

禅のこだま

# EKIZEN

NEWSLETTER FROM THE SANGHA OF SHINNYO-JI

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## Keizan-zenji and women

横浜善光寺留学僧育英会論文集より抜萃

定着し発展する「アメリカ禅」  
講演 瑩山禅師と女性  
keizan-zenji and women

東 隆真

駒澤女子大学学長  
横浜善光寺留学僧育英会理事



**Ryushin Azuma**

**President of Komazawa Women's University D. Lit**

*Transcription of the Conference held by Azuma Roshi, 72<sup>o</sup> Abbot of the Daijo-ji Temple from 25 July to 1 August 1997 in five Zen Centers in America and at the time when he was Dean of the Komazawa Women's University of Buddhism. This text was published in the "Association for Foreign Monks" collection from the Zenko-ji Temple in Yokohama.*

Tempio Shinnyo-ji

I would like to talk about "Keizan-zenji and Women". As you know, Keizan-zenji is a Zen-priest who lived from the middle of the 13th Century to the first half of the 14th Century, namely the last part of the Kamakura Period. Keizan-zenji is the fourth patriarch who follows Dogen-zenji (1200-1253).

In Japanese history, Dogen-zenji was one of the most excellent religionists, an acute philosopher and merciful teacher. Moreover, he had abundant knowledge of literature. His attitude of Zen is to clarify the essence of Chinese Zen Buddhism and to confirm the tradition of the right Buddhism. He succeeded to Soto-Zen in the Chinese Zen Buddhism, and founded Eijei-ji in Fukui-prefecture. Now he is admired as the "Koso" (Founder). His noble character and his universal philosophy have worldwide significance beyond the stereotyped-thinking of Buddhism and Zen.

Keizan-zenji as the 4th successor of Dogen-zenji founded Sojiji in Ishikawa prefecture. This temple was moved to Kanagawa prefecture in the Meiji-Period. We admire him as "Taiso" of Japanese Soto-Zen. Keizan-zenji succeeded to the dharma of Dogen-zenji, propagated and developed the Soto-Zen. I can point this out through many ways but in this lecture I want to introduce his view of women and his relationship with women.

Before talking about it, I would like to begin with the same problem in Dogen-zenji. Dogen-zenji wrote the chapter of "Raihaitokuzui" in the "Shobogenzo" in Kyoto in 1239. In this chapter he denied

the predominance of man over woman in the world of Buddhism at that time and advocated the equality between sexes in the Buddhist practice. He says as follows in the "Shobogenzo".

"In Japan there is a ridiculous thing. There is a place called "Kekkai" or "Dojo of Mahayana" where women cannot enter. Though it is a long standing custom, people never think about its origin."

In this way Dogen-zenji criticized Japanese traditional Buddhism. In those days the famous temples, for example, Hieizan, Koyasan, Kinpozan and Todaiji, had the place of "Kekkai" or "Dojo".

Dogen-zenji says, "The extremely foolish people think that women are the object of sexual desire. But what kind of faults to women have? Are there any reasons why men are so noble?" And he says, "Don't be concerned with the differences between men and women. This is the basic principle of supreme law of Buddhism."

Dogen-zenji shows his attitude as follows, "The acquisition of the essence of Buddha dharma in the succession of it is owed to the faithful mind based on the true enlightenment. This comes from neither inside or outside. It is important to regard dharma very highly and to make light of life."

Thus Dogen-zenji thinks highly with respect to free ourselves from worldly concerns. In his experiences of dharma that thought summarizes his view of women, namely "Don't be concerned with the differences between men and women."

This is a basic principle of Buddhism."

This view of women is not only estimated highly as an excellent thought in the history of Japanese Buddhism but also as the insistence of the dignity of men's and women's character ever before the Renaissance and Martin Luther's time.

Among people who studied dharma and Zen under Dogen-zenji, we can confirm that there were some nuns and women believers from historical sources. But it was by Keizan-zenji that it was firmly established.

The Keizan-zenji's view of women is clarified by the following words: "So New believers and followers! Fortunately, you succeed to what Sakyamuni-Buddha did as a Buddhist. Why do you desire what the masses want? In any case, you must be free from all illusions of kinds of classification between even right and wrong and of the distinction between men and women."

This passage is cited from the chapter of the 41th patriarch Go-Doan-Daishi in the "Denkoroku" of Keizan-zenji. In this passage Keizan-zenji shows that Buddhism must be free from the idea of discrimination between men and women. We can understand that this succeeds from Dogen-zenji's thought. Since Keizan-zenji is the follower of Dogen-zenji, this similarity is natural. But it is important that we confirm the same attitude between Dogen-zenji and Keisan-zenji. As Nyujo-zenji, not well known in the Chinese Zen Buddhism, had increased to shine through Dogen-zenji, so founder's teachings must be developed by his followers.

The family of Sakawa who was the lord of a manor embraced Keizan-zenji. They donated the land and a temple in 1319. This temple is Yokoji. The women of the family especially embraced it. For example, Shozen and Mokufu-Sonin, mother and daughter renounced the world and later because of the disciples of Keizan-zenji. It was the first appearance of a woman priest in Sotoshu.

Then Keizan-zenji ordained Sonin the chief priest in Enzuin, which was the temple in the grounds of Yokoji. Enzuin was not only built in order to hold a memorial service in honor of grandmother, but also was the dojo to realize the earnest wish of Keizan-zenji's mother. Moreover, this temple was the dojo where Keizan-zenji propagated Buddhism and hoped to save people.



In addition to that, Mokufu-Sonin was ordained as the chief priest in Hoo-ji.

Meisho-Enkan was the cousin of Keizan-zenji, who became a disciple of Keizan-zenji and she became the chief priest in Enzuin after Mokufu-Sonin.

Konto-Ekyo become a disciple, devote herself to practicing Zazen everyday, then she succeeded to Keizan-zenji.

In many sources, we can find the names of nuns, such as En'i, Shinmyo, Shinsho, Jonin, Ninkai and Myoshin and more. In this way, Keizan-zenji made women believers nuns, ordained them as chief priests and regarded them as successors. Keizan-zenji stated in the "Tohkokuki" that the relationship of Mokufu-Sonin and he are that of a priest and a donor of a master and a disciple who cannot be separated like magnet and iron.

We can find the dialogue between Keizan-zenji and Mokufu-Sonon as follows in the writing.

I (Keizan-zenji) ask Sonin, "This year is almost gone and another new year will come. So how about your religious life?" Sonin answers, "In the branches of the tree without shadow (This branch means eternal life) is there any kind of time (which is not separated and has no beginning or end)?"

This is the first excellent answer given by Sonin.

In this dialogue, we can see Sonin's earnest mind to Buddha-dharma, Keizan-zenji's deep trust in Sonin, the bondage between master and disciple, and the spirit of harmony between priest and believer.

The prominent view of women established in Dogen-zenji and Keizan-zenji and the development of Buddhism with women based on their views did not necessarily

succeed properly in the history of Japanese Sotoshu. It is regrettable that these views were buried in the ground of the general tendency of male chauvinism.



But in this century, the material civilization and the scientific technology have rule our world. We have pursued a more convenient life and realization of our self-desire.

Now we are convinced of the limit of our civilization. Therefore, it is necessary to enlighten on human beings themselves. It must be questioned what a human being is, or what our life is. We can say that the 21st century is the time of human life. When we ask and observe human beings, the problems of men and women, namely what are men and women?, must be argued. Because men and women are human beings. I think that the view of women from Dogen-zenji and Keizan-zenji gives us important insights, when we consider our fundamental selves.

In 1995 and 1997, I visited about twenty

places in America, including seven Zen Centers which Maezumi Hakuyu Roshi founded. This visit was in response to the request of Maezumi Roshi. Then I lectured about "Keizan-zenji and Women" in Los Angeles Zen Center (Busshin-ji), Zen Mountain Monastery (Doshin-ji), Kanzeon Sangh Zen Center (Hoshin-ji), Zen Community of Oregon (Jizoin) and San Francisco Zen Center.

This pamphlet was translated by Y. Ando, Assistant Professor of Komazawa Women's University, and printed and offered by Kuroda Bushi Roshi, Yokohama Zenko-ji.

Gennaio 1998  
Ryushin Azuma



## Sokanbu Seminar

### Zen Temple La Gendronnière

19-21 October 2012

Our Teacher, Shinnyo Roshi went to the Zen Temple La Gendronnière in Paris and participated in the annual Sokanbu Seminar. This year's speaker was Prof. Griffith Foulk who translated Shobogenzo and Gyojikihan for the Sōtō Zen Text Project of which he is a member. The principle themes of the Seminar were the following texts: "An Explanation of the Heart Sutra", "Lotus Sutra" e "SBGZ Sutra Reading".



## ROHATSU VIGIL

7-8 December 2012

### Greeting from Teacher Shinnyo Roshi

#### Extract taken from Greeting and theme for the New Year of practice

A new year has come and many changes have taken place at our Temple, which is consolidating itself in both substance and form. Practitioners that go, practitioners that come, the Temple is like a polar star that remains firm and indicates the Way.

Whoever stays grows and contributes in the foundation fo this Itlaian reality: a group of practitioners that work, a

Sangha always in movement and ready to welcome whomever shows up at Shinnyo-ji's door. On this evening, the night of the Rohatsu Vigil, I would like to emphasize how, after my return from Japan last September, the energy felt coming back from the origin of our Tempo and our Lineage has brought great clarity into the soul of each practitioner and therefore, a sort of fresh breeze of air, re-energizing, that blew away what was hanging in the balance, calling new strength, new practitioners who are diligently progressing their practice with us as Shinnyo-ji.

At the end of this past year teaching the theme of practice, DISCIPLINE, as the Teacher I have observed great effort amongst the followers and their results and yields are evident.

The theme of practice for this New Year, a theme that emerges, as always, from the light of which is lived in the sacred space of the Temple, is



MUSHIN 無心, pure heart/mind where "pure" does not intend something that was cleaned, or the condition of something that was recleansed, but rather, "pure" in the sense of being "originally pure", not judgemental, non attached to illusion, free from confused thought.

Dōgen Zenji nell' Eihei-ji kōroku, the "Great Collection of the Eihei-ji Temple Documents" says that the MUSHIN 無心 mind is like the clean air of white clouds, or the state of innocence similar to the lives of Zen monks called unsui, (where the ideogram `un´ means clouds and the ideogram `sui´ means water) that walked around Temple after Temple in search of their Teacher with the absolute MUSHIN 無心 mind, or letting themselves be carried off by the wind, or the rain, (or by the "connection to the Buddha", the Butsu-en, with anything to plan or choose.

It is important to keep this concept in mind, because our practice is in constant risk of falling into the spirit of profit,

calculating, or personal interest. We often ask ourselves what advantage we have in our practice, and if this improvement is evident or better than the quality of our lives and if it is worth the required respect and effort. We often fight with our judging ego, that often heightens in front of the difficulty of letting go, shinjin datsuraku, let the mind and body fall, and "simply be" in the Unity of the moment. How many times I have heard someone say to me: "Teacher, but by doing this I would loose everything have I have built and constructed (or even worst: claimed) over the years as a defense for my being". Yet our strength is to become One with what we encounter through MUSHIN 無心, always at ease, adapting to whatever situation without contrasting to undergo what happens to us, but simply harmonizing to it and with the energy of the entire Universe. (...)

Living Zen is said to be living MUSHIN 無心, so the work for this next year of practice will

continuously call you to react with a pure mind while being detached from confusing thoughts. Translated into everyday life, it means to obligate oneself in difficult moments, in the moments when you feel overcome by emotions, when you feel desparate and you think that you can't take anymore, even with difficult times of practice, simply letting go through the emotions of the moment and MUSHIN 無心- Muga, meaning with pure mind without ego, watching reality as it is, for what it is. It will be light turning on a light in a dark room. As long as we remain in the darkness of our pain, of our anger, of our attachments, of our confused minds, we live in the illusion that there is nothing around us, like a dark room that seems to be empty, but once we turn on the circuit breker, we see that it is furnished with many objects. At the same time, if we distance ourselves from emotions and return to our pure mind MUSHIN 無心, back in touch with the Buddha Nature, it will be like being struck by a wind taking about all confusing

thoughts, our confused vision of the moment and giving us a clear vision that reconfirms One with the entire Universe, sustatining us with every step from the entire Universe.

It also means to accept, to be happy of what one has and not anguish oneself for what one does not have, whether is be equal or inequal, to be equal in recognizing differences.

The pure heart vision of MUSHIN 無心, is the vision of suchness, the world as it is, that perquistites the Satori, Originally pure. As for us walking along the Path of Englightenment it leads our mind toward Original Nature, so that we can get in touch with it and eventually completely realize it.

I end my Greeting for the Year Year of practice that begins tonight, by remember that according to Indian Buddhism MUSHIN 無心, equate the Buddha, in other words, Mushin ze Butsu\_ "the non-mind is Buddha" while in the Chinese Chan Buddhism, the teacher Basō says: "Our mind is

Buddha". Therefore, even ordinary people have the Buddha Mind and everyone has the possibility of achieving Illumination of the Buddha, the Satori, which in this night of Rohatsu Vigil, we celebrate.

Gasshō

*Rev. Iten Shinnyo*



### Program

From 8:00 p.m. Arrive at the Temple  
8:30-9:50 p.m. Opening with M° Daniele Dubbini who will perform some of

his composition with the traverse bamboo flute, bansuri

Break

9:00-9:20 p.m. Zazen

9:20-9:30 p.m. Kin-him

9:30-9:50 p.m. Zazen

Break

10:00-10:20 p.m. Greeting from the Teacher for the New Year of Practice

10:20-10:40 Zazen

10:40-10:50 p.m. Kin-hin

10:50-11:20 p.m.

Testimonies of Practice

Meal preparation

12:00-1:30 a.m. Formal

mean and tidy up

1:30-2:00 Zazen

2:00-2:10 a.m. Kin-hin

2:10-2:40 Zazen and

Haiku

2:40- 3:40 a.m. Kin-hin

under the stars

3:40-4:00 a.m. tea break

4:00-4:30 a.m. Sutra

writing Break

4:40-5:10 a.m. Zazen and

Haiku Break

5:30- 6:00 a.m. Zazen and

Satori of the Buddha

reading

6:00-6:10 a.m. Kin-hin

6:10-6:40 a.m. Zazen

6:40-7:00 a.m.

Fukanzazenji

7:00-7:10 a.m. Rohatsu

Ceremony and Dedication

7:10- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast

7:30-8:30 General tidy up

Tempio Shinnyo-ji

## Responsabilities

Segr. Maestro: Dai shin  
Segr. Rohatsu: Shin den  
Resp. Zendo: Dai shin  
Aiuto Zendo: Yū shin  
Welcoming: Shin den  
Tenzo: Ben shin  
Tenzo Helper: Lō, Shin den  
Serv. pasto: Shin den, Yū shin, Valentina, Yō shin  
Samu: Yū shin  
Aiuto Samu: Lucia  
Reader: Shin den  
Report foto: Dai shin  
Moppan: Ben shin  
Mokugyo: Yō shin  
Incense: Yō shin  
Sutra: Shin den  
Form Lessons: Yō shin

## Testimonies

### Of the Discipline Teachings

A year practice through lessons on discipline, this was the Teacher's indication. I ask myself how much I followed and it seems only partially. Discipline, connected to being a disciple, therefore connected to learning, but also to following, the most difficult part. Following the teacher's instructions, the Buddha's precepts,

the Way of our predecessors who have followed it. Following is not always easy for me, I get distracted, I decided what to do with my own mind, I am lazy. The way is that one, but I don't always follow it with confident and sure steps. I don't always welcome discipline nor being a disciple.

This year of practice seemed in descent at the beginning and then uphill. There was an easy period when everything ran smoothly, with few obstacles, in which the practice, presence at the Temple, listening to the Teacher came naturally. Sure there is always work to be done, but sometimes we don't feel it or we forget.

Then at a certain point, it slowed down, perhaps because I had run too far without noticing it or perhaps we eventually change footing. My feet came across vines, rocks and holes. I wonder if they were not there before, if I just didn't notice them or if I had always just avoided them. I started going slower, but continuously going.

The image that came to mind is a seagull quickly and joyously flying and then at a certain point, begins to coast. It coasts and coasts and then it lands, perhaps it tumbles down and peels out, then disheveled and bruised, starts walking by foot, tip, tap, with its feet, and again tip, tap, one step after another. Clumsy and slow, waiting to fly again or transform into a sturdy and able goat. This year my practice seemed to strengthen and it became more and more important to me. I am thankful to Teacher Shinnyo for this, her effort and commitment of bringing Zen to Italy, here in Florence, the others with whom I walk the path and all of those who somewhere in their lives, have realized this path, kept it alive and present for us to follow. This year of practice ends with a new Rohatsu Vigil and it makes me happy that I am still here, ready to joyfully celebrate the Illumination of the Buddha and start a new year of practice.

*Ben shin*



The M° Daniele Dubbini while performing one of his compositions

A year has passed since I went to my first Rohatsu and since then many things have happened, it seems like an eternity has passed, surely that day has given me strength and has helped me (and continues to do so) in everyday life. But there is something that I never learn: constancy. I am patient until a certain point but I see more and more clearly that I cannot tolerate well repetition and this is why sitting meditation everyday is difficult. I can do it for a month straight but I think this is the maximum that I've been able to do it up until now, then I feel the need for a long period of "rest", if we can call it that. Have a Temple nearby is surely an incentive to continue daily meditation:

doing Zazen with other people, cleaning and working at the Temple, the Zazenkai. Perhaps I am repetitive, but we realize the importance (or uselessness) of someone or something when it is gone, in this case I realized how important being close to a Sangha and a Teacher is. And I don't mean an abstract association with people at any time in space: I mean all of you sitting on the zafus throughout this night of Vigil. I thank you all and lovingly think of you.

Thank you for everything that I found at the Temple, thank you because now that I am far, when I sit down to meditate I feel your closeness, I know you are there. You are not abstract, you are not anywhere.

I wish you a fruitful night of Vigil and I hope that this new year of Practice that is about to begin is serene for all of you, especially since the past year was a difficult time for most of us.

Happy Rohatsu, a low bow to all of you, and to each of you.

Gasshō,

*Margherita*

I asked myself in these days if and how my practice has changed me, if I have matured, if I have made a step along the way. All that I can say is that I continue to sit in Zazen as soon as I awake in the morning and when I return to home I sit again, with strain but also with joy. I have been practicing for the past two years and in respect to the strain of the first months, I now feel the need to sit in Zazen and the joy of doing it.

Gasshō

*Gregorio P*

When I first came to Shinnyo-ji I thought that I was a disciplined person. Soon after a few weeks of Practice I began to doubt this conviction. I spoke about it with the Teacher, she said: "This is good". Then she smiled without saying anything else. The first time I hear my Dharma name, I cried.

Gasshō

*Yō-shin*

I followed this year's theme of practice focusing on the precepts, in deepening studying Zazen as a root and foundation of the precepts themselves. Through the few years of practice I still cannot abandon the body and mind while sitting in particularly intense days of meditation. At first I thought it was normal, an agitated mind needs time to clam down and often there is not enough time, or sufficient time to let everyday problems that bother us go. Many times I thought that I had let the body and mind go, following relaxing my tension, the tranquility I felt after meditations, and then once again, the mind returned as it was before, focusing on a problem, on its difficulty to confront and again is confused.

One day I had a clear new vision of my Zazen, in other words, the difficulty of accepting the simplicity of reality. I realized that my mind needed to cling onto that determined problem because it is attached to a central need in my life;

needing this, rather than solving it, not letting it go, and always keeping it in mind because I was afraid of giving it up. And since nothing can be kept forever, I was always attached to an eternal and continuous return that I was not able to break.

Yet reality is very simple if one is not attached to what we do not have, and a problem seems very simple only after it is resolved.

Gasshō

*Yū-shin*

The Teacher has taught us that the mind creates false priorities that the mind grinds, provoking pain. That practicing means watching that priority and smiling at it. Watching pain and welcoming it.

It's not that easy for me: I often find myself bogged down in the furrows of my mind. But practice is the safe door, that ray of Truth that filters through the clouds of my mind and that allows me to recognize it.

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Separation doesn't mean anesthesia... on the contrary.

Thank you Teacher for your energy, the constance and love with which everyday allows for the growth of each one of us.

Gasshō,

*Lō*



Ten shin san participated in the Vigil at her home in Ohio about 7460 km from Shinnyo-ji

A year has already passed since my first Rohatsu, I remember it as if it were yesterday- I arrived early with Margherita to prepare food and welcome other members of the Sangha. It was the night that she took Refuge. I remember feeling anxious before beginning the Vigil, thinking of how many hours there are in the night and the great effort it would take to

make it through the morning. But I made it and participated the entire night, by welcoming each moment and not thinking of the entire night together or how I would feel the day after.

Welcoming each moment should be applied to every aspect of life. I would have never imagined the great steps I have taken in my practice, taking the vows was not an goal but a natural step in the Way of the Buddha.

Like everyone, I struggle with attachment, egoism and anger, I recall the lessons and the emotions that I feel from my practice and I return to being myself again. Even if I am not with you all tonight at the Temple, I will be sitting at the same time for the whole Rohatsu, about 7460 km from you, I feel your closeness, and I hope that you feel mine. Have a good practice.

Gasshō

*Ten shin*

I'm trying to write something about this last year of practice but I

cannot think the year as a whole, it began three years ago; the first year was tiring but convincing and beautiful, the way was denser, richer and more attractive, the first part was of the second year maintained this strength, I had a glimpse of what this Way can bring in terms of liberty, presence and attention and decided to take the Vows of the Bodhisattva. Soon after, some stressful responsibilities and difficulties that took a lot of time and space inside of me and instead of leaning on the practice, I put it aside, I kept a connection with Zen, thanks to the Teacher and a friend who practices, but it was extremely difficult. Now that I stop and think about it, I see how I was tossed about by the events that happened to me, like a drunk, incapable of walking straight. So this year I was not very present and in October I came back to the Temple after a 3 month absence, it took a while to enter again, I put it off, but it eventually became easier, it was surprising

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to feel the total familiarity, the easiness of uncovering again the motions, movements the music of the Sutra... and now I'm here.

Gasshō

*Go shin*

Dear Sangha, another year has passed, a very difficult year for me, in which I did not come to the Temple very often and I didn't practice very much. My mind is still very confused, but knowing that the Sangha supports me and that the Teacher is close gives me a glimpse of light. Thank you Sangha. Thank you Shinnyo-ji.

Gasshō,

*Leonardo.*

I have been practicing Zen for about ten years, I am now certain that this is my Way beyond any distinction and rational opinion, I affirm it with all the modesty of an imperfect practitioner and as a beginner. I could say that this is the religion, the philosophy, the ethic, and the aesthetics that I

try to attain, in which I have slowly grown and now after many years I find myself the same and different at once, I seem to have always been like this, like I have never moved, a sensation of have never changed. A calm security, a distance force that I know and don't know but I feel upon my persona, I know where I am, it's called to stay within the Lineage.

My critical attitude and some of my cultural positions and a certain idiosyncrasy for the dogmas and rhetoric forms that often express positions of power bring me to criticizing religion, forms and dogmic practices, this is my nature that tends to see all of this at the first level. This is why I sometimes spontaneously prefer to feel the Zen Way through a quid that I immediately feel sincere and honest by the religious and spiritual path, I tend to concentrate on the direct passage of this feeling, which is what I feel at the Temple with the Teacher and the Sangha, it is a pure life, first of all, it is the

honest life that I would like to carry within myself, encounter and share with others. Without refusing anything about myself, I try to evolve my path and my thought and bring it toward a certain harmony and serenity, for every expression of the Way. I do not name to make separations, I say only what gives me strength and what strikes me like a lightning flash is in something that I cannot say that I don't know how to day that is only like a great original silence, that is in the Strength of the Way that expresses the Teacher Shinnyo and that also expresses in other moments and situations at the Temple and in everyday life that I want to listen to and I intend to do so.

Perhaps by mistake I neglect to cultivate and feel this also in other moments or situations that are a part of the Ceremony and of the organization of a Temple.

I believe that in this brief life I have a great gift, an opportunity of encountering the Teacher Shinnyo,

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without her I would be lost in the thousand rivulets of choices and spiritual distractions that exist.

I don't think that I would practice Zen with another Teacher. For me the Teacher Shinnyo expresses and is the creator of a new way of European Zen that is forming with teachings from the Patriarchs, the concrete bases of the Buddha's words, establishes a humanist Zen, based on the expression of compassion and helping others, Zen strength of salvation and of liberation with found joy toward other people, with a profound respect for every personal life choice and without any rhetoric, dogma or need for power that would dry up if they betray the original way of Zen.

Thank you to Teacher Shinnyo who for all of these years has instructed me, guided me and has always listened and in way "put up" with me, thank, a sincere wish for every good during this year of practice.

Thanks to this new Sangha that I hope will always continue to

express itself in this harmony and with this kind welcoming toward others.

My thoughts and wishes to Rev. Azuma Roshi and to the peace and prosperity of the Temple in Kanazawa.

Thanks again Teacher Shinnyo. With faith. Happily here.

*Shin den*

*Luigi Oldani*



Teacher Shinnyo Roshi with practitioners present at the Vigil

I think we are a group of lucky people.

To be here sitting in Zazen is truly extraordinary.

To have Shinnyo-ji is extraordinary.

To have received the teachings in direct descendance from Shakyamuni until Shinnyo Roshi is something that should take our breath away. This is said by someone who is against every rule, every institution

and every catechism.

I read that the Buddha would have said, don't believe in my words, but try what is say and then believe it.

Every time I sit in Zazen, without any placebo effect, it is undeniable that something comes to my conscious and in my spirit.

Best wishes to my Teacher Shinnyo Roshi, to all of you, to all who suffer, to my family and to myself for a serene future, with peace in our hearts, with the Zen Way that illuminates our steps in the dark of the all so fragile human lives.

Gasshō

*Shin-kai*

Practicing with discipline was not an easy task to follow during this whole year. I worked hard to do it and as a result, I had a great grasp of consciousness my capacities. I felt protected by the Teacher, by the Sangha and by the Practice and I am thankful for the complex moments

throughout 2012.

To practice with awareness helps center yourself, to precieve yourself and precieve what is around and inside of ourselves as it is, without needing judgement that distinguishes value that is always too focused on our problems. It could make an attivity or work that doesn't correspond to our spirit easier and make it more interesting in the end. It allows us to reach goals and along the way to identify what details need attention, as what happens when you paint a picture and all of your senses are involved, logic and achievement of a result are only satisfying for the eyes but also for the soul.

*Valentina*

A new year of Practice at Shinnyo-ji is about to end, proceeded through time by the teacher and theme of 'Discipline'. The general impermanence and acceleration of the planetary events in 2012 greatly mixed with the splendor that surrounds and most of all

intimately invests us, often leaving us the feeling of oppressing, hurting, threatening or even breaking something within each of Us; in that little bit of "US" diffused and indistinct that we are alone and receive and call "I".

In the occasion of sharing with the Sangha, we all too often say that we feel mourning, tiredness, weariness, sickness, pain, or in the least, perplexity and worry; nevertheless we were able to transform ourselves and interact with our daily lives with the help of how much discipline each of us knew to develop at the Temple, as in the private life.

As far as I know, in spite of the repetitive falls into traps of natural tendencies, I can observe the efforts made toward my self discipline that are producing some slight changes.

Discipline is a tool that is non-spontaneous, burdensome, tiring tool that tends to be difficult to take continuously in processes of my being. I feel that it is deeply connected to Patience.

Trying to find it, I chose to attribute different masks in order to successfully practice it in areas where I usually have difficulty.

The Discipline of Sitting and practicing Zazen, it was regular at the Temple, but not so much at home, where my work rhythms are deeply systemized, from unforeseen requests for medical help by my Patients, and lack of sleep that afflicts me, which sometimes makes my Zazen turn into a meditative trance.

I tried to amend this irregularity by integrating it with zeal and the aware availability in exercising my medical work, conducting it with an interior meditative behavior and of constant donation of my best energies.

I tried to apply the Discipline of Silence with everywhere with attention, however, succeeding in developing it more at the Temple than in my private life.

It was very interesting to apply it and impartially observe myself, each time that I felt that I received

criticism that could appear in my insufficient eyes, unfair, or non-applicable to action that I was responsible for. The Silence became a determined and clarifying friend.

The Discipline of Acting, despite fear, tiredness, doubts or subjective judgement, has given its steady outcome every time that I felt incapable of continuing or sustaining beyond certain situations or physical workloads, morals, affections, or responsibilities: I tried to do rather than undergo.

The progressively clarifying and liberating strength of Action has manifested itself most of all where I felt confused or insecure.

Acting uncovered an accomplice in Breathing, both are antidotes to the poison of restraining found in thinking too much. Action is Movement: free even if it is not specifically connected to the problem in operation: often I just needed to walk and become tired, to do Samu or a healthy walk through the woods, or climb a beautiful mountain, action is itself

decisively meditative.



The Teacher Shinnyo Roshi with practitioners during the Kinhin under the stars

The absence of the Teacher during her summer stay in Japan, with the great amount of work and tidying up following the reconstruction of the Temple's guestrooms, were in the torrid summer heat of Florence, a great exercise to recleanse my mind from tiredness, from passiveness and from thoughts. It was also for taking care of the garden and the plants that suffered from the drought, dust and abandonment.

It was a subtle and energizing meditation that, beginning almost without realizing it, activated vague and spontaneous connections with the Teacher, with the

Temple and with the Practice itself, making it easier and more intimate, and cleansing it from anxiety and insecurity.

I tried to constantly practice it, despite the anxiety and severity of judgement that could arise from every error or difficulty from myself found or produced in its flow, until recently, it has become more and more a friend to my steps and my growth. As the Teacher often emphasizes, the Formal exercise of the Ritual is a gift from a tool of continuous verification of ones interior condition. It shows me how much I am present to myself and within the context where I am, beyond how I seem to feel: It unfailingly denounces fear, fragility, reticence and anticipating anxiety that takes me from my perception of the moment and of myself. The Form is Meditation and, like the latter, goes along with Trust, with Abandonment, Acceptance and the Absence of judgement. It makes me less mental, more bodily, and frowns on the tendency in

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freezing myself in what I have achieved and gained, and my scarce elasticity and readiness to unforeseen events and of "new" events that interrupt them.

A bad Form expressed, like a bad meditation done, I feel that they are precious and perhaps more than a presence at the Temple, perfect but rigid. Recently, I try to welcome errors in the practice of the Ritual, to observe and accept in the most aware way possible, something and how it is in that particular moment, and how I tend to repeat some of my errors.

Under the great friendship between the Form and myself, a bigger level of attention to the necessities and of the attention of the Practitioners is subtly growing.

In synthesis a more subtle connection, solid and spontaneous, and at the same time even less anxious and serious.

Lastly, I would like to write about the Discipline of Living and Loving in my private life. I recently tried my best to practice it through awareness both where I feel it most easily,

intuitively, and most obviously, such as in my relationship with my son and with this karmic complexities, and where for me it is harder and optional to practice it: meaning in the relationship between man and women, with my partner. I feel like talking about it, sometimes, in conversation with the Teacher, I agreed with her upon what is fundamental, to be able to coherently sit in Zazen and try to help the way on a spiritual Path, trying to live life intensively in subtle interests in all of its constructive shades. For my experience, conducting also with my life partner, a consciously aware Practice, has allowed that I take care of all levels of my current existence in a way that intertwines with the practice at the Temple, so that it roots itself in a land cultivated in every part and with all tools given from the Universe. I live with gratefulness, for what has come to me easily and intuitively, like also what sometimes comes and creates a difficult

dilemma or a source of pain, friction or momentaneous conflict. A path made of lights, shadows and reciprocal projections: a mirror and an occasion, a source of strength and clearness but also of letting go. I feel this as a compliment and as a ulterior refraction of the small insecure steps that I mention along the way of reuniting under the guide of my Teacher; a way in which the fulfillment of the spirit passes through the body and also through awareness of this that flows beyond. Thanks to the Way, to the Teacher, to the Sangha and to Life in its Unity.

*Dai shin*

### Haiku

#### Selezione di Haiku per la Notte di Rohatsu

**Matsuo Bashō 1644-1683**

Metterò l'erba dell'oblio  
nel riso bollito?  
Fine dell'anno.

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*wasuregusa  
nameshi ni tsuman  
toshi no kure*

わすれ草  
菜飯につまん  
年の暮

**Matsuo Bashō 1644-1683**

"Viaggiatore" voglio  
essere chiamato,  
ora che cade  
il primo scroscio della  
stagione.

*tabibito to  
waga na yobaren  
hatsushigure*

旅人と  
我が名呼ばれん  
初時雨

**Matsuo Bashō 1644-1683**

Mi sono ammalato in  
viaggio.  
I miei sogni vagano  
per i campi spogli.

*tabi ni yande  
yume wa kareno wo  
kakemeguru*

旅に病んで  
夢は枯れ野を  
駆け巡る

**Yosa Buson 1716-1783**

Nella sera che è rapida a  
svanire  
risplendono le stelle.  
Campi spogli.

*kuremadaki  
hoshi no kagayaku  
kareno kana*

暮れまだき  
星の輝く  
枯れ野かな

**Senryū 1757-1796**

La distribuzione dei  
ricordi.  
Nonostante i singhiozzi  
non è fatta a caso.

*nakinaki mo  
uka to wa kurenu  
katamiwake*

泣き泣きも  
うかとはくれぬ  
形見分け

**Naitō Jōsō 1662-1704**

Dove una lieve pioggia  
cola nel mare aperto  
- è buio.

*kuromi keri  
oki no shigure no  
yuku tokoro.*

くろみけり  
おきのしぐれの  
ゆくところ

**Kobayashi Issa 1763-1827**

è proprio questa  
la mia ultima dimora,  
cinque piedi di neve?

*kore ga mā  
tsui no sumika ka  
yuki goshaku*

これがまあ  
ついのすみかか  
ゆきごしゃく

**Meisetsu 1847-1926**

Primo dell'anno:  
nella stirpe imperiale,  
il monte Fuji.

*ganjitsu ya  
ikkei no tenshi  
fuji no yama*

がんじつや  
いっけいのてんし  
ふじのやま

**T. Kyoshi 1874-1959**

Il sole si è posato  
sui monti lontani.  
Campi spogli.

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*tōyama ni  
hi no ataritaru  
kareno kana*

とう山に  
日のあたりたる  
枯れ野かな

**Iida Dakotsu 1885-1962**

Neanche il suono dei passi  
del monaco nomade.  
La terra è gelata.

*unsui no  
ashi oto mo naku  
tsuchi hatenu*

雲水の  
あしおともなく  
土凍てぬ

**Kobayashi Issa 1763-1827**

Tutto bagnato di pioggia  
soffre per gli esseri umani,  
il Buddha.

*hito no tame  
shigurete owasu  
hotoke kana*

人のため  
時雨ておはす  
佛哉

**T. Kyoshi 1874-1959**

Se mi accarezzassi  
il viso con le mani,  
sentiresti il freddo del  
naso!

*te de kao wo  
nazureba hana no  
tsumetasa yo*

手で顔を  
撫ずれば鼻の  
冷たさよ

**Natsume Sōseki 1867-1916**

Monti d'autunno.  
Com'è strano  
vederli fino in cima!

*tate ni mite  
koto mezurashi ya  
aki no yama*

豎に見て  
事珍しや  
秋の山

**O. Seisensui 1884-1976**

Anche se spegnessi la  
lampada,  
avrei tra le palpebre  
lo splendore della luna.

*tomoshi wo keshitemo  
tsuki ga akarui  
mabuta no naka*

灯をけしても  
月があかるい  
まぶたのなか

**Katō Shūson 1905-1993**

Vette azzurre d'inverno,  
nelle pupille di un coniglio  
che si è svegliato.

*fuyu ne aoku  
memurisametaru  
usagi no dō*

冬嶺青く  
ねむ眠りさめたる  
兎の瞳

**Murakami Kijō 1865-1938**

I veri alberi  
resistono al freddo  
spezzandosi.  
Monaco magro.

*shinki watte  
samusa ni tau ya  
yasebōshi*

真木割って  
寒さに堪ふや  
瘦法師

**A. Ryūnosuke 1892-1927**

Vento freddo d'inverno.  
Il colore del mare  
resta nelle sardine  
essiccate.

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*kogarashi ya  
mezashi ni nokoru  
umi no iro*

木がらしや  
目刺にのこる  
海のいろ

**Katō Shūson 1905-1993**

Vetta di nuvole.  
Nelle otto direzioni  
non c'è più terra.

*kumo no mine  
happō muji  
to wa narinu*

雲の峰  
八方無士  
とはなりぬ

**Matsuo Bashō 1644-1683**

Mi sorprenderà la pioggia,  
ora che non ho neppure il  
cappello di bambù?  
Ma che importa...

*kasa mo naki  
ware wo shigururu ka  
nanto nanto*

かさもなき  
われをしぐるるか  
なんとなんと

**Senryū 1757-1796**

Fukurokuju.  
Quando ci s'inchina  
c'è da fare un passo  
indietro.

*Fukurokuju  
ojigi no toki wa  
atojisari*

福祿寿  
お辞儀の時は  
あとじさり

**Masaoka Shiki 1867-1902**

Quando le guance gelano,  
il bimbo torna a casa  
e la cena è pronta.

*hoho kōte  
ko no kaerikuru  
yūge kana*

頬凍て  
子の帰り来る  
夕餉哉

**Kobayashi Issa 1763-1827**

Lampi.  
Ad ogni bagliore  
il mondo si purifica.

*inazuma ya  
hitokire zutsu ni  
yo ga naoru*

稲妻や  
一切れずつに  
世が直る

**K. Hekigodō 1873-1937**

Colgo una mela.  
Ho detto tutto,  
ma devo ripeterlo.

*ringo wo tsumami  
iitsushitemo  
kurikaesaneba naranu*

林檎をつまみ  
云ひつくしても  
くりかえさねばならぬ

**Murakami Kijō 1865-1938**

Il vento forte  
non riesce a respingere  
i passeri dei campi.

*ōkaze ni  
fukimawasarenu  
ina suzume*

大風に  
吹き廻されぬ  
稲雀

## Reading

### Buddha Shakyamuni

Extract from "Zen in the Art  
of Illumination" by Keizan

Buddha Shakyamuni  
abandoned his palace  
when he was nineteen  
years old and he shaved  
his head. For six years he  
followed ascetic practices.  
Later, he sat upon an  
indestructable seat so still  
that spiderwebs formed  
between his eyebrows and  
a bird's nest was built  
upon his head and stalks  
grew around his feet.  
He sat for six years.  
When he was thirtythree,  
on the eighth day of the  
twelfth month, he was  
suddenly illuminated at  
the appearance of the  
morning star. He said: "I  
and all beings of the Earth  
gain together the  
Illumination at the same  
moment."  
He then passed forty-nine  
years teaching to help  
others, without ever being  
alone. With only one outfit  
and one bowl, he did not  
need anything. He taught  
to more than 360  
assemblies, and in the end,  
delivered the Treasure of

the Eye of Truth to Kasyapa and this Transmission still continues today. This is the root of the Transmission and of the Practice of the True Teaching in India, China and Japan.

The behavior that Buddha Shakyamuni followed during his life is a model for the disciples that succeed him. Ever since there were those who searched for the way of his Teaching, they have imitated the form and behavior of the Buddha and in every one of their actions they have always preeminently retained the task of auto-comprehension. Having been Transmitted from Buddha to Buddha, from follower to follower, the true Teaching has never been lost.

Although the Buddha did not indicate and did not always explain the same thing in more than 360 meetings during the forty-nine years, the various stories, parables, metaphors and explanations will never go beyond the principle illustrated in the story of his Illumination.

This mean that I am not Buddha Shakyamuni, even if Buddha Shakyamuni arises from this I.

This not only gives birth to Buddha Shakyamuni, but all the beings of the earth arise from it. In this way, as pulling out at a stitch in a net, all of the nets become undone, when Buddha Shakyamuni became Illuminated so too were all of the beings of the earth, and also all of the Buddhas of the past, present and future.

Being this way, what is the principle of Illumination? I ask: the Buddha is Illuminated along with you? You all are Illuminated with a Buddha? If you say that you became Illuminated along with the Buddha or that the Buddha became Illuminated with you, it is not the Illumination of the Buddha. Therefore, do not call it the principle of Illumination.

Also, I along with others am not one or the other. Your skin, flesh, bones and marrow are all together, and the guest of the house is this I. It does not have skin, flesh, bones and marrow; it does not have rough physical elements nor mental elements.

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Therefore, do not consider beings of the earth distinct for yourselves.

The seasons come and go; mountains, rivers, and regions change in the various moments: know that it is of the Buddha that raises his eyebrow and blinks. It is the only body that manifests itself in a myriad of forms. Therefore, studying it from every angle and penetrating it in every way you clear the Illumination of the Buddha and comprehend your Illumination.

A branch stretches out from an apricot tree. At the same time thorns grow.



## THE POEM

*A poem by Rabindranath Tagore, famous also by the name of Gurudev, born in Calcutta on May 6th, 1861 and died in Santi Niketan, Bolpur, on August 7th, 1941.*

## Do not Judge

### From the collection "Selected Poems"

*Do not judge.  
Where you live is only a  
small angle of this earth.  
For as far your eyes reach,  
they contain little;  
to the little that you hear  
add your voice.  
With care you keep both  
good and bad parts, black  
and white.  
In vain you trace a line to  
draw the limits.  
What does it matter that  
some men are good and  
others are not?  
They are all travellers on  
the same path.  
Do not judge.  
Alas! Time flies by,  
and every word is useless.*



## TESTIMONIES



## Bringing Zen home

Before going home for a visit in America, I was a little worried that I would leave my Zen practice in Italy. It was the first time that I distanced myself from the Temple ever since I began continuously and seriously practicing. I was afraid that my practice would be only "made in Italy" and that I would have left it in Florence. In the end, these 15 days at home have confirmed that my practice is not an outfit that I wear, but rather, it is a part of myself. I felt my "transformations" thanks to Zen while speaking with my famiglia, in particular with my mother; it helped me recognize her open heart, even through the differences between us. I admit that in some mornings it was difficult to sit in Zazen, I didn't have my usual place where I put the zafu that the Teacher lended me, I made a makeshift one with a folded pillow. Plus, the delicious smell of American breakfast tempted me to end the meditation early.

But I think that these small difficulties will fade with more practice away from the Temple. I am happy to have done this trial/confirmation of my Practice. Unfortunately, due to my citizenship and the laws on immigration in this country, at least for now, I do not have the possibility of living and working here and I must return to my home in America. My practice, the support from the Teacher and the Sangha, and service to the Temple will continue despite my distance and I will welcome any opportunity to return to Shinnyo-ji or visit Daijo-ji in Kanazawa. You are all with me, for the good of all beings.

Gasshō

*Ten-shin*

## You have no idea

*You have no idea how  
difficult it was  
To find a gift to bring you.  
Nothing seemed like the  
right thing.  
What sense does it have to  
bring gold to a gold mine,  
Or water to the ocean.  
Everything that we find,*

*Was like bringing spices to  
the Orient.*

*I cannot give you my heart  
and my soul,*

*Because you already have  
yours.*

*So I brought you a mirror.*

*Look at yourself and  
remember me.*

*Gialal ad-Din Rumi*

The mirror, in the simplicity of the archetype that it contains, at a time Solidity of life and symbol of clarity, consist in the double acceptance of the aspect-mirror here understood; or rather one is the mirror as a mudra of the Buddha's mirror; to show the clear reality, as it is, reality and fiction seeming overcome and transcended, perfect identity from universal reality. Not only, but mirror as the truth-consciousness on which to continuously work until tiredness and inactivity and the weight of the world (the dust) do not deposit upon you, in other terms, tolls and occasion to exercise one's own force in the dimension of yourself-world.

Gasshō

*Gregorio G.*

## Opening up

In practice, like in life, there are moments in which it is difficult to move ahead, there are huge steps and our legs have become so heavy... The mind gets lost in blind streets and is surrounded by fog and obscurity. How did we end up here? It seemed so different and easy before. We remain covered with mud up to our knees or even our hips.

Fear makes us close up in ourselves and the mind contracts and take refuge in the room of pain. It cries and continues to beat at the walls. One from the next, up and down, forward and backwards, without stopping. There is no peace, no way to escape.

But it just takes a moment, the flash of light that penetrates, the beat of the wings that opens the heart and a window suddenly appears: the light, the sun that flows in and we feel alive and faithful. You just need to give up, let it fall and open your eyes. There is the whole world around us (like Matia Bazar sang). The Teacher repeats: "Don't close yourselves in

yourselves, in your world of pain, open your heart!" Sometimes it seems so difficult, almost impossible. And yet the other night it just happened: I was thinking a series of negative thoughts and about unhappiness and then at a certain point, I just gave it up for a moment, and a small opening was created and my gaze became happier. I realized that I was in a small world, skimpy inside. I look out, there was so much space: a vastness, lots of light and beauty.

*Ben-shin*

*At dawn, during the  
Rohatsu, between sleep and  
awakeness,*

*I raise my eyes to the  
door in front of where I am  
seated.*

*I see a mirror without  
my figure. It reflects only  
light on a white  
background:*

*Like the floor of kitchen  
where I was raised, on a  
sunny day.*

*Like the empty and  
sacred space in the Zendo  
that we walk around during  
Kinhin.*

Without having asked for it, without wanting it, this year coming to the Temple was accompanied by numerous changes that came about in my life. In some cases the events were brief but rapid, in others, like in the past June and July, events happened with a sustained rhythm until making me throw my hands up in the resignation of someone who cannot take any more challenges and must move ahead. I mourned for some people that left, a deep pain in front of a sudden suicide, a car accident in which I was not injured, the windshield glass shattered and the door fell into the seat from the top side and I was thrown from the cabin, I wasn't angry: and I'm still not!

The necessity to realign myself, or stay in the present, is strong and urgent.

I came to the Temple to begin again this experience, of practice and life, very precious, and at the same time painful from my recent past. In that period I felt that I had "squared the

circle".  
 Later, everything paid off.  
 I needed a break.  
 The necessity of letting go.  
 Thanks to the Teacher for accepting my request.

*Lucia*

In the noise of a blind room  
 I learned how to sit in silence.  
 How, much later, I encountered the community at the Temple and the Teacher.  
 Sitting with you is a joy and honor.

Gasshō

*Marco V*



**THE ZEN OF  
 BODHIDHARMA**

**Chapter IV: The  
 Breakthrough Sermon**

If someone is determined to reach enlightenment, what is the most essential method he can practice?

The most essential method, which includes all other methods, is beholding the mind. But how can one method include all others?



The mind is the root from which all things grow if you can understand the mind, everything else is included. It's like the root of a tree. All a tree's fruit and flowers, branches and leaves depend on its root. If you nourish its root, a tree multiplies. If you cut its root, it dies. Those who understand the mind reach enlightenment with minimal effort. Those who don't understand the mind practice in vain. Everything good and bad comes from your own mind. To find something beyond the mind is impossible.

But how can beholding the mind be called understanding?

When a great bodhisattva delves deeply into perfect wisdom<sup>(76)</sup>, he realizes that the four elements and five shades are devoid of a personal self. And he realizes that the activity of his mind has two aspects: pure and impure<sup>(77)</sup>.

種差別云何爲二一者淨心二者染心此二種心法亦自然本來俱有離假緣合互相因待淨心恒樂善因染心常思惡業若不有所染則淨之爲聖遂能遠離諸苦證涅槃樂若染染心遂染受其纏覆則名之爲凡沈淪三界受種種苦何以故由彼染心障真如體故十地經云眾生身中有金剛佛性猶如日輪隱明圓滿廣大無邊只爲五陰重雲所覆如瓶內燈光不能顯現又涅槃經云一切眾生悉有佛性無明覆故不得解脫佛性者即覺性也但自覺覺他覺知明了則名解脫故知一切諸善以覺爲根因其覺根遂能顯現諸功德樹涅槃之果德因此而成如是觀心可名爲了。

By their very nature, these two mental states are always present. They alternate as cause or effect depending on conditions, the pure mind delighting in good deeds, the impure mind thinking of evil. Those who aren't affected by impurity are sages. They transcend suffering and experience the bliss of nirvana. All others, trapped by the impure mind and entangled by their own karma, are mortals. They drift through the three realms

and suffer countless afflictions and all because their impure mind obscures their real self. The Sutra of Ten Stages says, "in the body of mortals is the indestructible buddha-nature. Like the sun, its light fills endless space, But once veiled by the dark clouds of the five shades, it's like a light 'inside a 'at, hidden from view." And the Nirvana Sutra says, "All mortals have the buddha-nature. But it's covered by darkness from which they can't escape. Our buddha-nature is awareness: to be aware and to make others aware. To realize awareness is liberation," Everything good has awareness for its root. And from this root of awareness grow the tree of all virtues and the fruit of nirvana. Beholding the mind like this is understanding.

You say that our true Buddha-nature and all virtues have awareness for their root. But what is the root of ignorance? The ignorant mind, with its infinite afflictions, passions, and evils, is rooted in the three poisons. Greed, anger, and

delusion. These three poisoned states of mind themselves include countless evils, like trees that have a single trunk but countless branches and leaves. Yet each poison produces so many more millions of evils that the example of a tree is hardly a fitting comparison.

The three poisons are present in our six sense organs<sup>(79)</sup> as six kinds of consciousness<sup>(80)</sup>, or thieves. They're called thieves because they pass in and out of the gates of the senses, covet limitless possessions, and mask their true identity. And because mortals are misled in body and mind by these poisons or thieves, they become lost in life and death, wander through the six states of existence, and suffer countless afflictions.

問上說眞如佛性一切功德因覺爲根未審無明之心以何爲根答無明之心雖有八萬四千煩惱情欲及恒河沙惡習因三毒以爲根本其三毒者貪嗔癡是也此三毒心目能具足一切諸惡猶如大樹根雖是一所生枝葉其數無邊後三毒根一根本中生諸惡業百千萬億倍過於前不可爲喻如是三毒心於本體中應現六根亦名六賊即六識也由此六識出入諸根貪著萬境能成惡業障眞如體故名六賊一切眾生由此三毒六賊惑亂身心沈沒生死輪迴六塵受諸苦惱猶如江河因小泉源涸流不絕乃能彌漫波濤萬里若復有人斷其本源即眾流皆息求解脫者能轉三毒爲三聚淨

These afflictions are like rivers that surge for a thousand miles because of the constant flow of small springs. But if someone cuts off their source, rivers dry up. And if someone who seeks liberation can turn the three poisons into the three sets of precepts and the six thieves into the six paramitas, he rids himself of affliction once and for all. But the three realms and six states -of existence are infinitely vast. How can we escape their endless afflictions if all we do is behold the mind? The karma of the three realms comes from the mind alone. If your mind isn't within the three realms, it's beyond them. The three realms correspond to the three poisons - greed corresponds to the realm of desire, anger to the realm of form, and delusion to the formless realm. And because karma created by the poisons can be gentle or heavy, these three realms are further divided into six places known as the six states of existence.

## Notes

(76) Supreme wisdom. It is a paraphrase of the verse of opening of the Heart Sutra where the Bodhisattva and Avalokitesara and where the perfect wisdom, or Prajna Paramit, is not wisdom, because wisdom is "gone, gone beyond, completely gone beyond" of the space and time categories, to be and not to be.

(77) Pure and impure. For an extensive reading on this see 'The awakening of the faith in the Mahayana' by Ashvaghosa, where pure and impure are called illumination and non-illumination.

(78) Sutra of the Ten States... Sutra of the Nirvana. When the translations of these two Sutra appear for the first time at the beginning of the fifth century, they had a profound impact on the development of Buddhism in China. Amongst their teachings, there are the universality of the Buddha Nature and the eternity, joyousness, personal, and pure Nature of the Nirvana. Since then, the doctrine of emptiness teaches from the Sutra of

the Prajna Paramita had dominated Chinese Buddhism. The Sutra of the Ten States, that goes into detail about the states in which a Bodhisattva passes throughout his path toward Buddhahood, it is a version in a chapter with the same title in the Avatamaska Sutra.

(79) Six organs of senses. Eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind.

(80) Six states of consciousness. The types of consciousness associated with sight, hearing, smelling, taste, touch, and thought. The Lankavatara divides thought into comprehension, discrimination and memory (of the Tathagata) for the total eight forms of consciousness .

(81) Six states of existence. The fundamental types of existence through which beings move, thought after thought or life after life, until they achieve illumination and escape from the wheel of suffering. Suffering in this wheel is relative. The gods of paradise follow more or less blessed lives, whereas who suffers in hell goes from punishment to

punishment. Demons and humans feel more suffering than gods but less than hungry spirits and beasts.



**Prof. Aldo Tollini at  
Shinnyo-ji**

**24 September 2012**



After the release of his book, "Lo Zen", Professor Aldo Tollini from University Ca' Foscari of Venice, came to Florence for work motives, he was a guest at Shinnyo-ji and came to the Sangha in the Zazen Monday evening and Tuesday morning. After Monday practice, introduced by Teacher Shinnyo Roshi, he spoke about the motivations that lead him throughout his work, commenting later on the text. It was followed by a dinner together in the Temple's Guest room, prepared and offered by the practitioners.



**Statues of Buddha by  
sculptor Enkū  
(1632- 1695)**



Article by Prof. Yukihiro Nomura, Art History docent at the University of Gifu, published by the national newspaper, "Asahi Shinbun" on 24 March 2012.

**"What is the artistic significance of the Enkū statue?"**

Enkū, Buddhist monk in the Hōsōshu e Tendaishu school, created thousands of Buddha statues in all of Japan, during the Edo period. Since about 50 years ago, Professors Tsuchiya from the

University of Gifu rediscovered the artistic value of these Buddha statues of Enkū, a group of researchers began an intense activity of studying the artistic production. Not only local stories, but many scholars from other sectors such as History of the Religions, Anthropology, Art and various artists try to find more about the rediscovery of his work.



Statue by Enkū:  
"Buddha of wooden bark"  
© photo Hideo Goto ( "Wild art, Enkū, Show catalogue", Asahi Shinbun 1980)  
円空「木端仏」(撮影・後藤英夫、『野生の芸術 円空展』朝日新聞社)

Also the Gifu Prefecture has instituted the "Enkū Prize" to maintain alive its

memory and to diffuse its consciousness and the community museum of Nagoya was recently set up with an exhibition of his works, it was a huge success. In this way, his popularity will not diminish.

Until now, research on Enkū was brought ahead mostly by his relation with Buddhism and on his practices as a hermit monk, but now I would like to present him here from the historic point of view of the International Art and how we can value his sculptures. It was often said that Enkū's statues look like many modern and contemporary European works. We can say that refinding the value of his works depends on the arise of interest in Japan for contemporary European artwork.

Let's now do a comparison between his works and those of avanguard artists of today. For example, if we put the works of Picasso next to those by Enkū we see that both, having an infant "naïve" style, have characteristic lines, simple and very strong, that have

never been seen in other artworks.



Statue by Picasso:  
"Little statues thin and long" 1931  
(H.Read, "A Concise History of Modern Sculpture", London 1985)  
(H.リード『近代彫刻史』言叢社)

It is surprising to say that the works of Enkū were created from than 200 years before those of the Avanguard and Picasso. And not only this, his works are also similar to those by other sculptors like the Italian Medardo Rosso (1858-1928), the Romanian Constantin Brancusi (1876-1957) and the Swiss Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966), pioneers in modern sculpture. Surely these European artists were not aware of the works of Enkū. So why are the European modern

Tempio Shinnyo-ji

sculpture seem so similar to those of Enkū?

Under historic profile, Japanese sculpture of Buddha statues arise from the Asuka Period (538-710) and it evolved with richer form and expressions until the Kamakura Period (1185-1333), epoch of the Samurai, only to fall in to decadence. Enkū, living in the period without a tradition, not having followed an artistic form, could express himself in a totally personal and characteristic way.

Rather in Europe, the search of realistic expression began in the Renaissance period and ended in the XIX century, with the art of François-Auguste-René Rodin (1840 - 1917) French sculptor and painter. Later, European art turned toward abstract art, folklore, for children and disabled, and to artists who did not follow an academic course. In reality, the evolution of the History of Art in Japan and in Europe are very similar.

The re-evaluation of Enkū's art, rediscovered only 50 years ago, according to me began

very late, because inserting Enkū in the History of International Art we must emphasize that this sculpture realized an innovative expression of post-realism much earlier than European artists. Frans Krajcberg (1921), the Polish sculptor that won a last edition of the Enkū

Prize said: "I love Enkū's statues, but unfortunately his works are still not known around the world". Therefore there is still a great need to diffuse the presentation and study of Enkū abroad.

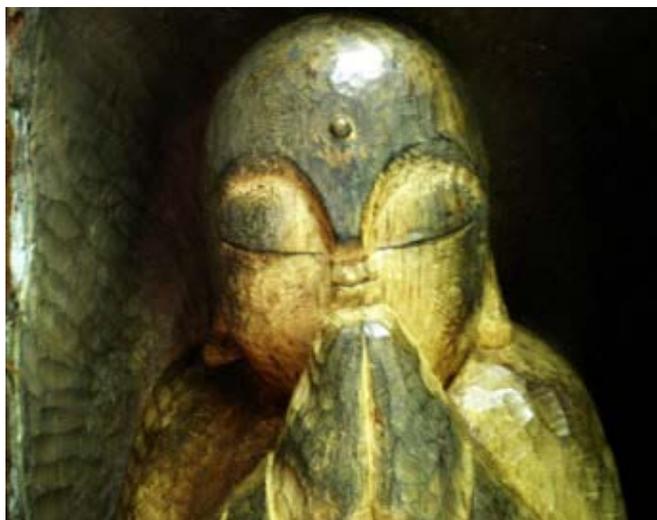


Thanks to Fabio Dai shin, Lisa Ten shin, Beatrice Ben shin for the photos, Eva Yō shin for editing the Newsletter and Lisa Ten shin for translation.

We will see you at the next EkiZen number.  
Gasshō



### Calendar for Zen Practice at the Shinnyo-ji Sōtō Zen Temple of Florence:



**Zazen** – Three encounters per week: Every Monday evening from 8.00 to 10.00 p.m. , Every Tuesday morning from 6.30 to 7.30 a.m. , Every Friday evening from 8.00 to 9.30 p.m.

**Zazenkai** Zazenkai – una domenica al mese dalle 9.00 alle 18.00.

**Sesshin** – One weekend per month from Friday at 8:00 p.m. to the following Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

Retreat schedules are available on our website.

### Tempio Shinnyo-ji

Italian branch of the Monastery of Daijo-ji in Kanazawa in Japan

Via Vittorio Emanuele II n. 171 – 50134 Firenze  
telefono +39 - 339 8826023  
email: [centro@zenfirenze.it](mailto:centro@zenfirenze.it)  
[www.zenfirenze.it](http://www.zenfirenze.it)