

ZEN NOTES



artist's concept

LATE NEWS Our house is the one next to the PIERPONT, a condominium for Connoisseurs, with 52 apartments available at from \$143,000 to \$409,000. So if any of you are looking for a dwelling only inches away from the zen-do, here it is. From its rear windows one will be able to see the bamboo grove that is taking over our yard...A full-page ad by HITACHI, Ltd. in the Wall Street Journal, reads: "Zen" is part of Japan's cultural heritage, dating back to the 12th century. The essence of *zen* lies in the mental concentration achieved by meditation in the lotus position. *Zen* is enjoying increasing acceptance in communities all over the world because it brings the peace of mind many people are seeking today. There are now some 500,000 people in the United States, and three million people throughout the world who devote themselves to *zen* meditation...Hitachi's goal is to develop business activities that integrate with communities everywhere in the same way that *zen* has done. We think we should contribute to the development of each community in the world by sharing our technology with them...

The Venerable PIYATISSA of Sri Lanka mentioned in Zen Notes of August is presently living at The New York Buddhist Vihara, 133-45 37th Ave., Queens, NY 11354...GARTH COWAN, of the Insight Meditation Center, called in to report an incident brought to mind by our Animal Trainer story of the faking dog. He was sitting with some friends in their living room when their dog suddenly developed a fit of choking. All rushed to his aid. The dog, instantly recovered, went at once to his favorite chair and occupied it...On Park Avenue a young, baggily dressed female was slowly moving south in samadhi with a perfect lineup of eight different sized dogs on different length leashes proceeding as one about four feet behind her. "Quite an assorted lot of dogs," Farkas noted to a passing woman. "Quite an assorted lot of a woman," she nodded. ...As we say goodbye to the Year of the Pig (and, by the way, our predictions were pretty much true) we were for the first time invaded by mice. This does not bode well, with their year not yet started!

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The October issue of Zen Notes mentioned the practice of moon meditation in the Shingon school. We have since received several requests for more detailed information on this method, one of the most basic in Shingon Buddhism. The following simple explanation was composed by the Esoteric master Kakuban (1095-1143), founder of the Shingi branch of Shingon, which attempted to revive the Esoteric teaching in Japan. The translation was prepared by Ryuichi Abe, a priest of the Shingi Shingon school and a former student of Professor Hakeda. He is currently writing his dissertation on Kakuban for the Religion Department of Columbia University.

MOON VISUALIZATION: A GATHA (Gachirin kan ju)

Before the deity, the object of meditation, and above
the altar in your mind
Is the full moon of the mind, the essence of Bodhi
Mind.
It is that which creates all *dharma*s, the primordial
source of Nonduality,
The innermost secret of all the Buddhas,
the essential nature of the *Dharmadhatu*.
Practitioner, sit upright in the meditative
posture, harmonize your body and mind;
Study, become well-versed in the method of
meditation, then practice this visualization.
The image of the moon abides directly before
your face, neither higher nor lower.
The length of a forearm,
it is perfect, all-inclusive.
Perfectly round is the form, immaculately
white is the color.
Radiating brightly both within and without,
it manifests itself vividly and clearly.
Pure, cool, and tranquil is its essential nature;
all-pervading, luminous, and calm, its light.
Observe it continuously whether your eyes
are open or closed.
Do not let your eyes leave it even momentarily,
but visualize it penetratively.
The moon is identical with the mind;

the mind, none other than the moon.
Apart from the full moon,
 no mind thought exists.
For the essence of mind thought itself is nothing
 but what you visualize as the moon.
Visualize only the full moon and allow
 no other thoughts to rise.
The one mind and the one thought
 totally coincide; no other image exists.
As your singleminded concentration
 becomes solid and steadfast,
You will enter Samantabhadra's palace, and abide
 in the adamantine samadhi.
If your mind goes astray, stop and hold it in
 one place;
If you become dispirited, let its radiance
 illumine vividly and clearly.
When the mind abides in the image,
 a forearm-long,
And manifests itself definitely and
 lucidly like the moon in the sky,
Then bring it into your chest, place it
 at your heart, and observe it.
With your mind's eye gaze into it
 even more intently.
As the mind becomes calm and collected,
 and settles in this position,
Gradually expand the image of the moon,
 first to the size of four feet,
Then to ten feet, continuing to expand it
 until it fills the meditation hall,
Until it permeates the entire city;
 having clearly defined each expansive stage,
Advance, and let it no longer stay in the
 same stage, but continue to expand it
Until the moon finally pervades in all the myriad
 thousand-fold universes; let it illumine
 extremely vividly and clearly.
When your mind becomes exhausted, and when you
 are ready to end the visualization practice,
Contract the image in the same way till it
 returns to its original form.
Having visualized the moon, a forearm-long,
 and having placed it within your chest,
 complete the meditation.

THE GREAT SIXTH PATRIARCH'S TEACHING
Chapter IV,5

SOKEI-AN SAYS

In the period of the Sixth Patriarch, there were two schools of Zen in China. One was the Northern School. The Sixth Patriarch was the founder of the Southern School, called the School of Sudden Enlightenment. The Northern School was called the School of Gradual Enlightenment.

The Northern School placed its emphasis upon tranquil meditation and intrinsic wisdom, intense meditation, as the way of attainment; while the Southern School placed its emphasis upon intrinsic wisdom. In terms of Buddhism, this wisdom which is intimately possessed by the mind of man is called Prajna. It is not only in the mind of man, but in the tactual sense of a tree, or in the nature of balancing weight in any material object; or in the reaction to surroundings in insentient beings. In all entities of the universe, you can call this intrinsic wisdom. So the Northern School placed its emphasis upon the negative force and the Southern School placed its emphasis upon the active force. We are descendents of the Sixth Patriarch, so we belong to the Southern School. The Northern School has expired--no torch was handed down.

Virtuous friends, some teach that to sit introspecting your mind, absorbed in tranquillity without moving or letting thoughts arise, you can obtain results.

The Sixth Patriarch is talking now about the Northern School. The "someone" is perhaps its head, a contemporary of the Sixth Patriarch whose name was Shen-hsiu. He too was a disciple of the Fifth Patriarch--a scholar, an educated man, an eminent figure in Chinese Buddhism. This "someone" always practiced the "fathomless tranquillity" type of meditation. His statement that this was the way to attain results is being questioned by the Sixth Patriarch.

The words spoken by Shen-hsiu are really wonderful. There is nothing wrong with his statement. Everyone could accept it. I don't think there is any error here. The "moving" means not

just the "moving" of the body but also that of the mind. The sitting is one of the Four Dignities--sitting, standing, walking, lying down. With the human body we cannot do anything other than these four movements, in the Chinese idiom, the Four Dignities. So "sitting" is to sit down upon the ground in accordance with the formula of meditating tranquilly and by doing this, to apprehend the original nature of the sentient being.

While Western schools were trying to prove Reality by demonstrating, reasoning or analysing, the Chinese and Hindus were meditating upon their own consciousness. It is a shortcut. While one puts on more and more eyeglasses with which to see, we give up our physical eye-sight to gaze inward. Which is the right way? We plunge into the ocean of consciousness. We do not have to know what it is; we plunge, then feel. No one believes this way is effective, it is so easy.

The deluded one does not apprehend the core of his words and adheres to the formula. Thus his view is inverted.

In the Buddha's time, the monks were begging in the morning, then returned and rested. Because their lying down would have been disgraceful before the students, they were sitting and the students imitated them. They then became attached to the formula of "sitting," though this had nothing to do with anything. They think if they keep their bodies in a certain shape, they will be enlightened even though their minds are absent. No one thing, not your brain, not a broom, not your hip-bone, nor any attitude of body can bring you to enlightenment. It is intrinsic wisdom, your own mind, that enlightens you and rights your inverted view.

There are many who have such an upside down view. For this reason, you must know that this is a serious error.

The Master of the Northern School said to sit and meditate until a result is obtained, but his disciples were not doing it for the result but for the sake of the formula. They thought that sitting on a quilt was Buddhism. If this were so, then a cat sitting on a quilt would be a Buddhist too--or an American Indian. Use your

head. Not notions, common sense.

Virtuous friends, true Zen does not have two types of teaching, sudden and gradual. The "true Zen" is that which was handed down from the Buddha.

To be wise or unwise, however, is in the nature of man. The deluded one will enlighten himself gradually and the subtle one will attain enlightenment immediately. When you are conscious of your true mind and see your original nature, there is neither wise nor unwise.

From the Sixth Patriarch's time there were two types of teaching. For Zen students, the conclusion of Zen is daily life, and it is not so easy to come to this. Then there is one more stage--art, the art of life. Christians do not seem to have this. Once I said to a Christian: "I am going to a moving picture." "Oh, are you? A Japanese monk going to a moving picture? Oh! Oh!" Do you think a Japanese monk must not eat meat or see a moving picture? A painting of a dancing figure on the wall is different from living flesh, and the life depicted on the stage is different from the similar scenes in real life that it portrays. So though we say that everyday life is the conclusion of Zen, there are many degrees in everyday life. Zen students must observe this.

But for the unenlightened one, temporarily those names, the sudden or the gradual were devised.

Virtuous friends, this is my teaching. Just so, since ancient times, all the sages have taken mindlessness as the principle. Formlessness is the body, standing upon nowhere is the foundation.

You cannot come to this by words. This "Mindlessness" means that your mind is not your own. This is not stupidity. And "egolessness" does not mean that if I slap your face, you will say, "I'm afraid you hurt your hand." It is not this kind of egolessness. And "mindlessness" means that you do not own your mind; it is not the mind of a particular human being. "Formlessness" means to have no particular form in your mind; it is not a triangle or a square. It is like water that will shape according to the circumstances.

"Standing upon nowhere" means not to stand upon any particular place--on silence or on speech. Do not stand upon God or upon Buddha. Stand upon everywhere.

We stand upon Dharmakaya. This is the foundation.

BOOKS NOTED by John Storm

New books about Zen seldom attract a big audience, which is why they seldom last long at the larger book stores. There are some booksellers, however, who keep a stock of less-than-best sellers (Weiser's, for instance, or the Mad Monk), and for anyone interested in tracking down obscure titles, here is a list of a few worthwhile ones that have found their way to the Institute in recent years. They may or may not be still in print, and it is possible that some have been reissued under different titles. Each is, in any case, available at the Institute.

"Zen and Reality," Robert Powell. The Viking Press. A lucid, intelligent exposition of first principles from the perspective of a Krishnamurti follower.

"Hi Hai High: Zen and the Art of Backpacking, : by Fil Lewitt. Exposition Press, Hicksville, N.Y. A collection of poems based on the author's experiences trekking through wild country out west.

"The Threefold Refuge in the Theravada Buddhist Tradition," edited by John Ross Carter. Anima Books, Chambersburg, Pa. Essays on the notion of the three refuges as articulated by the earliest Buddhists.

"This Book Needs No Title," by Raymond Smullyan. Prentice-Hall. A free-wheeling series of homilies, anecdotes and provocations by a professor of philosophy and mathematics at City University.

EDITOR'S NOTE Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your many donated "extras" toward ZN this year. Thanks to your subscription extras ranging from \$1-\$100, we believe we will end the year, this issue included, with a +3 digit balance. We'll let you know later. Anyway, our price policy will continue for 1984. It is true that December will reach you only in January, but we still hope to get it out before the first.

A HAPPY NEW LEAP YEAR TO ALL.

John Storm

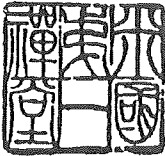
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Mary Farkas, Editor

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www.firstzen.org

First Zen Institute of America
113 E30 Street
New York, New York 10016
(212-686-2520)

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Meditation and tea: 8-9:30 PM

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