





MUMONKAN 2

Daichi Zenji of Hyakujo-shan noticed that, in the daily assembly, following the monks, an old man was attending his sermon. Whenever the monks retired, the old man retired. One morning, however, he did not retire.

The Master thereupon questioned him: "Who are you that stands before me?"

The old man replied: "I am not a human being. I have been living upon this mountain from the time of Kashyapa Buddha. When I was asked the question: "Does an enlightened one submit to the law of causation or not, I answered that he did not submit to it. At this word I fell into the body of a wild fox and remained in it during five hundred times of reincarnation. I pray you, Osho, say a word for me that I may, by your benevolence, be disembodied from the fox."

Then the old man repeated the question: "Does an enlightened one submit to the law of causation or not?"

The Master said: "An enlightened one is not blind in the law of causation."

Upon this word, the old man was enlightened. He made a bow and said: "Thus I am freed from the body of the wild fox. I reside in back of this mountain. May I be granted this request: Will you, Osho, dispose of my remains according to the rites customary for a dead monk?"

The deacon of the temple made an announcement to the monks: "After the meal, we shall perform a funeral service for a dead monk?"

The multitude said among themselves: "Everybody is safe, and in the infirmary there is no sick man. What is this all about?"

In the afternoon, the Master led the monks to the back of the mountain. From the bottom of a rock he dug up the corpse of a fox and cremated it in accordance with the custom.

COMMENTARY

THIS is one of the famous koans in Zen. Daichi Zenji was a Zen Master of the Tang Dynasty. Daichi is the posthumous name given him by the Emperor in the 10th Century. He died at the age of ninety-five. He lived on Mount Hyakujo, a beautiful mountain between two great lakes. His temple is still existing.

The morning assembly took place quite early in Zen temples, about half-past six, when it was near dawn. Such a huge temple as this one would be very dark at that time. Artists like to picture the subject of this old man with a white beard standing before the Master, who was seated on his preaching chair.

As the old man had been coming for a number of mornings, the Master noticed him. Now, when he stayed after all the monks went out, the Master looked at him, feeling that it had been in his mind all along to ask a question, and that the time had now come to ask it.

The Master thereupon questioned him: "Who are you that stands before me?"

The old man replied: "I am not a human being. I have been living upon this mountain from the time of Kashyapa Buddha." Kashyapa Buddha was the Buddha previous to Shakyamuni. His teaching was still existing. Shakyamuni many times repeated his teachings and mentioned that they were the teachings of Kashyapa Buddha. He was very ancient; his country and race are unknown. Some Buddhists surmise that he must have been an Egyptian, but there is no way to prove this.

When I was asked the question: "Does an enlightened man submit to the law of causation or not?" This is a profound question. When one has attained enlightenment and transcendental life, his stage of life is beyond this world. Why should he submit to the law of causation?

The "law of causation" means the law of Karma. There is life, so one must die; there is birth, so there is death. If you beat your child, your child will beat you. A husband and wife are always arguing; their child learns to argue from them. Karma works in a strange way sometimes. A child may have to pay the debts of his parents. When you are incarnated, you must pay the debts of all children. Though we have forgotten the past, and do not know whose karma we are bearing, we still must suffer for it. And if I kill a man, perhaps someone else will have to pay for it. When they think about this, one question occurs to everyone: Does someone who is enlightened have to pay the karmic debt? If so, what is the use of enlightenment?

I answered that he did not submit to it--the enlightened man has nothing to do with the law of causation!

At this word I fell into the body of a wild fox. He was transformed into a wild fox. Anyone would be transformed into a wild fox at this moment, though he would not know it.

I remained in it during five hundred times of reincarnation. I pray you, Osho, say a word for me that I may, by your benevolence, be disembodied from the fox. We have all experienced such moments many times. We have questioned and we have answered many times, but we are still unsure. We

Watching an Oriental artist who has mastered his skills create a work in his particular medium demonstrates "function" in the most striking way. Whether it is the potter, the sculptor, the calligrapher, the swordsman, the dancer, the musician, the player, who performs, his mastery is unmistakable. Avalokiteshvara, of many hands, employs many instruments.

In 1956 a skilled Japanese sumi-painter, Shinji Ishikawa, demonstrated his art for us by producing before our eyes a number of paintings. His concentration was a model for imitation. As the bamboo, the iris, the landscape came to life before our eyes, each stroke was sure and faultless. His was a demonstration of figure painting rather than calligraphy alone--the two are also often combined--but calligraphy carries everything with it too. Zen masters and priests often display their attainment with their calligraphy; it is a recognizable way of showing the true man. One of our members who studies handwriting examined the examples of the calligraphy of the 20th Century masters collected to decorate this issue and commented that all showed a high "form-level."

The critical appraisal of an art work for its intrinsic virtue requires a cultivated "eye." To determine authenticity, one must use something other than the retina, or mere perception.

Sokei-an said: "When Mr. Miya, my friend who buys Chinese antiques (a well-known art-dealer), must decide on the authenticity of an art object, said to be thousands of years old, he doesn't ask anything about it. He has it brought to his home and put on a shelf. After many years of experience he has developed a knack for looking at things. He practices meditation, purifies his mind, brushes off all notions and with his clear eye looks at the object once, not twice. He just concentrates on that first impression of the object, feeling whether it is genuine or not."

Sokei-an, using an Oriental way of description, speaks of different "eyes" with which one must see. In Zen, the eye is regarded as the highest sense (though it may often include the other senses). Beyond the everyday eye, there are Five Eyes that are most often mentioned in describing the degrees of religious development. Avalokiteshvara may be shown with a thousand eyes. The responsive eye with which one sees art is usually placed in the level of the pure esthetic realm, rupadhatu.

The cultivation of the purely responding eye is by way of meditation practice. Seeing straight, one is not confused by dusts or blurring or distortion, nor is thought or emotion involved.

In the performing arts, the act itself is judged. Its effect need not appear. As in karate, for instance, the killing blow does not have to kill in order to be judged. In swordplay, to judge a given stroke it is not necessary to kill a man to demonstrate its effectiveness, though a current samurai movie is based on a young man's doing so. The virtue of the arrow-shooting that was not judged by hitting the target but its cor-

晴好雨奇天使園
千紅萬紫落花翻
吾家灌佛君知否
今曉喫茶筋骨溫



本末人

周利平



荷大德瑞翁相書



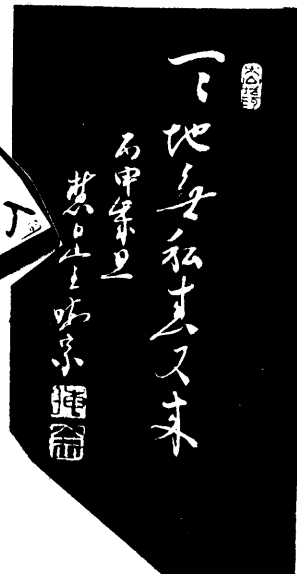
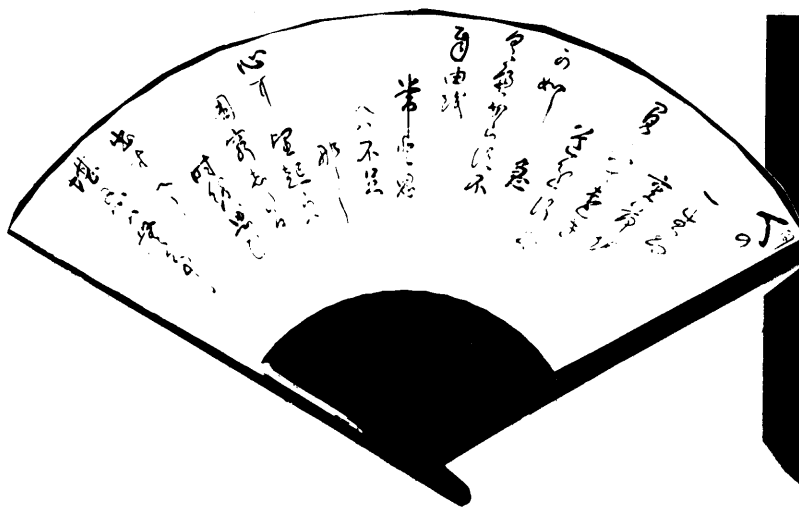
左錄趙堂和尚五法送外倡

東海兒孫日惜多

明：泥与處堂叟

話既盡交再強過

教磕門庭細揣摩



rectness was pointed out in Herrigel's *ZEN IN THE ART OF ARCHERY*. So the action or movement may be conclusive in itself. Carried to an extreme, the act need not be performed at all if the underlying attitude is perfectly clear. I am told this is the case in sumo contests, which have, at least in fiction, been resolved without the opponents laying a finger on one another or coming belly to belly. So manifestation may be judged in the realm of any of its three degrees: mind, speech, action.

Who can judge the genuineness of art or act or attainment from this view? In the New York art world today works are sold for fabulous sums that would appear accident or doodling to some. Who is to decide? Is it by the price paid? By approval of the cognoscenti of the moment? Or are there real standards that can be universally applied? To judge a "Zen" act would require a "Zen" eye, or at any rate an experienced eye. In Zen study, of course, standards are quite clear. As with the masters of the various arts and crafts in Europe and the Far East, a man must prove himself to the satisfaction of his guild or caste before he may use the title of "master." To be a Zen master is not at all an ambiguous thing. It is, in its own way, as definite a title as to be a licensed doctor, lawyer, or engineer. The standards of accomplishment which prevail are known and ascertainable. For anyone to claim mastery, he must have passed training with a known master, and must have had his work tested and approved by him. Of course, among masters as among students, there will be greater and lesser ones. But the seal of approval of the master is not merely an esoteric personal matter. Though the standards of accomplishment are not so publicized as the levels of attainment in judo, karate, or even yoga, they are pretty clearly cut. For a man to call himself a "master" when he is not so accredited is just as dubious as to call oneself a doctor when he does not possess a medical degree.

In art, mastery today is not so readily determinable. To judge whether a work is authentic or not is, I think, impossible in a technical sense. The most that could be said would be that a publicly recognized body of opinion tentatively identified it as such. Perhaps more objective standards will develop, but it is my opinion that they do not now exist.

One more question that is often asked here is whether to be a master of any of the individual arts is the same

as being enlightened. To be ambitious to be a "master" of Zen is a very different thing from striving to reach enlightenment, isn't it? Many of the young people today have adopted the Zen master as a fantasy-figure. It is their dream to become such a "master" rather than to seek to become students. They do not seem even to have heard of the distinguished role the student or koji has in Zen history. And they do not make a distinction between being a master in the sense of having accomplished one's own skills, and being a master-teacher, or a religious person. Sokei-an pointed out certain of these distinctions many times. For instance, even after someone has finished his Zen study, he might need to let his attainment soak in for ten or twenty years before he would be ready to teach others. To advertise was in earlier periods unheard of. To be a religious man, or to be a master-teacher is a very different thing from being a missionary. Special qualities are required of the master-teacher which the person accomplished in the art might not have at all. Just as one might be a great dancer, or fighter, yet not have any idea how to teach dancing, or fighting. To be a master in the technical sense, whether of art or even Zen, or to be merely accomplished is not necessarily the same as being enlightened or a religious man in the most profound sense.

Sokei-an, who started as an art-student, came to the decision that of all the arts, the art of life itself was first.

I studied art more than ten-fifteen years, but I gave it up, because an artist must make something besides his own daily life--must paint something. So his own daily life is not true daily

life. He must express more than the ordinary person, must make something extra, something else than life itself. It annoys me a great deal. I like to take a real attitude. When I walk, eat, sleep, talk--every moment is religion to me. I do not wish to copy anything. I see a mountain, a woman, a tree, that is enough. I do not want to make a portrait. Somehow art and the attitude of the artist is not the true thing--really art is a branch of the true thing. This is the distinction between the artist and religious people. An actor is wonderful, but when he shouts "O-O-O-H" on the stage, it is not real to him, it is not his own. But when I shout "O-O-O-H" in my room it is real to me, it is not a copy. Some artists may make opposition to this, but that is the reason I gave up art. I have my own face, I do not need to make a portrait. I have my own world--I do not need to make a copy of it. I do not wish to lead a double life. I am trying to be simple. I am not discouraging artists, but it was my attitude.

Sokatsu Shaku seems to have held a similar opinion. At least, so it seems in the story Sokei-an reports of him.

When I was young, my teacher asked me: "How many years have you been studying sculpture?" "About six years." "Carve me a Buddha." About fifteen days it took, and I showed it to him. "What is this?" he said, and he threw it out of the window into the pond. It seemed unkind, but it was not. He meant me to carve the Buddha in me.

OBITUARY Zuigan Goto Roshi, aged 87,
March 20, 1965.

Published with ZEN NOTES
Volume XII, No. 4, April, 1965

hope that someone will settle the matter for us.

Then the old man repeated the question: This is a Buddhist custom. Not only Zen Buddhists, but all Buddhists, do this. First we ask a question, then we repeat it.

"Does an enlightened one submit to the law of causation or not?" The Master said: "An enlightened one is not blind in the law of causation." A sentient being cannot stand outside the law of causation. While we are living in the body, in the sense perceptions, in the intellectual mind, and in the emotions and willpower, we cannot stand outside the law of causation. We are in it always. But most human beings are blind to the law of causation. From morning to evening they do not know what they are doing. Killing, stealing, lying, committing adultery, boasting, they make the wheel of karma turn. We are like field mice, running blindly, thinking we are going somewhere.

In Sanzen we observe these two sentences: Does an enlightened one submit to the law of causation or not? An enlightened one is not blind in the law of causation. But the main point of this koan is: What does it mean to fall into and come out from the body of the fox?

Upon this word, the old man was enlightened. He made a bow and said: "Thus am I freed from the body of the wild fox. I reside in back of this mountain. What does he mean by saying he resides in back of the mountain? What kind of mountain is it?"

May I be granted this request: Will you, Osho, dispose of my remains according to the rites customary for a dead monk?" The deacon of the temple: I am not sure if deacon is a good translation for the title used here. The officer referred to is next to the abbot and transacts all the business of the temple.

Made an announcement to the monks: After the meal we shall perform a funeral service for a dead monk. The multitude said amongst themselves: Everybody is safe, and in the infirmary there is no sick man. What is this all about? In every large temple there is an infirmary which is called the Nirvana room. In the four corners of this infirmary there were four silver bells and in the center there was a crystal bell. The silver bells murmured in the breeze. If there was no breeze there was no sound. But the crystal bell always murmured. The sick monks listened to this sound as they died. When the Buddha entered Nirvana

this bell was silent. Monks who are in the infirmary often tell this story.

In the afternoon, the Master led the monks to the back of the mountain. From the bottom of a rock he dug up the body of a fox and cremated it. To observe this koan in a Zen temple, you must understand the true story behind it. What is the dead fox? What is the fox itself? When I was a young student, I thought; Perhaps it means desire, nature. I thought this must be the answer, but the answer is not so shallow. Almost every religion has a legendary or mythological aspect as well as a theological aspect. In Buddhism Abhidharma is the theological aspect.

In Christianity, when resurrection is spoken about, they tell how Mary Magdalene went to the sepulchre of Jesus and, finding it empty, went to the shore of a lake and there met Jesus. Later she told the Apostles: "I have seen the Christ walking barefoot on the shore." No one believed her, but when they saw him and touched him, they said: "I believe."

There is a third aspect in religion--the mystery. To understand any religion, you must have three eyes: you must observe its mythology, its theology, and its mystery. The religious student must understand all three aspects in order to grasp the meaning. But today, the religious student is so lazy, he just swallows everything in one gulp, like drinking mother's milk. I hope you who are students of Zen will think about this story.

Reconstructed by Vanessa Coward and Mary Farkas from the notes of Edna Kenton.

The interesting May Issue of Black Belt Magazine, sent us by the editor, Robert Wells, quotes Bodhidharma's teachings in words so appropriate to Sokei-an's comments on the workings of Karma I note them here: When a man has cultivated an austere way of living, he must not forget there might be sins in his past life. Though one might have done nothing wrong in the present life, how could one say he had no blame in a past existence? Thus one must bear calmly all adversities without complaint.... All living beings are fundamentally self-less and the good and bad come to one as the law of cause and effect is in operation. One may receive an honor, but it might have been the reward for some good done in a past existence, and with the reward, the good mark has come to an end, so that there is no cause for jubilation.

zen notes

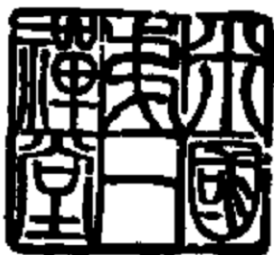
Copyright 1965 by The First
Zen Institute of America, Inc.

Published
MONTHLY BY THE FIRST ZEN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA, INC.
113 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016

Vol. XII, No. 4, Apr. 1965
Mary Farkas, Editor
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Copyright of Zen Notes is the property of the First Zen Institute of America, Inc., and its content may not be copied or e-mailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download or e-mail articles for individual use.

**Founded in 1930 by
Sokei-an Sasaki**



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

美國禪一第協會