Wú Mén Guān

The Barrier That Has No Gate

Original Collection in Chinese by

Chán Master Wûmén Huìkâi
無門慧開 (1183-1260)

Questions and Additional Comments by

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Frontspiece

“Wú Mén Guān”
Facsimile of the Original Cover
Dedication

What are we in this cosmos? This ineffable question has haunted us since Buddha sat under the Bodhi Tree. I would like to gracefully thank the author, Chán Master Wúmén, for his grace and kindness by leaving us these wonderful teachings. I would also like to thank Chán Master Dàhuì for his ineptness in destroying all copies of this book; thankfully, Master Dàhuì missed a few so that now we can explore the teachings of his teacher.
Foreword

There is considerable underlying confusion for Western Zen students who begin to study the tremendous wealth of Asian knowledge that has been translated into English from China, Korea, Vietnam and Japan over the last seventy years. In most large bookstores, there is a section reserved for books on Buddhism, or if the store is smaller it might be Eastern Philosophy, and on those shelves, there will be found literally hundreds of titles from various sources and authors. A Zen aspirant browsing through the brightly bound covers may find an interesting book such as The Recorded Sayings of Zen Master Jôshû\(^1\) on the shelf; however, if that Zen aspirant starts to leaf through the contents, he or she will discover that the author actually refers to the book’s subject, Zen Master Jôshû, as Zen Master Chao-chou within the contents of his book. The aspirant may then start leafing through another book, say The Compass of Zen\(^{ii}\), only to discover that Zen Master Jôshû in the last book is referred to as Zen Master Joju in this book. The next text might be the Book of Serenity—One Hundred Zen Dialogues\(^{iii}\) in which the aspirant will find more stories about the same teacher, only this time his name is Romanized as Zhàozhōu.

We now have only leafed through the contents of three books and are left with four Romanization’s for one single Zen Master’s name, which are Jôshû, Chao–chou, Joju and Zhàozhōu. If the aspirant then begins to read more books that refer to the hundreds of other Asian teachers the complexity of keeping all of this straight going from book to book can be at times overwhelming. The Japanese Teachers who came to the west were literally using the Japanese way of pronouncing Chinese logographs for a particular person, place or thing. Furthermore, the Korean Teachers who came to the West were using their Korean way of pronunciation. Although originally not a problem because there were so few books on the subject when they arrived, the cultures that were created
by the founding Asian teachers have yet to find a common English voice.

Jôshû is the Japanese Romanization of the characters 趙州從諤. Joju is the Korean Romanization invented within the Kwan Um School of Zen\textsuperscript{iv} and indirectly from Zen Master Sûnsan\textsuperscript{v} (Seung Sahn); however, the student may also encounter different Romanizations from other Korean sources. Chao–chou is the older Wade–Giles\textsuperscript{vi} method for Romanization of the Chinese logographs, while Zhàozhōu is the newer Pinyin method of Romanization for the same logographs.

Prior to China opening its borders to the west in 1979 the principal form of Chinese Romanization was the Wade–Giles method, although the curious Zen aspirant will eventually come across even older works that might employ the Yale system in lieu of the other two aforementioned methods. The Pinyin\textsuperscript{vii} Romanization method appeared when the People’s Republic of China adopted its own system in 1979 and all official Chinese uses of Romanization now employ the Pinyin method; furthermore, this standard is becoming more popular as China’s influence in the world increases.

Prior to 1979, the capital of China was popularly known as Peking; today the entire world refers to the capital of China as Beijing. Another problem with the Wade–Giles versus Pinyin debate shows up when one visits a Chinese Restaurant. I have yet to find a Restaurant in the West that serves Beijing duck; this unique dish is still referred to as Peking duck at most Chinese restaurants. On the many trips, that I have made to China each place that I visited utilized the Pinyin method for maps, signs, menus, newspapers, etc.

Yet, another determining factor for choosing a methodology of Romanization is the advent of new computer software programs. Microsoft Word 2003/2007 now has numerous language functions that will transliterate Romanized Pinyin into Unicode Chinese logographs as well
as almost every other language/alphabet in the world. Google and Google Translate have internet sites that will also make rough attempts at translating other web sites, paragraphs and words from one language to another. Following the advent of uni-code, along with its two-byte segments, and the sub sequential upgrade of the world’s databases, the rendering of Chinese, Korean and Japanese logographs has become easier than ever.

The Korean government has tried to take the cue put forth by the Chinese by adopting an official Romanization methodology for Korean; however, major changes, additions and deletions have taken place over the last twenty-five years. Furthermore, each of the officially sanctioned systems themselves have been totally replaced several times in that same existing time frame. There is conscientious debate about the proper use of western characters in the pronunciation of Hangul and many scholars still disagree with all of the methods put forth to date. I consulted several of the most renowned Western Scholars of Korean Buddhism and have chosen, as they have, to employ the McCune-Reishauer system to Romanize Korean names. This does not follow the methods used by the Kwan Um School of Zen, of which we share the same root teacher; but their methodology does not conform to any system used by any other group in the world. Their Romanization system appears to have been invented and has evolved over time internally by members with no formal language training within the organization. It might also be noted that that the Jögye Order of Buddhism, which is the largest single Buddhist Order in Korea has recently adopted the current Korean Government’s method of transliteration. The problem is that the method utilizes stringing multiple vowels together in an effort to emulate certain sounds that totally do not exist in the Western Latin languages.

Based upon all of this information, where does this leave us in this discussion? I have decided to utilize the
Romanization of a person or place based upon the country of origin. Additionally, as Pinyin has begun to circumvent the use of the Wade–Giles and Yale methods we have decided to use Pinyin for Chinese Romanization. I hope that other authors and information databases will eventually follow this method making it easier on the beginning Students of Zen. A final note of the Romanizations utilized within this book. Because of the ease of use of our new uni-code databases and fonts, I have chosen to employ the use of diacritical marks, and I have chosen to render common Sanskrit names, terms and places utilizing their technical forms. The reason is that the proper pronunciation of these words is not intuitively obvious to the unseasoned reader, so additionally I have included a pronunciation chart in the index section of this book. Lastly, I want to state that any mistakes or omissions made within this text are purely my own.

Paul Lynch, JDPSN
Five Mountain Order
Huntington Beach, CA 2008
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About Chán Master Wúmén Huìkāi

Wúmén Huìkāi (無門慧開) was a thirteenth century Chan Master who was abbot at Lóngxiáng-sì in China, wrote the Zen classic Wú Mén Guān, which contains forty-eight now-famous Zen kōans and was first published in 1228. The Barrier That Has No Gate (無門關, Japanese: Mumonkan) is a collection of forty-eight Chán (Zen) kōans compiled in the early Thirteenth Century by Chinese monk Wúmén. Wúmén’s preface indicates that the volume was published in 1228 ACE. Each kōan has a commentary and a gatha by Wúmén.

Along with the Biyán Lu (碧巖録 Blue Cliff Record) and the oral tradition of Hakuin Ekaku⁹ (白隠 慧鶴, 1686 – 1769), The No Entry Point Gate is a central work much used in the Línjì School. Five of the kōans in the work concern the sayings and doings of Zhàozhōu; four concern Yúnmén.

Although the title The Gateless Gate has become common in English, some have criticized this translation as unfaithful to the original. A particular source of criticism is the fact that, in “Gateless Gate”, the word “gate”, occurs twice, implying an obviously paradoxical meaning: a gate without a gate. On the contrary, the two Chinese characters being translated here are 門 (mén) and 關 (guān), which are different words and usually have distinct meanings. In order to more accurately reflect this, the translations The Gateless Passage or The Gateless Barrier are sometimes used.

The character 無 (wú) has a straightforward meaning: no or nothing. 門 (mén) is a very common character meaning door or gate. In modern Chinese, 關 (guān) is most often a
verb meaning to close, but it also functions as a noun with the meaning of checkpoint, such as a customs house or a fortress guarding a mountain pass. This implies the literal translation checkpoint without a gate. As a checkpoint is something that can be either closed, functioning as a barrier, or open, functioning as an entry point, this title may be taken to have a double meaning: does “without a gate” mean that the barrier has no gateway through which to pass, or does it mean that the passage has no gate to block it?

One should also note that, as the author of the collection was named Wúmén (which literally means gateless), Wúménguān could also be read as simply, the Checkpoint of Wúmén.
Chán Master Wúmén’s Preface

佛話心為宗、無門為法門。
Buddhism points mind as its foundation and a barrier that has no–gate as its entry point;
既不無門、且作麼生透。
yet, how do you pass through this barrier that has no–gate?
豈不見道、從門入者不是家珍、
從緣得者終成壞。
An ancient once said that the things passing through this gate could never be your own treasures. Whatever you gain from external circumstances are extinguished in the end.
恁麼說話、大似無風起浪好肉抉瘡。
However, this is already raising waves where there is no wind. It is like cutting unblemished skin.
何况滞言句覓解會。掉棒打月、隔靴爬痒、有甚交涉。
As for those who try to understand this essence through other people’s words, they are striking at the moon with a stick; they are scratching the sole of their shoe, when it is their foot that itches. What do they understand of the truth?
慧開、紹定戊子夏、首衆于東嘉龍翔。因納子請益、遂將古人公案作敲門瓦子、隨機引導學者。
In the summer of the first year of Huìkāi, was in Lóngxiáng-sì and as the head monk there worked with the student monks, using the cases of the ancient Masters as clubs to batter at the gate and lead them on according to their respective capacities.
竟爾抄錄、不覺成集。初不以前後敘列、
共成四十八則。
The text was written down in no important order, but just assembled to make a collection of forty-eight cases.
通日無門關。
This collection is titled the Wú Mén Guān, “The Barrier That Has No Gate.”

若是箇漢、不顧危亡繡刀直入。
A noble man of determination will unhesitatingly push his way straight forward, regardless of what dangers are on the path.

八臂那吒、攔他不在。
Then even the eight-armed Nàzhà cannot hinder him.

縱使西天四七、東土二三、只得望風乞命。
Even the four sevens of the West and the two threes of the East would beg for their lives.

設或蹤蹤、也似隔窓看馬騎、貶得眼來、早已蹉過。
If one has no determination, then it will be like catching a glimpse of a horse galloping past the window: in the twinkling of an eye, it will be gone.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

大道無門
The Great Way is gateless,

千差有路
Approached in a thousand ways.

透得此關
Once through this checkpoint

乾坤獨步
You walk unhindered in this universe.

无门慧开
Case 1: Zhàozhōu’s “Wu”

A monk asked Chán Master Zhàozhōu, “Does even a dog have Buddha–Nature?” Master Zhàozhōu answered, “Wú.” (No!)

Master Wúmén’s Comment

To study Zen you must pass through the barrier of the ancient masters; to attain the subtle realization, you must completely cut off your mental constructs.

If you do not pass through the barrier of the ancient masters, and do not cut off your mental constructs, then objects will lead around your consciousness as they appear.

The single word no (wú) is the lock on the gate of the source; therefore it is called the “The barrier of Zen that has no gate.”
Those who can pass through this barrier will not only see Zhàozhōu face to face, but they will also enter into the realm of all the Zen Masters who ever were, entangling your eyebrows with theirs, seeing with the same eyes, and hearing with the same ears.

豈不慶快。
Isn’t that a delightful prospect?

莫有要透關底麼。
Wouldn’t you like to pass this barrier?

將三百六十骨節、八萬四千毫竅、通身起箇疑團參箇無字。
Arouse your entire body with its three hundred and sixty bones and joints and its eighty-four thousand pores of the skin; summon up a spirit of great doubt and concentrate on this word “wú.”

畫夜提撕、莫作虛無會、莫作有無會。
Carry it continuously day and night. Do not form a nihilistic conception of vacancy, or a relative conception of “has” or “has not.”

如吞了箇熱鐵丸相似、吐又吐不出。
It will be just as if you swallow a red-hot iron ball, which you cannot spit out even if you try.

蕩盡從前惡知惡覺、久久純熟自然内外打成—片、如啞子得夢、只許自知。
All the illusory ideas and delusive thoughts accumulated up to the present will be exterminated, and when the time comes, internal and external will be spontaneously united. You will know this, but for yourself only, like a dumb man who has had a dream.

驀然打發、驚天動地。
Then all of a sudden, an explosive conversion will occur, and you will astonish the heavens and shake the earth.

It will be as if you snatch away a great warrior’s sword and hold it in your hand. Meeting the Buddhas, you kill the Buddhas; meeting Chán Masters, you kill Chán Masters. On the brink of life and death, you command perfect freedom; among the six fold worlds and four modes of existence, you enjoy a merry and playful samadhi.

且作麼生提撕。

Now, I want to ask you again, “How will you carry it out?”

Employ every ounce of your energy to work on this “Wú.”

If you hold on without interruption, behold; a single spark and the holy candle is illuminated!

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

狗子佛性
a dog’s Buddha–Nature,
全提正令
only go straight ahead.
纔涉有無
if you touch “yes” or “no”,
喪身失命
you lose your life.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The first question is; Buddha said all things have Buddha nature. Nature means substance. All
things have this substance. However, Zhàozhōu said the dog had no Buddha nature. Which one is correct?

The second question is; Zhàozhōu said “Wu.” What does “Wu” mean? The third question is; does a dog have Buddha nature? What can you do?

Many students understand this kōan; however, understanding cannot help you. You must attain the correct function of freedom from life and death—only understanding freedom from life and death cannot help you.

1. **Buddha said all things have Buddha nature. Nature means substance. All things have this substance. However, Zhàozhōu said a dog had no Buddha nature. Which one of these statements is correct?**

2. **Zhàozhōu said, “Wu.” What does this mean?**

3. **I ask you, does a dog have Buddha-nature?**

4. **Zhàozhōu said the dog had no Buddha nature and this has caused suffering now since the ninth century and that is more than twelve hundred years of suffering because of Zhàozhōu’s answer. So, how do you fix Zhàozhōu’s mistake?**
百丈和尚、凡參次、有一老人常隨衆聽法。

While Chán Master Báizhàngi was giving a certain series of dharma talks, an old man always followed the monks to the main hall and listened to him.

衆人退、老人亦退。

When the monks left the hall, the old man would also leave.

One day, however, he stayed behind, and Master Báizhàng asked him, “Who are you, standing here before me?”

老人云、諾。

The old man replied.

某甲非人也。

“I am not a human being.

於過去迦葉佛時曾住此山。

In the distant past, in the time of Kāsyapa Buddhaii, I was the Master, living here on this mountain.

因學人問、大修行底人還落因果也無。

One day a student asked me, ‘does an enlightened person fall into samsara (the realm of cause and effect?)’

某甲對云、不落因果。

I answered, ‘No, they are not subject to cause and effect.’

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i Báizhàng Huáihái (720-814) 百丈懷海 [wg]: Pai-chang Huai-hai; [Jap]: Hyakujō Ekai was a Chinese Chán Master during the Tang Dynasty. He is a dharma heir of Māzū Dāoyī. Báizhàng’s students included Huángbò and Línjì.

ii In Buddhist tradition, Kāsyapa (迦葉) is the name of a Buddha, the third of the five Buddhas of the present kalpa (the Bhaddakappa or ‘Fortunate Kalpa’), and the sixth of the six Buddhas prior to the historical Buddha mentioned in the earlier parts of the Pali Canon (D.ii.7). In the Buddhist texts in Sanskrit, this Buddha is known as Kāśyapa.
Because of this answer, I have been reborn as a fox\(^1\) for five hundred generations.

I implore you now to give a turning word and release me from this foxes body."

Finally, the old monk asked Báizhàng “Does an enlightened man fall into the realm of cause and effect?"

Báizhàng answered, “Cause and effect are clear.”

No sooner had the old man heard these words than he was enlightened.

The old monk immediately attained enlightenment and while making his bows, said, “I am now free of this fox’s body which can be found in a cave on the other side of this mountain.”

“I have a favor to ask of you: would you please bury my body as that of a dead monk.”

Báizhàng had the temple director strike the gavel and announce to the assembly that after the midday meal there would be a funeral service for a dead monk.

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\(^1\) The story deals with cause and effect (karma in Buddhism), the power of language, reincarnation, and the folklore elements involved the role of the fox in Chinese mythology. The fox is representative of the Western image of a ‘black cat’ or perhaps a witch or sorcerer. They are considered sly and sneaky and also represent bad omens for the common population.
The monks wondered aloud, “Everyone is in good health; nobody is in the sick ward. What does this mean?”

After the meal Báizhàng led the monks to a cave on the far side of the mountain, with his staff poked out the dead body of a fox, and performed the ceremony of cremation.

That evening he ascended the rostrum and told the monks the whole story.

Huángbò Xīyùn thereupon asked him, “This old monk made one word mistake and was doomed to be a fox for five hundred generations. Suppose he had given the right answer, what would have happened then?”

Master Báizhàng said, “Come closer here to me, and I will tell you.”

Reverend Huángbò went up to Chán Master Báizhàng and slapped him across the face.

Venerable Báizhàng clapped his hands with a laugh and exclaimed, “I thought that the barbarian had a red beard but now I see that the barbarian’s beard is red.”

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1 Huángbò Xīyùn (died 850) 黃檗希運 [wg]: Huang-po Hsi-yün; [Jap]: Ōbaku Kiun was an influential Chinese master of Zen Buddhism. He was born in Fujian, China in the Tang Dynasty. Huángbò was a disciple of Báizhàng Huáihái (720-840) and the teacher of Línjì Yìxuán (died 866)

2 This statement is referring to Bodhidharma who is always pictured as having a beard.
Master Wúmén’s Comment
無門曰、不落因果、為甚墮野狐。
Not falling under causation: how could this make the monk a fox?
不昧因果、為甚脱野狐。
Not ignoring causation: how could this make the old man emancipated?
若向者裹著得一隻眼、便知得前百丈贏得風流五百生。
If you come to understand this, you will realize how old Báizhàng would have enjoyed five hundred rebirths as a fox.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
不落不昧
not falling, nor darkening:
兩采一賽
two faces of the same coin.
不昧不落
not darkening, nor falling:
千錯萬錯
ten thousand errors, a million mistakes.

Seung Sahn’s Commentary: This story is very interesting; however, Báizhàng’s speech is not correct. He said, “Cause and effect are clear,” but how could the fox lose his fox’s body and get Enlightenment upon hearing these words?

I have a big question: does it mean additionally that everyone will lose their human body when they get Enlightenment? If this is so, they will become what kind of being, a God, a Buddha, or what? Not darkening, not falling; a thousand mistakes, ten thousand mistakes.
1. The first question is, “Not falling, not darkening.” Are they the same or different?

2. Why did Huángbò hit his teacher (Báizhàng)?

3. Huángbò hit Báizhàng and then laughed and said, “I thought that the barbarian had a red beard but now I see that the barbarian’s beard is red.” What does this mean?

4. Báizhàng’s speech is not correct. He said, “Cause and effect are clear,” but how could the fox lose his fox’s body and get Enlightenment upon hearing these words?

三  倚指堅指
Case 3. Jùzhī Yīzhǐ Raises a Finger

俱胝和尚，凡有詰問，唯舉一指。 Whenever Chán Master Jùzhī\(^{1}\) was questioned about Chán, he would simply hold up one finger.

後有童子。因外人問，和尚說何法要。 Once a visitor to the temple could not find the master so he asked Jùzhī’s attendant, who was a young boy, “What dharma does your master teach?”

童子亦堅指頭。 The attendant, mimicking his master, mindlessly held up one finger.

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\(^{1}\) Jùzhī Yīzhǐ 倚指一指 [Kor]: Guji [Jap]: Gutei Isshi was a 9th-century Chinese Chán Master. After Bodhidharma, he was the eleventh successor in the line of Nányuè Huairâng (677–744) and Mâzû Dâoyì (709–788), as well as—according to some sources—Linji Yixuan (although according to others he was Linji’s contemporary). He was the student of Hángzhōu Tiānlóng
Upon seeing this, Jùzhī cut off the attendant’s finger with his precepts knife.

As the boy ran away screaming with pain.

Chán Master Jùzhī called to him, and when the boy turned his head, the Master held up his finger.

The attendant was suddenly enlightened.

When Jùzhī was about to die, he said to his assembled monks, “I obtained this one–finger Chán from Venerable Master Tiānlóng and have used it all my life but still I did not exhaust it.”

When he had finished saying this, he died.

**Master Wúmén’s Comment**

The enlightenment of Chán Master Jùzhī and of the boy does not depend on the finger.

If you understand this, Venerable Tiānlóng, Jùzhī, the boy, and you yourself are all run through with one skewer.

**頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse**

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1 Hángzhōu Tiānlóng [wg]: Hang-chou T'ien-lung, [Jap]: Kashō Tenryū, (d. 9th century), heir of Dāméi Făcháng, Nányuè line
Jùzhī made a fool of old Master Tiānlóng,
a sharp precepts knife has damaged the boy,
the mountain spirit raised his hand without effort
a great mountain range of ten thousand peaks is split in two.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The snake has legs and puts on socks. Who can control this snake? If you have no fingers, you can control it.

1. What is the meaning of Jùzhī’s raising one finger?

2. What did the boy attain?

3. If you were the attendant, what could you say to Zen Master Jùzhī?
四 胡子無髭
Case 4. Bodhidharma has no Beard

或庵曰、西天胡子、因甚無髭。
Chán Master Huòān\(^1\) said, “Why does Master Bodhidharma\(^2\) have no beard?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
無門曰、參須實參、悟須實悟。
Study should be real study, enlightenment should be real enlightenment.
者箇胡子、直須親見一回始得。
You should meet this barbarian’s heart at least once to be fully intimate with him.
説親見、早成兩箇。
But saying you are fully intimate already divides you into two.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
癡人面前
in front of an old fool
不可說夢
don’t speak of dreams
胡子髭無
Bodhidharma with no beard
惺惺添

\(^1\) Huòān Shih-t’i (1108-1179) 或禪師體 [wg]: Huo-an Shih-t’i, [Kor]: Hŏkam, [Jap]: Wakuwan Shitai

\(^2\) Bodhidharma (d: 536) 達磨 [py]: Dámó, [wg]: Ta-mo, [Kor]: Talma, [Jap]: Datsuma, he is considered Twenty-Eighth in the Indian Lineage from Śakyamuni, and the First Chinese Ancestor.
this obscures what is already clear.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** Why does Bodhidharma have no beard? This is a dharma exchange kōan. Here is an example: there is a very famous painter, and everybody wants him to draw his or her face. They will pay him much money to do this. “Please, will you draw my face? Make a picture of me?”

So he makes a portrait of you, and when he is finished with it, there is your finished portrait. Look at that! No hair! It is like a monk! You are very surprised. Why no hair? So what can you do? Already you have paid much money, and he is a famous painter! Maybe there is some meaning! Then what do you ask him?

In this way, Bodhidharma has a beard. Then why does Huòān Zen Master ask, “Why does Bodhidharma have no beard?” That, we say, is a dharma exchange kōan. There are many kinds of dharma exchange kōans. Another example is this: you clean your body in the Zen Center shower room. However, where do you clean your mind? Where do the sun, the moon, and the stars come from? These are all dharma exchange kōans. Therefore, again I ask you, “Why does Bodhidharma have no beard? Tell me! Tell me!

1. **What is Bodhidharma’s original face?**

2. **I ask you, why does Bodhidharma have no beard?**
五 香嚴上樹
Case 5. Xiāngyán’s “Man up in a Tree”

香嚴和尚云，如人上樹，口啣樹枝，手不攀枝，腳不踏樹。

Chán Master Xiāngyán¹ said, “It is like a man up in a tree hanging from a branch by his teeth; his hands cannot grasp a bough, his feet (tied and bound) cannot touch a limb.

樹下有人問西來意，不對即違他所問，若對又喪身失命。

An Emperor’s General appears¹i under the tree and asks him, ‘Why did Bodhidharma come to China?’ If he does not answer, he evades his duty to respond to the question (and will be killed). If he does answer, he will lose his life.

正恁麼時，作麼生對。

“If you are this man, in this tree, how do you stay alive?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
無門曰，縱有懸河之辨，懸用不著。

Even if your eloquent tongue flows like a river, here it is of no avail.

說得一大藏教，亦用不著。

Though you can expound the whole of Buddhist literature, it is of no use.

若向者裏對得著，活却從前死路頭、死却從前活路頭。

¹ Xiāngyán Zhixián (908-987) 香嚴智閒, [wg]: Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien, [Kor]: Hyangŏm, [Jap]: Kyôgen Chikan, Studied with Bâizhâng, received transmission from his Dharma-brother Guishan

¹i As an Emissary of the Emperor “Son of Heaven”, this General is asking a question to the Monk, if the monk does not answer the question satisfactorily, the General will cut him in two for not expounding the Dharma when questioned as a Monk. Monks were tax exempt and so the government was always wary of imposters and punished imposters severely.
If you solve this problem, you will give life to the way that has been dead until this moment and destroy the way that has been alive up to now.

Otherwise, you must wait for Maitreya Buddha and ask him.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

Master Xiāngyán is a very bad man;
he spreads his poison everywhere.
the mouths of monks are made mute,
and demon’s eyes sprout from their bodies.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: You are hanging by your teeth, so you cannot open your mouth. In addition, you cannot move your hands; you cannot move your body. You cannot do anything. This is a Kyŏng Chul Mǔn kŏan, everything stops and only one thing is possible. What is the one thing? There is only one way, not two ways—you have one way. If you find that, then a good answer is possible. The question is, “Why did Bodhidharma come to China?” If you open your mouth to answer, you fall to your death. If you do not answer, you evade your duty as a bodhisattva and this man will kill

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1 Maitreya (Sanskrit), Metteyya (Pāli), or Jampa (Tibetan), is a future Buddha of this world in Buddhist eschatology. In some Buddhist literature, such as the Amitabha Sutra and the Lotus Sutra, he is referred to as Ajita Bodhisattva. Maitreya is a bodhisattva who in the Buddhist tradition is to appear on Earth, achieve complete enlightenment, and teach the pure dharma. According to scriptures, Maitreya will be a successor of the historic Śākyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism. The prophecy of the arrival of Maitreya is found in the canonical literature of all Buddhist sects (Theravāda, Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna), and is accepted by most Buddhists as a statement about an actual event that will take place in the distant future.
you. If you are in the tree, how can you stay alive? That is the big question.

If you pass this Gate, you have finished half of the kōans. We have about one thousand seven hundred kōans. If you pass this gate, you have passed the equivalent of eight hundred and fifty kōans. Therefore, this is a difficult kōan. If you only pass the kōan, it is not interesting. If it becomes yours, then your mind, your body, and your world become one and function correctly. At that time, you attain freedom, correct function, and freedom from life and death is possible. So attain freedom from life and death. This means there is no life, no death; but if you only have that, you have a problem.

1. *If you are in the tree, how do you stay alive?*”
Case 6. The Buddha Holds up a Flower

Long ago on Mount Grdhrakūṭa, Śākyamuni Buddha held up a flower before the assembly. Everyone was silent. Only Venerable Mahākāśyapa broke into a broad smile.

Śākyamuni Buddha said, “I have all-pervading true dharma eye, the incomparable mind of nirvana, the exquisite teaching of formless form, and the subtle dharma gate. Not dependent on words and speech, a special transmission outside the sutras. This I have entrusted to Venerable Mahākāśyapa.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰，黃面瞿曇，傍若無人。

1 Mount Grdhrakūṭa (Vulture Peak) is sacred to the memory of the founders of both Buddhism and Jainism and associated with both the historical Buddha and Mahavira, the last Tirthankara of Jainism. It was here that Gautama Buddha spent several months meditating, and preaching at Grdhrakūṭa, he also delivered some of his famous sermons and converted King Bimbisara of Magadha and countless others to his religion.

2 Siddhārtha Gautama (Sanskrit: ); was a spiritual teacher in the north eastern region of the Indian subcontinent who founded Buddhism. In most Buddhist traditions, he is regarded as the Supreme Buddha of our age, “Buddha” meaning “awakened one” or “the enlightened one.” The time of his birth and death are uncertain: most early twenty-first-century historians date his lifetime as c. 563 BCE to 483 BCE; more recently, however, at a specialist symposium on this question, the majority of those scholars who presented definite opinions gave dates within twenty years either side of 400 BCE for the Buddha's death, with others supporting earlier or later dates.

3 Mahākāśyapa or Kāśyapa was a Brahman of Magadha, who became one of the principal disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha and who convened and directed the first council. Mahākāśyapa is one of the most revered of the Buddha's early disciples, foremost in ascetic practices. He is often depicted in statuary together with Ānanda, each standing to one side of the Buddha.
Golden-faced Gautama really disregarded his listeners.

He made the good look bad and sold dog’s meat labeled as mutton.

He himself thought it was wonderful.

If, however, everyone in the audience had laughed, how could he have transmitted his True Eye?

And again, if Mahàkàsyapa had not smiled, how could the Buddha have transmitted it?

If you say the True Dharma Eye can be transmitted, then the golden-faced old man would be a city slicker who cheats the country bumpkin.

If you say it cannot be transmitted, then why did the Buddha approve of Mahàkàsyapa?

**Master Wúmén’s Verse**

holding up a flower,

the tail already apparent.

heaven and earth were bewildered,

at Venerable Mahàkàsyapa’s smile.
Seung Sahn’s Comment: Zen Master Seung Sahn (perhaps the late seventies or very early eighties) traveled to the Nalanda District of the Bihar State in India. He visited the current site of Vulture Peak and when he was standing on top of the hill, which according to him was more like a mound of dirt; Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "Oh, I think this place is much too small to fit two thousand five hundred monks in an assembly. Two Thousand Six Hundred years ago, Buddha held up a flower here. Today I hold up this stick. So tell me, are Buddha's flower and my stick the same or different?"

1. Why did Mahàkàsyapa smile?

2. Why did Buddha pick up the flower?

3. What kind of Dharma transmission was given to Mahàkàsyapa?

4. If you were Mahàkàsyapa, how would you respond to Buddha’s speech?

5. If you were Buddha and no one smiled, what would you have done?

6. If you were Buddha and everyone smiled, what would you have done?

7. What would be the correct kind of transmission for Buddha to give to Mahàkàsyapa?

8. Is Seung Sahn’s stick and Buddha’s flower the same or different?
七　趙州洗鉢
Case 7. Zhàozhōu’s “Washing the Bowls”

趙州、因僧問、其甲乍入叢林。乞師指示。

A monk said to Chán Master Zhàozhōu¹, “I have just entered this monastery. Please teach me, Master.”

州云、喫粥了也未。

“Have you had breakfast?” asked Venerable Zhàozhōu.

僧云、喫粥了也。

“Yes, I have,” replied the monk.

州云、洗鉢盂去。其僧有省。

“Then,” said Master Zhàozhōu, “go and better wash your bowls.” The monk was enlightened.

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、趙州開口見膽、露出心肝。

When he opens his mouth, Chán Master Zhàozhōu shows his gallbladder. He displays his heart and liver.

者僧聽事不真、喚鐘作甕。

I wonder if this monk really did hear the truth. I hope he did not mistake the bell for a jar.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

只爲分明極

it is already clear

¹ Zhàozhōu Cóngshēn (778-897) 趙州從諦 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [kusz] Jo Ju, [Jap]: Jôshû Jûshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn
翻令所得遲
attaining enlightenment is already past
早知燈是火
don’t you know that flame is fire?
飯熟已多時
your breakfast has long been cooked.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: What did the monk attain? This is very simple. “Please teach me.” “Did you have breakfast?” “Yes.” “Then wash your bowls.” This is correct function and correct relationship. This is everyday mind. This is an everyday mind kōan, just do it. Everyday life is the truth and the correct way. Everyday life is the Great Bodhisattva Way.

What did the monk attain? Do not attach to the Zen Masters words. If you attain this point, you understand correct situation, correct function and correct relationship moment after moment after moment. The monk attained his correct situation. Breakfast in the morning, lunch at noon, dinner in the evening, after the meal, do you understand your job? Then do it.

1. What did the monk attain?

2. If you were the monk, what could you say to Zhàozhōu?
八 奚仲造車
Case 8. Xizhòng made Carts

月庵和尚問僧，奚仲造車一百輻。
Chán Master Yuēān¹ said to a monk, “Xizhòng², the first wheel maker, made a cart whose wheels had a hundred spokes.

拈却兩頭、去卻輻、明甚麼邊事。
Take both front and rear parts away and remove the axle. What then becomes clear?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
無門曰、若也直下明得、眼、似流星、機、如掣電。
If anyone can directly master this topic, his eye will be like a shooting star, his spirit like a flash of lightning.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

機輪轉處
where the wheel of mind activity turns,

達者猶迷
even the master falls into ignorance.

四維上下
the four directions, above and below,

南北東西
North, South, East, and West.

¹ Yuēān Shāngwù (no dates) 月庵善果 [wg]: Yüeh-an Shan-kuo, [Kor]: Wŏlam
² Xizhòng (no dates) 奚仲 [wg]: Hsi–chung, [Kor]: Hyechung
Seung Sahn’s Comment: In the vast sky, clouds appear and disappear. Already everything is clear.

1. *When all of the parts are taken away, what then becomes clear?*

2. *What did you attain from this Kōan?*
九 大通智勝
Case 9. Xiāngyán’s Non-attained Buddha

A monk asked Chán Master Xiāngyán, “The Buddha of Supremely Pervading, surpassing Wisdom sat in meditation for ten kalpas and could not attain Buddhahood. He did not become a Buddha. Why?”

Venerable Xiāngyán said, “Your question is quite self-evident.”

The monk persisted, “He meditated so long; why did he not attain Buddhahood?”

Master Xiāngyán said, “Because he would not become Buddha.”

Master Wūmén’s Comment

I allow the barbarian’s realization, but I do not allow his understanding.

When an ignorant man realizes it, he is a sage.

When a sage understands it, he is ignorant.

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1 Xiāngyán Zhixián (908-987) 香嚴智閒, [wg]: Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien, [Kor]: Hyangŏm, [Jap]: Kyôgen Chikan, Studied with Báizhàng, received transmission from his Dharma-brother Guishan.
Master Wúmén’s Verse

rather than resting the body, rest the mind.

if you completely attain mind, the body is not a problem.

when both body and mind are clear,

even asuras and hungry ghosts see little value in worldly power.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The Huáyán Sutra states, “Each mote particle has Buddha-nature, so everything has already become Buddha.” If someone wants to become Buddha, this is already a big mistake. So, be careful.

1. Why did he not attain Buddhahood?

2. What is the meaning of, “Because he would not become Buddha?”
Case 10. Qīngshuì Is Alone and Poor

曹山和尚、因僧問云、清税孤貧。
Reverend Qīngshuì said to Chán Master Cáoshān¹, “I am poor and destitute.
乞、師賑濟。
Please help me, Master?”
山云、税闔梨。
Master Cáoshān called out, “Reverend Qīngshuì!”
税、應諾。
Reverend Qīngshuì responded, “Yes!”
山曰、青原白家酒、三盞喫了、猶道未沾唇。
Venerable Cáoshān said, “You have already drunk three goblets of the Zen Ancestor’s wine, and still you say you have not yet wet your lips!”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
無門曰、清税輸機、是何心行。
Reverend Qīngshuì missed his opportunity. What was going on in his mind?
曹山具眼、深辨來機。
Chán Master Cáoshān had a keen eye and could perceive the states of those who visited.
然雖如是、且道、那裏是税闔梨、喫酒處。

¹ Cáoshān Benji (840-901) [Jap]: Sozan Honjaku, [Kor]: Chosan, together with his master Dōngshān, Cáoshān goes down in history as co-creating the Cáodòng School (J. Soto) of Chan (the name is literally a combination of the “mountain names” of both), one of the 5 “houses” of classical Zen in China. He came from the area of modern Quanzhou, Fujian. Named his temple location Mt. Cao in the Fuzhou district after Huīnéng’s temple in Guangdong. Started another temple at Mt. Heyu, and named that Cáoshān too.
However, please tell me, where did Reverend Qīngshuí drink the wine?

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
貧似范丹
poor as the poorest,
氣如項羽
brave as the bravest;
活計雖無
though he had nothing to live on,
敢與鬬富
he dared to challenge the rich and powerful.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: A dog ate Qīngshuí’s mind, running around and around, east and west.

1. “I am poor and destitute please help me, Master?” what does this mean?

2. What is the meaning of “You have already drunk three goblets of the Zen Ancestor’s wine?”

3. “You say you have not yet wet your lips!” What does this mean?
Case 11. Zhàozhōu’s Hermits

Chán Master Zhàozhōu went to where a hermit was practicing and asked, “Do you have it? Do you have it?”

The hermit held up his fist.

Master Zhàozhōu said, “You are a blind dog, a ship cannot anchor in shallow water.” The he left.

Coming upon another hermit’s retreat, he asked again, “Do you have it? Do you have it?”

The hermit also raised his fist.

Master Zhàozhōu said, “You are free to give, and free to take; free to kill, and free to give life,” then he bowed very deeply.

Master Wúmén’s Comment

Both alike raised their fists; why was one accepted and another rejected?

So, please tell me, what is the confusion here?

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1 Zhàozhōu Cóngshēn (778-897) 趙州從谂 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [Jap]: Jôshû Jûshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn
若向者裏下得一轉語、便見趙州舌頭無骨、扶起放倒得大自在。
If you can utter a turning word, you will realize that Master Zhàozhōu’s tongue has no bone, he helps some to get up, while knocking others to the ground with perfect freedom.

雖然如是爭奈、趙州却被二庵主勘破。
However, it is important to realize that the two hermits could also see right through the old Master.

若道二庵主有優劣、未具參學眼。
If you say that one hermit was better or worse, you still lack eye of realization.

若道無優劣、亦未具參學眼。
If you say that neither hermit was better or worse, you also still lack the eye of realization.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

眼流星
eyes like shooting stars,
機掣電
mind flashing like lighting;
殺人刀
a death–wielding blade,
活人劍
a life–giving sword.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: In this dialog there are two hermits; both were asked the same question, and both gave the same answer. So why on earth would Zen Master Zhàozhōu approve of one and disapprove of the other?
In our modern society, messages, images and media are constantly telling us what to do and enticing us on what to get to improve our situation. We hear things like “you should follow this path,” or “you should live your life this way,” or “you need to get this to make your life complete,” or “you aren’t safe unless you buy this product.” Lǎozi tells us in the Dàodēqīng, “if you seek for the approval of others, you become their prisoner. How much do you believe in your true self?

This is a Kyung Chul Mun “single entry gate” style kōan. Only one answer is possible. What is this one thing? There is only one way in this kōan and not two ways—if you enter the world of opposites then you are lost, if you are not tangled then you can see through old Zhàozhōu’s comments.

There is only one path of discovery. You must relinquish your opinion, your condition and your situation. Forget about Zhàozhōu’s approval or disapproval. Ask your own true self the same question and see if you trust what appears. Zen Master Sungsan once said, “Together, these two monks killed Zhàozhōu and stuffed his body in a wine bottle.

1. Why did Zhàozhōu approve of one answer and not the other?

2. If you were the first monk, what could you say to Zhàozhōu?

3. If you were the second monk, what could you say to Zhàozhōu?
Case 12. Ruiyán Calling the Master

Chán Master Ruiyán would call to himself every morning, “Master!” and he would always answer himself, “Yes!”

Then he would say, “Keep clear and be alert!” then answer himself, “Yes!”

“From now on never be deceived by others!” Finally, he would conclude to himself, “Yes! Yes!”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

Old Master Ruiyán sells himself then buys himself. He takes out many Asura heads and hungry ghost faces putting each one on with a playful spirit.

What is the meaning of all this? Please listen!

One calling and the other answering; one wide awake, the other saying he will never be deceived.

If you cling to recognition, you will not be correct.

If you imitate the Old Master, you are just a wild fox spirit.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

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¹ Ruiyán Shīyān (658–736) 趙州從谂. [wg]: Jui-yen Shih-yen, [Kor]: Sŏngam Eŏn, [Jap]: Zuigan Shigen, a Dharma-heir of Yántóu Quanho, he also studied with Jiashan Shanhui.
students of the Dao do not perceive the truth, it is simply because they cling to deluded consciousness.

the roots of birth and death through infinite kalpas: still, the ignorant name it their true original nature.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Ruiyán Shīyan used to call to himself and answer himself — two minds. Which one is the correct Master? Some people have not only two minds, but three minds, four minds, five minds, eighty minds, many, many minds—pain mind, sad mind, sex mind, money mind, all kinds of mind. Ruiyán Shīyan has only two minds: “Master!” “Yes!” “Keep a clear mind!”—two minds. Which one is the correct master? Two minds become one. If you become one, there is no mind, no master. Then you attain your true master. To attain this, first your master and your mind must disappear; then you are nothing. If you are nothing, then your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body can work correctly and you can see your master — everything is your master.

1. Ruiyán Shīyan used to call himself, and answer himself, two minds. Which one is the correct Master?
Case 13. Deshān Carrying His Bowls

One day Deshān went down toward the dining room, carrying his bowls.

The housemaster, Xuèfēng, met him and asked, “The bell has not rung, and the drum has not been struck. Where are you going, carrying your bowls?” Deshān turned and went back to his room.

Xuèfēng mentioned this to the head monk, Yántóu, who remarked, “Deshān is great, but he does not understand the last word.”

Deshān heard about this remark and sent his attendant to get Yántóu. “You do not approve of me?” he demanded.

Then Yántóu whispered something in his Master’s ear.

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1 Deshān Xuānjian (781-867) 德山宣鑑, [wg]: Te-shan Hsüan-chien, [Kor]: Duksan, [kusz]: Dok Sahn, [Jap]: Tokusan Senkan, a Dharma-heir of Lóngtán Chóngxìn

2 Xuèfēng Yícün (822-908) 雪峰義存, [wg]: Hsüeh-fêng I-ts’un, [Kor]: Sŏlbong, [Jap]: Seppô Gison a Dharma-heir of Deshān Xuānjian

3 Yántóu Quánjué (d 842) 巖頭全鑑, [wg]: Yen-t’ou Ch’üan-huo, [Kor]: Amdu, [Jap]: Gantô Zenkatsu a Dharma-heir of Deshān Xuānjian.
Deshān was relieved. The next day he ascended the rostrum, and while giving his Dharma speech was very different from before!

巖頭至僧堂前、拊掌大笑云、且喜得老漢會末後句。
Yántóu, going toward the front of the hall, clapped his hands and laughed loudly, saying, “Great Joy! Our old Master has understood the last word!

他後天下人、不奈伊何。
From now on, nobody in this whole country can check him!”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
無門曰、若是末後句、巖頭德山俱未夢見在。
As for the last word, neither Yántóu nor Deshān has ever dreamed of it!

撿點將來、好似一棚傀儡。
When you look into the matter, you find they are like puppets on the shelf!

頌日 Master Wúmén’s Verse
識得最初句
realize the first,
便會末後句
master the last.
末後與最初
first and last
不是者一句
are not one word.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: This is a famous kōan in China, Korea, and Japan. The last word means correct situation. In
other words, Yántóu was saying that his teacher did not understand his correct situation or function.

Yántóu’s words were two kinds. At first Deshān Zen Master was very angry, so you must take away his angry mind. It is like a wife and a husband—they love each other very much, but one day the wife talks to her husband’s friend: “My husband this, this, and this.” Then her husband hears from his friend that his wife does not approve of something. Therefore, he begins checking, checking inside and outside. He is holding something, making something, and attached to something. Therefore, he is very busy, busy, and cannot control his mind, and therefore he may become afraid, confused, angry, full of desires, ignorant, sad, etc.—much suffering. Because of this, some people may feel desperate enough to kill themselves. This is a sickness of our modern era. Nobody guarantees our life. When you die, where are you going? What is life? What is death? These are primary questions. If you finish these primary questions, you are completely free, and you will get true happiness and everything.

In our modern age people like freedom and want happiness, but they do not understand what complete freedom and true happiness are. They only understand the path of freedom and the path of happiness. This type of freedom and happiness however is based upon changing phenomena; freedom is not freedom; there are many hindrances. Happiness is not happiness; and there is much suffering. This comes from where? Only holding tightly to an idea, or holding on to a situation and condition results in dissatisfaction. If we can relinquish or opinion, condition and situation, then the correct opinion, correct condition, and correct situation appear. If you keep enough mind moment to moment this is possible. In Daoism, it is written, “If I hear the True Way in the morning, and if I die in the evening, it is no problem.” However, Zen is
originally in our true self and there is no life, no death. If you attain your true self, you will get freedom from life and death.

1. What was the last word?

2. What did Yántóu whisper in the Master’s ear?

3. How was the Master’s speech different from before?

4. If you were Deshān, what could you say to the housemaster to prevent all these problems from occurring?
Case 14. Nánquán Kills a Cat

Once the monks of the Eastern and Western halls quarreling about the ownership of a cat.

Nánquán Chán Master took the cat and while holding it up in front of the assembly said, “You! If you can give me one word of Chán, you will save the cat. If you cannot, I will kill it.”

No one could answer, and Nánquán cut the cat in two.

That evening when Zhàozhōu returned from a trip outside of the temple, Nánquán told him of the incident. Zhàozhōu took off his sandal, placed it on his head, and walked away. “If you had been there, you would have saved the cat,” Nánquán remarked.

Master Wúmén’s Comment

无門曰，且道、趙州頂草鞋意作麼生。
Tell me, what did Zhàozhōu mean when he put the sandal on his head?

若向者裏下得一轉語、便見南泉令不虛行。

If you can give a turning word on this, you will see that Nánquán’s decree was carried out with good reason.

其或未然險。

If not, “Danger!”

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

趙州若在
if Zhàozhōu had been there,

倒行此令
turning the world order upside–down;

奪却刀子
snatching away the knife,

南泉乞命
leaving Nánquán begging for his life.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The first question is, when Nánquán Zen Master holds up the cat and says, “Give me one word; then I will save the cat. If not, I will kill it”—what can you do? This is a love kōan. If you have Great Love and Great Compassion, then this kōan is no problem. Here is a hint: a long time ago during the time of King Solomon, there was an argument about a baby. Two women each said, “This is my baby!” Therefore, Solomon said, “Bring this baby, and I will divide it in two. Then each of you can take half.” Then one woman said, “Oh, you take the baby it is yours.”

Then who is the true mother? This is a love story. If you have Great Love inside, then you have a Zen mind. Unconditional means Great Love, Great Compassion, Great Bodhisattva Way. So unconditionally sit; unconditionally DO IT!
Unconditionally practice. Do not check your condition. This is Great Love. If your mind is unconditional, then this unconditional mind has no I, my, me. I do everything for all beings—for husband, for wife that is Great Love. Then it is possible to save the cat.

The last question is; Zhàozhōu walked away with his shoes on his head. Then Nánquán Zen Master said, “If you had been here, I could have saved the cat.” What does this mean? Why did Zhàozhōu put his shoes on his head and walk away? What does this mean? So keep your correct situation, correct condition, correct idea action. If you attain this kōan, then you attain Great Love, Great Compassion, Great Bodhisattva Way. This means moment to moment keep your correct situation, correct function and correct relationship.

1. Nánquán said, “Give me one word.” At that time, what can you do?

2. Zhàozhōu put his shoes on his head. What does this mean?
Case 15. Dòngshān’s Sixty Blows

Dòngshān came to study with Yúnmén. Yúnmén asked, “Where are you from?”

Yúnmén asked, “Where were you during the summer?”

Dòngshān replied, “Well, I was at Bàocí monastery in Hunan.”

Yúnmén asked, “When did you leave there?”

Dòngshān said, “On August twenty-fifth” was Dòngshān’s reply.

Yúnmén said, “I spare you sixty blows.”

The next day Dòngshān came to Yúnmén and said, “Yesterday you said you spared me sixty blows. I don’t know where my mistake is?”

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1 Dòngshān Liángjie (807-869) 洞山良价 [wg]: Tung-shan Liang-chieh, [Kor]: Dongsan, [Jap]: Tôzan

2 Yúnmén Wényǎn (1025-1115) 禹門文彦, [wg]: Yün-men Wen-yen, [Kor]: Unmūn [Jap]: Ummon Bun’en a Dharma-heir of Huánglóng Huīnàn.
“You rice bag!” shouted Yúnmén. “What makes you wander about, now west of the river, now south of the lake?”

山於此大悟。

At this Dòngshān got enlightenment.

**Master Wúmén’s Comment**

Dòngshān had an agonizing struggle through the whole night, lost in the sea of right and wrong. He reached a complete impasse. After waiting for the dawn, he again went to Yúnmén, and Yúnmén again made him a picture book of Chán.

洞山直下悟去、未是性燥。

Even though he was directly enlightened, Dòngshān could not be called brilliant.

且問諸人、洞山三頓棒、合喎不合喎。

Now, I want to ask you, should Dòngshān have been given sixty blows or not?

若道合喎、草木叢林皆合喎棒。

If you say yes, you admit that the entire universe should be beaten.

若道不合喎、雲門又成訛語。

If you say no, then you accuse Yúnmén of telling a lie.

向者裏明得、方與洞山出一口氣。
If you really understand the secret, you will be able to breathe out Chán spirit with the very mouth of Dòngshān.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

獅子教兒迷子訣
lion mother teaches her cub;
擬前跳躍早翻身
the cub crouched, leaped, and dashed forward.
無端再敺當頭著
second time, a casual move led to success.
前箭猶輕後箭深
first arrow only grazes, second goes in deep.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Snow in the north, rain in the south, somebody already got enlightenment—already a big mistake. Go drink tea.

1. Why did Yúnmén give Dòngshān sixty blows with a stick?

2. What is the meaning of prowling around Bàoci monastery in Hunan?

3. Dòngshān got enlightenment, what did he attain?
Case 16. When the Bell Sounds

Yúnmén said, “The world is vast and wide. Why do you put on your seven-fold robe at the sound of the bell?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

In studying Chán, you should not be swayed by sounds and forms.

Even though you attain insight when hearing a voice or seeing a form, this is simply the ordinary way of things. Don’t you know that the real Chán student commands sounds, controls forms, are clear-sighted at every event and free on every occasion?

Granted you are free, just tell me: Does the sound come to the ear or does the ear go to the sound?

If both sound and silence die away, at such a juncture how could you talk of Chán?

若將耳聽應難會，眼處聞聲方始親。

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i Yúnmén Wényǎn (1025-1115) 雲門文偃, [wg]: Yün-men Wen-yen, [Kor]: Unmǔn [Jap]: Ummon

Bun’en a Dharma-heir of Huánglóng Huìnan.

ii In Zen Buddhism this is the Kasa, Rakusu or O’Kesa which is worn over the robes and represents the Buddha’s robes originating in India.
While listening with your ear, you cannot tell. When hearing with your eye, you are truly intimate.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
會則事同一家
with realization, the ten thousand things return to one;
不會萬別千差
without realization, the ten thousand things are all separated.
不會事同一家
without realization, all things become one;
會則萬別千差
with realization, things are separated in a thousand ways.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Your mind and this world, which one is bigger? Open your mouth and you cannot find your direction. Close your mouth and you lose your direction. At the sound of the bell, go to the Dharma Room for practice.

1. “The world is vast and wide,” what does this mean.

2. Why do you put on your seven–fold robe at the sound of the bell?”

3. If you do not have a seven–fold robe, what can you do?
Case 17. The National Teacher Gives Three Calls

The National Teacher called his attendant three separate times, and three separate times the attendant responded.

The National Teacher said, “I thought I had deserted you, but originally, you deserted me.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

The National Teacher called three times, and his tongue fell to the ground.

The attendant responded three times, and he gave his answer with brilliance.

The National Teacher was old and lonely; he held the cow’s head and forced it to eat grass.

The attendant would have none of it,

delicious food has little attraction for a man who is satiated.

Tell me, at what point was the betrayal?

When the country is flourishing, talent is prized. When the home is wealthy, the children are proud.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
someone must wear the iron collar with no hole
leaving a curse to trouble his descendants.
if you want to hold up the gate and the house,
climb the mountain of swords with your bare feet.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The grandfather loves his grandson; the grandson only tolerates his grandfather, he only wants candy.

1. Calling someone one time is enough, why call three times?

2. “I thought I had deserted you, but originally, you deserted me.” What does this mean?

3. If you were the attendant, what could you do?
十八　洞山三斤

Case 18. Dòngshān’s “Three Pounds of Flax”

洞山和尚、因僧問、如何是佛。
A monk asked Dòngshān¹, “What is Buddha?”

山云、麻三斤。
Dòngshān replied, “Three pounds of flax².”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、洞山老人、參得些蚌蛤禪、纔開兩片露出肝腸。
Old Dòngshān attained the poor Chán of a clam. He opened the two halves of the shell a little and exposed all the liver and intestines inside.

然雖如是、且道、向甚處見洞山。
However, tell me, how do you see Dòngshān?

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

突出麻三斤

three pounds of flax comes sweeping along;

言親意更親

intimate words, intimate mind.

來說是而非

arguing about right and wrong

便是是非人

are those enslaved by right and wrong.

¹ Dòngshān Shóuchú (807-869) 洞山守初, [wg]: Tung-shan Shou-ch’u, [Kor]: Dongsan, [Jap]: Tōzan Shusho a Dharma-heir of Yunyan Tansheng.
² Flax is a generic representation of what was most likely linen fabric as flax is the raw material from which linen is manufactured.
Seung Sahn’s Comment: Big mistake, big mistake, Dòngshān does not understand three pounds of flax; however, three pounds of flax understands Dòngshān’s two eyes.

1. What is Buddha?

2. What does “three pounds of flax mean?”

3. If you were the monk, what could you say?
Case 19. Nánquán’s “Ordinary Mind Is the Way”

南泉、因趙州問、如何是道。
Zhàozhōu Ⅰ asked Nánquán Ⅱ, “What is the true way?”

泉云、平常心是道。
“Ordinary mind is the true way,” Nánquán replied.

州云、還可趣向否。
“Then, should I try to keep it or not?” Zhàozhōu asked.

泉云、擬向即乖。
“If you try to keep it, you will become separated from it,” responded Nánquán.

州云、不擬爭知是道。
“How can I know the true way unless I try to understand it?” persisted Zhàozhōu.

泉云、道不屬知、不屬不知。
Nánquán said, “The true way is not dependant on understanding or not understanding.

知是妄覺、不知是無記。
Understanding is illusion; not understanding is blankness.

若真達不擬之道、猶如太虛廓然洞豁。
If you completely attain the true way of not thinking, it like space, clear and void.

豈可強是非也。

Ⅰ Zhàozhōu Cóngshēn (778-897) 趙州從谂 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [Jap]: Jōshū Jūshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn

Ⅱ Nánquán Pǔyuàn, (748-835) 南泉普願, [wg]: Nan-ch’üan P’u-yüan, [Kor]: Namchôn, [Jap]: Nansen Fugan. Nánquán received transmission of the Dharma from Măzŭ Dàoyí. Nánquán gave transmission to seventeen of his students, and amongst them, Zhàozhōu Cóngshēn and Changsha Jingcen have the most recorded history.
So, why do you make right and wrong?”

州於言下頓悟。

With these words, Zhàozhōu attained enlightenment.

**Master Wúmén’s Comment**

無門曰、南泉被趙州發問、直得瓦解氷消、分離不下。

Nánquán dissolves and melted away before Zhàozhōu’s question, and could not offer a plausible explanation.

趙州縱饒悟去、更參三十年始得。

Even though Zhàozhōu comes to a realization, he must delve into it for another thirty years before he can fully understand it.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

春有百花秋有月
fragrant spring flowers, silver autumn moon;

夏有涼風冬有雪
cool breezes in Summer, white snow in winter.

若無闊事掛心頭
freeing your mind of useless thought,

更是人間好時節
the best season of your life has arrived.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** Not eating for three days, you only desire food. Walking through the desert, you only desire water. The baby cries, and wants to see its mother. Everything is clear, many stars in the night sky, may trees on the mountainside.

1. *What is the true way?*
2. “Everyday mind is the true way.” What does this mean?

3. “It is like space, clear and void.” What does this mean?

4. What did Zhàozhōu attain?

5. If you were Zhàozhōu, what would you say to Nánquán?
Case 20. A Man of Great Strength

Sōngyuán Chán Master asked, “Why is it that a man of great strength does not lift his legs?”
In addition, he said, “It is not with his tongue that he speaks.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

It must be said that Sōngyuán shows us all his stomach and intestines.
However, no one can appreciate him!
Moreover, even if someone could appreciate him, let him come to me, and I will beat him severely.

If you want to find pure gold, you must see it through fire.

Master Wúmén’s Verse

lifting his leg, he crushes the scented ocean;

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1 Sōngyuán (1132-1202) 松源, [Jap]: Shogen Sugaku, [Kor]: Sŏnwon, Contemporary of Chán Master Wúmén (compiler of the Wúménguān, Gateless Gate), but 30 years older
lowering his head, he looks down on the four dhyāna heavens.

there is no place vast enough for this huge body—
someone else will have to finish this.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: You ate too much, so you must exercise. If you are thirsty, you must find a well. If you are tired, you must go to sleep.

1. Why is it that a man of great strength cannot life his legs?

2. How does he speak without his tongue?

3. Who is a man of great strength?
Case 21. Yúnmén’s “Dry Shit on a Stick”

A monk asked Yúnmén, “What is Buddha?”
Yúnmén replied, “Dry shit on a stick.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
Yúnmén was too poor to prepare plain food, too busy to speak from notes.
He hurriedly took up this shit stick to support the gate and shore up the walls.
The decline of Buddhism was thus foreshadowed.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

lightning flashing,
sparks shooting;
a moment’s blinking,
missed forever.

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1 Yúnmén Wényán (1025-1115) 雲門文欽, [wg]: Yün-men Wen-yen, [Kor]: Unmŭn [Jap]:, Ummon Bun’en a Dharma-heir of Huánglóng Huìnan.
Seung Sahn’s Comment: Yúnmén’s mouth smells bad. How do you remove the smell? Take him to the bathroom and rinse his mouth out.

1. What is Buddha?

2. What is dry shit on a stick?

3. If you were the monk, what could you say to Yúnmén?
Case 22. Mahàkàsyapa’s “Flagpole”

阿难问曰：‘世尊传金禅袈裟外，别传何物。’
阿难问曰：‘世尊传金禅袈裟外，别传何物。’

Mahàkàsyapa called out, “Ānanda!”

“Knock down the flagpole at the gate,” said Mahàkàsyapa.

Master Wúmén’s Comment

If you can give a turning word at this point, you will see that the meeting at Mount Grdhrakuta is still solemnly continuing.

If not, then this is what Vipasyin Buddha worried about from remote ages; up to now, he has still not acquired the essence.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

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i Ānanda was one of many principal disciples and a devout attendant of the Buddha. Amongst the Buddha’s many disciples, Ānanda had the most retentive memory and most of the suttas in the Sutta Pitaka are attributed to his recollection of the Buddha’s teachings during the First Buddhist Council. For that, he was known as the Guardian of the Dharma

ii Mahàkàsyapa (Sanskrit; Pali: Mahakassapa) or Kàsyapa was a Brahman of Magadha, who became one of the principal disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha and who convened and directed the first council. Mahàkàsyapa is one of the most revered of the Buddha’s early disciples, foremost in ascetic practices. He is often depicted in statuary together with Ānanda, each standing to one side of the Buddha.
問處何如答處親
question or answer—which was more intimate?
幾人於此眼生筋
how many strain their eyes over this;
兄呼弟揚家醜
elder brother calls, younger brother answers, the family
shame appears.
不屬陰陽別是春
without yin and yang, they had a special spring.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The sky has no clouds, but
lightening hits the flagpole. Mahàkàsyapa and Ānanda both
lose their jobs.

1. *What else did Buddha transmit to Mahàkàsyapa?*

2. *What does the call and answer between Mahàkàsyapa and Ānanda mean?*

3. *“Knock down the flagpole in front of the gate.” What does this mean?”*
Case 23. Don’t Think Good and Bad

The Sixth Ancestor was pursued by the monk Shénxiù as far as Zhīrú Mountain.

The Ancestor, seeing Shénxiù coming, laid the robe and bowl on a rock and said, “This robe represents the faith; it should not be fought over. If you want to take it away, take it now.”

Shénxiù tried to move it, but it was as heavy as a mountain and would not budge. Faltering and trembling, he cried out, “I came for the Dharma, not for the robe. I beg you; please give me your instruction.”

The Ancestor said, “Think neither good nor evil. At this very moment, what is the original self of the monk Shénxiù?”

At these words, Shénxiù was directly illuminated. His whole body was covered with sweat.

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1 Dàjiāng Huìnéng (683-713) 大江慧能 [wg]: Ta-ching Hui-neng, [Kor]: Hyenŏng, [Jap]: Enô a Dharma-heir of Daman Hóngrén

2 Datong Shénxiù (605-706) 神秀, [wg]: Shen-hsiu, [Jap]: Jinshû
He wept and bowed, saying, “Besides the secret words and
the secret meaning you have just now revealed to me, is there
anything else, deeper still?”

The Ancestor said, “What I have told you is no secret at all.
When you look into your own true self, whatever is deeper is
found right there.”

Shénxiù said, “I was with the monks under Hóngrêng for many
years but I could not realize my true self.
Now, receiving your instruction, I know it is like a man
drinking water and knowing whether it is cold or warm.
My lay brother, you are now my teacher.”

The Ancestor said, “If you say so, but let us both call
Hóngrêng our teacher.
Be mindful to treasure and hold fast to what you have
attained.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

The Sixth Ancestor was, so to speak, hurried into helping a
man in an emergency, and he displayed a grandmotherly
kindness.

譬如新荔枝剝了殼去了核，送在你口裏，只要你嚥一
嚥。
It is as though he peeled a fresh lichi, removed the seed, put it in your mouth, and asked you to swallow it down.

**Master Wúmén’s Verse**

你不能形容它；你不能画它；
你不能赞美它；不要尝试生吃它。
你的真我无处可藏；
当世界毁灭，它未毁灭。

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** The Sixth Ancestor has two eyes. Shénxiù has two ears. They each have one mouth. Together they see and hear, but their speech is different. One goes south, and one goes north.

1. *Do not think good and bad, what is your original face?*
2. *What did Shénxiù attain?*
3. *What is the secret you already have?*
4. *What is the meaning of “Only go straight?”*
Case 24. Fēngxuè’s Speech and Silence

A monk asked Fēngxuè, “Both speech and silence include separation and union. How can we escape these faults?”

Fēngxuè said,

I always remember the spring in Jiāngnán,
Where the partridges sing;
How fragrant the countless flowers!

Master Wūmén’s Comment

Fēngxuè’s Chán spirit was like lightning and opened a clear passage.

However, he was entangled in the monk’s words and could not cut them off.

If you can really grasp the problem, you can readily find the way out.

Now, putting language Samadhi aside, say it in your own words.

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Fēngxuè Yánzhǎo (892-973) 风穴延沼 [Jap]: Fuketsu Ensho, [Kor]: Punghol, he was a Dharma Heir of Nányuàn and teacher of Shoushan. All of the Linji [Jap]: Rinzai lineages of Zen masters descend from Fēngxuè Yánzhǎo.

Li [離 inward action of mind] and Wēi [微 outward action of mind]
Master Wúmén’s Verse

he does not use a refined phrase;
before speaking, he has already handed it over.
if you chatter on and on,
you will find you have lost your way.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Open your mouth, there is no tongue. Open your eyes there is no pupil. How do you fix this, you must go to Jiāngnán and ask the partridges.

1. Without speech and silence, how can you answer?

2. How can we be free and without mistake?

3. Where is Fēngxuè’s mistake?
Case 25. Yǎngshān’s Dream

In a dream, Yǎngshān Chán Master went to Maitreya’s place and was led in to sit in the third seat.

A senior monk struck with a gavel and said, “Today the one in the third seat will speak.”

Yǎngshān rose and, striking with the gavel, said, “The truth of Mahayana is beyond the four propositions and transcends the hundred negations.

Listen Carefully! Listen Carefully!”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

Now tell me, did Yǎngshān preach or did he not? If he opens his mouth, he is lost; if he seals his mouth, he is lost.

Even if he neither opens nor shuts his mouth, he is a hundred and eight thousand [miles away from the truth].

Master Wúmén’s Verse

in broad daylight, under the blue sky,

夢中說夢

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Yǎngshān Huiji, (813–890) [Jap]: Kyozan Ejaku, [Kor]: Angsan
he forges a dream in a dream;
捏怪捏怪
he makes up a monstrous story
訕一衆
and tries to deceive the whole crowd.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: This world and human life are like a dream. Two men discuss the dream, when will they wake up? Outside the house, at three in the morning the rooster is crowing, cock-doodle-do, cock-a-doodle-do.

1. How would you answer the emperor’s question?

2. Yǎngshān made a big mistake, where is it?

3. What did you attain from this kōan?
Case 26. Two Monks Roll Up the Blinds

When the monks assembled before the midday meal to listen to his lecture, the great Fǎyǎn of Qīngliáng pointed at the bamboo blinds.

Two monks simultaneously went and rolled them up.

Fǎyǎn said, “One has got it, one has lost it.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

Tell me, who gained and who lost?

If you have an eye to penetrate the secret, you will see where the National Teacher in Qīngliáng failed.

However, I warn you strongly against discussing gain and loss.

Master Wúmén’s Verse

rolling up the blinds, the great sky is open,

but the great sky does not come up to Chán.

Fǎyǎn Wenyi (885–958) [wg]: Fa-yen Wen-I, [Jap]: Hogen Mon’eki
why don’t you throw them all down from the sky, and keep your practice so close that no air can escape?

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The two monk’s action is very clear. Fǎyǎn’s speech is a big mistake, so how do you make it correct? Do you understand Fǎyǎn’s age? Go and ask the pine tree in front of the temple.

1. “One has got it, one has lost it.” What does this mean?

2. Which monk got it? Which monk lost it?

3. If you were there and Fǎyǎn pointed at the blinds, what would you do?
Case 27. Nánquán’s “Not Mind, Not Buddha, Not Things”

南泉和尚、因僧問云、還有不與人說底法麼。
A monk asked Nánquán ¹ “Is there any Dharma that has not been preached to the people?”

Nánquán answered, “There is.”

“What is the truth that has not been taught?” asked the monk.

Nánquán said, “It is not mind; it is not Buddha; it is not things.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、南泉被者一問、直得揣盡家私、郎當不少。
At this question, Nánquán used up all his treasure and was not a little confused.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

talking too much spoils your virtue;

silence is truly unequaled.

¹ Nánquán Pǔyuàn (748-835) 南泉普願, [wg:] Nan-ch’üan P’u-yüan, [Kor]: Namchŏn, [Jap]: Nansen Fugan
let the mountains become the sea;
終不為君通
I’ll give you no comment.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** Ten thousand words, ten thousand mistakes. In complete silence, everything is clear right in front of you. Just see, just hear, just smell, just taste, and just touch.

1. *Is there without speech Dharma for all people?*

2. *Where is Nánquán’s mistake?*

3. “*Is not mind, is not Buddha, is not anything.*” Then what is it?
Case 28. Lóngtán Blows Out the Candle

龍潭、因德山請益抵夜。
Deshān asked Lóngtán about Chán far into the night.

Eventually, Lóngtán said, “The night is late.

Why don’t you retire for the evening?”

Deshān made his bows and lifted the blinds to withdraw, but he was met by darkness. Turning back to Lóngtán, he said, “It is very dark outside.”

Lóngtán lit a paper candle and handed it to him.

Deshān was about to take it when Lóngtán blew it out.

At this, all of a sudden, Deshān went through a deep experience and made bows.

Lóngtán said, “What sort of realization do you have?”

Lóngtán Chóngxìn (760-840) 龍潭崇信 [Kor]: Yongdam, [Jap]: Ryūtan Sōshin a Dharma Heir of Tiānlóng and teacher of Deshān.
“From now on,” said Deshān, “I will not doubt the words of an old Chán Master who is renowned everywhere under the sun.”

The next day Lóngtán ascended the rostrum and said, “I see a fellow among you. His fangs are like the sword tree. His mouth is like a blood bowl.”

He will not turn his head to look at you.

Someday or other, he will climb the highest of the peaks and establish our Way there.”

Deshān brought his notes on the Diamond Sutra to the front of the hall, pointed to them with a torch, and said, “Even though you have exhausted the abstruse doctrines, it is like placing a hair in a vast space. Even though you have learned all the secrets of the world, it is like a drop of water dripped on the great ocean.”

And he burned all his notes.

Then, making bows, he took his leave of his teacher.

**Master Wúmén’s Comment**

無門曰、德山未出關時、心憤憤、口得得來南方要滅却教外別傳之旨。
Before Deshān crossed the barrier from his native place, his mind burned and his mouth uttered bitterness. He went southward, intending to stamp out the doctrines of special transmission outside the sutras.

及到灃州路上問婆子買點心。

When he reached the road to Lízhōu, he asked an old woman to let him have lunch to “refresh the mind.”

婆云、大德車子內是甚麼文字。

“Your worship, what sort of literature do you carry in your pack?” the old woman asked.

山云、金剛經疏抄。


婆云、只如經中道、過去心不可得、見在心不可得、未來心不可得。

The old woman said, “I hear it is said in that sutra, ‘The past mind cannot be held, the present mind cannot be held, the future mind cannot be held.’

大德、要點那箇心。

Now, I would like to ask you, what mind are you going to have refreshed?”

德山被者一問、直得口似□橔。

At this question, Deshān was dumbfounded.

然雖如是、未肯向婆子句下死却。遂問婆子、近處有甚麼宗師。

However, he did not remain inert under her words but asked, “Do you know of any good teacher around here?”

婆云、五里外有龍潭和尚。

The old woman said, “Five miles from here you will find Lóngtán Chán Master.”

及到龍潭納盡敗隕。
Coming to Lóngtán, Deshān got the worst of it.
可謂是前言不應後語。
His former words were inconsistent with his later ones.
龍潭大似憐兒不覺醜。
As for Lóngtán, he seemed to have lost all sense of shame in his compassion toward his son.
見他有些子火種、郎忙將惡水薦頭一澆澆殺。
Finding a bit of live coal in the other, enough to start a fire, he hurriedly poured on muddy water to annihilate everything at once.
冷地看來、一場好笑。
A little cool reflection tells us it was all a farce.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

聞名不如見面
hearing the name cannot surpass seeing the face;
見面不如聞名
seeing the face cannot surpass hearing the name.
雖然救得鼻孔
he may have saved his nose,
爭奈瞎却眼睛
but alas! he lost his eyes.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Nature is already teaching us everything, why do we need all the Sutras. If you attain your original face, you can toss all the Sutras into the fire. Then your world becomes complete.

1. What did Deshān attain?
2. “I see a fellow among you. His fangs are like the sword tree. His mouth is like a blood bowl.” Who is this person?

3. “From now on, I will not doubt the words of the old Chán Masters who are renowned everywhere under the sun.” What does this mean?

4. “Even though you have exhausted the abstruse doctrines, it is like placing a hair in a vast space.” What does this mean?
Case 29. Not Wind, Not Flag

The wind was flapping a temple flag, and two monks started an argument.

One said the flag moved, the other said the wind moved; they argued back and forth but could not reach a conclusion.

The Sixth Ancestor said, “It is not the wind that moves, it is not the flag that moves; it is your mind that moves.”

The two monks were awe-struck.

Master Wúmén’s Comment

It is not the wind that moves; it is not the flag that moves; it is not the mind that moves. How do you see the Ancestor?

If you come to understand this matter deeply, you will see that the two monks got gold when buying iron.

The Ancestor could not withhold his compassion and courted disgrace.

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1 Dàjiāng Huīnéng (683-713) 大江慧能 [wg]: Ta-ching Hui-neng, [Kor]: Hyenŭng, [Jap]: Enô a Dharma-heir of Daman Hōngrēn
Master Wúmén’s Verse

wind, flag, mind, moving,
all equally to blame.
only knowing how to open his mouth,
unaware of his fault in talking.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Two monks do not have a problem. The sixth ancestor made a big mistake, because he once said, “originally nothing.” Where is mind? Wind and flag may control the two monks, but mind controls the sixth ancestor.

1. Is the flag or the wind moving?

2. One monk was attached to the wind, another to the flag and the Sixth Chán Ancestor was attached to mind. How do you avoid these attachments?

3. If someone had said to the Sixth Ancestor, “your mind is also moving.” How could he have responded?
Case 30. Mind is Buddha

Dàméi asked Mǎzǔ, “What is the Buddha?”

Mǎzǔ answered, “This very mind is the Buddha.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

If you directly grasp Mǎzǔ’s meaning, you wear the Buddha’s clothes, eat the Buddha’s food, speak the Buddha’s words, do the Buddha’s deeds—that is, you are a Buddha himself.

Alas, Dàméi misled not a few people into taking the mark on the balance for the weight itself.

How could he realize that even mentioning the word “Buddha” should make us rinse out our mouths for three days?

If a man of understanding hears anyone say, “This very mind is the Buddha,” he will cover his ears and rush away.

颂曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

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1 Dàméi Fācháng (752-839) [wg]: Ta-mei Fa-ch'ang
2 Mǎzǔ Dàoyì (709-788) 马祖道一 [wg]: Ma-tsu Tao-i, [Kor]: Majo Toil, [Jap]: Baso Dōichi ; a Dharma-heir of Nányuè Huáiráng
青天白日
the blue sky and bright day,
切忌尋覓
no more searching around!
更問如何
“what is the Buddha?” you ask:
抱贓叫屈
with loot in your pocket, you declare yourself innocent.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: If there is no Chán Master Māzū, no monk asking a question, no Buddha to transcend, and no mind to release, what do you perceive? Do you see the sky? Do you see the tree? Already you understand. Put it all down.

1. What is Buddha?
2. What is mind?
3. Mind and Buddha, are they the same or different?
Case 31. Zhàozhōu Investigates an Old Woman

A monk asked an old woman, “What is the way to Tái Shān?”

The old woman said, “Only go straight.”

When the monk had taken a few more steps, she said, “A good, respectable monk, but he too goes that way.”

Afterward someone told Zhàozhōu about this.

Zhàozhōu said, “Wait a while and I will go and investigate the old woman for you.”

The next day he went and asked the same question, and the old woman gave the same answer.

On returning, Zhàozhōu said to his disciples, “I have completely seen through the old woman of Tái Shān for you.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

Mount Tai (Chinese: 泰山; Tái Shān, [Kor] Dae San, [kusz]: Tae Sahn [Jap]: Tai Zan) is a mountain of historical and cultural significance located north of the city of Tai’an, in Shandong Province, China. The tallest peak is Jade Emperor Peak (simplified Chinese: 玉皇顶; traditional Chinese: 玉皇頂; [py]: Yùhuáng Dīng), which is commonly reported as 1,545 meters (5,069 ft) tall, but is described by the Chinese government as 1,532.7 meters (5,028.5 ft). Mount Tai is one of the “Five Sacred Mountains”. It is associated with sunrise, birth, and renewal, and is often regarded the foremost of the five. The temples on its slopes have been a destination for pilgrims for three thousand years.

Zhàozhōu Cóngshēn (778-897) 趙州從說 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [kusz]: Joju, [Jap]: Jōshū Jūshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuán
The old woman only knew how to sit still in her tent and plan the campaign; she did not know when a spy shadowed her.

Though old Zhàozhōu proved he was clever enough to take a camp and overwhelm a fortress, he displayed no trace of being a great commander.

If we look at them, they both have their faults.

However, tell me, what did Zhàozhōu see in the old woman?

**Master Wúmén’s Verse**

The question was like the others,

the answer was the same.

sand in the rice,

thorns in the mud.

**Seung Sahn’s Commentary:** Zhàozhōu has eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, but he has no bone. How does he come down from Táishān and return to Tái Shān? The old woman has no eyes, no mouth, and no hands; how did she point the way to Tái Shān? This is very funny, ha, ha, ha, ha.

1. *Why did the old woman best the old monk?*
2. When Zhàozhōu tested the old woman, did he have mind or not?

3. What does “I have completely seen through the old woman of Tái Shān for you” mean?
Case 32. A Philosopher Questions the Buddha

A philosopher said to the Buddha, “I do not ask for words; I do not ask for silence.”

The Buddha changed position to sit correctly.

The philosopher said admiringly, “The World-honored One, with his great mercy, has blown away the clouds of my illusion and enabled me to enter the Way.”

In addition, after making bows, he took his leave.

Then Ānanda asked the Buddha, “What did he realize, to admire you so much?”

The World-honored One replied, “The best horse runs even at the shadow of the whip. The good horse runs at the sound of the whip. The bad horse runs when it feels the whip touch its flesh. The worst kind of horse will only run when it feels the pain to the marrow of its bones.

Master Wúmén’s Comment

Ānanda was the Buddha’s disciple, but his understanding was not equal to that of the philosopher. I want to ask you, what difference is there between the Buddha’s disciple and the philosopher?

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This refers to a quote from the Samyuta Agama Sutra. The quote is: The best horse runs at the shadow of the whip. The good horse runs at the sound of the whip. The bad horse runs when it feels the whip touch its flesh. The worst kind of horse will only run when it feels the pain to the marrow of its bones.
Master Wúmén’s Verse

on the edge of a sword,

over the ridge of an iceberg,

with no steps, no ladders,

climbing the cliffs without hands.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The tree, the water, the ground and the sky have no speech, yet they teach us completeness. If you do not understand the way, the truth and correct life, you must ask the moon and the sun.

1. “I do not ask for words; I do not ask for silence,” what can you do?

2. “The Buddha changed position to sit correctly,” what does this mean.

3. What did the philosopher attain?

4. “The best horse runs even at the shadow of the whip,” what does this mean?
三十三 非心非佛

Case 33. Mǎzŭ’s “No Mind, No Buddha”

馬祖、因僧問、如何是佛。
A monk asked Mâzŭ¹, “What is the Buddha?”
祖曰、非心非佛。
Mâzŭ answered, “No mind, no Buddha.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若向者裏見得、參學事畢。
If you understand this, you have finished studying Chán.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

路逢劍客須呈
present a sword if you meet a swordsman;
不遇詩人莫獻
do not offer a poem unless you meet a poet.
逢人且說三分
when talking, tell one-third of it;
未可全施一片
do not divulge the whole at once.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The rocks do not care about
Buddha or mind. The trees do not want truth or the correct
way. They only do it. They embody it.

¹ Mâzŭ Dàoyī (709-788) 馬祖道一 [wg]: Ma-tsu Tao-i, [Kor]: Majo Toil, [kusz]: Ma Jo, [Jap]: Baso Dōichi ; a Dharma-heir of Nányuè Huái ràng

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1. What is Buddha?

2. Show me, “no mind, no Buddha.”

3. No mind, no Buddha, then what?
Case 34. Nánquán’s “Conceptualization Is Not the Way”

Nánquán said, “Mind is not Buddha, conceptualization is not the Way.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

Nánquán, growing old, had no shame. Just opening his stinking mouth, he let slip the family secrets. Yet there are very few who are grateful for his kindness.

Master Wúmén’s Verse

the clouds clear, the sun shines brightly, the rain comes, the earth gets wet. opening his heart and expounding the mystery, I fear he is little appreciated.

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1 Nánquán Píyuán, (748-835) 南泉普願, [wg]: Nan-ch’üan P’u-yüan, [Kor]: Namchŏn, [kusz]: Nam Cheon, [Jap]: Nansen Fugan. Nánquán received transmission of the Dharma from Măzŭ Dăoyĭ. Nánquán gave transmission to seventeen of his students, and amongst them, Zhăozhōu Cóngshĕn and Changsha Jingcen have the most recorded history.
Seung Sahn’s Comment: A cat understands cat’s job, a dog understands dog’s job, a chicken understands chicken’s job. Human beings do not understand human being’s job. What are you doing right now? Just do it.

1. *What is conceptualization?*

2. *What is path?*
Case 35. Qiàn’s Soul Separated

五祖問僧云，倩女離魂，那箇是真底。
Wǔzǔ\(^1\) said to his monks, “Qiàn’s\(^{ii}\) soul separated from her being. Which was the real Qiàn?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
無門曰，若向者裏悟得真底，便知出殼入殼如宿旅舍。
When you realize what the real is, you will see that we pass from one husk to another like travelers stopping for a night’s lodging.

其或未然，切莫亂走。
However, if you do not realize it yet, I earnestly advise you not to rush about wildly.

然地水火風一散，如落湯螃蟹七手八腳。
When earth, water, fire, and air suddenly separate, you will be like a crab struggling in boiling water with its seven or eight arms and legs.

那時莫言、不道。
When that happens, do not say I did not warn you!

頌曰 Master Wûmén’s Verse
雲月是同
the moon above the clouds is ever the same;

渓山各異
valleys and mountains are separate from each other.

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\(^1\) Wûzû [kusz]: Oh Jo
\(^{ii}\) Qiàn [kusz]: Chong Nyo
all are blessed, all are blessed;
are they one or are they two?

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** Anger, ignorance, desire, happiness and sadness, which one of these is the true mind? If you have no mind, where do they go? One appears, two disappears. Two appear, ten thousand things appear. One disappears, everything disappears.

1. *Qiàn and her soul, are they the same or different?*

2. *Qiàn and her soul are separated, which is the true one?*
Case 36. When You Meet a Master on the Road

五祖曰，路逢達道人，不將語默對，且道，將甚麼對。
Wūzǔ said, “When you meet a Master on the road, do not meet him with words or in silence. Tell me, how will you meet him?”

Master Wūmén’s Comment
無門曰，若向者裏對得親切，不妨慶快。
In such a case, if you can manage an intimate meeting with him it will certainly be gratifying.
其或未然，也須一切處著眼。
However, if you cannot, you must be watchful in every way.

掛名 Master Wūmén’s Verse
路逢達道人
meeting a Master on the road,
不將語默對
meet him with neither words nor silence.
攔膊劈面拳
a punch on the jaw:
直下會便會
understand, if you can directly understand.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: The tree understands the weather, the mountain understands the season. All animals understand their situation and their actions. Only human beings are stupid. In spring, the grass is green; in winter, the snow is white.
1. What is a master’s job?

2. How do you greet a master on the road?

三十七  庭前栢樹

**Case 37. Cypress Tree in the Garden**

趙州、因僧問、如何是祖師西來意。
A monk asked Zhàozhōu¹, “What is the meaning of Bodhidharma’s² coming to China?”

州云、庭前栢樹子。
Zhàozhōu said, “The cypress tree in the garden.”

**Master Wúmén’s Comment**

無門曰、若向趙州答處見得親切、前無釋迦後無彌勒。
If you understand Zhàozhōu’s answer intimately, there is no Śakyamuni before you, no Maitreya to come.

**頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse**

言無展事
words cannot express the truth;

語不投機
speech does not convey the spirit.

承言者喪
swayed by words, you are lost;

滯句者迷

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¹ Zhàozhōu Cóngshên (778-897) 趙州從谂 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [kusz]: Joju, [Jap]: Jôshû Jûshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pùyuán

² Bodhidharma (d: 536) 達摩 [py]: Dámó, [wg]: Ta-mo, [Kor]: Talma, [Jap]: Datsuma, he is considered Twenty-Eighth in the Indian Lineage from Śakyamuni, and the First Chinese Ancestor.
Seung Sahn’s Comment: Hard training, this was a very difficult job for Bodhidharma. His “do it” opened many people’s eyes; however, he lost his body. Then three years after he died, he found his body and traveled to India. Where is he now; the pine tree is green and the sky is blue.

1. *Who is Bodhidharma?*

2. *Why did Bodhidharma come to China?*

3. *What does “the cypress tree in the front garden” mean?*

4. *If you were the monk and Zhàozhōu gave you this answer what could you have done?*
三十八 牛過窓櫺

Case 38. A Buffalo Passes the Window

五祖曰、譬如水牯牛過窓櫺、頭角四蹄都過了、因甚麼尾巴過不得。
Wūzǔ said, “A buffalo passes by the window. His head, horns, and four legs all go past. But why can’t the tail pass too?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若 向者裏顛倒、著得一隻眼、下得一轉語、
可以上報四恩下資三有。
If you make a complete about-face, open your eye, and give a turning word on this point, you will be able to repay the four kinds of love that have favored you and help the sentient beings in the three realms that follow you.

其或未然、更須照顧尾巴始得。
If you are still unable to do this, return to this tail and reflect upon it, and then for the first time you will realize something.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

過去墮坑斃
passing by, it falls into a ditch;
回來却被壞
coming back, all the worse, it is lost.
者些尾巴子
this tiny little tail,
直是甚奇怪
what a strange thing it is!
Seung Sahn’s Comment: The water buffalo’s tail killed all the Buddhas, killed all the teachers and killed all sentient beings. Where is the buffalo’s tail? Do you see it? Are you holding it? It has already passed.

1. Where is the water buffalo?

2. How did the water buffalo’s head, horns and legs pass through?

3. Why can’t the tail pass through?
Case 39. A Mistake in Speaking

A monk said to Yúnmén, “The brilliance of the Buddha silently illuminates the whole universe. . .”

However, before he could finish the verse, Yúnmén said, “Aren’t those the words of Zhang Zhou the Genius?”

“Yes, they are,” answered the monk.

“You have slipped up in your speaking,” Yúnmén said.

Afterward, Sǐxīn Chán Master brought up the matter and said, “Tell me; at what point did the monk make a mistake in his speaking?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

If you clearly understand this and realize how exacting Yúnmén was in his method, and what made the monk err in his speaking, you are qualified to be a teacher of heaven and earth.

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1 Yúnmén Wényǎn (1025-1115) 雲門慧眼. [wg]: Yün-men Wen-yen, [Kor]: Unmūn, [kusz]: Un Mun, [Jap]: Unmon Bun’en a Dharma-heir of Huánglóng Huīnan.

2 Zhang Zhou [kusz]: Chán Jul Su Jae

3 Sǐxīn Chán Master [kusz]: Master Sa Shim
If you are not yet clear about it, you are far from saving yourself.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
急流垂釣
a line cast in the rapids,
貪餌者著
the greedy will be caught.
口縫纔開
before you start to open your mouth,
性命喪却
your life is already lost!


1. “The brilliance of the Buddha silently illuminates the whole universe. . .” what does this mean?

2. Why did Yúnmén say, “You have slipped up in your speaking?”

3. Where is the place where this monk has slipped up in his speaking?
Case 40. Kicking Over the Piss Pot

When Guīshān Chán Master was with Báizhàng, he was kitchen master of the monastery.

Báizhàng wanted to choose a master for Mount Dàwéi, so he called together all the monks and told them that anyone who could answer his question in an outstanding manner would be chosen.

Then he took a piss pot and stood it on the floor, and said, “You may not call this a piss pot. What do you call it?”

The head monk said, “It cannot be called a stump.”

Báizhàng asked Guīshān his opinion.

Guīshān tipped over the piss pot with his feet and went out.

Báizhàng laughed and said, “The head monk loses.”

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1 Guīshān Lingyu (1094-1164) 惠山 [wg]: Wei-shan Ling-yu, [Kor]: Wisan, [kusz]: Wi Sahn, [Jap]: Isan Reiyu
2 Báizhàng Huáihái (720-814) 百丈懷海 [wg]: Pai-chang Huai-hai; [kusz]: Pai Chang, [Jap]: Hyakujō Ekai was a Chinese Chán Master during the Tang Dynasty. He is a dharma heir of Mǎzŭ Dàoyī. Báizhàng’s students included Huángbò and Línjì
In addition, Guīshān was named as the founder of the new monastery.

**Master Wúmén’s Comment**

Guīshān displayed Great Spirit in his action, but he could not cut himself free from Báizhàng’s apron strings. He preferred the heavier task to lighter one.

Why was he like that, eh?

He took off his headband to bear the iron yoke.

**Master Wúmén’s Verse**

He made a glorious dash and swept all before him.

Báizhàng’s barrier cannot stop his advance,

thousands of Buddhas come forth from the tips of his toes.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** Guīshān is not good and not bad. Too wild, he must keep a clear mind. Are his hands on vacation?
1. *This must not be called a piss pot, what do you call it?*

2. *Where is the head monk’s mistake?*

3. *Why did Guīshān kick over the piss pot?*
Case 41. Bodhidharma’s Rest Mind

Bodhidharma sat facing the wall.

The Second Ancestor stood in the snow.

He cut off his arm and presented it to Bodhidharma, crying, “My mind cannot be at rest! I beg you, master, please pacify my mind!”

“Bring your mind here and I will put it at rest,” replied Bodhidharma.

“I have searched for my mind, and I cannot find it,” said the Second Ancestor.

“Now your mind is pacified,” said Bodhidharma.

Master Wúmén’s Comment

The broken-toothed old Barbarian came so importantly, thousands of miles over the sea.

i Bodhidharma (d: 536) 達磨, Ta-mo, Talma, Datsuma, he is considered Twenty-Eighth in the Indian Lineage from Śakyamuni, and the First Chinese Ancestor.

ii Dazu Huìkě (487-593) 大祖慧可, Hui-k’o; Taiso Eka is considered the Second Patriarch of Chinese Chán and the twenty-ninth since Gautama Buddha.
This was raising waves where there was no wind.
末後接得一箇門人，又却六根不具。
In his last years he induced enlightenment in his disciple, who, to make matters worse, was defective in the six roots.
謝三郎不識四字。
Why, Sānláng did not know for ideographs.

頌目 Master Wúmén’s Verse
西來直指
coming east, directly pointing,
事因囑起
you entrusted the Dharma, and trouble arose,
撓聒叢林
the clamor of the monasteries
元來是
is all because of you.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Very stupid Bodhidharma, why did he sit for nine years? Does he have a mind or not? If he has no mind, he has lost his life. What did the Second Ancestor achieve? If you understand this, go drink tea.

1. Do you have a mind?

2. At that time, what was the Second Ancestor’s unrest mind?

3. Where did the Second Ancestor’s mind go?

4. What is rest mind?
Case 42. A Woman Comes out of Samadhi

Once, in the old days, in the time of the World-honored One, Mañjuśrī went to the assembly of the Buddhas and found that everyone had departed to his original dwelling place. Only a woman remained, sitting in samadhi close to the Buddha’s throne. Mañjuśrī asked Śakyamuni Buddha, “Why can the girl get near the Buddha’s throne, while I cannot?” Śakyamuni Buddha said, “Bring her out of her samadhi and ask her yourself.” Mañjuśrī walked around the girl three times, snapped his fingers once, took her to the Brahma heaven, and exerted all his miraculous powers to bring her out of her meditation, but in vain.

文殊、因文殊、至諸佛集處倶諸佛各還本處。
The World-honored One said, “Even a hundred thousand Mañjuśrī’s cannot make her wake up.

下方過一十二億河沙國土有罔明菩薩。

But down below, past twelve hundred million lands as innumerable as the sands of Ganges, there is the Bodhisattva of Delusive Wisdom.

能出此女人定。

He will be able to rouse her from her samadhi.”

須臾罔明大士、從地湧出禮拜世尊。世尊敕罔明。

Instantly the Bodhisattva of Delusive Wisdom emerged from the earth and made a bow to the World-honored One, who gave him his imperial order.

却至女人前鳴指一下。

The Bodhisattva went over to the woman and snapped his fingers once.

女人於是從定而出。

At this, she came out of her samadhi.

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、釋迦老子、做者一場雜劇、不通小小。

Old Śakyamuni put a petty drama on the stage and failed to enlighten the masses.

且道、文殊是七佛之師、因甚出　女人定不得。

I want to ask you, Mañjuśrī is the teacher of the Seven Buddhas; why couldn’t he arouse the woman from her samadhi.

罔明初地菩薩、爲甚却出得。

How was it that a Bodhisattva at the beginner’s stage could do it?

若向者裹見得親切、業識忙忙那伽大定。
If you understand this intimately, you will enjoy Nagya’s grand samadhi in the busiest activity of consciousness.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
出得出不得
one was successful, the other was not;
渠儂得自由
both secured freedom of mind.
神頭并鬼面
one in a god-mask, the other in a devil-mask;
敗闌當風流
even in defeat, a beautiful performance.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Head cannot hold a pen, eyes cannot hear a sound, and mouth cannot see the sky. Men cannot have a baby. Hands have hand’s job, legs have leg’s job, and you must understand your correct job. When the rooster crows in the morning, the body gets up.

1. What is deep samadhi?

2. Why was a very high-ranking Bodhisattva not able to wake the woman, while a low ranking one could?

3. After the woman came out of samadhi, what became clear?
Case 43 Shǒushān’s Chán Stick

Shǒushān1 Chán Master held up his Chán stick before his disciples and said, “You monks! If you call this a Chán stick, you oppose its reality.

不喚作竹築則背。

If you do not call it a Chán stick, you ignore the fact.

汝諸人、且道、喚作甚麼。

Tell me, you monks, what will you call it?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、喚作竹築則觸。

If you call it a walking stick, you oppose its reality.

不喚作竹築則背。

If you do not call it a walking stick, you ignore the fact.

不得有語、不得無語。

Words are not available; silence is not available.

速道、速道。

Now, tell me quickly, what is it?

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

拈起竹築

holding up the walking stick,

———

1 Shǒushān Shěngniàn (926-993)首山省念, [kusz]: Su Sahn
行殺活令
he takes life, he gives life.
背觸交馳
opposing and ignoring interweave.
佛祖乞命
even Buddhas and Ancestors beg for their lives.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** Originally, there is no name and no form. When one mind appeared, name and form appeared. If you are attached to name and form, you cannot get out of hell. Attaining the correct function of name and form, you become Buddha.

1. *What do you call it?*

2. *Someone in the assembly answered correctly. If you were Shǒushān what could you do?*
Case 44. Bājiāo’s Zen Stick

Bājiāo Chán Master said to his disciples, “If you have a Chán stick, I will give you a Chán stick.
If you have no Chán Stick, I will take it from you.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
It helps me wade across a river when the bridge is down. It accompanies me to the village on a moonless night.
If you call it a staff, you will enter hell like an arrow.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
the depths and shallows of the world
are all in its grasp.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: All animals understand their
correct way and correct action. Only human beings remain
ingnant. The rabbit likes carrots, the mouse likes cheese.
1. How could you answer?

2. If you do not have a Chán Stick how can Shǒushān take it from you?

四十五 他是誰
Case 45. “Who Is This?”

東山演師祖曰、釋迦彌勒猶是他奴。
Wūzǔ of Dòngshān said, “Even Śakyamuni and Maitreya are servants of another.
且道、他是誰。
I want to ask you, who is he?”

Master Wúmén’s Comment
無門曰、若也見得他分曉、譬如十字街頭撞見親爺相似、更不須問別人道是與不是。
If you can really see this “another” with perfect clarity, it is like encountering your own father at a crossroads. Why should you ask whether you recognize him or not?

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
他弓莫挽
do not draw another’s bow,
他馬莫騎
do not ride another’s horse,
他非莫辨
do not discuss another’s faults,
他事莫知
do not explore another’s affairs.
Seung Sahn’s Comment: If you do not make anything, the whole universe is yours. If you make something, you are already dead. If you want to meet the Buddha, go to the kitchen. If you want to see Maitreya, go to the bathroom.

1. *Who is this?*

2. *Are Buddha’s, Maitreya’s and the other’s job the same or different?*

四十六 竿頭進步

**Case 46. Proceed from the Top of the Pole**

石霊和尚云、百尺竿頭、如何進步。
Shíshuāng Chán Master said, “When standing at the top of a hundred-foot pole one more step is necessary.”

又古德云、百尺竿頭坐底人、雖然得入未為真。
Another eminent teacher of old said, “You, who sit on the top of a hundred-foot pole, although you have entered the Way you are not yet genuine.

百尺竿頭、須進步十方世界現全身。
Proceed from the top of the pole, and you will show your whole body in the ten directions.”

**Master Wúmén’s Comment**

無門曰、進得步、翻得身、更嫌何處不稱尊。
If you go on further and turn your body about, no place is left where you are not the master.

然雖如是、且道、百尺竿頭、如何進步。嗄。
Even so, tell me, how will you go on further from the top of a hundred-foot pole? Eh?”

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse
he dulls the third eye of insight
and clings to the first mark on the scale.
even though he may sacrifice his life,
he is only a blind man leading the blind.

1. *When standing at the top of a hundred-foot pole one more step is necessary, what does this mean?*

2. *You, who sit on the top of a hundred-foot pole, although you have entered the Way you are not yet genuine, means what?*

3. *How can you show your body in the ten directions?*
Case 47. Dōushuài’s Three Barriers

Dōushuài Chán Master set up three barriers for his disciples:

1. You leave no stone unturned to explore profundity, simply to see into your true nature.
即今上人性在甚處。  
Now, I want to ask you, just at this moment, where is your true nature?
識得自性方脱生死。
2. If you realize your true nature, you are free from life and death.
眼光落時、作麼生脱。  
Tell me, when your eyesight deserts you at the last moment, how can you be free from life and death?
脱得生死便知去處、四大分離向甚處去。
3. When you set yourself free from life and death, you should know your ultimate destination. So when the four elements separate, where will you go?

Master Wúmén’s Comment

If you can put turning words to these three questions, you are the master wherever you may stand and command Chán whatever circumstances you may be in.

四十七  兜率三關

Case 47. Dōushuài’s Three Barriers

兜率悅和尚、設三關問學者、  
Dōushuài Chán Master set up three barriers for his disciples:  

撥草參玄只圖見性。  
1. You leave no stone unturned to explore profundity, simply to see into your true nature.
即今上人性在甚處。  
Now, I want to ask you, just at this moment, where is your true nature?
識得自性方脱生死。
2. If you realize your true nature, you are free from life and death.
眼光落時、作麼生脱。  
Tell me, when your eyesight deserts you at the last moment, how can you be free from life and death?
脱得生死便知去處、四大分離向甚處去。
3. When you set yourself free from life and death, you should know your ultimate destination. So when the four elements separate, where will you go?

Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若能下得此三轉語、便可以隨處作主遇縁即宗。  
If you can put turning words to these three questions, you are the master wherever you may stand and command Chán whatever circumstances you may be in.

其或未然、亀易飽、細嚼難飢。
If otherwise, listen: gulping down your meal will fill you easily, but chewing it well can sustain you.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

一念普觀無量劫
this moment’s thoughts see through eternal time,
無量劫事即如今
eternal time is just this moment.
如今破箇一念
if you see through this moment’s thought,
破如今底人
you see through the man who sees through this moment.

1. You leave no stone unturned to explore profundity, simply to see into your true nature. Now, I want to ask you, just at this moment, where is your true nature?

2. If you realize your true nature, you are free from life and death. Tell me, when your eyesight deserts you at the last moment, how can you be free from life and death?

3. When you set yourself free from life and death, you should know your ultimate destination. So when the four elements separate, where will you go?
Case 48. Gànfēng’s One Road

A monk asked Gànfēng Chán Master, “It is written, ‘Bhagavads in the ten directions and one straight road to Nirvana.’

I still wonder where the road can be.”

Gànfēng lifted his staff, drew a line, and said, “Here it is.”

Later the monks asked the same question to Yúnmén, who held up his fan and said, “This fan jumps up to the thirty-third heaven and hits the nose of the deity Sakra Devanam Indra.

When you strike the carp of the eastern sea, the rain comes down in torrents.”

Master Wúmén’s Comment

One, going to the bottom of the sea, lifts up clouds of dust; the other, on the top of the highest mountain, raises towering waves to wash the sky.

One holding fast, the other letting go, each stretches out his hand to support the profound teaching.
They are just like two riders starting from opposite ends of the course and meeting in the middle.

However, none on earth can be absolutely direct.

When examined with a true eye, neither of these two great masters knows the road.

頌曰  **Master Wúmén’s Verse**

未舉步時先已到
before a step is taken, the goal is reached;
未動舌時先說了
before the tongue is moved, the speech is finished.
直饒著著在機先
though each move is ahead of the next,
更須知有向上竅
there is still a transcendent secret.

1. *Where is the one straight road to Nirvana?*

2. *Gànfēng lifted his staff and drew a line, what does this mean?*
後序  
Master Wúmén’s Postscript

從上佛祖垂示機緣、據款結案、初無剽語。
The sayings and doings of the Buddha and the Ancestors have been set down in their original form.

掲翻腦蓋、露出眼睛。
Nothing superfluous has been added by the author, who has taken the lid off his head and exposed his eyeballs.

肯要諸人直下承當、不從佗覓。
Your direct realization is demanded; it should not be sought through others.

若是通方上士。纔聞舉著、便知落處。
If you are a man of realization, you will immediately grasp the point at the slightest mention of it.

了無門戶可入、亦無階級可升。
There is no gate for you to go through; there are no stairs for you to ascend.

掉臂度關不問關吏。
You pass the checkpoint, squaring your shoulders, without asking permission of the keeper.

豈不見玄沙道、無門解脫之門、無意道人之意。
Remember Master Xuánshā’s way, “No-gate is the gate of emancipation; no-meaning is the meaning of the man of the Way.”

又白雲道、明明知道只是者箇、為甚麼透不過。
In addition, Báiyún says, “Clearly you know how to talk of it, but why can’t you pass this simple, specific thing?”
However, all this kind of talk is like making a mud pie with milk and butter.

If you have passed the Wúménguān, you can make a fool of Chán Master Wúmén.

If not, you are betraying yourself.

It is easy to know the Nirvana mind but difficult to attain the wisdom of differentiation.

When you have realized this wisdom, peace and order will reign over your land.

The first year of Shàoding [1228], five days before the end of the summer retreat.

Respectfully inscribed by Wúmén Huikāi Bhikū, eighth in succession from Yángqí Bāshì

Wúménguān End of the book
Paul has been practicing Buddhist meditation for more than twenty-five years, and with the sanction and encouragement of Zen Master Sūngsan, founded the Huntington Beach Zen Center on August 14, 1993 where Zen Master Sūngsan installed him as Abbot of the Zen Center during the opening ceremony. The Huntington Beach Zen Center was originally a residential Zen Center where up to eight students lived and practiced. Paul faithfully served as the Abbot for fifteen years from 1993 until the summer of 2008. Over those years, the Zen Center moved from Huntington Beach to Stanton and later settled in Long Beach when it became a non-residential Center in 2000.
Throughout the late 1980's and into the early 1990's Paul had the opportunity to practice with Zen Master Sŭngsan; and although his grand-teacher was retired from formal teaching at the time, the monks at Dharma Zen Center would frequently request him to host kōan interviews with the students during his frequent long stays in Los Angeles.

Paul Lynch, JDPSN received Inka from Zen Master Jibong of the Golden Wind Zen Order in April of 2006. Paul is no longer associated with the Golden Wind Order and has since founded the Five Mountain Sangha when he made the decision to enter into Zen studies with James Ford, Roshi of the Harada/Yasutани Lineage of Japanese Zen as transmitted through John Tarrant Roshi who was the first Dharma Heir of Robert Aitken Roshi. Besides having a practice location in Huntington Beach, California, he also has Zen Centers located in Berkeley, California, and Cincinnati, Ohio.

Paul has traveled extensively throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia sitting retreats with many of the Zen Masters both inside and outside of the Kwan Um School of Zen. Additionally, he is a Poet and Author, was encouraged by Zen Master Sŭngsan to write poetry, and was counseled by his grand-teacher in the proper use and function of Zen Poetry in practice and teaching. Paul, JDPSN has written many books; including Cold Heart Thawing, a collection of his earlier poetry, Peering through the Cloud, a collection of his latter poetry, and A Path to Christ Consciousness was co-authored with his long time Dharma friend Robert Harwood. Pŏpsanim has also written Five Mountains–a Practice Guide to Sŏn Buddhism, Zen Liturgy–Korean Sŏn Practice Forms, and Buddhist Precepts–a Guide for Western Buddhist Lay Practitioners along with Translations of The Barrier That Has No Gate, Wú Mén Guān and The Blue Cliff Record. These books are available from the Zen Center, at Before Thought Publications or any of your local booksellers.
Appendix 一: Dharma Lineage

Five Mountain Order
金風禪宗

Indian Ancestors

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<th>563-483 BCE</th>
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<td>12. Asvaghosa</td>
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<td>13. Kapimala</td>
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<td>15. Kāṇadeva</td>
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<td>17. Sanghanandi</td>
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<td>20. Jayata</td>
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<td>28. Bodhidharma</td>
<td>470 – 536</td>
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Chinese Ancestors

29. Dàzǔ Huìkě   487 – 592
30. Jiāngxi Sēngcàn   d. 606
31. Dàyì Dàoxìn   580 – 651
32. Dàomén Hóngrèn   602 – 675
33. Dàjiāng Huinéng   683 – 713
34. Nányuè Huáiràng   677 – 744
35. Mǎzǔ Dàoyī   709 – 788
36. Báizhàng Huáihái   720 – 814
37. Huángbò Xīyún   720 – 850
38. Línjì Yixuán   d. 867
39. Xiāngyán Zhixián   830 – 888
40. Nányuàn Huiyóng   860 – 930
41. Fēngxuè Yánzhào   926 – 993
42. Shōushān Shēngniàn   947–1024
43. Fényáng Shānzhāo   987–1040
44. Shishuāng Chuyuán   993–1046
45. Yángqí Fānyǔ   1025–1072
46. Wúzhǔn Shīfàn   1103–1163
47. Mīn Xiánjié   Unknown
48. Yuánwù Kèqín   Unknown
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<td>Guigog Jeongun</td>
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<td>Pyoggye Jongshim</td>
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<td>69.</td>
<td>Cheonbong Taeheul</td>
<td>1710-1793</td>
<td>千峯泰屹</td>
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<td>Yulbong Chongwa</td>
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<td>Keumho Bopchom</td>
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<td>Yongam Heeong</td>
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<td>Manhwa Boson</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
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<td>75.</td>
<td>Kyongho Song’u</td>
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<td>Mangong Wolmyeon</td>
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<td>Sungsan Hangwon</td>
<td>1927-2004</td>
<td>崇山行願</td>
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<td>79.</td>
<td>Jibong Haeum</td>
<td>1941-Present</td>
<td>智顶洋音</td>
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<td>80.</td>
<td>Dochong Popsa</td>
<td>1957-Present</td>
<td>道清禅师</td>
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Publisher: Weatherhill,
ASIN 0–8348–0125–6
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iv Kwan Um School of Zen: The Kwan Um School of Zen is an international organization of more than a hundred centers and groups founded by Zen Master Seung Sahn, among the first wave of Korean Zen Masters to live and teach in the West. The School’s purpose is to make this practice of Zen Buddhism available to an ever-growing number of students throughout the world. The heart of the Kwan Um School of Zen is the daily practice, which goes on in its Zen centers and groups. Students and visitors eat together, work together, and meditate together – gradually attaining a clear compassionate mind, which moment to moment is able to help all beings. They offer training in Zen meditation through meditation instruction, daily morning and evening practice, public talks, teaching interviews, sittings, retreats and workshops. Their programs are open to anyone regardless of previous experience and are often offered at no cost.

v Sŭngsan sŏnsa (1927-2004) (KUSZ: Seung Sahn Soen-sa) was a Korean Zen master born in Seun Choen, North Korea. In 1973 he founded the Kwan Um School of Zen in Providence, Rhode Island. Zen Master Sŭngsan died in at Hwage’sa in Seoul, South Korea. Some of his Zen teachings were recorded in several books, including The Compass of Zen, Only Don’t Know: Selected Teaching Letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn, and Dropping Ashes on the Buddha which was his first book actually was the labor of Stephen Mitchell, an early student of Zen Master Sŏngsan. Zen Master Sŏngsan also bestowed the title of Taesŏnsa-nim (KUSZ: Due Soen Sa Nim) upon himself as a celebration for his sixtieth birthday, which mean ‘Great Honored Zen Master.’

Wade-Giles (Simplified Chinese: 威妥玛拼音 or 韦氏拼音), sometimes abbreviated Wade, is a Romanization system (phonetic notation and transliteration) for the Chinese language based on the form of Mandarin used in Beijing. It developed from a system produced by Thomas Wade in the mid-19th century, and reached settled form with Herbert Giles’s Chinese-English dictionary of 1892. Wade-Giles was the main system of transliteration in the English-speaking world for most of the 20th century, replacing the Nanjing-based romanization systems that had been common until late in the 19th century. It has mostly been replaced by the pinyin system today, but remains in use in the Republic of China (Taiwan).

vi Pinyin is a system of romanization (phonemic notation and transcription to Roman script) for Standard Mandarin, where pin means “spell” and yin means “sound”. The most common variant of pinyin in use is called Hanyu Pinyin (Simplified Chinese: 汉语拼音方案; Traditional Chinese: 漢語拼音方案; pinyin: Hànyǔ Pīnyīn fāng'àn), also known as scheme

McCune-Reischauer is a romanization system of the Korean language, created in 1937 by two Americans: George M. McCune and Edwin O. Reischauer. It does not attempt to transliterate Hangul but rather to represent the phonetic pronunciation. North Korea and many Western countries use this system while South Korea replaced it with a new romanization system that was created by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Revised Romanization of Korean. A third system—the Yale romanization system, which is a one-to-one transliteration system—exists, but is only used in academic literature, especially in linguistics. During the period of Russian interest in Korea at the beginning of the 20th century, attempts were also made at representing Korean in Cyrillic. The McCune-Reischauer system is basically friendly to Westerners.

Hakuin Ekaku (白隠 慧鶴, 1686 – 1769 or 1685 – 1768) was one of the most influential figures in Japanese Zen Buddhism. He revived the Rinzai School from a moribund period of stagnation, refocusing it on its traditionally rigorous training methods integrating meditation and kōan practice. Hakuin's influence was such that all Rinzai Zen masters today trace their lineage through him, and all modern practitioners of Rinzai Zen use practices directly derived from his teachings.