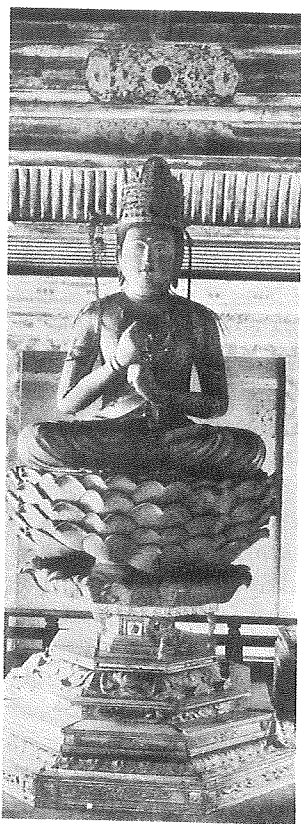


ZEN notes



THE GREAT SIXTH PATRIARCH'S TEACHING VII,2

The Master was living there for a little more than nine months. In order to avoid the parties that were searching for him, he fled into the mountain in front of the temple. The pursuers set fire to the thickets and burned the mountain. The Master made a narrow escape, hiding himself in the cave of a rock. The impression of the creases in his robe and of his crossed legs in sitting down are still visible in the cave. This rock, therefore, is named "The Refuge."

To recall the prediction of the Fifth Patriarch: "When you come to Huai, stay! When you come to Hui, hide yourself." The Master left the temple, covering his traces about the two villages.

A monk, Fa-hai, who was a native of Ch'u-chiang of Shao-chou, came to pay homage to the Master for the first time and asked this question: "It is said that the mind of a man is Buddha himself. I pray that you may elucidate this for me."

The Master answered: "Before your mind was born, it was in its original state; and after your mind realizes that it will never cease, it will become Buddha himself. When your mind manifests all the forms of the world, you will prove the Buddha mind; and when your mind abandons all the forms of the world, you will discover the Buddha nature in yourself."

SOKEI-AN SAYS

In order to avoid the parties that were searching for him. All this happened before the Sixth Patriarch had really begun to preach his wisdom to the multitude. The parties who were searching for him were unenlightened monks, disciples of the Fifth Patriarch who, with envy, pursued the Sixth Patriarch. Among these men who had renounced the world, envy and jealousy still existed. They wished to find and to kill the Sixth Patriarch. But this wasn't merely envy and jealousy; behind this there were two great currents of Buddhism struggling against each other. One side of Buddhism was quite pedantic; they tried to keep the forms and formulas exactly as they came from India and, in trying to keep these forms, they paid no attention to the Buddhist life or to their own enlightenment.

The other side of Buddhism was trying to keep the Buddhistic spirit, the real core of Buddhism. They were trying to enlighten themselves, to express Buddhism in their own terms, to adapt the terms of Buddhism in accordance with their own climate and customs, because the antique Buddhism could easily fall into an "image."

When I observe the knowledge of European scholars who have studied Buddhism. I notice that they will keep these antique forms as long as possible. They like rules: the Buddhist monk will take one meal of vegetables only; they will not shake hands with a lady, and so on.

If a Buddhist monk comes from Ceylon to New York and you go to shake hands with him, he will withdraw his hand. One such came here at the same time I did. I was shaking hands with everyone and he said of me: "That monk is shaking hands and is breaking the commandment." That he keeps these commandments has a very deep significance; it is not merely to follow forms. I do not say that monks in these modern times should violate the commandments but I say that they should know the real significance of the commandments. The monks' commandment is the intuitive reaction of monks to the daily life. It is easy to observe and hard to violate.

Well, there were these two schools in China, each trying to annihilate the other. Therefore, the Sixth Patriarch was in danger after the Fifth Patriarch transmitted the Dharma to him.

The Master made a narrow escape, hiding himself in the cave of a rock. The impression of the creases in his robe and of his crossed legs are still visible in the cave. This rock, therefore, is named "The Refuge." There are many cave temples in China. This is just description. Someone translated this into Japanese as "Cave of Stone."

To recall the prediction of the Fifth Patriarch: "When you come to Huai, stay! When you come to Hui, hide yourself." The Master left the temple, covering his traces about the two villages. We cannot know today what these two names signify. It seems to me that they are possibly names for the two different parties of Buddhism.

The monk, Fa-hai, who was a native of Chu-chiang in Shao-chou, came to pay homage to the Master for the first time and asked this question. From now, this text becomes very important. Fa-hai was not the best but he was the first disciple of the Sixth Patriarch.

There are many records of the Sixth Patriarch made by many monks. And there is a manuscript newly excavated from Tun-huang, described by Fa-hai. We learn from this that Fa-hai was not a man of letters. I am translating this record from some monk who had a literary record, but this recently excavated record has the value of antiquity and seems to be the oldest among the manuscript records of the Sixth Patriarch.

"It is said that the mind of man is Buddha himself. I pray that you elucidate this for me." The mind of man is indeed Buddha himself--very plain, very simple, and it is true. The Chinese have many words for mind--*hsing, shin, nen, ryo, jo, sho*--many names and each has many shades of meaning. From the Buddhistic standpoint, it is not so easy to describe the mind because of its many states. English expressions include the soul, heart, mind and brain. Localizing mind is very difficult and makes philosophical confusion.

Some Oriental teachers will localize the mind somewhere two inches above your head and relating to the spine and hip bones.

In Mahayana Buddhism, the mind is quite difficult to study, but in Hinayana Buddhism it is simple. It is consciousness in the five consecutive shadows of mind and it is mind as well. The outside is an extension of mind; we see our inside on the outside. The mind you see on the outside is the activity of your own mind. But if you say: "The extension of my mind," you cannot understand very well.

Extended subjective existence and subjectified subject are terms used by Hegel. Outside is "I-ness." But "you, I, he," is not clear to the Buddhist because of his non-ego.

The Five Skandhas (Five Shadows) are: rupa-skandha, form; vedana-skandha, sensation; samjna-skandha, thought; samskara-skandha, conformation;

and vijnana-skandha, consciousness.

When you dream, you are not dreaming; someone is dreaming you because you are not in it. Consciousness dreams you. So it is not yourself at all, but the consciousness of nature. In Buddhism, there is no isolated consciousness. The Buddhist soul covers the endless space of the universe. This that hears, thinks, sees (vedana--sense perception) is not yours. This that sleeps, eats, dreams is not you and you have nothing to do with it. The ONE is in a puppy, pussycat, fly, man (samskara). Vijnana is soul; prajna is brain. Amala-jnana is at the bottom. In Indian art, he has six feet, six hands and six heads. In the palm of each hand there is an eye; in each foot there is an eye; in each end of hair there is an eye; and in each pore of the skin there is an eye. The Buddhist God is not good-looking at all compared to the Christian God. In Buddhism, six symbolizes omnipotence.

The mind of man is Buddha himself. From this gate (Sokei-an touched his heart) we can see all mind. When a Buddhist gets into his own mind, he is in the avenue of all minds. Through this mind you can go anywhere. So the Buddhist practices to get into all states of mind through meditation. To embody your own mind is the first practice.

The Master answered: "Before your mind was born, it was in its original state; and after your mind realizes that it will never cease, it will become Buddha himself. When your mind manifests all the forms of the world, you will prove the Buddha mind; and when your mind abandons all the forms of the world, you will discover the Buddha nature in yourself." As a rule, you are living outside your mind--living beside yourself. Before this mind was born (I want to eat, sleep, buy, go to Japan and so forth) it was in the original state (vijnana). When you abandon the active mind and meditate, vijnana is there. When you break the ice, the water is there at once. So, when you break this mind, the original mind is there. And when you realize that all these minds will never cease, you will be Buddha.

When you die, you will leave your body as ash; your blood as water, your breath as wind. And your

consciousness goes back to the ocean of consciousness. Where will all the thoughts go? They will be kept in everyone's brain. Thoughts have always existed; they are the common property of all human beings. When we are in the bath, hot water is common to all; we are all moving in one bath-tub. So nothing will cease to exist after your death.

Time plus space is motion. The sun is in your right hand, the stars are in your finger tips, the moon is in your left hand. To the Buddhist, it is difficult to be born as a human being. When you abandon all forms of nature, you will discover Buddha nature in yourself. You will go back to vijana and be fused with universal consciousness.

The Christian calls God a Person, the Buddhist calls him the Universe--but really there is "no-body" in the universe. Universal body is Buddha and Buddha's body is myself. In prayer we say: "I embody in you; you embody in me. I embody Buddha and Buddha embodies me. I embody in the universe and the universe embodies in me."

So the universe will amalgamate with you and you will prove Buddha nature in yourself. You and Buddha are one.

EUGEN HERRIGEL, in an excerpt from "Zen in the Art of Archery," says: "You cannot do it (draw the bow properly)," explained the master, "because you do not breathe right. Press your breath down gently after breathing in, so that the abdominal wall is tightly stretched, and hold it there awhile. Then breathe out as slowly and evenly as possible, and, after a short pause, draw a quick breath of air again--out and in continually, in a rhythm that will gradually settle itself. If it is done properly, you will feel the shooting becoming easier every day. For through this breathing you will not only discover the source of all spiritual strength but will also cause this source to flow more abundantly, and to pour more easily through your limbs the more relaxed you are." ...The master attached so much importance to breathing out as slowly and steadily as possible to the very end that, for better practice and control, he made us combine it with a humming note. Only when the note had died away with the last expiring breath were we allowed to draw air again."

NOTED by John Storm

BOOK NOTED by John Storm

A Westerner studies Zen in Japan, learns something, and returns home to write books and teach, his teaching being an amalgam of Zen and whatever conceptual baggage he was carrying around before. No more need be said: he's anathema already, to Zen purists, and as a rule quite rightly so; even a little baggage, after all, is an overload for Zen. There are exceptions, however, and perhaps Karlfried Graf Durckheim should be among them.

According to a biographical sketch accompanying his latest book to be translated into English, "Zen and Us" (E.P. Dutton), the 90-some-year-old Durckheim is the founder of the "world famous" Center for Initiatory Psychotherapy in the Black Forest and is "acclaimed throughout Europe as the leading reconciler of Oriental and Western thought." That doesn't sound very promising, frankly, but let's not be hasty. Durckheim is also the author of "Hara: The Vital Center of Man" (Mandala Books), which, amid rather distracting echoes of German Existentialism, provides some useful material on center-of-gravity or hara practice. And sure enough, there is substance in "Zen and Us," too.

Durckheim, it turns out, was in Japan during World War II (a non-Nazi educator), and came to Zen by way of the martial arts, like Eugen Herrigel, author of the classic, "Zen and the Art of Archery." Durckheim, however, studied Zen with an adept of the sword, Takeharu Teramoto, a former admiral and professor at the Naval Academy in Tokyo, which adds an interesting wrinkle. For of all the Zen ways, that of the sword appears to be the most powerful, no doubt largely because it has carried forward in various guises the teachings of the great 17th century Zen master Takuan Soho. Perhaps that accounts for the essential rightness that seems to underlie much of what Durckheim says, even when he's writing in most un-Zen-like generalities about "suffering and promise, the source of quest," or "the shackles of objective consciousness," or "depersonalization and the individual," or "the experience of Being and dualism," to cite a few of the section headings in "Zen and Us."

Durckheim's chief message is that Zen should not be the monopoly of formal Buddhism, that its root experience is available to anyone willing to spend time practicing zazen or one of the other Zen exercises. He discusses specific techniques, but doesn't focus on any one of them for long, as he did in "Hara." That book, incidentally, could be very helpful to any Zen students who, despite conscientious sitting, find themselves still up-tight (in the most literal sense) about many things in their daily lives. Meager results in practice may be the consequence of meager hara, which in turn may be the consequence of meager teaching, for few Zen masters say much about how to develop a strong hara, although almost every one insists a strong hara is all-important.

In the end, Durckheim's efforts to replant Zen in fresh, non-Buddhistic soil don't lead him far from traditional Buddhism; in fact, he manages to communicate quite a bit of it, in his own idiom. Here, for example, from "Hara," is a passage that expresses a kind of Durckheimian Middle Way: "The man at home in himself--that is, the rightly centered man--lives in that undisturbed state where the eternal out and in of breathing goes on peacefully, in which he gives himself to the world without losing himself in it, abides there a while without being swallowed by it, withdraws himself without thereby cutting himself off from it and remains alone without ever hardening himself."

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

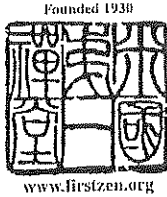
Each year at this time we check our ZN mailing list and take off the names of subscribers we haven't heard from for a long while. This year we have been lax about sending out renewal notices, so you may not have received any, but you will find one attached to your ZN if your renewal is due for 1988. If your address is changing or if for any reason you prefer not to receive ZN your letting us know would be appreciated. Your extraordinary generosity with extras in the past has enabled us to maintain our low, low rate. Thank you. HAPPY NEW YEAR

Journal

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