CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE（Dai nijūisshō 第二十一章）

ROOT CASE 本則]

第二十一祖、婆修盤頭尊者、因二十祖曰、

The Twenty-first Ancestor, Venerable Vasubandhu, on one occasion heard the Twentieth Ancestor [Jayata] say:¹

我不求道、亦不顛倒。我不禮佛、亦不輕慢。我不長坐、亦不懈怠。我不一食、亦不雜食。我不知足、亦不貪欲。心無所希、名之曰道。

時師聞已發無漏智。

“I do not seek the way, but I do not have inverted views. I do not worship the Buddha, but I do not disparage him. I do not sit for long periods, but I am not indolent. I do not have just one meal, but I do not eat randomly. I do not know satisfaction, but I am not greedy. When the mind has nothing that it hopes for, this is called the way.” When the Master heard this, he aroused uncontaminated wisdom.

PIVOTAL CIRCUMSTANCES 機縁]

師は The Master²

¹ say (C. yue 咲; J. iwaku). The block of Chinese text that follows is nearly identical to one that appears in the Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Flame under the heading “Twentieth Ancestor, Jayata” (T 2076.51.213a25-28).

² 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 “Twenty-first Ancestor, Vasubandhu”:

《景德傳燈録》羅閲城人也。姓毘舍佉。父光蓋。母嚴一。家富而無子。父母祷于佛塔而求嗣焉。一夕母夢吞明暗二珠。覚而有孕。經七日有一羅漢。名賢衆。至其家。光蓋設禮。賢衆端坐受之。嚴一出拜。賢衆避席云。迴禮法身大士。光蓋罔測其由。遂取一寶珠跪獻賢衆試其真偽。賢衆即受之殊無遜謝。光蓋不能忍。問曰。我是丈夫致禮不願。我妻何德尊者避之。賢衆曰。我受禮納珠貴福汝耳。汝婦懷聖子。生當為世燈慧日故吾避之。非重女人也。賢衆又曰汝婦當生二子。一名婆修盤頭。則吾所尊者也。二名芻尼(此云野鵲子)昔如來在雪山修道。芻尼巢於頂上。佛既成道芻尼受報。為那提國王。佛記云。汝至第二五百年生羅閲城毘舍佉家與聖同胞。今無爽矣。後一月果產子。尊者婆修盤頭年至十五禮光度羅漢出家。感毘婆訶菩薩與之授戒。（T 2076.51.213b16-c18).
羅閲城の人なり。姓は毘舎佉。父は光蓋、母は嚴一。家富て子なし。父母、佛塔に禱て嗣を求む。一夕、母明暗の二珠を呑むと夢む。覚て孕むことあり。七日を経て一の羅漢あり、賢衆と名く。其家に至る。光蓋、礼を設く。賢衆、端坐して之を受く。嚴一、出て拜す。賢衆、席を避て曰く、礼を法身の大士に還すと。光蓋、其由を測ることなし。遂に一の寳珠を取り、跪て賢衆に獻じ、其眞僞を試む。賢衆卽ち之を受て、殊に遜謝することなし。光蓋忍ぶこと能はず。問て曰く、我は是れ丈夫、礼を致すに顧みず。我妻何の徳ありてか、尊者之を避く。賢衆曰く、我れ禮を受け珠を納ることは、汝を福せんことを貴ぶのみ。汝の婦、聖子を懷せり。生れば當に世燈慧日となるべし。故に之を避るなり。女人を重ずるに非ず。賢衆又曰く、汝が婦は常に二子を生むべし。一を婆修盤頭と名く。則ち吾が尊む所の者なり。二を芻尼と名く（此に野鵲子と云ふ）。昔し如来、雪山に在て修道するとき、芻尼頂上に巣ふ。佛既に成道して、芻尼報を受けて、那提國王となる。佛記して曰く、汝第二の五百年に至て、羅閲城毘舎佉が家に生れ、聖と同胞ならんと。今ómことなし。後一月にして果して二子を産す。尊者婆修盤頭は、年十五に至て、光度羅漢を禮して出家す。芻婆訶菩薩、これが烏に戒を授けることを能さ。
world, a sun of wisdom. Thus, I left my seat for him. It is not that I treated a woman with more respect.” Many Virtues also said: “Your wife is sure to bear two children. The first will be named Vasubandhu, and he is the one venerated by me. The second will be named Sūni (this means “wild magpie”). Long ago, when the Tathāgata was cultivating the way in the Snowy Mountains, a sūni nested on top of his head. Once the Buddha had attained the way, the sūni received the karmic recompense of becoming king of the Country of Nādi. The Buddha made a prediction, saying, ‘When the second five-hundred-year period arrives, you will be born in a Viśākhā household in Rājagṛha, sharing the womb with a sage.’ Now it seems that it [the prediction] was not in error. After one month, it will come to fruition with the birth of twins.” When the Venerable, Vasubandhu, reached his fifteenth year, he paid obeisance to Luminous Deliverance Arhat and went forth from household life. Vivāha Bodhisattva, on account of this, responded by giving the precepts to him.

二十祖闍夜多尊者、行化して

The Twentieth Ancestor, Venerable Jayata, carrying out conversions,1

羅閲城に至り、頓教を敷揚す。彼に學衆あり、唯辯論を尚ぶ。之が首たる者を婆修盤頭（此に遍行と云ふ）と名く。常に一食不臥、六時に禮佛し、清浄無欲にして衆の歸する所と為る。尊者、將に之を度せんと欲す。先づ彼衆に問て曰く、此遍行頭陀、能く梵行を修む。佛道を得べけや。衆曰く、我師精進なり。何が故で不可なる。尊者曰く、汝が師は道と遠し。設苦行歴於塵劫皆虚妄の本も。衆曰く、尊者蘊何徳行を譏我師。尊者曰く、我不求道、乃至、無漏智を發し、歡喜賛歎す。尊者、又彼衆に語て曰く、吾語を會すや否や。吾が然る所以は、其れ求

1 carrying out conversions (gyōke shite 行化して). 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 “Twentieth Ancestor, Jayata”:

《景德傳燈錄》至羅閲城敷揚頓教。彼有學衆唯尚辯論。之が首たる者を婆修盤頭（此に遍行と云ふ）と名く。常に一食不臥、六時に禮佛し、清浄無欲にして衆の歸する所と為る。尊者、將に之を度せんと欲す。先づ彼衆に問て曰く、此遍行頭陀、能く梵行を修む。佛道を得べけや。衆曰く、我師精進なり。何が故で不可なる。尊者曰く、汝が師は道と遠し。設苦行歴於塵劫皆虚妄の本も。衆曰く、尊者蘊何徳行を譏我師。尊者曰く、我不求道、乃至、無漏智を發し、歡喜賛歎す。尊者、又彼衆に語て曰く、吾語を會すや否や。吾が然る所以は、其れ求
arrived in Rājagrha and expounded on the sudden teachings. There was a congregation of students there who valued engaging in debate above all else, and whose leader was named Vasubandhu (which has the meaning here1 of “Universal Practice”). He always had just one meal, never reclined, worshiped the Buddha six times a day, and remained pure and without desire, which is why the assembly took refuge in him. The Venerable [Jayata] wished to deliver him. First, he asked that assembly, “This ascetic, Universal Practice, cultivates the practice of purity well, but can he attain the way of the buddhas?” The assembly replied, “Our master strives vigorously! How could he not be able to?” The Venerable [Jayata] said, “Your master is far from the way. Even if he engages in ascetic practice throughout kalpas as numerous as motes of dust, it would all be the source of vain delusions.” The assembly said, “Venerable, what virtuous practices do you have in store, that you slander our master?” The Venerable [Jayata] said, “I do not seek the way”...and so on, down to...2 he [Vasubandhu] aroused uncontaminated wisdom. He [Vasubandhu] joyfully praised [Jayata]. The Venerable [Jayata] again spoke to that assembly, saying: “Do you understand my words or not? The reason I spoke thus was because his way-seeking mind was extreme. If the strings of a musical instrument are too tight, they snap.3 Therefore, I did

1 here (koko ni 此に). That is, in East Asia, where Chinese is the language of Buddhist scriptures. The name “Universal Practice” (C. Bianxing 循行; J. Hengyō) is given here as a translation (albeit a fanciful one) of “Vasubandhu,” which is more commonly rendered in Chinese with a number of different transliterations.

2 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.

3 If the strings of a musical instrument are too tight, they snap (gen, kyū nareba suna- yachi tatsu 絃、急ならば単ち断つ). There is an allusion here to sūtra passages in which the Buddha cautions monks against engaging in ascetic practices that are too severe, using the metaphor of the strings of a lute, which will not play properly if they are too tight or too loose, and will not sound good if they are plucked too harshly. For example, in the Middle Length Āgama Sūtra, the monk Śroṇa-Κotikoṭkarna is training rigorously in the forest and going entirely without sleep when the idea occurs to him that he should cease striving for awakening, return to his wealthy family and comfortable lay life, and simply practice charity as a way of making merit. The Buddha reads his mind and cautions him against “excessiveness when striving vigorously,” explaining that “if you pluck the strings of a lute harshly” it will not make beautiful music (T 26.1.612a6-b1). In the Sūtra of
not praise him, but I caused him to abide in a state of ease and joy,
and to enter into the buddhas’ cognition.”

Investigation

This episode is really an outstanding secret lore for studying the way. And
why is that? Because you think that there is a need to attain buddhahood,
and a need to gain the way. And for the sake of this “gaining the way,” you
think you should try to maintain dietary restraints and the practice of pu-
rity, sit long without lying down, worship the Buddha and revolve sūtras,
and thereby pile up every kind of merit. But all of this causes flowers to
rain down in a sky that has no flowers, and makes holes in places that have
no holes. Even if you practiced like that through “kalpas as numerous as
motes of dust,” or kalpas as numerous as infinitesimal motes of dust, you
still would have no share of liberation. Truly, when your mind has nothing
that it hopes for, either here or there, this is called the “way.”

Forty-Two Sections, similarly, the Buddha tells a monk who wishes to return to lay life
that studying the way is just like playing a lute: the strings should be neither too lax nor
too tight, but rather in the middle between those two extremes (T 784.17.723c13-17).

1 in a sky that has no flowers (hana naki sora ni 華なき空に). An allusion to the
common Buddhist trope of sky flowers. To “cause flowers to rain down” (hana wo
amefurashi 華を雨らし) means to give rise to deluded thinking.

2 makes holes in places that have no holes (ana naki tokoro ni ana wo shōzu 穴なき
所に穴を生ず). That is, to create imperfections in something that is perfect to begin
with. A similar expression is found in the Tiansheng Era Record of the Spread of the
Flame:

Old Śākyamuni’s forty-nine years of preaching the dharma delivered countless people,
but it was largely like poking a finger in the eye and generating flowers, gouging
out flesh and making a wound, or oppressing the virtuous for the sake of the despicable.

3 “kalpas as numerous as motes of dust” (C. chenjie 廼劫; J. jingō). This is a quotation
of words spoken by Venerable Jayata in the preceding Pivotal Circumstances section.
Therefore, wanting to "know satisfaction" ¹ is the root of desire. Surely, even if you enjoy sitting for long periods, this entails the error of being obstructed by your body. If you try to have just one meal, this too entails the discrimination of having views about food. Likewise, when you go to worship the Buddha or revolve sūtras, this amounts to generating flowers in your eyes.² Therefore, every single one of these activities is the root of empty delusion; they are not at all the matter of the original disposition of one’s own self. If sitting for long periods is to be taken as the way, then at the time of birth everyone has been sitting for ten months, so that must be the way: why seek it a second time? If maintaining dietary restraints is to be taken as the way, then at times when one is ill and has no fixed times for meals, must one no longer be a person of the way? How utterly laughable!

Disciples of the Buddha did, in this way,³ establish various rules of purity and make known the proper conduct of buddhas and ancestors. Nevertheless, if your clinging to them is one-sided, then they are sure to become, on the contrary, mental afflictions. Furthermore, if you seek the way because you have wearied of birth and death, going and coming, then you will not be able to cut off the “dying here” and “being born there” that has gone on from the beginningless past down to the present. In which place⁴ do you

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¹ "know satisfaction" (C. zhizu 知足; J. chisoku). This is a quotation of words spoken by Venerable Jayata in the Root Case.

² generating flowers in your eyes (manako ni hana wo shōzu 眼に華を生ず). To “poke a finger in the eye and generate flowers” (C. niemu shēnghuā 捏目生華; J. nimoku shōka) is a metaphor for seeing things that are not actually there. The Sino-Japanese expression “generating flowers” (C. shēnghuā 生華; J. shōka) can be rendered in English as “seeing stars.”

³ in this way (kaku no gotoshi 是の知し). That is to say, disciples of the Buddha did establish the rules and practices that are named above: those pertaining to diet, celibacy, meditation, worship, sūtra reading, and so on.

⁴ In which place (izure no tokoro ni ka 何れの處にか). That is to say, in which place of
suppose it will be the proper time to gain the way? However, you think that by adhering rigidly to various practices of this sort, that in itself is seeking the way. This is an entirely mistaken understanding.

Furthermore, what buddhahood do you see that could be attained? What living beings do you see that could be deluded? Thus, there is not a single person who is a deluded person, and not a single dharma that one could awaken to. For this reason, sayings to the effect that delusion is turned around and made into awakening, or that the ordinary is turned around and made into the sagely, are entirely the words of unawakened people. Furthermore, what ordinary is there that could be turned around? What delusion is there that could be awakened from?

Therefore, Reverend Jiashan said:

明明無悟法、悟法却迷人。長舒兩脚睡、無僞亦無眞。

Clearly, there is no dharma of awakening; the dharma of awakening, on the contrary, deludes people. Stretch out both legs and sleep; there is no counterfeit and no real.

A monk asked [Jiashan]: “Up to now, the intention of the [Chan] ancestors and the intention of the [sūtra] teachings have been established. Reverend, will you say why this is so, or not?” The Master [Jiashan] said, “After three years of not eating any food, at present no starving people are evident.” The monk said, “I grant that there are no starving people, but why am I not awakened?” The Master said, “It is only due to awakening and delusion that I spurn ācāryas [i.e. experts on the teachings].” The Master spoke a verse, which went:

Clearly, there is no dharma of awakening; the dharma of awakening, on the contrary, deludes people.
Stretch out both legs and sleep; there is no counterfeit and no real.

In other words, there is no such thing as "awakening." The present verse is the locus classicus of the kōan known as...
the dharma of awakening, on the contrary, deludes people.
Stretch out both legs and sleep;
there is no counterfeit and no real.
living beings; how, then, could it possibly despise delusion or seek awakening? In order to enable that person to see directly, ever since the ancestral teacher came from the west, regardless of whether one is intelligent or stupid, an old student or a new student, we have been made to do a single bit of sitting erect, and made to abide peacefully in ourselves. This is the dharma gate of great ease and joy.\footnote{dharma gate of great ease and joy (dai anraku no hōmon 大安樂の法門). This expression refers to the practice of seated meditation, mentioned here as “sitting erect.”}

Thus, gentlemen, from vast kalpas past down until the present day, you have thought that that which is not mistaken is a mistake. Do not, while pointlessly heeding only the frost atop another person’s gate, forget the jewel\footnote{jewel (takara 寶). This sentence and the two that follow play off the famous parable in the Lotus Sūtra about the “jewel in the drunken man’s robe.”} in the interior of the house of your own self. Thus, at present, an intimate friend is about to meet all of you. Do not anticipate attaining the way on some other day, distant from now. Merely flip over your patched robe, properly face the middle of the square inch of your own self and meticulously examine it, without putting this off to the future or facing anywhere else when seeking. If you proceed in this way, hundreds and thousands of dharma gates and limitless buddha-activities will all flow forth and proceed to cover heaven and cover earth.

Earnestly avoid seeking the way. You need only take responsibility for your own self. Although it may be said that, from vast kalpas past, you have carried it coming, carried it going, and never been separated from it for even a moment, if you do not know that your own self possesses everything, it is just like searching to the east and to the west for something that you are holding in your hand. For how long have you been making that mis-

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take? This is simply a matter of your forgetting your own self; that is all. Today, if you come to see it fully, then the wondrous way of all buddhas, as well as the individual transmission of the ancestral teachers, all consist simply of this one matter. You should not presume to doubt this.

People, when you arrive at such a level, you will not presume to doubt the tongues of the world’s old reverends.¹ In the above [Root Case] it is said, “When [Vasubandhu] heard this, he aroused uncontaminated wisdom.” If you wish to arouse uncontaminated wisdom, then all you need to do is take responsibility for your own self. If you wish to take responsibility for your own self, then you must know that, from birth until reaching old age, it is only “this.” In general, there is not a single mote of dust that need be discarded, and not a single dharma that need be obtained. Furthermore, do not try to arouse any “uncontaminated wisdom” other than this.

今日、例に依て卑語あり。適來の因縁を演んと思ふ。聞かんと要や。

Today, as is customary, I have some humble words, and I would like to expound on the aforementioned episode. Do you wish to hear them?

VERSE ON THE OLD CASE 【頌古】

風過大虛雲出岫。道情世事都無管。

Wind passes through vast space; clouds appear in mountain ravines. Noble sentiments and worldly affairs: I pay no heed to either.

¹ world’s old reverends (tenka no rō oshō 天下の老和尚). The abbots of Chan/Zen monasteries.