

ZEN notes



A Zen Story

THE GREAT SIXTH PATRIARCH'S TEACHINGS

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

Chapter X, No. 19

"Now I shall leave a gatha as a parting gift. I call it 'The Gatha of the True Buddha of Your Own Nature.' If anyone in future generations understands its meaning, he will see for himself original mind, attain for himself the Buddha Way. The gatha says:

*"The bhutatathata of your own nature is itself true Buddha
The three poisons of false views are the Demon King*

*When you are deluded by false views, the demon dwells in your
house*

When you possess the true view, Buddha dwells in your house

*If you allow the three poisons of false views to grow in your
mind*

Instantly, the Demon King will come to occupy your house

*If the true view eradicates the mind of three poisons, the
Demon King will be transformed into Buddha -
He who is true, not false*

*Dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, nirmanakaya
These three bodies are originally one body*

*If you are able to look into your own nature
That itself will be the cause of realizing buddhahood and
awakening to enlightenment*

*Originally, your pure nature is born from nirmanakaya
Your pure nature is always within nirmanakaya*

*Your nature causes nirmanakaya to follow the true path
It will bring perfect [realization] that is true and infinite*

*Lustful nature is originally the cause of pure nature
When you rid yourself of lust, that itself is the body of pure
nature*

*If the five kinds of sensuous desire are extirpated from
your original nature*

*You will recognize your original nature and instantly
[manifest] absolute truth*

*If you encounter the teaching of sudden enlightenment
in this life*

*You will instantly realize original nature and behold the
Buddha*

*If you want to practice in order to become Buddha
You must first know where the truth is to be found*

*If you find the truth in your own mind
That truth is itself the cause of becoming Buddha*

*If without seeing your own original nature, you try to
find Buddha outside
You are an utter fool*

*I have now handed down to you this teaching of sudden
enlightenment*

*To save the people of the world, you must [first] practice
this yourselves*

*I say to you who in future will study the Way
If you do not take this view, you are simply wasting your
time"*

SOKEI-AN SAYS;

*"Now," the Master said, "I shall leave a gatha as a parting gift.
I call it 'The Gatha of the True Buddha of Your Own Nature.' If
anyone in future generations understands its meaning, he will see
for himself original mind, attain for himself the Buddha Way." If
you practice meditation in accordance with this gatha, said the
Sixth Patriarch, you will recognize your original mind.*

It is not easy to recognize original mind. You can read about it,
you can imagine it, but to recognize it is truly very hard work. Af-
ter many years of practice the student may think he has attained
original mind, but when he goes before a Zen master, the master
says, "That is not original mind; you are only dreaming." Are you
dreaming? What is this original mind spoken by the Sixth Patri-
arch?

We have this mind. It is evident that we have a mind. Is our
mind not the original one? If not, what is this original mind? It is

man's bad habit to think of everything as in space, time, and value. Now, I have a mind, I have this present mind. Therefore, I must have had an original mind that existed before this present mind. So we think in time. If I said, "This sky is the present sky; there must have been an original sky," it would sound ridiculous. But this sky is all the sky there is, of course, and it is a new sky.

My father had this mind. My ancestors had this mind. Adam and Eve had this mind. This is an old mind, but it is also a new mind - I have it in the present. I also say that my old mind is priceless, but that my new mind is very cheap, a depraved and degenerate mind - I would not pay one penny for this mind. Thus we put value on things. If it is old, we value it highly; if it is new, we would not pay a penny for it. A million years ago, human beings did not pay a cent for the sky, and today human beings do not pay for it. We live under the sky, and it is valueless - we do not value it in terms of money. Why then try to put a value on our mind? The sky is sometimes clouded and sometimes very bright. Our mind is the same as the sky, and it is as old as the sky. The Sixth Patriarch called it "original mind." When you meditate upon your original mind, you will find it.

When you first practice meditation, you will find a pandemoniac procession in your mind. When I was sitting in Battery Park and the Bear Mountain boat arrived, many people passed through the park - a pandemoniac procession. When you practice meditation for five minutes, you will find this pandemoniac procession. Your friend makes a funny face, the cat goes away, and so forth. I have heard that when we die, we repeat all our memories three times. In meditation, we repeat them many times. But after you have practiced for just a few months, you will not even find a mouse passing through your mind. All is quiet. You are not going anywhere, not looking into anything. You are still sitting on your chair, but you will find your original mind. This is an old mind, a timeless mind. In deep meditation, the outside vanishes from your sight, and the mind is alone in endless space, pervading in multi-fold directions. This is timeless mind.

Meditation is a delightful thing. We do not meditate upon some idea, symbol or thought. We meditate upon our own mind. Our mind meditates upon Mind itself. Without using another lamp, the lamp shines. You see this expressed in Oriental sculpture - the Hindu meditating with his eyes half closed. In his position of repose, he calmly meditates upon his own mind. We do not meditate upon our thoughts. In Japan, I saw Rodin's "Thinker," and when I went to Columbia University, I saw it again before the Hall of Philosophy. I do not think he is thinking much. I am glad to have the opportunity to speak about our meditation.

It is easy to fall into imagination. You must meet a true Zen

master who has had true experience and been tested by a previous Zen master. Your experience and your imagination must be tested by him.

Buddhadharma is Buddhism. Before you attain it, you cannot speak of Buddhism. To quench your thirst, you must drink the water yourself. No one can drink it for you.

The gatha says:

"The bhutatathata of your own nature is itself true Buddha"

Alaya-consciousness is the active mind that appears with our recognition. Bhutatathata is empty mind - we are not in it. When bhutatathata appears within our mind, we recognize it, and that is called alaya-consciousness. When it transcends our mind, it is bhutatathata. It is said that Buddhists have no God. We do not call it God, but that attribute of bhutatathata is the attribute of God.

The usual conception of those who entertain the mind of imagination is that bhutatathata is that state in which you cannot see, hear, taste, or smell, that it transcends our sense perceptions. This is a theoretical explanation. Bhutatathata is really different from this theory. Theoretically everyone thinks there is a state behind this phenomenal state that cannot be reached with our senses or thought of in any terms, perhaps this bhutatathata state. We cannot reach it with our senses, or think of it in any terms; it is only theoretical. Bhutatathata, therefore, exists outside the human intellect; it does not exist in the human mind. Therefore, it has no relation to us - *but this must be experienced*. Bhutatathata is not the Shakyamuni Buddha who was living 2,500 years ago.

"The three poisons of false views are the Demon King"

The Demon King is a famous demon, the king of them all. In Buddhist legends, when the Buddha was about to attain the highest enlightenment, the demons were afraid and said: "If the highest truth were grasped by a human mind, we would lose our existence. We should send our army and destroy Shakyamuni." So the Demon King sent his army but was defeated by the Buddha's power of mind. Then the Demon King sent his three daughters to entice the Buddha from meditation, so they danced before him; but they did not awaken him. Perhaps you have seen pictures somewhere of the three daughters of the Demon King dancing before the Buddha. The Sixth Patriarch was using this legendary story.

The "three poisons," the three venomous minds, are the three fundamental poisons of lust, anger and ignorance. Instinctively, all

sentient beings endeavor to generate, to preserve their own bodies through time. Instinctively, we endeavor to find food to eat. We, human being or tiger, kill the victim, meaning food. This is so-called anger. When a person has a good position and another person comes along and takes the job away from him, this also means food. These instinctive actions are based on fundamental ignorance. They are the three venomous minds. So "false views," which are the cause of the three venomous minds, are the Demon King. To attack people blindly, to seize the opposite sex to generate, is a false view. This is the cause - the Demon King.

"When you are deluded by false views, the demon dwells in your house

When you possess the true view, Buddha dwells in your house"

When that instinct to devour the enemy is transformed, it becomes the energy to meditate - you have the same attitude towards yourself as to your friends.

What is the true view? Many scholars talk about this. When I was a novice, this puzzled me. I had to talk, I had to see everything at once, so I looked in both ways at the same time. Ridiculous!

"If you allow the three poisons of false views to grow in your mind

Instantly, the Demon King will come to occupy your house

If the true view eradicates the mind of three poisons, the Demon King will be transformed into Buddha -

He who is true, not false"

Demon and Buddha are, therefore, the same. The demon will be transformed into Buddha, as cold water is transformed into hot water. It is the same mind. But by your own practice, it will be transformed into Buddha. This transformation is of great importance in Buddhism.

*"Dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, nirmanakaya
These three bodies are originally one body"*

In Western countries, there is a very famous theory - monism. All comes from the "One," and all is reduced to the "One." Dualism is "two" - in the beginning there was good and bad, man and woman. Pluralism is not two, but many. But from the standpoint of Reality, there is neither one, two, nor many. We do not call it "one," because one is invented by the human mind experiencing "two" or "three." The Buddha said: "If there were one, it would be none." In Reality, you need not call it one or two or three. Bhutatathata is

Reality. Buddha is Reality. Original mind is Reality.

Dharmakaya is the omnipresent body that pervades the universe. It has no end, no center, and no beginning. Sambhogakaya is the intellectual center. For billions of years, it always received its own experience of existence, like the center of a nebula. Finally, it recognizes its own existence, like a human being. Nirmanakaya is the body of transformation. It transforms itself into many different people, millions of people, all with different bodies. But our original mind has only one body, one existence.

"One body" is the state of bhutatathata. When we meditate and forget our sense perceptions, this is bhutatathata. Then we open our eyes, and there is just one body!

We do not believe in the "astral body." *This* is etheric, astral, physical - the same body.

*"If you are able to look into your own nature
That itself will be the cause of realizing buddhahood and
awakening to enlightenment"*

This is the attitude of Zen students. While the students of other religions look for God in the sky and for Reality in material objects, analyzing objective existence by microscope, Zen students always look deep into their own nature by tranquilizing their mind.

At first, you feel that your mind is very confused. Then you realize that your consciousness is like a deep well, a bottomless well. Later, through the practice of meditation, you feel that there is no depth in your consciousness, that consciousness is not a thing that has depth; it cannot be fathomed or measured by our imagination, nor can it be called shallow or deep. When you close your eyes to meditate, you keep yourself in "imaginable" darkness and think you are in a deep state of consciousness. But this is not the darkness of deep consciousness, it is merely the darkness of the skin - your eyelid covering the retina of the eye.

I was following all the texts of Buddhism with my own knowledge. I believed there was shallow consciousness and deep consciousness, and consciousnesses called "alaya-consciousness," "manas consciousness," and "amala-consciousness." But such imaginings ceased to exist, one by one.

Today, I believe - of course, it is my own personal view of Buddhism - that so-called alaya-consciousness is only a name. Consciousness itself is *this real existence* - including eye, ear, nose,

tongue and the million pores of the body, the mind that perceives dreams, and the mind that perceives samskara. All these together are alaya-consciousness.

Alaya-consciousness is like the star at the head of a comet. When a comet sweeps through the sky, a long trail follows the head. This alaya-consciousness of mind is the head of the comet, and the tail of the comet is the whole universe - mountains and rivers, sky and oceans.

Therefore, this aspect of mountain and river, sky and ocean is my own tail, and I am looking at this tail, objectifying it. If I introspect this entire universe, the sky and the ocean, the mountains and rivers are my consciousness. So when I look at the sky, the beautiful clear sky, I realize it is *objectified* alaya-consciousness.

When you meditate, alaya is the deepest consciousness. When you open your eye and look at it, alaya is the infinite sky. When you observe the whole universe, within and without, with the eye of Zen, the entire universe, including your mind, will become very rich, very beautiful, and very great. It is a long-lived being. This is how you must observe your life. The Sixth Patriarch said, "If you are able to look into your own nature, that itself will be the cause of realizing buddhahood and awakening to enlightenment."

When you meditate upon your mind, you realize that there is neither shallow nor deep in the nature of consciousness. It is all one piece, one present existence, and it is *this moment* - this moment including the blue sky, the deep ocean, the green mountain, the shining stream of the river, and the millions of people on the surface of the earth. This appearance is the state of the dominion of Buddha. Thus, the man who perceives the whole universe is Buddha himself.

"Originally your pure nature is born from nirmanakaya"

Buddha's nirmanakayas are covering the whole earth. When you go to Broadway you will find Buddha's nirmanakayas floating all over it. Every one of them is the head of the comet. The whole world is following the one comet, and that world is common to all comets, but they are deluded.

If you were enlightened, you would see your pure nature within you. It is like the sky that you can see outside. It is boundless and bottomless. Your sense organs are just floating over that consciousness as foam floats over the waves. When this foam vanishes, you will go back to your original, pure nature. You think and your mind is confused because you attach yourself too much

to this mind. This mind is like air-bubbles floating over the surface of the ocean. When you stand against the sky, you realize how small you are. This smallness of your existence is due to the limited experience through your five senses and the state of your existence through these senses.

"Your pure nature is always within nirmanakaya"

This pure nature, which is like the ocean, is the base of your nirmanakaya. Nirmanakaya here means "acting body."

"Your nature causes nirmanakaya to follow the true path"

Your pure nature does not cause it to follow, it is innate in your nature.

I do not believe the last line of this text was written by the Sixth Patriarch. From his standpoint, this line is somewhat like the words of a narrow Hinayanist. Of course, this poem was written by his disciples. Perhaps at first the Sixth Patriarch said something like this, but I do not believe he would have talked this way before his death. Someone inserted these lines as the words of the Sixth Patriarch. So I will not give a commentary on them. But I shall certainly say something about the Sixth Patriarch's viewpoint.

"It will bring perfect [realization] that is true and infinite"

To practice this dharma, you must practice the "right way." In Buddhism, the right way is the Eightfold Noble Path: right view, right contemplation, and so forth. So you must practice the dharma, but you cannot command your nirmanakaya to practice. If your nirmanakaya finds its original nature, the Eightfold Noble Path is the original performance of your original nature.

What is right view? From my own standpoint, when you look at the sky and do not think of anything else, that is right view. When you go into the kitchen, you look at the shelf, the spoons and knives in the drawer and the garbage pail, you see the ice-box.

When I observe things, as they exist in my kitchen, and I do not know anything else, that is the right view. But if anyone looks at my kitchen from a moral view, then it is not right view; it is subjective view. That person is looking at my kitchen through his own concepts: "Look at those cups and glasses! They're all chipped and nicked! Someone has broken them! Look at the garbage can! It has an obnoxious odor! Somebody should wash it!" Many people observe the whole world from such a corner, but this is not the Buddha's right view.

Right view is the basis of right consideration. When you

practice your meditation upon each state of your five skandhas, introspecting yourself in such a way, such practice is called right view. What is right view? The principle viewpoint of right view is, "Look once! Don't look twice." If you look at objective existence once, you look at it with your eye. If you look twice, your brain brings some subjective notion to it.

To attain this right view is very difficult. After you have passed many koans, put your mind into the fire and beat that mind and beat it again; then pull it out. You will attain right view. When you pass the first koan, without reasoning and without philosophizing, when you have eradicated all your notions and are standing in the center of the universe, at that moment you will attain right view.

"Lustful nature is originally the cause of pure nature"

This is like the line in the *Sutra of Perfect Awakening*:¹ "The ore of gold is the primitive state of pure gold." The life of the caveman is the primitive state of the sacred man. This is different from Christianity, isn't it?

In Buddhism, there are many legends of the past lives of Shakyamuni Buddha. Through many incarnations he was a sparrow, a tiger, a serpent, a pigeon, and slowly he became a man. Finally, he attained buddhahood. Of course, the quality of buddhahood is in the sparrow, the serpent, the pigeon. But it is not only in sentient beings. It is in *water, fire, ether* - everywhere in the universe. It is in the sky, the mountain and river, in the stars, in the sun and in the moon. But when it is concentrated in this existing alaya-consciousness, buddha-nature awakens. It awakens to its own existence - "OH!"

In meditation, you close your eyes and meditate for three years, then you open your eyes and meditate for three years. Sometimes, as you are standing on the shore of the Hudson River, suddenly you come across your own enlightenment - "Oh-h-h! That was it!" But it will come only after long meditation. Without this long meditation, you will never come to this sudden enlightenment. Someone may come to it without any preparation, but such a one was a bodhisattva a long time.

In Christianity, the Savior was always a savior from the beginning of creation. He was created a savior. He was always perfect, from beginning to end. He was always immaculate. He was not the child of a human father. And from the first, when he appeared on this earth, he was decidedly different from other

¹ The *Sutra of Perfect Awakening* (C. Yuan-chueh-ching) was translated by Buddhatrata in the year 693 C.E.

human beings. He was never a sparrow, never a rat. He was always the child of God.

But the attributes of Buddha as a messiah for human beings are entirely different from those of Christ. Buddha passed through all lower sentient states and gradually ascended to the state of enlightenment by his own effort. When you compare Buddhism to Christianity, you must remember this difference. The pure nature of Christ in Christianity is deductive - there was the idea of God in the beginning. But in Buddhism, the pure nature of Buddha is discovered only by our own effort. The word is "discover." Just like you discover the gold in ore, I discover buddha-nature for myself, you discover buddha-nature for yourself, and he discovers buddha-nature for himself. In Japan, this always produces an argument between Buddhists and Christians. It is a very important point.

"When you rid yourself of lust, that itself is the body of pure nature"

This statement is entirely Hinayanistic.

"If the five kinds of sensuous desire are extirpated from your original nature

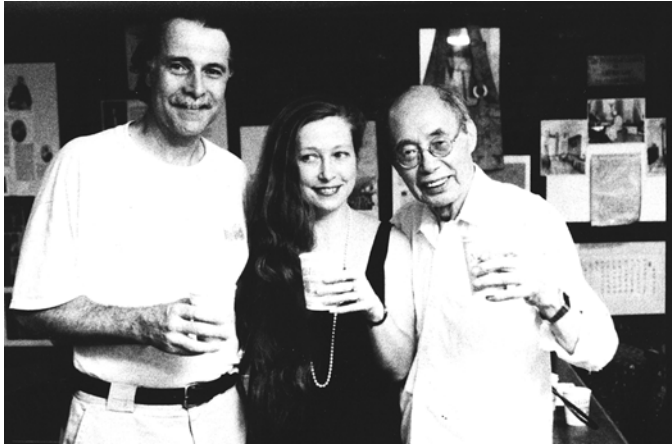
You will recognize your original nature and instantly [manifest] absolute truth"

The five kinds of sensuous desire have nothing to do with your discovering the original nature of your body. In the Chinese text, it is apparent that an illiterate monk or a Hinayana scholar inserted these lines here. I do not believe the Sixth Patriarch, who was a great Mahayanist, would have made this statement.

To attain the first gate of Buddhism, you must extricate yourself from worldly desires. Some people misunderstand Zen and look at it from a queer corner - from symbols or from a sexual view or from a psychoanalytical view. They try to find an answer to the first koan in psychoanalysis or in symbolism. One student gave me a strange answer - "A triangle is original nature." A triangle has nothing to do with original nature. Another answered, "Through the gate of mother, I can return to original nature." This is sex alright, isn't it? Terrible answer! Of course, such notions must be thrown out entirely.

If the Sixth Patriarch wrote this line from such a viewpoint, I agree.

(continued after "Zen Story")



Dejan Georgevich, Magdalena Solé and Kim Chan

At the beginning of July we received a request from Magdalena Solé, a friend of one of our longtime members, Jonathan Lorch, to shoot a short Zen movie at the Institute. After some deliberation, both the house members and the board decided it was okay and on July 23, Magdalena and the film crew arrived with a truckload of equipment for a two-day shoot that, eventually stretched into three. It was remarkable how much equipment could be packed into a twenty-foot truck... enough, it seemed, to almost fill the first three floors of our five-story building.

Our backyard bamboo grove become the entrance path to the Zen Story temple, while the actual temple gate was set up in the public meeting room. The back office became the dressing and makeup area while both the Zendo and the Library had their brief, well-illuminated, equipment-cluttered moments upon this Zen Story stage.

All three characters in this story, the older monk, the novice monk and the visiting monk were played by Kim Chan, a well known actor who happened to be in New York at the time working on a new film. When contacted by Magdalena he expressed interest in her project and to her delight agreed to play all three parts. He assumed the parts so well that when one of our members, Bob Schaefer, saw him for the first time in his older monk garb he asked, "Who's the Roshi?"



The shoot went quite smoothly, as far as film shootings go, and we were all impressed by the way Magdalena and her crew maintained an admirable Zen-like focus while managing the complex process of filming within the tight confines of the house. We were invited to partake in the catered meals in which some of us, therefore, indulged ourselves. When it was all over, late Saturday night, the exhausted crew still managed to pack it all up and put things back, so that very little effort was

required on our part to restore the house to its original state.

Filming in the Library and backyard



The Characters



elder monk



one eyed novice



visiting monk

The Story

This Zen Story has a slightly different twist from Sokei-an's tofu peddler version that appeared in the fall of '99 Zen Notes. I have paraphrased most of it to fit into this issue. Original script is in italics.

The story begins with two monks, who are brothers, having supper in the temple kitchen. The elder monk is quiet and focused while the younger, one-eyed brother, is noisily gulping his food.



Suddenly they hear a knock on the temple door and the elder monk asks his brother to answer. The one-eyed monk reluctantly goes to open the temple door and finds a wandering monk standing there. He asks the one-eyed monk to challenge him, for he seeks lodging and any wandering monk who wins a Dharma challenge with a resident monk can stay at the temple.

The one-eyed monk shuts the temple door in the visitor's face, is very agitated and runs back to tell his brother. His brother, tells him to go back, let the visitor in and challenge him in silence, then leaves to meditate in the shrine room.

After much procrastination and pacing about the one-eyed monk finally goes back to let the visitor in and takes him to the kitchen where they sit facing each other for some time in silence.

Finally the visitor holds up one finger.

The one-eyed monk gruffly holds up two fingers.

The visitor after some thought, holds up three fingers.

The one-eyed monk looks quite offended and shakes his fist in the visitor's face.

The visitor then bows deeply, in awe, and leaves him. On his way out he finds the elder monk in the shrine room and tells him his brother has a great gift of understanding. He accepts his defeat and will leave.

The elder brother is quite surprised and asks him to relate what happened.

The visitor relates the encounter saying,

"I held up one finger because one finger represents the Buddha, the enlightened one."

Imitating the other monk, he covers one eye and looks disturbed, holding up two fingers.

"So your brother held up two fingers signifying Buddha and his teachings."



The wandering monk thinks for a while and then holds up three fingers.

"I held up three fingers, representing Buddha, his teaching and his followers living a harmonious life. Then he shook his clenched fist in my face, indicating that all three come from one realization, signifying all is one."

The wandering monk bows deeply and leaves. The elder monk looks very surprised ponders for a while and then resumes his meditation.

Suddenly the one-eyed monk noisily barges into the shrine room looking for the visitor and exclaims that he is going to beat him up. His elder brother looks up from his meditation and asks what's the matter ...did he not win?

His younger brother replies that the visitor spent all his time insulting him and then relates to his surprised brother the following;

"First he held up one finger making fun of my eyes! So to teach him compassion, I held up two fingers... he should be happy for he has two eyes. Then he held up three fingers insulting me again saying that between them they had three eyes. I got so angry! I shook my fist in his face, he got scared and left."

His elder brother breaks out laughing.

The one-eyed monk gets even angrier,
"Why aren't you on my side? What's so funny, he insulted me"

His elder brother just couldn't stop laughing.....

The summary credits for this Zen Story are:

Kim Chan: *the three monks*
Glen Lee & Paul Lee: *stand-ins*
Magdalena Solé: *Producer/Director/Writer*
Dejan Georgevich: *Director of Photography*
Wai Ng: *Still Photographer*
Evelyn Sakash: *Production Designer*
Bill Kellard: *Costume Designer*
Amie Minnassian: *Hair/Make-up Artist*
Maha See, Josphe Ruiz & Frédéric Autran: *Production Managers*

(All photographs by Wai Ng, edited for Zen Notes by PLamp)

(6th Patriarch cont.)

"If you encounter the teaching of sudden enlightenment in this life"

Of course, the teaching of sudden enlightenment is a shortcut to attainment. The Northern School of Zen, the school of gradual enlightenment, emphasized meditation practice. Their motto was: "When you meditate you are a buddha." To the Sixth Patriarch, the founder of the Southern School of Zen, meditation was just the preparation for attaining enlightenment. The Northern School just sits without thinking. When they sit, they are Buddha. When they lie down, they are not Buddha. When they meditate they are Buddha. When they eat, they are not Buddha. The Sixth Patriarch thinks that when he eats he is enlightened Buddha, when he walks he is enlightened Buddha. Why must we attach ourselves to the form of sitting? To know Buddha is the main thing. By sitting down, the Northern School thinks their minds slowly become clear, that the light of Buddha, like a candle light, slowly comes from somewhere, and that they will be enlightened.

Of course, we are of the Southern School, and we practice meditation. To concentrate the mind, you must hold the body in shape. To keep the body in balance and repose, do not gather all your face muscles to the center. Think indifferently. Do not think only in your brain, but use the whole body for thinking. That is our way. The famous sculptor Rodin made *The Thinker* - all those contorted face muscles - what is he thinking? I don't know. Perhaps he is thinking about conquering the whole earth!

While you are running around the street in a terrible confusion of mind fighting with your friends, killing your enemies, or stealing others' property, you cannot concentrate on your problems, whose solution would awaken you to the state of Reality, the base of all existence. Therefore, you must not kill, steal, commit adultery, or tell lies - that is, in order to keep your mind quiet, keep the commandments. In quiet mind, you can meditate on the problems that must be solved and reach an answer.

"You will instantly realize original nature and behold the Buddha"

Buddha and original nature are the same in this usage.

The first problem that was very important to monks was: "What is Buddha?" This is like your first problem: "What is God?" You must find the answer, and you must realize that which is called God by name, or that which is called Buddha by name. When this is realized, we say, "You are enlightened." This "enlightenment" may come any time, maybe this moment, maybe tomorrow, maybe

twenty years from now; but when it comes, it comes suddenly, not gradually. When you see your image in the looking glass, it appears suddenly, not gradually. When mist clears from the sky, the moon peeps out gradually, but this gradualness is not the nature of the moon. Thus, the nature of enlightenment is not gradual, but sudden. It comes suddenly because it is always there in your mind. When the disturbance of your mind is cleared up, you find your original nature, which is called Buddha.

The root of this word "Buddha" is *budh* - to know, to see, to hear, to understand, to realize, to be aware of, to be conscious of. This activity of mind is Buddha, and this activity of mind is intrinsic.

Before the creation of the world, there was Buddha, and Buddha was all. Buddha was the beginning. Therefore, we awake to the buddha-mind. All sleeping sentient beings, like trees, weeds and animals, will also awake to the state of Buddha through aeons of time. Therefore, they will realize their own existence. They will become aware of their own consciousness. All sentient beings, sooner or later, will attain buddhahood, and those who attain this buddhahood will realize by themselves that they have attained buddha-knowledge, enlightenment.

Awakening does not come when you are sleeping. You must struggle to be awake. "When you are asleep and dream bad dreams, you struggle in the dream and awake from the dream." This is a famous quotation from the *Sutra of Perfect Awakening*.

*"If you want to practice in order to become Buddha
You must first know where the truth is to be found"*

Where is the Buddha? In the East, we are always told from infancy, "There is no Buddha outside yourself; you, yourself, are Buddha," or "The Buddha is within you." And we just say, "Is that so?" and do not pay attention.

Every village builds churches; everyone goes to the House of God. But no one knows what God is; they are too busy making money, bringing in the autumn harvest, and getting married. They have no time to think about God. Then they die and never know Him. I am sure in this country, when you are naughty, your mother says, "God will punish you." But if you ask her, "What is God?" she cannot answer because she is not quite sure about it. And if you do not ask any questions, she will say nothing.

But occasionally, there is a child who is different, someone who conscientiously sits down and really, honestly starts to think about it: "Can I be a buddha? What is a buddha? How can I be a

buddha?" Such a child is not often encountered. Other children think he is funny and do not associate with such a boy. They call him a "sissy," and he himself thinks perhaps he is queer and inferior. He is discouraged because people criticize him, and his sister complains: "You don't play baseball, and you're always sitting and thinking something. What are you thinking about? I don't like it." Such a boy goes to theological school with a great hope that there will be someone to tell him about God. He thinks maybe he will find out. He asks, "What is God?" No one can tell him. No one knows.

In Japan, young men go to the monasteries to find out about Buddha, but no one tells him anything about it. He asks the priests and elder monks, but no one answers him. No one knows anything about it; no one can tell him. But occasionally, he will find one who knows, especially among Zen monks.

Today is a period of pragmatism and utilitarianism, of materialistic realism. This is the popular attitude today. No one cares what God is and what Buddha is. If anyone speaks about it, everyone thinks he is crazy. But this is not a real, conscientious attitude for a human being.

*"If you find the truth in your own mind
That truth is itself the cause of becoming Buddha"*

The student starts to meditate upon the five senses. What are these eyes and ears. What is this? Why does this look red? Why does this look green? One day, he finds seventy-five cents in his pocket and runs to the bookstore to buy a book on the science of optics. He starts to learn what light is, what color is, what x-rays are, what infrared and ultraviolet are, short waves of light, long waves of light. Then he understands what the eye is, how color is produced. He realizes that if he had been born on Saturn, he would have had a gaseous body. Perhaps he would have had a consciousness in this gassy body. In comparison with the body that we have, this body would be very thin and very weak. Naturally, the Saturnians would not eat what we eat. He would realize that all kinds of sentient beings are existing throughout all of space. Do not take the scientific view that sentient beings exist only on this earth. The whole universe is inhabited. Why must all bodies be like those on the planet Earth? There are many types of sentient bodies which do not appear even in the microscope of the scientist.

After the senses, he comes to *this* consciousness - "Who dreams my dream? I appear in the dream, so who is it that dreams this dream? Is it myself or not? What consciousness is this that dreams me?" Then he meditates on consciousness. In such a way, he wipes

out the mist of the conscious mirror and finally finds the real mirror that is shining, that has existed from the beginningless beginning, that will exist to the endless end - "Ah, this is not I. This is my original self. It is not my ego. It is the consciousness of the world, it belongs to the universe. I-ness does not exist in the world." Then he realizes that Buddha, God, is immediately *here*. Directly we know, intuitively we realize.

To clasp the hands and look up to heaven for God is silly to us. God is here within us. Why must we look up to the sky and call his name? But if your explanation is that the whole universe is an extension of our consciousness, greater than ourselves and infinite, that we can accept, that we will believe. But that there is "One" who has eyes and ears and sneezes, a god existing apart from ourselves in the sky, we do not accept. That is reading religion in terms of mythology. Find religion in terms of Reality. The sound will be entirely different.

"If without seeing your own original nature, you try to find Buddha outside. You are an utter fool"

Find Buddha outside yourself? Indeed!

"I have now handed down to you this teaching of sudden enlightenment"

Sudden enlightenment was not really invented by the Sixth Patriarch. It was the name he gave to the Buddhism that was brought into China by Bodhidharma. Before that, all the Buddhist teachings that were brought into China were in the form of written scriptures. Bodhidharma was the first to bring living Buddhism into China. This Buddhism was written upon his own body and mind. He opened his eye and said: "Look at my eye! This is buddha-eye! Now look at my mind. It is buddha-mind."

Without speaking a word, he handed down the buddha principle. It is clear. Buddha is not a lump of sugar. Buddha is not a candle. Buddha is not fire, is not water, but buddha-nature pervades the universe. It is everywhere.

Of course, your Christian teachers tell us God is omnipresent. We open our dictionaries and find the meaning. We know what omnipresent is. When I lived downtown, there was a black cat who always came into my house. I gave him food, and he stayed all night. In the morning, you could find him in the grocery store and in the afternoon at the butcher's. He was an omnipresent cat!

"To save the people of the world, you must[first] practice this yourselves"

But you are in agony, worldly agony, the agony that comes from your discrimination. The cause of worldly agony, according to Buddha, is your idea of good and bad, life and death, beauty and ugliness, love and hate, beneficent and unbeneficent -- discrimination made by you, yourself, according to your own desires.

In one way, original nature has no desires, but in another way, I can say original nature is all desire at once. When it flows out like water, like air, it flows out infinitely, but it is limited. It will take the beautiful shape of a tree according to time and space. The desire to flow out from the seed will create the beautiful crystallizations of branches, leaves, and flowers. That is the symbol of our desires. When we look at our desires from the outside, we see them whole, like the growth of a tree. But when we see them from the inside, we see joy, hatred, agony, love. It is a natural phenomenon that we experience every day. But sometimes we look at it from the outside. It is a forest, a complete design. You must seek deliverance from this worldly agony, but how? When you realize your own original nature, when you observe your own portrait of desire, you will accept it, and you will understand it. You will be enlightened. But you must practice this sudden enlightenment by yourselves. I am not free to speak of everything that I know. You must practice according to your own knowledge.

*"I say to you who in future will study the Way
If you do not take this view, you are simply wasting your time"*

You are laggards. And this is the end of the Sixth Patriarch's last song. So at the end, you must put quotation marks.

The Sixth Patriarch's disciple Shen-hui went to Northern China and had a great debate with the Northern school students. Perhaps Shen-hui added these lines. At any rate, the Sixth Patriarch's record was later diluted by someone. Everyone who studies the Sixth Patriarch's record realizes that many lines were added for some purpose. A Chinese scholar, who is now the Chinese ambassador to America, Dr. Hu Shih, said the Sixth Patriarch's record was written by his disciple Shen-hui. To some extent, I agree with him.

I have been giving lectures on the Sixth Patriarch for about four years, and now there remain three or four more weeks. Then this long translation will come to an end. I hope that after my death someone will publish this translation in a book for future Zen students.



Taste of Things to come

There are four more installments of the 6th Patriarch, after which we will probably be doing Sokei-an's translation of the record of Rinzai. So below is a fleeting glimpse of that old fellow.

TEA TALK HOUR

By Sokei-an August 29, 1934

Record of Rinzai:

He asked of the gateman a question: "Is this a common one or a holy one?" The gateman answered him no word, whereat the Master struck the column with his staff and said: "Though this one has answered my question, this is a mere wooden pole." And he entered.

Sokei-an:

I recollect something that happened when I visited Dr. Goddard in Vermont. He has three hundred acres of his property, and in the center of them he has his big dry woods which had been dead a long time.

He said: "I always come beneath this tree and I meditate."

I asked him this question: "Then you must know this tree? This woods?" And I hit the big tree -- hit it! "Then you must know this tree?"

My question did not penetrate his mind. He looked at the sky. "Yes, this has been dead a long time!"

I observed that he did not meditate -- he would never understand that tree. He had been dead a long time ago. I felt I had made a connection, an association. You cannot observe when the Zen Master observes you -- in that connection.



I think I'm going to Cheshire,
big grin, no smile...



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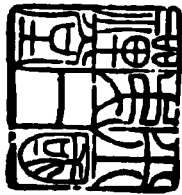
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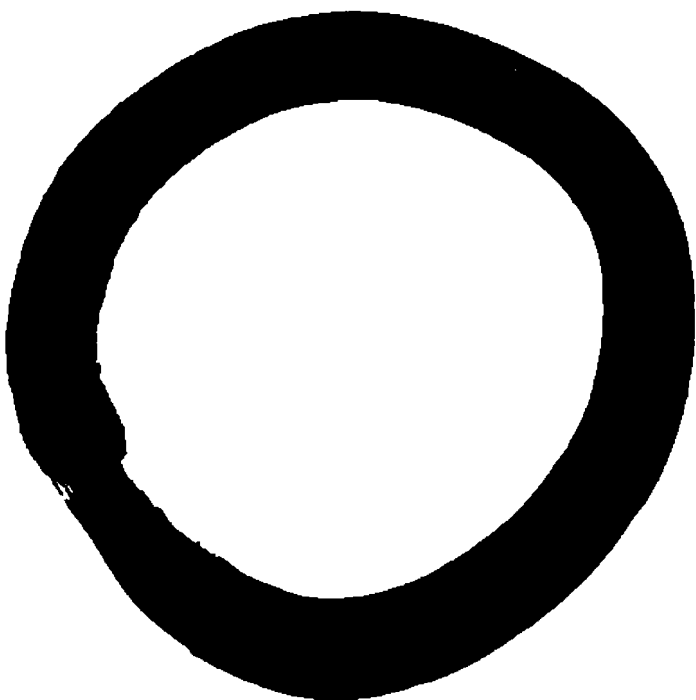
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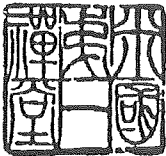


First Zen Institute of America
113 E30th Street
New York, New York 10016



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First Zen Institute of America
113 E30 Street
New York, New York 10016
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