

September 18, 2003

Inka-Stinka-Doo

**"In times of pervasive deceit,
telling the truth is
a revolutionary act."**

George Orwell

Zen teachings have something to offer Western people, yet there are serious issues involving classism, racism, sexism and elitism associated with some Zen schools. The school I trained in is fraught with these issues coupled with a sociopathic attitude toward American people that isolate it from the very community it allegedly serves.

An almost universal difficulty in traditional Rinzai Zen's transmission to the West is the apparent inability of many Asian teachers to differentiate between the elements of the tradition; specifically the Buddhist aspect and the Japanese cultural aspect. Some make claim that these elements are inseparable and have insisted on the adoption of Japanese cultural elements of the tradition irrespective of the West's cultural spectrum. This has brought about splits in communities, herein lies the marrow of this present essay.

I greatly respect the technical training provided by Eido Shimano, Roshi, who I have been associated with for almost a quarter century. I am grateful for being able to have trained at his isolated country monastery, International Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-Ji, in the town of Hardenburg, Ulster County, New York State. While many express a feeling of "debt" toward Eido Roshi, I can only express gratitude for what he has taught that has been of value to me and others.

The "debt" to the teacher concept somehow seems out of place in the broad-band, big picture perspective. Debts involve commerce, materialism, binding contracts for exchange. If we relate "debt" to our

teacher do we not in a certain way commodify his teaching? Is it possible to “teach” as one to another or can only really “learning” take place within the practitioner? We might wish to offer respect, or gratitude - but debt I sense is out of place.

Can we incur a debt for being mistreated? If that mistreatment results in us making sure that we do not mistreat others? Can abuse become a commodity for exchange? It certainly is in prisons and power-over dynamic situations. It is called oppression.

If dedication implies absolute allegiance such that we support the creation of mythologies that are not truthful representations of history do we not do a disservice to others, ourselves and fail in our social responsibility?

What do we do when our awakesness and diligence collide with our dedication and just how dedicated to what, are we anyway? When something comes that we don't like, it's OK? How does this attitude relate to experiencing a prisoner being denied adequate medical care? Then when he dies from medical neglect -- No problem?

We can indeed refrain from making something out of nothing. But perhaps our awakened aspect perceives that there really is a “something” there that needs to be dealt with properly, our diligent aspect gets to work and makes nothing out of something.

When I wind up being in the position of serving as the spiritual advisor to a condemned person, I find it pretty absurd conceptualizing being joyful and cheerful after watching someone being executed. Cheerful and joyful are “mind-stuff umbrellas” myths to be lived by. We are above all human, we go through the gamut of emotional experience, we function, live and breathe through countless changes some of which are not at all joyful or cheerful. More umbrellas and myths. Watching the corporate media is an exercise in the observation of umbrella gathering, an umbrella fetish. The big myths we are provided with early in life, in grammar school social studies we are given the “Columbus myth.” On the corporate news we are given myths of “weapons of mass

destruction.” We are bombarded with myths in such a way that we become like herd animals being channeled down paths of killing, brutality and belligerence.

The myth we were told about Columbus, the Federal holiday that was constructed around the myth are umbrellas of security used to hide from our collective conscience the awkward truth. It is a mistaken belief that creating myths can expiate social and community vipaka. The health and structure of society is built on real history not on myth. Myth is a tool of power, control and domination. It serves to create patterns of belief that the mythology is absolute truth, it is a mechanism used to define and affirm a fictitious reality.

When we see violence in our midst and all we know about is the mythology we have been sold as our history, we are befuddled and confused, we ask with a mask of surprise, how could this ever happen? ‘thing is, it’s always been happening. We have a legacy of violence that is woven into the warp and weft of our American societal fabric. We in America have a horribly violent history going back to Columbus himself and even further back under the institutions of feudalism and the Catholic church’s periods of inquisition. The next time you see a statue of Columbus in a park somewhere, stop for a minute. Look up at the figure, don’t read the plaque, that’s myth rubbish. Look at the dude and consider; he landed three little ships in Hispanola in 1492. In just a few years he was systematically cutting off the hands of the Teano people who did not bring him enough gold dust as tribute.

Inside of 55 years he, his sons and their cohorts had either killed or put into slavery 7/8ths of the Teano people. Columbus was the first “conquistador,” an absolute power over, totalitarian brute. This man did not discover any “new” world, it was quite thoroughly populated with people who had been living here for thousands of generations. The first thing the Europeans did was establish a hegemony through superior technology, brute force, systematic terrorism, murder, torture and slavery to confiscate the resources held by the First Nations people. This goes on still today.

So yeah, Columbus, he now does not sound so cool, not like what we were told as kids in school. Our society thrived on slavery for centuries, it killed most of the indigenous people and drove them off their land in the name of progress. We owned and traded in the lives of Black people and worked them to death.

There is a sort of social glue which ties the present to the past, things get passed down. Social patterns are propagated from generation to generation. Violence in the past persists as vipaka, the fruit of karma. We live in a violent society because we always have lived in a violent society, even though we have tried to use mythological umbrellas and academic falsification to shield us from our true societal burden.

Even if we do manage to create for ourselves an environment covered with all kinds of mythological umbrellas to protect us from unpleasantness, the truth is always there, lurking under the conscious mind. We collectively bear the burden of being the products of a society which has historically been based on power-over dynamics, brutality, violence, the distortion of the historical record and falsification of cultural identity. This stuff didn't happen that long ago. The effects of centuries of slavery do not disappear in three or four generations, nor do ideas of being personally armed for "protection," nor does experiencing an adrenaline rush during a chase scene in an action movie. It's part of who we are irrespective of the constructed mythologies.

The problem is that the "umbrellas," become like plates of armor. Every time an aspect of unpleasant truth shows itself, we quickly slap on another armor patch to protect and isolate ourselves. Isolation does not work either, buying a huge expanse of land in a remote area and trying to create a foreign community from a mythical past amounts to a distortion of cultural reality, delusions of grandeur and notions of racial supremacy. When critical thinking and systemic analysis are applied the entire concept grows stale rather quickly. It may appear to survive on double-think for a while but in the end it withers and dies.

So I kind of get that we create the past for the future in myth as a means of maintaining control, not at all out of concern for those of the

future or perhaps even through a misguided concept of concern.

Most of us do not want to leave behind a legacy of arrogance and embellishment. Some wish to do just that - I've met one or two of those guys on death rows, the label the shrinks use is sociopath. It appears to mean someone who is socially ill. Someone who has not learned or been willing to really examine themselves thoroughly, to explore far enough to get beyond the myths, the need to control, the concepts of superiority, the psychological restraints that might have put in place around themselves through moral and ethical guidelines. Inside they are afraid of exposure, unwilling to stand naked and exposed for all to see.

This exposure business is painful, as a younger man I was "fearless" -- at least my self created mythology, which I carried around with me, said I was. Now, recovering from a triple bypass, being burned out with prison work, having watched the execution of two people I cared about, having been beaten unconscious by the police for exercising my first amendment rights, having abandoned my wife, lost every meaningful relationship after that, and being separated from the people I love most, living in constant physical pain, I am often frightened.

Much of my Zen training comes into play in dealing with my difficulties but at times there are elements of what I was taught that are obviously plain down right inappropriate. I want to talk about some of those contradictions here and in particular in regards to my relationship with Eido Shimano Roshi.

The primary aim of Eido Shimano's line of Zen is the creation of "Dharma Heirs" all other considerations are secondary to this prime directive the continuation of the Rinzai mythology. The welfare of mainstream students is of little concern other than their ability to follow orders, pay fees and support the monastic institution. While the "dead heroes" of the monastery are mentioned once a month, their names read off in a boring ceremony, there is never a word of gratitude or even a word wishing well the hundreds and hundreds of people who were damaged by their tenure at the monastery. There is no liturgy for the mentally

damaged people that line the road to Dai Bosatsu Zendo.

Lately Eido Shimano has been concentrating creating myths about himself in preparation for his death - re-writing history. He has for years now attempted to write his first Dharma Heir out of history by dismissing him as a "Dharma error." His relationships with his friends and associates are embellished as significant Dharma events, as though their segment in time is of far more value than the present. I have never known a man with more enemies, more people he refuses to admit into his presence. I sometimes wonder how the Shimanos keep track of all their enemies.

His recent penchant for working on his mythology has involved doing video inventories of his collection of scrolls, vestments, art; he has had a video made that depicts him as a Dharma hero, it amounts to a commercial for an ethnic control freak.

I learned about this sort of practice when Soen Nakagawa Roshi died. Towards the end the man behaved as a lunatic. Once he was cremated and safely ensconced, out came the publication of the Soen Roku. The sayings and doings of master Soen. Now that the guy was finally dead, not pissing in the hallways, or climbing around on the eaves of the roof, the mythology could be woven.

I was quite surprised to find included in the Soen Roku a little story I had written about Eido Roshi and sent to him as a gift; except that Eido's name in the story had been changed to Soen. Soen's dead, he can't do anything nutty any more now; we can re-create him as a Zen Saint, the teacher of our own hegemonistic leader. It just sort of feeds on itself, the tales grow in length, only a positive view is presented. Out of an alleged tradition of "respect" or is it simply suspect? I never opened my mouth about the little story I wrote out of fear of upsetting or disrespecting Eido. I feel very different about it now.

There have been times I have witnessed instances of racism, sexism and classist denigration of people by Eido Roshi and his wife that have been egregious from this perspective. Such experiences have led me to

profound questioning of the institution of at least this Rinzai Zen school in its transplantation to America. Eido one day informed a group of us that, "... the greatest disaster of the twentieth century was the loss of World War II by the Japanese." I have been sickened to hear derogatory remarks from him over Korean and Chinese people. But then again, I am perhaps overly sensitive to "racial" issues because of my involvement in anti-racism work.

In 2001, a time of great need for EZF, our computer crashed, we were desperate to find an alternative. I called Denko John Mortensen a senior monk of our line because I knew he was in the computer business and might perhaps be able to help us out. I was pleased and grateful when he called back and told me that he had a machine that he would donate to EZF to bail us out. We made arrangements to drive up to his home/Zendo to pick up the donated machine. I took Dakota along, my partner and fellow activist.

We sat down to talk with Denko who at the time was the unannounced pick for Dharma Heir status, some light chit-chat about EZF and his Zendo. The topic came around to the Zen Studies Society and Eido Roshi came up. Dakota remarked to Eido's chosen Dharma heir how troubled she was over Eido Roshi's apparent racism, classism and sexism based on things she had gleaned from me and a brief meeting with Eido and Aiho Shimano. She was rebuked by the future Dharma heir's commenting, "Oh he's not racist, he's just Japanese." A few more words later concerning ethics and morals and Denko declares: "There are no morals in Zen..."

I nearly fell over, Dakota's mouth dropped open and I quickly replied, "There is certainly no dogma in Zen but there are most assuredly morals and ethics. This is what the Great Vows and the Precepts are all about."

Less than two years later, this man was given Inka Shomyo by Eido Roshi. Indeed, there appear to be no morals in Shimano's Zen. The Great Vows for all, the Ten Precepts, none of these hold any moral sway, at least as far as telling the truth, maintaining control at all costs and indulging in power-over dynamics. From this perspective we seem to be

being taught that in a completely isolated environment under the absolute control of a master of double speak, determined to recreate the manners and customs of mediaeval Japan that this can some how bring about awakening.

MahaSangha News SPRING 2003



Eido Shimano Roshi and Denko Motendo John Mortensen performing the inka ceremony at Pine Hill Zendo.

THIRD WESTERNER TO BECOME RINZAI ZEN MASTER

Last November, Denko John Mortensen, abbot of Pine Hill Zendo in Katonah, New York, became the third Westerner to receive inka in the Japanese Rinzai Zen tradition. Denko joins Roko Sherry Chayat, abbot of Syracuse Zen Center, and Jiro Osho Fernando Atable, vice abbot of Dai Bosatsu Zendo in Livingston, New York, as teaching heirs in the lineage of Eido T. Shimano Roshi. Denko Mortensen was installed as abbot of Pine Hill Zendo when it opened in 2000. The *inka*, or "seal of approval," ceremony signifies that the teacher is satisfied with the authenticity of the student's insight. "With this approval, the student becomes a master and is thus prepared to teach the next generation," explained Mortensen. Eido Roshi, abbot of Dai Bosatsu Monastery, officiated at the ceremony with senior members of Pine Hill Zendo and monks and nuns from Dai Bosatsu.

CORRECTION: The Spring 2003 issue of *Buddhadharma* reported that Denko John Mortensen was the third Westerner to receive *inka* from Eido T. Shimano Roshi, joining Roko Sherry Chayat and Jiro Osho Fernando Atable. In fact, in 1992 Junpo Denis Kelly was the first Westerner to participate in an *inka* ceremony with Eido Roshi. 

It was interesting to see this little correction two issues later. It perhaps did not have the "flash" of the announcement of the now obvious fourth

westerner to become a Rinzai Zen master story, but “There are no morals in Zen..” It could appear that Shimano got better press, big color picture, article - indeed it was a “success” and hardly any one will pay much attention to the brief “correction” published in *Buddhadharma* two issues later.



Eido T. Shimano Roshi, Abbot

SUMMER 1992

New York Zendo • Shobo-ji

Dai Bosatsu Zendo • Kongo-ji

With the Readiness of Time An Important Announcement

by Eido Shimano Roshi

During the Memorial Day sesshin, one day I delivered a teisho on the Blue Rock Collection, Case No. 11. The main subject goes as follows :

Master Obaku said to his disciples, "You are all sediment eaters. If you continue to be as you are now, how can you realize This Matter. Don't you know that in this great China there is no Zen teacher?"

A monk stood up and asked, "But how about all these Zen teachers who reside in various monasteries and temples? What are they?" Obaku said, "I did not say that there is no Zen, but that there is no Zen teacher."

Obaku's last statement is especially crucial. To state it briefly and directly, from the Zen perspective, from an insightful vista, there is not a thing in this world which is not Zen itself. All external phenomena and internal conditions are nothing but Zen. They go beyond good or bad, not even neutral.



They refuse such dualistic judgements. Each one of us is Zen itself. There is nothing to add, there is nothing to subtract.

If you don't understand this last sentence, I dare say that you don't understand what Zen is all about. What Obaku said was quite right. "I did not say that there is no Zen, but that there is no Zen teacher," and I would like to add that there is no Zen and no Zen student either, as there is nothing to teach, and there is nothing to learn.

Everything is to be regarded as "so-called", such as so-called Me, so-called You, so-called Chair, so-called Table. This is the correct way to point to the essence of being. They are all so-called. But because of the language system, we avoid the use of the adjective, "so-called". The more we repeat Me, You, Chair, and Table, the stronger these preconceived notions become and gradually we are well deceived and start to believe that there is a chair instead of a so-called chair. As the Diamond Sutra says:

***All composite things are like a dream,
A phantasm, a bubble and a shadow -
Are like a dewdrop and a flash of lightning;
They are thus to be regarded.***

The same is true of a Zen teacher. They are all so-called Zen teachers or at least it should be stated in quotes, "Zen Teacher". If someone knows this much, he may deserve to be called a Zen Teacher. Please turn to the next page.

Announcement

With the readiness of time, I shall now make a public announcement: on the last day of the Kongo-Shobo 10 day sesshin, October 11th, a Dharma Transmission Ceremony will take place at Dai Bosatsu Zendo and Junpo Denis Kelly will become my Dharma heir. Needless to say, from a relative standpoint, nobody is perfect. We are all working on it, we are all "Not Yet". But at the same time, some of us are ready to "teach" and some of us are qualified to be so-called "teachers". Junpo has been my student for the past 13 years. I know him very well. He is ready.

Some of you may ask, What does it mean to be a Rinzai Zen Dharma heir? First, let me say that there is a big difference between the Rinzai Zen



tradition and the Soto Zen tradition. I can only speak of the Rinzai Zen tradition. In Rinzai Zen, a Dharma heir is one who has gained genuine insight,

who has completed the required koan studies, and who has certain knowledge of Buddhism, far more than average. A person who knows generosity and compassion and has attained a degree of maturity as a human being. And most importantly, enigmatically there is some element that cannot be expressed in language. Some people call it Karma, but it defies specification; it cannot be named.

It is not me, but through me, that Dharma decides. Somehow with the readiness of time, Junpo is to be my Dharma heir and is charged with the responsibility to carry this heavy Hakuin, Torei, Gempo, Soen lineage. I trust that it will flourish under his care.

On December 8, the last day of Rohatsu sesshin, I shall conduct an official acknowledgement ceremony for three Dharma Teachers, in their presence at Dai Bosatsu Zendo. They are :

Aiho Yasuko Shimano, the Director of New York Zendo Shobo-ji,

Roko Sherry Chyatt, the Head of the Syracuse Zen Center,

Agetsu Agatha Wydler Haduch, of the Rinzai Zen Society, Zurich, Switzerland.

They are all long time dedicated Zen students and more importantly they have achieved insight. They know that everything is to be regarded as "so-called" and they have demonstrated a willingness to give their lives to the Dharma. In addition, they have within their characters the gift of leadership. However, as it stands now, they are not yet my Dharma heirs. Maybe someday. Maybe not. Nobody knows; only Dharma knows.

But at least with the readiness of time, it is with great confidence that I make this public announcement that the above named students will be regarded as Zen Teachers starting on December 8, 1992, after the ceremony at Dai Bosatsu Zendo. They are Zen Teachers acknowledged by me, the Abbot of The Zen Studies Society, although their organizations, except for the Shobo-ji, remain completely independent.

In November, during the Harvest Sesshin, I will conduct a Jukai ceremony, which officially names those who are to become so-called Zen Buddhists. The future of Zen in the West will be very much aided by their dedication, and they too may become future Zen teachers.

It's been over 30 years since I came to the United States. I established New York Zendo Shobo-ji and Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji with the help of many people. And that itself was a miracle, but my mission does not end with just a physical establishment. I feel that my further responsibility is to build a solid foundation for the future of Zen in the West.

I have no immediate plans to retire as the Abbot of either Zendo. I will continue my current work until the readiness of time dictates otherwise. All ordained and senior students will remain as my students and I will be responsible for their training. I am aware that a few individuals are seriously considering to be ordained at Dai Bosatsu Zendo. As they are already practicing under me, their training and ordinations will go forward as originally expected.

After October 11th, however, all new students at Dai Bosatsu Zendo will be trained by Junpo. As my Dharma heir, he will be called Junpo - Shi. From October 11, Aiho, Roko, and Agetsu will be called Aiho-san, Roko-san and Agetsu-san.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is the end of my important announcement.

Buddham Saranam Gacchami
Dhammam Saranam Gacchami
Sangham Saranam Gacchami

Gassho,
Eido Tai Shimano, Abbot

I read the public announcements of the organization when Junpo Kelly received Inka, I even attended the ceremony and the party afterwards. There were a hundred other people there

too.

The Newsletter of The Zen Studies Society



Eido T. Shimano, Abbot

Autumn/Winter 1992

New York Zendo • Shobo-ji

Dai Bosatsu Zendo • Kongo-ji

The Staff, the Robe and the Bowl

On October 10, 1992, the final day of Golden Wind Ten-Day Sesshin, Rev. Junpo Kando Denis Kelly received Dharma Transmission from Eido Shimano Roshi in a public ceremony at Dai Bosatsu Zendo. Junpo-Shi is Roshi's first Dharma heir.

The transmission ceremony followed the same form as it did twenty years ago when Soen Nakagawa gave the transmission to Eido Shimano at Shobo-ji. Junpo arrived in the entrance to the zendo dressed as a traveling monk: barefoot and carrying a straw hat. As tradition holds, he was confronted by five Dharma Gates represented by ordained monks and nuns who presented original koans for him to pass.

The first barrier challenge was Rev. Banzan Katsudo Jurek Szczepkowski who asked him, "With what mind will you pass this barrier?" with no hesitation Junpo embraced Banzan and hugged him, and Banzan allowed him to pass.

The second gate was Rev. Seiko Kido Susan Morningstar who's koan was, "Junpo, your name means 'Dharma Cruiser' You've come along way. Where are you going with this Dharma?" Whereupon Junpo pounded

on the ground with his hand three times.

The third barrier was a dramatic challenge by Rev. Chimon Keido Carl Viggiani, who asked, "Buddha says in the Diamond Sutra that there are no beings to be liberated. Why then do you chant 'Shu jo mu hen sei gan do' every morning, vowing to save all beings?" Junpo began chanting *Shu jo mu hen sei gan do* when Chimon

of the problem is that you don't understand the question." Chimon said, "I understand the question perfectly. I want to see your understanding." Junpo made a mudra with thumb and index finger of both hands. Chimon said, "How will you actualize This for the sangha?" Junpo bowed. Chimon accepted this.

The fourth gate was Rev. Jiun Seido

Ewa Tarasewicz who's koan was: "Zen is neither Japanese nor American, Junpo, What do you enshrine on your altar?" Junpo said, "Truth, love, compassion" and with a smile on his face said "and a good bottle of Italian wine!"

Rev. Seigan Fudo Ed Glassing was the fifth barrier gate who shouted, "Junpo!" Junpo answered saying, "Hai!". Seigan asked, "If there is No giving and No receiving, then tell me, what are you receiving today?" After a long minute of silence, Junpo

raised his finger and placed it over his mouth indicating "It" cannot be said.

The last and final gate was reached with Junpo facing Eido Roshi at the altar. Eido Roshi asked Junpo, "In the Rinzaï Roku, Master Rinzaï gave four shouts: Sometimes a shout is like the jeweled sword of the



interrupted him, saying, "You're just chanting the same chant!" Junpo hit Chimon's forehead with his forehead three times. Chimon exclaimed, "You may be able to break my skull but that does not mean you understand Dharma!" Junpo walked around Chimon once, then said, "I think that part

What actually took place there? Can Inka Shomyo be "conditional"? Is there some sort of "probationary period"? Is

Inka something which can be withdrawn somehow? Can one's awakening be publicly acknowledged and a short time later forgotten, a taboo subject, something which never happened?

Vajra King; sometimes a shout is like the golden haired lion crouching on the ground; sometimes a shout is like a weed-tipped fishing pole; sometimes a shout doesn't function as a shout. Junpo, how do you understand this?" Junpo shouted a resounding "MU".

Assisted by Aiho-san Yasuko Shimano, Eido Roshi gave Junpo the wooden staff, a robe and bowl, and a calligraphy as symbols of the formal acknowledgment of

the transmission of the Dharma.

During the second part of the Transmission ceremony, the five ordained monks chanted a special Great Compassionate Dharani, and the sangha chanted the Teidai Denpo Lineage as Roshi and Junpo bowed and made prostrations to all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Patriarchs.

Junpo-Shi (as he will be called during this transition year) gave his first teisho on Case 6 of the Mumonkan: "Buddha

Holds Out a Flower". The ceremony ended with the chanting of The Great Vows.

Over a hundred people attended this significant event which marks the first Rinzai Zen transmission of Eido Roshi's lineage. We congratulate Eido Roshi and Junpo-Shi. It is our sincere wish that Junpo-Shi will continue to grow and mature in his practice with sincerity and dedication for the sake of All Beings. Let True Dharma Continue. ■

The maneuver of writing Junpo Denis Kelly Roshi out of history I suspect has been designed by Shimano Inc. to avoid any possibility of Junpo Kelly moving into control of Dai Bosatsu Zendo when Eido dies. This revolves around Shimano's knowledge that Junpo would drastically change DBZ and the practice of Rinzai Zen there. Junpo also can not be trusted to buttress the deliberately crafted mythology which Shimano has constructed around himself, nor will he continue to support "Japonification" of American Students.

I watched individual after individual fall out of favor and get "written out of history." The most egregious such revision of the history of Dai Bosatsu Zendo was the recent public announcement, including a press release published in Buddhadharma a leading Buddhist magazine concerning Eido Shimano's bestowal of "Dharma Transmission" on Denko John Mortensen. This event was announced as the ascension of his Third Dharma Heir. In reality, Junpo Kando Denis Kelly, who was his first publicly announced Dharma Heir was revised out of history, this due to a falling out over Eido Roshi's lying to him about a sex scandal. So instead of having four officially sanctioned Dharma Heirs there are now three.....

One day in 1993, completely by surprise, I received a call from Aiho Shimano, Eido Roshi's wife and director of New York Zendo in Manhattan. This was an unusual call, I was often called to repair and maintain the building and equipment at New York Zendo and receiving a call from Aiho about a leaky toilet or difficulty with the heating system was not out of place. This call however was different, she told me that she wanted to have a formal meeting with me in Manhattan as soon as possible.

I figured "formal meeting," something's up, I donned my robe and drove into the city. She greeted me and took me into the board meeting room and served tea. She told me that she wanted to talk to me right away so that I would hear the truth from the start because there were likely to be rumors appearing shortly. She had my attention.

The low-down on what she said to me was that I was a long time student a trusted member of the organization and someone of importance to be given this information directly. Now I was really intrigued..... She rambled out the following story I present in essence.

Eido Roshi had recently returned from a long flight from Japan and was driven straight up to Dai Bosatsu Zendo, some three hours from the New York airports. He arrived at DBZ very tired and travel weary. He retired to his small apartment above the guest student hall and had a couple of drinks to settle him down after the long trip. The insinuation was that his travel weariness and the alcohol contributed to him forgetting to lock the door of his apartment before going to bed.

According to the story, in the middle of the night, a female student entered his unlocked quarters, took off all her clothes in his bedroom and crawled into bed with him. Given his state of mind, tiredness, the alcohol..... She said, "You know how

men are....”

I was stunned..... I didn't get why I was being told about this at all. The story was an obvious crock - on a gut level I knew I was being fed a prepared and completely fabricated story.

Sure enough, in a matter of days I heard from a Sangha person that Eido Roshi had an affair with a woman student from Colorado while she was in residence at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, that somehow the woman's husband had found out about it and that a stink was being made.

I refrained from collecting all the juicy details, I'd heard such melodramas before. I kept to myself and remained a supporter of Eido Roshi by maintaining silence and distancing myself from the whole seamy business.

To be blunt, my relationship with Eido was not at all concerned with who he was sleeping with or not sleeping with. I figured it was none of my business. as it did not impact much on my life at all. At that time I failed to properly understand the nature of the power over dynamics paradigm. It was ten years later through the experience of working in prisons for a decade and the education I received from a woman social activist, Dakota Rowland, that I was able to grasp the depth of the situation.

I did at one point contact Junpo simply as a friend touching base shortly after my formal meeting with Aiho. He was distraught over this entire affair. When he had received transmission and in view of his position as vice-abbot of DBZ he had vowed with Eido Roshi to be totally honest in their communications. I told him of the basic rendition of the unlocked door scenario that had been painted for me and he admitted that the evidence to the contrary of that tale was overwhelming.

In short, he knew he was being led on, stone-walled like the

rest of us, lied to by the Shimanos. I could never get how Aiho, banished to being the director of New York Zendo as a means of maintaining control over the Zendo and being kept away from Eido and Dai Bosatsu Zendo could so readily come to her husband's defense.

Junpo felt betrayed in a major way, if wasn't the transgression itself that was his issue, but the cover-up that dissolved the bond. Junpo resigned as Vice Abbot and left Dai Bosatsu Zendo. The scandal it seemed, took its own course, eventually reaching the board of directors of the Zen Studies Society. The board was always an odd conglomerate yet possessing one single criteria of unity, the unity of support for Eido Shimano under any, and all, circumstances. The single most important criteria for board membership always being almost personality cult devotion to the Shimanos.

Whatever happened in the board meetings concerning this particular sex scandal was soon compounded by one of the board members announcing her own sexual affair with Eido Roshi. She was soon removed and written out of history. I never really knew of the outcome of the board's deliberations over these issues. We did receive a letter toward the end of February 1993 announcing the resignation of Junpo-shi Denis Kelly, as Vice Abbot and Head Monk of Dai Bosatsu Zendo. No reason or explanation was given. Here is a copy of the letter:



Eido T. Shimano Roshi
Abbot

February 18, 1993

Dear Sangha Member:

It is with deep regret that The Zen Studies Society Board of Directors announces the resignation of Junpo-Shi Denis Kelly, Vice Abbot and Head Monk of Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji, on February 6, 1993.

We are very grateful for his past efforts and wish him well in his future endeavors.

In the absence of Eido Roshi, who is presently in Japan on a teaching assignment, the Board appointed Reverend Seigan Fudo Ed Glassing as Head Monk and Shikaryo at Dai Bosatsu Zendo.

Programs at both Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji and New York Zendo Shobo-ji will continue as scheduled.

Let True Dharma Continue!

Muin Bernard Spitz
President
The Zen Studies Society

The only tangible effect from the board appeared to be an elaborately staged melodramatic “public apology” from Eido Roshi accompanied by his vow to

never again let such a thing happen as long as he lived. I knew that the board had somehow managed to wheedle the Roshi into this “public apology” but I was aware of little else.

In time it was announced that there would be an important meeting held at New York Zendo and that senior students were to be present. I wondered about this meeting, it had been scheduled during the regular public night meditation meeting. When I showed up, the place was full, most of the people were first time beginner students it being a Thursday “public” night.

Eido Roshi’s cushion and sitting lectern were set up prominently in the center of the Zendo as if for a formal Teisho. My gut told me this was to be an ordinary “teisho” address. With somewhat muted pomp Eido assumed his seat. Aiho was quietly sniffing in the background initially.

Eido, without ever specifically explaining what he was apologizing for, in front of a crowd of people fresh off the street who had no inkling of the recent sex scandals listened to him go on for almost forty minutes over his profound regrets, deep sorrow, and iron clad vow to never ever let anything like this happen again. As he went on, only a handful of people even knowing what he was talking about, Aiho and another Japanese woman carried on incessant crying, sniffing and wailing in the background. They were particularly apparent every time Eido admitted that he had done this terrible un-named transgression.

Before we knew it we were being quietly and quickly ushered out of the building. The evening social tea meeting after public night zazen had been discontinued by Aiho driven by her constant fear that

students grouped together and knowledgeable of the machinations of the organization were a threat to the Shimano control over the corporation. For years on the inside, for those aware and in touch with the flow of power in the Zen Studies Society, the organization was casually referred to as Shimano Incorporated.

I remember hitting the street that night with E-Kun, my partner at the time, both of us kind of stunned and left wondering just precisely what we had witnessed. Sometime later, some how through the Sangha grapevine, I heard that in making the “public apology” Eido Roshi had fulfilled his agreement with the Board. We were never able to make much sense out of the whole affair, it was distasteful to ask anyone about it because it was impossible to know the position of the person in advance or whether one would get the truth or some spin-doctored fairy tale. An aspect of theocratic dictatorship I presume.

Some six month later I was anonymously sent a copy of another letter signed by eight distinguished American Zen teachers calling for Eido Roshi’s resignation. Here is a copy of the letter:

August 9, 1995

Richard Rudin
President of the Board of Directors, Zen Studies Society
1018 Imperial Place, Hayward, CA 94501

Dear Richard Rudin,

We write to you as colleagues of your teacher, Eido Shimano, Roshi, and as your fellow students in the Maha Sangha of Buddhists in North America. Our concern in this letter is the Buddha Dharma and the well-being of the women and men who invest themselves in its practice.

Over the past three decades, we have interviewed many former students of Shimano Roshi. Their stories are consistent: trust placed in an apparently wise and compassionate teacher, only to have that trust manipulated in the form of his sexual misconduct and abuse. Some of these students elected to continue their practice with us; most of them wanted nothing further to do with Zen Buddhism.

With report after report of the same depressing story, it is clear to us that our colleague, Shimano Roshi, is not simply one who slips into an occasional love affair. We have no hesitation in judging from first-hand accounts that the quality of these relationships is not loving but exploitative and extremely damaging to his victims.

A teacher in another lineage presently faces a multi-million dollar law suit for alleged sexual abuse. Superficially speaking, we are on the sidelines of this controversy, but actually we are deeply involved, for the Dharma is one. We would not encourage the remedy of legal action in the case of Shimano Roshi, but we sense that it is only a matter of time until he faces his accusers in a court of law.

The most obvious solution to the problem would be Shimano Roshi's resignation. There may be another option in the form of a program designed to help him with his harmful predilections, although of course the mere completion of such a program does not guarantee a cure.

Neither option is easy in the face of the emotional and financial investments of the Sangha and the teacher. However, we urge you to consider that your teacher is jeopardizing the Buddha's noble teachings. The situation is grave and calls for action to prevent further harm. We offer you our wholehearted support in your deliberations.

We can suggest that some of us are willing to consult with the Board about "what to do," having faced similar situations in our own and related communities. Thinking about the women and their families who have been hurt by Shimano Roshi, please consider underwriting the therapy they need. Our deepest wish is for a healing on all sides: for those who have suffered abuse, for your Sangha, and for Shimano Roshi.

We look forward to your timely response to this letter. If we do not hear from you within a reasonable period, we will consider making this an open letter. Please address your reply to the first signator.

Respectfully yours,

Robert Aitken Roshi, 2747 Waiomao Road, Honolulu, HI 96816

Yvonne Rand, Alan Senauke, Jan Chozen Bays, Susan Jion Postal,

Helen Yuho Harkaspi, Bodhin Kjolhede, Philip Kapleau, Roshi

cc: Eido Shimano Roshi, Andy Afable, Jane Bankier, Karen Barnes, John Brady, Ed Glasing, Vasken Kalayjian, Dennis Kelly, Charlotte Mansfield, Susan Morningstar, Fran Perriello, Wilkie Pretorius, Aurora Russell, Bernard Spitz

To Richard Rudin, President and members of the Board of Directors, Zen Studies Society

Signature	Name	Title, Organization, Address
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Quite some time later I was invited to attend a meeting of teachers at a nearby Zendo where we each given a brief opportunity to speak to the gathered students. I remember speaking about my prison work and explaining the work of The Engaged Zen

Foundation.

After we all spoke and Zazen was concluded, there was an opportunity for the attending students to interact with the teachers. I was surrounded by a group of people and answered questions about my prison work. At one point a woman I recognized but could not recall her name stepped forward and introduced herself. It turns out she was a former member of the Zen Studies Society Board of Directors who had resigned following her taking part in deliberating Eido Roshi's apparent transgression of sexual misconduct with another woman and admitted to the board that she herself had also been having a sexual affair with Eido Roshi.

She was really aggressive and confrontational and demanded why I had not warned her about Eido Roshi. She castigated me for supporting him and being "one of his monks" and went on to accuse me of permitting my ex-wife to have an affair with Eido Roshi. This was done in public, in front of a group of people who were visibly stunned by her accusations. I was flabbergasted beyond belief, particularly by her insinuations about my ex-wife and the mother of my children.

I roared out at the top of my lungs, in a church/Zendo no less, that she was completely out of her mind and that she should get away from me immediately. She at that point tried to attack me and was fortunately physically restrained by some of the students and led out of the building. I was mortified - I had completely blown my cool in front of at least fifty people and half a dozen distinguished Zen teachers.

I have watched the Shimano's treat people with money and in particular Japanese people with extraordinary attention giving them preference over poorer, Caucasian and Black students. I have watched his wife deliberately hassle Black people and be very rude to them for simply showing up on the center's "open to the public" night. I've experienced other students respond in disgust at such treatment only to remain silent out of fear of the inexcusable disregard of "respect" that any such expression would entail.

At one point his wife asked one of my prison volunteers why she spent time going up to Sing Sing prison to teach. Aiho asked, "Why to you bother with them, don't you realize that it is their karma to be there?" My volunteer responded splendidly by saying, "....and it is my karma to be there with them teaching."

Suffice it to say, that over two decades of association with these folks produced several major sex scandals, all sorts of unethical accusations and a number of major upsets within the Sangha.

The school I trained in is fraught with issues that isolate it from the community. Corpocracy and patriarchy are two of the most glaring aspects. Insensitivity and complete unwillingness to respect American cultural mores have been a hallmark of Eido's presentation of Buddhadharma. Things which he knows full well do not fit into American culture he propagates and ignores their consequences. At one point he obtained a highly ornate silk brocade ceremonial hat. He adopted the practice of wearing this hood like, brocade hat with a dropped collar and forward curved peaked top at important ceremonies.. When I first saw him wearing this hat I was stunned

because I immediately recognized how the hat could be construed as being highly offensive and insensitive to the Black community.

The hat was bothersome to say the least, when I was ordained a full priest in 1993, I asked that the ceremony be conducted in Sing Sing prison so that some of my prisoner students would be able to witness the event. I did have to make one very strongly worded statement to Eido Roshi's attendant, and that was: Do everything in your power to insure that "the hat" did not make it into Sing Sing prison. The last thing on earth we needed in there was a man dressed looking like the grand imperial wizard of the Ku Klux Klan conducting an ordination ceremony in front of a largely Black audience being held in slavery under The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

I was devastated several days later when the student who had driven Eido Roshi and his wife to the prison for the ceremony told me that they were both disgusted by the venue, her commenting that, "It was the biggest mistake they had ever made..." going into Sing Sing Prison. It somehow was not at all a "grand enough" place for a Shimano ordination, it mattered not one iota how important it was to E-Kun and I and the men we had been working with for years.

In any event, suffice it to say, grandiosity is a trademark of the Zen school in Japan. It is offensive that vestments can be purchased from Japanese clerical catalogs that list for over \$40,000. Forty grand and more for a "costume" that originally was made as a garment from discarded burial shrouds and gleaned hand made textiles in the time of the Buddha. Eido's wardrobe over the decades has grown in leaps and bounds, becoming more and more ornate as time

progressed. These days he can be seen wearing highly ornate brocade robes costing more than an average American working family makes in a year.

My question is - Where does the awakening come into play? How does a grand costume make traverse of the path of the awakened state of mind better for anyone? If such extravagances are expected in Japan as evidenced by the criminally expensive Kesas for sale in the vestment catalogs, then something has gone awry. Material success appears to be expected at least in Japan of so called great teachers, corruption reigns.

For a long time I have been considering what I have come to call "Broad-Band Awakening" Involving not simply kensho, personal awakening, but also awakening to the social, cultural, psychological, economic, ecological and political arenas as an integral expression of full awakening.

I have asked why, at New York Zendo, the tradition of having tea with new students after the introductory night Zazen was discontinued when Aiho Shimano took control. I have asked why The Society does not use its facilities to prepare soup and meals to feed homeless people, why there are never any clothing drives for those people in need? I already know in my heart that doing such activities are "dirty" and beneath the grand drama of bringing "True Dharma" to the West. Besides, if people are homeless, they are dirty, they smell, they are beneath our consideration, after all it is their "karma:" they are just existing in their own self created worlds of suffering and are of no concern to us practitioners of the "True Way." "If only I could give him this beautiful moon....."

In the case of Eido Shimano, he resists admitting error – especially when the admission damages his career and reputation. He very much subscribes to the notion of “closure” the adoption of a belief system that arbitrarily determines that at some specific point the past, whatever it may have entailed, is over and done with. The consequence of such thinking and acting is the development of functional mythologies and personality centered veneration so that we are always led to be reassured that the right thing was done or that nothing at all negative ever happened. This involves the creation of mythology, the revision of the historical record in such a way so as to always place the Shimano’s in the best possible light despite the harm and damage done to others directly and indirectly.

Many may criticize my writing as an effort to spread dissension in the Sangha, it is anything but. As Dr. Cornel Pewewardy, a Comanche and Kiowa, Professor at the University of Kansas states: “Inaction in the face of racism is racism. As culturally responsive educators, we must understand that "enslaved minds cannot teach liberation."

For every single case of sexual misconduct on Eido Roshi’s part, large numbers of Zen Studies Society Sangha members were hurt, misled, lied to and told to keep quiet or get lost. How many times? In my quarter century association with Eido Shimano I can recall four cases involving major sexual scandals which divided and alienated the Sangha. Not just one or two people leaving disgruntled, but vast numbers falling away in utter disgust. Those who thus disappeared were never again to be brought up or talked about, their contributions, practice and efforts to support the Society were forever to be forgotten.

The positions of the banished and disillusioned people are quietly filled by new eager students, most of whom are totally unaware of the reason for their ascension and the status quo of the Shimano total control regime goes on as if nothing ever happened.

Let me clarify the terms here, and let my position be made clear. I could care less what two consenting and equal adults do on their own time in their own privacy. That is none of my, or anyone else's business. However, when there are vast inequalities in social, political, financial or power over dynamics at play then the situation becomes far more complex. This is some of the issue surrounding the legal aspects of sexual relations between prisoners and guards. In the majority of states any form of sexual contact between a guard and a prisoner is illegal for good reason, the fundamental inequality and power over relationship which exists in the separate roles. Interestingly there is still at least one state where such sexual conduct is not a criminal offense.

In the instance of spiritual teachers, and specifically those in the patriarchal and power-over driven zen sects the issue is one of vast inequality. This inequality is created by the lineage mythology, elements of Japanese culture, notions of racial supremacy, cultural stereotyping and lack of respect for the host culture. When these elements encounter people seeking spiritual guidance in an isolated and stress dominated environment, their vulnerability to manipulation and coercion is severely compromised.

If Eido Roshi wants to have an affair, that's fine with me, he can go out to a bar and pick up a woman any time he may so choose. I have no interest in his

sexual affairs as long as they are off campus and do not involve him using his position of authority as a power-over manipulation technique. He can hit on a waitress in a diner, pick up a stewardess between flights, whatever the case may be. However, In the position of Abbot of a Monastery he exercises absolute power over the lives of those in residence. If he declares tomorrow is a day off, it just is, no questions asked. If he demands that my son with a torn annular disk and so anxious to follow in my footsteps perform extra heavy work to pay for his room and board while in training he can do so, there is no discussion, his word is law. His role is absolute, above question and beyond reproach.

If he makes melodramatic vows in public to refrain from conveniently undefined sexual misconduct and at 70 years old still resorts to inviting women students up to his monastery apartment with offers of alcohol and promises of special treatment what does this tell us?

There are no safe guards in place in the Zen Studies Society regarding Eido Shimano's behavior. He and his wife hand pick board members for one purpose only, the Shimano's perceived ability to maintain control over them and their complete and utter "loyalty" and "respect" for Eido. His Dharma heirs are in no position to offer challenge, one simply threw up his hands and left in utter disgust, the other safely maintains her distance with the responsibility for her own center, the other gets slowly burned out, worked to death, receives bogus promises and jumps ship at the first opportunity. The latest heir declares "There are no morals in Zen." and is chosen to be Vice Abbot.

What Eido has dreamed of as the flowering of Rinzai

Zen in the West will soon fade away. His arrogance in thinking that he can somehow magically transform Americans into pseudo-Japanese will bear bitter fruit for it lacks what he desires most from his students but is most unwilling to give -- respect.

Kobutsu Malone

