Zen Notes

Before anything...

THE SUTRA OF PERFECT AWAKENING

SIXTY SECOND LECTURE

Wednesday December 6th, 1939

"O Obedient One! Awareness of all hindrances is itself ultimate awakening. Unawareness of one's state of mind and awareness of one's state of mind are, after all, states of emancipated mind. Both the creation of the Dharma and the destruction thereof occur in the state of Nirvana. Knowledge of the Dharma and the ignorance thereof are both termed Prajna. *The Dharma attained by a Bodhisattva and that attained by a heretic are both* Bodhi. *The state of Avidya and that of Tathata are one and the same. All the practices of* Sila, Samadhi, *and* Jnana, *and those of passion anger and ignorance as well—are the practice of pure deeds. Sentient beings and the earth pertain to the same* Dharmata. *Heaven and hell pertain to the same Pure Land. Sentient and insentient beings,* gotra *and* agotra *alike, will realize the law of Buddha. The state of all sufferings is that of emancipation. The wisdom of the sea of Dharma and the phenomena illumined by this wisdom are as empty as the sky. If you have attained this state of awakening, it will be termed 'awakening according to the nature of Tathagata.'*

SOKEI-AN SAYS:

This is the most profound aspect of Buddhism. It is really the conclusion of Buddhistic attainment. But these lines can be misleading to those who do not read them with the utmost care. For instance, it is written here: "Heaven and hell pertain to the same Pure Land." This is mysterious! This is called "The Ten Contrasting Things." If you try to observe these "things" from a dualistic view you will fail to grasp the meaning.

In Buddhism there is another standpoint beside the dualistic one. It transcends good and bad, pure and impure, etc. "But mans' original nature is bad—therefore it must be made good!" This is dualism. "Well then—what do you say?"

There is a tree in my garden. Is the nature of this tree good or bad? But a tree is not a human being; unlike a tree or a stone, the human being must have a moral nature. The true nature of all

sentient beings is absolutely pure. It is immaculate. But this "immaculate" means neither good nor bad.

The dualistic view makes all the trouble for those who see the world in two different terms: good or bad. Such a narrow view—as a man who would say to an earthquake, "Sir, you are very bad!" The earthquake would answer, "My dear Sir, if you could understand my state, you would know that I am neither good nor bad—I am just an earthquake—and that is all." We call such a view "a non-stated view"; it has no moral value.

The Buddhist takes a third standpoint: good and bad have equal value. From the standpoint of consciousness itself—both good and bad are good. In the creation of the Dharma, everything comes together as one family. So, from this third standpoint, good and bad has one and the same value. When you observe Oriental people, you will understand this; when we observe Western people we must understand their dualism.

Hell and heaven exist only in your own mind; they are psychological existences. Mind exists in your consciousness. Consciousness is like a mirror taking all the reflections of the outside. But the consciousness is not stained by the reflections.

Once, when I went into the autumn woods, I became very thirsty. I sought and found a pool which looked as if it were tinted red by the autumn leaves. But when I scooped it up in my hands—it was pure, transparent water! So, the consciousness remains unstained by the reflected color.

Good and bad also exist only in the mind—not outside. You may think a venomous snake is bad—but the snake could say, "Sir, I am biting you as a good deed!" It is the snake who has the standpoint of consciousness: good and bad are both good. If you can take this ultimate view your mind will become broad and you will accept everything.

"*O Obedient One! Awareness of all hindrances is itself ultimate awakening.*" One thinks, "I am enlightened now!" He only thinks he is enlightened. This type of thought is a "hindrance." There are many kinds of hindrances. Sometimes we are aware of them—but mostly we are not. If a fencer has the thought, "I must defend myself" —this thought can become such a hindrance that he cannot attack his opponent.

"*Unawareness of one's state of mind and awareness of one's state of mind are, after all, states of emancipated mind.*" "Unawareness" is like absence of mind; when you are absent-minded, your wisdom shines brightly—clearly like the moon.

Awareness covers the bright moon—your mind doesn't function.

"*Both the creation of the Dharma and the destruction thereof occur in the state of Nirvana.*" This Dharma world—the world of relationships created by yourself and destroyed by death— fundamentally exists in the state of Nirvana, the great ocean of the soul. It doesn't belong to you!

"*Knowledge of the Dharma and ignorance thereof are both termed Prajna. The Dharma attained by a Bodhisattva and that attained by a heretic are both* Bodhi." —Religious truth attained by Buddhists and Christians are both true knowledge. A man may drink this water or not—but the water exists and it is true water. So, when you come into this neutral state all is *Bodhi*. You associate equally with all.

"*The state of* Avidya" —Darkness—like the mind of an infant. But the Buddhist has another explanation: When you observe everything by your own notion, philosophy, fiction, you never see the true thing as it is. Then your mind is in the state of *Avidya*, even though you are no longer a child.

"*... and that of Tathata are one and the same. All the practices of* Sila, Samadhi, *and* Jnana, *and those of passion, anger, and ignorance as well, are the practice of pure deeds.*" --- *Sila* is commandment. There are five commandments: You shall not kill, shall not steal, shall not practice impure deeds—adultery, shall not get drunk, shall not lie. *Samadhi* is attained by meditation. *Jnana* is wisdom—the result of meditation. By following the commandments, you acquire a calm mind and good conduct. Then the calm mind, in meditation, reaches *Samadhi*; and from *Samadhi* you attain *Jnana* wisdom.

"*Sentient beings and the earth pertain to the same* Dharmata. *Heaven and Hell pertain to the same Pure Land. Sentient and insentient beings,* gotra *and* agotra, *alike will realize the law of Buddha.*" —"*Gotra*" is the nature which can accept four different kinds of religion; "*Agotra*" is the man who cannot accept any type of religion.

"*The state of all sufferings is that of emancipation. The wisdom of the sea of Dharma and the phenomena illumined by this wisdom are as empty as the sky.*" —In this ultimate wisdom, all is empty.

"*If you have attained this state of awakening, it will be termed 'awakening according to the nature of Tathagata.*'" —The awakening of the Buddha himself.

TALES OF HAKUIN'S FOLLOWERS

(Part 3)

Hakuin Ekaku (1686-1769) is generally acknowledged as the key figure in formulating the Japanese Rinzai school of Zen as we know it today. The following anecdotes are taken from *Hakuin monka itsuwasen* (*Tales of Hakuin's Followers*), a translation into modern Japanese of *Keikyokusôdan* (*Tales From the Forest of Thorns*), composed in 1829 by Hakuin's fourth-generation disciple Myôki Seiteki (1774-1848) and published in 1843. *Tales of Hakuin's Followers*, which along with the modern Japanese-language version includes notes, the original Sino-Japanese (*kanbun)* text and its reading into classical Japanese (*yomikudashi*), was prepared by Nônin Kôdô and issued in 2008 in Kyoto by Hanazono University's Zen bunka kenkyûjo (Institute for the Study of Zen Culture).

Master Suiô Genrô[1] was born in Shimotsuke (Tochigi Prefecture) ... Though by nature fond of wine, he was a man of superior talent. At age twenty-nine Genrô first met Hakuin, who perceived his endowment to be out of the ordinary and subjected him to severe and painful Zen training. Genrô's private interviews with Hakuin were always conducted in the dead of night, so his traces were invisile to others. He studied some twenty years under Hakuin, but the loftiness of his wisdom remained concealed, swallowed up among the other monks of the assembly.

Genrô secluded himself in a hut at Ashihara, some thirty ri[2] from Hakuin's temple [Shôinji]. Unless a lecture day were scheduled, Genrô would never go there. And when there was a lecture, he would leave as soon as it was over,.

On one such day Hakuin summoned Genrô, but the attendant he sent was unable to find him. "Genrô has already left," someone told the attendant, who promptly pursued and overtook Genrô and told him, "The master has sent for you. Hurry back!"

Genrô replied, "The master is doing the summoning--not me," and sweeping his sleeves he continued on his way.

Such was Genrô's typically highhanded attitude. He had no truck with trifling matters, gave no heed to trivial things. He neither did zazen nor recited sutras. He had no fixed abode, but would stretch out and sleep wherever he found himself. When

[1] 1717-1789. Genrô became one of Hakuin's noted Dharma heirs.

[2] Approximately 73 miles.

drunk he considered himself happy. He loved to play *go* and to paint. And so he drifted along at his ease, wholly content, and no one could tell whether he was a fool or a sage.

...When [in 1764] Genrô recieved advanced rank at Myôshinji, he selected his own formal teaching name,[3] Suiô, "Drunken Old Man." Asked about this by the priest at the sponsoring Myôshinji subtemple, Genrô replied, "Because I'm fond of drinking. That's why."

The priest responded that such a name seemed highly inappropriate. He suggested instead substituting another similar-sounding Chinese character, meaning to attain, or accomplish, in place of the character "drunken."

Genrô relied, "That's all right, too."

Following the ceremony, Genrô traveled to Osaka, finally returning to Shôinji and offering [Hakuin] the following poem:

On a morning in the sixth month of the first year of Meiwa[4]
I accorded with hallowed tradition at the founder's pagoda[5]
Now in the twelfth month
I've come back to serve as abbot of my ramshackle temple
Having emptied completely the karmic winds,
I'm letting them blow as they will

After the ceremony, Genrô did not seek to stay with Hakuin, but lived in solitude at Ashihara for three years. As Hakuin's health deteriorated, however, he returned to [Shôinji] and attended the master by his bedside till Hakuin passed away. Genrô then assumed [Shoinji']s abbacy but, willful and wayward as ever, refused to concern himself with temple affairs. To anyone who came and asked for instruction in Zen, he replied, "What do I know? Go study with Tôrei!"[6]

...In the summer [of 1789] Master Gasan[7] was to lecture on the *Blue Cliff Record* at Rinjôin in Edo. The master wished to go

[3] A "new" Buddhist name was assigned when one formally became a Myôshinji-line Zen master, and this name then preceeded one's earlier Buddhist name. Here, Genro has chosen his own name.

[4] July 1764 by Western reckoning.

[5] Misshô-an, the pagoda of Myôshinji's founder Kanzan Egan (1277-1310). Genrô is alluding here to the ceremony in which he received the advanced rank of *dai ichizo* (a.r., *dai ichiza*) at Myôshinji and paid his respects at Kanzan's pagoda.

[6] Tôrei Enji, one of Hakuin's principal heirs, referred to earlier.

[7] Gasan Jitô (1727-1797) another of Hakuin's important dharma heirs.

but [because of his precarious health] the monks of the temple sought to dissuade him.

Genrô told them, "It's my duty to the teaching," and set off for Edo. On the way there, however, Genrô suffered from heat exposure, and returning to his temple in the sixth month, he was confined with illness to his bed and never rose from it again. He had taught the Dharma for some sixteen years.

On the twentieth day of the twelfth month of the first year of Kansei (1789), the master's attendant monk begged him for a final verse. Genrô scolded him, but the attendant returned again with the same request. Genrô wrote:

After seventy-three years deceiving buddhas and patriarchs
What do I do for a final verse?
Katsu![1]

Genrô then shut his eyes, turned on his side, and passed away.
(P.48, No. 19, 176-181)

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Three-Hundred-Mile-Tiger

Sokei-an's commentary on

The Record of Lin Chi

Discourse XIV, Lecture 1

Someone asked, "What is true understanding?"
The Master said: "Entering into all circumstances-into the secular, into the sacred, into the impure, into the pure, into all buddha states, into the Tower of Maitreya and the Field of Vairocana you manifest all the worlds of birth, growth, decay, and annihilation.

"Buddha came to this world and turned the Great Wheel of Dharma and entered into nirvana, yet there is no trace of him coming or going. To seek the evidence of his birth and death is impossible. Thus you enter into the Birthless Dharma World traveling about in various states, and as you enter the Lotus Treasury, you prove that all existence is nothing but emptiness, that there is

[1] CH: *HO*! The shout frequently eployed by Zen masters and associated with Rinzai Zen's Chinese founder, Lin-chi I-hsuan (J:Rinzai Gigen, d.866).

no actual existence. There is only the one who is not dependent upon anything and listens to my sermon. That one is the mother of all Buddhas. Therefore, a buddha is born not dependent upon anything. Awaken to not being dependent upon anything . . .

"If your understanding is like this, it is true understanding."

SOKEI-AN SAYS:

In this passage, Lin-chi is observing buddha-nature from the point of view of dharmakaya-essential existence, an important term in Buddhism. According to this view, *dharmakaya* entered the world incarnated in the body of Shakyamuni Buddha and then entered nirvana. But there was no trace by which to grasp that evidence, just as there is no evidence of the shadow of the bamboo in the moonlight sweeping the dust from a veranda. Even though this world is born, grows, decays, and is eventually annihilated, nothing has ever happened. This *dharmakaya* point of view is most important. However, even some Buddhists complain there is too much attachment to this view, that there is not enough attention to the actual existence of the body. Even though *dharmakaya* is usually explained as the essential "body" (*kaya*), to grasp its real nature you must take *sanzen*. In the study of koans, you will find the real basis upon which to depend.

Someone asked, "What is true understanding?" This is Lin-chi's favorite topic. In the Zen school we ask this question, while other religions ask, "What is God?" One question is observed from the outside, the other from the inside. The Buddhist sometimes must understand first and then gain faith. The Christian creates faith first and then tries to understand God.

The Master said: "Entering into all circumstances into the secular, into the sacred, into the impure, into the pure, into all buddha states, into the Tower of Maitreya and the Field of Vairocana you manifest all the worlds of birth, growth, decay, and annihilation." This "you," of course, is not the one who has a Selfish and egoistic attitude. This "you" is one with the universe; it enters into all circumstances. A Christian might say God emanating throughout multifold directions enters all circumstances; but the Zen student says "I" enter into all circumstances. Lin-chi has his own particular observations to make about entering into everything. Others think that the power of God would never extend into the secular or profane, only into pureness.

The tower of Maitreya is the heart of egolessness, tranquillity, love and no differentiation. And the field of Vairocana, the sun, is

the manifested state of oneness of the unmanifested God. The field is his body, existing in substance but not as color and form. The whole universe is manifested through your mind as the light of Vairochana. It emanates through your mind and you see the whole world. The reality you are now feeling is not color, not form: the mountain is transparent, the water in the river is transparent; the wind, rain, and fire are all transparent. You see color and form in this transparency: noumenon is the body, and the variety is noumena, so we cannot grasp it as phenomena. But pure wisdom will grasp it (see it) and will know that there is just one noumenon. Our eyes see color in it, but it is not there, it is in the eyes. It is the same in all the senses. Through you this world manifests. If your mind is like a devil, then all the world is evil. You will see each one's devilish nature. If you are a gambler, you will see all as gambling. You see everything from your own standpoint. But if you are a Buddhist, everything is seen as emanating from *dharmakaya*.

All these symbols and elements, of course, are in ourselves, and we enter into all these states. If you understand this, you will not be afraid of entering. Someone will say, "Oh, I must not think anything like that!" But he, of course, has been thinking it a long time. And anyone who practices without knowing the principle behind his practice is like a monkey in human garments playing on the stage. Good and bad conduct is important to human life, but to know the principle is more important. To know the principle and not use it is like having a million dollars and not using it. So when you can enter into all these states, that is true understanding. This is not only the highest and purest state but also all evil and profane states. To save the one who is in a ditch, one must know his condition.

"Buddha came to this world and turned the Great Wheel of Dharma and entered into nirvana, yet there is no trace of him coming or going. To seek the evidence of his birth and death is impossible." In the transparent sky there was a transparent bird, can you trace the flight of this bird? Nothing has happened! This is the *dharmakaya* observation.

To have tranquillity in your life, you must understand this view, and though you are living in this manifested world attached, suffering, screaming you must know that really there is nothing! There is nothing to attach to. But do not hesitate, go ahead, attach. Do not take a false attitude. Attach knowing there is nothing. If you once experience it, you will truly understand *dharmakaya*. You will be delivered from your old egoistic self. You will have a new birth, a new body and mind. The Christian is baptized with water, but the Buddhist is baptized with this nothingness!

"Thus you enter into the Birthless Dharma World traveling

about in various states . . ." States of every kind, from the immaterial (insentient) to the mental (sentient). But he is in the world of essence, which is non-existent. He is at home yet travels. He travels yet stays at home. Very queer! He is sitting upon a chair yet running around the world; such an impossible one!

"As you enter the Lotus Treasury, you prove that all existence is nothing but emptiness, that there is no actual existence. All is reduced to One, so nothing really exists. Every fish tastes the salt in the ocean but does not notice it.

The "Lotus Treasury" is the world womb. It is the receptacle or store-house of everything. "All existence" is the essential body of God (Vairocana) who divided his body into numberless lotus flowers. Vairocana or God manifests his own form upon each individual lotus flower, and every god who stands upon each flower is exactly the same as the God of the Universal Vairocana in his form, nature, and virtue. The Lotus Treasury includes all these millions of lotus flowers with each minor god upon it. This is the world or womb of the holy lotus. It is the symbol of the One Consciousness, *sambhogakaya*, one god divided into millions of individual gods. In Christianity, God is spirit and each soul is emanated from the soul of God. In Buddhism, all is emanated spirit, all is exactly the same nature, individual but one. Actually, all these individual gods are manifested states of one consciousness; and as they respond to those states, they transform their bodies sometimes to a smiling god, or sometimes to an angry god, or a sympathetic god. There are many different figures representing this transformation, but the greatest one is Avalokiteshvara. Avalokiteshvara transforms into millions of different bodies, but all are one consciousness. It is from this standpoint that we observe all individual existence. This is the main column of Buddhist morality.

"There is only the one who is not dependent upon anything and listens to my sermon." He is spontaneously born, and like God himself does not depend upon anything.

Man always relies upon something, but not God. He creates the law directly from his own mind, spontaneously. But man must be like God in some way, for Consciousness is originally the same, like Vairocana, omnipresent Buddha. If you understand this, you will grasp the ultimatum of Buddhism.

Who is listening to the sermon? A Zen master often asks this question of his disciples. When Yang-shan went to Tan-yuan and asked him how to save oneself from the bottomless well, Tan-yuan said: "Fool! Idiot! *Who* is in the well?" "Ah . . . " said Yang-shan, but he did not grasp it exactly, so he went to Kuei-shan with

the same question. Kuei-shan said, "Ah!" "Yes?" "Did you come out?" Who answered, "Yes?" From whence came the answer?

So *that one* listening to the sermon, who is that? Do you know his name? *"That one . . ."* says Lin-chi, *". . . is the mother of all Buddhas."* Transcendent wisdom? Sasaki? Yes? *That one* is the Mother.

A Zen master asked, "What's the sound outside the gate?' The monk said, "Rain." The master said: "The Buddha taught us that all are inverted, deluded by the outside. What is the rain? Who listens?"

This is an interesting koan. It is hard to grasp it in the Zen room. One must open the Eye of *prajna*, the Eye of Wisdom, the Mother of all Buddhas.

"Therefore, a buddha is born not dependent upon anything. Awaken to not being dependent upon anything . . ." It is spontaneous but not blind.

"If your understanding is like this, it is true understanding." So how do you manage yourself in daily life? You dig deeply into your nature and scrape out your mind and kill every worm in it. No one can help you with this. You must do it yourself. Dig a little deeper every day until you hear the real voice of *tathagata*!

It is said when you are near to the mountain, you will hear the sound of the wind. When you are near to the sea, you will hear the sound of the waves. When you are near to tathagata, you will hear the sound of one hand. The sound cannot be proved, cannot depend upon anything, but you will understand.

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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. The previous sections, therefore, concerned Japanese Zen during the late middle ages, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. "Tokugawa Zen" deals with the Zen of Bankei's own period and how it emerged amid the changed conditions of the new age. The Tokugawa period, which lasted from approximately 1600 to 1867, was of key importance in the development of Rinzai and Soto Zen as we know them today, and many of the features of Japanese Zen that we now take for granted evolved during the more than two and one half centuries of rule by the Tokugawa shoguns. Bankei's age, the seventeenth century, is a particular focus of this section. Bankei was an original and highly individual teacher, but as will be seen, he shared many characteristics with other Zen teachers of his day, not least the very originality and individualism of his approach. The concluding section, "Bankei's Story," will detail Bankei's biography and the manner in which he arrived at his distinctive teaching of the unborn Buddha Mind

TOKUGAWA ZEN (Part III, #8)

(Continued from the Winter '13 Zen Notes)

Early Tokugawa Zen

At Daitokuji, in spring of 1628, the Zen Master Takuan Soho joined with several colleagues in drafting a detailed response that attempted to counter certain of the charges and assumptions of the Genna decree. The principal target of Takuan's criticism is the second article of the code and particularly its mention of "thirty years" study and completion of "seventeen hundred koans" as necessary conditions for abbacy. The figure "seventeen hundred," Takuan points out, is only a general number, derived from the number of Zen teachers mentioned in the Sung Zen record *Chingte Era Transmission of the Lamp*. It is not to be taken literally, and does not correspond to any established course of koan

study in Japanese Zen. Zen attainment cannot be quantified in terms of the number of koans one has passed, Takuan observes. By truly mastering a single koan, one has mastered them all. The same is true of the code's stipulation that a Zen master's training must continue for "thirty years." This, too, Takuan says, constitutes a misunderstanding of the real nature of Zen practice, as both the number of koans taken up and the length of time one spends in study vary with the individual. To illustrate his point, Takuan adduces the careers of various revered Medieval Japanese masters who, he implies, would have failed to meet the code's artificially rigid standard. Daito, for example, completed only one hundred eighty koans, Takuan says; his heir, Tetto, a mere eighty eight; similarly Daio, Hotto Kokushi, Shoichi Kokushi, Muso and Daito himself all spent less than thirty years under their particular teachers before receiving sanction. Were one to adhere to a thirty-year required period Takuan argues, only old monks could qualify as Zen teachers, and they would lack the time necessary to produce suitable heirs; man's span is, after all, limited, and some gifted masters may, like Kanzan, die young. Above all, Takuan insists that the essence of Zen realization--that is, enlightenment itself--is not dependent on either koans or years of study:

> "*...The Zen school has its own special transmission--it doesn't necessarily depend on koans. Precisely because of this, there have been many in the past who, even after mastering koans, failed to obtain* inka.
>
> "*During the Sung dynasty, there were many Confucian officials who studied Zen. But because they were widely learned, greatly imbued with the teachings of all the various schools of thought, they were unable to concentrate their practice. They were therefore given one koan, and by centering their practice on this basic koan, they received an aid in their practice and readily penetrated the truth of Zen. Studying koans, therefore, is for the purpose of bringing forth enlightenment. Once enlightenment has been realized, it is senseless to go on studying koans; so at that time, one is considered to have finished his training. All the words of the buddhas and patriarchs constitute koans, and one could not hope to finish with them even after five or seven lifetimes of study! Hence, finishing one's training does not mean that one has studied all the koans. ln the past, attaining enlightenment was considered to mark the end of one's training, just as one needs a raft to cross a stream, but once having reached the other shore, the boat can be forgotten. Enlightenment is not necessarily dependent on koans or on the number of years one spends in practice--it is [sudden] as a spark struck from flint or a flash of lightening. Once having finished his koan study, an accomplished teacher can, whether he's finished fifty or one hundred koans, thoroughly realize the teachings of the buddhas and patriarchs using the wisdom that realizing one thing, illumines ten thousand .... The fact that monks nowadays are studying more koans than the accomplished teachers of the past and*

declare themselves to have studied a large number of them in no way means that they are superior to the worthies of long ago! When out of ten koans, a person can, by realizing two or three, realize the remaining seven as well, that constitutes widely pervading wisdom. However, if he cannot gain realization unless he goes through ten out of ten, that means he is inferior to his wise predecessors. As I have noted above, the number of years of study completed by the accomplished teachers of the past might be merely five, six or seven. If they'd had to complete seventeen hundred koans it would have been impossible in five or six years, even for an accomplished teacher! I don't know about the practice in other establishments, but here in our temple, the course of study is twenty years. There's, nothing either now or in the past about needing thirty years of study....

In his letter, Takuan seeks to assure the Bakufu that Daitokuji is not attempting to oppose the government's policies, but merely to act in accordance with its own time-honored traditions. Although presented in a mixture of *kana* and Chinese characters, rather than the more formal Chinese in which petitions to the authorities were generally inscribed, Takuan's letter is nowhere disrespectful toward the Bakufu, and its tone tends to be informative rather than confrontational. Nevertheless, the Bakufu was provoked by both the letter's irregular style and its questioning of an official directive bearing the seals of both Tokugawa Ieyasu and Daitokuji's current abbot. The Zen priest Suden, who had drafted the decree, was particularly incensed and demanded that Takuan be punished severely. Despite the Tendai Priest Tenkai's efforts to intervene and engineer a quiet settlement of the problem, at Suden's insistence, Takuan was exiled in 1629 together with several other Daitokuji and Myoshinji monks who had joined in protesting the Genna decree.

The two temples, meanwhile, had continued to directly bestow imperial abbacies in their traditional manner, in defiance of Suden and the Bakufu. They were abetted in this by the Emperor Go Mizunoo, a supporter of both establishments and a patron of many Daio-line priests, including Takuan and Gudo Toshoku. In 1627, the Bakufu issued a general code for all the Imperial temples included a provision governing the imperial purple robe abbacy and announced punishments for violators of the Genna decree. Fifteen monks of Daitokuji and Myoshinji who, in the interim, had " illegally" received imperial abbacies were deprived of their purple robes and had their imperially-issued sanctions confiscated. In the end, both temples were compelled to submit to the will of the Bakufu, as was Go Mizunoo himself, who was forced to abdicate in what is sometimes termed the "purple robe incident." Suden's role in the events surrounding the Daitokuji and Myoshinji decrees can be variously interpreted. Suden was not only one of Ieyasu's principal lieutenants, but the last important Gozan

priest and the last Rinzai *soroku*, or administrative head of the Gozan. It is difficult to judge whether, in framing the Genna codes, Suden was influenced by a desire to champion the interests of the *sorin* at the expense of the *rinka* groups such as the Daio line which had been its chief rivals during the late Middle Ages. The statement in article two of the Daitokuji and Myoshinji codes, for example, calling for mastery of "seventeen hundred koans," appears only in the decree for these two organizations while the requirement for "thirty years" study of Zen is found exclusively in the codes directed to the *rinka* groups i.e., the Daitokuji, Myoshinji, Eiheiji, Sojiji, and Soto-shu decrees. By contrast, the Gozan codes contain no such statements.

Tamamura has suggested that Suden's Daitokuji and Myoshinji decrees reflect the influence of the *missan*-style Genju line Zen that still pervaded the Gozan temples of his day as a legacy of the Sengoku period. The codes' mention of "seventeen hundred koans," he proposes, alludes to the quantitative approach to koan study that distinguished *missan* Zen, each sect maintaining its own "schedule" of koans to be mastered during an extended period of study. Tamamura concedes there is no evidence that Suden himself received the Genju-line *inka*, but he points out that many of his important colleagues in the Gozan priesthood are known to have done so, and contends that in the Daitokuji and Myoshinji codes Suden was affirming the missan Zen of the late medieval Gozan. It is those items suggestive of *missan* practice, he observes, that aroused the strongest opposition in the Daio line temples and became the focus of Takuan's argument in his letter of protest to the Tokugawa authorities. Consequently, Tamamura argues that much of the controversy surrounding the Daitokuji and Myoshinji codes was a product of the "hardliners" rejection of *missan* Zen. Takuan's letter is not contesting merely the provisions of the Daitokuji decree but the *missan* system itself.

While intriguing, Tamamura's arguments for the existence of a *missan* Zen orientation in the Daitokuji and Myoshinji decrees are not finally proven, and rest on evidence that seems, at best, ambiguous. Although Suden was a leading figure in the *sorin*, his primary role was as political advisor to the shogunate, and the object of the temple code was, in essence, no different from that of the secular legislation he authored: namely, to assert the Bakufu's absolute monopoly of power in all spheres of Japanese society and to eliminate any independent centers of authority that might be seen to challenge, even symbolically, that monopoly. Similarly, despite the events of the "purple robe incident," there is little to support any inference of an underlying friction between the Bakufu and the Daio line during the early Tokugawa period. In 1633, the imperial purple robe abbacy at the Daitokuji and Myoshinji was, in fact, restored by the Shogunate to its original form. And Takuan

himself was not only pardoned for his erstwhile opposition to the decree, but became a favorite of the Shogun Iemitsu. As previously noted, lemitsu even sought, albeit unsuccessfully, to employ Takuan in an advisory capacity similar to that of Suden. As in the case of the Daio line temples' relationship with the Ashikagas, it is probably an error to draw any far-reaching conclusions on the basis of specific strains in the ongoing relationship between Daitokuji and Myoshinji and the Tokugawa regime. Like the orthodox Neo-Confucian scholars of the Japanese Chu-hsi school, the Daio line monks of the Tokugawa period were generally members of the "establishment." They preached the Confucian-inspired virtues of the feudal ethic, enjoyed the patronage of leading Tokugawa retainers, and even participated in the government's anti-Christian campaign. In functioning as part of the "system," the Otokan priesthood was only following a pattern typical of all Tokugawa organizations.

Nevertheless, it has been suggested that this "establishment" role combined with the stringent regulations imposed on the temples by the Bakufu to stultify Tokugawa Zen and render it virtually moribund. Such arguments may explain why there has at times been a tendency to dismiss Tokugawa Zen, to treat it as a relatively undistinguished or minor chapter in the overall history of the sect in Japan. Yet this sort of negative assessment, probably reinforced by the anti-Buddhist rhetoric of certain Confucian scholars of the day, is belied by the rich and varied complexion of the Zen sect during the early Edo period. Indeed, despite the ostensibly repressive character of Tokugawa society as a whole and the pervasive pressures for conformity and obedience within the temples, the seventeenth century was, for many segments of the Zen school, a time of active development and creativity, a lively period of debate, ferment, self-examination and experimentation unparalleled in the history of Japanese Zen.

* * *

As a religion, Zen in the seventeenth century was in a state of crisis. Many monks had begun to repudiate the legacy of the late Muromachi period, to critically examine the present condition of the sect and to question the direction it should take in the new age. The *missan* secret oral transmission, it is true, continued a vestigial existence at Daitokuji, the Kyoto and Kamakura Gozan and certain Soto monasteries. But elsewhere the temples of both sects witnessed a strong reaction against the Zen of the late Middle Ages, accompanied by a surge of idealism aimed at restoring the authentic teachings of the school, teachings that were felt to have become defunct in the preceding age. It is difficult to determine the precise moment at which this movement emerged, and even its causes remain obscure. Why, for example, did it occur at this par-

ticular juncture?

Several possible explanations suggest themselves. As noted previously, every major change in the power structure in premodern Japan witnessed correspondingly important changes in the character of Japanese Zen, and the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate was no exception. It seems likely that many of the changes appearing in seventeenth-century Zen were linked to the different social and economic conditions of Japan under the "Pax Tokugawa," though the exact connections are unclear. To some extent Zen also found itself on the defensive, as did the other Buddhist sects, forced to respond to the anti-Buddhist attacks of the Confucians by actively "cleaning house," carrying out internal reforms and revitalizing its practice. The impulse to self-scrutiny may also have been prompted by loss of the privileged official status which elements of the Zen sect had enjoyed under the Ashikagas. Deprived of much of its former glory, Zen in Japan may have been forced to take stock and reflect on its original mission and teachings. Then, too, the seventeenth century was a time of new beginnings in many areas of Japanese life, including commerce, literature and art, and the Zen monks of the revival movement may have shared in this "national" spirit of renewal, fashioning a more promising form of Zen suitable to the new age.

While never numerous, such reform-minded monks were significant and frequently influential figures, and formed a conspicuous feature of early Tokugawa Zen. Though advocating varied methods and approaches, they shared a common conviction that Zen had been corrupted during the late Muromachi period, leaving the survival of the teaching seriously, perhaps mortally, endangered. Repeatedly, one hears the lament that the authentic Zen transmission has ceased to exist in Japan and enlightened teachers are no longer to be found. Choon's complaint that "for two hundred years the lamp of Zen has been extinguished...." is typical, as is Mangen's statement that the teaching has been in decline since the Onin era, approximately the same span of time. In fact, "two hundred years" is the time period commonly cited by early Tokugawa monks to mark the decline, or expiration of the Zen teaching.

While they agreed on the importance of the problem they confronted, however, the reformers had very different assessments of its causes and solutions. At issue, for both individual monks and their teaching lines, was the problem of how to proceed, given what they viewed as the long rupture in the authentic transmission and the accompanying deterioration in the quality of the priesthood. Generally speaking, dissatisfaction with the state of Zen led early Tokugawa monk reformers either to evolve new approaches and forms or to revive old ones that had fallen into decline. Thus, for

some, the answer was to start afresh, to devise new modes of teaching and practice in accordance with the circumstances of the age, relying not on precedent or even on other teachers, but operating on their own, as the historical Buddha himself had done. For others, the solution to the difficulties facing Zen lay in returning to the ways of the medieval founders, reasserting the original vision of the early Japanese Zen teachers. Different aspects of the legacy might be emphasized, some monks stressing the primacy of the enlightenment experience itself and some the importance of formal, procedural elements. Yet others meanwhile, looked to new transmissions of Zen from the continent, and hailed the arrival of Ming masters in the midseventeenth century as a cure for the decayed condition of Japanese Zen.

These different approaches were not, however, mutually exclusive, and within each there existed countless syntheses and variations. Early Tokugawa Zen was never a unified, coherent whole, but embodied a plethora of different streams, alternately mingling and diverging, but all representing varied solutions to the problem of how to restore the teaching after two centuries of protracted decline. In addition, though their teachings might differ, nearly all the monks identified with the revival of Japanese Zen in the seventeenth century were affiliated with one or another of the two leading Zen organizations of the period--the Soto line of Dogen, with headquarters in Eiheiji and Sojiji, and the Myoshinji Kanzan line. As in the Middle Ages, however, it is misleading to conceive of a distinct or uniform Rinzai and Soto Zen existing in early Tokugawa Japan. The seventeenth century was, above all, a formative period, in which new identities were being forged within the schools and the nature of Zen practice and enlightenment itself were being hotly debated within each sect. Just as the complexities of Muromachi Zen can be described more accurately by the terms *sorin* and *rinka* than by the sectarian classifications "Rinzai" and "Soto," the Zen of the early Tokugawa period is perhaps best understood by reference to general trends, or "currents," rather than to particular schools. What follows is an attempt to outline some of the most important of these trends as embodied in the teachings and careers of noted Zen monks of the period.

Cover

Unidentified bodhisattva at base of a 6th century pillar in the Dunhuang caves in western China.

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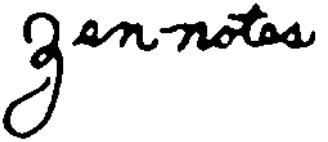

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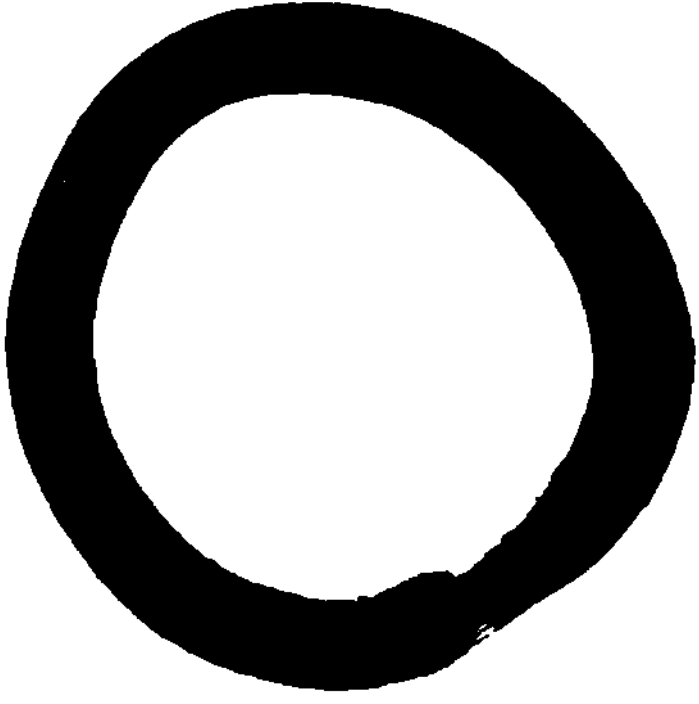

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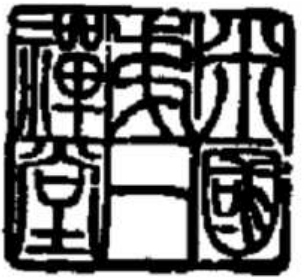

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