

zen notes



Homes of the FZI



113 E30 Street 1939

THE SUTRA OF PERFECT AWAKENING

THIRTY-SEVENTH LECTURE

Saturday, April 8th, 1939

"Traveling in a cycle and repeating this back and forth, or accepting this and rejecting that causes you to be in transmigration. If, without getting out of transmigration, you attempt to attain the Perfect Awakening, the quality of that Awakening must be the same as that of transmigration. If you are not yet free from transmigration there will be no place for you to reside. For instance, when you move your eyes, the water of a pool will swing. When you keep your eyes still, a revolving flame will appear as a fire-ring. When clouds shift quickly, the moon seems to sail, and when a boat goes forward, the shore seem to run. Transmigration is exactly like this.

O Obedient One! While the recurrences continue, objective existences do not remain in one place. It goes without saying that this is true in the case of birth and death."

SOKEI-AN SAYS:

This is the answer of the Buddha for the question which was asked by Bodhisattva Vajra-garbha. But this is not the direct word of the Buddha; these are so-called Mahayana scriptures written by some famous Buddhist in a later period, in dramatized style, to expound the original Buddhism in a new form.

We think that this sutra was written in the period of Asvaghosa who wrote the famous "Awakening of Faith in Mahayana." However, from a real study of that period, it seems to have been written at a later period. We now believe that the "Awakening of Faith in Mahayana" was not written by Asvaghosa because, comparing it with other scriptures written by him, we realize that he never wrote that type of scripture. This is so-called "inside talk!"

"Traveling in a cycle and repeating this back and forth, ..." It means "recurrence." In the sentient world, according to the Buddha, all takes recurrence.

This is the cycle; Akasha, infinite space, begets appearances of

the world, and the world gives birth to conscious life. Conscious life will give birth to intellectual life. Intellectual life will give birth to the phenomenal world. Thus, the sentient being sees the sky, the earth, and the whole external world!

When our intellect disappears -- the whole phenomenal world disappears. When our consciousness disappears, all sentient life disappears. And when this insentient existence disappears, everything disappears. This "everything" returns to the state of Akasha. Therefore, one man's death is the disappearance of one world.

When I die, my sky disappears --my house, my Hudson river -- everything which is perceived by me disappears. This is a particular view of the Buddhist world.

In the end of the universe, ten thousand conflagrations will sweep all into Akasha (emptiness). But this is not dead emptiness -- it is the source of all life!

Akasha preserves all energy; it is omnipotent; it recreates all the worlds!

There is a relation between the old world and the new, and there is a causation for this. Therefore, the karma which was created in the old world can be repeated in the new world. This is "traveling in a cycle, repeating this back and forth."

"... or accepting this and rejecting that, ..." -- We are always making choices! We like one thing and dislike the other -- pleasure and agony. According to our physical or mental reaction, we make discrimination. I like cucumber but not tomato; you like tomato but not cucumber. This is so-called "discrimination."

You may ask yourself, "Who within me makes this discrimination?" It is your ego -- your ego with its desire and attachment -- that makes the discrimination.

You can't go to Paris -- so you hate the friend who is able to go before you; and you envy the one who has just returned. You like one religion and you hate the other. One who comes to your organization is your friend -- but he who goes to the other is your enemy. All this is egotism -- the egotistic view makes the discrimination,

And the egoistic attachment: I give all opportunities to my own daughter -- pinch and scrape to send her five dollars at Christmas! But how about the daughter of my neighbor? I do not give a fig or a straw -- even though she starves to death!

You admire everything written by your wife. But some other one's wife writes a novel or a poem, and you throw it unread into the wastebasket! Whoever has such egoistic attachment must suffer.

The second question is, "Who is this ego?" There is no ego! Without this kind of ego, we make discriminations (egoless) which we do not call "discriminations." Hence, you can emancipate yourself from all unnatural discriminations!

"... causes you to be in transmigration." -- As a cat chasing his own tail round and round. Or as a little mouse in a car-wheel, thinking he is going somewhere -- 10,000 miles in 3,000 years! When he gets out of the mouse-car -- where is he? Well, if you enjoy transmigration -- remain in this consciousness!

When I was in California, I found a big labyrinth in a park. I liked to go into it on fine days and find my way out. But when the rain came -- I became anxious to get out!

"If, without getting out of transmigration, you attempt to attain this Perfect Awakening, the quality of that awakening must be the same as that of transmigration." -- This is one of the very big lines in this sutra. In this transmigration, how can you get out of it? An insect perhaps can -- but how can man? Man has no outside -- he is always inside. It is like some conversation between the Tortoise and Alice in Wonderland. The tortoise says he is studying laundry at the bottom of the sea -- but he can study how to dry the laundry only in theory! He was studying "Laundryology." We study "Emptyology" -- but we are always in this transmigration. How can we get out of it? This question was asked by Samantanetra in a previous lecture: "My body is illusory and my mind is illusory. In this illusory state, illusory man studies illusory Dharma! How can he escape from illusion?" Great question, wasn't it?

Man is like the little worm living in the wood of a tree. He was born in that tree-trunk and he works hard to make his way out; he eats the wood and leaves his dung behind him. He continually eats more -- round and round -- never knows sun or air. He lives, begets his son, and dies in the tree. But if he can break through the bark and get out of the tree -- then he is out of transmigration!

When we think with our reasoning -- we are like Rodin's "Thinker," clutching his bronze knees! He is always in the transmigration of thinking; he cannot get out of his reason and he dies in it. He makes a dung of thinking -- and calls it "philosophy." He is like a carpenter who drills a hole all his life long, and the drill never goes through the board. But if the drill

breaks through -- he is out of transmigration.

So, when thinking comes to an end -- you are out of transmigration. There is a way -- we do not need to stay in transmigration! Though our physical body stays in it, our intellect will find a way out. This is the function of the intellect; when it finds a way out, though our physical body changes its phase -- we are out of transmigration!

In your meditation, your physical body, your sky, your earth, will disappear. Thus you free yourself.

I am not telling a lie! I have experienced it and my experience was accepted by those who have experienced the same thing. In Buddhism we say: "Your experience is accepted by 3,000 Bodhisattvas."

You can do it if you follow the Buddha's Way. He found the law by great effort. He was the first to find and pass through this way. And because he can lead us out of transmigration -- we are his followers.

"If you are not free from transmigration (sandhya) there will be no place for you to reside. For instance, when you move your eyes, the waters of a pool will swing." -- Fluctuate. When I ogle my eyes -- the whole house goes round!

"When you keep your eyes still, a revolving flame will appear as a fire-ring." -- This physical eye is very stupid -- cannot see the true phenomena. There is no fire-ring; it comes from the stupidity of our eyes.

"When clouds shift quickly, the moon seems to sail, and when a boat goes forward, the shores seem to run." -- When you are in a train and you realize -- farmer, ox, road, etc. -- your body is running very fast -- it is in transmigration, but you are not!

It is like this (strikes gong). We use the gong to manifest this unspeakable theory of transmigration. These strokes -- the fluctuation! Human life is exactly like this; the life of the whole world is like this!

"Transmigration is exactly like this. O Obedient One! While these recurrences continue, objective existences do not remain in one place. It goes without saying that this is true in the case of birth and death." -- "Recurrences" are the shifting, coming-going, birth-death, of transmigration. But when we realize the state of original being (which is not the state of the senses), we will remain in one place.

I realize that not everyone likes this view -- it is even painful. But when this tree-eating worm comes out of the bark of the tree - - there will be no more dualistic or pluralistic or monistic view. All reasoning will disappear! No more views!

"Objective existences" -- Water, fire, moon -- a metaphor of Perfect Awakening.

So, when transmigration of mind ceases, then Perfect Awakening appears. Remember, AKASHA is not the state of Perfect Awakening! It is only awakening to the state of Akasha -- very far from Perfect Awakening.

There are two ways of attaining Reality: There is the Hinayana way and the Mahayana way. The Mahayana reaches to the state of Original Being by unraveling all entanglements. We have intellect -- many levels. We call it "prajna" and by using it we solve the final question!



BANKEI AND HIS WORLD

by Peter Haskel

Like Bankei, many of his contemporaries in the priesthood in seventeenth-century Japan believed that the authentic transmission of Zen in their land had been debased and finally destroyed during the preceding two or three centuries. If Zen was to continue, such reformers argued, it had to be thought through again from the beginning, not only revitalized but reinvented. The Zen of Bankei's age, the Tokugawa period, was in many ways a rejection rather than an extension of the Zen that came immediately before. To fully understand Bankei and seventeenth-century Zen, it is therefore necessary to start with a discussion of Japanese Zen in the late Middle Ages, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the latter part of what is referred as the Muromachi period (1333-1573), after the Muromachi district of Kyoto where the reigning Ashikaga shoguns had their palace. Much of the information cited below is drawn from the pioneering research of Tamamura Takeji, a leading scholar of medieval Japanese Zen history. The discussion here focuses on the two principal groups identified by Tamamura as dominating Muromachi Zen: the sorin, the official Gozan temples patronized by the shogunate; and the rinka, those temples like Daitokuji, Myoshinji, Sojiji, and Eiheiji that remained largely outside the official system.

ZEN IN THE MUROMACHI PERIOD (Part 1, #8)

(Continued from the Summer '05 Zen Notes)

The Decline of the Gozan

Though the influence of Japanese aristocratic tradition was altering Gozan Zen in many important respects during the fifteenth century, the extent to which Zen was in turn being seriously imbibed by its aristocratic patrons remains questionable at best. Even in the case of Noritoki's contemporary the Ashikaga Shogun Yoshimochi, who outspokenly identified himself as a partisan of the Zen school," there is no evidence of his actually experiencing any penetrating realization of Zen teaching, only of his high regard for it. Yoshimasa's understanding of Zen appears to have been fairly limited as well. It is unclear when Yoshimasa first became acquainted with Zen, but as Zen priests were familiar figures at the Shogunal court, it is likely to have been at an early age. Yoshimasa was a frequent visitor at the Shokokuji, engaging in discussions with the temple's literary priests, but these

exchanges dealt not so much with Zen per se as with various aesthetic aspects then associated with Zen.

There is no evidence of Yoshimasa's having actually practiced Zen under any of the sorin monks whom he patronized) and his first contact with Zen in a strictly religious form was probably a series of fifteen lectures he attended on the Lin-chi lu, an exercise that he confessed left him baffled, if intrigued. Despite his interest and enthusiasm, then, Yoshimasa's understanding of Zen was apparently superficial, though probably typical of his class and time.

Among the upper classes of the late Muromachi period, the "Zen approach" was nearly universal, but this implied a broad spectrum of aesthetic and scholarly preoccupations, a blend of native and imported aristocratic cultures in which the goal of religious awakening constituted at best a source of artistic theory and expression, an ideal embodying a kind of intangible aura of refinement, rather than an underlying vital discipline. To a great extent, the Gozan ceased to perform a religious function for its patrons, who tended to seek such spiritual instruction elsewhere, regarding the sorin rather as an important pool of intellectual talent from which they could solicit a wide variety of non-religious services. The actual roles of many Gozan priests were primarily secular and often political. Gozan monks served the Ashikaga as advisors, consulting on internal state affairs and acting as arbiters between the Shogun and the daimyos in rebellions and disputes. As experts on Chinese language and culture, they conducted nearly all formal contacts with the Ming government, drafting official correspondence and holding a practical monopoly over Japanese trade with the mainland.

Even within the temples themselves, Gozan monks served as trained bureaucrats supervising the temples' estates and augmenting their revenues through successful money-lending operations. Ultimately, however, it was in their role as custodians of Chinese culture that the Gozan monks made their most lasting contributions, preserving many Chinese cultural traditions that exerted a profound influence on Muromachi culture in such areas as gardening, medicine, calligraphy, painting and, particularly, literature. Yet as the power of their Ashikaga patrons began to wane, even these cultural aspects fell into decay, and the entire sorin stagnated. Contemporary accounts from the late fifteenth century accuse the Gozan monks of having abandoned living Zen for textual exegesis, ceremonial and advancement in ecclesiastical rank, regarding these pursuits as "Zen" while forsaking the real substance of the teaching. In the end, the literary transmission, too, became stultified, and the life of the sorin temples focused upon strictly formal concerns.

The final blow was not long in coming. The Gozan establishment remained heavily dependent on the support and patronage of the Muromachi Bakufu, and the waning power of the Ashikaga clan threatened the sorin's very lifeline. Already in decline, Gozan culture was irreparably weakened by the Onin War (1467-1477), and during the ensuing period was never able to recover more than isolated fragments of its former glory.

The Onin and Bunmei disturbances signaled the failure of the centralized power of the Bakufu, and played a decisive role in accelerating the Gozan's collapse, destroying the temples' economic base in the provinces and the temple buildings themselves in Kyoto, the former the result of confiscation by the newly powerful provincial daimyo, the latter the outcome of the bitter fighting in the capital. In the post-Onin period, the Gozan found itself dramatically diminished in scale, reduced for the most part to the large metropolitan temples and their associated sub temples.

By the early sixteenth century, Gozan Zen had reached its nadir, and seems to have lost much of its original character. Not only were the temples virtually bereft of Zen practice, but little new literary work of any merit was being produced and the teaching of the traditional literary specialties had become no more than an empty transmission of conventions. Of those idealists who remained in the temples, a few seem to have attempted some form of revival of Zen study within the Gozan, but the majority simply abandoned the sorin to practice under rinka teachers, while many of those who had devoted themselves primarily to Confucian learning returned to lay life as independent scholars.

To a certain extent, strictly political events determined the decline of the Gozan, which shared the fate of its aristocratic patrons and of the old order generally, as the sorin lines gradually succumbed to the influence of the rinka schools championed by the newly victorious provincial warlords.

Yet various internal factors also contributed to this process, laying the ground for the developments of the sixteenth century and making the Gozan temples peculiarly receptive to the penetration of rinka Zen. Chief among these was the degeneration of the process of transmission of the enlightenment experience from teacher to disciple which formed the core of Zen study and was regarded as the actual "lifeline" (*kechimyaku*) of Zen teaching across the generations.

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Homes of the First Zen Institute,

A brief history by Ian R. Chandler

63 West 70th Street

The First Zen Institute of America was first incorporated as the Buddhist Society of America on May 15th, 1931, and Sokei-an Sasaki operated it out of his apartment at 63 West 70th Street. He lectured from behind a reading desk to an audience of avid note-takers. Formal Japanese cross-legged meditation was a bit much for westerners at that time, so his audience practiced zazen in folding chairs. Sokei-an had about ten good years prior to World War II. In addition to giving lectures and sanzen for his students, he produced a variety of translations and commentaries, including the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, and the Record of Linchi.



124 East 65th Street

One of Sokei-an's students, Ruth Everett, the widow of a prominent Chicago attorney, arranged for more spacious accommodations for the Institute at 124 East 65th Street, where Sokei-an lived from September 1941 until his internment on Ellis Island in June, 1942. Following his release in 1943, he lived at 124 East 65th street until his death in 1945. Prior to his death, he married Ruth Everett in order to give her an entree into the world of monastic Japanese Zen Buddhism. Sokei-an's story is set forth in his own words in Michael Hotz's autobiography of him, *Holding The Lotus To The Rock*.



156 Waverly Place

Following his death, two of his closest students Mary Farkas and Ruth Everett, now Ruth Sasaki, shouldered the burden of carrying on his teaching. For several years, Mary Farkas ran the Institute out of her house at 156 Waverly Place, using her living room as a small make-shift zendo. During the 1950s the First Zen Institute became one of Americas primary sources for information about Zen. Pretty nearly anybody in New York with an interest in Buddhism had some contact with the First Zen Institute. It became so popular for a while that during the regular Wednesday night sittings, there were people lined up down the block waiting to get in. Ruth Sasaki traveled to Japan where she founded the First Zen Institute of America in Japan, and completed an English language translation of the Rinzai-roku. Her status as Sokei-an's wife made it possible for her to participate in sesshins at Daitoku-ji. Mary Farkas later joined Ruth in Japan, and together they convinced Isshu Miura Roshi, a former Daitoku-ji head monk and a Rinzai zen master in the Takuju line, to come to New York. At this time, it was decided to acquire 113 East 30th Street, so that the Institute would have its own building.



156 Waverly Place

113 East 30th Street

113 East 30th Street was designed as a private home in 1895 by S.E. Gage, Architect. It was a middle-quality brownstone in terms of its design and construction. In 1896 an extension was added housing the present-day kitchen. At some point, it ceased to be a private home and was purchased by the Windham Society for the Care of Boys. The Windham Society was some sort of reformatory or orphanage, under its president C. B. Ives and treasurer R. E. Paulson. We believe that 113 East 30th Street was used by the Windham society as a multiple-occupancy dwelling. Likely the boys lived in the upper floor rooms, although we don't know much more about it than that.

In 1939, FDRs Civilian Conservation Corps hired unemployed photographers to photograph all the buildings in New York City, the so-called Tax Photos. Notable about the tax photo of 113 East

30th Street is the complete absence of any buildings behind and above the institute no skyscrapers in the neighborhood. 113 East 30th Street is shown here next to one of a pair of small brownstones which were later replaced by a parking lot and still later by a 20-story condominium.

In 1948-1951, changes made to accommodate the American Field Service, a Quaker organization, included installation of a new automatic oil burner and boiler stack. The Quakers purchased the building from the Windham society and used it as temporary housing to support their charitable work. It also functioned as their Manhattan office for at least a decade. The American Field Service needed a larger space and sold the building to the First Zen Institute in 1961. Bringing it up to fire code required installation of a new sprinkler system and steel fire doors on all floors. There were many other renovations and repairs, the total cost of which came to about the same amount as the original purchase price of the building. The original certificate of occupancy called for 2 Priest's quarters and 6 rooms for students, but the City objected to this terminology, so it was changed to 2 Class A apartments and 6 Class B rooms.



113 E 30th Street 1939



113 E30 Street 2006

Isshu Miura was the first priest to live at the Institute. Under his direction, the Institute's new zendo on the second floor was modeled after a zendo in Japan. Its library included a wide

selection of books about Buddhism, general Eastern religion and Zen, including Sokei-an Sasaki's copy of the Chinese Tripitaka. In the photograph shown here, Isshu Miura Roshi is flanked by Mary Farkas on his right and Ruth Fuller Sasaki on his left.



After Isshu Miura's departure from the Institute in the early 1960s there was a period of about fifteen years where many of the present members and residents joined the Institute. Despite the lack of a resident or visiting master, the meditation practice was quite rigorous. The Institute held full, seven-day Rohatsu sesshins with 12 hours of sazen practice daily, usually with one hour sitting periods, and often as long as an hour and a half. Twice a year there were 3-day mini-sesshins from Friday eve till Sunday afternoon. Each month there was a weekend sitting from Saturday morning till Sunday noon, morning sittings were every weekday from 6:30 to 7:30 AM and Monday and Tuesday evening sittings as well as our traditional Wednesday evening open house. It was a disciplined but creative time at the Institute, and several Buddhist monks of various stripes showed up on the doorstep hoping to land a spot as resident teacher. But after a few weeks staying in the house or nearby, they realized their monastic training did not prepare them for the free wheeling bunch at the Institute and they went elsewhere to eventually set up their own groups.

During the mid-1970's the FZI invited Joshu Sasaki Roshi to conduct sesshins twice a year. He was the most senior, experienced Rinzai Zen master practicing in America at that time. During the 1970s and 1980s, these sesshins often attracted more than forty participants, and for two, one-week periods each year, 113 East 30th street functioned somewhat like a traditional Buddhist monastery. The first floor public meeting room became the chanting hall and also the sanzen room, the 2nd floor zendo the meditation hall, and the library the dining hall. We had a full complement of officers, with Mary Farkas serving as Shika, Edgar Kann and Bob Schafer as Jikijitsus, Jim Shapiro as Tenzo, with Shoten and Handaikans appointed as necessary. Anthony Tudor's first floor Apartment served as the Roshi's private quarters, and some of the upper floor rooms served as dormitories.

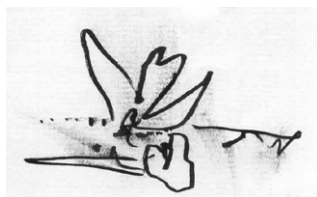
During one of Sasaki Roshi's sesshins in the mid-1980s, he gave me the koan; "*How do you manifest no sound?*" I left the zendo to go in for sanzen, and there was a garbage truck right outside the public meeting room door making



End of sesshin with Sasaki Roshi

ning a screeching noise so loud that it was almost impossible to talk. I fumbled with my answer to the koan, and then Roshi like a kabuki actor on stage started miming the garbage truck. He was spontaneous, totally appropriate, and hilarious. After that it became much easier for me to answer koans. Although not situated in a tranquil bucolic setting like Buddhist monasteries of old, the Institute still functions very effectively as center for coming into direct experience of Zen Buddhism.

No record of the history of 113 East 30th street would be complete without a brief mention of the Institute's defacto Deacon, Peeter Lamp. For the past several decades, Lamp has been the source of extensive repairs, renovations and remodeling. Plumbing fixtures have been replaced, skylights rebuilt, windows refinished, the basement dug out to create a small workshop, appliances and steam radiators repaired, electrical boxes installed, staircases reconstructed, stone masonry reworked, etc. A few years ago when the Institute contracted for repairs to the facade of the building, the inexperienced Pakistani work crew was doing sloppy work. Lamp actually got out on the scaffolding with them and made certain that the work was done to his own high standards. The thousand things that can go wrong with old buildings are taken care of with professional attention which guarantees that the facilities are maintained and improved upon so that the building will be in a good state of repair for future generations. It is, after all the oldest continuously operating Zen center in North America. We believe that it may be here for a long time to come.



Three-Hundred-Mile-Tiger

Sokei-an's commentary on

The Record of Lin Chi

Discourse X, Lecture 7

“Brothers, the soul is without form, yet penetrates in all directions. In the eyes, it is seeing; in the ears, hearing; in the nose, smelling; in the mouth, speaking; in the hands, holding; in the feet, carrying. Originally, it is one essential light divided into the six harmonious senses. If you do not cling to the thoughts in your mind, wherever you stand you are emancipated.

“Brothers, why do I say this? Only because you cannot keep your minds from wandering, and you are trapped in the useless devices of the ancients.”

SOKEI-AN:

Last time, Zen Master Lin-chi was talking about the true soul, the original soul in ourselves. He said that everyone thinks the soul has various features, so everyone conceives delusion. This delusion shatters the true faith of the soul.

“Brothers, the soul is without form, yet penetrates in all directions. In the eyes, it is seeing; in the ears, hearing; in the nose, smelling; in the mouth, speaking; in the hands, holding; in the feet, carrying. Originally, it is one essential light divided into the six harmonious senses.” It is very difficult to see the shape of a naked soul. We clothe it as we would a body in many garments—superstition, education, various acquirements and attainments. Our minds have many sets of garments. We can see the shape of other forms even with our clothes on, but no one sees the shape of another's naked soul so easily. You notice the ugly proportions of a naked body, but most of the time you never see the unbalanced proportions of a soul. Sometimes we see a naked soul in the form of a *preta*, a hungry ghost, but we cannot see the soul that has the beautiful form of the Buddha in perfect balance with our conceptions.

Reality is not anything when it gives you more garments to put on your soul. True reality suggests that you take off your shabby clothes. It makes you see the original body of the soul that you got

from your spiritual mother in the Tushita Heaven,¹ the creatress; not the creator of *maya*, delusion, but the creator of true existence.

When the old garments are discarded, you will choose your own clothes. In summer, you will don gossamer and in winter velvet. If you realize you wear a seamless fur coat like Noodle, my cat, you will need no other garments. If you realize where you are, on what spot of the universe you are standing and in what shape your soul is, you will know what to do, and you will be emancipated at that moment. However, in summertime you may have forgotten how you put on your heavy winter clothes, so you are unable to disrobe and emancipate yourself.

As I've said before, it was during the Tang dynasty that Buddhism once again took on its original form in China, its original face, like the Buddha speaking directly from his own heart. The Zen masters at that time were not reading from moth-eaten old *sutras* but spoke Buddhism as it was written in their own hearts. They were speaking from the innermost part of themselves. At that time, Buddhism became very clear, but it can be criticized, for these great masters forgot the atmosphere of Buddhism. They grasped the vital point and were satisfied, like the scientist of today who goes to a drug store instead of a restaurant and says, "Give me Vitamin D!" and eats it instead of a meal. If you go to the Ta-yu restaurant in the neighborhood, you will probably have a cocktail, some soup, the main dish and dessert, then, perhaps a cigarette and some coffee. Real Buddhism must be a full course meal, too. Lin-chi gives us a vitamin and we swallow it—"The Essence of Buddhism!" The vitamin is only good in theory, but when you eat food that comes from the garden, you also see the farm, the chickens, and the dogs. You must see it all. I wish to show you all of Buddhism, not just Vitamin D.

So Lin-chi says the soul is without form yet penetrates in all directions like electricity or water. We look at the sun, moon, and so forth with objectivity, with our senses, but if we become the sun and moon, we see subjectively. Then all becomes one great fire, for the soul cannot visualize itself from its subjective viewpoint. So one essential light is subdivided into different universal manifestations.

"If you do not cling to the thoughts in your mind, wherever you stand you are emancipated." It is easy to talk about annihilating the human mind, but it is not easy to do so. This human mind is made by the karma of nature, the human mind that we have made through the actions of karma. But if you realize buddha-nature, you are emancipated—but you cannot see it with your two eyes. Your logical understanding will only lead

¹ I.e., the abode of all buddhas.

you to the gate of real existence, it does not have the ability to bring you to the center of real existence; no word will take you there. You have to take off the drapery of words and enter. That is emancipation. If you really enter, this very body is the body of Buddha. That is why your teacher will say you must enter by yourself. He cannot take you in.

If you do not know how to attain this, you may think you must suppress this or that. But that way is too slow! To have the fruits of buddha-nature, it is not necessary to cut off the root and trunk. When the time comes, your mind will open the petals of the true flower and you will see the white lotus (original nature). Do not destroy its pond! However, you must separate from the three worlds of desire, form and formlessness. And it is not necessary to go into a deep sleep, separate from your body, etc.; you cannot separate from the universal body.

Why is this such a deep mystery? It cannot be understood with the understanding that you received from your mother's teaching. It is by your own effort that you will understand the phenomenal world. In this realm both realities are the same. This is the mystery.

"Brothers, why do I say this? Only because you cannot keep your minds from wandering, and you are trapped in the useless devices of the ancients." The ancient Buddhists used wonderful methods or devices (meditation, etc.) to carry you into the real understanding of Buddhism. When I give you *koans* like, "Sitting in your chair stand upon the Himalayas," "Pass through the keyhole," "Hide yourself in the wall," and "Walk on the surface of the water," you cannot answer because you are trapped in the meaning of words.

A *koan* is a device to free you from all devices, to train you to see through words and get the meaning behind them, so you are not trapped by words. I do not think my meaning is different from that of Christians who really penetrate their words and find the real meaning of phrases such as "Pass over the surface of the water." These *koans* point to real existence, the reality of the universe beyond phenomena. But when I say "beyond," you probably think "sky," and so forth. What can I say? Do not be bothered by the shades of meaning in words. As Lin-chi said, do not be trapped in the useless devices of the ancients.

The Buddha, however, taught us how to meditate. In meditation, you separate yourself from the circumference of your environment and realize the Buddha is yourself. The Master is here. You have to knock at the door and ask to meet the Master! The answer comes from the inside, not the outside. But to call, you must make an effort, must knock at the door of your heart. When

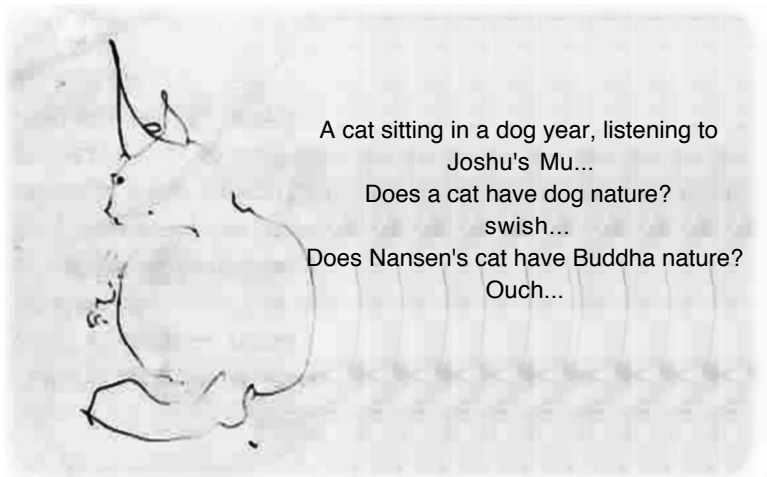
you meet Him, give up the knocking. At midnight, if you try to get into a monastery, banging on the door with your fist, there will be no answer. Then with a stone, Bang! Bang! Bang! “Yes?” Then you throw away the stone. Meditation and concentration are stones to find the Master; there comes a time when you do not need them anymore. The door of the temple is not the Master, do not mistake it. Many people think that meditation and concentration are Buddhism, but they are not.

I need not say anything more because if I say something more you will cling to it, will forget the Buddha in yourself, and search outside from the lips of a teacher, from an image carved in wood. You will study a word from the outside, or a word made of mind-stuff. You will forget how to search for the searcher who is Buddha. The object with which you search is not Buddha. You must find Buddha in the searcher. You need no devices. Give up all devices, all methods, and when you come to yourself—“Hmm! I understand.”

In such a way you must find the Buddha....



Seiko Susan Morningstar



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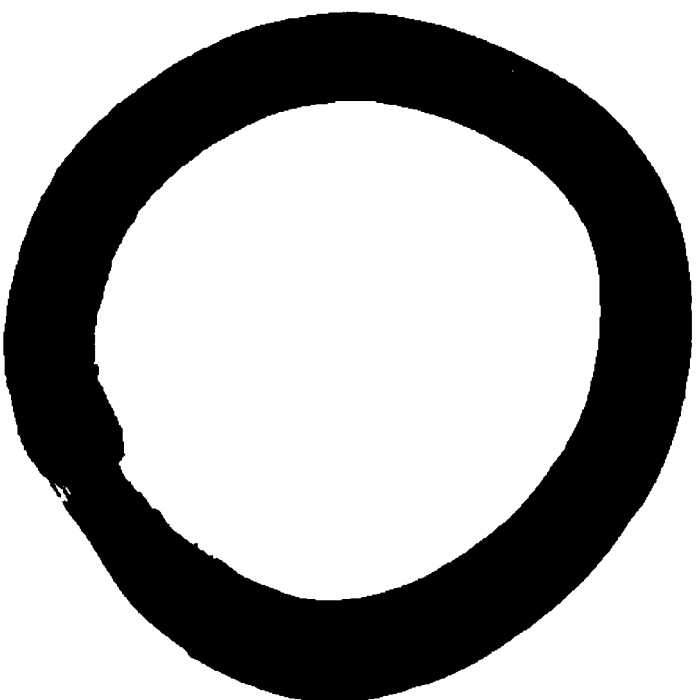
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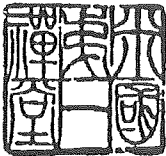


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