

# ZEN notes



## SOKEI-AN SAYS

**THE FIVE EYES** The Buddhist term, the Five Eyes, is quite popular among the lay followers of Buddhism, but they misunderstand its true significance. They think it means some mysterious power, to be able to see through a wall, or hear from a great distance, but such secular misunderstandings are not accepted by authentic teachers.

First is the physical eye; second is the Deva eye; third is the Wisdom eye; fourth is the Dharma eye; fifth is the Buddha eye. The first three eyes are for students; the last two are for teachers.

The Buddha himself spoke about the Deva eye many times, and there are some descriptions of the Dharma eye in the primitive sutras, but the term, the Five Eyes, is used only in the later Mahayana scriptures. Of course, Buddhist students understand that the technical terms of Buddhism were not invented by the Buddha himself, but were manufactured through generations of Buddhist students. In the Mahaprajnaparamita-sutra (not the short work, but the 600-volume version) I find this line; "If the Bodhisattva Mahasattva wishes to attain the five eyes, he must learn prajna-paramita through practice." I think this is the oldest quotation about the five eyes that appears in the Buddhist scriptures. Nagarjuna, in his famous shastra, the Dai-chi-do-ron, says: "With the eye of the flesh (the physical eye) we see what is nearby. We cannot see what is far away. We can see the front, but we cannot see the back. With that eye

we can see the outside, but we cannot see the inside of our mind. With that eye we can see everything in the daytime, but we can see nothing in the night. When we see above we cannot see beneath. This naked eye is a very inconvenient and imperfect eye. Therefore we agree among ourselves that we shall not do anything where no one can see; that we will do everything where everyone can see." Perhaps this was the first agreement among human beings in that primitive time.) "Therefore we try to attain the Deva eye. If you attain the Deva eye, you can see near and far, front and back, inside and outside at the same time. Day or night, you can see everything. You are free to see above and beneath." This eye usually belongs to higher human beings, never to or animals.

From the West side of New York City it looks as though the sun drops down into New Jersey when it sets. The American Indian used to paddle across the Hudson River quickly to try to get to the place where the sun sank. My ancestors believed that the sun was the size of a tea-tray. Civilization has given human beings generally the Deva eye. Now we know how far away the sun is. We know that it doesn't hide in the New Jersey swamps in the evening nor rise in the morning from Long Island. In today's world, the scientific eye is the equivalent of the Deva Eye. With it, we can see the real size of the sun, the real distance to the moon.

While tracing the ingredients of Japanese Buddhism, I became interested in the part played by Shinto, and while tracing its ingredients I became even more interested in the part in it played by magic. A good statement about both appears in a book by Inazo Nitobe, a Japanese who, after serving for seven years in the International Secretariat of the League of Nations, made it his mission to make clear to English readers in JAPAN "Some Phases of her Problems and Development" at the time of writing, 1931.

All that Mr. Nitobe has to say about Shinto and its marriage to and subsequent divorce from Buddhism in Japan is interesting (in case members wish to read this long out-of-print work, it is in the Institute library), but the most useful part for my inquiry here is Shinto's relation to Shamanism.

The center spread of this issue consists of some fascinating figures inspired by the Eskimo Shamans. Manus Pinkwater, the artist who conceived them, also described their training (a subject of research in anthropology, years back). Shamanism all over the world seems to have certain elements in common. Of these magic is the most common. Awareness of its universality, in my opinion, is best evoked by the artist's conjuring up the past or remote. For, viewed through the artist's samskaric feeling, even the more prosaic may for a moment be drawn to see the minds of people who believed in or gave their lives for, its power. All that's needed is to use the right eye for looking at the artist's creation.

"The essence of Shinto," says Nitobe, "as a system of worship seems to reduce itself in the last analysis to magic, since it is usually understood as meaning the art of producing physical results by spiritual power. Such an art may consist of various acts of divination--exorcism, incantation, conjuration, thaumaturgy, etc.--all of which can be so ordered as to form a cult. The exercise of such a supernatural power, directly by a magician or indirectly through him by an unseen being, presupposes a belief in the existence of a close relationship between physical and spiritual existences...."

"Shinto, in its primitive stage, may well have been allied with Shamanism. Is it possible that the Japanese race brought it from their original home, Akkad? From the descriptions given by Vambery, Radloff, Nioradse, Czaplica, one detects only faint resemblances between them; but from its cult and practices in ancient days, of which we get detached glimpses in the *Kojiki*, one is tempted to regard Shinto as related--setting aside the question of how innately or distantly--with Shamanism as this is not to be met with in the north-eastern regions of the Asiatic continent. A good Japanese may be given an uncanny shock by being told of the widespread Turkish term *Kam* among Tungu Shamans, which term is applied to the intermediary between spirits and men, and which Vambery translates as doctor, quack salver, medicator or sorcerer...."

"There seems little doubt that magic, in the broad scientific sense of the term, originally played the chief part in Shinto. Sympathetic or, as Frazer calls it, Contagious Magic explains the existence of so many fetishes enshrined in our innumerable fanes, large and small, and of so many holy places hedged round about with taboo. Talismans and amulets endowed with magical powers are furnished to the public in all the shrines of the country. Homeopathic magic explains the many rituals which form the bulk of the cult. So numerous are the rituals that one sees nothing else in Shinto sacraments. Purification is exorcism. Atonement is offering of sacrifice. The predominance of the magic elements leads us to acknowledge that there may be a close connection between Shinto and Shamanism. If the truth and sanctity of magic be admitted there will follow practices that may be found common to all the cults founded on it, irrespective of locality. So there are not a few analogous views and doctrines in Shinto and Druidism, separated as they are in time and space. One may even detect in their tree-worship a close relationship. Shinto, as we understand it at present, is probably a composite product of many faiths held by many tribes and races who were ultimately amalgamated into the Yamato people."

So much for Shinto's relation to Shamanism. Nitobe, also gives us a capsule history of the union of Shinto and Buddhism (their relation

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to Confucianism is handily thrown in) in the following passage.

"When the Korean King's proselyting letter (introducing Buddhism to Japan in A.D. 552) was brought before the Emperor's council for discussion, opinions were sharply divided. These were mainly animated by political reasons and family interests, and a fierce conflict ensued between two leading uji--the Soga espousing the Buddhist faith on the ground of its universality and blessings, and the Mononobe stigmatizing it as an alien tenet in no way superior to the native trust in *Kami*. The Tenno, after listening to both sides of the argument, gave the image of Buddha to the defender of the new faith, saying, 'Keep it for yourself; but let others keep their old faith.' This simple but clearcut enunciation of religious liberty was never diverged from throughout the history of religious movements in Japan, until the coming of the Christian friars.

"The conflict between the two faiths ended in an intellectual compromise--so often resorted to in Japan on like occasions--that this exotic faith was fundamentally identical with the teachings of Shinto, the native religion identified by some scholars with Shamanism. The great reconciler was the Prince Regent Shotoku, to whom the country owes much for its elevation from the status of semi-barbarism to that of culture. Himself a devout Buddhist, an ardent patriot and a thorough Chinese scholar, he announced the following principle: 'Shinto is the source and root of the Way, and shot up with the sky and earth, teaches man the primal way; Classicism (Confucianism) is the branch and foliage of the Way, and, bursting forth with man, it teaches him the middle Way; Buddhism is the flower and fruit of the Way, and, appearing after man's mental powers matured, teaches him the final Way. Hence, to love one in preference to another only shows man's selfish passion.'"

In 1868, a year before the abolition of feudalism, Shintoism and Buddhism were officially separated. But a marriage of three hundred years, though legally at an end, does not destroy elements that have been introjected at an unofficial, even subconscious level. It is just such leftovers that give Westerners indigestion when they try to assimilate Zen Buddhism into their own deeper being. To the Westerner who turns to Zen as a total religious expression, magic is one of its most disturbing irrelevances to our modern taste. To those who view Zen non-committally, of course, it is of con-

siderable psychological interest. To those who seek to distill its essence, the formula of its makeup demands intensive analysis as a preliminary to the removal of impurities.

Example of the way in which a tie-up occurs is the controversial "macrobiotic diet" to which the name Zen has been applied by its inventor, George Ohsawa, about which we may have more to say in a future issue.

The second, though the tie-up is between magic and Amida Buddhism rather than Zen, might just as well have for its "magician" a Zen Master to administer the magic, as the device used is the Hannya Shingyo. In "Kwaidan," a motion picture directed by Masaki Kobayashi, in one of its three stories taken from the work of the same name by Lafcadio Hearn, the priest saves a man from demonic ghosts by writing the Hannya Shingyo all over him. Of course we take this as a quaint and curious example of forgotten lore, but I imagine it is no more remote than a case in which a friend of mine had a particularly persistent demon exorcised by a Jesuit Father here in New York two years ago.

There are many tales of spirit-subduing in Zen, including one we usually tell on New Year's Eve. It is true that such stories are taken literally only by the superstitious, but superstition is prevalent, here and now in New York, as well as long ago and far away.

I myself once profited from the principle involved in the subduing of pictured demons by promising to quiet a particularly ferocious TV witch that threatened to come out of the set after the small girl in our household. "If the witch gets out," I reassured her, "send her to my office and I'll take care of her." I don't suppose this little girl believed in the witch any more than you do, but my "device" quieted her actual uneasiness.

A fear of magic also prevails in all sorts of forms in our modern world. The psychoanalysts can tell us why, but the person possessed by such fears doesn't easily lose them. More often they go underground and reappear disguised. One we run into frequently is the fear of taking part in Buddhist rituals, particularly, that the recitation of the Four Vows would make the reciter a Buddhist automatically. In a way, it would be nice if this were so. Then all our students would need to do on Bodhi Day would be to take the Three Refuges and recite the Four Vows and all would be well. Regrettably, we must tell them "Not so easy, there is no magic way."

## SHAMANS OF THE NORTH

When the children become adolescent some of them hear voices. They pretend not to hear them but the voices grow stronger and more persistent. The child hearing the voices becomes afraid. He does not understand what the voices are saying or what they want of him.

The shaman notices this. He tells the child that he knows about the voices. The child denies hearing them but the voices persist and finally the child cannot help himself. He goes to the shaman and the shaman tells him what he must do.

The child himself must become a shaman. To do this he begins to learn from the old shaman. It is a secret learning and goes on for years. First he is ordered to go off by himself and summon the spirits. The child is frightened but the call of the voices drives him on. Even so he may abandon his task and run home. But the voices continue and at last he goes.

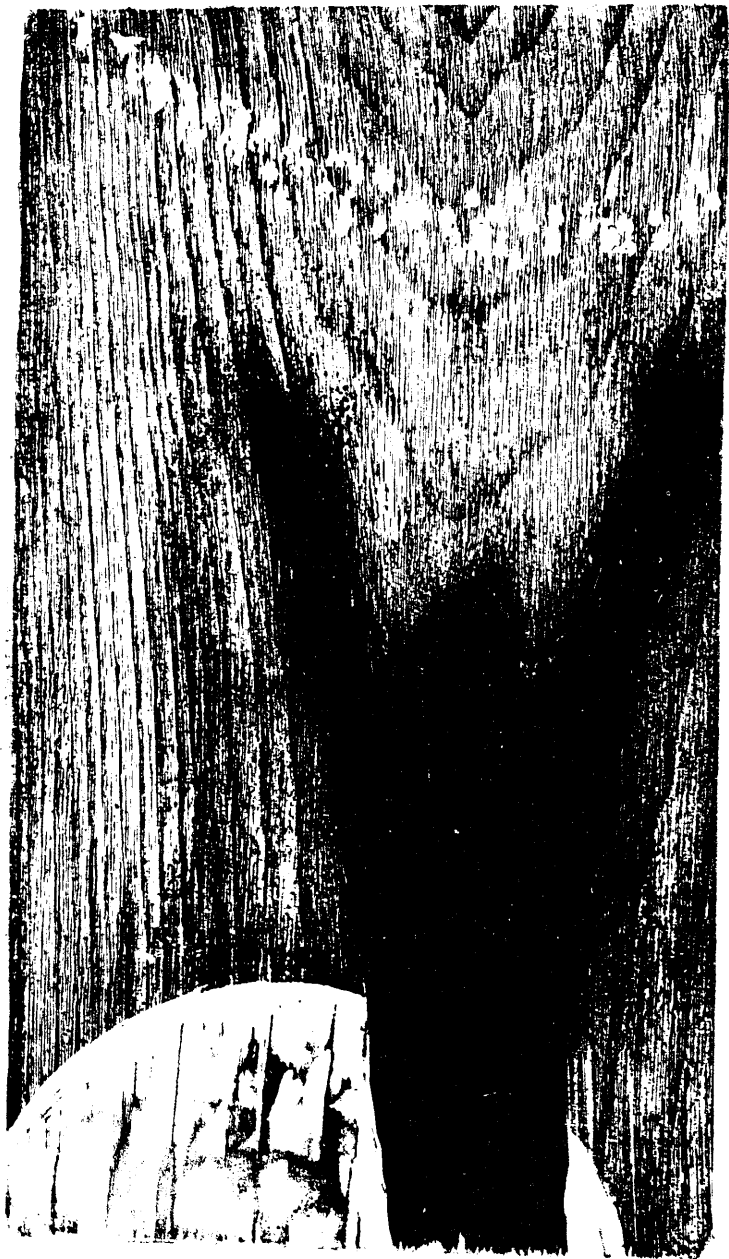
Following the shaman's instructions he calls together the spirits of the earth and air some of which become "his" own spirits to command. Later he is sent to a lake where he is to look for a certain stone. When he has found it he must select a smaller stone and with it rub the top of the large one un-



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til there is a flatness. He returns to work thus for several summers.

At the lake he may kindle no fire, eat only certain food and make no noise. Once, while there, a bear will appear and eat him. Then the bear will spit out his bones, followed by his flesh, his skin and his clothing. These reassemble into the shaman, for now he is one. Life returns to him and he now possesses a powerful spirit. After this the shaman goes home and lets the people of his village know that he has become a shaman. They are afraid of him because of his power but when they are frightened by other things they will ask him to intercede for them with the great spirit. In order to do so, the shaman must be able to swim through ice and stone to the heart of the earth. In times of trouble the people assemble to help the shaman on his journey. He vanishes almost before their eyes (shamans are famous for their tricks). As he travels for them they chant without which he cannot move and will be imprisoned by the earth. He returns exhausted and unable to move, suddenly reappearing soaked with sweat on the spot from which he had vanished. The people are then assured that he has communicated with the spirit and the spirit's instructions are given.

This is a fairly good explanation of the Deva Eye, but the true meaning as understood by Buddhists is different. The Deva eye sees things that are relative, but it fails to see the Reality of things. It sees everything clearly, but it fails to see the Reality of things. It sees in shape and color, time and space. So we must attain the eye that is able to see the state of Reality of all things, not only the Reality of objective existence but the Reality of subjective existence.

When you attain the Wisdom eye, all differentiated human forms and the forms of nature will disappear from before your eyes and you will see only one form and one nature of existence which is Emptiness. Sometimes this is called no-form, no-purpose, no-creation, no-destruction. IT exists from the beginningless beginning to the endless end. No one has created IT and IT will never be destroyed. IT has no name, no shape, no color. IT is the original state of Being. With our physical eye, our Deva eye, we fail to see the state of Reality. But with the Wisdom eye we can see IT. The one who has this eye is enlightened. All disciples of Buddha must attain this.

Using the terminology of Immanuel Kant, this eye might be called "intellectual intuition." According to Kant, there are two kinds of intuition, intellectual and empirical. The state of mind that realizes Reality is intellectual intuition in his definition.

Lay people sometimes misunder-

stand this. Thinking that the state of Reality is some mysterious place, they conceive erroneous ideas about it and delude themselves. Western philosophers and religious teachers have explained Reality in your dictionaries and encyclopedias. So please look up Reality in your own dictionary or encyclopedia and see what I am talking about.

With the eye that is called the Wisdom eye you can attain Emptiness, but only for yourself. It is not enough to teach others. With this eye, you cannot promulgate Buddhism to others, though you attain enlightenment for yourself with it. To teach others, you must attain a still higher eye, the Dharma eye.

When you attain the Dharma eye, you can see all the different strata of existence. Until you attain this eye you are in the state of Reality but you cannot see the many different stages or phases in the Dharma. There are people who have felt the great cosmic vibration but cannot transmit it. Many attain great religious experience but few can teach how to reach it. So you require the higher eye that observes the law of Nature. In meditation we observe the law of mind and analyze mind so as to attain the Dharma eye. Then we can see the other's state of mind and read it.

We say you have entered the North Star. We call the Wisdom eye the Star of the North, of the endless world of the North. But now you must turn yourself from within the North Star to look toward the

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entire zodiac extending southward. The turning point of enlightenment exists between this Wisdom eye and the Dharma eye. You go into IT and then you must turn yourself around to see from whence you came. Then with your enlightened eye you can see all the natures of human beings. For instance, you will look at a man and see that he can practice one Buddhist way but not others; he can go through this avenue but not through that one. So, according to the nature of each man, the Bodhisattva selects the means by which he can practice to attain enlightenment. The one who has this eye understands all law, so he can switch his own power to another so the other can feel it.

But though the Bodhisattva who has attained the Dharma eye understands the Dharma according to Buddhism, his eye does not penetrate to the minds of slaves or criminals, of crooked and twisted souls of the lower sentient beings or those lost wandering ones who dwell in hell. He can only transmit his power to good, natural followers.

To reach all sentient beings, one must attain the highest eye, the Buddha eye. When the Bodhisattva attains this eye, it will penetrate everything, even the minds of the human beings that are covered up with the beginningless darkness of ignorance and kalpas of evil karma. The Buddha eye can reach the true heart of true mind of criminals and slaves and save them from their agony and give them emancipation. The one who has the Buddha eye sees from all sides,

sees all the details of the human mind. With compassion and sympathy, he observes the agony of entanglement, of impurity. Nothing can be hid from him. When he sees the washerwoman, cursing and gossiping in the laundry, crying from morning to evening among the soap bubbles and steam, he will reach the truth hidden in her mind and be able to give her emancipation. The Buddha eye penetrates through all the details of the human mind and its emotions. Seeing a man with this eye, the Buddha can clearly understand what is wrong with his life, in his nature. One who has this eye really works for salvation among all kinds of people. He sees all there is to see. He sees the concealed psychology of man and saves him.

The Bodhisattva can effect his own salvation with his own wisdom, but Buddha, with his compassion and sympathy, knowing all human beings' emotions and minds, effects his salvation among all of them.

A Zen student asked his teacher, "I have heard that all enlightened teachers go to hell. Why is this?"

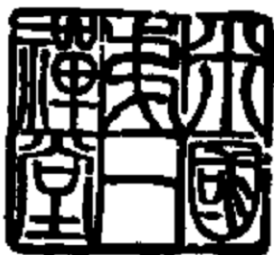
The teacher said, "If I did not go to hell, how could I save you?"

Ordinary people can attain two eyes, the physical eye and the Deva eye. Buddhist students who have attained enlightenment as Shravakas and Pratyeka-buddhas may have three eyes, the physical eye, the Deva eye and the Wisdom eye. The Bodhisattva has four eyes. Only a Buddha has all five eyes. To become Buddha, sentient beings must have five eyes. I wish everyone would at least attain the third eye.



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