

## Remembering my Teacher

by Milton Moon ©

My teacher died in 1992. I am old now and  
but he is clearly alive in my mind.

My Medical Note said Lacuna Infarct,  
but unconfirmed.

MRI was not advised due to Stapes implants  
but the syndromes and symptoms  
suggested problems,  
'blurred-speech' in particular indicating  
damage to the speech circuitry whilst  
leaving perception and memory near to normal.

At ninety-two years one accepts lapses  
and speech is hardly important  
even though the content is mildly of interest.

Religious matters aren't everyone's 'cup of tea'  
but a sojourn in the isles of Japan for a year  
close on fifty years ago provided a chance  
of indulging combining and contrasting interests.  
Kobori Nanrei was a genuine Zen master,  
also the abbot of a culturally-important sub-temple  
of the famous Rinzai temple and monastery  
Daitokuji of Kyoto.

He had surprising and personal developments  
beyond the traditions of Rinzai Zen  
which also released me, eventually,  
from the confines of my own restrictive thought  
and bonds which hampered  
my clarity of seeing clearly.

Self-delusion is common  
especially with those of sincerity  
believing in their own inspired aspiration.  
Within the 'flow of life' as we sometimes call it,  
between being born, and living life  
then vanishing from life there's plenty  
of scope for delusion, by another or others,  
as well of self.

Ordinary life is called Samsara  
this 'flow of life' between birth and death  
that separates liberation of attainment  
and entry into nirvana.

But a cautionary note  
It is not the final end;

it is what some call  
the sighting of 'The Other Shore.'  
There are lots of dangers in the shallows  
before the safety of the shore is reached – but  
even the 'seeming safety' of the shore  
seems to conceal hazards.

Samsara is life, both good and bad:  
no one knows why either happens but  
Chaos seems to rule as to why some who are  
undeserving are rewarded and those of  
innocence are grievously tortured.  
Even those who have glimpsed the Other Shore  
and speak with pride and authority  
on their attainment are perhaps at  
greater risk than those whom they  
wish and hope to guide: there are  
hazards lurking in pride.

Meditation is arresting the madness of Mind;  
the slowing-down of movement that separates  
jumble into individual component parts.  
At times the parts disappear and absence of thought  
reveals void-like 'aliveness' that is beyond thought.  
When that happens – if it happens –  
the ancient advice holds true  
'Keep it a secret, especially from yourself.'

The miracle of that moment  
changes dimension of thought itself  
and lasts moments, hours and even days.  
It takes special knowledge to confirm and  
confirmation and corruption are both possible  
But self-affirming and self-delusion  
are the most serious sins of all.

In the days of the ancient Masters  
'seekers' knew solitude was the secret  
and sought escape from the busy-ness of life  
seeking life in far-away mountains and deep  
in the wilderness, beyond the daily chores  
or incessant chatter of ordinary life.  
Buddhism foretold this present period  
known as the Age of Mappo  
when solitude is hard to find.

The Buddha told the story  
of a bodhisattva who made vows, that  
when fulfilled he would create a Pure Land  
where personal attainment was possible  
whatever the obstacles.

The vows were eventually fulfilled  
and the Pure Land emerged and in it's  
mystery and beauty, it is somewhere in  
the Western Cosmos and it is said that  
the Buddha who resides there  
is known by many names:  
in Japan he is known as the Buddha Amida  
and the doctrine of truth revealed  
in the Pure Land Sutras.

My own teacher  
teaching still, after his death,  
after long years of meditation,  
realised there is another Way  
before the Other Shore is 'sighted'  
and self-reliance or conceit is disciplined.  
The Buddha taught the reliance on  
the teachings of an earlier Buddha, Amida.  
Whether or not you do take his advice  
your own Karma will decide.  
But first, the Karmic Law applies  
"What you sow you must reap."  
There's no escape from Karma.

Amida, mindful of his vows –  
particularly the eighteenth vow –  
even the most evil of person,  
if they call his Name, with earnest appeal,  
will begin the long or short journey  
to enter the Pure Land.

In Japan the calling of the Name  
is known as the Nembutsu  
and the 'calling' itself is  
"Namu Amida Butsu",  
you can say it once, say it ten times  
or hundreds of times daily.

Some say the Pure Land is here,  
on earth and in our Minds –  
the Minds of no limit.  
Years have passed before acceptance

of my teacher's viewpoint –  
and his suggestion of myself teaching –  
but I have read of his life  
and of his teachers' lives  
no disloyalty can I detect.

The Age of Mappo surrounds us  
both comforting and shaming:  
if I read my teachers' minds aright  
it is easy to accept the comfort  
and rationalising the shame.

I respect and bow low before my teacher  
a Rinzai priest, former roshi and abbot of Ryokoin  
a sub-temple at the Daitokuji, Kyoto,  
Kobori Nanrei Sohaku 1918 – 1992.