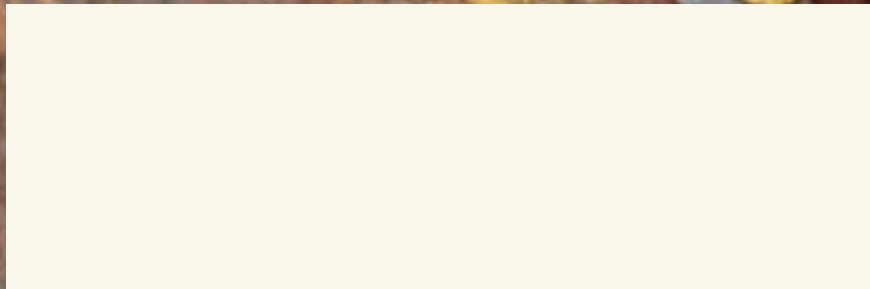
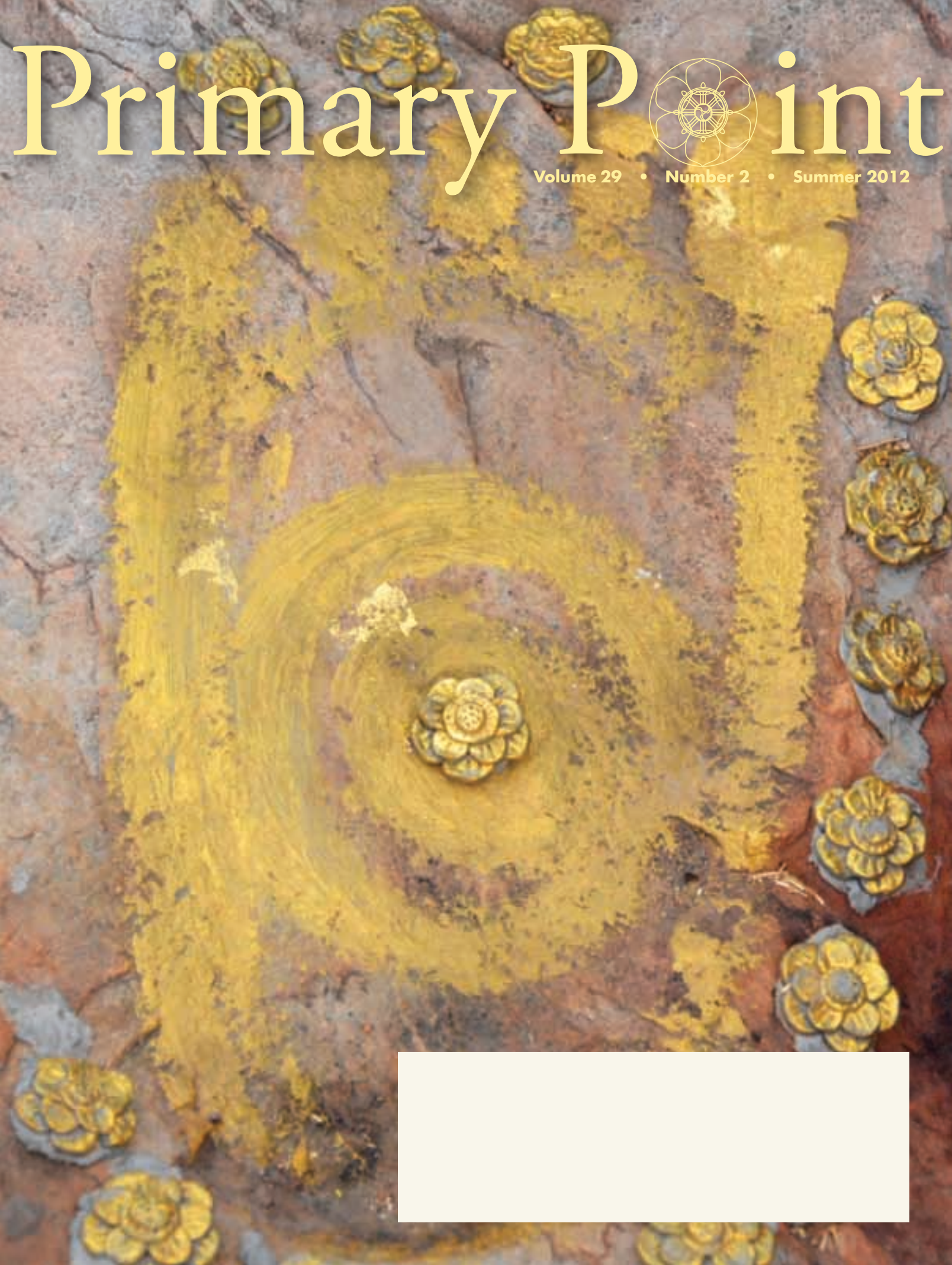


# Primary Point



Volume 29 • Number 2 • Summer 2012





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The Kwan Um School of Zen supports the worldwide teaching schedule of the Zen Masters and Ji Do Poep Sas, assists the member Zen centers and groups in their growth, issues publications on contemporary Zen practice, and supports dialogue among religions. If you would like to become a member of the School and receive Primary Point, see page 31. The circulation is 2,800 copies.

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*Cover: Buddha's footprint, graffiti on a rock outcrop at Vulture Peak, Rajgir, India. Photo by Allan Matthews.*

# Buddhadharma

*Zen Master Man Gong*

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1. If you say “buddhadharma,” already that’s not buddhadharma.
2. Everything, as it is, is buddhadharma. If you get up on a soapbox to preach about buddhadharma, the meaning is already lost.
3. Material things are to be used; Mind is the basis. When Mind and the material become one, this is buddhadharma. If you don’t attain the buddhadharma in this lifetime, there is no guarantee that you will find the path in future lives.
4. Buddhadharma is appropriate for any historical period or human circumstance.
5. If your life is not touched by the dharma, then you have already lost your human status.
6. Buddha is Mind; dharma is the material. Before the buddhadharma appeared as name and form, and even before the historical Buddha appeared, true nature existed. If you put down the small “I,” which is like a piece of unglazed pottery, then you will get a dharma body which is like the seven treasures (gold, silver, lapis, crystal, coral, agate and pearl).
7. It’s not the mouth that speaks; it’s not the hand that works. When you find the one who really speaks and works, then you will become an authentic human who can truly speak and work.
8. Buddhadharma is responsible for the body and the mind. A life where buddhadharma is not in charge is a life without purpose. Once you realize this you will return to the buddhadharma immediately.
9. Worldly principles and the buddhadharma are not two. Buddha and sentient beings are one. When you attain this “not two” dharma, you will become a true person.
10. Someone who knows the buddhadharma is not attached to dualistic thinking. (They have left home.) If you haven’t attained the buddhadharma, then you are just like a common, worldly person.
11. To open different locks you need many kinds of keys. If you want to comprehend the numberless obscure



principles of samadhi, you will need 10,000 wisdom keys.

12. Denying the buddhadharma is denying oneself. If you reject the buddhadharma, you reject yourself, because you are the Buddha.
13. Every sound is a dharma talk and every thing is the true body of the buddha. But we always hear that it’s very difficult to encounter the buddhadharma even once in 10 million kalpas. This puzzling situation deserves our serious consideration.

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*From the book The Teachings of Zen Master Man Gong, translated and edited by Zen Master Dae Kwang, Hye Tong Sunim and Kathy Park.*



# Buddha's Birthday 2002

Zen Master Wu Bong

Excerpted from *Zen Life, Moment Life* by Zen Master Wu Bong (ISBN 978-3-937983-34-9). Copyright © 2012 European Kwan Um School of Zen. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission of Johannes Herrmann Verlag. For information on ordering this book, see page 17.



This is mistake day, so my talk points the same way.

Buddha was born and the gods enjoy: Big mistake.

Six years under the Bodhi Tree, then enlightenment:  
Another big mistake.

Your life, my life: Also a mistake.

Today it's Buddha's birthday celebration: Mistake  
celebrating mistake.

Then how will you make your life correct?

In one gulp swallow all oceans and rivers.

Then someone hungry, give them food; someone  
thirsty, give them drink.

Very simple.

The tradition says that when Buddha was born, in heaven they had a big celebration because all the devas, all the gods, they could see that it was somebody great because a great light shone from the Buddha's birthplace into heaven. So they were very happy. They already understood that Buddha is born, future Buddha is born. But as several people pointed out, if you are born, already a mistake, so the same thing is true for Buddha. He was a human being, not a god in heaven, so as a human being, already a mistake.

You are all familiar with Buddha's story, sitting under the Bodhi Tree, getting enlightenment. Somebody once asked a great master about Buddha's enlightenment, and this master said: "Golden sand in the eye." Zen students want enlightenment, but the problem is that as soon as you want something, this something is binding; it becomes your prison. Whether this prison is golden and beautiful, or bad and terrible, still prison is prison. So, if you are attached to something, want something, then already you don't get freedom.

In our life it's that way. We start, we begin our life with a mistake, then the continuation of our life is this moment, just now. In this moment we are also making a mistake, because we are celebrating a mistake. That's why it's a mistake celebrating a mistake. So everybody has a challenge: How do we make our life correct? How do we use this mistake and make our life worthwhile? I already said, if you are attached to something then you can't get freedom.

Then what is freedom? In one gulp swallow all oceans and rivers. That's absolute freedom. That means you can be anything, but if you are attached to this freedom, then this freedom itself becomes your prison. That's also a mistake, so the final step is most important—this final sentence of the speech: Then, somebody is hungry, everybody understands what to do. Somebody is thirsty, also everybody understands what to do. So only one thing remains to do: *do it*.

Thank you everybody for coming here. It's wonderful to see people from many countries, many places, and I'm sure if Buddha was with us, Buddha would be very pleased. ♦

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# "I Want!"

*A kong-an interview with Zen Master Wu Kwang*

We used to have a different translation of the second great vow: "Desires are inexhaustible. We vow to extinguish them all." Once, during an interview, a student asked Zen Master Wu Kwang:

"Desires are inexhaustible. What does this mean?"

**Zen Master Wu Kwang:** "I want!"

**Student:** "Then how do you extinguish them all?"

**ZMWK:** "I want!"

*Commentary: Human life is "I want!" Even to direct yourself toward extinguishing desires is a want or desire. Strictly speaking, desire or even preference is not the problem. Clinging and self-centered craving is really the core of the issue. Why do "I want," and for whom? How do I use the energy of desire to go beyond just I, my, me? When you're hungry, eat; when someone else is hungry, give them some food.*



# Giving Thanks for Cancer

Anne Rudloe JDPSN

*Anne Rudloe died peacefully in her home yesterday, April 27, 2012. I've been fortunate to work with her on her blog over the past few months. She asked me to publish upon her death the piece that follows, which she wrote years ago right after being diagnosed with cancer. It's been my great, good fortune to spend some time with Anne and her husband, Jack. Though we've known each other from a distance for many years, it's only in these past few months that I was able to spend some personal time with them. When I saw Anne last week, her eyes were bright and her presence unencumbered. She expressed gratitude for the ability to sit and look over the bay from her front window. If you watch the video that this post is based on, or if you read more of her publications, or if you had been lucky enough to spend some time with her, you're likely to know straightaway that she moved through nature and the whole of her life with the familiarity and the knowing of a wild one. Ever on the edge, Anne didn't hold back anything. In her life and in her death, Anne faced what was before her with an openness that has been of benefit to many beings. Fare thee well, my friend. —Penny Alsop*

**M**y eyes blinked open as consciousness returned after the colonoscopy. Before I could say anything, the doctor leaned over my shoulder and said in an urgent voice, “You have cancer!”

“Geez, what kind of a bedside manner is that?” I thought in a fuzzy blur. A few hours before, when I had arrived at the clinic for a routine screening, I had felt fine. It was just the last step in a series of routine checkups.

“But you’ll be OK,” he added. “It’s small, we think we caught it before it spread beyond the gut.”

But it had spread. And after surgery to remove the tumor and a series of lymph nodes, I spent weeks recovering under huge old trees next to the Gulf of Mexico in the company of fall wildflowers and butterflies. Morning sunlight glittered on the bay and gilded the pine needles overhead. I was swept not with fear but with gratitude for all the wonderful things of life and with the absolute conviction that, if death came, nothing would be lost.

Later, my husband and I made a trip to the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa. On the way, we canoed the Weeki

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Wachee River, a gorgeous spring run with crystal-clear water, underwater emerald meadows, manatees, schools of fish darting past us and eagles overhead. The healing that came from being there was palpable, even as it had been under the pines at home. There was joy to be a part of a system that creates such beauty even though death is part of it.

Halfway through the chemotherapy, I ended up in and out of the hospital over 25 days, really sick. I never felt as if I were in any serious danger, given that medical support was available, but a lot of friends who saw me were convinced that I was on the brink of death and the doctors didn't say that it was out of the question.

Neighbors came to visit and they always wanted to pray. I welcomed the kindness even if the language was not the same as I was used to in my own religious practice.

This culminated in the appearance in my front yard one Sunday afternoon, after I got out of the hospital, of about 20 members of a little lay-led church. Everybody gathered around my husband and me, but in the little village of Panacea, where neighbors still know each other, it was well known that neither my husband nor I was an orthodox believer. They were a little uncertain about how to begin with a couple of lost souls, one of whom might be facing an early death.

So I began by thanking them for their care and all the covered dinners and they began to share the value of their faith. I found that I truly agreed with everything that was said, with the exception that theirs was the only way. Then I said that the most mistaken thing anybody can say in this situation is "Why me?" because sooner or later we must all face this sort of trouble, and eventually we will all die of something. Rather, I said, a health crisis is a wonderful teacher if we can let go of anger and fear and open up to what it has to teach.

The preacher immediately added, "We should give thanks for cancer because it brings us closer to God and that is the most important thing in life." He then turned and looked at the other members of his congregation. Nodding at individuals one by one, he said, "And you should give thanks for the breast cancer," and you, nodding to another, "mental illness, and you," nodding to another, "should give thanks for that shooting," and you, nodding to another, "for the heart attack." Everyone he pointed to agreed.

So, was he right? Should we not only be brave but even thankful if we get cancer? I reflected on my own case and realized that the preacher was right. In addition to the wisdom of the river, the forest and the sea, here's what I am thankful for.

To fully know what it is to be human, it is just as important to go through the hard times of old age, loss of social roles, illness and approaching death as it is to go through the pleasant phases of youth. The hard parts can provide insight and wisdom as nothing else can.

Cancer means one must really live in the present rather than being lost in the past or in fearful or desire-ridden fantasies of the future. It makes all the difference in the world in experiencing life as the gift that it is.

I experienced the impermanence and fragility of the rational, intellectual, analytical mind. It slowly disappeared when I got really sick, and it slowly reappeared as I got better. By shutting down the egocentric mind, the body actually makes it easier to face the final decline.

I no longer take positive things for granted or get all upset about the stresses of daily life.

Mortality and the impermanence of an individual lifetime become very real rather than an intellectual philosophy, but it is a wonderful aspect of reality. Birth and death endlessly produce unique new minds and consciousness, new insights and talents. If Mozart had never died, Stravinsky could never have appeared. It is possible to let go of fear and to perceive the brilliance of the process and to know that death is part of a vaster and extraordinary reality.

I have met some extraordinary people among those who treat cancer patients, doctors who are humble and compassionate—I guess it is hard to be arrogant when you lose so many patients—and nurses who keep what could be a grim setting cheerful and upbeat, giving their patients the courage to get through it all.

I have finally been able to really drop the ego-based worries of career and finances and replace them with things I really want to do.

That consciousness can survive the death of the brain is no longer strictly a matter of faith. There is a growing amount of rational evidence that points in that direction, enough to provide hope if not certainty. If so, then death might not mean giving up the beauty of life. It might only mean a better view of the larger wonders of the universe.

So I have learned to give thanks for all the tough lessons that teach us what we would never learn voluntarily. When we stop whining, when we realize that this too is part of the experience of living a full life, then when a major disease comes, we can truly give thanks for it. It's an intense and rich way to live, like having a challenging teacher always in your face, forcing you to live at your highest level of insight, ability and courage.

Reinhold Niebuhr, a Protestant theologian, said, "Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing true or beautiful makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love."

This is what I've learned so far. ♦

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*Follow this link to see the video that this essay comes from:*  
<http://youtu.be/5y9JR8u1XhY>



# Elephants and Tigers: The Whole World Is a Single Flower Tour in India

Jo Potter JDPSN

It was Zen Master Seung Sahn's vision that the Kwan Um School of Zen would organize the Whole World Is a Single Flower conference every three years. India had been chosen as the destination for the conference in 2011. Zen Master Soeng Hyang, successor to Zen Master Seung Sahn, began in May 2009 to consider what kind of team could plan and carry out the conference in India in 2011. She envisioned a team that would "not let the ball drop," a team that would work independently and be self-motivated. She was very clear that the *feeling* of "The Whole World Is a Single Flower" would best emerge through an international team of teachers and students.



The team that came together included two teachers and three students: Carlos Montero, representing the North American sanghas; George Hazlbauer, representing the European sanghas; Grace Tam, representing the Asian sanghas; and Zen Master Bon Haeng and myself, representing the teachers' group. We chose not to have a chairperson. Each of us simply committed to doing the best we could in our areas. It was interesting to note that the teacher and student roles dropped away almost immediately and we became a team of five people each doing what we were best at.

Zen Master Bon Haeng (Mark) would sit quietly during the meetings, encouraging us to stick to clear priorities. He was also a wiz at the finances during the actual trip. Grace was likewise a wiz with organizing the travel details in Hong Kong and keeping track of participants. George gravitated toward all things technical, while I gravitated toward designing the program and wrote the letters and minutes for the meetings. Carlos had incredibly clear commentaries and vision, and ended up being the best master of ceremonies ever during the actual trip. We laughed often and respected each other's opinions—no matter how wacky they might have been. We grew toward each other and came to know each other well over the two years of preparation time. For me this time was a precious example of the direction of our school: people working together for others. I wouldn't have missed these two years for anything!

Something really funny happened at the first meeting. We tried to convince everyone to change the destination from India to somewhere "more comfortable, safe and known" and where there would be a Kwan Um School of Zen community waiting for us. But deep down inside we understood that this was an awesome chance to grow beyond the mind, which wants to remain safe and comfortable and in familiar surroundings.

It helped that one of the great teachers of the school, Zen Master Dae Bong, sent an e-mail stating that: "Korea or some known place for the WWSF trip would be okay but I feel that for this WWSF we ought to do something that has an effect beyond our group!"

Zen Master Dae Bong's wise words sealed India as our destination. And there was no doubt that going to India would be an adventure to look forward to and which would present all kinds of challenges. The team was now focused

and we began wholeheartedly. At this point we were already mentally on the way to the “Land of Primary Point,” the land where our Zen practice had started—even though the conference was still two years away.

But where would we start? Four of us had never been to India, and I had been there 30 years ago. Zillions of questions appeared. Our initial meetings were filled with imagining all the things that could go wrong, as well as discussing the fun stuff: traveling through this mystical land where Buddha was born, taught and died. What did the Bodhi Tree look like, and how would it feel to sit under it? We learned that we would visit the caves where Shariputra and Ananda practiced, trudging up Vulture Peak, visiting myriads of Buddhist temples and meeting the people of India. What would Varanasi look like? And what about the boats on the Ganges River? We were going to the land of kong-ans, the land of the Heart Sutra and Primary Point!

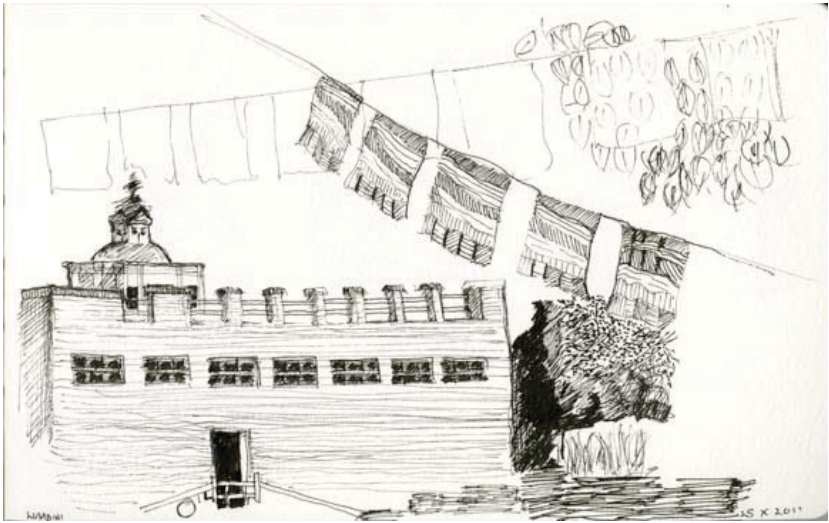
We thoroughly evaluated setting up a Whole World Is a Single Flower conference like all the previous ones: structured around talks given by teachers invited from the greater sangha, with some entertainment in the evenings. But it turned out impossible to tailor this huge unknown India into an already known pattern.

Finally with the green light given by Zen Master Soeng Hyang, the School Zen Master and Guiding Teacher for the Kwan Um School, the team agreed to the following setup:

*This Whole World Is a Single Flower event will be a pilgrimage and practice trip. The conference will be the 11-day trip in its entirety, where we start in Varanasi with a welcoming dinner and orientation. There will be dharma talks, chanting and lots of practice led by different Zen masters in our school along the way in places like Sarnath, Bodhgaya, Vulture Peak and many others. The final stop—the Korean temple in Lumbini—will be where we will have some dharma talks, sharing and completion. In this case one day for the official part of the conference will be enough.*

A very important part of our Zen teaching is to stay flexible and keep a wide-open mind to the arising situation. The Buddha used skillful means to teach all dharmas. Skillful means here meant setting aside any previous ideas of past conferences and completely opening to a very different kind of event.

Of course, practical things loomed huge on our horizon: How many people would actually come? Which month should we go? Where would everyone sleep? What kinds of things would we need to know about traveling to India? What kind of program should we design? How much should each person pay? Who would be our contact people in India?



How would we transport everyone from point to point? And what about the advertisement, the Web site and logos? And of course hundreds of other details.

I noticed that team coalesced quickly, arranging itself like the five fingers of the hand, which allowed all of the energy to be projected to the planning. Once the inner mind was focused and the team had gelled together, the details were easy to fix.

Really great help came from so many people not on our team. Elisa, a student in Berlin, would e-mail, telling us she was in India and asking if we needed anything to be researched. Another student, Arthur Collins, was often in India and sending reports to George, as well as soothing our worries. Zen Master Dae Jin, who lives in Korea, went to Lumbini to talk to the abbot and arrange the details of our stay. Frances in Hong Kong worked on the beautiful programs, and Katka Grofova in Hungary designed the logo with the elephants. Cat in the United States designed the very useful Web site. And many more brought pieces of the big puzzle to us. Zen Master Dae Kwan, head of Su Bong Zen Monastery in Hong Kong, helped enormously with ideas of day-to-day activities during the trip. And all of the teachers on the trip committed immediately to give the dharma talks. I heartily thank all of these wonderful people for their generous offerings!

The years went by and after about 70 Skype sessions and more than 600 e-mails, the team Skyped for the last time on October 11: George in the Czech Republic, Grace in Hong Kong, Carlos in Miami, Zen Master Mark in Boston and myself in Berlin. We surrendered our plans to the unknown and got ready for the reality of India. We discussed last-minute cancellations with sadness and welcomed new participants with happiness. Then we boarded airplanes from our different nations and flew to India, the land of the Enlightened One, the land of the Dharma of the Enlightened One and the land of the Sangha of the Enlightened One.

We couldn't wait to meet our beloved sangha family members in Varanasi, all 88 of them! ♦



# Pilgrimage to India, 2011

Zen Master Bon Soeng

**Editor's note:** *The following article is from two sources. The main talk, from Zen Master Bon Soeng's talk at Lumbini at the Whole World Is a Single Flower conference in October 2011, is in our standard typeface, placed between two sections set off in a different typeface, taken from Gong Mun, the newsletter of the Empty Gate Zen Center.*

Pedestrians, bicycles, scooters, tuk-tuks, bicycle rickshaws, cars, trucks, busses, cows, goats, pigs and dogs vie for limited street space. Everyone and everything within one inch of disaster, going in every direction with horns blaring . . . if you are lucky enough to have a horn. Fortunately, no one is hurt today and we make it to the temple for full-moon chanting. On the road to Ranakpur to visit an amazing Jain temple constructed exclusively of carved marble, we share the road with hundreds of sheep, goats and camels. Some of the camels carry the babies of the herder families. Getting 22 kilometers from the airport to our hotel in Varanasi takes over an hour and a half. Patience, patience, patience: the code words for travel in India!

In the darkness before dawn the eighty or so Kwan Um pilgrims set out on foot from our hotel to chant and sit under the Bodhi Tree at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya, where the Buddha experienced his great enlightenment. In the quiet before dawn, the cows and dogs own the streets. Sellers of beads, buddha statues and fabrics are slowly setting up their wares. Beggars are lining up with one hand extended, the other pointing to their mouths. . . We pilgrims walk single file in silence, allowing the place and our intentions to become one. Under the Bodhi Tree we meet up with other fellow Kwan Um pilgrims who have spent the night under the tree. These overnight pilgrims watched as a flashmob of Thai gilders applied gold leaf to the fences that surround the sacred tree. All night long, as these pilgrims were bowing, chanting and sitting in their mosquito-netted tents, dogs were howling and fighting. Joining together for chanting, voices from Hong Kong, Singapore, Korea, America, Germany, Lithuania, Russia, Canada, South Africa and Australia merge in reverence for

the place, the teachings and our ancestors. As our chanting ends we immediately hear beautiful chants sung in Thai, Cambodian, Korean, Chinese and who knows what else. All of us practitioners from all points around the globe and all styles of Buddhist practice chant as one, revealing the beautiful voice of the mahasangha echoing the Buddha and his disciples, who wandered and practiced deeply in these very same places of our journey.

It is a few days later and we have rolled our way through the Indian countryside into Nepal. This small-town border crossing is choked by colorful trucks full of merchandise from India trying to pass through customs. In the other direction these same colorful trucks are now empty, slowly, slowly, rolling back into India. We wait, more patience required, as all our passports are checked for visas. Finally, in darkness, we arrive at the Korean temple in Lumbini, Nepal, Buddha's birthplace. With no one to greet us we again wait and we laugh. Twelve hours on a bus and now this?

It's dawn the next day and we pilgrims walk in silence, two by two, toward the stupa and pillar marking the "exact" birthplace of the Buddha. As the sun rises, for the first time on the pilgrimage we can actually see the bright yellow sun. Gone is the pollution-filled sky of India with its hazy red sun. The path to the stupa is beautifully kept, the landscape calming and lovely. The silence, beauty and warm sweet air are almost intoxicating. A sense of peace and aliveness comes over me. I realize that I haven't heard this silence since arriving in India. I haven't seen the bright yellow sun in days. Then I realize that there are no beggars around; no one is trying to sell me anything. Alone with my fellow pilgrims I am in heaven. Ahh . . . wonderful!

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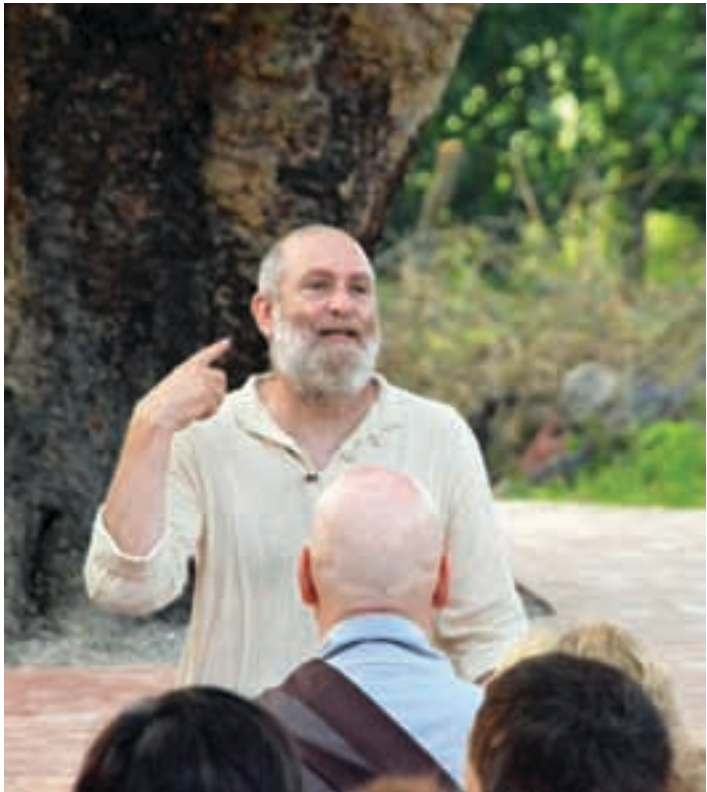
We are here in Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha. This is the last stop on our 10-day pilgrimage, which has been retracing, in a very odd order, the major places of the Buddha's life. Every major spiritual tradition has some kind of pilgrimage as part of their tradition. It is the duty of every Muslim who is able to go to Mecca once in their lifetime. Jewish people travel to the Wailing Wall, the last remaining section of the Second Temple, in Jerusalem. Many Catholics travel to northern Spain and walk a route of many churches culminating in a visit to the Cathedral of Saint Jerome.

I was thinking this morning as we were walking here that maybe now we are in heaven. There was no honking of the traffic. Nobody was coming up to us trying to sell us beads. We didn't have to look at beggars, naked children with their hands out or children singing Buddhist chants, not really as a spiritual practice but as a performance so that we would pay them money. But here it is silent. The sun is rising, bright and yellow. The air is cool. The birds are singing. And I thought, we're in heaven.

And that's the kind of life the Buddha was born into. The Buddha was born into heaven. He was born into a world where there was no suffering. Every wish he had was granted. His father tried to make sure that he couldn't see the suffering of the human world. So he pampered him and kept him cloistered in the palace. Every whim was granted.

But something happened in the Buddha's mind. The Buddha eventually saw suffering and realized he was human. He couldn't live in heaven anymore. In the mythology of the heavenly realms, you can live there and you can have a wonderful life, but ultimately you dissipate your karma. You eventually lose everything. This world is impermanence and your good situation will end. So the Buddha somehow intuitively realized this and he jumped over the wall of the palace and he left heaven. In doing so he entered into the suffering world of human beings. Without a moving mind, unflinchingly, he looked at the suffering of this world. He cried with the people when they cried. He suffered just like everybody else suffered. And he didn't need to. He could have dissipated his karma in the palace but instead he jumped over the wall. And in that jumping, he set our practice life in motion. Our practice is to unflinchingly be with the suffering of the world. Not to separate ourselves off, but to be with the suffering that is all around us.

All of us traveling on the buses have seen the poverty, the pain, the sadness, the despair, along with the joy and the wonder of life in Northern India. We have no choice but to witness the pain. Our pilgrimage is to be touched by the truth of all of it. We all know our joy. We all know our happiness. We crave these mental states. But we also know that they don't last. And it is our deep practice vow



to unflinchingly be with the pain and the suffering of this world. That is the bodhisattva mind.

On this pilgrimage, we learned about the life of a man named Gautama Shakyamuni, who became the Buddha. We have also learned about his disciples. We learned about his cousin, Ananda. We were told that Ananda argued with the Buddha when the Buddha wanted to leave Vaishali and go to Kushinagar to die. Ananda said, "What's wrong with my hometown?" Forty years practicing with the Buddha and still he argued with the Buddha! So even the disciples of the Buddha were human beings just like us.

When our guides speak about the Buddha he is called Lord Buddha. And when we bow to the Buddha on the altar it's very easy to think of him as a god. But he's a man. We learned about the Buddha's aunt, who argued so forcefully with Buddha to allow women to become nuns, to be part of the sangha. We were told that the Buddha couldn't quite agree. He couldn't say yes, but he didn't say no. Perhaps even the Buddha's mind wasn't completely clear when he was arguing with his aunt.

Practice is nonstop. It's easy to think we get enlightenment and we're done. Zen Master Seung Sahn used to say, "Enlightenment is easy to get, hard to keep." Moment to moment to moment, what are we doing now? We learn a very simple practice: keep a don't-know mind. But we all know how difficult it is to keep this don't-know mind. But we keep a try mind. Only try, try, try. What am I? Don't know.

This don't know is the light that brings us into our life.



So I talked about the pilgrimage as a journey over land, but a pilgrimage is also an inner pilgrimage. What am I? As we have been traveling on this trip, all of us have been confronted with our own karma, by our own conditioned mind, this I-my-me. We have likes and dislikes. We think that some things are good, some things are bad. All of us at one time or another on this trip have tried to change India. "If only they did it this way, then it would be a good country." I realize that it is not really possible that I am always right, and six billion other people are wrong. But that is how our minds operate.

Just as we unflinchingly face the suffering of this world, we also go inward and unflinchingly observe and wonder, what am I? It's so easy to jump into the heaven realm and ignore the truth of our experience. Our practice is to face the experience that we have right now. But we shouldn't be fooled by our idea of that experience. That's just our mind. We're always asking, what is this? What am I? Don't know!

So here we are at Lumbini Garden, the birthplace of Buddha. We are having our conference at the Korean temple here in Lumbini. This conference is called the Whole World Is a Single Flower. That name points to a calligraphy that Zen Master Man Gong, our great grandteacher, penned or inked when he was told that the Japanese had been defeated in World War II. So I thought I would recite a short poem by Man Gong for us today. It's called "Prajna Ship." He said,

Everything is impermanent.  
But there is truth.  
You and I are not two, not one.  
Only your stupid thinking is nonstop.  
Already alive in the Prajna ship.<sup>1</sup>

Everything is impermanent, but there is truth. When we were at the Mahabodhi Temple there were many different groups coming to pay respects to the Buddha's enlightenment place and sit under the Bodhi Tree. There was Thai chanting. There was Burmese chanting. Our Kwan Um group was doing Korean chanting. Together we chanted the Heart Sutra in English, Korean, Chinese, German, Lithuanian and Polish. At the Mahabodhi Temple there were people from all over the world. All these different practice forms come and go. We all like to think my way is the right way, but really it's just "my way." Our way is a wonderful way. We should practice it single-mindedly. But it is only one way.

The diversity of our world is always changing. Zen Master Man Gong could never have imagined that all of us from all these different countries would be here in Lumbini celebrating the dharma that's been passed down from the Buddha to Man Gong to Zen Master Seung Sahn to us. Never in his wildest dreams could he have imagined it. This world is always changing.

You and I are not two, not one. We are one, we are two.

How is it we are not two, not one? The whole world is a single flower. All one thing. And, each individual flower in this world is the whole universe. From one to many, from many to one. Where do I stop and you begin? Don't know.

But only our stupid thinking is nonstop. We're always thinking, thinking, thinking, making ideas. Before I came here to India, I made many plans. I packed many things. Half of them I haven't touched. I had so many ideas of what it would be like. And India is not what I thought. Only stupid thinking—making making making, judging judging judging.

So we raise this don't know mind. Cut off all thinking. This doesn't mean we don't have a thinking mind; it means we don't attach to our thinking. We say don't make anything. That doesn't mean we don't have an idea. But we don't hold our idea so tightly

In this last line of the poem, Zen Master Man Gong says, "already alive in the Prajna ship." We have this magnificent life. What will we do with it? *Prajna* means wisdom. Can you bring this wisdom mind into your life? Without really digging deeply—what am I?—there is no wisdom. There is only opinion. It might be a good opinion but it's only an opinion. You have to cut through everything, and from that place become alive.

The Buddha is alive right here, right now. The Buddha is not some fantasy who walked this land 2,500 years ago. Right here, sitting under these lovely trees in this beautiful garden, the Buddha is alive. How will you manifest it?

Back in Varansi after the Kwan Um pilgrimage, and it is the night of Diwali, which is like Christmas, New Year's Eve and Independence Day all rolled into one. We take an auto rickshaw down to the river on the main ghat (path or stairs down to the river). The driver tells us that he he can't get any closer than a half-mile from our hotel because the traffic and crowds are too great. Rolling our bags behind us, we move into the crowd. We sort of know where we are headed, but are unclear how to get to the exact location of our hotel. Fireworks are exploding, families are shopping at the street stalls, and as usual the cows meander from garbage pile to garbage pile. A man comes up to us and asks us where we are going. After telling him that we are going to our hotel he smiles and says "follow me." We trail behind, trusting him because we have come to trust India and Indians. We weave through the crowd, entering the space he has cleared for us. When we arrive at the hotel, tired and exhilarated by our walk, we offer him some money for his guidance. He smiles, refuses, and wishes us a happy Diwali. ♦

#### Notes

1. Seung Sahn, *The Whole World Is a Single Flower* (Rutland, VT: Tuttle, 1992), 106.

# The Whole World Is a Single Flower: Reflections by Participants

No filters.

Getting off the plane at Indira Gandhi Airport, I was an urban sophisticate looking for new experiences. After living a sunrise on the River Ganges—serene and primal—and then riding the maelstrom through the streets of Varanasi on a bicycle rickshaw—all cacophony and wild contradictions—I feel like I was shaken awake. There are no filters here. All sensations are simple and direct. After a few days, it's beginning to make sense. Every horn beep, begging child, colorful costume—everything has a purpose and effect. It's all just like this. Welcome to India!

*Paul Green, Canada*



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Evening chanting in the bus. Everybody keeps hands in hapchang. Bus stops for a moment. A guy in the street stares at us, his mouth wide open: “This bus driver must be really crazy if all the passengers are praying so sincerely.”

*Alvydas Turskis, Lithuania*

One of our native Indian guides was asked, “Why are the cows so revered?” He said, “Oh, they are the holiest of animals. They give everything and ask for nothing. Their milk makes it possible for us to eat the most delicious and high protein foods. Their dung heats our homes and fuels our stoves. It fertilizes our fields. Ninety percent of our population is vegetarian. Nothing is wasted. We have more than enough because of the cows. It’s a perfect balance. We are very blessed.”

*Zen Master Soeng Hyang, United States*





The Plunge: Stepping off our safe bright tour buses into the dark early dawn of Varanasi and walking (singly, silently) through chants and bells and cries for alms from half-naked children, crippled limbs and bundles of rags curled coughing in doorways, starving dogs nosing piles of refuse, clay-coated fakirs and hawkers and dark-eyed women in bright saris selling flowers—to the crumbling steps of the ancient and holy Ganges—coated with filth, reeking of mud and excrement and the smoke of death—and alight with grace, crowded with reverence, bodies bathing and swimming and chanting and prostrate in prayer.

The Goat: Walking through a small village in Rajgir, children bringing us their newborn goat to admire—no begging, no photos, just humans together celebrating the joy of a new life.

*Nancy Czarkowski, United States*



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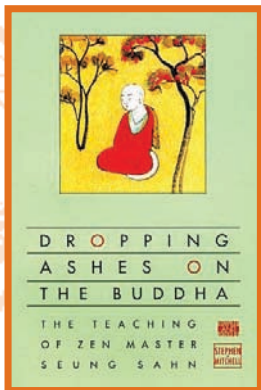


When I was small, I liked my grandmother or my mother to scratch my back before I would go to sleep. Now my granddaughter, Candice, likes me to scratch her back before she sleeps.

I saw a beggar woman sit on the floor outside Mahabodi Temple, her daughter, who is about four or five, lying at her feet. The beggar woman used one of her hands to scratch her daughter and stretched out another hand to beg for money. It was so touching and beautiful. The great Mother's love has no rich or poor, no high or low. Only don't know, just do it.

*Wai Hing, Hong Kong*

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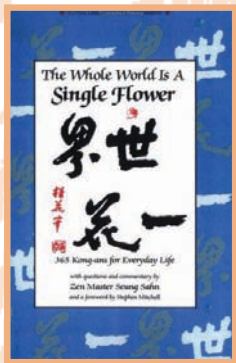
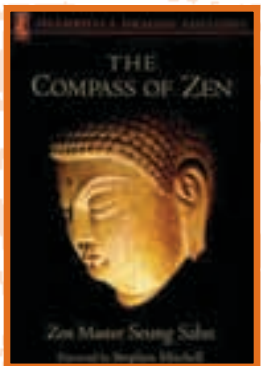
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**ZEN IN A WILD COUNTRY**  
SOLO WILDERNESS MEDITATION



**Anne Rudloe**

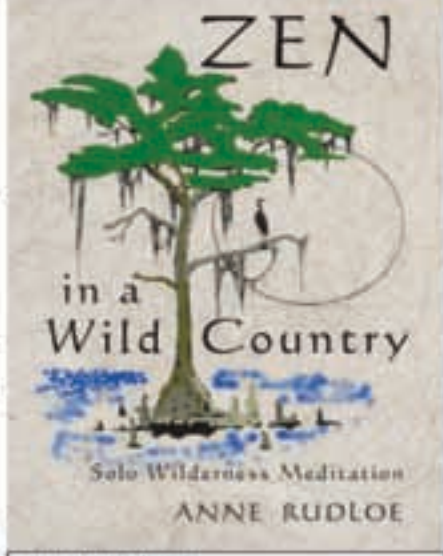
**PRAISE FOR Anne's last Zen book, *Butterflies on a Sea Wind: Beginning Zen***

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**ZEN IN A WILD COUNTRY** takes the reader deeper into this spiritual path with descriptions of solo wilderness retreats, long monastic retreats and a marine ecologist's Zen of sharks, sea turtles, and starfish that share an ocean practice space.

Anne received her permission to teach Zen, from the Kwan Um School of Zen, and holds a doctorate in Marine Ecology.

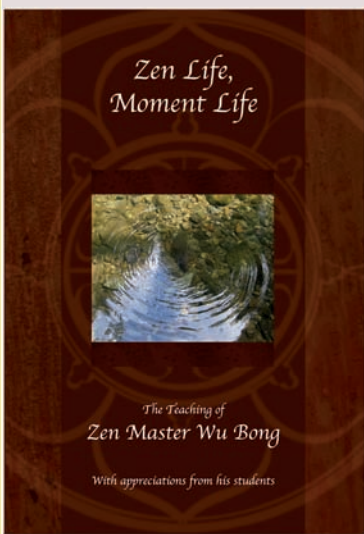
Her writing has also appeared in *National Geographic Magazine*, *Southwest Magazine* and many other national publications.



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That is Zen mind.  
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Zen Master Seung Sahn

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“Clear mind is like the full moon in the sky. Sometimes clouds come and cover it, but the moon is always behind them. Clouds go away, then the moon shines brightly. So don’t worry about clear mind: it is always there. ... Thinking comes and goes, comes and goes. You must not be attached to the coming or the going.” —Zen Master Seung Sahn

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# Dialogues in Spain: Zen Master Seung Sahn and his Senior Students in Palma

*Eduardo del Valle Pérez, Palma Zen Center*

This morning I woke up early and went to Palma Zen Center, a nonresidential center on Majorca island in Spain, and there I met Pepita and Maria Antonia, who have been keeping the morning practice twice a week for many years. Pepita, 65 years old, was leading the prostrations, with us following her while she bowed, her eyes closed, slow and steady as the pendulum of an old carillon. It suddenly struck my mind that she has been bowing every day, without ever having missed a day, for the last 28 years, since the first time she met Zen Master Seung Sahn. Pepita has been leading the morning practice in Palma Zen Center

when Joan Insa, a Spanish artist who was living in the United States, was walking down the streets of Providence and he heard beautiful and profound chanting coming from a nearby house. He was so powerfully attracted by the chanting voice that he knocked on the door of the house and found out that it was a Korean monk named Zen Master Seung Sahn who had been chanting, and that this Zen master was a great Zen patriarch from Korea. Joan became one of his first students in the West.

Soon Joan invited Zen Master Seung Sahn to teach on the Balearic island of Majorca. Immediately after this many people were interested in his teachings, students appeared and Palma Zen Center was founded. In the first years Palma Zen Center was led by Joan Insa in his own house. At that time, when Buddhism was not well known in Spain, the sangha talked to the abbot of the Christian monastery, La Real, and asked him for permission to have Zen retreats (Yong Maeng Jong Jin in Korean) in his monastery. The abbot, after meeting Zen Master Seung Sahn and listening to his teachings, approved and offered a space for the practitioners of our sangha, under the condition that he could freely attend each Zen retreat to practice with Zen Master Seung Sahn—even though his fellow monks disagreed with his decision.

Once, when Zen Master Seung Sahn was present, the dharma room floor was covered with only a thin carpet. Meditation cushions were placed around the room, but because the Zen center was so new there were no meditation mats or blankets available. The students put the only blanket they had under Zen Master Seung Sahn's cushion so that he could do bows without pain in his knees. When he entered the room and perceived the situation, he said with a smile "Bows are not necessary, no good for legs." He was always following the situation with kindness and compassion.

At that time Palma Zen Center was a small community, so that any time Zen Master Seung Sahn came to visit us, we were fortunate to spend a lot of personal time with him: going for walks, eating together, talking on the streets, sitting in front of a garden just keeping silence. We treasured spending time together with this great Zen master who we also called "Dae Soen Sa Nim" (Great Zen Master), being and acting in everyday life situations with him.

since then—no matter what—even if at times no one else came. In our last Zen retreat, during a ceremony honoring the senior students, the students of the second generation agreed that Pepita's virtue is perseverance and strength, and we told her that she is like Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva (Dae Se Ji Bosal), who never gives up, despite any kind of hindrance.

Zen Master Wu Bong told me last year in Berlin that Palma Zen Center was born in 1976, becoming the third Zen center of the Kwan Um School of Zen—after the Zen centers of Providence and New York—and the first Zen center in Europe. For a while Palma Zen Center was the head temple for the European Kwan Um School of Zen. Now it is the head temple for Spain.

The inspiration for Palma Zen Center came in the 1970s,

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One day Antonia del Olmo, Joan Insa's wife at that time, was driving her car with Zen Master Seung Sahn sitting next to her. Antonia asked him, "Dae Soen Sa Nim, what is the true job for a wife?" Zen Master Seung Sahn answered, "Wife must always follow, respect and obey her husband!"

Antonia was stuck and angry. She couldn't believe that a Zen master could give this kind of answer! But she kept silence. Later she met her husband and told him about her talk with Zen Master Seung Sahn and she told her husband, "You must go to Zen Master Seung Sahn and ask him what the true job for a husband is, and then you tell me his answer."

So when Joan Insa met Zen Master Seung Sahn he asked him, "Dae Soen Sa Nim, what is the true job for the husband?" Without the slightest doubt Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "Husband must always follow, respect and obey his wife!"

Some years later the students invited Zen Master Seung Sahn to visit the famous caves of Porto Cristo. When he entered the caves he looked around and said, "This world is very interesting." After this first visit, any time Zen Master Seung Sahn came to visit us he always said, "Going to see the caves is necessary." And when he entered the caves again he always repeated "Caves—world very interesting."

On one of these visits to the caves, Zen Master Seung Sahn was waiting in line and talking with two students from Palma Zen Center, Pedro Pomar and Jaume Más, and a student from Barcelona Zen Center, Fernando Pardo, who is now the abbot there. Suddenly a beautiful woman walked past them. Pedro, Fernando and Jaume stopped talking—they forgot completely about Zen Master Seung Sahn and just looked at that beautiful woman who had entered the caves. When the three of them looked at Zen Master Seung Sahn again he simply gazed at them in silence. Then Pedro asked, "Master, what do you think about our looking at this beautiful woman?"

"Oh, no problem! Wonderful!" he answered. "Ah! Very good! If beautiful woman appears in front of you, enjoy her beauty, looking at her, no problem. Wonderful! But when that woman goes around the corner, if you continue thinking about her, then you have a problem!"

The students looked at each other and started to laugh.

Another time, in the dharma room of Palma Zen Center, two Americans, a monk and a Zen student, were arguing about the lid to the water bowl on the altar. The monk said, "The water bowl should be opened now!" Then he removed the lid to water bowl.

"No, no, no!" the student insisted. "You are wrong! The water bowl must remain closed now. You don't understand!" And then she covered the water bowl again with the lid.

"You are wrong!" shouted the monk. "This is not correct!" And the monk uncovered the water bowl again.

The monk and the student continued arguing this way, opening and closing the water bowl, when Jaume Más, who that time was the head dharma teacher, entered the dharma

room and perceived the situation. He suddenly walked to the altar, took the lid and said loudly, "From now on, and for the peace of America, Palma Zen Center is not going to use the lid for the water bowl again!"

The monk and the student were dumbstruck while Jaume Más left the dharma room with the lid in his hands. When Zen Master Seung Sahn, who was in his room, heard about this, he approved of the head dharma teacher's action, and in Palma Zen Center we never used the lid to the water bowl again for the following 17 years! Jaume Más was a strong student and served as our head dharma teacher for many years. Later he entered the Sufi path and became a student in the Nimatullahi Sufi order.

In 1992 Pedro Pomar, who had been one of the first students at Palma Zen Center and one of its main benefactors, fell very ill. During a dharma talk in a Yong Maeng Jong Jin with Zen Master Seung Sahn, Pedro said to him, "Dae Soen Sa Nim, I'm afraid to die!"

"You are already dead!" Zen Master Seung Sahn exclaimed.

Pedro and Zen Master Seung Sahn looked at each other deeply and suddenly both of them started to laugh. A few months later Pedro passed away. Pedro attracted many people to the dharma and greatly supported the Palma Zen



Center with his wisdom and generosity. We will always remember his great compassion and his luminous smile.

Pilar, Pedro's wife, has continued practicing and supporting our center since then. During the ceremony honoring the senior students, we agreed that her virtue was wisdom because any time a student had a problem she was always ready to offer them kind words that helped clear their mind and their problem. That's why we told her that she is like Manjushri Bodhisattva (Mun Su Bosal).

Tolo Cantarellas, who has been the abbot of Palma Zen Center during the last 20 years, told me this story about Zen Master Seung Sahn:

Once, in 1992, Zen Master Seung Sahn visited us. He came with eight people, monks and students, to give a

dharma talk and lead a retreat with a precepts ceremony. At one point Zen Master Seung Sahn felt unwell with chest pain and so we urgently took him to a small hospital in Palma, situated on a hill near a forest. After an initial stay in the intensive care unit, Zen Master Seung Sahn was transferred to a room, where he was always accompanied by two or three people. When we went for a visit we found Zen Master Seung Sahn looking upward. He greeted us and smiled, and pointed a finger at a small insect with antennae, perched on the IV stand. Then Zen Master Seung Sahn introduced us to his “small friend that keeps me company,” and then he talked to the insect for a while with fun and loving words. Looking at him I could see that he was not at all concerned, and not fearful for his own life.

Zen Master Seung Sahn looked then at me and said, “You must go talk to the cardiologist. Tell him that tomorrow I must leave the hospital.” So I went to look for the doctor and I found him in the reception, looking over Zen Master Seung Sahn’s medical history. When he heard what Zen Master Seung Sahn wanted he was stunned and glared at me angrily. Then he showed me the ECG (which I can read because I’m a nurse) and he said, “Look at his background”—Zen Master Seung Sahn had already suffered three anterior infarctions—“How can you imagine that I would allow him go out? I refuse to discuss this further!”

“Yes, yes, of course,” I said. “Thank you, doctor . . .” And then I returned to Zen Master Seung Sahn’s room to give to him the doctor’s answer. He told me “OK, OK, you must go talk again to this doctor. This time tell him that tomorrow I must give a very important lecture attended by many people, and I cannot miss it. OK? Now go and talk to him.”

“Yes sir, yes sir . . .” I answered. So I went to talk to the doctor again, and on the way I was overwhelmed, trying to find the right words to explain the situation so that the doctor would understand and react with the least possible anger. I found the doctor in the same place reviewing patient records. I got his attention and explained to him how important and inescapable Zen Master Seung Sahn’s appointment was, and that it was necessary that he leave the hospital the next morning. The doctor said: “OK, if this man wants to commit suicide, then he must sign the voluntary discharge before leaving!”

The next day Zen Master Seung Sahn left the hospital, and in the afternoon he gave a dharma talk with the same energy as ever, and afterward he went to the hotel to rest.

During the ceremony honoring the senior students, we agreed that Tolo’s virtue is energy and strength, because in good and bad situations at Palma Zen Center he never gave

up, and he encouraged everybody to continue practicing no matter what. He became an example of constant practice, so we told him that he is like Samantabhadra Bodhisattva (Bo Hyon Bosal).

Gabriela Tous has been Tolo’s wife and constant dharma companion through the years. One time Gabriela accompanied Zen Master Seung Sahn to the airport. He was sick and Gabriela thought that maybe it was the last time she would see her beloved teacher alive. Then Gabriela looked at Zen Master Seung Sahn and said sadly, “Dae Soen Sa Nim, when are you going to come back?”

“You must be strong, Gabriela!” Zen Master Seung Sahn insisted sternly. “I come here so that you can become independent, and then you won’t need me anymore!”

Gabriela started to mourn, with her heart full of gratitude for this last teaching she received from Zen Master Seung Sahn. The great patriarch never returned to Palma Zen Center again, because soon afterward he became ill and remained in Korea until the end of his life.



During the ceremony honoring the senior students, we agreed that Gabriela’s virtue is her compassion. She is always smiling and lovingly taking care of everybody. Any time a student is sad she comes and smiles kindly at them with bright eyes, and nurtures the student so that they feel loved and unburdened. We named her Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva (Kwan Seum Bosal).

These are some of the stories of our life with Zen Master Seung Sahn. As I’m writing these lines, looking now at the altar of the dharma room in Palma

Zen Center, next to the golden Buddha—which he gave to our Zen Center many years ago—I see the face of a great bodhisattva: our beloved Zen Master Seung Sahn. And next to him I see the faces of Pedro and Pilar, Tolo and Gabriela, Pepita, Jaume, Manel, Tami, Xisco, Maria Antonia, Pablo . . . and many other Zen masters, teachers and bodhisattvas who, with their teachings, effort, patience and practice through the years, have made this beautiful taeng hwa (altar painting) possible. Before the living taeng hwa of Palma Zen Center and the Kwan Um School of Zen I bow with gratitude and love.

---

Eduardo del Valle Pérez started practicing Zen in 1991 with Zen Master Seung Sahn at the Palma Zen Center in Spain. He took bodhisattva precepts with Zen Master Wu Bong in 2011. Nowadays Eduardo is part of the European office of the Kwan Um School of Zen. Since 1998 he has worked at the University of the Balearic Islands, where he leads its web and digitization department. In addition, he is technical director of the Digital Library of the Balearic Islands. He earned his pilot’s license in 2008 and also works as a flight instructor for professional pilots. He lives with his wife in Majorca, Spain.



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# Mind Inscription and Mind-King Inscription: Two New Translations

Jess Row

**Editor's note:** Dharma teacher Jess Row recently translated "Mind Inscription," "Faith in Mind" and "Mind-King Inscription" for a Chinese language class at Princeton University. "Faith in Mind" has been translated by many others, including Zen Master Hae Kwang, and is thus not included here. However, "Mind Inscription" has only been translated once, and this is the first English translation of "Mind-King Inscription."

## Mind Inscription

*Attributed to Farong, founding patriarch  
of Ox-Head Mountain*

The nature of mind is  
non-arising;  
Why try to look for it?

Originally there is no dharma—  
Why talk about smoke and fire?

Going and coming without end,  
Clinging to what you've known—  
don't bother.

All these things are useless.  
In a place of quiet illumination, see  
for yourself.

What is past is empty.  
Stuck in knowing, you confuse the  
teaching.

If you think you see clearly the  
objects of cognition,  
Your clarity is still lost in darkness.

If one mind is obstructed,  
No dharma passes through.

If things come and go naturally,  
what deception can pass?

Existence and nonexistence share  
the same characteristics  
And are illuminated in turn.

If you want to attain purity of  
mind,  
You must only use the effort of no-  
mind.

When high and low are not  
illuminated,  
This is the most subtle point.

Know dharma without knowing;  
Not knowing is all the knowing you  
need.

If you hope to keep a still mind,  
You haven't yet avoided sickness.

Living and dying while forgetting  
desire—  
This is original nature.

The ultimate principle needs no  
discussion—  
Not loose, not tight.  
If you want your spirit to pass freely  
through the things of this world,  
Always be with what is right in front  
of your eyes.

And if you find nothing in front of  
your eyes,  
Be completely with that nothing.

Don't bother with discriminating  
thinking—  
This itself is the mysterious void.

Thoughts come, thoughts go—  
Make no distinction between  
"before" and "after."

The second thought won't come  
If the first thought doesn't produce  
it.

In the three worlds there is  
nothing—  
No mind, no Buddha.

All beings have this without-  
thinking mind,  
And this is where your without-  
thinking mind will emerge.

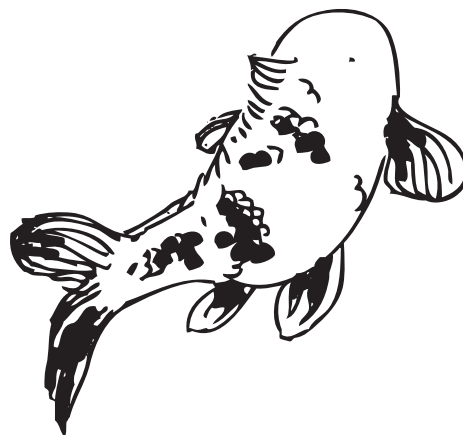
Distinguishing between ordinary  
people and sages—  
This is the source of so many  
afflictions.

Constantly calculating and  
scheming is  
To seek the truth while turning  
away from the teachings.

If you put to rest this need to  
control things good and bad,  
You will be full to the brim with  
pure illumination.

There's no need for cleverness  
When you're protecting an infantile  
way of thinking.

If you use your keenest intelligence,  
You'll see how erroneous views  
pervade the world around us.



Without looking for anything, stay quiet,  
In a dark place, not moving.

Your keenest intelligence doesn't lie:  
In the place of quiet you will find  
the brightest illumination.

The ten thousand appearances are  
all true,  
All arranged in a network, of one  
aspect.

Whatever happens, stay sitting in  
the same place,  
Without grasping anything.

Believe me: there's nowhere to go,  
And no one going there.

No holding, no scattering,  
No delays, no sickness.

This quiet illumination of things as  
they are—  
There are no words to explain it.

Keep this mind and don't look for  
another.  
Don't try to cut off your cravings  
and lust.

Your discriminating nature is  
ultimately empty,  
So let it appear and disappear  
naturally.

Not clean, not dirty,  
Not shallow, not deep.

Originally there is no "then";  
See that there is also no "now."

See that there is also no abiding,  
And thus you will see your original  
mind.

Originally nothing exists.  
This realization is what is "now."

The original existence of bodhi  
Does not require you to hold  
on to anything.

Your afflictions originally do  
not exist.  
You don't have to do  
anything to get rid of them.

Prajna illuminates itself.  
The ten thousand dharmas  
return to this point.

Without returning, without getting  
anything,  
Cut off perceptions and forget  
about grasping.

The four virtues are non-arising;  
The Buddha's three bodies have  
always existed.

The six sense faculties respond to  
cognitive objects,  
but this discrimination is not the  
only kind of consciousness.

There is one mind that does not  
deceive,  
That tames and corrects the ten  
thousand conditions of karma.

This mind-nature is originally even,  
It stays in one place and cannot be  
led astray.

Non-arising, it follows the way of  
things,  
Accords with any situation, and  
doesn't draw attention to itself.

Enlightenment is originally not  
enlightenment.  
It becomes "enlightenment" when  
it's no longer enlightenment.

The two extremes of having and not  
having—  
Who can call them "good" and  
"bad"?

All things that seem to exist  
Are originally nonexistent and  
unmade.

The knowing mind is not mind  
There is no sickness and no  
medicine.

In times of confusion, let go of the  
things of this world.  
Enlightenment-ceasing is not  
different from this.



Originally there is no grasping,  
So why should we throw anything  
away?

To say "it exists" is demon speech.  
To say "emptiness" only resembles  
what's appropriate.

Don't try to extinguish your  
unenlightened thoughts.  
Only instruct yourself to rest your  
thinking.

Thinking will be cut off by no-  
mind,  
Mind will be extinguished by non-  
effort.

Don't bother trying to "investigate"  
emptiness—  
By itself it illuminates everything.

To cut off life and death  
Enter the principle with a mind of  
deep mystery.

Open your eyes and see the  
characteristics,  
Allow your mind to see all that  
arises.

Then let your mind let go of all that  
arises,  
And in those arising objects the  
mind itself will disappear.

As the mind erases objects,  
Mind and objects collapse into each  
other.

Mind quieted, objects quieted,  
They are now one and the same.

When objects are extinguished by  
the mind  
The mind is also extinguished by  
objects.

Until neither mind nor objects arise  
Leaving only quietness, calmness  
and bright emptiness.

All the manifestations of bodhi  
become visible  
And the mind becomes like the  
purest water

To attain your true nature, you  
must become truly stupid:  
Don't make "near" or "far."



Know that approval and disapproval  
are an unceasing cycle,  
So don't keep any fixed address.

Then all this karma will suddenly  
disappear,  
And you'll never think about it  
again.

Endless day is like night.  
Endless night is like day.

Outside, you might seem like a  
stubborn, protesting fool;  
Inside, your mind will be empty of  
all truths.

Don't make any move in response to  
outside conditions—  
This is the strength of a great  
person.

But don't hold on to "person"; don't  
hold on to "seeing":  
Without seeing, everything appears.

All-penetrating,  
All-pervading.

Thinking only leads you into  
darkness,  
And will bring chaos to your spirit.

When your mind stops moving,  
Moving, stopping, moving—it all  
drains away.

The ten thousand objectless  
dharmas  
Have only one entrance.

Not entering, not leaving,  
Not gentle, not warm.

Sravakas and pratyekabuddhas  
Cannot fathom this teaching.

In reality there is not even one  
thing.  
Only surpassing wisdom remains.

Original reality is utterly empty  
Apart from mind there is nothing.

Correct enlightenment is not  
enlightenment  
True emptiness is not emptiness.

All Buddhas of the three worlds  
And all vehicles embrace this  
teaching.

Which is as far-reaching  
As the sands of the Ganges.

In it there is nothing to refer to,  
Only a quieted mind with no place  
to rest.

And this not-resting mind  
Opens itself to bright emptiness.

This feeling of quiet and peace does  
not arise out of anything,  
It is always there, a broad, vast  
liberation.

Anything can happen there,  
And it will all remain in harmony.

The sun of wisdom is quietness,  
A light whose brightness never goes  
away.

A grove of unmarked illumination,  
A citadel of bright nirvana.

All of the conditions which go on  
endlessly—  
You can try to explain them in  
spiritual terms,  
to understand them in material  
terms.

But don't put up a platform for  
teaching the dharma.  
Close your eyes and rest in the  
house of emptiness.



The happiest path, the quietest  
nature,  
Is found in the nature of things as  
they are.

Not doing anything, not attaining  
anything,  
all comes from not manifesting the  
self.

The four virtues, the six paramitas,  
all come together in the One  
Vehicle.

If the mind does not arise,  
then it will be no different from the  
dharma.

Know that arising and non-arising  
Always exist at the same time.

At this point, the sages know  
There is nothing that can possibly  
be explained.

### Mind-King Inscription

*Attributed to Fu Dashi (Mahasattva Fu)*

1.

To perceive the mind of the  
Buddha, the king of emptiness,  
is subtle, mysterious and difficult.

Without shape, without any  
distinguishing characteristics,  
Still it has the strength of a great  
spirit.

It can extinguish a thousand  
calamities,  
And bring about ten thousand  
attainments.

Although its essential nature is  
empty,  
It reveals all aspects of the dharma.

Look for it and there's nothing to  
see,  
Call out: you'll just hear the sound  
of your own voice.

It is the greatest leader of the  
dharma,  
Its moral strength transmits the  
teachings.

If water tastes salty,  
Only the mind-king can perceive its  
underlying clarity.

We can see that it exists  
Even though we can't see it in front  
of us.

The mind-king is exactly like this.

The mind-king stays within the  
body, unmoving,  
and faces the gates of perception,  
where things come and go.

It adapts to the capabilities of all  
beings, following every necessity,  
Remaining completely at ease, with  
no obstruction.

But remember: what the mind-king  
does, anyone can do.

## 2.

The mind that understands our root  
consciousness—  
That same conscious mind sees the  
Buddha.

Mind is, so Buddha is.  
Buddha is, so mind is.

Every moment possessing Buddha  
mind—  
Buddha mind thinking "Buddha."

If you want to quickly reach this  
point  
Discipline your mind and control  
your self.

Pure control, pure mind.  
This mind is instantly Buddha.

Apart from the mind-king  
There is no other thing that can be  
called "Buddha."

If you seek to become a Buddha  
Don't take up any kind of  
defilement.

Even though mind-nature is empty  
Greed and anger are real.

If you want to enter the dharma  
gate  
Sit up straight and become a  
Buddha.

Then you have already reached the  
other shore,  
And you have attained the  
paramitas.

The truly refined person who seeks  
the Way  
Studies the self, studies the mind,

And knows that Buddha lies within,  
Not looking for any other source.

Mind = Buddha.  
Buddha = Mind.

This mind-illumination is the real  
Buddha;  
This clear understanding is the real  
mind.

Apart from mind, no Buddha,  
Apart from Buddha, no mind.

## 3.

"No Buddha" is unfathomable,  
There is no adequate way to express  
it.

If you try to grasp emptiness and get  
stuck in quietness,  
You'll just keep floating and sinking,  
floating and sinking.

All Buddhas and bodhisattvas  
Lack this kind of "quiet mind."

A refined person with an  
illuminated mind  
Awakens to this dark and mysterious  
sound.

The marvelous nature of body and  
mind  
requires nothing more outside itself.

It's because of this that sages  
have free and unobstructed minds.



## 4.

For the no-word mind-king  
Emptiness lacks any substantial  
nature.

The material body, subject to so  
many afflictions,  
May do harm, or do good.

Not being, and not not-being,  
Are neither hidden nor apparent.

Mind nature, apart from emptiness,  
May act in a deluded way, or may  
act with wisdom.

It's for this reason that I exhort you:  
Protect your mind at all costs.

Temples and states can do what they  
want,  
Unstable, floating and sinking.

The pure and clean mind of the sage  
Is like gold and jewels in the middle  
of this world.

The storehouse of the prajna-  
dharma  
In this way also exists in the body  
and mind.

And the dharma treasure of non-  
action  
Is neither shallow nor deep.

All the Buddhas and bodhisattvas  
Already embrace this fundamental  
mind.

And those who have fully  
encountered the conditions of the  
world  
Exist beyond past, present and  
future.

---

Jess Row is the author of two books of short fiction, *The Train to Lo Wu* and *Nobody Ever Gets Lost*. His work has won a Whiting Writers Award, an O. Henry prize and has appeared three times in *The Best American Short Stories*. He is a professor of English at the College of New Jersey and also teaches at the Vermont College of Fine Arts and the City University of Hong Kong. He started studying Chinese while living in Hong Kong, and later did coursework in classical Chinese at the University of Michigan. He has been a student in the Kwan Um School of Zen since 1994.

# Buddha's Birthday Poem, April 2012

Judy Roitman JDPSN

26]



Siddhartha!  
It's not too late!  
Don't do it!  
Demons wait.  
Heavens wait.  
Arhats lose weight from anticipation, and  
Rats race from their ships  
Towards what?  
Have you thought  
About what comes next?

Go to the fortune-tellers.  
Ask them. They  
Utter: Prince or Holy Man.  
This is what you're in for,  
And your father doesn't forget.  
Meanwhile your mother,  
Away from home, clings to a branch.

Shakyamuni,  
Her death comes soon,  
Almost as soon as you're born. Nobody owns this  
Karma.  
You could stop the wheel right now. But  
Already you've forgotten the future.  
Maya reaches  
Upward, the tree supports  
No one and somehow  
In its shadow you are

Born.  
Unleashed ocean of  
Dharma! Un Mun would have thrown you to a hungry  
Dog. "Only I am  
Holy." KATZ! The tree in front of you is already 100%  
Awake.



## Notes

This is an acrostic. The first letters of each line spell out Buddha's given names followed by his clan name followed by his title: Siddhartha Gautama Shakyamuni Buddha.

References are made to the following:

Before his birth, Siddhartha's father, King Suddhodana, consulted fortune-tellers (aka "wise men") who said that the new baby would grow up to be either a great king or a holy renunciant. (The fortune-tellers were called in because Siddhartha's mother, Queen Maya, dreamed that an elephant pierced her side; this is not in the poem.) Towards the end of her pregnancy, Queen Maya decided to return to her parents' house to give birth, and while on the road she went into labor, giving birth while standing under a sal tree, holding on to a branch. (Supposedly, Siddhartha was born from her right side, another detail not in the poem.) Queen Maya died 10, or maybe 7, days after Buddha's birth.

Upon being born, baby Siddhartha took seven steps in each of the four directions; under each step a lotus flower appeared. He then proclaimed "In heaven above and earth below, only I am holy."

About 1,500 years later, Un Mun referred to Buddha's birth by saying, "If I had been there I would have fed him to a hungry dog." About 750 years after Un Mun, So Sahn spoke of how Ananda "unleashed this ocean of sutra teachings" derived from the Buddha's words.





The Kwan Um School of Zen  
 would like to thank the volunteer team  
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 The Whole World is a Single Flower 2011  
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*Zen Master Bon Haeng*  
*Jo Potter JDPSN*  
*Jiri Hazlbauer*  
*Carlos Montero*  
*Grace Tam*  
*And many others...*  
 Thank you for a wonderful time together!

**The Human Route**

*Coming empty-handed, going empty-handed – that is human.  
 When you are born, where do you come from?  
 When you die, where do you go?  
 Life is like a floating cloud which appears.  
 Death is like a floating cloud which disappears.  
 The floating cloud itself originally does not exist.  
 Life and death, coming and going, are also like that.  
 But there is one thing which always remains clear.  
 It is pure and clear, not depending on life and death.  
 Then what is the one pure and clear thing?*



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The heart of the Kwan Um School of Zen is our practice. Zen Master Seung Sahn very simply taught "Don't Know". This

means in each moment we open unconditionally to all that presents itself to us. By doing this, our innate wisdom and compassion will naturally breathe and flow into our lives.

The Zen centers of the Kwan Um School of Zen around the world offer training in Zen meditation through instruction, daily morning and evening meditation practice, public talks, teaching interviews, retreats, workshops, and community living. Our programs are open to anyone regardless of previous experience.

The School's purpose is to make this practice of Zen as accessible as possible. It is our wish to help human beings find their true direction and we vow and to save all beings from suffering.

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