

ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN:
ONE PURE AND CLEAR THING

ZEN MASTER WU KWANG:
MA'TSU, TSI-TSANG,

AND THE EARLY KOREAN MASTERS



Primary Point



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one pure and clear thing

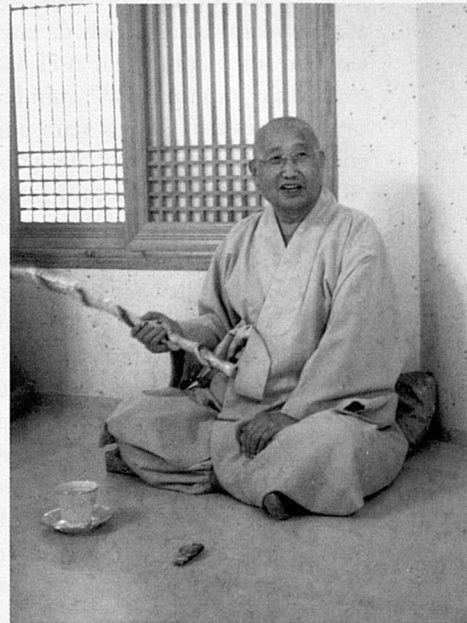
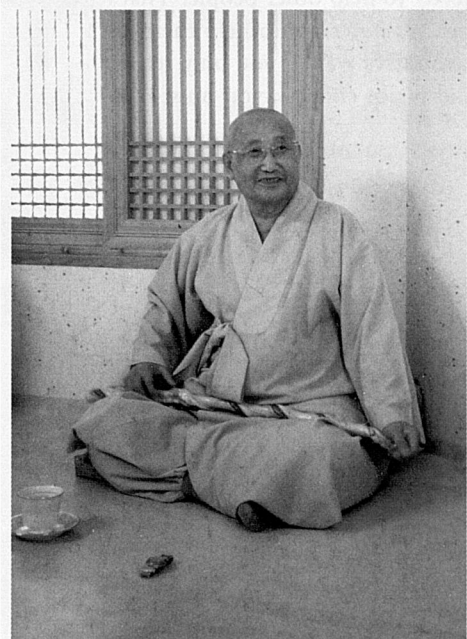
Zen Master Seung Sahn

One day Zen Master Man Gong gave a dharma speech in which he said, "Even if this whole world explodes, if everyone has one pure and clear thing, it will never disappear. That thing sometimes dreams and sometimes is awake. Then I ask you, if you are not-dreaming and not awake, where is it?"

That is a famous dharma speech by Man Gong Sunim. Everybody already has one pure and clear thing. But if you find it, you lose it. If you forget it, it's always in front of you. Also, if you say "one thing," that's a big mistake because that is not one thing. Saying that is a strange thing!

An old Zen Master said, talking time, sitting time, walking time, even drinking time, one thing is always in front of you, any place. Even dreaming, it's always in front of you. But not-dreaming time has no front, has no back, has no high or low. So, if you are not dreaming, where is the one thing then? One thing appears or disappears? Where is it; where does the one thing stay? That's a very important point.

Commentary: When you are hungry, go to the kitchen. When you are tired, go to the bedroom.





That's Zen style. Tired, sleep. Hungry, then eat. That means, don't make anything. Moment to moment, just do it. That's our job, OK? Moment to moment, just do it. That's very important. This world is complicated, but if you are not thinking, it's not complicated, it's simple, very simple. If you are thinking, it's very complicated. If you are thinking, then checking mind appears. When checking mind appears, then the whole world appears. When the whole world appears, this world controls you. If you don't make anything, the whole world disappears. When the whole world disappears, everything is very simple. Only see, only hear, only smell, do it! Very simple. Just do it.

Original mind is like a clear mirror, there is nothing. Somebody appears, it reflects. Something appears, it reflects. The mirror reflects everything, but it's not attached. Reflections appear, then disappear, appear, disappear, appear, disappear. It's free, no hindrance. So that is a very important mind. Our true self is the same as a clear mirror.

Everything appears, disappears, appears, disappears—that's truth. If you don't understand anything, then everything you see, everything you hear, is the truth. Then, next, how does truth mind function correctly to help other people? That's the bodhisattva way. When hungry people appear, it's necessary to help them. If suffering people come, help them. That's the bodhisattva way. If you only reflect hunger or suffering, it's not enough. Mirror mind is not enough; you must help them. So everyone should achieve this mind.

Question: What should we do when anger and desire appear? Hinayana and Mahayana teach us to take them away. What does Zen teach us to do?

ZMSS: Return to moment mind.

Question: Yes, and then what?

ZMSS: Return to moment mind. If desire appears, you have already lost moment mind. Moment to moment, becoming clear is very important. Moment to moment: that is Zen mind. If moment mind disappears, then desire mind and angry mind appear. If you attach to something, if you make opposites, then I-my-me mind appears, then you cannot keep moment mind. If you return to moment mind, there is no my opinion, my condition or my situation. So our practice is moment to moment, become clear. Good, bad doesn't matter, return to moment. OK?

Excerpted from
Zen Master Wu Kwang's
upcoming Shambhala book
*Drink Cold Water:
Talks on the Teachings
of Korean Zen Masters,
Ancient and Modern*

Ma'tsu, Tsi-Tsang, and the Early Korean Masters

[Hits the floor once with Zen stick.]

Can this be explained or not?

[Hits floor.]

Can this be understood or not?

[Hits floor.]

If you say this can be explained and understood, then you are attaching to words and concepts and miss the basic fact. On the other hand, if you say this cannot be explained and cannot be understood, then how can the Zen dharma be taught to all beings? What can you do?

KATZ!

Look clearly: A crow's head is black, a crane's head is white.

Ma-tsu's Four Words and One Hundred Negations

There is an old Zen story titled "Four Words and One Hundred Negations" which appears both in *The Blue Cliff Records* (the Seventy-Third Case) and *The Book of Serenity*. I will read the case:

A monk asked Great Master Ma, "Please, Master, going beyond the four words and one hundred negations, directly point out to me the meaning of the coming from the West." Master Ma said, "I'm tired today and can't explain to you. Go ask Tsi-Tsang." When the monk asked Tsi-Tsang, Tsi-Tsang said, "Why didn't you ask the Master?" The monk replied, "The Master had me come ask

you." Tsang told him, "I have a headache today. I can't explain to you. Go ask Elder Brother Hai." So the monk then asked Elder Brother Hai [also known as Pai-Chang]. Hai said, "At this point, all the more I don't understand." When the monk related this to Great Master Ma, Master Ma said, "Tsang's head is white, Hai's head is black."

Before examining the case, I want to say a little about the cast of characters. The three monks named here have a strong connection not only to the Chinese Zen tradition, but also to the Korean Zen tradition. Of these three, a lot has been written about the Great Master Ma, whose full name is Ma-tsu (*J. Baso Doitsu K. Ma Jo*). There is also a fair amount about Zen Master Pai-chang (*J. Hyakujo Ekai K. Back Jang*). But there is little written about Ti-ts'ang (*J. Jizo K. Ji Jang*).

Ti-ts'ang, who was born in 735 C.E., became a novice monk and began following a teacher when he was eight years old. When he was twenty-five, he took full monk's precepts. Later, hearing about the Zen teaching that Great Master Ma-tsu was giving in the mountains, Ti-ts'ang went to be his student and eventually became his successor.

Ma-tsu was well-known and had hundreds of students, but only 139 earned his permission to teach and start Zen groups in different parts of China. Among those 139, Ti-ts'ang, Pai-chang, and Nan-ch'uan (*J. Nansen Fugan K. Nam Cheon*) were considered the greatest. When Ma-tsu died, the monks in his assembly asked Ti-ts'ang to teach in Ma-tsu's place. He taught for many years before passing away in 814.

A few other stories about Ti-ts'ang have survived. One tells of the time Ma-tsu sent him to take a letter to the national teacher at the capital. When Ti-ts'ang got there, the national teacher asked him, "What kind of teaching is Ma-tsu giving these days?" Ti-ts'ang, without opening his mouth, walked from the east side of the hall to the west side, then stood still. The national teacher asked, "Only that? Or is there something else besides?" Ti-ts'ang then walked from the west side of the hall back to the east and again stood still. The national teacher then said, "That's what you have learned from Ma-tsu, but what do you have that's your own?" Ti-ts'ang replied, "I've already shown you, Master."

This reminds me of an exchange I had with a student some years ago while leading a retreat at the Cambridge Zen Center. She was a long-time student in the Kwan Um Zen school, but had become angry at Zen Master Seung Sahn.

Zen is not necessarily about developing some

She started the interview by telling me how angry she was, then began enumerating what she felt were his faults and shortcomings. She went on for a long time; I listened and listened and listened. Finally, at a certain point she seemed to have expended herself, so I said to her, "Zen Master Seung Sahn always teaches this [*hits floor*]. If you don't imitate him, how will you reveal it?" Immediately, without thinking, she hit the floor and burst out laughing, loudly and fully. When she finished, she [*hits floor*] digested this in a way she had never digested it before.

Ti-ts'ang makes *his* statement when he walks from east to west, west to east, and then stands still. When the national teacher says, "That is your teacher's, but what is *yours*?" Ti-ts'ang replies, "I've already shown you." Zen is not necessarily about developing some kind of originality. Zen is about digesting and assimilating clear perception and clear understanding. If originality emerges, then originality emerges. If it is strictly this [*hits floor*] once again, then it is just that once again for the very first time.

On another occasion, Zen Master Chih-kung said to Ti-ts'ang, "The sun is rising too early," and Ti-ts'ang replied, "Just on time."

When Ti-ts'ang first left Ma-tsu's temple, he established his own teaching center at a place called Ti-ts'ang. (He adopted that name as his own). Once a layman came for an interview and asked Ti-ts'ang, "Is there heaven and hell?" Ti-ts'ang answered, "Yes, there is." The layman then asked, "Do the three jewels of Buddha, dharma, and sangha exist?" "Yes, they do." The layman asked many more questions of a philosophical nature, and with each one, Ti-ts'ang answered in the affirmative. Finally the layman asked, "Don't you make a mistake by answering this way?" Ti-ts'ang replied, "Have you called on other teachers before?" The layman said he had called on Zen Master Ching-shan. "What did Ching-shan have to say?" Ti-ts'ang asked. "Ching-shan said that none of these things exist." Ti-ts'ang then inquired, "Do you have a wife?" The layman said he did. "Does Zen Master Ching-shan have a wife?" "No, he doesn't." Then Ti-ts'ang commented, "Well, for him it's appropriate to say none of these things exist." [*laughter*] The layman bowed, thanked him for his teaching, then left.

Around this time, the late 700s to early 800s—long before Zen went into Japan, Vietnam or any of these countries to the east of China—monks came from Korea and studied with a number of Great Master Ma-tsu's students. After returning to Korea, they founded what became known as the Nine Mountain Schools, the earliest Zen tradition in Korea. The schools were not different in their teaching, but were located on nine different mountains. Three of the founding masters were students of Ti-ts'ang, including Zen Master Toui, who died in 825. He had gone to China in 784 and returned to Korea in 818. Actually, both Ti-ts'ang and Pai-chang recognized his ability and sanctioned him as a teacher.

Not much of Toui's teaching has come down to us, but I will read one short section of it. Toui had been asked by a scholar about certain philosophical points in Buddhism. In response, he just held up one fist and said, "All of the teachings of the scriptures are contained in this." The questioner asked, "Then what is the purpose of believing, understanding, practicing and realizing, and what can these achieve?" Toui responded, "Zen is to make one believe, practice and realize the principle of without thought, without cultivation. What matters is the direct pointing to the true nature of your mind. Therefore, in the five divisions of the teachings there is also, besides the scriptural teachings, mind-to-mind transmission. Worshiping Buddha statues is nothing more than resorting to an expedient for those who do not understand true nature. However many scriptures you have finished reading over the many years, I think you will not understand through them the way of mind-to-mind transmission."

Zen Master Hyech'ol was another who went to China and studied with Ti-ts'ang, although he arrived only in 814, the year Ti-ts'ang passed away. It is said, however, that Hyech'ol's practice was so strong that Ti-ts'ang was able to give him sanction and establish him as a teacher even though their contact was short.

According to a story telling of Hyech'ol's arrival in China, he happened to be traveling on a boat carrying a bunch of criminals. When they docked at the port in China, Hyech'ol was mistaken for one of the prisoners and brought

kind of originality.

before the magistrate. All he would say in his defense was that he was a monk. The magistrate did not believe him and sentenced him along with the others. After that, Hyech'ol just sat in a deep state of meditation. He did not protest; he just sat there. The magistrate decided to execute thirty of the convicts as an example to anyone else, and Hyech'ol was included in that group. As he awaited execution, Hyech'ol remained in the deep state of meditation. The magistrate thought this was rather odd and asked who he was. Finally, becoming convinced that Hyech'ol was, indeed, a monk, the magistrate released him. It is said in the story that when he was arrested Hyech'ol did not particularly protest or look disturbed and when he was released he did not particularly seem overjoyed, he just went on his way.

A short piece of Hyech'ol's teaching also has come down to us. Hyech'ol said, "Originally there is no such thing as Buddha, but by necessity the name was given to him. Originally there is no such thing as mind. To attain enlightenment is to realize the one thing. For the sake of illustration, it is said that the one thing is empty, but it is not really empty—mind of no mind is the true mind, wisdom of no wisdom is the true wisdom."

Hong-Jik, another monk who studied with Ti-ts'ang, returned to Korea and became a great Zen master. Although little is known of him, he is mentioned in an inscription on another Zen master's memorial plaque. It states, "As for Hong-Jik's Zen spirit, he practiced it without any trace of practice, attained enlightenment without any enlightenment. In his daily meditation he was always quiet like a great mountain, and when he moved it was as if all the echoes of the great mountain were roaring."

Now, returning to the case, the first paragraph says, "A monk asked Great Master Ma, 'Please, Master, going beyond the four words and one hundred negations, directly point out to me the meaning of the coming from the West.'" There is a note at the bottom of the page regarding the four words and one hundred negations: "Four words are 'Existence is emptiness, no-existence is no-emptiness.'" These four words are repeatedly negated according to some procedure of Indian philosophy to make one hundred negations.

This is in accordance with the philosophy of the *Heart Sutra*. Sometimes the four words are expressed as four propositions: existence, non-existence; both existence and non-existence; and neither existence nor non-existence.

An old commentary says, "Existence is slander by exaggeration. Non-existence is slander by underestimation. Both existence and non-existence are slander by contradiction. Neither existence nor non-existence is slander by intellectual fabrication." Another way of saying that is, "Everything is not it, nothing is not it." This means it is just like the Zen circle: full, empty, complete. Each and every thing is full and empty and complete just as it is.

This case talks about going beyond, or abandoning, the four propositions and one hundred negations, and then asks about the meaning of Bodhidharma's coming from the West. "Why did Bodhidharma (*C. P'u-t'i-ta-mo J. Daruma*) come to China from India?" is a standard Zen phrase that means, "What is the living meaning of Buddhism? What is the living meaning of Zen?" You could ask, "Abandoning or not abandoning, going beyond or not going beyond, where is the living meaning of Buddhism not already clear?"

In a later, similar story, Zen Master Ang Sahn (*C. Yang-shan J. Kyozan Ejaku*) has a dream in which he gives a dharma speech in one of the celestial realms. He mounts the rostrum and hits the gavel on the table, then says, "The dharma of the great wide vehicle goes beyond the four propositions and the one hundred negations. Listen carefully, listen carefully."

If you listen full of care and allow the true spirit of listening to emerge spontaneously, that is the great wide vehicle of compassionate connection with this world. To *just listen* is a rare, rare event, but it is nothing special.

In the case, Ma-tsu says it a little differently. He does not say, "Listen carefully, listen carefully." When the monk asks, "Going beyond the four propositions and the one hundred negations [the totality of Buddhist philosophy, everything that is taught in the scriptures and in the teaching], directly point out for me the meaning of the coming from the West [the living spirit of Zen]," he is asking Ma-tsu to show it to him as a living fact, not as verbal philosophizing and conceptualizing. When Ma-tsu says, "*I'm tired today and can't explain to you,*" those words already reveal the living meaning of Buddhism. No doubt this monk thought Ma-tsu's answer was going to be something extraordinary, something unusual.

In the introduction to this case, written three to four hundred years after the interchange actually happened, there is a statement about this *not explaining*:

Zen Master Yuan-Wu said, "In explaining the dharma, there is neither explanation nor teaching. In listening to the dharma, there is neither hearing nor attainment. Since explanation neither explains nor teaches, how can it compare to not explaining? Since listening neither hears nor attains, how can it compare to not listening? Still, no explaining and no listening, still amount to something."

One of Ma-tsu's other students, Layman Pang said, "My great attainment is when I'm tired, I sleep; when I'm hungry, I eat." You could add to that a third: "If someone else is hungry, then give them something to eat."

Ma-tsu's teaching, as well as the teaching of his school and his successors, was fundamentally about the function of our natural being—to not hold anything and to just let the function of our natural being emerge: eating time, just eat; sleeping time, just sleep. "I'm tired today" is just *I'm tired today*. That is all. Sad time, just sad. Happy time, just happy. Relating time, just connect. This means, just let your natural function come forward and connect with the situation. That is the impetus for feeding someone else if he or she is hungry. To function naturally does not mean, "I do exactly what I please." It means I let my natural function emerge as it connects with the exact situation I am in. If someone is hungry, connect with that. If someone is sad, connect with that. If someone is happy, connect with that. Moment by moment let the natural function emerge and connect.

Ma-tsu says, "I'm tired today and can't explain to you. Go ask Ti-ts'ang." If this monk had been really sharp at that time, he would have just bowed to Ma-tsu and said, "It's already appeared, no need to go ask Ti-ts'ang. Thank you for your not explaining." But the monk did not quite get it, so he innocently went on to Ti-ts'ang. From one point of view, this story is about three thieves and an innocent. Each of the thieves is teaching something, but the innocent is also teaching something just by his guilelessness.

When the monk asks Ti-ts'ang, he responds, "Why didn't you ask the Master?" "But I did ask the Master," says the monk, "and he told me to come here and ask you." Ti-ts'ang immediately replies, "I have a headache today and can't explain." *I have a headache* is just "I have a headache," explaining is extra. Ti-ts'ang's answer is the second revelation of the living meaning of the Zen tradition. Then Ti-ts'ang tells the monk, "Go ask Elder Brother Hai," and when he does, Hai says, "At this point, all the more I don't understand."

Now we have *can't explain, can't explain, don't understand*. Explaining is the four propositions and the one hundred negations. Not explaining, not understanding is the transcendence of ideas, concepts, words and speech. When the monk related this to Great Master Ma, Ma said, "Tsang's head is white, Hai's head is black." This last statement is enigmatic. In the poem after the case, there is a line that says, "Great Master Lin Chi isn't yet a thief who can steal in broad daylight." This relates to a comment Zen Master Seol Bong (C. Hsueh-feng J. Seppo Gison) made when he heard a story of Lin-chi's encounter with a particular monk. Lin-chi (J. Rinzai) had suddenly put forward something of a shocking nature to this monk. Seol Bong said, "Lin Chi is very much like a thief who steals in broad daylight." This means he has suddenly taken something away from the monk. But the poem says he is not yet a thief who can steal in broad daylight, meaning that compared to the three thieves in this story, Lin-chi is not so sharp; he is not such a clever thief. Those three can pull it off in broad daylight: "I'm tired, can't explain," "I have a headache, can't explain," "At this point, I don't understand." That is real thievery. By comparison, Lin-chi is too rough, too obvious.

In *The Book of Serenity* there is a comment about this particular line: "This is very much like Hu Bai, the thief who was robbed by trickery by Hu Hai." An old Chinese legend tells of a thief named Hu Bai who was tricked by another thief, Hu Hai. One of them wore a white bandana and the other a black bandana. Here, when Ma-tsu is told about Ti-ts'ang's comment and Pai-chang's (Hai's) comment, he says, "Tsang's head is white, Hai's head is black." This means these two were great thieves, and of those two, the one who had the best trickery was the one who said, "I do not understand."

"Neither existence nor non-

That is very much at the heart of the Korean Zen tradition: *Don't understand, don't know*. If you completely *don't know*, then conceptualization is all taken away. This points to the teacher and the teaching as thieves, meaning that the teaching has to have the ability to cut off the flow of words and speech, ideas and concepts, and take that away from the student. If you sit meditation or observe your mind in daily activities, you may notice that once you get past the stage of settling your distracted mind, you will almost continuously be explaining your experience to yourself moment by moment by moment. We all tend to engage in this ongoing commentary on living, trying to consolidate our ground or to feel more secure about our experience. Yet, this ongoing explanation is, in its fundamental form, a lie. These explanations are not the actual facts of our experience. That is why Ma-tsu and his student Ti-ts'ang both say, "Can't explain." When the teaching takes away from you, either suddenly or gradually, this ongoing commentary on your own experiences, then you fall into your actual living experience completely, without separation. It is important to have all that commentary stolen away from you. That is why a commentator says that these three are thieves, the third being the greatest thief. If you completely let go of concepts and completely and only *don't know*, moment by moment, then each thing becomes clear as it is.

Zen Master Wu-tsu (*J. Goso Hoen*), commenting on the line about the head of one thief being white and the other black, says simply, "Mister Dust Sweeper." In Buddhism, you find the word dust used in a particular way. For example, there is the story about the Sixth Patriarch's poem. The head monk had written a poem on the wall of the monastery, which said, "The body is the Bodhi tree [the place where Buddha sat and attained his enlightenment],/The mind is the clear mirror's stand./Constantly we should clean them, so that no dust collects." Then the Sixth Patriarch composed a poem challenging that one, saying, "Bodhi [Sanskrit for wisdom] has no tree. The clear mirror has no stand. Originally nothing. Where is dust?"

One time Zen Master Joju (*C. Chao-chou J. Joshu*) was sweeping the courtyard in his monastery. A monk said to him, "In this

immaculate and pristine place, where can you find dust?" Joju immediately replied, "Here's another little bit," meaning if you make too much of a big deal about there being nothing, then that is also dust. On the one hand, clean dust; on the other, where is dust?

Dust in Buddhist philosophy means each phenomenal occurrence. For example, if you look at a beam of light indoors, you may see dust particles floating, millions upon millions of phenomena. The whole world of phenomenal experience is referred to as dust because each and every phenomena is a momentary flash of existence. If you sit in meditation and watch your experience, you will see each thing flash into existence moment by moment by moment.

Sometimes all the various senses are referred to as dust. What this means is, if you relate to seeing or hearing or sensing and feeling in a dualistic way—subject is here, object is over there—that is creating dust. But if subject and object, inside and outside, all—*ptchh!*—come together, then that is just complete seeing, complete hearing, complete sensing. Sometimes the whole world is referred to as "dust world." (*Cf.*, Luke 6:39-42. Eccles. 12:7.)

So in commenting on these thieves by saying, "Mister Dust Sweeper," Zen Master Wu-tsu is implying that we have to sweep away the sense of expectation in our practice. We all come to practice with some set of expectations, some of them quite obvious, some subtle. The longer you practice, the more you see the infinity of expectations we all have the capacity to bring to something as simple as just sitting, just walking, just listening, just eating, just sleeping, just helping someone. It is necessary to sweep away all those expectations and all of the conceptual superstructure that we build around our experiences. If you do that, then you fall into the world of *just now, just as it is*.

I hope that we all can allow the teaching to steal all of that away from us and go on to help this world with its very large headache.

[Hits floor three times.]

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existence is slander by intellectual fabrication."

**RESPECTING
OUR
ANCESTRAL
PRACTICE:
MORNING
BELL
CHANT
PART 4**

Zen Master Hae Kwang

▶▶ 7
The Pure Land

NAMU SO BANG JONG TO GUNG NAK SE GYE
Namu western pure land extreme joy world
Become one with the western Pure Land, a world of utmost bliss

SAM SHIM NYUNG MAN OK IL SHIB IL MAN GU CHON O BAEK
thirty-six billion one hundred nineteen thousand five hundred
The thirty-six billion, one hundred nineteen thousand, five hundred

DONG MYONG DONG HO
same name same meaning
names of the Buddha are all the same name.

DAE JA DAE BI A MI TA BUL
great love great compassion Amita Buddha
Great love, great compassion, Amita Buddha.

NAMU SO BANG JONG TO GUNG NAK SE GYE
Namu western pure land extreme joy world
Become one with the western Pure Land, a world of utmost bliss

BUL SHIN JANG GWANG
Buddha body long wide
This Buddha's body is long and wide.

SANG HO MU BYON GUM SAEK KWANG MYONG
face good no limit gold color shine bright
This auspicious face is without boundary, and this golden color shines everywhere,

BYON JO BOP KYE
everywhere illumine dharma world
pervading the entire universe.

SA SHIP PAR WON DO TAL JUNG SAENG
forty eight vows free save many beings
Forty-eight vows to save all sentient beings.

BUL GA SOL BUL GA SOL CHON
not can say not can say opposite
No one can say, nor say its opposite.

inexplicably ten times larger than the first) in this section of the chant all reduce to the same name. So Vairochana and Amitabha, the two Buddhas we have met in this chant, and all other Buddhas are all the same Buddha.

And all of these Buddhas and Buddha fields are none other than our own minds. This deep teaching is driven home in the chant's concluding section, the Mantra of Original Mind's Sublimity. This mantra recalls the line earlier in the chant, "All things are made by the mind alone." Zen practice is a deep investigation of the mind. As Mu Mun said, "Buddhism takes mind as its foundation." The expedient means that Buddhism has developed to bring us to our mind's foundation include the sutras, poetry and philosophy that are epitomized in our chanting, especially in the Morning Bell Chant. Zen schools have always used these expedient means freely and in the spirit of genuine practice to instill the essential teachings of Buddhism into the body-minds of practitioners.

BUL GA SOL HANG HA SA BUL CHAL MI JIN SU
not can say eternal river sand Buddha fields fine dust number
No one can say, because this Buddha is like the Ganges's innumerable grains of sand, or the infinite moments in all time, or innumerable dust particles,

DO MAK CHUG WI MU HAN GUK SU
rice hemp bamboo reeds no limit extreme number
or countless blades of grass, numberless number.

SAM BAENG NYUNG SHIM MAN OK IL SHIB IL MAN GU CHON O BAEK
three hundred sixty billion one hundred nineteen thousand five hundred
The three hundred sixty billion, one hundred nineteen thousand, five hundred

DONG MYONG DONG HO
same name same meaning
names of the Buddha are all the same name.

DAE JA DAE BI
great love great compassion
Great love, great compassion,

A DUNG DO SA
our guide teacher
our original teacher.

KUM SAEK YO RAE NAMU AMITA BUL
gold form thus come namu Amita Buddha
Homage to the golden Tathagata Amita Buddha.

NAMU AMITABUL (5x)
Namu Amita Buddha
Become one: infinite time, infinite space Buddha.

▶▶ 8
Concluding Mantra

BON SHIM MI MYO JIN ON
original mind sublime mystic true words
The mantra of original mind's sublimity:

DA NYA TA
OM A RI DA RA SA BA HA (3x)

10]

11]

*From a dharma talk by Grazyna Perl JDPSN
at the Paris Zen Center*

These days many people are concerned about freedom, but their idea of freedom is not so clear. Today I would like to talk about true freedom or what we call in Zen, inner freedom. Often people say: "I am free! I do things in this way, which is just the way I like to do them." Other people say: "I am free. So I do things in another way, which is just the way I like to do them." Is that true freedom? No! As soon as we say: "I must do this because I like it," that is not freedom, because we are being controlled by our likes and dislikes. Of course we have our preferences. That is not good, and not bad, it's just the way it is. Inner freedom, however, means that we do not have to follow our preferences.

I recall a story of an event which took place at Providence Zen Center in the seventies. This was a time when many young "hippies" were interested in Zen. One day Zen Master Seung Sahn ran into one of these long haired young men in the hall and said, "Your hair is too long. You have to cut it." The man replied, "Of course, sir." At that moment Zen Master Seung Sahn started to laugh and said, "Wonderful! Now you can keep your hair." In the seventies long hair was very important, but for that young man there was no hindrance. He could keep his hair or he could cut it. Either way, it was fine—no problem. True inner freedom means that we can do anything.

Next important point is: Why do we do the things we do? Many times people will say, "Me, I am free. I want to do this, and I do not want to do that." But, again, that's

just following our desire. True inner freedom is finally not for us. Zen practice means that our action, our speech, our enlightenment, our freedom—all are for others. If it helps someone that I cut my hair, then I will cut my hair. I have short hair, so I hope that everyone is happy.

[Suddenly someone in the audience said:] "I am not happy, because I have long hair."

Then cut your hair, and you will be free.

Question: What is enlightenment and what is its purpose?

Perl PSN: You want to know what is enlightenment? Why don't you ask the sky? Look, it's already complete. It already understands its job. Only human beings don't. That's why they want philosophy and enlightenment, but they don't want practice too much. In true enlightenment there is no enlightenment. Only for others. Only: how can I help? You must understand your correct function, your correct job. What are you? Why are you here?

In one of our chants it says: Become Buddha, become dharma, become sangha. Buddha means awaken. Dharma means wisdom. Sangha means compassion. Many here understand that already, but you must make one more step. You must attain that.

Then what is the true meaning of enlightenment? Tell me, tell me!!!

The sky is blue; the water flows to the ocean.

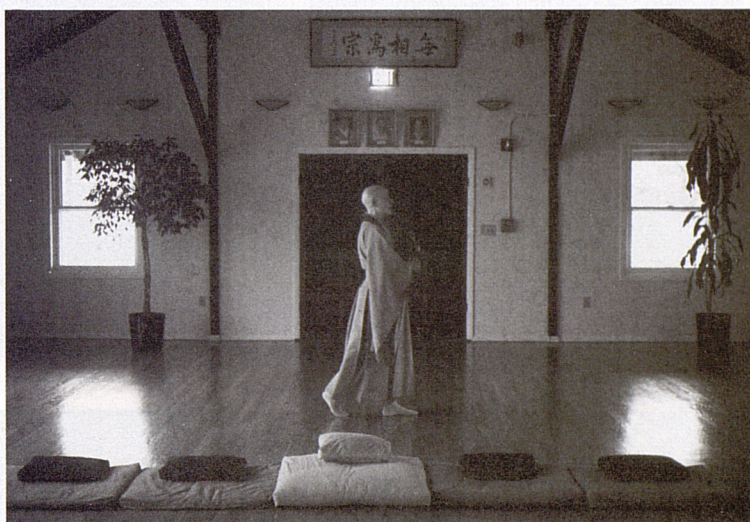


This is an excerpt from Dr. Roland Wöhrle-Chon JDPSN's doctoral dissertation in social psychology.

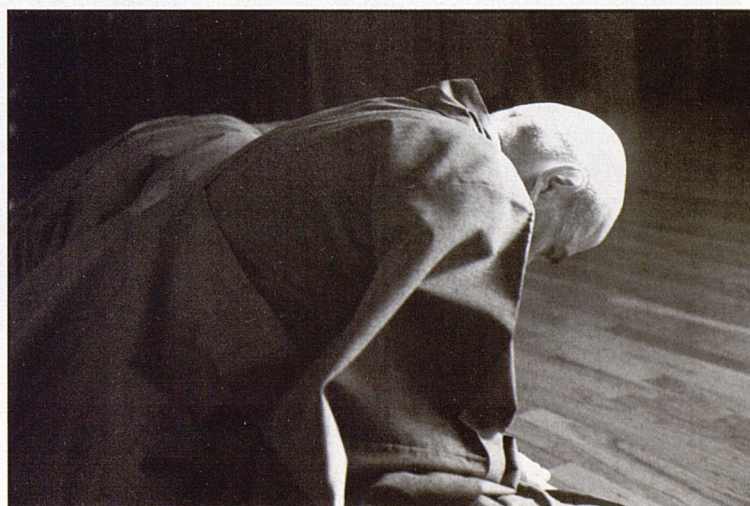
For a Zen student, the following text is a big mistake! It creates the impression that an effort will be made here to observe Zen objectively and turn it into an object with the intention of formulating empirically confirmable propositions. But be assured that I am not following that tack because, in my opinion, scientific methodology does not help us understand Zen. A human being is not a lab rabbit—which, by the way, rabbits are not either—but rather an entity with hopes, individual dispositions, life projects and the anticipation of death. Zen and the meditative path in general emphasize primarily a furthering and realization of the whole person.

There have been many experiments over the years involving meditating people. In 1993, the two Japanese researchers Akira Kasamatsu and Tomio Hirai, conducted an experiment with 48 meditators in an EEG laboratory. They found that after about fifty seconds of sitting Zen with eyes open there occurred slow and regular alpha and theta brain waves. This is normally characteristic of a relaxed, wide-awake mind with the eyes closed or a state of extreme deactivation. From the perspective of orthodox brain research this result is a paradox called concentration without tension or “relaxed high-tension.” It is marked by a high degree of conscious activity along with a de-activated experience of the ego. We can therefore summarize the practice of Zen as a kind of detached attention or awareness. The practitioner tries to let thoughts, ideas, images and feelings pass by without holding onto them or getting involved with them until they reach a condition of before-thinking.

However, can this be understood as a mental experience at all? The mental state of the Zen practitioner is certainly not a form of unconsciousness. On the contrary, the clarity of consciousness and the ability to perceive, are increased. The German word for consciousness, *Bewusstsein*, is made up of two words “conscious” (*bewusst*) and “being” (*sein*), and refers to a kind of “conscious-being” or being-conscious. The contents of consciousness are perceived during the formal practice of Zen but are not actively processed, not conceptualized or reacted to. Through this process of non-doing, conscious-



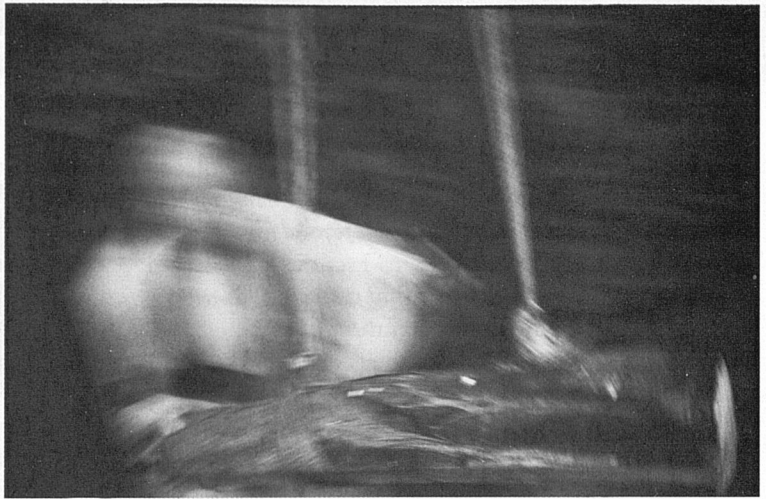
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ness loses more and more of its personal egoistic involvement. Without reference to an experiencing "I" or to the individual's concept of self, the reality that is experienced through Zen is realized in an intense and direct way. Here our everyday relational reality is not turned into a subjective inner experience or into an event that can be made use of or "evaluated." That means it is not turned into our *individual* reality.

Zen cannot be reduced to mere mental events in the way that neuropsychology wants to investigate them. The world is not in our heads; rather, we, along with our heads, are in the world. In the west people still seem inclined to understand events as mental, as events-in-our-heads. Maybe that is one of the reasons that western man feels obligated to judge, to manipulate and impose himself upon the world. In contrast, Zen is more a matter of non-doing, of acceptance, of letting reality be. Zen consciousness, or conscious-being, integrates body and spirit. Their relationship to each other is experienced directly as the relationship of man in the world. Zen is the wisdom and the experience of an intimate connectedness and wholeness of the complex of man and world, of subject and object in the here and now. It is not a kind of experience; it is a mode of being.

Guttman, one of the few neuropsychologists who does not simply deny the questions posed by mysticism, "posits two independent dimensions of consciousness. One represents pure activation, including all the various states of consciousness from wide-awake concentrated attention to the deepest unconsciousness. The other dimension, in contrast, represents the clarity of the I, reaching from the obvious experience of a subject-object duality (as is usual for our daily lives and is thoroughly useful) all the way to a complete dissolution of the consciousness of an I." (Guttman, G., & Bestenreiner, F., 1991). Wide-awake attention without any dualistic condition of consciousness would be a possible combination that would describe Zen-consciousness according to Guttman's two-dimensional model. Thus, from Guttman's perspective, the concept of I as a "primary psychological given" could fall away through "a process of differentiation" (ibid. 40). The model makes clear that Zen conscious-being has a deconstructive effect, for, at this point, there is no subjective consciousness left in which the "I" could construct its world. Here, the world



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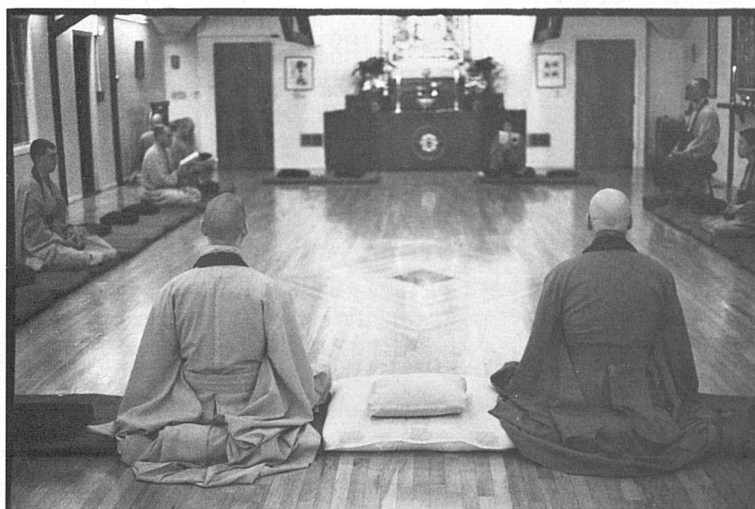
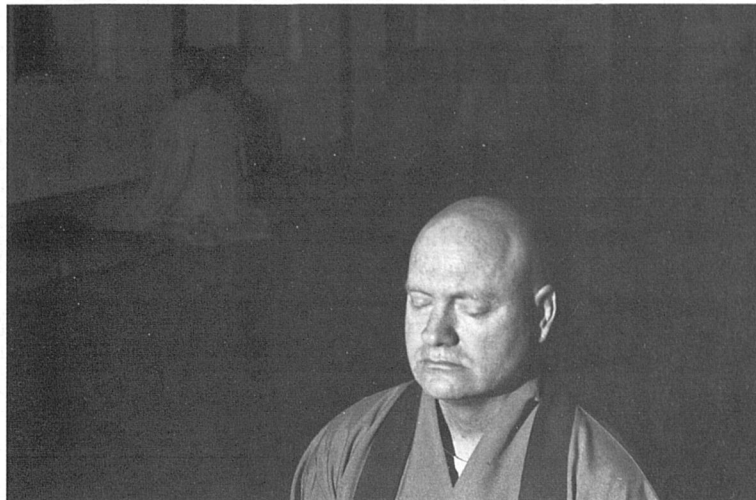
is integrated with consciousness, while the notion of an experience determined and filtered by subjective consciousness is lacking. The possibility arises that human beings, living in a world experienced without an I, could be connected to the world through a process of empathy.

When Zen teachers say that Zen is a return to original nature, what they are pointing to is this direct experience of the unity of man and world. This means that all living beings, including plants and anorganic material, participate in the "just nowness" of existence and experience, of being and letting be. Ego-less Zen consciousness, like all mystical experiences, is an achievement brought about by practice. We must practice in order to leave behind our usual subjective grasping for reality, in favor of an unconstructed existence.

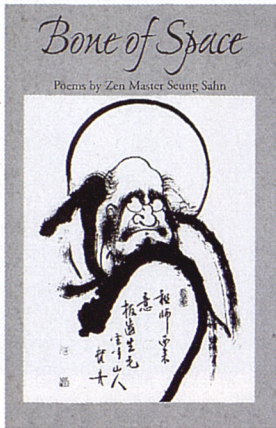
Zen consciousness allows experience and being to be simultaneous. This means that Zen practitioners are more open to unconscious realms and experience themselves as integrated with the world to a higher degree. The more a person can live in a state of forgetting the self, the more they will be psychologically healthy and free of stress.

Zen is not based on moralistic thinking, nor can moral imperatives be derived from it. However, Zen practice means a new evaluation of reality which can lead to a new moral sense. This has two aspects: First, the world loses its meaningfulness for the subject. Life becomes a theatrical play in which we cease being actors. We become the audience, no longer enmeshed in a seriousness which can make us blind. It is a perspective through which the world is transformed into a drama that can be observed in a disinterested manner. Secondly, the I is completely integrated with the not-I, i.e. becomes one with it. Here consciousness is directly acquainted with the illusions and dreams of life, and one comes to feel the pain of the whole world as their own. When inside and outside become one, I am connected in a direct way with all living beings. Their suffering becomes my suffering, just as their joy becomes my joy. The observer does not stand in opposition to the observed. One is not controlled by their reactions, opinions or feelings, and is therefore not helplessly entangled in reality. Rather, one is connected with the world which they themselves *are* and at the same time completely free.

Into what could the rhinoceros stick his horn at this point? (cf. Tao-Te-King, chapter 50)

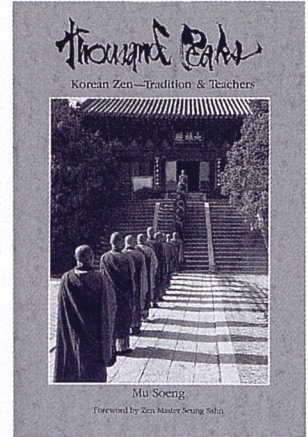


A fresh approach to Zen

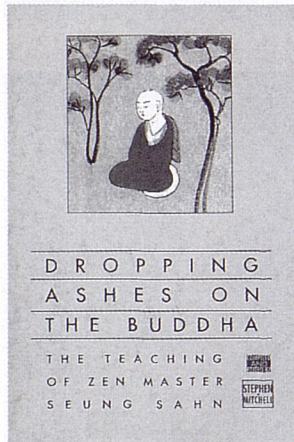


Bone of Space: Poems by Zen Master Seung Sahn. This collection captures a master's thoughts during everyday life—while traveling, talking on the phone, attending a friend's funeral. Primary Point Press edition, 1992. 128 pages.
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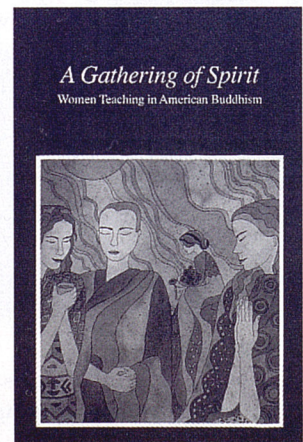


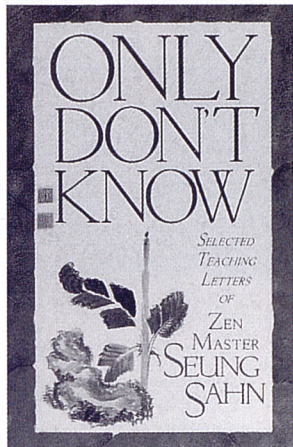
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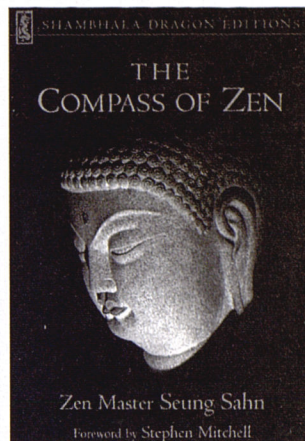
Dropping Ashes on the Buddha: The Teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn. Compiled and edited by Stephen Mitchell. A delightful, irreverent, and often hilarious record of interactions with Western students. 244 pages.
Grove Press. ISBN 0-8021-3052-6. \$12.00

A Gathering of Spirit: Women Teaching in American Buddhism. Edited by Ellen Sidor. Talks and discussions from three landmark conferences at Providence Zen Center. Third edition, 1992. 156 pages.
Primary Point Press. ISBN 0-942795-05-9. \$11.95

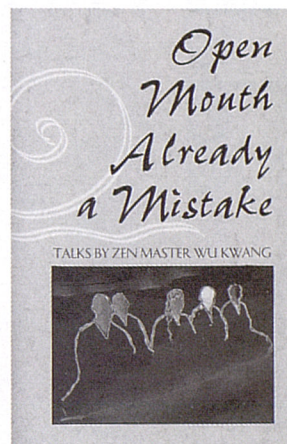




Only Don't Know: Teaching Letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn. Issues of work, relationships, and suffering are discussed as they relate to meditation practice. 1999. 230 pages.
Shambhala. ISBN 1-57062-432-1. \$14.95



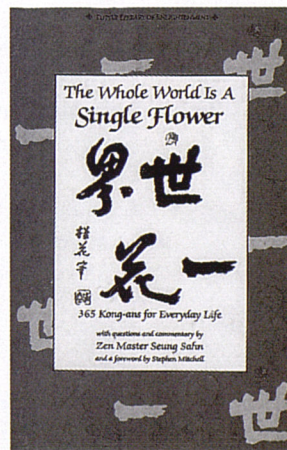
Compass of Zen. Zen Master Seung Sahn. Compiled and edited by Hyon Gak Sunim. It is a simple, clear, and often hilarious presentation of the essential teachings of the main Buddhist traditions—culminating in Zen—by one of the most beloved Zen Masters of our time. 1997. 394 pages.
Shambhala. ISBN 1-57062-329-5. \$21.95



Open Mouth Already a Mistake: Talks by Zen Master Wu Kwang. Teaching of a Zen master who is also a husband, father, practicing Gestalt therapist and musician. 1997. 238 pages.
Primary Point Press. ISBN 0-942795-08-3. \$18.95



Wake Up! On the Road with a Zen Master. An entertaining documentary that captures Zen Master Seung Sahn's energy and presents the core of his teaching. 1992. VHS. 54 minutes.
Primary Point Press. ISBN 0-942795-07-5. \$30.00



The Whole World is a Single Flower: 365 Kong-ans for Everyday Life. Zen Master Seung Sahn. The first kong-an collection to appear in many years; Christian, Taoist, and Buddhist sources. 1993. 267 pages.
Charles Tuttle. ISBN 0-8048-1782-0. \$22.95



Andrzej Piotrowski JDPSN

From a talk at the 2002 European Sangha Weekend at Paris Zen Center

Today we are celebrating Buddha's Birthday. Zen Master Seung Sahn says that being born is already a mistake. An eminent Korean teacher, Sosan Taesa, once said, "Before the ancient Buddha was born, one thing was already perfectly clear. Shakyamuni Buddha never understood it, how could he transmit it to Mahakasyapa?" So, today we are celebrating the big mistake Buddha made a long time ago. However, this mistake was necessary to teach sentient beings about their original treasure. His birth was like a finger pointing at the moon. As the story goes, when he came out of his mother's side, he took seven steps in each of the four directions, held one finger up and one down and said, "In the heavens above and the earth below, only I am holy." This "I" is no-I and belongs to every human being; it is our original nature. In fact his whole life was pointing at the inherent clarity and wisdom we all possess.

A famous philosopher once said that life is an incurable disease because it always ends with death. Sometimes when we look at human beings' lives it's difficult to refrain from such conclusions. People constantly follow their desire, anger and ignorance, creating senseless suffering for themselves and the world around them. Buddha said that human beings have no meaning and no direction. Despite the fact that we are endowed with this one pure and clear thing, we are almost completely blind to this truth. So, being born seems to be a sad mistake. But perceiving this does not change anything. We must apply the medicine given to us by the Buddha so that we could transform lack of meaning into great meaning and lack of direction into great direction. We must really attain, "Only I alone am holy," and help this world to awaken to this truth. This is the only medicine for the sickness of life.

Buddha's life was the best example of how to correct the mistake of being born. I thank him for the help he gave our world. But being attached to Buddha can also be a problem. Sometimes we can think with great pride, "I'm Buddhist. I follow the noblest of truths. I'm somebody special." There is a very wise saying: "When I was a Buddhist I had conflict with the whole world. But when I'm the Buddha the whole world is in harmony." That's why Zen Master Un Mun said, commenting on Buddha's birthday, "If I had been there, I would have grabbed a big stick, killed him and fed him to a hungry dog. Then the whole world would be at peace." So, when we really put it all down, we can clearly perceive one pure Buddha-substance, which was apparent in everything even before Buddha was born. I'm grateful to all of you for making this mistake of being born and fixing it by being here and practicing together.

mistake

Someone knocks
wood
at dawn

I wait
under a dark window
that crawls
toward light

somewhere
a small bell
crimps the naked time

released at sunset
to a wind in the
garden

the tree falls through me

Pat Reed

No sun
and no ducks

and a whole day
where I hold still

my lap
gives birth
to hands

shook free
of me

Pat Reed

What was given
in holding still

gone off in the
wind

rags and long bamboo
we nudge the high cobwebs

and wake the delicate spiders

Pat Reed

Daylight pulls
me up
and the green
world

glows in the
small high
window

getting me used to
enough

Pat Reed

On His Blindness

The crows spatter the spent meadow:
Crushed grasses and shorn goldenrod.
Dark water gathers in hoof-marks,
Gaping, naked and sour as mouths.

In a moment, the crows tangle and scatter
Like a black pot shot in the air.
They throw their scene against a stone—
Then, in one instinctual motion

The crows constringe in a single tree.
There they tense, like fingers in a fist:
Ashes, bright in the beautifying eye.

James Najarian
Cambridge Zen Center

Family

Tom Campbell

The one moment that before it we were going this way and after it we were going that way. In this mystery, everything is out there from the first, but you don't realize it.

—Tom Spanbauer

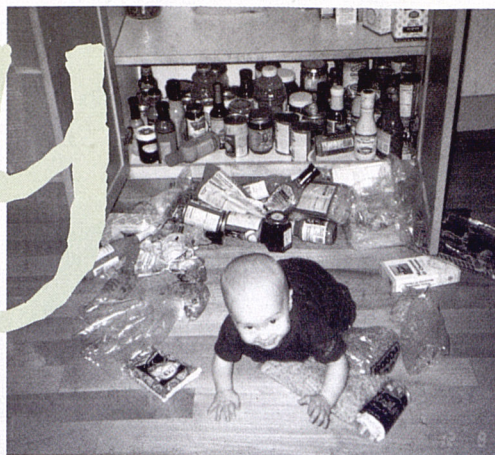
In the City of Shy Hunters, 2001

As Zen students, we embrace change every moment. In family life, change is constant: cleaning up piles of toys and clothes, agreeing on meals, and making decisions. Being in family requires a huge don't know mind. The requirement to be completely flexible ranges from the simplest tasks to more momentous surprises.

In the June of 2000, it came as a complete surprise when my wife Stephanie announced she was pregnant with our third child. At age 47, I had deferred the vasectomy appointment, leaving the door cracked to a major twist in fate.

With a sinking feeling, I contemplated the losses. First, it was the loss of freedom. Second, was the all-consuming tiredness and years of diapers. Third, was old age. It didn't help when my son Corey promptly informed me that at age 65, the new child would still be living at home with us. He of course would be long gone.

Slowly, Stephanie and I began to dig into the fears of what a third child would bring. It was not just coping with the load of another child—it was our own difficulties and relationship. Our Zen practice helped us to



delve deeper into our direction, trust and vulnerabilities. After all, this child growing in her belly had cleared all kinds of hurdles to get here and there was a purpose in being nested with our family.

We began to see the true gift that was presented to us—our relationship grew more powerful and intimate as never before. The priority of working the intense jobs of the past twenty years began to recede as I opened up to the opportunity to embrace the strength and complexity of family.

When the baby's birth was past due, our family had a welcoming ceremony of chanting and encouraging words to bring him into the world. With the right signal, Nicolas was born at home the next morning on February 22, 2001—a beautiful sunny day with his whole family at his side. What was originally an unconscious “mistake,” had become a wonderful awakening of love and conscious intention.

At mid-year, juggling three jobs and three kids, I decided to cut my work to part-time and build a home office. One morning after the kids and Stephanie went off to our school, I was practicing Zen in the living room where Nicolas

20]

*[poems at a retreat]
Ken Kessel, JDPSN*

[Amy]

Something over here
Something over there
The sky helps me
The wind helps me
If it's not
In the rustling leaves
Where is it?

[John]

Vast cloudless sky
Is not sky
Deep still ocean
Is not ocean
Clouds, waves
Embrace them
Get wet! Get wet!

Kyol Che

was born. I asked myself: What is my biggest challenge? How do I find this big “don’t know” in every moment? How can I be the best father and husband in this family?

After sitting, I was thinking about Zen Master Ji Bong’s five principal aspects of Zen training: finding our direction; cleaning our karma; focusing our attention; expanding our “generosity of spirit”; and, wisdom training. I realized I had to take the step of deepening my practice. Having never had the inclination to go off and do a 100-day Kyol Che, I had to figure out how to do it at home, with the family.

I decided at that moment to do my own family Kyol Che. After a repentance ceremony, I designed a do-able yet flexible schedule to fit in with family life: managing the household duties with three sons, a wife who had started a school, and my own part-time work. In essence, my other half-time job for the next 100 days was to be my practice and work with my questions. I set up practice for three times a day: morning for bows and sitting until Nicolas woke up—which was frequent; mid-day for long sittings; and night for a sitting period when everyone was in bed—usually at 11:00 pm. My work period involved diapers, lunches, shopping, cleaning, and outside for building a new garden space for spring.

More important than just the amount of sitting time I got, was bringing practice energy into all of my activities whether it being putting messes away, dealing with hurt feelings and anger, or coping with multiple conflicting needs. It was the challenge of sustaining a seamless, moment-to-moment awareness of change. The family Kyol Che provided new insights into the connection of all the different parts of my life.

Just before my 100 days ended, Nicolas turned one and it felt like my life had turned 360 degrees. And I realized another 100 days began—and another 1000 years.

The family Kyol Che should be another of our practice forms. For many of our families, it is a most focused and consuming effort: how to be fully engaged with our Zen practice without leaving home? Deepening our practice through family and relationships is a powerfully rich task. The ability to sit down in the middle of your life is invigorating and challenging. I encourage others to structure your own family Kyol Che.

Tom Campbell is a senior dharma teacher at the Dharma Sound Zen Center. He has been practicing with the Kwan Um School of Zen since 1977. He and his wife Stephanie, and sons Corey, Lucas, and Nicolas live in Seattle.



[Brad]

Dragon’s breath
Freezes in the snow
Ice lion
Melts in the sun
Passing through a
Valley of ghosts
Raindrops splatter
On Auburn Street

[Kuen]

Look with your ears
Listen with your eyes
Can the nose
Deceive the tongue?
Unhindered by the senses
Great compassionate dragon
Soars silently
Whoosh!

Brief Reviews

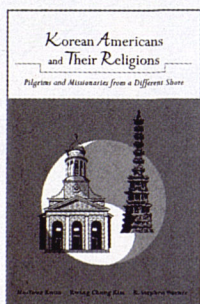
Judy Roitman JDPSN



Butterflies On A Sea Wind: Beginning Zen by Anne Rudloe, published by Andrews McNeel, Kansas City, 2002

Anne Rudloe is the abbot of the Cypress Tree Zen Group in Tallahassee, Florida. This book is basically a description of what it's like to be a relative beginner in Zen practice, both on and off the

cushion. Rudloe brings together three strands of her life: her experience practicing Zen (especially on retreats); her personal life—family, work, and ecological activism; and the natural world around her. Her description of practice deliberately focuses on its difficulties—no one reading this book will confuse Zen practice with relaxation techniques—and her own practice experience is embedded in clear descriptions of the broader picture of how both sangha and retreats are organized and function. Episodes from her personal life show the results and rewards of practice, as well as the ways in which we all fall short (and hence need to practice). Nature grounds her, and she has dedicated her professional life to its preservation. Her lyrical, meticulous descriptions of birds, water, plants and sky make the area around her home in Panacea, Florida, seem an enchanted place, one of the most beautiful on earth. I will never again see palmetto as scrub, or overlook the way creatures as small as captive brine shrimp reflect light.

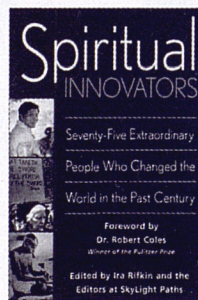


Korean Americans and Their Religions: Pilgrims and Missionaries from a Different Shore, ed. by Ho-Youn Kwon, Kwang Chung Kim, R. Stephen Warner, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001

An academic book of essays mostly presented at a conference and focused mostly on the Christianity

of the Korean American community; four of its fifteen chapters are on Buddhism. Two of these chapters feature prominent profiles of Zen Master Seung Sahn. *The Growth of Korean Buddhism in the United States, with Special Reference to Southern California* by Eui-Young Yu profiles six Zen teachers among other prominent personalities involved with Korean Buddhism in America (including at least two non-Korean Americans). It's interesting to see

our school in the broader context of Korean Buddhist activity in southern California—did you know that there's a temple in Los Angeles not in our school known as Kwan Um Sa? The two longest profiles are of Samu Sunim, based in Toronto and teaching mostly European-Canadians/Americans through his Zen Lotus Society; and of Zen Master Seung Sahn, giving a slightly different version than the canonical one most of us have heard. More interesting is Samu Sunim's very generous article *Turning the Wheel of Dharma in the West*, which has an excellent synopsis of the history of Buddhism in Korea, and then profiles three teachers: Ven. Dr. Seo, Kyung-Bo, a charismatic teacher who towards the end of his life became the self-proclaimed world dharma-rajā; Kusan Sunim, one of only two (the other is Zen Master Seung Sahn) Korean teachers who went out of their way to encourage western students to study in Korean monasteries; and Zen Master Seung Sahn. Samu Sunim also gives an extensive history and description of our school, and responds directly to charges made against Zen Master Seung Sahn and our school both by traditional Korean Buddhists and at least one former monk in our school (such charges include a confusion in the Korean community about our school having married monks, because lay people wear long robes; charges that Zen Master Seung Sahn basically moves too fast in making centers and teachers at all levels; that he encourages quantity at the expense of quality; and so on). Samu Sunim clearly has great respect for Zen Master Seung Sahn's teaching, compassion, and energy, and I recommend this article for its discussion of our school and founding teacher, its broader treatment of Korean Buddhism both in Korea and America, and for its indirect introduction to Samu Sunim.



Spiritual Innovators: Seventy-Five Extraordinary People Who Changed the World in the Past Century, ed. by Ira Rifkin and others, SkyLight Paths Publishing, projected publication date 2002

I have this book only in uncorrected proof, so things might have changed but from the Amazon.com reviews they have not changed that much.

The editors basically asked a bunch of people to list people they thought were spiritually important, collated and tweaked the results, and ended up with seventy-five people ranging from Dr. Bob, the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, to Pope John XXIII. Each of these people gets a profile of about two pages, followed by an extensive quote or two, and a brief bibliography. This format is guaranteed to oversimplify and even miss the point entirely—for example, Zen Master Seung Sahn is thrown into a group characterized by the chapter heading *They*

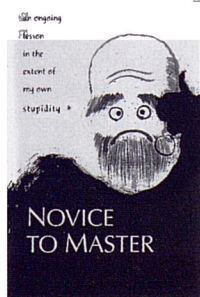
spoke from the power of silence, on the grounds that he was asked to maintain teaching silence for three years after receiving transmission.



Buddhism, Sexuality, and Gender, ed. by José Ignacio Cabezón, State University of New York Press, 1992

Okay, why am I reviewing an out-of-print academic compilation ten years after publication which I got for free because it was so tattered and faded sitting in a window display focused on something like basketball

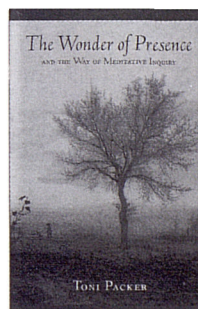
that the bookstore people couldn't bear asking me for money? Because it has stuff that shouldn't be lost to the broader community, including generous quotations from primary texts. The two articles of most interest to people in our school are Barbara E. Reed's *The Gender Symbolism of Kuan-Yin Bodhisattva*, and Miriam L. Levering's *Linchi (Rinzai) Ch'an and Gender: The Rhetoric of Equality and the Rhetoric of Heroism*. The complex and contradictory gender mythologies of Avalokitesvara/Kuan Yin make fascinating reading, and Reed's article in a relatively small number of pages manages not only to state it but to analyze it seriously in relation to both gender and culture. Her article is especially remarkable because it manages to go deeper than some of the much longer treatments of the subject that have appeared since. Levering's article focuses on a sermon honoring a woman lay practitioner of Ch'an, Lady Ch'in-kuo. This sermon is placed in the context of Ch'an teachings about the irrelevance of gender, in the context of ancient Chinese cultural premises about male and female and the rhetoric this engenders, and in the context of feminist rhetorical analysis. About half of this article consists of direct quotes from 8th to 12th century Ch'an texts, especially from Master Ta-hui, a champion of the hua-t'ou technique that is also prominent in Korean Zen, and it is terrific to meet these old masters face to face as they confront an issue we like to think we've invented, as well as to learn that female dharma heirs were not unknown in ancient Chinese Buddhism.



Novice to Master: An Ongoing Lesson in the Extent of My Own Stupidity, by Soko Morinaga Roshi, translated by Belenda Attaway Yamakawa, Wisdom Publications, 2001.

Lost and despairing at the end of World War II, barely managing to focus enough to graduate from high school, Morinaga became a Zen monk as a way of finding some sort

of discipline. This book is a memoir of his early days in training, interspersed with teaching and a number of vigorously told stories, some from the classic Zen tradition, and some from the lives of his friends and acquaintances. His early training was very physical—a lot of cleaning and caretaking. Then he moved into a training monastery, where he was intermittently beaten and verbally abused for three days outside the gate before being allowed in. The classic Rinzai style, as depicted here, is short on encouragement and long on disparagement. Tremendous determination, and maybe desperation, is needed in order to stick it out. Morinaga's practice in its early years was dominated not by serenity and calm, but by exhaustion and stress, which led, as they are supposed to in the Rinzai tradition, to a breakthrough, after which the real work could begin. Morinaga presents his weaknesses and doubts honestly, shows tremendous gratitude and respect for his teachers (including one of his secular teachers) and presents himself as not being particularly special. There is an interesting contrast between the memoir aspect of this book, which focuses on the difficulties of classic Rinzai training and the difficulties of Morinaga's life, and the teaching aspect, which simply and even gently encourages the reader, whether lay or monastic, practitioner or not, to believe in her/himself, to face each moment directly, and to live a clear life in the face of death. For example, talking of an old friend dying of cancer: "Always now—just now—come into being. Always now—just now—give yourself to death. Practicing this truth is Zen practice." (p. 132)



The Wonder of Presence and the Way of Meditative Inquiry by Toni Packer, Shambhala, 2002.

Toni Packer was supposed to be Philip Kapleau's dharma heir in a Rinzai-style tradition, but she broke with her training and founded a center in northern New York State with no formal hierarchy (although she is clearly in charge), no required activities, and pots of tea always

available. We could not be further in atmosphere from the monasteries of her original lineage. Packer's teaching is to be aware, and basically this book, taken from talks given on retreats, is a series of exhortations on why we should and how we can be aware. Her language is gentle and even a bit abstract. For example, taking a quote at random: "Meditation is coming into intimate touch with our habitual reactions of fear, desire, anger, tenderness, or whatever, discovering them freshly, abstaining from automatically judging them good or bad, right or wrong." (p. 128)

Book Review

Algernon D'Amassa

An Open Heart: Practicing Compassion In Everyday Life by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, edited by Nicholas Vreeland, Little Brown and Company, 2001

In our Zen tradition, there are many stories about thieves and fools who start practicing and “accidentally” attain enlightenment. Sometimes they merely pretend to practice, by imitating a *saddhu* in order to hide from angry villagers, but even then, their minds open up. One burglar of lore started sitting because he saw a Zen Master concentrating so completely on a famous kong-an that the Master actually turned into a cypress tree. The burglar thought, “If I had this power, no one would be able to catch me,” so he started to practice Zen with the idea that it would make him a better burglar. Instead, he woke up and eventually became a Zen Master, a different kind of criminal altogether.

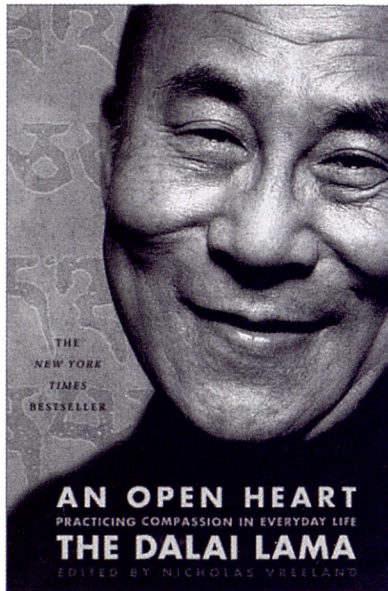
Like these thieves, most of us initially approach Buddhism with an agenda. We hope this will take us somewhere pleasurable or repair our imperfections. Perhaps it will help us dissolve our stress or become “better people.” Some find that their egocentricity is drawn to the idea of dropping the ego. Yet I have never heard a teacher say to a student, “That’s a lousy reason to practice.” Any desire that brings us to the cushion and one step closer to letting go of our opinion, condition, and situation is, indeed, a bodhisattva in disguise, showing us to the path regardless of where we think we’re going. A skilled teacher uses these ideas to help us practice.

When His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave a public talk in the east meadow of New York’s Central Park in 1999, he drew a crowd of 200,000 people. Although he may never succeed in getting the Chinese government to sit down and talk straightforwardly about Tibet, he is without question a true world leader who also commands a vast audience as a teacher of the dharma—and yet, what he talks about more than anything is how to get happiness. The promise of happiness and self improvement, and an escape from afflictive emotions and delusion, continue to sell his books and introduce more people to the dharma.

The Dalai Lama does not only offer happiness and escape from a mean and unpredictable world; he also offers power:

Imagine that your neighbor hates you and is always creating problems for you. If you lose your temper and develop hatred toward him, your digestion is harmed, your sound sleep goes, and you have to start using tranquilizers and sleeping pills... Then your neighbor is really happy.

...If, in spite of his injustices, you remain calm, happy, and peaceful, your health remains strong, you continue to be joyful, and more friends come visit you. Your life becomes more successful. This really brings about worry in your neighbor’s mind. I think that this is the wise way to inflict harm upon your neighbor.



Like a wily Zen Master, the fourteenth Dalai Lama draws students in with the strength of his radiant kindness and personality, and the unspoken promise that we, too, can embrace the completeness of life and smile the way he does. *An Open Heart* moves from his ecumenical speech in Central Park to instructions in beginning meditation, and onward to more advanced teachings in “generating” bodhicitta, the loving-kindness of the bodhisattva. The nature of all phenomena, even the happiness and power some will have sought in the first place, is penetrated and traced back to the mind that creates good situations and bad situations, happiness and suffering, and all other opposites.

A worthwhile examination of the differences between Vajrayana Buddhism, even in the simplified form presented in this book, and our school’s Zen teaching is beyond the scope of such a small article. The root practice outlined in *An Open Heart* clearly emphasizes a different technique than Zen:

The Tibetan word for meditation is *gom*, which means “to familiarize.” When we use meditation on our spiritual path, it is to familiarize ourselves with a chosen object. This object need not be a physical thing such as an image of the Buddha or Jesus on the cross. The “chosen object” can be a mental quality such as patience, which we work at cultivating within ourselves by means of meditative contemplation. It can also be the rhythmic movement of our breath, which we focus on to still our restless minds. And it can be the mere quality of clarity and knowing—our consciousness—the nature of which we seek to understand.

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These lectures define a course utilizing two kinds of meditation-candy. There is analytical meditation on a desired object, such as compassion (literally, "suffering with," complete intimacy with a situation as opposed to a generalized attitude of sympathy). There is also "settled meditation," which takes place after a desired change in attitude has been achieved. This non-analytical awareness of a new attitude is deepened with intensive one-mind practice.

This style of Buddhism takes what some would call an idealistic approach; instead of cutting off all thinking and perceiving original nature, this practice speaks of cultivation, of "generating" the bodhisattva mind, and using analytical faculties as a vehicle so far as they can carry you. By contrast, Zen Master Seung Sahn just told his students to bow, chant, and sit; and he admonished, "Don't make anything; then you get everything."

Are these different Buddhisms? One teacher offers meticulous technique, another says, "You learn how to climb by climbing." One offers cultivation and self improvement, another says, "If you make something, you get something." Which one will you follow? Either way, a thief is leading you. Please follow one of them until the end of time, and see what happens.

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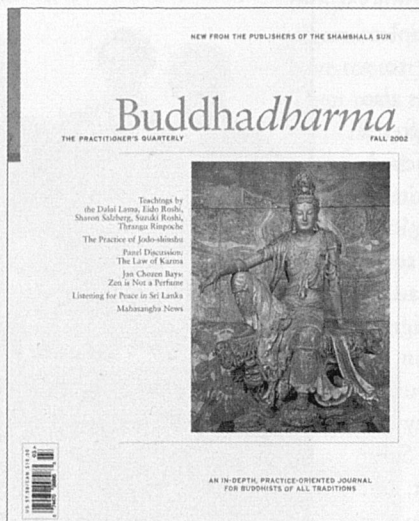
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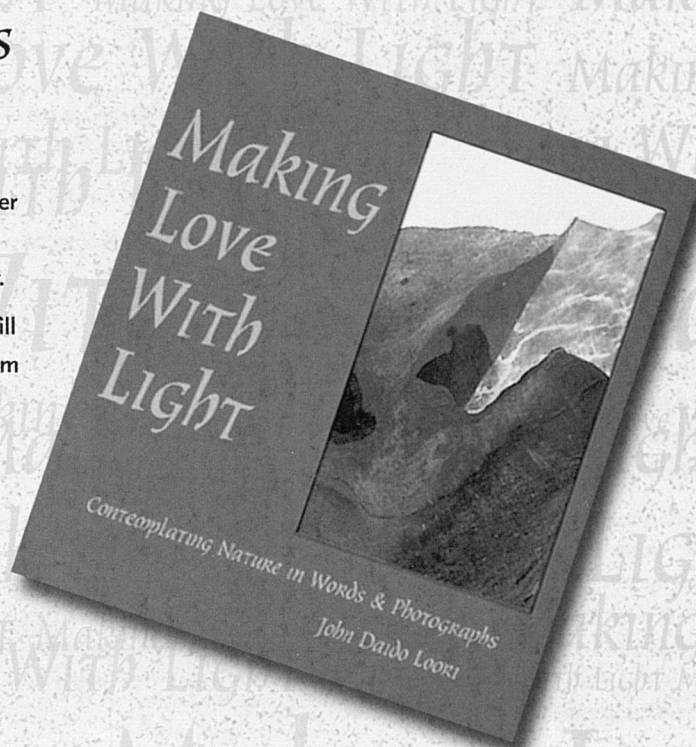
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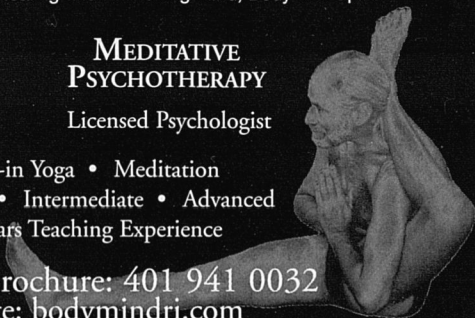
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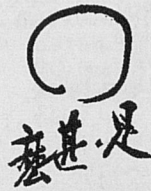
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