

ZEN notes

50 years + 6



50 Years of Zen Notes

It has come to my attention that the 50th anniversary of ZN slipped us by a short while ago. However, since this is the Fall 2005 issue in spring (now summer) of 2006, it would not be out of form to celebrate it now, for time, as many of you have discovered, is quite flexible in its rigidity; sometimes slow as a stone tortoise in those moments of distress, swifter than a hungry cheetah after prey when we need it and, occasionally, flowing like warm honey into a cup of fragrant tea. So by exercising and stretching time we can help prevent temporal rigor mortis but I digress... for what it's worth, the Fall of 2005 has volunteered to accept the burden of Winter of 2004's ZN oversight.

To help induce the flavor of ZN beginnings, I am using the gray tone paper of the early issues and am including the first issue as our center fold. As for another 50 years, ... that is highly speculative in light of the present activities of the two legged beings on this spinning orb. Room for error still seems to be but room for disaster is shrinking rapidly, so even a Chinese immortal would have to scratch his head in wonder.. 50 years? hmmm... a velly, velly long time. We'll just stick to year by year, issue by issue as they do add up while you are not looking, effortlessly.

Mary Farkas began Zen Notes in Jan 1954 as a four page monthly. I believe Ruth Fuller Sasaki (Sokei-an's surviving wife, 1892-1967) initially intended to publish something akin to ZN as a resurrection of her efforts with publishing Cat's Yawn at Sokei-an's bequest (July 1940 - July 1941), but got involved with her Zen studies, translations of Zen texts as well as setting up a branch of the FZI at Ryosen-an a temple of Daitoku-ji in Japan.



Mary Farkas

The early issues (1954-1979) were done on folded, legal size gray papers of various tones. In the sixties after the Institute moved into its 30th street home her zeal for putting out ZN manifested a rather odd fellow she called her "Paper Buddha", who would, unexpectedly, appear at the Institute's front door now and then with boxes of quality paper samples that I can still dip into to this day. Sometimes there was enough paper of the sort that she wanted to do the whole

issue with, if not, she would insist that the printer procure and use the tantalizing samples that caught her eye.

Mary was the old, cut and paste school of publishing to the very end and regarded computer intrusions into her work with great suspicion, preferring to peck out Zen Notes sitting on a noisy clanker of a machine almost as big as her that looked somewhat like a miniature linotype. Perhaps the rather impressive looking museum piece also walked in the front door as a response to her enthusiasm with Zen Notes accompanied by some "printer Buddha" before my time. But I can only speculate...

At any rate her enthusiasm for ZN would captivate any of the House residents that would happen by the back office during her efforts with lively accounts of what she had planned. Later, after I'd been at the Institute for a couple of years and she discovered my predilection for artwork from the piles of paper and canvas often spread out on my floor, she would show me what she was working on, and, if the issue demanded it, give me a certain look accompanied by a few short but pointed words for some visual enlivenment of her efforts. I would balk at first, knowing full well the hours of effort and piles of graphic applicants vying for a berth on that month's issue. Eventually, however, the artist in me would get the upper hand and soon I would lose myself in an intense brush, paper and pen sesshin.

But Mary's main focus was getting the word out and at the time, until the late sixties, she was a major source of information concerning the the goings on in the Zen world. She gave a running account of Zen in America, past and present, visiting Japanese Zen masters, Zen in Japan, usually through Ruth Fuller's *Letter from Kyoto*, as well as publishing some of Sokei-an's work and writings of others involved in the slowly emerging practice of Zen in America. With the

1980 issue she replaced the legal, gray paper with the pristine white folded letter size most are familiar with. The reasons for the change I can only guess, but as present editor, I appreciate the smaller pages that are more easily fed with their hunger for text and graphics.



Robert Lopez

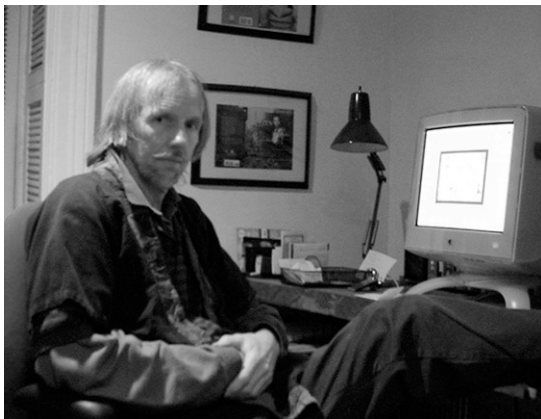
Zen Notes has had four editors over these 50 years with Mary Farkas from Jan 1954 to March 1992 before she collapsed from an ongoing brain tumor. Bob Lopez who had been assisting her during that period took over in April of 1992 and remained editor till January 1995. Fortunately, for us later editors he managed to convince Mary to purchase a Mac SE computer (now long replaced) which she refused to use but Lopez was more than delighted with. His last few issues experimented



Snow Buddha- An Armando Mendonsa Inspiration

with a new cover format but when he left, Armando Mendonsa who took over as editor, decided to make it the present 20 page quarterly and returned to the original cover format. He remained editor till the end of 98 and the above snow buddha is the only visual reminder we have of him; a creation he sired at 2:30 AM with the help of good wine and other Institute members during a NYC blizzard. When he left, ZN was being entirely set up on a

Macintosh computer though the printing was still being done outside. The present editor is grateful for the copious amount of typing into computer of Sokei-an's lectures done by the previous two editors. It has made publishing Zen Notes much easier and more creative along with upgrades in the Macs we use, especially



The Present Editor... (The Lamp and I)

since everything, including the printing is now done in house; an idea I had presented to Mary in the early 80's ... and I still remember clearly the look of bemused suspicion that lit up her face.

Three-Hundred-Mile-Tiger

Sokei-an's commentary on

The Record of Lin Chi

Discourse X, Lecture 5

“The pure light that resides in a single pulse of your soul is the Dharmakaya Buddha within your shrine. The light that discerns nothing in a single pulse of your soul is the Sambhogakaya Buddha within your shrine. The light that does not discriminate in single pulse of soul is the Nirmanakaya Buddha within your shrine. This triune body is none other than the one in your presence who is listening to my sermon. Thus will it be revealed when you cease to search in the outer world.

“According to the authoritative masters of the sutras and shastras the triune body is the fundamental principle, but according to my view this is not the case. The triune body is merely a name, and the three bodies denoted by this name are conceptual. The ancients said, ‘These bodies exist theoretically. Their fields exist as a natural consequence of the bodies themselves.’ The essential body and the essential field of Buddha are now evident. They are the light and shadow of one’s own mind. Good brothers, you must recognize the one who operates them! He is the very source of all the buddhas. The very place you are now is the home to which you long to return.”

SOKEI-AN:

This is a very important passage. Lin-chi is talking about the triune body of Buddha, the Buddhist theory of the *trikaya*: *dharmakaya*, *sambhogakaya*, and *nirmanakaya*. Zen Master Lin-chi, however, is criticizing this theory. He is telling us that the three bodies are not existing in the sky or somewhere far away. The triune body of Buddha is our own body. Everyone is a Buddha, everyone has buddha-nature, whether we know it or not.

“The pure light that resides in a single pulse of your soul is the Dharmakaya Buddha within your shrine.” The pure light of which Lin-chi speaks has two meanings: the light of nirvana and the light of pure wisdom. Pure wisdom is complete annihilation. To come to this nirvanic wisdom—if I may coin this phrase—you must annihilate all notions, all mind-stuff. To attain pure wisdom one must attain pure nirvana first.

Dharmakaya Buddha is not manifesting its own existence, but exists as essence. Its light does not perceive anything. Your tongue

tastes and your eyes see, but they do not say, “I wish to taste, and I wish to see.” This Buddha is the intrinsic world of *arupadhatu*, the non-seeming or formless world of *dharmakaya*; it is the Knower of the universe.

“The light that discerns nothing in a single pulse of your soul is the Sambhogakaya Buddha within your shrine.” Sambhogakaya Buddha is the “responding” or “enjoyment” Buddha and has two functions: perceiving the inside and perceiving the outside. So it is the body of actual consciousness. This Buddha is of the world of *rupadhatu* and perceives without attachment. This light or consciousness knows its own nature without phenomenal existence. Perceiving phenomena, it proves that it sees. The first state is unmanifested consciousness; it perceives its own being without having contact with phenomenal existence; it knows its own vibration and realizes it is living. The second state is manifested. Making contact with its own vibration, it realizes the whole universe.

“The light that does not discriminate in a single pulse of soul is the Nirmanakaya Buddha within your shrine.” The light of the Nirmanakaya Buddha, the Buddha of “transformation,” is the world of desire. It is through various transformations that it achieves its aim. This Buddha is pure. Though this Buddha uses the words “like” and “dislike” it is different from attachment or human discrimination. It chooses cotton in summer and wool in winter.

Please understand the three Buddhas or bodies are all *dharmakaya*. *Dharmakaya* includes *sambhogakaya* and *nirmanakaya*. In *sanzen*, to show your understanding in *dharmakaya*, you must prove the two other stages are included. So *dharmakaya* is the body of *sambhogakaya* and *nirmanakaya*. In the *sanzen* room, *sambhogakaya* is observed in its function as wisdom, the body of response. When someone slaps your face, you feel pain. *Nirmanakaya* is your life from morning to evening. These bodies together are the *tathagata*, and they do not exist anywhere else but in your body. Your body is the body of *tathagata*, three bodies in one. There is no mystery to this; it can be clearly proved.

When you have passed the first *koan*, you prove *dharmakaya*, *sambhogakaya*, as well as *nirmanakaya* within it.¹

The Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng proved *sambhogakaya* in the *koan*, “The flag is not moving, wind is not moving; the soul is

¹ I.e., “Before father and mother, what was your original aspect?”

moving.¹

Consciousness does not belong to the outside or the inside, its wisdom shines through *dharmakaya* and the whole phenomenal world. If you do not attach to any particular point in the outer world, you will prove nirvana in your physical body, in this flesh, and enter any part of outer or inner existence. That is transformation—*nirmanakaya*.

“This triune body is none other than the one in your presence who is listening to my sermon. Thus will it be revealed when you cease to search in the outer world.” You can attain nirvana and reveal this mysterious body in this existence on earth. This is your merit. When you prove the Reality of the universe you accumulate merit in your daily life because you are not searching in the outer world. You are proving the merit in yourself. This merit also includes “function” and “revelation” as well.

“According to the authoritative masters of the sutras and shastras the triune body is the fundamental principle, but according to my view this is not the case.” The authoritative masters Lin-chi is referring to are the *sutra* and commentary masters of his time. They said the triune body was the fundamental principle, but Lin-chi disagreed. He said the triune body was merely a name and conceptual. We cannot prove existence with words, whether they be *dharmakaya*, *sambhogakaya*, *nirmanakaya*, or Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.² For Lin-chi, a name or word is like the cane of an old man, without it the old man cannot stand. He is trying to tell us that truth originally has no name, that we put one on it, like a robe, worn and not very clear. Then we try another and another, and soon we have three sets of robes completing our conception. So names are convenient but also troublesome.

“The ancients said, ‘These bodies exist theoretically. Their fields exist as a natural consequence of the bodies themselves.’ The essential body and the essential field of Buddha are now evident. They are the light and shadow of one’s own mind.” So the essential bodies and the essential fields are Buddha-itself—universal nature; and they are created by the light of your own mind. It is like a moving picture on a screen where the brain is

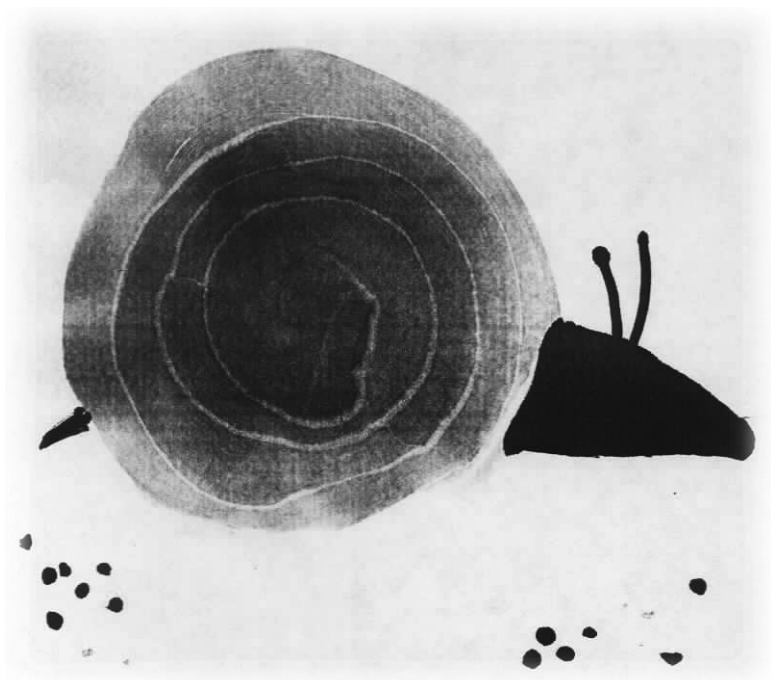
¹ See case twenty-nine, “Neither the Wind Nor the Flag”: “The wind was flapping a temple flag. Two monks were arguing about it. One said the flag was moving; the other said the wind was moving. Arguing back and forth they could come to no agreement. The Sixth Patriarch said, ‘It is neither the wind nor the flag that is moving. It is your mind that is moving.’ The two monks were struck with awe,” Shibayama, *Zen Comments* p. 209.

² Presently referred to as the “Holy Spirit.”

the machine operating the film. The triune body appears on the screen of your mind and you think that it is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and then you pray to it. No wonder there is no answer.

“Good brothers, you must recognize the one who operates them! He is the very source of all the buddhas.” He who operates these bodies and fields is the Master, not your body, not your mind-stuff, but your own light. Mind is body and mind-stuff is the field of this light. You see light and cast it into bronze or write it in a character and pray to it. This is all nonsense. The Master is *here*. The physical body is *nirmanakaya*, the soul is *sambhogakaya*, and the source of it all is *dharmakaya*.

“The very place you are now is the home to which you long to return.” That place is your own mind, Buddha. Man searches for truth in outward form. God is everywhere. But someday you will come to your own shrine that is supported by your own two feet, and you will find Buddha in the very place where you stand.



Seiko Susan Morningstar

ZEN NOTES

Fifty Years of Zen Notes

(Jan 1954, issue #1)

SOKEI - AN SAYS

THE QUIET LIFE Perhaps you cannot imagine such a practice as that which has been current among my people. In China or Japan, monasteries are built on a mountain top or on the edge of a cliff. From there you can see a thousand miles before your eyes. In winter, when the valley is covered with snow, you feel you are in a world of silver. No color is before your eyes. In the valley it is so quiet. In the daytime when the monks are meditating, if there is any sound in the temple it will be only that of a mouse or a rat.

These monks are not retiring from the world; they are trying to find quietude in their minds. This state is longed for by oriental students. They try frantically to find it. Occasionally they renounce their home, or separate from wife and children to pass their lives in such a quiet place. You could not dream of men like this until you meet them. They value highly their quiet way of life. They cannot see the value of the life we are in daily contact with, our present civilization, where men hold a cigar in the right hand and a glass of whiskey in the left hand, listen to music, watch dancing, and eat delicious food. We might say that these are the two extremes of human life.

Perhaps you will ask, what value is there in that quiet and aloof way of life. The monks would ask the same question of you. What value is there in passing your nights in a night club?

From a lecture Feb. 21, 1942

WHEN I WAS A CHILD my father always put me to bed. From three years old I remember he told me bedtime stories in Chinese, so the sound of Chinese was familiar to me from my earliest memory. When I was five years old he began to teach me Chinese, and writing those characters was my life work as a child.

From a tea talk

NEW YEAR The New Year is approaching. Here in Japan, a day or two before, we shall go to the market and buy from the heaped-up carts of the peasant women of O Miya-dori braided and fringed ropes of straw, the large oranges called *dai-dai*--a word which can also mean "long life"--branches of pine, bamboo and earliest blooming plum--symbols of good fortune and congratulation--and with them decorate the gateway to our house. In the *tokonoma* we shall have an arrangement of the fruits of forest, field and sea--a spray of fern and of laurel, a white pounded-rice cake, a branch of dried persimmons, a large *dai-dai*, bands of grey seaweed and a lobster--on a stand of fragrant white *hinoki* wood.

The day before the New Year everything will be put in perfect order. We shall make certain that all the end of the year bills are paid. We shall prepare innumerable things to be eaten cold or warmed up, for we shall not cook during the first three days of the year, yet must have the delicacies of the season to give to our visitors. We shall clean the house from top to bottom, shall take our baths, have our hair freshly done at the beauty-shop, and shall lay out our best clothing for the next day. Then, late in the evening, we shall take all the charcoal embers from the braziers and cover them with ashes in the garden. Thus all that has accumulated of dust and dirt during the year which is passing will have been destroyed.

For me, these New Year customs in Japan sum up what the end of the old year and the beginning of the new should mean. But the custom I love best is that of procuring fresh fire at the Yasaka Jinja in Gion. When all other preparations have been completed, we start on our pilgrimage. Every one goes--old men, old women, husbands, wives, lovers, students, serving maids, children, babies. At the booths lining the approaches to the shrine we buy hemp ropes, then slowly follow in the crowd to the great iron braziers of flaming pine faggots presided over by white-robed Shinto priests wearing high black-lacquered hats. With a quick twist of the arm the priest siezes a blazing faggot and lights the end of our rope, and then the next, and the next. In a constant stream more than a half-million people will present their hemp ropes to be lighted, and dawn will be approaching when the fires finally die down.

Carrying their fresh fire, men, women and children will go one by one before the main edifice of the shrine, its darkness and mystery made darker and more mysterious still by the two or three lighted candles of the inmost sanctuary. They will pull the twisted rope and clang the great gong to let the Kami Sama know of their presence, then clap their hands three times and bow deeply and respectfully. Who the Kami Sama is, what the Kami Sama means, why they bow so respectfully to the Kami Sama perhaps none clearly knows, only vaguely senses. But all undoubtedly feel some inner need satisfied, some cleansing of the spirit through their simple act.



Last year, with a full moon making huge black shadows of the ancient pines among which the shrine is set, and glistening silhouettes of the heavy tiled roofs of buildings and gateways, we walked through the compound on to the Sammon (Mountain Gate) of the temple, Chion-in, on Higashiyama. Up the three hundred steep stone steps we plodded, across the moonlight-flooded courtyard before the main temple building, again up uncertain steps hewn out of the mountain-side, and through the forest to the tower where hangs the great bell of the headquarters of the Jodo (Pure Land) Sect, the second largest bell in Japan.

On the edge of the forest to the side of the bell-tower, over boiling cauldrons propped on blazing bonfires, bent and wrinkled *obasans* and *ojisans*, like so many forest gnomes and witches, were ladling out bowls of steaming sweet-bean soup to shivering watchers. Just before twelve, the great candles on iron stands were put in place in the four corners of the earthen floor of the tower. They illumined the eager, pushing crowd and brought into sudden relief a huge and strange dark-faced figure completely swathed in orange robes. A visiting monk from Ceylon, I knew. But just so must Bodhidharma have looked among the native crowds at some ancient festival in China. Before the simple Buddhist altar set beneath the bell itself, the *Kancho* and attendant priests, arrayed in purple robes and golden *kesas*, recited sutras and burned incense till it rose in clouds. The gnarled old bell-ringer, grasping the rope of the enormous log with which the bell is struck, stood immovable, watching for the signal that the year was done. A priest's hand dropped, the hour struck, struck with a great boom that went rolling over the entire city of Kyoto and far out to the fields and villages beyond. By this signal over many centuries have the folk of the Kamo valley known that the New Year has begun.

Again the great bell was struck, and again, and again, one hundred and eight times in all it was struck, a number sacred to all Buddhists. On the one hundred and eighth stroke, the great bell of the temple next north on Higashiyama sounded, and after that the next and then the next, until all the hills by which the city is surrounded echoed and re-echoed with the booming of the bells.

Late into the night the temple bells were still booming. And all through the city people were still streaming toward the shrine and out into the city streets carrying their fresh fire. Booming of bells, twinkling of tiny fires! A new year is beginning. A Happy New Year? A Prosperous New Year? Would the Kami Sama answer the unspoken hopes of these hearts?

RUTH FULLER SASAKI

Ryosen-an, Daitoku-ji, Kyoto



JAPANESE VOCABULARY

tokonoma: the raised part of the room (lit.); the alcove in which are displayed the one picture, one ornament, and the flower arrangement in a classical Japanese room.

obasan: "granny," an old woman.

ojisan: "grandpa," an old man.

Kancho: the title of the highest ranking priest in the headquarter-temple of a Japanese Buddhist sect; the title is not used in every Japanese Buddhist sect, however. This priest is administrative as well as spiritual head of the sect. Usually the office is an elective one.

kesa: the large mantle or robe covering the right shoulder, the left shoulder remaining bare, worn by Buddhist priests when they are conducting services.

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三

CHINESE CHARACTERS Our class begins with three Chinese characters.

You are invited to read them at sight. If you doubt your grasp of their meaning, a correct translation is given below, upside down.

The three Chinese characters are 1,2,3.

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THE SUTRA OF PERFECT AWAKENING

THIRTY SIXTH LECTURE

Saturday, April 1st, 1939

"This highest teaching of 'The Complete Discourse of the Mahayana' for all Bodhisattvas is capable of giving a positive faith in Dharma and a release once and forever from doubt and mortifications to the Bodhisattvas everywhere who are learning the Dharma, and to the sentient beings of all the future worlds. Now listen to me attentively! I will expound these meanings for you."

Vajra-garbha was delighted with the Buddha's consent, and the multitude made ready to listen to the sermon in silence.

"O Obedient One! All worlds appear and disappear without beginning and without end. There is neither past nor future. The worlds sometimes assemble and sometimes scatter. Now they are in motion, now quiet. Thus they continually repeat their changes of phase from moment to moment."

SOKEI-AN SAYS:

"The Complete Discourse of Mahayana" is one of the names of this Sutra of Perfect Awakening. In this Sutra, there are ten states:

The first is the so-called "causal stage of being" or the initial state of BEING. Western philosophers call it REALITY. You will study this state of being in Ontology. Then, from this standpoint, there are nine more states embraced in this initial state. Thus the Buddha gives The Complete Discourse of the Mahayana for all Bodhisattvas.

I shall explain the meaning of Bodhisattva. In ancient Chinese -- Bosatsu; today it is Pusa. In origin, Bodhisattva meant "enlightened gentleman" -- the lay followers of the Buddha. They were always powerful patrons of the Buddha -- kings or eminent Brahmins. And the Buddha gave them the teaching which we now call Mahayana, while he gave a different kind of teaching to his monks, especially the younger and unenlightened ones. Today this kind of teaching is called Hinayana.

Some chronologists think that Mahayana came from disciples of the Buddha -- that his teaching was limited to Hinayana. This theory was accepted in Europe and in the Orient for quite a while -- but today we realize that the Buddha was giving this Mahayana to laymen; that it was recorded by these lay followers and kept in their homes while the monks kept the Hinayana in the monasteries.

The Mahayana type of teaching was transmitted to their descendants orally, and later it was written down in Sanskrit, enlarged, and dramatically arranged. It spread all over Northern India and was carried into Burma, Ceylon, China, and Japan. Now we call these teachings the Sutras of Mahayana; and those who promulgated them were later called Bodhisattvas.

In the genealogy of the Buddhist Patriarchs there are names with titles of Arhat for monk patriarchs and Bodhisattva for lay patriarchs. Then later the word "Bodhisattva" began to express some kind of demi-god who had a knowledge of Buddhism next to the Buddha himself.

"This highest teaching of 'The Complete Discourse of the Mahayana' for all Bodhisattvas is capable of giving a positive faith in Dharma and a release once and forever from doubt and mortifications to the Bodhisattvas everywhere who are learning the Dharma, and to the sentient beings of all the future worlds." -- "Positive faith" is a very important word here. Of course faith is the first key to open all the mysteries of Buddhism; without faith

you cannot open any gate! But with faith you will attain the state of mind which is equal to that of Buddha. How to create such faith is a great question. Not only to Buddhism but to all religions faith is the first key.

When I was admitted into the Zen monastery, I had found nothing which was capable of answering my questions and solving my problems. As a child, being the son of a Shinto priest, I had disliked Buddhism and I hated the Buddhist monks!

But when I was twenty years old, finally I came into Buddhism! I was an art student and a great worshipper of nature; I had cultivated a very humble attitude in myself before nature. In this humbleness I accepted Buddhism as a religion which had existed in the Orient for two thousand five hundred years. Before that, Bodhidharma brought it to China in the sixth century A.D.

From the Buddha it has been transmitted from generation to generation -- there must be something in it -- otherwise it could not live so long. This was my attitude in accepting Buddhism -- and I entered.

Then, all of a sudden, I was awakened to the truth which was transmitted from India to Japan! For the first time I realized a great current of wisdom streaming down to this modern period from the time of Gautama Buddha!

You do not need great faith -- but you must have complete reliance! You must not reject anything.

About the "*doubt and mortification*" -- I gave a discourse last week. And as to "*the sentient beings of all the future worlds*" -- it means not only on this earth but throughout the universe. The Buddha believed that there are many worlds in this universe. But I must speak about the Buddhist conception of "world."

To the Buddhist, "world" is subjective. Because our sense perceptions are subjective, the pure, objective existence is unknown to us. Better to say that existence is non-existence. Then what is it which exists on the outside? It is the so-called "indestructible" reality.

To the West the state of Reality is fundamentally different -- it is objective -- while to the East it is subjective. We observe this world through our sense organs and make our own conceptions; your world is your world and my world is mine. But all worlds are common to each other -- this is very interesting -- because our consciousness is all uniform. It is not this consciousness in which I see the world in my own way -- there is some discrepancy but it is

essentially uniform.

But for sentient beings whose consciousness is different from ours -- his world will be entirely different. So this world (dhatu) is subjective to the Buddhist. One million worlds in multifold directions means the subjective worlds of all sentient beings, throughout all sentient minds!

"Now listen to me attentively. I will expound these meanings for you" Vajra-garbha was delighted with the Buddha's consent, and the multitude made ready to listen to the sermon in silence. -- The Buddha now explains all the inner significances. This was the old style. Today in the monastery in the Orient, when the teacher begins to speak -- GONG-G-G-G -- and all the students are silent.

I shall again explain the meaning of the name "Vajra-garbha." This is a dramatized sutra: the philosophical discussions are expressed as dramatic literature. Each important principle is expressed in a personified figure. For instance, to express absolute Emptiness, the Buddha conceived Bodhisattva Akasha-garbha -- Sky-womb. From this emptiness everything is produced -- so the sky is a womb. (In Sanskrit, all that which has productive power is a womb) the earth, man, wisdom -- all are wombs which will conceive the child which will be enlightened! Sometimes this Wisdom is called "Buddha-matrix" -- not the Buddha's mother, but the creative power of his Wisdom. (His mother was called "Maya," the creatress of illusion.)

This Wisdom is there called Vajra-garbha. "Vajra" means "diamond" -- the hardest of all things. It is indestructible, this intrinsic wisdom, existing from the beginningless beginning to the endless end. So this Diamond Wisdom is the womb from which the writer of this sutra drew the theoretical principle and produced this personified figure. So it is really saying, "YOUR intrinsic wisdom was delighted with the Buddha's assent!"

"O Obedient One! All worlds appear and disappear without beginning and without end. There is neither past nor future. The worlds sometimes assemble and sometimes scatter. Now they are in motion, now quiet. Thus they continually repeat their changes of phase from moment to moment." -- When the Buddha speaks of "existences," he is always talking about the four stages of existence:

The first stage is emptiness. However, this emptiness slowly begets existence. It is the womb of existence. How this emptiness produces something (everything) is a great question in Buddhism.

The second stage is consciousness. "The awakening of Faith in

Mahayana" will explain this to you. If I had time, I would explain it tonight.

The third stage -- all existence stays for a certain period.

The fourth stage -- all existence slowly disappears, then scatters and vanishes -- to return to the first state of emptiness.

Of course this was the Phenomenology of the Buddha -- told from his view of phenomena (existence). From his ontological view, nothing appears and disappears.

So "All worlds appear and disappear" means from his phenomenological view. You must understand this ancient type of philosophy.

... without beginning and without end." -- The Buddhist doctrine does not believe in the creation of the world. Whether perceived by the senses or not -- everything exists forever as Reality. All existence is continuous without beginning and without end!

"There is neither past nor future." -- And then, like the Buddha's disciple, Shariputra, there is no present. What is this then? Funny, isn't it?

"The worlds sometimes assemble and sometimes scatter." -- We can realize this sometimes if we take our mind as a world, gathered or scattered. All solar systems will sometimes assemble and sometimes scatter. The Buddha found many laws which are beyond the comprehension of the human mind.

"Now they are in motion, now quiet." -- They fluctuate like waves in a great storm.

When I was a novice, my teacher shouted at me, "Keep down the fluctuation of your mind!" It was very hard to control the mental excitement. I know the hurricanes of the brain.

"Thus they continually repeat their changes of phase from moment to moment." -- But this "moment to moment" isn't our idea of a moment. The Buddhist "moment" is mind. Now you think of a cigarette, now of incense, now of smoke, then of fire -- every moment the mind changes its phase.

The Buddha described the nature of the whole universe -- his subjective world. And then he expounded all the things of this world, and all its mysteries!

Three-Hundred-Mile-Tiger

Sokei-an's commentary on

The Record of Lin Chi

Discourse X, Lecture 6

“My sermon to which you are listening cannot be comprehended by the four great elements of which your body is composed, and it cannot be comprehended by your stomach, liver, and heart. My sermon to which you are listening cannot be comprehended by the empty sky. Who, then, is the one who can comprehend my sermon to which you are listening? He who has no visible figure but illumines brightly in your presence comprehends the sermon to which you are listening. If you realize who ‘he’ is, your understanding of the true view does not differ from that of Buddha. He exists unceasingly throughout space and throughout time. Everything that meets your eyes is his manifestation.

“But when you entertain any notion, true wisdom is shattered, and when you harbor any doubt, the original body is misconceived. Consequently, you will transmigrate throughout the three worlds and will suffer from various afflictions. According to my view, there is [no moment of life] that does not touch the bottom of wisdom or reach [the height of] emancipation.”

SOKEI-AN:

The four great elements that Lin-chi-chi is talking about are earth, water, fire and air. In Buddhist theory sometimes a fifth and sixth elements are added: *akasha* and consciousness. *Akasha* is Lin-chi's “empty sky”; it is the material that fills the void.¹ Consciousness is awareness, whether manifested or unmanifested. In an intricate body, consciousness is manifested; in a simple body like air, it is unmanifested. Lin-chi is telling us his sermon cannot be comprehended by any of these elements.

“Who, then, is the one who can comprehend my sermon to which you are listening? He who has no visible figure but illumines brightly in your presence comprehends the sermon to which you are listening. If you realize who ‘he’ is, your understanding of the

¹ *Akasha* is all-pervasive space of which there are two types: 1) corporeal space, part of the six *skandhas*; and 2) eternal space, one of the six elements

true view does not differ from that of Buddha." In other words, "he" has no name but is in everyone.

If I could say impersonal person, it would be that. He is not living in worldly existence but in purified existence. He is the "one" of the triune body. But Lin-chi is fooling us. He thinks we are children, so he tells us a fairy story. If he had said "he" had a figure, you would attach to that figure.

"He exists unceasingly throughout space and throughout time." Everything that meets your eyes is his manifestation." Wonderful conception! Mountains! Rivers! Stars! Sun! Flowers! Birds, and insects! All live everlastingly! That is the true ground of religion and Buddhism.

"But when you entertain any notion, true wisdom is shattered, and when you harbor any doubt, the original body is misconceived." The true ground or true existence is undemonstrable by words; it is not a notion. Notions are the material of logic, and logic can only bring us to the gate of religion. So you must not seek true understanding in notions, the material that comes from outer existence. The material, the stuff that we have in our minds, is the shadow of our sense-impressions. True understanding is different from sense-impressions. The true ground of religion is as pure as *akasha*, but a flake of delusion, like a small cloud in the clear sky, comes into your mind and creates mind-stuff. Then you do not see true existence anymore. You never see the fact of existence. You think this mind-stuff is mind, but mind-stuff and mind are different; one is the outer existence of mind and the other is neutral mind. When you perceive without delusion, it is altered. If you perceive with the five senses and cling to that, you think it is true existence. As they say in China, "When your form has been changed, you are carried away from the true body, the essential body—Reality."

"Consequently, you will transmigrate throughout the three worlds and will suffer from various afflictions." That is, as a man, an ox, a dog or cat. You will experience torture and joy.

"According to my view, there is [no moment of life] that does not touch the bottom of wisdom or reach [the height of] emancipation." That is, true universal wisdom.



I've lost my cover, a dogged, runaway dragon
Stuck on a back page of a dog year while roosters still crow.
Is time up or down, back and forth or just runs in circles?
Then which way did my cover of Nov'64 go?

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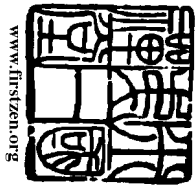
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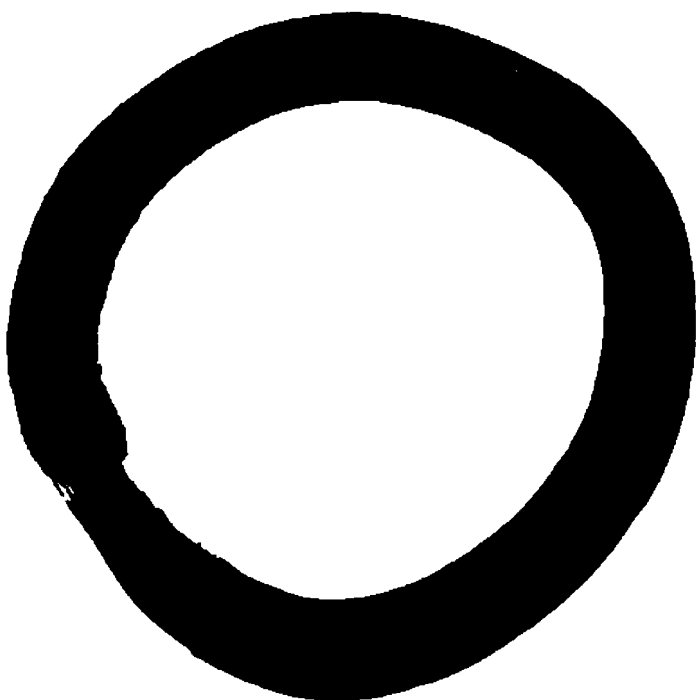
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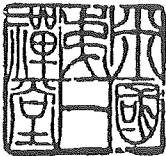


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