

Spring Wind

Buddhist Cultural Forum

Winter 2002



War is
Bad Karma

The Land of
Broken Calm

When the
Quiet Came

Visiting
Buddha
Land



War & Peace

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Voice of the Dharma Peddler

My father had been missing since I was three. I was the youngest of four children, with a brother and two sisters. My two sisters told me that my father had to go to Manchuria to join the Korean independence movement there. Korea was then under Japanese colonial rule. My mother died during the Korean war in 1951. So at the age of ten I was left an orphan.

There was some farmland a few hundred yards away from my house. Every morning the inmates from the local prison would march to the farmland carrying honey buckets on their shoulders and work hard all day long in the hemp field under the guards' watchful eyes. I would watch them, wondering what wrongdoing they had done. The death of my mother and the problem of social justice haunted me. At the same time I began to have a distrust of the adult world. Finally I decided to have a go at firsthand experience with the real world. I dropped out of middle school and left home. This was my first transformation.

After going without food for three days I lost any sense of shame and became a street kid begging for food. I delivered papers, worked in a restaurant, polished shoes and did whatever I could to survive. I wanted to join the brotherhood of the homeless to honor the principles of dignity and righteousness for street kids, but instead I got severely beaten up and thrown out. I didn't know at the time that that was my initiation. Eventually I got a teaching job at a boarding school for shoeshine boys. The school was just a mudbrick house on the hill, but it was the most stable job I had. Unfortunately it did not last very long.

Holidays were painful days for homeless kids. It hurt us

Letter from the Publisher

to even see kids with parents on holidays. It was a harvest moon festival day, or Korean Thanksgiving, in September 1957. The typhoon brought rain with a strong wind that lasted all day. On holidays the homeless shoeshine boys would work harder in order to forget their pain. However, the weather was denying us even that. We huddled on the earthen floor, feeling miserable. Towards the evening some of the big kids went down to the town. They had some wine and beat up some "home kids" who passed by flaunting their holiday dress and eating cookies.

The word that the "homeless kids" on the hill had beat up the decent kids in town spread fast. The townfolk found it outrageous, like servants beating up their master. They called youth leaders and the police force of the town and surrounded the hill. All of a sudden, the situation got out of control. Now the homeless kids were not the sort who would roll over and submit to hostile forces. These were tough and seasoned street kids, like weeds that grow stronger when trampled. They rose to the situation in solidarity. Little kids gathered stones while big kids just as quickly pelted the arrayed forces. The rain stopped and a bright full moon was shining all over. It was a beautiful harvest full moon night. But sixty of us had to wage a battle, fighting fiercely with all the bitterness we felt toward the mainstream adult world.

In the end our adversaries approached us in an almost military operation. We were hopelessly outnumbered. In retreat we decided to scatter and regroup in the near future. I cried and escaped into the night.

I was back on the street again in a state of complete collapse. I even contemplated committing suicide. But I hung on to life and kept drifting. During that time I came across a palacelike building in a narrow alleyway in downtown Seoul. It was an unusual building in an unusual place, like a strange place in a strange land. But the building seemed somehow familiar to me. It resembled one of the shrines in my hometown. When I found out that people were living in it, I was immediately seized with a great yearning to live in such a place. For once I wanted to live in a big house with a big open garden.

Upon inquiry I learned that it was the Buddhist temple Chogyesa. I asked the guard at the gate if I could live there. Right away I was refused. I became desperate. I pleaded with the guard and said I would do anything if they allowed me to stay. The guard said with a big grin on his face, "You cannot stay here unless you wish to become a monk." Without thinking I said right away, "I would love to become a monk." With another big grin he said, "It is better to go to a mountain monastery to become a monk." So upon his advice I went to the mountain monastery and became a monk for the wrong reason. And that was my second transformation.

In the monastery I was surprised to learn that monks are homeless people and Buddhist monasteries are for the homeless who renounce the worldly life. So it seemed that I was

in the right place after all. Anyhow I was very happy to live in a “big house.” Monastic life in the mountains began in the predawn hours, at 3 a.m., and ended at 9 p.m. We novice monks had to wake up at 2:30 a.m. and retire at 10 p.m., because we had to be up ahead of the community to prepare for the morning practice and stay up one hour for study. It was hard in the beginning but I soon adjusted.

Waking up in the empty mountain and washing my face in the running stream under moonlight always gave me a feeling of mystery and life-giving energy. But at the end of a long day we were always tired. After the night bell, the five of us novice monks would gather around the lamp in our common room to recite the Admonition for the Beginner’s Mind in a singsong voice. Our lecture master would pace back and forth keeping his eye on us while we recited the text. Invariably one of us would fall silent, a sure sign that he was dozing. Our lecture master would then tap him on the shoulder with a bamboo clacker. The resounding sound and his roar of laughter would jolt all of us wide awake. Then, like tiger cubs we would start giggling after him. He would then give a different shout which made us immediately return to our study. With a constant smile on his face he was alone and always content with himself. He was a funny and happy character. Even in the monastery he seemed to belong to another world. The silhouette on the paper door of five novice monks studying Beginner’s text under lamplight left a permanent mark in my consciousness. Yes, the three years of my novice monk training were one of the happiest periods of my life.

My main teacher Tongsan Sunim (1890-1965) was a renowned Son (Zen) master and served as the spiritual head of the Korean Chogye Order. He had hundreds of disciples and was too busy to function as a Son teacher to the training students in meditation halls. So I attached myself to Solbong Sunim (1890-1969), who was the Son master of the meditation hall of the Pomo-sa monastery in Pusan in the early 1960’s.

Solbong Sunim came from North Korea and disliked Communists and all religious people who supported violence and warmaking for whatever reason. He strongly believed that all religious and non-religious people should surrender themselves to peace and love as a way of life. He found it difficult to stomach religious teachers with a double standard or hypocritical behavior. He showed this in his lifestyle. He

would display his humble yet strict decorum to his students during the formal training, but as soon as that was done he would go off to towns and villages. Completely carefree he would have a drink first and then mingle with ordinary people to his heart’s content. Then he would lie down and sleep happily wherever he found himself, even in a ditch. After weeks and sometimes months of sojourn in the secular world, he would look bedraggled beyond recognition, his face soggy and sometimes bruised, and his clothes soiled and crumpled. Then he would return to the mountain monastery and proudly announce to his anxious students, “I had a wonderful pilgrimage!”

Occasionally he indulged in his “unlimited action” program. He would stop rush hour traffic at a busy intersection for a five-minute silent meditation, test policemen for their compassion and patience and confront pesky Christian missionaries with “straight talk.”

Solbong Sunim described his lifestyle in his Admonitory Words. “My life as a cloud-and-water monk is based on the principle of pure poverty. Therefore I am free from being poor wherever I go and I am free from being pure whatever I do. I am content and always full eating rice of no taste and drinking soup of no broth. With no desire for worldly gains I never refuse anybody and feel no shame (in my comings and goings). One who pursues the Way of liberation should not ride a horse of others, should not draw a bow of others, should not find a fault with others and should not concern oneself with the affairs of others. More than anything else, knowing yourself and not being deceived by others are the most important of important things. Thus the World-Honored One held up a piece of flower and Mahakashyapa broke into a smile...”

Sometimes unhappy incidents follow happy events. By government decree young monks were ordered to fulfill the compulsory military service. So I was taken to boot camp and after that assigned to the infantry division near the 38th Parallel. After one year in the army I went AWOL while on leave. Eventually I smuggled myself out of South Korea to Japan. Before I left I visited Solbong Sunim and informed him of my situation. He looked at me long and hard and said with tears in his eyes, “The whole world is Dharma realm for selecting Buddhas and bodhisattvas and difficult situations are no other than gates of emancipation to the one with a Dharma heart. Embrace the new world with your full heart.

It is our aim to inform the public of Buddhist tradition and to promote “Buddhism in everyday life.” It is our aim to facilitate the encounter between Buddhist wisdom and Western civilization.

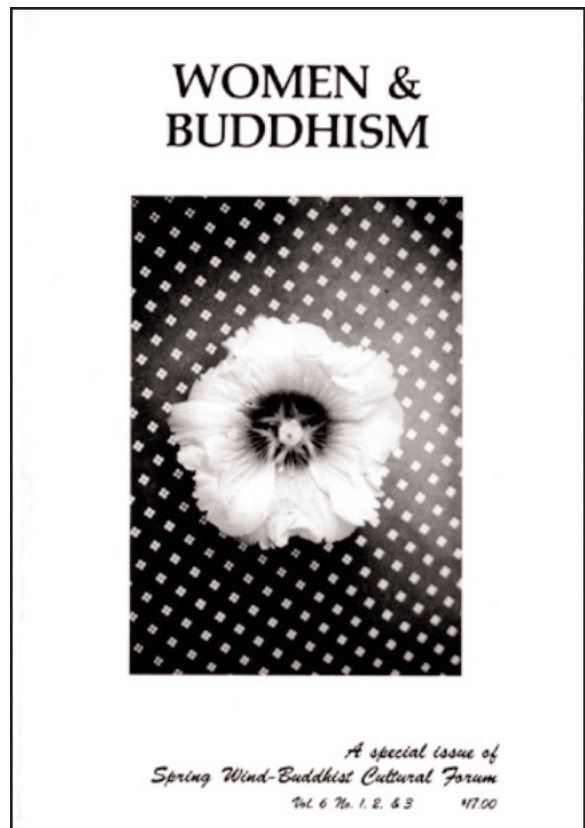
Take care of yourself and Dharma wherever you go and whatever you do. I will be with you!" That was the last time I saw my Dharma teacher.

It was the end of November 1966 when I left Korea for Japan. That was my third transformation. I spent eight months in Rinzai Zen monasteries and then left Japan for America. In February of 1968 I went from New York City to Montreal, Canada. In the spring of 1972 I moved from Montreal to Toronto. Three years later I became a Canadian citizen. That was my fourth transformation. Now after more than fifteen years of working out my karma with U.S. Immigration Services, in July 2001 I became a U.S. citizen. That was my fifth transformation. I consider this my journey and transformations on a modern Silk Road to the Pacific West.

I am still a Korean. I am still a Canadian. Now I am a U.S. citizen. But first and foremost I am a Buddhist. There are three things I like most about Buddhism. First, we believe that each and every one of us is endowed with Buddha nature. Therefore, Buddhist or non-Buddhist, we are originally and essentially all Buddhas. In other words, individually and collectively we are the light, the truth, the hope and the Way. Second is meditation and the Bodhisattva's way of life. In



Samu Sunim
in the basement
apartment
in Toronto



meditation we use the power of silence and concentration to discover what is true, noble and infinite within. Then as a bodhisattva or wisdom-being, we apply the Dharma ingredients of wisdom and compassion in our everyday life for the benefit of the world. The third is peace, harmony and tolerance. It is true that all religions promote peace, harmony and tolerance. But in Buddhism peace, harmony and tolerance are more than spiritual values. They are ethical rules and principles by which all Buddhists must conduct themselves. This is one reason why Buddhists are stronger on promoting peace and tolerance than any other religion. These are my three jewels of Buddha-practice, Dharma-practice and Sangha-practice.

When I moved to Toronto I lived in the basement apartment for seven years. In 1979 we moved to a rundown flophouse in Parkdale, a gray area in Toronto. We completely gutted the building and began to renovate. None of us had construction skills or money so we had to work to earn money and do renovation after work hours. Every day was a long and full day but nobody complained. Our energy and spirits were high. We were all very much into building a Buddhist Temple! Many people contributed to the renovation work. On any given day, seven to fifteen people meditated, worked, and slept at the construction site. After two hard and joyful years we completed the renovation with skills acquired on the jobsite.

All of a sudden, we ran out of work. Sujata Linda Klevnick, the temple secretary and later editor of *Spring Wind*, found a printing press sitting in someone's basement. We bought it for \$100. We assembled and played with it and made it work. That's how *Spring Wind* Newsletter and later *Spring Wind: Buddhist Cultural Forum* magazine was born as a product of cottage industry.

Then something unexpected happened. Some temple members complained about publishing newsletters. They thought Zen was all about meditation practice and manual work and were against any intellectual activity. We argued that writing was manual work like cooking or sewing, but failed to persuade them. They left. To some Zen was everything and nothing. To others Zen was this one thing and nothing else. We lived through such times of Zen craze. Well, Zen is like water, earth, wind or fire. Their nature and essence are immutable but their motions and conditions change all the time. They are highly flexible and adaptable. Try your great unknowing and liberating mind!

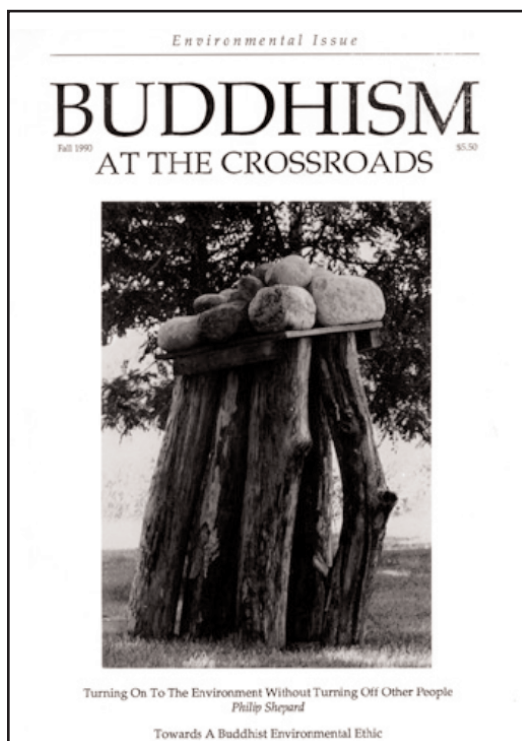
The enthusiasm and high energy we had for renovation work we applied now to magazine publishing. So the magazine kept growing in content and volume and gained a reputation as an international Buddhist magazine. When we published the special issue *Women and Buddhism* in 1986, it was 400 pages solid. However, the cottage industry finally reached its limit. When we had no response to our appeal for a laser printer, photocopier and a new press, *Spring Wind* had to cease publication. In the fall of 1990 we tried to revive *Spring Wind* with a new name, *Buddhism at the Crossroads*. But after publishing one issue professionally with the help of our Ann Arbor Temple, it had to fold due to

the prohibitive printing cost. After that the Society's attention turned to the new Chicago Temple, which opened in 1992.

The story of the renovation of the Chicago Temple is similar to those of the Toronto and Ann Arbor Temples. The Chicago Temple building was in much better shape than that of our two sister temples before renovation, but it was much larger. The renovation work in Chicago progressed slowly over the years partly due to lack of skilled help. This year finally with the completion of the Urban Meditation Retreat Center we ran out of construction work. So we are resuming the publication of *Spring Wind*.

It is our aim to serve the *Spring Wind* Sangha community of the Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom through exchange of information and improved communication. It is our aim to inform the public of Buddhist tradition and to promote "Buddhism in everyday life." It is our aim to facilitate the encounter between Buddhist wisdom and Western civilization. Right now America is in a state of war and our global society is polarized and in anguish. Therefore, I feel the urgency for a Buddhist voice. Hence this issue on war and peace. **SW**

I am still a Korean. I am still a Canadian. Now I am a U.S. citizen. But first and foremost I am a Buddhist. There are three things I like most about Buddhism. First, we believe that each and every one of us is endowed with Buddha nature. Therefore, Buddhist or non-Buddhist, we are originally and essentially all Buddhas.



HOPE

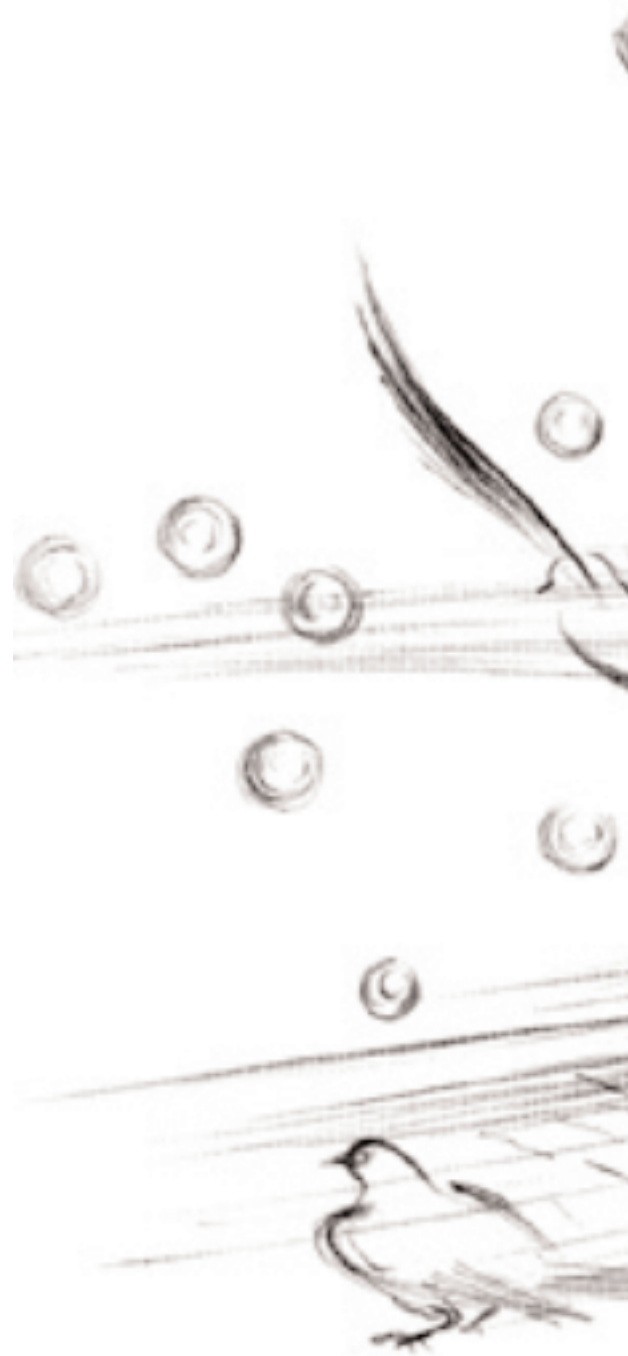
We have lost peace.
We have lost love.
With a broken heart
We cried.

A wise person whispered to us,
“You have sky
You have ocean
Spring will come for the children.”

Now
Children are praying for peace.
Children are praying for love.
Children are praying for tolerance
Waiting for Spring.

Wishing
a Very Happy New Year
Joining two hands palm-to-palm
With my sincere heart.

Ven. Samu Sunim
Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom



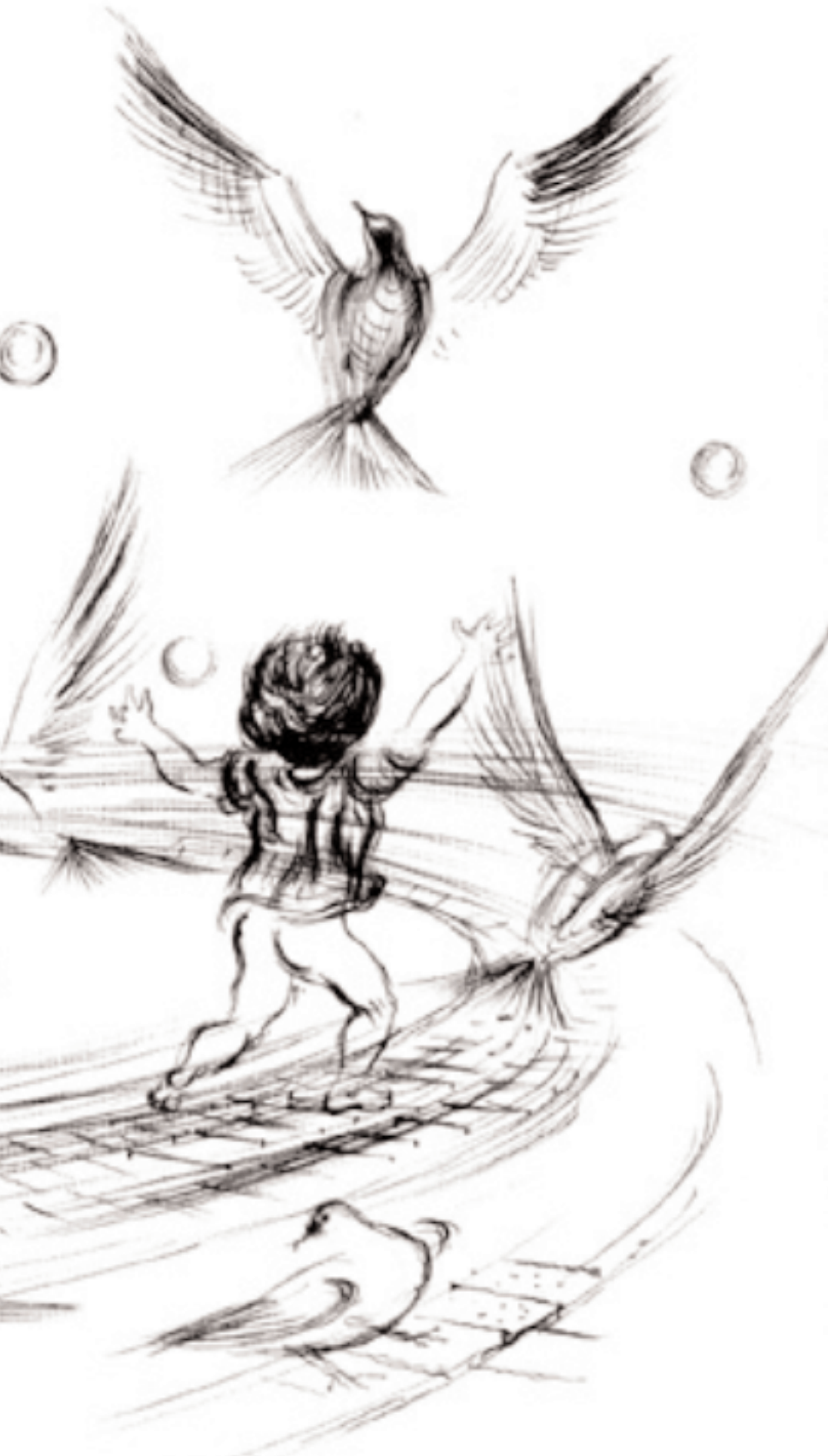


Illustration by Rev. Toan José Castelao



Photography by Dave Robinson

War Is

Buddhist teachings and tales inform this response to the great and terrible lessons of war in the wake of September 11

In Buddhism we believe in the past worlds, present worlds and future worlds. We also believe in the past worlds, present worlds and future worlds in each of the three worlds of past, present and future. These time periods are called “nine worlds” because the three worlds each has its own past, present and future.

All beings go voluntarily or involuntarily through the three and nine worlds, so we are incessantly making and remaking our own lives and together shaping and reshaping our world according to the effects of our deeds, thoughts, and words. In this process we share our lives intimately with one another, as different beings arise and disappear from lifetime to lifetime and from eternity to eternity. Taken together, all beings and nonbeings as one body make up the universe and vast emptiness.

Our universe has the blessing of life. Life is good, wise and fun. What is it that gives life and vital energy to sentient beings so that they would become good, wise and fun? It is breath-and-awareness. This breath-and-awareness is our everyday mind. And our ordinary everyday life is the Way of Buddha.

It was more than 40 years ago when I was doing my novice monk training that I learned the teachings of Causality of the Three Worlds and Retributive Justice in the Universe. I studied Ten Precepts for Novice Monks and practiced Ten Good Karmic Deeds as everyday morals in addition to vegetarianism and a life of noninjury. Two teachings that intrigued me most were the didactic teachings on Emancipation from Enmity and Grudge and on Keeping Precepts/Breaking Precepts.

KEEPING PRECEPTS/BREAKING PRECEPTS

Keeping Precepts/Breaking Precepts means that those who keep precepts are the ones who violate precepts. Contradictory and confusing? It appears so at first glance. What it means is that if you adhere to the form of the precepts and become self-righteous, thereby lacking tolerance and compassion, you violate the spirit of the precepts. The

best approach to the precepts is to follow the purpose of keeping the precepts rather than keeping the precepts for the sake of keeping the precepts. The purpose of keeping the precepts is to alleviate the fear and suffering of all living beings and to emancipate them from hatred and delusion by your example. We call this “unhindered practice.” For instance, there may be circumstances for activist Dharma workers to have to dispense with a precept or two in order to save lives. There may be occasions when non-monastic bodhisattvas have to go beyond the constraints of some precepts in order to be close to sentient beings in need to be more helpful.

To be sure, there are risks involved in unhindered practice. Mahayana Buddhist teachers in the past warned, “People who violate precepts do not go to hells and people who keep precepts do not go to heavens.” They also said, “If the wrong person follows the right path, the right path becomes wrong and if the right person follows the wrong path the wrong path becomes right.” Therefore, it is important that we become the right person, a person of peace and nonviolence and a person of compassion and wisdom.

EMANCIPATION FROM ENMITY AND GRUDGE

With regard to teachings on Emancipation from Enmity and Grudge I read a story titled “Cause and Fruits of a Pear Falling When a Crow Flew Away” in one of the recommended books available to the novice monks.

A long time ago a crow was resting on top of a pear tree branch. At the same time a snake was snoozing away under the tree. Neither the crow nor the snake knew the other was there. When the crow flew away he shook loose a pear. It happened that the pear fell right on the head of the snake and killed it.

Completely confused and angry the dead snake was immediately reborn as a wild boar. The boar roamed the mountain valleys and open fields looking for something to hurt. In the meantime, the crow died and was reborn as a pheasant. Early one spring day, the pheasant was picking

Bad Karma

by Ven. Samu Sunim

...if you adhere to the form of the precepts and become self-righteous, thereby lacking tolerance and compassion, you violate the spirit of the precepts.

fresh sprouts in the valley and the boar was digging for roots above. The boar's digging dislodged a rock. The rock rolled down the hill and killed the pheasant. The pheasant was reborn as a hunter, who set off to take vengeance on the boar.

One day in his hot pursuit of the enemy the hunter came across a monk and asked if he had seen the boar. The monk, an incarnation of peace and nonviolence, explained the escalation of violence fed by ignorance of the cycle of the causal conditions and effects over three lifetimes. He taught the hunter the art of forgiveness and reconciliation with a Dharma verse: "If you do not emancipate yourself in this lifetime, when do you expect to emancipate yourself?" The hunter then and there put an end to the vicious cycle of violence by discarding his bow and arrows and becoming the monk's disciple.

AHIMSA AND THE CULTURE OF NONVIOLENCE

In the late 1950's when I lived in the mountain monastery, the monastery remained remote, untouched by modernization programs. There was no electricity or telephone service and the monastery attracted few tourists, only local devotees and occasional school groups who used to trek the dirt roads. So the twenty members of our monastic community had more to do with the members of the wildlife community surrounding us every day than with the human world. Being a minority we had to show respect and cultivate a friendly relationship with beings small and large for peace-making and peace-keeping purposes.

Korean tigers used to roam over the mountains as kings of the forest and terrorized all animals and villagers with their roars. From early on, the monastic communities in the mountains paid special attention to tigers and honored them as mountain gods. Following the traditional Buddhist spirit of accommodation and greater harmony, the monks erected a small shrine dedicated to the mountain gods in each mountain monastery in order to persuade the beasts to serve as Dharma protectors. The tigers prowled after their prey at night and stayed away during the day.

Hermit Monk and Tiger Disciple

There are even stories of tigers that provided protection for traveling monks at night and escorted them safely to their temples. Many years ago, a tiger used to visit a hermit monk who would sit out in his meditation in the remote hermitage and keep company with him almost every night. Eventually they developed friendly feelings toward each other. Before he would retire the monk would give a short Dharma talk to the tiger. The tiger would then bow and go away. After a year the monk talked to the tiger about killing.



The monk recognized that the tiger had to kill to survive but had him promise that he would do so minimally and selectively. Upon that the monk gave the tiger precepts and the Dharma name Ilsim (Single Mind) and made him his disciple. Not long after that the tiger disciple disappeared for a long while.

Winter came. The monk began to worry about his disciple. One snowy night the hermit was enjoying his winter samadhi when he heard a big thump and scratching sound outside. Right away he knew it was his disciple Ilsim and opened the door. Ilsim looked tired and exhausted but his head was pointing to something. When the hermit looked carefully in the dark, to his great surprise he saw a dead woman. His happiness at seeing his disciple turned immediately into deep disappointment and anger against him. So he rebuked Ilsim severely. Ilsim felt hurt but did not understand what he had done wrong. Ilsim stayed for a little while down in the mouth and then disappeared into the darkness.

The hermit examined the woman's body more carefully. Then he took her pulse on the wrist. It was still beating. He hurriedly brought her inside and heated up his room to keep her body warm. The young woman recovered her consciousness in the predawn hours. When she saw the hermit monk and strange surroundings she was completely confused and started crying. The hermit waited for a while and then explained quietly how she was brought to this remote mountain. She then remembered how she had fainted on her way to the outhouse when she saw two fiery eyeballs approaching her. She lived in Namwon, Cholla province, nearly one hundred kilometers away from the monk's hermitage. The hermit's tiger disciple must have taken a lot of trouble to bring her all the way in the snow.

More snow fell. They were now completely snow-bound until spring. As Insun—so she was called—recovered from her shock she was grateful to the hermit for saving her life and made herself available diligently in helping him. But the hermit's life was poor and simple. Aside from feeding the fire, cooking rice and cleaning there was not much to do except silent meditation. The hermit taught her how to do chanting and kido with prostrations. As winter progressed, so did their Dharma friendship. Occasionally Ilsim dropped by. The hermit now understood why Ilsim had brought Insun to him. Ilsim must have thought that the companionship of a young woman would be helpful to his bachelor teacher. Ilsim was very happy that his teacher and Insun were getting along well. The hermit and Insun finally recognized their indebtedness to Ilsim for their Dharma relationship despite their strange encounter.

“If you do not emancipate yourself in this lifetime, when do you expect to emancipate yourself?”

Spring arrived after a long winter. The hermit felt that it was now time to take Insun home, but Insun vigorously protested. Insun felt that she gave her everything to the hermit and decided that she belonged here. The hermit succeeded in persuading Insun to visit her parents so that they would know that their daughter was alive and well. When they arrived at Insun's after a few days of journeying her parents were greatly surprised and overjoyed. They believed that their daughter had suffered the disaster caused by tigers and were greatly saddened at the prospect that they would not even recover her bones. After tears of joy at their emotional reunion Insun told how it all happened. Then she informed her parents that she had decided to follow the hermit and serve him as his disciple. At this Insun's parents were even more surprised but eventually enabled themselves to accept her decision.

After five days of sweet stay the hermit and Insun parted with her parents with great difficulty and set out to return to the mountain. The rocks, trees and mountains welcomed them back with spring fragrance. But the tiger Ilsim did not return to the hermit's mountain. Spring turned into summer and summer into autumn. The whole mountain began to glow with fall colors embroidering the skyline. Leaves started falling and kept falling. As the piles of the fallen leaves carpeted the mountainside, trees revealed their naked branches in succession. One night between fall and winter, after meditation, the hermit and Insun fell in love while watching the moon rising over the mountain. They never saw Ilsim again.

Kim Hyon and the Tiger Maiden

There are also stories about tigers who developed romantic problems with human beings. According to *Samguk Yusa* (Legends and History of the Three Kingdoms) by the priest Iryon (1206-1289), there once was a young man named Kim Hyon who lived during the reign of King Wonsong (r. 785-799) during the Unified Silla period (676-935). At that time it was the custom that people in the capital city of Kyongju would circumambulate

the Buddha Hall and pagoda of Hungnyun-sa Temple chanting from the 8th through the 15th day of the second moon in order to invoke good fortune for the year.

One day Kim Hyon was circumambulating late at night. Circumambulating closely behind him was a maiden invoking the name of the Buddha. They exchanged glances and were attracted to each other. When they finished circumambulating they led each other to a secluded place and made love. When the maiden wanted to go home Kim Hyon followed her. The maiden warned Kim Hyon not to follow her but Kim Hyon persisted. When they reached a hut at the foot of West Mountain they entered. An old woman inside asked the maiden, "Who is this fellow?" The maiden informed her of what happened. The woman said, "What a lovely experience you had! But it would have been better without the romance. Now it's

It is not a bad thing
to lose out. Actually
it can help to lose. It
helps to promote
peace and harmony.
It helps you wake
up, learn to go
beyond your desire-
being and relate to
your wisdom-being
or bodhisattva.

water out of the vessel. You cannot help it. Hide him somewhere so that he cannot be found. I'm afraid that your brothers may harm him."

No sooner did the maiden hide Kim Hyon than three big tigers burst into the hut with a thundering roar. One of the three tiger brothers said, "Eh, it smells of a human being. That would take care of my hunger." "Stop that nonsense!" scolded the mother and sister tigers. "Something must have gone wrong with your sense of smell." Just then a loud voice from the sky said, "You have harmed many lives without shame. Now one of you must pay for the evil you committed." The three tiger brothers got alarmed and began to worry about the upcoming punishment. Their sister comforted them and said, "I will take care of the retribution if you hide out in the wilderness." The three brothers readily agreed to it and nimbly ran away.

The maiden tiger went to Kim Hyon in hiding and said to him: "I am sure that you would now understand why I was so unwilling to invite you home. Honey, you listen to me now. I am different from you in kind but we spent a night together sharing our love. This is equal to my getting married to you. Now my three brothers incurred heaven's wrath for their indiscriminating slaughter and I offered to take the brunt of the burden by ending my life. I would rather die in your hands than by someone else's. Tomorrow I will go to the capital and stir up a big disturbance by running wild harming people. Without fail the king will offer a big prize and noble title to the one who kills me. Then I would like you to chase me fearlessly to the forest north of the capital. I will be waiting for you there."

Kim Hyon: "It is normal for a human being to have intercourse with another human being. To do so with a nonhuman being is a special relationship. Unless there was some affinity between us in the past, how could this have happened? How could I have the heart to covet worldly riches and honors at the expense of my partner for all the world?"

Maiden: "Do not say that, please. My premature death is a divine order as well as my wish. And it will be a good fortune for my family, a happy event for you and a big relief to the country. These are the five benefits to be gained from my death. How could you refuse? I will be grateful to you forever if you can erect a Buddhist temple in my memory and invite eminent monks to expound on the wisdom scriptures for the sake of the world."

Unable to change her mind and holding back his tears, Kim Hyon parted with the maiden.

The following day sure enough a fierce tiger showed up in the capital city and attacked anybody in its way. Upon the urgent report King Wonsong offered a high ranking position to anyone who killed the tiger. Kim Hyon entered the royal palace and volunteered to subdue the tiger. Right away he rushed to the forest as directed by the maiden the day before. The tiger, now in the form of the maiden, was waiting for him there. The maiden spoke to Kim Hyon with a big smile. "I am glad that you came. Do not fear for those who got hurt by my claws. They will heal if they apply soy sauce of Hungnyun-sa Temple and listen to the conch horn of the temple playing." With these words the maiden pulled Kim Hyon's dagger and killed herself. As soon as she died, her body returned to that of a tiger.

Kim Hyon came out of the forest and declared that he killed the tiger, but said nothing about his relationship with the maiden. He treated people with wounds according to the maiden's prescription.

After accepting the official position Kim Hyon erected a temple and named it Howon-sa or the Wish-of-Tiger Temple and had monks expound on the Brahmajala Bodhisattva-sila Sutra or Indra's Net Bodhisattva Precepts Sutra. Towards the end of his life Kim Hyon was unable to keep the secret to himself and recorded the account for the public.

Story of Terrace where Tiger was Invited

Having fun in style is apparently not unique to human beings. There are also stories about animals who knew how to have fun and enjoy style. The Myohyang-san or Wonderfully Fragrant Mountain (1909 m) in North Korea commands a breathtaking scenic view and is famed for its ancient monastery Pohyon-sa. Legend has it that on a warm spring day a long time ago a deer climbed up there in search of new sprouts. When the deer finally looked around he was stunned at the spectacular beauty of the surroundings with their majestic peaks and waterfalls. He felt that it was just too good for him to enjoy it alone. So when the deer saw a tiger pacing restlessly down in the distance he invited him over to share the joy of gazing at the panoramic view. The tiger was surprised at the invitation and felt he would soon enjoy a good meal. But when the tiger rushed up and took a look he became completely captivated. Like two good old friends the tiger and the deer sat down and had great fun in style, oblivious to themselves. When people learned the story later they built an observation pavilion and named it "Inho-dae or Terrace where Tiger was Invited" in order to encourage more such convivial gatherings.

Actually, what tormented the monastic communities most were not tigers but bedbugs. The nonviolent monastic communities that were successful in dealing with fierce tigers

Being born in the human body is always a great hope to all sentient beings. Human beings are capable of awakening to their own true self, which is no other than the Universe infinite and boundless.



We Americans had all thought our great nation was invincible. We never thought that someone would dare attack our country. We were wrong.

became helpless before the tiny bloodsucking bedbugs. These round, paper-thin rogues with a bad smell would attack at sunset, keeping the members of the community sleepless all night. Some Vinaya members would take advantage of the situation and donate their blood freely, while some meditation members would use the opportunity to stay up for practice all night, often naked. But some communities would just surrender to the bedbugs and move out to another place. The blind bedbugs did not discriminate against anything for warm blood. They attacked villagers as well, so much so that the villagers left their lasting hatred behind in a proverb, "My house burned down, but I got revenge on the bedbugs." It is not a bad thing to lose out. Actually it can help to lose. It helps to promote peace and harmony. It helps you wake up, learn to go beyond your desire-being and relate to your wisdom-being or bodhisattva. Most important of all, you can win big for the world by losing your egotism, anger and hatred.

I did not get to see any tigers when I lived in the mountain monasteries. I was told that during the Korean war the tigers were killed or had run away to Manchuria. There were bedbugs, to be sure, but they were not numerous enough to drive people away from the monasteries. Over the decades, the remote monasteries had increasingly more to do with human beings and less contact with other sentient beings, as paved roads and the amenities of electricity and telephone calls brought more visitors and tourists.

Being born in the human body is always a great hope to all sentient beings. Human beings are capable of awakening to their own true self, which is no other than the Universe infinite and boundless. Furthermore, human beings are capable of extending love and compassion to all beings. To be born a human being today, when our natural capacity for enlightenment and compassion can be empowered by so many technical marvels, is a greater hope still.

Technology and the information superhighway have brought all of us closely together in the global village, sharpening our interdependence. If we cannot get along with each other and live in peace and harmony, the dire consequences will affect all of us. Sentient and insentient beings alike have always been an interrelated whole through the impermanent and selfless nature of all life. But now more than ever the hard reality of oneness of all life has been brought to our doorstep. Our predicament in the earth household is like being aboard an express train. If any conflict or disturbance erupts we will all be victims; there will be no winners. Only our ignorance and foolhardiness will prevent us from seeing this.



WAR ON TERRORISM

The Attack

On September 11th, America was attacked. The twin towers of the World Trade Center, monument of New York City and symbol of capitalism, collapsed. Part of the Pentagon building, headquarters of the U.S. Defense Department, was destroyed. Over 3000 people perished. Terrorists made bombs of airplanes full of innocent beings. It was a horror and great tragedy to all of us.

For a day or so the whole world stood still in a state of great shock. We Americans had all thought our great nation was invincible. We never thought that someone would dare attack our country. We were wrong. The Pentagon itself was vulnerable. With that realization, a wave of aftershocks of anxiety and paranoia swept the country. We were all deeply hurt and angry.

Our government did what it had to do to protect the country and its citizens from further terrorist attacks. The National Guard was mobilized to protect government offices, public buildings, airports and military installations. Government agencies hunted down terrorist suspects around the country and overseas. Meanwhile, our President wanted more than sympathy from the heads of foreign governments. He formed an international coalition against terrorism and demanded that the Taliban regime of Afghanistan deliver to the U.S. government Osama bin Laden as the mastermind and prime suspect of the terrorist attack. He warned that all countries that provide support and training for terrorists would become the target of retaliation. For a show of force our government sent to the Arabian Sea aircraft carriers complete with jet fighters, guided missile launchers and special force units.

The War

On October 7, what many of us had dreaded came to pass. Following our refusal to negotiate with the Taliban we launched our military campaign. As I write early in December, we have been bombing Afghanistan for more than two months. During this period we have been bombing every day, dropping more than 10,000 bombs. Although the bombs were aimed at military targets, civilian casualties were inevitable.

The bombing campaign has been very successful in minimizing American casualties. With heat-seeking and laser-guided missiles our powerful bombs did most of the destruction before our ground troops were even deployed and inflicted terrible damage. Just imagine what it is like to be bombed every day for weeks by heavy B-52's. A single such airplane is capable of dropping dozens of

bombs that carpet a half-mile square called a "kill box" with an overwhelming wave of explosions like "a rumbling earthquake." Survivors suffer "blood streaming from [their] noses and eardrums torn by the concussion."

Compassionate and intelligent people might believe our actions were necessary, but could not fail to be moved by such suffering. No civilized country, no matter what it had endured, could be pleased at such a victory. Still less can the United States, which aspires to be a superpower in peace and justice as well as in economic and military might. Even if you are sure our choices are right, you should still grieve for their costs.

Becoming Informed

After the terrorist attack there was strong sentiment among us for retaliation, and our nation gave strong support to the President. He needed such united support to obtain international cooperation and to wage war. But our support must be wise and independent. It is our duty as citizens in a democratic country to know what our government is doing. It is our duty to be well informed. Being informed has been harder than it should be. I have learned more about the war every day from a few minutes of BBC World News than from hours of U.S. broadcast media. That should not be. Adequate news coverage is not only necessary for us as voters and citizens to inform our decisions, it is also important spiritually.

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serve us as a great and terrible teacher. We can renew our learning that all life is precious and that we cannot enjoy peace and security through the suffering of others. With a broken-hearted compassion we can learn that retaliation and punishment are not the right way to seek justice and restore peace. Yes, we can learn with heart-rending sorrow that war is immoral. We should not be deprived of opportunities to learn such great lessons.

Looking Forward

Now we are close to defeating the Taliban. The Taliban soldiers should be allowed to surrender and foreign volunteer fighters allowed to go home. We should not let them become victims of ethnic strife and revenge. Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda leaders should be given fair civil trials. They should not be tried in a secret military tribunal. If they are tried in secret, doubt about their guilt may haunt us forever. Osama bin Laden has not admitted his guilt and the public has been given no solid proof of his involvement.

The great mission facing us now is the refugee crisis.

Two to three million refugees are left with no place to live. It breaks our hearts to see them even on TV. It hurts to know that the actions of our nation are links in the chain of causation which brought them to their plight and misery. Whatever the reason, whatever the provocation, the fact remains: we have laid their country waste, a country that has already suffered from more than twenty years of war and three years of drought. It is a sobering reality.

I do think that there is a parallel between the story of Pear Falling When Crow Flew Away and American attack on Afghanistan in retaliation for terrorism, although the characters are different and the times have changed. Like the wild boar that killed the pheasant, terrorists attacked America as retaliation for injustice and indignities they have suffered. If we turn our back on this crisis, we will be like the snake, the boar, and the pheasant in the story of Pear Falling When Crow Flew Away. We will pass the wound we received from Al Qaeda on to the refugees, who will pass it on again until it inevitably comes back to us. But if we act massively and decisively to rescue the refugees and rebuild Afghanistan, we will be like the hunter who threw away his bow, became the disciple of the monk and broke the vicious cycle of violence.

Looking Back

Besides looking forward, we must also look back to understand the causes. The Buddha remembered all past lives and taught us the causality of three worlds and nine worlds. The cause of our present life is no other than the worlds which are past. We need to know the past to understand what we are now. We should not have short memories, be ignorant of our history or blindly follow the habits of the past.

Cause and Effect, not Good and Evil

We have concentrated on what happened to us and reacted to it without looking deeper. Our reaction was reinforced by our traditional black-and-white dualism, seeing things, as the President said, as “a monumental struggle of Good versus Evil.” To us, we are good and our terrorist enemies are evil. To them the roles are reversed. Both views are dualistic; each side invokes God; all the combatants believe they are doing God’s work. Dualism reached new heights when our President George W. Bush gave the world the ultimate choice: “Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.”

Buddhists see things differently. We seek a Middle Path of nonviolence and wisdom. When we see hatred against us, we ask its causes and seek its healing. If we have contributed to the hatred, we repent and work to

address the grievances against us. We follow the example of the victim of September 11 whose touching letter I have read, who appealed to the U.S. government not to retaliate.

The Buddha told us:
“Look how he abused me and beat me,
How he threw me down and robbed me.”
Live with such thoughts and you live in hate.

“Look how he abused me and beat me,
How he threw me down and robbed me.”
Abandon such thoughts, and live in love.
(*Dhammapada*)

We cannot defeat terrorism militarily. Terrorism grows from the hatred and anger in people’s minds, and military action only sows more hatred and anger.

Hate has never yet dispelled hate. Only love dispels hate. This is the Dharma, ancient and infinite. (*Ibid*)

Sometime we human beings have to stop bombing and killing. We must end the endless cycle of violence and retribution. Why can we not do it right now? Have we not inflicted enough pain and destruction on the ravaged Afghanistan? If it pains you to see an Afghan refugee family with a few belongings crossing the desert in deep sorrow, then now is the time to stop making war. If it pains you to see children maimed by bombing, then we should break the cycle now. America, the world’s richest and most powerful country, should not be destroying Afghanistan, the poorest, in order to punish a few. America should not be a high-tech bully.

Too many have died already. We have pounded and pulverized the country until the trees must be crying out, the rivers hiding from bombs, and the mountains pleading for peace.

The Example of Asoka

After the emperor Asoka (c. 273-232 BCE) defeated the Kalingas, he was overcome with sorrow for the suffering he had caused and renounced violence forever. He erected Rock Edicts to promote peace and Dharma. One said, “The loss of even the hundredth part or the thousandth part of all those people who were slain, who died...at the time in Kalinga, would now be considered very deplorable. Even to one who should wrong him, what can be forgiven is to be forgiven.” If our leaders could follow Asoka’s lead, it would be a victory for all. Like a spring wind that carries a life-giving energy it would send waves of deep emotion reverberating throughout the world.

We in America enjoy so much comfort that it is difficult

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Depending on Right
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to understand the misery we cause. How could we enjoy our comfort and live happily while our family members are starving?

THE TENTH WORLD

Let us now turn from the Cause-and-Effect Continuum to the Tenth World. The Cause-and-Effect Continuum refers to the sum total of what we have done individually and collectively up until now, while the Tenth World deals with what we are doing right now in the aftermath. Our focus now is on the Tenth World. The Tenth World is Right Now plus the nine worlds or, to be more exact, this present moment that is inclusive of the nine worlds. In other words, all our past and all our future is concentrated in the Tenth World, Right Now.

Depending on Right Here and Right Now what has been done wrong in the past can be righted and we can build a better future. Therefore, Right Now is a great opportunity in which we can change and turn our failures into a success for all.

What is America doing Right Now? What are we doing Right Now for America and the world? America woke up from the Ground Zero disaster after decades of indulgence in consumerism and apathy. We have become more attentive, alert and helpful. With outpouring emotions we have been sharing grief, suffering together and praying for people and peace. And we have been making ourselves available, eager to “do something,” anything, that is positive and helpful. The true American spirit of giving and grit pervades our everyday lives. Americans are awake now. We have become more generous and have been reaching out to others because of our sudden realization of how much we depend on each other. Even our garbage has been reduced because we consume and waste less.

Perhaps most important of all, our understanding and appreciation of Arab and Islamic culture and civilization have improved significantly since September 11, 2001. For a long time Arabs and Muslims have been denied their share of common humanity and social justice and suffered under oppressive regimes which our governments have supported with military and economic aid in order to protect our interests. Our ignorance of their culture and prejudice against their beliefs have added fuel to their indignities and hatred against us. In short, we have created bad karma for ourselves. We must embrace their hurt and hatred with great understanding and compassion.

FAILURE OF WORLD RELIGIONS

May I be patient! May I be able to bear and forbear the wrongs of others. (*Third Paramita of the Six Perfections*)



“There is a Tibetan story of a fellow who, while circumambulating a temple, saw someone sitting in a meditative posture. He asked the meditator what he was doing, and the meditator answered, ‘I am cultivating patience.’ Then that person said something very harsh to the meditator and the meditator at once answered back angrily. This response came because although he had been cultivating patience, he had not encountered anyone who was harming him or speaking badly to him; he had no chance to practice patience. Thus, the best of all situations for the practice of patience is an enemy, and for this reason someone engaged in the Bodhisattva practices should treat an enemy with tremendous respect.” (from *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, by H.H. Dalai Lama)

All the great world religions support peace and compassion and condemn injustice and violence. All too often we find justification for our own violence and exceptions in our own circumstances. Every war finds those on each side who, while professing adherence to the great religious traditions, condone cruelty and justify the most violent acts. Too often these include respected religious leaders.

This is a great failure of the great religions. All of us should contemplate these failures. We should reflect on our own acts and positions in light of this experience and in light of the wisdom we learn from our tradition. We should confess and repent our shortcomings so we may be reborn as peacemakers for the sake of the world.

I appeal to all Christians and Muslims to make peace and work together for the happiness of all beings. Jihad or Crusade, we should not use our religion as a weapon against each other. Unless the members of the two largest religions of the world can bury their past, forgive each other and begin to reach each other’s hearts for mutual respect, the world would continue to suffer from hatred and hostilities.

Buddhism is no talisman against committing violence and war crimes. It is no secret that Japanese Buddhists supported Japanese military expansionism and collaborated with the army during its invasion and occupation of Asian countries. Following the Samurai tradition, Soto and Rinzai Zen priests went a step further in their collaboration. They served as paramilitary men, informers and pacification workers for the Japanese colonial governments. More than half a century after the end of the Second World War, far from being repentant, they continue to justify their involvement in atrocities during the war.

The Chinese military occupation of Tibet and the destruction of Buddhist monasteries, and the Dalai Lama’s nonviolent struggle for independence of Tibet, have been well known to the West. Many Westerners and Catholic

monks and nuns have been openly supportive of the cause of Tibet and the Dharma activities of the Dalai Lama. But what about Chinese Buddhists? There is a strong presence of Chinese ethnic Buddhism in this country today. Chinese “tycoon monks” and laymen have been building huge palace-style traditional temples in California, Texas and New York states. However, I have not yet seen any Chinese monk who is courageous enough to stand up for justice and condemn the Chinese government for the occupation of Tibet and human rights violations, or for the persecution of Fa Loon Kung or the crackdown on Islamic resistance in Xinjiang Province.

I have also heard about American Jewish Buddhists who justify Israeli retaliation while condemning Palestinian suicide bombings. Japanese Soto Zen warriors who fought for the Emperor, Chinese American Buddhists who condone repression in Tibet, and American Jewish Buddhists who support Israeli retaliation all practice “National Buddhism,” or Buddhism that suits their national or ethnic interests.

National Buddhism is a clear betrayal of Buddhism. It violates the First Precept, “Ahimsa,” not to cause pain to any creature, by any means or at any time—the precept of nonviolent civil disobedience taught by Gandhi. Buddhism is a universal religion with universal principles. When you become a Buddhist you commit yourself to these principles, you make allegiance first and foremost to the Three Jewels of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for the salvation of all beings. Sakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, relinquished his worldly position and eventually saw his country destroyed in order to pursue and uphold the principles and values of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Such was the example He set for his disciples and followers. Contemporary Buddhists who accept warmaking ought to ask their own Buddha within if they might be harming others by bending Buddhist teachings to fit in with their ethnic and national gains. **SW**

Americans are awake now.

An exploration of

Buddhists roots

along the Silk

Road and a call to

move from conflict

to compassion

by Ven. Samu Sunim

Afghanistan and Mahayana

Afghanistan is the heartland of Asia, situated halfway between the Mediterranean and the East Asian centers of civilization on the old trade network called the Silk Road. Formidable mountain ranges in the north such as the Hindu Kush and the Pamir Plateaus, called the Roof of the World, and deserts in the south dominate the landscape of the country. Ancient cities and towns like Balkh, Taloqan, Jalalabad, Bamiyan, Ghazni and Kandahar already served as centers of trade and commerce, cosmopolitan culture and religious ferment during the first millennium. At that time, Buddhism flourished in Afghanistan among many different peoples and changing political forces.

It was Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE), King of Macedonia, who brought the first cosmopolitan culture to Afghanistan through his conquest of Bactria—today's northern Afghanistan—in 327 BCE. Due to his premature death Alexander failed to include all of India in his vast empire which extended across Asia into Greece, but his expedition succeeded in opening up lines of traffic and communication by land and sea between West and East. The establishment of Greek kingdoms in western Asia facilitated the flow of ideas and culture between India and Europe.

ASOKA

Buddhism came to Afghanistan through the missionary activity of Emperor Asoka. His grandfather Chandragupta (c. 322-298 BCE) had established the Maurya dynasty, the first empire in Indian history. Taking advantage of the death of Alexander, Chandragupta had extended his rule into the present day Afghanistan and Pakistan in a peace treaty signed in 303 BCE after defeating Seleucos, the Greek general who had won control of Alexander's eastern dominions.

Asoka converted to Buddhism in 261 BCE following his bloody conquest of Kalinga. He renounced war and violence and called upon his descendants to give up "conquest by arms" and to concentrate their energy on "conquest by Dharma." He ordered his officials to exert themselves to provide impartial justice with mercy and to treat all his subjects respectfully as they would the royal children. He also promoted "the welfare of men and beasts by planting trees and digging wells by the roadside and by establishing hospitals for men and beasts not only throughout his vast empire but also in the neighboring Hellenistic kingdoms." For the promotion of Dharma and edification of people,

Asoka sent missionaries far and wide to the three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe.

Asoka worked diligently to educate common people, so he left Dharma lessons all over his empire. They were written in the scripts of local dialects and languages and carved on

Buddhism

rocks and stone pillars and in caves. More than forty inscriptions known as Asoka Edicts have been discovered. In Afghanistan three inscriptions have been found in Kandahar and one in Jalalabad, one of them being inscribed on a boulder at the foot of a hill. The Afghanistan scripts were written in Greek and Aramaic and urged piety and respect for life. In the edicts the three obligations of showing reverence, respecting animal life and telling the truth are inculcated over and over again. Upholding the Buddhist ethical standard of considering all beings as like oneself, tolerance and generosity were foremost in Asoka's governing policy of the empire.

In addition to sending missions and erecting rock edicts, Asoka built pagodas all over his empire, as many as 84,000 according to tradition. Apparently they contained relics of the Buddha, so each pagoda represented the life of the Buddha and served as a physical reminder of Buddhism to the local people. "At the same time there was a movement to reduce [Buddhist] teachings to stories and to artistic presentation in sculpture and painting..." (A.K. Warder. *Indian Buddhism*, p. 267). Today there remain many pagodas and temple ruins with panels of scenes from the life of the Buddha in Jalalabad, Kapisa and Ghazni of Afghanistan. The popularization campaign of Buddhism through the erection of pagodas by Asoka was so successful that it followed the Silk Road and reached China and Korea to the far east and survived long after his death.

Asoka supported all religions and cared for all people with great benefaction and zeal regardless of race and creed, while remaining an ardent Buddhist until the end of his life. Buddhism helped Asoka become one of the world's most compassionate rulers, devoted to the welfare of living beings. In turn, Asoka had turned Buddhism into a world and universal religion.

Asoka...renounced war and violence and called upon his descendants to give up "conquest by arms" and to concentrate their energy on "conquest by Dharma."

KING MILINDA AND NAGASENA

About 202 BCE Bactria became an independent Hellenistic kingdom under Euthydemus. His successor Demetrius conquered the rest of Ariana or Afghanistan and the Punjab and ushered in the unique Indo-Greek period centered in Afghanistan. Perhaps the most remarkable Greek king of this period was Milinda, who ruled in the Punjab from about 160-140 BCE. More than anything else he is remembered in the Buddhist scripture *Milindapanha*, or *The Questions of Milinda*. *The Questions of Milinda* is a record of dialogues between King Milinda and the Indo-Greek monk Nagasena.

In an exchange of Western thought and Eastern religion King Milinda takes a deep interest in Buddhism and questions Nagasena on the Buddhist doctrine of nonself. Nagasena reminds the king that his name is just a convenient label but there is no such person in reality. He compares the self to a chariot. "What is a chariot?" asks Nagasena. "Is it the pole? Is it the axle? Is it the wheels, or the framework, or the yoke, or the reins?" Through a series of questions and answers Nagasena shows the king that there is no unchanging self or I. Nagasena teaches the king that clinging to the concept of self or ego poses the main obstacle to the realization of Nirvana, and that removing this obstacle and dismantling of the ego lead to the stability of mind and peace. King Milinda became a lay disciple of Nagasena and, according to Buddhist record, a Buddhist ceremony was held after his death. Their dialogue might have been the first encounter between the self-centered society of the West and nonself-centered society of the East.

KANISHKA

In the first half of the 2nd century Emperor Kanishka of the Kushan dynasty opened a new era for Buddhism. The Mauryan empire of Chandragupta and Asoka had arisen from the ancient kingdom of Magadha in the Indian subcontinent with Pataliputra (Patna) on the Ganges as the capital. The Mauryans were of Indo-Aryan stock. The progenitors of the Kushan empire, on the other hand, were Yüeh-chih nomads who migrated from western China towards the northwestern frontier of India along the road to the north of the Taklamakan (Gobi) desert. Around 50 CE Kadphises I, the founder of the Kushan dynasty, led his nomadic horde across the Hindu Kush mountains and conquered Bactria and then the Kabul region. He annexed Gandhara (eastern Afghanistan), shed nomadic habits, and gradually replaced Indo-Greek customs with that of his own Indo-Scythian.

The Kushan dynasty established its capital at Puskaravati near modern Peshawar, a strategic position on the main Silk Road and at the entrance to the Khyber Pass

through which invaders from the northwest would descend into India. It ultimately extended its rule as far as the basins of the Indus and Ganges in the south, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in the north and western India. The Kushan rulers battled China over control of the Silk Road and Central Asia. Eventually Kanishka prevailed and subdued the tribal kings in the Khotan and Yarkand and the Kashgar region of Chinese Turkestan. Kanishka's mastery of the Silk Road helped the eastward advance of Buddhism.

The center of Kanishka's empire was Gandhara, which includes modern Peshawar, Taxila and Rawalpindi. Gandhara was a multi-cultural, cosmopolitan melting pot where native Indians, Greek settlers and Iranian speakers intermingled. Kanishka II, the grandson of Kanishka I promoted tolerance and provided his support for all religions. This is well attested to by the coins of the Kushan dynasty and by archaeological evidence. Kushan coins bear images of a variety of Indian and Iranian deities as well as the Buddha. Under his patronage Buddhism prospered and spread as never before. Kanishka II built monasteries and pagodas and helped organize the meeting of the Fourth Buddhist Council in Kashmir, over which the renowned scholar Vasumitra presided. It was at this Council that it was decided "to rewrite the original Gandhari vernacular, or 'Prakrit' texts, in the high literary language of Sanskrit, a turning point not only in the history of the Buddhist literary canon but also in the evolution of the Mahayana Buddhist movement." The great Buddhist authors Nagarjuna, Asvaghosa, Matrceta and Vasumitra are associated with Kanishka. Buddhist tradition gratefully acknowledges him as a "second Asoka."

THE GANDHARA SCHOOL

Perhaps the most outstanding development to come out of the cultural diversity in cosmopolitan Gandhara was none other than the style of Buddhist sculpture known as the Gandhara School, in which the forms of Greek art were applied to Buddhist subjects. The revolutionary feature of this style was the depiction of Buddhas in the likeness of Apollo or in human form. Previously the Buddha had been represented in art only symbolically, for instance by a wheel, tree or seat for meditation. Another noticeable feature of this art is the common portrayal of the Buddhist laity. But the most significant was the reflection of the cult of Bodhisattva early in Gandharan art. The best known representations are of the Bodhisattva Maitreya, the future Buddha. Along with *Milindapanha*, or *The Questions of Milinda*, the Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhara was one of the great monuments from the cross-cultural encounter of Buddhism and Hellenism.

With Kanishka's liberal patronage for art and literature, the popularization of Buddhism gained a firm ground with Hellenistic images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, new

Gandhara was a multi-cultural, cosmopolitan melting pot where native Indians, Greek settlers and Iranian speakers intermingled.

scriptures in Sanskrit and literary activities by Buddhist thinkers. The early Buddhist democratic ideals took a new turn and flowered in the fertile ground of this cosmopolitan environment, ideals such as the Buddha's insistence that he had only discovered the ancient path to Nirvana and the truth of its availability to everyone, that monks must rely on themselves and Dharma, "as an island" or lamp, not on any person or god, and the organization of local Buddhist communities without a central hierarchy. In this climate, the adherents of Buddhism began to believe in not just the historical Buddha Shakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, but also Buddhas of the past, present and future. As these beliefs became more firmly established, Gandharan Buddhists, in order to establish their legitimacy for their Dharma activities, claimed that Gandhara and northwest India had been the Buddha land of the past, whereas Magadha and central India, where Buddha Shakyamuni, was born and passed away, was the Buddha land of recent times. These developments testify to a formative period for a New Dharma of Great Vehicle Mahayana Buddhism.

Geopolitically situated at the crossroads of the Eurasian traffic network, the Silk Road, Afghanistan and Pakistan were at the center of a vortex of changing political forces



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It is not known exactly when the Kushan empire finally collapsed. As the central authority declined, the heads of vassal states in the Indian subcontinent began to assert their independence from their foreign overlords. The king of Magadha rose from among independent states and established the Gupta dynasty in 320. In northwestern Iran and Central Asia Kushans were driven away in the middle of the second century and the Indo-Greek influence was replaced with Iranian culture. The once vast Kushan empire was now reduced to Gandhara, and Kanishka II, the former emperor, to "King of Gandhara." By the fifth century Gandhara was raided and plundered by the nomadic armies of the White Huns who invaded from the steppes to the north.

EASTWARD ADVANCE

Although Buddhism in northwestern India had lost a great patron in Kanishka, with its great flexibility as an on-the-move religion, it was able to make inroads into new and diverse cultures. While Graeco-Roman influence survived long after the Greek diaspora, particularly through its grafting onto Mahayana Buddhism, Iranian culture predominated in the former Greek settlements and Buddhism learned to blend in. Marv and Sogdiana near Samarkand in Western Asia and Khotan and Kucha in Central Asia became major Buddhist centers and served as mission stations in the eastward spread of Buddhism to China. Buddhist missionaries from India, merchants, artists and expatriate wanderers all contributed to the Buddhist culture of these desert kingdoms. In turn, Sogdians,

Khotanese and Kucheans were active in the transmission of Dharma throughout Central Asia and China. The Sogdian merchants established small colonies all the way from Samarkand and learned Chinese for trading purposes. Some ended up as translators of Buddhist Sanskrit literature into Chinese. Sogdians were instrumental in imparting Buddhism to the Uighurs and Chinese and Sogdian Buddhists coinhabited Kocho, the principal city of the Turfan region and the southern capital of the Uighurs after the fall of their empire in 840.

The Buddhist scriptures were first translated into Chinese from Gandhari and later from Sanskrit. Many early translators spoke Central Asian languages. Among them were Khotanese missionaries such as Devaprajna, Siksana and Siladharma, who translated Buddhist texts into Chinese at Lo-yang and Ch'ang-an. However, none equalled the famous translator Kumarajiva (344-413), the son of an Indian father and a Kuchean mother. Kumarajiva is honored in China for having introduced the Chinese to Mahayana Buddhism.

IRANIAN INFLUENCE

On the Silk Road in Western and Central Asia, Buddhism encountered most of the world's religions: Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism, Nestorian Christianity, Judaism and Islam, not to mention Brahmanism (later Hinduism) and Jainism from India. But it was Zoroastrianism and Islam that had the most sustained contact with Buddhism and left a lasting influence. The greater Iranian cultural area that stretched from Mesopotamia into Bactria and the Pamirs and included Persians, Parthians and Sogdians, were all Zoroastrian in pre-Islamic times. Iranian influence had been present in Bactria and Gandhara all along, but had remained more or less an undercurrent due to the dominant Indo-Greek presence. It was after the collapse of the Kushan empire that Buddhism came in contact with Iranian culture in earnest. Amitabha, Buddha of Infinite Light and Immeasurable Life, and Avalokitesvara or Kwansum, the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion, are associated with Iranian Buddhism.

Bodhisattva Maitreya, the future Buddha, served as a guide and protector of the Way of Buddha to the Buddhist missionaries and pilgrims who were often exposed to hostile terrain, violent climate, inhospitable people and alien religions. Avalokitesvara Kwansum Bosal is the Bodhisattva who always observes the world with boundless compassion for unhappy humanity in order to protect hapless individuals in times of troubles. So Her name was commonly invoked by people in distress. Kwansum Bosal also assists Amitabha to fulfill His vow that one can be reborn in His Pure Land of the "Western Region" without having cultivated good karma at all, if one thinks of the Buddha Amitabha with sincere yearning for His Land.

BODHIDHARMA

The last group of Indian monks who followed the caravan route and persevered in scaling high mountains and traversing sandstorm deserts in order to reach China, were meditation monks who believed in spontaneous enlightenment. They were called Bodhidharma, because they taught the Dharma for enlightenment (bodhi). One of them became the first Ancestor of Ch'an Buddhism in China. Since then people who cannot shape up and let go of their limbs in order to find peace, go around chewing the *hwadu* "What is the meaning of Bodhidharma's coming from the West?" or "What is the highest purpose of the teachings of the Buddha?" These Bodhidharma monks raised dust where there was no dust and stirred up waves when there was no wind. This was a fine example of the blind faith that enables hundreds and thousands of followers to seek a great truth if one galoot babbles out nonsense.

BAMIYAN

Buddhism had survived several changes of fortune amid fluctuating political circumstances, but in 642 the Arab defeat of the last Sassanian ruler posed a real threat to its survival. The first encounter between Buddhism and Islam in Western and Central Asia was not a hostile one. In many cases the two religions existed side by side for centuries. In some places Buddhism even experienced revival. Bamiyan, well known for its two giant Buddha statues, was a good example. The local ruler embraced Islam during the late 8th century but Buddhist monasteries were allowed to function there for more than one hundred years.

In the 7th century when the two towering Buddhas—one 175 feet tall, the other 120 feet—were carved in deep relief directly from the rocky cliffs, Bamiyan, 100 miles west of Kabul, was home to a great monastic center "set in a broad, flat valley flanked by high stone cliffs." The valley was "a busy node on the trade route between China and India, in a part of Asia where languages and religions—Buddhism, Hinduism and, later, Islam—co-existed" (*New York Times*, March 3, 2001). Mirroring the racial and religious diversity of the area the art of the Bamiyan Buddhas combined the styles from India, Persia and the Graeco-Roman tradition of the Gandhara school. The two large standing Buddhas were cast when the pan-Buddhist movement in Central Asia had reached its zenith. Along with their stylistic dynamism the Bamiyan Buddhas captured the high spirit of Greater Vehicle Buddhism. "According to the art historians Susan and John Huntington, the carvings represent a form of the Buddha known as Vairocana, in whom the entire universe is encompassed, and in their stupendous scale, this immensity is made literal" (*Ibid*).

When the famous Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-tsang (600-

664) reached Bamiyan in 630 on the last leg of his long journey to India, he wrote in his journal, "To the northeast of the royal city there is a mountain, on the declivity of which is placed a stone figure of Buddha, erect, in height 140 or 150 feet. Its golden hues sparkle on every side, and its precious ornaments dazzle the eyes by their brightness."

"To the east of this spot there is a convent, which was built by a former king of the country. To the east of the convent there is a standing figure of Sakya Buddha, made of metallic stone, in height, 100 feet" (Samuel Beal, tr., *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, pp. 50-53). Seen from across the valley miles away they must have been a visionary sight.

In February 2001, Mullah Omar, the supreme leader of the Taliban in Afghanistan, issued an edict ordering the destruction of all statues, declaring, "These idols have been gods of the infidels." Muslim fundamentalists used grenades and explosives to destroy these two world cultural treasures. Hundreds and perhaps thousands of other smaller statues were also destroyed.

WEEPING PILGRIMS

In the 7th and 8th centuries when Chinese and Korean Buddhist pilgrims set out on their long and arduous journeys to the Indian heartland of Buddhism, they encountered signs of decline of Buddhism in many places they visited and their eyes filled "with tears of sorrow." In the 5th century the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hsien toiled up to the Vulture Peak outside Magadha and "found little else besides these marks."

"The hall where the Buddha preached his Dharma has been destroyed, and only the foundations of the brick wall remain. On this hill the peak is beautifully green, and rises grandly up; it is the highest of all the five hills" . . . He felt melancholy, but restrained his tears and said, "Here the Buddha delivered the Suramgama-sutra. I, Fa-hsien, was born when I could not meet the Buddha; and now I only

While Graeco-Roman influence survived long after the Greek diaspora, particularly through its grafting onto Mahayana Buddhism, Iranian culture predominated in the former Greek settlements and Buddhism learned to blend in.

see the footprints which he has left, and the place where he lived, and nothing more” (James Legge, *Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*, p. 83, quoted from “Exploratory Observations on Some Weeping Pilgrims” by T.H. Barrett, *The Buddhist Forum*, Vol. 1 (1990), p. 105).

Having risked their lives to visit the Western land of Buddha they must have been overcome with human emotion and shed tears over the destruction of Buddhist sites. They could not help but lament the lack of tolerance and the hostility against Buddhism by followers of theistic religions.

However, unlike Chinese and Korean pilgrims who were grieved at the situation of Buddhism in India and Central Asia, the Buddhists living in these lands did not lose heart. On the contrary, their boundless heart was ever aching to redeem the secular world with the great vow of infinite pity. The 8th century Indian monk-scholar of the monastic university of Nalanda, Shantideva, wrote in his *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*:

“I am happy but others are sad,
I am high though others are low,
I benefit myself but not others.”
Why am I not envious of myself?

I must separate myself from happiness
And take upon myself the sufferings of others.
“Why am I doing this now?”
In this way I should examine myself for faults.

Although others may do something wrong,
I should transform it into a fault of my own;
But should I do something even slightly wrong,
I shall openly admit it to many people.

By further describing the renown of others,
I should make it outshine my own.
Just like the lowest kind of servant,
I should employ myself for the benefit of all.

I should not praise my naturally fault-ridden self
For some temporary good quality it may have,
I shall never let even a few people know
Of any good qualities I may possess.

In brief, for the sake of living creatures,
May all the harms
I have selfishly caused to others
Descend upon me myself.

I should not be dominating and aggressive,
Acting in a self-righteous, arrogant way;
Instead, like a newly married bride,
I should be bashful, timid and restrained.

“I would never dare
despise you, for you
are all certain to
attain Buddhahood!”

Thus, O mind, you should [think] and abide in this way;
And not act [selfishly] as [before].

If, under the control [of self-cherishing], you transgress
[this code],

Your [selfishness] will be your end

(Stephen Batchelor, tr., *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, pp. 130-131)

BODHISATTVA NEVER DESPISE

The Lotus Sutra, or Sutra of the White Lotus of the True Dharma, is one of the most important and influential in all of Mahayana Buddhism. It was committed to writing about 200. The Sutra has been especially popular in China, Korea and Japan through the Chinese translation in 406 by the Central Asian scholar-monk Kumarajiva. For centuries the Sutra has been available in Chinese and Tibetan translations. In recent times fragments of old manuscripts of the Sanskrit dating from the fifth to the sixth centuries have been discovered in Central Asia and western Turkestan. Another manuscript discovered at Turfan contains an Uighur-Turkish translation of the Sutra. This Sutra must have been popular among Buddhists in Central Asia before it disappeared with Buddhism there and could possibly have originated in that region.

The Sutra places great emphasis on universal liberation and socially engaged Buddhism through which various bodhisattvas can raise hope and provide special aid and protection to people in need. Chapter 25, which centers on Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara or Kwanseum Bosal as perceiver of the sounds of the phenomenal world, is perhaps the most famous and influential, and often treated by devotees as an independent Avalokitesvara Sutra. Another devotional chapter is Chapter 20, “Bodhisattva Never Despise.”*

At this time there was a bodhisattva monk named Never Despise...For what reason was he named Never Despise? This monk, whatever persons he happened to

meet, whether monks, nuns, laymen or laywomen, would bow in obeisance to all of them and speak words of praise, saying, "I have profound reverence for you, I would never dare treat you with disparagement or arrogance. Why? Because you are all practicing the bodhisattva way and are certain to attain Buddhahood."

This monk did not devote his time to reading or reciting the scriptures, but simply went about bowing to people. And if he happened to see any of the four kinds of believers far off in the distance, he would purposely go to where they were, bow to them and speak words of praise, saying, "I would never despise you, because you are all certain to attain Buddhahood!"

Among the four kinds of believers there were those who gave way to anger, their minds lacking in purity, and they spoke ill of him and cursed him, saying, "This ignorant monk-where does he come from, presuming to declare that he does not despise us and bestowing on us a prediction that we will attain Buddhahood? We have no use for such vain and irresponsible predictions!"

Many years passed in this way, during which this monk was constantly subjected to curses and abuse. He did not give way to anger, however, but each time spoke the same words, "You are certain to attain Buddhahood." When he spoke in this manner, some among the group would take sticks of wood or tiles and stones and beat and pelt him. But even as he ran away and took up his stance at a distance, he continued to call out in a loud voice, "I would never dare despise you, for you are all certain to attain Buddhahood!" And because he always spoke these words, the overbearing arrogant monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen gave him the name Never Despise (Burton

Watson, tr., *The Lotus Sutra*, pp. 266-267).

**I have changed "Bodhisattva Never Disparaging" to "Bodhisattva Never Despise" because Buddhists are more familiar with this name.*

MUSLIM CONQUEST

From the eighth century on, Muslim armies began to take control of the Central Asian Silk Road. "Although Islamic law offered protection to 'peoples of the Book,' namely Christians, Jews and by some interpretations Zoroastrians, the early Muslims were generally hostile toward Buddhists. They referred to Buddhists as 'idol-worshippers,' which had unfortunate associations with the portrayal of the Prophet's Meccan enemies in the Qur'an. This probably at least in part accounts for the unabatingly harsh treatment Muslims reserved for the Buddhists they encountered in the course of their conquests" (Richard C. Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road*, p. 56).

The year 1000 is generally thought to mark the beginning of the end of Buddhism in India and Central Asia. Muslim scholar Al Biruni (973-1050) described only the last traces of the vanishing religion after witnessing it himself. "In the east, in Khotan, news of the Arab conquest seems to have alarmed the local monks as early as the 8th century, when some of them fled into Tibet. But it took another two centuries before Islam finally reached Khotan itself, via Kashgar, and the Khotanese ruler embraced the new religion in about 950...Buddhism had vanished by the year 1000; monasteries were deserted; Buddhist literature slowly fell into oblivion, together with the Khotanese language." (Oskar von Hinüber, "Expansion to the North: Afghanistan and Central Asia," in *The World of Buddhism*, edited by Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich, p. 107).

The most violent encounter took place in Magadha, the physical heart of Buddhism, when the Muslim armies invaded India towards the end of the 12th century. Thousands of temples were destroyed and mosques erected in their places. All "shaven-headed" idol worshippers who had not fled were put to the sword and the monastic learning centers such as Nalanda and Vikramasila were repeatedly plundered and their great libraries burned. According to the Buddhist historian Taranatha, "The majority of Buddhist refugees went to Southeast Asia (through Burma), many to Tibet and some to south India (Kalinga, which remained independent until the 16th century...). A few monks hung on near the ruined universities for a time. For example a Tibetan traveller about 1235 visited Nalanda and found an ancient monk teaching Sanskrit grammar to seventy students among the ruins. Only one or two monks had books (which some must have carried with them when they escaped the Turks who destroyed the library). Even while the traveller was there there was another Turkish raid from

The year 1000 is generally thought to mark the beginning of the end of Buddhism in India and Central Asia.

Uddandapura, the object of which was presumably to massacre the monks who obstinately remained and perhaps to ransack the ruins further in the hope of finding buried treasure. The monks were warned by a messenger from Uddandapura and withdrew to places at a safe distance. Three hundred Turkish soldiers scoured the ruins and then returned to their base, after which some of the monks returned to their burnt out university. The Tibetan pilgrim found none of the books he had hoped to get copies of and wandered elsewhere...Even after this a succession of four more teachers followed the ancient Rahulasribhadra...However, there was no hope of restoring Buddhist learning while the Turks ruled Magadha" (A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, p. 512).

"Buddhism has always been a philosophy and religion of peace in all senses of that word. When confronted with a religion of 'holy war,' offering its enthusiastic followers the reward of rich plunder, not as a crime but as a virtue,

The Muslim invasion of India was fatal to Buddhism. Buddhism in India has never been able to recover from it completely.

the Buddhist countries of Central Asia and North Western India could apparently not find enough good soldiers, enough military spirit, to defend themselves. The teaching of nonviolence surely had had some effect. Formerly Buddhism had spread among the barbarian peoples themselves (notably the Kushans) and thus defied the forces of militarism and destruction by civilising the people who had practiced them. But the new barbarians were different. They were not open to the ideas of the people they had conquered, for they had their own religion, which admirably served the purpose of conquest by providing ideological justification and incentives for it".

"The Kushans saw in Buddhism a means to consolidate a great empire by promoting the harmony of its peoples. The Turks did not concern themselves with consolidation (until Akbar) but only with expansion and accumulating more plunder and more slaves. Buddhism condemned their whole way of life, Islam encouraged it and glorified it as commanded by God. Here indeed was 'anti-Buddhism' which appealed to all the powerful passions which Buddhist moral principles opposed. Here were violence, plunder, rape and vandalism. The Turks chose the way of violence and took all India with them, destroying her civilization" (*Ibid*, pp. 512-513).

The Muslim invasion of India was fatal to Buddhism. Buddhism in India has never been able to recover from it completely. Today the ashes of the Buddhist temples at Sarnath where the Buddha delivered His first sermon still bear witness to the rage and destruction of Muslim invaders. Sometimes history has a strange way to remind people of bygone times. When the Muslim armies invaded Magadha they took for forts the many vihara (Buddhist



Is the Buddha image idolatrous?

There have been two differing reports on the motives behind the destruction of the two giant Buddha statues in Bamiyan by the Taliban, the Islamic leaders of Afghanistan. The first one refers to a religious motive. "These idols have been the gods of the infidels," declared the Taliban's leader in ordering the destruction of the statues (*New York Times*, March 3). The second suggests a violent emotional reaction towards the world community, which offered help to safeguard these cultural treasures "while a million Afghans faced starvation." Taliban envoy Mr. Rahmatullah, on a mission to the U.S., stated that "a council of religious

scholars ordered the statues destroyed in a fit of indignation" (*New York Times*, March 19). It appears that both reports have truth, and the Buddha statues became easy targets in the Taliban's retaliation against sanctions by UN and its anger over the UN's failure to marshal international support for suffering Afghans.

The Taliban are not the first to destroy Buddha statues as pagan idols. Early Western Christian missionaries in Asia did their part. Even today some evangelical Christians in South Korea continue to deface and destroy Buddha statues and burn Buddhist temples.

monasteries) and colleges and learned that they were called "Bihar." Buddhist monasteries (vihara) disappeared but the term "Bihar" stuck and remained to become the designation of the area where the Buddha lived and Buddhism flourished. Today the state of Bihar, situated between West Bengal on the east and Uttar Pradesh on the west, includes most of the area of the ancient kingdom of Magadha.


Although some local Muslim rulers did occasionally allow Buddhist pilgrims to pass through their territories, the increasing Muslim dominance of the Silk Road made it more and more difficult for Buddhist monks and pilgrims to travel between India and China. By the second half of the 11th century this once vital contact had ceased and East Asia was left on its own with its own brand of Buddhism. By this time Buddhism had permeated well into the societies of China and Korea.

In 1271 the 17-year old merchant Marco Polo set out from Venice, Italy, with his father and uncle on a journey across Asia. Travelling over 5000 miles by caravan, the Polos arrived in Afghanistan two years later along the ancient Silk Road. They must have been the first Europeans who had visited Afghanistan since Alexander's time. Their journey to China along the Silk Road of Central Asia was made possible through Pax Mongoliana of the Mongol Empire under Genghis Khan and his grandson Kublai Khan, with whom the Polos were granted an audience in 1275. In Central Asia and China Marco Polo encountered Tibetan and Chinese Buddhists whom he, a Christian, called "idolaters" in his Description of the World. The "idolaters" intrigued Marco with their fasting, their shaved heads, "moon calendar and the way they lead life hard."

Today Afghanistan is at the crossroads of international

I trust that once again Afghans will learn from their towering and majestic mountains a soaring spirit and transcending power to heal their pain and overcome their hatred. I trust that they will rise from the wilderness of debris and bloom like desert flowers.

conflict. After years of war and oppression the country is an open wound with gaping holes and bombed-out buildings. The plight of children and widows languishing in the refugee camps and old people starving in the countryside would break the hearts of many bodhisattvas. In the sound of wind galloping across the desert I would like them to hear the voice of the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion to assuage their sorrow. In the stillness of desolate mountains I would like them to hear the shout of Bodhisattva Never Despise to alleviate their resentment.

I trust that once again Afghans will learn from their towering and majestic mountains a soaring spirit and transcending power to heal their pain and overcome their hatred. I trust that they will rise from the wilderness of debris and bloom like desert flowers. With Afghans we will renounce violence and move from conflict to compassion. Together we will turn to peace and happiness as a way of life. I trust. I trust. 

Is the Buddha image idolatrous? The word Buddha means Enlightened One, one who wakes up from ignorance and delusion. Buddhism teaches that all sentient beings are essentially and potentially Buddhas. Mindful of this, Buddhists venerate Buddha statues with a belief that they too can one day become Buddhas if they follow the Buddhist path with diligence. As such, the peaceful and compassionate image of Buddha statues has provided countless people with consolation and hope throughout the long history of Buddhism and has served as a pointer to the path of purification and wisdom.

When I saw the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha statues on the Internet I could not help but feeling the sadness Son (Zen) master Hyujong felt when he wit-

nessed the plunder and destruction of the monasteries during the Japanese invasion of Korea in 1592. He wrote in a poem upon coming across a thousand year old structure of a monastic complex reduced to ashes, "Even a Son monk (who practices detachment) could not hold back his tears at this sight of human destruction."

The Buddha taught, "Hatred does not cease by hatred. Hatred ceases only by love." It is my strong wish and hope that the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha statues will help transform the culture of hatred and violence into a culture of tolerance and enlightenment.

—This is a letter Ven. Samu Sunim sent to the editor of the New York Times in March 2001.



Listening To Ground Zero

Ministering to
the survivors of
September 11
and a ceremony
to honor and
heal.

By Bopsa
Frank Jude Boccio



I live just under 100 miles from my home “town” of New York City, so when I heard the news of the attack on the World Trade Towers, I felt completely cut-off from those I know and love and care about. There was no phone service in or out of New York City, so the only contact I had with anyone from the city was through the Internet. I yearned to be with my students and fellow sangha members in Brooklyn.

I arrived in the city on Friday, September 14, and the air was still heavy with the smell of the smoke from Ground Zero. That night was the first class of a six-week course on Mindfulness Meditation that I teach several times a year at the Energy Center, the yoga center where I work on weekends. Obviously the students were still in shock over the events of September 11th, and our discussion centered around the significance of the attack and what it meant for us to be there that night embarking on this path of mindfulness. My first night’s talk for this course usually revolves around the Four Noble Truths and the importance of recognizing *dukkha* (suffering) in our lives as the motivation for practice. It was not a difficult topic to speak about this time, as everyone was freshly experiencing it. What was heartening for me to sense was the strong commitment these new students were expressing.

That first weekend, I was greatly moved by the openhearted generosity I was witnessing and hearing about from others. On trains and buses, standing in line at the grocery, people – New Yorkers! – were actually looking into each other’s eyes and asking, “How are you?” and meaning it. Alongside this, the sense of sadness and fear – the deep psychological and emotional suffering – was palpable.

I counseled some survivors of the attack, and their grief was inconsolable. Survivor guilt was already in evidence. One woman talked of how, as she ran from the burning building, pieces of the building and body parts were falling onto and around her. The ground was slippery with blood. These details, not shown on television, plague those who were there. Many of the people I met with saw either people jumping or bodies being blown from the tower. Every one who saw these incidents anguished over what those who jumped must have been feeling and thinking. As I write this, I know that many of those who witnessed this are still having nightmares.

My “ministry” amounted to little more than just listening. Whenever I felt myself becoming overwhelmed by the tales of suffering, I reminded myself to come back to my breath. Whenever I felt that I was helpless to really give any aid or solace to those I was counseling, I recalled the Invocation of Avalokiteshvara that we often use before Dharma discussion:

“We invoke your name, Avalokiteshvara. We aspire to learn your way of listening in order to help relieve the suffering in the world. You know how to listen in order to understand. We invoke your name in order to practice listening with all our attention and open-heartedness. We will sit and listen without any prejudice. We will sit and listen without judging or reacting. We will sit and listen in order to understand. We will sit and listen so attentively that we will be able to hear what the other person is saying and also what is being left unsaid. We know that just by listening deeply we already alleviate a great deal of pain and suffering in the other person.”

With gratitude, I was able to see the truth of this teaching and the power of “deep listening” as those I counseled expressed their gratefulness to me, one after the other, for being able to “really listen.” I say “with gratitude” because I know that it is my practice, taught to me by my teachers, that helped me to develop the capacity to “just listen.” Many told me that they were hesitant to tell others what they experienced or felt because they found them incapable of listening without holding back their own opinions, perceptions or advice.

Several of my female students told me they were struggling with anger and hatred. I saw, and gently pointed out to them, that their struggle was with the suffering of the anger, and not the anger as such. I led them to see that they were “at war with themselves” over having anger, and that by becoming angry at their anger, and at themselves for feeling anger, they were experiencing “two angers” and thus compounding their suffering. They were suffering from aversion, and aversion itself was creating deeper suffering. Rather than rejecting their experience, I tried to help them see that they could transform the energy of anger into wisdom. But first I had to help them see the need for compassion and full acceptance of their experience. One thing I have definitely learned from my practice is that when we reject or condemn ourselves and our experience,

we create “hardening of the attitude” and become imprisoned in our own shell of self.

I established a sangha over two years ago that is affiliated with the Community of Mindfulness NY/Metro. The sangha meets every Sunday evening and is non-sectarian. Our average attendance is between 16 and 24 people, and we have a fairly large e-mail list. On September 12, I sent the sangha an e-mail message that the Sunday gathering would be a ceremony to honor the dead, the survivors, and the grieving, as well as to begin the process of healing.

On the September 16, over 70 people were present as I opened the ceremony with 108 ringings of a large crystal bowl. As I began to ring the bowl, I had the inspiration to recite the gathas we repeat when we do 108 prostrations. As the 25th sounding of the bowl reverberated, I recited, “Great is the matter of birth and death.” At the 50th ringing I recited, “Impermanence surrounds us.” At the 75th, “Be awake each moment,” and at the 100th ringing, “Do not waste your life.” The 108th ringing led into 20 minutes of silent meditation.

After our session of silent sitting meditation, we did slow walking meditation, followed by some chanting led by a Kundalini Yoga teacher from The Energy Center. Following this, I gave a short talk, using the gathas from the bell ringing as the basis for my observations.

I told those gathered that I had heard a NYC journalist on the radio say that the attack of September 11th had forced New Yorkers to do something they rarely do, and that was “stop.” And in stopping, he asserted, “We have begun to see that which we have not seen in much too long a time: Each other.” I tried in my talk to connect the observation made by this journalist with the gathas I had recited during the opening. I pointed out how Mindfulness Meditation is the practice of “stopping and looking,” which is the literal translation of shamatha-vipashyana.

When we stop our conditioned reactivity, we can see what is real and what is true. And from this seeing, our hearts naturally open. My fervent wish was that those in attendance could see that from the Buddhist and Yogic perspectives, the attacks were a “bell of mindfulness” which we could ill afford to forget. “Impermanence surrounds us.” “Death comes without warning. How can we bargain with it?” says the Buddha in the Bhaddekaratta Sutta. “The yogi walks with death at his back and with truth before him” says one of the Yoga Upanishads.

All these teachings are to encourage us to awaken and to stay awake. In New York, people were already saying that in times of crisis, New Yorkers respond with open hearts, generosity, patience and kindness. The Buddhist and Yogic teachings agree that every moment is a moment of “crisis” in the sense of the urgency and importance of waking up. From this perspective, nothing fundamentally changed with the attacks of September 11th. “We are of the nature to die. We cannot escape death,” is the third of the Five Remembrances. If we were really conscious of this truth, made abundantly clear by the attack, we would respond with love and compassion to everyone all the time.

The fourth remembrance reminds us, “All that is dear to us and everyone we love are of the nature to change. There is no way to escape being separated from them.” Again, if we truly overcame our deep denial of this truth, we would never let an opportunity to express our love and gratitude pass; we would never let a hot moment linger into long days of resentment without doing all we could to reconcile misunderstandings, no matter how small.

“We inherit the results of our actions in body, speech and mind. There is no way to escape the consequences of our actions. Our actions are the ground upon which we stand,” the fifth remembrance reminds us. The Buddha said that the life of Dharma practice is one that “goes against the stream.” We practice in order to go against the stream of our conditioning; our cultural and societal conditioning, and even our psychological and biological conditioning. That it is not easy to do so is understood. That we cannot afford to do otherwise is perhaps less understood. To fall back into the denial and stupor of “normalcy” would be a tragic loss of a great opportunity. May all beings awaken from forgetfulness, and realizing their true nature, transcend the path of fear, sorrow, and anxiety.

After I spoke, we opened the floor for others to share from their experience. Several people spoke very movingly, but one in particular resonated with me as she explained how difficult it had been for her since she had survived the attack, but many of her co-workers had not. She said that my talk had helped inspire her to give meaning to their deaths by committing to wake up and keep her heart open. Another woman, concerned for all the children who lost parents in the attack, sang a beautiful Italian lullaby “for the children.”

After about 45 minutes of shared discussion, I led the group in a guided peace meditation. Another sangha member then led us in a song from the *Plum Village Songbook*. The ceremony ended with my giving a brief explication of at least one meaning of “Taking Refuge” as there were many in attendance unfamiliar with the practice. We then rose to take refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Finally, I met with a fireman the second weekend after the attack. He had lost dozens of his friends and colleagues, including a childhood buddy he saw die when struck by a falling body. He himself narrowly escaped the collapse of the first tower and was struck by debris and body parts. His face was a mask as he talked. In a moment of silence, I just looked into his eyes and said, “I cannot imagine what it must have been like for you.” His face immediately softened and tears began to flow. What I later learned from him was that no one he had talked to before seemed to understand him, because they all filtered his story through their lens of perceptions. Ironically, by understanding how I could not really understand what he had been through, he felt “heard” and “validated.” Without my practice, I would not have been able to do this. With heartfelt gratitude, To Buddha, To Dharma, To Sangha, I go for refuge. **SW**

—Bopsa is a first year Dharma Student and an interfaith minister.

The Land of



Illustration by James Hancock

Childhood reflections on being caught in the crossfire of the Korean War

Broken Calm

by Ven.
Samu Sunim

It was mid-August 1950, nearly two months after the North Korea Communist invasion of the South, when I experienced the full impact of the war for the first time. My mother and I lived in the floodplain near the riverbank outside the old city limits of Chinju, 140 km west of Pusan. I was in the fourth grade. Mother had bought me two rabbits to take care of during my summer vacation. We heard rumors that a big disturbance had broken out and that Seoul was taken and Communists were advancing south. We were assured that Allied troops would intervene and protect us, but told to prepare for Communist invasion anyway. Mother and I dug an underground hole in the floor of our spare kitchen to use as a hideout and all-purpose shelter.

Everything was quiet and nothing disturbed the pastoral serenity of our village until the day U.S. soldiers arrived. We had never seen foreigners before. However, their presence represented more than a novelty. The soldiers brought heavy equipment and bulldozed a plantation of pine saplings into an instant airfield. Soon reconnaissance planes were landing and taking off for their missions. It wasn't long before bombers were flying overhead to their targets. We could hear bombs exploding on the far horizon like thunder in the distant sky. Still, the fighting felt remote.

One day mother and I were working together in the field harvesting sweet potatoes. It was a lot of fun to dig up the root crop. I unearthed the biggest sweet potato I had ever seen. The plant had produced one giant sweet potato instead of several small ones. Mother and I dug it out together. She put it on my back and I carried it like a baby, and we laughed and laughed like playful children. It was a happy moment with my mother, and the last one. That night, our village got caught in the crossfire. The North Koreans had been resting and sleeping during the daytime to avoid American airpower and marching south at night. The Americans had installed big guns on the old lookout site and on the mountain tops across the river to prevent the North Korean advance to Chinju.

The fighting went on all night. We believed that the cotton layers of overquilts would protect us from stray bullets, so we covered ourselves with all we could find. I feared that even if we weren't shot we would suffocate to death. It was a night of terror. Toward the morning the sounds of fighting grew more distant, but the quiet brought a new fear. Though the sun shone brightly there was not a soul in sight.

As the morning advanced, our relief that we were still alive turned into concern about what had happened to the rest of the village.

Through a tiny glass window in our living room door we watched outside for any sign of movement. All remained quiet. The first movement we saw was a group of heavily camouflaged North Korean soldiers marching in single file on the roadway. It was an eerie feeling. We were now under Communist control and we knew we had to brace ourselves for an unknown future.

Our village survived the fighting with only two houses damaged by mortar fire. The first outsiders we met after waking up from our nightmare were four American stragglers. They asked for food and directions to the south. Crossing the river was a shortcut to the south. The water level was very low due to the dry season, so the Americans were led to a shallow spot of the river. While crossing in midstream, holding their rifles high overhead, they were spotted by Communist soldiers who had captured the mountaintop gun positions. We watched helplessly as one soldier was shot and collapsed in the water, while the rest made it safely to the other shore.

Retaliation was swift. Uncontested, a formation of attack planes crisscrossed Chinju city, dropping bombs all afternoon. Away in the distance we could make out marvelous flying performances and hear the boom of explosions. Late in the afternoon bombers appeared again and dropped napalm on the Teacher's College several hundred yards away from our village. In a flash the wooden structure was a sea of flames. Mother and I watched aghast. Suddenly we were experiencing the destruction of war for ourselves. We learned later that much of Chinju was destroyed that afternoon.

At first everything was too overwhelming and hard to believe, but eventually it dawned on us that the village might not be safe anymore. We decided to seek refuge in the mountains. Packing food, supplies and cooking utensils, we set out along the embankment toward the country road. It was a lovely summer evening. The earth was starting to cool down and a fresh breeze blew in the air, but the landscape was empty of people. Fear was keeping them isolated in their homes.

We saw a dead Allied soldier. He had been shot in the head and was lying next to his MP helmet at an abandoned

checkpoint. His mission must have been to stop runaways and secure a safe retreat. Farther down we saw three soldiers sitting in a rice paddy. I did not understand why they would sit in the wet, mosquito-infested rice paddy. They looked tired and lost, and one of them seemed to have been wounded. I prayed that they would gain enough strength to move to safety before being discovered by Communists. I always remember those who were willing to sacrifice their lives in our distant foreign land in order to protect peace and freedom. It was after dark when we arrived in a sleepy mountain hamlet and rented a small room. It had been a long, exhausting day.

We woke up in what seemed to be another world. We spent three peaceful days undisturbed by the conflict gripping the country. Then one evening over 500 North Korean soldiers arrived and the peace turned into complete chaos. The soldiers occupied every available space. The village inhabitants slaughtered their livestock and had to use up all their food supplies to feed the People's Army for three days.

I had begun to worry about my two rabbits. Their food and water would be low or have run out by now. I begged Mother to go home. We were told not to travel by day. People were afraid of the firepower of the jet planes. So we set out at night. The moon was bright, illuminating the mountain path. When we reached the country road I could not believe my eyes. It was overflowing with people running away from the war. They carried their young children, aged parents and belongings on their backs, shoulders or heads. Young and able men were conspicuously absent from the crowd. They had been recruited by the South or North Korean Armies or were hiding out.

Occasionally we would hear a commotion and had to scramble out of the way of a motorcade carrying commanding officers of the Communist Army. Once we heard shouts of "Fighter planes!" and "B-29's! Everybody down!" No sooner had everybody jumped into rice paddies or off the opposite side of the road than the planes appeared. I was stunned by the sudden emptiness of the road and the dead silence of the crowd. After the planes flew by we resumed our march, the heavy silence broken only by the cries of babies or the frantic voices of mothers calling for their missing children.

The experience of having walked with my white-clad kinsmen under the moonlight left a permanent imprint in my consciousness. Throughout the long history of the nation our ancestors must have traveled by night like that for their survival and the survival of the nation under Chinese invasion, under Mongol invasion, under Japanese invasion, under Manchu invasion and again under Japanese invasion and occupation. Now once again, the country was embroiled in conflict, but this time in a civil war pitting brothers of the North against brothers of the South, both sides armed with imported weapons and imported ideologies.

Mother and I arrived home before daybreak. I ran to see

the rabbits. There they were in their box with their big eyes looking at me as if asking where I had been. I gave them fresh water and promised to bring plenty of fresh grass in the morning and to take good care of them from then on.

We arose late in the morning and greeted our neighbors. They seemed to be adjusting to the new situation and the village seemed to have resumed its normal pace of life. I ran out to pick grass, happily gathering the grass they liked best. When I got home and was opening the rabbit box, I heard the thunder-like sound of approaching fighters. Mother shouted to run for the shelter. I tumbled down into the hole. Fifteen minutes later when I came out the rabbits were gone. I had forgotten to close the box. Running outside, I chased my rabbits from furrow to furrow through soybean field and radish field. They eluded me with joyful abandon. As I chased the white one, then the gray one, one after the other, my annoyance and frustration mounted. Mother called me in for dinner as the sun was setting. I had to give up for the day.

A big moon rose above the eastern mountain and shone bright over the fields. I ached to go out again to find the rabbits. Mother read my thoughts and prevented me from slipping out. Sitting on the floor in the moonlight, my mind returned to the image of the night before, of so many people subdued by war, plodding together in silence on the mountain road. My sorrow overwhelmed me. Mother noticed my tears and took me by the hand to bed.

The next morning I went out to the fields again to look for the rabbits. Mother cautioned me to keep my eyes and ears on the sky as well. Having been outdoors overnight the two rabbits had gained strength and confidence in their legs and were running wild. To make matters worse, a cou-



ple of times I was close to catching one of the rabbits when planes showed up overhead and I had to run for cover. I started to get upset about those two stupid little running creatures. They ran about without a care and I ran after them upset and mad. I had wasted another day chasing them for nothing.

The third day dawned and I prepared to go out again. Mother was worried about me. But my greater worry was that my rabbits would run away for good. Over the last two days they had greatly expanded the radius of their running activity. I had had no trouble locating them in the mornings; they looked as if they were waiting for me. Then, as I approached they would take off in different directions. Today I decided to focus my pursuit on the white rabbit, which was much easier to spot, instead of chasing one rabbit after the other as they appeared and disappeared among the furrows.

After half an hour of chasing the white rabbit, out of the blue I ran into a man. We completely surprised each other, because neither of us expected to meet anyone in the open field. He was a young man, standing before the entryway to an underground hole completely at a loss. He must have been living there for a while, hiding behind stacks of barley straw.

The following day the mother of the man came to visit my mother. After she left, mother called, looked straight at me and said, "Chin-Sam, you should tell no one that you saw the man you met yesterday in the field, or that you know someone is living there. We must protect him. Do you understand?" I understood that the Communists would harm him if he were discovered, so I promised with a big nod of my head.

Now once again, the country was embroiled in conflict, but this time in a civil war pitting brothers of the North against brothers of the South, both sides armed with imported weapons and imported ideologies.

Eventually I succeeded in catching the white rabbit. But I was not anxious anymore about protecting and taking care of my pets. They seemed to be happier and healthier outdoors, so I released the white rabbit to keep company with its partner.

In the early mornings and evenings, I would occasionally see the man behind the barley stacks. Once a day, I saw his mother bringing a bundle containing his meals. She came from the inner city beyond the embankment. My mind was not at peace. My whole being felt in conflict and turmoil, but I did not know why. I would go and lie down on the river bank, my favorite spot, and watch summer clouds floating in the sky. I let my mind wander listlessly with the summer clouds.

One day a reconnaissance plane flying over the mountain touched a power line while descending and crashed. It happened almost in front of my eyes, but I did not rush to the scene. The members of the local Communist self-defense organization cordoned off the accident scene to the villagers. I never found out what happened to the pilot.

A few days later, I did not see the young man behind the barley stacks, nor his mother visiting him. I began to wonder what had happened, but did not have the courage to ask my mother. I eventually learned that one night he was taken away by local members of the Communist Party.

Almost two months passed since the Communist invasion of Chinju city. It was the day before the harvest full moon festival, the Korean version of Thanksgiving. With the successful Inch'on landing by General MacArthur, the North Korean Communist Army was in retreat. Chinju was recovered by Allied troops now marching north, and we were called back to school. I remember my great surprise when I went back to school after summer break. There was no school there! All I saw was rubble and unexploded bombs. Teachers and children began cleaning up. We worked every day for several days, just cleaning up according to the instructions of our teachers and military security personnel. We all knew it would be while before any kind of normal school life resumed for us.

It was the day after Thanksgiving that I started to hear a woman's cries when I passed the cow market district on my way to school, just over the embankment. The cries sounded like deep, sorrowful sobbing and continued for a couple more days. Her cries were so anguished and penetrating that I could hear no other noise when I passed by. After three days I heard the cries no more. I learned that the woman had died from a broken heart over her missing son. I also found out that she was the mother of the young man behind the barley stacks. Not long after that, my own mother died in a tragic situation. **SW**

—This article was originally prepared for an interview with Mr. Richard Nielsen for a Canadian documentary on Canada's participation in the Korean War.

A seminary student recounts his experience and inspiration during summer Zen training

Illustration by Achala Jeff LeGro



Meeting the Master

By Yosim Ken Norman

Early Saturday morning, June 23, I set out from my home in northern California for the Zen Buddhist Temple in Chicago. A journey of many miles, two weeks away from family for an intensive meditation retreat and my first seminary convocation were scheduled – but, I wondered, “What really awaits me in Chicago?” Events and circumstances aside, where was I truly going? Could I apply myself in some new way, attune the mind, go deeper in practice?

Venturing into the unknown is always a little frightening, as well as exciting and inspiring. Meeting the master is risky business. Would I come out alive? I also felt anxious about the oral presentation I would be expected to give at some point, for which I didn’t feel 100 percent ready yet. How was I going to be tested – an exam, a demonstration of ritual practice? I so wanted the approval of my teacher and fellow students; hence, the fear of failure loomed large.

Still, I knew that I would just be expected to be fully present to the moment, mindfully aware, humble, helpful and responsive. If I could do that, I would be all right, even if everything went wrong. In fact, if I could do that, everything would be wonderful! Thinking of the Buddha Hall, the Sangha, the schedule and the healthy, hearty ways of temple life, I was on the whole so glad to be going, and looked forward to immersing myself in Sangha and uninterrupted inner work.

Upon arriving, I joined a meeting of the Temple’s Advisory Council. A subject was being discussed which I had strong feelings about, so when Sunim asked for comments, I felt I should offer my thoughts. Right away he interrupted me and told me just to sit and listen, and not to speak out at this meeting. Thus began the potent and uncomfortable lesson of humil-

ity, which would characterize the next two weeks for me.

Until *Yongmaeng Chongjin* (intensive meditation retreat) began late Monday afternoon, it was difficult for me to adjust to being uninvolved. Although it’s sort of a relief to find out you’re “just one person” and nearly insignificant, it was already obvious that I had a lot to learn about being quiet inside and tempering the impulse to speak my mind. I wanted to be heard, understood and appreciated. So what? Is that what spiritual practice is all about? I don’t think so. Why the big need for belonging and being valued? What’s behind this grasping? A few days later these questions would ripen. Right now, they were just beginning to tweak my complacency.

On Sunday Sunim met with me to review my first year of training in Maitreya Buddhist Seminary, and to consider promoting me from novice to junior. Sunim expressed grave reservations, however, regarding my coming to the Temple only once per year. This is the best I can do, I stubbornly insisted, again. Sunim was clear that this might not be enough, that I need to humble myself, see this as a fault, and strive to come – or at least be open to coming – more often.

I wondered if this attitude of mine, insisting that I can only give and can only ask so much of my family, was part of my root problem? Knowing your limitations sounds good, but what about being complacent and self-defensive?

I’ve come to a very surprising conclusion about my teacher. Although at first I receive his teachings with resistance and dismay, invariably they prove to be right on target, the very thing I needed most. I have learned this in my practice, by questioning myself, by letting go of old attitudes, and by staying open to the hard lessons. What this boils down to

for me is: Don't give up! When it's difficult, stick with it, and forget about old resentments. Be flexible. Remember, you may be wrong.

In a brief ceremony, Sunim gave the yellow *kasa* (vestment worn around the neck) to Won'gak, Muhan and me. I felt so blessed. The training is precious and the teachings, a treasure. Touching the *kasa* to my forehead, I imagine without words the Dharma streaming out of it like light. Putting the *kasa* on, I am a new person. Who is this new person?

Before *Yongmaeng Chongjin* began on Monday, there were several hours of free time and I was able to prepare a little more for my presentation, but by then I was worried it would last too long. More and more retreatants arrived, the meditation hall was made ready, and *Yongmaeng Chongjin* began.

Sunim used the imagery of spring, summer, fall, winter, and spring again for the days of our retreat. He urged us to uncover that authentic experience that is at once intimate, immediate, spontaneous, and obvious. We rallied our energy, and cooked in the humid heat of a midwestern summer.

With *Yongmaeng Chongjin* come daily interviews with the master. During Dharma talks Sunim called upon us to question powerfully with all our heart, "What am I?" At this time I practiced as never before the strange art of asking without considering answers, inquiring, not knowing. Taking the low seat, unsure even of what I am, maybe a failure, a fool, a know-nothing. Am I an entity? Experience? I cannot say, yet I must say something! What? What is it that I am? Ha! What is this? Who knows? Ha ha ha ha!

The first couple of days, while serene, energetic and care-free, were also a struggle for me as I experienced worthlessness and was hounded by doubts. For days I didn't even know what project I was working on during work practice. Everything conspired to humiliate me in some way, and I let it. I welcomed it, and like Bodhidharma, I practiced bouncing back, constantly returning to my breath and to the question, "What am I?" Mu, no, nothing, not that! Over and over again, in the heat and discomfort, and in the peaceful and sublime quiet alike, just questioning, questioning, questioning.

The meals were all delicious, simple, healthy, and never too much. We exercised a lot, stretching in the morning after a bracing cold rub down, doing prostrations, empowering ourselves during running meditation with shouts and screams, going on long single-file walks through the neighborhood, and working. We spent long, poignant hours sitting. We rested a lot too, and deeply. Even on the floor, people would fall asleep if you gave them half a chance. At night I fell asleep with my *hwadu*, lying prone without my typically fat pillow, feeling both poised and spent. Waking up the next morning, the wheel kept turning.

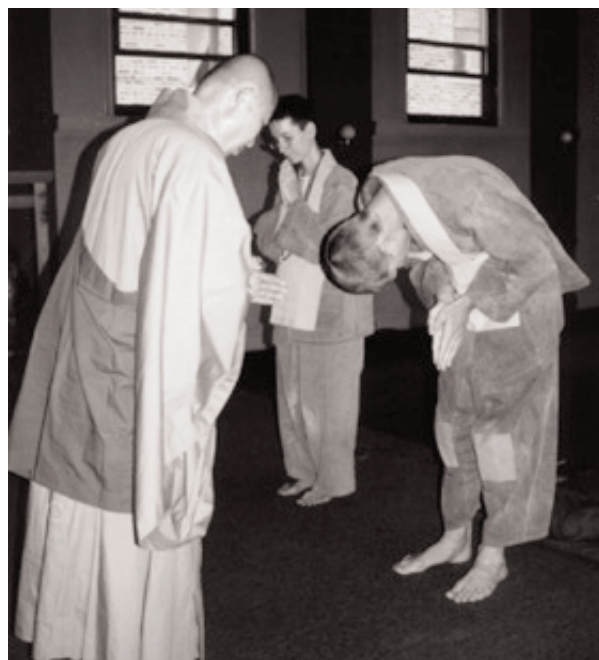
Yongmaeng Chongjin gradually worked its medicine on me, and as I relaxed into great effort and no status, I enjoyed the time immensely and would have been happy to carry on in this fashion a few days longer, or perhaps forever. And that's the

magic of *Yongmaeng Chongjin*. When it's over, the rules change back to "normal," but the imperative, the heart, the path remain. These strangers you've been sitting with are now forever family, the Temple will always be home, and no matter how big your doubts become, the seeds of faith will continue to grow and save you in the end.

The Dharma talks Sunim gave, full of stories and anecdotes, were compelling, humorous and grounding. The schedule rolled along and we flowed in harmony with all beings. Interviews helped the mind to keep from settling on anything, and dared us to go much further, beyond getting it or going anywhere with this practice. Thus by Saturday morning I had nothing to show for my efforts, no fruits. And NO, that is not all.

Yongmaeng Chongjin ended and a spirit of congeniality joined us on the Temple deck for iced coffees and watermelon and sundry snacks. People poured in from all over for the Precept-Taking Ceremony Orientation. That evening over a 100 people, including many newcomers to the Buddhist path, heard encouraging words, asked questions, sat in meditation, and sweated profusely as we performed 365 plus prostrations. The next day's ceremony was quite lovely, and I have a wonderful feeling thinking of all those sincere individuals committing themselves to the Way of Bodhisattva.

The next three days at the Temple were quite different. The retreatants and precept-takers all departed, save for the handful of Dharma teachers and students who remained for the Seminary's annual Dharma Student Meeting. We began with each student giving a very personal account of their training over the past year. The teachers sometimes offered a response, or a question, but it was the student's own testimonial (and sometimes confession) that shed such light on the path and the plight of lay Zen training in modern America. I'm not the only



one in our group who has undertaken this program while living very far from temple and teacher, with family and work and other demands on our time and attention that represent obstacles, in the conventional way of thinking about them, to regular practice. How many times we fall off the path! With great determination and feeling do we climb back onto the path and begin again! We contemplate these obstacles as challenges, even allies, on the path, and set our hearts on unshakable stability.

We didn't rush through this phase of the meeting; we gave it the time it needed to find full expression. The meeting lasted from morning until evening for three days. In a world where people pop in for a one or two hour meeting driven by a timed agenda and action items, this was an amazing and beautiful thing. I wanted so often to pipe up, add my two cents' worth, relate everything to my own thoughts and experience, but I forced myself to be still, and listen. Maybe the situation didn't really need my commentary. Maybe the situation was perfect as it was, unresolved. It was humbling. I guarded myself as best I could from boredom and excitement, and from feeling inferior or superior. I was deeply impressed by everyone else's willingness to listen, to stick with it, to respond with gentleness

and appreciation, and to follow Sunim's lead.

The Dharma students gave our presentations, were each put on the spot to demonstrate chanting from memory, and answered a smattering of questions to test our scholastic prowess. For each of these three Sunim praised me in front of the others, and I carefully refrained from giving in to feelings of pride. This may have been what I had come wanting, but now I was as wary of it as of slander or blame. Besides, I knew my shortcomings well enough, how I could have done better, and how prone I am to waywardness and delusion. The first year, I heard from a fellow student, it's easy to stay enthused and almost never miss formal practice, journal writing and study, but wait until the second year. How much harder it will be, I thought, if I become overly confident. If I become pleased with myself, I'll have lost the Way almost completely. Wherever you stand, the path leads onward from here, doesn't it? Go!

These days were also marked by great camaraderie and fun. We went to a park on Lake Michigan and wrestled ferociously in the sand and wind in a game called American Eagle. We ate out, yucked it up, ran through the rain, nibbled on chocolate kisses, ate ice cream and sang songs of every stripe late in the



Dharma Train

By Satya Hugh McBride

Late this past June I boarded a train in Toronto enroute to my third consecutive summer *Yongmaeng Chongjin* in Chicago. Stowing my bag and settling in for the 12-hour journey, I was a mixture of emotions: nervousness (always a little bit nervous before a retreat), wistfulness (at the thought of being away from my family for six days), and a vague sense of pride in doing something that I knew was important. Five days later I would leave the retreat, not transformed or enlightened, but a little wiser about myself, my practice, the value of retreats and the importance of Buddhism in my life.

I love train travel. On trains life slows to its proper pace. There's time – lots of it – to read, think, daydream, and to observe people, train stations and passing countryside. But I wasn't taking the train for this reason only. To travel alone by train was a good way to settle my brain for the five days of silence and meditation that lay before me, something akin to stretching before running a marathon. Owing to delays, I didn't arrive in Chicago until after midnight, a full 14 hours after setting out from Toronto. I took a cab to the Temple, rang the bell, and in less than a minute Anjali greeted me warmly at the door. Five minutes later I was in bed.

I spent the next day cleaning and chanting, talking with old Dharma friends and making new ones. That evening, just

before the evening bell signaled the beginning of the retreat, I made a vow. I pledged to give this *Yongmaeng Chongjin* everything I had. I would practice constantly. I would concentrate on my practice and nothing else. I would strive to be awake each moment. This is what I promised myself.

At least twice a day we gathered together on the floor close to Sunim to hear him speak. We were like children, so eager to learn, sponges for inspiration, hanging on every word. It was always like this. He spoke to us about the importance of believing in our Buddha nature. Whether we were daydreaming or not, he said, it was with us. Regardless of what we had done that we regretted, he said, our Buddha nature was there by our side. Through all the desire, longing, depression and anxiety, our Buddha nature was an inseparable, integral and indissoluble part of our being. We should never ever doubt that it is there. "After all," he asked, "What brought you here?" It was a simple rhetorical question – nothing at all to it. But my heart soared. I was overcome with joy.

At the retreat we were rocks rubbing against and polishing each other. You didn't have to look far for inspiration: Anjali's soaring and lilting renditions of The Great Compassion Dharani and Gatha for the Evening Bell; the stillness in meditation of the man on the cushion to my right; the mindfulness of those around me at Dharma meals; Haju Sunim in walking meditation; anyone who stayed up late. So much and so many people to be grateful for.

On the last night of the retreat I vowed to stay up as late as I could. I vowed, in the dwindling hours of *Yongmaeng*


evening. Taking a break from sitting in meeting one day we were pawing the ground outside, ready for action. Across the street in the empty parking lot we would have played Basketball or Ultimate Frisbee if we'd had a basketball or a frisbee. Someone had brought along a plastic colander with a few strawberries in it, so we played Ultimate Colander! Panting, sweating and giggling, we ambled happily back inside to resume our efforts to save all beings.

One evening, while some watched *The Joy Luck Club* on the big screen TV, Kosu, Pabha and I went to the roof to soak in the delicious summer night sky and cityscape, and talked. On July 4th Won'gak, Bopmun and I went to Lincoln Park to hear a little music and witness a billion Chicagoans kickin' back. We sat with the boats bobbing in the marina or cruising the crowd. We talked, and watched the moon and the fireworks display over the water.

By Friday morning the Dharma Student Meetings were over and everyone had returned home except for Toan and myself. Sunim asked me to do a special *kido* practice, so I played the *mokt'ak* and chanted my heart out. That afternoon, Sanha and I went postering, and had a good long talk in a bookstore coffee shop. Toan and I had an intimate chat that evening over an

informal supper. It seems I had gotten a chance to connect personally in some way with almost everyone in the group, and my desire for Dharma friendships was satisfied. I have a lot of love and admiration for these people, and I'm grateful to share this life of training with them.

I returned home on Saturday as well equipped as could be to begin another year of solo Zen Buddhist training in the midst of householder life. Perhaps the real purpose of going on pilgrimage is to return home, bringing a remnant of the Holy Land with you, inside you. If you learn to grow up a little more, to let go a little more, to be a little more humble and still inside, to go deeper without knowing, to be willing, to try harder and not make something out of it, and to have a little more faith, your trip has been a true pilgrimage. The Way has become a greater part of you.

I'm determined to practice diligently this year, and to remember, constantly. May all beings benefit directly! Thank you, Sunim! May anyone who reads this take heart and trust in the path of peace they are already treading. *Svaha!* 

—Yosim is a second year Dharma Student and a special education teacher.




Chongjin, to practice as intensively as I could. After the final bell at 10 p.m., the retreat center emptied. The candlelit room – so spare and now so quiet – became ineffably peaceful. The floorboards creaked reassuringly as those who remained quietly performed prostrations or walking meditation.

I began with a sitting meditation. I decided that my old ally in meditation, pain, should be allowed to pay me a visit. I forced myself into a half lotus that I knew my knees would resent. With pain, I have found, comes clarity and a clear choice: you can either allow it to take control or use it to fuel and deepen your practice, at which time it disappears altogether. Years ago at my very first retreat, Haju (then Sukha) told me what Sunim had said to her years before when told of the pain she was experiencing in meditation. “Sukha,” he said, “You need heat to make a fire!”

Now my practice spreads out, widens, warms me. I am enjoying myself. A half an hour or so later, it occurs to me I will have to take good care of myself to stay up any later. I go downstairs and for 20 delightful seconds enjoy an invigorating cold shower. I return to the retreat center filled and inspired by my own determination. I find Toan Sunim doing a brisk walking meditation around the perimeter of the room. I fall in behind and for half an hour am intimate with practice. I go to my cushion and renew my commitment. But at some point – 1:30 a.m. or 2:00 a.m. – I begin hallucinating. Fantastic, fascinating metamorphoses in images, patterns and color take place in the patternless monochrome strip of carpet on the floor before me. I try my best to meditate through these distur-

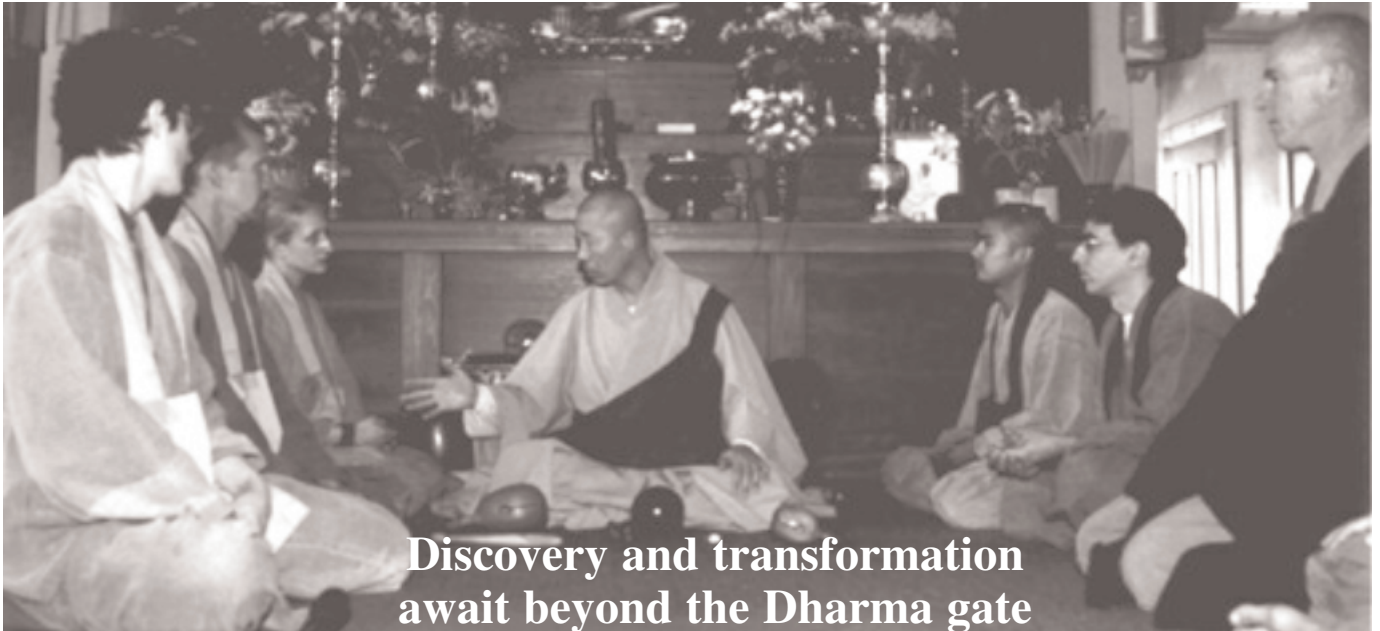
bances, but fail. It was time to go to bed. I had done my best.

Notwithstanding my experience on the final evening, my practice floundered through much of the retreat. It never was what I thought it could be or should be, or what it has been at past retreats. What had I struggled with? Was it an attachment to the idea or goal of achieving something? Perhaps. My obligations to work and family only allow me to attend one retreat a year. Perhaps at some level I was thinking, “I can't let this rare and important opportunity go to waste. I must have something to show for it.”

I think most importantly, however, I was playing catch up. I was facing karmic obstacles, karmic obstacles empowered by things I had done in the previous year that I wasn't proud of and by the collapse of my practice in the first few months of the year. Still, this was a good retreat. I learned a great deal, including the importance of practicing and attending temple sittings regularly. I came to a more meaningful understanding of the fact that Buddhism isn't about making steady linear progress toward a defined goal. We all follow different paths. We each have different twists, turns and detours to follow, in our practice, as in life. We learn lessons once, and then relearn them with greater profundity the second and third times. Backward steps are sometimes necessary to forward ones. Accepting, even embracing this struggle, I believe, is necessary to forward movement. I know this now. 

—Satya is a member of the Toronto Temple and a proposal director for KPMG Co.

When the Quiet Came



Discovery and transformation
await beyond the Dharma gate

By Bopmun Alex Alviar

“But I’m afraid, Haju”. That’s what I said when she first asked me to consider joining the seminary. I’m too young, too arrogant and hotheaded, too new to the practice, and too undisciplined. Better people than I have tried it. They loved it, hated it, and left it to pursue other paths in their lives. What makes her think that I’d be any different? In fact, I’d probably blunder the whole thing much sooner and grander than any of the veteran sangha members who have been practicing for years. Besides, I thought, I’m not ready to go through another round of intense practice burning through my negative habits. Round One as a Dharma Worker was enough for me – at least that’s what I thought at the end of August 2000.

With the Dharma Students on semester break, a great lull in the buzz of activity settled over the Ann Arbor Temple. I spent my last two weekends training at the Temple virtually alone. I had my shovel, the piles of weeds I’d pulled, the knife and pink sheet I shredded into ties for the tomatoes swollen and heavy with rain. I sat and chanted alone, aware of all the empty cushion spaces around me. I set the table for formal Dharma meals with just two bowls for Haju and myself. I’d show up to the Temple Friday night and by Sunday afternoon it would feel as if the world slowed to the pace of sunlight squares travelling across the *sonbang* carpet.

It took a long time for me to slow down. For three months I

tried to reel in my mind, which was thrashing wildly like a hooked fish. I hated my mind. I hated the Temple. I hated myself for not having memorized the Great Compassion Dharani, for showing up late, for gaps in my practice journal, and for being an impatient, self-absorbed, angry person. I felt as though an internal storm had risen and abated. Finally, when the quiet came, I was there in the Temple garden with my shovel turning earth. Three months later and the wide world was green.

“If not you, then who? If not here, then where? If not now, when?” That was Haju’s response to my fears about joining Maitreya Buddhist Seminary. She encouraged me to consider the seminary at the close of the Dharma Worker program, which I left to be the winter caretaker at Friends Lake Community living in a cabin on a lake. That was the last I would think about it until the end of the year.

I was seeking solitude and the lake was the perfect place to be alone. I also needed to see what it was like to be a regular Sangha member who shows up for Wednesday night and Sunday morning sittings. Before starting the Dharma Worker program, I was never serious about my practice. I needed to see how well I could maintain a daily practice on my own. The cabin and lake became my teacher. I learned to split wood and build fires for heat. The fire became my practice, as did the walks around the lake and kayaking. My practice was learning how to live simply, minimizing my wants and comforts.

I continued a loose daily practice, attending *Yongmaeng Chongjin* retreats in the fall and winter, and doing a retreat by myself at the cabin. I soon found, however, that I was always dropping by the Temple to join evening services, to help with a project or to just sit in the *sonbang* alone. This was the first hint that at a very gut-level, a part of me was calling for spiritual practice, a calling that continues to pull me in unexpected directions. It was that same pull which initially dragged me through the Temple gates.

I'd been to the Temple occasionally in the summer of 1999 and took the introductory meditation course that fall. I read a lot about Buddhism and even aced a college course. I shopped around on the spiritual market, but never settled in with a specific Sangha. It wasn't until I witnessed my former mischief as a college student ripen into the destruction of my career and long-term relationship that I crawled through the Temple door. Something was deeply wrong with the way I behaved and operated. I needed a practice to dig into and uproot my personal garbage. Within three weeks, I signed up for my first *Yongmaeng Chongjin*.

I showed up for that first retreat and immediately felt the unease of getting quiet begin to creep in. My practice was to say, "*hanah*" slowly on out breaths. But I found myself inventing stories about everyone there on retreat. I sat depressed. I sat through arguments with myself. I sat through the twentieth sexual fantasy. I sat through the throb in my ankles and knees. And still I tried to pull myself back to practice *hanah* while sitting, *hanah* while chewing on tofu, *hanah* turning the manure in the soil, *hanah* at the edge of my lips and waiting on the in-breath. The bell rang and I ran up the stairs into the interview room. Haju asked, "So Alex, what is it that brought you here?" "Pain," is what I said. "Are you sure?" I wasn't. "Then what is it that brought you here," she asked again. I screamed, "I don't know!" I couldn't keep it together. My neurosis was out in the open and as obvious as the bell ringing that told me to leave the interview room. I went back to my cushion and began again. *Hanah*, slow on the out breath. *Hanah*, between sips of tea. When my mind finally quieted that night, *hanah* stepped alone lightly on the footpath beneath a single moon in the newly turned garden.

The retreat ended, but *hanah* remained. I was amazed. With strong effort, I could actually free myself from the negative mental and emotional habits I had built. It was possible to help myself, maybe even help others. When I walked into my apartment, the phone was ringing. It was the University of Montana, asking whether I'd accept their teaching position.

Instinctively I said, "No, I need to stay here." Three weeks after my first retreat, in May 2000, I became a Dharma Worker for the Ann Arbor Temple. Looking back, I cherish my time as a Dharma Worker, and see it as the most crucial life-changing decision I ever made. I was new to the temple, to Buddhism, and to practice. Because it forced me to confront my issues honestly and compassionately, it was exactly what I needed. Also, the camaraderie that developed with the other Dharma Workers helped support my efforts and keep me on the path. Those bonds would be my future source of encouragement to enter the seminary.

Haju said, "You understand that it's my job to get under your skin. Sunim and I don't just push your personal buttons, we stomp on them." "You have some cooking to do," she said. Cooking is slang for purification – the process by which your personal hang ups and internal garbage get stirred up and boiled by your conscious awareness. It's not comfortable and I had just agreed to get thrown in the stew once more. It was Buddha's Enlightenment Day sitting and I committed to sit until 4:00 a.m. There was a small group of us that lasted the night. Afterwards I was initiated into Maitreya Buddhist Seminary. I also celebrated my twenty-fifth birthday that same day. A friend said it was an auspicious time for me, but I spent the next week wanting to hide from this daunting responsibility. I asked myself, "Who am I kidding?" "Can I really do this?"

The first month I took my practice and drove as hard as I could to build momentum for the challenging times ahead. It was January and I was alone in a cabin buried in snow. Knowing that I was indeed fortunate to practice undistracted, I settled in, sitting and chanting almost to midnight on most evenings.

One night I woke up to the moonlight cutting across the floor. The moon was full and seemed to be setting down onto the thin branch of a tree just outside the cabin on the shore. I sat up and watched it set. I did prostrations until the sun came up in the east. Later, I wrote in my journal:

Stir of the poker,
hot coals open red and black,
a few splinters and bark,
blue flame arises.

I'd show up to the Temple Friday night and by Sunday afternoon it would feel as if the world slowed to the pace of sunlight squares travelling across the *sonbang* carpet.

To the east, the sun snuck in quietly, like the prostrations I was doing. Moon goes down, sun comes up. Impermanence surrounds us. That morning I took my joy and sent it out into the world with my breath – to friends, family, strangers, people who have loved and harmed me, to world anger and world despair. Who cares about enlightenment or ordination? I send my joy.

Suddenly I saw that practice was not about perfection. I realized then that I wasn't going to accomplish anything. Nothing is reliable. For me, only the practice has shown me anything worth believing and applying. Learning rituals, sutras, and perfect chants – these are all secondary. Doing the heart work, carving out a mind and spirit free of anger, hatred, greed, and delusion, not harming but helping, learning to be sincere – these are what matter to me. As for the rest, I realized I just had to do my best.

It's been a challenge. I struggled to maintain a regular practice. I was frustrated with practice and seminary because it took so much of my time. I had fallen madly in love and was angry at Haju and the Temple for destroying my social life and stealing my personal time. My resentment grew. One morning during a Dharma Student meeting, I was so angry that I left the *sonbang* and vowed to do prostrations until my mood changed. I did 872, but my mood did not improve. I broke down crying in the meeting. Afterwards, a fellow student said, "The honeymoon is over. Now it really begins."

I moved into the Temple in May after my caretaker position at the cabin ended. My relationship was beginning to break down and my social ties were wearing away. I was in the Temple, but fighting to hang onto my life beyond its walls. However, sitting in a café one afternoon, I realized that there was no difference whether I was inside the Temple walls or outside of them. No matter where I went, I carried the resistance of my mind with me. I was making myself and those around me miserable by being halfway in and halfway out of the Temple gate. I ended up back in the Temple garden with a shovel digging and weeding.

Sitting in a café one afternoon, I realized that there was no difference whether I was inside the temple walls or outside of them. No matter where I went, I carried the resistance of my mind with me.

I was nervous driving out to Chicago for summer *Yongmaeng Chongjin*. This would be my first time with Sunim as one of his formal students. I heard that it's his job to jump on his student's egos, poke them, and rub them raw until there's nothing left. With barely a year of training under my belt, how mature am I? Do I really have it in me to get back up, blow after blow?

"You're a fool!" "You know nothing!" These are the first words Sunim screamed into my face. "You are not your thoughts or words or emotions!"

"Who is Alex?" What a relief to be a fool.

To know nothing! I felt I had been given permission to let myself completely off the hook and just be there with my breath. "So WHO IS ALEX?"

Sunim demanded. He then instructed me to question over and over again, "What am I? Mu." He continued, "Don't try to answer rationally, answer from your great unknowing mind."

This was to be my practice. For the rest of the retreat I tried to stay with my practice sitting on the cushion, washing my face in the sink, cleaning my dinner bowl,

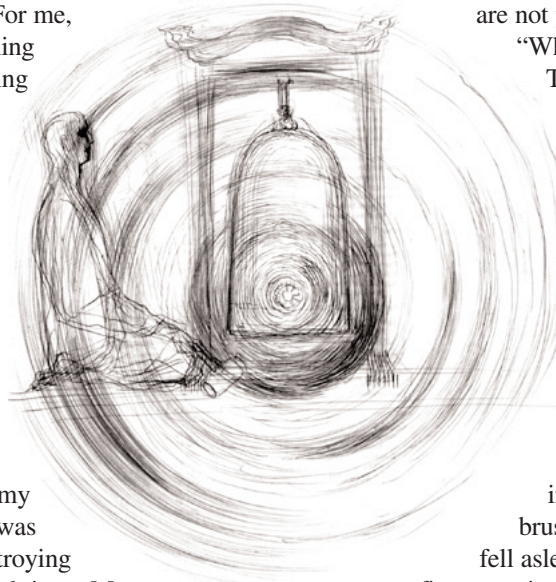
brushing my teeth. I brought it with me as I fell asleep and then awoke to it as one of my first conscious thoughts, "What Am I?"

By the second day of the retreat, the day just flowed. Being quiet for that long, situations become very straightforward and simple, and the mind responds to what is needed with little hesitation or forethought. Sixty sets of eating bowls and silverware, plus all the cooking pots, pans and cutlery were washed, dried, and neatly put away in minutes. Table counters were wiped down, the floor were swept. All this happens in silence. Everyone flowing along together, flowing along with our practice, taking care of each moment as it comes.

During walking meditation we scream loud grunts and roars while running in circles around the meditation hall. It brings energy into the practice, spontaneously. I sprinted hard, screaming and running as fast as I could. *Yongmaeng Chongjin* means "fearless practice" and is sometimes described as "to leap like a tiger" in reference to tiger cubs thrown off a cliff by their mother. They have no choice but to climb and jump back up to their den or else die. Furiously and foolishly, I screamed my practice, forgetting how my knees hurt and how my bare feet were getting pounded with each step. I was a complete idiot running and leaping.

When the retreat was over, my feet ached, my throat was hoarse and my eyes had huge bags under them. Yet I was giddy, laughing and chatting now that we were allowed to speak. The people I'd been sitting next to in silence introduced themselves to me with hugs and handshakes. I was buoyant from the simple joy of having a sharp, quieter mind. I

Illustration
by Rev. Toan Jose Castalao



felt that we had tapped into the potential of the human heart and mind with a sense of inner strength and self-reliance gained from helping ourselves.

After five days of silence, people soon began pouring into the Temple for the international precept-taking ceremony. The noise and sensory stimulation shocked me, but it was inspiring to see so many people converging at the Temple to take Buddhist precepts. For a month the Ann Arbor precept group had been meeting weekly to discuss our experiences working with the precepts in our daily lives. Everyone in the group had been dreading prostrations. At orientation, I listened to the sound of all of us rising, standing, and kneeling in one great wave. I chose not to count, because I didn't care how many prostrations we had to do.

At the ceremony I was given my Buddhist name. "Bopmun," Sunim said. "It means Dharma Gate. You have to pass through the Dharma gate." I bowed while Sunim handed me my certificate, received my meditation beads from Haju, and returned to my seat. "How fitting," I thought, "for the rest of my life jumping through gate after gate."

The Temple was empty again except for the Dharma Teachers and Students who stayed for the annual Dharma Student meeting. I was nervous about the meeting. I hadn't been able to structure enough study time into my daily schedule at the Temple. I tried to stay up and memorize basic Buddhist concepts, the life of Shakyamuni Buddha, Sunim's biography, and Temple history. None of it would stick. About midnight I decided that there is no point in trying to polish myself at the last minute. The next day everyone would just see exactly where I am at this point in my training.

To my surprise, the Dharma Student meeting was a lot of fun. Each of us reported on our practice and training in the last year. I listened to the difficulties of being a second and third year student, and the hardships of the long-distance students isolated from any Sangha. Those of us living far away yearn to be close and deeply involved in the temple. Those living close to a temple feel cramped by the constant demands. I realized that my story is not unique. It didn't seem to matter if someone had just started or had been in the seminary for ten years. This is tough. We all know it, but we all love it too.

The meetings focused on building camaraderie so that when we returned to our solo practice we would have a whole family of Dharma brothers and sisters to support us. We did get quizzed, but it was relaxed. When I didn't know an answer to one of Sunim's questions, I simply shrugged my shoulders and said, "Sorry, I don't know." It was no big deal. I was corrected and learned something new. I realized, however, how good it was for me to be living at the Temple, how helpful it has been to my training. I appreciate it now instead of resenting it. Of everything I learned at the Dharma Student meetings, the most powerful was Sunim's advice, "You're young. You should focus on your potentials, not your problems."

Upon returning from Chicago, the summer work-study program began and brought young energy to the Temple. With

two new work-study students, the place became lively with a lot of laughter or snickering under our breath when we were supposed to keep noble silence.

One Friday afternoon, I returned to the Temple to find Haju rushing out the door. She had received a phone call that Kojongmyong Elsie Archer was in the last hours of her life. The doctors predicted that she would pass within 24 hours. Haju had to be with Elsie to chant for her. Koho, Nicole, one of the new work-study students, and I would have to lead the Beginner's Zen Retreat scheduled to begin that evening. I'm a rookie. Nicole had only been at the Temple for a week. Our veteran, Koho, could not stay for the entire course. We didn't have time to think or fret about it. Elsie was dying. We had to drop everything, including worries about our capabilities, and just do it.

I had never given a Dharma talk before, never even explained to anyone how to sit in full lotus position. I still can't sit in full lotus. How am I going to demonstrate this with any credibility? I ended up telling the class that I too found these positions excruciating, and assured them that I was suffering right along with them. I led the yoga stretches and explained why we bow and do prostrations. I stopped them in the middle of smoothing mats and cushions in order to explain why we do this. I was surprised at how much I really did know and how I could give intelligible instructions. I reached a point where I decided to rely on my own wisdom and forgo the Dharma talk stories given in the manual. Instead of telling stories about Haju, I decided to speak from my own experience. In the context of the situation, I thought that the class would feel that it was impersonal if I were to speak from second hand experience.

I talked about Elsie, impermanence, and the reality of death waiting at any moment. My voice was soft and gentle – a kind of zenny calm tone that I picked up from being around Haju. Suddenly I dropped it. That's her style, not mine. When I did that I became comfortable and felt very open. I was just completely myself. Then a great surge of enthusiasm rose in me. I went on to say that right here, right now life is passing – how much have we missed living on auto-pilot? It felt like I dropped into a deeper voice and was speaking directly from my gut, not my brain. Deep in the mind there's a place where sincere answers come from, truly heartfelt answers. Speaking from there feels very grounded, confident and surprisingly natural. I didn't second guess myself or mentally edit what I was saying. Everything flowed. Sunim said to focus on my potentials. That day I got a taste of the teacher I could one day be. I got a taste of who I am when I'm truly unafraid. After I finished the talk, I thought to myself, "Now I really have to live up to every word I said." **SW**

—Bopmun is a first year Dharma Student from the Ann Arbor Temple and a graduate student at the University of Montana.



Pilgrimage to Sunim's Cottage



by Kohye Jeff Boland

Morning practice

The sun poked in the window, and my clock read 5:30 a.m. I lay comfortably in bed at the Temple, half-asleep and praying that the morning wake-up bell would not disturb me from the sleep I anxiously coveted...RING-RING-RING!!

"Damn!"

So started the day on August 6, Civic Holiday in Canada, Simcoe Day in Toronto. Obviously not a Buddhist holiday, I thought, while dragging myself down for morning meditation. Sunim was in town, and so temple life was predictably unpredictable. His mischievousness continued during the morning sitting, when we sat for fifty minutes instead of the usual half-hour. Afterwards he asked me with a smile if I enjoyed the special holiday practice. "If it's a holiday, why aren't we in bed like the rest of Toronto?" And then he says something that I do agree with: "We Buddhists don't need to sleep as much as other people! They live stressful lives full of worry and distraction, which tires them out. We are happy and free from that, so we have more energy! Now let's get some pancakes for breakfast and then go to my cottage to celebrate the day off!"

The Beaches

I have lived in Toronto for a year, and in semi-rural Ann Arbor, Michigan for ten years before that. I enjoy the bustling and sprawling concrete metropolis here, but long for open and outdoor space. The "Beaches" area is one of the most well known outdoor locations in Toronto. It's east of the city, along the shoreline of Lake Ontario. I had never been there, and certainly did not know that Sunim had a cottage there. In fact, I did not even know what "going to the Beaches" meant, so I dressed completely inappropriately, wearing my heavy gray meditation clothes and ill-fitting leather shoes. Ignorant of

An unsuspecting pilgrim takes a journey of consciousness on the shores of Lake Ontario

what we were getting into, six Temple residents piled into the Temple van – Sunim, Woo Haengja and Yoo Haengja (a Korean novice monk and nun freshly arrived in Canada five months before), Sohn Posalnim (a quiet, pretty Korean woman also new to the Temple and with an interest in past lives), Glenn (vocal teacher, musician, and champion chanter), Adarsa (shiatsu practitioner, yoga and tai chi teacher) and myself (itinerate mathematician) – and we were off to cottage country!

We arrived around 11:00 a.m. at the Toronto Water Works installation perched on a hill above Lake Ontario. There was a movie shoot in progress, so it was difficult to find a parking spot. Once out of the van, Sunim tore off his shirt, and laughing like a five-year-old, ran gleefully down the steep hill toward the water. Sohn Posalnim turned to me bewildered, and said, "I'm really surprised by Sunim's behavior." Realizing that a man in his position in Korea would not normally behave so casually in front of members of his congregation, I shrugged and said "He's happy – and we should be too!"

The sun was already sizzling, and we were thirsty from too much maple syrup on the pancakes, so Adarsa and I eagerly hunted for a drinking fountain. There was one, in the middle of a large expanse of dry grass in front of the Water Works, but it was dry. At a water works plant! We laughed at the irony of it. Meanwhile, Sunim had told Yoo Haengja to start running down the beach and not to stop until she found a watersnake. She is a 23 year-old new university graduate and novice nun, with an artistic bent and flamboyant smile. Eager to please her teacher, she scampered off across the sandy beach following the water's edge. Sunim and Adarsa walked quickly after her, while Woo Haengja, Sohn Posalnim, and I trailed at the rear. The beach stretched out like a camel's tongue at a desert oasis for miles in front of us, and in the distance we sighted the Scarborough Bluffs rising majestically off Lake Ontario. The cliffs seemed miles away, impossible to reach on foot. Overhead the sun burned brilliant in the deep blue sky, and the emerald water we walked in was clear and warm near the shore. We saw few people, and were cut off from the city and its noise by the steep hill running parallel to the beach. While the others walked ahead, Woo Haengja and I stripped down and went for a swim, practiced floating motionless on our backs with necks arched into the sunshine. A deserted tropical island could not have been more peaceful.

The Journey

But the mind is a disruptive agent, and mine was aggravated. I had made previous plans to spend the day with a friend, and had no warning that the trip to Sunim's cottage would take all day. Feeling guilt and worry about standing up my friend, I had no phone access to call and explain. Against this backdrop of physical beauty and mental agitation, I began my pilgrimage down the beach toward the bluffs, where Sunim insisted his cottage lie.

We journeyed mostly on the sand at the water's edge, for the cool wet sand was compressed and firm there, and easiest to walk on. I had long before abandoned my shoes, which had gotten wet and were impossible to walk in. The dry sand away from the water's edge was fiery hot from the sun, and the tides had deposited thousands of small sharp pebbles there. We stopped occasionally to look for interesting pebbles and rocks: Yoo Haengja found a fossil of a small flower in a rock, and I treasured a smooth exotic turquoise piece of stone until Woo Haengja pointed out that it was just a fragment from a shattered porcelain toilet bowl! The rocks were painful to walk on in bare feet, however, so we stayed at the water's edge. Our path along the shoreline was broken up every few hundred meters by an enormous pile of car-sized boulders jutting out into the water, which served in stormy weather to break the motion of the waves and protect the fragile hill beyond the beach from erosion. The breakers created mini bays of tranquil water. Trees grew among the boulders, giving each breaker the feeling of a little island. As we walked, we climbed over each one, often resting under the shade. After traversing ten or so of these breakers, Woo Haengja and Sohn Posalnim tired of plodding onward and found comfortable boulders to rest on. I stopped for a while with them, and we sang John Denver songs with an imaginary guitar. Nearby, a couple made love on a log half submerged in the water, oblivious to our presence.

After some time I bid Woo and Posalnim goodbye, and hurried again down the beach in the direction of Sunim, Yoo, Adarsa, and the bluffs. It became obvious that Sunim was not turning around anytime soon, and so as I walked alone I came to peace with my impatience and desire to leave quickly. I would be hours late meeting the friend I knew was waiting for me, but rather than let the guilt and frustration beguile me, I decided to enjoy the time outdoors and the beauty of the walk. In the presence of a lake so large that it looked like an ocean and below a sky of infinite reach, I sensed that unhappiness is a feature of the world found only inside the small confines of human heads, which serve as beacons of emotional pollution. Alone outdoors, however, there was no feedback mechanism to support my negativity. Embarrassed by spoiling the natural world with my emotions, I let my mind fade into the afternoon sun, and I disappeared.

After walking for several miles – on hot sand, maneuvering over large boulders, past naked sunbathers, across swaths of sharp pebbles – we reached the bluffs. Only moments before



they had seemed just as far away as at the beginning of the journey. In front of them now they seemed small and unimposing, like seeing a movie star in person. About a mile back, Yoo Haengja had succumbed to the heat, fatigue, and uncertainty of the journey's outcome. Despite our insistence that she continue forward, she remained frolicking in the water instead; Adarsa, Sunim, and I now walked on alone, in silence.

The heat was by now intense, and the air shimmered around us, distorting our view. At times I did not know if what I was seeing was real or not. When we passed a man oil painting, he seemed like such an anachronism that I dismissed him as a mirage. At one point we came upon a large concrete pipe extending from the city's underground and protruding from the side of the hill. The diameter was taller than a man, and we took turns standing in the mouth-like opening, enjoying the remarkably cold air pouring forth.

The final leg of the journey led us up a steep trail, and then down the other side. Sunim pointed to what looked like hieroglyphics painted on a rock, saying, "The sign says that my cottage is very close!" I asked him if we could have some lemonade or iced tea when we arrived, and he assured me we could. Finally, we approached an area of the beach which was unremarkable in every respect. We cut diagonally away from the water and towards the foliage growing just beyond the sand. Small trees and bushes struggled to take root in the sandy soil, and were parched from the summer drought. Sunim headed toward a short tree and small patch of grass that offered some shade and a soft spot to sit on. He quietly sat down beneath the tree, and Adarsa and I joined him. "Welcome to my cottage!!" Sunim announced with a smile. "How do you like it?" Without hesitation I replied, "It's better than I thought it would be!"

We then sat wordless for several moments enjoying the warm sea breeze, the splashing water, and the calls of the gulls. I reflected on our journey, what had become a pilgrimage of consciousness. A beautiful thing had happened: the real became unreal, and the unreal became real. Since our minds alone are the source of both the Real and the Unreal, there can be no difference between the two. As Buddhists we search not for that which is created by the mind, but for true Buddha Mind itself, which encompasses all of us. Let us search in peace together, and may we all find our cottage. **SW**

—Kohye is a member of the Toronto Temple and a risk manager for the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Visiting Buddha Land

By Kosu
Diane Snider

On the doorstep of history- retracing the path and past of the Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom

I was driving on I-94 heading east across Michigan to Ann Arbor. It was a sunny August day, with yesterday's storm clouds broken into playful groups chasing over the cornfields. I felt great. Responsibilities, relationships and the big city were far behind. In the course of the last three years of Dharma student training, I had decided to throw in my lot with the Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom and become a full time teacher — maybe even a priest — after I had finished my responsibilities as a parent. With both girls in high school, I could feel the pull of the temple life. It wouldn't be long now. When I told Sunim my plan to visit the Ann Arbor and Toronto Temples at the end of the summer, he thought it was a great idea, a pilgrimage, he called it. That's right, I thought, a pilgrimage. I was aware that part of me just wanted to play hooky from my life for a week. But I knew that even stronger was my wish to experience the other Temples of our Society. I wanted to train with my role models and mentors, Haju Sunim, Anicca and Anjali, and with the people whose karma has also drawn them to this practice of Zen. "Never put off doing a good thing," Sunim says. Besides, the Toronto Temple was up for sale. I had already missed so much of the Society's history: the legendary early years of communal living, Buddhist conferences and temple renovations. I didn't want to have to experience this venerable place through a handful of photographs.



The Ann Arbor Temple



The Chicago Temple

After getting a little lost in Ann Arbor construction, I finally arrived at the Temple. It was secluded behind a wall that came right to the sidewalk, but the sign gave a jolt of familiarity: the same cracked varnish, the same calligraphy, "Zen Buddhist Temple." Toan, I thought. He must have still been at the Toronto Temple when the Chicago Temple was being built. Toan Sunim, now the priest for the Mexico City Sangha, had spent nine years in Toronto training with Sunim and is the unofficial artist-in-residence. Passing into the front yard, I felt a little off balance. It was so different — a three-story frame house with a huge porch and tall wildflower garden, a bulletin board by the door crowded with notices for social activist opportunities.

A young resident answered the door, greeted me by name and helped me with my bags. On the way up the stairs he told me that Haju Sunim wasn't there, but she had left word that after lunch he and I were to work on sanding and painting the *sonbang*. The feeling of disorientation vanished. Over the next day and a half I gave

myself over to the magic of Buddhist community life. With the two work-study residents I followed the temple schedule of formal meditation practice, manual work and study. Three other residents were busy with a variety of other projects: one would slip off to the university library to work on a dissertation on Buddhist Pure Land practice; one painted Buddhist themes by morning and helped organize demonstrations by night; one worked full-time and was moving out of the Temple, contemplating what form his Buddhist practice would now take. Other Temple members came to work in the office or to do the quiet heroic work of preparing for the Temple's upcoming annual yard sale.

Haju Sunim would appear in the morning, stretching with great vigor on the front porch in the predawn starlight. When Haju Sunim was around, you had to have an eagle eye and you had to be fast. If you didn't notice that the mats needed straightening or the table needed setting, she wouldn't tell you to do it, she was right there doing it. Whether she was leading prostrations or sitting and listening to one of us speak, she had a forthright quality that was like clear running water.

We gathered in various configurations for morning practice, meals, group discussion and study. I experienced continuous revelations of beauty in the genuineness and humility of the residents as they worked or talked to one another or to me, and in the bond that was there in the silence of meditating or reading. The Buddha calls it "noble friendship." It seemed to me that here was a place where a person could be as good as he or she wanted to be, without the guardedness or cynicism of ordinary relations in the world. The morning I left for Toronto, I left with a full heart, knowing that when I returned in a few days on my way back to Chicago, I would return to friends.

Turning onto Vaughan Road in Toronto, the same weathered calligraphy, "Zen Buddhist Temple," greeted me. I approached the Temple with a little reverence. The Temple building in front of me, bought and renovated in 1988, marked the Society's coming of age. It is a three-story former synagogue with a sweep of glass up the front of the building, transformed into a Buddhist temple by huge paint-

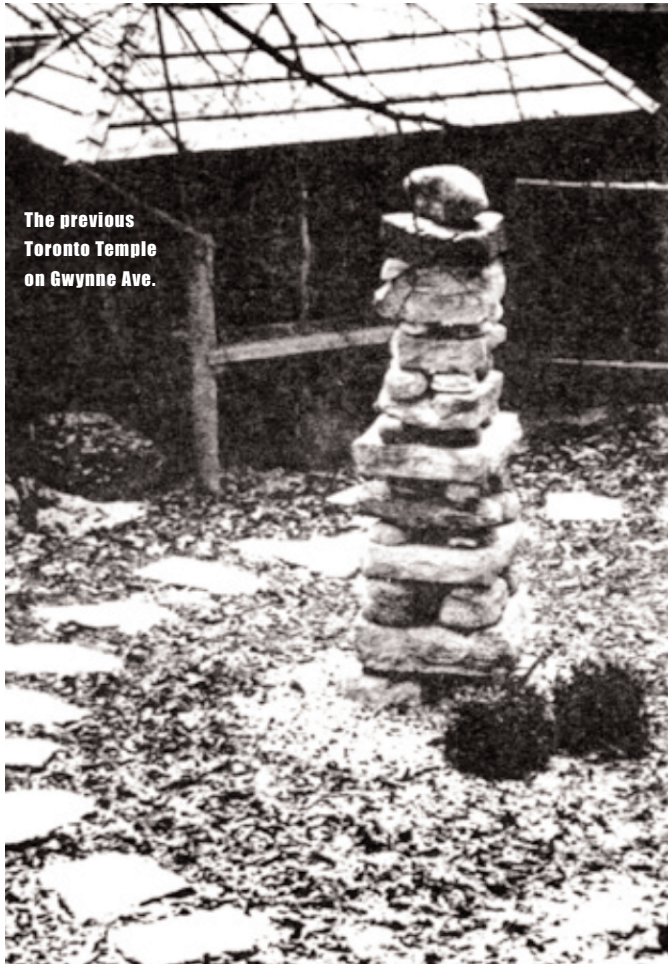
ings of the Buddha and a teahouse out front. Inside are the statues, mats and cushions, *mokt'aks*, futons and the sense of peace and order that characterize Zen. This building and the community that renovated it grew out of the faith and effort of a young Samu Sunim in a basement apartment a few miles away. After a long solo retreat in that basement apartment, Sunim began accepting students for meditation instruction. One of those that came to the basement apartment was Sukha Linda Murray, now Haju Sunim. This was in the late 70's. In the spirit of the times, Sunim, with a rag-tag group of students, bought a practically condemned residence on Gwynne Avenue and renovated it to be the first public temple, living there with little but the joy of community and the Dharma. Through the efforts of Toronto Buddhists, this serene temple before me had come into being, the wonderful, busy Zen Buddhist Temple in Ann Arbor had come into being, and my own beloved spiritual home, Zen Buddhist Temple in Chicago.

A shaven-headed Korean *haengja*, or novice monk, greeted me at the door with a courteous smile. The place was huge and very quiet, like the Chicago Temple. Again, I felt an immediate kinship with the residents: two *haeng-*



The Toronto Temple

This building and the community that renovated it grew out of the faith and effort of a young Samu Sunim in a basement apartment a few miles away.



jas, a *posalnim* (female devotee), and a former Dharma Student. As at Ann Arbor, their sincerity, naturalness and kindness felt like gifts that were given over and over. Here, though, I had no schedule to follow. I wandered the rooms of the Temple, staring for hours at the photographs on the wall, poring through photo albums, absorbing the spirit of history and the very spirit of the Temple. In the silence of a room behind the bookstore, the familiar sleeping loft and various Dharma objects from years past left casually on shelves brought me to tears. Everything about this place seemed to me infused with the love and labor of those early days.

In the evenings, Anjali, one of the two Dharma teachers, came from his full-time job to lead the Wednesday membership sitting and teach the Thursday night Introductory Meditation Course. I knew Anjali from the summer *Yongmaeng Chongjins* in Chicago and felt a deep bond of friendship and respect. But here in Toronto, there was something else. As Dharma teacher and leader of the Sangha, he represented the entire tradition of Buddhism and the lineage of teachers who for 2500 years have devoted themselves to teaching the Way. In leading the service or teaching beginners, Anjali is the embodiment of kind-

It seemed to me that here was a place where a person could be as good as he or she wanted to be, without the guardedness or cynicism of ordinary relations in the world.

ness, patience and humility. Watching him, I silently vowed that I would strive to cultivate those same qualities. I asked Anjali after the service if I could do *insa* (formal greeting to teachers), to honor him as part of the lineage. He gently refused, and said that we could bow to each other. We bowed in the silence of the bookstore, surrounded by the teachings of the Buddha, beneath the gaze of the Parinirvana Buddha reclining on the top shelf. Buddha, Dharma, Sangha.

The last day of my visit in Toronto, I set out after lunch, wearing my meditation clothes and carrying only my wallet, map and camera. Taking a subway then a streetcar west on Queen Street, I disembarked at Gwynne Avenue. This was the last leg of my pilgrimage: Buddhist Society past and future. I walked down two quiet residential blocks to the former temple that had been renovated from a dilapidated flophouse. I found it, a large two-story building on a corner lot, densely covered with ivy and practically obscured by tall trees. It couldn't have been like this in 1979. I crossed the street in front to try to get a better look. In the darkness of the shade I could see an Asian peaked roof set over the front entrance. I approached and rang the doorbell, explaining to the young man who answered what I was doing there and asking permission to take pictures around the outside. He was extremely gracious and invited me to go into the backyard as well. I walked slowly around the house, stopping to take in every detail, paying homage and feeling the blessing of the place. The young man and his wife met me in the backyard. She picked ripe peaches from the tree there as a parting gift. "Here," she said, "you can plant the seeds at the new Toronto Temple."

Walking fast, I backtracked a mile east then went north, crossing King Street. A few more blocks and I was

standing in front of 378 Markham Street and the basement apartment where Sunim had begun his missionary work. I sat on a low wall in front of the building, imagining Sunim alone inside, sitting in front of a Buddha altar, keeping the temple schedule. I imagined young men and women with sandals and fringed jeans passing me to enter this place where they could find out about the Way of peace and liberation. A feeling in my heart would not let me leave. I sat there until the daylight started to wane. Finally I bowed to the plain white door and walked back to the streetcar.

Looking out the window, I thought about how much work had gone into the current Toronto Temple and how perfect it seemed. Why would Sunim want to sell it and move into a bigger place? I checked my map and hurried to get off at a busy intersection in the university neighborhood. It was dark, but the streets were full of people. I walked a few blocks one way, passing retail stores, a psychiatric rehabilitation institute and housing for university students. I retraced my steps to my final destination, the site of the proposed future Toronto Zen Buddhist Temple. I got ready to lay in with some faultfinding, but it didn't happen. I stood there in the parking lot and just stared. The building was wonderful. A little scruffy-looking, per-



Sunim's basement apartment on Markham Street in Toronto, origin of the Society

fect for transformation into something beautiful. It was big enough for the future of Buddhism, for a Buddha hall for public meditation, a retreat center, a tea and reading room, and residences for Dharma students and teachers. Once Sunim was asked why he wanted to open a temple in New York. "Because that's where the people are," he replied. I felt happy for the people passing me on the street, that a Buddhist temple would soon be coming into their lives. And I remembered what Anjali had told me, that even though he sometimes feels like a child with his nose pressed against the glass when hearing about the early glory days of the Society, Buddhist history is still being written and now we are part of it.

I drove home, very sorry to be leaving my friends and temple life. It was back home to the stresses and annoyances of the secular world. Over the last couple of months I've felt a nagging dissatisfaction with my life. But every time I read Buddhist scripture or hear one of Sunim's Dharma talks, a voice in my mind has been nagging back. Buddha Land is not at any of the temples. Buddha Land is here, at home and at work. Family are bodhisattvas, co-workers are my Sangha, situations are my teacher.

There is no playing hooky from my life and nowhere to run for happiness. The work is here, the fun is here, in my own mind. It's time to get started on those renovations and write some history. **SW**

— *Kosu is a second year Dharma Student from the Chicago Temple and a middle school science teacher.*



When I told Sunim my plan to visit the Ann Arbor and Toronto Temples at the end of the summer, he thought it was a great idea, "a pilgrimage" he called it.

What's in a Name?



Reflections on Precept-Taking

by Bopkyong Lisa Galicia

I've never been very fond of ceremony. I did not attend my university graduation despite the numerous honors to be bestowed upon my grasping, fragile ego. I opted for the \$10 city hall wedding despite the strong objections of my beloved. And, as the youngest of seven children in a family that reveres Hallmark as the patron saint of emotional expression, I am routinely paralyzed by the onslaught of birthdays and anniversaries requiring but an address and stamp for the pre-packaged sentiments that would fulfill my familial duty. Email greetings have done little to improve my condition. Despite these precedents and despite myself, the Precept-Taking Ceremony celebrated on July 1, 2001 revealed the transformative power of ritual that changed me.

The morning of precept-taking did not begin auspiciously. Tender from the rousing round of 360 plus prostrations performed at precept orientation the night before, I hurriedly hobbled and winced my way down three flights of stairs to the basement bath. Still very attached to my cosmetics and blow dryer, I sought a detached Buddhist look, and pondered what an initiate should wear to begin her journey down that famous Middle Way. I chose purple. Reviewing the precepts and their significance one more time over coffee, my kind spouse alerted me that it was time to roll. He wanted a good

seat at what promised to be a standing room only event. Halfway to the temple I realized that I had forgotten my altar offerings – a miserable measure of mindfulness indeed! I raced back home, sprinted past the startled cats lounging in the living room, scooped up the carefully prepared day lilies, cashews and apricots, and resumed my commute towards Commitment.

The Temple was a muted hive, quietly abuzz with Buddhists-to-be. The air was alive with expectation, the altar resplendent with gifts, the *sonbang* filled with friends and family. As we entered, we were given tags to wear about our necks that bore our new Buddhists names in Korean. As I was shown to my seat, I silently practiced the pronunciation and wondered, "What's in a name?"

The ceremony began with Ven. Samu Sunim addressing all assembled about the purpose of our gathering. He was joined on the altar by Rev. Haju Sunim from the Ann Arbor Temple, Rev. Toan José Castelao from the Mexico Sangha and Dharma Teachers Anicca Bengt Skoggard and Anjali Jacques Oule from the Toronto Temple. Grateful for their presence and their gentle encouragement, we recited the Three Refuges with great heart. The Six Guidelines for Right Livelihood, hot off the presses, were then presented. Next Ven. Samu Sunim read the eight precepts, pausing after each to ask us, "Do you accept this precept?"

1. Do not harm, but cherish all life.
2. Do not take what is not given, but respect the things of others.
3. Do not engage in sexual promiscuity, but practice purity of mind and self-restraint.
4. Do not lie, but speak the truth.
5. Do not partake in the production and transaction of firearms or chemical poisons, which are injurious to public health and safety, nor of drugs and liquors which confuse or weaken the mind.
6. Do not waste, but conserve natural resources.
7. Do not harbor enmity against the wrongs of others, but promote peace and justice through non-violent means.
8. Do not cling to things that belong to you, but practice generosity and the joy of sharing.

The response after each was a thunderous “Yes!” that resonated like the temple bell, reverberating through our body-minds, throughout the Sangha, and carrying our vow forth beyond the temple walls and out to the wide world of our practice. It was a powerful experience. I encountered a deep vulnerability in this public expression of my desire and my commitment to be good, to live an ethical life for the sake of all beings. “Yes!” was a simultaneous shout of trust in myself, and a cry for help. As Reb Anderson states in his book, *Being Upright*, “In asking to receive the precepts, there is an admission that we don’t practice all by ourselves: we need help from the whole universe in order to practice the way fully.” It was the longest leap of faith I had ever taken; a leap of faith in myself.

One by one we were then called forward to officially receive our Buddhist name from Ven. Samu Sunim and to learn its meaning. We were given a beautiful booklet that contained the Way of the Buddhist, the Three Refuges, the Six Right Livelihood Guidelines, the Eight Precepts, and a certificate of our vow to embrace the teachings of Buddhism and receive a Buddhist name. Rev. Haju Sunim presented us with meditation beads to hearten our practice.

We learned that all those taking precepts that day would be our Dharma brothers and sisters indicated by the first syllable of our common name, Bop or Bob, signifying Dharma. “That’s a tall order!” I thought to myself as I listened intently to the poetic names being bestowed upon the new members of my family. I approached Ven. Samu Sunim looking quite auspicious with his red *kasa*, and was given the name Bopkyong, Dharma Mirror, which I received with equal parts elation and trepidation.

Dharma Mirror, my mind began spinning with interpretations, some sublime and others downright mindless: “Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s the fairest of them of all?” accompanied by images of sneezy buddha, sleepy buddha, and grumpy buddha. “I’m hopeless,” I concluded, “A prisoner of Disney dharma and a dopey buddha if there ever was one!” Trusting myself under these circumstances would take some getting used to. Dharma Mirror...I should reflect wisdom, universal truth, the teachings, while realizing that I am one with all that I see. What’s in a name? Nothing, but an awesome responsibility and a calling – that I belong here. I started to cry, sorrowful tears for all the years it had taken me to arrive at this beginning, grateful tears for having arrived just in time. Not wanting to appear too melodramatic, I tried to dry my eyes and wipe my nose discreetly with hands in *hapchang* (palms of the hand placed together). Now more than ever that gesture symbolized the union of my strength and weakness, the mirror images of my life’s truth.

The ceremony drew to a close with Rev. Haju Sunim’s kind and colorful words of wisdom and Ven. Samu Sunim’s entreaty that those in attendance, as witnesses to our vows, support us in our efforts. (My husband, a.k.a. the Precept Police, has taken this request rather seriously, and does not hesitate to notify me of cracks in my resolve.) The ceremony ended joyously with wide smiles and warm embraces. We then unceremoniously gathered for our group portrait. The photographer struggled to fit the Society’s largest number of precept-takers in the camera’s eye. In that moment we were all so radiantly ordinary, our new old selves shined. Adjusting the lighting meter, the photographer joined in our irrepressible laughter as circuit after circuit blew in the face of such brightness. **SW**

—Bopkyong is a member of the Chicago Temple and a director of development for a social service agency.



“Yes!” was a simultaneous shout of trust in myself, and a cry for help.

July 2001

Dear Spring Wind Sangha Members,

Buddhists believe in the wisdom and compassion power of Buddha within each of us for awakening and universal salvation. This power includes the power of self-awakening from indolence and indifference exemplified by Buddha Shakyamuni and the spiritual power of tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation exemplified by the Mahayana Bodhisattvas. The formulas for the application of these powers are the Three Refuges, Eight Precepts, Six Perfections and the Eightfold Path, leading to the cessation of suffering.

For the last several years I have been promoting right livelihood values to our Spring Wind Sangha members through the seasonal Sangha Day meetings. Right livelihood, which means a wholesome and rightful way of earning our living, refers to the type of work we seek and how well we go about performing our work. However, right now in our trailblazing Dharma work in the West, right livelihood has an urgent and added significance: combining traditional right livelihood with our Buddhist practice in the midst of the turmoil of everyday life. How can we serve as an example and inspiration to others in the light of Dharma and make a difference to the larger society, advancing a culture of hope and enlightenment?

In February of this year I organized a Right Livelihood Group at the Chicago Temple. In March, a working group for the Right Livelihood Group formed to provide some guidelines for the everyday life of sangha members. The first results are the Six Right Livelihood Guidelines. It is our belief that we can follow one or two of the guidelines and begin to change our own lives. The Korean Zen teacher Chinul (1158-1210) said, "One who falls to the ground can rise up by way of the ground." If we have shortcomings and make mistakes, we can use our shortcomings and mistakes to wake up from them. Each of us has the power of Buddha to do so. Such is the spirit of the Six Guidelines.

We all need encouragement and support from time to time. The people of the working group will serve as Dharma friends and guides for your journey toward peace of mind, stability and wisdom. Let us take a brave heart and persevere along for the sake of Dharma and the world.

The Right Livelihood Group is open to all Spring Wind Sangha members. Meetings will take place following the 9:30 Sunday morning meditation service every other Sunday. We welcome your feedback. Please address your communications to our e-mail at sit@zenbuddhisttemple.org or call your local Zen Buddhist Temple.

Sincerely in the Dharma,

Ven. Samu Sunim

Right Livelihood Working Group

Sunita Frank T. Karall
Sanch'ul David O'Donnell
Bodbam Bettina Tahsin
Bobsong Lee Warzecka

Bopku Mary Morrison
Bopsan John Hall
Bopkyong Lisa Galicia



Six Right Livelihood Guidelines for Spring Wind Community Sangha Members

1. Consume Mindfully

Eat with awareness and gratitude.

Pause before buying and see if breathing is enough.

Pay attention to the effects of media you consume.

2. Pause. Breathe. Listen.

When you feel compelled to speak in a meeting or conversation, pause.

Breathe before entering your home, place of work, or school.

Listen to the people you encounter. They are buddhas.

3. Practice Gratitude

Notice what you have.

Be equally grateful for opportunities and challenges.

Share joy, not negativity.

4. Cultivate Compassion and Loving Kindness

Notice where help is needed and be quick to help.

Consider others' perspectives deeply.

Work for peace at many levels.

5. Discover Wisdom

Cultivate "don't know" mind.

Find connections between Buddhist teachings and your life.

Be open to what arises in every moment.

6. Accept Constant Change

Toronto



The Temple was alive with activity through the summer and fall. Sunim visited Toronto from June 7 to June 18, July 26 to August 15, and September 9 to October 17. While he was here, Sunim conducted a Relaxation and Power Breathing Workshop, two Introductory Meditation Courses, three 49 Day funeral services (for Mucho’s mother, for Glen Dirk Sheppard, and for Doris Carlson), three wedding services (for Emily on July 28, for Samil on August 11, and Ch’anyom on September 22), two Dharma Student meetings (one on “What is a Spiritual Person”, and another on “What is Ritual and Non-Ritual practice?”), a Precept-Taking Ceremony for those who could not go to Chicago in July, fall membership meetings, and led the end of Summer Training Two Day Meditation Retreat and the Fall *Yongmaeng Chongjin*. Sunim was also filmed and interviewed by the CBC for a documentary about Canada’s involvement in the Korean War, and he was interviewed for the Korea Times newspaper. During his stay, Sunim led several outings to the Casa Loma gardens and to Lake Ontario, and we celebrated his recurring birthday with ice cream and the Hoochi Koochi dance on more than one occasion.

Resident Bodhisattvas

Since March 2001, the Korean novice monk Yong-Joo Woo Haengja and the novice nun Sun-Young Yoo Haengja (*haengja* means novice monk/nun) have resided at the Temple and have coordinated temple business and activities. In addition to their religious studies and training, they assist at every public and membership service, help with Temple administration, organize the cooking and cleaning, sew mats and cushions, and frequently post Temple flyers around Toronto. They both set good examples by being diligent in their training, and are well-loved by the community for their good nature and humor. Woo Haengja left the Temple and his training on September 16, 2001, while Yoo Haengja finished her six months novice monk’s training on September 30. Sunim presented Yoo Haengja with a *kasa* (vestment worn around the neck) at her Kasa Ceremony attended by Dharma Teachers Anicca and Anjali. She also received the new name Kaesim, which means “Opening the door of Dharma” or “Open Mind.” This name is inspired by the pioneering work we are doing in opening the door of Buddhism to North Americans, work for which Kaesim is especially well suited due to her open heart and generous spirit.



Socially Engaged Dharma

Since the terrorist attack on New York City, September 11, Sunim has taken a keen interest in what our Buddhist response to these events should be. He has organized a Peace Vigil and Prayer Meeting held twice each Sunday, where people can meditate, chant, pray, and talk in order to promote peace. These Peace Vigils have been appreciated by many as a helpful way of healing and dealing with the crisis, and many people have spoken out about how the events have shaken them, what they are doing to cope, and what our public policy should be in response. Some have found the discussion of politics and the recognition of these worldly events within the Temple as improper and undesirable. Sunim believes that this crisis provides a rich opportunity for “socially engaged Buddhism.” He continues to educate himself about the history of U.S. foreign policy and its role in the Middle East, and urges us to educate ourselves and speak out loudly as advocates for peace, not war.

This topic of socially engaged Buddhism has been the focus of much of Sunim’s recent activity in Toronto. On September 21, he gave the first lecture of the Buddhist Institute of Canada five-part Fall Lecture Series “Buddhism in Everyday Life”. His talk was entitled “Monastic Practice vs. Socially Engaged” “Buddhism: The Dilemma and New Hope of Lay Buddhism in the West”. Sunim explained that monastic practice has historically involved full-time Buddhists who renounce the world and retreat into mountain monasteries to seek enlightenment for themselves, rarely venturing into the city and marketplace. Lay practitioners in the West, however, are in a completely different situation. We find ourselves with families and full-time jobs. As Buddhists, therefore, we have no choice but to act in and engage with the world. The task is to bring Buddhist values and vision down from the mountains and into our homes and workplaces. We find that by helping ourselves we can help others, and realize that by helping others we also enrich ourselves. In the fall membership meetings, Sunim stressed that our model is the post-Enlightenment Buddha, not pre-Enlightenment Buddha. Post-Enlightenment Buddha went into his world on foot, travelling constantly, and spread what he had learned for the benefit of all he met. Sunim said that because the Buddha had spent six years in monastic-style training to discover that we all innately possess Buddhahood, it is not necessary for us in 21st century North America to renounce the world to rediscover this truth. Rather, we should go into the world and promote this message of hope from where we are now as lay practitioners.

Summer Visitors

There have been several visitors this summer who have participated in Temple training activities. Advisory Council member Kohye Jeff Boland lived at the Temple for the summer, and worked in the office on the accounting and financial records, and other computer work. Hyunyuh Sunim, a Korean monk from an ethnic Korean Zen Buddhist temple in Los Angeles, stayed during the month of July. A monk for ten years, Hyunyuh Sunim is interested in working with North American students of Zen. Glenn Miller, a member who is a professional singer and musician, resided at the Temple during July and August. He helped with cleaning, and became famous for his delicious recipes, particularly rhubarb pie. Myung-Bun Sohn Posalnim, a Korean woman who has lived in Toronto for three years, stayed at the Temple from July 20 to

September 16. Muwi Andreas Tijerina came from Mexico and stayed for one week. He is a silversmith and donated some small Buddha figures to the temple. Adarsa Sensei, a shiatsu practitioner and yoga and tai chi teacher at Kokoro Dojo, stayed at the Temple for three days, and could be heard during the day doing vigorous chanting in the *Sonbang*. Advisory Council member Ch'asa Neil Gislason has a regular practice of staying for two days each month and doing several hours of meditation each day. Chicago Dharma Student Kosu Diane Snider made a pilgrimage from Chicago through Ann Arbor to Toronto, and visited the original



Kosu Diane Snider

site of our Temple in Toronto, as well as our intended future location at College and Spadina. At the original Gwynn Avenue location, she found three peaches growing, and on her journey back to Chicago, she gave one to the Toronto Temple, one to the Ann Arbor Temple, and one to the Chicago temple. Each temple hopes to grow a peach tree from their peach as a tribute to the original flowering of the dharma that began in Toronto. Bopson Brian Collins, despite his 17 year old daughter's worries that he's out misbehaving, regularly stays over Saturday evenings for Sunday morning practice. Other members who did this were Norma Graham, Bopnyom Trudy White, Bopchi Ann Parker, Bopmin Robin Pittis, Won'gak Julie Gilmour, and Chanyom Mike Barber. Lee Sheung, an acupuncturist who has attended morning practice for many months, became a Temple resident on November 1.

Precept Taking

Eighteen community members took precepts this summer, many making the trip to Chicago. They returned with an invigorated spirit for the Dharma, and with a deep appreciation for the opportunity to share their spiritual journey with each other and the rest of our community.



Toronto Times

As always, Dharma Teachers Anicca and Anjali have been instrumental in teaching courses and giving spiritual guidance to the membership. Won'gak Julie Gilmour teaching the *Haengjas* about the life of the historical Buddha for two hours each weekday during August. There have been four meetings of the Toronto chapter of the Right Livelihood Group, led by Sunim and Kohye. The Summer and Fall Sangha Days were attended by 21 and 28 people, respectively. Lee Sheung practiced Dyana paramita by generously offering her acupuncture treatments to both of the *Haengjas* while members Pacho Zeisha Bahry, Lee Sheung, and Christina Nelson have been generous in regularly bringing food and ice cream to the Temple. Temple residents and Lee Sheung did *Ulyuk* (community work) on August 17 by washing and sunning the meditation mats and cushions, and members volunteered to distribute the fall fundraising letter and Peace Vigil press release to about 900 Toronto members and friends. Po Chai Chinese Buddhist Temple donated money, oil, and rice to our Temple for Ullambana Day (rites of offering to the dead). Finally, the Buddhist Institute of Canada Fall Lecture Series was held.

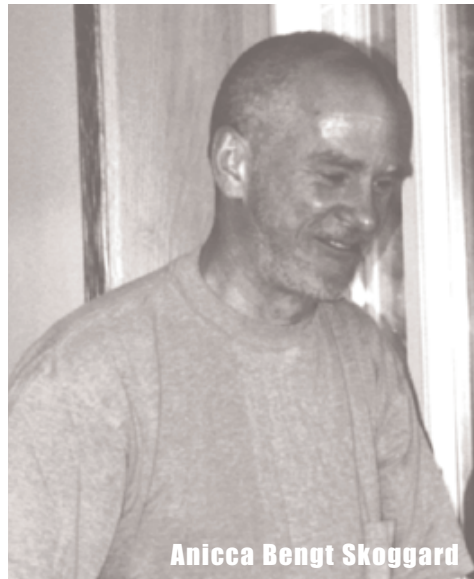
Won'gak delivered five talks on the life of the historical Buddha followed by five talks on Buddhism in Everyday Life: "Monastic practice vs. Socially Engaged Buddhism: the Dilemma and New Hope of Lay Buddhism in the West" by Samu Sunim; "Dharma Gates Without Number...Embracing the Struggle in Work and Family Practice" by Satya Hugh McBride; "Impermanence and Social Justice: A Creative Relationship between Buddhism and the Modern Secular Worldview" by Mu'un



Anjali Jacques Oule

Professor Dieter Misguld; "Dharma and the Art of Coping with Illness" by Ilhaeng Carolyn Johnson; and "Right Livelihood, Right Living, and Right Action: Advancing the Culture of Enlightenment" by Kohye Jeff Boland.

The Sunday morning public meditation service has averaged 34 people this summer and fall, and the evening Sunday service has averaged 15 people. The Wednesday evening membership sittings have also averaged 15 people. Morning practice during the week typically consists of Temple residents plus one or more members, while Monday night chanting and work practice has included the *Haengjas*, Anicca or Anjali, Kohye, and others.



Anicca Bengt Skoggard

We specially welcome new members since July 2001

Josephine Casey
Shannon Craig
Bao-linh Dang
Patricia Devlin
Mark Goldstein

Christine Inglis (renew)
Bop'ha Asad Khavary
Christine Kim
Alex McIntyre
Christina Nelson

Korim Fred Prack (renew)
Bop'chun Emily Spann
Marc St-Aubin
Karen Temple
Liza Zawadzka

Ann Arbor



Summer Lecture Series

Speakers were honest and open at our 14th Annual Summer Lecture Series held in July. David Black, Bopmun Alex Alviar, and Bobdang Robert Rhodes started us out on Tuesday, July 9th, describing how they had come to Buddhist practice and how Buddhism had affected their lives. Talmasan Donna Minock and Sandahwa Karen Kennedy followed the next week with their stories, which were equally candid and fascinating. The final lecture involved two couples, San'u Santiago Colas and San'ga Monica Weinheimer, who had separated a few months before, and Muji Scott Merwin and Samgye Carol Morris, who have been married for almost seventeen years. Each couple shared their stories and talked about what has helped their relationships work. Very lively question and answer sessions were held each evening, bringing forth much wisdom and humor.

Peace Camp

Our 14th Annual Peace Camp was the best yet! Camp started in 1987 with very humble beginnings: it was a day camp with mostly toddlers in the Temple back yard, with everyone going home after lunch each day. This year we once again camped out at Friend's Lake, but for six days, instead of five. We had a total of 60 campers, with ages ranging from one to 60, and folks joined us from Toronto, Chicago, Ohio, Massachusetts, and many parts of Michigan. Highlights were early morning swims and meditation, the hilarious skits and improvisations, the marvelous food, the games, the crafts, the wedding, all the waterfront activities, tenting – but most of all the wonderful sense of community. Many thanks to everyone who helped, and to Friend's Lake Community and the Michigan Friend's Center for the use of their beautiful property on Long Lake near Chelsea.

Wonderful and Marvelous!

Miguel Antonio Sandler-Espinosa, the first child of Kosim Eric Espinosa and Felicia Sandler, was born on May 26th. Kaoru and Akiko Onishi welcomed a son, Namu, on September 21st. The name Namu comes from the first two syllables of namo-amida-butsu (“I entrust myself to Amida Buddha”).



Yard Sale

This year's yard sale was a resounding success, bringing in a total of \$11,530 before expenses! Temple resident San'ga Monica Weinheimer joined member Lenny Bass to help organize the myriad details, including at least 300 hours put in by approximately 60 volunteers to sort, clean, and sell items. Special thanks to Ilcheon Richard Raynor who fixed up furniture for the tenth year, Dorje Wright for his many hours, and to the many contributors of everything from furniture to ice-cube trays. Thanks also to Martin Bouma for the use of his moving truck. Our Great Green Recycling Yard Sale was indeed that!

Practice Period

The theme of our fall/winter practice period is “being part of the solution,” as each of us responds, in terms of our formal practice and everyday life practice, to the events of September 11th and afterwards. Participating in a practice period involves making a formal commitment to intensify one's practice for a limited period of time. Throughout the period, participants meet regularly for discussion. New this time are specific interest groups, looking at voluntary simplicity, and working with anger. The dates of the practice period are October 28 to January 20.

Our deep sympathy goes to Marty, Cathy, and Griffin Fletcher, whose son and brother, Gage, was stillborn on July 4th; to Hyeong-Do Kim and Chun Kang Lee, whose baby daughter, Soe-Hyeon, died at the University of Michigan Hospital on September 22nd, just before she would have been one month old; and to the family and friends of Kojongmyong Elsie Archer, who died on July 15th.

Transference of Merit

Kojongmyong Elsie Archer
(1920 - 2001)

Kojongmyong Elsie Archer, was a large woman, five foot ten on a big frame. She had big brown eyes, and wore big square tortoiseshell glasses. She had big feet and a big heart. Her Buddhist name means “Long and Happy Life.” She died at age 81 on July 15, 2001.

Although she had no relatives living in Detroit, she was never alone in the last three days and nights that she spent dying. Her friends, members of the Ann Arbor and Detroit Sanghas, and her teacher Haju were at her bedside, as they had been frequently before. A feeling of great calm pervaded the atmosphere. One member of the Sangha helped to arrange her pillows and asked how she was feeling. She heard Kojongmyong’s last words: “wonderful, wonderful.”

Kojongmyong came to the Dharma late in life, after an Elderhostel visit to Green Gulch Farm. She joined the Ann Arbor Temple in the spring of 1995, and took the Precepts in 1997. She always spoke of her Buddhist practice with great enthusiasm, and said it was a great joy to walk through her apartment ringing a bell, then to light incense and sit in her comfortable wing chair. On Tuesdays she spent the morning helping Haju.

She knew Buddhism isn’t a proselytizing religion, but always said that she was a Buddhist evangelist anyway, and urged anyone who seemed the slightest bit interested to come to the Temple. She loved the Sunday services, always sitting in a chair at the back. After the service, she gave her



complete attention to each person who wanted a word with her. And many always did. Her large dark eyes never wavered but gazed into ours with intense interest. There was nothing sentimental or superficially polite in her approach to people - she had a remarkable ability to accept everyone, and became the champion of that which is good in each of us. She saw Buddhas everywhere.

Kojongmyong’s entire life reflected the principles of compassion and generosity. Trained as a psychiatric social worker, she was involved in many noteworthy projects over the years. To give just two examples, she established and ran a small day school for emotionally disturbed children, and volunteered with a program providing help for

prostitutes, drug addicts, and at-risk young women in Detroit.

One of Kojongmyong’s favorite poets was Mary Oliver, and after she died a friend found that she had placed a bookmark next to the poem “When Death Comes.” The final lines read:

*When it’s over, I don’t want to wonder
If I have made of my life something particular, and real.
I don’t want to find myself sighing and frightened
Or full of argument.
I don’t want to end up simply having visited this world.*

Certainly Kojongmyong did not simply visit this world; she embraced it and took in everything through her big brown eyes and warm heart.

— Sanjulgi Julia Henshaw

Work Study Program

This summer we inaugurated the first annual Work Study Program at the Temple. This is a variation on the tradition of Summer Training, with the purpose of bringing people into the Temple community as residents to practice, study and help with our special summer projects – the garden, Peace Camp, and our yard sale. Students followed a demanding daily schedule, with two days off each week. Six amazing young people participated: Bopmun Alex Alviar, Nicole Skyllis, Matt Stockman, Christoph Heinen, River Timothy, and Bophui Ben Darragh.

Members and Friends

Congratulations! Haju Sunim has been very busy performing flower wedding ceremonies! Nirmala Singh and Donald Brinkman were married on June 23. Woncho Laura Arendsen and Jeff Rowe were married at Peace Camp on July 22. Chandima Stephen Laycock and Nancy Craig were married at the Temple on July 29, before moving to Hawaii. John Leonard and Kevin Wisney became committed partners at a ceremony in Toledo on September 22. And Valerie Mann Hatopp and Karl Hatopp celebrated ten years of marriage with a recommitment ceremony in their backyard on October 6, with their children, family, neighbors and friends all present. Bopto Rudolfo Palma-Lulion married Melissa Birkle on July 21, in a Christian ceremony held at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens.

20th Anniversary Celebration

On Sunday, September 23rd, the morning service was dedicated to a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Ann Arbor Temple. Members who were here in those early days - Sorina Beth Gleespen, Assaji Marty Gleespen, Toryang Mark Leventer, Muji Scott Merwin, Ethel Schremser, Paul Dellamora, Jim Hadden, and, of course, Haju Sunim - talked about the awful mess the house was in when the Society bought it, and all the hard work involved in its renovation. At the end of the service, names of others who were involved, but who were not present, were called out in gratitude. It was very touching and inspiring to think of all the effort that went into building our Temple, and all the people who helped.

Welcome to new members:

Mary Bejian, Katrina Brooks, Arthur Chartow, Kok-Heng Chong, Bophui Ben Darragh, Joan Deas, Janet Everingham, Jon Hyatt, Bill Forsak, Debbie Gioia, Kaite Hoover, Jonathan Larson, Steven Lilleyman, Hillary Lo, David Meyers, Mary Jane Shafto, Nicole Skyllis, Matt Stockman, Kim Walton

This fall, member David Black has begun teaching our yoga classes, after training as a yoga teacher at the Sivananda Yoga Ashram in the Bahamas. On Tuesday evenings he teaches Yoga I from 6 to 7 p.m., and Yoga II from 7:30 to 9 p.m. His help is much appreciated.

Congratulations to the members who formally became Buddhist at the International Precept-Taking Ceremony in Chicago on July 1st. "Bop" or "Bob" means "Dharma." Pictures of the Bop dharma family are available at the Temple.

Sangha News: **Mexico**

The Mexico Sangha has been sitting regularly on Saturday mornings. Since the tragic attacks in New York, we have also been sitting on Wednesdays evenings, at the same time as the rest of the groups within the Buddhist community of Mexico City.

Rev. Toan José Castelao, Muhan José Manuel Palma, and Bop'chi Eduardo López traveled to Chicago to participate in the summer *Yongmaeng Chongjin*. They reported of an inspiring experience at the Chicago Temple. Muhan returned to Chicago for further Dharma Student training in the early days of October.

Rev. Toan conducted a three-day retreat in the city of Pátzcuaro, in the state of Michoacán, beginning on August

Annual Fall Fundraising

Our fall fundraising campaign is now in progress. The focus of this year's campaign is to increase our Building Fund in order to repair and maintain our current building, and eventually expand into a new one. It is also an option to contribute to the Administrative or Retirement Funds. The goal of last year's fall fundraising was to raise money to hire an administrative assistant. It turned out that, instead of hiring one person specifically, we had several people take on extra responsibilities over the year, including the reorganization of our office, organization of email and phone communication, and administration of the yard sale. Your continued financial support of the Temple is very much appreciated!

On the move: Sandahwa Karen Kennedy and her husband Joe have moved to Eugene, Oregon; Ewen Harrison to Santa Fe; P'arang Larkin Willis to Detroit; Lucia Suarez to Seattle; Toban Gary Cook, Sue Ward, Sara and Emma to Glen Arbor, Michigan; and Tongsan Catherine Brown to Durham, North Carolina. Bopmun Alex Alviar is attending graduate school in Missoula, Montana, but continues to be a Dharma Student.

Current Temple residents are San'ga Monica Weinheimer, Christoph Heinen, Kyle Norris, Adam Lowis, and Joe Bertka. After two years as a Temple resident, Kowon Sam Clark has returned to his home on Orchard Street in Ann Arbor. Haju Sunim and her daughter Komani now live next door.

Visitors to our Temple: Ven. Samu Sunim stopped enroute between Chicago and Toronto several times. Also visiting were Kosu Diane Snider, a Dharma Student from Chicago; Rev. Nonin Chowaney from Omaha; My-O Marilyn Scher Habernass from Clouds in Water Zen Center in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Jay Pinka from San Francisco.

31. Twenty-one people participated, and were strongly committed to the experience. Kalapa María Antonieta Arreola attended from México City. The remaining participants, with whom we have joined before for several retreats, were from Morelia, Michoacán.

Currently we are preparing for Sunim's visit in December. In addition to Winter *Yongmaeng Chongin* and a precept taking ceremony, Sunim will conduct an Introductory Meditation Workshop. He will also deliver various talks including "Monastic Buddhism vs. Socially Engaged Buddhism," "Suffering: Is It Optional?," and "Out of the Body and Out of the Mind: Love and Happiness." Radio interviews with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México station and others have also been scheduled.

Our regards from members of the Mexico Sangha!

Chicago



The summer smiled warmly upon the Chicago sangha, which blossomed with activity and beckoned even in repose. The Chicago Temple was deeply honored to host the 14th Biennial Precept-Taking Ceremony on July 1, 2001, conducted by the Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom. Seventy-three individuals from across North America joined the Buddhist path, taking Refuge in the Three Jewels and embarking upon the wisdom-based life. Twenty-two people, including Sangha members from New York and California, renewed their precepts, contributing to the happiness of all beings. The Chicago Advisory Council organized a marvelous celebratory reception after the ceremony that was appreciated by all. Bopsin Muge Celik and Bopan Arvan Reese graciously held an open house for their new Dharma family and Chicago Temple members in early September.

The Precept-Taking Ceremony was preceded by *Yongmaeng Chongjin* (June 25-30), and followed by a week of special activity including Dharma Student training (July 2-4) and the Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom Sangha Council Meeting (July 4-6). Our thanks to everyone involved in the extensive preparations for these events.

Residents and Visitors

Temple residents Sunim and Sanha were joined by Muhan José Manuel Palma, a Dharma Student from the Mexico Sangha, who arrived for a ten-week residency beginning October 6. Muhan touched us all with his sincere and diligent practice, and provided great assistance to Sanha with temple business. Whether mat making, cushion stuffing or cleaning, Muhan never failed to inspire with his energetic chanting. While following the temple schedule and learning ritual practices, Muhan also attended English classes throughout the week to strengthen his language skills. Muhan was a welcome member of our Sangha and we look forward to a future visit.



Anicca Bengt Skoggard, Dharma Teacher at the Toronto Temple, visited Chicago from November 6-13 to contribute his carpentry talents to completing the great window weatherizing project. Started during Summer *Yongmaeng Chongjin*, Anicca led the way in building customized insulated frames to place over the Temple's over 70 windows during the winter months. The durable, reusable frames will save us rolls of plastic, duct tape and inestimable time for which we are warmly grateful.

Boptung David Laser began the Dharma Worker program in October. Dharma Workers cultivate humility and selfless service while training in the art of mindful living. Boptung brings his boundless heart and handyman skills to share with our Sangha.

Visiting Korean monk Dukhyun Sunim graced our August 26 morning service by playing two sonorous selections on the Korean short flute.

Transitions

Throughout the summer and fall, the Chicago Temple celebrated life's special occasions and welcomed special guests. Samu Sunim officiated at three Temple member weddings. Congratulations to Edward Hamlin & Paula Monteiro Mendes (August 18), Dharma student Koseya

Blair Thomas & Sheri Doyle (August 19 in Oxbow/Saugatuck, Michigan), and Bopkyo Mark Booth & Bopsam Kathleen Odell (October 20) on their flower wedding ceremonies. Sunim also conducted one 49-day observance and a service for Koha Fred Sperry's mother, on August 18. Our Ullambana Day Service took place on September 2 to remember the dead and to offer the opportunity for reconciliation, peace and liberation.



Bopkyo Mark Booth and Bopsam Kathleen Odell



Koseya Blair Thomas and Sheri Doyle

Fall Happenings

The September 22 Fall Sangha Day brought 30 Dharma friends together for chanting, a reflection circle to share the impact of September 11, fellowship, and fine vegetarian fare featuring endless varieties of couscous. In the wake of September 11, the Temple held weekly Ground Zero Prayer Meetings and Peace Vigils, and offered numerous opportunities for continued reflection and discussion through meetings of the Right Livelihood Group and other informal channels. Kosa Joseph Schuman presented the well-attended Seventh Annual Lecture Series on key Buddhist teachings from October 16 through November 10. Topics ranged from "Sex, Drugs, Red Meat & Violence: Five Precepts and Six Paramitas" to "A Dharma Talk is Not a Sermon: Religion Without God." The Temple's Fall Membership Meetings also began in October and focused on the creative relationship between formal and informal practice. Forty-four members participated in the meetings that ran through November 11. Dharma Student, Koseya Blair Thomas, brought the creative energy of musicians, puppeteers, actors and storytellers together in a montage of performances to interpret "What is Karma?" for an audience of 60 curious seekers on November 10. "What is Karma?" is part of an ongoing series of programs designed to express Buddhism through North American arts and culture.

Attendance at the Sunday morning services has averaged 70 people, while approximately 10 people attend the afternoon Dharma service. Wednesday evening membership sittings average eight participants. Since June, the temple offered three Introductory Meditation courses, four Overnight Introductory courses, one Advanced Meditation course, one Relaxation and Power Breathing Workshop, and one Two-day Retreat. During Sunim's travels to Ann Arbor and Toronto, Dharma Students Kosu Diane Snider, Koseya Blair Thomas and Sanha have alternately led Sunday and Wednesday services, conducted courses and the retreat. Thank you for your leadership and for keeping the Temple running smoothly.



After-2-day retreat: Bobsong, Sanha, Bopkyong & Bobsim

Fundraising Update

To date, the Annual Fall Fundraising Campaign has generated \$6,105 in contributions from 59 temple members and supporters. This year's campaign again recognizes the faithful support that the Chicago Temple has received from its sister temples and, in gratitude, seeks funding for the publication of *Spring Wind: Buddhist Cultural Forum* and support for the new Toronto Temple purchase. Contributions toward the Priest Welfare Fund are also welcome.

With the completion of the Urban Meditation Retreat Center, the Chicago Temple committed to resume publication of *Spring Wind: Buddhist Cultural Forum*. To that end, proceeds from the Holiday Auction held on December 8, our major annual fundraiser, were designated to the inaugural issue. The auction raised a total of \$6,823 through silent and boisterous live bidding conducted by Kosa Joe Schuman. The Advisory Council and many friends went to great efforts in soliciting an array of merchandise and services - from altar objects to portrait photography - from area businesses, creating attractive displays and processing bids the night of the event. The Holiday Auction was complemented by delicious vegetarian dishes prepared by Temple member and chef Fred Derby, and the jazz offerings of Temple musicians including Sunita Frank Karall, Sandong Kurt Iselet, and Darrell Farley. We thank everyone for their kindness and generosity.



Kosa conducting live auction

Welcome!

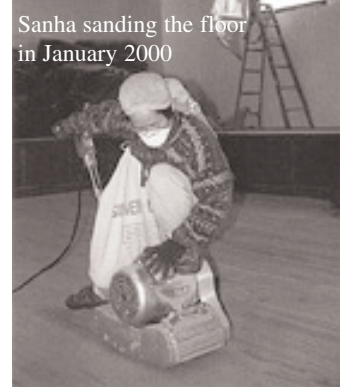
The Chicago Temple welcomes the following new members since June 2001: David Anthony, Andy Bayiates, Ron Bieganski, Bopsin Muge Celik, Stephen Collin, Bopjo Lisa Couser, Kim Craft, Janice Curry, Nancy Dearhammer, Edward Hamlin, William Hynes, Yvonne Irvin, Al Kircher, Deb Kowalczyk, Greg Lindeman, Judy Lindholm, Robert Mishlove, Joe Pakovits, Boban Arvan Reese, Daniel Sherman, Jim Stewart, Elyse Tatreau, Sandra Wallick, Tom Walsh.

Urban Meditation Retreat Center Opens

With profound gratitude to the members and friends of the Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom for their generous contributions of time, talent and resources, the Chicago Temple celebrated the long awaited opening of its Urban Meditation Retreat Center over the Thanksgiving holiday. The Urban Meditation Retreat Center, located on the top floor of the Temple, features a raised meditation platform that can seat 50 people, a kitchen and dining room, a common sun room and 12 individual and dormitory-style sleeping rooms. The Urban Meditation Retreat Center was designed to provide a haven for those seeking silence, healing and wisdom. Many people want peace and quiet and need to be alone for self-renewal, conflict-resolution or insights into life problems. Stays can range from half a day to several months. If interested contact the Chicago temple. A three-day retreat that was open to all empowered the meditation center and culminated in a special Sunday morning service of true thanksgiving. A fabulous reception hosted by the Advisory Council followed the service.



Kosim from the Ann Arbor Temple building the meditation platform in 1998



Sanha sanding the floor in January 2000



Summer Yongmaeng Chongjin retreatants working at the Center in 1999



First retreat held with floor unfinished in December 1999



Summer Yongmaeng Chongjin in 2000



Now retreatants sit on the raised platform facing the wall

CONGRATULATIONS!

Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom

Precept Takers July 1, 2001

Ann Arbor Temple

Alexander Alviar	Bopmun	Dharma Gate	David Laser	Boptung	Dharma Lamp
Michael Ball	Bopgo	Dharma Drum	Chris Lynch	Bopch'al	Dharma Land
Jerry Beyer	Bopto	The Way of Dharma	Mary Morrison	Bopku	Dharma Word
Peter Beyer	Bopyok	Dharma Power	Barbara Naess	Bopsang	Dharma Always
Susan Buggell	Bobun	Dharma Cloud	Kathryn Nickel	Bobju	Dharma Host
Benjamin Darragh	Bophui	Dharma Joy	Kathleen Odell	Bopsam	Three Dharma Friends
Jacqueline Dilley	Bopmi	Taste of Dharma	Elaine O'Sullivan	Bobmyong	Dharma Bright
Donald Dreffs	Bopmok	Dharma Tree	Renee Parr	Bobin	Dharma Seal
Aaron Dresner	Bopki	Dharma Vessel	Suzanne Plunkett	Bobho	Dharma Protection
Maralyn Gable	Bobga	Song of Dharma	Arvan Reese	Boban	Dharma Eye
Estyn Hulbert	Bopch'ang	Dharma Window	Michael Reisel	Bobyon	Dharma Naturally
John Leonard	Bobu	Dharma Rain	Michael Roe	Bobni	Dharma Principles
Fred Lovgren	Bopnyu	Dharma Fellowship	Bettina Tahsin	Bobdam	Dharma Talk
Mark Naess	Bobil	One Dharma	Jessica Thebus	Bobyo	Essential Dharma
RodolfoPalma-Lulion	Bopta	Dharma Helm	Laura Thompson	Bobsang	Marks of Dharma
Rebecca Pelletier	Bopsu	Dharma Water	Lee Warzecka	Bobsong	Dharma Nature
Robert Rhodes	Bobdang	Dharma Hall			
Kevin Wisney	Bobyon	Dharma Connection			
Lisa Zucker	Bobch'on	Dharma Spring			

Chicago Temple

Sophia Anastos	Bobjang	Dharma Store			
DeAnne Besetzny	Bopnyon	Dharma Lotus			
Steve Besetzny	Boptong	Monastery			
Thomas Bierdz	Bophwa	Dharma Flower			
Frank Boccio	Bopsa	Dharma Teacher			
Mark Booth	Bopkyo	Teachings of Dharma			
Muge Celik	Bopsin	Dharma Body			
Lisa Couser	Bobjo	Illumination of Dharma			
Mary-Kate Coyle	Bobsim	Dharma Mind			
Steven Daugherty	Bobwi	Dharma Truth			
Darrell Farley	Bopkye	Dharma Realm			
Lisa Galicia	Bopkyong	Dharma Mirror			
John Hall	Bopsan	Dharma Mountain			
Jennifer Harris	Bopnim	Dharma Forest			
Scott Franzblau	Bobjong	Dharma School			
Joseph Hartel	Bobjang	Dharma Stick			
William Hynes	Bophung	Let Dharma Flourish			
Christopher Keivit	Bopkwang	Dharma Light			
Serena Lander	Bopchu	Dharma Abode			

Mexico Sangha

Eduardo Lopez	Bopch'i	Dharma Pass
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Toront Temple

Mona Bolton	Bobyak	Dharma Medicine
James Carrol	Bopch'ul	Born of Dharma
Brian Collins	Bobson	Dharma Boat
Mark Fabro	Bopt'ong	Dharma Pervades
Tony Kempe	Bopkong	Dharma Emptiness
Mir Khavary	Bopha	Dharma River
Jason Lane	Bobho	Cry of Dharma
Anne Parker	Bopchi	Dharma Wisdom
Lewis Pearsall	Bopnak	Joy of Dharma
Robin Pittis	Bopmin	Dharma Act
Robert Robello	Bobsong	Dharma Hymn
Kurt Schwarz	Bobum	Sound of Dharma
Maureen Sharp	Bobhyang	Fragrance of Dharma
Emily Spann	Bopch'un	Dharma Spring
Vanessa Vance	Bopch'a	Dharma Offering
Dondrub Wangchuk	Bopch'e	Dharma Body
Trudy White	Bobnyom	Dharma Thought
Carmen Young	Bobbal	Right Livelihood



Ann Arbor

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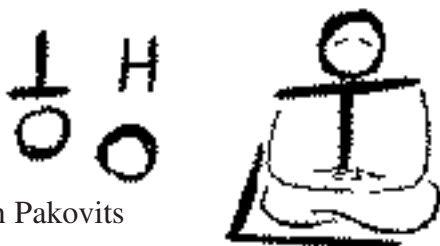
BE A PART OF ENDING VIOLENCE WAMM SELF-DEFENSE. Offers full-force, full-contact self-defense classes for women and kids in the Ann Arbor area. Programs also available in Chicago. For more information, contact Ch'ason Katy Mattingly at 734-669-2089 or selfdefense@umich.edu.

Summer Work Study Program

at Ann Arbor Temple (June 15 - September 15)

This is a wonderful opportunity to live and practice with the Temple community, while contributing by working on special projects. Days will be structured and guided by Haju Sunim. Participants will help with the large garden, our 15th annual Peace Camp at nearby Friend's Lake, our famous Great Green Recycling Yard sale, and repair and maintenance of our temple buildings. You may participate in all or part of the period but minimum commitment is one week. The cost is \$250 per month, or \$65 per week, which includes room/board, access to all temple programs and practice, and approximately 5 hours of work - 5 out of 7 days each week. Accommodation is mostly dormitory style with some single and double rooms available. Contact our temple in Ann Arbor for an application. 734-761-6520 (Haju)

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Mark Allen, Randall Bates, Leonard Bihler, Irda Mark Caffray, Emilie Cardoso-Serup, Sanbul Mary Champaign, Larry Devens, David De Witt, Bobjong Scott Franzblau,

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We gratefully welcome contributions for the continued publication of *Spring Wind: Buddhist Cultural Forum*. Please help us promote Buddhism in everyday life. May you be well and happy by virtue of your generosity.



Art by Rev. Toan Jose Castelao

Next Issue

- **Buddhism and the Economy**
- **Right Livelihood**
- **20th Anniversary of Zen Buddhist Temple – Ann Arbor**
- **Buddhism in Mexico**

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WAKE UP TO THE ONENESS OF ALL LIFE

DISCOVER YOU ARE A SOURCE OF HAPPINESS FOR ALL BEINGS

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and beautiful
words

protect our earth

love beings great
and small

be content with
what you have



work for safety
and harmony

treat enemies
as friends

relate to people,
not to sex objects

be generous and
joyful

2002
BUDDHIST SOCIETY FOR
COMPASSIONATE WISDOM
PRECEPT TAKING CEREMONY

TORONTO MAY 19
CHICAGO MAY 26

*Information & Orientation Meetings will be organized in April and May
by local Zen Buddhist temples in Toronto, Ann Arbor and Chicago.*

Please inquire.

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