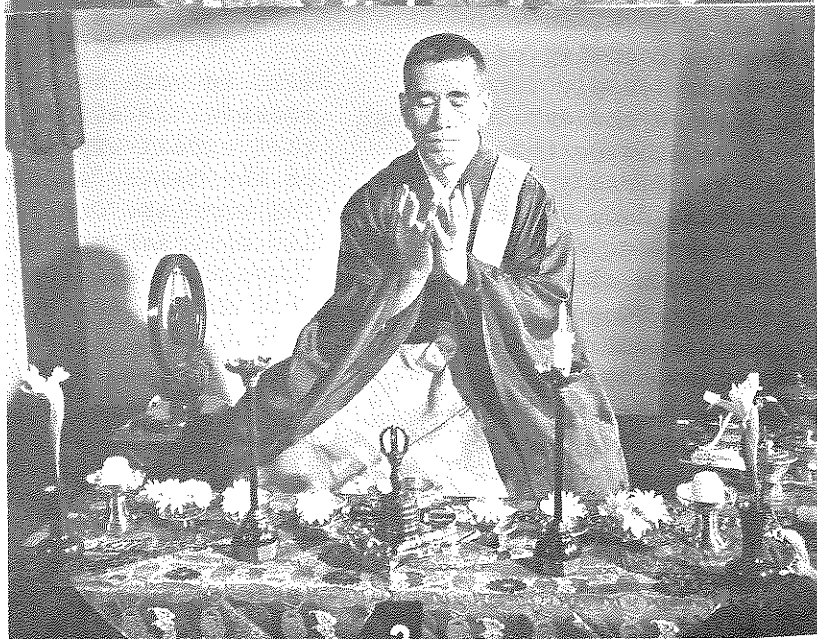
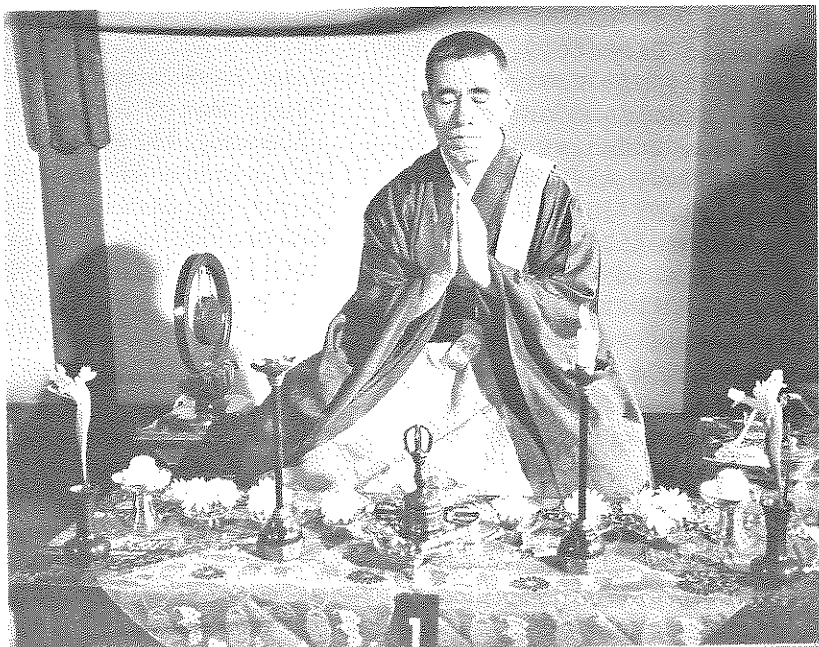


ZEN NOTES



UPDATE

...Our telephone is always ringing..where to buy robes,zafus,statues, where to sit...For this one,we have been leaning heavily on: The American Buddhist Directory,\$3,published by Dr. Kevin O'Neil, president of the American Buddhist Movement,301 W. 45th St., New York,NY 10036,Tel. 212/489-1075. It seems to be his idea (one which I share) that "All Americans would benefit by obtaining a basic understanding of Buddhism." Similarly, meditation is for anyone,anywhere,any time. The following instructions are offered as introduction: 1.Sit in a chair with your back straight and feet flat on the floor. Place your hand on each leg,palm up. 2.Inhale deeply through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Do this five times.3.Close your eyes and take deep breaths through your nose. Keep your mouth closed and put your tongue on the roof of your mouth.Relax your jaw,separate the teeth. 4.Relax and count your breaths: 1,2,3,4,5, 6,7,8. Count each in-breath and out-breath. 5.Continue this for five,ten,fifteen or twenty minutes, depending on your time schedule.6.When medita-

tion is completed,get up slowly. Take your time.

BOOK NOTED

By John Storm

Two new books of teachings by the respected Korean Zen master Seung Sahn have appeared. "Only Don't Know" (Four Seasons,1982,\$6.95) is a collection of letters in which he offers trenchant advice on everything from family problems to practice in prisons. "Bone of Space" (Four Seasons,1982,\$4.95) brings together a number of spontaneous teaching poems,many of them also drawn from his letters. "When the situation appears,"he says, "then I make a poem."

Seung Sahn maintains a wide correspondence, personally answering every letter written to him. In both books,the material is selected so that a full exposition of the master's teaching emerges. Central to his approach,perhaps,is the concept of "Don't Know Mind," that state in which one cuts through discriminatory thinking and acts freely, unchecked by the personal self. "Don't make anything," Seung Sahn says. "Then you will get everything. If you don't understand,only go straight--don't know."

THE RECORD OF LIN-CHI

Lin -chi said also:

"Each principle must comprise three sections, and each section must comprise three points. There is expediency and there is direct utility. How do you understand these?"

SOKEI-AN SAYS (June, 1935)

Lin-chi was a monk of the Vinaya school and of course studied the Avatamsaka Sutra before he became a Zen monk so he had something of the Shingon attitude in his mind. Our Zen taste prefers to eat a cake that is in one piece, not cut into little pieces. The Shingon monk classifies everything into many divisions while the Zen monk grasps the whole thing at once and throws it at his disciples... No one could understand this passage. It is like saying everyone must have a body, a body has arms, the arm has five fingers, and so forth. Or, one weed has three branches, each branch divides into three smaller branches, and each of these ends in three flowers. We like to see the whole plant with its beautiful flowers in bloom... we don't care how many sub-branches there are. We see a beautiful dandelion-- that is all.

Lin-chi analyzed Zen into three principles-- these three principles are enough to think about... I have already explained them...

As for the three sections, one interpretation is that these are: (1) Dormancy--latent, not yet apparent (2) appearance (3) realization.

A weed or plant has a flower but when it comes from the earth the flower is in dormancy, not manifested. Then it shows buds which open--realization. Everything has these "sections."

Shakyamuni Buddha held out the lotus... Everyone looked but did not understand. Except Mahakashyapa, who smiled. Mahakashyapa understood though the Buddha had never said one word. Nor did Mahakashyapa. No one knows what happened. It is like--before the earth, before the sun and moon, before the universe-- something happened but no one could realize it. I think in Zen study some student may reach that point--he cannot express it, cannot tell it, cannot conceive it, but it is not nonsensical. We cannot demonstrate it, this kind of conclusion, cannot conceptualize it. Immanuel Kant, the philosopher, gave it a name, in-

demonstrable. Someone picks up an iris bulb-- can you see this will have a beautiful flower? Where is it? It will be here in three or four months. I know it will, but I cannot demonstrate this now. This is an important understanding in Zen.

Or, your dead father-- where is he? You do not know whether he is in heaven or hell, yet you know he is living. Prove it? Demonstrate it? You cannot.

Ananda was with the Buddha almost thirty years. All the other disciples of the Buddha became enlightened. But Ananda did not attain anything. Such descriptions in Buddhism are mysterious. That was the great part of Ananda. He did not grasp anything because there was nothing to grasp. He had great enlightenment.

The next "section"-- though I know, I cannot talk about it. You know about your dead father. He is always here. In the same way, Buddha is always with me. The Christian knows Christ ascended. But you prove he is here in your own body. You cannot talk about it but you feel it. That is the begin-

ning. You are initiated when you feel the cross upon your heart. When you eat, it is the body of Christ. Anything you swallow is his blood. You prove his communion in your own body. Initiation is wonderful. All Buddhist monks enter here-- "Ah! this is that!" Heaven and earth shine at once in this initiation-- you prove it in yourself.

The next "section" is realization. You realize everything in your eye and your ear.

Heaven and earth shine and bring you into this stage. Then you come upon your physical body and your feet come upon this earth and you go into daily life. You come back into your own home and you find the peace of heaven there with your family. You come back to your own chair-- "Ah! This was what I was looking for" --and you find your own position between heaven and earth. You understand your own destiny.

Whatever center you have you must have these three sections. So, first, young men throw away all desires, ambitions, possessions and go into the monastery. That is the

first. You become pure sky, give up everything. Second--heaven and earth shine, you realize the Buddha in yourself. Then, third, you come back to your own village to see your father and mother and friends. You are not a demi-god, but a human being, you come among people and speak about your understanding.

As for expediency, or experiencing, and utilization, utility is direct actualization. You sow the seed in the spring, wait until autumn and harvest. This is direct utility--utilization of your own being. Experience is--you know what will come so you use heat in the hothouse to help the seeds grow.

Bye, Bye dog year
We're going to leave you now

Dog by Peeter Lamp



EXTRACTED FROM A TAPED
TEISHO TALK ON JOSHU'S
"MU" by Joshu Sasaki
Roshi March 21, 1980

Noted by MF

Joshu was a Zen master who lived some 1200 years ago in the Tang dynasty. He was known for his eloquence. One day a monk was talking with him. As the two monks were talking, a little dog came up.

Of course the monk thoroughly accepted the well-known theory that all sentient beings (as stated in the Nirvana sutra) manifest Buddha nature, so there would be no point in calling this in question. Nor was there any point in questioning the fact that the state of samadhi is the true self. "So I won't ask about that," he said. But what I will ask is: how does one go about realizing a state of oneness, of samadhi, with the dog? If you're sleeping with the dog--the dog not-thinking, you not-thinking--the world where neither you nor the dog is thinking *is* the world of samadhi. And, actually, the reason why human beings like to sleep together without thinking about anything is in order to realize the world of samadhi.

A nonsentient being, like a rock or a pine tree, is completely in this state of

samadhi, for it has no need to think. So when the human being is manifesting Buddha nature (or Dharma) completely, he also has no need to think, and manifests like a noble pine tree.

But, unfortunately, dogs, cats and human beings cannot stay forever in the state of samadhi... That samadhi is burst, is broken with a burst like the eruption of a volcano... and a thinking person comes into existence. This thinking self we call a sentient being. That state wherein there is no need to think, like the samadhi of sleeping, we call nonsentient. You, over and over again, are experiencing these two selves, the sentient and the nonsentient.

In the koan text, the monk, knowing all this, says: "I'm not going to ask you about the state of samadhi, Joshu, but rather I ask: "How does that little dog manifest Buddha nature?"

That's what this koan is getting at. It's not asking, "Does the dog have Buddha nature?" The center of this koan is, *how* is this dog manifesting Buddha nature?" In other words, we want to find out what the activity of the dog is when it breaks out of samadhi. When you jump, are you thinking about anything?

When you're standing at the bank of the river, thinking how to get over, you're thinking about many things, but when you breathe, there is no thinking. So how about a dog? When it opens its eyes and does something different from the Buddha-activity, its Buddha-manifestation, how does it act? I suppose this monk expected Joshu to answer "Bow-wow," but Joshu didn't answer that way. He answered "Nooooooooo." How about it?

What Joshu is talking about in this "Nooooooooo," is MU, is nothingness. The dog is manifesting "nothing"-activity. In other words, even when you're acting, that action is quiescence. So every day you are standing up from that position of samadhi and carrying out your activities, but you are acting *within* the quiet. What Joshu is getting at is that even a dog acts egolessly. What he is saying is that you human beings should be able to do it too. In other words, the practice of Zen is to wake up from one's nap and act egolessly.

Then, when you act, when you work, you feel tired. Being aware of this thinking you're tired, your "personal self" appears.

You think, "Ah, let's have a rest." Then you return to samadhi. Coming out of samadhi, you work again. But, before you work, you think of various things-- this is the personal self. When you begin working, you reveal an egoless form, then you get tired again and a personal self appears. You decide to rest again and go back to a state of samadhi wherein there is no self.

We have four activities that we do. If we divide them broadly, there are only two: the state of samadhi and the state of having broken samadhi. But we can subdivide these two into four--that is very difficult. You are doing those four over and over again every day, and within an hour there are four kinds of work. The practice of Zen is the study of that. As long as you have your body you can practice Zen. You don't need anything else.

But talking about this as a theory is not interesting--that's why this koan has come into existence.

COVER A Shingon monk from Mt. Koya, Japan, shows the bud and full flowering mudras--could be (1) and (3) of the "sections."

THE RECORD OF BANKEI
Transl. by Peter Haskell

When I first met the Master, I received his teaching, but failing to gain a penetrating understanding, I said: "What your Reverence teaches is from the realm of the master. But for a fellow like me who's never experienced great enlightenment, I'm afraid that reaching the master's realm is going to be hard."

The Master said, "If you want the real teaching, you should do as I say. Students of the Way must first of all take care to watch where they're going. For example, if someone is going to Edo and learns he should travel east, after going one mile, he's one mile closer, and so on for five and then ten miles, until finally he's sure to arrive there. But if he mistakenly sets off to the west, even if it's just a single step at first, the more he exerts himself, the further from Edo he'll be."

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DON'T FORGET. Cynthia Mac-Adams "Rising Goddess" exhibition Jan. 5-Jan. 27. Reception: Jan. 5, 6-8 pm. Parsons Exhibition Center, 2 W. 13th Street.

CONVERSATIONS WITH
FARKAS

Noted by Hackney

How to bring people (oneself included) to see that they are doing something objectionable (that's not exactly the word, but I can't think of a better) when they are shutting their eyes to their own motivation.

First, what is going on must be identified, shouted about if necessary, but brought into the open. If you immediately respond in a firm and unambiguous way to their seemingly innocent but actually wrongful pressure, you are best off.

Suppose you visit someone who presses on you something they know you should not have. (For example, a drink when they know you're an alcoholic.) If you take it to be polite, they'll press you more, so as to drive you into their way of self-indulgence. Then, every time you visit you'll be in this same dreadful position, your only recourse not to visit at all. When these "people" happen to be relatives, it is particularly distressing.

Politeness won't work. But no need to be righteous, either.

Jan-nata

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Mary Farkas, Editor
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