

INKA CEREMONY FOR

Barbara Pardo

August 31, 2019 at Bori Sa Temple, Catalonia, Spain

DHARMA COMBAT

Question [*mother with baby*]: Hello Barbara. I would like to ask you, how can I teach her “don’t-know mind”?

Pardo PSN: You already understand.

[*Baby starts babbling—ba-ba-ba.*]

Pardo PSN: Already appeared [*plays with baby*].

Question: Thank you!



Schaefer PSN: Hello, Barbara. Serious question.

Pardo PSN: [*gulps*] Serious question? OK.

Schaefer PSN: When I was here last time, you may remember we were discussing politics, Catalonian independence and politics. Hmm, it’s always risky to enter that field . . .

Pardo PSN: So, why do you go there? [*Laughter.*]

Schaefer PSN: [*stuck*] Done! [*Hugs Barbara.*]



Question: I live nearby, and the other day when I was walking in these mountains I met some local hunters who had killed three magnificent mouflon, or wild sheep. I became very upset, and I felt great helplessness. I was left

heartbroken. Such a beautiful animal! And so I want to ask you: what attitude does Buddhism propose in this situation?

Pardo PSN: You already understand.

Question: No, I don’t.

Pardo PSN: [*chants*] Namu Amita Bul, Namu Amita Bul, Namu Amita Bul . . . [*Questioner joins chanting and then everybody chants together.*]

INKA SPEECH

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

Mountain is you, you are the mountain.

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

No mountain, no you.

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

Mountain is mountain, you are you.

Three statements, which one is correct?

10]



Photo: Oriol Casanovas

KATZ!

Outside on the mountainside, many trees. Inside in the Dharma room, many smiling faces. Thank you all for coming to this inka ceremony.

I want to thank all of the teachers for coming from far away to our first sangha weekend, especially Zen Master Soeng Hyang—it's a great honor to have you here. Thank you, Zen Master Bon Shim, my guiding teacher, for so many years and for being the person who changed my life. Thanks to all of the sangha and friends who are here today, and very special thanks to my beloved husband and *doban'*, Tonda, and my parents, Fernando and Rosanna, who not only gave me my life but also gave this practice to me, and to many of you who are here today.

Many people call me Baru. My husband gave me this name because it seems Barbara is too long for him! At first I thought it was a silly name, but I had to settle with it, until one day a Korean person came to Bori Sa Temple and said, "Wow, you have a great name! It means dharma bowl." *Baru* is the name of the bowls we use for formal meals (*barugongyang*) during retreats and, literally, *baru* means "bowl that holds exactly as much as needed." No more, no less. So, I have a bowl story for you.

A long time ago there was a king in India who had a palace, concubines, servants, jewels, gold, silver, silk, horses—all of the nice things kings have. The king also had a guru, a teacher who was extremely ascetic. The only thing the teacher owned was a small bowl that he used for begging. One day, the king and his guru were sitting under a tree at the end of the big garden, and the guru was giving a teaching about impermanence, nonattachment, renunciation, and so on, when suddenly the ser-

vants came running and shouting, "Your Majesty, come quickly! The palace is on fire, we must do something!" The king got up, alarmed, but then reconsidered and said with irritation, "Don't bother me! I'm studying the dharma with my teacher. This is most important; you deal with the fire!" But the guru, who had turned red, jumped up and yelled, "What are you talking about? Let's go! My bowl is in the palace!"

Having many or few things doesn't matter. Things in themselves are not good, not bad. It is when we attach to things that we have problems. And I'm not talking only about material goods. We also attach and hold to everything that appears in our minds: our thinking, desires, ideas, opinions, likes, and dislikes. Worst of all, many times we don't even realize it, and these things control us. We act upon our attachments, causing suffering for ourselves and others. Zen Master Seung Sahn said that sometimes seeing your karma, finding your attachment, is more important than attaining enlightenment.

When I came to live here at Bori Sa with my husband many years ago, I thought that I did not have many attachments, and that I could see my karma. I thought that my karma was very good because we had found the perfect place to practice and, of course, to attain "enlightenment." Everybody wants to practice in a place like this, in the middle of the mountains, completely quiet, surrounded by nature, with nobody around to bother you. But this kind of practice is also attachment: attachment to practice. If you attach to a good situation, if you want to practice only in peace and silence, or in a beautiful environment, you are missing the true direction of Zen practice. Yes, we practice to attain enlightenment, but attaining enlightenment is not enough. We practice to at-

[11



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12]

tain a clear mind and a strong center, but then what? How do you use your clear mind in your everyday life? How do you use your strong center to help others? How do we share our practice with others? This is the true job of enlightenment.

Actually, thinking that you have good karma is very bad karma! And thinking that everything is fine is very dangerous. Fortunately, the universe always helps you. This delusion about being a hermit in the mountains and just sitting around practicing all day long ended very soon. Even though Bori Sa is in the middle of nowhere, many people started coming here from the very beginning—not only Zen students, but also neighbors, people from the village, from the city, farmers, hunters, woodcutters, hikers—all kinds of different people, with different karma from mine, different opinions from mine, different ideas, different likes and dislikes. Then it is very easy to perceive your own likes and dislikes and your karma. You can really see yourself!

And just seeing already makes you a little less attached, not so caught up in your karma. During this Kyol Che, Zen Master Bon Shim talked about four steps we can take to work with our habits and attachments: see it, accept it, work with it, and let it go. It's not easy or quick—usually you need to see it many times before you can put it down, but better you put it down! Because if you can put everything down, and if you can make harmony with others, everything becomes very easy and smooth. If you cannot let go, everything remains very difficult and you are in hell. Even in a paradise like this.

I thought I had found a place that was perfect for practice, so quiet, with nobody around me, but it's rather the people who make this a perfect practice place. That's why I am so grateful to everybody who comes here, who actually are this mountain and are part of this harmony. All of you are my good teachers. We are already teaching and learning

everything from each other. We are like mirrors that show each other our karma, how many attachments we still have, our hindrances and limitations, and we have this great opportunity to share this practice, to do it together, to let it go. Because if you put it all down, your bowl becomes big. If you attach and hold, your bowl shrinks.

When we practice together, we make our bowl bigger. If our bowl is small, not much can go into it. If we make our bowl big, it can hold a lot and we can help many people—not only ourselves and our friends and our families, but everybody around us. If we practice and make our bowl big and our center strong, we can see, accept, understand, and digest everything that appears, and we will not only not be controlled by it, but we can use it to help all beings.

So, I ask you: how can we use everything that appears to help all beings?

KATZ!

Are you hungry? Please, after the ceremony let's share a bowl of *paella*².

1. *Doban* is Korean for a person who walks the path with you.
2. *Paella* is the traditional Spanish rice dish that was served for lunch.

*Barbara Pardo JDPSN received inka from Zen Master Bon Shim in 2019. Barbara's father, Fernando, was one of Zen Master Seung Sah'n's first students in Spain, and has been the abbot of Bori Sa Temple in Barcelona since the 1980s. Her mother, Rosanna, also was a strong practitioner. Barbara started practicing soon after meeting Zen Master Bon Shim in 1994, sitting many Yong Maeng Jong Jin and Kyol Che retreats since then, and serving in many roles in the Bori Sa sangha in various locations in Catalonia. In 2008 she reestablished a permanent home for the sangha in Barcelona. Later, in 2012, she and her husband, Tonda, moved to the Pyrenees mountains to help establish Borisa Retreat Center. Barbara is a graphic designer who works for the publishing company La Liebre de Marzo, which has published many Buddhist books, including the Spanish edition of Zen Master Seung Sah'n's *Dropping Ashes on the Buddha*, titled *Tirando Cenizas sobre el Buda*.*