

**Reverend Monsignor Ambrose Madtha
Chargé d’Affaires, a.i.
Apostolic Nunciature
87 Ai Kuo East Road
106 Taipei, Taiwan R.O.C.**

Your Eminence,

I have read of His Holiness Pope John Paul II’s passing on April 3, 2005. I am very pained by this news. The Pope’s passing is our world’s loss. He was a religious leader for all humankind whose unwavering commitment to promoting world peace and whose engagement in interreligious dialogue have been greatly felt all over the world. I believe people of all religions, all countries and all races will commemorate him forever.

I met with His Holiness Pope John Paul II personally in Vatican City in 1997. I will never forget that meeting with the Pope. His wisdom and compassion have opened the heavy door to pluralistic dialogue and tolerance among people of all religions. This is a legacy for humankind that will forever be in this world.

I would like to represent the more than one million followers of Dharma Drum Mountain worldwide in extending our condolences on the Pope’s passing.

Respectfully yours,

**Master Sheng Yen, Founder
Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association**

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Founder/Teacher

Chan Master Ven. Dr. Sheng Yen

Editor-in-chief

David Berman

Coordinator

Virginia Tan

Photography

John Feng, Jerry Roach

Contributing editors

Ernie Heau, Kevin Mathewson, Virginia Tan, Wei Tan, Sheila Sussman

Contributors

Rikki Asher, Berle Driscoll, Jeffrey Kung, Rebecca Li, Charlotte Mansfield, Mike Morical, Bruce Rickenbacker, Wei Tan, Tan Yee Wong (Chang Ji Shi)

Administrator

Guo Chii Shi

Chan 禪 Magazine

From the Editor	4
Dharma of Teachings, Dharma of Mind	6
<i>The fifth in a series of lectures based on the Platform Sutra by Chan Master Sheng Yen</i>	
Togata and Coda	14
<i>Poem by Adam Pergament</i>	
“Who is dragging a corpse around?”	18
<i>Retreat Report by C.M.</i>	
The Past	25
<i>News from the Chan Meditation Center and DDMBA</i>	
The Future	33
<i>Retreats, classes, and other upcoming events</i>	
Chan Center Affiliates	35

From The Editor

I was writing a rather complicated editorial about Theresa Schiavo, and Pope John Paul II, and the “sanctity of life,” and the interplay of religion and politics...when suddenly, my father died.

Actually, my dad’s death was sudden only in the sense that enlightenment is sudden – he awoke, and suddenly died, much as I awoke an hour later and suddenly learned that he was dead. But it was also gradual in the sense that all cultivation is gradual – he had had Parkinson’s for over 20 years, and his world had gradually shrunk, until it consisted mostly of my mom, with whom he could communicate less and less, of the TV, which he could see less and less, and of his thoughts, which he was less and less able to share.

During the last year he often sat with his eyes closed, his forehead resting on one hand, sometimes dozing but often not, often just giving himself a rest from the double vision they could no longer correct, and his face and frame having shrunk, his hair and beard having gone a little wild, he looked a little hidden, a little far away, as indeed he was. Like someone sneaking out of a party, he had gradually receded from us, and then he was suddenly, quietly gone. Out the door.

My dad had made it clear that he was ready to go. Not that he suffered greatly being here, not that he complained, and not that there was nothing left for him to enjoy, but he nevertheless made it clear that he was ready. He had done what I thought was a truly magnificent job accommodating his growing

disability, with the indignities and losses of liberty and intrusions on privacy that it had entailed, but he had also made it clear that there was a level of disability awaiting him that he was not interested in, and that he’d prefer to leave before achieving it. A few years ago there was a family meeting, chaired by my mother, about living wills and medical interventions and the like, and when someone, maybe my sister, brought up the possibility that a nursing home might be “the last stop,” my dad roused himself and interrupted, “No no. The stop before the nursing home is going to be the last stop.” And so it was.

Being the devout atheist that he was, my dad had more in common with Pope John Paul II than one might imagine, or than either might have admitted. Both were born in May of 1920; both put themselves at risk in the fight against fascism, Karol Wojtyla in Nazi-occupied Poland, my dad before Joe McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee; both spoke out throughout their lives against war, social injustice, the death penalty, and the immorality of capitalism; both were natural entertainers, who applied their charm and wit and humour to their entirely serious concerns.

And both died the first week of April, 2005, at the age of 84, of Parkinson’s disease, having both made the choice to live every day of life that had been given them, yet to waste no effort resisting death when it came.

My dad was Norm Berman. He was born on May 26, 1920, and died April 7, 2005.



Dharma of Teachings, Dharma of Mind

by

Chan Master Sheng Yen

In May of 2003, Master Sheng Yen held a Chan Retreat in Moscow that was organized by Wuji-men, a Russian martial arts club. During the retreat, Master Sheng Yen lectured on teachings from the Platform Sutra by the Sixth Patriarch Huineng. This is the fourth of six articles based on those lectures. Douglas Gildow made the oral translation from Chinese to English. Transcriptions were prepared by Chang Wen Shi, Bruce Rickenbacher, and Victor Ku, and edited by Ernest Heau with assistance from Chang Wen Shi.

May 13

For those practicing huatou, should one ask the huatou or should one recite it? To clarify this, let me describe the four stages of huatou.

The first stage is “reciting the huatou” or “repeating the huatou.” Initially, our minds are confused and full of wandering thoughts. At this stage, we just recite the huatou over and over to ourselves. We don’t really have much feeling for the huatou, we just tell ourselves we have this job to do, so we just keep repeating the huatou.

The second stage is “questioning the huatou.” At this stage, we have truly developed interest in the huatou, and we want to know the answer to it, so we keep asking the huatou over and over. At this second stage of

questioning the huatou, we still repeat it, but we have truly developed interest in knowing the answer. But we still have to repeat the phrase.

The third stage is “investigating the huatou.” This stage occurs after the doubt mass arises. (This is not ordinary doubt, but an overwhelming desire to find the answer to the huatou.) We no longer have scattered thoughts and are fully absorbed in investigating the huatou, over and over. In this state, we are not aware of the flavor of the food; we hear talking, but are not really listening. We are completely absorbed and surrounded by the huatou. It is our whole life. In other words, we have entered into the huatou, and become the huatou. Whether eating, sleeping, walking, or doing any other activity, we are fully into the huatou. It is our own little universe that we’ve entered into.

Afternoon Samadhi

The fourth stage is called “watching the huatou.” Although one has attained enlightenment, one still has vexations. Enlightenment does not necessarily mean one has severed all vexations, it simply means that one has seen one’s buddha nature. But some time after the experience, vexations usually return. Therefore, after enlightenment one must continue to practice, or “watch the huatou.” Until one realizes full enlightenment, vexations will not be completely severed. Therefore, one needs to keep watching the huatou and never leave it.

Samadhi is not just a mental phenomenon — it is linked to both body and mind. Especially at the beginning, the body element in samadhi is strong. We previously talked about how consistent use of a meditation method can change the scattered mind to a concentrated one. As wandering thoughts decrease, the mental energy needed to focus will also decrease. Then from a concentrated mind one can reach unified mind. This is possible even without using a method like silent illumination or huatou.



When we speak of unified mind, that means both body and mind have unified. This is the result of using the method quite well. Whether this leads to samadhi can depend on whether one is tense or relaxed. Perhaps one has been anxious, even mixing breathing with other methods, and using the body to unify in a tense way. In such a case one's body will feel smaller and smaller because one is tense and the body feels like it is collapsing. Eventually one feels cool, then cold, and then extremely uncomfortable. In this situation the scattered mind will rise again. This kind of unification of body and mind is unhealthy and will not lead to samadhi. Regardless of which method one uses, one's mind should not be nervous.

If however, one can unify body and mind in a relaxed way, and one is very proficient in the method, the burden of the body drops away. One will then experience happiness. One is said to feel "lightness and ease" — lightness as a sensation of the body, and ease as a feeling in the mind. Some people mistake this feeling of lightness and ease for enlightenment, but they have merely unified their body and mind in a proper way. In our ox metaphor, at this stage one not only has seen the ox, but one has begun to train it.

When body and mind are thus correctly unified, we can then enter samadhi. Initially, we can enter the sequential samadhi as taught in the Hinayana schools, or we can unify with the environment, in accordance with the Chan Mahayana methods. Since we are practicing sudden enlightenment, at this point we do not cultivate sequential samadhi. Instead, we observe the environment as the body. As we do this, the environment may also disappear. So as both body and the environment disappear, all that remains is the mind fixed on the method.

At this point the method becomes effortless. Like a jockey who does not think of himself as riding the horse, or a horse who does not think someone is riding him, the two are unified. We want to be like this jockey and enter the Mahayana samadhi in which we forget the environment, while still using the method. This unification of body, mind, and environment is a samadhi that can be reached through silent illumination.

If we are using the huatou method, after giving rise to a sense of doubt we may then develop a "great ball of doubt." At that point our whole life is absorbed by the huatou. We may no longer be asking the huatou with the words in our minds, but we are seeking the answer to it; we have this strong aspiration to find the answer. At this point our practice is powerful and continuous, without break. At such a point, a practitioner walks, eats, and sleeps, but is completely absorbed by the huatou, is inside the huatou. This is also a form of samadhi. The Hinayana samadhi is more like a concentration that is limited to one's own body. The samadhi achieved through silent illumination and huatou is one in which body, mind, and environment are all unified.

The basic Hinayana methods of attaining samadhi are the Four Foundations of Mindfulness and the Five Methods for Stilling the Mind. The Four Foundations consist of mindfulness of body, mindfulness of sensations, mindfulness of mind, and mindfulness of dharmas (mental phenomena). After one is successful in such contemplations, one will enter samadhi states. In Chan, one does not cultivate sequential samadhi. The enlightenment that is sought is sudden enlightenment. In the Mahayana samadhi, after one's body and mind are unified, one also unifies with



the environment. One also relinquishes samadhi, as in the saying, "Let go of all forms." Samadhi is also a form, so it should be let go of. One continues to do this throughout one's life, in all activities, dropping or letting go of all forms, including the forms of samadhi.

Now I'd like to share with you stories about two Chan masters from modern China. This first is about the great Master Xuyun, or Empty Cloud, the teacher of my teacher. As was the custom in China, he traveled to different monasteries to practice. On one of his travels, he was investigating a huatou, and developed the great doubt. Walking along the banks of the Yangzi River, he was so deeply absorbed in his huatou that he fell in. Three

days later, a fisherman pulled Empty Cloud out of the river with a large net. Seeing that he was a monk, some fishermen carried him off to the monastery. The monks rang a hand chime in his ears, and he finally woke up and said, "What are you all doing here?"

Anyway, Empty Cloud was like a fish in the river for three days. Because he was unified with the environment, he did not know that he was in the water. He was not afraid nor did he drown. This was not an enlightenment experience for Empty Cloud, but a deep samadhi state. Even today in India, there are yogis who can be buried under the ground for dozens of hours, and they can be exhumed and still be okay. However, when this happened to

Empty Cloud, it was an accident. He was not performing some kind of stunt.

The next story is of the Chan Master Laiguo, who was practicing huatou in a monastery. Eventually, he decided that life in the monastery was not for him, so he took his meditation cushion and his alms bowl and started wandering. When he was hungry he would beg for food. He did not always know where he was, but just kept wandering. At night he would sleep wherever he could find a place. As he walked, ate, and slept, he continued to investigate his huatou. Occasionally, when he got tired he would do sitting meditation and continue his huatou. His entire life was engulfed by it. Because he was so deep inside the huatou, he was unaware of whom he had met, where he had been, and how many days he had been wandering.

Both Laiguo and Xuyun later achieved great enlightenment because they cultivated and held the great doubt mass for a long time. As the saying goes, "Great doubt, great enlightenment." These are both examples of practitioners using the huatou method to achieve samadhi. In one case, Xuyun fell in the river and floated around in samadhi; in the other case, Laiguo walked around living a normal life in a state of samadhi.

I will tell you a third story, this one about entering samadhi while practicing silent illumination. Master Hanshan (not to be confused with the Tang dynasty poet of the same name) lived in the sixteenth century, during the Ming dynasty. In front of his monastery was a small stream over which there was a bridge. One day he sat on the bridge to rest. He looked at the water and listened to the sound of it as it flowed under the bridge. Sit-

ting on the bridge, he forgot himself. One full day and night passed. The next day someone saw him sitting there and spoke to him. At this point, Hanshan became aware of his surroundings again, and said, "I just sat down a moment ago!" He had forgotten his body and was fully absorbed in observing the sights and sounds of the stream. He had unified with his environment and had entered samadhi, not realizing a full day had passed.

Direct Contemplation

We will now practice direct contemplation. Direct contemplation is not intuition. With intuition, we come to a conclusion, or we have an idea about something. However, intuition is subjective — our minds are confused and we put our subjective ideas into the situation. In contrast, direct contemplation is completely objective — you do not contemplate based on past experience or ideas, you just observe. Whatever you see, you see; whatever you hear, you hear. That's all. There are two ways to use direct contemplation: you either select an object for observation, or you can be unselective. You can look at something and confine your observation to that one thing and nothing else. Or you can select a field of vision and visually contemplate everything in that field of vision, without selecting any special object. The entire field of vision becomes your object of contemplation. Or, you can select a certain sound to listen to and confine your observation to that one sound. Or you can contemplate all the sounds that you hear without focusing on any specific sound.

Whether your method is selective or not, whether contemplating visual objects or sounds, there are three things you should not do in direct contemplation. First, do not name

the object that you contemplate; second, do not describe it; and third, do not compare it with anything, either in the present or the past. Once again, this is not intuition because unlike intuition, you do not put any subjective ideas into your observation. I repeat, do not name the object, do not describe it, and do not compare it. The object you observe is just what it is, just the object-in-and-of-itself. The reason for the three rules is that naming, describing, and comparing arise from our knowledge and past experience and are hence subjective. What you are observing then is not the thing-in-itself, but something coming out of your cognitive associations.

One more note: if you choose to observe by looking, do not mix this in with observing sounds, unless the thing that you're looking at and listening to is the same. For instance, if you're looking at water, then you can also listen to the water. But if you are listening to an airplane flying by, then you should not also simultaneously visually contemplate water.

Find a comfortable spot, wherever you like, within this area. Once you select a spot, do not move. You can assume any posture you like, standing, sitting, or lying down. Then select some sound or object to observe. You can start now, but remember: no naming, no describing, and no comparing. For now, everyone should just do direct contemplation.

If you are practicing huatou, do not use it for this exercise. For now, I suggest you limit yourself to one object because it is relatively difficult to observe everything in one's field of vision. If you do that you are more likely to have wandering thoughts. Let's just try it that way, and not ask more questions for now. Just practice.

[They practice direct contemplation outdoors.]

“THERE ARE THREE THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO IN DIRECT CONTEMPLATION. FIRST, DO NOT NAME THE OBJECT YOU CONTEMPLATE; SECOND, DO NOT DESCRIBE IT; AND THIRD, DO NOT COMPARE IT WITH ANYTHING, EITHER IN THE PRESENT OR PAST.”

For most people, it is difficult to continually observe one object for fifteen minutes without naming, describing, or comparing. It is easier to do this just for a few seconds or for a few minutes, but it is possible to do it for fifteen minutes or more. How many of you were able to maintain focus on a visual or sound object for at least one minute without naming, describing, or comparing?

[Raising of hands.]

That is very good. Normally when we observe things, we do so subjectively. We are not acting like mirrors that just reflect. Regardless of which meditation method we use, huatou or silent illumination, we want to put down our subjective ideas. For instance, when using huatou, we don't analyze it with subjective thinking. Direct contemplation still involves forms, but it is a preliminary step to entering the formless.

Some may think that even an infant can do direct contemplation, but this would be incorrect. An infant's faculties for observation are undeveloped. It is simply ignorant, it is not doing direct contemplation.

If you can practice this method very well, you can apply it in daily life. When you are doing something, do just that and not anything else. This will reduce the amount of mental fluctuation you experience in daily life.

Now it's time to eat. Eating is just eating, so we will just eat.

Sudden or Gradual Enlightenment

Let's continue with Huineng's verse on formlessness:

Although in the Dharma itself there is no sudden or gradual,
in confusion and enlightenment there is slowness and speed.

The Mind Dharma is not connected with sudden or gradual enlightenment, because it is not in any way linked to practice. But as the verse says, "...in confusion and enlightenment, there is slowness and speed." A confused person will not see the formless mind at all, but an enlightened person will experience no-form right away.

The Dharma of Teachings can be followed by practice, its purpose being for us to attain the Dharma of Mind. We should perhaps say "discover" instead of "attain," because the Dharma of Mind is pre-existent in us; it cannot be explained, nor can it really be "attained" by practice. This Dharma is always there, fully present. It is just that we don't know that we

have this "no-mind," this mind of wisdom. The Dharma of Mind is unconnected to ideas of sudden and gradual, but the Dharma of the Teachings can be connected to sudden and gradual. That is to say, some teachings can be for sudden enlightenment and others are directed towards gradual enlightenment.

In the Platform Sutra "formlessness" refers to the Dharma of Mind, but the verse doesn't actually teach us concrete methods for achieving it. Rather, it describes the Dharma of Mind and indicates that we need to drop attachment in order to see this Dharma. How do we drop these attachments? All of these methods for dropping attachments are the Dharma of Teachings, which allows us to move away from a mind of confusion and then to drop this confused mind. We do this through understanding the causes of confused mind and also through continuously practicing a method. Through the Dharma of the Teachings, first we see that we do have a confused mind, that our self-centeredness is very strongly rooted, and we learn how to put this mind down. If we succeed in doing so we will be able to see the Dharma of Mind. From there we become enlightened and we will be able to realize no-form. Everything I have been describing thus far has been the Dharma of the Teachings. Without it, we wouldn't know that we have a confused mind, we wouldn't know how to drop it, and we wouldn't have the means to perceive formlessness.

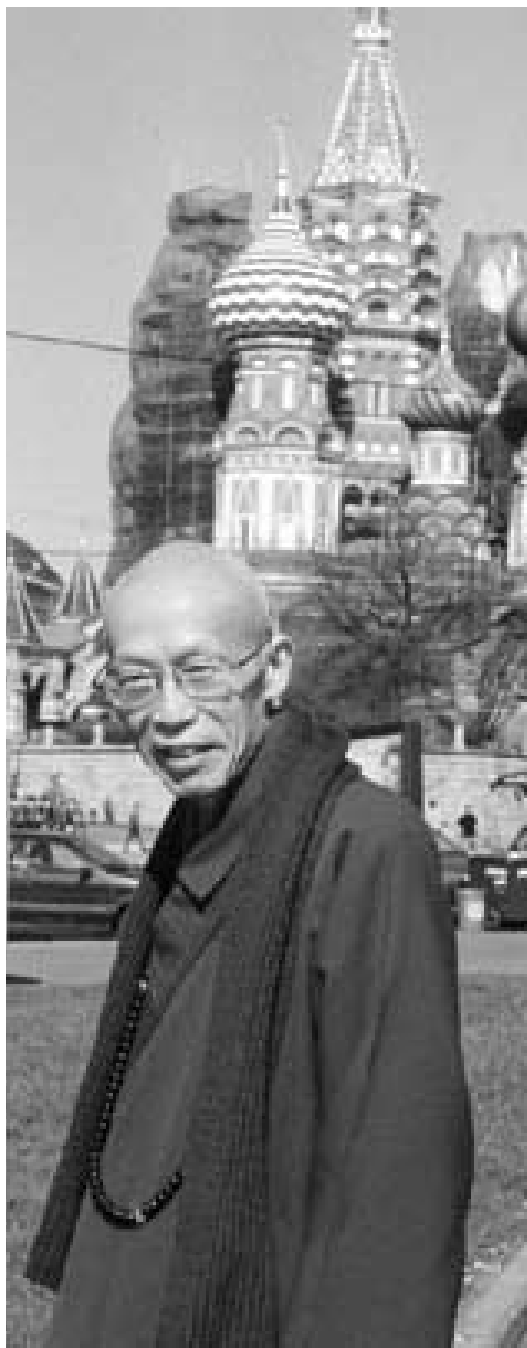
Am I teaching the Dharma of Mind or the Dharma of Teachings? Is there a lack of the Dharma of the Teachings in Russia or is there a lack of Dharma of Mind? Or both? How many think Russia lacks Dharma of Mind, and you are here to learn it? Please raise your hands. Those who think that Russia al-

ready has Dharma of Mind, please raise your hands. Maybe some people are so involved in their huatou they are not raising their hands. [Laughter] It can be confusing because these are similar-sounding words. Some people are very sneaky and they don't want to raise their hands at all. [Laughter] I'm sure many are still not clear about the difference.

If the Mind Dharma is inexpressible, how can I teach it? I can only talk of the Dharma of Teachings. Those who raised their hands in hopes of studying Dharma of Mind as well as Dharma of Teachings were clearly wrong. It is impossible to study the Dharma of Mind. The Dharma of formlessness is the Dharma of Mind, and cannot be spoken.

A disciple asked his master, "When Bodhidharma came to China, what did he bring?" The teacher replied, "Bodhidharma didn't bring anything." The disciple was rather confused: "Well, if he didn't bring anything, why did he bother coming?"

What was it that Bodhidharma went to China to tell people they already had? I tell people that they already have this Mind Dharma, that everyone has this mind of wisdom, formlessness, and no-self. Do I teach methods for discovering the Dharma of Mind? No, I teach how to practice putting down vexations, letting go of clinging. If you do that, the Dharma of Mind will naturally arise. Perhaps it is better to say wisdom "appears." "Arises" may sound like we originally don't have it. So, when we drop the vexations, wisdom appears. What I said tonight is very important because you all have this Dharma of Mind, and some of you were not sure you did. I hope this matter is clarified.



Togata and Coda

Adam Pergament

V. 塔型

Iridescent Shibuya schoolgirl dances
with prowlers and reaches for light
she is already wearing

In Kyoto a man laughs as he
cuts off his arm and places it
bleeding
on the ground as an offering

Near Gogo-an a monk points at
the moon and mistakes his
finger for a cat's tail wondering

In a tea house by a fire
of purest pine pitch
Sen No Rikkyu laughs as he pours
sings tea is just tea

In England at the University
they are changing the letters
the first and the last
but
the middle holds fast

On the radio, in the bookstore,
at nine in the morning,
a man tells me
that he couldn't sleep,

at three in the morning,
but he smiles as he says it,
'cause at four in the morning,
he drifts nodding off to slumber
knows the music is still there

It is a matter of open (ness)
cascading mind down
gravel strewn slope

A lacewing fire escape lady languishes on a cell phone

By the pond by the 塔 the reeds clack incessantly (without cease)

Within the space of this moment
a moment is born

Puddles rise foggy dew in the hollows of roadside concavity

VI. Coda

Swirl Swirl Swirl Swirl
Elixir Elixir Elixir

a bugler, playing taps, through a digital horn
can't chip a note
can't sound forlorn
at the end of the day

Swirl Swirl Swirl Swirl
Elixir Elixir Elixir

Adam Gregory Pergament
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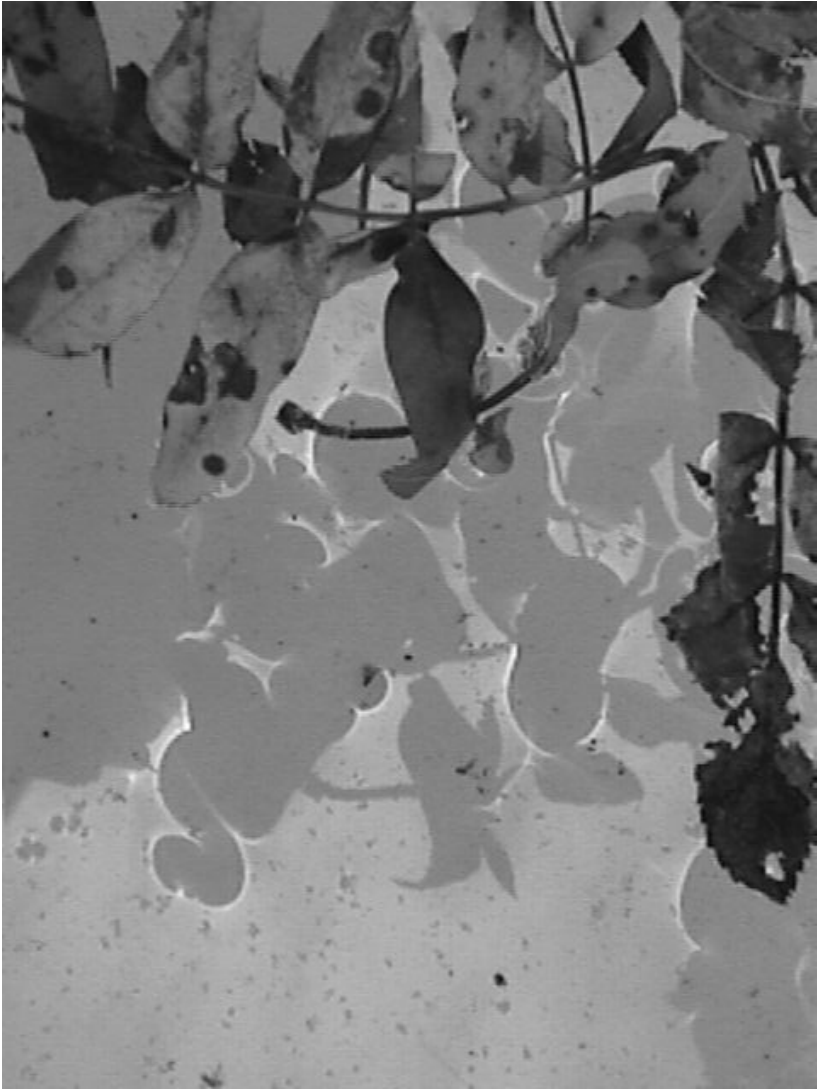


Photo by Chang Wen Shi

Who is dragging a corpse around?

Retreat Report by C.M.

Background

This is my fifth intensive Chan retreat and my first “huatou” retreat after two seven-day “counting breath” retreats and two seven-day “silent illumination” retreats.

Vexation accumulates in an ordinary mind as easily as time goes by. Like the New Year house cleaning, an intensive Chan retreat serves its purpose for the mind. A fully devoted practice in an intensive Chan retreat gives me repose. It gives me time to refresh the mind, time to be close to the self, and time to get to know more about the self. It always brings me back to what is important in life. And thus, I don't need to sweat that much dealing with daily challenges after returning from a Chan retreat.

Having said that, it never occurred to me that huatou practice could do any good for a lazy lay practitioner like me. Shifu once told us that huatou practice was particularly useful for serious and diligent practitioners who had generated a big ball of doubt in the mind. I knew I was far, far away from being diligent in practicing Chan. I did get confused in life from time to time, but I didn't know that I had a ball of doubt in me.

And yet, having failed to make time for the planned silent illumination retreat last winter, I felt I had to attend an intensive retreat badly. Since June was the earliest I was able to take time off from my new job,

circumstances brought me to the ten-day huatou retreat in June, 2003.

Huatou

Huatou (“source of words” in Chinese) is a question that one asks oneself to generate a great ball of doubt. It is a mind-cultivation method unique to Chinese Chan Buddhism. Each huatou was derived from ancient Chinese Chan masters' enlightenment stories, which were known as gongan (“public case”).

The three huatous we were suggested to apply in this Huatou retreat were: “What is wu?” (wu being a notion equivalent to “emptiness”); “What's the original face before being born?” (In the Platform Sutra Hui Ming got enlightened when the Sixth Chan Patriarch Hui Neng asked him this question); “Who is dragging this corpse around?” (I can't remember the gongan story now). Each attendee would have to choose one huatou, and only one, to practice during the whole retreat.

Investigating the Huatou

A huatou is not intended to be asked and analyzed with the “intellect.”

Every one of us has a big doubt in mind about life, and unless that big doubt is cleared, one will not be able to stay at ease at all times. To most of us, we don't know what it is and

don't even know of its existence. It is a big question mark that the conscious, reasoning mind, which people use in daily life, is not able to comprehend.

Asking the huatou, one does not try to find an answer to the huatou question. Instead, one asks the huatou to bring out the very fundamental question one has in life. It is fine even if one doesn't know exactly what the fundamental question is. And the fundamental question may not be describable in any words that the intellectual mind can come up with.

The huatou's purposes are to provoke one's awareness of the fundamental question's existence, and to develop a keen interest in finding an answer to that fundamental question.

While huatou is a very powerful method that goes directly to the mind and to the root of vexations, practitioners have to apply it carefully with right attitudes.

Shifu has taught us that there are four stages of huatou practice:

1. **Reciting the huatou.**

A practitioner who doesn't have a doubt in mind will normally fall into this category. One recites the huatou like one recites any name.

2. **Asking the huatou.**

This is the stage where a practitioner starts to want to know the answer to the huatou. Thus, instead of just reciting the huatou, one starts to ask the huatou and develops an interest in finding an answer.

3. **Investigating the huatou.**

At this stage, one starts to generate the ball of doubt. Note that investigating the huatou with the intellectual mind is a trap one wants to avoid. That is to say, one should not try to analyze the huatou for an answer to the huatou. The ball of doubt should grow bigger and bigger when one continues to "investigate" the huatou.

Even though one is able to carry on daily chores without problems, one's intellectual mind does not function as well as it normally does. One stops analyzing what's around one. One is in huatou and in the ball of doubt.

One might stay in this stage for a while until an occurrence causes the blow-up of this huge ball of doubt. At such a time, one sees self-nature and gets enlightened.

4. **Watching the huatou.**

Whenever one sees self-nature, one is enlightened at that moment. Having seen one's self-nature, one is free from certain vexations but not all. To be free from all vexations, one has to be fully enlightened like Sakyamuni Buddha. And thus, it is important that one continues to practice the huatou and cultivate the mind even after having had the enlightenment experience.

However, instead of investigating the huatou, one watches the huatou. Apparently, this is beyond what an unenlightened mind is able to comprehend, so don't ask me what watching the huatou is about. My

suggestion is asking Shifu after you think you got enlightened.

Huatou was a total stranger to me before I attended this retreat. And thus it was difficult for me to have a good grasp of the method.

Day One

I tried each of the three huatous. None of them was appealing to me. I got no feeling and they generated no doubt in me. "What is wu?" was a short sentence. I feared that I might control my breathing with it similar to what I had experienced in my first retreat practicing the counting-the-breath method. Thus, I decided to use "Who is dragging a corpse around?" as my huatou at the end of day one.

Day Two

Shifu said it was important to apply the correct attitude in applying the huatou, namely:

1. **No resistance;** no resistance to any arising wandering thoughts. One does not feel bad about having wandering thoughts. One does not embrace the wandering thought. And, one does not allow oneself to be led by the wandering thought. One simply drops the wandering thought as soon as one becomes aware of the arising of wandering thoughts.
2. **No seeking.** It is important that one does not seek for good experiences, even enlightenment. Anything other than the huatou is a wandering thought. Simply apply the huatou and practice the method.

3. **No control.** One does not try to control whatever phenomenon one faces. Let it be.

It is important to avoid using the intellectual mind and reasoning or analyzing the huatou. Practice huatou like a dumb person. No thinking, no analyzing, no reasoning.

If one is too smart not to use the intellectual mind, play dumb. Intellectual mind is no good in practicing huatou. It impedes the practice.

I always knew that I was dumb and thus, this was not a problem for me. I kept on reciting "Who is dragging a corpse around?" in every waking moment that wandering thoughts failed to occupy me.

After Shifu's morning Dharma talk, Fashi led us for an outdoor walking meditation in the woods. My mind continued to focus on my huatou. Reciting "Who is dragging a corpse around?" and seeing people walking in front of me, I suddenly felt sort of "knowing" how badly we, ordinary people, were caught in traps of ignorance. Sad feelings struck me when I realized how unlikely it was that people be free from ignorance.

I found that tears started to drop down my face and my breathing started to go fast after returning to the Chan hall. Even after I sat down to meditate, the body's reaction didn't seem to ease a bit. Rather, it seemed like it was about to burst out. Having had the qi-moving reaction I experienced in the first intensive retreat, I figured something was coming and I might make noise in the Chan hall.

So, with the permission of the Chan hall supervisor, I left the hall to release whatever was in me. As soon as I walked out of the Chan hall I allowed myself do whatever was necessary. I felt like an unreasonable person demanding an answer to whatever confused me. I started to walk fast and cried out loud for a while until it naturally went away. My pace became slow again. Once I resumed applying the huatou, my pace started to go fast again and I found myself crying out loud again till the end of a second cycle. After that, I was able to go back into the Chan hall and continue sitting meditation.

I knew the qi-moving reaction I experienced during the first retreat was a result of my controlling my breathing by misapplying the counting-the-breath method, so I was afraid that the morning reaction was caused by a misuse of the huatou method. I had to ask for an interview with the supervising Fashi. During the interview, Fashi told me that the experience I had in the morning was normal and did not mean that I applied the method in the wrong way.

Having cleared the concern about misapplying the method, I continued to recite my huatou.

Day Three

Having recited “Who is dragging a corpse around?” for days, I still couldn’t seem to generate any ball of doubt. At times, I started to ask the huatou intentionally with an attitude. However, it gave rise to fast breathing and I didn’t feel comfortable with it. Shifu had asked us to do “no seeking” in practicing huatou. When I asked the huatou with the attitude of seeking an answer, my body reacted right away.

Not just fast breathing – I felt helpless knowing that I might not be able to get an answer at all. I figured I had to be careful. No seeking. I then gave up pushing the huatou with an attitude; I simply recited. If there were any ball of doubt, I believed it would come naturally and there was no need to push for it.

“Who is dragging a corpse around?” still meant little to me. I had to pay extra attention reciting it because wandering thoughts kept rising; it seemed they enjoyed my company a lot and wouldn’t go away.

There was one time I caught myself reciting “Who is carrying slippers around?” instead of “Who is dragging a corpse around?” because “slippers” and “dragging” has the same sound “tuo” in Chinese. I almost laughed out loud. At other times, I found myself thinking of lion reciting “Who is dragging a corpse around?” because “corpse” and “lion” sound the same in Chinese.

Reciting the huatou became funny. What should I do?

Day Four

In the afternoon Dharma talk, Shifu advised that the huatou was merely there to help us generate the ball of doubt. It doesn’t need to mean anything. Anything that has a question mark and is able to trigger the creation of the ball of doubt to the very fundamental question in us would work.

I didn’t feel like going with slippers and dead lions any more. I decided to see if I should try another huatou even though one huatou



throughout the whole retreat was strongly recommended.

“There is no time. What is memory?” was a phrase I had read about in the booklet “Chan Comes West” at the beginning of the year. I was stuck to it like a magnet right away. I remembered that I wasn’t able to get it out of my mind for around three days. If I had had such a strong reaction to this phrase and it had a question mark, maybe I should try to see if it would work well as a huatou in this retreat.

It was amazing. As soon as I started to recite “There is no time. What is memory?” in the evening, my mind was stuck to it again. It

was like a swirl, or a black hole attracting all my attention. My mind couldn’t stop reciting “There is no time. What is memory?”. Naturally, the reciting went faster and faster and yet remained clear. At the same time, my breathing remained smooth, and my mind was calm and at peace. Bingo. I had found my huatou.

There is no time. What is memory?

Reciting my new huatou in the morning sitting meditation, I felt it wanted to lead me to Tao-Hwa-Yuan, the Chinese Shangri-La.

I continued to recite the huatou and followed Shifu’s instruction.

Day Six

My back started to feel like an iron board after a few sittings in the morning. I was not sure if I had misused the method again. Thus, I decided to drop the huatou whenever I found the iron board in my back. The iron board would be softened whenever I dropped the huatou. However, as soon as I picked up the huatou again, the iron board came back. There were only a few days left. I wanted to practice my huatou instead of dropping it. I figured I had to go for another interview to see what to do with it.

During the interview, as soon as I finished describing what I had experienced, Fashi asked if I had had any serious injury before. The only injury that I could think of was the Singapore accident when I was hit by a motorcycle which knocked me unconscious till the following morning. It cost me one month of sick leave and several years of dizziness. However, I was not aware of any injury to my back.

Fashi advised that qi might work on the old injury during meditation. He believed that my back was very likely hurt in that accident since such a big hit would have thrown my body up in the air, and it was very likely that my back was hurt when I fell. Since doctors only focus on the brain damage, the other injuries were likely ignored. He advised that I shouldn't worry about it as long as I was able to apply the huatou method. Having heard what he said, I felt relieved and was happy to pick up the huatou again.

Fashi was right. The iron board started to go away after a while. However, I felt that my

arms and hands were heavy. It seems that qi was being released from my two hands. My breathing remained smooth.

Days Seven-Ten

Leg pain, manipulated breathing, and wandering thoughts have been my three major obstacles since I started practicing sitting meditation. I am luckier than some for I seldom get caught in drowsiness when sitting.

Even though I was able to sit much longer than before without pain, leg pain was still an obstacle during this retreat. It was not a big issue in the first two days, but after a few days of intensive sitting, it became more of a problem. My mind was not able to focus on the huatou; it was mostly led by pain. At this time, the pain was difficult to bear, my chest was heavy, my face turned red and I started sweating.

When sitting in meditation, I tend to regulate my breathing if I focus on breathing. My breathing might appear to be smooth, but is actually manipulated. If the situation is not corrected in time, qi flow can be impeded and pressure can accumulate in the body, which can cause abrupt qi movement.

Wandering thoughts kept popping up even when I was reciting my huatou. In daily life, my brain is busy most of the time thinking, reasoning, organizing, analyzing... Reciting the huatou alone was not enough to fully occupy my mind. "Drop wondering thoughts and pick up huatou" is what I kept practicing to deal with wondering thoughts.

Dharma Talks

It is always a delight for me to listen to Shifu's Dharma talks. During this retreat, Shifu gave three Dharma talks a day covering:

1. Guidance in practicing huatou. Attitude, method, various errors and associated solutions.
2. Clarification of the enlightenment states.
3. Buddhadharma.

Shifu always has a very good handle on our states of mind. His teachings on obstacles and how to deal with them always come at the time when I need it.

I looked at Shifu when he gave us the Dharma talks; I wanted to be at ease as he is when I get old. Shifu seemed to know that; he told us that if it were not for a continuous practice of Chan, he would have generated all kinds of vexations.

The Journey Continues

It always puzzles me how people, including myself, do things to hurt themselves and others. It doesn't make sense at all, and yet, we do stupid things every day no matter how smart we think we are.

It particularly puzzled me how people could wrap bombs around their own bodies killing

themselves and other innocent people in return for the harm others had done them. Wouldn't killing be a bigger harm? How was a bigger harm acceptable when a minor one was not?

Sometimes, I have gotten frustrated finding myself doing stupid things or making the same mistakes over and over again. I knew I was not "supposed to" but I did. I couldn't understand why I didn't feel like doing what was making sense to me. I felt trapped. However, seeing great Buddhist practitioners like Shifu has given me hope. There are ways to help myself out.

There have been situations that have bothered me because I didn't understand how and why they had happened. From the teaching of causes and conditions, I have learned to be more accepting. From the teaching of cause and consequence, I have learned to be more diligent, working on causes that could contribute to desirable results rather than dwelling in sorrow.

Practice, like life, has its better times and worse times. These don't matter as long as the practice is moving in the right direction. After years of practicing Chan teachings from Shifu, even though I am never as diligent as Shifu suggests, I have found myself more relaxed in dealing with obstacles, and I have less vexation.

The journey is putting the puzzle pieces together into a clear picture. It is the journey of gaining more understanding. And the journey continues wherever I go.

The Past

News from the Chan Meditation Center and the DDMBA Worldwide

DDM Starts Five-Year Relief Plan in South Asia

After the devastating tsunami of December, 2004, the Dharma Drum Mountain (DDM) Foundation is drafting a five-year relief plan and will remain in the disaster area to set up local “peaceful mind” service stations. The plan will be based on models used successfully after the Taiwan earthquake of September 21, 1999. The main focus of the effort will be on the rehabilitation of mind and on caring for neglected children or those who have been unable to continue schooling.

In the first stage a full-time staff of relief workers will be dispatched from Taiwan and will train local volunteers to make comfort visits, will provide care for those in need, and will teach Mandarin language, DDM’s Eight Form Moving Meditation for physical health and stress relief, Buddhist basics and Chan meditation techniques.

There are more than one million tsunami survivors in Sri Lanka, most of them still living in temples and tented camps. To address their urgent housing needs, DDM, in cooperation with the Venerable Dr. Bodagama Chandima from the Theravada Samadhi Education Association, will construct 1000 housing units at Hambantota, in southern Sri Lanka. 300

houses will be constructed in the first phase, of which 100 have been donated by DDM.

Besides Sri Lanka, DDM has targeted Medan, Indonesia and coastal areas Thailand for it’s relief work. In order to encourage children in the disaster area to attend school, DDM and the local Bodhicitta Mandala Foundation in Indonesia is offering scholarships to more than 100 students. Meanwhile, through the assistance of the local Taiwanese population in Medan, locations for “Peaceful Mind” service stations have been found near the Medan downtown area.

In Thailand, DDM has combined the efforts of its local disciples with the resources of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University to help local monks to carry out mental counseling and reconstruction work for children.





Master Sheng Yen Attends Leaders' Meeting on Faith and Development

Master Sheng Yen attended the third Conference of Leaders of Faith and Development, held on the 31st of January and 1st of February in Dublin Castle. Organized by the World Bank, the conference was convened to discuss a variety of topics under the general heading, "The Development of Justice and Equality in the World."

Master Sheng Yen addressed the conference on the topic, "Compassion and Wisdom: Handling Conflict," expressing the hope that all beings would learn to treat others with compassion, manage their affairs with wisdom, and thereby reduce conflict in the world.

The two-day meeting was hosted by Lord George of Clifton, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Diarmuid

Martin, the Archbishop of Dublin, and James D. Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank.

The meeting was attended by religious leaders from Islam, Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism affiliated with the World Council of Churches, and economic and financial leaders from the United Nation Human Affairs group. Topics on the agenda included: "After the Tsunami Disaster: What Lessons Can We Learn From the Compassion of God And How Can These Societies be Rebuilt?"; "AIDS – The Issues of Morality and The Improvement of the Support System"; "The Unheard Majority: Women and Young People"; and "The Influence of Poverty and Social Marginalization in Areas of Conflict: How to Develop Global Security." The aim of the meeting was to build a global system based on equality, humanity, and social justice through international effort and cooperation.

Changes at DDRC

Chan Master Sheng Yen's organization in the United States began with the founding of the Chan Meditation Center (CMC) in 1977, incorporated as a not-for-profit educational organization. In 1996 he founded the Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association (DDMBA), which was incorporated as a not-for-profit religious organization. The Dharma Drum Retreat Center (DDRC) was purchased by DDMBA in 1997, and has been undergoing continuous renovation to better serve as an international center of intensive Chan practice.

Now the DDRC has been given an independent legal status of its own. On October 22, 2004, DDRC was incorporated in New York State as a not-for-profit 501(c)3 religious organiza-

tion. As such, DDRC now has its own board of directors: Chan Master Sheng Yen (President), Guo Jun Fa Shi (resident teacher beginning 2006), Rebecca Li, Harry Miller, Wei Tan, and Iris Wang. Chang Wu Shi, while not a member of the board, serves as treasurer.

In a brief lecture to the DDRC board, Chan Master Sheng Yen articulated his vision for the mission of DDRC: "The mission of Dharma Drum Retreat Center is to promote the practice of Chinese Chan Buddhism in the western hemisphere. The teaching practiced and taught is based on the Dharma Drum Mountain Lineage developed by the founder, Chan Master Sheng Yen."

It is a mission shared by all three organizations that constitute our Dharma Drum community, and while all three organizations





run programs of Dharma practice, Shifu explained that his vision is that CMC specializes in the recruitment of members and volunteers, DDMBA in fund-raising, and DDRCC in running Chan meditation programs, and that the three organizations work together to serve and support each other. Based on this principle, the boards of these separate legal entities will consult with each other on all important future matters.

DDRCC would like to welcome its newest staff member, Howard Stewart, as DDRCC facility administrator. Mr. Stewart lives on the DDRCC campus and is responsible for maintenance of the retreat center property. The dormitories, which can accommodate 80 people, have been in use since the November 2004 retreat and various improvements to the facility are ongoing. Information on upcoming activities at DDRCC can be found at www.dharmadrumretreat.org. Inquiries can be sent to ddrc@dharmadrumretreat.org.

Two-day Recitation Chan Retreat

The two-day recitation Chan retreat, held at DDRCC from March 18 to 20, 2005, was attended by 53 black-robed devotees, ages eight to 80, including five westerners, from the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey and Connecticut). The retreat was supervised by Guo Chian Fa Shi with Guo Chii Fa Shi as the lead chanter, and assisted by three volunteers.

The recitation retreat was devoted to the chanting of Amitabha Buddha's name. Seven periods a day, lasting from forty-five minutes to one hour and ten minutes, consisted of chanting while circling the hall, followed by chanting while sitting in stillness. Each period began with a short talk by Guo Chian Fa Shi giving pointers on chanting and devotion.

Repentance and prostration practices were also an integral part of this retreat. Practi-

tioners were encouraged to do two hundred prostrations daily on their own, and to recite the Buddha's name in silence at all times during breaks and while having meals.

Each day was concluded by the chanting of The Great Transference of Merits, prostrating to and praising the Buddhas, bodhisattvas and mahasattvas of the Western Pure Land and the Dharma realm, and making great vows to deliver all sentient beings.

For many this was the first such experience. Most devotees expressed the feeling of dharma joy, though many regretted that the retreat had been only two days, and expressed the desire to have a three- or even a seven-day retreat in the future.

Three-Day Retreat Focuses on Youth

Venerable Guo Chian and Venerable Guo Chii of the Chan Meditation Center led a three-day meditation retreat for college students and young professionals at the Dharma Drum Retreat Center (DDRC) in upstate New York from Jan. 6th to Jan. 9th.

Because of the relative inexperience of the young participants, and the great variety of their backgrounds, the two venerable ones mapped out a flexible retreat schedule that covered a range of activities, including Dharma talks, sitting meditation, walking meditation, eight-form moving meditation, prostrations, yoga exercises, chanting and work practice. Further, using approaches such as telling stories, drawing analogies, writing letters and holding question-and-answer ses-

sions, they guided the participants gradually toward a better understanding of themselves, gratitude to the Three Jewels, and cultivation of the Bodhi mind that seeks to benefit all sentient beings. Through the process the participants not only learned the significance and liveliness of meditation, but also came to realize that the goal of Chan practice was to extend the mindfulness they developed on the meditation cushion into their daily lives.

For the participants who had been raised in the Western society, a week of total silence like this was an unprecedented experience, which nonetheless helped them to keep body and mind in good order, and to be aware of the arising of every single thought. With the guidance of the two venerable ones, each of the participants gained a great deal, though their experience was quite unexpected.

DDRC Has New Dorms, New Fee Structure

Dharma Drum Retreat Center has completed two new dormitories for resident practitioners on Chan retreats.

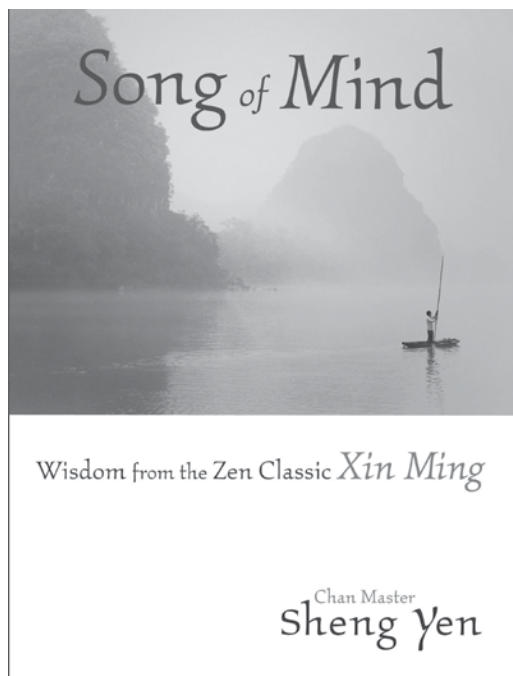
The new facilities, one for male and one for female practitioners, each with forty private rooms, were completed last year just in time for the two year-end retreats in November and December.

Because of the cost of maintenance and upkeep of these accommodations, retreat fees will go up proportionally. Effective May 15 of this year, the cost of intensive Chan retreats, including room and board, will be \$50 per day, or \$500 for a ten-day retreat.

Active Chan Meditation Center members and DDMBA/USA fundraising members will receive a 10% discount on DDRC retreat fees.

Master Sheng Yen Publishes New Book in English

Another English-language book of Master Sheng Yen's Dharma talks about Chan practice has been published in America. The book, titled *Song of Mind*, records talks he gave on an enlightenment poem of the same name by the Chan Master Niutou Farong (594~657 C.E.) The poem, widely regarded alongside the Third Chan Patriarch's "Faith In Mind" as one of the great enlightenment documents of Chan history, previously appeared in Master Sheng Yen's *A Guide to the Experience and Practice of Chan*.



The Dharma talks published in the current book were originally delivered by Master Sheng Yen during the seven-day Chan retreats he led at the Chan Meditation Center in New York between 1985 and 1988. Fifteen years later these talks were finally compiled and edited, and were accepted for publication in 2004 by Shambhala, the renowned publisher of Buddhist works.

This is the second book by Master Sheng Yen published by Shambhala. The first, *Complete Enlightenment*, Shifu's translation of and commentary on the sutra of the same name, was published five years ago.

New Year Celebration and Tsunami Relief Fund-Raising

This year's Chinese New Year celebration was held on Sunday, February 13th. The day's program began with the chanting of The Heart Sutra, followed by a Dharma lecture by Master Jen Jun and a vegetarian feast.

Master Sheng Yen expressed, via a pre-taped video, his sincere appreciation for everyone's contributions and support over the past year and offered his blessings and wishes for a happy and healthy New Year. He reminded us of this year's theme: Harmony, Joy, Peace and Freedom. Freedom here means to be free of one's attachments, vexations and afflictions, and to feel at ease both internally and with the outside environment under all circumstances – even one as difficult as the recent disaster in South Asia. If we make good use of Buddhadharma we will live in harmony, joy, peace and freedom in any situation.



The DDMBA Tsunami Relief fundraising event replaced the traditional entertainment program in the afternoon. Booths were set up with donated foods and goods; raffle tickets were sold. The day's intake totaled over \$14,000, which added to donations from CMC/DDMBA members, their families and friends since January made a grand total of \$100,000 – 25% of Shifu's goal of \$500,000 for the Tsunami Relief Fund, with donations still coming in at press time.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who worked so long and hard on the fundraising efforts, and to all the donors who gave so generously from their hearts.

Year of the Dharma Drum

Good news! After sixteen years of hard work, including the land acquisition, then detailed planning and many stages of construction, a new phase of the development of the Dharma Drum Mountain International Buddhist Educational Complex will be completed this year. 2005 has been dubbed The Year of The Dharma Drum; an inaugural celebration will be held this October in Taiwan.

Dharma Drum Mountain began as an outgrowth of Nung Chan Monastery, of which Master Sheng Yen had inherited the stewardship from his teacher, the Ven. Master Dong-

chu. First, a tract of land was purchased in 1989 in Sanjie Village outside of Taipei. Construction began with the groundbreaking in 1993, and in 1996, following ancient Chinese Buddhist tradition, over 300 Buddhist texts and artifacts were sealed within a vault in the foundation of what would become the main Buddha hall. (The vault is not to be opened until the year 3000.) Phase One was complet-

ed and inaugurated in 2001; the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies and the Dharma Drum Sangha University have moved onto the site and begun operation. Other facilities in development include Dharma Drum University (secular), Dharma Drum Monastery and Dharma Drum Museum of History and Culture.



The Future

*Retreats, classes and
other upcoming events.*

Chan Retreats

Chan retreats are opportunities for serious practitioners to deepen their practice and receive guidance from resident teachers. Retreats are held either at the Chan Meditation Center in Queens (CMC) or at the Dharma Drum Retreat Center (DDRC) in Pine Ridge, New York.

Ten-day Silent Illumination Retreat (DDRC)

Thursday, May 26, 6 pm –
Sunday, June 5, 10 am

Ten-day Huatou Retreat (DDRC)

Thursday, June 24, 6 pm –
Sunday, July 4, 10 am

One-day Recitation/Chanting Retreat (Contact CMC)

Saturday, July 23, 9 am – 5 pm

One-day Meditation Retreat (Contact CMC)

Saturday, August 27, 9 am – 5 pm

Three-day College Meditation Retreat (Contact DDRC/CMC)

Tuesday, August 16 to Friday, August 19

Three-day Recitation/Chanting Retreat (Contact CMC)

Friday, September 2 to Monday, September 5

Chan Practice

Monday Night Chanting

Every Monday, 7:30 – 9 pm
Devotional chanting of Amitabha Buddha;
88 Buddhas Repentance on last Monday of
each month.

Tuesday Night Sitting Group

Every Tuesday, 7 – 9:30 pm
Periods of sitting meditation alternating with
yoga, walking meditation, readings, discus-
sion, and chanting the Heart Sutra.

Saturday Sitting Group

Every Saturday, 9 am – 3 pm
Half-hour periods of sitting meditation alter-
nating with yoga or walking meditation.

Sunday Open House

Every Sunday (except May 15 for Buddha's
Birthday Celebration)

10:00 am – 11:00 am Group Meditation

11:00 am – 12:30 pm Dharma Talk

12:30 - 1:00 pm: lunch offerings

1:00 - 2:00 pm: lunch

2:00 - 3:00 pm: chanting; Q & A for

English-speaking practitioners

2:00 – 4:30 pm: July 10, August 21,

September 11: Great Dharani chanting

Activities at DDRC

Four-day College Camp

Friday, August 13 to Tuesday, August 16

Two-day Youth Camp

Friday, August 5 to Sunday, August 7

For regular weekly and monthly activities:

<http://www.dharmadrumretreat.org>

Email: ddrc@dharmadrumretreat.org

Phone: (845) 744-8114

Classes at CMC

New Meditation Class Series:

Beginners' Meditation

Two Saturdays, 9:30 am – 12 noon, \$40

Intermediate Meditation

Two Saturdays, 9:30 am – 12 noon, \$40

Please call for summer dates.

Pre-registration required.

Beginners' Dharma Class

Please call for summer dates.

Taijiquan Classes

Thursdays, 7:30 – 9:00 pm,
with instructor David Ngo, \$80 for a session
of 16 classes, or \$25/month. First Thursday of
every month free for newcomers.

Yoga

4 – 5:30 pm, with instructor Rikki Asher.
\$10/class; please call for dates.

Special Events

Public Lectures by Chan Master Sheng Yen

Sunday, May 8 and 22; June 19, at CMC,
11 am – 12:30 pm. Master Sheng Yen will
speak on the Surangama Sutra.

Dharma Gathering

Friday, May 13, 6:30 – 9:30 pm. Welcome
Chan Master Sheng Yen on his return from
Taiwan.

Buddha's Birthday Celebration

Sunday, May 15, 10 am – 3 pm
Dharma talks by Master Jen Chun and
Chan Master Sheng Yen; bathing of the
baby Buddha; chanting, vegetarian feast,
entertainment.

Taking Refuge in the Three Jewels

Sunday, May 22, 9 – 10 am
Transmitted by Chan Master Sheng Yen

One-day Bodhisattva Ksitigarbharaja (Earth Store) Sutra Recitation

Sunday, August 14, 9:30 – 3:30 pm

"Zen and Inner Peace"

Chan Master Sheng Yen on WNYE (25) every
Saturday at midnight.



Chan Center Affiliates

Local organizations affiliated with the Chan Meditation Center and the Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association provide a way to practice with and to learn from other Chan practitioners. Affiliates also provide information about Chan Center schedules and activities, and Dharma Drum publications. If you have questions about Chan, about practice, or about intensive Chan retreats, you may find useful information at an affiliate near you.

NORTH AMERICA

USA:

USA Headquarters

Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association (DDMBA); Dharma Drum Publications; Chan Meditation Center:

90-56 Corona Avenue
Elmhurst, NY 11373
Tel: 718-592-6593
Fax: 718-592-0717
Email: ddmbaus@yahoo.com
<http://www.chancenter.org>

Dharma Drum Retreat Center

184 Quannacut Road
Pine Bush, NY 12566
Tel: 845-744-8114
Fax: 845-744-8483
Email: ddrncy@yahoo.com
<http://www.chancenter.org>

California

Davis:

Contact: Grace Wei
6600 Orchard Park Circle #6221
Davis, CA 95616
Tel/Fax: 530-297-1972
Email: ddmbasacra@yahoo.com

Los Angeles:

Contact: Stanley Kung, Sam Chin, Paul Lin.
1168 San Gabriel Blvd., #R
Rosemead, CA 91770
Tel/Fax: 818-248-1614
Email: smkung@sbcglobal.net or
paullinddm@aol.com
<http://members.aol.com/ddmchan>

Riverside:

Tel: 909-789-6052

San Francisco

Contact: H. C. Chang
102 South Camino Real
Millbrae, CA 94030
Tel: 650-692-3259
Fax: 650-692-2256
Email: ddmbsaf@yahoo.com

Florida

DDMBA Orlando Meditation Group:

Contact: jin Bowden
6082 Red Stage Drive
Port Orange, FL 32128
Tel: 386-322-0524
Fax: 386-322-3639
Email: jin_bowden@yahoo.com

Georgia

Duluth:

Contact: Sophia Chen
4977 Dillard's Mill Way
Duluth, GA 30096
Tel: 770-416-0941
Fax: 770-417-5897
Email: sophialee046@hotmail.com

Illinois

Belvedere

Contact: John Chen
1632 South State Street
Belvedere, IL 61008
Tel: 815-978-7159
Fax: 815-547-5550
Email: chen0981@yahoo.com

Chicago

Contact: Isabel Huang
2299 Pflingsten Road
North Brook, IL 60062
Tel: 847-480-1583
Fax: 847-480-9064
Email: isabelhuang@comcast.net
<http://www.ddmbachicago.org>

Michigan

Contact: Li Hua Kong
1431 Stanlake Drive
E. Lansing, MI 48823
Tel/Fax: 517-332-0003
Email: kongl@sbcglobal.net

New Jersey

Contact: Paul Lee
1 Ireland Brook Drive
N. Brunswick, NJ 08902
Tel/Fax: 732-398-1569
Email: runnshenglee@yahoo.com

Piscataway:

Contact: Maggie Laffey
Tel: (732)463-1689
Email: mfxl@earthlink.net

New York

Manhattan:

The Meditation Group
Marymount Manhattan College
221 E. 71st (2nd and 3rd Avenues)
Contact: Charlotte Mansfield
Tel: 212-410-3897
Because of building security, please call
before visiting.
Email: MeditationGroup@yahoo.com
<http://www.MeditationGroup.org>

Long Island:

Contact: Hai Dee Lee
P.O. Box 423
Upton, NY 11973
Tel: 631-689-8548 or 631-344-2062
Fax: 631-344-4057
Email: hdlee@bnl.gov

Rochester:

Contact: Min Wang
170 Maywood Drive
Rochester, NY 14618
Tel/Fax: 585-242-9096
Email: min_wang@xelus.com

North Carolina

Contact: Hannah Yuan
323 Whitney Lane
Durham, NC 27713
Tel: 919-450-2668
Fax: 919-991-1728
Email: hannahyuan0410@yahoo.com

Northeast Ohio:

Contact: Jeff Larko
339 Valley Brook Oval
Hinckley, OH 44233
Tel: 330-225-8722
Email: DDMBA_Ohio@yahoo.com

Oregon

Contact: Sabrina Huang
12715 SW 158th Terrace
Beaverton, OR 97007
Tel/Fax: 503-579-8582
Email: sabhuang@yahoo.com

Pennsylvania

State College

Contact: Kun-Chang Yu
425 Waupelani Drive #515
State College, PA 16801
Tel: 814-867-9253
Fax: 814-867-5148
Email: ddmdba_pa01@yahoo.com

Texas

Arlington:

Contact: Patty Yi
2150 East Pioneer Pkwy
Arlington, TX 76010
Tel: 817-274-2288
Fax: 817-274-7067
Email: ddmdba_patty@yahoo.com

Vermont

Contact: Jui-chu Lee
16 Bower St.
S. Burlington, VT 05403
Tel/Fax: 802-658-3413
Email: juichulee@yahoo.com

Washington

Contact: Dephne Chen
411 13th Ave. W.
Kirkland, WA 98033
Tel: 425-889-9898
Fax: 425-828-2646
Email: dephne66@hotmail.com

Canada:

Richmond

Contact: Mei Hwei Lin
10800 No. 5 Road
Richmond, BC, Canada V7A 4E5
Tel: 604-277-1357
Fax: 604-277-1352
Email: ddmvan@infinet.net
www.ddmvan.ca

Toronto

Contact: Quin Feng Yang
265 Main St., Unit 804
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4C4x3
Tel/Fax: 416-691-8429
Cell: 416-712-9927
Email: ddmdba_toronto@yahoo.com

Mexico:

Mar de Jade Oceanfront Retreat Center Chacala, Nayarit, Mexico

Contact: Laura del Valle MD
USA phone 800-257-0532
Mexico phone 01-800-505-8005
Email: info@mardejade.com
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Daily meditation; regular retreats;
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Croatia:

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Dordiceva 23
10000 Zagreb, Croatia
Tel/Fax: ++385 1 481 00 74
Email: info@dharmaaloka.org
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Teacher: Zarko Andricevic
Ongoing program of study and practice,
including courses in Buddhism and Chan
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and retreats.

Belgium:

Luxemburg

15, Rue Jean Schaack L-2563 Bonnevoie
GD.DE Luxemburg Tel: 352-400080

Poland:

Warsaw

Zwiazek Buddystow Czan (Chan Buddhist Union):

Contact: Pawel Rosciszewski, Beata Kazimierska

Tel/Fax: (22) 7275663, GSM 0-601-205602

Tel/Fax: (22) 6208446, (22) 6498670,
GSM 0-601-205602

Switzerland:

Zurich

Teacher: Max Kalin (Guo-yun)

Tel/fax: 411 382 1676

Mobile: 4179 416 8088

Email: MaxKailin@chan.ch

<http://www.chan.ch>

United Kingdom:

London

18 Huson Close
London NW3 3JW, England
Tel: 44-171-586-6923

Western Ch'an Fellowship:

24 Woodgate Ave. Bury
Lancashire, BL9 7RU, U.K.

Contact: Simon Child, secretary

Email:

secretary@westernchanfellowship.org,

www.westernchanfellowship.org

ASIA

Hong Kong:

Room 205, 2/F BLK B,
Alexandra Industrial Building, 23-
27 Wing Hong St., Cheung Sha Wan,
Kowloon, Hong Kong
Tel: 852-2865-3110
Fax: 852-2591-4810

Malaysia:

*Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhism
Information Centre in Malaysia:*

30 Jalan 16/6, 46350 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor DE, Malaysia
Tel: 603-79600841, 603-7319245
Fax: 603-7331413, 603-79600842
Email: kahon@pc.jaring.my
<http://www.media.com.my/zen>

Singapore:

*Dharma Drum Mountain (Singapore
Liaison Office):*

No. 10 Second Avenue,
Singapore 266660
Contact: Ms. Yeh Yin Shia
Tel & Fax
(65) 6469 6565
Cell 9745 6565.
Email: ysyehsg@yahoo.com.tw

Taiwan:

Nung Ch'an Monastery:

No. 89, Lane 65, Tayeh Road
Peitou, Taipei
Tel: 02-2893-3161
Fax: 02-2895-8969

Dharma Drum Mountain:

No.14-5, Lin 7, Sanchieh Village,
Chinshan, Taipei
Tel: 02-2498-7171, 02-2498-7174
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<http://www.ddm.org.tw>

*Dharma Drum International
Meditation Group:*

Contact: Guo Yuan Fa Shi
Tel: 886-02-2778-5007~9
Fax: 886-02-2778-0807
Email: gchiis@ddm.org.tw
Saturday, 8:30-11:30 am, meditation and
discussion in English at An Her Branch
Monastery

Australia:

Melbourne

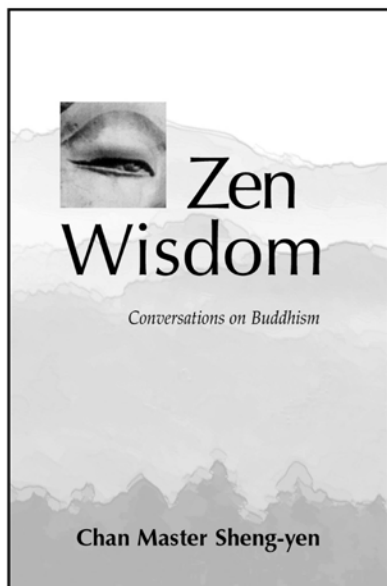
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Australia
Tel: 61-3-4024-1997

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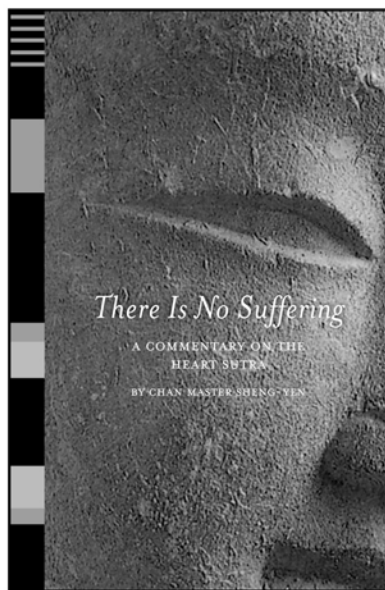


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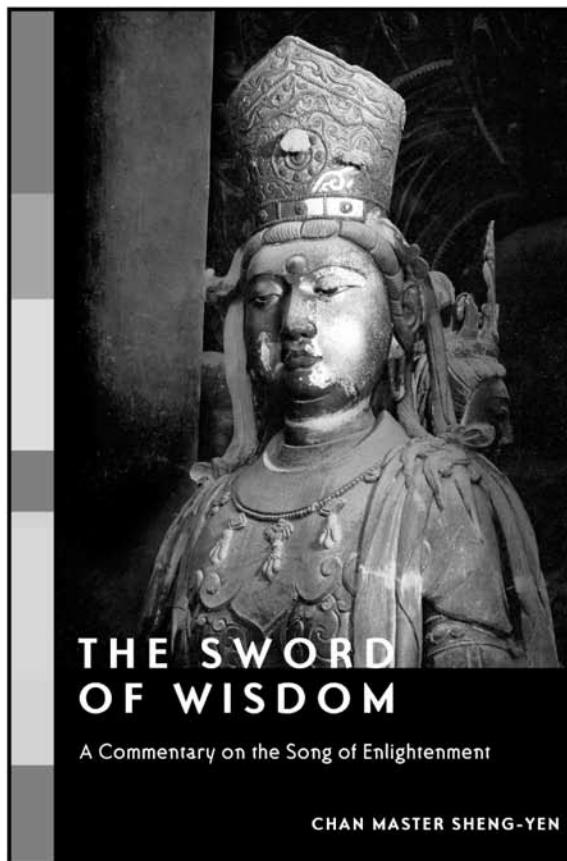


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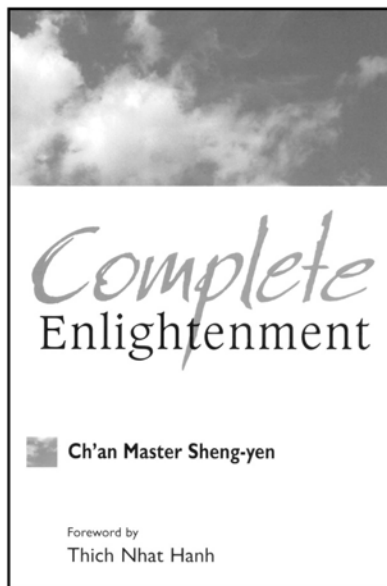
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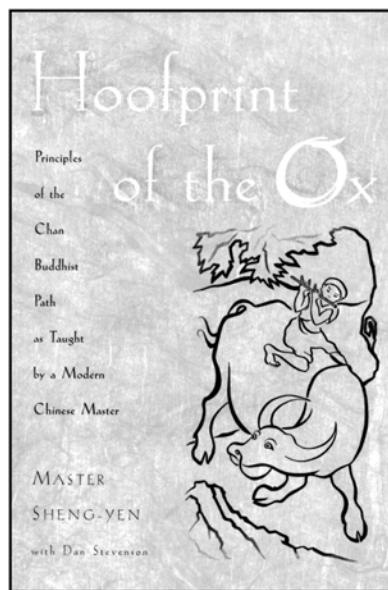
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