

## TRANSLATION

### No Eye: A Word to the Wise

#### Teshima Toan's Commentary on Ikkyū's *Mizu kagami*

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#### Shingaku and Popular Zen

Religious popularization is essentially a process of simplification. As recorded in canonical texts or specialized commentaries, the orthodox teaching may be inaccessible or unappealing to the average person. The popularizer's task is to free the central concepts of the tradition from their arduous terminological matrix and convey them to the uninitiated layperson. Ultimately, such popularizers define the "core" of the original tradition, often for large numbers of people. To facilitate this redefinition, they sometimes synthesize the home tradition with elements from other religious systems. The text translated below exemplifies both the simplifying and synthesizing aspects of the popularization process.

Efforts to simplify and spread ideas took place across the religious spectrum in Tokugawa Japan. Among Buddhists, the Pure Land sects stand out for their energetic preaching. Even the Zen community, not traditionally seen as a "preaching sect," produced a series of figures who brought their teachings directly to the people. Takuan Sōhō (1573–1645), Suzuki Shōsan (1579–1655), Shidō Munan (1603–1676) and Bankei Yōtaku (1622–1693) all contributed—whether through vernacular writings or public sermons—to the popularization of Zen.<sup>1</sup> In these cases, popularization did not necessarily involve the accretion of folk religion or other extraneous elements. Early Tokugawa Zen was

rather characterized by a trend toward simplification and purification, partly in reaction to the monastic corruption and formalized practices which had weakened the Zen establishment in late Muromachi times.<sup>2</sup>

In the world of Shintō as well, teachers emerged in the early eighteenth century who sought both to popularize Shinto and to purify it of Confucian and Buddhist influences. The quintessential example of this development is Masuho Zankō (1655–1742), whose sermons at intersections, temples and shrines attracted considerable crowds.<sup>3</sup> Popularizing tendencies were also evinced by certain Confucian teachers, although mostly later in the period. Even from early Tokugawa times, the increasing circulation (especially in urban areas) of vernacular didactic works, which sought to inculcate such values as filial piety and loyalty, began to expand Confucian morality among commoners. However, Neo-Confucian notions of self-cultivation, transmitted through Chinese texts, generally remained in the domain of the educated classes.<sup>4</sup> Oral presentations of Neo-Confucian ideas designed to appeal to the "person on the street" were rare in the first half of the Edo period. Most Confucian scholars were unskilled in the arts of popular speaking; normally they were employed as domain or private school teachers, or as advisors and tutors to high-level samurai. Some, particularly followers of Yamazaki Ansai (1618–1682), developed effective lecturing styles, but they invariably addressed educated audiences rather than semi-literate townspeople or peasants. In the eighteenth century, however, a few Confucian "preachers" began to have an impact. The Confucian scholar Hosoi Heishū (1728–1801), for example, was able to move the hearts of ordinary people with his entertaining ser-

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<sup>1</sup> This could be roughly characterized as Rinzai Zen, although sectarian differences tend to be blurred at the popular level. Shōsan also had connections with the Sōtō sect.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Haskel, "Bankei and His World," unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1988, pp. 101–03.

<sup>3</sup> See Peter Nosco, "Masuho Zankō (1655–1742): A Shinto Popularizer between Nativism and National Learning," in Peter Nosco, ed., *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 166–87.

<sup>4</sup> The Neo-Confucian scholar Kaibara Ekken stands out for his efforts to render ideas of self-cultivation into the vernacular. A translation of one of his popular treatises is contained in Mary Evelyn Tucker's *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism: The Life and Thought of Kaibara Ekken (1630–1714)* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989).

mons on moral cultivation.<sup>5</sup>

The most systematic and successful adaptation of Neo-Confucian teachings to popular needs was carried out by the followers of Ishida Baigan 石田梅岩 (1685–1744). Their teaching eventually came to be known as Sekimon Shingaku 石門心学 (“The Learning of the Mind According to the School of Ishida”).

The “discipline of the mind” (or “heart”) had been an important strand of thought in the Neo-Confucian revival of Sung China (960–1279). The Sung masters, inspired by the Mencian conception of the universal goodness of human nature, proposed that the cultivation of the mind be the basis for a broad program of learning leading to moral perfection. This discipline consisted in conscientious self-examination and reflection in the light of the values enunciated in the Confucian classics; the Sung masters considered it a preferable alternative to the current Ch’an teachings of the mind.<sup>6</sup>

Sekimon Shingaku owes much to this tradition of mind-cultivation.<sup>7</sup> Baigan’s teaching is often spoken of as a merchant ethic,<sup>8</sup> but the founder was primarily concerned with the internal, spiritual basis for what he and his followers believed to be a universal ethic. This introspective emphasis became more conspicuous in Shingaku under the leadership of Baigan’s successor, Teshima Toan 手島堵庵 (1718–1786).

Toan was very active in promoting popular teaching activities; he was largely responsible for the great expansion of the movement in the eighteenth century. Yet he never tired of repeating that the beginning of all learning was the knowledge of one’s own true nature or “original

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<sup>5</sup> A translation of one of Heishū’s talks by Michiko Y. Aoki and Margaret B. Dardess is contained in “The Popularization of Samurai Values: A Sermon by Hosoi Heishū,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 31.4 (Winter 1976): 393–413.

<sup>6</sup> For detailed analyses of the development of this trend from the Sung through later periods, see Wm. Theodore de Bary’s *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981) and *The Message of the Mind in Neo-Confucianism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989).

<sup>7</sup> There is no evidence of any direct connection with the “School of the Mind” (J. *Shingaku*) associated with Wang Yang-ming.

<sup>8</sup> This trend was initiated in the West by Robert Bellah, who cast Shingaku in a Weberian light, comparable in its economic function in Japan to the role of the Protestant ethic in the rise of Western capitalism. See his *Tokugawa Religion: The Cultural Roots of Modern Japan* (New York: Free Press, 1985 reprint).

mind" (*honshin* 本心).

This concept has its *locus classicus* in the *Mencius* (6A: 10): if one ignores the good impulses which arise naturally in one's own mind, and violates universal values such as humanity (*jin* 仁) and moral rectitude (*gi* 義), one "loses" the true mind. But in Toan's talks, "knowing the original mind" (*honshin o shiru* 本心を知る) also means finding a level of consciousness which is free of subjective conceptualizing tendencies and the "self" which they assume. The original mind is thus an awareness which is spontaneous and non-self-conscious.

The term which Toan used most often to characterize the true mind is *shian nashi* 思案なし, "no calculation" or "no premeditation." In general, the word *shian* has a range of connotations, from ordinary planning or pondering to a state of worry or preoccupation regarding one's actions. For Toan, *shian* encompassed any unnecessary mental activity centered on one's own needs. He sometimes depicts *shian* as a temptation or self-justification which leads to wrongdoing, as in the case of a thief who decides to loot at the scene of a fire, or of a person who devises excuses for not getting out of bed in the morning.<sup>9</sup> Sometimes he uses the term to mean self-centered anxiety, a Confucian theme which goes back to Mencius' story of the man who destroyed his rice plants by pulling at them to help them grow (2A:2). "Calculating" may also mean simply thinking too much. In one work, Toan cites a passage from the *Analects* (5:19), in which Confucius criticizes an overly cautious man for thinking too many times before deciding on a course of action. The extra thinking constitutes calculation; it is no longer the "natural thinking" of the original mind.<sup>10</sup>

In Toan's view, calculation is a self-conscious activity, whereas spontaneous thinking (*omou* 思ふ) is not. When one is aware of good as "good," or of joy as "joy," one is not aware of this through one's original mind, but through conscious intellectualizing. This is a state of mind which a child, for example, would be incapable of.<sup>11</sup> Since calculation is a distorted, stagnated form of thought, "one inevitably becomes aware of it in one's mind."<sup>12</sup> Such "self-conscious" thinking

<sup>9</sup> *Sekimon Shingaku*, Nihon shisō taikēi 42 (Iwanami shoten, 1971), p. 122.

<sup>10</sup> *Sekimon Shingaku*, pp. 122-23.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Mencius* 4B:12.

<sup>12</sup> *Teshima Toan zenshū*, p. 249.

appears to be directed by an inner subject or ego; it imposes an illusory subject-object framework upon one's experience. In order to know the original mind, one must transcend this dualistic perspective.

The notion of an original mind which is free of calculations resonates with some Confucian ideas, but Toan derived much inspiration for his teaching directly from Zen doctrines of the mind. The Zen to which Toan turned, however, had already been through its own process of "popularization." It had spread during the first half of the Tokugawa period through the efforts of Zen preachers, such as those mentioned earlier, as well as through the increased circulation of medieval Buddhist writings. Toan was thereby able to acquaint himself with popular Zen terminology, and he used it freely to clarify the meaning of no calculation. Zen-type expressions such as "no mind," "no self," "no thought," "no body," and "no eye" abound in his writings.

The Shingaku leader generally understood "no mind" (*mushin* 無心) as it was used in Neo-Confucian texts, to mean a moral self-transcendence whereby one identifies the entire creation as one's self, and acts accordingly with love for all. In his talks, he re-evokes the doctrine of "having no mind" or forming "one body with heaven and earth and all things," associated with Ch'eng Hao (1032-85).<sup>13</sup> The thrust of this sense of communion with the cosmos was the message of liberation from selfishness; "no mind" means "no selfish mind," or "no mind of one's own."

Toan may have had a simplified understanding of the Mahayana Buddhist doctrine according to which all beings have no abiding self-nature of their own, but when he uses the term "no self" (*muga, ware nashi* 無我), he is more interested in emphasizing the state of being centered on others, rather than on oneself. In his writings and sermons Toan consistently stresses the ethical dimension of his teaching: filial piety, loyalty, honesty, moderation. The implications of knowing the original mind were eminently practical and concrete. It was an internal religious experience which was to serve as the basis of moral living.

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<sup>13</sup> Wm. Theodore de Bary, "Neo-Confucian Cultivation and the Seventeenth-Century Enlightenment," in Wm. Theodore de Bary, et al., eds., *The Unfolding of Neo-Confucianism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 151, 165.

At the same time, Toan does not hesitate to use "no thought" (*munen* 無念), as a Buddhist would, to denote freedom from illusory thoughts or subjective conceptions of reality. He points out that "no thought" is the same as "correct thought" (*shōnen* 正念), which is one of the disciplines of the Eight-fold Path in Buddhism. "No thought," he reminds us, "does not mean having no thoughts."<sup>14</sup> The term "no body" (*mushin*, *mi nashi* 無身) also appealed to the Shingaku teacher. In his view, once one knew the nature of the original mind, the non-existence of the body would be a matter of course. By this he did not mean that the physical body would literally cease to be, but that one would transcend the egotistic self which is bound by physical desires. (The Japanese word *shin* or *mi* 身 may be translated "self" as well as "body.")

Toan used another Zen term, *me nashi* 目なし, literally "no eye," or "no self-centered viewpoint," in much the same way as "no mind," "no self," and "no body." The image of the eye represents the "I," the self-centered ego which sees itself as subject in a dualistic relationship. In the text translated below, Toan simply equates no eye with no calculation—the defining characteristic of the original mind.

*Me nashi yōjin shō* 目なし用心抄 is Toan's commentary on *Mizu kagami* 水鏡 ("Water Mirror"), a vernacular tract attributed to Ikkyū Sōjun (1394–1481).<sup>15</sup> Ikkyū, whose popular image was well-embedded in Japanese culture by the mid-Edo period, was an important source of inspiration for Toan and his followers. Ikkyū himself had been a complex, unconventional figure who criticized the corruption of the Rinzai establishment of his day. His Chinese poetry reveals a keen sensitivity to the paradoxes and conflicts of the religious life.<sup>16</sup> However, as James Sanford has pointed out, there are many "Ikkyū's" living in the Japanese public mind; some were fabricated from pseudo-hag-

<sup>14</sup> *Sekimon Shingaku*, p. 123.

<sup>15</sup> James Sanford gives a brief synopsis of *Mizu kagami* in his *Zen-man Ikkyū* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Scholars Press, 1981), p. 198, though he overlooks the distinction between the original work and *Mizu kagami [chū] me nashi gusa*, a later, anonymous commentary on *Mizu kagami*.

<sup>16</sup> For a translation and study of Ikkyū's Chinese poetry, see Sonja Arntzen's *Ikkyū and the Crazy Cloud Anthology: A Zen Poet of Medieval Japan* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1986).

iographic and folkloristic traditions which have little relation to the historical Ikkyū.<sup>17</sup>

The "Ikkyū" who is most relevant to the development of Shingaku under Toan, in any case, is the Zen master who tried to convey his teaching to the common people through vernacular prose and poetry. Several popular tracts as well as Japanese poems were attributed to Ikkyū. Whether or not these works are authentic, they implanted the image of a committed, creative Zen teacher in the minds of many readers in the Edo period. The role played by these writings in Shingaku three hundred years after Ikkyū's death testify to the power of that image. Toan very likely read several of the eight other Japanese prose works which are usually attributed to Ikkyū, such as *Amida hadaka monogatari* 阿彌陀裸物語 ("The Naked Truth about Amida"). He was also familiar with Ikkyū's Japanese poems.<sup>18</sup>

Toan's interpretation of Ikkyū's message in the following text was not based solely on the original *Mizu kagami*. He also drew on an anonymous Buddhist commentary, entitled *Mizu kagami chū me nashi gusa* 水鏡注目なし草 ("Reflections on No Eye: A Commentary on the 'Water Mirror'"). The date of *Me nashi gusa* is unknown, but the first block prints appear to have begun circulating in the early seventeenth century.<sup>19</sup> There are several variant versions of the *Mizu kagami* itself;

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<sup>17</sup> *Zen-man Ikkyū*, pp. ix-xi.

<sup>18</sup> Many of Ikkyū's Japanese poems are contained in popular anecdotes about the life of Ikkyū, e.g. *Ikkyū banashi*, which burgeoned in the Tokugawa period, so their attribution is suspect. Sanford seems to feel that the Japanese poems (*waka*) from the prose works are of higher quality than those in the anecdotes—perhaps they are more likely to have been written by Ikkyū himself; *Zen-man Ikkyū*, p. 120. *Me nashi yōjin shō* contains many of the Japanese poems attributed to Ikkyū. In any case, the often comical image of Ikkyū presented in the *Ikkyū* tales themselves is not prominent in Shingaku during the second half of the eighteenth century; cf. *Zen-man Ikkyū*, p. 247. The Ikkyū who surfaces most often in Teshima Toan's works is a poet, Zen master and writer of sermons.

<sup>19</sup> For comments and translations from this text in the notes below I have used the Bunka 2 (1805) reprint of the Enpō 3 (1675) edition, comparing it at some points with the Meiwa 7 (1770) edition (I did not find any major discrepancies). The latter is the last extant version to which Toan could have had access. I have also consulted the comments on *Me nashi gusa* contained in *Shakkyō kaei zenshū*, vol. 3, ed. Sasaki Nobutsuna et al. (Osaka: Tōhō shuppan, 1934), pp. 325-36.

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my translation is based on Toan's abridged, annotated text, printed in *Teshima Toan zenshū* 手島堵庵全集 ("The Complete Works of Teshima Toan").<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ed. Shibata Minoru (Osaka: Seibundō shuppan, 1931; repr. 1973), pp. 281–97. I have compared this text with the one printed in *Zenrin hōwa shū* (Tokyo: Yūhōdō shoten, 1914), pp. 39–54. Many thanks to Yanagida Seizan for providing me with a copy of the transcription of the original text of *Mizu kagami*, edited by Nakagawa Issei in *Bokuseki Ikkyū Sōjun* (Tokyo: Chūō kōron, 1986), n. 220; and to Yokoyama Toshio, Kinami Takuichi and Peter Haskel for their assistance in deciphering the text. Needless to say, I am responsible for any remaining errors in the translation. The above remarks draw on a larger body of research on Shingaku, to be published as a book by University of Hawaii Press.



## No Eye: A Word to the Wise

[*Me nashi yōjin shō*]

### Preface

What sort of thing does “No Eye” mean? “Eye” is self. “Self” is self-centered calculation. The expression “No Eye” means that one is free of calculations and forgets the body. The light of one’s innate nature alone is revealed: one has no self. If one has no self, what evil can one possibly do? Ishikawa Goemon, so they say, [having committed so many evil deeds that] there was no space to record them in Yama’s register, lost the Way to Enlightenment: he ruined the natural light of his own nature through human selfishness, and fell from this world into the cauldron of hell.<sup>1</sup>

Someone once said, “Look at this, listen to that, take care! This is the honorable Ikkyū’s vision.”

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### WHERE, WHERE IS NO EYE?

*Commentary:* “No Eye” is a term which indicates that there are no calculations by the human self; it means the original mind. “Where, where” is an expression of enquiry. The light of one’s innate nature is referred to by [the saying]: “The function of the mind is to think.”<sup>2</sup> This thinking seeks for no self.

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<sup>1</sup> Ishikawa Goemon (1558–1594), a famous thief, was put to death by being boiled in a cauldron in Kyoto. King Yama is the judge of sinners in the Buddhist hell.

<sup>2</sup> *Mencius* 6A: 15.

**FOLLOW THE SOUND!<sup>3</sup>**

*Commentary:* If one abandons calculation, one will be unaware of one's body, even though it is alive. At that moment, it is as if this very self is empty space. That empty space hears the myriad sounds. Thus, if one constantly seeks [to discover] what it is that hears (since one has no self), one day one will suddenly understand that one can hear precisely because there is no self. And as for that wisdom through which one understands—here, too, it is not that one possesses wisdom; yet it is not that one is completely ignorant, either. To give an analogy for this wisdom, people usually forget their faces, but it is not as though they have no faces.

**NOW, IN EVERY CASE, WHEN PEOPLE ARE TRAINING TO REALIZE WHAT IS CALLED ENLIGHTENMENT, FIRST I ASK THEM TO TELL ME: WHAT WAS YOUR SELF LONG BEFORE YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER EXISTED?<sup>4</sup>**

*Commentary:* "Father and mother" are heaven and earth. "Heaven" is mind. "Earth" is "body." "Long before" implies that people are constantly forgetting both mind and body. [Ikkyū] is saying, "Tell me what you have forgotten."

**HOW CAN ONE SPEAK ABOUT SOMETHING WHICH ONE DOES NOT KNOW? ONE SHOULD SIMPLY THINK OF IT AS SOMETHING ORDINARY.**

*Commentary:* "One does not know" means one has forgotten. When one has forgotten, the viewpoint of the self is non-existent. That realm cannot be expressed. Therefore [Ikkyū] asks, "How can one speak about [it]?" If one makes the error of thinking that it is either ordinary

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<sup>3</sup> *Koe ni tsuite mashimase.* *Koe* may also be translated "voice"—this is a play on the idea of blind people (people who "have no eyes") having to follow sounds in order to find their way.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hui-neng's question: "What was your original aspect before your mother and father existed?" Trans. Isshū Miura and Ruth F. Sasaki, *Zen Dust* (Kyoto: First Zen Institute of America in Japan, 1966), p. 44.

or not, that is because one has already taken the viewpoint of the self. Moreover, although it is something "one does not know," this does not mean it is not there at all. Even though one unknowingly forgets it, the body is not extinguished. The mind is like this, too.

An old saying goes, "Instead of the body of form, take empty stillness to be your own body. Instead of deluded thoughts, take wondrous wisdom to be your own mind." Although the wondrous light of one's innate nature and one's original insight may be shut off, they cannot be discarded. The disease of scholars is that they build up views with their knowledge and create ideas out of ideas; therefore [Ikkyū] says they worry themselves [about things] above their head, and disapproves. He considers "Eye" to be that which arouses self-centered views outside of the original, inborn [nature]: "No Eye" means there is no such self-centered viewpoint. "Self" is private disposition; it is calculation and deluded discrimination.

**IT IS LIKE THE FLOWERS AND MAPLE LEAVES  
OF YOSHINO AND HASE:<sup>5</sup>  
THEY BLOOM AND SCATTER IN VARIOUS WAYS,  
THEN RETURN TO THEIR ORIGIN.**

*Commentary:* This means that the arising and passing away of people's thoughts is the same as the flow of the four seasons between heaven and earth. [Ikkyū] seems to be saying that there is no master who causes this operation to take place. We should contemplate this very thoroughly. People's thinking, whereby ideas arise one after another, is operated by No Eye, so it is called both "correct thought" and "no thought." Calculation is thinking which has become perverted. It is called both "deluded thought" and "thought."

The reason why thinking is called "no thought" is because correct reflection does not contradict No Eye; therefore we seem not to be aware of it. To draw an analogy, unless one thinks about walking, one will not walk; but even though one thinks about it, one is not in the least aware of thinking. For this reason, it is called both "correct thought" and "no thought." Or again, if one's feet turn even a bit in a

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<sup>5</sup> Yoshino and Hase are both located in today's Nara prefecture.

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direction in which one should not go, one's thinking immediately becomes perverted and contradicts No Eye; thus, one becomes aware of it. This is termed both "deluded thought" and "thought." "No thought" does not mean that one has no thoughts.

MY ANCIENT SELF,  
WHO ORIGINALLY NEVER EXISTED,  
HAS NO PLACE TO GO AT DEATH,  
NONE AT ALL.

*Commentary:* "Originally never existed" means that the beginning is unknown. If the beginning is not known, neither is the end. "My ancient self" is heaven. As for having "no place to go at death," how can heaven possibly come and go? Heaven is another name for No Eye.

MORE EVANESCENT AND FUTILE  
THAN NUMBERS WRITTEN IN RUNNING WATER—  
THE AFTER-LIFE OF PEOPLE  
WHO DEPEND ON THE BUDDHA.<sup>6</sup>

*Commentary:* The point is that even though one may write numerous things over and over in running water, what good can it do? It is useless. In particular, to commit wrongdoing while appealing to the Buddha is utterly futile. Does not *Tsurezuregusa* say:

You cannot depend on the myriad things [. . . .] If you depend neither on your self nor on others, when things go right you will rejoice, and when things go wrong, you will not feel resentful.<sup>7</sup>

[Ikkyū] means that one should simply entrust oneself to No Eye and abandon all dependencies. This does not mean that one should not

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<sup>6</sup> This line mimics a verse in the Heian collection, *Ise monogatari* ("Tales of Ise"): *Yuku mizu ni kazu kaku o mo hakanaki wa omowanu hito o omou nari keri* ("More futile than numbers written in running water, is thinking about someone who does not think [about you].")

<sup>7</sup> Yoshida Kenkō, *Tsurezuregusa* ("Essays in Idleness") n. 211; ed. Kidō Saizō (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1977), p. 233.

believe in the gods and Buddhas. If one does not believe in the gods and Buddhas, one soon comes to depend on one's own power, and acquires that indulgent "eye" of self-pride.

**MASTER BODHIDHARMA—**

**IF YOU ASK HIM, HE WILL ANSWER;<sup>8</sup>  
IF YOU DO NOT, HE WILL NOT.**

**CAN ANYTHING BE IN HIS MIND?**

*Commentary:* "If you do not ask him, he will not answer" seems to indicate there is nothing [in his mind]. On the other hand, "if you ask him, he will answer" —so one cannot say there is absolutely nothing in his mind.

**AS SOON AS PEOPLE DIE, YOU CREMATE OR BURY THEM. YOU THINK THEY ARE GONE ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN REMOVED, BUT THEY ARE NOT. A THING CALLED THE SOUL GOES TO SOME SORT OF "NEXT WORLD." WHEN [THE SOULS] PASS INTO THE HANDS OF KING YAMA, HE RECORDS THE SINS WHICH THEY HAVE COMMITTED IN THIS WORLD IN HIS IRON BLACK-BOOK. WHEN HE SHOWS IT TO THE DEVILS AND SAYS: "THESE PERSONS HAVE SINNED TO THIS EXTENT: PUNISH THEM!"—AH, THAT MOMENT IS TERRIBLE INDEED!**

*Commentary:* "As soon as people die, you cremate or bury them. You think they are gone once they have been removed" refers to the perverted mentality according to which people think they can secretly commit evil deeds and submerge [the evidence]. "But they are not [gone]. A thing called the soul goes to some sort of 'next world'" means that, if one's second thought is good, Yama, known as Correct Thought, the First Retainer of No Eye, will allow one to pass through to paradise. If it is bad, he will not grant forgiveness.<sup>9</sup> "This world"

<sup>8</sup> Some texts have "If one asks, he will not answer." E.g., *Zenrin hōwa shū*, p. 40.

<sup>9</sup> Translation of this line is tentative. Toan is probably following *Mizu kagami chūme nashi gusa*, 5a, which states that "King Yama is the first retainer of Master No Eye." "Second thought," *dai ni nen*, may denote *shian* (calculation).

means the present time.

One causes one's master and parents to grieve by having one's way in various things: "That's all mine! I hate this! I love that!" Husband and wife are cruel and without sympathy for each other, elder and younger brothers fight with each other, and friends lose their trust in each other. Causing trouble and injustice in the world, one has no compassion or pity on anyone. One does out of stupidity things which human beings are not supposed to do, and instantly falls into the Way of animals. One is greedy for things which one should not crave, intensifies one's desires for everything, and becomes a hungry ghost. Out of selfishness, one becomes enraged, burns the flames of anger and falls into [the Way of] the Asuras.<sup>10</sup>

There are not enough words to express the ways in which one creates and suffers through all the hells in one's own mind: Kokujō, Shugō, Ennetsu, Guren, Kyōkan and Muken.<sup>11</sup> These places are not known by others, but by oneself. When one thinks even a tiny bit of evil, its reflection instantly appears in the clear mirror of pure crystal<sup>12</sup> called No Eye. How much more is this true if one carries out the evil! It is difficult to wear off that reflection. It is said to be recorded in an iron register.

The "devils" are the Five Skandhas—form, sensation, conception, volition and consciousness.<sup>13</sup> Whenever the body receives [sensations from] various things, one has all kinds of self-centered thoughts, commits evil acts, and completely indulges oneself in various ways; the attachment is deep in one's consciousness. Therefore, the delusion and confusion in one's mind is spoken of as the torture of devils. Thus, one is tortured exactly in accordance with the gravity of one's sins and not forgiven at all. It is a terrible thing.

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<sup>10</sup> The Six Ways or levels of existence in which beings remain until liberated from the illusory cycle of birth and death are those of hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts, animals, asuras (demons), human beings and gods.

<sup>11</sup> These are six of the Eight Great Hells (*Hachidai jigoku*). Possible translations are, respectively: Black Rope, Combination, Fire Heat, Red Lotus, Shrieking and Without Interruption.

<sup>12</sup> *Jōhari no kagami*, a mirror used by King Yama in hell to reflect people's good and bad deeds.

<sup>13</sup> The Five Skandhas are impermanent personality aggregates; they project a false sense of self and therefore generate the karmic attachments which result in rebirth.

IF POISON CAN TURN INTO MEDICINE,  
GRAVE SIN MAY WELL BECOME BUDDHAHOOD.

*Commentary:* All poisons can become medicine in accordance with how they are used. Therefore, medicine in turn becomes poison if used in the wrong way. It is the same with sin. When one's sin is extremely grave, one can instead become Buddha. There are no sins greater than the three poisons—greed, anger and delusion. Buddha is greedy in his desire to save all living beings. He becomes enraged to ensure that living beings refrain from evil; and his constant worry for living beings is deluded love. When the three poisons are extraordinarily severe, there is no self. That is why [Ikkyū] says that [grave sin] can become Buddhahood.

IF THE SINS ONE ACCUMULATES  
ARE AS GREAT AS MOUNT SUMERU,  
THERE WILL BE NO SPACE  
TO RECORD THEM IN YAMA'S REGISTER.

*Commentary:* As indicated above, the Buddha's three poisons are great compassion, so his compassion is compared to Mount Sumeru. Consequently, how can honest Yama record it in his register? There is a saying that, "If for one day one conquers one's self and returns to propriety, the world will be restored to humanity."<sup>14</sup> How much more is this true for the Buddha of great compassion and great mercy—who could he hate, to whom could he be prideful? When one conquers and removes all delusions, and there are no longer any delusions to be conquered, this is called both humanity and Buddhahood. For "Buddha" [*hotoke*] means the dissolution [*hodokeshi*] of delusion. "Delusion" means the selfishness of the human self.

WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THINGS CAREFULLY, EVEN HELL IS  
NOT FAR.<sup>15</sup> WHAT WE CALL "DEVIL" IS GAUTAMA. ALL

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<sup>14</sup> *Analects* 12:1.

<sup>15</sup> Reading *Yoku mono o anzuru ni jigoku mo tōkarazu*. The extra *to* after *jigoku mo* may be a misprint; it does not appear in the Meiwa, Enpō-Bunka or *Zenrin* texts.

## TOAN'S "NO EYE"

THE BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES ARE MEANT TO HURT HUMAN BEINGS. AH, THAT HATEFUL MASTER ŚAKYA! HE TOLD ALL KINDS OF LIES. . . .

*Commentary:* To "consider carefully" is to illuminate and observe by the light of No Eye. "Even hell is not far" means that it is not external; it is in oneself. [The statement] "what we call 'devil' is Gautama" means that everything is temporary. One can be either a devil, a human being, a Buddha or a hungry ghost. "All the Buddhist scriptures are meant to hurt human beings" means the same as "poisons turn into medicine." If it doesn't hurt, how can it bring one back to one's original well-being? For example, when one treats a person who, through some injury, has broken an arm or wrenched a leg, one must stretch or strike [the injured limb]. As a result, the pain is difficult to bear, but because of this, [the person] will become better later. The sutras restore people who have deviated from their original [condition], so they "hurt." "Ah, that hateful Master Śakya" indicates admiration; it is an expression which extols [the Buddha's] virtue highly. "All kinds of lies" means that [the Buddhist teachings] are all emptiness.<sup>16</sup>

WHO CAN POSSIBLY ASK ABOUT SUCH AN UNASKED-FOR STORY?<sup>17</sup>

*Commentary:* "Who could ask" indicates that there is no one who asks. This is emptiness. "Unasked-for story" means the temporary [realm]. Should we regard this to be "empty" or "temporary?" Neither "empty" nor "temporary" hits the mark. Where is the True Attribute of the Middle Way?<sup>18</sup> The True Attribute of the Middle Way is another name for No Eye.

IF EVEN THE GRASSES AND TREES BECOME BUDDHA, IT

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<sup>16</sup> In other words, they are expedient means, *upāya*—they may point to the unconditional realm of Emptiness, but are themselves only provisionally true.

<sup>17</sup> *Sore o ta ga toeba yoshinano towazugatari ya*. This might also be rendered: "Who could ask about that? (Nobody. . .) —it's such a no-good, unasked-for story." *Towazugatari* is an account which the speaker volunteers without having been asked.

<sup>18</sup> *Chadō jissō*: true reality according to which all attributes neither exist nor do not exist—are neither temporary nor empty, i.e. the Middle Way.



**GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT HUMAN BEINGS BECOME BUDDHA, TOO. LONG, LONG AGO, BOTH ŚAKYA AND AMIDA SAID THEY WERE BUDDHAS. BUT THEY TOLD LIES, DIDN'T THEY?**

*Commentary:* “Grasses,” “trees,” “human beings,” “long ago,” “Śakya” and “Amida”—all are temporary. But “lies” indicates emptiness. “They told [lies]” because even the name “Buddha” is temporary.

**BOTH SINGING AND DANCING ARE THE VOICE OF THE DHARMA.**

*Commentary:* This is the True Attribute of the Middle Way. However, one should realize that when one makes the mistake of thinking, “This is No Eye,” one’s [self-centered] eye has already come into being.

**IF SOMEHOW, THE CHAOS SHOULD EMERGE SOMEWHERE.**

*Commentary:* “Chaos” is No Eye. “Emerge” signifies becoming enlightened. This means that if one is deeply committed, one will find No Eye. To find it is to forget the self.

**BEFORE YOUR PARENTS ARE BORN, BEFORE THE BEGINNING, YOU KNOW NOTHING AT ALL ABOUT THE SO-CALLED “BUDDHIST DHARMA.” YOU SHOULD NOT PONDER OVER WHAT YOU MAY BECOME. BUDDHA IS SIMPLY THE MIND WHICH KNOWS NOTHING AT ALL. WHAT IS CALLED “BUDDHA” NEITHER EXISTS NOR DOES NOT EXIST; WHEN YOU ARE ENLIGHTENED, YOU ARE NOT AWARE WHETHER IT EXISTS OR NOT. AS FOR THE MORE THAN EIGHTY THOUSAND SUTRAS,<sup>19</sup> THE MIND WHICH BECOMES BUDDHA IS NOT CONTAINED [IN THEM] AT ALL. THEY ARE THE SAME AS OLD CALENDARS.**

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<sup>19</sup> That is, the 84,000 or numberless Buddhist scriptures.

## TOAN'S "NO EYE"

*Commentary:* "As for the more than eighty thousand sutras, the mind which becomes Buddha is not contained in them at all" indicates that [the Buddha mind] transcends verbal expression. [Ikkyū] says that because it is "transmitted separately outside the teachings and not dependent on words,"<sup>20</sup> even Buddha, so it is said, "did not explain one word in forty-nine years."<sup>21</sup> However, one should realize that these remarks of Reverend Ikkyū are, in turn, indebted to the "old calendars." In any case, one should neither adopt nor reject [this statement], but comprehend it silently, letting it penetrate one's mind.

CLOUDS ASCEND THE SKY  
WITHOUT USING STAIRS,  
BUT THEY DO NOT DEPEND  
ON GAUTAMA'S SUTRAS.<sup>22</sup>

*Commentary:* I have commented on the idea that one should not depend [on anything] above, in regard to the verse about running water. This [verse] means the same.

THAT ROGUE NAMED ŚAKYA  
APPEARED IN THE WORLD,  
AND HE LED SO MANY  
PEOPLE ASTRAY!<sup>23</sup>

*Commentary:* Thanks to Ikkyū's disparagement of Śakya, so many people are thrown into confusion!

LET RIGHT BE RIGHT AND WRONG BE WRONG — LIFE BE  
LIFE, DEATH BE DEATH, FLOWERS BE FLOWERS, WATER

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<sup>20</sup> *Kyōge betsuden furyū monji* is a famous early Zen saying which is traditionally attributed to Bodhidharma.

<sup>21</sup> *Shijū kunen ichiji fusetsu*: in forty-nine years of teaching, the Buddha spoke not one word of ultimate truth (because it cannot be expressed in words).

<sup>22</sup> In other words, one should not rely on or become attached to the literary expression of Buddhist teaching.

<sup>23</sup> Here Toan is mimicking and rebutting Ikkyū's own paradoxical statement about Buddha.

**BE WATER, GRASSES BE GRASSES, EARTH BE EARTH.**

*Commentary:* If people mistakenly think of right as “right,” already it is not right. When it is truly right, one forgets and does not know what is “right”—that is why it is right. Since olden times, it has never been heard that the sages believed themselves to be sages. Filial children, too, are filial children because they are unaware that they are doing deeds of filial piety. Flowers do not know [that they are] flowers, water does not know [that it is] water. Life, death, grasses—it is the same in every case.

**WHAT AM I? WHAT AM I? YOU SHOULD SEARCH YOURSELF  
FROM THE CROWN OF YOUR HEAD TO YOUR BUTTOCKS.  
THE SELF IS THE PLACE YOU CANNOT FIND, SEARCH  
THOUGH YOU MAY.**

*Commentary:* “From the crown of your head to your buttocks” means the whole body. Even though this body appears to exist, once one enquires deeply and investigates thoroughly, it seems not to exist. The reason is that ordinarily, most people forget their bodies. When [the body] is forgotten, it is like empty space. This empty space is very aware of heat, cold, pain and itchiness. The thing which is aware is called No Eye. That is the true self; it is also known as the selfless Great Self. Because there is nothing by which to catch hold of this Great Self, [Ikkyū] calls it “the place one cannot find.”

**“MIND” — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?  
IT IS THE SOUND  
OF THE WIND THROUGH THE PINES  
IN THE INDIA-INK PAINTING.**

*Commentary:* One should know that whenever one has even the least sense that this place exists or does not exist, the self-centered viewpoint is present, and this is calculation. In another poem, Ikkyū sings:

*The mind—*

*It is the shaved forehead of a pot,*

*The beard of a stone;*

*It is the song of a warbler inside a flint-sack.<sup>24</sup>*

THAT RASCAL FUDŌ, WHO CANNOT EVEN DRIVE AWAY THE HEAT AROUND HIMSELF, IS USELESS FOR DEFEATING EVIL SPIRITS.<sup>25</sup>

*Commentary:* "That rascal Fudō, who cannot even drive away the heat around himself" indicates that calculation is nothing other than a Fudō who cannot drive away heat. The real Fudō is a great, free Buddha who does not burn even when placed in fire, nor drown in water, and who cannot be budged even when one tries to move him. Therefore he is quite capable of overcoming evil spirits. A Fudō who cannot drive off heat is a Fudō who, stuck in [realm of discrimination between] being and non-being, cannot move. He is the worst evil spirit of all. "Cannot even drive away [the heat] around himself" refers to the form of one who, in the midst of flames of anger, holds a rope for binding himself, carries the sword of wrong views in his hand and whose eyes spark with fury. Although his appearance resembles that of the real Fudō, he is a great phony. One should distinguish very clearly. The point is that a phony is useless.

WATER WHICH DOES NOT COLLECT  
 RIPPLES IN A WELL WHICH HAS NOT BEEN DUG.  
 WITHOUT SHADOW OR SHAPE  
 A PERSON SCOOPS IT UP.

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<sup>24</sup> "The shaved forehead of a pot," *nabe no sakayaki*: samurai used to shave the front of their heads in the shape of a half-moon, which was referred to as *sakayaki*. A similar verse alleged to Ikkyū is translated by R. H. Blyth, *Zen and Zen Classics* (Hokuseidō, 1962) vol. 5, p. 169.

Buddhism  
 Is the shaved part of the saucepan,  
 The whiskers of the pebble,  
 The sound that accompanies  
 The bamboos in the picture.

"Flint-sack," *hiuchi-bukuro*, is a small bag carried by travellers which contained materials to make fire, i.e. flint-stones.

<sup>25</sup> Fudō, literally "unmoving," is Acalanātha, a Buddhist guardian deity revered in Japan from the early Heian period. He is often depicted artistically as a fierce figure surrounded by flames, which represent the flames of human passion, especially anger.

## SAWADA

*Commentary:* Water which collects does not ripple  
In a well which has been dug;  
With both shadow and shape  
A person scoops it up.

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT ONE CAN BECOME A BUD-  
DHA BY SUBMITTING ONESELF TO ŚAKYA'S PRECEPTS; IN  
ANY CASE, IT IS NOT CLEAR. WHEN ONE DIES, THERE IS  
NEITHER SELF NOR OTHERS. IF ONE CONSIDERS ŚAKYA  
AND AMIDA, TOO, ORIGINALLY THEY TOOK ON HUMAN  
NATURE AND EVEN ENTERED HELL.

*Commentary:* As for "submitting oneself to Śakya's precepts," the disposition to submit oneself becomes the self-centered "eye," and it engages in all kinds of selfish calculations and deluded discriminations: That is why "there is no evidence that one can become a Buddha." "In any case," it is the same as darkness. "When one dies" means when one forgets the deluded thoughts of calculation. Once one has forgotten everything, there is no [distinction between] others and self. It resembles the mind of an infant. That realm is called "neither self nor others." When one becomes the infant which one once was, this is the same nature—originally equal to that of Śakya and Amida. "Entered hell" implies that as the Ten Realms are contained inside one's nature, they entered not only hell, but also [the Realms of] hungry ghosts, animals, aśuras, human beings, gods, śravakas, pratyeka buddhas and bodhisattvas.<sup>26</sup> In this case they are said to have entered hell in order to save sinners.

YOU CALL IT MIND—  
BUT IN REALITY IT IS NO MIND  
WHICH YOU BRING TO LIGHT.  
WHAT SORT OF ENLIGHTENMENT IS THIS?

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<sup>26</sup> See above, n. 10. The next three "enlightened" levels of existence are enumerated here: śravakas are those who heard the Buddha's teaching directly, and pratyeka buddhas are those who find their way to Enlightenment without the help of a teacher. Buddhahood is the tenth realm.

## TOAN'S "NO EYE"

*Commentary:* "In reality it is no mind" does not mean that there is no such thing as the mind. It means that selfish calculation and deluded discrimination between being and non-being are unnecessary. Therefore, [Ikkyū] warns [us by asking], "What kind of Enlightenment is this?" If one thinks one is enlightened, that is delusion. On the other hand, this does not mean that there is no such thing as Enlightenment. To be enlightened means to have forgotten both mind and body. Originally, heaven is [in] people's minds; when they intentionally calculate, "Do I have a mind, or do I have a body?," [these thoughts] become a curtain and heaven is concealed. We cannot say that heaven is not there. On the other hand, we cannot say it is there, either.

From the side, some one said, "That seems impossible."<sup>27</sup> I said, "What is it that made you to say 'Impossible'?"

EVEN THE SPRING FLOWERS,  
NOT NEEDING  
TO EXPLAIN THEIR OWN DHARMA,  
BLOSSOM, SCATTER AND TURN TO EARTH.<sup>28</sup>

*Commentary:* "The four seasons proceed, the hundred creatures come into being. What does heaven say?"<sup>29</sup> The plum begins to blossom from under the snow, and continues to bloom in the last part of the mist. Before one knows it, the flowers are a cluster of summer trees; [next, they are] faint red leaves stained by the autumn drizzle. It is not when [the old leaves] scatter, but when the buds come up from below, that the young leaves sprout. There is no one who believes a high place is low, nor is there anyone who mistakenly perceives the bottom of a valley to be high up. Good is naturally good; it goes without saying that bad is bad. Suffering is painful, pleasure is easy. Fire is hot without practicing how, and water flows downward without learning how. People are born with an innate dislike of evil.

Who asked about this? Well, well—you need not have bothered.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The translation of this exchange is tentative. Literally, the questioner remarks: "It doesn't seem possible that we cannot [say that heaven is in such people's minds]." Toan then asks his critic to identify the agent (the self? heaven?) which caused him to speak up. The point is that such questions themselves obscure the spontaneous truth of the mind.

## Postface

“Water Mirror” is truly a sermon of Great Compassion by the Buddha Ikkyū. And as for the commentator, he in turn must be a Bodhisattva of Great Compassion.<sup>31</sup> This work is written in mere *kana*, but it is extremely difficult to understand from a simple, narrow perspective. Therefore, even in his preface, [the commentator] says that it was written in Japanese for the sake of the people. However, since this is like drying up a great ocean to give rise to clouds in the blue sky, he worries about wrong views. He grieves over the possibility that he may in fact increase people’s wrong views. In his postface, he further laments that he may add to people’s deluded conditions more and

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Blyth’s translation, *Zen and Zen Classics*, vol. 5, p. 175:

Though we do not preach the doctrine,  
Unmasked the flowers bloom in spring;  
They fall and scatter,  
They turn to dust.

Note, however, the following verse (also attributed to Ikkyū):

One does not hear the Dharma  
Explained by the flowers  
Which bloom and scatter in spring—  
For people are present.

This verse is recited by Teshima Toan in *Toan sensei goroku*, *Teshima Toan zenshū*, p. 654; it also appears in *Mizu kagami chū me nashi gusa*, 35b, as a comment on the former verse, along with the following remarks:

This original verse is the last passage of this text. It speaks of the Buddha’s constant joy and innate purity. This is a summary of the book. “Own” means innate purity. “Dharma” means constant joy. The meaning of the poem is that here, there or anywhere, since it is one’s own Dharma, one need not utter it. The spring flowers opening up and becoming earth—all this refers to the realm of constant joy before one’s eyes.

<sup>29</sup> *Analects* 17:19.

<sup>30</sup> *Yare iranu osewa ya*. Perhaps this is a play on the last line quoted from Ikkyū, i.e., flowers do not need to speak about their own Dharma (*waga nori o iwade mo iranu haru no hana*)—therefore, neither do we. It also resonates with the earlier idea of an “unmasked-for story” (*towazugatari*).

<sup>31</sup> *Daiji*, a term usually used to refer to the Buddha. The identity of the “commentator” (the author of *Mizu kagami me nashi gusa*) is unknown.

more, like attaching legs to a snake.<sup>32</sup>

There is no doubt that it is utterly despicable to circulate warnings [written] from the biased perspective of a country boor in a book which fully expresses the minds of such incarnations [of the Buddha]. However, I am not trying to ward off [danger] in the world on a wide scale. Thinking that it might be something upon which unskilled persons like myself could rely, I rearranged and broke up [the text] according to my own preference; thus, I have not followed the original intention. I only hope to prevent the danger of impertinent know-nothings and hot-blooded warriors proceeding without regard for the horrors ahead, imitating No Eye while looking [carelessly] off to the side.<sup>33</sup>

For example, people who become attached to this body and adopt the view of "being" are like those who regard fire as a precious gem and scatter it about. One can never know when they might set off a fire by mistake. Again, people who forcibly crush their minds and attach themselves to the view of "non-being" are like those who utterly detest the "fires" of various views; they collect all these fires in the fireplace of a secret room, put a cover on top and pretend there is no fire. Although the wondrous light of one's innate nature and one's original insight may be cut off, they cannot be eradicated. Fire is something prevalent all over the world; we cannot live without it. This [approach] in turn, then, is very bad for fire prevention. At any moment, [the suppressed fire] is bound to burst into flames.

There is a master outside of this fire. It is precisely this master who is the true No Eye. This No Eye is beyond the discrimination of being and non-being; he is a peculiar fellow who sees throughout the whole world in the ten directions and illuminates the darkness, not to mention his own foothold. In the world, a nightwatch is a lowly person, but the one who responds to his voice calling "Beware of fire!" is the master. If the master appears, although there may have been a fire, [in the end] it will seem as though there has not been a fire.<sup>34</sup> This is because [the night watchman] has taken good precautions. If he takes good precautions,

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<sup>32</sup> That is, he may be making a bad situation worse by elaborating unnecessarily.

<sup>33</sup> My translation of the last sentence is tentative; the general point seems to be Toan's desire to caution people against adopting extremes in their quest for the truth.

<sup>34</sup> In other words, the fire will not have caused any serious damage.



SAWADA

no harm will be done. If he saves one from harm, even the watchman is of value, is he not?

Beware of fire! Beware of fire!

*Even though you are besieged  
By the fire of the Six Roots,<sup>35</sup>  
As long as you do not cover up Master No Eye,  
You will be well-prepared.  
To be faithful to one's master and filial to one's parents,  
To be compassionate to others,  
To get along well between husband and wife, elder and  
younger—  
This is goodness!  
Freedom from dualistic discrimination and the self  
Is itself compassion!  
Parents who think of their own true child  
Have no self-centered viewpoint.*

Spring of the year Tenmei 6, hinoe uma [1786].

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<sup>35</sup> "The fire of the Six Roots" refers to the temptations of the sensory and intellectual realms (the five senses and the mind).