

ZEN NOTES



Peeter L'amp

MONKEY TALK NOTED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NY TIMES

As the year of the monkey draws to its close, we bring you a report that monkeys communicate not only general alarms (we all knew that from Tarzan movies) but that they (anyway vervet monkeys) "specify different categories of animals or types of danger."

"Thus far, this is the first demonstration," Dr. Peter Marler states after a 14-month study in Africa, "that monkeys convey semantic content in their messages."

Actually, the monkeys haven't ever had any problem "getting" semantic messages or dishing them out either. The news is really that at long last humans have been able to grasp the meaning of a few bits of monkey-talk that everybody in the treetops and some on the ground have been catching on to right along.

It is true that infant monkeys don't categorize all that well, for instance, sometimes giving an eagle alarm for a pigeon, but adult vervets show a distinct sophistication in their interpretation. In addition to specific leopard, eagle and python calls, they also distinguish baboons and unfamiliar humans. The call for humans, by the way, is similar in some respects to that for snakes. (Something like "a snake in the grass" perhaps?)

For more details, see the report by Robert M. Seyfarth, Dorothy L. Cheney and Peter Marler in the journal *Science*.

SEASON'S GREETINGS EVERYBODY

CONVERSATIONS WITH FARKAS

Noted by Hackney

Yoda is the "master" in a little funny form in the movie "The Empire Strikes Back." It is sort of associated with me--the master who is so completely unlike what one expects a master to be. Some expect a master to be a powerful and heroic man and yet they are getting something from me--sometimes they even admit it!

People know that the secret of really doing something is in their head and not "out there." It is painful for people to go through this. They can go through it if they will take the simple advice "See what you are doing as you do it." "See it!" Don't twist it and pretend it is something else and you can explain it away to other people. You're not fooling anyone.

The one thing is: The only way you can do it with another person is to keep speaking directly to the real person. The other will put up all sorts of imitations and obnoxious defenses, but you must go right to the real one.

Being obnoxious is a good defense. For example, one of the few real deterrents women have against rape today is the terrible, foul-smelling chemical that they can break over their bodies when needed. Buddhism has such a remedy that can be found in the sutras. The

(continued on the seventh page)

THE GREAT SIXTH PATRIARCH'S TEACHING, CHAPTER III

Venomous harm is an evil dragon; falsehood is a truculent ghost; anxiety is a shark; avarice is hell; folly is a beast.

Worthy scholars, if you practice the ten virtuous commandments always, heaven will come to you. If you annihilate your ego, Mount Sumeru will go away, turning a somersault. Then the sea of desire will dry up; the waves of suffering will cease to exist; the danger of reptiles will be vanquished. In consequence, the Buddha of awakening, who dwells upon the soil of your mind, will radiate his effulgence through the six gateways, and the force of his purity will conquer the six evil angels of the Kama heaven. When your original nature throws its light within yourself, the three kinds of poison will be driven out and all sin deserving of hell torture will be wiped off. Thus your mind within and without will become bright and clear like the Western heaven. Without giving yourself the discipline of this practice, how can you reach there?

Having heard this, the multitude were all awakened in their original nature, and all made a bow, saying in one breath: "How wonderful! We hope that all the sentient beings who hear this will be awakened at once."

SOKEI-AN SAYS

This part of the record shows the naivete of men's minds at that period. It was during the T'ang dynasty in China. The Sixth Patriarch, using metaphors, destroyed their superstitions, but they were still believing that after death they would go to the Western heaven, that they would be accepted as children by the hand of Amida, and that they would live in peace and happiness forever on the lotus flowers blooming in the pond of pure, heavenly water.

This type of faith is comparable today to the Christian faith. The adherent believes that there is a heaven in the sky, and at the golden gate your child who died will be waiting for you, surrounded by a golden cloud. A professor once told me that animals do not think but that they dream, and that when they dream, they dream in figures--trees, water, cats and cows. People in the cave age, since they didn't have many words to express their thoughts, composed their thoughts in figures like those in dreams. These golden gates of heaven, lotus flowers and crystalline ponds surrounded by clouds like rainbows, are the cave-man's thoughts. No civilized being cherishes such child-like illustrations in his mind.

The Sixth Patriarch was attempting to destroy all those picturesque religious thoughts, and he spoke in metaphor.

Venomous harm is an evil dragon: "Venomous harm" is that, by contrivance, one ensnares his enemies and kills them, not knowing why. This is an evil dragon.

Falsehood is a truculent ghost: The contriving one tells a lie,

without showing his own figure to his enemy. He is like a ghost, hiding himself as he tries to harm another.

Anxiety is a shark: Anxiety is like a fish that comes slowly to your feet without making any noise--and all of a sudden takes over your life.

Avarice is hell; folly is a beast: You are devoured by your own desire.

Worthy scholars, if you practice the ten virtuous commandments always, heaven will come to you. In Buddhism, when you come to the temple, a monk will give you the commandments and you will take an oath to keep them. These ten virtuous commandments are somewhat different from the usual ones observed in the West. If we draw up to the table of human life, we must have some sort of behavior in order to live with others without disturbing them. So we are given commandments: we must not kill, steal, lie, etc. This human world is so complicated that we cannot apply such a scheme as these commandments to discriminate good and bad; the measure in these commandments is too big; the world cannot be divided into two parts, good and bad. If you try to divide the world thus, you cannot live happily. Commandment in Buddhism is a very difficult study. The ten virtuous commandments are just a minor scheme of commandments--the manners, etiquette of the monk. He must observe them and behave like a good child, as in school. Nuns have more.

In Buddhism, you must start with these commandments as one starts learning to play the piano with scales. Then heaven will come to you; it will spread itself like a carpet at your feet.

If you annihilate your ego, Mount Sumeru will go away, turning a somersault. Mount Sumeru is an Oriental expression, meaning the whole world. They believed that the world was a triangle standing upside-down like a top, with water holding it all around. Under the top is a golden rug, supported by wheeling fire. At the top of Mount Sumeru is the palace of the God Indra, and there are many heavens, grade by grade, up to the Triastimsa Heaven. Above Kamadhatu, Rupadhatu, and Arupadhatu is the highest heaven of all, called Dharma-dhatu-samapatti. In each grade of the heavens there is a grade of angel. In India, they had long tried to make all this particularization in meditation. The Hindus thought that you could go up through each heaven one by one, and finally come to the highest heaven. After that, the physical body would vanish and the meditator would be born in that world. This was the original idea of Hindu meditation. So the first condition was to become a monk; the second was to eat very little, preparing to be born in heaven, just as the snake changes its skin. This was the reason for the ascetic life in India.

But the Sixth Patriarch says: "If you annihilate your ego, you will reach there." Meditation has nothing to do with his Zen. You must

change your attitude and become yourself, and you must prove this. How do you prove it? Wisdom will prove it in one moment. Then the Patriarch says: "Mount Sumeru will go away." All this quantity of material manifestation of physical existence will go away; all the material of imagination which created heaven in the empty sky will vanish, "turning a somersault." It will vanish like a bad child, turning a somersault. It will jump out of the universe. Heaven, earth and hell will go away. Even you will turn a somersault.

I faithfully believe in this. I cannot believe in those grades of heaven, the old idea of the thousand grades of heaven of the Sumeru Mountain. And I abominate the idea of ascending higher and higher to the top. This ego must be destroyed, wiped from the human mind. A man may have such a notion of going higher and higher in meditation, but if someone would give him a black eye in such a meditation, he would drop down to earth quickly enough! He is not going to heaven; he is only thinking of it in his mind. If all such thoughts are destroyed, heaven spreads like a carpet underfoot. The idea of turning a somersault in the sky is a very interesting Chinese idiom. There is no such idea in the West.

Then the sea of desire will dry up; the waves of suffering will cease to exist. The danger of reptiles will vanish. In consequence, the Buddha of awakening who dwells upon the soil of your mind will radiate his effulgence through the six gateways, and the force of his purity will conquer the six evil angels of the kama heaven. The Buddha of awakening is this Buddha of ours. In sanzen, you are practicing this Buddha of Awakening. It is he who dwells on the soil of your mind. Buddha is not in the Western heaven, but dwells upon the soil of your own mind.

The six gateways, of course, are the senses--eye, ear, nose, tongue, and so on. The "force of his purity" is the attitude of your mind which takes all those paddings of the mind away from you and makes your mind pure. All these paddings, everything that is thrown into your mind like ashes thrown into the water, become like a sewer. All this must be taken away in order to make your mind pure... About this "purity"--everyone has an idea of purity, thinking that it means: Don't smoke cigarettes, don't drink wine, don't be seen with ladies, but go to church. The best thing is not to believe your mind, even when it comes and whispers to you--just don't believe! Say "Hello," and let it go.

We say, "Do not entertain it. Then your mind will become clear and you will find the purity of your mind." Then you will return to the original condition of your nature which is not influenced by your surroundings. This is the new-born mind, yet it is not stupid. Keep this clear mind which is not the padded brain; it is bright with the force of wisdom.

This will conquer the six evil angels of the Kama heaven. These

angels are not evil, but they are called so because people think of them as evil. I have not the time to explain all this, but sometime I will.

The Kama heaven is the lowest, the demons' heaven. The desire that belongs to earth is eating, the desire to support the physical body. The desire that belongs to heaven is generating, to keep your generation. To eat and to generate are the two desires, and these angels are guardians of the functions of human beings. People call them evil. Some Methodism crept into Buddhism here.

When your original nature throws its light within yourself, the three kinds of poison will be driven out. These three kinds of poison are avarice, anger, ignorance.

And all sin deserving of hell torture will be wiped off. All guilt and all sin will be wiped away. When you realize the original substance that is your original self, original body and mind, the original of all things, then there will be no torture, no anxiety. When you pass the first koan, then you must prove this. The first gate is very difficult to go through; if you come to me in the clothes you wear in ordinary life, I will throw you out.

Thus your mind within and without will become clean and bright like the Western heaven. Without giving yourself the discipline of this practice, how can you reach there?

Having heard this, the multitude were all awakened to their original nature and all made a bow, saying in one breath: "How wonderful! We hope that all sentient beings who hear this will be awakened at once." I am quite sure that all those disciples were not enlightened. Many philosophers have seen Reality, but they could not bring it into actuality.

In Zen, you must prove that Actuality and Reality are not two different existences, but one. Then you will be a sage, and you will prove it in sanzen.

The key is in the hand of the Zen master. We are proud to hold this key and to give it to those who will open the door of Reality. Then, when you come back from this door your usual human life is not the same as it was before you entered the gate. All human life, all that you see, has a different significance. And from that moment, the true life begins.

Before this time, though you breathe, you are sleeping. Many complain of those who are awakened, saying that they disturb those who are still asleep.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH FARKAS (continued from the second page)

beautiful woman tears out her eye and makes herself ugly. The only way for a woman to ward off unwanted attentions is to make herself as un-attractive as possible. But, naturally, the tricky part is she doesn't want to do that. Double signals always go out and this is the excuse men always use to justify their actions. Men don't want the real person, only the object.

People don't want to talk straight. It is very difficult to talk on any subject whatsoever with someone in a straight way. It is the last thing they want to do--to come in and display their naked, infantile self. The minute they do so, everything can be counted.

How fast does the mind go? Say that mind, operant mind, is a wave. The wave has energy, is energy and is going. How fast? In terms of what? Miles per hour? Yes.

I was watching Lamp hit a tennis ball and having its speed measured. So, something is transferred to the ball which makes it go at that speed. But what about before it gets to the ball? What is the speed at which the mind goes and what is in the person's body, his ego or whatever--the thing that gets it to happen? Something is projected--like "Nude Descending the Staircase." It is mentally first. I am sitting here and I want to go there and I project the pictures which move from here to there. It is like trying to remember a Bach fugue. If your projection doesn't go all the way, then at that point where there is a problem, your movement (or memory) will either stop, or become confused or do something else. Some people can only visualize to a certain point and after that it will be unregulated. I say this is not a question of, in the case of playing music, motor inefficiency, but of programming. What stops the programming?

Point to a window and project a force that will go to the window. If you are projecting or radiating all the time in all directions, there will be no problem, because you would have the force going.

How do you shoot a gun? You just put it up, look over there and it is there. Now, which goes faster, the bullet or the mind? If your mind is grasping the greenery out the window, which it does--it goes out and takes it. What is the speed at which it does this?

Suppose you are programming yourself, your body, and sending your thoughts, forces, waves, whatever, by seeing the greenery. This is in response to what? In aiming the ball, what gives the ball the message to get over there? Where does the energy start? What starts it? The desire to do it. Now this is where the trouble can begin. If you have resistance in the form of unconscious conflicts, things will not work correctly--to do whatever task you are doing. The only way to deal with this is by seeing the conflict. You can't see the unconscious conflict, but you can see the result. You must see what is happening as it happens.

FROM THE RECORD OF BANKEI

Translated by Haskel

gon notes

The Teacher addressed the assembly: The Dharma I'm teaching all of you is nothing else but the Unborn Buddha Mind that everyone innately possesses. And why is this? Well, while all of you here are listening to my talk, if outside the temple a dog barks, you know it's a dog; if a crow caws, you know it's a crow; your eye distinguishes the differences between black and white, men and women. In the course of my talk, even though you haven't any thought of deliberately trying to tell apart the sounds of dogs and crows or to distinguish things as black and white, men and women, right here and now, before discrimination appears, you see and hear whatever is there. Supposing someone were to tell you that the voice of a dog was that of a crow. Even if a million people were to say so, you'd hardly be taken in by them. The Buddha Mind, endowed with this sort of marvelous, inconceivable function, is a precious thing, isn't it? However, people fail to realize the way all possess this sort of splendid function, and that's why they're deluded about everything. This delusion, ultimately, arises from self-centredness. To give you an example of this self-centredness: On hearing one of your neighbors slandering you, you get mad and blindly hate him, holding him in contempt. Or if, instead, you hear your neighbor praising you, you think well of him and hold him in high esteem, that too is self-centredness. As to the origin of self-centredness, when you people were born, there wasn't even the smallest trace of evil notions of hating or loving people, or the like. But as you grew up, you picked up the various bad notions and things that you saw and heard around you and these became accumulated bad habits. These bad habits then became second nature to you, and so all kinds of delusions and perverse views got their start. Evil notions of hating or envying others are the karmic causes of rebirth as a hell dweller, and anger is the karmic cause of rebirth as an ashura, while notions of desire, of clinging and craving, are the karmic causes of rebirth as a hungry ghost. To regret what is past and think of what lies ahead is foolishness, so these are the karmic causes of rebirth as a beast. These are known as the Four Evil Paths. Innately, not even a trace of these Evil Paths exists; originally, there is only the Unborn Buddha Mind. It's only because of the outside dusts of your bad habits that you change your highly precious Buddha Mind for the evil karma of rebirth as a hell-dweller, and so forth. Having received the precious gift of birth as a human being, to then exchange your bright virtue that distinguishes good from evil, right from wrong, for such senseless stuff, is shameful, pathetic, isn't it? From the time I was young, I was determined to realize the Buddha Dharma, seeking out teachers in every quarter, sitting for long periods without lying down, living up in the mountains, performing all sorts of difficult and painful practices, so that I finally realized the source of Buddha Mind. But the fact that each of you, without any sort of practice, may right here and now easily learn the truth of realizing Buddhahood, shows you have a strong affinity with Buddhahood, and makes you fortunate indeed.

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