Wind Bell

PUBLICATION OF ZEN CENTER Volume IX No. 1 Winter 1970

this issue of the wind bell is dedicated to the memory of
Trudy Dixon

"Go, my disciple.

You have completed your practice for this life and acquired a genuine warm heart, a pure and undefiled Buddha Mind, and have joined our *Sangha.*

Because of your complete practice your mind has transcended far beyond your physical sickness, and it has taken full care of your sickness like a nurse.

Dogen Zenji, the founder of our sect, says "Buddha Mind differentiates itself into the Three Minds: the Joyful Mind, the Kind Mind, and the Magnanimous Mind."

"The Joyful Mind", Dogen says, "is the joyful frame of mind". A man of joyful mind is contented with his lot. Even in adversity he sees bright light. He finds the Buddha's place in different circumstances, easy and difficult. He feels joy even in painful conditions, and rejoices. For us, for all who have this joy of Buddha Mind, the world of birth and death is the world of Nirvana.

The "Compassionate Mind" is the affectionate mind of parents. Parents always think of the growth and welfare of their children, even to the neglect of their own circumstances. Our scriptures say "Buddha Mind is the mind of the great compassion."

The "Magnanimous Mind" is the mind which is as big as a mountain and as deep as an ocean. A man of Magnanimous Mind is impartial. He walks the middle way; he is never attached to any side, any extreme aspect of things. The Magnanimous Mind works justly and impartially.

Now you have acquired the Buddha Mind and become really a disciple of the Buddha. At this point, however, how can I express my true heart? RRRRRRRROOOAARRRRRRRRRRRRR!

At Tassajara, sitting outside of your cabin all night through . . . at first you made your trip with the moon and stars, and then followed the ever-flowing stream of Tassajara* . . .

July eleventh, Nineteen Sixty-nine."

SUZUKI ROSHI'S EULOGY FOR TRUDY DIXON,
GIVEN AT HER FUNERAL

**On July 1st Trudy made the difficult trip to Zen Mountain Center with her brother Jack who had come from Wyoming to see her. She wanted him to see Tassajara and to meet Suzuki Roshi. At night, she slept outside of her cabin in the moonlight. On the night of the 3rd, she shared a cup of water from Tassajara Creek with Roshi and her brother, and the next day was driven back to a hospital in San Francisco. She returned to Tassajara and zazen two days later and, on the 8th, she again left for the hospital where, early the next morning, she died.*

"We've rented a wheelchair and each day Angie and Mike push and hoist me outside to loll on the lounge under the pine and cherry boughs."

To find in the words that are given us
To find in what yet may be given
The thread, the line
That can unravel how we feel
That can reveal
your unmasked being
As it now stares from the bed.

Such a hard dead word, dead
It has no life, no line
And at best
Only begins
The thread
Of what we must find.

Gertrude Horton Dixon died July 9, 1969 at the age of 30 after a long struggle with and acceptance of cancer. She is survived by her husband Willard Michael Dixon (Mike) and their two children, Annie, age four, and Will, age two, and by many others whose lives are different because she lived.

It's hard to say more than just—Trudy died—because she was such a good friend and complete part of the life and community and development of Zen Center. She was the very close disciple of Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki Roshi. She was the wife of an extraordinary painter and natural musician, and the mother of a beautiful girl and boy. She and Mike were the strongest of the early Zen Center couples; and their meditation together, practice, and sense of community are one of the foundations of Zen Center.

"Was" is not the right word. Her spirit, courage, and work definitely go on in Zen Center. What is most essentially and truly Trudy is very much alive in what Zen means by Emptiness and Fullness and Buddha Nature, and is alive in no sentimental way in the wind, trees, flowers, friends, beings, and things that were life for her and that she gave life to. You cannot lose a book that has made its contents and deep spirit known. Trudy was a natural Zen teacher and during the last two years taught us as much about Zen as anyone could in a long lifetime. In many unknown ways life and death continue their identical expressions, and her unknown being continues beyond continuing and not continuing, as it did in life.

She took care of things, and did the things that she wanted to do and were necessary to do before she died. She saw many people and literally inspired them with a knowledge of True Being. Trudy often felt silence was enough and best, and yet her beautiful and clear writing and talking were an intrinsic part of her life. The realization expressed in these excerpts and the poem from her letters did not flow easily or automatically from zazen alone. They were the result of a constant effort and will to transform the long gray abyss of the sleepless nights and suffering of this disease and life into the activity and realization of Buddha beyond life and death.

—By Richard Baker

"Is it only because I am more wordless now that things seem to shine more? Yet words cross oceans, and so lacking any other craft, I write.

One day when I was 12 or 13, climbing the steps up to the ranchhouse, I paused on the top step and looked up at the pale stars just beginning to appear in the deepening blue of evening's approach, and I thought of the Earth I was standing on, round, so vast and mysterious and teeming green whirling through its grey-rain-cloud-wind-swept mantle and I felt all beings walking around upon, living, suffering, dying, and I wondered: Why? Why? Why are we here? Why should we be anything at all? This has been my deepest Zen all along.

There's not Buddhism and non-Buddhism, but only Truth, realized or not.

For years I have been such a pusher, such a non-let-be person. I feel quite at home in my disease; I feel I intuitively understand it very well. "To accommodate your enemy," Roshi once said. I do not feel I am fighting it now; I am not fighting anything now. Like my thoughts, if it comes I will let it come, if it goes, I will let it go. I am not *trying* to do anything at all now, and yet things progress, unfold and develop, as moment after moment blooms! This morning during zazen that line from the song "Funny Valentine" came into my head with respect to myself, "Don't change a hair for me!"

That *everything* is an opportunity for practice—that's what Salvation *is!*

I guess I really knew when a spontaneous and deep and genuine sorrow came at the separation from my kids and yet I could accept it and feel joy at the same time in the beings they are and in the simplicity and clarity of my own new being-at-home within myself.

That point of utter stillness around which all creation pivots felt in zazen Saturday morn at the Zendo—what a treat it was to be there.

How intriguing life is, with so many possibilities and yet lived quite closely, no choice at all. I've been feeling this lately—and feeling it as perfect freedom—absolute freedom: the thoughts, feelings, people, food, body-feelings, the gifts-of-nature like a distant but clear-ringing neigh of a horse heard yesterday that came to my consciousness as pure gift—gift of all in one thoroughly penetrating staggeringly beautiful animal call. Sometimes I feel just how the sound *feels* in the throat of a dog when his repeated and repeated bark comes across our valley. I feel almost as if I were he just *having* to bark when that rrhum rrrum of the big noisy four-wheeled thing speeds past our house. Anyway, all that comes to me is hardly haphazard, but the full and perfect and penetrating Dharma. Why should I separate anything that comes—comparing, criticizing, judging? Why should I fret about what I should be doing? If I look, what should be, what is to be done is always right here.

My self, my body is dissolved in phenomena like a sky's rainbow caught in a child's soapbubble.

The evening after the operation my lungs filled up with liquid and I couldn't breathe. They brought oxygen tanks and pumped my lungs and all that *jazz*. It was quite an experience. Twice before I've thought I might die: once as a child climbing a cliff; once as a teenager swimming in a lake. Both

times the thought of death—not the thought of falling, of drowning—came and I became literally paralyzed by fear. This time there were no thoughts at all—just the animal need to breathe: my whole being—all the energies of my mind and body—poured into this one thing: there was a kind of strange detached calmness in the effort. When it first started to hit me, I rang for the nurse and between gasps, said, "I cannot breathe. I am dying you see, because I can't breathe." And then I remember no more thoughts, no more words, no fear—only the breath-struggle samadhi and feel of the people who filled the room—especially this Negro doctor who held the oxygen mask and coached my breathing. I saw very clearly his hand and felt his presence and

the oneness of our absorbtion, of our effort. Mike was there through all of it (how much harder for him—to watch and think, and not be able to be inside my body to feel out how it was). His calmness—his being just himself as usual—helped me immeasurably—helped me remember: Who? I was, helped me to Watch. Two days later, they had to pump out my lungs again, and we all were afraid it was going to keep on being this way. But miraculously the filling gradually stopped. Five days after the operation, I awoke to feel a glimmer of the old life-joy-urge again. I know now how old, very ailing people must feel when all measures are taken to keep them alive at any cost. I felt a couple of times—why, why prop up life this way if it must be lived in

this form? It was a good experience to have. And that very morning when I first started to feel good again, Mike brought Suzuki Roshi and Okusan (his wife) by to see me, and it was like new life, joy, and the sun to see them! I was in the hospital nearly six weeks and came home just one week ago and not a moment too soon, for the plum and apricot blossoms were just at their height, and now are gone, and here now are the peach and cherry, and apple to come! I'm out each day, 5 or 6 hours when its fair."

Eurydice: Waking Song

I've always been ringed in fragile green,
(the kind the sun makes
sifting in lace layers through the leaves.)
Always have I lain here
upon these ashen sheets? this grass?
my eyes half-seeing heaven,
my body spread around me,
blowing in the wind, firm as trees.

Forever have I anticipated your embrace:
the sudden move across what space?
the quick and careful clasp of your arms,
careful, careful of the long grey ache
mind's night has left behind.

Always have you known, better than I perhaps,
this play of night with day,
This leaden streak, the green-gold lace . . .
Orphée,
ah, Orphée!

From letters from Trudy Dixon to Dick Baker

FROM LECTURES BY DAININ KATAGIRI SENSEI

One of the students at Zen Center sent me a letter and some poems. She really confronts death, day in and day out. Her husband takes care of her, but he cannot take care of their children too. He had to separate from his children and send them to his parents. But day after day, her mind cannot escape from the voices of her children, as if they were playing in the garden or in the playground. She cannot help but listen to their voices. Sometimes if a dog barks outside, the dog's voice turns into their voices. She cannot escape from it. On the other hand, she has to listen to her own voice, bubbling out her sickness, her death.

In her poems she says "there is nothing, only the monologue of pain—and in a few minutes, behind it, just silence." Just silence exists. We should contemplate this point. She means that if you confront death day in and day out there is no room to make a complaint, there is no room to fear death, no room to discuss the subject of death, because you are in the midst of death; your life is occupied by death. But though there isn't room to discuss the subject of birth and death, you cannot help but discuss the fact that death is in your mind. You have to ask yourself what death is.

The more you reflect upon yourself, the more there is left just death in the midst of your life. But you continue to constantly seek for what death is. It seems to me that your effort is like seeking after your own tail. It's all right to seek, to chase after your own tail. After continually chasing, chasing death, at that time, as the student said in her poems, "in a few minutes, behind it, just silence".

In the domain of this silence there is something that you have to accept. What seems to exist is just a monologue of pain, of death, of the suffering coming from death. Within this world you have to walk step by step. At this point death is not a matter for discussion. You have to suffer from death because death exists right here, right now.

This life is not a matter for discussion from your own viewpoint. You live in the midst of life and death and suffering because they exist, really. That's why Buddhism says accept your life and understand how the world is with imperturbable composure. To be imperturbable is to walk step by step by step. This is a hard thing, but you can accept it. Even though you suffer from your daily life so much, just accept it, just listen to the silence, the voice of your steps, with imperturbable composure. This is Buddhism. . . .

While you look at the subject of death through discussion you cannot have a real understanding of death because you are always looking at death, actual death, as an on-looker. If you do it in this way it is really impossible to understand the subject of death.

As the student confronts death she is completely tied down by the suffering which emerges from her disease. Nobody wants to die, and I think that in her mind she is always shouting "I want to escape from this problem," and praying to Buddha, to God, "Please help me." But unfortunately, even though she prays to God, to Buddha, in reality it is impossible for her to save herself from suffering. All she has to do is look at the advance of the disease. Even though she cries, she screams, the disease is going on regardless of her suffering. The more she struggles with it the more the suffering gradually increases. At last, all she can do is just accept it, with silence.

I think everybody suffers from something if they are alive, because life itself is suffering. But most people look at the problem of suffering as on-lookers. In the case of this student's suffering, coming from death, from confronting death, it is impossible for her to see her suffering as an on-looker. If you see your suffering from the outside, as an object, you can't know that you must really accept your life situation. Your knowing is still in the going and coming between your conception and reality. Actually, you always think "I don't like it. Don't give me suffering. I don't like trouble." The trouble doesn't exist, you know, on the outside, apart from yourself. The suffering exists within yourself. Though you say "Please don't give me trouble," trouble comes up to you regardless of your struggle. Then, just listening to the silence between no-suffering and suffering is not enough. . . .

As a human being you exist just at the intersection of time and space, which means just in the midst of the contradictory world; just in your own reality in which you are situated. I think you will notice how you feel. Behind the screaming and the crying there is nothing but the existence of silence and the acceptance of your own existence. So the student said in her poems, that on the one hand she realizes the monologue of pain that is raging in herself, and on the other that she cannot move an inch. That's her reality. Behind both facts, she said, just silence exists.

I think this is the real truth. But to sit on the chairs of silence is not enough to realize what you are and who you are. Everybody can sit on the chairs of silence and tranquility, on the chairs of understanding transience. Actually, every time you encounter the various phases of human life it is possible to understand what a human being is. Through your experience, I think, you can see that understanding transience is not enough to improve your life in the future. Understanding tranquility or silence is not enough to elevate your life. You have to *develop* silence and tranquility. The understanding of silence and tranquility on a higher level is the actual practice. In other words, give it life, vivid life. . . .

Buddha teaches us that we have to have the Big Mind. Then what is the small mind? The Big Mind as taught by Buddha has nothing to do with the domain between big and small. Even though you think you understand the Big Mind as taught by Buddha, I think this understanding is still floating between your notion of reality and Reality itself. You say "I don't like this," but the suffering doesn't move.

For the sick student, the most important thing is that she expresses the decision to continue to listen through her everyday life, through the taking care of, through the benign and cheerful treatment of her disease, of her death. Listening to the silence, to the silence and the tranquility, is not merely a notion—it should be bound up with our everyday life. . . .

When you see the subject of suffering through the function of the brain, your understanding of suffering is wandering in the domain of notion, of the distinction between suffering and no-suffering. But if you express the decision to continue to practice as a *Bodhisattva* it elevates your life situation, elevates it to a higher level, the level of union of suffering and no-suffering.

I think this student who confronts death knows, she alone knows, what death is and how long life is. In the *Lotus Sūtra* it says, "Only a Buddha knows the Buddha's world." The same is to be said of the student who confronts her own death. Even though you can feel the feelings of her suffering, feel "poor lady" and give her lots of sympathetic words, even though she receives many thousands of sympathetic words, they cannot save her from her suffering. No one can really understand the situation of her suffering. No one but herself can understand well what death is, what she is, who she is. . . .

We don't listen to silence and tranquility simply by having that notion. You have to express the *decision* to listen to this silence and tranquility beyond the no-suffering and the suffering of our everyday life. At that time you can experience bodily what silence and tranquility is. When you experience silence and tranquility, your activity, as expanded into your daily life, is regarded as the Bodhisattva's practice. But even though you realize your practice in the domain of suffering as a Bodhisattva's practice, you still find yourself crying out, suffering, saying, "Please help me." Still, the more you experience this in silence and tranquility, the more you will find your activity as a Bodhisattva's practice. This is called in Japanese *gyo-gan*. *Gyo* is practice and *gan* means vow.

This student said to me one day, "All I have to do is to take care of my disease, putting my full energies into giving benign and cheerful treatment to my disease, and at the same time practicing the Buddha's teaching." This attitude is very important. If you suffer you want to escape from it, and if you just listen to the notion of suffering you will despair. You will think, "I give up, I give up everything. I don't want to do anything at all." This is because you understand yourself always as a subject, as an on-looker to the suffering. You are the subject and your suffering is an object. Then you say, "I don't like suffering," but the suffering doesn't leave you. It is part of yourself and cannot be escaped. Suffering just smiles, regardless of your suffering. But when you experience this suffering bodily and express the decision to continue to listen to the silence behind it through your everyday life, you will find yourself becoming brave, continuing to be alive, continuing to move in the direction of the future. Then your steps towards death will be taken firmly.

* * *

(Dainin Katagiri Sensei first came to America in 1963 when he went to Los Angeles and then, five months later, to San Francisco where he helped Suzuki Roshi with the Soto Zen Mission at Sokoji Temple. As the assistant to Rev. Suzuki he was deeply involved with the Japanese congregation, and very busy. In addition he sat with the Zen Center members and began, in 1964, to lecture regularly at Zen Center, alternating with Suzuki Roshi there, and later at the affiliate zendos in Los Altos and Berkeley. After Tassajara Springs was purchased by Zen Center in 1967 Katagiri Sensei took over all of the duties at Sokoji during Suzuki Roshi's stays at Tassajara, and led the rapidly growing Zen Center community as well. It was during this time that students began approaching him as their personal teacher.

Upon Suzuki Roshi's retirement from Sokoji and Zen Center's purchase of their own city building, Katagiri Sensei accepted the students' invitation to join them on a full-time basis, leaving Sokoji to devote himself to Zen Center and, in addition, to teaching a class at San Francisco State College. The students are very happy with Sensei's decision to stay with Zen Center.

The preceding were excerpts from Katagiri Sensei's lectures given at Tassajara during the Spring Sesshin, 1969.)

NEWS

The last issue of the *Wind Bell* to carry any general news of Zen Center's activities came out over a year ago. During this time the concerns of the *Wind Bell* have been changing, moving in the direction of "special" issues, like the last two, and away from the older function of printing news regularly. No attempt will be made here to catch up on all of the events of the past year and a half. This will be a sampler, if you will, not a history.

Since we are essentially a religious community, the tone of most things we write about ourselves tends to be somewhat one-sided. We want to see the perfection of the *sangha* which we intuitively know is there (with a conviction that gives our life together real strength), and yet our incomplete perception leads to imperfect words. Maybe it is through misunderstanding our teachers and *their* perception that we sometimes mislead—tending to portray problems as already solved, neglecting to indicate that we are in the very midst of the confusion, frustration, hostility and boredom that many of these problems bring to us and we to them.

But this is the difficulty with almost all "objective" accounts of spiritual undertakings. One loses sight of the fact that human undertakings, no matter how exalted, are still human. (The seeming paradox of Trudy Dixon's death—a devoted and advanced student of Buddhism dying painfully of cancer at the age of 30—is a good one to bear in mind). Though we try "not to sell intoxicants," still many prospective students read the *Wind Bell* and then travel sometimes thousands of miles to Zen Center, expecting an ideal community of Bodhisattvas, only to find themselves in almost the same world which they hoped they'd just left behind.

Han *and* Densho *at Tassajara, used to signal the changing events of the day.*

Zen Center is not complete or perfect, but our difficulties, individual and collective, are blessings that give us the incentive to practice, to work.

The next two issues of the *Wind Bell* will again be special issues. One will be devoted to our relationship, as Buddhists, to our environment. The other will be the second issue on American Zen, covering Zen in San Francisco in the 50's and the activities of Suzuki Roshi and his students preceding the formation of Zen Center.

Reader's comments are strongly encouraged and gratefully received.

300 PAGE STREET

The opportunity for extended Zen practice afforded by the establishment of Zen Mountain Center in 1967 had considerable effect on the activity of Zen Center in San Francisco. Since 1959 students had been sharing the spiritual leadership of Suzuki Roshi with the Soto Zen congregation of Sokoji Temple, a Buddhist Church within the Japanese community of San Francisco. We also rented our practice space from Sokoji. But by the summer of 1969, interest in Zen practice had grown to the extent that over 120 students were regularly participating in the scheduled *zendo* (meditation hall) activity, and the limitations were becoming increasingly apparent. It was clear that these students needed full time teachers and a less limited space in San Francisco in which to develop an extensive city practice in conjunction with the monastic practice at Zen Mountain Center. Experiments in communal housing for Zen students in San Francisco had been carried on since early 1968 in five large apartments across the street from Sokoji. As at Tassajara, living together in the city was found to be an effective way to extend Zen practice into everyday student life. Hence, a movement towards a more integrated physical community—one in which students and teachers could live, study and practice *zazen* together under one roof—gradually emerged.

Suzuki Roshi's resignation from his duties with the Sokoji congregation was accepted in July of 1969 and he was then freed to fully devote his time

Entrance to 300 Page Street.

Upstairs corridor.

The courtyard. Suzuki Roshi has begun a rock garden here.

The kitchen. There is also a small "snack kitchen".

to the development of Zen Mountain Center and Zen Center in San Francisco. Shortly after this, a building became available that seemed just right for our city needs—one with potential zendo space for about 159 students, living accommodations for up to 75 persons, an office, library and lecture hall, as well as a quiet garden courtyard. Throughout, the building had been safely built and generously designed. It was an overwhelming prospect; the kind of challenge that could help us stretch and respond positively to the need manifested by the growing numbers of students wanting a more complete involvement in Zen.

In August of this year, Suzuki Roshi and the Board of Directors, supported by the membership, resolved to buy this property, previously the Emanu-el Residence Club for young Jewish women, located at 300 Page Street in San Francisco, for the new city center. By November 15, through the generosity and help of friends, members, an understanding bank, and a sympathetic owner, we had begun the purchase of the building and moved in. The zendo was formally opened on January 3, 1970.

For the time being the students are following a schedule and a mode of living arrived at through the years of practice at Sokoji, and the experience in communal living gained at Zen Mountain Center and in the city apartments, and letting the new building itself suggest the changes. For now the central effort is one of harmonizing the life with the realities of city living. Jobs that require much time and experience to perform, such as guest dormitory manager, kitchen steward, house treasurer, or work leader, are performed by students receiving partial or full room and board support. Other jobs are shared by all residents of the house. Six crews take daily rotating turns at providing two common meals each day, cleaning the public areas and maintaining a phone, door and fire watch. A typical student day begins at 5:00 a.m. with two 40-minute periods of zazen and a service, followed by a common breakfast, full or part-time work at regular jobs in the city, an evening zazen period and service at 5:30 p.m. and a common meal. Lectures are given twice each week by Suzuki Roshi, Katagiri Sensei or Yoshimura Sensei and a two-day *sesshin* (all-day zazen) is held on the 4th weekend of each month. One-week sesshins will be held in February and August. Suzuki Roshi now lives with his wife in the building and is closely watching and developing the practice there.

About 110 students are presently involved in communal practice at Zen Mountain Center and Zen Center in San Francisco. Approximately 200 other students are associated with the San Francisco zendo or affiliated zendos in Mill Valley, Berkeley, and Los Altos, living privately in the city or country while maintaining their zazen practice. Despite the growing complexity of Zen Center the practice continues in the spirit expressed by Suzuki Roshi nine years ago when, in response to a student's request to teach him Zen, he replied that he did zazen every morning and anyone could come and practice with him.

PRESIDENT'S FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 1969

Zen Mountain Center

Zen Mountain Center was opened in the summer of 1967 and since that time about 300 students have joined the practice there for periods varying from one week to two years and more. In addition 2500 guests have stayed during the May-September period when Tassajara is open to the public. All on-going expenses are met on a break-even basis through the student fees of $75 per month and the guest income during the summer months. We have looked to donations from members and friends of the Center to complete the initial purchase of the property, and are pleased to report that an additional $52,000 was paid to the former owners, Robert and Anna Beck, during 1969, reducing the balance owed to $62,500 from the original purchase price of $300,000. Our legal purchase agreement called for equal payments made twice yearly through the spring of 1972, but we agreed in spirit with the Becks to try to complete the purchase earlier if possible. It was because of this consideration that they agreed to charge no interest on our original debt. We hope that we may soon pay off the remaining amount and ask all of you who can to please help us complete the founding of Zen Mountain Center in 1970.

300 Page Street

The willingness of many members and friends to lend interest-free funds

Last year three benefits were given for Zen Center. Charlotte Selver and Charles Brooks, who have become two of Zen Mountain Center's largest donors by giving benefit seminars in sensory awareness annually since 1966, held two seminars in 1969, five days at Tassajara and one day in San Francisco. Christopher Tree (above), an improvisational percussionist, gave an afternoon children's concert and two evening concerts of "Spontaneous Sound" in the auditorium at Sokoji Temple.

Mending zafu *in Sokoji.*

to help meet contractual deadlines on major purchases has been a great encouragement to Zen Center. Such loans, amounting to $86,000, combined with $175,000 in mortgages, a $20,000 bank loan secured by stocks lent by friends, and gifts of about $33,000 and also a house, enabled Zen Center to purchase the building at 300 Page Street. Income from the 65-70 students and guests who live there should cover all living expenses and maintenance costs, and will help us retire most of the building's original price within ten years. An additional $60-90,000 will be required during that time to complete the purchase given the present interest rate on our loan commitments. Long term interest-free loans would help us reduce that need. Please contact Silas Hoadley, president, if you would like to help us in this way.

Zen Center San Francisco Expenses

Functions of the San Francisco Center include maintaining the city zendo, providing teachers at Zen Mountain Center and the Los Altos, Berkeley, and Mill Valley zendos; providing a library of Buddhist texts for student use; and supporting occasional visits by our teachers to other parts of the country. Another major responsibility is running the main office which handles day to day communications, Zen Mountain Center admissions, and responds to the many requests for information about Zen Center and other Zen groups in North America that arrive daily. All of these activities are supported by pledges from Practicing, General, and Annual Members. Some donations are also received for general Zen Center purposes and have been very helpful in meeting expenses. General expenses for 1969 were $25,300; income was $24,975.

Grants

That a few older students chosen by Suzuki Roshi are able to go to Japan for some time to learn the language, study the culture, and train in traditional monasteries, is an important factor in extending the practice at Zen Center and in eventually developing a relevant American Zen. For the past year

Preparing lunch in the Sokoji kitchen during a sesshin.

Richard Baker, past president of Zen Center, has been studying in Japan under a working grant. Dick will stay there for another two years before returning to America. Grant expenses for 1969 were $4,800.

Wind Bell

Total expenses incurred for *Wind Bell* publications in 1969 were $7,300 and subscription income was $4,800. Since per page printing costs have almost doubled in the past three years, we are asking subscribers to increase their voluntary subscription to $3.00 per year.

1970 Budget

One reflection of the increased activity of the Center over the past three years has been its increased expenses for teachers and staff. At the beginning of 1968, we had three part-time teachers; we now have three full-time teachers in addition to fourteen full-time students who function as staff at Zen Mountain Center and in San Francisco. Projected total budget expenses for 1970 (which include grant and *Wind Bell* expenses, full room and board costs for 110 students, 300 Page Street purchase payments, guest costs, and support for our teachers and staff) amount to $169,000, while anticipated income from student fees, pledges and other predictable sources should be about $162,000.

Zen Center students are making a strong effort, studying Buddhism with Suzuki Roshi and his assistants. Their continued financial support of the community is one indication of the vitality of their way. But without contributions from many friends we would not have been able to develop so broadly the opportunity for students to approach Zen practice. We appreciate this help very much, and thank all of you for your thoughtful support of Zen Center.

WINTER/SPRING PRACTICE PERIOD
AT ZEN MOUNTAIN CENTER, 1969

Tassajara Creek by the steam rooms, approaching high water, February 1969.

As a result of a series of record rains in Monterey County, Tassajara was isolated from the outside world for most of the three-month 1969 winter/spring practice period. The 14-mile dirt road to Tassajara which crosses Chew's Ridge at 5,000 feet was already nearly impassable by the beginning of the training period, and continuing heavy rains closed the road completely by cutting a gully a hundred feet long and three to six feet deep. The evening after the County repair crew filled the gully it snowed heavily on Chew's Ridge and the Tassajara truck, which had left for supplies immediately after the repair crew had finished, was stranded in Monterey for the winter. Two weeks later, a rain-caused rock-slide took out part of the road and left behind a 300-ton sandstone boulder. The five feet of snow on Chew's Ridge prevented the County from coming in and the road remained closed. The telephone was also out and the only communication between Tassajara and the outside was through couriers who either hiked on snowshoes over the mountain, or forded the swollen creek five miles downstream to use the telephone at the Arroyo Seco Ranger Station.

One day a student hiked to Church Creek Ranch to see how the nearest (and in the winter, the only) neighbors of Tassajara were doing and found that caretakers Larry and Jules Law had only a few days' provisions left. Word of this was brought over the mountain to the Lambert Ranch in Jamesburg and immediate supplies were brought from Tassajara. The Lamberts tried packing in to Church Creek on horseback but had to turn back because the crusted snow was cutting the chests of the horses. So the Church family in Salinas had provisions ferried in by helicopter, including the mail for Tassajara and a few carrots and some salt.

The new kitchen at Tassajara, being built entirely by the students with stone from the creek. The second phase of the project will join the kitchen with the existing zendo, not shown here.

Rafter detail, Tassajara kitchen. The large beams of Coulter Pine were taken from Chew's Ridge, six miles from Zen Mountain Center, the smaller horizontal braces from a felled sycamore in Tassajara Canyon. The wood has been assembled through a system of complex joints, doweled and pegged.

Boulders on the Tassajara Road. The smaller one was about the size of a Volkswagen.

For a seemingly interminable period, the rains came nearly every day. The students dug an extensive series of run-off ditches and draped long sheets of plastic over their roofs to cover the leaks. Sitting in the zendo during the heavy rains, one could hear the low thuds of rocks rolling underwater in Tassajara Creek and feel their vibrations through the zafus. Usually the creek was so high that the steam rooms at the hot baths were awash, and in one storm the water rose above the level of the hot plunges, 15 feet above creek level. The next morning the bridge was gone and Bill Shurtleff and Niels Holm strung a rope bridge between the beams of the baths and a sycamore on the opposite bank.

Much of the planned work was suspended because of the rain and lack of construction supplies, but alternate projects were found and completed. The downhill field between the cabins and the pool was sifted and composted and then graded into four terraces, thereby doubling the garden space. The pine beams for the new kitchen had been lifted into place on the stone walls in December and during the winter the roof was put on. The ceiling over the plunges, which came down early in the rains, was rehung and plastered and the leaky second story of the bath house was torn down. With the reusable redwood from the bath house, the former sewing room in the first barn was converted into a dormitory for women. The relocated seamstresses made curtains for the guest cabins, denim aprons for the cooks, and robes, skirts, pants and shirts to order until everyone had Tassajara-made zendo wear.

Bulldozer operator Eldin Pura widened Tassajara Creek to divert and slow down its flow.

If it didn't rain for four or five days supplies could be packed upstream from Arroyo Seco, about forty pounds to a hiker, but this was seldom done and the students made do with essentials after luxuries like margarine and wheat flour ran out. There were wheat berries on hand but not enough propane to run the generator to mill them into flour, so the berries were boiled whole with white rice. Eventually the diet was made up mostly of brown rice and lentils with bean and seed sprouts and foraged wild greens like Miner's Lettuce and Water-dock for vegetables.

Then one day it was quite clearly spring and the snow began to melt on the ridge and a week later Katagiri Sensei hiked in from Arroyo Seco for seven days with the students. The County road crew came in and after a few days decided to blast the sandstone. In all it took them two weeks to open the road but all kinds of supplies were carried around the boulder, including a winter's worth of parcel post.

Afterwards, most students said they felt pretty good about the practice period, although Suzuki Roshi had had to remain in San Francisco, convalescing from a lingering illness during the entire winter. Being at Tassajara without a Master for the first time during a practice period had made the students uneasy at first, but they ended up with some trust in Tassajara itself.

(As of February 8th the weather hasn't been nearly so spectacular. There is no snow on the ridge, and the road has only been out for a few days. The creek, though it rose suddenly one day after a storm, taking the new bath bridge with it, dropped again just as suddenly and has been, in general, well behaved.

There are fifty-five students at Tassajara this training period and five priests. Acting Abbot, Tatsugami Sotan Roshi, has made many changes in the practice, and his dynamic presence, like a "strong wind", is felt in every phase of life there.)

1969 GUEST SEASON AT TASSAJARA

During the practice periods the common focus of students at Tassajara is seemingly simple—getting to the zendo on time, eating the repetitive zendo diet, working mindfully, continually trying to make "right effort" to follow the schedule and the few basic rules. During guest season, though, when Tassajara is a resort hotel as well as a Buddhist training center and is a favorite stopping place for hikers in the National Forest and for local sightseers, the students' practice suddenly becomes both more complex and more public. It is an entirely new situation. On the one hand, discipline is relaxed. There are trips to town, and a variety of "exotic" foods are available—coffee, pastries, meat cooked for the guests. Students are asked to join the guests in a glass of wine or beer, there is music, and the camp often buzzes with activity late into the night. The usual rule of maintaining silence before breakfast and after evening zazen must be abandoned, and students are on widely varying schedules depending on what specific duties they are performing. On the other hand, the students' presence, both in and out of the zendo, is representative to many of what the teachings of Buddhism mean, or can mean, to Americans.

Willow Creek, near Tassajara, in June.

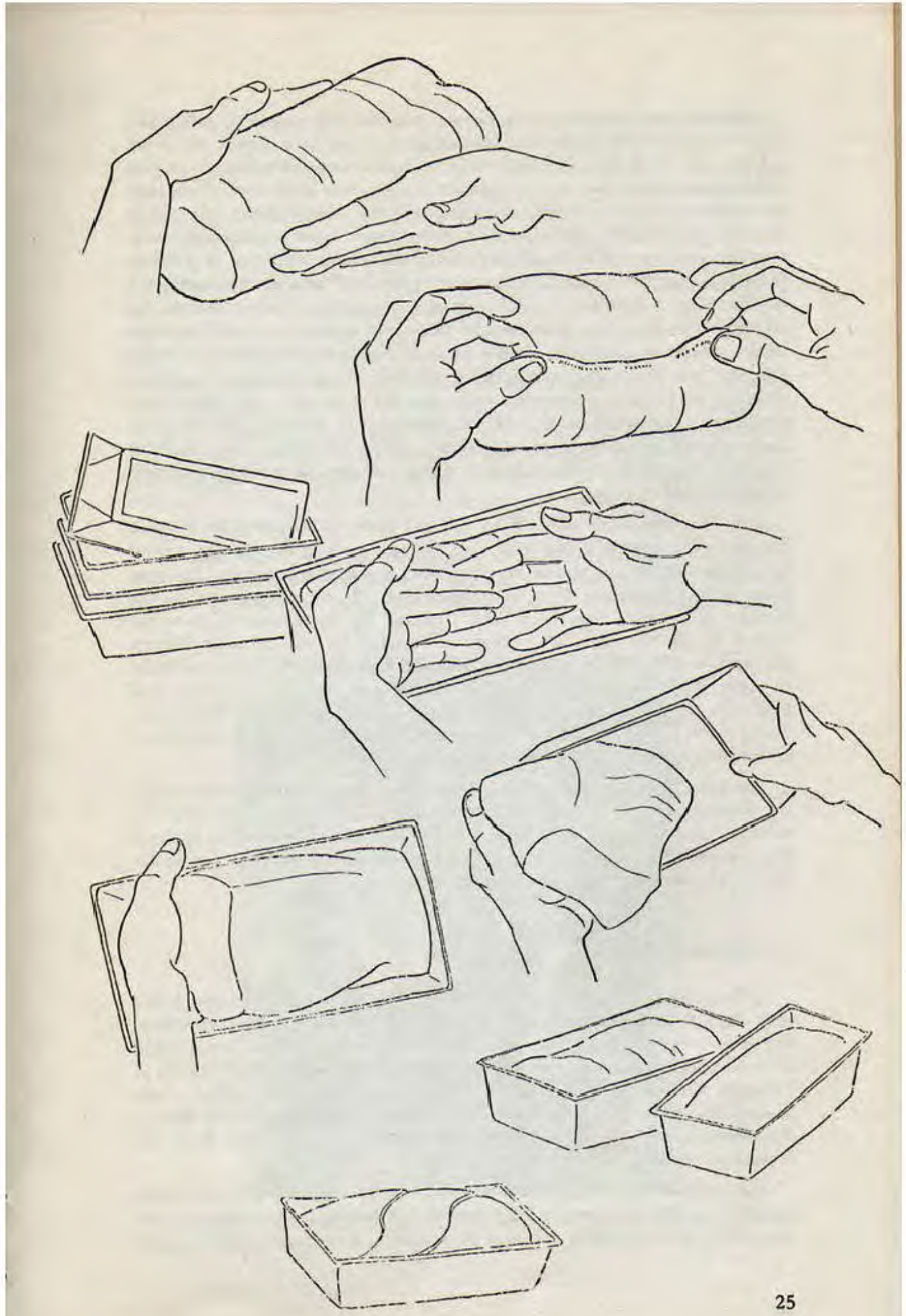
At first many of the older students who had been at Tassajara during training periods found it difficult to share their community with the daily influx of new and varied faces. The relaxation of discipline and the holiday atmosphere were felt as intrusions. For most students, however, the sense of intrusion gradually changed to one of satisfaction at being able to share the practice, and the friendliness and interest of the guests was met with an effort to serve them and to answer their many questions. Zazen instruction was given twice daily for anyone who wished to sit in the zendo, and students eating in the guest dining room engaged in informal discussions of Zen practice and Buddhist philosophy, answering innumerable, often demanding questions: "Why do you shave your heads?" "Do you believe in Our Lord Jesus Christ?" "How can I find God?" "Why did you come to Tassajara?"

"We need more cooks, not more cookbooks" (Charles Brooks).

Bread makes itself, by your kindness, with your help, with imagination running through you, with dough under hand, you are breadmaking itself, which is why breadmaking is so fulfilling and rewarding.

A recipe doesn't belong to anyone. Given to me, I give it to you. Only a guide, only a skeletal framework. You must fill in the flesh according to your nature and desire. Your life, your love will bring these words into full creation. This cannot be taught. You already know. So please cook, love, feel, create.

The above is from the introduction to The Tassajara Bread and Goodie Cookbook, written by head cook E. Espe Brown and edited by Alan Marlowe. At right is one of the illustrations by Francis Thompson. The cookbook is still in the testing stage, and formal plans for publication have not yet been made.



As in the year before a number of psychiatrists, psychologists, philosophy teachers and writers came to share the practice and to experience the Zen teachings at work. One man came to do research on a book he was writing on prisons, mental institutions and monasteries. He came back a few weeks later and stayed for over a month as a guest-student, taking part in the student schedule and sitting in the zendo. In general there was a marked increase in interest in zazen and in Buddhism among the guests compared to previous guest seasons. There seemed to be more guests at Tassajara who had come to share the atmosphere of the practicing community, either directly, by taking part in the zendo schedule and often joining the students in the day's work as well, or indirectly, simply by spending their time quietly, walking, enjoying the hot baths, and relating sincerely to the students and their practice. Many guests attended zazen for the first time, and then came regularly to the zendo to sit and participate in the services. Lecture nights always found the aisles filled with guests, almost all sitting on the floor as comfortably as they could, making an effort to follow the students' example of stillness and attentiveness.

Still, the attractions which have brought guests to Tassajara for the past hundred years remain strong. One man has been coming to take the sulphur baths since 1919, and recalls the days when a stagecoach traveled the road from Salinas bi-weekly, bringing visitors from all over the country to the famous spa. Others have long been attracted by the chance to leave the coastal fog for the warm dry sunlight of Tassajara Canyon; to walk through the green woods and appreciate the beautiful views from the mountain trails; to enjoy the deep swimming hole at the Narrows and the bamboo-hedged pool near the cabins; and to partake of the unusual and simple food in the dining room. Over a thousand loaves of Tassajara breads have been sold to hikers and guests, many to be taken home as gifts to friends.

The guest season ended with a special dinner served in the dining room to the students and the few remaining guests. Dr. Wenner from Monterey—the volunteer family doctor of Tassajara and a good friend of the Zen students there—supplied a taped rock concert, and people danced in the garden by the light of kerosene lamps and the autumn stars.

TASSAJARA SCHOOL

Is Tassajara a monastery, and if so, how can we practice a monastic life with children underfoot? Or, is Tassajara an intentional practice community, and if so, why can't we have marriages and children here? We had decided early on that, as a community, there should be room for married couples at Tassajara. Children seemed another problem entirely, complicated by a lack of facilities—schools or nurseries—and by the worry that they would disrupt the monastic atmosphere and distract their mothers and fathers from the communal practice.

The children came themselves and showed us what to do: feed them regularly on the porch behind the zendo, but balance the brown rice and miso soup with pancakes and eggs occasionally. Encourage them to come

inside for services and zazen and lectures if they wanted to, and between times, let them run around and play and generally figure out how to take care of themselves in this new and wild mountain canyon world. This worked out well. Their ages were spread enough so that there were always older children to catch the younger ones when they were on the verge of directly investigating the true nature of rattle-snakes and high cliffs; enough younger children to keep the older ones from becoming overbearing, enough time in between zendo and work schedules for parents to be with their children; and more than enough resilience among the single Zen students to absorb the children into the community. In fact, almost everyone seemed pleased with this new aspect of life at Tassajara.

When it was felt that some structure was needed, one of the mothers began holding an informal and voluntary outdoor class for an hour or so every morning. All the children chose to come to hear stories of Buddha's life, to ask questions about the zendo and what we did there, and to be generally, gently introduced to Buddhism. Sometimes they studied lady-bugs and garter snakes. As the summer wore on, they seemed to come more and more often to the zendo.

Summer ended, and the paying guests left. Students began asking why, since the experiment had gone so well in the summer, there couldn't be children at Tassajara during the training periods. But training periods are

Monica Linde, Eliot and Lethe Walters, and Jane Westberg outside of the Tassajara school-house.

more intense. Parents don't have so much time to spend taking care of their children. And it rains often so they can't just run around outside all day. We established a school in one of the cabins. Jane Westberg, who had made her living as a teacher, was chosen as the head teacher. Two couples said that they wanted to bring their children to Tassajara for training period—three children in all, two girls and one boy, six, seven and eight years old.

No one wanted an ordinary school. Through discussions between Jane and several other people concerned with and knowledgeable about education, the school's "structure" and "courses" were decided on: the main emphasis was to be on natural history, studying the immediate Tassajara environment. (For instance, Jane read a book about honey bees to her mildly interested class one day, and the next took them out to the hives on Grasshopper Flat where the beekeeper revealed the mysteries to be found in an opened hive to the now very excited children). The class also did a lot of art work, learned the names of all the trees and read and studied arithmetic. The children continued investigating Buddhist practice. Outside of classes they chanted at their own impromptu services, and all knew the regular student chants by heart. They appointed the only boy to be "Roshi".

The situation was conducive to finding where each child's interest lay, and to letting him follow it with the energy and concentration which a child brings to those things that are important to him. At Tassajara, the children seemed able to develop more responsibility for themselves and for their lives in school than they had before. But the school was a fairly radical change for all of the children and they were a little uncertain, in the absence of blackboards and grades, whether they were "learning" anything or not. Only time will show what got learned in school, but it is already obvious that young children can, and probably always will, be an integral part of the practice life at Tassajara, and in the new city building as well.

Here are some poems that the three children wrote:

the rocks are big
the world is big
I am sitting
on the rocks

one day I went to
the seven dwarfs.
they looked like little men
maybe we looked like giants

the trees are yellow
the sun is yellow
and gold is yellow too

I wish I was skating
on the ice
in the bucket!

there were lots of rock-cakes
by the caves

And some questions they had for Roshi:

How come you gave us all those tangerines and candy and cough drops?
Why do you smack people with a stick?
Why are you the most important person here?
Why do you think that we are the good students?

TRAVELERS

TATSUGAMI ROSHI AT TASSAJARA

During the winter/spring practice period the training at Tassajara is being directed by Tatsugami Sotan Ryosen Roshi. He has come from Japan at the invitation of Suzuki Roshi, who will remain in San Francisco this winter at the new Zen Center building. Katagiri Sensei, Chino Sensei and Yoshimura Sensei are alternating in assisting Tatsugami Roshi.

At Eiheiji Monastery, where he served for twelve years as head training Master *(Ino Roshi)*, Tatsugami Roshi revealed what has been called his "international mind", a great facility in working with non-Japanese Zen students. Several Zen Center students met and studied with him at Eiheiji. Although he speaks no English and rarely makes use of a translator he has, says Yoshimura Sensei, who has known him since childhood, a powerful intuition which allows for a high degree of non-verbal communication and teaching.

Tatsugami Roshi originally was a painter. While he was studying for the entrance examinations to the National Art School however, he had an experience which led to his becoming a Soto Zen priest. As a monk, his early training was with a very strict Master, and Tatsugami Roshi's way is tough and strict as well. Physically imposing and a man of apparently boundless energy, he became the sumo wrestling champion of Eiheiji during his training

there, and sometimes went out to try his skill against professional wrestlers—successfully. But Yoshimura Sensei is quick to emphasize the Roshi's kind heart and his deep empathy with, and concern for, young students.

Tatsugami Roshi retired from his official position at Eiheiji last year and since then has been living at his temple, about two hours away from Eiheiji, his concerns shifting more and more to Zen Buddhism outside of Japan. At present he plans to return to his temple in April, at the end of the Tassajara practice period. We welcome Tatsugami Roshi to America, and wish to express our gratitude for his interest in us.

YOSHIMURA SENSEI

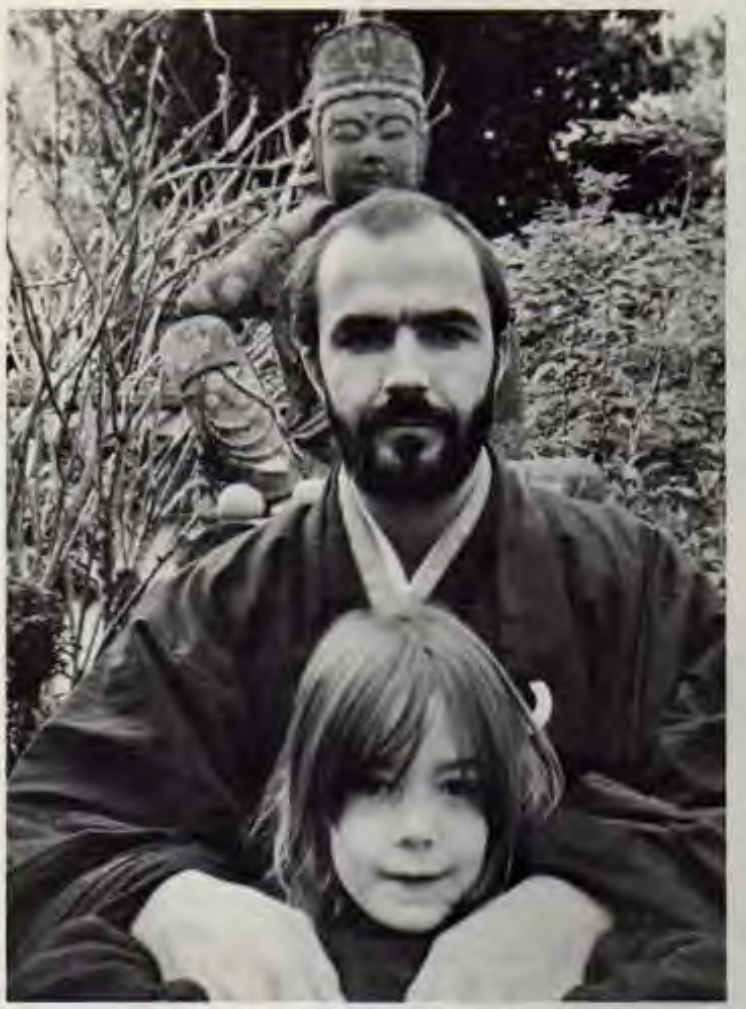
Yoshimura Ryogen Sensei came to San Francisco from Japan in March of 1969 to help Suzuki Roshi in teaching students at Zen Center and Zen Mountain Center. Speaking English well, he began lecturing in San Francisco soon after his arrival, and has also been visiting the affiliate zendos to lead zazen and to lecture.

He lives in San Francisco with his wife, Choko-san, and their young son, Gengo.

RICHARD BAKER

This fall Richard Baker returned from Japan with his wife Virginia and their daughter Sally for a three month visit in the United States. Dick was the founding director of Zen Mountain Center and, next to Suzuki Roshi, is the

New faces at Zen Center: Karako Shojo, Tatsugami Sotan Roshi, and Yoshimura Ryogen Sensei. (Shojo-san stayed one month at Tassajara before leaving to become monk-in-residence with the Northampton, Massachusetts, Zen group. Araki Tesshu Sensei, a young priest from Wakayame Prefecture who has come to spend the practice period at Zen Mountain Center, is not shown here.)



Dick and Sally Baker in Kyoto.

man whose ideas have perhaps most shaped Zen Center as it exists today. He left for Japan last year with the intention of deepening his Zen practice and his understanding of Buddhism through studying Japanese culture and language at first hand. His work in Japan has been, essentially, an attempt to discover the nature of traditional Buddhism in Japan today, of the role of Buddhism and meditation in shaping the Japanese character, and to draw from his experiences some idea of the directions in which westerners might best go in assimilating Buddhist practice-life, given the background of their own cultural heritage.

The Bakers have been living in a house in Kyoto where both Ginny and Dick are studying Japanese intensively and Sally is attending a Japanese school. While the practical aspects of knowing the language are obvious, there is for Dick a deeper aspect also. He feels that in attempting to know a particular culture the initial work must be done on the level of language, as the language of a people reveals their particular mind and the basic underlying assumptions of their culture. (For instance, Japanese grammar deals only in terms of an on-going present; it offers no reënforcement for concepts of either a conceptual past or a hypothetical future.)

During his visit to America Dick led a sesshin at Esalen Institute in Big Sur, followed by a two-day seminar on Buddhism and the Japanese mind. He also gave two lectures at Esalen in San Francisco on the same subject. (One of these lectures will appear in the next issue of the *Wind Bell.*)

As a Soto Zen priest Dick is in a unique position to observe Japanese life, both secular and religious. He has already visited many temples and monasteries, absorbing much of the feeling of traditional Buddhist practice. He plans to continue his language study through next autumn and then, during the next two years, to enter both Rinzai and Soto Zen monasteries for extended periods of training. Already much has come to Zen Center through Dick's stay in Japan; tangible things like better-fitting robes for American priests and definite suggestions for Americans wishing to study Zen in Japan, but also something less definable and perhaps farther reaching and more important in the long run to the evolution of Zen Center and the development of Western Buddhism.

CHINO SENSEI

Chino Kobun Sensei has come back to America after a six month stay in Japan. He originally came to this country, in 1967, for a year at Zen Mountain Center and returned to Japan after two years, at the insistent request of his master, Chino Koei Roshi. At first Chino Roshi was hesitant to let Sensei come back to America, but moved by over forty letters from Zen Center students urging that he do so, he gave his consent and Sensei arrived in San Francisco in February, planning to stay in this country indefinitely. Chino Sensei is presently teaching at the Los Altos Zendo.

JIYU ROSHI

Jiyu Roshi, or Reverend Peggy Kennet, and two of her disciples, Mokurai and Myozen, have recently arrived from Japan. They stopped off first in San Francisco, and we were fortunate in being able to invite them to stay with us for a week at Zen Center. Jiyu Roshi will be visiting other of her disciples here, and will give a series of lectures. Eventually she hopes to settle in the United States, joining together with some of her disciples in forming a monastery, probably somewhere in California.

Jiyu Roshi was born in England and became a student of Buddhism at an early age, at first in the *Theravāda* tradition. She was very active in the London Buddhist Society and taught there for a number of years. Leaving England in 1961 to study Zen in Malaya and Japan, she was first ordained into the Lin Chi sect (Chinese Rinzai) in Malaya. She then left for Japan in 1962 to study under Chisan Koho Roshi, the chief abbot of Sojiji, one of the two head Soto Zen monasteries. They had met before in London, and he had invited her to come to Sojiji as his personal student. There she received her divinity degree as a full priest in 1964, her *Sei* degree in 1966, and her *sanzen* and teaching certificate in 1968. She was also the Sojiji Foreign Guest Master for four years.

Not so long ago, when her teacher Chisan Koho died, she left Sojiji and took up residence as the abbess of her own temple, Umpukuji, near Nagoya, where Mokurai and Myozen joined her.

Having completed her training in Japan, she feels it is now best for her to come back to the West, and with all of us aid the growth of a Zen natural to our own soil. Working towards this end she has already devoted much of her time to a book containing translations of most of the important works of the founders of Eiheiji and Sojiji, Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji, including a detailed description and translation of the important Soto Zen services and ceremonies. Hopefully a publisher will soon be found.

Jiyu Roshi's group is temporarily located in San Francisco at 149 Arkansas Street, and is called the "Zen Mission Society." Telephone 626-5771. They will probably be in the United States until spring, when she is planning to visit England for several months. For further information please write the Society, or contact Claude Dalenberg at Zen Center.

PRIME MINISTER U NU

Former Prime Minister U Nu of Burma visited Zen Center last October while on a tour sponsored by the U. S. State Department. He has been an active and well-known figure in the Buddhist world for many years and at the same time he has, on various occasions, been headmaster of a school, leader of a political party, thrice Prime Minister of Burma, the last time being for several years beginning in 1960, and, most recently, special assistant to U Thant. To us it was quite interesting to see someone so active in secular life and yet so obviously a Buddhist.

Some of us had the impression that *Theravāda* practice was mostly limited to the priesthood, but U Nu replied with a description of the *Vipassana* (Theravādin) practice, outlining the four stages of meditation, pointing out that all stages except the fourth were possible for a layman, and that even then taking the robe was not so much a prerequisite as it was a completely natural and inevitable consequence of having completed the first three stages. He then went on to emphasize some basic Theravāda principles, such as no-self and incessant change, which are common to Zen Buddhism as well.

THE KAZI FAMILY

In January, Mr. Sonam Kazi, a Sikkimese layman of the Tibetan *Nyingmapa* sect, visited Zen Center with his wife and their daughter, staying at 300 Page Street for about three weeks. Mr. Kazi studied Buddhism intensively in Tibet for many years before the Chinese occupation of Tibet and, speaking fluent English, served as a translator to the Dalai Lama in his exile in North India. Mrs. Kazi, a Tibetan from Lhasa, entered a convent to study Buddhism when she was five years old. Their daughter Jetsun, now fifteen, attends a Catholic school in India. (The wondrous affinity between Mrs. Kazi and her daughter was noticed by many students and Mrs. Kazi revealed that Jetsun was the *tulku*, the officially recognized reincarnation, of her own teacher who died at the age of 125.)

During their stay in the San Francisco area, the Kazis divided their time between visiting Rimpoche Tarthang Tulku, head of the Nyingmapa Meditation Center in Berkeley, and Zen Center. Mr. and Mrs. Kazi gave three talks at Zen Center, introducing the fundamentals of Tibetan meditation and practice. Mrs. Kazi also sang the morning chants to the Guru and those for taking refuge in the Triple Treasure, accompanied by drum and bell. The Kazis visited a philosophy class at San Francisco State College as guest teachers, and Mr. Kazi gave many personal interviews at Zen Center, demonstrating his great rapport with American students.

After leaving San Francisco the Kazis planned to visit Los Angeles and New York before returning to their home in India. They've expressed their wish to return to the United States, and to Zen Center, sometime in the future.

DANA FRASER

Dana Fraser is an American who has been studying Zen in Japan for the past eight years. In addition to his personal study there he is working on completing the translations started by Ruth Fuller Sasaki before her death in 1967. He came to the United States for a visit in the fall of 1969, spending some time at Tassajara and at the San Francisco Zen Center before he returned to Japan in January. The following is his account of life at Shokokuji where he is still practicing.

RINZAI ZEN TRAINING AT SHŌKOKUJI

by Dana Fraser

Perhaps a description of the roles of the Zen monk, and that of the part- and full-time lay practicers of Zen at the contemporary Rinzai Zen *sōdō* (monastery) of Shōkokuji in Kyoto, Japan, will interest you. I have spent the last five years in Kyoto as a full-time lay student of Rinzai Zen, and have been conducting my practice at Shōkokuji for nearly four years. From March 1965 through March 1966 it was my great good fortune to be permitted to live in the sōdō as a practicing layman. During that time, I participated in many of the daily activities of the monks, and gradually came to learn not only the schedule of events, but also some of the reasons behind them. The following are some of my observations about the schedule of the sōdō, and the roles of the monk and the layman there.

First of all, the yearly schedule at the sōdō is divided into quarters. The three months of May, June, July, and of November, December, January are "in term" periods *(seichū)* when all the monks are present. *Ōsesshin*, a week-long period of intensive *zazen* and *kōan* study, is held throughout the first week of each of these months, except that in January it is from the 16th through the 23rd. Two weeks of *sesshin* are held each month, one as a preliminary to, and another as a sequel to the ōsesshin which falls in between. During sesshin weeks, daily group zazen in the Zendō is held for about three hours in the evening, and individual zazen practice, called *yaza*, is held for an hour or more afterwards. During sesshin weeks the individual koan interviews with the Rōshi known as *sanzen* are held twice daily, once during the evening zazen, and again in the early morning. *Teishō*, the Zen discourse by the Zen Master *(Rōshi)* on an important Zen text, is scheduled for one hour in the morning on days of the month numbered 1, 3, 6, and 8, i.e. about twelve times in each of those months. As for the weather, May and November are usually pleasant and mild. With June come the mosquitoes and the humid rainy season starting about June 12, while July marks mid-summer with some of the hottest days of the year. In December, evening temperatures often drop to freezing, and January marks mid-winter. High humidity in Kyoto all year around intensifies the discomfort of the extremes of hot and cold.

The months of February, March, April, and August, September, October are the two "vacation" *(seikan)* quarters. In the sōdō during this period the Zendō is closed and no teishō is held, but sanzen (in Japanese only) is given

by the present Rōshi, Kajitani Sōnin, to those of his disciples who request it. He is resident in the sōdō throughout the year. Some of the monks will leave the sōdō and perhaps return to their home temples, or make a pilgrimage, etc., for all or part of these months.

The Rinzai Zen training at Shōkokuji sōdō is based on hundreds of years of experience in China as well as Japan. The sōdō is basically a temple, added to which are a *Zendō* (Meditation Hall) and certain other buildings. These provide the physical facilities for the training of the monks. The monks' training program consists of two parts: first, training to bring about personal understanding of Zen through zazen, sanzen, and teishō; second, vocational training as a Zen priest, which includes the learning of temple administration, conduct of various ceremonies, sutra memorization, begging, gardening, vegetarian cooking, etc. Though monks may come to the sōdō with a variety of personal aims, each one must participate fully in all aspects of the training. It is above all a "do it yourself" practice in which progress is gained through individual exertion, and not merely by spending time in the sōdō. Those who work hard and eventually gain insight into their true nature *(kenshō)* can be said to have made a start, for Rinzai Zen kōan study truly begins from there. For monks to gain even minimum competence in the training, three years in the sōdō is considered essential. To complete the basic training required of a Rōshi requires many more years.

The sōdō has a regular yearly schedule of activities which include ōsesshins, sesshins, teishō, morning and afternoon sutra-chanting services, days for bathing, washing, sewing, writing letters, etc., periods of work, days for going out begging *(takuhatsu)*, days for holding various memorial services, and days for observance of Buddhist, National, and special sōdō holidays. In addition to such regularly scheduled events, there are also impromptu activities scheduled on short notice, such as going out on working parties to gather firewood, performing memorial services and/or partaking of a meal *(tenjin)* at the homes of certain lay believers, assisting with the conduct of a funeral service, etc.

New monks wishing to conduct their Zen training *(shugyō)* at the sōdō generally arrive in April. They must pass a severe test before they are allowed to enter the sōdō. For two days they must wait in the entrance hall in an attitude of supplication, and if they successfully manage that, must pass five days sitting in zazen alone in a nearby room. This is done to test the earnestness of their desire to enter, and their fitness for sōdō life. Some may find the test too difficult, and leave. This is actually a kindness, for if they give up it means they lack the ability to cope with similar difficult situations which will arise later on. The new monks who pass this entrance test to the satisfaction of the resident monks may be allowed to join the community. Such a newcomer is by no means an equal of the older monks, however. Any monk who has entered the sōdō before him, even a few minutes before him, is automatically his senior with respect to time spent in the sōdō. The new monks are under the constant surveillance of their seniors, who give them little or no verbal instructions in how to perform the thousand and one details of a life which is new to them, and who may roundly scold them for every mistake. The most difficult and odious jobs are theirs. They get little

sleep, have a poor diet, and must spend long hours in zazen or in work. They are given a kōan by the Rōshi shortly after they enter, and must exert every effort to find a solution to the seemingly impossible problem it poses. In short, for a time their life is hell. Either they learn quickly, keep every sense alert, exert themselves, and yet relax and keep their sense of humor in spite of countless difficulties that beset them, or they may become discouraged and leave. Those who do exert themselves, learn what is required, and make progress in their zazen and kōan study gain self-confidence, strength of character, patience, and a sense of compassion in a remarkably short time.

If the beginning monks can manage to make it through their first year, their lives will become a little easier. Subsequently new monks will have come, so that they will no longer be "on the bottom of the heap". They have become senior in their turn to the newcomers, and as time goes on, if they continue to develop their ability to sit in zazen for long periods, develop the quiet concentrated mind which is required for kōan study, maintain that concentration continuously in every activity of the day, and show proficiency in the way they perform assigned tasks, in another year or so the most able may be recommended by the senior monks for positions of responsibility in the sōdō administrative offices. These offices, which only qualified senior monks fill, are rotated every six months. By holding such offices, a monk gradually learns all aspects of administration, accounting, planning, fund-raising, scheduling, food budgeting, etc., which are essential to the smooth and orderly functioning of the sōdō. The practical experience a monk gains in these duties will be of great value to him when he later comes to manage a temple of his own.

Nowadays, most monks have had four or more years of college before they enter the sōdō. While it is true that during their beginning years in the

The Ku-in, *building for conducting monastery business and receiving guests, at Shokokuji.*

sōdō they have very little time for book learning, the more they advance in kōan study the more they will have to read. They should be able to read the teishō texts and the various texts which contain the kōans they receive from the Rōshi. They will spend long hours searching through the "Zenrin Kushū" or similar literary collections to find one phrase *(jakugo)* among thousands which expresses accurately the content of each koan which they have intuitively understood to the Rōshi's satisfaction. Unless and until their intuitive understanding of a kōan is matched with a clear intellectual understanding of it, they will not be allowed by the Rōshi to proceed to another kōan.

In summary, monks at Shōkokuji sōdō learn by doing, under austere conditions that develop character and resourcefulness, to perform all the varied activities of daily life. They develop concentration and a quiet mind through group and individual zazen, particularly in sesshin and the intensive ōsesshin weeks. This enables them to awaken understanding of the kōans, which express in the Zen way the truths of Mahāyāna Buddhism. To complete their formal Zen training may take many years, during which they will gradually have learned to handle with competence a wide range of duties. Their training is truly comprehensive.

Well then, what about the laymen? There are two associations of laymen at Shōkokuji. One is called the "Yuima-kai" (Vimalakirtī Association). It has about thirty active members of both sexes and various ages. They meet on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at the Shokokuji *Honzan*, or Headquarters Building. Meetings begin at 9:30 a.m. with about an hour of zazen, in twenty-minute periods, with sanzen available once with the sōdō Rōshi, followed by a teishō of about an hour. Shōkokuji's Chief Abbot *(Kanchō)* and the sōdō Rōshi alternately give teishō. Afterwards tea is served. Few of the Yuima-kai members are kōan students. The ten to twenty young men who are resident in "Hannyarin", a Zen-style dormitory located nearby and supported by the Honzan, are all members of the Yuima-kai.

The second group of laymen is the "Chishō-kai" ("Wisdom-Attesting Association"). At present it is composed of about fifteen young Japanese men, most of whom are college students, and myself, the only Westerner. We meet every Sunday from 9:00 a.m. until noon, at the Honzan together with the Yuima-kai on the second and fourth Sundays, and at the nearby sōdō Zendō on the first and third Sundays of the month. Meetings begin with zazen in thirty-minute periods, then sanzen, teishō, a period of work cleaning in the Zendō or the surrounding gardens, and end with a meeting over tea. Members of the Chishō-kai may upon request participate in the sōdō ōsesshins. A few may decide to live in the Zendō for the whole week, but the majority generally come for the evening zazen hours only. Most of the members are kōan students. Since the students have their college studies and the working members their jobs as their main concern, their Zen practice is on a part-time basis. When the students graduate from college and move away from Kyoto, they usually drop out of the group. A number of the new members who join each year also drop out before long, resulting in a consistently large turnover each year. Members of the Chisho-kai are treated as guests at the sōdō and encouraged to participate as much as they wish in the zazen, sanzen, and teishō held for the monks themselves.

Since I came to Shōkokuji with the intention of devoting myself to a period of full-time Zen practice as a layman, I found the program of the Chishō-kai to be insufficient for my needs. My first desire was to learn the value of the Zen life in the sōdō as experienced by the monks, who after all are professionals. During the year I lived in the sōdō, I found that although laymen are welcomed as Zen practicers there, they have quite a different status from the monks. They are regarded and treated as guests, never as newly-arrived monks. Laymen are the junior of every monk, have no authority in the sōdō, and are never appointed to any of the administrative offices there, no matter how long they may live within the sōdō. Laymen are expected to devote themselves to zazen, sanzen, and teishō, but not to the activities which form the monks' vocational training.

The fact of being a Westerner also made it necessary for the monks to make certain exceptions for me. I had come to Japan, like so many others, practically ignorant of spoken and written Japanese. Almost daily language study and two or three hourly lessons per week with a language instructor was a necessity. Everything about the Japanese language was difficult, being as nearly the opposite to English as one can imagine. I made steady progress, but even so it was two years before I could manage a halfway decent conversation, and my speaking and reading ability is still limited after five years. Kajitani Rōshi, being a diligent scholar himself, knew it was important for me to keep studying Japanese even while in the sōdō, so as to better understand sanzen and teishō. The hours of each day I spent studying Japanese further limited my participation in the monks' daily life. Japanese language study was and is a requirement for me, but there was no provision for it in the sōdō schedule.

During my year in the sōdō, I came to understand that as a full-time Western Zen student, unfailing participation in the sōdō zazen, sanzen, and teishō, as well as Japanese language study constituted the essentials of my practice. I found that such a practice was different both from that of the monks in the sōdō, and from that of the lay members of such groups as the Yuima-kai and the Chishō-kai.

Brief though it is, perhaps the above account is sufficient to convey some idea of the role of the monk and layman at Shōkokuji, and the nature of their Zen practice.

LAMA GOVINDA VISITS TASSAJARA

During the fall practice period of 1968 Lama Anagarika Govinda and his wife, Li Gotami, accompanied by Iru Price of the San Francisco Arya Maitreya Maṇḍala center, came to visit Tassajara.

The author of several well-known books* as well as many articles on Buddhism, Lama Govinda has achieved wide recognition as an highly articulate spokesman for the *Vajrayāna* as it was practiced in Tibet. An Austrian by birth, he was ordained as a Theravādin monk in Ceylon as a young man and, twelve years later, went to India and Tibet where he began a study of the Vajrayāna which led eventually to his ordination as a lama of the *Kargyütpa* sect. He met Madam Govinda, Li Gotami, while teaching at Rabindrinath Tagore's College in Shrinigar. She has traveled extensively in Tibet with her husband, studying Buddhism there, and was initiated into the Kargyütpa sect herself.

The Govindas now live in North India, at Almora, in the foothills of the Himalayas. Lama Govinda founded and is the spiritual leader of the Arya Maitreya Maṇḍala, a Vajrayāna group which has study centers in America and in Europe. He is presently at work on a number of new books, one of them a new approach to the interpretation of the *I Ching*, the Chinese oracular classic which has been of great importance in the cultural history of Tibet.

Lama Govinda and Li Gotami stayed at Zen Mountain Center for four days, resting quietly after several weeks of strenuous lecturing throughout the United States. Lama Govinda lectured once in the zendo. (This lecture, *Siddhas and Zen Buddhism*, follows.) He also led an open discussion in which students asked various questions about the Vajrayāna, Tibet, and the Lama's own life and experiences. He related more of the *Siddha* tales, illustrating them with his own drawings of the legendary figures, and often stressing the need for inspiration and joy coupled with dedication in spiritual practice. Most students had read at least one of his books, and the discussion was informed and lively.

Madam Govinda is an accomplished photographer and painter, as is Lama Govinda himself, and on the third day of their visit she organized an impromptu exhibition of their works in the guest dining room; excellent photographs, water-colors, and ink drawings of Tibetans, their monasteries, and their religious art. She stayed in the room all day, answering questions, relating endless fascinating anecdotes and stories (particularly about their adventures trekking through Tibet to trace the famous frescoes at Tsaparang), charming everyone with her incredible energy and good humor.

**Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, Ryder, 1959.
Mandala, (poems, in German), Origo Verlag, 1961.
The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy, Ryder, 1961.
The Way of the White Clouds, Hutchinson, 1966.

The impression made by the Govindas' visit was powerful and lasting. Many students had opportunities to talk with Lama Govinda in his room and found the peace, deep quietude and friendly alertness of the man very moving and inspiring. Madam Govinda, too, was very happy to talk with students, and many, particularly the women, got a new and revitalized view of Buddhist practice-life from her.

Lama Anagarika Govinda.

SIDDHAS AND ZEN-BUDDHISM

Lama Anagarika Govinda

When religion grows in age, faith turns into dogma, and experience is replaced by book-knowledge, virtue by adherence to rules, devotion by ritual, meditation by metaphysical speculation. The time is then ripe for a rediscovery of truth and a fresh attempt to give it expression in life.

This is what happened in the sixth century B.C., when the Buddha revived Indian religious feeling through a re-formulation of the ancient Dharma (for which the orthodox called him a revolutionary), and again a millenium later, when Buddhism had crystallized into so many philosophical schools and monastic institutions that the individual was in danger of getting lost in them, like a lone seafarer in the immensity of the ocean.

A new individualistic idealism sprang up then. It had its repercussions on the Chinese *Ch'an* School, which was called *Zen* in Japan, and on Indian Buddhist mystics whose records have been preserved in Tibet in the stories of the Eighty-Four *Siddhas* or Masters of the Mystic Path.

These *Siddhas*, as also the Masters of the ancient *Ch'an* or *Zen*, were as revolutionary in their ideas and methods as the Buddha had seemed to the orthodox of his time. They were equally insistent that experience was more important than book-knowledge, and that "truth" could not be handed out in any "solid" or clearly definable (and therefore limited) form, in which it could be preserved for an indefinite time.

The Buddha discovered that it is not the *results* of human thought, the "ideas", beliefs and formulas, the conceptual knowledge, that matter, but the *method*, the spiritual attitude behind them. True to this fundamental principle, the *Ch'an* in China and the *Siddhas* in India refused to put their experiences into philosophical systems or to crystallize their ideas into doctrines.

They preferred the paradox to logical formulations and laid more stress on the spirit of inquiry than on solutions. Their spiritual attitude was expressed in one word—*sunyata*—which literally means "emptiness", but has so many gradations of meaning that it can only be circumscribed. In the present instance it may be interpreted as complete absence of prejudice and preconceived ideas. It is the intuitive state of mind, which in the Indian system of meditation is called *dhyana* and from which the word *Ch'an* or *Zen* is derived.

There are as many ways of achieving this as there are thinking beings. So each of the Masters developed his own method and—what is more—made each of his pupils find his own particular way. This is what makes it so difficult to give a precise idea of what Zen or the *Siddhas* stand for, without over-stressing individual aspects or over-simplifying the problem by mere generalization.

They did not believe in verbal expressions of truth and only pointed out the direction in which truth might be experienced, since truth is not something existing in itself, not even as a negation of error, as Joka, a pupil of the Patriarch Eno (638-713 A.D.), sings in his hymn *Shodo-Ka:*

"I do not seek the truth,
I do not destroy the error,
Because I know that both are nothing,
That both are no forms (of Reality),
The Unformed is nevertheless not 'nothing',
But also not 'not-nothing'."

And in the same hymn we find the words: "The empty shape of transitory illusion is nothing but the shape of truth." Tagore expresses a similar idea when he says: "If you close your doors against all errors, you exclude the truth."

All our logical definitions are one-sided and partial, since they are bound to their starting point: the judging intellect and the particular angle of vision. What people generally regard as truth is little more than a one-sided statement.

A fine example of this is the story of two Chinese monks who had a dispute about a flag moving in the wind. The one maintained that the flag was moving; the other, that it was the wind that moved. Eno (Hui-Neng), the sixth patriarch in China, who overheard their discussion, said: "Neither the wind nor the flag is moving; your mind moves."

But Mummon, a Japanese Patriarch of the thirteenth century, not satisfied with this answer, went one step further and said: "Neither the wind, nor the flag, nor the mind is moving", thus going back to the ultimate principle of *sunyata*, in which there is neither going nor coming, comprising both the subjective and objective aspects of reality.

This reality beyond the opposites, however, is not to be separated or abstracted from its exponents, the momentariness is not to be distinguished from eternity. The most perfect individual self-expression is the most objective description of the world. The greatest artist is he who expresses what is felt by everybody. But how does he do it?—By being more subjective than others. The more he expresses *himself*, the nearer he comes to the others, because our real nature is not our imaginary, limited ego. Our true nature is vast, all-comprehensive and intangible as empty space. It is *sunyata* in its deepest sense:

"Clear and unimpaired is the light of the spiritual mirror,
Boundlessly penetrating the innumerable realms,
Which are as countless as the sands of the sea.
In its centre there is formed as a picture the whole world.
It is a perfect light; it is unbroken:
It is neither merely inside nor outside."

(Shodo-Ka)

It is the secret of art that it reveals the supra-individual through individuality, the "not-self" through the "self", the object through the subject. Art in itself is a sort of paradox, and that is why *Zen* prefers it to all other mediums of expression; for only the paradox escapes from the dilemma of logical limitation, of partiality and one-sidedness. It cannot be bound down to principles or conceptual definitions, because it exaggerates intentionally, and a literal interpretation is not possible. Its meaning is beyond the incongruity of words.

Paradoxes, like humour, are greatly dependent on the soil on which they grow. Thus there is a marked difference between the paradoxes which we find in the stories of the Indian Buddhist *Siddhas* and those of the *Zen* Masters in China and Japan. In the stories of the *Siddhas* the paradoxes take either the form of the miraculous, in which inner experiences are symbolized, or they show that the very thing by which a man falls, can be the cause of his rise, that a weakness can be turned into strength, a fault into an asset, if only we are able to look at ourselves like a stranger, without bias and prejudice, and upon the world around us, as if we had never seen it before.

We are blind to Reality, because we are so accustomed to our surroundings and to ourselves that we are no more aware of them. Once we break the fetters of habit by the power of a paradoxical situation or by a flash of intuition, everything becomes a revelation and everyday life turns into a wonder. In the stories of the Tantric Mystics this wondrous experience which follows the great spiritual change, is symbolized by miracles and extraordinary psychic powers *(siddhi)*. In *Zen* Buddhism with its refined psychology, the scene of activity is entirely located in the human mind and the paradoxes are of a more complex nature.

Perhaps it was this difference in treatment and style which prevented scholars up to now from recognizing the inner relationship between *Zen* and *Siddhas,* though thousands of miles and hundreds of years may have separated them.

The following story, which might be aptly entitled "The Man who met with himself", may serve as an example. It is found in the Tibetan biographies of the Eighty-Four Siddhas *(Grub-thob brgyad-cu-rtsa-bzihi mam-thar)*, who flourished between the seventh and the eleventh century.

The story runs as follows: There was once a hunter, called Savari. He was very proud of his strength and his marksmanship. The killing of animals was his sole occupation, and it made his life one single sin.

One day, while he was out hunting, he saw a stranger approaching him from afar, apparently a hunter. "Who dares hunt in my territory?" he thought indignantly, and walking up, he found that the stranger was not only as big and sturdy as himself, but—what surprised him still more—he looked exactly like himself!

"Who are you?" he demanded sternly.

"I am a hunter", said the stranger, unperturbed.

"Your name?"

"Savari!"

"How is that?" the hunter exclaimed, taken aback. "My name is also Savari! Where do you come from?"

"From a distant country", the stranger said evasively.

Savari regained his self-confidence.

"Can you kill more than one deer with the shot of a single arrow?"

"I can kill three hundred with one shot", the stranger answered.

This sounded to Savari as tall talk, and he only wished for an opportunity to expose his rival's ridiculous claim.

However, the stranger—no other than the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, who had assumed this shape, because he felt pity for Savari—immediately created a herd of five hundred deer through his magic power. Savari was delighted when he saw the deer emerge from the forest at not too great a distance, and he asked gleefully: "Will your arrow be able to go through all those deer?"

"It will go through all five hundred" the stranger replied. But Savari suggested: "Let your arrow miss four hundred and kill one hundred only."

The stranger accomplished this feat with the greatest ease, but now Savari began to disbelieve his eyes.

"Fetch one of the deer", said the stranger, "if you have any doubt." And Savari went as he was told.

But, alas! When he tried to lift one of the deer, he found it so heavy that he could not move it from the spot.

"What?" exclaimed the stranger, "you, a great hunter, cannot even lift a deer!" And he laughed heartily.

Now the hunter's pride was completely broken. He fell at the stranger's feet and asked him to be his teacher.

Avalokiteśvara agreed. "If you want to learn this magic shooting art", he said, "you must first purify yourself for a month by not eating meat and by meditating on love and compassion towards all living beings. I will then return and teach you my secret."

Savari did as he was told, and when the teacher returned, he was a changed man, though he did not know this yet. He asked the Guru for his promised initiation into the secret art of shooting.

The teacher drew an elaborate *maṇḍala* (a concentric diagram, used as an aid in meditation), decorated it with flowers and told Savari and his wife to look at it carefully.

Since both of them had seriously practised meditation for one full month, they gazed with undivided attention upon the *maṇḍala*, and lo!—the ground below it seemed to become transparent, and it was as though they looked right into the bowels of the earth. There was smoke and fire, and agonizing shrieks pierced their ears.

"What do you see?" asked the Guru.

The hunter and his wife were unable to utter a word. But when the smoke had cleared away, they saw the eight great hells and the agony of innumerable human beings.

"What do you see?" the Guru asked again. And when they looked closer, they recognized two painfully contorted faces.

"What do you see?" the Guru asked for the third time. And suddenly, full comprehension came over them like a flash, and they cried out: "It's ourselves!"

They fell at the feet of the Guru, imploring him to show them the way of liberation. But they entirely forgot to ask for the initiation into the secret

shooting art.

Savari continued to meditate on love and compassion and became one of the Eighty-Four *Siddhas.*

It is interesting and instructive to see the main features of this story in the garb of *Zen,* as related in Chuan-teng Lu and translated by Prof. D. T. Suzuki in his "Essays on Zen Buddhism" (vol. II, p. 94 f.):

Shih-kung was a hunter before he was ordained as a *Zen* monk under Ma-tsu. He strongly disliked Buddhist monks, who were against his profession. One day, while chasing a deer, he passed by the cottage where Ma-tsu resided. Ma-tsu came out and greeted him.

Shih-kung asked: "Did you see some deer pass by your door?"
"Who are you?" asked the Master.
"I am a hunter."
"How many can you shoot down with your arrow?"
"One with one arrow."
"Then you are no hunter", declared Ma-tsu.
"How many can you shoot with one arrow?" asked the hunter, in his turn.
"The entire flock, with one arrow."
"They are living creatures, why should you destroy the whole flock at one shooting?"
"If you know that much, why don't you shoot yourself?"
"As to shooting myself, I do not know how to proceed."
"This fellow", exclaimed Ma-tsu, all of a sudden, "has put a stop today to all his past ignorance and evil passions!"

Thereupon, Shih-kung the hunter broke his bow and arrows and became Ma-tsu's pupil.

When he became a *Zen* Master himself, he had a bow with an arrow ready to shoot, with which his monks were threatened when they approached him with a question.

San-ping was once so treated. Shih-kung exclaimed: "Look out for the arrow!"

Ping opened his chest and said: "This is the arrow that kills; where is the one that resuscitates?"

Kung struck three times on the bow-string. Ping made a bow. Kung said: "I have been using one bow and two arrows for the past thirty years, and today I have succeeded in shooting down only a half of a wise man."

Shih-kung broke his bow and arrows once more, and never used them again.

SUZUKI ROSHI'S LECTURE

Tassajara, 8/28/69

Roshi: I have nothing in mind to say. So ask some questions about our practice, zazen practice, or our everyday practice.

Student 1: In a few days I'm leaving Tassajara to live in the city after being here for one year. I wonder what you might have specifically to say to me about that.

Roshi: When you are here at Tassajara you don't find anything special. But if you come here from the city you will find something quite different. I think that the proper understanding should be like this: Tassajara is like water. That you feel something special about it is to see the waves on the water. Even though you have some special feeling about Tassajara you do not see the true Tassajara; it makes you feel very good but Tassajara should be greater than that. The wave is just a part of the water, one of the many features of water.

Even though you have some special experience in your practice, that special experience is just a part of the reality of perfect enlightenment. Perfect enlightenment is something more, something greater than that, something beyond our experience.

Usually, when we feel good, we become very proud of our practice at Tassajara. But even though you feel good, that does not mean that your practice is good, and even though you don't feel good, that does not mean that your practice is bad. And if you don't feel anything about it, that does not mean that practice does not mean anything. Whatever feeling you have about your practice, that is just a part of your practice.

Your real practice is something which you cannot compare to some other practice. It is something greater than that, deeper than that. It is so great that you cannot compare it to your ordinary experience. This point should not be forgotten.

Anyway, if you come back from the city you will feel wonderful. Maybe Tassajara is more than your home. That is how I felt when I came back to Eiheiji Monastery after staying outside for a month. I think you must have the same feeling.

Student 2: You say "count to ten." To a degree this is auto-suggestive. Or, if someone says I should put my consciousness below my navel, this is even more auto-suggestive. But if someone said, "Just sit. No matter what happens, just sit," that would be like the antithesis of auto-suggestion. Could you talk a little about auto-suggestion or its antithesis, and its relationship to zazen?

Roshi: When we say, "count your breathing," or, "keep your mind on your palm," it doesn't mean that to put your mind in your palm is our practice. What we mean is to have mindfulness in your practice, not only on your palm. Your mind should pervade all of the various corners of your body, and all of your body should be aware of your practice. To be concentrated on something like your tummy or your palm is not enough.

If you are sitting I may come to check your posture. I see your *mudra*[1]* and back, your neck and breathing. But maybe something is missing. Even though your mudra is right and your neck is right, even though your mind is on your palm, this is not what I mean. The center is the center. This is the most important point. When all of your body is participating in the practice, when you practice zazen with your whole mind and body, that is right practice.

There is some danger of misunderstanding our instructions. But for me, and for you, the best way to know whether your practice is good or bad is to see your mudra. That is, to see whether you have strength here or not. That is the easiest way to check someone else's practice, and to know whether your own practice is good or bad. That is why we give this kind of instruction.

Student 3: That doesn't mean then that if you say keep your mind in your left palm that 40 minutes should go by with concentration on the left palm. Is that the understanding?

Roshi: Yes, that is not all.

Student 3: Then should the whole 40 minutes be devoted to counting exhales, one to ten and back to one? In other words is this sort of a self-test?

Roshi: Yes, sort of a self-test. And actually, if you can do that more than maybe ten minutes, it is more than a self-test. You will forget, no, not forget, but your practice will go beyond breath counting. You're counting, but you're not counting like you count something. Your mind follows your breathing, and your physical body also follows or participates in breathing and counting. In that way, as you count, you continue the practice with your whole mind and body. That is how we count our breathing.

Student 3: Roshi, you said to push down on the exhale, not too much, just a little bit. Should that be done for a whole period of zazen, or just for a short period?

Roshi: Not just a short period. We should continue for the full period, especially beginners.

Student 4: I always have the choice of whether to sit in half-lotus posture and not have any pain, or to sit in full lotus. . . .

Roshi: Why don't you try half-lotus? It is not always necessary to be in full lotus. Half-lotus is good enough. When it may be better to try full lotus, you will do so naturally. When you find it too easy to sit in half lotus, I think you will try full lotus.

Student 5: Roshi, are we supposed to count our breaths now? [During a lecture] I know you say that sometimes but I don't believe it enough to do it more than sometimes. And sometimes I'll count it for five minutes and then I'll start wondering if I should be counting my breath, and I'll quit. So why don't you tell me now to count my breath or not to count my breath.

Roshi: That is your zazen, not my zazen. That is not my problem. It may be good to give up in five minutes, but I don't think so. You don't feel good when you give up in five minutes. And until you can continue for one full period you will not be satisfied with your practice. The continuous effort is the point; not attainment. Posture or ability to count is not the point. To

*All footnotes found on page 53.

give up is bad. Do you understand? The spirit is important. In our practice we are liable to be caught by the waves. But a wave is just a part of the nature of water. So five minutes is valuable and ten minutes is also valuable if your practice is based on belief in Buddha Nature. OK?

Student 5: OK? I don't know. I'll count my breaths.

Roshi: Yes, you should continue. And don't be discouraged if you cannot do that. Try as much as you can. So far as you are trying, that is practice.

Student 6: I'm having a great deal of difficulty counting my breaths. In fact I gave it up about a month ago and started concentrating on my posture because I found that when I was counting my breaths my head was hanging, my mudra was lopsided, my whole body was not with it. So I started to concentrate on my body and when I did I found that I couldn't count my breaths any more. What should I do?

Roshi: I understand what you say. Without right posture it is difficult to have natural good breathing. With right posture you will have natural good breathing without much effort. But even though your posture is good, if you are not yet fully accustomed to it, and are trying so hard just to keep your spine straight, and your mudra right, then it is rather difficult just to follow your breathing. Counting breathing is good because it will help your posture and naturally your breathing will be deeper. That is why beginners should count.

Student 7: Should we concentrate on our posture if we're just beginning and find it very difficult to count breaths?

Roshi: You can do that if it is a kind of preparation for counting your breath. It doesn't mean that you gave up.

Student 3: Does counting breathing alter the character of the breathing?

Roshi: No.

Student 2: When you make a suggestion with your mind—one, two and so forth—doesn't that make the breath different, longer or shorter? or more pushed down?

Roshi: Yes, it will help deeper breathing.

Student 2: It seems like the breaths are longer . . . both the inhale and exhale.

Roshi: I usually count exhales, you know. And when the exhaling is good you make more space for your lungs to inhale, so the inhaling is naturally good.

Student 8: Roshi, I don't understand what you mean by "pushing down."

Roshi: You shouldn't feel that you are pushing down, just that you're having deeper breathing. You should feel as if the air comes down to your belly but that is just the feeling. Actually, exhaling doesn't reach there and inhaling doesn't reach your neck. When you exhale, you should press everything down even though you don't *try* to do so, that's all.

Student 9: Would you speak about *makyo*[2] in zazen and nightmares during sleep?

Roshi: Nightmares and makyo are different. When you practice zazen, being

concentrated, you may see something, mostly because of your imperfect breathing. When your physical practice is not so good but your mind is in good concentration there may be some imbalance between physical and mental practice. But that you have makyo means that you have pretty good concentration.

Makyo or even nightmares are good. They are functions of our Buddha nature, so you should welcome them. There is no reason why you should be afraid. Our practice should be based on that kind of faith, of conviction or confidence.

Student 3: Roshi, if we follow this method of counting breathing we won't necessarily feel better physically and we may have even more mental stress than we would if we didn't follow this method.

Roshi: The purpose of these practices is to help learn how to practice *shikantaza*[3], to practice without "doing" anything. Even though you don't do anything, if your mind pervades all of your body, and all parts of your body participate in the practice, you don't actually think. It is good if you can stop your mind and practice our way in its true sense, but that is very difficult. You can do it for a moment but it is very difficult to continue for very long. So we need some help. If you are counting your breathing, that is not much, you are not involved in much activity, and it is much better than to think many things, or to have many images come over you.

Student 3: You mean like a *koan?*[3]

Roshi: Maybe. The purpose of koan practice for beginners is mostly to stop thinking or to push yourself to the limit of thinking where you cannot think any more; where you have to give up thinking. Your urge to accomplish our way must be so great that mental thinking cannot help you anymore. So long as you cling to your thinking faculty you will be defeated, or you will be lost and won't know what to do, because you will find that something which used to support you is too weak. So you will have to confront the problem or koan without anything, without relying on anything.

Student 3: This is koan practice, more like Rinzai practice, not counting breathing, that you're talking about now?

Roshi: The practice of counting breathing is very old, has an old tradition, and it works pretty well for everyone. When you practice zazen for some intellectual purpose, you may say counting breathing is good or bad. But when you feel that you *have* to practice zazen in some way and you *have* to accomplish your practice, when you have this kind of feeling, then counting breathing, or whatever it is, will work.

Student 10: How about repeating a single word, Roshi? I've found, for instance, that if you take the word *Mu* and just sit and fix your concentration on that word and let it repeat itself it fixes the mind and eventually the word seems to go out too. Is it wrong practice to do that?

Roshi: To be involved in some activity in its true sense without any subjectivity or objectivity, is good; to become one with your practice, not only zazen, but drinking, eating with the *oryoki*[4], following vows, or reciting the *sūtra*, whatever. When you become one with the practice then it means that

you are already one with everything, and that your practice includes everything. When your practice includes everything, there is nothing to achieve, nothing to do. I say, "everything". This is just a word. "Everything" means, actually, something greater than that which you can figure out. That is so-called nothingness. Nothingness will be realized when you are involved in some activity completely. That is nothingness.

Student 10: You disappear into the activity?

Roshi: You will disappear and what exists is actually activity only. And that activity is not your activity. It is someone's activity, but I don't know who that someone is. Maybe he is Buddha, but I don't think he is Buddha even. That is nothingness. Nothingness is not somewhere else; it is right here. When we do something, there is actually nothingness. And when we are able to continue this kind of activity, more or less, that is Buddhist practice in our everyday life.

Student 10: Can that ever happen when you're talking, say, or only in activities that are physical, or like using the oryoki, or rock-moving?

Roshi: It happens whatever you do. It looks very difficult, but zazen practice will give you some proof that it is possible.

Student 3: Does that mean, just to get really straight on this, that all of us, all of the students that follow your way, should count our breathing for 40 minutes during zazen?

Roshi: Yes. They have to try. If that is not possible you should figure out why—because of want of sleep, because of your physical posture. You will find out many, many things. Then you should correct them, one by one, so that you can do it. It does not mean that if you cannot do it you should be expelled from Tassajara. But I want you to understand through the practice of counting breathing what the actual practice of zazen is. That is the main point.

Student 11: Roshi my back gets sore all the time. I try to keep my back straight, and my muscles get very tense up and down my spine. I've tried several ways of sitting lower or sitting higher, but it still seems to hurt quite a bit, and I don't feel relaxed. My zazen is very rarely relaxed because I'm always trying to keep my back straight. But when it is relaxed, I fall over. Is there any way to keep your back straight without tension?

Roshi: You can do it quite easily. How long have you been sitting?

Student 11: About three years.

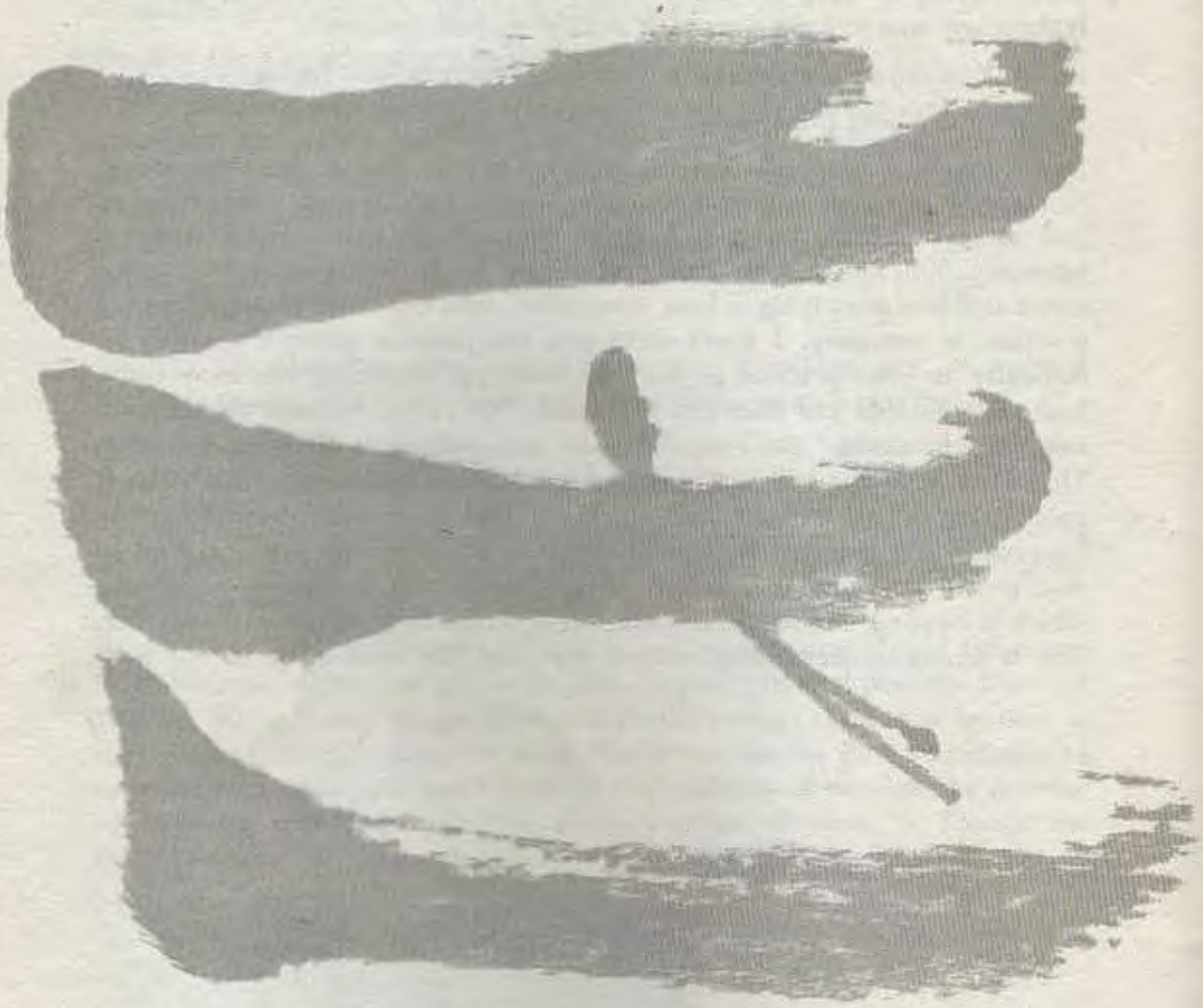
Roshi: Maybe not enough. You know some kind of effort is always necessary. As I am 65 years old my head tends to be slouched forward. I don't feel so bad, but I am always trying to keep my back straight. This kind of effort is necessary. You know, sometimes you will be sleepy but you cannot practice zazen as if you were lying in bed; some effort, which in itself encourages your practice, is necessary. I don't think you can practice zazen if there is no difficulty in your practice at all. Like counting breathing; you may easily lose your number and then you will think, "Oh, I lost it. Next time I must not lose the count." So you will make some effort to continue counting. That kind of effort will encourage your practice. And if you feel, "This is good practice" or "That's bad practice", that is not our way. Whatever happens in our practice, we should accept as a part of our practice. And so you should continue to practice. If you think you will attain something which is beyond our reach, or completely different from our everyday life, that is wrong understanding. In our everyday life there must be our way.

1. *Mudra* – The formal symbolic position of the hands. In a larger sense the zazen posture itself is a mudra.

2. *Makyo* – Hallucinations or delusions.

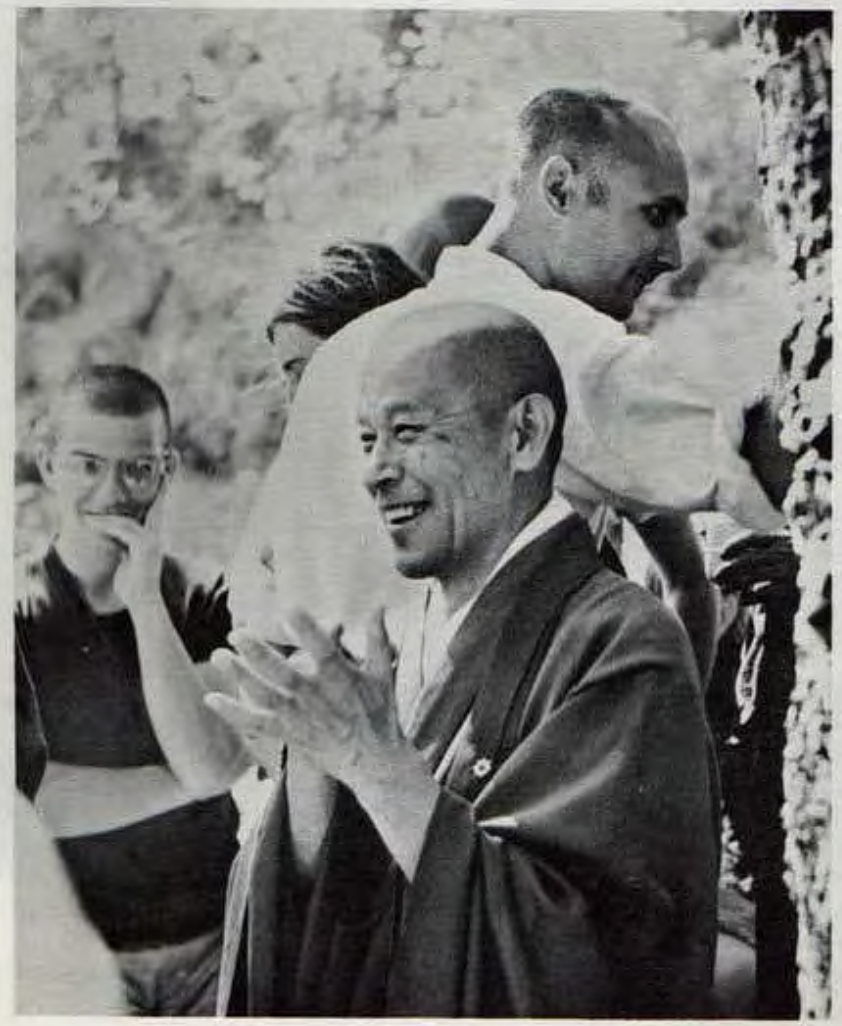
3. *Shikantaza* & *Koan* – *Shikan taza* is themeless meditation, and it includes the source of all themes. It is "just sitting", or "sitting quietly doing nothing". *Shikan* means "to give up illusions and attain enlightenment", *taza* means "to sit".
This type of zazen is practiced mainly by the Soto Zen sect, in contrast to the use of *koans*, or "no-sense" questions in Rinzai Zen practice.

4. *Oryoki* – Buddha's eating bowl. The meaning of the word has been extended to include the entire set of eating bowls and utensils, wrapped in a cloth, with which Zen monks eat their meals. The procedure for unwrapping the bowls, eating from them, cleaning and re-wrapping them has been formalized and, in the *zendo*, this ceremony is performed in unison by all of the monks at meal-time. The Japanese tea ceremony grew out of the use of the oryoki in monasteries.



May the merit of this penetrate
To all things in every place
So that we and all sentient beings
Together may realize the Buddha's Way.

Sentient beings are numberless; I vow to save them.
Desires are inexhaustible; I vow to put an end to them.
The dharmas are boundless; I vow to master them.
The Buddha's Way is unsurpassable; I vow to attain it.



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ZAZEN AND LECTURE SCHEDULE

ZEN CENTER & AFFILIATES	ZAZEN				LECTURES
	Monday through Friday		Saturday Morning	Sunday Morning	(Including 4 & 9 dates)
	Morning	Evening			
SAN FRANCISCO	5:50-7:00	5:30-6:30 except Tues.	5:00-10:00	7:30	Tuesday evening 7:50 Sunday morning 8:30
BERKELEY	5:50-8:00	5:45-6:45	—	—	Monday morning
LOS ALTOS	5:45-6:45	7:15 Wed.	5:45-9:00		Wednesday evening Thursday morning
MILL VALLEY	5:45-6:45	—	—	—	Wednesday morning

- There is no zazen on dates containing a 4 or 9, such as 14, 29, etc.
- Zendo opens at 5:00 for zazen practice.
- Zazen instruction for new students is given on Saturday morning in San Francisco at 10:00 except on the fourth Saturday of each month.
- In Berkeley, Los Altos, and Mill Valley lectures are given after zazen including 4 and 9 dates.
- A two-day sesshin is held in San Francisco on the fourth weekend of each month.
- A one-week sesshin is held in San Francisco twice a year, in February and in August.

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Zen Center of San Francisco is a non-profit religious corporation under the guidance of Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki. The voluntary subscription price of the *Wind Bell* is $3 per year.

Cover photograph by Judy Frisk. *Detail, Tassajara Creek in summer.*