



Shin'ichi Hisamatsu (1889-1980),  
'Chan: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization'

From: *The Eastern Buddhist*, volume 1, No. 1, September 1965, pp. 22-47  
(revised by G. Tokiwa, March 2005)

<http://www.fas.x0.com/writings/hisamatsu/chanitimeaningformodernchivilization.html>

## **CHAN: ITS MEANING FOR MODERN CIVILIZATION**

*by Hisamatsu Shin'Ichi*

### **1. Chan means Emancipation and Construction [1]**

As to the question, "What is Chan?" [2] if one is to be brief, it may perhaps suffice to utter just one word or, indeed, to utter no word at all. If, however, one is to elaborate, it may be said that no amount of elaboration can ever prove to be exhaustive. The intention here, however, is to be as simple and as plain as possible.

In the common view, Chan is a school of Buddhism which was founded by Bodhidharma in the sixth century in China. Speaking from the side of Chan, however, Chan is not one particular school within Buddhism; it is, rather, the root-source of Buddhism. There is a good reason for this.

Each of the various schools of Buddhism has a basic expression to characterize its fundamental teaching. Chan's basic expression, dating from the early period of Chan's introduction into China and attributed to Bodhidharma, is: [3]

"Not relying on words or letters,  
An independent Self-transmitting apart from any teaching;  
Directly pointing to man's Mind, having them  
See their (Original-) Nature and actualize the Buddhahood."

This expression attempted at once to do several things : to criticize and to break through radically the kind of Buddhism prevalent in China at the time of the rise of Chan; to express verbally the true nature of Buddhism; to return to the true source of Buddhism and to produce anew, therefrom, a genuine Buddhist creation.

This mode of creative criticism raised by Chan Buddhism fifteen centuries ago may provide a suggestive precedent not only for present-day Buddhism but also for present-day religion in general. For it is an authentic and appropriate way to revive and make fully alive again religions which have succumbed to formalization and conventionalization.

As regards the first part of Chan's basic expression, "Not relying on words," this is not to be taken simply literally. "Not relying on words" does not mean the complete negation (as ordinarily understood) of words. Rather, it is to be taken to mean "prior to words" in the sense of not depending on words, not being bound or caught by words. It must be explained that as here used the term "words" refers to the Buddhist sutras, which are all expressed in words. Ordinarily, the Buddhist sutras are treated as records of the oral expositions of Shakyamuni and are considered to be the source of and the authority for Buddhism. Today, however, modern research into the historical actualities of the compilation of the scriptures has made clear that what is spoken of as the sutras are not all the direct discourses of Shakyamuni, but also include sutras which were composed many centuries after Shakyamuni. Until this realization, however, the sutras were generally regarded by Buddhists as the ultimate foundation and authority of Buddhism. When each of the various schools of Buddhism was about to be founded, the founder always sought in the sutras the final authority for the truth to be embodied in the new Buddhist form. In the traditional Buddhist view, the final norm of truth was contained in the sutras; that which had no basis in the sutras could not be called truth.

Accordingly, each Buddhist school has its own particular sutra (or sutras) as the ultimate authorization of its teaching. For example, the Kegon School has for its authoritative scripture the Avatamsaka Sutra (Huayanjing); the Tendai and the Nichiren Schools, the Saddharmapundarika Sutra; and the Pure Land School, the "three Pure Land Sutras." To prove that they are Buddhist and that their teaching is true, the various schools have recourse to their authoritative scriptures. In this regard, the same is true of Christianity. For Christianity, the Bible is the exact counterpart of the Buddhist sutras; it constitutes for Christianity the final criterion of truth and is itself absolute truth.

Chan, however, has no such authoritative sutra upon which it is based. This does not mean that it arbitrarily ignores the sutras, but rather that it dares to be independent of the sutras. Chan severely condemns that Buddhist sutra-dogmatism or sutra-magic which makes the sutras the final norm of truth. Chan rather casts off such dogmatism and magic and seeks to return to the source of the sutras -- that is, to that which is "prior to" the sutras. In this, Bodhidharma's response of "No-Merit!" [4] was a great criticism of the Buddhism of his time; indeed, it was revolutionary.

When I say here "prior to" the sutras, this "prior to" is liable to be taken temporally or historically. But, of course, I do not mean historically "prior to." I mean, rather, the source which is "prior to" the sutra expressions. In Chan, this source is expressed by the term "Mind," which is, however, radically different from what we today commonly call mind. It is, for Chan, this "Mind" which is the root-source of the sutras, and, thus "prior to" the sutras.

It is this Mind, the "Mind" as the source of the scriptures, which is meant in the previously mentioned, "Directly pointing to man's Mind, having them See their (Original-) Nature and actualize the Buddhahood." By the word Nature in "See their (Original-) Nature" is meant man's original nature, that is, one's true way of being. This is generally called, in Buddhism, Buddha-Nature or Mind-Nature. In Chan, however, it is called Self-Nature or "one's Original-Face," expressions which are far more intimate to us humans. Self-Nature is our own original human nature, and this original nature is no other than "man's Mind." For Chan, it is precisely "man's Mind" which is the "Buddha-Mind." Apart from this "Mind of man," there is nothing which is truly to be called "Buddha." Again, Buddha is not to be sought outside of this "Mind."

Consequently, "See their (Original-) Nature" means finally, that we human beings "see" man's own original nature. This does not mean "objectively" to see, to contemplate, to cognize, nor, of course, to believe in the nature of some Buddha which is wholly other to man. That is, though we say "to see one's original nature," this does not mean to see with the eyes. Nor does it mean to contemplate, as in the case of "contemplating the dharma." As Dazhu (a Chinese Chan master of the 9th century) [5] said, "the Seeing is itself the (Original-) Nature." This "seeing" is man's awakening to one's own

original nature. In Chan, apart from the one who has awakened to one's original nature, there is no Buddha to be called Buddha. It is the awakening of man's original nature which is the actualization or attainment of Buddhahood; hence, "See their Original-Nature and actualize the Buddhahood."

As is well known, the term "Buddha" means, in Sanskrit, "the Awakened-One." This "Awakening" means, again, man's awakening to one's own original nature, that is, to one's Buddha-Nature. Shakyamuni is called "Buddha" only because of his awakening to this original nature.

Returning to the matter of the Buddhist sutras, there are written within those sutras many things which are no longer acceptable today, however much one may try to make them acceptable by forced interpretations. This reminds one of Bultman's "de-mythologizing" [with which he pointed out the same problem in the Christian context]. [6] Especially today when the influence of Western religion, philosophy, and science has entered into the sphere of Buddhist influence, if one is taken up with the words of the sutras, then one is caught and bound by words expounded in the past; this, then, becomes an obstacle to an understanding of the original meaning and, consequently, it becomes impossible to give that original meaning a new and free contemporary expression. Rather than rely on what has been expressed in the past, that is, rather than rely on the sutras, it is far better to enter directly into the source "prior to" what is expressed, that is, into what is "before" the sutras. Then, equipped with the living "eyes with which to read the sutras," one can then interpret them freely and, according to the particular situation or occasion, give a new and truly spontaneous expression of their "source." So it is said, in Kumarajiva's translation of the Mahaprajna-paramita Sutra, "To use words to expound the dharma which is without words." [7]

## **2. The Chan Method**

Chan, thus, does not rely on the sutras but rather makes its main concern the direct entering into the Mind which is "prior to" the sutras. To repeat, Chan does not stand on any authoritative sutras. This, after all, is what is meant by the phrase "apart from the teaching" in the expression, "An

independent Self-transmitting apart from any teaching." This phrase, "apart from the teaching", stands in contrast to "standing within the teaching." "Teaching" here means, again, that teaching which has been established with the written sutras as its basis. In contrast to that Buddhism which relies on the sutras and is therefore said to "stand within the teaching," Chan, not relying on the sutras but entering directly into the Mind which is the source of sutras, is said to be "apart from or outside the teaching." "Apart from or outside the teaching" thus does not mean apart from or outside Buddhism; rather, it means the inner source of that which is "within the teaching." In other words, considered from the side of the sutra-expressions, Chan is "apart from," or "outside"; considered from the source of what is expressed in the sutras, Chan is rather even more "inner" than what is ordinarily called "within or inside the teaching." Thus, in contrast to that which is ordinarily considered to be "within the teaching," that which is within this ordinary "within" therefore becomes "apart from or outside the teaching." If we think in terms of base or foundation, it may therefore be said that Chan's base or foundation is that root-source which is even more "inner" than the sutras.

In fact, however, Chan does not only not rely on the sutras; it does not rely on anything.

The Record of Linji [8] has such expressions as:

"[True students of the Awakened way of being are] solitarily emancipated ;" "they rely on nothing."

This derives from the basic nature of "Mind" itself. If there were "that which relies" and "that which is relied upon," or, again, if it were just a matter of not relying on the sutras, then it would not be ultimately not relying on anything. The kind of reliance in which one has nothing to rely on but oneself as a reliance, is a true reliance. A reliance in Chan lies where relier and relied-on are nondual. In other words, that in which the relier and the relied-on are of one body, and which has no distinction between them is a true reliance. Accordingly, since there is no distinction between that which relies and that which is relied on, there is, in fact, no relying. Thus, true-relying is "not-relying." It is as Huangbo has said:

"All through the twelve divisions of the day, I don't rely on anything." [9]

In this respect, Chan greatly differs from Christianity and even from the Shin or Jodo Shin School of Buddhism. Christianity and the Shin school are religions which rely absolutely either on God or on Amida Buddha. In these religions, that which relies is always that which relies, and that which is relied upon is always that which is relied upon. Their duality is never removed. It is for this reason that Christianity is called a religion of absolute dependence and the Shin school a religion of the absolute "other power." Consequently, the understanding of man in these religions is that of a being absolutely dependent upon and supported by God (in Christianity) or Amida (in the Shin School). This is not the Chan view of man Linji has described to be "Solitarily emancipated" and "Relying on nothing." Linji has further characterized such a person as the "Non-reliant man of Awakening" and also as the "True man." He has, moreover, asserted that other than such a person there is no Buddha to be properly so called. And in a very severe statement he has declared:

"Encountering a Buddha, killing the Buddha; encountering a Patriarch, killing the Patriarch; encountering an Arhat, killing the Arhat; encountering mother or father, killing mother or father; encountering a relative, killing the relative: only thus does one attain liberation and disentanglement from all things, thereby becoming completely unfettered and free."

In a later period, Wumen Huikai (1185-1260) similarly pronounced, at the beginning of his Gateless Barrier: [10]

"Encountering a Buddha, killing the Buddha; encountering a Patriarch, killing the Patriarch: therein does one attain the Great-Freedom at the brink of life-and-death and actualize the samadhi of sportive-play in the midst of four modes of birth in the six realms of existence."

These expressions emphasize that the true person of Chan is emancipated even from Buddhas and Patriarchs; he/she is a person of absolute non-reliance -- of absolute in-dependence -- beyond the Buddhas and the Patriarchs.

In the Discourse on the Direct-Lineage of the Dharma, attributed to Bodhidharma, we read:

"Beings of perverted mind do not know that the Self-Mind is the True-Buddha. They spend the whole day in running to and fro, searching outwardly, contemplating or honoring Buddhas, and looking for the Buddha somewhere outside of themselves. They are misdirected. Just know the Self-Mind! Outside of this Mind there is no other Buddha." [11]

The Sixth Patriarch of Chan, Huineng (638-713), also says, in his Platform Sutra :

"The Self-Buddha is the True-Buddha. ... Your Self-Mind is the Buddha." [12]

Mazu [13] likewise declares:

"Outside of the Mind, no other Buddha;  
Outside of the Buddha, no other Mind." [14]

Huangbo, in his Essentials for Transmitting the Mind as the Awakened Truth, asserts:

"Your Mind is the Buddha; the Buddha is nothing but the Mind.  
Mind and Buddha are not separate or different." [15]

Yongjia, [16] in his Song of Actualizing Bodhi, says:

"In clearly seeing, there is not one single thing;  
There is neither man nor Buddha." [17]

To talk in this way may sound as if to be negating Buddha and to be extremely anti-religious. From the standpoint of Chan, however, the self which is still dependent on Buddha or his teachings is not the truly emancipated, free, self-supporting, independent Self.

The fundamental aim of Buddhism is to attain freedom from every bondage arising from the dualities of life-and-death, right-and-wrong, good-and-evil, etc. This is the meaning of ultimate emancipation as understood in Buddhism. Thoroughgoing emancipation is thus not being bound by anything, not depending on anything, not "having" anything -- that is, being in unhindered freedom from everything. The expression in the Prajna-paramita Hridaya Sutra, "The Mind has no obstruction," [18] has no other meaning than this.

Chan emphasizes, further, that this ultimate emancipation is not to be sought only as a future ideal which can not be actualized in the present. On the contrary, Chan insists upon its actualization in the present. The self that is dependent on Buddha is not yet the true Buddhist-Self, that is, is not yet the Mind spoken of in Chan. The Mind spoken of in Chan is not dependent on any Buddha or dharma outside of itself; rather, this Mind is the Buddha Itself which is the root-source of all.

In Buddhism, Buddha is considered the most honorable. But even that which is most honorable, if it is outside of us, would bind and obstruct us. When we are bound by something which is insignificant, we easily become aware of it. When we are bound by something very important and honorable, however, we tend to be blinded by it and fail to notice our bondage.

In Buddhism, however, the ultimate is for us to awaken on the Self which, not being bound by anything -- not even by its "not being bound" --, works freely. Indeed, it will be even more correct to say that just because it is not bound by - or to - anything it can work freely.

Ordinarily, the above quoted Chan phrase, "Killing the Buddha, killing the Patriarch," would be an expression of the most extreme anti-religiousness. To draw even one drop of blood from the body of a Buddha is considered by Buddhists to be one of the five deadly sins. Thus, to kill a Buddha or a Patriarch is, from the viewpoint of Buddhist faith, absolutely inadmissible. From the standpoint of Chan, however, this utterance most thoroughly expresses Chan's being "outside the teaching," which means being free even from Buddha-bondage or dharma-bondage. Indeed, this phrase is rather to be regarded as expressing the ultimate position of true faith. The

third Chan Patriarch, Sengcan, [19] meant this when he said, in his Xinxinming ("Verses on the Mind of Faith"), that: [20]

"The mind of faith is nondual;  
Nondual is the mind of faith."

In Buddhism, there are, ordinarily, innumerable forms of Buddha. In Chan, however, the true Buddha, as stated above, is the Mind which is emancipated from every kind of bondage and is completely free of all forms. Chan denies to be the true Buddha not only Buddha figures depicted on paper, in earthenware, in wood, or in metal, but even those most sublime Buddhas possessing the so-called thirty-two major and eighty minor marks of excellence. For Chan, indeed not such Buddhas as the Buddhas of the recompense body, the response body, or the transformation body are to be called the true Buddha.

In the Shin School which has as its central religious concern the Buddha-with-form called Amida Buddha, it is likewise recognized that the source of Amida is the Dharmakaya (Awakened Truth-Body), which is without form. Shinran (1173-1262), the founder of the Shin School, writes in his Yuishinshomon'i [21]:

"The Dharmakaya is without shape, without form, and, accordingly, beyond the reach of the mind, beyond description in words. That which takes form and comes forth from this Formless-Suchness is called the Upaya-dharmakaya (Expedience-Form of the Awakened Truth-Body)."

Again, in his Jinenhoni-sho, [22] which he wrote at the age of eighty-six, Shinran says:

"The Supreme Buddha is without form. Because it is without form, it is called Self-effected. When we represent it with form, it can not then be spoken of as the Supreme Nirvana. It is to make known this Ultimate Formlessness that we speak of Amida-Buddha."

Here it is made clear that the Upaya-dharmakaya expressed in form, that is, Amida-Buddha, is not the Supreme Buddha or Supreme Nirvana. Again, in the fifth book, "The True Buddha and His World," of his main work,

Kyogyoshinsho, [23] Shinran, quoting from the Larger Sutra of Eternal Life, says that attaining rebirth in the Pure Land is "enjoying the Self-effected, Unlimited Dharma Body of Emptiness." This is quite reasonable if, in the Shin School, rebirth is considered, as it should be, equivalent to attaining Nirvana. They call the attainment of Nirvana the "going aspect." Since, however, Nirvana is the Self-Nature, the Original Way of life of all beings, the attainment of Nirvana is also spoken of by Shinran (in his Yuishinsho-mon'i) as "the returning to the capital of Dharma-Nature." [24]

From this we can see clearly that a Buddha which has form is not the ultimate or true Buddha, that the true Buddha is without form. It is in this sense that for Chan the Buddha without form is the true Buddha; and it is just the true Buddha which is the true Self, the true Man. Therefore, Chan has nothing to do with idols -- and this in a most thoroughgoing fashion. Accordingly, Chan Buddhism does not worship, pray to, or believe in any Buddha with an objective form, whether material or ideational. Rather for Chan, Buddhism means awakening to the True, Formless Mind; that is, awakening to the True-Buddha. It is this awakening to the True-Buddha that Chan calls Seeing One's Nature or awakening to One's Original Face. According to Chan, it is precisely the Original Face of man -- of any one of us human beings - which is the True-Buddha. The True-Buddha is no other than the Original Way of human life, or, in other words, the True-Self. Awakening to one's Original Face is "Seeing man's Nature and becoming Buddha." By the Seeing of one's Nature we do not mean any objective contemplation, objective awareness, or objective cognition of Self-Nature or Buddha-Nature; we mean the awakening of the Self-Nature itself. Since there is no Buddha apart from this awakening, to "become Buddha" means to come to the true Self-Awakening. Thus it is that the term "Buddha" literally means "the Awakened one." Since, for Chan, there is no true Buddha outside of the one who is awakened to one's True Self, Linji calls this awakened one the "True Man." [25] All Buddha-forms, like the so-called recompense body, response body, or transformation body, are but different modes of expression of this "True Man" and have meaning only as such. It is in this sense that we can say that Chan is neither a theism which sets up a transcendent god, nor a humanism centered on man in the ordinary sense, but that it is rather "'True-Man'-ism," centered around the True Man awakened to one's Original true Self.

As has already been made clear, Chan has no reliance at all. If we are to speak of any reliance in Chan, its basic authority is the True Self, that is, the True Man. This authority, however, is to be called the reliance of no-reliance. Accordingly, the Buddhistic method of Chan is to get oneself - and to get others - to awaken to the True Self, which all humans are in their primal nature. This is what is meant by "Directly pointing to man's Mind." Chan takes its occasions or opportunities to come to this awakening not simply from within the teaching but freely and directly from life itself in its every aspect and action, such as walking, abiding, sitting, lying, hearing, seeing, raising the eye-brows, or blinking the eyes. If one looks into the Chan occasions and Chan opportunities which appear according to the different places and different times in the Chan history, this becomes clear at a glance. Such occasions and opportunities are simply too numerous to be counted. A few well known examples are: Nanquan's "Killing the cat"; [26] Zhaozhou's "Go to have a cup of tea" and his "Cypress tree in the garden" [27]; Longtan's "Blowing out of the lantern"; [28] Yunmen's "What is the meaning of wearing a clerical gown at the bell-signal?" and his "Dried dung stick"; [29] and Shoushan's "Bamboo spatula." [30] Thus, according to the time and place, Chan makes use of any of the innumerable phenomena of life as the occasion to awaken oneself or to have others awaken to one's true Self-Nature.

To seek for the Buddha externally is wrong in its very direction. Nanquan, in his Chan teaching-expression, "The Ordinary Mind is the Awakened Way," goes so far as to say to Zhaozhou, "Even to set upon the quest for awakening is to go contrariwise." [31] Linji also, using the example of Yajnadatta (a young boy of that name who once, looking into the mirror, went about searching for his real face), admonishes that in searching externally for the Buddha one only goes far and far away from the Buddha. [32] The Discourse on the Direct-Lineage of the Dharma, cited above, states that so long as one searches externally, not knowing that the Self-Mind is the Buddha, even if one is busy the whole day contemplating the Buddha and making obeisance to the Patriarchs, one misses the True-Buddha.

For Chan, that Shakyamuni is a Buddha is only because he is awakened to his True Self-Nature. And not only Shakyamuni, but anyone without exception, who is awakened to one's true Self-Nature is, for Chan, a

Buddha. Here lies the sameness quality of being a Buddha. In the Buddha-Nature every person is completely equal. The Buddha who is the mode of being only of some particular person or who is transcendent does not represent the true mode of being of the True Buddha. Conversely, the one who is not a Buddha does not represent the true mode of being of True Man. Thus it is even said that man as man truly is is Buddha, and that not being a Buddha is to be in maya or "illusion." The same is meant by the Sixth Patriarch when he says in his well-known verse :

"Originally not-a-single-thing,  
Where can dust collect?" [33]

When historians say that Shakyamuni lived in India two thousand five hundred years ago, they are referring to the Shakyamuni with form. Shakyamuni as Buddha is not the Shakyamuni who existed temporally and spatially 2500 years ago in India, but is the Formless True Person who is not delimited by time or space. In this sense Shakyamuni is the eternal "right-now," the infinite "right-here." Shakyamuni as Buddha can not be understood by those historians who would negate the Self-Buddha through their use of the categories of time and space. Shakyamuni as Buddha can be known never as an object but only as Self-Awakened Existence, as the Awakening awakened to Itself.

This means that wherever and whenever any person is awakened to one's True Self-Nature, the Buddha is there and then, Shakyamuni as Buddha is there and then. This "there and then" is the root-origin of Buddhism which is "prior to the sutras." From this root-origin there can be created newly and freely, appropriate to the time and place, dharma-expressions of the past, such as the Buddhist sutras and Buddha-images. Chan's "not relying on words" means freedom not only from the already established forms but, indeed, from every form; further, it means that while continually creating forms in Self-expression, one is not captured by those forms or by their creation. It is just in this meaning that the Vimalakirtinirdesa speaks of "On the non-abiding root does every dharma abide," [34] and that the Sixth Patriarch says, "Only with no dharma to be attained are all dharmas to be established." [35]

Chan thus may be said to have two aspects: one is the aspect of the true emptiness of the True-Self which, unbound by any form, is completely free from all forms; the other is the aspect of the wondrous working of the Self which, unbound by any form, actualizes all forms. These two aspects constitute the "substance" and "function" of the True Self. True emptiness is the "abstraction" of all forms; the wondrous working is the free formation of every form. This is the Self-expression of the absolutely Formless Self. It is here that we have the ground for the non-dualistic oneness of thoroughgoing abstraction and thoroughgoing expression. Ordinary abstraction is not completely free from form, since it is still only a stage in the process going toward the liberation from all forms. Ordinary expression is not yet a free expression which is not bound by anything, since it is still an expression deriving from some kind of form. Herein lies the Chan basis for a thoroughgoing abstract art and a thoroughgoing expressionism.

### **3. The Chan Prescription**

When Chan arose in the sixth century, much had been going on in Chinese Buddhism in the way of translations into Chinese of the sutras, the construction of Buddha images, of the building of monasteries, and the giving of offerings to the monks. Emperor Wu (464-549) of the Liang dynasty (r. 502-57) had achieved so much in the line of these Buddhist works that he was called the Buddhist-minded Son-of-Heaven. It was just during this Emperor Wu's reign that Bodhidharma came to China from India. Bodhidharma was asked by the Emperor what kind of merit he could expect from the innumerable good works which he had sponsored since his enthronement, such as the construction of monasteries, the copying of sutras, and the ordination of monks. Bodhidharma replied that all these accomplishments were of "No-Merit!" This single phrase of "No-Merit!" may be said to be a basic and thoroughgoing criticism of the mode of Buddhism of those days. For Bodhidharma, these works were trivial fruits attained within the birth-death bound cycle of samsara, and still remained causes for defilement. They were not to be regarded as ultimate realities. Upon being asked further by Emperor Wu what, then, was the true merit, Bodhidharma answered, "The Wisdom of Purity being perfect in its functioning, the Functioning Self is empty and calm." [36] What this means is that this Empty-Calm-ness is the root of all merits, the merit at the heart of all merits;

that if this is neglected, however devotedly one undertakes the construction of monasteries, the reproduction of sutras, and the ordination of monks, these achievements must be said to lack the essential point. The Empty-Calm-ness of the Functioning Self, spoken of by Bodhidharma, is nothing but the Original Face of the truly Empty-Self mentioned previously. Awakening to this Self is, for Bodhidharma, the highest merit, the essential meaning of Buddhism. This radical criticism by Bodhidharma together with the later spread of Chan brought about a great change in Chinese Buddhism, redirecting it from its diversion toward accidentals back to its basic source.

This direction toward the root-source, however, does not mean the process of going toward the root-source, but rather means, as is expressed in the Chan phrase "Directly pointing to man's Mind," directly entering into the root-source, that is, directly awakening to the Original Face of the Self. That is why direct and straightforward ways to open up this awakening came to be so greatly emphasized. The innumerable occasions of satori, that is, of Seeing one's True Nature, which appear in the history of Chan are so many instances both of this unique method and of its actual fruition in Self-Awakening.

The examples of the so-called ancient cases of koan which are recorded in and make up many of the Chan texts such as the Biyanji ("Blue-Cliff-Collection"), [37] the Congronglu, [38] the Wumenguan ("Gateless Barrier"), [39] etc., constitute no more than a very small portion of these Chan occasions. These occasions, it is to be emphasized, all involve the concrete things of the ordinary world of man, including such extremely common things of the natural world as the bamboo, the peach, the pine, the cypress, various animals such as the dog, the cat, the wild duck, the ox, and the tiger, or the daily activities of the monks – traveling about to different monasteries, begging alms, drinking tea, taking meals, taking a bath, talking, keeping silent, raising the hands, or stretching out the legs. This concreteness of the occasions, however, is no mere concreteness. As the sutra-expression "Concrete matter is itself empty" indicates, it is only the occasion according to the time and place for the direct entering into True-Emptiness; that is, this concreteness is no more than the moment for the direct awakening to the true Emptiness-Formlessness, which is the "abstraction" which emancipates concreteness. This abstractness, in turn, as

indicated by another sutra-expression "Emptiness is itself concrete matter," is not simply the negation of concreteness. It is, rather, the very basis of the turning away from the concreteness which is to be negated (that is, the false being) to the concreteness which is to be affirmed (that is, the true being).

We have said that natural things and human affairs serve as the occasions and the opportunities for Chan. There are, however, not a few instances in which phrases from the various Buddhist scriptures, such as the Vimalakirtinirdesa Sutra, the Vajracchedika Sutra, the Avatamsaka Sutra, and the Saddharmapundarika Sutra, also serve. For example, Chan makes use of the following sayings quoted or derived from Sutras :

"The Original Being, consummate and fulfilled in Itself -- Why has it gone astray and become the unawakened beings?" ([derived from the] Vimalakirtinirdesa); [40]

"To enter the Dharma-gate of Non-Duality" (Vimalakirtinirdesa, T14.530c-2a);

"The fourfold Dharma-World" ([derived from the] Avatamsaka Sutra); [41]

"Originally all pure! Why comes there to be mountains, rivers, and the great earth?" (Lengyan-jing, T19, 120a);

"Activate that Mind which abides nowhere," (Vajracchedika Sutra, T8, 749c);

"If one sees Me with form or seeks Me identifying Me with sound or voice, that one practices the wrong way and can never see the Tathagata." (Ibid., T8, 752a);

"No eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no consciousness." (Prajnaparamita Hridaya Sutra, T8, 848c).

These phrases, which are so-called "koan from inside-the-teaching," are not quoted, however, out of respect for what is written in the sutras or for the purpose of indulging in verbal exposition of the texts. Chan rather takes

over these phrases and makes them its own, using them as its own occasions and opportunities according to the requirements of the time and place. In this usage, these scriptural phrases are given a treatment completely different from the close, logical reasoning they receive in Indian Buddhism and the textual exegesis and commentaries they receive in Chinese Buddhism. The Indian and Chinese treatments are "inside-the-teaching"; the Chan treatment is a living usage "outside-the-teaching." That is, in Chan even the scriptural phrases are used as Chan's own unique and direct moments to bring about the Seeing of one's Nature and the attainment of Buddhahood through the direct pointing to man's Mind, which is at once separate from and the source of all the sutra-expressions.

Often, the occasions for the functioning of Chan take the form of mondo question-and-answer exchanges. A mondo question-and-answer exchange is not a dialectical or theoretical dialogue or discussion; nor is it of the question-and-answer mode of daily conversation. It is a kind of question-and-answer exchange wholly unique to Chan, developed for the purpose of bringing about Self-Awakening in the unawakened or, when used by the already awakened, for the purpose of taking the measure of each other's awakening. This kind of question-and-answer exchange is the total Self-hurling, so to speak, of true Emptiness-at-Work. It is the free play of Chan functioning, which takes everything and anything for its occasion depending on the time and place. It includes all the functions of man and is not, as is generally the case with ordinary questions and answers, based merely upon words. For example, there are many instances in which the mondo-exchange involves the blinking of the eyes, the raising of the eye-brows, the cupping of the ears, the raising of a fist, a blow with a stick, giving a loud shout, [42] eating a meal, drinking tea, bowing in homage, lifting up a mosquito-driver, and the like. What must be emphasized is that in this kind of mondo question-and-answer there is the vivid, dynamic Self-presentation of true Emptiness-at-Work. In short, what is being unfolded in the mondo-exchange is the direct, vigorous Chan action of having others attain or oneself attaining Awakening, that is, "directly pointing to man's Mind, having them see their Nature, and actualize Buddhahood." The uniqueness and marvelousness of the Chan mondo lies in its never being mere talk or silence, sitting or lying, drinking tea or taking a meal, using a stick or shouting; it is always the Wondrous-Working of True-Emptiness. If it were not for this -- and if this is not understood -- the Chan mondo would be

nothing but exchange of falsehoods, boasts, madness, or at best, wits or riddles.

#### **4. A Blind Spot in Modern Civilization and the Chan Understanding of Man**

It is a characteristic of man that the more he becomes involved in complexity, the more he longs for simplicity; the simpler his life becomes, the more he longs for complexity; the busier he becomes, the stronger is his desire for leisure; the more leisure he has, the more boredom he feels; the more his concerns, the more he feels the allure of unconcern; the more his unconcern, the more he suffers from vacuousness; the more tumultuous his life, the more he seeks quietude; the more placid his life, the lonelier he becomes and the more he quests for liveliness.

It is a characteristic feature of modern civilization that everything is becoming more and more complicated, that the degree of busyness increases day by day, and that the mind becomes too overburdened with concerns. Consequently, there is an increasingly strong desire on the part of people to seek simplicity, leisure, freedom from concern, and quietude in order to offset the common trend of modern life.

Recently, in the United States, which has assumed the lead in modern civilization, not only ordinary buildings but even churches have changed their architectural style from a delicate, intricate and grand style to a square and straight, simple and smart modern style. That this tendency toward modernization in architecture is sweeping over not only America but also older cities of Western Europe and, indeed, even Japan, is not simply because of practical utility, but also undoubtedly because it responds to a natural desire of modern man, who finds himself further and further enmeshed in the extreme complexities of modern life. More specifically, the fact that houses in America are gradually becoming one-storied, simple, and clean-cut, influenced by Japanese architecture, is probably because of the desire to escape complexity and to find serenity. Further, that intricate and involved painting and sculpture have given way to forms which are unconventionally informal, de-formed, or abstract may also be considered to signify a liberation from troublesome complexity, elaborateness, and

formality. So too, the change from overly heavy colors to monotone colors in the manner of monochrome sumi-e paintings, thus making for a beauty of simplicity, one of the special characteristics of modern art, may also be considered another aspect of this same liberation.

In the same vein, it is inevitable that modern man, thrown more and more into a whirl of pressing concerns, should seek and in fact, greedily demand leisure time, a phenomenon which has found its expression in the current term, "leisure-boom." Indeed, all of the following recent phenomena – the deep interest in the extremely primitive art of uncivilized people, the popularity of folk songs and of children's songs, the appeal generated by the rustic colloquialisms of the local dialects in contradistinction to the standard language of the cities, the attraction of the free and open world of nature (the mountains, the fields, the oceans) as opposed to the uncomfortably close and crowded urban centers, the marked tendency in recent art toward naive artlessness, simplicity, and rustic beauty -- can probably be similarly attributed to a longing for artlessness by modern men, who are suffering from the excessive contrivances and artificiality of modern civilization.

Oneness and manyness -- or, unity and diversity -- are mutually indispensable moments within the basic structure of man. They must necessarily be one with each other and not two. Oneness without manyness is mere vacuity without content; manyness without oneness is mere segmentation without unity. Here lies the great blind spot in the mode of modern civilization. The so-called diseases of civilization -- uprootedness, confusion, prostration, instability, bewilderment, skepticism, neurosis, weariness of life, etc. -- are largely due to this blind spot. The greater the multiplicity, the stronger in direct proportion must be the oneness or unity. When on the contrary, the actual situation is a relation of an inverse proportion, then man has no other alternative than to seek to escape into a oneness or simplicity alienated from manyness, whether by turning to the primitive or by simply negatively withdrawing from manyness. This, however, is no more than a superficial solution of the problem of segmented dissociation. Herein may also be found one reason that today, although anachronistic to our time, premodern, non-civilized cults and superstitions still command a following. A drowning man will grasp even at a straw, although objectively considered it is clearly untrustworthy. The attempts by

contemporary man to escape from civilization or to return to the primitive, to the non-civilized, and the non-modern, may be viewed as natural but superficial countermeasures to try to compensate for the lack of unity in modern civilization. To turn from such superficial countermeasures to a genuine solution, there is no other way than by establishing within the multiplicity that oneness or unity which is appropriate to the multiplicity.

If the direction of the development of civilization is toward more and more multiplicity, more and more specialization, then no fixed, static oneness or unity will ever do. The oneness or unity must be sufficiently alive and flexible to respond freely and appropriately to the growing multiplicity. It is not enough that the oneness, while not being alienated from multiplicity, merely serve as the static basis within multiplicity. It must be a dynamic and creative oneness or unity which, as the root-origin of multiplicity, produces multiplicity from itself without limit; a oneness that can eternally produce multiplicity out of itself freely and yet remain unbound by what is produced; a unity which while producing multiplicity appropriate to the particular time and place can reach multiplicity to make itself implicit in multiplicity. Only then can the multiplicity, while unlimitedly taking its rise from such a oneness, never lose that oneness, and does the oneness, while producing the multiplicity, ever remain within and unalienated from the multiplicity which it produces.

Multiplicity, in such a case, continuing to contain within itself, even as multiplicity, a oneness or unity, will thus not become disjointedly fragmented. Accordingly, there will be no need to escape from multiplicity to a hollow unity which is alienated from multiplicity. On the other hand, since the oneness even as oneness is the inexhaustible source of, and is never separated from, multiplicity, there will be no need, because of any feeling of ennui or because of having fallen into a mood of emptiness or loneliness, to seek for a liveliness within a manyness alienated from oneness. The true oneness is a oneness in manyness; the true manyness is a manyness in oneness. There is a Chan expression, "Not having one thing is an inexhaustible storehouse." [43] Only when such a relation obtains between oneness and manyness, the two elements of the basic structure of man, will man, however much he/she may diversify toward multiplicity, be free from disjointed fragmentation and, at the same time, in his/her oneness never suffer from emptiness or loneliness. Then can he/she be at once a unity and

a multiplicity without hindrance, free from all pressure and self-contented, the true Subject eternally giving rise to civilization. Man as such a Subject is Man in his/her True mode of being. Precisely this Man is the human image which is the inner demand, whether or not he/she is conscious of it, of modern man, standing as he/she does right in the midst of a civilization which continues to diversify more and more as it develops. Such a human image is the Original-Subject which, even as it freely and unlimitedly creates civilization and is ever present appropriate to the time and place within the civilization which has been created, is always completely emancipated and never bound by the civilization.

This Original-Subject, which must awaken to itself and form itself right in the midst of modern civilization, is no other than the Chan image of man. It is what the author in his previous writings has called "Oriental Nothingness," "Active Nothingness," and "Formless-Self." It should be called the modern realization of the image of Man which Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch, already very early in the history of Chan in China, spoke of as "The Self-Nature which, unmoved in its base, is able to produce all things," [44] and, again, as, "Only with no dharma to be obtained are all dharmas to be established." It is the same image of Man which is referred to when Yongjia, a contemporary of Huineng, says that:

"Walking is also Chan, sitting is also Chan. Whether talking or silent, whether in motion or rest, the Subject is composed." [45]

The same Man is meant by Huangbo when, in his Essentials for Transmitting the Mind as the Awakened Truth, he declared:

"Just the one who the whole day, though not apart from things, does not suffer from the world of things, is called the Free Person." [46]

## **5. The Formless Beauty**

In that it infinitely creates civilization and forms history, this human image may be said to be humanistic. In that -- even while it is immanent in, and the root-origin of, what is created or formed -- it is not attached to or bound by, but is always free from, the created, it may be said to have the religiousness

of Linji's "Self-awakened and Non-reliant (Person)," that is, the religiousness of being the truly Emancipated-Subject. Only when they come to be this Emancipated-Subject, can the subjects spoken of in the Avatamsaka teaching as the subject which "returns to and takes rise from Itself" and in the Pure Land teaching as the subject which in its "going aspect" actualizes Nirvana and in its "returning aspect" "plays freely amid the thick woods of what formerly constituted self-agonizing illusions," lend themselves to a modern application. Of course, by modern here I do not mean anything temporal, i.e. of any particular generation or period of history. Rather, I mean a modern Self-formation-actualization of the Eternal-Subject which is the root-origin of, and beyond all, historical periods, as is expressed as "Responding to people by taking form." [47] Here there can be established a newer and higher humanistic religion which, on the one hand, does not degenerate into the modern type of anthropocentric, autonomous humanism which has forgotten self-criticism and, on the other, does not retrogress back toward a pre-modern, theocentric theonomy completely unawakened to human autonomy.

The realization of such a new, yet basic and ultimate, human image will enable us to do two things. First, it will enable us to turn away from the superficial attempt to cure the disease of modern civilization through an anachronistic, simple-minded, world-renouncing mode of escape to a naive, pre-modern oneness which is in estrangement from civilization. Secondly, it will enable us to make a more proper attempt at a radical cure of the modern predicament through the Self-awakening of that oneness which, contrary to being in estrangement from civilization, accords with, and is the source and base of, civilization. Such an image of man entertained by Chan will also sweep away every internal and external criticism or misunderstanding of Buddhism which takes it to be world-weary, world-renouncing, and removed from reality, longing for some ideal world in a sphere other than the historical world of time and space. It will, at the same time, be worthy of being presented to the Occident as a new Oriental prescription for the disease of modern civilization. For the recent surging of Chan interest in the West in such areas as psychology, the arts, the handicrafts, invention, philosophy, religion, etc., is not accidental but derives from an inner necessity of modern civilization.

Chan is thus, the awakening to the above described human image which is beyond time and space, but which works freely and without hindrance according to each particular time and place. For Chan therefore, this awakening-working is the ultimate active truth, active good, and active beauty, which transcends all limitation; it is the root-origin of every particular -- and therefore limited -- instance of truth, good, and beauty. Although we shall confine our remarks here to beauty, what is said in this regard applies as well to truth and goodness.

Supreme or ultimate beauty is not a particular beauty belonging to the realm of art in the narrow sense, but is, rather, the beauty of the awakened, working human Self. It is a formless beauty which never becomes an "object" -- either of vision, of any of the other senses or indeed of any mode of consciousness. It is Active-Subject-Beauty, that is, the beauty which is the free functioning itself of that which is emancipated from all forms; it is neither merely the concept of beauty nor the idea of beauty. That is, it is the beauty of our being the human Self which is actually awakened and is at work; it is not any objective beauty which arises from seeing or otherwise sensing that Self as an object. It is the beauty which becomes aware of itself only when it becomes the awakened Self itself. In other words, it is the beauty of the Formless Self.

In Buddhism, the so-called thirty-two major and eighty minor physical marks of the Buddha are ordinarily regarded as the perfect features of Buddha. But perfect as the features may be, any Buddha with form is not the true Buddha. As Linji has said, the true Buddha is formless; being without form is the true form. Formlessness is the genuine mark of the true Buddha, and is true beauty. The Buddha beauty which is sought in objects of perception by the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or consciousness, that is, through shape, voice, smell, taste, touch, or idea, is not the true Buddha beauty. In the Vajracchedika Sutra it is written, as already noted, that "If one sees Me with form or seeks Me identifying Me with sound or voice, that one practices the wrong way and can never see the Tathagata." The true beauty of Tathagata cannot be sought for through the above-mentioned sixfold mode of sense perception (or consciousness) or their objective referents.

It must never be forgotten that in Buddhism there is an ultimate beauty of formlessness which goes beyond the beauty of form to be found in such

things as Buddha images, Buddhist music, incense-burning, ceremonial meals, worshipping, verses, the various mudra expressions of the fingers and so forth. It is precisely this beauty of formlessness which is the beauty truly unique to Buddhism, the beauty of the true human Self. Buddhist aesthetics or the true beauty of form in Buddhism must be a formless beauty expressing itself in form, which is then known through the six modes of sense-perception or consciousness - that is, must be the Self-expression of formless beauty which freely takes on form in any of the objective realms of sense-perception or consciousness. Formless beauty, because it is formless, not only is not conditioned by any already established form but is never conditioned by any form whatsoever. Therefore, it can freely take on any form in Self-actualization. True Buddhist aesthetics is to be found in this beauty of formlessness which freely actualizes itself within form while never being bound by any form.

Accordingly, true Buddhist aesthetics, from the side of the active creation, is formless beauty expressing itself in form; from the side of appreciation, it is the apprehension within form of the formlessness which transcends form - that is, the apprehension of the form as the expression of formlessness. In short, true Buddhist beauty is none other than the beauty of the human Self awake and at work. Awakened formless beauty, through its working, expresses itself in, so to speak, "a subtle form-beauty," the beauty of mere form returning, thereby, to the beauty of formlessness. True Buddhist art is the beauty not of mere form but of "subtle form." It is this latter beauty alone which enables Buddhist art to be directly connected with the true human Self and to have a necessary intrinsic relation with the awakening of this Self; it is this beauty alone which can enable Buddhism to become the backbone for a healthy development of contemporary civilization and to become the eternal source for the creation of future civilization.

--

(The Japanese text was first published in November 1962, in the Hisamatsu Shin'ichi Chosakushu, volume three, pages 11-33. Translated by Richard DeMartino and Tokiwa Gishin (in the Japanese name order), and made public in The Eastern Buddhist volume 1, No. 1, pages 22-47, September 1965. Revised by Tokiwa Gishin, March 2005)

[1] In this revised English translation the manner and expression of headings for all the five sections follow those of the original Japanese text; all the diacritical marks are omitted for technical reasons.

[2] In this revised text pinyin is used for Chinese spellings, and the Chinese term "Chan" is preferred to its Japanese rendering "Zen" to avoid misunderstanding of what the author really meant.

[3] The Discourse on the Direct Lineage of the Dharma (Xuemailun; Kechimyakuron) says (Taisho Tripitaka, hereafter T 48, no. 2009) :

Between two successive Buddhas there is transmission of mind to mind; no words are relied on therein.(373b)

[4] In Essentials for Transmitting the Mind as the Awakened Truth (Chuanxinfayao; Densinhoyo) Huangbo Xiyun, dates unknown, 8th-9th c., says (T 48, no. 2012) :

Just when one arrives at this occasion, one knows how Bodhidharma has come from the west, directly pointing to the human mind, and how one, seeing its nature, gets awakened to it [and becomes Buddha]. (384a)

See the related note which comes below.

[5] Dazhu Huihai, dates unknown, a dharma-heir to Mazu Daoyi (709-88).

[6] This cursory reference by the author to Rudolf Bultman, a German theologian, 1884-1976, had been omitted in the previous version.

[7] T 8, no. 223, 396b (Chapter Seventy-Eight).

[8] The Linjilu, T 47, 498c, 500ab. Linji Yixuan, -866, a dharma-heir to Huangbo Xiyun (dates unknown).

[9] The context in which Huangbo made this remark was as follows, according to the Jingde Record of Transmission of the Lamp, fascicle eight (T 51, no. 2076, 257c) :

Nanquan : "Concerning the equal study of dhyana and prajna, how do you think of this truth?"

Huangbo : "All through the twelve divisions of the day I don't rely on anything."

N.: "Isn't that Senior Monk's view?"

H.: "I don't deserve this."

N.: "Let alone the price for drinks. Who do you make pay for your traveling expenses?"

[10] T48 no.2005,293a.

[11] In order to accord with the text of Xuemailun two corrections are made of both the Japanese text and the English version: from "the Self-Buddha is the True-Buddha" to "the Self-Mind is the True-Buddha" and from "contemplating Buddhas, honoring Patriarchs" to "contemplating or honouring Buddhas" (T 48, 374c).

[12] The Sixth-Patriarch Great-Master's Dharma Treasure the Platform Sutra, ten chapters, T 48, no. 2008, 362a.

[13] Mazu Daoyi, 707-86, a second generation dharma-heir to the Sixth Patriarch, Huineng

[14] The Jingde Record of Transmission of the Lamp, fascicle six, T 51, no 2076, 246a.

[15] T 48, no. 2012B, Wanling Record, 385b.

[16] Yongjia Xuanjue, 675-713, a dharma-heir to the Sixth Patriarch, Huineng.

[17] The Zhengdaoge, T 48, no. 2014, 396c.

[18] The Chinese version by Xuanzang, Banruoboluomiduo-xinjing, T 48, no. 251, 848c, has : "xin-wuguawu; J. shin-mukeige," in which the mind is free from obstruction as is meant by the above translation, while in its Sanskrit equivalent, "acittavaranaḥ," which means "having no obstruction of the mind," the mind itself constitutes obstruction.

[19] His historical existence as well as his dates are unknown. The Baolinzhuan (compiled around 801), fascicle eight, states he died in 606.

[20] For the understanding of the term "Mind of Faith" Prof. Yanagida Seizan refers to its usage in the Mahayana Treatise for the Awakening of Faith (Dashengqixinlun). Cf. Zen no Goroku, vol. 16, Shinjinmei, Shodoka, Jugyuzu, Zazengi, Chikumashobo, Tokyo 1974. In that case the mind of faith means the mind that has had faith awoken to one's true nature.

[21] A text of one fascicle, in which Shinran gave his "interpretation of essential passages (mon'i)" chosen from among the Buddhist sutras and commentaries quoted in the Yuishinsho ("Collected Writings on Faith Alone") compiled by Seikaku (1167-1235), a Tendai priest who had close contact with Honenbo Genku (1133-1212), founder of the Jodoshu (Pure Land School in Japan).

[22] The "Passage on the Self-Effectiveness, Dharma-Effectiveness, of Attaining Awakening," is a piece of sermon by Shinran, recorded by Kenchi, a disciple of his; it was included in a collection of Shinran's twenty-two dharma-passages, compiled in 1333 with the title Matto-sho ("Collected Writings as the Latter-Days' Lamp").

[23] Precisely, Kenjodoshinjitsu-kyogyosho-monrui ("Passages that Manifest the Pure Land True Teaching, Practice, and Attainment"), six fascicles in Chinese characters, is made up of quotes from Buddhist sutras, commentaries, and treatises as well as Shinran's own comments on the six main themes: Pure Land true teaching, Pure Land true practice, Pure Land true faith, Pure Land true attainment, Pure Land true Buddhahood, and Pure Land expedient Transformation-Buddhahood.

[24] The Wuliangshoujing, a Chinese version of the Sukhavativyuha-sutra, in two fascicles, by Samgha Varman, who came to China in 252.

[25] The Linjilu, T 47, 496c: "On the lump of red flesh is a true person of no rank, constantly coming in and going out of each of your face."

[26] The Zhaozhoulu, first of the three fascicles. Nanquan Puyuan, 748-95, a dharma-heir to Mazu Daoyi.

[27] The Zhaozhoulu, first, and third, of the three fascicles. Zhaozhou Congshen, 79-897, a dharma-heir to Nanquan Puyuan.

[28] The Jingde Record of Transmission of the Lamp, fascicle fifteen; a case between Longtan Chongxing, dates unknown, and Deshan Xuanjian, 782?-865, his dharma-heir.

[29] The Wumenguan, case 16, and case 21. Yunmen Wenyan, 864-949, a dharma-heir to Xuefeng Yicun, 822-908 (dharma-heir to Deshan Xuanjian).

[30] The Wumenguan case 43. Shoushan Shengnian, 926-93, the fourth dharma-heir to Linji Yixuan.

[31] The Wumenguan case 19. Mazu Daoyi, Nanquan's master, distinguished the "pingchan-xin (ordinary mind)" from the "shengsi-xin (birth-death mind)" in that the former is free from the defilement of the latter. Cf. the Sijiyulu, fascicle one.

[32] The Linjilu, T47, 497c. Linji quoted this story from a Buddhist scripture compiled in the Tang dynasty, Dafoding Rulai-Miyin Xiuzhengliaoyi Zhupusa-Wangxing Shoulengyan-jing (briefly, Dafoding Shoulengyan-jing, or just, Lengyan-jing), ten fascicles. T 19, no. 945, fascicle four, 121b.

[33] The Platform Sutra, T 48, no. 2008, Chapter One, 349a.

[34] The Chinese version by Kumarajiva, T 14, no. 475, 547c, seventh of the fourteen chapters, on "Contemplating Sentient Beings."

[35] T48, no.2008, 358C, Chapter Eight

[36] The Jingde Record of Transmission of the Lamp, T 51, 219a, third of the thirty fascicles.

[37] Also, the Biyanlu ("Blue-Cliff Record"), ten fascicles. This is made up of two layers of works : one hundred cases of koan collected from preceding

Chan records with so many verses attached to each of them as comments on them by Xuedou Chongxian, 980-1052, and detailed comments on those cases of koan as well as on the verses by Yuanwu Keqin, 1063-1135.

[38] Six fascicles. This is a *Bianlu* of the Caodong school of Chan, records of lectures given toward the end of Southern Song at Congrong-an (=hermit) in a temple in Yanjing (present Beijing), together with comments and commentaries added, after the style of the *Bianlu* of the Linji school, by Wangsong Xinxiu, 1166-1246, a Caodong priest, on the one hundred cases of koan and related verses gathered by Hongzhi Zhengjue, 1091-1157.

[39] The Chan School *Wumenguan*, one fascicle, a collection of forty-eight cases of koan with comments and verses by Wumen Huikai, 1183-1260. This was transmitted to Japan by Shinji Kakushin, 1207-98, a Japanese disciple of Wumen's, and was used only in Japan.

[40] Actually this is not a direct quote from the *Vimalakirti-nirdesa* sutra, though, in the form of a Chan gong'an (koan), it represents the viewpoint of that scripture advocated in its first chapter "Buddhaland." The Buddha in the scripture says, "The land of all the unawakened beings is the Buddhaland for the Awakening beings (bodhisattvas) (T14, tr. Kumalajiva, 538a);" "My Buddhaland is eternally pure like this; only wishing to have those base beings mature, I present to them this false appearance of a much faulty, spoilt land. (538c)"

Historically speaking, Kanzan Egen, ?-1360, founder of the Myoshinji Rinzai-zen temple in Kyoto, is known to have cited a koan for guiding practitioners, apparently the source of Hisamatsu's quote. It goes as follows : "The Originally Present, Consummate, and Fulfilled Buddha -- Why has He gone astray and become the unawakened beings?" (Cf. A comment by Ikkyu Sojun, 1394-1481, another Rinzai-zen priest, on Verse no. 551 of his poetry in Chinese, *Kyounshu*, in the manuscript preserved by Okumura Jubei, *Chuse-Zenke-no Shiso*, Iwanami-shoten, Tokyo 1972, p. 364.) And that is considered to be the reason why the Japanese term "Honnuenjo" for "The Originally Present, Consummate and Fulfilled" was conferred on him as the posthumous title for a state master by Emperor Gonara, 1520-57.

Here the problem is how Hisamatsu took the koan with the slight change of wording for a quote from the Vimalakirti-nirdesa sutra. Hisamatsu in 1915 at the age of twenty-six, after graduation from Kyoto University, practiced under the guidance of Ikegami Shozan at the Myoshinji monastery, and attained Awakening. There he must have been acquainted with the above koan. In 1960 he published a book on the same scripture with the title, Yuima-shichisoku ("Vimalakirti in Seven Cases"), and expounded the Mahayana meaning of it with clarity and profundity. Although he did not refer to the koan in this book, it must have been deeply rooted in his mind as what represented the Buddhaland chapter of the Vimalakirti-nirdesa sutra.

In the history of Japanese Rinzai-zen school there have been transmitted a collection of cases of koan, compiled and extended among the Myoshinji sect practitioners, named Shumon-Kattoshu. According to the recent edition by Kajitani Sonin, Shokoku-ji Sodo, Kyoto in 1982, it contains 282 cases of koan, and its Case 183 cites this very koan as a quote from the Vimalakirti-nirdesa sutra. Kajitani notes that the source seems to have been wrongly cited, and that it can be seen in the chapter on Bodhisattva Vajragarbha of the Yuanjue (Round Awakening) Jing (Sutra). There Vajragarbha asks the Buddha: "The World-Honored One, if all the unawakened beings had originally attained Awakening, why, again, do they have all the ignorances? If ignorances were what the unawakened beings originally had, for what reason do you, the Tathagata, again declare that they have originally attained Awakening?" (T17, 915b) This question by Vajragarbha well represents Shariputra's doubt and the Buddha's response in the Buddhaland chapter of the Vimalakirti-nirdesa sutra. This scripture, Yuanjue Jing, was first introduced by Zongmi, 780-841, as a new translation from Sanskrit, but it is considered to have been compiled in the Tang dynasty as a compendium of Mahayana scriptures in response to the inner quest for the Buddhist truth by the contemporary practitioners. One can see one context or another of several scriptures referred to there. This means the source cited in Case 183 of the Shumon-Kattoshu, which must have derived from Kanzan Egen, was very appropriate. Hisamatsu may well have shared the same understanding with Kanzan on this regard. (In writing this note Tokiwa is much obliged to the three persons for their help: Professor-emeritus Yanagida Seizan of Kyoto University, Ms Maeda Naomi, librarian at the Zenbunka-kenkyusho, Kyoto, and Rev. Hirota Sogen of Junshin-ji, Rinzai-zen temple in Nishinomiya City.)

[41] "Sifajie" ("shi-fajie, li-fajie, lishimuai-fajie, shishimuai-fajie") is the term invented by Chengguan, 738-839, according to the thought of the Huayanjing. Cf. Huayanjing Xingyuanpin-shu, Zokuzokyo 7-0498b.

[42] This does not necessarily mean uttering "he!; ka!"

[43] Followed by another line : "Having flowers, having moon, and having towers," this poetic statement is generally attributed to Su Dongbo, 1036-1101. "Within Nothingness" is corrected to "Not having one thing."

[44] The Platform Sutra, T48, no. 2008, 349a.

[45] The Zhengdaoge, T 48, no. 2014, 396a.

[46] Essentials for Transmitting the Mind as the Awakened Truth, T 48, no. 2012, 384a.

[47] The author does not give its source, and the translators were responsible for citing a wrong one. The phrase appears in the following context in which the Four Great Kings uttered their praises for the Buddha, in Chapter Seven of the Sutra of the Golden Light (Suvānaprabhāsa sūtra), tr. Dharmakshema, T 16, no. 663, 344b. In the extant Sanskrit text it is not stated explicitly; the underlined parts constitute the Skt. verse five :

"The Buddha's body of awakening is like the moon in the sky,  
Responding to people by taking form;  
Equal to the moon in the water in having no hindrance,  
It resembles an illusion or a mirage.  
For this reason, Victor Unspotted, we bow to you, the Buddha Moon."

2008/01/03

More by and about Hisamatsu:  
<https://site.boeddhaweg.nl/hisamatsu/>