

ZEN NOTES



Rinzai Reed

If you are not disposed to differ with Buddha, do not search for IT in the outer world. The pure light that resides in every pulse of your soul is a Dharmakaya Buddha enshrined in your home. The light in every pulse of your soul that is common to all souls is a Sambhogakaya Buddha enshrined in your home. The light in every pulse of mind that is inseparable from that of others is a Nirmanakaya Buddha enshrined in your home. This triune body of a Buddha is none other than the one who is, in your presence, listening to my sermon. Thus it will be revealed to you when you cease searching in the outer world.

SOKEI-AN SAYS This is a very important part. Rinzai is talking about the triumviracy of Buddha. It corresponds to the theory of the trinity in Christianity.

The three bodies of Buddha are not existing somewhere in the sky or far away; the triune body of Buddha is our own body.

To understand the outline of Buddhism, you must also know the famous three worlds theory (the tridhatu): kamadhatu, rupadhatu, and arupadhatu. The body of Buddha in arupadhatu, the non-seeming stage, is dharmakaya. Here dharma means innate nature or essential existence, essence. The body of Buddha in rupadhatu, the seeming stage, is sambhogakaya. It perceives, responds to the other (I mean responds to itself, to its own body); it is the responding body. *Sam* means "to enjoy" (its own existence). So it is the body of actual consciousness. Kamadhatu is the body in the stage of desire.

Buddha's body in the stage of desire is the nirmanakaya, the body of transformation. To pursue or realize desire, the body changes its form, and through these various forms, reaches its aim--as the goddess of mercy, to realize her love, transforms herself

into thirty-two bodies.

The three stages, kamadhatu, rupadhatu and arupadhatu are one's own nature, everybody's nature. Three of the senses--to smell, taste, touch--belong to kamadhatu; to hear and to see belong to rupadhatu; consciousness itself is arupadhatu.

The five skandhas belong to rupadhatu and arupadhatu, not to kamadhatu. The four stages of meditation belong to arupadhatu.

Buddhism is just a huge diagram. It is not necessary to think about it, however. If you understand it, you will find the diagram written in your own body, your own soul. All is written there; no book is necessary.

If you are not disposed to differ with Buddha, do not search for IT in the outer world. You know your kamadhatu: to eat, to generate. You know your rupadhatu: you can see and hear. You know arupadhatu: you can conceive and perceive. These three mysteries comprise the theory of the Rinzai school.

Those who are in kamadhatu, the stage of desire, knowing no other stage, look to others to take it off for them because they do not know the true stage. They must themselves let

go of it; they must train themselves to look at everything as an artist looks at the body he sketches--without desire. By going to beg food, young monks are training themselves not to be angry when abused. If they were not in the stage of desire, why would they become angry? Day by day they train themselves in various stages of rupadhatu; meditation is the training in arupadhatu. Everything takes place in one's self--nowhere else.

Do not search for IT in the outer world. Arupadhatu is non-seeming, pure wisdom, Buddha. But this Buddha is not Shakyamuni Buddha--it is pure light, the universal Reality that is the body of Wisdom. The wisdom of our brain has its own manifestation. Everything in the universe has wisdom; the universe itself is wisdom. (We have to use the word wisdom, for there is no better word in English to express it.

Pure wisdom is complete annihilation. One must annihilate all notions (mind-stuff) to come to this Nirvanic wisdom, if I may coin this phrase.

The pure light has two meanings; the light of Nirvana and the light of pure wisdom. To attain pure wisdom one must attain pure Nirvana first.

The pure light that resides in every pulse of your soul is a Dharmakaya Buddha enshrined in your home. This light does not perceive anything. It perceives intrinsically, of course, but this consciousness is not trying to perceive or discern. Your tongue tastes and your eye sees, but they do not say, "I wish to taste and I wish to see."

The light in every pulse of your soul that is common to all souls is a Sambhogakaya Buddha enshrined in your home. Rupadhatu just perceives,

without adhering. Sambhogakaya has two functions: it perceives the outside and the inside. It looks at its own nature: the light shines, sees, and knows the inside. It proves its own shining by others; the sword cutting the other proves that it cuts. Without phenomenal existence, consciousness knows; perceiving phenomena, it proves that it sees.

The light in every pulse of mind that is inseparable from that of others is a Nirmanakaya Buddha enshrined in your home. Rinzai used "soul" in all three places, but I change the last of the three from "soul" to "mind." Nirmanakaya discriminates but is not trying to. Nirmanakaya Buddha is pure. Though it uses the words "like" and "dislike", this is different from attachment; its function is discriminative: if not good, it cuts off; it chooses cotton in summer, wool in winter.

The Zen student must not attach to rupa either. He may think that he can do everything without attachment, but this is not so: he has one body, not three.

In rupadhatu, one has the nature of the arhat. In this stage, nature provides everything.

Dharmakaya consists of three bodies--it includes sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya. In sanzen, to show your understanding in dharmakaya, you must prove that the two other stages are included. So dharmakaya is the body of the whole nature; sambhogakaya is observed in its function. Function is knowledge, wisdom, the body of response: when someone slaps your face, you feel pain. Nirmanakaya is life from morning to evening.

These three bodies, Tathagata, do

not exist anywhere else but in your body--*your body* is the body of Tathagata--three bodies in one body. There is no mystery; it can be clearly proved. When you have passed the first koan, you prove dharmakaya and sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya within it. The Sixth Patriarch proved sambhogakaya in the koan: the flag is not moving, wind is not moving; soul is moving.

Consciousness does not belong to the outside or the inside; its wisdom can shine through dharmakaya and the whole phenomenal world. You can realize the golden figure of the Buddha, six feet high.

The Sixth Patriarch said, "One candle flame illuminates the darkness of a thousand years and annihilates the ignorance of a million years."

If you do not attach to any particular point of the outer world, you will prove Nirvana in your physical body, in this flesh, and enter any part of outer or inner existence. That is transformation--nirmanakaya.

This triune body of a Buddha is none other than the one who is, in your presence, listening to my sermon. Thus it will be revealed to you when you cease searching in the outer world. This "revealed" in Chinese has shades of meaning that include merit and mystery also. You can attain Nirvana and reveal this mysterious body in this existence on earth--this is merit. When you prove the Reality of the universe you accumulate merit in daily life because you are not searching in the outer world. You prove the merit in your self. This merit also includes "function." Revelation, merit, function--all three meanings are in this "reveal."

The Zen 

THE ANT HILL

SOKEI-AN SAYS These days I am speaking about the primitive Buddhism described in the Nikayas or Agamas, the oldest sutras of Buddhism, composed about 2500 years ago.

There were two kinds of Buddhism beginning in those days. One was for monks, the other for lay brothers. The Agamas were the sutras for monks. Everything in them was concerned with teaching the monks how to attain enlightenment. Other teachings (for lay brothers) were collected in the Jatakas. There are about five hundred Jataka stories; many tell how the Buddha sacrificed himself for sentient beings when he was a Bodhisattva. Later Bodhisattva was the name given to the lay brothers and sisters who were attempting to attain enlightenment by sacrificing themselves to others out of compassion and sympathy. In Western terms it would be called love.

When we read the fairy stories of the West (Grimm, for instance) we come across many stories that were in the Jatakas. We also find many of these stories in Aesop's Fables.

There were many stories of Shakyamuni Buddha. Some were carried to Syria, Egypt, even Greece, and translated into the languages of those countries.

The Agamas were particularly for monks; later those teachings were called the Hinayana. Those for lay people later became the Mahayana. Of course in primitive Buddhism there was neither Hinayana nor Mahayana --there was just one Buddhism.

In the Agamas there is a story of an eight-year-old boy named Kumara

Kashyapa who attained enlightenment. He was the son of a nun. Two sisters came to join the Sangha and were accepted. When the monks and nuns noticed that the newcomer's shape was changing into that of a mother, they wanted to drive her out.

The Buddha told them: "You cannot drive her out without knowing the reason why she is in such a condition." The monks questioned her, then sent for her parents. They said: "Our daughter wished to become a nun, but we refused her request. After she married, her husband gave her permission. Her child was conceived before she was admitted into the Sangha. Later the boy was adopted by the King of Kosala. When he was twenty, he returned to the Sangha and was finally ordained as a monk. The story takes place when he was eight years old and still with the monks.

One early autumn morning he was in the Hot Spring Garden in the Daytime Dark Wood. He had taken a bath in the hot spring and was drying himself on the bank when a deva appeared, shining with radiant light.

A deva is different from an angel. There are both good and evil devas. Devas have power with which to control the mind of man. They are our thoughts, they appear in our minds. Here in the story, however, the deva is described as appearing in the sky. From the sky, she called: "Kumara Kashyapa, I'll tell you a story: In an open space in the wood there is an ant hill." The Indian ant is not as small as the American ant; some are one or two inches long.

"In the night smoke rises from this ant hill; in the daytime there are flames." It sounded dreadful in

the dark wood--that somewhere there was a round hole from which fire came by day, smoke by night.

"If you dig into it with a sharp spade, a Brahman will appear in the smoke and tell you: 'Child, dig down. Your spade will strike a coffin. Open the coffin, then dig deeper. You will come to a rock. Take the rock away and there will be a huge toad. (In Japan and India toads are as big as dogs, with shining eyes.) Do not be afraid of it. Dig again and you will come to the dry flesh of a dead man. Take it away and dig deeper. You will find wooden fetters (that fit the hands, neck and feet). Take this away and you will see a forked road. Do not hesitate. There you will find twisted roots of trees. If you go under them, at the end of the road, you will come to a cave. A dragon will be waiting for you there. Look at it, but do not touch it. Do not pay attention to it; go somewhere on a rock and meditate day and night. You will see the whole truth for which you are searching.'"

After saying this, the deva disappeared, trailing her veils behind her.

The boy shivered, looking around him in the dark wood, then came back to where the Buddha was seated. The boy knelt down and kissed the Buddha's feet.

The Buddha looked down at him. "Boy, you are up very early this morning. What happened?"

The boy told the Buddha what he had seen and asked the meaning of the deva's words.

The Buddha told him: "The ant hill is your body, which consists of the four elements--fire, water, earth, air. Your parents bestowed this upon you and you feed it. But finally it will

decompose and return to its original elements.

"Ants are the mind stuff all around. The smoke rising in the night is your imagination--dreams, notions. All these have nothing to do with truth.

"The fire burning during the day is your karma-making mind--your passions, your anger.

"The Brahman is a teacher; the student is you.

"The spade is your effort, your painstaking work endeavoring to attain enlightenment. With it you analyze that ant hill, introspect your mind.

"Your mind strikes the coffin. The coffin is a 'bandhana'-- like a bandage, it is the hard shell of your mind, the complex of your mind."

The Buddha said that everyone has three bandhanas: to doubt; to conceive ideas from thoughts, the thoughts you have received from others. You keep these as truth and with them as scales, try to see something. When you try to measure space with a watch, this comes from an idea, not truth. If you see truth, there is no time, no space. The third bandhana has to do with rules. For instance, you might carry your American rules of morality to another country. With such a scale you could not analyze yourself. With these shells or bandages you cannot attain enlightenment. So you must break the shell, the coffin, and dig deep.

The rock is your pride. Because of pride, you cannot see the truth. The toad is stubbornness. In my country, we say "stubborn as a toad" as Americans say "stubborn as a mule."

The dry flesh of the body is your greed--avarice. The fetters are the five senses (eyes, ears, nose, tongue

and skin), the beginning and end of trouble, if you analyze carefully. All illusions and delusions come from the five organs of sense.

When you go through there (analyze deeper) you will see a forked path. This is the dualistic view: matter and spirit. Buddhism does not divide Reality into two different names. Matter and spirit are measures of Reality created by our five senses. Of course we cannot measure one. You conceive one because you see many things. The fish in a hot spring do not know heat. If there is one it does not exist; one conceived as one is one part of many. The idea of oneness is really as one part of dualism. The monistic idea cannot be explained in a word.

Past the dual road you will see the roots of many trees. Root means darkness, original ignorance, avidya. In the mother's womb we know nothing, neither self nor mother, time nor space. Yet our existence cannot be denied. When you recall your first memory, it is as if your life started then, yet it existed before. If you go deeper, in meditation, you throw a light upon this original darkness. Digging deeper you come to a dragon.

"That dragon, child," the Buddha said, "is myself."

Go meditate day and night somewhere on the rock and you will attain enlightenment. Do not take my word for it.

Following these words of the Buddha, the boy of eight found the light in original darkness and attained arhat.

The story is a simple one, but the allegory is interesting. I hope you will analyze yourselves in the same way and, by lighting original darkness, attain enlightenment.

EDITOR'S COMMENT

As Sokei-an pointed out, *The Ant Hill* instructs the student how to penetrate the various layers of the mind, viewed metaphorically. The images are not ones particularly likely to occur to our minds of today, but one does not have to search far in one's own dream data to recognize the mechanism. I suppose the sequence is intellectually composed, not reported, but, though typical Indian categories are employed didactically, the landscape is as unmistakably from the dream world as ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND. This was noted by Sokei-an in another lecture on the same story (ZN XV/3) to which you might like to refer for a somewhat different commentary. In both lectures, Sokei-an has used the items of the vision as pegs on which to hang his own teachings.

The particular item that roused my own interest was the forked-path. None of the translations I have seen give a clearcut direction about it that makes "reasonable sense." "To dig it out and throw it away" is one instruction. To "never mind, dig straight on!" is another. Ruth Sasaki took it to be two roads one faced head on, I think. "Do not hesitate," was the direction in that case.

Sokei-an took the forked path to represent duality. Regardless of the meaning intended, however, or what associations we might make to this particular image, the thing that struck me about it was its dream-nature. Where else but in a dream could one dig out a forked-path and throw it away? When I first read this passage, I thought the difficulty was a matter of trans-

lation, but the others are no more "reasonable" than Sokei-an's.

Sokei-an noted that this story appears several times in the Chinese canon. The *Valimika Sutta*, *Majjhima Nikaya* 32, is the equivalent in Pali. A rather different version is that in the *Majjhima Nikaya* 25, included here for comparison, in which Kumara-Kassapa is older. The translation of the statement of the vision is by Lord Chalmers. Another translation, by T.H. Perera (*The Buddhist*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 10), gives a karmic reason for the deva's appearance.

One night, a *deva* (god) whose luminous body illuminated the entire Blind Men's Cove, visited his one-time friend in *samsara* the venerable Kumara Kassapa. In the time of Buddha Kassapa, this deva, Kumara Kassapa and three other monks had repaired to a mountain cave to devote themselves to (attaining) insight. One of them attained Arahantship. The deva gained the third stage of Holiness that of an Anagami, and, at death, he was born in the Pure Abodes (*suddhavasas*) where the Anagamins sojourn till they attain Nibbana, while the other three failed to gain the supramundane Path. One of these failures was Kumara Kassapa, who had entered the Order of Buddha Gotama. The deity said (to the Reverend Kumara-Kassapa): "Almsman, there's an anthill which smokes by day and flames up at night." The brahmin said: "Take your tool, sage, and dig." The sage dug away till he found a bar and cried: "Here's a bar, Lord." Said the brahmin: "Cast it out, sage, and dig on." As the sage dug on, he came on a frog. "Cast it out, sage, and dig on," said the brahmin. As the sage dug, he came on a passage which forked. Said the brah-

min: "Cast it out, sage, and dig on." As he dug on, he came successively on a strainer, a tortoise, a cleaver, and a joint of meat, all of which he was successively told to cast out and dig on. At last he came on a cobra. "Sage, leave the cobra alone," said the brahmin, "do not harm the cobra; pay homage to the cobra."

Buddha's interpretation follows:

The ant hill typifies the body, which is made up of the four elements, starts from a mother and father, is sustained by rice and other foods, and is impermanent, being subject to attrition, abrasion, erosion, decay, and dispersal.

The smoking by night is what by night a man thinks about, and ponders on, with reference to the day's doings.

The flames by day are what, after thinking and pondering by night, a man executes by day, with body, voice, mind.

The brahmin typifies the truthfinder, the Arahant all-enlightened.

The sage is an Almsman under training. His tool is noble wisdom. His digging is perseverance in effort.

The bar signifies ignorance, which he is bidden to cast out and fling away.

The passage which forked signifies doubting, which he is bidden to cast out and fling away.

The strainer represents the five hindrances, of passion, illwill, torpor, worry, and doubting.

The tortoise means the five-fold grip on continuing existence, through visible forms, feelings, perceptions, plastic forces, and consciousness.

The cleaver indicates the five pleasures of sense--proceeding from sights, sounds, odors, tastes, and touch, all of them pleasant, agreeable and delightful, all of them bound up with passion and lust--which he is bidden

to cast out and fling away.

Lastly, the cobra is the symbol of the Almsman in whom the Cankers are no more. Leave him alone, harm him not, pay him homage.

Variant and additional interpretations of fifteen items from the translation that appeared in *The Buddhist*, Colombo, Ceylon, follow.

The brahmin who ordered the digging of the ant-hill is the Tathagata, the Supremely Enlightened One.

The pupil is a disciple of the Buddha who is faring on to gain profound knowledge (*prajna*) by a gradual training, a gradual working out of cause, a gradual practice.

The spade used in the digging is the knowledge anterior to insight--wisdom.

The process of sustained digging is the earnest application of the mind on the Noble Eightfold Path.

The door-bolt (the bar in the preceding listing) stands for Ignorance (*avidya*). When a bolt is applied on a door, neither entrance nor exit is possible. Similarly, Ignorance veils one's vision from within and without.

The forked-path signifies one's inability to discern the right path from the wrong.

The tortoise represents the five grasping groups, perceptions, mental activities and consciousness. The tortoise has four legs and a head. It could draw in and throw out these appendages as it likes. In like manner, due to craving and wrong belief, we think (draw in) that form, feeling and so on as "I" and "Mine." This is how a worldlyling looks at things. It is because of this Ignorant-craving that we are thrown over and over again (throws out) into painful existence.

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