## Selected Buddhist Poems by Ancient Chinese Emperors

- Emperor Shunzong of the Tang Dynasty

楊維光 、劉年聰 彙編 及 英譯 Compilation and English Translation by Yong Wei Kwong and Liew Yen Chong

## 《問如滿禪師》

Seeking Advice from Dhyana Master Ruman

佛從何方來,滅向何方去? 既言常住世,佛今在何處?

Where did the Buddha come from? Where did he go on entering stillness? Since it is said that he dwells eternally in the world, Where is the Buddha right now?

佛向王宫生,滅向雙林滅。 住世四十九,又言無法說。 山河及大海,天地及日月, 時至皆歸盡,誰言不生滅?

He entered stillness beneath the twin trees. He dwelt in the world for 49 years, Yet said he had not spoken a word of Dharma. The mountains, rivers and great oceans;

The Buddha was born in the Royal Palace;

疑情猶若斯,智者善分别。

Heaven and earth; the sun and the moon -All will come to an end when the time approaches. Who says there is no coming into being or ceasing to be? For the sake of sentient beings who share my doubts,

如滿禪師《答順宗皇帝問》:

May the Wise One explain with skillful reasoning.



佛從無爲來,滅向無爲去。 法身等虚空,常住無心處。

有念歸無念,有住歸無住。

來爲衆生來,去爲衆生去。

清淨真如海,湛然體常住。

智者善思惟,更勿生疑慮。

佛體本無爲,迷情妄分别。

法身等虚空,未曾有生滅。

有緣佛出世,無緣佛入滅。

處處化衆生,猶如水中月。

非常亦非斷,非生亦非滅。

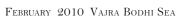
生亦未曾生,滅亦未曾滅

了見無心處,自然無法說

## Dhyana Master Ruman: Reply to Emperor Shunzong's Query

The Buddha came from the Unconditioned; Upon stillness, he returned to the Unconditioned. His Dharma body is equivalent to space, Eternally dwelling in the place devoid of mind. The state of thought returns to that of non-thought; The state of dwelling returns to that of impermanence. Since he came for the sake of living beings, Likewise he departed for the sake of living beings. The clear and pure ocean of True Suchness Is where his pristine and perfect body eternally dwells. May all wise ones ponder this over carefully And not give rise to further doubts.

The Buddha's body is originally unconditioned. It is deluded beings who falsely make discriminations. The Dharma body is akin to empty space, Which neither comes into being nor ceases to be. With the right conditions, the Buddha appears in the world, Continued on page 46



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When conditions cease, the Buddha enters stillness.

He transforms living beings everywhere: Just like the reflection of the moon in the water.

Not constant, yet without interruption; Not coming into being, yet not ceasing to be.

He was born, yet did not come into being; He entered stillness, yet did not cease to be.

Completely seeing the place devoid of Mind, Naturally, there is no Dharma to speak of.