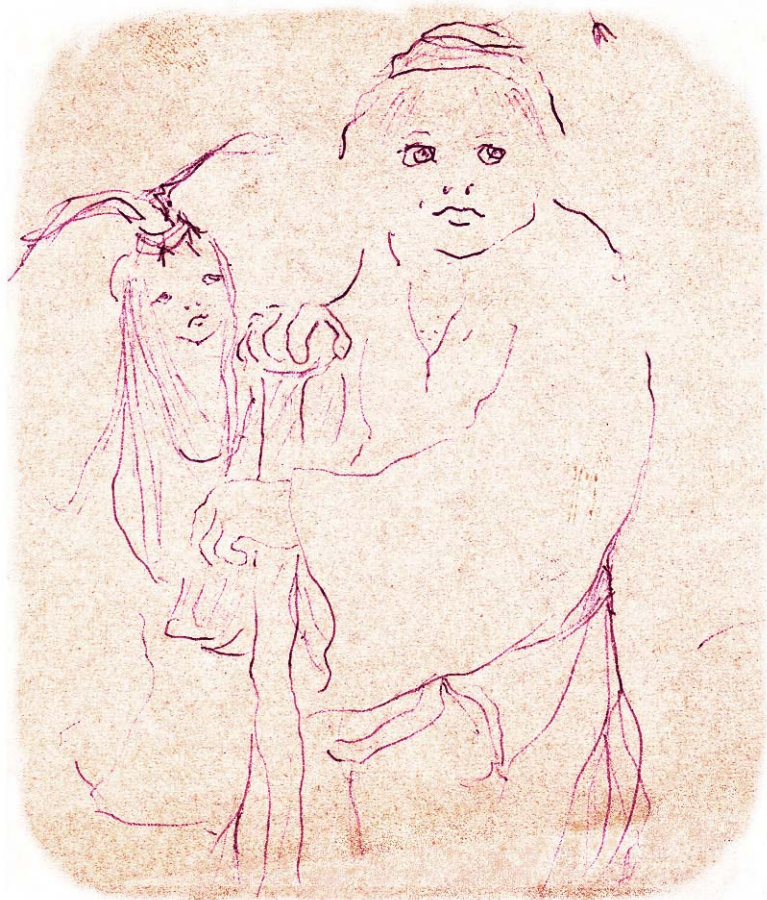


# ZEN notes



Where are You?...  
Staring at what's before you.

# THE SUTRA OF PERFECT AWAKENING

## TWENTY-SEVENTH LECTURE

Saturday, January 28th, 1939

*"The four great elements are immobile; hence you must know the nature of awakening is uniform and immobile. Furthermore, the eighty-four thousand gates of Dharani are also uniform and immobile; hence you must know that the nature of awakening is uniform and immobile.*

*"O Obedient One. The nature of awakening is pure and immobile and pervades endlessly the multifold directions; hence you must know that the six roots of consciousness extend throughout the Dharmadhatu. The roots of consciousness extend everywhere; hence you must know that the six qualities of dust extend throughout the Dharmadhatu. The dusts extend; hence you must know that the four elements of matter extend throughout the Dharmadhatu. Furthermore, the gates of Dharani extend throughout the Dharmadhatu."*

### **SOKEI-AN SAYS:**

This is part of the Buddha's answer to the question asked by Bodhisattva Samantanetra. It is the Buddha's view of the elemental aspect of the world. This view is quite different from that of Western philosophers. This observation of the elemental aspect of the world is quite new to the Occident, so I shall explain it briefly.

The Buddha's world was entirely subjective -- that is -- the world which extends before me is my world, the world which extends before you is your world, etc.

While we have the same consciousness, the world extending before us has the same appearance -- yet each one sees it according to his subjective state. But a sentient being which has a different consciousness from ours, sees the world quite differently. How does sweet taste to an animal? Red may be green to him.

When we change our consciousness by alcohol or drugs, round may become square and thin may become fat -- one day I took too much aspirin and all O's in my dictionary become square...

We call this a subjective appearance -- but to a Buddhist -- the whole world is subjective and there is no objective world. Standing upon this subjective view -- the Buddha observed all Dharma, existences in four types:

**First** - The absolute elemental type -- beyond our sense perception. To this type, for instance, the city of New York is a city of transparency -- no time, space, color, sound -- no three dimensions; it is empty, but solid and omnipotent. This is what the Buddha called "Bhutatata," and what the Western philosophers call "the state of reality."

**Second** - The type is this (struck bowl). There are many things displayed in kaleidoscopic phenomena: green, gold, yellow, shining and dark, standing, moving, sitting, and lying down, in space and time. These two types are not in a different place or in a different time (and not in consecutive time) -- but in the same place and at the same moment.

To illustrate this by the analogy of water: One is a state of liquid and one is a state of vapor -- but both are H<sub>2</sub>O which takes two states; one is liquid and the other is transparent.

**Third** - The state in which the Dharmadhatu (the whole world) can be seen in the two states -- emptiness and phenomena. The two states are the same, are in complete unity, yoga. They are transfused, amalgamated into one form of existence which is this existence.

The Buddha does not call it either an "empty" world or a "phenomenal" world. This view does not exist in Western philosophy.

**Fourth** - In this phenomenal world are many worlds and this world is in many worlds. I embrace 1,000,000 worlds. These worlds are common property -- each one has his worlds and they are all the same, yet all different.

This theory is largely expanded in the Avatamsaka Sutra, one of the great sutras of Buddhism.

Each one of you is existing in my mind, and I am existing in your minds; we are exchanging the world between us. Upon this conception, the Buddhist morality is established. Here is money -- ten dimes (holding out). They belong to everybody (or nobody) but I possess them for a little while. (It is like a family in which everybody works and on Saturday night, bring their salaries home to mamma. Then every child will come running -- "Mamma!" -- and mamma never gets a new hat.)

In the previous part of his answer, the Buddha explained the first type of the subjective world -- the world of Reality. The second is the world of actuality. Here is the third world, where Reality and actuality are completely inter fused. Then the fourth, where one actuality will embrace all and all will embrace one -- as Indra's Net. All is reflected in one mirror.

*"The four great elements are immobile; hence you must know that the nature of awakening is uniform and immobile."* -- The four great elements: earth, water, fire, air -- a very ancient study of matter -- dividing them into these four qualities. They are "immobile" because you cannot change their nature -- cannot destroy or disturb it.

Today we analyze everything into many elements -- but in ancient days there were only these four types of matter -- essential and elemental.

"The nature of awakening" is, of course, our own consciousness. The body of this nature of awakening is emptiness, the first existence; it means reality, primary existence which is not developed into the six consciousnesses. It is innate in everyone's mind.

This innate nature of awakening is uniform in every mind, and it is indestructible (no one can destroy it). Our consciousness originally has the nature to awake to this world -- and from this world to awake to higher worlds.

When you die, your body will be destroyed -- but this innate nature of awakening will never be destroyed.

Thus the Buddha made a connection between the four great elements and our inmost qualities of consciousness. The reality of it is emptiness -- called Nirvana. Though it is "empty," it possesses omnipotent power.

*"Furthermore, the eighty-four thousand gates of Dharani are also uniform and immobile."* -- Each gate is an entrance to each principle of religion. The Buddha's religion has 8,000 gates. Each principle holds the whole world, as the First View of the world holds all the other three worlds, the second view -- the other three, etc. All principles hold every principle and support all. This is called "Dharani," a Sanskrit word with this meaning. So each different principle of Buddhism is not really different -- they are uniform, essential, and immobile principles.

*"hence you must know that the nature of awakening is uniform and immobile."* -- First, the Buddha made a relation between

matter and awakened consciousness. Second, he made a relation between mind (84,000 thoughts) and consciousness; they are the same, uniform and immobile.

Essentially, the Buddha's view is that this is a world of utensils which keep the soul of sentient beings -- keep the form. He divides it, temporarily, into two: matter and mind. And from both worlds -- like manipulating two kites -- comes the awakening.

This awakening nature is in everything. The ivy stretches its tendrils through a dark cellar toward to some crack of light and stretches its little hand toward the sun. This is the world of light -- the so-called "nature of awakening." The Buddha called it "the seed of Buddha."

According to the power of this awakened seed -- we try to emancipate ourselves from agony, to cross from ignorance to education, from disturbance to quietude, from sickness to health. When your mind is enlightened, your body becomes stronger and your face begins to shine. You can live a long time.

*"O Obedient One. The nature of awakening is pure and immobile and pervades endlessly multifold directions."* -- It is not only existing in the human mind -- it exists in every mote. In modern terms, we say the nature of awakening is innate in every atom, electron and proton. We cannot see the molecules which are moving at tremendous speed in electricity -- yet each one has this nature of awakening.

*"hence you must know that the six roots of consciousness extend throughout the Dharmadhatu."* -- The "six roots" are the five sense organs and the mind. They are the true roots of consciousness and extend throughout the world. My world does not stay here, but extends to the top of heaven and the bottom of earth; it reports to my eye, ear, and mind -- for each particle has an eye and is a root of consciousness.

Once I asked my father a question. I had seen a speck of dust floating in the sunshine which came through a crack in the window. "All these millions of motes -- why do they not collide with one another? Do they have consciousness?" My father did not answer. Much later, I asked a professor: "Has the universe consciousness?" He replied: "Have you seen the stars in the heavens? They do not collide. Yes, the universe has a consciousness."

*"The roots of consciousness extend everywhere; hence you must know that the six qualities of dust extend throughout the Dharmadhatu."* -- And each particle of dust has the eye. "Dust"

means "raja" -- filth. All appearance and sound are called filth upon the first state of existence -- so pure and beautiful. So the Hindus call it "rajas" -- that is -- the filth that piles upon this original state. The Chinese call it "dust." By now, this "dust" is an accepted term by Western scholars.

*"The dusts extend; hence you must know that the four elements of matter extend throughout the Dharmadhatu. Furthermore, the gates of Dharani extend throughout the Dharmadhatu."* -- Therefore each principle of Buddhism (teaching us "awakening") extends throughout space.

In this lecture, the Buddha presents a complete unity of awakening and matter. He explains the Third View of the existing world.

\* \* \* \* \*



The bird above hatched from a new book and sumie drawing set, Zen by the Brush, published this September by Stewart, Tabori & Chang. The book's sumie drawings as well as the bird are by Seiko Susan Morningstar, an FZI resident, and the text is by Myochi Nancy O' Hara.

What is unique about this book and drawing set is the special 5x7, white, painting pad. One need only to dip the brush, included with the set, in water and then draw on the pad to produce black brush strokes. The amount of water on the brush determines how dark the stroke gets. By dipping the brush carefully in water a brush stroke with many gradients from gray to black is possible. Then, so one does not get overly attached to one's work, the image slowly fades away in a few minutes as the painting pad dries, ready for more inspiration. Of course, one can cheat and scan or photograph the images too dear to let go before they evaporate.

Sengai would certainly have appreciated this ephemeral medium. I found it an excellent means to practice brush strokes and recommend the book to those interested in sumie. -Ed.

# A SOLITARY PERSIMMON

Leaves from the Life of Nyogen Senzaki

## *Part Three*

(For those who missed Part One and Two, Part Three is the conclusion of an article by Michael Hotz based upon the materials in the Institute archives that relate to Nyogen Senzaki, one of the early pioneers of Zen in America. Ed.)

Mary Farkas: *"In 1950, I met Senzaki in Los Angeles during a two week visit there on business (film). He had become, except for the war years, very much in the scene."*

*Dear Mrs. Farkas,*

*These copies (of his lectures) are for you. You can keep them if you like or else throw them in your waste basket. They are nothing but a trash altogether.*

*Nyogen Senzaki*

*Dear Mr. Senzaki,*

*Oct. 24, 1952*

*My fellow members of the Institute and I are looking forward with keenest anticipation to your coming to the Institute next Wednesday, Oct. 29. As I have taken the liberty of reading to them several of your lectures which you gave me years ago and as your Mumon and 101 Zen Stories have so long been familiar to them you do not come as a stranger, but as a known and respected friend.*

*Sincerely yours, Mrs. Nicholas Farkas ( Mary)*

In 1974 Mary Farkas began publishing Senzaki's tirade against the corruption of the Japanese Buddhist religious establishment in Japan and began her new column in Zen Notes, "From Where I Sit", as follows: *"One of my best friends and critical readers suggested that the way to make my own writings less dry and more like Senzaki-san's would be to write something each month as practice. Actually this was my own idea when I started this column years ago, and one in which Senzaki himself encouraged me. Sokei-an (Cat's Yawn) and Senzaki both had columns, and I would like to follow in their footsteps, which I see vividly in the invisible way before me. The other day someone from San Francisco stopped by and on being told my name said, "Oh, you're the Zen historian." So be it. Now I am presenting Nyogen Senzaki, Sokei-an's brother/uncle-in-Zen. "*

Mary Farkas found much to admire in Senzaki's dedication to the Dharma and devoted many issues of Zen Notes to Senzaki. *"He was true to his own idea of being a homeless monk. Without the antiestablishment chords in him he would probably never been able to go against the stream of the anti-oriental and worldly time in which he moved."*

Farkas wrote in the early 1970's about Senzaki's unauthorized giving of koans, *"I particularly emphasize this note, as I feel it one that sounds in the period of California free-for-all-style Zen... Senzaki offered the real thing. But our American taste has been cultivated for imitation flavors. Senzaki did not make a secret of koans, nor stay aloof behind the robe. Contact with him was direct and available. He stretched his hand out to all who could take it in an informal way. I was surprised in the Fifties when people would come to New York from California and want to give koans to anyone who would accept them. He even presented me with a koan on a public occasion though I was not his student."*

Here's an example of Senzaki's giving koans from a letter from Mr. Money (Senzaki's student for over thirty years) to Farkas. Mr. Money: *"I am reminded of the day when a woman editor of the Times visited Senzaki to answer her koan. She had been at the Zendo two times before, but did not have the answer. Senzaki said "Twice before she came to give me the right answer, but she did not have it. Today she said, "I am here for the last time. I will not need to come anymore. I have the answer to my koan." Senzaki chuckled and said, "She had it all right. Our minds were at one. She said, "Why should I be occupying one of your seats when it could be used by a newcomer? I don't think you will see me again."*

Eido Roshi addresses the issue of authentic transmission stating: *"In retrospect, when we carefully observe the life of Nyogen Senzaki,, his style of teaching and his personality, we cannot help but be impressed with how different he was from both the ancient masters and modern teachers of Zen.... He shied away from institutionalism and was in no way trying to establish a temple. Senzaki taught using no particular religious dogma and he did not seek to establish any kind of priestly hierarchy. This kind of teaching, of course, is only possible in a new country and Nyogen Senzaki, as a pioneer Zen Buddhist, was ready to meet the challenges facing a stranger in a new land."*

*How is the work, Awkward One?*

*He might be saying to me.*

*America has Zen all the time.*

*Why should I meddle?*

*Nyogen Senzaki*



*Dear Senzaki san,*

*Your kind message sent through Miss Takeshita struck right to my heart. When it arrived I was preparing the April (1957- about Senzaki) issue of Zen Notes and thinking about you and your Zendo. Your stay, I feel, must be the greatest encouragement to others to do their utmost without compromising their own sense of feeling.*

*I continue to be terribly slow. Everything I try to do takes so long to accomplish that everyone has cause to complain of me, yet I cannot seem to go any faster. Sometimes it is quite discouraging. How could you find so exact a moment to send a word to one so far away? Thank you so much, I wish I could see you sometime.*

*With respect and affection, (Mary)*

*Mary Farkas: D.T. Suzuki had cornered the market on "enlightenment" but it was really Senzaki and Reps with Gateless Gate and Zen Bones, Zen that put the the Zen story into American life in paperback.*

*Dear sweet Mary,*

*Dec. 13, 1957*

*Senzaki sent me a letter you wrote him in which you say: "But the feel of Zen writing is almost never conveyed, so as you have succeeded in conveying it, your work has an atmosphere it is impossible to match." I wish you to clarify this for me. Do you mean Senzaki's writings or do you refer to Zen Flesh Zen Bones? If you mean his original writings, I agree. His original, really original English unedited except for errors has a feel to it like no one ever had. He has for many years refused to recognize this and allowed others to dissipate and and weaken his style until he had no more style and is a mere shadow of himself. This is a sad condition, but the usual condition of people who want to to make their english like everyone else's, or permit others to do it.*

*Well Reps, you may say, you changed his English. Indeed, I did. I put my own English in those books. So we have two kinds of English, his innocent original kind and mine.*

*... If you refer to his original kind of writing you are making a really strong point. It is superb BUT UNRECOGNIZED and found only in the poems I urged him to write. If you refer to the book, then you should remember to give me credit when mentioning this book. The book aims for pellucid English and does not reflect his at all....*

*Most cordially, Reps*

Reps-san,

Dec. 21, 1957

*Your last letter brings you straight before my eyes and rouses in me the most amusing speculations as to the rest of your correspondence with Senzaki-san. I have always felt it a great pity your "transcribing" didn't continue. Not only because at this point you would be best sellers but also because the works you two would have introduced were and are much needed.*

*My letter to Senzaki was somewhat ambiguous. As you request further details, I shall add this. The classic quality of "The Gateless Gate", "Ten Bulls", and 101 Zen Stories", it seems to me, is compounded of two things, the viewpoint from which the stories are retold and your pellucid English (and I love and revere pellucid English), but it has nothing to do with and tends to impede what I think of as the feel of Zen, a raw, explosive and subliminal thing, smelling of blood sweat and tears. Of course what I mean is most apparent in Senzaki's own writing in English. In his angry handwritten letters it is very vivid. It also seeps strongly into his Mumonkan Commentary, as well as some other unpublished works, over which I have poured avidly. I have only seen a few of his poems, but in them I am moved by other dimensions which diminish this aspect... I too, wish he would use his own style. If he asked me, I would certainly give my opinion. If I were close enough to be his friend, I might give it unasked. For the sake of what might be the result... I prefer to thank him for what he is and encourage him if I can. Senzaki and Sokei-an are up to now, in my opinion, the only persons writing in English who have ever succeeded in communicating live Zen. This is much easier done by their actual presence.*

*Thinking of the terrible struggles these two men, one in the West one in the East, suffered to pioneer Zen in this country, I sometimes feel like expressing my gratitude to them. I do not suppose there will be any more like them.*

*Best regards and a Happy New Year (Mary Farkas)*

As the editor of Senzaki's story, I am grateful for Mary Farkas's detective work. I also recognize and am grateful for the work of these two men, Senzaki and Sokei-an, and of the lineage that spawned them: Kosen, Soyen, and Sokatsu. They worked to reform the stagnation of institutionalized Japanese Zen and bring to America awakened mind itself. These two unconventional men, Sokei-an and Senzaki, held the lotus to the rock of America and began a process that is still evolving. They had many similarities. They both lost their mothers early, when boys, had priests for father figures, and worked out the agony of their troubled hearts on the ground of self awakening. They were educated, adept at

languages like Chinese, wrote poetry and translated. They immigrated to a new land and shared experiences of economic hardship, discrimination and internment. Left alone in America, they found a heroic role in the historically significant bringing of the Dharma. America was a country they grew to love, one which gave them room to expand into both the vividness of their Zen and the richness of their individuality. Even in their last words they echoed each other, driving a critical point of Zen to those who were listening:

**Sokei-an:** "... *Pay careful attention to the normal attitude of freedom.*" (Sokei-an raised his hand.)

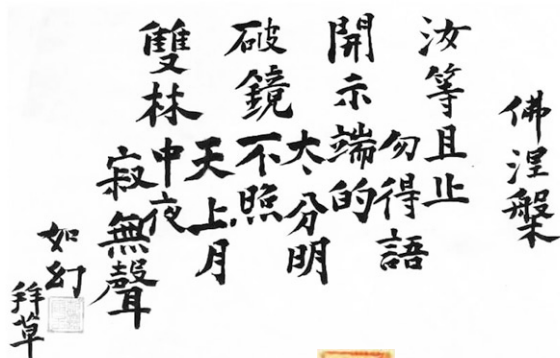
**Senzaki:** "... *Then minute by minute watch your steps closely.*"

After his last discourse, the Buddha said, "Now, my disciples, be quiet. Do not speak a word. It is time to part from you." Buddha tried to open the mind of all disciples in silence. His Zen was shining as the moon above the Sala forest, but, alas, Mahakashapa, his successor being absent, none of the remaining monks could reflect the light. Their hearts were like broken mirrors. The night of sadness, thus, passed in vain.

*Nyogen Senzaki*

Commemoration of Buddha's Parinirvana

Feb. 12, 1939.



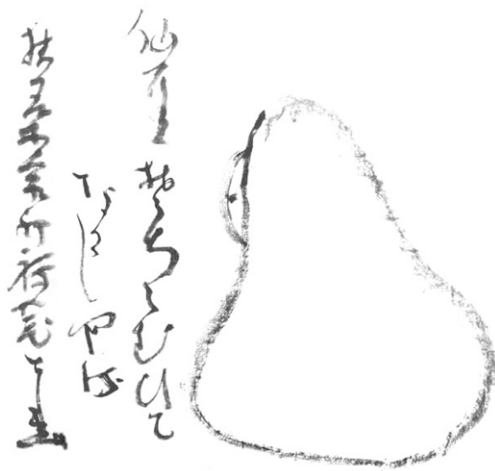
At about 4 am May 7, 1958 Senzaki died quietly in his sleep.

Michael Hotz  
First Zen Institute of America  
Summer, 2003

# SENGAI STORIES

## Part 3

*"Sengai,  
With your back turned  
What are you doing there?"*



Sengai's Self Portrait

Idemitsu Museum of Arts collection, Japan

### Master Sengai's Disguise

The Master was extremely small, and at first glance might be mistaken for an old lady or a novice priest. He disliked being recognized by people who would exclaim, "That's Master Sengai!" and always looked scruffy and down-at-the-heels.

One day, dressed in a dingy, frayed robe, Sengai was picking tea leaves in the tea garden near his temple when a man came to ask for a piece of the Master's calligraphy.

"Hey, you! Novice!" the man called out. "Where can I find the Venerable Master Sengai's temple?"

Sengai, not in the least put out to be mistaken for a novice, promptly assumed the role and directed the visitor to Kyohohaku-in, saying, "Yes, sir, you can find Master Sengai over there."

It's said that several times a day Sengai resorted to such stratagems in dealing with importunate visitors.

## Sengai at the Checkpoint

On his way home from Edo, the Master arrived at the checkpoint at Hakone. As he approached, the guard shouted at him, “No nuns allowed to pass this checkpoint!” and refused to let him through.

Laughing, the Master told the guard, “Very well, shall I show you my bona fides?” And pulling up his robes, he said, “Take a look! Male or female?”

\* \* \*

## Sengai and the Master of Ki

Among the teachers of jujutsu in the Fukuoka domain was one Shobayashi Mata'shichiro. A master of ki power, Shobayashi with a single shout could reportedly knock a man over from behind a screen and bring down a bird in flight by staring at it fiercely.

One day Shobayashi went to visit Master Sengai.

“Your Reverence, why don’t we have a little contest,” he suggested. “Your samadhi power against my ki power.”

“Certainly,” Sengai replied. “Feel free to demonstrate your ki power at any time.”

Shobayashi chuckled sardonically. “I’m going to really teach you a lesson!” he promised, and went into the next room, where focusing his full force he gave a powerful shout--

**”EeeeEEEEH!”**

“I must have knocked that Zen master right on his can!” he gloated. But when he peered into the room he saw Sengai calmly drinking tea. Shobayashi therefore tried again, with a second great shout, but Sengai remained completely unfazed. Even the famous Shobayashi couldn’t match the power of Zen meditation.

This reached the ears of the lord of the domain, and consequently Shobayashi’s stipend was reduced by fifty koku.<sup>1</sup> When Sengai learned of this he was greatly concerned about Shobayashi’s situation and secretly summoned him to the temple.

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<sup>1</sup> A koku (approx. 5.2 bushels) is a measure of rice used as an index of wealth and as here to calculate the stipends of samurai.

“Let’s have another match,” Sengai suggested. “This time I’ll teach you a surefire way to win.”

The Master then instructed Shobayashi in the meditation technique of counting breaths.

Returning home, Shobayashi practiced the technique single-mindedly night and day, striving to enter the samadhi of breath-counting, till suddenly he became one with his breathing: there was no self apart from his breath, no breath apart from his self. He shouted, and the force of his shout filled heaven and earth. It seemed as if at that moment nothing existed in the vast universe. At the same time, when he shouted, the entire universe suddenly appeared.

“That’s it!” he cried out spontaneously and rushed off to see Sengai, presenting his realization.

Astonished, Sengai exclaimed, “Shobayashi, you’ve done it! That shout is Rinzai’s ‘jeweled sword of the Vajra King.’ You’ve knocked down not only me but heaven and earth and all there is. I’ve lost the match!”

Through his practice of breath-counting meditation, Shobayashi realized the indestructible diamond samadhi. Thereafter, not only was the fifty koku restored to Shobayashi’s stipend, but an *additional* fifty, it is said, was awarded him.

\* \* \*

### Sengai and the Wall Scribbler

Someone once came and left a drawing of a penis on the gate of Sengai’s temple. Sengai erased it, but the next morning an even larger penis had been drawn on the gate. Again Sengai rubbed it out, but in the morning a still larger penis had been drawn. Alongside appeared the inscription: “Touch it and it gets bigger.”

“Ah,” the Master exclaimed, “This time I’ve been beaten!”

\* \* \*

### Sengai and the Sword Master

In Hakata there lived a teacher of swordsmanship who had formerly been a retainer of the daimyo of Fukuoka but had become a ronin, or masterless samurai, and sent his son to become

a monk under Master Sengai. Later when the sword master had once again found employment with a lord, he petitioned Sengai to allow his son to return to lay life and become the family heir. Sengai agreed, and the young man returned home, where under his father's instruction he devoted himself to the practice of swordsmanship.

One day the son returned to visit Sengai.

"You've been at it for some time now," the Master observed. "Have you gotten your swordsman's credentials?"

"Not yet," the young man admitted, "I'm still not qualified."

Sengai then wrote something and handed it to him, saying, "Take this back with you and show it to your father."

Returning home he did as Sengai instructed.

When his father received the document he was startled to read: "Between the Way of Zen and the Way of the sword there is only a difference of words, and this is itself the essence of the teaching of swordsmanship in our school. My son has studied the Way of Zen under your Reverence, so that there remain no further problems."

The sword master promptly conferred on his son successorship in the school's innermost teachings.

\* \* \*

### Master Sengai Arrives at the Temple

The monks of Shofukuji had assembled on the outskirts of Hakata to greet their new abbot. But they waited and waited, and still no one resembling an eminent priest appeared. Tired of waiting, they noticed a stunted, bedraggled beggar priest pass along the main road in the twilight and called out to him, "Hey! On the boat here did you happen to meet the eminent priest called Master Sengai?"

Pausing, the beggar monk remained silent and then quietly replied, "Sengai....Yes, that's me."

The monks, taken aback, kept staring at the beggar monk. "This is Sengai?" they all wondered.

The Master, accompanied by the monks, proceeded to his new temple. On the way, the monks stopped at a tea stall, and Sengai

joined them all for buckwheat noodles in broth. When they had finished eating and were about to leave, one of the monks complained, "Those noodles we just had were made with fish stock. And Master Sengai himself partook of such food." Many of the other monks could be heard muttering their disapproval as well.

Sengai told them, "I don't know anything about fish myself, but the soup tasted delicious, so I ate it. I can assume you all must be used to eating fish, and that's why you're so familiar with the taste."

The monks all looked away shamefaced.

\* \* \*

### Master Sengai Inscribes a Painting

One day a samurai named Genyu came to the temple. Demanding that the Master paint something for him, he refused to budge till Sengai complied. Having no choice, the Master took a clean sheet of paper on which he painted two circles before handing it to the samurai.

Genyu examined the painting, but unable to make out what it meant asked the Master to inscribe it with a title.

Sengai promptly took his brush and wrote: "Genyu's balls."

Red with embarrassment the samurai took the painting and fled.

\* \* \*

### Sengai and the Delinquent Monk

There were many monks training at Shofukuji under Master Sengai. Not far from the temple was a red light district that attracted many monks, who at night would scale the monastery wall to secretly visit the brothels. Because the wall was quite high, the monks would leave under it a footstool to help them get over and back down again on their return. Among the miscreants was Sengai's favorite disciple, Tengen, whose participation in these outings was something that the Master could not avoid learning of.

One evening at the hour he knew the monks would be returning from their foray into the gay quarter, Sengai stationed himself under the wall, removing the step stool and sitting down to practice zazen and await the monks' return. Toward dawn, the



unsuspecting monks tiptoed back to the temple and climbed the wall. But as they lowered themselves down on the other side, they were disconcerted to find that the footstool they always left behind was missing. Their feet groped in confusion in the darkness for the stool. Finally they managed to find something in its place that allowed them to lower themselves from the wall, and placing their feet on it, one by one they stepped down into the temple yard. As they peered around in the shadows, they were astonished to discover that the object they had used as a footstool was the shaved head of their teacher! White with fear, they prostrated themselves on the ground. But Master Sengai, in admonishing them, blamed only himself, saying their misbehavior was due to his own negligence in teaching.



## **Book Review**

by Ian Chandler

### **Buddhist Saint Cards**

You collected Baseball cards when you were a kid, playing cards for poker, and Tarot cards for Halloween. Now, you can get The Tibetan Buddhist Deck, a set of 36 cards depicting the heroes, gods and saints of the Tibetan Buddhist Pantheon. They are divided by number into 6 Dhyani Buddhas, 11 Historical Figures, and 19 Guiding Spirits various Bodhisattvas, protectors and deities. I found these beautiful cards in the gift shop at the Metropolitan Museum of Art: each has on its face an art reproduction of a Tibetan Buddhist saint and on the reverse side is a brief description, e.g.:



## **YAMANTAKA The Terrible One**

*"Yamantaka Vajrabhairava or Terrible Vajra is the most ferocious Buddhist deity. He is a manifestation of Manjushri, who adopts this form to conquer Yama, the god of death, turning death into a guardian of blissful life. With a great fan of arms holding implements for the thirty-six branches of enlightenment, and with sixteen legs for the sixteen types of avoidance, he has eight buffalo heads topped by a head of Manjushri. The message of this deity is that fully enlightened beings, while not omnipotent, are strong enough to contend with dangerous energies and to transform the environment from a place of fear and violence into a safe and supportive realm for the practice of meditation."*

The text of these blurbs was written by Priya Hemenway [The Tao Box], who has lived in India where she studied Asian scriptures. The Tibetan Buddhist Deck is published by Chronicle Books, San Francisco © 2003, and is available from Amazon.com for \$9.95.

I've jumped from Buddha's palm  
across countless world systems only to land in Zen Notes?  
Just can't get away from that guy...



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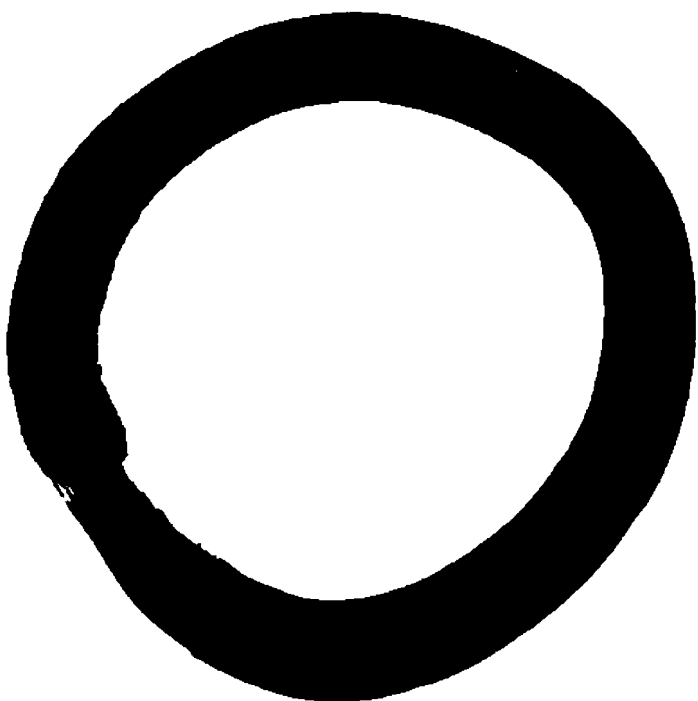
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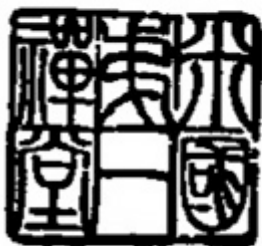


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