

MODEL SUBJECT NO. 40
FROM THE HEKIGAN ROKU
(BLUE CLIFF RECORDS):
RIKKO'S "HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE THE SAME ESSENCE"
December 1963

NOT VERBATIM

Rikko is said to have lived from 764-834. He was a high official of the Tang government in China. He was a disciple of Nansen Fugan. His writings and biography are in *Koji-buntoruko*. There were many famous lay Zen Buddhists during the Tang Dynasty. The most famous of these lay Buddhists are:

Ho-Koji (Ho-un)--see Model Subject No. 42

Kak Rakten (Hak-Kyoi)--the most famous writer and poet of the Tang Dynasty.

Haikyū--Highest public official of the time. His teacher was Obaku (Huang Po).

Haykyū--Compiler of Obaku's *Denshin Hoyo* (a collection of sermons and dialogues).

Riko--a high official and the scholar-author of *Fukuseisho*

Sai Gun--a high official and scholar

Chinso--see Model Subject No. 33

Sojo was one of the four most famous disciples of Kumarajiva, who came to China in 401 from Kucina [Kashmir], near Tibet. Kumarajiva and Genjyo were epoch-making translators of Buddhist scriptures. Kumarajiva translated many of the Vaipulya scriptures and sutras of the *Prajñāpāramitā* group. The *Prajñāpāramitā Hidraya-sūtra (Shingyo)*, which is said to have been translated seven times, was also translated by Kumarajiva, but his translation is said to be lost. Nansen Fugan (748-834) was a disciple of Baso. See Model Subjects No. 28, 31, 40, 63, 64, 69.

Introductory Word:

Enso, introducing the subject, said: When complete liberation from the cord of desires takes place, and when there is a perfect cessation of effort motivated by wrong desires, then, even from an iron tree, blossoms might open out. Is it so? Is it so? Even a very artful or clever boy may make a mistake because of his cleverness. Even if one's skill is tactful enough for free activity in seven vertical and eight horizontal, one will still be led by the nose. Think where is the fault? Ponder the following:

Main Subject:

Attention! While conversing with Nansen, the official Rikko said, "Sojo said that heaven and earth and I are the same root--all things and I are of one substance. This is a wonderful statement."

Nansen called Rikko over to him, pointed to a flower in the front garden and said, "People of this time who see this flower are like men in a dream."

Appreciatory Word:

Seeing, hearing, and knowing are not the same. Mountains and rivers do not see a mirror even though they are in a mirror. The frosty sky, the setting moon, and the middle of the night: with whom shall I share the coldness of the clear depths of the reflected shadows?

Commentary by Reverend Shunryū Suzuki, Master of Zen Center:

Sojo's famous statement in his last work that 'Heaven and earth and I are the same root.

All things and I are of one substance is wonderful, when it is not applied to Rikko's own attached view of the oneness of all things being in the realm of the explicable. As long as Rikko clings to the ideal of oneness, he is said to still be making an erroneous effort motivated by wrong desires or craving. This attachment will lead to disappointment, even though the idea of oneness is not wrong.

Rikko should try to know why he clung to a particular idea, and he should try to follow the way to attaining singlemindedness free from points of view. This effort is necessary if he is to have full appreciation of Reality. Because people and Rikko seek for temporal satisfactions from a worldly view-point, cling to their own stand-points, and do not follow the right way practicing zazen with perseverance, they cannot see things as they are. So Nansen pointed at a flower and said, "People of this time who see this flower are like men in their dreams."

Setcho, in his Appreciatory Word, brings each phenomenal existence into the realm of Reality and stresses the independent meaning of things. He said, "Seeing, hearing, (smelling, tasting, etc.), and knowing do not take place in the same realm. Mountains and rivers do not see (depend on) a mirror. (A mountain is a mountain, a river is a river, and a mirror is a mirror). Late at night when frost is everywhere, the moon is setting, everything is sleeping, with whom shall I share the severe coldness of the reflected shadows (each phenomenal existence) in the clear water (in the realm of Reality)?

This transcript is a retyping of the existing City Center transcript (thought to be based on notes by Baker-rōshi). It is not verbatim. No tape is available. The City Center transcript was entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. It was reformatted by Bill Redican (10/27/01).