



Editor's Introduction

by William Edelglass

Since the early generations, Buddhists have been retelling the life-story of the Buddha and revoicing his teachings. These stories and teachings, often intertwined, have been shared in prose, poetry, images, sculpture, and drama. Today, these stories and teachings appear in film, comics, and animation as well as novels, dialogues, and treatises. Mu Soeng's recent book, *Revoicing the Buddha: Ancient Wisdom in a New Vernacular*, is in a long tradition of Buddhists giving voice to the teachings of the Buddha, seeking once again to bring the dharma alive for a new generation.

For almost three decades, Mu Soeng was Scholar in Residence at the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies. Before that, he trained in a Korean Zen tradition, where he was ordained as a monk for more than a decade. *Revoicing the Buddha* draws on a lifetime of practice and study, teaching and writing. It is informed and inspired by particular Pāli suttas, rearticulating them with images, metaphors, and a style that still feels ancient.

This special issue of the *Insight Journal* consists of chapters from *Revoicing the Buddha*. It begins with Mu Soeng's "Introduction," in which he shares his understanding of what he takes to be the most fundamental teachings of the Buddha and his own project of presenting these teachings for 21st century readers. This is followed by three selections: "Monkey Fist Sūtra" (inspired by the Makkāṭṭa Sutta and the

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Udāna Sutta); “Obsessions Sūtra” (inspired by Anusaya Sutta and Sallatha Sutta); and “Not-Self Sūtra” (inspired by Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta and the Brāhmaṇa Sutta). These three selections—from the total of eighteen chapters in *Revoicing the Buddha*—illustrate Mu Soeng’s use of metaphor, image, and repetition in the style of early Buddhist texts. They are representative of his deep commitment to the Buddha’s radical critique of views, opinions, and attachments, as well as his prescription of how to let go of compulsion, aversion, and confusion. We hope you enjoy this revoicing of the Buddha.

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