

ZEN notes



(1915)
Beatrice Lane Suzuki
1878-1939

THE GREAT SIXTH PATRIARCH'S TEACHINGS

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

Chapter X, No. 18

"If your mind is uneven and disturbed, a buddha is [concealed] in a sentient being. If a single moment of thought is even and straight, a sentient being becomes a buddha. Your mind of itself possesses Buddha. Your own Buddha is the true Buddha. If you yourself do not have buddha-mind, where are you going to look for the true Buddha? Your own mind is Buddha; never doubt it! There is nothing that exists outside that can be independently established. It is original mind itself that creates all the varieties of existence. Therefore, the sutra says: 'When Mind arises, all things appear. When Mind ceases, all things cease.'"

SOKEI-AN SAYS

The Sixth Patriarch was certainly one of the reformers of Buddhism in China. Instead of reading sutras or listening to lectures, he found the teaching in his own mind.

"If your mind is uneven and disturbed, a buddha is [concealed] in a sentient being." Of course, in English there are many words which denote the meaning of the Chinese word "hsin," translated as "mind." "Mind" can mean "soul," "brain," or "consciousness"; there are many words. In this present mind, there are senses, conscious mind, and unconscious mind. In Sanskrit, there are two words that are particularly used: *hrdaya* and *citta*.¹

Hrdaya is the mind common to all sentient beings, including those souls that are sleeping or hibernating like vegetables or insects. This is very different from our state of mind. It is the fundamental mind. This present mind, which we experience at every moment, is not sleeping; it is awake. It can attain, according to practice, the enlightened mind. It is called *citta*. So there are two states of existence in the sentient mind. According to the Sixth Patriarch's usage of the word *hsin*, it is sometimes the basic mind, and sometimes it is the present state of mind.

¹ *Hrdaya* is heart, mind, or soul; *citta* is the seat of the intellect.

The Sixth Patriarch always used "mind" as a whole: the fundamental state of universal mind, the state of mind which is common to all sentient beings.

While I am speaking here, you are listening to my speech. The mind within you is very vivid. It is the present state of mind. In our meditation, we meditate on the basic state of mind, which is called mother-consciousness, or alaya-consciousness. From there, we emerge to the present state of consciousness. Without philosophizing, we realize through this meditation that which is universal - what is nature, what is man, and what is the nearest way to approach this living being. It is not necessary to call it "man." It is always with you, and you will never fail to have access to it because it is an eternal, living being. When you call it "I," this sound is very narrow and small, but when you do not call it by any name and just meditate on it, you will realize that your mind will never die and can never be destroyed. Birth and death are just names, like waves coming and going on top of the great ocean. Meditation is the nearest way to attain the true state of being.

"If a single moment of thought is even and straight, a sentient being becomes Buddha." The mind must always be even, simple, and plain. That is the original state of mind - calm as an ocean. The surface is fluctuating every moment, but the bottom is tranquil and eternal.

When the mind is uneven and distorted, it does not act like the mind of original nature; but when it acts according to the mind of original nature, it radiates like light waves in all directions, or like heat which permeates in manifold directions. The distorted mind acts just one way, or sometimes no way - it is confused.

Buddha is that even mind, even and calm, which radiates in multifold directions at once. The word "buddha" came from the Sanskrit root "to know." Buddha is one who knows, the knower. So this present consciousness is the Buddha, the knower. We know we see, we hear, we smell, we taste, we touch. Legendarily, we say Buddha, but we do not need to think Buddha and "I" are different existences in the universe. There is only one universe, one universal power in all the world, and one universal intrinsic wisdom throughout all sentient beings and all insentient beings.

This power of knowing actually performing within us is Buddha. This is our God. We worship this. We do not bow down to worship this Buddha. We meditate upon it. We do not call its name; we do not look up to the sky or peep down into the earth to find it. It is in us. We do not know where the Buddha-mind is. It is not in the brain, or in the stomach. But we know it exists. We rest in it and meditate.

Just sit down and meditate. Don't put a little tag "I" on yourself. Peel the label off, and throw yourself into the great universe. You won't feel it at once, but do it every day, and you will feel it. On a lovely spring day, go sit on a park bench by the Hudson River and forget yourself. When your heart beats with the rhythm of the universe, there on a park bench you will find Buddha.

"Your mind of itself possesses Buddha." In Christianity, you say, "God is Love." In Buddhism, we say, "Your mind of itself possesses Buddha" because mind is common to all sentient beings. Mind, according to the Buddhist, is not created separately. Mind is whole; it fills the universe like air, like ether. You cannot call it "my" mind, "your" mind, "their" mind. "My" mind is just like a drop of water in the ocean. How can I say "my" mind? Mind exists from beginningless beginning to endless end. It was not created. It is the creator of all appearances in the world. Very strange!

Mind is like the artist who paints scenery, or like the goldsmith who casts gold. When you think of a mind as small as yours, you wonder how it can create so much. Well, this mind is not yours. As human beings, we have human minds, so all human beings observe reality in the same way. But I do not trust the minds of other sentient beings, for they have their different worlds. Their worlds are theirs and have nothing to do with me. If you were a sentient being on another planet, you would have different senses. If you were born on some planet far from the sun, your skin would be like mist and your body like gas, you would have a different body structure. Each sentient being has, therefore, a different world. I live in my world, and you live in yours, but our consciousness is uniform. So my world and your world, though not exactly the same, are similar. "Your mind of itself possesses Buddha" is not faith or legend; it is truth.

"Your own Buddha is the true Buddha. If you yourself do not have buddha-mind, where are you going to look for the true Buddha? Your own mind is Buddha; never doubt it!" Everyone tries to find Buddha in books, temples, and carved images. That is not a true way to find him. Do not think that Buddha exists outside or inside, or is carved in images, or was born in India 2,400 years ago. We do not pursue such buddhas. Buddha exists as a uniform mind in all sentient beings.

"There is nothing that exists outside that can be independently established." The immediate question is: "What are they, then, the sky above, the earth below? Are they outside my mind?" We do not know what *this* really is, this thing existing *here*. Sound is created on the eardrum, not in the object, and color is created on the retina of the eye; the object has no color or shape. So what is

this that is existing outside? We call it "reality." But what is reality? It is the world that we see in color, in shape, in our own view. The whole world is our own view. We are living in our own delusion, so all of us sentient beings are stewing in our own juice. It is called delusion because, really, there is nothing outside. True objective reality is unknown. The sky is blue, the earth is green. We are the magi. We are the creators of delusion from the basic state of consciousness.

"It is original mind itself that creates all the varieties of existence. Therefore, the sutra says: 'When Mind arises, all things appear. When Mind ceases, all things cease.'" Sometimes the Mind is very bright, and sometimes it is dark; and when it is weak, it sometimes disappears. Mind is not brain. The whole universe is Mind. The universe creates its own concentrating power as we concentrate our mind on one thing. I move because Mind is living and I am living. Mind itself concentrates itself in one place and creates heat, creates light, creates its own concentrated power. Thus alaya-consciousness creates this whole kaleidoscopic existence.

When my mind ceases, when your mind ceases, when all human beings cease, then all manifestations cease.



Narrow Road to the Interior

Books reviewed by Ian R. Chandler

The Essential Basho, by Matsuo Basho. Translated from the Japanese by Sam Hamill. Shambhala. Boston & London, 1999. 184 Pages.

The Essential Haiku : Versions of Basho, Buson, and Issa (Essential Poets, Vol 20)" Robert Hass(Editor), et al; The Ecco Press. 1994. 327 Pages.

Basho's Narrow Road. Spring and Autumn Passages. Two Works by Matsuo Basho, Hiroaki Sato (Translator); Stonebridge Press. Berkeley, CA 1996. 186 Pages.

The Narrow Road to Oku. Basho Matsuo. In Japanese and English. Donald Keene, Translator. Kodansha International. New York. 1996. 187 Pages.

"The moon and sun are eternal travelers. Even the years wander on. A lifetime adrift in a boat or in old age leading a tired horse into the years, every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home."

[Hamill, p.3].

So begins Basho's "Narrow Road to the Interior," or "Narrow Road to Oku," Basho's composition of poetry and prose written while on a walking journey around the Island of Honshu in 1689. Starting out from Edo (modern day Tokyo), he traveled the length and breadth of Japan's largest island, covering a total of 1,223 miles in nine months. He was 46 years old at the time, at the height of his creative powers, and despite complaints of various infirmities, obviously in good physical condition. "Narrow Road to the Interior" is probably Basho's most famous work. Although a scant 45 pages, it is a celebrated Japanese literary classic.

Basho was a lay Zen student, but the Narrow Road to Oku does not deal explicitly with Zen Buddhist themes. Rather, it is packed with literary, cultural and historical references. The passage quoted above is loosely borrowed from Li Po, and Basho's travels through the Japanese countryside were probably inspired by the Chinese Poet Tu Fu (772-846). Tu Fu's wanderings around China during the cataclysmic collapse of the T'ang Dynasty lend his poetry a depth, urgency and importance impossible to obtain for a poet living at home in peace and prosperity. Basho lived during

the Edo period when Japan was ruled by the Tokugawa Shoguns. It was a period of political stability. By traveling to ancient battlefields, ruined temples and spectacular vistas, he increased the breath and depth of his poetic expression. His writings became a celebration of Japanese culture and history, as well as a search for poetic truth.

At the beginning of the work, Basho invokes the protection of the guardian deities of the road, and in the next several pages we meet some of them, such as an innkeeper whose name is Buddha. A few days into the journey, they find themselves standing in the middle of farmers' fields stretching off in every direction with no clear path. Another of the guardian deities of the road -- a local farmer -- invites them to take his horse. "Just send back this horse wherever he stops." The horse knew the way, and led them to the next village. Basho and his traveling companion Sora preferred to journey with shaved heads and monk's garb. One early stopping point was a temple to the mountain Yamabushi En Nyo Gyoja, a seventh century itinerant Buddhist priest who had traveled extensively through Japan. Basho, who was in the process of circumambulating the entire country on foot, offered him this poem:

*In summer mountains
I bow before his high clogs
My journey's just begun*
[Keene, page 35]

Many of Basho's poems on this journey were simple snapshots evoking feelings or describing scenes in nature.

*Blossoms unnoticed
By people of this world
Chestnuts by the eaves*
[Keene, page 51]

*We wade into
Early rice fragrance
The rough sea to our right.*
[Sato, page 113]

*Quietness:
Seeping into the rocks
The Cicada's voice*
[Sato, page 95]

*Under one roof,
Courtesans and monks asleep --
Moon and bush clover*
[Hamill, page 29]

*Eaten alive by
Lice and Fleas -- now the horse
Beside my pillow pees
[Hamill, page 20]*

Near the battlefield where the Fujiwara clan met its end:

*Summer grasses:
All that remains of great soldiers'
Imperial dreams.
[Hamill, page 19]*

*In deutzia flowers
I see Kanefusa's white hair*
[Sato, page 87]*

In his notes, Hiroaki Sato mentions that "Masuo Kanefusa (dates unknown), [was] an old white-haired warrior, who, after making sure that Yoshitsune and his wife were dead, set fire to Takadachi Mansion and died fighting." For many of the poems, the notes are critical for understanding.

Basho was born in 1644 and grew up thirty miles from Kyoto, the former imperial capital, where he studied poetry and Zen. At the age of 28, he published a book of poems, "The Seashell Game," and also moved from Kyoto to Edo (modern day Tokyo). For part of his time in Edo, he was employed as a minor official, but had several young men as poetry students. At the age of 36 he shaved his head, in the spirit of a Buddhist monk, and moved to a gamekeeper's hut on the outskirts of Edo. One of his poetry students gave him a plantain tree (basho) as a gift, and he took his *nome de plume* from the tree.

How was he able to support himself as a professional poet? Basho acted as the host to innumerable Renga meetings. Renga were poems written by teams of people writing verses. One would write the opening verse, which was a Haiku. This would be followed in sequence by several additional verses, each written by a different individual. At the end, the poem was scored by a judge, usually Basho himself. Perhaps because of the absence of modern mass-media (no movies, no television, no internet) the men involved in these contests took their poetry writing seriously -- to the point of hiring a professional poets to assist them.

This type of poetry-writing activity may have helped finance Basho's travels while he was on the road, although the finances behind this long and arduous journey still remain something of a

mystery. There was speculation that he may have been a Ninja -- a spy from the Imperial Court sent to investigate certain matters in outlying districts. Hiroaki Sato discusses this speculation in his introduction to Basho's Narrow Road, but concludes that if either of them was a Ninja, it was his traveling companion Sora. On his journeys Basho sometimes stayed in temples, but for the most part he stayed in inns. He also sought out local poets at several stopping points and sometimes stayed with them.

The four books reviewed here each offer a different perspective on Basho.

Hiroaki Sato's Basho's Narrow Road is packed with literary references. Hiroaki Sato is past president of the Haiku Society of America, and Basho's Narrow Road contains a full page of notes for each page of poetry. It also includes an example of one of Basho's Renga, A Farewell Gift to Sora. The book emphasizes that Haiku started out originally as the opening verses of Renga sequences.

Donald Keene's The Narrow Road to Oku has a format similar to some of his earlier translations, such as An Introduction to the Tale of Genji. The book is illustrated by Miyata Masayuki with English and Japanese text presented side by side, along with copious notes. Masayuki's illustrations, in my opinion, make it the most aesthetically pleasing of the four books. Donald Keene is Professor Emeritus of Japanese literature at Columbia University, and the Donald Keene center for Japanese Culture was established at the University in 1986.

The Essential Haiku, edited by Robert Hass, presents Basho as one of the three founders of the Haiku tradition, along with Buson and Issa. It includes biographies of all three poets, followed by translations of selections of their poetry. Translation of the entire Oku no Hosomichi is not included here. This book is volume 20 in the Essential Poets series.

Last but not least, Sam Hamill's The Essential Basho contains some of the most artistic renderings of the poems. As literal translations, his poems are probably somewhat less accurate than the other translations, but Hamill is very good at conveying poetic feeling. He is the author of numerous translations from the classical Chinese and Japanese languages.

Beatrice Lane Suzuki
1878-1939



(USA 1907)

The current issue of *Zen Culture* (*Zen Bunka*) magazine from Hanazono University features an interesting article by Ueda Kanshō on D.T. Suzuki's wife Beatrice Lane Suzuki (1878-1939) [*Zen Bunka*, Vol. CLXXV, January 2000, "*Sannin no jōsei to Daisetsu sensei. Dai ikkai: Suzuki Biatrîsu*, " pp.39-55). According to the article, Suzuki first met Beatrice in New York in 1906 when he was acting as translator for the Zen master Shaku Sōen, then on a lecture tour of the US. Deeply moved by Sōen's

talk, Beatrice asked him to instruct her in Mahayana Buddhism and Zen, and he in turn urged her to study with Suzuki.

Beatrice had a rather unusual background. Her mother, according to Suzuki, came from an aristocratic English family, the Erskines, and had married an American diplomat named Lane, whom she accompanied back to the US. Beatrice was born in Boston in 1878, and when Lane died prematurely, Beatrice's mother was remarried to a German, a Dr. Hahn. The marriage, however, was unhappy and they eventually separated. Beatrice preferred to suppress the Hahn name, and referred to herself as Beatrice Erskine Lane. Intellectually gifted, she graduated from Radcliffe and subsequently received a Master's degree in sociology from Columbia. Suzuki seems to have been quite taken with the young American, and commissioned a pendant of the Sanskrit syllable Man (a reverse swastika) to be made for her at Tiffany's, inscribed with the sacred phrase *Tat tvam asi*, "Thou art that."



Suzuki returned to Japan in 1909. In 1911 he invited Beatrice to join him, and they were married at the American consulate in Yokohama. They set up house in Tokyo, but continued to spend time in Kamakura at Shôdenan, the Engakuji subtemple with which Suzuki was connected. One student of Suzuki's recalled the curious figure this international "East-West" couple cut in the streets of early twentieth-century Japan, with the rather large-proportioned Beatrice striding along in front of her comparatively slight husband, who brought up the rear carrying a huge valise. Between themselves, the couple always spoke in English. In 1916 they were joined by Beatrice's mother, Emma Erskine Hahn, who continued to live with them till her death in Kyoto in 1927.

Suzuki resumed his Zen study with Sôen, which began before his departure for the States and continued after his return to Japan until the time of Sôen's death in 1919. Beatrice, who had begun to study Zen under Sôen in New York, was now able to begin zazen practice in an actual zendo under Sôen's Dharma brother, the Zen master Hirota Tenshin, head abbot of Engakuji, receiving from Tenshin the Dharma name Shôren (Blue Lotus). Beatrice sat through numerous sesshins, practicing along with the monks from a special seat in the zendo and, as she later remembered, trying to appear as inconspicuous as possible in her dark robes while she strove, along with the rest, to answer her koan.

In 1921, both Beatrice and her husband were given teaching positions at the True Pure Land sect's Otani University in Kyoto, but continued to return regularly to Shôdenan and Kamakura on vacation. At Otani they founded and contributed regularly to the

Eastern Buddhist, a still-flourishing journal focusing on Mahayana Buddhism and Zen. While Suzuki lectured on Buddhism, Beatrice taught practical English and English texts on comparative religion. To the chagrin of many of her students, no Japanese language was allowed during any of her classes, and she maintained a reputation as a demanding teacher.



The Suzukis had a large Western-style house. Suzuki's study was on the second floor, which was largely buried under a mountain of books through which a pathway wound like a tunnel, at the end of which, in a kind of valley, Suzuki sat at his desk. Beatrice was also a prodigious reader, known to devour two or three novels in a single day. She seems to have taken sincere pleasure in the traditional ways that were fast disappearing from Japanese life. When electricity was first introduced at Engakuji, Beatrice was outraged, going about the

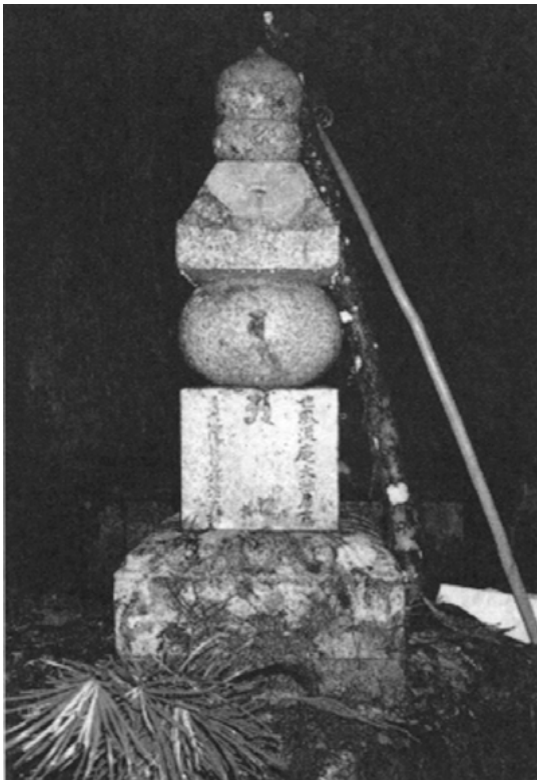
temple grounds and insisting loudly to all and sundry that this attempt at modernization threatened to destroy the temple's special atmosphere. In the process she scandalized many of the priests, though not, incidentally, her husband. She was also known for rescuing stray dogs and cats, whose cries, Asahina Sôgen recalled, tended to disturb the entire neighborhood, and the Suzuki's home at Shôdenan contained memorial plaques for various deceased animals that Beatrice had sheltered.

Although Beatrice continued to practice Zen at Engakuji, she was gradually drawn to the practice of Shingon. From 1924, she began to receive instruction in Shingon meditation techniques at Tôji, the famous Kyoto Shingon temple, attempting to master the requisite mudras, mantras, and visualization practices. The following year she became a formal disciple of Tôji's chief abbot, Matsunaga Shôdô, receiving his initiation and traveling to the nearby Shingon headquarters establishment on Mount Koya for further practice and study. Here, in 1927, she was joined by her husband, who encouraged his wife's interest in Esoteric Buddhism. For the next ten years, Beatrice would spend her summer vacations practicing in retreat at Mount Koya. She was especially taken with the pristine setting of the thousand-year old monastic site, which in those days was still deeply forested and

serene and off-limits to vehicles, such as the tour buses which have now become omnipresent.

In April, 1939, a malignant tumor was discovered, and Beatrice entered the hospital, where she died, tended to the last by her distraught husband. Her funeral, in deference to her interest in Shingon, was held at Tôji, and her ashes divided between Mount Koya, Tôkeiji, a noted Kamakura Zen temple with which Suzuki was connected, and the Suzuki family plot in Kanazawa--the same three sites in which Suzuki himself would later be interred. Suzuki posthumously published Beatrice's writings on Shingon, first in their original English under the title *Impressions of Mahayana Buddhism*, and later in Japanese translation. Beatrice's "five-ring" stupa, or grave marker, pictured in the accompanying photograph, can still be seen today on Mount Koya, a monument to this formidable woman's devotion to Buddhism and her adopted land..

--Peter Haskell



THE SUTRA OF PERFECT AWAKENING

FIFTEENTH LECTURE

Saturday, October 15th, 1938

"O Obedient One! When you realize that this world is illusory you will stay away from it; you need no means to release yourself from it. When you find yourself free from this illusory world, you will be awakened. There is no gradual awakening. All the Bodhisattvas and the sentient beings of the future world must strive for their awakening in accordance with this teaching. Thus they may release themselves from all illusion."

Then the Buddha desired to proclaim this once more; he expressed it in the following gatha:

*"O Samantabhadra!
You must know that the beginningless, illusory
darkness of the sentient beings
Has been created in accordance with the
perfectly awakened consciousness of all Tathagatas."*

Samantabhadra Bodhisattva asked a question of Shakyamuni Buddha: "Reality is intangible and unintelligible; it is empty. How can anyone attain enlightenment in this empty state? The whole world is illusory and our mind is also illusory. In this illusory state with this illusory mind -- by what means can we emancipate ourselves from this illusory world?"

The Buddha answered: *"One who dreams will awaken from the dream when it becomes very intense!"* (As I -- when I speak English in my dream -- will wake up because the language is a hard task for me. When Americans speak Japanese, I do not wake up, but when I, in my turn, speak English I always awaken.)

"By observing this illusory world, one will awake from it!" This was the Buddha's answer. What is that which is called illusion? Color, sound, odor, touch, taste, and the mind are illusory appearances.

Our mind consists of images of the outside -- it is a copy of the outside -- and the names of things -- and the joy, fear, etc., that result from our contact with the outside. Without accepting the outside, we cannot form our mind. But, as all on the outside is illusory our mind is also illusory!

Time and space do not exist, they are the constituents of outer consciousness. They are our creation. Yet with time and space we try to measure the outside. We are not possessed of any correct measure of the outside. We measure illusion with illusion.

And what is the direct object in existence? It is, in your term, noumena. What is noumena? There is the name -- but we cannot prove noumena with our five senses. Therefore, this phenomenal world is illusory. But we cannot get out of this illusory world; if we get out of it -- we are dead. We are living, eating, thinking, in this illusory world -- as a fish breathes, eats, generates, and dies in water. If he goes outside of water he is dead.

It is very strange! The human being knows this is an illusory world, and he knows there is a reality -- call it heaven, Nirvana, shunyata, akasha -- but this state is entirely different from our state, so we have nothing to do with it! As Hume said, "Reality is not a state which our knowledge can conceive, and that which is outside of our knowledge -- we have nothing to do with it!"

The Buddhist has a different view! The state of reality is very intimate to us. We do not put reality outside of ourselves -- do not reject it.

There is a story of long ago: A Catholic monk was brought into Japan 400 years ago, and a Japanese asked him, "When God created the universe, was he outside the universe or inside the universe?" the Catholic Father said, "Of course he was outside!" The Japanese said, "Does anyone know the outside, or if there is any outside?" And the Father answered, "God knows!" Good story!

While the Buddhist thinks there is no outside of the universe -- he means "outside of our knowledge," and of course this Father wasn't speaking of place but of the outside of our knowledge.

The lecture tonight deals with this illusory world:

"O Obedient One!" -- In Japanese, This word means "Good man," according to the commentary of I translate it "Obedient One," one who knows the law.

Knowing the law, he has fear of the law -- therefore he

is obedient, understands acquiescence. The Buddha used the same word. Some European scholars translate this "Good fellow" -- but I do not accept this translation.

When you realize that this world is illusory you will stay away from it; you need no means to release yourself from it; -- This "stay away" is famous in Buddhism. It means to renounce. In primitive Buddhism this meant to shave your head, go into the mountains, eat one grain of rice a day and die there!

This is not good renunciation! He has renounced the world physically but his mind is still there! This is not the Buddha's real teaching but you begin the practice from there -- the method of "staying away" from the worldly. It is a rather quick method. If we stay at home, drink wine, eat a whole pig at once, we cannot find enlightenment so easily! If one is lazy the awakening is objective, not subjective.

"Stay away" is really not physical but mental! So you do not need to move from place to place. Sitting on your cushion, cross-legged you can practice meditation!

"You need no means to release yourself from it." -- There is no means or control by which to release yourself from it! This answers the question asked by Samantabhadra: "By what means, step by step, may they emancipate themselves from their illusions forever?"

The Buddha answers: "There is no means. You do not need any steps!"

"Renouncing" is in one moment in your mind! There is no ascending or descending. (No idea of ascent or descent according to space.) In a flash of mind you will attain enlightenment! In this flash, before putting any question to your own mind, you are awakened. In Buddhism, Enlightenment and Awakening are the same.

"When you find yourself free from this illusory world, you will be awakened." -- As you might dream you are in jail with a policeman waiting outside -- "Oh, what have I done to be locked in this place!" -- and you wake from the dream to find yourself free from jail. But the policeman and jailers who live in that jail, do not feel trapped! They have their own freedom.

I once asked my teacher: "Those who go to hell, in the tremendous heat of the fire, certainly feel the fire. But why do not the demons who live in hell feel that heat?" My teacher answered, "Because hell is subjective." Good answer! Later, I found this

answer by my teacher in a sutra. It was not my teacher's invention; it was spoken by Nagarjuna.

"There is no gradual awakening. All the Bodhisattvas and the sentient beings of the future world must strive for their awakening in accordance with this teaching. Thus they may release themselves from all illusion." -- In the Zen school, the "gradual awakening" is changed to "sudden awakening!" When you know this is illusion -- by knowing it -- you will be awakened! And when you have awakened, you will realize that there is no awakening! Therefore, in the real state of Enlightenment, there is no such thing as so-called "enlightenment."

While you are in the state of this illusory world, you chase the world as a cat chases his tail; but the cat knows it is his own tail! The fish in the water chase their own shadows -- do not know it. And we, in this world, run from our shadows to the mountain cave! We may dream of a mortal wound, call the doctor, for medicine -- only to awaken from the dream and find no wound! But we take it so seriously!

There is a story in Greek mythology -- I forget the name of the nymph who was changed, by Jupiter, into a demon. She was sleeping very comfortably in shallow water, awoke, and saw a demon. She ran for three days and nights. The demon pursued her and finally she fainted. On awaking, she saw that the demon was her own tail! She had escaped from illusion.

Greek mythology is very subtle; certainly this story comprises the meaning of the illusory world!

Then the Buddha desired to proclaim this once more; he expressed it in the following gatha: -- The Buddha was a poet. He spoke and then proclaimed his teaching in a poem.

"O Samantabhadra! You must know that the beginningless illusory darkness of the sentient beings has been created in accordance with the perfectly awakened consciousness of all Tathagatas." -- This sentence sounds, on the surface, like a contradiction. How can this illusory world be created by the awakened mind?

We talk about "absolute reality" -- in that abstract sense, it is outside our phenomenal world of the five senses. We have forgotten the state in the bosom of the Mother -- the so-called "beginningless darkness" called avidya. Until we are educated, we do not know Reality. We are born ignorant of Reality and live in a world ignorant of Reality!

There is no foundation for our knowledge. We think we are all created different. This is ego which will cause you to live very uncomfortably in this world!

But the state of Reality is not abstract -- it is really concrete! It is very near -- it is Buddha! That is Buddhism.

Buddhism does not observe life in two different states -- one phenomena, the other noumena (reality). Buddhism puts the two together, shakes the mixture, analyzes it -- and lives in it! How to do this is the practice. It is entirely different from other religions; other religions always observe two states.

So "this beginningless illusory darkness has been created in accordance with the perfectly awakened consciousness!" And when you are "perfectly awakened," you will know that this world has been created so!

But to attain -- you must attain Tathagata! This word has many meanings, but here it means "Buddha-nature." This Buddha-nature creates the illusory world!

The Buddha spoke of "the illusory blossoms that bloom in the sky." These are the blossoms that appear on the retina of the eye -- but one who has a blind mind will accept them as real. But one who has an awakened mind will accept them as "beautiful blossoms." This is Mahayana. "It was a wonderful dream -- and I wish to dream it once more!"

But to reach Mahayana, you must first pass the Hinayana state. You cannot immediately accept Mahayana teaching.



If all else fails, a good Yawn will do...



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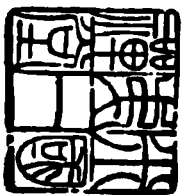
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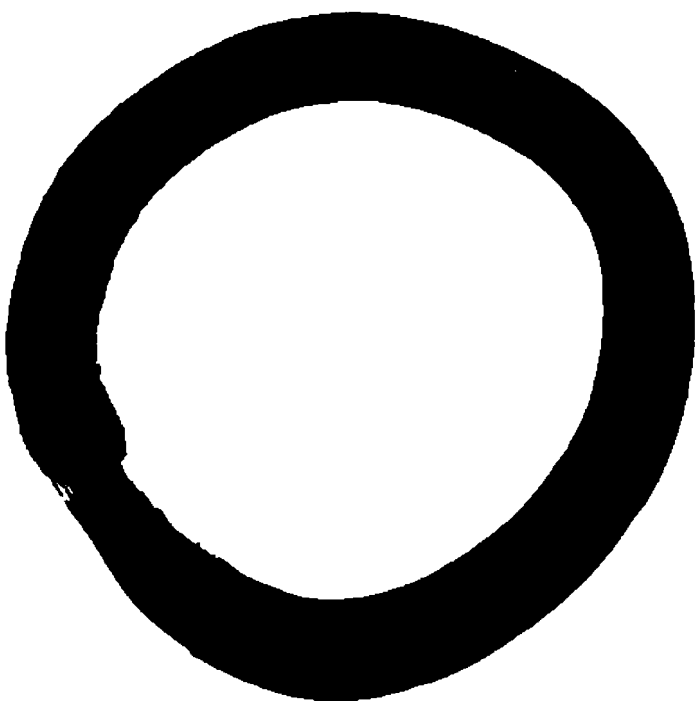
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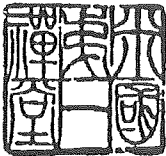


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