

October 2012

SHINGI

Newsletter of the Tendai Buddhist Institute



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Jushoku's Meanderings

On the 6th of this month we will start a two week long Tendai Betsuin Gyo. The gyo finishes on the 21st with a Mahasangha Sunday and Tokudo (ordination of two Doshu (temple assistant) and one Betsuin Soryo (monk). This is a segment of a much longer training for men and women who wish to become ordained Tendai priests ([cont.](#))

October Events Calendar



Weekly Meditation Services (WMS)

are on Wednesday evenings. They begin at 6pm with a discussion or talk (see below for this month's discussion topics). At about 7pm there is a meditation service, followed at 8pm by a potluck supper. All of Wednesday

evening's events are open to the public. There is no fee, and reservations are not required.

October Wednesday Meditations and Discussions

3 Endonsho: Perfect Sudden (from the Mo ho chi kuan, Jpn. Makashikan) by Zhiyi (ca. 594). This brief excerpt is a type of dialectic from the venerated treatise by Zhihi is widely recited and studied in East Asia.

10 The Six Repentances - from the Morning Service - what they can teach us about Buddhadharma and ourselves.

17 Q&A - Stump the Sensei - Do you have any questions about the Buddhadharma about which you have not found a satisfactory answer? Write down the question and bring it with you. There are no 'too simple' or involved questions. Sensei will do his best to answer in a way that at least sheds light on the issue.

24 Women and Buddhism - First read the article by Kuroki Masako - A Hybrid Form of Spirituality and the



Challenge of a Dualistic Gender Role: The Spiritual Quest of a Woman Priest in Tendai Buddhism - (The link is: <http://nirc.nanzan-u.ac.jp/publications/jjrs/pdf/878.pdf>) and join us for discussion. The article is in the open on-line *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 38/2: 369-385.

Quicklinks

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31 Pure Land Practices in China - a discussion of historic Pure Land meditation and worship.

Other events in October:

6 No Morning Service and Sutra Class this Month - 8:30 - 10:30 AM. However, join us for Morning Meditation - see below.

7 - 21 Tendai-shu New York Betsuin Gyo - This yearly training period for Non-Japanese Doshu and Soryo is normally held in June, changed this year due to Shumon's attending Enryakuji Gyo. It is not a seminary - it is a training of body, speech and mind that prepares women and men to be sangha and temple leaders.

8 -20 Morning Meditation - 7-8 AM - Join us each morning during this period for a meditation. Daily service is not included at this time.

21 Mahasangha Sunday Service - 10:30 AM - 1 PM - The service follows the 2012 Tendai-shu New York Betsuin Gyo. Mahasangha is the larger sangha encompassing all our sangha, wherever they may be located. We will have participants with the sangha in Springfield, MA, Albany, NY, Indian Lake, NY, Washington, DC, Cobb County California, Denver, Colorado, Denmark and our local contingent. A potluck service follows the service; it is a celebration with those who have completed the gyo, and taken Doshu and Betsuin Soryo Tokudo.

Notes:

Food Pantry at Jiunzan Tendai-ji - The number of families who now depend on the food pantry has grown as a direct result of the continued economic recession. There are fewer and fewer resources going to more and more people. Please bring non-perishable food items to the Tendai Buddhist Institute on Wednesdays. We contribute these items to the Chatham Silent Food Pantry.



When people hear about monks [1] training they understandably relate it to a seminary activity. A gyo is not the same type of training or environment as is found in a seminary. We often use the term training, but that can be misleading, though there are aspects of training involved. The Japanese term, *shugyo* might elucidate what is actually occurring. Shugyo can be translated (from Japanese) as ascetic training.

Shugyo refers to the Buddhist conception of 'mind-body as one entity'. The practice of shugyo is an aspect of traditional Japanese culture, derived from this Buddhist concept. It is applied in many different forms of training, including, Japanese dance, theater, tea ceremony, martial arts, etc. In this context it is a deep mind-body training in which physical training masters the techniques perfectly so that the practitioner's body internalizes the techniques completely as second nature. Yuasa Yasuo wrote about shugyo's importance and Buddhist origins as, "a pragmatic enterprise aiming at spiritual training and improvement of character *through training of one's body.*"[2]

As Isaka states, "Not only is the body an identity kit, but it, in effect, *is the mind.*"[3]

Isaka goes on to write:

"Shugyo consists of two phases: repeated somatic training (such as that of posture and movements) and internalization of the technique in question as second nature.

Thomas P. Kasulis deftly summarizes Yuasa's point about shugyo as follows: "*Gradually . . . the posture becomes natural or second nature. It is the second nature because the mind has entered into dark consciousness and given it a form; it is an acquired naturalness.* (p. 55)

In the shugyo model, the student takes only a handful of skills or forms and repeats them time and time again. Each repetition refines the skill or deepens one's knowledge. The model of shugyo is characterized by an emphasis on the depth of knowledge, wisdom, experience, and technical ability. Body, speech and mind are one entity. The monk gains his or her knowledge about Buddhist teachings through study, intellectual and reasoned. She or he learns about how to conduct weddings, house blessings, and such through a type of apprenticeship and classes. He or she learns, internalizes, practices and builds the character necessary to be an effective sangha

leader through gyo. The aim here is total mastery over one's object of study and oneself to the point where both subject and object disappear into the void of experience... awakening.

Finally, thank you to all our sangha members for your patience and support during the gyo.

[1] Monk is a direct translation from the Japanese, and is used in to refer to both male and female ordinands.

[2] Yuasa, Y. (1990) *Shintairon Toyotyeki shinshinron to gendai* (Theory of the body: An Eastern Mind-Body Theory and the Present) Tokyo: Kodansha; 101; emphasis is the original.

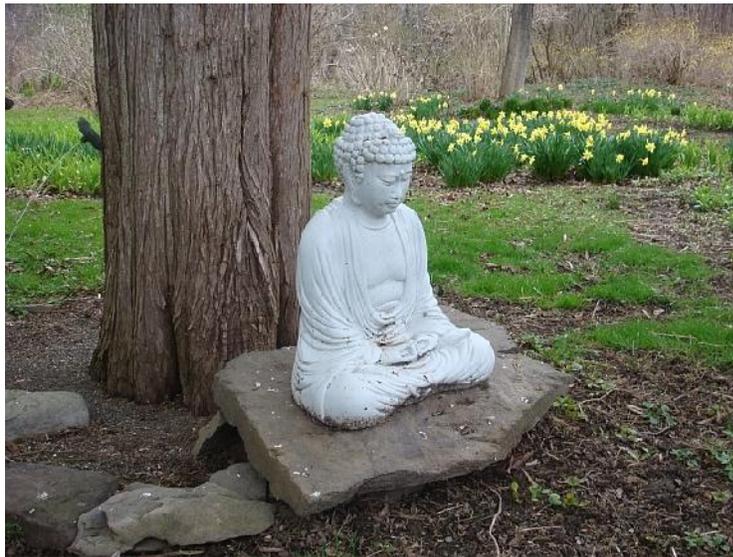
[3] Isaka, M. Bardsley, J. and Miller, L. (2011) *Box-Luch Etiquetts: Conduct Guides and Kabuki Onnagata*. (In) *Manners and Mischief: Gender, Power, and Etiquette in Japan*. (ed. by Bardsley, J. and Miller, L.) University of California Press; 55; emphasis is the original.

Gassho . . . Monshin

The Third Jewel--Where sangha members share ideas, poetry, and art to enrich everyone's Buddhist practice.

From Judi Jiko Croft's garden





Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Contact . . .

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