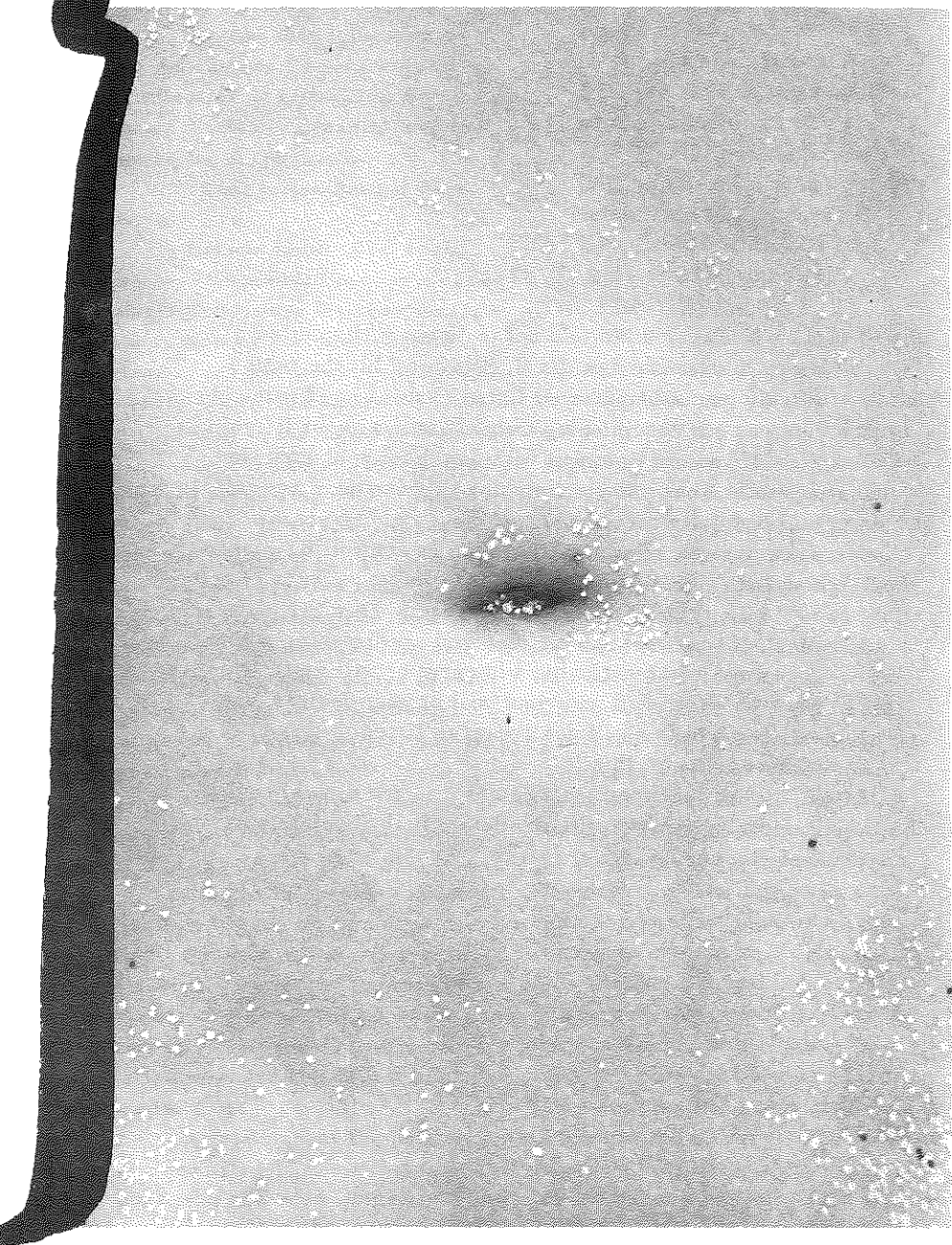


7EN NOTES



JOSHU SASAKI ROSHI SAYS

Noted by John Storm 8/20/82

In Zen you are told not to listen with your ears but to listen with your navel. So when I hit the table with my fan, as long as you listen to this sound with your ears you are not listening truly. Listen without listening.

If you are listening with your ears, your ears are separate. When you are listening to this sound with all your body, all your senses, with your whole body, you won't have to "listen." What, then, is controlling your body? It is the navel.

Therefore I tell you to listen to me with your navel. If your navel is big, then you are listening without listening. It is functioning without your willing it. If you "try" to listen with your will, or your desires, you will begin to think: "I don't want to listen to this, or I want to listen to this."

The functioning of the navel is the natural course: it doesn't have any will, any desire; it is absolutely natural functioning.

THE RECORD OF LIN-CHI
Discourses, IX

Lin-chi ascended to the high seat in the Hall. A monk asked: "What is the First Principle?"

Lin-chi said: "As soon as the Seal of the Three States of Realization is lifted, the fiery brand distinctly appears, host and guest are distinguishable."

"What is the Second Principle?"

Lin-chi said: "How could Miao-chieh permit Wu-chao's questioning? Because Wu-chao's expediency was not at variance with Miao-chieh's absolute wisdom that severs the myriad streams of notions."

"What is the Third Principle?"

Lin-chi said: "Observe the puppets performing on the stage. Their jumps and jerks depend upon the man behind."

Lin-chi further said: "Each Principle comprises the three fundamentals, and each fundamental comprises the three states of realization. There are expedients, and there is direct utility. How do you understand these?"

Having said this, Lin-chi descended from the high seat.

SOKEI-AN SAYS

Lin-chi is speaking about the three principles of Zen. It is difficult for students of today to understand some of the expressions used so long ago, but, consulting the comments left for us by his contemporaries, we can follow his ideas.

It is said that the person who questioned Lin-chi was a monk who had been living in Chen-

chou prior to Lin-chi's coming.

I shall briefly explain the commentary on these words as it has been handed down traditionally.

Editor's Note: Sokei-an's 1942 interpretation of this well-known passage, which we are basically using here, differs from the view of some scholars of today. Excerpts from the F.F. Sasaki translation notes will be appended. It is also different from his commentary in 1935, (notes of EK and AK), some of which is added.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE

The Seal of the Three States of Realization I have translated from the Chinese characters which literally are "the seal of the three important pivots." "Seal" in Sanskrit is *mudra*. In Buddhism the teacher uses a "seal" to prove and authorize a pupil's attainment. The so-called "Seal of the Three States of Realization" is symbolized by the three eyes of Mahesvara, represented by the second vowel of Sanskrit, three dots, ॐ, in old Sanskrit. The uppermost dot is the symbol of the spark of fire; the horizontal dots are the symbol of water. This symbol was employed in Buddhism to express Buddha's Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya. But there is no necessity to explain so tediously.

When the Seal has been lifted from that which receives the impression, the fiery brand—that is, the first dot—immediately appears. You must not imagine that this seal is impressed on paper. When Sakya-muni Buddha transmitted his Dharma to Mahakashyapa, he is said to have

branded Mahakashyapa with the seal of the Buddha Mind, and, when I transmit to you the traditional view of a koan, it can be said with my seal I brand you with Shakyamuni's mind. Literally, the Buddha "cast a golden mudra to signify his mind" and handed it down to Mahakashyapa. Everyone believed he cast it in gold and handed it down, that Mahakashyapa later lost it materially. In reality no material gold or any mudra in any shape is involved--it is Mind.

The origin was that when you visit a temple they stamp their seal on paper for you. You take it and bow, then go home. In my temple the transmission is from my mind to your mind and the seal is in the form of my Buddha Mind and I am proving your attainment. I seal when you completely attain a koan--"All right!" That "All Right" is a "seal", handed down, the witness of three thousand bodhisattvas.

We say a monk who has a complete understanding of Zen is a "sealed" Zen student. When I transmit the view of a koan it can be said "with my Seal I branded you with Shakyamuni's Mind."

Before the Seal is lifted realization of the Buddha Mind is existing. "As soon as the Seal is lifted" means, figuratively speaking, that Buddha's Mind was handed down to Mahakashyapa. At that moment he who transmits and he who received the transmission is clear; host and guest are distinguishable. The relation of host and guest is something like that of subject and object, pot and lid, box

and cover. This "host and guest" is used many times in Lin-chi's Record.

(In Sokei-an's talk June 5, 1935, he said of the Three Principles :) They are very important to Zen students. However, they are difficult to grasp. These are different from the Three Principles of usual Buddhism--peculiar to Lin-chi. I shall explain, but if you cannot understand, do not blame me.

The usual Three Principles of Buddhism are the Three Bodies, the Trikaya: Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya.

In Christianity, also there are Three Principles, the Trinity: Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Everything has three principles, or bodies: water, for instance--steam, water and ice; fire: air which gives force to the fire, and its function is to warm food and heat the room. Air is Dharmakaya; the fire itself is Sambhogakaya; and its utilization is Nirmanakaya.

Dharmakaya is the infinite, omnipotent, invisible body.

Sambhogakaya is the body of consciousness--the consciousness revealed when the body separates itself by its own force and makes a union.

Nirmanakaya is the transforming body: man, woman, dog, cat. In man it is the iceman, policeman, politician, artist. Three principles in your own body.

The Three Principles of Lin-chi are different.

Lin-chi ascended the altar.

A monk questioned him: "What is the first principle?"

Lin-chi said: "The impression

of the seal of the three fundamentals will become distinct, and before you become aware of any doubt, the host and the guest will be distinguishable." The Three Fundamentals are Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya.

What is the seal? When you receive mail the place and date of sending are stamped on it. In the orient people use seals rather than handwritten signatures. The seal of the three fundamentals means one seal that shows the three fundamentals at once--Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya.

In fire you can see the Dharmakaya of fire and the Sambhogakaya of fire but you cannot see its original form--gas. In air you cannot see the fire and in my glass you can see neither fire nor air. You see this human body but you cannot see its other forms.

The one seal that shows the three fundamentals clearly--what is it? In one second you realize that you are Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya! It becomes as clear as the impress of a seal. Do you know this moment? Have you experienced it?

At the moment that the three fundamentals become clear--at that moment you become the seal of the three fundamentals!

You must prove this for yourself! It is absolute, relative and mutable; it has no past, present or future--no space nor time. Yet it has duration, expansion and motion; it has beginning and end, is changeable at every moment; today it's here--tomorrow it's there--visible, invisible. All these phases become

very clear to you at once, as though you see fire, air, utility at once; you can prove ice, steam, water!

Such an experience must come to your own consciousness--Enlightenment. It does not come to your physical body--but to your wisdom body.

This is the first Enlightenment: You see these three at once--in one second; you see your omnipresent body and your omnipotent consciousness and realize your present condition. Your wisdom mind sees through these three fundamentals--God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost become clear. That is Enlightenment!

What is this "seal"? It is the Self--just as my staff is the seal--but you do not realize it before you have seen its impression. You must stamp this staff upon your own mind and it will become the impression. Zen teaches you this. Hibernating your self in meditation is *not* Zen!

As Lin-chi said: "*The host and guest will be distinguishable!*" Today we have very useful technical terms of philosophy: subject, object, etc.--but Lin-chi had no handy expressions. He speaks of "host" and "guest". The consciousness which observes *all* is "host", and all phenomena is "guest."

Before one begins to think about something, before one tries to analyze it--it is clear--clear as object and subject. I think, in your own experience, when you pass the first koan, you will know subject and object; in one moment, they are *one*. In this sound (bangs staff) is both subject and object!

APPENDIX

Note 37, p.69 of Ruth Sasaki *et al.*'s translation says: This is one of Lin-chi's most enigmatic discourses. Later masters in the Lin-chi School entitled it "Lin-chi's Three Statements." The exact meaning...is not clear. Later...masters have offered a variety of different interpretations...all emphasize that the "Three Statements" are mutually related...

38. The "seal of the Three Essentials" probably indicates the ultimate realization in Ch'an, but its exact meaning is not clear. "Seal" here means that which is authentic and unchanging. The metaphor is that of a hand-held seal moistened with vermilion ink which, having been stamped down and lifted, leaves a duplicate design.

THE RECORD OF BANKEI

Translated by Haskel

The Master addressed the assembly: "The mind that you innately possess is the unborn and indestructible Buddha Mind. The proof of this is that when you look about you, you simultaneously distinguish a hundred different sorts of things; while at the same time, (whether it's) the singing of birds or the sound of a gong, you hear every possible sort of sound without setting into motion even a single thought. From morning to evening, in all circumstances, (your unborn mind) functions without a single thought arising, but because you fail to realize this, you think it's the functioning of (your) calculating discriminating (mind). That's all wrong. The minds of all the Buddhas and the minds of all of you

are no different. And yet you go about seeking to attain enlightenment or trying to find your own (true) mind, engaging in religious practice, exercising your mind; and that's all wrong too.

"Even though the expression 'unborn and indestructible' is known to anyone who has read the one fascicle of the Heart Sutra, people fail to recognize the real source of the Unborn, and by using their calculating, discriminating mind try to attain the Way and realize Buddhahood. As soon as you try to seek Buddhahood or attain the Way, you immediately go against the Unborn and depart from your own innate being. The mind is neither light nor dark, but just as it is innately. To seek to realize this (mind) by attaining enlightenment is to lose yourself in secondary concerns. Since you're originally Buddhas, you're not now becoming Buddhas for the first time. You must know for certain that within (the Buddha Mind) there's not even the minutest trace of delusion, and that from it, no thing whatever is arising. Clenching your hand in a fist, running, walking--all (your activities) are (grounded in) the Unborn. If there's even the slightest desire to try to improve yourself or to hurry off in pursuit of anything, you immediately go against the Unborn. In the mind that you innately possess, there's neither joy nor anger--there's nothing but the marvelous Buddha Mind that illumines the whole universe. To truly believe in and realize this truth, and to be without attachment to anything at all is what's meant by faith." Copyr. 1982 Haskel

ZEN IN DETECTIVE FICTION
ALL RIGHT! Noted by Farkas

I've been meaning for a long time to bring to your attention that Nero Wolfe's Archie somewhere (I can't find the actual book--maybe you noticed it) mentioned he was probably a Zen Buddhist.

Wolfe is, of course, Archie's "master." When Archie does a really good job of solving his "problem" set by Wolfe, Wolfe "seals" his answer. But read it yourself. This is on p. 119-120 of *Murder By the Book* by Rex Stout, Viking, 1951. Archie is speaking.

"I phoned Wolfe at 3:23. It is always a pleasure to hear him say 'Satisfactory' when I have reported on an errand. This time I did better. When I had given him all of it that he needed... there was a five-second silence and then an emphatic 'Very satisfactory.' "

"A Masao Masuto Mystery" identifies more than a dozen stories, mostly with a girl's name for title, by E.V. Cunningham (the pseudonym a well-known author uses for his mysteries).

What distinguishes this Beverly Hills Police Force detective from all the rest is that he is a Soto Zen Buddhist, a Californian with a Japanese face, as well as karate expert. "He is a complex man with a singular sense of justice, taking action on his own and making moral judgments as he sees fit--not always by the code... superb at puzzling out a crime."

How, as a Buddhist, does he live and work with murder? "I

don't judge," he says, referring to a man who had died through his instrumentality, 'but he was a man who was responsible for the deaths of many innocent people. Death waited a long time before it welcomed him.'"

"Well, a day like today is not so different from a koan.' He smiled a bit at the thought. He himself practiced in the Soto School of Zen, but in the Rinzaï one meditated upon a thing called a koan, a proposition that defies reason; and Masuto had always felt that murder, the destruction of one human being by another, defied both reason and civilization. It was certainly not an apt comparison, but it amused him.

"Well, it is as it is,' he said to himself, which is a very Zen comment."

His daily life included a 45-minute period of sitting cross-legged (or anyway 5-minute) then tea on two cushions with his old-fashioned but lovely Japanese wife, who had greeted him on his arrival with a ready steaming bath, folded white towel, no questions. It is admitted that the bath is perhaps a little better than meditation... In fact, one of the books I read ended as, closing his eyes, he relaxes into the heat of the bath. Sokei-an recommended this also.

IF you received a notice
NEW TO ZEN NOTES?
RENEWING?

And wish to receive it...

SEND US\$3 in US; US\$4 outside US

We may mail bimonthly to save
time and postage (50% increase)

CONVERSATIONS WITH FARKAS
Noted by Hackney.

After Sokei-an died in 1945, we continued at the house on E. 65th Street. We held meetings on Wednesdays as usual. Ruth Sasaki would read talks that she had written out. We had not yet started working on the notes of Sokei-an's lectures.

She was the one who brought to the scene a certain amount of 'ritual', shall I say. Not that Sokei-an didn't perform ritual. Sokei-an functioned as a priest. He always did the three bows and recited a brief sutra beautifully. (I used to throw the mat down first.)

Ruth loved that pomp and ceremony and devised a way of doing it without doing it. All that remained was to read his lecture which was what we had decided to do. So she or one of the others, usually George Fowler, would sit at his table, then as a sign they were doing it in his place, lift the flywisk. This was the sign that the Master's words were being given.

Ruth would always make a point of things like that and that she was not, of course, in this category. Which wasn't really the question. She didn't really want to be in that category. But she was impressed with it.

Many people have this kind of idea about ceremony--that there is something sacred or magical--stuff like that. It was a problem for Jewish members particularly. She wanted to do

the right thing. She would read the lecture or occasionally some other member would read it.

In 1947 she had the idea to go to Japan partly because Sokei-an had put it on her that she ought to publish the Rinzai which he did want very much. Also, to finish her Zen.

At that time Ruth had more or less promised Edna Kenton in a rather dramatic private scene--which Edna related to me--that she would really make an Institute. She would provide a building and she would maintain it for the Institute--not just part of her house which it was at that time and it was better for it to be that way. Because after the war things were pretty shaky--anything that was of Japanese origin...

Sometimes she would invite speakers, like Dr. Acker who did the archery book. Some other people came and gave talks of a cultural nature. Ruth had the same idea that many people had that intellectual and cultural things were the thing to do. Nice people would come--a better class than the old bohemian members, she thought. She attempted to attract them.

Ruth was a romantic in the same sense that many people were at that time. She really thought things were different from the actual truth of them. It was very disappointing to her when she found how things really were.

COVER by CYNTHIA MACADAMS

JOSHU SASAKI ROSHI SESSHIN
Tentative schedule Oct. 1-7

gan notes

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