

Growing & Learning The Way of The Architect

»» The Ten Ox

The Ten Ox

“... illustrate the stages of a practitioner's progression...”

“...comes from the Maha Gopalaka Sutta
(Majjhima Nikaya 33)”

Appeared in China ~12th century

Verses by Kuòān Shīyuǎn;

Translation by Senzaki Nyogen (1876–1958) and Paul
Reps (1895–1990);

Paintings traditionally attributed to Tenshō Shūbun
(1414–1463).

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls

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1. In Search of the Ox
In the pasture of the world, I endlessly push aside the tall grasses in search of the Ox. Following unnamed rivers, lost upon the interpenetrating paths of distant mountains, My strength failing and my vitality exhausted, I cannot find the Ox.

Commentary:

The Ox is not lost – it is the Architect who is lost ...in the midst of sensory overload, unable to discern truth or what is essential from the Ten-Thousand Things.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls



2. Discovery of the Footprints

*Along the riverbank
under the trees,
I discover footprints.
Even under the fragrant
grass, I see his prints.
Deep in remote
mountains they are
found. These traces can
no more be hidden
than one's nose,
looking heavenward*

Commentary:

The Architect has discovered hints of Patterns, but cannot yet discern good patterns from bad. Clinging to hammer – everything looks like a nail.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls



3. Perceiving the Ox
*I hear the song of the nightingale.
The sun is warm, the wind is mild,
willows are green along the shore –
Here no Ox can hide!
What artist can draw that massive head,
those majestic horns?*

Commentary:

The six senses merge, the Architect has entered the gate and the myriad illusions of false patterns fall away. The Architect focuses on First Principles – and is not blinded by the next Shiny New Thing.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls

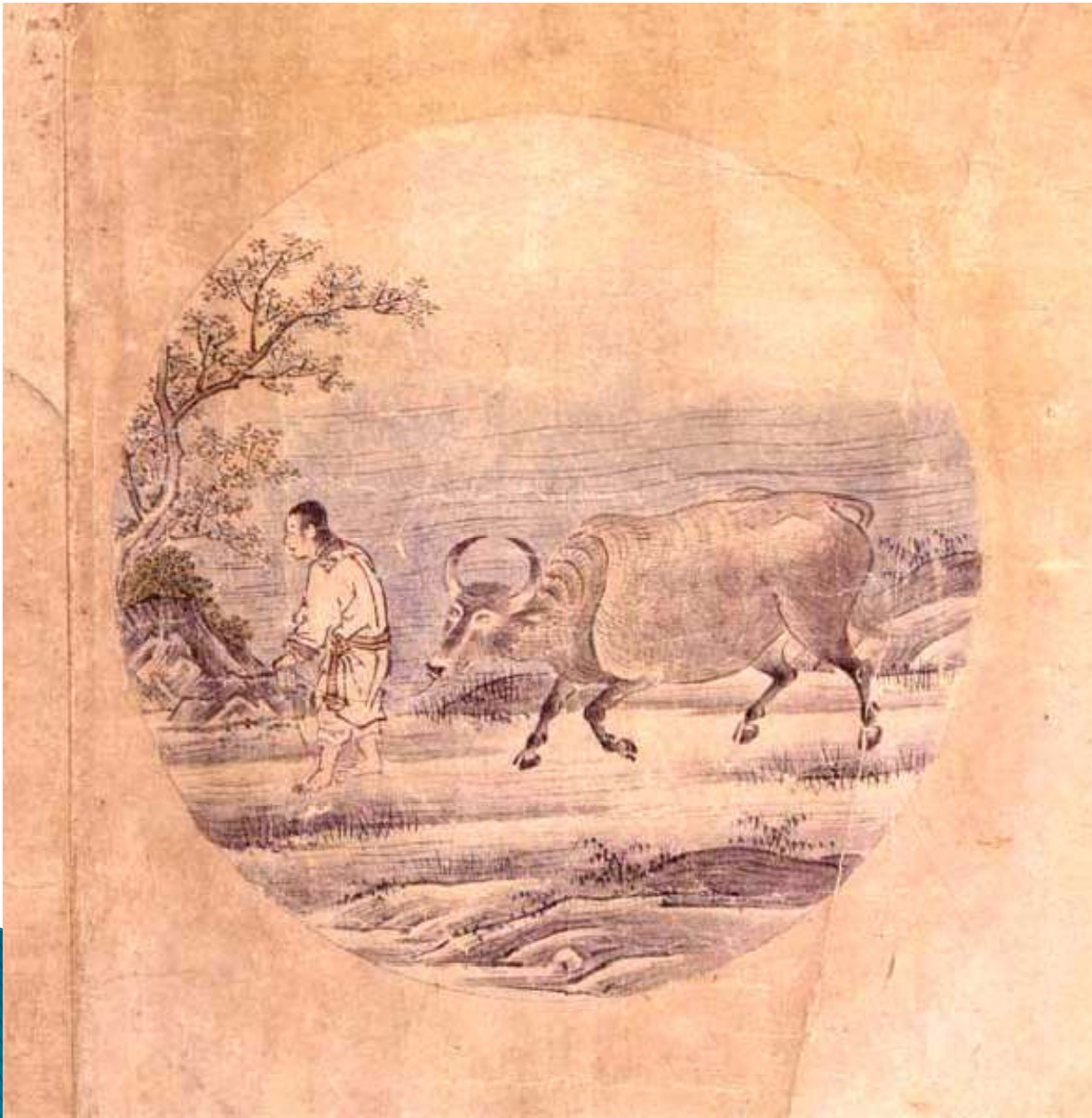


4. Catching the Ox
*I seize him with a
terrific struggle.
His great will and power
are inexhaustible.
He charges to the high
plateau far above the
cloud-mists,
Or in an impenetrable
ravine he stands*

Commentary:

The Architect must resist clinging to comfortable ways that are known – and continually struggle to avoid becoming complacent and stagnating. The oh-so-subtle trap of feeling comfortable with what you know...

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls



5. Taming the Ox

The whip and rope are necessary, Else he might stray off down some dusty road.

Being well-trained, he becomes naturally gentle. Then, unfettered, he obeys his master.

Commentary:

The Architect has learned how to master the use of Patterns and appropriate technologies in a natural way – and does not try to force a tool (NoSQL?) to solve a problem in an unnatural way. CAP Theorem is still a challenge...

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls

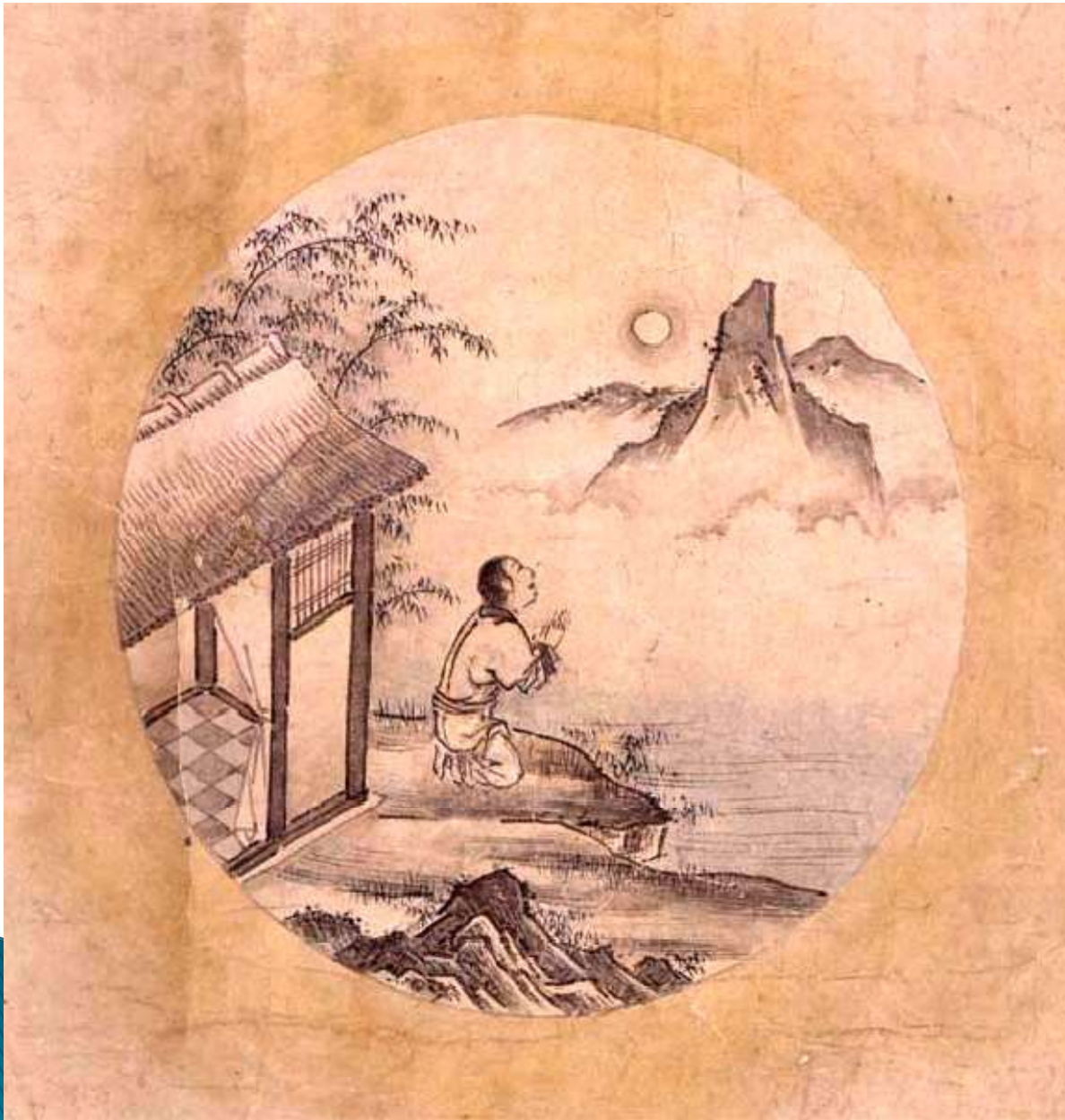


6. Riding the Ox Home
*Mounting the Ox, slowly
I return homeward.
The voice of my flute
intones through the
evening.
Measuring with hand-
beats the pulsating
harmony, I direct the
endless rhythm.
Whoever hears this
melody will join me.*

Commentary:

The Architect has achieved the level of Master Craftsman and has internalized his knowledge – and uses Patterns correctly and instinctively. Even NoSQL.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls

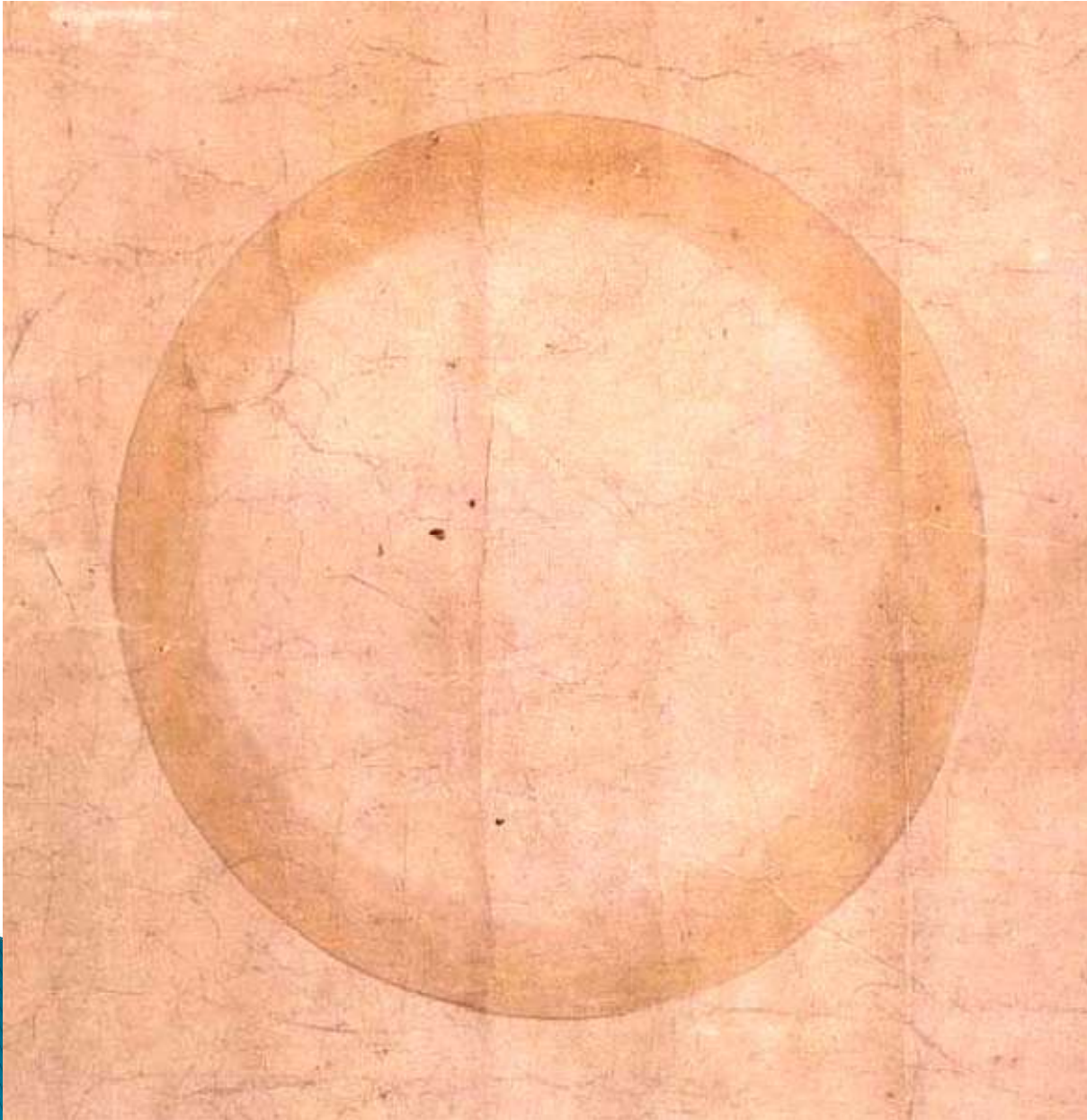


7. The Ox Transcended
*Astride the Ox, I reach
home.
I am serene. The Ox too
can rest.
The dawn has come.
In blissful repose,
Within my thatched
dwelling I have
abandoned the whip and
ropes*

Commentary:

The Architect has transcended the need for the guidance and restrictions of known Patterns – and is free to explore problems in new and innovative ways. This may also be when the Architect decides to join Management...

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls



8. Both Ox and Self Transcended

Whip, rope, person, and Ox – all merge in No Thing.

*This heaven is so vast,
no message can stain it.
How may a snowflake
exist in a raging fire.
Here are the footprints
of the Ancestors.*

Commentary:

The Architect sees everything as having a pattern – and yet the highest pattern is no-pattern.

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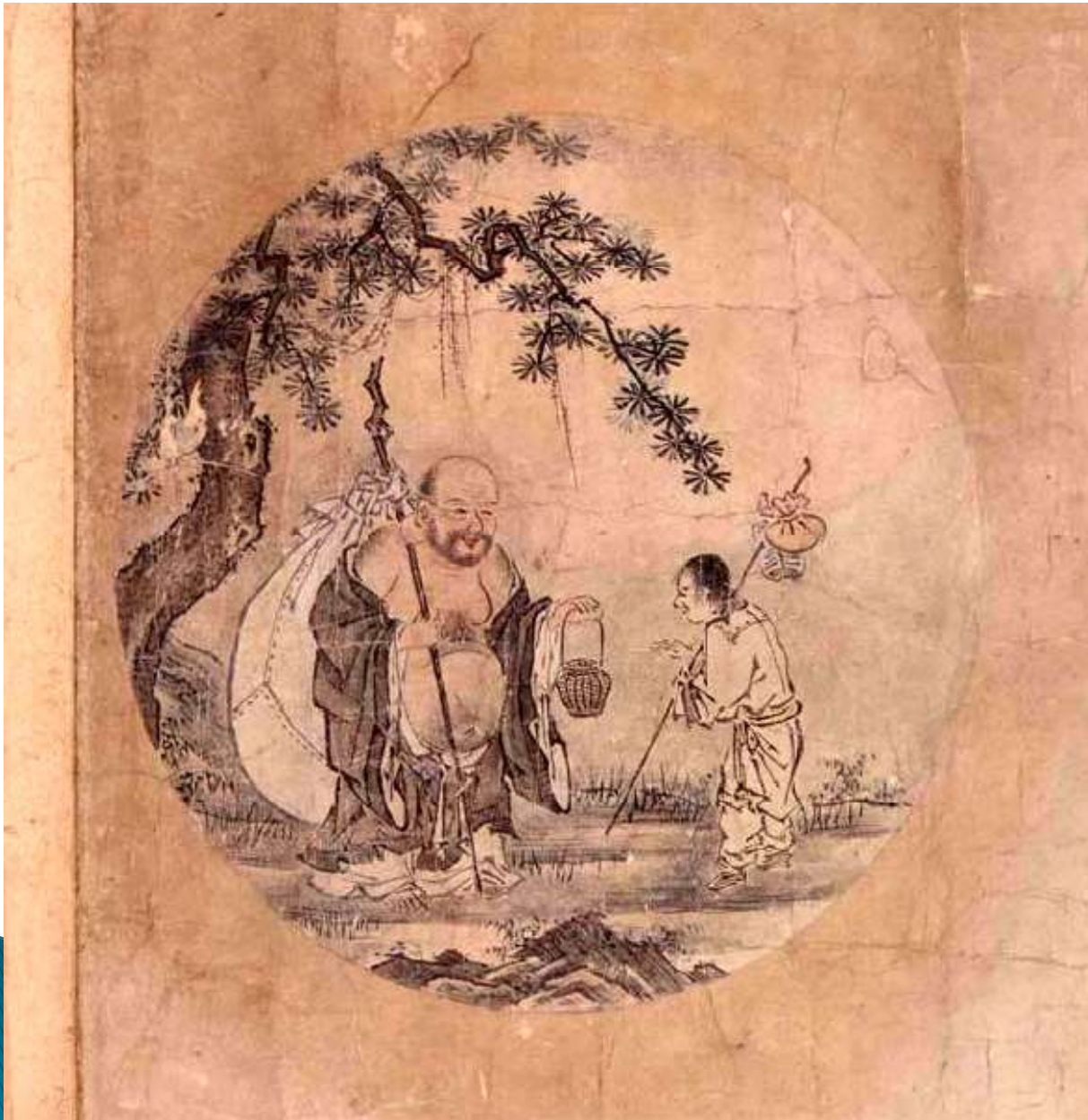


9. Reaching the Source
*Too many steps have
been taken returning to
the root and the source.
Better to have been
blind and deaf from the
beginning!
Dwelling in one's true
abode, unconcerned
with and without –
The river flows
tranquilly on and the
flowers are red.*

Commentary:

The Architect is at
peace with that which
is – and that which
cannot be helped
(COBOL still lives) –
and accepts Eventual
Consistency

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Bulls



10. Return to Society
*Barefooted and naked
of breast, I mingle with
the people of the world.
My clothes are ragged
and dust-laden,
and I am ever blissful.
I use no magic to
extend my life;
Now, before me, the
dead trees become
alive.*

Commentary:
The Architect turns
outward to teach that
which has been
learned.