

Afterword to *The Three Pillars of Zen*

Zen Comes to the West

When Philip Kapleau returned to the United States in 1966 after thirteen years of Zen training in Japan, he became one of only a few Zen teachers living in North America. He had no idea that in his lifetime so many Americans would take up the practice of Zen. On the assumption that teachers, too, would remain scarce here, he included "Yasutani-roshi's Private Encounters with Ten Westerners" in *The Three Pillars of Zen* for the sake of readers who would have no personal guide of their own. He could not have foreseen the explosion of interest in Zen Buddhism since then, or that his own book would be a major detonator of that explosion.

Fast-forward to 1999: for their annual meeting, the American Zen Teachers' Association sent out invitations to 107 North American men and women who were functioning independently as sanctioned Zen teachers. The size of this population reflects the most measurable element of a tide of interest in Zen that has been rising ever since the original publication of *The Three Pillars*. Huston Smith, in his preface to the first edition, posed the question of whether Zen would successfully make the stride across the Pacific to America in its migration eastward from Asia and India, wisely answering, "We don't know." Now, however, we do.

With hundreds of groups of Zen practitioners scattered across the Americas and Europe, and teachers proliferating at a geometric rate, Zen has clearly "taken" in the West. This Western Zen has already assumed many different forms, for like Buddhism generally, it will inevitably make an accommodation to those who practice it. This process has been repeated each time Zen crossed over to a new country. Zen originated in China as Ch'an, a hybrid of Indian Buddhism and the native beliefs of Taoism and Confucianism. Ch'an then became Son in Korea and Zen in Japan, further adapting itself to those cultures. Now immigrant teachers of Ch'an, Son, and Japanese and Vietnamese Zen have all established their respective strains of Dharma practice in the West. All these different traditions have retained some of their indigenous elements, but naturally they have also been altered by occidental culture.

What happens when an ancient, non-theistic, contemplative religion rooted in agrarian Asian culture is transplanted to highly mobile, urban Western countries dominated by consumer culture? Many of us are watching, as wide-eyed as Bodhidharma, to find out. We are involved in a colossal shift, unprecedented in either Buddhism or the West, and while the cultural forces in motion are largely beyond our control, we need to be as watchful as possible.

A Confucian Tradition Flattened

This meeting of civilizations is just beginning, but already we can identify some emerging characteristics of Western Zen that distinguish it from its Asian ancestry. Among the most obvious are those aspects of Sangha life that reflect the egalitarian principles so basic to North Americans and Europeans. For example, the annual AZTA meetings are a Western innovation: Zen teachers from different lineages meeting together regularly to share information and experiences is unheard of in Japan. Within individual Sanghas, too, we have seen a general horizontalization of authority since the first generation of (mostly Asian) Zen teachers founded their centers. Most teachers, presumably, hold the line at spiritual matters, which require the authority of deep experience and, it is to be hoped, spiritual insight. But the boundary between spiritual and secular decisions is open to interpretation (at one major Zen center, abbots are now elected to four-year terms by membership vote).

Viewed from a historical perspective, Zen is undergoing an unprecedented metamorphosis. Unlike Buddhism as a whole, the Zen sect grew out of Confucian soil, and though it assumed distinctive forms in each of the other East Asian countries to which it migrated, a common denominator between the Zen communities and the wider society was the Confucian ethos that both took for granted. Thus Sangha relationships were shaped by the concept of *li*, or propriety, composed of rules governing the way of life. These rules, stressing filial piety, obedience to authority, and veneration of age and lineage, prized rank and protected the position and power of the ruling class. It would be hard to find a worldview more contrary to American dispositions. To be sure, many of the values of Confucianism, if assimilated, could serve to knit together our desperately confused, dislocated society. But Western civilization is cut out of different cloth, and as practice in this country has matured, Dharma centers from

coast to coast have begun shedding some of the formalism, the unquestioning awe of authority, and other Confucian features of East Asian Zen that we gamely tried on in the early years, but which have since proved to be ill-fitting.

Women as Equal Partners on the Path

Another significant change to Zen that is well underway in the West is our recognition of the equality of women as Zen practitioners. The largely invisible role of women in Asian Buddhism is no secret. Official teacher lineages, or “patriarchal lines,” are by definition composed exclusively of men. But women have been coming to awakening since before the Buddha himself, and scholars have learned that some of them ranked as genuine masters. Why, then, isn’t a single one of them included in the formal lineage? This exclusiveness reflects their traditional position in Asian society as a whole, but it also can convey the false message that women generally don’t rate with men in spiritual ability. The patriarchal line is, then, a reminder of how deep cultural biases can run, in this case undercutting the core Buddhist teaching that all beings without exception are equally endowed with the true nature of enlightenment.

Buddhism’s age-old acceptance of gender inequality is already under reform in the West. At last year’s thirteenth annual AZTA meeting the majority of participants (though the minority of invitees) were women, many of them priests. As Western women become seasoned in Zen practice, they are quietly reforming attitudes and behavior, giving balance to the yang bias of traditional monastic Zen. Perhaps as a result, American Zen centers are consciously working to jettison the overly goal-driven, competitive, body-denying aspects of traditional Zen practice and are allowing the more process-oriented, cooperative, and nurturing sides of our True-nature to express themselves. The truly realized person, male or female, will come to actualize all aspects of his or her nature. And all of us can, while falling short of that lofty state, at least begin reversing gender biases by changing the language and other forms of our heritage that contribute to them. To that end, the Rochester Zen Center, like some others, has changed “Patriarchal Line” to “Ancestral Line,” and added an homage:

...and to the unknown women, centuries of
enlightened ones,
whose commitment to the Dharma nourishes
and sustains our practice!

Western Individualism

No doubt the most profound adaptation required of Zen in the West revolves around the Western notion of the self as an autonomous individual. This assumption is so basic to our way of thinking as to determine our entire worldview. But it is qualitatively different from the traditional Asian conception of self, in which a person is defined within a nexus of social relations, and dependent on a contextual web consisting of other persons as well as place, time, and history. This definition resonates strongly with Buddhist doctrine, in which the self is so thoroughly interdependent that it has no essential reality. Buddhism does not deny the self absolutely; it denies the self as an absolute, unchanging entity that exists independently.

Once we've been conditioned to see ourselves as existing independently of social roles and relations, we become particularly susceptible to a host of self-referential illnesses, for which Western psychotherapy has developed as the medicine. I do not make a general practice of recommending psychotherapy to my students, for in the short term it can work at odds with zazen. During the course of psychotherapy one will typically find oneself more preoccupied than usual with thoughts of self, and this self-concern is the antithesis of zazen. On the other hand, for those who feel the need for it and are ready, psychotherapy makes just as much sense as surgery does for an athlete with a knee injury. With the help of some months of psychotherapy, many of my students have seen improvements not just in their relationships and work, but in the quality of their zazen itself. Greater emotional stability and clarity, it seems, can alleviate some of the anxiety and self-concern that so commonly prevents one from reaching deeper states of meditative absorption.

Nowhere is the notion of a separate self more securely fixed, and more vigorously asserted, than in the United States. From a Buddhist perspective, it is our national handicap. But it is the hand we Americans have been dealt, and moreover, the sense of alienation and self-consciousness that it spawns impels many of us to practice. Like it or not, each of us exists in mutual causality with our milieu – a fact which itself testifies to the permeable nature of the self.

Not that trading in our individualistic sense of self for a more contextual one, even if we could, would be the solution. Every worldview offers a skewed representation of human existence, and by muting or repressing aspects of experience each generates suffering in different terms. Greed, anger, and

delusion are basic human afflictions, and the Asian cultures in which Zen was nourished also have their own ways of falsely dividing reality into categories that create suffering. In any case, we have to work with our mental formations, such as they are. Zazen works universally to dissolve these illusory structures, in whatever terms humans are acculturated to conceive of them.

Acknowledging the Psychological

For Westerners, psychotherapy, as a home-grown system of healing, holds the promise of enhancing this awakening process. The realm of the psychological is not to be confused with that of Essential-nature, but neither are these two separate. Since Western Zen students, even those without psychological education, are by nature more psychologically oriented than their Asian counterparts, Zen teaching and practice will inevitably come to reflect that coloration; if it didn't, it would fail us. Western Zen teachers are increasingly falling in with their Vajrayana and Vipassana (the other two main streams of Buddhism in the West) colleagues in accommodating themselves to Western psychological perspectives, if not methods. Those who have ignored the psychological needs of either their students or themselves have done so often at the cost of their own personal integrity and that of their students, and, consequently, the well-being and harmony of their Sanghas. So far this has proved far more damaging to Buddhism than the very real danger of our psychologizing it.

Buddhism in a Judeo-Christian Culture

As a belief system, psychology rivals the Judeo-Christian tradition in its influence in the West. In fact, in our highly secular culture it probably has an edge over formal religion in that it is so easily assimilated by those of other faiths; psychology and Buddhism have been courting each other ever since they met here. And now there are signs that Zen is beginning to adapt to the Judeo-Christian tradition as well, just as Buddhism did to Taoism and Confucianism in China. More and more books are coming out that advance Buddhist dialogues with Christianity and with Judaism. Most significantly of all, hybrids of actual Zen practice are appearing that incorporate Jewish and Christian elements.

How does Buddhism, a non-theistic religion, find an accommodation with Judaism or Christianity? More easily, it would seem, than vice-versa. The Buddha, while denying that he himself was any kind of god, refused either to deny or affirm the existence of God. The Zen school, known since its inception as a teaching “beyond words and letters, without reliance on the sutras,” points to the Original-mind that precedes all religion. As such, the teachings of the Zen masters have always resonated strongly with those of the Christian and Jewish mystics, as well as the teachings of the Sufis.

When it comes to mixing the actual rituals and other devotional practices of Judaism and Christianity with those of Zen, however, I see problems. Granted, the American way, as Roshi Kapleau has said, is to borrow freely from all traditions, and we are accustomed to mixing and innovating in all matters of culture. But every spiritual tradition has its own character, refined over centuries in responsive communion with its practitioners. The Dalai Lama’s public suggestion that Westerners might do better to remain within their own religious tradition rather than adopt Buddhism is one that I feel should not be taken too seriously; for many of us there is simply no choice, so deep is our affinity with the Buddhadharmā. Nonetheless, every great spiritual path has its own integrity, which is put at risk the more it is cobbled to elements of other traditions. I think of the comments made by an esteemed Buddhist scholar in explaining the disappearance of Buddhism in India: “It didn’t die, but was smothered in the loving embrace of Hinduism.”

Engaged Buddhism

Yet another major development of Zen in the West is the burgeoning interest in “engaged Buddhism,” a movement that endeavors to apply Buddhist – compassion – i.e., wisdom in action – to social, political, and environmental problems. Traditionally Buddhism has focused on individual spiritual practice as the most intelligent approach to relieving the suffering of all sentient beings. Engaged Buddhists agree that meditative practices are indispensable but, recognizing that we are also determined by the social and political systems in which we are enmeshed, seek to remedy the ills of those systems by working actively for peace, justice, education, and ecological preservation. Such work advances the cause of liberation, then, even as it follows in the long Western religious tradition of social service.

This broader approach to practice is hardly new to Buddhism as a whole, but it does mark a departure from the traditional focus of the Zen school. Granted, even in Zen, the ten oxherding pictures (shown in *The Three Pillars*) portray the highest stage of realization as “entering the marketplace with helping hands,” which can easily be interpreted in terms of public service. But though this may be the ideal, the core practice in East Asian Zen has always been silent meditation, usually done in remote locations. Society, or community, meant the monastery, and compassionate activity within its walls benefited others in mainly ineffable ways.

The promise of the contemplative life that has characterized Asian Zen is that selfless meditation is, rather than an escape, the most essential way of healing the so-called world that is nothing other than Mind. Still, the need for social and political activism has never been more pressing. Never before have systems and institutions held such global power, thus extending the repercussions of human greed, anger, and delusion to threaten the very biosphere. Ultimately, each Zen practitioner must determine how much time, if any, to dedicate to activist causes.

Zen as a Lay Practice

Probably the most significant Western departure from traditional Zen, and the most radical and obvious to our Asian counterparts, is Western Zen’s predominantly lay nature. Ever since the time of the Buddha, the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma has been the work of monks until now. Today there are only a smattering of full-fledged residential Zen training centers in the Western Hemisphere, which leaves such a vast majority of Zen practitioners sitting on their own that it is all but impossible to estimate their number (5,000? 10,000? 20,000?). Only a scant number of Western Zen practitioners have been ordained, and it would appear that the majority of even those “monks” or “priests” are married (and more than a few of them with children). Among Western Zen teachers, too, a growing number now have families, thus following the norm for rabbis and Protestant ministers.

It is noteworthy that *The Three Pillars of Zen*, surely one of the two most influential Zen books in the West (the other being Shunryu Suzuki’s *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind*), presents the teachings of a school of Japanese Zen known for its accessibility to laypersons. Yasutani-roshi was a priest (though married, and with five children), but drew almost exclusively lay students. It is hardly

surprising, then, that *The Three Pillars* has found such particular resonance in this Western culture in which monasticism calls so few.

The Fabric of American Zen

The Three Pillars is only incidentally a tribute to lay Zen and its possibilities. Its real impact on Western Zen was in introducing us to firsthand accounts of enlightenment and “its most potent incubator,” sesshin, the traditional Zen seclusion. The sesshins so evocatively described by Roshi Kapleau gave tens of thousands of readers in the 1960s the vicarious experience of rigorous Japanese Zen monastic training. The fact that half of the awakening accounts from these sesshins were written by Westerners presented a compelling new model of Buddhist practice; householder Zen fortified by periodic bursts of monastic-style training. We could hold on to our careers and families and still drink deeply from the wells of a great mystical tradition. It was Zen in a new package, stamped with an American brand name. We could have it all – or so it seemed.

Several decades now into the American experiment with lay Zen, many of us have been sobered by the obstacles inherent in this new strain of Buddhist practice. As a teacher, I hear every week of my students’ struggles to find time to do daily zazen while juggling family responsibilities and the demands of work. And they must do this while immersed in what is arguably the most restless, acquisitive, market-driven society the world has ever known. Like everyone else, the contemporary Zen student must daily navigate through a howling gale of information and images in the form of advertising, popular entertainment, and news. To maintain a centered, stabilized mind under such conditions would be demanding enough even with the support of a close-knit community. But householder Zen in our decidedly non-Buddhist culture is still usually a solitary voyage, in which family and friends are apt to be uncomprehending if not critical of one’s efforts. Furthermore, even when the aspirant has a Zen teacher, chances still are that they are not close enough to see each other with much frequency, so that their contact, if any, is limited to mail or phone. This far-flung arrangement is a radical departure from that of the monastic communities in which Zen practice has been nurtured over the centuries in Asia.

Given the choppy currents of worldly responsibilities that modern Zen students struggle with on a daily basis, the hectic pace of life and its diversions, it is no wonder that so many are drawn to sesshin, usually at the cost of vacation time.

In fact, for many Western practitioners of Zen, the periodic retreat becomes a refuge to which they feel compelled to return, again and again, for spiritual rejuvenation. It is also the only exposure many ever have to actual Zen training, which is to be distinguished from ordinary Zen practice. The latter includes everyone who “sits” on a regular basis, which most Westerners still do at home. Zen training, on the other hand, is Zen practice undertaken, for longer or shorter periods of time, at a residential facility under the guidance of others. Since most Zen practitioners in the West are householders, sesshin becomes their sole link to the monastic tradition in which Zen has historically been embedded.

Sesshins at the Rochester Zen Center

Given the significant cultural differences between Asians and Westerners, some readers may wonder how contemporary Western sesshins compare to those described in *The Three Pillars of Zen*. In structure, sesshins at the Rochester Zen Center are much like those of our Asian ancestors. Yasutani-roshi used to say that sesshin consisted of three main elements: zazen, teisho, and dokusan, and the same holds true of those conducted at our centers. Each day there are some ten hours of “formal” sittings, which are timed and monitored by senior students and interspersed with brief periods of group kinhin (walking meditation). This is the basic sesshin fabric within which teisho and dokusan take place, and through which they come to life.

As monastic as our sesshins remain in style, like those in *The Three Pillars* they draw almost exclusively laypeople. A typical seven-day sesshin includes, in addition to a dozen or so Zen Center residential staff in training, the same “business and professional men and women, artists, and housewives” whose kensho accounts are recorded in *The Three Pillars*, but also retailers, contractors, writers, computer workers, farmers, secretaries, scientists, gardeners, librarians, nurses, realtors, administrators, craftsmen, students, and musicians. About half come from the Rochester area, and the rest from elsewhere in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, and other parts of the world.

Upon arriving, participants find everything arranged for them: a bedroom (shared with up to eight others), a job assignment for the daily hour of manual work, and an assigned seat in the zendo. As at Hosshin-ji (the monastery, described in *The Three Pillars*, where Philip Kapleau trained), in the opening ceremony that evening they are reminded of the two most important guidelines:

complete silence and eyes lowered at all times everywhere on the premises. These two elements alone go a long way toward helping participants settle the mind and reach deeper states of absorption. So, too, does the rule of not moving during formal sitting, as refraining from fidgeting or scratching does much to brace one's commitment to single-minded concentration on the breath or koan.

Little orientation is necessary at these longer sesshins because everyone accepted will already have attended a sesshin of two or four days at the Zen Center to prove their seriousness and stamina. Still, the demands of the sesshin that are described in *The Three Pillars of Zen* can be equally daunting here. Buddhism's classic Five Hindrances to practice – desire, aversion, restlessness, boredom, and doubt – are timeless and universal challenges that easily provoke the urge to bolt. For this reason, all participants are required to sign a pledge to complete the sesshin. Only rarely does anyone leave without having fulfilled this crucial commitment to persevere through the obstacles that are inevitable in intensive and sustained zazen.

Dokusan is given three times a day in sesshin. As in Japan, it is offered on a first-come, first-served basis, and due to demand, not everyone can expect to get in every time. In the formative years of the Center, when most of us were in our twenties, the tumultuous dokusan rush was a standard feature of the sesshin drama. In the same samurai spirit, the heavy use of the kyosaku was sustained throughout the week, as were the other pressure cooker methods described in *The Three Pillars*. But over time the tone of sesshin has changed in step with the maturation of the Sangha. Some of the younger, usually male, participants still tend to get stirred up in the zendo at times, but the major key is now one of vibrant stillness.

The Self and Its Shadow

What occurs in dokusan itself is much the same at our sesshins as that recounted in *The Three Pillars*. One hindrance Westerners face that is not noted in those pages, however, is one that other teachers and I have come to see through years of close work with many students: a tendency, seemingly most pronounced in Americans, toward negative self-judgment. One American Buddhist teacher has referred to it as "self-hatred," another as "the inner critical voice." It is not just a sense of lack, or an awareness of one's faults, but an abiding conviction, deep inside, that there is something wrong with oneself. The self-examination

process of serious meditation will expose it eventually, but in the intimacy of dokusan it is often revealed to the teacher before the student sees it.

This core sense of unworthiness would seem to be an outgrowth of our Western notion of the autonomous self (in discussions at East-West conferences, Asian teachers have been unable to grasp what we meant by it). It can be seen as the underside of the American celebration of self, or even the shadow cast by our Judeo-Christian God-concept. It may be masked by grandiosity or self-confidence, but peel away enough layers and, more often than not, there it is.

Like all concepts, the Western negative self-image has no substance, and thus no abiding reality. But it still undermines one's faith in the True-self, and together with other cultural biases can create a thicket of concepts about Zen practice and attainment. Having absorbed the American ideals of freedom and equality, and the message that we can become whatever we want, we aspire to realize the enlightenment that is our birthright. So far, so good. But when we don't "succeed" at Zen (as quickly as we'd like to, or as others we know may have), this "failure" reinforces the illusion of the fatally flawed self. At this point some practitioners may give way to resignation, while salvaging their self-esteem by slipping into buji Zen: the stance that to speak of becoming enlightened is a contradiction in terms since we are all innately enlightened. Roshi Kapleau warns against this philosophical dodge – a denial of the validity of the enlightenment experience – in *The Three Pillars*, but buji Zen is beginning to spread in the West. It should be exposed for what it is: a loss of faith in one's potential for realization.

Buji Zen and other mental complications related to success and failure also trouble Asian practitioners, but the more tightly-knotted American sense of self tends to further crystallize these issues for us. Estrangement from classical Buddhist concepts like rebirth and karma, which set liberation and causation in a vast and complex frame, may also intensify self-blame for American students, leading them to identify with a particularly narrow sense of self (and time) and to see their "failures" as definitive.

Until students directly realize that there is no core person – either good or bad – inside, dokusan will tend to highlight this mental reflex of self-judgment. In the student's mind, consciously or unconsciously, the teacher sits in the dokusan room waiting in judgment, reflecting back to the student the naked fact of falling short in practice and attainment. Thus the issue of when to go to dokusan and

how to use it is one of the most problematic for the Western student, at least in the beginning. Whatever self-concerns one may have about performance and the approval or disapproval of the teacher will tend to rear their heads before, during, and after dokusan. Accordingly, dokusan is an arena of psychological ferment that is rich in its potential for personal transformation.

Making the Forms Authentic

At spiritual training centers the world over, few elements of the daily routine can compete in importance with meals. All meals served at the Zen Center, both in and out of sesshin, are vegetarian, in keeping with the ancient Buddhist custom of avoiding complicity in the slaughter of other creatures. Two of the three meals each day are taken formally, in silence except for the traditional meal chants. Due to crowded conditions we kneel on the floor at low tables, as is widely done in Japan, but plans for a new country retreat complex now under construction near Rochester provide for a dining room with chairs at tables (which are the norm at Chinese and Korean Zen temples). Meals are eaten with ordinary plates and bowls, forks and spoons, rather than in the elaborate Japanese Zen ritual of *oryoki* (the nested set of eating bowls traditionally used by monks). When the Center was founded, Roshi Kapleau recognized how important it was to exercise discriminating wisdom in adopting Asian ways. By the same token, we have strived to be sparing in our display of Asian calligraphy and to find suitable English equivalents for Japanese Zen terms and traditional chants. The temptation to grasp at the exotic is common in spiritual practices imported from the East, but clinging to foreign trappings does a disservice to the Zen tradition.

Americans and Enlightenment

When it comes to East-West cultural hurdles, probably nothing about Zen Buddhism is more commonly made exotic than the idea of enlightenment itself. Having no enlightenment tradition of our own to speak of, Westerners tend to project their most exalted hopes and dreams onto such an experience. The thought of enlightenment itself then becomes a mental attachment, and a formidable hindrance in actual Zen practice. Americans, with our craving for quick fixes, may be most susceptible of all to this meditation trap. Readers of the enlightenment accounts in *The Three Pillars of Zen* can be forgiven for idealizing

awakening as a panacea for all of life's pain. Despite the sober reminders sprinkled through the book that enlightenment is but the first gateway to Zen, the personal accounts are so dramatic and stirring that the caveats are often forgotten. To repeat, then: An initial awakening reveals the non-dual nature of reality, but it is usually tentative, offering only a faint glimpse of our Essential-nature. The habit forces of acting and reacting egoistically are so entrenched in us that we remain vulnerable to those tendencies. Our insight can be deepened through subsequent realizations, but it takes long, devoted practice after kensho to uproot our most primitive emotional afflictions and integrate our understanding into our daily lives.

Although awakening is no silver bullet that dramatically changes our lives in a flash, it does show the Way – the Middle Way through which we can come to terms with the suffering inherent in worldly existence. That itself is the first and foremost challenge to American Zen aspirants: to accept that pain is a condition of life. Through our extraordinary creativity and technological resourcefulness, Americans have succeeded in mastering adversity to an extent that would have been inconceivable to our ancestors. As a result, we are conditioned from birth to see pain as a kind of mistake, an intolerable offense against the way things should be. This attitude, in turn, spurs us on to further perfect our control of the conditions of life. The Buddhist experience reveals that this ceaseless “pursuit of happiness,” though scripted in our Declaration of Independence as an “inalienable right,” merely perpetuates our suffering. It is a vain pursuit not only because it is in the service of the self and its desires, but because our mastery of worldly phenomena will simply change the particular ways we suffer and not our understanding of the nature of suffering.

The good news, on the other hand, is that when the Noble Truth of suffering does sink in, either through personal loss or societal crises, we have an abundance of resources to help us find our way out. We are the beneficiaries of a system, flawed as it is, inspired by values that go to the heart of Buddhist teaching: freedom, equality, and community. Likewise, the American ethos, with its promise of advancement based on initiative and hard work, is one in which Zen is at home. Indeed, this can-do pioneering spirit is what emboldened Philip Kapleau to leave his own country – and all that he knew – in response to the timeless calling of the Self, venturing to the only land where he knew to find Zen. Ours is a culture far removed from the Asia which nourished Zen, and much in our world has changed even since the original publication of *The Three Pillars of Zen*. In adapting Zen to the West we run the risk, as Roshi Kapleau always warned, of “throwing out the baby with the bathwater.” But through

zazen we can preserve the essence of the tradition and transmute our tendencies toward selfish individualism and privatism into the fulfillment of a faith shared by Buddhism and the West: the absolute worth of every human being.

BODHIN KJOLHEDE
Abbot of the Rochester Zen Center