

WIND BELL

Monthly Newsletter of Zen Center

November

Vol. II No. 7

NEWS OF THE MONTH

Margaret Ikeda and Seiyo Tsuji were married on the afternoon of October 19. We wish them lifelong success.

A two-day sesshin was held October 26 and 27. Zen Center tries to have a sesshin approximately every two months. The next sesshin will be at the end of December.

Archbishop Rosen Takashina, Primate of Soto Zen Buddhism, came to San Francisco October 17 for a three-day visit. He was at the end of a peace mission which had taken him to see religious leaders in Russia, Italy, England, and the United States.

Dr. Koji Sato, Professor Psychology at Kyoto University, showed and lectured on his film, "The Science of Zen." This film by this well known scientist and author is a report on a study of the mediation (zazen) of novice Zen monks and of older Zen Masters. The monks' respiration, metabolism, reaction to stimulus, and brain waves were measured. Dr. Sato said that there is a scientific basis for maintaining that the practice of zazen encourages physical and mental health. He also discussed the application of Zen principles in modern Psychotherapy.

Reverend Dainen Katagiri, who in Japan has been very helpful to Americans studying Zen Buddhism, arrived in San Francisco on October 8 on the President Wilson. He was in San Francisco one day and then he went to Los Angeles where he will assist Bishop Yamada. Reverend Katagiri plans to spend at least two years in America.

MAIN SUBJECT NO. 36 FROM THE BLUE CLIFF RECORDS

Cho-sha's "Strolling about Mountains and Waters"

Attention! One day Cho-sha went for a walk. When he returned to the gate, the gate-keeper asked, "Sir, where have you been walking?" Cho-sha said, "I have been strolling about in the hills." "Where did you go?" asked the gatekeeper. "I have walked through the scent of herbs and wandered by the falling flowers," said Cho-sha. The gatekeeper said, "Very much like a calm Spring feeling." Cho-sha said, "It transcends even the cold Autumn dew falling on the lotus stems."

Set-cho, the compiler of the Blue Cliff Records, adds the comment, "I am grateful for Cho-sha's answer."

Commentary by Reverend Shunryu Suzuki, Master of Zen Center

"Strolling about mountains and waters" means in Zen the stage where there are no Buddhas or Patriarchs to follow and no evil desires to stop. Not only climbing up a mountain or wandering about waters, but all activities of Cho-sha are free from rational prejudices and emotional restrictions. His mental activity is free from any trace of previous activity. His thinking is always clear without the shadows of good and evil desires.

It is important to have a good memory and to be able to go into every detail of activities so that effective decisions can be made. Yet one's mind cannot respond to the coming of new objects into the consciousness if it is full of the traces of former thinking. It is useless to remember everything. There is no point in remembering things just so we can cry, be jealous, or be proud. The mind should be spotless so that everything may be observed as it is. If the mind is free from the traces of past thinking and is always clear, without tainted ideas or desires; then mind will always be calm and natural like the flowers that come out in Springtime or the red leaves that turn in the Autumn. Your mind and your nature will have the same pace.

When you have reached this stage, your everyday life is called the life of "yusan gansui" -- the life of wandering about mountains and waters. Cho-sha's answer, "I had walked through the scent of herbs and wandered about by falling flowers," refers to his well-trained everyday life which surpasses good and bad experiences and is always calm and clear.

The gatekeeper's reply that this is "very much like a calm Spring feeling" suggests Cho-sha is attached to the calm Spring feeling when his mind should always be like a mirror reflecting everything as it is, transcending forms, colors, and feelings. So Cho-sha replied meaning that: the state of mind expressed in my statement that I have walked through the scent of herbs and wandered by the falling flowers transcends the warm Spring feeling and the cold Autumn feeling when icy dew is on withered leaves and stems of the lotus.



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Engo's commentary says, "The first arrow is shallow, the second one is deep." Yet we must know the pain by the first arrow (statement). Because the gatekeeper did not appreciate fully Cho-sha's second statement, Set-cho in his commentary says, "I am grateful for that answer."

Appreciatory Word by Set-Cho

The Great Land¹ transcends its small dusts.² What man's eyes are not open? Following the herbs and wandering around by falling flowers.³ The enfeebled stork flutters around a cold withered tree. The mad monkey chatters on a balcony.⁴ Oh! Cho-sha's impossible way of putting things into words.

TOTSU ! 咄⁵

1. "Land" can mean a well-trained Zen mind.
2. "Dusts" are evil desires, anger, ignorance, stagnation, agitation, doubt, remorse, etc.
3. This remark of Cho-sha's means that his mind is always one with falling flowers and the scent of herbs (outward objects). There is no trace in his mind of former activity.
4. This is Set-cho's remark. There is no sign of worldly feelings put into words in this statement. Do not say whether Set-cho's or Cho-sha's remark is better.
5. TOTSU is a kind of exclamatory word or scolding voice. Sometimes it is the same as

KATSU ! 喝, or 咳... 咳.

It is shouted out in order to cut off entanglements completely. In this case, Set-cho means infinity or endlessness.

Zen Center was formed to help maintain a place for Buddhist meditation and practice. Zen Center is supported by contributions from its members and friends. There are two kinds of membership -- associate and active. If you are interested in joining Zen Center, please contact Richard Baker, treasurer.

ZAZEN AND
LECTURE SCHEDULE

Lectures: Sundays at 11:00 a.m., Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.
Zazen: Mornings at 5:45, except Sunday when it is held at 7:00
Evenings at 5:30, except Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday
Note: Zazen is not held on calendar days that contain a 4 or a 9.

Wind Bell

Hanging in space by his teeth,
his whole body his mouth.

Eastwind, Southwind, West, North
he does not care.

He talks for others in many ways,
always Prajnaparamita.

Tsu Chin Tsun Ryan
Tsu Chin Ryan

Dogen

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