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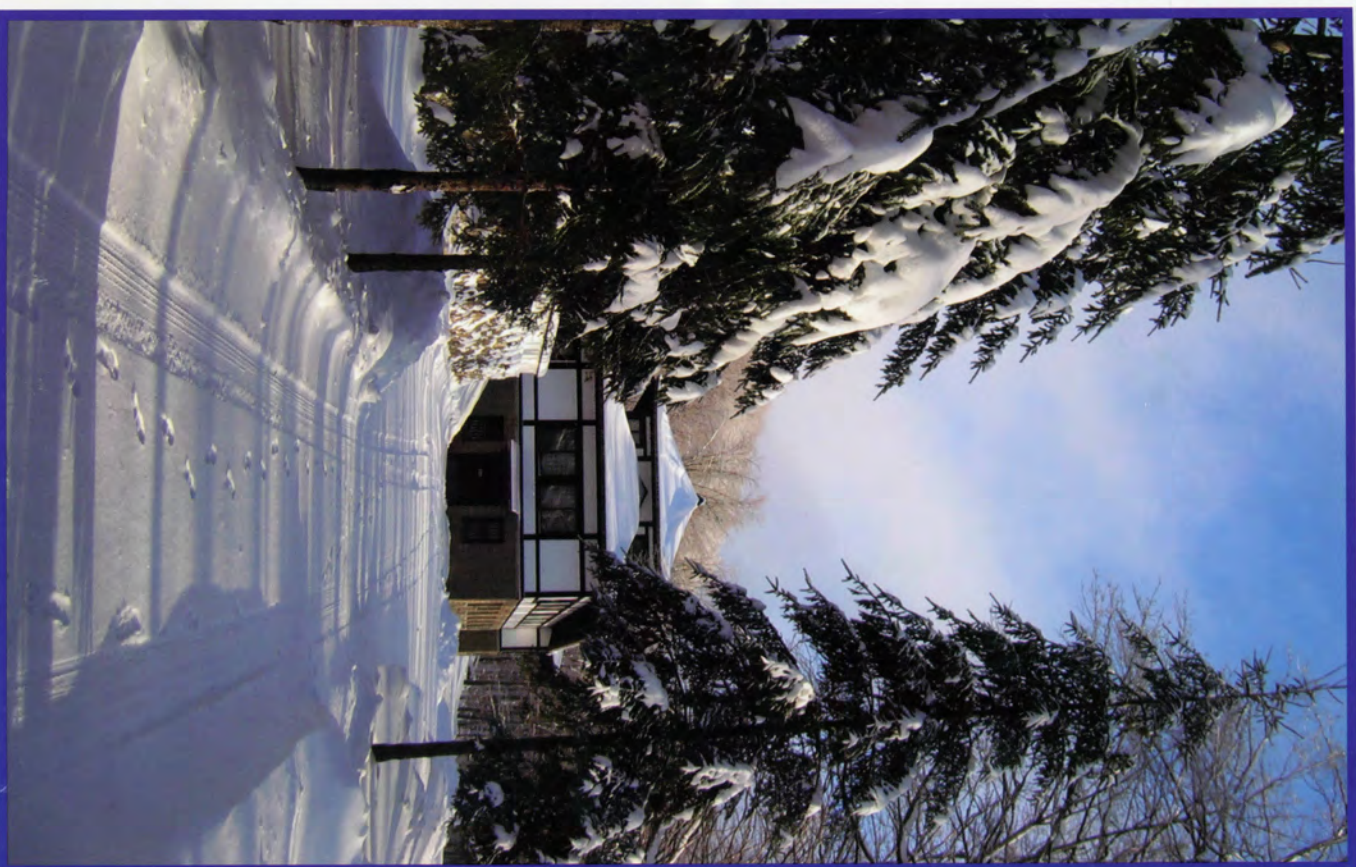
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Rinzai Roku

The Book of Master Rinzai, Record of Pilgrimages, Chapter 1
From a Teisho given by Eido Shimano Roshi at Dai Bosatsu Zendo Winter Weekend Sesshin Jan 18, 2004



did your question go?" The Master said, "Before my question was over the Abbot hit me. I don't understand." The head monk said, "Just go and ask him again." The Master went again and asked. Obaku hit him again. Thus three times he asked the question and three times he was hit.

The Master humbly returned to the head monk and said, "I was lucky to receive your compassionate guidance. You forced me to ask the question three times, and three times I was hit. I deplore deeply that my accumulated evil karma is preventing me from getting the profound meaning of the Abbot's intention. I have decided to take my leave." The head monk said, "Before leaving, be sure to bid the Abbot farewell." The Master bowed and withdrew.

The head monk went ahead to the Abbot and said, "That young monk who has been questioning you is a vessel of Dharma. When he comes to take his leave, kindly give him some advice. I am positive that in the future, with much training, he will become like a great tree providing cool shade for the people of the world."

The Master went to take his leave. Obaku said, "You must not go to any other place but to Daigu by the river of Ko-an. I am sure he will guide you." The Master arrived at Daigu. Daigu asked, "Where are you from?" The Master said, "I have come from Obaku." Daigu asked, "What did Obaku say to you?" The Master said, "Three times I asked him 'what is the quintessence of Buddhaharma,' and three times I was hit. I have no idea where is my fault?" Daigu said, "Obaku is indeed such a grandpa, he completely exhausted himself for your sake. Nevertheless, you came here and said, 'I have no idea, where is my fault?'"

The Master's first training was under the guidance of Obaku. His attitude was sincere and direct. The head monk said with a sigh, "Even though he's a relatively new monk, he's quite different from the others. The head monk then asked the Master, "How long have you been here?" The Master replied, "Three years." The head monk asked, "Have you ever questioned the teacher?" The Master said, "No, I don't know what to ask." The head monk said, "I urge you to see the Abbot and ask him, 'What is the quintessence of Buddhaharma?'"

The Master went to Obaku and asked his question. Before he had finished, Obaku hit him. The Master withdrew. The head monk said, "How

too, saying, "Your teacher is Obaku. It is none of my business."

The Master took his leave from Daigu and returned to Obaku. Obaku saw him coming and said, "Look at this fellow coming and going, coming and going, will it ever end?" The Master said, "It's all because of your grandmotherly kindness." Then he stood next to Obaku. Obaku asked, "Where have you been?" The Master said, "Upholding your compassionate advice, I went to Daigu's place." Obaku said, "What did Daigu say?" The Master told him all that had happened. Obaku said, "I can't wait to give him a good dose of my stick." The Master said, "Why do you have to wait? Take it right away." He then slapped him. "YOU LUNATIC!" screamed Obaku, "coming back here, pulling the tiger's whiskers." The Master shouted. Obaku said, "Attendant, drag this lunatic fellow out of here and take him to the Zendo."

Later Issan mentioned this story to Kyozan and asked, "On that occasion, did Rinzai get his power from Daigu or from Obaku?" Kyozan said, "He not only rode on the tiger's head, but he also understood how to take hold of its tail."

Over the past few years whenever I have found time, I have been translating the Rinzai Roku, the recorded sayings of Master Rinzai. It seems that at last the readiness of time has come, so either by the end of this year or the beginning of next year this book of Rinzai will be published. As you know there are many Zen centers in the United States. Perhaps Dai Bosatsu Zendo though is the only place where Teisho on the Rinzai Roku is being given. In fact, the last day of the Rohatsu Sesshin, which ended a little over a month ago, 'Jishu', the section that means teaching, was completed. Today's Teisho is on Chapter One of Critical Examinations. Since many of you are here for the first time and may not know of the extremely important event in Chapter One, I thought it appropriate for you to learn how Master Rinzai came to his great enlightenment. Those of you who are relatively older, senior students, have heard this many times, but today I would like

to approach it in a slightly different way.

"The Master's first training was under the guidance of Obaku." Here, "Master" refers to Rinzai, even though at the time he was still a monk. Obaku is well known in the West as Huang-po. "His attitude was sincere and direct." The opposite of devious. Not deceiving himself, not deceiving others. "The head monk said with a sigh, 'Even though he's a relatively new monk, he's quite different from the others.'" Evidently the head monk was watching monk Rinzai. So one day he asked, "How long have you been here?" The Master replied, "Three years." The head monk asked, "Have you ever questioned the teacher?" Teacher, naturally, implies Obaku. The Master replied, "No, I don't know what to ask." For three years, he was living in Obaku's mountain and doing zazen patiently, and until the head monk asked him, he never went for dokusan. The reason he never went is simply that he didn't know what to ask. This too shows the honesty of Rinzai's personality. "The head monk said, 'I urge you to see the Abbot.'" - that is Obaku, "and ask him 'What is the quintessence of Buddhaharma.'"

Many of you have a theistic religious background. What is the quintessence of Judaism? What is the quintessence of Christianity? What is the quintessence of Islam? What is the quintessence of Agnosticism? The Master went to Obaku's place and asked, "What is the quintessence of Buddhaharma?" Before he had finished his question, Obaku hit him. "Once, twice, three times. We don't know. But we do know that it was painful. And when our body feels pain our mind questions. Why? What? I'm sure you know the story of Gurei. He cut off a boy's finger, far more than hitting! And because of that action, great enlightenment came. Pain. You may complain, but complaining doesn't produce anything! In this case, Master Rinzai was hit and was full of pain. He must have thought, "WHAT IS IT? WHAT DID I DO? WHY?"

"The Master withdrew. The head monk was waiting and asked, 'How did your ques-

tion go?" This is a very kind thing to do. "The Master said, 'Before my question was over, the Abbot hit me. I don't understand, maybe he is confused?' The head monk pushed him



"Kwatz" by Kogetsu Tani Roshi

and said, 'Just go again, and ask him the same question.' The Master went, again. 'Hai! [Yes!] sincere and direct. Hai, Hai. And again he asked, "What is the quintessence of Buddhadharmā." "Obaku hit him again. Thus three times he asked the question and three times he was hit. The Master humbly returned to the head monk and said, 'I was lucky to receive your compassionate guidance. You forced me to ask the question.'" Forced me. Otherwise, for four years, five years, six years, he might have stayed at Obaku's monastery without ever going to dokusan. "You forced me to ask the question. Three times I went, and three times I was hit. I deplore deeply that my accumulated evil karma is preventing me from getting the profound meaning of the Abbot's intention." I am sure that when Rinzai was telling this to the head monk he must have been crying. Even though his evil karma has been accumulated up from the past, it cannot do anything for him right now. At this, Rinzai felt deep remorse, and profound regret.

Speaking of tears, someone came to the

dokusan room crying, not just ordinary crying, sincerely crying. I've never seen that student crying. So I asked, "What's the matter?" "I can't get what is preventing me from understanding. I have suffered enough," she said. "Not enough!" I said, "Suffer more!" Many of you, myself included, prefer comfort rather than pain. We prefer tranquility rather than struggle. But this is a sort of gate, which everyone has to pass through. In order to pass through this gate, pain, struggle, tears, frustration, anger, self-pity -- all these must occur.

"I have decided to take my leave." The head monk said, "Before leaving be sure to bid the Abbot farewell!" Don't just disappear, say goodbye. "The Master bowed and withdrew. The head monk went ahead to the Abbot and said, "That young monk who has been questioning you is a vessel of Dharmā." This head monk had discerning eyes. "When he comes to take his leave, kindly give him some advice. I am positive that in the future with much more training, he will become like a great tree, providing cool shade for the people of the world." He was right. If this suggestion was not made, Rinzai Zen Buddhism might not have been born, Hakuin Zenji could not have taught Rinzai Zen. Certainly Rinzai became the great tree, providing cool shade for the dharmā travelers of the world. "The Master went to take his leave. Obaku said, 'You must not go to any other place but to Daigu's by the river of Ko-an. I am sure he will guide you.'"

So Master Rinzai with a dark state of mind, walked, walked, walked, to Master Daigu's place. Daigu is the dharmā cousin of Obaku. "Daigu asked, 'Where are you from?'" I have often wondered, why did Obaku send him to Daigu's place? One possibility is that, as a dharmā cousin living at the same time, somehow Obaku knew Daigu's style of teaching. The other is that he realized "the readiness of time," with regard to Rinzai's awakening, had not yet come. It was best then to change the environment and see how things would go. This is my guess. "The Master said, 'I came from Obaku.' Daigu asked, 'What

did Obaku say to you?' The Master reported, 'I asked three times, what is the essence of Buddhadharmā, and three times I was hit. I have no idea, where is my fault?'" This must be an honest statement. I have no idea, what is wrong with me? I just asked the most important question, three times, and three times he just hit me without saying anything. I have no idea, where is my fault? Sincere, direct, honest Honesty.

"Daigu said, 'Obaku is indeed a grandma. He completely exhausted himself for your sake.'" Spiritually Obaku became naked and did as much as he could possibly do for a young monk known as Rinzai. "Obaku is indeed a grandma. He completely exhausted himself for your sake! Nevertheless, you came here and said, 'I have no idea, where is my fault.'" Maybe this should be read in a slightly different way. Daigu said more harshly, "Obaku is indeed a grandma, he completely exhausted himself for your sake! Nevertheless, you came here and said, 'I have no idea, where is my fault.'" Scolding Rinzai, stimulation by words. Hamlet's "words, words, words" then is not always necessarily bad. When "words" are said at the appropriate time, by the appropriate person, in the appropriate way, words have magnificent power.

"Upon hearing these words, the Master was greatly awakened..." Greatly awakened. Not "had insight." Greatly awakened! "...and said, 'Ahi From the beginning Obaku's Buddhadharmā is nothing special!' Not Obaku's Buddhadharmā. Buddhadharmā is nothing special. Rinzai, too, had been searching for something extremely special. And this, nothing special, is quite often misunderstood. Again, it becomes "words, words, words," but something extremely special can only be said of "nothing special!" Mountain is mountain, nothing special! Snowflakes are snowflakes, nothing special! You may say, "I know that." But what we know and what Rinzai said in "nothing special" is a different level of understanding. As the famous saying goes, "At First Mountain is mountain, river is river." And this is what most of you see. And

then, when we go into deep zazen, mountain is not mountain; river is not river. And then, returning, we can say, "Ahi From the beginning, mountain is mountain, river is river. Nothing special, but very special. "Daigu grabbed and lifted up the Master saying, 'you little bed-wetting devil! A moment ago you said, 'I have no idea, where is my fault,' and now you say, "Obaku's Buddhadharmā is nothing special!" What did you see? Say!"

Even to Daigu this was not expected, since Rinzai's enlightenment was so splendid. He just wanted to make sure that he understood this "nothing special" reality. "SAY!" "The Master punched Daigu in the ribs three times and pushed him off." Daigu asked him "SAY", but Rinzai did not say. Instead he punched Daigu's ribs three times. Pow, pow, pow, and pushed him off. That's enough. This is the quintessence of Buddhadharmā. No question. "Daigu pushed the Master away too, saying, 'Your teacher is Obaku. It is none of my business.'"

"The Master took his leave from Daigu and returned to Obaku." On the way from Daigu back to Obaku he must be happier than happy. His step was lighter than light. "Obaku saw him coming and said, 'Look at this fellow coming and going, coming and going. Will it ever end?'" Obaku too did not expect that the young monk who questioned, "what is the quintessence of Buddhadharmā," had such a great awakening. "The Master said, 'It's all because of your grandmotherly kindness.'" He most likely put his palms together, and made a deep bow, and stood next to him. "Obaku asked, 'Where have you been?'" He was suspicious perhaps. Rinzai may have been some other place. "The Master said, 'Upholding your compassionate advice, I went to Daigu's place.' Obaku said, 'What did Daigu say?'" This is a rather important question to ask. What did he say? "The Master told him all that had happened. Obaku said, 'I can't wait to give him a good dose of my stick.'"

Obaku was so happy! This may be a difference between East and West. In the West

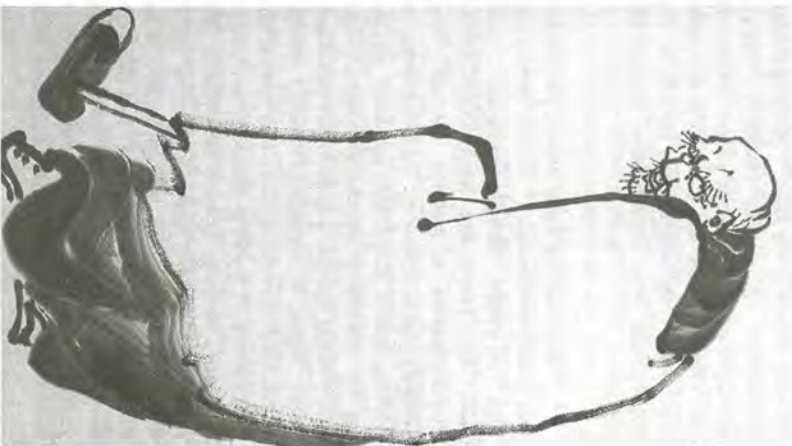
perhaps, you say "Oh, congratulations! Let's open a bottle of champagne!" And nothing is wrong with that. In the East we have a tendency to suppress, don't show that happiness. And in this case particularly, Obaku wanted to test Rinzai. So he could not say, "Let's have champagne." "I can't wait to give him a good dose of my stick!" The Master said, "Why do you have to wait? Take it right away!" "This is dharma hatarak! - spontaneous activity of the wisdom." "Take it right away!" And "he then slapped him." So Obaku said, I can't wait to hit Daigu, so Rinzai said, "Why do you have to wait? Take it right away!" and Rinzai slapped Obaku. Three became one, and yet three are three. And all occurs spontaneously.

"You LUNATIC!" screamed Obaku, 'coming back here and pulling the tiger's whiskers!' The Master shouted." This is Rinzai's first, KKKWWWWATZZZZ! No longer an Unsu! no longer a training monk. With great confidence and great dignity, he gave a first shout to his Master, KKKWWWWATZZZZ! Obaku did not say, "Good!" Rather he said, "Attendant, drag this lunatic fellow out of here and take him to the Zendo!" Now this is another way to say, "I forgive your coming and going," and new permission was granted to reactivate his training at Obaku's monastery. Again this is another difference between East and West.

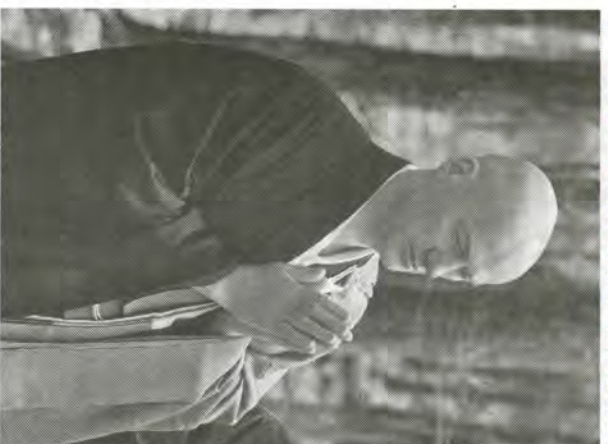
"Later Issan mentioned this story to Kyozan and asked, 'On that occasion did Rinzai get his power from Daigu or from Obaku?' Kyozan said, 'He not only rode on the tiger's head'" which is another way to say he not only hit Daigu's ribs three times 'pow', 'pow', 'pow', "but he also understood how to take hold of its tail." This may be difficult for you to understand, but "he understood how to take hold of his tail" means hitting Obaku. In other words, he has no specific teacher. We are all Buddhists, we can all say, "I am a student of Shakyamuni Buddha." But, at the same time each one of us is independent, no teacher, teacher-less, no student, student-less. This was the comment of Kyozan.

In conclusion this is the story of how

the young, honest, sincere, direct, training monk Rinzai received the help of many teachers. However it was more than mere individual teachers, there must have been some kind of dharma energy as well, which forced him to go there. There must have been something to make him stay for three years, to meet the head monk to ask Obaku questions, all of this occurred in an uncanny way. The reason why you are here, too, in the midst of January, on this cold Dai Bosatsu Mountain must be some kind of dharma energy. Yes, it is partially your decision to come, but also it is the dharma's decision for you to be here. I always thought that forty-three is the most ideal number to do sesshin, forty people in the Zendo, and three tenzos in the foye. Just that way. At Ryutaku-ji, and at Shogen-ji, even as I speak, they are in the midst of Rohatsu sesshin. Although we held our Rohatsu sesshin already in December, they are doing Rohatsu now. Keep this in your mind. Let us march on with the same Rohatsu spirit! Hai.



9/11/03 Twin Towers Commemoration Dharma Talk



by Denko Osho

This morning two years ago, on a beautiful sunny day like today, this country was attacked. Since then, America, and the world, is quite a different place it seems. I'm sure we all more or less directly know someone who was killed on that morning. So it is maybe somewhat difficult to go through again a day like that. Fortunately, we have the comforting strength of zazen, the comforting strength of performing a memorial service. It took us all, I'm sure, a very long time to digest that day. Well, I think it's still mostly undigested. But to realize the fact of what happened, it was just so unbelievable, so far out. People had many different reactions. We were all shocked, saddened. I'm sure most of us cried, if not all of us. Some people got angry for various reasons. Some got angry because they were actually too close to the actions, because they could've been killed.

The following days were indeed very strange days. What I remember most about the following days was the eerie silence of no airplanes. I don't remember how many

days, but there were no airplanes for many days. Up here at Dai Bosatsu Zendo we don't hear so many airplanes. Used to be about one a day, now it's about five or six. But in Katonah, in Pine Hill Zendo where I was in those days, many airplanes are heard throughout the day. And then there were none.

Something like that is really a wake-up call in a positive and sometimes negative way. Wake-up call -- we realize that terror attacks not only happen to strangers far away. They happen to us. We are indeed of this world. We cannot sit back, relax and ignore the violence that happens every day, indeed every moment in this world. So in that sense, it's a wake-up call to reality. We are in the midst of this. Unfortunately, for many of course, it's a wake up call to fear and anger, such as I said before, and probably worst of all, revenge.

Because of some of these effects on us human beings, we are now at war in various places of the world and many more will get killed.

So what are we to do? How are we to look at these kinds of things? We are fortunate that we have the explanation as well as the answer. We have Buddhism. Why are things like this happening? We are told: Because of greed, anger and delusion. Indeed this kind of event originates from greed, anger and delusion.

But an explanation is not of much use if we do not have a way out of trouble as well. And we do: The way of Buddha Dharma. Like I said before, that day was a wake-up call to reality. And what Buddhism actually is, if you cut through all the ceremonies, cut through all the words, digest all the sutras, is a description of how reality actually functions: There are natural laws; some of them are obvious. We can see them in the physical world, like the law of gravity. If we throw something up in the air, it



comes down. Natural law. Gravity. And there are more obscure natural laws that we do not clearly see -- or it could be that we do not want to see. The law of karma for instance. There are innumerable laws and this is why we do zazen. To see these, or at least to see their functions. So like some meteorologist weather predictor said, the butterfly in Mongolia might flap its wings and that event somehow eventually leads to a hurricane in the US. Sounds incredible, but this is certainly possible. Likewise, one single angry thought... one single angry thought can lead to a future of war. Just as possible. This is why we teach mindfulness. Not only mindfulness. Mindfulness by itself. I don't know if that's of any value. Observe. Observe yourself. Be aware of what you are doing. It is not that we do not make mistakes. We all have angry thoughts. They now need to be neutralized by, for instance, apology. It is of no use to have an angry thought, and then in common western fashion be sorry for it, or regret it or have guilty feelings about it. Guilt feelings can be eradicated. Simply: if you hurt somebody with an angry word or an angry deed, then apologize. Make it good. Evil karma's neutralized. Guilt is avoided. If you are Catholic, hell is avoided. So in our way, awareness, mindfulness, and awareness of our deeds are of utter importance if we want to change the world to something better.

After the event, and after talk about invading Afghanistan, several Zen masters wanted me to sign all kinds of petitions and political things. I refused. That is not the way to do it. I just described the way to change the world. Not political actions. Not mere words. We cannot demand that others change. We can only change ourselves. And this is what Buddhism is all about. We have various remedies in Buddhism: the eight-fold path, right living to say it condensed, the six paramitas, or perfecting our ways. We are not perfect and it is highly unlikely that we will reach a point of perfection, but it is certainly imperative that we strive towards that if we want a better world, if we want a better life for ourselves. Peace. Peace is not an external thing. So trying to stop our president and soldiers from going to war will not create peace. Peace is not an external thing. Peace is, as I've described before, neutralizing our karma. Therefore we do zazen. We study Buddhism, read the sutras, chant. When you look at these texts, look at them with an open mind. It's not just something we have to recite everyday because now we are so-called Buddhists. It is not some strange oriental text. It is a prescription for a better life.

There are many schools of Buddhism. And the texts, the fundamental texts, are common for all. The explanation of why the world is as it is, the tools, the prescription for how to change. In Zen, we have an addition, like a trump card so to speak. Through intense training, we can so-call "awaken to the dharma"; see these natural laws functioning in front of our own eyes. See it from the perspective of Buddha himself. See why he said, greed, anger and delusions are the cause. We can see for ourselves why he prescribed the ten precepts as a way towards peace. So by striving to awaken, we can see through the scripture, so to speak. We can see directly, why it makes sense not to kill, why it makes sense to strive for perfection, meaning practicing the paramitas. By the way, starting next Thursday afternoon, we will have Buddhist classes, so all these things

will be talked about and clarified hopefully, throughout this kessei.

So if you have not awakened to the dharma yet, awakened to reality yet, in the Buddhist sense, then the advice is to study the scriptures, follow the precepts, and gradually your being will mature, and you will naturally get closer and closer to this awakening. I'm talking about two kinds of awakening to reality today. Awakening to the reality that we are not isolated from various so-called negative things that might happen to other areas of the world. We are not isolated at all. And then through exerting yourself in Zen, awakening to clarity of why this is, and what to do about it. So Zen sometimes looks to me like it is somewhat outside of the rest of Buddhism, but through this awakening to ourselves, to our own original nature, through working through all these koans, we come back to fundamental Buddhism, and this is why, this kessei, we are trying to combine these, take it up again. If there is no absolutely clear connection between fundamental Buddhism, and what we do here, then something is certainly wrong. Having passed a hundred koans, and then still get angry several times a day -- something is certainly wrong.

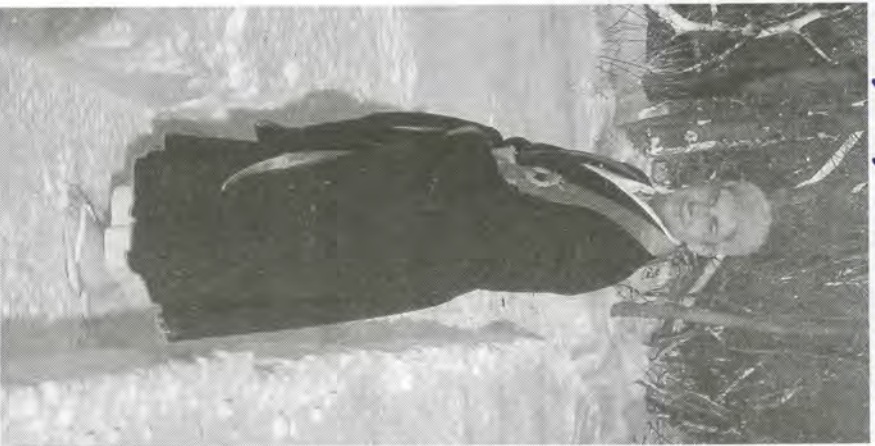
Hopefully I've pointed out today that this is all a matter of personal, individual effort and involvement. We all have to take this question up and resolve it one way or another. How do you create peace on earth? Those that are working with koans, of course know what to do with those kinds of questions. Is there anyone here that does not want peace on earth? So we do need everyone to take this up: "How do I create peace on earth?" "This is what I want." And we are unbelievably lucky that we are here in a Buddhist temple. We have all the tools available to deal with this question, to resolve it for ourselves in an absolutely positive way. Humankind will not change -- highly unlikely. There will be wars in the future, just like there will be hurricanes. But we as individuals can reach peace on earth. And what that will do is, people we come in con-

tact with, will feel this, will benefit from it, will become more peaceful themselves. They might even inquire, "How can you be so at rest, at peace? Could you teach me? Could you help me?"

First, peace in ourselves. Then peace in our immediate family. Peace among friends. Peace in our village or town. Peace in our country. Peace on earth. Peace in the universe. Who knows, it might be contagious. And just like with peace, any other thing, event, emotion we run into that is unacceptable, that we do not want, we do not like, can be changed through this practice.

The world has changed, now it is our turn to change.





Blue Cliff Collection Case 86,
Day 5, Rohatsu Sesshin, 2003
Dai Bosatsu Zendo
Dharma Talk by
Roko ni-Osho Sherry Chayat

It's amazing, this practice. Amazing and impossible to explain to anyone who isn't doing it—and even to ourselves, before Rohatsu, when we may feel anxiety or dread along with excitement and anticipation: all of the minute we sit down. The sitting does it all by itself, but as we've heard repeatedly each night from Hakuin Zenji in his Exhortations, we have to have a strong intention, a strong vow, and a strong willingness to push past all the delusory thoughts—not

only thoughts, but all of our habitual ways of regarding what we think works for our lives. All of it has to be thrown away, the sooner the better.

In the Introduction to this Case, Engo says, "Controlling the world, he allows not the least speck of dust to escape." In this translation, Sekida uses the word controlling, but this has some pejorative connotation. We often say, "So-and-so is very controlling." And we also think, in a kind of vain attempt to make sense of our lives, "I've got to be in control."

This kind of control is not what is meant here. A better word would be "master" of the world. Master. When my son was a young boy, he used to play with little figures called Masters of the Universe. Masters of the Universe, we allow not the least speck of dust to escape. But as we have experienced, almost every time we sit down, with our good intentions, somehow some insidious thing happens, and before we know it, some of our wonderful Ki is escaping, leaking out. We are gone, elsewhere. Each thought that takes us elsewhere is this speck of dust. But as the days go on, we become more and more attuned to this, and we are able to recognize it right away. Hakuin Zenji calls this speck of dust the deity of disturbance. We can recognizing these deities before they get anywhere close: ah, I see you, demon; out! Out, out! Thus we "cut off the deluded stream of thought," as Engo puts it. What is this deluded stream of thought? What was it most recently, in the last moment? These deluded streams of thought are generated by a very strong force: the self-protecting strategies, the preoccupations of the ego—Me, Me, Me. It's so hard to be free of this, but the more we sit here together, the more quickly we recognize Ah, that's what this is all about. That's why I'm sitting here in terrible pain, because my mind has wandered off thinking about what I...it doesn't matter! Cut it off, leaving not a drop behind. No leakage. Not the least speck of dust. The moment there is

this Me diversion, it's very easy for this leakage to occur. So cut it off.

"If you open your mouth, you are mistaken." What does this mean? All the time, in our zazen, we are opening our mouths—having some wonderful insight and then thinking, "Oh, that's great, I must tell Roshi about it in dokusan," conceptualizing, killing it. Opening our mouths, immediately mistaken.

"If you doubt for a moment, you have missed the Way." Doubt. What is this doubt? Ummon Zenji says, "Everybody has his or her own light." You have your own light, right? Welllll.... There might be a slight trace of doubt, right? This doubt in what we chant each morning, Atta dipa...if you doubt for a moment, you have missed it. Vharatta: Do not doubt! This is not the doubt of "Great Doubt;" rather, this doubt is completely ego-ridden. It's all wrapped up in I Me Mine. Our lack of self-esteem is ego-based.

"Tell me, what is the eye that has pierced the barriers?" What are the barriers? Doubt in our own light, deluded streams of thought, all the veils or blankets that we use to improve the ways others perceive of us, so they won't see what we're really like, when all along what we're really like is Atta dipa! To see this, to pierce the barriers! Then Engo says, "See the following," and we go into the Main Subject, which is Ummon Zenji speaking to his assembly.

Ummon is so well-known that I don't think I need to say too much about him. There are many exchanges between Ummon Zenji and his monks that were compiled in "The Ummon Roku," several of which have been translated into English in a book called "The Roaring Stream." Here's one that's particularly relevant to Rohatsu sesshin:

Having entered the Dharma Hall for formal instruction, Ummon said, "The Buddha attained the way when the morning star appeared." A monk asked, "What is it like when one attains the way at the appearance

of the morning star?" Master Ummon said, "Come here, come here!" The monk went closer. Master Ummon hit him with his staff and chased him out of the Dharma Hall.

What is it like? What was Shakyamuni's realization like? We all want someone to tell us what it's like. But as you know, Zen is not a simulacrum. It's not like anything!

Here's another exchange:

Someone asked Ummon, "I request your instruction, Master." The master said, "ABCDEFGH." "I don't understand." The Master: "GHIJKL." So that's cleared up!

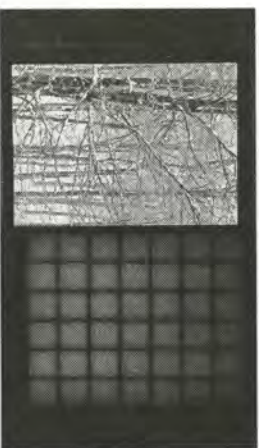
Someone asked, "I heard a teaching that speaks of the purity of all-encompassing wisdom. What is that purity like?" Oh, yeah, all-encompassing wisdom, that sounds like a good idea. Ummon spat on him. The questioner continued, "How about the teaching method of the old masters?" There must be something you can give me, besides your spit, right? The master said, "Come here. Cut off your feet, replace your skull, and take away the spoon and chopsticks from your bowl. Now pick up your nose." The monk asked, "Where would one find such teaching methods?" The master said, "You windbag," and struck him.

So today, Ummon says to us, "You have your own light. But if you try to see it, everything is darkness. What is your own light?"

I read that he continued to speak this way to his students, "You have your own light—what is your own light?" for twenty years. Here, in this translation, it says, "Later, in place of his disciples..." Later: We think, oh, maybe they were still in the room together, and a few minutes went by. No, twenty years of saying, "You are the light, but you don't understand...everything seems so dark and dim." Does this sound familiar? Lost in the darkness of ignorance! This darkness. When we are chanting Atta dipa, we think it just can't be! It may be that YOU are the light, but it can't be that I am the light! As

Roshi once put it, we totally believe in Atta DUKKHA. No question. Of course, the Buddha's first sermon after his profound realization was what? The Four Noble Truths, about dukkha, right? Dukkha there is, and the origin of dukkha, and the end of dukkha, and the path of ending dukkha. But when Shakyamuni looked at the dawn sky and saw that star, he knew: Atta dipa! Everything—all beings and I together—are nothing but this light.

Eido Roshi was speaking the other day about the deep meaning of the word cool, about coolness. One of my favorite haiku by Soen Roshi, in English, goes:



At last
I have found
My own cool star.

How do we discover this for ourselves? We have to go through *atta dukkha*, completely, thoroughly. As we heard the other day, the Buddha didn't sit down for one sitting or for one sesshin; he sat down, period. He was at the end of his tether. He had tried everything. He had been in such deep awareness of suffering, and of the need to end suffering. I was thinking the other day about this, and remembering when I was a child enveloped in an intense awareness of the darkness of suffering.

I had strong early Zen training, with a head monk for a stepfather. A very angry head monk. Some of you who have trained at a monastery may remember when something had gone wrong, and everybody was pointing at you. Everybody seemed to know it was your fault. You knew it was your fault,

too, but you didn't have a clue about what was wrong or why you were at fault. This kind of condition—we hate it. It really is horrible to endure, especially if it goes on for a long time; but something really important can happen along the way: a building of resolve, determination, backbone. Or we become mass murderers! Probably the reason I didn't was my grandmother. We had a seasonal rhythm to our lives. Nine months or so of darkness, feeling I was to blame but not knowing why; and two or three months at my grandmother's summer house at Kiamasha Lake, which is down the road from DBZ, near Monticello. She had a great old house, and it was a really amazing respite each year, filled with light. She herself was so loving, so staunch an ally. With her I began doing *takuhatsu*. She and I would carry the little blue charity box to collect money for Hadassah, the organization for helping others. We would take the long, stony dirt road from her house up high on the hill overlooking the lake down toward the village of Kiamasha, where there were about five stores and a bar. My grandmother was full of confidence and had a jovial nature; she would talk to everybody. It didn't matter whether or not they were Jewish or whether they knew about Hadassah; she would have her blue box and we would collect money. We even went into the bar, and they would give her money, too.

Those summers were when I started to sit, informally alone on the banks of Kiamasha Lake. Some years later, when my grandmother became ill, the nurses told us, "You know, all the other cancer patients want her near them. She's so full of light, even in pain; she just has something that makes other people feel better."

Everybody has her own, his own light. But if we try to see it, what happens? What happens when we look for the light? Everything is darkness. Looking for the light elsewhere, we're lost in the darkness of ignorance. Ummon said, "You come and go by daylight. You distinguish people by daylight. Suddenly it's midnight, and there's no sun,

moon, or lamplight. Now what?" We try to distinguish and discriminate, asking, "What is the light?" But how can we see it when we're in the midst of it? There's no light! The moment we think, "Oh, I have to get something," the truth is so far away. What about this darkness at midnight? That indeed is the darkness by which we can realize our own light. No distinguishing—then, what is everybody's light?

So, some twenty years later, the monks finally prevailed upon him to say something about this. And he answered, "The halls and the gate."

The halls and the gate. In our morning service, we chant the Bodhisatva's Vow, "In any event, in any moment, and in any place, none can be other than the marvelous revelation of its glorious light." When we first start chanting this verse, it may sound so flowery, too much. But then—just recently, maybe this morning, I chanted, "None can be other than the marvelous revelation of its glorious light," and I thought, "That's just pure fact, that's not flowery at all!" It's just the way things are—just pure description, just like "the halls and the gate." Of course when we hear, "the halls and the gate," we may think that it's not very poetic. Ummon Zenji's poetry is so spare, so bare, that we almost miss it. But that's the point, isn't it. Nothing added. Just this: the halls and the gate. The floors we're walking on. The halls we walk through each day. Do we think, "Oh, the light!" No, because it's dark. Our minds naturally go this rational way. We can turn on the baseboard nightlights to get light. But the halls and the gate: already, could not be brighter. We are always looking outside of what is, or looking to make something more than it is, and therefore cannot get it.

Suddenly it's midnight, and there's no sun, no moon, no lamplight. Now what? Now our discriminating mind is not able to function. At this point in Rohatsu sesshin, we're less and less able to be caught up by the discriminating consciousness that we call reality. No eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue,

no body, no mind. Cutting off knowing, cutting off seeing, then what? The halls and the gate. To experience this: Hall's Gate! Of course hearing this, we may think there's something mystical that we should be getting from the halls and the gate. What are we not seeing? Ummon Zenji then says, "Blessing things cannot be better than nothing." Take it away! Blessing things. Saying anything about it, we lose it. There is nothing to say. If we really feel this, then anything we say is ok. Any answer is right. Ummon Zenji said, "Every day is a good day." Every answer is a good answer.

To have it all stripped bare, just experienced directly, naked: this is sesshin. Sitting after sitting, the blankets and veils and barriers fall away. Old habits die hard—we try to enshroud ourselves again, again, and again. There is a subversive longing for the familiar, even though the familiar is what causes our suffering. It's the project of our lives, continuing to tread in those well-worn grooves. But here, at Rohatsu sesshin at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, we just don't have to do that anymore! We can believe this, we can have faith in this. We don't have to do those things to ourselves any more. It's something we have to keep reminding ourselves about, because it's so easy to forget and fall back into what's familiar.

Setcho's Verse: "It illuminates itself." Your light is not dependent upon anything, is it. Certainly not upon teachers. No matter how wonderful Eido Roshi is, your light is not dependent upon his teaching. You don't need batteries, you don't need extension cords, you don't even need an outlet. Just plug in. Sit down on the cushion and plug in to the universe. I'm back! Over and over, plug in. Some of us are old enough to remember Timothy Leary, in the good old days of "Turn on, Tune in, and Drop out!" Yeah. Turn on. This is what we're doing, right? We don't need any substance. Here we are in our own light, just turning it on! Come to sesshin, turn it on, what are you waiting for? Turn it on! Tune in! This light. The universe.

Everything we could possibly need is right here. The halls, the gate, the floorboards. Everything. Tune in! You know the tune. "This tune, another tune..." It's your tune.

Drop out, Timothy Leary said. At that time, it was taken to be, "Well I'm not going to work for IBM anymore." But to drop out—of all the stuff that we've been heaping upon ourselves—just drop out of all our accumulated layers. Remember Dogen went to China, and while sitting he heard his teacher say, "Mind and body dropped. Dropped off, dropped away!"

"It illuminates itself, absolutely bright. It gives a clue to the secret." As R. H. Blythe puts it, "It's an open secret." It's right here. "Flowers have fallen, trees give no shade." Bare naked, no embellishment, nowhere to hide or to cling. "Who does not see if he looks?" That's an interesting sentence. Who does not see? We can understand this one way: who does not see if he looks, that is, if you look, you will see. Or we can understand it the other way. Who does not-see if he looks? If we seek it, it's far away. If we look, with some idea of what we're looking for, we can't see it. "Seeing is non-seeing." When we're looking around, trying to figure it out, turning on the light of rational thinking, grabbing at somebody else's light, the one that needs the extension cord—we don't see a thing. Just lost in the darkness of ignorance. The more we think we know, the deeper into that darkness of ignorance we go. So the light of the discriminating mind results in confusion, darkness.

As we have found sitting here together these five days, the more we let go of that addiction to knowing what's going on—a terrible addiction—the more we can be free of that, the more we can enter into non-seeing, the seeing of non-seeing. Eido Roshi was speaking the other day about Gempo Roshi, who was almost completely blind. And it was the brightness of his extraordinary acuity, his power of true seeing, that heads of state and students came from all over to receive.

"Facing backwards on the ox, he rides into the Buddha Hall." Facing backwards, here we sit, no direction home, learning how to trust in our own freedom, no looking ahead, no flashlight, no map, just carried, carried along by our faith in Mind. Whenever a thought comes about progress, what's up next, what's going to happen next, just jettison it—throw it away. Ride backwards, in this crazy freedom. The ox knows where it's going. Our zazen is carrying us. No need to direct traffic—forget about it. We are being carried. And we find that the Buddha Hall is right here. Really here!

Roshi was talking the other day about a man who had come back from Iraq, who felt that he didn't know at any moment whether he was in so-called life or so-called death. Actually this is true for us all. It is so easy to succumb to the great deception that we are not going to die. And even though we know we will, it doesn't seem real until we're in that kind of extremity. As some of you know, at Hoen-ji, we just lost a little being of light. One of our residents had a baby, not quite two months old, who was killed in a car accident. This resident came here for Thanksgiving, and in Roshi's teisho that day, and then afterward in meeting with her, he spoke about giving the true giving that completely rights our upside-down views. We chant every day, "Buddham saraman gachami!"

And the usual translation is, I go to the Buddha for refuge, or I take refuge in the Buddha. The genius of Eido Roshi's teaching is to translate this the way it really is: I give my life to the Buddha. There is no refuge unless we give our life. Atta dipa, vharatta. Atta sarama. This refuge, sarama, can only be experienced when we give our life. And what Roshi said about this tragedy is that this baby, Morgan, truly gave: Buddham saraman gachami, Dhamman saraman gachami. The power of that one being, that two-month old life, resonates on and on, in our sangha togetherness, in her mother's great vow, among and for all of us. Each one of us sitting here: we don't know how much time we have, so let's give completely, let's burn ourselves up completely!

About Sai Rai Zen So

by Jikei Georgette Siegel



(front row from left: Denko Osho, Eido Roshi, Jikei Georgette Siegel, Kossan)

As a result of various favorable karmic forces, a connection between the Zen Studies Society, a small zendo in northwestern New Jersey, and an ancient Rinzai Zen temple in Japan is being forged—thanks to the good offices of Shimano Eido Roshi and his disciples. I have been asked to write something of the history of this effort and its significance in the ongoing establishment of Rinzaï Zen in this country. That history necessarily begins with an account of Miura Isshu Roshi (1903-1978) and his work in America.

Isshu Roshi was a Rinzaï Zen Master who was the head priest of an ancient Zen temple pronounced and Romanized as "Ko-on-ji" in Hachioji, a city near Tokyo. He had entered monastic life at the age of ten under the guidance of Seigen Hogaku Roshi. (Hogaku Roshi was a Dharma heir of Shaku Soen, the first Rinzaï Zen Master to visit the United States; he had travelled to Chicago in 1893 to attend the World Conference of Religions.) At age 20, Isshu Roshi began his sodô training at Tenryu-ji in Kyoto, but when the sodô roshi died a few years later, he went to Nanzen-ji sodô, spending twelve years as a disciple of Nanshinken Roshi. After Nanshinken's death in 1935, he completed his training two years later at Ko-on-ji as a disciple of Nakamura Taiyu Roshi, a Dharma heir

of Nanshinken. In 1946, when Nakamura Roshi retired from his position as the sodô roshi of Ko-on-ji, Isshu Roshi succeeded him and three years later was appointed to be the head priest of this temple, a position he held until his death.

When he was first assigned to Ko-on-ji, a number of monks and laymen went there to become his disciples. However, the temple was in a very dilapidated state and there was little money at that time for suitable repairs. He ultimately decided that in such a state Ko-on-ji was not an appropriate place for training monks. So he sent them, as well as the laymen, to train elsewhere. (I should note that in the 1970's sufficient funds were finally available to extensively renovate Ko-on-ji, thanks to the good economic conditions that prevailed in Japan at that time. It is now a fully functioning sodô with Niwa Jisho Roshi, Isshu Roshi's Dharma heir, the Zen Master in residence.)

In 1955 Isshu Roshi was invited to take a trip to the United States by Ruth Fuller Sasaki, the widow and disciple of the founder of The First Zen Institute of America in New York City, Sasaki Sokelan. (Isshu Roshi had known Mrs. Sasaki since 1933 when he was the jikijitsu at Nanzen-ji sodô. Mrs. Sasaki had become a student of Nanshinken and often practiced in the sodô along with the monks.) During this first visit to the Institute, Isshu Roshi asked his audience to memorize the Four Great Vows (*Shigu seigan*), saying that these are the most important of all vows. Though his coming to America was the result of karmic factors, he emphasized that the most fundamental cause was the Four Great Vows. He entreated his listeners to plant them firmly in their hearts, and if they did, he said his purpose in coming would be fulfilled. He also gave a series of talks on the Zen koan, translated by Mrs. Sasaki, that were later published in *Zen Dust* (a title which he chose) and also in a smaller format entitled *The Zen Koan*.

This visit and several others thereafter eventually led The First Zen Institute to invite him to come to New York to teach Americans as the Institute's Zen Master in residence. He accepted that invitation, vow-

ing to himself to teach in America for twenty years. It is curious that his immigration application papers had been signed on December 10, 1958, and on December 10, 1978, he died in San Francisco on his way back to New York from a trip to Japan—twenty years to the day. He was 75.

I first encountered Isshu Roshi at The First Zen Institute in 1960 and formally became his disciple in 1962 with the Dharma name of Jikei. After he left the Institute in 1963, I followed him to his new zendo in an apartment on 72nd Street near Lexington Avenue, and continued Zen practice with him until his death in 1978. Though initially there were a substantial number of students who came to the 72nd Street zendo, gradually their numbers diminished until, before long, there were very few. Roshi was never concerned about attracting a large number of students. He steadfastly refused any publicity. Some who tried to be accepted were turned away. He was content to work with the few who continued to study with him over the years, often saying that all he needed was one person or even just a half (Ikko hanko).

In 1968, my husband Max and I moved out of New York City to an old farm house on twelve acres surrounded by woods and farmland in Sussex County, a rural area in the northwestern corner of New Jersey. Roshi was often a weekend visitor here, enjoying walks in the countryside, picking vegetables in the garden, and reciting haiku in the evening while watching the moon rise over the pond across the road. Of course, we also did zazen together in our house in which one small room was used as a zendo. He seemed particularly pleased with the statue I had placed there – a large Japanese-style Buddha seated in zazen that I had found in a nearby “antique” store.

In June of 1979, after Roshi's death, Niwa Roshi came with a small portion of Isshu Roshi's ashes and, after conducting a sesshin in the apartment zendo in New York, buried them here in Sussex County behind the house. Max and I decided that this place should in some way be dedicated to honor

Isshu Roshi and keep his memory alive. We sent out a letter to all of our Zen friends on May 1, 1980, that read:

Dear Friends,

During this beautiful spring, Isshu Roshi's favorite season, when the cherries are in full bloom and the new leaves are emerging, covering the woods with a delicate green, we fondly recall how thoroughly Roshi enjoyed walking through this scene here in Sussex County.

We feel moved to do something special to honor his memory at this time, and have decided to name our place Isshu-ji (One Boat Temple) and dedicate it to Isshu Roshi's One Boat, his great teaching.

Everyone is welcome to come for zazen to continue what Roshi has put into motion here in America.

Our very best wishes to all.

Since we had invited people to come for zazen, it occurred to us that there should be a zendo separate from the house. So in October 1980, we hired a local contractor to build a small simple building in a wooded area behind the house. There we installed the Buddha image that had pleased Roshi. Niwa Roshi came to dedicate this humble zendo in 1981 and named it "Sai Rai Zen So", meaning

“Coming from the West [like Bodhidharma] Zen Hermitage”. It became a place for Niwa Roshi to gather Isshu Roshi's disciples (who had also become Niwa Roshi's disciples) and his own American disciples whenever he could come to America to continue Isshu Roshi's work. It also became a place of pilgrimage for people in Japan who were either associated with Ko-on-ji or who otherwise had some connection with Isshu Roshi. Over the years, we have had several tour buses full of Japanese visitors pull up in front of the house on our country road, startling neighbors and passers-by. One such event occurred in September of 2000 when we were visited by Nakamura Bumpo Roshi of Kokei sodo in Gifu and 20 of his monks; they were accompanied by Eido Roshi and his attendant, Fujin.

Prior to this visit, Max and I had been thinking about what kind of an estate plan to

make so that the property would continue to be used as a place for Zen practice and would also continue to honor Isshu Roshi's contribution to Zen in America. As Eido Roshi was about to leave with Nakamura Roshi and his monks, I was spontaneously moved to ask him to think about what the best disposition of this property might be and arranged to speak with him further. I knew that Eido Roshi had visited Isshu Roshi from time to time in New York. Also, once I had driven both of them to Dai Bosatsu Zendo when it was under construction. So I felt confident that Eido Roshi knew Isshu Roshi's inclinations and point of view well enough to offer some good advice. When we next met, I was very pleased to hear his ideas since they captured the essence of Isshu Roshi's way. He said that the property should be reserved for a well-trained teacher with a solitary disposition who would be content to have a small sangha gradually and naturally develop around him. That person might be someone from Ko-on-ji or depending on future circumstances. Also, the property should continue to be a place where Isshu Roshi's memory is honored, since a portion of Isshu Roshi's ashes is buried here.

We then talked about the possibility of making a bequest of the property to the Zen Studies Society with this disposition in mind. In 2001, with the concurrence and agreement of Niwa Roshi and Eido Roshi, we assigned this property to The Zen Studies Society in our wills. As part of that agreement, Niwa Roshi and Eido Roshi decided to establish a connection between Ko-on-ji and Dai Bosatsu Zendo by having Kossan, a Ko-on-ji monk and disciple of Niwa Roshi, come to the US twice a year to train at DBZ. Moreover, on these occasions, Eido Roshi would send several of his own disciples at DBZ to accompany Kossan to Sai Rai Zen So for zazen. He has honored us further by coming along, too. With each of Kossan's visits, the bond between Ko-on-ji, DZB and Sai Rai Zen So strengthens.

It had always been my hope that some people in our vicinity might eventually become interested in Zen practice and come to Sai Rai Zen So. Thanks to a report about

one of Eido Roshi's visits here which appeared in the DBZ news column in the Summer/Fall 2002 edition of the Newsletter of The Zen Studies Society, three people in this area who have practiced at DBZ learned about this zendo and got in touch with me. They have formed the core of a small zazenkai that is now meeting here twice a week.

Eido Roshi's most recent visit here took place on October 14, 2003. Roshi was again accompanied by Kossan and Fujin and, on this occasion, also by Denko Osho and Hiten. This time Roshi conducted a special ceremony to dedicate a new (memorial tablet) for Isshu Roshi which he brought with him; it was later to be installed in the DBZ Dharma Hall along with a photograph. In his talk during the afternoon sesshin, he shared some reminiscences of his encounters with Isshu Roshi. We were very moved.

We look forward to the continuing relationship with Eido Roshi and The Zen Studies Society sangha. Every visit energizes all of us who are practicing here. Every visit deepens the Four Great Vows in our hearts so that Isshu Roshi's work in America will be fulfilled. We are deeply grateful to Eido Roshi and his disciples for their help.



Dai Bosatsu News

The Monkey on the Mountain

Dai Bosatsu Zendo hosted its fifth annual News Year's Eve sitting and celebration on December 31. We welcomed thirty-five people to our remote mountain monastery amidst the snow and cold. This year issued in 'the year of the monkey' with zazen, an exquisite dinner, a flute and guitar concert performed by Fujin Attale Formhals and Anthony Bez, and fringing of the bonsho gong 108 times. After midnight, a traditional New Year's Eve Japanese noodle dish was served accompanied by a champagne toast by Denko Osho. Special thanks to the efforts and hard work of all the residents at Dai Bosatsu, especially the tenzo staff -- led by Fujin -- Hiten, Ida, Anna Song, Tina Sobin, and Lzandra Vidal. The monkey men was so strong that over half the guests decided to stay on for a few more days.



Winter Weekend Sesshin

From January 16 to 19, DBZ held its first-ever Winter Weekend Sesshin. Although it fell in the dead of winter, forty-three participants braved the snow and roads to join in sesshin. DBZ Mountain could not have been more beautiful with deep snow, diamond icicles on the trees and a penetrating blue sky. Teisho was given by Eido Roshi and a dharma talk was given by Denko Osho. In his opening remarks Roshi said that when he and Denko planned the sesshin they had no idea that so many people would attend. The surprising show of people -- the majority from the sanghas of New York and Pine Hill Zendos -- not only energized the Winter Interim but also heralded in a fresh new beginning to our year.

Fall Kessei 2003

The first kessei with Denko Osho John Mortensen as Vice Abbot was strong and intense. There were many young new faces adding a spirit and vitality to our practice. Joining Eido Roshi and Denko Osho were: Hiten Angela Mortensen, office manager and coordinator of Open Space; Fujin Attale Formhals, Inji (Roshi's attendant); Rinden Roland Sugimoto, Shikaryo (Head monk) and Jikijitsu; Goho Stephen Rossi, office and Fusuryo (Finances); Goran Paul Worden, Jisharyo (Guest caretaker); Daiho Matthew Wagner, a student monk of Junpo's who recently began his training under Eido Roshi, Jisharyo. Also joining us were Emmyo Florentine Sack from Austria; Preston Nelson, Manuel Ferrin, Anna Song and for one month, Kossan Wako Yamada. DBZ nun Iyoi Karen Matsumoto, returning from her half-year practice at Shogen-ji, joined us for the month of November and stayed till the end of kessei. She will be continuing her practice in Pennsylvania and practicing at DBZ whenever possible.

Ensu Scott Rosecrans, after returning from Shogen-ji, stayed at DBZ for a year and returned to his home temple Hoen-ji this fall. Ensu has divided his time between the two zendos since then, helping out as tenzo (cook) during kessei. Assisting Ensu and filling in when he was absent was Tiffany Patrelia, with curiosity and a willingness to practice in the kitchen.

Ida Foxvig, the daughter of Denko Osho, came to us from Denmark. She trained as the Gyotin (drumming during the chanting service) at the monastery. Her bright smile and enthusiasm was infectious.

Longtime kessei student Andrew Gregory returned to DBZ for Fall Kessei. His easygoing attitude made

the open space groups at the guesthouse run smoothly; he also was jisha for the monastery. Andrew has been living in Switzerland for the past few years and hopes to return for Spring Kessei.

Sean Law, a frequent work-study participant, stayed for one month before leaving for Taiwan. He is now frequenting the temple of Chokusan, a Taiwanese monk who practiced at DBZ several years ago.

This fall, Tamcho Bruce Aldridge rejoined the DBZ sangha as the new caretaker, residing at the gatehouse. Tamcho was the gatehouse caretaker and general maintenance man for the monastery over ten years ago. Welcome back.

Uncanny Obon

On August 9 and 10 over 100 people gathered at DBZ to take part in O-Bon with Dai Segaki chanting and the calling of the names of deceased loved ones. This year was particularly dramatic since heavy rain continued unabated throughout the entire weekend. Eido Roshi in his dharma talk mentioned that in all the years of hosting Obon only twice or three times was the lantern ceremony ever cancelled due to rain. Within a half-hour after saying these words, the rain suddenly stopped. This short window of opportunity allowed the floating of the lanterns to commence on Beecher Lake, ending a most beautiful ceremony. We would like to sincerely thank Aho-san for her tenzo work, and Seigan for assisting her. It was a most wonderful feast.

Autumn News

On September 11, 2003, DBZ held an All Day Sit to commemorate the anniversary of the 9/11 tragedy. A dharma talk was given by Denko Osho, and a special chanting for the victims was performed.

Niwa Roshi from Ko-on-ji visited DBZ this fall to pay his respects. Niwa Roshi is a friend of Eido Roshi and the dharma heir of Isshu Miura Roshi who was one of the pioneers of the transmission of Zen to America. A special memorial ceremony was held for Miura Roshi in the Dharma Hall. Several monks accompanied him, including Kossan Wako Yamada, who has practiced at DBZ for parts of kessei in the past and who hopes to return again soon.

This Thanksgiving DBZ once again hosted its annual Thanksgiving Day celebration. Sangha members from near and far gathered together to celebrate this truly American holiday. Zazen was held, a dharma talk was given by Eido Roshi and a wonderful feast was shared. Aho-san with NYZ sangha members; Roko Ni-osho with Hoen-ji sangha members; and Shoikan, from Switzerland, joined in the festivities. Thanks extend to Ensu Scott Rosecrans and the tenzo staff for an incredible feast. Special thanks to NYZ members Gemmyo and Koshin Akawa for offering their jazz talents every Thanksgiving.

Relic of Soen Nakagawa Roshi

This fall a realignment of the Soen Roshi/Nyogen Senzaki Stupa in Sangha meadow uncovered a small urn containing a remarkable relic. When the urn was opened it contained a small bone of Soen Nakagawa Roshi. Eido Roshi brought the relic back to the monastery and placed it on the Dharma Hall altar. At the conclusion of Harvest Sesshin a memorial service was held for Ryoga Kutsu Soen Shaku Zenji, the first Zen Patriarch to visit America, as well as for Soen Roshi. The relic is now enshrined in the Kaisando (Founders Hall), and a piece of it was brought to NYZ to be enshrined on its altar.

Interim Repairs and Work-Study

Compared to years past, this winter interim was particularly unique in that there were over a dozen residents and work-study students practicing and working at DBZ. Some much-needed projects were completed, including the repainting of two bathrooms and the zendo kinhin corridor, and the manufacturing of zabutons and zafus. In addition, the original company who installed our two furnaces returned to overhaul the heating system and boilers in early autumn. We purchased a new wood splitter, and winter work-exchange students worked hard splitting firewood. We wish to thank each and every work-study participant who volunteered his or her time, energy, and hard work to help DBZ through its sometimes-harsh winter months. Gassho.

If you are interested in participating in our summer work exchange program the dates are from July 7 to September 11. The cost of Summer Sesshin and O-Bon are not included as a part of work exchange. Interested students please call the office at DBZ during business hours 845-439-4566.

Spring and Fall Kessei / Anjo

In the spring and fall of each year, the monastery conducts a three-month intensive training period. The training period utilizes the discipline of daily zazen, chanting services, work practice, and formal meals, with the support and guidance of the sangha (community) and our teachers Eido Roshi and Denko Osho. Kessei students follow a rigorous schedule: daily work ranges from splitting wood and landscaping to serving guests and zendo cleaning. Students have private rooms and there is one rest day each week for personal study. The monastery holds three seven-day sesshins during each kessei training period. If you are interested in taking part please call or write for a kessei application. European students please note that our Fall Kessei is designed with Visa requirements in mind, therefore it is a few days less than three months. Spring Kessei begins April 1; Fall Kessei begins September 12.

Intro to Zen Weekends

The introduction to Zen Weekend is designed to give beginners a taste of Zen training in a monastic context. The weekend begins on Friday evening with an orientation, and ends Sunday with informal lunch. The workshop includes orientation and instruction on zazen (Zen meditation) chanting, work practice, vegetarian meals eaten in traditional style, tea, and break time. A dharma talk is given by Vice Abbot Denko Osho and a question and answer period concludes the talk. The fee includes all meals and two nights lodging. Reservations are required; please arrive by 4 PM Friday. Fee: \$175



Sesshins

"Sesshin" literally means "to collect one's Heart/Mind" and is one of the most important practices in Zen Buddhism. Sesshin is a weeklong (or five-day) intensive silent retreat, which has its roots in early Buddhism. Sesshin was further developed in Zen into a living tradition and is today held by all schools of Zen. Students gather from all over the world to participate in a rigorous schedule of zazen, chanting, dokusan (one on one meeting with a teacher) and a short period of work practice. An important element of sesshin is to continue uninterrupted practice throughout the day, devoting

ourselves almost exclusively to zazen. This strict atmosphere allows us to sharpen our awareness, deepen our training and concentrate all our energies on discovering our True Nature. Every afternoon, talks presenting the Zen truth (Teisho) are delivered by Eido Roshi and dharma talks are given by Denko Osho. Price includes room and board for one week and three vegetarian meals a day. Reservations are necessary; plan on arriving before 4 PM the day that Sesshin starts. Please note, although sesshin ends on Saturday evenings (except for the five-day Anniversary and Rohatsu Sesshins) participants will depart the following day.

March-on - February 28-March 3

This popular five-day sesshin is an excellent opportunity for beginners who have never done a week-long retreat, to experience a sesshin of five days. Perfect for those with time constraints. The schedule begins on the evening of February 28 and continues to March 3, with departure in the early afternoon of March 3.

Holy Days - April 3-10

The first weeklong sesshin of the year and a great way to celebrate the Holy days of the East and West. Passover, Good Friday and Easter fall into this week, as well as Shakyamuni Buddha's birthday (April 8) and Rinzai Gigen Zenji's Memorial Day (April 10). Holy Days Sesshin usually sees the ice melt on Beecher Lake, and the beginnings of spring arrive on the mountain.

Pine Planting - April 30-May 4

This five-day sesshin commemorates Master Rinzai, the Zen Master who was the founder of our lineage. It is recorded that Rinzai planted pine trees for future generations to appreciate. Eido Roshi will not be in attendance this year; Denko Osho will lead this sesshin. A pine tree is always planted in honor of Master Rinzai at the retreat's conclusion. Starts April 30; arrive by 4:00 PM; ends early afternoon May 4.

Memorial Day - May 22-29

The coming of spring in full bloom surrounds our Dai Bosatsu Mountain. The smell of blooming flowers intermingles with incense, as we are reminded of our ancestors, teachers and all those we memorialize.

Anniversary - June 27-July 4

The peak of Summer in the Catskill mountains, warm sunshine, blue skies and cool nights are the backdrop for this sesshin. Anniversary sesshin commemorates not only the founding of America, but

of our mountain monastery on July 4, 1776. Sesshin begins Sunday June 27, (arrive by 4 PM) and ends the evening of Sunday, July 4th. Please plan on departing Monday July 5, early afternoon.

Summer Samu Five Day - July 30-August 4

This five-day Sesshin is in preparation for the upcoming O-Bon ceremony for the deceased. The schedule is slightly changed, with an emphasis on work practice (samu) in the mornings. Every evening (as we get closer to O-Bon) we will celebrate our deceased loved ones with a special chanting ceremony called Mizu Segaki. Begins evening of July 30; ends with a departure in the early afternoon on August 4.

Golden Wind - September 25-October 2

The autumn season is arguably the most beautiful time of year on the mountain. The changing colors of the trees, gentle breezes and shorter days remind us of the Impermanence that surrounds us. The autumnal spirit adds a whole dimension to this Sesshin.

Harvest Jukai - October 30-November 6

As nature gives over its bountiful harvest and the cycle of the seasons winds down, the monastery becomes quiet and contemplative. This sesshin is a perfect time for introspection, putting us in touch with the fruit of our year's activities. This year will be a Jukai ceremony for those who wish to become Buddhists. See below for details.

Rohatsu - November 30-December 8

Rohatsu Sesshin is the King of Sesshins; all the other sesshins throughout the year are preparation for this. As such, Rohatsu Sesshin is the most intense and rigorous retreat, celebrating Shakyamuni Buddha's Enlightenment on December 8. Each evening the sitting schedule is extended as the week progresses. The entire Beethoven's 9th Symphony is played at dawn during the last hours of Sesshin, followed by a ceremony commemorating Buddha's enlightenment. Rohatsu begins on the evening of November 30, and ends with departure on December 8, early afternoon.

Fees:

- March-on, Pine Planting \$175
- Five-Day \$225
- Seven-Day \$350
- Rohatsu \$450
- Note - Sesshin Fees are discounted 10% for members of related Zen centers

Sesshin in Switzerland with Eido Roshi - August 21-26

Every year Eido Roshi conducts sesshin in Switzerland. This will take place at the Lassalle Haus in Edlibach near Zurich. Lassalle Haus, Bad Schönbrunn, CH-6313 Edlibach. For reservations, information and fee schedule please contact Shokan, the head monk of Shogen-doho at (see related Zen centers below):
Telephone: +41 364 30 10 or +41 342 56 73 or e-mail info@shogen-doho.org
www.shogen-doho.org

O-Bon

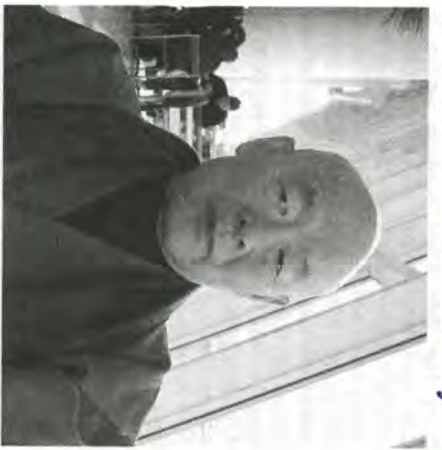
O-Bon is a traditional Buddhist celebration that commemorates our ancestors, parents, friends, and loved ones who have passed away. It is believed that during O-Bon, spirits of the deceased return to this earthly plane. Through our remembrance and gratitude we give peace and comfort to those with whom we have shared this life. O-Bon, therefore, is a time of joy and reflection. Program includes a vegetarian meal, Segaki ceremony, dharma talk by Eido Roshi, floating lanterns on Beecher Lake, a Bonfire, overnight stay, optional zazen and morning service, and a continental breakfast the next morning. August 7 and 8.
Call the DBZ office to register (845) 439-4566. Fee: \$175 per person, children 12 and under \$75. A chartered bus from NYC will be available for an extra fee.

Open Space

Our Open Space Program season runs from April through November. Administered by Hiten Angela Mortensen, it provides space for groups of ten or more people to use our Guest House, overlooking Beecher Lake, or other facilities for various activities such as AA meetings, Yoga, Healing and Wellness and others. If you would like more information about Open Space or about renting our cabin, O-An, please call the office at (845) 439-4566 or the Pine Hill Zendo at (914) 767-9240 and ask for Hiten.

Visitors

Students who have attended an Introduction to Zen Weekend may join us as guest students of DBZ. Please call in advance to make reservations. Guest students are expected to participate fully in our schedule including all zazen and work periods. The overnight fee is \$45 and includes room and board, three meals a day.



constant and vigilant awareness. In a larger sense, you are committing your life to the realization of your True Nature."

In order to be eligible for Jukai you must have completed at least two seven-day sesshins at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, or approximately ten weekend sesshins at New York Zendo or Pine Hill Zendo, or the equivalent. You must write a formal letter requesting Jukai no later than August 1, 2004, addressed either to Eido Shimano Roshi or Denko Osho (if you are their student respectively). Your application must include your name, clearly spelled, your date of birth, a brief history of your practice, and a clear statement of your intention why you wish to take the precepts. Attendance for the entire seven-day Harvest Sesshin, October 30-November 6, is mandatory.

If you fulfill the prerequisites, please mail your letter to: Ven. Eido T. Shimano or Denko Osho John Mortensen c/o: Dai Bosatsu Zendo 223 Beecher Lake Road Livingston Manor, NY 12758. If accepted you will be sent a letter with further instructions.

Tenugui Cloth

We now have 32" x 14" Tenugui (printed cloth) for sale at DBZ and NYZ. These cloths are printed with the calligraphy Nambu Dai Bosa masterfully done by Soen Roshi with roman lettering by Eido Roshi. \$10.

The sangha is as happy as Eido Roshi and would like to congratulate him for receiving this great honor. The Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai has a working office at The University of California in Berkeley, and their group of distinguished scholars translate and publish Buddhist texts into European languages.

Jukai 2004

Jukai is a ceremony that takes place every other year and marks a time when lay people take the Buddhist precepts under their teacher Eido Shimano Roshi or Denko Osho. As a symbol of this commitment to the Buddhist path, each participant is given a dharma name and a rakusu to wear during zazen. Eido Roshi has said: "Jukai is the turning point in your life where, as a lay-student, you unconditionally commit yourself to the practice of Buddha-Dharma. We take the precepts in the knowledge that we are committing to an endless path of transformation, a path that requires our

Manhattan Monkey

On New Years Eve eighty people attended Shobo-ji's Oshogatsu service. Two strong sits were followed by a dharma talk given by Eido Roshi. In his talk Roshi mentioned that it was not necessary to know the meaning of 'Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo' but to coally 'combust' yourself in chanting. This combustion is the true meaning of the three famous monkeys covering their eyes, ears and tongue. With strong chanting and ringing the main gong 108 times, the celebration concluded with a party on the second floor. Special thanks to Ailho-san for making traditional toshikoshi soba noodles, a symbol of the bridge between the old and new years, and kururumame, black beans, a symbol of good health for the coming year.

As Time Goes By - 35 Years

It has been 35 years since the opening of New York Zendo Shobo-ji on September 15, 1968. NYZ commemorated its 35th Anniversary with a weekend sesshin and a full zendo. In a Thursday night dharma talk on Dec 4, 2003 Ailho-san reminisced about the early days of the zendo with many interesting and funny stories. She said, "In comparison with the old days where there were no bells and gongs to ring, people sat on pillows instead of zafus, and it was necessary to sew cushions by hand. Nowadays all these essentials are a given. All that we must work on now is a faith in practice and a gentle-hearted spirit. This attitude of humility and tender heartedness, with less and less ego, is called "Sunao" in Japanese. With 'sunao' heart and mind, our Zen practice will surely bloom; this is the fruit of our zazen and a time to truly enjoy life. As Shakyamuni lived in India 2500 years ago and spread the Dharma to India, China, Japan; so too, now in America, Shobo-ji was born 35 years ago. Dai Bosatsu 28 years ago and all these events were meant to happen." She concluded her talk 'As Time Goes By' with "whatever should happen, True Dharma will absolutely continue, and what is essential is 'Sunao' spirit."

Visitors

The first week in September, Hossan Daiho Hirose visited NYZ from Japan in honor of the September terrorist attack. Hossan performed an Obaku Zen style Segaki chant for the deceased. Together with Eido Roshi, Hossan and several NYZ members traveled to ground zero

later in the afternoon where another chanting ceremony was performed. We wish to extend our gratitude to Hossan for making this long journey and for his heartfelt chanting and dedication to ease the spirits of the dead.

Myoyo Tanaka from Hyogo-Ken, Japan joined the DBZ Sangha for one month and visited NYZ for one week. Myoyo-san has been a great dharma help throughout the years, assisting Eido Roshi in his work both in America as well as in Japan. Her quiet demeanor and dignity added a charm to our Sangha; we wish to extend our thanks for all her help.

Tuesday Evening Sits

In order to make New York Zendo more accessible to city people, beginning in 2004 we have changed our Tuesday schedule from afternoon sitting to evening sitting. As with other evening sits, doors open at 6:15PM and zazen is from 7:00 to 9:00PM.

Upcoming events:

Weekend Sesshins

Sesshin is an opportunity for students to intensify zazen and to deepen their Zen training. Sesshin includes zazen (Zen meditation), chanting, vegetarian meals eaten in traditional monastic style, teisho (a formal talk given by Ven. Eido Shimano Roshi), and dokusan (private interview) with the Master. New student orientation and instruction will also be given. Weekend Sesshin begins on Friday evening from 7 to 9 and continues to Sunday late afternoon. Please bring clean white socks to wear during teisho. Reservations are required. Members: \$85, Non-members: \$120, Saturday only: \$70, Sunday only: \$60.

- Apr 16-18 SoenRoshi/Vasutani Roshi
- May 14-16 Gempo Roshi/ Nyogen Senzaki/ Kengan Goto

- Sep 17-19 Shobo-ji 36th Anniversary
- Nov 19-21 Soyen Shaku/Kaigen



All Day sats are held six times a year from 9AM to 5PM. Like a one-day sesshin, morning chanting service is held, followed by zazen. Lunch is served, and in the afternoon after a short break a teisho is presented by Eido Roshi when he is in attendance. After teisho there is one more period of sitting followed by ending chanting and prostrations. Reservations required. Members: \$15, Non-members: \$20

法恩

Please note that for the Ho-on All Day Sit March 13, Eido Roshi and Aliho-san will be in Japan to accept the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai award. This day is dedicated to supporting them and giving the sangha an opportunity to repay spiritual and dharma debts (Ho-on). Seigan Ed Glassing will give a dharma talk and lunch will be served.

Sun Feb 22 Parivirvana All Day Sit
 Sat Mar 13 Ho-on All Day Sit
 Sat Jun 19 Summer All Day Sit
 Sun Jul 11 Segaki All Day Sit
 w/ special ceremony.
 Mem: \$20, Non-mem: \$35
 Bodhidharma All Day Sit

Sun Oct 10

Thursday Teisho by Eido Roshi

Teisho (formal Zen talk) will be presented by Eido Shimano Roshi on the Soto text "Tetekki Tosui -- Blowing the Iron Flute Upside down." This program is open to the public; one sit will be followed by chanting and teisho. Please wear white socks for these evenings.

Mar 25
 Jun 3
 Dec 16

Saturday Japanese Dharma Class

Presented entirely in Japanese. Eido Roshi leads zazen and chanting, and gives a lecture on the Shin Buddhist priest Shinran's "Zenso no Tanisho". The afternoon concludes with an informal sarai. Doors open 1:30PM; class is from 2:00 to 4:00PM.

Feb 21 Mar 20 Apr 17 May 8
 Jun 5 Oct 9 Nov 13

Every Thursday evening Shobo-ji opens its doors to the public for beginner's instruction in zazen. The basics of zazen -- posture, breathing and concentration -- are taught. One sitting of zazen follows on nights when there is no speaker. Twice a month a dharma talk about Zen will be given by a sangha member. No reservations necessary; doors open 6:15PM, starts punctually at 7PM and runs till 9PM, \$15

Scheduled Dharma Talks

Feb 26 Fréh Bekele
 Apr 8 Gento John Vitell
 Apr 22 Saiun Asturni Hara
 May 26 Curtis Gatz
 Jun 17 Soun Joe Dowling
 Jul 15 Shorecki Chris Prielan
 Sep 30 Honan Yoshi Amakawa
 Oct 14 Kokan Jim Borowiec
 Oct 28 Bensen Dan Foley
 Nov 11 Genju Joe Gaffney
 Dec 12 Aliho-san Yasuko Shimano

Buddhist Study Talk

Last year NYZ resident monk Seigan Ed Glassing gave well-received ongoing Thursday night talks on Zen Master Hakuin's chant "The Song of Zazen." Using the text as a basic starting point, Seigan spoke about many key themes of Zen and Buddhism, emphasizing everyday life practice. This year he will continue with selections from Dogen Zenji's "Shobogenzo Zaimonki," short informal talks on Zen by the Soto Zen Master Dogen.

Mar 13 (Ho-on All day Sit)
 May 6
 Jul 29
 Sep 16
 Nov 18

Interim

Please note, this year NYZ has moved its Summer Interim to the month of August; therefore we will be open for our normal schedule the entire month of July. From August 1 to 31, NYZ will be closed for Summer Interim except for the following dates:

Wed Aug 18 & Thu 19
 Wed Aug 25 & Thu 26

Related Centers

Ho-en-ji, The Zen Center of Syracuse
 Roku Ni-Osho Sherry Chayat, Abbot
 266 West Seneca Turnpike
 Syracuse, NY 13207-2639
 (315) 492-9773
www.zencenterofsyracuse.org

Pine Hill Zendo, Katonah, NY
 Denko Osho John Mortensen, Abbot
 49 Garlen Rd.
 Katonah, NY 10536-3424
 (914) 767-9240
www.pinehillzendo.org

Jacksonville Zen Sangha
 Zennin Chido Zenji Robert Lewis
 2014 Perry Place
 Jacksonville, FL 32207-3445
 (904) 398-6905
www.zensanghanet

Rinzai Zen Society in Switzerland
 Shokan Marcel Urech, Head Monk
 Weinbergstrasse 100
 Zurich, Switzerland
 Telephone: +41 | 364 30 10 or +41 | 342 56 73
www.shogen-dojjo.org

