

MIND MOON CIRCLE



ZEN IN CHINA

Autumn 2012

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Zen in China

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Correction: Janet Selby's article, "Kanzeon Embodied in Clay", in the previous issue contained two significant errors. "Koori Kuan Yin" should read "Kodoji Kuan Yin" and "Manure Rock" should read "Manjusri Rock".

Cover

The cover of this issue, shows a feminine Manjusri from Moshan Temple (photo Allan Marett).

Editors: Subhana Barzaghi and Allan Marett

The next issue of *Mind Moon Circle* (Winter 2012) will have as its theme: Zen in daily life

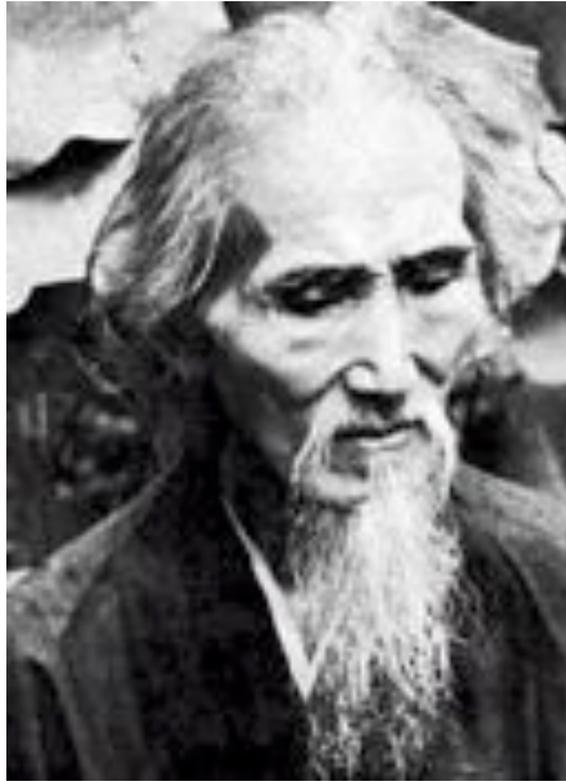
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Huatou, Doubt and Self Nature

Xuyun (Empty Cloud)



Editorial note. Master Xuyun (Empty Cloud) (1840-1959) is mentioned in a number of contributions to this volume. He was the key driving force in the revitalization of Chan/Zen Buddhism in China, forming the Chinese Buddhist Association in 1953 and thereby laying the foundations for the revitalization of Chan (Zen) Buddhism in China and the rebuilding of its most important temples. Given his importance, we felt it appropriate that some of his teaching appear in this volume so as to give a sense of the flavour of the dharma in modern China. The following is an excerpt from Xuyun's essay, "The Chan Training" from the Hsu Yun Ho Shang Fa Hu, translated by Charles Luk. The full essay can be found at http://hsuyun.budismo.net/en/dharma/chan_sessions2.html

HUA T'OU AND DOUBT

In ancient times, the Patriarchs and Ancestors directly pointed at the mind for realization of self-nature and attainment of Buddhahood. Like Bodhidharma who 'quietened the mind' and the Sixth Patriarch who only talked about 'perception of self-nature', all of them just advocated the outright cognizance (of it) without any more ado. They did not advocate looking into a hua t'ou, but later they discovered that men were becoming unreliable, were not of dogged determination, indulged in playing tricks and boasted of their possession of precious gems which really belonged to others. For this reason, these ancestors were compelled to set up their own sects, each with its own devices; hence, the hua t'ou technique.

There are many hua t'ou us, such as: 'All things are returnable to One, to what is (that) One returnable?'¹ 'Before you were born, what was your real face?'² but the hua t'ou: 'Who is repeating

¹ All things are returnable to One-mind, to what is One-mind returnable?

Buddha's name?' is widely in use (today).

What is hua t'ou? (lit. word-head). Word is the spoken word and head is that which precedes word. For instance, when one says 'Amitabha Buddha', this is a word. Before it is said it is a hua t'ou (or ante-word). That which is called a hua t'ou is the moment before a thought arises. As soon as a thought arises, it becomes a hua wei (lit. word-tail). The moment before a thought arises is called 'the un-born'. That void which is neither disturbed nor dull, and neither still nor (one-sided) is called 'the unending'. The unremitting turning of the light inwards on oneself, instant after instant, and exclusive of all other things, is called 'looking into the hua t'ou' or 'taking care of the hua t'ou'.

When one looks into a hua t'ou, the most important thing is to give rise to a doubt. Doubt is the crutch of hua t'ou. For instance, when one is asked: 'Who is repeating Buddha's name?' everybody knows that he himself repeats it, but is it repeated by the mouth or by the mind? If the mouth repeats it, why does not it do so when one sleeps? If the mind repeats it, what does the mind look like? As mind is intangible, one is not clear about it. Consequently some slight feeling of doubt arises about 'WHO'. This doubt should not be coarse; the finer it is, the better. At all times and in all places, this doubt alone should be looked into unremittingly, like an ever-flowing stream, without giving rise to a second thought. If this doubt persists, do not try to shake it; if it ceases to exist, one should gently give rise to it again. Beginners will find the hua t'ou more effective in some still place than amidst disturbance. However, one should not give rise to a discriminating mind; one should remain indifferent to either the effectiveness or ineffectiveness (of the hua t'ou) and one should take no notice of either stillness or disturbance. Thus, one should work at the training with singleness of mind.

(In the hua t'ou): 'Who is repeating the Buddha's name?' emphasis should be laid upon the word 'Who', the other words serving only to give a general idea of the whole sentence. For instance (in the questions): 'Who is wearing this robe and eating rice?', 'Who is going to stool and is urinating?', 'Who is putting an end to ignorance?', and 'Who is able to know and feel?', as soon as one lays emphasis upon (the word) 'Who', while one is walking or standing, sitting or reclining, one will be able to give rise to a doubt without difficulty and without having to use one's faculty of thought to think and discriminate. Consequently the word 'Who' of the hua t'ou is a wonderful technique in Ch'an training. However, one should not repeat the word 'Who' or the sentence 'Who is repeating the Buddha's name?' like (adherents of the Pure Land School) who repeat the Buddha's name. Neither should one set one's thinking and discriminating mind on searching for him who repeats the Buddha's name. There are some people who unremittingly repeat the sentence: 'Who is repeating the Buddha's name?'; it would be far better merely to repeat Amitabha Buddha's name (as do followers of the Pure Land School) for this will give greater merits. There are others who indulge in thinking of a lot of things and seek after everything here and there, and call this the rising of a doubt; they do not know that the more they think, the more their false thinking will increase, just like someone who wants to ascend but is really descending. You should know all this.

Usually beginners give rise to a doubt which is very coarse; it is apt to stop abruptly and to continue again, and seems suddenly familiar and suddenly unfamiliar. This is (certainly) not doubt and can only be their thinking (process). When the mad (wandering) mind has gradually been brought under control, one will be able to apply the brake on the thinking process, and only then can this be called 'looking into' (a hua t'ou). Furthermore, little by little, one will gain experience in the training and then, there will be no need to give rise to the doubt which will rise of itself automatically. In reality, at the beginning, there is no effective training at all as there is only (an effort) to put an end to false thinking. When real doubt rises of itself, this can be called true training. This is the moment when

² This hua t'ou is sometimes wrongly translated in the West as: Before your parents were born, what was your original face? There are two errors here. The first is probably due to the wrong interpretation of the Chinese character 'sheng'. which means 'born' or 'to give birth'. Then 'original' is wrong because it suggests creation or a beginning. The self-nature has no beginning, being outside time. The correct rendering is: Before your parents gave birth to you, what was your fundamental face?

one reaches a 'strategic gateway' where it is easy to go out of one's way (as follows).

Firstly, there is the moment when one will experience utter purity and boundless ease³ and if one fails to be aware of and look into the same, one will slip into a state of dullness. If a learned teacher is present, he will immediately see clearly that the student is in such a state and will strike the meditator with the (usual) flat stick, thus clearing away the confusing dullness; a great many are thereby awakened to the truth.⁴

Secondly, when the state of purity and emptiness appears, if the doubt ceases to exist, this is the unrecordable state⁵ in which the meditator is likened to one sitting on a withered tree in a grotto, or to soaking stones with water.⁶ When one reaches this state, one should arouse (the doubt) to be immediately followed by one's awareness and contemplation (of this state). Awareness (of this state) is freedom from illusion; this is wisdom. Contemplation (of this state) wipes out confusion; this is imperturbability. This singleness of mind will be thoroughly still and shining, in its imperturbable absoluteness, spiritual clearness and thorough understanding, like the continuous smoke of a solitary fire. When one reaches this stage, one should be provided with a diamond eye⁷ and should refrain from giving rise to anything else, as if one does, one will (simply) add another head upon one's head.⁸

Formerly, when a monk asked (Master) Chao Chou: 'what should one do when there is not a thing to bring with self?' Chao Chou replied: 'Lay it down.' The monk said: 'What shall I lay down when I do not bring a thing with me?' Chao Chou replied: 'If you cannot lay it down, carry it away.'⁹ This is exactly the stage (above mentioned) which is like that of a drinker of water who alone knows whether it is cold or warm. This cannot be expressed in words and speeches, and one who reaches this stage will clearly know it. As to one who has not reached it, it will be useless to tell him about it. This is what the (following) lines mean:

'When you meet a fencing master, show to him your sword.

Do not give your poem to a man who's not a poet.'¹⁰

³ Lit. utter purity and extreme lightness. When the meditator succeeds in putting an end to all his thoughts, he will step into 'the stream' or correct concentration in which his body and its weight seem to disappear completely and to give way to a bright purity which is as light as air; he will feel as if he is about to be levitated.

⁴ Lit. thus clearing away the fog that darkens the sky. As soon as the confusing dullness is cleared away, the self-nature, now free from hindrance, is able to function normally and will actually receive the beating, hence enlightenment.

⁵ Avyakṛta or Avyakhyata, in Sanskrit; unrecordable, either as good or bad; neutral, neither good nor bad, things that are innocent and cannot be classified under moral categories.

⁶ When the mind is disentangled from the sense-organs, sense data and consciousness, one reaches a state described as: 'holding fast to the top of a pole', or 'silent immersion in stagnant water or 'sitting on the clean white ground'. (See Han Shan's 'Song of the Boardbearer'.) One should take a step forward in order to get out of this state called 'a life', the fourth of the four laksanas (of an ego, a personality, a being and a life) mentioned in the Diamond Sutra, otherwise the result one will achieve is no better than 'soaking stones with water' which never penetrates stones. If from the top of a hundred-foot pole one takes a step forward, one will reach the top of a high peak from which one will release one's last hold and leap over the phenomenal.

⁷ Diamond eye: indestructible eye of Wisdom.

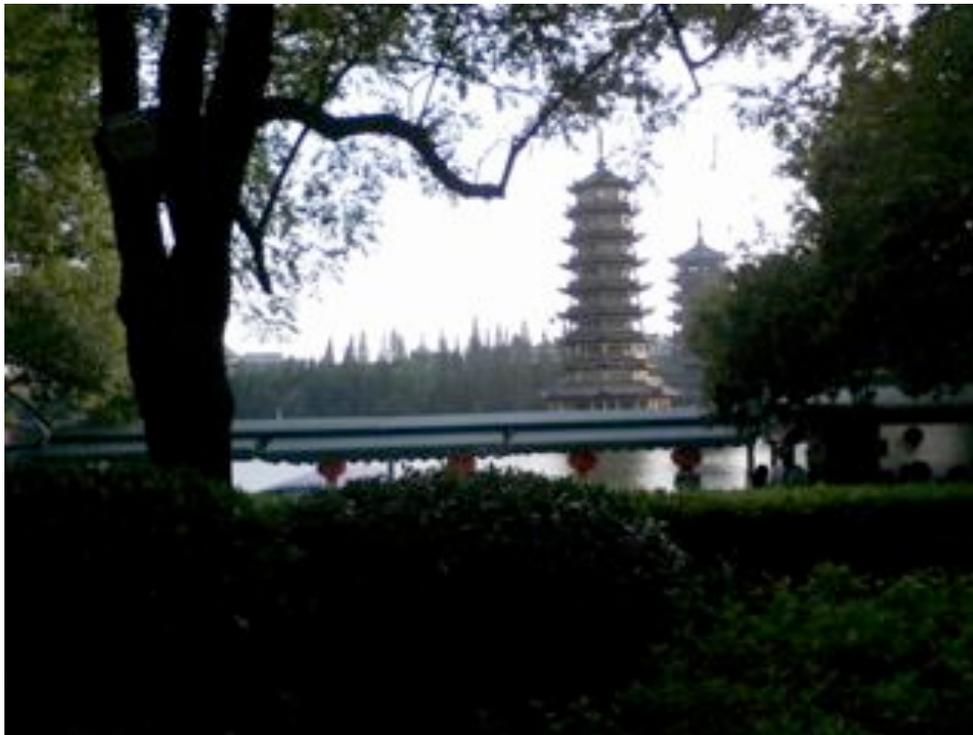
⁸ A superfluous and unnecessary thing that will obstruct the training.

⁹ The monk became thoroughly awakened after hearing Chao Chou's reply. His first question means: 'What should one do when one becomes disentangled from sense-organs, sense-data and consciousnesses?' He did not know that he was still entangled with this awareness of ego and preservation of ego. (See Han Shan's commentary on The Diamond Cutter of Doubts). Chao Chou's reply 'Lay it down' means: 'Lay down even the thought you are still burdened with, for this very thought of not carrying a thing with you holds you in bondage.' The monk argued: 'As I do not carry a single thing with me, what shall I lay down?' Chao Chou replied: 'If you really have got rid of all your false thinking, there will only remain your self-nature which is pure and clean and which you should carry away with you, because you cannot get rid of it.' The monk, now released from his awareness of ego or last bondage, realized that only his self-nature remained which was free from all impediments and which he could not get rid of, for Chao Chou told him to carry it away. It was this very self-nature of his, now pure and clean, which actually heard the master's voice, hence his enlightenment.

¹⁰ These two lines come from Lin Chi (Rinzai in Japanese) whose idea was that one could talk about enlightenment with an enlightened person and that it was useless to do so when meeting a deluded man, for the truth was inexpressible and could only be realized after rigorous training. The first line 'When you meet a fencing master, show to him your sword' was

TAKING CARE OF A HUA T'OU AND TURNING INWARD THE HEARING TO HEAR THE SELF-NATURE

Someone may ask: 'How can Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva's "method of turning inward the hearing to hear the self-nature" be regarded as Ch'an training?' I have just talked about looking into the hua t'ou; it means that you should unremittingly and one-pointedly turn the light inwards on 'that which is not born and does not die' which is the hua t'ou. To turn inwards one's hearing to hear the self-nature means also that you should unremittingly and one-pointedly turn inwards your (faculty of) hearing to hear the self-nature. 'To turn inwards' is 'to turn back'. 'That which is not born and does not die' is nothing but the self-nature. When hearing and looking follow sound and form in the worldly stream, hearing does not go beyond sound and looking does not go beyond form (appearance), with the obvious differentiation. However, when going against the mundane stream, the meditation is turned inwards to contemplate the self-nature. When 'hearing' and 'looking' are no longer in pursuit of sound and appearance, they become fundamentally pure and enlightening and do not differ from each other. We should know that what we call 'looking into the hua t'ou' and 'turning inwards the hearing to hear the self-nature' cannot be effected by means of the eye to look or the ear to hear. If eye and ear are so used, there will be pursuit after sound and form with the result that one will be turned by things (i.e. externals); this is called 'surrender to the (mundane) stream'.¹¹ If there is singleness of thought abiding in that 'which is not born and does not die', without pursuing sound and form, this is 'going against the stream'; this is called 'looking into the hua t'ou' or 'turning inwards the hearing to hear the self-nature'.



Janet Selby: Pagoda, Guilin

illustrated when Han Shan met Ta Kuan and sat cross-legged face to face with him for forty days and nights without sleeping. (See Han Shan's Autobiography). The second line 'Do not give your poem to a man who's not a poet' was proved by the Sixth Patriarch, who urged his disciples not to discuss the Supreme Vehicle with those who were not of the same sect, but to bring their palms together to salute them and make them happy. (See The Altar Sifra of the Sixth Patriarch.)

¹¹ I.e. to accord with the world, its ways and customs; to die.

Zen in China

Subhana Barzaghi

I retain a passion for pursuing the Chinese sources of Zen and its practices. This passion, lead David and myself to sign up for a 20 day Zen Buddhist Temple tour of China from October 9—27 2011, with South Mountain Tours (<http://www.southmountaintours.com>). The tour was organized and guided by Andy Ferguson, author, translator of classical Chinese, Buddhist scholar and joined by his local Chinese business partner and tour guide Eric Lu, a reliable, highly organized unflappable guide. Twenty-four people, the majority of which were Zen students from Germany, U.S.A. and eleven from Australia, ventured forth on this Chinese Pilgrimage.

The first port of call was to visit the first Patriarch of Zen, Bodhidharma's, place of arrival. The legendary story is that Bodhidharma travelled from South India and arrived in Southern China to spread the dharma and the direct transmission of the awakened mind. Andy indicated that scholars now think that Bodhidharma probably arrived earlier than the usual biographies indicated, perhaps as early as 460.

Bodhidharma's place of arrival is located in Guangzhou near the beautiful Hualin temple fed by the spring called 'Five Eyes Well.' We entered under the great temple gate, known as the 'The Coming from the West Gate', which led to the shrine rooms and monastery. We were greeted by long red and gold colored incense sticks in their hundreds, which were placed in the large ornate black, iron incense urns in the Temple courtyard by devotees. A cloud of incense smoke like a dragon's tail rises and weaves around the temple pavilions. The incense permeates and gets up your nose and into your eyes and hair. It was to become a familiar smell and site at every temple, something we learned to avoid. The lighting of incense there was a strong devotional ritual practiced by the local Chinese upon entry to any temple (see photo 1 below).

What impressed me about the Ancestral Hall was the large scrolls of calligraphy placed either side of the statue of Bodhidharma. They read, "I have no words to teach you", and on the other side, depending on the translation, "Directly presenting Mind", or Directly realizing Mind." I came to China seeking confirmation of these ancient teachings, looking for evidence of these mythical characters. I laughed, here was the basis of Zen, in large bold graphic calligraphy. I was stopped in my tracks, '*I have no words to teach you*'. The essence of Bodhidharma message is that the essential nature of mind is beyond words and letters. It cannot be grasped and understood in this way and yet it can be experienced directly.

The Dharma Hall was large and magnificent and was constructed with gigantic wooden poles holding up an ornately carved ceiling. The calligraphy read, "Know your ancestors, where you truly come from". This piece has layers of meaning and can be read in a number of ways. Ancestral worship or veneration for the elders and wise teachers is part and parcel of Chinese culture; however the calligraphy written in the Dharma Hall is inviting one to know ones ancestors more intimately. As Wumen comments, you should tangle eyebrows with eyebrows, see with the same eye as the old masters, then you truly know where you come from. This is referred to as ones original dwelling place. At Allan Marett's instigation a small band of us chanted the Heart Sutra outside the Dharma Hall.

Inside one of the main halls, rows and rows of slightly dusty Bodhisattva statues adorn and clutter the space, it feels like a stuffy museum with an altar at the rear. At the rear a stream of nuns dressed in brown and black robes chant Amitābha while circumambulating the Bodhisattva statues. The feminine voice brings a melodic life to this otherwise lifeless place.

As a small group of us gather under the entrance gate, symbolic of Bodhidharma coming from the west, I asked Sandy Dance, Zen student from Melbourne an old classic Zen koan, "What is the true meaning of Bodhidharma coming from the west?" As Sandy did not respond, I then pointed to the red

lanterns that were hanging from the gate and blowing in the wind. “Lanterns dancing in the wind,” I said. Sandy appreciated the impromptu dokusan.

‘Five eyes well’, is a historic site located at the edge of the Temple compound just outside the ‘Coming from the West Gate’. There are many stories about the old masters having psychic powers. For instance they were clever at divining water, so they would bang their long staff on the ground and a pure spring of clear water would appear. ‘Five Eyes Well’, is such a story of Bodhidharma finding a pure spring. Much of the water around Guangzhou was at that time, brackish and swamp like, so to find a clear pure spring was indeed a treasure and perhaps a life saver. Apart from literally discovering water, another interpretation is that where true dharma is taught, it is like the perennial spring of truth where the teachings of ‘no mind’ come forth nourishing the many beings.



Photo 1. Incense at Hualin temple, Guangzhou (photo Allan Marett)



Photo 2. True body of Huineng, Nanhua Temple (photo Sandy Dance)

The Sixth Patriarch Huineng

Huineng’s place of ordination was within a large complex called Guangxiao temple, located in the outskirts of Guangzhou. This is where Huineng took tonsure and entered the renunciate life. The story goes, that Huineng, after having been in hiding for seventeen years in the mountains, entered the temple scene when an interaction was going on between two monks, who were arguing over the movement of a flag in the temple courtyard. The famous flag story and interaction is recorded in Case 29 of the Mumonkan. One monk said, “The flag is moving”, while the other monk argued that, “the wind is moving.” Huineng interjected, “It is not the wind, nor the flag that moves but it is your mind that moves”.

Huineng’s lively potent comment got the attention of the residing abbot and thus Huineng was questioned as to his background, training, understanding of the dharma and who his teacher was. The abbot was impressed by Huineng and hence offered him tonsure on the ordination platform. It is said that on this platform Huineng delivered an autobiographical story of his awakening experience, his training under the 5th Patriarch and the contested transmission of the robe and bowl, (the symbols of mind to mind transmission). Huineng’s personal account forms the first part of the Platform Sutra. The abbot upon hearing the depth of the dharma later installed Huineng as the sixth Patriarch.

Our group stood in the courtyard, the flag pole was in full view, but alas there was no flag that day! Being knowledgeable Zen students we knew about the flag koan. No flag suddenly appears like a curious great teaching. Allan and I could not waste an opportunity to wave ourselves about as if we were flags dancing in the wind. If your mind is still and does not move, you can then understand the deeper meaning of, ‘not wind, not flag, not mind, not Buddha’. I decided that my practice over the next

20 days would emerge from the encounters with the various Zen masters stories, koans and temples that we intended to visit.

As we sit under the shade of the Bodhi tree, sheltering from the noonday heat Andy tells us the story of a monk named, “Wisdom Knowledge Tripitaka,” who brought seedlings from the famous Bodhi Tree in India and planted them in three places in the year 502. One was at Guangxiao Temple in Guangzhou. His prophesy was purportedly that in 175 years a great Bodhisattva would appear at this place. Huineng arrived in 676, thus fulfilling that prophecy.

In the 1980’s the Chinese Government lifted their repressive ban on practicing religion, which resulted in a general flourishing of spirituality over the last 30 years. Where there was repression, there is now a new wave of passion. There are a few religions that have been officially sanctioned by the Communist Government namely; Christianity, Zen Buddhism, Taoism & Confucianism. This official sanction helped to stage a revival of Chinese monastic Zen Buddhism. Zen temples are burgeoning and flourishing particularly in Southern China due to the massive rebuilding of temple compounds, primarily funded with multi-million dollar donations from Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan Buddhists.

Monastic or Lay tradition—different clothes of emptiness

This tour is primarily focused on visiting various Zen temples, notably the six Zen Patriarchs’ monasteries as well as the precious opportunity of staying and practicing at the Fourth and Six Ancestors’ temple. I have great reverence for the monastic tradition, and how it has upheld the dharma, translated and protected the precious teachings of liberation. The lay community today would not have inherited the dharma without the generations of sincere monastics who dedicated themselves to study, training and practice-realisation that embodies the way.

Visiting practicing Zen temples is inspiring and makes me wonder and reflect again about my own choices to live a worldly life and deal with the drama, the joy and pain of relationships. The monastic option seems particularly attractive when I am experiencing distress in my personal relationships. Despite the grit in daily relationships, it re-affirmed that my path is clearly to engage with the world, to bring the dharma into daily life. It is the art of leaving home without literally shaving my head and leaving home.

While my eye can see clearly into the empty one world, and my heart and mind are devoted to the Buddha dharma, I walk invisible as a lay woman of the dharma, with my long flowing auburn hair, wearing jeans and a t-shirt. A lay, woman Zen Roshi, seems ridiculous, incredulous and unrecognizable to them. Even though there are a few isolated accounts of revered lay men and woman in Zen history, for example Layman Pang and his enlightened daughter, they appear more like interlopers on the general monastic scene. Whether one is a sage, monk or ordinary lay woman, all have the same empty, selfless nature which is beyond distinctions. Just like Zhaozhou’s response to the ignorant monk, “you only see the simple log bridge, you don’t see the great bridge of Zhaozhou, which lets donkeys and horses cross over.”

Sesshin on Wheels

Our tour guides keep us to a gruelling schedule. Andy mentions with a wry smile that the tour is like sesshin on wheels and insists we are washed, packed and bundled into the bus and on the road by 8am. No time to lounge about in the luxury hotels. I snooze on the bus, as I am still recovering from jet lag and adjusting to early morning rises. I decide to practice metta (loving kindness) in my wakeful moments, to my travelling companions on the bus, most of who are fast asleep. I was inspired to practice metta after seeing a striking piece of calligraphy back in the temple where Huineng delivered the platform sutra. The calligraphy was called, ‘The boundless nature of love’. A love that is not a passionate attachment, but radiates to all, beyond my preferences. Whether I like them or not, or whether they like me or not is irrelevant.

Nanhua Temple

Nanhua Temple is the Buddhist monastery where Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch of the Chan School of Buddhism once lived and taught. The location is in the northern part of Guangdong province. Nanhua received its present name in 968. The site was later renovated in 1934 under the leadership of Xuyun (Empty Cloud). It is worth noting that Xuyun was one of the most influential Zen Masters of the 19th and 20th centuries who was responsible for revitalizing the monastic community as well as supervising the rebuilding of many of the old Zen Temples. Nanhua temple covers an area of more than 42.5 hectares (105 acres). It consists of a set of magnificent Buddhist buildings, including the Hall of Heavenly Kings, the Grand Hall, Sutra Depository, Sixth Ancestor Hall, Lingzhao Pagoda and 690 Buddhist statues.

On the road to Nanhua Temple, Andy Ferguson spoke about the Platform Sutra and the revolutionary nature of the ‘Signless Precepts’, that Huineng instigated and the political implications of distancing himself from the Imperial Court and the control of Emperor Wu.

What is your original face?

The guard kindly let our group into the inner chamber to pay our respects to Huineng’s true body (see photo 2 above). We walked in silent mindful, reverence circumambulating this dark figure, which had sharp, clear features: a brown lacquered face, a small man sitting cross-legged in meditation posture. The thing that touched and moved me most in this great monastery was not the elaborate massive buildings that spanned acres but the presence of Huineng’s preserved, dark lacquered embalmed body. The locals refer to this as his, ‘true body’. There are various stories of how the monks had to hide Huineng’s ‘true body’ in caves during the Cultural Revolution to protect it from destruction and installed a fake, ‘true body,’ which they say was destroyed by the Red Guards. The body that we were viewing is reported to be the true, ‘true body’.

It was his ‘true body’ that gave substance to this legendary character. He was not just a mythological story but a real man who awoke to his original face after hearing the lines in the Diamond Sutra, “Dwelling nowhere let the mind come forth”. The calligraphy on the back wall behind Huineng’s ‘true body’, reads, “Original Face.” As I gaze at this darkened figure, “What is your original face,” takes on another dimension. My head bows in a natural respect and gratitude.

Behind the shrine room, were several very ancient cypress trees, said to be 1,000 years old, growing out of the water. These trees are considered to be very rare even in China. Lounging on the logs in the pond, were five baby turtles, huddled together, just sitting, doing turtle zazen, another manifestation of ones original face.

Zen nuns – not your mild docile tea ladies!

One of the great highlights of the tour was our visits to the nuns temples and our audience with the Abbesses (see photos 3 and 4 below). In the afternoon Andy guided us to the nuns’ temple, located next to Nanhua. It was certainly a poorer cousin to the main temple. We were granted an audience with the Abbess, Lung Qing, who served us tea and cookies. They have a rigorous daily schedule starting with early morning zazen 4.30—6.00am, then breakfast followed by a work period, sutra study and evening chanting and zazen again from 6—9pm.

I was surprised to discover that the nun’s temple is aligned with a Rinzai (Linji) sect, which utilizes koans as their primary practice. Their primary koan is, “Who is chanting Buddha’s name?” This koan originated from Zen Master Xuyun (Empty Cloud’s) teachings, due to his awakening experience, which reportedly occurred through chanting Buddha’s name. The nuns also chant the name of Amitābha Buddha from the Pure Land Sect and learn and recite by heart the Platform Sutra, which is no small feat.

A blended cocktail of the Pure Land sect, (which is primarily a devotional practice which visualizes and recites the name of Amitābha) and Zen are practiced in most Zen temples throughout China today. This blend of practices is quite contrary to the Zen that we have inherited.

The basic doctrines concerning Amitābha are found in three canonical Mahāyāna texts: *Longer Sukhāvāṭīvyūha Sūtra*; *Shorter Sukhāvāṭīvyūha Sūtra*; *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra*.

Pure Land Sect accept the basic Buddhist teachings of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path, along with the recitation of the name of Amitabha. Amitābha is a Sanskrit word (Chinese “Amituo Fo”; Japanese, “Amida”), commonly referred to as “the Buddha of infinite light” or ‘one who possesses light without bound, one whose splendor is infinite’. An important practice to achieve this sense of boundlessness is to visualize your ordinary surrounding world as a paradise. “Who sees his/her world as a paradise, awakens his enlightenment energy.”



Photo 3. The abbess of Moshan Temple (bottom right) with orphan child and Zen tour members (photo Allan Marett)



Photo 4. Meeting the Abbess at Luhua-an (photo Sandy Dance)

Zen master Yunmen—Great Enlightenment Temple.

We clamber out of the bus, searching for rain jackets in our daypacks. The yellow hue of the buildings, the lush green fertile fields and the soft rain greet us as we enter Yunmen’s temple (see Photo 3). “Yunmen” translates as “Cloud Gate.” Cloud gate enters my mind and becomes a space of unknowing from which I openly keep walking, step by step.

This was a working monastery with a large retinue of monks in training, who seemed to be dedicated to a strong, spirited, rigorous practice. The temple owns large plots of land, which the monks farm and produce vegetables to support the life of the monastery. This work ethic and self-sufficiency is what helped Zen to survive in China for more than a 1,000 years. At 11am, which is the time for the main daily meal in Zen temples, we dined on delicious vegetarian food with fresh produce straight out of the communal fields.

A classic couplet of calligraphy adorns either side of a small shrine room doorway. On the left is written, “Every mind is Buddha mind” and on the right, “Every day is a good day”. It was so exciting to be standing in Yunmen’s Temple and see first hand, written on the wall, that iconic saying and great koan, that ushered from his lips. “Please don’t tell me about before the 15th of the month (before enlightenment), give me a word about after the 15th of the month. No one responded, so he answered for them, ‘Every day is a good day’.”



Glen Jackson, *Every Day is a Good Day*

“Every day is a good day” is an old favourite koan, which became my mantra of reflection through the day. Yunmen was not speaking about the opposites of good and bad in the common sense of the word, but a realisation that is beyond all dualities that is not affected by the coming and goings of the world, by pleasure and pain, by praise and blame, or by painful difficult family dynamics. No matter what befalls me and you, can I stand there and genuinely say, “Every day is a good day”?

A treat was waiting for us after lunch, some creativity and play-time with ink, brush and rice paper in the calligraphy hall. Chi-Kwang Sunim, (an Australian born Korean nun) did some wonderful pieces of Bodhidharma’s wild face, with his signature of bushy eyebrows and no eyelids. I requested from the calligraphy master, a very vibrant engaging young monk with a serene round face, to do a piece of calligraphy for “signlessness.” There were lots of giggles and shaking of head and he said, “how can I write signless with signs?” I replied, “that is your koan”. Just this brush stroke, moment by moment. Eric wrote my dharma name on the top of the piece, Myo Un An, and the monk presented it to me, signed in the year of the rabbit. I felt really touched and grateful.

Yunmen is still teaching us, his three phrases cause much discussion amongst the Zen students on the tour. These phrases have a dual purpose, they are an expression seen from the awakened mind and they are also pragmatic steps in practice. Peter Wong offers a vital translation:-

*Encompass the entire universe,
Cut off the flowing mind stream,
Following wave/moment upon wave/moment.*

The Nun’s Temple Xiao Xitian

“Xiao Xitian” means, “Little Western Paradise.” The nun’s temple of this name was located next to Yunmen’s Temple. It had been built relatively recently and had been freshly painted and the roof was decorated with brightly coloured new tiled mosaics. The entrance walkway was a picturesque gallery, lined with the famous 10 Ox-herding pictures, that were carved in stone along the wall. The artistic treat was seeing the feminine depictions of Manjushri riding the lion on the right and Samantabhadra riding the elephant sitting on the left of the Buddha Shakyamuni. The feminine paintings were both

radical and beautiful. Radical because in traditional Zen temples, the iconography would normally be depicted in the masculine image, certainly there is nothing like it next door at Yunmen's temple.

Moshan Temple

We arrived on a rainy morning at Jiufeng (Nine Peaks) mountain and bussed up and down the peaks to Jiufeng Temple, Moshan's dharma seat. Moshan's teacher was named Gao'an Dayu, (9th Century) and was in turn a student of Guizong Zhichang, who was a student of Mazu. After Dayu offered Moshan transmission as a fully authorized teacher, she set up her nunnery on Mount Mo. Revered teachers often took on board the name of the local mountain. An awakened mind is considered to be one with the mountains and great earth. The mountain also represents the immovable, unshakable strength and liberation of mind. Moshan's reputation spread throughout the land and both men and women trained and studied under her tutelage. The following dialogue was recorded between Moshan and a monk, who initially challenged Moshan in dharma combat before he would submit and take her as his teacher.

A monk asked, "What is Mount Mo (Moshan)?"

Moshan asked, "The peak is not revealed" (it is invisible, if you go to the top you cannot see it).

"Who is the master?" asked the monk.

Moshan said, "The master of that place does not have a female or male form."

The monk challenged further, "Why can it not transform itself?"

Moshan then said, "It is not a God or deity, it cannot be transformed."

This dialogue is not only an illustration of a beautiful play and inter-change on the true nature of mind and Mount Mo, but also embedded in this dialogue is the sexist attitudes about women teachers that were prevalent at that time. It would take someone with the strength of mind like Moshan, to cut through, demolish and free the monk from his misconstrued sexist notions.

I wrote this poem in honor of Moshan.

*Mount Mo does not reveal its pure summit,
Yet from the beginning it is here before your eyes.
It does not have a male or female form,
Yet it manifests in all forms.
It is not transformed,*

*Yet it transforms all who encounter this truth.
The signless nature of mind is our true signature.*

As we approached the nun's quarters in the back of the compound, five orphaned children dressed in grey pants suits were lined up on the steps to greet us with a welcoming song (see photo 3 above). Their sweet innocent openness and youthful spirit touched us all. The nuns took delight in taking care of orphaned children. I gave them a mothering role and intimate physical contact with children that they would otherwise not have. They cared for them until they were young adults, educated them in basic ethics and Buddhist philosophy and paid for their primary and high school education. They did not necessarily groom them to take up a cloistered life, however they did expect them to grow up with integrity and compassion and be of strong upright moral character.

After an audience with the Abbess and nuns during which we were served refreshing green tea, the 4.30pm bell sounded the call to the evening prayer and chanting of the sutras. Our whole troop filed into the Buddha Hall, surrounded by the feminine imagery. We stood enchanted listening to the nun's strong melodic voices, while the mokugyo's deeper resonance beat out the rhythm of the Heart Sutra. The youngest nun with her slender fingers performed a fascinating elaborate hand mudra ritual, offering blessings, incense, and ringing bells throughout the ceremony that had us all spellbound. It was a ritual that I had never seen performed before. Some of the mudras I recognized as; offering a

blessing, purification, removal of defilements, the mudra of no fear and turning the dharma wheel. We speculated where this ritual originated from and thought it probably came from a Tantric Buddhist sect that involved esoteric, mudra ritual practice, which is an art form and meditation in itself.

I left the temple with the impression that sisters in robes are turning the dharma wheel for themselves, with great confidence, a strong feminine Zen spirit and independence.

Baizhang's Temple

The bus weaves its way along a hair raising narrow mountain road with dozens of sharp bends that have steep breath taking drops that fall away to a misty valley below. The drive to Baizhang's temple is gripping and picturesque, passing through mud houses and villages, terraced rice paddies and bamboo forests. We climb about 1,000ft, and then descend into an isolated valley, several hours away from any major city. It feels great to be out in the countryside. Children's voices from the village, the rustling of leaves from the bamboo grove, the changing of the bus gears, all become the voices of Buddha.

The villagers have a curious and novel way to winnow their rice, which they lay out and spread along the concrete roads, so that it is threshed by the passing traffic. I was hoping that perhaps this grain will be used for the animals rather than for human consumption?

Finally the steep valleys open out into a wider plain. A very grand new temple stands as a bold iconic statement on the landscape. The new temple has been built alongside the old temple. Millions of dollars have been poured into this enormous monastic complex, but as we walk around the grounds we discover that it is basically deserted. The only form of life, were a handful of monks that seem to inhabit the old temple accommodation and grounds. Apparently three months prior they held a grand opening Temple blessing ceremony, where thousands of people attended, now everything stands still and quiet, with an almost eerie silence. The new buildings feel sterile and un-lived in with lots of empty accommodation quarters, shrine rooms and a vacant meditation hall. The statues are freshly painted with bright gold lacquer. It looks all too gaudy and touristy. Our group is quite puzzled and disappointed. We all prefer the small old temple, with its peeling colourful paint, blankets sunning in the courtyard and the monks brown robes hanging out to dry. In the old temple quarters most of which had been abandoned, we discovered a beehive in the donation box in one of the shrine rooms. Not a good idea to slide any pious generous fingers and donations into that box!

Sadly the old temple, even though it had a friendly warm familial lived in atmosphere, was dilapidated and neglected for the bright new monstrosity next door. The whole experience confirmed that the new temple had yet to prove and establish itself to be a living vibrant practice community. It needed a good strong Abbot who had a vision and could lead and inspire the monastic community otherwise the whole place was a wasteful white elephant.

The most exciting part of the monastery tour was the walk up the hill through the bamboo forest behind the Dharma Hall. There we visited Baizhang's 'wild fox cave', which was a small cave made out of stone recessed in the side of the hill, nestled in a small gully. Allan Marett and David leaped down the steps to explore inside the cave, having expressed great affinity with this story and embodying some of that old wild fox spirit themselves (see photo 6 below).

Baizhang's wild fox story appears in Case 2 of the Mumonkan. It is a fascinating imaginary story about an old priest and Baizhang, which was actually an internal debate that Baizhang was having with himself. The old priest was asked by a monk, whether an enlightened being falls under the law of cause and effect or not? The old priest initially answered that an enlightened person does not fall under the law of cause and effect. With this answer however, the old priest was reborn as a fox. The old priest returns and asks Baizhang for further clarity, "Does and enlightened being fall under the law of cause and effect?" Baizhang offers a turning response that awakens the priest and releases him from the body of the fox. He says, "An enlightened being is not blind to the law of cause and effect, but nor is he completely bound by the cycle of birth and death." This crucial case illuminates the Buddha's

teaching on dependent arising, cause and effect and discovering freedom within the constructed conditions of life. It is considered the second most important koan after the koan, Mu.

Baizhang's teachings of dependent arising are summarized and encapsulated in his warnings about attachment to views. "If you cling to some fundamental [read: "metaphysical"] 'purity' or 'liberation,' or that you yourself are Buddha, or that you are someone who understands the Zen Way, then this falls under the false idea of 'naturalism' [i.e. something not subject to cause and effect]. If you cling to [the idea of self or things'] 'existence,' then this falls under the false idea of 'eternalism.' If you cling to [the self or things'] 'non-existence' this falls under the false idea of nihilism. If you cling to either of the concepts of existence or non-existence, this falls under the false idea of partiality. If you cling to a concept that things do not exist and also do not not exist, then this is the false idea of emptiness, and is also called the heresy of ignorance. One should only practice in the present without views of Buddha, nirvana, and so on, nor with any ideas about existence or non-existence, and so on; and without views about views, which is called the correct view; or what you have not heard or not not heard, for this is true hearing. This is all called 'overcoming spurious doctrines.'"

This quote is from the "Recorded Words of Zen Master Baizhang" and appears in the Lamp Records (Wudeng Huiyuan, or Chuandeng Lu). Such metaphysical philosophical explanations of 'being' and the 'world' are not the same as realization of mind. I am reminded of discourse in the Majjhima Nikaya or Middle-length Discourses of the Buddha on being aware of the limitation of the net of views. Freedom from clinging to views leads to liberation.

Baizhang was also responsible for developing some new rules governing monastic life, which arose from the shift from an itinerant monks lifestyle to a working monastic residential community. He actively encouraged the monks to work and cultivate the land, which required a change in the Vinaya, the practical disciplinary rules set down by the Buddha for the life of a mendicant. These new rules and work ethic also made it possible for the monasteries to be more self sufficient and independent from the constraints and control of the imperial Government and the Emperor. The shift to include work into the monastic lifestyle had not only practical but political repercussions as well as unforeseen far-reaching implications that would later influence the survival of Zen in China.



Photo 5 Detail from Fourth Ancestor's stupa with important placenames including Magadha (photo Allan Marett)



Photo 6. Two old fox spirits sniffing around Baizhang's cave (photo Allan Marett).

Baizhang's famous motto was, "A day without work is a day without food". Even when Baizhang's bones were old, he insisted that he work in the fields every day. One day the monks decided to hide his tools, so Baizhang refused to eat, until they gave him back his tools. Daily work

was an integral part of monastic practice, equal to zazen, as well as learning and reciting sutras and participating in ceremonies and rituals.

The dome shrine and cave of transmission

After breakfast at the Fourth Ancestor's Temple, we climb up thousands of steps to a very old stupa three-quarters of the way up the hill (see photo 5 above). This stupa used to house the 'true body' of the Fourth Ancestor, Daoxin, now empty. Daoxin's true body was reportedly destroyed by the Red Guards in the Cultural Revolution. The stupa is an unusual old brick edifice, which reminds me of the ancient stupa in Sarnath India, especially as the calligraphy markings on the outside are like ancient Sanskrit seed syllables. As I step inside this building that has no windows, there is a natural inclination to look upwards at the tall dome ceiling constructed from intricate layers of brickwork. I surprisingly take a deep in-breath Ahhhhh and it feels like my chest expands to match the ethereal concave space. Daoxin you are present in this empty spaciousness.

The cave of transmission where Hongren (Fifth Ancestor) received transmission from Daoxin (Fourth Ancestor) is further up the mountain. I tried to imagine that perhaps these old masters sat here, gazed out over the view, probably drinking tea and laughing, at the serious craziness and squabbling that goes on about transmission.

The Backpacking nuns

We pause to take a breath before heading off to the nuns' temple over the other side of the mountain, nestled in a serene valley. The temple had suffered from a flood washing away a corner of the buildings, so there was a lot of earth moving and construction work happening in front of the temple. They were busily reconstructing the pond of liberation and reinforcing the large retaining walls.

After climbing up through the many terraces to the back of the monastery we finally meet the Abbess and nuns in a large tearoom (see photo 4 above). Curiously along the temple wall there were more than a dozen backpacks, all lined up airing and drying. I was puzzled by this sight. The Abbess is a strong, short, feisty stocky sort of woman. We hear that the nuns have just returned from a nine-day walking pilgrimage to a sacred Mountain. We exchange stories of walking sesshins in Australia and compare notes. The nuns walk in silence approximately 30 kilometers a day, which is kicking up quite a pace, especially through mountainous terrain. The nuns lodge over-night with the farmers and villagers along the way.

We discuss their schedule and practices. Their annual 62 day sesshin through the winter months, sounds daunting and awesome. They have a strong emphasis on work practice along with morning and evening zazen. They work in the fields nine months of the year, which provides them with lots of vegies and nourishment, plus it gives them some independence. They have a cohort of about 30 nuns in residence so far and welcome and train new nuns.

One of the most surprising parts of this trip is that the nunneries have been warm, welcoming, friendly, open places more so than the monks. The nuns have been very forthcoming, patiently answering a barrage of questions about their lifestyle and practices. It is inspiring to learn about their mediation practices, schedules, lay support, financial support and general lifestyle.

I left China invigorated and inspired by the strength and revitalization of monastic Zen in China today, that is trying to be true to the spirit and form of the old awakened masters and their teachings of direct transmission of mind here and now. Their words of wisdom come down the generations to here: "I have no words to teach you," "Directly pointing to mind," "What is your original face?" "Who is chanting Buddha's name?" "Every day is a good day," "The peak is not revealed," "An enlightened being is not blind to the law of cause and effect, but nor is he completely bound by the cycle of birth and death."

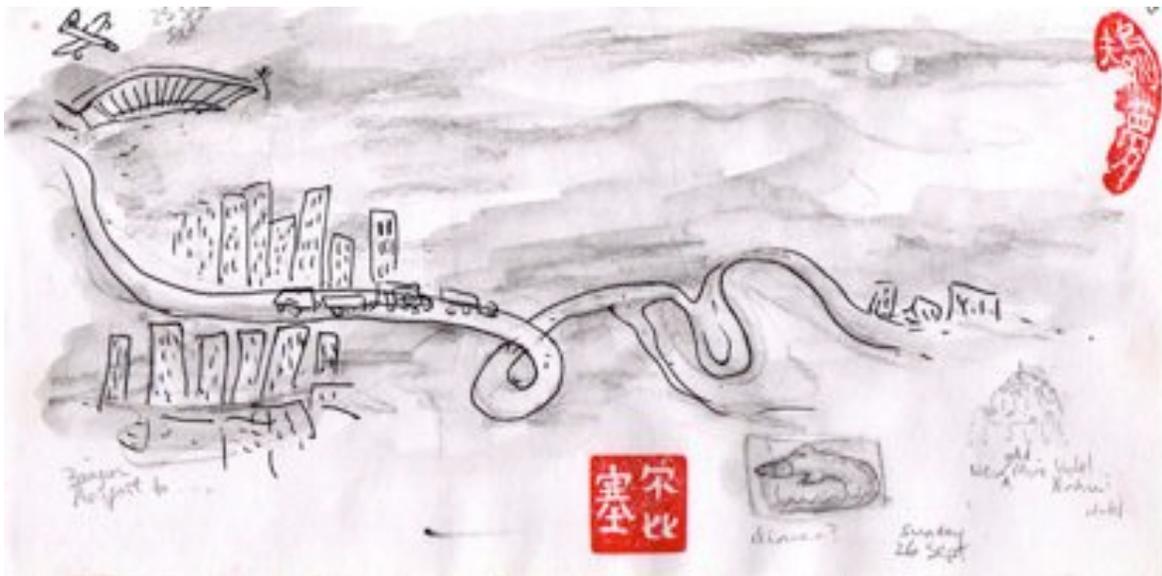


Janet Selby: *Bodhidharma*

Where's China?

Maggie Gluek

Skinny old bum
on a black seat
making no sense at all
of the way things are—
the way things are



Janet Selby: *Guangzhou Airport*

No East, No West

Allan Marett

On the day the South Mountain tour of Zen temples visited Mazu's temple, it was alive with ritual and bustling with visitors celebrating Guanyin's Enlightenment day. After joining the many pilgrims for lunch, a group of us were sitting around in the sun. Idly looking at my pilgrims' hat, which I had worn during my pilgrimage to Shikoku in 2009 and 2010 and which I had brought to China because I was going to go straight on from there to Shikoku to complete my pilgrimage, I noticed a couplet—one of several edifying epithets written on the hat for the benefit of pilgrims—which read:

How can there be dwelling in north and south.
From the beginning there is neither east nor west



A few days earlier we had been staying at the Sixth Ancestor, Huineng's temple, Nanhua-si. My room mate, Tom Fisher, had been given a copy, in Chinese, of the Platform Sutra, in which key events, some of them undoubtedly apocryphal, of Huineng's life are narrated¹² Over the ensuing days we spent many happy hours dipping into the Chinese text and translating key passages with the help of the Chinese dictionaries we had on our iPads.

One of the passages we had looked at was a famous exchange between the illiterate peasant, Huineng, and the Fifth Patriarch, Hongren, which occurred when Huineng first arrived at Hongren's temple. Huineng came from a humble fishing village called Xinzhou, not far from Guangzhou, in Southern China. One day upon hearing the words, "Dwelling nowhere, bring forth this mind," he attained deep realisation. When he asked about the source of these words, he was told that they were from the Diamond Sutra, and that the monk who had recited them came from the temple of the Fifth Ancestor, Hongren, near the village of Huangmei, a thousand kilometres to the north.

When he arrived, Hongren asked Huineng where he was from. Huineng replied that he was from Xinzhou, in the south of China. When Hongren asked him why he had come all that distance, Huineng

¹² Nelson Foster, in *The Roaring Stream* says, for example, "[Huineng's] exact role and his relationship to the text attributed to him, usually known as the *Platform Sutra* are fraught with unresolved questions, and a large amount of legendary material has accrued to his account." (p.17). Bill Porter's Introduction to *The Platform Sutra: The Zen Teachings of Huineng*, contains a more detailed account of the source history of this document.

replied that he wanted to realise his essential nature and become a Buddha. Hongren scoffed, “you are nothing but a southern barbarian, what makes you think you can become a Buddha?” Huineng then uttered his famous response, which like the verse on my hat, is also a couplet:

人雖有南北	Although ordinary people dwell in the south and north
佛性本無南北	There is no north and south in Buddha nature

Sitting that day in the sun at Mazu’s temple, I suddenly realised that the phrase on my pilgrim hat (How can there be dwelling in north and south/ From the beginning there is no east or west) was a paraphrase of Huineng’s response. I was amazed to think that I had been walking around Shikoku with Huineng’s response on my head for all those weeks, and had even visited Huineng’s temple without realising this.

But what was written on the hat was not exactly Huineng’s response. There are a couple of differences. First of all, whereas Huineng only spoke of north and south, the hat speaks of north and south, *and* east and west; and secondly while Huineng said that there was no north and south *in buddha nature*, my pilgrim hat said that there was no north and south *from the beginning*. I began to puzzle over these differences. Were they significant or not? While terms like ‘buddha nature’ (*busshin*) and ‘from the beginning’ (*honrai*) refer to subtly different aspects of the awakened mind, they are often also used more or interchangeably simply to point to the awakened mind. Either will work.

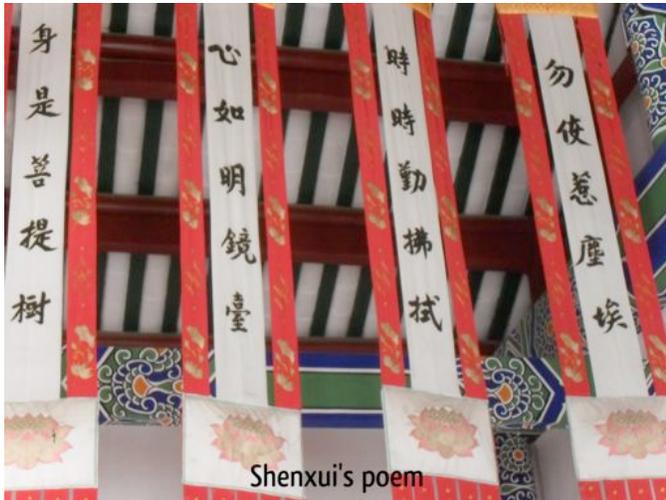
The next day I was on the bus with David Bubna-Litic and began discussing the differences between the couplet on my pilgrim hat and the Huineng’s couplet. He made an interesting suggestion in response. “Maybe the reason that the person who wrote on the pilgrim hat paraphrased rather than exactly quoted Huineng was to demonstrate that he or she understood the deep meaning of Huineng’s response.” I thought that this was an interesting idea. It is, after all easier to quote than to paraphrase. As we all know from doing comprehension tests at school, you have to understand in order to paraphrase. Moreover, in paraphrasing, the person who writing on my hat was able to expand Huineng’s “south and north” to “north, south, east and west,” a formulation more appropriate to the pilgrimage: after all, while Huineng walked from south to north, the pilgrim in Shikoku walks north, south, east and west.

But what about the substitution of “from the beginning” for “in Buddha nature”? It occurred to me that in making this substitution the hat-scribe was perhaps making deliberate reference to another of Huineng’s famous utterances, namely the poem that he wrote in the famous poetry competition with the head monk of Hongren’s temple, Shenxui. You may remember that when the time came to determine who would become the Sixth Ancestor, Hongren asked his monks to write a poem that expressed their understanding of the Way. Shenxui wrote the following poem on a wall of the temple:

Our body is the Bodhi tree
Our mind like a bright mirror on a stand
Always try to keep it clean
Don’t let dust settle on it.

The peasant layman, Huineng, whom Hongren had sent to the rice threshing shed in order keep him out of danger, heard about Shenxui’s poem, and composed a poem of his own in response. But because he was illiterate, he had to ask one of the monks to write his now famous response

Bodhi is not a tree
The bright mirror has no stand
From the beginning there is not a single thing.
On what, therefore, can dust settle?



In response, the Fifth Ancestor, Hongren, who had already noticed the clarity of Huineng’s dharma eye, bestowed on him the robe and bowl that had passed down through the five generations since Bodhidharma as the mark of true succession, and then advised him to flee. In Hualin Temple, there is a huge golden replica of this bowl in front of the main gate. A lot more could be said about this bowl: Case 23 of the *Wumenguan*, for example, deals with the attempts of the soldier monk, Ming, to retrieve this bowl from Huineng and Ming’s subsequent enlightenment. But this is not my focus here.

At the Fifth Ancestor’s temple, lines from Huineng’s and Shenxui’s poems are inscribed everywhere: at the entrance of the temple, on wooden boards attached to the sides of doorways, and in particular on banners in the room that is said to have been the rice threshing shed in which Huineng worked (see photos above).

It is perhaps significant that the expression used in Huineng’s poem, namely ‘from the beginning’ (*honrai*) is the same as the one that turns up on my hat, At first, I thought my hat-scribe might have mixed up Huineng’s response to Hongren (there is neither north and south in *buddha nature*) with Huineng’s poem (*from the beginning* there is not one thing), substituting ‘not one thing’ for ‘buddha nature.’ But maybe here too, my hat-scribe was being clever—demonstrating a deep knowledge of the original Chinese writings by, in his paraphrase, obliquely referring to Huineng’s famous poem.

All of us who went on the tour were, I think, struck by the vitality and vigour of Zen in China. During the Cultural Revolution, we might have been forgiven for thinking that Zen had been all but wiped out, and would survive only in its Korean and Japanese forms. But miraculously, through the heroic deeds and great faith of people like Xuyun (Empty Cloud), an example of whose writings is included in this volume, and the present abbot of the Fourth Patriarch’s temple, Jinghui, whom we met, there is a vigorous revival going on. There are many ways in which this was manifested— in the vitality of the practice, in the warmth with which we were welcomed, especially in the nunneries, in the massive temple building projects, in the huge crowds attending festival days—like Guanyin’s Enlightenment day ceremonies that we witnessed at Mazu’s temple.

But I also saw this vitality in the written language that surrounded us in the temple, some of which I could read and some not. Chinese Buddhists know this literature well, and quote from it copiously. Key phrases adorn doorways (I mentioned lines of Huineng and Shenxui’s poems adorning doorways at the Fifth Ancestor’s temple; and Subhana notes in her article that at Yunmen’s temple we saw ‘Every day is a good day’ and ‘Every mind is Buddha mind’ on facing door panels); they hang, written on banners, from the roof; they appear nailed to columns in corridor; they are everywhere. The photo below left shows a board tacked up in a temple saying ‘contemplate your koan.’; the photo below right shows a text hung in the Dharma Hall of Baizhang’s temple, which says, ‘Not saying a

single word on Da Xiang Peak” (another paraphrase: in Case 26 of the Blue Cliff Record a monk asked Baizhang to show him something miraculous; Baizhang said “sitting alone at Daxiong Peak.” Baizhang’s temple is at Daxiong peak). These texts transcend time; they transcend place. They remind me of Lindy Lee’s banners that we hang at at Kodoji during sesshin.

In the case of my pilgrim hat, a simple phrase written in rural Japan today and carried by me around Shikoku and then into China resonates with a poem written on a temple wall in China a millennium and a half ago, and which today is written in doorways and on banners hanging in the threshing shed of Huineng’s old temple.





An episode from *The Journey to the West* (see Gillian Coote’s article) at Tiantong Temple (photo Allan Marett)

To be a pilgrim

Gillian Coote

The word *pilgrim* is from the Latin word *peregrinus* meaning 'stranger abroad', hence *peregrinate*, to travel, to journey, which is of course what the *peregrine* falcon does. Pilgrimage is not just about journey, about distance, but also about that state of openness, of 'don't know mind', where every moment shows the way.

Pilgrimage has long been a Buddhist tradition. Starting way back in the T'ang dynasty and going right through to today, Zen students trekked from teacher to teacher. I recall a tall fellow, known only by his dharma name, K'shanti - forebearance - he wore a blue denim rakusu - who came to Palolo to sit with Aitken Roshi as one step on his journey to encounter different teachers.

While Tony and I were in China on *our* pilgrimage, we were reading *Ten Thousand Miles without a Cloud*, written by a Chinese-born documentary filmmaker, Sun Shuyun. She was at school during the Cultural Revolution when her devout Buddhist grandmother was reviled before her eyes. At school, the children had to memorise a verse supposedly composed by Chairman Mao after he took up Communism:

What is Buddha?
One clay body,
With two blank eyes,
Three meals a day are wasted on him,
With four feeble limbs,

He cannot name five cereals,
His six nearest relatives he does not know
What should we do with him?
Smash him!

It wasn't until she was studying in Oxford in the late 1980's that Sun Shuyun began to look into Buddhism, to begin to understand her grandmother, and to read Xuanzang's meticulous account of his pilgrimage, *Journey to the Western World*, written in 646 about his extraordinary 18-year journey along the Silk Road to India to bring back the sutras (see photo previous page). He is the role model for Tripitaka in the 16th century Chinese novel *Journey to the West*, which was on television as *Monkey* in the 1970's. In her book, Sun Shuyun skilfully weaves her journey along the Silk Road with his.

Xuanzang was an extraordinary man in any age. He was born into a scholarly Confucian family in 600 AD. Both parents died when he was an infant. By the time Xuanzang was born, Buddhism had already been in China for over six hundred years. We visited the first Buddhist temple built on Chinese soil in Luoyang in 64AD - the White Horse Temple. In these first six hundred years of Buddhism in China, Indian monks came to China, and Chinese monks went to India. Different schools flourished side by side - Theravada and Mahayana monks and nuns lived and practised together. Many sutras had already been translated, such as the Vimalakirti Sutra by Kumerajiva around 350, and the Lotus Sutra.

Xuanzang was a serious little boy, who followed his brother into monastic life at thirteen. It is said that after hearing a sutra only twice, he could remember every word. By his late teens, he and his brother had mastered all the Buddhist scriptures of the different schools, and were impressive teachers. But the more he studied, the more dissatisfied he felt. Ch'an masters told him all beings by nature are Buddha - and there must have been enough Ch'an around for masters of the Pure Land School to tell the curious monk that practising Ch'an was difficult and laborious, and instead he should simply recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, and pray to Guanyin, Amitabha's chief minister, ever ready to lead the faithful to the land of purity and bliss.

Followers of the Tiantai School claimed *they* had found the true way with their emphasis on the Lotus Sutra. Xuanzang saw that each school claimed to know the true way but were at odds with each other. Perhaps it was because the sutras they read were in different translations? He decided to study

the Yogacara school, and set out for the capital, Chang'an - now present-day Xian - leaving his brother behind. But even the Yogacara teachers seemed to be at odds, and when an Indian monk in Xian told him about Nalanda University in India with its ten thousand students, he felt his questions would be resolved there. But he was stuck in Xian. The Emperor had banned all travel.

One night he had a dream in which he saw Mount Sumeru, the sacred mountain at the centre of the universe in Indian and Buddhist mythology. It was surrounded by sea but there was neither ship nor raft. Lotus flowers of stone supported him as he crossed the waters but so slippery and steep was the way up the mountain that each time he tried to climb, he slid back. Then suddenly a powerful whirlwind raised him to the summit where he saw an unending horizon. In an ecstasy of joy he woke up; he believed he'd been shown a vision of what he must do - he must go to India and learn the teaching of the Buddha at its source. It was a time of great turmoil in China, and nobody was allowed to travel, but he was determined and managed to sneak out of the capital.

Xuanzang set out in 627AD and returned in 645. He had spent eighteen years on the road, on the outward journey through China, Krygyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India and returning through current-day Pakistan and Afghanistan to reach Kashgar. Because the Han Chinese Cultural Zone during the Tang Dynasty Era only reached as far as Dunhuang where the Great Wall of China began, Xuanzang had to travel south-east from Kashgar via Khotan, along the South Route around the Taklamakan Desert to finally return to China. His brushes with death were astounding. He came back fluent in seven languages, laden with 657 sutras, relics of the Buddha, and seven gold, silver and sandalwood images.

To celebrate his return there was a huge welcoming procession in Chang'an such as Sydney puts on for sporting heroes, but with musicians and acrobats. Monks from all the temples came to see him, but the person *he* was most keen to see, Emperor Taizong, was away in Luoyang, the eastern capital, preparing to go to war with Korea. What did Xuanzang do? He was so determined to persuade the Emperor to fund a translation institute for all the 657 sutras he had brought back with him that, after a brief rest, he set off to see him, another 700 mile journey.

The Emperor didn't mention Buddhism at all during their interview, instead requesting that Xuanzang write him a full account of his journey, information which would be a useful guide for his dynastic ambitions to extend his empire to the Eurasian steppes. Xuanzang managed to persuade the Emperor that if he wrote this account, in return, the Emperor would fund an institute for translating the sutras. It was a deal.

Xuanzang selected twenty-four monks from all over China and installed them in the Monastery of Great Happiness to begin the epic task of translation. Xuanzang worked day and night, up at 2 am meditating, then reading through the Sanskrit text to be translated that day, thinking over each word and phrase. When the team was ready, he would dictate his translations to them. And while they worked on them, he'd either be giving talks twice a day on new scriptures or treatises or answering questions from monks from all over the country and from afar. At this time, Chang'an was a buzzing metropolis, a 7th century New York. This was the T'ang dynasty flowering.

After Xuanzang had completed that mammoth task, he sat down with one of the monks and dictate information about the countries he'd travelled through for the promised book of the journey. This book is titled *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, an extraordinary work of cultural anthropology and geography which was translated into English by Samuel Beal in 1884. I bought my copy back in 1988 in the Piccadilly Book Stall, New Delhi, surely the most marvellous bookshop in the universe, at the end of another pilgrimage with Thich Nhat Hanh. Now I could compare and contrast the Buddhist sites we had just visited with how Xuanzang had found them, journeys over 1400 years apart. Of course, so much had changed.

Tragically, Beal's English translation came out just in time to become the perfect guidebook for European thieves and looters of the Silk Road Buddhist treasures - Sir Aurel Stein, Paul Pelliot,

Langdon Warner and all the others. Today manuscripts from Dunhuang are among the treasures of seventy-seven museums and libraries in England, France, Germany, Russia, the United States, Japan, Korea, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Turkey - and China.

But on a brighter note, in the Sydney Morning Herald of February 9, 2005, I read that Xuanzang's book had inspired Afghanistan's foremost archeologist to lead a dig within view of the cliff walls in the Bamiyan Valley where those two standing Buddhas were bombed by the Taliban some years ago.

In his book, Xuanzang describes an ancient monastery with a gigantic reclining Buddha inside its walls. (p.51) "To the north-east 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. To the east of the city there is a convent in which there is a figure of Buddha lying in a sleeping position, as when he attained Nirvana. The figure is in length about 1000 feet or so. (There is a footnote from Beal to the effect that the text of Xuanzang is probably corrupt in this passage. He writes, 'It is unreasonable to suppose it could be 1000 feet in length if it was lying within the building'.)

Dr Tarzi's first dig uncovered a wall that may be part of this ancient monastery, and several dozen sculptures of Buddha heads, some dating back to the 3rd century, He also found evidence of what may be a huge statutory foot. The second dig was to start again that summer.

Of the 657 sutras Xuanzang had brought back with him, 75 sutras and commentaries were translated under his direction. The most important for Chinese Buddhism was the Prajnaparamita Sutra which he started working on in 660, when his health was failing. Together with commentaries, the translation occupied 600 volumes, nearly half his work. He completed it at the beginning of 664 and then he sent for all his disciples.

'I am weary of the body now. My work is finished and there is no point in my staying longer. May the good works I have done benefit all living beings. May they and I be reborn in the Tushita Heaven of Maitreya, and serve him there. When Maitreya at last becomes a Buddha, may I go down with him into the world, promote the faith in all lands and attain the highest enlightenment."

Before he died, Xuanzang had persuaded the Emperor to write a preface praising Buddhism, and at last Buddhism eclipsed Taoism as the official religion. This is known as the flowering of the T'ang dynasty. With royal patronage, thousands were ordained, and monumental monasteries and temples built. Xuanzang's translations were stored in the specially-built Big Wild Goose Pagoda. He died on March 8, 664. He was 65. The Emperor was heartbroken and said, 'Xuanzang was the boat ferrying the faithful over the sea of suffering. The sea is so vast, and now the boat is sunk.'

The Big Wild Goose Pagoda is in present-day Xian and we visited there on our second day in China. Out in front, there's a huge bronze statue of Xuanzang, setting out on his epic journey with his backpack and staff. A vast new hall inside the temple grounds has recently been opened, showing in exquisite bronze bas-relief murals the hair-raising adventures he had on his journey. The Chinese are extremely proud of this monk and they have never stopped loving him. We climbed up inside the Big Wild Goose Pagoda. At every one of its nine levels a little shop sold memorabilia where I bought a rubbing of Xuanzang and a folding book with Xuanzang's translation of the Heart Sutra, with calligraphy by a contemporary monk.

Although I had dedicated our journey to China as a pilgrimage, travelling with equanimity and paying respects to the Dharma ancestors, it was difficult to be equanimous here, knowing that during the Cultural Revolution the Red Guards had stormed the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, ripped down the silk banners, toppled the Buddha figures, and taken all the sutras and Xuanzang's translations out of the pagoda. "Smash the old world, build a brand-new one!" they had shouted. Then they set fire to the precious priceless archive of Xuanzang's original translations. The fire burnt all through the night. All

the monks were forced to leave the temple - the abbot was reduced to selling coal in a little cart - but one monk named Pu Ci refused to leave. At 'struggle meetings' he refused to say a word. Though he was beaten by the Red Guards, he stayed put. This is amazing k'shanti - endurance, and it is Xuanzang's endurance. The spirit of these Dharma ancestors is alive here.

These days, the temple is supported by the government; the temple fields have shrunk to almost nothing, have become smaller even since Sun Shuyun, the author of *Ten Thousand Miles Without a Cloud* visited there in the late 90's. The pagoda and the many halls are hemmed in by high-rise apartments. But out the front, Xuanzang strides out on his mission. On his pilgrimage. I bow in gratitude.

We also travelled to Wu Tai Shan, one of the sacred Buddhist mountains of China, and the reputed home of Manjusri. The place is described by the Chinese as 'the Buddhism Holy Land' and is full of Chinese visitors browsing in shops playing syrupy sutras and selling enormous Guanyins, Buddhas and all manner of other accoutrements.

Very little English is spoken or understood up here. Carrying our map showing the location of all the Wu Tai Shan temples, we picked out a Manjusri Temple to visit on our first morning. It was up a mountain and the path was steep and rough: we were the only people walking - the Chinese tourists all went up on stocky little ponies. It was a large temple complex and though we explored its many halls, there were no statues of Manjusri.

We gazed down into the valley where the village was and over to the opposite mountains where we could see temples dotted about everywhere, looking at our map to identify them. It seemed as if there was yet another temple higher up the hill from where we stood. Could *it* be Manjusri's Temple, I wondered? Optimistic about finding someone who'd understand simple English, I asked a burly fellow selling tickets - every temple in China sells tickets - 'Do you know where we can find Manjusri's Temple?'

The man didn't hesitate. 'Now!' he said. This was perhaps his only English word. It is certainly one I am more than happy to share. 'Now!' That is the true pilgrimage, not to an exotic or remote country, but to this very moment, where everything is just as it is, and nothing is missing. Now!

Hymn No. 676 *To be a Pilgrim* (with apologies to John Bunyan)

We, who would true virtue seek
Let us come hither;
And we will constant be,
Come wind, come weather;
There's no discouragement
shall make us once relent
our first avow'd intent,
to be a pilgrim.

When Mara does confound
with dismal stories.
With resolve we will rebound
and our strength the more is.
No lion can us fright;
We'll with a giant fight,
And we will have the right
to be a pilgrim.

**Outside Xiantong Temple with Ming Yuan,
from Yunmen Buddhist Academy in
Guangdong Province (photo Gillian Coote)**





(Photo Gillian Coote)



Girl on a melon cart (photo Gillian Coote)



Strolling through the scented grasses on Wutaishan (photo Gillian Coote)



Manjusri cutting through at Dailuoding Temple (photo Gillian Coote)

Wutaishan in the pilgrim season

Diana Levy

On the eve of my departure for China in 2010, Aitken Roshi passed away. I was going to visit my daughter Ruby, who was living in Beijing and studying Mandarin on exchange from Sydney Uni. Ruby designed a tour for us, and knowing my predilection for things Buddhist, we travelled first to the caves at Yungang, where on the sandstone cliffs were carved buddhas of all descriptions by the northern Wei dynasty. They were tribesmen from places on the Silk Road and they conquered eastwards. I felt that these giant buddhas were partly exercises in legitimization: “See how big Buddha is? He’s really big!” And I prostrated and bowed at each of these beautiful images with Roshi in my heart. But Yungang is not what I want to write about. Except to tell you this: we went in to a cave (the sandstone had been dug out) to view about three statues, one a thirty-foot buddha painted gold. No photos allowed. Standing there, the crowds who came in would give a collective gasp at the magnificence of the images, some would bow. Ruby overheard a couple of men who accosted the guard and were exclaiming over the wonder of China’s heritage. The buddha at the side had a huge smile, and seemed to be amused and enjoying all the hullabaloo.

Then we went by bus to Wutaishan (‘shan’ means mountain), the home of Manjusri, the bodhisattva of wisdom. There was a hair-raising drive up a narrow road, on one occasion three abreast as the driver (hats off to Chinese bus drivers who are alert, skilled operators of rattletrap machines on dodgy roads) overtook a line of trucks while a three-wheeler farmer’s vehicle came down the mountain and squeaked past us. In the seat behind us a Taoist monk chanted all the way up the mountainside. The bus stopped at the high point before the descent into Wutaishan, and a line of men got off the bus and pee’d beside the road. The monk dashed off down towards the scrub. I fondly imagined he was going to perform some Taoist ritual about this sacred place. No: he was tugging at the back of his pants as he entered the bush.

What I saw in the village itself in the valley, which has many monasteries, was Buddhist Disneyland. Chaos - hundreds of stalls selling objets - a chairlift going up one steep hill to a monastery. (I rather liked a souvenir shop called “*State Department of the Buddha Wholesale Boutique*”). And, being China and being pilgrim season (summer), vast crowds of people and vehicles, the roads clogged. Ruby and I ignored the touts (who got on our bus and fired questions at us), trying to lead us to *their* hotel, and we walked off deafly, noses up and eyes fixed on a direction less populated. We crossed the stream and found a hotel with a restaurant at street level. We ate there, and also at the *Farm Soil Restaurant*.

Ruby came down with a cold so after that day, I was on my own, with a few phrases and a phrase book. On my first day alone, I went to Bishan temple. As we had been travelling I had been reading (Red Pine) Bill Porter’s excellent travel book “*Zen Baggage*”, in which he retraces the steps of the first six Zen patriarchs. He wrote about Bishan, so I wanted to go there. It was founded in the Northern Wei, about 400 CE. After making my prostrations at the third temple inside its walls, I was drawn into conversation with a woman who had a little English, and then an old monk. When she heard my daughter was sick, they wanted me to do something with a red piece of paper. I gradually understood. I paid about \$2 for two slips of paper, and wrote my daughters’ names on one, and Roshi’s name on the other. Then we set off in a growing procession which took us into the dining hall. There, hundreds of these red and yellow blessings and prayers were taped to the wall. The monk added my two, and then the woman showed me how to do the prostrations in front of the altar. She was an exacting teacher and tried to teach me “*Namo Amida Butsu*’ but I was a very bad student. I felt really pleased that Roshi’s name was there, amongst the monks who would shortly come in, eat their lunch, and do so forever onwards. These monks and this place felt right. They invited me to have lunch, but I declined, so they gave me bickies and sweet bars. The woman gave me an Amida necklace, and I gave them Australian stamps.

Ruby’s cold set in and we moved hotel rooms twice, being underwhelmed by toilets that didn’t work, thermoi of hot water that leaked. I think my limit for non-functional things in Chinese hotel rooms is about

three. I found her a nice room with a view of the mountains - and on the opposite hill a vast Tibetan temple complex called the Pusadina terrace. She had nothing much to read and was miserable. I set off for a day of visiting nunneries. I also had to buy bus tickets to get us back to Beijing. In her wisdom Ruby wanted me to experience travel like a native, in which you cannot buy a series of tickets. You can only buy a ticket for your next journey. It was a complicated task that involved finding an ATM and using Ruby's card, taxi drivers, suspicion about whether I am being cheated, the ticket office, though for once this one did not have long long queues of Chinese people with a way overworked and impatient ticket seller behind a booth. By now I knew the routine and could manage.

Once that was done I visited Pushou nunnery. They took me to Kuan Yin and then up a grand flight of very white stairs to a shrine room the size of an aircraft hangar in which had alighted three enormous two-storey golden buddhas, whose place in the pantheon I forget. I decided to try and establish whether they practised meditation. I tried the word *chan*. Blank looks - then I tried 'seated quietly' *-jingzour*, from the phrase book.

Qifo nunnery was wonderful - humble, indeed rather crumbly, and I met a lovely nun who gave me lunch, and gifts. She gave me a sweet for Ruby that resembled a slice of melon. This nunnery was rather off the beaten track and, perhaps in an endeavour to attract the tourist trade (upon which they rely for funds), had taped red flowers to the ends of small trees, giving a jolly appearance to the courtyards. Some other pilgrims, a family, examined this device, and we laughed and laughed together. Later they walked around a stupa with their son, playing sacred chants on their music device and twirling something. Again this place concentrated on chanting *Namu Amida Butsu*.

I next made my way to Cifu - '*Amitofu*' - and asked about *jingzour*. The nun thought that at Baiyun (Empty Cloud) nunnery, they sat quietly. But I didn't get there. It was further down the valley, I was afraid of being ripped off by the taxi drivers, so I walked past them, and the apiarists selling honey, somewhat despondent. When I lay down in some grass for a rest I startled the second bird I had spied in all of our ten days of travels.

I was walking back through town in my maroon shirt, when a Tibetan monk in a copy shop spotted me and called me to come in. He positively lit up. Another monk leapt up from his seat and offered it to me. Bit by bit, and with use of the phrase book, we conversed. When he heard that I was from '*Aodalia*' he was ecstatic. "Dalai Lama!!", he said, and clasped his hands together to show unanimity. (Kevin Rudd had, at this time, met for half an hour with the DL, in spite of Chinese disapproval. Afterwards the Chinese withdrew a trade order, and an executive from Rio Tinto based in China was arrested.). There was much animated discussion amongst the monks in the shop who were the only ones there apart from a Chinese friend. My interlocutor was big and smelly. I tried my word, '*jingzour*', and showed him how it is done, asked him if that is what he did. We went around 'meditation' but he kept returning to the subject of the Dalai Lama and showed me chanting in a very low-throated way. He pointed to his ear. I think he meant that his practise was chanting. He kept patting me on my chest which was a bit disconcerting, with more animated commentary, but I think he meant "This girl is a genuine Buddhist" - the true heart. We got onto the subject of walking. I showed him my feet: 'sore'. He then showed me his hand, cupped - the fingertips. Then he showed me the map of Wutaishan. It dawned on me that the shape of the main peaks of Wutaishan, seen from above, match the fingertips of a cupped hand facing north. And he, I gathered, had just walked all around them! None of this bowling up in a shiny car, paying \$ for incense which burns as you bow three times in the shrine, take photos, buy a vulgar trinket from a stall. The monk took out his mobile phone and flicked through to an address. It was the name of a monk or a centre in Katoomba, which is near where I live. I beamed at him - I had been to this centre in Lurline St. It was a marvellous connection at the end of a somewhat frustrating day.

That night as Ru and I went to sleep, we listened to the regular ringing of a bell. It came from Pusadina terrace across the way. 108 times I was reminded of the mystery of the Way - everything was in each peal: death, effort, love, joy, friendship and true dharma. As one of the t-shirts I had seen read, " *Make everyone very happy feelings*".

Jukai Vows

Kim Bagot

The Three Vows of Refuge (*Three Homecomings*)

I take refuge in the Buddha.

I devote myself to making a home in the sacred hall of Buddha, the one who truly is awakened; the one whose peace of heart bids welcome to all, whose teachings truly bode well for all suffering beings.

I take refuge in the Dharma.

I devote myself to being at home fully in the great silent way of the Tathagata, the one who has truly arrived.

I take refuge in the Sangha.

I devote myself to making a home for the community of peace, integrity and intimacy - a home of amity and metta.

The Three Pure Precepts (*Three Basic Principles of Practice*)

I vow to maintain the Precepts.

I vow to live by Ahimsa, the great silent peace in all our hearts and minds; to really live by the subtle, mysterious graciousness inherent in/all things.

I vow to practice all good dharmas.

I vow to walk the way of integrity for my whole life.

I vow to save the many beings.

I vow to wake to my boundless, joyful, true being - at home, at work, at the shops, on the road; to practice intimacy with the good times and the not so good times.

The Ten Grave Precepts (*The Ten Principles of Practising the Great Peace*)

Not Killing.

I take up the way of killing off the mind road endlessly; of practising Ahimsa, the peace which passes all our understandings; I vow to tend the whole tree of life.

Not Stealing.

I take up the way of not stealing my Buddha-nature; I vow not to try to gain enlightenment, to be careful about

my grasping in all its sneaky forms.

Not Misusing Sex.

I take up the way of true intimacy and integrity, of reconciling the duality of eroticism with the one great peace; I vow to celebrate the sacred dance of sexuality following the steps of the Precepts; I take up the way of warm-hearted loving-kindness towards all.

Not Speaking Falsely.

I take up the way of listening for the great silence, the silence in the heart of things; of allowing my friends and family members, and all beings, to guide me with their truth.

Not Giving or Taking Drugs.

I take up the way of not blocking the great light, the light that floods in through “the cracks in everything”; I vow not to block up the many cracks in myself with newspapers, news bulletins, food, wine, television, idle chatter or lifeless zazen.

Not Discussing Faults of Others.

I take up the way of not finding any others, or their faults, in the great peace which passes all our understandings or corrections; I take up the way of Sangha-building, of nurturing the fault-lines and growing tips in everyone, especially myself; the way of avoiding “loose lips” and sloppy speaking.

Not Praising Myself while Abusing Others.

I take up the way of not denigrating others to build up my self-importance; I vow to give everyone a fair go.

Not Sparing the Dharma Assets.

I take up the way of mindfully managing the ever-present wealth of the Dharma generously and ethically, to aim for a return on investment of vast emptiness; I vow not to constrain or devalue the “assets” of my friends and family members.

Not Indulging in Anger.

I take up the way of not indulging my angry feelings, like spoiled children, of entertaining my self-centred stories and the self-justifications emanating from my darker side; I vow gently to draw these suffering little beings into the great peace by taking them in hand, shining on them the light of selfless wisdom.

Not Defaming the Three Treasures.

I take up the way of not dishonouring or disregarding the living truths of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha; I vow to actualize them with this very ordinary body to the best of my abilities; I vow to become a haven for those suffering; to become a reservoir of Dharma-truth in the river of realization flowing into the ocean of all being; I vow to attain and maintain a beginner’s mind.



Glenys Jackson, *Mu*

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