

ヨーガと禅での出会い

# ENCOUNTERS IN YOGA AND ZEN



TREVOR LEGGETT



2007

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**YOGA  
AND  
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ENCOUNTERS IN  
*Yoga and Zen*

Meetings of Cloth and Stone



Trevor Leggett Adhyatma Yoga Trust

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# **DEDICATION**

To the late Hari Prasad Shastri,  
in whom the ancient traditions were always young,  
this collection of pieces is reverently dedicated.

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## PREFACE



Stories of the type presented here are used in many spiritual schools, to a greater or lesser extent; nearly all teachers make some use of them. I have collected these over the years from a variety of sources: sometimes reminiscences of a former teacher are buried in an old book, or a temple magazine; one or two are folk stories, some are verbally transmitted, some would be difficult to trace to a source. There are one or two incidents personally experienced, and I have occasionally put a few introductory remarks.

Their function is to act as flint and steel in making a light. In this, the flint is gripped in the left hand, with some dry tinder (usually a herb) under the thumb near the edge; then the steel is struck with a glancing blow across the edge of the flint. There may be no spark; then one tries again. There may be a spark which does not touch the tinder; then one tries again. But when a spark does set the tinder smouldering, as must happen sooner or later, it has to be carefully blown on - not too much and not too little - till it glows brightly. Finally a spill of thin paper can be ignited, and that in turn lights the lamp or fire.

If a story here strikes no spark, or if there is a spark which dies away so that it does not recur in the mind, then another can be tried. When one does grip the mind, it should be pondered daily for several weeks, to find the deeper points. At the end of the introduction an example is given of how to focus on one such point. The process corresponds to nurturing the little glow of the tinder; it should not yet be subjected to the strong wind of outside



criticism or scepticism or even constructive suggestion. It must be cherished inwardly. If all goes well and it creates a blaze, then outer winds, however strong, can only increase it.

These stories are not the same as Zen koans, in many of which something apparently extraordinarily inappropriate is said, or perhaps done; just because these are extraordinary, they are good for catching the mind. But afterwards the light from them has to be applied to daily life. The pieces presented here are often incidents from ordinary life (not that there are no extraordinary ones too). The aim is to find realization and inspiration from daily life. Because they are ordinary, it may be harder to focus upon them; but the traditional presentation is skilful at catching at the heart of an attentive reader.

In the Jewish tradition, Jesus was the first person known to have made systematic use of the method of riddle. He never spoke to the people except in riddles, says the Gospel. He expected these to be solved: to disciples asking for an explanation he replied briefly, 'Are you as dull as the rest?' (Interested readers may find a stimulus in the Buddhist priest's comment on pearls and swine, in the twelfth story.) His use of the riddles was itself one, echoing and extending the riddle in Isaiah: 'to those outside everything comes by way of riddles, so that (as Scripture says) they may look and look, but see nothing; they may hear and hear, but understand nothing; otherwise they might turn to God and be forgiven.'

# THE PICTURES



The pictures were brushed for this book by Jacques Allais in what is called the Suiboku style, in which he is an expert. His work has been praised by the doyen of Japanese Suiboku painters, Nanpu Katayama, who received the Order of Culture (corresponding to the British Order of Merit) for his services to art.

Suiboku is eighty per cent suggestion - a Suiboku artist would not show both ends of a bridge, only one. The style gives a hint for the focusing of meditation practice.

I am grateful to Jacques Allais for his generosity in offering these pictures for the book.



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# INTRODUCTION



Cloth against cloth, or stone against stone:

No clear result, and it is meaningless.

Catch the flung stone in the cloth,

Pin the wind-fluttered cloth with a stone.

This verse comes in a scroll of spiritual training belonging to one of the knightly arts in the Far East. In these traditions, instruction is given in the form of vivid images, not in terms of logical categories; it is meant to be a stimulus to living inspiration, not dead analysis. The apparent exactitudes of logic turn out to be of very limited value when applied to life, because then the terms can never be precisely defined.

In the verse, the catching cloth stands for what is technically called 'softness', which is not the same as weakness; the stone stands for hardness, not the same as strength.

Softness has a special meaning: it is not merely giving way or doing nothing. There is a strength in softness, but it is not the hard strength of rigidity which has an inherent weakness, namely incapacity to adapt. There is another verse which illustrates these distinctions:

Strong in their softness are the sprays of wisteria  
creeper,

The pine in its hardness is broken by the weak snow.

How do these things work in practice? Here is an example from one of the schools of self-defence. You stand on the edge of a cliff and suddenly you see a powerfully built man rushing at you with outstretched arms to push you