

ZEN NOTES



SACRED EAGLE MOUNTAIN

SOKEI-AN SAYS

Once, when the Buddha was sojourning in Grdhrakuta (the name of a temple that was on the hill of Grdhrakuta), he told his five hundred disciples about this place.

Grdhrakuta was a lofty hill, but it was called "Eagle Shaped Mountain," like an eagle that stretches its wings. The Buddha gave it this name.

You must realize that when the Buddha speaks of this name he is suggesting something else. "Oh monks," he told them, "you must know that the mountain on which we are sojourning is the Sacred Eagle Mountain."

Do you know where this mountain is? It is not always in India. If you realize the attitude of the Buddha--this Sacred Eagle Mountain is anywhere. The Buddha's words have deep meaning; though we cannot see his face saying them, we feel it in what he has said two thousand five hundred years ago. If you understand what the Sacred Eagle Mountain is, you are with Buddha--one of the five hundred monks, beyond space and time.

The Buddha continued: "Oh monks, in the remote past this mountain was called Vaipulya Mountain." Of course this "remote past" is beyond the measurement of time--a million--a billion years. "Vaipulya" means "omnipresent," wide, boundless space. Where is this Omnipresent Mountain?

This sutra is extraordinary because here the Buddha shows us the immediate Reality. He does not speak in terms of philosophy--a long, long time--it may be at any moment, *then* and *now*.

The Buddha continued: "But monks, before *that*, this mountain was called Good White Mountain." It was not green, not yellow, not black--nor was it the white that is in contrast to black--the Buddha's "white" is not relative to "black." It means absolute whiteness--the whiteness of all existence--transparent.



The human eye cannot conceive it; it must be seen with the true eye, this mountain upon which we are sojourning.

The Buddha continued: "But, monks, long before *that*, this mountain was called "Bearing Weight," as Atlas supports the whole universe with his own strength. In modern terms, the mountain means "dynamo, absolute energy." Newton would call this gravity.

The mountain upon which we are sojourning was once called "Bearing Weight," but the real mountain is called Saint's Grotto.

In China as well as India there are many cave temples along the stony hillsides. If you go to Tun Huang you will see many of them. We have found precious old manuscripts in these stone caves, manuscripts which upset the later information entirely. One relates to the history of the Zen School at the time of the Sixth Patriarch. A revision of the old records is now (1935) being made. (See P.B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1967.)

In this Eagle-Shaped Mountain were many cave temples with beautiful paintings on the stones. They were bowl-shaped and had beams put in. Catholic churches are an imitation of these caves.

"The cave in this mountain was called Saint's Grotto--a saint lives in this grotto."

Certainly the Buddha is speaking strangely. This shrine of a saint was in a mountain called omnipresent, Reality, universal dynamo!

I am sure that among the five hundred disciples there were a few who understood what the Buddha was talking about. The Buddha cared deeply about *this* Eagle-shaped Mountain.

This teaching must end here. We have only what the Buddha propounded out of kindness to his five hundred disciples in this poetical sutra.

This mountain was always the abode of some pratyeka-buddha--one who has attained enlightenment for himself, but who cannot speak about it and cannot carry out his understanding. He cannot express it and has no way to teach others. Such a one, living alone without friends, is called a solitary saint. There are many of them in the world--poets, actors, artists--who open the eye and understand but cannot talk about it, cannot teach it.

In the Saint's Grotto there were said to have been five hundred pratyeka buddhas. Then one had discovered the truth but could not communicate it to the others!

There are many religious teachers in this stage; one may receive sudden enlightenment but it is too great for words. He can only say: "You must attain as I have attained." "How?" "I have no word to tell you."

Our Buddha was not such a one; he certainly discovered a method and knew how to give it to others. He created many methods according to all the faculties of human beings. He was not a pratyeka-buddha. He was a Buddha. But in the Saint's Grotto there are five hundred pratyeka-buddhas and one is living in the Grotto. *He* knows all, and *you* know he knows, but he cannot tell you the mystery of the universe and you have no way to ask. This is the Saint within you, don't you realize it?

The Buddha's Buddhism is not like this. Though we do not speak a word, we understand each other because the Buddha found a method. It has existed

through two thousand five hundred years.

At the death of the pratyeka-buddha, all his understanding will disappear. This precious jewel will disappear and leave no trace behind.

It is said that Brahmadeva(?) told the solitary saints: "One day, there will be no cloud, no agony of heart, no thoughts, no illusions--the one who has attained to that stage will have excellent sight and excellent manifestation, clear as crystal."

Then the Rajah told the saints: "Two years from now, Tathagata will appear in this mountain of the Saint's Grotto."

All the five hundred pratyeka-buddhas ascended to the sky and cremated themselves with the fire of the sky and entered Nirvana, because there cannot be two kings in one country.

In two years the Buddha was born! Do you understand this symbolical speech? Do you know what the sky is and the fire of the sky and the cremation of all physical existence? Space, time and movement are physical existence. The pratyeka-buddhas burned it all up.

Of course Buddha will come. The Buddha said: "Many saints are living on this mountain, therefore I come on this mountain too. Through the future and until Maitreya Buddha comes, this mountain will not change its name. All other mountains will lose their names, be unable to recall their true names, but this mountain will always be known as Saint's Grotto."

You must find the Saint in your own soul! That One has a name. The whole universe may change its name, but this name will not be changed. You must find it!

SOME SECTS OF BUDDHISM

We Japanese call our sect Zen (Zen-shu). But Zen is not the original name of this particular sect. Before the Sixth Patriarch, Chinese Buddhists called it the Buddha's soul sect (Busshin-shu), Bodhidharma's name for it.

In the Sui dynasty (581-618) of China, a philosophical sect was dominant. A great monk, Chih-i (538-597), founded a sect on the "Heavenly Terrace." The T'ien-t'ai Mountain is in Chekiang Province about one hundred and eighty miles southeast of Hangchow. This mountain is shaped like an inverted eight-petaled lotus, with eight great ridges, eight valleys, and innumerable peaks. The sect was originally called the Lotus Sect because its main reliance was on the Lotus Sutra, but it was renamed for the mountain. This sect takes a philosophical attitude but it is also based on meditation.

(The basis of the Master's teaching was the synthesis of all Buddhist doctrines and schools. He gave equal emphasis to ceremonial discipline, meditation, and the study and recitation of the sutras. His famous system of meditation, termed *chih-kuan*, in Sanskrit *samatha-vipasyana*, consisted of methods for calming and concentrating the mind in order that it might have clear insight into truth. Though the classifications into which he organized Buddhist doctrines were inclusive of all types of scriptures, teachings, and methods, for him the *Lotus Sutra* contained the complete, final, and perfect teaching. It was the crowning glory of Buddhism. *ZEN DUST*)

Another great sect was the Shingon or "True Word" Sect, which came from China to Japan, derived from the Indian

Yogacara School. In this sect the principles of Buddhism are expressed by symbols. It is a pictorial Buddhism, in which the symbols are systematically arranged diagrammatically.

One more famous sect of China is the "Pure Land." Like Christianity, it has a god (the Buddha of Boundless Light) and a heaven of eternal rest in the Western sky (the Buddha-land).

The True Word Sect (Shingon) explained Buddhism by pictures; the Pure Land Sect (Jodo) objectified Buddhism by a mirage in the sky; the T'ien-t'ai (Tendai) Sect tried to explain Buddhism by philosophy. These are the three great Mahayana sects of China.

The Buddha Soul Sect (Zen) made no diagrams nor mirages, nor did it explain by philosophy. Zennists try to "feel" the Buddha soul themselves. Because we have IT we feel IT.

To study the eye, we use pictures of it made from anatomical knowledge. Shingon Buddhism made pictures of the human soul, mind and intellect by anatomical knowledge of it.

The Zen Sect does not use knives and scissors to gain knowledge of the soul but introspects or looks into it. "Look into" is not the best expression to use here, for we don't really "look into" but "out of" the mental sphere, using the mind's inner eye, not our two eyes.

In the Zen School of Buddhism, we do not study anyone else's mind, but our own. Psychoanalysis is of someone else's dreams or thoughts. We, day and night, "look into" our own mind. Psychoanalysts use mindstuff as their material for study; we do not. We use mind activity itself.

When you make a gelatine dessert, first you pour it as a liquid into a

concave mold, cup or bowl. When it has "jelled," you turn it upside down and remove the concave mold. The gelatine has been molded into a concave mass. Our mindstuff is the concave mold. Our mind activity, feeling the outside impressions--heat, cold, joy, anger, take on their convex form from this concave mold. When you are angry at making contact with something, your mind activity is poured into this concave form. It is the same with joy, when your mind is poured into the mold of laughter. Touching fire or water with your finger, feeling heat or cold, your mind is formed. Psychologists study the concave mold.

Our method is different. We sweep all the mind stuff off, destroy all the molds. Then we find the original form of mind activity. It is not to be found in any meaning such as joy or sadness, high or low, abstract or concrete, relative or absolute--the pairs of opposites. These are just concave molds. We destroy everything. We take off all the concave molds and return to the original state of mind-activity. It is as if the molded gelatine was put into a large pan and melted so its form or shape ceases to exist. This is our first study. The koans we give you are the dynamite to destroy your tenacious concave molds and bring your mind back to its original state. Then you sit and observe the activity of boundless mind.

You do not need to study the molds made by Buddhists of the past. You have to find your own mind activity. Do not jump from the frying pan into the fire. After you have broken your old mold, do not remold in some Buddhist pattern. Many teachings prevailing today are concave molds. You

have enough molds as you are. Why take on another?

If I were to try to put your mind into another it would be like taking you out of the form of a snake and putting you into the form of a skunk or something. You must not enter any readymade concave mold.

If you really Experience IT with your positive shining soul, you will really find freedom. No one will be able to control you with names or the memory of words--Socrates, Christ, Buddha. Those teachers were talking about consciousness. Consciousness is common to everyone. When you find the fourth consciousness you will not need the names or words of any teachers. There is no particular concave soul. Once you are Experienced, you will find the law for yourself. Do not put on anyone else's rigid form. Keep your mind free and look into the natural activity of universal mind. Words are a particular mold. So in the Zen School we hate words. When students use words to make molds, the teacher must destroy them.

You come into the Zen room with a pan on your mind. The Zen master knocks it off. Next day you come in with another pan and he knocks that off. Pan after pan after pan. Even if you come in with the stove perched on your head, the teacher will smash it and drive you from the room. Finally you find your mind's own activity. But even then you try to put it into a mold to show the teacher. Do you think he is blind? Unkind? When you come in with your soul bare, the teacher will see it. We do not want any formula as an answer. Each answer must be the student's invention, creation.

Of course, we know the "best an-

swers" historically. These have been handed down. When you have passed the koan yourself, the teacher will tell you these. There are philosophical answers also, which may be given to you after you have got the real answer, but these are not the "main store"--just the annex.

The Zen Master uses bare kindness, shouts or strikes. If he is disgusted, he just gives you up. When I am intense, I am most kind.

Do not make a mistake. If I smile, it means I accept the answer as insignificant. A true, substantial answer must be made by the student.

Then I say, "All right." I show you the best answer made by previous students. In my experience, when I show previous answers to students, they protest. Of course, this is due to their ignorance. The pupil should listen and accept, take it as coming from the teacher.

When the teacher asks you a question, do not answer with philosophy. Give a true answer.

Once a true answer is given, it is never forgotten. Sometimes a student will spend two or three, perhaps five months on a koan before passing it, then a year later will have forgotten his answer. In my experience, no real Zen student forgets answers. If you have forgotten, find out before the teacher asks you.

For beginners, I speak of mind activity. For three or four years this is enough. A Zen student would not call IT activity, or mind or soul. If you call IT mind, it is not soul. If you call IT soul, it is not mind. Do not call IT by any name. If a fire is burning down your house, though you point at it and yell at it and become

angry, it won't make any difference. The fire burns just the same.

We divide consciousness into three stages: adana, hridaya, citta.

Adana is the consciousness of fire, water, air, ether, electricity. You can see the activity of this consciousness clearly. When you see this bowl which I strike, to you it has no consciousness, but it has force, energy. If it is melted into fire, the fire will have the force to move something.

The words, names, matter and spirit, material and spiritual, come from the Western World. Before the invasion of the East by the West this dualism was unknown. There was no difference between matter and spirit. When I was a child, the ground was not mere earth, but spirit. The sky was not mere space, it was spiritual space. Since Western dualism came into the Orient, the world has become dualistic. We certainly regret it. We were taught that matter and spirit are one from the beginning.

From the outside, this bowl is matter, of course, but in adana consciousness it has its own conscious law and its own conscious activity. When we die we return to adana consciousness, the ocean of consciousness. The ocean is not water but waves. You do not travel through the water but through the waves of adana consciousness. Running from the fire that bars your way, you feel it as consciousness all around you. When you burn, your mind enters adana consciousness.

Hridaya consciousness is more complicated, more sophisticated. All things that sleep are in this stage. The child in its mother's bosom does not know front from back, up from down, space, time, motion, dark or light. Its consciousness does not exist but you

cannot deny its existence. If I ask you, "What were you there?" what answer would you make? "I cannot remember." The sleeping stage is a wonderful state. There is no individuality in it. All sentient beings are in this one stage, are one in it. It has its own activity and we live according to its law. The hridaya sutra talks about this stage which is quite familiar to us.

Citta consciousness is this present thinking consciousness. We control with our awareness. We look. We see the enemy. He runs, we run from him. Even cockroaches are in the citta stage. I observe cockroaches quite intellectually. If one feels danger, he runs. If alone, he comes out like a pickpocket. The cockroach mind is different from that of an onion or a pine tree. We do not have to speak about our citta consciousness because we know it so well, we feel it directly.

We use these three consciousnesses, citta, hridaya, and adana as a base and find prajna consciousness. It is not so difficult if you get into the center of adana consciousness. Do not stick around here or look for a different mold. Don't let your mind get into any dead words; they are just molds. Gather yourself into the center that stands like an incense stick and penetrate through the three stages. At the top is the prajna stage, but the prajna stage is different from the other three. From sleeping to waking to consciousness to shining--then you really find freedom and no name can mean anything to you. Aristotle, Christ--all the teachers are talking about consciousness, but when you find your own consciousness, you will be yourself. *Reconstructed by F.Reiter*

Rinzai Reed

Do not be deceived, brothers. Have you not a father and a mother? Have you not inherited the source of wisdom and love from them? Why should you keep trying to acquire something more? Turn your gaze deep into your own consciousness. Long ago someone said: "Yajnadatta was unable to find his own head in the mirror one morning." When you stop looking, you will find that there is nothing further for you to do for your enlightenment.

Good brothers, be yourselves. Do not be pretentious.

SOKEI-AN SAYS Last time Rinzai told his disciples how to be a true Buddhist. He said, "One who tries to learn the words of Buddhism, its technical terms, or its doctrine, the systems of Hinayana and Mahayana, is not a true Buddhist. Nor is he who tries to find a teacher who will agree with him. The real one seeks Buddhism in himself. Where is the main gate of Buddhism within him? From what place can he enter into Buddhism? Religion is not in the sky, under the earth, in books--nowhere but in himself. From what sense--ear, eye, mouth--does one enter?"

Shariputra told his disciples, "We have six gates (the six senses) through which we enter Buddhism." The five senses go out from *one* sense that is the root. With the senses we see color and form, and we hear sound--that is how we know the outside. But if we had no eyes, we could not be sure whether sound is inside or outside; the same with smell, taste, and touch. Of course it is all in the sense-organ, not outside. We cut our finger and say the knife is painful, but the pain is not in the knife. We say this color is red, but color is in the eye, and so on with all the senses. The five senses create phenomena in you, not outside. The creator, the Goddess Maya, is in you. The five senses perceive phenom-

ena and the sixth (the root) perceives Reality. Then what is really existing outside? If we had no five senses, what would exist in the universe? There is essential existence, which is not color, form, and so forth. We must see this with the *one* sense. This essential existence is called by many names: Reality, noumena, eternal atom, and so forth. This part of Buddhism is the same as Western philosophy; it is the real ground upon which to build religion. If you do not understand Reality, you cannot understand religion. So the entrance of Buddhism is *this* consciousness within yourself. Of course this is not *your* self. You must realize that this consciousness and that Reality are not two, but one elemental existence. You must drop the conception of ego existence. Buddhism is in that which has no name, not in ego or individual. We cannot say it is inside, for that is merely relative to the outside. Yet Buddhism is visible and tangible within yourself. Do not seek it in anything outside.

Rinzai is certainly talking about non-ego. He disliked the Buddhists of his time who kept themselves above human beings, taking a pretentious attitude, so he pulled them down to earth.

Do not be deceived, brothers. Have you not a father and a mother? Have

you not inherited the source of wisdom and love from them?" The father within you is avidya. The Buddha said, "Avidya is your father and trishna is your mother." Love with attachment is not pure love. Avidya is darkness, ignorance as in one's mother's bosom--we do not know time or space, have no consciousness of self.

After birth, you open this eye and use this ear, yet you are still sleeping; you see the blue sky with wide-open eyes, yet you are snoring--that is our life. You must open the inner eye.

Trishna, desire, is pursuing you from morning to evening--smiling, crying, angry--by these you are destroying yourself.

But the Buddha did not speak of avidya, in this case, in its primitive sense; he spoke of avidya as intrinsic wisdom, as the sky-mirror, akasha-garbha-jnana. Akasha is the mirror that has consciousness when something is reflected. Thus avidya becomes Nirvana to the enlightened mind. Trishna becomes love--the enlightened one can make happiness on earth. Universal love is Maitreya.

Have you not a father and a mother? Have you not inherited the source of wisdom and love from them? You have this intrinsic wisdom and universal love in yourself.

Why should you keep trying to acquire something more? Nirvana is in you. The Buddha's omnipresent Dharmakaya is in you. With this universal love in your heart, you make all the judgments of daily life. So why try to acquire more?

Turn your gaze deep into your own consciousness. The Ancient Buddha told this story to his disciples. There was a man named Yajnadatta in Shra-

vasti. Each morning as he looked into the mirror he saw a beautiful man and was enchanted with his own reflection. But one morning he couldn't see it--nothing was reflected, and he ran out crying, "I have lost my head--please find it!" He did not realize that he was looking at the back of the mirror. This is an allegory, this searching for one's head on the street. It is consciousness seeking consciousness--like looking in the encyclopedia for yourself, or searching the sky for nirvana.

Truth by itself is undemonstrable, cannot be proved by something else. The logical function of the brain can identify truth, but truth is undemonstrable. So if you try to find your own consciousness by using the mind, you are like the one in the story. You need not laugh, for some do this today.

When the Second Patriarch of China met Bodhidharma, he was asked what he was seeking. The Second Patriarch said, "My soul is not yet emancipated." "Oh," said Bodhidharma, "Where is your soul--let me see it!" The Patriarch was emancipated.

When you stop looking, you will find that there is nothing further for you to do for your enlightenment.

You come back home and meet your own father and mother.

Good brothers, be yourselves. Do not be pretentious. This is very good. Ordinary everyday life is more valuable than anything else. If one asks a Buddhist, "Do you understand?" and he dramatizes himself, we say, "Do not be pretentious."

For the Yajnadatta story, as told by the Buddha to Purna Maitrayaniputra, see the *Surangama Sutra*, translated by Charles Luk (Rider and Co., London, 1966)

Jan-nata

Copyright 1970 by (The First Zen Institute of America, Inc.
Published monthly) 113 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016

Vol. XVII, No. 11, Nov. 1970
Mary Parkas, Editor
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Copyright of Zen Notes is the property of the First Zen Institute of America, Inc., and its content may not be copied or e-mailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download or e-mail articles for individual use.

Founded in 1930 by
Sokei-an Sasaki



First Zen Institute of America
113 E30 Street
New York, New York 10016
(212)-686-2520
www.firstzen.org

會協禪一第國美