

Poem for Buddha's Birthday 1997

Before Buddha came The sky was already blue All this stuff and nonsense About "Only I am holy" Pointing up, Blue. Pointing down, solid earth.

When Buddha lived
The sky
Was still
Blue
Forty years of teaching, traveling
Didn't change that.

When Buddha died, Where did he go? Burning Buddha's body Sent smoke to Blue sky. How unoriginal!

Unoriginality
Is our original nature
What did Buddha teach?

Before your birth, now, after you die, The sky Is still blue. Same as Buddha. Same for us all. Whose sky is it? Yours, mine, Buddha's?

When the sky is gone When you are gone When Buddha is gone What then?

Look up!

Blue sky!

Do you get it?

Ken Kessel, JDPSN, May 14, 1997