

# SHÔYÔROKU

## (Book of Equanimity)

### *Introductions, Cases, Verses*

*Selection of 100 Cases with Verses*  
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*(Hong-zhi Zheng-jue: 1091-1157)*  
*with*  
*Introductions*  
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*Sanbozen Society*

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## **CASE 1: The World-Honored One Ascends the Rostrum** <sup>1</sup>

### Introduction:

Even if you close the gates and stay asleep, you can guide those with the highest aspiration.  
You dare look to and fro, and bend and stretch your body –

only for the sake of those with the mediocre and low aspiration.

How could you bear sitting on the curved wooden chair and sport with your devil's eyes?

If there is anyone nearby who does not agree, step forward.

Never would I consider him a queer fellow.

### Case:

One day, the World-Honored One ascended to the rostrum (and sat there). Manjusri struck the table with the gavel and said, "Contemplate clearly the Dharma of the Dharma-King! The Dharma of the Dharma-King is like this!" Thereupon, the World-Honored One descended from the rostrum.

### Verse:

The true wind of supremacy – do you see it or not?

Mother Creation<sup>2</sup> moves incessantly her loom and shuttle,

Weaving the ancient brocade, embracing all forms of spring.

How could you stop the Prince of East<sup>3</sup> from leaking them?

## **CASE 2: Bodhidharma's "Vast and Void"** <sup>4</sup>

### Introduction:

Benka presented the jewel three times, yet he did not escape punishment<sup>5</sup>.

When a luminous jewel is thrown to anyone in the darkness,

they would certainly get ready to draw their sword<sup>6</sup>.

For an impromptu guest there is no impromptu host.

What is only expediently appropriate, is never truly appropriate.

If you cannot make avail of the rare and unusual treasure,

I will present you the head of a dead cat<sup>7</sup>. Look!

### Case:

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<sup>1</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 92.

<sup>2</sup> The Goddess of Creation..

<sup>3</sup> I.e., "God of spring." When the four seasons are compared to the four directions of the world (east, west, south, north), "spring" stands for "east"; therefore, the "Prince of East."

<sup>4</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 1.

<sup>5</sup> A man named Benka found a stone in which a gorgeous gem was hidden inside. He presented it to King Rei of So, but the king considered this a malicious joke and cut off one of Benka's foot tendons as a punishment. The same thing happened with King Bu, and Benka lost the tendon of the other foot. Only in the time of King Bun did they discover that the stone did hide a wonderful gem inside.

<sup>6</sup> Once a snake in the castle of Zui was saved by a man named Shukugenyô. The snake wanted to thank the savior by presenting him a radiant pearl in the darkness. Shukugenyô was terrified and wanted to draw his sword.

<sup>7</sup> The expression "head of a dead cat," seemingly a symbol for something totally valueless, comes from a dialogue between Master Sôzan and a monk: A monk asked Sôzan, "What is the most precious thing in the world?" Sôzan said, "The head of a dead cat." The monk asked, "Why is that?" Sôzan, "Because no one can give it a price."

Emperor Bu<sup>8</sup> of Ryô asked Great Master Bodhidharma, “What is the highest intent of the holy reality?” Bodhidharma replied, “Vast and void, no holiness.” The emperor said, “Who are you in front of me?” Bodhidharma said, “I don’t know.” The emperor did not match him. Finally, Bodhidharma crossed the Yangtze River and came to the Shôrin Temple. There he sat for nine years, facing the wall.

Verse:

Vast and void, no holiness –  
The practitioner comes, missing the mark by far.  
One gains, when one swings one’s axe without hurting the nose<sup>9</sup>,  
One loses, when one drops the pot without turning back<sup>10</sup>.  
In solitude he sits coolly in the Temple Shôrin,  
In silence he manifests the absolute command.  
In the clean pure autumn the moon rotates its frosty wheel,  
In the pale Milky Way the Dipper’s handle hangs low in the night.  
The robe and bowl have been handed down to the descendants in succession,  
Since then they have become medicine and disease for humans and heavenly beings.

**CASE 3: The Indian King Invites the Patriarch**

Introduction:

The activity prior to the beginning of kalpas, before any signs ever emerge –  
A blind turtle goes into the fire.  
The one phrase transmitted outside the scriptures –  
Flowers bloom upon the beaks of a stone mill.  
Just tell me, do you have the capacity to accept, maintain, read and recite sutras or not?

Case:

A king of Eastern India invited the twenty-seventh patriarch, Prajna-Tara<sup>11</sup>, for a meal. The king asked, “Why don’t you recite sutras?” The patriarch said, “The poor way<sup>12</sup> does not stay in the world of subject when breathing in, and has nothing to do with the world of objects when breathing out. (I am) always reciting the “Such-as-this”-sutra<sup>13</sup> in millions and billions of volumes.”

Verse:

A cloud rhinoceros plays with the moon, (with its horns) bearing the radiant light;  
A wooden horse romps in spring, unbridled and swift.  
Beneath the eyebrows, a pair of blue eyes are cold:  
Why should the reading of sutras pierce through the ox skin?<sup>14</sup>

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8 Emperor Bu ruled over the land of Ryô in the years 502-549.

9 A man got a fleck of earth on the nose. An axe master swung his axe, and, lo, the fleck was gone and the nose was intact.

10 Once a man named Môshi carried a valuable cooking pot called Sô on his shoulders and let it fall on the ground. He heard the noise, but went further on without turning back.

11 Same as: Hannya-Tara. He was the master for Bodhidharma.

12 I.e., “I.”

13 Japanese: *Nyoze-kyô*. “Nyoze” means “(such) as this.”

14 Yakusan Igen Zenji (745-828) was a very strict master, so there were never more than 20 students in his monastery. He did

The clear mind transcends vast kalpas;  
The hero's power smashes the enclosures thick and fast.  
The pivot hole let the subtle round disk turn in wondrous activities:  
Kanzan has forgotten the path by which he came;  
Jittoku leads him back by the hand.<sup>15</sup>

#### **CASE 4: The World-Honored One Points to the Ground**

##### **Introduction:**

Once a speck of dust arises, the whole great earth is embraced in it.  
On a single horse and with a single lance  
You enlarge the territory and widen the boundaries – that is not impossible.  
Who is the person who can be master at any place and embody the principle in any karma?

##### **Case:**

When the World-Honored One was walking with his assembly, he pointed to the ground with his hand and said, "This place is good for building a temple." Indra<sup>16</sup> took a stalk of grass and stuck it in the ground and said, "The temple has been built." The World-Honored One smiled.

##### **Verse:**

The boundless spring upon a hundred plants –  
Taking up whatever comes to hand, he can use it familiarly.  
The golden body of sixteen feet, an assemblage of virtues<sup>17</sup>:  
Taking casually the hands (of others), he walks into the scarlet dusts.  
He is able to be master amid all the dusts,  
While the guest spontaneously appears from beyond this world  
(where the Buddha's preaching is due)<sup>18</sup>.  
Everywhere life is sufficient according to its portion;  
It does not matter whether you are inferior to someone else or not.

#### **CASE 5: Seigen's "Price of Rice"**

##### **Introduction:**

Shadai cut off his flesh to feed his parents,  
But he could not be enrolled in the (traditional) list of filial children.

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not allow the monks to read sutras, although he himself always read them. One day a monk asked him why Yakusan read the sutras while he did not allow the monks to read them. Yakusan answered, "I am simply letting the letters obstruct my eyes." The monk asked him if he might imitate the master. Yakusan said, "If you do read the sutras, you must read them so intensely that the ox skin (upon which the sutras were written) is pierced through."

15 Kanzan and Jittoku are legendary monks, Kanzan representing the quality of the Bodhisattva Majusri (symbol of the world of enlightenment) and Jittoku that of the Bodhisattva Fugen (symbol of compassion). In a literary work called "Poems of Kanzan" it reads: "... He [=Kanzan], not returning for ten years, forgot the path by which he came."

16 Exactly: Sakra-devanam-Indra. The lord god of the Trayastrimasa Heaven.

17 I.e., Shakyamuni Buddha.

18 "This world" is the area where the Buddha's preaching is considered to be directed; the Heaven, from which Indra appears, is outside this area.

Devadatta pushed a mountain to crush the Buddha,  
Yet did he ever fear the peals of abrupt thunder<sup>19</sup>?  
Pass through the jungle of thorns, chop down the forest of sandalwood,  
and wait till the year comes to an end;  
As of old, early spring is still chilly.  
Where is the Dharma body of the Buddha at all?

Case:

A monk asked Seigen, “What is the essence of Buddha’s Dharma?” Seigen said, “What is the price of rice in Roryô<sup>20</sup>?”

Verse:

The reign of great peace knows no form:  
The atmosphere of the rugged old man is superbly pristine,  
There are nothing but singing and drinking of the village festival;  
How could they be aware of the virtues of Shun and the good will of Gyô<sup>21</sup>?

**CASE 6: Master Ba’s “White and Black”** <sup>22</sup>

Introduction:

When it is impossible to open the mouth, a person without a tongue can speak.  
When it is not possible to lift up the feet, a person without legs can walk.  
If you fall within the range of your opponent’s arrow and die under a phrase, how can you show the status of freedom?  
When the four mountains<sup>23</sup> are about to oppress you, how can you attain thorough liberation?

Case:

A monk asked Great Master Ba, “Apart from the Four Propositions, beyond the Hundred Negations<sup>24</sup>, please show me directly, Master, the intent of Bodhidharma’s coming from the West.” Master Ba said, “I am tired today, I can’t explain it to you. Go and ask Chizô<sup>25</sup>.” The monk asked Chizô about it. Chizô said, “Why don’t you ask our master?” The monk said, “He told me to ask you.” Chizô said, “I have a headache today, I can’t explain it to you. Go and ask Brother Kai<sup>26</sup>.” The monk asked Brother Kai about it. Kai said, “I understand nothing about that question.” The monk told Great Master Ba about it. Great Master said, “Chizô’s head is white, Kai’s head is black.”

Verse:

Medicine causing illness – the past sages are the mirror of this.  
Illness becoming medicine – who can demonstrate this at all?

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<sup>19</sup> As a sign that he would go to hell.

<sup>20</sup> A place famous for its rice production.

<sup>21</sup> Two legendary, holy rulers of the ancient China.

<sup>22</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 73.

<sup>23</sup> That is: being born/living a life, getting aged, becoming ill and dying.

<sup>24</sup> That is, beyond all concepts and thinking. Cf. the verse to Case 90.

<sup>25</sup> Seidô Chizô (735-814), a Dharma successor of Great Master Ba.

<sup>26</sup> Hyakujô Ekai.



White head, black head – the children augmenting the esteem of the house.  
Speech and non-speech – they are able to cut off the streams.  
(While sitting) they magnificently chop off the roads of the tongue tip.  
How laughable – the ancient Awl of Biya<sup>27</sup>!

### **CASE 7: Yakusan Ascends the Rostrum**

#### **Introduction:**

Eyes, ears, nose, tongue – each has its function,  
(While) the eyebrows (just) sit above.  
Warriors, farmers, craftspeople, merchants – each has their work to do,  
(While) the person without fixed profession is always at leisure.  
What method does a true master apply to teach the students?

#### **Case:**

Yakusan had not ascended the rostrum for a long time. The temple steward said, “All the assembly has been wishing for instruction for a long time. Please, Master, give your assembly a sermon.”

Yakusan had the bell rung. The assembly gathered. Yakusan ascended the rostrum and sat there for a while. Then he descended and returned to his room.

The temple steward followed him and asked, “You said a while ago that you would give the assembly a sermon. Why didn’t you speak even a word?” Yakusan said, “For sutras, there are sutra specialists; for sastras<sup>28</sup>, there are sastra specialists. Why do you have doubts about this old monk?”

#### **Verse:**

You give the foolish kids “toy money” to stop them from crying;  
(Even) the four good horses<sup>29</sup> and the “wind-chasing” steed<sup>30</sup> see the shadow of the whip.  
While the clouds sweep the wide open sky, the crane nests in the moon;  
With the cold purity sinking into the bones, one never goes to sleep.

### **CASE 8: Hyakujô and the Fox** <sup>31</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

If you memorize the character for “One” and stick to it in your heart,  
You will swiftly fall into hell like an arrow.  
If you have swallowed one drop of slobber of the fox,  
You can never spit it out for thirty years.  
It is not that the Law in India has been too strict;  
It is just that the karma of the stupid fellow has been miserably heavy.

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27 I.e., Vimalakirti, who lived in Biya. He is surnamed “Awl”, because he could so sharply drill through the thick leather of delusions of other people.

28 Books on Buddhist doctrines, written by ancient Buddhist philosophers.

29 The four good horses which pull the cart.

30 An excellent horse owned by the King Shin of the ancient China.

31 See *Mumonkan* Case 2 with the enlarged part.

Has there ever been anyone who has committed such a transgression?

Case:

Whenever Master Hyakujô delivered a sermon, an old man was always there listening with the monks. When they left, he left too. One day, however, he remained behind. Hyakujô asked him, “What man are you, standing there?” The old man replied, “In the past, in the time of Kashyapa Buddha, I lived on this mountain as a Zen priest. Once a monk came and asked me, ‘Does a perfectly enlightened person fall under the law of cause and effect or not?’ I said to him, ‘He does not.’ Then I fell into the state of a fox for 500 lives. Now, I beg you, Master, please say a turning word.” Hyakujô said, “The law of cause and effect cannot be obscured.” Upon hearing this, the old man became greatly enlightened.

Verse:

One foot<sup>32</sup> of water, one fathom<sup>33</sup> of wave.

It was impossible to do anything against the five hundred lives.

They have been arguing whether it is “not falling” or “not obscuring,”

Always being caught up in the pit of entangling vines.

Ha! ha! ha! Do you understand it or not?

If you are completely detached and at ease, you do not object to my babbling talk.

People sing and dance at the shrine festival, creating spontaneous accord;

While clapping the hands, they chant around in merry unison.

**CASE 9: Nansen Kills a Cat** <sup>34</sup>

Introduction:

If you kick over the blue ocean, the great earth flies away like dust;

If you bark out at the white clouds, the empty sky is smashed like powder.

Solemnly executing the absolute command is only a half of the true presentation.

If the great activity manifests itself completely, how do you express it?

Case:

Once the monks of the eastern and western Zen halls in Nansen’s temple were quarrelling about a cat. As he saw this, Nansen held up the cat and said, “You monks! If one of you can say a word, I will not slay the cat.” No one could answer. Nansen cut the cat in two.

Nansen told Jôshû what had happened, and asked him for his view. Jôshû thereupon took his sandals, put them upon his head and went away. Nansen said, “If you had been there, I could have spared the cat.”

Verse:

All monks of both halls were noisily arguing;

Ô Roshi<sup>35</sup> was able to examine true and false.

The sharp knife cuts both images asunder, they are utterly destroyed;

Thus he is admired as a great adept for a thousand ages.

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<sup>32</sup> Originally: „Shaku“, about 30cm.

<sup>33</sup> Originally: „Jô“, about 3m (a “fathom” is about 1.8m).

<sup>34</sup> See *Mumonkan* Case 14; *Hekiganroku* Cases 63, 64.

<sup>35</sup> I.e., Master Nansen.

This Way has not yet perished;  
 A true connoisseur will appreciate him.  
 For digging the mountains and letting the river flow into the sea  
 Great U<sup>36</sup> was the only one who was to be honored;  
 To smelt stones and mend the heavenly pillar,  
 Joka<sup>37</sup> was the only one who was wise enough.  
 Old Jôshû had a worthy life;  
 Putting his sandals upon his head, he matches a little bit.  
 “Coming amidst the difference,”<sup>38</sup> he mirrors all the more clearly;  
 This genuine gold is never blended with sand.

### **CASE 10: An Old Woman near Mt. Godai** <sup>39</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

Gathering and releasing – the stick is always with him;  
 Able to kill and able to give life – the balance remains in his hands.  
 Worldly worries, devils and followers of other ways – he controls them all at his finger tip;  
 The great earth, the mountains and rivers – all become his toys.  
 Just tell me, what sort of inner dimension is this?

#### **Case:**

There was an old woman on the way to Mt. Godai<sup>40</sup>. Whenever a monk asked her how to get to Mt. Tai, she would answer, “Go straight on.” After the monk had gone a few steps, she would say, “This good, worthy monk goes off that way, too.”

(Later) a monk told Jôshû about this. Jôshû said, “Wait a bit. I will go and see through (the old woman) for you.” He (went and) asked the same question (, and she answer in the same way).

On a later day, Jôshû ascended the rostrum and said, “I have seen through the old woman for you.”

#### **Verse:**

Old in age, he has become a spirit, making no mistakes in transmission;  
 The old buddha Jôshû succeeded to Nansen.  
 The old turtle loses its life because of the designs on its back<sup>41</sup>;  
 Even the “excellent four horses”<sup>42</sup> and the “Wind Chaser”<sup>43</sup> are encumbered by the bridle.

36 The sacred king of the ancient China, U, spent 9 years trying to divert the flow of the flooding Yellow River.

37 Once in ancient China, a powerful clan named Kyôkô fought with the legendary sacred king Gyô and was defeated. The clan chief smashed his own head unto Mt. Fushû and killed himself. The shock of this clash destroyed the heavenly pillars and earthly foundations. At that time, a man named Joka melted the “five-colored stones” to make pillars and supported the heavens with them.

38 The significance of the expression is not clear. Maybe it is the same as “the Ultimate amidst the Hen [= phenomenal]” of the “Five Modes of Hen and Shô” by Tôzan Gohon. “The difference” often stands for the phenomenal world.

39 See *Mumonkan* Case 31.

40 Mt. Godai (Literally: “Mountain of five plateaus,” 3058m) was famous as Bodhisattva Manjusri’s sacred abode, so that many Buddhist practitioners used to pilgrimage to the mountain. It is located 270km south-west of Beijing, or 170km north-north-west of the place where Jôshû resided.

41 In ancient China they performed augury using the designs on a turtle’s back and the cracks that appeared on the back as it was burned.

42 Quick four horses pulling a cart.

The “old woman’s Zen” has been seen through:  
If you preach it to people, it isn’t worth a penny.

### **CASE 11: Unmon’s “Two Diseases”**

#### **Introduction:**

A person without the body suffers illness;  
A person without hands fixes medicine;  
A person without the mouth eats food;  
A person who receives nothing at all is at peace.  
Just tell me, how do you treat a disease seated in the invisible depth?

#### **Case:**

Great Master Unmon said, “When the light does not penetrate, there are two diseases. Everything is unclear and things hang before you – this is one disease. Even after you have realized the emptiness of all things, somehow you feel as if there were still something there. This shows that the light has not yet penetrated thoroughly.

Also there are two diseases concerning the Dharma-body. You have reached the Dharma-body, but you remain attached to the Dharma and cannot extinguish your own view; therefore you lead an idle life around the Dharma-body – this is one disease. Suppose you have truly penetrated to the end, if you give up further efforts, it will not do; you examine yourself minutely and say, ‘I can find no flaw with myself’ – this is nothing but a disease.”

#### **Verse:**

Letting all phenomena of the universe be as they are;  
Passing through thoroughly, free from all directions – yet it obstacles the eyes;  
Who has the power to sweep out the garden?  
Hidden in the depth of your heart, it unnoticeably creates obsession.  
Laying the boat in the autumn-blue water of the ford,  
With the pole resting in the bright reed flowers shining like snow;  
An old fisherman, wanting to take his beautiful fish to the market,  
Lets his tiny boat travel leisurely through the waves.

### **CASE 12: Jizô Plants the Rice Field**

#### **Introduction:**

Writers plow with the brush, speakers plow with the tongue.  
We patch-robed monks are bored with seeing the white ox on the bare ground;  
We pay no heed to the auspicious grass without root.  
How should we spend the days?

#### **Case:**

Jizô asked Shuzanshu, “Where have you come from?” Shuzanshu said, “I have come from the South.” Jizô said, “How is the Buddha-Dharma in the South these days?” Shuzanshu

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43 The famous horse owned by the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty.

said, “There is much lively *mondô* and discussion<sup>44</sup>.” Jizô said, “How could that match with my planting the rice field here and making rice-balls to eat?” Shuzanshu said, “How could you then save the Three Worlds<sup>45</sup>?” Jizô said, “What you call ‘the Three Worlds’ – what’s that?”

Verse:

Principles and explanations – they are all forced labor.

Listening with the ears, repeating with the mouth – that is nothing but chaos.

Planting rice fields, making rice balls – the ordinary household work;

Only those who are satiated with practicing would know it —

Having had enough of practice you clearly perceive there is nothing to seek:

Shibô did not care at all to be appointed lord of a great province<sup>46</sup>;

Forgetting all intentions, one returns and becomes a friend of fish and birds<sup>47</sup>;

One washes one’s feet in the muddy water of the Sôrô River<sup>48</sup> in the autumn air.

**CASE 13: Rinzai’s “Blind Donkey”**

Introduction:

Totally dedicated to helping others, one does not recognize one’s own self.

One has exhausted the Dharma, disregarding the fact that all people have gone away.

One must be able to implement harsh and spiteful means to break the wooden pillow<sup>49</sup>.

But when one faces death, what then?

Case:

When Rinzai was about to die, he entrusted Sanshō with his Dharma and said, “After my passing, do not destroy my treasury of the Eye of the true Dharma<sup>50</sup>.” Sanshō said, “How would I dare destroy your treasury of the Eye of the true Dharma?” Rinzai said, “If someone asks you about it, how will you answer?” Sanshō instantly shouted, “Kaatzu!” Rinzai said, “Who knows that my treasury of the Eye of the true Dharma has been destroyed by this blind donkey!”

Verse:

At midnight, the robe of faith is granted to Ronô<sup>51</sup>;

The seven hundred monks on Mt. Ôbai<sup>52</sup> were thrown into an uproar.

A branch of the Eye of true Dharma of Rinzai<sup>53</sup> —

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44 The original word is *shôryô*. It mainly refers to the questions and answers (=mondô) in the dokusan room between a master and a student.

45 The world of desires, the world of matters, the world of non-matters.

46 The emperor of the Han Dynasty, Kôso, wanted to reward Chô Shibô for the great service he had done, but the latter declined the emperor’s favor.

47 Once a young man was happily playing every day with sea gulls at the sea shore. One day his father wanted him to catch a gull and bring it home. When the young man went to the shore intending to do what his father had ordered him to do, no sea gulls came to him at all.

48 Gyoho, a person in the 4th/3rd century BCE, warned Kutsugen not to adhere to the extreme purity of mind and to act flexibly according to the situation. Thus he composed a line: “When the water of the the Sôrô River is clear, you wash the helmet strings; when the water of the River is muddy, you wash your feet.”

49 “The wooden pillow” stand for a half-baked enlightenment.

50 Originally: *shôbôgenzô*.

51 I.e., the 6th Patriarch Enô.

52 This is where the 5th Patriarch lived. Under him there were 700 monks.

The blind donkey destroyed it, which provoked hatred of all people.  
Heart to heart they seal each other;  
Ancestor to ancestor they transmit the lamp.  
One flattens the seas and mountains, letting the giant birds come out.  
The splendid phrase is beyond comparison;  
One knows the method to turn things over and let them soar.

#### **CASE 14: Attendant Kaku Offers Tea**

##### **Introduction:**

A searching cane in hand, with a straw mantel<sup>54</sup> around oneself;  
Sometimes wrapping a cotton ball in iron, sometimes a hard stone in brocade.  
To overwhelm the soft by hard means is a matter of course;  
How is it if you are weak when meeting a strong one?

##### **Case:**

Attendant Kaku asked Tokusan, “Where have all the past saints gone?” Tokusan said, “What? What?” Kaku said, “I gave the command for an excellent horse like a flying dragon to spring forth, but there came out only a lame tortoise.” Tokusan was silent.

The next day, when Tokusan came out of the bath, Kaku served him tea. Tokusan passed his hand gently over Kaku’s back. Kaku said, “This old fellow has gotten a glimpse for the first time.” Again, Tokusan was silent.

##### **Verse:**

When an opponent comes up face to face, the adept sees through;  
The action is even quicker than sparks and lightning.  
The plotter loses – but with a deep intent;  
The warrior who deceives the enemy possesses no deep thinking.  
He shoots and hits the mark without fail – who could ever mock him?  
If you see jowls from behind his head, you know you can hardly fool the man<sup>55</sup>.  
The man with his eyes behind the eyebrows<sup>56</sup> – he has gained the advantage<sup>57</sup>.

#### **CASE 15: Kyōzan Thrusts His Hoe into the Ground**

##### **Introduction:**

Knowing before it is spoken – this is called silent speech;  
Manifesting oneself before anything is revealed – it is called a dark activity.  
After making gassho in front of the main gate, (the monks) walk down the hallways on both

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<sup>53</sup> There was a well-known phrase “Rinzai, the great tree.”

<sup>54</sup> The “straw mantel” was used to hide oneself. Cf. the Introduction of Case 81.

<sup>55</sup> This is based upon a popular belief that a person with wide jowls was ill-natured so that you might as well avoid any company with such a person.

<sup>56</sup> Such a person was believed to have a penetrating eyesight.

<sup>57</sup> “Gain the advantage” [*toku-bengi*], expression in the commercial world, meant “to make a great profit”; whereas the expression “lose the advantage” [*raku-bengi*] indicated “to make a great loss.” These expressions were used in the Zen world with metaphoric meanings: former phrase meant to attain great enlightenment, the latter to lose all traces of enlightenment.

sides:

They understand it all naturally.

When one dances in the inner garden, another wags his head at the back gate:

What is this?

Case:

Isan asked Kyôzan, "Where have you come from?" Kyôzan said, "From the rice field." Isan said, "How many people are there in the rice field?" Kyôzan thrust his hoe into the ground and stood with his hands folded on his chest. Isan said, "There are a great number of people cutting thatch on the South Mountain." Kyôzan took up his hoe and left immediately.

Verse:

The old enlightened one affectionately thinks of his descendants.

Now (the descendant) repents and thus erects a house gate<sup>58</sup>.

Remember well the saying about the "South Mountain":

Engrave it on your bones, inscribe it on your skin,

And return the profound kindness you all have received.

**CASE 16: Mayoku Shook the Ring-Staff** <sup>59</sup>

Introduction:

Pointing to a deer, you make it a horse<sup>60</sup>,  
Grabbing some soil, you turn it to gold<sup>61</sup>;  
Creating wind and thunder upon the tongue,  
Hiding a bloody blade between the eyebrows,  
You observe defeat and victory while sitting,  
You examine death and life while standing.  
Just tell me, what samadhi is this?

Case:

Mayoku, with his ring-staff in hand, came to Shôkei. He circled around Shôkei's dais three times, shook the ring-staff and stood there bolt upright. Shôkei said, "Right, right"

Mayoku then came to Nansen. He circled Nansen's dais three times, shook the ring-staff and stood there bolt upright. Nansen said, "Not right, not right." Mayoku said, "Master Shôkei said, 'Right.' Why, Master, do you say, 'Not right'?" Nansen said, "With Shôkei it is 'Right'; with you it is 'Not right.' This is nothing but a whirling of the wind<sup>62</sup>; in the end it perishes."

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<sup>58</sup> The expression "house gate" means "Zen school."

<sup>59</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 31.

<sup>60</sup> In the era of the 2nd emperor of the Kingdom of Shin [=Qin, the 1st half of the 3rd Century BCE] there was a powerful prime minister named Chôkô. One day Chôkô, who was keen on displaying his power, rode on a deer and come to the emperor. The emperor asked him why he was riding a deer. Chôkô answered, "Your Majesty, this is not a deer, this is a horse. If you doubt it, please ask your men." The emperor asked his men, and one half of his retinue, who feared the power of Chôkô, answered, "That is a horse, my Lord." The emperor could not tell any more whether the animal was a deer or a horse. Hence the expression "horse-deer" [*baka*], which means "fool."

<sup>61</sup> A legend goes that there was a very rich man named Shakumanan in old India; when he took up a piece of soil, it turned into gold.

<sup>62</sup> "Wind" is one of the four elements in Chinese physics (earth, air, fire, wind), wind) or it signifies the eight "wind"-elements in Chinese anthropology (profit, decline, slander, honor, praise, destroy, suffer, enjoy).

Verse:

“Right” and “Not right” – be clever enough to see the trap.  
Seemingly suppressing, seemingly upholding –  
Difficult to say, which is the elder brother and which the younger:  
This one acknowledges, simply acting according to the occasion,  
That one denies, performing nothing special.  
With one shake of the golden staff, he stood all alone,  
Circling around the seat three times, he played with complete equanimity.  
Zen monasteries are agitated, “good” and “bad” are created,  
As if they saw ghosts in front of a skull.

**CASE 17: Hôgen’s “Hairsbreadth”**

Introduction:

A couple of lone geese flap upon the earth and soar up high;  
A pair of mandarin ducks stand alone at the pond.  
Let us put aside for a moment the meeting of two arrow heads in the air<sup>63</sup>;  
What if a saw cuts a scale weight?

Case:

Hôgen asked Shuzanshu<sup>64</sup>, “If there is only a hairsbreadth of difference, it is the distance between heaven and earth.”<sup>65</sup> How do you understand that?” Shuzanshu said, “If there is only a hairsbreadth of difference, it is the distance between heaven and earth.” Hôgen said, “If that’s your understanding, how could you ever attain It?” Shuzanshu said, “My view is just that. How about you, Master?” Hôgen said, “If there is only a hairsbreadth of difference, it is the distance between heaven and earth.” Shuzanshu made a deep bow.

Verse:

The beam scale tilts when a fly sits upon it;  
The balance of myriad generations illuminates inequalities.  
Even if you clearly see pounds and ounces, or drams and grams,  
All is overcome by the point “zero.”

**CASE 18: Jôshû’s Dog** <sup>66</sup>

Introduction:

Touch a gourd floating on the water, and it turns;

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63 Once upon a time there was an archer named Kishô, who mastered the highest art of archery under his master Hikô. No one could match him except his own master. One day Kishô wanted to defeat his master and shot an arrow against him. Immediately perceiving this, Hikô too shot an arrow against Kishô. The two arrows met each other in the air and fell upon the earth together.

64 Hôgen (885-958), the founder of Hôgen School, and Shuzanshu (=Ryûsai Shôshû, dates unknown) were both disciples of Rakan Keishin Zenji (867-928). Hôgen was obviously older.

65 Cited from the *Shinjinmei* (A Hymn of Sincere Mind), a work attributed to the Third Patriarch Sôsan. See also Miscellaneous Koans 21(2).

66 See *Mumonkan* Case 1. The *Shôyôroku* case presents a fuller text of the dialogue.



Hold a jewel in the sunlight, and its colors show no fixed forms.  
It cannot be attained by the mind of Mu [= there is not],  
Nor can it be known by the mind of U [= there is].  
Even surpassingly great people are turned over in the flow of words.  
Is there anyone who can escape from it?

Case:

A monk asked Jôshû, “Is there buddha-nature in a dog or not?” Jôshû said, “There is [U].” The monk said, “If there is, why did the buddha-nature creep into that skin bag?” Jôshû said, “Because it does so quite knowingly.”

Another monk asked, “Is there buddha-nature in a dog or not?” Jôshû said, “There isn’t [Mu].” The monk said, “Buddha-nature is in all living beings’<sup>67</sup>. Why isn’t there buddha-nature in a dog?” Jôshû said, “Because the karma-consciousness is in it.”

Verse:

The dog – buddha-nature – U [= there is]!  
The dog – buddha-nature – Mu [= there is not]!  
A straight hook intrinsically seeks a fish who would disregard life<sup>68</sup>.  
Practicing monks are chasing the air and running after fragrance,  
Making noisy and confused excuses.  
He presents it evenly, throwing the shop completely open;  
Don’t consider it strange that he wasn’t mindful enough at the beginning.  
Pointing out the flaw, Rinshôjo took back the jewel;  
The emperor of Shin didn’t know him<sup>69</sup>.

**CASE 19: Unmon’s “Mt. Sumeru”**

Introduction:

“I cherish the activities of Shôyô<sup>70</sup> and Shinjô<sup>71</sup>:  
All through their lives they pulled out nails and wedges from the people.”<sup>72</sup>  
Why did they sometimes open the door and present a bowl of glue,  
Or dig a pitfall on the road?  
Try to examine and see!

Case:

A monk asked Unmon. “Not a single thought arises: is there any fault or not?”

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<sup>67</sup> Quotation from the *Nirvana Sutra* 7, 25.

<sup>68</sup> Once a man named Shiga was fishing in a valley with a straight hook. King Bun of Shû saw it and asked him, “How could you get any fish with a straight hook?” Shiga answered, “I am looking for a fish who would disregard life” (i.e., be courageous enough to swallow the entire hook at once).

<sup>69</sup> Once, the king of the land of Chô obtained a marvelous jewel. King Shô of the great empire Shin promised to give the king of Chô 15 castles in exchange of the jewel. So, Rinsôjo as ambassador of Chô took the jewel to King Shô. But having seen that King Shô had no real intention to grant 15 castles, Rinsôjo said to King Shô, “The jewel has a flaw. I will show you where it is.” After getting the jewel back, Rinsôjo fled immediately out of the palace with the jewel and came back to the land of Chô.

<sup>70</sup> I.e., Master Unmon.

<sup>71</sup> I.e., Master Bokushû Dômyô (or Dôshû, =Chinsonshuku; 9th c.), who led Unmon to a great enlightenment.

<sup>72</sup> Words by Setchô Zenji, the author of the *Hekiganroku* (cf. the commentary by Engo Zenji on Case 6 of the *Hekiganroku*).

Unmon said, “Sumeru<sup>73</sup>.”

Verse:

Not-a-single-thought-arising – Mt. Sumeru:  
The way Shôyô presents the Dharma is not stingy at all.  
If you can accept it, he gives it to you with both hands;  
If you have a doubt, it's so steep you can never climb it.  
The blue ocean is wide, the white clouds are calm;  
Do not put even a single hair in there.  
A fake cock crow can hardly deceive me;  
I have never let anyone cheat around and pass through the gate<sup>74</sup>.

**CASE 20: Jizô's “That's it”**

Introduction:

The profound speech leading into the ultimate principle despises “three” and tears up “four.”  
The great way to the Capital Chôan runs 7 vertical and 8 horizontal directions.  
If the mouth is suddenly opened up and preaches, or the legs are (suddenly) moved and steps are taken,  
Then you can hang up your bag with the meal bowls and break off your wandering staff.  
Now just tell me, who is like this?

Case:

Jizô<sup>75</sup> asked Hôgen, “Where are you going, senior monk<sup>76</sup>?” Hôgen said, “I am on pilgrimage<sup>77</sup>, wandering with the wind.” Jizô said, “What is pilgrimage?” Hôgen said, “I don't know.” Jizô said, “Don't know' – that's it.” Hôgen suddenly attained great enlightenment.

Verse:

Now, having practiced to the full, it is just like as it was at the beginning –  
Having rid yourself of all intricacies you come to the non-knowing.  
Let it be short, or let it be long – cease pruning and patching!  
You follow the high, or follow the low – it levels by itself.  
Richness of the family or its thriftiness – you use it according to the occasion;  
You walk leisurely around in the land of your heart, go wherever your feet lead you.  
That you have been on pilgrimage for thirty years –  
How clearly it ran counter to the fact of your two eyebrows!

**CASE 21: Ungan Sweeps the Ground**

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73 The highest and most massive mountain in the center of the world according to Indian cosmology.

74 Môshôkun of Sei was fleeing out the Kingdom of Shin with his men, arriving at the checking gate Kankokukan at midnight. When he let his men make fake cock crows, the watchers of the gate thought it was already morning, and they opened the gate and let Môshôkun and his men pass through the gate.

75 Zen Master Rakan Keichin (867-928).

76 “Senior monk” (*jôza*) is an honorific for a monk who has practiced more than 10 years.

77 Originally: *angya*.

Introduction:

Having come out of delusion and enlightenment, and annihilated holy and ordinary – you find there is nothing special.

And yet establishing host and guest and distinguishing noble and mean is a requisite of the Zen house.

It is natural to evaluate the abilities of the people and give them suitable assignments.,

But how do you understand those who are born of the same tree trunk and are of the same spirit?

Case:

When Ungan was sweeping the ground, Dôgo<sup>78</sup> said, “You are having a hard time!” Ungan said, “You should know there is one who doesn’t have a hard time.” Dôgo said, “If that’s true, you mean there is a second moon?” Ungan held up his broom and said, “What number of moon is this?” Dôgo was silent.

Gensha said, “That is precisely the second moon.”

Unmon said, “The servant greets the maid politely.”

Verse:

Taking up the subject, they easily swept off the gates;

They have used it properly and now they rest.

The one who played with the snake in front of the Elephant-Bone Rock<sup>79</sup>:

Aren’t you ashamed of your action of childhood, now that you have become old?<sup>80</sup>

**CASE 22: Gantô’s Bow to the Kaatzu**

Introduction:

Human beings are examined with words, water is checked with a stick.

Sweeping grasses and witnessing the wind – this is what is normally applied.

What if all of a sudden a tiger with a burned tail<sup>81</sup> springs out?

Case:

Gantô came to Tokusan. He straddled the threshold of the gate and asked, “Is this ordinary or is this holy?” Tokusan shouted, “Kaatzu!” Gantô made a deep bow.

Hearing of this, Tôzan said, “Hardly anyone but Gantô could have accepted it that way.”

Gantô said, “Old Tôzan can’t tell between good and bad. At that time, I raised up with one hand and suppressed with the other.”

Verse:

Foiling the attempt of the on-comers, holding the gripe of authority<sup>82</sup>;

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78 Ungan (?780-841) and Dôgo (759-835) are Dharma brother under Yakusan Zenji (751-834).

79 Cf. Case 24 below (cf. also *Hekiganroku* 22). The “Elephant-Bone Rock” means the stony mountain which looked like the bones of an elephant (same as the “South Mountain” in Case 24). Master Seppo lived there. Practically the expression “Elephant-Bone Rock” means Seppo himself.

80 An allusion to Unmon’s action at the end of the koan (Case 24): “Unmon threw his staff in front of Seppô and acted frightened.”

81 According to a legend a tiger with its burned tail would turn to a great man.

82 I.e., Tokusan.

Things have rules, after which they must be performed;  
Nations have laws that must not be violated.  
The guest<sup>83</sup> reverently brings his gift, and the host<sup>84</sup> becomes proud;  
The lord<sup>85</sup> dislikes admonition, and the subordinate<sup>86</sup> flatters.  
What is the intent of Gantô's questioning Tokusan?  
One raising, one suppressing – observe well his mind and action!

### **CASE 23: Roso Faces the Wall**

#### **Introduction:**

Bodhidharma's nine years – it is called "gazing the wall"<sup>87</sup>.  
Jinkô's<sup>88</sup> three bows – it divulges the activity of heaven.  
How could you sweep away the traces and annihilate the tracks?

#### **Case:**

Whenever Roso saw a monk coming, he immediately sat facing the wall.

Hearing of this, Nansen said, "I usually tell my people to realize what had existed before the universe came into being<sup>89</sup>, or to understand what had existed before Buddhas appeared in the world. Still, I haven't acknowledged one disciple or even a half. If he continues that way, he will go on even until the year of the donkey<sup>90</sup>."

#### **Verse:**

Flavor in plainness –  
It wonderfully transcends thought and speech.  
Seemingly existing so precisely and intimately, yet it is beyond all phenomena.  
Rugged, as if an idiot, yet his way is lofty.  
A gem loses its integrity when patterns are carved;  
A pearl in a gulf remains attractive by itself.  
A fresh air, thoroughly pure, quenches the heat of early autumn;  
A piece of leisurely cloud separates the sky from the water of the ocean.

### **CASE 24: Seppô's "Look at the Snake"** <sup>91</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

The carp of the Eastern Sea<sup>92</sup>, the turtle-nosed snake<sup>93</sup> of the South Mountain,

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<sup>83</sup> Tôzan.

<sup>84</sup> Gantô.

<sup>85</sup> Tokusan.

<sup>86</sup> Gantô.

<sup>87</sup> "Gazing the wall" was originally the way of practice of the Brahman.

<sup>88</sup> "Jinkô" is the real name of the 2nd Patriarch, Eka. This line expresses his sincere entreaty to be accepted as a student by Bodhidharma.

<sup>89</sup> One of the "four kalpas" or periods of cosmic changes: the kalpa of creation, the kalpa of existence, the kalpa of destruction, and the kalpa of emptiness. The expression "before the kalpa of emptiness" is almost identical with "before the universe came into being."

<sup>90</sup> Since there is no "year of the donkey" in the Chinese zodiac, the expression "until the year of donkey" means endlessly.

<sup>91</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 22. Cf. also the verse of *Shoyoroku* 21.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. *Mumonkan* 48; *Shoyoroku* 61.

<sup>93</sup> A poisonous snake. Cf. den Case below.

Fuke and the donkey bray<sup>94</sup>, Shiko and the dog's bays<sup>95</sup> –  
They do not fall into the ordinary tracks, and do not wander into the beast kind.  
Just tell me, whose way is this?

Case:

Seppô, instructing the assembly, said, "There's a turtle-nosed snake on the South Mountain<sup>96</sup>. All of you should look at it carefully!" Chôkei said, "Today in the Zen hall there are many people who have lost their body and life<sup>97</sup>."

A monk told this to Gensha, who said, "Only my Elder Brother Ryô<sup>98</sup> could say something like that. However, I wouldn't talk like that." The monk asked, "What then would you say, Master"? Gensha replied, "Why does it have to be 'the South Mountain'?"

Unmon threw his staff in front of Seppô and acted frightened.

Verse:

Gensha's excessive strength, Chôkei's tiny courage:  
The turtle-nosed snake in the South Mountain is dead and useless.  
When you meet wind and cloud, a horny head emerges;  
You now observe how Shôyô<sup>99</sup> plays with it.  
He plays with it – see the change in a flash of lightning.  
On one hand he superbly sends back and summons;  
On the other he grips and releases.  
What is this matter, and whom shall I impart it now?  
The cold mouth<sup>100</sup> bites the people, and they do not feel any pain.

**CASE 25: Enkan's "Rhinoceros Fan"** <sup>101</sup>

Introduction:

The dharma ocean<sup>102</sup> is boundless, and yet it is not apart from here;  
The entire matter before the countless kalpas exists in the present moment.  
If you are asked to present it in front of your face, you cannot bring it out so smoothly.  
Tell me, where is the fault?

Case:

One day, Enkan called to his attendant, "Bring me the rhinoceros fan<sup>103</sup>." The attendant said, "The fan is broken." Enkan said, "If the fan is already broken, bring me the rhinoceros." The attendant gave no answer.

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94 One day Fuke was eating raw vegetable. Master Rinzai saw it and said to him, "You are like a donkey!" Thereupon Fuke gave a donkey bray.

95 One day Shiko Rishô Zenji put an announcement board outside his house. It read: "Here there is a wild dog. It robs you the head above, the heart in the middle, and the legs below. If you ponder even a while, you will already be killed."

96 The "South Mountain" [*Nanzan*] was the place where Seppô resided.

97 Another translation: "Today in the Zen hall there is a great person who has lost his body and life."

98 I.e., Chôkei.

99 The place where Unmon lived. Here it stands for Unmon himself.

100 The snake's mouth.

101 See *Hekiganroku* Case 91.

102 *Sekkai*, i.e., the entire phenomenal world.

103 A fan made of rhinoceros bones and paper (or a fan with a picture of rhinoceros on it).

Shifuku drew a circle and wrote the ideograph “ox (牛)<sup>104</sup>” in it.

Verse:

As the fan is broken, he demands the rhinoceros;  
There is a reason for the character in the circle.  
Who would know that the thousand-year darkness of the dead moon  
Subtly turns into the autumn with singular radiance?

**CASE 26: Kyôzan Points to Snow**

Introduction:

Ice and frost are one color; snow and moon mingle their light.  
It would freeze the Dharma-body to death, and ruin the fisherman<sup>105</sup> through purity.  
Could such things be worth being extolled or not?

Case:

Kyôzan pointed to the snow lion<sup>106</sup> and said, “Is there any<sup>107</sup> that can go beyond this color<sup>108</sup>?”

Unmon said (later), “I would have pushed it over for him at once.”

Setchô said<sup>109</sup>, “He<sup>110</sup> only knows how to push it over, but he doesn’t know how to help it up.”

Verse:

A pushing-over, a helping-up: the snow lion in the garden.  
Mindful about trespasses, one shows special kindness;  
Brave in actions, one sees righteousness.  
The pure light shining in the eyes, yet it is as if one got lost from home;  
Turning to clarity, one falls into a (fixed) rank.  
Patch-robed monks never have anything to rely upon after all;  
Born together, dying together – how can one say what is here and what is there?  
The warm tide opening the plum buds, the spring comes to cold branches;  
The chilly wind felling the leaves, the autumn purifies the river water.

**CASE 27: Hôgen Points to the Bamboo Blinds** <sup>111</sup>

Introduction:

When doctors are numerous, the pulse is disturbed;

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104 The Chinese character for “ox” (*gyû*, 牛) is one of the two characters for “rhinoceros” (*saigyû* = sai + gyû).

105 A fisherman in the land of So Kingdom (4th /3rd Century BCE) is said to have admonished the extremely pure Kutsugen for realistic flexibility. Cf. Verse to Case 12. Some take the word “fisherman” (*gyoho*) rather as a personal name *Gyoho*.

106 Probably a lion made of snow or a stone lion covered with snow.

107 I.e., “anything” or “anyone.”

108 The white color.

109 Hearing of this response by Unmon, Setchô Jûken Zenji (980-1052), the compiler of the *Hekiganroku*, comments.

110 Unmon.

111 See *Mumonkan* Case 26.

When laws are issued, evil deeds spring up.  
Although it is excessive compassion to cure illness when there is no illness,  
An example should be mentioned if there *is* an example.  
Why not quote such a story?

Case:

Hôgen pointed to the bamboo blinds with his hand. At that moment, two monks who were there went over to the blinds together and rolled them up. Hôgen said, “One gains, one loses.”<sup>112</sup>

Verse:

Pines are straight, briars are crooked;  
Cranes are tall, ducks are short.  
In the ancient days of Emperor Fugui<sup>113</sup>, all people forgot about reign and rebellion.  
It was so peaceful as if a dragon were hiding in the abyss;  
It was so free as if a bird shed the tether and soared to heaven.  
Nothing could be done about it: the Patriarch came from the West,  
And gain and loss were half and half.  
The tansies turn in the empty sky with the wind,  
The boat cuts off the stream and reaches the shore.  
If sharp-minded patch-robed monks are here,  
Observe well Seiryô’s<sup>114</sup> method!

**CASE 28: Gokoku’s “Three Disgraces”**

Introduction:

A person wearing not even an inch of thread is nothing but a naked non-Buddhist;  
A person chewing no grain of rice is definitively reduced to the red-faced king of demons.  
Even if you are born in a holy place,  
You cannot escape from the danger of falling down upon a pole top.  
Is there anywhere you can hide your disgrace?

Case:

A monk asked Gokoku, “How about when a crane<sup>115</sup> perches on a withered pine tree?”  
Gokoku said, “It is a disgrace when seen from the ground.”

The monk asked, “What about when every drop of water is frozen at once?” Gokoku said, “It’s a disgrace after the sun has risen.”

The monk asked, “At the time of the Eshô Persecution<sup>116</sup>, where did the good Guardian Deities<sup>117</sup> of the Dharma go?” Gokoku said, “It is a disgrace for the two of them on both sides

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<sup>112</sup> Or: “One gain, one loss” (*Ittoku, isshitsu*).

<sup>113</sup> One of the several ideal rulers of ancient China. Fugui is said to have taught people how to catch fish and to raise cattle – a legendary time of splendid peace.

<sup>114</sup> “Seiryô” stands for Master Hôgen.

<sup>115</sup> This bird symbolizes noble beauty and elegance.

<sup>116</sup> In the “5th year of the Era of Eshô” (845) Buddhism was suppressed by order of Emperor Bu of Tang Dynasty. 265000 monks and nuns were forced to abandon their monkhood or nunhood.

<sup>117</sup> *Kongô-Rikishi* (=Niô), represented as two Deva kings on each side of the main gate of a Buddhist temple. They are considered to be protectors of the Dharma.

of the temple gate.”

Verse:

The vigorous man, full of dignity and power, does not yet have any grey beard;  
The young man, if not indignant about himself, cannot yet be feoffed as a duke.  
I reflect upon the family tradition of the pure and honorable man<sup>118</sup>;  
How the ox was not watered in the river where the ears were washed<sup>119</sup>.

**CASE 29: Fuketsu's "Iron Ox"** <sup>120</sup>

Introduction:

Chess players, going all too slowly, rot the handle of the ax<sup>121</sup>;  
Your eyes swirling, your head going astray, you are robbed of the dipper handle<sup>122</sup>.  
Falling into a devil's cave<sup>123</sup> and keeping hold of a dead snake's head<sup>124</sup>,  
Are you capable of radically transforming yourself or not?

Case:

When he was staying at the government office of the Province Ei, Fuketsu entered the hall (to preach) and said, “The heart seal<sup>125</sup> of the Patriarch<sup>126</sup> resembles in its form the activities of the iron ox<sup>127</sup>. Gone – lo, it's there; there – lo, it's ruined<sup>128</sup>. If it's neither gone nor

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118 There is an episode behind the expression “the family tradition of pure and honorable people”: A man named Yōshin became governor of the Province of Kei in the Latter Han Dynasty. A province officer called Ōmitsu wanted to secretly give him a great sum of gold as bribe, but Yōshin never accepted it. Later he became governor of another province, which he ruled with absolute righteousness. He remained poor, never using any cart; his children ate always simple food. His friends and seniors would want to take care of him financially, but he always turned down the offer, saying, “If people in the future generations were to say, ‘That man is a descendent of the pure and honorable governmental officer family,’ it is the best asset I could ever afford to leave for my family.”

119 There was a man named Kyoyū in the time of Emperor Gyō. Since Kyoyū had a reputation as an excellent sage, Gyō wanted to make him the emperor for his stead. But Kyoyū fled and hid himself in the mountain. Later, Gyō found him and asked him to be the head of 9 provinces, if not the emperor. Thereupon, Kyoyū washed his ears in a river, saying, “I heard something terribly dirty.” Just then, a man named Sōfu came with his ox; he wanted to give the animal water from the river. Sōfu asked Kyoyū, “Why are you washing your ears?” Kyoyū told him the story. To this, Sōfu said, “Precisely because you are so vain as to act as if you were a sage or a saint, a fellow like Gyō found you useful and asked you for something stupid like that. I would never let my dear ox drink from the water you soiled by washing your dirty ears.” Sōfu then went further up the river to water his ox.

120 See *Hekiganroku* Case 38.

121 Once in ancient China a wood-cutter named Ōshitsu went into the mountain with an ax. On the way he saw four boys playing chess. Finding the game very interesting he sat there and watched it. He was given some seeds to eat, and they perfectly stilled his hunger. As the game was over, he stood up, to find that his ax was rotten and crumbled to the ground. He went back home, but, strangely enough, there was no one he knew. At last he found out that one hundred years had passed in the meantime.

122 The most important thing.

123 A dark, hopeless spot.

124 A meaningless move.

125 The form of the heart-mind..

126 Bodhidharma.

127 The history behind this expression goes: In the Yellow River area in Sansei Province there was a commercially very important road called Hotsu-kan. From the period of the Warring States a floating bridge was made upon the river to secure the traffic of the road, but every time the Yellow River flooded the bridge was washed away and had to be reconstructed. During the period of Emperor Gensō of the Tang Dynasty in 724 they constructed a floating bridge with ships, which were connected with one another through iron chains; these chains were then bound to anchors in the shape of iron oxen, iron men or iron pillars implemented at the bottom of the river water. An iron ox was 1.5 meters high and 3.5 meters long, and weighed from 55 to 75 tons, according to the recent archaeological discovery in 1989.



there, would it be right to give a seal (of approval)<sup>129</sup> or not?”

Then Elder Rohi came up and said, “I have the activities of the iron ox. (However,) I ask you, Master, not to give me the seal.” Fuketsu said, “I am accustomed to leveling the great ocean through fishing whales. But, alas, now I find instead a frog wriggling about in the mud.” Rohi stood there considering. Fuketsu shouted “Kaatzu!” and said, “Why don’t you say anything else, Elder?” Rohi was perplexed. Fuketsu hit him with his whisk and said, “Do you remember what you said? Say something, and I’ll check it for you.” Rohi tried to say something. Fuketsu hit him again with his whisk.

The Magistrate said, “Buddha’s law and the King’s law are of the same nature.” Fuketsu said, “What do you see in them?” The Magistrate said, “If you do not make a decision where a decision should be made, you are inviting disorder.”

Fuketsu descended from the rostrum.

Verse:

The activities of the iron ox:

The seal is there, the seal is ruined –

Going beyond the head of Vairocana<sup>130</sup>,

Coming to the tip of the tongue of the Nirmanakaya buddha<sup>131</sup> and sitting there,

Fuketsu possesses the scale, and Rohi is defeated.

On the stick, at the shouting – a flash of lightning, a spark of flint:

All is clear, the pearl is on the table;

If you raise your eyebrows, it’s already gone.

**CASE 30: Daizui’s “Kalpa Fire”** <sup>132</sup>

Introduction:

Annihilating all oppositions, cutting off both heads through sitting:

In order to smash the lump of doubt, why would you need a full phrase?

The Capital Chôan is not even an inch away,

The mountain Tai weighs only three pounds.

Just tell me, relying on what command do you say something like that?

Case:

A monk asked Daizui, “When the great kalpa fire bursts out, the whole universe<sup>133</sup> will be destroyed. I wonder if *it* will also be destroyed or not.” Daizui said, “Destroyed.” The monk said, “If so, will *it* be gone with the other<sup>134</sup>?” Daizui said, “Gone with the other.”

The monk asked Ryûsai, “When the great kalpa fire bursts out, the whole universe will

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128 This sentence (去即印住、住即印破) could be paraphrased: “If the stamp of the iron ox is gone, the print [= *in*] of the ox as its impression is there; when the stamp of the iron ox sits there, the print [= *in*] of the ox as its impression is ruined (, since you cannot see the impression as covered by the stamp itself).”

129 Here lies a word play with *in* (=seal, print).

130 The buddha-name for the world of absolute essence.

131 The buddha that appears corresponding to each situation of the living beings; namely, Shakyamuni Buddha.

132 See *Hekiganroku* Case 29. Compared with the *Hekiganroku* case, the *Shôyôroku* version has an additional part with Ryûsai.

133 Literally: “threefold-thousand Great-Thousand Worlds.” It means one billion solar systems. Cf. Introduction to Case 67 and Verse to Case 82.

134 The word “the other” means “the universe.”

be destroyed. I wonder if *it* will also be destroyed or not.” Ryûsai said, “Not destroyed.” The monk said, “Why is it not destroyed?” Ryûsai said, “Because it is the same as the whole universe.”

Verse:

Destroyed – not destroyed:

The great universe – gone with the other?

In the phrases lies no activity of hook or chain.

Many legs are caught by entangling vines.

Understand? – not understand?

It’s a matter with utmost clarity – why are they being so extremely polite?

Those who know the heart need not bring up the matter to negotiate about it;

If you insist on selling or buying at my store, you are (already) a poor loser.

**CASE 31: Unmon’s “Pillar”** <sup>135</sup>

Introduction:

The one activity of the highest World – a crane soars into the firmament;

The one road facing the sun – a falcon flying over the country of Shiragi<sup>136</sup>.

Even if your eyes are like comets, (you cannot see it;

If you have a talent to speak as eloquently as flowing water,) you cannot help keeping your mouth shut<sup>137</sup>.

Just tell me, what sort of principle is this?

Case:

Unmon, instructing the assembly, said, “The old buddha and a pillar intersect each other. What number of activity is that?” The assembly was silent. He said on their behalf, “Clouds gather over the South Mountain; rain falls on the North Mountain.”

Verse:

The one way of godly light: it has never been concealed from the beginning.

It transcends ordinary views: “yes” and “no-yes” at the same time;

It goes beyond ordinary emotions: it fits, and it does not fit.

With the pollen of the flowers upon a cliff, the bees produce honey in their chambers;

With the rich wild grass, the musk deer make fragrance.

Each according to the kind: either three feet<sup>138</sup> or sixteen feet<sup>139</sup>.

It is all clear: wherever you touch, it is superbly manifest.

**CASE 32: Kyôzan’s “Subject and Object”**

Introduction:

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<sup>135</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 83.

<sup>136</sup> The Korean Peninsula (or a country therein).

<sup>137</sup> In the original text the fuller version of the sentence (with (    )) is presented in a shortened form.

<sup>138</sup> Like a small child.

<sup>139</sup> Like Shakyamuni Buddha (according to a popular expression).

The ocean is the world of the dragon – freely it appears, freely it disappears;  
The sky is the home of the crane – at ease it flies, at will it calls.  
Why does the foolish fish stay in a basin and the dull bird dwell among the reeds?  
How should you figure gains and losses?

Case:

Kyôzan asked a monk, “Where do you come from?” The monk said, “I am from Yû Province.” Kyôzan said, “Do you think of it (often)?” The monk said, “Yes, I think of it always.” Kyôzan said, “That which thinks is the subject<sup>140</sup>. That which is thought about is the objective world. Within that world are mountains, rivers and the great earth, towers, palaces, people, animals, and so forth. Turn your attention toward inside and reflect upon the subject that thinks. Are there a lot of things there?” The monk said, “There I don’t see anything at all.” Kyôzan said, “That’s right for the stage of (faithful) understanding<sup>141</sup>, but not yet for the stage of (true personal) experience<sup>142</sup>.” The monk said, “Is there any special advice from your side, Master?” Kyôzan said, “It is not right to say that there is or there is not. Your standpoint shows that you have obtained only one half of the mystery. From now on you see by yourself (what it means): Sitting down, putting on clothes<sup>143</sup>.”

Verse:

Embracing all, excluding nothing;  
Flying high, without an obstacle.  
Gates and walls erected high;  
Barriers and locks installed manifold.  
The wine feast is in full swing, but the guests lie in sleep;  
One is stuffed with rice, and yet the farmers are ruined.  
The wind bursts into the empty sky and makes the Garuda<sup>144</sup>, the King of birds,  
flap in the air;  
The roaring thunder kicks over the great blue ocean and sends out the rambling dragon.

**CASE 33: Sanshō’s “Golden Scales”** <sup>145</sup>

Introduction:

Meeting the strong, be weak;  
Meeting the soft, be hard.  
If both are robust and smite each other, there will surely be a wound.  
Tell me, how do you meet each other without collision?

Case:

Sanshō asked Seppō, “When a fish with golden scales has passed through the net, what should it get for food?” Seppō said, “I will tell you when you have passed through the net.” Sanshō said, “A great Zen master with 1500 disciples doesn’t know how to speak.” Seppō said,

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<sup>140</sup> Originally: *kokoro*.

<sup>141</sup> “*Shin’I*,” literal translation: “stage of faith (or belief).”

<sup>142</sup> “*Jin’I*,” literal translation: “stage of person.”

<sup>143</sup> “*Tokuza-hie*,” representative for all everyday doings.

<sup>144</sup> A giant bird in the ancient Indian mythology, who also eats dragons.

<sup>145</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 49.

“The old monk<sup>146</sup> is just too busy with temple affairs.”

Verse:

When the carp first ascends the three tiers of the waterfall<sup>147</sup>,  
the heavens send clouds and thunder to accompany him;  
Bravely leaping and vigorously jumping, he shows his great function.  
With his tail burnt up (through the lightening from heaven)<sup>148</sup>, and now turned into a dragon,  
he clearly surmounts the Gates of U:  
The magnificent fish will never be thrown into a vinegar pot.  
An old matured man does not startle other people;  
Accustomed to meeting great foes he has no fear from the beginning –  
Fluttering like a pinwheel, made of a cock’s feathers<sup>149</sup>,  
As a massive mountain, far more than a thousand tons.  
Famed over the four oceans—who could be his peer?  
He stands alone, never to be moved by the eight winds<sup>150</sup> blowing.

**CASE 34: Fuketsu’s “Speck of Dust”** <sup>151</sup>

Introduction:

An empty hand, a void fist – a thousand changes, ten thousand variations.  
Even if one makes *being* out of *non-being*,  
How could one avoid that the unreal is cast into an image of the real?  
Tell me: is there a fundamental principle or not?

Case:

Fuketsu, giving instruction, said, “If one raises a speck of dust, the house and the nation prosper. If one does not raise a speck of dust, the house and the nation perish.”  
(Setchô<sup>152</sup> held up his staff and said, “Is there anyone who lives and dies with this?”)

Verse:

A white-headed man rises from his angling by the Isui River<sup>153</sup>;  
The two brothers on Mt. Shuyô are starved for their purity<sup>154</sup>;  
Which is better?

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<sup>146</sup> I.e., “I.”

<sup>147</sup> Once the King U of ancient China made a tree-stair waterfall as part of his renovation program of the land’s irrigation system (“Gates of U”). From there a legend came out that a strong and excellent carp climbs up these stairs and, turned into a dragon with its thunder-tinged tail, soars up to heaven.

<sup>148</sup> It is a sign of excellence for the carp to get his tail burnt by the heavenly lightening.

<sup>149</sup> A symbol for something very light.

<sup>150</sup> They are: gaining, decaying, being slandered, being honored, being praised, defaming, suffering, and enjoying. That is, 8 factors which unsettle our mind.

<sup>151</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 61.

<sup>152</sup> Setchô Jûken Zenji (980-1052), the author of the *Hekiganroku*.

<sup>153</sup> When Emperor Bun of the future Kingdom of Shû was about to go hunting, there was a fortune-telling that he would meet a great person who would help the emperor pacify the entire China. Sure enough, the emperor met Roshô, an old angler, along the River Isui and made him his royal advisor.

<sup>154</sup> The two brothers, Hakui and Shukusai, were persecuted by Emperor Bu of the Kingdom of Shû, who eventually conquered the entire China. The brothers fled to Mt. Shuyô, but, refusing to eat anything pertaining to the Kingdom of Shû, they starved to death in the end.

It is a speck of dust, with different transformations;  
Fame and accomplishment: neither will perish easily.

### **CASE 35: Rakuho's Obeisance**

#### **Introduction:**

Speedy action and swift speech shatter the assault of non-Buddhists as well as of heavenly devils.

A master of surpassing caliber, transcending even the principle of his own school, condescends to help a student of excellent aspiration and of the sharpest wisdom.

What if you meet a fellow who never turns his head even if he gets hit with a stick?

#### **Case:**

Rakuho came to Kassan and without bowing stood facing him. Kassan said, "A chicken dwells in the phoenix nest. It's not of the same class. Go away." Rakuho said, "I have come from far away, hearing much about you. Please, Master, I beg you to guide me." Kassan said, "Before my eyes there is no you, and here there is no old monk<sup>155</sup>." Rakuho shouted, "Kaatzu!" Kassan said, "Stop it, stop it. Don't be so careless and hasty. Clouds and the moon are the same; valleys and mountains are different from each other. It is quite possible to cut off the tongues of the people under heaven. But how can you make a tongueless person speak?" Rakuho said nothing. Kassan hit him. With this, Rakuho started to obey Kassan.

#### **Verse:**

The red-tailed carp shakes its head and wags its tail<sup>156</sup>;  
Thorough and independent, he knows how to make a turn.  
Even if he possesses the art to cut off tongues,  
He is pulled by the nose and led to real mystery.  
In the luminous night, outside the window screen, wind and moon are bright like day;  
In front of the withered tree, blossoms and grass are in eternal spring.  
O, a tongueless person, a tongueless person!  
How fitting is this one expression – a full manifestation of the absolute command.  
As one walks alone in one's sovereign realm, all is perfectly clear.  
Well then, – let people under heaven stay merry and enjoy themselves!

### **CASE 36: Master Ba Is III** <sup>157</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

Practicing Zen apart from mind and consciousness – still there is *this*;

Learning beyond the paths of the ordinary and the holy – yet one is too proud.

The scarlet furnace sends out barbed balls of (hot) iron;

Even someone with the sword-like tongue and spear-like lips can hardly open up his mouth.

I will cite an example which is free from barbs and halberds. Look!

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<sup>155</sup> I.e., "I."

<sup>156</sup> When Rakuho, an excellent student of Rinzai, wanted to leave his master, Rinzai said, "With Rinzai there is a red-tailed carp; he shakes its head and wags its tail and goes south." The first line of the verse uses this episode.

<sup>157</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 3.

Case:

Great Master Ba was seriously ill. The temple steward asked him, “Master, how are you feeling these days?” Great Master said, “Sun-faced Buddha, Moon-faced Buddha<sup>158</sup>.”

Verse:

Sun-face, moon-face –  
Stars shoot, thunder peals.  
The mirror renders images without “I”;  
In a basin the ball rolls of itself.  
Don’t you see?: in front of the hammer and the stand – gold purified a hundred times;  
Under the scissors and the measure – a roll of silk.

**CASE 37: Isan’s “Karma-Consciousness”**

Introduction:

Snatching the ox from a plowman and dragging the nose (of the ox) around;  
Robbing the hungry man of his food and grabbing his throat fast.  
Is there anyone who can wield (such) a poisonous hand?

Case:

Isan asked Kyôzan, “Suppose a man asks you, saying, ‘(Is it true that) all living beings are tossed in a vast karma-consciousness, and have no foundation to rely upon?’ How would you check him?” Kyôzan said, “If (such) a monk appears, I call out to him, ‘Mr. So-and-so!’ When he turns his head, instantly I say, ‘What is this?’ If he hesitates, then I say to him, ‘Not only is there a vast karma-consciousness, but also there exists no foundation to rely upon.’” Isan said, “Good.”

Verse:

One calls you, and you turn your head around—do you know your self or not?  
The full moon, shining vaguely through ivy, even becomes a crescent.  
The child of great riches is ruined a bit;  
Endlessly destitute, how sorrowful the person is!

**CASE 38: Rinzai’s “True Person”**

Introduction:

Taking a robber for your own child, taking a servant for the master:  
Could a broken ladle of wood ever be your ancestor’s skull?  
The saddle for a donkey could never be your father’s jawbone.  
When bestowing land with a temple to someone, how would you discern he could be a master?

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<sup>158</sup> The “Sun-face Buddha” is a buddha, who is said to have a life of 1800 years, while the “Moon-face Buddha” lives only 24 hours.

Case:

Rinzai instructed his assembly and said, “There is one true person of no rank, always coming out and going in through the gates of your face<sup>159</sup>. Beginners who have not yet witnessed that, look! look!”

Then a monk came out and asked, “What is the one true person of no rank?” Rinzai descended from the rostrum and grabbed him. The monk hesitated. Rinzai pushed him away and said, “The true person of no rank – what a shit-stick<sup>160</sup>!”

Verse:

Delusion and enlightenment are two sides of the same coin;

Transmission is subtle, and yet simple.

When the spring wind once breezes, hundreds of flowers open;

When the powerful person yanks once, nine bulls turn back.

It cannot be helped: mud and sand are removed, yet it does not open;

The eye of the sweet fountain is evidently blocked.

If (, however,) it suddenly burst open, the water would freely flow:

The master<sup>161</sup> also says, “Watch out!”<sup>162</sup>

**CASE 39: Jôshû's “Wash Your Bowls”** <sup>163</sup>

Introduction:

When rice comes, you open your mouth;

When sleep comes, you close your eyes.

When you wash your face, you touch your nose;

When you take up your straw sandals, you feel your feet.

At those times, if you stumble over take a burning light and make a special search in the deep night.

How can you find something that corresponds (to the real thing)?

Case:

A monk asked Jôshû, “I have just entered this monastery. I beg you, Master, please give me instructions.” Jôshû asked, “Have you eaten the rice gruel yet or not?” The monk answered, “Yes, I have eaten it.” Jôshû said, “Wash the bowls.”

Verse:

Once the rice gruel is over, one tells to wash the bowls:

The mind-ground clearly meets itself.

And now, you monks in the monastery who are satiated with practicing:

Tell me, is there enlightenment in there or not?

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<sup>159</sup> I.e., sense organs such as eyes, nose, ears, tongue, etc.

<sup>160</sup> *Kanshiketsu*. As to the meaning of the word, cf. *Mumonkan* 21.

<sup>161</sup> Master Wanshi himself.

<sup>162</sup> Or: “Danger!”

<sup>163</sup> See *Mumonkan* Case 7. However, the end of the *Mumonkan* Case goes: “The monk attained some realization.”

### **CASE 40: Unmon's "White and Black"**

#### **Introduction:**

Where the wheels of activities turn, even the wise eye is bewildered;  
When the treasure mirror opens, no speck of dust ever passes (in front of it).  
The fist opens, (yet) nothing falls to the ground;  
One knows well the time, according to the subject.  
When the two sword blades meet, how do they handle each other?

#### **Case:**

Unmon asked Kempô, "May I ask for your answer<sup>164</sup>?" Kempô said, "Did you ever come to this old monk or not?" Unmon said, "If so, I must say I was too late." Kempô said, "Is that so, is that so." Unmon said, "I thought I was a Marquis White, but I find that there is a Marquise Black<sup>165</sup>."

#### **Verse:**

The bowstring and the arrow-nock match each other;  
The pearls in the net reflect one another<sup>166</sup>.  
A hundred arrows shot, no arrows are wasted;  
All sceneries accommodated, the lights shine without impediment.  
Each utterance comprising all, one dwells in the perfect samadhi of leisureliness.  
Wonderfully moving in total freedom in all spheres;  
Vertically and horizontally, complete freedom – how could it be otherwise?

### **CASE 41: Rakuho at His Deathbed**

#### **Introduction:**

Sometimes one smites oneself – beyond words is the suffering because of one's sincerity;  
Sometimes misfortune arises, people being devoid of comprehension.  
At the deathbed one condescends and retails cheaply;  
At the very end one is most polite.  
Tears welling out of painful guts, it is impossible to hide any more.  
Now, is there anyone who has cold eyes?

#### **Case:**

When he was about to die, Rakuho addressed his assembly and said, "I have one matter to ask you about. If you say, '*It is this*,' you are putting another head on your own. If you say, '*It isn't this*,' you are looking for life by cutting off your head." The head monk said, "'The blue mountain always lifts up its legs. You don't need to carry a lantern in the

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<sup>164</sup> Or: "instruction."

<sup>165</sup> Marquis White and Marquise Black are noted thieves in Chinese folklore. Marquise Black, a female thief, seems to have been the cleverer of the two: One day Marquis White saw a woman looking down into a deep well, crying. He asked her what had happened. She said, "I dropped my priceless neckless into the well, and I can't get it back." Marquis White, telling her he would get it for her, took off his clothes and jumped into the well. He thought: When he finds the neckless, he will steal it, while he tells the woman, "I am sorry, I couldn't find it." The moment he jumped into the well, however, the woman took all his clothes and disappeared. The woman was Marquise Black.

<sup>166</sup> It is said that in the pavilion of the Deva Shakra there is a great pearl in the center, and numerous pearls in a huge net surround the central pearl.



daylight.”<sup>167</sup> Rakuho said, “What occasion is this to utter such a saying?” A senior monk named Genjô stepped forward and said, “Apart from these two ways, I beg you, Master, not to ask.” Rakuho said, “That’s not enough. Say some more.” Genjô said, “I cannot say it fully.” Rakuho said, “I don’t care whether or not you can say it fully.” Genjô said, “I feel just like ‘an attendant who has nothing to respond to his master’<sup>168</sup>.”

That evening, Rakuho called Genjô to himself and said, “Your response today had something quite reasonable. You have to realize what our late master<sup>169</sup> said,

‘There are no dharmas before the eyes;

mind is before the eyes.

*It is not the Dharma before the eyes;*

*It cannot be reached by eyes and ears.’*

Which phrase is the guest? Which phrase is the host? If you can sort them out, I will transmit the bowl and robe to you.” Genjô said, “I don’t understand.” Rakuho said, “You must understand.” Genjô said, “I really don’t understand.” Rakuho shouted and said, “Miserable, miserable!”

(Another) monk asked, “What would you like to say, Master?” Rakuho said, “The boat of compassion is not to be rowed<sup>170</sup> over pure waves; it’s wasted labor releasing wooden geese down the precipitous strait<sup>171</sup>.”

#### Verse:

With the clouds as bait, with the moon as a hook, one fishes in the pure water;

Old with age, solitary-hearted, one hasn’t caught a fish yet.

After returning (to the common world, where) he composed the poem “Forsaking the Clamor”<sup>172</sup> –

(Lo,) the only sober one upon the Bekira River<sup>173</sup>.

### **CASE 42: Nan’yô<sup>174</sup> and the Water Jug**

#### Introduction:

Washing the meal bowls, pouring water into the jug:

These are all Dharma gates and Buddha-works.

Carrying firewood and transporting water:

These are nothing but supernatural deeds and miraculous functions.

Why don’t you understand (the reality) that emits light and shakes the earth?

#### Case:

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167 The phrase obviously comes from a saying by Rakuho himself “Once a monk asked Rakuho, ‘What is the mysterious thing about the practice?’ Rakuho said, ‘The green mountain always lifts up its legs; you don’t remove the wheels in the daylight.’”

168 Apparently an idiomatic expression meaning, “I can’t describe it in words.”

169 Most probably Master Kassan.

170 “To row a boat of compassion” a metaphor expressing the teaching activities of a Zen master.

171 It was a custom that the boat rushing down the stream through a gorge released pieces of wood ahead as a warning so that a possible crash with the boat coming upstream could be avoided. These wooden chips were called “wooden geese.”

172 A poem which Kutsugen (4th- to 3rd Century BCE; cf. Verse to Case 12) composed after he was dismissed from his royal office through a slander and returned to the common world. In despair Kutsugen eventually committed suicide in the Bekira River.

173 Here in the Verse Rakuho is depicted with the image of Kutsugen.

174 The name of the city “Nan’yô” is used here as a nickname for the National Teacher.

A monk asked National Teacher Chû of Nan'yô, "What is the intrinsic Dharma-Body<sup>175</sup>, the Vairocana<sup>176</sup> Buddha?" National Teacher said, "Pass me that water jug." The monk passed him the water jug. National Teacher said, "Put it back where it was." The monk asked again, "What is the intrinsic Dharma-Body, the Vairocana Buddha?" National Teacher said, "The old Buddha is long gone."

Verse:

Birds fly in the sky:  
They have realized their will in clouds and firmament;  
Fish stay in the water:  
They have forgotten rivers and lakes.  
If you have a single thread of doubting mind,  
You are already a thousand miles away from what you are facing.  
How many can appreciate the benevolence received and requite it?

**CASE 43: Razan's "Appearing and Disappearing"**

Introduction:

One speck of a holy hermit's medicine changes iron into gold;  
One word at logic's end renders an ordinary person to a sage.  
If you learn that gold and iron are not two,  
And that ordinary and sage are intrinsically the same,  
Then you don't need that "one point" after all.  
Just tell me, what is that "one point"?

Case:

Razan asked Gantô, "What if things appear and disappear without ceasing?" Gantô scolded him, shouting, "What is it that appears and disappears?"

Verse:

Cutting the old entangling vines,  
Smashing the fox's den –  
A leopard clothes himself with fog and changes its spots (as a tiger)<sup>177</sup>,  
A dragon makes use of the thunder in order to alter his bones (and to soar to heaven)<sup>178</sup>.  
Tut!<sup>179</sup>  
Appearing and disappearing in full abundance – what's that?

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175 The "Dharma-Body" (Dharmakaya, [jp.] *hosshin*) is one of the three Bodies of the Buddha, signifying the ultimate Reality as itself. The other two are "Reward-Body" (Sambhogakaya, [jp.] *hōjin*; functions of the Buddha nature) and "Appearance-Body" (Nirmanakaya; [jp.] *ōjin*; Shakyamuni himself).

176 "Vairocana" means "radiant in all directions."

177 According to a Chinese legend, a leopard hides himself in the deep fog of the South-Mountain and fasts for a week, in order to change his spots to become a tiger.

178 A metaphor for a radical metamorphosis to a totally new dimension.

179 "Totsu!": expression of dissatisfaction or of scolding.

#### **CASE 44: Kôyô's "King of Birds"**

##### **Introduction:**

A lion strikes an elephant, the Garuda<sup>180</sup> knocks down a dragon.  
Even flying creatures and running animals distinguish between lord and subject;  
Patch-robed monks should learn to tell between guest and host.  
But how could you judge a person who dares to defy the heavenly authority?

##### **Case:**

A monk asked Master Hô of Kôyô, "The great dragon has emerged from the ocean, calming heaven and earth. How will you treat him when he suddenly appears before you?" Master Hô said, "The Garuda, the king of birds, covers the (entire) universe. Who can stick his head within him?" The monk said, "But how about when he does appear?" Hô said, "It is like a falcon catching a pigeon. If you don't realize it, you will learn the truth through the 'inspection before the balcony.'<sup>181</sup>" The monk said, "If so, then I'll fold my hands on my chest<sup>182</sup> and retreat three steps." Hô said, "You black tortoise under the Sumeru altar.<sup>183</sup> Don't wait further to be struck on the forehead and get hurt."

##### **Verse:**

The imperial edict comes down, the command is released:  
The heartland is for the emperor, the border lands are for the generals.  
The roaring thunder does not wait for the dormant insects to crawl out;  
How could one perceive that the wind stops the streaming clouds?  
Continuous looming and weaving let golden lines and jasper stripes naturally come up.  
Before stamping, it's so clear and void;  
Intrinsically there are no letters and characters at all.

#### **CASE 45: Four Phrases from the Engaku Sutra**

##### **Introduction:**

That which exists now (is precisely the manifestation of) the essence<sup>184</sup>:  
This all relies on the "right now."  
The family tradition of the essential nature never plans to go beyond its status.  
If you forcibly create burls and joints, and dare to resort to devices,  
You do nothing but draw eyebrows on "Mr. Chaos"<sup>185</sup> and add handles to your meal bowls.

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180 A giant bird in the ancient Indian mythology, who also eats dragons.

181 A reference to a story in which Heigenkun Chôshô, the brother of the king of Chô and a wealthy landlord with 3,000 dependents, built a grand palace with a balcony that overlooked the main road. One day a crippled person was passing by and one of the concubines saw him and laughed. The crippled person was angered and demanded Heigenkun her head. Heigenkun presented the head of an executed convict as the head of the concubine. His dependents knew of his deception, lost faith in their master and gradually all left him. His fortunes declined, so at last he cut off the head of the concubine and presented it for the crippled person to inspect. After that the dependents returned and his fortunes were restored. -- The story is an allusion to the fact that you can never hide away the real truth.

182 The position of the hands during the *kinhin*.

183 A reference to one of the four carved figures, representing black tortoises, underneath the Sumeru altar (with the Buddha statue). It is used here as a symbol of someone who has lost the freedom of movement.

184 Literally: "Genjô – kôan."

185 "Mr. Chaos" was a bogey in old China who had no eyes, no nostrils, no ears and no mouth on his face. People took pity on him and tried to make at least one "hole" on his face. However, Mr. Chaos died one week after this treatment.

How could you attain peace at all?

Case:

The Engaku<sup>186</sup> Sutra says:

“At all times, you do not raise the delusive mind.  
When there are all kinds of illusory thoughts, you do not extinguish them.  
Dwelling in the delusory state of mind, you do not add understanding.  
Where there is no understanding, you do not discuss<sup>187</sup> the truth.”

Verse:

Stately and dignified, carefree and at ease.  
You stick your head amid the clamorous place;  
You lower your feet amid the peaceful place.  
The binding strings around the lower legs have disappeared: I am free.  
The mud upon the nose top is gone – stop trying to chop it off<sup>188</sup>.  
Don't be troubled!  
Medicine fixed according to a scrap of one-thousand-year-old paper<sup>189</sup>.

**CASE 46: Tokusan's "Study Accomplished"**

Introduction:

The pure ground where there is not an inch of grass for ten thousand miles<sup>190</sup> still deludes people;  
The clear sky without a speck of cloud in eight directions still deceives you.  
Even if one removes a wedge by (driving in) another wedge,  
It cannot avoid sustaining emptiness by using emptiness.  
Observe well a special method – a hammer upon the back of the head!

Case:

Great Master Tokusan Emmyo<sup>191</sup> instructed his assembly and said, “If all has been exhausted to the end, then all buddhas in the three worlds will hang their mouths to the wall<sup>192</sup>. Still, there is one person, who is giving a great laugh. If you can recognize that person, your Zen study has been accomplished.”

Verse:

Gathering in – holding fast the throat:  
Winds polish, clouds wipe; the water is cool, the sky is autumn.  
Never say the brocade-scaled fish has no good taste:

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186 “Engaku” means the perfect awakening of Buddha.

187 Or: “discern”.

188 A story lies behind this expression: Once a carpenter, who could masterfully handle the ax, chopped off the speck of mud on his friend's nose tip with his ax, without hurting the latter at all.

189 I.e., the Engaku-Sutra itself.

190 See Tôzan's words in Case 89 of the *Shoyoroku*.

191 He was also called Tokusan Emmitsu Zenji (dates unknown), a Dharma descendant of Unmon (864-949). He is different from the more famous Tokusan Senkan Zenji (780/782? – 865).

192 I.e., they are unable to open their mouths.

One hook of the moon fishes out (the waters of) the Sôrô River.<sup>193</sup>

**CASE 47: Jôshû's "Oak Tree in the Garden"** <sup>194</sup>

Introduction:

The oak tree in the garden, the flag on the pole blown in the wind<sup>195</sup> –  
It is like one flower preaching the boundless spring,  
Like one drop of water revealing the waters of the great ocean.  
The ancient buddha, born once in 500 years, goes way beyond the ordinary currents.  
Not falling into words and thoughts, how could you understand the speech?

Case:

A monk asked Jôshû, "What is the intent of the patriarch's coming from the West?"  
Jôshû said, "The oak tree there in the garden."

Verse:

The banks (are the) eyebrows, holding snow;  
The river (is the) eyes, containing autumn;  
The ocean (is the) mouth, drumming the waves;  
The ship (is the) tongue, leading the streams.  
The hand that weeps out disorders, the staff that brings peace.  
Old Jôshû, old Jôshû!  
Monasteries are disturbed, never coming to rest;  
In vain you expend devices, making carts and fitting them to the grooves;  
Without art it intrinsically covers the valleys and fills the trenches.

**CASE 48: Vimalakirti's "Not-Two"** <sup>196</sup>

Introduction:

Even if one's action is so free in all directions,  
There's a spot where one cannot start a thing at all;  
Even if one's eloquence knows no hindrance,  
There is a time one cannot even open up the mouth.  
Just as Ryûge, a man of no hand, hit with a fist<sup>197</sup>,  
So did Kassan make a tongueless person speak<sup>198</sup>.  
Who is the one who can transcend the half ways?

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193 Cf. the verse to Case 12 of the *Shoyoroku*. The Sôrô River is famous for its connection with the righteous statesman Kutsugen (343-278 BCE), who committed suicide in the Bekira River, lamenting over the corruption of the world: A man named Gyoho once spoke to the frustrated Kutsugen, "If the water of the Sôrô River is pure, I will wash my helmet strings; if the water of the Sôrô River is muddy, I will wash the legs of my horses." – the "Sôrô River" in the last line of the Verse comes from here.

194 See *Mumonkan* Case 37.

195 See *Mumonkan* Case 29 with the Sixth Patriarch.

196 See *Hekiganroku* Case 84.

197 Ryûge is a Dharma successor of Tôzan Ryôkai. Once a monk asked Ryûge, "How can one power acquire in all twelve hours?" Ryûge said, "You can get it only when you can hit with your fist as if a man of no hand."

198 Cf. Case 35: Kassan said, "How can you make a tongueless person speak?"

Case:

Vimalakirti<sup>199</sup> asked Manjusri, “What does it mean that the Bodhisattva enters the Dharma-gate of Not-Two?” Manjusri said, “I see it like this: In all phenomena, there are neither words nor explanations, neither presentations nor knowledge; it is beyond all questions and answers. That is what I understand with ‘to enter the Dharma-gate of Not-Two’.”

Then Manjusri asked Vimalakirti, “All of us have finished giving our explanations. Now you should give your explanation. What does it mean that the Bodhisattva enters the Dharma-gate of Not-Two?”

Vimalakirti remained silent.

Verse:

Manjusri asks about the illness of the Old Biya<sup>200</sup>;

The gate of Not-Two opens, and one sees the adepts.

A rugged stone on the surface, a pure stone inside—who could appreciate it?

Forgetting and losing what is before and after oneself—do not lament.

Humbly presenting the gem that looked like a stone,

The man had his foot tendons cut off in the court yard of So<sup>201</sup>;

The snake, once wounded, gives thanks with a shining gem in the castle of Zui

(–, only to arouse antagonism)<sup>202</sup>.

Stop checking, it has no flaws whatsoever:

When the vulgar mind is all gone, it can be the real thing a little.

**CASE 49: Tôzan and the Memorial Service**

Introduction:

However hard one may try, it can never be depicted,

However hard one may endeavor, it can never be drawn.

Fuke made a somersault<sup>203</sup>, Ryûge exposed only half his body<sup>204</sup>.

After all, what kind of expression of *that* person is this?

Case:

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199 An excellent lay disciple of Shakyamuni. He is said to have had the same degree of enlightenment as Shakyamuni himself. Once he became very ill, and Shakyamuni wanted to send someone out of his disciples to go and pay a visit to Vimalakirti in bed. But no one wanted to go, because they knew they would be severely checked in their Dharma eye by Vimalakirti. At last, Shakyamuni sent Manjusri. Then, unexpectedly, a big group of Shakyamuni's disciples wanted to accompany Manjusri, so they all came to Vimalakirti. The koan starts from there.

200 “Biya” designates the “Castle Biyari (Vaisalian)” where Vimalakirti resided.

201 Cf. the “Introduction” for Case 2: A man named Benka found a stone with a gorgeous gem inside; he presented it to the kings of So, but the kings, thinking that it was just an ordinary stone, became furious about Benka and had the latter's foot tendons cut off as a punishment.

202 Once a wounded snake was saved by a lord in the Kingdom of Zui. Later the snake appeared to the lord to thank him with a shining gem in its mouth. But the lord, frightened by the light in the snake's mouth, tried to kill it with a sword.

203 Master Banzan, shortly before his death, made his disciples to come to him and told them to depict the Greatest Matter. Fuke made a somersault and went out.

204 There is a portrait of Ryûge Zenji, on which only the half of his body is painted. On the back side of the portrait stand the following verses of Hôji Zenji: “The sun comes out and lines itself with the mountains; the moon is round and shines upon each house. This body is not inexistent; he simply does not want to expose all.”

When Tôzan held a memorial service for Ungan before his portrait, he told the episode of “making a portrait”<sup>205</sup>. Then a monk asked, “When Ungan said, ‘Just this, just this,’ what did that mean?” Tôzan said, “At that time, I almost misunderstood my master’s intention.” The monk said, “I wonder whether or not Ungan really knew that *it* is.” Tôzan said, “If he did not know that *it* is, how could he say that? If he knew that *it* is, how did he dare say that?”

Verse:

“How could he say that?”

In the fifth watch, before dawn, the cocks crow among the houses.

“How did he dare say that?”

The thousand-year crane grows old with the pine tree in the clouds.

The jewel mirror is clear and bright;

It examines both *shô* [essence] and *hen* [phenomena].

The jade loom operates back and forth;

It sees *kenchûtô* [the completion amid all (aspects)]<sup>206</sup>.

The spirit of the School flourishes, the footsteps of the practice continue without end.

Father and son change and pass through<sup>207</sup>; their fame and radiance prevail all over.

**CASE 50: Seppô’s “What Is This?”** <sup>208</sup>

Introduction:

The last word finally breaks the toughest barrier.

Gantô is so confident of himself that, above, he even defies his own teacher,

And, below, he never concedes to his younger Dharma-brother.

Does he arbitrarily make the knurs grow, or does it have any special functions?

Case:

When Seppô was living in a hermitage, two monks came to pay their respects. When he saw them coming, Seppô thrust open the gate of his hermitage with his hands, jumped out, and said, “What is this?” (One of) the monks also said, “What is this?” Seppô hung his head and retired into his hermitage.

Later, the monk came to Gantô. Gantô asked him, “Where have you come from?” The monk said, “From Reinan.” Gantô said, “Did you ever visit Seppô?” The monk said, “Yes, I visited him.” Gantô said, “What did he say?” The monk related what had happened. Gantô said, “What else did he say?” The monk said, “Not a word; he hung his head and retired into his hermitage.” Gantô said, “Oh, (how I regret now that) in those days I did not tell him the last word<sup>209</sup>! If I had told it to him, no one under heaven could do anything against him.”

At the end of the summer practice period the monk came back to this conversation and

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<sup>205</sup> Tôzan was still a young monk under Ungan. One day, when he was leaving his master, he asked Ungan, “After your passing, if I am asked by someone whether I have your ‘portrait,’ what should I answer?” Ungan remained still for a while and then said, “Tell him: ‘Just this, just this.’” When Tôzan was about to go, Ungan called to Tôzan, “Dear Kai (Tôzan’s real name)!” and said, “If you want to attain this Great Matter, go straight to it and be utmost precise!”

<sup>206</sup> *Shô*, *hen* and *kenchûtô* belong to the vocabulary of “Hen-shô Goi” (Five Modi of Hen and Shô), a work by Master Tôzan Gohon.

<sup>207</sup> “Change and pass through” is a shortened form of a longer expression: “When you are stuck, you change; when you change, you pass through; when you pass through, it stays forever.”

<sup>208</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 51.

<sup>209</sup> *Matsugo-no-ku* literally means the phrase/word one utters before one dies.

asked him about its intent. Gantô said, “Why didn’t you ask me about it sooner?” The monk said, “I could not dare to ask you about it.” Gantô said, “Seppô was born on the same stem as I<sup>210</sup>, but he will not die on the same stem. If you want to know the last word, it is just this, just this.”

Verse:

Cut, grind, strike, and polish<sup>211</sup>;  
Change attitudes, and apply dialects – :  
In the Pond Kappi the staff turned into a dragon<sup>212</sup>;  
The shuttle stayed hidden in the house of Tô<sup>213</sup>.  
There are many who are born on the same stem;  
(Yet) not many are those who die on the same stem.  
The last word: *just this, just this*.  
A boat in the wind, carrying the moon, floats on the autumn water.

**CASE 51: Hôgen’s “Boat or Land”**

Introduction:

Amid the worldly dharmas how many people have been brought to enlightenment;  
Amid the Buddha’s dharmas how many people have been deluded.  
If you suddenly become completely one, can you clearly articulate delusion and enlightenment or not?

Case:

Hôgen asked Senior Monk Kaku<sup>214</sup>, “Did you come by boat or by land?” Kaku said, “By boat.” Hôgen said, “Where is the boat?” Kaku said, “The boat is on the river.”

After Kaku had withdrawn, Hôgen asked a monk nearby, “You tell me, did that monk who was here just now have the eye or not?”

Verse:

Water does not wash water,  
Gold does not change itself into gold.  
One obtains a horse without knowing the color of its hair<sup>215</sup>,  
One enjoys the lute without being particular about the strings<sup>216</sup>.

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210 Seppô and Gantô were both disciples of Tokusan; cf. Mumonkan 13 and Shoyoroku 55.

211 These 4 verbs represent the idiomatic word *sessa-takuma*, which means the competitive efforts in rivalrous relationship in a particular field.

212 In olden China, a man named Hichôbô met a hermit and practiced under him. But the result was not promising. When he wanted to leave him, the hermit gave Hichôbô a bamboo staff, saying, “You should mount on it on your way back, and throw it into a pond named Kappi.” When Hichôbô did so, the staff turned into a dragon.

213 Once a boy named Tôkan caught a shuttle with a fish net. He took it back home and hung it on the wall. Some time later there was a thunder, and the shuttle turned into a dragon and soared toward heaven.

214 Probably Ekaku (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> C.), a disciple of Jôshû Jûshin. Because of his sharpness he was named “Kaku, the iron beak.”

215 Once Hakuraku found an excellent horse. He reported it was a dun-colored stallion. But when the horse arrived, it was a black mare. When people mocked Hakuraku for his inability even to describe a horse, Hakuraku answered, “I capture the essence and forget rough parts, see the inside and forget the outside.” It surely was a horse of exceptional quality.

216 The great poet Tôenmei (365-427) is said to have had no ear for music, but he profoundly loved lute, saying, “If you know the heart of the lute, why do you have to bother about the particularities of the strings?”



People made knots in a rope<sup>217</sup>, then started hexagrams<sup>218</sup> – now there is this *thing*.  
The true genuine mind of Banko<sup>219</sup> has completely been lost.

### **CASE 52: Sôzan's "Dharma-body"**

#### **Introduction:**

All those who have intelligence can understand through metaphors.  
If you reach a point where no comparisons or analogies work,  
How do you explain (the matter) to other people?

#### **Case:**

Sôzan asked Elder Toku, “The true Dharma-body of Buddha is like the empty sky. It manifests its form corresponding to things – just like the moon on the water.”<sup>220</sup> How do you explain the principle of this corresponding?” Toku said, “It is like a donkey looking into a well.” Sôzan said, “You put it in a nice way, but you were able to say only eighty percent.” Toku said, “How about you, Master?” Sôzan said, “It is like a well looking at a donkey.”

#### **Verse:**

The donkey looks into the well, the well looks at the donkey.  
Wisdom embraces all, without anything outside it;  
Purity contains all, yet it is never full.  
Who can deliver the seal behind his or her elbows<sup>221</sup>?  
Not one book is stocked in the entire house<sup>222</sup>.  
With no thread in the loom the shuttle does the work;  
Beautiful patterns, vertical and horizontal – with exquisite designs, appearing of themselves.

### **CASE 53: Ôbaku's "Devourers of Dregs"** <sup>223</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

When one meets the functions of the mind, one does not see Buddha;  
For great enlightenment there is not a teacher<sup>224</sup>.  
The sword that pacifies heaven and earth knows no mercy;  
The activity to capture tigers and rhinoceroses forgets the understandings of the (earlier) saints.  
Now tell me, whose strategy is this?

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217 I.e., in the olden times, when peace and trust prevailed among all people, making knots was enough to secure a contract.

218 Then, people became cleverer and started making sophisticated hexagrams.

219 The sage founder of the Old China.

220 A quotation from the *Golden Light Sutra* (Kon-kômyô-kyô).

221 It is said that with “the seal behind one’s elbows” you can work wonders. It symbolizes our essence.

222 The episode behind this line: Once Ungan instructed the assembly, saying, “There was a boy who could answer any questions.” Tôzan asked, “Were there many books in his house?” Ungan said, “Not one book.” Tôzan said, “How could he know so many things?” Ungan, “Day and night, he never slept.” Tôzan, “Could one ask him about the most important Matter?” Ungan, “He could have answered such questions, but he would never do that.”

223 See *Hekiganroku* Case 11.

224 A phrase by Seirin Shiken (†904).

Case:

Ôbaku instructed the assembly saying, “You are all devourers of dregs! If you keep roaming around in this way<sup>225</sup>, when will you be able to have the Today? Do you know that in this great empire of Tang there is not a single Zen master?”

Then a monk came forward and said, “What would you say to those who direct their assemblies and lead their followers in various places?” Ôbaku said, “I do not say that there is no Zen; I only say that there is no master.”

Verse:

The ways are divided, the threads are (differently) dyed: too much labor;  
Binding the leaves, tying the flowers: it mars the ancestors<sup>226</sup>.  
One<sup>227</sup> takes skillfully the active handle of creation;  
Vessels designed with waters and clouds<sup>228</sup> are on the lathe.  
Clearing the tangles, smashing the tile chips, shaving off the fluff –  
The balance, the mirror, the scale and the scissors:  
Old Ôbaku perceives even the thinnest autumn hair;  
Cutting off the spring wind through sitting, he never allows haughtiness.

**CASE 54: Ungan and the “Great Mercy”** <sup>229</sup>

Introduction:

Transparent on eight sides, totally open in ten directions;  
Emitting light and shaking the earth in all places,  
Exercising supernatural deeds and subtle functions at all time.  
Tell me, how could this be manifested?

Case:

Ungan asked Dôgo, “What does the Bodhisattva of the great Mercy use so many hands and eyes for?” Dôgo answered, “It is like a person in the middle of the night reaching with his hand behind his head groping for his pillow.” Ungan said, “I get it.” Dôgo said, “How do you get it?” Ungan said, “The whole body is hands and eyes.” Dôgo said, “You said it very well. But you expressed (just) eight-tenths of it.” Ungan said, “How would you say it, Elder Brother?” Dôgo said, “The entire body is hands and eyes.”

Verse:

One hole, void and open;  
Transparent on eight sides.  
Without form, without “I”, spring takes its shape;  
Unobstructed and unhindered, the moon travels through the firmament.  
Pure treasure eyes, arms of virtue;  
“The whole body” and “the entire body” – how do they compare with each other?  
The hands and eyes at this moment manifest the entire activities:

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<sup>225</sup> I.e., keep visiting temples and masters here and there in a lukewarm manner.

<sup>226</sup> I.e., Bodhidharma and the 6th Patriarch Enô.

<sup>227</sup> This primarily suggests Ôbaku’s activities.

<sup>228</sup> “Clouds and water” [*unsu*] hints at “practicing monks”.

<sup>229</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 89.

The great functions, vertical and horizontal – how could they detest anything at all?

**CASE 55: Seppô in Charge of Cooking** <sup>230</sup>

**Introduction:**

Ice is chillier than water, blue comes out of indigo:

Only when one's view excels that of one's master, it is qualified to be transmitted;

If the child is brought up and cannot match the father, the family declines in one generation.

Tell me, who is it that snatches away the activities of his father?

**Case:**

Seppô came to Tokusan and became in charge of cooking food. One day, the lunch was late. Tokusan came down to the hall carrying his bowls. Seppô said, "Old Master, the bell has not yet rung nor the drum sounded. Where are you going with your bowls?" Thereupon Tokusan went back to his room. Seppô told this to Gantô. Gantô said, "Great Tokusan though he is, he has not yet realized the last word."

Hearing of this, Tokusan sent his attendant to summon Gantô and then asked him, "Don't you approve of this old monk?" Gantô whispered his intention. Tokusan remained silent.

Sure enough, the next day, when Tokusan ascended the rostrum, his talk was quite different from usual. Gantô, rubbing his hands together, laughed and said, "Wonderful! How happy I am that our Old Man has realized the last word. From now on he'll be subject to no one on earth."

**Verse:**

The last word – did you understand it or not?

Father Tokusan and his son are terribly unclear.

In the assembly there is a guest from south of the River (Yangtze):

Don't sing the song of partridges in front of him<sup>231</sup>.

**CASE 56: Misshi and the White Rabbit**

**Introduction:**

"Even if I sank forever in hell, I would not look for the Liberation of the saints."<sup>232</sup>

Daibadatta [=Devadatta] enjoyed the bliss of the Three-Dhyana-Heaven amid uninterrupted hell<sup>233</sup>;

Uzuranbotsu [=Uddaka-Ramaputta] fell from the zenith of the highest heaven

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<sup>230</sup> See *Mumonkan* Case 13.

<sup>231</sup> A partridge is a bird representing the region south of the Yangtze River [Kônan Region]. The people from that area were said to become awfully homesick whenever they heard the song of their home birds. Seppô originally comes from the Province of Sen, south of the River.

<sup>232</sup> A phrase by Sekitô Kisen (700-790).

<sup>233</sup> Daibadatta was a cousin of Shakyamuni and became one of his disciples. But he rebelled against Shakyamuni and wanted to kill him. Therefore he had to fall in the uninterrupted hell. Shakyamuni sympathized with him and sent his attendant Ananda, to visit him in the hell. But Daibadatta said, "Mind your own business! I am enjoying the greatest happiness in this hell."

down into the body of a flying raccoon<sup>234</sup>.  
Just tell me, where is the gain or loss?

Case:

When Uncle Misshi<sup>235</sup> and Tôzan were walking together, they saw a white rabbit run by in front of them. Misshi said, “How swift!” Tôzan said, “In what way?” Misshi said, “It is just like a person in white clothes<sup>236</sup> being venerated as a prime minister.” Tôzan said, “You are such an elderly and respectable man, and still you say something like that?” Misshi said, “Then how about you?” Tôzan said, “A noble of an ancient house is temporarily fallen into poverty.”

Verse:

Comparing the strength with snow and frost<sup>237</sup>;  
Walking as high as the heavenly clouds<sup>238</sup>.  
Kakei left his country<sup>239</sup>;  
Shôjo passed the bridge<sup>240</sup>.  
Shôga and Sôzan’s strategy established the Han Dynasty<sup>241</sup>;  
The body and mind of Sôfu and Kyoyû wanted to evade (the invitation of) Emperor Gyô<sup>242</sup>.  
People are disturbed by favor and disgrace: find deep trust in yourself.  
The traces of the true heart get mixed with those of fishermen and woodcutters.

**CASE 57: Gon’yô’s “Not a Single Thing”**

Introduction:

You play with the shadow to catch the (real) form – all in vain;  
You do not know that it is the (real) form that is the source of the shadow.  
You raise your voice to stop an echo;  
You do not know that it is the voice that is the root of the echo.  
If it’s not seeking an ox while riding an ox, then it’s driving out a wedge using a wedge.

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234 Uzuranbotsu owned many supernatural powers and was once born in the highest heaven. But when his karma there terminated, he fell from there and became a flying racoon, that is, a cursed creature which had to kill fish all the time.

235 Shinzan Sômitsu Zenji, a disciple of Ungan Zenji, as Tôzan Zenji himself. Since Sômitsu Zenji was elder to Tôzan Zenji, he is called “Uncle.” “Misshi” literally means “Master Mitsui.”

236 I.e., a commoner, or a person without any social status.

237 This line depicts how “a noble of an ancient house is fallen into poverty”, facing difficulties and hardships.

238 Another way to represent how “a person in white clothes is venerated as a prime minister.”

239 Ryû Kakei was an honest, honorable man from childhood, but after he left his country and became a government official, he was unjustly rejected three times. Here, he is an example of “falling into poverty.”

240 Shiba Sôjo became a very high official in the Han Dynasty. When he as a young man left his home in Shoku, he wrote on the pillar of the Bridge Shôsen near his home as follows: “A man of great courage would never pass through this bridge again without being on a four-horsed carriage (=a cart for a highly-elevated person).” He represents the world of a person “venerated as a prime minister.”

241 Shôga and Sôzan aided the first emperor of the Han Dynasty and created the basis for peace for the next four hundred years. Here they represent “persons in white clothes being venerated as prime ministers.”

242 Sôfu and Kyoyû were righteous men. When the emperor of the Kingdom of Gyô wanted to give his throne to Sôfu, the latter refused it and went into a river nearby to wash the ears. There came Kyoyû, wanting to give his cow some water from the river. He asked Sôfu why he was washing his ears. Sôfu answered, “The emperor said he would invite me to the throne, which dirtied my ears. So I want to wash away the filth.” Then Kyoyû said, “Since you play like a righteous and honorable man, you received such a dirty offer. The water of the river where you washed your ears is too filthy for my cow to drink.” So he went further up the river to water his cow. The story symbolizes the world of “temporarily falling into poverty.”

How can you avoid this flaw?

Case:

Venerable Gon'yô<sup>243</sup> asked Jôshû, "How is it when there isn't a single thing?" Jôshû said, "Throw it away." Gon'yô said, "I say there isn't a single thing. What could I ever throw away?" Jôshû said, "If so, carry it with you."<sup>244</sup>

Verse:

If one is not being attentive enough, one cannot preempt effective attacks;  
Realizing one's own carelessness, one gets shamefully checkmated:  
When the game was over<sup>245</sup>, the handle of the axe had long been rotten away at the waist<sup>246</sup>;  
After cleansing the ordinary bones, one plays with the sacred hermits.

**CASE 58: "Getting Despised" in the Diamond Sutra** <sup>247</sup>

Introduction:

Understanding the intent (of the Buddha-Way) relying upon the sutras  
is the enemy of the Buddhas of three realms;  
Going away one word from the sutras is the same as the devil's preaching.  
The one who is not included in cause and does not go into effect –  
Does that person receive karma results or not?

Case:

The Diamond Sutra says, "It is about getting despised by other people: If you are to fall into the Bad Realms<sup>248</sup> because of your sinful karma of your previous life, this sinful karma of your previous life will be extinguished through (the fact that) you are despised by the people of this world."

Verse:

Merits and faults are continuously connected;  
Causes and effects are glued together.  
Away from his mirror Ennyadatta runs about crazily<sup>249</sup>.  
(Master) Hasôda strikes (the oven) with his staff<sup>250</sup>;

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243 A prominent and virtuous disciple of Jôshû.

244 It is sometimes said that Gon'yo thereupon attained a great enlightenment.

245 Literally: "When the game was destroyed".

246 Once there was a man named Ôshitsu. When he was on his way to cut wood in the forest, he met four boys playing Chinese chess. Since he loved chess, he was fascinated by the game and watched it till the end. When the game was over, he rose up, but, behold, the handle of his axe was completely rotten and fallen apart; his clothes were also all worn out. In great anxiety he returned home, only to find that several decades had already gone by.

247 See *Hekiganroku* Case 97.

248 "The Bad Realms" (*akudô*) means "the Three (bad) Realms" out of "the Six Realms" (*rokudô*), namely, that of "the animals (*chikushô*), that of the hungry demons (*gaki*) and that of hell (*jigoku*)". Sometimes the Realm of the "fighting spirits" (*shura*) is added to them (then: "the Four (bad) Realms").

249 Ennyadatta was always pleased to see his face in the mirror every morning. One morning, he could not see his face in the mirror. Crazily he went out into the street, searching his own head.

250 Master Hasôda [= "Oven-Destroyer"] is said to have been a disciple of National Teacher Ean (7-8th C.), but his real name is not known. Near the place where he lived there was a shrine dedicated to an oven; at every festival sacrifices were offered, so that the curse of the oven might not attack the village. Master Hasôda had sympathy with the village people and struck the

The oven is destroyed, (the god of the oven) is come to be congratulated;  
He sees that he was (always) going against his own self.

### **CASE 59: Seirin's "Snake of Death"**

#### **Introduction:**

Gone – lo, it stays;

There – lo, it's expelled.

Neither gone nor there<sup>251</sup> – *it* has no land.

Where will you meet *it*? – at every spot, at every place.

Just tell me, what is this thing that is so strange and so wonderful?

#### **Case:**

A monk asked Seirin, "How is it when a practitioner goes along a narrow path?" Seirin said, "You will meet a snake of death<sup>252</sup> on the great road. I advise you, do not run into it." The monk said, "What if I do run into it?" Seirin said, "You will lose your life." The monk said, "What if I don't run into it?" Seirin said, "You have no place to escape from it." The monk said, "Precisely at such a time, what then?" Seirin said, "It has disappeared." The monk said, "I wonder where it is gone." Seirin said, "The grass is so deep, there is no place to look for it." The monk said, "You too, Master, must be watchful in order to get it." Seirin clapped his hands and said, "This fellow is equally poisonous."

#### **Verse:**

The helmsman moves the rudder in the dark;

The lone boat turns its bow in the night.

The flowers of the reed, (as) snow upon both banks;

The cloud over the water – 'tis autumn on the river.

Wind helps the sailboat, no need to row forward;

With the sound of the flute calling the moon,

The boat descends toward the enchanted land.

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oven three times, scolding the oven. Thereupon, the oven fell apart, and a noble man with a crown in blue garment appeared. He said to the master, "I am the god of this oven. I have been suffering for a long time because of the retribution of my kar ma. Today, because of your saving act, I could be reborn in heaven." The master said, "This is nothing but your true nature." Then the man worshipped him and became invisible.

<sup>251</sup> Concerning these 3 lines, cf. the main case of Shoyoroku 29.

<sup>252</sup> A deadly poisonous snake.

**CASE 60: Tetsuma, the Cow**<sup>253</sup>

**Introduction:**

The nose is high and dignified:  
Each one has an appearance of a great personage.  
The legs and ankles are firm and solid:  
Should one dare study “grandmother-like” Zen?  
If you grasp the ungraspable barrier,  
For the first time you see the means of a true adept.  
Tell me, who is such a person?

**Case:**

Ryû Tetsuma<sup>254</sup> came to Isan. Isan said, “Old Cow, you have come!” Tetsuma said, “Tomorrow there will be a great feast at Mt. Tai<sup>255</sup>. Will you go there, Master?” Isan lay down and stretched himself out. Tetsuma left immediately.

**Verse:**

Successfully accomplishing one hundred battles,  
One grows old in peace.  
Soft and gentle: who dares to fight over “long” and “short”?  
The jade whip and golden horse are useless all day;  
The clear moon and pure wind – one is rich all through one’s life.

**CASE 61: Kempô’s “One Line”**<sup>256</sup>

**Introduction:**

A lengthy explanation is easy to understand: (however,) it imparts (only) to one hand;  
A direct preaching is hard to understand: it opens up in all directions.  
I beseech you, do not intend to speak (too) clearly.  
If you speak clearly, it is harder to get out of it.  
If you don’t believe it, I will try to raise the case, look!

**Case**

A monk asked Master Kempô, “(In a sutra it says,) ‘The Bhagavat<sup>257</sup> in ten directions, the one way to the gate of nirvana.’ I wonder where the way is.” Kempô drew a line with his staff and said, “Here it is.”

The monk told Unmon about this and asked him. Unmon said, “This fan jumps up to the heaven of the thirty-three devas and adheres to the nose of the deva Taishaku<sup>258</sup>. When a carp in the eastern sea is struck with a stick, it rains torrents as though a tray of water is overturned. Did you get it? Did you get it?”

**Verse:**

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<sup>253</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 24.

<sup>254</sup> A famous Zen person, a nun, once a student of Isan. Her name means “Ryû, the iron grindstone.”

<sup>255</sup> More exactly: *Mt. Godai*. The mountain is about 1200km to the north of the place where Isan resided.

<sup>256</sup> See *Mumonkan* Case 48.

<sup>257</sup> It means “god” in Sanskrit. Here it stands for Buddha.

<sup>258</sup> Sakra-devanam-Indra, a main deity protecting the Buddha Dharma.

The hand (of a master veterinarian) cures even a dead horse<sup>259</sup>;  
The soul-reviving incense<sup>260</sup> will make you rise from the peril.  
If you once sweat with your entire body (and get enlightened),  
You will believe that your master has never wanted to spare his eyebrows<sup>261</sup>.

### **CASE 62: Beiko's "Enlightenment or not"**

#### **Introduction:**

Bodhidharma's "ultimate intent": Emperor Bu's head is bewildered<sup>262</sup>;  
Jômyô's<sup>263</sup> "Dharma gate of Not-Two": Manjusri's speech is too much<sup>264</sup>.  
Is anyone able to go straight into this reality and act freely in it or not?

#### **Case**

Beiko had a monk ask Kyôzan, "Do people these days resort to 'enlightenment' or not?" Kyôzan said, "It is not that there is no enlightenment. Yet how can it be helped that it falls into the secondary class?"

The monk went back to Beiko and told him about it. Beiko deeply agreed.

#### **Verse:**

The secondary class distinguishes 'enlightenment', shattering 'delusion':  
Quickly you should throw away all traps and nets<sup>265</sup>.  
If your achievements are not exhausted, they turn to be an additional thumb<sup>266</sup>.  
Wisdom cannot grasp it, just as you cannot bite your own navel.  
The autumn dew weeps when the rabbit is old<sup>267</sup> in the icy disk<sup>268</sup>;  
The birds are cold, while the jade trees<sup>269</sup> are chilled in the dawn wind.  
With his remark, Great Kyôzan distinguishes authenticity and expedience;  
Without any scars at all – how precious is the white jade!

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259 Once, in ancient China, there was a man named Chôshû, whose horse unexpectedly died. Then a man named Haku came and said, "I will bring it to life again." Haku brought an animal which looked like a monkey, and had it revive the horse's respiration.

260 *Hangan*. An imaginary incense, which was believed to call the soul of a dead person back and to let his or her figure appear in its smoke. It has its origin in the story that Emperor Bu of Han saw his beloved and deceased wife appear in the smoke of the incense.

261 A saying goes that, if a Zen master imparts a wrong teaching, he or she will lose the eyebrows as a sign of having to go to hell.

262 Cf. Hekiganroku Case 1; Shoyoroku Case 2.

263 "Jômyô" (literally: "the pure name") is a nickname of Vimalakirti.

264 Cf. Hekiganroku Case 84; Shoyoroku Case 48.

265 Means to catch fish and rabbits.

266 I.e., good for nothing.

267 A metaphor for the full moon.

268 I.e., a literary expression for the moon.

269 Trees covered with snow or frost.



### **CASE 63: Jôshû Asks about “Death”** <sup>270</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

Sanshō and Seppō<sup>271</sup> are orchid in the spring, chrysanthemum in the autumn;  
Jôshû and Tôsu<sup>272</sup> are the gem of Benka<sup>273</sup>, the gold in the land of En<sup>274</sup>.  
On a balance without scales, both weights are even;  
In a boat without the bottom, they go across in one place<sup>275</sup>.  
When the two meet, what happens then?

#### **Case:**

Jôshû asked Tôsu, “What if a man who has died a great Death comes back to life?”  
Tôsu said, “I don’t allow walking about in the night. You should come in the daylight.”

#### **Verse:**

The castle of poppy seeds<sup>276</sup>, the rock of the kalpa<sup>277</sup>: the beginning is wonderfully exhausted;  
In the circle of the living eye, vast emptiness is illuminated.  
“Not allowing walking about in the night, coming in the dawn’s light”:  
The news of the family (needs) not be entrusted to a giant goose and a fish<sup>278</sup>.

### **CASE 64: Shishō’s “Succession”**

#### **Introduction:**

Shōyō<sup>279</sup> intimately encountered Bokushû, yet he burnt succession incense for old Seppō<sup>280</sup>;  
Tôsu<sup>281</sup> personally received it from Enkan<sup>282</sup>, yet he succeeded in the Dharma to Daiyō<sup>283</sup>.  
Jade blossoms bloom upon the coral branches;  
Gold fruit ripens in the forest of sandalwood.  
Just tell me, how do such creations take place?

#### **Case:**

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<sup>270</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 41.

<sup>271</sup> Sanshō (9th century) is a famous disciple of Rinzai: Seppō (822-908), a famous master, a disciple of Tokusan. Cf. Case 33 about these two masters (also *Hekiganroku* 49).

<sup>272</sup> Tôsu Daidō Zenji (819-914), almost 40 years younger than Jôshû.

<sup>273</sup> Cf. the Introduction to Case 2 of the *Shoyoroku*.

<sup>274</sup> Once the king Shō of En invited all prominent figures of the land to his palace to show off his treasure, a great heap of gold.

<sup>275</sup> NB.: literary translated.

<sup>276</sup> One way to measure a “kalpa”: Suppose there is a huge castle of 160km<sup>3</sup> filled with poppy seeds. A heavenly person comes down once in a hundred years and picks up one seed. When all seeds in the warehouse are gone, it is almost one kalpa.

<sup>277</sup> Another way of measuring a kalpa: There is an enormous rock of 160km<sup>3</sup>; upon it a heavenly being lands once in a hundred years and strokes it with the heavenly robe. When all the rock disappears because of the friction of the cloth, it is just about one kalpa.

<sup>278</sup> The story behind this line: Once the daughter of Saihakukai in Han was captured by the Huns and became their queen. Worried about her parents, however, she tied a letter on the neck of a giant goose and sent it in the direction of her homeland. The goose landed on its way to drink water and let the letter drop into the water. But a fish swallowed the letter and, behold, the letter came out of a fish caught by a fisherman and was brought to the parents, who now knew how and where their daughter was.

<sup>279</sup> I.e., Unmon.

<sup>280</sup> Unmon came to a great enlightenment under Bokushû, but he became a Dharma successor to Seppō.

<sup>281</sup> Tôsu Gisei Zenji (1032-1083), a different master from Tôsu Daidō in Case 63.

<sup>282</sup> A master in the Rinzaï line.

<sup>283</sup> A master in the Soto tradition.

Head Monk Shishô<sup>284</sup> asked Hôgen, “You have opened a zendo, Master. But who did you succeed to?” Hôgen said, “Master Jizô.” Shishô said, “You have gone a great deal against your late master Chôkei.”<sup>285</sup> Hôgen said, “I still don’t understand a turning word of Chôkei’s.” Shishô said, “Why didn’t you ask me?” Hôgen said, “‘Amid myriad things – alone, naked, and manifest’ – what does it mean?” Shishô stuck up his whisk. Hôgen said, “That is what you learned under Chôkei. What is your own view, Head Monk?” Shishô was silent. Hôgen said, “When it is said, ‘Amid myriad things – alone, naked, and manifest’ – are the myriad things swept away or are they not?” Shishô said, “Not swept away.” Hôgen said, “There are two.” All the disciples on the right and the left side said, “Swept away.” Hôgen said, “Amid myriad things – alone, naked, and manifest. *Ni*”<sup>286</sup>.

Verse:

Away from thoughts, you see the Buddha, expelling the dust, you draw out the Sutra.  
The family treasure in naked reality:  
Who (still) wants to establish (the teaching facilities of) the front yard<sup>287</sup>?  
The moon follows the boat, flowing into the river of silken purity;  
The spring comes with the fresh green grass in the burnt field.  
Swept away – not swept away: Listen with utmost care!  
“The three paths are desolate” – yet one was able to return<sup>288</sup>;  
The old “pines and chrysanthemums” are still balmy and fragrant.

**CASE 65: Shuzan’s “Bride”**

Introduction:

Tut, tut<sup>289</sup>! Whoop, whoop!<sup>290</sup>  
Bang, bang<sup>291</sup>! Grumble, grumble<sup>292</sup>!  
Puff, puff<sup>293</sup>! Zing, zing<sup>294</sup>!  
Waaaw, Ohhhh<sup>295</sup>!  
Impossible to chew, difficult to come near.  
Tell me, what is this all about?

Case:

A monk asked Shuzan, “What is Buddha?” Shuzan said, “When a bride rides the donkey, her mother-in-law leads it by the bridle.”<sup>296</sup>

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284 Shishô was a disciple of Master Chôkei. Later, he became a disciple of Hôgen and succeeded to him.

285 Hôgen once practiced under Master Chôkei.

286 A word used to directly point out something – “There!”

287 Teaching means and methods in Zen.

288 The last two lines are an allusion to a verse composed by Tôenmei (365-427): “The three paths are desolate, yet the pine trees and chrysanthemums are still there”. Here, “The three paths” are a path of pine trees, a path of chrysanthemums and a path of willows.

289 A sound you make with the tongue as a sign of dissatisfaction or anger.

290 A sound of a hoarse voice or of a neigh.

291 A sound of knocking on the door or of loud walking.

292 A rolling sound.

293 How the wind softly blows.

294 A sound of quick motions or of a hurried walk.

295 This pictures how the great sea with full water endlessly spreads out.

296 This is how the mother-in-law introduces the bride to the village people.

Verse:

“When a bride rides the donkey, her mother-in-law leads it by the bridle”:

A scene full of grace – truly natural.

How laughable! The girl in the neighborhood imitates a frowning face<sup>297</sup>:

She simply adds to her ugliness in front of other people, it never makes her attractive.

**CASE 66: Kyûhô’s “Head and Tail”**

Introduction:

Even a person who can apply supernatural powers cannot let a foot down;

Even a person who has forgotten all karma ties and extinguished all thoughts cannot raise a foot.

You should say: Sometimes you just run, sometimes you just sit<sup>298</sup>.

How can you attain the true balance?

Case:

A monk asked Kyûhô, “What is the head?” Kyûhô said, “Opening the eyes and not perceiving the dawn.” The monk said, “What is the tail?” Kyûhô said, “Not sitting on a ten-thousand-year-old sitting place.” The monk said, “What if there is a head, but no tail?” Kyûhô said, “After all, it is not valuable.” The monk said, “What if there is a tail, but no head?” Kyûhô said, “Being self-complacent, yet having no power.” The monk said, “What if the head matches the tail?” Kyûhô said, “The descendants gain power, but the person him- or herself never knows it<sup>299</sup>.”

Verse:

Round for a compass, square for a ruler:

When used, you do it; when cast away, you hide yourself.

Clumsily stumbling – a bird resting in the reeds;

Unable to go forward or backward – a sheep stuck in the hedge.

Eating rice of other people, slumbering in one’s own bed.

Clouds come up and cause rain, dew forms and becomes frost.

The jade lines cross each other and go through the eyes of needles;

The brocade threads constantly rush through the weaving shuttles.

The stone woman’s loom stops<sup>300</sup>, and the dark night approaches noon;

The wood person walks on the road, and the moon goes beyond the zenith<sup>301</sup>.

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297 Seishi, the renowned beauty in Chinese history, was rumored to have become even more attractive when she frowned because of a headache. Then a girl in the same town imitated Seishi’s frowning wanting to be as beautiful as Seishi, but – alas, in vain.

298 Literally: “Sometimes you kill by running, sometimes you kill by sitting.” The word “kill” simply stresses the meaning of the main verb.

299 Literal translation of the second half of the sentence: “but it is not known in the room [*shitsunai* = he himself or she herself]”. The *person* means in reality the “master.”

The other translation of the whole sentence goes: “The descendants gain power, but one does not know it oneself.”

300 I.e., the working time at night is over.

301 I.e., the middle of the month (= full moon) according to the lunar calendar.

### **CASE 67: The Wisdom in the Kegon Sutra**

#### **Introduction:**

One speck of dust contains myriad phenomena,  
One thought embraces the threefold-thousand (Worlds)<sup>302</sup>.  
How (much more it is so) with a strong person who sustains the heaven and stands upon the earth!

You, a wise and sharp fellow who understands the tail when the head is mentioned:  
Aren't you turning your back against your own spirit and burying away the family treasure?

#### **Case:**

The Kegon Sutra<sup>303</sup> says, "Now I see all living beings everywhere, and I see that each of them possesses the wisdom and virtue of Tathagata. But because of their delusions and attachments, they cannot realize it."

#### **Verse:**

Like heaven it<sup>304</sup> covers, like earth it sustains;  
It makes lumps, it forms masses.  
It prevails in the dharma world<sup>305</sup> without having any boundary;  
It shatters the smallest particle<sup>306</sup> without leaving anything inside.  
All mysterious subtleties being exhausted,  
Who could divide between going for and going against?  
Buddhas and Patriarchs come and expiate for the karmic wrong they have said.  
Ask the Old Teacher Ô<sup>307</sup> of Nansen:  
Each and every person eats a piece of vegetable<sup>308</sup>.

### **CASE 68: Kassan Brandishes the Sword**

#### **Introduction:**

The emperor's decree inside the land of his direct control,  
The general's command outside the land of imperial reign.  
Sometimes one gets power at the gate,  
Sometimes one is sublime in the room.  
Just tell me, who is this?

#### **Case:**

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302 This means one billion solar systems or so many solar systems as 1000<sup>3</sup>, i.e., the whole universe. Cf. Main Case 30 and Verse to Case 82.

303 The Avatamsaka-Sutra ("the Sutra, embellished with the flowers (of the universal-absolute Buddhas)"), probably made in the 4th century C.E.

304 I.e., the wisdom and virtue of Tathagata.

305 That is, the whole universe.

306 Literally: "Next to zero."

307 "Ô" is Master Nansen's real name (one of the most common names).

308 Behind this line there is a dialogue between Nansen and Yôzan (both were Baso's disciples): One day Nansen showed a piece of vegetable and said, "This vegetable is so good, it should be offered to all people to eat." Thereupon Yôzan said, "I don't need not only that vegetable, but also any other kinds of nice food at all." Then Nansen said, "That's great. But only after eating it could you really know how it tastes."

A monk asked Kassan, “What if one sweeps away the dust and sees Buddha?” Kassan said, “You must brandish your sword. If you do not brandish your sword, you are like a fisherman stuck in a (fish) nest (full of reeds)<sup>309</sup>.”

The monk mentioned this to Sekisô<sup>310</sup> and asked him, “What if one sweeps away the dust and sees Buddha?” Sekisô said, “He has no land<sup>311</sup> (to dwell in). Where could one meet him?”

The monk reported this to Kassan. Kassan ascended the rostrum and said, “As for the facilities at the gate<sup>312</sup>, the old monk<sup>313</sup> is superior to Sekisô, but for deep discourse expounding the true principle he is one hundred steps ahead of me.”

Verse:

The *ki*<sup>314</sup> of the swords that banish the Altair<sup>315</sup>,  
The power that washes (and invigorates) the army<sup>316</sup>:  
To whom belongs the merit of pacifying disorders?  
Although the weird-spirited dust of war is raised,  
the four oceans are (peaceful and) clear;  
With the robe loosely hanging down, the emperor rules naturally, doing nothing<sup>317</sup>.

**CASE 69: Nansen’s “Cats and Cows”**

Introduction:

Becoming a buddha, becoming a patriarch:  
That is to be abhorred since it is nothing but wearing dirty names;  
Carrying horns, wearing fur:  
It is recommended that these (animals) take superior seats.  
Therefore: the true light does not radiate, great wisdom is like stupidity.  
Moreover, there is someone who thinks it is convenient to be deaf,  
And pretends not to know any arts.  
Do you know who this is?

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309 Another translation: “... like a fisherman dwelling in a cave (deep in the mountains).” In either way you are unable to catch a single fish.

310 Sekisô Keisho Zenji (807-888, disciple of Dôgo Enchi), not Sekisô Soen Zenji (986-1039, disciple of Fun’yo Zenshō).

311 I.e., “country, realm.”

312 Concrete teaching means and devices in Zen.

313 I.e., “I.”

314 Sharp spiritual energy.

315 In old China there was an astronomer named Raikan. He noticed a strange *ki*-phenomenon between the Altair (=the brightest star in the constellation Aquila and the 12th brightest star in the night sky.) and the North Star and wondered what it could be. A noble man named Chôka noticed it too and invited Raikan to make further researches on the phenomenon. Raikan found out that the spirit of some treasure swords was soaring up to heaven. Thereupon Chôka appointed Raikan governor of the land of Hôjô where the *ki* seemed to originate and let him develop the area. Sure enough, Raikan found a stone box with a couple of treasure swords. The expression “The *ki* of the swords that banish the Altair” comes from there.

316 King Bu of Shû wanted to attack King Chû of In. All of a sudden the blue sky changed and it started to rain in torrents. Sangisei, a general to King Bu, advised the king to refrain from starting the attack since the rain was a bad omen. But King Bu refused Sangisei’s admonition, saying, “Behold, Heaven washes my army!” He then assaulted King Chû amid the heavy rain and defeated the opponent.

317 An old saying goes: “Emperors Kô, Gyô and Shun (=ideal emperors according to the legend) ruled the land with robes hanging down; they ruled while doing nothing, the government functioning without any orders.”

Case:

Nansen instructed the assembly and said, “All the buddhas of the three worlds<sup>318</sup> do not know that there *is*. Only the cats and cows<sup>319</sup> know that there *is*.”

Verse:

Limping with paralyzed hands,  
Ragged with dirty hair;  
Good for nothing, not capable of even one thing.  
In deep silence he knows that his own mind field is nothing but peace.  
Composed, free from care – who says that he is mentally<sup>320</sup> an idiot?  
The entire universe, all dharma world<sup>321</sup> – they have turned to be food for him.  
With his big nose loosely hanging, he seems perfectly satisfied, with no need for anything at all.

**CASE 70: Shinsan Asks about Nature**

Introduction:

A person who hears the fragrant elephant<sup>322</sup> crossing the river<sup>323</sup>  
Goes certainly away according to the stream;  
A person who knows that life has unborn nature  
Is led to stay with life.  
Furthermore: If you talk about becoming a bamboo shoot<sup>324</sup> or becoming a bamboo rope<sup>325</sup>  
before Samadhi or after Samadhi,  
The sword is already long gone; you are (simply) making a mark on the edge of your boat<sup>326</sup>.  
Turning the wheel of activity (toward inside), how do you tread on one special road?  
I will bring up an example, so look!

Case:

Master Shinsan asked Master Shûsan<sup>327</sup>, “After one has clearly known the unborn nature of life, why is it that one is still attached to life?” Shûsan said, “The bamboo shoot necessarily becomes a bamboo. But is it possible to make a bamboo rope already out of a bamboo shoot?”<sup>328</sup> Shinsan said, “Later you will come to realization by yourself.” Shûsan said, “My view is just as I said. What is your view?” Shinsan said, “This is the temple steward’s quarters, and that is the cooks’ quarters.” Shûsan made a deep bow.

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318 The past, present and future.

319 The original words [*byakkô*] means either cow(s) or castrated ox(en). Here, the “cats and cows (or oxen)” represent such people who understand truth only intellectually.

<sup>320</sup> Literally: “in his guts.”

321 The phenomenal world.

322 A powerful elephant of great vitality.

323 In the Nirvana-Sutra it is said that a Bodhisattva hears the fragrant elephant crossing the river.

324 I.e., too young and soft, so that no bamboo ropes can be made out of it.

325 A rope that is made out of grown, strong bamboos.

326 Once a man wanted to cross the Yantze River on a boat. By mistake he let his sword fall from the boat into the water. He thereupon made a mark on the edge of the boat and said, “From here I let my sword fall into the water.” When the boat stopped later, the man jumped into the water and tried to look for the sword according to the mark of the boat – but in vain.

327 In the original language: “Shinsanshu” and “Shûsanshu” (*shu* meaning “Master”). The two masters, whose dates are respectively unknown (about the middle of 10<sup>th</sup> Century), were Dharma relatives in the line of Master Rakan Keishin (=Master Jizô, 867-928). Obviously Shinsan was older than Shûsan.

328 Cf. the “Introduction”. The sentence means: “I am still a bamboo shoot; you cannot make a bamboo rope out of me.”

Verse:

Clear and void, forgetting all things to rely upon;  
Lofty and serene, bound by nothing;  
The home land is totally peaceful, yet few can arrive there.  
A little bit of competence creates classes and ranks;  
Body and mind, vast and peaceful, extinguish Yes and No;  
Yes and No are (indeed) extinguished.  
Alone in the vast universe – there are no tracks at all.

**CASE 71: Suigan's "Eyebrows"** <sup>329</sup>

Introduction:

If you hold blood in the mouth and spit it at others, you defile your own mouth;  
If you gulp alcohol, you will end up paying for the debts of others all your life.  
You have been selling paper for three years,  
And yet you even lack "paper money for the demons"<sup>330</sup>.  
I, Banshō, have preached to you all (likewise);  
Will that strike a faire balance or not?

Case:

Towards the end of summer<sup>331</sup>, Suigan instructed the assembly, saying, "All summer I've preached to you, my brothers. Look here, are Suigan's eyebrows still there?"<sup>332</sup>  
Hofuku said, "The robber's heart is terrified!"<sup>333</sup>  
Chōkei said, "They are well grown!"  
Unmon said, "*Kan*"<sup>334</sup>."

Verse:

The heart of a robber – the guts to go beyond others:  
Clear and free, horizontally or vertically;  
Prompt and just, according to the situation.  
Hofuku and Unmon – their superb noses cover their lips<sup>335</sup>;  
Suigan and Chōkei – their long eyebrows are reflected in their eyes<sup>336</sup>.  
Immature Zen disciples, where is your limit?  
I dare say, spirit and expression are both cut off at once<sup>337</sup>.

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<sup>329</sup> See *Hekiganroku* Case 8.

<sup>330</sup> In ancient China there was a custom of making "paper money" out of a small amount of paper and to put it in the coffin so that the dead person could give irest as a bribe to the demons in the netherworld. The sentence means therefore, "You don't even have a little bit of paper to make the paper money for the demons when you die."

<sup>331</sup> Summer-sesshin for 3 months.

<sup>332</sup> According to the popular belief a great criminal should lose his eyebrows as a sign of his punishment in hell.

<sup>333</sup> A different interpretation: "The robber's heart is telling a lie."

<sup>334</sup> Literally: "barrier" (cf. Mumon-*kan*). In those days this Chinese word seems to have also colloquially meant, "Watch out!" or "There!"

<sup>335</sup> A sign of excellence.

<sup>336</sup> Another sign of a great caliber.

<sup>337</sup> They say there are 4 ways how "spirit" (*ji*) and "expression" (*ku*) can be combined: (1) The spirit is there, but the expression is not (= the spirit is grasped, but the expression is inadequate); (2) the expression is there, but the spirit is not (= a fake imitation); (3) neither spirit nor expression is there (= a catastrophe); (4) both spirit and expression are there (= the ideal state).

You bury your own self, swallowing your own spirit and gulping your own voice<sup>338</sup>;  
You ruin your ancestors, facing a walled fence<sup>339</sup> and carrying a board<sup>340</sup> (upon your shoulder).

### **CASE 72: Chûyû's "Monkey"**

#### **Introduction:**

Exercising wisdom you fight with the other shore;  
Hiding the armed soldiers, you lay an ambush.  
Facing each other, they fight with the pointed spears and sharpest swords.  
This is why the patch-robed monks value total activities and great functions.  
Starting slowly, changing briskly –  
I will try to gush it all out. Look!

#### **Case:**

Kyôzan<sup>341</sup> asked Chûyû<sup>342</sup>, "What does buddha-nature mean?" Chûyû said, "I will explain it for you by allegory. Suppose there is a room with six windows<sup>343</sup>. Inside there is a monkey. Outside, someone shouts, 'Monkey! monkey!' It immediately responds. If someone calls, 'Monkey!' through any of the windows, it responds the same way. It is just like that." Kyôzan said, "How about when the monkey is asleep?" Chûyû descended from his Zen seat, grasped Kyôzan and said, "O monkey, monkey! There you are!"

#### **Verse:**

Sleeping as if frozen in a snow-covered house – the year is ending;  
The quiet gate with ivy and wisteria – it does not open in the night.  
Trees in the garden, withered in the winter, now perceive the change of the climate;  
The spring wind blows away the ashes in the bamboo pipe<sup>344</sup>.

### **CASE 73: Sôzan's Filial Fulfillment**

#### **Introduction:**

Relying on the grasses, hanging onto the trees, one becomes a ghost (after death);  
Suffering humiliation, being punished without cause, one turns into a revengeful demon (after death).  
When you summon them<sup>345</sup>, you burn paper money and make the shape of a horse (out of

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The line "Spirit and expression are both cut off at once" is similar to the category (3) above.

338 Unable to say or do anything.

339 Unable to see anything.

340 If you carry a big board on your shoulder, you cannot see what is on the other side of the board. Therefore, the expression means that you can see only one side of the reality.

341 At this time Kyôzan (807-883) was about 17 years old.

342 Chûyû Kôon Zenji (dates unknown) in the Province of Rôwas, a Dharma heir of Great Master Ba (709-788).

343 The six organs of a human being: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, consciousness.

344 The image comes from a saying in the book of *Raiki* (*Li-chi* 5-3c BCE): A bamboo pipe, stuffed with ash, was kept in a chamber in winter; the warm air of the spring came and let the ash fly away from the pipe – the first sign of the new season.

345 The above-mentioned spirits (namely, the "ghost" and "demon").



vegetable)<sup>346</sup>;

When you send them back, you send charms with written words into the blessed water<sup>347</sup>.  
How could you attain (real) peace of your family?

Case:

A monk asked Sôzan, “When one leaves off his mourning clothes<sup>348</sup>, how about that?” Sôzan said, “For Sôzan ‘filial piety’<sup>349</sup> is fulfilled today.” The monk said, “How about after filial piety is fulfilled?” Sôzan said, “Sôzan loves to get drunk.”

Verse:

For the pure and noble yard, all neighbors are extinct in four directions;  
Through long years, it has been swept and barriered; no dust can ever come in.  
When the full light turns, the thin moon gets tilted in the sky;  
When the hexagrams change, it turns from *yin* to *yan*;  
Freshly fulfilling filial piety, one encounters spring.  
Walking drunk with crazy songs, losing the hat along the way;  
With messy hair, staggering to and fro: who cares what?  
Thoroughly drunk – without any problems at all, in great peace.

**CASE 74: Hôgen’s “Form and Name”**

Introduction:

The Wealth contains ten thousand virtues –  
(Yet) totally exhausted without a speck of dust<sup>350</sup>.  
Away from all forms –  
(Yet) one with all dharmas<sup>351</sup>;  
You step forward on top of the hundred-foot pole  
And realize your whole body throughout the world of ten directions<sup>352</sup>.  
Tell me, from where does one get this?

Case:

A monk asked Hôgen, “I hear that a sutra says, ‘From the basis of non-abiding all dharmas<sup>353</sup> are established.’<sup>354</sup> What is this basis of non-abiding?” Hôgen said, “‘Form arises (as) what has no substance yet; name comes (as) what has no name yet.’<sup>355</sup>”

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<sup>346</sup> The is the way how they called the dead spirits back in old China.

<sup>347</sup> In this way they sent the dead spirits back into the world of the dead.

<sup>348</sup> In Japanese: *Rei*. The white mourning closes that one wore for three years when one of the parents was dead. Here it is symbolically used to designate the period of serious Zen practice.

<sup>349</sup> “Piety” is *kô* [Chin.-jp: 孝], the central word for Confucianism. It means “love of the children to their parents and to their forefathers and -mothers.” It is the foundation of the Confucianist ethics, according to which people spent three years as mourning time when one of the parents was dead – as the expression of this “piety.”

<sup>350</sup> This sentence is a quote from the Foreword of a commentary on the *Diamond Sutra*.

<sup>351</sup> Here, the word “dharmas” means all phenomena. This sentence is from the *Diamond Sutra*.

<sup>352</sup> To these two lines, cf. Case 46 in the *Mumonkan* and Case 79 in the *Shoyoroku*.

<sup>353</sup> I.e., all phenomena.

<sup>354</sup> The line is in the *Kanshujôbon* in the *Yuima-Sutra*.

<sup>355</sup> Quote from Monk Jô’s *Hôzôron* (he lived in 374-414). Another (common) interpretation of this phrase is: “Form arises (from) what has no substance yet; name comes (from) what has no name yet.”

Verse:

Gone are the traces, extinct are the tidings –  
The white clouds have no roots;  
What color is the pure wind?  
The heavenly canopy is scattered away, there is no center at all;  
(Still) there is a power to sustain the earth.  
The thousand ancient abysses are clarified.  
The forms and rules of ten thousand phenomena are manufactured.  
If the way of the greatest land and smallest dust is understood,  
(Bodhisattva) Samanta-Bhadra<sup>356</sup> is everywhere;  
If the gate of the tower is opened,  
Each head is (Bodhisattva) Maitreya<sup>357</sup>.

**CASE 75: Zuigan's "Unchanging Truth"**

Introduction:

Even if you call it "thus," it has already changed.  
Where knowledge cannot reach, you should abandon talking about it.  
Here – is it possible to search for it or not?

Case:

Zuigan<sup>358</sup> asked Gantô, "What is the intrinsically unchanging truth?" Gantô said, "It has moved<sup>359</sup>." Zuigan said, "What if it moves?" Gantô said, "You don't see the intrinsically unchanging truth." Zuigan thought for a moment. Gantô said, "If you acknowledge it, you are not yet free from the roots and their dust<sup>360</sup>. If you do not acknowledge it, you are immersed in endless birth and death."

Verse:

The round jewel has no holes,  
The great raw gem needs no polishing.  
What a person of the Way cherishes has no (rough) edges.  
When the road of acknowledgement is abolished, the roots and their dusts are emptied out:  
A complete exposure, relying on nothing – so active, so independent.

**CASE 76: Shuzan's Three Phrases**

Introduction:

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356 Jp.: *Fugen-Bosatsu*, symbol for universal compassion and wisdom.

357 Jp.: *Miroku-Bosatsu*. The last two lines rely upon the *Nippôkaibon* in the *Kegon-Sutra* (Garland Sutra): Once Maitreya came to the gate of a tower. When he snapped his fingers, the gate was opened. A young practitioner called Sudhanakumâra (*zenzai-dôji*) went inside and found that Maitreya was in each of all three thousand great worlds and of all heavens in and outside the whole universe.

358 At the time of this dialogue Zuigan was still a young boy.

359 Another translation: "It's movement."

360 The "roots" means "six roots" of sense organs: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, consciousness. "Dust", more exactly "six dust particles," means the objects of the six sense organs: form, sound, smell, taste, things to be touched, objects of mind.

One phrase makes three phrases clear;  
Three phrases make one phrase clear.  
Three and one have no relation with each other.  
Very clear is the way of the highest realization.  
Tell me, what phrase exists first?

Case:

Shuzan instructed his assembly and said, “If you get it at the first phrase, you will be the teacher of buddhas and patriarchs. If you get it at the second phrase, you will be the teacher of human beings and heavenly beings. If you get it at the third phrase, you cannot save even yourself.”

A monk asked, “At which phrase did Your Reverence get it?” Shuzan said, “The moon is set – the Third Watch<sup>361</sup>; one makes one’s way through the market place.”

Verse:

The skulls of the buddhas and ancestors are penetrated with one single skewer;  
The water clock in the palace moves quietly its arrow in the deep night.  
The wonderful activities for the sake of human beings and heavenly beings (are like) shooting with a catapult of thousand *kin*<sup>362</sup>;  
The troupes of clouds are brightly shining, emitting sudden lightning.  
The person who is right *here* – do observe the change:  
Meeting baseness, one is noble; meeting nobility, one is base.  
Finding the pearl through a blind man<sup>363</sup> – the supreme way knows no end;  
The (thin) knife plays freely over the deceased ox<sup>364</sup> – there is nothing but the pure heart<sup>365</sup>.

CASE 77: Kyôzan’s “As Befits My Portion”

Introduction:

It is like a person depicting Emptiness:  
The moment one starts to use the brush, one is in the wrong.  
How could you bear creating a model and making a pattern?  
How could you bear trying to make something with ○ ?  
Banshō<sup>366</sup> has already exposed (useless) means of investigation.  
If there are rules, make avail of them;  
If there are no rules, use the (following) example.

Case:

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<sup>361</sup> In old China the night was divided into five “Watches.” How the “Third Watch” corresponds to the modern hours could be different according to the seasons; at any rate it is the “deep night.”

<sup>362</sup> About 18 tons.

<sup>363</sup> An anecdote recorded in the *Zhuangzi*: Once Emperor Yellow, going outing to the north, lost his pearl. He had a wise man search for it, but he could not find it. Next, he sent a clairvoyant man, but he could not find it either. At last he sent a blind man, and he found the pearl.

<sup>364</sup> When you make fine cuts into a dead cow, you do not use a hatchet but a thin blade. Then you can cut the meat freely as if you were playing with it. This picture is a metaphor for *not* resorting to any forced and unreasonable means, but always going the most natural and freest way.

<sup>365</sup> Literally: “the red heart”, meaning the true, naked, almost excessively compassionate heart.

<sup>366</sup> It is Banshō Zenji, who composed the Introductions; therefore, the name “Banshō” here stands for “I.”

A monk asked Kyôzan, “Your Reverence, do you know characters<sup>367</sup> or not?” Kyôzan said, “As befits my portion.” The monk immediately turned around (Kyôzan) once clockwise and said, “What character is this?” Kyôzan drew the ideograph for “10” [ 十 ] in the earth. The monk turned around (Kyôzan) once counter-clockwise and said, “What character is that?” Kyôzan modified the sign “ 十 ” into a swastika [ 卐 ]<sup>368</sup>. The monk drew a circle in the air and lifted his two palms like Asura<sup>369</sup> vigorously holding the sun and moon and said, “What character is this?” Kyôzan immediately drew a circle enclosing the swastika. The monk at once represented the vigor of a Rucika<sup>370</sup>. Kyôzan said, “Good, good. Keep it with care.”

Verse:

The emptiness of the hole of the axis cannot be filled;  
 The (real) character for Emptiness has not yet appeared.  
*It* governs wonderfully the orbits of heaven und the axis of the earth;  
*It* applies beautifully the warp in a harsh way and the weft in a gentle way.  
 Gathering together, letting go;  
 Absolutely independent, freely going anywhere.  
 The (empty) pivot creates all activities;  
 In the blue sky the thunder roars violently.  
 The eyes, hiding violet lights<sup>371</sup>,  
 See the stars in broad daylight.

**CASE 78: Unmon's “Pita”** <sup>372</sup>

Introduction:

Searching for the price in the entire heaven – it is remunerated in the form of the whole earth.  
 Applying a hundred devices is nothing but a disgrace.  
 Is there anyone who knows going and returning, or being good and bad?

Case:

A monk asked Unmon, “What is meant by the expression ‘to go beyond the Buddha and the ancestors?’” Unmon said, “Pita [*Kobyô*].”<sup>373</sup>

Verse:

“Pita [*Kobyô*]” is said to be the “expression ‘going beyond the Buddha and the ancestors.’”  
 There is no taste in the phrase – how could you grasp and present it?  
 If a patch-robed monk one day knows how to be satiated,

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<sup>367</sup> Writing characters or “kanji”.

<sup>368</sup> *Manji* in Japanese; a symbol of Buddhism.

<sup>369</sup> Originally a Hindu deity, here one of the eight supernatural protectors of Buddhist Way.

<sup>370</sup> The buddha Rucika wailed at his fate at first because he was the last of the thousand buddhas in this cosmic period. But then he made up his mind to be the energetic protector of the Dharma for all other buddhas. Two powerful figures of this buddha are seen at the entrance gate of many temples in Japan (named *Niô*).

<sup>371</sup> „Violet lights“ is a metaphor for penetrating ability to see through all things.

<sup>372</sup> *Hekiganroku* Case 77.

<sup>373</sup> *Kobyô* is cheap and unrefined rice cake, made with sesame. It could be somewhat equivalent with “pita” (or “pitta”), which means “pita bread” (or “pitta bread”), a type of plain flat bread in the shape of an oval.

He will certainly see that Unmon's face is not ashamed<sup>374</sup>.

**CASE 79: Chôsa and One Step** <sup>375</sup>

Introduction:

“The wife of the son of the family Ba” on the golden sand-bank –  
indeed a special spirit (of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara)<sup>376</sup>.  
Pounding to make chestnut rice cake in a jade pot –  
who would ever dare to turn around (the dough in the pot)?  
If you don't go into the terrifying billows, you can hardly get a satisfactory fish.  
What about one phrase that manifests leisurely, majestic strides?

Case:

Chôsa had a monk ask Master E<sup>377</sup>, “How was it when you had not yet seen Nansen?”  
E sat silent. The monk asked, “What about after seeing him?” E said, “Nothing special.”

The monk returned and told Chôsa about this. Chôsa said, “Even though one who is sitting on top of a hundred-foot pole has entered realization, it is not yet real. You must step forward on<sup>378</sup> top of the hundred-foot pole. The world of ten directions is the entire body.” The monk said, “How should you take a step forward on<sup>379</sup> top of a hundred-foot pole?” Sa said, “Mountains of Ro, waters of Rei<sup>380</sup>.” The monk said, “I don't understand.” Sa said, “Four seas and five lakes are all under the imperial reign.”

Verse:

The pearl person's<sup>381</sup> dream is destroyed – a cry of the rooster!  
He looks around – all phenomena in life are equal.  
Wind and thunder, bringing the news (of spring), drive out the dormant insects;  
Peach trees, silent as they are, naturally create footpaths (beneath).  
When the season is come, one labors in the fields with a plowing ox;  
Who would ever care about the knee-deep mud of the ridges in the spring?

**CASE 80: Ryûge brings the Chin Rest** <sup>382</sup>

Introduction:

“The great sound is seldom heard; great talents flower late.”<sup>383</sup>

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374 I.e., Unmon does not have to be ashamed of his seemingly strange teaching.

375 Cf. auch *Mumonkan* Case 46.

376 Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara is said to have appeared in the district of Sen'u in the ancient China in the form of an extremely beautiful girl and promised to marry a young man who would be able to read the sutras best. All young men started to learn to read the sutras, but the son of the Family Ba could read them better than anyone else, so he succeeded in marrying the girl, who, however, died right after the wedding. An old monk, who happened to come by, explained the real history behind the girl. After that, Buddhism spread all over the district, and the statue of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara was erected on the golden sand-bank of the land; the statue was eventually called “Avalokitesvara, the wife of the son of the Family Ba.”

377 Certainly a disciple of Master Nansen, but the details are unknown.

378 Another translation: “from the”

379 Cf. the note above.

380 Ro and Rei are the names of Provinces in the old China.

381 A “pearl person” (*gyokunin*) means a great person who experienced a great enlightenment.

382 See *Hekiganroku* Case 20. The third paragraph, however, is peculiar to the *Shôyôroku*.

Amid hustle and bustle in great clamor one plays idiot;  
Leisurely one lingers, waiting for one thousand years.  
Just tell me, what kind of person is this one?

Case:

Ryûge<sup>384</sup> asked Suibi, “What is the intent of the Patriarch’s coming from the west?” Suibi said, “Bring me a chin rest<sup>385</sup>.” Ryûge brought one and gave it to him. Suibi took it and hit him. Ryûge said, “You may hit me as you like. After all, the intent of the Patriarch’s coming from the west does not exist.”

He also asked Rinzai, “What is the intent of the Patriarch’s coming from the west?” Rinzai said, “Bring me a sitting cushion.” Ryûge got one and gave it to Rinzai. Rinzai took it and hit him. Ryûge said, “You may hit me as you like. After all, the intent of the Patriarch(’s coming from the west) does not exist.”

Later Ryûge became abbot of a temple. A monk asked him, “Master, at that time, when you asked Suibi and Rinzai about the intent of the Patriarch’s coming from the west, did they clarify it or not?” Ryûge said, “They clarified it all right. After all, the intent of the Patriarch(’s coming from the west) does not exist.”

Verse:

The cushion and the chin rest are faced against Ryûge:

Why not become an adept at such opportunities?

He doesn’t want to rob<sup>386</sup> anything, he doesn’t show off his capacity on the spot;

He is afraid that (his followers) would be degraded<sup>387</sup> and roam stray under a distant sky.

How could he hang a sword in the empty firmament?

Rather, he floats a raft in the Milky Way<sup>388</sup>.

In the grass that does not sprout he knows how to hide a fragrant elephant;

In his basket that has no bottom he carries a living viper.

What obstacles are there at the Lake and the River<sup>389</sup> today?

There are boats and wagons at the ferry places all over.

**CASE 81: Gensha Reaches the Province**

Introduction:

Move – there appears a shadow,

Realize – there arises dust.

Raise it up – it is clear and distinct,

Throw it down – it is peaceful and intimate.

When people of the true Way meet, how do they converse with each other?

Case:

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<sup>383</sup> A quote from Lao-tse.

<sup>384</sup> Ryûge (838-923) was certainly still in his twenties, since Rinzai died already in 866/7.

<sup>385</sup> Literally: “Zen board.” A narrow board used so as to let one sleep in the sitting posture.

<sup>386</sup> I.e., he doesn’t want to “rob” his opponents (= Suibi and Rinzai) of the opportunity to show off their sovereignty.

<sup>387</sup> I.e., his Zen students would be simply small-scaled Zen people through conceptual understanding of Zen.

<sup>388</sup> That is, he has an entirely different, unexpected dimension to show his greatness.

<sup>389</sup> The Lake Dôtei and the Yantze River (jp.: *Kôko* for both together), around which Zen temples flourished.

Gensha came to the Province of Hoden. He was welcomed with great entertainment. The next day he asked the Elder Shôtô, “All the revelry of yesterday – where has it gone?” Shôtô held out the corner of his Buddhist garment. Gensha said, “Far away – no relation at all.”

Verse:

Hiding the boat in the valley of night,  
Moving the pole in the clearest source.  
Dragons and fish don’t know yet that the water is their life.  
With broken chopsticks one twirls (the water) a bit.  
Master Gensha, Elder Shôtô:  
The box and the lid fit together; two arrows crash right in the middle:  
A searching cane, a straw mantle<sup>390</sup>.  
Withdrawing their members the old turtles nest among the lotuses;  
Joyfully swimming, the gorgeous fish play with the water grass.

**CASE 82: Unmon’s: “Sound and Color”**

Introduction:

If one does not cut off sounds and colors, one fails wherever one is;  
If one seeks sounds and sees colors, one does not see the Tathagata<sup>391</sup>.  
Is there anyone who is on the way and returns home or not?

Case:

Unmon instructed the assembly and said, “Hearing a sound, realizing the way; seeing a color, clarifying the mind.”<sup>392</sup> – Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara comes with some small change and buys (poor) rice cake<sup>393</sup>. If he throws it away, he will get (nice) *manjû* cake<sup>394</sup> instead.”

Verse:

One goes outside the gate, lets the horse gallop and sweeps away the comet<sup>395</sup>.  
The smoke and dust of all countries are pacified of themselves.  
“The twelve sense-fields”<sup>396</sup> are ruined, (they were) illusory shadows and echoes.  
The threefold-thousand Worlds<sup>397</sup> emit pure lights.

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390 The “straw mantel” was used to hide oneself. Cf. the Introduction of Case 14.

391 Cf. Case 20e of the Miscellaneous Koans.

392 An idiomatic expression. A typical example of the former case is the great satori experience of Master Kyôgen as he heard the sound of a pebble hitting a bamboo; a famous example of the latter case is the episode of Master Reiun, who came to a deep realization after glimpsing peach blossoms afar.

393 Japanese: *Kobyô*. Cf. Case 78.

394 Steamed cakes made of fine wheat, with minced meat in it; in Japan nice sweet beans are used inside.

395 A “comet” was said to be a demonic star, an omen of civil wars, disorders, famines, etc.

396 The “six roots” (the six sense-organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, mind) and the “six objects” (corresponding to the above six organs: color and shape, sound, odor, taste, tangible objects, objects of the mind) put together.

397 Cf. Main Case 30 as well as Introduction to Case 67.

### **CASE 83: Dôgo's Nursing the Ill**

#### **Introduction:**

The whole body is ill: Vimalakirti can hardly be healed<sup>398</sup>.

This grass can cure well: Manjusri employs it well<sup>399</sup>.

What could be better than consulting a person of the highest realization

And obtaining the place of great peace?

#### **Case:**

Isan asked Dôgo, "Where have you come from?" Dôgo said, "I come from nursing the ill." Isan said, "How many people are ill?" Dôgo said, "There are people who are ill and not ill." Isan said, "The one who is not ill – isn't that you, dear Chi<sup>400</sup>?" Dôgo said, "Ill or not ill – it has nothing to do with *that* matter. Say it quickly! Say it quickly!" Isan said, "Even if one may say it, there's no relation at all."

#### **Verse:**

How could good medicine go through your mouth?

Even a genius doctor couldn't get hold of your hand.

Seemingly existent: that One isn't originally non-being;

Totally empty: that One isn't originally being.

Not perishing, it is born; not dying, it lives long.

Transcending the Buddha of *Ion*-King<sup>401</sup> one comes before him,

One walks alone after the "Kalpa of Emptiness"<sup>402</sup>.

As for serenity, (it) covers the firmament and supports the earth;

As for movement, the crow<sup>403</sup> flies and the rabbit<sup>404</sup> runs.

### **CASE 84: Gutei's One Finger** <sup>405</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

One hearing, a thousand realizations; one understanding, a thousand applications.

The people with the highest spirit capture all when one has been decided;

The people with the middle and lower spirits hear much, but do not believe much.<sup>406</sup>

I will try to bring up the clear and the simple matter, look!

#### **Case:**

Whenever he was asked an (important) question, Master Gutei simply stuck up one

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<sup>398</sup> Behind this line lies a story: One day Vimalakirti became ill. Being asked where his problem was, he said, "Because all the living beings are ill, I became ill too."

<sup>399</sup> One day Manjusri asked a boy to go out and search for grass medicine. The boy saw that everything on earth was medicine. In the end he came back with a piece of grass and presented it to Manjusri. Manjusri said, "This medicine can kill people as well as heal people very well."

<sup>400</sup> Dôgo's full name was Dôgo Enchi. "Chi" is short for Enchi.

<sup>401</sup> *Ionnô-butsu*. The very first Buddha of the three thousand buddhas of the threefold-thousand Great-Thousand-Worlds; that is, a very ancient buddha who existed kalpas ago.

<sup>402</sup> According to the Buddhist cosmology, the universe repeats the four Kalpas: The Kalpa of Becoming, the Kalpa of Abiding, the Kalpa of Destruction and the Kalpa of Emptiness.

<sup>403</sup> Or: a metaphor for the sun.

<sup>404</sup> Or: a metaphor for the moon.

<sup>405</sup> See *Mumonkan* Case 3 and *Hekiganroku* Case 19.

<sup>406</sup> These two lines come from the Shôdôka (L. 55 and 56).



finger.

Verse:

Old Gutei – Zen on the fingertip:

He has used it for thirty years, yet he hasn't drained it out at all.

Truly a man of the Way, he knows an art beyond all categories:

In the end he sees no profane things before his eyes.

What he got is extremely simple; his devices all the more broad.

The ocean of great-thousand worlds is engulfed in a hair-tip.

The dragon knows no limit; whose hands would he fall into?

How splendid that Mr. Nin<sup>407</sup> takes a (great) fishing rod with a hook!

The master<sup>408</sup> too puts up a finger and says, "Look!"

**CASE 85: The National Teacher's Gravestone** <sup>409</sup>

Introduction:

Only when you have the hammer to destroy the empty firmament

And the means to split Mr. Ka open,

You can reach where there are neither seams nor openings, where there are neither flaws nor scars.

Just tell me, who is such a person?

Case:

Emperor Shukusô<sup>410</sup> asked Chû<sup>411</sup>, the national teacher, "What would you wish me to do after a hundred years<sup>412</sup>?" The national teacher said, "Make a seamless gravestone<sup>413</sup> for this old monk." The emperor said, "I should like to ask you, master, for a design." The national teacher sat silent for a long time. Then he said, "Did you understand?" The emperor said, "No, I didn't." The national teacher said, "I have a Dharma successor, my disciple Tangen, who is well versed with this matter."

Afterwards the emperor called Tangen and asked him about the intent of this. Tangen responded:

"The south of the river, north of the lake:

In between there's gold, filling the whole land.

Under the shadowless tree – a boat with all people.

In the crystal palace there is no knowledge<sup>414</sup>."

Verse:

Only one – wide and endless;

Completely round – full and perfect.

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407 Famous for having fished a big fish.

408 Master Wanshi himself.

409 See *Hekiganroku* Case 18.

410 Historically speaking it was Emperor Daisô the oldest son and succes

411 Master Echû.

412 After your death.

413 An egg-formed gravestone which is made out of a single piece of stone. It was often made for deceased monks.

414 Or: "there is no one who knows."

Where the eyes can see no more, it stands high and lofty.  
 The moon is set, the lake is void, the color of the night so dark and weighty;  
 The clouds are gone, the mountain is lean; the autumn is rich in atmosphere.  
 The position of the eight trigrams<sup>415</sup> is correct;  
 The spirits of the five elements<sup>416</sup> are harmonious.  
 The (whole) body is right in it – do you see it?  
 The father and the son of Nan'yô<sup>417</sup> seem to know that it exists;  
 The Buddha and Patriarchs of India can do nothing about it.

### **CASE 86: Rinzai's Great Enlightenment**

#### Introduction:

A bronze head, an iron forehead,  
 The heavenly eyes<sup>418</sup>, a dragon's pupils,  
 An eagle's beak, a shark's jowls,  
 A bear's heart, a leopard's liver:  
 (Still,) under the diamond sword no reflection is allowed;  
 One cannot plan anything at all.  
 Why is it like this?

#### Case:

Rinzai asked Ôbaku, "What is the great intent of the Buddha-Dharma?" Ôbaku hit him. This happened three times. Rinzai then took his leave and went to see Daigu. Daigu asked, "Where have you come from?" Rinzai said, "From Ôbaku." Daigu said, "What did Ôbaku have to say?" Rinzai said, "I asked him three times, 'What is the great intent of the Buddha-Dharma?' and I got his stick three times. I don't know if I was in error or not." Daigu said, "Ôbaku was overly gentle like an old grandmother; he completely exhausted himself for your sake. Yet you come here and ask if you were in error or not!" With these words, Rinzai came to great enlightenment.

#### Verse:

A chick of the Phoenix with nine-fold virtues<sup>419</sup>,  
 A colt that runs a thousand miles.  
 The true wind goes through the pipe (and let it sing),  
 The wondrous activity turns the hinges (and open the doors).  
 When one comes suddenly, the lightning flies;  
 When the cloud of delusion is dispersed, the sun is all alone.  
 He "strokes the tiger's whiskers"<sup>420</sup> – do you see it or not?  
 This is certainly a brave person of great caliber.

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415 *Ba Gua* (jp.: *hakke*)– the eight diagrams in Taoist explanation of the cosmos

416 "Wood, fire, earth, gold, water" – the five elements of the Chinese philosophy.

417 I.e., National Teacher Echû and his disciple Tangen.

418 The eyes of a heavenly being.

419 A phoenix is said to possess nine virtues or faculties.

420 An allusion to what Master Ôbaku said when Rinzai re-visited him after attaining the great enlightenment at Daigu: Rinzai told the story to Ôbaku, who said, "What? Did the dumb Daigu say such a stupid thing? I must hit him when I see him next." Thereupon Rinzai hit Ôbaku. Ôbaku said, "This vagabond came back and stroked the tiger's whiskers!"

### **CASE 87: Sozan's "Being and Non-Being"**

#### **Introduction:**

When the gate is about to close, you can open it (again) with a little push;  
When the boat is about to sink, you can turn it with a move of the pole.  
The Shasô Valley leads into the canyon: there is no way to return;  
The Senkatsu Peak soars to heaven: one gate is open<sup>421</sup>.  
Just tell me, where does it go?

#### **Case:**

Sozan came to Isan<sup>422</sup> and asked, "I have heard that you said, 'Words about Being and words about Non-Being are just like wisteria relying on a tree.' If suddenly the tree falls down and the wisteria withers, where will the words go?" Isan burst into great laughter. Sozan said, "I sold my clothes and other belongings, and made an arduous journey of one thousand miles to come to you. Why does Your Reverence make light of me?" Isan called his attendant and said, "Bring some money and give it to this reverend monk as compensation." Finally he foretold to him, "Someday a one-eyed dragon will let you open your eyes."

Later Sozan went to Myôshô<sup>423</sup> and told him about this. Myôshô said, "I can say that Isan had both a true head and a true tail<sup>424</sup>, but he did not meet one who could appreciate him." Sozan asked again, "If the tree falls down and the wisteria withers, where will the words go?" Myôshô said, "It would make Isan laugh loudly again." Upon hearing this, Sozan came to an insight. Then he said, "From the beginning, there was a sword behind Isan's laughter."

#### **Verse:**

With the wisteria withered, the tree fallen, he asks Isan:  
Great laughter! – is it somehow disrespectful?  
There is a sword behind the laughter – he sees through it.  
Words and thoughts have no path – extinguished are all deliberations.

### **CASE 88: "No-Seeing" in the Ryôgon Sutra** <sup>425</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

If there is a view or no view, it is (nothing but) lighting a lantern in the middle of the day;  
If there is neither a view nor no-view, it is (nothing but) pouring ink in the middle of the night.

When you believe that seeing and hearing are like illusory pictures,  
You will know that voices and colors are like empty flowers.

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421 These two lines are an allusion to a poem by Toho (712-770): *Shasô* is the name of a deep valley, and *Senkatsu* is the name of a high peak.

422 Isan Ran'an Zenji or Chôkei Daian Zenji (793-883), not Isan Reiyû Zenji (771-853), a founder of the Igyô School. Both were, however, Dharma heirs to Hyakujô Ekai Zenji.

423 Master Myôshô Tokken (dates unknown; probably in the 9th Century) is said to have lost his left eye.

424 This sentence means that Isan had both a clear Zen-eye and a great capability to lead people.

425 See *Hekiganroku* Case 94.

Tell me, is there a (fitting) speech for patch-robed monks in the sutras?

Case:

The Ryôgon Sutra says, “When I don’t see, why don’t you see (the fact) that I don’t see? If you say you ‘see’ that I don’t see, that is naturally not the way how I don’t see. If you ‘don’t see’ what I don’t see, it is naturally not a(n objective) *thing*. Why isn’t it your (own) self?”

Verse:

The great ocean is dried up,  
Empty space filled up.  
The patch-robed monks’ nostrils are long<sup>426</sup>;  
The old Buddhas’ tongues are short<sup>427</sup>.  
The string of the pearls goes through nine bent holes<sup>428</sup>;  
The beautiful loom is slightly turned once.  
Meeting him right on the spot, who knows him?  
You now believe for the first time that it’s impossible to accompany this person.

**CASE 89: Tôzan’s “Place of No Grass”**

Introduction:

If you move, you bury your body ten thousand feet deep;  
If you don’t move, roots grow right at your very place.  
Even if you throw away both and cast off the middle,  
You must buy some straw sandals and set out on a pilgrimage,  
In order to truly attain it.

Case:

Tôzan instructed the assembly and said, “At the beginning of autumn and the end of summer, you, brothers, are departing east and west. Thus you go directly to the place where there is not an inch of grass over ten thousand miles.” And again he said, “How will you go to the place where there is not an inch of grass over ten thousand miles?”

Sekisô<sup>429</sup> said, “When you go out of the gate, there is grass!”

Daiyô<sup>430</sup> said, “I would say right off: Even if you don’t go out of the gate, grass is abundant everywhere.”

Verse:

Grass all over –  
Inside the gate, outside the gate – you see it yourself.

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426 I.e., the monks have a high nose – an expression of the monks’ high spiritual independence.

427 Even old Buddhas cannot explain fully.

428 When Confucius was in the land of Chin, he was given a difficult assignment to put a string through 9 pearls with bent holes. He then tied a string to an ant and let it go into the hole of the initial pearl, and put some honey at the end of the hole of the last pearl. The ant went through all the pearl holes, thus putting the string through all the bent holes as required.

429 Sekisô Keisho (808-888), student of Tôzan Gohon (808-869), not Sekisô So’en (986-1039).

430 Daiyô Kyôgen (943-1027).

It is easy to set your foot in the jungle of thorns (and trample it down);  
It is difficult to unfold your whole being outside of the moonlit screens<sup>431</sup>.  
Look, look! How many are like that?  
For a while you follow the old tree and become cold and thin as well;  
Now you are about to go after the spring wind and to enter the burnt fields (with fresh grass)<sup>432</sup>.

**CASE 90: Kyôzan Speaks Out** <sup>433</sup>

**Introduction:**

Kutsugen<sup>434</sup> said, “Only I am sober” – this is nothing but intoxication.  
Kyôzan speaks of a dream; yet it is like in an awakened state.  
Just say: I, Banshō, preach like this, and you all hear like this:  
Just tell me, is this an awakened state or is this a dream?

**Case:**

Kyôzan went to Maitreya’s abode in a dream and sat at the second seat. A venerable monk said, “Today the second seat is due to speak.” Kyôzan stood up, struck the wooden anvil with a gavel, and said, “The Dharma of Mahayana is beyond the Four Propositions and transcends the Hundred Negations. I beg to tell you this!”

**Verse:**

In a dream, wearing a patched robe, he calls on the revered elder<sup>435</sup>;  
The saints are sitting as (lofty) trees to his right<sup>436</sup>.  
When his turn comes, he does not defer; the wooden anvil is struck loudly.  
Without fear he preaches, roaring like a lion.  
His heart is as serene as the ocean,  
His liver as massive as a bushel.  
Tears flow from the shark people’s<sup>437</sup> eyes;  
Pearls come out of the clams’ guts<sup>438</sup>.  
Who knows that the idle chattering leaks the activities of our (school)?  
The (people with) great eyebrows<sup>439</sup> should laugh that the family disgrace was raised.  
“Beyond the Four Propositions and transcending the Hundred Negations”<sup>440</sup>:  
Master Ba and his sons have given up applying medicine altogether.

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431 Screens made of crystals and white jades, therefore luminous also in the moonlight. Here it is a symbol for enlightenment.

432 Fields where in the early spring the old grass is burnt and the new grass gradually sprouts.

433 See *Mumonkan* Case 25.

434 Cf. the notes to Case 12 (Verse), 26 (Introduction), 41 (Verse) and 46 (Verse).

435 I.e., Bodhisattva Maitreya.

436 I.e., Kyôzan is more revered than the holy ones.

437 “Shark people” are mysterious people in the south ocean (similar to “mermaids”); when they weep, it is said that their tears turn into pearls.

438 When the clams expose their guts and swallow the spirit of the moon, pearls are said to come out.

439 The great personages who are present there (Maitreya etc.).

440 Cf. Case 6 (Master Ba’s “White and Black”).

**CASE 91: Nansen and the Peonies** <sup>441</sup>

**Introduction:**

Kyôzan makes reality out of a dream<sup>442</sup>,

Nansen points to an awakened state as unreality.

If one knows that awakening and dreaming are intrinsically *Nothing-at-all-ness*,

For the first time one can believe that unreality and reality transcend dualism.

Just tell me, what eye does this person possess?

**Case:**

Minister Rikukô said to Nansen, “Dharma-teacher Jô is wonderful. He truly knows what he is talking about: ‘Heaven and earth (and I) have one and the same root; all things (and I) are one single body.’<sup>443</sup>” Nansen pointed at the peonies in the garden and said, “Minister, people of our time<sup>444</sup> see these flowers as in a dream.”

**Verse:**

Seeing through the roots of the creation with *ri* and *bi*,<sup>445</sup>

One sees the gates<sup>446</sup> of abundant coming-and-perishing;

Letting the godly spirit play outside the kalpas,

What questions could one still have?

With the eye set before oneself, the knowing exists in subtlety.

When the tiger roars, the wind blows ghostly over the rocks;

When the dragon moans, the dark clouds fill up the caves.

Nansen, shattering the dreams of the people of his time,

Wants everyone to acknowledge the honored One who becomes the next Buddha<sup>447</sup>.

**CASE 92: Unmon’s “One Treasure”** <sup>448</sup>

**Introduction:**

One has attained the great Samadhi of freely carrying out all godly deeds,

One understands and maintains the mystic utterances of all living beings,

One turns around Bokushû’s “giant drill of the Shin Era”<sup>449</sup>,

One plays with the poisonous snake of the South Mountain of Seppô<sup>450</sup>:

Do you know this person?

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441 See *Hekiganroku* Case 40. A slightly different wording in the main Case.

442 Cf. Case 90.

443 From Dharma-teacher Jô’s *Hôzôron*. The full quote should be: “Heaven and earth *and I* have one and the same root; all things *and I* are one single body” (cf. the italic parts which are lacking both in the *Hôzôron* and in the main Case of *Hekiganroku* 40).

444 I.e. “you”.

445 *Ri* (subject) and *bi* (object) belong to the vocabulary of Jô-Hosshi (at the beginning of the 5th century). Cf. *Mumonkan* 24.

446 The “gates” of the “six roots” (eyes, nose, ears, tongue, body, consciousness).

447 I.e., the Bodhisattva Maitreya, who will appear 5,670,000,000 years after the death of Shakyamuni and become the next Buddha.

448 See *Hekiganroku* Case 62.

449 An abusive expression meaning “good for nothing”, used by Bokushû to pull the practitioners to pieces. Unmon was once thrown out of the door by Bokushû with these words, when he broke his leg and subsequently came to his great enlightenment.

450 Cf. *Shoyoroku* Case 24 and *Hekiganroku* Case 22.

Case:

Great Master Unmon said, “Within heaven and earth, in the midst of the universe, there is one treasure hidden in a mountain of forms<sup>451,452</sup>: taking up the lantern and going to the Buddha Hall; taking up the temple gate and putting it on the lantern.”

Verse:

Rolling up all the reverberations, disliking fancy things –  
Returning (to oneself), where is one’s life after all?  
The woodcutter with the rotten axe-handle<sup>453</sup> finds no path (back home);  
In the pot in the cassia tree, as directed by Mr. Pot, a mysterious house is found<sup>454</sup>.  
The night water with gold ripples reflects the moon;  
The autumn wind blowing, the snow embraces reed flowers.  
The cold fish are on the bottom, swallowing no baits;  
Losing interest, one turns the boat homeward with a pure song.

**CASE 93: Shiso Does Not Understand**

Introduction:

People use jewels from Mt. Kei<sup>455</sup> to strike down magpies;  
Old rats bite pieces of gold.  
They don’t understand their treasure, they can’t make use of it.  
Is there anyone who suddenly finds the gem hidden in their own clothes?<sup>456</sup>

Case:

Shiso<sup>457</sup> asked Nansen, “People do not recognize the Mani<sup>458</sup>-pearl; it is intimately grasped in the treasury of the Tathagata.<sup>459</sup> What is this treasury?” Nansen said, “Old Master O<sup>460</sup> exchanges questions and answers with you. That’s it.” Shiso said, “How about when there is no exchange of questions and answers?” Nansen said, “That’s also the treasury.” Shiso said, “What is the pearl?” Nansen called him to come near, saying, “Shiso!” Shiso said, “Yes!” Nansen said, “Get out. You don’t understand my words.”

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<sup>451</sup> The expression “a mountain of forms” [形山] is usually understood as “a body.”

<sup>452</sup> A sentence from the *Hôzôron* (Treatise on the Treasure Chamber of the Dharma) by Monk Jô (? -414).

<sup>453</sup> Cf. the Verse of Case 57.

<sup>454</sup> Once a man named Hichôbô was guided by a medicine seller named Mr. Pot to look into a pot in a cassia tree and found an entirely different world in it with beautiful palaces.

<sup>455</sup> A mountain famous for producing precious stones. The first half of this sentence depicts children who use jewels to strike magpies down to the ground, without knowing the value of the jewels.

<sup>456</sup> A story in the Lotus-sutra goes: Once a rich man had to depart for a distant land, leaving a poor friend behind. The two had a farewell meal and drank a lot. The poor friend, getting drunk, fell deep asleep. The rich man actually wanted to give his friend costly jewels so that the friend would be better off during his absence. Since, however, the friend would not wake up, the rich man sewed the jewels into the friend’s clothes and went away. The poor friend woke up later, but not having noticed that the jewels were sewn into his clothes, he continued his usual poor life.

<sup>457</sup> Mistakenly the original text renders “Roso” (Nansen’s elder brother in Dharma); in reality it should be “Shiso” (Nansen’s student), as Nansen’s question indicates.

<sup>458</sup> “Mani” in Sanskrit means “perfectly free-willed” or “unstained”.

<sup>459</sup> A quote from the famous *Shôdôka* by Yôka Daishi.

<sup>460</sup> Nansen himself.

Verse:

Differentiating “yes” and “no,” clarifying “gain” and “loss”,  
Responding to this in the heart, pointing to that in the palm –  
Coming and going, not coming and not going: both are nothing but treasury.  
King Tenrin rewarded the worthy ones with it<sup>461</sup>,  
Emperor Yellow found it through a blind man<sup>462</sup>.  
Turning the pivotal activities, skilled in the art –  
You clear-eyed monks, never take it carelessly!

**CASE 94: Tôzan Unwell**

Introduction:

The lower do not discuss the higher; the humble do not move the dignified.  
Even if one rules over oneself and follows the others,  
One should not burden the heavy by the light.  
When the four elements<sup>463</sup> are not in order, how would one attend and serve?

Case:

Tôzan<sup>464</sup> was unwell. A monk asked, “Your Reverence is unwell. Is there anyone who does not become ill?” Tôzan said, “There is.” The monk said, “Does the one who does not get ill take care of Your Reverence?” Tôzan said, “The ‘old monk’ is properly taking care of ‘the other one.’” The monk said, “How about when the ‘Master’ takes care of ‘the other one’?” Tôzan said, “There is no illness at all to see.”

Verse:

Casting off the stinky skin bag<sup>465</sup>, rolling over the bulk of red flesh –  
Right here the nostrils are straight, right now the skull is dried up.  
The old doctor<sup>466</sup> doesn’t see the previous traits (of illness);  
The young one<sup>467</sup> can hardly approach and encounter him.  
When the water in the field becomes meager, the autumn lake recedes;  
Where the white clouds are no more, the old mountains are cold.  
It must come to a complete annihilation – don’t cheat (yourself)!  
Fully exhausting non-accomplishments<sup>468</sup>, one attains one’s (true) dimension;  
Lofty and solitary – one does not share the same plate with you.

**CASE 95: Rinzai Draws a Line**

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<sup>461</sup> From the Lotus-sutra: King of Tenrin declared in front of many soldiers of his that the ones who would show worthiest deeds would be rewarded with a famous pearl.

<sup>462</sup> Cf. the Verse of Case 76.

<sup>463</sup> The four principle elements are “earth, water, fire, and wind.” That the four elements are not in order means one is ill.

<sup>464</sup> Tôzan Gohon (807-869), a founder of the Soto-School.

<sup>465</sup> The physical body.

<sup>466</sup> The essential self.

<sup>467</sup> The phenomenal person.

<sup>468</sup> Concerning the “non-accomplishments,” cf. the “Aspect of Accomplishment without Accomplishment” [*Kôkô-j*], the 5th aspect of the “Five Aspects of Endeavor and Accomplishments” [*Kunkô-go*] by Tôzan Zenji.



### Introduction:

When the Buddha comes, one hits him;  
When a devil comes, one hits him.  
If there is logic, thirty blows;  
If there is no logic, thirty blows.  
Does one betray malice and hatred through misapprehension?  
Or is one not able to distinguish the good (from the bad)?  
Try to say it, and I'll see!

### Case:

Rinzai asked the temple steward, "Where have you come from?" The temple steward said, "From selling brown rice in the province." Rinzai said, "Have you finished selling all of it?" The manager said, "Yes, I have finished selling all of it." Rinzai drew a line with his staff and said, "Have you sold all of this too?" The manager shouted, "Kaatzu!" Rinzai immediately struck him.

Later, the cook monk<sup>469</sup> came to Rinzai, who told him about this incident. The monk said, "The steward didn't understand Your Reverence's intent." Rinzai said, "How about you?" The monk made a deep bow. Rinzai struck him likewise.

### Verse:

Rinzai's whole activities – sublime are the tones:  
An eye is on top of the staff, distinguishing the thinnest hair.  
The lone rabbit<sup>470</sup> is swept away – severe is the family tradition;  
The fish is turned into a dragon – its tail is burned through lightning<sup>471</sup>.  
The sword that gives life, the blade that kills life;  
From heaven it glitters upon the snow, it is sharper than the hair-severing sword;  
Equally commanding, yet differently to be savored.  
The very spot that causes massive pain – who can meet it?

## **CASE 96: Kyûhô Does Not Acknowledge**

### Introduction:

Ungo does not rely upon the holy ashes of a person who has faithfully followed the Precepts<sup>472</sup>;

Kyûhô does not appreciate expiring while sitting or standing<sup>473</sup>,

Gozu does not need hundreds of birds to bring him flowers<sup>474</sup>,

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<sup>469</sup> I.e. "tenzo" – a monk who prepares meals.

<sup>470</sup> Metaphor for a person of small caliber.

<sup>471</sup> Cf. the Verse of Case 33.

<sup>472</sup> Once Ungo asked his attendant to take a garment to a holy hermit. The hermit did not receive it, saying that he already had a garment from his mother. Thereupon Ungo asked him, "Before your mother was born, what kind of garment did you have?" The hermit could not answer a single word. Later, the hermit died and left some "holy ashes" [*shari*] after being cremated. People believed namely in those time that a holy person, who had followed faithfully the way of the precepts, would leave holy ashes behind after the cremation. Someone brought the holy ashes to Ungo. To this Ungo answered, "What good would it bring even if he had produced tons of holy ashes? It would have been far better if he had been able to answer the very question I posed him at that time."

<sup>473</sup> Cf. the main Case.

<sup>474</sup> Gozu is Hôyû Zenji on Mt. Gozu. He sat daily in his stone chamber, while the birds of heaven brought him lots of flowers to

Ôbaku does not envy putting a cup upon the river and gliding across it<sup>475</sup>.  
Tell me, what are their special merits?

Case:

Kyûhō served Sekisō as his attendant. After Sekisō's passing, the assembly wanted to make their head monk the abbot of the temple. Kyûhō would not acknowledge him. He said, "Wait till I examine him. If he understands our late master's spirit and intention, I will serve him as I served our late master."

So he asked the head monk, "Our late master said<sup>476</sup>,

Totally ceased;

Totally extinguished;

*(Totally becoming a cool land of desolation;)*

Thoroughly fostering one thought for ten thousand years;

Thoroughly becoming cold ash and a withered tree;

*(Thoroughly becoming a fragrant censer in the ancient shrine;)*

Thoroughly becoming a vertical stripe of white silk<sup>477</sup>."

Tell me, what sort of matter did he clarify with this?" The head monk said, "He clarified the matter of the One Color." Ho said, "If so, you have not yet understood our late master's spirit." The head monk said, "Don't you acknowledge me? Pass me incense." He lit the incense and said, "If I had not understood our late master's spirit, I would not be able to pass away while the smoke of this incense rises." No sooner had he said this than he expired while sitting in zazen. Kyûhō caressed his back and said, "Dying while sitting or standing is not impossible. But you could not even dream of our late master's spirit."

Verse:

The school of Sekisō was intimately transmitted to Kyûhō.

Expiring in the fragrant smoke does not lead to the authentic stream.

The crane in the moon-lit nest creates a dream of one thousand years,

While the man in the snowy hut is deluded by the merit of the One Color.

Cutting off all ten directions through sitting is still a miserable failure;

Truly moving one step forward would witness soaring dragons<sup>478</sup>.

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admire and worship him. The Fourth Patriarch smelled the fragrance of the spiritual flavor of the flowers and came to visit Hōyū. The two met and conversed intimately with each other. During Hōyū's short absence, the Fourth Patriarch drew the character "Buddha" upon Hōyū's sitting cushion. Hōyū came back and wanted to do zazen. He saw the character "Buddha" on the cushion and was perplexed. Thereupon the Fourth Patriarch said, "There is still *this!*" After this, Hōyū became a disciple of the Fourth Patriarch and began his most serious practice. Afterwards, no birds came to worship him with flowers any more.

475 Ôbaku Zenji met a monk on his way to Mr. Tendai. The two went along friendly together, until they came to a big river, where there were no boats or bridges. The monk used his hat like a boat to start crossing the river. Ôbaku was angry and cried to him, "It was a waste of time to come along with such an unimportant guy like you. If I had known that you were such a tiny fellow so proud of your stupid 'supernatural powers', I would have hit you hard in the face for that!" Thereupon, the monk admired Ôbaku, "Here is a great man of the Mahayana Dharma!"

476 The original Shoyoroku-text contains five out of the famous "Seven Aspects of the Realization (*shichiko*) of Sekisō." For your reference, the lacking two aspects are shown in ( ).

477 The image of a waterfall.

478 The last two lines allude to a famous legend (cf. note to the verse of Case 33) that only the carps overcoming the three grades of waterfalls could be transformed into dragons and soar up to heaven. The "poor failure" in the second line from the end suggests that some carps bump their foreheads against the rock and get carried away by the water.

### **CASE 97: Emperor Dôkô's Helmet Hood**

#### **Introduction:**

Bodhidharma met (Emperor) Bu of Ryô<sup>479</sup>, solely wishing to transmit the heart-mind.  
Enkan<sup>480</sup> saw through (Emperor) Daichû<sup>481</sup> that the latter would certainly attain an eye.  
“Peace prevails under heaven, the king enjoys long life”<sup>482</sup> –

Heavenly majesty were not violated through these words;

“The sun and the moon rest the landscape in peace, the four seasons are all in harmony”<sup>483</sup> –

The virtuous activities are manifested through these words.

When the king of people and the king of the Dharma meet,  
What should they talk about?

#### **Case:**

Emperor Dôkô<sup>484</sup> spoke to Kôke<sup>485</sup> saying, “I have attained the treasure of the Central Land<sup>486</sup>. However, no one can set a price on it.” Kôke said, “Your Majesty, please lend it to me so that I may see.” The emperor pulled the ends of his helmet hood with both hands. Kôke said, “Who can dare to set a price on the emperor’s treasure.”

#### **Verse:**

The king’s true intention is communicated to the best friend;  
All people under heaven show sincere affection with the heart of the sunflowers<sup>487</sup>.  
He took out the priceless treasure of the Central Land,  
incomparable with the jewel of Chô<sup>488</sup> or the gold of En<sup>489</sup>.  
He presented the gem of the Central Plain to Master Kôke;  
Its excellent radiance is truly priceless.  
The works of the emperor can well be the guidelines for ten thousand generations;  
The beams of the golden wheels<sup>490</sup> illuminate the four directions under heaven.

### **CASE 98: Tôzan’s “Keenly with It”**

#### **Introduction:**

Kyûhô, by cutting off his tongue, followed Sekisô faithfully;<sup>491</sup>

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479 Cf. Case 2 (=Case 1 of the *Hekiganroku*).

480 National Teacher Enkan Saian ( - 842). Cf. Case 25.

481 “Daichû” is originally the name of the era of Emperor Sensô of the T’ang Dynasty; here it means Sensô himself, who, before becoming the emperor, was a disciple of Enkan. Enkan knew that Sensô was a man of great caliber and told him to foster the Buddha-Way when the latter was to take over the throne. In fact, the Buddha-Way came to flourish during Sensô’s reign.

482 Words of Reverend Kyô, the 10th Patriarch, when he had a Dharma combat with Memyô in front of the king.

483 Words which are supposed to be spoken by Fudaishi, praising the virtues of the then emperor.

484 Emperor Sôsô (period of reign: 923-926) of the Late Tang Dynasty. The name of his era was “Dôkô.”

485 Kôke Sonshô Zenji (830-888), a Dharma successor of Rinzai.

486 The entire land of China.

487 The sunflowers naturally incline toward the sun: a metaphor for a virtuous ruler who attracts all people.

488 Cf. the Verse (with Risôjo) of Case 18 and its footnote.

489 King Shô of En is said to have put a massive sum of gold on the table and invited celebrities to his palace.

490 In the ancient Indian mythology there were four kings around the Mt. Sumeru: the king of iron wheels reigned over the southern part of the mountain, the king of bronze wheels the southern and eastern parts, the king of silver wheels the eastern, western and southern parts; only the king of golden wheels ruled over the northern, southern, eastern and western parts of the mountain.

Sôzan, by cutting off his head, did not go against Tôrei<sup>492</sup>.  
The tongues of the ancients are so intimate as these.  
Where is the art of doing good to people?

Case:

A monk asked Tôzan, “Among the three bodies of the Buddha<sup>493</sup>, what body does not degenerate into numbers<sup>494</sup>?” Tôzan said, “I am always most keenly with it.”

Verse:

Not going into the world,  
Not following the worldly bonds.  
The family tradition lies in the dimension of the Kalpa of Emptiness<sup>495</sup>.  
The breeze travels through the white water flowers at the dusk of the autumn river,  
With the boat returning to the ancient bank enveloped in the mist.

CASE 99: Unmon’s “Bowl and Pail” <sup>496</sup>

Introduction:

There is a special wisdom for chess, a special stomach for alcohol.  
The sly rabbit makes three holes<sup>497</sup>, the clever monkey has luck a myriad times.  
There is (yet) an obstinate fellow – just tell me, who is this fellow?

Case:

A monk asked Unmon, “What is the dust-dust samadhi<sup>498</sup>?” Unmon said, “Rice in the bowl, water in the pail.”

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491 The first and the second line have the following stories as their background: A monk asked Sekisô, “What is the significance of the Patriarch’s coming from the west?” Sekisô bit his teeth (i.e., he did not speak). After Sekisô passed away, the monk asked Kyûhō, a disciple of Sekisô, “What is the significance of Master Sekisô’s biting his teeth?” Kyûhō said, “Even if my tongue were cut, I would not violate the real name of the emperor. (i.e., I would not open my mouth to say the real thing)”.

– As for the second line: (As in the main Case:) A monk asked Tôzan, “Among the three bodies of the Buddha, what body does not degenerate into numbers?” Tôzan said, “I am most keenly with it.” Later the monk asked Sôzan, “What is the significance of Master Tôzan’s saying, ‘I am most keenly with it?’” Sôzan said, “If you want my head, cut it and take it with you.”

492 Master Tôzan Gohon.

493 The three “bodies” of the Buddha are three aspects of our true Essence: (1) *Dharmakaya* [*hosshin*, Dharma-Body], the Truth of absolute Zero; (2) *Sambhogakaya* [*hōjin*, Retribution-Body / *jyūshin*, Bliss-Body], emanation or functioning of the Buddha nature; (3) *Nirmanakaya* [*ōjin*, Corresponding-Body / *keshin*, Appearance-Body], Incarnation in the visible (human) form (such as Shakyamuni Buddha).

494 I.e., “degenerate into numbers” means to get trapped in numbers (more concretely, the three sections of “six roots [=sense organs], six functions, six areas”, the seven elements of “earth, water, fire, wind, etc.” and so on).

495 “The Kalpa of Emptiness” is one of the four great kalpas characterizing the entire span of the universe: the Kalpa of Becoming, that of Abiding, that of Destruction, and that of Emptiness.

496 See *Hekiganroku* Case 50.

497 So that it can escape for sure.

498 *Jin-jin-zammai*: The word “dust” comes from the expression “Six Dust Particles” [*roku jin*], which means the same thing as the six objects of the “Six Roots” [*rokkon*] (=epistemological organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, consciousness), i.e., the phenomenal world per se. Moreover, the expression “dust-dust samadhi” has a distinctive background in the *Kegon* [Avatamsaka] *Sutra* (about 4<sup>th</sup> c. CE): in one of its chapters (Chap. “Kenshubon”) it reads: “In a tiny dust particle you go into samadhi and fulfill the samadhi of *all* tiny dust particles.” So, “dust-dust samadhi” is short for a “samadhi” in which one dust particle is simultaneously all the dust particles (=the whole universe).

Verse:

“Rice in the bowl, water in the pail” –  
He opens his mouth and shows his guts,  
Seeking for someone who can really understand him.  
If you try to think, you fall into the second or the third level of activities;  
If you face it, you are a thousand and ten thousand miles away.  
Master Shôyô<sup>499</sup> hits the spot a little bit:  
Who would be equal with him in the “metal-cutting”<sup>500</sup> sharpness?  
The heart-mind, more solid than a rock, stands alone without parallel.

***CASE 100: Rôya's “Mountains and Rivers”***

Introduction:

“One word can make a nation rise, one word can make a nation fall.”<sup>501</sup>  
“This medicine can kill people and can give people life.”<sup>502</sup>  
“The benevolent person sees it and names it benevolence,  
The wise person sees it and calls it wisdom.”<sup>503</sup>  
Tell me, where is the profit and where is the loss?

Case:

A monk asked Master Kaku<sup>504</sup> of Rôya, “The essential dimension is pure and clear; how are mountains, rivers and the great earth produced all of a sudden?”<sup>505</sup> Kaku said, “The essential dimension is pure and clear; how are mountains, rivers and the great earth produced all of a sudden?”

Verse:

One sees a being; it is *not* a being.  
One turns one's hand over; one turns it back.  
The man in Mt. Rôya:  
He does not yield to Gautama<sup>506</sup>.

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499 I.e., Master Unmon.

500 An old phrase goes: “When two people are of one heart, their sharpness cuts metal asunder.”

501 A saying by Confucius.

502 It is said to have been a remark by Bodhisattva Manjusri.

503 A quote from a Confucian book.

504 Master Ekaku (dates unknown), Dharma successor of Fun'yô Zenshō (947-1024) in the Rinzai Line.

505 The words derive from an utterance in the *Heroic Valor Sutra* (*Shuryōgon-kyō*): “Furuna asked (the Buddha), ‘When all roots, dusts, *yins*, realms and other things house the Tathagata and are pure and clear in its essential state, how are mountains, rivers, the great earth and other aspects of being produced at once and eventually flow away, only to be re-started once again?’”

506 D.h., Shakyamuni.