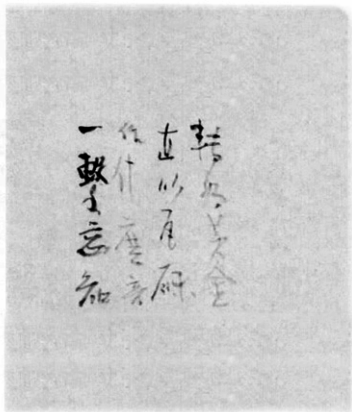


ZEN notes



Sengai

Kyogen Sweeping the ground

One strike made him forget
his learning.
What kind of sound was it?
A piece of brick immediately
turned itself to gold.

(Translation; D.T. Suzuki)

THE SUTRA OF PERFECT AWAKENING

THIRTY-NINETH LECTURE

Saturday, April 22th, 1939

"Why? Because the sky has no flowers. So the flowers are neither produced by the sky nor do they disappear from the sky. Birth and death are like the flowers which appear and disappear. The light of Marvelous Awakening pervades the universe. It transcends the flowers in the sky and the films in the eyes.

O Obedient One! You must know that the empty sky is neither that which gradually begins nor that which gradually ends. Is the Tathagata's Perfect Awakening and his acquiescence to the Perfect Awakening due to the uniform nature of the empty sky?

O Obedient One! It is as you smelt gold ore. Without being smelted the gold was already in existence; when the gold has been smelted it never again returns to the state of ore. The quality of gold is indestructible throughout infinite time."

SOKEI-AN SAYS:

Bodhisattva Vajra-garbha asked this question of the Buddha: "The original was empty; everything was produced by the original emptiness and disappears from this existence into emptiness. As legendarily told, that universe will come to an end and all existence be destroyed and entirely wiped out, and return to the original emptiness. When does the universe appear again from the emptiness?"

The Buddha's answer was this: "Your view is mere delusion. When it is destroyed once it will never return again. Your view has nothing to do with this original emptiness. When you awake from this illusory world to emptiness -- which is the state of Reality -- once and for all your illusory world has been wiped out and there is no more recurrence of the illusory world." This is an outline of the Buddha's answer.

Now, going back to the previous lecture, I shall read the last part of that text and then comment on the ensuing lines.

"It is as the phantom flowers vanish in the sky. When they vanish there will be nothing for you to speak about and there will be no object in asking whether one can see the phantom flowers in the sky again."

And now starts today's continuation:

"Why? Because the sky has no flowers." -- "Phantom flowers"
-- How does the sky display the flowers without any tree or root? Because of the films in your eyes. When you have little clouded films in your eyes, you see flowers and you believe the flowers are blossoms in the sky. But when the film is removed, the illusory flower vanishes and you have nothing to speak about any more. It did not disappear into the blue sky. The blue sky did not produce the flowers -- so when they vanish there is nothing for you to speak about.

This metaphor is easy to understand -- but our illusory world and our illusory mind, as explained by this metaphor, is a great subject that you must understand!

You cannot just accept all the appearances of the external world. You must observe carefully and think deeply about phenomena -- the appearance of this world.

I use the word "phenomena" philosophically; in this audience, no one will think I am speaking about ghosts! (This happened when I first came to America and used this word.) This phenomena appears in our mind, which is called Alaya Consciousness. This is not the human mind -- but it appears in our mind as water from a well. You cannot drink from this well -- it is not yours. It is the water of a subterranean channel common to all wells. So, we think this consciousness is ours -- but it is a universal consciousness called "Alaya Consciousness."

This Alaya Consciousness creates all phenomena; we look at it with our eyes -- but our eyes are also a production of this everlasting Consciousness. This Consciousness thinks -- and the thoughts are the appearances.

It is very difficult to accept the fact that you create your own world. "My mind creates this world? I have no part in it!" But when it is said, "Alaya Consciousness creates this vision and you are in it." -- then you can accept it. Your mind has created the vision and you are observing it.

If you go to bed and try to finish a novel when you are sleepy, you will stay on one line forever! So, when the mind is vigorous, the dream disappears quickly; when the mind is feeble, the dream

lingers in the mind.

When the Alaya Consciousness dreams, creating all the illusions, we observe the dream through our five senses which are also in the dream; we are dreaming in the dream, and the Alaya Consciousness is the "film" of the consciousness. When this film is removed, the "blossoms" disappear -- when Alaya Consciousness disappears, all phenomena will disappear and eternal emptiness will reign over the whole universe. There are no questions to ask of the Buddha!

"So the flowers are neither produced by the sky nor do they disappear from the sky." -- This great vision was not produced from real emptiness (Nirvana) and it will not disappear into real emptiness. Such existence has nothing to do with Reality. It has no connection at all with Bhutatatha. Bhutatatha exists -- but this existence is not blended with our five senses. Having no relation to our senses, it is neither color, sound, taste, smell, or touch.

It is called "Reality" (of BEING) -- but it really has no name. (Dr. Suzuki translates it as "Suchness" -- not a good translation! Who could understand "Suchness?" In Sanskrit it is "Bhutatatha," and in Chinese -- "Hsieu.") It is not Bhutatatha which produces the "great Illusion" -- it is Alaya Consciousness.

It is an interesting fact that, by the deluded mind, Bhutatatha is observed as Alaya Consciousness -- while, to the enlightened mind, Alaya Consciousness is observed as Bhutatatha. So, to the deluded mind, there is no Bhutatatha -- there is only a dream. Such a one can never see Reality -- never touch the true state of being.

"Birth and death are like the flowers which appear and disappear." -- Birth -- death -- samsara. I was born yesterday, cry aloud, and tomorrow I die. I repeat it again and again as long as I am in this illusory world; as the wheel turns, I take transmigration.

When I am enlightened -- realize Bhutatatha -- it is the end! You can awaken -- "Ah! I was in here -- now I can see it as a delusion!" The delusion is like a dream: perhaps a tiger is chasing you -- you scream and awaken and realize it was a dream. You cannot any longer accept this dream as real existence. This life is not real existence; it is phenomenal existence. Ask this question of your European scholars; Emanuel Kant answered it most clearly.

When you realize the state of Reality (Nirvana), your transmigrations come to an end. But almost everyone likes to continue the dream. Even if it is a good dream -- unless you realize it as such, you are a deluded man.

"The light of Marvelous Awakening pervades the universe. It transcends the flowers in the sky and the films in the eyes." "The Light of Marvelous Awakening" means awakening to the whole state of Bhutatatha. "Bhuta" means this immediate existence, as your word "be." Therefore, it is sometimes called "Isness." And "tathata" means "that." So, "This is That!" (please add on the syllable "ta" to Bhutatatha -- Bhutatathata)

This is the Reality ungraspable by the five senses. But our intuition, our so-called epistemological intellect, knows it immediately. We cannot see it, but we know it.

So open your eyes and see it wide and strong! Break the ice and look to the very bottom of it! This is Marvelous Awakening. Its light pervades the universe. From the bottom of Reality you see the whole universe. Many students awake to Reality; but it is very hard to awake *into* Reality -- to see the world again from this pit.

The half-baked Mahayanas, without knowing Hinayana, could never attain this. You must know Hinayana first, and then come into Mahayana. Why? Because "the sky has no flowers." As the Buddha said, *"The flowers are neither produced by the sky nor do they disappear from the sky. Birth and death are like the flowers which appear and disappear. The light of Marvelous Awakening pervades the universe. It transcends the flowers in the sky and the films in the eyes."*

"O Obedient One! You must know that the empty sky is neither that which gradually begins or that which gradually ends." -- This great view! You may say, "Well, I am now in delusion -- but Reality will gradually appear in my mind." No! Reality will not appear in your mind as part of your dream; you awake all of a sudden. If your dream is a hard one, it is easier to awake.

"Is the Tathagata's Perfect Awakening and his acquiescence in the Perfect Awakening due to the uniform nature of the empty sky?" -- I have explained this first part, the "Perfect Awakening." Now "his acquiescence" in the Perfect Awakening; this means that when you awake to Reality, you understand the law of nature and the law of man.

You observe the world first from the mountain-top; then you penetrate and observe it from the bottom. From your deluded state, you must first transform; second, return to Nature; third, go back to the state of the human being. Knowing the law of the mind, of nature, and of man, you now take an obedient attitude. This is called "Buddha's acquiescence." You must take this attitude!

The empty sky is uniform -- just one state -- no man, no life

and death, no light and dark. *"Is the Tathagata's Perfect Awakening and his acquiescence to the Perfect Awakening due to the uniform nature of the empty sky?"*

So... did the Awakening come from the empty sky (original state) or not? Did he come from there and will he go back there? Is there a coming and going?

"Tathagata" means, "He has come thus and he goes back thus." As the Christ said: "I am the Son of my Father and I am the same as my Father." And the Buddha said: "I came from there and I go back to that same place."

But the real meaning is, "There is no coming or going. The Emptiness itself is enlightened." This is puzzling. I puzzled over this for seven years! I thought, "I have this intrinsic knowledge, but if the beginning is empty, how can I possess this mind today?" It is a very big question. Of course I cannot tell you of my experience in coming to the answer: "Emptiness itself is Wisdom."

Is light fire? Fire itself is light. I meditated on this question a long, long time. With this Wisdom I entered emptiness. So, Emptiness and Wisdom are the same thing. Therefore, there is no coming out or going in."

"O Obedient One! It is as you smelt gold ore. Without being smelted, the gold was already in existence;" -- Without taking that enlightenment out of Emptiness, the Enlightenment was already in the Emptiness. So Emptiness is Enlightenment.

"... when the gold has been smelted, it never returns to the state of ore again." -- When you realize that Emptiness is Wisdom you will never return to the darkness.

"The quality of gold is indestructible throughout infinite time." The quality of true Wisdom (gold), in Emptiness, or even in the deluded state, exists throughout all time and cannot be destroyed! Your wisdom itself is the Reality -- how can you go back to the deluded world?

This part of the sutra is good -- but much of it is miserable scholastic philosophy. There are so many words! But I hope that my Zen students will understand it -- and grasp it in one word."



Three-Hundred-Mile Tiger

Sokei-an's commentary on

The Record of Lin Chi

Discourse X, Lecture 8

“Brothers, if you accord with my view you will cut off the heads of the Sambogakaya and Nirmanakaya Buddhas. A bodhisattva who is content with the tenth stage of enlightenment is merely a hanger-on in an alien land. A bodhisattva whose attainment is equal to that of the Buddha is a criminal in stocks. An arhat and a pratyekabuddha are the filth in drains. Bodhi and nirvana are hitching posts for mules and asses. Why? It is because, brothers, you have failed to attain the full annihilation of countless kalpas that you have barriers.”

SOKEI-AN:

To “cut off the heads” is an expression that is very difficult to translate. What it means is that you must “sit” on the head of the Buddha, sit upon the seat of meditation, sit upon the universe to realize the Buddha in oneself. *You* are Buddha. There is none other in the universe.

“A bodhisattva who is content with the tenth stage of enlightenment is merely a hanger-on in an alien land.” The *bodhisattva* has exterminated his ego and embodied himself in the universal body. The human being has a separated soul and lives in blind desire. But when he opens his Eye, he realizes there is no separated soul. There is only one soul, a tree of soul, and you are one branch of that tree. You perform your own functions, but you are not separate. When you realize that soul is universal, your body is also universal, and you are a *bodhisattva*.

The *bodhisattva* that is “content with the tenth stage of enlightenment” is only observing phenomena and noumena as conceptions. This is not like the *arhat* who keeps himself in a corner of annihilation, separated from the rest. The highest *bodhisattva* knows Reality in both phenomena and noumena. The *arhat* thinks the phenomenal is not existing, so he hides in the annihilation, or nothingness. This is not true annihilation. It is only the annihilation of conception.

Nevertheless, according to Lin-chi, if anyone conceives that

these stages are really existing (such stages exist hypothetically as a mode of thinking to bring one to enlightenment), he has not attained to Reality but is still in a hypothetical cloud.

“A bodhisattva whose attainment is equal to that of the Buddha is a criminal in stocks.” If he thinks he is a bodhisattva or a Buddha, or a plain man, he is not living in his own light. In such a case, he is merely a “hanger-on,” and he is not standing on his own two feet.

There are two kinds of bodhisattvas: the one whose understanding is co-equal with the Buddha's but not the Buddha's, and the one whose understanding is the Buddha's. The first type of bodhisattva has enlightened himself and attained the understanding that is co-equal with that of the Buddha. He has gone against the stream and come to buddha-nature. He has ceased to desire and made many efforts to come to it. The second type of bodhisattva from that point turns himself into everyone's heart. Having attained buddhahood, he comes back to promulgate his own understanding. Then he will go away and return no more. According to Lin-chi, neither of these bodhisattvas are truly emancipated. The truly enlightened one is himself, not Buddha or the same as Buddha.

Lin-chi uses a poisonous tongue in criticizing those who are satisfied with hypothetical Buddhism.

“An arhat and a pratyekabuddha are the filth in drains. Bodhi and nirvana are hitching posts for mules and asses.” The arhat has attained the annihilation of agony and the cause of agony. He has annihilated desire, but not superstition; therefore, his attainment is not complete annihilation. The pratyekabuddha has enlightened himself, but he is like the dry leaves of autumn. He has passed the twelve stages of cause and result,¹ has attained the truth of the universe, lives alone and understands, but he cannot teach.

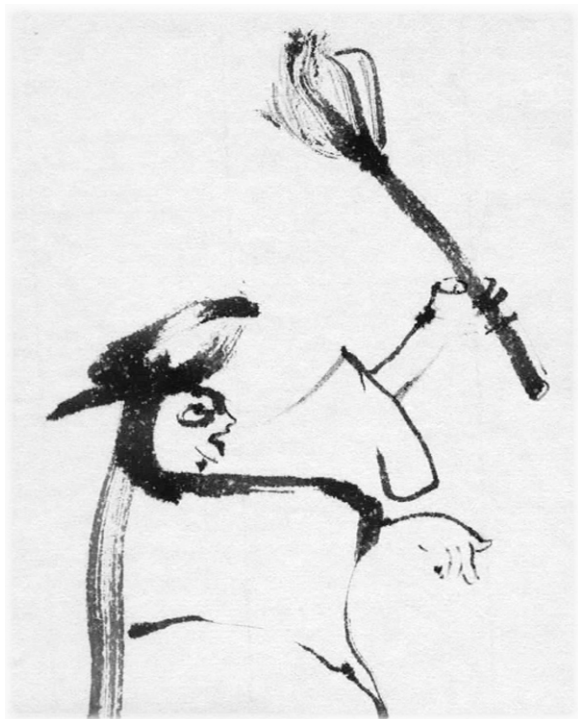
To Lin-chi, bodhi, knowledge, the goal of nirvana, reached with the great knowledge and theory of Buddhism, the system built by the Buddha, are all like hitching posts for mules and asses. You cannot move as long as you are hitched to any hypothetical sort of Buddhism.

“ Why? It is because, brothers, you have failed to attain the

1 The twelve stages or links (*nidanas*) in the chain of existence, *pratitya-samutpada*, are 1) old age and death; 2) rebirth; 3) existence; 4) grasping; 5) love, thirst, desire; 6) receiving, perceiving, sensation; 7) touch, contact, feeling; 8) the six senses; 9) name and form; 10) the six forms of perception, awareness or discernment; 11) action, moral conduct; 12) ignorance.

full annihilation of countless kalpas that you have barriers." *Kalpa* means endless time. In Lin-chi's view, if you attain full annihilation, one moment equals a million years. You must realize this or the definition of the system and theory of Buddhism stays in your brain and you are never free. You have to attain throughout all *kalpas*. Even "oneness" is not existing in this entire annihilation.

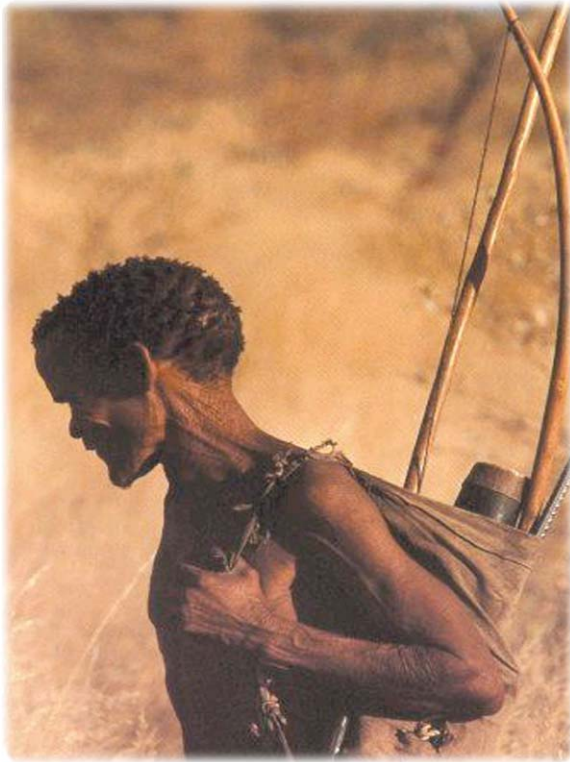
These are barriers because you have not attained full annihilation. However, if you annihilate your mind immediately, you will emancipate yourself. Cutting one handful of weeds you cut all weeds. If you cut off your human mind, that is the end of all connection with this delusion. You have emancipated yourself from all agony and darkness and have attained the Ocean of Nirvana. If you cut one, you can cut all with the sword of Manjushri, the *bodhisattva* of original wisdom. Cut off human karma—I hate, I feel nice, and so forth. As for *samskara*, the subconscious, you can cut it off with the sword of Manjushri that you originally have.¹



¹ *Samskara* are mind-elements and mental formations; one of the five *skandhas*.

The Bushmen Win Their Case

By Ian R. Chandler



Bushman Hunter,

(From <http://www.theartofafrica.co.za/africa/index.jsp>)

A little more than a year ago, the First Zen Institute of America enjoyed a visit from a group of African Bushmen (ZN 2004;) Vol 51 #2. They had been evicted from their ancestral homeland in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, and had come to New York to plead their case at the United Nations. Now they have won their case, thanks to the organizational and legal efforts of Survival International (www.survival_international.com), Rupert Isaacson, Gloria Steinheim and others.

From the Survival International Website:

13-Dec-2006. Scenes of jubilation greeted the Botswana High Courts ruling today in favor of the Kalahari Bushmen.

The court ruled today that the Botswana government's eviction of the Bushmen was unlawful and

unconstitutional and that they have the right to live on their ancestral land inside the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. The court also ruled that the Bushmen applicants have the right to hunt and gather in the reserve, and should not have to apply for permits to enter it.

One of the judges, Justice Phumaphi, said the government's refusal to allow the Bushmen to hunt was tantamount to condemning the residents of the CKGR to death by starvation. However, the judges also said that the government is not obliged to provide services to Bushmen in the reserve.

Bushman spokesman Roy Sesana said outside the court, "Today is the happiest day for us Bushmen. We have been crying for so long, but today we are crying with happiness. Finally we have been set free. The evictions have been very, very painful for my people. I hope that now we have something to be proud of."

The court case has been the longest and most expensive in Botswana's history.

The Bushmen are still under considerable pressure to stay right where they are. Although it's true that they have been issued permits and about 40 of them (as of 1/15/2007) have returned to the CKGR, with at least 1,000 preparing to return, there is considerable social and police pressure for them to remain in the relocation camps.

Why the subtle persuasion? According to Rupert Isaacson, author of *The Healing Land*, who introduced the Bushmen to the First Zen Institute, there are three issues involved: (1) The landmark legal case; (2) hunting licenses for the Bushmen and (3) rights for the Bushmen to maintain small herds of livestock for their private use within the CKGR. There is also a deeper underlying conflict between agriculturalists and hunter-gatherers. The larger and more technologically sophisticated tribe (the Tswana tribe from which the country gets its name) has an economy based on agriculture, and an ideological position that tribal distinctions should be ignored: the nation's laws should apply equally to all of its citizens, including the Bushmen. Traditionally, the Bushmen are hunter-gatherers, and the CKGR is their main asset, and a very, very nice chunk of real-estate.

In the long-term, it looks as if diamonds may be the real issue here, diamonds and other mineral rights. Diamonds have been discovered at a couple of small test mines in the CKGR, although

the mines at present are not of the highest quality and have not gone into commercial production. DeBeers has a 50:50 partnership with the Botswana government. The CKGR is a geographically large scrub-desert area situated near one of the most lucrative diamond-producing regions on the planet, and who knows? Its not clear what lies beneath the surface of the CKGR, and efforts are actively under way to discover additional deposits.



DeBeers test mine at Gope in the CKGR,
from: <http://www.survival-international.org>

Does this land and its mineral rights belong to the Bushmen or to the Botswana Government? When the CKGR was set up many years ago, the Bushmen were legally treated as just another species of wildlife occupying the CKGR. Mineral rights were not even a subject for discussion.

According to Rupert, the quandary faced by the Bushmen is being played out by a number of additional tribes in Africa, the Amazon basin, and around the world. There are at present 50-60 tribes in this situation: hunter-gatherers versus agriculturalists in a setting where the hunter-gatherers are in possession of ancestral hunting grounds, and fighting a losing battle to retain them. It is, however, heartening that the Bushmen, at any rate, won their case, and can remain in the CKGR for as long as they want. At the First Zen Institute, we were delighted to learn of their court victory and return to their ancestral home. Who owns the diamonds is a different question.

Twentyfive Zen Koans

Selected and Translated by Sokei-an Sasaki

Fourth Koan

(January 29, 1938)

Chikan Zenji (*Kyogen, disciple of Isan, 771-853*) was mowing down the bushes around a ruined temple. When he threw a piece of broken tile, it made a clatter against a bamboo tree, and he was all of a sudden enlightened. Whereat he extolled his enlightenment in this poem:

*Upon the clatter of a pebble
Against a bamboo,
I forgot all I had learned.
No device will avail in attaining wisdom.
Without being disheartened
In the region of chaos,
And in the everyday tasks of life
I can practise the old teachings.
But no traces
Can be found behind me
Wherever I go.
I am not within any of the postures--
Standing or sitting--
Nor am I embodied
In that which is made of color or sound.
Any one who is enlightened
Will say that this is the highest attainment.*

Sokei-an:

This is all of the lines which are written in any book of Zen questions -- Zen koans. He made this poem to express his own enlightenment; but how you express your own enlightenment is the point on which you would meditate. It is very strange to think that when he threw a stone that made a clatter on some bamboo, upon that sound he was enlightened.

This enlightenment did not come to him all of a sudden. It was kindling in his mind a, long, long time. This casual incident -- that a pebble made a clatter against a bamboo -- gave a shock to his mind, and his enlightenment burst in his mind like a fruit that leaves the bough upon one shock. His mind was smoking a long, long time. This clatter (struck table) ignited the fire, so all of a sudden he realized what enlightenment is. We are talking about enlightenment, but no one knows what *is* enlightenment.

When I was a novice, I always doubted about that enlightenment. It was written everywhere that one was suddenly enlightened, or that enlightenment burst in his mind. It was written in the Chinese scriptures that enlightenment thundered in his mind. But this enlightenment, in Chinese is the word *satori*--it means to realize the reality of true existence.

For instance, you left your pocketbook at home when you went to the restaurant, and you order your food and begin to eat--and all of a sudden you realize you have left your pocketbook at home. This is realization--"Oh!" Or you are thinking about the reality of yourself, and suddenly, "Oh, yes! This is the reality of myself!" In that moment the realization will be experienced as enlightenment. There is no streak of lightning flashing through your mind, It is no such thing as that. I have heard of a lady here who went to some Hindu to find enlightenment. He said; "Pinch your nose, Do you see a green light in your brain? All right. That is enlightenment. Twenty-five dollars!"

In different scriptures there are some lines which tell of the cause of this monk's enlightenment:

Chi-kan Zenji of Kyogen Temple in Teng-chou was a native of Ching-chou. He abhorred the layman's life and left his home. Being very honest in his desire to attain the Dharma, he directed his steps toward Wei-shan (in Tan-chou) and came to stay among the monks.

Having noticed that he was capable of being a vessel of the Dharma, and hoping that his wisdom would be kindled and intensified, Wei-shan one day said to him: "I am not questioning you about your everyday learning or about your knowledge of the scriptures. Answer me, however, in a word: What was the reality of yourself when you were still in your mother's bosom and were ignorant of any direction east or west? I wish to give you my seal as a token of the genuineness of your attainment."

Chikan was disconcerted and could not answer a word.

This was the cause of his sudden enlightenment. I shall give you some commentary on these lines so that you will understand them in detail.

These Chinese names and places are very important to Zen students. The geography of China has become very familiar to you these days, so I think you will be interested to know where these temples were and these countries, which were the homeland to these monks.

Chi-kan Zenji of Kyogen Temple in Teng-chou... Kyogen was the name of a temple; Teng-chou is the name of the place. This is not a story of today. This was in the period of the Tang dynasty--the last part of the seventh century. Teng-chou is back of Hankow--this means that it is north from Hankow, about 150 to 170 miles north, near Northern China. In those days the Chinese called that district Nanyang.

...was a native of Ching-chou. There was a German concession, and then a Japanese mill, which was destroyed.

He abhorred the layman's life and left his home. He disliked the squabbles between brothers and sisters and those disharmonies between husband and wife and the struggles between friends--those usual human troubles, so he left home. Those people at that time were very happy to go away from home. In these days there is no place to go!

"Directed his steps" means that he decided to go to Wei-shan. Wei-shan is the name of the mountain on which was the temple of Osho (Master) Wei-shan, a famous Zen master. This temple was in Teng-chou. Here was a lake, very beautiful, very big. The entire state of Illinois will fit into that lake. On its western shore was a beautiful fat mountain. "Fat mountain" sounds very funny, but the usual Chinese mountain is just a skeleton of stones with very few trees. This mountain had much earth on it and many flourishing trees. And this Osho of Wei-shan was a fat monk--very kind, and his mind as big as the ocean. There are many types of monks--some severe--but this Wei-shan was very kind.

...and came to stay among the monks. In the Orient one cannot make a conversation immediately with the master. He must stay there some months with the monks while the master is getting acquainted with his mind.

Having noticed that he was capable of being a vessel of the Dharma --that he can be a vessel of Buddhism, has a natural talent to be a monk.

... and hoping that his wisdom would be kindled and intensified -- ensouled! "Ensouled" means... I beg your pardon, I cannot explain to you in English... but it is as when God ensouled that lump of clay, breathed and made Adam out of it.

Wei-shan one day said to him: "I am not questioning you about your everyday learning or about your knowledge of the scriptures. I am not questioning you about your school education or what you have studied or are doing here or about monk's orders or whatnot.

Answer me, however, in a word: What was the reality of yourself when you were still in your mother's bosom and were ignorant of any direction east or west? This question is very profound. I think everyone has this experience. I was in my mother's womb, but I did not know that I was there in that time. And I was a boy one year old, two years old, three years old, but I did not know that I was an infant.

Now let us think about before I was an infant or before I was in my mother's womb. What was I? I was there anyway--otherwise I cannot be here now; but you think that you have no memory of that period. Everyone passes through this period, but no one knows anything about it--it is very queer. We talk all about Nirvana, but it is just talk; we cannot realize it.

I wish to give you my seal as a token of the genuineness of your attainment. In Buddhism the teacher will make his successor, or he will be authorized as the heir of that Zen Master. Then he can be a Zen Master of the second generation, the third, fourth, fifth generation. In such a way we authorize our disciples' genuineness of enlightenment, from Buddha's time--from generation to generation. In Buddhism, in our Zen sect especially, no one can call himself a Zen Master without his teacher's recognition. To get this recognition we have to stay in the Zen temple a long, long time. Only the honest student will be recognized by the Zen Master. I entered the monastery at twenty, and when my teacher said, "Go where you like and speak what you like" I was forty-seven. I forget how many years have passed since then--I am a quite old man!

Chikan was disconcerted and could not answer a word.

We ask our students: "Before father and mother, what were you, what was your reality?" You cannot make an answer, you know. It is very hard to make an answer to a Zen question. If you say, "I was Oneness," the master will say: "There was not such a thing before father and mother." "Well, I was in Nirvana,"--and the Master will say: "In or out? There wasn't such a thing!" You can talk about it, but you can't realize it.

This Kan was standing before the Master to make an answer, and he gave several answers to the Master and the Master denied those answers, just as I ring my bell when you answer.

Kan said: "Please, you tell me that answer. I cannot make any answer. Please, you tell me."

Wei-shan said: "If I speak about the answer, it is my own answer. The answer must be found by you yourself as your own

answer. My giving you the answer will not give you any help for your own enlightenment.

Kan left the room of the Master and retreated into his own cell. And then, as you know, he opened this book, opened that book, and searched around, never seeking to find it from his own heart but from those scriptures, those 5,048 volumes on those shelves, printed today in fine type--but no one monk can read them all.

And he sighed: "The painted food cannot fill one's hunger. This is just painted food!" And he set fire and burned them all and said: "And hereafter I will not study Buddhism anymore. I will be a monk and will beg food from door to door and meditate." And he went down the mountain. He realized he was unable to make an answer, that those 5,048 volumes would not teach him anything: "Hereafter, through my own meditation I will find the answer." And he went down the mountain, crying--all those honest monks will do that.

He came to an old ruined temple on White Mountain, which had belonged to Echu, a disciple of the Sixth Patriarch, and thought he would stay there, sweeping the garden; and he stayed there without any friend, any teacher. When he was hungry he would go to the village and beg food. You will see these strangers in many places in India today--at Buddhgaya...They are not all Hindus, but many are Japanese and Chinese, just living there. And in China, you will see in the gateways many monks meditating without any teacher. It was so 2500 years ago and it is still existing. We know that attainment cannot be taught in schools.

Chikan was mowing the bushes around the temple, when all of a sudden he threw a tile against a bamboo tree. At the sound he was suddenly enlightened.

"Oh! This is it!" He threw away the broom which he had in his hand and washed himself and burned incense. He then bowed [in the direction of] Wei-shan and said: "If you had told me the answer, I would not have this enlightenment today... I owe you the veneration which is more than that due mother or father." And he made a poem to extol his enlightenment.

Upon the clatter of a pebble, Against a bamboo/, I forgot all I had learned. All he had learned was of no use. No device will avail in attaining wisdom ... To read manuscripts is of no use.

Without being disheartened in the region of chaos You know, in meditation, the mind of a good monk will sink down and die.

And in the everyday tasks of life, I can practice the old

teachings. This is the true way.

But no traces, Can be found behind me, Wherever I go.
Because the physical body, material, no longer exists, so...

I am not within any of the postures, Standing or sitting. He is working very busily, cutting weeds; he was not sleeping in meditation but was working honestly and attained enlightenment.

Nor am I embodied In that which is made of color or sound.
When you realize this, you will attain. I felt for about one week that I was walking on air. I saw many people in the street and I thought they were I. That is not full enlightenment, but it is a gate. Passing that gate, you will attain.

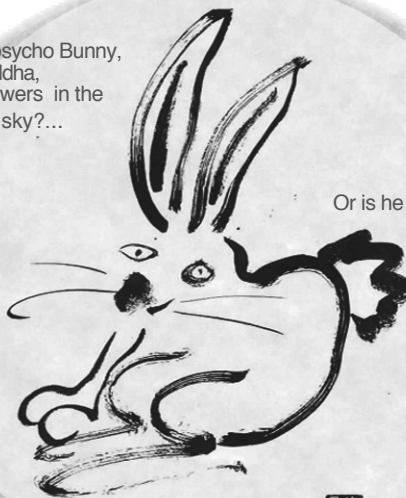
Anyone anywhere who is enlightened Will say that this is the highest statement. He realizes that all he was told and all those scriptures will be realized in his mind. "Oh yes! Now I understand!" You have heretofore read from the outside, but when you read again and from the inside, all those words shine. Then those miracles are not miracles any more. To enter true religion we must go through this gate, attain the gate of reality. It is the only way...

(Rang bell.)



Seiko Susan Morningstar

Is big-eared psycho Bunny,
Buddha,
Chasing flowers in the
empty sky?...



Or is he sky dreaming Buddha
Chased by
flowers
seeking rabbits
in
his mind?

{Rabbit by Seiko Susan Morningstar}

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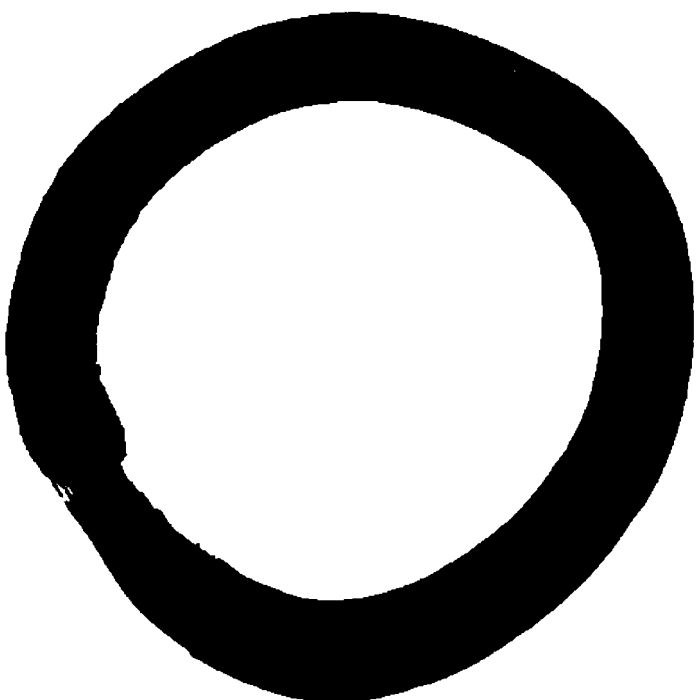
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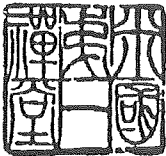


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