Zen Notes

Fire Lilies

SOKEI-AN'S COMMENTARY ON THE RECORD OF RINZAI

SECOND LECTURE

Episode 3

A lecture-master asked Rinzai a question: - In the original, the word for lecture-master is *Zasu*. *Za* means "high seat" and *su* means "master." The "master upon the high seat". A Zasu was not a Zen master. He was an outsider in Zen. Today in Japan a zasu is a patriarch in the Tendai sect.

"*The three vehicles and the twelve divisions of the teaching reveal Buddha-nature, do they not?*" - Perhaps this zasu was one of those scholastic scholars among Buddhist monks who were supported by the Governor, Wo Jo-ji. Apparently this lecture-master was not very glad to have Rinzai in his territory. He appeared before the Governor and his staff and before Rinzai and tried to show off. Therefore he asked this scholastic question. The "three vehicles" are the usual ones: Sravaka, Pratyeka-buddha, and Bodhisattva yanas. Today these three are called the Hinayana, the Quasi-Mahayana, and the Mahayana.. "The twelve baskets or divisions of the teachings." The Buddha's teachings are divided into twelve baskets or divisions: sutra, geya, gatha, nidana, itivritta, jataka, abhidharma, avadana, upadesa, udana, vaiipulya, and vyakarana. These are poetry collections, philosophical collections, story collections, metaphor collection, etc. The twelve divisions are the first division of the Buddha's teachings. They were thus subdivided in the period of Ashoka. It was a scholastic question which was asked by this lecture-master.

Rinzai said: "This waste-land has never been cleared." - I am sure the lecture-master failed to understand Rinzai's remark. "Waste-land" was this lecture-master's mind. His mind was covered with weeds and bushes, keeping snakes and toads inside. Such minds must burn up the trash and find the real soil underneath. This is Rinzai's remarkable statement: "This waste-land has never been cleared." The lecture-master was terribly disconcerted because he failed to understand Rinzai's remark.

The lecture-master said: "How could the Buddhas have so befooled men?" - The lecture-master's mind was still in the state of

the three vehicles and the twelve divisions. He ignored Rinzai's words. The Buddha, I am sure, did not tell any lies. You certainly can understand Buddha-nature by reading those twelve divisions of the Buddha's teachings.

Rinzai said: "Where is Buddha?" - All of a sudden, Rinzai shows his real sword. His "Where is Buddha?" was like a clap of thunder rending the sky. This type of religious teacher is not to be found in Western countries. He doesn't make much demonstration of kindness or compassion. Rinzai, from the beginning to the end, from head to foot, was absolutely honest. Talking about Buddha-nature, you must know first what Buddha-nature is. "Where is Buddha?"

The lecture-master was speechless. - He opened his mouth and immediately could not speak a word. He had to carry all the twelve divisions of the teachings to explain what is Buddha. From Rinzai's standpoint, Buddha is here. The lecture-master thought that the Buddha was somewhere - at least he was living twenty-five hundred years ago. No wonder the lecture-master became speechless.

Rinzai said: "In order to hide your ill appearance before the Governor, you have intended to deceive me. Get out! Get out!" - In these days we cannot find such men as Rinzai. Rinzai was a newcomer to this Province. Perhaps this was the first or second time that his meeting was held under the patronage of the Governor. Maybe this lecture-master was well-known in the district and had been invited to appear at Rinzai's lecture. Rinzai shouted, "Get out! Get out!"

Today, even though someone were to speak erroneous Buddhism in the presence of other Buddhists - monks or Zen masters - no one would say, "Get out! Get out! You are trying to deceive us." No one would be so kind. No one would want to embarrass the audience and lose their sympathy. The speaker might be erroneous but it is his own affair if he discloses his appearance. It is wise for those masters to cover their faces and listen to the erroneous teacher in silence. Later, when they speak to the erroneous lecturer, everyone says, "Nice! Beautiful!" And everyone drinks tea and goes home. Gold and stone are mixed together. We cannot find men like Rinzai today in this world - such honest religious men.

"Get out! Get out! You hinder the others from asking their questions."

The lecture-master retired. Then Rinzai proceeded.

Episode 4

The Master said: "This gathering is being held today in regard to a most important matter. - This "most important matter" is one of the important words or terms. In Chinese it is written "one great consequential cause and condition (*innen*)." But it is not necessary to translate this word innen as "cause and condition." Innen has become almost a plain idiom. It means "happening." In our country we use it this way, saying, "What innen is this?" We salute in haste and bump our heads together, we are so close. Then we step back and say, "What is this innen?" - so you must not take this innen here too literally. Take it as a happening - a great and grave happening.

The Buddha had said: "I came to this world for one purpose (Skt. *akakutyena)* and for one work (Skt. *ekakaraniva).*" Krtyena means "one work" and *karanayena* means "one aim of work." All monks take this vow to uphold <u>one</u> aim - not two or three. The monk sacrifices himself to spread Buddhism and to hand down the Dharma. That is all for monks to do. "I spread Buddhism and support my family; I hand down the Dharma and keep my family." No monk can do this. Whatever condition or circumstances he may be in, the monk's purpose is just one work and one aim. It is a great vow promised to the Buddha - and not such an easy one. Sometimes it is pretty difficult, but people accuse the monk of not knowing. They do not know the monk's life nor the cardinal principle of his life.

"*This gathering is being held today in regard to a most important matter. If there are any more questioners, let them come forth and question me. Make haste!*" - Rinzai's characteristic word -- "Hurry up! He was like a great general. Of course the period when he was in North China was one of civil war. There was not a single peaceful day. Since it was war-time, people liked to see monks like Rinzai. He fitted that time in China. He was impatient and showed his naked sword. He was honest. When he touched another, the other bled.

It seems that no one came forth to question, so Rinzai continued:

"*The very moment you open your mouth you have nothing to do with what you have intended to point out. Why is it thus?*"

As when you take a koan and appear before me, For instance, "Before your father and mother gave you birth, what were you?" Before your father and mother, before Adam and Eve, before God created you--what were you? What do you say? You appear like a

ghost. "I think...I guess I was nothing then," you stutter. Gosh! Nothing--nothing! When you try to open you mouth to express yourself, you cannot say a word.

"*Have you observed that Shakyamuni said*": To entertain the audience Rinzai quoted from an old sutra.

"*Because no word can confine Dharma within itself, Dharma is not dependent upon either causation or condition.*" The idea that Dharma is not contained in words or has nothing to do with words is written many places in the sutras. In the *Lankavatara Sutra* there is a famous line: "Dharma transcends all words." In the Chinese this statement consists of three characters, but Dharma also transcends all written characters.

"'*It is not dependent on either causation or condition.*'" Dharma does not depend on causation and condition--in Japanese pronunciation, *innen*. Just as my soul is the primary cause, but my father and mother are the secondary causes or conditions. They created me in this human shape and gave me this particular nature. Maybe seed is the cause, but sunshine, rain, and wind are the conditions which make the seed grow. No one has accurately translated this word *innen*. for the time being, I translate it "cause and condition."

"*You are unable to have faith in this, therefore you must listen to my sermon today.*" True Dharma has nothing to do with thinking or talking. It transcends the expressions of human beings. This is written everywhere, but no one has faith in it. "Therefore you must listen to my sermon today," said Rinzai. Therefore *you* must pay your carfare and come *here*. If I said, "Don't spend your carfare, stay at home, don't think about Buddhism!" what would you say? There is no need for these chairs. Put me in Central Park. That is much better for you.

Rinzai said, "Therefore you must listen to my sermon today. The Governor had me come here and asked me to speak, but there is nothing to speak about." Dharma exists always, so though every man in the world, every soul, be wiped out of this universe, yet Dharma will exist. You must have faith in it. If it exists in the universe, it exists in you, too. What is it? Do not ask me. You must find out for yourself.

"*Perhaps I have kept the Governor and his staff here too long and am deluding their Buddha-natures.*" The more Rinzai spoke, the more he deluded them. The more I give commentary upon Rinzai's words, the more I annoy *you*!

This Governor was a disciple of Isan, a famous teacher, and Rinzai's uncle in the Dharma. Rinzai's teacher was Obaku, and Obaku and Isan were of the same brotherhood. Perhaps Isan said, "My brotherhood's disciple is going to your neighborhood. Please guard him," for without a protector, a monk cannot do any work. A monk has his Dharma. He does not earn a penny. He spends all his time for one knowledge, one purpose, one practice. No one supports him; he has his own treasure. He is not disappointed. But if someone wants to support him and dig out this treasure, it is very meritorious.

When I was young in New York, on one occasion I began to teach a young girl who was a disciple of some occultist. The girl went back and reported to him. "Wonderful stuff! Wonderful stuff! he exclaimed. "Get it out of him! Get it out of him!" A wonderful expression, but I felt it was a queer one at the time. So come with your shovel and pick-ax. Get it out! I do not hinder you; I am very glad if you can get it out of me.

"*I had better withdraw.*"

"*Then Rinzai thundered a 'HO!*" This is Rinzai's expression of Zen. It doesn't mean anything to you, does it? Only a shout. But this is the very shout on which Rinzai's Zen depends. You can get it out of Rinzai. This HO!" can be observed from four different angles. It is sometimes like a sword, which cuts off all your mind-- all your entanglements. Then you give up all your mind and become not empty, but solid ivory. And when Rinzai shouts "HO!" it is the shout of a crouching lion. By this shout he destroys the solid ivory. Then sometimes he shouts to test the other. And sometimes he shouts to carry out the truth.

This last shout is an important one. I say he carries out the truth--but do not take it so lightly. This shout he thunders is the so-called Sword of the Diamond King. "Diamond King" is not Mr. So and So who has plenty of diamonds. "Diamond" is Vajraprajna, the wonderful sword made of the Diamond Wisdom.

"*You who have little faith in the heart have no day for rest. I thank you for having stood listening so long.*" Rinzai often said this.

THE SUTRA OF PERFECT AWAKENING

TWENTY-FIRST LECTURE

Saturday, November 26th, 1938

"O Obedient One! Without admitting the existence of the six qualities of dust, this fallacious mind cannot be maintained. When the four great elements disperse, the existence of dusts (rajas) can no longer be grasped. In this ungraspable state, the pure relative elements and the six qualities of dust scatter and cease to exit. There is, in the end, no existence of the reasoning mind animated by correlative entities, which can be perceived.

O Obedient One! Because the illusory bodies of the sentient beings vanish, because the illusory dusts vanish also, the vanishing of illusion also vanishes. Because this vanishing of illusion vanishes, real beings are neither illusion nor that which vanishes; it is as a mirror -- when the filth is wiped away, the light appears."

Sokei-an Says:

The Buddha is answering the question asked by Samantanetra Bodhisattva, as to the nature of existing Dharma and how anyone can observe it in meditation.

The important point of the passage which I am translating tonight is: Ego is empty and theory is empty. "Ego is empty" means that man is empty and his conception is also empty. These two emptinesses are, in Buddhism, called "devatashunyata." They comprise a very important Buddhist theory.

Man himself is non-existence -- and all the contrivances by which he attains non-existence are also empty.

"O Obedient One! Without admitting the existence of the six qualities of dust, this fallacious mind cannot be maintained." -- "Six qualities of dust" -- the word "dust" is translated from the Chinese. The Chinese translated it from the Sanskrit word "raja,"

or "filth." This filth means that which covers the light of the mind. It is as dust covering the light of a mirror.

Man's mind is originally in the state of reality -- reality itself! But this raja covers original mind, also called original nature.

When the Buddhist speaks of Reality -- it is always subjective Reality. The Buddhist does not believe in any objective existence. (My cat does not know the sky is existing; the sky cannot exist objectively because there is no subjective knowledge in the cat's mind). To the Buddhist, all is subjective -- objectively calculated as time. Six hours is six hours long as indicated by your watch -- but subjectively it doesn't mean anything. When you are waiting for your husband to come back from the Western coast, ten minutes seems like a whole day! Waiting outside on a cold night like tonight, ten minutes seems like two hours -- but when you are enjoying a game of poker...

Objectively, time and space do not exist. Therefore the Buddhist views the universe as subjective. So, when we say Reality, -it is subjective Reality.

Of course there is true objectivity by itself -- but we don't know what this is! If we see it -- then it is not objectively existing! You cannot talk about it or put it into any terms; Reality by itself is unintelligible.

Religiously, you say: "No one has seen God, but we believe in Him." Theological speech!

But these ancient teachers stated the attributes of God very clearly, because they knew God. Through their intuition they talked with him very precisely; their statements are as clear as crystal! Today, our minds, are covered with filth -- so we cannot talk about our own mind.

What are the six dusts -- rajas? Sight, sound, taste, smell, touch -- and then all the mind-stuff that appears in your brain from morning to evening like a merry-go-round; and in sleep as dreams. When you are alone you speak to yourself -- you are always living in this filthy mind-stuff. Some call it the subconscious mind . But to us it is not subconscious -- it is the six qualities of dust. Our mind is supported by them: color, sound, taste, smell, touch. So, "Without admitting the existence of the six qualities of dust, this fallacious mind cannot be maintained."

"*When the four great elements disperse, the existence of dusts (rajas) can no longer be grasped.*" -- The four great elements, the "Mahabhutas," are earth, water, fire and air. When we die -- these

disperse. Flesh returns to earth, blood to water, heat to fire, breath to air -- all return to their own element.

"... *can no longer be grasped*." -- Cannot be made intelligible to you. I translate "grasped" from the Chinese word meaning "cannot be apprehended."

There is no human body created especially by God! The sparrow is created from the same dust; and what we call the "soul" is also of the universal elements.

Our body consists of the four great elements and the six branches of Indriya.

Then Reality is shining in it -- but this Reality is not mine, yours or his!

We are organized differently, so we have different characters -- but no one is especially created by God -- there is no such creation!

"*In this ungraspable state the pure relative elements and the six qualities of dusts scatter and cease to exist*." -- "Ungraspable" means "undemonstrable" state -- Reality.

It is multinoumenal and you cannot give it any name, though it is called by many. In the commandments, if you call IT by a name and bear witness to that name, you are telling a lie. You must not bear false witness. This commandment is not so shallow as to refer to ordinary lies; "You must not bear false witness," means to call IT by a particular name.

"*There is, in the end, no existence of the reasoning mind animated by correlative entities which can be perceived*." -- All will return to Reality. No more Buddhism, no more Christianity! The Dharma, the contrivances, the theologies -- all will cease to exist. All filth will be wiped away -- and the state of Reality appears -- the mind exists. The dusts have been scattered and the four great elements cease to exist, but the "emptiness" is not annihilated. People think we become stupid and idiotic through too much meditation -- but monks who meditate all day become wiser -- there is something in it! Nihilism and Buddhism are quite different -- but if you misunderstand Buddhism you will fall into Nihilism. And it is easy to fall into it if you have a bad teacher. The Buddhism which comes from the eye also drives some into Nihilism -- but that which comes from meditation is clear.

In this part, the Buddha answers Samantanetra: first, Shunyata Atman, and second, Shunyata Dharma. Dharma is empty, Ego is

empty -- and thus you come to pure Reality.

And then, (I have not much time to explain -- five minutes more) the Buddha told the four stages of Zen -- step by step -- to reach reality, the true Reality. Of course there is no false Reality -- but human beings sometimes conceive of Reality falsely.

"*O Obedient One! Because the illusory bodies of the sentient beings vanish, the illusory dusts vanish also*." -- After this first step , the illusory dusts of the five sense perceptions will cease to exist.

"*Because illusory dusts vanish also, the vanishing of illusion also vanishes*." -- This is a queer sentence! Our sense perception vanishes, and then the vanishing activity will become unnecessary! In meditation we annihilate all conceptions and reach emptiness. In this way, the purpose, the intention, of vanishing vanishes. (The rooster scratches away the sand to get to the stone wall -- and when he reaches there, the scratching vanishes). This is the second step. When you have the koan: "How do you stop the sailing-boat in the far away ocean?" you stop physical and mental motion -- and then you must stop that stopping!

"*Because the vanishing of illusions also vanishes, ...*" -- You have come into emptiness. There is nothing more to vanish. Then what do you realize?

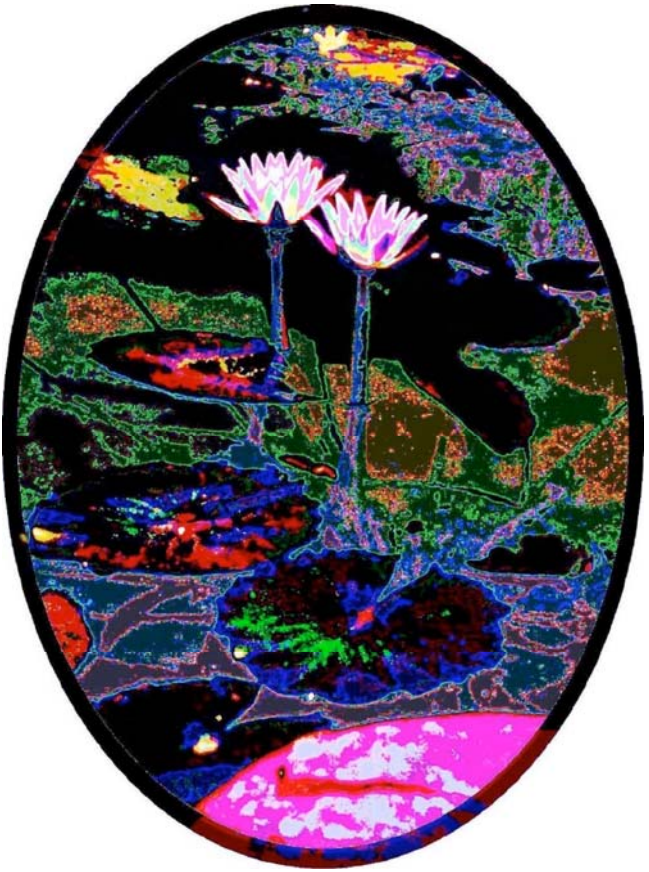
"*... real being is neither illusion nor that which vanishes*;" -- Buddhist gods and goddesses are queer; they are like children. Children are always themselves. So these gods and goddesses do not accept prayers, flowers, or money. They love the innocent girls and boys playing in the garden of the shrine. "Unless you become as one of these, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven," said the Christ.

So when you try to enter Reality by squeezing your face, closing your eyes -- you are far away from Reality!

"*It is a mirror; when the filth is wiped away the light appears*." When all fallacious ideas and hypothetical theories about religion are wiped out of your mind -- you will reach the Reality of your nature!

This is the Buddha's answer to Samantanetra.

Meditation at twilight



Through the pearl of evening twilight
the fire lotus sifts her petals
before the night.
Her flaming heart falls slowly
into the depths and darkness
of the Earth.
That fathomless silence of darkness never frightens
those falling petals
as she follows her destined way:
But in the glowing heart of the day
something of another world still lingers
at the water's edge...
In the pearl of evening twilight
the lotus
hides her heart of fire.

Zen Stories

SANDLE CHÊN

Mu-chou was a very poor man who supported himself and his aged mother by making straw sandals, which he often left in the streets for the poor who could not afford them. At first no one knew who the anonymous benefactor was, but the sandals were finally traced to Mu-chou. He was greatly admired by the people of his village for his generosity and sympathy, and became widely respected for his wisdom, earning the affectionate name of Sandal Chên.

One day it was rumored that the village was about to be attacked by bandits. On hearing the news, Mu-chou constructed a huge sandal and hung it from the village gate. When the bandits arrived they saw the sandal and turned away, sparing the village out of respect for the old sandal maker. Mu-chou's reputation is said to have spread throughout the country before he died at the advanced age of ninety-eight.

This Mu-chou was non other than Mu-chou Tao-tsung, often referred to as the Reverend Old Master Chên, who along with Lin-chi I-hsüan (Jap. Rinzai) was a student and Dharma heir of Huang-po. In fact, he was the head monk under Huang-po when Lin-chi first began his study with Huang-po and was instrumental in sending Lin-chi down his path of Great Awakening. He was also the teacher of Yün-mên Wên-yen (Jap. Ummon) and essentially paved the way for the development of two of the famous Five Schools of Zen in China as both Lin-chi and Yün-mên were founders of one of these schools.

Mu-chou preferred to remain obscure, despite his fame among the devotees of Zen, lived at the Lung-hsin Monastery in Mu-chou, left no recorded lectures or theoretical writing on Zen, yet despite his attempts at obscurity became well known and respected far and wide even by bandits. His Zen was short, direct and to the point as in the following episode:

Once when Mu-chou was asked for a statement surpassing the wisdom of all the Buddha's and Patriarchs, he held up his staff and said,

"I call this a staff. What do you call it?"

When the monk made no answer, Mu-chou flourished his staff and said,

"A statement surpassing all the Buddhas and Patriarchs, is that not what you asked for, O monk?"

The text in italics is from Original Teachings of Ch'an Buddhism by Chang Chung-Yuan, first edition, published by Random House in 1969. It is an excellent selection of translations about the major Zen Masters of the Tang Dynasty from the Transmission of the Lamp, the earliest historical record of Ch'an Buddhism in China.

RECORD OF THE GREAT PRIMORDIAL (TAIAKI)

by Takuan Sôhô [1573-1645]

(Part 1)

As I observe it, the art of war is not about struggling over victory or defeat; nor is it concerned with strength or weakness. One neither advances a single step nor retreats a single step. Your opponent does not see you; you do not see your opponent. Penetrating to the place where heaven and earth have not yet separated or Yang and Yin emerged, you can directly realize the power of this practice.

As I observe it (*kedashi*) means "I don't know exactly, but..." Originally this ideogram represented the cover of a container (*futa*). For instance, when a cover is placed on a set of nested boxes, you don't know what's inside, but by guessing, six or seven times out of ten you can figure it out. Here, too, it expresses, "I don't know for sure," or, "Without actually checking, I can't be certain, but..." Even if you know something for certain, you will show humility and won't *talk* as if you know it--that's the convention in writing. *The art of war* is just as the characters indicate. *[It] does not consist in struggling over victory or defeat; nor is it concerned with strength or weakness* means not contending over victory or defeat, or being concerned with whether your actions are strong or weak. *One neither advances a single step nor retreats a single step* means that you neither take one step forward nor one step back, but, secure victory remaining right where you are.

Your opponent does not see you. "You" refers to the true self. It is not the self of self-and-other. The self of self-and-other is something people can easily see; but to see the self of true self is rare indeed. That's why we say, "Your opponent does not see you." *You do not see your opponent* means that since you harbor no attachment to notions of self and other, you see beyond the opponent's fighting strategy based on self and other. When we speak of not seeing the opponent, it doesn't mean not seeing the opponent who's right in front of your eyes! Seeing yet not seeing--this is subtle mastery.The self of true self is the self before heaven and earth were divided and father and mother were born. It is the self that exists in all things--in ourselves as well as in birds, beasts, grasses and trees. In other words, it is what's known as

Buddha nature. It is a self that has no shape, no form, that is neither born nor dies. It is not the self seen with the everyday physical eye. It can only be seen by one who's realized enlightenment. One who has glimpsed it has seen his own nature and realized buddhahood.

In the distant past, the World-Honored One entered the snowy mountains,[2] and after six years spent in painful [practice] realized enlightenment. This is the awakening to true self. The usual, unenlightened person, lacking the power of faith, will not understand in three or five years. One who studies the Way will continually rouse his great power of faith for ten or twenty years without flagging, studying with teachers, heedless of hardship and suffering, never yielding in his resolve, like a parent who has lost a child, pondering deeply, searching intently, till he comes to where he has exhausted all views of Buddha and Dharma and is able to spontaneously realize enlightenment.

Penetrating to the place where heaven and earth have not yet separated or Yang and Yin emerged, you can directly realize the power of this practice. This means, focus your attention to the place before heaven and earth separated and Yang and Yin emerged, and then, without employing reason or understanding, see things directly. Then the time may come when you realize great power.

> *One who has achieved mastery does not use his sword to kill people. He uses his sword to bring people to life. When he wants to kill them, he kills them immediately. When he wants to bring them to life, he brings them to life immediately. This is the samadhi of killing and the samadhi of bringing to life. Without viewing things [in terms of] right and wrong, he is able to see the right and wrong of things. Without making distinctions, he is able to distinguish between things. He walks on water as if walking on land, walks on land as if walking on water. If he realizes this freedom, what can anyone on earth do to him? He is completely without equal.*

One who has achieved mastery indicates one who is master of the art of war. *does not use his sword to kill people* means that although he does not use his sword to kill people, when people encounter this principle, all instinctively cower before it and

[2] .e, the Himalayas, where the Buddha is said to have undertaken prolonged austerities in his search for awakening.

become dead men, so that there is no *need* to kill them. *He uses his sword to bring people to life* means that by using his sword he keeps the opponent under control, while he remains free just to watch, as he lets the opponent move any way he wants. *When he wants to bring them to life, he brings them to life immediately. This is the samadhi of killing and the samadhi of bringing to life* means that whether bringing to life or killing he remains in the samadhi of freedom.

Without viewing things [in terms of] right and wrong, he is able to see the right and wrong [of things]. Without making distinctions, he is able to distinguish between things means that in the art of war he has no [fixed] views of right and wrong, yet is able to *see* the right and wrong. Without making distinctions, he is *able* to make distinctions. For instance, if you take out a mirror and set it up, whatever things come before it, each and every one of their forms is reflected, so that each and every one appears. But, because the mirror is without intention, even though it precisely reflects each and every thing, it doesn't make any distinctions between one thing and the other--"that is this, this is that." So, too, with those who practice the art of war, when the mirror of the one mind is revealed, there is no intention to distinguish between right and wrong; yet since the mind's mirror is bright, precisely because distinctions between right and wrong *don't* appear they are fully apparent.

He walks on water as if walking on land, walks on land as if walking on water. The meaning of this cannot be understood unless a person has awakened to what is original to *all* persons. The foolish imagine that if one walks on water as if on land, then even when walking on land, you'll probably sink, and if one walks on land as if on water, then even when walking on water, you'll go right across. What is meant is that only when you become a person who has completely forgotten about either land or water can you arrive at this principal.

If he realizes this freedom, what can anyone on earth do to him? He is completely without equal. For a warrior who has attained this sort of freedom, even if everyone on earth conspired to attack him, there's nothing they could do to him. *He is completely without equal* means that in the whole world no one can match him. As it's said, "In heaven and on earth, I alone am to be revered.[1] "

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[1] According to legend, said to have been the Buddha's words when he was born. The baby Buddha is said to have taken seven steps, raised his right hand and repeated this phrase. *Jô agongyô* (Long Agama Sutras), T.2:4c.

If you wish to attain this, then whether walking or standing, sitting or lying down, in speech or in silence, [drinking] tea or [eating] rice, you should practice assiduously, urgently focusing your attention, and by penetrating through and through, see directly. With the passing of the months and years, it will seem as if you naturally possessed a lamp in the darkness. You will obtain the wisdom that has no teacher[2] and manifest the marvelous function of acting without intention. At that very moment, without departing from the ordinary, you will transcend the ordinary. This is what is called the Great Primordial (Taia) .

If you wish to attain this. "This" is the words referred to above, so it means, If you wish to realize the principle referred to previously. *Walking or standing, sitting or lying down* are the four [activities] known as the four dignities[3] . This is something everyone has in common. *In speech or in silence* means both while speaking and not speaking. *[Drinking] tea or [eating] rice* means even while drinking tea or eating rice. *You should practice assiduously, urgently focusing your attention, and by penetrating through and through, see directly.* Practicing conscientiously and assiduously, always come back to your [true] self, urgently focusing your attention to master this principle, and recognizing what is right and what is wrong, directly see this principle in every situation.

With the passing of the months and years, it will seem as if you naturally possessed a lamp in the darkness. As you earnestly practice like this and the months and years go by, you will make progress and come to realize this marvelous principle, just as if on a pitch dark night you suddenly came upon a lamp's radiance. *You will obtain the wisdom that has no teacher.* You will attain the fundamental wisdom that even a teacher cannot pass on. *and manifest the marvelous function of acting without intention.* All the activities of the unenlightened person proceed from consciousness, so they are all based on intention and hence are nothing but suffering--while this acting *without* intention proceeds from original wisdom, so it's completely spontaneous and easy. That's why it's called marvelous functioning. *At that very moment* means, when that time comes; in other words, *when you obtain the wisdom that has no teacher and manifest the marvelous function of doing without intention.*

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2 .e., wisdom that is natural, intrinsic and spontaneous.

3 *Shi igi.* In Buddhism, used as a comprehensive term for human physical activity.

Without departing from the ordinary, you will transcend the ordinary. This marvelous function of acting without intention does not manifest itself in some special sphere; rather, all your ordinary activities, without exception, completely become acting without intention, so that you never depart from the ordinary. In this way there is a complete transformation from the common unenlightened person's usual activity [based on] intention, with the result that *without departing from the ordinary, you will transcend the ordinary*.

This is what is called the Great Primordial (Taia) . Great Primordial[1] is the name of a famous sword without equal anywhere on earth. It freely cuts through [all] hard [substances], from gold and iron to gems and rocks. Nothing under heaven can resist its blade. For one who has attained the marvelous function of acting without intention, none can oppose him whether it's the general of a great army or a formidable force of a million, in the same way that nothing can withstand the blade of this famous sword. That's why we call the power of this marvelous function the sword Great Primordial.

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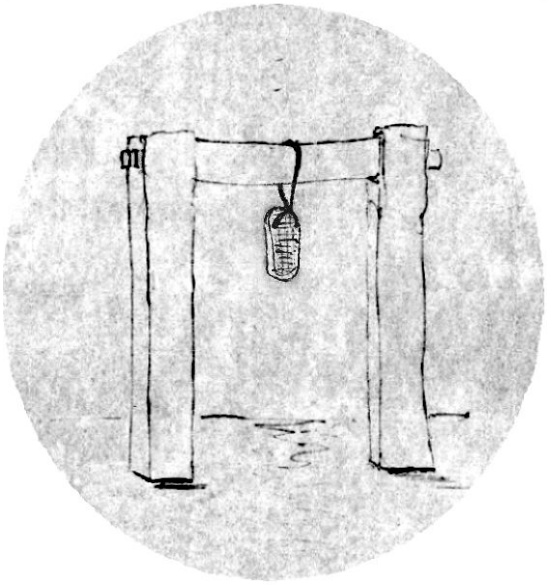

[1] *Tai-a*. (CH *Tai a)* A legendary sword mentioned in ancient Chinese chronicles, used here as a metaphor for original nature.

If I met Rinzai in the garden,
Would my roar be a hoe?...

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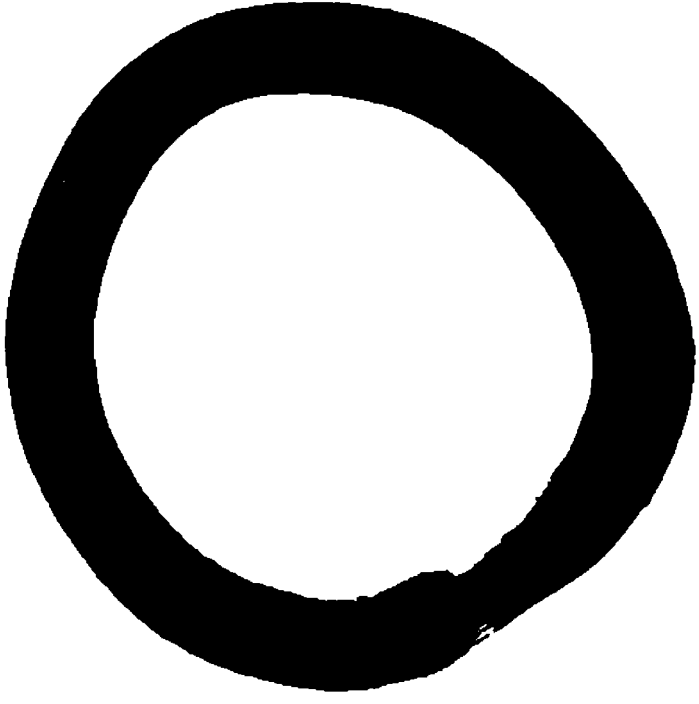

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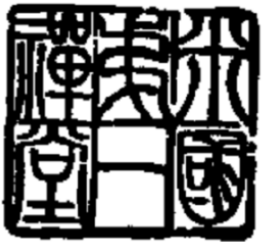

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