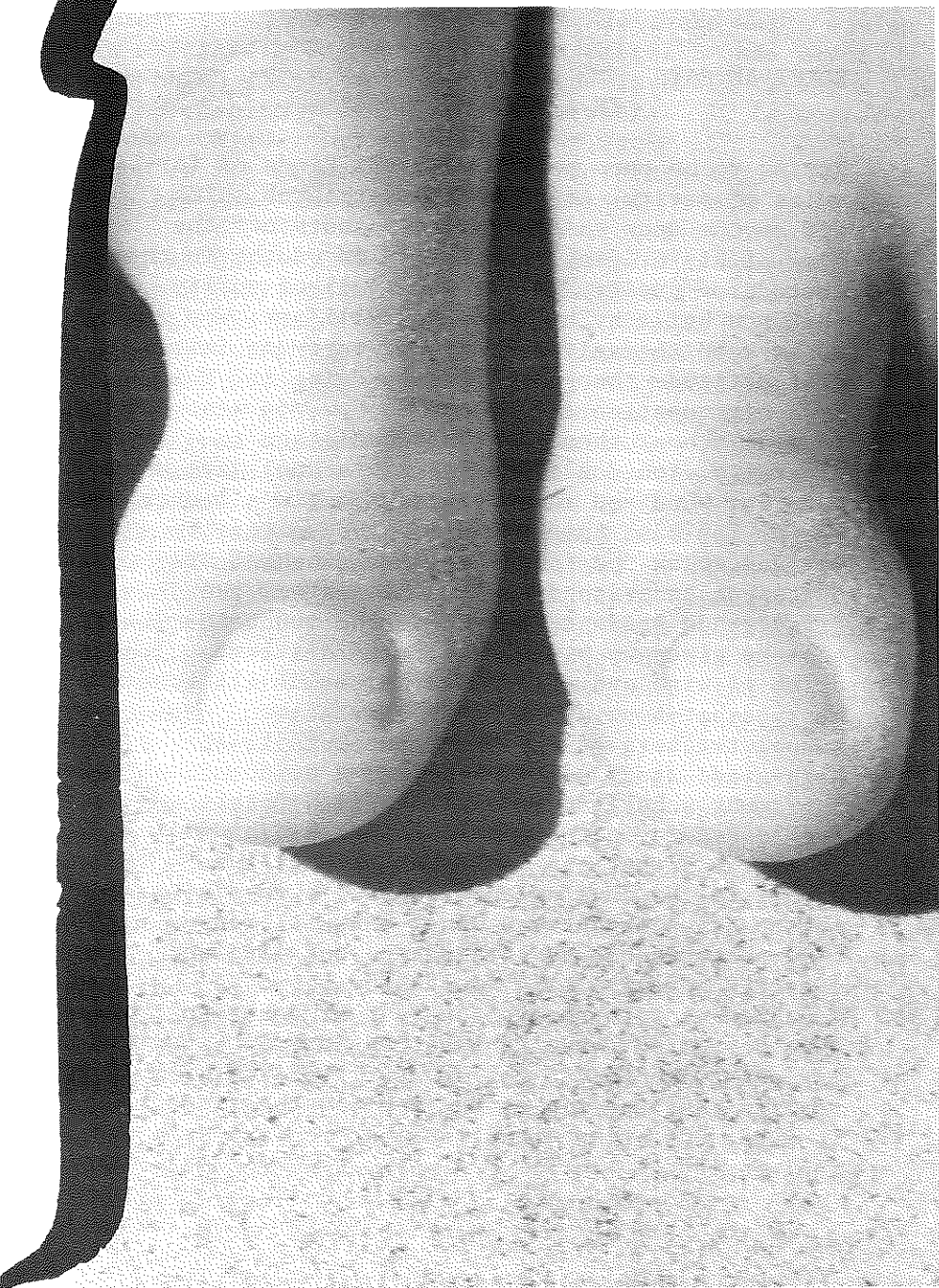


gen notes



SOKEI-AN SAYS

IN A JAIL OF PURITY

Trying to be pure, people make all kinds of formulas of purity. As the Sixth Patriarch said: "If anyone does this, he himself shuts off the flow of his original nature and is caught in the custody of purity." He is in a jail of purity that was built by himself. You will ask: Why do monks keep themselves aloof, not marry, or imitate that attitude though not really doing it? This is a big question for everyone. Now, you went to grammar school, then to high school, then to a university. You don't use grammar school ways any more, but when you teach you must begin all over again. You must come down from the university way and speak the language grammar school students can understand. In Buddhist study, the first-grade student goes up to the mountain-top--he gives up his fiance, takes his last drink of wine and renounces the world. All the husky, arhat-type monks are really grammar school teachers of Buddhism. But ours is a high-grade study of Buddhism, so we do not take a grammar school attitude. The Sixth Patriarch's Record is the conclusion of Buddhism. It is the father and mother of a long line, and it is the conclusion. You are living in this conclusion, but you don't know it. You come to a teacher to straighten your mind and your teacher will take you to the top of a mountain--not to straighten your mind but to take your mind away. Zen teaches satori. Satori is your awakening on top of "purity." You will realize that the tip of the toe and the finger is pure. But before that, you must realize original purity.

THE RECORD OF LIN-CHI
Discourses, IX, Part 2

"What is the second principle?"

Lin-chi said: "How can Miao-chieh (Manjushri) permit Wu-chao to question him? Because, Miao-chieh's expediency is not at variance with his Absolute Wisdom.

SOKEI-AN SAYS

Manjushri is the god of Wisdom in Buddhistic mythology--Intrinsic Wisdom. The usual wisdom that we have is not intrinsic--it is acquired wisdom.

Jade is in ordinary stone, but you cannot find it from the mountain; you know the common stone that conceals it, but you must chisel it out! You go to school, gather information--these are special instruments to break the shell concealing intrinsic wisdom. You must chisel off the insignificant part of the mind--and finally you discover that intrinsic wisdom in yourself! That is your true nature; the other is like the thorn of a rose stuck into your flesh. You can pull this out immediately; but the mental thorn you leave in your mind for long, long years!

Everyone has Manjushri in himself!

When you come to Zen,

you bow--not to the wooden image, but to this Manjushri in yourself. But, as there was a living Buddha, so there was a living Manjushri. He has never died--is still living somewhere. It is mysterious, isn't it?

To explain the second principle I must acquaint you with the allegorical story of the conversation between Miao-chieh and Wu-chao. *Monju* (Japanese) is the name for the Sanskrit Manjushri, the name given to the Bodhisattva of Absolute Wisdom. Miao-chieh is the name of *Monju* in Chinese. Wu-chao is the monk in this story (*Mujaku* in Japanese). The Manjushri of this allegory was not an historical personage. He was the personification of the Buddhist doctrine of the Original Wisdom of man. This doctrine is the main pivot of Dharma. The monk Wu-chao was also an imaginary person, whose name signified 'non-attachment.'

In Tibet, there is a range of mountains, with five pedestals, each as flat as if cut off with a saw. This was a center of Buddhism before Buddhism was accepted in China.

Some years after the Buddha, Manjushri came to this mountain, which is

held sacred till today. A magnificent temple is still standing, with many images and beautiful carvings-- the art center of Buddhism. But all the complete statues have been stolen; just three months ago (Dec., 1941?), a law was passed against stealing these objects.

Wu-chao, a monk, believed that Manjushri was still living on that mountain, and determined to go see him. One day he climbed up the mountain, but could not reach the peak. Having climbed all day, he decided to stay through the night. The sun fell into the western horizon and the sky became dark. The Bodhisattva Manjushri caused a phenomenal temple to appear in the midst of the mountain wilderness, and at this temple Wu-chao stopped to put up for the night. Suddenly, he came upon an old man with a long white beard. He was carrying a long cane of natural white wood and was feeding a cow. So sudden was this appearance that Wu-chao did not know if it was real or visionary. He approached and said, "I came to this mountain to see Manjushri--but where is he?"

The old man said, "Well, the sky is now dark and you cannot find him.

The mountain is pitch black. Come to my hermitage and spend the night. In the morning you will find him."

Wu-chao followed the old man, and they entered a temple. It was a beautiful temple. The old man asked: "Whence have you come?"

"From the south," answered Wu-chao.

"How is the Buddhism of the south faring?"

"The monks in this period of decline are observing the commandments more or less," was the reply.

"How many of them are there?" asked Manjushri.

"Three to five hundred," answered Wu-chao.

Then Wu-chao questioned Manjushri, saying: "How is Buddhism faring here in the north?"

"Ordinary men and holy monks are living together," replied Manjushri, "and dragons are mingled with snakes."

"How many of them are there?" inquired Wu-chao.

"Three times three yesterday and three times three tomorrow, was Manjushri's famous answer.

Then the old man prepared tea and poured it into a cup made of a certain glass-transparent and precious--which was made in China at that time. Lifting up the crystal cup

Manjushri asked: "Do you have *this* in the south?"

This is a deep question--an object that is transparent. In mythology, a glass of this type is so transparent that one can hardly believe it is there.

The old man is referring to the omnipresent body, the Dharmakaya. It means, do you understand?

Wu-chao answered decidedly, "No, we do not have it!"--a beautiful answer. If you say, "Yes, we have," then you do not understand Dharmakaya, the omnipresent body; if you say, "I have this," it is not omnipresent!

The old man said: "Well, then, in everyday life, what are they using?"

Wu-chao took the cup and drank--utilization! This is Nirmanakaya.

So, in the Zen school, we do not open our mouths.

At dawn, Wu-chao let a novice, a beautiful child, lead him away from the temple. The child came with him to the edge of the mountain. It was dawn, and the morning star was in the sky, going down into the endless field.

Wu-chao asked the name of the temple, and the young boy said: "The name of the temple is written on the eave of the gate. Look at it if you wish to know its name!"

Wu-chao turned to look-- and suddenly realized there was no gate and no temple where he had slept that night! There was nothing at all--no stone, no image-- just purely Nothing!

Wu-chao turned again-- and there was no child! He was standing alone, the omnipresent Body!

"How can Miao-chieh permit Wu-chao to question him." In that conversation, Wu-chao had asked Manjushri a question: "How many monks are in your temple?" Manjushri said: "Three, three yesterday, three three tomorrow." How can one ask Absolute Wisdom (Manjushri) a question? Words are relative; the Absolute cannot be conceived by words!

"Because, Miao-chieh's expediency is not at variance with his absolute wisdom." His expediency is this: He made the temple, created the cow--created the glass cup--created all experience! He creates all from nothing--absolute nothing--the Dharmakaya.

Then Manjushri threw out all expediency, as though blowing out a candle flame, and Wu-chao suddenly understood Intrinsic Wisdom! This is true expediency! Manjushri knew that Wu-chao would attain Enlightenment in the morning! You cannot gain wisdom without some plan; some looking ahead.

"HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE A BUDDHIST?"

"How does it feel to be a Buddhist?", a friend of mine asked me two years ago when one day I came back from London's Buddhist Vihara at Heathfield Gardens. I am a professor of philosophy at Florida Atlantic University, who in 1980 spent his "sabbatical" in England, living at London House in Bloomsbury and working out of the Buddhist Society on Eccleston Square. One day I humbly inquired into the formalities necessary for joining the Theravada Buddhist community. I wanted to take the first five vows of a Buddhist. To my pleasant surprise the gentle bhikkus of the Vihara in London's west side welcomed me into their Sangha after not much more than examining my knowledge of theoretical Buddhist doctrine of the Hinayana tradition. (Theravada was, of course, the term they preferred.)

And so, when I returned on a Monday afternoon to my room at London House, my friend, who was only superficially acquainted with the beauty of the Dharma, asked me ingenuously how it felt to be a Buddhist.

I was amused at his question, since the little ceremony at the Vihara no more changed me from a non-Buddhist to a Buddhist than a simple justice of the peace ritual would make a married man out of one who had been loyally living with his woman for several years without the benefit of clergy, or the secular authority's stamp of approval. But I gave my friend a good-natured answer telling him that it felt very nice being a Buddhist. He wanted to know the details of my initiation, and this is what I told him over a cup of tea that rainy afternoon.

I had arrived at Heathfield Gardens by appointment and was met by the Venerable K. Piya-tissa, a noble and kind man of a most tender spirit. He made me feel at home the first moment I saw him in his Ceylonese saffron robe. The London Vihara is part of the British Mahabodhi Society, and the monks are mostly from Sri Lanka. After a brief but thorough test of my general knowledge of Buddhist thought and history, I repeated Ceylonese devotional stanzas and holy verse, and since I

have a fairly good ear and tongue for foreign languages, even those which I don't understand, I must have pleased the Venerable Piyatissa with my pronunciation, and he escorted me to the shrine room where he left me alone with a splendid Buddha statue. The room was simple, the view of the gardens lovely, and my meditation never better. After a while the Venerable Piyatissa took me back to the first room, where another monk handed me a bouquet of flowers, asked me to kneel before a second shrine, and while I repeated the five vows, took my photograph, which is at this moment on my desk as I write. These Theravada precepts are too well known to be repeated here. I only hope I have not consciously violated any of them. As I look back to this beautiful forenoon, which was crowned by my meeting Dr. H. Saddhatissa, the head of the British Mahabodhi Society and enjoying a simple lunch with the brothers, I wonder whether I am ready to take the next three precepts (including the five already pledged and three new ones) the next time I am at the Vihara. If

I should have this opportunity and honor, I hope the Venerable Piyatissa will once again lead me into the Sangha. This time, as the Japanese gentleman who in 1970 skied down Mount Everest said, I would empty all the pockets of my mind.

Robert Schwarz, Ph.D.
South Palm Beach, Florida
Summer 1982

SKIP THIS IF YOU KNOW
"the next three precepts" (I didn't) for lay folk. Soothill says:

1. Do not kill
2. Do not steal
3. Do not commit adultery
4. Do not lie
5. Do not become intoxicated

AND NOW

6. Do not eat food out of hours
7. Do not use garlands or perfume
8. Do not sleep on high or broad beds

THERE ARE TWO MORE FOR THE ADVANCED

9. Do not sing, dance or witness theatrical performances
10. Do not carry coined or uncoined gold

IF you received a notice

NEW TO ZEN NOTES?

RENEWING?

And wish to receive it...

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

THE RECORD OF BANKEI
BY PETER HASKEL

A monk asked: "The men of old declared that with a great doubt one will experience a great enlightenment. How is it your Reverence makes no use of the great doubt of the masters?"

The Master replied: "As to what's meant by 'great doubt': long ago when Nangaku went to see the Sixth Patriarch, he was asked by him, 'What is it that comes thus?' Nangaku was utterly flustered, and puzzling over this for eight years, finally answered: 'As soon as you speak about a thing you miss the mark.' This is the real great doubt and great enlightenment. For example, when you misplace a kesa and, no matter how much you search, are unable to find it, and, searching and searching, can't put it out of your mind for even a moment--that's real doubt. People nowadays go stirring up doubt just because they say the old masters did, so what they produce is an imitation doubt. Because this doubt isn't genuine, they won't have any day of awakening. It's just as if they were to search all over, thinking they'd lost something that had never been lost at all."

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CONVERSATIONS WITH
FARKAS

Noted by Hackney

All the men and women here have running things they are fighting over. They have certain ways of doing it. It is desirable that people should learn to fight with one another. I think that people do want to fight with each other. They want to fight anyway. It is not harmful or bad--it's like the bucks wanting to clash heads. To find some way of doing it that is appropriate is better than not doing anything at all. If they never get to do it, they will not really know what they want.

JOSHU SASAKI ROSHI SAYS

If you have been raised in such a way that you know for sure that ghosts don't exist, you won't see them.

NOTED by John Storm

A middle-aged man with a huge transistor radio blaring disco music walking hand-in-hand with a small boy who was carrying a quarter-sized transistor radio blaring away on the same station.

COVER PHOTO BY
Cynthia MacAdams

Journal

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