



# Incense From Roshis

*by*

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## Chapter 1 – The Search for Zen

[The first page is missing—Ed]

The Ambassador from the Land of the Rising Sun happened to be in Los Angeles at one time and heard about the garden. The respected guest was received with utmost cordiality when he visited the place.

The owner explained everything down to the smallest detail. Then he asked for the Ambassador's response. The latter beamed, "Wonderful! Wonderful! We have nothing like this in Japan."

There are quite a number of philosophies abroad which use the term "Zen" and offer teachings that nobody in Japan has ever heard before. If offered as personal teachings or as eclectic approaches to life, one could hardly be offended. But they are not based on the practice of meditation. To Zen means to meditate. Some professors have admitted they have been guilty of vocabulary stealing, others do not.

We do not go to the tailor to study anatomy nor to the beauty parlor to learn neurology. Knowledge of the body comes through examination of one sort and knowledge of the self comes through a discipline of another sort. One ardent group has made an effort to copyright "Zen." Apparently they know nothing of the Parliament of Religions which took place at the Columbia Centennial Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. That Parliament is one of which Americans may well be proud. It was a pioneer effort to bring representatives of all faiths together. It was the representatives who explained their religion and went on to defend it for the edification of the audience. There were no substitutions and no mass of non-American, non-Asians giving out personal ideas as exotic religions, a very contemplative practice of which we ought to be ashamed. (No objection is made to Christian missionaries, here, but to pseudo-representatives as authorities for Asian faiths.)

Shaku Soyen was a Roshi, a Master, an Abbot of the Rinzai Zen sect. The Roshi is qualified to be head of a monastery or even of a group of monasteries. The teachings, disciplines and practices of Rinzai Zen have been explained in the words of Prof. Daisetz Suzuki. In Zen the Roshi can trace his line of patriarchal succession back to the historical Buddha. The claim has been made that all those patriarchs have experienced enlightenment.

I met Rev. M.T. Kirby, an English Zen monk, in 1919. He had belonged to a Catholic order previously but his convictions had drawn him to Buddhism. He became in due order a disciple of Shaku Soyen who had given him the name of Sogaku Shaku. He was a good friend of the late L. Adams Beck and of Beatrice Lane, the first wife of Prof. Suzuki.

Kirby told me his story. He had to wait outside the monastery for three days before being recognized. He had had a background of culture, wealth and monastic living. Now he was compelled to dissociate himself from his entire past. This proved most difficult.

One expects Zen Masters to be diligent in effacing mental activities in disciples, to remove samskaras or impressions from their minds. Old Shaku Soyen seems to have exercised an almost sadistic delight in beating Kirby. There he was, an almost aristocratic Englishman in a far off land, having surrendered home, family, customs, everything, and all he was receiving in turn were beatings. He finally could stand it no longer and determined to run away. After being severely chastised he fled down a hill and in his agony dropped to the ground, grasped a pine tree and cried aloud. In that moment It happened.

By It I mean the experience of samadhi or satori, or the escape from ego-self wherein one obtains insight into his true nature. This has been called emancipation. Samadhi is a Sanskrit word and one should bear in mind that emancipation or enlightenment is also the goal of many Indian disciplinary efforts. Satori is a Japanese word. The experience of satori brings the definition of satori. The true mysticism of the Orient comes in and from experience, not definitions, dialects or discus-

sions. Our young people are beginning to understand this and so are submitting to the disciplines of meditation and other practices; older peoples are often attracted by discussions and philosophers which have quite a different import.

Kirby then returned to Shaku Soyen and was recognized. He visited British Columbia, California, Hawaii and Japan, functioning in the dual role of Zen Monk and Pure Land Priest. Here it should be stated that Buddhists in general are not analytical or dualistic like Westerners, and the functional differentiation of sects is not determinate. In later life Kirby also took the vows of a Theravadin Bhikku (Pali term for "monk") and stayed at the Island Hermitage, Ceylon. Among his pupils is the famed Dr. Malalasekera.

Kirby taught that Zen meant meditation; that it was derived from the Sanskrit dhyana. There were not many books on Buddhism in these days and we practiced meditation but did not have philosophical discourses. He introduced me to Beatrice Lane, Kenneth Saunders and most important of all, the late Nyogen Senzaki.

He also showed me *Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot* by Shaku Soyen. The Roshi had much to say about God, having views quite different from intellectuals who teach comparative religion or talk about "Zen."

The "Sermons" include what the Roshi said was the first translation into English of "The Sutra of Forty-Two Chapters." In many ways this work reflects principles one finds in the Upanishads. It has been one of the most revered texts in Southeast Asia, an area that has been rather neglected in our scientific studies.

Sogaku Shaku and Nyogen Senzaki came from the same monastery, both being disciples of Shaku Soyen. They impressed upon me the importance of anatta, the non-ego outlook. This is basic in all Buddhism. But many recent books seem to ignore or overlook it and so egocentricity has crept in where it can only cause confusion and increase ignorance.

From the beginning Senzaki-san impressed upon his audiences: "There is no such person as Senzaki-san." In time this pioneer monk became a legend. He had been brought to California in 1906 and was put on a sort of twenty years discipline during which time he did reveal his true mission. He had functioned as a great scholar, a linguist, an authority especially on German and Chinese literature; he had worked and worked hard in many capacities; and again he lived, actually, as a poor, homeless monk.

Although Sensei Senzaki stressed meditation and seemed to be anti-intellectual, he encouraged friendship with Dr. Thompson who brought the complete Pali Canon to this country. He may become better known as the man who introduced the Siamese Cat! But he encouraged all his friends to study these scriptures. In later years this became a profitable adjunct in traveling in Southeast Asia. It includes a vast literature which needs a much more thorough examination than it has had in America.

In 1980 there was Dr. Senzaki, the cook-valet-savant. In 1926, the poor monk who spoke Pidgin English, denied all learning and gave, at the most, simple lectures. Instead there would be a paper on meditation from Shaku Soyen. But all through his life he invited Buddhist and other teachers to his abode. In that way I met Master Tai Hsu from China, Dwight Goddard known for *A Buddhist Bible* and others. Nearly all agreed on the importance of meditation; but all did agree that there should be no speculation.

In 1930 I came to New York and met Senzaki's spiritual "nephew," Sokei-An Sasaki. I have never, I hope, escaped from his influence and wisdom. But no attention was paid to this until I was traveling in Japan with my brother Upasika<sup>1</sup> Kiichi Okuda. The first thing we did upon our arrival in Kyoto was to look up Mrs. Ruth Fuller Sasaki. Then she asked the question which for years I had been forbidden (actually) to refer to: "What did Sokei-An teach you?"

<sup>1</sup>A Buddhist lay devotee.

## Chapter II—What Did Sokei-An Teach You?

Bodhisattvas:

It was with this greeting that old Senzaki addressed his audience. He did not define it. If you stay with a Zen teacher long enough you may come to a much better understanding of terms than looking them up in a dictionary.

When I traveled through the Orient in 1956 I received the most cordial greeting in each land: Japan, Thailand, Burma (where I remained only a few days), Pakistan (both wings), and India. When the heart is open and there is no adherence to self, there are no strangers anywhere.

It is we of the West who divide the universal Dharma into what we call "Hinduism" and "Buddhism." Perhaps this should be done. But when one submits to discipline he will be told he is treading the path of Dharma.

This word was introduced into the West by the famous Swami Vivekananda, chief disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. There is a tradition that Sri Ramakrishna taught his disciples that his heart would split in 50,000 pieces and each of these would reincarnate, so to speak, in 50,000 successors. All of them would carry the light of Dharma. I do not know if this will be literally true but I have been convinced that many of the Vedanta teachers of the day seem to be far advanced in spiritual wisdom.

Swami Maharaj Ranganathananda is the secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission in New Delhi. He impresses one as being a true swami, as fulfilling the mission for which he has been selected. I hope to say much more about him elsewhere.

Swamiji gave me an afternoon tea just before I left India in 1956. Professor S.C. Chatterjee of the Philosophy Department of Calcutta University was present. Hardly waiting for an introduction, the professor became very critical. Swamiji interceded and said: "Why do you not wait until you hear his point of view before criticizing?" I turned to the professor and asked him if he wanted my explanation of Chandogya-Upanishad off hand. The Swami added: "He is not fooling." The professor apologized and we had a wonderful visit.

Professor Chatterjee is one of a large group of Asians who have become somewhat anti-American. We organize classes and seminars in Asiatics and put Europeans in charge. Or else some American is selected because he has a PhD. degree in something or other, which is something or other that has nothing to do with the Orient. When one approaches such men with any suggestion, criticism or idea, the invariable reply is: "We like your ideas, but cannot possibly accept them lest the Asians be offended." So these highly placed men have often been guilty of that very offence.

Naturally you will ask what has this anecdote about Professor Chatterjee to do with Zen Buddhism and Sokei-An? It has been stated that fundamentally there is one Dharma and that Dharma-transmission may be universal. It is realization that enables us to comprehend Scriptures. Book reading does not often, if ever, lead to enlightenment. But study or discipline under a valid teacher may bring about wonderful consequences.

Gautama Buddha, the sage of the Sakyas, did not teach any "Buddhism." He came to review and clarify the basic teachings of Dharma. Dharma is an aeonic method or religion or way of life whereby man comes to understand his own nature, fulfill his destiny and realize the truth of being, within and without.

The Upanishads teach that there are many levels of consciousness and communication. The higher levels cannot be expressed in ordinary terms. Efforts to do so have often produced confusion. The logic of Aristotle is not applicable to integrative and transfinite processes, though a lot of us still try it in this day of Univac. Buddha may be said to have been a sort of Univac. That is to say he consciously utilized integration in his teaching and thinking. But he did not stop there; he seems to have realized the Ultimate.

Dharmakaya literally may mean, "the body of the law." But Dharmakaya is infinite and belongs to a class of terms associated with the experience of perfect self-realization. Until then it is a word which loses meaning and charm through gross discussion.

Dharma-transmission is basic in Ch'an and Zen Buddhism. In this they do not differ from spiritual or mystical Hinduism. In both realms there may be references to chains of Patriarchs and Masters who have passed the Dharma on ceaselessly, even to this day. Perhaps this might be expressed in a free interpretation of the first chapter of the Gospel of John:

1. In the uncreated was the Dharmakaya,  
And the Dharmakaya was with God,  
And this Dharmakaya was God.
2. This was in the uncreated with God.
3. Through it everything became,  
And without it not even one became,  
That has been done.
4. In it was Life; and the Life was the Light of men;  
And the Light shone in the darkness  
And the darkness did not grasp it.
  
9. Was the true Light  
Which enlightens every man  
Coming into manifestation.
10. Was in the manifestation,  
And the manifestation was because of it,  
And the manifestation knew it not.

This would propose that there is only one Truth and one finality.

There is a close kinship between "The Sutra of Forty-Two Chapters" and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. There is a further kinship between many aspects of Mahayana Buddhism and schools of Indian tradition regarded as orthodox. In other words, there is one Supreme Dharma. However one receives it, one has it. It may have come through one teacher or another, but it is one and the same Truth.

I came to New York in 1930. At that time there were many people interested in what they called "Buddhism." Most of them seemed interested in Theravadin (or Hinayana) teachings; or else in some Tibetan school. One of these people suggested I visit Sokei-An Sasaki, which was done. From the first instance, Sokei-An impressed me as a sort of incarnation of the basic teachings of Mahayana. There was no separation in him between the ultimate peace of Nirvana and the life and activity of this world. He lived in the midst of the world, though it did not know him.

He worked for his living. He did a number of ordinary things in ordinary ways. He could lecture like an intellectual and sometimes did. He could converse as an ordinary person to an ordinary person, and sometimes did.

Sometimes he gave profound answers to questions. Sometimes he gave detailed intellectual answers. Sometimes he was enigmatic. His purpose was to restrain the ego and help liberate the personality from its delusions. If I learned anything from Sokei-An it may be continued in the word *prajna*.

Somewhere Prof. Sasaki has said that Zen was *prajna* rather than *dhyana*. The understanding of *prajna* may be quite different accordingly as one seeks verbal definitions, practices meditations, or comes to realize the wisdom-guidance which all of us have. This spirit of guidance is supreme in us, once we begin to awaken.

Zen tradition holds that Buddha gave the essence of his teachings to Mahakasyapa who gave

them to Ananda, and that Dharma has been handed down through a succession of patriarchs, all realized souls. Such transmission is outside but not apart from the scriptures. Scriptures may be called "the clothes of Dharma." They can point to its nature; that is all.

Buddha expounded on sama-drishti which means supreme or universal or cosmic outlook. The term darshana, coming from the same root, may be termed outlook or view or philosophy. But there is a vast difference between views or outlooks or philosophies gained externally and those associated with enlightenment.

Sasaki-san never gave me any direct instructions in scriptures. He did, however, expound on several Japanese Mahayana developments which we associate with the Kegon, Tendai and Shingon schools. I call them "schools" rather than sects because the Oriental mind tends to be eclectic and synthetic rather than analytical and separative.

All Mahayana Buddhism is based on prajna and karuna. Prajna may be translated as "intuition" or "insight." It has also been called "wisdom" but what is wisdom? Prajna involves the immediate grasping of anything. It is the factor in tropisms, instincts, impressions and inspirations. It united man with knowledge, knowledge both within and without. It comes, however, with experience and not by definition.

Karuna may be translated as compassion or universal love. It transcends mehta or friendship, being the natural state of the pure heart. Nor are prajna, karuna and dhyana separate. They are the natural states or functions when the ego is controlled or transcended. This alone stands in the way.

When Sokei-An gave prajna and karuna and dhyana (actually practiced) he gave much more. The veil was lifted over many things. Not only Buddhist Scriptures but much Indian literature and wisdom became clear. Future events were often foreseen. The demarcation between science, religion and philosophy disappeared. And one came to know something of the true being of himself, and others.

I arrived in New York in 1945 the day Sokei-An died. Something also died in me to be resurrected later. His faithful followers are carrying on his work in New York. They may be recommended to the world.

### Chapter III—Nyogen Senzaki, or Zen Means Meditation

Bodhisattvas:

I first met Nyogen Senzaki in San Francisco early in 1920. He was then director of the “Mentorgarten.” This Senzaki bore few resemblances to the Zen monk of later date. He was an intellectual authority, known for his acquaintances with many great books, not included in Mortimer Adler’s lists.

The Mentorgarten was basically an intellectual institution. But we always did have short meditations during the evening. At that time, Mr. Senzaki (as he was generally called) conducted an open forum dedicated to Asiatica and not just Japan. He might lecture on Chinese poetry or have someone talk or demonstrate some phase of far Eastern Art, or there might be some traveler or explorer to entertain us. Philosophy, metaphysics and speculative thoughts were banned. Some attention was given to Buddhism, along the lines of Lafcadio Hearn rather than of the Rhys Davids.

We sometimes spent enjoyable evenings around a fireplace. We would have parties. We would celebrate the Japanese Boys’ Day and Girls’ Day, and the birth of Buddha and Paranirvana Day. There were no discussions on scriptures or doctrines. When Dr. Thompson presented the Pali Tripitaka it was considered as literature.

When Shaku Soyen left Chicago in 1893, he stopped off in San Francisco where he was entertained by a Mrs. Russell. She had a home on the Great Highway, near the Pacific Ocean. She invited the Roshi to return in 1906 and he then brought Senzaki-san with him as interpreter and companion.

Nyogen Senzaki did not always tell much of his early life. His biography may someday be given us. He seems to have been born on the peninsula of Kamchatka, perhaps of Chinese parents. He was a foundling in fact, rescued and raised by a Buddhist monk of the Kegon School. He later came to Zen, was accepted by Shaku Soyen of the Rinzai tradition, and evidently advanced very far in that discipline.

He was to remain in San Francisco for twenty years without imposing his ideas on anybody. Then he suddenly changed his whole way of life in 1926, and for practical purpose the Mentorgarten died, the Zendo was born.

With the opening of the Zendo conversation stopped. No more entertainments, no more discussion, even no more lectures for a while. The whole emphasis was on meditation. At first the meditations were quite short and easy. A paper might be read on how to meditate. We sat on chairs. The ritual elements were only slowly added. All we retained from the earlier period were the holidays or holy days. The meditations gradually lengthened. There would be rest periods, and then continued silence.

As we became more attentive and skillful, there would be the chantings of the Pali Formula, the Pancha Sila (in Pali) and the Vows of the Bodhisattva (in Japanese). Occasionally we had readings from the Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch. Sometimes Senzaki-san would translate poems from the Masters of China or Japan. Some of these translations later came into print. But during the depression Senzaki-san moved to Los Angeles and established his Zendo there.

I later became a member of the Los Angeles Zendo. There was a gradual relaxation of strict discipline and a degree of intellectualism. But this was never introduced at the expense of meditation which was first and foremost, always.

Discussion and propaganda on this point is not always helpful. Many writers have gone into detail on the matter and the reader must refer to them. But meditation is not necessarily Buddhist; there are all sorts of meditations practiced by all types of devotees religious and non-religious. The disciple of Zen would question about their fruits; where do they lead? The end of meditation is the acquisition of self-knowledge.

This seems to involve a contradiction. Buddha promulgated anatta, the absence of ego-substance. Senzaki often stated, "There is no such person as Nyogen Senzaki." St. Paul has said, "I die daily," a teaching which is not particularly germane to Christianity but which most Buddhists might accept.

Shaku Soyen did discuss God. Nyogen Senzaki seemed to deny any acceptance of God. He would say: "Show me! Show me!" Yet he would quote Tauler and other Christian mystics.

In 1923 I had the pleasure of introducing Nyogen Senzaki to the Sufi Pir-o-Murshid, Inayat Khan. This was bringing a man who denied God (we would say) to another who held that nothing existed but God. Their meeting would have delighted Emerson. The two men sat opposite each other at a table, a mutual glance passed between them, and they both spontaneously entered into that grand state called samadhi. "Murshid, you would make a very good Zennist." "Mr. Senzaki, you are a brilliant Sufi."

From that year on Nyogen Senzaki, the poor Zen monk, always celebrated the birthday of Inayat Khan. He even regarded himself as a disciple in Sufism. Their final meeting in 1926 is illustrative of the Zen Inayat Khan and the Sufi Nyogen Senzaki.

"Pir-o-Murshid, would you consider that the light of all these stars this evening, and of the moon and sun is one light?"

"Good-night, Mr. Senzaki."

These meetings have stimulated Paul Reps, who is today a well known writer on Zen, mysticism and the art of relaxation.

Senzaki-san of the Mentorgarten was an entertainer. We had parties and games sprinkled with wit and humor. There were times of discipline and times of joy. There were picnics and feasts. The monk did the cooking. Often he would serve foods which were prejudicially objectionable—such as bacon, or even meat. But there is a contrary teaching in India concerning Prasad, that whatever is given to a disciple or visitor in the way of food or gift must be accepted as a blessing. And it was so.

Many stories could be told about Nyogen Senzaki. One or two people have written theses about him; unfortunately the anatta philosophy is not always accompanied by an anatta psychology and so far the so-called writers here screened their source of data (not information), by personality.

Personally I am indebted to Nyogen Senzaki in many ways. During a very trying period in my life a former friend had gone out of the way to attack me publicly. I was visiting the Zendo in Los Angeles and was amazed to hear the monk attack this person in a most successful manner, practically putting an end to his career—one of the many pseudo-Buddhists.

There was a very noteworthy Swami in those days who held forth at Crescenta, in the hills north of Pasadena, California. He had a brilliant career and to multitudes a very clean personality. This did not stop certain women from spreading the most vicious gossip about him. When I dared to mention that the Swami could not have possibly committed the torts attributed to them, they turned on me.

The next day they went to the Zendo in Los Angeles and asked to come in: "Get out or I call the police!" "But, Mr. Senzaki, we wish to study Zen with you." "Get out or I call the police." "But, Mr. Senzaki...." He turned aside, put on his hat, pushed the women aside and started off. "Where are you going?" "To call the police." The gossip about the Swami stopped abruptly.

The Swami was not the only East Indian who had a following in that part of the world. The Zen monk would occasionally attend their services. One of them gave a talk on being equal-minded in pleasure and pain. Senzaki-san said he was so delighted that he requested an interview. This was granted.

They met in a room where there was a table with a magnificent vase. In a rather awkward way the monk knocked it over; it was smashed to pieces. "You stupid, awkward dolt, how could you

do such a thing! That vase cost \$200 and may be irreplaceable. I do not know what to say, it is so disgusting!”

Senzaki-san took out a wallet which contained a large number of bills, carefully laying out two one-hundred dollar bills. “So sorry. I pay. If cost more, I pay. Thank you. Now I know what it means to be equal-minded in pleasure and pain. Thank you. So sorry. Good-bye.”

On the following Sunday our Zen monk took some of his devotees to a rival ashram. Perhaps this was because the Swami was talking on Buddhism. The lecture was a series of castigations on the quasi-atheism of the rival religion. The Swami, who was an “expert” on compassion and universal love, was very vehement about it. For good measure a few strong remarks were made against Zen also.

After the lecture Senzaki-san went to Swamiji and said: “Me likee suhmon velley much. Velly good. Me likee velly much. Me Buddhists monk. Thank you.” The Swami was taken aback and began to hem and haw and apologize. Our monk continued: “No apologize. Me likee velly much. Velly, velly good. S’long; good bye.” (The Swami went back to his lectures on universal consciousness and divine love.)

My good friend, Robert Clifton, makes claims for Zen entirely out of line with those promulgated by various Europeans and some Americans; or for that matter those who delve into Chinese philosophy of a thousand years back. Siddhanta teachings are not well known in the West; they are ignored or by-passed. The “enlightened” or even the evolved personality may have faculties out of the ordinary. And it is certain that the late Paul Fernandez, who was a devotee in Zen for many years held to views which are out of the ordinary in the West, which does not make them untrue. It is possible that a sort of mythology may grow up around Nyogen Senzaki which may be even more important than any biography.

I can well remember that on at least two occasions when I sat in meditation in the Fernandez home, I felt the presence of the teacher and within a short while the old monk wandered in. Telepathy, attunement, telekinetic phenomena, etc. are not essential to Zen, but they might be in Zen or in any advanced mysticism or occultism.

Many years ago I was typing in a room in San Francisco and our monk appeared to me: “Fill your body.” I did that. “Fill the whole room.” I found that this could be done, but with effort.

“Now fill all space.” That was too much. Then.

I called on Senzaki-san not long before his death. He had given me a ko-an and I cannot report much success with it. Now I had been to Japan, and had worldly experience as well as those of another nature—which we may come to accept more seriously some day.

“When I met Asahina were there one, two or no persons in the room?”

Senzaki-san offered me tea. We did not discuss old times. We did not need to discuss the trip to Japan. We both paid the highest homage to Sogen Asahina. We did not discuss.

## Chapter IV – Sogen Asahina

Bodhisattvas:

People use the word “Buddhism” without being aware that it might be a cognate of “Photo-ism.” This, of course, may be a problem for the philologist. But there is no question that both these words are consisted with some phenomena of light. Buddha is called both “the awakened one” and “the fully enlightened one.”

The Muslims preserve a story about Jesus. One day he and Peter were walking by the sea-shore. The Master turned to the disciple and asked, “If you looked down as we are walking and saw pebbles and pearls, which would you pick up?” “Why, the pearls, of course.” “You are very far from the Kingdom of Heaven.”

My own trip to the Orient had been, in part, to test or verify the teachings of Professor Pitirim Sorokin of Harvard. Perhaps after all that Christ had said, we do not need (!) a college professor to assert that cosmic love can save the world and dissolve all problems. While the Golden Rule remains verbal, it is a corpse, not a living body.

Some day our envoys may realize the value of paying respects to religions leaders or holy places in foreign lands. Failure to do this has undoubtedly been one factor in anti-American demonstrations in different parts of the worlds. And when I met my old Zen companion, Kiichi Okuda, we outlined a program of visits to proper places and persons.

Kamakura is, of course, a very important setting. It has been a capital of Japan; it was even more a cultural center. Today people go to visit Hachiman Shrine and the famous Daibutsu. Part from this our main purpose was to call at the Rinzaï Engakuji Temple. This place has had an important role in history. It is even more important to Americans, as the tomb of the teacher of Shaku Soyen (who first introduced real Zen to us) is there. It also has the home of Prof. Daisetz Suzuki.

When we arrived at the gate we were asked for credentials. We told the attendant that we had once known and practiced Zen under Roshi Furukawa. “Oh, he is still alive.” “Can we see him?” “It is impossible. He is nearing ninety and has gone into seclusion for the remainder of his life; he sees no one.” “Will you take him our cards?” “Yes.” Then Okuda-san and I gave the attendant our personal cards.

We did not wait long. We soon heard the clackety-clack of geta, Japanese shoes. The next thing, the gate opened and we saw the smiling face of the venerable Roshi who beckoned us in. We do not know who was more astonished, the attendants, gardeners or ourselves—everyone stood gawking.

The old Roshi was a “typical” Rinzaï-Zen Master. He had been stern, he had been harsh, he had been cruel. Stories circulated about him. He had become the symbol of those unbending teachers of old who seemed to know how to beat and browbeat their disciples; only in the end some disciples did come up with the right answers.

Of course the picture is not the man. I believe the Roshi was following in the line of Fudo Bosatsu, the Bodhisattva of stern but wise counsel. The true Buddhist has no ego and a description does not reveal much. We had known him in San Francisco. He had taught us much about the historical Buddha and his place in Zen. He even lectured on what Sakya Muni looked like!

It was neither the harsh teacher not the student of history that we met at Kamakura. Here was a boy long hospitalized, visited by a couple of playmates. Here was an old man being rejuvenated. We were children, but children of eternity. He laughed and chattered and showed nothing but joy and hospitality and love. We were honored with ceremonial tea and dainties. This was nothing like the Hindu Prasad only there was the spirit of togetherness.

One leaves him, reminding our friends, the general semanticists, that a map is not a territory; a picture is not a person; and perhaps the place to learn about Zen is from Zen teachers.

After that the old Roshi conducted us to another building where he introduced us to Sogen Asahina, his younger successor who now functions as Abbot at Engakuji.

If Furukawa-san represents Fudo, guiding-wisdom-love, then Asahina may be said to represent karma, universal compassion, personalized in the bodhisattvas Kwannon and Manjusri. We thus have in Zen, and in much of Mahayana, the three fundamentals of dhyana (meditation), prajna (insight) and karuna (compassion). Given two of them the third may come naturally.

Roshi Furukawa had been very stern on one point: no speculation. This teaching, indeed, had been offered before him and after him by Oriental gentleman who had submitted to disciplines. There is a very far cry in this from the speculative and self-devised literary constructions which some identify with the word Zen. We need, I believe, meditation, insight, and compassion though these virtues may not be confined to Buddhism.

The speculative philosophers of the West have taken refuge in the traditional mondo, or stories which stem for the most part from China. It is very difficult to express certain types of experience in ordinary language; and here a symbol is little better, or even worse than direct discourse. When I later visited a Soto Zen Teacher and he asked me about Asahina I replied:

“When the peach was nearly ripe, the farmer did not have to shake the tree.”

Old Senzaki often quoted from Abdul Baha: “People of the world, you are as branches of the tree and leaves of the branch.” This is a refreshing representation of the words of Jesus, “I am the vine and you are the branches thereof.” The Whitsuntide experience or the full communion at its highest level bring about the realization of brotherhood and togetherness. This is for all of us; nothing and nobody may be excluded. But mostly we do not realize it.

In another sense, in the presence of Asahina both my brother Okuda-san and I passed through “The Gateless Gate” with a realization that was true and lasting. Less experienced people are always dogmatic concerning that which they have not yet touched. When Buddha was alive multitudes became arhats just by coming into his presence. And, my friends, Truth is eternal and unconditioned.

Roshi Asahina has published a little pamphlet called “Zen.” It offers his suggestions for meditating: how to adopt the body to a suitable posture, and how to deal with the mind. He does not separate meditation, insight, and compassion. They are as one, to him.

Americans and Europeans need to learn that meditation need not be a dry practice. It is not a quasi-muscular exercise to control something we call “mind.” It is the door to grandeur; nay, it is the grandeur itself. There is a silence which is not our silence; which is not more cessation of noise and emotion and run-away thoughts; which is all-pervading, illuminating, complete.

Asahina has only the greatest esteem for Jesus Christ. He has not only written so, but this was particularly emphasized in our visit. To him there was no essential difference between Jesus and Buddha. Both were examples of perfection, of compassion, of wisdom. Complete surrender might bring this knowledge to us; anything else might hold us short of the mark (what was “sin” originally?).

After our sublime communion-meditation the Roshi preformed Tea Ceremony. This was a high honor. Then he had his attendant show us around the rear compound. We were told few visitors are ever permitted to enter but I am pretty sure L. Adams Beck has been there—from some descriptions in her books.

The attendant told us that he was a college graduate. Most of the monks in training have already passed courses in the history of Buddhism, in art and philosophy. The two outstanding factors in their lives are meditation and hard work. You won’t read much about the hard work in some books supposedly related to “Zen.” If we understand “oneness” the work and the meditating coalesce.

The attendant described the buildings, explained the architecture and woodcraft, and details in the habits of the monks. He then took us to a grotto which holds the tomb of the teacher of Shaku

Soyen. I keep on repeating this theme because our indebtedness to this man has become overshadowed by either derivative or speculative writings.

Before we left we were shown the actual entrance gate and given the details as to how applicants enter monasteries, and are tested thereupon.

After the attendant bade us sayonara I turned to Kiichi Okuda and said: "This was an omen." "What is an omen?" "It is a sign of things that are to come, that will happen." I spoke better than I knew.

Okuda-san was with me when we visited the Daibutsu Temple at Nara, and all over Kyoto and again at the Soto Temple of Tsurumi. He was not with me at the Royal Cemetery or before the Stupa for the Ashes of the Buddha; but again was when we entered the Royal Grounds—the first humble citizens in history to be granted this honor.

Both the Roshis have given no credentials, though to the world I may be neither "Zen" nor "Buddhist." It is one thing as a matter of name; it is another as a matter of experience. In unity-totality differences do not persist.

## Chapter V—Zen and Buddhism

It is many years since I began studying Buddhism. My early Zen teachers told us about patriarchal succession. This also appears in other branches of Mahayana. When we have before us the works of Karl Phillip Eidmann and the Encyclopedia being compiled in Ceylon, we may get a better picture of this whole subject.

Years ago writers would distinguish between those whom they called “the disciples of Buddha” and Zennists who became “the brothers of Buddha.” So far as I know, no actual Zen teacher ever considered himself outside the folds of the Dharma. Members of Zentos, along with all other Buddhists repeat the three jewel formula. True, Dwight Goddard introduced Tao Te Ching in his *The Buddhist Bible*. No doubt there are vast areas of agreement in the path of unfoldment in Buddhism and Taoism. But one can also find these areas of agreement in all “enlightenment teachings.” This is certainly true of the Gospel according to St. Thomas. It may even be more true of Sufism; and the day will no doubt come when enthusiasts will write at length to prove that Sufism has been derived from Mahayana, just as there have been writers who have “proved” it is derived from about everything excepting what the Sufis say themselves. Who started these lines of speculation? Why are they continued? What is gained therefrom?

The great experience in the life of the historical Buddha was his enlightenment. This stands out supreme like the transfiguration and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

One does not become strong through another’s exercises. The eight-fold path of Lord Buddha is a path, a way of life, a career. He spoke against it being used as a source of speculation and metaphysics. If there is to be any metaphysics it is to come from one’s realization, not from one’s idle dreams.

Meditation has become and remained an important element in the Theravadin schools of Ceylon, Burma, and other lands. But if one studies Pali literature and books of discipline, one might ask, what happens when one performs the meditations on the infinity-of-space, or the eternity-of-time, etc. Nor should one lose sight of the fact that there is no fixed ground-ego. Any meditative act changes the personality and ultimately may transform it. Disciples did become artists in the presence of the Buddha. Has anything been lost?

Beatrice Lane was among the first to offer in English a clear explanation of Buddhist doctrines and Buddhist methods. Her husband, Dr. Daisetz Suzuki, has written many, many books. But here, instead of going to the same source, the tendency has been to use these books as source of speculative induction and deduction, and reaching conclusions which no Oriental has ever surmised.

As an extreme, in the historical records of the enlightenment-experience, Buddha resisted the temptations of Mara. This has become very important in art. But today, in America, we see people following the practices and methods of Mara, calling themselves “Buddhists” and “Zen Buddhists” and being so accepted. This hardly makes us popular in Japan or in the Orient in general.

The central core of Buddha’s teaching may be found in the words anatta, anicca and dukkha. Anatta has been interpreted as “there is no soul,” but better, “there is no ego-substance.” But there is a psychological hazard that the thought “there is no soul” may disintegrate into an empty idea, held by an egocentric person. Then, while a doctrine of egolessness is affirmed, it has little validity. Asian languages do not stress the first personal pronoun as Europeans and Americans do.

Actually if one turned to the Bible he would find precious little ego-affirmation; or, from one interpretation, the identity of ani (oni) with God. Mysticism in general affirms that the only “I” is God.

Anicca accords with the principle, “being-is-becoming.” Here again, we face the dilemma of confusing the thought with the process. The general semanticists, who ought to be the first to support the actual Buddhist explanation, have joined the speculators and so confused the teachings.

Dukha proposes that suffering is inherent in all living beings. Perhaps in things also. If so, the experiments of Jagadis Bose and his successors substantiate Buddha's teachings.

In Rinzai Zen, many of the pupils have been given a ko-an as an anchor in meditation. There is no doubt that the historical Buddha (call him Gautama Siddhartha or Sakya Muni) utilized the ko-an of dukha. He was interested in the apparent existence of suffering, its cause and its ultimate extermination. He seems to have succeeded. His followers attest to this.

Western people are trained in analysis and in Aristotelian logic and psychology. They see in the sects of Buddhism disagreement and diversions, comparable to those of Christian sects. They do not fathom the depths of the Eight-Fold Path, nor the various approaches to the solution of the problem of suffering; or the methods and disciplines which might bring the desired results. If we study the writings of our contemporary U Nu, or of Saint Shinran in Japan who seem to represent very distinct ways of approaching the goal, we find strong similar underlying motive and understanding.

The greatest difficulty, of course, is that speculators neither meditate nor repeat formulas nor develop faith or insight. Any one of these or other methods may lead to a transformation and a greater understanding of self, of life, of doctrine.

Dharma-transmission involves the whole spiritual and intellectual world Westerners call "Buddhism" and "Hinduism." In his admirable pamphlet, *Buddha, the light of Asia*, Swami Ranganathananda explains Dharma, its rise, fall, renewal and the part that the historical Buddha played in this. Swamiji is Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission in New Delhi. He seems to understand Dharma-transmission from the historical, geographical and self-unfolding points of view—which is a completion in itself.

Thus Dharma-transmission includes the wisdom of the Upanishads, and therefore the experiences related to this wisdom. It involves the cosmology and psychology of India. Buddha was a Hindu—however much we say, Buddhism was affected by the Chinese and others.

Many of the Mahayana sects in Japan teach that the original doctrines of the Buddha were too profound for the multitudes. Therefore he gave the world the Pali agama literature. Then, as the disciples grew, he restored more profound teachings to fit their needs and understanding.

The Kegon (Flower-Garland) School in Japan purports that it represents the earliest enlightenment teachings. These were brought to Nara many centuries ago. I found that this school is still very active and influential.

One of its most profound teachings is formulated as *ji-ji-mu-ge* which can be paraphrased as "everything is every thing" or "every thing is everything." Both Dr. Takagusu and Mrs. Sasaki have given us satisfactory explanations. It fits in nicely with many current scientific teachings; on the other hand it is a fine verbal formulation of Zen realization, or realization per se.

Yet there is no monopoly on the experience or realization thereof. And no true Zen Buddhist has it thus. We find it in the West in Edward Carpenter's *Toward Democracy* and Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Renascence." This universal realization no doubt brought Taoists and Mahayanists together; and Sufi Inayat Khan and Zenist Nyogen Senzaki here in America.

It is the apotheosis of brotherhood.

## Chapter VI—Zen and Religion

One must refer the reader here to Ruth Fuller Sasaki's *Zen—A Religion*. This informs the world of the actual Zen attitude toward reverence, respect, and devotion. It is true that the great Bodhidharma verbally denied that there is anything "sacred" in the vast cosmos. To affirm the sacredness of anything would be to deny the sacredness of something. This would not accord to the ji-ji-mu-ge attitude.

In a few years new influences will cause us to use the word "Zen" to represent actualities, and not speculations. The Zen calendar does not omit holy days and holidays. In general the Mahayana festivals are celebrated. Sitting in meditation is not an escape into blankness or a regression.

Buddha pointed the "way." We can prove or disprove by definition that dharma is the same as religion or different from religion. It is strange here how egotists turn from statistical compilations.

There is a story of Mohammed. Coming out of his spiritual state, he saw his wife, Khadija, and asked, "Who are you?" "I am Khadija." "No, I am Khadija. And who is Khadija?" "The sister of so-and-so, the daughter of such-and-such and the wife of this person (naming them). The Prophet replied: "I am that man."

If the names were changed, many would say this is a Zen story. Or else they would accept this as an enlightenment story. But as soon as the name "Mohammed" is mentioned, many would recoil; it could not possibly be. This shows the great chasm between the mystic and the metaphysician.

Writers like James and Hocking have collected evidence of many types of religious and mystical experiences. They have to be by-passed by the metaphysicians who are seeking to prove, or disprove. Our logical positivists are excellent with syllogisms, not so adept with facts of life and history.

In Buddhist studies we often come upon the term "all the Buddhas." In India, we have the correlative, avatars. The Buddhas were not necessarily Indian, despite their Sanskrit appellations. They refer either to archetypes or to persons lost to history who gained the ultimate attainment. This experience is not unique. Each religion may tend to regard the founder as unique. That proves little.

China has its semi-legendary character Fo-Hi. He may have been a Buddha. There is nothing to disprove it. The hagiography of Christianity is vast and includes persons of distant places and independent development. If a Buddha be a term used for all enlightened persons, it cannot be restricted.

Meditation is a universal practice. We have several forms within Christianity. The Quakers rely upon it as fundamental. The Catholic Trappists have a very different form. And there are today several schools within the Protestant ranks which are practicing it more and more. All those forms of meditation are certainly "religious."

Meditation is mentioned in the Bible. There were periods in which it was a predominating practice. Ritualism, priestcraft and institutionalism tend to be antagonistic toward it. They decry complete freedom.

In Japan Buddhism is divided into two psychological camps. (a) jiriki or the school of self-reliance; (b) tariki or the school of other-reliance. This is in part a misnomer for as one goes into it more deeply the lines of self-reliance and other-reliance disappear. Perhaps all religions are so divided, but have not yet been examined on this basis.

In California there is a close kinship between the young people who meditate in Zentos and those who practice mediation elsewhere. The "Quiet Way" as a subject for intellectual discussion never reaches the goal. There cannot be quietness when anyone is talking or operating mentally.

The chief aim in Buddhism has been to eradicate the sway of the ego. Zen Buddhism, in particular, seems to reserve the full experience of the Buddha and to be transmitting on through our times, and even into our country. Spiritual leaders in India, like Swami Ramdas, affirm that the basic teachings of the Buddha have been preserved in the Zen schools.

How then does Zen differ from the dharma-transmission of India? Unfortunately the teachings of India have been marred also. There are those who dogmatically insist that Hinduism is not dogmatic. They are very empathetic about it. This definitely disproves their prowess in meditation or development in dharma.

This state of affairs is also complicated by the definition that yoga means union-with-God and there are numerous schools purporting to represent yoga which bring neither union nor God. India as a nation should not be condemned therefor, and there is plenty of evidence to show one finds pure teachings in India, and in many lands outside the Buddhist orbit.

The experience called satori in Japan and samadhi in India is supposed to bring emancipation to the devotee and the two may be identical. Zen schools held it is abrupt and revolutionary ("sudden"). Those who have kept in touch with India and Japan report that about the same number of persons have attained in both countries in a given period. This might indicate that the Buddhist has a more efficient system than the Hindu. But current Burmese literature indicates that not many reach the goal in the herenow in their land. Whatever be these reports, the facts should stand out; actually the facts have not stood out.

There is the mondo of the Ch'an teacher rubbing two bricks together. "What are you doing?" a disciple asked. "I am making a mirror." "How can you make a mirror by rubbing two bricks together?" "How can you become a Buddha by mere mediation?" was the teacher's reply.

This might infer that mediation is not enough. But at the least the practice of meditation and devotion is infinitely superior to the lecture and metaphysical methods still current with regard to these subjects. Meditation does produce change, if not transformation. Thus in Mahayana there is reference to Nirmanakaya which is translated "Transformation Body." One does not see therefore, that even radically this presumes a state of consciousness in which one no longer depends on one's ego-mind.

Many people have been attracted to the mystery- and phantasm-sides of religion. So there has been some interest in Tibet. The Zen monk does not decry this attitude but urges more investigation into the silence which is beyond life. Perhaps all religion posits this stillness though institutionalism does not.

There is no doubt that Zen has influenced Japanese life in general, and by reflex-action has penetrated in some way into nearly all the schools of Buddhism and even beyond into Shinto and Christian methods. In honesty, therefore, we should identify the term Zen with meditation and stillness; in reality it has no connection with noisy persons and methods which have misused this term as a cover-over.

The great Emperor Akbar of India recognized that spiritual attainment is necessarily universal. The Parliaments of Religion being held today in many parts of the world are reaching similar conclusions. So far as philosophy is concerned Zen implies one-ness and all-ness. By whatever way we do come (come, and not believe) to one-ness and all-ness, that would be regarded with satisfaction.

## Chapter VII—Zen and Science

Bodhisattvas:

In the nineteenth century there was a very orderly universe as if God had been a supreme town planner. The material world was made up of elements and each moment had its private domain. The world was explained by atoms and cells; the religious existence was explained by referring to individual-souls. Of course there were positivists and they opposed religion but still adhered to atoms and souls and cells. One went so far as to write a book, *The Seven Exploded Fallacies of Science*. The positivists of the time applauded. Many of these fallacies are now accepted facts and the positivists of this century may put out a book "The Exploded Fallacies of Science" which will give positive disprove of quite different things.

The discovery of radio-activity and transmutation not only proved that the positivists were wrong, but hit greatly at the type of thinking which has been ascribed to Aristotle. Actually this great philosopher has often become a whipping post for a great many mistakes made in the past. Atomic and monadic theories may reveal a type of thinking rather than a type of investigation. A great chemist like Ostvald has all but been derided in certain encyclopedias for refusing to accept doctrines which have been found to be quite fallacious by later generations.

There is a Dr. Leung in Hong Kong who is both a physician and a nuclear physicist; as a physician he has had training in two quite different traditional Chinese schools as well as in modern Western methods. In addition to that he is both a Buddhist and a Taoist. We discussed the probability that a Chinese would soon win the Noble Prize for scientific accomplishments because the thinking of contemporary physicists was bringing them closer and closer to conclusions reached long ago in the Far East. And even as I write there is a possibility of two California physicists being given a similar award for their researches into the anti-positron and anti-matter.

The nineteenth century beheld the rise of Positivism and the accepted prowess of certain thinkers whose private lives were proper. Lord Russell has opened the doors to great advances in Logic and Logistics and has given us the groundwork for a rational examination of almost every kind of thought. If we follow him we can recognize that Science is, like Einstein's universe, finite and unbounded. To speak of such a changeable realm in the traditional dualistic manner is questionable. And if "we" wish to keep ahead of Russia, or Russia ahead of us, it may be necessary for both cultures to examine their foundations.

Until a few years ago the word "Zen" meant meditation and the application of meditation to all avenues of behavior and expression. The Zennist would probably not have argued with Jesus Christ who said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you."

The rise of General Semantics might have offered the world an opportunity for an impersonal, dispassionate examination of culture, and in particular through attention to language. But at this point we are confronted with a failure to accept, actually, Russell's logical conclusions, such as that of "The Confusion of Types" and to relate "Science" (finite but unbounded) with what may be finite, or may be infinite, or may be indefinite.

The methods of Science seem to be that of observation, experimentation, and examination of what has been done, by the individual, or by the group. Meditation, on the other hand, is a form of self-exploration which may lead to outer activity. We don't now pay any attention to the methods of the Inquisition. The latter term is a "bad" word and nowhere more than at the hands of those crusading against "bad words." Yet at this juncture it may be well to permit the Inquisition to plead its case before condemning it to limbo.

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven" (Acts I, 11) was a suitable pun employed against G. Galileo, which sets forth some of the ideas of the "bad" Inquisitionists. They held that if the mind of man was set to exploring outer space instead of one's own inner being, it would

lead to confusion and immorality. True or not we live in an age where excitement is desired and the exciting accomplishments of scientists are set before the public by the scribes and Pharisees of the times and the unexciting things, discoveries, are not so well known.

Aldous Huxley is one of the most prominent men of the day who has noticed that while scientists pay particular attention to their equipment, to their pertinent and not so pertinent surrounding factors during experimentation, to phenomena involved, etc., etc., they do not pay coordinate attention to their own minds. What part does the mind of the scientist play during laboratory or other testing?

Those who have read the biographies of Darwin and Wallace may be struck by the fact that both went through similar psychic experiences before reaching similar philosophic conclusions. Their minds had been at rest between their collations of data and their reaching any conclusions; nor were these conclusions reached by laborious deductive or inductive methods such as are used by statisticians.

Turning to Science itself we find the first law of Newton holding that all bodies remain in a "state of rest or uniformly accelerated motion..." Is the mind a body? Does the mind obey the laws of the body or of the physical universe?

Without seeking an answer here, one may ask, when is the mind at rest? Can the mind be at rest apart from the body being at rest?

In meditation both mind and body rest without there being any sleep. Sleep is no doubt an absolute requisite for all bodies, at least all living bodies. But is it possible to rest the mind, and if so, how?

We are immediately confronted with the fact that millions upon millions of people have practiced meditation and did so during long centuries in the Orient when any kind of positive thinking was practically forbidden in the Occident.

Where meditation has been practiced, there have been great works of art and engineering. The Tibetans do not divide technology into Art, Engineering, Science, and Mathematics, considering them as a whole—achievements which follow the disciplines of the mind. For in general Buddhists would adhere to the education of the mind itself before and along with the utilization of mind in other activities. In other words, there is a practical regard for the growth, perfection, and revivification of mind itself.

It is conceivable, even plausible to pray before undertaking any scientific work. It seems even more plausible to prepare the mind for whatever is to be done by it and with it in this world. Therefore when one speaks of "Zen and Science" one is speaking of two universes which are not logically co-ordinate but which can be brought into harmonization.

In Mahayana we find the astonishing teaching that Nirvana, or the transuniverse of "Rest" is identical with Samsara, or the manifest universe of ceaseless activity. As today we can place alongside of each other such things as:

- a. Buddha's teaching of absolute enlightenment.
- b. The ji-ji-mu-ge teaching of identity of each with all, being composed of the same substance
- c. 1960 Physics with its sub-atomic and cosmic doctrines of identity-by-analysis, and universal light-streams.

So when the term Dharmakaya is offered, it applies to all these three and here we find identities, or harmonizations.

A society which craves excitement may be more interested in "outer space" than in the examination of fundamental principles. The very apprehension of the Inquisition has come into being. The "state of rest" seems to be by-passed excepting by those philosophers who constantly examine and re-examine the bases of Science.

Here one may also find a parallel between Potential Energy and Zen-Life. No doubt one does not practice meditation in order to accumulate energy. One of the Scriptures, admired in the Zen Schools, is the "Diamond Sutra" which rejects any sort of accumulation as being contrary to anatta. And the more one adheres to the State-of-Oneness which is discernible in meditation, the more one finds oneself in a cosmos beyond birth, change, and death. The existence of such (and it is called "Suchness") enables one to draw incessantly on its resources. Thus there is a kind of perpetual-motion, but not within Mechanics.

Prof. Jagadis Bose of Calcutta gave the world much of what may be called "Plant Psychology" and "Mineral Psychology." Such discoveries appear as outer evidences of dharmic truth. But the Dharma-transmission, as has been stated before, awakens one to the functions of integrative-harmonization (Vijnana) and selfless-intuition (Prajna).

Although one cannot select a single philosopher and say he is the spokesman for either Science or Philosophy, the late Henri Bergson came near to bridging many gaps between East and West with his "Intuition." Although Lord Russell could not concur, his one-time collaborator, Sir Alfred Whitehead, was able to comprehend and accept much of both Russell and Bergson.

The weakness of Russell and the very fine thinkers who stem from Vienna, is that they have been unable to escape Western traditional psychological approaches. Russell himself admired the use of meditation and cosmic contemplation and such practices are not anti-logical; one does not come up with several kinds of answers because one uses different approaches or methods to examine Nature. But the efforts of Aldous Huxley may awaken us to endless possibilities and when we pass from maximology (to which many of us are glued), and take "Man, know thyself" as a way of life, and see in all scientific research an investigation into the "self" within as well as into the seeming world without, success may be within our grasp. Indeed that great thinker, Russell, has affirmed that all knowledge may, in the end, prove to be knowledge of the self.

Here ends any argument between East and West. There can be a wing between Zen and Science, despite quite different genealogies.