

Long ago, the World-Honored One pointed to a green grove and said to Ānanda: “That grove is named Urumanda.¹ One hundred years after my death, there will be a person named Śānāvāsin Bhikṣu, and at this place he will turn the wheel of the sublime dharma.” One hundred years later, the Master [Śānāvāsin] was born here. Eventually he received the entrustment of Venerable Jubilant, whereupon he resided in this grove. He turned the wheel of the dharma, and a fire dragon descended. The fire dragon submitted and presented this grove to him. Truly these events agree with the World-Honored One’s prediction.

Be that as it may, originally Venerable Śānāvāsin was a wizard in the Himālayas.² The episode we are considering now took place when he joined with Venerable Ānanda, asking, “What kind of thing is the fundamentally non-arising nature of dharmas?” Truly, this was something people had never yet asked. Śānāvāsin alone asked, “Who could lack the fundamentally non-arising nature of all dharmas?” However, not knowing of its existence, there is no asking about it.

何としてか不生の性といふ。萬法諸法悉く此處より出生すと雖も、此性遂に出生する者なし。故に不生の性といふ。故に悉く本不生なり。山これ山に非ず、水これ水に非ず。故に阿難、和修の袈裟角を指す。

¹ Urumanda (Uruda 優留荼). The name of a mountain in Mathurā where Śānāvāsin is said to have founded Naṭabhaṭṭika Monastery.
² wizard in the Himālayas (Sessen no sennin 雪山の仙人). According to the biography of Ānanda in the Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame, Śānāvāsin and Upagupta belonged to a group of five hundred wizards in the Himālaya Mountains who were admitted to the Buddhist monastic order by Ānanda and five hundred arhats. → Ānanda.
What, then, is the unarisen nature? Although the myriad dharmas — all dharmas without exception — arise from this place, this nature ultimately has nothing that it gives rise to. That is why it is called the “non-arising nature.” That is why everything is fundamentally non-arising. “Mountains are not mountains, and rivers are not rivers.” That is why Ānanda pointed to the corner of Śānāvāsin’s kāṣāya.

Investigation 【拈提】

The Sanskrit “kāṣāya” has the meaning here of “dull color,” and it has the meaning of “color/form that does not arise.” Truly, this is a case of “not

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1 unarisen nature (fushō no shō 不生の性). The Chinese Root Case that Keizan is commenting on speaks of the “fundamentally non-arising nature of dharmas” (C. zhuō ben busheng xing 諸法本不生性; J. shōhō bon fushō shō), which means that the fundamental “quality,” “characteristic,” or “nature” (C. xìng 性; J. shō) of all dharmas is that they “do not arise” (C. busheng 不生; J. fushō). Keizan, however, either mistakenly or willfully changes the meaning of the Chinese when he begins to speak of an “unborn” or “unarisen” (fushō 不生) “essence” or “nature” (shō 性) that all people “have” (aru 有る) whether they know it or not, which must be a reference to the buddha-nature.

2 here (koko ni 此に). That is, in East Asia, where Chinese is the language of Buddhist scriptures.

3 “dull color” (C. huaise 壊色; J. ejiki). Dōgen states in the chapter of his Treasury of the True Dharma Eye entitled “Merit of the Kāṣāya” (Kesa kudoku 袈裟功德) that: “Generally speaking, the kāṣāya should be dyed blue, yellow, red, black, or purple. Whatever color it is, make it a dull version of that color (ejiki 壊色)” (DZZ 2.318). In Sanskrit, the word kāṣāya denotes an earthy pigment containing ferric oxide that varies from light yellow to brown or red and is often translated as “ocher.”

4 “color/form that does not arise” (fushō shiki 不生色). There is a double entendre here that plays on the word shiki 色, which means “color” in ordinary Japanese, but also translates the Sanskrit rūpa or “form” in the standard Buddhist list of dharmas known as the five aggregates. Because Keizan is speaking of kāṣāya, which is a color (or mode of color), the expression fushō shiki 不生色 could be translated as “color that does not arise” or the “color of non-arising.” However, given the preceding discussion of the “fundamentally non-arising nature of all dharmas,” it is clear that he is talking about “form,” the first of the five aggregates.
possible to see by means of form.” Moreover, from the buddhas above on down to the crickets, ants, mosquitoes, and flies below, secondary and primary recompense are entirely matters of “form.” Everything that is seen around us is like this. Nevertheless, it is neither voice nor form. Therefore, there is no need to escape the three realms and no need to realize the fruits of the path. Although he understood in this way, Śānāvāsin again asked, “What kind of thing is the original nature of the bodhi of buddhas?”

Although non-erring, from vast great kalpas past, is like this, if you do not learn of its existence at least once, then your eyes will be futilely obstructed. Therefore, to clarify the place from which buddhas are born, he [Śānāvāsin] asked in such a way. To let him know that [buddhas] respond when one calls and appear when one inquires, [Ānanda] let him know by pulling sharply on the corner of Śānāvāsin's kāśāya. At that moment, Śānāvāsin greatly awakened.

Truly, although it has unmistakably been thus from innumerable kalpas ago, if you do not strike it at least once, you cannot know that your own self is the wisdom mother of the buddhas. Based on this, buddhas appear in the world one after another, and generation after generation of ancestral teachers give indications. Although there is not a single dharma that one can receive from another person, nor a single dharma that one can give to another, it should be like searching one’s own face and touching one’s nose.

参禅は須らく自ら参悟すべき。悟り挙げては人に違ふべし。若し人に違はすば、徒に依草附木なり。實に参禅徒らにすべからず。一生虛くすべからず。今生の和修の因縁を以て明めつべし。徒に自然天然の見を発すべからず。已見齋見を先とすべからず。

1 “not possible to see by means of form” (shiki wo motte miru beki ni arazu 色を以て見るべきに非ず). This is a line from the Diamond Sūtra, where Śākyamuni Buddha says that if someone sees him “by means of form,” that person “cannot see the Tathāgata.” → “not possible to see by means of form.”
To inquire into Zen must be to inquire, of one’s own accord, into awakening. Once awakened, you should encounter people.¹ If you do not encounter people, then you will futilely “cling to grass and attach to trees.”² Truly inquire into Zen, and do not waste your time. Lest you live your entire life in vain, you must clarify this episode about Śānāvāsin. Do not futilely arouse views regarding spontaneity or naturalness. Do not give precedence to what you have already seen, or your longstanding views.

We must also realize that we cannot abide the idea that the way of the buddhas and ancestors selects certain people and selects certain abilities. Such a view is truly the stupidest and most shallow of the stupid and shallow. Did not the people of long ago possess bodies born of their fathers and mothers? How could those people have lacked the bonds of affection, and of fame and profit? Nevertheless, when they once began to inquire, without fail they thoroughly investigated. Therefore, from India down to our kingdom, regardless of differences among the three periods of the true, semblance, and enfeebled [dharma], the numbers of sages and wise people who realized the fruits could top the mountains and fill the seas.

Therefore, none of you people differ from the ancients in being fully equipped with the ability to see and hear. No matter what place we might suppose you will arrive at, it is entirely correct to say that all of you are

¹ encounter people (bito ni au 人に遭ふ). Most commentators take this to mean meeting with a Zen master, to make sure one’s awakening is genuine.

² “cling to grass and attach to trees” (C. yicao fumu 依草附木; J. esō fuboku). This is a quotation of Wumen Huikai’s (1183–1260) introduction to his kōan collection, the Gateless Barrier, which makes it clear that inquiring into Chan means penetrating the “barriers,” i.e kōans, established by the ancestral teachers of the Chan/Zen Lineage. Those who cannot do so are deluded people, compared to ghosts who “cling to grass and attach to trees.”
this person. Along with Kāśyapa and Ánanda, nobody is anything other than the four primary elements and five aggregates. Why then, with regard to the way, should you be any different from people of old? Simply because you do not investigate the principle and pursue the way, you not only squander this human body, but in the end you never know that self exists. Having directly received the understanding that he should not waste his life in that way, Ánanda also took a master for a second time in Kāśyapa, and likewise connected with Śānavaśin, widely propagating the way of master and disciple.

Having been conveyed to us in this manner, the treasury of the true dharma eye, the sublime mind of nirvāṇa, is not different from when the Buddha was in the world. Therefore, do not regret that you were not born in the land where the Buddha was born. Do not rue that your life does not coincide with the Buddha’s time in the world. Long ago, you planted good karmic roots in abundance and connected deeply with the good karma of prajñā. As a result of that, you have gathered together in this community of followers of Daijō, where truly it is as if you are lined up shoulder to shoulder with Kāśyapa and meeting knee to knee with Ánanda. Therefore, although we are guest and host for one day, you will spend your whole

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1 squidder the human body (itazura ni ninshin wo shikkyaku suru 徒に人身を失却す る). In the Buddhist view, being born as a human being is a rare and precious opportunity to aim liberation from the round of rebirth.
2 second time (kasunete 重ねて). The first time that Ánanda took a master, that master was Śākyamuni Buddha.
3 community of followers of Daijō (Daijō no eri 大乗の會裡). The reference here is to the community of monks, not all of them necessarily present or even still living, made up of the dharma heirs of Daijō Gikai 大乗義介 (1219–1309) and their disciples. That would include, but not be limited to, all of the monks assembled at Daijō Monastery (Daijōji 大乘寺), who were listening to Keizan’s sermon.
4 we are guest and host for one day (ichi nichi hinju tari 一日賓主たり). “One day” (ichi nichi 一日) means “for now,” or “temporarily.” What Keizan means is that he himself, as abbot, is the “host,” while his audience of disciples and followers are “guests.” → guest and host.
lives as buddhas and ancestors. Do not, foolishly, be bound by feelings about past or present. Do not be obstructed by dharmas of sound or form.\(^1\)

Whether night or day, do not pass your time in vain. By making a concentrated effort to pursue the way in detail, and arriving at the place that was penetrated by the ancients, you should receive the seal of approval of the present time.

Thinking that I may illuminate the aforementioned episode, I have a humble verse. Do you wish to hear it?

**Verse on the Old Case**

万仞巌上無水源、穿石拂雲湧沸來。散雪飛花縱亂亂。一條白練絶塵埃。

On a cliff rising ten thousand fathoms, there is no spring of water, just a bubbling up from perforated stones and whisking clouds. Swirling snow, flying flowers: let them be chaotic and confused; in the uniformity of white silk, there is a cutting off of dust and dirt.

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\(^1\) **dharmas of sound or form** (shōshiki no hō 聲色の法). In other words, the dharmas or “things” one hears or sees. This refers back to the earlier statement, deriving from the *Lotus Sūtra*, that the Tathāgata cannot be known through his voice or form.