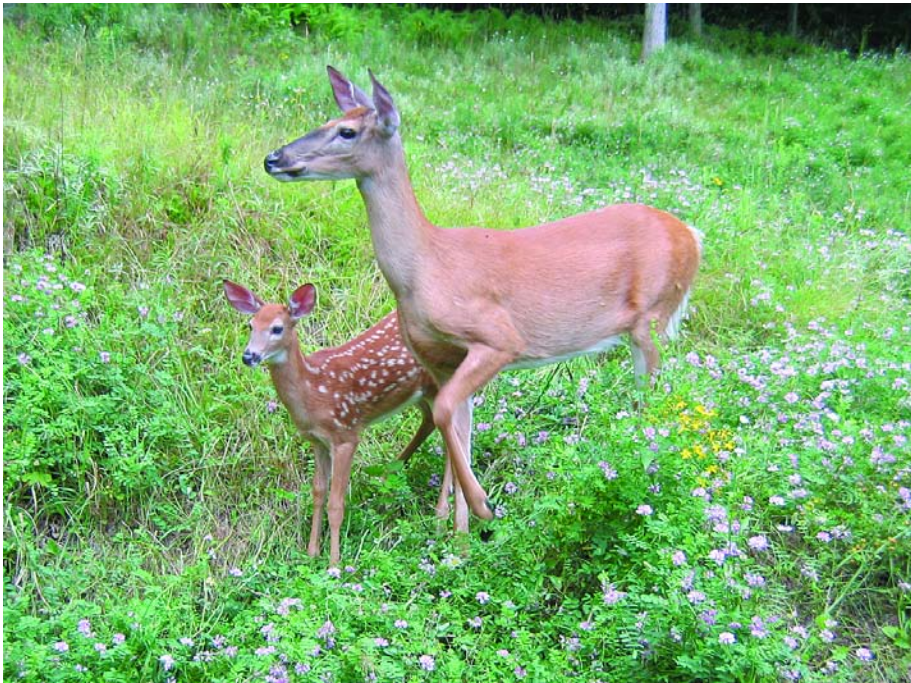


THE ZEN STUDIES SOCIETY



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Teisho on *The Rinzai Roku* Chapter XIX

by Eido Shimano Roshi

RINZAI ROKU

KANBEN: Cross-Examinations, chapter XIX translated by Eido Shimano



Mayoku (Magu) came to see the Master. Spreading his bowing mat, he asked, "Which is the true face of the twelve-faced Kanzeon Bodhisattva?" The Master stepped down from the rope-bottomed chair. With one hand he picked up the bowing mat; with the other hand he seized Mayoku and asked, "Where has the twelve-faced Kanzeon gone?" Mayoku twisted himself free and tried to sit on the chair. The Master picked up his staff and hit him. Mayoku grabbed it too, and both holding it, they went into the Master's quarters.

A psychologist told me about someone who wrote an interesting book. In this book there is a chapter which mentions three important points of psychological growth: first, spirituality; second, art; and third, play. In the "Kanben" ("Cross-Examinations") part of the *Rinzai Roku*, particularly in connection with today's topic, the encounter of Mayoku and Master Rinzai, these three themes stand out clearly: spiritual insight,

aesthetic beauty, and play. This 'play' aspect is one of the significant characteristics of Rinzai Zen Buddhism.

The other day I mentioned the seventeenth century haiku poet Basho and the now-famous pilgrimage he took when he was forty-one years old. With desperation and a deeply inquisitive attitude, Basho traveled throughout Japan in search of 'something'. He recorded various scenes, wrote about his experiences, and composed poems along the way. I would like to read a section from his travel journal in connection with the *Rinzai Roku*.

As I was plodding along the river Fuji, I saw a small child, hardly three years of age, crying pitifully on the bank, obviously abandoned by his parents. They must have thought that this child was unable to ride through the stormy waters of life which flow as wild as the rapid river itself, and that he was destined to have a life even shorter than that of the morning dew. The child looked to me as fragile as the flowers of bush-clover that scatter at the slightest stir of the autumn wind, and it was so pitiful that I gave him what little food I had with me.

The ancient poet
Who pitied monkeys for their cries,
What would he say, if he saw
This child crying in the autumn wind?

How is it indeed that this child had been reduced to this state of utter misery? Was it because of his mother who ignored him, or because of his father who abandoned him? Alas, it seemed to me that this child's undeserved suffering has been caused by something far greater and more massive — by what one might call the irresistible will of heaven. If it is so, child, you must raise your voice to heaven, and I must pass on, leaving you behind.

— from "The Records of a Weather-

Exposed Skeleton" in Basho's *The Narrow Road to the Deep North and Other Travel Sketches*, translated by Nobuyuki Yuasa

Let me tell you a story similar to Basho's. Some fifteen years ago, after establishing a monastery in the Catskills and a temple in Manhattan, I took a sabbatical for one year. A friend of mine, Tani Kogetsu Roshi of Shogen-ji, invited me to come and live in Gifu Prefecture in Japan, where I taught at Shogen College and had a different lifestyle for a year. That summer, I needed to come back to Dai Bosatsu Zendo for a summer five-day sesshin for American students. Tani Roshi asked me: "May I bring my students and friends? Can we do a joint sesshin?" I welcomed that offer. Thus, they came.

The last day of the sesshin was August 7th. That morning, with great grief, Tani Roshi told me that his only sister had passed away that day. She was his only living relative, and she had cancer. Their father had passed away a long time before, and their mother cared for them strictly and with loving-kindness until she too died more than thirty years ago, on August 7th. Just before Tani Kogetsu Roshi left Japan for New York, the doctor told him, "It's crazy for you to go to New York, leaving your only sister behind who is dying in two weeks." Of course, he did not tell me this until she passed away. I have a feeling that he visited her at the hospital the day he left for New York and said to her: "Whether I stay near your bed or not, your life is only two more weeks, but the Zen which has been transmitted to America may have a firmer foundation and deeper roots by my going there with my students."

So, that day we had a memorial service for his sister, and during the chanting, two bats were flying around the ceiling. Kogetsu Roshi said, "They are my mother and my sister." These stories of Basho and Kogetsu Roshi show us that loving-kindness, or com-

passion, cannot always be predicted by conventional morality.

The child whom Basho met on the road reminds me of two great teachers who are connected to our tradition: Yamamoto Gempo Roshi and the Venerable Nyogen Senzaki. They were both abandoned children. Nevertheless, these outstanding men were able to overcome their difficulties and become not only great Zen teachers but also wonderful human beings. What they have given us is still vividly alive, and their influence is still felt, even though they are no longer here. The great Zen Master Bassui, too, was an abandoned child. He is the one who asked the well-known koan: "What is This?"

Brother Bernard, who is sitting with us now here at DBZ, is also related to this subject. He has been a Catholic Brother for over fifty years and has spent three Kessei's here and one Kessei at Mount Baldy in California. I don't know whether he deliberately chose Rinzai places or if it was the "irresistible will of heaven" which brought him to DBZ and Mount Baldy. These were the only two Rinzai Zen monasteries in the United States. At nearly seventy-five now, he sits more than anyone else here, he works more than anyone else here, and he has never given us any trouble. He is truly a wonderful human being. Through his grace and his gentle yet strong practice, he has influenced our community immensely. He will be leaving us shortly to return to Africa where he will continue his mission. Many of you do not know, however, that he too, like Gempo Roshi, Nyogen Senzaki, and Master Bassui was abandoned as a baby! They have all taken this seeming misfortune and transformed it into fortune.

All of us experienced some kind of trauma in our childhood. It may not have been as dramatic as abandonment, but all of us have experienced some unforgettable, uncomfortable, un-erasable event which has left a trace in our hearts. So, we must not view this seventeenth century Japanese

child who was abandoned by the River Fuji as someone who has “nothing to do with me.” This child is just another aspect of ourselves.

“Alas, it seems to me that this child’s” – in other words, each one of us – “undeserved suffering” – our fear, frustration and insecurity – “has been caused by something far greater and more massive” – not by our fathers, not by our mothers. There is no single person to blame; this cause stretches back even to previous lives.

“By what one might call the irresistible will of heaven” – heaven’s will, God’s will, karma.

“If it is so.” This to me means not “if” but “since.” That is: Since it is so, child, each one of us, one by one, must raise our voices “to heaven, and I must pass on, leaving you behind.”

This is a delicate issue, and you may say Basho and Kogetsu Roshi are cold and indifferent, but it seems to me that they really knew the limitation of their own capacity to help ‘so-called’ others. We, on the other hand, in our delusion, think rather arrogantly, “Oh, we can save the world.” But, we do not fully understand the limitation of our capacity to help others. When it comes to this point, the most important aspect of Buddhist practice is, naturally, to see clearly all aspects of the situation – the good aspect, the evil aspect, our own trauma traces. If we can see all aspects of ourselves and not run and hide, especially from our own inner traumas, then we can not only truly help ourselves, but we can also save others.

Many of you know about Dr. Victor Frankl. He was an Austrian Jew who became a very well-known psychologist. During World War II, he was sent to Auschwitz. For some reason, almost miraculously, he survived the death camp and was able to write about his experiences. The other night, as I

was reading one of his books translated into Japanese, something really struck me. Please allow me to extemporaneously translate into English this short paragraph:

What is the meaning of life? It is found when there is no hope. When someone is driven to despair by a situation such as being in Auschwitz, there is absolutely no chance of reprieve. In this condition where there is no hope, we can’t help but ask ourselves about the meaning of life. When we think deeply about the meaning of life, in the end, we have no other choice but to completely accept our fate.

– from *The Walls of the Fools* by Takeshi Yoro

This “fate” is none other than Basho’s “irresistible will of heaven.” When we, as students of Dharma, completely accept our karma, our fate, then we can take a different attitude. When we take a different attitude, a positive attitude, then, no matter what the situation, we have a great influence on other people. This “giving influence” to other people is the meaning of life. If we can radically accept our karma, our traumas, when our attitude changes, our actions change too. Then, whatever we say and whatever we do, however we interact with other people will have a tremendous effect. This is how a hopeless individual in the worst situation saved himself. Victor Frankl’s death camp experience transformed his attitude from hopeless to hope-full, from misfortune to fortune.

Mayoku (Magu) came to see the Master. Spreading his bowing mat, he asked, “Which is the true face of the twelve-faced Kanzeon Bodhisattva?”

In our Zendo, and in many temples throughout the world, there are images and statues of Kanzeon Bodhisattva. Kanzeon is the personification of the Buddha’s infinite compassion. Mayoku came to Master Rinzai one day and asked, “Which face is the true

face? Is it you, or is it me? Am I the real Kanzeon or are you the real Kanzeon?”

The Master stepped down from the rope-bolted chair. With one hand he picked up the bowing mat; with the other hand he seized Mayoku and asked, “Where has the twelve-faced Kanzeon gone?”

Where did the real Kanzeon go? Where did he hide? This is Rinzai’s cross-examination.

Mayoku twisted himself free and tried to sit on the chair.

The chair was now empty, as Master Rinzai had come down and grabbed Mayoku. Mayoku seized this opportunity to sit on the chair himself, as if to say: “I have become the twelve-faced Kanzeon.”

The Master picked up his staff and hit him.

This hit can be interpreted in two different ways. First, as destroying both the secular and the sacred. The hit is destroying both the true and the false. By negating everything, Master Rinzai is saying: “Whatever you say, whatever you do is NO!” At the very same time he is saying: “All right, all right, you are Kanzeon sitting in the chair.”

Mayoku grabbed it, too, and both holding it, they went into the Master’s quarters.

Rinzai used his staff to hit Mayoku. At the very instant that Rinzai hit him, Mayoku grabbed the stick, and with both holding onto it, they went into the Master’s quarters.

This is what I mean by play! This is a Dharma drama, and here we can see the quintessence of Rinzai Zen. When two great people – one host and another guest, understand each other perfectly, with equal depth and equal clarity, there is no differ-

ence, no separation anymore. They have become completely one.

Getting back to the Basho and Kogetsu Roshi story. Their attitude is only one way of looking at things. Basho left the child behind, Kogetsu Roshi left his sister behind, knowing their own limitations and accepting karma as it is – this is one aspect of compassion. If, on the other hand, another individual had picked the baby up, taken him in, and raised him as his own, then that too is an equally valid form of compassion. This happened to Yamamoto Gempo Roshi when he was abandoned by the side of the road as a baby. He was found by a man named Mr. Okamoto, who carried him to his warm house, gave him food, and thereafter, with his wife, raised him as his own child. Mr. and Mrs. Okamoto were good parents, and each year after they passed away, even when Gempo Roshi became old and frail, he would visit his parents’ graves and offer incense in gratitude. What a beautiful attitude. This must have happened also with Nyogen Senszaki, Master Bassui, and also Brother Bernard. Some persons with great compassion took it upon themselves to help an abandoned baby without any hesitation.

All I can say is that “Yes, there is karma.” It may be negative karma or positive karma, but in the end it is the “irresistible will of heaven.” Who are we to judge any of this? Who are we to say: “this is right compassion and that is wrong compassion?” Is Basho and Kogetsu Roshi’s position totally wrong? Is Mr. Okamoto’s position totally right? Are the parents who abandoned the seventeenth century baby, Gempo Roshi, Nyogen Senszaki, Master Bassui, and Brother Bernard totally wrong? No one can judge. How each of us acts in life depends entirely on the depth of our understanding. To see all aspects—positive, negative, and neutral—of ourselves and the world takes desperate courage and endeavor in zazen. This is the only way we can be emancipated. There is no other reason to practice. Think over this matter well.

Bodhidharma's Mind-Pacifying



Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji Golden Wind Sesshin Day Five, September 30, 2004
—Excerpts from a Dharma Talk by Roko Ni-Osho Sherry Chayat

Mumonkan Case 41, Bodhidharma's Mind-Pacifying

Good afternoon. Isn't it? *Desu ne?* A few of us have been learning a little Japanese, and it's one of the few things I can remember. This expression is a social convention, and like most social conventions, no matter what the culture, it reflects a yearning for mutuality. In every culture, every language, there is this: Isn't it? Don't you agree? This kind of feeling. We want this. We have a kind of nostalgia for a dimly remembered oneness. We know it's there. So it's not just a matter of good manners. Even in the most densely packed cities, in the midst of loneliness and alienation, we feel the need to have this underlying oneness expressed in little ways. We come to Zen practice not because we're looking for a new social convention, but because of our yearning for this remembered oneness.

I wanted to speak about this koan, "*Bodhidharma's Mind-Pacifying*," because I think it really captures the theme of this sesshin: acceptance and fierce struggle. In fact, we might say it captures the heart of our reality. Right? *Desu ne?* This is how we all really feel: longing for acceptance of self, of each other, of conditions beyond our comprehension, fiercely

struggling to understand, asking, Why is this? How can I go on?

Of course the other reason I wanted to use this koan today is because Bodhidharma Day is October 5, right after sesshin ends, and Bodhidharma is our first Zen ancestor. And so, seeing this scroll of Bodhidharma that has been hanging here this week, I asked Eido Roshi whose it was. When he told me, I was struck by how appropriate it is. Of course! As you know, those of you who have been practicing for some time with Roshi, appropriateness is one of his subtle but profound teachings—he is always showing us his exquisite sensitivity to what is appropriate: what words, what silence, what visual image. So, not only do we have Bodhidharma, but this Bodhidharma is by Soyen Shaku Zenji. About Soyen Shaku, we may say, yes, he was one of the pioneers of Zen in America, but more than that, like Bodhidharma, he can be considered the first patriarch—the first ancestor of Zen in America. He was the first Zen Master from Japan to come here, in 1893, to speak at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and in 1905 he returned, and brought with him a young monk, Choro-an Nyogen Senzaki, who stayed, and became the first Zen monk to teach zazen here in America.

Another first was a talk that Soyen Shaku gave in San Francisco on that visit. Of course the audience knew Soyen Shaku was a very important Zen master from Japan, and they were extremely excited to hear his great understanding; no doubt their expectations were that they would be able to take something useful away with them. He said:

"I have studied Buddhism for more than forty years, and have preached the teaching here and there. But only very recently have I begun to understand it. Now I understand that what I had understood is that, after all, I do not understand anything."

Needless to say, the audience didn't get it, and went away scratching their heads, amid some laughter. Nearly half a century later, when Soen Roshi came to America and gave his first talk in San Francisco, he quoted those

words.

These days, I often think of Soyen Shaku's words. In fact, I feel I'm just starting to understand in that same way what zazen is. I've been sitting for a few decades. What was all that sitting? I remember Eido Roshi's wonderful metaphor on the opening evening of sesshin of flies dashing themselves against the glass over and over; the window has been opened for them, but they don't see the free space, they just hurl themselves against the glass. Sitting after sitting, hurling ourselves. What are we doing? I can only speak for myself. Just now, maybe I'm starting to see that some kind person has opened the window. Sometimes, when I've knocked myself senseless, I can get out for awhile, but there are lots of windows, lots of glass. And also, all those windows are open. That's what is so wonderful about this practice. They are always open.

The word acceptance is a very important one. Mostly it's used in a way that's like resignation. Oh well, my life is really a mess, but I'll have to accept it. This is not the acceptance we are talking about. What we are doing in this practice is a radical acceptance. THIS IS IT! Shunryu Suzuki Roshi used to say, "Things as it is." This is what our zazen teaches us more and more, particularly in sesshin: we have to go through it. There's no way around it. When we finally stop hurling ourselves and simply see things as it is—suddenly there's an open window! It's always been open!

About Bodhidharma, most of you know the story of his encounter with Emperor Wu, in which his three quintessential teachings were, "No merit"—you cannot count on what you are doing to bring some wonderful result; "Vast emptiness; nothing holy"—MU!; and, "I don't know"—"Now I understand that what I understood is that after all, I do not understand anything." To finally give it all up. As it is now, just this. No inflection, no shading, no agenda.

Bodhidharma went to China at a very old age, they say maybe 120 or even 150; at

that time, the sixth century, it took three years by boat to get from India to China. So speaking of fierce struggle—how amazing, to make that journey! And why? This question is asked numerous times in Zen encounters. Why did Bodhidharma come from the West? Why did he make this supreme effort? What was he bringing? What is the truth of Buddhism? Why did he come? Why are we here? This struggle and deep anguish leads one to search and probe and question as Eka did, as we all do. A monk asked Joshu, "What is the meaning of Bodhidharma's coming to China?" Joshu answered, "Oak tree in the garden."

When I was a child, I was extremely interested in matters of a spiritual nature, but my parents did not want to have anything to do with religion. They were running away from the old Jewish mysticism of Europe, and making a new life as secular humanist-artists. One day I asked my mother about God. At first, she dismissed the question, but I contin-



ued: "Really, what is this, it's so mysterious. There's more to it than I can see around me." She said, "Well, look." She drew a circle. She

said, "Inside this circle is everything we can know." My mother is a brilliant woman, very logical. She amazes me with her ability to look deeply into matters, but always with this very rational perspective. So she drew a circle, and said, "Everything that can be known is in this circle, and that's all we can concern ourselves about." And I thought, You know, everything I care about is outside that circle.

Bodhidharma sat facing the wall—for nine years, after his meeting with Emperor Wu, he sat facing the wall. Eka came and stood outside the door in the deep snow, wanting so badly to be accepted as the disciple of Bodhidharma. Such sincere desire. Snow mounting up higher and higher. Pleading to be accepted as a student. Over and over, Bodhidharma said no, I won't take you. He told Eka, "The subtle and supreme teachings of the Buddhas can be pursued only by endless assiduity, doing what is hard to do and bearing what is hard to bear, continuing the practice even for kalpas; how can one of little virtue and much self-conceit dream of achieving it? It will end only in fruitless labor."

Imagine if we got such a response when we applied to come to sesshin. "The subtle and supreme teachings can be pursued only by endless assiduity." In truth, it's important to remember, as we sit in the midst of all kinds of turbulence, that this is absolutely as it should be. He said so, our first ancestor, he warned us. Why should we think it would be anything but "doing what is hard to do, bearing what is hard to bear, continuing the practice even for kalpas." What makes it so hard is that we believe that there is somehow an easier way. If we can just find the right instruction, the right posture, we can get around this. But there's no getting around it. Those of you who have been sitting for awhile know how wonderful it is that there's no getting around it.

Eka, with such sincerity, in a state of such extremity, refused to be discouraged, and finally took out a sword he was carrying and cut off his arm at the elbow and presented it. Each one of us, although it's not written in

the sesshin application, has to do this. Of course you understand, I'm not speaking literally; but we must have the willingness, the spiritual fortitude. We have to be able to say, OK! Whatever it takes! And whatever it takes is cutting. Cutting. You may see "arm" as everything you've brought with you, everything you've constructed about who you are, about what you're going to get out of this, about what it's going to lead to—everything, cut! Thus Eka presented this strange gift to Bodhidharma, crying, "My mind has no peace!"

By now, the fifth day of sesshin, I'm sure everyone has looked at what creates this state of no peace in the mind. Certainly one big thing is, continually dwelling in the past and the future, having some construct of reality based on what we've already experienced or what we think will happen next. As you know, there is pain; but suffering only enters into it when we think pain should be otherwise, and think, what's next? The bell? When will it ring? Meal? What will I say in dokusan? These things are always entering into our minds. Or we drift off into some dreamy state of past things that happened, things that were said. These figments, these imaginary flowers in the air that we call reality, what are they? A metaphor that is often used these days is movies. My son is out in LA studying and making films. What is a film? What are the films going on in our minds all the time? What are these projected images? Projected light, can you grasp any of it? Can you go up to a screen and grasp that figure there? Same is true of all those figments in our minds we are so caught up in, the movies of our lives. It causes us to live in fictional time.

As I said, I'm just beginning to understand zazen, and one of the things I've been doing is what Master Hakuin advises in his Rohatsu Exhortations, just breath counting; to really be nowhere but this time. The window opens. There's no other way to put it. Being-time, Master Dogen called it. But this continual march across the screen of the projected images returns again and again, and seduces us back into past, future. The

Diamond Sutra tells us, past mind cannot be grasped; present mind cannot be grasped; future mind cannot be grasped. Bodhidharma said, "Bring your mind here, and I will pacify it for you." Bring it here. When you look for your mind, what do you see? The more we look into it, the more illusory it is—the more it evaporates. "I cannot find my mind. I have searched, and I cannot take hold of it!" Eka said. Dogen said, "To study the Way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self." What is the self? You cannot take hold of it. And when that is realized, then whatever we see is it. With the blinders off, these golden leaves, last night's *Ode to Joy* performed by the geese, the changing light of this moment, it's all here. Now your mind is pacified.

Before we can hear a teacher's words the way Eka heard Bodhidharma's words, we have to be in a state of readiness, and to enter into that state of readiness requires sincerity, willingness, absolute attention. And it also requires an awareness of how rare and precious this opportunity is. We can't have an arrogant or stiff-necked approach to spiritual practice. We do the Purification Verse every morning. This is essential, more often than just once a day. Whenever you feel some complaint, immediately, "All the evil karma ever committed by me since of old..." When there's no gap, then we are ready to meet Bodhidharma.

We started sesshin on the Jewish High Holy Day of Yom Kippur, and these ten Days of Awe begin with a very beautiful passage that is sung by the cantor the first day. It really speaks to this readiness of mind. Before we undertake these days of solemnity, of atonement, we have to begin this way, and the same is true of sesshin. The passage goes in part,

"Trembling, rising to entreat the awesome One, I now begin my plea; with limited good deeds I stand in fear; with limited wisdom, what hope is there for me? Grant me wisdom to transmit our heritage, Creator. Strengthen me as I falter in my fear, consider as rare incense

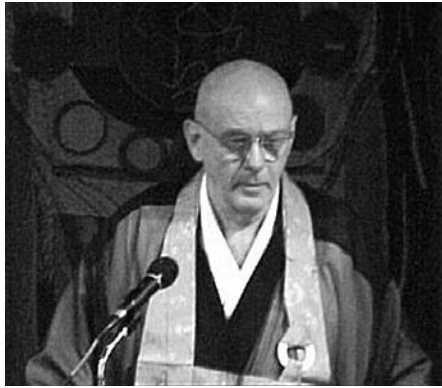
my whispered prayer; consider as sweetest honey my uttered plea; may it be acceptable, not a worthless sham, so that pardon may be granted those whose emissary I am. Hear my cry as I begin, Master of all that mercy can fashion. My heart is in turmoil. I cannot rest. My faults have brought me to the point of tears. My heart is astir as I offer my prayer."

The turmoil in our hearts; the turmoil in Eka's mind. We have to cut off the arm. With readiness and purification...and finally, just MU. This turmoil in our minds—what is it really? ME ME ME ME! We come to sesshin and begin sitting, and it becomes, "ME ME ME MU ME ME MU ME MU MU MU MU MU MU MU MU." Little by little, more MU and less ME. And finally, just MU. But ME comes right back. And there's nothing wrong with that. It's only through ME that MU can be realized! When we chant so strenuously "KANZEON!" in the morning, maybe we think it's some bodhisattva out there that we're chanting to, but the more we do this, the more we understand that Kanzeon is what's happening here, right in the very midst of MU ME MU ME MU, and thus compassion for ourselves and our own struggle builds.

So along with the willingness, and sincerity, and earnestness, and humility, we must have compassion for our own impediments, without which we would never be able to wake up. The impediments themselves are the karmic cause for our being here today. Isn't that wonderful? We all must bow in gratitude for everything that we think is wrong with us, or that has been done to us. Sesshin after sesshin, fiercely struggling, and then finding Bodhidharma not on some pedestal, but in our own hearts, in our own lives. At this moment, what more need we seek?

(The scroll of Bodhidharma on page 10 was done by Soyen Shaku Zenji Dai Osho.)

Fuketsu and The Mind Seal of the Patriarchs



Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji Memorial Day Sesshin Day Six May 30, 2003 from a Dharma Talk by Zenrin Chido Robert Lewis

Blue Cliff Record Case 38:

Fuketsu and the Mind Seal of the Patriarch

Introduction:

The gradual method, going back to the ways of the world to merge them into the Way—turns out to be leading the student up and down and back and forth in the hustle and bustle of the busy marketplace of ideas. Use the sudden method, leaving no trace—and even thousands of sages groping on for it couldn't discover it. How about staying with neither way, sudden or gradual? The keen person at one word—at the critical time when such a student is at a loss, who is so skillful and quick? To see, take a look at this.

Main Subject::

Fuketsu was at a government office. Speaking from the high seat in the hall there, he said: "The Mind Seal of the Patriarch is like the effect of the Iron Ox. If the seal is removed, the impression remains, fixed—but if the seal remains, the impression is ruined: It makes no impression on anyone. To avoid both the seal being removed and the seal remaining, is stamping with the seal the thing to do—or not stamping with it?" Then a senior monk, Rohi, came out with a request: "This person is already experiencing the effect of the Iron Ox. Please, Master, don't stamp with the Seal, adding yet another impression."

Fuketsu said, "I've had a lot of experience fishing for whales and settling great floods, which makes this frog wallowing in sandy mud all the more dismaying." Rohi stopped to think. Fuketsu gave a shout and said, "Elder, why not say more?" Rohi hesitated, trying. Fuketsu swatted him with his ceremonial fly whisk and said, "Well, do you remember what we were talking about? Take a look at it." Rohi was about to say something, but Fuketsu swatted him with the whisk again.

Verse:

*Fuketsu was able to hold Rohi
Astride the Iron Ox
The Three Profundities' sword and shield
Don't stir up mindless retaliation
A king's palace, high on banks, divides
Waters of a river returning to the sea
With that shout, though, he made
The river flow backward.*

Driving up here through Pennsylvania on a four-lane divided highway, everybody doing sixty-five in the dark and the rain, I glanced in my rear-view mirror. In the car behind me two people were backlit, in silhouette—it looked like they were tearing each other's hair out, back and forth like Punch and Judy, their car swerving all over the road. Calming way down, I thought, "Be my guests; the road is yours." I planned to edge over into the slow lane to let them pass. Immediately at my red right-turn flasher they darted around to my right and were gone. Leaving me feeling grateful for my life, not so much all of it as just that moment, that mo-moment. I think most all of us have that feeling by now in this sesshin.

If we keep at this long enough, apparently we all see, after a long and deep session of sittings, a tree, say—in a new way: The tree looks like it fits. I mean, if there's a good snow, snowflakes coming down, no snowflake falls out of place, in an inappropriate place—it's all white. Believe it or not, your tree will look like that (or already does). It will fit in just like those snowflakes fit in. At the same time, you see with a shock of recognition that the tree is somehow totally familiar. And, you and the tree being in the same world, you fit

in too, and you find you yourself are totally familiar.

When the jikijitsu strikes the inkin bell, does she strike it with the striker? With her hand? At exactly the place where it gives a good sound without hurting the bell? Does she strike it with exactly the right force—not too much, not too little? Or does she strike it with her mind? If her mind is certainty, no doubts—then when she rings the bell that bell will say certainty. Then we, sitting, are certain: We have no doubts about how the sitting is going to go—whatever that means!

Hakuin defines the Mind Seal of the Patriarch that way: No jargon, just everything—including you—always fits and is totally familiar like that tree: You're completely at home in the world. And it's like certainty, not certainty about something, certainly not about something else. Just certainty.

The Patriarch whose Mind Seal it is, is the Patriarch Bodhidharma, who passed it down to us through the generations of Zen masters. He brought nothing from India but the robe on his back, the sandals on his feet, and a begging bowl. That was it. So his Mind Seal is sort of close to nothing, isn't it? Like that tree, just an ordinary tree being a tree, and yet at the same time something decisive is different. On the calligraphies hanging here in the Dharma Hall are seals. The Chinese word is 'chop'. When the mind of the master who did the calligraphy is, after many tries, finally satisfied, he puts his seal on it. It's the same way the jikijitsu, after long learning how to strike the inkin, her mind.....

The Yellow River is so called because it's silted up with the rich yellow soil of the 'breadbasket' in north China. Looking at it, you can see the sorrow there. The fields are so much lower than the river that when it changes course—disaster: drought where it's moved from, flood where it's moved to. Yu the Great, a very ancient emperor, made its very high dikes. He set his seal on his work: an Iron Ox, with tail and hind feet south of the river and snout and forefeet north of it—bridging the river. Enormous, solid iron! Let's not worry about engineering problems here. The point is the psychology. Fuketsu says the Mind Seal of the Patriarch is like the effect on your

mind of that Iron Ox.

Let's now go into this: If the seal is removed /If it remains /If it's stamped down /Or not—which of these to avoid? Both of those? But it sounds like certain parts of the Record of Rinzai. Remember the one about on the way, yet never having left home; having left home, yet not on the way—which is best? Something is really wrong with the question. Rinzai was fishing. So is Fuketsu, and he catches Rohi: "Then a senior monk, Rohi, came out with a request: 'This person [he himself] is already experiencing the effect of the Iron Ox. Please, Master, don't stamp with the Seal, adding yet another impression.'"

The ox is iron throughout, no silver nose or tin liver; what you see is what you get. So how could there be two different Mind Seals of the Patriarch? Rohi says, "Please don't add another impression." But there is no other impression, only that one. We're not in the realm of two different things here. Apparently Rohi thinks his condition is delicate, vulnerable: If he's not treated just right, he's going to suffer. How can that be if he's experienced the effect of the Iron Ox, if he has the Mind Seal of the Patriarch?

We cobble together a false self out of mental phenomena listed in the Heart Sutra: form, feeling, thought, volition and consciousness—defining ourselves from them. Which leaves us horribly dependent and vulnerable, because they are. When Fuketsu says, "I've had a lot of experience" with whales and floods, "which makes this frog wallowing in sandy mud [worthless things] dismaying"—the frog is Rohi, but the cobbled together Rohi, therefore vulnerable. The disciplinarian will correct you whenever you do wrong, making you dependent on constant correction. And the one that always has a positive attitude, is kind and encouraging, leaves you dependent on that encouraging kindness. But if you want real autonomy and independence, you need somebody like Fuketsu, who will call a frog a frog.

The real drama here is in Rohi's mind. His reaction to being called a frog is: "Rohi stopped to think." No obstinate resentment, no ruthless insistence on always being right. Rather, a deep respect for Fuketsu. Therefore

Rohi is trainable, able to let go of that cob- bled-together false self, ungraspable as any contingent thing, which is not going to work for him. Thus Fuketsu brings Rohi to prajna- wisdom.

Then just at the right time, Fuketsu gives a shout! Rohi, losing just letting his whole being be with it, is just starting to think, just on the edge of having a good thought, and Fuketsu blows it away. This is a matter of timing: When is Rohi ready?

And Fuketsu immediately takes the initiative: "Elder;"—the frog is gone—"why not say more?" And the shout is gone. It's as if he's going around to the side of Rohi and saying it softly in his ear, encouraging him to go on further.

Rohi hesitates, trying—not cleverly, but straight-forwardly—which is shugyo practice, doing with cultivation. Fuketsu lets him try until just at the point where he starts to go off into thought, and then swats him with his fly whisk (a short stick with a horse's tail). The first time it was a shout, but we have a sensitive monk here—all he needs now is a flick with the fly swatter.

"Well, do you remember what we were talking about? Take a look at it." Says Fuketsu. This "Take a look" is what introduces this koan at the end of the introduction—remember? Fuketsu is giving Rohi a koan, as if saying, "Check it out, Rohi." A koan is, as Eido Roshi has put it: when and where the truth happens—you might say it's a reality check.

In the second stanza of Setcho's Verse he talks about the "Three Profundities"—of Rinzai, who never said what they were. But here's what Fuketsu says they are: 1) Prajna, 2) Shugyo, and 3) Koan: wisdom, practice, and reality check—here, seeing that a frog is a frog, trying to say more, and remembering what this is all about.

"Rohi was about to say something, but Fuketsu swatted him with the whisk again."—leaving Rohi where? The Verse says, "Fuketsu was able to hold Rohi / Astride the Iron Ox." Do you see it? The river and, spanning it from dike to dike, the huge Iron Ox with Rohi riding it. And Fuketsu is helping Rohi stay on with the Three Profundities, the shout, and the swats.

If Fuketsu were to fail and Rohi fell off the ox, he'd fall into the Yellow River, full of silt. How about: He'd fall into his delusion stream of snow-balling thoughts and drown in dichotomies?

Where is Rohi headed, where is Fuketsu helping him get to on the ox? The Verse says, "With that shout, though, he made/The river flow backward." What does that mean? For instance, take Beecher Lake. There's a stream flowing from the semicircular ridge up there between Dai Bosatsu Mountain and the mountain on the other side of the lake. Follow that stream back and you'll come to a spring welling up, and that spring's water is pure, fresh, cool, refreshing, and constant. Which sounds like Denko Osho quoting from the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra about the essence of Mind, talking about its purity, its constancy, and so on.

What is the essence of this mind, your mind, right now? What we know of this mind is this stream. So we can translate the question: What is the source of the stream? How do we not just find the source, but go back to get where the stream's source is and dwell there? That is what Fuketsu is doing for Rohi—helping him get back to the source.

In Tei Dai Denpo we chant, "...Rinzai Gigen Zenji, Koke Sonsho Zenji, Nanin Egyo Zenji, Fuketsu Ensho Zenji..." The "planting pines" section of the third part of the Record of Rinzai says that Fuketsu would be a worthy successor of Rinzai. The brisk interaction characteristic of Rinzai is here in this koan. So in that sense the Record of Rinzai is continued in, with, by, Fuketsu. Fuketsu, so to speak, is Rinzai. And in the same sense Rinzai Zen is alive and well today. Translation of the Record of Rinzai involves scholarship—things like grammar and word choice. But how to bring Rinzai alive? My impression is that the only way is to be Rinzai. The translation that Eido Roshi is working on bids fair to be our first really accurate, living translation of the Record of Rinzai.



Takuhatsu

By Fujin Zenni

It was not until I returned from Shogen-Ji, Japan, in the summer of 1999 that I could start to appreciate the impact that it had on my practice. Once in a while at Shogen-Ji, lay people would ask what I liked the most about Japanese monastic life. Invariably I would reply, "Sweeping the grounds while the sun comes up and *takuhatsu*." Though it can be challenging to walk in robes and straw sandals on cold winter days, when the sun comes out and my body gradually warms up, the joy and gratitude that follow make the hardship a mere meaningless memory. Also, *takuhatsu* is the only time when *unsuis* (training monks/nuns) are freed from their seniors' watch and are allowed to have brief contact with Japanese villagers. This contact is often very moving, especially in Gifu Prefecture where Buddhism is still widely followed.

In the Diamond Sutra, we read,

"One day, at mealtime, the World-Honored One put on His robe, and carrying His bowl, made His way into the great city of Sravasti to receive offerings of food. In the midst of the city, He walked from door to door, according to tradition. In this way, all virtuous men and women were given an opportunity to learn the practice of charity."

These few lines express so well the attitude of Japanese farmers during *takuhatsu*.

Though they thank us profusely all the time, we are instructed never to say "thank you". The reason for this is that we are not beg-

ging for ourselves. Upon approaching a house, we are told to chant, "Konnichiwa, Ibuka Shogen-Ji, Bussho no kokorozashi onegai mooshimasu!" (Hello, this is Shogen-Ji temple in Ibuka. I am here with the hope of receiving an offering for the daily meal of the founder.) The founder of course passed on a long time ago, and this is where we have to remember how much Zen Buddhism and western thinking differ. In Zen tradition, "*Kaisan*," the founder of a temple, is far more alive than a regular *unsui*. Because of his realization, the temple was built, lay people are given a spiritual home and true understanding can continue through his practice. An *unsui*'s life, on the other hand, may not be worth a penny, as we often hear Gempo Roshi say in Eido Roshi's *teisho*. So, what are we supposed to do upon receiving the congregation's generous offerings? We are to bow low and to strengthen our resolve to save all beings through our continuing effort.

I cannot recall all of the encounters that donors' unbelievable attitude allowed me to 'go through the rest of the week'. But on such days, while walking back to the monastery, although I may have been carrying a few kilograms of rice on my shoulders, my heart was lighter than a feather. I'd like to tell you about two particular events which are engraved in my memory.

The first one happened shortly after being admitted to Shogen-ji. A *takuhatsu* team usually consists of four or five *unsuis* who walk together early in the morning to the designated village. At 7 A.M. begging is to start. Everyone is assigned an area of the village and goes 'from door to door' individually. Around 11:30 A.M., the group meets in a given place and proceeds to the host-family of the day for a service and lunch. Because we cannot read signs or even a map during the first few months, foreigners are usually sent along with a "*sempai*" (senior monk or nun). As you can imagine, the selected *sempai* is usually not very happy to have to baby-sit while everybody else is enjoying some long-awaited independence.

One day, I was following one of the nuns, and as I just said, she was treating me like a nuisance. She sent me to a street saying, "Do both sides of this street." In her tone, there was no room for me to ask, "And then what?" While I was going from house to house on the assigned

street, she disappeared. After the street was over I panicked and frantically searched for a blue robe and a bamboo hat in the neighboring areas, pricked my ears to hear her chanting. When at last we found each other, she scolded me, sent me to another street and repeated the whole thing time and time again. After an hour or so of this game, I lost my patience and told myself, "I am just going to continue takuhatsu no matter what. If I get lost, she will get scolded far more than I. After all I am a new-comer and she is responsible for me." I went straight ahead with no instructions, ignoring the fact that I had no idea where I was going.

After a few minutes of walking, I entered a courtyard and chanted as usual. I heard some shuffling inside and opened my offering bag while bowing. Because of the wide bamboo hat and frequent bowing, we can't see the donors' faces. But their hands and feet stand out so expressively. Upon recognizing the feet of the old lady who was approaching me, I just stared. I had been in that same house a few minutes ago. Once in a while when two unsui's areas overlap, or when one has a poor sense of orientation (as I do) a particular household might be visited twice. In such case, the householder would say, "Oh, today we've already seen a Shogen-ji monk," which means, "We've already given our offering." Due apologies then follow. Realizing my mistake, I started to mumble apologies, but then stopped, speechless. The old lady was carrying a tray with some rice to offer. She gave me rice a second time as if she had never seen me before. I could only bow in sheer admiration and as I withdrew I heard her whisper to herself, "Muzukashii desu ne! (Difficult isn't it!)" I felt great shame for my previous anger and discouragement. She was much older than I, probably worked much harder than I did, yet didn't lose her patience nor wasted a minute in telling me what to do. Hearing a monk's chanting, she JUST brought some rice.

The other event was a few months later. I was emancipated from having to follow my sempai and at long last I became responsible for my own area. The contact with Gifu prefecture natives became far more personal and rich. Though I couldn't always figure out the meaning of their words, their hands, eyes and smiles spoke far more to my heart than volumes on Japanese culture. Sometimes, they would peak

under my hat and say, "Oh! You are a foreigner I see. Are you a boy or a girl?"

One day (it was December 21st) I was finished ahead of time and felt like joining our Dai Bosatsu Mandala day service. I saw a cemetery on a nearby hill and thought it was a good place to offer some chanting. To be crowded doesn't seem to be a problem for Japanese deceased individuals, any more than it is for the living. Jizos and Kanzeons, old-timers and new-comers, all seem to do their best to squeeze in the small available space. Upon seeing the grave of someone who had died just a month earlier, I decided to chant for him: Dai Hi Shu, Dai Segaki, Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo, and of course, Namu Dai Bosa. Refreshed by this unique opportunity, I came down and headed toward the meeting point. A few minutes later, a middle-aged woman ran after me. She was in tears and her hands were full of offerings: rice, money and oranges. I recognized her from having visited her house earlier that morning. At first, she was sobbing so much that I couldn't understand what she was saying. When she finally was able to articulate, she told me that her husband had died just a month ago. She could see the cemetery from her garden and had seen me chanting and bowing at her husband's grave. Her gratitude was a great encouragement and still is.

The strictness of the founder (through the Roshi) on one hand and the kindness of the lay community on the other hand, both create great pressure for us to practice with single-minded determination. To do takuhatsu is like listening to Master Hakuin's Rohatsu exhortations, everyday.

"You monks, all of you without exception have a father and a mother, brothers and sisters and countless relatives. Suppose you were to count them all life after life, it would become thousands, ten thousands and even more. All of them are transmigrating in the six worlds and receive innumerable sufferings. They await your enlightenment as keenly as they would expect a small rain cloud in the distant horizon during a draught. How can you sit so carelessly! You must have the great vow to save them all! Time passes like an arrow. It waits for no one. Exert yourself! Exhaust yourself!" (Hakuin Zenji, Rohatsu Exhortations, the seventh night.)

A Jukai Note

By Keiun Clare Dacey

On November sixth at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, twelve students took Buddhist precepts under Eido Shimano Roshi and Denko Osho. Since becoming Eido Roshi's student in 2003, I had felt no hesitation in moving toward commitment to the Buddhist path. As the end of Harvest Sesshin approached, and with it, jukai, I understood that the most important event of my life was about to take place. Today, a little over one week after jukai, three things stand out in my memory of the ceremony. The dharma hall in which we assembled was filled with a golden light. Repeatedly, when I could not contain the momentousness of what was happening, I fell back on my community with the eleven other people sharing the ceremony. Finally, I did experience Roshi talking to my true nature and became alive as I have never been.

Eido Roshi began the jukai ceremony by explaining its name. He said that the syllable *ju* connotes both giving and taking. Roshi gave me a brand new birthright, and I took it with all my heart. The 'me' he gave it to was at that moment as spacious as my dharma name — for once, not ego-bound! Who knows how much of that was due to the rugged seven days of sesshin preceding, or to Roshi's infinite patience as I banged my head against the floor in doku-san, or to the silent generosity of others present, or to the elegant exoticism of jukai itself? What is certain is that Denko Osho's brief words at jukai rang true: one day all people will be Buddhists. Jukai is meant for all.

In the joy of new birth are sober thoughts. Perhaps we all reflect on our ability to live up to the precepts. Pre-ceremony discussion of not giving way to lust provoked doubtful laughter among a group of us jukai students. In one of his dharma talks, Denko Osho wondered how many of us had come to Dai Bosatsu looking for the Way. I thought to myself, "Well, I came for the food!" (Genju's description of DBZ's cooking had propelled me to do sesshin there for the first time in 1999.) Now, with jukai past, it will be interesting to see if the glutony slows down. As for subtler behavior, like judging, I am simply grateful for the practice that lets me see it. And Roshi told me to be

patient with myself.

Several people attending Harvest Sesshin commented on its grave tone, which I think threw the radiance of jukai into high relief. Fujin's presence was missed at jukai, and her trip to France a poignant reminder of why we do sesshin in the first place. We all felt her loss. Some thought that the restrained turmoil of sesshin reflected the nation's harsh presidential election struggle.

But veteran students were encouraged to see Denko Osho's jukai students, all in the midst of kessei. Soryu, Jokei, Tenetsu, Jushin, and Eigan showed a young, enthusiastic dharma spirit and graciously played host to other participants. Soryu's strength and energy was disguised by jisha grace. She did much to make the jukai sesshin comfortable. It was also wonderful to listen to my fellow students under Eido Roshi — Chogetsu, Shinkyo, Somon, Daigi, Genryu and Yuho — as they spoke about their jukai experience at closing brunch. Sesshin is so solitary, and each of us jukai students had traveled it alone. Then came the splendor of jukai, and all twelve of us ended up in the same dumbfounded state. While preparing us for the ceremony, wise and cheerful Seigan did not give too much away.

Soyen Shaku/Kaigen Weekend Sesshin (with Aiho-san's fabulous cooking) is about to begin. Each taking of the Great Vows can be a fresh commitment to the Buddhist path, and jukai kept alive. In one of my favorite of Roshi's teishos, he talked about the expression "give and take": "We do not say, 'take and give'. We say, 'give and take!'" Deep gratitude to Eido Roshi, Aiho-san, and the wonderful sangha that makes these words live.



Zen Studies Society News & Roshi's Travels

Roshi Speaks in Japan

Eido Roshi gave a speech to an audience of over 2000 people in Tokyo, Japan this October. His speech was connected to the prestigious award given to him in March by the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai foundation, a group dedicated to the dissemination of Buddhism to the west. The well-received talk lasted forty-five minutes and was entitled "The world of Zen and Zen in the world." He spoke about the three fundamentals of all religions: 'aliveness', 'radical acceptance', and 'renunciation'. A party was hosted by Mr. Kato at the Tokyo Imperial Hotel to acknowledge Eido Roshi for his lifetime achievement in bringing the Buddhadharma to the west. We would like to congratulate Eido Roshi for this great honor.

Jukai Ceremony 2004

On November 6, 2004, the last day of Harvest Sesshin, a Jukai ceremony was performed by Eido Roshi and Denko Osho. Amidst tears and joy, twelve students received lay Buddhist precepts, formally embarking on "a path of endless transformation." Congratulations to all the Jukai participants and best wishes to the newborn Buddha babies on their Dharma life.

Students of Eido Roshi:

Carl Baldini	Yuho	"Sublime Peak"
Clare Dacey	Keiun	"Open Cloud"
Hiroshi Ito	Genryu	"Profound Dragon"
Sarah Lechner	Shinkyō	"Mind Mirror"
Anna Song	Chogetsu	"Fishing for the Moon"
Thomas Stabb	Daigi	"Great Doubt"
Terrance Truta	Somon	"Patriarchs' Gate"

Students of Denko Osho:

Jericho Blum	Tentetsu	"Piercing the Sky"
Sylvia Dambrauskas	Soryu	"Simply Dragon"
Megumi Kairis	Jokei	"Always Blessings"
Patrick Newton	Eigan	"Eternal Vow"
David Seaman	Jushin	"Heart of this Important Matter"

Roshi's Travels in Europe

For two weeks in August, Eido Roshi traveled to Europe for his annual sesshin held at The Lasalle House in Zurich, Switzerland. Eido Roshi was assisted by Shokan Marcel Urech and Miku Michael Weissert. The sesshin was attended by over two dozen people. At the completion of the retreat, Roshi traveled to Italy fulfilling a lifelong dream to visit Assisi, the birthplace of St Francis. While at the Cathedral of St Francis, Roshi visited the underground tomb and chanted The Great Compassionate Dharani while surrounded by priests, monks, and nuns. "It was an unusual and deeply moving experience," he later said.

Zen Weekend Workshop in Telluride with Eido Roshi

On November 13 & 14, Eido Roshi went to Telluride, Colorado to lead a Zen Weekend Workshop there. The Workshop was made possible through the generosity, effort, and genuine dedication of Jingu Arnold Zidell. Also participating was Daien George Burch, Godo Gordon Johnson, who kindly brought all the cushions and other necessary equipment from his Deer Run Zendo in Corte Madera, California, and Rinden Roland Sugimoto. The Workshop was part of the "Out Loud Lecture Series," a community program, and took place in the Sheridan Opera House, an old theater located in the heart of Telluride. Each day there was a Dharma-talk followed by a few periods of Zazen. The Workshop was well attended with over forty participants; and the weather was auspicious with snow falling over the mountains of Telluride.

Also, on Saturday evening Eido Roshi gave an inspiring lecture with the title, "What is the most

wonderful thing?" originating from the Koan "Hyakujo Sits on the Great Sublime Peak," Hekiganroku, case 26. Most importantly, Roshi spoke about how to live a meaningful life, with the message: "we are 'OK' as we are, right now." Roshi's talk was also well attended despite a heavy snowstorm.

Eido Roshi Dedicates Unzan Zendo

The official opening and dedication of Unzan (Cloud Mountain) Zendo was held on the morning of May 1, 2004. Located in Jacksonville, Florida, and established by Zenrin Chido, the Zendo building was transformed from an original 1918 foundation. Zenrin is the resident teacher to the Florida Sangha; he is assisted by Dairi. Eido Roshi dedicated the Zendo in the morning and gave a public talk at the local Unitarian Church that same evening.

Other News:

Condolences

Both Zendo's Sanghas express their condolences and sincere sympathy to Fujin and her family. On November 2, 2004, the second day of Harvest Sesshin, Fujin's father Jean Formhals passed away at the age of 89.

Earlier this year Denko Osho and his wife Hiten also suffered losses; Denko Osho's stepmother and Hiten's father passed away. We would also like to offer them heartfelt condolence in their loss.

Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji News

Spring Kessei 2004

Spring Kessei began on April 1st with the following returning residents: Fujin Zenni – Inji; Entsu Zenji – Tenzo; Rinden Zenji – Shikaryo and Fuzui; Daiho Zenji – Jisha; Hiten Angela Mortensen – Open space manager; Anna Song – Assistant Tenzo; Jericho Blum – Gyorin; Enmyo Florentine Sack – Assistant Jisha; and Brother Bernard Kilm – Jokei. At the close of Spring, Brother Bernard Klim returned to monastic practice in Africa. Brother Bernard is a Holy Cross monk and long-time student of Eido Roshi. His energy, good humor, and endless-work ethic at DBZ this kessei was inspiration to all.

Also joining the activities this spring were Nicolaj Jespersen, Elizabeth Grant, Eigan Patrick Newton, Soryu Sylvia Dambrauskas, Jason Franklin, Don Volk, and Zuiki Eduardo Job.

Summer Work Exchange

Summer work-exchange participants: Alan Davies, Mugen Hilary Adler, Senshin Julius Talyansky, Seema Christie, Jason Smith, Sylvia White, Shelly Bello, Joriki Scott Baker, Richard Smith, Christian Louis, Heather Gallagher, Hal Hallstein, David Hicks, Greg Di Gesu. Special thanks to Donald Volk from Hawaii who was a great help in work on the fire alarm system, refixing the screens, and many other various jobs.

Summer Five-Day Sesshin

Sogen Yamakawa Roshi visited us from Japan for the five-day summer sesshin. He and Eido Roshi alternated dokusan and Teisho to give us an unforgettable traditional Rinzaï sesshin experience. This atmosphere, along with the many committed participants made it a particularly exhilarating event. It was splendid to host Yamakawa Roshi again for the first time in two years; his guiding presence was welcoming and inspirational.

O-Bon

One gift of this year's O-Bon was the ceasing of persistent rain on the evening of the ceremony. Auspiciously, the sky cleared just minutes before we proceeded outside to cast our candlelit

lanterns across Beecher Lake and enjoy a festive bonfire. Thank you Aiho-san, Seigan, and Entsu for preparing a superb traditional Japanese feast for the occasion.

Fall Kessei 2004

Fall Kessei has begun strongly under the guidance of Eido Shimano Roshi and Vice-Abbott Denko Osho.

Officers: Fujin Zenni – Inji and Shikaryo; Entsu Zenji – Tenzo; Assistant Tenzo – Eigan Patrick Newton; Daiho Zenji – Assistant Shikaryo; Hiten Angela Mortensen – Open space manager; Rinden Zenji – Ino; Chogetsu Anna Song – Gyorin; Tentetsu Jericho Blum – Jokei; Soryu Sylvia Dambrauskas – Jisha; Myogen Gail Freed – Assistant Jisha.

Returning residents: Jushin David Seeman, Jokei Megumi Kairis.

New residents: Myogen Gail Freed, Jishin Karen Bartlett.

Along with established residents, we are joined by Settan Vasily Apostilidis and Gabriel Valibouze from Greece and France, respectively. Both will be studying at the Zendo until the end of Kessei on December 9th.

Rinden Roland Sugimoto Zenji has completed his thousand days of training and continues to practice here at Dai Bosatsu.

Wood Crew: Samu Weekends at DBZ

Sangha members from Shobo-ji have visited Dai Bosatsu several times this season to help with wood harvesting, splitting, and stacking. With this extra help, led by Soun Joe Dowling's motivation and coordination, we were able to obtain wood stock entirely from DBZ property, often clearing already fallen trees from the forest. Thank you very much Soun, Agung Hertanto, Zuiki Eduardo, Noel Rodriguez, Kevin Murphy, and Douglas Seiden.

Defibrillator

Dai Bosatsu Zendo seeks to purchase a defibrillator unit for use in emergency situations; at least one resident would like to be trained in using this apparatus. Donations for the unit would be most appreciated; please contact us at 845-439-4566 if you can be of service regarding this issue.

New York Zendo Shobo-ji News

Chimney Repairs and New Carpet

This spring NYZ had various repairs done to its building. The rusted out chimney connected to the boiler was replaced; it had been leaking throughout last winter. The jisha closet was repainted, as well as the foyer and entrance area. Outside on our sidewalk, the iron access doors leading to a drainage area were replaced with a brand new set, and new carpets were installed on the stairs and library welcoming people inside with a warm cranberry color. For their generosity, we would like to thank the many people who donated to these necessary repairs.

New Garden in Progress

Our stone garden area is in the process of being renovated. With the help of Eido Roshi and Dr. Cunningham Rundles Ward, our neighbor who lives directly behind the Zendo, and in consultation with Bill Watson, a gardener and landscape designer, plans are underway to restore our garden area to its original beauty. Already a new bamboo partition has been built to cover one of our neighbor's air conditioning units, which was an eyesore to be sure. The cement walls, which now have cracks in them, will be replaced; and new pebbles will soon replace the existing ones. In addition, when the enkianthus tree in the corner of the garden was removed due to its age, a beautiful natural altar was born.

Aiho's New Knee

On Friday, February thirteenth, while visiting friends in Hawaii, Aiho-san had a serious accident resulting in her right knee being broken. Both of her knees were surgically replaced in 1991, but this second break posed a challenge for the same doctor who had worked on her years before. After she was flown back to New York, a three hour operation was successfully performed. Aiho-san underwent physiotherapy for more than a month and a half before resuming her normal activities at the Zendo. She is now fully recovered with a new knee and wishes to thank the many Sangha members and friends who sent cards, flowers, and well wishes. Aiho-san was very moved by everyone's care and concern. A congratulatory get-well party for her was held in the Spring just before she and Eido Roshi traveled to Japan to accept the prestigious award by the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai.

Eido Roshi Talks to St. Luke's

On Monday September 20, Eido Roshi, accompanied by Seigan and Fujin, gave a special talk to fifty staff members of the Child and Family Institute, a psychiatric facility at St. Luke's Hospital in Harlem. Roshi led the staff in two periods of mindfulness and discussed the uses of mindfulness in patient treatment. He also captivated the psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers in attendance with his answers to questions.

Several doctors spoke of the pain they experience while encountering the wretchedness of their patients' lives. Roshi's words about radical acceptance for both doctor and patient, gave guidance and consolation to the hospital staff.

The doctors found Eido Roshi's Eastern view of healing particularly fascinating. Many reported having an experience of being healed by Roshi's presence and by his encouraging words. Repeating Roshi's saying, "Let it be," for weeks afterward, hospital staff found renewed energy for their work.

The Child and Family Institute expresses warm gratitude to Aiho-san and Kei-un Clare Dacey for proposing and arranging this visit to St Luke's.

NYZ Shobo-ji on TV

On Wednesday, September 29, a crew from the Fuji television network of Japan visited our Zendo and taped our sitting and chanting practices, and interviewed several people. The resulting program highlighted Zazen practice as an alternative for Japanese businessmen after a long day of work. We truly hope that anyone who views this program will be educated to the benefits of Zazen.

Like a Dream, Like a Fantasy

At long last the Zen writings and translations of Nyogen Senzaki, edited and introduced by Eido Roshi will be republished in the near future. This revised edition includes a new introduction and new chapters.

Upcoming events:

New Years Eve New York Zendo will host its annual New Year's Eve Celebration and Chanting on Dec 31. Two sats will precede a Dharma Talk by Eido Roshi, which will be followed by chanting Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo 108 times. During the chanting, each participant will strike the large gong and offer incense. A party will follow on the second floor, featuring traditional Japanese New Year's food and drink. Please call for more information or to register. 8PM to 2AM; doors open at 7:15. Members: \$20; non-members: \$30.

Interim and Opening Teisho 2005

Eido Roshi will give the last Teisho of 2004 on Wed Dec 15. All are welcome to attend. From Dec 16 to January 4, New York Zendo will enter its Winter Interim period; therefore the Zendo will be closed. It will re-open with the first Teisho of 2005 on Wed Jan 5. Again, all are welcome to attend.

