

News of Rinzai-ji

Fall 2016

Bodhidharma's Four-fold Entrance of Practice

by Noritake Shūnan Rōshi

EXCERPTED FROM TEISHO-S GIVEN AT MOUNT BALDY ZEN CENTER
JULY 2016. TRANSLATION BY THOMAS KIRCHNER.

[After his audience with Emperor Wu], Bodhidharma went north to the temple Shaolin on Mount Song, where he sat in a cave in deep meditation for nine years. Later generations extolled Bodhidharma's practice, speaking of his "nine years facing the wall" and referring to him as "the wall-gazing Brahman." Many of Bodhidharma's expressions, such as "not relying on words and letters" or "a separate transmission outside of the teachings," are famous in Zen, and have come to define the essential nature of the Zen school.

... But Bodhidharma did not stop with his nine years of zazen in the cave. He also left behind a number of texts and records of his exchanges with students. Particularly well-known is the text known as the "Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices," in which he outlines his teachings on Zen. To summarize, there are various approaches to entering the Way, but in the simplest terms there are two approaches and four practices. The two approaches are referred to by him as the entrance of principle and the entrance of practice. The entrance of principle consists of understanding the source of the Way through study of the teachings, with deep faith that all sentient beings, both ordinary and enlightened, equally possess the same true nature, that is, the Buddha-mind, and with the recognition that we fully live everyday life in the suchness of Truth. It is only because of superficial delusions and false thinking that this Truth is not clearly visible. It is like the sun, which is eternally radiant but whose light is temporarily hidden by clouds. Therefore we read the sutras in order to grasp the fundamental

principle, which is also known as "the source" or "Buddha-nature."

The entrance of practice consists of entering the Way through use of the four practices; all other virtuous acts are incorporated within these. It is not sufficient to understand the four practices intellectually—they must be actually performed.

The first practice is known as "the practice of accepting adversity." When we undergo suffering we should reflect in this way: "In the past we have forgotten the root and gone chasing after the branches and leaves, thus wandering through the world of delusion, generating enmity toward others and causing unlimited injury to them. Thus I cannot avoid this suffering. When in the past I experienced suffering I felt resentful, so now I will endeavor to eliminate this feeling of resentment. I shall patiently accept this suffering and bear no resentment toward anyone." When painful things or bad things happen to us we disregard our own part in the matter and place the blame on other people, on society, or on nature. When our children are involved we don't consider our responsibility as parents but say instead that the schools are responsible, or the teachers, or the society we live in. Such attitudes do nothing to solve the problem. We must return to the starting point of the ego. We must closely observe ourselves.

The second practice is known as "the practice of accepting circumstances." Originally there is no ego. We must penetrate to the essence of this lack of ego—this is the true spirit of no-self, of anatman. All of us are simply acting in accordance with the law of causality. We human beings have been born into this world according to circumstances, and our existence here is merely provisional. We have nothing that we truly possess, and we will die according to circumstances. It is important that we observe the true workings of nature—suffering and pleasure, sadness and joy, all are entirely the result of circumstances. All that we receive we will lose when those circumstances are exhausted. There is nothing to be happy or sad about—just move ahead, one with the Way,

in accord with circumstances through both gain and loss. It is like the water in a river, which flows along smoothly when unobstructed but throws up spray when hitting a rock; if you allow yourself to be obstructed unsteadiness sets in, and you undergo suffering.

The third practice is known as “the practice of nonseeking.” There is nothing to seek; simply be satisfied with what suffices. People in their constant delusion always covet this and covet that. This is what is called craving. In the sutras it is said that where there is craving there is suffering, and that where nothing is sought there is ease. Human desires are limitless; there is no end to them. The negative side of this is a constant state of frustration; the positive side is that human desire drives scientific progress, affluence, and human evolution. None of this brings us spiritual peace, however, regardless of how much we advance materially or culturally, no matter how much we progress intellectually and technologically. What eases our spirits is the Buddha’s teaching to be content with what is enough. What satisfies the mind’s limitless discontent is to accept, in the midst of one’s discontent, the fact that “this is fully sufficient.” Do so and you will realize that there is nothing lacking in yourself.

Last April Jose Mujica, the former president of Uruguay, visited Japan. He was called “the poorest president in the world” because of his simple lifestyle—he donated most of his salary to the poor, refused to move into the presidential mansion, and lived in the same way as the ordinary people of Uruguay. He would appear on TV driving around in his old used automobile, which he kept in a dilapidated garage. He proclaimed that unchecked greed constitutes true poverty, and said, “At some point a time comes when people must stand in front of a mirror and see the summation of their lives. Those who have not given any time or space to other people will see in the mirror only egoism, and no doubt will despair.” He also said, “A person needs a certain amount of egoism in order to live, but what is important is to apply the brakes to greed and cooperate with other people.”

Such comments are clear indications to us of the true way that people should live. A young Japanese woman, when asked on Japanese TV what she thought of President Mujica’s views on life, replied, “They were truly wonderful. I’ve never in my life heard such refreshing words.” Hearing what she said I was quite moved, and at the same time made aware of how short I’ve fallen as a

Buddhist in teaching these same values. This young woman is typical of the post-WWII generations who, having grown up in a Japan that attempted to fulfill all human desires, seek only their own affluence and the satisfaction of their own wishes. Thus this woman, living her ego-centered existence, had never heard of simple living or of Shakyamuni’s teaching to be content with what is enough, and knew nothing of applying the brakes to desire. President Mujica’s words opened her eyes a bit, I believe, and the eyes of other Japanese. His advice is that of the Buddha, “Be content with what is enough”—advice that all Japanese Buddhists know but have a hard time putting into practice.

The fourth practice is known as “the practice of according with the Dharma.” The principle of essential purity is the Dharma. We must practice dana free of avarice in our hearts, giving fully of our possessions and giving fully of our essentially pure life, unstained by anything and unattached to anything. Moreover, we should practice dana with no thought of practicing dana; we should perform good works with no thought of performing good works. “Good works” are often talked of, but I recommend that you actually do them. You see people, however, who become full of pride in their contributions, boasting to the world of all the wonderful things they’ve done and thus negating the benefit they gain from their good works. Good works must be performed in the true spirit of Bodhidharma’s “no merit.” What is essential is that acts leave no trace, just as birds leave no trace as they fly through the sky.



An ancient master said, “Bodhidharma, gazing at the wall, pacified peoples’ minds; outwardly cease all attachments; inwardly grasp not with the mind. When there is nowhere for dust to settle in your mind, then you can enter the Way.” A precious teaching indeed! Let all of

us here in the beautiful surroundings of Mount Baldy return to the spirit of Bodhidharma and give ourselves fully to the practice of zazen.

Rinzai-ji Pilgrims' Progress

Highlights from Firsthand Accounts

These narratives provide a glimpse of the experiences of four members of the group that toured Rinzai-ji heritage sites in China and Japan in August and September of this year. Recurring themes are the hospitality shown to the group, the enduring impressions through meetings with people who knew Jōshu Rōshi, and the splendid itinerary and arrangements for which all who participated bow deeply to Myōren. A full report will be posted on the website.

A HEARTWARMING PILGRIMAGE

by Carole Wilson

(FULL-TIME PARTICIPANT)

This September, sangha members from Rinzai-Ji went on pilgrimage to Japan and China to visit monasteries where Jōshu Sasaki Rōshi had left his footprint, from Zuiryū-ji in Sapporo, where Rōshi began his training at the age of 14; to Zuigan-ji, a pristine temple where Rōshi continued his rigorous training; to a bucolic temple in Shōjyu-an where Rōshi was Abbott before leaving for the United States in 1962. In between travel to these historic places, our intrepid tour guide Myōren made sure to schedule visits to hot-springs, four in total, each one renowned for specific healing properties. Appreciation of the unique and special cuisine of Japan was also part of the itinerary, with many memorable lunches and dinners arranged by Noritake Rōshi, Minakawa Rōshi and other gracious hosts.

In Kyoto, Noritake Rōshi gave us the “insider’s” tour of the magnificent grounds and temples of Myoshinji. In Sendai, Rōshi’s nephew Seiya Oshō welcomed us to his temple and brought out a special and rare exhibit of brush paintings by the Rinzai Zen masters, including Hakuin Zenji and D.T. Suzuki. At Zuigan-ji, the sangha

stayed in the monasteries and followed the schedule of the Japanese monastics. It will be noted, however, that the Jiki-jitsu used the keisaku only on volunteers in deference to American sensibilities, and the sting of the stick felt more like a welcome massage.

The group also flew to the city of Shijiazhuang in China, where Rinzai founded the lineage of Rinzai Zen 1,150 years ago. Participating with over 200 monks who flew in from Japan and several hundred Chinese monks and lay sangha, we were able to experience a rare and sacred ceremony, held every 50 years at Rinzai Zenji’s temple. The Chinese leg of our journey ended with a magnificent banquet of delicious Chinese cuisine.

The trip was a rare opportunity to experience the land where Rōshi developed his own unique style of Zen. As Minakawa Rōshi told us, “Zen comes in all flavors.” What was most touching was to understand that Rōshi left Japan and the centuries-old temples and traditions to come to Los Angeles. The image of Rōshi’s last temple assignment at Shōjyu-an, nestled in fields of grass and surrounded by fresh mountain breezes, was a vivid reminder that Rōshi was a bold pioneer who left an elaborate cultural heritage to come to America to teach Zen.



JAPAN/CHINA NOTES

by Elisa Atwill

(FULL-TIME PARTICIPANT)

It was a memorable trip in so many ways! Thanks to Myōren, it was well planned to maximize our time and experiences, she was also an invaluable translator, and thanks to Mike Rudnick who kept us together helping out through the many travels and transits.

We were warmly welcomed, treated as honored guests and were able to participate in many temple and monastery activities. It was a wonderful way of deepening the understanding of our traditions of zen practice while nurturing relationships with our Japanese and Chinese sanghas.

In China we were part of the official delegation led by Noritaki Rōshi, visiting the monastery where Jōshu Oshō (Chin.: Zhaozhou; famous for answering ‘Mu’) was Abbot and participating in the 1,150 year memorial ceremony at the monastery where Rinzai (Chin.: Linji) was Abbot.

In Kyōto, memorable moments include: chanting at Reiun-in the sutra hall & sitting on the veranda as dawn illuminated the courtyard, warm tea and the deep sounds of the temple bell, and having a private tour of the Myōshinji temple complex enlivened by stories from Noritake Rōshi. We also took part in a zazen-kai at Tenryū-ji.

On our pilgrimage to the monasteries and temples where Jōshu Rōshi lived and taught, we heard stories about his youth, saw the trees he planted and observed his influence that lives on in Japan, such as the kindergarten program in Sendai.



At Zuigan-ji monastery (also in Sendai), our itinerary included participation in a rigorous daily schedule. That meant working in fields and sweeping the gardens with bamboo brooms, formal meals, Zazen in the ancient Zendo with cricket serenades all around, and Yaza while fighting fatigue—taking care not to fall off the porch!

In Sapporo, we stayed at Zuiryū-ji temple where Jōshu Rōshi entered monastic life at the age of 14. It was wonderful to be able to practice with Minakawa Rōshi

and afterward to socialize with the numerous lay members of the community.

Altogether it was a memorable trip indeed!

JAPAN PILGRIMAGE 2016

by Jackie Farley

(PART-B PARTICIPANT)

This was a trip of extreme contrasts: relaxing in ancient hot springs, enjoying fine Japanese food and then sitting on tatami with no support cushion trying to follow the complex choreography of the meal sequence at Zuigan-ji training monastery and trying to clean my bowl with a pickle!



It was a delight to be welcomed in Sendai by Rōshi's grand nephew, Seiya Oshō, and a challenge to squeeze into the seats of the kindergarten bus he had set up for a tour that included a lovely lunch before we set out by boat to Matsushima. His collection of calligraphy and brush paintings by various zen masters was amazing and very much a blessing to see.

At Zuiryū-ji, the farewell party hosted by Minakawa Rōshi was remarkable. He made sure we had translators at each table. We were showered with gifts, and I felt like I had been embraced by family.

Matsumoto Tokuji, an elder patron of Zuiryū-ji, was able to share memories of Jōshu Rōshi from his childhood and showed us the room (now part of the temple) where he would tease Rōshi when Rōshi would come to his home to chant. On the next day, Matsumoto-san took us up to

the Olympic ski jump above Sapporo and treated us to lunch at the restaurant overlooking the slopes. I felt quite overwhelmed at the hospitality we were shown.



Getting to know my room mates was a boon. Meeting Carole Wilson and seeing for a first time the film she made for Rōshi's memorial moved me to tears.

All in all it was an extraordinary trip—a meditation in motion—in which we covered a lot of ground in just 10 days. How Myōren managed to coordinate everything remains a mystery. I'm really glad I had a small carry-on.

GIFTS FROM THE JAPAN – CHINA PILGRIMAGE

By Mike Rudnick

(FULL-TIME PARTICIPANT)

This brick or cookie of tea was a gift from Zhengding Rinzai-ji founded by Linji Yixuan in Zhengding County, China. At the center of the temple grounds stood the Chengling Pagoda. It was said that tea has been compressed in these types of packages for centuries for travel over the Silk Road. It is my understanding that the initial flash steep of these leaves is discarded and the second and third steep are for consumption.



Next is a gift from Ryōan-ji. It is a replica of the cap for the Tsukubai, or stone water basin used for a ritual cleansing of the hands and mouth before entering into the tea ceremony. The cap, which is the size of a manhole cover, is most famous for its poetic inscription. From my understanding, the void in the middle functions as a compounding kanji character and a poetic sentence is articulated when read attaching this compounding element to each of the inscribed characters—a lexical sleight-of-hand that has no counterpart in any Western language. Myōren helped me to construct the meaning as follows:

“The stone water basin called Tsukubai consists of the following words:

五 (five)+口= 吾 *ware* (I)

止 (stop)+口= 足 *taru* (sufficient)

佳 (bird)+口= 唯 *tada* (just/only)

矢 (arrow)+口= 知 *shiru* (know)

If combined together as a 4-character idiom it reads:

吾唯足知 (吾唯足るを知る) *Ware tada taru wo shiru*



This is the essence of Buddhist teaching, and illustrates the heart of Chisoku (知足), which Shakyamuni has taught as: “Those who know when to be satisfied are rich even if poor. Those who do not know when to be satisfied are poor even if rich.”

If I remember correctly, the guide translated the expression to mean something like, “Know that just enough is enough.” It turns out that the replica can also come in handy (it’s “just enough”) for opening a beer bottle.



This is my most treasured gift of the trip, a Mala (or rosary) from Minakawa Rōshi. As a layperson, I am not sure how I use this tool to deepen my understanding. (Does the Rinzai Zen tradition recite mantras?) I think it is important to hold it in your left hand. Nonetheless, I have incorporated it into my personal sitting practice.

Photos Dylan Isbell

July Events at Mount Baldy and Rinzai-ji

by Soko Paul Humphreys

Kyōzan Jōshu Rōshi arrived in North America on 21 July 1962. In most years since then, that date, or one very near to it, has seen a convergence of students and friends to celebrate the occasion, and more recently, to observe the occasion of Rōshi passing in 2014.



In July 2016, we honored the Rōshi's in a third memorial ceremony (Sankai-ki) at Rinzai-ji. A photograph of Rōshi taken by Don Farber was placed on the new butsudan with Oshōs, ordained, and lay folks present. In his first official action as Acting Abbot (Kenmu-jūshoku)

DANA PARAMITA

We acknowledge the contributions of the following institutions and individuals that have arrived since publication of the summer issue. Zen asks us to donate ourselves in the practice of no-self. We deeply appreciate the support that enables that essential practice to continue at Rinzai-ji and Mount Baldy Zen Centers. Hail the donor!

Denkyō-an	Marilyn Gladle
Fukyōshi-kai	Susan & Paul Humphreys
Honkō-ji	Kōdo Kanai
Hantō-in	Mariko Kanai
Jion-in	Patrick Lavey
Myōkan-ji	Dianne Lawrence
Myōshin-ji	Agnes Lin
Reiun-in	Patrick Mair
Ryōan-ji	Tokuji Matsumoto
Seijō-in	Kris Matsuoka
Tōen-ji	Myoyuu Okazaki
Yōki-ji	Peter Pyrko
Zuiryū-ji	Julianna Raye
Zennō-ji	Kim Salisbury
Elisa Atwill	Sigita Sulaityte
Mark Byers	John Watts
Jeff Creek	Stanley Weinstein
Jack Drake	Tom Yoneda
Stanley Edmonton	Yusa Shimeko
Jackie Farley	Sohan & Marcella

JULY EVENTS, CONTINUED

of Rinzai-ji, Noritake Shūnan Rōshi served as officiant (Dōshi) for the ceremony. (See also 13 August 2016 news post to www.rinzaiji.org).

At one point, the ceremony shifted from the zendo to the back courtyard where everyone made an offering to the monument for Rōshi that is now situated along the north wall. It was a time for everyone to say another hello and goodbye to Jōshu Rōshi.

Both before and after lunch, students and friends offered performances to honor and enliven the occasion. Among those who shared music and dance that day (in some cases at the encouragement of Noritake Rōshi) were Ellie Choat, Kimberly Anne Free, Sōko Paul Humphreys, Mariko Kanai, Myoshō Virginia Matthews, and Julianna Raye.

Previous to the Sunday memorial and installation ceremonies at Rinzai-ji, Mount Baldy Zen Center hosted a five-day memorial (Hō-on) sesshin. Noritake Rōshi offered interviews (Sekke) and sanzen as well as teisho-s on Case One of the Blue Cliff Record (Hekigan-roku), excerpts of which are included in this issue. On the last evening, Noritake Rōshi held a question-and-answer period with tea & sweets (Sawakai). He also introduced a president of the education department of Myōshin-ji, Yamamoto Oshō & the abbot of Shūrin-an temple, Shimizu Oshō and to whom questions were posed as well.



In the three days immediately previous to the sesshin, Mount Baldy hosted a Sangha meeting. Shindo Atae, Shinkai Barratt, Seido Clark, Nora Haenn and Sohan Youngelson all did commendable work to organize and facilitate the meeting. Some of the exercises emerged as extensions of Council Practice, modified to fit the time constraints of the occasion. Others, such as ranked-

choice voting, were new to many and suggested avenues for future meetings. Overall, the meeting was a time to affirm kinship through shared practice in the past and to meet the challenge of working together in the continuing present. Noritake Rōshi demonstrated his support by changing his original travel plans so that he could arrive early to attend the meeting from mid-Saturday through to closing sarei.

Those attending these events came from seven states and one territory (Puerto Rico) in the U.S., two provinces in Canada, and from Germany (Augsberg), Austria (Vienna) and Kyōto, Japan.

Upcoming events

ZAZENKAI

Sunday, December 11 | 9:30am - 4:30pm

NEW YEAR'S PROGRAM

Saturday, December 31 - Sunday, January 1, 2017

SESSHIN

Rōhatsu Sesshin led by Noritake Rōshi

Hashinkyūji: Saturday, November 23 | Banka 4pm

Sesshin: November 24 - 28, 2016

At Mt. Baldy Zen Center

Nirvana Sesshin led by Noritake Rōshi

Hashinkyūji: Saturday, February 15 | Banka 4pm

Sesshin: February 16 - 20, 2017

At Mt. Baldy Zen Center

SERVICES

49th Day, Teishin Tropper: Sunday, November 20

Jōdō-e: November 29

Rinzai-ji Publications

by Kendo Hal Roth

The next book of teachings from Jōshu Rōshi will contain the set of forty-two teisho-s that Rōshi gave during six sesshin-s at Mount Baldy Zen Center between March and October of 1986. These are very capably translated by Professor Christopher Ives who at the time was completing his doctoral dissertation at the Claremont Graduate School under the direction of renowned Japanese Zen philosopher Masao Abe. Ives is now a full professor at Stonehill College. He hopes to have an edited version ready to send to publishers by the end of the year and reports interest from several publishers in the project. We are also looking for a practical way to include Rōshi's original Japanese in the publication, perhaps via a password-protected link to a website on which digital recordings are contained.

From the Presidents of the Boards

by Soko Paul Humphreys & Mark Byers

Greetings at mid-fall, an auspicious time to recall the events of this past summer and to anticipate those that lie ahead as the days grow shorter. Glowing accounts appear in this issue of the Rinzai-ji-sponsored tour of heritage sites in China and Japan during September. You may have already seen photos on the Rinzai-ji website.

July was a busy month at both centers. At Rinzai-ji, a third memorial ceremony to honor Kyōzan Jōshu Rōshi brought us together on the same day as a ceremony of installation (Nyūji) for Noritake Shūnan Rōshi as Acting Abbot. Photos that document these events also appear on the Rinzai-ji website in news.

At Mount Baldy, Noritake Rōshi led a second memorial sesshin, coming on the heels of a Sangha meeting, also hosted by Mount Baldy. (See “July Events” in this issue; for an update from the boards presented at the meeting, see also <www.rinzaiji.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Statement-from-Boards-for-Sangha-Meeting-at-MBZC-July-2016.pdf>)

Meeting-at-MBZC-July-2016.pdf>)

Practice Schedule at Rinzai-ji

DAILY ZEN PRACTICE

Wednesday - Saturday Morning 6:00 - 7:30 AM
Choka (chanting), Zazen & Kinhin
Wednesday - Saturday Evening 7:00 - 8:30 PM
Zazen & Kinhin
Wednesday - Saturday
10:00 - 11:30 AM & 2:00 - 4:30 PM
Samu work practice

WEEKLY PRACTICE

Thursday Evening 7:00 - 8:30 PM
Sutra Study, Sutra Copying, Movie etc.
Sunday Program 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Rinzai-ji offers Zazenkai on a regular basis and also hosts classes and workshops by special arrangement. Please check the [Rinzai-ji online calendar](#) for details and dates as these are announced.

TO CONTACT US

We welcome comments and proposed submissions.
Please address these to editor@rinzaiji.org.

Many thanks!

FROM THE PRESIDENTS, CONTINUED

Also during July, the boards learned from Noritake Rōshi of his intention to lead sesshin at least three times a year at Mount Baldy. We are pleased to announce that the first of these will be an early Rōhatsu this month (please see “Upcoming Events” in this issue). Special thanks are due to Noritake Rōshi for offering to provide this additional spiritual guidance to our sangha.

We bring our palms together in thanks to Yoshin David Radin for leading a five-day Zazenkai at Rinzai-ji in October and for his dharma talk as part of the Daruma-ki ceremony on the day following the retreat. We also are very grateful to Junshu Jay Hershey who took time from his work and practice in Pittsburgh, PA to lead practice at Rinzai-ji during the tour of China and Japan.

This issue is an opportunity to announce a pilot effort to facilitate communication between members of the sangha and the boards. Suggestions and comments will reach us directly at the following link: <board@rinzaiji.org>.

Finally, we acknowledge with sadness the passing of **Teishin Eunice Tropper** (1923-2016), beloved by many and a steadfast, long-time student of Jōshu Rōshi.

Many thanks. We look forward to practicing with you soon.

Satori in Two Parts

by Kyōzan Jōshu Rōshi

Everyone talks about satori. Americans love this exotic animal called satori. Actually satori has two parts: to realize absolute self (in which there is no self left to experience), and then, when this unification breaks up, to realize the individual self which objectifies the absolute and bases its actions on the realization of the absolute. It is the essential tragedy of modern education that you are taught only to affirm the self, to develop just this one aspect. By affirming the individual self without knowing absolute self, you are approaching the problems of the world as if they were external to yourself. However, from such a one-sided perspective of self, you will be forever seeking that which appears only as an object to yourself. Since you only experience the world as external to you and you are never unified with it, then you are forever seeking the world. You are enslaved by it and you can

never experience life in its true joy. Satori means, ultimately, that there is only one center of gravity in the universe and you are sitting in the center of gravity. What you ordinarily call the absolute or ultimate reality must become your own experience. When you have such an experience of the absolute then there is no need to go on seeking things outside of yourself. When you are really embracing your friend, you are not seeking your friend or yourself. This is absolute self.

Excerpted from a dharma talk given during a symposium at UC Santa Cruz in 1978, Professor Taisetsu Unno translating. Also published as “Who Pollutes the World” in *Zero—Contemporary Buddhist Life and Thought*, Volume Two, pp 154, 55 (1979).



Stone water basin (Tsukubai) at Ryōan-ji in Kyōto
Photo by Scott Page