

Question: My friend has given me an idea. We took the precepts together. Your dharma name is Ja An, your name is Bogumila [*Bogu=God, mila=favor*], so you are “Favor of God” and your surname is Malinowska [*maliny=raspberry*]. In Poland we often say, “to pull in the raspberry.” So, what does it mean, “to pull in the raspberry”?

Malinowska JDPSN: You already understand.

Q: I ask you.

MJDPSN: What are you doing now?

Q: I’m sitting and asking you a question.

MJDPSN: Very good.

Q: That’s how you are pulling me in the raspberry.

MJDPSN: But that’s a good raspberry!

Question: I know that you were born in Poland and we met when you moved to England. I want to know, how is the dharma in Poland different from the dharma in England?

Malinowska JDPSN: You already understand.

Q: What about you?

MJDPSN: During winter in Poland you need to have warm shoes, in England you always need to have an umbrella.

Question: How can you teach me if Zen is too difficult for me?

Malinowska JDPSN: You already understand.

Q: [*shakes his head: “no”*]

MJDPSN: Today is Sunday. After ceremony let’s go drink tea and eat cakes.

Q: That’s nice.

Question: Hello, Bogusia.

Malinowska JDPSN: Hello, Poep Sa Nim.

Q: You were always a great inspiration to me. When I came to my first session here someone pointed to you: “That is Bogusia, she does 1000 prostrations daily.” And I know you continue that, yes?

MJDPSN: Yes.

Q: So tell me, how many prostrations did you do today?

MJDPSN: You already understand.

Q: I ask you.

MJDPSN: [*bows*]

Q: Ooh, that’s it. Thank you for your teaching.

MJDPSN: Don’t mention it.

Question: Good morning.

Malinowska JDPSN: Good morning, Sunim.

Q: I have a question—teaching and helping. How do they differ?

MJDPSN: You already understand.

Q: But I ask you.

MJDPSN: How can I help you?

Q: By answering the question.

MJDPSN: Isn’t that enough?

Q: It seems it’s enough. Thank you.

Question: For a healthy human an average heart beat is sixty beats per minute. With what frequency does your heart beat?

Malinowska JDPSN: You already understand.

Q: No, I don’t.

MJDPSN: Tick, tick, tick, tick.

Q: Oh, very fast.



*Dharma combat and Inka speech
of Bogumila Malinowska JDPSN,
September 20, 2009,
at Warsaw Zen Center in Poland*

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Bogumila Malinowska inka ceremony

DHARMA SPEECH

[Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.]

Dirty is clean, clean is dirty.

[Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.]

Not dirty, not clean.

[Raises the Zen stick over her head, then hits the table with the stick.]

Dirty is dirty, clean is clean.

KATZ!

Where is the place, where there is no clean or dirty?

A long time ago, a wandering monk, Won-Hyo, realized that life is impermanent and decided to seek the answer to the meaning of life and how to deal with the sense of instability. Thus he started his journey to find a teacher. He traveled for many days and nights and at some point he was really tired. He lay down on the ground and, being exhausted, he slept. When he woke up at night, being very thirsty, he instinctively began to seek something to drink. In the dark he thought he had found a vessel with water, and being very happy, he drank from it. The water was very refreshing. Feeling satisfied, he went to sleep. When he woke up in the morning he wanted to drink that water again, but this time it was daylight, and he could see clearly that the vessel was a human skull with parts of the body and hairs on it. There were also a lot of bugs in it. Seeing this, the only thing he could do was to vomit strongly. At that moment he understood, that when he was thirsty at night, there was tasty water, but when he woke up in the morning his eyes could see what he had drunk, and he was disgusted. At that moment his mind—as we say in Zen—was opened. He understood that this thinking, and everything that he thought, comes from mind.

Not so long ago in Japan, during World War II, human mentality changed radically. I've never been to Asia, but from what I observe when I meet Asian people I know is that Asians pay a lot of attention to the aesthetics of eating. This aesthetics of eating is something very important to them. Therefore the meal preparation, the colors, the meal served in bowls of various sizes, and doing this in accordance with ceremony rules is very important. They wash the meal ingredients mindfully, they peel them, and everything is done very, very precisely. But many times during the war there was a lack of food. In such cases, every bit of food has the price of gold. So when those

people, being so dutiful and so much attached to meal aesthetics, were finding thrown-away peels, it was a wonderful meal for them.

I would like to refer to a movie we saw together last night. There was a moment in it where the main figure, the inventor of all these wonderful technology inventions, Apple and Blackberry, is saying at the end “be hungry and stupid.” I would like to talk about my life—how being stupid and having no understanding can help. Usually we think that our life should go straight and without hindrances—that is our human desire. But what I would like to say is, what has helped me most in my life were precisely the hindrances. When I became a single mother, I was very scared. But now, after many years, I know it was the best teaching. Also, about six years ago, I lost a very good job in Poland, a career I worked in for a very long time. When I lost it, I believed it was very hard and something I didn't want to happen, but in reality it has opened a new way of life for me. We often think—and this is also true in my case—that when we have a great title, good job and position, these things can give us full happiness. But what I realized is, whenever I lose something, it is the greatest happiness, because it opens the way for something else for me. Therefore I would like to add my words to the wishes spoken by the main character of yesterday's movie: please don't be afraid of losing something—use it.

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KATZ!

How can I help?

I thank my teachers for teaching me for years and having the patience for me. Thank you, Wu Bong Soen Sa Nim, thank you to my teacher Bon Shim Soen Sa Nim from Poland, thank you to my teacher Bon Yo Soen Sa Nim, who believed in me before I believed in myself. I thank all teachers, and I thank all of you that I have practiced and will be continue to practice with you. After this ceremony, we will drink tea and eat cookies. ☯