









# ON THE “KIRIGAMI” IN SŌTŌ-ZEN TRADITION

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The “Kirigami” (切紙) literally means the “cut paper”, which is transmitted from the Master to disciple together with the oral esoteric teachings. This tradition started from the Tendai Sect of Japanese Buddhism, and was used to transmit the secret principles of Buddhistic arts, such as flower arrangement, tea ceremony or the Nō-play since the middle ages of Japan. One of the best known collections of “Kirigami” in the field of arts is the “Kadensho” (花伝書) by Zeami (世阿弥 1363-1443), the famous master of Nō-play. It has been said that the “Kirigami” was originally invented to transmit the inexplicable doctrine of Hongaku (本覺) of the Japanese Tendai Sect. The doctrine of Hongaku is to realize the Innate Buddha-nature, and it belongs to the category of working from the result towards the cause. The Hongaku doctrine could not be expressed through ordinary usage of words because of its non-dualism and absolute nature. Thus it was bound to take symbolical expression, shared common to all religious languages based on deep religious experiences. Therefore, the disciple receives a sheet of paper from the Master after his hard training of esoteric practice, as a sort of memorandum with symbolical signs and words together with the oral teachings from the Master. It is also used in the Jōdo-shin Sect, but especially in the tradition of Soto-zen Sect the “Kirigami” is highly respected, as the sign of the right transmission of the right law of Buddha from the right Master. Only in the Sōtō-zen Sect is it to be re-written by the disciple himself kept secretly throughout his priesthood life. The novice of Sōtō-zen Sect anticipates seeing the “Kirigami” very much, because it is supposed to explain the secret of the deepest religious experience, but usually he is disappointed because it is now very difficult for most people to understand it, due to the lack of the right oral tradition.

which is supposed to be together with it, and of its extremely symbolical form.

The "Kirigami" of the Sōtō-zen Sect has many explanatory diagrams, which consist of black and white or red points and circles, and clockwise or anti-clockwise swastikas. One of the typical examples of the "Kirigami" is the diagram of the "Sho-hen Goi" (正偏五位, Five Ranks Dialectic), which explains the five stages of practice of Zen according to Tōzan Ryōkai (洞山良介 Tung-shan Liang-shieh, 807-869), the founder of Chinese Sōtō-zen Sect, and his disciple, the second patriarch, Sōzan Honjaku (曹山本寂 Ss'ao-shan Pen-chi, 840-901). It uses the symbolical signs such as the black circle which is called "Shō" (正), meaning the one or the ultimate reality, and the white circle which is called "Hen" (偏), meaning the Many or the phenomenal world. It also uses the trigrams and hexagrams of I-ching, the traditional book of Chinese divination, which shows every stage to enlightenment, with their own symbolical meanings, but it seems they are used only for their forms and not for their meanings.

The first stage is shown as  or . It means the one is in the Many, the ultimate reality does not have form, but from it all existing forms are discriminated, therefore, it does not transcend the phenomenal world, in other words, the ultimate reality is itself the phenomenal world. The second stage is shown as  or . It means the Many in the one, it is the situation as seen from the phenomenal world toward the ultimate reality. The all existing phenomena themselves are the expression of the underlying ultimate reality. The third stage is shown as  or . It means that coming from the one, the ultimate reality and the phenomenal world are two faces of one thing, nevertheless, one has to transcend the phenomenal world first and live in the ultimate reality which manifests all phenomena. The ultimate reality becomes the center of the whole. The fourth stage is shown as  or . It is the reversion of the former stage, that one goes deeply into the phenomenal world. The phenomenal world becomes the center of the whole. Here, the different tradition says that both sides arrive into the midst of dualities. Therefore, D. T. Suzuki analyses the first three stages as noetic comprehension and the last two as *conative*, and the transformation takes place in the third stage, but

generally it is understood that only in the last stage the conative or sythetic comprehension takes place. The last stage is shown as ● or ☯. It means the summary of the proceeding four stages, it transcends the discrimination of the ultimate reality and the phenomenal world.

It is known that in Tang (唐) and Sung (宋) dynasties in China, it is quite common in explaining metaphysical theories by a certain style of diagrams. Alfonso Verdú pointed out in his article "The 'Five Ranks' Dialectic of the Sōtō-zen School", the similarity between "Shōhen Goi" by Tōzan Ryōkai and the "Goi no setsu" (The theory of 'Five Ranks') by Keihō Shūmitsu (圭峰宗密 Kuei-feng Tsung-mi, 779-841), a contemporary of Tōzan and the fifth generation of Katakū-zen, and also the fifth patriarch of the Kegon Sect. A. Verdú tries to find out the intimate relationship between these two theories and diagrams, but A. Verdú himself admits that Keiho Shimitsu's 'Five Ranks' explains the doctrine of "Yuishiki" (唯識, Vijñapti mātrātā) of Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism, while Tōzan Ryokai's 'Five Ranks' lacks the ontological expression of Kegon or Yuishiki and uses the metaphorical and concrete expressions which are so typical of Zen, and it rejects in principle speculative reasoning. Also the former is essentially cosmogenic leading to the ultimate reality of the Buddhist idealism, while the latter is not cosmogenic, strictly speaking, and the "ultimate reality" and its "reversion" are both included in the stages towards a total synthesis. So the similarity comes from mainly the use of similar diagrams and names of diagrams.

The tradition of these diagrams goes back to Han (漢) dynasty. It is said that there were 9 diagrams of these sorts had existed in the "Chou i ts'an t'ung chi" (周易參同契, The concordance of the Three; an apocryphal tradition of interpretation of the Book of Changes, A. D. 142?), though only two remain at present. The "Chou i ts'an t'ung chi" is the earliest extant treatise of Chinese alchemy, and is said to be written by Wei Po-yang (魏伯陽). It explains the technical problem of *phasing* the alchemical process in a sequence of stages using the symbolical expressions of trigrams and hexagrams of the I-ching, and the diagrams of waxes and wanes of the moon. However, it is also said that the diagrams of the treatise which remain today have quite

developed forms which might not be as old as the treatise itself but that the additional part was put into it later. In any case, the diagrams of waxes and wanes of the moon were found in some other manuscripts in the structure of images and number symbolism developed from the book of I-ching in the later Hang dynasty, and together with the wide-spread five-elements theory, the 'Five Ranks' is not such a particular form of explanatory diagram in the later periods of China.

According to Chou Hsi (朱熹), the "Chou i ts'an t'ung chi" refers to breathing disciplines which had taken over the language of alchemy classified as "internal alchemy (内丹)". And so the symbolism in these diagrams actually means the process of practices as well as the metaphysical theories behind the practices. C. G. Jung had the idea that modern psychology can offer a possibility of understanding the symbolical expressions of alchemical operation in the east and west. He wrote in his commentary on "Das Geheimnis der goldenen Blüte", the translation of the Chinese text of one of the books of later internal alchemy by Richard Willhelm, as follows; "the union of opposites on a higher level of consciousness is not a rational thing, nor is it a matter of will; it is a process of psychic development that expresses itself in symbols, and today the development of personality is still depicted in symbolic form. I discovered this fact in the following way. The spontaneous fantasy products become more profound and gradually concentrate into abstract structures that apparently "Principles" in the sense of Gnostic archai. When the fantasies take the form chiefly of thoughts, intuitive formulations of dimly felt laws or principles emerge which at first tend to be dramatised or personified. If the fantasies are drawn, symbols appear that are chiefly of the mandala (circle) type". "Such a symbolic unity cannot be attained by the conscious will because consciousness is always partisan. Its opponent is the collective unconscious, which does not understand the language of the conscious mind. Therefore it is necessary to have the magic of the symbol which contains those primitive analogies that speak to the unconscious. The unconscious can be reached and expressed only by symbols, and for this reason the process of individuation can never do without the symbol. The symbol is the primitive exponent of

the unconscious, but at the same time an idea that corresponds to the highest intuition of the conscious mind".

The symbolic expressions of diagrams in the tradition of Chinese innate alchemy aim the inner perfection which is what Jung calls the individuation, and the "Kirigami" which are influenced by those diagrams, also pointing the certain goal at the end of the dialectical processes. To understand the symbolic meanings of these diagrams, one has to study, first of all, the complicated promises of I-ching symbolism of Han dynasty, but adopting the interpretations of the symbolic expressions from the unconscious materials, such as dreams, fantasies and images, used in modern Jungian psychology, can also add something more in understanding the symbolic diagrams of those of Chinese alchemy, as well as of the "Kirigami" in Sōtō-zen tradition.

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