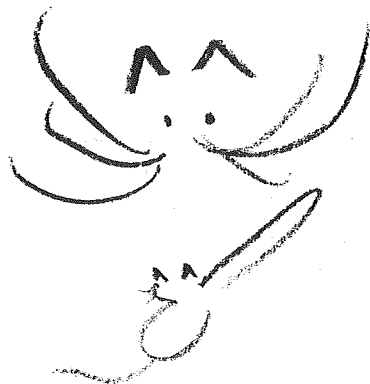


ZEN NOTES



"A wise mouse once told us:
'If a cat shows his head,
smash it with a stick!'"

--Hakuin

BOOK NOTED by Mary Farkas

Echoes from the Bottomless Well, as heard by Frederick Franck, Vintage Books, 1985, NY, manifest many Buddhist notes anyone who has sipped from its clear water must enjoy seeing with FF's European eye. He had a wonderful 48 hours of creativity in which the 144 images dropped from his brush on the pages that make up his breviary. I had the pleasure of sharing some of his exhilaration seeing them in their looseleaf form. It is encouraging visiting with someone whose mind-store is harmoniously arranged, tastefully decorated and well-stocked.

Number 82 I found particularly appealing and hope it will appear to advantage on my smaller page. I hope I may be forgiven for compressing it a bit.

When I last saw FF he was bubbling with enthusiasm, overflowing with energy. He must be doing something right. How nice to have a well-tempered brush.

VANESSA COWARD WRITES:

These *Echoes from the Bottomless Well* do indeed echo through the reader. Each one is an experience of some forgotten or remembered past experience, feeling knowing, discovering, et cetera.

Congratulations and thanks for a reassurance of all my possibilities of expression in form and in words.

N.S. KOBORI ROSHI, of Daitokuji, Kyoto, writes to Dr. Franck . . .

March 29th, 1985

Dear Mr. Franck,

Thank you so much for your warm regard to send me your recent work *Echoes from the Bottomless Well*.

I have never seen such a wonderful book which is quite unique.

The bottomless well has no form, the moment it springs, it takes form--the word. But it once takes form of word. The word used to stop the spring of the original well. That is why the brush work like yours makes the spring of the original well as lively as possible; Sengai, Hakuin, Ryokan achieved it. But none in the West. I think your *Echoes* are Sengai in the modern West. Gassho

Naurei S. Kobori



people walking?

Karma walking...

Buddha Nature walking...

Peter Haskel, though agreeing to our use of the following item, which he submitted, asks that a note precede all such "trivialities" stating that their appearance renders him personally embarrassed.

--Ed.

LIKE A RHINOCEROS

"...I live alone, very alone, more and more alone. My father and sister are dead; my friends leave me or change. 'He who has understood that sorrow comes from attachment,' says Sakiya-Muni, 'retires into his solitude like a rhinoceros.'"

--Letter from Gustave Flaubert to his friend Maxime du Camp, composed in 1846, when Flaubert was 25.
The Selected Letters of Gustave Flaubert, translated by Francis Steegmuller, NY, 1953, p. 44.

RECENT RAT ALERT

Property owners of Park Avenue buildings in Grand Central's vicinity are warned that work about to begin in the underground will dislodge thousands of rats who will be seeking housing.

Bulletin 163 of the NY State College of Agriculture states that tests of ultrasonic and electromagnetic devices show no efficacy for rodent control.

Word has come to us that some Buddhist centers are resorting to hired rat killers.

Please note:

Cover drawing by James Shapiro; quotation from *Penetrating Laughter*, Kazuaki Tanahashi, The Overlook Press, Woodstock, NY, 1984.

Cover photo of 6,7/85 was by Robert Lopez. The Sokei-An Memorial and The Rhinoceros in that issue were by Hugh O'Haire.

SESSHIN with Joshu Sasaki Roshi is announced for October 24-30 in PRINCETON, N.J. Call or write The Princeton Zen Society, 317 Mt. Lucas Road, Princeton, NJ 08540; (609)924-0782.

THE GREAT SIXTH PATRIARCH'S TEACHING
Chapter VI,7

'The Gates of Dharma are manifold; I take a vow to enter them all,' is that you must recognize your own original nature and must always perform your deeds in accordance with the law of True Dharma. This is called true learning.

And 'The wisdom of Buddha is ever beyond; I take a vow to attain it,' is that when you become humble, you can perform true deeds, delivering yourself from delusion and freeing yourself from awakening; and will find the prajna growing within you. Abnegating (giving up) your conviction as to what is true and what is false, you will at once find your Buddha nature, and upon this word you will accomplish the Dharma of Buddha. The ceaseless desire of your heart to perform this deed is the force of your prayer.

Virtuous scholars! Now we have made our four great vows! In addition to this, virtuous scholars, I will give you the three commandments for you to be converted to the three treasures.

SOKEI-AN SAYS

The Sixth Patriarch of Zen in China during the T'ang dynasty made this Record as his memorandum and the disciples of the Sixth Patriarch handed down this Record from generation to generation to us and now we are talking about the Four Great Vows for monks and laymen.

The Gates of Dharma are manifold. Gates means divisions. Dharma means Buddha's teachings--the law of the universe--all the laws of the universe. It was originally limited, but in Mahayana the meaning becomes quite broad. Today there are many divisions to study that were not studied by the monks of that day--in the scientific fields and in the metaphysical fields. No one can really accomplish one of them in a lifetime.

I take a vow to enter them all is that you must recognize your own original nature.

If I cannot do it in this life, I will do it in the next life--this is a Buddhist view. From the Zen standpoint this entrance to all gates is simple.

You must recognize your own original nature. The first step to recognize this is to meditate.

"Before father and mother, what were you?" By this gate you will enter the gate of your prime being. So to enter a gate does not mean to step forward, but to retreat into your own consciousness. By meditation you will break through the dam of the original nature of all being.

...and must always perform your deeds in accordance with the law of true Dharma. This is called true learning.

Return to this field which you can see and hear and you will perform your daily life from the true Dharma standpoint. Buddhism does not take a symbolical or mythological view of this world. Buddhism takes a radical view. So the Buddhist thinks his daily life from morning to evening is a service to God; and his joys and his tears, his sighs and his songs are a hymn offered to God. But the Buddhist does not speak in such terms. He says, "I put on my vesture; I eat my food; I carry water; I plow the field." Weeping, laughing, eating is a hymn.

Your house is a church and your physical body is a shrine. Your consciousness is a priest and your Buddha nature is God. So to feed your physical body is a festival; to nourish your mental body is a sermon, and to meditate is the ritual of your consciousness. There is no other religion to teach this. To teach this they have to build a temple and set up symbols--the true meaning is not there--attitude is religion. They disdain daily life--desecrate the temple.

Thus we have to teach according to the Dharma, through strength--bodily strength. Every joy is true joy, every tear is a true tear in accordance with the law of true Dharma. I went to hear my teacher speak about this. I did not understand because I was in the 33rd heaven. I am not there now; I am on the ground.

'The wisdom of Buddha is ever beyond; I take a vow to attain it,' is that when you become humble you can perform true deeds, delivering yourself from delusion and freeing yourself from awakening; and will find the prajna growing within you.

The wisdom of Buddha--Buddha knowledge--is Bud-

dhism. When you are living in Buddhism, it is mysterious. When I bow down to the candle that comes in the chain of karma . . . and I was given this body--I am here a little while--a rainbow--when life, a lotus flower blooms and chords of consciousness interplay in consciousness. If you say the world is everlasting, I will conquer it with my power and my wisdom; you think you will live forever, have love forever, wealth forever--you will not see the dream. If you understand your ego and think "I AM" and keep this word ever active, you will be able to notice this dream.

From the eternal view there is nothing to keep permanently. A moment--I and you--this life--and then back to infinite chaos like a silhouette reflected in lightning. We see this world as a silhouette and this makes this life religious.

But when your friend dies and you say: "Go back to eternity, my friend. You did not pay me the five dollars you owe me." Is that religion? A little of the Oriental view helps. New York is very mysterious. It is not necessary to go to Miami. Each moment gives you a wonderful poem, joy and sorrow. It is endless.

"I take a vow to attain"--On the true stage of daily life you shall not be somebody, you must be nobody. You must be humble. You are a great soul. Then you can perform great deeds. "Free yourself from awakening"--Awake in this life. In true life there is no such contradiction. Neither one is there in the eternal view. "Prajna" is intuition, not the common use. You can see something that the five senses cannot see. With prajna you will see it. We cannot see eternal time and eternal space with our eye. Our eye cannot see it. You don't see it now. With prajna you will see that which does not relate to your five senses.

Abnegating (giving up) your conviction as to what is true and what is false, you will at once find your Buddha nature, and upon this word you will accomplish the Dharma of Buddha. The ceaseless desire of your heart to perform this deed is the force of your prayer.

"Abnegating" means giving up what is true and what is false. Take the attitude of meditation.

Journal

Performing the deeds from morning to evening is real prayer.

When I was living in Seattle, Washington, there was a big slope up Washington Street. It was a short cut to my home, but it was very steep. When I came back home from work I would take this short cut. On a very hot day, I would think about this very hard --I would think: "This is my prayer, I am going up with my own power, with all my strength I go up the slope." And I would have a thought as I reached the top--"This world turns very fast, very hard, from east to west by its own power--this is the world's prayer every day as it turns from east to west--the prayer of the universe." You must offer something--some strength for a prayer. And the whole world is moving in its orbit, as a star moves--and that is a prayer. Prayer is your daily life from morning to evening. When you understand this, your prayer is heard as it were.

In Japan we believe that to supplicate to God we have to offer something. So, a little daughter will come and offer her best doll to Avalokitesvara to help the pain in her father's back. Our physical effort is offering something--that is a prayer in the Orient.

Virtuous scholars! Now we have made our four great vows! In addition to this, virtuous scholars, I will give you the three commandments for you to be converted to the three treasures.

The Three Treasures we will talk about next time. They are the commandment for Buddha which means that Buddha exists, not individual existence; then the commandment for dharma which means that law exists in your heart; and the commandment for the monks, Buddha's disciples, which means that social taboos exist such as sneezing in someone's face, et cetera.

These are the Three Treasures which we must remember and upon which we must find foundation if we are to exist.

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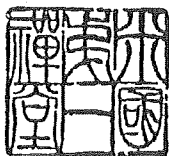
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