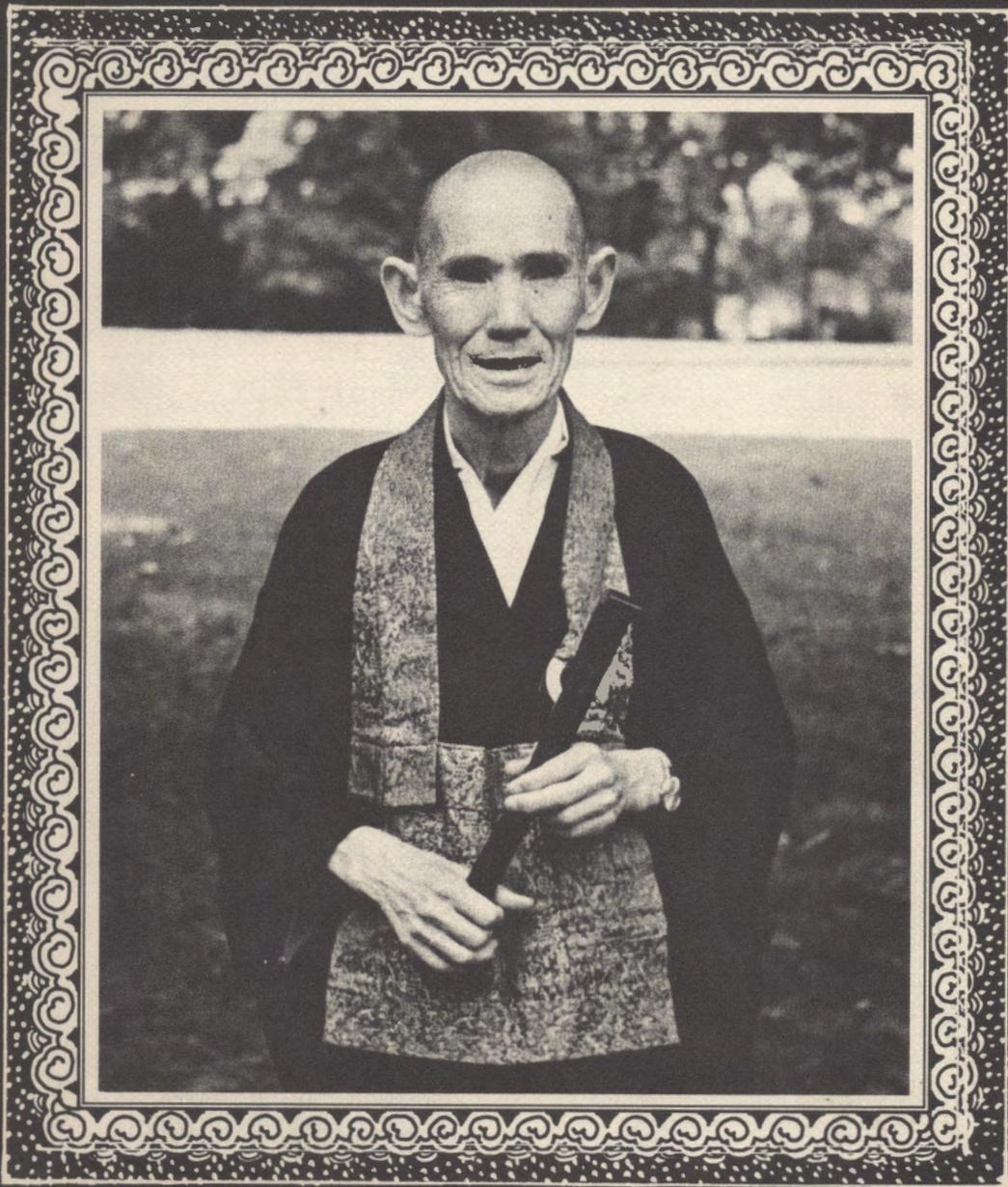


# zen bow



Spring 1973

Vol. V, No. VI



"Mu." Calligraphy by Yasutani-Roshi.  
(Damaged in the Center's 1968 fire.)  
The smaller characters read, "A dog  
-- Buddha-Nature."

# Hakuun Yasutani-Roshi

1885 - 1973

By Buddhist or any other standards his death was ideal: in his sleep, with no previous pain or illness, and 'in the saddle': only two days before he'd returned from holding sesshin and jukai (giving of the Precepts) in Kamakura. It was a fitting death to a fitting life. Husband, father (of five), author, primary school principal, temple priest, and Zen Master, Yasutani-Roshi accomplished much before entering his Nirvana at age 88 on March 28, just three years short of the life-span of his teacher, Harada-Roshi.

Remarkably, many of his achievements took place in his old age. He was almost 75 when he wrote and published his outstanding commentaries on the books of koans known, respectively, as the *Mumonkan (The Gateless Barrier)*, *The Hekiganroku (The Blue Rock Records)*, *The Denkōroku (Records of the Transmission of the Light)*, *The Shōyōroku (Recorded sayings of Great Serenity)* and *Go-I (Five Degrees of Realization)*.

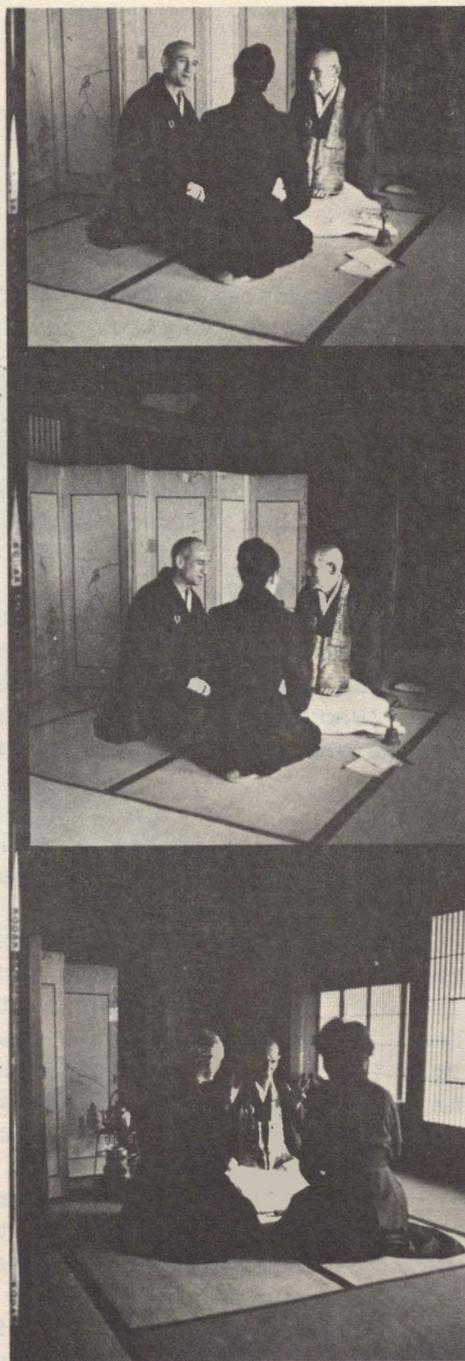
And he was in his eighties when he left Japan to teach the Dharma in the West. For several years he traveled regularly from Japan to the United States to fulfill the insatiable hunger for authentic sesshin on this continent. Where most Japanese priests and roshi who then came to America were content with a quick visit, delivering a few lectures and then returning to Japan to proclaim that, alas, the Zen boom in America is just a sputtering firecracker and that there is no real Zen there, Yasutani-Roshi fulfilled the role of an authentic Zen master, teaching zazen, holding dokusan and delivering bona fide teisho, thus laying the foundation for a genuine Zen in America.

His lectures were wonderfully free of the condescension which marked those of other Asian teachers. It is, one may suppose, not easy for a Japanese or Chinese or Tibetan raised as a Buddhist in a Buddhist country not to talk down to Western students brought up in an essentially Christian culture, nor to dilute the Buddha's doctrines to accommodate them to the supposed needs of Westerners. Not once

did I hear from the Roshi's lips phrases like 'We Japanese Buddhists...' nor ever feel that he was teaching an expedient, debased Zen to Westerners.

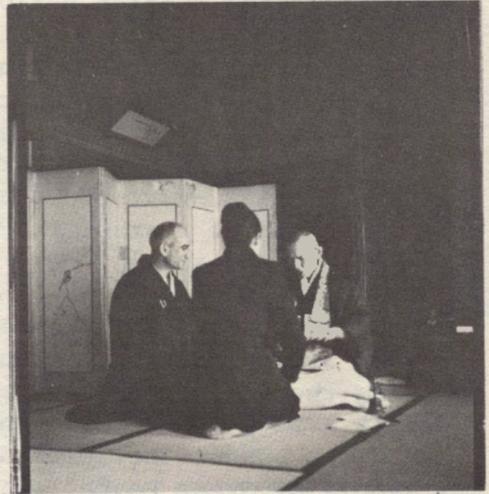
In Japan, recognition had come slowly. For many years he had few students, almost all of whom were laymen, and fewer still who attended his sesshin. My first sesshin under him -- it was in 1956 in a small mountain temple -- held only eight people. Despite the relatively relaxed atmosphere, it was for beginners a golden period, with dokusan sometimes as long as 45 minutes. His compassionate and patient help and penetrating explanations are still gratefully remembered. Upon my departure from Japan, in 1966, his seven-day sesshin had ballooned, averaging about 50 participants, with many being turned away.

To Americans unfamiliar with the Japanese mentality it may sound odd to hear it said, but the Roshi's trips to America and Europe and the presence of many Westerners at his sesshin in Japan were instrumental in attracting many Japanese back to Buddhism. The Roshi had often said: "Buddhism here has become the profession of undertakers in robes, priests who merely preside over formal rituals such as funerals but who make no real spiritual effort and have no direct experience of the truth of Buddhism. In Japan today we have only a corpse in the name of Buddhism." But he saw in the Japanese fascination with things Western the soil in which the seeds of authentic Zen could spring up anew in his home country. The Roshi



*Roshi Yasutani in dokusan with Western students (Roshi Kapleau translating). Japan, 1964.*

himself pointed this out after I had refused to be interviewed by a newspaper reporter on the eve of a sesshin. "Japanese acquire a new respect for Zen," he said, "when they hear about it from the perspective of a Westerner, especially an American; so you are really helping to propagate Buddhism among the Japanese themselves when you allow yourself to be interviewed." The Roshi wanted to establish an international Sangha, one with zendos throughout the West as well as the East. It showed his deep respect for the spiritual aspirations of Westerners.



Sesshin of course were only one facet of the Roshi's activities. Each week he held *zazenkai* (one-day sesshin, with *teisho* and *dokusan*) at several universities, the Defense Academy, and other places. Sandwiched in were writing assignments and lectures before various groups. He was never idle and whatever he did he did fully. Even in his old age he radiated great energy, though he went to bed late and rose early.

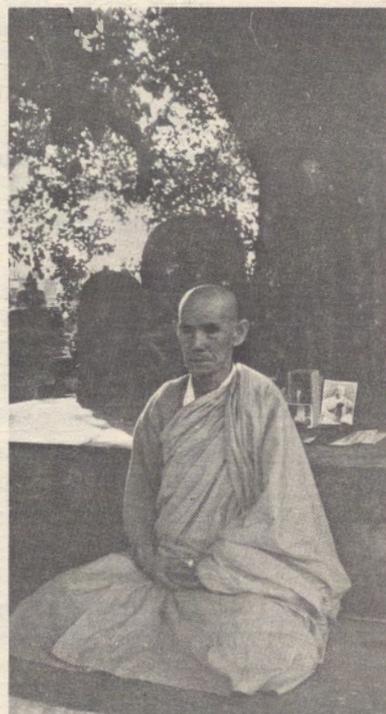
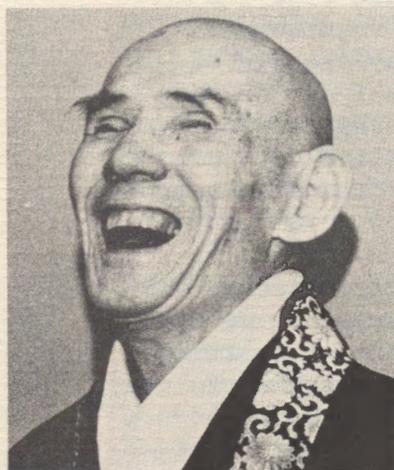
Once I asked the Roshi how he happened to become a priest since temples usually went to the eldest son when the father retired. In the Roshi's case his father had only been the owner of a small pastry shop. He told me that when he was born he was mysteriously clutching a small bead from the *juzu* (Buddhist rosary) of his pious Buddhist mother. (This had been told him, he said, by his eldest sister.) Regarding this as a favorable omen, his mother took him to a temple when he was five to have his head shaved by the temple priest and thus be initiated into the Buddhist priesthood. Later he attended a seminary of the Soto sect, though it was many years before he became a temple priest in fact as well as name. Meanwhile he took a job as a primary school teacher to support his large family, later becoming principal. Not until he met Harada-Roshi and attained *kensho* under him with the koan *Mu* at his very first sesshin did he formally become a temple priest. For a number of years he worked on koans under Harada-Roshi, mostly during sesshin at *Hosshin-ji*, Harada-Roshi's monastery. But he never experienced monastery life. Evidently it was not required in those days. Today in Japan a Zen monk must spend three years in a monastery before he can take over a temple.

Following a brief period in a small mountain temple, Yasutani-Roshi moved to Tokyo and converted his small house on the outskirts of the city into a temple. Conditions here were far from ideal. During sesshin you could hear the cars and trucks traveling the main road just outside the temple, there was the constant barking of the Roshi's dog tied up in the small yard, and there was the helter-skelter running around of his 2-year-old grandson, who lived with his parents in small quarters at the rear of the temple. At night we slept virtually cheek to jowl in the small zendo. And since most of the people who came to these sesshin were laymen who had jobs during the day, they were allowed to join the sesshin whenever they came from work, which meant much coming and going toward evening. Usually there was no monitoring during the day because the senior members who did it were at work and didn't arrive until the evening sittings. Despite these handicaps and the great burden they placed on the Roshi, sesshin at Taihei-ji ("Temple of Great Peace"), as the Roshi's temple was called, had a strange power, due no doubt to the Roshi's trenchant teisho and his stimulating dokusan.

Comparisons are odious, the more so in Zen, but having been Harada-Roshi's disciple for three years and Yasutani-Roshi's for eleven, inevitably I found myself comparing their temperaments and teaching styles. No two men were more different. Harada-Roshi, who came from a family of samurai, used a blood-and-guts vocabulary to inspire his students at sesshin; his strong spirit dominated the zendo even when he was not physically present. Yasutani-Roshi, on the other hand, was gentler and more philosophic, his analogies and anecdotes often being couched in the language of the marketplace, reflecting no doubt the hardships of an indigent temple priest with a large family to support. The Old Lion, as many of us called Harada-Roshi, was a strict disciplinarian, yet a fair one, who radiated genuine warmth outside sesshin. Yasutani-Roshi on the whole was easygoing and permissive. Harada-Roshi was the abbot of a monastery where many monks trained. His disciples were chiefly temple priests, though there were many laymen also among them. Yasutani-Roshi's followers were mostly employed men and women, some with families, others students. Harada-Roshi never married but remained a monk in the strict sense of the word. Yasutani-Roshi was a married man with five children and the responsibilities that that entailed. Physically they also differed. Harada-Roshi was short and balding, Yasutani-Roshi tall for a Japanese, with a full head of black hair even in his eighties. Both were thin with tremendous vitality, though they used their energies differently, and



*In front of Bo tree with  
picture of Harada-Roshi*



*Bodh-Gaya, 1957*



each of them even in old age did an hour or more of calisthenics each day. Two qualities, however, they did share in common: both had been school teachers and both were men of strong faith and deep realization.

While Harada-Roshi had been sickly in his younger years, he had gained sound health through diet, exercise and of course zazen. Yasutani-Roshi evidently had a strong constitution even as a youth; in later years he seldom appeared tired despite his strenuous exertions. Even at eighty he had great endurance. Once I happened to meet him and his remarkable nun disciple-companion, Satomi-san, in Kyoto. They were on their way to Eihei-ji, one of the head monasteries of the Soto sect. I offered to carry his large shoulder bag to the monastery, outside Fukui City, some three hours of travel away. The bag was loaded with books and so heavy that I could scarcely lift it. Though half his age, on the way I found myself resting frequently; but I was glad of the opportunity to help relieve the Roshi of this burden and to see that great temple with him and Satomi-san.

Whatever the source of his tireless energy, it could hardly have been his diet, which consisted largely of white rice and white bread and potatoes plus miso soup and a few vegetables. Once an American doctor who had been to a seven-day sesshin of his in Tokyo confided: "If the meals which the Roshi ate at the sesshin are typical, by all Western medical standards he should have been dead long ago. But he will probably outlive both of us." And outlive he did at least the doctor, who died of a heart attack some five years later at age 51.

With characteristic energy the Roshi constantly attacked what he termed "Buji Zen," a teaching which contends that since we are all inherently enlightened there is nothing to awaken to. It was a rare teisho in which the Roshi did not shoot a few arrows in the direction of the Buji Zennists. When asked once by a group of American followers why he harped on this theme and on the shortcomings of the contemporary Soto teachers who propagated this teaching, he replied: "Until I met Harada-Roshi and learned true Zen from him, I had been completely misled by these pseudo-teachers and their false doctrine, so naturally I feel strongly about this subject and do not want to see others misled as I had been."

Another of his targets were the 'scientific-minded' Japanese Buddhist priests who, lacking deep faith in Buddhism, tried to rationalize away what they could not understand. Following one teisho in which he came down hard on these men of little faith, I told him of a conversation I had had with a Japanese Buddhist priest-scholar in which the talk turned to the Buddhist doctrine of rebirth. "That doctrine isn't very scientific, so how can we accept it?" this man insisted. More in sorrow than in anger the Roshi commented: "Is it any wonder that Japanese Buddhism has become so degenerate when the priests themselves lack faith in the Buddha's teachings and therefore do not practice them?"

These views and opinions of the Roshi, not to mention his attitude toward the Vietnam War and the contemporary Japanese social scene, were frequently expressed by him in Buddhist magazines, letters to editors, in his own little publication and on radio and TV. They did not go unchallenged, especially by younger priests who especially objected to his stance on the Vietnam War, which favored an American military presence in that country. Yasutani-Roshi, like many of his generation in Japan, had a fierce distrust of the Soviet Union. They could still remember Japan's brilliant victory over Russia in 1905 and how they were robbed of its fruits by other Western powers. They also felt the sting of Russia's revenge when, after World War II, despite the existence of a peace pact between the two countries, this communist power seized the northern Kuriles which legally belonged to Japan. It was natural therefore that the Roshi would be particularly wary of communism. That he, a Zen Master, could be so blinded by it, however, was one of those unexplainable contradictions.

The Roshi's oft-stated contention that in present-day Japan there was too much emphasis on democratic notions of equality and not enough on differences -- that is to say, not enough respect for hierarchical class distinctions -- was equally unpopular in post-war Japan and labeled 'feudalistic,' a stinging epithet in Japan at the time.

Other inconsistencies existed as well, and a fully human portrait of the Roshi demands that some be mentioned.

In the Zen sect there were those who charged that he was too 'grandmotherly' toward students, passing them much too

readily on their koans. (This same accusation, by the way, could be leveled at any roshi in either the Rinzai or Soto sect who was still teaching in his eighties, as Yasutani-Roshi was, for it is common knowledge that even masters who once were rigid disciplinarians can go 'soft' and 'sugary' when they get beyond their seventies.)

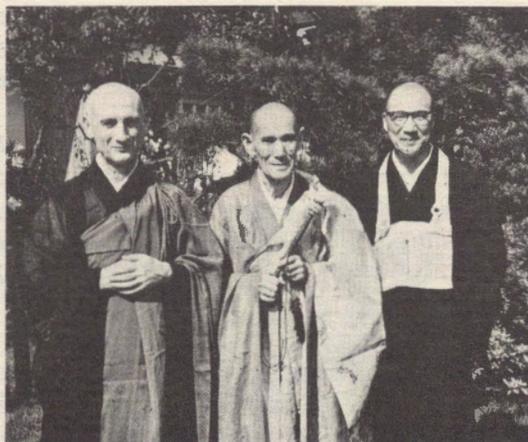
Finally, friends and critics alike shook their heads at his frequent quarrels with his disciples, even with those of long standing, which often ended in a severance of the teacher-disciple relationship.

No ordinary observer or student, whose understanding at best is limited, can hope to resolve the inconsistent actions and statements of a Zen master. To analyze or pass judgment on them has about as much meaning as a run-of-the-mill analyst evaluating the character and life of, say, a Buddha or Christ or Socrates. Even Zen masters, it must be remembered, have past karmic debts to repay, and not infrequently they are heavy. Unlike the ordinary person, however, they more than willingly pay off the old and do not acquire new ones. It must also be borne in mind that, as the Roshi himself once pointed out in reply to a question, Zen masters are not experts in fields in which they have had no special training or have not made a special study of -- for example, art, economics, or politics. On the other hand, it is also true, he continued, that no man can call himself an expert (the word used was 'meijin' which is deeper in meaning than 'expert' and which can perhaps better be translated as 'past master'), no matter what his training or the degrees he holds in that field, unless he has experienced the basic emptiness of all things.

No matter how those contradictions are labeled -- and what teacher is free of them? -- Hakuun Yasutani was truly a master -- a Dai-osho. Who having read his masterly commentary on Mu or hearing his brilliant and penetrating teishos on Dogen's *Shobogenzo* (which hopefully will be translated into English one day from the tape recordings made of them) can doubt that his experienced Understanding of the Buddha's Dharma was profound? Irrespective of the place in Buddhist history which the Japanese themselves will assign to him, those Americans privileged to attend his sesshin and read his teachings in *The Three Pillars*

of Zen will always look to him as one of their great benefactors. My own personal debt to him is beyond measure -- for a teaching freely and unpretentiously bestowed, without the closed fist of a pseudo-teacher. I gassho to him out of heartfelt gratitude.

--Philip Kapleau



*The Ordination of Roshi Philip Kapleau  
by Hakuun Yasutani Roshi. Kamakura,  
June 28, 1964.*

## Dharma words of Master Yasutani

*There is nothing unusual about Zen. It doesn't deal with anything but what is natural, with our everyday, commonplace life. There is nothing obscure or mystical about it. The crow is black, chickens have chickens, not ducks; ducks have ducklings, not chickens.*

*Everything is dreamlike except this: I just speak, you just hear.*

*Enlightenment is comparable to graduating from university. One's life is still ahead of one and one has to learn how to live it. This corresponds to practice and training. Even with enlightenment one has to mature his emotions, strengthen his will and purify his feelings.*

*Hell is ego. Paradise is the realization that nothing in the world is outside one.*

*The Buddha teaches nothing. Or better, what he teaches is that there is nothing to teach, because we have all knowledge and perfection from the beginningless beginning. So it can be said that the Buddha's teaching is that we are all inherently perfect, without a flaw.*

*Everything is dreamlike, all life is dreamlike, yet there are exalted dreams and base ones. To dream that one will become a Buddha is an exalted dream. It is not rejected because it is a dream and therefore has no reality. Rather, it is accepted in the knowledge that it is unreal.*

*The experience of the true, living Self is Zen. Philosophy and doctrines are an explanation of living experience. Zazen is the purest way of learning this. Theory is always a substitute for the real thing. Theory and reality become one in experience. Theory is the explanation of reality; reality is the proof of theory.*

The real way to listen is without the ears -- this is real hearing. In reality there is nothing to listen to and nothing to teach since we are all fundamentally perfect. The only worthwhile teaching is the teaching that helps us to realize this as living experience.

If you are merely on the surface of things they are always imperfect, unsatisfactory, and incomplete. Penetrate into the substance and everything is perfect, complete, whole. According to causes and conditions, things are constantly changing, so that superficially everything appears to be different and distinguished from everything else. But in substance everything is equal, without high or low, better or worse.

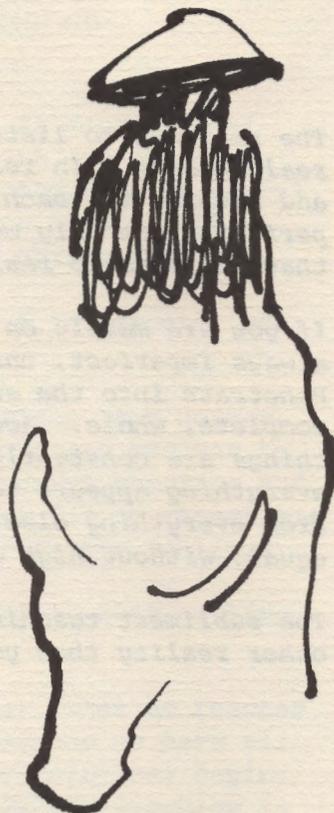
The sublimest teaching is the truth that there is no other reality than your own Mind.



Sirs,

I could not help but be struck by the contrast between the generally activist outlook of the Vietnamese writers appearing in the Winter, 1973, issue of *Zen Bow*, their general willingness to engage in samsaric affairs ("objective conditions in Vietnamese society have compelled the Buddhist religion to engage itself in the life of the nation") and the decidedly compassionate but quietistic outlook of the preponderance of American contributors.

The article "How Can We Work for Life" seems to me to raise forcefully the issue whether compassion coupled with quietism does not abandon the samsaric field entirely to negative forces, and on the other hand whether a certain impure but well-motivated activism might not be preferable to compassionate passivity. For example, I doubt very much that "if our heart is bleak with duality, no amount of good actions can end even one ounce of misery," or that "if we want to act from a truly responsive love for our country and mankind, the most effective way is from a heart purged of greed, anger and delusions"; I am sure that more than



several ounces of my own suffering, and of myriads of others, were ended by persons who were far from being enlightened beings but just well-intentioned effective ones, and equally sure that if all men of good will were to await enlightenment before seeking to relieve misery, misery would increase enormously. No one could object to the desirability of acting from a heart purged of negativity and error,

but it would be disastrous if all action were ended while we all pursued this state of enlightenment. It is said that "to walk down the street, going nowhere, simultaneously brings all beings to Buddhahood"; yes, but samsarically speaking, this activity does little if anything to relieve the ordinary suffering of ordinary human beings. Finally, while no one can doubt the value of a response to human needs from "the serenity of a firm mind," still it seems to me that the efforts of a somewhat confused

mind working sincerely and effectively to meet the needs of men is at least as much to be valued, in the samsaric order, as serene minds "going nowhere, doing nothing."

In short, are compassion and the effort to purge oneself of spiritual imperfection adequate responses to a world drowning in blood and sorrow? I think not, and that is what I sense in the writers to whom I have referred.

Sincerely,

\* \* \*

Dear Zen Center,

The enclosed check represents the donations to the Vietnam Relief Fund by members of the Boston Zen Group. The Center's mailings concerning the continuing pain caused by the war and additional information provided by Jim Quella at a recent visit here brought home the too-abstract meaning of suffering in very real, immediate, and human terms to us all. The Center's involvement in this area has, for us, been very beneficial. We apologize for the lateness of this letter.

With gassho,

Gentlemen,

We have been receiving your publication *Zen Bow* and wish to stop its continued delivery. We find the content of Volume V, No. 5, more political than religious and wish to dissociate ourselves from any Buddhist organization expressing such opinions in the context of a Buddhist publication.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
(from an  
American  
Zen center)

## EVERYDAY AFTERMATH

Cast aside, if you are able, all notions of Zen and Buddhism. Put out of your mind all thoughts about the country's spiritual centers where masters draw the land's aspirants. Turn away from the world of your private comforts. And what do you have left? A world where children have their arms and legs shot off; a world of lonely people dead certain that nobody cares about them. A world where nobody's hiding. Because they can't.

Every day we go our round, each one so much the aftermath of the day before. Working and playing, eating and sleeping; and inventing those labels that make life easier. If you toss pizzas, for example, you're called a pizza-maker. If you're into wielding total control over other people, you're a tyrant. If you grow beets, your name is 'farmer.' Play of light and shadow -- unending. And then there's the woman at home gazing into her baby's eyes and cooking all that food for years and constantly cleaning. We call her a housewife.

We build a world of bits and pieces, an obvious point perhaps. But the sword of differentiation has two edges. Wielding it, we can get cut on the backlash, which is the basic reason we took up zazen. We became trapped in the boxes we had built for others. But as soon as we began that practice which would help us gain freedom, we just kept sliding along in the same old grooves. Now we just had a whole new world to split in two. Having begun spiritual practice, we became 'spiritual' men, as opposed to those well-meaning but misguided players over there on the muddy turf of 'samsara.' Like 'politicians.'

It's something you had vaguely hoped wiser heads had avoided. Nevertheless, some of the mail received here after the publication of our winter issue reflected this

attitude. That issue dealt with the Vietnamese Buddhist response to the suffering in their ravaged country. But if we can dismiss as 'political' compassionate actions arising from the responsive hearts of deeply realized men and women in a land ripped to its heart by decades of war, we can only guess where our practice is at. Where is this spiritual world that we talk so easily of? Is it separate from Samsara, or the mundane sphere as some people call it? If so, we'd better reexamine our Buddhism. All of us.

We could begin by listening to Pablo Picasso:

*What do you think an artist is? An imbecile who has only eyes (if he is a painter), or ears (if he is a musician), or a liar at every level of his being if he is a poet, or if he is a boxer, only his muscles?*

*On the contrary, he is at the same time a political being, constantly alert to the heart-rending, burning or happy events in the world, molding himself in their likeness.*

*How can it be possible to feel no interest in other people and, because of an ivory-tower indifference, detach yourself from the life they bring with such open hands?*

*No, painting is not made to decorate apartments. It is an instrument of war, for attack and defense against the enemy.*

What ever happened to the Zen of Master Hakuin? Is it dead? The way some of us talk you'd think we'd never heard of him or tried to keep the 'uninterrupted spirit

of zazen' alive anywhere except in our own rooms. Did Shakyamuni Buddha teach us 'dead sitting and silent illumination'?

Well fine, you say, but what does all this have to do with zazen? Same problem. One of our readers stated it nicely when he asked "whether compassion and the effort to purge oneself of spiritual imperfection provide adequate answers to a world drowning in blood and sorrow." What he and all of us are faced with of course is the fact that for life-times we have tended to place more faith in Doing than in Being. The causes: impatience, frustration and a deep anguish about the perpetual darkness we sense around us.

We can begin to sense an answer to this man's question as we begin to believe that we are more than, as one writer put it, "an island of flesh and words." We can continue by believing the teaching of Yasutani-Roshi when in an issue of *Zen Bow* some years back he was quoted as saying that there is a "responsive communion between sentient beings and Buddhas" that operates all the time whether we know it or not. In that writing the Roshi specifically said that a hermit sitting in samadhi in an isolated and remote place in the mountains is helping us here and now in the most direct and intimate way.

That is our beginning and our continuing; our leap of faith. It is what makes zazen more than personal physical or mental exercise. It gives birth to our religion. If only on an intellectual level, it makes the Four Vows of the Bodhisattva pulse and glow with Life:

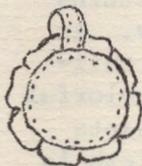
*All beings, One Body, we vow to liberate.  
Endless blind passions we vow to uproot.  
Dharma gates without number we vow to penetrate.  
The Great Way of Buddha we vow to attain.*

At last we can accept that perpetual darkness as the fundamental impetus to awakening and not just an impenetrable and Stygian blackness to which there is no meaningful response. We can have faith that "Everyday Buddhism"

is more than an empty phrase and that walking down the street, doing nothing, simultaneously brings all beings to Buddhahood. And it will enable us to avoid that stale death of the spirit which awaits those who separate work "on the mat" from work on the farm, in the office, at home or on the field of war. In the end, it will also allow those of us who call themselves Buddhists to have more patience with ourselves. The Dharma is new on this continent. We are in the early stages of practice when our faith is like a tender green seedling. Unlike our Vietnamese brothers and sisters it is still all too easy for us to separate active zazen from quiet zazen. Twenty-five years of war haven't allowed them that luxury. For ourselves, we can see that for the ordinary seeker, the emphasis must at first necessarily be on sitting zazen. No one expects otherwise. And no one demands it. But no one dare condemn those who do not need to make the separation. Vietnamese Buddhist monks and nuns, laymen and especially, perhaps, those without a conscious faith in that country, have turned the Wheel of the Law in our time at a dizzying rate. We must keep them as our beacon. We must keep them in sight.

(--ed.)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

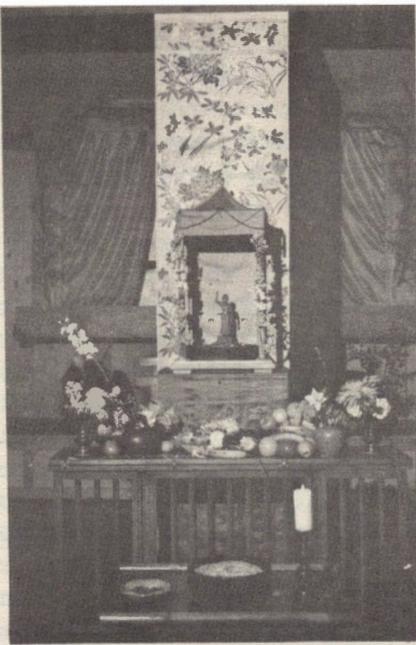


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On behalf of Vietnamese relief organizations with which we have been in contact, the Center would like to publicly acknowledge and express its appreciation of the nearly \$13,000 which members and friends have donated in response to Zen Bow's Vietnam issue.

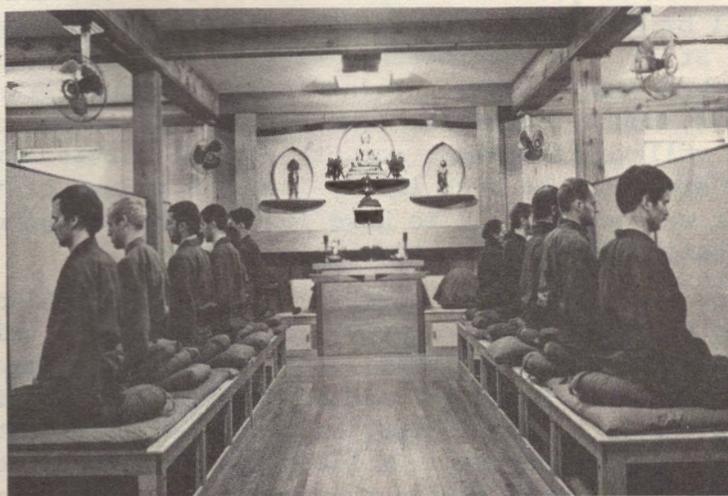


#### SPRINGTIME IN ROCHESTER

Rochester winters: grey on grey. Roshi says they're a lot like the ones at Hosshin-ji, driving a man into his hara. Then suddenly when one doubted it would ever happen again, Oxford Street explodes: pink on green. Magnolias take the street by storm. The purple shift in Highland Park heralds the Lilac Festival and here on Arnold Park the flowering crabapples exude and drop their pink blooms. Once more the city starts to smile as heavy winter thoughts melt with the departed snows.

In April the Center starts to buzz as everyone returns from the winter break. We celebrate Buddha's Birthday. As in previous years everything is turned over to Sangha children but the events have a bigger, brighter and more colorful flare than before. There is a parade. Flags and pennants decorate the driveway. The puppet show of Buddha's birth is presented in several showings, graced this time with Kit Hill's original music (songs sung by the cast). It is held in the east zendo where the large white elephant struggles in from the sub-shop. In one corner of the dining room two ancient sages take turns relating Jataka Tales, while in the main zendo and Kannon room the children make offerings to Buddha and the Bodhisattva. A day of delight.

Two tandem seven-day sesshins later in the month are dedicated in gratitude to the memory of Yasutani-Roshi. Roshi Kapleau reads his teacher's commentary on Mu from *The Three Pillars*. On one of those mornings there is a teisho on the terse Dharma words of Master Ummon. A stone wall for the intellect to beat its head against. The monitors fly when the moment calls for it, encouraging and prodding us to more intense and single-minded exertion. After the second sesshin, we all file into the backyard for picture-taking, tired but happy and washed clean of some ego-grime after seven days under the stick.



*First tandem 7-day April 1973 sesshin*

Both May sesshins, each four days in length, are strong as well, with the second one marked by a fire next door at the Johnston House. Well, we'll still have an art sale, but it will be confined to our buildings here.



*Participants: second tandem 7-day April sesshin*

In early June, the annual picnic "happens" at the Temple place. Those of you who remember the ones at the Gratwick farm will be sorry to hear that the Big House was recently gutted. Still, the get-together at Alan and Mary's, though smaller than usual, lacks nothing in enthusiasm. Frisbie aficionados, touch footballers, soccer players and a high-spirited volleyball contest compete without particular incident for space on the back lawn. There is plenty of food as well, but we seem finally to have learned the art of not serving nor eating too much at these annual rites.

There are big changes here at the Center, with Roshi beginning to live in the country and commuting for teisho, dokusan and the other activities that keep him occupied here four days a week. Milda Vaivada is gradually being given charge of the Rochester Center, and the Roshi will establish a monastery in the country. Milda and Jackson Deupree are getting married, a big change too, and a beautiful one from what one can observe of the people involved.

On July 15 there will be an animal releasing ceremony at the country land. This ceremony, traditional in the older Buddhist countries, is being held here in Rochester for the first time. Its purpose is to save some animals intended for slaughter and at the same time affirm our faith in the oneness and interdependence of all existence. It fits with Spring.

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