

# ZEN NOTES



Monk Tan-hsia burning a wooden Buddha

The wind is high, the cold penetrating;  
 The fire must be stirred up in the hearth.  
 If you call this "burning the Buddha",  
 You will see your eyebrows as well as your beard  
 falling off.

The hip is warmed now,  
 The hard ice is melting.  
 Here is the Buddha...

# THE SUTRA OF PERFECT AWAKENING

## FORTIETH LECTURE

Saturday, April 29th, 1939

*"It cannot be affirmed that the quality of gold was not present in its entirety in the ore. Thus is the Buddha's Perfect Awakening.*

*"O Obedient One! All the Tathagata's marvellously and perfectly awakened mind possesses intrinsically neither Bodhi nor Nirvana; neither the attainment of Buddhahood nor the non-attainment of Buddhahood; neither false Samsara nor the non-existence of Samsara.*

*"O Obedient One! The state which was perfected as the attainment of all Sravakas is that of the annihilation of mind and body, word and speech. They fail, after all, to reach the state of Nirvana proven by personal experience. How can one fathom the Tathagata's state of Perfect Awakening with one's reasoning mind?"*

### **SOKEI-AN SAYS:**

This metaphor of gold and ore is a famous one in the *Sutra of Perfect Awakening*.

In Mahayana Buddhism, there is a theory which is that the Buddha had enlightened himself and attained Buddhahood nine kalpas ago. So the attainment, in this incarnation was not his first, which took place in the dim past. This modern Buddhism then makes a connection between the Buddha who was born as a man and the Buddha of the universe.

The theory of Shakyamuni Buddha's time was that the Buddha was a rabbit, a fish, a sparrow, a snake, a monkey--many things as he passed through the states of sentient beings. Finally he was born as a human being and attained Buddhahood for the first time. It was much later, in Mahayana Buddhism, that this new theory was promulgated.

As Zen monks, we are not interested in such theories. This metaphor of the gold ore is also deduced from some kind of theory.

*"It cannot be affirmed that the quality of gold was not present in its entirety in the ore. - In the ore, there was the entire quality of gold. This ore is, in the metaphor, the unenlightened mind of man and gold is the awakening nature. In our dreaming and suffering mind, this awakening nature intrinsically exists. So the sentient beings possessing delusions and sufferings of mind are originally Buddha. In short--man is Buddha! This is the clear answer of a Buddhist.*

"What is Buddha?" "Man is Buddha." "How can a man be a Buddha?" "Because you doubt it you cannot be a Buddha!"

There was a very interesting catechism. When Christian missionaries first came to Japan, they said, "When we need something we make supplication to God; but you have no God. To whom do you supplicate?"

A Buddhist monk said, "To a friend! While you are praying to God, we visit a friend, and ask his help." So when God answers, it is through the hands and mind of man.

When man is a Buddha he forgets the idea of value. Buddha is valueless. Man's value is cheap. How can he be a Buddha? We must speak about the philosophy of values.

In famine, you sell your diamonds to buy food, because the value of food is higher to you than the value of diamonds. When you are in need you will pay a high price. When you do not need something you may dispose of a treasure without putting any value on it. It is man who puts the value; it is not the thing itself. We cannot buy the sky; it is valueless! We cannot buy a mind; that is also valueless!

The Buddha realized that man is Buddha. But when you need Buddha more than man, Buddha is carved in wood or stone and you pay ten thousand dollars. Yet you do not strive to give any value to your mind. Your idea of value is wrong. When you do not put any tag of value on Buddha you realize that he is there.

*"Thus is the Buddha's Perfect Awakening. His Perfect Awakening has been existing from the beginning of creation: it is not newly attained by man's mind. Buddha is the beginning and Buddha is the end. His Awakening was the beginning and it will be the end. From Alpha to Omega--the awakening always exists.*

*"O Obedient One! All the Tathagata's marvellously and perfectly awakened mind... Awakening is like this: One is asleep. When he observes the outside like a scientist, with a microscope, he will awaken to the materialistic state of mind, but he still observes*

as in a dream, believing the dream to be objective reality, and not realizing any system in the mind.

Another one will practice meditation and will realize that there is a law, a system, in the mind. Then he will awake to that mind. Perfect Awakening, however, is to awaken to the original state of mind. The scientist will awake to the materialistic reality--but we awake to the reality of the mind.

Then we realize that the origin of the universe is Perfect Emptiness; it is the sky of the mind. This sky is a diamond, and it is living. To realize this is called Perfect Awakening.

The Marvellous Awakening is this: When you attain Perfect Awakening, you observe all the evidence before you, standing upon this emptiness, and you find uniform nature in each objective existence. You awake to your daily life as a human being.

*"...(awakened mind) possesses intrinsically neither Bodhi nor Nirvana; neither the attainment of Buddhahood nor the non-attainment of Buddhahood; neither false samsara nor the non-existence of samsara. When a monk awakes to Perfect Awakening, he will renounce the world and live in a temple. But when a layman awakes to Marvellous Awakening he may become a good statesman, a keen businessman, or a brave warrior. As a man, he must possess the two types of Awakening. In the real Awakening, the old "furniture" is not existing. In the Marvellous Awakening, you need no theories! When you can swim in the ocean, you don't need that little book that teaches you how to swim. A good cook does not look at the cook-book, nor watch the clock--"Boil three minutes!"*

Buddhism is like a boat to carry you to the other shore. When you arrive there you don't need the boat.

And "samsara"--the wheel of life. Yesterday you were born--"Wah-h-h!" Tomorrow you die--"Ah-h-h--circling endlessly as a wheel! These are the so-called Buddha's teachings, but when you have attained enlightenment . . . . .

In the metaphor, emptiness is the first body of Buddha, like the sky with no center. Gold is the second body of Buddha, the shining body, the intellect. The body itself is consciousness, wisdom; not only the brain but the whole body is wisdom; and not this human body but the whole body of the universe is wisdom.

Then this gold will be cast into many different moulds. This is the metaphor for Buddha's third body. It is the body of man; it

takes the shape of all the parts, hand, eye, ear... It transforms itself into many different shapes in accordance with human phases and circumstances.

*"O Obedient One! The state which was perfected as the attainment of all Sravakas, is that of the annihilation of mind and body, word and speech.* This type of line seldom appears in a sutra. *Sravaka* originally meant the Buddha's disciples. Later it meant the Hinayana students. The ultimate in Hinayana teaching is *"the annihilation of mind and body, word and speech."* So the ancient Hinayana monk went into a mountain cave and ate a grain of rice each day, and stopped the entire activity of his mind. He did not think or speak a word. That is the attitude of Hinayana Buddhism.

There are many legends concerning this type of mind: When the Buddha was meditating in the wood, some children of the village came upon him. His body was dry and there was no breath--so the children thought him dead. They took a stick and poked it into his ear, but it did not interrupt the Buddha's meditation.

This practice continues. In my teacher's time there was a monk who was meditating in the temple for a long time. He entered the deep, eternal samadhi, and did not return. It was summertime and his body started to decay! The brotherhood tried to awaken him--but no answer. They went and told their teacher. The teacher said, "Leave him alone." That evening he emerged from his deep samadhi---and all of a sudden attained the state of Arhat. He went to his master's room and demonstrated his attainment! There are many who still meditate in this way, the Hinayana way.

The Sravaka will attain and think it is Nirvana. But this is only a partial state of Nirvana; it still possesses the remnant (the body which is his own). He has not entirely entered Nirvana. His mind is also still his own--he has only stopped its activity but is not emancipated from it. This state is the nearest to Nirvana, but it is not yet true Nirvana.

The Hindus used to put cotton in their ears and in their noses, and stayed underground for from seven to twenty-one days. On emerging from this hibernation, some friend would massage his body and he would again become conscious. His body is still existing, and his mind is not free from his own attitude! He has entered Nirvana-with-a-remainder, as it is called. But in true Nirvana he loses his body, and his mind possesses nothing. This is the Nirvana that we must attain.

This is called Nirodha samapati, true annihilation in meditation. This meditation is the measure of a man's experience in Nirvana; it

divides the one who has experienced it from the one who has not. The true teacher holds this key in his hand, and so judges the other's meditation.

*"They fail., after all, to reach the state of Nirvana proven by personal experience. --These are the Sravakas--talking about it or hibernating in a cave. He comes out, drinks water, and says he has experienced Nirvana. But the Buddha will not accept this as true Nirvana.*

There is a story: A monk was always counting the monies and expenses of his temple; he had no time for meditation. The King of Hell said to his demon messenger, "Go up and tell that monk that his time is exhausted--he must come to hell!"

The demon went up, located the monk, and said, "Your time is up--come with me to hell! "

The monk answered, "Through many incarnations this is my only opportunity to become a monk. But I was unfortunate because I was always counting the money and, therefore, had no time to meditate. Please give me a break! Let me meditate for two days before I go with you!"

The demon said, "Well, I don't know what my boss will say." And he went back down to Yama, who said: "You idiot! If you let him meditate for two days, you will not find him again. Go back and catch him immediately!" The demon went back and searched everywhere--but that monk had completely disappeared!

*"How can one fathom the Tathagata's state of Perfect Awakening with one's reasoning mind?"* Philosophy is of no use. You must attain the true mind!



# Twenty-Five Zen Koans

Selected and Translated by Sokei-an Sasaki

## **Fifth Koan**

(Saturday, February 5, 1938)

*Tennen Zenji of Tan-hsia [Sokei-an spelling it out slowly... then requests, "please be patient, those who do not take notes, please be patient"] went to Lo-yang. When he visited Erin Temple, the weather was extremely cold. He took the wooden Buddha which was in the temple and made a fire to warm himself.*

*The abbot saw this and upbraided him: "How dare you burn up my wooden Buddha!"*

*Tennen poked the ashes with his staff, saying: "I burned it in order to make some relics."*

*The Abbot said: "A wooden Buddha has no relics."*

*Tennen said: "If it has none, I shall beg you for a few more images."*

*And he took them and burned them. Whereupon the Abbot fell into hell.*

### **Sokei-an:**

Those who are taking notes please be careful to describe these names and the places. I observed someone's notes this morning very carefully. Nothing was straight. All was erroneous. In my absence, no one can get my notes anymore, so be careful--these names are very difficult.

This Tennen (his Japanese name; in Chinese, T'ien-jan) had his temple in Tanka (Chinese Tan-hsia), a mountain whose name means "red mist"--Red Mist Mountain. His birthplace is unknown. But he was a Taoist. He was coming to the city of Lo-yang (today called Sian, the city where Chang kidnapped Chiang Kai Shek) for admittance to take the examinations for government service and was at a hotel. Of course, there was no hotel like the American hotel in China at that time. It was a boarding house, and he dreamed that a white light filled the room.

A fortune teller told him: "Your dream is a good omen, a good

sign, that you will understand true emptiness."

A man questioned him: "Where are you going?"

Tennen said: "I came to the city to take the government examinations to get a position in the government."

The man said: "To select Buddha is better than to select the government."

Tennen said: "To select Buddha where should I go?" To select Buddha means to select his own religion. You select your own religion; I select mine. Everyone must select his own religion. There were many Buddhas in China at that time, so one must select among many Buddhas.

The man said: "In Kiang-hsi is a famous Zen master whose name is Ma. His temple is the place to select Buddha. You had better go there."

So, giving up his first attempt, to select government service, Tennen went to Kiang-hsi. This describes his nature plainly: "Oh, yes! Of course to select Buddha is much better than to select government service..."

When he saw Ma, he looked at him, put his hand upon his head-band (not like a turban; the Chinese were using a little piece of cloth at that time--put on like this [demonstrates]). So he put his hand--like this [demonstrates]): "Oh! This is Ma! Wonderful man!"

Honest, simple-hearted Ma looked at him in silence. Then he said: "I am not your teacher. Go to Sekito of Nangaku. You go to that Zen Master. He is your teacher." He did not say, "will be". He said "*is*." He judged so with his penetrating eye.

So Tennen went to Sekito at Nangaku and told him the reason why he had come: "I went to Ma first. Ma said he was not my teacher; that you are my teacher, so I accept this."

Sekito looked at him. "Go to the mill house and get work."

He did not say, "You are admitted." He said, "Go to the mill house and get work." All temples have a mill house, to pound the rice, and so forth. The mill house is always connected to the kitchen. It seems to me that this temple of Sekito was a big temple.

Tennen made a bow -- very low -- and went to the mill, which



was a house for temple laborers who were called anjas. He went to the anjas' room. These anjas are not monks--they are laymen, but they are living in the temple, doing manual labor.

This Tennen was chopping wood, making charcoal, pounding rice, working in the garden, about three years without saying anything--three years at hard labor. You must not think that he would get any salary, wages, compensation or anything. He had no time to attend the lectures of the master, or to read the sutras, or even to meditate.

One day Sekito preached (sic) to the monks: "Tomorrow we shall cut the weeds before the temple." Everyone, not only anjas, will work very hard to cut down the weeds. This has some significance to the Buddhist life.

That morning, while Sekito was watching the working monks, Tennen came with a wooden bowl filled with water, for washing his hair, and knelt down before the Master.

The Master smiled: "So, you wish to mow weeds before the temple, do you?" And he shaved Tennen's head. Well, he had stayed in the temple three years, and he understood Buddhism. These can be the weeds before the temple--if you understand Buddhism. So Sekito shaved his head and gave him the commandments:

*"Have you ever committed murder?"*

*"No, Master." And all the monks repeated, "No, Master."*

*"Have you ever committed robbery?"*

*"No, Master." And all the monks repeated, "No, Master."*

*"Have you ever committed adultery?"*

*"No, Master." And all the monks repeated, "No, Master."*

And then the Master will say: "Hereafter you shall not commit murder, robbery, and so on."

Sekito began to give him the commandments, and Tennen took his hair and ran out of the temple. When he understood, he did not need the commandments. Of course he did not run away from the temple but from that place.

Immediately (not at that moment, but in two-three weeks) he went to see Ma again. He went into the temple and mounted upon the wooden image--the neck of the temple's wooden image-- as one mounts upon a horse. (The image was usually that of Manjusri.) Everyone looked at Tennen in surprise, and ran into the temple and told Ma: "A queer monk has come and is mounted upon the wooden image! What shall we do?"

Ma himself came out. All those monks were just blind monks, but Ma understood. One who came to the temple and mounted upon the wooden image was not a mere blind monk.

Ma said, "Oh, you are my child, natural-hearted. (Tennen means "natural.")

Tennen came down from the image and made a profound bow, saying: "I am grateful to you for giving me the monk's name." Hereafter he was called Tennen--Natural-hearted. But he did not stay in Ma's temple. After that he went up to Northern China to Lo-yang. There was a friend in a temple and he stayed there.

*When he visited Erin Temple, the weather was extremely cold. Sometimes there are very cold times there.*

*He took the wooden Buddha which was in the temple and made a fire to warm himself. I think this was a very big temple, because he made a fire in the temple--on the stone floor.*

*The abbot saw this and upbraided him: "How did you dare burn up my wooden Buddha!"*

*Tennen poked the ashes with his staff, saying: "I burned it in order to make some relics."*

When the Buddha died he was cremated and many kings came to take his relics, or *sarira*, and almost fought. So these relics are very important in Buddhism.

*The abbot saw this and upbraided him: "How did you dare burn up my wooden Buddha!"*

*Tennen poked the ashes with his staff, saying: "I burned it in order to make some relics."*

The Abbot fell into hell--not Tennen! Do you understand? If not, there is not use explaining. The Abbot did not understand Buddhism, but Tennen did.

Tennen died on the 23rd of July, 824 A.D., at eighty-six. When he came to Lo-yang in 806 he was about seventy. Perhaps this incident happened the next year:

Tennen was laying down on a bridge over the Yang-tse. A policeman came along and said, "What are you doing here?"

Tennen said, "I am a monk who has nothing to do, so I am

lying down."

People gave him clothing and food and suddenly discovered him. In about fifteen years after that he was in a great temple; and two-three years after that he died.

When Tennen visited [name unclear in the notes of Sokei-an's talk; hereafter referred to as "the Master"], he met the Master's attendant.

Tennen asked: "Is he at home?"

The attendant said: "Yes, but he will not see you."

Tennen said: "It is very deep if he will not see me."

The attendant said: "Oh, yes, it is so deep that even Buddha himself cannot see him."

Tennen left.

When the Master awoke from a nap and the attendant told him this, the Master smote the attendant twenty sticks and drove him out, saying, "You're eating my food and do not know a true monk!"

Tennen having heard this, came back the next day. Arriving in the presence of the Master, he spread his prayer mat to make his bow--an Oriental custom, as you kiss your mother. Don't think this is worship. It is not! It is only a custom, no mystery or worship in it.

And he began to spread his mat and the Master said: "Oh, never mind!"

So Tennen retreated two-three steps.

And the Master said, "Very well, very well!"

Tennen said: "No good!" and went around the Master and went out.

The Master said: "After Buddha's death, no one has taken Buddhism very seriously. Hereafter we will not find any monk like him." And he admitted Tennen.

Very funny, isn't it! I think that you think this is profound enlightenment--or do you think this is just foolishness? It depends on your own judgment. If you have eyes, you can see it.

( Rang bell... )

# **BANKEI AND HIS WORLD**

by Peter Haskel

*Like Bankei, many of his contemporaries in the priesthood in seventeenth-century Japan believed that the authentic transmission of Zen in their land had been debased and finally destroyed during the preceding two or three centuries. If Zen was to continue, such reformers argued, it had to be thought through again from the beginning, not only revitalized but reinvented. The Zen of Bankei's age, the Tokugawa period, was in many ways a rejection rather than an extension of the Zen that came immediately before. To fully understand Bankei and seventeenth-century Zen, it is therefore necessary to start with a discussion of Japanese Zen in the late Middle Ages, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the latter part of what is referred to as the Muromachi period (1333-1573), after the Muromachi district of Kyoto where the reigning Ashikaga shoguns had their palace. Much of the information cited below is drawn from the pioneering research of Tamamura Takeji, a leading scholar of medieval Japanese Zen history. The discussion here focuses on the two principal groups identified by Tamamura as dominating Muromachi Zen: the sorin, the official Gozan temples patronized by the shogunate; and the rinka, those temples like Daitokuji, Myoshinji, Sojiji, and Eiheiji that remained largely outside the official system.*

## **ZEN IN THE MUROMACHI PERIOD (Part 1, #10)**

(Continued from the Summer '06 Zen Notes)

### **The Politics of Succession**

To a great extent, the tendency to fragmentation, which became general throughout the Gozan, reflected the failure of the original Chinese ideal of overall teaching lines based on actual inka transmission from teacher to disciple. One result of the stultification of the existing teaching lines within the Gozan was a consequent emphasis on succession in individual temple lines. With options to succeed to lines of one's own choosing closed and all opportunity confined to one's own temple line, succession within this line soon became an accepted formality rather than a matter of spiritual attainment. The ritual of succession remained important, but this was largely symbolic and no longer implied

receipt of inka from the teacher to whom one succeeded.

As noted earlier, the concept of transmission (*shiho*) in the Gozan was already undergoing change at the beginning of the Muromachi period, with *shiho* possibly being granted in the absence of inka. Although we cannot trace this development precisely, the idea gradually gained acceptance that simply being part of a particular teacher's assembly was a sufficient qualification for transmission. No longer was it taken for granted that a Zen monk became the heir of a teacher from whom he had personally received inka. In practice, he merely secured nominal succession to some amenable teacher in his "original" line, and thereby insured his own position within the lineage. This altered approach to *shiho* can be attributed to the degeneration of Gozan Zen itself, with its unconcern for the intensive practice of meditative Zen and its lack of real commitment to the integrity of the Chinese transmission system. At the same time, however, it seems to have evolved equally in response to powerful cultural and political factors as a means to accommodate the growing demand for a single-line succession that would insure the exclusive, vertical style of organization traditionally favored in Medieval Japan.

In the late Muromachi Gozan, the ideal of transmission through inka seems to have been utterly abandoned, replaced by the temple line, with *shiho* construed simply as succession to the temple's abbacy. The result was that the teaching line was merged with and determined wholly by the temple line, traced not through the direct personal relationship of teacher and disciple, but through the successive generations of the temple's abbots. While, in certain instances, an abbot's successor in office might in fact be his heir, the fiction of "succession" to the preceding abbot was maintained even when the relationship between the two was dubious or wholly nonexistent, conferring on the temple line a specious aura of religious legitimacy.

The mechanism of *haito shiho*, "transmission by paying reverence to a master's pagoda," assumed an important role in effecting these arrangements, whose principal object was to maintain the exclusive control of the line identified with a particular temple or subtemple. The *haito* system insured that, whatever the actual state of affairs, the new abbot would be formally acknowledged as his predecessor's heir and the temple therefore remain in the possession of the same line. As mentioned earlier, a disciple who at the time of his teacher's death had received incomplete or merely cursory training could eventually become his formal successor simply by performing the *haito* ceremony. Even if the abbot died without designating an heir, one could be automatically provided simply by having one of his brother monks train a suitable successor, who would then pay his

respects before the late abbot's pagoda.

At other times, there might be no shortage of worthy heirs, but the temple's leaders wished to promote a particular monk whose connections could enhance their line's political or economic position--the son of a wealthy patron, perhaps--and *haito shiho* allowed such figures to assume the abbacy, even if they had no connection with the previous abbot, or had originally been members of another line. In this way, temples observing *haito shiho*, while rejecting the open abbacy system and adhering strictly to the principles of single-line succession, could still allow certain prestigious outsiders to be installed in the abbacy, providing an expedient for their ritual adoption into the line.

With the wholesale acceptance of the temple line and associated practices like *haito shiho*, the Gozan teaching lines had forfeited both their vitality and their credibility. Inka transmission was replaced by transmission through temple succession, and the temple line replaced the teaching line as the basic unit of religious organization. As the common identity provided by membership in a particular teaching line lost all importance, the last remaining bonds between the temples and subtemples of the various Gozan lines withered. This shift in focus meant that a Gozan monk now regarded himself as belonging primarily to the temple line of a particular branch of a particular temple--to that of a particular Muso-line temple or subtemple, rather than to the Muso line generally. Patronage, too, conformed to this pattern. Thus, the Bakufu's intimate relationship with the Muso line as a whole became, in the end, an exclusive relationship with the Muso line of Shokokuji. Largely cut off from the other members of their lines, the various groups in the Gozan temples began, in many instances, to identify themselves more closely with the temple in which they were situated, the monks of the various lines becoming indistinguishable. This was the case at Shokokuji, where the shogunate ultimately came to view the temple itself as the special object of its patronage, which it bestowed equally on all the Shokokuji lines, and not merely the Muso line that constituted the Shokokuji's principal lineage.

This extreme vertical mode of development would not remain unchallenged during the ensuing age. With the sorin temples materially and spiritually depleted, it would be the large and rapidly expanding rinka Genju line that would step in to fill the vacuum created by the absence of active inka transmission lines in the Gozan. Already weakened from without by the loss of their patrons and estates, the sorin temples in the post-Onin period were to find themselves subverted internally as well by the widespread adoption of the Genju-line transmission. Though there were sporadic protests by Gozan leaders, and perhaps even attempts to

renovate the Gozan from within, the principal forces determining the course of Gozan Zen in the sixteenth century would be those associated with the rinka. Unable to reclaim its privileged position in an order that was essentially alien to it, the Gozan would be forced to accommodate to the changing circumstances as best it could so as to preserve what little remained of its wealth and organization. In the process, however, it would see itself superseded by the rinka lines, emerging from their former obscurity to dominance in the world of Japanese Zen, a position they would maintain throughout the late Medieval and Tokugawa periods and into the modern age.

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## **Three-Hundred-Mile-Tiger**

Sokei-an's commentary on

### **The Record of Lin Chi**

#### **Discourse X, Lecture 9**

*“If you are a real Buddhist, you are not like them. You expiate past karma by your daily deeds. You wear whatever you please. You go or sit at will. You seek none of the attainments of Buddha, even for a moment. Why? The ancients said, ‘If you attempt to see Buddha by having recourse to any device, Buddha becomes the cause of birth and death.’*

*“Good brothers, you must value every moment of life. Yet you run about studying Zen, memorizing terms and phrases, looking for a teacher, and restlessly searching house to house for Buddha and the Patriarchs.”*

#### **SOKEI-AN:**

Last time Lin-chi said that you do not have freedom of mind because you have not annihilated your mind. A Chinese master after this criticism of Lin-chi said you cannot grow mushrooms upon bamboo leaves; they need soil. A mushroom that grows upon bamboo leaves dries up in one hot day. Growing upon the earth, it will survive a long time. If one's mind does not grow from the real ground of life, it disappears very soon. For once in your life you must clear away the piling leaves, that thicket of bamboo in your mind, and see the real ground of mind.

If you can answer the crystal bell koan and “Where is Mahakashyapa now?”<sup>1</sup> you will really see the ground of soul. If you attain real annihilation, you will know. Otherwise, you are like a mushroom upon a dry leaf.

If you do not reach the real ground of mind, you cannot see the law of the universe written in your mind. Lin-chi tells us that we must turn our blind instinct into enlightenment. When the turn takes place at the bottom of the true ground of mind, we realize that our blind instinct is wisdom calling us.

*“If you are a real Buddhist, you are not like them.”* There was a Buddhist congregation on the Pacific Coast (not the San Francisco one) where the youngsters talked things over and made the decision that the way to deeply enter into Buddhism was to read all the books of foreign scholars in English. They were of the Pure Land sect. The founder of the Pure Land sect said that to become a true Buddhist it is not necessary to do anything but call the Buddha’s name from your heart; that makes you a true Buddhist. This is a popularized form of Buddhism. It can penetrate into everyone’s mind. Every moment of the day, whatever you do or think, you call the name of Amida Buddha. But the Pure Land teacher on the Pacific Coast did not teach this. Instead he said, “Read books.” Lin-chi would not agree.

*“You expiate past karma by your daily deeds. You wear whatever you please. You go or sit at will. You seek none of the attainments of Buddha, even for a moment.”* Take a drink, fan yourself, and at noon, lunch; in the evening, supper. Expiating past karma? Yes. Not hiding the past or making new karma. You must turn the karma, the judgment in you, which is the result of your past life, into true Wisdom.

*“Why? The ancients said, ‘If you attempt to see Buddha by having recourse to any device, Buddha becomes the cause of birth and death.’”* The fox never sleeps in his hole, always outside. If the wind blows from the north, he will sleep on the north side; if from the south, he will sleep on that side. So if someone approaches the hole, the fox gets the scent and enters the hole. He never sleeps there, for a fire could be set, burning the grass in the hole. No one told the fox about it. He has this knowledge naturally. However, the poor fox does not know the artificial mind, so it can be caught by a hunter who knows its instinctive ways.

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<sup>1</sup> “When the Buddha was dying, he gave his golden robe to Mahakashyapa, telling him to pass it on to the future Buddha, Maitreya. Mahakashyapa, holding the robe in his hands, went to the top of a great mountain and entered into *nirodha-samadhi*, the *samadhi* of annihilation, to wait for him. Where is Mahakashyapa now?” Unpublished commentary by Sokei-an on the *Sixth Patriarch’s Sutra*.



free in daily life and wear whatever we wish (put on whatever thoughts we wish). We can be “Zennists” or Christians, for if we have taken off everything, we can put on any garb that pleases us, go or stay at will. Mirror-like wisdom is not blind instinct but enlightened intuition. If we understand this, there is no more Buddhism. The two hundred and fifty commandments of the Buddhist monk become daily life. We need no books, no meditation.

*“Good brothers, you must value every moment of life. Yet you run about studying Zen, memorizing terms and phrases, looking for a teacher, and restlessly searching house to house for Buddha and the Patriarchs.”* Buddhism came to its height of metaphysical understanding in the Tang dynasty. At that time it had reached an impasse and become stagnant. Bodhidharma came in the fifth century, and three hundred years later his disciples started destroying that metaphysical theory by actually trying to realize Buddhism in themselves. That school is called Zen. It is this Buddhism that I am trying to carry into America. You, as modern mankind, must not be blind to superstition. You must open your Eye to see the real source of Buddhism, which has real flesh, a beautiful form, and a shining body.

Today in China, Buddhism is a form without soul. The other extreme, of which Lin-chi spoke, has soul but no body. Pointing to the soul, they have forgotten the beauty of the body. Lin-chi used a short dagger and pointed it directly into the heart, and it was very sharp.

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We human beings are almost entirely living in our instinctual mind. Whatever we do we are expiating past karma—passion, anger, and ignorance. With true, intrinsic wisdom we turn these into virtues. Willfulness turns into willpower; anger turns into meditation; ignorance turns into wisdom. After gathering all information and knowledge, you must come back to the real ground of mind. What was once called ignorance is now intrinsic wisdom. Total ignorance is nirvana!

According to Buddhist theory, our eight consciousnesses turn into four great wisdoms. The *alayavijnana*, the eighth or root consciousness, turns into “mirror-like wisdom.” The seventh consciousness, *manovijnana*, becomes “discerning wisdom.” The sixth consciousness, this present consciousness, becomes “observing wisdom.” The fifth consciousness, including the five senses, becomes “performing wisdom.”

The mirror-like consciousness reflects—nothing but the mirror is there. There is no reflection on it, but it exists—a black ox sleeping in pitch dark. If you hear the caw of the crow that is not cawing, you can see your father before your birth. (The father before your birth means the one you cannot meet). The mirror is here, but it reflects nothing. It is *akasha*, the mirror made of sky, unmanifested consciousness.

Undiscerning wisdom is “equalizing wisdom,” or “coinciding wisdom”—two clear mirrors that reflect each other with nothing between—your mirror and my mirror reflect each other as sky and ocean reflect each other. An Indian sage who visited a Buddhist master dropped a needle into a silver bowl filled with water. The master understood and admitted him to his presence.

Observing wisdom, the wisdom of insight, sees everything inside and outside. With it you perceive all color and sound with present consciousness, with Buddha’s wisdom. We all have this innate wisdom with which to decide, with which to create our daily life. With it, we know time and position. So we must use it.

We all have these four fundamental wisdoms, but we use them blindly, instinctively; therefore, we make many mistakes—that is our life. We must make our wisdom sure and shining. We can be an expert in any line we wish, use it in any direction. We are rewarded and punished by its use. So by knowing it and using it, our *alaya*-consciousness can be turned from mere blind instinct into mirror-like wisdom.

The first of the four wisdoms is immobile, like the earth, and the other three depend upon it; it perceives all as Oneness. When you attain this, your consciousness becomes wisdom. We are then



(Seiko Susan Morningstar)

Fall Springs 07 times, like a frog jumping to an upside down pond...

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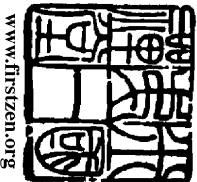
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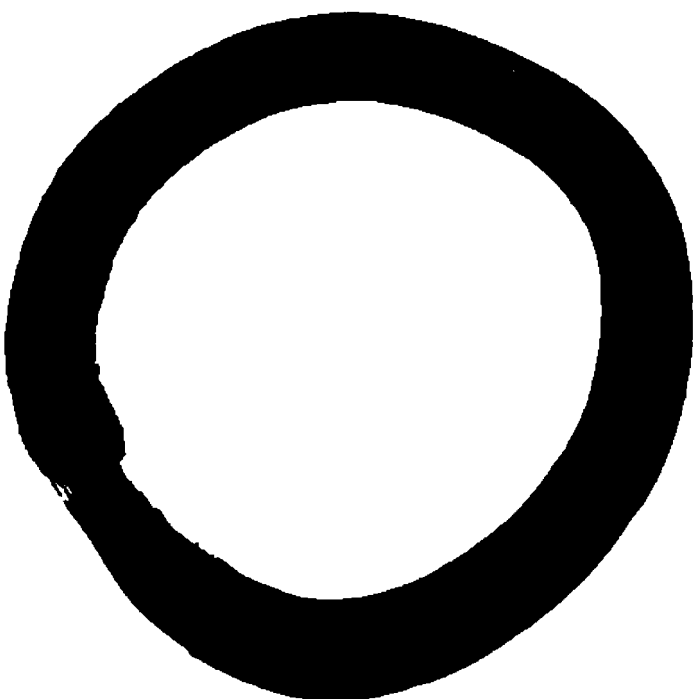
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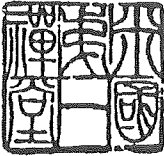


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