

LOTUS LANTERN

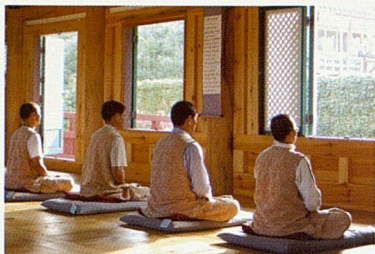
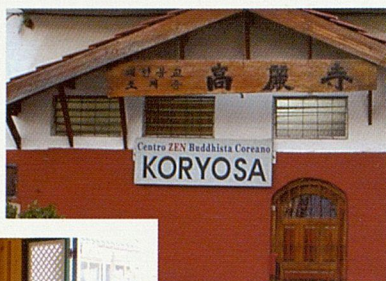
Korean Buddhism for International Readers Winter 2006



Practice

Wake Up To The Enlightenment!

CONTENTS



- 1 Celebration Of The Season
Enlightening the Load...
- 2 Special Report
Kwan Um School of Zen
- 8 Feature
Wake up to Enlightenment!
- 14 Focus
Ven. Jeonggwon Sunim :
Children Should be Educated in the Right Way
- 16 Temple Fantasia
The World of the Future Buddha, Here and Now
- 18 Exploring Temples(3)
Stupas or Pagodas
- 22 Translation(8)
The Debate over Materialism and Spirituality II
- 24 Interview
Liz Merrill:
Practice Helps Me To Be One with This World
- 26 Korean Temples Around The World
Koryosa Temple in Argentina: Fruitful Happiness
- 28 What's On
Exhibition, Event & Programs
- 31 Review
Movie & Music
- 32 Book Review
The Zen Monastic Experience

LOTUS LANTERN

Winter 2006

Supreme Patriarch
The Most Venerable **Beopjeon Sunim**

President & Publisher
The Most Venerable **Ji Kwan Sunim**

Editor
Ven. Jiwon Sunim

Associate Editor:
Ven. Mujin Sunim

Managing Editor:
Yangja Ha

Reporters
Yonhee Koh Hyunshil Kim Suhee Kim
Juliette Park Scott Scattergood

Design
ClearMind

Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism
45 Gyeongji-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea
TEL. (82)2-2011-1830 / (82)2-738-1445
FAX. (82)2-735-0614
Email : son@buddhism.or.kr
www.buddhism.or.kr
www.koreanbuddhism.net(English)



I Cover Story

The temple is sitting in the snow.
A red bud will blossom soon.

Mihwangsa Temple

Enlightening the Load...

So the Buddha's Enlightenment Day is on January 26, 2007. Talking about the Buddha's enlightenment is not an easy matter because we are told that without experience it for ourselves we cannot judge. The result is that many schools of Buddhism have simply dismissed the possibility by saying that it might be only possible in a far off lifetime. Korean Buddhism is divided between those that say it is possible now and those that say it is far off, between those that say practice before only and those that say practice before and after. Elsewhere I am told that I am a Buddha and already enlightened but I do not know it. Some authors even suggest pretending that you are already enlightened so you experience the feeling!

So what can I do with all this, me, the simple Buddhist? Let us, just for a moment, bring all these ideas down to our level. What, as a Buddhist, do I really want in life?

For me the attraction of Buddhism and the one dimension that has held my attention all these years is the idea of freedom. However, like most people I also want to be happy. The Buddha clearly says, "I teach the overcoming of suffering" which means that I will become happy and free.

Happiness we all know. It is the deep-seated peace of contentment coupled with gratitude and compassion (There are millions — as many as there are people — of definitions of happiness, so I won't attempt that here. These are the main qualities that I can identify).

What about freedom? Freedom from what? The Buddhist texts tell me that with enlightenment, true understanding, the Nahan puts down his load. He is finally able to take off his heavy back-pack and put it on the ground. He feels light, buoyant and open to everyone and everything. So what was in that huge sack? First of all there are fears — for the future, for loved ones, for well-being — then there are the attachments, the things to be concerned about — the future, loved ones, well-being — and then there the desires, the wishes, the hopes. Wow, what a huge bag!

And so today I am going to take the first step forward: I am going to identify something that I can take out of my huge bag. The bag may only be a few grams lighter but it will be at least one step! **L**

The legend started when a short, happy, smiling Korean monk arrived in the USA in 1972. He could not speak a word of English, so people had to resort to his body language and the big innocent smile in order to get his teachings. He showed what a Seon(Zen) master really is and how he can help people through down-to-earth practices. There was nothing but a handful of students then, but now the whole world is listening to him in over 120 Seon centers all across this planet. His name was Seung Sahn, the founder of the Kwan Um School of Zen.

The Kwan Um School of Zen

The Whole World is a Single Flower

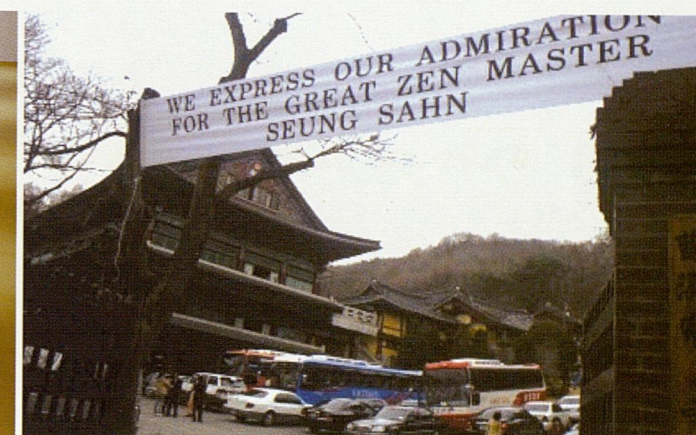
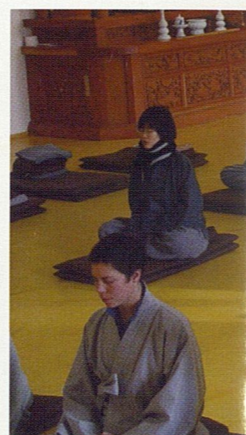
by Yangja Ha(eunj8070@hotmail.com)

The people

On the first day of last December, people began arriving at Incheon International Airport. They were coming from various places such as Hong Kong, the USA, South Africa, Poland, Mexico, Singapore and Malaysia. Ven. Musim Sunim, abbot of Musangsa Temple, one of the centers founded by Master Seung Sahn, greeted each one. All of them had come to commemorate the second anniversary of Master Seung Sahn's death on the 8th of the month preceded by a three-day retreat at Musangsa Temple. There was a great variety of different people: Seon masters, a Dharma teacher, Ji Do Peop Sas and students. Some of them did not know each other but that changed as they began to mingle. The noticeable common characteristic was their big smiles and their sincerity. On the bus, they all chanted the Heart Sutra in three different languages — Korean, English and Chinese — to the respective tunes. It was like a microcosm of the meeting of all of the international Seon centers.

During the retreat, their days began at 3 o'clock in the morning and ended at 9:20 in the evening. The time in between was dedicated to some

chanting, but mostly to meditation. They all, from the Seon masters and Ji Do Peop Sas to the lay people, followed the schedule together without any exception in the same room, at the same time. They started together and ended together. They tried to help each other with smiles and tips to ease aching muscles, holding hands and massaging shoulders. The teachers were always behind the participants watching and guiding their meditation. The retreat ended with a discussion in a big circle. They talked about their practice and their emotions experienced during the sessions. Whenever they mentioned the teachings of Master Seung Sahn, they looked really happy in their reverence for their great teacher. They were excited with this very special retreat in Korea, the homeland of the Dae Seon Sa Nim(Great Seon Master). One of them said, "I am so happy to be here. I saved all my holidays during the last year for this. Master Seung Sahn was the great teacher who showed me the way." All



of them looked really happy.

Seon Master Seung Sahn

Born in 1927, at 20 he became a monk after he was disappointed with the ideological struggle between the left and the right political ideologies of Korea. He went into an intensive retreat at Sudeoksa Temple and afterwards traveled to meet the great Seon masters of those days in order to have his enlightenment accepted. He was recognized and received the seal of approval of a Seon student's great awakening from the three great Seon masters ;Chunseong, Geumbong and Geumoh.

His search reached its climax when he met Seon Master Gobong. He said to the master; "I killed all the buddhas of the past, present and future last night. Now I have come back after cleaning up all of the corpses." Master Gobong said, "Prove it!" and asked him the 1,700 hwadus; he was able to answer all of them without hesitation. Finally the master asked, "The mouse eats cat food, but the cat bowl is broken. What does this mean?" For a while the two men sat facing each other hunched over like tomcats. Then, all of a sudden, he had the answer. It was, "Just like

this." Master Gobong embraced him saying, "As your flower bursts into bloom, I will be a butterfly for you." Ven. Seung Sahn received the transmission of Dharma from Master Gobong in 1949. He was 22 years old.

Master Gobong said to him, "You will spread the teachings all over the world." Following his teacher's request, in 1962, he opened a Korean temple, Hongbeobwon, in Japan and in 1972, he finally arrived in America. He continued the same work throughout his life, setting up Korean Seon centers in more than 30 countries over a period of 35 years. In 1992, he opened the International Zen Center in Hwagyesa Temple in Seoul for training his foreign disciples and for the globalization of Korean Buddhism.

The Kwan Um School of Zen

SZKOŁA ZEN KWAN UM



Great Master Seung Sahn

Kwan Um / Gwaneum

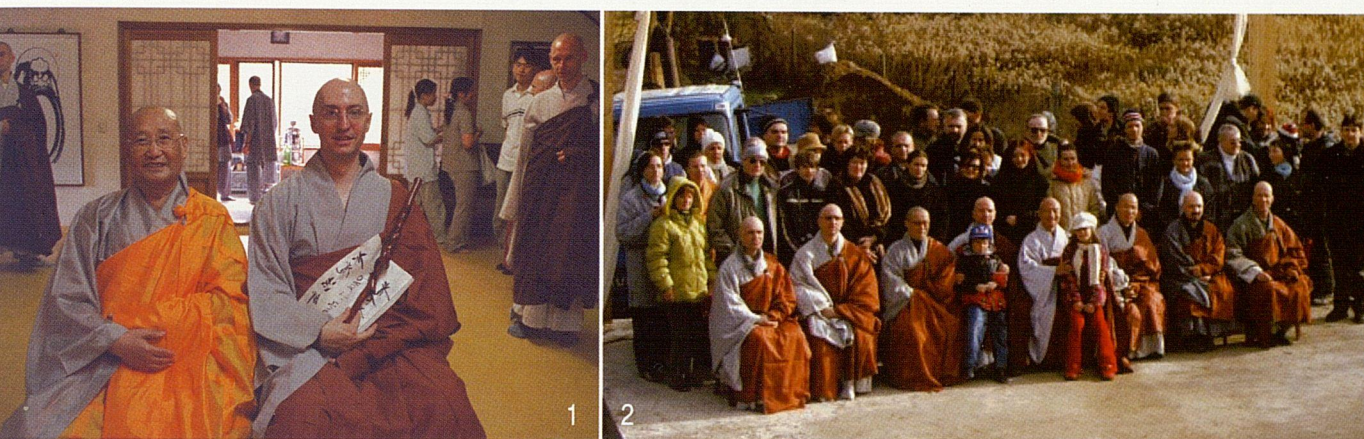
As the name of this school suggests Kwan Um / Gwaneum chanting is, in addition to meditation, an integral part of the practice they are doing. Kwanum is another appellation for Gwanseum, Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. Gwanseum literally means "listening to the sounds of the world." With one thousand eyes and one thousand hands the Bodhisattva always listens to the suffering of the people and helps them out of their troubles.

The Bodhisattva transforms according to the situation and so becomes the personality necessary in order to help the suffering. Master Seung Sahn emphasized that practice and Bodhisattva Action are the two wings to carry practitioners to enlightenment. Without love or compassion for others, practice is a hollow struggle. In a word, it is just self-deception, disguised selfishness to believe that one can reach enlightenment and save sentient beings without compassion. He taught that compassion is the great source of energy which drives practice to its goal. So compassion, the heart of Gwanseum Bodhisattva, is a synonym for wisdom, the fruit of practice. The Master integrated the two things in

order to make the teachings more practical.

Teaching System

Another practical aspect shown in his leadership is the systematic structure of the organization based on equality. Unlike other monastic organizations of the Jogye Order, which is the background of this school, Master Seung Sahn employed some devices to make his school more accessible to westerners. One example is that every member is treated equally whether monastic or lay. In the Korean Buddhist tradition, there is a distinctive line drawn between the two groups and so their roles. The result is two groups: the guides and the followers. However, in this school, neither ordination nor gender causes any discrimination. What matters is spiritual



1 with Ven. Hyon Gak Sunim 2 Master-beam Raising Ceremony at Won Kwang Sa in Hungary

development. The criteria for the development are the following:

Dharma teacher : someone who has met certain training requirements, usually over at least several years of training and has taken the ten precepts;

Senior Dharma teacher : one who has met certain training requirements, usually over at least nine years, and has taken sixteen precepts;

Ji Do Peop Sa Nim(JDPSN) : Dharma Master; one who has received Inga from Seon Master Seung Sahn after careful examination in kongan practice. They are authorized to teach hwadu practice and lead retreats. Ji Do Peop Sa(JDPS) is for teachers who are monks or nuns.

Zen Master : one who, after some seven years or more of borim, or stabilization of their awakening, receives the formal transmission of the Dharma in a public ceremony. They are then considered independent, and can start their own style tradition, either modelled on the Kwan Um School of Zen form or otherwise.

Even though this looks like a hierarchical structure, in fact, it doesn't

have any official, over-arching centralized authority. Rather, all the individuals in teaching positions are referred to as guiding teachers and accepted as spiritual helpers. As was mentioned above, ordination, gender or marital status have nothing to do with the religious position in the school, therefore, in the category of Zen Master, there are some laymen, laywomen and even a married couple along with monks and nuns. As a result, sometimes there are very awkward encounters when they are attending ceremonies in Korean temples, which are accustomed to putting the ordained before the laity.

Difference and Sameness

When Korean Buddhists join any of the school's gatherings, they soon notice the different dress code. Members almost all wear gray suits [ED. This is customary in most temples for those involved in serious practice.]



1 International Head Temple – Providence Zen Center 2 International Zen Center in Hwagyesa Temple

and some wear even the clothes usually worn by monastics in Korea. The brown small kasa which those who take five precepts wear is unfamiliar to Koreans, too. All those things are the Seon Master Seung Sahn's idea to help people to feel strong solidarity with the sangha community. These are the remedies he chose to make a strong organization.

However, he did not change everything. All over the world, in the early morning and evening, they chant in Korean at Kwan Um Zen centers. They recite the Heart Sutra twice; first in Korean and next in English or in their native language. They do 108 prostrations every day. Master Seung Sahn cared for the "bone", or essence of the teaching, not so much the outward form, or "flesh". He adjusted his way of teaching to the situation, just as water flows. It is a kind of open-mindedness and a Bodhisattva way to help people. The most important thing is that the students of the school become happy and think that Korean Buddhism is the root of their practice and hope to visit Korea to go on retreat in their spiritual home.

When Buddhism began to spread out of India, it modified in order to be more accessible to the environments. Through this flexibility it could be assimilated and so survive in unfamiliar situations. The same thing happened when Seon Master Seung Sahn tried to spread Korean Buddhism in America. The Kwan Um School of Zen shows one possible way in which Buddhism can transcend and broaden over national boundaries. As Seon thought enlightens us, name and form are empty, and so we are all one. This whole world is a single flower, only if we realize it. **L**

"So I hope from moment to moment you only go straight, don't know, which is clear like space, try, try, try for ten thousand years, nonstop, get enlightenment, and save all beings from suffering."

- Seon Master Seung Sahn

What is Zen(Seon)?

An excerpt from Master Seung Sahn's Dharma talk

Zen is very simple... What are you?

In this whole world everyone searches for happiness outside, but nobody understands their True Self inside.

Everybody says, "I" - - "I want this, I am like that..." But nobody understands this "I." Before you were born, where did your "I" come from? When you die where will your "I" go? If you sincerely ask, "What am I?" sooner or later you will run into a wall where all thinking is cut off. We call this "Don't know."

Zen is keeping this "Don't know" mind always and everywhere.

Meditation in Seon means keeping the don't know mind when bowing, chanting and sitting Seon. This is formal Seon practice. And when doing something, just do it. When driving, just drive; when eating, just eat; when working, just work.

Finally, your don't know mind will become clear. Then you can see the sky, only blue. You can see the trees, only green. Your mind is like a clear mirror. Red comes, the mirror is red; white comes, the mirror is white. A hungry person comes, you can give him food; a thirsty person comes, you can give her something to drink. There is no desire for myself, only for all beings. That mind is already enlightenment, what we call Great Love, Great Compassion, the Great Bodhisattva Way. It's very simple, not difficult!

- **Publications of Master Seung Sahn** : 「Wanting Enlightenment Is a Big Mistake」, 「The Whole World is a Single Flower」, 「The Compass of Zen」, 「Dropping Ashes on the Buddha」, 「The Moon Illuminated on the Thousand Rivers」, 「Only Doing It」, 「Only Don't Know」
- Website: www.kwanumzen.org



Practice Wake up to Enlightenment!

Practice is the way to clear the clouds from our minds. There are many ways of practice that can lead us to enlightenment. Though the methods may seem different from one another, they all point in the same direction: enlightenment, the complete liberation from all sufferings. Therefore, it is wrong to think that one practice is better than any other because the method chosen depends on the individual practitioners' characteristics.

by SangHee Jeong(sanghee_krns@yahoo.co.kr)

January 26 is the Buddha's Enlightenment Day. Ceremonies are held in temples and people gather to celebrate this day. But what is Enlightenment Day, and what does it mean to us? What is the way to enlightenment and how can we make our own path toward it?

The morning star seemed to shine so brightly; almost clearer and brighter than ever before because the eyes of the beholder were not the same. He stood up from his seat under the Bodhi tree. For six years he had been tried everything he could do to attain true understanding. He had no fear of any excessive hardship in his practice and tried his best to endure all the pain in his body as well as patiently accepting extreme hunger in order to free himself from the suffering of existence; but he found that he had completely failed. At that moment, however, when he finally let the last string of attachment go, there was enlightenment. Just as the absence of darkness is

one of us. There are many stories of great buddhas who obtained enlightenment, but this is the simplest and the most beautiful story that shows us how we can attain true understanding and eliminate our ignorance. Enlightenment is nothing secret or special, but something simple that appears when we blow away the clouds from our fundamentally clear mind.

Practice is the very act of clearing the clouds from our minds. There are different ways of doing this which seem to be vastly dissimilar. However, they are all pointed in the same direction: absolute enlightenment, the complete liberation from all sufferings. Therefore, it is completely wrong to say that a certain practice is better than another. The best way of practice only depends on the individual and on the circumstances in which the person finds themselves. So let us go take a look at the different methods of practice in the Korean Buddhist tradition.

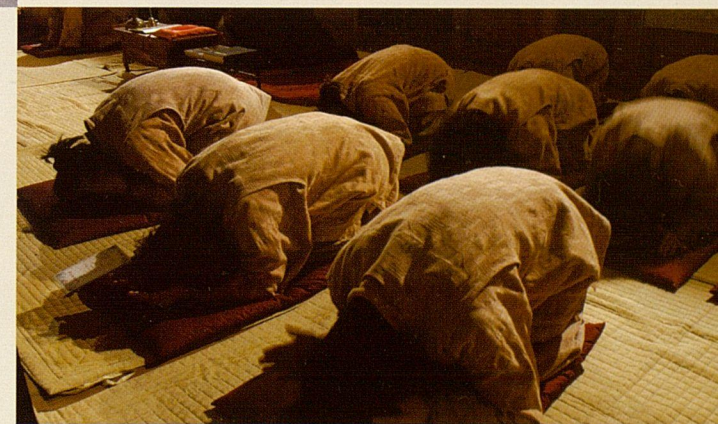
■ Full Bow

To lower your body to the ground and make a full bow is a way of humbling your mind. The direction of a prostration should not necessarily be toward the Buddha statue because everything has Buddha Nature, and actually one bows to one's own Buddha Nature. In spite of this, it is important to pay homage to the Buddha, who showed us the way to enlightenment and who is our original teacher. So it is one of the standard temple rules in Korea that whenever you go to a temple, you go to the Main Hall first and salute the Buddha with three full bows. You may find it a little humiliating at first, especially if you come from a Western background. It may feel



light, his way to enlightenment was completed simply by putting it all down. Now he had become a Buddha, an Awakened One.

This is a story that took place in India more than 2,550 years ago. Then, what does that story mean to us living in the 21st century? Why do we celebrate the Buddha's Enlightenment Day when most of us are still suffering in a house on fire? What does it have to do with us? It is a story that opens the way to enlightenment to each and every





awkward and not really necessary to follow such a foreign practice, but as soon as you notice this rejection in your mind, you can make it the starting point of melting your karma away. For lots of bad fruits of karma have accumulated around your strong ego and created your suffering as well as that of the people around you.

There are specialized bowing sessions in which 108 bows or 3,000 bows are made together. These are mainly aimed at correcting our behavior and giving us a chance to put it all down, to let all the anger, anxiety and regret out. One reason why a set of 108 bows is required to eliminate all the bad actions you have done is that the six points of contact (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking) are produced through the six senses (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind), and this has continued endlessly throughout the past, the present and the future ($6 \times 6 \times 3 = 108$). A set of 3,000 bows is just a rough number used instead of 3,240 (108×30), and people do this when they want a more thorough practice. Through this intensive physical exercise of humbling yourself, you can contemplate your past actions and make new resolutions, and finally relieve yourself of many of your heavy mental burdens.

■ Kido

Kido is actually the act of making a wish, to pray in complete belief of the power of the Buddha and great bodhisattvas. This is where Buddhism takes on a more religious look, even though, in principal, it is more a philosophy or certain way of life. In Korean Buddhism, however, people do kido in combination with full bows and chanting the names of the Buddha or bodhisattvas. This concept of kido is so general among Koreans that the word almost automatically

refers to full bows and chanting, thus making it a way to practice. It is not just making a wish and worshipping but also cultivating oneself through practice. The important point in kido is that you make the wish without desire. You practice with hope that your wish comes true, but you don't get disappointed even though things turn out differently. Making a wish with an empty mind is true Buddhist prayer, and that is what makes kido a practice.

■ Chanting

There are three kinds of chanting: chanting sutras, chanting the names of the Buddha or bodhisattvas, and chanting mantras. By chanting sutras you learn and repeat the teachings of the Buddha and other prominent teachers in Buddhism. By chanting the names of the Buddha or bodhisattvas you purify yourself and make a Pure Land in your mind. You can see many Korean Buddhists make full prostrations continuously while repeating a bodhisattva's name or the Buddha's name as explained above. Chanting mantras is believed to bring blessings and eliminate evil because certain mantras have supreme and mysterious power. The mantras are originally Sanskrit words, and they are not translated but only transliterated. People with absolute belief in the power of the mantra repeat it hundreds and thousands of times.

The low and continuing sound of chanting has the effect of calming and purifying the practitioner's mind. When practitioners enter Samadhi, a meditative state, by chanting, they see the bodhisattva or the Buddha whose name they were chanting, and experience surreal sensations. Chanting is a way to empty the mind, to put it all down, and to get rid of all the dust of ignorance and realize the One Mind.

■ Reading / Copying Sutras

Reading sutras is also a way of practice, and some practitioners choose to read the same sutra hundreds and thousands of times with great speed. Copying sutras is writing the letters of the sutra one by one in a meditative state of mind. It is very relaxing and calming, and helps you get rid of worldly thoughts. In the old days monks practiced this method combined with full bows. They wrote one letter and made one full bow and continued the same until they finished



copying the whole sutra.



■ Meditation

There are plenty of methods of meditation. In Korean Buddhism, Ganhwaseon was traditionally practiced and, as it was considered the best way to meditate, it was taught by all the great masters of the past. Meditation in general is a way to realize your True Self, your Buddha Nature, by emptying your mind. “Seon” is the Korean pronunciation of “Zen,” and “Ganhwa” means “to see through” a hwadu.

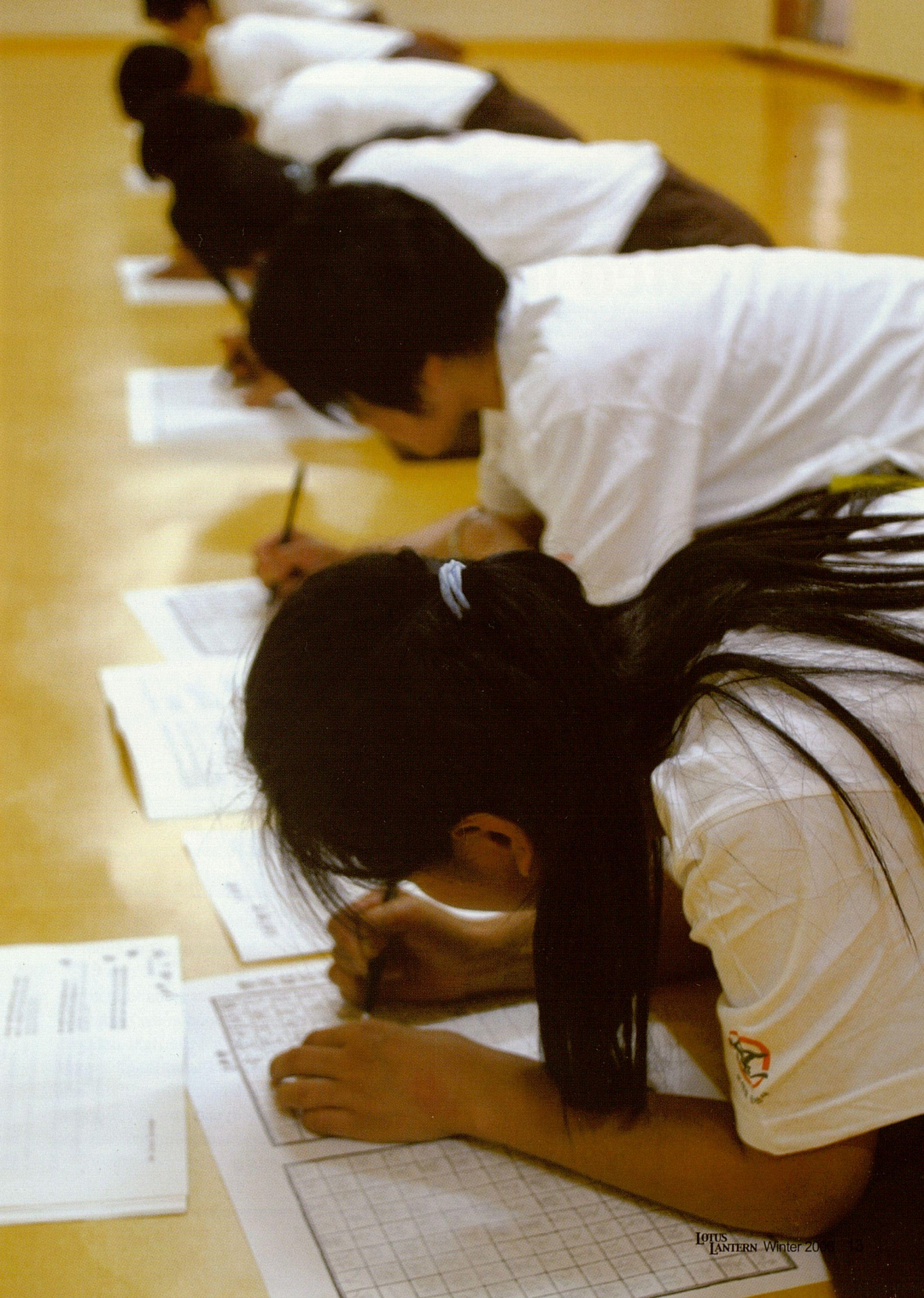
Hwadu is a sentence which apparently seems irrational and which is given to practitioners by their own teacher in order that they learn to doubt their rational thinking, thus making them completely focused on the hwadu. The most commonly used hwadu is “What is this?” What is this thing, that sees and feels, that wakes up in the morning, eats three times a day and sleeps at night? What is this thing that is thinking like this right now? That “thing” is the Buddha Nature which already exists in us and cannot be fully expressed and taught through words. That is why great masters taught their students to concentrate on strange sentences like “The pine tree in the yard” or “Three pounds of hemp” when they were asked “What is the Buddha Nature?” Hwadus are only fingers pointing at the moon, hence the teaching “Look at the moon, not the finger that is pointing at it.” Therefore, practitioners of Ganhwaseon are supposed to keep their hwadu all the time whatever they are doing. When sleeping, working, or eating, they should keep their mind fully occupied with the hwadu so that they can lead a normal life without being distracted by their own karma and can control it with conscious mind. It is a method to keep the practitioner awake in any situation.

In recent years, great interest has grown in the original form of Buddhism still practiced in Southeast Asian countries. These Theravada methods of practice have been introduced to Korea, the principal one of which is Vipassana. This method of

meditation is easy to start with, so it is becoming very popular in Korea. It also encourages practitioners to be clearly aware in every moment of their lives and emphasizes observing every sensation they feel with their body, every emotion arising in their mind. When a sensation appears, just observe it, do not react to it, and it will disappear sooner or later, for everything in this world is bound to change, they are taught. This is very efficient especially in controlling emotions, so it is often used in psychotherapy as well.

Practicing meditation can be classified according to the form it takes. When you sit on the floor and meditate, it is called sitting meditation regardless of whether you are keeping a hwadu or doing Vipassana. If you meditate while walking, it is walking meditation. In monasteries both the sitting and walking meditations are used to minimize the physical limitations of each method. Sometimes, however, practitioners are encouraged to endure and overcome the physical hardships they feel while practicing. In the Korean Buddhist tradition, there is a special session of practicing meditation all through the night, which is called Yong-maeng-jeong-jin. It is generally practiced in the winter retreat near to the Buddha’s Enlightenment Day (the 8th day of the twelfth month of the lunar calendar), especially the night before the day. When you do Yong-maeng-jeong-jin, you sit in the meditation hall in straight rows and continue practicing without eating and sleeping at night until the morning comes. It is to emulate the great effort and strong resolution of the Buddha who endured all physical hardships until he found the truth of the universe.

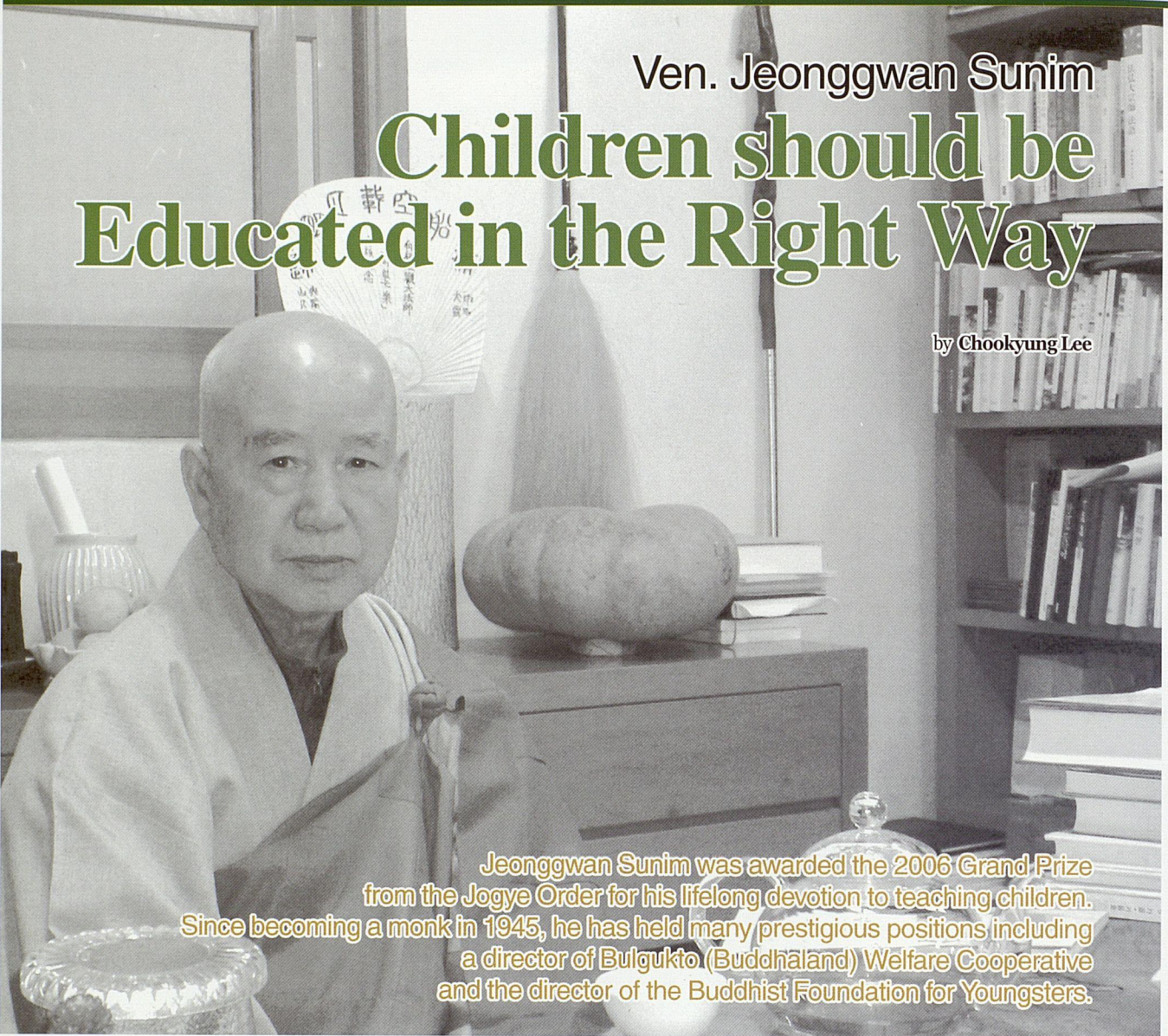
Practice is nothing more than awakening to every moment, and all the methods we now have been through are only means to keep us on the right path. If we follow the right path shown to us, it is certain we will reach our destination. No, Enlightenment is not too far away for us to reach, but just here — only if we can go back to the point where thinking does not yet arise. To constantly direct us to that point before thinking is practice. So, let’s just do it and celebrate the Enlightenment Day as our new birthday. It is our day, to celebrate the Buddha’s and our own enlightenment. ■



Ven. Jeonggwan Sunim

Children should be Educated in the Right Way

by Chookyung Lee



Jeonggwan Sunim was awarded the 2006 Grand Prize from the Jogye Order for his lifelong devotion to teaching children. Since becoming a monk in 1945, he has held many prestigious positions including a director of Bulgukto (Buddhaland) Welfare Cooperative and the director of the Buddhist Foundation for Youngsters.

When I arrived at Youngjuam Temple in Busan around 3 pm, Jeonggwan Sunim was practicing in the meditation hall. He came back to his office around 3:30 pm. What I saw was a monk who isn't tall and who looks like an ancient Seon master rather than an active monk working for teaching Buddhism. After receiving my greeting, he made tea for me and said, "Well, ask me questions. I will answer." and smiled.

Why are you interested in teaching Buddhism to children?

Years ago, I thought that in order to build a strong nation, children should be educated in the right way. And so in order for them to have a right national view, I realized that they should learn Buddhist philosophy. I believe that teaching children Buddhism leads to national development and also development of Korean Buddhism. I have worked in this way for 25 years.

What do you mean by the philosophy of Buddhism?

That includes freedom, an affirmative view, true understanding and holding the ideal of the Buddha land. In the philosophy of Buddhism, the most important thing is freedom.

For a human being, freedom is primordial; it comes before anything else like food, welfare, etc. A person can only be a human being in freedom. Freedom produces food. Without freedom, welfare is meaningless and does not succeed. For a tiger, the mountains are the only place in which to be a tiger, and for a fish the sea is the only place to be fish, not a fish bowl. Freedom is the only thing for a human being.

It seems to me that you have a keen sense on freedom.

Yes, I think so. It is because Buddhism teaches freedom. Sakyamuni Buddha renounced the worldly life for perfect freedom. He suffered for sentient beings who are not free, so he vowed to save all sentient beings.

The basis of true understanding is to create our own share. When we only claim another's share, instead of creating our own, we have to compete and fight. Fighting and competition can't build understanding. When we create our own share, we can truly understand and then we can live together. I try to plant these ideas of freedom in the children I meet.

What are the sources of your teachings?

My sources are mainly from Seon.

Do you think more children are attending temple schools and programs now?

No, I don't think so. The number of children attending temple programs has decreased more than 50% recently. Nowadays, children are busy and distracted because of mobile phones and computer games. They do not try to think anymore and are chasing pleasure only. Humans must think. Living without clear thinking is an animal life. Chasing pleasure is momentary but living with clear thinking is eternal.

Twenty-five years ago, when I started teaching

children, my supporters and I published a monthly magazine, 「연꽃」(Yeonggot, Lotus Flower). Korean residents in eight countries(USA, Japan, Bangladesh, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia and Malaysia) are subscribing to 「연꽃」 now. The magazine is used as a Korean language text in different countries. Also we made 200 Buddhist songs for children and adults. For 25 years, about one million children have passed through our programs.

What do you think are the best methods of spreading Buddhism to the West?

In order to spread Buddhism to the West and to establish it there, Buddhist ceremonies should be accompanied by the teachings. Through Buddhist ceremonies, foreigners can learn the Buddha's teachings. They should learn how to chant for themselves, their family and the world in the Buddhist way. Through Buddhist ceremonies, they will become Buddhist devotees and then Buddhism will be established.

How should we, lay people, live these days?

Just do your best in every aspect of your daily life. Do everything with your heart and always maintain a certain degree of shame.

How should monks and nuns live today?

These days there are too many temptations for ordained people. For monks and nuns who live in the mountains throughout their lives, it was easier 100 years ago than it is today. Monks and nuns are not a piece of wood, they are human beings. So they should try even harder to be true disciples of the Buddha, even harder than before.

Thank you so much for spending time with us.

Do not forget to chant the name of Gwanseum Bosal at any time, in any place silently. Filling your mind with the Buddhas' and the Bodhisattvas' names gives us great power.

I bowed deeply from my heart to the great Seon Master Jeonggwon Sunim. **L**



法華林菩薩
法華林菩薩

The World of the Future Buddha, Here and Now

They are there to realize the Buddha Land of Younghwa, the land of attainment in this samsaric world — some day. Maitreya, the Future Buddha, and two attendant Bodhisattvas now adorn that land with the beautiful teachings of the awakened ones and wait for the time when all sentient beings can join them to purify this world with our enlightenment.

People are waiting for Maitreya, too. People make statues to express the golden glory; people pray to them to make their wishes come true; people decorate the place with flowers and incense to beget merit; people look up to them listening for answers to their agonized murmurs; people stand in front of them seeking consolation for pains suffered and to help them to keep going. Many people want the Buddha Land right here and now: Maitreya is their hope.



Geumsansa Temple
www.geumsansa.org 82-63-548-4441

They don't realize that the Future Buddha and the Bodhisattvas are here; they are not only in Tusita Heaven which is above this samsaric world, far away from us and our sufferings. They are with us here, watching us, preparing the world to come. They whisper that with our love for each other and aspiration to truly attain, we can bring the Land of Maitreya, the Buddha of Compassion, to where we are living now. The Buddha's mind can be realized in our minds and in this world when we truly see our Buddha Nature.

Today is the day for us all to see our True Nature and be the Buddha that we already are! **L**

Stupas or Pagodas

by **In-Souk CHO** Architect, Principal / DaaRee Architect & Associates

A stupa is a memorial — a symbol of the Buddha, as the principle of enlightenment, pointing indirectly to both the teacher and his teachings. It is specifically a reminder of his final passing of the Buddha since sometimes it enshrines relics. In the early days, before Buddha statues were enshrined in temple halls, a stupa was the object of worship. Traditionally, stupas are built in the central area of temples. There are two types of relics enshrined in a stupa: Buddha-sari(physical relics) and Dharma-sari or sutras(the Buddha's teachings). On the surface of a stupa you will sometimes find carved figures of the Buddha, Bodhisattvas or congregated guardians. Occasionally, wind-chimes hang from the corners of its roof and make beautiful sounds when a breeze blows. A pagoda is the general term in the English language for a tiered tower with multiple eaves common to Nepal, China, Korea, Japan and other parts of Asia.

Pagodas in Korea were made of wood, earth, brick, stone or other materials.

Wooden Pagodas

Ever since Buddhism was first introduced to Korea in the late 4th century, the custom of building wooden pagodas became popular. Until recently, there were only two wooden pagodas remaining, preserved in Korea as objects of cultural heritage: Palsangjeon at Beopjusa Temple and Daeungjeon at Ssangbongsa Temple, both used as Main Halls.

Palsangjeon, a five-story wooden pagoda, at Beopjusa Temple

Palsangjeon, literally, means hall of eight pictures. These eight pictures are of the acts performed by the Buddha in order to save people. The existing Palsangjeon is a square, wooden building with a five-tiered roof, 22.7 meters in height, with a surface area of eight square meters. It stands on a stone platform with an entrance at each of the cardinal directions. There are several structural characteristics to this Pagoda. For example it has a central pillar running up the middle of the building, an inner frame of four stories in height with a log structure on top, and an

Ssangbongsa Daeungjeon



outer frame ending at the third storey.

The inside of the building is made up of three parts: the place to store the relics of the Buddha, the place to enshrine the statue of the Buddha and Palsangdo, the pictures of the eight scenes and a place for paying homage to Buddha.

All historical records of the Palsangjeon have been lost. Two inscriptions, however, were discovered during major repair work done in 1968. The dates of the inauguration of this building are on the relic container underneath the central pillar, and the other is on the main ridge of the roof. According to the inscription records, the relic was enshrined in 1605 and the roof frame was completed in 1626. The construction period lasted twenty-one years.

Stone Pagodas

There are many stone pagoda remains preserved in Korea. The first stone pagodas were built in the middle of the 6th century after two centuries of building wooden pagodas. The Silla stone pagodas and those of Baekje origin differ in the material used and the tectonic form adopted. In Silla, granite was used and the design was taken from wooden pagodas. In Baekje, andesite alone or mixed with granite was used and the design followed that of brick-style masonry. A pagoda is basically divided into three parts: foundation, body and finial.

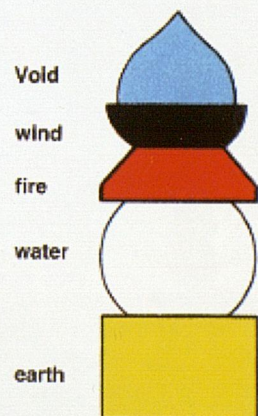
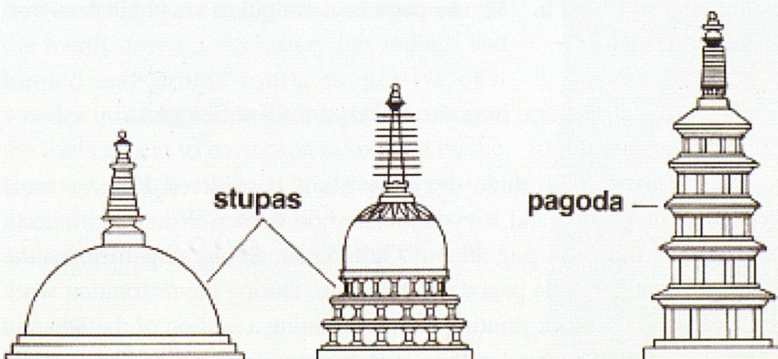
The five-story stone pagoda on the site of Jeongnimsa Temple

The five-story stone pagoda at Jeongnimsa Temple was built during the Baekje Period(BC18 - AD 660) along with the stone pagoda on the site of Mireuksa Temple in Iksan. Believed to date back to the early seventh century, it is one of the oldest and most exemplary of the many stone pagodas still existing today.

The five-story pagoda body stands on a single narrow, low pedestal. Pillar stones are fixed in the middle and on the corners of each side of the pedestal. There are pillars at each corner of the body on each story. The roof stones are thin, wide and raised at the ends of the eaves to make



Jeongnimsa Five-story Pagoda

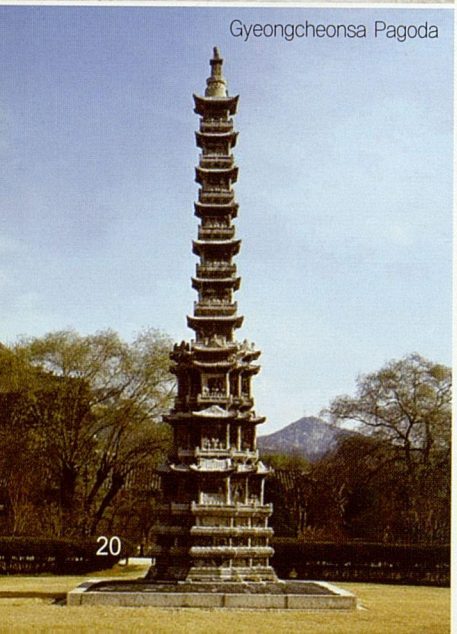




Gameunsa Twin Pagodas



Bulguksa Dabotap



Gyeongcheonsa Pagoda

them look elegant. From all this, we can guess that this pagoda was built following the design of a wooden building — a main characteristic of this pagoda. The whole figure is very majestic and beautiful and it is particularly prized because it is one of the two remaining stone pagodas from Baekje Period.

The twin three-story stone pagodas on the site of Gameunsa Temple

These magnificent twin pagodas, built in the 7th century, are the biggest existing pagodas of their kind in the Gyeongju area. A pair of pagodas of the same size and style is found on the site of Gameunsa Temple. Traditionally, there were two types of temple layout. One was with one Main Hall and one pagoda. The other was first introduced at Gameunsa Temple and consists of twin pagodas for one Main Hall.

The twin pagodas have a three-story body on a two-tier foundation, creating an impression of stability and height. This impression is further increased by the main body of the first story which is much taller than those of the other stories and a long, piercing mast as the finial. Of special note is that each portion of the two pagodas comprises tens of pieces of stone instead of a single stone. The pagodas have a carefully balanced ratio of one part to the next, which further increases the impression of dignity and magnificence. When the west pagoda was repaired in 1960, a royal palanquin-shaped relic container was retrieved from the third story.

The Pagoda of Many Treasures at Bulguksa(多寶塔, Dabotap)

Of all the pagodas in Korea, the most representative two pagodas at the same site are: the Pagoda of Many Treasures and the Three-storey stone Pagoda of Sakyamuni in the world of Humanity at Bulguksa Temple. The reason for building the two pagodas at the same site is to follow the statement found in the Lotus Sutra that the Buddha of the past (Many Treasure's Buddha) emerged from the earth to witness the Sakyamuni Buddha's teaching(the Buddha of the Present). The Dabotap stands to the right as one faces the Main Hall of the world of Humanity at Bulguksa — the Temple of Buddha Land. "Dabo" means "many Treasures ," and the Dabotap is dedicated to the Dabo Yoraе — the Buddha of Many Treasures . Historically, there are records of a Dabotap being built in China in 732; the pagoda at Bulguksa was built less than twenty years later.

The three-story stone pagoda of Sakyamuni at Bulguksa (釋迦塔, Seokgatap)

The 8.2 meter high three-story pagoda is considered Korea's most typical stone pagoda and is even pictured on the ten Won coin. Indeed, along with the twin pagodas at Gameunsa, Seokgatap follows the "golden mean" in Silla pagoda architecture. During the restoration work in 1966, a wood-block printing plate containing a section of the Dharani Sutra was found in Seokgatap. This is considered to be the world's

oldest surviving wood-block printing plate.

The brick-shaped three-story stone pagoda on the site of
Bunhwangsa Temple(模塼石塔, Mojeonseoktap)

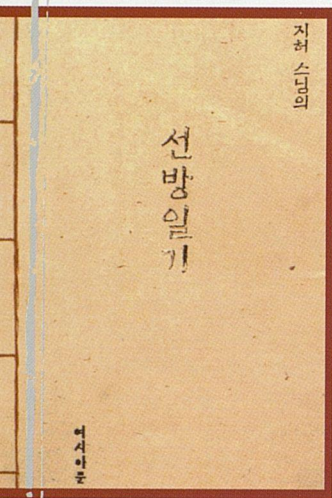
The pagoda of Bunhwangsa Temple is the oldest remaining stone pagoda of Silla origin. It was built in the 7th century.

This pagoda stands on a square single-story platform made of natural stones, with a granite lion at each of the four corners of the platform. The pagoda body is presently only three-stories high and has been made by piling small brick-shaped stones trimmed from charcoal-grey andesite. Compared with the first-story core, it is prominently reduced in size from the second story on. There is a doorway complete with a stone lintel, threshold, doorjamb and two doors on each side of the first level. A pair of Vajrapani, guardians of Buddhism, stands sentinel at each doorway. The roof stone is like a brick pagoda in that it has staircase-shaped stories at both the upper and the lower part. Only the upper part of the three-story roof stone is square pillar-shaped. There are lotus flowers in full-bloom carved in the granite.

The ten-story marble pagoda
of Gyeongcheonsa Temple

This pagoda was taken to Japan during the Japanese occupation period of Korea and relocated to the Gyeongbokgung Palace in 1960.

According to an inscription on the first story, this pagoda was erected in the 14th century. This 13 meter-high, ten-story pagoda is unusually made of marble, distinguishing itself from other pagodas of Goryeo origin. The three tiered platform holds the first three stories of the pagoda. They are all cross-shaped with each part going out in the four directions. The next seven stories are square. Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and flower designs are sculptured on them. From the fourth story up, each story has railings and hipped-and-gabled roofs, suggestive of a wooden building with a tiled roof. The eaves of the roofs appear to have been influenced by the wooden architecture of the period which makes them an important object of study for understanding the architecture of that time. **L**



Seonbangilki

The Debate over Materialism and Spirituality II

In the 1970s a travelling monk named Ji-Hur Sunim spent a retreat season at Sangwonsa Temple and wrote a diary. Times were simpler and the jobs given to the participants were specific and so their job is used as a name. Here is an excerpt.

Written By **Ji-Hur Sunim** Translated by **Chookyung Lee**(chookyungl@hotmail.com)

For humans, what is more essential, the body or the mind? Some monks go to the extremes of ascetic practice through restricted meal, never-lying-down-to-sleep, keeping silence for years or other various ways of torturing their bodies. On the other hand, there are other people who do not consider those practices to be valid or appropriate. One day a debate took place between two practitioners in the sideroom over where the focus should be put in the search for enlightenment. One advocated the mind saying that it is eternal while the body is mortal. The other retorted that it is the body that sustains the mind. Here is the last part of the heated discussion.

“That’s [Ed: physical abstinence brings more spiritual achievement] hypocrisy, artificiality and only a means of claiming to be an authentic practitioner, a true seeker. If you are a true seeker, you should maintain your body. Only after caring for your health is intuition conceivable. We need to have right intuition in order to begin the road to enlightenment.”

“Do not be dazzled by the do-nothingism of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu.. They were engrossed in maintaining their health while renouncing the world. They couldn’t reach the state of being a perfect human [至人], so they did not and could

not promote social welfare and the good of all sentient beings. But, we are going forward on the path to enlightenment, our ultimate goal only, by ignoring the body that is fated to die.”

“Do you honestly think that the spirit is sublime and feels free when the body loses its functions? For sentient beings like us who do not easily get out of the endless round of rebirths with all the sufferings of karma, do you think it is possible to attain enlightenment?”

“It’s possible. For that possibility, these days we are staying in this mountain living as if in a hell.”

“Be careful in your use of speech that can make sentient beings truly desperate. Your conclusion seems to be that by suffering all kinds of deformation, we might attain enlightenment. However, in the Buddhist tradition, the rule is that if you are disabled you can’t be ordained as a monk or a nun. This rule clearly shows the truth that a wholesome spirit dwells in a wholesome body. A balanced, healthy body is absolutely indispensable for Seon monks like us until we see our True Nature, or reach Nirvana, or the Other Shore or tranquil extinction.”

“Sunim, you are trying to ignore the sufferings of sentient beings in the karmic cycle while indulging in the comfort of the body. You seem to be caught in a prison of worshipping the body.”

“I am trying to keep my body sound in order to feel the sufferings of sentient beings burdened with karma, more keenly. And this meditation hall is where I can realize the karmic results of existences. I can feel all my bad karmic results as well as those of others. Here is the kaleidoscope of Samsara. That’s why I am here. Ok, let me put it this way. I am controlling my body not because I am attached to this useless body but, rather, because I detest the body. The body is not the subject of the eye but of feeling. It is just like this: We keep away from the world not because we abhor the world but because, in fact, we love the world too much. We are afraid that this attachment may bring us to indulge in the beauty of the world which will hinder us from taking the world as it is and so understanding it as it truly is. So, by keeping away from the world, we are struggling for enlightenment in order to make the world perfect. Though we renounce the world temporarily in the process of searching for the truth, though the world is not perfect now, the world must exist. If the world crumbles down, our

enlightenment will be of no use. In our practice, the body is like the world. Do you understand me? Let’s stop here. It is time to sit Seon.”

The debate was over without reaching any concrete conclusion. In the world of sentient beings, deciding which one is right and which one is wrong is impossible. For sentient beings are double-sided beings with both right and wrong. **L**

Monks are exercising between study and meditation



Liz Merrill

Practice Helps Me to be One with this World

by **Suhee Kim**(kimsuhee@yahoo.com)



At the winter solstice, Lotus Lantern met Liz at Jogyesa Temple. It was a busy day with Buddhists crowding in to join the ceremony and to eat Patjuk (red bean porridge), a traditional dish believed to keep evil spirits away! We had a great time, sharing our experiences and ideas of practice. Liz is an American who lives in Bundang with her husband and her 10-year-old daughter. Here's our talk.

Could you tell us about your background?

I went to the University of Montana where I studied botany and education and worked as community organizer on environmental issues. After college, I moved to Idaho where I continued to work as a community and political organizer. I worked to save the wilderness from loggers, the people of Idaho from Republicans and the world from nuclear weapons.

What do you do in Korea?

I have been married for ten years to a Korean American software engineer. We have a 10-year-old daughter and she's in the 4th grade at the International School. We are in Korea because my husband is working for Samsung and learning about his Korean heritage in his homeland. I am a homemaker. These days I am studying Korean language and practicing meditation fairly regularly.

What first interested you in Buddhism?

I was drawn to the Buddhist Dharma about 13 years ago, when I was in Law School and looking for a

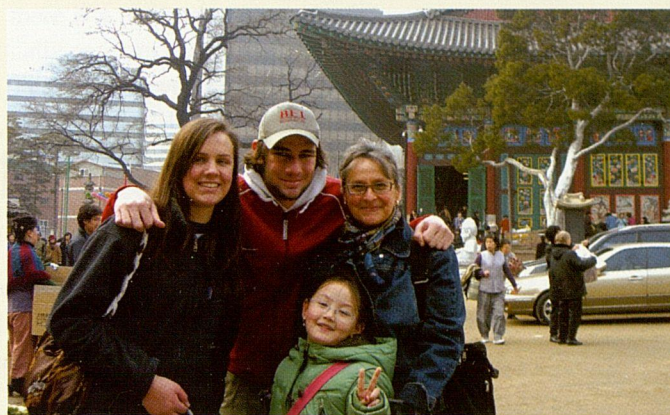
way to cope with my suffering. I was beginning to get an inkling of the idea that my suffering was not something that would be fixed by trying to save the world outside.

Since that time I have become a regular practitioner of meditation. I joined a Buddhist group in Boise, Idaho, called the Open Path. It was founded by students of the late Namgyal Rinpoche, a Canadian who studied the Dharma quite intensively in Burma. He believed that we could and should awaken in this lifetime for the benefit of all beings. He taught traditional Buddhist Dharma while employing tools from western mystics and other western spiritual traditions to reach those of us raised in the West. His teachings and those of his students were immediate and accessible. The Open Path does not have a resident teacher, but hosts and co-sponsors, many visiting lamas. I have had the great good fortune to attend many of these teachings and attend some weeklong meditation retreats. The teachings I have experienced are mostly in the Tibetan and Japanese Zen traditions.

How do you practice? Can you describe it?

Now, most frequently, I sit watching my breath for 50 minutes each morning. Recently I have added prostrations at the suggestion of Ven. Jawoo Sunim. She has suggested that bowing practice is really good for an overactive mind. She said if one is having a difficult time it is good to do up to 3,000 bows a day. I am working my way up and am currently at 40; still a way to go to reach even the daily 108. When I was in Boise, in addition to a daily sit, I would join other practitioners for a weekly Avalokitesvara Puja. During this practice we would chant mantras and visualize Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. At the end of the practice, Avalokitesvara and the practitioner merge into one. During this practice it is possible to get a glimpse of how all beings are not separate from each other and that all beings are buddhas, even though some of us are for now blinded by greed, hatred and delusion.

Sometimes, when I have the time and the space, I also do a Green Tara or Twenty-one Tara practice with visualization and mantra. These practices are, as I understand it, designed to provide the practitioner with a sort of map to enlightenment. By visualizing



oneself as an awakened deity, one gets a feel for the qualities and characteristics of enlightened existences and is then able to work backwards from that ideal and forward from one's current state, clearing obstructions along the way.

Is there anything you want to know about Korean Buddhism?

I want to know about daily practice and how to do it. I am also interested in the overall teachings. I have heard that Korean Seon is a mixture of Mahayana and Vajrayana and as I have experience with the Tibetan style of practice and American-Japanese Zen, I would like to learn more. However, I have had a difficult time learning about Korean Seon, because most of my encounters with it have been in Korean and my Korean language skills are very minimal.

How useful is Buddhism in your daily life?

It is very useful. Through the practice of watching my mind jump about, I am just a little bit less reactive, and not quite as believing of my stories. I don't take things so seriously, and am more likely to ask, "Hmm, what is going on here?" Hopefully, I am also a little kinder to other beings and to myself.

At the end of our talk her daughter came to Jogyesa Temple with two of her cousins and joined us. There were two long lines at the temple that day; one for the red-bean porridge and the other for the free calendar. We didn't get either. But it was ok because I am pretty sure we shared something better.

Thank you again Liz!

Happy New Year! **L**

Koryosa Temple in Argentina

Fruitful Happiness

Buddhism is not an odd or unfamiliar word any more in the West of today. And of course, Argentina is no exception. You may wonder when you see the signpost to Koryosa in a commercial area of Buenos Aires. But without doubt, it's a Korean temple, a small one in the strongly Catholic country.

by **Hyunshil Kim**(hyunshil23@naver.com)



The Story In Buddhism, nothing is permanent. It is true. Being Buddhist means trying to follow the Buddha's teaching and yet sometimes, it is very difficult to integrate the teachings into our daily life. These phenomena may encounter another hindrance. People living abroad in particular have a stronger desire to learn and practice. Although it is considered not right to become attached to something, in this case, the situation is a little different. Korean immigrants find their identity through Buddhism. Being guided by a Sunim is one way of sustaining themselves and so keeping a strong connection with their roots.

Back in 1985, a small group of Korean Buddhists had their first Dharma Meeting at a private house. It was 40 years since the first Korean immigrants had

settled. From then on the house was called Seongbul-sa Temple, which was the herald of Korean Temples in the country. After that Ven. Jeongjin Sunim came and established Koryosa Temple. Temples with big budgets could easily be built quickly but Koryosa Temple has taken a different approach. The members really wanted a temple. So they saved all the money they could and put it all together. Eventually they acquired this peaceful spot in Buenos Aires.

While Ven. Kyeonghyun Sunim and Seomok Sunim stayed, Korean Buddhism was very popular. Anyone who wanted to learn Buddhism just had to go to the temple and the two Sunims would teach them with great enthusiasm. In addition, they used the internet and were much praised in the local media.

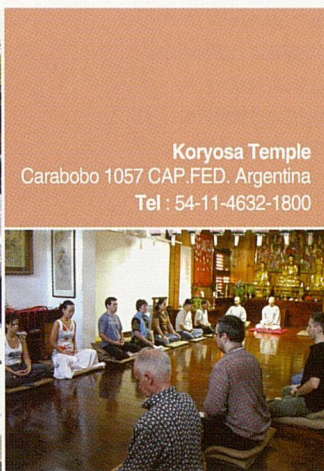
A Warm Welcome Koryosa Temple is on the first floor of a commercial building in the town. This is surprising to most people as they think that a temple should be in a remote and quiet place. The result is that it is not far from us but near us and so busy people of today, who do not have enough time to drive far to visit a temple, can come frequently. Even more fortunate, the members of the temple can pop in whenever they want to. After paying homage to the Buddha, they take a rest in a peaceful and quiet place for a moment, even for a second. It must be much cherished by the members as it is a rare chance these days.

From the outside, it looks like an ordinary commercial building but once you get inside, you feel as if

there is a meditation class. And there is an intensive daily program every December.

The biggest events are the Buddha's birthday, April 8th, and the All Spirits' Day, July 15th, by the lunar calendar respectively. When those two days do not fall on a Sunday, they have a special ceremony in the evening. In the case of the Buddha's Enlighten-ment Day, they celebrate it by the solar calendar. Otherwise, the members are not available to come and join in the ceremony.

Sad to say, there are not many young members. As they are living in a Catholic society, there are certain strict social rules. For example, wedding ceremonies must be held in a church. This kind of thing makes it a bit difficult for the youth to come to the temple.



you are in a traditional Korean Buddha Hall. Once you enter, you will surely receive a warm welcome from the smiling Buddha. That is the moment you are in peace.

Programs Since its new head nun Gilsang Sunim came, the temple has been regenerated and the members are keen again. All programs are for everybody, Koreans and nationals. Every Sunday, there is a Dharma Meeting which consists mainly of chanting. It is conducted in Korean, which even some local people enjoy. Gilsang Sunim feels really sorry for them as it is not translated into Spanish. For now, her Spanish is very limited but some day it will improve as she is studying hard. Sometimes, they have Dharma Meetings in the suburbs. On Saturdays

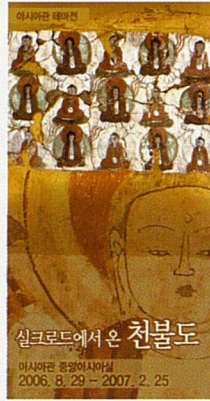
Future Plans Argentineans are very interested in Buddhism and in meditation. In spite of this, Buddhism is still very new for them. Therefore, Ven. Gilsang Sunim slowly teaches the general guidelines and, in order to make it more attractive and understandable, she tries to offer many different aspects. Apart from the above mentioned activities, she is going to run various other classes, such as meditation, yoga, and tea ceremony. They also hope that eventually they can move to bigger place in order to have more facilities for more people. However there are many obstacles, so for the moment they just plan and hope.

Koryosa's members are really small in number, but their devotional energy is great, greater than any other Buddhist group at any other time! ■

Buddhas from the Silk Road

The National Museum of Korea is holding a theme exhibition, "Thousand Buddhas Paintings from the Silk Road" until February 25, 2007. "Thousand Buddhas Paintings" is the name given to paintings depicting endless numbers of Buddhas. The paintings on exhibition are from the cave temples of Kucha, Turpan, and Dunhuang in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region of China. Formerly, this type of painting didn't attract any attention in the field of fine art because of the lack of originality on the part of the artists. This exhibition aims to shed new light on these paintings and increase public understanding of them.

The exhibition consists of four sections: Religious Meaning, Characteristics of Expression, Connection with



Rituals, and Painting Process. The Religious Meaning of Thousand Buddhas Paintings is explained in the context of the view that there is not only one Buddha but many. The Characteristics of Expression appear through the repetition of Buddhas in rows and columns. Also, some of the hidden meanings in the arrangement of the paintings in the cave temples of Central Asia are revealed in the exhibition. Among the paintings on exhibition, some pictures have the names of the Buddhas next to their images. This is connected with the act of reciting the Buddhas' names. Visitors are introduced to certain sutras and rituals related to this style of chanting. Finally, the exhibition suggests a new way of understanding the technique employed in these paintings by viewing the repetitive and efficient painting method from a new angle which was not fully appreciated in the conventional standard of evaluating art that focused on the value of originality.

For more information, please contact:

www.museum.go.kr / Tel. 82-2-2077-9000

Ven. Suan Sunim's Seon Paintings



Suan Sunim, famous for his paintings whose main themes are the pure mind of children, hope, nature and Seon, exhibited his works in Yun Gallery in Gwanhundo, Jongno-gu from December 23 to 30. Since his ordination in Tongdosa Temple under Soekjoeng Sunim in 1957, he has been painting many pictures of innocent children and the beauty of nature. In this exhibition he showed his recent works of tea pots and cups, a vase of flowers, a child preparing tea, Bodhidharma, and a monk

in Samadhi. All the paintings made the visitors feel calm and peaceful just as if they were enjoying the scent of a cup of tea.

Suan Sunim says that he was inspired by the experience of traveling to Lake Baikal, where the Altai people live; they are assumed to be the origin of the Korean people.

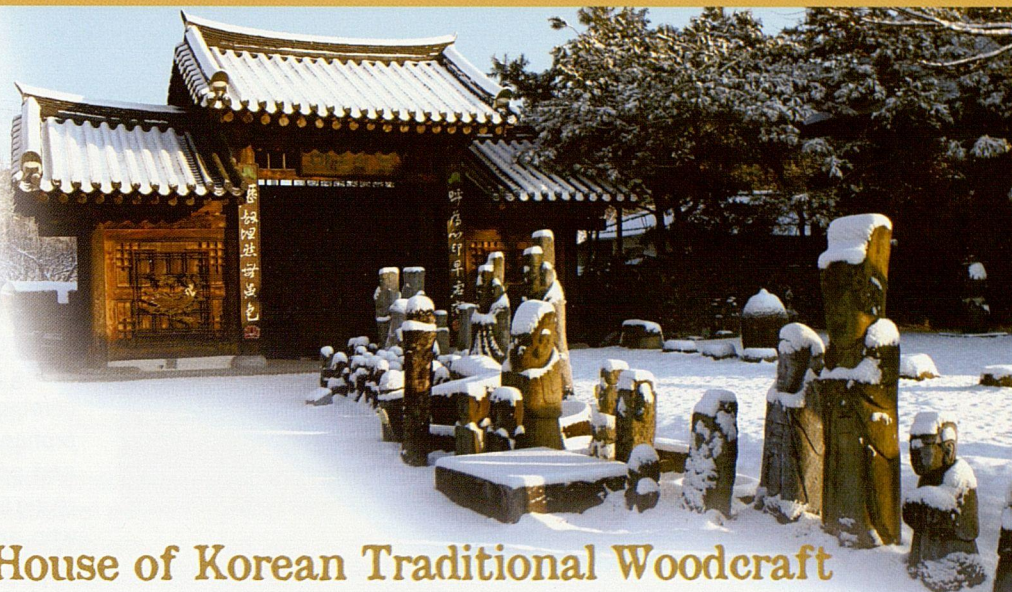
"I felt the ultimate power of nature from the sound of the ice breaking in Lake Baikal in winter and the sand storms of the Gobi Desert," he says. His unique paintings are recognized world wide. He has already held many exhibitions in Paris, Berlin, Casablanca in Morocco as well as in Russia, Taiwan and Monaco.

Among the notable paintings on show is one of a blue toad winking. "There are many toads around the small temple where I live. I don't know where they live, but one summer day a toad was sitting under the tea tree trying to escape the heat. I felt that grass and trees all have human forms. After all, the Buddha, humans, and toads are all one. So I painted that toad."

"Drinking tea and eating meals is our daily activity. Some paint as a profession, but I paint with an easy mind as my daily activity," says Suan Sunim.

For more information, please contact:

Tel. 82-2-738-1144

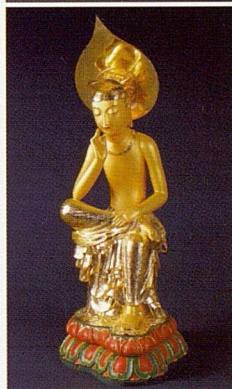
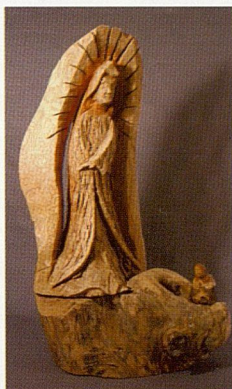


Moga Museum --

A Treasure House of Korean Traditional Woodcraft

Moga Museum was established in 1994 to preserve Korean traditional woodwork and promote Korean Buddhist art. As a specialized private museum, it has started many cultural projects including annual exhibitions, a museum school and culture classes. It tries to promote Korean Buddhist art and woodcraft and give easy access to valuable materials on Korean traditional art to the public. It is a base for the preservation of traditional woodwork and the promotion of traditional Buddhist carving techniques through the Moga Traditional Art School. Here, people can see cultural remains related to Buddhism and contemporary Buddhist carvings at the same time.

Moga museum was named after its director Chansu Park, whose pen name is Moga. He is a prominent Buddhist wood sculptor, and was named "Korean Important Intangible Cultural Property No 108 - Woodcraftsman." The museum has a three-story main exhibition building, an outdoor park displaying sculptures and other objects, and several other Korean traditional style buildings. The design of the main exhibition building was inspired by Indian stone cave temples and has a lot of windows. There are three spiral staircases; one in the middle and one at either end of the building, which represent the Three Jewels of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.



The first (basement) floor is decorated according to the general structure of a Hall of the Kings of the Hells and has statues of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, who saves the souls in the hell. On the same floor is the auditorium, which is used to show films on wood carving techniques in particular. Classes for the Moga culture school are also held here. The ground floor of the museum houses special exhibitions, and on the second floor, 200 Buddhist ritual items used in old temples are on display. The third floor has the exhibition hall dedicated to the creations of the director of the museum, Moga, including famous works that have won many prizes. Two huge dragons hang from the ceiling, 20 pieces of the Eight Scenes of the Life of the Buddha Paintings are displayed on the walls, and statues of many other gods and bodhisattvas are on permanent exhibit. Outside the building, there is a beautiful park with 160 statues. This park is open to the public to serve as, for example, a wedding place and it is also very popular with the local people. The museum also has a complete list of 2,200 films on Korean culture, traditional fine/folk art, and the natural beauty of Korea. All of them are available by prior arrangement with the research center of the museum.

For more information, please contact:

e-mail: mapcs@chol.com / Tel. 82-31-885-9952~4

Jogyesa Choir commemorated its 30th anniversary on December 28, 2006 in the National Theatre of Korea by performing "Hyecho," a cantata composed by Kim Hoikyung, conductor of the Jogyesa Choir. It describes the pilgrimage of the monk, Hyecho, who lived in the eighth century. He was an eminent monk of Silla, a period of Korean history in which there was a very advanced Buddhist culture, and he wrote a diary describing his journey to India to collect more sutras; it is now published as Hyecho's Diary: Memoirs of a Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India. On his way to India, Hyecho passed through Central Asia; this is the only record of the eighth century of that region that we have now. Beautiful images accompany the choir as it sings this contribution

Jogyesa Choir Plays "Hyecho"



to world cultural exchange. Jogyesa Choir is one of the outstanding temple choirs in Korea and has 100 members. Since its establishment in May 1976, it has been performing at various Buddhist ceremonies and other religious events, as well as at the president's inauguration ceremony in 1988. It also visits orphanages, retirement homes and prisons more than often, giving light to many lonely people who are not much exposed to

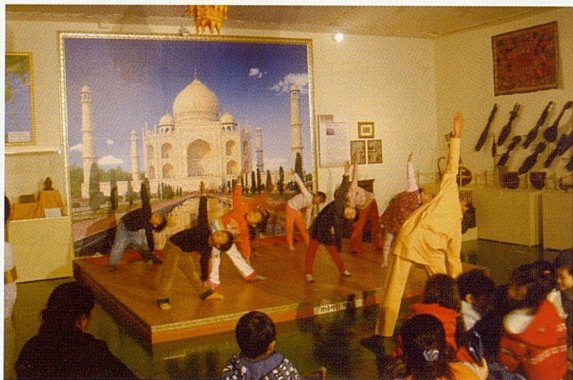
cultural events.

Along with the main performance, there were also other congratulatory performances by Ven. Doshin Sunim and of Yadan-beopsoek.

For more information, please contact:

www.ijogyesa.net / Tel. 82-2-735-3724

Indian Yoga, Dance, or Whatever



The Indian Museum in Gwangju of Jeollanam-do Province has prepared a special program for children for this winter vacation. On Mondays and Wednesdays during January and February, an English yoga class welcomes children who want to develop a balanced body and mind. Children can learn practical English as they learn yoga with a native Indian teacher, Jaya Prasad, from southern India. He has an M.A. in Indian literature and teaches the traditional Indian yoga that he learned from his guru. Yoga helps children fully develop their

physical flexibility and ability to concentrate. It also helps the control of hormones and is highly beneficial to girls' menstrual cycle.

There is also a class that explores image painting, which stimulates children's imagination and encourages them to discover their hidden talents. In combination with the yoga class, there is an Indian dance class for children. The teacher, Byun Youngmi, majored in dance in Korea, studied traditional dance in India, and came back to Korea to promote Indian dance. In the class, children can learn various hand and feet movements, as well as diverse facial expressions that are unique in traditional Indian dance. The museum has yoga classes for adults as well. In addition to this program, the museum has items on permanent exhibition that show Indian life, religions, culture and history, and its auditorium and education hall are available to the Korean public so that they can learn and experience Indian culture. Every weekend the museum hosts performances of Indian artists working in Korea.

For more information, please contact:

Asian Cultural Foundation

E-mail. kjasia@hanmail.net / Tel. 82-62-224-0045(Indian Museum) / 0255(Indian Culture Center)

Oseam

Oseam is an animated, 77-minute version of a story written by Chaebong Jeong. It's the story of five-year-old Gilson and his blind older sister Gami, who are on their own after losing their mother. As the children have no place to go, they are invited to stay in a Buddhist temple.

The wonderful anime scenes of this film provide a beautiful backdrop to unforgettable story. A visual feast takes the viewer through a summer, autumn and winter in the lives of the two children. The lively younger brother trying to learn and adjust to the quiet, slow flow of life at a temple offers moments of laughter to lighten up a heavily dramatic movie full of sad and poignant scenes. Most of this movie is set in a Buddhist temple, and we



Directed by Baekyeop Sung

really get the feeling of an actual remote mountain temple. The Buddhist ideas portrayed may not be strictly orthodox, but that is not the focus of this movie. In fact I don't believe non-Buddhists would find anything particularly objectionable here.

Oseam, which translates roughly as Five-year-old Hermitage, is suitable for all ages, but the sad parts would definitely need a lot of discussion and explanation with young children. Though the animation and characters are very appealing to kids under the age of seven, it's probably best to hold off on viewing this with preschoolers. Overall, though, this movie comes highly recommended.

For CD or DVD, www.seoulselection.com

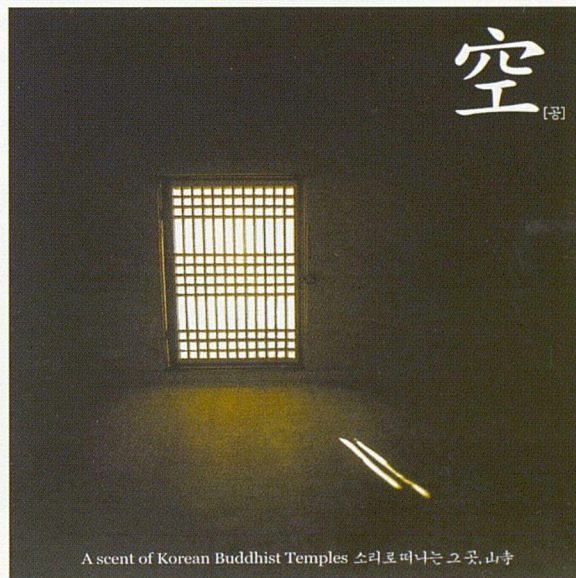
空

The Chinese character, 空 or *gong*, means "emptiness." It's also the name of a two-CD set of sounds emanating from Buddhist temples set in remote mountain locations across Korea. These high quality digital recordings strongly evoke the true atmosphere of being at a temple. The first CD is called "Taking Refuge in the One Mind," and it interweaves sounds of nature with sounds of percussion instruments from morning rituals at temples, sometimes on the same track. There are also tracks of chants that are commonly heard in the early morning. The second CD, "Taking Refuge with a Sincere Mind," contains recordings of evening rituals from three different temples. These include one track of the four percussion instruments that are used to call all beings to the ceremony and one track of the chanting and reciting of sutras from each temple.

Listening to any part or all of these CDs is a very satisfying experience. It's very easy to close your eyes as you let yourself be transported to the scene. The first disk is a skillful blending of birds, water, and wind chimes with the music of the bell, drums, and the gong. The tracks of chanting that are interspersed lead you on a pleasant mental journey. The second disk is a more straightforward recording of rituals as you actually hear

them, and are powerful samples of the possibility of this form of expression. These CDs will become a highly valued part of almost anyone's collection, whether being used to set the mood of a particular occasion or as daily vehicles of practice.

For more information, www.korearoot.co.kr



The Zen Monastic Experience

Author : **Robert E. Buswell, Jr.** / Publisher : Princeton University Press

Living Context of Korean Seon Practice

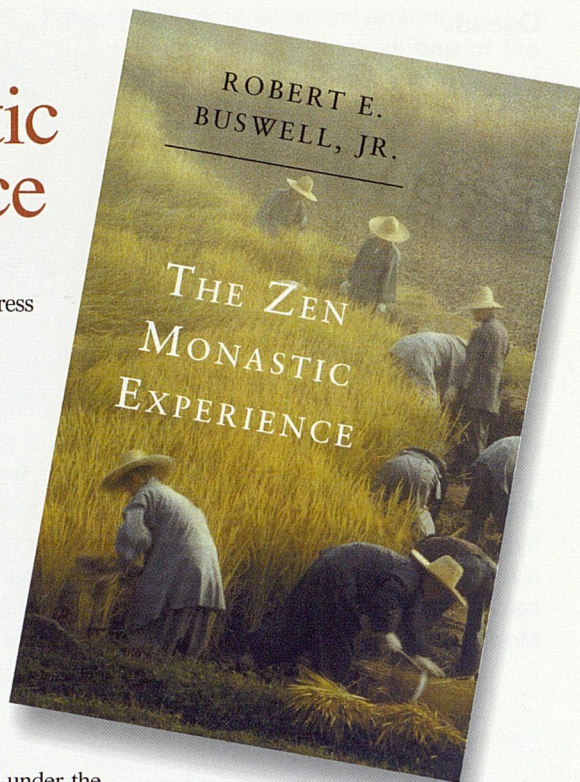
The author has given his reasons for writing this book in the introduction. He says, "I went to Korea not to study monks, but to live as a monk. During those five years, I absorbed most of my knowledge about monastic life and monastic residents simply by living the life. I chose to be not an outside observer, gazing down upon the monastery as if from on high, but someone committed to the tradition."

Prof. Buswell, a famous scholar of Korean Buddhism, practiced under the Ven. Kusan Sunim's direction at Songgwangsa Temple in Korea between 1974 and 1979. Songgwangsa Temple is the temple representing the Sangha and one of the five Chongnims (Comprehensive Monastic Training Centers). This book is the record of his adventure in Korean Seon practice.

In the 1970s Korea passed through a very dark and hard time politically and economically. The nation's desire for an improved economic situation was so great that social consensus was focused on the government campaign that seemed to overlook cultural and traditional values in pursuing the yearned for goal. However, during this same period, monks practiced and trained themselves according to the traditional monastic system. This book describes their search for spiritual accomplishment in a practical and straightforward manner. One of the merits of the book is that the author shows Seon practitioners in their actual lifestyle and not through the tinted glasses of mysticism. In addition it tells us about the routines followed in a restrained life under the strict regulation of tradition and hierarchy. Especially the detailed descriptions of "Training in the Meditation Hall," Chapter 8, gives a live sense of the customs surrounding the Korean Seon tradition.

However, there are two things I should mention so that you are not misled. One is that the gap of about 30 years has brought some changes to the monastic tradition while the essence is still alive. So if you expect to now visit a temple and see the same scenes described in the book, you will be sorely disappointed. The other is, to our disappointment, there is no longer an international community at Songgwangsa Temple. These two things are really discouraging to the modern searcher, however, at the same time, it gives a valid reason for reading this rare account.

When you finally close the book, the idea might flash through your mind that the attainments in those days as well as the religious accomplishments achieved, are a beacon to people in this conflicting secular world of today - even though we know that this is not the scope of this book. ■



by **Yonhee Koh**(yjunekoh@hanmil.net)

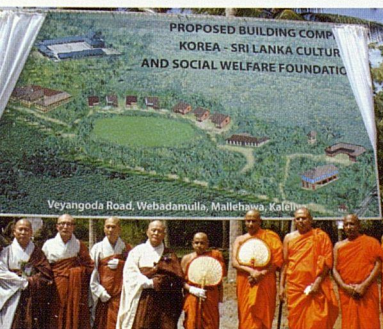


Planting Hope for the Future

Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism Welfare Town in Sri Lanka to be completed in 2007

The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism is
establishing Welfare Town in Sri Lanka to help the victims
of the December 2004 Tsunami which caused
so much death and destruction.

This Welfare Town includes an orphanage for the homeless children.



Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism Tel: 82-2-2011-1830 E-mail: son@buddhism.or.kr

“ We devoutly pay homage to
the eternally existent assembly
of all the Buddhas,
in all the ten directions. ”

