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Cambodian Peace March - Practicing with Illness - New Teachers Receive Inka

In this issue

Illness helps your true self
Zen Master Seung Sahn 3

There is nothing special about AIDS
 The Ninth International Conference on Aids
Tony Somlai 4-5

A moment of peace, a glimmer of hope
Report on Maha Ghosananda's peace walk in Cambodia..... 6-8

Cambodia ... peace on the move..... 9

Outside, it is raining
Do Mun Sunim, JDPS 11-13

Teacher Certification

 Hindrane or no hindrance *Do Mun Sunim, JDPS*..... 14

 Morning stars *Stanley Lombardo, JDPSN*..... 15

 Reveal your true nature *Jeff Kitzes, JDPSN* 16

 Dharma combat 17

Finding your compassion *Do An Sunim, JDPS*..... 18

Poetry 13, 19

Book Reviews 20

Primary Point Press 26-27

Glossary 31

Subscriptions 31

Zen Centers of the Kwan Um School of Zen 29-30



This precepts picture was taken at Nam Hwa Sah, Quang Dong Province, China, in front of the hall dedicated to the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng. Zen Master Seung Sahn is sitting fifth from the right in the front row. Sitting to his right is Maha Ghosananda and to his left Maezumi Roshi and then Kwong Roshi.

PRIMARY POINT

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The Kwan Um School of Zen supports the world-wide teaching schedule of Zen Master Seung Sahn and the senior teachers, assists the member Zen centers and groups in their growth, issues publications on contemporary Zen practice, and supports dialogue among religions. PRIMARY POINT is published three times a year: Winter/Spring, Summer, and Fall. To subscribe, see page 31. If you would like to become a member of the Kwan Um School of Zen, see page 29. Members receive PRIMARY POINT free of charge. The circulation is 5000 copies.

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Illness helps your true self

Zen Master Seung Sahn, founding teacher

Our physical body is not our true self. What is our true self, our true I? Every human being must find their true I. If you find the answer to this question then freedom from suffering and freedom from life and death appears.

Don't be afraid of your sickness. At times everybody is afraid of what will happen to their body. However, the only difference between human beings when it comes to death is: go early, go late. So again, what is a human being? You must find this! Then when you die, your direction will be clear.

Some people are strong, very smart and have a lot of power. But still, if the direction of their life is not clear, when they die their consciousness will go round and round.

Being alive is very lucky. At this time you must find your owner, your master. You must ask yourself, who is my master? If you find your master, then throwing away your body at any time will not be a problem for you. Don't be afraid of life and death. This body is like a floating cloud that appears and then disappears. What are you?

No matter what the disease, your true self has no sickness; only your body is sick. Sickness, any sickness, helps your practice. Without sickness, there is only more wanting and desire, wanting and wanting; so you don't understand your true self, your direction is not clear. If you die at that time, you will have a big problem.

To know that you are dying is very important. For a

dying person, completely putting it all down is very easy. Letting go of desires and attachments is easy because at

that time you cannot get anything. Now you are sick. What do you want? Money? Sex? Power? What do you want? Finding your true self when you know that you are dying is the easiest way. So this sickness helps your true self. ☉



Zen Master Seung Sahn

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There is nothing special about AIDS

Tony Somlai, abbot Racine Zen Center

One day we worry about our socks matching and the next day the world is aflame in an incurable epidemic. In the blink of an eye a disease destroys family, friends and community. AIDS is a disease that refuses any type of a distant relationship. AIDS is immediate, incurable, infectious; right in front of us. We cannot fool ourselves into believing it is someone else's problem when a good friend becomes HIV infected. As the disease spreads, the mental and physical pain begins to touch us deeply.

The conceptual mind realm, the world of words and ideas about AIDS, cannot penetrate deeply enough to help. The thirst of a dry mouth is not quenched by words and ideas. You have to drink so the body understands water. As you cannot quench thirst through the word water, you cannot deeply investigate the meaning of AIDS by relegating it to the realm of ideas.

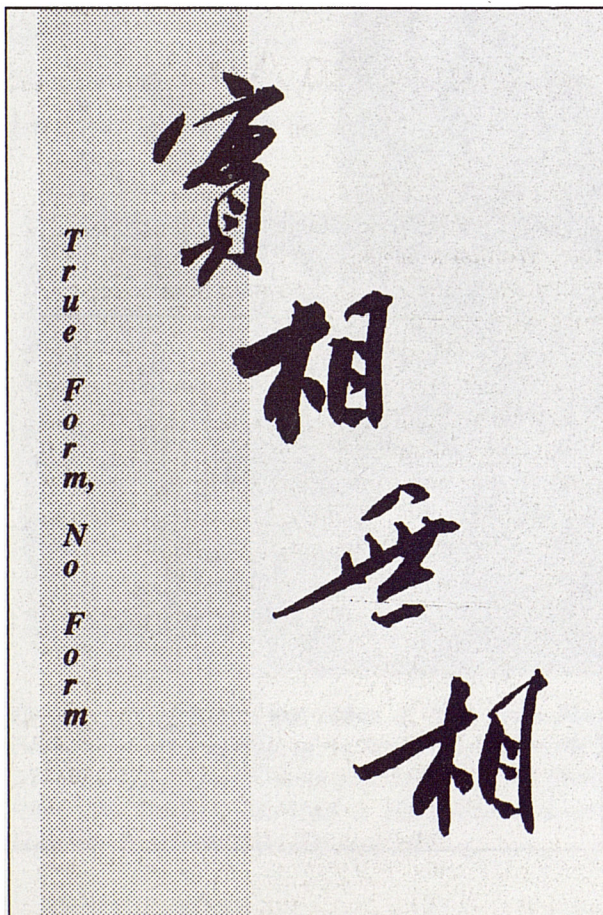
AIDS is indiscriminate, making it no different from any other form of death. Men, women, children, all ages, races and orientations die from AIDS. Humans die from many different causes. The physical and biological world is just like that. There is nothing special about AIDS. There is no distinction between AIDS and any other body sickness that has pain, suffering and eventually leads to death. Someday there may be a cure for AIDS but all humans will still die.

The Buddha also faced disease, death and old age. In these he saw the impermanence and fleetingness of life. His journey was to find the answer to the question, "What is this?" He realized that even princes could not escape death. His ideas about existence began to shatter and he felt a deep compassion for the world. He chose to let go of the ideas, the images, the despair and wake up. How is it possible for us also wake up?

AIDS raises very strong questions: What am I? What is life/death? Where does our fear of pain, suffering and death come from? The five skandhas, the mental and physical forces that come together in an individual form, were perceived by Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva as empty. Form, feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness have no base, they can not save us from suffering, disease and death. A person dying of AIDS knows this intimately. We spend our life's energy encouraging the desires of the five skandhas only to realize that they can not save us. Zen teaches that all phenomena are impermanent. The truth appears by itself when opposite ideas such as like and dislike, life and death are cut away. Holding no conditions the mind sees the world as just like this. Form is form and emptiness is emptiness. All that we see, feel, touch, hear is true and complete, needing nothing from us. In fact, we ourselves are already complete at this very moment. What difficulties would this world have if not for people?

*The Great Way is not difficult
If you don't make distinctions.
Only throw away likes and dislikes
And everything will be perfectly clear.*

Zen stresses great courage, great faith and great question. These are simply a willingness, always and everywhere, to let go of our personal opinions and keep a clear mind. As the mind becomes clear, understands this world and its situation, a deeper commitment to help



humanity naturally appears. With the clarity of “don’t know” we can help people with AIDS by spending the time to care and be with all people who are alive.

Body sickness is an opportunity to pursue clarity and is no different from any other kind of Zen practice. This type of practice is extremely valuable since it takes the threat of losing our body and turns it into slowing down a mind full of desires. We fail to realize that the appearance of body sickness is not by accident, is not a coincidence. Karma is already determined by natural process. However, correct direction and try mind can make this karma disappear. If you hold your sickness, are afraid of suffering, have no try mind and only take care of your body, your karma will never change. The suffering will continue.

The fear of body sickness hinders people from finding their true I. Everyone at sometime will lose their body. So it is very important to look at what a human being is.

Oppositional thinking that, life is right and death is wrong, is a hindrance to finding out what a human being is. By overcoming this fearful thinking a realization appears that we are not the sickness, but rather the body has a sickness. Then we can attain the true self that has no sickness or health, no life or death. It becomes clear that illness and AIDS are not the enemy.

We will all die, so letting go of AIDS and body sickness is very important. AIDS simply means you can not do anything. What do you want? Health? A world with no disease, no suffering? Body sickness forces us to look deeply into “What is really ours?” So AIDS, suffering, body sickness and the decay that comes with dying, all point to this true self that has no life, no death. This is every human being’s original job: to find their true self, which means to understand themselves completely and then help save all beings from suffering. ☸

The Ninth International Conference on AIDS

The Ninth International Conference on AIDS convened in Berlin on June 6, 1993. Over sixteen thousand conference participants represented this planet’s best attempt at dealing with AIDS. They shared the most current medical and behavioral research data on curing and preventing this disease. The reports were discouraging and disheartening.

Researchers are far from a cure or vaccine for HIV/AIDS. Whereas last year there was hope of finding a vaccine within a few years, the latest data indicates it may take decades to find a cure. Scientists also reported that a vaccine will not eradicate the disease since twenty-five percent of the high risk population will never receive the inoculation. Many researchers have concluded there will never be a complete cure and that AIDS will be here for a long time.

The data from other parts of the world was startling. AIDS will cost Thailand nine billion dollars, while the toll in Spain is too difficult to estimate since over two hundred thousand people are HIV-infected. At current rates, the world will not be able to afford the health costs for people dying from AIDS.

Women are significantly at risk on every part of the planet. Since the vast majority of countries view women to be less significant than men many of them

will never receive education or prevention services. Many of the world’s nations place a higher premium on the health of men, relegating women to a lower level of medical care and therefore a greater mortality rate. Women’s biology renders them particularly vulnerable to the AIDS virus, making it easier for a man to transmit the AIDS virus to a woman than the reverse. Women are particularly vulnerable since men decide whether to use a condom. Infection rates among U.S. women are increasing and particularly striking in minority communities. Fifty percent of the HIV positive women in the U.S. are African-American. Worldwide, ten million children will become infected with HIV by the end of the decade as a result of mother-to-child transmission.

The AIDS epidemic recognizes neither borders nor political ideologies. It respects no nationality, race or creed. The best that people can do is to practice the “ABC’s” of safer sex. A person can choose to *Abstain* from sex, *Be monogamous* with a partner who doesn’t share needles with others, or use a *Condom*. If humans practice the “ABC’s,” fewer people will die from AIDS. If we don’t wake up, the reports from next year’s conference, in Japan, will be filled with even more alarming data. The choice is ours. ☸

A moment of peace, a glimmer of hope

"Our journey for peace begins today and every day ... slowly, slowly, step by step. Each step is a prayer. Each step will build a bridge."

It was in the spirit of "slowly, slowly, step-by-step" that Ponleu Khmer (a group of over four hundred Buddhist monks, nuns and lay people), left Angkor Wat, Cambodia's national shrine, on the afternoon of May 4, 1993. It was the first steps of a three hundred and fifty kilometer, cross-country journey through the war-torn provinces of Siem Reap, Kompong Thom and Kompong Cham to the capital city of Phnom Penh. It was the beginning of a walk for peace in areas of Cambodia which have known nothing but war ever since the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in October, 1991. The sixteen day walk took place on the eve of the UN-sponsored national election, and it proceeded through the heart of Khmer Rouge territory at a time when the Khmer Rouge was attempting to discourage citizen participation in the voting through public denouncement of the election and threats of violence.

The Dhamma Yietra almost ended before it began. In the early morning hours of May 3, as the participants were gathering for a morning meditation, the pagoda in the city of Siem Reap in which they were staying became a battleground.

In the ensuing four hours' cross-fire, three participants were wounded. A hand grenade was thrown into the room where two hundred participants, including the Venerable Maha Ghosananda, Supreme Patriarch of Cambodian Buddhism and the leader of the Dhamma Yietra, were gathered. The grenade did not explode. When shooting finally subsided, the participants gathered around the beloved Supreme Patriarch who smilingly said, "Buddha saved us." (Two days later the venerable monk told the Catholic monk among us, "Christ saved us!" with an ecumenical smile.)

The immediate question after this violent episode was, should the walk go on at all? It was the sentiments of Venerable Maha Ghosananda that swayed the group. "Indeed, this is why we must walk," he confirmed. Echoing his commitment, the most seriously wounded walker also sent word from his hospital bed that the walk must continue. "Please keep walking... so that we may have peace soon." Some of the organizers suggested riding the first day, through the 'rough spots.' On the next morning, the eve of Vesak, which is the highest holy day of Buddhism, a bus-load of over one hundred fellow walkers from various provinces arrived from Phnom Penh. It was soon followed by another bus of Thai participants, both having been delayed, but not dissuaded,

by the fighting. Upon seeing the first bus pull into the temple compound, one of the organizers affirmed, "We can forget about riding. We're walking!"

The concept of a Dhamma Yietra is as old as the Buddha himself. In the Buddha's day (over 2500 years ago) he would lead his monks and nuns in long processions across the countryside teaching peace, a path to relieve suffering. The Buddha would walk to areas of conflict. Following in that tradition, the Venerable Maha Ghosananda announced the Dhamma Yietra, in support of peace for Cambodia and peace for the world.

This particular route was chosen due to the ongoing war. "We must walk where the troubles are," Maha Ghosananda told the participants. Venerable Kim Teng, one of the principle organizers of the walk, further explained the choice of route to the one hundred and fifty monks gathered for the Dhamma Yietra. "We, as monks, must serve our people. We depend on them. Indeed they are our rice bowl; they sustain us. If the people are suffering, we too suffer. We cannot sit and meditate in our temples. We must walk, where the suffering is the greatest, to share the sorrows of our people, to dry their tears. With each step we will build a bridge, a bridge from war and suffering to peace and tranquility. We are not peace keepers like the UN, but peacemakers, so we must walk where there is no peace yet to keep."

Later, reflecting on the walk route, he told an audience in Phnom Penh, "The road from Siem Reap to Kompong Thom is not far from here. We walked in less than a month. But it is like another continent. There, people sleep in bunkers, fearing rocket attacks nightly. Their eyes are laden with suffering. They came to share their suffering, bearing their souls before we even asked how they were. Yet seeing us walk was healing, like medicine. It was like visiting a sick person. Even if you don't bring any medicine, the person feels better afterwards, just because of the visit."

As Venerable Maha Ghosananda has often said, "The suffering of Cambodia has been deep. Years of violence have brought great tragedy. More violence can only bring more harm. Now is the time for peace." It was a message that was welcomed with tears by the thousands of people who witnessed and participated in the walk. In reflecting on Maha Ghosananda's teaching, Kim Teng commented, "People were very happy to hear the teaching that peace begins in the human heart, and can begin with themselves. Until now, people had told them that peace comes through

guns. They told us they are happy because they realize they can assume control. I told them how sincerely I do believe that if they have peaceful hearts, it will spread outwards and soon their families, their villages, our country will be peaceful. And through their offerings to us, we could see that people felt peace in their own hearts upon witnessing the walk. This in turn gave us the strength and energy to carry on."

The walkers would usually begin their daily treks at four or five in the morning, depending on the security situation of

the area they were about to enter. Even at four o'clock in the morning, in town or countryside, families would wait outside their huts with a bucket of water, candle and incense sticks. As the monks and nuns filed past, two by two, they would bless the people with water and words of peace. "May peace be in your heart, your family, your village, our country..." In kind, many a walker had her/his feet "blessed" — washed by those waiting alongside the road, wishing them well on their journey. "May your journey be as cool as this water." The incense sticks would then be extinguished in the water as a symbol of dousing out the flames of war, as many such prayers were exchanged. "May the war end now. May we join hands and never know one another as enemies, from this day forward," exclaimed a grandmother as she held her grandchild out to receive a water blessing from a walker. "They want peace as much as we do," answered a nun. One school teacher commented, "When I heard the Dhamma Yietra was walking for peace, I got goose bumps all over ... now that I see you ... to think we might actually be able to have true peace!"

Minefields on either side of the road, temperatures over 40°C (100°F), and rainstorms did little to dampen the spirit of the walkers, or those patiently waiting by the



Venerable Preah Samdech Maha Ghosananda

side of the road to greet us. One day the walkers were caught in a cold rainstorm. As most of the participants ducked into houses to wait out the rain, about fifty monks proceeded with the walk during the downpour. As they arrived at the temple, villagers were kneeling in mud, waiting for the water blessing of the walkers.

Another afternoon of scorching heat, a woman by the side of the road called out encouragement to the sweating walkers, praising them for withstanding the high temperatures. "Your walking in this heat has

GOT to bring peace!" One man answered, "This heat is nothing compared to the flames of war!" His wife added, "I'd walk in heat much hotter than this if it would bring us peace!" Another oppressively hot day one old grandmother by the side of the road said, "Bless you all for walking in this heat!" to which one of the nuns walking answered, "The weather may be hot, but our hearts are cool!"

In many parts of Siem Reap and Kompong Thom the walkers literally traversed a war zone. Not a day went by when the sound of thumping artillery or land mines exploding was not heard. The walkers heard repeatedly the cries of "We have suffered so much," along the road from people with arm(s), leg(s), or eye(s) disabled by the war; or from people living under blue plastic canvas once again displaced from their home villages five to fifteen kilometers away. "May we have peace so that we may return to our homes soon," offered one father, crouching in front of his blue plastic tent. The Dhamma Yietra walked through areas where the UN peace keeping forces are not allowed to travel further than five hundred meters from their home bases for the sake of their own security. Through areas where people's prayers were hauntingly simple, "May we sleep above the ground again," instead

of gathering their children for another night in the bunker. "May the shelling stop. We just don't know where to run to anymore," pleaded a mother of five. "May we just stop fearing the night."

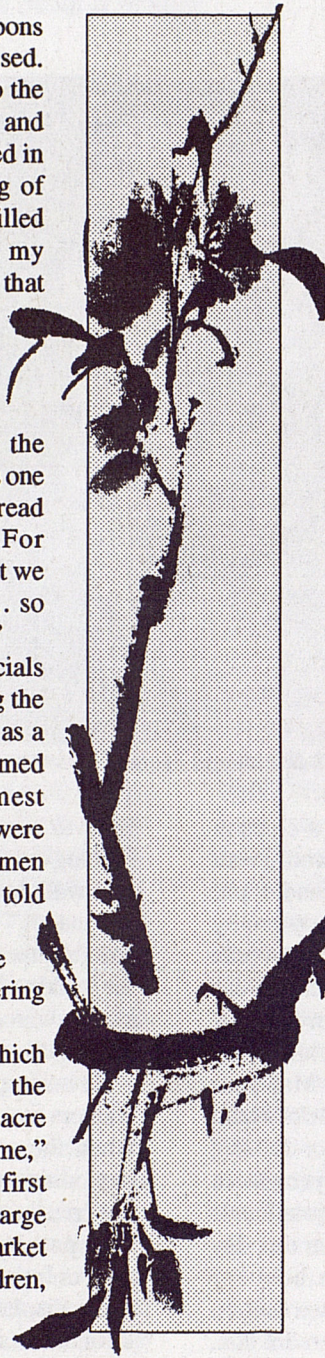
Even soldiers would lay down their weapons as the monks filed past, and ask to be blessed. And at one stop several soldiers came into the temple in which the monks were staying and put their weapons on the floor. They bowed in front of the monks, asking for a blessing of protection. "We don't want anyone to be killed or hurt," one said. "I have no ill will in my heart," he continued. "Please bless us so that our bullets don't hurt anyone, and so that no one else's bullets hurt us."

One of the expressed purposes of Dhamma Yietra II was to encourage a peaceful environment during and after the Cambodian election (May 23-28, 1993). As one monk said, "By walking we seek to spread loving kindness and compassion. For reconciliation after twenty years of conflict we must be able to trust one another again ... so that true peace may prevail in Cambodia."

In some towns local government officials tried to discourage people from welcoming the walkers, somehow seeing the peace walk as a threat to their political interests. But it seemed to have the opposite effect. The warmest welcome was in a town where the people were told clearly not to come. Old men and women would whisper to the walkers, "We were told not to come, but they cannot stop us. This is our religion. And we hunger for peace so much," they said as they made an offering of food to the monks and nuns.

A young man from another village which was told not to receive us, related how the villagers had recently experienced a massacre of thirty people at the temple. "But this time," he said, "he couldn't stay away. It is the first time we have dared to gather together in a large group. This time everyone is here. The market is closed, people left their jobs, their children, to come receive you. We are so grateful that you have come to help us find peace.

The UN has sent people from all over the world to keep peace, but it hasn't worked. All we have left is the monks and Buddhism. If they help us, it shouldn't be so difficult to make peace. They must lead us out of this mess of killing one another. If we just think of killing and revenge, it will never end. The monks must guide us."



By the time the Dhamma Yietra reached the city of Phnom Penh, a city tense with the fear of violence, its numbers had swelled to over three thousand people as many spontaneously joined the walk. A coalition of women's groups, student associations and human rights groups coordinated the walk through the streets of Phnom Penh, as people from all walks of life spontaneously joined in.

"I saw the walk in front of my office, and I just had to join. I couldn't keep it inside. I walked off my job ... all Cambodians, and foreigners too, should stop work and walk for peace today. When I saw the monks, I was speechless," said one Cambodian worker from an international organization. Another added, "People were so afraid of the elections. Here in Phnom Penh they had started to stockpile rice ... but the walkers marched through the streets of the city holding silent meditations for peace at various key points. Rain or scorching heat, thousands joined each walk. After fifteen minutes of silence at what is usually a busy traffic intersection, a boy leaned over and asked, "Do you have peace?" An elderly man who had walked all the way from Siem Reap chanting one phrase in Pali, the ancient language of Buddhism, teaching it to many on the way, overheard and answered with his oft-repeated prayer, "Nanti santi barange sok kang" — there is no greater happiness than a peaceful heart.

On the morning of May 24, Prince Sihanouk greeted the walkers with words of deep gratitude for the Dhamma Yietra. In front of the Royal Palace, the walkers again meditated in silence, praying that all beings be free from suffering, fear, and sorrow. Then the Prince made a solemn plea to all of his compatriots for peace and called on all parties to "put an end to violence and hatred, and take out the spirit of vengeance from this day forward."

Days earlier on a lonely stretch of road which has known no peace for the past twenty-five years, a farmer cradling his young son said, "If the Dhamma Yietra brings us even a moment of peace ... ahhh, I offer my deepest gratitude. For then we can hope." ☸

This field report from Cambodia was compiled by: Bob Maat, S.J. and Liz Bernstein of the Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation; and Yeshua Moser, of Nonviolence International.

Cambodia... peace on the move

There is a non-violent movement in Cambodia. Known as Ponleu Khmer, this movement consists of monks, nuns, women's groups, student associations, and human rights groups. They have organized several activities, turning out thousands of people.

One of the coalition's first projects was the organizing of the Dhamma Yietra, a walk for peace. One spectator testified, "People were so afraid of elections. Here in Phnom Penh they had started to stockpile rice... but the walk has relieved us all, inspired us with hope."

One week later, June 4 through 6, the coalition organized a three day peace festival before the final results of the election were announced. The festival consisted of silent meditations for peace at various key points in the city to congratulate the Cambodian people on the successful elections.

On the final day of the festival, one thousand people gathered to listen to the words of Maha Ghosananda and to sit in silent meditation, despite a rain shower. Afterwards, the crowd, joined by thousands along the way, paraded a boat made of banana leaves to the river front, where they launched it into the Tonle Sap River, symbolically sending off all of the violence and hatred of the past twenty years. People piled money into the boat before it was launched as a symbol of ridding themselves of their own hatred, greed and delusion.

Tirelessly, the coalition's committee met the next day to plan the following event. When they presented their next plan to Maha Ghosananda, he laughed, "You all understand very well working for peace. There is no beginning and no end. We must continuously begin again and never become discouraged."

On the day the elections results were announced, the coalition organized a "Bon Chlong Wiel Bey," a festival. Thousands walked through the streets, ending in front of the palace where birds were released in a gesture of freedom and balloons flown with peace messages. As the name of this festival in Khmer indicates crossing three "deserts," Maha Ghosananda explained how we have crossed the deserts of hatred, greed and delusion which are the causes of war. "Like our breath, in and out, like day and night, war and peace are always interchanging. Nothing is permanent. One leads to the other. Now we leave suffering and enter peace."

On Monday, June 14, at the first meeting of the new Constitutional Assembly, thousands of monks, nuns,

human rights activists and other non-governmental organizations and individuals gathered in front of the Assembly Building to encourage the new Constitutional Assembly in their noble task of preparing a new Constitution for Cambodia. They requested seats for representatives of monks, nuns, non-governmental organizations and people's committees as observers in the Assembly to make the period of writing the new Constitution a democratic process.

As the representatives entered the building, the group chanted prayers and blessings, read a statement and then sat in meditation outside during the session, again raising banners as the delegates left.

The coalition will lobby for a Bill of Rights, for an independent judiciary and for the advancement of women. The group obtained continued coverage of all events by both local as well as international media.

In less than a month, the Peace Movement has empowered people and has given leaders new experience, strength and inspiration. New leaders/groups have sprung up over the past four weeks, breaking the silence of a people accustomed to living in an environment dominated by fear and intimidation. The people clearly want to show their newly elected leaders a way which serves and respects the people's right to live in dignity. ☸

វិទ្យាស្ថានប៊ុណ្ណិកម្ម

Samdech Preah Maha Ghosananda would like to establish a center in the Paris, France, area. \$500,000 is needed to purchase the land. For information on how you could help, please contact:

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Outside, it is raining

Zen Master Seung Sahn visits the sixth patriarch's temple

Do Mun Sunim, JDPS

In 1985, Zen Master Seung Sahn and twenty-one students traveled through China, visiting Buddhist temples and engaging in Zen dialogues and conversations with Chinese Masters and abbots.

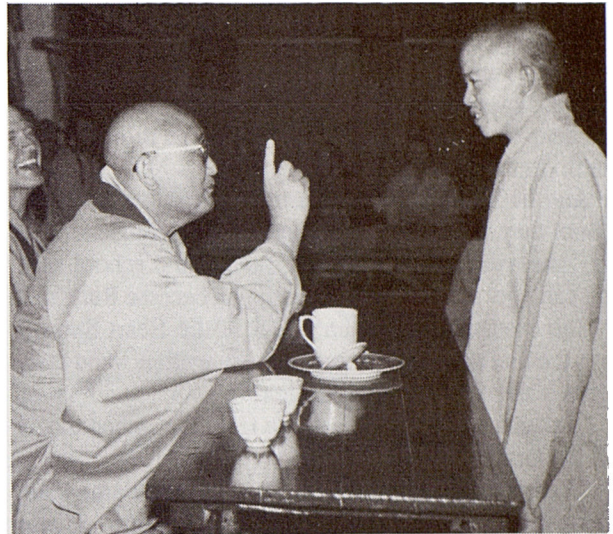
In 1992, the Venerable Fou Yuen, abbot of Nam Hwa Sah, the sixth patriarch's temple in northern Guangdong Province, invited Zen Master Seung Sahn to lead a three-day retreat for Chinese and Western students. Organized by the Hong Kong Zen Center, the retreat took place September 5-7, 1992. Fifty Chinese monks from Nam Hwa Sah, thirty-five Zen students from Hong Kong and fifteen monks, nuns and lay people from America, Canada, Poland and Germany participated.

Nam Hwa Sah was built over thirteen hundred years ago. It is most famous because it is the temple of the sixth patriarch, located on Chogye Mountain (Ts'ao Chi). It is one of the few Buddhist temples in China not destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. The temple has three hundred and twenty rooms. There are six big halls and nine small ones. The temple is built in three long rectangles. In the center of the main rectangle, going up the mountain are first, the main Buddha Hall; next, the library where sutras and Buddhist statues and relics are stored; next, an ancient pagoda of stone; and next, the hall in which the sixth patriarch's body is enshrined. To the right is a rectangle of buildings containing the kitchen and guest quarters. To the left, a rectangle of buildings containing the Zen hall and monks' quarters. All the buildings and halls are connected by covered walkways, between which are gardens. The temple gives one a feeling of strength, serenity and openness.

There are one hundred and twenty monks and nine lay people living at the temple. The government is more open regarding religion now. There are three to five hundred visitors to the temple every day. Most are tourists from Taiwan, and local people. The government regulates money at the temple but otherwise seldom interferes with temple affairs. The government does want to register the people who regularly practice religion, however.

Teaching at the temple comes mostly from reading the sutras and from the abbot's life experience. The practice is chanting, every morning and evening. Some monks sit Zen for the length of one incense stick four times a day. The rest of their time is spent maintaining the temple for tourists.

The Yong Maeng Jong Jin (Zen meditation retreat) led by Zen Master Seung Sahn included bowing, chanting



Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "So I say to you, when the Buddha died he said, 'My whole life I never spoke one word.' That is a very important point."

and much sitting. Zen kong-an style interviews were given to everyone each day by Do An Sunim, JDPSN, abbot of the Providence Zen Center. For the Chinese monks, it was the first time actually working with kong-ans and a Zen teacher. Zen Master Seung Sahn gave a dharma speech and answered questions each day. Many monks in addition to those sitting the retreat attended the dharma speeches. Before, they only understood sutra and Pure Land teaching. They were both very surprised and excited by Zen-style teaching. The question and answer times were particularly lively, with both younger and older monks engaged in asking the Zen Master many questions. Lively conversations ensued.

One monk said, "Zen is for very high class people to study and I am very low class. There is no way for me to understand."

Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "Don't make high class or low class." Picking up a fan, he asked, "What is this? You don't know?"

"A fan."

"If you say 'fan,' you are attached to name and form. If you say 'not fan,' you are attached to emptiness. Is this

a fan or not?"

The monk couldn't answer.

Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "You ask me."

The monk asked, "Is this a fan or not?"

Zen Master Seung Sahn fanned himself. Everyone applauded. Then he said, "Name and form are not important. Name and form are made by thinking. How everything correctly functions is very important. Everybody uses this fan. Chinese people use a fan. Korean people. Japanese people. American people also use this. Moment-to-moment, just do it. That's Zen mind. That's the Sixth Patriarch's teaching.

Another monk asked, "In the Pure Consciousness school they say that when you reach the eighth level you can take away ignorance. But the Tiendai school says you can't get rid of ignorance until you become Buddha."

Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "In the Heart Sutra it says the five skandas are empty. Do you understand that? What is the eighth consciousness?"

"Buddha said when the eighth level is reached that is the Bodhisattva level..."

"Buddha speech is all lies. The sixth patriarch said, 'Originally nothing.' Do you have something? Please show me."

"Two different schools pointing at two different things. How should I apply this teaching to my practice?"

"So, I say to you, when Buddha died he said, 'My whole life I never spoke one word.' That is a very important point. All sutra teaching is like children's cookies and toys. Do you like cookies? Then reading sutras is no problem."

"There is a monk from Singapore who came here and preached about two schools. This monk said we must use Buddha's speech to be our guideline."

"I don't like Buddha's speech. I like your true speech." (laughter)

The monk started to speak, then became confused, turned red and then smiled.

Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "That's OK. Enough. More questions?"

A monk asked, "Does the Pure Land exist or not?"

Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "Outside, it is raining."

Everyone was very surprised, then the monk smiled and said, "Thank you very much."

After the retreat there was a precepts ceremony presided over by Zen Master Seung Sahn and Do An Sunim, JDPSN, held in the sixth patriarch's hall. Twenty Chinese monks took precepts with Zen Master Seung Sahn. Also, three lay people from Guangzhou and three lay people from Hong Kong took five precepts and one American took novice monk precepts. Everyone was very happy with the retreat and precepts ceremony and pledged to continue efforts to practice together and share our

teaching and experiences. Many Chinese monks expressed interest in coming to Korea to sit Winter Kyol Che (a three month retreat).

On September 8th, a big ceremony was held at Un Mun Sah for the opening of the Un Mun Sah Buddhist Sutra School. Zen Master Seung Sahn and his students from Hong Kong and the West were invited, along with the Minister of Religion of the Province and other local officials and senior monks.

Un Mun Sah, also in Guangdong Province, was founded over a thousand years ago by the great Zen Master Un Mun. It has been rebuilt during the last eight years after being destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. The abbot of Nam Hwa Sah has also been abbot of Un Mun Sah for fourteen years.

After chanting in the main Buddha Hall, many speeches were given in honor of the sutra school's opening. Zen Master Seung Sahn was also asked to speak.

Hitting the table with his stick, he said, "Opening is closed. Closed is opening."

Hitting the table with his stick again, he said, "Originally nothing. So, no opening, no closing."

Hitting the table a third time with his stick, he said, "Everything complete, so, opening is opening, closing is closing."

"Three statements. Which one is correct? If you find correct, this stick will hit you thirty times. If you cannot find correct, this stick will still hit you thirty times. Why?"

"KATZ!"

"Open the door, many Buddhas and bodhisattvas appear."

"Today, the Un Mun Sah Buddhism School is opening. That is very wonderful. The government helps us a lot. Everyone is helping us a lot. Also, the abbot is helping us all a lot. That is very, very wonderful."

"This world is changing, changing, changing, changing. So, everybody said, this is end of this world. But Buddha said, not end of this world. This world is always complete. Already Buddha taught us, first: this world is impermanent. Next, this world is complete. So, today this school opening means save all beings."

"Before, Chinese Buddhism was the best in this world, but it almost died. But now the government is helping Buddhism, helping many temples appear, and helping many monks receive education. That is very, very wonderful. That means, in the midnight, bright light appears."

"So, everybody come here, read sutras, practice strongly, attain Buddha's way and save all beings."

"Long time ago Un Mun Zen Master said 'What is Buddha? Dry shit on a stick.' If you do strong practicing, attain that point, then you attain your true self and everything is no problem. If your center is not strong

Zen Master Kyong Ho

Three Poems in Autumn

1.

Autumn wind from a desolate sky.
Night deepens, but I cannot sleep.
The cicadas' sadness distills
Into tears that soak my pillow.

2.

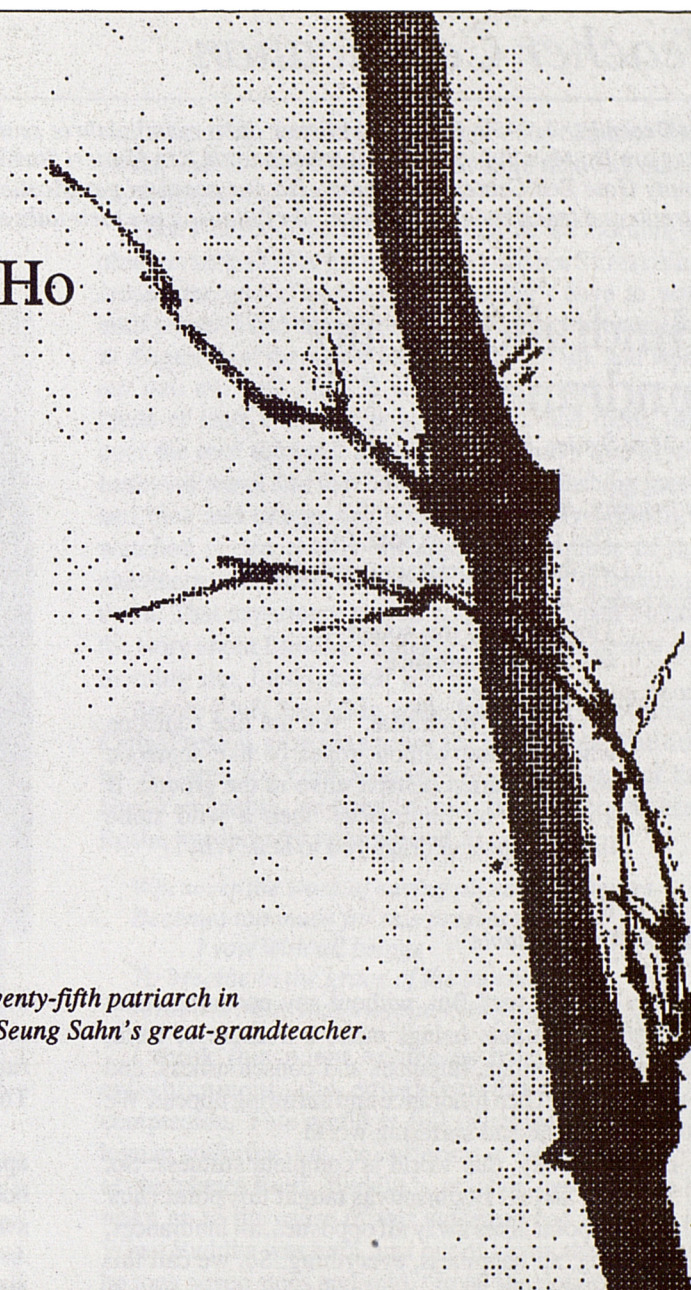
Fallen leaves lift up from the ground
And whirl in the air.
The uneasy traveller
Cannot decide when to start.

3.

Twilight. The hermitage seems deserted.
Stretching out, I drift off to sleep
And waken to the rustle of wind outside.
The yard is flooded with golden leaves.

Zen Master Kyong Ho (1849-1912) was seventy-fifth patriarch in the Korean Zen lineage and is Zen Master Seung Sahn's great-grandteacher.

Translated by Stanley Lombardo



then the sutras read you. You must read the sutras. That's very important.

"I hope everyone does strong practicing, practicing, gets enlightenment and saves all beings from suffering.

"Thank you very much."

Everyone was very happy with Zen Master Seung Sahn's speech. The abbot said it was a very high class Zen speech. The Minister of Religion said that now that relations between China and South Korea are open, more connections, and exchange of Buddhism, and coming and going will be possible. He was very happy.

After the Western monks and nuns and the Hong Kong Zen students had bowed good-bye and thank you to the abbot, the abbot gave us a good-bye speech. He said, "Zen Master Seung Sahn got enlightenment at age twenty-two. I have not yet got enlightenment, so I cannot give a dharma speech. Only I have this robe, eat and work each day. Please take care of your teacher because he has the sixth patriarch's mind. He has the same transmission as the sixth patriarch. So Buddhism in Korea and China has the same root. Buddhism in Korea and China is the same. That's all." ☸

Teacher Certification

On December 5, 1992, Zen Master Seung Sahn certified three senior students as *Ji Do Poep Sa Nims* (dharma masters). They are Do Mun Sunim, of Seoul International Zen Center; Stanley Lombardo of Kansas Zen Center; and Jeff Kitzes of Empty Gate Zen Center in Berkeley. Having received certification — “inka” — these teachers are authorized to lead retreats and teach kong-an practice. The following are their talks and excerpts from the dharma combat at the ceremony.

Hindrance or no hindrance

Do Mun Sunim, JDPS

Shows stick, hits table

This stick and this sound —
are they a hindrance to your mind?

Shows stick, hits table

This stick and this sound —
are they no hindrance?

Shows stick, hits table

If you say, “hindrance,” you are like someone who is bound without ropes or like someone who has buried himself alive in the ground. If you say, “no hindrance,” then a wild stone lion appears and drags you to hell. Why?

KATZ!

Shows stick, hits table

Very simple, yes? But, without any encouragement from outside, human beings make a treasure of form, feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness, and lose this point. Then hindrance and suffering appear. We call this opposite and suffering world.

But, originally, this world is complete stillness. So, all Buddhas and all Bodhisattvas taught this point. (*hits table*) This point takes away all opposites, all hindrances, all suffering, all happiness, everything. So, we call this absolute world.

If we attain this point, then opening our senses, everything we see, hear, smell, taste, touch, feel and think is the truth. Sky is blue, tree is green, dog barks “woof, woof,” car horn “honk, honk.”

Looking at the world, what do we see? Mouse is afraid of cat. Cat is afraid of tiger. Tiger is afraid of elephant. Elephant is afraid of mouse. Not only animals. Human beings are also like that — between nations, within families, within our own mind. Around, around, around, around. If we attain that, then this world is complete. Everything is complete. Everything has it. “Sugar is sweet” is complete. “Cloud is white” is complete.

If we attain that this world is already complete, then



everything is no hindrance. No hindrance means moment-to-moment we can keep the correct situation, correct function, correct relationship. That is moment world. Then, saving all beings is possible.

Our teacher, Zen Master Seung Sahn once said, “I” appears, then human being appears. “I” not appear, bodhisattva action appears by itself.” So, how to take away “I”?

Sitting here today, we are all human beings. But, attaching to that, how can we find the true way? How can we help this world?

There is a calligraphy hanging in the Providence Zen Center which says, “Without situation, true life.” Not holding our situation, our condition, our opinion, we find the true way and true life. This is our practice.

In the beginning, I only held up this stick and hit the table. (*hits table*) Then I talked about opposite’s world, absolute world, complete world, and moment world. So, which one is the true way?

KATZ!

After the ceremony, down the hall to the dining room for a party. ☉

Morning stars

Stanley Lombardo, JDPSN

Shows stick, hits table

Sky is dark, stars are shining.

Shows stick, hits table

In original nature, there is no sky, no stars.

Shows stick, hits table

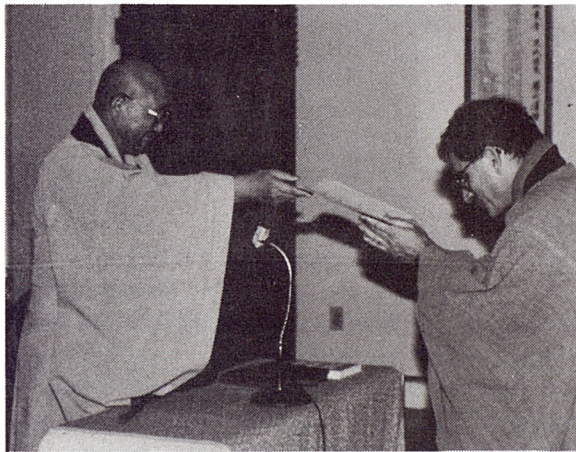
Which one is correct?

If you say correct,
your life can never be correct.

KATZ!

In the clear eastern sky

The morning star rises pure and bright.



One of the things about Buddhism that has always seemed completely right to me is that Buddha's enlightenment came when he saw a star. Everyone knows the story about how after years of asceticism struggling with the question of suffering, he decided simply to sit under a tree until he understood. One night toward dawn as he saw the morning star rising, his mind opened.

Long before I heard this story for the first time I became interested in astronomy. When I was about twelve years old I began to learn the constellations. It was springtime and every night at about eight o'clock I would go outside and identify some stars I hadn't known before. I found that if you go outside every night at the same time, new stars and constellations are rising in the east while others are setting in the west. So as the weeks went by I would look forward to new stars always coming up. But it was a slow process, and what I really wanted to see were the stars that wouldn't rise in early evening until

wintertime, the exceptionally bright constellations like Orion, and, the star I wanted to see more than any other, the brightest star in the sky, Sirius.

Then I learned that if I got up early in the morning to observe, instead of in the evening, I could see Sirius rising around the end of summer and wouldn't have to wait until winter. I had never been up that early, but one night in August I set my alarm for 4:30 am, got up, and went out into the back yard. It was still dark, and I saw all kinds of stars I had never seen before, and there, just over the roof tops and under the chinaberry tree in my backyard was a star that had to be Sirius, flashing green and blue and orange and white, impossibly brilliant. I watched it rise slowly through the branches of the chinaberry tree until it disappeared in the brightening dawn. That experience stayed with me, so when I heard the story about Buddha's mind opening when he saw the morning star, I thought, oh yes, of course.

Before I left Kansas to come here, a friend of mine, Cathy Preston, gave me a poem she had written. The title is "A Gatha for Your Journey." It's in the style of the Hua Yen gathas, or poetic vows, that Robert Aitken, Roshi, has recently reintroduced. It goes:

*Whenever the work of saving all sentient beings
Becomes too much for this present moment,
I vow with all beings
To breathe in the grace of the morning star
And remember that they are really saving me.*

I think this poem expresses true morning star enlightenment, the enlightenment of reciprocal compassion. This world is full of suffering. Not only human suffering, but the suffering of animals and even of the planet itself. Buddha's practice, and ours, is to wake up to the cause of this suffering and help end it. When Buddha was born, just out of his mother's womb, he took seven steps and said, "In all the universe, only I am holy." That was his baby's mind. Then he grew up and led a very privileged life. When he encountered the mystery of suffering he began to practice, and when his mind opened up after his hard training, the first thing he said was, "How wonderful. All beings have this enlightened nature; only they have forgotten it." So then he began his life work of helping people wake up to their original nature. He saw that all suffering begins in our ignorance of our original, bright nature. Because we have forgotten that we already have everything, we form desires, and from the inevitable frustration of these desires comes anger and hatred. Waking up to our original nature means realizing we are already complete, not lacking

Teacher Certification

anything. When we attain that, we can let go of all the psychological acquisitiveness to which we become addicted in our desperate attempts to fabricate and sustain a self at all costs. That letting go is the beginning of the end of suffering in this world.

As if it knows that, the world itself is always trying to wake us up, each one of us, every moment, with every phenomenon it manifests, like a cosmic alarm clock for a race of troubled, restless sleepers. That's what Zen Master Seung Sahn is reminding us of when he says things like, "Go ask a tree" or "The sound of a waterfall is better than the sutras." So all of us have this original job, this great question, "What am I?" The consequences of answering it are enormous, and the answer is right before our eyes.

Hits table.

Yahweh said from the burning bush, "I am who I am."

Hits table.

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life."

Hits table.

Buddha said, "In all the universe only I am holy."

What can you say?

KATZ!

A roomful of shining faces on a December evening. ☉

Reveal your true nature

Jeff Kitzes, JDPSN

Shows stick, hits table

Life is like a cloud that appears.

Shows stick, hits table

Death is like a cloud that disappears.

No life, no death.

No appearing, no disappearing.

Shows stick, hits table

Katz! Just now, breathing in and breathing out.

Twenty years ago I first heard the teaching which says that if you use death as your advisor, you will wake up to this moment and truly be alive.

For a twenty-year-old college student this was a revolutionary concept. If I remember my own death, the power and intensity of this very moment becomes evident.

Ten years later my father was sick with cancer and facing his own death. He said to me: "All my life I thought



I had to hide who I was... Schmuck!" He realized the futility and waste of spending a lifetime not revealing his true nature to the world. It was only by facing his own death that he could perceive this fundamental truth.

So, we must all wake up; RIGHT NOW! At any moment this ceiling could fall down. Our death awaits, at any moment

it may appear. The illusion of immortality is very strong. Be careful. What can you do?

As Zen students, we've learned the necessity of keeping a don't-know mind. When we keep the Great Question, *what am I*, the reality of this present moment appears. If just now we open our eyes, breathe in and breathe out, what do we see, what do we hear, what do we smell, taste, and touch? If we are awake then only this moment is the truth.

Next, we say, how does this truth function. Moment to moment this is the challenge of our lives. How do I use this moment, express my true self and help others? When we put down our opinions, condition, and situation, this very moment becomes alive. Our don't know mind cuts off self-centered thinking, and acting for all beings is possible. Then the incredible suffering which we see every day can be felt in our hearts. Only then can we truly get on with the great work of life and death and help others.

So I hope that when we see this stick (*holding up Zen stick*) and hear this sound (*hitting table with Zen stick*), we all can wake up, attain our true selves, and help save this world from suffering.

Thank you very much. ☉

Dharma Combat

Do Mun Sunim, JDPS

Q: So at your Zen center lives this Korean monk. And his name is Hwa Gong Su Nim. Hwa Gong means "flower emptiness." What is this emptiness flower; what does that mean?

DMSN: You already understand.

Q: I know that, but I'm asking you.

DMSN: (Takes flower from the altar and holds it up.)

Q: Yeah, but I asked about *emptiness* flower.

DMSN: That's yours (hands him the flower).

Q: Thank you.

◆◆◆

Q: I have no question; I'm not prepared; what can I do?

DMSN: What are you doing right now?

Q: Sitting here talking to you.

DMSN: Is that enough?

Q: It's perfect.

DMSN: See you later.

Stanley Lombardo, JDPSN

Q: I hear that you're a great teacher of classics.

SL: Yeah, that's right.

Q: Now that you're a Zen teacher, how can you possibly teach that?

SL: Quomo dol posso te divatum.

Q: I need a translation.

SL: Latin for "How can I help you?"

Q: Thank you very much.

◆◆◆

Q: You are sitting in the front. Who did you really follow to be at this place?

SL: Where are you sitting?

Q: In front of you.

SL: I only follow you.

Jeff Kitzes, JDPSN

Q: We met long ago sitting next to each other in Kyol Che. You've gone through many changes, worn many hats. Could you sum it up for us, please?

JK: You already understand.

Q: So I'm asking you.

JK: It's really nice to see you.

Q: Oh, it's really nice to see you. Thank you for your teaching.

◆◆◆

Q: I don't have a psychotherapy question. When we all met Zen Master Seung Sahn, he taught us this (*hits the floor*). So we've all been imitating him ever since. So if you don't imitate him, then what?

JK: You already understand.

Q: So I ask you.

JK: (*hits the floor*)

Q: Thank you.



What will you do with this prescription?

Finding your compassion

A talk by Do An Sunim, JDPS at Providence Zen Center on Buddha's Enlightenment Day, 1991

Throughout the ages people have written commentaries on the Buddha's enlightenment using many different perspectives. But from the point of view of history, the Buddha's enlightenment is not very interesting. Nor is it very interesting from the points of view of philosophy or psychology. However, if the Buddha's enlightenment enters your heart and mind in this moment, that is interesting! Thinking about enlightenment is not interesting. Attaining enlightenment is interesting. The big meaning of the Buddha's enlightenment in this moment is, "What are you?"

We practice Zen in terms of two essential questions, both of which point directly to the suffering of this world and our role in it. First, "What are you doing right now?" In other words, "What are you? What is a human being? Why are you on this planet, right now, right here? Right now!" Second, "Why do you do what you do?" The Buddha's enlightenment connects with us at this moment through these two questions. Actually, these two questions are one question: What are you? This is the great question of life and death.

Many human beings are like lemmings running to the sea — heading pell mell towards destruction, agony, and suffering. However, standing out in human history are some great figures who went in a different direction, whose lives say something else. Two obvious examples would be the Buddha and Christ. The lemmings are running one way, but Buddha and Christ are saying, "Hey, how 'bout this way?" And they aren't just flapping their lips; their lives point in this direction. Let's look at the Buddha's life more closely.

The Buddha was born into very good circumstances. He had a good family situation, he was wealthy with the possibility of being a king — he had everything. We too have our situations; and these life circumstances become our nest. We've all made our nests somewhere, feathered nicely with our cozy "I-my-me" of one kind or another. We want to stay in that nest forever and make it even more secure.

One day the Buddha was shaken from the seeming security of his good situation when he saw a sick person, an old person, and a corpse. The sight of these inevitable forms of human suffering, and the transience of life so profoundly struck his mind that he could no longer stay in this comfortable situation. The Buddha left his nest.

He left home to find the answer to the great question: "What is a human being?" "Why do we suffer so much?" This burning question became the singular purpose of his life. He could no longer rest until he understood what human beings really were. The same must be true for us. That's how his enlightenment connects to us, right here in this moment. The Buddha practiced for a long time, only trying to seek the answer to this question. Then one dawn he saw the morning star and experienced a great resolution to this question; he attained enlightenment.

Enlightenment is not an end point, actually, it is a beginning. The Buddha left home twice: once, to seek the answer to the great question and a second time, when out of compassion he went out into the pain and agony of this world, to help relieve suffering. His two home leavings point directly to Zen's two basic questions: "What are you doing right now?" This means, attain truth. And: "Why do that?" That means, how will this truth function. That means compassion. That means love. The two elements that make up our Zen practice are finding truth, and finding our function in this world. How can we help resolve this agony and suffering? These two questions point directly at us, down from Shakyamuni Buddha for the last twenty-five hundred years. That's what we celebrate today.

Many times people will say that they don't like Zen because "it's cold or unemotional." Everybody has an emotional mind that revolves around their likes and dislikes. This is our nest. You like this nest, these emotions, and this like and dislike. However, the Buddha taught that our like-and-dislike mind is the source of human suffering. We tend to confuse compassion with our emotional nest. So something is not connecting here. If you take away like and dislike you don't get cold and unemotional, you get compassion. Humans are very attached to their like and dislike; we call this "clinging mind."

Another feeling that everyone has is for this world, for the suffering in this world. This is a "clear emotion." Compassion is a clear emotion. Zen means finding the compassion that's inside of you. Suffering requires a response; we call this response "compassion." Zen means, how do you find your compassion? Compassion means "to suffer with," from the Latin words "to be with" and passion, "to suffer." If one is "suffering with," that means

there is no I-my-me, no "my likes/my dislikes." True "suffering with" means becomes "one with." This is enlightenment. This is what the Buddha's enlightenment teaches.

The Buddha attained a great enlightenment that comes down to us through this lineage to Zen Master Seung Sahn. Our practice is keeping a don't-know mind, keeping a mind which is before thinking. If you raise the big question, "What am I?" and look inside deeply "don't know" appears. This "don't know" cuts off all thinking. It is before thinking. This is the Buddha's medicine which has been passed down to us. Human beings are sick, so the Buddha gives a prescription. Then it is passed down to us. Now Zen Master Seung Sahn gives us this same wonderful medicine to take, this "don't know" medicine.

There once was an isolated community which lived deep in the forest. One day, a member of that community became ill. Everyone became very concerned about the person who had become ill. Then a second person became ill with the same symptoms. The illness began to affect many people in the community. Since the community was isolated and didn't have a doctor they became quite concerned. Finally, it was decided to send someone to the outside world. The emissary went and found a doctor who said, "Oh, I understand these symptoms. I know what's causing these people to be ill." He wrote a prescription and gave it to the man, who then returned to his community.

When he got back, he reported to the community, "This doctor understands our sickness. He knows what's wrong with us, and gave me this prescription." After reading the prescription aloud everyone said, "Oh, that's very wonderful. Now there's some hope for us." Everyone was very happy. The next morning they got up, and the man who had gone off took the prescription out again and read it. Everybody was very happy and said, "Oh, that's a really good prescription! You know, these drugs are really going to work, we know they are."

That day passed, and the next day they got up and again the man, who had gone off to get the prescription, took it out of his pocket and read it to them once more. Then they were even more happy. It was finally sinking in. They were starting to understand what this prescription really meant. They were going to be relieved of their suffering and their community was going to be saved.

Then another person in this community thought that it was such a wonderful prescription that he wrote a commentary on it. Everybody was very happy because this commentary revealed more about the prescription which they hadn't understood before. And in fact, one group of people in this community thought that this man should be the new leader of the community because his understanding of the prescription was better than that of the man who had gone to the doctor. Several of them even started arguing about the prescription with the man who had gone to the doctor. This went on for about two months... and then everybody died.

So we have this wonderful "don't know" prescription. What will you do with it? ☺

Enlightenment Day Poem

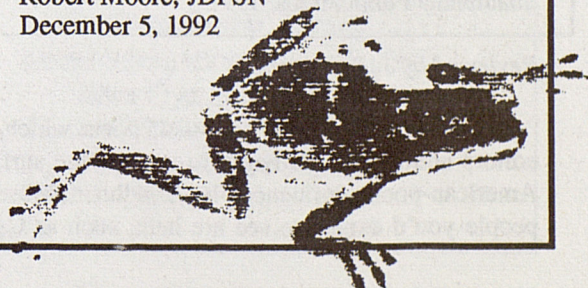
Old Gautama sat on the grass for six years,
Saw a star, talked about enlightenment.
Listen to this wild talk,
Fall into a deep well of delusion.
On the well's bottom each frog croaks,
Ribbit, ribbit, ribbit
My sound is better than yours.
Each frog fighting.

How do these frogs get out of their world?

Moment by moment, become don't know,
Only ribbit, ribbit, ribbit.
Time and space, cause and effect disappear
Frogs grow wings, fly into space
Eat the sun and moon.

The ancient mirror reflects perfectly.
Clear, clear, clear.
Winter dew drops gather on maple leaves,
Scarlet beads all around.

Robert Moore, JDPSN
December 5, 1992



Book reviews

Teachings of a Buddhist Monk

Ajahn Sumedho

Buddhist Publishing Group, Devon, England, 1990

Reviewed by Mu Soeng Sunim

This small book, a collection of talks by the well-known Western Buddhist monk Ajahn Sumedho, is a precious gem. Ajahn Sumedho is the abbot of the Amravati Buddhist Centre in England, which he established in 1977 after ten years of training in Thailand under the tutelage of Ajahn Chah, the great Buddhist meditation master. Amravati Centre has become perhaps the most authentic place in the West for Westerners to have a taste of Buddhist monastic life of the Theravada tradition. Ajahn Sumedho's tireless efforts and clear vision made this training facility a reality, and this book reacquaints us with that effort and vision.

A bonus for the reader of this book is a wonderful foreword by Jack Kornfield. Kornfield says of Ajahn Sumedho, "As a teacher, he brings a spontaneity, wonderful humor and warmth, a terrible, self-revealing honesty, and a clear and uncompromising wisdom." The collection of talks in this book confirm this assessment. There's an intimacy, an inviting warmth to these talks, and at some point Ajahn Sumedho's monastic life and his vision of the Buddha-dharma blend to give us a glimpse into how Buddha's teachings can find roots in the West. It's not an easy book to quote from; any such attempt would do less than justice to the overall quality of the book. A reader would be well advised to let Ajahn Sumedho's wisdom wash over him or her gently.

Beneath a Single Moon: Buddhism in Contemporary American Poetry

Edited by Kent Johnson and Craig Paulenich, with an introduction by Gary Snyder
Shambhala Publications, 1991

Reviewed by Judy Roitman

There's a lot of stuff in here — 45 poets, which, as the editors admit, doesn't begin to scratch the surface of American-poetry-influenced-by-Buddhism. Most of the people you'd expect to see are here, such as Cage, di

Prima, Ginsberg, Snyder, Waldman, Whalen. But also there are many poets not so well-known, and some well-known poets whose affinities with Buddhism are not widely advertised (not necessarily hidden, just not a big part of their public persona).

What is "Buddhism in contemporary American poetry?" Well, just about anything you want, as it turns out. This volume works well as a general introduction to late twentieth century American poetry: from standard first-person lyrics to Chinese-influenced clarity to the formal experiments of Cage and MacLow to the post-modern urgencies of Scalapino to the largeness and largess of Whalen and Ginsberg. There are short lines and long lines, heightened rhetoric and the rhythms of natural speech. There are short poems, long lists, nature, cities, relationships, sex, life and death (of course), and even some very explicit poems about practice (a hard genre to pull off). Not much explicitly political poetry, and maybe more haiku-type poetry than a random sample of literary magazines would produce. Other than that, a good representation of what's going on in American poetry right now.

So what makes it Buddhist? It is a kind of skewing of attention: attention to attention, attention to the mind which pays attention, and attention to whether the mind which pays attention is any different from whatever it is paying attention to. And there are terrific little essays in which the poets get a chance to say whatever they want to say about Buddhism in their life/poetry/world. Not everyone gets one, and not everyone who could have had one chose to have one, but there are enough of them to give a good sense of the richness, variety, and depth of American Buddhist practice and the influence of Buddhist thought even on those who don't practice.

The standard thing to do at this point is to give a couple of quotes, a sense of the book. But no short selection of quotes could do justice to the variety here. So, wish-I'd-been student of Cage that I am, I'll just flip it open and — what luck! we're looking at Jackson MacLow, one of the great contemplators of language/mind/world in contemporary poetry. Here is what he's saying:

"THE MOSSES TURN TOWARD THE LIGHT.
THE FLOWERS TURN TOWARD THE LIGHT.
THE TREES TURN TOWARD THE LIGHT."

Exactly. ☉

1994 WINTER KYOL CHE RETREAT

with Do An Sunim, JDPSN
January 2 - April 1

1994 SUMMER KYOL CHE RETREAT

with Do An Sunim, JDPSN
August 2 - 21



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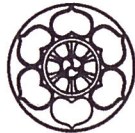
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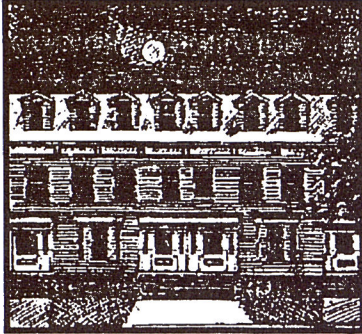
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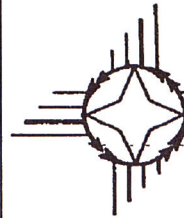
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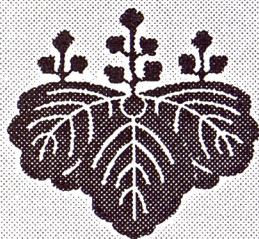
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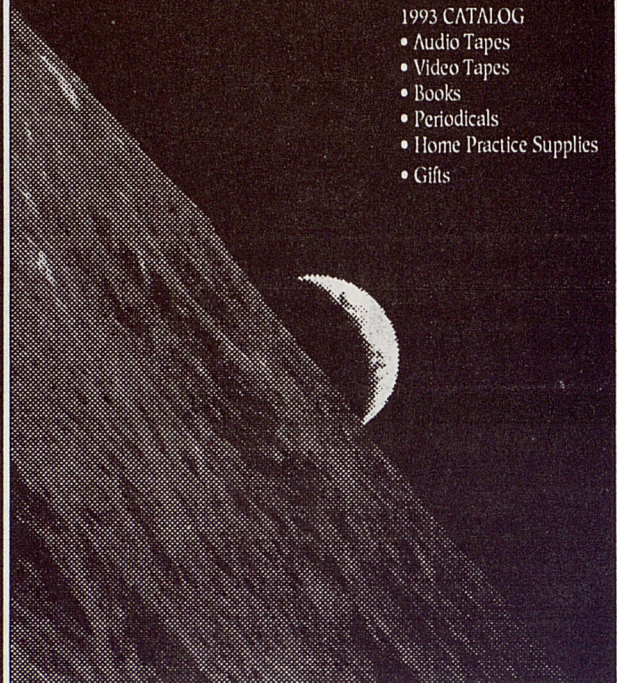
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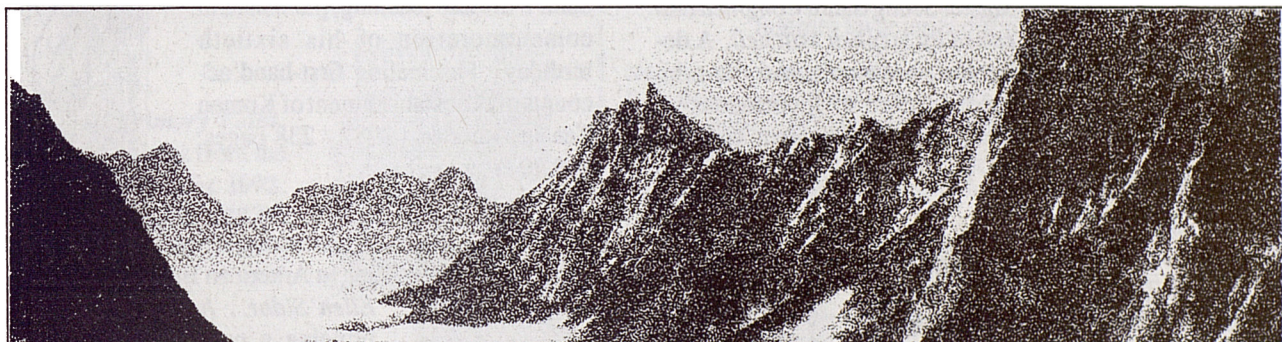
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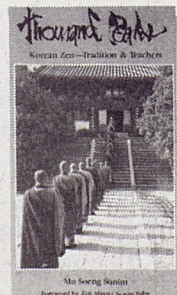
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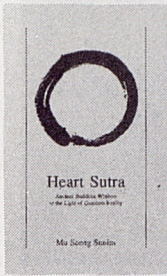
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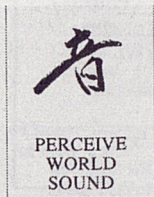
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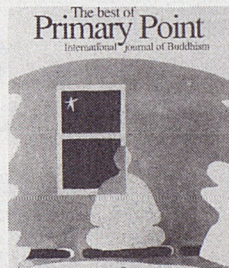
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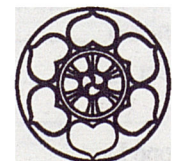
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Glossary

beads: a string of beads resembling a bracelet or necklace, used for counting bows or repetitions of a mantra in various sects of Buddhism.

Bhikshu (*Sanskrit*): fully ordained monk.

Bhikshuni (*Sanskrit*): fully ordained nun.

bodhisattva (*Sanskrit*): a being whose actions promote unity or harmony; one who vows to postpone one's own enlightenment in order to help all sentient beings realize liberation; one who seeks enlightenment not only for oneself but for others. The bodhisattva ideal is at the heart of Mahayana and Zen Buddhism.

bosalnim (*Korean*): in Korea, a lay woman who helps at a temple

Buddha (*Sanskrit*): an awakened one; refers usually to Siddhartha Gautama (sixth century BC), historic founder of Buddhism.

Buddha-nature: that which all sentient beings share and manifest through their particular form; according to Zen, the Buddha said that all things have Buddha-nature and therefore have the innate potential to become Buddha.

Chogye order: the major order in Korean Buddhism, formed in 1356 AD by the unification of the Nine Mountains Schools of Zen.

Dae Soen Sa Nim (*Korean*): title used by Zen Master Seung Sahn's students in referring to him; "great honored Zen Master."

dharma (*Sanskrit*): the way or law; the path; basically, Buddhist teaching, but in a wider sense any teaching or truth.

dharma room: in Zen Master Seung Sahn's centers, the meditation/ceremony hall.

enlightenment: awakening.

hapchang (*Korean*): literally, "palms together;" a hand position used in various practice situations.

hara (*Japanese*): the vital energy center of the abdomen; in many Zen traditions it is considered the seat of the heart-body-mind.

HIT: the sound of a palm or stick hitting a

table or floor; used to cut off discriminative thinking.

inka (*Korean*): "public seal;" certification of a student's completion of, or breakthrough in, kong-an practice.

interview: a formal, private meeting between a Zen teacher and a student in which kong-ans are used to test and stimulate the student's practice; may also occasion informal questions and instruction.

Ji Do Poep Sa Nim (JDPSN) (*Korean*): "dharma master;" a student who has been authorized by Zen Master Seung Sahn to teach kong-an practice and lead retreats.

karma (*Sanskrit*): "cause and effect," and the continuing process of action and reaction, accounting for the interpenetration of all phenomena. Thus our present thoughts, actions, and situations are the result of what we have done in the past, and our future thoughts, actions, and situations will be the product of what we are doing now. All individual karma results from this process.

kasa (*Korean*): brown piece of cloth worn around the neck or over the shoulders, symbolic of Buddhist vows and precepts.

KATZ! (*Korean*): traditional Zen belly shout; used to cut off discriminative thinking.

Kido (*Korean*): "energy way"; a chanting retreat.

kimchee (*Korean*): spicy pickled cabbage.

kong-an (*Korean; Japanese: koan*): a paradoxical or irrational statement used by Zen teachers to cut through students' thinking and bring them to realization.

Kwan Seum Bosal (*Korean; Sanskrit: Avalokitesvara; Chinese: Kwan Yin; Korean: Kwan Um; Japanese: Kanzeon*): "one who perceives the cries of the world" and responds with compassionate aid; the bodhisattva of compassion.

Kyol Che (*Korean*): "tight dharma;" in Korean Zen tradition, an intensive retreat of 21 to 90 days.

Mahayana (*Sanskrit*) Buddhism: the Buddhism practiced in northern Asia; encompasses schools in China, Korea, Japan, and Tibet.

mantra (*Sanskrit*): sounds or words used in meditation to cut through discriminating thoughts so the mind can become clear.

moktak (*Korean*): fish-shaped wooden instrument used as a drum to set the rhythm for chanting.

patriarch: the founder of a school and his successors in the transmission of its teaching.

sangha (*Sanskrit*): in the Mahayana and Zen traditions, the community of all practitioners; may refer to a family of students under a particular master.

senior dharma teacher: in the Kwan Um School of Zen, one who has met certain training requirements, usually over at least nine years, and has taken sixteen precepts.

sutra (*Sanskrit*): Buddhist scriptures, consisting of discourses by the Buddha and his disciples.

transmission: formal handing over of the lineage succession from teacher to student.

Yong Maeng Jong Jin (*Korean*): literally, "valorous or intrepid concentration," paraphrased "to leap like a tiger while sitting." In the West it is a short silent retreat of two to seven days involving thirteen hours of formal meditation practice a day. Participants follow a schedule of bowing, sitting, chanting, eating, and working, with an emphasis on sitting meditation. During the retreat each participant has interviews with a Zen Master or Ji Do Poep Sa Nim.

Zen (*Japanese; Korean: Son; Chinese: Ch'an; Sanskrit: Dhyana*): meditation practice.

Zen center: meditation communities which may include a residence. All the Zen centers in the Kwan Um School of Zen are under the spiritual direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn, and each offers regular practice and periodic retreats.

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