

ZEN notes

ANTONY TUDOR HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE
INSTITUTE SINCE 1957 AND IS ITS PRESIDENT

Tudor



The Tudor Evening at the Met (Metropolitan Opera House to non-New Yorkers) which was celebrating forty years of American Ballet Theatre, comprised four numbers in a combination of Tudor's own choosing. The first was "Tillers of the Soil," first performed in 1979. The "New York Times" recently described it as "an anecdote about a peasant lad seduced by a gypsy type." Her pregnancy becomes obvious and subsequently she hands the child to the father who takes both of them into his arms and carries them off, presumably to live happily ever after. When I observed to Tudor that the whole program was about the relations of men and women, he threw out, after saying, "Yes, I planned it that way," a dismissal of the first number as "the vulgar, bodily, you know..."

The second ballet was his first major work (1936), "*Jardin aux Lilas*" (Lilac Garden), described by Tobi Tobias in the program notes as showing the poignant situation of four people who

are affected by a marriage of convenience. Perhaps, she writes, *Jardin* epitomizes the very English understanding of a ballet as "a creation of atmosphere." The atmosphere it created for me was exactly the world of British "Vogue", to which Tudor admitted, and added, "I was full of that when I first came to New York (Oct. 13, 1939) to seek fame and fortune."

The third item on the program was titled "Little Improvisations" and was danced, with great charm and verve by two young performers, the girl oriental, the male a boyish blonde. Child's play was what it looked like and spontaneity its message (a dramatization of course).

A piece of cloth was the Rorschach to fantasy that became a bridal veil, a train, a cape, a doll baby, and, best of all, the back of an animal under which the girl, as front legs, marvelously suggested a prancing horse. Barry Blitstein, who sat next to me and is a budding playwright (his one-acter was actually performed in Minnesota recently) enthusiastically proclaimed: "That's theater at its best. Just take whatever you have and show what imagination can do with it."

Then came the fourth and last number. I'd seen it before so I wasn't expecting any surprises. The critics had loved this one in the late seventies when it had come as a complete surprise as a masterpiece of romantic lyricism. Innocence, beauty, sadness, pure grace--all these had been seen, appreciated before.

After I'd watched "The Leaves are Fading" a short time, something else appeared. The paired dancers, dressed in pale transparencies, the shaded forest in dim after-glow--it was the halfpast afternoon of life itself, the end of the life of the year, of the cycle, the inexpressible sweetness and sadness of loving farewell, the most tenderly longing embraces, the abandonment of everything, even love itself forgotten in the infinite variety of its no-longer feverish but ultimate expression. Just a little left of the passion of the glorious reds and yellows that scientists tell us are the chemical expression of decay that we see as the glory of autumn. I realized the human forms of the dancers had dissolved, were transformed. Only the essence of movement that had been activating them was to be seen now manifesting as leaves whirled this way and that by motion, emotion, their leave-taking unhurried, not-regretting, one more embrace, another, poignant as nature's way of going, and at last gone.

EPILOGUE I want to congratulate Tudor. If he had only accomplished this one wonderful transmission of his own genius to his charming young successors for the brief period of time it took them to manifest this expression of love itself, it would be quite enough to mark him the master-teacher, master-choreographer that he is. I am so happy I could see it July 4, 1980. It was a celebration of 40 years of American Ballet Theatre, with which he has been associated in, as Sono Osato, one of the dancers he had directed says, "the work, devotion to the hard precious work that aims always toward perfection." MF

THE RECORD OF LIN-CHI

Ascending to the high seat, Lin-chi said: "There is a man who discusses everything endlessly. He is on his way, yet he has not gone out of his house. There is another who has departed from his house, yet he is not on his way. Which of these is deserving of support from manu and which from deva?" Lin-chi descended from the high seat.

SOKEI-AN SAYS

Some day in the future you will realize that there was some Asiatic Buddhist monk who was giving lectures on the *Record of Lin-chi*, the record of a Chinese Zen Master. He has come too soon to this country. These two civilizations will meet in the future. Now, they are fighting, but the fighting is the sign that there will be some contact later. Physical contact is fighting, but mental contact is to exchange their minds. Buddhism came into China after the war between China and Central Asia. Buddhism came into Japan after the war between Korea and Japan. War is always introducing Buddhism to the other country.

The sentence "*One who discusses everything endlessly*" is my translation of the original, which is literally "*to discuss kalpas (eons of time)*." Ancient Zen masters have given various commentaries on these two words "*to discuss kalpas*." In my opinion, the correct commentary is "*reasoning about and discussing this and that throughout endless time*."

This word "*kalpa*" is used many times in the sutras and we use this word *kalpa* many, many times. It means "*endless time*." One Buddha exists during one *kalpa*. The next *kalpa* another Buddha will advent. In the legend of Buddhism there is a huge stone called "*the kalpa stone*." An angel comes down from heaven and sweeps this *kalpa* stone with her gossamer sleeve. She comes once in one hundred years. Repeating the sweeping of the stone with her sleeve, finally she will sweep away the stone. When the stone vanishes, the *kalpa* has come to an end.

"Reasoning about and discussing this and that throughout endless time" is one of the wings of Buddhism. Buddhism has wings. One is this philosophical talk; the other is Zen, silent meditation. Buddha's 5480 volumes of sutras and his teachings for forty-nine years are this side of the wings.

The man who, from morning to evening, reasons and talks about Buddhism, gives lectures on Buddhism and explains all Buddhism, certainly lives like any other layman. He is traveling on the road with his friends, seeking the way to enlightenment. By leading this missionary-like life, however, he dwells always in the sphere of Buddha's main principle, which is his original home.

To explain all Buddhism in words or to give lectures on Buddhism, "*reasons and talks about Buddhism*", means not only to talk

about or reason about Buddhism in the lecture hall, but it means that a Buddhist lives and leads an everyday life. Washing his face in the morning, eating his breakfast, working, he enjoys and visits friends and comes back home and goes to bed. He lives like any other layman.

He, however, dwells in the sphere of Buddha's main principle which is his original home. I must speak about Buddha's main principle. The Buddha talked for forty-nine years about his main principle and left us tremendous volumes of sutras to explain this principle. I can not talk about it here in one word, but if I were to use one word to denote that, perhaps I would employ the word "Nirvana".

You would ask, "What is Nirvana?" and I answer, "Nirvana is extinction." You ask, "What is extinction?" I answer, "Extinction means death." You ask, "What is death?" I turn around my mind and answer, "Death means nothing has appeared yet."

It is difficult to put it into words. I live every day, repeating the same thing, but I never leave this main principle behind me. Because I cannot shake it off. I am not holding it, but it follows me. It is like your heel. When you walk, you cannot shake it off or discharge it. It follows you always, as your shadow follows you always. As death follows you wherever you go. Whenever you are very happy, death follows you like a shadow. The principle of Buddhism is like this. But you do not know it. You cannot realize it because you are not a Buddhist. Perhaps you are a Buddhist. But you have not quite realized this principle.

The other man who does not stay at home, yet does not stay outside, is not concerned either with promulgating Buddhism or staying in Buddhism. He does not fall into Buddhism, neither does he fall into the ordinary life of the layman. He has transcended the world and the life which is aloof from the world.

He left home. What is "home?" Who is "on the road, on the way?" A monk said to Tozan: "If I try to get in to that movement, I cannot. I have to get it in meditation." Tozan said: "There is something that is shining like black lacquer. It is always in movement. How do you grasp it?" "I try to grasp it in meditation." Tozan was angry and kicked the table over.

Many Buddhists take this attitude, are satisfied, do not wish to think deeper. Such a person is dishonest. It is easier for an honest but misled man to reach a higher point because he *has* to understand the real meaning of it. He must discover the truth about it. A deep philosopher is an honest man.

I recall a famous story: A messenger from hell came to a monk and said, "Well, your time is up--you must come with me! Yama awaits you." "What? Well, I have been so busy in my life that I have had no time to attain Enlightenment! Please wait three days, and I will go with you." "I do not know, but I will inquire of Yama."

When the messenger told this to Yama, he yelled, "What have you done? Go back quickly before he attains Enlightenment!"

In the meantime, the monk meditated hard for three days--and attained Enlightenment!

The messenger searched through the temple, peered into every face--but could not find the monk. He had disappeared like a candle flame in the sunshine! The flame was there--but no one could find him. He was not himself--he was IT.

If one takes the egotistic attitude--it is absurd--like the story of Atlas. Without him, the world still stays in place! After all, there is *no* self. If you really understand--there is just one divine power; it is in my finger-tip, my tongue-tip--there *is no* Sokei-an!

The one who left home does not care about the principle of Buddhism. He has forgotten it. He is not living with any sort of principle. So he left home! Good bye! But he is not on the way. No one can find him anywhere. Has he evaporated in the air? What kind of man is he? "He is not on the way" means he is not promulgating Buddhism and is not even living the human life. What is he doing then?

When the Second Patriarch, Hui-k'o, had attained Bodhidharma's sanction, receiving his seal upon his own mind, that he had attained the principle of Buddhism, he left Bodhidharma and was promulgating Bodhidharma's teachings for a while. But later he disappeared for a long time. Still later he appeared somewhere like Broadway or like someplace that is called a red-light district where there are many drinking houses and brothels and beautiful women and singing and dancing. He was among them, singing and dancing, intoxicated and talking something that no one understood. He was not living in the Nirvanic principle of Nirvana nor was he giving any Buddhistic teachings to the people. Hui-k'o was gone, just a crazy man left there. He is neither clergy nor layman. What do you call him? This is one example of this type of Buddhist.

The other type among this kind does not stay at home nor stay outside. No one knows where he has gone. This man is neither a physical nor a mental man. This is like Bodhidharma. He lived in China for nine years. When he came to China he was one hundred and twenty-five years old. He stayed nine years in China. He died. Monks buried him and made a pagoda, putting his coffin in it on the mountain side called Uju Temple. Bear Ear Temple. There he was buried. So-un, a Chinese monk who went to India, when he was coming back through the pass of Karakolan in the Himalayas, on the way met Bodhidharma. So-un said, "Well, fancy seeing you here!" "I have done my work and I am going back to India for I wish to return to my own soil." "Farewell, Master!" So-un realized the Master did not wear any shoes. He was holding one shoe instead of a pair in one hand. In the other hand he was holding a couple of volumes of the sutras, scrolls.

So-un came back to China and told the Emperor that he had met Bodhidharma holding one shoe and walking barefoot in the Himalaya pass. The Emperor said, "Ridiculous! He died in China. I buried him on the Mountain of the Bear Ears." He ordered them to open the tower and open the coffin. Everyone saw that the coffin was empty, but one shoe was left. There were neither bones nor robes.

This type of man who has gone out from the house and yet is not on the Way, where is he?

To be supported by heavenly beings or by man means to accept the way of thinking which is the superhuman way or the ordinary human way.

There is a word which we use, Arhat or Arhatva--the nature of Arhat. One who attains Nirvana in his lifetime, not after death is called an Arhat. He has attained this Nirvana only mentally, an Arhat who has attained Nirvana with Remainder, because when he is cremated his bones and ashes will be left behind, so he does not enter into annihilation. He does not enter into absolute Sunyata, Emptiness.

But he who has attained Nirvana without Remainder has attained Nirvana mentally and physically before his death.

How can he attain this? Even the sick man when he dies leaves a corpse behind. How can a man being well and healthy attain such a Nirvana and leave nothing behind? A queer Nirvana, isn't it? Nothing which was his own is left. He with his shadow entered into the enlightened sphere. In his old world where he has been dwelling, he left nothing. This enlightened Arhat, who has nothing for his own, must be supported by someone in order to live. Arhat means "one who ought to be supported." As a human being he died and he is supported by Nature. His thinking capacity is gone, but all thoughts are given to him by Nature. His eyes are not his own; they are supported for him by Nature. Thus men will attain the highest level of life. Buddhist monks are imitating this, though they have not attained this level yet. They have misunderstood the idea of Nirvana and also the state of Arhat and superman. Their minds are not mature.

You say, "I think, I eat, I see," but your seeing is supported by your eyes. Your thinking is supported by manus, mind. Your supernatural thinking is supported by devas, heavenly beings. Deva means "pure mind." Pure or ordinary mind. I am not talking my own notions. This is the authentic way.

One who has reached the state of Arhat, accepting the support of the laymen, can give the teaching. Before anyone reached that state of Nirvana with Remainder, the Buddha would not permit him to open his mouth.

One who does not stay anywhere, neither in the home nor on the Way, do you think he will be supported by devas, and the other will be supported by men?

When he does not live anywhere and appears like the Second Patriarch, then he must be supported by men of the brothel and by pick-pockets. He must be supported by nagas, gandharvas, and demons. Will they support him?

Tao-hsuan said: "Buddha has three bodies: manu and deva cannot see the Buddha's first body or his second body because no word can explain those two bodies." No measure can be applied to those two bodies.

The two bodies are the Dharmakaya and the Sambhogakaya. Men and devas can see the third body, the Nirmanakaya, which is in color, form and sound. The Nirmanakaya exists in the world of three dimensions. This is the Nirmanakaya. (Here Sokei-an held out his hand.) The Sambhogakaya, the second body, and the Dharmakaya, the first body, are not revealed before these naked eyes made of water and light. Men and devas fail to see them.

He who is neither at home nor on the Way--do you think he should be living in the Dharmakaya? Perhaps you think such a way. And those who live in the principle, are they living in Nirmanakaya only? Perhaps you think this way? You will understand the real conclusion when you attain Zen understanding. Lin-chi gave no answer so I shall give no commentary on his unwritten words.

FROM THE RECORD OF BANKEI

Translated by Haskel

Now I want all you laymen in the assembly to pay particular attention. Since people have their different individual capacities, (when they come to Buddhism) they take refuge in a particular Buddha, a particular Dharma and a particular Sangha. So, when it comes to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, though people may *claim* one to be best, (the truth of Buddhism itself) is not limited to the teachings of one sect. Among Buddhas and Dharmas there is no question of superiority or inferiority, all are equal. What I'm teaching is simply that the Buddha Mind is unborn and marvelously illuminating, so it's perfectly alright to have faith in the (particular) teaching passed down from the patriarchs (of your own school). While the patriarchs all set forth their own individual teachings and establish expedient methods in their effort to convert people, in spite of their differences, what they all are teaching is none other than the Unborn Buddha Mind we receive from our parents at birth.

JOSHU SASAKI ROSHI SAYS HE WILL BE AT THE FZI
FOR A SESSHIN OCT. 9-15 and at BEECH HILL OCT. 1-7.

CONVERSATIONS WITH FARKAS

Noted by Hackney

One of the characteristics of "schizophrenic" personalities is that at around the age of 14 they may construct a world system into which everything must fit. I was thinking about this because I received

gan-mata

a book catalogue describing a new book on mandalas. It reminded me of Jung's ideas, because he had to make a system too, and he made it quite early as well. It was completely individualistic. I don't believe his system has anything to do with the way things really are. But, by training people in his system, they were able to benefit from it. They felt that somebody was running things or it was running in some manner and they could depend on it.

Science in general is like this, too. It is a system by which things can be judged. If they fit into it, OK--if not, out with it. As the Queen would say, "Off with their heads!" Then they are unidentified foreign objects--that puts them into the system, too. It gives them a corner into which they can be placed and located. Whereas Zen, of course, is the exact opposite of that. If there is any kind of system to it or any theorizing, then you have got to jump into chaos and get rid of all that stuff without depending on anything or any system.

The only time Sokei-an ever criticized me was when I was first there with him. I never asked any questions, displayed any confusion. There was never any doubt in my mind about anything. I was just going along in my own way.

Sokei-an was sitting at his desk and I went by him doing some domestic task and then he said, "What are you really interested in?" I said, "I like to know things." He said, "Oh, that's bad." I don't know whether he really thought so.

I was thinking of this and how to explain or characterize Sokei-an. What is there about him that is different from the others that makes me cotton to him and not to any of them? The real fact of the matter is that he too was interested in knowing things and never gave it up.

In his lectures, you can see the tracks as he was concerning himself with the same kind of questions I was concerning myself with. I would see something in a lecture and realize he was going into this question or that question. It wasn't that he was trying to find a way to explain Buddhism--not at all. He was trying to find out how it worked himself. Not *why* it worked, but *how* it worked. This is what he was trying to do all the time. He translated the sutras and made comments on them. But, they are not the same sort of explanations that the Chinese scholars or Japanese of today give. His were ones that explained them to himself.

I, too, wanted to know these Buddhists' things. Not that I had a particular faith in them or interest except I wanted to know how they worked and, to a certain extent, what the system was, because there is a system there. The history can be told. But the problem about making a simple statement about Buddhism is great, because there are so many divergent things about it. So now I want to say a few things about Zen and its history. But it is very limited. There are only a few things you can say because it blends in and the details can be confusing.

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