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BRINGING NATIVE AMERICAN AND BUDDHIST TEACHING TOGETHER in the September 1987 "Expanding the Circle, Converging the Paths" conference at Providence Zen Center were (from left) Barbar Rhodes, Twylah Nitsch and Dhyani Ywahoo. See article on page 8. Story and photos by Sid Kemp.

Attaining truth and a correct life

A NEW ZEN IS APPEARING

by Zen Master Seung Sahn

The following was taken from a talk given to a meeting of the Kwan Um Zen School's governing council on December 13, 1987. Soen Sa Nim was asked to speak about the purpose and vision of the school, which is grounded in the Zen teachings he has been transmitting here since 1972. In this talk he traces a brief but wide overview of the history of Zen teaching. A fuller account of some of the famous Zen stories can be found in *The Blue Cliff Records* and *The Mumon Kwan*.

What are the Kwan Um Zen School's roots in the past? What is the Kwan Um Zen School today? What is its future?

1. Only practicing First in the Kwan Um Zen School history is the fact that Buddha appeared in this world and attained enlightenment. He taught his students that everything is impermanent. He taught them about form going to emptiness, and how to attain Nirvana. He gave many Dharma speeches and his disciples only "did it" - practiced what they heard. There were no writings and not much discussion, not much checking [questioning]. At first, Buddhism was only practice and nirvana was the highest experience - "Make my mind the universe." Then Buddhism changed.

2. From emptiness comes true form After the Buddha died, his disciples gathered in four meetings to write down what Buddha had said. These writings, called 'sutras,' are not what the Buddha said, the same as the Bible is not what Christ said. They are the words of the disciples. The conventional form of the sutras was to state in the first line, "Thus I have heard..." Through the ensuing years the disciples created what is now called Mahayana Buddhism. It teaches that from emptiness comes true form, which is truth. If you keep an empty mind, your mind is clear like space, clear like a mirror. When

red comes, red. When white comes, white - everything is perfectly reflected. That became the highest teaching and can be found in sutras like the Lotus Sutra and the Platform Sutra.

After Mahayana Buddhism appeared, there was much discussion, much opinion - "Buddha taught this, Buddha taught that..." - much checking. Only studying Buddhism became more prevalent than practicing it.

Within 800 to 1000 years after Buddha's death, there were many volumes written about Buddhism and intellectual dissension with other religions. Also the sects within Buddhism argued with each other. Still there was more studying of the sutras than practicing, more talking and Dharma combat.

3. "Don't know" practicing Then Bodhidharma appeared, about 1500 years ago. He went from India to China, where Buddhism had already appeared some 300 years before. It was not a "pure" Buddhism, it was only "praying Buddhism" - "Pray and get happiness, pray and get whatever you want" Buddhism. Many Indian monks went to China teaching this. When Bodhidharma went to China, he saw that it was not correct Buddhism and began to change it.

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"WHY DO I HAVE TO FINISH THIS?"

By Master Dharma Teacher Mu Deung

This talk was given on January 19, 1984, during the 90-day Winter Kyol Che intensive meditation retreat at Providence Zen Center, led by Mu Deung.

Mu Deung: So, someone left the retreat last night. That's not unusual in a retreat. It's part of growing up. Whatever we do in our practice, we learn from. If we keep a mind that can be a little open, we can learn from everything we do. Whether it's a big mistake or a little one, correct or not correct action, we can learn something about ourselves and other people.

When I was doing my first 100-day solo retreat, at about the 47th day I called Soen Sa Nim [Zen Master Seung Sahn]. I said, "Why do I have to finish this?" Whether we leave or not, have a problem or not, this is not a game. That's the point. My whole life, even at intense suffering times, has been a game. Since I was 13, if you said to me, "Don't do it," I was guaranteed to try it. If you said, "Do it," I might. But guaranteed if you wanted me to do something, all you had to say was "Don't do it."

I wouldn't do just anything. I could perceive that some things were not such good ideas. But anything I had a question about and somebody said, "Don't do," I did, be-

cause I could never believe anybody. I could believe my parents, I respected them and thought they were good parents. But at the same time if they said something I didn't quite understand or wasn't sure of, the only way I thought I could understand for myself was to try it. I got into lots of trouble!

I went away to boarding school. All the dorm masters were telling me not to do things, but I had to do them. Not things like disobeying the curfew or bringing alcohol onto campus or smoking dope - those were pretty clear, set rules. It wasn't necessary to test them. But things like "Don't go and hang around with these kind of people because they're not so good and you might become a bank robber or a bad person." - I was never sure why I shouldn't do them, so I always tried.

I had seen gang movies. They were kind of a big thing when I was growing up - "Blackboard Jungle" and gang fighting

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IT'S OK TO LET GO: a hospice experience

By Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes

(The following talk was given at Providence Zen Center on December 16, 1986.)

Most of you know that I'm a nurse and I've been working with a hospice program in Rhode Island. The story I want to tell you is about this patient I've been taking care of since July. She has cancer of the liver and intestines. We have been doing guided meditations together for several months and have gotten very close. I care a lot about her. Her husband is very nice and they have three daughters with little children—it's a lovely Italian family, very close. Through the months I've gotten to know all of them, even the grandchildren.

In the past few weeks my patient has gotten sicker. Her pain has increased, so we've been trying to get the pain under control. She's needed more and more care in the past few weeks and I've spent a lot more time with her. A few days ago she went to bed and didn't get out of it again. When I went to see her Friday, she was almost in a coma and in a lot of pain. We changed her medication again and she got more and more confused.

This was the one thing she had been afraid of: losing control and not being able to understand what was going on. I understand that fear. I think that's why all of us are in this room right now: not being able to understand what's going on, not being able to control in a clear way what we need to do with our lives. I don't mean control in the sense of being rigid, but being able to control our destiny, our needs, our ability to be with our families, with our lives.

She used to say to me, "What is it going to be like when I get so sick that I won't be able to express what I need? I'm going to be so dependent. My family might not be able to take care of me." I told her that I thought it was going to be okay, that I

thought she was just going to be lying in bed and she would slowly lose consciousness. I told her that after all these months, her family would be ready and able to take care of her, and that I would come and help as much as I could.

That's pretty much the way it happened. She got weaker and weaker. As she needed more equipment, I would bring it to the house: johnnies [nightgowns] that are easy to put on and pads for her bed in case she was incontinent and a commode if she couldn't walk to the bathroom anymore. It's a step by step process when people die. Gradually you can't do these things for yourself, so the hospice is prepared for

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NEW ZEN

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There is a famous story about his first visit to the Emperor in southern China, who told Bodhidharma that he had built countless temples, copied countless sutras and given supplies to countless monks. So he asked Bodhidharma how great was his resulting merit. Bodhidharma replied, "No merit at all."

That was the beginning of the destruction of "praying Buddhism." The Emperor then asked, "What is holy teaching?" And Bodhidharma replied, "Vast emptiness with nothing sacred in it." The Emperor was completely baffled. "Who are you?" he demanded, and Bodhidharma replied, "Don't know." (That is when don't know appeared, our don't know, the same as Bodhidharma's don't know.)

Bodhidharma explained, "If you don't know, and I don't know, that's don't know mind. That's my teaching." At that, the Emperor became his student and later attained enlightenment.

Then Bodhidharma went to northern China to its capital city, Chang An. At that time there were already many famous temples, but he did not stay in any of them. Instead he went to a holy cave near Shao-Lin and sat. (When we traveled to this mountain in 1986, we saw that it was very high and barren.) There were no gardens, so what did Bodhidharma eat for nine years? And what did he do, only facing the wall, for nine years?

That is what we might call 'hibernation practice' - like a snake or a frog going into the ground and not eating anything. Just breathing in and breathing out, very extended breathing in and out. If you practice like this, go 'underground' and do this extended breathing practice, then not eating even for nine years is no problem. In Korea there is a famous monk who has not eaten anything for 16 years.

4. Mind to mind transmission After nine years Hui-Ko (the future Second Patriarch) went to Bodhidharma and said, "Please teach me what is Dharma." Bodhidharma replied, "Even if I told you, you would not believe me."

Then Hui-Ko reportedly cut off his own arm: "Oh Master, the pain is terrible! My mind is in awful pain! Please put my mind at rest."

"Give me your mind and I will put it at rest."

"I cannot find it."

"Then I have already given you rest mind."

Then Hui-Ko attained enlightenment.

This was the first Zen teaching - only mind to mind connecting, teacher and student mind becoming one. Transmission went from mind to mind. Here's another example: the Fourth Patriarch was very sick when he was 13. The Buddhists used to meet in a big house, eat together and hear Dharma speeches, but he was so ill that he could not go out. So after one speech, the Master came to visit him.

The boy said to him, "Master, I have very heavy karma, please take it away so that I can become strong and study Buddhism." The Master replied, "Oh, you have heavy

"The five Zen schools in China died, because they could not connect with everyday life. If we do not correct this, today's Zen will also die."

karma? I will take it away. Show me your heavy karma."

The boy said, "I can't find my heavy karma."

"I have already taken it away. You are not sick."

"Oh, I am not sick. Why should I be sick?" All his sickness disappeared and he attained something, so he became a student and got transmission.

5. Don't make anything The next change in the teaching came with the Sixth Patriarch, who taught about cause and effect, about "making nothing." "If you don't make the cause, you have no effect." "Don't make anything. Then you are nothing, then no trouble." His poem answering the Fifth Patriarch was: "Bodhi has no tree, clear mirror has no stand. Originally nothing, where is dust?" When he gave that poem to the Fifth Patriarch, he got transmission.

6. The beginning of kong-ans These enlightenment stories about the Patriarchs and famous teachers began to be told over and over and used as teaching devices. For example, the Sixth Patriarch was famous for this kong-an: two monks were watching a flag ripple in the wind and arguing over what was moving, the flag or the wind. Overhearing them, the Sixth Patriarch said, "Neither the flag nor the wind is moving, it is your mind that is moving." This was very simple teaching.

When the Seventh Patriarch appeared before him, the Sixth Patriarch asked him, "Where are you coming from? What kind of thing comes here? Don't know." This is where the "What am I?" kong-an appeared. It was the same question that the Buddha sat with for six years. Buddha, Bodhidharma and the Sixth Patriarch, all asked "What am I?" and answered, "don't know."

Huai Jang sat in his temple for 8 years with "don't know." He would ask his visitors, "What thing do you bring here?" They might answer, "If you say it's a thing, that is not correct." So a kind of word-fighting began to appear, which we call Dharma combat. At this point it was still very simple teaching.

After him came the Eighth Patriarch, Ma Jo. A country boy appeared before him and asked, "What is Buddha? Ma Jo answered, "Mind is Buddha, Buddha is mind." Later his answers to this question grew more complicated. For a while he used to say, "No mind, no Buddha." And later, "Buddha is not a thing, is not mind, is not Dharma, then what is it?"

There is the famous story of Ma Jo and Pae Chang, riding together in a ship and seeing the geese flying north. Ma Jo asked him, "The geese, where are they going?" Pae Chang answered, "North." "North?" Ma Jo exclaimed, and twisted Pae Chang's nose very painfully. Pae Chang got enlightenment. When he returned home, he cried and cried. A friend asked him, "Why are you crying?" "Go ask the Zen Master." So the friend asked why Pae Chang was crying. Ma Jo told him, "Ask Pae Chang." The friend went back and said to Pae Chang, "The Zen Master said to ask you." Then Pae Chang began laughing. So, crying and laughing, are they the same or different?

7. Simple, one-point answers to kong-ans

After Pae Chang came Hang Guk, then Rinzai (Lin Chi), and at the same time many other lines appeared: Un Mun, To Ban, Da Hui, Wi San, and many other Zen Masters. Then the answer to the question, "What is Buddha?" became "Dry shit on a stick." "Three pounds of flax." And Jo Ju gave his famous answer to the question, "Why did Bodhidharma come to China? The cypress tree in the garden." These were one point answers, very simple, very direct.

After that many schools appeared, and there was some fighting between them. Many techniques also appeared, many different intellectual styles. Before, the teaching had been very simple. When these intellectual styles of teaching appeared, Dharma combat also appeared. Thus we have the **Blue Cliff Record** and the **Mumon Kwan**. There was much discussion as the wisdom of Zen developed. Practicing was very clear, but it was considered just one of several special techniques.

8. Magic or 270° style Zen began to look much more complicated to ordinary people. The practice of Zen and peoples' everyday, normal lives grew far apart. With esoteric sayings like "The wooden chicken cries, the stone tiger flies in the sky," people didn't understand. Zen became a practice only for the elite, in other words, your hair appears higher than your head. "Do you see the horn of the rabbit?" - everyday people didn't understand this kind of talk. You had to look at the hidden meaning behind the words, because the words themselves were not the true meaning.

This went on for a while, then more direct talk appeared again. "What is Buddhism?" was answered with "Spring comes, the grass grows by itself." "What is the true way? The sky is blue, the tree is green." - direct, one sentence answers. In the past, the answer had been a single word or action - "What is Buddha?" Hit! One

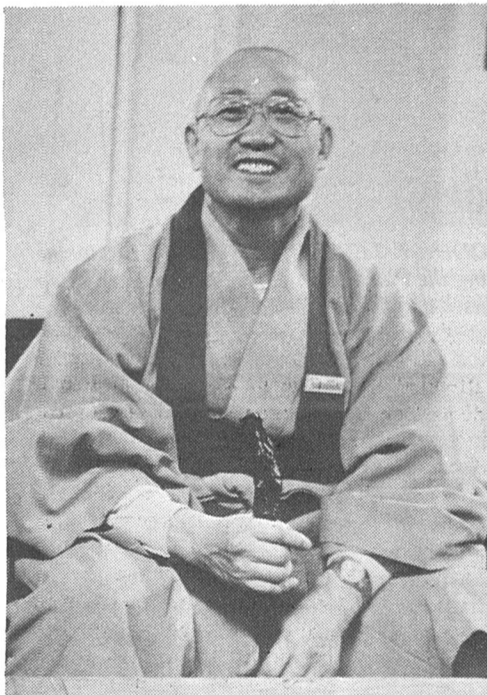
point. Then the answers to this question went through many changes. One sentence answers appeared, and later, even more more complicated forms. But they were all teaching truth.

9. Correct function of an enlightenment experience Truth means, how can you attain your true self, how can you attain your truth? How can you attain the correct way? This is now still the primary teaching in Japan, Korea and China. They start with how to attain the truth, the true self. But it is also very important to attain the correct way. What is the correct function of truth, the correct function of your true self? - this they do not teach.

"We use kong-ans to make our direction correct, to make our practice and our life correct. That is the teaching of the Kwan Um Zen School."

So the Kwan Um Zen School has appeared in the United States. Some schools are very focused on an enlightenment experience: what is enlightenment? They want to attain this truth, but they are missing the correct function of an enlightenment experience. Attaining your true self doesn't matter. When we first begin, both ways are necessary: attaining enlightenment and its correct function. If we attain the correct function of our true self, we attain truth. This is correct attainment.

If we want to attain our true self, a correct life is necessary. So we say, put it all down, don't make anything, moment to moment keep correct situation, correct function. Moment to moment do it! Doing



Photos by Paul Stevenson

it means we have already attained our true self. But we don't understand that, we don't believe that, so we must keep trying. Then correct function and attainment happens all at the same time. That is the Kwan Um Zen School teaching.

Only attaining truth is 'monk Buddhism': only keep your hair cut and go to the mountains, practice your whole life. Correct function is not necessary because you have no wife, no children, and no connection to society. But everyone else has hair, has a wife or a husband, children, job - how do we connect this everyday life and Zen? This is a very important point.

In the Kwan Um Zen School, it doesn't matter whether you are monk or layman. Everybody "does it" and at the same time attains true self, enlightenment. Correct function with correct life, at the same time - understand?

10. Using kong-ans to make our lives correct Our teaching is kong-an practicing. In the past, kong-an practicing meant checking attainment, checking someone's enlightenment. Now we use kong-ans to make our lives correct. This is a different way of using kong-ans than the traditional Zen way. In the light of our teaching, some of the kong-ans are correct and helpful, some are not. Whether they are correct or not doesn't matter. We use kong-ans to make our direction correct, to make our practice and our life correct. That is the teaching of the Kwan Um Zen School.

"Kwan Um" means perceive sound. This means perceive your true self. At the same time, perceive inside and outside. Perceiving this world sound means perceiving that many, many people are suffering. If you can hear this sound of suffering, then helping is both possible and necessary. That

is the Bodhisattva way. How to help other people is our practice and our job. It's not only attaining enlightenment, it's enlightenment's job. Enlightenment is a monk's job, but only someone like a Zen monk has the circumstances to do it: no family, no job, everyone giving support.

Your practicing is not a monk's job - it is how to help other people. First your family, then your friends, then your country and all beings: helping them is your obligation. If you want to help correctly, put down your opinion, your condition, your situation. If you do not put down these things, you cannot help. If you put them down, then true love appears. This means not special. Just

keeping your moment to moment correct situation is very simple. The name for that is love, compassion. That is the practice of the Kwan Um Zen School today.

It's a change in Zen practice and teaching. In order to do that, we need a school that both parents and schoolchildren can attend. This is not the old style. Korean Zen has not come here without changing. Many changes have been necessary. We do kong-an practice, but some Korean monks looking at our Zen style have said, "That's not Zen." Yes, it's not Zen. Zen doesn't matter. Original Zen is not Zen. Nothing is Zen. In fact, we don't understand what Zen is.

Ever since its beginning, Zen has meant many changes. It started with Bodhidharma, then after the Sixth Patriarch it changed. Five schools of Zen appeared, all different. Many sicknesses appeared, Zen sicknesses. The five schools in China died. Why? Because they could not connect with everyday life, with society. If we do not correct this, today's Zen will also die. If it is only monk Zen, it will soon die.

In China, Korea and Japan this kind of group does not exist: laypeople staying in a Zen Center, a temple, doing together action, meditation and practice. This has begun in America. It has never happened before - it's new, a new Zen. So it is necessary to have a new direction and new practices. We don't call it American style, it's just everyday life and correct direction.

Zen is a kind of revolution. In the future, what will happen? This kind of practicing will be very important: how does your practice connect with your life? How does your practice help other people? If it helps you, it will help other people, help this world. Then your practicing will connect with world peace.

There are many opinions in this world. Americans have American opinion. Russians have Russian opinion. All religions have their own opinion. They are attached to something. That is this world's sickness. In the future, it will be necessary to teach this kind of practice: you must wake up, ah! Then what, does being human mean? Being human means no meaning, no reason, no choice. But if you attain no meaning, you get Great Meaning. That is, put down any kind of opinion, any condition, any situation, then your life becomes complete. This will help your family, your country, this world.

This teaching means that if we practice sincerely and share our wisdom and teach correctly, there will be no more fighting among religions, among countries, no more atom bombs. If we take away the weapons, this money can go to India and Cambodia. Then world peace is possible. That's Kwan Um Zen School's future. □

NOTICE

Due to an ever-busy schedule, Zen Master Seung Sahn is no longer able to answer teaching letters. You are invited to correspond with any of the Master Dharma Teachers. For a list of their names and addresses, write to Kwan Um Zen School, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864. Thank you.

Kwan Um Zen School of Europe:**1987 AN ACTIVE YEAR, MANY RETREATS PLANNED FOR 1988**

by Do Mun Sunim,
Abbot of Centre Zen de Paris

The Kwan Um Zen School of Europe held its first annual Congress at the Centre Zen de Paris in Paris on December 5 and 6, 1987. Students of Zen Master Seung Sahn, and Dharma Master Ji Kwang (Poep Sa Nim) came from almost every country in western Europe. It was a great weekend of practice, appreciation and fun as our common purpose overcame the barriers of language, culture and individual karma.

The weekend began with a day of ceremonies: a traditional Buddhist energy ceremony by Poep Sa Nim on the day of the full moon, the largest Precepts ceremony yet in western Europe presided over by Soen Sa Nim and Poep Sa Nim, and an evening ceremony on the occasion of Poep Sa Nim's birthday. Nineteen people from seven countries took 5 Precepts at the afternoon ceremony. Many were Poep Sa Nim's students who had just recently met Soen Sa Nim.

Nine students took 10 Precepts. Arno Schuh and Heinke Geise became our School's first two German Dharma Teachers. Griselda Olavarria from Mexico (who lives and works with the United Nations in Switzerland) and Patrice Faure, Annick Hamon, Catherine Neuville, Jacques Ruelle, and Helene and Marie-France Lamourette (all from France) also became Dharma Teachers. The ceremony gave everyone a renewed sense of the power and importance of our practice.

In the evening ceremony we honored Poep Sa Nim's birthday. Students representing each country gave talks, telling anecdotes of their practicing with Poep Sa Nim. There were many flowers, gifts and laughter as students heard from each other, often for the first time. Soen Sa Nim gave a Dharma speech talking about Poep Sa Nim's early life, his experiences meeting her and testing her mind. He then spoke about the importance of kong-an practice and challenged Poep Sa Nim with some kong-ans. She answered stongly and warmly. Soen Sa Nim, smiling and seeming very happy, said, "My present to you is my Zen stick. If you didn't answer correctly, I couldn't give it to you." Poep Sa Nim read a poem she had written for the ceremony. A big party followed.

On Sunday, we held the first meeting of the Kwan Um Zen School of Europe. The school was officially formed with its headquarters for now in Paris, and with myself as School Abbot. The Dharma Teachers Association of Europe was also formed with Joan Insa, Dharma teacher, Abbot of Centro Zen de Palma, Spain, and long-time student, as its president. Soen Sa Nim gave a talk on the development of Zen teaching style since the time of Shakyamuni Buddha. He said that in coming to America, he created Kwan Um Zen School style. "Enlightenment is not so important. What do you do after Enlightenment? Our teaching is keeping correct situation, correct function, correct relationship, moment-to-moment. That is most important. That is moment-to-moment enlightenment."

Poep Sa Nim gave a talk saying, "Thinking creates our life. If we have good think-



Some of the European sangha as they gathered in Korea in September to celebrate Soen Sa Nim's 60th birthday. Photo by Meg Nicks

ing, we make a good life. If we have bad thinking, we make a bad life. If we have no thinking, there is no life, no death. Then, moment-to-moment you can do correct action, correct function. This saves all beings. This is love and correct human life. Our teaching is, attain your true self and correctly function in this life." The weekend ended with a Kido led by Soen Sa Nim.

While in past years Arno, Heinke, Joan and Miquel deHaro (from Spain) have all attended Kyol Che in Korea or at Providence Zen Center, the year 1987 saw a great increase in activity in Europe by the students of our school. Arno and Heinke made contact with meditation groups and interested people in a number of cities in Germany and organized two teaching tours by Soen Sa Nim—to Munich, Munster and Frankfurt. Large public talks and workshops were held in each city. Students of the late Deshimaru Roshi helped arrange two of the events. Paul Koppler, at our affiliate in Nischenich, Germany, organized a three day retreat with Poep Sa Nim. It was the most well-attended retreat yet at Paul's center and was attended by many people who have sat with Soen Sa Nim. Harry Whitford, an American living in Germany, is helping organize multi-lingual publications of our teaching and advertising programs. He took 5 Precepts in December and serves as Poep Sa Nim's translator in Germany.

The Zen group in Norway continues to grow, due largely to the efforts of Odd Runar and Astri Gulbrandsen and the increasing number of interested students

there. Three retreats with Poep Sa Nim and one with Soen Sa Nim were held in 1987. Astri also traveled to Bergen, the second largest city in Norway, to participate in a conference on Buddhism. Sirin Eide, a professional filmmaker, made an English language video of Soen Sa Nim's visit. The chants were all transliterated and translated into Norwegian (as well as into Spanish and German). Mouliko, a Swedish Aikido master who traveled to Korea in August to represent the Norwegian sangha at Soen Sa Nim's 60th birthday, has opened his dojo for meditation practice several days each week for those who live in the center of Oslo.

The Barcelona Zen Center continues to be headed by Ferna Pardo and Kirpaya and Dauramya of Comunidad Ahabah. It is the fastest growing group in our school in Europe and now meets in the apartment of fashion designer Lidia Cassellas. Soen Sa Nim and Poep Sa Nim, between them, led 5 retreats there and at Ahabah this past year. During her last visit, over 130 people in 5 days came to see Poep Sa Nim for personal counseling, followed by a weekend workshop attended by 50 people.

A growing Zen group in the south of France in the city of Montpellier has been initiated by Brigitte Danel, a psychologist who took 5 Precepts last June. She organized a three-day retreat with Poep Sa Nim at Chateau de Theraguyes in the Languedoc region of France last October, and a seven day retreat with Poep Sa Nim is being planned there for next July.

With continuing visits by Poep Sa Nim to Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and England, while no groups have been formed, an increasing number of students are appearing, practicing in their homes, attending retreats and workshops held near them and visiting the Centre Zen de Paris. In August over 30 Europeans traveled to Hawaii for a three week retreat/vacation, and then on to Korea for the celebration of Soen Sa Nim's birthday. This was a very strong experience, connecting new students with the roots of our practice in Korea and with a style of living, traveling and together-action that was new to many.

Soen Sa Nim spent a month in Poland, and in November Poep Sa Nim (with Do Mun Sunim and Do Ryun Sunim) joined him for a week for her first teaching trip there. The sangha had been waiting to see her for over a year and the reception was incredible. Talks in Warsaw, Krakow and Gdansk were attended by 1,000, 500 and 300 people, respectively. Tickets were sold to the public talks in Warsaw and Krakow, which were held in a disco and in the city theater. Workshops following the talks were also extremely well-attended. The Polish sangha is talking of making a meditation and therapy center near Krakow and inviting Poep Sa Nim frequently to Poland to help.

The entire sangha in Europe has been more active in practicing and spreading the dharma this past year. As older students of Soen Sa Nim and newer students who have come to practicing through Poep Sa Nim meet, their faith in each teacher has become strong and our School's teaching has become one that increasingly pays attention to relationships, as well as meditation practice, as opportunities to become clear and help others.

In January 55 Europeans from 9 countries traveled to Hawaii to attend a four-week retreat led by Poep Sa Nim. The retreat combined a strong meditation practice, daily teaching and living together under Poep Sa Nim's guidance in the small temple, with only two bathrooms and people from different cultures and languages. It provided a powerful opportunity to become clear and harmonize with others, a teaching many people have been looking for.

Plans for 1988 in Europe include a major visit from Soen Sa Nim, during which he will lead 7-day retreats in Spain, Germany and Norway. A World Masters Conference is being held in Switzerland in July, to which both Soen Sa Nim and Poep Sa Nim have been invited. Poep Sa Nim will continue to teach in Paris three days most weeks, while a full schedule of retreats and workshops with her all over Europe is planned, with frequent visits to our Zen centers and groups and to new cities such as Madrid, Amsterdam and Milan. Seven-day retreats with Poep Sa Nim in Greece in June and in the south of France in July, and a month long retreat in Hawaii in August are also planned. The German group has decided to hold regular retreats with and without teachers.

We hope that the continued activity and practice of our sangha in Europe will contribute to a growing clarity and harmony in individuals, and in society, this coming year. □



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SOEN SA NIM'S TRIP TO TIBET AND CHINA LEAVES SEPT. 1

Don't miss this unusual opportunity to travel with Soen Sa Nim. The group will spend a week in Tibet, visiting Lhasa and other famous temples and cultural sites. Soen Sa Nim will then continue on to mainland China, with brief stops possibly in Hong Kong and Sri Lanka, and then to Korea for his annual fall visit. The Tibet group must be at least 15 people. Register by June 1. For information, write Diana Lynch, P.O. Box 877, Stinson Beach, CA 94970 or call (415) 868-2925.

NEW LOCATION OF CHOGYE ZC HAS CINNAMON-RAISIN FLAVOR

On the afternoon of December 20, 1987, the Chogye International Zen Center of New York held an Opening Ceremony and reception. The center recently moved to its new location in downtown Manhattan at 400 East 14th Street. Soen Sa Nim presented the Center with a Buddha-statue which was placed on a diminutive new altar. The new center is, like most New York apartments, compact. But, as Soen Sa Nim said immediately upon his arrival here for the first time, "Very nice feeling."

There was a chanting ceremony, an opening speech by Nina Davis, a Dharma talk by Richard Shrobe, addresses by Dr. Jagu Kang, Soon Bae Lee, Richard Streitfeld, and Mu Soeng Sunim, and a talk by Soen Sa Nim. Most of the speakers helped recall the warm and interesting history of the Center, which has moved around the city and sometimes temporarily used members' apartments for sitting and chanting. Ronnie Davis generously provided a vegetarian dinner.

The large crowd squeezed into the Dharma room, although several old-timers waited in the hall during the evening chanting and sitting, which was followed by a Dharma talk by Syndria Mecham and a question and answer period with Soen Sa Nim. Throughout the day, all the guests were introduced to a feature of the new Center which all the members know quite well -- the odor of baking bagels wafting up from the bakery below, and the very warm wooden floor. Some members are becoming expert at knowing the bakery's schedule and, as expected, cinnamon-raisin was the flavor of the Opening Ceremony, along with a great feeling of togetherness in our new center.

"THE WHOLE WORLD IS A SINGLE FLOWER"

By Mu Soeng Sunim, Abbot of Diamond Hill Zen Monastery
Assisted by Richard Streitfeld, Director of Kwan Um Zen School

A narrative beginning in August of the year 1987, in which a warm and hectic pilgrimage to the faraway land of Korea is depicted, wherein some 75 intrepid Zen students and teachers from North and South America, Western Europe, Poland and Korea gathered to celebrate their teacher's attainment of sixty mortal years, and furthermore in enduring several adventures within strange subcultures, encountered a rare glimpse of unity among diversity.

There have been group pilgrimages to Korean Buddhist temples before in our school, usually every other year. However, the 1987 August tour brought a special rush of anticipation, not only because we were going to celebrate Soen Sa Nim's 60th birthday on a grand scale in his native country, but also because of the urgency in Korea's political situation. All spring and summer, TV showed the anti-government



Temple dragon. Photo by Karen Ryder

demonstrations in the streets of major Korean cities. There was speculation that martial law might be imposed. If things got worse, we might not be able to go there at all. Then came the remarkable political concessions by the Korean government, and a cautious euphoria. We could go after all!!

Our first encounter with the new political reality came literally with our first steps on Korean soil. There were no handlers to unload our baggage from the airplane - they were on strike. Until a few months ago, Korea was run along assembly lines that would have made the first Henry Ford beam with joy. Now there were strikes, workers' unions! Some of us empathized with the workers' demands despite our discomfort.

Planeload after planeload of passengers arrived at Kimpo Airport, danced into the baggage retrieval area with expectant steps and became part of a restless, irritated multitude. We waited six hours for our bags to be unloaded. Our tired, patient hosts also waited, on the other side of the customs barrier. One unexpected result of the delay was that our New York and Los Angeles contingents converged at the airport.

We were finally driven to Hwa Gye Sah, our host temple on the outskirts of Seoul, where Soen Sa Nim was the Abbot for many years. Arriving at 2 a.m., some of us had not slept in 36 hours. As a rare concession to our situation, we did not have to get up at 4:30 a.m. for practice. Even so, first-

timers couldn't help being introduced to a new subculture of Buddhism, because at this hour a monk walks around the temple compound chanting "The Ten Thousand Eyes and Hands Sutra" with a moktak. The familiar chant has a different melody here. The stillness of early morning gave the chant a mystery and enchantment rarely experienced in America.

Breakfast in the morning ensured that newcomers understood they were in a different culture. Portable folding tables were brought into the "kunbang," our sleeping/living/practicing area, followed by what was the first of a series of identical meals: white rice, soup, kimchee, side dishes and condiments. The guessing game of the trip was to speculate what new side dishes we would get at "special" meals, of which there were many. The variety of these dishes was tantalizing and apparently endless. Nuns' temples were especially famous for supplying many of them to their visitors. While the structure of the meal was simple and functional, the meals were delicious and also choiceless. Unanimous agreement: we ate well.

Our first day in Korea was for acclimatization. Some people went in town for a more intimate contact with the shopping district of Seoul. Soen Sa Nim and all the monks went to KBS studios, the nation's leading TV station, and sat for nearly four hours under hot kleig lights while an interview was taped with Soen Sa Nim and the host of Korea's leading talk show, the Korean equivalent of Johnny Carson but cut from a Confucian mold! That evening the European contingent arrived via Hawaii, chaperoned by Do Mun Sunim from the Paris Zen Center. There were now about 75 of us from all over North and South America, Western Europe, Poland and Korea.

The next day we packed up and crowded into two buses to drive to Su Dok Sa, about a four-hour ride. This temple, situated on Duk Seung Sahn Mountain, is one of four "chongnims," or teaching temples of the Chogye Order. Soen Sa Nim trained here as a young monk and considers it to be the root-temple of the American Kwan Um Zen School. Up further on the mountain is tiny Jeung Hae Sa temple. Both of these temples were associated with Zen Master Mang Gong, who in the 1930's and 1940's almost single-handedly revived Korean Buddhism. Nearby was Kyong Seong Am, one of the largest nunneries in Korea, also established by Mang Gong Sunim. The large temples and the small hermitages on this mountain are all paeans to his spirit. Even the theme for our conference at Su Dok Sa - "The whole world is a single flower" - comes from one of Mang Gong Sunim's famous sayings. For our first-timers, it was a glimpse into Korean temple life as it has been carried on for nearly a thousand years. Above all, it was a monks' community with its own well-established rules and regulations.

Since Su Dok Sa received the status of a chongnim only recently, it was still renovating and expanding. A huge new two-story meditation hall was under construction. The mountain stream had been dammed

and was to be redirected so that it would go around the new hall. Since an enormous hole had been dug down to nearly 30 feet, the massive hall seemed to float in the air with a mysterious power. Even though it was only half-finished and the sides were still open, we were to have our conference in this hall.

We were very fortunate to be joined on the trip by some other very prominent teachers besides Soen Sa Nim. The Venerable Taizen Maezumi Roshi, and old friend of Soen Sa Nim's, came from Zen Center of Los Angeles. Jakusho Kwong Roshi and his wife Laura, both dear friends of our sangha, came from Sonoma Mountain Zen Center in northern California. Ven. Maha Ghosananda, leader of the Cambodian Buddhist community in America and a near neighbor in Providence, R.I., was with us as was Ji Kwang Poep Sa Nim (Dr. Choi), primary teacher of the KUZS European contingent and also a teacher in Hawaii. Six of the seven Master Dharma Teachers in the School were travelling with us, as were nearly all of the KUZS monks.

Our arrival at Su Dok Sa was a preview of the etiquette we were to follow at each of the many temples we were to visit in subsequent days. Immediately upon arrival we went to the main Buddha hall, bowed three times to the altar and chanted the Heart Sutra in Korean. If the Abbot and/or resident Zen Master were available, we bowed to them three times as well. In most Buddha halls, our large group was barely able to squeeze itself in. The Buddha hall at Su

meditation hall at Su Dok Sa. The Women were quartered nearby in slightly larger accommodations at Kyon Seong Am, the nuns' temple. We all ate together in the meditation hall, our numbers overflowing out onto the porches of the hall as well.

The opening ceremony for the conference was at 10 in the morning. On a raised dais, Soen Sa Nim sat with Won Dam Sunim (resident Zen Master at Su Dok Sa), Maezumi Roshi, Kwong Roshi, Maha Ghosananda and Ji Kwang Poep Sa Nim on the upper tier. On the lower tier were our six Master Dharma teachers. Monks and nuns from all over the mountains and nearby cities came for this ceremony. Each of the teachers gave a short talk about the theme, "The whole world is a single flower." They were followed by representatives from each of the countries represented in our party, who were asked to use only one action or one word to express the theme.

In the afternoon and on the next day, the teachers offered workshops built around specific topics. These were times of solid teaching and dialoging with the teachers. In the evening we celebrated Soen Sa Nim's 60th birthday in "Su Dok Sa family" style. Many of the Korean monks and nuns joined for this festivity and it was a fulfilled, happy event with people singing songs of their native countries. A Korean singer who is a "national cultural treasure" gave a virtuoso performance. More than any other event of the trip, it was here that the whole world seemed to manifest itself as



DIFFERENT ZEN TRADITIONS walked together at Zen Master Seung Sahn's 60th birthday celebration in Korea last September. From left, Jakusho Kwong, Roshi of Sonoma Mountain Zen Center; Soen Sa Nim, and Taizen Maezumi, Roshi of Zen Center of Los Angeles. In the background is Kwan Um Zen School Abbot Jacob Perl.

Dok Sa was awesome in its history, first built in 600 AD on this very site! Last rebuilt in the 13th century, it is one of the very few Buddhist sites in Korea not destroyed during the Japanese invasions of 1592 and 1598. Chanting in these old Buddha halls always seemed to add a new dimension of energy and power.

We were at Su Dok Sa for two days. The men in our group stayed in a very small

a single flower.

The conference closed with a ceremony adopting a resolution which expressed the sentiment of the assembly. (see box on p. 6)

The next day was the showpiece of our trip, "the Peace Symposium" at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Seoul, another slice of Korean culture quite different from the simple mountain environment at Su Dok Sa. Here there were layers of contemporary

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western glitz and luxury. The huge hall of the hotel was overflowing with an estimated crowd of 2000 to 2500 people. About half of them were monks and nuns, the other half were laypeople who form the core of popular Korean Buddhism. The symposium was organized under the auspices of "The International Buddhist Symposium for World Peace and Unification of North and South Korea."

All of the distinguished teachers who were present at Su Dok Sa were here, in addition to many other dignitaries: the President of Korea's Chogye Order, the President of Korea's Taego Order (order of married monks and nuns), the President of the Buddhist Association in Korea's National Assembly (also a member of Korea's parliament and leader of the Buddhist political party), and the President of the Korean Young People Buddhist Association.

The purpose of the symposium was to continue the theme of "The whole world is a single flower." In Hwan Sunim, an old friend of KUZS and a professor at Dongguk (Buddhist) University, was one of the keynote speakers. He was so short a footstool had to be brought for him to stand on so that he could reach the microphone. He took it in good humor.

Robert Genthner, Abbot of the Lexington Zen Center in Kentucky, was the other keynote speaker. An excerpt from his talk follows.

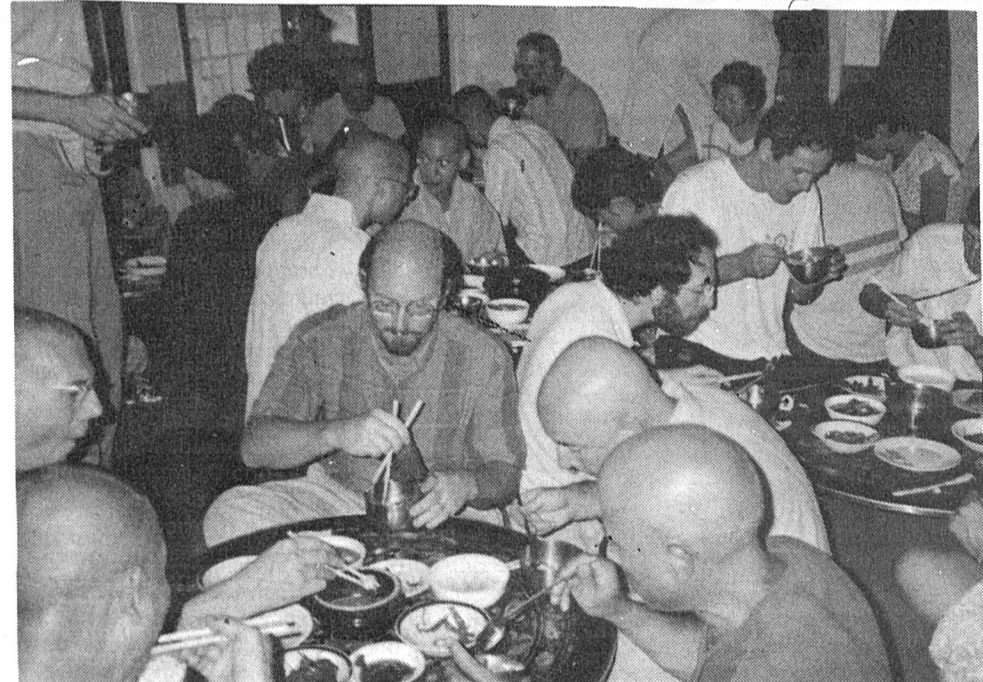


Photo by Karen Ryder

"...most people say they want world peace and they are probably sincere. Out of this desire opinions become ideas, and ideas become beliefs. Beliefs solidify into systems that become exclusive, oppositional, and destroy the very peace-seeking that inspires their development. The world has no scarcity of ideas and plans for peace. We don't need another ideology for solving our problems. And so, we might ask, what is the way out? Are we destined to destroy ourselves with the very ideologies we have proposed to thwart destruction?"

Perhaps the solution lies not in more or better ideologies for peace, but in a willingness to look deeply at our own personal conflicts. Perhaps peace on earth can only occur after each of us faces our own humanness, finding our own true nature which is beyond duality.

Once we realize the fundamental error of our dualistic thinking and put an end to it, then seeking world peace is no longer necessary. There is a realization that the very seeking is the source of individuation, separation, and inevitably of conflict. Without separation, unification is not necessary. How do we go about facing our own opposition? The question arises: can we have a willingness not to get caught up in our own opinions, in our own desire to

seek personal comfort and satisfaction without indulging in an ascetic martyrdom? Making a commitment to world peace must begin on a personal level...."

Following the speakers, representatives from each country came up to the stage as before and expressed in various ways the conference theme. The first half of this symposium closed by our adopting the same resolution we had adopted at Su Dok Sa, only this time it reached a much larger number of people.

The second half of the symposium marked the publication of a big new Korean biography of Soen Sa Nim compiled and produced by Dr. Han, a former Taego monk and now a lay Buddhist teacher. Dr. Han was emcee for this part of the symposium and went through the highlights of Soen Sa Nim's life. The book was a massive document, about 700 pages long and weighing 5 lbs! Since none of us in the American-European contingent could read or understand Korean, it all seemed rather mystifying.

The President of the Chogye Order gave a talk in which he regretted the fact that the Chogye Order was not able to provide much support for Soen Sa Nim while he labored single-handedly in the early 1970's to bring Korean Buddhism to America. Jacob Perl, Abbot of the American KUZS, presented two gifts to Soen Sa Nim on behalf of the international sangha. One was a

hand-carved gold-engraved plaque with the inscription "Thank you for your teaching" in the languages of his various students. The other was a huge quilt with original squares made by Zen Centers and groups throughout the world [now on display in the Dharma room at Providence Zen Center].

Then it was picture-taking time. The crowd surged onto the dais. Hundreds of flashbulbs exploded. As soon as the last picture was taken, all the Koreans rushed off to the buffet tables. Within minutes all the food was gone! The Westerners, thinking to be polite, had been shy about pushing themselves to get to the food; the result was they didn't get any. Everyone felt hungry and a little bewildered - to go hungry in a luxury hotel like the Hyatt?

The next day was another sharp contrast. In the morning we visited the National Museum, housed in the old administrative headquarters of the Japanese Governor-General during the Occupation years. The building seemed closer to an Italian renaissance palace than to anything oriental - tons of marble everywhere. Lunch and dinner were at two of the ultra-deluxe, ultra-western hotels in Seoul.

The following day we visited Chogye Sa in downtown Seoul, the temple attached to



Bulguk Sah temple in Korea. Photo by Karen Ryder

Chogye headquarters. It was an enormous colorful hall, at any time of the day full of bosal nims (devout ladies) who came from all over town to offer prayers here. In the headquarters building next door, we had a little ceremony in which Soen Sa Nim was again felicitated and gifts were exchanged. Lunch was at the large nunnery, Bo Mun Sa, not far from downtown. In the afternoon we visited Don Guk University, Soen Sa Nim's alma mater, and chanted the heart Sutra in the Buddha hall of the university's famous temple.

Next morning we packed up again and left on a 5-day tour of Korean temples. Everyone had been looking forward to this part of the trip and since Su Dok Sa, had wanted to see more mountain temples. Since our time was short, we visited mostly the better known and larger temples rather than small temples hidden in inaccessible mountains. First stop was at Poep Ju Sa, one of the six major temples in Korea. We had a delicious lunch there. The enormous

built in 751. Dating from Silla dynasty, these steps are the only remaining parts of the original temple, which has been rebuilt several times since then. Up on the mountainside we visited the grotto housing the famous Sokurram Buddha, probably the finest example of Buddhist sculpture in East Asia. The huge granite Buddha has an unmatched serenity and power about it.

Late in the afternoon we arrived at Mun Su Am. No one in our party had been to this small temple before. We had no idea of what lay in store for us. Passing through the port city of Ulsan, home of the huge Hyundai plants, the giant ship and auto maker, we passed street demonstrations. In our hectic movement from temple to temple, we had had no sense of the tremendous political changes taking place all around us - here was our second big whiff of the new political reality.

In this part of Korea, heavy summer rains had caused extensive damage to crops and roads, also many people had died in the

"The massive Buddha hall seemed to float in the air with a mysterious power."

standing figure of Miruk Bosal (the Maitreya Buddha) which some of us had seen on earlier trips, had been taken down for repairs. In its place, the temple was building a new complex. It was sad to miss this familiar landmark of Korean Buddhism.

Boarding the buses again, we headed for Haein Sa, the premier temple of the Chogye Order and the largest training center for monks. It houses the famous *Tripitaka Koreana*, a set of 81,258 wooden blocks carved in 1251. Originally carved as a national prayer for protection from the invading Mongols, it is the oldest and best preserved Chinese translation of the entire Buddhist canon. The building housing the blocks was in itself an engineering marvel. The air circulates in such a way that the wood does not get worm-ridden or mildewed. No high-tech replacement has yet been found for housing this famous collection. We were housed in one of the sub-temple buildings, where Samyong Taesa, chief disciple of Sosan Taesa and the military commander of a monks militia during the Japanese invasions of 1592 and 1598, spent the last years of his life.

We left Haein Sa the next morning and arrived at Bul Guk Sa in time for lunch. This temple along with Haein Sa is one of the two temples most visited by tourists in all of Korea. No Korean honeymoon is complete unless the newlyweds have their picture taken in front of the marble steps

floods. We stopped at a gas station and transferred to mini-wagons called "bongos" - ideal for mountain roads. We expected the bongos to go directly to the temple gates; instead we were let off at a clearing in the middle of nowhere. We looked up at the mountains and way up on the cliffs people were waving at us. That was Mun Su Am!

How would we get from here to there? Then we noticed the cables strung between the clearing and the cliffs; a bucket (a contraction like a ski lift) travelled between the two points. Is that how we would go up - in a bucket? Some of us were excited by the idea; others were scared. We soon found out that the bucket was just for carrying bags. The owners of the bags had to hike up to the temple. It was an exhilarating 45-minute hike and when we got to the top, we found a long table laid out with snacks


Continued on next page

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A SINGLE FLOWER

continued from page 5

and juice. Weary travelers welcomed the liquid. Before our eyes was a spectacular view of the hills and valleys. Although we were not far from the crowded streets of Ulsan, we might as well have been on the other side of the moon.

In front of the temple was a big sign, "Welcome, International Buddhist Leaders." Did that mean us? We were here at the invitation of the Abbot, Chang Hae Sunim, an old friend of Soen Sa Nim's. They had met years ago while teaching in Hong Kong and had kept up their friendship. The main Buddha hall, the only temple building at the cliff, had a brand-new, mint condition interior. One could imagine it being taken apart piece by piece and shipped to New York to be recreated at the Metropolitan Museum - nothing else would give a better idea of Korean temple art.

We wondered how they built something like this way up here - did the single bucket

going up and down the cliff haul up all the building materials? The logistics of human labor and material involved in building this cliff temple were just staggering. But Mun Su Am is not unique - almost every small temple in the mountains evokes the same response: awe at the dedication and hard labor of the people who built these temples. We wondered what motivated them.

We ate an extravagant meal, then chanted. Squeezed into the Buddha hall, our voices were one, strong and unified. Later there was a party with more food and treats from our hosts. Again people from different countries sang songs. Maezumi Roshi tried a solo Japanese melody and succeeded with a little help from In Ok Gibson and her sister. Kwong Roshi and Laura Kwong sang a verse from "You Are My Sunshine." Even Soen Sa Nim got into the act, contributing a melody from the Morning Bell Chant. We even had the song that inspires the sisters at Bryn Mawr. The best singers, however, were from Spain. Their last selection, "La Bamba," had the audi-

ence rollicking and the mountains dancing.

Next morning we prepared to leave. After our bags had been transported down to the clearing far below, we witnessed an act of incredible daring. One of the young men helping with the bucket lift grabbed the cables and slid all the way down, holding on only with his hands!

The next temple to visit was Tong Do Sa, another of the "Three Jewels" temples in Korea. Haein Sa is the "Buddha's Words" temple (it has the *Tripitaka*). Song Gwang Sa is the "Buddha's Mind" temple (it has been the premier Zen temple for nearly a thousand years). The "Buddha's Body" temple is Tong Do Sa - it houses the "sariras" (supposed body remains/crystals of the historical Buddha). It is also the largest temple complex in Korea.

After lunch we went to Pusan (second largest port city of Korea) and nearby Bo Mo Sa temple, a huge temple with a "lifetime retreat" Zen hall. People enter this hall with the vow that they will not leave unless they get enlightened. Access to the hall was restricted and we could not visit it.

On to Dae Won Sa in Pusan itself, our first exposure to a "neighborhood" temple. Its Abbot, who had invited us to stay for the night, was an old friend of Soen Sa Nim's. The place was so small that it was beyond imagination how all of us were going to find a place to sit, never mind lie down to sleep. Earlier in the day Mu Shim Sunim, one of our American monks, had been bitten by a poisonous snake. Before we retired, we chanted Kwan Seum Bosal for his recovery. Every nook and cranny of the temple was taken over by sleeping-bagged figures. Despite the crowded conditions, the temple hospitality was wonderful and we took an emotional leave of the Abbot the next morning.

Lunch was at Sang Gye Sa, a temple with a pagoda under which was reputedly buried the head of Hui Neng, the Sixth Patriarch of Zen, which a Korean monk was said to have brought from China. Some of us had been to China several years ago and visited the Sixth Patriarch's temple where we viewed the entire embalmed body of the Patriarch. Did Hui Neng have two heads? What was going on here?

Late in the afternoon we arrived at Song Gwang Sa, seeing heavy flood damage along the way. A dam was being built near the temple and many villages had been relocated. On an earlier trip, Song Gwang Sa had seemed a study in timelessness. Now jackhammers and caterpillar tractors were the order of the day with several buildings under renovation. The main Buddha hall had a renovation budget of a million dollars! This huge hall swallowed up even our large party in its vastness.

When Ku Sahn Sunim was resident Zen Master here, there was a large sangha of western monks. Since his death in 1983 they

had dispersed. Only an Australian nun, Ji Kwang Sunim, remained, living in a hermitage about a mile away from the main temple. As she traveled with us on our trip, we were very grateful for her insights into Korean Buddhism and her command of the language. We had a delicious dinner. For a change, sleeping accommodations were not crowded. We even had enough room to do Tai Chi exercises. Before we left the next morning, we were given copies of Ku Sahn Sunim's books for our Zen Centers. It was



A temple painting at Hae In Sah temple.

a good visit, and the last temple on our itinerary before going back to Seoul.

However, we stopped in Taejon City and visited Sae Deung Son Won, a nun's temple. The Abbot Sae Deung Sunim, received "inka" from Zen Master Ko Bong, Soen Sa Nim's teacher and thus she is Soen Sa Nim's Dharma sister. It was always a pleasure to visit this temple, one of the largest nun's temples in Korea and one with legendary hospitality.

We arrived back at Hwa Gye Sa late at night - the last night in Seoul for most of our party. In the morning the New York contingent would leave, in the afternoon the Los Angeles contingent, and in the next evening the European contingent would depart. Only a few people were to remain behind, including Soen Sa Nim, staying for another week before going on to Japan. The sangha was dispersing again to the four directions. But for a few amazing days we had caught a glimpse of the whole world as a single flower.

"Spring wind blows.
Single flower blossoms." □

Resolution adopted by the Conference.

"This entire world is one very beautiful and perfectly complete single flower. But now this world has many problems. Political ideologies oppose each other around the globe, having created a tense nuclear stalemate and the partition of countries, like Korea, divided at the 38th parallel. Religions also fight each other and amongst themselves, each claiming to be the truth. Nations vie for economic supremacy on the world market. Meanwhile, hundreds of millions of people die from starvation, disease, and warfare. So this beautiful world flower is very sick. How can we revive it?"

In this world, cause and effect are very clear. Everything has a primary cause, condition, and a result. Take away the cause, and it is possible to change the result. Holding my opinion, my condition and my situation is the primary cause of all the present world problems. Let go of my opinion, my condition, and my situation, and the primary cause disappears. Then the correct condition, correct situation and correct function appear and everything becomes harmonious. The sun, the moon, and stars, mountains and rivers, animals and human beings, all things become harmonious and perfectly complete. This is the true meaning of "the whole world is a single flower."

To demonstrate this, people from countries all over the world have gathered here at Su Dok Sa's temple in Korea. The tense confrontations on the Korean peninsula make it a micro cosm of the world crises: democracy or dictatorship, capitalism or communism, Christianity or Buddhism, traditional or modern, eastern or western. The division of North and South at the 38th parallel is indeed the symbol of these opposites fighting each other in our mind. For the United States and the Soviet Union to wake up and take responsibility for this tragic division, each person must wake up and take away this "opposite mind." Therefore, many international people, practicing together, talking together, working together and eating together, not holding my opinion, my condition or my situation, taking away "opposite mind," can attain harmony and make world peace.

A long time ago, Buddha sat atop Yong San mountain and picked up one flower. One thousand two hundred disciples in the assembly did not understand the meaning of this. Only Mahakasyapa smiled. Buddha picked up the outside flower. Mahakasyapa attained the inside flower. Outside and inside thus became one flower. So everyone must find this flower, and attain the correct way, truth, and correct life.

After World War Two, great Zen Master Mang Gong picked up a flower, dipped it in ink, and wrote the calligraphy, "The whole world is a single flower." Is that an inside or an outside flower? If you make outside or inside, you go to hell like an arrow. But if you don't make outside or inside, you are bitten by the stone dog. Why?

Look! Look!

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IT'S OKAY TO LET GO

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that. You bring these things to the house and sometimes it seems premature to be bringing them and there would be a little resistance. But I knew that the time was going to come soon.

She would say, "Do you think we're really going to need this?" And I would say, "Maybe we won't need it but why don't you have it on hand anyway." It's the same with our practice. Sometimes we don't want to think that we need something or that we're going to have to do something. Sometimes we need to listen to people with experience, like hospice nurses. Many families don't want to look at death. Many families don't even sign up for the hospice because in a way, it looks like a death certificate.

Hospice care is intended to be care for the terminally ill, but we always tell people that they can still get better even though they have hospice care. We would be happy if they got better, but in case they don't, we're really adept at being able to take care of people in their homes when they're terminal.

When we sit and practice, sometimes someone who is older and has practiced longer will say something to us. Instead of rejecting it outright, it helps to say to yourself, "I'll put that in a corner in case I need it." This Italian family would do that with the things I brought. They would hide them, put them over in a corner and cover them up. Slowly these things would come out of the corner as they were needed. It's important to just listen, keep an open mind, and to know when you need something and have to take it. It's important for our whole life to do that, whether we're practicing Zen or practicing dying, or whatever.

When I went over on Friday, she was in a lot of pain. I gave her some other medication that helped more. Then I sat on her bed with her. (That was another thing she wanted to control. She didn't want a hospital bed. She wanted to stay in her own bed. It turned out to be a nice thing, as it was a queen size bed, big enough so that at times, her husband and her three daughters and I could all sit there with her at the same time. It's not possible to do that with a hospital bed.) Her husband was sitting on the other side of her and we were both holding her hands. The pain started to go away and things settled down. I said to them, "Why don't we just try to pray for a little while?"

They know I'm a Buddhist, but it doesn't really matter. They had a strong Catholic background, but we knew each other so well by now that we all knew what we meant when we talked about prayer. For about 20 minutes we didn't say anything. We were just quiet and closed our eyes, and it was wonderful. It was wonderful for me to sit silently for 20 minutes with these two people. It's not like having robes and meditation cushions and all the paraphernalia, but it was just sitting on her bed. There was an agreement between us that helped us to just sit and be quiet. After 20 minutes I looked up at her face and she looked at mine, and she gave me the most beautiful smile I've ever received.

eral times during the day to see how she was. Then at five o'clock they called me to say she was groaning and clammy and they wanted me to come.

When I went there, her abdomen had gotten swollen. I think she was bleeding internally and there was a lot of pressure. With every exhalation she would just grunt, about 20 times a minute. She had a terrible grimace on her face. I thought, "Oh, it's not supposed to be like this! Not this wonderful lady!" The family were all looking at me and wanting me to fix it so that she was not in any pain. So I called the doctor and got permission to give her twice as much pain medication.

An hour and a half later she was still making the same noise, so I called the doctor again to see if we could get an even stronger medication. It wasn't terrible, but she seemed to be so uncomfortable. And yet in many ways we felt strongly we were doing everything we could for her. Her family were holding her hands and telling her how much they loved her. It wasn't being obviously received, because she was in a coma. Once in a while she was a little bit awake, but basically she couldn't say "Thank you for saying you love me." She just kept grunting and moaning every time she exhaled.



I finally called a nurse that I work with and asked her to bring over more morphine, because I was afraid we were going to run out. She came over, a more experienced nurse than I. I asked her, "What is this exhalation, this grunting? Is it pain, or what?" She said many people do that when they are dying and it's not seen so much as pain but as a reflex, because it can be hard to die. This grunting really disturbs people when dying people do it. Researchers who have studied it basically feel that it's not pain, it's just hard effort.

We all felt better after that. We sat there

it. "It's time to tell her it's okay to die." He said, "I can't do that!"

I said, "Well, maybe she thinks it's not okay because everyone is holding onto her so tight."

One of her daughters is a nurse and she said, "I was just thinking that myself." So she leaned close to her mother's face and said, "Mom, it's okay with me if you go right now. I think it would be really good if you started to try to let go right now."

The husband was on the other side and every time his daughter said, "It's okay to let go," he would cover his wife's face so she couldn't hear what her daughter was saying. He didn't even know he was doing

daughters, and he was crying. Then all these other people who had been outside in another room all night came in and began to cry and say Hail Marys.

My karma is that I'm very composed and tight, even though I'm always telling people to let it out, to relax. In essence I wasn't in this family, so I kind of stood back and watched it all and watched myself too. I came from a middle-class Protestant background and I was telling myself, "Look, there's nothing wrong with being Italian and screaming and yelling and saying Hail Marys."

Then I got into it, I almost cried, but I held it back. I was so relieved that she was

"The father had never before in his whole life cried before his daughters, and he was crying."

it. He wasn't angry with his daughter, it was as if he just had this question: is it okay to let go? He wasn't sure it was okay, so he was protecting his wife from hearing it.

I didn't try to control that, I didn't say, "Wait a minute, do you see what you're doing?" I just let it happen. Finally another daughter said, "Mom, it's okay to go to sleep now." She was modifying it.

I said, "Is going to sleep and letting go the same thing?" And she said, "Well, not quite. Just out of pain and asleep." At that the husband said to his wife, "Yeah, I think it's okay for you to die now." Then he started to say Hail Marys over and over again in a beautiful way, about 15 of them.

He was telling her to let go, but he was thinking that there was something unfinished between them. Then I really admired him, because in front of this audience, his three daughters and me, he said to his wife, "I want to tell you something. I want you to forgive me for anything I've done in our marriage which has hurt you." It was so beautiful. He said, "I know that I've hurt you many times and I am really sorry and I want you to forgive me."

Up till then she hadn't moved at all, but just then she moved her head towards him. He told her again that he loved her. It felt complete. All the daughters said that they wanted her to let go and that they loved her very much but they wanted her out of pain. For about ten more minutes we sat there quietly and watched her grunt.

I really wanted her to stop, to relax. I was trying to keep an empty mind and just perceive what was going on. I said, "I think she's trying to think that it's okay to let go. I think she knows that you think it's okay to go and now she's trying to do that." We all sat there patiently, not rushing her, not forcing her. Two of the daughters left the room and I moved closer to her and held her. She started to relax. We thought, "That's wonderful."

Then something happened which I didn't expect. Again, it's like our practice not to make some thought about the future but just to take things as they come in the moment. At that moment some really dark blood started coming out of her mouth. Nobody expected it. Of course I had to act as if this happened all the time and not look worried about it. I got a pad and a basin and said, "We have to let this come out. She needs to have this come out. Maybe when she lets this come out, she's going to let go." Actually she was letting go. I told her it was okay to try to let it all come out.

The blood kept flowing slowly. The daughter, who was only about 28 years old, was incredible and got some kleenex and kept cleaning her face. It was so quiet in the room. The beautiful thing about it was that even though it was such an ugly thing in a way, there was complete attention by the three of us. Her husband even kissed her on the mouth - totally unconditional love.

I called the other two girls in. She was just resting, her respirations were very slow. I said, "Now she's going to let go." She stopped breathing. All of a sudden her husband took the basin and got up and started to take it to the bathroom. We knew each other really well. I said to him, "Wait a minute, we're not finished. This isn't finished. I'll take this out and you go back to her." I could tell that he was scared all of a sudden. She wasn't going to take another breath, but this was the finish of it, so I told him, "Go back and look at her - watch her stillness." Then I left the room and stayed out for a few minutes.

They all started to cry. It was beautiful just to let them get it out. The father had never in his whole life cried before his

out of pain. Then after about ten minutes this wonderful thing happened. The father and his three daughters went into another room and closed the door, just the four of them. I could hear them laughing. They were so high, it was like a five-hour retreat of being at her bedside and they all had gotten so close in that five hours.

There were certain family dynamics between the daughters. They would talk to me and complain a little about each other. Basically they got along but there were frictions, and now all the friction was gone because they had done this bedside retreat together. They were talking and laughing and telling each other how much they loved each other and how much they had helped each other. I wondered what the rest of the family was thinking, because their mother and wife had died just ten minutes ago and here they were laughing their heads off.

It was a great thing. I wanted to tell you about it because it was so wonderful for me. It's wonderful when you can take your work and take what we do here and bring them together. You don't have to use the word Buddhism or Zen.

I've started using the word "pray" because that's what most people feel comfortable with. It isn't threatening to them. I say, "Let's be quiet and listen to what God has to teach us." I never used to use the word "God," but I do now because people like it. I say, "There's this whole universe and whatever makes this universe work is God. So let's be quiet and just listen." That's a sneaky way to get people to do what I like to do.

This woman was the first hospice patient that was all my responsibility, and she was the first person since I've been a nurse that prayed with me. I never had the nerve to ask before. I asked her early in our relationship if she would like to try some guided meditation, since it might help her relax and relieve the pain. She said she wanted to. We ended up doing guided meditations that were in a book on grief meditation. She got in touch with a lot of her grief and was able to let it go. I taught her about breathing and how that could help her feel stronger, and she would use that to handle her painful memories.

She meant a lot to me. It was wonderful to see how her family pulled together, even though it was not an "ideal" death in a sense, with her constant pain and so forth. One of the things we teach here is how to let our minds go anywhere without hindrance. No matter what the outside circumstances

continued page 16

"What is it going to be like when I get so sick that I won't be able to express what I need?"

She had been very confused and in and out of consciousness, but she gave me this beautiful smile. It was such an incredible gift after months and months of trying to get calm together and accept the time when she was going to be this sick. There was no thinking, just this wonderful moment. I thought, "Oh, this is how it's going to be. This morphine is going to help her and she's just going to slowly fade out and it's going to be okay." That was the thought that came after her smile, so much like the Buddha when he held up the flower to Mahakashyapa. I was thinking, "I give this to you, this comfortable home death, me the wonderful hospice nurse." I had the idea that her dying was going to be just right.

Then Saturday morning I went to see how she was doing. She was okay but she didn't look very comfortable. We had a retreat going on here and I told her family that I was going home for a while and to call me if they needed anything. I called sev-

holding her, five of us each holding one of her hands or feet. We often talk about the direction of our lives, and it can be a high-faluting idea, but basically what it boils down to is, "What am I doing just now?" I was just sitting there. I wasn't one of the daughters or the husband, but I had a role. I felt that I was trying to perceive. I emptied out and just perceived, and it came to me all of a sudden what was happening, all these long hours since five o'clock in the afternoon and now it was ten o'clock and she was still grunting.

I said to them, "I think it's time for us to tell her that it's okay to let go." Nobody had told her that. We had all kept telling her we loved her, but nobody had said, "It's okay to go away now."

Her husband is a great guy, a genuine Rhode Island Italian about 62 years old. He was earthy and kind of hid his feelings a lot, but he was very warm. He looked at me and said, "What do you mean by let go?"

I said, "Die." He didn't want me to say

MY TEACHER

Into the wonderful white space
Of my Japanese print
(A snowy field surrounding two brown birds)
An errant ant has crawled
And died.
I've been meaning to take apart the frame
And remove the corpse.
It offends me daily -
These things don't happen to other people.
I do nothing.
The ant remains on the snow,
And I remain upset.
This intruder is my teacher:
He gave his life so I can learn
Not to take his inconsideration
Personally.

Tom Greening

"WE ARE HERE TOGETHER" EXPANDING THE CIRCLE, CONVERGING THE PATHS

By Sid Kemp

September 19-20, 1987

On a rainy, gray weekend last fall, sixty-five people gathered to share with three teachers of the Native American and Buddhist traditions. Twylah Nitsch (an Elder and Teacher in the Wolf Clan of the Seneca Nation) told us that gray is the color of friendship, and her people looked forward to gray days as a chance to stay inside and share, and a chance to do all the wonderful things that they couldn't do on sunny days. The conference at the Providence Zen Center drew together on the themes of gratitude, spiritual bounty, and compassion.

More than three paths converged at this conference. Twylah offered Seneca teachings; Master Dharma Teacher Bobbie Rhodes offered the Kwan Um Zen teachings of Korean Zen Master Seung Sahn; and Dhyani Ywahoo brought the teachings of both the Cherokee Indian People and the Vajrayana (Tibetan) Buddhist tradition. Dhyani is the Lineage Holder of the Ywahoo teachings of the Cherokee People. She invited us to celebrate our own traditions as well: "Each of us came from a particular family and family religion, and this weekend, we will realize that the roots of our family of origin, the roots of the life that we live, all of these roots grow to one tree, the tree of life which we all share. The three of us hope that this weekend each of you will be inspired to remember the wisdom of your family, and that you may cultivate the inner wisdom of your heart."

Twylah, a tiny woman whose hair was a silver halo above her scarlet cape, sat between Dhyani and Bobbie. Dhyani looked too young to be a grandmother, yet ancient wisdom was clearly present in the statuesque visage that surmounted her maroon wool poncho. Bobbie looked more austere in her long gray robes, but her personal warmth and natural compassion came through when she listened and spoke.

The variety of people who joined the circle enriched the conference for all of us. I was fascinated to find that a number of people came purely on an intuitive hunch. Others came because of an interest in Native American traditions or a desire to meet female spiritual teachers. Also, those of us who had been students in one or more of the schools the teachers represented had a wonderful chance to share with experienced students from other traditions. This became an opportunity to examine our doubts, reinforce our strengths, and compare our perspectives. Both Bobbie and Dhyani frequently reminded us that they, as well as we, were beginners. Our circle was equal in all directions, with each of us bringing our special gifts to its center.

The conference was a tapestry woven of threads that were the individual paths of all the participants. All of the traditions that the teachers represented spoke of the spiritual path as including both the healing of oneself, and the healing of one's relations with family, friends, and the world. Also, as a group, we were very conscious of our special qualities. We participants, descendants of recent arrivals to the American continent, had come to learn from the traditions of those who were here before us, in marked contrast to the hostility and oppression that marks the history and present-day relations between our peoples.

Both men and women gathered to listen to female teachers at a conference focused on the traditionally feminine quality of compassion, represented by the usually female Bodhisattva Kwan Yin (Kwanseum Bosal in Korean). In addition to our special historical qualities, we also brought the personal struggles that each of us has in our spiritual seeking. These historical and personal issues guided the second day of the conference, during which the teachers responded to questions.

Saturday morning, each of the teachers gave an introductory talk on the philosophy and practice of her own spiritual tradition. These talks showed the wonderful diversity of spiritual traditions, and the variety of practices available to a seeker looking for the way to his or her own heart. The diversity was positive in that it offered the participants a wide variety of practices and approaches to follow; and we were encour-

aged to trust our own intuition in choosing among them. It also created some difficulties for those for whom everything was new. Talks and chants and visualization practices followed one another rapidly, leaving some people confused. However, I felt a lightness and clarity present throughout the conference which allowed such doubts to be brought forth and clarified.

Dhyani began: "Wisdom is an energy that exists within each of us. Very often one may think that wisdom is far away, or that it is something that you need to attain. In the Cherokee tradition, everything is well. You are wise--the wisdom is within you. It is only some confusion of your thought and action that gives you the idea that something is not well."

"How can you come again to the remembrance that all things are well? First, by just looking at the nature of your mind. You sit, or you walk, whatever you do is an opportunity to see yourself as you are. When you see thoughts of anger arising, when you see thoughts of jealousy, fear or confusion arising, you say, 'Ah, this thought arises. Is it me?' Not really. It is but a thought, it is appearance that arises out of the emptiness, out of the circle of your experience. So each one of you has the seeds of wisdom within. Each one of us has the fire of mother-father burning brightly within us."

"What is the significance of this mother-father, this father-mother imagery that is within each of us? This enables us to live. How could we live if it were not for our parents? And in an esoteric way, the fire of Mother and Father, they are two channels alongside the central channel of our spine. The wise practitioner who begins to recognize the clarity of mind has enabled those two fires of Mother/Father energy to arise and blend in a harmonious blissful dance in the heart. Heaven and Earth, they meet within our heart."

She went on to tell us that the wisdom fire ever burns within each one of us. Arising in the spine are the three elder fires. The first is will, will to be, clear intention that brings us forth. The second is "love, compassion, the cohesive energy that enables human beings to live and coexist together. Without love, without caretaking one another and the Earth and all the creatures who share this time with us, then our life feels empty." The third Elder Fire within us "is the wisdom that brings things to succeeding. It is the ability to bring a dream to fruition for the benefit of your family, your clan, your nation, and all beings."

In the Cherokee tradition, spiritual practice and living in correct relationship with people and the world are one. "The wise practitioner considers that each moment we are creating a new day. We can look at the past and we can see the patterns that may have caused harm, and we can transform that energy."

"How do you transform the energy of hurt and pain? First you forgive yourself and others for what might have been, could have been, should have been. When you cultivate the mind of altruism, the mind of caretaking, there arises within your heart an energy to accomplish. Sometimes you may feel lethargy, uncertain of how to move in the world. Sometimes you may feel confusion. Well, what can you be sure of? You inhale. You exhale. The sun rises and it sets. Always we can look to the natural world to remind us of the cycle of things, because we, too, are moving in cycles of relationship. Each one of us is related one to the other. We live in cycles. How we speak of one another, this returns to us."

Dhyani continued by introducing the idea of a "negativity fast," a time of cleansing one's thoughts by thinking and speaking of positive steps in process and nothing negative about oneself or others. She spoke of how inner practices purify the mind, and combine with the outer practice of being a caretaker or bodhisattva to bring spiritual clarity and compassion for the benefit of all beings. Finally, she introduced ritual as a means for both inner practice and communal sharing, and discussed how all traditions

have rituals with fire, (such as the family fireplace) and rituals of chanting or prayer.

Twylah spoke to us of "The Path of Peace," a Seneca perspective that allows us to remember the meaning and direction of our lives. Most important for me was the reminder that even our doubts and problems come from our own center, and come with solutions. "When we entered this earth walk, this life, we came with certain gifts. First of all, we decided that we wanted to come to this beautiful place to have earth experiences. Next we came in on a special ray light. Before we entered this earth walk, we had chosen our parents, a place to grow, and lessons that would help us to become a whole entity. With our purpose in mind, we knew that within ourselves, right in the vibrational core, which is the solar plexus, there were questions, and also there were answers to those questions. And we started on our mission from the time we breathed our first breath. From this time, life became a wonderful adventure. And as we walked upon this earth, we saw lessons all around us. Lessons in our home, lessons in nature, voices, all things that became part of the interest within us."

"Then a vision appeared. At first this vision was not very clear, but as time went on, it began to have parts that made it whole, parts that could make it walk, parts that could make it talk, parts that helped us to listen, and parts to help us grow. We realized that we would have to walk our talk and live our vision. How do we do this? We would seek answers that related to our vision. There are four important questions:

"Our anger does not protect us, it only hurts us and can eventually make us sick."

—Dhyani

Who am I? Where did I come from? Why am I here? And, what does the future have in store for me? Additional questions would appear from time to time. The lessons of truth became part of a formal circle. We realized that when we came into this earthwalk, we entered a sacred space. And that we honored this sacred space. And that we were responsible for this sacred space. Within this sacred space were the truths that stated: Learn the truth, honor the truth, accept and practice the truth. See the truth. Hear the truth. Speak the truth. Next, love the truth. Serve in truth. Live in truth. Work in truth, walk in truth, and be grateful for the truth.

"We were walking on the pathway of peace, which had seven stepping-stones. And each stepping-stone had seven sides. And the sides of each stone were sound, sight, scent, taste, touch, emotion, and awareness. The first stepping stone is faith, and its color is red. We had faith, when we came into this earth walk, that the blood within our bodies would not spill. When we look at the blood, it's red. So we think, and we believe, and want this blood, this red, strong fluid, to be within us. And we know that this body is going to contain it. So that feeling of faith is within."

"The next stepping-stone is love. We look at the sun and it's yellow. When the sun is touching our bodies, we feel its warmth, and oh, that's love. It's the most

exquisite feeling to allow that love to flow right through our bodies. Love helps us to look into the eyes, the lights of the sun, to see the love that others have. This helps us to exchange feelings of love."

As we move up the pathway of peace, the third stone is the blue of intuition. It is as blue as the bluest water that we would ever see, and when we drink of it, it satisfies our thirst for the lessons that we want to learn from within.

"Then we move to the next stepping stone on the pathway of peace, and that stone is green. It represents living, and as we embrace that color, we know that we receive fertility and renewal. The trees and the foliage represent that living green, the color of renewal, the color of life's perpetuation."

"Next we look at the fifth stepping-stone on the pathway to peace. We look at our hands, the color is pink. Pink is for creativity. Our hands are the tools we use to create whatever we want in the types of work we do. The five fingers represent: life, unity, equality for eternity. When we extend our hands to reach out, touch in peace."

Then we look to the next stepping-stone on the pathway of peace. It is white, to represent purity. This is the stone of magnetism that attracts when we give away or share, in love. The magnetic feeling keeps us on this earth to walk and to grow in spirit.

"The seventh stepping-stone is purple. We call it the rainbow of peace, because it encompasses all the steps on the pathway of peace. And when we walk under the rainbow of peace, we feel its protection, and we

feel the growth and the homage that we can express. Thus life is wonderful and offers us the gifts of beauty to make us whole."

"Whenever anything happens, we can refer to any one of the truths that appeared on the seven stepping-stones on the pathway of peace. Life becomes abundant. Families become whole, and we feel a connection to the earth as one body, one heart, one mind, and one spirit."

"But there are things that occur that do not fit into this beautiful concept. Sometimes they hurt. Sometimes they make us laugh. Sometimes they make us forget, and sometimes we became angry, frustrated, and finally we realized that these were negative energies. How do we deal with them? Why are they here?"

"These questions and their answers lie within the vibrational core, the center of perfection that lives within us. Without this, we would not be able to grow. Nor would we even be able to exist. This vibrational core connects us to all the other entities! The creature beings, the tree beings, the human beings, the sun, the moon, the sky, the earth--all things in the sky world, all things in the sun world, all things within the moon world and within the earth world are all connected through this vibrational alliance. When we flounder, we can grasp hold of the stepping-stones on the pathway to peace."



Dhyani, Twylah and Bobbie (from left). Photo by Sid Kemp

Bobbie Rhodes gave a talk that was very different from Dhyani's and Twylah's, reflecting some essential differences between Zen and American Indian Spirituality. Zen is not a tribal religion, but a Buddhist practice traditionally occurring primarily in monasteries. As such, Zen does not have the kind of overarching cosmology or world view that guides the Seneca and Cherokee traditions. Such metaphysical systems do exist in Buddhism, but Zen does not find its core in a system of thought.

Rather, the essence of Zen lies in a moment-to-moment practice of bringing oneself and one's history to the present moment and present situation. Because of this, Bobbie Rhodes gave a talk more from her personal history than from a vision of life similar to Dhyani's or Twylah's. She said that she felt Zen practice was very helpful in giving her a way to see past her own biases (and our culture's prejudices), so that she, and perhaps others of us, can learn to listen to the wisdom of the first human visitors to the Americas, the Indian peoples.

"About 15 years ago I was sitting under a tree and a friend handed me a beginner's manual on Zen Buddhism. I had never heard anything about it before. I started to read, and on the very first page it talked about what the Buddha taught. It was a very simple little book. It said the Buddha taught that within each thing was Buddha nature - 'Everything, everyone, has it.' I remember reading that sentence and a flood of gratitude welled up in me. I felt five hundred pounds lighter. I'd been wanting to hear that all my life, and I never had. It was just the right timing, just the right book. Then I started to read more books about Buddhism and tried practicing meditation.

"About three years ago I met Dhyani and Twylah. I was invited to teach at Dhyani's school in Vermont. I was pleased to go, but had no idea what Native American teaching was. We were all sitting in a line, Twylah and Dhyani and me and two other women teachers. When Twylah started speaking, I remember looking at her and thinking, 'How does she know that?'

"I'd been cloistered in this Zen Center for ten years and even though I admired so much what the Buddha said, that everyone 'has it,' within that ten years I thought that *only* Buddha had said it and that you had to be a Buddhist to know it. It didn't make any sense, but my mind had encapsulated this idea about Buddhism. I was genuinely shocked that Twylah knew so much. I almost said, 'How did you know that? How did you figure that out?'

"It was a wonderful thing for one to open up more to the Native American teaching...and recognize it's not a label...it's the nature within all of us." —Bobby

"Then a big question arose, I saw it happen inside myself. I saw the arrogance and the cloistered part of myself, and remembered how much it had nurtured me to have Buddha's teaching that 'everyone has it.' A little light bulb went on and I said to myself, 'Of course Twylah has it.'

"But she's an old lady, you know. I'd been working in nursing homes all of my nursing days, and I'm used to catering to crippled old ladies, people that can't care for themselves. I had a perverted idea about aging. It was a wonderful thing to open up more to Native American teaching and recognize that there's no label of Buddhism, Native American, Hindu or whatever, it's the nature within all of us, whether you call it your center or your God, or whatever you want to call it.

"A very important thing happened for me in that moment of being so impressed with Twylah. Then Dhyani started to talk and that was amazing also. In that moment of seeing my arrogance, I also was seeing how happy I was that they were so strong. So I practiced what we do in the Zen Center, I had a mind that doesn't know.

In other words, I was feeling bad about feeling such arrogant ideas as 'only Buddhists understand all this stuff.' Then I realized that feeling bad is not important, it is actually harmful. So I just recognized that film, that cloud, that was over me and let go of it. "Don't know" means not spending time thinking about "Oh, how stupid I've been," but dropping that curtain and appreciating what's appearing. What's hard for us is running into those curtains or clouds and then feeling ignorant....

"What amazes me over and over again is

how I feel, in a sense, as if I had peaked. It doesn't last long, but I think, 'I've got it, I've learned something new.' I feel AH! and as if I could rest in that space for a second anyway, but then a new lesson appears immediately. I'm beginning to realize that's a gift. But it feels funny to keep stumbling.

"Soen Sa Nim has a phrase he uses all the time: seven times fall down, eight times stand up. I love that. It came from an ancient text, and you feel all your brothers and sisters from countless time have had to fall down, stand up, fall down, stand up. If we can, in the moment of contact of falling - even in that time when it hurts - whether we feel humiliated or whatever, if we can immediately say, 'Ah, there's a lesson,' then I think we don't get so discouraged. Although it's okay to get discouraged, sometimes too....

"What I have been trying to learn is to trust that not-knowing place, and not just to trust it, but to *be* it, and take each moment as it appears. Just be naked with it, be completely what you are. If it's being a little nervous or afraid, well that's that. The sky never rejects anything, the ground never rejects anything, so why should we reject any part of ourselves, or any part of another? A few minutes ago Dhyani said, 'Unless you've walked 10,000 miles in someone's moccasins, how would you ever begin to think you could judge how they're feeling, and what and why they're doing?' The idea of negativity fast was great, and it often has to begin, as Dhyani said, with our own negativity about ourselves. If we can begin to let go of that, we can begin to let go of our negativity about the world....

"We need to realize that all of us have the same thing within us. It doesn't come from a particular teacher or a particular tradition, it comes from opening up to this universe, opening to our energy and wisdom. Unless I had had some guidance and some very clear strong practice that I've committed myself to, I never would have known that. I don't think I would have been able to hear Twylah and Dhyani three years ago, if somehow I hadn't heard that in myself. Finding our gifts, what we have to offer to this world, is something that a lot of people have a hard time doing.

"In the Temple Rules that we read every Monday morning, it says, 'Don't wear other people's coats and shoes.' For several years I heard that and thought it was kind of nit-picking, that we had this rule because at the Providence Zen Center we keep all of our shoes near the door, and if someone

grabs your shoes and uses them, then you're stuck without a pair of shoes. I thought that rule literally meant, don't wear anybody's shoes. Finally it dawned on me that the rule had a deeper meaning than that. Another way of saying it is, 'Believe in yourself. Trust yourself. Find yourself.'

"The self that you have is so powerful and so able to do anything that you want, that it's unbelievable. All of us have a different capacity, a different timing about how and when we find what we need and want to do. Some of us do several things within our lives and are completely fulfilled by them, and some of us stay with one thing. One of the things I've wanted to do since I was very young was be a nurse....so I went into training and became one.

"Since then I've had a number of different nursing jobs. About 15 years ago something in me said, 'Go to the Jewish Home [for the Aged in Providence]. So I went and the very next day I was hired. I stayed there for ten years just on that one impulse. The lessons I learned there were unbelievable. Then at one point, I said to myself, 'You're tired of the Jewish Home.' That was okay. I didn't feel guilty about it. Something inside me said, 'Go to the Hospice.'...so I went and I've been working there for a year and a half now.

"It was listening to that voice, trusting it, believing in myself and just doing it, going forward. And knowing that 'fall down seven times, eight times stand up' is part of the pattern. This and everything else is part of the breath of life. As Twylah and Dhyani have said, it is finding and trusting that Universal Energy and realizing that we're not encased by this flesh that's keeping us from that, but if we actually begin to

breathe and listen and perceive and ask, as Twylah said, 'Where did I come from? Who am I? Where am I going?' then we are totally capable of understanding those questions.

During the morning talks, the teachers also introduced chanting, visualization, and meditation techniques. At the very beginning, I was lifted into a clear state by Dhyani's talk in which each event, word and mood was part of a beautiful dance. Thus I breathed and felt, for a time, the reality of the Cherokee perspective that everything really is all right. I suspect that some others may have felt difficulty at times, but, for me, even the difficulties were chances to explore and share. A few people came to me when they were uncertain about something (probably because I wore a long gray robe and looked



Twylah Nitsch

official), and the uncertainties they shared became just another chance to grow and learn. I was grateful that this clarity (unusual in my life) came through me to help other people.

During the afternoon, each of the teachers led us in the basic practices of her tradition. Dhyani introduced a system of esoteric chanting and visualization intended to clear the practitioners' energy body of hurts that remain within our memories of traumatic experiences. I found the method very powerful in the group setting, but have found some difficulty in keeping the melody of the chants at home, where I practice alone.

Bobbie introduced us to chanting the name of Kwan Seum Bosal, the Bodhisattva of compassion. This is a very simple chant in which we repeated "Kwan Se Um Bo Sal" in a steady rhythm, accompanied by pounding our fists or percussion instruments. Bobbie told us that groups who practice this chant all day on kido (chanting) retreats build up tremendous "special energy." We looked silly and a little crazy as we snaked around the dharma room and its outside porch, pounding our hands together and chanting. Some people absorbed themselves in the chant, but others seemed a bit confused or put off by chanting words whose meaning they really did not understand.

One woman asked me what Kwanseum Bosal meant, and I explained that it was the Korean name of Kwan Yin, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. She replied that she wished she had known that while she was chanting, because she had always felt very close to Kwan Yin. From her comment, I realized that other people share a discomfort I feel with the Chogye tradition in which the focus is on "before thinking" absorption in the practice, and we don't always know the meaning of what we are saying or doing. Like this woman, I find absorption easier if there is at least a simple meaning to the words that allows my intellect to support the direction of the practice.

Twylah introduced us to more intellectual activities that were part of Seneca "Earth Astrology." She taught us a way of evaluating the colors and gifts special to us from our birth that are with us this lifetime. The method combined an intuitive approach to determine one's own particular colors with a systematic logic that explained the mean-

ing of those colors and the relationships between them. By supertime Saturday, all of us had been introduced to a wider range of practices for the beginner than would have been possible to learn from any one tradition.

I felt like I'd spent all day at both a conference and a meditation retreat. I was excited but too tired to think clearly, so I took a few minutes to hide out by myself and stretch and relax. After a few minutes of calming my mind with the practices that I had just learned, I was ready to go out and share with the others. This swift return to clarity showed me the power of taking responsibility for keeping my own center and using the techniques offered that weekend to bring balance.

There were two ceremonies that evening: the regular evening practice of the Kwan Um Zen School and a special fire ceremony from Dhyani's tradition. The evening Zen chanting took on a new sound as two score people tried out the unfamiliar Korean sounds and rhythms. The next day, Bobbie, who has a very musical ear, said that she had gotten caught up in worrying that it sounded awful, but Dhyani and Twylah expressed a feeling that I think was shared by most of the group--that, regardless of our musical talent, the shared energy and willingness to practice to create clear mind created a rich experience for us. Between the ceremonies, I played with a wide-eyed baby, a child of one of the conference participants. His wonder at every sound and motion was a reminder of the state of clear mind that all of the practices have as their purpose.

The Cherokee ceremony was not the huge bonfire I had hoped for because the weather kept us inside. The entire group formed a large circle around a circle of candles in the dharma room and Dhyani introduced a visualization in which we searched our minds for negativity and judgments, and then gave them to the fire to be consumed. We held this in our minds as we chanted and Dhyani and her students led us with drums and rattles. I found it easy to concentrate, and the room itself seemed to grow brighter and more clear. There was a wonderful feeling of purity and richness, a quality that allowed all things to be just as they are. This created a wonderful synergy between Dhyani's teachings and the fire ceremony.

After the formal events, most of us stayed up to get to know each other. There was one lively late-night discussion on the differences among spiritual freedom, political freedom, and freedom of choice. Others spent time together in the hot tub trading foot massages. The day seemed so complete that it was overfilled, yet there was a sense of balance that I believe came from the fact that it had included esoteric rituals, religious ceremonies, lectures, dance, and relaxation.

The second day of the conference was driven by questions that the participants had written down and given to the teachers. Dhyani said that the questions had taught her that the mind of competitiveness, anger and envy was much more pervasive than she had thought, and that she was surprised by the number of people who were afraid to give up their anger because they believed that it protected them. She told us that our anger does not protect us, it only hurts us and can, eventually, make us sick. She suggested that when envy of the qualities or gifts of another person arises in our thinking that we remember that we cannot see any quality in another that is not also present within ourselves. In these ways, she encouraged us to view the world in a way that encourages us to grow, rather than pressures us to compete.

Specific questions ranged from the acceptability of homosexuality to the existence of spirit and animal guides. All of the teachers approached the issue of homosexuality with unusual respect, but each also gave different responses. Bobbie said that in her school, the only important question was one of intent: whatever acts we choose, are we doing them for the benefit of all beings? She also said that there may be issues of energy for homosexual spiritual practitioners because male and female bodies have different kinds of energy, and that one might weaken oneself by exclusive interaction only with one's own sex. Dhyani said that it was most important not to identify yourself with your actions by creat-

Continued on next page

We Are Here Together

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ing a label such as homosexual, but that gay female couples were accepted in Cherokee culture. She added, however, that the tradition was so much centered on child-rearing that many of these women often found a husband to share so that they could become mothers! Twylah discussed homosexuality as a personal issue of health and spirituality, in which cultural condemnation had no place at all.

Bobbie said that one of the most wonderful things that she had gained from Twylah's tradition was the notion of "Band People." These are spirit-friends that we each have to help us by providing us with guidance and inspiration. The intuitions that we have and the events and chance meetings that help us grow can come from the help of these spiritual beings. Bobbie recalled a time in high school when she had felt small and left out and had heard an inner voice encouraging her to get involved in school politics. It had been an important moment in her developing self-confidence, and she wondered if this had been the encouragement of one of her Band People.

Along similar lines, Dhyani suggested that we look to our past to see the Joy Markers in our lives--those things that have helped us survive, for which we feel grateful and good about ourselves.

The teachers did not always agree, and sometimes something that one of them said raised doubts that another was still working on. Bobbie mentioned that Zen practice did not include visualization or dream journeying, and that she had never become comfortable with these techniques for herself. Both Twylah and Dhyani explained visualization as being the same as what we do every day, all the time. "Everything was someone's idea before it became a reality," Twylah told us. Dhyani said, "Did you think about what you wanted your bedroom to look like before you decorated it? That is visualization." Spiritual practice means just taking these everyday mental activities and focusing them for the benefit of all beings, instead of being lost in worry or confusion, or focusing only on ourselves.

Dhyani told a wonderful story about spending years seeking after a spiritual woman who appeared in her visions. The

"As we walked upon this earth, we saw lessons all around us."
—Twylah

visions led her to the Himalayas, where she risked her life on high mountain passes in flood and avalanche. Then a moment came when she asked herself what she was doing all this for. She looked down at herself and saw that her clothes were the clothes of the woman of her vision. She was the spiritual woman in Tibet that she had been seeking. She ended by saying, "That is what your everyday mind becomes--what you are meditating on, what you are contemplating."

A lively discussion arose from Twylah and Dhyani introducing the notion of spiritual bounty. In their traditions, spirituality is not useful unless it enriches the community. This perspective, which is common in tribal religions, appears to be different from the ascetic turning away from the material world that occurs in monastic traditions such as Zen. Bobbie felt uncertain about the idea of seeking to manifest "what you want" because it reminded her of people who spend time and energy trying to get fancy cars and other possessions. With a laugh, Dhyani replied, "If it is for the good of all, why not?"

There were certain agreements within the group that are unusual in the larger society we also share. The teachers and audience held a focus on feminine spirituality that literally laughed away chauvinist notions. In one question, a Zen teacher from another school was quoted as saying that women were naturally spiritually inferior. After the teachers finished laughing, Bobbie and Dhyani both said that they disregarded the views of such teachers. Twylah spoke at greater length about the problem of society's sexist views, pointing out the crucial distinction between what others think, which ultimately affects only them, and what we think of ourselves, which affects our inner and outer lives.

The view that the recent arrivals to Amer-

ica had practiced genocide against the Native Americans also might have been challenged elsewhere. At this conference, however, it allowed for a beautiful and honest discussion of how Twylah's traditions had helped her survive being raised in foster homes and trained in special state institutional schools. The key, she said, was that her parents told her that she would hear a lot of strange beliefs, but to remember that that is what they said, and not what she said. She was taught that she was responsible for whatever she said or did, but not for the words and actions of others. And her parents reinforced this by asking her to recount what others said, and, separately, what she did about it.

It seemed very easy to get to know people rather intimately during the two days. The dozen or so people I talked with felt very willing to open up their uncertainties and look at themselves and listen. People offered each other a great deal of compassion and respect. For example, several people asked for copies of the tapes from the conference, or for the opportunity to take pictures. When people learned that the teachers' religious values made it impossible to offer these, they all were very understanding of this and comfortably put aside their own desires. I also heard more expressions of gratitude in those two days than I usually hear in a month.

It would be impossible to sum up a central meaning to the conference, but there was some guidance from the teachers that I think shows the quality of that center, that point of convergence which we came to during the two days, and carried outward with us when we left:

Twylah: "Everything that you see people do that you think is wrong will give you a positive direction, because you won't do it. And everything you see that you think is right you will do, because that is also a positive direction."

Dhyani: "Cultivating the mind view of compassion and care, not so much attachment to this or that, that is the way of the wise practitioner."

Bobbie: (Answering the question: "How does one let go of the need to hold on? How does one let go of one's dreams and manifest them? How do you let go and nourish at the same time?") "In the midst of your suffering, look at your situation and say, 'What do I have to contribute to this?' Then your suffering disappears and your dream becomes alive."

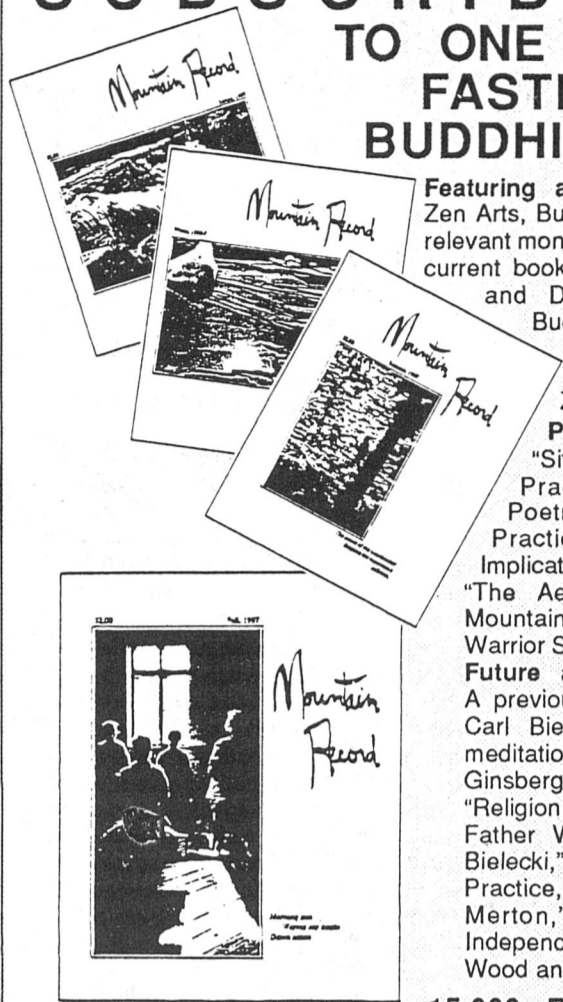
What I gained most from the conference was a deep appreciation of the diversity of spiritual paths and of people. It was clear that beginners at the conference were drawn to each of the three teachers, and that some who might have had no interest in two of them found something special in the third. I have found that adding some of Dhyani's esoteric chants has helped balance my energy and supported my Zen practice. Many people found that Twylah's earthy, pragmatic approach to figuring out who they are and making their dreams into realities was a special gift. Several people learned that Zen is more accessible than it often appears; Bobbie reported that two people new to Zen had passed a koan (paradoxical Zen question) that Bobbie had offered the group on Saturday afternoon.

The conference didn't really let up even during the breaks. Most people seemed to find themselves making new friends, and I barely had time to meet everyone I felt drawn to. Near the end of the afternoon, we went outside to end with a ceremony of healing and gratitude underneath an ancient elm tree. We joined in a circle and each offered a word of joy or gratitude or named something in the conference that was special for us.

Even then, we weren't ready to quit. Almost everyone went back into the dharma room to hear more about Twylah's earth-astrology. As people put on their shoes and coats to leave, most of us had a bright, glazed look that I had often seen after conferences and retreats. We had all had nearly too much of something wonderful.

In the last three months, the conference has come to mind as a memory of clarity and light. For me, this is a wonderful gift, because I often feel I have little to look back on that is joyful. The special gifts of the people I shared that weekend with remind me to look ahead with joy and hope. □

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WHY DO I HAVE TO FINISH THIS?

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movies. These gangs were always depicted as not so good people. So I moved into New York City for a summer and my street was a Spanish neighborhood, one side Spanish and the other side Greek. There were gangs on both sides. I could recognize them as gangs from all the movies I had seen. They were hanging out on the street corner, in front of the laundromats. The second day I was in the city I was walking around and saw this group. I wanted to see what a gang was, so I walked up to this group of three guys - really rough-looking guys. Here I was, with a crew cut and from a private school. I didn't know anything about the street. I came from a small country town in Hawaii and never grew up in the city. My first experience away from home was in a boarding school.

So I went up to these street kids and said, "You guys want to be friends?" They were scared. I guess they thought I looked crazy, so they wouldn't touch me. Even if you are mean, fighting a crazy person is difficult. They thought I was crazy, so they only looked at me and walked away.

Every day I thought that all I had to do was just hang out on the street corner where they were and we would get to know each other. I would stand on the corner and eyeball them (which I found out later was not such a good thing to do). But that was okay because they were already scared of me. They thought I was eyeballing them because I was going to attack them the first chance I had. Anyway, we never became friends.

I tried lots of things like that. When I was about 19, I went to Washington Street in Boston [the so-called "Combat Zone"]. People said prostitutes and gay people and street people were no good, so I asked why. These people and I have a human body. We eat the same food, all require sleep, all have some kind of job to make money. They also have feelings, people they care about, parents. What is our difference? Yes, their action and speech is different, but just because of those things, does that make them bad?

For a year I sometimes hung out with them. I didn't do a lot of the stuff they did, but I hung out with them. For some reason they accepted me even if I didn't do complete together action with them. That was no problem for them. And I saw that they were not so different. They liked to have parties. They cared about each other, had feelings. They weren't especially meaner than some husbands and wives and families are to each other. I couldn't figure out what the difference was. This was a big question.

"For me, practice had often become an intellectual game."

Then I began practicing Zen. At that time "What is this life?" was a big, big question. But soon it became a game. You know, how many koans can you answer? I didn't know it had turned into a game. When I first started practicing, sitting was very painful. I had to put out a lot of effort. My first two or three years were difficult. When I sat, it was intense and I was really looking for something. After a while it became a way of life. Retreats, doing things around Zen Centers, became just things to do. Sometimes there was a question, but generally it was just going along, like we go along in our daily life with a question.

Then yesterday I talked to Soen Sa Nim. He always says, "If you make a mistake, then make it correct." So I said to him, "There's good action and then there's mistake action. If a mistake can help you learn, why not make it anyway?" Silly question, huh? He looked at me and shouted strong and loudly, "This is not a game!"

Then pow! That question, "What am I?", appeared again. For me, practice had often become an intellectual game. So when Soen Sa Nim said, "This is not a game!", he was a little pissed. Then "put it all down, your opinion, your condition, your situation" (a frequent teaching of his) means something, not just words. If these are just words to you, then it's a game.

"Not a game" means what? Try. "Not a game" means try mind. At the end of our talk Soen Sa Nim did a little more shouting. "Checking, checking - I don't like that." So I said, "You are my teacher. I come in

here and tell you anything and you yell at me. Then I understand, but only for a short time. Then this checking appears again. When I come in here again, you must yell at me again. So, you must yell at me a lot." He said, "Correct! That's try mind. 'Not afraid' mind. Try mind is the mind that says 'Mistake, not mistake, doesn't matter....just try.'"

Holding an opinion of yourself or of some situation, not exposing yourself, that's okay. But when you can completely expose yourself, whatever that means, without anything, only asking "what is this? Don't know....okay, only try." That's try mind.

If we don't open ourselves, we cannot see anything. Koan practice is like that: only reflect. Only reflect everything completely. Mistake, not mistake, doesn't matter. Only what comes out - poof! Aha! That's a mistake! But what did that do? It took away some shield, some veil. Even if it's a mistake or not a 100% correct answer, it's taken away some veil. If you keep doing that, doing that, finally the correct answer comes out - poof, aha! Then what? You can begin to trust exposing yourself.

So whether you leave a retreat or not, it doesn't matter. You've already exposed yourself. Every moment you sit you've exposed yourself to yourself. Then when we can completely expose ourselves to ourselves and believe it, then we can see. "Aha, now I trust myself, now I believe myself 100%." But it doesn't end there.

"Now I believe myself" means I also see I have this karma. If you can perceive your karma, then you can change it, maybe, then you can use it. All the time, your karma is controlling you, but when your direction becomes clear, you can see your karma. When your direction becomes clear and strong, then your karma can follow you, which means only go straight don't know. Then you have no attachment to your karma and you can begin to use your karma.

Soen Sa Nim says that try mind is already enlightened mind. So only sit, only try, only go straight don't know. These days I think try mind is the most important thing there is, the only thing we have that's substantial. What else have you got to hold onto? This life? This feeling? This attainment, no attainment? How can you hold that? How can you hold clear eyes? Maybe you got enlightenment, how do you hold that? Nothing's guaranteed. Everything's always changing. You cannot hold your life. "Coming empty-handed, going empty-handed, that is human." That means we cannot hold anything.

But there is one thing you have that is not changing: don't know plus try mind. That's guaranteed. You don't even have to try to hold it, it's yours. But you must make use of it, find the correct direction for it. The name for that is only go straight, try for 10,000 years.

Several days ago we were talking about a lot of spiritual leaders in this world and different kinds of groups, and how at the outset, they all have something to give people. Sometimes this direction becomes a proud thing: "I've got this, I attained that." Then this try mind slowly away and everything becomes cloudy again, not sure, not clear.

A Zen Master said, "So you attain enlightenment, so what? If you don't practice, all that's going to be left is a trace of a memory." The Heart Sutra says, "No attainment with nothing to attain." But that does not mean "no attainment." It means try. In clear try mind, there's no idea of something to attain, only try. Why is there no idea? Because try is "don't know" and don't know has no word, no name, no form, no speech, so no attainment with nothing to attain. You don't know what you're going for.

You are sitting with the mantra "Kwan Seum Bosal, Kwan Seum Bosal." But what will you get from it? Do you know? You don't know. You have no idea what you'll get from it. That means trying "don't know." "Nothing to attain" means completely, 100% don't know. Do you understand? Neither do I.

Before, I used to practice with Kozan Roshi. When he was a student, he thought there was something to attain. He was afraid of heights, so he wanted to attain no fear of heights. He practiced a lot. Out in the country in Japan there was a big well. At night he would put a plank across it, a one by twelve inch plank, and then sit on the plank. There weren't any houses

around, so if he fell in, he was probably a goner unless someone happened to walk by.

He would do that at night, go there and say, "I'm going to sit all night." Then he would crawl out on the plank. He had to be really careful. After a while he found he could crawl out there and not be afraid, so that it was very easy to sit. He didn't have to sit up rigidly and be aware all the time, he could doze. That's how easy it became. So he thought he had attained something.

Next he went to Tokyo. Around the top

"Whether you leave a retreat or not, it doesn't matter. You've already exposed yourself."

of big skyscrapers there is a little wall called a parapet. So he went up on a 16-story building and walked around the parapet. He had practiced sitting on the well so he would not be afraid. Then to test this "not fear" he went up on the skyscraper and managed to walk around without much of a problem. He walked around several times before the police came and took him away. They put him in jail for being crazy. His teacher had to come and sign him out.

I said to Kozan Roshi, "Your teacher signed you out. Then what did he say?" Kozan Roshi said, "At that time I thought Zen meant getting some magic, some special superhuman characteristic like being able to fly or not having any fear. My teacher shouted at me, scolded me and said, 'This is not the reason you are practicing.' Then I said, 'what do you mean? Then why?' And my teacher replied, 'In Zen there is no attainment with nothing to attain, but why do you do that?'"



Master Dharma Teacher Mu Deung (formerly See Hoy Liou) was born in Hawaii and has two teenage sons living in Los Angeles. For a number of years he was Abbot of Dharma Sah Zen Center in Los Angeles (formerly known as Tahl Mah Sah). He studied at the California Institute for the Arts and worked as an industrial designer. In 1974 he began studying with Soen Sa Nim. A skilled carpenter, he has worked on many building projects within the Kwan Um Zen School, most recently supervising the renovation of the Cambridge Zen Center. He was ordained a Bodhisattva monk in 1982, a full monk in 1984, and is now living as a Bodhisattva monk at Cambridge Zen Center. He was named a Master Dharma Teacher in 1981 and travels in North America and sometimes Europe, giving talks and leading retreats.

But we have to attain that "nothing to attain" so that we can return to our human nature. We all think there is something to attain in this life: good car, good money, good job. So we all fight each other, lie to each other, cannot get along together. If you attain "no attainment with nothing to attain," which means "not only for me," then this life is very simple. Then you and I have a chance of getting along. We don't have to compete. You and I are already the same, which is "don't know," so we sit Kyol Che.

This together action takes away competition. Why? Because together action

makes everybody equal. We all wear the same robes, eat out of the same colored bowls. In this together action, we're equal now. We have this opportunity to see, at least to taste that we are equal and that there is something common to all of us which is much deeper than some personal goal we want to attain.

There's something a little deeper that haunts us. That's why we're practicing here. We serve food to each other. Sometimes serving in my house is only for me.

But we come here and take this pot and serve everybody. It doesn't seem special, but it has a taste of "not only for me," a small taste anyway. Three times a day we do only that for 90 days. Then somewhere in our consciousness that idea becomes a habit, which means just doing it. This habit's name is great love, great compassion.

We all know these are the correct things to do. But we have to attain that so it comes naturally, so we don't have to be confused about whether some action is correct or not. We can just do it.

Q: You said earlier that on your 100-day retreat, you felt like you had enough sitting. What kind of mind did you have, that made you think like that?

Mu Deung: I had "I am" mind, which means "Oh, I'm already finished. I can do anything. I have freedom." That mind.

Q: What did Soen Sa Nim say to you?

Mu Deung: I said to him, "Soen Sa Nim, now half of the retreat is over and it's no problem." Before, I had talked about always having this mind that wanted to try something, especially if someone said don't do it. When I went on this retreat, the mind I had was not retreat mind. Lots of people go on retreats and think, "I'm going to practice hard for 90 days and only follow my schedule, and I will do it!" That's try mind. When I went on retreat, I made up my schedule and then said, "I'll see what it's like." So I didn't have try mind, I had "see what it's like" mind, kind of like "checking it out" mind.

When fifty days came and I wanted to leave, it was no problem. I had to hitchhike a long way, six or seven miles to the outskirts of a little town, to get to a public phone. I called Soen Sa Nim and said, "The next 50 days are no problem. My body can do it. If you say, 'stay,' then I will stay. But why should I do that?" Asking him meant I thought I already had freedom mind and it wasn't necessary to finish the retreat.

Soen Sa Nim said, "You must only try." I said, "Yes, I can, but why?" Then he said, "For all people," and slammed down the phone. It took me two hours to get back home, and the only thing in my mind was "For all people - what on earth does that mean?" I asked him, why sit? And he said, for all people. What does this sitting do for all people? For the next forty days I only had this question. I had no choice. It wasn't that I asked myself the question, it was there all the time. "For all people - what on earth could that possibly mean?"

It was there while I was eating, while sleeping, while practicing. I just wanted to vomit. I wanted it to be out and done with. I didn't care whether I found an answer or not, I just didn't want the question any more. Then one day I was sitting and all of a sudden it wasn't there at all. I didn't understand anything, but it wasn't there. I was very happy.

Q: Did you finish the retreat?

Mu Deung: Yes. That happened on the 87th day. I only had 13 days more. Those last 13 days were just a bliss-out because I didn't have this frustrating question. It was like going to the beach and lying around, but better than that. I could just do it: get out, chant, sit, wash my clothes. I thought that was wonderful.

When I came down from my retreat, I still had that good feeling for three days afterwards - "only do it" mind. Any kind of action, I could only do it. Some people said, Korean people like to take you out after a retreat like that, it's a big deal. So let's take you out to dinner. Let's do this or that. Anything, I could do it. Then after 3 or 4 days it was done. "I" appeared, then all karma appeared. Then again, only sitting, still sitting, still trying, only go straight don't know. □

PRIMARY POINT

PRIMARY POINT is published by the Kwan Um Zen School, a non-profit religious corporation under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn. The School supports and arranges the world-wide teaching schedule of Zen Master Seung Sahn and his senior teachers, issues publications on contemporary Buddhist practice, and supports dialogue among religions.

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Reading Matters

KOREAN ZEN

Thousand Peaks: Korean Zen--Traditions and Teachers, by Mu Soeng Sunim with a foreword by Zen Master Seung Sahn, Parallax Press, Berkeley, CA, 1987. 222 pages, glossary, index. Pb, \$12.50.

The Way of Korean Zen, by Kusan Sunim, trans. Martine Fages, edited with introduction by Stephen Batchelor. John Weatherhill, New York and Tokyo, 1987. 182 pages, glossary. Pb, \$12.50.

Reviewed by Sid Kemp

In general, students [of Zen] should study live words, and should not study dead words.

Comment: If one brings forth one's understanding from live words, then one is worthy of being a teacher of Buddhas and patriarchs. If one brings forth one's understanding from dead words, then no matter how one seeks to save oneself, it cannot be done.

Sosan Taesa (1520-1604)

Handbook for Zen Students

These two new books are making the history of Korean Buddhism available to English-speaking readers for the first time. **Thousand Peaks**, by Mu Soeng Su Nim, a monk in the Korean Chogye order and Abbot of the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery in Providence, RI, provides a unique, brilliant and balanced history of the role of Buddhism in the Korean national mind and succeeds in bringing ancient Zen Masters to life through the printed page. His teacher, Korean Zen Master Seung Sahn, has provided an inspiring introduction.

Alternatively, **The Way of Korean Zen** is a kind of book very familiar to readers of Zen. Zen Master Kusan Sunim offers a capsule history of Korean Buddhism that demonstrates the author's teaching lineage and provides the basis for the remainder of the book, a collection of his talks and other teachings. However, the book is an unusually strong one of its type for three reasons: first, Kusan Sunim was one of the most dynamic Zen Masters of this century; second, this book, like many that have appeared recently, has a greater depth of understanding of the American idiom,

NEW PRIMARY POINT EDITORS TAKE OVER AFTER FEBRUARY ISSUE

PRIMARY POINT will have a new managing editor starting after the February issue: Bruce Sturgeon of Asheville, NC. Bruce began last fall as advertising and marketing manager of the paper and was responsible for the Reader's Survey enclosed in the last issue, which gave us a very informative picture of some of our readership. Bruce, who became a Dharma Teacher last August and founded the Asheville Zen Circle, has a wealth of experience in marketing and editing. His plans for the paper include upgrading its technical quality, moving into computer-assisted production, and improving its financial and readership base.

Sid Kemp from New York City will continue as feature editor and contributor of the book review column "Reading Matters." The second of his major conference articles is in this issue. More background on these two new editors was published in the October 1987 issue. The other senior editors and contributors will continue as before.

Ellen Sidor, who with the first School Director started PRIMARY POINT in 1983 and has served as its editor-in-chief for the past three years, will remain as a contributing editor and advisor, especially during the transition period. Along with being a writer and editor for many years, she is also a professional stone sculptor represented by three New England galleries, and will be devoting more time to this work. Last fall she completed a series of nine sculptures in a series called "The Suffering and Strength of the Third World."

Ellen is also planning more involvement with social action issues in Providence, including low income housing. She currently works as a volunteer at a shelter for the homeless. In addition, she will be coordinating the "Grounding Art in Mindfulness Practice" retreat for artists this July at Providence Zen Center. Several dozen local meditators sit at "The Meditation Place," a meditation room that Ellen opened in her home after she left Providence Zen Center in 1985.

which allows a richer translation of Buddhism into English; and, third, the talks offer an intimate view of life during a Kyol Che, or ninety-day Korean Zen sitting retreat.

Korean Buddhism is an important study for anyone who reads about Zen, because the conflict and synergism between Zen meditation and Zen language study is central to the development of Zen in Korea. For most of the last 1,000 years, the Zen schools and the sutra-study schools of Korean Buddhism were divided and opposed to one another. As a result, the greatest teachers were syncretists able to unite the two conflicting traditions. Uichon (1055-1101) criticized the conflict thusly:

"The Dharma is devoid of words or appearances, but it is not separate from words and appearances. If you abandon words you are subject to distorted views and defilements; if you grasp at words, you are deluded as to the truth. Students of the scriptures often abandon the inner work and pursue externals; Son [Zen] adepts prefer to ignore worldly activity and simply look inward. Both positions are biases which are bound at two extremes. They are like fighting over whether a rabbit's horns are long or short, or arguing whether flowers in the sky are profuse or scarce."

Thousand Peaks describes how the conflict was fed by the social structure and politics of Korea. Learned monks of the sutra schools received support from Korean royalty for over 500 years before the introduction of Zen, which took root far from the cities in isolated mountain monasteries. Many of Korea's Zen masters were illiterate orphans who attained enlightenment often without ever learning to read. This conflict was made more difficult by 500 years of Confucian oppression that did not end until 1910, and by other political and religious matters such as the institution of standard examinations for monks, which hampered their pursuit of Zen.

The two chief wonders of **Thousand Peaks** are its sense of intellectual balance and its ability to express the personalities of ancient masters. Mu Soeng Sunim expresses a clear understanding that history is the result of the actions of creative individuals in the context of larger political, economic, and mythic drives. Korean Buddhism has had many such special individuals, and Mu Soeng Sunim offers a view of their paths, their teachings, and their personalities.

One of my favorites is Won Hyo (617-686). Long before Zen, he expressed his freedom by living honestly anywhere from the King's palace to the bordello. He lived free not only of social convention, but also of the religious distinctions of his time. After many years as a wanderer and then as a monk, he married and had a family. He then saw himself as a "small layman," but was the

author of the basic texts for two of Korea's Buddhist schools, and commentaries on five major Mahayana sutras. His unbridled lifestyle and great devotion entered into folklore, and "even today this spirit continues to have an immeasurable impact on Buddhist monks and thinkers in Korea."

Other great masters founded schools, built temples, advised kings, and brought many students to enlightenment. Mu Soeng Sunim shows an unusual awareness of the physical and political structures that underlie religion, and the importance they play in building religious tradition. A particularly enjoyable part of the book is its inclusion of the folk tales and myths that have grown up around great figures. Mu Soeng Sunim takes care to distinguish these from precise history, but includes them as an essential part of Korean tradition. His book gave me an excellent sense of the otherness of Korean history, in a very subtle way.

One deep historical difference between Korean Buddhism and current American Buddhism appeared to me when I read about the "compact of the Samadhi and Prajna Community," an agreement made by Chinul and other monks to meet and form a new and vigorous Buddhist monastery. Only eight years after the original pact in 1190, "owing to death, sickness, or worldly pursuits, only three or four, out of more than ten, came." It struck me how death and illness had then played such a large role in the lives of even young men.

Volition

Trapped where my reach
Eye
in the palm of my hand.

Stretch my eggs out in river mud
and crawl away
the sun on my shell

I remember the eye in my hand
crawling onto brown land
the sun in my brain

Craig Presson

Nowadays, although perhaps just as few people would come to such a meeting, their non-appearance would more likely be because of mental entanglements and less for physical reasons.

Realizing this gave me a deeper meaning to the encouragements to practice while you can (before illness and death overtake you) that are a large part of the Zen tradition.

A history book such as this has great contemporary value. Different political and social issues are striking American Zen now, but the central issue of living out the right relationship between the practice of oneness (the root meaning of "Zen") and intellectual study is as crucial now as it was over centuries of Korean

Zen. The roots of the problem in America seem to be that most people drawn to Zen come to it through reading, and that American Zen does not yet have strong roots among less-educated, but equally wise, people. It is in danger of being an intellectual's game of rejecting intellectualism, without vigor and life. Anyone who reads and thinks, and also takes the development of Zen in the West seriously, would benefit from taking a look at the 1600 years' worth of enlightened Korean teachers who have struggled with this problem, as described in **Thousand Peaks**.

Zen Master Kusan Sunim's **The Way of Korean Zen** is a particularly useful guide for meditators who are trying to adapt Korean practice to American life. I was given the book at a time when my meditation seemed to be demanding more and more of my time. The advice the book offered was that **this** was the moment to begin unceasing effort, night and day. This was indeed how I felt, but not at all what my life (as a husband in New York City) allowed. This brought me directly to the root of the problem, as it is clearly presented in **The Way of Korean Zen**. The "Don't Know" practice of unceasing questioning, called *hwadu* in Korean, has been developed in a monastic setting for about a thousand years.

Kusan Sunim is an excellent example of the kind of person who can use it to great benefit: he was once so committed to breaking through to enlightenment immediately that he meditated standing on his toes for seven days! (I've tried it. Over five minutes is nearly impossible for me.) The contrast between the freedoms of monastic and those of lay life must be a central issue for anyone who is trying to adapt a monastic practice to a lay life. It may indeed be true that the best thing for me to do at times is meditate sixteen hours a day; however, it is just not a possibility.

Reading **The Way of Korean Zen** showed me how strongly monastic the Korean tradition is, and how unique is the American effort to create a vital lay Zen practice. It also provided a great deal of specific guidance. One invaluable element was Kusan Sunim's rendering of a teaching guide for *hwadu* practice that was written by Chinese Master Dahui and used in Korea by Zen Master Chinul, called "The Ten Diseases." It describes ten different ways of using a koan that are not helpful, and I found that I had tried most of them. It is very easy to talk about Zen as if you understand, and justify your words, because Zen supports the individual's own inner search. It is more realistic and humbling to come to know the Zen tradition well enough to know how Zen masters have uniformly criticized such thinking.

Both **Thousand Peaks** and **The Way of Korean Zen** are well worth reading. Even though they overlap somewhat, I would recommend both. The overlap itself is a useful study in how the same tradition can be interpreted to give two very different feelings. However, for those looking to choose just one of these books, I offer a few notes. **Thousand Peaks** offers a complete history, rather than just a capsule review of historical events. It contains greater variety, and struck chords with many different parts of my own life and experience. I found it to be stimulating to my creative thinking and encouraging to my practice. I found invaluable guidance in the excerpts from ancient teachers' guides; they show the common threads of seeking that have been woven over centuries.

The Way of Korean Zen, on the other hand, spoke to the diehard ascetic within me. The part of me that is ready to let go of everything and strive unconstrainedly for enlightenment is supported by Kusan Sunim's own devotion and stern practice. It is full of admonishments for austerity. It is important not to read it as unbalancedly monastic; while Kusan Sunim's own practice was extreme, it is the state of clear mind, and the dedication not to be caught napping. It is inspired by reading the book, rather than any particular lifestyle.

The two books left me hungry for more of the riches Korean Buddhism has to offer. □

MEETINGS WITH REMARKABLE WOMEN

Buddhist Teachers in America,
Lenore Friedman, 1987,
Shambhala, 288 pages,
Paperback, \$12.95.
Reviewed by Dhananjay Joshi

*If you are afraid of being grabbed
by God, don't look at a wall.
Definitely don't sit still.*

- Roshi Jiyu Kennett

*If you need good words to feel
good about yourself, then it's
devastating when someone gives you
bad words. Neither one needs to
touch you. Your mind doesn't have
to move with either. You are right
there the next moment...that's the
goods you get from sitting and practicing...being able to answer the next
moment with no trace of the last.*

- Bobby Rhodes

I finished reading this book and it was a wonderful vision. It felt like I had seventeen chairs in the living room and that we just had one of the most fulfilling encounters one would dream of...seventeen remarkable women sharing their life's journey with you. 'Meeting' doesn't quite describe the feeling!

Let us forget for a moment that these are all women. As one reads these interviews one cannot but see a great quality that is common to all of them. They are teachers! Oh, yes! Each one of them is different in her own way and has a unique method of 'transmitting' what should be so obvious if only we care to open ourselves to that truth. But this diversity is only natural. We must look beyond the diversity and we must look with clear eyes. "What prevents us from seeing clearly? What prevents us from being what we could be?" Maureen Stuart confronts us like a 'warrior'. "I strongly urge you to...cut off, cut off, cut off (our illusions)... she says and you feel the urge. "It is possible for a human being to 'see', not just think about it."

Toni Packer teaches, "But you have to sit...and just look and listen internally, without knowing." A student of Bobby Rhodes remembers her saying in a dharma talk... "Remember, whatever happens...no matter how far out your mind gets, just believe what's in front of you. That's your direction." And there is one of Ruth Denison's students describing her, "Ruth would wade through the mud to get to the stars and tell her students to do it too, but with the proviso, 'Do it with awareness, dahlings.'" "Practice...is not to be done sloppily" Sharon Salzberg's teacher, U Pandita, taught her, requiring absolute moment to moment mindfulness.

This is the inspiring thing about these teachers. They confront us and lovingly convince us to do our absolute best. This is a level that is very pure and independent of anything else. It is in this light that they have transcended femininity. It is not that they have denied it, which is an important factor. Indeed, Lenore Friedman's excellent introduction provides us with a historical and current perspective on the issues concerning the role of women in Buddhism today, especially in the United States. The dynamics of shaken traditional structures and changes introduced by some of these teachers in their respective schools only signify a refreshing lack of stagnancy. Of course, they have met with resistances, but that has never stopped true pioneers. The balance is needed. Jack Kornfield calls it "a return to the heart, the validation of feelings and emotion, receptivity, and connection to earth." This is the positive effect we all seek.

Aitken Roshi acknowledges that "in Far Eastern culture, the female virtues in women and men tend to be covered over." What does this all really mean for the role of women in American Buddhism (or Buddhism) in general? We can look to these teachers as the nucleus that can provide a direction that is "correct" in bringing a harmony between the absolute and the relative. Buddha talked about "skillful means." Christina Feldman, a Vipassana teacher from England, talks about the fact that women do spend a major part of their lives "establishing a relationship of integrity" with the world. If we use our lives as vehicles of understanding, then there is the beginning of a balanced approach. It is in this background that Ayya Khema's work in establishment of an International Women's Center in Sri Lanka attains great importance.

I must mention that I immensely enjoyed Lenore's intimate descriptions of the daily lives of these teachers. Bobby Rhodes talks to her while folding laundry. Maureen talks about cooking, giving interviews and also dharma talks and saying that it all just happens. Ruth is ready to make bread for the retreatants at midnight after a long day's work. It is all very charming. As a practitioner herself, Lenore has captured this unique view along with their teachings.

This is a remarkable book!

NINE-HEADED DRAGON RIVER by Peter Matthiessen (Shambala, Boston. PB 287 pages, \$12.50)

Reviewed by Mu Soeng Sunim

Peter Matthiessen is a naturalist, explorer, environmentalist, champion of American Indian causes, novelist of distinction, and a student of Zen Buddhism. His latest book, *Nine-Headed Dragon River*, as luminous a book as his earlier National Book Award-winning, *The Snow Leopard*, is a paean to his Japanese and American Zen teachers: Nakagawa Soen Roshi, Eido Shimano Roshi, Taizen Maezumi Roshi, and Bernard Tetsugen Glassman. Above all, it is a celebration of the genius of Dogen Zenji (1200-1252), founder of the Soto branch of Zen in Japan.

Nine-Headed Dragon River, a collection of 'Zen journals' Peter Matthiessen kept from 1969 to 1982, gives us a glimpse into the evolution of Zen itself in America. Like most students, he got involved in Zen by accident when one day in 1969 "three inscrutable little men" turned up in his driveway on Long Island. They were guests of his wife and turned out to be roshis (Zen masters) Soen, Yasutani, and Eido. The earlier part of the journals is a moving account of his wife's bout with cancer and her eventual death, and the pain and loss he felt in that experience, some of which was recounted in *The Snow Leopard*.

On a certain level, *Nine-Headed Dragon River* is the most sincere attempt yet by an American Zen student to come to terms with his Asian heritage. The unfolding of Zen and other forms of Buddhism in America has not been without its growing pains. For one thing, there has been a built-in conflict between the personalities of the oriental teachers, the structures they brought to this country, and the gift of their teachings. The issues are familiar to anyone who has practiced Zen for any length of time in America: the problem of language, the seemingly personal quirks and eccentricities of the teachers, at times even misuses of power and trust. Matthiessen refuses to

delineate these latter issues. "Eido Roshi, whose comportment (which will not be the business of this book) has caused dismay among his students..." Again and again, though, one senses his reservations about completely accepting his Asian heritage. "... if I had found an American Indian teacher—not some medicine man but a true teacher—willing to work with me, I might well have chosen a North American tradition over an Asian one."

Matthiessen's disenchantment with his first Zen teachers from the Japanese Rinzai Zen tradition led to his leaving the sangha of Eido Roshi and joining Maezumi Roshi at the Zen Center of Los Angeles. Maezumi Roshi, though belonging to the Soto branch of Japanese Zen, emphasized strong koan practice. Matthiessen later helped Maezumi Roshi's dharma-successor Bernard Tetsugen Glassman, Sensei to start the Zen Community of New York, and presently is a 'shuso' or head monk at ZCNY.

The second half of *Nine-Headed Dragon River* is an account of Matthiessen's pilgrimage to Japanese temples in Tetsugen Sensei's company, as part of Tetsugen's training. During these travels, one feels Matthiessen is genuinely comfortable in Tetsugen's company, an American who speaks the same language from the same culture. "Like most American students, I have been attracted to the flavor of Asian Zen, so removed in its enigmatic self-containment from the wasteful sprawl of Western life, but I adjust more quickly than I expected to the idea of a non-Japanese Zen teacher—Bernie Roshi! How different this man is, in style, manner and appearance, from a quixotic 'classical' Zen master..."

An important part of the book is the ruminations on Dogen Zenji's teachings by Tetsugen and Matthiessen. Quoting from Tetsugen:

"For Dogen, the Zen of our everyday life, moment after moment, is truly the way of enlightenment. His teachings hammer that idea over and over, and at the same time his *practice* manifests it so sincerely that it serves others as a model. Dogen's great contribution—and his own life was an example—was the perception that daily practice and enlightenment are one.... In a single sentence, he talked from both points of view, the absolute and the relative, the universal and the particular. He was not only living in both, he was switching so fast between the two that he was in *neither!* He was entirely free!"

Matthiessen's admiration for Dogen as a writer and thinker is equally inspired.

"... not until recent decades has it (Dogen's *Shobogenzo*) been

perceived as a unique and shining vision that far transcends its original purpose as a synthesis of thirteenth-century Buddhist thought. Yet Dogen continues to receive more praise than appraisal, and he remains all but unknown in the West, not because his language is opaque—it is brilliant, lucid and poetic—but because he has attempted to convey a set of concepts—not even concepts or even perceptions, but intuitions, **ap-prehensions**—for which no suitable vocabulary exists. To approach this formidable masterwork is to seek an ascent to a shining peak, glimpsed here and there against the blue through the wild tumult of delusion. With each step forward, the more certain one becomes that a sure path toward the summit can be found...."

"Dogen is many centuries in advance of his pre-medieval epoch, and his vibrant efforts to transcend the old limits of language, like his insistence on the identity of space and time, would not be appreciated until seven centuries later. Like all born writers, he wrote for the sheer exhilaration of the writing, in a manner unmistakably fresh and poetic, reckless and profound. Though the risks he takes make the prose difficult, a mastery of paradox and repetition, meticulous nuance and startling image, swept along by a strong lyric sensibility in a mighty effort to express the inexpressible, the universal or absolute, that is manifest in the simplest objects and events of everyday life."

Matthiessen's informal descriptions of the temples he visits during his pilgrimage, and their place in the larger history of Japanese Zen, are extremely readable and add enormously to our knowledge of Japanese Zen. Whether as a history of Japanese Zen and its movement to America, or as a glimpse into the life and teachings of Dogen Zenji, *Nine-Headed Dragon River* is an invaluable addition to the literature of American Zen. Present and future generations of American Zen students will no doubt be grateful to Peter Matthiessen for the deep feelings and insights he brings to his understanding of the Buddha Way.

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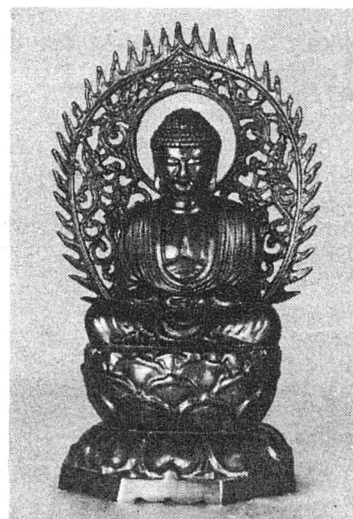
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WOMEN'S DHARMA MONASTERY conference May 3-10 at Chan-Nhu Buddhist Pagoda, Lakewood, CO. Please send suggestions for conference structure and discussion topics. Registration \$10/day, limited accommodations, day visitors welcome. Write for information to Rev. Martha Dharmapali, Chan-Nhu Buddhist Pagoda, 7201 West Bayaud Place, Lakewood, CO 80226 or call (303)238-5867 (9am-9pm MST).

JOIN THE STAFF OF THE KWAN UM ZEN SCHOOL: two positions available. **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:** work on the newsletter and PRIMARY POINT; run the word processor and data base programs; do special projects and learn many skills...half-time or full-time. **FINANCIAL MANAGER:** maintain financial records; produce statements and prepare budget analyses...half-time. We're a fun and challenging place to work for. Write: Kwan Um Zen School Director, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864 or call (401) 769-6476.

A SELECTION OF POEMS by Ralph Gauvey, Jr. Includes Zen poems. Send \$4.95 plus \$1 for postage and handling (Overseas \$4). Rhode Island residents add \$.30 tax. R. Gauvey, 236 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864.

BAMBOO FLUTES, Shakuhachis, and Tapes. Send 2 stamps: Forest Music, Box 273, Mountainview, Hawaii 96771.

The rate of classifieds is \$.15 per word. Please send your ads and a check or money order to **PRIMARY POINT**, Kwan Um Zen School, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864.

CORRECTION: In the October 1987 we misspelled and misidentified Kris Lindbeck, whose husband Sid Kemp is the new PP feature editor. Kris is a Christian student at Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, not a rabbinical student. Our apologies, Kris.



CAMBODIAN TEMPLE COMPLEX MAY BE BUILT IN RHODE ISLAND

An exciting purchase by the Khmer Buddhist Society of New England is underway for an 86-acre parcel of land in Western Rhode Island, the future site of a multi-purpose temple complex and cultural center. Under the guidance of Ven. Maha Ghosananda, the internationally known monk who represents to the United Nations the Cambodians in exile, the Society has a long-term plan to build a meditation retreat and monastic residence, as well as a center for cultural and religious activities. The Khmer Society is a focal point for Cambodians in New England and has its religious center in Maha Ghosananda's temple in South Providence, which serves many refugees.

The property under agreement is located in rural Burrillville, RI and includes four buildings and part of a river. Plans for the long-envisioned temple will include a library and museum for cultural and educational materials, a hospital facility utilizing Cambodian folk medicine, a school offering education in the rich Khmer cultural heritage as well as the Pali language, an Insight Meditation Center, a clearing house for Cambodian refugee monks, kitchen, cremation repository, and charity center for the needy here and in the refugee camps in Thailand.

The helping spirit and serene appearance of the temple environment will be exemplified in the white robes worn by nuns and novices and will be a place where people can come for help. In addition, the complex could be used in the future as a site for a much-needed Khmer Studies Institute and a meeting place for the growing American Buddhist Congress and regional centers of the World Federation of Buddhists. In Cambodia, the temple is traditionally the center for learning and unity. Completing the purchase and building such a complex here will be a challenging and long-term undertaking. The Khmer Society and Maha Ghosananda join palms together in deep gratitude for whatever help you can offer. Please send your tax-deductible check or money order to: Khmer Buddhist Society of N.E., 178 Hanover Street, Providence, RI 02907

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About The Kwan Um Zen School

The Teachers: Zen Master Seung Sahn is the first Korean Zen Master to live and teach in the West. He is the 78th Patriarch in the Korean Chogye Order, and became a Zen Master in his native Korea at the age of 22. After teaching in Korea and Japan for many years, he came to the United States in 1972 and founded the Providence Zen Center, now located in Cumberland, Rhode Island. He is addressed as "Soen Sa Nim" (Honored Zen Teacher) by his students.

Soen Sa Nim has established over 50 Zen centers and affiliated groups in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Europe and Korea. These centers comprise the Kwan Um Zen School. The Providence Zen Center is Head Temple in the United States. In 1984 a Kwan Um Zen School of Poland was formed which includes five Zen Centers and ten affiliated groups, of which the Head Temple is Warsaw Zen Center. In 1985 a Kwan Um Zen School of Europe was established, with its Head Temple at Centre Zen de Paris.

Soen Sa Nim travels worldwide leading retreats and teaching Buddhism. Working to strengthen the connection between American Zen and Korean Buddhism, he has established

the Seoul International Zen Center in Korea and the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery in the United States. At Diamond Hill, Zen students who wish to may become monks and live the traditional monastic life in the original practice style of Bodhidharma.

Published works by and about Zen Master Seung Sahn's teaching include **Dropping Ashes on the Buddha** and **Only Don't Know** (collections of his teaching letters and Zen stories); **Ten Gates** - the Kong-an teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn; **Only DOing It** (the 60th birthday tribute book with anecdotes from students and friends and a biography); and **Bone of Space** (a book of poetry).

He has given "inga" - authority to lead retreats and teach kong-an practice - to seven senior students. Called Master Dharma Teachers, they regularly travel to Zen Centers and affiliates in North America and abroad, leading retreats and giving public talks. They are: **George Bowman** and **Mu Deung**, Cambridge Zen Center; **Barbara and Lincoln Rhodes** and **Jacob Perl**, Providence Zen Center; **Robert Moore**, Dharma Sah (Los Angeles); and **Richard Shrobe**,

Chogye International Zen Center of New York.

Training Programs: Zen Centers offer daily meditation practice and introductory talks on a regular basis. These events are free and open to the public. Some centers also offer personal interviews each month with the teachers in our school when available.

Introduction to Zen Workshops: Beginners and newcomers can experience Zen practice for a day, with instruction on meditation, question periods, informal discussions and lunch.

Short Intensive Retreats (Yong Maeng Jong Jin, or "Leap like a tiger while sitting"): Each month many of the Zen centers hold silent meditation retreats for 3 or 7 days under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn or one of the Master Dharma Teachers. The daily schedule includes 12 hours of sitting, bowing, chanting, working and eating in traditional temple style. Personal interviews and Dharma talks are given by the Zen teacher. Advance reservation is necessary and requires a \$10 non-refundable deposit. (Providence Zen Center requires a 50% deposit.)

90-Day Intensive Retreat (Kyoil Che or "Tight Dharma"): Conducted in total silence, long intensive meditation retreats are powerful tools for examining and clarifying our lives. The daily

schedule includes 12 hours of sitting, bowing, chanting and formal silent meals. Personal interviews and Dharma talks are given frequently. Registration is for 90 days, 21-day periods or a one-week intensive. The School offers annually three long Kyoil Che's (one in Poland, Korea and the United States) and a three-week summer Kyoil Che at Providence Zen Center. See schedule on this page.

Chanting Retreats (Kido): Occasionally chanting retreats are offered. A Kido is powerful training in keeping a one-pointed mind and using group energy to deepen awareness.

Membership: If you would like to become a member of the Kwan Um Zen School, you may either contact the Zen center or affiliate nearest you, or become a member-at-large by writing directly to the School. You do not have to be a member to participate in any of the training programs. However, rates for members are reduced and include a free subscription to the bi-monthly **NEWSLETTER** and the international newspaper, **PRIMARY POINT** (3 issues per year). The most up-to-date calendar information is in the **NEWSLETTER**. Non-members may subscribe to the **NEWSLETTER** for \$6.00 a year and to **PRIMARY POINT** for \$10.00 a year. □

RETREAT AND SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR

February	5-7 Empty Gate (MD)		23 Chicago Public Talk (SSN)	15-17 Dharma Sah (BM)	for one month teaching trip	17-19 Cambridge (*)
	6-7 Nashville (BR)			16-17 Ontario (BR)		18 Chogye (RS)
			25-27 North Florida (Tallahassee) (SSN)	22-24 Kansas (GB)		24-26 Dharma Sah (BM)
	11-12 New Haven (mid-month interviews) (LR)			23 Chogye (RS)		25 New Haven (*)
			26 New Haven (MD)	24 Chogye Public Talk (SSN)	July	8-17 Artists retreat at Providence
	13-15 Medford, Oregon** (MD)		28 Gainesville Public Talk (SSN)	28-30 Gethsemani Abbey Retreat (SSN)		30-31 School Congress and SSN's Birthday, Providence
			29 Largo, FL Public Talk ** (SSN)	30 New Haven (RS)		
	19-21 Dharma Sah (BM)	April	3 Ontario Public Talk (SSN)	May	7 Introduction to Zen Workshop at Providence	
			7 Cambridge Public Talk (SSN)	1-8 Regional Retreat at Lexington (SSN)		
	20 Providence (GB)		9 Buddha's Birthday Providence (SSN)	6-8 Empty Gate (BM)		
	27-28 New Haven (LR)		10 KUZS Council Meeting, Providence	13-15 Buddhist & Native American Chanting Retreat (SSN and Dhyani Ywahoo)		
March	2 End of International Kyoil Che in Korea			20-22 Cambridge (*) Chogye (*)		
			11-17 East Coast YMJJ at Providence (SSN)	June	3-5 Kansas (GB)	
	4-6 Empty Gate (BM)				10-12 Chicago (MD)	
	12 Chogye (RS)					
	18-20 Dharma Teacher YMJJ in Kansas (SSN, others)					
	20 Kansas Public Talk (SSN)					

WINTER KYOL CHE (BR) PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER

February 14 - 21 intensive week
 February 21 - March 13 third period
 March 13 - April 1 fourth period

*Teacher to be announced

**Contact KUZS for exact location

Please call the appropriate Zen Center to confirm these dates and teachers, and make your retreat reservations at least two weeks in advance. Retreat leaders are indicated by their initials: SSN, Zen Master Seung Sahn; GB, George Bowman; BR, Barbara Rhodes; LR, Lincoln Rhodes; MD, Mu Deung; JP, Jacob Perl; RS, Richard Shrobe; BM, Robert Moore.

THE TEN DIRECTIONS

Published by Zen Center of Los Angeles & The Kuroda Institute

The Ten Directions is a biannual collection of articles, talks and essays by contemporary Zen teachers, Buddhist scholars and followers of the Way from all walks of life.

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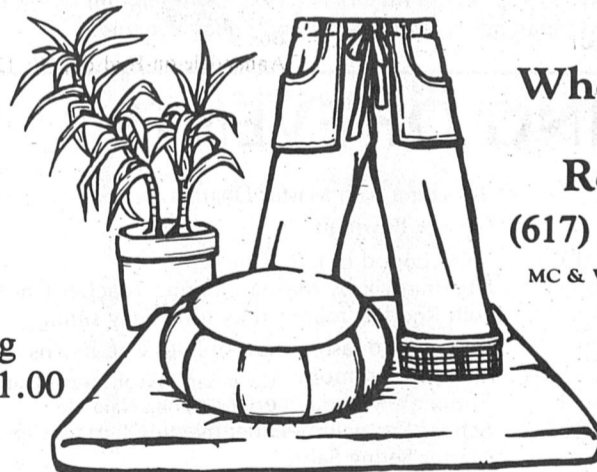
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IT'S OK TO LET GO

continued from page 7

are, if our center is strong and our clarity is strong, then these things are not a hindrance. They are more teaching. They are gifts.

This woman's family felt that at the end. They said, "All of her suffering is only making her stronger in some way." On some level it doesn't make any sense to see such a nice lady suffer so much, but at the end we all had a sense that what she went through during those months and during the last day had strengthened her.

Nobody knows where she went. They had

their Catholic ideas and I had my Buddhist ideas, but none of knew where she went. All we saw was the gift she gave us by going through it together. □

Barbara Rhodes took her nursing degree at Washington Hospital Center School for Nursing in Washington in 1969 and has worked in a number of settings, including a free clinic for migrant workers in California. She was a charge nurse at the Jewish Home for the Aged in Providence for 12 years and is currently working for a Rhode Island Hospice. Married to Master Dharma Teacher Lincoln Rhodes, she has two daughters and is a resident teacher at the Providence Zen Center in Cumberland,

R.I.

She began studying with Zen Master Seung Sahn in 1972 and was given teaching authority by him in 1977. Within the Kwan Um Zen School, she is chairperson of the Dharma Teachers Association and a teaching editor for Primary Point. She travels throughout North America and occasionally Europe giving talks and leading retreats.

In the past several years she has been collaborating with two Native American women teachers: the Cherokee lineage holder, Dhyani Ywahoo, founder of Sunray Meditation Society in Vermont, and Twylah Nitsch, a teaching elder in the Seneca Clan. They have led several conferences together. See the article on "Expanding the Circle" in this issue.

SNOW LION PUBLICATIONS

Snow Lion Publications is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Tibetan culture. Founded in 1980 following a visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Ithaca, Snow Lion now publishes 15 to 20 books a year on Tibetan Buddhism, Tibet, and related fields. They offer a wide variety of books, posters, cards, video and audio tapes as well as beautiful dharma items through their mail order catalog and retail store. You may receive their excellent newsletter and catalog simply by contacting them at: Snow Lion Publications, P.O. Box 6483, Ithaca, NY 14851, (607) 273-8506.

1988 SPRING AND SUMMER SCHEDULE at PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER

KYOL CHE INTENSIVE MEDITATION RETREAT

Last two 21-day periods: February 21-March 13
March 13-April 1

Led by Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes, this year's intensive winter retreat is being held in the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery, located on the grounds of Providence Zen Center.

The traditional Korean-style monastery has a spacious, airy meditation hall overlooking a small pond. Here in silence, retreatants sit, chant, bow, eat and work together. Barbara Rhodes offers guidance, personal interviews and Dharma talks on a regular basis.

Kyol Che is a rare opportunity to look intimately at what is happening in our lives. It is a time when all our energies are devoted to deepening and clarifying the meaning of what it is to be human. Such training is a powerful tool for enriching our everyday lives with greater clarity and direction.

Costs: \$400 (\$300 for KUZS members) per period.

SEVEN DAY EAST COAST RETREAT WITH ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN

April 11 - 17

Retreats are a rare opportunity to simplify our lives for 7 days, asking only "What is this present moment?", "How is it just now?"

Silence; kong-an practice with a great teacher; quiet country environment; vegetarian cooking. Sitting, walking, chanting, bowing, eating, working, lying down. Please join us.

This is the only meditation retreat that Zen Master Seung Sahn will be leading on the East Coast in 1988. Please register early; space is limited.

Costs: \$24/day (\$15 for KUZS members). Two-day minimum registration. Entry Monday noon, Wednesday and Friday evenings.

LISTING OF EVENTS

Feb. 20	9-5 sitting with Master Dharma Teacher George Bowman
Feb. 21-Mar. 13 March 13	Third period of Kyol Che retreat Dharma talk by Master Dharma Teacher Lincoln Rhodes, followed by a half-day sitting. Fourth (and last) period of Kyol Che begins
April 1	Hae Jae ceremony.
9	Buddha's Birthday ceremony.
10	School Council meeting; evening talk by Zen Master Seung Sahn.
11	Seven-day retreat begins.
May 7	Introduction to Zen workshop.
13-15	Chanting retreat with Zen Master Seung Sahn and Dhyani Ywahoo.
June 3-5	Three-day YMJJ (retreat) with Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes.
July 2	Six-hour sitting (leader to be announced).
8-17	Artists' retreat.
29	School Council meeting.
30-31	School Congress: Zen Master Seung Sahn's Birthday on Saturday, Precepts Ceremony on Sunday.
August 2-21	Summer Kyol Che intensive sitting retreat; leader to be announced. Two-day minimum registration.

For more information/registration, write:

Director, Providence Zen Center
528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864
(401) 769-6464

When registering, please enclose 50% of the event fee.

THREE DAY CHANTING RETREAT WITH ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN AND DHYANI YWAHOO

"Nuwati Onohynughga"—The sound medicine that permeates all things.

May 13-15

How does chanting help us and this world? Why is it called "sound purification" in the Native American tradition? Why is the Buddhist name for the Bodhisattva of Compassion "Kwan Seum" (perceive world sound)?

Together we will experience and explore chanting practice through the heritages and with the guidance of these two fine teachers. Zen Master Seung Sahn is an internationally famous teacher and founder of the Kwan Um Zen School here and abroad. Dhyani Ywahoo is the holder of the Ywahoo lineage in the Cherokee nation and spiritual director of Sunray Meditation Society in Bristol, VT. In this retreat they will meet for the first time, chant together and share their teaching.

Costs: \$160 (\$115 for KUZS members). Child care is available at \$15/day; register before April 30. Space is limited; please register early for this retreat.

GROUNDING ART IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

A 10-day retreat for artists July 8-17

An unusual opportunity to combine art, meditation and networking in a peaceful rural setting. Supported by a schedule of mindfulness practices drawn primarily (but not exclusively) from contemporary Buddhism, artists will experience silence, contemplation and the heart-opening of a meditation retreat coupled with opportunities to work alone and with others in a variety of media. As artists often work and suffer in isolation, the focus of the retreat will be on integrating art and the refreshment of spiritual practice, the creation of new visions (or revitalizing of old ones) of harmony and wholeness, and experiencing community with others of like mind and purpose.

The retreat will be organized around regular practice periods of sitting and walking meditation, varieties of body movement, singing/chanting, and other shared rituals. A talk on some aspect of art and spiritual process will be given every day by a different artist as it is integrated in that person's life. There will be studio time every day, as well as time for sharing each others' work through slides, photographs and performance. Artists should bring their own tools and materials but will be encouraged to explore collaboration in different and unfamiliar media. Delicious and hearty vegetarian meals will be served. A work period will be held every day to prepare meals, clean facilities, and to create sacred and restful spaces around the grounds, including a sculpture garden.

Costs: \$250 or less depending on whether we can get financial assistance.

Some staff and facilitator positions will be available before and during the retreat. Participants will be expected to attend the entire 10 days.

For this retreat, a deposit of \$25 will be required.

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

Providence Zen Center, in addition to being a conference center, is also a Zen meditation community, practicing simplicity and compassion in daily life. Sample a taste of clarity in a peaceful setting as a guest or resident.

- 50 acres of woods, ponds, and fields in rural Rhode Island
- three Master Dharma teachers in residence
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- a daily schedule of meditation, chanting, work and community participation

\$315 monthly training fee includes:

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- weekly interviews with teachers (kong-an practice)
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