

正法眼藏第五十七  
Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma  
Book 57

徧參  
Extensive Study

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES

1. **“Go without a string at your feet”** (*sokuka mu shi ko* 足下無絲去): From a saying attributed to the Tang-dynasty master Dongshan Liangjie 洞山良价:

僧問、師尋常教學人行鳥道、未審如何是鳥道。師曰、不逢一人。云、如何行。師曰、直須足下無絲去。

A monk asked, “The master always has students follow the way of the birds. What is the way of the birds?”

The master said, “You don’t meet a single person.”

[The monk] said, “How do you follow it?”

The master said, “You should go without a string at your feet.”

(*Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄, T.51:322c21-23; c.f. *Dongshan yulu* 洞山語錄, T.47:511a28.)

2. **“Clouds arose underfoot”** (*sokuka unshō* 足下雲生): An expression best known from an incident told in the notice on Bodhidharma in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T.51:218b2-6) and discussed in a number of Chan conversations. The story begins when Bodhidharma’s follower, identified by the name Zongsheng 宗勝, disobeyed his master and went off to teach a king; Bodhidharma knows from afar that he will be defeated in debate with the king:

遽告波羅提曰、宗勝不稟吾教、潛化於王須臾即屈。汝可速救。波羅提恭稟師旨云、願假神力。言已雲生足下。至王前默然而住。時王正問宗勝、忽見波羅提乘雲而至愕然忘其問答。

He immediately addressed [his follower] Boluoti, saying, “Zongsheng has disobeyed my instructions and is secretly teaching the king; he’s about to be defeated. Quick, you must save him.”

Boluoti respectfully accepted the master’s charge, saying, “I wish to borrow some supernatural powers.”

Upon these words, clouds arose at his feet. Traveling to the king, he stood silently in front of him. At the moment, the king was about to question Zongsheng; but suddenly seeing Boluoti come riding on the cloud, he was stunned and forgot the debate.

3. **“A flower opens and the world arises”** (*ke kai sekai ki* 華開世界起): From the transmission of verse of Bodhidharma’s master, Prajñātāra (*Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.51:216b12-16):

尊者告曰。如來以正法眼付大迦葉。如是展轉乃至於我。我今囑汝。聽吾偈曰。心地生諸種因事復生理果滿菩提圓華開世界起。

The Venerable [Prajñātāra] addressed [Bodhidharma] saying, “The Tathāgata passed the eye of the true dharma to the Great Kāśyapa. In this way, it has developed down to me. I now bequeath it to you. Hear my verse:

The seeds grow from the mind ground;  
The principle arises from phenomena.  
When the fruit ripens, bodhi is complete;  
A flower opens, and the world arises.

4. “**I always care for this**” (*go jō o shi setsu* 吾常於此切): From a remark attributed to Dongshan Liangjie (e.g., at *Dongshan yulu* 洞山語錄, T.47:510b24-25):

問、三身之中、阿那身不墮衆數。師曰、吾常於此切。

[A monk] asked, “Among the three bodies [of the buddha], which body doesn’t fall among the numbered?”

The master said, “I always care for this.”

Dōgen’s *shinji* 真字 *Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼藏, case 55 (DZZ.5:152) gives the monk’s question as “which body preaches the dharma” (*na shin seppō* 那身說法).

5. “**Don’t do even the noble truths**” (*shōtai yaku fui* 聖諦亦不爲); “**what stages are there?**” (*ka kaikyū shi u* 何階級之有): From a conversation between Nanyue Huairang 南嶽懷讓 and his master, the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng 六祖慧能 (see, e.g., *Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.51:240a19-21):

後聞曹谿法席乃往參禮。問曰。當何所務即不落階級。祖曰。汝曾作什麼。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。

Later, upon hearing of the dharma seat at Caoqi, he [i.e., Huairang] went and paid his respects. He asked, “What business would avoid falling down the stages?”

The ancestor said, “How do you understand it?”

The master said, “Don’t do even the noble truths.”

The ancestor said, “What stage will you fall to?”

He said, “If you don’t do even the noble truths, what stages are there?” The ancestor deeply respected him.

6. Reference to this famous dialogue, between Nanyue Huairang 南嶽懷讓 and the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng 六祖慧能, appears regularly throughout Dōgen’s writings. Here is the version of the story given in his *shinji Shōbōgenzō* [DZZ.5:178, case 101].

南嶽山大慧禪師（嗣曹溪、諱懷讓）參六祖。祖曰、從什麼處來。師曰、嵩山安國師處來。祖曰、是什麼物恁麼來。師罔措。於是執侍八年、方省前話。乃告祖云、懷讓會得、當初來時、和尚接某甲、是什麼物恁麼來。祖云、爾作麼生會。師曰、說似一物即不中。祖曰、還假修證否。師曰、修證即不無、染污即不得。祖曰、祇此不染污、是諸佛之所護念。汝亦如是、吾亦如是、乃至西天諸祖亦如是。

The Chan Master Dahui of Mt. Nanyue (descendant of Caoxi, named Huairang) visited the Sixth Ancestor. The Ancestor asked him, “Where do you come from?”

The Master said, “I come from the National Teacher An on Mt. Song.”

The Ancestor said, “What is it that comes like this?”

The Master was without means [to answer]. After attending [the Ancestor] for eight years, he finally understood the previous conversation. Thereupon, he announced to the Ancestor, “I’ve understood what you put to me when I first came: ‘What is it that comes like this?’”

The Ancestor asked, “How do you understand it?”

The Master replied, “To say it’s like anything wouldn’t hit it.”

The Ancestor said, “Then is it contingent on practice and verification?”

The Master answered, “It’s not without practice and verification, but it’s not defiled by them.”

The Ancestor said, “Just this ‘not defiled’ is what the buddhas bear in mind. You’re also like this, I’m also like this, and all the ancestors of the Western Heavens [i. e., India] are also like this.”

**7. “Sixty-five hundred thousands of ten thousands of hundred millions”** (*rokujūgo hyaku sen man oku* 六十五百千萬億): The number derives from the twenty-seventh chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra*, in which a buddha says of the two pious princes, Vimalagarbha and Vimalanetra,

此二子已曾供養六十五百千萬億那由多恒河沙諸佛

“These two boys have already made offerings to buddhas equal to sixty-five hundred thousands of ten thousands of hundred millions of *nayutas* of buddhas.” (T.9:(262):60c12.)

**8. “Striking the four quarters and eight sides”** (*da shihō hachimen rai* 打四方八面來):

Seemingly based on a well-known passage in *Linju yulu* 臨濟語錄, in which Linji’s eccentric follower Puhua 普化, says,

明頭來明頭打、暗頭來暗頭打、四方八面來旋風打

If a bright one comes, I hit the bright one; if a dark one comes, I hit the dark one. If they come from the four quarters and eight sides, I hit them like a whirlwind.

Dōgen’s version here seems to break the Chinese passage so that the verb “hit” (*da* 打) at the end of the second clause gets attached to the head of the third clause.

**9. “Four or five thousand lanes of flowers and willows, twenty or thirty thousand pavilions of flutes and zithers”** (*shigosen jō keryū kō nisanman za kan genrō* 四五千條華柳巷二三萬座管絃樓):

The two clauses here represent a slight variation on a common theme in Chan writings; see, e.g., the lecture by Yun’an Kewen 雲庵克文 (1025-1102):

佛法門中有縱有奪。縱也四五百條花柳巷。二三千所管絃樓奪也。

In the buddha dharma, there is letting be and taking away. “Letting be” is four or five hundred lanes of flowers and willows; two or three thousand pavilions of flutes and zithers are “taking away.” (*Gu zunsu yulu* 古尊宿語錄, ZZ.118:713a10-11.)

**10. “Walking on Vairocana’s head is the samādhi without feeling”** (*Biru chō jō gyō wa mujō zanmai nari* 毘盧頂上行は無情三昧なり): The likely source for this phrase is a conversation between the Tang emperor Suzong and the Chan Master Nanyang Huizhong 南陽慧忠 (d. 775):

又曰、如何是無諍三昧。師曰、檀越踏毘盧頂上行。曰、此意如何。師曰、莫認自己清淨法身。

[Suzong 肅宗] said again, “What is the samādhi without conflict?”

The master said, “The *dānapati* [“patron”; i.e., Suzong] treading on the head of Vairocana.”

[Suzong] said, “What does this mean?”

The master said, “Don’t acknowledge your own pure dharma body.” (*Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.51:244c15-17.)

**11. “His life is like a thread”** (*myō nyo shi* 命如糸): Perhaps an allusion to the warning of the Fifth Ancestor, Hungren 弘忍, to, Huineng 慧能, upon the latter’s accession to the position of sixth ancestor, that he should go into hiding to avoid conflict:

所謂授衣之人命如懸絲也

The person to whom the robe [of Bodhidharma] is said to have been transmitted, his life is as if hanging by a thread. (*Jingde chuandeng lu*, T.51:223a22-23.)

**12. “Set up a single blade of grass”** (*ikkyō sō wo konryū suru* 一莖草を建立する): Dōgen’s frequent uses of “a single blade of grass” seem most often to reflect the story of the god Śakra creating a *brahma-kṣetra* (i.e., monastery) for the Buddha from a blade of grass. For the story, see, e.g., the *Chanlin sengba zhuan* 禪林僧寶傳, ZZ.137:490b; here is the version from the *Congrong lu* 從容錄, T.48:(2004)230a4-6.

世尊與衆行次、以手示地云、此處宜建梵刹。帝釋將一莖草、押於地上云、建梵刹已竟。世尊微笑。

Once, when the Bhagavat was walking with his assembly, he pointed at the ground and said, “This would be a good place to build a *brahma-kṣetra*.”

King Śakra took a blade of grass, stuck it in the ground, and said, “The building of your *brahma-kṣetra* is finished.”

The Bhagavat smiled.

Among Dōgen’s several allusions to this story, see, e.g., his verse at *Eihei kōroku* 永平廣錄, number 79 (DZZ.3:50):

佛祖翻身五萬回、見成公案百千枚。一莖草立十方刹、雲水不期得得來。

The buddhas and ancestors flip fifty thousand times;

The realization of the kōan in a hundred thousand pieces.

A single blade of grass establishes a *kṣetra* of the ten directions;

The clouds and water, expecting nothing, come trudging along.

Dōgen also sometimes alludes to the saying best known from the introduction to case 8 of the *Biyān lu* 碧巖錄 (T.48:(2003)148a27-28):

有時將一莖草作丈六金身用、有時將丈六金身作一莖草用。

Sometimes we take a blade of grass and use it as a sixteen foot body [of the buddha]; sometimes we take a sixteen foot body and use it as a blade of grass.