

# Inka Speech

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*Inka Speech by Ja An JDPSN, September 19 2009, Warsaw Zen Center*

*[Raises the stick]*

Dirty is clean, clean is dirty.

*[Hits the table]*

*[Raises the stick]*

Not dirty, not clean.

*[Hits the table]*

*[Raises the stick]*

Dirty is dirty, clean is clean.

*[Hits the table]*

***Katz!***

Where is the place, where there is no clean or dirty?

A long time ago a wandering monk, Won-Hyo, realized that life is impermanent and decided to seek the answer to the meaning of life and how to deal with the sense of instability. Thus he started his journey to find a teacher. He traveled for many days and nights and at some point he was really tired. He lay down on the ground and, being exhausted, he slept. When he woke up at night, being very thirsty, he instinctively began to seek for anything to drink. He felt that he had found something to be a vessel with water and being very happy he drank from it. The water was very refreshing. Feeling satisfied he went to sleep. When he woke up in the morning he wanted to drink that water again, but this time it was bright and he could see clearly that the vessel was a human skull with parts of the body and hairs on it. There were also a lot of bugs in it. Seeing this, the only thing he could do was to vomit badly. At that moment he understood, that when he was thirsty at night, there was tasty water, but when he woke up in the morning his eyes could see from what he had drunk and he was disgusted. At that moment his mind – as

we say in Zen – was opened. He understood that this thinking and everything that he thought comes from mind.

Not so long ago in Japan, during II World War, human mentality changed radically. I've never been to Asia, but from what I observe when I meet Asian people I know that Asians pay a lot of attention to the aesthetics of eating. This aesthetics of eating is something very important to them. Therefore the meal preparation, the colours, the meal served in bowls of various sizes and doing this in accordance with ceremony rules is very important. They wash the meal ingredients mindfully, they peel them, and everything is done very, very precisely. But many times during the war there was lack of food. In such cases every bit of food has the price of gold. So when those people, being so dutiful and so much attached to meal aesthetics, were finding thrown-away peels it was a wonderful meal for them.

I would like to refer to a movie we have seen together last night. There was a moment in it where the main figure, the inventor of all these wonderful technology inventions, Apple and Blackberry, is saying at the end “be hungry and stupid”. I would like to talk about my life – how being stupid and having no understanding can help. Usually we think that our life should go straight and without hindrances – that is our human desire. But what I would like to say is what has helped me most in my life were precisely the hindrances. When I became a lone mother I was very scared. But now, after many years I know it was the best teaching. Also, about six years ago I lost a very good job in Poland, a career I worked in for a very long time. When I lost it, I believed it was very hard and something I didn't want to happen, but in reality it has opened a new way of life for me. We often think – and it was also in my case – that when we have a great title, good job and position, these things can give us full happiness. But what I realized is, whenever I lose something it is the greatest happiness, because it opens the way for something else for me. Therefore I would like to add my words to the wishes spoken by the main character of yesterday's movie: please don't be afraid of losing something – use it.

*[Raises the stick]*

Dirty is clean, clean is dirty.

*[Hits the table]*

*[Raises the stick]*

Not dirty, not clean.

*[Hits the table]*

*[Raises the stick]*

Dirty is dirty, clean is clean.

*[hits the table]*

**Katz!**

How can I help?

I thank my teachers for teaching me for years and having the patience for me. Thank you Soen Sa Nim Wu Bong, thank you to my teacher Bon Shim from Poland, thank you my teacher Bon Yo who has believed in me before I believed in myself. I thank all teachers and I thank you that I could and will be able to practise with you. After this ceremony we will drink tea and eat cookies.

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