

ZEN NOTES



SOKEI-AN SAYS

EMANCIPATION

In Christianity, a term that is analogous to emancipation is salvation. When a Christian teacher came to our country and asked us questions, the first was: "What is salvation in Buddhism? What is Buddhism for?" I don't know if any Buddhist monk ever answered this question, but the answer must be that our Buddhist salvation is moksa--emancipation. Emancipation means that you disengage yourself from all bonds. You are roped, fastened by ropes, visible or invisible. The ropes of affinity, the ropes of karma, are binding you and taking all freedom away from you. By your own endeavor you must unfasten these ropes and free yourself from bondage of all kinds.

The things that are fastening you and taking your freedom away from you are, first, karma, the results of your previous deeds--as, your father was a drunkard, therefore you as your father's child have some mental effect. It bothers you all your life and you act queerly. You call it inheritance. We call it karma. When you were young, perhaps you were associating with a Buddhist monk, so when you are graduated from your Christian seminary school you still carry a little inclination toward Buddhism in your mind. There is both good and bad karma. Both take freedom from your mind. You must unbind these invisible ropes by your own effort and then you will attain freedom of mind and emancipate yourself from the agony of worldly life. This is the meaning of moksa.

Buddhism is not a religion that is taught. Buddhism is a religion of self-realization. You must realize the entire experience of Buddhism by yourself. A Buddhist monk, therefore, is not a teacher. A monk does not teach anything in Buddhism. Nor do we go out to work among people or help in charity work or social activity as Christian ministers do. Buddhist monks must work out their own salvation. A Buddhist monk has no idea of teaching his attainment to others. He just pursues his own attainment. Those who are sympathetic with the monk's attainment follow him. When I came to this country I was asked many questions about this attitude. What is your activity? Sitting and meditating. Meditating upon what? Upon nothing. Nothing? Your religion has no charity? They just meditate? Do you call this religion? Yes! They are dumbfounded.

Our idea of attainment is to pour water into a glass. When it fills up, it runs over. Before it is filled, we must fill it. We have no time to give anything to people.

I went to a monastery when I was twenty years old. When my teacher gave me permission to speak about Buddhism, I was forty-seven. Of course in some Buddhist denominations in Japan, imitating the theological seminaries of Christianity, young men get a diploma in four years. But what they have is printed in books. They are phonograph records.

A monk must work for his own emancipation. When famine attacks the country, the monk sits by the roadside joining his hands and waits for his last moment. When he is sick he closes his eyes and without tears, without pangs of death, dies alone. When he has no penny, he stands with his bowl in his hand under the eave of the layman's house, not asking, not begging. If no one gives anything to him, he joins his hands and starves to death. When he comes to a foreign country, no one knows him, no one follows him; he scrapes the floor, he licks the dust, he supports himself. This is a so-called Buddhist monk in Japan.

It is said in the *Mahaparinirvana-sutra*, "To attain Nirvana is moksa." This is a very big word. Attain Nirvana means to transcend this phenomenal world, to experience the state of Reality. There are many kinds of Nirvana. The Japanese layman thinks if anyone dies, he enters Nirvana, unless he goes to hell. This is a negative emancipation. Positive emancipation is called vimoksa. By your own enlightened mind that you have attained by experiencing the state of Nirvana,

you emancipate yourself from this world, remaining in it. Suppose you have trouble living in your house because it is infested with cockroaches. You try to get yourself free. If you move out or set fire to the house, that is the negative way, as you think to attain Nirvana by annihilating the phenomenal world. By the other way, you ask the exterminator to come and kill the cockroaches without destroying the house. That is the positive way of getting free of the infesting cockroaches. Meditating upon your trouble, not running away from it, but remaining in it, you can find the solution of what to do.

You must find emancipation from your worldly attachments, from your greed, from your selfish love, or desire. You must emancipate yourself from your ignorant mind, from your deluded emotion and from all superstition. Wisdom is the cause of both kinds of emancipation. Without our minds, we could not emancipate ourselves from emotion or scientific delusion. Our wisdom emancipated us. With the intellect, the Arhat (the Buddhist who has the highest knowledge of Buddhism) attains Nirvana. With the intellect, by meditation--he attains Nirvana. But he is caught in meditation.

This is a very important part of the doctrine of Buddhism. When one has annihilated all the outside in his meditation, in his attainment of Nirvana, he is still in meditation. Therefore he must annihilate the state of samadhi, of meditation, in order to attain absolute annihilation, Nirodha Samapatti, the next stage.

So there are two types of Arhat--one is he who attains Nirvana by in-

tellecual power; the other is he who is not attaching himself to this intellectual power but hops out from everything. He attains absolute freedom.

There are Arhats who have experienced moksa, others who have experienced moksa and vimoksa. There is yet another moksa--pratimoksa. The Arhat who attains absolute freedom attains Buddha's skandhas. While those who are deluded have the usual five shadows, the one who has attained absolute freedom has five enlightened aggregations in his consciousness. With the Buddha's five skandhas, he acts according to the Buddha's commandments. Following this commandment, he emancipates himself at every moment. Following the two hundred and fifty commandments, one by one, you emancipate yourself with your enlightened mind.

Later pratimoksa became the name of the commandments. With it you attain freedom from the skandhas. You emancipate yourself from this physical body: What is rupa? It is existing from beginningless beginning to endless end. This is not my body. As I see my body existing, it is my illusion. I know what is the realization of my body. Thus you emancipate yourself from rupa. Thus also, you emancipate yourself from vedana, sense perception. What is your mind? What is your dream? Thus you emancipate yourself from samjna. What is this mood-samskara. What is this consciousness? You meditate upon vijnana and emancipate yourself from consciousness. This also is called pratimoksa.

SOOTHILL SAYS: *Pratimoksa*: emancipation; *Prātimoksa*: the 250 commandments for monks in the *Vinaya*; a portion of the *Vinaya*, called *The Sutra of Emancipation*.

JOSHU SASAKI ROSHI'S ADVICE TO STUDENTS ABOUT ZAZEN--from the Newsletter of Cimarron Zen Center of Rinzai-ji, 2505 Cimarron Street, Los Angeles, Cal. 90018

Some of you must be practicing zazen for the first time. While the practice of zazen is widespread in the United States, I do find it a little different from my interpretation of sitting. Dhyana meditation preceded Zen by many, many years. This sitting meditation is practiced even today in many parts of the world, including much of India. But the Mahayana zazen is quite different from the one accepted in Hindu and Yoga practices. It is a little bit too complex to explain Zen sitting in a brief time, so I will talk about something that is more easily understood.

Meditation consists of quieting the mind, or contemplating some object or problem. Some ponder the question "Who am I?" Also, in Mahayana meditation it is true that the idea is to realize who the self is, but the practice is slightly different. Some forms of Indian meditation ask the question "Who am I?" and on this basis is meditation largely done. However, by asking the question "Who am I?" the self becomes an object.

In Buddhist thinking the true self is neither object nor subject. Therefore to think and ask "Who am I?" is a foolish thing. However, the Roshi reaches the height of folly, because he himself asks you to ponder that question. Since you obey his request you demonstrate an even higher form of foolishness.

To sit and try to understand the self is not strictly a Buddhist purpose. To realize the self in order to

manifest the self is the true purpose. The truth of Zen is that at all times we are manifesting our true selves.

Everybody here stand up. Put your hands on your hips, wrists up. Now everybody laugh out loud. While you were laughing were you thinking about yourself? You probably forgot to be concerned about yourself. However, the person who laughed was you--no one else. No one else but you did the laughing. So you were manifesting and realizing yourself while you were laughing. Not recognizing the fact that you are indeed realizing and manifesting yourself at all times, you are seeking elsewhere objectively or subjectively to find yourself.

At all times you are manifesting God or Buddha or yourself. The Buddhists say your true nature is God's nature. Also, God's nature is also your nature. God is permeating your nature. And likewise you are in God's nature. You are always one with God. So you are always laughing and realizing your own and God's true nature. Instead of affirming and manifesting the realization that you are manifesting God all the time, you expect something tremendous, external to yourself. You seek that and thereby drive yourself crazy.

So Zen practice here is not to study what or who God is. This place here is for practicing sitting meditation in order to affirm the suchness that you and God are indeed the same.

Thus, if you ask me what is Zen, my answer will be to laugh as you people laughed a while ago. That is Zen, my Zen.

When you wake up tomorrow morning, first thing, stand up, put your hands on your hips, and laugh five or ten times, and that will cure you of much

of your illness. This exercise is even better than a long period of meditative sitting. As a beginner in meditation, instead of suffering a long period of cramped legs, it would be better for you every morning as soon as you get up to immediately stand in this position and laugh about ten times. This is really the best beginning of Zen.

If during that time you are doing this exercise and laughing vigorously, I were to ask you "Where was God at that time?" how would you answer? Then immediately your logic and your consciousness starts to work. That is what is bad. That is time and space learning. That is not Zen. Just simply laugh and you will begin to realize.

MORE ABOUT ZAZEN

The problem of religious men is to find out where does God come from? Where does he go? The same as a physician would want to know where the blood comes from and goes. God is not born from the mind but from the sacrum. And he needs a place to leave. That place is the sternum. This is the Zen explanation. However, the physician may have a different explanation. He may place God somewhere inside the chest or blood. So in Zen we emphasize that God needs freedom to go in and out and that is why the position of the sacrum and sternum is important. You may form God within yourself, but if that God cannot enter or leave freely at any time, then you are not in perfect condition. If your God goes out and is not able to return, then you are not balanced within yourself. So in my talks I repeatedly emphasize that God is inside as well as outside. The speed with which God enters and leaves is beyond description. The fact that God

goes out from us and comes back again means that our mental attitude does not require past, present or future. When you think of God in terms of past, present or future, then that state of mind indicates that you have not yet realized God. So, if you do zazen properly, you will not recognize past, present or future. Therefore the proper form of zazen represents the proper form of God, which is yourself.

As soon as you start thinking: How shall I breathe? or What shall I do with my eyes? then you are already out of balance and are not in the enlightenment position. We often hear noises during zazen such as dogs barking, cars, and so forth, but when you are really engaged in genuine zazen, none of these noises will disturb you. Neither do we think about accumulating saliva in our mouth. All these problems are forgotten, and no reasoning takes place in our mind. Even though your eyes are open, you do not see, you forget about breathing and yet you continue to breathe. Outside noises are heard and yet they are not heard. So proper zazen requires a proper attitude of the senses as well as proper posture.

In the proper posture, the head is held up straight from the spine towards the ceiling, so that the chin pulls in. This position allows the blood to circulate freely, and the mind becomes clear. In Zen, we discourage a relaxed position of the head with the chin raised. This is a meditative position, indicative of a resting mind. When the head is in the proper position, the shoulders naturally drop. You should look down along your nose to a place about six feet in front of you. Your sight will be limited to a small

semi-circle and despite the fact that you look at a certain area, you won't see anything.

Next is the breathing. In the proper position, God which is born in your sacrum goes out and in one breath circles the entire universe three thousand times. That is why we keep our nostrils wide open during zazen, so that God may come and go freely. You may have noticed in the photographs of great men that their nostrils are wide open and their lips are tightly shut. When you have the proper nose-mouth position you will feel the whole cosmos enter, circulate and leave your body and you will come to the state of mind where there is neither anything internal nor external.

When the sacrum is forward and the sternum is up, the abdomen will be in a very stable position, and only in the area between the navel and the chest is there a slight movement. Often during zazen, a person is surprised by his own sudden sigh. Your tongue is tightly pressed against your palate, the root of the tongue is very rigid and while air enters very gently through the nose, nothing enters through the mouth. The ears should be in line with the shoulders; eventually you will get to the point where none of the sounds such as children's voices, sounds of passing cars, and so forth, will disturb you. You should never dislike any sound that enters your ear. Try to listen to children's screams and try to like them until they become inaudible to you.



BUDDHIST ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND(1959)

From an article by Dr. Luang
Suriyabongs, published by the
Buddhist Assn. of Thailand

SECTS We have in Siam two sects of Theravada Buddhism, namely: The Dhammayuktika Nikaya to which at present only 12,452 monks and novices belong, residing in 649 Dhammayuktika Wats; the Mahanikaya sect in which more than 200,000 monks and novices belong, occupying 20,295 Mahanikaya Wats.

The Dhammayuktika sect was established by King Makut who reigned from 1851-1868 in order to establish stricter discipline in the Holy Brotherhood. Today, both sects adhere equally strictly to the 227 Vinaya Rules and other rules as laid down by the Buddha, and there are only slight differences in their daily practice.

For instance the Dhammayuktika monks give their robes a twist to the left, the Mahanikaya monks twist their yellow robes to the right. The Dhammayuktika monks make a confession when they feel themselves guilty of an offence against the 227 Vinaya Rules and others; the Mahanikaya monks confess twice a day, before sunrise and before retiring to sleep.

The Patimokkha (the disciplinary code of offences against the Vinaya Rules) is recited twice a month by both sects. The Dhammayuktika sect recites the Patimokkha publicly although no layman is allowed to come closer than within an arm's length of the monks who are seated closely together on an elevated floor in the temple, whereas the Mahanikaya sect recites the Patimokkha behind closed doors and windows.

THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SANGHA--Since 1954 the Sangha has a similar administration to the State. It can be called "a state within a state." The Supreme Patriarch or Sangha Raja is the spiritual head, the highest dignitary of the kingdom. He appoints a Council of Ecclesiastical Ministers headed by the Sangha Nakaya (equivalent to the Prime Minister). Under him are four boards, namely, the Board of Administration, of Education, of Propaganda, and the Board of Public Works. Each Board is headed by an Ecclesiastical Minister. At present the Ecclesiastical Ministerial Council consists of ten members. There is further a Consultative Assembly (corresponding to Parliament) which consists of forty-five members and acts as an Advisory Body.

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES--according to statistics for the year 1957-58, there were 20,944 monasteries throughout the country with more than 150,910 monks and 86,208 novices (samaneras) as inmates.

The number of students of Buddhist Religion who passed in the ecclesiastical examinations held annually by the government were as follows: monk-students: first grade 115,136; second grade 38,018, third grade 24,437; lay-students: first grade 13,240; second grade 7,574, third grade 3,188. Total 201,773.

Substantial sums were allocated annually for monks of all ranks as well as the upkeep of two institutes of higher learning, namely, the Maha Makut Ecclesiastical University and the Maha Chulalongkorn Academy for Monks.

The state railways grant free passes for monks traveling all over the coun-

try in the performance of religious duties, and special compartments are reserved for monks on most trains.

PARTICIPATION OF THE SANGHA IN OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE FUNCTIONS--The Thai, of which the great majority are Buddhists, take their religion soberly and seriously. It is vital to them and forms an actual part of their everyday life. There are no festivities, either official, public or private without the participation of Bhikkhus who are invited to chant passages from the Holy Scriptures, to hold sermons on Buddhist ethics of Buddhist doctrines, to give their blessings after some meritorious deeds have been performed and to perform other rites for each special occasion. The Thai people are said to spend as much as three to four percent of their yearly income on merit making for the benefit of the Sangha and for their own spiritual well being.

THE BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION OF THAILAND UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE--Its objects are to spread the Dhamma at home and abroad; to encourage and foster the study of Buddhism and religious training by weekly lectures and discussions on Dhamma for monks and laymen alike, by assisting in the education of monks, supplying medical care of ailing monks and arranging final rites for those who die without relatives. Its further aims are to promote and through its members to assist in social welfare and the observance of religious practices: to publish pamphlets and periodicals in Thai and in English and to extend help to visiting scholars.

BUDDHIST EDUCATION OF THE LAITY OF SIAM
Being well aware that modern civ-

ilization with its great progress in science and technology has led to extreme materialism all over the world, seriously threatening our century-old culture based on Buddhism, if not counterbalanced by a more serious study of our religion, it is generally agreed upon by educators in this country, that the only way to steer clear away from the many dangers of our present day life is to blend Western scientific knowledge (which is only perceptive knowledge) with that intrinsic knowledge and wisdom derived from the study and practice of the Buddha's teachings.

Working towards this aim, the people and the Government are doing their best to teach the younger generations the "Right Way of Living" as propagated by the Buddha, and the following developments have taken place:

Sermons by eminent monks by radio are held on every Uposot day and broadcast all over the country. They are also held in temples, schools, and Government offices.

Regular classes are held in centers of education for adults of both sexes. These are conducted by monks and qualified laymen to teach the essentials of the Dhamma, of Buddhist philosophy and ethics, also meditation, and the Abhidhamma.

Many Buddhist Sunday schools for the very young have been inaugurated.

Buddhism has a firm grip upon the Siamese. It is vital in their daily life and has moulded the Thai people into a peace loving folk contented with whatsoever they earn. The people smile; they are happy. Never have there been famines or pogroms, throughout history they have been able to preserve their national freedom.

THE FIVE EYES
GOGEN--From The Kosei Times July 1969

A Buddhist sutra says that a man who can discern the real state of all things is versed with *Gogen*. What is *Gogen*? In a few words, that is the five kinds of eyes: *Nikugen*, *Tengen*, *Egen*, *Hogen* and *Butsugen*.

Nikugen means the eyes of those who have a material body. A man who has such eyes can see only a part of the superficial phenomena. What makes the matter worse, frequently he can not recognize the real state of all things. When we say *Nikugen* at the present time, it means an ordinary man's way of looking only at the surface of things.

Tengen indicates the divine eye of celestial beings in the world of form. Celestial beings who have such eyes can discern not only superficial matters but also the real state of them in the inner part. The function of divine eyes should not be understood to be something mysterious but to be scientific. For example, those who have the eyes of the material body can see water as only a liquid body while those who have the divine eyes of celestial beings can know that water is made of oxygen and hydrogen. If we try to understand the meaning of *Tengen* along with our modern idea, we can take it as a scientific eye.

Egen expresses the eyes of wisdom by which the two vehicles (the vehicles of the hearer of the Buddha's teachings and of the cause-knower) observe the thought of non-substantiality or nothingness. A man who has such eyes can discern the universal and eternal truth applicable to all things. He can, so to speak, take a philosophical view of matters. For instance, Dr.

Albert Einstein, a famous American theoretical physicist, regarded this universe as a world of four dimensions. We can only think that this is a three dimensional world having the three directions of length, width and height. However, he expounded that the universe is a space having time in addition to these three dimensions. A man who has the *Egen* can realize such an ultimate truth as unknown by the means of *Tengen*.

Hogen signifies the eye of the law by which the bodhisattvas perceive all teachings in order to lead mankind to enlightenment. Those who have a very cool mind can sense directly the lives of natural creatures. They perceive all over the body the essence of things which ordinary men can hardly penetrate. Therefore, we say that *Hogen* is an artistic way of looking at things while *Tengen* is a scientific way of looking at things and *Egen* is to take a philosophical view of matters. In ancient Japan, there were the periods when *Hogen* was regarded as one of the ranks which were given to noted Japanese-style painters and physicians of the Chinese school.

Butsugen is the Buddha's eye, the four kinds of eyes enumerated above, existing in the Buddha's body. It is the highest way of looking at things. With the mind of benevolence, the Buddha can penetrate clearly the real state of all things in the universe. In other words, only Buddha combines the five kinds of eyes with the merciful mind which makes the lives of all creatures as they are.

SEE ZN VOL. XII/12 for an article on
THE FIVE EYES by Sokei-an.

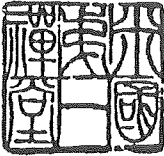
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