

Lecture 14

Rinzai and Soto Zen

After Chao-Chou

- More emphasis on communication through action
 - actions should show enlightenment
- More emphasis on sudden enlightenment

Rinzai Zen

- Lin-Chi
 - one of greatest Zen masters
- Two Main Innovations
 - koan practice
 - the "true person of no status"



Lin-Chi on Koans

- Koans are a challenge from master to student
- Koans should present students with a perplexing puzzle
- Koans give students opportunity to *show* their enlightenment
- Koans are designed to appear to be rationally unresolvable
- apparent unresolvability → anxiety → state of tension → enlightenment
 - like the release of a tightly strung bow

The "Original Face" Koan

Not thinking of good,
not thinking of evil,
just this moment,

what is your original
face before your mother
and father were born?

- What are you prior to all conceptualizations and learned responses?
- What is experience like free of all conceptual filters?

Lin-Chi on Buddha-Nature

- The true person of no status can be at home anywhere
- The true human is simple, direct, natural in all circumstances, free of pretense, at ease in the present moment
 - contrary to Confucian ideas
 - see **Handout, #6**

When hunger comes, I eat my rice. When sleep comes, I close my eyes. Fools laugh at me, but the wise man understands.

The Host-Guest Relationship

- Be a host in all situations
 - because ...
- Ditto with koan interactions
 - they are situations designed to allow context stealing
 - see **Handout, #7**

"Just make yourself master of every situation, and wherever you stand is the true place. No matter what circumstances come they cannot dislodge you from where you stand. Even though you bear the remaining influences of past delusions or the karma from having committed the five heinous crimes, these of themselves become the ocean of emancipation."

- Lin-Chi, *Discourses*,
Section 12

Spontaneity and Creativity

- The master designs a context to stump the student
- The student can either respond to that context or replace it with one of his own
- If the student is open (*wu*) and creative, he will not be stuck in the master's context
 - That is: he will not be stuck in a prejudicial context
 - He will be responding to the moment just as it is

If you meet a man of *Dao* on
the way, greet him neither
with words nor with silence.
Now tell me, how will you
greet him?

What happens to
our thought
systems when
being and non-
being are not
distinguished?

To give an example: it is
like a buffalo passing
through a window. Its head,
horns, and four legs have
all passed through. Why is
it that its tail cannot?

Eisai (1141-1215)

- Took Lin-Chi's ideas to Japan
 - founded Rinzai School in Japan
 - also founded Japanese tea culture
- Sitting in meditation and koan practice suffice for Buddhist practice



Dogen (1200-1253)

- Eisai's most famous student
- Less aggressive
- Main Innovation: the master's role is to *practice with* the student, instead of *challenging* the student



Zen Duets

- The role of the Zen master is to intertwine with the student
- Words should be used to engage with the student
 - master and student should be responsive to each other
- Both master and student should use words and actions to "cut through" ordinary consciousness
 - see **Handout, #8**
 - "**katto**": concepts and words in which we entangle ourselves

Dogen on Koans

- Koans are not necessary for attaining enlightenment
- *Zazen* suffices
 - **zazen** = just sitting
 - *zazen* is the practice of sitting silently in meditation



Three Aims of Zazen

1. Increase concentration in order to transcend confusions and distractions
2. Attain satori
 - **satori** – the awakening of enlightenment
 - state in which one becomes awakened to one's enlightenment
 - experience the world without conceptual dualities and prejudices

Three Aims of Zazen

3. Incorporate enlightenment into daily activities
- be awake at all times
 - Zen and life are not two different things

"What is your age?"

"Sixty-eight", the monk answered.

"Why don't you make the other cooking monks under your supervision do it [the cooking]?"

"They are not me."

"You are really one with Buddhism, but I wonder why you work so hard in the burning sun."

"When else can I do it but now?"

Zen and Ordinary Life

- We are like the novice ballplayer
- Zen practice allows us to be like the skillful ballplayer
 - responsive



Dogen's Main Idea

- Meditation allows us to experience the world without conceptual discriminations
- Extensive practice of *zazen* allows one to become skillful in being awake to one's enlightenment
- Then one can perform one's enlightenment in everyday life without thinking about it



Reminder

Final Exam Wednesday March 14, 11:30 am,
in this room

- covers Daoism; Tiantai and Huayan
Buddhism; Chan, Rinzai, and Soto Zen

Journal #3 due at start of Final (three entries)