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# An Analysis on the Definitions and Responsibilities of Teacher in Theravāda Buddhism for a Consensus in a Globalised World

## Mediyawe Piyarathana

### Research Objective

The objective of this research paper is to observe the definitions and responsibilities about teacher presented in *Theravāda* Buddhism as it can be very fruitful to investigate them for the implementation of the globalised world when the opportunities of Buddhism are explored with openness.

### Introduction

There are many explanations about the definitions and responsibilities of teacher in *Theravāda* Buddhism. Many terms have been used to define teacher. The role of teacher has been explained in many discourses. Many categories of teachers are presented in Buddhism. The study and analysis about the definitions on teacher and responsibilities in *Theravāda* Buddhism has been a significant area in finding out the challenges and opportunities in a globalised world.

### Research Methodology

To find the definitions and responsibilities of a teacher presented in *Theravāda* Buddhism, Buddhist canonical texts were mainly used in this research to do the literary survey.

### Research Problem

Are there any definitions and responsibilities about teacher in *Theravāda* Buddhism that can be implemented in a globalised world?

### Discussion and Analysis

There are many specific terms that were used to present Buddha as a great teacher in the dialogues of early Buddhism. One of those terms is 'sathā' (teacher). The word 'sathā' is a technical term to introduce teacher. The word 'sathā' is a technical term to introduce teacher. The Buddha is introduced as a teacher in a significant sense than the religious teachers at the Buddha's time (D.ii.p.93). He is introduced so because of his vast or great knowledge (anōmanāmaṇ sathāraṇ). And also, he has been introduced as a teacher who ends the fear of those who come to him for his refuge "sabbēsaṇ saranaṇ yanti - so no sathā anuttaro" (SN.p.27). The Buddha became a respectful person for many since the day he possessed wisdom and ended his suspicion "sabbesaṇ saranaṇ yanti, so no sathā anuttaro" (SN.p.31). The Buddha was honoured by many since he gained insight and uprooting doubt "puccāma sattāraṇ anoma paññaṇ - ditthe va dhamme yo vicikicchāna cettā" (SN.p.60). Many Brahmins who were considered great intellectuals paid their full respect to the Buddha. They did so by appreciating his exemplary, correct and good behaviour "pundarīkaṇ yathā vaggu toyena upalippati" (SN.p.101). According to Sabhiya, a famous Brahmin, Buddha was appreciated as the greatest teacher who gave up all the desires "saṅgātigo sabbadukkhappahīno" (SN.p.45). He saw Buddha as a white lotus flower which is not corrupted even from water. 'sathā' means sometimes a term or an adjective used specially to introduce Buddha. This term perhaps used for another famous teacher very rarely. Whatsoever, to distinguish Buddha from others, the term 'sathā' has been emphasised.

There are five groups of persons who were known as teachers are found in early Buddhist texts or canon.

1.	Teacher with bad conduct	“ <i>aparissuddha silo</i> ”
	Teacher with good conduct	“ <i>parissuddha silo</i> ”
2.	Teacher with bad living condition	“ <i>aparissuddha jīvo</i> ”
	Teacher with good living condition	“ <i>parissuddha jīvo</i> ”
3.	Teacher with bad advice	“ <i>aparissuddha dhammadēsanā</i> ”
	Teacher with good advice	“ <i>parissuddha dhammadēsanā</i> ”
4.	Teacher with bad analysis	“ <i>aparissuddha veyyākaraṇo</i> ”
	Teacher with good analysis	“ <i>parissuddha veyyākaraṇo</i> ”
5.	Teacher with bad philosophy	“ <i>aparissuddha ñāna dassano</i> ”
	Teacher with good philosophy	“ <i>parissuddha ñāna dassano</i> ”

(A.iii.p.124-125).

The Buddha by his exemplary behaviour and advice has preached that the above mentioned persons with bad behaviour are not suitable to consider as teachers because they don't have Cognition and Recollection which are with a true teacher. According to Buddha, a good teacher is with good conduct, good living condition, living with good advice, with good analysis, and a person with a good philosophy spiritually (A.iii.p.126). It is an obvious fact that the teacher has also been defined with immeasurable Cognition, Recollection and Conception. Cognition possessed with person is a very clear thing and it is not possible to hide it in a deceitful way. This Cognition feature reveals another complete description about teachers at that time. Due to this Cognition feature, specially, there had been a considerable subject analysis change with the teachers at that time. It was not possible for them to explain about the feelings of senses and nature of feelings. So, some group of teachers could give a complete knowledge of feeling on senses and the nature of feelings with regard to body. This last group of teachers were considered real teachers by the Buddha.

The understanding capacity of teacher is on his vast creative ability. Creative thinking ability makes him famous as a teacher. The Buddha becomes the greatest with this astonishing power when compared with the teachers at his time. The path to the deliverance not known to anybody in the world was found by the Buddha “*asañjātassa maggassa sañjānetā*”. He preached it first to the others “*anakkhātassa maggassa ankhātā*”. The Buddha knew that way “*maggaññu-maggaṇḍu*” (S.i.p.191). He was clever from the way “*magga kovido*” (S.iii.p.66). This has been given in canon in another way. For a man walking in the jungle meets a city. He informed his finding to the king. The king renovates that city. In the same manner, the Buddha also found a path that the previous Buddha followed and he said about his findings to many people (S.ii.p.104). According to Buddhism, the teacher should be a creative thinker and explorer of unknown knowledge “*magga jino ca – magga desako*” (SN.p.17).

One of the other famous terms used to introduce Buddha as a teacher is “*akkhātāro*” “lecturer, narrator, describer” (SN.p.29). According to etymology, the meaning of “*akkhātāro*” is the person with the ability of explaining even with the most difficult thing (Williams.1959.p.2). According to Dhammapada commentary, the term ‘*akkhātāro*’ is used to introduce ‘communication ability’ “*vasena ye paṭipannā*” (Dhp.A.p.673). This idea has been given vividly in Hemavata Sutta (SN.p.29). So, Buddha is spring of vast learned or erudite “*sabba dhammāna pāragū*” (SN.p.29). And also, he is praised as great person who is without fear and anger “*verabbhayātīta*”. There are places where the terms ‘*sathā*’ and ‘*akkhātāro*’ has been used in the same place to

respect each other. ‘akkātārō’ is an honorary term used to denote a person who has the ability to analyse something. Friends, our religious teacher describes the craving and the way to end desire. “Chanda rāgakkhāyī kho no āvuso satthāti”(S.iii.p.7). Friends, further our religious teacher explains the craving and ending the desire about body “rūpa rāgakkhayā kho āvuso satthāti” suffering or pain, “vedanā” feeling or sensations “saññā”, collective actions “saṅkhāra”, knowledge “viññāna” (S.iii.p.7). It can be seen that Buddha’s wonderful way of teaching has been described as ‘satthāsāsana’ (Itivuttaka.p.28). At the same time, those who follow the Buddha’s dispensation or advice “anusāsana” are known ‘satthusāsana-kārino’ (Itivuttaka.p.29).

In early Buddhist canon, teacher is a great person who tames persons who are necessary to be tamed “purisa dhamma sārathī” (D.ii.p.93). The term “purisa dhamma sārathī” ‘clever leader’ is a good term used to denote an incomparable teacher with Cognition and vast knowledge. Cunda Sutta clearly states that there are many terms used to denote Buddha as a great teacher (A.iii.p.355). The Buddha, introduced in those special features as a great teacher, appreciates the silence “muni”, a great intelligent person “pahūta pañño”, understood everything “Buddha”, the Chief of Dhamma “Dhammasāmi”, was without craving “vīta taṇhā” the greatest of men “dipaduttama” and also he was a brave trainer to discipline those who need to be disciplined (SN.p.16). The meaning of “purisadhamma sarathī” (great teacher) is given in Pāli Commentary. Though it is short, it can be seen as a clear argument in this regard. Kēsī, a trainer of horse, once came to inquire the Buddha about his knowledge. At the beginning of his conversation, Kēsī was willing to know from the Buddha how to tame the untrained horses. Kēsī said to the Buddha all his conventional methods of taming horses, some horses from soft words and some from rough words. He said that the horses that cannot be tamed in the above procedure are killed. Kēsī explaining the facts further said that he kills the untameable horses in order to protect his reputation as a horse trainer. As a response to Kēsī’s words, the Buddha preached that he also follows the same method in taming those who should be tamed. But, the way Kēsī did for untameable horse is not followed by the Buddha in taming people. The Buddha preached that He imposed Brahmaḍaṇḍan (not speaking or advising) to the untameable persons (A.ii.p.112).

There are three other terms that have been used to denote Buddha as a teacher in the Pāli canon. They are Guru, ‘ācariya’ and ‘upajjhāya’. Here, the considerable factor is that these haven’t been used as the terms mentioned before. If it is stated in brief, it is very clear that the last two terms ‘ācariya’ and ‘upajjhāya’ have been used to denote any teacher in the Pāli canon. At the time of the Buddha and later, this concept that took a special place at the educating institutions has to be examined in great detail.

The term Guru is not found in Pāli canon like other two terms. The academic meaning of Guru is, the opposite of Luhu (light) and the opposite of it Bara, Gambhira (deep). This term is used for measuring some material or to appreciate something (M.iii.p.20). According to Buddhist teaching, those who are with the capabilities of “Vijjā” cognition, “Carana” knowledge and activities “kosalla” “manocālaka” were considered as Guru. As presented in Kālāma Sutta (A.i.p.189), when something is decided or accepted or followed, among the factors that should follow, Guru (teacher) is accepted. The Buddha advised Kālāma at the Kēsaputta village not to accept something only because of a teacher said it or that has come from generation to generation “mā samano no garūti” (A.i.p.189). This can be considered as one direct occasion or usage of Guru by the Buddha.

Old Buddhist texts indicate that the term ‘Guru’ is certainly an important term that should

use to denote Buddha. In the discourse, Kin Kusala Sutta (SN.p.56), the term Guru has been used in two occasions. It says there that it is necessary for a student to meet the teacher on all the possible occasions for the development of own virtue “kālaññācassa garūnaṃ dassanāya” (SN.p.56). It has been emphasised there that keeping a close relationship is very helpful for good and permanent development of virtues “kālena gacce garūnaṃ sakāsaṃ” (SN.p.56). It is clear that for the explanation of some difficult and complex words, it is possible to use the term ‘Garū,’ flexible term. The person living with great behaviour “brahmacārī” and with special objectives is suitable to introduce as teacher “garuttanīyo” (A.ii.p.21-23). In the same way, the term ‘Sattha’ and ‘Garū’ are used to respect towards teacher. Specially, the term ‘Garū’ is used with the meaning ‘honour or respect’ (A.ii.p.331). So, it is very clear from these two terms that the term ‘Garū’ is used to introduce teacher as well as the respect towards teacher.

It is really a difficult matter to judge the importance of teacher. The influence of a teacher for Cognition and the development of knowledge are very great. According to the old texts of canon, keeping a close relationship with an exemplary teacher, helps highly for the improvement of spiritual and virtuous development of a person. Spiritual power of the student with a close relationship always with a teacher becomes the main symbol of his personality and it is the peace “anusuiyako”. In this manner, the student who developed his personality well will respect elders “vaddhāpacāyino” (Dhp.v.109). He will be punctual “kālaññū”. By presenting the way that he should behave in front of his teacher, he won’t laugh on unsuitable occasions “hāsa”. He won’t speak barren or arid words “jappa”. He won’t worry on grief “parideva”. He will be free from bad or corrupted mental and physical behaviour “padōsaṃ”. He will give up all the bad mental conditions like cunningness “māyākataṃ”, deceitfulness “kuhakaṃ”, greediness “giddhaṃ”, arrogance “kasācaṃ” and high craving “muccaṃ” (SN.p.57). He will become a person with good speech, thought and action due to the close or friendly association with his teacher. He will start spreading his whole personality, calmness, happiness and contemplation or tranquillity of mind (SN.p.57). It will become a reality of achieving personal objectives and spiritual blessing (SN.p.57).

A good teacher is considered as a person who established his own good behavioural pattern ‘thērō’. A teacher like that is firm or fixed of his emotions. He does not embarrass the things that are reasoning for lust “rajjanīye na rajjati”. He will not arise anger on the things that make him angry “dussanīye na dussati”. He will not be ignorant of those that create ignorance “mohanīye na muyhati”. He will not enrage or provoke in provoking things “madanīye na majjati” (A.iii.p.110-111). Teacher, who is known with the Garū concept, was praised for having the control or firmness of emotion and behaviour patterns (Mookerji.1976.p.237). The firmness of character and discipline is thought to be a beauty of a good teacher. According to Buddhist view, the firmness of the teacher’s character is not only with ageing. Though one is over hundred years of age and speaks false and unsuitable or unnecessary things, he was introduced as a fool by the Buddha. On the other hand, though one is young and with discipline in every behaviour pattern, he was praised by the Buddha as a great person in discipline (A.iii.p.22).

The term ‘Garū’ has been used at the earliest time to introduce only the Buddha (A.i.p.188). However, by the passage of time, it has become a technical and a common term to denote any teacher. The term ‘Garū’ later comes into the usage as ‘Guru’. According to linguistic, the term ‘Guru’ is used to introduce teacher. However, the term ‘Guru’ has been used more than ‘Garū’ in the earliest time to intend teacher (A.iii.p.22). The aged and the matured head with grey hair is not enough to make a person a good teacher. In this manner, the usage of ‘Garū’, which creates a

conceptual framework, emphasises greatly of high quality of behaviour pattern.

Radh Kumudu Mookerji in the book, 'Ancient Indian Education' (Mookerji.1976.p237), indicates that the term 'Guru' has been used in ancient Indian books. However, more than talking of the origin of these terms and the usages, it is clear that these two terms have been used in Pāli text to introduce teacher.

'ācārya' (a+car+a = ācārya or teacher) and 'upajjhāya' (upa+a+i) (the teacher who is considered a high position even to give spiritual discipline) are the terms that were used in early Buddhist education to explain the meaning of teacher. According to early Buddhist canon, the term 'ācārya' seems to be older than the teacher who gives a virtuous training to student. The term 'upajjhāya', equal as the Brahman in Brahmanic doctrine and Vedic texts, can be considered as the teacher who provides student with doctrine, spiritual counselling for learning discipline "pubbācariyāti vuccare" (V.i.p.132). In Brahmanic education, the term 'ācārya' holds a high place than 'upajjhāya'.

It can be seen that the term 'ācārya' has been used in Buddhist Pāli cannon to bring out two wide meanings. In worldly sense, the Buddha presents parents as the first teachers to children (A.i.p.132). The term 'pubbācariya' is used as a similar word to denote parents (A.i.p.132). How much is the importance of parents as the first teachers can be seen from giving the similar place as Brahma who is supposed to be the Creator of world "brahmāti mātā pitaro" (A.ii.p.132). Parents help children greatly as the first teacher. They introduce them to society by nourishing them and teaching good conduct (A.i.p.132).

In Brahmanic doctrine, the term 'ācārya' has been used to introduce the person with a high education. Brahmanic ācārya or teacher, accepted according to Brahmanic texts, is an expert who learnt various things about Vedās. He is an expert in the subjects like dictionary or encyclopaedia "nighaṇḍu", Vedic magic "abhicāra" phonology and etymology "sākkararapabhēdan" and history "itihāsa". Apart from them, verse "Padako", grammar "veyyākaraṇa", philosophy "lokāyata" and the knowledge of Features of a Great Person "mahāpurisa lakkhanesu" were considered to be an expert (D.i.p.87-110).

It is possible to prove or certify with the evidences found in Buddhist texts that Brahmin teachers were servants who got wages. But, they received presents and offerings from the kings and the general public and became economically sound and it is a fact that cannot be disproven. Sometimes, it can be seen that they received offerings for the role played by them as spiritual leaders. The old Brahmin, Mahāsāla, who got suitable advices to his personal questions from the Buddha, did great offerings to the Buddha. It is said that Mahāsāla Brahmin offered two cloths as Teacher Offering "ācārya dānam" (S.i.p.381). By the passage of time, the Buddha's exemplary behaviour as a teacher became a spiritual guide to the general public. In this process, many disciples showed a tendency in gaining the responsibility of advising to their behalf. Venerable Ananda Thēra was one such monk who possessed the mastery of this education field.

The layman "gahapati" who tried greatly in spiritual development, once met Venerable Ananda. Venerable Ananda advised him the way of attaining complete deliverance "nibbhāna" through mental discipline. Delighted with this, he intended to give suitable presents to his spiritual teacher by keeping traditional customs. So, he offered Venerable Ananda three robes, 500 gold coins and a valuable hut or hermitage "kuti" (M.iii.p.248).

Venerable Sāriputta was respected as the best teacher from among the Buddha's glorious disciple community. Actually, the Buddha reacted for the request of the public that they wanted teachers who are capable of advising them in their spiritual progress. After few months of his enlightenment, Buddha set forth sixty disciples to teach doctrine (V.i.p.21). It is clear that Buddha, for forty five years, the main attention of his missionary service is not only to train his disciples as teachers but also to create teaching institutions with an environment of teaching his doctrine. Among those erudite teachers with vast learning, Venerable Sāriputta is considered as the best teacher. Buddha once praised Venerable Sāriputta as the best teacher to teach his doctrine or to rotate the Wheel of Dhamma "Sāriputto bhikkave tathāgatena anuttaraṃ dhammacakkaṃ pavattitaṃ sammadeva anuppavattāti" (A.i.p.23).

The Buddhist concept of teacher is clearly different from Hindu concepts. Brahmanic teachers said that they don't teach some of their knowledge even to the best students (Mookerji.1976.p.65). It is clear that they tried to keep a distance between teacher and the things taught by mistaking the object of education. However, it shows that the Brahmanic teachers had deep-rooted dishonesty or deceitfulness. But, the Buddhist concept of teaching is totally different from that of Brahmin way. Buddhist way is clear through the exemplification of Buddha himself. On one occasion, he explained about it to the disciples that a good teacher does not keep the knowledge for himself but teaches everything. This exemplary academic trend was expressed by the Buddha himself.

It is clear from the early text on Buddhism that Buddha didn't teach all he knew to the disciples. According to Buddhist view, a clever teacher is like a clever doctor "Evameva kho bhikkhave etadeva bahutaraṃ yaṃ vo mayā abhiññāya anakkhātaṃ appamattakam akkhātaṃ" (S.v.p.438). The duty of a doctor is to recommend the suitable medicine according to the diagnosis. A good teacher also guides a pupil knowing his mentality and the necessity to fulfil his objectives or intentions. It can be introduced as a way of carrying out mental activities to achieve personal objectives with the mental process towards a rapid development of them. Teaching is anyhow not meant as a way of storing ideas in the mind of pupil.

There is a code of criterion for selecting the most suitable lessons to make learning easy. The objective of teaching is none other than the complete understanding of the reality (S.v.p.420). For reaching this position, it is necessary to select carefully the needful thing for teaching and unwanted things for teaching. Since the Buddha preaches many things in a way of categorisation, it is possible to say the categorisation way as the fundamental way for understanding. Some facts only with extra-terrestrial value were neglected by the Buddha without teaching "kin-nu kho Gotama, asassato loko, idameva saccaṃ, moghamaññan ti evaṃ diṭṭhi bhavaṃ Gotamo ti. Na kho aham vaccha evaṃ diṭṭhi" (M.i.p.484-485). From these categories, things included for the first part should be the background of a lesson. According to Buddha, the teaching method of a lesson should be to explain the Four Noble Truth as the centre. For these purposes, a clear summary of the fundamental things is there in the Buddha's first two sermons. And also, a long detail about his teaching can be seen in Sangīti Sutta of Dīgha Nikaya (D.ii.p.207-271).

According to the above facts, it is clear that Buddha did not teach all he knew. The significance of selecting what should be taught is there with His practical teaching. By the passage of time, with the increase of his disciples, he had to select only the significant teaching for the spiritual development of the disciples. A critical analysis about the Buddha's teaching was done by an old monk Ven. Cūlamālunkyaputta and therefore, the Buddha understood that there should

be some awareness and security.

It is said that Ven. Cūlamālukyaputta had ten wrong thoughts about the Buddha and His teaching (M.i.p.429). Having presented these ten facts to the Buddha, he said to the Buddha that he is to disrobe if the Buddha doesn't give successful solutions to them. Ven. Culamālukyaputta's foolishness is clear from this act. Presenting the correct way for him, Buddha saved him from the darkness of ignorance and created wisdom. As a person who was shot with a poisonous arrow and he examines with what the arrow is made and from which direction the arrow was shot and wastes time, more than finding these details it is advisable to remove the arrow and treat the wound to save the life of the person. The Buddha preached that actually, the person, who is suffering due to the Samsaric nature or worldly condition, first must do related things with practical value to avoid that situation (M.i.p.429). For this, as the necessary guidance, he specially presented only practical and useful teaching. He explained that it is necessary to have practical value with the knowledge. The special features or values explained by the Buddha are Four Noble Truth, Noble Eight Fold Path, Three Worldly Conditions "ti-lakkana", "Kamma" (Action) and Rebirth (D.ii.p.207-271). Gaining awareness of these features of knowledge will help for a person to reach autonomous and self-intentions. On the other hand, it is clear that the doctrines of Gūḍa (super natural) were put aside by the Buddha without solving them "avyākata dhamma". The Buddha put aside those facts because they are not useful for anyone to reach any practical objective. The Buddha preached that it is necessary to analyse doctrine in four ways. They are known as Vyākaraṇa. From these four, first three has a positive value.

1. Regular answer "ekāṅsa vyākaraṇa"
2. Analytical answer "vibhajja vyākaraṇa"
3. Answers by posing opposing questions "paṭipuccā vyākaraṇa"

Fourth way presents that the Buddha did not give any answer. There he put aside without solving questions "ṭhapanīya vyākaraṇa" (A.i.p.196). It was with the belief that solving them won't help to fulfil any practical objective. According to this, the teaching way of Buddha becomes special and its main feature is that it consists of a practical value system.

In some texts, there are places that the two words 'ācariya' and 'upajjhāya' have been given as a compound word "ācariyupajjhāya". From the day that those two terms came into usage, more than using as a single meaning and for a single thing, it has been used for different thing with a definite meaning. According to the above discussion, the term 'ācariya' has generally been used to introduce the teacher who examines the good behaviour of the pupils who are learning under the guidance of him.

Now, it is necessary to pay attention to the synonym of the term 'teacher' and which is considered an important milestone in the change 'upajjhāya'. The academic meaning of 'upajjhāya' (upa + adhi + i) is that a pupil has been to his teacher or being close to him or residing close or near him (Williams.1959.p.141). The change in the role of 'upajjhāya' is fascinating. With the gradual and quick spread of Buddhism, many who belonged to various social status, started to enter the Bhikkhu order. Some among this vast community became intelligent with a vast education and others did not get any education at all. At the beginning of dispensation "buddhasāsana", the number of disciples was limited. Therefore, it is clear that only the Buddha became the only teacher who gave the spiritual progress because the number of questions arose, was also limited. By the passage of time, it was a difficult matter for one person to control the monk community.

Some new monks who newly entered the order of monks misbehaved in public. They used to behave in streets and villages with torn robes and robes woven irregularly. They behaved without any feeling of good conduct. Having seen this, the public accused saying that the disciples of the Buddha misbehave and they started protesting against (V.i.p.44). According to this, the Buddha recommended to appoint an ‘upajjhāya’ to examine and act about the behaviour of the disciple monks. Mainly, it was necessary for an ‘upajjhāya’ to play the role of a teacher who gives spiritual training. From this, it can be clearly seen that the Buddha himself approved the nature of teacher-student relationship. According to canon, ‘upajjhāya’ has to show and give the student the affection that is given to his own son. On the part of the student, the student has to consider the teacher as his own father and act. In this manner, with a good teacher-student relationship and with honour, belief and agreement, it is expected to reach and develop to a good level in doctrine and discipline (V.i.p.45). Exemplary teacher-student relationship is an essential feature of monastic education. It is clear now that in the whole process, teacher is the most important feature.

The view on teacher-student relationship is centred on the dedication on the services and duties that should be done with self-willingness. Fulfilling the personal requirements of Upādhyāya or teacher is the duty of a student “saddhivihārika”. Having woken up every morning before the teacher, student has to arrange the things needed for teacher to wash face like the tooth-pick or brush “dantakaṭṭha” and water etc. It was a custom at that time to arrange a seat near the water basin to sit for the teacher. Since the teacher must do his daily routine in a proper order, it was necessary to prepare his meal on time (V.i.p.46). By fulfilling these services (duties) well, student gets the necessary knowledge and experience to lead monastic life successfully. By this, student develops gradually the ability to live a life of purity and gets the right knowledge of life. These principles of teacher-student relationship are related to lay life in the same manner. Singālovāda Sutta shows that a good teacher-student relationship is necessary for monastic or domestic life to get a useful learning (D.iii.p.189-190). Teacher’s responsibility clearly holds an educational nature. His main responsibility is to advise about “uddesana”, doctrine and discipline “dhamma-vinaya”. The responsibilities of “upādhyāya” are to improve the abilities of students by letting them to question on the things communicated to them “patipucchanā”, advise on necessities and direct students to a correct way in knowledge “vijjā” and behaviour “carana” (V.i.p.50). More details on teacher-student relationship can be found in Singālovāda Sutta (D.iii.p.189-190).

Not only merely to advise for the academic progress, but there is more responsibility rest on the part of “upādhyāya”. The highest responsibility of an Upādhyāya is to lead a newly entered monk into the dispensation for a high moral behaviour without letting him to be a slave of sensual pleasure. There are many such occasions found in early Buddhism. At the time of the Buddha, one monk became a slave of his lustful passion. At that very moment, he informed it to the Upādhyāya (A.iii.p.69).” Having paid attention regarding this, Upādhyāya took him to the Buddha. The Buddha advised him with kindness in the manner of a cleaver doctor treating a patient saying to be a person who gained discipline in sense organs (A.iii.p.70). This advice like a treatment gave good results for the lustful monk.

There is a report with an unusual incident connected with the monastic life of the monk called Waṅgīsa. This is a good example where a clever monk holds the role of an Upādhyāya and a student. The monk Waṅgīsa was good enough to attract the minds of devotees who were coming from the village called Aggalāwa and other distant places. One day, he was attracted to a group of girls who came to visit the monastery. As a result of this, his mind started to fill with the feeling of

lust “anurāgī”. He could not avoid from lust and his mind was disturbed with it in an unbearable manner. Therefore, he was not in a position to engage in his religious activities with a good frame of mind. Actually, he would have gone to his ‘upādhyāya’ for advice. He didn’t do so at once. Instead, he engaged in self-criticism for the rearrangement of his mind which is a more fruitful psychological way “attānam codaye”. After controlling his mind in the way he wants, he could succeed without others’ guidance.

On the part of student, it is absolutely needed to pay the due respect towards “Upādhyāya” because spiritual progress of a student mainly depends on “Upādhyāya”. There is a good simile about the way a student should conduct towards the teacher. “O monks, a newly married woman should show a good respect to her husband and towards her relatives and brother. In the same way, a student should develop the respect towards the teacher (A.ii.p.78).

According to Brahmanic view, a student gets a second birth (spiritual birth) only from the teacher. In the same way, a newly entered monk to the dispensation must depend on his teacher for the development of spiritual features (Mookerji. 1979.p.177).

### **Responsibilities of a Teacher in Theravāda Buddhism**

Teacher’s responsibility is not limited only to the fulfilling of monastic services. From the very beginning of Buddhist missionary service, serving to the lay community was considered to be the main responsibility of Buddhist missionary worker. At the time of Buddha, education was a privilege of high class in Indian society and had a dictatorship of the privileged people. The Buddha, by breaking that social convention, expressed that the education is a human right. He invited all those who wished to learn his doctrine and emphasized that those who wish the benefit of his doctrine to learn his doctrine and it is open to everyone (V.i.p.7). He set forth throughout the entire North India sixty teachers who were trained by Buddha himself to teach to the people living there. In many of his teachings, he emphasised how a teacher will be important in society. The Buddha praised those who treated teachers on and off with kind words and honour. And the Buddha said that the money used for the purpose of teacher is a good use of money. The merit collected so will result for one to be born in heaven and to be born with heavenly comforts.

Among these famous and honorary teachers like Ananda, Sariputta and Punna Mantāni Putta etc. are considered that they had great learning and are famous for their honorary behaviour. When one talks about them, they are introduced as mobile libraries due to their knowledge. Both lay and clergy communities joined with them for their knowledge, good conduct and help for the spiritual blessing to go beyond the worldly existence “samsara”. It is possible to present vast wisdom and exemplary behaviour as essential things even for lay community.

It is a good feature of the Buddha that he praised the intelligent people as the creators of a good society. Once in one discourse, he preached Ven. Rāhula that intelligent people are not only worthy of respect but also it is necessary to associate them for the progress in one’s personality development. The well-learned intelligent people always create wisdom of the people with their leaning (SN.p.58). Due to this reason, they are suitable for the praising of all and they don’t get the accusations from society.

The main objective of education and its main meaning is to achieve one’s autonomous nature “svāyatta”. According to the earlier mentioned facts, one will like to denote it as the understanding of reality. Until one develops one’s abilities like Cognition, Recollection and

Conception to the maximum, one cannot develop one's autonomous nature "svāyatta". Progress of this differs from each person to person and it greatly depends on the teacher's guidance and person's endeavour. The teacher's main role is to direct pupil for the development of autonomous nature "svāyatta".

For the achievement of these "svāyatta" and the objectives, everybody must get the training in the description of autonomous nature or the arts "svāyatta viggaha", "atta vīmaṇsā" and the control of the autonomous nature "atta panidhi". Knowing about self, the person's sense organs and controlling them can be considered as the main reasons for the physical and spiritual progress. The inner peace of controlling the autonomous nature "svāyatta" is the key to know hidden nature of human existence (SN.p.164). This training is a gradual one not a sudden one.

It is similar to the gradual gradient or the slope of the ocean and gradual deep. It will not take place like a sudden slope. The Buddha preached that in the same way a monk has to learn gradually "anu pubba sikkhā", should train himself "anu pubba kiriyā", and he himself must go in the path step by step "anu pubba paṭipadā". It is because joining this path is not a sudden one but gradual.

The role of a teacher links with the personality development of person. Therefore, when the role of a teacher is examined, it is necessary to examine specially about the teaching of personality development in Buddhism. In the early Buddhist texts, for the term 'Personality' has been used in common the term 'atta' (self) (Dhp.v.165). Its closest English term is 'self'. The term 'atta' is used in many religions for the meanings 'permanence' and 'remaining permanent' and also with the feeling of 'blessing'. But according to Buddhist philosophy, the term 'atta' or 'ātma' gives completely different meaning.

The Buddhist teaching on 'personality' gives a deep, direct and a different one than in the Indian religions. It is possible for one to get a deep analysis about this from the Brahmajāla Sutta. Greatly spread this concept had been with all the Indian religions. It had been there for happiness or unhappiness, independence or liability, permanency or void, heaven or hell, and some spiritual factors have been centred on 'personality'. For example, according to some, existence is permanent because they presented an idea about a permanent 'self' or 'ego' (D.i.p.12-13). Some others show the existence as totally different one from the decaying body. Some "amarāvikkhepavāda" did not give an answer. They were blind in a particular idea (Malalasekara.1982.p.35-40). In this manner, there originated various religions and definitions about man, his existence and future. All these ideas without any speciality arose due to definitions on permanency or void (Bodhi.1980.p.65). Since these ideas are connected to study or education, it is necessary to examine them.

According to Buddhism, there are five ways that shows personality of human beings (Aquinas Journal, Vol. 4, p.82-84). They are divided mainly into two categories. They are physical and mental. That physical foundation is body (rūpa). And also this part called Rūpa or body is the visible composition of human personality. There are four kinds in mental composition. They are feeling "vedanā", knowing "saññā", mental activities "saṅkhāra" and awareness "viññāna". These are without the feature of visible composition. More than physical, those are magical. They are sensitive (sharp). Concept of Personality of man is described in a more meaningful way by taking a simile with a cart. At the time, the nun Vajirā was meditating in a day time, Māra (Killer) came to her and disturbed. The Killer wanted to stop her attempt in improving her spirituality. He asked her several long lasted questions on Atta. He asked the questions such as 'What is the composition



of personality? Who is the actual creator of it? How does it really continue? What is the last reason of it? (S.i.p.286-287) Vajirā's answer became foremost in the whole Buddhist concept of personality. After fixing several pieces of wood, it is possible to call it a cart. In the same manner, the collection of Rūpa, Vedanā, Saññā, Saṃkhāra, and Viññāna are called personality.

Personality concept presented in Buddhism means physical and mental composition arranged in some conventional way. It is not possible to control these factors. Since the being is a composition of these factors, he can get destroyed. So, this physical and mental situation will be impermanent, sorrowful and there is no self-ness (S.i.p.297). Personality has the feature of ever-changing, renewing and enlarging (M.i.p.1-6). The law of changing is universal. It affects various reasons like things with life and lifeless things, even after this life, physical, mental, food and even time frame. Physical and mental unit that flows without disturb and only the things that are joined together with cause-effect theory are considered a personality.

In early Buddhist texts, the facts mostly connected are about the true personality of man. It is bright and dark. It is optimistic or pessimistic. Personality is not a thing that lies in the same place. According to the nature of personality development, its nature changes from birth to death. Personality means the organization of one's life. The real education is the gaining of the real nature of life through internal peace. According to the Buddhist theory, if education doesn't widen the knowledge on life, its advantages and disadvantages, its pessimistic and optimistic view, do not go beyond student's view, it is not possible to say it as education. Man's problems are the wrong interpretations created by man though they are large, small, external, internal, national, international, essential values, culture, race, economic and political factors (SN.p.112). According to Buddha, the tool called education should be a motivation for the one who gets the education as a whole to understand his personality. It is the beginning of education.

As far as life is seen by materialistic sense, people will be blind persons who don't see the real nature of it. Our attitude about life will be a selfish one with various links. Through the education, it is always possible for student to except the wrong ideas with lust about life and get the correct way of life with the knowledge he gains "subānupassim viharantaṃ" (Dhp.v.8). And also, the person who lives with a wrong vision of life will be with wrong values and false thickness. This false thickness is a very dangerous disease. It is a fearful thing more than a cancer. The person without correct attitudes of life is a curse not only to himself but also to the society. Education always trains a person to look at life not lustfully or selfishly "asubānupassim viharantaṃ" (Dhp.v.146). While those ideas always help a person to keep good behavioural patterns with him, they also help him to control craving and ignorance.

According to Buddhism, life becomes a monotonous one when its correct nature is not understood. Therefore, the aim of education is to enlighten the wisdom of everyone (A.ii.p.48) and through a right vision of life letting them to spend a perfect life.

People are not ready to accept some above mentioned profound things. Things like them are not possible to understand for a mind trained in a Western way. The reason for it is that his life has got developed with an education with a philosophy based on Materialists. However, the new education way is also a reason for the various problems prevailing in our society. Due to the combination between the scientific knowledge and modern education, there are many unprecedented astonishing things. With the wonder of scientific knowledge, people meet each other with extra-modern technology and communication methods. The time of a person using a

computer to get help in various activities won't be too long. There is no doubt that a robot instead of a teacher may be used for the administration of school and teaching subjects. Will it be possible for man to develop his knowledge with advancement of these prevailing teaching and learning conditions, relationships and the development in administration? Has the modern education taught about man's unison or agreement? Isn't the modern education responsible for problems, trials and tribulations prevailing in the present society? As it is known, the birth of science is to encourage man on the physical needs. Education based on Materialists never identifies self and the phenomenon in the society completely.

The person who didn't identify self or I, he will always be with the false pomposity or thickness. Therefore, this false pomposity is something going against the truth. And also, this will be against all the things connected with person. One reason for this is that some Westerners who give interpretations about education system found in Buddhism present pessimistic view about it. According to Salla Sutta, the profound things found in Buddhism can be understood clearly and led a happy life by only those who are wise or intelligent. Man is a too complicated text book. Personality is connected with life but it is a thing formed with education. According to the repeated saying above, every man is similar with a world. More than the physical environment around us, it is possible to use the term 'Lōka' to the man more meaningfully. Physical environment displays our internal features.

Once, the Buddha highlighted a fascinating lesson. Accordingly, man should start finding happiness not from external environment but from man within himself. Though all the modern scientific findings are taken together, isn't this finding so educational? Buddha preached, "I know psychological process of this fathom-length body "byāmatte kalēbarē"- 'the body of six feet'. According to that, world, its origin, its end and the way leading to end are disclosed by within this body itself (A.ii.p.49). Here, the term, 'world' is meant for the continuation of life or in other way the continuation of mentality. The things like personality are the things originated from them. And also, materialistic and the things generated with materialistic elements, the personality of man even origins from this origin. Next, it is necessary to consider and examine in detail how our internality builds up and the possibility of how to get real happiness through internal peace.

Inside of personality of each person, there are unlimited Cognition, Conception and Recollection. Many don't know about this unlimited mental power "citta balam". But, that power can be used daily for useful or harmful purposes. Therefore, people's behaviour means using our mental power. So, it gets enriched with feelings. Inner knowledge of person not only creates a true education but it also becomes the medium of creating a perfect Wiseman or intelligent person.

Among the various psychological evidences that are included in personality, 'Vedanā, Saññā, saṅkhāra and viññāna are significant features. Our motives and activities will be created through these features or by these features. It happens through two-fold mental activities. One of those two is natural. The other is an intelligent one. They occur as a result of the process of continuation of them. This series of activities happen by combining with one purpose. From the two intentions, one is naturally invasive. By the process of continuation it creates three factors or inductions. These are craving, anger or fighting, ignorance. Other mental generations are gained from education "bhāvita citta santati". It will be with the enthusiasm and consideration of person. Those are mostly positive inductions. Getting away from craving, anger and ignorance are those inductions. These two fold mental generations or thoughts occur as one a positive induction and the other negative induction.

The origin of these inductions and the influence of them on human behaviour are presented clearly in early Buddhist texts. One best example for this is the argument between the Buddha and the demon, Sucilōma. The question that was asked by Sucilōma by humiliating Buddha was how the mental defilements like desire “raga”, anger “dāsa” likeness or love “rati” get created (SN.p.48). The answer the Buddha gave was that those mental defilements get created within person itself “ito nidānā” (SN.p.48). When person is controlled by these mental features, they are drawn into the person like a crow takes away a child “Kumārakā vaṅka iva ossajanti” (SN.p.48). These things get created within lust and self “atta sambhutā”. As a result of an unwholesome depressive situation, lost “alābō”, sorrow “dukkha”, grief “soka” and mental confusions can be taken and they arise like a small banyan tree is grown on banyan tree trunk itself (S.i.p.219). In some places, lust, anger and ignorance have been compared to flood and hurricane (Dhp.v.370). These bad inductions create very bad results by mixing with internal and external forces (A.iii.p.63). Among these forces, human philosophy is very important. The thoughts about sex life are the results of psychological willingness called desire or a result of lust. Willingness or likeness that occurs on and off “chando” creates the intention of enjoying lust. Sometimes, it can be a lawful or unlawful enjoyment (SN.p.151). And also, anger “dvesa” origins on and off due to the aggressive nature. The bad results originated with it sometimes can be sudden or created before it (Dhp.v.3). For example, it is not possible to see the things in their real nature when the mind is with jealous “issā”, ill-will “vyāpāda”, anger, dishonesty when the mind is under anger or wrath or else it will prevent everything. The third induction is ignorance. This is considered the most serious mental condition out of these three. The mind that is under ignorance will always with confusion and due to its troublesome nature the unclear all will be disliked (A.i.p.2). The Buddha introduced ignorance as a main thing that pollutes mind “avijjā paramaṃ malam” (Dhp.v.243). The mind polluted with ignorance will not understand anything clearly. The reason for it is that the ignorance will destroy the ability of person to understand and the power of Cognition. The last result crated with this is that confusion will get worse from it.

When the mind is confused with the above mentioned induction, it will be an unrest situation to the mind and that kind of mind has been compared with a battlefield. Early texts on Buddhism present the mental situations arose with the kind of war that takes place in the mind as tenfold. This tenfold mental situation enters into the mind and destroys it. They are

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|-----|---|--|
| 1.  | Willingness to satisfy sense organs     | “kāma”   |
| 2.  | Disgust                                 | “arati”  |
| 3.  | Thirsty and hunger                      | “khuppipāsa”                                     |
| 4.  | Craving                                 | “taṇhā”  |
| 5.  | Laziness and inactiveness               | “thīnamiddha”                                    |
| 6.  | Fear                                    | “bhīru”  |
| 7.  | Suspicion                               | “vicikicchā”                                     |
| 8.  | Dishonesty                              | “makkhā”   |
| 9.  | Willingness to get profit               | “lābho siloko”                                   |
| 10. | Considering self as greatest and others | “attānaṃ samukkanso pare ca avajānana” (SN.p.76) |

With this depressed mind, there can be various unrest situations and those situations can be depressive and also they will destroy person. When seeing in this manner, it is possible to think that there isn't a battlefield more than this. The people's mind arranged with those tenfold bad mental conditions, isn't it the most dangerous battlefield. It is possible to see violence operating in

various forms. Sometimes, those fierce or cruel activities happen face to face or in our presence. These happen as a result of the influence of bad motivation.

The human mind has been compared to a jail or prison “māradheyya” in many Buddhists Pāli text books. Many of human beings are prisoners. Mental cells are the creations of human beings by themselves. Mental Prison will be tenfold and they will tie them. This Mental fetters will be protected by tenfold trick. As far as they are strong, they will be able to stay within them. Those tenfold tie or the protections are,

- |     |   |                      |
|-----|---|----------------------|
| 1.  | Willingness to own self or ego          | “sakkāya diṭṭhi”     |
| 2.  | Suspicion                               | “vicikiccā”          |
| 3.  | Sacrifice and offering                  | “sīlabbata parāmāsa” |
| 4.  | Desire for sense pleasure               | “kāmaraga”           |
| 5.  | Anger                                   | “vyāpāda”            |
| 6.  | Desire to be born in Physical World     | “rūpa raga”          |
| 7.  | Desire to be born in Non-physical World | “arūpa raga”         |
| 8.  | Pride                                   | “māna”               |
| 9.  | Mind wondering                          | “uddhacca”           |
| 10. | Ignorance                               | “avijjā” (A.i.p.17)  |

Person is really attracted to these tenfold mental. These mental disturbances exclude the freedom of man. As far as the mind is disturbed with these, he won't experience peace or tranquillity of mind. According to Buddhism, as far as human beings undergo the power of this mental disturbance, human beings are suffering from mental diseases (A.i.p.95). It is certain that people will be prisoners of these mental conditions until they are free from them. It is stated clearly, according to Buddhist philosophy, education means finding the correct way of wisdom and values by leaving hindrances “nīvarana”.

As the last definition, education can be taken as cultural activities. According to Buddhist philosophy, culture means the discipline in mind. It is because the mind becomes the chief for internal and external nature of expressions. As a land without cultivations will become futile and grow trees after sometime, the untrained mind is also not suitable for teaching. The mind will also become a motherland for suspicion, mistrust and calmlessness. It happens so when the mind is sensitive only towards physical things and as a result of the education gained through such medium. On such an occasion, human beings will become infertile spiritually “cetākhila”. According to Buddhist point of view, spiritual infertility occurs due to the lack of belief in six factors.

1. Breaking of the trust about teacher “buddhe kankhati”
2. Breaking of the trust about doctrine “patimāna” “dhamme kankhati”
3. Breaking of the trust about conventional teachers “saṅghe kankhati”
4. Breaking of the trust about training process assigned “sikkhāya kankhati”
5. Breaking of the trust about spiritual teachers “sabrahmacārīsu kupito hoti” (M.i.p.101).

Education means not merely remembering or memorizing what you heard “sutadharo”. If an educator tries only to save the knowledge in mind, it is like filling an empty basket with water (A.ii.p.22-23). If one doesn't keep the knowledge gained properly, it is dangerous like food that was not digested. Sometimes, there won't be more dangers from the food that was not digested.

But, the danger from the person who does not gain the knowledge correctly can be more disastrous than it. If it is to state in a more emphasized way, it should be proven from the person who gained the knowledge. He should be critical and a researcher “anussavāca vīmaṅsā” (M.iii.p.110). And also, from it, he has to change not only his attitude about self but also the attitude towards society. Buddha’s education system becomes more significant because it gradually leaves out the wrong old attitudes about man (S.v.p.420). The analysis about man who is a component of five physical and five mental elements “pancupādānakkhandā” (V.i.p.13-14) shows that without considering his birth, race, colour or class, but he should be with good behaviour and activities and also he should be with a virtuous or pure living philosophy (SN.p.122). The Buddha preached that it is necessary to emphasise him to lead a good life without prior social judgment, (A.iv.p.281) not letting him to enter into bias concepts and to persuade him to build up relationships with kindness. Even for a good teacher, it is difficult to explain the correct way to people. It becomes a difficult task because it is like taking them into light from darkness.

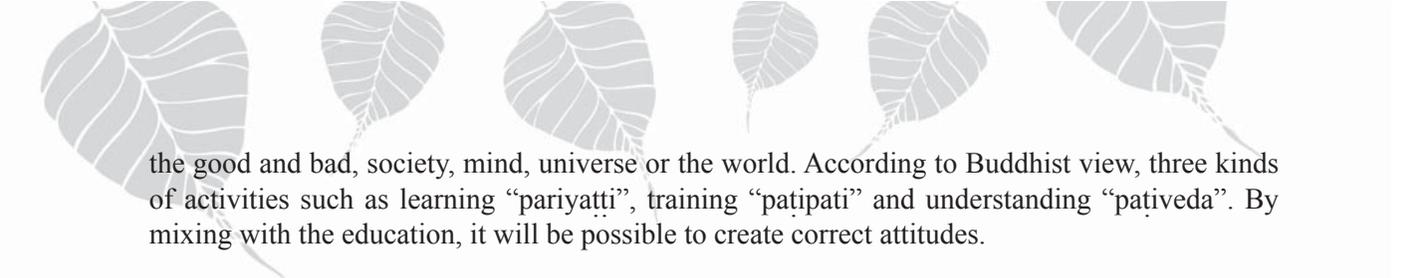
It is clear that the Buddha did not use the bad ways or strict discipline “dīṭṭhi nijjhānakkhanti” (S.ii.p.115) to take person to the correct path. Instead, he used a very freeway “vīmaṅsā”. According to the above, everyone can accept anything by critically analysing it. There is no such freedom in any religion like in Buddhism. For this rare and intelligent trend, the best example is famous Vīmaṅsaka Sutta (M.i.p.317-320). As gold is examined by rubbing in the Touch Stone, before accepting a fact, it is possible for the followers to examine critically before accepting the Buddha’s teaching. The Buddha had introduced how to examine the validity of his teaching in Vīmaṅsaka Sutta (M.i.p.318).

According to Buddha’s teaching, teacher, doctrine (lesson) and the belief about communication methods are necessary things for education to be a fruitful and happy one. It is now possible to enter good un-bias concepts into the disciples. In that manner, to create good attitudes, learning should be a pleasant one to person. Vīmaṅsaka Sutta describes it clearly (M.i.p.318).”

There is an attractive or a good description about logical inquiry with ten points in Kālāmā Sutta (M.i.p.189). It is possible to use this method to find what is good.

Psychologically, the good and the bad are the things occur in the mind. Those occur always as responses to the enthusiasm. According to some views, the thoughts are formed and the qualitative nature of our attitudes will take place accordingly to the nature of mind when the thoughts are formed. According to Buddhism, uncorrupted mind is always pure and with great qualities “pabassaramindaṃ bhikkhave cittaṃ” (M.i.p.10). But, according to the nature, that nature can be changed at any time because of the reactions done to various enthusiasms. Due to this nature, human mind is compared to a piece of cloth (M.i.p.36)”. And also, there is another definition about the nature of mind in Vatthupama Sutta (M.i.p.36). This definition found in Pāli canon is a psychological description.

In the above mentioned all the paragraphs, forming attitudes is centred on the role or the duties of teacher. It emphasises the fertility of the education process. There, the attitudes were discussed for the both side of attitudes good and bad. Bad attitudes, wrong views about self and person, the things or materials and incidents are the bonds of man to Sansāra or the world. Good attitudes in the hearts of people have the capability of forwarding motives towards the autonomous activities. Good attitudes get created when there is a good understanding about



the good and bad, society, mind, universe or the world. According to Buddhist view, three kinds of activities such as learning “pariyatti”, training “paṭipati” and understanding “paṭiveda”. By mixing with the education, it will be possible to create correct attitudes.

In the Buddhist monastic convention, student-teacher relationship operates with a system of ethics. Since it is an order or direction with the consent or approval of the Religious Leader (Buddha), there is no possibility for teachers or students to go away from them. They are bound to fulfil their duties even from their fundamental monastic laws. If a teacher, who does not have proper qualifications, keeps a student under his protection, he is considered an offender. Apart from this, some other factors that a teacher is considered as an offender are if a student who did a wrong thing and even after he is rehabilitated from those mistakes, the teacher does not forgive him or even when advising and if the student still misbehaves, the teacher does not leave him or well-behaved student is left.

The responsibilities of a teacher towards a student are also confirmed by the monastic laws. The teacher has to pay attention about the student’s benefit, protection, development and the good behaviour. He has to help the student everyway like teaching, exemplary behaviour, advising and supplying the necessities. This is not like the duty fulfilling of an attendant, but as a father looks after a child well (V.i.p.61). These have to be continued till a student is able to engage in day to day work alone. And also, a student who disrespects a teacher will be worthy for punishments. A student, without showing the respect to a teacher like for a father, without respecting, without fear for misbehaving and not getting the spiritual training, will get these punishments (V.i.p.61). The significant feature of fulfilling these responsibilities and duties of a student is that it helps for the proper conduct between teacher and student with the father-son relationship. The benefit of education in the Buddhist monastic organisation is that it is helpful and considers by protecting the purity of person, leaving out all the sin, and the maintenance of proper conduct.

## Conclusion

Finally, it is obvious that Buddhism presents many definitions about teacher in various discourses. Many terms like ‘sattā’, ‘ācariya’, upādyāya’ have been used in Theravāda Buddhism to define teacher. Many significant characteristics like immeasurable cognition, recollection, conception are also given in many discourses as presented in the discussion and analysis. Buddhism has emphasised that teacher should be a creative thinker and explorer of unknown knowledge as well as they are to serve the entire beings. Serving the entire beings in the world will help to reduce violent or conflict situations as a whole. Human values can be established throughout the world by the establishment of a good teacher-student relationship since many seek the assistance teachers in the formation of their lives. The responsibilities of teacher are clearly presented in many discourses as presented in the discussion. It can be concluded that Buddhism presents many definitions and responsibilities of teacher for the betterment of an exemplary teacher-student relationship in a globalised world. The teacher-student responsibilities presented in Buddhism are universal factors and they can be put into practice in any society.

In the globalised world, it seems necessary for teachers to form the correct attitudes among pupils. The discussed Buddhist disciplinary rules and monastic laws will pave the way for teachers to form the lives of students for their benefit, protection, development and good behaviour. Since the teacher is with the discipline in mind, he will be in a position to guide students in the correct path through the development of the personality of students.

If a teacher in a globalised world can gain a vast knowledge by following Buddha, help everyone coming for refuge, become a respectful and honorary person, be exemplary with correct and good behaviour, remove desires and give the correct understanding to the nature of life, he will be a qualified person to overcome issues in a globalised world. He must also be a creative thinker and explorer of unknown knowledge to educate the community as a whole. In a Buddhist context, a teacher is defined as an incomparable teacher with cognition and vast knowledge. So, the teachers in the present globalised world need to get a vast knowledge by implementing the advanced technology at present and gain the firmness of character with discipline to become good teachers. They will serve the community guiding pupils knowing their mentality and necessities to fulfil their objectives. So, the society in a globalised world would be a better one for everyone to live in a peaceful manner.

The best example for the implementation of these values and responsibilities is the Sri Lankan Pirivena Education, the education system for Buddhist monks. Many educational institutes for Buddhist monks are based on the features of Buddhist values and they have been successful up to the present. There is a good student-teacher relationship in these institutions. When considering the university entrance, Buddhist monks represent a high percentage as a result of the well-established education system based on Buddhist values. The whole Buddhist society is directed on the correct path through Dhamma schools. Since Buddhist educational institutes hold a significant place in the society, two of them have even been converted into two leading universities in Sri Lanka.

Therefore, through the implementation of these concepts and responsibilities, it will be possible to create a better world free from inhuman values as the aim of Buddhist education is to enlighten the wisdom of everyone to spend perfect lives. It is clear that many opportunities are available in Theravada Buddhism for a consensus and the betterment of the globalised world.

### Abbreviations

- A. – Āṅguttaranikāya
- D. – Dīghanikāya
- Dhp. – Dhammapada
- M. – Majjhimanikāya
- S. – Saṃyuttanikāya
- SN. – Sutta Nipata
- V. – Vinayapitaka
- Dhp.A.-Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā

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# From Making Merit to Civil Society: The Politics of dāna cliques and socially engaged Buddhist monks in Myanmar

Keziah Wallis

## Abstract

Social welfare organisations in Myanmar are frequently created and participated in by Burmese Buddhists and operate as forms of civil society. This paper explores the Buddhist motivations of members of these civil society organisations to participate in such social welfare projects by examining their relationship to Burmese traditional merit-making practices. In doing so, it investigates whether such practices can be considered an example of socially engaged Buddhism. The discussion in this paper focuses on the case study of the Win-Win organisation, a Yangon-based women's organisation focused on providing health care to poor rural Burmese. I argue that the social welfare work of this group operates within a framework of dāna practices and is part of a wider renegotiation of the concept within Myanmar. As a result, I see such practices as being constitutive of socially engaged Buddhism despite the blurred boundaries between religious and secular motivations. The social welfare work of the members of Win-Win both draws upon Buddhist practices, values, and principles, and reflects local political, social, and economic concerns.

## Introduction

*Early one January morning I arrived at the Yangon home of one of the senior members of the Win-Win Organisation. For around half an hour the women and I sat together catching up the details of our lives for the fortnight since we had last seen each other. Daw Kaythi Win and some of the other committee members busied themselves with the various administrative duties such an organisation requires: collecting dues, marking members present, and passing along details of upcoming events. Eventually, the call went out that the mini-van had arrived and we all piled into the van or an assortment of cars belonging to members before setting off in convoy for the day's destination. After an hour or more on the road and a brief stop to share breakfast together, the group arrived at the small village of Kyauk Tan about 45 miles from Yangon.*

*Upon our arrival at Kyauk Tan, the group split up with the doctors taking up their spaces in the newly built medical centre on the grounds of the Walumon Monastery School. I took my usual place at the medicine dispensing table while another group responsible for running the education programs separated off into the seminar room. Within ten minutes the first patient appeared at the table handing over their medical records book to one of the nurse volunteers. Once she had organised the prescribed medicines, the nurse passed a green plastic plate containing the medicine and the record book to one of the other volunteers. Each medication was packaged up with a clear chart of directions.<sup>1</sup> The patient is then called over, and detailed instructions are given for each medication before I move onto the next patient. We repeated the procedure until finally, the call rang out that there were no more patients waiting. After packing up the supplies, the group gathered again at the food hall next to the meditation centre to once more share a meal and to pay their respects to the Venerable Dr. Ashin Pyin Nyaw Batha (also known as Waluwon Sayadaw) who oversees the monastery school and meditation centre.*

The above anecdote describes a typical excursion of the civil society organisation Win-

<sup>1</sup> Many of the patients of the clinic are illiterate or at least only able to read to a grade school level. The instructions for each medicine must be simple and clear to ensure that patients can follow the drug regimen prescribed



Win, a domestic NGO founded in 2009 to focus on improving the social and economic status of women and their families (Win-Win Organisation 2014). While not an explicitly Buddhist organisation, organisations such as Win-Win focused on social welfare work are intimately intertwined with processes of merit-making and associated social groups, which I term *dāna cliques*.<sup>2</sup> Performances of social welfare work are conducted in much the same way as those of merit-making and within the same social groups. Also, Buddhist beliefs have helped to shape how many Myanmar people and local organisation--including Win-Win--conceive of, and carry out, charity work and other types of social engagement. While the characterisation of these charitable motivations as more ‘universal’ than ‘Buddhist’ is possible, the way in which the practices are carried out, and their links to concepts of *dāna* and *mēṭta* locate these practices within the field of socially engaged Buddhism.<sup>3</sup>

### **Ethnographic Background: The Win-Win Organisation**

The founder-president of Win-Win, Daw Kaythi Win, and three friends with shared histories of long-term involvement in humanitarian aid, established the domestic non-government organisation (NGO) in January 2009. In part, the women were motivated to devote their time and financial resources to aid and development work after participating in the relief work following the destruction of Cyclone Nargis considered the worst natural disaster in the recorded history of Myanmar. The women’s involvement with domestic and international NGOs inspired them to work towards the improvement of Myanmar society. The name Win-Win refers to the idea behind the organisation that ‘Win for women is a Win for all.’

The primary focus for Win-Win is the provision of health care and health education aimed at improving the lives of Burmese women in rural Myanmar.<sup>4</sup> In Myanmar where the private sector accounts for over 70% of expenditure on health care, the civil society sector has taken significant responsibility for the provision of health care services in a policy framework which has often been deficient. In recent years, the Myanmar Ministry of Health has worked in cooperation with the WHO and domestic NGOs to improve the quality of health services delivered to the population. In addition to the health clinics, the Win-Win organisation has also raised money for a variety of building projects including the medical centre at Kyauk Tan.<sup>5</sup>

The group is made up of a mixture of female members and male and female volunteer medical staff. Support for Win-Win social enterprise activities comes mostly from the rising urban-based middle-class in Myanmar society. Likewise, the bulk of the active members of Win-Win also draws from this class. Many of the members of the Win-Win committee are socially

- 1 Many of the patients of the clinic are illiterate or at least only able to read to a grade school level. The instructions for each medicine must be simple and clear to ensure that patients can follow the drug regimen prescribed
- 2 I have adopted this terminology from the work of anthropologist Ingrid Jordt who in examining the politics of sincerity in Burmese interpretations of the military government’s appropriation of *dāna* practice defines them as ‘groups of lay donors [who] share in each others’ merit-making events, [and] also form the backbone of commercial networks among women’ (Jordt 2007, p.106)
- 3 The term ‘socially engaged religion’ was coined by Vietnamese Thien Buddhist monk Thich Nhất Hanh who was himself inspired by the Humanistic Buddhism of Taixu and Yinshu. The concept itself generally refers to religious movements which show an actively concerned posture to formulate civil society. In the Myanmar-context the main proponent of socially engaged Buddhism for the past few decades has been Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Daw Suu’s speeches and essays have clearly outlined how her vision of Myanmar’s future sees it as that of a contemporary democratic state founded on Buddhist teachings. Her political activism is based upon the premise that ‘religion is a positive force in social life that ameliorates social, economic, and political injustice and spiritually empowers popular resistance against the states coercion’ (Schober 2005, p.127)
- 4 Despite the existence of fertile lands, a rich endowment of natural resources, and an excellent geographical location at the intersection of two of the world’s most dynamic economies (China and India), poverty levels in Myanmar are estimated by the UNDP at 26% of the population (UNDP 2014). While economic growth in Myanmar has been significant--the Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimated an increase in Gross Domestic Profit of 7.5% in 2013-2014 (Lewis 2014), this growth has largely been the result of resource extraction and infrastructure investment and has seen little improvement in the lives of the average citizen. This lack of improvement is particularly the case for the rural population who make up around 70% of the population and for whom poverty is endemic.
- 5 Other building projects have included a steel-reinforced concrete boat to facilitate access to a village which is inaccessible during the monsoon season and a school house in another village. At another clinic, located on the grounds of a local school, the organisation handed out new school uniforms for every pupil as well as donating the necessary books to the school.

high-ranking---as are the majority of the monks who participate in the project.<sup>6</sup> They may not be part of the military elite or their civilian ‘cronies’, but they still maintain a certain level of cachet through familial and patron-client networks. The husband of one woman, for example, was a high-ranking member of the military intelligence, while another’s husband is a divisional police chief.<sup>7</sup> The Burmese are often quite pragmatic about utilising whatever resources are available and so their political allegiances have not prevented the organisation from connecting with the government to participate in state-sponsored development projects. In addition to this the organisation also receives money from donors in other countries and from international development project funds.

Outreach trips like the one described at the beginning of this paper occur on the first and third Saturdays of each month with occasional longer trips occurring throughout the year to allow for visits to more remote areas. While the first Saturday of each month entails a visit to Kyauk Tan, Win-Win provides similar outreach clinics at other rural villages on the other Saturdays. The location of these clinics varies throughout the year however one common thread is the use of Buddhist networks in establishing these clinics. In the ten months that I was an active member of the organisation all except for one of these clinics was conducted in conjunction with monastics in the regions. Throughout this paper, I will discuss the way in which both the women and the monks employ the concept of *dāna* to describe the financial and labour donations and how an understanding of the variety of Burmese interpretations of the concept and related traditional practices is essential for understanding the functioning of civil society in Myanmar.

## Ethnographic Background: Civil Society in Myanmar

Civil society in Myanmar can trace its origins back to village-level religious organisations which served as a way for local people to come together and organise social and religious activities. Basic civil society structures emerged in Myanmar from predominately Buddhist and Christian-led social welfare activities which focused on poverty, health, and the daily needs of communities. Despite the evidence of earlier practices and the fact that the civil society sector in Myanmar has been gradually increasing since the mid-1990s when some the government opened up legal space for non-political domestic NGOs, the widespread participation in such socially engaged Buddhist projects is a relatively recent phenomenon. The impact of Cyclone Nargis in 2008 and the role of monasteries and Buddhist organisations in providing relief to the afflicted proved a watershed for socially engaged Buddhism in the country.<sup>8</sup> According to Jacquet and Walton, it has only been since Nargis that observers have begun to consider monastic networks as important allies in relief work in the region (2013, p.52). The number of domestic NGOs which list their foundation to the period 2008-2010 is also quite significant. In fact, the development of civil society organisations, in general, appears to predominately date to the post-Nargis period. I encountered relatively few such organisations which claimed a foundation date prior to 2008.<sup>9</sup>

6 While there are several *thila-shin* (nuns; lit. lords/masters of morality) who are members of Win-Win I did not personally encounter them during my time with the organisation. We did on several occasions encounter nuns at outreach locations. The status of Burmese nuns is on the whole much lower than that of monks although these social perceptions depend upon personal relationships and past dealings of lay people to nuns (see Jordt 1988; Kawanami 2000). Nuns are therefore unlikely to have the cachet necessary to draw in donors to the extent that charismatic monks do. This does not mean that nuns are not involved in civil society works. A number of Burmese nuns run monastic schools and microfinance programs as well as other community development programs. Daw Ketu Mala, for instance is the founder of the Dhamma School Foundation (DSF). DSF has organised a network of thousands of schools across the country with over half a million pupils. Daw Ketu Mala is also a working towards challenging Myanmar’s gender-inequality.

7 Such connections are not uncommon in Myanmar and do not in any way indicate allegiance to the former military government. In fact, the majority of the women are strong supporters of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy (NLD) Party.

8 When the cyclone hit the four most densely populated southern divisions of Myanmar, it destroyed over 800,000 homes and 75 percent of the health facilities. Despite initial fears that the region epidemics of serious diseases such as cholera, typhoid and dengue fever would ravage the region, these concerns proved unfounded. This was mainly owing to the combined efforts of both the international community and the domestic civil society sector in Myanmar which saw Burmese citizens living abroad rally to assist their compatriots inside the country.



Today in Myanmar a vibrant civil society sector is operating within urban centres like Yangon. The sector itself is made up of three main types of civil society organisations: informal or voluntary community-based organisations formed at the village level for the performance of social and religious functions; and domestic and international NGOs.<sup>10</sup> The majority of domestic NGOs in Myanmar are unregistered with the government, although increasingly such groups are registering in order to tap into the regional, national, and international NGO networks as well as to link to government ministries sponsoring social welfare projects. Thus, the domestic civil society sector plays a significant role in the state's poverty alleviation, immunisation, sanitation improvement, health education and disease prevention, education development, and social welfare services.

### **Ethnographic Background: Buddhism in Myanmar**

Merit-making plays a central role in Bamar religious practices. The term is used by Burmese to refer to a wide range of good deeds and acts of generosity that are considered to improve a person's kamma. If merit is the key concept around which Bamar religious practice orientates itself as both motivation and justification, *dāna* is the primary form taken in the pursuit of merit. It is in many ways the mainstay of all activity within the Bamar community. The commemoration of any kind of event frequently combines with the *dāna* of a shared merit or an offering to the sangha. Such acts of merit-making often take the form of a feeding ceremony for monks, but just as frequently Bamar will extend the *dāna* to include friends and family members. When the birthday of a Bamar friend living overseas occurred, his mother arranged for the provision of lunch for all of the students and teachers in the small school she was running. This offering was an extension of a traditional offering of a meal to the sangha which took place at a monastery near her house.

*Dāna* is frequently understood as a virtue perfected through practice, but is also regularly translated as 'generosity.' Many Burmese believe that donation, as an ideally selfless act of generosity, leads to positive effects in the future.<sup>11</sup> The roles of the recipients and donors, as well as the actual donation, is of significance. Ideally, however, the focus of giving should be on the development of the donor's mind. According to U Chit Thin the volition of the donor before, during, and after the act of *dāna* is the most important factor in the practice of giving (U Chit Tin 1987). The importance of intention (*cetāna*) is so strong that the Anguttara Nikaya for instance records the Buddha as saying: 'even if a person throws away pot-scourings or the rinsings of cups into a pool or cesspit, thinking of feeding the creatures that live therein, I declare it would be a source of merit for him.' (AN 3.57).

The recipient of the offerings is significant for the quality of the merit that the donation

9 Before Nargis, socially oriented Buddhist institutions led by both monks and lay people were active in addressing issues such as free funeral services for the destitute, medicine for HIV/AIDS patients, and homes and education for orphaned children. The relief operations following Cyclone Nargis, however, were an opportunity for Buddhist organisations to establish relations with international NGOs and donors.

10 Although there are no government or other statistics on these groups, one estimate puts the number at 214,000 (Heidel 2006). Many of which sprung into being following the devastation of Cyclone Nargis or the more recent massive floods of the 2015 monsoon season which affected around a million people across 12 of the 14 states. A 1998 report by UNICEF identified over fifty domestic and international NGOs operating in Myanmar. Since that time, the number of both has significantly increased as new professional, charitable, religious, and ethnic associations have come into existence. I estimate that in 2015 there were at least several thousand of such organisations operating throughout Myanmar, mostly in the health and welfare sectors. The activities of such institutions frequently appear in the numerous Myanmar newspapers, especially in relation to their merit-making and charitable activities. While community-based organisations are most likely to be found in the rural areas, Domestic NGOs almost exclusively originate in the urban regions, particularly Yangon.

11 The story of Sivali (or Shin Thiwali as he is known in Myanmar) in the Dhammapada is an example of the great merit which can result from even a tiny gift when presented to the Buddha-led sangha. The villager who willingly donated his newly harvested honeycomb instead of selling it for a lifetime's earnings was reborn as the Arhat Sivali (Dhp XXVI.414).

(dāna) will entail. High-quality merit is considered to require beneficiaries separated from the lay realm and who through strict living constitute a ‘field of merit.’ Traditionally giving to monks as part of the sangha considered to be the most meritorious form of giving. The question of which recipients result in the greatest merit is a frequent question asked of the Buddha in the Pāli texts. In the Sakkasamyutta the Buddha responds to Sakka’s inquiry by specifying that donations to the sangha bear great results (S i.233).<sup>12</sup>

In Burmese society, dāna is a practice affecting social and political life as much as religious. The link between dāna and civil society organisations lies in dāna’s being a pre-eminently public practice.<sup>13</sup> Amounts donated are broadcast for all who might hear to aid in producing feelings of sympathetic joy (muditā). The mental act of free-will giving is cultivated by the donor and simultaneously by their witnesses, who find produced in their own consciousness the thought and inclination to donate as well. Donation is, consequently, a social event in which invitations to ‘share in the merits’ of the occasion may be sent out to family, friends, and acquaintances. These regularised groupings, in turn, form the basis of dāna cliques. The prominent givers in these more or less labile groups accrue grander amounts of merit and social status because they give more and consequently draw larger numbers of giving participants to their events. There is, in fact, a functional reciprocity involved, as all of those individuals who participated in the donor’s event will eventually invite herto come and participate in their dāna events as well. These networks of donors form latent action groups for activities extending outside the religious sphere.<sup>14</sup>

## Research Objectives

While a recent study of the influence of Myanmar Buddhist concepts on relief activities by examines the importance of kamma for explaining the occurrence of disasters such as Cyclone Nargis (Jaquet and Walton 2013), this paper focuses on dāna’s relationship to wider networks of reciprocity. My aim in this paper is to outline how such local Buddhist-based organisations function as a form of civil society within Myanmar and then to examine how these practices can be considered evidence of the emergence of a socially engaged movement within Burmese Buddhism. This paper does not attempt to produce an all-encompassing theory of why Buddhist women in Myanmar participate in civil society projects but provides analysis of how the Buddhist concept of dāna influences their interpretation and participation in social welfare works. The aim of this paper is to examine how social welfare works performed by Burmese Buddhists as part of civil society organisations can be considered evidence of the emergence of a socially engaged movement within Myanmar Buddhism.

In examining some of the ways in which Buddhists in Myanmar conceptualise, justify, and practice civil society, this paper examines to what extent these practices can be considered ‘Buddhist’ as opposed to ‘universal’ and therefore whether we can consider such activities a form of socially engaged Buddhism. For Jaquet and Walton, in their recent research on Buddhist relief projects following Nargis, despite evidence of increased social donations such practices cannot be considered a movement of socially engaged Buddhism due to a lack of evidence of

<sup>12</sup> Here the Buddha is in-fact in the use of the term referring to the those who are on the path to stream-entry, once-returning, non-returning, and arahant (cattari purisayugani, attha purisapuggala) rather than the community of monks as the term is used in the Vinaya. The Anguttara Nikaya records a lavish alms-giving conducted by the bodhisatta when he was the Brahman Velāma (AN 9.20). In the Velāma Sutta, it is clear that it is more meritorious to feed a single once-returned (sakadāgāmin) than a hundred stream-enterers (sotāpanna)

<sup>13</sup> Juliane Schober argues that ‘in a traditional polity, social status was seen as a ritual economy of merit based on spiritual rewards for material donation in support of Buddhist practices and institutions’ (2011, p.3).

<sup>14</sup> For further elaboration of this theme and the gendered nature of these networks see Jordt (2011).



their popularity beyond Yangon (2013, p.67). This paper argues, however, that the proliferation of domestic NGOs and community-based organisations based around traditional merit-making practices and conceptions of *dāna* are in fact evidence of the development of a socially engaged Buddhist movement within Burmese Buddhism.

## Research Methods

The data used in this paper is developed out of ten months long-term immersive fieldwork in Myanmar. Ethnographic inquiry comprises participant observation and interviewing, as well as historical contextualisation and theoretical analysis that makes visible that which lies beneath the surface of the everyday. Ethnography thus brings attention to cultural logics and local meaning-making, along with social structure, governing systems, ritual practices, etc. Ethnographic fieldwork is an important lens to use when studying religion as it opens up a space for examining the everyday lived realities of religious actors. Through a combination of in-depth discussions, participant observation, and more general long-term observations as well as the development of intimate relationships, ethnographers can obtain glimpses into the more privately held beliefs and discourses of Burmese Buddhists. It is only through these long-term engagements that the boundaries of public and private discourse become visible and non-official beliefs and definitions reveal themselves.

During my fieldwork period, I became involved in the Win-Win organisation through a Burmese friend who was also a member. While my involvement originally began as a way to give back to the people of the country and not as an object of research, my interactions with the women of Win-Win came to inform my understandings of *dāna* in the wider context of Burmese Buddhism. Likewise, my developing understanding of Burmese Buddhist beliefs and practices informed my participation and understandings of Win-Win. The analyses presented in this paper, therefore, are based on first-hand observations and discussions with Burmese Buddhists from multiple walks of life. Such observations and experiences informed later interviews conducted electronically to illuminate participants lived experiences. Subsequent inductive thematic analysis enabled themes to emerge from participants' voices while providing meaningful topics for further analysis. The case study presented in this paper serves to foster understanding of the wider religious and cultural fields of Burmese Buddhists which in turn reveal important factors to consider for understanding the development of socially engaged Buddhism in Myanmar.

## Results

For the women of the Win-Win organisation, Buddhism is an undeniable component of this equation. This is true regarding the religion the women claimed as their own, the terms they used to describe their commitments, the places of worship they frequented, and the basic social fabric in which they lived. Such commonality, however, must not be confused with uniformity. People in the communities in which I worked orient to standard Buddhist principles in different ways. The label 'Theravāda Buddhist' is in this instance somewhat misleading. While it operates as a useful conceptual tool for emphasising the similarities with other Theravāda Buddhist countries in the region, it runs the risk of ignoring the great diversity between Burmese Buddhists themselves.<sup>15</sup> Regardless of such divergent understandings of Buddhist principles, or in McDaniel's words---

<sup>15</sup> Burmese scholars and monks frequently stress the purity of Burmese Buddhism, but scholars such as Brac de la Perrière (2009) have rightly warned against reinforcing this unitary viewpoint. My recent fieldwork has revealed that in fact, significant discrepancies exist between the religious practices and understandings of rural and urban Burmese. More significantly, however, it has shown that differences relating to what constitutes 'Buddhism' regarding the propitiation of local spirits, esoteric tattoos, protective amulets, and meditators with magical powers exist equally as frequently amongst Yangon-based Burmese

repertoires (2013), the use of these Pāli-derived terms is essential for the women's understandings of social welfare work.

In the following section, I explore some of the ways in which Myanmar Buddhist concepts can potentially structure relief activities. First, I outline the importance of concepts such as mettā and karunā for people's motivations to make donations. Next the paper outlines the ways in which civil society organisations like Win-Win mirror more traditional practices of merit-making such as dāna cliques. Finally, I examine the importance of charismatic monks as brokers both for sites of civil society activities and in grounding changing conceptions of dāna.

## Mettā and karunā in social welfare

Many of the women of Win-Win also volunteer with other civil society organisations and frequently participate in religious donations to the sangha. All speak positively of their work with Win-Win and the other organisations. Daw Yee Cho, for example, says it fills her heart and makes her feel she has mettā. She admits however that the Win-Win visits can be frustrating and even disheartening as many of the patients do not follow the directions set by the doctors. When describing the condition of the village residents, Daw Yee Cho repeatedly uses language forms which indicate feelings of sympathy or pity towards a third party. She also describes her relationship with the receivers of Win-Win's support as one of ana. Anade, referring to the feelings of ana, is a Burmese cultural and social value with no clear English equivalent but involves a strong consideration for others' feelings and desires to avoid causing emotional or psychological distress to others. One of the most important elements of anade is the emotion of sympathy, pity or empathy. This element combined with the use of the clausal operator hya suggests that the dominant emotion related to such works is pity or sympathy.

These feelings of anade explicitly link to the Buddhist principle of mettā which glosses in English as 'loving-kindness' or on occasion 'pity.'<sup>16</sup> One day as we sat at the drug dispensing table preparing medications she talked openly about these connections. Surrounded by lines of village residents waiting for medical consultations, she repeatedly used the word mettā to explain how she felt when she saw the poverty of the patients. She explained that in Buddhism, mettā and karunā are key to charity.<sup>17</sup> In interviews, many of the women of Win-Win were quick to point out that, according to the Buddha's teachings mettā is an important state of mind, part of the four sublime states (brahmavihāras) that reflect ideal conduct in the transient world.<sup>18</sup>

The Buddhist concept of mettā or loving-kindness is a central concept in Burmese Buddhist lay practice. The Mettā Sutta (Sn 1.8; Khp 9) is particularly prominent in Burmese Buddhist discourse. Its recitation is a regular part of Buddhist practice in Myanmar, and many Burmese see mettā as a transformative feeling or practice, not just for individuals but for society as a whole.<sup>19</sup> Gustaaf Houtman argues that popular practices of mettā and karunā had particular

16 Underlying such glosses of mettā as pity is a broadly understood notion of kamma as a general law of cause and effect spanning multiple lifespans: This means that one might feel pity for someone's kammic baggage. Other common translations include friendliness, benevolence, kindness, love, sympathy, and interest in others

17 In her analysis of the concept of anade, Sarah Bekker's (1964) research showed that Burmese Buddhists are more strongly influenced by anade than non-Buddhist and/or non-Burmese Myanmar people. She argues that anade is seen as fundamentally related to Buddhist emphasis on compassion towards others as well as anatta.

18 Brahmavihāra, according to Myanmar scholar Khin Maung Nyunt is 'a set of four sublime states of living, namely mettā or loving kindness, karunā or compassion, muditā or altruistic joy and uppekhā or detachment which the Buddha advised men to practice in their social relations' (cited in Houtman 1999, p.195).

19 This is one of the reasons why Burmese monks chose to chant the mettā sutta as they marched in protest in 2007 as they believed that the act of generating mettā through this act would spur social and religious change.

political importance in that they ‘primarily serve as a way of forming bonds between individuals so as to make possible a sense of groupness’ (1999, p.316). The use of the term in this context links these ideas to wider ‘universal’ concepts associated with international discourses of charity and development work.

## Dāna and Social Giving

Intimately linked to the performance of mettā for the women of Win-Win are practices of dāna. This relationship between mettā and dāna can affect the ways in which Burmese Buddhists choose to make social donations and participate in organisations like Win-Win. The word dāna means ‘charity’ or ‘generosity’ and Buddhists in Myanmar most commonly use the word to refer to donations or alms given to monks. Apart from proper moral practice in their daily lives, dāna directed to monks is one of the most common ways in which lay Buddhists in Myanmar gain merit. For some, dāna is a daily practice of joining with neighbours in providing food for local monks while for others it solely involves formal donation ceremonies of robes and the eight requisites. Dāna can also include donations made for larger religious projects such as publishing pamphlets, sponsoring a sermon given by a monk, or building a monastery or pagoda.

Even though the activities of the women of the Win-Win organisation seem different in some ways compared more traditional Burmese understandings of dāna, the dynamics of dāna appear to influence how some Burmese choose to participate in such civil society organisations.<sup>20</sup> In interviews, many of the Win-Win women said that they considered themselves to be generating the ‘right attitudes’ (brahmavihāra) of mental cultivation. While only a couple of the women made direct reference to brahmavihāra, many of the women’s descriptions of the importance of mettā and karuṇā reflected understandings of such concepts even if they were unable to explain them directly.<sup>21</sup>

The main purpose of dāna according to the Dhammapada is to get rid of one’s attachment to material things and to be free of greed (lobha) (Dhp XVII.223). The women of Win-Win were quick to follow this more traditional interpretation and explain dāna regarding the moral standing of the recipient when describing religious donations. Such ideas, however, were never mentioned about their social donations even though dāna was used to refer to such donations. Likewise, the moral standing of village residents was not a consideration when planning Win-Win excursions. This suggests that within a social welfare context, the dynamics of dāna differ from those of a religious context. The Pāli term dāna has a Burmese-language synonym, ahlu which is more commonly used to speak of a donation in the everyday context. Some Burmese differentiate between ahlu and dāna by seeing dāna as being explicitly religious while ahlu has more secular considerations. For the women of Win-Win, however, understandings of the two terms varied but in practice they were used interchangeably.<sup>22</sup> All of the women agreed that the work of the organisation was a form of dāna.

This ambiguity reflects the variety of Burmese Buddhist interpretations by of dāna described by other scholars. According to Spiro, in an interpretation still shared by many Burmese

20 I am using the term ‘traditional’ here to refer to the dominant discourses on dāna which emphasise the importance of the virtuousness of the receiver as much as the intention of the giver in the achievement of merit. While I recognise that interpretations of terms such as dāna have always had multiple discourses, this particular one is still largely promoted by the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee which oversees the sangha in Myanmar, and the Dhamma Education program of the Myanmar government.

21 Scholars have often suggested that the philosophical tenets of Buddhism have little to no impact on how the average lay person experiences his or her daily life. Recent works such as Julia Cassaniti’s (2015) work on Thai Buddhism contradicts such assumptions. Cassaniti argues that ‘elite’ concepts like anicca do manifest in people’s everyday lives even if they may not be able to articulate the philosophical details

22 My thesis research into village religion has shown that ahlu is regularly used to refer to religious forms of dāna. The shinbyu ordination ceremony is, for example, known as the the most significant of all ahlus and the main donors of the ceremony are known as the ahlu-ei, or ahlu-house

Buddhists, religious donations, as described above, provide the most merit (1982, p.104). In this interpretation, the moral worthiness of the recipient affects the amount of merit generated by a donation. Others, however, argue that *cetanā* (intention) is of greater importance in generating merit. From this point of view, it is the selfless intention of the lay donor, along with the qualities of the monastic recipient, that determines the resultant worthiness of the donation (Spiro 1982, p.29). In other perspectives, the quantity and repetition of giving enhances its efficacy. Hence a rich person can earn more merit through acts of giving, regardless of their mindset. All of these interpretations represent a wide range of views on *dāna* held by Burmese Buddhists each of which is able to legitimise itself by referring back to different sections of the Pāli texts.

It is not only the utilisation of Buddhist concepts such as *mettā*, *karunā*, and *dāna* to frame civil society works that locates the practices of the women in Win-Win as a form of socially engaged Buddhism. The remarkable similarities with the practices of merit-making found in *dāna* cliques is significant. The very construction of each Win-Win outing reflected those merit-making activities undertaken by the group with a purely religious focus. *Dāna*-related merit-making activities are always social events in Burmese society. Invitations are regularly sent out to by donors to family and friends inviting them to ‘share in the merits’ of the occasion. The amounts donated by each participant is broadcast publicly to allow others to experience feelings of sympathetic joy (*muditā*). Donation events always conclude with a water libation ceremony that ritually invites all present to share in the merits of the donors. The issuing of invitations to participate in such merit making ceremonies implies the reciprocal obligation of return invitations in the future. These regularised groupings then form the basis for *dāna* cliques or regular merit-making communities. Jordt argues that these cliques also form the backbone of commercial networks among women who tend to exchange *dāna* participation and merit-making within defined *dāna* cliques (2007, p.118). Women’s *dāna* practices are, according to Jordt connected with their commercial networks, (2007, p.118) an idea that endorsed by the fact that Win-Win members also have business connections which frequently serves to incorporate new women into the organisation.

Merit-making excursions almost always entail the sharing of a meal, much like that described in the anecdote at the beginning of this paper. Likewise, merit-making activities almost exclusively involve the sangha, either by taking place at monasteries or with the ritual feeding of monks as part of the ceremonies. Likewise, the Win-Win outreach clinics almost always take place through monastic networks. In the case of the Kyauk Tan visits, the medical centre is located within the grounds of a monastery, while another regular visit is to a monastic orphanage which takes in children from the strife-torn border zones. Such monastic connections are utilised for two main reasons, one religious and one pragmatic. In the religious sense, the participation of the sangha grants the organisations a sense of legitimacy. The presence of monks at Burmese religious ceremonies enables their success by making the occasion auspicious (*mingala*). The participation of monks even tangentially in such works also helps to legitimise the conceptualisation of these social donation practices as a form of *dāna* as almost all interactions between the sangha, and the laity are conceived of through this framework.

### **The Monk and the Mission**

While the focus of this paper is on understandings of *dāna* in relation to the civil society activities of members of the Win-Win organisation, I believe it is important to also include an examination of the monk at Kyauk Tan who is an equal participant in the offering of medical



services to nearby residents. Dr Ashin Pyin Nyaw Batha (‘Waluwon Sayadaw’) returned to his natal village of Kyauk Tan and established the Pann Pyo Let Monastic School in 2004. Waluwon Sayadaw is an up and coming monk with a large following in the urban areas of Yangon and Bago city. He was inspired by the socially engaged Buddhism of other Theravāda monks as U Nyanissara (Myanmar), and Phrakhru Manas Natheepitak (Thailand). In 2004, he established the monastic school in Kyauk Tan village and later in 2012 purchased 50 acres surrounding the school to establish a forest sanctuary. The compound of the centre is designed to be ecologically sound and serves the local community by providing space for a regular medical centre and free schooling for over four hundred local children whose families are unable to afford government education.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the centre funds the ongoing high school education of 150 alumni of the school.

Support for Waluwon Sayadaw’s various civil society works comes largely from the comparatively wealthy urban middle-class. Alongside this local support, Waluwon Sayadaw also receives money from donors in other countries and increasingly from international NGO and charitable organisations. In 2013 he received a visit from two volunteers of the Swiss-based Saydanar organisation who presented Waluwon Sayadaw with funds raised by the organisation to allow the Pann Pyo Let Monastic School to ‘provide the community with proper education and health care’ long term (Saydanar Association 2013). Waluwon Sayadaw’s participation in various Inter-Faith programs such as the interfaith dialogue training of the Judson Research Center (JRC) of the Myanmar Institute of Theology and the Nyein (Shalom) Foundation.<sup>24</sup> He can tap into this wider network of donors and the international aid community to support his social welfare practices in Kyauk Tan.

The form of dāna promulgated by Waluwon Sayadaw sees the purest form of dāna as being that which occurs when the donor gives with not thought of receiving any benefit as a result (personal conversation, 2015). In this sense, the social donations made to organisations such as the Pann Pyo Let Monastic School--and similarly the Win-Win organisation--fit within this framework of the purest form of dāna.<sup>25</sup> The majority of donors to such organisations are not thinking of any specific rewards even if they justify the practices within the context of cultivating attitudes of mettā. As a result, these social donations are seen as the highest form of dāna, suggesting a sincerely selfless attempt to alleviate the suffering of others. Monks like Waluwon Sayadaw also see it as important for Buddhist monks to use their social capital to improve the conditions of the wider Burmese population.

Since local authorities regard Buddhist monks with respect, they are often able to gain access to areas that other organisations are unable to. The redistribution of donations to prominent charismatic monks is not an uncommon part of Burmese religious practice. Burmese monks depend completely on the layman’s donations for their subsistence, but prominent monks often receive far more donations than they have a need thus running the risk of accumulating private wealth. The accumulation of private wealth is a somewhat ambiguous standing in Myanmar even outside of the sangha. While business success is not considered to be an expressly bad

23 Most of the approximately 20,000 people living in the area are suffering badly from poverty and have very low levels of education. The school is open to all children in the area of any religious background and has also provided space for children from the dangerous border areas.

24 The Nyein (Shalom) Foundation was established in May of 2000 to act as a forum for the breaking down of old prejudices and resolving misunderstandings (Nyein Foundation n.d.).

25 Jacquet and Walton make reference to a similar framework of dāna proposed by a Yangon-based monk in which dāna is seen as consisting of three levels, the lowest being giving with the intention of receiving worldly benefits, the next being giving in order to progress further along the path to Enlightenment, and the final being giving with no thought of reward (2013, pp.61–62).

thing, there is an expectation that it should be accompanied by a subsequence conversion into community strength through the sponsoring of merit-making activities. For the sangha, processes of redistribution are frequently used to mitigate such issues. Donations made to individual monks (poggalika) can be used according to a monk's individual desire as long as they confer to the sangha's monastic code (Jordt 2003, p.330). Such donations easily flow back into the civil domain as monks utilise donations to support their natal villages and other public works.<sup>26</sup> Donations to the entire community of monks (sanghahika) in contrast remain the legal property of the sangha and therefore redistribution can only occur along monastic channels.

For most Burmese poggalika donations are preferred despite the fact that they are seen as less meritorious as they allow the establishment of relationships with prominent monks, the existence of which is seen as evidence of previous kammic affiliations. As a result, prominent monks such as Waluwon Sayadaw can utilise such social capital to support development and other social projects. Lay Burmese I interviewed who donated to development monks or through similar monastic organisations frequently described such donations as being directly to the groups their programs assist. Likewise, monks like Waluwon Sayadaw frequently emphasise that such donations made to them during dāna ceremonies will be redistributed to social welfare works.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, for many lay Burmese, the kamma of prominent monks such as Waluwon Sayadaw ensure the success of their projects and facilitate their effective organisation and distribution of social welfare.

In the secular sense, the participation of the sangha serves to grant social legitimation by virtue of their high status. Since local authorities and the wider Burmese community regard Buddhist monks with respect. Burmese monks serve as the living embodiment and symbolic focus of Bamar values and as such constitute an important locus of activity in Bamar daily life, as such Buddhist monks play key roles as brokers and mediators in Burmese society. Likewise, it is not uncommon for them to use their social status and capital to get around the red tape of Burmese politics, whether by soliciting donations to help support particular causes or to provide services that otherwise would be restricted by the government. Locating such services at monasteries is also just common-sense given that monasteries act as the locus of village life in Myanmar. The location of drinking-water well within the grounds of village monasteries leads to a constant stream of residents travelling to the monastery to fill their water tanks each day. The head monk of a village monastery is also frequently called upon by village residents to provide advice and spiritual support.

## Discussion

A modern and increasingly studied interpretation of the Buddha's teachings, often called 'Engaged Buddhism' emphasises social justice, sustainable development, and peace as the basis for spiritual development.<sup>28</sup> While my research suggests that there is an increase in social donations by Myanmar Buddhists, it is important to clarify that my interviews were conducted predominately amongst urban residents. In determining the relationship of the Buddhist beliefs of the participants in civil society organisations such as Win-Win to their motivations for participation and locating the practices within the framework of socially engaged Buddhism three

26 Jordt describes how donations to a renowned monk at the Mahasi Thathana Yeiktha meditation center are transferred to his natal village in order to support the construction of a meditation center, school and other public works in the village (2003, p.330).

27 Rozenberg notes a similar process whereby the effectiveness of donations made to monks and nuns through prominent monk Thamanya Sayadaw were amplified in the eyes of Burmese donors (2010, pp.87–105). The prominence of Thamanya Sayadaw and consequently his increased kamma meant that he was able to marshal resources far beyond what the monks or nuns could otherwise receive (Rozenberg 2010, chap.4).

28 See for example, Sallie King (2005) and Christopher Queen et al (2003).



key themes have emerged. These inter-related themes of the blurred boundaries between the religion and secular society; active processes of renegotiating the parameters of *dāna*; and the role of charismatic monks as brokers and translators for changing religious practices are essential for determining whether such practices constitute a form of socially engaged Buddhism.

## Blurred Boundaries

Although practices of social welfare can appear similar in different contexts, the motivations and perceptions of donors and recipients are important factors in understanding the articulation of Buddhism and civil society. In the case of Myanmar, Buddhist beliefs have helped to shape the ways in which many people and local organisations conceive of, and carry out, social welfare and other types of social engagement. At the same time, there also appear to be charitable motivations that could be characterised as more ‘universal’ rather than ‘Buddhist.’ Certainly, the social welfare works of the Win-Win organisation do not seek to draw attention to their Buddhist identity. The public discourses of Win-Win as an organisation contain no explicit reference to Buddhist concepts beyond those which function as part of everyday Burmese language. In fact, the public performance of identifiably Buddhist practices is unrecognisable to the uninformed observer. For example, it was only after some time participating in the activities of Win-Win that I began to recognise their operation within frameworks of *dāna*. Unlike my experience of other merit-making activities, the organisation’s activities did not begin with chanting or worship practices. They also did not limit their services to only Buddhist recipients but expressly offered them to all religious groups.<sup>29</sup> Despite the absence of Buddhist symbols or rituals within the practices of the Win-Win organisation, the volunteers themselves saw Buddhism and charity as intimately connected. While the provision of social welfare services was not expressly Buddhist, many participants view participation as a particular kind of religious work.

Critical to locating the practices of civil society within a Buddhist framework is a recognition of *dāna* as ‘a system of intention’ which is ‘mutually constitutive of social, political, and economic realities’ (Jordt 2003, p.xviii). Jordt argues in her examination of the sincerity of acts of *dāna* that *dāna* functions as a circulatory engine of resources within the sacred economy directed toward the propagation of the *sāsana* and the *sangha* as its wordly institution. Likewise, in her insightful analysis of *dāna* practices and relationships in Myanmar, Kumada emphasises the fact that *dāna* can encompass any form of giving, not just religiously motivated kinds (2004, p.3). *Dāna* is, and always has been, as much part of the secular *lokiya* realm as it has of the transcendent *lokuttara* one.

Social status in Burmese culture is likewise intimately tied up in practices of *dāna*. It is almost impossible to have high social status without participating in *dāna* practices. A fact which contributes to why *dāna* practices are so publicly visible. In the Burmese Buddhist scheme of moral causality, the mental intention contained in the act of donating is critical for the creation of substantive political power. Renowned donors are persons of influence, and close links with prominent monks reinforce their status. As Jordt argues, these pairs ‘indexically link the statuses of the worldly to the transcendent’ due to the development of their relationships over multiple lives (2007, p.120). The accumulation of social status through *dāna* practices is not a straightforward relationship where sole giving leads to the accumulation of social status. For many Burmese

<sup>29</sup> The similar absence of Buddhist symbols in Sri Lankan monks provision of similar services in Malaysia is interpreted by Samuels as a deliberate response to the need to distance their services from seeming ‘too Buddhist’ within an Islamic context (Samuels 2016, p.68). There is no evidence that this is the case in relation to the women of Win-Win who are operating within a very different political and religious context. The absence of explicitly Buddhist symbols is more a reflection of their recognition of such services as being part of the world of *lokiya* and the fact that they do not see their services as part of Buddhist missionary efforts.

cetanā (intention) is held to be as equally as important as the moral worthiness of the recipient in determining the merit generated by dāna practices.<sup>30</sup>

The importance of intention links to ideas of ideas of diligence or effort directed towards a particular goal, encapsulated within the Pāli terms viriya and samadhi. A regular gloss for viriya in Burmese is ‘effort or energy, diligence or industry’ while samadhi refers to the fixity of mind or single-mindedness of the individual on a single object. Traditionally the term samadhi is used to refer to practices of meditation, although at times the concept is also used to refer to attempts to strive to gain something with concentrated effort. U Nanissara interprets the conception to claim that dāna and sīla are worthless without directing them towards a specific goal by incorporating samadhi (2004, p.58). For the women of Win-Win, their practices of dāna and sīla in the performance of their civil society actions are directed through samadhi on the need to improve the lives of Burmese women.

In this sense, any attempt to separate the religious motivations of Burmese Buddhists from more universal conceptions of compassion and charity is in effect an attempt to separate out the religious and cultural aspects of dāna. Attempts at separation, in turn, are a practice in trying to separate out Buddhism from Burmese culture a practice which fails to recognise the futility of endeavouring to separate out religion from other forms of human activity. Culture is the lens through which humanity perceives the world. As a result, any individual may only begin to comprehend the world through the elementary conceptions provided by their own particular cultural system (Saler 1993, pp.228–230). This does not mean that the category of ‘Buddhism’ is not useful as an analytical framework, or that the concept does not have meaning in the lives of believers and non-believers alike. It does, however, mean a need to recognise that the boundaries of the social institution we label as ‘Buddhist’ are not as sharp as they appear at first glance.

In examining the influence of Buddhism in societies like Myanmar, it is important to recognise the function of Buddhism as a ‘total social phenomenon’ (Tambiah 1984, p.7). One of the key problems with any approach that seeks to reduce human behaviour to discrete categories based upon precise, clear, unambiguous definitions, is that very few of the conceptual categories of human thought fit within such distinctions. The vast majority of the concepts used by individuals to make sense of the world are grounded in the daily life of a particular cultural system understood implicitly and applied unproblematically to everyday phenomena. In his examination of popular practices of Thai Buddhism, McDaniel argues for the recognition of religion as a form of repertoire. He claims that an understanding of the beliefs of religious adherents requires looking beyond what a person says, or values to how they use such values and how they say what they say about their beliefs as well as the physical and social context in which they do so (2013, pp.9–11). In this sense, the utilisation of Buddhist concepts by Buddhists locates such practices within the context of Buddhism regardless of whether other religious actors consider them as ‘universal.’

## Renegotiating Dāna

What is significant about the use of dāna in determining whether such practices constitute a form of socially engaged Buddhism is the way in which their usage reflects changes in understandings of dāna itself. For many Burmese Buddhists, the moral standing of the recipient amplifies the merit received from a donation which leads to a preference for merit-making

<sup>30</sup> The incorporation of dāna ideals by the SLORC government did not led to a corresponding recognition of social status by the majority of the Burmese population. Jordt shows that the sincerity of the government in performing these acts of merit that was a point of debate for Burmese society (2007, chap.3).



through donations to the sangha or the construction of religious buildings. I do not mean to say that social giving has never been part of Burmese Buddhist practices. There is a long history of Buddhist organisations and communities providing support for the less fortunate. In recent history, these practices have focused on providing free funeral services for the destitute, support for the significant HIV/AIDS population, and homes and education for orphans and other at-risk children.

In shifting the traditional emphasis on the moral standing of the recipient for the generation of merit in dāna practices, many of the women of Win-Win interpreted the need of the recipient as being instrumental in determining the worthiness of the practice. In this interpretation donations to those most in need of support generate the most merit. These are not the only discourses relating to dāna within Burmese Buddhism, however. The meritoriousness of the gift is dependent upon a variety of factors depending on the repertoire of the participant. Such interpretations include the state of mind of the donor or recipient, the type or value of the donation, the appropriateness of the donation to the recipient, etc. The central theme running through all of these interpretations is the importance of the ‘free will act of giving’ (Jordt 2003, p.329) in generating correct mental disposition. A mental disposition characterised by a lessening of attachment to material desires. The key innovation of the interpretations of dāna by civil society volunteers like the Win-Win women, and development monks such as Waluwon Sayadaw lies in their reinterpretation of social welfare projects as a form of religious work and consequently framing of social giving as the most meritorious activity. The interpretation of the charity of work of Burmese Buddhists as the expression of universal concepts by Buddhists is but one approach to such activities. An alternative approach would be to interpret such occurrences as examples of ways in which Burmese Buddhist reconceptualise their practices in order to legitimate and promote new practices. The interpretation of the importance of addressing the physical needs of poverty-stricken Burmese village residents as a form of dāna is a clear illustration of the renegotiation of understandings of religious work and subsequently a reworking of conceptions of what it means to be a good Buddhist.

While Samuels argues that similar reworkings in Sri Lankan temples reflect a reversal of traditional understandings of the roles of Buddhist temples in society from being recipients of donations to donors (Samuels 2016, p.58), monasteries in Myanmar have always played this social role. It does, however, reflect a shift in the understanding of the role of the sangha in Burmese society. While traditional ideals have focused on monks as renunciates who remained isolated from the affairs of wider society, for the members of Win-Win, there is an equal importance for monks to utilise their increased kamma and hpoun for the benefit of the lay community. While the idea of the monk as a complete renunciate is certainly still part of the public discourses of Burmese Buddhists, including those of the Win-Win organisation, the reality is often quite different, and in fact, is expected to be so.<sup>31</sup>

Dāna theoretically involves what Tambiah (1970) has called ‘a double negation of reciprocity.’ The monk stands as a model of nonreciprocity and is not supposed to return anything in exchange for the alms given by the lay Buddhist. In theory, dāna offered to the monastic community should never be returned in any material form. In practice, however, it is not uncommon to see this model displaced by a simple pattern of reciprocity whereby offerings to monks are rewards for their services to the lay community such as the performance of ritual functions. In fact, many Burmese conceive of the teaching of the dhamma (dhammadāna) a service performed predominately by monks as the greatest dāna of all. The facilitation of social welfare

projects by monks in many ways fundamentally displaces these conceptions of nonreciprocity as they become sites of donation rather than recipients.

One of the critical factors in gathering public support for such undertakings is the patronage of prominent monks. Following the lead of monks who organise donation ceremonies at hospitals, orphanages, and even prisons, many Burmese lay Buddhists have begun to change their practices of directing their giving solely to the sangha. For many of my participant's social donations to such causes are seen as just as generating of merit as more traditional religious ones, especially if mediated through monastic led ceremonies.

### Monks as brokers and translators

Monks are regarded highly in Burmese society with quite specialised vocabulary being used in the presence of the sangha and to refer to its members.<sup>32</sup> Given this prominent social positioning and their traditional social function as keepers and carriers of normative values, it is unsurprising that Burmese monks regularly act as role models in Myanmar society. John Ferguson in his examination of monastic identity suggests that: the sangha acts as a 'cultural gyroscope' of 'stabilising, adjustive, and dynamic values that help the society navigate through history (1975, p.7). As the keepers and carriers of normative values, monks are able to facilitate changes in societal values and practices such as new interpretations of Buddhist concepts. Monks are expected to be models for moral life and ideally above the material preoccupations of lay society. Their participation in new practices such as socially engaged forms of Buddhism serves to influence new societal norms.

As discussed above, traditional practices *dāna* serve to structure interactions between laypeople and monks, in which laypeople provide food and other material requisites for monastic members. In addition to acting as the field of merit for laypeople, monks have traditionally been the main educators in Myanmar society.<sup>33</sup> In addition to their role as educators through monastic schools, monks also contribute to moral and spiritual education of Burmese Buddhists through the publication of books and pamphlets and the presentation of public sermons and dhamma DVDs. This role becomes especially significant with regards to rural Burmese.

The village and the rural monastery and its' monk are in many ways inseparable entities acting as a focus point for the village. Monks and monasteries, therefore, operate as important forms of social capital in rural development. Outside of more formal social welfare works, the *dāna* practices of village residents are indispensable to the growth of the monastery itself. If the village is particularly poor then the number of donations offered by residents is likewise low. This in turn means that the monks are unable to construct necessary facilities such as a lecture hall, residential quarters, or a meditation centre.<sup>34</sup> As a result, the majority of monks in rural areas are equally as concerned with meeting the financial concerns of residents as their spiritual ones. The improvement of village residents' financial situation corresponds to an increase in the monastery's ability to provide greater spiritual support. The focus of more urban-based monks can be interpreted as a broadening of this idea where they are responding to improving the financial and health needs of the wider society rather than a localised community.

31 The ideal is still important, however and functions as a crucial aspect of the social relationship between the sangha and the lay community.

32 The use of highly honorific and flourished words, including a specific second-person pronoun---and its accompanying verbal imperative---clearly marks the status of monks and the highest within Burmese society.

33 Although that role was greatly diminished in the colonial period by the British implementation of state education, many Myanmar children attend monastic schools for part of their education--especially in rural areas.

34 U Zawana us a relatively young and influential monk who regularly organises donation ceremonies at hospitals and orphanages like the monks of ITBMU.



A critical factor in gathering public support for changes in interpretations of Buddhist concepts is the promotion by prominent monks. For example, several members of Win-Win mentioned the preaching of charismatic monks such as Waluwon Sayadaw, U Nanissara, or U Zawana in helping to convince them to direct their donations to social causes such as health care and poverty reduction. Preachings of the dhamma by these three monks in Yangon are always well-attended and regularly involve sermons stressing the importance of dāna as a religious practice. Donations at the preaching ceremonies of these monks often reign in the tens of thousands of dollars, an indication of both the sheer number of devotees and the financial standing of their prominent backers. In addition to the content of their public sermons, these monks also promote participation in social welfare practices by describing in detail their own projects and the resultant merit of participants prior to any dhamma preaching ceremony.

The spread of reinterpretations of dāna to emphasise social giving is therefore clearly a reflection of the popularity of such monks and their doctrinal emphases. Each of these monks stress to their patrons the interconnectedness of ‘material’ and ‘spiritual’ concerns emphasising the need to address both simultaneously. Waluwon Sayadaw, in particular, stressed how important he felt it was to care for a person’s physical needs and how the satisfaction of these needs was a necessary prerequisite for spiritual development. This emphasis has directly shaped the priority given to social welfare activities by patrons of development monks. As Samuels’ argues in relation to Sri Lankan monks, such manoeuvring is not, however, a matter of secularisation but rather that ‘both the monks and the volunteers themselves saw Buddhism and charity as intimately connected’ (2016, p.68).

In mobilising Buddhist concepts alongside universal qualities such as compassion (karunā), pity (mettā), and charity (dāna) within frameworks of merit-making, these monks are implicitly engaged in processes of translation. For Mosse and Lewis, translation in the brokering of development involves the ‘mutual enrollment and the interlocking of interests that produces project realities’ (2006, p.13). The process of translation allows for the negotiation of common meanings and definitions to facilitate the mutual enrolment and co-option into individual and collective objectives and activities. It is through these processes of translation that development monks are able to connect their own welfare projects with the values and concerns of their patrons. The expansion of networks of dāna facilitates the broadening of definitions of community. By incorporating international networks of giving and international forms of development, the participants can reconfigure and readjust the Buddhist concepts which have underpinned these projects so as to be meaningful to wider groups of people.

The importance of relational dynamics within these networks lies not only in the role of monks in translating for their donor-patrons. Equally important is the fact that the active involvement of development monks in social welfare works is directly dependent on these monks attracting a sufficiently large pool of donors who are likewise willing to be involved in similar projects. The founder of Win-Win, Daw Kaythi Win, for example, has been involved in humanitarian works for some years and her understanding of such practices is equally informed by experiences of international aid as it is by Buddhist conceptions. It is the support of educated English-speaking donors such as Daw Kaythi Win which allows these monks to accrue the social capital needed to cultivate active participation in their projects and legitimise innovative practices. Monastic led organisations such as Pann Pyo Let are founded on a particular set of relationships, actively cultivated by both Waluwon Sayadaw and lay participants. The relationships between such monks and the laity, and the different roles each carries out in relation to civil society projects



is distinctively Buddhist---albeit in different ways---locating such practices, therefore, within a socially engaged Buddhist framework.

## Conclusions

The civil society operations of organisations such as Win-Win have emerged out of the efforts of some key figures and as a consequence of a certain constellation of doctrinal, economic, social, and political concerns. Most importantly these innovative practices of socially engaged Buddhism are closely related to the existing traditional practices of merit-making. The construction of the practices of organisations of lay Buddhists such as Win-Win and the practices of their partner development monks such as Waluwon Sayadaw need to be analysed together as a result of their closely related nature. In considering the location of such practices within a framework of socially engaged Buddhism, three key themes emerge which broaden and nuance our understanding of the ways in which religion and civil society interact in Myanmar.

Practices of the sangha, state, and laity interact to produce status, hierarchy, and power through assertions of fields of consciousness that are generative of truth and virtue and the symbolic and actual grounds of power and legitimate political authority (see Kapferer 1997, p.267). Practices of *dāna* participate in larger systems of ideas regarding intention and the reproduction of present political realities (Jordt 2003, p.335). One critical feature of *dāna* is its centrality to Burmese Buddhist ideas of power. Prior meritorious actions in this and past lifetimes combine to produce an individuals current endowment of power and influence. In the Burmese Buddhist scheme of moral causation, the mental intention contained in the act of donating is critical for the creation of political power (Jordt 2003, p.330).

The development of socially engaged Buddhism in Myanmar did not take place in a political vacuum. It is important to therefore consider the interactions between Myanmar-based organisations and broader international development programs in examining the way in which members interpret such projects. The development of civil society in Myanmar within a Buddhist framework is not only an attempt to cultivate a more clearly delineated form of social responsibility. It also involves a recognition of the need to present Buddhism as one not removed from society and the concerns of everyday, ordinary people.

This reconfiguring of *dāna* practices also provides an opportunity for the women of Win-Win to enhance their social status and prestige not only amongst other Burmese Buddhists but also with the wider international community. The performance of socially engaged Buddhism as a form of civil society enables members to display Buddhism in a particular light to the international community. The displays of socially engaged Buddhism as a form of public religion can, therefore, be seen as a means of communication with the international, non-Buddhist world, one which emphasises the benefits of Buddhism.

In the case of Win-Win, a central dynamic shaping the provision of social welfare work are the relationships between such organisations and development monks such as Waluwon Sayadaw. The combined social welfare projects of these groups rely upon on a particular set of relationships, actively cultivated by both parties. The relationships between monks such as Waluwon Sayadaw and women such as the members of Win-Win and the different roles that each undertakes in relation to social welfare works was distinctly Buddhist particular regarding the authority, and the development of such networks. The possibility of such large-scale projects as



those undertaken by Waluwon Sayadaw was directly a result of their ability to attract the support of donors such as the women of the Win-Win organisation.

A second key theme in the location of Win-Win practices as a form of socially engaged Buddhism is the reconfiguring of concepts such as *dāna* as part of processes of translation. The active reconfiguring of these concepts takes place through what Mosse and Lewis refer to as a ‘process of translation’ (2006, p.13). According to Mosse and Lewis’ study of development work, development projects ‘become real through the work of generating and translating interests’ through which disparate actors’ interests and visions become mutually-shared (2006, p.13). By which we can understand the very understanding of what counts as *dāna* being in flux. The changing sense of what counts as Buddhist practice both shape the possibilities open to these organisations for engaging in social welfare work and are also (re)shaped by the organisations involvement in such activities.

The provision of social welfare works by Buddhist organisations evolved out of a long tradition of charitable activity undertaken by monks and lay Buddhist organisations originating in the colonial period. The innovation of organisations such as Win-Win lies in their expansion of the range of participants in such practices by linking Buddhist qualities such as *karunā*, *mettā*, and *upekkhā* with universal conceptions such as charity, compassion, and pity. Such reconfiguring is by no means unique to contemporary Buddhism and in fact, reflects an engagement with the wider international Buddhist community. In many ways the social welfare projects of organisations such as Win-Win and development monks such as Waluwon Sayadaw reflect those carried out by development monks in Sri Lanka (Samuels 2016), Buddhist lay communities in Taiwan (Huang and Weller 1998), and wider movements of socially engaged Buddhism such as the Fo Guang Shan tradition. All of which articulate the merging of development and social improvement works with Buddhist belief and practice and therefore locate such civil society practices as part of socially engaged Buddhism.

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# Religion as a Cultural Product: Investigative Study on the Cultural Roles of Nan Tien Temple

Gisy Chan Su-yi

## Abstract

In the BLIA World Headquarters 2016 General Conference, Venerable Master Hsing Yun gave the Conference keynote speech, “Consensus and Openness,” and advocated the application of this principle through ten major points. This research paper touches upon one of his points, “Consensus on the Importance of Culture” though the investigative study on the cultural roles of Nan Tien Temple, with respect to the spectrum of potential outreach in the national and transnational communities.

Fo Guang Shan was first invited by the Wollongong City Council to establish a Chinese-styled temple in the suburbs of the city in attempts to revitalise the city through post-industrial service industries such as tourism, healthcare and education. Thus the temple was introduced as a cultural product in order to create a culturally diverse environment and a novel experience for visitors to Wollongong.

While culture is creative and organic, cultural policies are bureaucratic process that controls and yet at the same time facilitate culture. Thus government policies have great influence over the evolution of culture. With the initial conditions and circumstances being dictated by the city council, this study attempts to understand how policy has influenced and changed the type of activities conducted by the temple and also the difference in stakeholder profiles that visit NTT. And whether as a result of the city plan, has that altered the vision and mission of the temple, the core of the organisation.

This paper attempts to understand some of these questions through interviewing key stakeholders of the temple and by surveying 120 visitors to the temple. The results do identify multiple stakeholders, and each stakeholder could have different relationship with the temple. Nan Tien Temple plays multiple roles to different people and therefore needs to find a fragile balance whilst wearing multiple hats.

**Key Words:** Creative city policy, cultural planning, cultural identity, Humanistic Buddhism, and migration and localisation.

## 1.1 Introduction / Background of Study

### 1.1.1 Brief History of Wollongong Industrial City

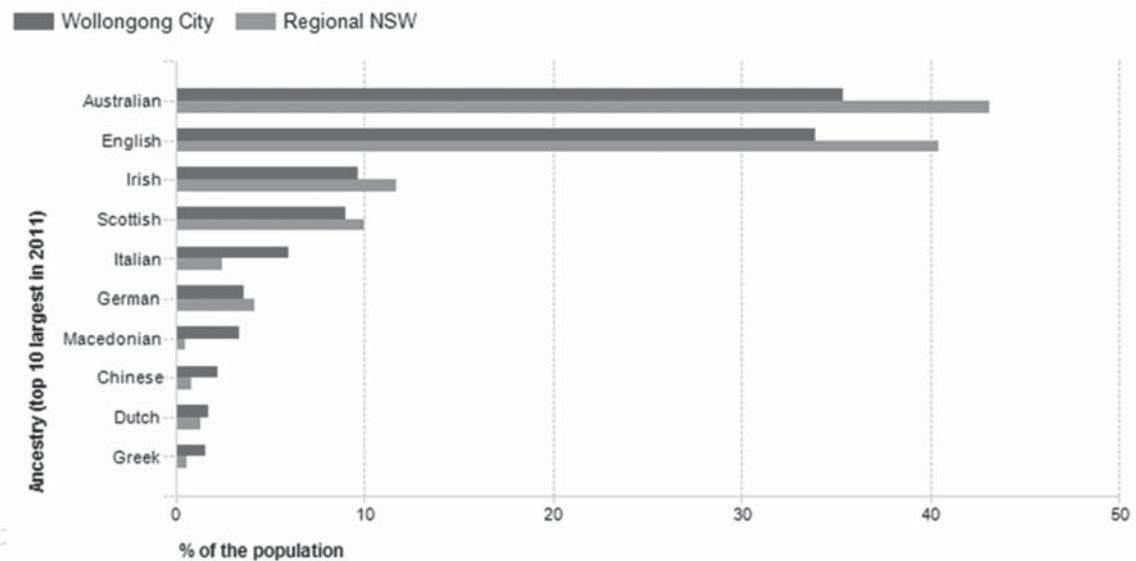
Wollongong City is situated on the south-eastern coast of Australia and 80km south of Sydney, its physical size is equivalent to that of Singapore and has an approximate resident population of 200,000 people. In the 2011 census, 73.3% of the population in Wollongong were locally-born Australians. Europeans from the United Kingdom, Republic of Macedonia and Italy made up most of the immigrant population (18%) (“Birthplace | Wollongong City”). However, it is observed that there was an increase of 66% of immigrants born in China between 2006 to 2011; the largest growth in the numbers of immigrants coming from any country. The population in Wollongong is predominantly Christian (68%), with a 1.4% Buddhist population (“Religion | Wollongong City”).

Figure 1: Location of the city of Wollongong on Australia Regions Map.



Source: Worldmap1.Com

Figure 2: Ancestry of the Population of Wollongong City & Regional New South Wales in 2011



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2006 and 2011. Id.

**Table 1: Comparison of the top 10 ancestries of the population of the City of Wollongong versus Regional New South Wales in 2011.**

Wollongong City - Total persons (Usual residence)	2011		
	Ancestry	Number	%
Australian	68,041	35.4	43.1
English	65,176	33.9	40.4
Irish	18,514	9.6	11.7
Scottish	17,284	9.0	10.0
Italian	11,515	6.0	2.5
German	6,900	3.6	4.2
Macedonian	6,452	3.4	0.5
Chinese	4,201	2.2	0.8
Dutch	3,379	1.8	1.3
Greek	3,058	1.6	0.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Housing 2006 and 2011*. Id.

From 1816, the early European settlers to Australia had developed the timber, agricultural and dairy industries followed by coal mining in the 1840s and steel industry in the 1920s. The steel and coal industries and associated manufacturing sector were a main catalyst for urban and economic growth and laid the foundations for the city's economy, lifestyle and culture (Wollongong City Council 4).

In the 1980s, Wollongong was hit by growing international competition and the decrease in consumption for steel in the worldwide market. The headquarters of Australia's largest steelmaker, Broken Hill Proprietary (BHP) situated in Wollongong downsized and laid off many workers, skyrocketing Wollongong's unemployed from 6,400 people in 1981 to 20,000 in 1984 (Rava).

Wollongong City Council made attempts to regenerate and revitalise itself through arts, culture and to promote itself as a tourist destination. To differentiate itself even further from other local tourist spots, then Lord Mayor Frank Arkell pursued Taiwanese Buddhist Sect, Fo Guang Shan (FGS) Temple in Kaohsiung to setup a branch temple in the suburbs of Wollongong, to provide an exotic and cultural experience for its visitors (Waitt 232).

### **1.1.2 Contextualising Nan Tien Temple (NTT) in Wollongong**

Venerable Master Hsing Yun, the founder of NTT founded the Buddhist Order, FGS in 1967 and built a monastery, that would eventually grow to house over five hundred monastics and lay devotees. In 1985, in a much unexpected move, the Master decided to abdicate his position as abbot and passed down the position to his senior disciple (Fu 191-201). Being freed up from temple duties allowed him more time to focus on propagating Buddhism beyond Taiwan. Buddhist devotees invited him to different countries to give lectures and talks, which eventually resulted in the building and expansion of the order around the world and within three decades, it has

established over two hundred branch temples globally (“Introduction to Fo Guang Shan.”)

In 1989, following a world steel conference that was held in FGS (Hsing Yun, “Twentieth Anniversary”), the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Frank Arkell, who was also the General Manager of BHP’s Port Kembla steelworks (Lee and Hagan 86) invited Venerable Master Hsing Yun to build a temple in the suburb of Wollongong, providing the Buddhist monk 26 acres of land for a token sum (“About Us.”).

To address the Mayor’s concerns of helping to local employment, Master contracted local architects and construction workers to build the Chinese-palace styled temple (Brewster). Despite the Chinese exterior, the temple was built entirely based upon Australian construction techniques. Construction materials were sourced locally as much as possible, with the exception of certain items which would be difficult to replicate or craft in Australia, such as the Buddha statues and terracotta roof-tiles (Brewster).

When the temple was finally completed in 1995, NTT organised several international Buddhist conferences and seminars that would attract thousands to Wollongong, to help bring in tourist dollars (Campbell). Throughout the years, Nan Tien has also developed itself to become one of the most recognised local attractions of Wollongong, well-known for its tranquil and peaceful ambiance and living up to its name as being the “Paradise of the South” (literal meaning of “Nan Tien”). It has received numerous Tourism Awards from the South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation (“About Us.”) and also the Certificate of Excellence from popular social media travel website, TripAdvisor (“Nan Tien Temple, Wollongong.”)

With its special circumstance of being an invited religious organisation as part of a city revitalization plan, to help boost the economy and provide cultural diversity to the city of Wollongong, makes it an interesting and unique case study even within the whole FGS organisation, as most FGS’s overseas branch temples were being built mainly to cater to the Chinese diaspora.

**Figure 3: Map of Nan Tien Temple**



Source: NTT.

During the construction of NTT, Venerable Master visited Australia on numerous occasions, giving talks and Buddhist ceremonies in the major cities. Many Chinese Buddhists flocked to listen to his teachings and soon found the establishment of FGS branch temples in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Currently FGS has 12 branch temples in Australia and New Zealand, with NTT being the headquarters in the Pacific region.

**Figure 4: Map of FGS Temples in Australia and New Zealand**



Source: NTT.

NTT's strong focus on education is also targeted at the young. The temple is a popular school excursion location for primary and high school students of various ethnic and religious backgrounds. The excursion programs allow students to take part in mindfulness meditation, Tai Chi, sutra copying, Buddhist ritualistic functions to get a firsthand experience of Chinese Buddhism ("Humanistic Buddhism in Australia").

## 1.2 Research Aim

To investigate and identify the cultural roles of NTT with respect to the spectrum of potential outreach in the national and transnational communities.

## 1.3 Research Questions

- a. Who are the different stakeholders (groups-of-concern) with NTT? What relationships/partnerships does NTT have with them?
- b. How do they relate to NTT (understanding the different relationships, involvement, etc.)
- c. What is NTT's vision and mission?

## 1.4 Significance and limitation of study

Due to time constraint, the researcher was only able to obtain a sample population of



visitors that were visiting the temple over a period of one week. As NTT did not keep any record of the number of visitors nor the kinds of visitors that come to the temple, the researcher was only able to identify groups of people to conduct survey from the researcher's prior knowledge and understanding of the temple.

On the other hand, being overly familiar with the organisation may result in certain blind spots and assumptions which the researcher might not even be aware of, such as the cultural context will still change as the branch temples are being set up in different countries, political forces, social trends and cultural policies could have altered the original DNA of the organisation as branches are being setup overseas.

This leads to the significance of the study, to understand or identify blind spots and assumptions, such as understanding the positioning of NTT within the Buddhist context in Australia. And whether all branch temples have the same positioning, or does it differ in different locations. This research hopes to provide a source of statistical data to affirm or refute certain assumptions that could help with its aims of promoting the religion in Australia. Through this study, it could also point out certain trends that are occurring on a wider socio-cultural environment.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Cultural Policy and City Planning – NTT as a part of the cultural dimension of Wollongong City

Culture is considered within two general dimensions, firstly from an aesthetic or artistic field, and secondly as ways of life (McGuigan 23). According to Miller and Yudice, cultural policy is the supports given by institutions in helping to bridge between the two dimensions (1-2). They continue to explain that cultural policies are regulatory guidelines that help facilitate, control, distribute, censor, train and finance organisations to help achieve their goals. As policy is a bureaucratic process, it often dictates the creative and organic processes of culture by setting certain criteria in order to achieve those aims.

Creative Nation was the first formal cultural policy paper that was released by the Australian federal government in 1994 (Department of Communications and the Arts). The report emphasised the importance of culture and its contribution towards building national identity and that the cultural industries would be a main driver of the Australian economy in the future. The document also brought to attention the significance of tourism that had been growing over the past decade, attracting over 3 million overseas visitors and earning over AUD 10 billion when the report was published.

Starting in 1980s, the city council attempted to reposition Wollongong as “The Leisure Coast” with promotional campaigns focusing on its beaches and waterfalls. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a proliferation of establishing cultural institutions, such as the Wollongong Library, the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and the Wollongong Art Gallery. However, many other cities were doing the same and perhaps were doing it even better. Faced with strong competition from neighbouring “world city” like Sydney for the tourist dollar, Wollongong needed more innovative attractions to be able to provide a fresh unique experience for its visitors (Waitt 232).

When the Lord Mayor chanced upon FGS during an International Steel symposium in

its Taiwan headquarters, he spoke with Venerable Master Hsing Yun and invited him to build a FGS temple in Australia (Hsing Yun, “Twentieth Anniversary”). Concurrently, there was also help from a Vietnamese-Chinese Buddhist devotee, Ms Cun Shijiao, who helped the monastics during their first visits to Australia and assisted them with establishing NTT (Hsing Yun, “Twentieth Anniversary”).

NTT through its physical presence, brings a sense of peacefulness and tranquility to the steel city. Its well-kept gardens, lotus pond and grandiose traditional Chinese architecture are juxtaposed against tall coal terminal chimneys of neighbouring Port Kembla. Introducing a culturally symbolic architecture to the built environment brings about change not only on a physical level, but it also introduces different values, beliefs, lifestyle, tradition and history to the local community. Its presence challenges the local identity, their sense of place and on their ability to evolve and embrace new influences (“What is Built Heritage?”).

As part of the city’s regeneration strategies, the temple also has been organizing the Nan Tien Cultural Festival (“Nan Tien Cultural Festival”). For more than 20 consecutive years, thousands visit the temple between Christmas and New Year’s Day, and it has been around longer than the most celebrated festival in Wollongong, the Viva La Gong (Latifi). Numerous visitors, ranging from tourists, to devotees, to cultural performers and artists pack the temple grounds. Activities such as Chinese performing arts and crafts, Buddhist vegetarian cuisine and art exhibitions, provide opportunities to understand Buddhism through Chinese cultural activities and/or Chinese cultural activities through Buddhism. In the midst of the whole Australia celebrating Christmas, the Buddhists are also in celebration alongside everyone.

In the Wollongong City Council Cultural Plan 2014-2018: Background Report, NTT was often cited is a cultural asset within the Wollongong Cultural Tourism, Economic Development Strategy (Conroy 107) and also the Illawarra Regional Strategy 2006 - 2031 (Conroy 81).

The Background Report identified 7 major experiences and attractions in Wollongong, and are considered so because of their capacity to lead as visitation drivers. NTT was identified as the only attraction within the cultural market as seen in Table 2 below (Destination Wollongong 22), made it stand out among the other attractions. Instead of having competition, Nan Tien adds to provide a different appeal to the visitors. The variety within this product mix of attractions are complementary to each other and caters to international as well as domestic tourists.

**Table 2: Wollongong’s Major Assets Identified by their Primary Appeal**

<i>Major Experiences &amp; Attractions</i>	<i>Appeal/Market</i>
Grand Pacific Drive/Seacliff Bridge	Touring – VFR, Domestic Day, Domestic
Blue Mile/Wollongong Harbour	Recreation
Stanwell Park/Bald Hill	Natural
Nan Tien Temple	Cultural
SymbioWildlife Park	Nature
Jamberoo Action Park	Recreation/Adventure
Skydive the Beach	Adventure

Source: Destination Wollongong

## 2.2 Buddhism, Migration and Localisation

### 2.2.1 Migration of Buddhism to the West

Many scholars have written about the different types of Buddhism that exist in America, and according to Jan Nattier, she categorises them under 3 types: import, export and “baggage” (74-76). She explains religion that falls under the “import” model is consumer driven. Followers of “import” Buddhism tend to be Caucasian, from a middle to upper class background and well-educated. They have sufficient resources to seek Buddhist teachers from overseas and to have Buddhism be imported back home. Upon return, these “importers” form their own Buddhist groups, attract followers of similar class background and thus are also known as “elite” or convert Buddhist. They tend to emphasize on mediation than ritualistic and devotional practices. Buddhist practice is looked upon as enhancing their human lives without them having to become monastics. On the other hand, “export” Buddhism, attracts a wide range of followers, who do not need to be from well-to-do backgrounds, nor do they need the time to come into contact with this form of Buddhism. The source organisation provides the funds for this missionary work and they actively approach the target audience in public spaces. Due to its characteristics, Nattier has also labelled it “evangelical” Buddhism.

Lastly, “baggage” Buddhism denotes immigrant Buddhists who have brought along Buddhism to new countries of residence not for religious purposes, but their motivations were for themselves to seek better socioeconomic opportunities. This category of Buddhists tends to have inherited the religion from their ancestors and are identified by their ethnicities; therefore, referred to as “ethnic” Buddhists. Religious groups that form with such motivations provide strong social support and cultural continuity to its followers (Nattier 74-76).

Although there are other models of categorization of Buddhist in America (Prebish 200-201; Seager 9-10), most studies concur with the identification of the two basic kinds of Buddhists, the convert and ethnic, as mentioned above. Likewise, studies in Australia have also led to similar conclusions that also categorised Buddhist as Western or ethnic (Adam Hughes 7-11).

However, this categorization of Buddhism is limited to Buddhists bringing their religious beliefs when they migrate. Then what about those Chinese immigrants who became Buddhists only after they came to Australia? The term “baggage” Buddhist seems less appropriate than compared to the term ethnic Buddhist. With a large post-Chinese Cultural Revolution generation immigrating to Australia, it is not really a matter of conversion, but a matter of “reversion and revision” to their Buddhist roots. (Numrich 69) With both the revitalization of Buddhism in Mainland China (Yang), there seems an inherent need to find their religious heritage whether they are in China or overseas.

In comparison, the growth of Chinese Buddhism has changed and progressed in Taiwan whereas the form that is found in China is still growing from its starting point of the post revolution era. For China Chinese immigrants, coming into contact with Taiwanese Chinese Buddhism, is a fresh experience. In China, visitors to temples are accustomed to paying entrance fees like as though they are visiting a tourist attraction and monastics are only called upon when there is a funeral service. Whereas compared to Buddhism in Taiwan where it could be seen as more progressive, tourists or devotees can visit the temple freely and even be served some hot tea and tidbits at the reception, and where monastics take on the role of curating exhibitions and teaching of meditation in public schools.

Of course these are generalisations of Chinese Buddhism in Mainland China and Taiwan, not all temples fall under these two categories. There are Taiwanese temples that also limit themselves to ritualistic dharma functions and China Chinese Temples that have made use of robotic technology to create a robot monk who can teach the Dharma and hold simple conversations (Sherwood). However, along the spectrum there has been more noticeable progress within Taiwanese Buddhist organisations.

Considering the type of activities and type of followers it attracts, the positioning of FGS temples in Australia and in most of its overseas branch temple cater to the ethnic than the convert Buddhist (Chandler 289-290). Although these temples also do conduct regular meditation classes, the majority activities held in these temples are ritualistic and cultural. On the other hand, for NTT on a day-to-day basis, there are actually very few Chinese devotees seen doing ritualistic practice, instead it attracts a largely tourist crowd and visitations from children's school excursions.

Therefore, although FGS temples in general cater more to an ethnic audience, the positioning of the temples will differ on a spectrum of convert-ethnic Buddhists for different locations. It is largely dependent on its neighbouring communities and facilities that are available at the temple. For example, branch temples are not able to organize retreats as there is insufficient accommodation and practice space although they are situated in the city where many ethnic devotees are located.

The use of the term "Chinese" is problematic, because of the constant evolution and fluidity of the Chinese identity and the complexities are beyond what can be covered in this research. Considering how well the Chinese diaspora has travelled and having a long history of migration, many "Chinese" have changed their nationalities and assimilated into the local culture of the host countries. Even within Mainland China, Hong Kong or Taiwan, there is no pure Chinese culture to speak of, as each territory had experienced colonisation, had imported different political belief systems or simply had non-Chinese influences through trade links. Therefore, it is difficult to pinpoint certain characteristics, such as looks, attire, spoken language, beliefs or values that make one Chinese or not Chinese.

There is also the relative environment that can make one naturally identify with his/her ethnicity, such as a Mainland Chinese might feel more "Chinese" when in a host country such as Australia than he/she would be when in his/her homeland. Since the sense of the Chinese identity is also largely dependent on a relative level on where one is situated in, therefore the term "Chinese" in this paper is used loosely to include anyone who can trace some sort of Chinese ancestry (Suryadinata 28).

## **2.2.2 Role of Religious Organisations for Immigrant Groups**

### **2.2.2.1 Traditional Roles of Religious Organisations**

According to Encyclopedia.com, a religious organisation is an institution that plays the role and has procedures to manage the relationship between man and the supernatural order. It manages rituals, practices, promotes truth and suppresses falsity and doctrine; it sets up the process for training, recruiting and networking of religious clergy and the organizational structure and authority between them. ("Religious Organization").

The temple being a religious organisation has the above functions and roles. However,



these functions are needed to support the devotee to have a conducive environment and healthy relationships in order to actualize his/her needs. Venerable Master Hsing Yun says the temple is like a petrol station and highway rest station, where one refuels and rejuvenates to carry on life's journey. It is like a shopping mall that provides a wide variety of goods and services that feeds and strengthens the mind. It is also like a school that nurtures people into benevolent, compassionate and wise beings. It is a place of gathering of virtuous friends. Even more so, it is a place where troubles and worries are removed (Hsing Yun, "Fojiao yu jianzhu").

Immigration whether voluntary or involuntary, is a life changing experience for many. Oscar Handlin recorded the resettlement of European immigrants that came to America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He depicted the plight of immigrants as living in crisis due to the uprooting. The extreme conditions of hardship and alienation greatly affected them, to which the effects were being passed down to later generations (Handlin 6).

Although in some cases, resettlement for non-refugee immigrants may not be as traumatic as mentioned above, at minimum, it often still entails severing of social networks, disrupting normal day-to-day living, and the breaking up of homes. As a result, immigrants may feel a sense of loss and left without a sense of belonging, which could lead to poor emotional or mental health. Numerous studies have found association between religious participation and immigrant emotional well-being (Connor 130). Ethnic religious organisations provide spiritual and cultural offerings of rituals and religious texts in one's mother tongue, provide a sense of familiarity and comfort (Hirschman 1206-1233). Religious communities provide networks and the resources to solve problems such as jobs, housing and schooling for young children. Such support systems are vital and the community substitutes as families who are not in close proximity (Hirschman 1206-1233). Trust and friendships are more likely to develop in a religious setting, helping immigrants to grow new roots in the new land (Hirschman 1206-1233).

### **2.2.2.2 Cultural Homes, Custodians of Ethnic Culture and the Builders of Cultural Identity**

From an anthropological perspective, culture is taken as a marker of how we live our lives, the sense of place and person that makes us human – neither individual nor entirely universal, but grounded by language, religion, custom, time and space (Miller and Yudice 1). Ethnic religious organisations also provide the place of cultural education to second-generation children who have been born away from their land of ancestry, or the 1.5-generation who have immigrated with their parents when they were at a young age. Some parents are eager for their children to maintain their cultural links and identity as Chinese even though they may have become Australia nationals. In host countries, Chinese temples are able to provide the environment for Chinese children to experience Chinese tradition, festivals and food culture as a larger community and establish language schools to allow these Chinese children to maintain their linguistic heritage.

Individual identity defines a person in terms of his or her own unique attributes and the individual responds to the self-image created (Liu 2). Within a group environment, collective identities form through the person's participation and interaction with other individuals. The nature of identity is fluid and dynamic, thus both collective and individual identities are in constant interaction (Liu 2). Mutually changing, influencing and reinforcing symbols, values and rules that teach the individuals appropriate and acceptable behaviour within the group dynamics. Cultural groups which are part of society, share and pass on cultural beliefs, values and knowledge to younger generation.



Cultural groups with a strong sense of cultural identity pass on a sense of belonging to their members (Butler-Sweet 747-769), which give value and emotional significance through group participation (Tajfel 24). The groups are able to provide a frame of reference on behaviour, thinking and protocols in the foreign environment for the new immigrant, easing the process of assimilation and adaptation into society, and avoid becoming socially excluded (Berry 5-34; Boese and Phillips 192-93; Liu 3).

According to Maslow, at lower levels of the pyramid there are physical, safety and social needs which require addressing before seeking higher purposes in life. Once basic needs are met, immigrants who have settled down are more likely to pay their services forward to others who are new to the community. Through service, older immigrants build self-esteem and confidence and are respected in the community for their contributions, fulfilling needs that are higher up the hierarchy.

From the host government perspective, it is important that immigrants are able to slowly adapt to the local environments, as many social problems can arise if there is no proper assimilation into society. As can be seen by a report by the Australian Social Inclusion Board, people who are socially excluded tend to experience multiple problems such as family abuse, mental illness, unemployment, low incomes, housing problems and low participation in civic activities (Australian Social Inclusion Board 14). The report also pointed out that the non-English speaking was more likely to have transport difficulties, poorer health and less likely to attend community events.

### 2.2.3 Buddhism and Localisation

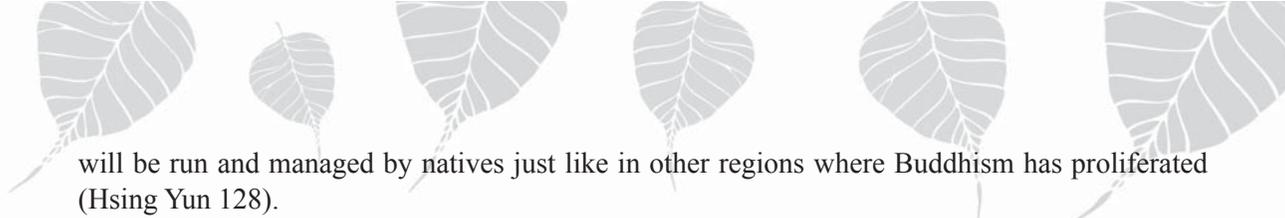
In 2001, at an international Buddhist conference made up of mainly lay Buddhist devotees, Venerable Master Hsing Yun provided historical context of the localization of Buddhism in his keynote speech. He said,

“Localization can be defined as the process of allowing Buddhism to find its roots in the local culture, developing its unique characteristic according to the cultural ideas, geographical environment, as well as customs and habits (Hsing Yun 98).”

Buddhism went through the same process when it was transmitted from India to China. Indian monks travelled to China to translate Buddhist text into the local vernacular, while leaving the duties of temple building with the native monastics. This combination allowed Buddhism to flourish within Chinese culture (Hsing Yun 98).

Like Venerable Master, some scholars such as Huang and Chan have also made similar observations that the Chinese diaspora is resistant to assimilating into their new immigrant countries (McKeown 306). They tend to hold on to Chinese values, identity, and social attitudes and structures. However, the Venerable Master encourages his monastics and devotees to respect local cultures, wherever they may be. And that one needs to be sensitive as immigrants, and not use Buddhism to overwhelm the culture of other countries. (Hsing Yun 97).

The localization that Venerable Master advocates is encompassing, benevolent and harmonious. It is not to create an isolated community, but to embrace wholeheartedly the new country which one resides in. He envisions that the temples which he has built all over the world



will be run and managed by natives just like in other regions where Buddhism has proliferated (Hsing Yun 128).

However, the definition of localisation which Venerable Master has proposed seems to be at odds with the inherent positioning of FGS overseas temples in general to cater to the Chinese diaspora. This “Chinese-ness” has its origins deeply enrooted in Chinese culture and its monastics are majority ethnic Chinese. The Venerable Master has actively been promoting the revitalization of Chinese Culture whenever he is invited to give talks in China over the period of 2013-2014. This in a sense is contrary to his wish to localize religion to whichever land that it may settle down in or perhaps it is just a difference in strategy for mainland China and the rest of the non-Mandarin speaking world.

#### **2.2.4 Humanistic Buddhism**

Buddhism originated in India over 2,600 years ago and has since spread all over the world. It has two main schools of thought, Theravada (“Teachings of the Elders”) and Mahayana (“The Great Vehicle”).

Humanistic Buddhism is based upon the Mahayana Vehicle, where it advocates that beings who take on this practice are referred to as bodhisattvas. They strive to help all sentient beings liberate themselves, and in turn, the bodhisattvas themselves are also liberated.

Venerable Master Hsing Yun defines Humanistic Buddhism as “what the Buddha taught, what is essential to humans, what purifies, what is virtuous and beautiful” (Hsing Yun 18). Humanistic Buddhism focuses on engaging in society rather than leaving it; on caring for the living than for the dead; on benefiting others than oneself and thus on universal salvation than self-cultivation. It is the expression and practical aspect of Buddhist theory and therefore is not a new form of Buddhism, but a new interpretation of it (Thapa 4).

Although Venerable Master was not the founder of Humanistic Buddhism, he has been at the forefront in popularising this form of Buddhism and developing its applicability in modern life. Through “study, research, contemplation, discussion and teaching to clarify and elaborate the philosophical concepts inherent in Buddhism and their practical implications” (Guruge 1), he has used FGS as a platform for promoting Humanistic Buddhism in order to achieve its objectives of fostering peace and harmony globally (“Objectives”).

These goals are achieved through its four founding principles:

- To propagate Buddhist teachings through cultural activities.
- To nurture talents through education.
- To benefit societies through charitable programs.
- To purify human hearts and minds through Buddhist practices. (“Objectives”)

To help understand the role of NTT, its activities and services are categorised according to the above mentioned four principles: Culture, Education, Charity and Buddhist Practices (See Appendix A). It should be noted that most activities do not only fall under one category, but multiple categories. And perceptions on whether it falls more under a certain category may change depending on the individual’s point of view. However, for ease of categorization and understanding, the list of activities organised by NTT will be taken from NTT’s point of view.

And to understand who these activities catered to, the target groups shall be labelled as “ethnic”, “convert” or “non-religious”.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Methodology

To get a better understanding into the role of NTT, a mixed methods research approach was adopted to answer the research questions posed at the beginning of the research. Primary data collections were done firstly through personal interviews of identified key stakeholders of NTT and secondly through survey questionnaires with visitors of NTT.

According to NTT, there tends to be more visitors to the temple during spring and summer. Co-incidentally, the researcher was in Wollongong to conduct the interviews in person and the surveys with the help of staff and volunteers over a one and half week period from 23 Feb to 3 March 2017.

This period was considered a time which marked the end of the festive period of the Nan Tian Cultural Festival and Chinese New Year celebrations and the beginning of normal regular classes and retreats. This period avoids large numbers of “cultural consumers” who were likely to be present. Thus the results of the survey reflect visitation on a normal weekly basis and avoids the spike in overly religious or cultural activities that might attract a different crowd than usual.

**Table 3: List of Primary and Secondary Data Sources**

<b>PRIMARY DATA</b>	
Personal Interviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chief Abbess Reverend Manko – FGS Oceania Head Abbess and Abbess of NTT</li> <li>2. Gordon A. Bradbery – Lord Mayor Wollongong, New South Wales</li> </ol>
Survey Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One-Time, Non-Frequent – Tourists, Local Visitors</li> <li>2. Frequent –               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Volunteers / Devotees</li> <li>b. Retreat Participants</li> <li>c. Class Participants</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>SECONDARY DATA</b>	
Video Recordings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Venerable Master Hsing Yun – Founder of FGS and NTT</li> <li>2. David Campbell – Former Lord Mayor of Wollongong</li> <li>3. Ian Brewster – Architect of NTT</li> </ol>
Images	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exhibition “Humanistic Buddhism in Australia” (2015)</li> </ol>
Papers on Government Policy / City Planning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creative Nation: Commonwealth Cultural Policy (October 1994)</li> <li>2. Point of Take Off: Wollongong City Council Cultural Policy Framework and Cultural Plan 1998-2003</li> <li>3. Wollongong Cultural Industries Audit (2000)</li> </ol>

As mentioned before because of the limited time available for conducting the surveys,



results of the survey only provide a snapshot of the visitors and participants that would normally come to NTT and are not a complete reflection of the actual visiting population, which in a sense can never be. However, the results do provide a preliminary understanding of the types of visitors who come to NTT and their reasons for coming.

This research also hopes to trigger interests in conducting further research into this aspect for the temple or to extend or repeat the survey at different intervals of the year to creating multiple snapshots of the visitors, making it into a longitudinal study and more analysis could be done over a longer period of time.

Secondary data sources were video recordings and graphic design files that were taken by or designed by NTT and FGS in Taiwan for the exhibition “Humanistic Buddhism in Australia” that was curated for the opening of Nan Tien Institute in 2015. There were video recordings of Venerable Master Hsing Yun (founder of FGS and NTT), Mr. David Campbell (previous Lord Mayor of Wollongong) and Mr. Ian Brewster (Architect of NTT).

## **3.2 Primary Data Collection and Instruments**

### **3.2.1 Personal Interviews**

Two key stakeholders were identified for personal interviewing. The first interviewee was the FGS Oceania and NTT Chief Abbess Rev. Manko. She was one of the key persons in-charge during the construction process of NTT from March 1990 to August 1996 (Shi). After the temple was completed, she was posted to Singapore and later returned to Australia in 2011 to build Nan Tien Institute.

The second interviewee was the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, NSW, Gordon A. Bradbery. He has been in the leadership position since 2011 and prior to that he was an ordained minister at the Wollongong Mission of the Uniting Church. His bachelor’s degrees were in psychology, sociology and divinity at the University of Sydney (“Gordon Bradbery”).

These elite interviews were conducted at the offices of the interviewees. Although a list of questions was provided prior to the interview, as both interviewees helmed the leadership positions within the government or religious organisation which they worked in, the semi-structured open-ended questions provided a guideline on the topics which required covering (Robson 270). The individuals acted in their own accord to freely explain, elaborate and provide more insights into their decisions, their vision and considerations for the city and for their organisations.

Their different viewpoints on similar topics of discussion created a more complete view on what was happening in NTT within the context of Wollongong City. Conclusions made through the conversation were inductive, focusing on the person’s meaning and his/her understanding of the complexities of the situation (Creswell 32). Interestingly, because Lord Mayor was previously a minister at the Church and a Zen meditation practitioner and was able to provide his own religion and the interpretations of religious symbolisms.

### **3.2.2 Survey Questionnaires**

The survey questionnaire was designed to provide open and closed-ended questions. Visitors to NTT range between infrequent and frequent visitors. Infrequent visitors were mainly tourists and local visitors, school excursion teachers who came occasionally to visit the temple

and they did not take part in any of the regular activities of NTT. Frequent visitors were those who participated in regular activities such as meditation retreats, Buddhist or cultural classes, students of University of Wollongong Buddhist Society, and those who offer their services to NTT as volunteers.

For frequent visitors, these groups were first being identified by the activities which they participated in NTT. The activities listed in Appendix A have been categorized according to findings in the literature review:

1. Cultural
2. Educational
3. Charity/Social
4. Buddhist Practices / Religious

The surveys were conducted at different locations according to the different activities. For surveys that were conducted targeting class participants and retreat participants, the questionnaires were handed out to the students after the session or during session break time. This gave the respondents ample time to complete the survey, which took approximately 10-20 minutes.

The respondents were not picked at random but were encouraged by the teacher of the class to take part in a student-led research survey that was conducted on the temple. The researcher believed that conducting the survey on a voluntary basis and giving sufficient time for the respondents to complete the survey, increased the likelihood that the questionnaires would be completely filled up and answers would have gone through more consideration.

It was more difficult to get tourists and visitors to the temple to participate in the survey, as some of them had followed tour groups and had a fixed time period to spend at the temple. Visitors were more likely to agree to complete the survey if they were seen taking a rest on the benches along the corridors of the temple building, at the Waterdrop Teahouse and Hai Hui Hall (a gallery space).

The activities are further labelled as targeting convert, ethnic or non-religious participants. To get a large enough sample size, the survey was timed when a significant number of classes were being held and also when there was a weekend retreat being conducted. The participants in the activity list as seen in Appendix A would make up the survey sample population. Depending on the number of participants in each class and the attendance of the class for that day, the sample population will be quite a close representative of the actual population of people who come regularly to NTT.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Survey Questionnaires**

#### **4.1.1 Processing of Survey Questions**

Once the physical copies of the surveys were completed and collected back, the results were entered into a spreadsheet to create an initial dataset (Robson 393-419). The data was further “cleaned” up, (i.e. to check for errors and corrections made to the data which did not make sense) and coded before importing it into the statistical program IBM SPSS Statistics.

The survey had a mix of close-ended single-answer questions, close-ended multi-response questions (questions having more than one answer from a given list of answers) and open-ended

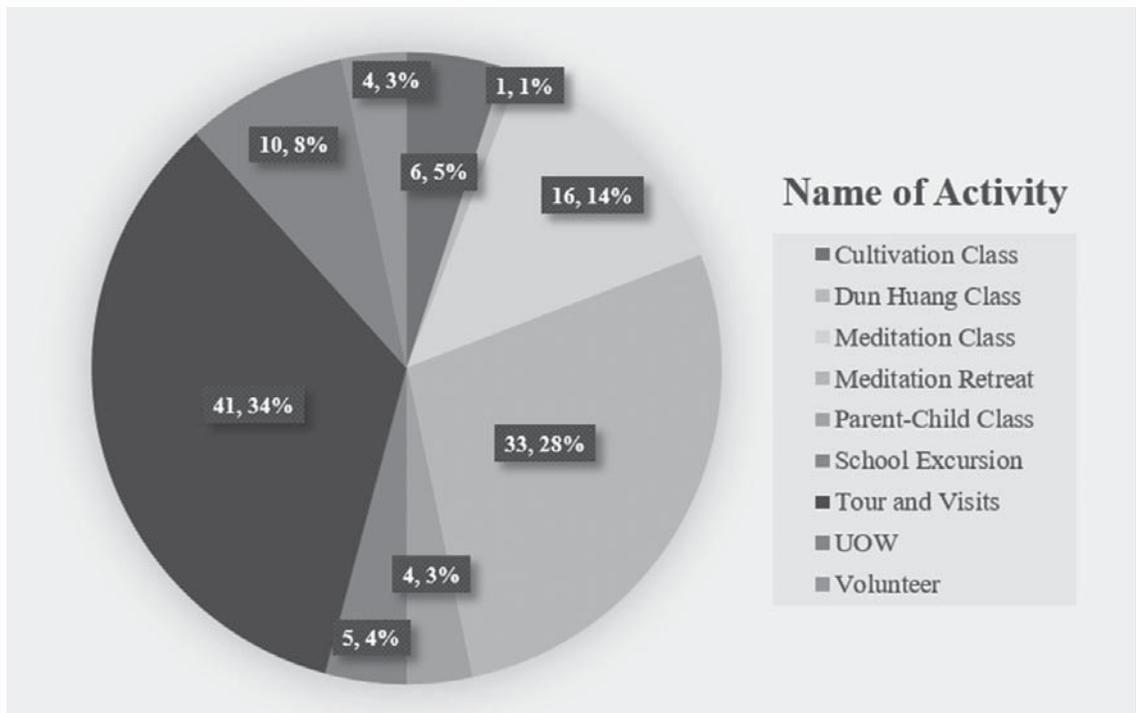
questions.

For close-ended multi-response questions, some questions were simplified to single-answer questions, such as those who had indicated more than one religion, were grouped into one category called “Multifaith” to simplify the classification. In instances where the answers were not grouped, such as in question 12, reasons for coming to NTT, each response was separated into different roles and were simplified into binary numbers of “0” or “1” to indicate “No” and “Yes”. Qualitative data generated from the open-ended questions were analysed using the method of coding or drawing common themes from the answers and which may link back to the research question (Creswell 246). After coding all the answers once, the codes are reviewed one more time to see if the codes could be further combined to draw conclusions relating to the research questions, before re-coding the answers and tabulating the frequency of the revised codes.

#### 4.1.2 Descriptive Statistics

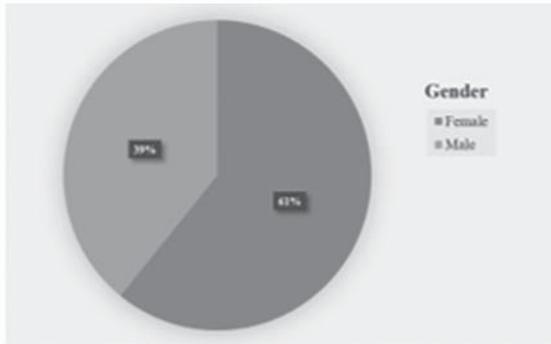
A total of 120 survey forms were distributed to the visitors, students and volunteers who came to NTT over a period of one week (see Appendix B and C for the tabulation of survey results). The figure below depicts the breakdown of the no. of respondents according to the activities which they participated in. The largest demographic of respondents surveyed were tourists and meditation retreat participants, which made up 41% and 28% of the sample population respectively.

**Figure 5: No. of respondents coming to NTT according to the activities which they participated in.**

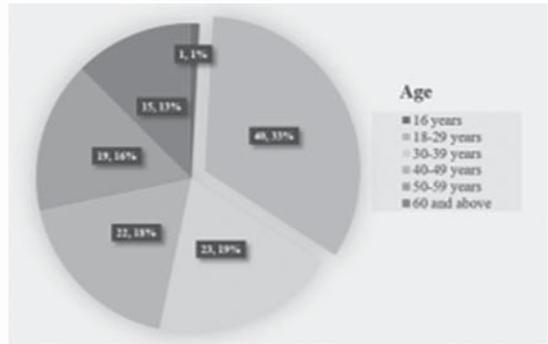


UOW = University of Wollongong Buddhist Society Student visit

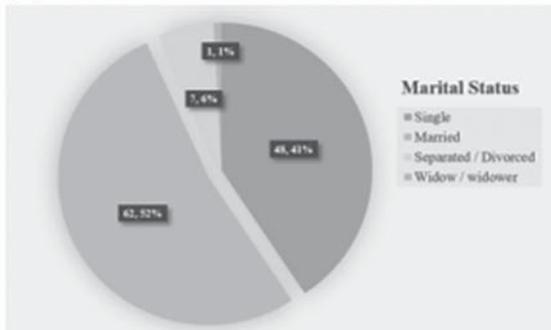
**Figure 6: No. of respondents according to demographics. (a) Gender. (b) Age. (c) Marital Status. (d) Academic Qualifications. (e) Profession. (f) Habitat. (g) Religious Status. (h) Ancestry.**



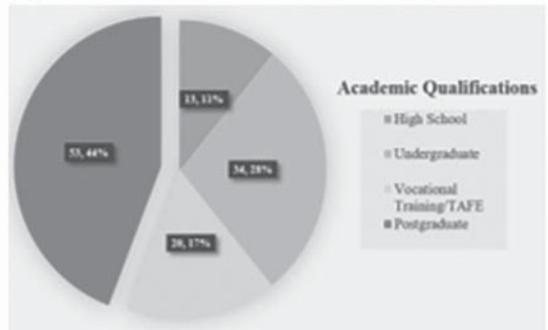
(a)



(b)



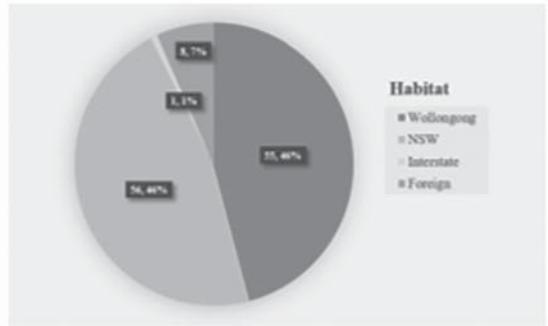
(c)



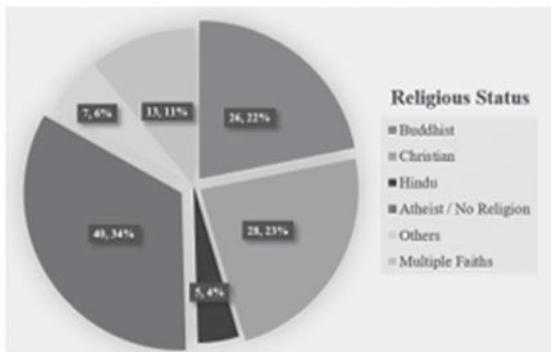
(d)



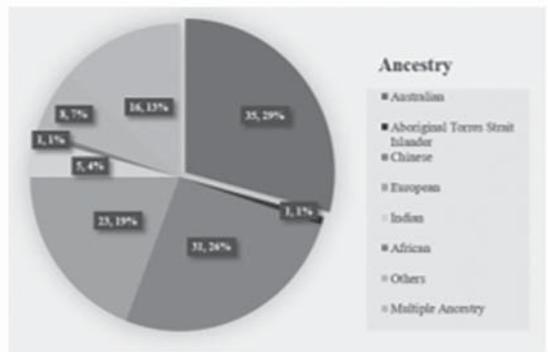
(e)



(f)



(g)

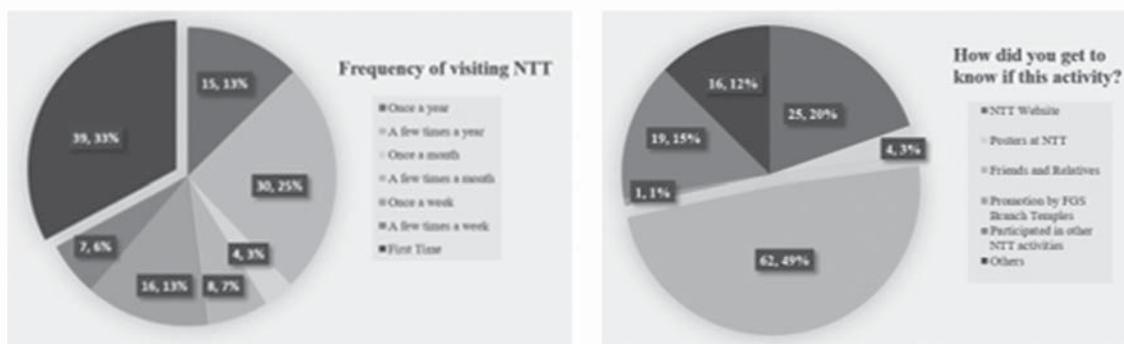


(h)

According to Figure 6 (a), the sampled population was made up of 61% female and 39% male respondents. Within the sample, the largest age group who came to NTT was young visitors, ranging between the ages of 18-29 and they represented 40% of the respondents. More than half of the 120 participants were married and 41% of the respondents were single. Close to three quarters of all respondents had obtained or were pursuing degrees, with 44% and 28% of all respondents indicated postgraduate and undergraduate qualifications respectively. 9 out of 10 people surveyed lived within the state of New South Wales, and half of the people from that group were staying in Wollongong.

With regards to the religious status of the respondents, the top 3 religious or non-religious individuals who visited NTT were the Atheists, the Christians and followed by the Buddhists, with 34%, 23% and 22% of the respondents respectively. 58% of the people indicated that they were of Australian, European or Australian-European (mixed) ancestry and 26% of Chinese ancestry.

**Figure 7: (a) No. of respondents and their frequency of visiting NTT.  
(b) How did you get to know of this activity?**



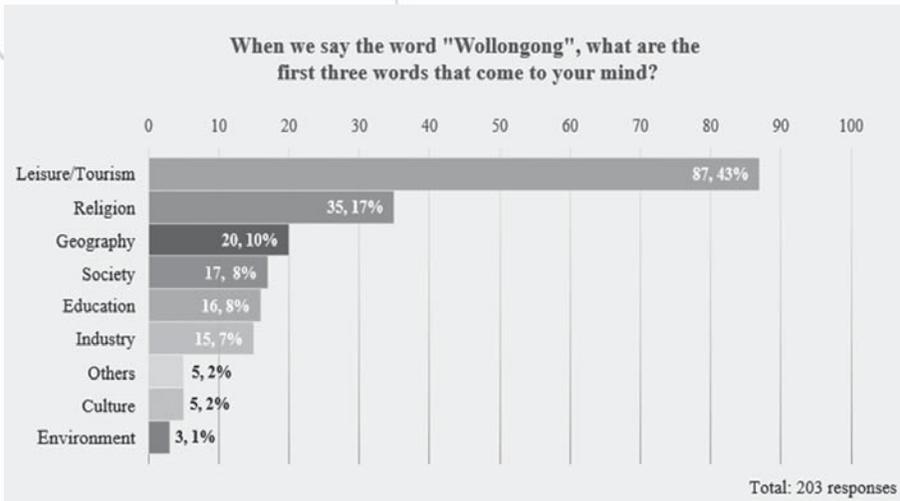
(a)

(b)

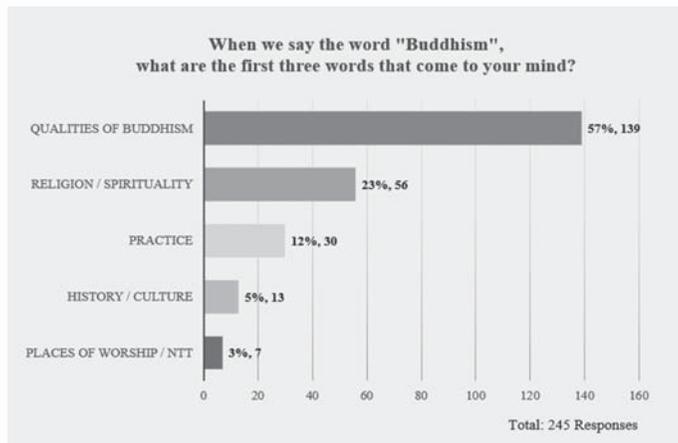
According to Figure 7 (a), a third of the sample population were first-timers to the temple, while 26% of the respondents came on a regular basis (ranging from a few times a week to a few times a month). 49% of the respondents knew about NTT and its activities through recommendations by friends and relatives, and 20% was through the NTT website. In Figure 8 (b), 12% of respondents indicated getting information of NTT from other sources than those listed in the survey, such as through searching on Google, referring to travel guidebooks, through their work or that they were living nearby.

119 respondents provided a total of 203 answers on their perception of “Wollongong”. The answers were categorised into 9 themes, “Leisure/Tourism”, “Religion”, “Geography”, “Society”, “Education”, “Industry”, “Others”, “Culture” and “Environment”. Most responses (43% of the answers) were related to the “Leisure/Tourism” giving answers such as “beach”, “sea”, “surf”, “relaxed”, “mountain”, “green” and “landscape”. Nearly all 17% of the answers related to “Religion” were linked to NTT and there were 7% of the answers perceived who Wollongong as “Industrial”.

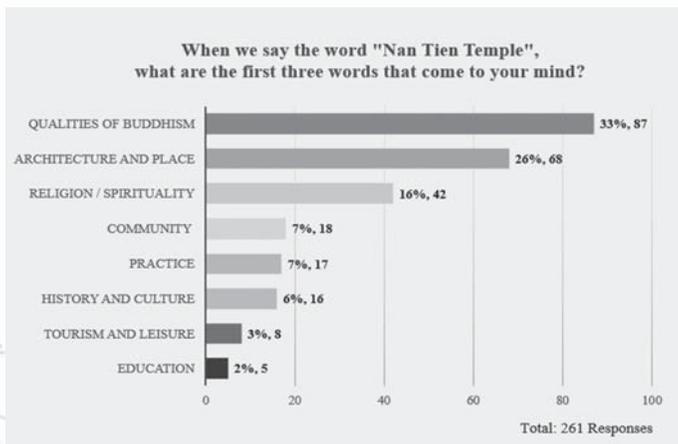
**Figure 8: Open-ended question on respondents' perception of "Wollongong"**



**Figure 9: Open-ended questions on respondents' perception of:**  
(a) Buddhism.

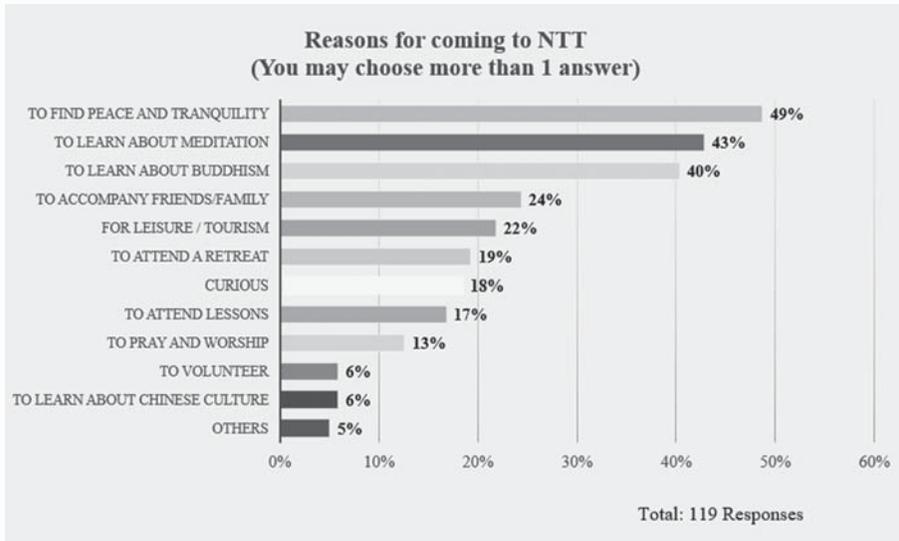


(b) Nan Tien Temple



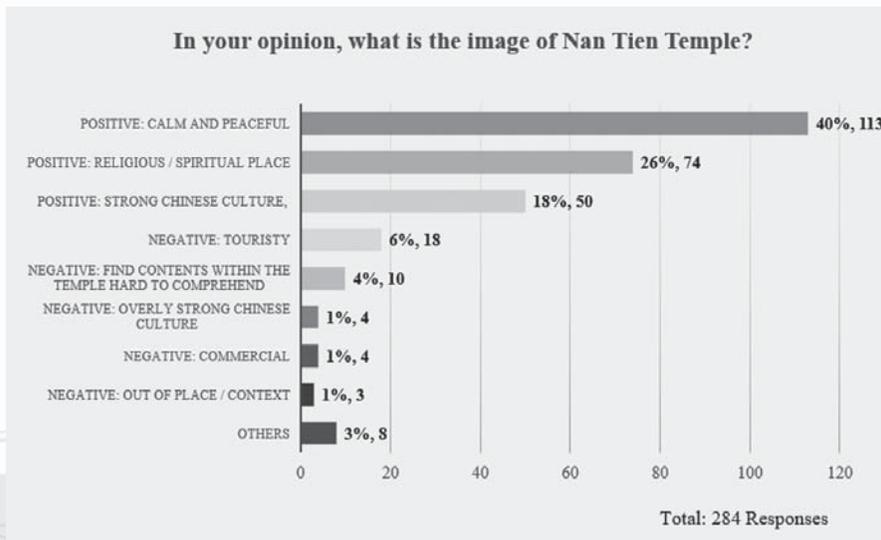
In Figure 10 (a) and (b), a total of 245 and 261 responses were collected on respondents' perceptions of "Buddhism" and "Nan Tien Temple". The responses were grouped into 5 main themes for "Buddhism" and 8 for "Nan Tien Temple". The statistics show that the respondents strongly identified with "Buddhism" and "Nan Tien Temple" in terms of the "Qualities of Buddhism" with 57% and 33% respectively of all responses falling under this category. Words such as "peace", "tranquility", "benevolent", "compassion", "equanimity" and "tolerant" appeared frequently under this category. "Qualities of Buddhism" ranked above respondents' perception of "Religion/Spirituality" in both tables.

**Figure 10: Reasons for coming to NTT (according to total number of responses)**



A total of 312 responses were tabulated from 119 respondents on their reasons for visiting the temple. The top 3 reasons for coming to the temple were "To find peace and tranquility", "To learn meditation", and "To learn about Buddhism", with 49%, 43% and 40% of all respondents choosing these options respectively.

**Figure 11: Respondents' perception of NTT**





Although both questions 15 and 16 in the survey questionnaire ask about respondents' perception of NTT, question 16 was designed to prompt the respondent to provide both positive and negative perceptions of NTT. Even with prompting, there were still a large number of responses which indicated that NTT was being viewed positively, with more than 86% of the responses (including those in the "Others" category) giving positive feedback. The results are also consistent with other questions in the survey to indicate that the brand image of NTT is one that is "calm and peaceful".

Of all the negative responses, the ones with higher percentages were that NTT was perceived to be "too touristy" (6% of respondents) and that certain "contents within the temple (were) hard to comprehend" (4% of respondents).

## **4.2 Discussion Topics**

### **4.2.1 Revitalisation of the City and the Creation of Novel Experience through Chinese and Buddhist Culture**

The interview with Chief Abbess Rev. Manko reiterated the reasons leading to the establishment of NTT in Wollongong. She gave insights into the contractual agreement between the city council and FGS, that the land would be donated to FGS on the basis that the temple would help to do the following: Firstly, to help stimulate the local economy. Secondly, to help promote tourism. Thirdly, to help change the image of the city. And lastly, to help promote inter-cultural exchange (Shi). None of these points seem to be unexpected and are in line with the developments of the city according to the city's revitalization plans in the 1990s. However, it seems rather far-fetched that the council would expect the temple would be able to achieve all the terms listed in the contract as these are not solely achievable on the part of the temple. It has to go along with other economic and social planning and strategies of the city.

Nonetheless, the efforts that FGS had put into during and after the building of the temple, showed that they were committed in upholding the contract and even going beyond what was required of them. They made sure as much as possible to employ local architects and builders to stimulate the economy. NTT also held large scale international conferences in order to bring in more tourists to the city and has organised the Nan Tien Cultural Festival annually since 1996 to promote cultural exchange.

The Lord Mayor echoed the achievements of Nan Tien, by saying they have been a good neighbour in transforming what used to be an unsightly neighbourhood into a visually attractive tourist and cultural destination (Bradbery). Nan Tien has also contributed to the region's social, economic and especially towards the tourism sectors. It attracts 250,000 visitors annually and it is prized for its strategic infrastructure of having conference, accommodation and dining facilities that can attract local, regional and international events (Bradbery).

Although in the survey there was an indication that Wollongong's history of being a steel city and shipment port was still imprinted within the psyche of some visitors, there was also indication that the perception of the city was slowly moving away from its industrial image and towards a place of leisure and relaxation. Visitors to the city do look forward to unwinding and enjoying the various beaches and natural landscapes that Wollongong has to offer and NTT is part of that array of offerings for leisure and tourism.



Having comments of being overly commercial or touristy is not new to FGS. In the 1990s, just during the Chinese New Year period, the FGS headquarters in Taiwan was known to receive as many as one million visitors (Chandler 18). And since the establishment of the Buddha Museum which is adjacent to the headquarters in 2011, the museum has welcomed more than 12 million visitors as of March 2017 (“Latest News”). Although FGS is providing a watered down version of the Buddhist teachings, this has increased the accessibility of the religion. The use of recreation or entertainment in attracting people to experience Buddhism is considered “legit” as it promotes understanding and interest in Buddhism (Chandler 22). This is considered applying “skillful means” and is considered a means to an end and not an end to itself.

The Lord Mayor emphasizes that NTT plays an important role in promoting cultural and religious diversity and constantly reminds the city of this diversity that Wollongong enjoys through the celebration of major Chinese or Buddhist Festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Buddha’s Birthday Festival (Bradbery). Rev. Manko reiterates that cultural exchange cannot take place if cultures are the same. It occurs when there is difference and we learn to appreciate and treasure other cultures for things we do not have in ours (Shi). Diversity opens up visions, extends one’s boundaries and develops people to become more tolerant and embracing individuals. She believes diversity has brought and will continue to bring vitality and vibrancy to Australia (Shi). The Lord Mayor emphasized the novelty factor as the strongest advantage of NTT (Bradbery). However, when Buddhism is presented through the filters of Chinese culture which is rich, lively and bustling with activity, he warns of over secularization of the religion and undermining the depth and seriousness of the Buddhist teachings. As a former Christian minister of 25 years and a practitioner of Zen Buddhism, he understands NTT treads on a fine line in maintaining receptivity to a general audience and sacredness of the religion.

#### **4.2.2 Education for Self-Improvement and the Promotion of Mutual Understanding**

According to western understanding of education, it is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits (“Education”) that normally takes place in the setting of a school, college or institution. However, the definition of education falls short of the understanding of its Chinese translation “教育” (jiaoyu). “教” (jiao) which has the meaning of “to teach” and “育” (yu) which means “to nurture”. Apart from acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world around us, the Chinese translation has aspects of looking after, rearing, development and growth, which not only looks at what is being taught, but how and for what purpose it serves.

In Buddhist education, the most important aspect is to be self-aware, 自觉 (zijue) and to have self-realisation (Hsing Yun, “Zijue”). Buddha attained enlightenment through self-reflection of his own imperfections, he was self-motivated and within his own effort, found solutions to his problem. With such an attitude, one is bound to improve and develop oneself easily (Hsing Yun, “Zijue”), which is the main point of education.

Meditation and mindfulness practice starts the process of being self-aware and works towards self-transformation and self-improvement. Through changes in a person’s behaviour, through having peace and harmony within oneself, the sphere of transformation and influence expand outwards affecting interpersonal relationships, to family members, to society and finally to the world (Hsing Yun, “The Value of Faith”). Thus, Venerable Master believes education brings about that change in oneself that can finally lead to a balance of social inequalities and bring about world peace (Shi).

Apart from meditation retreats and classes that are catered towards the adults, the temple conducts educational tours for primary and secondary school excursions and received on average 15,000 students a year to promote religious understanding. Students are introduced to meditation and learn simple Buddhist principles through board games, movies and short lectures. Thus NTT provides an avenue for children and teenagers to experience Buddhism and to understand Buddhist culture but not necessarily in hoping to convert them, but to development them into becoming better individuals.

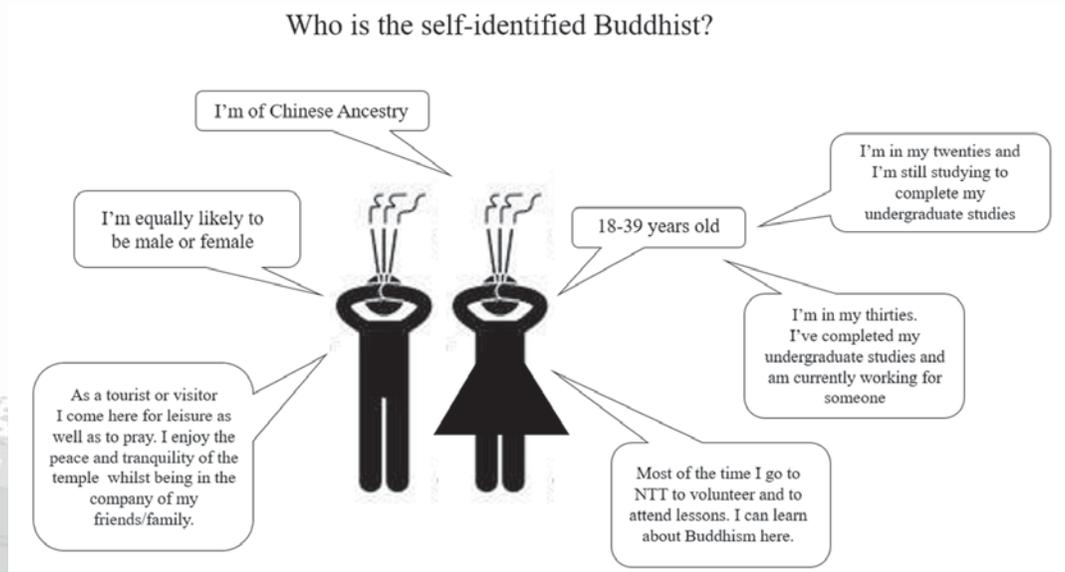
Education also helps to address concerns that certain religious individuals within the local community had especially when NTT first settled down in Wollongong. There was a discussion between the Christian and Buddhist clergy that was broadcasted over national television (Lyll), where an Anglican bishop voiced his opposition towards the presence of Buddhism in Wollongong. During the program one question was raised to the former Abbess of NTT, Rev. Man Shin on whether the Buddhists were here to convert people? To which she replied, the temple was not concerned about converting people to Buddhism. The practice of Humanistic Buddhist is to become better individuals, be good to one's family and to build a cohesive society. It is more important for someone to internalize the teachings rather than to proclaim to be a Buddhist (Lyll). And so perhaps it is not sufficient to broadcast on national TV about what the Buddhists are coming here to do, but really to allow people into the temple, to experience first-hand on what is being taught and to quell those fears and concerns which people have about the temple.

### 4.2.3 Changes in Religious Landscape

Applying the pivot table function in Microsoft Excel on the dataset, filters and segments the data in order to answer the research question, of who comes to NTT and why do they come? As the number of profiles that can be generated from the dataset are too many, the researcher approaches the question from a religious perspective and asks, who is the “self-identified” Buddhist and why does he/she come to NTT?

**Figure 12: Profile of “self-identified” Buddhists who visit NTT.**

According to the survey, 26 people or 22% of the sample population are Buddhists and close to 70% of these self-identified Buddhists are of Chinese ancestry. They tend to be between



the ages of 18-39 years old with an undergraduate degree. Although they identify themselves as Buddhists, approximately half of them come for leisure and/or for worshipping. They do not attend any lessons nor volunteer at the temple. These Buddhists can be considered “joss-sticks” Buddhists, because whenever they come to the temple, they light up joss-sticks and request for favours from the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. A large number of Buddhists in Asia, such as China, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia, fall under this category.

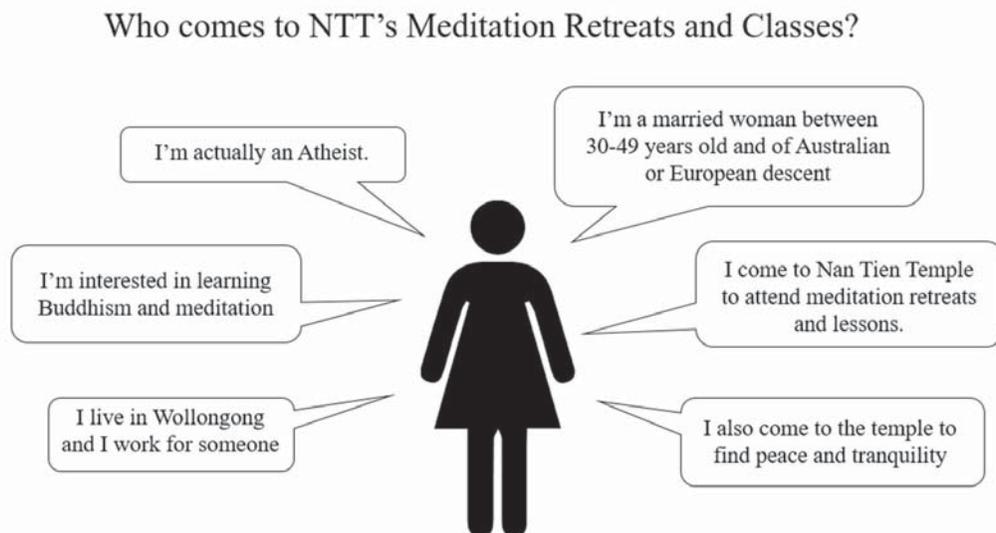
On the other hand, there are also “Buddhists” who do come regularly to volunteer and attend lessons, such as Dunhuang Dance Class and Parent-Child Buddhist Class. However, these people do not seem to take part in the meditation retreats nor the meditation classes. They have been observed to attend the ritualistic morning and evening chanting sessions.

For these Buddhists, NTT plays an important role in calming the hearts of immigrants, especially those who do not speak English (Shi). The close knit Chinese environment provides a sense of familiarity and security for people to feel less discriminated and secure in such an environment. The role of the religious organisation is also to provide shelter and refuge from a physical, mental and emotional dimension.

While these “joss sticks” Buddhists come to NTT to enjoy the peace and tranquility of the temple, they appreciate the environment of the Chinese culture that the temple presents in Australia. Ironically, it is also this group of people who commented that NTT is touristy and overly commercialized.

Regardless of what their intentions are, the above mentioned “Buddhists” fit into the category of “Ethnic Buddhist” that Nattier had referred to in her article “Buddhism comes to main street” (74-76).

**Figure 13: Profile of person who comes for meditation retreats and classes at NTT.**



If Buddhists make up only 22% of the sample population, what kind of people are coming for classes at Nan Tien? From the dataset, a particular archetype was identified. This person



is likely to be a married lady of Australian and/or European descent. She labels herself as an Atheist, but is interested in Buddhism and meditation. She is employed and is equally likely to have completed academic studies that range between vocational training to having a postgraduate degree. She attends meditation retreats or other classes at NTT, and like most people who visit the temple, she hopes to find peace and tranquility there.

The profile of such a person is aligned with the Chief Abbess' view that people who do not identify with being "Buddhist", but are in fact learning the Buddhist teachings and applying the teachings into their lives (Shi). Being "Buddhist" is just a label, there are many so-called "Buddhists" but do not practice Buddhism or even understand the teachings. She is not overly concerned if people converts or renounce their original beliefs, it is more important that people are able to use the teachings to solve their problems, to better understand their own situations and become happier people.

There are some non-Asian Buddhists who have gone through the refuge ceremony and have chosen to keep their refuge-taking a secret from his/her family, in anticipation of objections from family members (Shi). As an expedient means, Venerable Master has mentioned that refuge takers can follow the Buddhist teachings and at the same time keep his/her original religion ("About Triple Gem Refuge"), as it is far more important to maintain harmonious relationships between family members than to declare oneself as being a Buddhist.

Perhaps because of the new interpretation of "taking refuge", it has encouraged people of different faiths to come to NTT. Apart from the Atheists (34%), a notable number of "Christians" and "Multifaith" participants (35%) came to attend classes and retreats at NTT.

This religious diversity could also be explained by the new trends of religious consumerism in western societies. In America, religious practice is becoming an increasingly personal affair where people are not open in stating their religious beliefs (Einstein 24-27). In recent years, people who practice religion are more likely to cherry-pick the good parts of a religion and discard the rest which they find are not to their liking (Einstein 24-27). However, prior to getting a thorough understanding of the religion, people might be too quick to sieve out the "good" from the "bad" at a superficial level.

## CONCLUSION

It is the common consensus of to create a peaceful and harmonious society throughout the FGS order. The way to do it requires openness in adapting to the different environments and cultures where the temple has been set up.

When NTT was first brought into Wollongong as a cultural product, the FGS Order was open enough to promote itself more as a tourist destination than as a religious organisation. And because of this it was accepted by the local community that was largely of white Anglo-Celtic descent. Had the temple established itself without the invitation of the city council, it would have been difficult for a Chinese Buddhist temple to establish itself in Wollongong. And due to these changing causes and conditions, NTT has chartered a different path of growth and evolution than compared to many of its sister branch temples.

Chinese culture at its most elaborate, is colourful, lively and filled with activity, and to create that buzz for tourism to flourish, Buddhism faces the misunderstanding of being only "bling", which undermines the depth and wisdom of the religion. However, such misconceptions



are only tolerated in hopes of being able to attract people to the temple and get to know Buddhism better. This approach of expedient means looks to the long run of creating a harmonious and inclusive society based on understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Thus the focus of being a cultural experience in the initial years of NTT's establishment has paved the way for regular visitors who are looking for a place of solace and peace that can help them take a breather from their hectic lives and where they can "educate" and conduct themselves to bring that peace into their daily lives.

This is similarly so even for the Chinese immigrant population, who enjoys coming to NTT, where they can experience Chinese cultural festivals, a place where they find new friends and form new relationships in safe and culturally familiar surroundings. NTT contributes to their mental and emotional well-being through Buddhist teachings and providing a platform for service through volunteer work, but most importantly, people are able to see this place as a home away from home.

However, as much as a sense of safety and comfort is needed for the new immigrants, it is not to create a false sense of security for them within the confines of the temple grounds. More so, it should be a nurturing ground for new immigrants to grow to be more accustomed to Australian culture, to have the confidence in interacting with the local community, which will help them in adapting and assimilating into Australian society. New immigrants become active participants and contributors to society, which not only add value to Australia, but also lowers social costs for the government.

The setup of the location of NTT within this mainly white community has also greatly changed the usual audiences or devotees that the overseas branch temples normally attracts, who are mainly the Chinese immigrant Buddhist. Along with the change in religious mindsets of local Australians who have renounced their original religious beliefs or in taking on a multifaith approach, both the literature and survey (although limited in scope) do suggest that NTT is successful in attracting the local non-Asian audience. Thus it is changing the religious and cultural face of Chinese Buddhism of NTT within the FGS order and also of Buddhism in Australia.

However, the multifaith approach may pose a challenge to the religious communities in general. As religion is commodified and secularized, people assemble their own kind of "happy meal" for self-consumption. This poses a threat to religious organisations as who then will make up their congregation and how committed will these multifaith believers be? People will tend to cherry-pick portions of the religion which seem desirable, and thus have a superficial understanding of what the religion is all about. This trend also tends to move away from the vision of the Venerable Master of one day having overseas FGS branch temples be managed by local devotees.

Therefore, the creation of a multifaith environment (with the introduction of Buddhism and Hinduism into Wollongong) was a by-product of the city's plans for regeneration and stimulation of the economy. Bringing in of religious institutions was not to contribute to the identity or identification of Wollongong. Though unintentional, the impact and results of city planning and the implementation of certain policies have gone beyond local economic benefits. It has also affected local culture, religious beliefs and lifestyles on a national level (local residents, and local and regional visitors) and transnational level (temporary immigrants and overseas tourists).

As can be seen, because of the interrelationship between the different stakeholders involved in NTT, their values, expectations and perceptions could sometime be opposing. There is therefore a need to find a fragile balance between promoting tourism, religion, education, social behavior and well-being etc. where everything falls within the umbrella of the wider definition of culture. Nonetheless, because of NTT's flexibility and understanding of its external conditions, the approach and emphasis on the broader aspect of culture, FGS through NTT has been able to chart its growth in a different direction than that of other FGS temples, yet at the same time be able to continue working towards its vision of creating a Southern Paradise in the southern hemisphere.

## APPENDIX A: LIST OF ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY NAN TIEN TEMPLE

Type of Activity	Activity	Description	Location	Frequency / Duration	Potential Target Group
Cultural	Art Exhibitions & Workshops	Exhibition of local and international artists. Normally around themes surrounding Buddhism, spirituality and Chinese culture. FGS Art Gallery in Taiwan also arranges for artwork to be exhibited in NTT art gallery and museum. Occasionally artists are invited to conduct workshops to engage audience in art-making	Hai Hui Hall Museum	As required/ no specific duration	Ethnic, Non- religious
	Buddhist Wedding Ceremony	Buddhist Wedding Ceremony Ritual in English or Mandarin	Front Shrine Main Shrine	As required/ no specific 1 hr	Ethnic, Convert, Non- religious
	Baby Blessing Ceremony	A ritual to bless and pray for the good health and happiness of participating babies. In both English and Mandarin	Main Shrine	Thrice annually / 2 hr	Ethnic, Convert, Non- religious
	Dun Huang Dance Class	Classical Chinese Dance originating and is influenced by Buddhist imagery and stories.	Auditorium	Weekly / 1.5 hr	Ethnic
	Nan Tien Cultural Festival	A week of cultural performances, vegetarian stalls, and souvenir stalls.	Throughout NTT	Annually / 1 week	Ethnic, Non- religious
	Buddha's Birthday Festival	Has multiple activities, such as chanting and making offerings to the Buddha, bathing the Buddha, multi-faith prayer, mass meditation session, baby blessing ceremony, lion dance performance, cultural performances by Chinese and other ethnic groups, education exhibitions on the Buddha, food stalls, game stalls, children's costume parade	Darling Harbour	Annually / 2 days	Ethnic, Convert, Non- religious

Type of Activity	Activity	Description	Location	Frequency / Duration	Potential Target Group
Cultural	Viva La Gong	Participate in annual parade organised by the Wollongong City Council	Wollongong City	Annually / 2 days	Non-religious
Education	Buddhist College	Learning of Buddhist teachings, liturgy and etiquette. Serving and doing chores are part of the curriculum. Students follow a strict timetable. Course conducted in Mandarin and English	Throughout NTT	Twice annually / 3 months	Ethnic, Convert
	Weekend Buddhist College	Learning of Buddhist teachings, liturgy and etiquette. Serving and doing chores are part of the curriculum. Students follow a strict timetable. Course conducted in Mandarin and English	Throughout NTT	Annually / on weekends for 2 months	Convert
	Basic Buddhism Class	Class for learning Basic Buddhism conducted in English	Gandha Hall	Weekly/ 1 hr	Convert
	Meditation Class	Meditation Class conducted in English	Meditation Hall	Weekly / 1.5 hrs	Convert
	Guided Tour	Learn multiple aspects of Chinese Buddhist culture: A Temple Guided tour provides understanding on Buddhist architecture, symbols and deities. Vegetarian lunch is served and participants can choose to take part in different cultural or educational activities like origami, tai chi, calligraphy, meditation or basic Buddhism class. Tour conducted in English	Throughout NTT	Upon request / Ranges from 1.5 hrs – 3.5 hrs	Non-religious
	Saturday Mindful Dance Class for Children	Classes to train children in mindfulness practice	Meditation Hall	Weekly / 1.5 hrs	Convert, Non-religious
	Self-Development & Cultivation (English)	Class teaches Tai Chi, meditation and Buddhism. Course is free. This replaces the ritualistic prayers that the temple organises, to cater to a more local English speaking audience.	Gandha Hall	Weekly / 1 hrs	Convert
	Tai Chi Classes	Tai Chi Classes being taught in English	Courtyard	Weekly / 1 hr	Non-religious

Type of Activity	Activity	Description	Location	Frequency / Duration	Potential Target Group
Education	One Day Retreat / Weekend Meditation Retreat	During the retreat meditation is incorporated into daily activities, such as sitting, eating, drinking and walking.	Throughout NTT	Monthly / Ranges from 1-3 days	Convert
	Dinner with Dharma	Meeting over a dinner to discuss on topics on Buddhism that relates to society, ethics and daily life.	Held at rotating locations within FGS NSW branch temples	Monthly / 3 hrs	Ethnic, Convert
Social	Chinese New Year Reunion Dinner	Traditional Chinese Dinner	Dining Hall	Annually / 2-3 hrs	Ethnic
	Mid-Autumn Festival Gathering	Gathering of monastics, staff devotees, volunteers for performances	Dining Hall	Annually / 2-3 hrs	Ethnic
Buddhist Practices	Morning Prayer / Meditation	Traditional Chanting of Buddhist Scriptures in Chinese Language or Meditation Session	Main Shrine	Daily / 1 hr	Ethnic
	Evening Prayer	Traditional Chanting of Buddhist Scriptures in Chinese Language	Main Shrine	Weekly / 1 hr	Ethnic
	Pilgrimage (3 steps 1 bow)	A ritual of walking and prostrating meditation, while circumambulating the main shrine. For purification and repentance purposes.	Main Shrine, Courtyard & road within the temple's compound	Year's Eve and along with some retreats / 3 hrs	Ethnic
	Taking Refuge in the Triple Gem	Ceremony to induct a devotee to become a Buddhist	Main Shrine	Monthly / 1 day	Ethnic
	Five Precepts / Bodhisattva Precepts Retreat	A precepts that ceremony and classes that teaches one on how to observe and practice the precepts. Taking these precepts requires a lifetime commitment.	Throughout temple compounds	Annually/ 2 days	Ethnic
	Eight-Precepts Retreat / Short Term Monastic Retreat	Formal Buddhist Retreat, where participants are required to undertake precepts similar to monastics for a short duration of 5-7 days. Does not require lifetime commitment	Throughout temple compounds	Annually / 1 week	Ethnic, Convert

Sources: Nan Tien Temple

## APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESULTS

		Frequency	Total	%
<b>Name of Activity</b>	Cultivation Class	6	120	5%
	Dun Huang Class	1		1%
	Meditation Class	16		13%
	Meditation Retreat	33		28%
	Parent-Child Class	4		3%
	School Excursion	5		4%
	Tour	41		34%
	UOW*	10		8%
	Volunteer	4		3%
<b>Q1. Gender</b>	Female	73	120	61%
	Male	47		39%
<b>Q2. Age</b>	16 years	1	120	1%
	18-29 years	40		33%
	30-39 years	23		19%
	40-49 years	22		18%
	50-59 years	19		16%
	60 and above	15		13%
<b>Q3. Marital Status</b>	Single	48	118	1%
	Married	62		53%
	Separated / Divorced	7		6%
	Widow / widower	1		1%
	Missing	2		NA
<b>Q4. Academic Qualifications</b>	High School	13	120	11%
	Undergraduate	34		28%
	Vocational Training/TAFE	20		17%
	Postgraduate	53		44%
<b>Q5. Profession</b>	Student	28	119	24%
	Domestic	4		3%
	Retired	14		12%
	Working for others	51		43%
	Self-Employed	15		13%
	Unemployed	1		1%
	Working for others, Student	5		4%
	Working for others, Self-Employed	1		1%
	Missing	1		NA
<b>Q6. Habitat</b>	Wollongong	55	120	46%
	NSW	56		47%
	Interstate	1		1%
	Foreign	8		7%
<b>Q7. Religious Status (You may choose more than 1 answer)</b>	Buddhist	26	119	22%
	Christian	28		24%
	Hindu	5		4%
	Muslim	0		0%
	Jew	0		0%
	Aboriginal traditional religions	0		0%
	Atheist / No Religion	40		34%
	Others (Macedonian Orthodox,	7		6%
	Investigating Buddhism, Spiritualist, Yoga/Vedanta, Agnostic)			

\*Tour, Interaction and Cultivation session with University of Wollongong Buddhist Society Freshmen

		Frequency	Total	%
	Multiple Faiths	13		11%
	Missing	1		NA
<b>Q8. Ancestry (You may choose more than 1 answer)</b>	Australian	35	120	29%
	Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander	1		1%
	Chinese	31		26%
	European	23		19%
	Indian	5		4%
	African	1		1%
	Middle Eastern	0		0%
	Others	8		7%
	Multiple Ancestry	16		13%
<b>Q9. Frequency of visiting NTT</b>	Once a year	15	119	13%
	A few times a year	30		25%
	Once a month	4		3%
	A few times a month	8		7%
	Once a week	16		13%
	A few times a week 7	6%		
	First Time	39		33%
	Missing	1		NA
<b>Q10. How did you get to know if this activity?</b>	NTT Website	25	127	20%
	NTT Email	0		0%
	Posters at NTT	4		3%
	Friends and Relatives	62		49%
	Promotion by FGS Branch Temples	1		1%
	Participated in other NTT activities	19		15%
	Others (e.g. For Work, Guide Books, Google, Tour Agency, UOW Orientation Week, Live nearby)	16		13%
<b>Q11. When we say the word “Wollongong”, what are the first three words that come to your mind?</b>	Leisure Coast	87	203	8%
	Religious	35		1%
	Geography	20		7%
	Social	17		43%
	Education	16		17%
	Industrial	15		8%
	Culture	5		2%
	Others	5		10%
	Environment	3		2%
	Missing / illegible handwriting	3		NA
<b>Q12. Reasons for coming to NTT (You may choose more than 1 answer)</b>	To find peace and tranquility	58	312	19%
	To learn about meditation	51		16%
	To learn about Buddhism	48		15%
	To accompany friends/family	29		9%
	For leisure / tourism	26		8%
	To attend a retreat	23		7%
	Curious	22		7%
	To attend lessons	20		6%
	To pray and worship	15		5%
	To learn about Chinese culture	7		2%
	To volunteer	7		2%
	Others	6		2%
	Missing	1		NA

		Frequency	Total	%
<b>Q13. When we say the word “Buddhism”, what are the first three words that come to your mind?</b>	Qualities of Buddhism	139	245	57%
	Religion / Spirituality	56		23%
	Practice	30		12%
	History / Culture	13		5%
	Places of Worship / NTT	7		3%
	Missing	7		NA
<b>Q14. Are you affiliated with any other Buddhist organisations?</b>	Yes	6	118	5%
	No	112		95%
	<i>Missing</i>	2		NA
<b>Q15. When we say the word “Nan Tien Temple”, what are the first three words that come to your mind?</b>	Qualities of Buddhism	87	261	33%
	Architecture and Place	68		26%
	Religion / Spirituality	42		16%
	Community	18		7%
	Practice	17		7%
	History and Culture	16		6%
	Tourism and Leisure	8		3%
	Education	5		2%
	<i>Missing</i>	3		NA
<b>Q16. In your opinion, what is the image of Nan Tien Temple?</b>	Positive: Calm and Peaceful,	112	284	39%
	Positive: Religious / Spiritual Place	71		25%
	Positive: Strong Chinese Culture	50		18%
	Negative: Touristy	18		6%
	Negative: Find contents within the temple hard to comprehend	10		4%
	Negative: Commercial	4		1%
	Negative: Overly strong Chinese culture	4		1%
	Negative: Out of place / context	3		1%
	Others	8		3%

**Q17. In your opinion, rank the role that Nan Tien Temple plays within the community.**  
(1 being the most important role and 6 being the least important).

Rank	Religion/ Spiritual	Education	Cultural	Social	Tourism
1 (Most important)	58	8	19	4	1
2	16	30	29	7	8
3	7	27	30	14	12
4	6	14	8	46	16
5 (Least important)	3	11	4	19	53
Total	90	90	90	90	90

## APPENDIX C: TABLE OF DEMOGRAPHICS (GENDER, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, PROFESSIONAL STATUS, HABITAT, RELIGIOUS STATUS AND ANCESTRY) VS REASONS FOR COMING TO NTT

Demographics		12 Reasons for coming to NTT											
		To accompany friends/family	To learn about Chinese culture	To learn about Buddhism	To learn about meditation	To find peace and tranquility	To pray and worship	To attend a retreat	To volunteer	To attend lessons	For leisure / tourism	Curious	Others
1. Gender	Female	18	4	31	36	37	9	17	3	14	15	14	0
	Male	11	3	17	15	21	6	6	4	6	11	8	0
2. Age	18-29 years	10	3	17	15	19	9	4	2	5	10	7	0
	30-39 years	7	1	9	9	14	2	7	3	6	3	3	0
	40-49 years	5	2	6	8	9	3	5	1	6	6	5	0
	50-59 years	5	0	9	9	7	0	5	1	1	4	5	0
	60 years & above	2	1	7	10	9	1	2	0	2	3	2	0
3. Marital Status	Single	13	3	17	17	21	9	8	3	4	12	8	0
	Married	14	4	27	28	31	4	12	4	13	12	13	0
	Widow / widower	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Separated / Divorced	2	0	3	3	5	1	2	0	2	1	1	0
4. Academic Qualifications	Primary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	High School	3	0	4	4	4	1	1	0	1	3	4	0
	Vocational Training / TAFE	9	0	11	12	10	2	4	1	4	5	5	0
	Undergraduate	6	3	14	12	20	7	6	2	7	8	3	0
	Postgraduate	11	4	19	23	24	5	12	4	8	10	10	0
5. Professional Status	Student	9	3	9	8	12	7	2	3	3	8	3	0
	Domestic	4	1	3	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
	Retired	3	1	4	8	9	0	2	0	2	4	1	0
	Working for others	4	2	20	21	25	5	15	4	12	8	11	0
	Self-Employed	5	0	7	8	5	2	4	0	1	3	3	0
	Unemployed	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Student & Working for others	3	0	4	3	3	1	0	0	0	1	4	0	

Demographics		12 Reasons for coming to NTT											
		To accompany friends/family	To learn about Chinese culture	To learn about Buddhism	To learn about meditation	To find peace and tranquility	To pray and worship	To attend a retreat	To volunteer	To attend lessons	For leisure / tourism	Curious	Others
6. Habitat	Wollongong	16	5	25	28	31	7	8	3	14	15	12	0
	NSW	12	1	17	19	26	7	15	3	5	8	8	0
	Interstate	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Foreign	1	0	6	3	1	0	0	1	1	3	2	0
7. Religious Status	Buddhist	8	2	9	6	8	5	2	5	2	4	1	0
	Christian	7	1	11	12	11	0	6	0	6	8	8	0
	Hindu	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Muslim	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jew	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Aboriginal Traditional Religions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Atheist / No Religion	7	2	12	19	23	4	8	1	9	9	8	0
	Others	2	0	3	2	1	0	2	0	0	3	2	0
	Multiple Faiths	3	1	11	10	11	4	4	1	3	2	2	0
8. Ancestry	Australian	12	1	24	26	27	4	15	2	13	10	18	0
	Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Chinese	9	3	8	9	14	8	4	6	3	8	0	0
	European	7	1	19	17	19	2	8	0	8	7	4	0
	Indian	3	2	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
	African	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Middle Eastern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	2	0	2	4	4	1	1	0	1	3	2	0	



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# Building Bridges of Consensus and Openness in a Digital World: Gems from Humanistic Buddhism and Fo Guang Shan

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## Abstract

In the context of today's highly digitalized world, the Internet is both a formidable competitor and a potential ally for those who want to build consensus and openness. This is especially so with the threat of Internet addiction and its adverse effects on the capacity of people to communicate and relate, both with others and with themselves. This paper explores the phenomenon of Internet addiction, its symptoms and effects, and how these can be overcome. It will then continue with an exposition of more proactive means on how we can harness the power of the Internet and social media, throughout its various stages from Web 1.0 to Web 3.0 to help us promote understanding and harmony today and in the coming age of Web 4.0. This we hope to accomplish through the help of some precious gems mined from the rich field of Humanistic Buddhism and Fo Guang Shan.

**Key Words:** Internet addiction, Online Religion, Consensus-building, Humanistic Buddhism, Fo Guang Shan

In his thought-provoking book, *The Revenge of Analog: Real Things and Why They Matter*, David Sax mentions the curious practice of Reboot, a Jewish organization that weekly observes a “digital Sabbath” or total abstinence from technology along with their traditional weekly abstinence from work. It was an experience that he found to be “so restorative” that he began to practice it himself.<sup>1</sup> Almost ironically, we find other similar initiatives at the very heart of giant digital corporations like Adobe that pioneered Project Breathe in 2008 through the leadership of Scott Unterberg. This involves their employees spending 15 minutes of their working time each day to sit in quiet meditation “as a kind of ‘time out’ for people to recharge their batteries and center themselves.” Aside from serving as a “reset” for the mind, this daily practice of meditation was found to produce very positive results including decrease in stress as well as an increase in concentration, creativity, productivity and overall happiness.<sup>2</sup> As Sax reports:

*Meditation and its broader umbrella movement, mindfulness, have become practically mandatory at the leading companies in Silicon Valley. Google's Search Inside Yourself Program features regular meditation classes, and the company even has a purpose-built labyrinth for walking meditations. Facebook and Twitter both have meditation rooms in their offices, something that is now even found at hedge funds and banks. Zen masters, monks and mindfulness gurus are as in demand in Silicon Valley as personal trainers and Java script coders, and Untenberg himself have consulted with Yahoo! Microsoft, Salesforce, SAP, and others (all entirely unpaid as part of his Buddhist teaching).”<sup>3</sup>*

All these developments seem to give us a clue as to where the solution lies that could

1 David Sax, *Revenge of the Analog: Real Things and Why They Matter* (New York: Public Affairs Publishing, 2016), xii.

2 See A 15-Minute Reset: Project Breathe, <https://blogs.adobe.com/conversations/2015/01/project-breathe.html> (accessed 3 April 2017).

3 David Sax, *Revenge of the Analog*, 206. We find like initiatives for social media like “social media fasting”. See: <http://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2017/02/08/tim-ferriss> (accessed 3 April 2017).



solve the looming threat of Internet addiction, especially among our young people: a threat that becomes all the more urgent when we consider how the world in general, and the Asian continent in particular, is rapidly digitalizing. According to a recent demographic study,<sup>4</sup> the halfway mark of Internet penetration in the globe has already been reached this year. This means that at least half of the world's total population is now Internet users, amounting to 3.773 billion people and counting, while 37% are also social media users, which translates to 2.789 billion people. Here in Asia, while various factors such as cultural and linguistic barriers, lack of technological infrastructure, and costly telecommunication charges have delayed Internet and social media penetration,<sup>5</sup> Internet penetration is projected to hit the halfway mark by the last quarter of 2017.

Going from percentages to the actual figures, we realize that more than half of the world's Internet users now are from Asia and almost half of the people in Asia are now Internet users spending more and more of their day online. In my own country, people are now spending an average of nine hours daily on the Internet, with four of those hours spent on social media alone.<sup>6</sup> This makes of the Internet a formidable force to reckon with, as well as a most desirable ally, for anyone who wishes to engage in building consensus and openness, now and in the near future.

In this paper, we will start by trying to understand the threat of Internet addiction and how it creates a culture that is not conducive to consensus and openness especially in young people, and how this can be overcome. Then we will proceed to more proactive means on how we can harness the power of the Internet and social media to help us promote consensus and openness today. This we hope to do with the help of some precious gems mined from the rich field of Humanistic Buddhism and Fo Guang Shan.

## Understanding Internet addiction

Sometimes referred to as "PIU" (Problematic Internet Use) or "CIU" (Compulsive Internet Use), "Internet Addiction," simply put, pertains to "excessive Internet use that interferes with daily life."<sup>7</sup> However, we must note that "internet addiction" as such has yet to gain formal recognition and definition from the field of psychiatry. In the fifth and latest edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), which came out in November 2013, "internet gaming disorder" has been identified as a "condition for further study," i.e. a probable mental disorder subject to validation and confirmation, while addiction to the Internet itself was not mentioned.<sup>8</sup>

Nonetheless, addiction to the Internet is becoming more noticeable. In Western and more Westernized civilizations, this can already be observed in what is called Generation Z or Post-Millennials, born around the years 1995-2012. They were the first to be dubbed as "digital natives" who became adept at using cyber technology from an early age. According to a 2015 study conducted by Microsoft in Canada, 77% of those between ages 18-24 said that they usually reach for their mobile phone when nothing is occupying their attention while 52% check their

4 See the same *Digital in 2017: Global Overview*.

5 See Peng Hwa Ang and Chee Meng Loh, "Internet Development in Asia" [https://www.isoc.org/inet96/proceedings/h1/h1\\_1.htm](https://www.isoc.org/inet96/proceedings/h1/h1_1.htm) (accessed 3 April 2017).

6 See the *Digital in 2017: Global Overview*, a quantitative study of Internet and social media penetration worldwide made by We Are Social, a marketing and PR agency specializing in social media platforms, in partnership with Hootsuite, a company that specializes in social media integration. In true digital fashion, the report is available online in the form of several hundred infographic slides at <http://wearesocial.com/sg/blog/2017/01/digital-in-2017-global-overview> (accessed 3 April 2017).

7 Sookeun Byun et al., "Internet Addiction: Metasynthesis of 1996–2006 Quantitative Research," *Cyberpsychology and Behavior* 12 (2009): 204.

8 See American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th ed., (Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing, 2013), 797–798.



phone every thirty minutes at the least.<sup>9</sup> While seemingly harmless, these figures may already indicate a developing compulsion.

What is even more worrisome for us here in Asia is that according to some studies, Internet addiction tends to affect Asians more virulently than their Western counterparts. For example, students in China were said to experience a higher rate of Internet addiction than their counterparts in the United States who have been using the Internet for much longer. Many of them were found to prefer online to offline social interaction and resorted to overuse of the Internet as a means of escaping societal pressure.<sup>10</sup> As such, although Asia has long been on the opposite end of the so-called “digital divide,” what is happening in the other side of the globe may be taken by us as an early warning on what can happen soon to our own people, especially the youth:

*Addicted to pocket computers, such as smartphones and tablets, anxious teenagers are constantly monitoring their popularity among their peers, tormented by feelings of inadequacy and doubt. Easy access to pornography fosters this paranoia, offering a distorted image of human bodies and relationships. Unchecked, all of this transparent neurosis can lead to a disastrous loss of privacy, to the torture of being bullied, to self-harm and despair.<sup>11</sup>*

Indeed, a study in 2014 linked the use of Facebook to depressive symptoms.<sup>12</sup> Even without direct cyberbullying, the self-esteem of users fluctuates as they see the posts of others and the reactions these get while unconsciously comparing themselves. In line with this, we also have the phenomenon of “FOMO” or the “Fear of Missing Out,” which is rooted in the same dynamics of social comparison and feeds on the strong narcissistic tendencies of young people today. “They’re having exciting experiences that you’re not. They attended the hottest concert in town and you didn’t... Person after person is having the time of their lives. And you? Well, not so much.”<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, the irony is that in spite of this, people remain hooked to the Internet and to social media, constantly checking for updates, for the same reason that they do not want to miss out on the latest “trending.” Hence, they end up trapped in a wide-open cage. As Stuart said in the British sitcom, *Vicious*, “They make me nervous, all these young people, skittering about like mice, desperate to get back to the Internet.”

If such can be said of Generation Z, what more can be said of the upcoming generation they propose to call Generation A? These are the literal “digital natives” who were raised by “iNanny” who learned their rudiments from online applications such as “ABC Letters,” “Busy Shapes,” and “E-Flash Apps.” From the onset, the digital world has been cradle, home and school for them. Hence, while there may be efforts on the part of some parents and teachers to adopt a more analog or at least a mixed approach, the trend is pointing to a more pervasive influence of technology on this generation that is likely to be even more attached to digital technology than the previous one.<sup>14</sup>

9 See Attention Spans, Microsoft Canada, 2015 <https://advertising.microsoft.com/en/wwdocs/user/display/cl/researchreport/31966/en/microsoft-attention-spans-research-report.pdf> (accessed 3 April 2017).

10 See L. Zhang, C. Amos and W.C. McDowell, “A Comparative Study of Internet addiction between the United States and China,” *Cyberpsychology and Behavior* 11 (2008): 727-9. See also Cheng-Fang Yen, Ju-Yu Yen and Chih-Hung Ko, “Internet addiction: ongoing research in Asia,” *World Psychiatry* 9 (2010): 97. as well as F. Cao and L. Su, “Internet addiction among Chinese adolescents: prevalence and psychological features,” *Child: care, health and development* 33 (2007): 275-281.

11 Daniel O’Leary, “Missing the Point,” *The Tablet*, 25 January 2014, 8.

12 See Mai-ly N. Steers, Robert E. Wickham and Linda K. Acitelli, “Seeing Everyone Else’s Highlight Reels: How Facebook Usage is Linked to Depressive Symptoms,” *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 33 (2014): 701-731.

13 Linda Sapadin, “Fear of Missing Out” <https://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2015/10/12/fear-of-missing-out/> (accessed 3 April 2017)

14 For some pioneering explorations in several directions, see the article of Nick Bilton, “The child, the tablet and the mind” *International New York Times*, 2 April 2015, 20



Thus, while formal recognition from experts is still pending, Internet addiction has been gaining acknowledgement and attention from many clinical practitioners who have begun to pin down its symptoms and effects. For instance, Dr. Richard Graham, who runs the first rehabilitation center for technology addiction in Britain at the Catio Nightingale Hospital in London, has identified five major indicators of internet addiction, namely: lack of interest in other activities, constant talk or distraction about technology, mood swings, withdrawal symptoms, and devious or maladaptive behavior connected to using the Internet. Among these symptoms, Dr. Graham singles out withdrawal as the clear sign of addiction, evidenced by signs of “severe distress and agitation” whenever separated from the Internet, analogous to how drug or tobacco dependents crave a “hit” at regular intervals.<sup>15</sup> As such, even prior to its formal recognition as a mental disorder in the DSM, many practitioners have actually begun to recognize and address what the Center for Internet Addiction has already called “a growing epidemic.”<sup>16</sup>

Aside from the many direct effects on individuals that we have mentioned above, what especially concerns us is that high exposure to Internet and digital technology can have harmful effects, particularly on the communicative and social skills of these people who are overexposed to it. For example, Small quotes a Stanford University study which found out that for every hour spent in front of a computer screen, traditional face-to-face interaction drops by almost thirty minutes. In this way, essential social skills such as understanding emotional contexts and reading non-verbal cues are on the decline and there is a strong likelihood of misinterpreting them or missing them out altogether.<sup>17</sup>

Another concern that has been pointed out is that constant exposure to gadgets, especially from an early age, can hinder the development, not only of the capacity to relate with other people but also of the capacity to be alone and relate with oneself. Hence, the dynamic struggle involved in relating with others as well as with oneself is readily replaced with the comfortable complacency of dealing with machines instead or what has been called “robotic companionship.”<sup>18</sup> This kind of tendency is especially magnified in the case of individuals who are already lonely and depressed who are then more likely to have recourse to online social interaction as a convenient replacement for offline human interaction, which is comparatively more demanding in terms of depth, intensity and intimacy.

Such withdrawal can then spiral into other destructive dynamics, including but not limited to Compulsive or Problematic Internet Use.<sup>19</sup> The repercussions of such loss, not only of the skills but also of the gusto for intimate and authentic human interaction, can only be imagined. How do we build consensus and openness among people who would rather relate through gadgets or *with* gadgets?

### **From Overcoming to Transforming**

Dr. Graham’s 28-day “digital detox” program for children addicted to the Internet begins with an initial seven-day stage involving an “outright ban on all technology” and includes therapy sessions, chaperoned trips to retrain the patients to function normally in the world, as well as

15 Victoria Woollaston, “The five signs your child is addicted to their iPad - and how to give them a ‘digital detox’” <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2479109/The-signs-child-addicted-iPad--digital-detox.html> (accessed 3 April 2017).

16 See <http://netaddiction.com/>

17 See Gary Small and Gigi Vorgan, *iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alternation of the Modern Mind* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008).

18 See Sherry Turkle, *Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other* (New York: Basic Books, 2011).

19 See Scott Caplan, “Preference for Online Social Interaction: A Theory of Problematic Internet Use and Psychosocial Well-Being,” *Communication Research* 30 (2003): 625-628.

“digital hygiene” classes aimed at “finding the root of the problem and teaching healthier ways of using the Internet.”<sup>20</sup> We note that the “outright ban” is only an initial stage in the program, which later moves to a more productive reintegration of Internet and life. Hence, in contrast with other rehabilitation programs, the difference of treating Internet addiction from treating other addictions is clear, which may partially account for the strong hesitation to categorize it along with other “addictions.”

In the case of Internet addiction, the ultimate goal of recovery is not cessation or quitting but finding a path to a more creative use that does not interfere with but rather enriches life. Such an approach that is more “enabling” instead of “restrictive” has been found even in children to be more effective, empowering them to deal with risks while at the same time maximizing opportunities.<sup>21</sup> After all, there is clearly no turning back from the Internet for anyone today, with digital technology expanding its influence over us even more, for ill or for good. Hence, despite their addictive qualities, we must regard the Internet and social media not as threats but as tools, not as competition but as a potential contributor to our goals, including that of building consensus and openness.

The question for us then is how to harness the power of the Internet in the service of consensus and openness and use it as a means to promote communication, understanding and harmony. In this regard, it may be helpful here to briefly trace the development of the Internet in its first three stages and explore the different challenges and possibilities, opportunities and threats that it has opened for people of all religions.<sup>22</sup> In particular, we will highlight some of the best practices from Humanistic Buddhism and Fo Guang Shan that we were fortunate to observe firsthand during our week-long visit to the Fo Guang Shan Triple Gem Mountain in Kaohsiung as well as to the two Fo Guang Shan universities and other educational institutions and Three Acts of Goodness Model Schools as part of our Educators’ Immersion Program in Taiwan from May 11-16, 2017.

Note that each of these stages builds on the previous stage and usually retains the features and capabilities of its precedents. They are also not mutually exclusive and often overlap. Thus, a specific online platform such as Facebook or Google may exhibit the characteristics of more than one stage, as these platforms need to develop to keep themselves updated. Afterwards, we will try to sketch a picture of the horizon before us.

## Web 1.0: Informative Web

The first stage or Web 1.0 has been termed the “web of information connections”<sup>23</sup> or what I would call “informative web.” It consisted mainly of webpages with “read only” content that made the Internet not only an immense universal repository of data but also a potent “information highway” for sharing knowledge across the globe. Many have learned to harness it by coming up

20 Gemma Aldridge, “Inside Britain’s first internet rehab for kids where a ‘digital detox’ costs £16k for 28 days” <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/inside-britains-first-internet-rehab-1844778> (accessed 3 April 2017). Emphasis added. In the Philippines, we also have rehabilitation centers that already offer programs for Internet addiction such as “Kaya Rehab Philippines” in Itogon, Benguet. See their website <http://www.kayarehab.com/>

21 See Sonia Livingstone et al. “Maximizing Opportunities and Minimizing Risks for Children Online: The Role of Digital Skills in Emerging Strategies of Parental Mediation,” *Journal of Communication* 67 (2017): 82-105.

22 The framework we are proposing here, which follows the development of the Internet, is to be distinguished from a seemingly similar but very different framework proposed by Lytle, which follows the development of human communication in general. In Lytle’s framework, Faith Formation 1.0 corresponds to oral communication, 2.0 to written communication, 3.0 to mass media and 4.0 to interactive communication. See Julie Anne Lytle, *Faith Formation 4.0: Introducing an Ecology of Faith in a Digital Age* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2013).

23 These descriptors are taken from Sareh Aghaei, Mohammad Ali Nematbakhsh, and Hadi Khosravi Farsani, “Evolution of the World Wide Web: From Web 1.0 to Web 4.0” in *International Journal of Web & Semantic Technology* 3 (2012) available online <http://www.ftsm.ukm.my/ss/Book/ EVOLUTION%20OF%20WWW.pdf> (accessed 3 April 2017), 1.



with their own websites, not only to establish an online presence but also to make key documents and other important information available. In the age of Web 1.0, a computer, tablet, or mobile phone can easily become a bulletin board, newsletter, or library that can be accessed more readily and conveniently than its analog counterpart. Making essential information available may seem basic but it is also very important not only in keeping people well-informed but also in building their sense of belonging and community. As Eilers said, “informed people are happier people because they feel part of the organization they belong to.”<sup>24</sup> As we can see here, the Web, from its very beginning, has always possessed a potential for building relationships and promoting consensus and openness.

However, such a massive and liberal diffusion of data can also lead to a “democratization” of access to information, often with little or no direct guidance or mentoring. This in turn can appear to threaten traditional and established authorities, including religious and civic leaders, educators and parents, who previously performed gate-keeping, curating and even censorship roles. Internet users who are now more informed can become not only more intelligent but also more critical, which then becomes a source of conflict and misunderstanding.

In this way, the democratization of access to information that came with Web 1.0 often comes with an attendant “flattening of the world” when it comes to authority. Having the tools of an expert, anyone can now feel like an expert but may not necessarily be one. Gone are the days when dissent was unthinkable and traditional leaders like educators and parents held a kind of absolute authority over their people. Where Web 1.0 is, no one is ignorant anymore and some people begin to have the impression that the truth is just a click away. How open are we to welcome and how ready are we to address the questions and opinions, even dissenting beliefs, which arise from such democratization? How capable are we of promoting truth and correcting error in this democratized web, without antagonizing people and driving them away? Here we already have a serious challenge to building consensus and openness among ourselves and within our communities where it all begins.

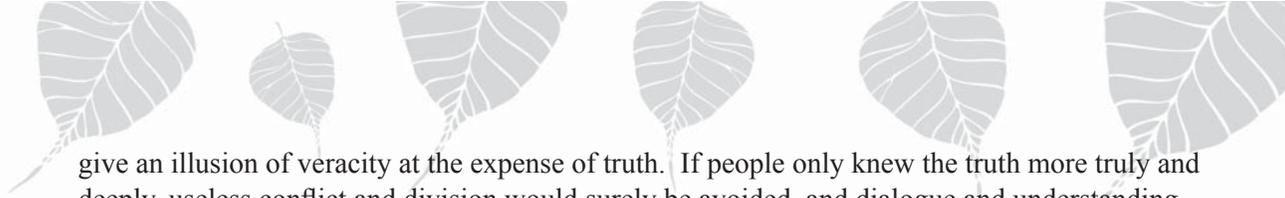
In Fo Guang Shan, access to knowledge is not considered a threat but an asset, which is why education has always been a priority in the movement. During our last day in Kaohsiung, we were fortunate to witness the inauguration of Master Hsing Yun’s impressive collection of writings in the newly built Sutra Repository, the majestic and breathtaking latest addition to the Triple Gem Mountain. It is a concrete testimony to the value given in Fo Guang Shan to the precious tradition of copying sutras, a practice that gives to anyone who is willing to do it sincerely, not just a superficial access but also a profound encounter with the sacred texts. Such depth and quality of encounter with knowledge is what is often lacking in today’s culture, often driven by the compulsion to merely acquire and amass information without digesting it. As Zhang Chao said:

*Collecting books is easy, reading is difficult.  
Reading books is easy, studying is difficult.  
Studying books is easy, applying it is difficult.  
Applying it is easy, remembering is difficult.*<sup>25</sup>

Thus bereft of genuine understanding, little knowledge soon leads to pride, which leads to argument and conflict. This issue becomes all the more complex in a time of trolls, bots and “fake news” where numbers and trends can give an illusion of credibility, which in turn can

24 Franz-Josef Eilers, SVD. *Communicating in Ministry and Mission: An Introduction to Pastoral and Evangelizing Communication* (Manila: Logos Publications Inc., 2009), 180.

25 Hsing Yun, ed. *365 Days for Travelers: Wisdom from Chinese Literary and Buddhist Classics* (Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Shan Monastery, 2015), 186



give an illusion of veracity at the expense of truth. If people only knew the truth more truly and deeply, useless conflict and division would surely be avoided, and dialogue and understanding would have naturally taken place.

As opposed to this, Dharma talks and conferences in Fo Guang Shan are held in an atmosphere of free conversation, conveying a disposition that no single person has a monopoly of truth and knowledge can be attained more surely if it is attained together. We were fortunate enough to participate in one such conference in Tathagata Hall where four speakers imparted their insights on Master Hsing Yun's contributions to society from different perspectives that mutually enrich each other. Even short and informal conversations with any of the monastics is a learning experience where one does not feel indoctrinated but lessons come in the form of stories that touch the heart. Contentious topics are carefully avoided and attention is given instead to matters that can serve as common ground and help build harmony.

Another alarming situation related to the informative web is information overload or what has been analogously termed as “mental pollution.”<sup>26</sup> This refers to the oversupply of information in the web, which can sometimes give rise to more confusion than clarity. As Nobel Prize winner, Herbert Simon, famously put it: “What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence, a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it.”<sup>27</sup> Once more, what we are dealing with here is not so much the inherent lack of attention or irremediably shortened attention spans, but the chaotic scattering of attention in various directions, which then leads to the depletion of our ability to focus and to listen, which are essential skills for building consensus and openness. Caught in the midst of this “cacophony of voices,” people now tend to know more but focus less and listen less. Hence, we also understand one another less.

In Fo Guang Shan universities and educational institutions as well as in schools that adopt the “Three Acts of Goodness” Program, they hold guided meditation sessions regularly, which is a simple but very important practice that could prove effective in addressing this problem. As we learned in the sharing, the students may question and resent it at first, precisely since it is the opposite of the culture they are accustomed to, but they eventually learn to appreciate it in the long run. This kind of practice can arrest and counteract the constant restlessness and lack of inner peace, which is at the very root of compulsive internet use and FOMO or the “fear of missing out.” It also develops the ability to focus and to listen, which are essential skills for building harmonious human relationships. Such a consistent habit of cultivating the mind can prove crucial especially since all mental and psychological problems begin in one's consciousness. Thus, for a solution to be organic and effective, it must also address the mind first of all: a practice that has been proven effective even at the very heart of digital corporations, as we have seen in the introduction of this paper.

As Venerable Master wrote: “When we first get up in the morning, we are free of worries and concerns, and we sit in meditation and recite the Buddha's name. At that moment, our minds are calm and clear as the Buddha's mind.”<sup>28</sup> Thus, he teaches us to take hold of our minds in order to shape our humanity. This is a skill that is not learned in an instant but

26 Francis, Encyclical Letter on Care for Our Common Home (Laudato Si'), 24 May 2015, Vatican Archive, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html) (accessed 2 May 2017), 47.

27 See the speech of Herbert A. Simon, “Designing Organizations for an Information-Rich World”, 1 September 1969, available online in <http://zeus.zeit.de/2007/39/simon.pdf> (accessed 2 May 2017).

28 Hsing Yun, Buddhist Perspective on Mind Consciousness (Hacienda Heights, CA: Fo Guang Shan International Translation Center, 2017), 24.



cultivated through the regular practice of meditation. Through this kind of discipline, we regain the ability to shape the reality outside of us, instead of being helplessly shaped by it and carried away by all kinds of passing “trendings,” both online and offline. In the words of Venerable Master: “Once the mind changes, land, mountains and water will change for our minds.”<sup>29</sup> Otherwise, we will always be at the mercy of these unstable and ever-changing currents.

## Web 2.0: Interactive Web

The second stage or Web 2.0 has been called the “web of people connections” or what I would call “interactive web.” With the addition of a “write” feature, the Internet became bi-directional and thus more dynamic. People could now upload their own content in various online platforms such as Friendster, Multiply or Blogger - and later in YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Moreover, other users can now interact with them in different ways such as liking/reacting, asking or commenting. This key development has given rise to online communities or “networks”: societies bonded by what is aptly termed “social media,” which has brought together the people we now call “netizens” into a virtual “global village.” Thus, the seed of potential, which the Internet had, with regard to promoting consensus and openness and building community has now become a plant that has begun to blossom.

Since then, people have been gravitating to these online networks as shown by the continuing rise of social media penetration worldwide, which has now reached 37%. Even religious leaders and institutions now maintain their own social media accounts, whether directly or indirectly that allows them to reach and interact with their followers from around the globe. Web 2.0 has thus become the Internet of cybersanghas, online ummahs, virtual “dioceses without borders” and the like, all trying to reach out to what Pope Benedict XVI has called the “digital continent,”<sup>30</sup> which is undoubtedly the new largest continent in the planet with 3.773 billion netizens and counting.

Unfortunately, not all religious leaders and movements realize the value and importance of the Internet and social media and fail to take advantage of its immense influence. As early as 2005, a study already observed that Internet penetration and evangelical Christianity tended to converge in certain Asian societies while tending to be absent in others. In these digitalized societies, effective use of the Internet tended to privilege some evangelical Christian groups at the expense of more traditional religions such as Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism that used to dominate Asia. In other words, the religions that knew how to use the Internet are the ones that ended up thriving in more communicative and “open” Asian societies while the other religions that did not tend to become increasingly marginalized and confined within the societies at the other end of the techno-cultural spectrum.<sup>31</sup>

This is clearly not the case with Master Hsing Yun who has social media accounts in several languages and so does the Fo Guang Shan movement, as well as the different branch temples all over the world. Through these social media accounts, the wisdom and joy of Dharma is able to pervade the digital realm as well. As we read in the *Yinbing Shi Heji*: “Buddhism believes in engagement in the world, not exclusion from it.”<sup>32</sup> This principle certainly applies also

29 Hsing Yun, *Buddhist Perspective on Mind Consciousness*, 29.

30 See Benedict XVI, 44th World Communications Day Message, 24 January 2010. See also his 43rd World Communications Day Message, 24 January 2010.

31 See Robbie B. H. Goh, “The Internet and Christianity in Asia: Cultural Trends, Structures and Transformations,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29, 4 (2005): 831-848.

32 Hsing Yun, *365 Days for Travelers*, 160.



to the digital continent, which has become the new frontier for reaching out to people nowadays, given the number of hours that they spend in it on a daily basis.

Nevertheless, one important issue that needs attention in the aspect of Web 2.0 or social media is the emergence of a new form of “digital divide,” which tends to isolate and marginalize those who are not able to engage and participate in social media for different reasons. For instance, there are those who simply have little or no access to digital technology. Moreover, not everyone believes that virtual faith resources and communities can truly nurture faith and there are those who simply prefer offline religion and community. As a study on American Buddhism and the Internet found out:

*Not everyone agreed that Buddhism online offered a spiritual connection to others. One respondent said that they only felt community online as they would with the rest of the world and that the Internet was for information and not communion. Another respondent said ‘I feel a sense of community when I look into one’s eyes.’<sup>33</sup>*

We need to take extra care lest these people be neglected and sidelined as we adopt this kind of technology more and more. It would be a real tragedy if such a technology that is inherently “social” by nature will be a cause or instrument of division or isolation, but it can be. In the most extreme cases, there are reprehensible practices such as e-jihad, which can range from spreading jihadist propagandas and campaigns online, launching cyber attacks by means such as hacking and cracking, to using the Internet as a means to organize terrorist operations.<sup>34</sup> We also have the rise of online religious trolls, now known as “Internet Hindus,” who rally under the banner of Hindutva and attack websites they deem offensive to Hindu religion and culture. While such practices are rarely promoted or approved by the leaders and followers of these religions, they not only sow violence in the Internet but also tarnish the corporate image of their religious institutions. They subvert and pervert the essence of “social networks” by making it a tool for conflict and discord instead of unity and harmony.

We also need to acknowledge that despite the many possibilities for authentic human connection offered by social media, it does not represent the fullness of human interaction and relationship. In fact, we have seen earlier how it can hinder authentic human interaction when it is used as an escape from the complexity of such relationships. Thus, even for many of those who are actively engaged in social media, there is often a longing for “a flesh-and-blood sense of community,”<sup>35</sup> as opposed to participating exclusively in networks that are purely virtual. Therefore, the bridges of consensus and openness that we build and the networks of people that we form online should lead us to the fullness of these relationships which can only happen if they are offline as well, where all the intensity and complexity of human interaction can be experienced.

Despite the widespread use of modern technology, it is totally impossible to miss this living sense of community in Fo Guang Shan since the Sangha is revered as one of the three gems of Humanistic Buddhism along with Buddha and Dharma. All the central tenets of Buddhism such as the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-fold Noble Path teach a way out of selfishness through non-self, which leads to communion with other people and with all sentient beings. In line with this, Master Hsing Yun’s unique teachings such as the “Three Acts of Goodness” and

33 Ally Ostrowski, “Buddha Browsing: American Buddhism and the Internet,” *Contemporary Buddhism* 7 (2006): 99.

34 See Gary R. Bunt, *Islam in the Digital Age: E-Jihad, Online Fatwas and Cyber Islamic Environments* (London: Pluto Press, 2003).

35 David Sax, *Revenge of the Analog*, 217.

the “Four Givings” are also directed towards fostering harmonious relationships. One only needs to visit any Fo Guang Shan temple to experience the warm hospitality, kindness and generosity accorded to everyone regardless of class, color or creed. These are core teachings that foster and nourish a living sense of community that can and should be applied, both online and offline.

We also need to pay attention to other issues that arise with the emergence of online faith communities. For instance, there is the issue of legitimate religious authority, especially for religions that are not highly centralized, and even for those that are. When literally anybody can setup a social media account, the question remains as to who can validly interpret sacred texts for others, who can rightly issue religious and moral prescriptions, and who are truly competent to offer spiritual guidance? Given the technology nowadays, virtually anybody can set oneself up as a religious leader without any legitimate authority, simply by putting up a convincing and attractive website. Whitaker posed the dilemma that such a situation can present, in the case of Islam:

*...For some this introduces an element of democracy; for others, anarchy. Potentially it opens up the field for all sorts of new and alternative interpretations of Islam alongside the more traditional versions. Potentially, too, it can open the eyes of Muslims who are entrenched in their local brand of Islam to the diversity of their religion in its global form - though that in itself is highly controversial.*<sup>36</sup>

In more extreme instances, a kind of “cafeteria religiosity” or self-styled practice of religion emerges, as we see in certain examples of online religion, including forms of online Buddhism in the United States. Instead of following the guidance of a particular religious movement, people design their own religious practices according to what they deem suitable or attractive. Hence, a kind of personal religion surfaces, often a motley hodgepodge of practices from various movements. This can then issue into a multi-level crisis of authority, doctrine, practice and religious identity. Thus, for instance, it has been asked: “Is it necessary to have a teacher to practice Buddhism effectively?”<sup>37</sup>

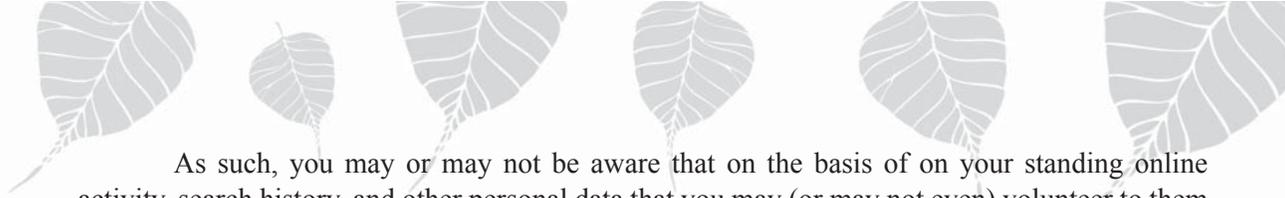
Fo Guang Shan gives an outstanding example in this area by having a clear and singular focal point in the person of Venerable Master Hsing Yun. Despite its strong presence all over the world and in the World Wide Web, the millions of devotees maintain an even stronger sense of unity and connection with a revered religious leader and a respected religious movement. Thanks to this, they are able to practice Buddhism authentically as part of a real Sangha spread across the five continents, and not merely as scattered, self-styled students and practitioners of Dharma. Otherwise, there will only be openness but no real consensus, which is far from an authentic practice of religion.

### **Web 3.0: Intuitive Web**

The third stage or Web 3.0 in which we are still in is known as the “web of knowledge connections” or what I would call “intuitive web.” The Internet having reached more than one billion websites in 2014, the main feature of this third stage is its ability to link, structure and integrate the overwhelming amount of data available online in order to make it more relevant and responsive to its users, precisely by becoming more knowledgeable about their users and thus more “user-sensitive.”

<sup>36</sup> Brian Whitaker, “Islam at the electronic frontier,” *The Guardian*, 11 August 2003, <https://www.theguardian.com/2003/aug/11/comment.worlddispatch> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>37</sup> Richard Hayes, “The Internet as Window into American Buddhism” in *American Buddhism: Methods and Findings in Recent Scholarship*, ed. Duncan Ryuken Williams and Christopher S. Queen (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999), 170.



As such, you may or may not be aware that on the basis of on your standing online activity, search history, and other personal data that you may (or may not even) volunteer to them such as age, gender and location, websites such as Google and Facebook automatically filter, adjust, and refine the contents that it chooses to present to you specifically through the use of very complex and highly sophisticated “algorithms.” In this way, they are now able to determine, not just what pages you will likely find useful and interesting or what things to advertise that you are likely to purchase, but even your sexual orientation, political leanings and religious beliefs through the rapid and unobtrusive exchange of data packets innocuously and attractively labeled as “cookies”.

How many of our websites develop or at least make use of the latest algorithms to know our audiences? Even more importantly, how many of us and our communities have adopted a Web 3.0 orientation that emphasizes knowing our followers and adapting our strategies and approaches accordingly? In other words, how open are we to expressing our message in the language, medium and context of people today, in a manner that remains steeped in tradition but not stuck in traditional approaches? This is a very crucial matter that we can no longer take for granted and it has only become more urgent and elusive nowadays with peoples’ attitudes, habits and beliefs changing rapidly with rapidly changing digital technologies. To begin with, how well do we actually know our people and their language, medium and context?

An example of development with this kind of orientation is the first International Congress on Religious Marketing held on April 21-22, 2016 in Madrid, organized by the Order of Preachers, a group of Roman Catholic priests and friars. The Congress sought to apply the secular techniques of marketing to communicating faith, enlisting the guidance of seasoned marketing professionals on how to make use of such techniques in the religious ambit. Some of the ideas that were surfaced during the Congress are as surprising as they are exciting. For instance, one professor declared that the time of “encyclicals” or very long, traditional documents has ended. Such documents and other similar techniques are no longer able to connect with today’s audiences and so achieve very little and need to be replaced. “The public has changed and because of this, we need to find new ways, not to sell, but to relate with them.”<sup>38</sup> The outward technique of “selling” is only a means to attract and connect on a deeper level.

Well ahead of the discoveries of the International Religious Marketing Congress, Fo Guang Shan has been using countless means of “selling” Humanistic Buddhism to their audience. While some critics have faulted this approach of Master Hsing Yun as being too commercial and materialistic, they cannot deny its effectiveness in imparting Buddhist teachings and drawing more followers. For instance, the books on Buddhism and other materials that are produced by Fo Guang Shan are not only cheap and affordable but also reader-friendly and physically appealing. Aside from books, there are also other items such as musical records and even decorative items like magnets and coasters that communicate Buddhist lessons through very subtle means. As these are sold, the Dharma is also shared freely and creatively.

Yet another frontier today is the gamification of religion, although this is often limited to religious instruction presented in the form of video games that are supposedly more attractive to today’s youth and aligned with their culture. Values and doctrines are imparted while they are enjoying in a way that is fun and productive at the same time. However, there are questions

38 José Lorenzo, “¿Adios al tiempo de las encíclicas?” Vida Nueva, 21-27 January 2017, 20.



as to its propriety as well as to its ultimate effect as turning religious subjects into games may lead to banalization instead of appreciation, or foment prejudice, fanaticism and other aggressive tendencies especially in the case of war-and-conquest themed role playing games.<sup>39</sup> A more simple and less-controversial attempt from Christianity is the “Alabaster Bible,”<sup>40</sup> which consists more of pictures than texts and hopes to connect better with the so-called “Instagram generation,” most of whom belong to Generation Z who are characterized by short bursts of high attention and a preference for video and images over text.<sup>41</sup> One more popular online medium nowadays is the “meme,” which has been used widely by the social media accounts of different religions. It consists of a combination of evocative pictures and compact texts, which is then not only attention catching but also thought-provoking. A likewise expansive frontier for us is the huge marketplace of “apps” or mobile applications. How many of our religions have developed such applications with authentic appeal and a real capacity to reach out to their audiences?

These are just some of the ideas and possibilities that are being floated and experimented these days with regard to using the Internet as tool for communicating and connecting with people. However, one only needs to visit the Buddha Memorial Center in Kaohsiung to see all of these possibilities already in place. As a visitor navigates the huge complex, one passes through the eight pagodas where one learns various aspects of Humanistic Buddhism, presented by means of the best available technology. Hence, in the form of a pleasant and interesting tour, the Dharma is communicated through very engaging and effective means. At the Main Hall itself, highly interactive exhibits not only inform or instruct but also immerse the visitor into the life of Sakyamuni Buddha, the history of Fo Guang Shan, and other key themes. One will also notice that even the corridors are filled with colorful paintings of Chan Stories, which is not unlike the modern memes that are able to deliver their point using just a few words and highly powerful images. They have likewise developed applications that target people of various ages.

However, more than all these technologies and techniques that change with time, we need to pay attention not only to Master Hsing Yun’s phenomenal creativity and entrepreneurial acumen, but also to his open disposition and long vision with regard to the use of technology as a communicative tool for building consensus and openness. As early as the turn of the century, Venerable Master was already using slides to propagate the Buddha’s teachings. He was the first in the Buddhist tradition to use such novel means and thus the pioneer in the modernization of Dharma propagation.

This fundamental disposition of using the means most suitable to one’s audience is the concrete expression of one of the “Four Givings,” which is “to give convenience,” just like the Buddha who “always taught according to the conditions of his disciples, caring for them as equals.”<sup>42</sup> In all these attempts and initiatives, the real challenge is not merely to transfer our religious beliefs to new media but to translate them in a “language” that is truly attractive and comprehensible to our audiences and at the same time faithful and rooted in our religious traditions. In this way, it goes more than just the third stage of giving which is the “giving of language” but goes as far as the fourth stage which is “the giving of heart.”<sup>43</sup>

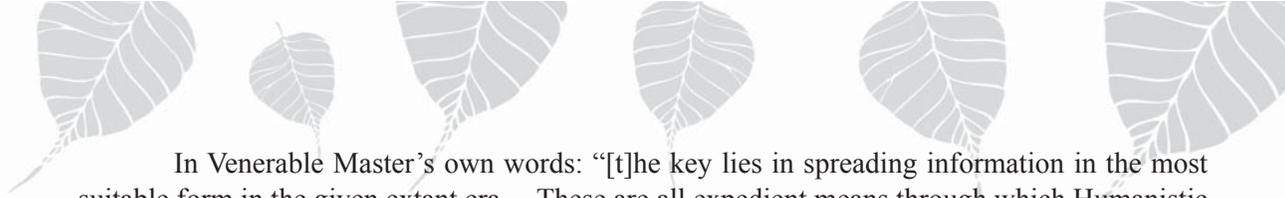
39 Miriam Díez Bosch, “La religión digital, ¿es cool para los jóvenes?,” *Vida Nueva*, 21-27 January 2017, 29.

40 See their website in <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/519726203/alabaster-the-bible-beautiful> (accessed 3 April 2017).

41 See “Step Aside Millennials: Gen Z Has Arrived” <http://www.ideasindigital.com/step-aside-millennials-gen-z-has-arrived/> (accessed October 7, 2016)

42 Hsing Yun, *Humanistic Buddhism: Holding True to the Original Intents of Buddha* trans. Miao Guang (Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Cultural Enterprise Co., Ltd., 2016), 73.

43 Hsing Yun, *Humanistic Buddhism*, 313.



In Venerable Master's own words: "[t]he key lies in spreading information in the most suitable form in the given extant era... These are all expedient means through which Humanistic Buddhism holds true to the original intents of Buddha so as to cater to the aptitudes and needs of all living beings."<sup>44</sup> If only people nowadays will adopt such an attitude and disposition of always "giving convenience," there will be more effective communication and greater understanding and harmony among us. This entails understanding my audience first, which is the best way to make myself understood. What an excellent model, example and embodiment of consensus and openness is Venerable Master Hsing Yun!

### **What could be in store in Web 4.0?**

Having laid down in perspective the first three stages, what now is in store for us with regard to the future of the Internet? What will Web 4.0 look like and what threat or promise does it hold for us, as we strive to build consensus and openness?

As early as now, we find emerging capacities, evolving from Web 3.0's increasing capability to link, structure and integrate information, but this time not only online but offline as well, with the Internet establishing and consolidating its influence in the offline world even more. Businesses, schools, industries and households will soon be run more online than offline. For example, we are now using mobile applications like Uber and AirBnB to book transportation or accommodations. These giant global companies are online but network with offline vehicles and hotels to link them with clients.

In this way, Aghaei et al. envisage that the coming Web 4.0 will become a "web of intelligence connections," or what I would call the "integrative web." According to their forecast, it will be a symbiotic and not just semantic web that will be characterized by a more and more permeable and seamless "interaction between humans and machines in symbiosis."<sup>45</sup> The walls will blur between online and offline and there will be a true "fusion of horizons" between the Internet and the world outside of it.

How do we build bridges of consensus and openness between all the inhabitants of the world's new largest continent? Between the online world and the offline world? Between the digital migrants, the digital natives, and the people who do not know how to use computers and digital technology at all? How do we maintain harmony and integrity between our online and offline life, especially with respect to our personal identity as well as our moral and religious practice, inside and outside of the World Wide Web?

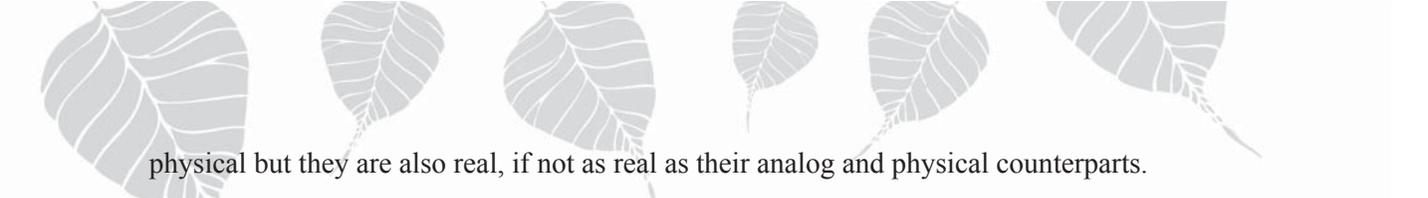
Meredith Gould, an expert in the religious use of social media, has suggested that the distinctions between real and virtual worlds that were helpful when social media was still in its early stages are not helpful anymore. According to her, "online communities of faith are real to members who have come to rely on them for inspiration and support..."<sup>46</sup> Moreover, she mentions that in their September 4, 2012 Twitter chat, participants have begun to stop the use of the acronym IRL (in real life) and there has been a suggestion to substitute it with ITF (in the flesh).<sup>47</sup> In other words, online human interactions, inclusive of the religious type, may not be physical but they are personal: involving real people and fostering real relationships. Virtual and digital may not be

44 Hsing Yun, *Humanistic Buddhism*, 266.

45 Aghaei et al., "Evolution of the World Wide Web: From Web 1.0 to Web 4.0", 8.

46 Meredith Gould, *The Social Media Gospel: Sharing the Good News in New Ways*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2015), 30.4

47 Ibid.



physical but they are also real, if not as real as their analog and physical counterparts.

Hence, while it may still be an issue for many digital migrants, it seems that digital natives no longer find it hard to see the reality of online relationships and their value, with many families and friends in global diaspora who remain connected through various Internet platforms. For them, the Internet is not only a “tool” but also a “space” where people can meet and love each other. Can human relationships really flourish on the Internet and not just through the Internet? Can the Internet really be home to genuinely human families, communities and even religious movements? How do we build consensus and openness in this highly digitalized environment where new challenges will also emerge?

For instance, we now find websites that allow Hindus anywhere in the globe to order pujas through the Internet from an actual Hindu temple. Traditionally, a puja has three main components: seeing the deity in the sacred shrine (darshan), puja itself or offering worship in the form of flowers or food, and afterwards obtaining the blessed offering and consuming it (prasad). In a virtual puja, the temple webcasts darshan live on the Internet, the worshipper makes the offering to be made through an online payment facility, and the prasad is shipped from the temple directly to the worshipper. Will Fo Guang Shan soon have an online branch temple in cyberspace? We can only be excited and thrilled about the many possibilities, given the boundless creativity and inspired genius of Venerable Master Hsing Yun.

These are just some of the emerging questions that we need to confront seriously and answer convincingly without falling into either of two extreme tendencies. On the one hand, there is the extreme tendency to always insist on physical, offline presence and play down the reality of non-physical online presence. On the other hand, there is the equally extreme tendency to overemphasize the reality of non-physical online presence and deny all distinction from physical, offline presence. Another important Buddhist teaching which is the “Middle Path” can help us to strike the balance and not fall into either of these dangerous extremes.

## Conclusion

If we truly want to build consensus and openness in the context of a highly digitalized world, we need to confront and address the problem of Internet addiction, which poses a real threat, not only because of its adverse effects on individuals but also because of the way it impairs and diminishes their capacity to communicate and relate, both with other people and with themselves.

At the same time, the Internet is not necessarily our enemy but it can also be our very important ally as we strive to build consensus and openness among people today. This is clearly shown in the ways in which Fo Guang Shan has been able to harness the many possibilities offered by the World Wide Web throughout its different stages, guided and inspired by the innovative, dynamic and creative spirit of Master Hsing Yun. May it serve as an example and inspiration for us as we look at Web 4.0 in the horizon:

Although there is a certain distance between him and young disciples, not only does Hsing Yun not reject or dismiss modern technology, but is even hoping to understand and learn more.<sup>48</sup>



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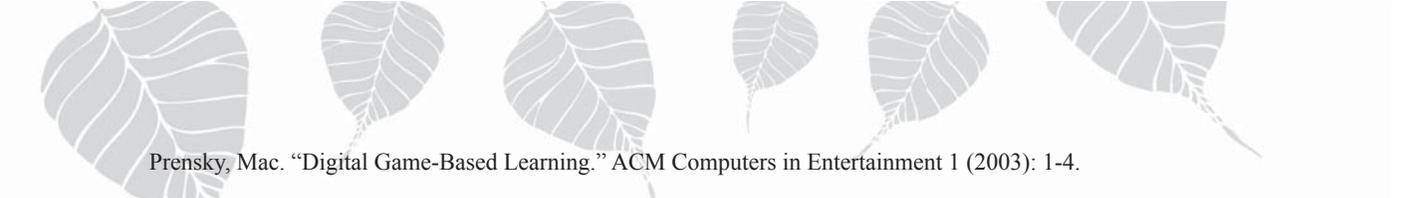
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# “With Dharma”: The Active Efforts of I.B.P.S Manila in Resolving Prejudice through Culture and Education and Propagation of the Dharma

Gian Carlo S. Navarro

## Abstract

The core intention of this paper is to highlight the immense impact of the active efforts of I.B.P.S Manila in resolving prejudice through culture and education and propagation of the Dharma. Culture and Education is the primary tool of human growth, which has a vital impact of the development of self-knowledge and morality. On the other hand, Dharma is what the Buddha has thought designed to rearrange the concepts in our minds that intended to show us to open our hearts to attain wisdom.

Initially, based on the history of the Philippines; as early as Spanish and American colonization Sino-Filipino interaction has been characterized by massacres, severe legal restrictions, communal rioting, and legally imposed ghettos. While at present, the Philippine government is tied up in a widespread but not consistent campaign towards bar “aliens”--Chinese, which has a substantial share impact on economic life of the country. These endeavors cause the misconception on Chinese traditions, which led to prejudices.

Secondly, by embedding the Dharma in the hearts of Filipino youths through culture and fostering their talents through Guang Ming College, hopes and prospects through knowing self and understanding the dharma is expected in the long run will resolve prejudices.

In conclusion, with the testimonies of my own and my fellow students in Guang Ming College that the Humanistic Buddhism’s teachings brought in our lives; it is highly requisites to have the amalgamation of *Culture and Education and Dharma Propagation* in the advancement of community since these will be the key on understanding the world in ourselves and ourselves in the world that will bring unity and harmony to the country and peace and happiness to the people.

**Key Words:** I.B.P.S Manila, Prejudices, Culture and Education, Guang Ming College, Self and Non-self, Dharma

## Introduction

*“Man is by nature a social animal; an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human. Society is something that precedes the individual. Anyone who either cannot lead the common life or is so self-sufficient as not to need to, and therefore does not partake of society, is either a beast or a god.”*

*-Aristotle*

Human are social beings that share mirror neurons that allow matching each other’s emotions automatically and unconsciously (Morgan, 2015). Humans have the capacity to connect emotions to each other, henceforth anticipate and mirror each other’s movements when in sympathy or in a phase of agreement with one another—when on the same side. We are all social beings nevertheless of the amount of our belief in individualism. “We are in the era of an expressive individualism. In well-off societies, more citizen follow individualist, secular and post-materialist ‘self-expression’ values” (Taylor, 2007). At present, we believe in a genuineness

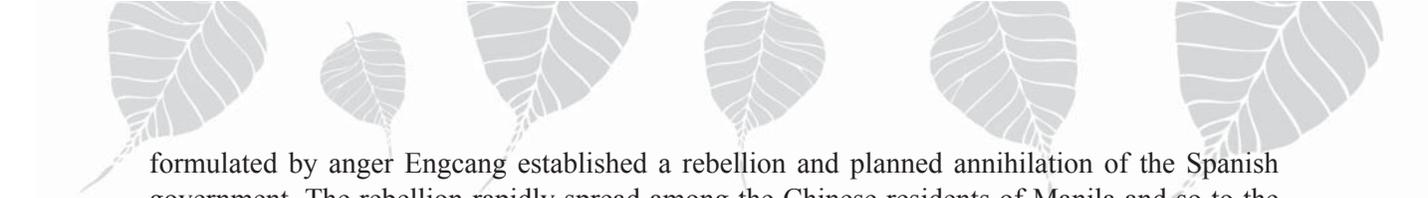
of the individual personality and in moral truth of the subjective experience as individuals and as groups. However, as humans, we are all social beings. In the fast-paced, modernize turmoil and indeterminate contemporary day society, in Manila Philippines, stability and peace is needed. Thus, the International Buddhist Progress Society, Manila (I.B.P.S., Manila) was established to address the needs of the people. The I.B.P.S manila is the 'light of dharma' that propagates Buddha's teaching and Humanistic Buddhism which gives energy and light in the Philippines.

To give energy and light to Filipinos, one of the I.B.P.S's charitable programs is to help folks in times of natural calamities while respecting the diverse religions and customs. Thus, it steadily integrated itself into the society and culture of the Philippines. After 15 years of propagating Buddha's teaching in the Philippines, with both spiritual energy and congregation of believers the number of devotees has increased, and the present temple is no longer large enough. Consequently, under the guidance of Venerable Master Hsing Yun, the I.B.P.S Manila decided to build a Multi-function I.B.P.S Manila Center with culture and tradition as its principle axes. The association bestows this Multi-function center in spreading the Buddha's dharma to benefit all in the Philippines and in the hope that its work brings to the country unity and harmony and to the people peace and happiness ("http://www.fgsphilippines.org/fgshistory.htm", 2010). The I.B.P.S Manila bears virtuous intents for Filipinos, however carrying out the plans have been a great challenge due to the imperative impact of the history on Chinese prejudices but through culture and education and the propagation of Dharma hopes and prospects is expected to solve prejudices in a long run.

### **History of Filipino Prejudices against Chinese: *Misconceptions on Chinese Traditions***

Anti-Chinese Sentiments, Chinophobia or Sinophobia came from the latin word "Sinae" which means China and from the Greek word "phobos" means fear; a sentimentality against China, its people, and its culture (Billé, 2015). Way back 9th century, Ethnic Chinese already sailed in the Philippine Islands. They interacted with the local Filipinos initially commenced as bartering and item exchanges done on Chinese sampans. The relationship between the two is supported by a collection of Chinese artefacts that was found along Philippine waters, dating back 10th century (Zaide, 2011). As early as 1521 when Spaniards arrived in the Philippines, there are already a significant population of Chinese migrants in the country due to the affiliation amongst the barangays (city-states) especially in the island of Luzon, and the Ming dynasty (Constantino, 1975). The first encounter of Spaniards with Chinese people was entirely unpleasant. This unpleasant encounter was when several Chinese pirates under the headship of Limahong, supervened to siege the freshly recognized Spanish capital in Manila in 1574. The group attempt to take over the city of Manila but subsequently they were crumpled and beaten by the cooperative forces of Spanish and native Filipinos under the leadership of Juan de Salcedo in 1575.

Later on, a Chinese Imperial named Admiral Homolcong went in Manila together with him is two priests which became Catholic missionaries from Mainland to the Philippines. Afterwards in May 1603, the official visit was followed by the arrival of Chinese ships in Manila. The ships bore the official seal of the Ming Empire and Chinese officials which led to the notion of Spaniards that Chinese had sent a fleet to surmount the nearly defenseless islands (Agoncillio, 2012). Ramparts of Manila were started by Spaniards; later on a Chinese settler in Manila named Engcang initiated to present his services to the present governor. The governor then declined the offer because of the mistrust notions to Chinese settlers. Because of the refusal, with the grudge



formulated by anger Engcang established a rebellion and planned annihilation of the Spanish government. The rebellion rapidly spread among the Chinese residents of Manila and so to the government officials. The rebellion was swiftly suppressed by the Spaniards, but bloodily ends with a large number of massacres for the non-Catholic Chinese living in the area. All throughout the Spaniard Colonization, there was a fast growth of Chinese immigrants that causes the outnumbering of Spanish colonizers by ten to one. Worse at least one on two instances Chinese settlers tried to take hold of the power, but these revolts were unsuccessful because it was quickly stopped by the cooperative forces composed of native Filipinos, Japanese, and Spanish (Blair, Helen, Robertson, Alexander, 1904).

After the previous horrid early interaction between the early Chinese migrants to the Spaniards, most ethnic Chinese living in Manila and some Chinese folks living in the rest part of the Philippines decided to focus only on merchandising items, selling trade and service industry for them to evade bloodbaths and enforced deportations to China. Subsequently, the Spanish authorities started hampering the activities of the Chinese immigrants. They confined them to the Parian near Intramuros where in the place has low chances of employment and worse they prohibited them from owning lands. As a result, most of the Chinese betrothed themselves in a small business and some worked as skillful artisans for the Spanish colonial authorities (Ang-See, 2005), until in 1898 the American colonization began.

Skepticisms and sentiments against the Chinese by the Filipinos continued. It did not remain just an emotional position-- the Americans instituted it. This happened during the term of office of Rutherford B. Hayes of the United States of America. The American Congress then passed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, containing a law suspending the immigration of Chinese to the United States. Chinese men at that time became the number one labor force of the United States. In 1899 after the signing of the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898 Americans came to the Philippines and they extended the enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 in country and integrated it in our Immigration Laws. As a consequence, the Immigration and Customs officials of the Philippines became strict in the entry of Chinese in our ports. A lot were deported, predominantly of which were relatives of the old Chinese who came to the Philippines before the Americans arrived (Soennichsen, 2011). In the Philippines on October 30, 1936 the Congress enacted a law that was seen to be Anti-Chinese; it was the Anti-Dummy Law under Commonwealth Act 108 that was strengthened by President Ferdinand E. Marcos which he signed under Presidential Decree 715 on May 28, 1975 (Gyory, 1998).

At present, the dead heat in Scarborough Shoal and Spratly Islands amid Philippines and China augments to prejudices to Chinese among Filipinos. As a result, movements and campaigns about boycotting the products of Chinese began in 2012. Hence, people are often seen protesting in front of the Chinese Embassy (Carpio, 2017). One more reason is the wariness and mistrusts of products came from China. The Department of Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) in 2008 enacted the imposing of the ban of Chinese products amidst the growth of fears for the safeness of dairy products made in China. This was when four children died and more than 50,000 have fallen ill, after drinking milk product made from China. On the later part due to investigations, it was discovered that the product is contaminated of an industrial chemical ‘melamine’ (Brice, 2008). Henceforth, it has been founded toys and dolls made in China contain lead which is known to be hazardous to children. Cosmetic products have been also found to have mercury and lead content in which can cause skin illnesses like skin cancer (Story, 2007).

The history has an imperative role in understanding the nature of Philippine Sino-phobia



prejudices which lead to the misconceptions on Chinese traditions. It is not only because through the endeavors and content analysis they provide that spur some insights of Sino-Filipino interaction in the last decades, but also for the reason of the position they now live in the minds of Filipinos; one cannot nevertheless presume Sino-Philippine relations to be affected. The Filipino prejudices on anti-Sinicism have many likes with the Western anti-Semitism that has been eminent by many social analysts. A relative consideration of these parallels compromises many prospects of understanding equally, this particular Philippine situation and the wide-ranging dynamics of intergroup relations.

### **Bridging the Gap between Cultures: Establishment of Multifunction I.B.P.S Manila Centre**

Different Ethnic groups have frequently confronted prejudices because of the unique cultural backgrounds, in this case the Chinese migrants in Philippines. By the growing attention on pride of heritage, it becomes gradually more challenging to find one's position. When society and Nations develop and be more secure, community will improve and be able to escalate and accept the diversity of their heritage with increased exposure to the differences, one can also learn about similarities; the cultural differences are the highlights (Roberts, C. 2016). (Nieto, 1999) stated that, people are not merely carriers of cultures, languages, and histories. Each one has a duty to reproduce them as [we] are the products of linguistic-cultural circumstances; [we] are the actors with a role to resynthesize what have been socialized into and; [we] are the ones who have the capacity to solve new and emerging problems of existence. Each one is not compelled to preserve inherited characteristics which are not structurally useful. [We] are mutually and socially resolute and creators of human futures bridging gaps for unity and harmony.

Culture with its over-all aspects is the vital constituent of sustainable development. It is considered as the sector of activity, creative industries and numerous forms of artistic expressions which makes culture as a powerful contributor to economic development, social stability and environmental protection. Henceforth, culture is the repository of knowledge, meanings and values that infuse all aspects of our lives ("UNESCO Culture of Development", 2010). With these understandings culture is the stimulant that helps to elevate the spirit and to improve lifestyle. Hence, culture is a vital factor that will guide to the understanding oneself and others.

Spreading the Dharma through culture, the Fo Guang Shan I.B.P.S Manila initiated the establishment of the Multifunction Center in the heart of Manila. Ms. Angela Carlos, director of the B.L.I.A Philippines said in an interview "This Multi-function Center is built to serve all the Filipinos. With joint efforts and contribution of many devotees and people passionate about culture and education, we hope to present this Center to all of you as soon as possible" (Ven. Jau, 2005). With this hope of establishing the building immediately, Ms. Carlos went a lot of effort to invite the internationally-renowned U Theater to do a production in the Philippines, to make a major contribution to the fundraising campaign for the construction project of the Multi-function I.B.P.S Manila Center and purposely to present Chinese culture through performing arts in able for the natives to appreciate the culture with the hopes of removing the preceding notions of Anti-Chinese and bridging gaps by accepting the beauty of differences (Ven. Jau, 2005).

In the year 2005, the U Theater finally came to Philippines for their charity performance of Meeting with Vajrasatta, a creation combining with drama, drum beating, martial art and dance. As body, words and mind work together harmonically, there would be a metamorphosis innermost



being, as well as a resolute power — which becomes the original strength of “Meeting with Vajrasattva”. This drama appears that one has conquered external conflicts and doubts, and then found the real-ego and the truth of “Tao”. In this performance, U’s performers use their bodies to the ultimate attainment, match with music and time precisely. It is the martial art of drums as well as the dance of drums (“Taishin Arts Awards”, 2002); this performance is not only for the construction of the new I.B.P.S Center but also serves us an international event of cultural and artistic exchange.

Subsequently, after the production Meeting with Vajrasattva a lot of devotees were inspired such as; Ms. Angelo Carlos (Filipino/ Chinese), she stated

“After watching the performance of the U-Theater, I realized that members of U Theater show the temperament of Buddhist Practitioners; in addition, they strive to display the philosophy of life through art and culture. From their routine training program: practicing Taiichi at 6 am, and meditation at 8 am, beating drums in the afternoon and rehearsing in the late afternoon, even daily trivia are included in their training program, we can see that their life is in fact as disciplined as that of Buddhist practitioners” (Ven. Jau, 2005)

Mr. Albert Teh (Filipino/ Chinese), president of Buddha’s Light International Association, Philippines

*“The U Theater’s Meeting with Vajrasattva is a performance that integrates theater, drumming, martial arts and dance, and represents the quintessence of sacred dance. What is the most remarkable in this performance is that it embodies the incorporation of Buddha’s teaching into art, and enables people to look for the intrinsic meaning of loss, hesitation, fear and struggle in every dance step and drumbeat. In fact, it is an artistic representation of vicissitudes of life. From the first scene, “Receiving”, to the last, “One Cudgel Which is not a Cudgel”, Meeting with Vajrasattva depicts the evolution of the mind confronted with confusion and enlightenment of life, and explores the ups and downs, as well as disillusion in life, to reveal the pursuit for a simple and tranquil soul” (Teh, 2005).*

By means of combining culture into arts and the Buddhist discipline into performance the audience had a chance to grasp about the philosophy and vicissitude of life through art and culture and here will spur the empathetic understanding and sympathetic acceptance to others.

Consequently, the made bridge contact to bring together the U Theater and Fo Guang Shan Temple was the accumulated merits of collective prayers, involving conception and organization, a series of agreements, hard work off-stage, performance on-stage and appreciation, as well as the audience’s participation and appreciation. “This process is all about uniting people’s energies, the result of which is the construction of the I.B.P.S Center, Manila” said Hong Chien and Ching Hui, chairperson of Hong’s Foundation for Education and Culture (Chien, Hui, 2005). When a temple is built with accumulated good merits, it will serve a larger number of people; and it is with a common ideal, and a common value that these people will unite the power of prayer-praying for inner calm, and for a better world (Ven. Jau, 2005). With the consensus congregated brought by the Fo Guang Shan people to U Theater and the openness that I.B.P.S Manila presented to Filipinos opportunities ascended, with the faith to build good affinities between Filipinos and Chinese and to help more youths uplifting their lives in accordance with Fo Guang Shan’s objective to foster talent through education—Guang Ming College was built.



## **Bridging the Gap between Cultures: Establishment of Multifunction I.B.P.S Fostering Talents through Education: *Founding of Guang Ming College***

In the year 2014, centered on the objectives of Fo Guang Shan's to foster talent through education; and to benefit society through charitable programs with its maxim "Four Givings; to give others joy, hope, confidence and convenience to all human beings" (Hyun, 2015) and in the hopes of uplifting and transforming the lives of Filipino youths Fo Guang Shan has set-up free Performing Arts College in the Philippines. The college is open to all the youths of all faiths. Helen V. Correa Ed. D. remarked during an interview,

*"Although the country is predominantly Catholic, for some, the idea in enrolling in a Buddhist college may present a challenge. However, there was no obligation for attending students to be a Buddhist" ("Fo Guang Shan Launches Free College", 2015).*

The mission of the Fo Guang Shan in this sense is not to convert the Filipino youths but solely to help improving and heartening their lives through Life Education incorporated with philosophy of the Humanistic Buddhism.

From January 17-19, 2015 Venerable Master Hsing Yun the founder of Fo Guang Shan, visited the Philippines mainly to meet Pope Francis and to check the progress and development of the college. Venerable Master said during the interview on Focus Taiwan News Channel, "Americans used to set up universities in our country, and now we are also able to set up universities in other countries". He emphasizes "the promotion of culture and education, especially higher education for disadvantaged people, are ways that religions can contribute to society" (Lim & Low, 2015). As the name Guang Ming suggests "光"(guang) means bright and "明" (ming) means light a "Bright Light University", where students will illuminate goodness towards the betterment of self, others, and the world—transcends the differences between races, culture, and religions.

Guang Ming College (GMC) is the fifth member of Fo Guang Shan International University Consortium. Being pioneer Humanistic College in the Philippines, it is open to students of all faiths willing to learn and to mutually respect one another's races, culture, and religion. The academe has a vision; "to produce ethical, compassionate, globally competitive, life-long learner, and agent of societal transformation graduates" and has a mission; "[We] commit ourselves to a holistic, humanist education towards the betterment of self, others, and the world. It is dedicated to provide the highest quality of humanistic education and experience towards the well-rounded development of socially responsible and accountable professionals for societal transformation. GMC aims to cultivate the innate talents of artistically inclined students through its different dance, music, and theatrical cultures. With this, they provide full scholarship for all the deserving students who are successfully chosen to study any of the programs offered regardless of what backgrounds they have.

Being the Pioneer of Humanistic Buddhist College in the Philippines at the same time the first Performing Arts School grounded in Life Education, more so, an institution run by Chinese who handles non-Buddhist students comes from different walks of life, the college had encountered lots of challenges for the past year. Defying the Anti-Chinese sentiments and bridging gaps between the differences in culture and traditions among Chinese and Filipino has been a great test for Fo Guang Shan in this undertaking. However, by the engagement of Fo Guang Shan in the Philippines for the past years, active efforts have been made to the students of Guang Ming College hoping to get rid of these prejudices to Chinese in the mind of Filipinos; embedding the



Dharma in their hearts through the teachings of Humanistic Buddhism and sending students to different activities like forums and seminars in order for them to engage in a place of diversity to have a better understanding of phenomena that will enable them to open the door for acceptance of differences.

### **For Peace: Acceptance of Differences Resolving Prejudices**

Last May 31, 2017, the school send me to attend an Inter-Religious Youth Camp entitled “Angat Kabataan 2017 Youth Camp for Peace”; Angat Kabataan in English literary means “*Uplifting Youth*”, one of the lecturer Mrs. Jasmin Galace from Center for Peace Miriam College said

*“Most of us wishes peace and many of us are willing to work for it, contrarily a lot of us do not even have a clear idea of what peace is. Many describe peace as merely the absence of war. But this kind of limited conception flops to recognize the constructive and comprehensive effect of peace; rather it makes war the active force. This notion is as if we defined light as the absence of darkness or good as the absence of evil, rather than the other way around. Peace is the constructive force, like light and good, and war is the result of its absence. Peace is life, whereas war is death, at the same manner peace is light and war is darkness”.*

Peace can be find through mutual respect and justice between every individual intended to secure and protect building of an transnational society in which each one will be able to find a place of bliss and relish the “share” of the world’s intellectual and material resources (Brock-Unte, 1985). Peace cannot contain completely just by the absence of armed conflicts nonetheless it should require mainly progression.

Another lecturer from the peace camp Ms. Bai Rohaniza Sumndad-Usman the founder of Teach Peace Build Peace Movement said “Mutual respect is established upon the knowledge of knowing others. This knowledge will be the basis of justice, which is the foundation of the harmony and unity desirable to form a social order for international society essential for peace”. By mutual respect both parties will accept and understand differences and by accepting and understanding differences a harmonious relationship will be develop that will lead to societal transformation towards peace and progress. Thus, education to attain true knowledge amongst individuals is a vital key to eliminate the prejudices resonating from ignorance that results to injustice, disunity and war (Brock-Unte, 1985). However, prejudice has always been a part of every individual which is the result of Self-centeredness.

#### **I. Self-centeredness: From Self to Non-self**

Self-centeredness defines by (Wommack, 2012) as the source of all grief. It causes one person to value and worth themselves more than others; thus, those who are different from them tend to be seen as inferior or lesser compare to them. He added, “If we are so filled up of ourselves and our own narrow knowledge, then we are not open to others and to new information”. With these indolent notions, otiose thoughts and fraudulent predisposition prime to prejudices. Self-centeredness or some called it as egotism is a common trait in every individual. This plays a significant role in growth and survival; however, it can be destructive to self (Dambrun & Richard, 2011).

Self can be characterized in two types ‘Independent Self’ and ‘Non-Self’ (Hyun, 2000). In Western countries, psychologists have try to understand the psychological functioning of the self from an ‘*idiosyncratic*’, individualistic perspective such as (Greenberg et al., 1990; Burke et

al., 2010) emphasizing, people needs to gratify, preserve and toughen the self. There are several formulations of the self, and these are formulated on the base of becoming a certain “I” entity (Shonin et al., 2014). In western psychology, it was seen the significant role for the “self” in an profusion of subject base relations as (Klein, 2014) stresses; self-awareness, self-affirmation, self-concept, self-comparison, self-control, self-consistent, self-efficacy, self-fulfillment, self-esteem, self-determination, self-handicapping, self-identity, self-image, self-perception, self-regulation, self-reference. Which shows, why people tend to compare and create a barrier when one is not the same as they are leading to prejudices.

This idea of the individualistic view of self can be traced as early as when Spaniards propagated Christianity. The so-called Protestantism is reflected to be the denomination most powerful related to culture and to be exact on the Western distinctive view of self (Oyserman et al., 2002; Cohen and Hill, 2007). On the other hand, in the East (Kelly, 2008) stated, for more than 2500 years Buddhists partake in the adaptation of a distinct approach to the idea of the self. According to (Wallace and Shapiro, 2006; Shonin et al., 2014), Buddhism is distinctive comprising East Asian Mahayana Buddhism, Vajrayana Buddhism, Southeast Asian Theravada Buddhism and Indo-Tibetan Mahayana. Their ultimate goal is to stun the agony and conflicts caused by sufferings such as the difficulties, challenges, and stressors of life (Shiah and Yit, 2012), and one way to understand these conflicts brought by the delusions and attachments is the Dharma.

The Buddha’s teaching or “*Dharma*” are meant to attain the true, durable happiness by continuous cultivation of self—whereas the shift and change from the self-state to the non-self-state (Dalai Lama, 1995a, 2005). Buddhism embraces that every person’s individuality is delusional (Giles, 1993) which to each is a self that turns out to not in fact exist (Dalai Lama, 1995b, 2005). With the fixation of self to the delusional self is the main cause of suffering (Dalai Lama, 1995a). Suffering is the state of mind in which the body and mind are driven with afflictions (Yun, 2000). In distinction to the idea of the “*self*”, the perpetual goal in Buddhism is *nirvana* (Hyun, 2016),

Nirvana is a ultimate bliss a state of non-self that contains a process of abandoning worldly things, mainly those for which allure springs from desires and egoisms, whereas sustaining and enriching the self which termed by (Hwang and Chang, 2009; MacKenzie, 2010) as *atama-graha*. This process leads to nirvana—the state of nonself, a state of total liberation (Tsong-Kha-Pa, 2000; Shonin et al., 2014). Nirvana is always our pure, intrinsic nature and the essence of reality (Hyun, 2000). Conversely, the entire liberation concepts of Buddhism are complex and transcends Psychology (Tsong-Kha-Pa, 2000). However, theoretical interest has hypothesized that Buddhism delivers an alternate outlook on self and others and ways to manage one’s daily life. As a matter of fact, lot of studies have been tried to get the connection of Buddhism to psychology (Wallace and Shapiro, 2006) and psychotherapy (Shonin et al., 2014), widely held of it which have focused on the result of meditation such as understanding oneself and others and mindfulness (Brown and Ryan, 2003; Khoury et al., 2015), improved attention (Sedlmeier et al., 2012; Lippelt et al., 2014), heightened positive emotion (Fredrickson et al., 2008) and improved emotional stability (Lee et al., 2015b). Not only are all phenomena being impermanent, but are also devoid on ‘*independent self*’. Not having independent self-nature means that all phenomena depend upon other things for their existence, and would not be able to exist without them (Hyun, 2000). By understanding these concepts, one may understand that all things are interconnected with each other; that one cannot exist without the others. Thus, will come to realization that self is not a separate entity but a part of the whole—the larger [We].

## II. With Dharma: Realizations between my Self and the World

Guang Ming College is centered in Humanistic Buddhism point of view. With the Humanistic characteristic, we are all well guided on how to view ourselves in the world and the world in ourselves. I am now in my 2nd year in the college and recently finished my 3rd unit of Buddhism which in totality I just completed 9 units studying the Dharma that are included in our curriculum. With the help of the Dharma I was able to broaden my mind and understand things with their true nature. Before I entered Guang Ming College, people tend to call me “SCP” literally means Self-Centered Person maybe because I was too full of myself and too conceited. I lived in a family where all pressures and expectations are in my hand. My father died early, I am in my 1st grade in elementary when he passed away. Since my mom did not finished any bachelor’s degree and I still have two sisters who were attending college, my mom really did all means to earn money in order to support us. With the efforts, I saw on my mom, I swore to myself to be always on top at class whatever happens. But this promise I made to myself, developed a self which doesn’t care.

In the past, I always compete with others, when someone was accelerating in class and get high scores more than I did; I considered them as my enemy. I will do all means to defeat them. Because of this self that doesn’t care, I was able to commit the worst method that I regretted the most, I cheated. I was on my 6th grade then, I was not able to review my lessons before the exam so with the fear of getting a low mark I concise my lectures in a bond paper and hide it on my pocket. Unfortunately, my teacher saw it and everyone was able to know what I did. As a consequence of my wrong deed, say “*karma*”, all the reputations I built--the name, the awards, the hard works I have received during the entire years were put into trash.

Subsequently, I was bullied and made the center of fun in the class. Since then, I hated and distrusted everyone. In my 4 years in high school I never had a so called “*best friend*” I do have friends but they were merely my classmates. I mean, I did not have a troop, group or circle of friends. During vacant periods and break times, I was always eating my snacks alone, I do my home works and academic requirements alone and if it’s possible I do not like group works. All people for me during those times were all cruel, judgmental and unkind. Certainly, I developed a prejudice mind for all the people. But these notions were resolved when I entered Guang Ming College and learned about Humanistic Buddhism, the original intents of the Buddha propagated by compassionate monk Venerable Master Hsing Hyun the founder of Fo Guang Shan.

Humanistic Buddhism as defined by (Hyun, 2001) “*What the Buddha has thought, what human wants, which pacifies body and mind bringing goodness and beauty to life*”. Humanistic Buddhism is a Buddhism needed by humanity that teaches the original intents of the Buddha, to allow his compassion and wisdom to shine a light for the hope on humanity (Hyun, 2016). Its essence is refuting superstition and blind faith in order to give inspiration of clarity and wisdom. Emphasizing self-awareness, self-enlightenment, and self-improvement by posing discernments into the truth, peace and stability, freedom from fear and sorrow caused by birth and death, and finally the perfection of life (Hyun, 2005). Given the fact that I mistrust everyone due to my past experiences, when Guang Ming college knocks I let them enter in my life by seeing the visions it promises to the Filipino youth like me.

At first, it is not easy living 24/7 in a place with strong force of diversity. First the students came from different parts of the Philippines. We have different backgrounds, language and customs that usually cause misinterpretation. Second the institution is run by Chinese which a typical youth

like me will quoted them as “Drug Lords, Corrupted Business man, Crook Shark and many more negative notions about them caused by external factors in society. I did not think of lasting in this institution, there are many things that I cannot understand. But by learning the *Dharma* which literally means for me “*seeing the truth*”; opening my minds and looking outside the box who confined me from seeing beyond, I have seen the compassionate heart of Fo Guang People who are mostly not Filipino but Chinese migrants. They are the ones who supported us from meals, dorms, clothing and education. They invest on the Filipino youths holding only the hopes of uplifting and elevating their lives for the their bright future and of the country.

Humanistic Buddhism and the dharma it possesses, has an immense impact on my personality and how I view things. It enhances my moral ethics by accepting and understanding others. It inspires me to elevate myself and have faith on myself—because this self is the embodiment of wisdom and virtue of the Buddha (Hyun, 2000). The truth of Dependent Origination, “*All things are interconnected to each other; All beings are connected as one; and everything in this world is related to us*” (Hyun, 2008), inspires me to blend in with others instead of seeing my self and others are separate beings on opposite stances. Even though society might be intricate and complex; while each human is an individual, we all depend on the conditions of the communities to exist, just as everything in the universe depends on one another to survive (Hyun, 2016).

I realized that I is a part of a larger we, that my self is a part of the society, that everything is inter-related to each other. While lives are viewed as separate beings, they are nonetheless unified as one. The prejudices to Chinese that was created by the throbbing history must put aside and understand that what the painful past brought to us must serve as a lesson and we must move on. In order to protect the future, we must take care of the present and that present is nonetheless *now*. Through the virtues of kindness, honesty and compassion people can uplift mind free from worries, doubts, and misconceptions and uncover wisdom. (Hyun, 2005) stated, the worth of faith lies in widening one’s horizons, to lift up oneself, awakening oneself and fusing the self and the world. Thus, I recognize that we can unify ourselves with others — “*the mind, Buddha and all living beings are no different from one another*” (Hyun, 2016), hitherto both the self and numerous living beings coexist as one.

## Conclusion

Philippines is linked into the history of misconceptions on Chinese traditions such as anti-Chinese sentiments that initiate the notions of prejudices. Yet, by active efforts of Fo Guang Shan members, through education and culture and the propagation of dharma; individuals specially youths will be awaken to the fact that we can harmonize ourselves with rest of the world. The Dharma helps us to understand and guide us about self-purification, self-management, and self-education and collective cultivation that maintain mutual respect of people’s conducts, share values, harmonious social co-existence, loving kindness and continuous growth and development. By accepting the Dharma in our hearts will help us pursue a life lived in joy in the boundless space and time, as well as within unlimited connections of ourselves and the phenomena around the world that will eventually resolve conflicts and prejudices.

Guided with Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s objectives to propagate dharma through culture; to foster talent through education; to benefit society through charitable works; and to purify human hearts and minds through Buddhist practice, the I.B.P.S Manila decided to build a Multi-function I.B.P.S Manila Center with culture and education as the principle axes that became the center in spreading the Buddha’s dharma to benefit people in the Philippines. This initial action



lead to the establishment of a Performing Arts school “Guang Ming College” that is centered on Life Education guided with the principles of Humanistic Buddhism. An academe concerned with the holistic personal development of the students and deals with the development of personality, body, spirit, as well as the professional and social aspects of the individuals-- where students encouraged to understand and apply the Three Acts of Goodness and Four Givings in their daily lives.

Embedding virtuous seeds in the hearts of the Filipino youths, students realized how the academe through culture and education, the Dharma and the people flip their lives and remove the notion of prejudices not just for Chinese but for the diversity and unique characteristics of different people. As Charles Solano 2nd year theater art’s student of Guang Ming College asserted,

*“I learned how to respect the uniqueness and differences of religions and unique characteristics of people...for this will bring us harmonious society. I am so lucky to be in a Humanistic Buddhist community where in the basic goal is to promote humanity to human race. I envision to set myself that I will be a future volunteer promoting peace, equity and humanistic way of life across the globe. The core value and essence of Humanistic Buddhism pushes me and inspires me to be an agent of transforming the world into a better place”.*

Henceforth, incorporating Arts that we believe as a universal language for all, that will bridge gaps, transcends differences and promotes mutual understandings as Rizalve Ancajas another 3rd year student from Guang Ming College stated, “to be an artist that aspires societal development, cultural equity, and human welfare through the promotion of performing arts. My vision: [to be] a firm and dignified Humanistic Art bearer for society and humanity that transcends peace through the works of performance arts and change life through human development with the integration of Humanistic principles”.

The impact and change that the college brought into our lives is the fruit of righteous seeds that Venerable Master Hsing Yun together with the I.B.P.S Manila planted in the Philippines years ago, as Cecilla Manican PhD. a professor in Guang Ming College proclaimed,

*“A curriculum that is cut above the rest... aside from developing 21st century learning skills, it envisions its graduates to have the wisdom and capability not to cause any harm to self and others through a compassionate heart that has a capacity to lift suffering and give happiness to others”.*

With great compassion and wisdom [we] students of Guang Ming College vow to continue the visions of Fo Guang Shan guided with Humanistic Buddhism principles and the maxim to give joy, hope, confidence and convenience to others through bridging gaps and resolving conflicts, accepting and respecting differences among people to make the world a better place for all sentient beings.

“University is not a place solely for the pursuit of knowledge and truth; it is where great leaders and virtuous sages of the future are nurtured”  
-Venerable Master Hsing Yun



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# Protest with Loving–Kindness: A Curious Case of (Politically) Engaged Buddhism in Malaysia

Tan Chong Yew

## Abstract

Some quarters claimed that religion should not be mixed with politics. However, religion and religious organisations do not operate in a political vacuum. In fact, religious ideals are what inspired Buddhists who subscribe to principles of Socially Engaged Buddhism to be involved in politics in the first place, for the sake of all sentient beings. This is also the position upheld by some great Buddhist teachers, including Fo Guang Shan founder Ven. Master Hsing Yun through his advocacy of Humanistic Buddhism. In fact, Hsing Yun (2015, p.104) said Buddhists should not hold on to some sense of moral superiority by divorcing themselves from politics. As street rallies are becoming increasingly normalised as a form of political expression in Malaysia, this paper is a semi-ethnographic account and personal reflection on how Socially Engaged Buddhism is contributing to the discourse on civil disobedience. It will discuss how some elements of Buddhism in Malaysia has been extended into the realm of political protests by looking at an informal Buddhist group calling itself “Buddhists for Bersih (B4B)”. Endorsed by a prominent monk in Malaysia, B4B participated in the two successive Bersih rallies to call for political reforms in the country. Even though the group is small, it is significant because B4B marked the Buddhist community’s entry into the contentious politics of the Malaysian civil society for the first time.

**Key Words:** Coalition for Free and Fair Election (Bersih), Buddhists for Bersih (B4B), Socially Engaged Buddhism

## Introduction

Malaysia is no stranger to both Socially Engaged Buddhism and street protests. The thing is Socially Engaged Buddhism in the country has seldom mixed with street protests or politics until recently. For years, Socially Engaged Buddhists in Malaysia were only found in mostly “apolitical” humanitarian and environmental activities (the word “apolitical” used here may also be rather misleading, unless politics is narrowly defined as a contest for state power or to influence the state). However, there is an interesting development more recently as a segment of the Malaysian Buddhist community is moving away from this disposition by participating in the mass demonstrations organised by the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (Bersih). The Malaysian Buddhist community’s entry into the politics of protest was facilitated by a group called “Buddhists for Bersih” (B4B). Even though this group was small, it attracted much attention from within the larger Malaysian Buddhist community, stimulating debates on whether religion should mix with politics.

Despite Buddhism’s image as a calm, peaceful and non-worldly religion, an analysis of the Pali Canon suggested that Buddhism could be treated as a political theory (Moore, 2016). The religion becomes even more political if non-canonical Buddhist literature such as the *Mahavamsa* (The Great Chronicle) and the *Milinda Panha* (Discourses of King Milinda) are included. Therefore, it is more beneficial to discuss about the appropriate models of political behaviour for Buddhists instead of just dismissing the link between Buddhism and politics. While there are various forms of political Buddhism, including Buddhist nationalism that led to violence

in countries such as Myanmar and Sri Lanka, it is Socially Engaged Buddhism which gave the religion a positive image and provided the blueprint for non-violent political actions. Today, it is a major movement throughout the Buddhist world, “with the exception of those countries where it is suppressed by an authoritarian government” (King, 2016, p.196).

In this respect, Malaysia is considered somewhat authoritarian despite having certain democratic attributes such as holding regular elections. For many years, the Malaysian government has restricted certain fundamental liberties for its people such as the freedom of speech and the freedom of peaceful assembly. Various laws had been applied to prevent criticisms against the ruling regime and mass demonstrations from taking place. These included the use of the legislations such as the Sedition Act against those who are suspected of arousing public disaffection against the government and the now abolished Internal Security Act, which had previously allowed the authorities to detain a person without trial. Not surprisingly, there were few mass protests against the government in Malaysia until a reform movement known as *Reformasi* was launched following the sacking of Anwar Ibrahim as the deputy Prime Minister in 1998. However, the Malaysian Buddhist community continued to tread very carefully on political issues. Even at the height of *Reformasi* movement when many Muslims and some Christian groups openly supported Anwar, Buddhists had generally refrained from getting involved. Therefore, the emergence of B4B is important because it represented the Malaysian Buddhist community’s break away from an established social norm.

## Research Methods

This paper is a reflective, semi-ethnographic account on B4B derived from a combination of personal observations, interviews and textual research. Certain insights on this topic came from my own experience participating in the Bersih 3.0 rally in 2012 and seeing the Buddhist group in action for myself. For the purpose of this research, I have spoken to some Buddhist community leaders who started B4B and supported the initiative, even though it is no longer active at the moment. There are also postings about this group on certain Buddhist community blogs that I have referred to for the purpose of getting information.

## Literature Review

Socially Engaged Buddhists are certainly not averse to using street protests, if necessary, to heighten public awareness on certain political issues. This has occurred during the Vietnam War in the 1960s and more recently in Burma during what is known as the Saffron Revolution in 2007. According to a leading expert on this subject Sallie King (2012 p.207), there are several ways for Socially Engaged Buddhists to justify itself to more traditional Buddhists. Prominent Buddhist master Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh argued that Buddhism has always been socially engaged in its attempts to overcome human suffering. However, some may countered this argument by highlighting that Buddhism is about escaping samsara, not trying to fix it. They believed it is impossible to fix samsara, which is intrinsically dukkha. In response, Socially Engaged Buddhists explained that the problem with samsara should not be equated as a problem with the world. Rather it should be viewed as our problem with the three poisons of greed, anger and delusion, as well as our own attachments. They argued that Socially Engaged Buddhism is not a form of social activism devoid of spirituality. One’s engagement with society is a part of the person’s spiritual practice.



King (2012 pp.208-209) listed six of such shared principles. Firstly, it is guided by the principle of cause-and-effect. Therefore, instead of directing attacking a problem, Socially Engaged Buddhists preferred to understand the cause of the problem and then try to either remove or change it. Secondly, they also use the Four Noble Truths as a framework for social analysis to understand a particular suffering, to uncover the cause of that suffering, coming up with a vision to end that suffering and implementing the strategies toward that end. Thirdly, engaged Buddhists also believed in interdependence. Since real-world problems are complex, they understand that their effort needs to address all the interlocking parts of a social problem.

Socially Engaged Buddhism also means engaged spirituality. One needs to first develop one's inner peace before working for world peace. Therefore, compassion and loving-kindness are a motivation for the actions of an engaged Buddhist. Next is non-violence. This principle can also be considered as the defining characteristic of Socially Engaged Buddhism that sets it apart from other forms of Buddhist political engagement. It means that Social Engaged Buddhists reject any action that is aggressive or violent. Finally, Socially Engaged Buddhism is non-adversarial. This is encapsulated in the Gandhian principle of "hate the deed but not the doer". Instead of being angry at their adversary, Socially Engaged Buddhists try to understand the causes behind their adversary's behaviour. Ultimately, the real enemies are greed, hatred and ignorance.

There is also a close relationship between Socially Engaged Buddhism and Humanistic Buddhism as both concepts complements each other. In fact, scholars of Buddhism noted that it is almost the same thing with a different name. According to Chandler (2004 p.80), the parallels between Humanistic Buddhism and engaged Buddhism are obvious as they share the following characteristics: reform, modernism, secularisation, laicisation and interfaith cooperation. Therefore, the three great teachers of contemporary Buddhism in Taiwan – Ven. Hsing Yun of Fo Guang Shan, Ven. Cheng Yen of Tzu Chi Buddhist Merit Society and Ven. Sheng Yen of Dharma Drum Mountain – may be thought of as representative examples of engaged Buddhism. On the subject of reform, Socially Engaged Buddhists "seek significantly to alter or even abolish institutions that uphold inequality, spawn violence, or perpetuate other forms of suffering (ibid p.79)." While in most cases, their focus of reform is a political or social entity but it can be the internal reforms of organised Buddhism.

The founder of Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Order Ven. Hsing Yun, who is a leading proponent of Humanistic Buddhism, said everyone including monks should care about politics if they care about society. He stressed that Buddhists "cannot hold on to some sense of moral superiority by divorcing itself from politics". As long as politics are conducted with compassion and wisdom, Hsing Yun believed that Buddhists could still show concern for national and international affairs without craving for power and influence. He explained: "Even the Buddha, himself, once said that he was 'one among the group'. Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva travelled to many lands by employing his thirty-two transformations, and among these were kings, ministers, and great generals. For the sake of living beings, the bodhisattva used such political backgrounds as tools to help build a pure land in this world (Hsing 2015 p.105)."

Despite the existence of Socially Engaged Buddhist's model of direct action and Humanistic Buddhism's endorsement for political involvement, they have never been put into practice in Malaysia until recently. This could be due to various factors, ranging from a strict government control over the people's right to protest to a general lack of support for Buddhist organisations to be directly involved in political issues from within the Malaysian Buddhist community itself. The



much-respected late Chief Priest of the Theravada Buddhist tradition in Malaysia and Singapore, Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda (2002, pp.319-320) said the Buddha's doctrine is neither a "political philosophy" nor encourages people towards worldly interests. "Its ultimate aim is to put an end to craving (tanha) that keeps men in bondage to this world. Everything else, including social reformation, is of a secondary concern". However, he also pointed out that this does not mean Buddhists should totally avoid politics. Those who want to be involved in politics should not misuse religion to gain political powers while monastics should refrain from active involvement in politics.

According to Samuels (2016, p.270), Buddhist organisations before the 1970s were more concerned with purifying Buddhism from superstitious elements. Furthermore, Malaysian Buddhist community are fragmented into the Mahayana, Theravada and Vajrayana traditions. Although the majority of Buddhists are ethnic Chinese, the Chinese-speaking group tends to be Mahayanists while the English-educated ones are Theravadins. There are also the smaller communities or Sinhalese, Thai and Burmese Buddhists in Malaysia. However, all of them started to feel the need "to speak in a single voice against perceived and real injustices" during the 1970s and 1980s. In spite of this, they have never transcended a boundary which would directly pit them against the government, no matter what their grievances may be. This situation is changing after the ruling coalition Barisan Nasional (BN) lost its two-thirds majority in Parliament and five state governments in the 2008 general election. Some Buddhist groups are now more vocal in speaking up on issues affecting the Buddhist community's religious freedom.

Generally, there are two types of Buddhist associations in Malaysia – those that are organised along a particular tradition or ethnic group and the non-sectarian ones. For example, the Malaysian Buddhist Association (MBA) is generally viewed as the umbrella body for all Chinese-speaking Mahayana temples and organisations, the Vajrayana Buddhist Council of Malaysia (VBCM) represents all four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism at the national level, and the Theravada Buddhist Council of Malaysia (TBCM) aims to unite all Theravada Buddhist organisations and followers in the country. However, it is the non-sectarian ones that are more politically significant because their growth is closely intertwined with the social and political development in Malaysia. Beside the diversity of Buddhism in the country, a key issue is the minority status of Buddhists living in a Muslim-majority country.

Due to the politicisation of ethnicity and religion after the 1969 ethnic riots, Malaysians are becoming more aware of their cultural differences. Policies favouring the Malays, who are constitutionally defined as Muslims, after 1969 are forcing the disparate communities of Buddhists, to think creatively about how to work together. This situation has been described as "the politics of Buddhist unity and non-sectarianism" (ibid p.269). One of the non-sectarian Buddhist organisations that emerged in the 1970s is the Young Buddhist Association of Malaysia (YBAM). Today, it is the leading non-sectarian Buddhist organisation at the forefront of speaking up for Buddhist interests in Malaysia. Although YBAM claims to be "politically neutral", it could not avoid entanglement in politics due to its role as a Buddhist pressure group. The B4B group can be considered as one of its outgrowths.

## Findings

The Malaysian civil society has seen tremendous growth over the years since the *Reformasi* Movement was ignited in 1998. Although *Reformasi* appeared to have gradually declined by the early 2000s, a combination of political openness and perceived ineffectiveness on the part of



former Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, especially after he won a strong mandate in the 2004 general election, created a new wave of protests against the government. The Coalition for a Free and Fair Election or “*Bersih*”, which means clean in Malay, is one of most important political reform movements that have emerged in the period. In the run-up to the 2008 general election, it was at the forefront of calling for reforms in the electoral process. Among others, it was demanding for the use of indelible ink to prevent fraud, transparency in updating the electoral roll and a longer campaign period. When its demands fell on deaf ears, *Bersih* supporters would take to the streets. There have been a series of five rallies since 2007 and the latest one took place last year.

Although the first *Bersih* rally happened in November 2007, the B4B initiative only started during what is known as the *Bersih 3.0* rally, which took place on 28 April 2012. Since it was supported by many former YBAM leaders, the organisation even came up with a public statement on 15 April 2012 to openly declare its support for the rally. Stressing that Buddhism is a “worldly religion”, the statement said: “Buddhists will not only show concern social current issues, they should also be part and parcel of the movement to promote national stability and harmony. We are Buddhists, but first and foremost, we are citizens of this country.” When citizens could no longer safeguard their country, the nation would decline, it added. The statement also highlighted the Buddhist teaching on the “Four Great Graces”, which include a debt of gratitude to one’s country. For YBAM, making sure that the country’s development is fair and just through a reform of the electoral system was a way for one to repay his or her gratitude to the country (Young Buddhist Association of Malaysia 2012).

YBAM continued to support the electoral reform movement in *Bersih 4.0* rally, which was held three years later in July 2015, under the leadership of its immediate past president Goh Qing Song. Using the Buddhist concept of *Dasa Raja Dharma* to justify YBAM’s support for *Bersih*, Goh said it “is driven by a value-oriented mind-set for a better governance of the nation, and not for the cause of supporting an alternative alliance (referring to the opposition parties)”. The Buddhist youth leader also pointed out that Malaysia has undergone many events in the recent years, including unfair government policies, corruption, disunity among the people, and an economic downturn. “The poor leadership qualities and injustice (in) governance practices are to be blamed for such incidents, which continuously raising anger of the people in the nation,” he said (“The Jātaka ‘Dasa Raja Dharma’” 2015).

According to another Buddhist community leader V.K. Soon (2012), Malaysian Buddhists need to be seen as “standing up for a cause that we feel is paramount to growth and development of our young nation” because Buddhists can make a change with their practice of the *Buddha Dharma*. According to him, what started off as a Facebook discussion on the lack of Buddhist representation in *Bersih* rallies generated a lot of interests and three face-to-face meetings were held to discuss the matter. Following that, a Buddhists for *Bersih* Facebook page was created. Starting with just less than 10 people, the private group grew to 1,000 people in less than a week. Just before the *Bersih 3.0* rally, there were over 2,000 members in the group with about 200 of them confirming their participation in the event. The Malaysian Network of Engaged Buddhists (MNEB) was also formed to align Buddhist spiritual practices with their actions during the rally (See Appendix, Figure 1).

The night before the planned rally, a former YBAM president Liao Kok Meng spoke about the need for Buddhists to participate in *Bersih 3.0* and its implications at the Bodhi Buddhist

Society in Kuala Lumpur. The Mahayana Buddhist organisation, which is located in Jalan Sultan, also served as the meeting point for B4B participants on the day of rally. The participants started their activity on the day with the chanting of *Tisarana* (Homage to the Three Jewels) and *Pancasila* (Five Precepts). They were told not to engage in any acts of violence throughout the protest. In fact, they were not even allowed to chant and shout like other protestors. Instead, they were to be quiet during the sit-in and perform *metta* (loving-kindness) meditation (See Appendix, Figure 2 and 3). Four monastics also joined them in the rally, including Ven. Chi Chern, who is a former YBAM president. The other three monastics were Ven. Miao Jan, Ven. Kong Yen and Ven. Hu Yue (Soon 2012).

The B4B initiative was revived again for the *Bersih 4.0* rally in August 2015. This time *Bersih* is also demanding for the Prime Minister's resignation for alleged corruption following revelations that hundreds of million ringgit were deposited into his personal bank accounts. Another former YBAM president Goh Tay Hock defended B4B's involvement in the *Bersih* protest because he felt Buddhist practices could "make a difference in practical aspect". He argued that the Buddhist group set an example to others on how to conduct "non-violent and non-provocative" acts of public disobedience such as those advocated by the great Indian nationalist Mahatma Gandhi. Tay Hock said: "We do not yell, make vulgar remarks, personal attack... We sat, stood and walked calmly making no noise (Ooi 2015)."

According to the former YBAM leader, there are two types of non-violent civil disobedience. The first type comprises of those that use provocative words, slogans and writings (in other words, verbal violence) to incite the authorities and police to react with force against the protestors. In return, this will invoke anger among the public towards the government. "The emotional basis of this method is anger. This is certainly not in accord with the teaching of the Buddha," Tay Hock said. However, B4B practices the second type of non-violent protests which are not provocative. He claimed that this method is better for Malaysia because rude and disrespectful manners of protesting against the country's leaders will not go down well with those who are conservative. Since opposition groups prefer the provocative method, the presence of B4B is important because they are showing an alternative non-violent method, which is also non-provocative (ibid).

Even though B4B only emerged in 2012 but I believe that seeds for its creation were sown earlier. From my interviews with several Buddhist community leaders from YBAM and BMSM, I found a common sentiment among them expressing a concern about the lack of support from the Malaysian Buddhist community towards *Bersih* compared to other religious communities. While this is a factor cannot be discounted, we also need to understand the history of Malaysian Buddhist community's struggle for religious freedom since the early 1990s. Of the various issues that the community had encountered against the government and the ruling party, the dispute surrounding the construction of Puzhao Buddhist Vihara is one of the most controversial. Although the groundbreaking ceremony of this vihara was done in January 1991, it was only opened in 2015 due to a protracted negotiation with the local authorities following fierce opposition from certain leaders in the ruling party UMNO in the state of Johor.

Although the local authority in Kluang district had already approved the *Puzhao Vihara* project in the early 1990s, its construction was halted after UMNO Youth lodged a protest against it. The *Puzhao Vihara* was an initiative of YBAM. It was estimated to cost RM10 million with most of the funding coming from public donations. To save the project, YBAM leaders held



several meetings with Johor state government with the help of some Buddhist politicians from the component parties in the BN ruling coalition such as MCA and Gerakan. It proved to be a frustrating process. During one of the meetings, there were suggestions from UMNO Youth representatives that the problem would be solved if the Puzhao Vihara is burnt down. Those who were involved in the negotiations to revive the project, including former YBAM deputy president Ang Choo Hong, even received a bullet as death threat (Tan 2014, p.329).

However, to the surprise of many people, the authorities approved the project just prior to the general election in 2008. However, it has to comply with nine conditions which some people in the Buddhist community felt to be “unfair” and “illogical”. Among others, the *Puzhao Vihara* was prohibited from holding any religious activities and putting up Buddhist statues as part of the design around its compound. There were heated discussions about the matter on YBAM online forum. Many of those who posted were clearly upset. One posting suggested that Buddhists should know about the struggle for Puzhao Vihara as “one of the most important history in Malaysian Buddhism”. As the general election is approaching, a posting calling upon Buddhists to vote wisely also appeared on YBAM online forum (ibid p.330). During the election, the BN which rules Malaysia since independence lost its two-thirds majority in Parliament. In addition to opposition-controlled Kelantan, the ruling coalition also lost control of the Selangor, Perak, Penang and Kedah state governments to opposition parties.

The sentiment of the Buddhist community on the *Puzhao Vihara* controversy is telling from Goh Qing Song’s speech during the YBAM 45th Anniversary Celebration, which also doubled as the opening ceremony of the *vihara* in July 2015. Goh remarked that 45 years is not long for an organisation but it was “extremely abnormal” to take 25 years to complete the construction of a *vihara*. “These 25 years witnessed the selfless contribution by the veterans of YBAM who fought so hard for the completion of the *Puzhao Buddhist Vihara*. It represented a long-term struggle of Buddhists against injustice. It also reflected the deliberate policy of the Malaysian government of discouraging the development of non-Islamic faiths. All these will be recorded in history. Nevertheless, we should look forward and move on. We believe that where there is *Dharma*, there is a way,” he said (Young Buddhist Association of Malaysia 2015). That very year YBAM also openly endorsed the Bersih 4.0 rally for the first time.

It must be highlighted that Ven. Chih Chern is also directly involved in the *Puzhao Vihara* controversy because he was designated as the first abbot of the monastery. Together with several other monastics, he attracted attention and set tongues wagging in the Buddhist community when he attended the *Bersih 3.0* rally under the banner of B4B in 2012. Although he did not participate in the *Bersih 4.0* rally in 2015, my informant told me that Chi Chern still supported the Bersih movement. While the monastic did not appear to be the main driver behind the group, his presence at the rally has no doubt gave more credibility to B4B. As the first appointed Dharma heir of Ven. Sheng Yen of Taiwan’s Dharma Drum Mountain, Chi Chern has a strong following among Chinese Mahayana Buddhist youth in Malaysia. Ordained as a monk by the famed Ven. Chuk Mor in Malaysia, Chi Chern is also a graduate from the Buddhist Research Institute in Fo Guang Shan, Taiwan.

Despite the enthusiasm when it first started in 2012, B4B is now practically dormant. The group which has never been formally structured did not participate in the latest episode of *Bersih* rallies which took place on 19 November 2016. One of my informants, a core member who initiated the group in 2012, explained that he was no longer interested in supporting *Bersih*.

He also closed down the MNEB Facebook group which he claimed had become a platform for advertisements. According to another informant, who is also one of B4B leaders, the group's core membership had always been small and it could not even be considered as a movement in the first place. While some Buddhists opposed the idea of B4B, there were also criticisms from others who felt that it was not aggressive enough. For the moment, it is unclear whether the B4B will be revived again. The informant also observed that Buddhists who supported the initiative are mostly Chinese-speaking Mahayanists while the English-speaking Theravadins tend to stay on the political sideline.

## Discussion

As mentioned earlier, the participation of a Buddhist group in Bersih rallies is already a turning point in the history of Malaysian Buddhism. All these while, Malaysian Buddhist organisations were reluctant to even appear as opposing the ruling regime, what more to openly support a protest movement against the government. In spite of this development, the majority of Malaysian Buddhists are still traditional. Socially Engaged Buddhism in Malaysia is mostly confined to the provision of humanitarian aid and environmental preservation – activities which generally, although not necessarily, eschew political activism. As the *Puzhao Vihara* controversy demonstrated, the Buddhist community preferred to be cooperative and maintained an appearance of being supportive of the government even when their religious rights were eroding. Individual members of some Buddhist organisations might be concerned about politics but very few will use direct action or civil disobedience as a tactic to deal with the ruling regime. In this sense, YBAM's open support for Bersih in 2015 is remarkable.

However, such act of Buddhist defiance to authorities may be dependent on the personalities helming YBAM. From my conversation with an informant within the YBAM, I realised that not everyone in the leadership structure of the Buddhist organisation agreed to its direct involvement with contentious politics. Former YBAM deputy president Ang Choo Hong, who is currently BMSM adviser, is believed to be one of those who have reservation about Buddhist organisations getting involved in politics. There are two possible explanations for this behaviour. Firstly, we can assume that since most Buddhists are peaceful, they would avoid any form of direct confrontation with others, including the government. For some Buddhists, religion should be confined to the spiritual realm and it is incompatible with politics. Secondly, the Buddhist community's perceived passivity may be attributed to the fact that a number of its lay leaders and patrons have links with the ruling regime. For examples, the Second Minister of International Trade and Industry Ong Ka Chuan is a director of the *Yayasan Belia Buddhist Malaysia* (Malaysian Buddhist Youth Foundation) while former MCA president Ong Tee Keat is a vice-president of the Buddhist Light International Association (BLIA).

As some Buddhist organisations believed that they would benefit more from these linkages to the government, they would rather not rock the boat. Due to efforts of certain BN politicians, Buddhist organisations were given land and financial aid. In May 2017, the Buddhist Missionary Society of Malaysia (BMSM) is allocated with a piece of government-owned land in the administrative capital of Putrajaya to build its national headquarters and a temple. The building is slated for completion by August 2018 to serve about 2,000 Buddhists working and residing in the area. During the ground-breaking ceremony, Ka Chuan said it represented the government's commitment to religious freedom. The building of the Buddhist centre is part of the government's plan to have a multi-religious enclave in the administrative capital. Next to the Buddhist centre is a Hindu temple, which is currently under construction. The BMSM has to raise



about RM8 million to build the two-storey building with a garden rooftop. However, MCA deputy president Wee Ka Siong, who is a Minister in the Prime Minister's Department and a Buddhist himself, announced that his party would donate RM100,000 for the building (Gan 2017).

All said and done, this does not mean that B4B is a futile effort. More than just making a political statement of Malaysian Buddhists' concern for the country, B4B can influence the discourse on protests in Malaysia because the current mode of civil disobedience is mostly based on negative emotions, which are hatred and anger. B4B is clearly different from other groups of protestors who attended the *Bersih 3.0* and *Bersih 4.0* rallies in 2012 and 2015 respectively. While others were busy mocking the Elections Commission and Prime Minister Najib Razak, B4B members meditated and radiated loving-kindness to everyone. By doing this, they are demonstrating how a non-violent and non-adversarial protest could be done. To show their patriotism, some B4B participants even covered themselves with the Malaysian flag as they meditated in the middle of the road. Together with monastics who meditated with them, B4B managed to attract the attention from other protestors and journalists who were present. Chinese language newspaper journalists covering the event were particularly curious about what the group was doing, especially when they realised that a group of monastics, including a prominent monk, was among them. Many people also posed for photographs with the monastics and B4B members. In this sense, the group has successfully made its presence felt during the rally. The issue now is whether the public are aware of (and accept) the logic behind their practices?

Besides the difficulty of educating the public on principles of Socially Engaged Buddhism in political protests is the fact that Malaysia is a Muslim-majority country. As the religious polemic of establishing an Islamic state and Islamisation heightens over the years, it is uncertain how the Muslims will respond to the entry of Malaysian Buddhists into the political arena. They may either welcome a new spiritually-inspired partner on their quest for justice and human dignity or see them as competitors. According to King (2012, pp.209-210), Socially Engaged Buddhism has been criticised of being as form of "Westernised Buddhism". It cannot be denied that many engaged Buddhist leaders had been influenced by the West as they adapted Western social sciences and charitable works of the Christians. However, engaged Buddhists are not passive receivers of Western thinking. They select what is useful, such as the concept of human rights, and discard what they found to be problematic, such as the anger in Western demonstrations and excessive individualism in the West. Therefore, if Socially Engaged Buddhism is to be applied in Malaysian politics, it must also take into account the local conditions. This is a challenge for local engaged Buddhists.

## Conclusion

As of now, it remains to be seen whether a politically active form of Socially Engaged Buddhism will emerge out the B4B experience. Beyond the initial enthusiasm of some Buddhists to support this group, the fact that the attitude among the majority of Malaysian Buddhists is still conservative cannot be discounted. Holding on to old ways of thinking however is not unique to the Buddhist community in Malaysia. According to King (2012 p.210), Burmese freedom fighter Aung San Suu Kyi has stated that one of the greatest obstacles facing the Burmese struggle for democracy is the traditional interpretation of the Buddhist concept of *karma* as fate. Many Burmese believed that their suffering under the military junta is due to their *karma* and they can do nothing until that *karma* plays out. So, they preferred to keep a low profile and wait for change to happen instead of taking action to change their situation. However, such thinking is contrary to the Buddha's teaching that called upon us to avoid passivity and fatalism. While karma connects

the past to the present, we can use our wisdom to make a choice and take actions for a better future.

As for B4B, its participants had tried their best to follow the principles of Socially Engaged Buddhism as closely as possible. Their mode of protest is non-violent and non-provocative at the same time. This is a fresh departure from the tactics of other *Bersih* protestors who were just venting frustration and anger towards the government. In this manner, B4B is introducing a new standard for civil disobedience in Malaysia. The emergence of this informal Buddhist group however cannot be viewed distinctly from the various socio-political factors, including the fact that some Malaysian Buddhists are feeling increasingly insecure of their religious rights. The challenge is to manage this fear or frustration to ensure that principles of Socially Engaged Buddhism are not lost in the heat of the moment during a protest. There are also other questions that need to be discussed. How effective or appropriate is this model of political engagement in the Malaysian context? Will participating in a few “non-provocative, non-violent protests” change the situation in Malaysia? What else can the Buddhist community do to improve the political scenario in the country? Buddhist community leaders need to grapple with these issues as they navigate Malaysia’s increasingly complex political terrains.

## Appendix



Figure 1: Banner of the Malaysian Network of Engaged Buddhists (MNEB) during the Bersih 3.0 rally (Source: Soon, 2012).



Figure 2: Some of the B4B participants meditating during the Bersih 3.0 rally in Kuala Lumpur on 28 April 2012 (Picture by Kevin Tan).



Figure 2: Some of the B4B participants meditating during the Bersih 3.0 rally in Kuala Lumpur on 28 April 2012 (Picture by Kevin Tan).

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# **Facilitating Goodness, Encouraging Openness: The Challenges of Teaching the Three Acts of Goodness in the Philippines**

Allen Dominic G. Quintos

Rosa checks her watch. It's ten past eight. She and her companions need to be at the pier to catch the 9:00 am ferry to Mindoro, a province located in Southern Luzon in the Philippines. If they miss it, they will have to wait for another hour and the already long nine-hour journey would further be extended to ten. Rosa and the others want to reach their destination as early as possible so they can rest and prepare for the task ahead. For the next five days, they will be staying in a school where they will teach high school students. They will not be teaching conventional subjects though such as Math, Science or English. They will be teaching them something that is much more important. They will be teaching them how to be good.

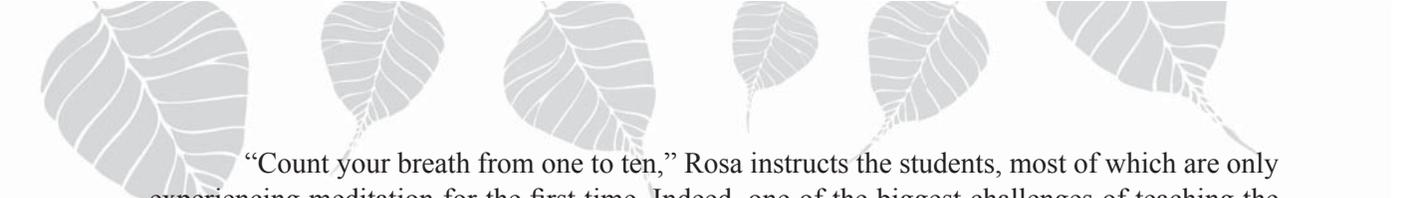
Rosa is one of the facilitators of the Three Acts of Goodness, a worldwide advocacy started by Venerable Master Hsing Yun, the founder of the Taiwan-based Fo Guang Shan Buddhist order. The Three Acts of Goodness are Do Good Deeds, Speak Good Words and Think Good Words. In the Philippines, one of the components of the campaign is a school tour where a team of facilitators go to different parts of the Philippines to share the Three Acts of Goodness through lectures and workshop-style sessions.

Though universal and secular in flavor, the Three Acts of Goodness is founded on Buddhist teachings, particularly the teaching on the three karmas of speech, body and mind. Students are also introduced to the concepts of cause, condition and effect and the lesson is explained through the metaphor of the seed and is further emphasized through activities and games.

Our actions, speech and thoughts are like causal seeds that lead to future conditions and effects. When an act, considered as a cause, is done, it produces an effect. The effect produced may now be viewed as a cause that leads to another effect. Another important factor in the cause and effect equation is condition. Effects may vary depending on the conditions. For example, the seed, as a cause, will need other factors such as sunlight and water for it to grow into a beautiful plant. These secondary factors that lead to an effect are the conditions.

Rosa, like the other facilitators, is a volunteer. She joined the program because she wants to share the practice of the Three Acts of Goodness, believing that it can change society and encourage openness among individuals. "I believe that everybody has the potential to be good," she said. "I believe that the practice of the Three Acts of Goodness can help bring about a kinder and more compassionate society."

It's only 7:30 in the morning but students are already starting to arrive even though school doesn't officially start until 8:00 am. The Three Acts of Goodness sessions usually start with meditation. The facilitators lead the students to the school's covered basketball court, the only space in the compound that is large enough to hold the more than 150 students that Rosa and company will be teaching that day.



“Count your breath from one to ten,” Rosa instructs the students, most of which are only experiencing meditation for the first time. Indeed, one of the biggest challenges of teaching the Three Acts of Goodness in the Philippines is the fact that, being predominantly Christians, these students are not familiar with Buddhist practices and teachings. The facilitators are aware of this from the beginning. When they were in the process of developing the modules to be used for the sessions, they had to simplify the teachings and avoid the use of difficult terminologies as much as possible. One of these terminologies is the word karma. In the Philippines, karma carries a different connotation. It is not unusual to hear Filipinos say, “makarma ka sana!” Loosely translated, it means, “may karma catch you,” and is usually uttered in reference to someone who was deemed to have done something bad.

“When you lose count, just go back to one,” Rosa continues. The instruction to focus on the breath will be useful many times during the day, when the students are already divided into groups and handled by different facilitators. The facilitators will use it whenever they feel that students are losing focus inside the classroom. “It helps because it really settles the very active minds of the students,” Rosa observed. “In the classroom, students usually lose focus but mindfulness helps them to bring back their focus.”

It’s midday and the temperature has risen to 36 degrees. The situation is not helped by the lone electrical fan tasked to cool more than 50 people in a room made for 30. Along with the temperature, Rosa notices her temper rising up and her patience getting shorter as the hours go. After all, these are high school kids she is teaching. Kids who have very short attention spans and who are prone to becoming rowdy at the slightest provocation.

At one point, Rosa noticed some girls at the back laughing. “Why are you laughing? What is so funny?” she asked the girls. They did not answer. Then Rosa noticed that they are looking at one particular girl. She called on the girl. “Do you have any idea why they are laughing?” she asked. The girl was hesitant to answer at first but when Rosa asked her for a second time, she spoke. “They were laughing at me,” she said. “They were laughing at my looks.” The girl was short in height, dark-skinned and had curly hair. In a country with citizens obsessed with being tall and having fair skin just like the Spaniards who colonized then for more than 300 years and the Hollywood stars they see on TV and movies, being short and having dark skin can get you bullied.

“Why are you laughing at her?” Rosa asked the girls at the back. “Don’t you realize that your actions have an effect on your classmate and on yourselves?” The girls did not reply.

One of the main goals of teaching the Three Acts Goodness is to make students realize that their actions have consequences, that whatever they do, say or think affects not only other people but themselves. Due to their Christian upbringing, many of these students have preset beliefs on why people need to be good. Almost all of them believe in a creator god who will reward them if they do something good and punish them if they do something bad.

There will be more challenges throughout the day. Students leave without even asking for permission. One student passed out because of the heat and hunger. Then there are those who are too cool for school. Too cool for lessons on goodness. They don’t talk. They don’t participate. There were times when Rosa felt she was talking to a wall.

Rosa and the others know though that being a Three Acts of Goodness facilitator means



being open to all kinds of experiences. They really cannot choose their students. And they know that most of the time, it is the difficult students who need the lessons of the Three Acts of Goodness the most.

“People are good. You just have to let them know that they can choose to be good,” this is the mindset that Rosa brings with her every time she teaches The Three Acts of Goodness. “These kids may look apathetic, some of them may be bullies but I know deep inside they are kind,” Rosa said. “I know I am talking to a future Buddha. I know they will make it.”

It’s five in the afternoon. The room is now empty except for Rosa who is gathering her things. She has just taught for eight hours and she would have to repeat the lessons again for the next four days.

But now it is time to rest. The seeds have already been planted.

# The Day I Met Consensus and Openness at Fo Guang Shan

Leo Martin Angelo R. Ocampo

Openness and Consensus are two essential virtues that are becoming more and more elusive in our world today. Ironically, even with more access to information and better means of communication, people have only become more closed instead of close to one another. We see an increasing lack of ability to listen and dialogue at all levels, from war and terrorism on the international arena to petty conflicts that worsen and tear families and friendships apart. Where and how do we find openness and consensus? Unexpectedly, I met the two of them earlier this year when we were privileged to be part of a week-long Educators' Immersion Program in Taiwan from May 11-16, 2017.

Our journey started in the beautiful Mabuhay Temple in Manila where we heard some inspiring words from the Head Abbess, Ven. Yung Guang. She shared with us her own experiences of travelling with Venerable Master Hsing Yun who taught them not to complain about petty and unimportant things but appreciate all that is good and beautiful in their travels. That was our "first lesson" in openness and consensus that would guide us in our trip: to be open to accept all and to see goodness in everything. After this, we had our first taste of a fully vegetarian meal in the bus going to the airport. To be frank, I don't like vegetables that much so this turned out to be my "first practice" in openness and consensus during the trip and I was not disappointed. The food was not just tolerable or palatable. It was really delicious! In many ways, our experience that afternoon was a foretaste of the many more that was to come in Taiwan.

From our first vegetarian meal, it was a week of full vegetarian meals. I never knew it was possible to cook vegetables in so many mouth-watering ways! One can taste the love and devotion poured in the preparation of all those meals which were not only pleasing to the palate but also good for the body and kind to the animals and to the planet itself. I do not remember ever going hungry throughout the week-long trip which is a testament to the thoughtfulness and generosity of the people of Fo Guang Shan who made sure that we were always comfortable, satisfied, and well taken care of.

As an instructor from a Catholic university, I could not describe my awe and admiration at the great kindness and hospitality with which we were received by our Buddhist friends. We had studied a lot in Theology School about interreligious dialogue or building harmony with people of other faiths but this was it, openness and consensus, not just in words or ideas but also in action!

From the venerable monastics whom we met in Manila, we met countless other venerable monastics in Taiwan. Each one of them had a lesson to impart, a gift to give, and a story to tell, especially about Venerable Master Hsing Yun. Their love and admiration for the Founder shines through in every word and sentence as they narrate their personal encounters and experiences with him and the ways by which he has promoted Humanistic Buddhism and touched their lives and the lives of other followers. They toured us around the different institutions of Fo Guang Shan, including two big universities, a modern media center at the heart of Taipei, as well as other schools and centers. We were also very fortunate to stay at the Fo Guang Shan headquarters in



Kaohsiung where we were literally embraced by beautiful and historic structures including the Buddhist College and other original buildings in the Triple Gem Mountain, the vast and amazing Buddha Museum, and the newly built modern Sutra Repository.

Thus, from one Mabuhay Temple in Manila, it became a week of seeing many Buddhist temples and shrines in Taiwan, the climax of which was visiting the majestic and breathtaking Fo Guang Shan Main Shrine with its three towering golden Buddhas surrounded by thousands more, together radiating peace, harmony and compassion. Another highlight was Buddha Land and its countless images of the Buddha imparting happiness and joy to all visitors. We were likewise struck with wonder and amazement as we gazed at the grand and majestic Buddha statue at the Buddha Memorial Center, which is the tallest sitting Buddha in the world with its hand raised in a lotus gesture and its comely face smiling at us like the morning sun.

Amidst all these splendor and beauty, hospitality and generosity, there was a growing desire in me to see the man behind it all, the simple Buddhist monk who did not only build these grand and impressive structures but gathered the worldwide movement that is Fo Guang Shan that has branch temples and members in every part of the world. I was saddened when I was told that he was still recovering from an illness and prayed for his health. Nevertheless, the hope remained alive in me that I would get to see him even once during our visit.

One hot afternoon after lunch, we were waiting for the vehicles that would take us back to our lodgings. Being one of the first in line, I was torn between going first or offering my place to others “to give convenience,” which is one of the important lessons we were taught. Since it was very hot and I really wanted to rest, I chose to go first and to my great regret, the next batch who arrived at our lodgings told us that they had a chance to glimpse Venerable Master as he was transferred from one building to another. If only I had taken that one golden opportunity “to give convenience,” then I would have seen him! But I was still too preoccupied with my own comfort and convenience and needed to learn the meaning of giving first place to others.

The second opportunity came when we were meeting with one of the oldest monastics in one of the rooms at the Fo Guang Shan head office. She was telling us about her experiences, especially since she worked very closely with Venerable Master in establishing many of the schools and institutions we had visited. Inasmuch as we were amazed and touched by her many stories, it was almost dinnertime and the sweets on the table were competing for my attention. I was discreetly helping myself to them that I did not even notice the eyes of the people around me turning towards the door. Master Hsing Yun was passing by outside! And I missed another chance of seeing him because I was so greedy and selfish.

Our last day in Taiwan came and still I have not seen Venerable Master, yet my hopes were high since there was a scheduled program where he was expected to receive his latest honorary doctorate and launch the complete collection of all his works. The program began and I was excited as I could be, but my enthusiasm slowly wore off as Master Hsing Yun was nowhere in sight. I was too sad to have seen so many of his works and to have met so many of his followers and to have heard so many good things about him and yet not be able to see even his shadow. As the program went on and was nearing its end, I became more desperate, lukewarm and listless that I almost dozed off, feeling so disappointed that I will not be able to see the Venerable Master.

Then suddenly, there was a thunderous applause in the Sutra Repository. Venerable

Master had finally come! He was riding on his wheelchair but you could feel his powerful energy filling the vast space. Everyone in the hall who loved him so much was just so happy to see him! All of the negative feelings I had earlier simply vanished in his presence and I was filled with a deep sense of peace, happiness and contentment. He did not even say anything or do anything but his smile alone was the most eloquent talk I heard in the whole visit. Venerable Master Hsing Yun himself was openness and consensus, not just in words or ideas, not even just in action, but also in his flesh!

And later I would realize that all this time that I wanted to see him, he was personally teaching me three important lessons on openness and consensus. The first is “to give convenience” or to give others first place. Without this, it would be impossible to listen to others since I would be too preoccupied with myself. The second lesson is to learn how to limit my greed and selfishness since these are the roots of most of the conflicts that we can see in the world today. The third lesson is not to give up easily, since building openness and consensus is not an easy task. If we are truly committed to achieve it, we need to learn not only to work but also to wait for it to bear fruit in due time with patience and trust. Indeed, building openness and consensus is not just about ideas or words, not even just about actions, but about who we are and what kind of persons we come to be, as I saw and met that day in Venerable Master Hsing Yun.

To the memory of that blessed encounter with Venerable Master Hsing Yun in whom I encountered openness and consensus in the flesh, I gratefully dedicate this simple poem as a testimony:

*Many miles, one journey.  
Many origins, one group.  
Many minds, one thought.  
Many hearts, one spirit.*

*Many temples, one worship.  
Many schools, one vision.  
Many books, one teaching.  
Many works, one purpose.*

*Many tokens, one sincerity.  
Many dishes, one devotion.  
Many artworks, one beauty.  
Many melodies, one song.*

*Many faiths, one harmony.  
Many roads, one goal.  
Many races, one humanity.  
Many smiles, one joy.*

*Many faces, one body.  
Many acts, one goodness.  
Many followers, one Venerable Master.  
Many places, one Fo Guang Shan.*

*Many indeed are the Buddhas,  
But Buddha is one.*

# The Ripple Effect: From One-Stroke Calligraphies to Thousands of Opportunities

Katherine Mae G. Sabate

## PROLOGUE

*I have read from one of my favorite authors that our dreams do not rely on our own imagination alone. Our dreams are fruits of all the dreams that have inspired us to dream more and offshoots from all the encounters, experiences, causes and conditions, which have triggered us to decide, to aspire.*

*This is a story of Kamilah – a story of how her dreams have developed from a ripple of Venerable Master’s efforts and ambition to reach thousands through a single stroke of his shaking hands, his visually impaired eyes, and his pure heart that sees and shines through like a moon in a dark night.*

It was high noon, Kamilah was walking home from her secondary school in Cavite. Her sweat flows like a stream inside her hijab. She walked ahead of her friends because she needed to get home early, like all the days of the week, to help her mother prepare and sell rice cakes. Her father is a farmer and her mother makes rice cakes everyday and sells it to the whole barangay—usually, she helps her mother by walking through the whole barangay, sometimes up to the next town, to sell all the rice cakes her mother had prepared. This is how Kamilah spends her afternoons everyday.

On this ordinary day, while walking home, she was thinking of her mother’s words before she left for school that particular morning, “Your father and I might not be able to send you to college immediately after high school, Kamilah. Since you are the youngest, we cannot afford to send all three of you to college. Maybe we can wait first for your sister to finish her degree. After that, maybe, she can be the one to send you to college. We just have to wait three years from now before she finishes.” Kamilah willingly said “It’s alright” to her mother after hearing this even if she was a bit heartbroken upon hearing that she cannot pursue college. She wants to be a teacher. She is consistently part of the Top Ten in her class because she knows she needs to learn more and more to become a teacher. She wants to teach her fellow Muslims, especially the needy ones in Mindanao, the ones they left since the war has started in the land.

Kamilah was originally from Lanao but ever since difficult times started in the land, her father decided to move to her auntie in Cavite, which is three-and-a-half days away, through a big ship, from the home where Kamilah grew up. Cavite has now become her second home. She met new friends, and though they have different faiths—she is Muslim and most of them are Catholic, Kamilah never considered their differences as hindrance to her meaningful relationships with them.

Various thoughts play in her mind as she walked under the sun in a vast Cavite rice field. She thinks that, she will, again, be separated to her friends since they all have plans to enroll to a college in Manila, the central city of the Philippines, a three-hour bus ride from Cavite. She, then, comforts herself by thinking that she can have more time to help her mother in making and selling rice cakes. She smiles and tells her heart, “It’s okay”.



“Kamilah! Kamilah!” she heard a loud familiar voice across the rice fields. She looks up and sees her father calling and waving from afar. Kamilah lifts her long skirt and runs swiftly to him. As she approaches her father, Kamilah sees him holding an orange brochure with pictures of students in front, which reads, “Guang Ming College”. She reads through and discovers that it is a school that offers full-scholarship to talented, deserving yet underprivileged students.

Kamilah’s heart beats fast but she suddenly felt a warm, inexplicable gush that rushed through her.

Kamilah smiled at her father with a new hope.

## **YEAR ONE: THE ENCOUNTER THAT LEADS TO MANY MORE ENCOUNTERS**

Kamilah slowly tries to read the characters framed on the Mabuhay temple walls. She is practicing her Mandarin.

It has been two months since she enrolled at *Guang Ming College*. It has been two months of self-motivation not to go home yet, amidst the homesickness and culture shock, because it is her goal to finish college and become a teacher. It has been two months since she last saw her parents trying to hide their tears when they left Kamilah to study at the temple.

Kamilah reads the writing on the wall, “Affinity has brought you and I together, With compassion and unity we shall celebrate our family. 你我有緣成伴侶 慈悲同心建家門”<sup>1</sup>

Kamilah realizes that she is now getting to know more her third set of “family” – the first ones were her Muslim friends in Lanao, the second set was her Catholic friends in Cavite, and now, she is knowing more with new friends learning Buddhism with her. She doesn’t wear hijab inside her new home. Her parents gave her the permission not to- not because she is denying her religion but because she accepts and respects that in her new home at Mabuhay temple, Buddhism is the guiding religion.

Eventually, Kamilah not only gained friends but sisters, who, like her, are away from their families while learning and growing together under the framework of Humanistic Buddhism and Life Education. Days are not always a perfect and joyful but what Kamilah soon realizes is that she is never alone. She has her sisters, especially the ones who takes the same course with her, and she is blessed enough to have all five of them.

## **YEAR TWO: (RE)DISCOVERING WITHIN**

As a Theatre Arts major, Kamilah has subjects like Philippine Contemporary Theatre, Theatre History, and so on... Kamilah wandered and wondered through the lessons showing different cultures and performances of societies and communities.

She remembers how performances are done in her first home in Lanao; she is reminded of the beauty of the weaving *malong* that visualizes the symbols of the Badjao culture; she recognizes how her own history should be carefully amalgamated with her recent experiences for her totality of becoming whole; and she realizes how important it is not to forget all her previous “homes” and acknowledge the present- that makes her a culture-bearer of her land and, at the same time,



an active propagator of the Three Acts of Goodness.

All of these empowers her aspire to become an educator and an artist one day.

One of Kamilah's experiences was to become part of the production staff for a *Pasinaya Festival*, the biggest on-day multi-arts festival in the country organized by the Cultural Center of the Philippines featuring different performing arts companies, colleges, and communities in the Philippines. Guang Ming College was part of the Pasinaya performers and, as a Theatre Arts major; Kamilah was the Stage Manager to a performance entitled, "*Emptiness*".

Kamilah has watched several local and international performances before this moment. Since Guang Ming College is walking-distance away from the Cultural Center of the Philippines, she has been exposed in ballet, theatre, film and other contemporary productions.

She, then, understands, why "*Emptiness*" was created to be Guang Ming College's performance during the *Pasinaya festival* – because its concept explains an ideology of Guang-Ming-College-trained artists; it expresses an identity that is molded in a Humanistic Buddhist art space; it contains an expression of wisdom that is gained through understanding the nature of reality – "*Emptiness is not nothingness*", the performance exhibits, "...emptying the Self and collectively welcoming interconnectedness in diversity; embracing the paradox of clinging to emptiness can never be emptiness; individualistic goallessness is knowing beyond knowing; letting go of the objective worldview, of the self-being, of the obsession to the ultimate transient things..." through a contemporary dance. As the Heart Sutra articulates, "...gone, gone beyond, gone all together beyond, awaken, all hail... then their heart is without hindrance, and since without hindrance, without fear; escaping upside-down, dream-like thinking, and completely realizing Nirvana."

Kamilah becomes conscious of the kind of artist-teacher she would want to be.

### **YEAR THREE: ENJOYING AND NURTURING COEXISTENCE**

In the beginning of the year, Kamilah was given the chance to travel to Taiwan and be immersed in the culture of Fo Guang Shan, the Buddhist order sponsoring her education.

It was her first time to ride an airplane. It was her first time to experience the feeling of taking off. Her heart beat fast again, like the inexplicable feeling she had when she first saw the college brochure, but this time, it was louder than the sound of the engine of the airplane. After a few heartbeats, she took courage to peep by the window beside her and she was appeased by the majestic view.

In this particular journey she was amazed how the images read in books is now real in front of her eyes. She was astounded by the view of Kaohsiung. She experienced the life and culture in the Fo Guang Shan community. Again, she acquired new brothers and sisters in the *Life and Ch'an Conference* where she practiced meditations, had discussions Buddhist literatures, wrote Sutras, and served as a kitchen staff.

Also in the same year, she had a subject on Asian Theatre, she had the chance to explore on other Asian traditions, (re)discovering their differences and similarities, especially in connection with her own. Kamilah had the chance to dress up like an Indian, do the make up like a Beijing



Opera actor, craft puppets like the Wayang Kulit of Indonesia, and explored more performances in Asia through films and stage plays.

This year, Kamilah accepts syncretism as her identity.

## YEAR FOUR: A FINALE THAT LEADS TO MORE BEGINNINGS

It is Kamilah's last year at Guang Ming College, "*Oh how time flies fast!*", she tells herself.

As part of the Guang Ming College tradition, the *Adulthood Ceremony* would take place: it celebrates the coming of adulthood of the young children. This ceremony is observed and practiced by some of the countries and colleges to recognize the youth's independence. In Fo Guang Shan, it is also celebrated by one of the University Consortium members, Nan Hua University in Taiwan. In GMC's own version of the Adulthood Ceremony is a fusion of elements from the Chinese and Filipino traditions. Hence, the rituals include the Tea Ceremony and the Gift Giving of Malongs: tea, is a tonic symbolizing the vow of the students to support and supplement their family as they become independent. It shows the development of their reliability in supporting their family and gratitude for their family's sacrifices, and their up bringing; the *malong*, a memorable fabric to Kamilah, is a meaningful representation of the idea of being wrapped with love and care. In Filipino traditions, a newborn is wrapped in a malong and in some cultures; a *malong* is used to wrap a person even in death. Thus, the malong symbolizes the enumerable affection of parents towards their child. Their warm hugs that made the child feel pleasant and safe at all times. It is also assumed that the multi-colored design represents the various lessons in life that parents have inculcated to their child.

The *Adulthood Ceremony* exhibited the wholeness of Kamilah's "present" self. The acceptance of her parents of what she had become after three years of her education in GMC is a huge contribution in Kamilah's process in accepting other practices aside from what she has been accustomed to before studying in GMC. The process of pluralism is still on going since learning hasn't stopped. There is acceptance, tolerance - there is peace. She is intact. A Muslim Student-Artist practicing the Three Acts of Goodness of the Humanistic Buddhism faith.

*FLIP* is another Guang Ming College annual event. It is a recital of Fo Guang Shan Educational Institutions, which intends to showcase their talents and propagate the Dharma through their lives that are "flipped" or transformed through the support of the whole Fo Guang Shan Community. The Guang Ming College scholars are both performers and staff for FLIP.

This specific year, Kamilah is a narrator, a choir member, an overall costume staff, and a shadow puppeteer for a performance of a recreation of the wisdom-filled short story from Venerable Master Hsing Yun's *Chan Heart, Chan Art*<sup>2</sup>, "*Purify Mind, Purify Land*":

It is a story of a devotee who offers flowers everyday to the Buddha and her brief conversation with a venerable expressing how she wants to live in a monastery for she is at peace when she is inside the temple. She has explained how she gets anxious in the realities of the places outside the monastery for it is filled with troubles. With wisdom, he explains then that when mind is pure, the land will also be. He then advises the devotee to see the metaphor of the maintaining

<sup>2</sup> *Chan Heart, Chan Arts* is a unique volume that pairs one hundred traditional Chan (Zen) stories retold by Venerable Master Hsing Yun published in 2006.



the freshness of the flower to the mind, he makes her understand that “*Our living environment is like the water in a vase and we are the flowers. All we need is continuously purify our bodies and minds. Changing our dispositions, constantly repenting, examining ourselves, and correcting our bad habits and faults can we unceasingly absorb the nutrients from nature.*”

The devotee tries to understand the wisdom that has been planted to her; she goes back outside the temple and encounters death, old age and sickness among the crowd. Disturbed at first until she fully realizes the wisdom that the venerable has shared her and it was to “*...make the bustling market place a place of practice. When practicing Chan, what need is there for waters, mountains or land? But when you extinguish the fire of the mind, it is cool.*” The Chan wisdom then becomes her tool to focus the mind to be at peace in the midst of troublesome realities.

The performance of “*Purify Mind, Purify Land*” includes elements of shadow puppets and live performances of instruments, and of actors. A movement piece was added to establish the notion of the “bustling market place” that shows old age, sickness, and death – the same worldly elements that the Buddha has encountered during his time, elements that still exist today that also prove that the Buddha’s teachings are still relevant in today’s society. A chant is also composed and sang based from the wisdom in the 365 Days for Travelers book published by Venerable Master Hsing Yun published in 2015, “When the mind is at peace, the body will naturally be peaceful”. As a finale, the mudras of Guan Yin are shown in shadows and the whole cast, including the puppeteers, makes a procession of offering flowers to the Buddha.

For Kamilah, this performance is a culmination of her training as an educator through storytelling, as an artist/performer, and as propagator of the Humanistic Buddhism principle.

*FLIP: Change the World, Benefit Humanity* serves as a testimony of how a Guang Ming College scholar like Kamilah has been transformed to become a humble artist, a compassionate teacher, and a responsible citizen of the world.

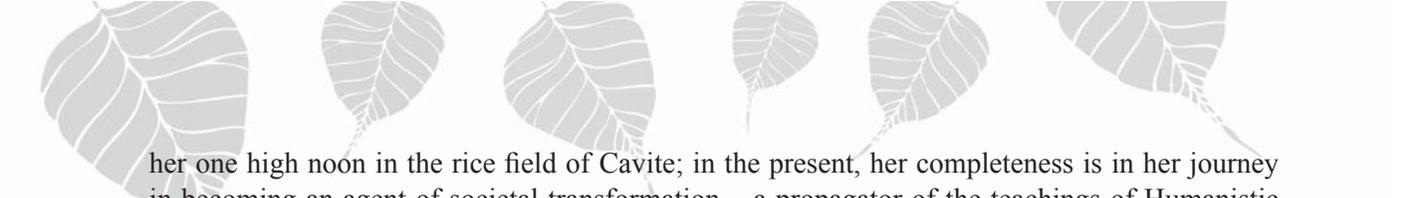
### **EPILOGUE: A CHAN MIND IS LIKE THE BRIGHT MOON 明月禪心<sup>3</sup>**

One of Kamilah’s most memorable encounter as a Guang Ming College scholar was when she was given a chance to meet the Venerable Master in person during the *Life and Ch’an Conference* in Taiwan,

*“Great compassion is the heart of the buddhas. Unconditional compassion is used to help sentient beings.’ The bodhisattva cares about all sentient beings without distinction, whether they are family or not. We should learn from all buddhas and bodhisattvas to broaden and free love from its narrowest meaning of loving ourselves and our family to loving everyone in society, our country, and throughout the world. Through compassion, we must expand the scope of love, purifying it through wisdom, respecting all that we love, and making sacrifices to fulfill our love. If there can be love and closeness among all people, how wide the world and universe would be!”*

In Kamilah’s young mind, she has understood the virtues that could make a peaceful world, a world that respects all sentient beings and a world towards the creation of a Pure Land. Kamilah – in Muslim it means perfect and complete: her process to perfection is brought about by all her encounters and experiences that overflowed since Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s vision in providing education to motivated and talented less fortunate Filipinos rippled and reached

3 Calligraphy of Venerable Master Hsing Yun as part of the FLIP, the Fo Guang Shan Educational Institutions Recital.2017



her one high noon in the rice field of Cavite; in the present, her completeness is in her journey in becoming an agent of societal transformation – a propagator of the teachings of Humanistic Buddhist, a creator, a culture-bearer and teacher of arts that uplifts humanity, and a carrier of peace within themselves and towards others.

Through the causes and conditions offered by Fo Guang Shan to the Guang Ming College Scholars, like Kamilah, they are turning out to be advocates transformational performance arts.

*“Life is as vast as the universe. It is now for me to explore! With such rare opportunity, a Filipino youth like me will surely grow. Your heart is so pure that even if you are not always with me and may be far from me, I always feel that as if you are walking with me in this journey. What you have showered upon me is the chance to transform my life and reach my dreams...every endeavor is aimed to benefit the people. Every undertaking is hoped to give confidence and faith to the people. Every seed sown is nurtured so we may attain happiness and peace. Abide in the Dharma.”<sup>4</sup>*

# 从星云大师「健康八法」探究 人间佛教的体育理念

释知尚

## 摘要：

佛教在全球化趋势下的挑战与契机，本文打破人种的差异，族群的对立，融合不同种族、不同宗教，以体育为媒介，创造出人间佛教的价值与观点，以全人教育发展策略为目的，提升自我为目标。以体育为发展全人教育的方法论述，所谓全人教育包含了心理、身体和道德，从星云大师所提出的健康八法为基础分类，并将星云大师的治心八法，以及佛教中五戒、十善等归纳其中，以体育活动为媒介，提供一套人间佛教的全人教育策略，达到个人的身心发展，以及健全的人格特质，有助于提升个人社会能力，并促进社会和谐。

**关键词：** 人间佛教、体育、全人教育、健康八法

## 一、前言

佛教在全球化趋势下的挑战与契机，本文打破人种的差异，族群的对立，融合不同种族、不同宗教，以体育为媒介，创造出人间佛教的价值与观点，以全人教育发展策略为目的，提升自我为目标。体育和宗教到底是什么关系，从全世界最大的国际运动盛会，运动员的最高殿堂—奥林匹克运动会Olympic Games（以下简称奥运）说起，运动会起源于古希腊，距今两千七百多年前，其运动会的意义是培养团结精神、祭神、表演武功以及宣传文化。其中以「祭神」而言，希腊人民对于体育极为重视，宗教心理也极为强大，从宗教节期形成希腊四大节庆，分别祭祀不同的神<sup>1</sup>，由此可得知，运动会的起源与宗教息息相关。佛教向来也注重运动，像传统的朝山、每日的跑香、行脚云游、普坡作务，甚至打拳出操等，都是舒展筋骨，锻炼身体，培养耐力、毅力的好方法<sup>2</sup>。

苏嘉佑曾提及，大师除了创办佛光山教团之外，也投入推动基层体育教育、筹设学校专业球队、办理国际体育竞赛，成为另类的弘法利生伟大事业，所谓「宗教无国界」、「体育无国界」，正信宗教追求至真、至信、至美，而全民体育追求的也是真、善、美的心灵品德及健康体魄、以及和谐富裕的人生。佛光门生在「宗教」与「体育」追求的精髓相辅相成，且有异曲同工之妙<sup>3</sup>。

[1] 参见吴文忠：《体育史》，新北市：中正书局，2006年。

[2] 参见星云大师：《合掌人生4饥饿》，新北市：香海文化，2011年。

[3] 参见苏嘉佑：〈佛光山推动体育发展 另类弘法利生〉，人间福报，2016年，<http://www.merit-times.com.tw/NewsPage.aspx?unid=437391>

裴斯塔洛齐 (Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi 1746~1827) 认为, 发展儿童的真实教育必须具备心智、身体和品德<sup>4</sup>。星云大师 (以下简称大师) 也指出, 运动和打球, 与我们的身体健康、做人处世、事业发展等, 其实也有着密切的关系<sup>5</sup>。

我国「国民体育法」第一条: 「国民体育之实施, 以锻炼国民健全体格, 培养国民道德, 发扬民族精神及充实国民生活为宗旨」。故学校体育是陶铸学生身心健全发展的重要方法。体育是发展全人不可或缺的因素, 从许多文献中都可得知, 以身体、心理和道德三个主要因素, 构成全人教育中重要的一部分<sup>6</sup>。

本研究将探讨如何藉由人间佛教理念提供更好的体育策略, 以促进身心健康, 并且培养高尚的人格特质。这将是本次研究的主要目的。

在研究方法上, 本文以文献内容分析 (Content Analysis), 做客观有逻辑的解释与陈述。本文的重点在于融合人间佛教与体育全人教育中之观念, 故本文将先把体育教育的目的, 与人间佛教的理念做结合, 再加以重新整理、归纳。

## 二、体育的定义

何谓体育? 何谓运动? 体育等于运动吗? 在此简单的厘清体育与运动的定义。体育大辞典将运动 (Sport) 定义为: 「任何种类的游玩、消遣、运动、游戏或竞争, 不论在室内或室外, 是以个人或团体的比赛为主的部分, 这种比赛的操作, 包含着某种技巧和身体的超越技能」<sup>7</sup>。而运动的目的是行动的最高指导方针, 其在于体育的不同内容与方法的选择。运动乃是体育教育的方法之一, 由于体育具有教育的性质, 故体育的目的, 亦以教育的目的为终极目标, 即以: 调和身心发展、充实人民生活、扶植社会生存、发展国民生计与延续民族生命为目的。

体育真正的涵义又是什么? 江良规在《体育学原理新论》一书中, 将体育定义为教育, 以大肌肉活动为方法, 获得身心完美的发展, 充实发展理性行为, 拓展经验, 改变行为, 提高适应力, 繁荣生活且发扬生命意义, 并以调和身心发展、充实人民生活、扶植社会生存、发展国民生计为目的<sup>8</sup>。

[4] 参见Cubberley, Ellwood P. 着, 杨亮功 (译): 《西洋教育史》, 台北市: 协志工业丛书出版社, 1970年, 页569。

[5] 参见星云大师: 《星云法语8—成功的条件·运动与事业》: 新北市, 香海文化, 2009年。

[6] 参见连建胜、简秀凌、廖威彰、王志全: 〈运动价值与运动道德之探究〉, 《嘉大体育健康休闲期刊》, 第9卷, 第2期, 2010年, 页264-273。又林汉淳: 〈在体育、运动中与全人养成的界限在哪?〉, 《竞技运动》, 第14卷, 第2期, 2012年, 页46-48。及许珺佩、林耀丰: 〈从定义与本质论点探讨体育在教育上的价值〉, 《第三届运动科学暨休闲游憩管理学术研讨会论文集》, 2010年, 页420-427。以及张婷翔: 〈体育教学在通识教育中应具备的功能探讨〉, 《中华民国大专院校95年度体育学术研讨会专刊》, 2006年, 页154-158。

[7] 参见教育部體育大辭典編訂委員會: 《教育大辭典》, 1984: 台湾商務。頁13。

[8] 参见江良规: 《体育学原理新论》, 新北市: 台湾商务, 1999。

从体育Physical Education一词来解释，英文直译生理的教育，广泛的解释是身体活动的教育，更简单的说就是透过身体的教育，有包含运动（Sports）、身体活动（Physical activities）和教育（Education），运动又含竞技运动与非竞技运动、职业运动与业余运动等等。体育是为了增进人体完美的发展，而寓教育于身体运动历程中的一种媒介，因此，又再次说明体育就是教育<sup>9</sup>。

综上所述，体育中包含了运动，运动只是体育的一部分，运动无法完全涵盖体育的意义。体育可以说是发展全人的重点教育之一，而「全人教育」包含了身、心和道德三大层面<sup>10</sup>。大师曾在《人间万事》中提及健康八法<sup>11</sup>，分别为饮食清淡、作息正常、适度运动、心平气和、乐观进取、营养均衡、正当嗜好和心理健康，而这八法也包含了身体、心理和道德三个要素。因此，以下本文将以「健康八法」和「体育的全人教育」做结合。

### 三、从心理层面谈体育中所蕴含的人间佛教理念

运动心理学是研究人们在从事体育活动时心里活动的过程，感觉、知觉、表现……等特点，在运动中的作用和意义，乃至运动中、运动后、比赛前、比赛中、比赛后等的心理状态。而佛教的心理学呢？如《华严经》云：「若人欲了知，三世一切佛，应观法界性，一切为心造」<sup>12</sup>，佛教也可以说是谈「心」的教育，佛教能对人类心理有充分的了解，并提供对治方法，又云：「了达三界依心有，十二因缘亦复然，生死皆由心所作，心若灭者生死尽」<sup>13</sup>。佛教对「心」的诠释，有诸多层次的分析说明，更用许多的譬喻来阐释我们的心，进而教导我们如何找心、安心、净心<sup>14</sup>。

以竞技运动而言，增加运动表现为首要课题，透过运动心理学的介入，让选手在比赛时稳定情绪，创造更好的成绩。萨姜·米庞仁波是一位马拉松的跑者，他整合禅修之心来跑步，指出跑步是身体的训练，而禅修是心理的训练，并成功的把禅修方法运用在跑步训练上<sup>15</sup>。运动员专注力就是一种禅定的练习与运用。利用禅定练心的稳定性，运动训练加强竞技技能，两者相辅相成，想必能创造更好的运动表现。如同祈祷，能有助于选手稳定情绪，也是一些教练会采取的手段，来对峙选手紧张的情绪<sup>16</sup>。体育与宗教的结合，对于运动员在其心理上有重要影响。

[9] 参见侯致远：《教育大辞书》。2000年，<http://terms.naer.edu.tw/detail/1315703/>

[10] 参见李涛、高达伦：〈体育科如何推展全人发展〉，《体育教师暑期学校2010》，p. 58-67

[11] 参见星云大师：《人间万事11—生命的拥有·健康八法》，新北市：香海文化，2009年。

[12] 参见《大方广佛华严经》，CBETA, T10, no. 279, p. 102a29-b1。

[13] 参见《大方广佛华严经》，CBETA, T10, no. 279, p. 195b17-19。

[14] 参见星云大师：《佛教丛书8—教用·佛教与心理学》，高雄市：佛光出版社，1995年。

[15] 参见 Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, 蔡雅琴译，《切跑步之心：同时锻炼身与心的禅跑》，台北市：橡实文化，2013年。

[16] Jason W. LEE. "An overview of the reciprocating relationship between sport and religion." smart online journal. V1,1 (2004). P26-30.

大师在《佛教丛书》<sup>17</sup>中提及人间佛教治心八法，将这八法归纳到健康八法中的心理层面，即心平气和、乐观进取和心理健康三方面加以论述如下。

### （一）心平气和

1. 以静心对治动心：现代人生活紧张忙碌，大多数的人都浮躁不安，若能有几分钟的静心时刻，让自己的心寂静下来，沉淀自己，《阿毗达磨俱舍释论》：「动心者是染污心，与掉起相应故。不动心者是善心，能对治彼故。非寂静心寂静心亦尔，非定心者，是染污心，与散乱相应故。定心者是善心，能对治彼故」<sup>18</sup>。在激烈的动态运动中，除了运动技能，还有专注力，如同禅定的功力，稳定情绪，才能发挥更好的运动表现，如同动中禅，训练自己在动中求稳定，比赛容易产生紧张的情绪，当心情紧张心跳也会跟着加速，就会影响运动表现，若以稳定的心面对比赛，则能有助于比赛中的稳定表现。

2. 以平常心对治好奇心：《宗鉴法林》：「若谓平常心是道，枝蔓向上更生枝，贴肉汗衫如脱了，唤来眼上与安眉」<sup>19</sup>。用平常心来生活，必能体会到「日日是好日，时时是好时」。平常心对待每一场比赛，无论对手是谁，全力以赴不起分别心，其实，场上最大的敌人是自己，不是别人。

3. 以好心对治坏心：《八识规矩补注》：「唯善心俱名善心。所言信者，于实德能深忍乐，欲心净为性。对治不信乐善为业」<sup>20</sup>。恶念一起，百障万门就开，熄灭坏心，维持正念，培养慈悲仁爱的心。运动竞赛是一场和平的对战，只是运动技巧、技能上的对战，并非故意造成对手受伤，先礼后兵，赛前鞠躬、赛后握手，都是良好的运动员精神。不违反运动道德，都是运动员应该有的观念，从运动中学习尊重对手，并尊重他人。

《大明三藏法数》：「以清净质直之心，得亲近法，心生欢喜，以欢喜故身得快乐，得快乐故其心得定，以得定故其心平等修念法观，必趣涅槃是名念法」<sup>21</sup>。心平气和的人生，安详自在，皆大欢喜。藉由运动调节心理情绪，增添愉快的心情，身心欢喜，自然不容易产生负面情绪。

### （二）乐观进取

1. 以信心对治疑心：于佛法真理中生起信心，才能与法相应，也更能包

[17] 参见星云大师：《佛教丛书8·心灵净化之道》，高雄市：佛光出版社，1995年。

[18] 参见《阿毗达磨俱舍释论》，CBETA, T29, no. 1559, p. 287b5-9。

[19] 参见《宗鉴法林》，CBETA, X66, no. 1297, p. 384a9-10。

[20] 参见《八识规矩补注》，CBETA, T45, no. 1865, p. 468c3-5。

[21] 参见《大明三藏法数》，CBETA, P182, no. 1615, p p. 191b10-192, a3。

容、接纳世间的一切，坚定信仰，《摩诃止观》：「佛法如海，唯信能入」<sup>22</sup>。又《般若心经注解》：「信心纳受无极道，大用不缺理义全；铁面无情生死断，疑心放下当时安」<sup>23</sup>。运动员的信心，能带给其无限的能量和勇气，倘若丧失信心，就像消了气的气球，在场上没有斗志。《华严经》云：「信为道源功德母，增长一切诸善法」<sup>24</sup>。信心是力量的泉源，是进步、发展的基础；凡事具足信心，即使排山倒海之难，也能迎刃而解<sup>25</sup>。怀疑自己的能力，怀疑能不能获胜，就像还没上场的兵先投降。有信心的运动员，即使遇到强敌都有可能在比赛中自我突破。

2. 以包容心对治狭隘心：唯有尊重与包容，心胸宽大才能舍离我们忌妒、狭隘的心。《大方广佛华严经》：「无量无边诸国土，悉令共入一尘中，普得包容无障碍，彼无边思行此道」<sup>26</sup>。胜败乃兵家常事，运动场上本来就有输赢，尤其团体竞赛中，队友间难免要互相互补不足，无须因胜败而责怪他人，从中学习看他人的缺点，帮助其学习成长。

3. 以永恒心对治无常心：《华严经疏钞玄谈》：「初发心便成正觉」<sup>27</sup>。初发心菩萨的心等同佛心一般清净，但要更进一步发恒常心，保持毅力不退初心，才能圆满菩提。比赛还不到最后一秒，奖落谁家无人知晓，战到最后一秒钟，不为胜败，只为享受比赛中的酸甜苦辣，都是增进自己的助力。不忘初心、奋战到底、勇猛精进，哪怕成功不属于自己，只要今天的自己比昨天的自己进步，就是最大的胜利。

人的健康，不只是身体外表上有充沛的体力，也要重视内心的豁达乐观。《佛说大乘菩萨藏正法经》：「乐观诸佛定境界，内心乐起慧方便，法界最上善逝身，愿我如是当获得」<sup>28</sup>。运动后通常会有愉快的心情，因为运动过程脑中会分泌脑内啡（Endorphin），能为人体带来快乐的感觉，因此，脑内啡的分泌，有助于心情轻松愉悦，藉由运动练习保持乐观进取的态度。

### （三）心理健康

1. 以无心对治有心：有所执着，就有所对待、牵系，若以无心对治世间假有、虚有的妄执，便能享受随缘放旷，任运不系舟的逍遥。《无心论》：「若觉

[22] 参见《摩诃止观》，CBETA, T46, no. 1911, p. 45c7。

[23] 参见《般若心经注解》，CBETA, X26, no. 575, p. 971c19-21。

[24] 参见《华严融会一乘义章明宗记》，CBETA, X58, no. 985, p. 91b14-15。

[25] 参见星云大师：〈星云大师现代诠释—四给〉，《佛法真义》，<http://www.merit-times.com.tw/NewsPage.aspx?unid=352506>

[26] 参见《大方广佛华严经》，CBETA, T10, no. 279, p. 110a12-13。

[27] 参见《华严经疏钞玄谈》，CBETA, X05, no. 232, p. 698a8。

[28] 参见《佛说大乘菩萨藏正法经》，CBETA, T11, no. 316, p. 796a23-25。



无心即无一切烦恼生死涅槃。是故如来为有心者说，有生死。菩提对烦恼得名，涅槃者对生死得名，此皆对治之法。若无心可得，即烦恼菩提，亦不可得。乃至生死涅槃，亦不可得」<sup>29</sup>。比赛常有得失心，得失心太重，一点的失误，就容易慌张，反而自乱阵脚，从运动中练习，不必为了一点挫败而影响大局。

2. 以真心对治妄心：《首楞严经义海》：「破妄心显真心，破妄见明真见，破幻相显真性，妄尽真发心」<sup>30</sup>。个人喜好产生了计较和比较的心态，应以平等一如的真心，泯除差别，才能创造真善美的人生。天才型的运动员有多少？脚踏实地，一步一脚印，打好基础才能更进一步，没有一步登天的妄想，扎扎实实精进努力，运动表现自然见真章。

心理平静安稳，可以利用信仰的力量，稳定情绪，《七佛经》云：「菩萨处胎时，令母心清净，不闻染污名，远离五欲过，断除贪爱根，不受诸苦恼，身心恒安稳，常得于快乐」<sup>31</sup>。菩萨处胎的时候，使其母亲的心得到清净，进而身心得到安稳，就能得到快乐，当佛法智慧常驻余心，以慈悲来相随，自然能解脱自在。

体育不只是追求运动中速度、耐力、技术等表现，更重要的是将体育活动，当成是生命力的展现。若能巧妙运用「治心八法」在体育教学策略上，必能从运动中养成健全的心理。

#### 四、从身体层面谈体育中所蕴含的人间佛教理念

体育中包含了运动，运动能促进身体健康是人尽皆知的基本常识，而运动是让身体健康最好的方法之一。大师：「所谓『健康第一富』，一个人有再大的富贵，但是身体不健康，乃至卧病在床，也是不能享有，因此要珍惜身体，保护自己的健康。身体有病，心有余，力不足，想要做什么，都备感困难，生活失去所依所靠，人生失去奋斗目标，家人为你辛苦，甚至国家社会，也要为你付出医疗成本。因此，自我保健，健康就是富贵的来源」<sup>32</sup>。既然运动是让身体健康最好的良药，大师也提及：「若要身体健康，就必须调心行善，多作运动，注意保健，心安自然体泰」<sup>33</sup>。从「健康八法」，与身体相关的包含：饮食清淡、营养均衡、适当运动和正当作息。

[29] 参见《无心论》，CBETA, T85, no. 2831, p. 1269b28-c2。

[30] 参见《首楞严经义海》，CBETA, P168, no. 1581, p. 364a8-10。

[31] 参见《七佛经》，CBETA, T01, no. 2, p. 153a9-12。

[32] 参见星云大师：《星云法语10—欢喜满人间·快乐的生活 富之源》，新北市：香海文化，2009年。

[33] 参见星云大师：《佛教丛书1—教理·佛教的真理是什么》，高雄：佛光出版社，1995年。

### （一）饮食清淡和营养均衡：

「病从口入」已经不是现代的专有名词，暴饮暴食、挑食的不良习惯，亦是众所皆知，现代人吃太油、太咸、太辣、太燥，已造成身体上的负担。饮食要健康不一定在于吃得好或吃得饱，重点在于营养要均衡。

《杂阿含经》：「人当自系念，每食知节量，是则诸受薄，安消而保寿」<sup>34</sup>。运动员的饮食是要特别关照的，因为均衡的营养，才能让身体发挥最好的状态。在营养与健康饮食方面，食材的选择尽量以多样化、多种颜色，并且配合少盐、少糖及少油的饮食原则<sup>35</sup>。《佛垂般涅槃略说教诫经》亦云：「受诸饮食，当如服药，于好于恶，勿生增减，趣得支身，以除饥渴。如蜂采花，但取其味，不损色香」<sup>36</sup>。

### （二）适度运动：

人要活就要动，这是家喻户晓的观念，「动」就是生命的展现。现代人长时间坐在电脑前面，久坐不运动对身体造成不良影响。《起世经》：「譬如细软丈夫其体柔弱，食美食已，运动施为，受少疲触，乃得消化」<sup>37</sup>。适度的运动有利于身体健康，毋庸置疑，教育部体育署也曾推广「333运动」，即每周运动三次，每次三十分钟，心跳每分钟达到一百三，规律运动有助于身心的健康。

### （三）作息正常：

台大医院运动医学中心主治医师、台大医院复健部专任主治医师林昀毅表示，美国《睡眠研究期刊》的一篇研究，打破过去普遍认定的「运动后影响睡眠」观念，认为只要是作息正常、身体健康的一般人，运动后二小时再入睡，不仅对身体无负担、还有助于促进身心健康。<sup>38</sup>《遗教经》中说：「昼则勤心修集善法，无令失时；初夜、后夜，亦勿有废；中夜诵经，以自消息」<sup>39</sup>。佛陀每时每刻虽都在精进修行，但精进过程中，也不难发现，佛陀的作息日复一日，生活很有规律。

透过禅修也能得到身体健康。大师：「增进身体健康：经云：『心生则种种法生。』现代的医学证明……。禅坐可以让我们性情恬静，气息安宁，感受清凉，并且可以畅通气血脉络，促进新陈代谢，使机能不易退化，因此不仅可以增进身体健康，而且还能祛病延年」<sup>40</sup>。

[34] 参见《杂阿含经》，CBETA, T02, no. 99, p. 306c18-19。

[35] 参见黄健富、林贵福：〈职场健康生活形态面向之分析〉，《辅仁大学体育学刊》，第九期，2010年，页274-284。

[36] 参见《佛垂般涅槃略说教诫经》，CBETA, T12, no. 389, p. 1111a22-24。

[37] 参见《起世经》，CBETA, T01, no. 24, p. 320a12-15。

[38] 参见倪浩伦：〈夜间忌运动？医师：作息正常 利大于弊〉，中国时报，2016年。

<http://www.chinatimes.com/newspapers/20161004000370-260114>

[39] 参见《遗教经论》，CBETA, T26, no. 1529, p. 286a27-28。

[40] 参见星云大师：《佛教丛书7—仪制·禅净加行篇》，高雄：佛光出版社，1997。



以运动获取身体健康，运动有运动的方法，靠的就是体育，藉由体育中教育，从饮食、身心调节以及正确运动观念等，正确教育使大众获得健康的身体，也是体育中重点教育之一，大师所提及的「健康八法」，也无非是体育教育中重要的一个环节。因此，若以「健康八法」做为体育教育在健康上面的策略，相信也能达到身体健康的目标。（这整段不知所云）

## 五、从道德层面谈体育中所蕴含的人间佛教理念

卢梭在其著作《爱弥儿》中，主张儿童道德发展的重要活动是体育；苏格拉底主张体操训练对青年道德教育的重要性，并强调个体行为表现的价值在于勇气与自律，提出体育馆不仅是人民训练的地方，更是教育道德的最佳场域<sup>41</sup>。中国武术界流传着一句话：「未曾学艺先学礼，未曾习武先习德。」习武的人，应该遵守武术道德，习武之前，以习德为先。少林武术更有十条戒规，要求少林弟子们精进，并培养少林习武之人的道德。蔡宝忠在2002年，针对少林武术戒约，从达摩时期、觉远上人时期、灾劫后期一直到现今探讨少林的十条戒约，仍不离以下几点。武艺以强健体魄为主要、不可懈怠、不好勇斗狠、尊敬师长、和善对待同辈、不宜欺负弱小、不随意轻显技术、戒酒、戒肉、戒欲等等<sup>42</sup>，这些戒律不仅仅只是少林习武之人，也是大家都应该遵守的，亦藉由习武媒介提升个人道德内涵。佛教与武术的关系，可以追溯至悉达多太子。太子精通击技射术，曾一箭射穿七面皮鼓，乃至佛教的四大金刚、天龙八部等护法神威武的雄姿，以及手中执持的武器看来，佛教有威武、降魔的精神，佛教的武术，并非用来争强斗狠，而是一种慈悲、智慧、勇敢的表现<sup>43</sup>。「健康八法」中提及，正当嗜好也与人格的养成有关，也可以说是一个人的德行和道德。

### （一）正当嗜好：

培养正当的休闲运动嗜好，能活络筋骨，纾缓情绪，有助于身心健康，还能促进人格发展，提升个人社会能力。何谓正当？即合理的、正确的，教育部体育署将品德教育列为体育运动施政重要目标，引导建立学生与运动员正确的道德观，进而落实运动家精神<sup>44</sup>。

### （二）奉行五戒：

佛教的五戒更是做人的基本道德<sup>45</sup>，五戒意旨不杀、不盗、不淫、不妄、不酒戒的精神在止恶行善，饶益有情，《出三藏记集》：「将以观和上道德何

[41] 参见徐元民、许义雄等17位撰稿人：《体育理论基础经典丛书（上）》，台北市：国立教育资料馆，2007年。

[42] 参见蔡宝忠：〈谈谈少林武术戒约〉，《禅露》，电子版夏之卷，2002年。

[http://www.shaolin.org.cn/templates/T\\_publication/article.aspx?nodeid=207&id=2777](http://www.shaolin.org.cn/templates/T_publication/article.aspx?nodeid=207&id=2777)

[43] 参见星云大师：《佛教丛书8·佛教的武术精神》，高雄市：佛光出版社，1995年。

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[45] 参见星云大师：《佛教丛书6·宗派·律宗》，高雄：佛光出版社，1995年。

如耳？护曰：吾亦以为然，明日此客率其一宗百余口，诣护请受五戒」<sup>46</sup>。又《高僧传》：「法师道德所归，谨舍以奉给，并愿受五戒」<sup>47</sup>。除了五戒还有十善，十善更是为人的根本，可分为身、口、意行为，身有不杀生、不偷盗、不邪淫；口亦有不妄语、不恶口、不两舌、不绮语；意则是不贪欲、不瞋恚、不邪见。此十善更简单的来说，也就是大师所提倡的「三好运动」即做好事（身）、说好话（口）、存好心（意）来实践。五戒中除了不饮酒戒，其余都与十善有重复。以下将以不饮酒和三好运动，试述人间佛教在体育中的实践。

### （三）「三好运动」的实践：

「身」的行为上，不杀生、不偷盗、不邪淫，简单说就是不侵犯他人身体的行为。以体育而言，不伤害他人，在身体接触的运动项目里，不以小动作侵犯他人，或违反运动道德，刻意加害他人，甚至害他人受伤。「口」的行为而言，不妄语、不恶口、不两舌、不绮语，不说谎诈骗或毁谤别人的名誉。运动竞赛是一场君子之争，运动场上也总有胜负，语言上无须对他人讽刺，甚至辱骂，导致双方起冲突。「意」的行为即是不贪欲、不瞋恚、不邪见，不贪于一时的胜利，产生不好的邪念，引发彼此的瞋恨。最后，以不饮酒而言，主要是不得吸食任何会妨害身体健康及迷失理智的饮料或药物等。为求得胜利，许多运动员使用运动禁药，不仅丧失比赛的公平性，也造成运动员本身的身体负担。

大师在佛光山第一届「大专佛学夏令营」时，大师精心安排篮球活动，为的是藉由比赛改善佛青的生活态度，进而培养良好的习惯<sup>48</sup>。从体育的教育观点来看，运动场就是教室，运动教练与体育教师都是教育工作者，有好的运动教练与体育教师，才能教导出好的学生运动员<sup>49</sup>。由此可见，在体育运动的环境当中，就等同于教育场域，运动员、运动教练及体育教师对于品德教育可以发挥一定的影响力。运动教练及体育教师，透过策略的发挥及营造品德学习的优质环境，培养正确的道德观念，在运动中奉行五戒、落实三好，可以让运动员及学生在成长的过程中养成好的品德，而运动员未来在职业运动竞赛或是公开的比赛当中，树立良好的运动道德风范，能进而提升社会风气<sup>50</sup>。

[46] 参见《出三藏记集》，CBETA, T55, no. 2145, p. 98a15-17。

[47] 参见《高僧传》，CBETA, T50, no. 2059, p. 380b26-27。

[48] 参见释慧表：〈星云大师的实践-以体育弘扬人间佛教〉，《佛光山研究2014年徒众论文发表会第一册》，2014年，页124~160。

[49] 参见林正常：〈运动场上的品德教育〉，《运动教练科学》，第21期，2011年，页1-14。

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## 六、结语

佛光杯是佛光山所创立的国际大学篮球赛会，从2010年开始至今，尚未间断。其目的是为倡导全民运动，及五育均衡发展，从三好运动的理念，及身口意行为，发扬体育运动的教育价值。篮球是以球会友，志在参加不在胜利，友谊最珍贵<sup>51</sup>。人有许多的缺点，都可以在球场上学习改进，从球赛中可以学到许多做人的修养<sup>52</sup>。

体育的教育不只是单单的对身体的教育，其实从体育发展全人的教育，就要包含品德、道德，个人的升华，以及个人在团体中的和睦相处，藉由体育活动中练习，乃至延伸到日常生活中。（又不知所云）

本研究藉由体育的媒介，将人间佛教的理念传达，进而教化人心。大师有许多对人间佛教与运动之间的独特见解，而本文以健康八法，为体育全人教育的目标做简单的归纳，并以健康八法为根基，延伸出治心八法、五戒和十善等方针，以作为体育的全人教育策略。

本次研究主要在运用人间佛教理念，建构以体育全人教育为目标的教学策略，属于理论性的论述，在未来研究上，可以在实践层面上做进一步的探究，例如：从三好体育协会所举办的各种活动中，如何落实人间佛教理念，并符合佛说的、人要的、净化的、善美的。

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# 唐代女禅佛性自觉及其文化结构 以《祖堂集》为研究中心

白岚心

## 摘要：

本文由禅宗的众生本具佛性、于相而离相的思想义理谈起禅宗对于性别的平等观念，以《祖堂集》作为研究范围，从参禅女性的活动、自觉、话锋、形象四方面讨论女性修禅时的主体自觉性。唐代女性参禅修佛十分积极，禅师与弟子的对话中也有不少女弟子，女性领悟智慧和睿智话锋都不亚于男性，而禅门婆子一来一往的话锋总能展示其通俗聪慧之机敏。另外，禅门女性形象于公案中呈现活跃率性的一面，往往是极具生命样态的个性主体。

女性禅者独特文化源于唐代禅宗自身的成熟发展，再加上唐代女性地位提高，且由于禅宗和净土宗的盛行，使参禅阶级转而流动至庶民阶层，这皆提供良好的宗教氛围与思想平台，让平民女性可以有更多机会参禅礼佛。因此禅门女性可以跃升禅宗宗教场合，公开参禅、推广佛典。唐代在禅宗自身发展和女性地位提升推动下，使禅宗公案的女性，得以呈现具有佛性自觉而智慧明朗的美好样貌。

**关键词：**女禅、禅宗、《祖堂集》、佛性、自觉

## 一、前言

回顾佛学的发展，释迦牟尼创立僧团后，戒律亦随之产生，而随着僧侣团日益壮大，因此须制定更严格的戒律，然而早期佛教认为欲望是对僧团最大的威胁，亦是一切罪恶的来源。早期佛教认为女性是诱发欲望的主要来源，女性的地位远不如男性，例如小乘经典中认为女子有五秽，对女性的态度充满歧视，且女性数度被拒于僧团之外，许多小乘经典皆描述佛陀曾三次拒绝第一位比丘尼大爱道的出家请求。佛教内部僧人对禁欲的严格要求，再加上婆罗门社会歧视、宰制女性的流风所致，早期部派佛教的经律，往往把女子污名化，显见原始佛教对女性的歧视和压迫。

至大乘佛教经典对女性的看法就有较进步的改观，对女性能否成佛的立场也逐渐修正，如初期大乘经典就出现有能力神通变化转身为男性的女性菩萨，然而转身成佛的观念显然不够彻底，必须进一步破除男女身见。所以晚期如来藏系思

想则承认众生皆有如来藏性，不因性别而有所差异，其中又以禅宗对女性的宗教活动记录较为生动。关于女性禅师的记录散见于各史传、语录和灯史，虽无女性独立专著，但亦可窥见禅宗对女性较平等而开放的态度。

本文以《祖堂集》作为研究范围，此书记录禅师的语录及传承，是现存最早的禅宗灯史著作之一，记述自迦叶以至唐末五代共两百五十六位禅宗祖师的主要事迹及问答语句，其资料集中于唐代，可作为考证唐代女性佛性自觉的重要佐证。因此本文以《祖堂集》为分析范围，由此讨论唐代女性禅者的主体自觉性，还有整个唐代佛教中，禅门女性所表现的形象，还有唐代的禅宗发展，及当时的风气和结构如何影响佛门女性的修禅自觉。

而在中国佛教史上，唐代女子参与佛教活动极为踊跃，于《新唐书》卷四十八〈百官志三〉就记载女尼数高达五万五千七百七十六人，此只是唐代前期的记录，估计中唐应该更多。至于遁入空门的女性身分，包括公主、嫔妃、官僚子女、普通百姓、姬妾、妓女、宫人等<sup>1</sup>，也因为禅宗和净土宗的盛行，唐代平民女子参禅学禅的宗教活动非常热烈，展现属于别具一格的佛门女性样态。故本文以《祖堂集》为研究范围，希望可以探讨唐代女性禅者的主体意识，并分析禅门女性的美好形象，还有其佛性主体意识与唐代禅宗思想、背后社会风气及文化结构之间的关系，希望替女性禅者寻找一个社会与文化史中的价值座标。

## 二、禅宗平等性别观

禅宗开明的性别观，除了基于禅宗真常佛性思想，此外源于禅宗超脱开阔而不着相的理论架构，故以下试以禅宗佛性思想、不着相来加以讨论其平等开阔的性别观念。

### (一)、众生本具佛性

禅宗公案语录藉由对话、讨论，以教化僧众体悟人人本具的真心，亦即佛心本具，故众人在心性上并无差别，肯定人的本体与心性觉悟之重要性。例如《祖堂集》卷二中记载达摩祖师与惠可的对话：

又问：「请和尚安心？」师曰：「将心来，与汝安心。」进曰：「觅心了不可得。」师曰：「觅得岂是汝心？与汝安心竟。」达摩语惠可曰：「为汝安心竟，汝今见不？」惠可言下大悟<sup>2</sup>。

[1] (北宋)欧阳修、宋祁等：《新唐书》〈百官志三〉「崇玄署」条：「僧七万五千五百二十四，尼五万五千七百七十六。两京度僧、尼、女官，御史一人莅之。每三岁，州县为籍，一以留县，一以留州；僧、尼，一以上祠部；道士、女冠，一以上宗正，一以上司封。」

[2] 同注四，〈菩提达摩和尚传〉，页98。

此处的「安心」代表佛性内在本有，不用向外追求安定，重视人之自性本体，人只需回归清静自然之本心，不受客观外在事物的干扰，即所谓不以物伤性，便能自在彻悟。另外如《祖堂集》卷二记道信和僧璨的对话：

会中有一沙弥，年始十四，名道信，来礼师而问师曰：「如何是佛心？师答曰：「汝今是什么心？」对曰：「我今无心。」师曰：「汝既无心，佛岂有心耶？」又问：「唯愿和尚教某甲解脱法门。」师云：「谁人缚汝？」对曰：「无人缚。」师云：「既无人缚汝，即是解脱，何须更求解脱？」道信言下大悟<sup>3</sup>。

僧璨透过对话，让道信体证本没有外在事物可约束自身内在本心，返归本心，只需当下即刻能够解脱，可见人之「解脱」不是向外追寻，本体在本心内现成自足而不知，向外悬空去追求，反而遭外在束缚，所以佛性自觉即回归主体工夫与本体之整合，照亮本心方是圆通清明。

因此众生皆有佛性，所以众生在本质上无自无他、凡圣等一、平等一如，所以成佛的根据所在并不关乎男女性别。

## (二)、于相而离相

禅宗主张「直指人心，见性成佛」，一切众生皆有佛性，且佛性超越所有分别相，故禅宗也强调不执着于差别相，例如《景德传灯录》卷九京兆大荐福寺弘辩禅师云：

佛者西天之语，唐言觉，谓人有智慧觉照为佛心，心者佛之别名，有百千异号，体唯其一。本无形状，非青黄赤白男女等相，在天非天，在人非人，而现天现人能男能女，非始非终无生无灭，故号灵觉之性<sup>4</sup>。

佛心是无心之心、离一切相的心，「本无形状，非青黄赤白男女等相」即所谓「无相」，就是「于相而离相」，所以能够不于外境上生心，而不致有染。既然不对于外在产生分别差异心，对于世间男女、始终、生灭都能无所住，方能坦然显现本心清静。

无相、无住是法体清静的本然呈现，也是自性本无一法可得的自我实践，以「真如」为体，是「真如之用」的发挥，能如实观照，故内外不住，来去自由，能除执心，通达无碍。禅宗「于相而离相」的自由超越精神，不执着于世间

[3] 同注四，〈僧灿传〉，页110。

[4] 《景德传灯录》（台北市：三民出版社，2005年）〈京兆大荐福寺弘辩禅师〉，页561。

差异之样貌，因此禅宗对于男女的二分差别之相，也给予超越而平等的看待。

### 三、《祖堂集》中的女性禅者佛性自觉

佛性自觉既然取决于本心，所以成佛无关性别，女性佛性自觉亦内在于自心，女性亦具有当下体证彻悟的能力，而禅门灯录中时常表现女性自觉的卓越禅悟智慧、女性参验勘照话锋的机敏，还有女性率性活跃之形象，因此本章节将以活动、自觉、话锋、形象这四方面，加以论述《祖堂集》中女性禅者之佛性主体性。

#### (一)、活动：女性参禅学佛

《祖堂集》中禅师与弟子的讨论和互动中不乏女性的参与，反映唐代女性参禅及讨论佛学十分积极，而且女性和禅师的对话中，时常可以表现女性对于禅学的爱好或是悟禅之聪慧。例如《祖堂集》里记录六祖至刘志略家，夜听尼转《涅槃经》的事迹<sup>5</sup>，这则资料于《景德传灯录》亦有记载，当中有六祖和无禁藏尼的对话：

尼无尽藏者，即志略之姑也，常读《涅槃经》，师暂听之，即为解说其义。尼遂执卷问字，师曰：「字即不识，义即请问。」尼曰：「字尚不识，曷能会义？」师曰：「诸佛妙理非关文字。」尼惊异之，告乡里耆艾云：「能是有道之人，宜请供养。」于是居人竞来瞻礼。近有宝林古寺旧地，众议营缉，俾师居之。四众雾集俄成宝坊<sup>6</sup>。

六祖体证禅为实修的体悟工夫，而无关乎文字言语，所以才说「诸佛妙理非关文字。」这便是禅宗不立文字之妙，只于正心之自性上下工夫。然而值得注意的是尼无尽藏不仅常读《涅槃经》，也在于和六祖的对话中，体悟六祖的智慧，并且转告乡里耆艾，使百姓们前来瞻礼，反映唐代比丘尼对于佛经的喜好，也在和禅师的对话中，体证禅师之智慧，并且具有推广参禅礼佛的影响力，能够促使广大百姓进而参禅学佛，可见比丘尼在唐代佛教的影响地位十分重大。另外如达摩和弟子们的对话，达摩言：「有三人得我法。一人得我髓，一人得我骨，一人得我肉。得我髓者惠可，得我骨者道育，得我肉者尼总持<sup>7</sup>。」类似纪录同样出于《景德传灯录》：

迨九年，已欲西返天竺，乃命门人曰：「时将至矣，汝等盖各言所得乎？」时门人道副对曰：「如我所见，不执文字，不离文字，而为道用。」师曰：「汝得吾皮。」尼总持曰：「我今所解如庆喜见阿闍佛国。一见更不再见。」师曰：「汝

[5] 同注四，〈安国和尚传〉，页488。

[6] 《景德传灯录》（台北市：三民出版社，2005年）〈第三十三祖慧能大师〉页247-248。

[7] 同注四，〈菩提达摩和尚传〉，页98。

得吾肉。」道育曰：「四大本空五阴非有，而我见处无一法可得。」师曰：「汝得吾骨。」最后慧可礼拜后依位而立，师曰：「汝得吾髓。」乃顾慧可而告之曰：「昔如来以正法眼付迦叶大士<sup>8</sup>。」

《景德传灯录》中记录较《祖堂集》详细，差别在于达摩认为弟子分别得其皮、肉、骨、髓，较《祖堂集》多了一层「皮」的境界，不过大意皆相似。其中惠可弟子以心印心，礼拜后依位而立，体证达摩祖师所言之道，故体道不言，真实究竟之大道本就无需多言，因此达摩认为惠可真正得到佛法的精髓。然而达摩与弟子的对话中，亦出现女弟子尼总持的身影，尼总持曰：「我今所解如庆喜见阿闍佛国。一见更不再见。」尼总持对于佛法的见解如庆喜见到阿闍佛国，见到清净国土便去除对于「相」的执着。因为尼总持对于「相」的消解，依旧要建立在见阿闍佛国的执着，所以达摩认为尼总持只得其肉。不过这样的对话却能反映禅师与诸弟子谈论佛法时，女弟子的身影亦能出现其中，可见女性不仅在当时可以拜入禅师门下，与其他男性弟子享有同样平等的参禅机会，且由达摩的反应，展现达摩是以弟子领悟佛法的境界判别高下，而非以性别或其他外在条件评断弟子。虽然尼总持领悟之境比不上惠可，但也能平等和其他弟子谈佛法，并且分享自己的见解。因此唐代比丘尼和其他男弟子一样可投入禅师门下，并与其他弟子、禅师共同讨论佛法。此外比丘尼对于经典佛法的爱好不亚于男性，还具有广大的推行力和影响力，足以使百姓投入禅门，故唐代女性参禅修佛的活动十分活跃积极，而且她们学经、诵经，拜师学习佛法，还大力推广佛典，从中表现女性对于唐代佛学的影响。

## (二)、自觉：女性禅悟智慧

前面已论述过唐代女性参禅学佛之积极，此外《祖堂集》中还刻画许多女性高度的禅悟智慧，其实并不逊色于男性。例如卷十五录庞居士和其女灵照之事：

居士临迁化时，令女备汤水，沐浴着衣。于床端然跌坐，付嘱女已，告曰：「你看日午则报来。」女依言，看已，报云：「日当己午，而日蚀阳精。」居士云：「岂有任摩事？」遂起来自看。其女寻，则据床端然而化。父回见之，云：「俊哉，吾说之在前，行之在后。」因此居士隔七日而终矣<sup>9</sup>。

庞居士原本已准备于正午迁化，故命女儿灵照回报何时日正当中，结果灵照回报父亲时辰已正午，但是出现日蚀，结果居士才刚往门外一探究竟，灵照便于

[8] 同注八，〈第二十八祖菩提达摩〉，页122。

[9] 同注四，〈庞居士〉，页702。



床上端然而化，而庞居士则需再延七日圆寂。佛陀所说涅槃，指众生去除生命的迷执、断灭轮回果报的无名和业力，呈现出自由自在的生命境界，而潜心修行之人，往往能够得到佛的神秘指示，或自己预知圆寂之日而从容就死。死之必然与人之无常在圆寂迁化中淡定展现，常人面对死亡的恐惧却在得道之士身上演绎为自然而平静，灵照便展现出对于圆寂的平淡，可知其禅悟智慧已达生命的自在，才能如此从容赴死。可见，灵照佛性自觉的禅悟智慧并不亚于父亲，可谓不相上下。

另外《祖堂集》卷十九记俱胝和尚和实际尼的互动：

师因住庵时，有尼众名实际，戴笠子执锡，绕师三匝，卓锡前立，问师曰：「和尚若答，某甲则下笠子。」师无对，其尼便发去。师云：「日势已晚，且止一宿。」尼云：「若答得便宿，若答不得，则进前行。」师叹曰：「我是沙门，被尼众所笑。滥处丈夫之形，而无丈夫之用<sup>10</sup>。」

俱胝和尚住庵时，实际尼来到庵里却戴着斗笠绕着和尚三圈，并且向他询问佛理，和尚却无法对答，后俱胝和尚欲留实际尼留宿，实际尼又向俱胝和尚再追问一次佛理，才愿留宿一夜，最后俱胝和尚还是无言以对。两次的问答中可发现俱胝和尚的无对，在于他被询问之时，想回答却有了分别心，表示他对自己的佛理境界仍旧十分执着，无法坦然视之。这与禅悟智慧背道而驰，但是实际尼则展现高超的修持境界，能在问答中让俱胝和尚无对，可见实际尼的禅悟智慧之高妙。

而《祖堂集》卷二十载灌溪和尚和末山尼的对话：

师到末山师姑处，师姑问：「从何处来？」师云：「路口来。」师姑云：「何不盖覆？」师却问：「如何是末山？」师姑云：「不露顶。」进曰：「如何是末山中？」姑云：「非男非女相。」进曰：「还变也无？」姑云：「不是鬼神，变什摩？」师肯之<sup>11</sup>。

灌溪和尚原欲与末山尼在佛法境界上一较高下，第一次问答中末山尼问灌溪和尚从何而来，灌溪和尚则回应从路口来，末山尼反问为何不把路口覆盖起来。由于灌溪和尚应该是为求取佛法而来，但却又带着比较差异之心，这在根本上违背佛理，所以末山尼以覆盖路口说明灌溪和尚为佛法而来，却又自行遮掩真理。而灌溪和尚询问「如何是末山？」末山尼答：「不露顶。」「末山」即指真心，心是本具的，故念心当下即是，无须向外求，因此末山尼才回应不露顶，末山尼不但

[10] 同注四，〈俱胝和尚〉，页870。

[11] 同注四，〈灌溪和尚〉，页894。

呈现聪敏智慧，又能对男女分别相不起分别心，以平等之心视之。禅悟智慧本不该分男女差异，而且末山尼亦说明佛理无关神通变化，常人容易对于神通变化起钦慕和爱好之心，反迷失自性本心，所以末山尼认为应把持自性，而不是追求外在的神通能力，表现出末山尼领悟智慧高于灌溪和尚，所以使其服膺向学。

《祖堂集》卷九中有一名年方十二岁的郑十三娘，但是其禅悟智慧却极其不凡。

郑十三娘年十二，随一师姑参见西院洩和尚，才礼拜起，大洩问：「这个师姑什么处住？」对云：「南台江边。」洩山便喝出。又问：「背后老婆子什么处住？」十三娘放身进前三步，叉手而立。洩山再问：「这老婆子什么处住？」十三娘云：「早个对和尚了也。」洩山云：「去！去！」才下到法堂外，师姑问十三娘：「寻常道『我会禅』，口如铃相似，今日为什么大师问着总无语？」十三娘云：「苦哉！苦哉！具这个眼目也道我行脚，脱取纳衣来，与十三娘着不得。」十三娘后举似师，便问：「只如十三娘参见大洩，与摩只对还得平稳也无？」师云：「不得无过。」娘云：「过在什么处？」师乃叱之。娘云：「今日便是锦上添花<sup>12</sup>。」

郑十三娘与师姑参拜洩和尚，洩和尚询问师姑从何处来，师姑却不明其理回答真实住处，实际上本心即住处，人之个体既已来到西院，那自心亦于当下当处，又何来其他住处。但是师姑却无法体悟洩和尚之理，反而是十二岁的郑十三娘却能领悟洩和尚的真义，仅以前进三步和插手而立回之，但师姑却仍旧执念于禅门应该妙语如珠，始终不明洩和尚和郑十三娘之间的问答。郑十三娘的禅悟智慧不因其年纪和性别限制，呈现了其聪慧参透真相的形象。

不论是灵照从容就死的自在境界，或实际尼以大丈夫之行略使俱胝和尚心服，还有末山尼对于男女别相和神通之变，不起任何分别差异心，以及郑十三娘的聪明早慧，这些佛门女性都表现出不为外执所迷妄，能够回归平凡自然的内在心性，故而内心自在而清澈。女性佛性自觉之主体能于禅宗公案中，呈现高度修悟和智慧的模样。她们的才智和机敏亦代表禅门领悟力不以性别为差异之平等。

### (三)、话锋：婆子勘验参照

由于实相真谛的不可言说性，故禅宗不立文字，直指本心，所以禅是心性实修工夫，超越语言和理性逻辑，但不得已又必须用语言向一般大众传达佛法，

[12] 同注四，〈罗山和尚〉，页450。



所以禅门公案的对答便经常以象征、譬喻、暗示的语言表意。对答形式表面上常常循环问答，看似答案又返回问题本身，然而此种循环对答，必待其中一方跳脱惯性逻辑思维，方能超越循环圈。而且在每次的对答中，即使是重复的字句，每次的感悟也不同。这关系着对话主体的感悟程度，所以禅宗公案的矛盾对立，是为方便诠释不可说的真谛。禅师所提的问题，婆子却时常故意从反面回答，问与答之间形成矛盾，反而展现正言若反的独特形式，突破语言文字的限制，在看似矛盾的言语中，传递不可言说的佛法。

公案中婆子便常以机智的话锋与他人对答，在循环对答的过程中，婆子往往能以通俗幽默的语言，展现其勘验参照的聪敏睿智，由一来一往的对话中表现禅婆自身对于佛法的领悟。例如《祖堂集》卷十七记：

师行脚时，三人同行，逢见女人收稻次，问：「退山路何处去？」女人云：「蓦底去。」师云：「前头水深，过得摩？」女云：「不湿脚。」师云：「上岸稻得与摩好，下岸稻得与摩勿次第。」女云：「下岸稻总被螃蟹吃却。」师云：「太香生。」女云：「无气息。」师云：「住在什摩处？」女云：「只在这里。」三人到屋里，其女见来，点一瓶茶，排批了云：「请上座用神通吃。」三人不敢倾茶。女云：「看老婆呈神通去也。」拈起盏子，便泄行茶<sup>13</sup>。

三位僧人途中遇到一婆子，三人向婆子问路，婆子只云往直走。禅门修行亦如是，直指本心无须妄为多行，但是僧人却仍旧询问前头水深问题，显得十分拘泥，不知变通。僧人后询问上下岸稻米种植好坏的差异，还说稻米太香生，而婆子以「无气息」回之，即勿动分别心，反映婆子话语中的智慧。最后婆子跟僧人说可用神通喝茶，但是三位僧人却不敢妄动，可见三人对于「神通」已起心念动分别诸境，婆子却大方地拈起盏子喝茶，还说明她在大逞神通，其实修行本身便是这样贴近生活，只须返归自心，应是极平易近人，但三位僧人却未能体悟，反而执着于「神通」的表象，但婆子却在对答中，显现其对「神通」的表象无所沾黏，反而将禅落实于日常之生活。

至于《祖堂集》卷十八载「赵州勘破」这则有名的公案，其中记赵州和尚和婆子的对话：

有人问老婆：「赵州路什摩处去？」婆云：「蓦底去。」僧云：「莫是西边去摩？」婆云：「不是。」僧云：「莫是东边去摩？」婆云：「也不是。」有人举似师，师云：「老僧自去勘破。」师自去，问：「赵州路什摩处去？」老婆

[13] 同注四，〈大慈和尚〉，页742-743。

云：「蓦底去。」师归院，向师僧云：「敢破了也<sup>14</sup>。」

有僧人向婆子问赵州路该如何去，婆子指点禅僧「蓦直去」，如同前文才刚论述过禅婆大显神通公案，「蓦直去」便是直指本心，当下即是禅门机锋，但是僧人显然未能领悟婆子之语，还不断拘泥于赵州路的位置。后赵州和尚向婆子问了一模一样的问题，婆子照样回应「蓦直去」，但是赵州却向僧人说已经勘破婆子。历来便有许多注家针对此则公案发表不同看法，有些认为赵州已勘破婆子，例如照觉常总，其为黄龙慧南的弟子，其颂：「赵州一勘老婆也，千古英风价转新。南去北来犹未荐，台山从此长荆榛<sup>15</sup>。」有些则认为婆子悟力非凡，无可勘破处，如圆通可仙颂云：「本欲平夷道路，反成土上加泥。而今五湖四海，刚被勘婆话迷<sup>16</sup>。」笔者以为此则公案不需执着于赵州或婆子境界高下判别，当婆子与赵州说「蓦直去」之时，赵州并未像之前的僧人一般继续追问，便可知他于当下体悟婆子直指本心之意，赵州和婆子能心心相印，体证对方所言之理，可见赵州和婆子都具有禅悟之智，而赵州向僧人说明已勘破婆子，是希冀僧人亦无需把此事再挂于心上，反而有所牵挂与拘束，违反清静本心。

不管是自逞神通豪迈喝茶的婆子，抑或是与赵州对话的婆子，都能以通俗的语言展现独到的禅境，从其和僧人或禅师一来一往的对答中，可见其悟力之高。其话语之接机，亦呈现婆子的机敏聪慧，婆子话锋的睿智并不下于男性和尚或僧人，凸显禅门女性敏捷的勘验能力。

#### (四)、形象：率性活跃主体

由前文已知唐代女性于参禅活动十分积极，禅师与弟子的对话中不乏女弟子，此外女性禅悟智慧和睿智话锋都不亚于男性。另外值得注意的是禅门中的女性形象并不像中国传统社会对女性所期待的庄重严谨，或恪守规范理教，禅门女性的形象于公案中呈现活跃率性的一面，而且往往是极具生命样态的个性主体。

例如前文已讨论过的实际尼，便具有大丈夫之形略和气概，还有禅婆对话用语则相当通俗，也会以生动活泼的动作展示其禅悟，如大显神通的婆子，便十足豪爽地将茶饮尽。此外灵照于《景德传灯录》卷十四〈邓州丹霞山天然禅师传〉中亦出现：

师访庞居士，见女子取菜次，师云：「居士在否？」女子放下篮子，敛手而立。师又云：「居士在否？」女子便提篮子去<sup>17</sup>。

[14] 同注四，〈赵州和尚〉，页793。

[15] 宋·法应集，元·普会续集，《禅宗颂古联珠通集》，卷18，《卍新纂续藏经》第65册，页586上。

[16] 同注十七，页585下。

[17] 同注八，〈邓州丹霞山天然禅师〉，页896。



天然禅师欲拜访庞居士，灵道见到禅师便放下篮子，并且敛手而立，可见其独当一面的大器，但是天然禅师又再问一次「居士在否？」，反映天然禅师并不重视眼前的灵照，只一心想找庞居士，所以无视灵照的敛手而立，而灵照则洒脱率性地当场离去，表现禅门女性直接率真、勇敢果断的形象。还有《祖堂集》卷十五记隐峰禅师倒立圆寂之事：

师因行至五台山，金刚窟前倒立而逝。众妨圣窟，拟易处茶毗，竟莫能动。先有亲妹，出家为尼在彼，及谳其兄行迹，遂近前呵云：「师兄平生为人，不依法律，死后亦不能徇于世情。」以手推倒，众获贖维。塔于北台之顶<sup>18</sup>。

当众人见到隐峰禅师倒立而化，而且亭亭然其衣顺体，都不免惊叹不已，惑于隐峰禅师圆寂的外观表象，只有隐峰禅师之妹大声斥曰：「师兄平生为人，不依法律，死后亦不能徇于世情。」还大力推倒其兄尸体，最后收舍利入塔。隐峰之妹虽只有一句对话，但其不惑于哥哥死之表象，还有果断直接的勇敢形象亦油然而生。禅宗女性活泼直率的形象，反映禅门能斥破性别偏见，因为女性具有平等成佛的机会和慧根，才能确立女性自信及富有生命的主体性。

#### 四、《祖堂集》植基于唐代佛教文化结构

禅宗肯定众生本来具有的真心、本性、佛性，是众生成佛的根据和最高主体性，而且真心的体用不分，全面肯定自心的意义和作用，因此本文虽以灯录中的唐代《祖堂集》女性作为探讨对象，但不表示只有唐代女性才具有佛性自觉。佛性本具于众生，女性的佛性应该本就自然存有，而且若由《比丘尼传》中的纪录可以发现，东晋南北朝时期已是中国尼僧团发展高峰的时期。尤其是南朝建业的比丘尼与达官贵人、帝后的交往频繁，深得上位者的尊敬和资助，所以具有强大的影响力<sup>19</sup>。但是六朝的尼众僧团多属于上流社会，或是和上流社会有密切的关系，和唐代的比丘尼重心转移至庶民社会不同，所以呈现的形象特质也大不相同。《比丘尼传》中不乏上层社会的尼师，但是禅宗灯录中出现许多平民阶层的婆子，所展现的形象也更为活泼率性。然而这些富有智慧又率性明朗的禅宗女性大量被书写和刻划于唐代，这又源自于唐代什么样的禅宗文化或是社会背景和文化结构呢？

##### (一)、禅宗自身发展

由禅宗正式成立至在较大范围的扩展，最初由唐朝的道信、弘忍上承北魏菩提达摩以来的禅法，在黄梅一代宣扬禅法，标志中国禅宗的正式成立。其后慧能从弘忍受法南归在韶州曹溪传法，神秀与弟子普寂在以东西两京为中心的北方

[18] 同注四，〈邓隐峰和尚〉，页682。

一代传法，后慧能弟子神会北上与北宗争取禅门正统，其它南宗弟子到各地传法，此时形成南北宗并立的时期。安史之乱后，经朝廷的正式裁定，南宗成为朝廷正统，北宗走向衰微。最后唐末五代时期形成唐门五宗，禅门思想达到成熟而大盛。

由禅宗思想发展的初期至唐朝末年，可见禅宗的思想与唐代的历史发展密不可分，在唐代对于官员、士大夫、民间都有相当大的影响力，像是神会便长期受到剑南的军事高官韦皋的崇敬和礼遇，另外如无住亦曾被汉州刺史崔宁请进成都讲法，以迎合当时笃信佛教的宰相杜鸿渐，以至于保唐禅派在杜鸿渐、崔宁的支持下，曾经兴盛一时。还有在江浙一代的牛头禅派，其六祖玄素长期在京口（江苏镇江）一代传法，也受到润州刺史韦铣及扬州刺史李愷尊敬与推崇。还有马祖的法系，其弟子智藏在虔州、普愿在池州传法，都受到当地州刺史的大力支持。由此可见禅宗在形成与发展的过程中，得到藩镇节度使、州刺史等地方官员的支持，所以得以有莫大的影响力和传播效果<sup>20</sup>。

禅宗强调的「即心是佛」思想，体用圆融的思维与机智的论答，在日常生活的简易提倡与崇尚自然的情趣，以及禅宗在心理上自我平衡的领悟，都对于中国士大夫有着极大的共鸣和吸引力，所以禅宗在士大夫的喜好下，于唐代得到迅速的兴盛，并且渗透自唐人的诗文或生活雅兴中。

上自上位者的支持，还有文人对于禅理的雅趣喜好，使得禅宗思想于唐代逐步兴盛而成熟，而禅宗宗派和义理发展的成熟，再加上其自由平等的佛性观，强调众生皆可当下成佛，自然提供妇女良好的平台，使女性也可以参禅学佛，跃上宗教的舞台，使得禅宗文献中具有更多关于女性的纪录。

## (二)、女性地位提高

唐代是胡汉融合的多元文化时代，不论是儒释道三家的兼采，或是与少数民族和海外贸易都有着较密切的接触，是多元又兼容并蓄、海纳百川的时代，因此推动书法、绘画、诗歌等文学艺术的进展。而在这样开放的文化背景下，唐代女子的思想也较为自由明朗，个性和其他时代相比更为豪爽直率。女性的婚姻、生活和社交都较为自由，包括两性关系上，可以公开与男子进行交往，结婚后女性离婚改嫁相对其他朝代自由，例如《唐律疏议》卷十四〈户婚〉中明文规定：「若夫妻不相安谐而和离者，不坐<sup>21</sup>。」夫妻之间若关系不和谐，就得以离婚，

[19] 释恒清：《菩提道上的善女人》（台北，东大出版社，2003年），页124。

[20] 杨曾文：《唐五代禅宗史》（北京：中国社会科学出版社，1995），页5。

[21]（唐）长孙无忌：《唐律疏议》（长沙：长沙商务，1939年），卷十四〈户婚〉，页10。



另外虽然法律未明文规定，但是如《旧唐书·列女传》记唐太宗时，刘寂之妻因父母双眼失明，要求和离归家侍奉父母亦或得批准，可见当时女性提出离婚较为容易。此外女性再嫁，在唐代也较为宽容开放，统治者亦明文鼓励寡妇改嫁，例如唐太宗在诏书规定：「男年二十，女年十五以上，及妻丧达制之后，孀居服制已除，并须申以媒媾，令其妇合<sup>22</sup>。」所以唐代由上层妇女到一般民间妇女都不忌讳改嫁，唐代公主再嫁或是三嫁便有许多。

女性经济条件上，唐代均田令发布：「凡道士给田三十亩，女冠二十亩，僧、尼亦如此。」表明僧尼于社会中具备一定的经济基础和社经地位。整体而言，唐代律法都给予女性较公平的保障，提升女性的地位。唐代政治权力中心也出现许多有才能的女子，包括武则天、太平公主、安乐公主等，使得女性有机会于政治中崭露头角。特别是武则天时期，采取许多措施提高女性的地位。她以女性身分进行封禅礼、修建明堂，涉足许多长期排斥女性的场合和领域，并首创女性主持祭祀，还把为母服丧的礼制进行改革，使得父在为母服丧三年成为定制，使女性权力达到中国历史上从未有的高峰。

由于唐代女性地位的提高，女性享有在法律、经济、制度上较多的平等权利，因此唐代对于女性也较为宽容开放。这样的开明风气也使得一般平民女性都得以有更多的机会跃升于禅门场合中参禅。

### (三)、尼师转向庶民

《比丘尼传》中的纪录可以发现，东晋南北朝时期是中国尼僧团发展高峰的时期。《比丘尼传》记载自晋升平年间至梁天监年间，即佛教东传中土，且由于上层社会的提倡，佛法相当隆盛。当时寺庙蜂起，僧尼云集，出现无数德行高远的僧侣，乃将「贞心亢志，奇操异节」的比丘尼予以记载，总共六十五人。这些比丘尼在当时影响甚大，尤其是南朝时建业的比丘尼与达官贵人，甚至于帝后的交往频繁，深得他们的尊敬和资助，因此具有相当的影响力。因多数帝后王公大臣都是虔诚佛教徒，此外有众多才学超群，又善结交权贵的比丘尼，比丘尼教团乃迅速发展成庞大的群体<sup>23</sup>。

然而，《比丘尼传》中的比丘尼和上层社会的关系密不可分，像是妙音、僧基等与当时权贵的关系有密切来往，而且其中多强调比丘尼苦行、贞节、讲述、习禅之美德或功劳，像是山阳东乡村竹林寺的静称比丘尼，便以粗食敝衣、只吃麻术的苦行闻名，还有以燃身作为苦行的善妙、慧耀、昙简、净圭等比丘尼。

[22]〔唐〕杜佑：《通典》，《钦定四库全书》本，卷五十九〈礼十九〉。

[23]释恒清：《菩提道上的善女人》（台北，东大出版社，2003年），页124。

可见东晋南北朝时期的比丘尼团体兴盛，但是她们和禅宗灯录中的女性形象大不相同，多以贞节、苦行、讲经等实际功业作为美德表彰，但是《祖堂集》中的唐代女性禅者，则具有更为率性、自我的主体性，以及率真自在的形象展现，甚至有俗语出口的大丈夫气概，而不再是以苦行或贞节闻名。这主要是因为唐代以后，禅宗和净土宗大盛，虽然唐朝一样具有内道场，但影响力已大不如魏晋六朝，反而因为禅宗的传播和其佛性平等观，以及净土宗的修行简易，所以唐代多数比丘尼的阶级由上层社会转向平民阶级，因此《祖堂集》中女性禅者便出现许多在家居士，像是庞居士的女儿灵照，甚至有路边的平民婆子，虽然她们的身分并不属于贵族，也并未和上层社会有密切的往来，却一样呈现高度佛性自觉的智慧，还有更为率性、无所拘束的真实形象。

禅宗宗派和义理在唐代的发展逐步成熟，以及唐代女性地位的提升，还有女性禅者由上层社会转向庶民阶层，禅理深入民间，使得女性得以出现在一般禅宗的宗教场合和典籍中。她们公开参禅、讨论佛理、推广佛典，也因禅宗对于女性平等开放的态度，使禅宗公案的女性，呈现明朗活泼的形象。女性以自我心性的体悟，于自身展现佛法修为和禅宗悟境，体现女性佛性自觉的主体性，替唐代禅宗文化写下一页页睿智又智慧的女性风貌。

## 五、结语

佛教强调众生本具的佛性，禅宗更是「教外别传，不立文字；直指人心，见性成佛。」真心便是众生成佛的根据和最高主体，而且真心体用不分，故禅宗全面肯定自心的意义和作用，禅理乃于相离相，所以能够不执着于外境，对于世间男女相、始终、生灭等，都能无偏执，不杂染，因此女性也平等具有佛性。而富有智慧又机智，且具有高度的佛性自觉意识的女性，则被大量书写和刻划于灯录中，展现独特的风采样貌。

女性于公案中呈现多采明朗的形样，源于唐代禅宗自身思想发展的新局面，加上唐代思想的兼容并蓄、多元开放，统治者对于女性的法律保障较为完整，使女性地位跃升，加上比丘尼的阶层转向庶民，所以民间便得以提供良好的宗教氛围与思想平台，使得女性有更多机会参禅、习禅。不论是女性参禅的积极性，与禅师的互动言谈和女性推动经典，都可见女性对于唐代禅宗的影响力，而且她们话锋的睿智、禅悟的智慧都十分卓越，又往往于言谈动作中呈现活泼直率的形象，成为具有佛性自觉的美好主体。

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# 经世利生——憨山德清三教圆融观探析

杨本华

## 摘要：

憨山德清三教圆融之思想不仅是三教融突之历史发展长期之结果，也是德清为学凝练之精华。其不仅仅从经典文本出发对三教之儒道、儒佛、道佛各方面打通彼此，又依圣人经世利生之心体与此心体之自利、利他之经世利生之用而从体用功夫等诸方面无碍圆融三教，可谓完备系统。且德清在融通三教同时又对诘难三教圆融或是三教间互相攻讦之言论做了回应，尤其是针对明末宗教间之诸多问题，提倡学佛之人需兼学其他百家思想，可以说不仅中兴了禅宗，更于当时佛教发展也大有裨益。本文自历史上三教关系发展部分轨迹为线索，逐步引出德清所处时代及其人生经历，由此据其所注三教经典展开其三教圆融观。

**关键词：**三教圆融；经世利生；憨山德清

## 一、解庄缘起

三教融合与冲突关系从佛教初传入中国，即有端倪<sup>1</sup>。三家经魏晋、隋唐、宋明几代发展融突、浮沉交迭、不断改易，最终形成我国历史上融突并进之独特三教关系，直至明末，三教合流之趋势大盛。德清生于当时，兼百家之学，尤精于佛，且其自幼好老庄之学，于三教圆融上用力颇多，是以成其一心为体，经世利生为用之解三教理论思想。

自佛教初传入中国来，国人或以为浮屠为神仙方术，如汉桓帝宫中祭祀“浮屠老子”，或以老庄解佛教思想者，其中翻译大多不免受到中国本土文化影响或是本身为契合中国本土文化而译，如六家七宗中诸多以老庄有无解佛教般若空义者。降至隋唐，佛教得空前发展，然这一时期三教之冲突也频频发生。及至唐武宗时会昌法难后，佛教诸宗由此大衰，至宋方有所恢复，此时三教关系亦融突兼杂，虽宋代有诸多三教融合之声，此中亦不乏攻讦者，至宋明道学家如濂溪、

[1] 德清对三教关系之理解，已有前辈提出德清仅从《道德经》与《庄子》实非是说道教，道家更合意思。笔者略有异议，虽道家自汉以来，一分为三：其一，黄老刑名之术，乃法家与道家之杂合，假道家而言权术，如韩非〈解老〉、〈寓言〉诸言，此非德清论及之道家，以内篇中〈应帝王〉中德清所论明王不测境界，说非是御臣之道，不在使帝王不测而臣子惧，乃是去臣子之心机，去百姓机心，而民自化，由此可见否定此派之意；其二，道教，重视神仙长生，与老庄原旨已有养性养形之分别；其三，魏晋玄学，分才性、名理二派，而德清所理解之道家，虽不免些许名理成分，但非特指此一派，乃是无非道家与道教二种。虽依德清下文中有解《庄子》诸篇中养生主诸篇，明论养性与养形之别是真知与强知之区别，及诸多回复天真本性之言论，及其解《道德经》中没身不殆意为虽身死而道长存等等，由此可知其非说此长生，但道教虽从汉末兴起而崇神仙方术与长生等，但至后来如德清所论三教之关系虽其意不在长生方术，但其三教圆融是对其所处时代儒释道三教之冲突而作，其时三教之冲突也已成儒、佛、道三种思想之冲突，原始道家思想与道教思想都包含其中，虽德清自己所论大多是原始道家思想，但其中亦非仅是原始道家之讨论，如其所论三教之现状若庄子所处之时代，三教之关系若百家争鸣之不齐既有此意。故本文下文所论述道家、道教即是分开意，若直说三教关系，则是持广义儒释道三种思想之关系。

二程、朱陆等皆排佛，大抵认为“惟一惟公故经世，惟利微私故出世<sup>2</sup>”以私利判佛。有明一代，三教之融突亦更明显。虽儒僧来往更加密切，在佛教积极融合三教情况下，诸多与僧人往来密切之儒者也都纷纷支持三教融合。如泰州学派李贽，其出入儒佛，作《三教归儒说》，认为“儒、道、释之学，一也，以其初皆出于问道也<sup>3</sup>”。然明代虽三教合流之势大盛，亦有诸反佛之论，如刘宗周及其弟子黄宗羲等皆有排佛之论，如崇祯四年“证人之会”，蕺山明分生死之事儒佛之不同，直言后者“事事求之于虚，必悟于生前，以知于死后，故曰，生从何来，死从何去。<sup>4</sup>”，而石梁于会上多言因果之事，梨洲鄙之以新建之传<sup>5</sup> 扫地即有此意。不仅如此，德清四十五岁时遇“有欲谋道场者。乃构方外黄冠。假称占彼道院。聚集多人讼于抚院。<sup>6</sup>”德清遂以智解难，化解闹剧。这样佛道之间乃至三教间之冲突如何去解决，可以说是德清注解三教之机所在。如德清针对历史上三教之间互相攻讦而言“窃观古今卫道藩篱者。在此。则曰彼外道耳。在彼。则曰。此异端也<sup>7</sup>”。又见许多学者弟子见佛经注释有援引儒、道之言者，则斥为外道。又见一些弟子研习《庄子》时，读一些言语觉得颇切合佛法，则言佛一大藏皆出于《庄子》。德清面对儒者病道佛，道士病儒佛，僧人病儒道以及庄尽佛意论等等诸多问题，认为是“自大视细者不尽。自细视大者不明<sup>8</sup>”。并于当年作《观老庄影响论》，此八篇加一序言可以说基本上描述了德清圆融三教之理路，德清三教圆融思想也于此成熟。

## 二、解庄理路

德清解庄之缘结于明末三教合流之势下，而正是如此合流之大势孕育了如此“有三教之任<sup>9</sup>”之大德。德清于年迈之际始将三教事业集中成于诸多注解文本，由此不难看出，德清欲以禅解诸家思想以方便后来者，如德清发明〈中庸〉旨意而作《中庸直指》时所言“因诸子有皈依者。未入佛理。故注中庸直指以发之<sup>10</sup>”，故德清解庄思想是其三教圆融之冰山一角，而对德清解庄思想探析前，需就其解庄理路，即三教圆融之理路作分析。而其三教圆融观散露在其注解三教经典中，故本文基于其注解三教经典之基础上，试论其三教圆融观。

德清对三教经典之注解或是经典旨意之发明破立并举，其以注释各家基本

[2] 陆九渊著：《陆象山全集》，北京：中华书局，1992年版，第11页。

[3] 李贽著，张建业等注：《李贽全集注》第3册，北京：社会科学文献出版社，2010年版，第223页。

[4] 姚名达著：《刘宗周年谱》，北京：商务印书馆，1931年版，第185页。

[5] 新建之传即王门后学浙东之学新建一传为龙溪，三传而至石梁。

[6] 憨山德清著，河北禅学研究所点校：《憨山大师全集·憨山大师年谱疏卷上》第20册，石家庄：河北省佛教协会法物流通处，2005年版，第245页。

[7] 《憨山大师全集·观老庄影响论》第19册，第35页。

[8] 同上书，第42页。

[9] 《憨山大师全集·憨山大师年谱疏卷上》，第193页。

[10] 同上书，第258页。



经典或发明经典旨意为主要立论根据，兼对历史上误解误读处予以破斥。这主要从儒道、儒佛、道佛三教间关系以及三教整体间之关系来展开，在三教分别关系中论述了三教间旧论旧说之误处，并阐释了其对于经典之解读以及三教间各自关系之论点；在三教整体间关系中以五乘观分别，又以一心圆融之不二法门展开，从体用、工夫两方面圆融无碍地论述了其三教观体系。

### (一)、禅解经典文本

其一，在调和儒道上。如对于孔子“毋意，毋必，毋固，毋我（《论语·子罕》）”与老庄追求释智遗形、离欲清净相连接。德清认为“世人所以不能如圣人者。但有意必固我四者之病。故不自在。动即是苦。<sup>11</sup>”，故孔子设教而言四毋是教人破执而已，尤其末者，所谓意、必、固者即为我执，诚如杨仁山居士所言“四者之中，以我为根，我病若除，则前三尽绝矣<sup>12</sup>”，而老子之意与其相得益彰，“若夫老子超出世人一步。故颛以破执立言。要人释智遗形。离欲清净。然所释之智。乃私智。即意必也。所遗之形。即固我也。所离之欲。即己私也。清净则廓然无碍。如太虚空。即孔子之大公也。<sup>13</sup>”由此将孔子与老子旨趣趋同一处。

其二在调和儒佛上。限于篇幅，本文从经典文本理论上引如下三处解之。首先以孔子“去欲”说儒佛共通处，“孔子曰。人有欲。焉得刚。不刚。则于此法门。犹望洋也。是以吾佛出世。最初说此离欲法门。是犹痛处札锥耳<sup>14</sup>”，德清认为孔子论申枵有欲而不得刚，若刚则至少无欲，并由此与佛门离欲法门结合；其次是以儒家“安命”之说与佛教“因果”结合，德清认为儒家所说安命思想，一切都已注定，而这些注定之因即是我自造之果，故贫富得失、穷达寿夭都是命里必然，故安命之命之必然即是因果之道理；最后是其在为《大学》作决疑时将文中所提出“明明德”中两个“明”之阐释以及“悟得明德。立地便是圣人”与禅宗明心见性、顿悟成佛联系起来：

两个明字。要理会得有分晓。且第二个明字。

乃光明之明。是指自己心体。

明明德即是悟明揭示之光明本性，而此种“人人自性本来光明广大自在。不少丝毫。但自己迷了”，但如果能够“悟了自己本性光光明明……悟得明德。立地便是圣人<sup>15</sup>”，此即顿悟成佛之意思，故不仅仅于佛教上明此本心顿悟成

[11] 《憨山大师全集·老子道德经解》，第78-79页。

[12] 杨仁山著，梅愚点校：《经典发隐·论语发隐》，武汉：崇文书局2016年版，第5页。

[13] 同上书，第79页。

[14] 《憨山大师全集·梦游集中·书四十二章经题辞》第2册，第336页下。

[15] 同上书，第7页。

佛，于儒家上来说明此本心即立地为圣人，故其释佛时说“佛者觉也。即自己本有光明觉性。能见此性。立地便是圣人。”<sup>16</sup>佛与圣人本来一体，由此圆融儒佛两教。

其三在调和道佛上。德清对道佛之圆融是其理论中光彩耀人之一点，其作品《老子道德经解》、《庄子内篇注》，从老庄两本经典上以佛释道，其中充溢着道佛圆融之思想。德清颇为赞赏老庄，将其二人与孔孟之关系相譬喻，认为“《庄子》一书，乃《老子》之注疏，“予尝谓老子之有庄。如孔之有孟<sup>17</sup>”。因本文下文将论述诸多德清解庄思想，故此处道佛圆融之例中道之方面以老子为主。

德清对老子评价颇高，在德清所处有明一代，面对世人非禅，认为禅在老子处已早有，将佛道融汇，以反击对禅之攻击：“且禅以我为弊。故破我以达禅。老则先登矣<sup>18</sup>。”

除此外，德清对《道德经》作全篇注解，其中诸多道佛圆融思想及三教圆融处，如有对《道德经》中诸多人天乘止观工夫之界定及《道德经》中诸文辞含义与佛教经典之会通。在止观工夫上，如“宠辱若惊，贵大患若身（《道德经·十三章》）”是言去名利与身工夫；“致虚极，守静笃（《道德经·十六章》）”是言外物本来不有（虚），内心如如不动（静），此亦止观工夫；“孔德之容、惟道是从（《道德经·二十一章》）”是言去名利之工夫。

## （二）、五乘教法与真如一心

德清对三教经典以及旧论误读误解处之重新解读，是基于圆融三教间关系基础上，除此外，德清三教圆融观中有另一方面，即是三教整体关系上圆融。这种圆融笔者将之区别为此节所论述次第观与真如心上之不二圆融与下节所论述之体用观与工夫论上之不二圆融。

德清认为“一切无非佛法。三教无非圣人<sup>19</sup>”，三教之法如《法华经》譬喻品中牛车、羊车、鹿车，但究竟而言，其实只是一车，因众生根器不同亦即是圣人设教之“机”不同，而因此“机”，故别出儒释道三教。接着德清将儒道代表人物孔子、老子分别列入五乘观。

[16]《憨山大师全集·梦游集下·自性说》，124页下。

[17]《憨山大师全集·庄子内篇注》，第1页。

[18]《憨山大师全集·观老庄影响论》，第71页。

[19] 同上书，第45页。



德清认为“孔子。人乘之圣也。故奉天以治人。老子。天乘之圣也。故清静无欲。离人而入天<sup>20</sup>”，德清自孔门与道家设教之迹，即从孔门与道家之教法上将二者分别判入人乘与天乘。此五乘观之分别又可从德清所著诸多绪言中窥得一二，如“故观老庄。而知诸子未尽也。观西方圣人。而知老庄未尽也<sup>21</sup>”，由此可知，就此次第上说，老庄言出诸子所未言处，而佛又言出老庄之未言处，由此可见次第之别。

德清虽从教法上将儒道分别判入人、天乘，可又对孔、老之心义作大发挥。乃言老子“且出无佛世。观化知无。有似独觉<sup>22</sup>”，而看其学旨趣所在在于“虚无自然”，又属于外道，但又看其救世慈悲之心则又似菩萨乘。此种说法不仅在德清论述老庄道家时如此，在称赞孔子时亦有如此言论，如“毋意毋必毋固毋我。观其济世之心。岂非据菩萨乘。而说治世之法者耶<sup>23</sup>”至此德清三教观则尤为明晰，德清以五乘观为框架判摄三教教法而有分别，又以三教圣人一心同而融通三教。如上所说老庄言诸子之所未言处，而佛言老庄未尽言处，非是佛、老庄、诸子有个分别，乃是言教上有所区别，德清借本迹角度对此加以说明。德清此处判教之根据为圣人之迹，即是圣人设教之内容如儒家、道家，以及诸子等诸教教法、经典等，而从本上说，即是从孔、老、释之本心上看，则三者圣人心并无差别，此即如权实智之分别也，亦庄子所说“书不过语，言有贵也（《庄子·秋水》）”之书语与言贵处之不同，此亦如《法华经》之譬喻品之比喻。

### (三)、工夫论

上节已论德清依五乘观分别判摄儒道为人、天乘，依此人、天乘之分，而又以一心圆融三教差别，除此外德清于止观工夫上亦有其圆融三教理念之文章。德清依此五乘观，对三教止观工夫也作如是分类。

如在德清看来儒家是人乘止观，而道家则是天乘止观，这两种止观都涵括在五乘止观工夫中，引下诸文为证：

以孔子颀于经世。老子颀于忘世。佛颀于出世。然究竟虽不同。其实最初一步。皆以破我执为主。工夫皆由止观而入<sup>24</sup>。

德清看来三教俱是以破除我执为主，工夫也都从止观而入。以下略述三教之破我执。

[20] 同上书，第44-45页。

[21] 《憨山大师全集·憨山大师绪言》第20册，第162页。

[22] 《憨山大师全集·观老庄影响论》，第52页。

[23] 《憨山大师全集·观老庄影响论》，第46-47页。

[24] 《憨山大师全集·老子道德经解》，第79-80页。

其一，佛教之破我执。

吾佛说法。虽浩瀚广大。要之不出破众生粗细我法二执而已。二执既破。便登佛地。即三藏经文。皆是破此二执之具。所破之执。即孔子之四病。尚乃粗执耳<sup>25</sup>。

佛教以破执为先，此不待论而自明，德清以此佛法所破我、法二执而言孔门及道家之破执之论如下。

其二，孔门之破我执。

世人所以不能如圣人者。但有意必固我四者之病。故不自在。动即是苦。孔子观见世人病根在此。故使痛绝之。即此之教。便是佛老以无我为宗也<sup>26</sup>。

以孔圣为名教宗主。故对中下学人。不敢轻言破我执。唯对颜子。则曰克己。其余但言正心诚意修身而已<sup>27</sup>。

德清对孔子之四毋：“毋意、毋必、毋固、毋我（《论语·子罕》）”评价颇高，认为“孔之四毋。禅之一心。皆复性之要。有志之士。可不勉哉<sup>28</sup>”此四毋则是判定儒家之教法归于人乘而孔子之圣人之心不在此乘之关键，且此四毋所破意、必、固、我，在德清看来还仅是粗执，易断，所言此四者是粗执，乃是德清认为孔子之四毋皆是分别我执而言。此四毋即是孔门之破执。

其三，道家之破我执。

至若老氏以虚无为妙道。则曰谷神不死。又曰死而不亡者寿。又曰生生者不生。且其教以绝圣弃智忘形去欲为行。以无为为宗极。斯比孔则又进。观生机深脉。破前六识分别之执。伏前七识生灭之机。而认八识精明之体即楞严所谓罔象虚无微细精想者。以为妙道之源耳<sup>29</sup>。

至于讲尧舜。薄汤武。非大言也。绝圣弃智之谓也。治推上古。道越羲皇。非漫谈也。甚言有为之害也。诋訾孔子。非诋孔子。诋学孔子之迹者也。且非实言。乃破执之言也<sup>30</sup>。

[25] 同上书，第79页。

[26] 《憨山大师全集·老子道德经解》，第78-79页。

[27] 同上书，第78页。

[28] 《憨山大师全集·梦游集上·示袁公寥》，第131上。

[29] 《憨山大师全集·观老庄影响论》，第58页。

[30] 同上书，第47-48页。



德清言老子比孔又进，是言老子破前六识之执，伏七识生灭之机，认八识精明之体，此是细执难断，故比孔子又进。进而又言庄子中诸诋薄尧舜汤武之言，抵訾孔子之语也意在破执。由此则三教破执之论已明，下论三教工夫缘何俱是从止观而入。

佛教有三无漏学，“所谓。摄心为戒。因戒生定。因定发慧。是则名为。三无漏学<sup>31</sup>。”，止观之止即定，观即慧。德清认为因佛教五乘有别，而止观工夫有大乘、有小乘、有人天乘、四禅八定、九通明禅等，但都从止观而入。对儒家，德清认为儒家之根本在仁义礼智诸教化，而此教化意在使人向善，所以定尊卑上下，但这种分别在德清看来是“断前六识分别邪妄之思。以祛斗争之害<sup>32</sup>。”，这种明善何处之知，即是“知止而后有定（《大学》）”之知止，故儒家之工夫由止观入。而道家在德清看来“老助于定。以其精于忘我<sup>33</sup>。”，老子之论有助于学者定，即止，且老子追求虚无自然，绝圣去智，忘形去欲，此等皆是止观之工夫，也是德清说老子助于定之原因所在。

以上是德清依五乘观论述三教以破执为主，且都从止观而入，以此论述三教圆融之处。而德清将儒道判入人天乘内，认为孔子所说“知止而后有定（《大学》）”、“自诚明（《中庸》）”是人乘止观，是言前者知有所止，而志能有所定向，所止即至善之地，后者指自诚而明之圣人之德，两者俱属人道，故是人乘；所言老子“常无欲以观其妙”，庄子“莫若以明”及庄子中“皇帝之退居。颜子之心斋。丈人承蜩之寓。仲尼梦觉之论<sup>34</sup>”之去欲离痴之言是属十善业故为天乘。虽然三教止观工夫有区别。德清进而提出儒道止观工夫实又有超出所在人天乘次第处。引文如下：

且出无佛世。观化知无。有似独觉。原其所宗。虚无自然。即属外道。观其慈悲救世之心。人天交归。有无双照。又似菩萨。盖以权论。正所谓现婆罗门身而说法者。据实判之。乃人天乘精修梵行而入空定者也。所以能济世者。以大梵天王为娑婆主。统领世界。说十善法。救度众生。据华严地上菩萨为大梵王。至其梵众。皆实行天人。由人乘而修天行者。此其类也无疑矣<sup>35</sup>。

虽然。孔氏之迹固然耳。其心岂尽然耶。况彼明言之曰。毋意毋必毋固毋我。观其济世之心岂非据菩萨乘。而说治世之法者耶<sup>36</sup>。

[31] 《大正藏·楞严经》第19册，第131页下。

[32] 《憨山大师全集·观老庄影响论》，第57页。

[33] 同上书，第62页。

[34] 同上书，第50页。

[35] 同上书，第52页。

[36] 同上书，第46-47页。

德清认为老子在无佛出世之世界而能知观化知无，此有达缘觉乘之次第，而看其宗趣，却又只是虚无自然，又是外道。而就孔、老慈悲救世之心而言，则似乎又近菩萨乘，甚至认为老子乃如法华经所说观世音菩萨现身婆罗门说法。进而言孔、老二圣乃为佛所遣，为佛法前导，如此，既言三教都以破执为本，且都以止观为入手处，又言三教止观次第分别及止观次第是仅就教法上说即用上说，而从三教圣人心即三教止观之体上说，儒道又可上追菩萨乘，此种分别与相同两边说法即是德清圆融三教之特色思路，是为工夫论上三教圆融。

#### (四)、体用观

德清除如以上从工夫论上圆融三教，亦从体用观上对三教关系作如下圆融。

首先，德清三教体用观之提出，出自一问，如下：

三教圣人教人。俱要先破我执。是则无我之体同矣。奈何其用。有经世忘世出世之不同耶<sup>37</sup>。

其所问为三教俱以破我执为先，无我之体同，如儒之毋意，毋必，毋固，毋我，道之释智遗形，佛之破执，即是如上文所论三教之破我执，既是破我执即是无我，此为体。而三教又有所谓经世、忘世、出世之不同，则是就用上说，却又有个差别。在论德清之解前，需就此经世、忘世、出世三用作一略述。

此所谓经世、忘世、出世之说法，本自德清口说。有文载“不知《春秋》。不能涉世。不知老庄。不能忘世。不参禅。不能出世<sup>38</sup>”，“以孔子专于经世。老子专于忘世。佛专于出世<sup>39</sup>。”德清将三教在用上分作经世、忘世、出世，详论如下。

其一，孔门之经世。《春秋》即代表孔门，德清认为《春秋》作，而名分正，赏罚明，故孟子云“昔者禹抑洪水而天下平，周公兼夷狄，驱猛兽而百姓宁，孔子成《春秋》而乱臣贼子惧（《孟子·滕文公下》），乱臣贼子所惧即《春秋》之罚，此即名分所在，先王治国之要。德清将《春秋》与《易》并举，认为“易言神道之吉凶。以惧之于幽。春秋言人道之赏罚。以惧之于显。二者相须。如衣之有表里。如木之有根株。岂有异哉<sup>40</sup>。”即言《春秋》、《易》使乱臣贼子惧，善恶昭明而人有所为有所不为，前者从赏罚之秩序而言，即从法治之

[37]《憨山大师全集·老子道德经解》，第80页。

[38]《憨山大师全集·梦游集下·学要》，第101页上。

[39]《憨山大师全集·老子道德经解》，第79页。

[40]《憨山大师全集·梦游集中·春秋左氏心法序》第2册，第38页上。

他律，后者从因果之报应而言，即从宗教之他律，此为经世之二要。

其二，道家之忘世。引德清注解《道德经》第十六章注如下：

夫物芸芸。各归其根。意谓目前万物虽是暂有。毕竟归无。故云各归其根。根。谓根本元无也。物既本无。则心亦不有。是则物我两忘。寂然不动<sup>41</sup>。

然人虽有形。而形本无形。能见无形。则不独忘世。抑且忘身。身世两忘。则自复矣。故云静曰复命<sup>42</sup>。

德清言道家之忘世以忘物而言，即如上文所论离人乘而入天乘之分别。德清此处注解最能体现此意，其言《道德经》中“夫物芸芸，各归其根（《道德经·十六章》）”归根意指万物暂时而有，毕竟是无，而物既然毕竟是无，心亦复如是，所以能达物我两忘，此中物我两忘之忘物已是忘世之意。

其三，佛家之出世。此处德清所论出世非是与入世相对之出世，而是摄世出世法之出世，譬如离净染之清净，即如《楞伽经》中一切佛语心品第四之四所论“佛告大慧。波罗密有三种分别。谓世间，出世间，出世间上上<sup>43</sup>。”中出世间上上。此意就五乘观来说，人天乘属世界，二乘即声闻、缘觉乘属出世间，而最上乘则摄此世间出世间，如德清所说“如来藏非世间法。非出世间法。而一切法。皆如来藏矣<sup>44</sup>。”即是此意。

依方才所说世出世间之法，故说德清所论佛家之出世非是要“绝世”，德清对绝世之说亦多批评，引以下为证：

汝已能舍世闲恩爱。身虽出家而心未明出家之事。昔吾佛世尊。舍金轮。弃王宫。入雪山。六年苦行。睹明星悟道。成等正觉。为三界师。六道尊仰。人天供养。普度众生。同出生死。此是最初第一个出家之样子也。如此看来。岂是偷安养懒。贵图现成受用。便为出家者乎。定有一段本分事也<sup>45</sup>。

佛老果绝世。是为自度。又何以利生<sup>46</sup>。

[41] 《憨山大师全集·老子道德经解》，第104页。

[42] 同上书，第104-105页。

[43] 《大正藏·观楞伽阿跋多罗宝经记》，第16册，第513页中。

[44] 《憨山大师全集·圆觉经直解》第14册，第73页。

[45] 《憨山大师全集·梦游集上·示慧梭禅人》，第120页下-121页上。

[46] 《憨山大师全集·老子道德经解》，第80页。

有此可知，德清所谓出家之事，尚且是有一段本分事，即从人天供养而普度众生而来，非是与世隔绝之绝世，且在德清看来佛陀若绝世，便自度而已，有何以有利生之用。由此，故知此出世间上上非是绝世，而是世出世间法之和合。

以上略说德清所说三教经世、忘世、出世之说，其次论述德清以三教“体用皆同”，但用上有个大小不同回应三教以无我为体，而用上有经世、忘世、出世之差别问题。

所论无我之体相同之论。所谓无我即是就破我执而言无我，这里德清不仅如上文论破执而言无我，又从反面论证无我，并论述儒释道皆有“经世利生”之用，即三教体用皆同思想。详论如下：

假若孔子果有我。是但为一己之私。何以经世。佛老果绝世。是为自度。又何以利生<sup>47</sup>。

孔子曰。惟天惟大。唯尧则之。荡荡乎民无能名焉。又曰。无为而治者。其舜也欤。且经世以尧舜为祖。此岂有名有为者耶。由无我方视天下皆我。故曰。尧舜与人同耳。以人皆同体。所不同者。但有我私为障碍耳。由人心同此心。心同则无形碍。故汲汲为之教化。以经济之。此所以由无我而经世也<sup>48</sup>。

老子则曰。常善教人。故无弃人。无弃人。则人皆可以为尧舜。是由无我方利生也。若夫一书所言为而不宰。功成不居等语。皆以无为为经世之大用。又何尝忘世哉<sup>49</sup>。

至若佛。则体包虚空。用周沙界。随类现身。乃曰。我于一切众生身中成等正觉。又曰。度尽众生。方成佛道。又曰。若能使一众生发菩提心。宁使我身受地狱苦。亦不疲厌。然所化众生。岂不在世间耶。既涉世度生。非经世而何<sup>50</sup>。

德清以各家之经典论证三教无我之体与经世之用：首先从儒家经世以尧舜为宗，而尧“荡荡乎民无能名言”之无名，尧舜无为而治之无为，此无名、无为，德清认为即是视天下人皆是我，即无我，如此涉世教化则是无我而经世；其次老子“是以圣人常善救人，故无弃人；常善救物，故无弃物。是谓袭明（《道

[47] 同上。

[48] 同上书，第80页。

[49] 同上书，第81页。

[50] 同上。



德经·二十七章》)”，如此无弃人则人人皆可以为尧舜。此是无我而利生。又有言“为而不恃、功成而弗居（《道德经·二章》）”，德清认为此无为是经世之大用，因无为而经世故不曾忘世，是无为之经世；最后认为佛“度尽众生。方成佛道”、“若能使一众生发菩提心。宁使我身受地狱苦。亦不疲厌”，而所度此众生，又在世间，故佛度生是经世非绝世也。

以上已明三教无我之体与经世之用相同之思想，而德清又言三教经世之用虽同，但在用上有个大小不同之分别。所谓大小不同之分别即是经世、忘世、出世，三者前文已论，而有此大小不同之因则是圣人设教不同之因，在本章第二节五乘观与真如心中已从内因与外缘说明。

最后，德清又将此经世、忘世、出世之说与工夫论圆融，详见如下：

三者（经世、出世、忘世）之要在一心。务心之要在参禅。参禅之要在忘世。忘世之要在适时。适时之要在达变。达变之要在见理。见理之要在定志。定志之要在安分。安分之要在寡欲。寡欲之要在自知。自知之要在重生。重生之要在务内。务内之要在颀一。一得而天下之理得矣。称理而涉世。则无不忘也。无不有也。不忘不有。则物无不忘。物无不有。物无不忘。物无不有。则无入而不自得矣<sup>51</sup>。

德清以类似《大学》中文体借经世、忘世、出世三教圆融之说，将上至参禅之一心下至定志、寡欲等修养工夫衔接，此等修养工夫在德清看来不仅适佛教之基础亦是其他二教基础，引下文为证：

是以世出世学圣贤之道。未有不正心诚意修身。而至于致知格物明心见性者。故孔氏为仁。以三省四勿为先。吾佛制心。必以三业七支为本。历观上下古今人物。成大器。宏大业。光照宇宙。表表为人师范者。未有不由此以至彼。由粗以极精。由近以致远也<sup>52</sup>。

在德清看来世出世法学做圣贤皆是从修养工夫而入，如孔门三省四勿即曾子之吾日三省吾身与孔子之毋意毋必毋固毋我，乃至道、佛、百家，皆是“由此以至彼。由粗以极精。由近以致远也<sup>53</sup>”之次第循序渐进，此即是上节所论三教以破执为主，工夫皆从止观入之意思，如此德清将三教之体用与工夫会通。

[51] 《憨山大师全集·梦游集下·学要》，第101页上-101页下。[49] 同上书，第81页。

[52] 《憨山大师全集·梦游集上·示澄鑑二公》，第267页上-267页下。

[53] 同上。

#### 四、结语

德清注解三教之思想，依此一心之体而开出，此体之发用全在“经世利生”四字。此经世利生，盖有二方面，其一自利，其二他利。所谓自利非是贬义之自私义，或是可自私可利他之中性之自利，此处自利乃是以自觉而言，即解脱自己，而他利则是觉他而言，即是解脱他人。

德清依此经世利生圆融三教，本为破斥邪见，却仍有如此攻讦者，无论古人乃至今人，如自孟子而言“义利之辩”，后世儒者无不严辩之。此非本文主旨，亦非本文力所能及详尽辨清处，故略说以陈述意思。笔者对孔子“君子喻于义，小人喻于利（《论语·里仁》）”乃至孟子严义利之辨自无二话，前文所论止观工夫处，名利诸等皆已破去。然自隋唐韩愈以“古之为民者四，今之为民者六（《原道》）”反佛以来，无非从利而言，然一理论如何与其理论之实现及现实作用自不能混作一事，纵观今日之共产主义运动现状，岂能依此而论？昌黎反佛，此自是当世之问题，是佛教之当时现状问题，于当时国家现状，自有道理，然以此尽斥佛理则有不当。降至宋明，儒者以佛“私、利”概之以反佛，然所谓私与利者以其求一己出生死之利益而言，然说一己之求解脱，置利他若罔闻。所谓自利，乃如孟子所说“天之生此民也，使先觉觉后知，使先觉觉后觉也（《孟子·万章》）”，自利利他即自觉觉他，先觉者觉他也，若安于二乘，佛亦苛其为焦芽败种，再如《大学》之三纲八目，修身齐家治国平天下者，“一是皆以修身为本，其本乱而未治者，否矣，其所厚者薄，而其所薄者厚，未之有也。（《大学》）”，自是自明了明德，自修了身，自先觉了，自利了，方能新民，方能齐家治国平天下，方能觉他，方能利他。所谓利他亦只是教他自利而已，教他自觉而已，叫他自修身，自明德而已。故《大学》有言“古之欲明明德于天下者，先治其国。欲治其国者，先齐其家，欲齐其家者，先修其身。欲修其身者，先正其心。欲正其心者，先诚其意。欲诚其意者，先致其知。致知在格物。（《大学》）”此意在利他先自利，觉他先自觉；而后有言“物格而后知至，知至而后意诚，意诚而后心正，心正而后身修，身修而后家齐，家齐而后国治，国治而后天下平。”此意自利而能利他，自觉而能觉他。且如“兼爱”、“仁爱”之一本二本之说，若亲亲之杀，不似墨者兼爱，以其二本，自相矛盾，而仁爱则一本，有理可寻。所谓自利自觉利他觉他亦是如此，若有二本，则自相矛盾，无下手处。且虽有亲亲而又推己及人，民胞物与，虽有自利自觉而有能利他觉他，此只是一个道理。

以上略议自昌黎反佛以来二种反佛论点，以明德清自利利他之经世利生之意，然后人亦有对德清三教圆融有曲解者，如认为德清三教圆融并非以平等地位



来相互交流与交融，认为其表面上是讲三教融通，实际上是把儒家和道家都统一到佛家的思想体系上等等，其人认为德清三教圆融乃是以佛家统一儒道或认为德清三教圆融实是比较高下，并以德清所说儒为人乘，道为天乘，而上至声闻、缘觉、菩萨乃至佛能凡能圣为证。此皆是偏乎一方，前者不明德清圆融三教非是统一三教，后者不明德清解圆融三教非是要专说差别次第。德清说差别次第是破三教为一之执，如庄尽佛意论等，又说圣人之心能圆融乃是再破三教互相攻讦之说，此两方面皆是二端之执着，德清论此只是破此执着而言。且德清论三教圣人济世之心同，而三教之法是随根调伏而设，实则为一法，究竟只是此经世利生之心，此无关儒释道，又关乎儒释道。说此无关儒释道三教，乃是此论已说无三教之差别，皆是经世利生，故不能说以佛统一儒道；说此关乎儒释道，是德清又承认三教之教法上差别，既有三教差别又何来三教统一之说。依此故说德清三教不一不异，是为圆融，乃为破执而说，非是统一，亦非分别次第说。

# 融摄宗教、文学与人生 —— 论苏轼词中「佛理」与「人情」之辩证

杨允宏

## 摘要：

苏轼(1036-1101)的思想融摄儒、释、道三教。就其习佛因缘考察，其一生佛缘深厚，在佛学上造诣也相当高深，使得文学创作有时引用佛典，或表现佛理。有关苏轼佛教文学的研究中，针对苏轼「词」中的佛经典故及意象着墨较少，观照较未全面，几乎都从佛「理」的角度切入，文学作品的抒「情」性、「情」与「理」的互动关系并未被突显出来。因此，本文希望以苏轼词作为讨论对象，并将词中的佛理主题分为「空梦」、「清净本性」、「随缘」、「自度度人」四类，观察与作者的情感有何互动、辩证的关系。

在四类主题之中，苏轼书写「空梦」的词作比重最高。从生命历程观察，苏轼的佛理书写可以「黄州时期」作为分水岭。黄州时期及黄州以后，开创出蕴含佛教「随缘」及「自度度人」精神的词作。而黄州以后含有空观佛理的词作，逐渐拥有一种宁静、理性的自持之道。反映苏轼人生走入中晚年，思维更加理性、圆融，逐渐能够驾驭个人情感，善于运用佛教智慧寻求生命的自在解脱之道。若从词体美感观察，「空梦」一类最能发挥词情特质，呈现出情与理相互拉扯、辩证的关系，反映苏轼在「人生如幻」与「情感安顿」之间的挣扎。其他三类主题则突破了词体的抒情基调。

透过本文的分析，可以见证苏轼在词作中，运用佛理与人情的相互辩证，努力寻找生命的理性。也呈现出人遭遇各种事情、在人生各个阶段，内心徘徊于理性、感性之间的复杂性。笔者也希望透过本文的研究，能为佛教文学的研究方法上，开拓出另一种观看「情/理」互动的研究模式。

**关键词：**苏轼；东坡词；佛理；人情；佛教文学

## 一、前言

苏轼(1036-1101)的思想融摄儒、释、道三教<sup>1</sup>，作为一位士大夫，儒家思想是他立身的依据，而其一生漂泊流徙，也使得佛道思想成为他心灵的慰藉。单就苏轼的习佛因缘考察，他的故乡四川自唐以来，佛教相当盛行，「蜀版」大藏

[1] 孙昌武说：「苏轼虽然也是以儒术立身，但对佛、老亦极表倾服，并确有心得。」见氏著：《中国文学中的维摩与观音》（北京：高等教育出版社，1996年6月），页338。



经即于宋初刊刻于益州。而且苏轼的家庭濡染着佛教氛围，父亲苏洵结交蜀地名僧，母亲程氏、弟弟苏辙、继室王闰之皆好佛<sup>2</sup>。苏轼自己则在二十岁时于成都结交僧友<sup>3</sup>，二十多岁担任凤翔签判，习佛于同事王大年，此时期所作的〈凤翔八观〉第四首以歌咏维摩像为主题，是他最早书写佛教题材的文学作品。出任杭州通判之后，曾向诸多僧友请益参法。经历了乌台诗案，贬谪于黄州以后，苏轼的佛教思想产生一大转变，开始进一步追寻佛理以求解脱<sup>4</sup>。苏轼一生可谓佛缘深厚，由于他在佛学上的高深造诣，因而被纳入禅宗传承的谱系中，在《嘉泰普灯录》、《五灯会元》、《续传灯录》均有「内翰苏轼居士」之名，属于东林常总禅师的法嗣。

至于苏轼经常诵读的佛经，除禅籍《金刚经》、《六祖坛经》、《景德传灯录》，就属《华严经》、《楞伽经》、《维摩诘经》、《般若经》、《楞严经》为最<sup>5</sup>，这也使得他的文学作品有时引用佛典，或表现佛理。当代研究「佛教文学」的专家萧丽华，仔细考察苏轼诗中的佛经典故及意象，从《圆觉》意象、华严世界、般若譬喻、佛经偈颂、庄禅合流等各面向展开论述，颇有开拓之功；但是，相较于苏轼「诗」，目前学界对于苏轼「词」中的佛经典故及意象着墨较少，大致将佛理主题归纳为「人生如梦」、「随缘自适」两类，观照较未全面，仍有值得探索的空间。除此之外，这些研究几乎都从佛「理」的角度切入，文学作品的抒「情」性、「情」与「理」的互动关系并未被突显出来。因此，为了延续及深化前人针对苏轼词中佛理意象的研究成果，本文的研究策略有以下三点：

### (一)分析苏轼词作中佛「理」与人「情」的辩证关系

所谓「情」，即「主体内在的情感」；「理」则是「将感性直觉经验作为对象而加以反省」、「已超越个别主体的意念，而客观化为普遍主体所同感共识的意念」<sup>6</sup>。「情」与「理」，一则主观，一则客观；一则聚焦于作者个人的生命经验，一则扩大为人类普遍的共识。从「情」与「理」的关系，可以进一步追问：苏轼在词作中既流露个人的主观情感，又表现出超乎个人的佛理思致，两者能够激荡出何种互动关系？

### (二)从「文体」角度切入

「诗」、「词」异体，王国维在《人间词话》说「词之为体，要眇宜修」

[2] 见孙昌武：《佛教与中国文化》（台北：台湾东华书局股份有限公司，1989年12月），页147-148。

[3] 此说是萧丽华据〈中和胜相院记〉、〈宝月大师塔铭〉二文判断。见氏著：〈佛经偈颂对苏轼诗的影响〉，《从王维到苏轼——诗歌与禅学交会的黄金时代》（天津：天津教育出版社，2013年1月），页284。

[4] 见孙昌武：《佛教与中国文化》（台北：台湾东华书局股份有限公司，1989年12月），页148-151。

[5] 萧丽华：〈佛经偈颂对苏轼诗的影响〉，《从王维到苏轼——诗歌与禅学交会的黄金时代》（天津：天津教育出版社，2013年1月），页286。

[6] 颜昆阳：《李商隐诗笺释方法论》（台北：学生书局，1991年3月），页62、65。

、「诗之境阔，词之言长」<sup>7</sup>，叶嘉莹进一步从「形式」及「内容」加以发挥，从形式言：诗多为齐言，词多为长短句，词「这种参差错落之音韵及节奏，当然是促成其『要眇宜修』之美的一个重要因素」；从内容言：诗「可以言情，可以叙事，可以说理，其内容之广阔，自非词之所有」，而词「所传达的一种幽隐深微之心灵的本质，及其要眇宜修之特点，其足以引起读者之感发与联想之处，却也并非诗之所能有。」<sup>8</sup> 依照叶嘉莹的深入辨析，可以明白苏轼在诗、词的文体抉择上，何以多以「诗」阐发佛理，因为词体宜抒幽微之情，不利于明白晓畅地议论说理，使得苏轼词中的佛经意象不如诗中丰富。

若再缩小范围，就「宋诗」与「宋词」的殊相观察，吉川幸次郎分析宋诗不同于前代的诗，「最显著的差别表现在对悲哀的态度上」，「到了宋代，却由苏轼领先带头，终于从悲哀的控制下把诗解放了出来」<sup>9</sup>，村上哲见进一步发挥吉川氏的论调，认为：

唐末以来的词有一种倾向：动辄沉溺于一味地伤感……东坡的词却超乎这种伤感，而一种悠然静观的姿态或者一种仿佛对人生的达观态度构成了它的基调。这在根本上或许是同吉川幸次郎博士所举出的宋诗特色——『悲哀的扬弃』或『平静的获得』——一脉相通的吧。<sup>10</sup>

综合两位日本学者的观点：宋诗与宋词主要风格的不同在于，宋诗扬弃悲哀精神，宋词则沉溺于伤感之情。而苏轼正是宋诗及宋词的重要突破者，他以理性精神解放了诗、词中的伤感基调，打通诗词的隔阂。但是，这种「以诗为词」仅见诗词之同、不见诗词之异的局限性也引发学者们的反思，如孙康宜认为「宋诗和唐诗有所不同，对哲思慧见兴趣较大。宋人又竟以理性相标榜，养成唯理是尚的作风。因此，随着时间流逝，『词』反倒成为『抒情的最佳工具』」。又从而判断「苏轼似乎把词保留为表示繁复情感的工具，而把诗视为处理杂事的媒体」<sup>11</sup>。刘少雄则从传统文体学(情与辞、内与外一体)的角度判定苏轼以诗为词，即使泯除诗、词界线，仍有择体抒情的用心，词作依然能够顾虑到词体的美感特质：「虽有类似诗一般的主题，却仍不失体，显见作者的自觉态度」<sup>12</sup>。

[7] 彭玉平：《人间词话疏证》（北京：中华书局，2011年4月），页211。

[8] 叶嘉莹：〈要眇宜修之美与在神不在貌〉，《词学新论》（北京：北京大学出版社，2008年4月），页12-13

[9] （日）吉川幸次郎著，郑清茂译：〈序章 宋诗的特质〉，《宋诗概说》（台北：联经出版事业股份有限公司，2012年11月），页45。

[10] （日）村上哲见著，杨铁婴译：〈苏东坡词论〉，《宋词研究：唐五代北宋篇》（上海：上海古籍出版社，2012年4月）页234。

[11] 孙康宜著，李爽学译：〈苏轼与词体地位的提升〉，《晚唐迄北宋词体演进与词人风格》（台北：联经出版事业股份有限公司，2001年11月），页200-201。

[12] 刘少雄：〈由诗到词——东坡早期词的创作历程〉，《东坡以诗为词论题新论》（台北：里仁书局，2006年3月），页13。

刘氏又从词体的书写手法、主题、音乐性质从而为词体的美感特质定义：

词的抒情特性，主要是以时空与人事对照为主轴，在男与女、情与景、今与昔、变与不变的对比安排下，缘于人间情爱之专注执着和对时光流逝的无穷感叹，美人迟暮、春花易落、好梦频惊、理想成空等情思遂变成词的主题。而词的体制，如乐律章节之重复节奏、文辞句法的平衡对称，无疑更强化了这种婉转低回、留连反覆的情感质性。<sup>13</sup>

综合以上诸多学者对「诗/词」、「宋诗/宋词」、「苏轼诗/苏轼词」的讨论，可以判定苏轼一方面以诗为词，汲取「诗」中宽广的主题，扩大词的写作题材，并将「宋诗」的「理性」精神注入以「感伤」为基调的词作，展现达观精神；一方面也依照词体的书写美感范式来创作，以词抒发细腻的情感。因此，如果要探讨苏轼蕴含佛理的词作呈现何种书写特质？可以结合「以诗为词」、「词体的抒情特质」双重角度考察：一方面观察当词中注入佛「理」思维，如何与词人的主观「情」感相互激荡？是否真能展现宋诗主理之精神？另一方面，可援用学者对于词体、词情议题的开发成果，进一步阐发词人、词作之「情」，印证这些蕴含佛理的词作，能够展现何种词体的美感特质？

### (三)扣合苏轼的生命经历

本文将苏轼词中的佛理<sup>14</sup>主题分为「空梦」、「清净本性」、「随缘」、「自度度人」四类，观察与作者的情感有何互动、辩证的关系。行文之中，会尽量扣合整首词作的脉络，以及苏轼的生平予以探讨。在词作分期上，采取当今学界普遍认同的、由村上哲见所提出的四期说：分为杭州、密徐(湖)、黄州、黄州以后四期。词作的编年版本则选用邹同庆、王宗堂校注的《苏轼词编年校注》，并参酌其他各家的编年。

## 二、空梦——情感如何安顿？

### (一)体悟人生如梦如幻

佛教言「空」，即「缘起性空」，世间一切法空无自性，系因缘合和而生，相离则灭，故《般若波罗蜜多心经》云「照见五蕴皆空」、「色即是空」<sup>15</sup>

[13] 刘少雄：〈由诗到词——东坡早期词的创作历程〉，《东坡以诗为词论题新诠》（台北：里仁书局，2006年3月），页15。

[14] 本文讨论范围有两个条件：一是找出含有佛经典故或意象的词作，再剔除不含佛理的词作，比如〈临江仙〉「四大从来都遍满，此间风水何疑」，是指地、水、火、风遍布整个世界；〈减字木兰花〉「释氏老君曾抱送」只是呼应前句的「惟熊佳梦」；〈三部乐〉「何事散花却病，维摩无疾。却低眉、惨然不答」只是以维摩诘居士比喻美人无疾而愁的样态；〈念奴娇·赤壁怀古〉「强虏灰飞烟灭」虽引用《圆觉经》语，但「灰飞烟灭」其实是形容曹操军队溃败之状况；〈西江月〉「老夫鼻观先通」，典出佛教之「鼻识」，但在此处纯指「嗅觉」，当中丝毫没有佛理。至于有些意象比如「空」、「梦」、「幻」、「月」等，与佛理颇相契合，当在本文讨论范围内。

[15] 《般若波罗蜜多心经》，CBETA, T08, no. 251, p. 848, c7-9。

，彻底否定世间有任何永恒的人、事、物。如此一来，世间一切法仅能短暂地存在着，予人梦幻不实之感，如《金刚经》六如偈云：「一切有为法，如梦幻泡影，如露亦如电，应作如是观。」<sup>16</sup>《大般若经》更有「般若十喻」：诸法如「幻」、如「焰」、如「水中月」、如「虚空」、如「响」、如「捷阇婆城」、如「梦」、如「影」、如「镜中像」、如「化」<sup>17</sup>。在《维摩诘经·方便品第二》中有言：「是身如浮云，须臾变灭；是身如电，念念不住。」<sup>18</sup>《圆觉经·普贤品》亦提出「身心亦幻」之说法，透过梦幻观以寻求生命的自在、解脱。

周裕锴观察：「在苏轼表现个人内心世界的诗歌中，始终贯穿着一个鲜明的禅学主题，即人生如梦，虚幻不实。这一主题来自禅宗的般若空观。」<sup>19</sup>事实上，在苏轼词作之中，亦呈现此类空梦主题：

杭州时期前的词作〈行香子·过七里滩〉即言「君臣一梦，今古虚名」，人和人相聚如梦一样，在世间成就的功名到头来也是一场空。由杭赴密行经海州，苏轼写了一首〈浣溪沙〉赠与陈海州，由于旅途漂泊以及不断与朋友相聚、分离，遂生「聚散交游如梦寐」之感。

苏轼在宴席上有时也会生起空幻之感，比如密州时期，在上巳日这天和友人流觞于南禅小亭，作了〈满江红〉一词，词末描写「相将泛曲水，满城争出」当时热闹的场景，但随即联想到七百多年前的「兰亭修禊事」：「到如今、修竹满山阴，空陈迹」，从前的兰亭群贤如今安在？换言之，今日的繁华景象必然会消逝，整首词作归结于「空」字，流露沉重的幻灭感。

接着再看徐州时期这首〈永遇乐〉。当三更的鼓声突然响起，落叶坠地发出金石般声响：「犹如三鼓，铿然一叶」，苏轼忽然从梦中惊醒，醒来之后，坠入了生命的沉思之中：「天涯倦客，山中归路，望断故园心眼」，苏轼意识到自己是漂泊在外的游子，又想到「燕子楼空，佳人何在，空锁楼中燕」，曾经住在燕子楼中的关盼盼早已不在，在时、空流转的巨大变化中，导引出「古今如梦」无穷的感慨。

苏轼经历乌台诗案到了黄州之后，空梦意识更为深沉，常将整个生、世间一切视为幻梦，并且多了一份沧桑、苍凉之感。刘少雄亦言：「黄州词屡见『

[16] 《金刚般若波罗蜜经》，CBETA, T08, no. 235, p. 752, b28-29。

[17] 《摩诃般若波罗蜜经》，CBETA, T08, no. 223, p. 217, a21-23。

[18] 《维摩诘所说经》，CBETA, T14, no. 475, p. 539, b20-21。

[19] 周裕锴：〈梦幻与真如——苏、黄的禅悦倾向与其诗歌意象之关系〉，《文学遗产》（2001年第3期），页69。



梦」字」<sup>20</sup>。初到黄州(元丰三年)的中秋,苏轼写下了〈西江月〉,词作劈头一句「世事一场大梦」,其后接着「人生几度秋凉」。诗案中,苏轼在死亡关头走了一遭,重生之后被贬谪到陌生之地,让他觉得世事如梦一样虚幻,且充满沧凉之感。隔年重阳节登楼,写一首〈南乡子〉呈给太守徐君猷。下片言「万事到头都是梦」,延续〈西江月〉那份巨大的荒漠感。来到黄州的第三年(元丰五年)七月,泛舟于赤壁之下,写下脍炙人口的〈念奴娇·赤壁怀古〉。上片开篇「大江东去,浪淘尽、千古风流人物」,将人与自然两相映照,即使为英雄豪杰,努力地在世上缔造大事业,却终究敌不过时间之浪,仅留下名声供后人追缅。下片将周瑜与自我对照:周瑜正值年华,爱情、事业两得意,娶得美人小乔,又在赤壁之战大败曹军,博得了不朽的美名;苏轼反观自身,步入中年,年华渐大,不仅头发斑白,而且政治失意,留不下什么伟大的功业供后人凭吊。在时空与人事的层层对比之下,更加衬托出自我的渺小,进而激荡出「人生如梦」这份强烈的生命虚无感。同年重阳节,与徐君猷于栖霞楼聚会宴饮,由于徐太守即将离开黄州,令苏轼有感而作〈醉蓬莱〉以赠别,首句说「笑劳生一梦」,比起早期所作〈浣溪沙〉中的「聚散交游如梦寐」,虽然同样以离别为词作的书写背景,此时的梦幻感更为巨大,更带有饱尝悲欢离合的沧桑感,而〈醉蓬莱〉虽以一「笑」泯之,背后的情感却是五味杂陈。隔年暮秋写下的〈十拍子〉,词情从季节的递嬗——「黄花已过重阳」——之中萌生,苏轼意识到人生已过大半,往事却如同过往云烟,「身外傥来都似梦」,深深体悟到世间一切事物全都留不住。因为外在之物有生、有灭,有「成」、「住」,必然归于「坏」、「空」。

黄州以后,苏轼不少词作亦传达出空梦意识,尤其是元丰七年,漂泊于江淮之时,以及元佑五、六年离京任地方官期间。相较于黄州以前,空观方式增多,不唯有「梦」观而已。而相较于黄州时期那股强烈的苍凉感,则逐渐展现出宁静、理性的自持之道。

这段时期,以「梦」比喻人生的词作,多半含有苍茫之感。元丰七年十月赴扬州,到平山堂凭吊尊敬的长辈——欧阳修,写下〈西江月〉一词,词作从人已逝而物依旧的强烈对比下,使苏轼深深体会到人生极其短暂:「半生弹指声中」,「弹指」,佛经语,极言时间的短暂。词尾更跌入深沉的虚幻感受:「休言万事转头空,未转头时是梦」,不是等到事情过了才觉得虚幻,事情发生的当下就像梦一样。同年十一月于楚州作〈浣溪沙〉,首句云「一梦江湖费五年」,从迁谪黄州以来,屡屡在宦海及各处漂泊,使苏轼心中产生梦幻不实之感。元佑六年三月离杭赴京经过湖州,与五位友人相聚,作一首〈定风波〉,苏轼想起十

[20] 刘少雄:〈东坡赤壁文学中的文体抉择〉,《词学文体与史观新论》(台北:里仁书局,2010年8月),页79。

五年前，同样与五位朋友聚会于湖州，不过，如今前五客已逝，仅剩自己存世，在今昔强烈的映照下，引发「十五年间真梦里」之感叹。

至于展现各种空观方式的词作，反映苏轼努力以理性精神，超越个人所执取的现实世界。如元佑五年八月苏轼于杭州观潮时作了一首〈南歌子〉，开头说：「苒苒中秋过，萧萧两鬓华。寓身此世一尘沙」，时序已过中秋，这份时空推移的体知，引发苏轼对于身体老化的喟叹，也让苏轼进而体悟到：人存在于这个世界上是何其渺小。萧丽华言：「以『空』为视野之下，则万法如空中之花，如微尘，人生也是万缘皆空。」<sup>21</sup> 苏轼在〈盐官绝句·北寺悟空禅师塔〉中也说：「已将世界等微尘，空里浮花梦里身」<sup>22</sup>，可见「一尘沙」、「微尘」与般若空观有着相契应之处。同年重阳于杭州作〈点绛唇〉，上片末尾言「江村海甸。总作空花观」，「空花观」为佛经语，如《圆觉经》云：「譬如患瞖，妄见空花」<sup>23</sup>、「空实无花，病者妄执」<sup>24</sup>，指眼疾者视觉妄生花的幻影，以此比喻世人执着色相，不明色相本为不实。元佑六年闰八月于颍州作〈木兰花令〉，次欧阳修之韵以追念之，词中言「四十三年如电抹」，又说「草头秋露流珠滑」，「电」、「露」比喻流逝之速，体现《金刚经》六如偈「如露亦如电」之空观精神。

元丰七年十二月，在泗州雍熙塔下沐浴，写了两首〈如梦令〉，第一首彻底表现色空不二之精神：「水垢何曾相受。细看两俱无有。寄语揩背人，尽日劳君挥肘。轻手。轻手。居士本来无垢。」以「水」、「垢」比喻「净」、「染」相对的概念，运用观照力：「细看」，体察到无所谓染净之相，离于两边：「两俱无有」，故词末云「本来无垢」，展现「空性」智慧。这首词作主要发挥《维摩诘经·入不二法门品第九》德顶菩萨的一段开示：「垢、净为二。见垢实性，则无净相，顺于灭相，是为入不二法门。」<sup>25</sup> 不二法门即《维摩诘经》的核心概念——「中道」思想，不执取于有，也不落于空相，因为说「空」也只是假名。这首〈如梦令〉，与苏轼其他含有空梦意象的词作大不相同，不因观空而陷入沉重的空漠之感；而是透过冷静地观照，呈现圆融的生命意境。并带有谐趣、轻松的心态：因为无所谓垢相，所以劝擦背的人力道轻柔一点，呼应序文所说的「戏作」。整首作品笔调诙谐有致，在简单的笔触中含藏深厚的佛理，诙谐之中有庄重，且意境深远。

[21] 萧丽华：〈苏轼诗中的般若譬喻〉，《从王维到苏轼——诗歌与禅学交会的黄金时代》（天津：天津教育出版社，2013年1月），页273。

[22] 宋·苏轼着，清·王文诰辑注，孔凡礼点校：《苏轼诗集》（北京：中华书局，1982年2月），页393。

[23] 《大方广圆觉修多罗了义经》，CBETA, T17, no. 842, p. 915, c9。

[24] 《大方广圆觉修多罗了义经》，CBETA, T17, no. 842, p. 913, b26。

[25] 《维摩诘所说经》，CBETA, T14, no. 475, p. 550, c11-12。《维摩诘所说经》，CBETA, T14, no. 475, p. 550, c11-12。



苏轼生命的各个阶段，都不断产生空梦之感。清代沉际飞在《草堂诗余正集》卷二云：「东坡升沉去住，一生莫定，故开口说梦。」<sup>26</sup> 沈氏所言极是。缘于苏轼(一)长期浮沉于宦海；(二)离乡漂泊各地；(三)与亲友旋聚旋散的生命经历；(四)深谙佛理，以般若空观之慧眼透视古往今来。促使苏轼经常从时间的长流中俯瞰人事，故能体察到人间虚幻不实的一面，从而在词中流露出空梦意识。

## (二)词体抒情性：「空观」与「情感」的拔河

从「以诗为词」的角度来说，苏轼以前的作家，大多将佛理于诗、文中阐发，词作鲜少论及佛理，即使于词中言空说梦，往往无涉于佛理。自苏轼始，词作的空梦主题开始与般若空观相契合，且大量在词中抒发空梦意识，确实扩大了词的创作主题；但是，当词中注入了理性思致，是否真能摆落情愁？迄及宋诗普遍主理之精神？

大体而言，宋诗的叙事、议论成分偏多，往往扬弃哀感，展现以理性为主的基调。就拿苏轼早年所写的〈和子由澠池怀旧〉这首诗为例，诗作前半：「人生到处知何似？应似飞鸿踏雪泥。泥上偶然留指爪，鸿飞那复计东西」<sup>27</sup>，以「鸿」比喻人生东奔西走，而「鸿」来去仅留爪痕，传达人生空幻的哲理；下半以「事」呼应上半所言的「理」：「老僧已死成新塔，坏壁无由见旧题。往日崎岖还记否，路长人困蹇驴嘶」。今昔映照之下，老僧已逝，徒留怅惘，最后则以过去赴京应试那段艰辛岁月劝慰子由，希望他如今也能够像过去一样，打起精神，以生命的韧性面对人生关卡。这首诗作表现空幻感的同时，虽带有一丝怅然之感，却由于强烈的说理成份，最终将诗作导入理性的彼端，引入哲思之境，并且积极地面对现实人生。

宋词却不同，透过时空与人事的强烈对比，更突显出人留不住一切的怅惘之情。随着旋律的重复递进、句法的对比相生，跌宕于情、理之间，情感表现比宋诗更加多姿。前文所举的诸多词篇，几乎都在「今」与「昔」、「变」与「不变」的强烈时空对照下，无法永恒地紧握人与人之间的情感，以及无法彻底地实践志向抱负，促发苏轼深沉的空漠感。苏轼透过「理」的观照，明白人生如梦如幻，试图从经验世界中超拔出来，却囿于词体的抒情模式，不知不觉地又跌入忧愁的情思之中。即使在黄州以后，苏轼努力尝试在词作中展现各种空观方式，却因词体抒情的限制，理性精神终难扬起。如〈点绛唇〉这首词作在上片扬起理性思维，开头甚至宣示「不用悲秋」，但转入下片，陷入一股哀愁的情思：「尚想横汾，兰菊纷相半。楼船远。白云飞乱。空有年年雁。」时序已入暮秋，年华也

[26] 宋·苏轼着，石声淮、唐玲玲笺注：《东坡词编年笺注》（台北：华正书局有限公司，2008年7月），页219。

[27] 宋·苏轼着，清·王文诰辑注，孔凡礼点校：《苏轼诗集》（北京：中华书局，1982年2月），页97。

逐渐老大，时间的焦虑感油然而生，「空有年年雁」之「空」，已从上片理性的「空」观，转为一种徒然、落寞之情。而〈木兰花令〉虽流露如幻之体悟，却又洋溢着对欧公的思念之情。李泽厚在《美的历程》〈苏轼的意义〉这章中特别认为「苏词更为含蓄而深沉地」表现人生空漠、无所寄托之感。<sup>28</sup> 他所说的「含蓄」而「深沉」，正是词体特殊的美感表现。

除此之外，由于宋诗注重理趣，也促使苏轼诗中的空梦主题带有一份理性精神，萧丽华从苏轼诗中使用《圆觉经》思想、意象考察出：「东坡诗因此也充斥着人生如幻、寻求梦觉的自我提醒。」<sup>29</sup> 反观苏轼之词，往往在词情的拉扯下，跌入深层的空幻感，陷入一股哀愁、落寞之情，使得词人难以寻求梦觉的自我提醒。徐州时期的〈永遇乐〉表达得最为明显：「古今如梦，何曾梦觉」一句尤其深沉，不仅不愿梦醒，甚至否定了人能从梦中觉醒的希望，既然人生如此虚幻，那么人生还剩下什么？苏轼认为只剩下人情——「欢」与「怨」，苏轼曾在词中屡屡说自己多情：如〈点绛唇〉言「我辈情钟」、〈采桑子〉言「多情多感仍多病」、〈念奴娇〉言「多情应笑我」，也许「多情」是他抵抗人生空漠感的方式之一。既然过去、现在、未来就像是一条情感的延长线，苏轼于是想像未来：「异时对，黄楼夜景，为余浩叹」，或许未来有人到了黄楼，会为了我而感叹吧！想像自己因治水有功搭建黄楼，能够被未来的人们回忆、歌颂，让情感不断地在时间轴线上被呼唤、被呼应，以此抵抗生命的虚无感。

以佛教空观的角度来看，苏轼词作中只有黄州以后所作的〈如梦令〉第一首最接近「色空不二」<sup>30</sup>之理境。绝大部分蕴含空梦意识的词作，往往流露出一股对于人生的深沉空漠感，其实只能算是消极的空，并未真正体现「色空不二」之自在解脱的境界；而苏轼在〈永遇乐〉又认为人只能不断地纠葛于欢、怨之情中，这便流于人情的执着了。不过，我们不能因此说苏轼是没有境界的人，因为苏轼仍有欲求解脱之用心，为词中注入佛理，试图扬弃悲哀。只是最后却又在词体抒情模式的引导下，使得那份理性精神被情感所压缩了。正因为如此，我们才能发掘其中情与理相互辩证的关系——求解脱却又难以解脱的纠结心理，也才能从中看出苏轼在「人生如幻」与「情感安顿」之间的挣扎。

### 三、清净本性——由情入理、以理导情

苏轼词作呈现「豪放」、「旷达」之风格，笔者认为可以从「情/理」的

[28] 李泽厚：《美的历程》（台北：三民书局股份有限公司，2012年1月），页174。

[29] 萧丽华：〈苏轼诗的《圆觉》意象与思想〉，《从王维到苏轼——诗歌与禅学交会的黄金时代》（天津：天津教育出版社，2013年1月），页216。

[30] 丁敏认为「空」：「从消极面来言有虚妄、无所有、不自在、不实等性质，从积极面看有清净、寂静、明澈透脱、超拔、平等特质。然「色空不二」主要仍应是自在无碍、不惊不怖的心灵状况。」见氏著：〈试论佛家「空」义在中国诗歌中的表现〉，《中华学苑》第45期（1995年3月），页268。



结构模式来看待，即是苏轼「此类」词作虽写出一己之忧愁心绪，却往往能够以「理」观照，摆落情愁，形成由情入理的书写模式，从而展现哲思理境，甚至达到本节所欲说明的「清净本性」之境地。苏轼有首〈减字木兰花〉，写离开徐州的时候，朋友前来送别，上片以「玉觞无味。中有佳人千点泪」，渲染出浓烈的离愁情绪，但忽然笔锋一转，忽然说「学道忘忧，一念还成不自由」，「一念」为佛家语，傅干注云：「释氏以邪心正性皆生乎一念」<sup>31</sup>，苏轼在〈黄州安国寺记〉文中也曾说：「一念清净，染污自落，表里翛然，无所附丽。」<sup>32</sup>烦恼与菩提仅在一念之间，一念清净心生起，自然不为烦恼所束缚。苏轼在悲戚的离别宴席上，试图扬起理性精神，不仅宽慰自己，也宽慰席上的朋友们。

萧丽华曾分析：「对东坡来说，水月是其众多月意象之作中独能呈现空明澄净的生命本体之相。」<sup>33</sup>在苏轼的词作中，某些水月意象亦呈现出清净本性之境界，比如杭州时期，赠别陈襄所写的〈虞美人〉，上片抒发离别之愁情，下片渐次将愁情收束，但末尾忽然一转：「夜阑风静欲归时。惟有一江明月、碧琉璃」，东坡将要归返之际，也许望了一下江水，但在望的瞬间，却被江上那清澈、空灵的月光所深深吸引，「唯有」一词，把视野升华至绝对的理境，词篇收束在刹那所见的江上月光，最终化为永恒的凝视。来到黄州的三年（元丰五年）所作的〈水龙吟〉「小舟横截春江」一首也极为类似，上片全写梦境，梦中见到故人、佳人，以及各种视觉、听觉的感受，到了上片结尾「空回首、烟波里」，梦的色彩逐渐褪淡，转入过片处，「推枕惘然不见，但空江、月明千里」，梦醒之后，梦中一切景物全都幻灭，内心升起怅惘之感，而在这时候，映入眼帘的，是一大片洒满月光的江水，「但」字有唯一、绝对的意味，「空」则有空灵、洁净之感。东坡此时沉浸在江月的宁静世界，遣散了梦醒之后的虚无感，契入绝对的本体世界。

禅宗以水月比喻自性、诸佛法身，〈永嘉证道歌〉云：「一性圆通一切性。一法遍含一切法。一月普现一切水。一切水月一月摄。诸佛法身入我性。」<sup>34</sup>《华严经》则认为如来法身普遍一切山河大地、十方世界：「佛身清净常寂然，普照十方诸世界」<sup>35</sup>、「佛身清净满十方，妙色无比应一切」<sup>36</sup>。苏轼在〈赤壁赋〉中则藉由「水」与「月」道出「变」与「不变」的生命哲理：「自其变者而观之，则天地曾不能以一瞬；自其不变者而观之，则物与我皆无尽也。」并体

[31] 宋·苏轼着，傅干注，刘尚荣校证：《东坡词傅干注校证》（上海：上海古籍出版社，2016年12月），页324。

[32] 宋·苏轼着，孔凡礼点校：《苏轼文集》（北京：中华书局，1986年3月），页392。

[33] 萧丽华：〈苏轼诗中的般若譬喻〉，《从王维到苏轼——诗歌与禅学交会的黄金时代》（天津：天津教育出版社，2013年1月），页270。

[34] 《永嘉证道歌》，CBETA, T48, no. 2014, p. 396, b7-9。

[35] 《大方广佛华严经》，CBETA, T09, no. 278, p. 399, a29。

[36] 《大方广佛华严经》，CBETA, T09, no. 278, p. 401, a22-23。

会到江上清风与山间明月都是「造物者之无尽藏」。足见东坡文学的「月」与佛教以月喻法性、本体有着相通之处。

〈虞美人〉与〈水龙吟〉这两首词作，由情入理，在景物转换的过程中，忽然将读者的视野引领到一个「绝对」的或是浩瀚的世界里。消除时空相对性，从时间的焦虑感受中超拔出来，突破词体「主要是以时空与人事对照为主轴」的抒情方式。「情感每从窄处转向宽处」<sup>37</sup>，运用佛教的思维企图展现一种理性、圆融的观照，正是苏轼词「旷」之另一独特面向。

#### 四、随缘——不黏滞于情

「随缘」，即随顺因缘，达摩禅师开示「二入四行」之法，其中有「随缘行」：

第二随缘行者，众生无我，并缘业所传。苦乐齐受，皆从缘生。若得胜报荣誉等事，是我过去宿因所感，今方得之。缘尽还无，何喜之有。得失从缘，心无增减。喜风不动，冥顺于通。是故说言随缘行。<sup>38</sup>

人所得到的果报，是过去所造的业导致，即使得到福报，也会有缘尽而失之时。「所以修行人应该体空随缘，逢苦不忧，得乐不喜，八风吹不动，得失忘于心，这就是大乘安心之法。」<sup>39</sup>广为人知的两首〈定风波〉皆与佛教的随缘观相契应。黄州时期的〈定风波〉，以途中遇雨比喻人生逆境。因为没携带雨具，同行之人「皆狼狈」，苏轼却以「何妨吟啸且徐行」、「一蓑烟雨任平生」悠然自在的姿态面对风雨，毕竟飘风骤雨不可能长久，总有缘散之时，雨后终究会天青，如同序中所言的「已而」遂晴；然而，真正的随缘是「得失从缘，心无增减」，无论顺境与逆境，心都能不为所动，正如末句所说的「也无风雨也无晴」，「无晴」亦是「喜风不动，冥顺于通」境界的展现。

另一首黄州以后所作的〈定风波〉，写苏轼与从岭南归来的王定国、柔奴相会，两人虽饱尝迁谪之苦，但风霜却丝毫没有在他们的身上留下痕迹，王定国是「万里归来颜愈少」，柔奴则「笑时犹带岭梅香」。苏轼问他们在岭南的日子是不是过得不好，柔奴回答：「此心安处是吾乡。」心无增减，得失随缘，不因逆境而悲苦，这是柔奴与王定国的养身安心之法。

[37] 郑骞：〈成府谈词〉，《景午丛编》（台北：中华书局，1972年1月），页257。

[38] 《楞伽师资记》，CBETA, T85, no. 2837, p. 1285, a25-29。

[39] 王开府：〈禅学之道〉，《正观》第75期（2015年12月），页29。



此外，萧丽华认为〈渔父四首〉其二、其四是东坡舟船意象诗中表现「庄禅合流」的作品，因为「渔父」的形象采自《庄子·渔父》，而「渔父词」、「拨棹歌」又是唐宋禅师示道诗的传统。<sup>40</sup> 而笔者认为第二首应当含有禅宗的「随缘」精神，继承了唐代德诚禅师〈拨棹歌〉其中一份自在、自适的生命意境。<sup>41</sup> 以下为词作内容：「渔父醉，蓑衣舞。醉里却寻归路。轻舟短棹任斜横，醒后不知何处。」关键即在最后两句，以舟比喻生命主体，以水流比喻变动不息的外境，任小舟随意地在江上漂流，意谓无论身处于何种外境，内心依然安稳自适。类似〈渔父〉传达随波自在之意境的词作，尚有〈哨遍〉「且乘流、遇坎还止」、〈好事近〉「独棹小舟归去，任烟波飘兀」。

以上所举的词作，写作时间都在黄州及黄州以后，反映苏轼中晚年的生命意境。苏轼在乌台诗案留下巨大的心灵伤痕，经历了黄州经历自然风光、人情的抚慰，并且藉由习佛向道，在一番自我调适之后，让他真正能够无畏人生的风雨，也不因生命的顺境而喜，随缘而行。这几首词作力图抛开悲、喜之情的束缚，努力地扬起「理性」精神，不坠入因执着情爱及时光流逝而伤感的词情特质，亦反映出苏轼心灵的折衷与调适。

## 五、自度度人——情的升华

元丰七年十二月，苏轼于泗州雍熙塔下沐浴，写了两首〈如梦令〉。第一首表现色空不二之理境，前文已提及。第二首则进一步阐发大乘佛教自度度人、自利利他之精神：「自净方能洗彼。我自汗流呀气。寄语澡浴人，且共肉身游戏。但洗。但洗。俯为世间一切。」首句「自净洗彼」，即指自度之后，不作自了汉，还要利益众生。次句则描述沐浴后流汗喘气之情形。苏轼沐浴有感，把话转告给一同沐浴之人，希望他们代为宣说，说什么呢？即是「且共肉身游戏」之理，所谓「游戏」，即《六祖坛经·顿渐品第八》所云：「见性之人，立亦得、不立亦得，去来自由，无滞无碍，应用随作，应语随答，普见化身，不离自性，即得自在神通游戏三昧，是名见性。」<sup>42</sup> 吴汝钧解释得相当清晰：

所谓游戏三昧，是禅者或觉悟者以三昧为基础，在世间自在无碍地进行种种教化、点化、转化的工夫，对于不同情境、条件的众生，皆能自在地拈弄，以适切的手法或方便去回应，使他们都得益，最后得到觉悟。<sup>43</sup>

[40] 萧丽华：〈从庄禅合流看苏轼诗的舟船意象〉，《从王维到苏轼——诗歌与禅学交会的黄金时代》（天津：天津教育出版社，2013年1月），页335-336。

[41] 如〈其十一〉：「戴箬笠，挂蓑衣。别无归处是无归」、〈其十五〉：「清风起，浪元平。也且随流逐势行」、〈其三十二〉：「晴川清瀨水横流。潇洒元不系舟。长自在，恣优游。将心随逐几时休。」

[42] 《六祖大师法宝坛经》，CBETA, T48, no. 2008, p. 358, c22-25。

[43] 吴汝钧：〈游戏三昧：禅的美学情调〉，《国际佛学研究》第2期（1992年12月），页208。

肉身若以般若空观而言，只是因缘假合而成的色身，而修行者内心正定，不仅可以利用色身修行，也能够运用色身在世间自在无碍地应机教化众生。因此「但洗，但洗」，具有双重意义：净化自身，也净化众生。「俯为世间一切」之「俯为」一语，则特别表达出无私的大爱精神，修行的目的并非使自我了悟而已，终极目的是为了救度众生而修行。这首词作若以分期而言，是黄州以后之作，呈现苏轼中晚年的生命意境：努力地走出人生的空漠之感，找回肉身的价值，拥抱人间，并且打破了词体抒情的局限性，扬弃因时空映照所流露的伤感，将私我之情升华为救度众生的慈悲心，即使肉身「汗流呀气」，仍能以游戏自在之心悠游于世间。

苏轼在〈答毕仲举〉中曾说：

若世之君子所谓超然玄悟者，仆不识也。往时陈述古好论禅，自以为至矣，而鄙仆所言为浅陋。仆尝语述古：公之所谈，譬之饮食龙肉也，而仆之所学，猪肉也，猪之与龙，则有间矣，然公终日说龙肉，不如仆之食猪肉实美而真饱也。不知君所得于佛书者果何耶？为出生死、超三乘，遂作佛乎？抑尚与仆辈俯仰也？<sup>44</sup>

这一席话正好可以和〈如梦令〉相互呼应。苏轼与陈襄两人习佛不同的地方在于：陈襄偏好谈论义理；苏轼则不喜空谈玄虚之道，讲究「实践」，真正落实于日常生活之中。这段文字最后点出两种生命取向：冀求成佛而脱离世间；或是在人间修行，最终仍然不离于人间。当然，苏轼会抉择后者。我们虽然在空梦主题的词作中，不断看见苏轼那颗挣扎于出世、入世的心灵，但是苏轼毕竟喜好生活、喜好世间、热爱人们，所以苏轼的生命意境，自然会倾向大乘佛教——以出世之心做入世之志业，既能「自净」，亦能「净彼」，在出世与入世之间取得圆满的调和。《维摩诘经》里，维摩诘居士曾言：「菩萨如是！虽生不净佛土，为化众生故，不与愚暗而共合也，但灭众生烦恼暗耳！」<sup>45</sup>菩萨入不二法门，不执着于染净，游戏自在，即使身在不净之土，亦能不被染污，甚至能够引领有情众生离开烦恼，如同荷花出淤泥而不染。〈如梦令〉说「且共肉身游戏」，身在红尘，反而有利修行，身在红尘，心中依然清净，这才是真正高明的解脱自在。见闻红尘中那么多苦难的有情生命，慈悲的苏轼，不会抬起头，不理不睬，不因红尘污浊而冀求超越三界。他选择俯身向下，用行动接引需要帮助的有情生命——俯为世间一切。

## 六、结语

本文从「空梦」、「清净本性」、「随缘」、「自度度人」四种佛理主题

[44] 宋·苏轼着，孔凡礼点校：《苏轼文集》（北京：中华书局，1986年3月），页1671-1672。

[45] 《维摩诘所说经》，CBETA, T14, no. 475, p. 555, b12-14。



发掘苏轼词中的情理辩证，发现其中「空梦」主题的词作最多，故而行文篇幅也最多。由于前文乃依照佛理主题分析，故本节重新就「生命历程」及「词体美感」加以统合观察，提出结语：

### (一)从生命历程观察

苏轼的佛理书写可以「黄州时期」作为分水岭。黄州以前，苏轼偶尔在书写愁情的过程中，以「理」导情，试图摆落胸中烦恼，唤回清净自性，契入绝对的本体世界，如第三节所分析的〈减字木兰花〉以及〈虞美人〉两首词作。此外，由于生涯漂荡，且受佛教空观影响，使得黄州以前写下不少蕴含空梦意识的词作，表现一种抽离现实(经验)世界的空漠感。

于湖州经历乌台诗案，心灵遭受强烈打击，来到黄州之后，余悸犹存，空漠感更为深沉，经常视人生、世间一切为幻梦，并带有一份沧桑、苍凉之感。在黄州这几年，经历山水风光、亲朋情感的抚慰，也从佛理之中找到宣泄、调节情感的出口，如〈与程彝仲〉中所说「但多难畏人，不复作文字，惟时作僧佛语耳。」<sup>46</sup>使得黄州时期及黄州以后，开创出蕴含佛教「随缘」及「自度度人」精神的词作，力图抛开空漠之感，以及悲喜之情，自在地活在人生的每个当下。黄州以后所作的〈如梦令〉第二首，更是希望扎扎实实地活在人间，找回肉身存在的意义与价值。而黄州以后含有空观佛理的词作，逐渐拥有一种宁静、理性的自持之道。反映苏轼人生走入中晚年，思维更加理性、圆融，逐渐能够驾驭个人情感，善于运用佛教智慧寻求生命的自在解脱之道。

### (二)从词体美感观察

「词」的抒情特质，在音乐旋律与句法句式交织下，形成回荡的情韵，内容在时空与人事的强烈映照下，发挥对人间情爱之专注执着，以及对时光流逝的无穷感慨。本文分析苏轼表现佛理的四类主题中，「空梦」一类最能发挥词情特质，大多词作几乎都在「今」与「昔」、「变」与「不变」的强烈时空对照下，促发苏轼深沉的空漠感。空观原是出自一种理性精神，却囿于词体独特抒情模式，难以彻底展现宋诗那份理性昂扬的精神，使得此类词作往往呈现出情与理相互拉扯、辩证的关系，反映苏轼在「人生如幻」与「情感安顿」之间的挣扎。

其他三类主题则突破了词体的抒情基调。如「清净本性」主题的词作，苏轼在书写离别，或是某些带有水月意象的词作中，由情入理，契入绝对的本性，扬弃悲哀的感受。「随缘」主题的词作，力图抛开悲、喜之情的束缚，努力地扬

[46] 宋·苏轼着，孔凡礼点校：《苏轼文集》（北京：中华书局，1986年3月），页1752。

起「理性」精神，反映出苏轼心灵的折衷与调适。「自度度人」主题的词作，苏轼试图努力地走出人生的空漠之感，找回肉身的价值，拥抱人间，并且打破了词体的抒情局限性，将私我之情升华为救度众生的慈悲心。

这四类佛理主题的词作，都可视为苏轼「以诗为词」的尝试，不仅扩大了传统词作的书写主题，也为词作注入一股理性达观的精神，扩大了词境。只是在表现空梦主题的词作，主要受到词体抒情的特质的影响，故而在情理相互拉扯、跌宕之后，仍然坠入情感的漩涡，往往呈现欲求解脱而终未能解脱之矛盾心理。其他三类主题的词作，如「清净本性」主题的词作，在坠入情感的片刻，理性忽然抬头；「随缘」一类的词作，词作通篇都昂扬理性精神；阐扬「自度度人」精神的〈如梦令〉其二，则将私我之情化为大爱精神，也是一种理性的超越。

以上即是本文对苏轼词中佛理书写的初步观察。透过本文的分析，可以见证苏轼在词作中，运用佛理与人情的相互辩证，努力寻找生命的理性。也呈现出人遭遇各种事情、在人生各个阶段，内心徘徊于理性、感性之间的复杂性。笔者也希望透过本文的研究，能为佛教文学的研究方法上，开拓出另一种观看「情/理」互动的研究模式。

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# 走在人间佛教的道路—— 读满义法师着《星云学说与实践》

许翌娟

满义法师研究星云大师人间佛教理念多年，继2005年发表《星云模式的人间佛教》一书后，近年又完成《星云学说与实践》。人间佛教，追本溯源，人间佛教就是佛陀的本怀，是佛陀的教诲，是佛陀为人说法的宗教。佛教教主释迦牟尼佛是「人」，不是神，他的诞生、出家、修行、成道、弘法皆在人间，他所传的就是人间佛教。人间佛教的根本落实在生活上，让道德思想净化，以及精神心灵升华，是重视生活处事的宗教，以人作为出发，以家国为起头，将佛法生活化，生活佛法化，即是人间佛教。星云大师为人间佛教订出四个宗要：「家国为尊，生活合理，人事因缘，心意和乐。」假使我们能透过佛法了解生命的意义，明白缘起中道的真理，透过自觉行佛来修行，必能转识成智，走在人间佛教的道路上。当我们思惟「三法印」、「四圣谛」、「十二因缘」的佛教根本教义时，会发现学佛是欢喜的，而不是消极的。

传统的佛教，掺杂了迷信，有人看时辰、风水、卜卦等等，成了以神鬼为主的佛教，让世人误解佛教的本意。我们有幸依循祖师大德，如六祖惠能大师的「佛法在世间，不离世间觉」，又如太虚大师的「仰止唯佛陀，完成在人格；人成即佛成，是名真现实」，勉励着身为佛弟子的我们要努力回归佛陀的本怀，人道完成了，佛道就不远了。人间佛教是人生所需要的能量，我们因此藉由佛法的智慧，让我们的生命更臻于圆满。

人间佛教是从过去山林走向社会，从寺庙道场扩及到家庭，完整地在生活中实践。大师立意为人间创造一个五和的人间净土，从自心和悦，为自己的出发；家庭和顺，为家庭的相处；人我和敬，为人际关系的处事；社会和谐，为社会上的和平；到世界和平，普及全世界。因此，将佛陀所说的教法，用浅显易懂的方式，向世人宣讲，举办活动用以接引学佛的人，让人人都有得度的因缘，进一步亲近佛法。

不了解佛教的人，总以为佛教是苦的，人间佛教是面对苦难的一盏明灯，是离苦得乐的一个门径。佛陀初转法轮所说的四圣谛，即告诉我们：人生的实相是苦，无论是什么苦，过去身累劫无明造作等等，曾经的业力所招感，集结而来，因此我们学习佛法、八正道及阅读佛经，要将苦的所形成的因缘断除。让每

个人的真如佛性显现出来，佛陀成道后即说：「奇哉！奇哉！大地众生皆有如来智慧德相，只因妄想执着不能证得。」（《华严经》卷五一）每个人的自性都跟佛陀一样，现在还没有发现是因为被无明执着所蒙蔽，我们要努力地行佛，让佛性开放出来。由此可见，佛教并不是只说苦空无常，其真正的目的是为了「示教利喜」。

人间佛教，大师定义为「佛说的，人要的，净化的，善美的」。在满义法师《星云学说与实践》里，立论的根本在于佛性平等，自信「我是佛」；阐扬的真理，是缘起中道，体解「空与有」；落实的修行，是自觉行佛，实践「菩萨道」；圆成的目标是转识成智，圆证「般若智」。

第一章佛性平等，主要从佛陀当初证悟时所说的「众生皆有佛性」，佛性为每个人都具有，星云大师更积极地提倡「我是佛」，希冀每个人都能直下承担，把自己的真如佛性找出来，学习三好、四给的精神理念，身做好事，口说好话，心存善念，让身口意三业能够清净。透过在人间的修行，我们要发愿行菩萨道，在人间中圆满佛道，让生命可以究竟圆满。在省庵大师《劝发菩提心文》中，「尝闻入道要门，发心为首；修行急务，立愿居先。愿立则众生可度，心发则佛道堪成。」说明踏入佛门修行，最重要的是发心和立愿，最先要发菩提心，要发大悲心，具足菩提心去实行服务大众。菩提道路上困难重重，只要发心坚固，诸佛菩萨也会庇佑。

第二章缘起中道，体证「缘起」是佛教信仰的根本。缘起的意义是借着种种条件而产生现象的原理，指现象相互依存的关系。探究什么是因缘？世界上一切事物，或一切现象的生起，都是相对的，如果没有这个关系和条件，任何事物和现象都无法生起，因缘也就是关系条件。唯有开发般若智慧，才能把贪嗔痴三毒，转为戒定慧的功德。大师主张，人间佛教的信仰不是迷信的膜拜，而是要从三藏十二部经典中，明白世间缘起缘灭的真理。万法缘起而有，自性本空。「空」是一切法之所依，如果没有空性，万物就不可能存在，因为必须有空，才能包含着有，诸法因为缘起而有，故知本性为空，因为性空，所以才能缘起万法。这说明缘起的奥义是果从因生、相由缘现、事待理成、多从一有、有依空立及佛是人成。

第三章是自觉行佛，倡导「自觉行佛」，提升佛教信仰。自觉行佛不但是人间佛教的修行，也是人间佛教的戒法。在人间行菩萨道，也是持戒的一部分，自觉行佛也是解行并重的体现。我们总是盲目地寻找佛陀，与其四处寻找佛陀，



不如让自己做个佛陀，佛陀涅槃前提醒着弟子要依循四念处——观身不净、观受是苦、观心无常、观法无我。「观身不净」是要随时检视自己的行为有没有端庄，品格有没有合乎道德，思想有没有纯正，我们处在污浊世界里，要随时反思自己的行为举止；「观受是苦」佛陀告诉我们生活在苦的时候，要有面对逆境的勇气，只要突破眼前的困难，那么才能历练成长一番，阴影的背后充满着阳光，化人生的绊脚石为垫脚石，勇敢向困难挑战；「观心无常」是指这世间无常，因缘不定，没有人能预知下一秒会发生什么事情，唯有把握当下，持戒、念佛、行善等等，才是面对无常的方法，因为无常，人生才过得更有意义；「观法无我」是佛陀提醒我们，要去「我执」，学佛的人不能过于自我，「自我」容易骄傲和目中无人，所以要去掉「我」，把自己看淡，才能在修行路上顺遂。这些方法都是佛陀教导弟子们该如何行佛，叮咛着弟子们要修好身、口、意（身体、口语、意念）三业，那么大家都可以迈向成佛之路。

星云大师倡导的「三好」、「四给」、「五戒生活」。我们要把大师所说的「做好事、说好话、存好心」落实在生活上，达到身、口、意三业的清净。做好事——举凡捡垃圾这种小事，举手之劳功德妙，或远至出国作公益旅行的范围都是做好事，服务奉献，一起为人间佛国付出，多多行善，建设人间净土。例如中华佛光青年团：公益旅行（大觉寺、印度）、关怀旅行（送爱到部落、灾区重建）、品德推广（三好走入校园、生命教育十堂课）。说好话——俗话说：「良言一句三冬暖，恶语伤人六月寒。」若是说好话，一句好话可以让三个冬天感到温暖，若是一句坏话，则可以让人在六月里感到寒冷。在佛光山，我们看到法师或是师兄师姐，向他们打招呼说声：「吉祥」就是说好话的最佳表现。慈悲爱语如冬阳，随时鼓励他人，赞美他人，让人感到欢喜，就像百花绽放芬芳散播一样。存好心——拥有一颗好心是学佛最重要的。省庵大师在《劝发菩提心文》说过：「欲行菩萨道，首发菩提心。」发菩提心就是存好心的实践。存好心——我的心中要怀着慈悲心、善心、好念等，心里要有正知正见，不要让恶心胡乱了我们的思维。唯有提起正念，我们才能在菩提道路上，永不退转。

「四给」就是「给人信心、给人希望、给人欢喜、给人方便」。四给的精神，就是佛陀示教利喜的本怀，也是慈悲喜舍的实践。四给的「给」，我们若是要给人，自己就要先具备信心、希望、欢喜、方便，充实自己才可以进一步传递幸福予其他人。我觉得佛陀纪念馆是一个展现「四给」的最好例子。来山的旅客，看见佛光小姐的发心服务，可以感受到旅客对于佛馆的信心；旅客来山虔诚礼佛、恭敬浴佛、点灯祈愿等，可以让他对于信仰充满希望；佛馆的人进进出出，无论法师还是佛光小姐甚至于义工菩萨，大家都是笑容满面，欢迎您的到



来，就是给人欢喜；佛馆多处都有净房，供大众使用；行动不便的长者、身心障碍的人士，佛馆也有残障坡道、残障人士专用净房供他们使用，就是给人方便的体现。

「五戒生活」就是「不杀生、不偷盗、不邪淫、不妄语、不饮酒」。五戒是以人为本，是尊重自己，爱护别人生命、财产、名誉，建立个人诚信，保持理智的自我管理，以端正社会善良风气为主。五戒是以不侵犯他人为主，如果今天杀害了有情众生，就是侵犯他人生命。不偷盗——未经他人同意私自动人物品，都算偷盗；不偷盗是以他人的生命财产为基准，若是违背不但造成别人的损失，也让自己的名誉受损；不邪淫，是指规范夫妻之间应该有正常的关系，不能在外面胡搞，让被害人蒙上阴影；不妄语——说话谈吐之间应以诚信为主，不应颠倒是非，造成彼此沟通误会；不饮酒——若是饮酒了会神智不清，可能会造成酒驾或是做出违背意志的事情，青年应以不犯酒为准则。年轻气盛，很可能因为不小心，做出伤害自己和他人的悲剧，应引以为戒。

第四章是转识成智，「识」是人间的情识，是生死的根本；「智」是般若自性，是解脱的要道。学佛就是要发开不一样的智慧，也就是要转识成智，才能找到自己才能找到自己的真如佛性。唯识学派认为，万法都是由心识所产生的结果，我们无时无刻都在进行唯识的作用。唯识宗把人类的心识分为八种，眼识、耳识、鼻识、舌识、身识、意识、末那识、阿赖耶识。我们的世俗意识或潜意识称为虚妄意识，处于贪、瞋、痴、五欲及六尘里，学佛的目标是要把虚妄意识转为清净菩提，就是转识成智。八种的心识，要转变为智慧的象征。前五识是感官的作用，用来感觉外物，眼耳鼻舌身转成「成所作智」，行事利益一切大众。第六识是分别外物，六根生起的六识，转成「妙观察智」，思考事物的性相。第七识是坚持我的意识，搜集各种心识的作用，传达给第八识阿赖耶识，要转为「平等性智」，一切平等，普度众生。第八识阿赖耶识，埋藏轮回的种子，要转为「大圆镜智」，不妄不愚，圆满真实。转识成智是众生的八识转为清净的一个过程，其中又包含五个阶段，一是资粮位，确立信仰；二是加行位，加紧修行；三是通达位，初见真理；四是修习位，继续苦修；五是究竟位，究竟圆满。四种智慧由破除虚妄所得，四智是生命精神圆满的展现，第一智做善事，第二智得真知，第三智显慈悲，第四智度众生。我们要将内心杂染不好的习气去除，让我们真如佛性不被无明烦恼所遮蔽，要将心灵提升到更高层次，开发般若清净光明的自性。



无漏一切诸法。阿赖耶识不会随形体而消失，它会一直传下去，人会随着阿赖耶识投胎轮回。最重要的转识成智，在第八识阿赖耶识进行，若要转变要由此下功夫，将污染的种子，转为清净的种子，时时薰习善的种子，必能转识成智。所以，生命的主人翁是第八识阿赖耶识，大师曾以四个生动的譬喻叙述，阿赖耶识像一块土地，种什么，即会长出什么，如果种下好的种子，必然长出善；如果种下坏的种子，必然长出恶。也就是说，行事作为操之在己。阿赖耶识像一个仓库，仓库收集许多的物品，无论是什么都可以放进，个人的因果、造业也会放在仓库里，时机因缘成熟，果报就会显现。阿赖耶识像一片大海，大海有吞吐万物的特性，好的坏的全盘接受，人在世间所造的业力，尽管生命的主体阿赖耶识要去受业报，但是业报有尽，生命的存在是永恒的。阿赖耶识像一条命根，如同《庄子·养生主》里「指穷于为薪，火传也，不知其尽也。」概念就像用薪柴点火一样，每一块柴薪是很容易燃尽的，但是火种却会一直延续下去，不觉得薪柴之尽。以薪喻为人类的肉身，人生虽然短暂，精神却是可以流传于后世，继续发扬光大。虽然生命的形体不一样，但真正的生命是不死的。

大师说：人间佛教是「佛说的，人要的，净化的，善美的」。佛光山四大宗旨是以文化弘扬佛法、以教育培养人才、以慈善福利社会、以共修净化人心，为佛光山人间佛教的开拓与建设，奠定思想理论基础及弘法策略。佛法即是佛说的，要用文化来弘扬，举凡媒体、报章、出版社、宣讲员等，都是传播佛法的方法。其中以文字的弘扬力量最为广大，受益人数最多，是回归佛陀本怀「契理契机」的展现。教育即是人要的，大师说道：「佛教，本来就是佛陀的教育；佛陀，就是一位伟大的宗 就是一位伟大的宗教教育家。」大师深耕教育的用心，遍及世界五大洲，不仅创办佛学院、幼稚园、国高中，更甚还创办大学，借以培养佛教未来的主人翁。推动人间佛教，必须积极服务人群，重视教育。

人心是需要净化的，在杂染的社会，五欲六尘蒙蔽双眼，如同老子十二章：「五色令人目盲；五音令人耳聋；五味令人口爽；驰骋畋猎，令人心发狂；难得之货，令人行妨。」对于欲望的追求，应该要适可而止，只求安饱，不求纵情于声色之娱。透过禅净共修祈福法会、道场例行共修法会、举办活动等来安定人心。

福利社会是善美的，大师对于「大众化」的强调，凸显人间佛教重要的品格，以大众为基础，与众生的需要有关。人间佛教的慈善，是救急不救贫；人间佛教的慈善，就是弘法，救济人心最为重要，慈善不限于金钱、物质，更重于精神上的饱满，以佛法布施他人，种下学习佛法的因缘。举凡救灾、育幼院、基金

会、养老院、医疗团队、监狱弘法等都是福利社会。

南京大学中华文化研究院教授一程恭让《星云大师人间佛教思想研究》一书曾说：「星云大师是一位深具般若与善巧方便的现代人间佛教导师，大师是一位具备慈、悲、愿、行、智五德的人间佛教行者，不仅在日常的行仪中，更渗透在大师著作里的字里行间。」我想，古人有云：「立德立功立言」为三不朽。星云大师为三不朽的典范，「不朽」是一种精神的永恒性，对后世的影响。大师著作立书，用文字流传精神会永远存在，因为文字的不朽，可以流传后世，文字追求不朽，可以把生命延长，文字的力量，甚至比语言更可贵。

远见·天下文化事业群董事长—高希均《星云之道领悟人间佛教》一书曾说「星云之道」，是指大师拓展人间佛教的道路，是指推广人间佛教的道理。它的道路无限宽广，是人人可以学习的、穿越的；它的道理无所不容，是人人可以亲近的、实践的。

高希均教授曾赞叹大师，开创了一个无远弗届的人间佛教，他的一生改革了佛教，改善了人心，改变了世界。大师的一生，致力于弘扬人间佛教，我们所信仰的佛教是人间佛教，每个人都走在人间佛教的道路上，对于人间佛教的体认，每个人运用不同的方式去学习、去实践，去印证人间佛教的精神，去弘扬人间佛教的理念，共创不一样的人间佛教价值体系。

佛教是个智信的宗教，旨在开启众生的智慧，以解决众生的烦恼和痛苦。人间佛教是现实重于玄谈、大众重于个人、社会重于山林、利他重于自利；凡一切有助于增进幸福人生的教法都是人间佛教。人间佛教引导我们认识自我、肯定自我，进而依靠自我，实现自我，从「未觉悟的佛—众生」，变成「已觉悟的众生—佛」，我们行走在人间佛教的道路上，在人间走出康庄大道。人间佛教，是佛陀的一代时教；人间佛教，未来必然是世界人类的一道光明。



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# 有容乃大

姜楠

每个人能过上什么样的日子，快乐或者不快乐，是由自己决定的。那取决于我们对于人生中各种烦恼的态度，对苦乐的理解，和自己心量的大小。对于我们这些普通的凡人，无不希望自己的生活里充满快乐而不是烦恼。快乐的定义可以是好吃的食物，如花美眷，儿女膝下呈欢，事业有成等等。绝大部分的人都是这样认为的。希望自己所拥有的都要恒常不变。只有不变才能带来安全感。身体要一直健康，为了讨个吉利，绝对不要说死，就好像不谈论死亡，死亡就会把他忘记。但凡是好的东西要一直拥有，房子要越来越大，要有车子，孩子，票子等等的物品。物品的拥有，这种油然而生的安全感，给了我们很大的错觉。而往往我们的痛苦都来自于这些好东西的失去。损失财产，天灾人祸的发生，失去了亲人，身患重病等等，无不让我们痛心疾首，无法自拔。

对于我这个学佛的人来说，快乐的定义更多的是希望能积极有效地面对生活中的起起伏伏。人生不如意十有八九。学佛使我懂得如何应付突然发生的种种不在控制中的事情，消除“不能由我”的失落感。总有人会问我，学佛学的是什么？有时候我会说，学佛就是为了改变命运，“诸恶莫作，诸善奉行”，懂得掌控自己的心念和想法。我也会说，学佛就是让心量变大烦恼变小的过程。其实最重要的，学佛是为了能够接受无常，活得坦然，接受宇宙人生的真相罢了。

人生中有八苦：爱别离、怨憎会、求不得、生、老、病、死和五阴炽盛苦。这八种苦难无时无刻不在我们的人生中，让我们无法出离。只有认清这八种苦难，提升自己的觉悟，才能拥有一颗广大智慧的心，而究竟地离苦得乐。

对于我们的亲人、爱人、朋友乃至没有亲密关系的人，都要能珍惜缘分，给予无条件的爱。只有这样才会没有人与人之间的“爱别离”、“怨憎会”和“求不得”的痛苦。大家都看过电视连续剧或者电影。当红的帅气男演员或者美丽动人的女演员，都会饰演很多部爱情故事。在这部戏里爱这个人，在那部戏里又和另外一个人长相厮守，无不是爱得死去活来，荡气回肠，肝肠寸断。我们何尝不是像连续剧里的演员，在每一次轮回的生命中，与每一世的爱人你依我依。每一世的爱人都是真爱，每一世的父母、孩子、亲眷都是真爱。虽然是真爱，但这个爱是自私的，有分别的。只有无条件的，无私的爱才是真爱。能做到爱别人就像爱自己需要一个很大的心量和觉悟。这让我想起《快乐王子》的故事。快乐王子生长在皇宫，每天锦衣玉食，没有见过痛苦，在他不幸离世以后，人们把他变

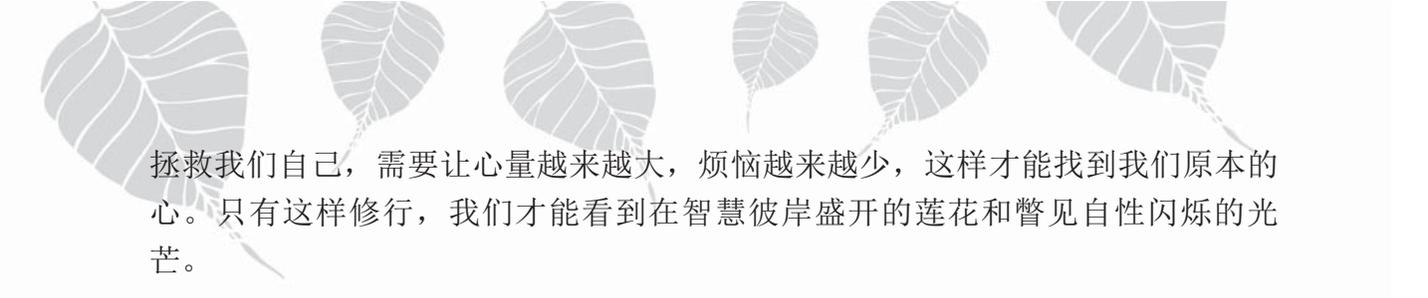


成美丽的雕像放在了城市的中央，为他做了蓝宝石的眼睛，镶嵌红宝石的宝剑，全身贴满了金子做的叶片。然而王子看到了城市里人们很多的不幸与哀伤，再也开心不起来，当他看见“富人们在漂亮的酒楼里寻欢作乐，而乞丐们却坐在大门口忍饥挨饿……看见饥饿的孩子们露出苍白的小脸没精打采地望着昏暗的街道”之后，他把自己身上全部宝贵的东西分散给了在痛苦中需要帮助的人们，而他也轰然倒下。当人们嘲笑他失去了真金宝石，只有铅做的心时，这颗铅做的心碎了，他的真心终于迸发了光芒。快乐王子其实在活着的时候并没有明白什么是真正的快乐。最后他之所以成了快乐的人，是因为他懂得如何付出无私的爱，如何用真心去感悟快乐，做到了“以无所求心，行饶益事”。同样的，对人与人之间的缘分，我们尚且要如此；对于物品，我们也应该懂得珍惜拥有和知足常乐。懂得控制对物品的欲望，才能没有“爱别离”、“怨憎会”和“求不得”的根本痛苦。

人的另一根本痛苦，就是要面对“生、老、病、死、五阴炽盛”。对于我们的身体和健康，我们只能尽力地珍惜和保护；面对死亡，我们要能够坦然接受而不是避之不提。不要忽略死亡，因为死亡本身就像是周围空气，无所不在。花朵之所以美丽是因为会凋谢，日子之所以要珍惜，是因为我们的身体终将毁坏。身体本是缘分所生，如空中的烟花，如水中的月影，并非在空义上真实存在。这就像是海浪的起伏生灭，波涛升起和消散最终都归入大海。波浪并非真实存在，因为本来是海水。水在海中是水，在雨中也是水，在茶杯中也是水。生命的形式不同，但本质没有差别，或者说佛性无二。比如经书上说的一则故事：一个年幼的婴孩死去了，妈妈内心无比的痛苦。她乞求佛陀让她的孩子复活。佛陀说：“你赶快到城中寻找，家中从来没有死过人的人家，求他们的火过来，我便救活你的孩儿”。妇人非常激动，匆忙去城中四处寻找。结果居然没有一个人家是没有死过人的。终于，这个妇人醒悟过来，接受了无常，也发起了无上菩提心。通过这则故事，也希望我们能够领悟到无常是不能改变的，只有坦然地去接受。珍惜拥有的生命和光阴，用积极向上的心去体悟和学习，行解并重。

“心净则国土净”，世界唯心造。生活，可以美好也可以痛苦，这完全是由我们的心量大小决定的。如果把痛苦比喻为咸盐，心量是盛盐水的容器。同样的盐分在茶杯里会觉得苦涩，而盐水在深井中就会淡而无味。痛苦忧愁其实没有减少，但是程度降低了，那是因为承载烦恼的心量变大了。

时常，我们的心像混浊的泥沙水，烦恼和纷扰会把我们的心搅得越来越混浊。当烦恼纷扰如泥沙般沉淀下来，我们才能有机会看到我们本来澄净的心。我们流落在轮回之中不能自拔，生活在“颠倒梦想”之中，把他乡认作了故乡。而



拯救我们自己，需要让心量越来越大，烦恼越来越少，这样才能找到我们原本的心。只有这样修行，我们才能看到在智慧彼岸盛开的莲花和瞥见自性闪烁的光芒。

也许这条路很长，道路蜿蜒曲折。尽力无条件地去爱，放弃分别和妄想，不要再被痛苦烦恼迷惑。心量就像天空，烦恼的云偶尔会将天空遮住，雾霾的污浊时常会让人以为再也没有蓝天，而拨云见日之后才会发现天空的无垠与广博。心就是那样的，有容乃大！

但愿大家都能找到自己原本的心，去感受生命的美丽，去看清宇宙人生中的真相！

# 有容乃大

苏慧珠

浩瀚宇宙无边际，川河流动总无休。有容乃大，圆融当中。在佛教教义中，“容”普及大众，尊爱的星云大师在其著作《迷悟之间》里有一篇《容人的雅量》，概述我们在生活中必须有着的条件：包容。“包容别人，就是扩大自己”，即心的容量有多大，你的收获就能有多大，同时促使社会和谐，亦使自己生命格局更为丰富，何乐而不为之？阅读此篇文章后，再对自己的生活多加思考，提醒自己无论遇到什么情况，实用的道理都是一样。

“大海容纳百川众流，所以才能成为大海；虚空容纳森罗万象，所以才能成为虚空。”因为佛教的宽宏与包容，所以造就曾经辉煌的弘法时代，并且历久不朽，纵使随着时代演变而衍生种种严峻的考验，只要在生活中实践佛典中的“容”之理念，佛教的根就会往人心深处底下紮去，根深蒂固，经历得起暴风雨的摧残而不消失；同时随着蔓藤而攀升，开出希望的花，结出和谐的果。

大，至宇宙的大，无从计算它的容量，承载着无数各异的星球和物质，甚比恒河沙数；小，如同杯子的小，但也能容下千万肉眼皆看不见的微生物和化学物质。不管是宇宙的大还是杯子的小，都蕴藏相同定律——“容”，这是释迦牟尼佛早期就参透的真理。不管愿不愿意，就从诞生那刻起，世界就在包容你，同时你也在拥抱着这个世界。只是在成长过程中，我们免不了沾污来自周围的烟雾与尘埃，蒙蔽了肉眼，蒙蔽了心眼，开始分异族群、国籍、社会地位等等，因此我们需要学习容纳彼此，甚至有智慧地相容。

## 主动与被动的相容

有者认为佛教是“被动的”，甚至有点儿消极，因为不是在谈“了脱生死”就是谈“缘”，没有机缘就一切未成，仿似我们就只能空等“缘”的到来。其实不然，因为佛教是可以“主动的”，积极地勾勒生活的希望，绘画七彩缤纷的世界。

在我的生活中所接触的佛教信徒都较为沉稳文静，或许是自修得来的能量，懂得在逆流中寻求和谐，其容忍的功力是值得尊重的，也被公司管理层视为中流砥柱，因为不管公司遇着什么困难，正当大家都在埋怨和纷纷离职时，佛教徒同事不惊不慌地守着岗位，默默承受压力，且让公司在乱流之中顺利运作。这种人物在企业管理中极度被需要，因为没有相对的容忍度，企业要站得稳也成问



题，又何谈要发展宏图？

有次探访流浪动物收容所时，听说“佛教徒都不会过来这里的。”为什么？因为他们都到佛堂里去了。我仿似当头喝棒。为何我会认为佛教是“被动”？因为走出佛堂范围后，部分佛教徒还不够积极和主动参与社区活动。尽管近年来开始看见佛教徒勇于突破社会对宗教的局限，穿上团体制服走在游行队伍中，似在宣告佛教并非自我封闭，佛教也在关注社会议题。因为只要佛教能走入人群中，便能发挥影响力，要不然就像经营一间咖啡馆，即使咖啡和食物都相当美味，但是没人喝的咖啡、没人吃的食物，再好也徒然。

于是我问同事：“为什么你不参与佛堂之外的活动？”

“我还没有那个能力。我想继续自修，让自己变得更有自信和完美。”

“那你什么时候才能变完美？”顿时我俩陷入很长的沉默当中。

经常听到：“既然你不是完美的人，那么凭什么批评人？”，那么换个角度，我们不敢走出去做更多事情，是因为我们不够完美吗？那我们何时才能完美？何时才能走出去？十年的时间足够吗？但是社会在十年里却可以有无数的大变化。我想起有位前辈的见解，他说老师之所以成为老师，不是因为他拥有完整的知识。如果要等一个人读完万卷书才有知识和资格成为老师的话，相信这个世界上仅存一、两所学校，结果是更多孩子们无法受教育。老师之所以成为老师，那是因为他愿意和学生边在不完美中，边付出自己仅有的力量和边学习。主动与被动的相容，或许也可视为自修与度人的平衡。

## 纪律与教育的相容

我想佛教会被认为是“消极”的原因，或许还有佛教中的戒律，即这个不可以做、那个也不可以做。本地曾经发生一宗教师因为迟到而被校长拒在校门外，最后含泪离去的新闻。大家都持有两极化的反应，有者认为老师迟到是竖起不良示范所以应该被对付，有者却认为这会导致老师在学生面前抬不起头、有失老师尊严的局面。我始终喜欢的是人性化的教育，不是硬梆梆的纪律。

如果我是那位校长，我会选择让老师进来学校如常地执行她的职务，发警告信后又尝试了解该名老师经常迟到的原因，共同商讨解决方法。例如我曾经在校任职，也因为交通关系经常迟到，结果校长知道后愿意把我的工作时间调至后1个小时，从此我对该名校长的宽容存有深刻印象，即使离职后也惦记她所教我的：“只要不是伤害生命的，什么事情都可以有商有量。宽容与理解是比纪律更



为重要的教育。”

纪律与教育的相容在于互相配合。若是分开，那就选择想要教育出只懂得遵守纪律的学生，还是想要教育出懂得包容和理解他人难处的学生。我选择后者。我相信，教育必须在纪律之前，即应该教育纪律背后的意义，而不是教育遵守纪律的表面。

## 恐惧与克服的相容

不久前，我在网上看到一句：“成熟，不是你学会了表达，而是学会了咽下”。若句中的咽下是一种容忍，那么不表达是为了避免麻烦，还是为了成全恐惧？我偶尔享受缄默中寻找答案的过程，偶尔则会大喇喇地直话直说，因为连我自己不敢表达，别人岂能了解我的想法？虽然很多时候都不被接纳，甚至惹来批评与讨厌，不过总算为自己的立场迈开脚步，结果如何亦只是个经历。

不要批评，要多赞美！我相信吸引力法则，也享受被赞美的乐趣，但是有时候我会思考：为何我们容不下批评的声音？当然批评的定义因人而异，我认为只要“不作出人身攻击”，任何声音都可以勇敢地表达自己。我看过孩子因为害怕父母啰嗦，所以不愿意沟通；因为害怕争执，所以不愿意沟通……最后导致关系渐行渐远。

随着科技进步发达，唾手可得的社交软件已经变成生活重要的部份，各自寻找喜欢的内容看，大部分的人都乐于按赞和留下开心的句子，而我应该是朋友间少数喜欢在新闻底下评论的网民，当然绝对不是酸民，而是喜欢表达自己的看法和感觉，然后再看看其他人的留言和想法，彼此几句往来亦是正常不过。在这过程中，我学习了：当自己看不顺某件事情时，思考那是自己的问题还是别人的问题呢？那么自己是选择说出来，还是继续漠视之？有些批评与建议是难以接受，但是哭过以后，思考多几次，从伤痛中领悟，再到深入内化，其实这是最好的成长。

有次总算了解部分朋友的心态，他们选择沉默，是因为害怕失言而失去朋友，又或者因为失言而自毁形象，毕竟在公开平台之上，每个言行举止都会被群众检视。因此不少朋友劝我少说两句，可惜比起当个受欢迎的人物，我渴望当个勇敢成长的孩子。将心比心，我喜欢创作，有时候很纳闷为何朋友们都这么客气地赞美我？我没有缺点吗？面对太多的认同，反而使自己变得不实在，所以我选择主动评论，因为我相信总会遇到跟我一样的小人物，在等着真诚的评论与建议。

恐惧与克服的相容，找到使自己恐惧的源头就能找到办法克服。如果因为少数的负面评论而关掉社交平台，选择自我封闭，倒不如勇敢寻获更多成长的机会。面对社会的事无大小，什么都可以是我的事情（自己学习成长），或者什么都与我无关（自己选择排斥）。

## 文化与生活的相容

过去我为了整理流浪动物收容所的资料，访问不同的单位，遇到热心和慷慨的团体组织，也遇到斤斤计较的团体组织，不断地计算自己的好处，有者看到自己不喜欢的资讯出现其中，便起反感和拒绝合作。曾经沮丧过，明明大家都是帮助流浪动物，为何又要互相排斥？这会不会是导致本地动物保育工作退缩不前的原因？

有一则关于犹太人智慧的故事烙印在我脑海里，讲述有位犹太人开间油站获取丰厚的利润，同时带动社区的人潮，其他犹太人见此便在旁边开设市场、餐馆，最后该社区变成繁华都市；相反的，如果某人知道油站是能获取丰厚的利润，而跑去开油站，下一个也开油站，最后大家为了获得最大的利益，不断地想尽办法打击对方，最后纷纷亏本倒闭，该社区则变成一座没有生气的废墟。故事中的犹太人不仅智慧高，包容度也是挺高的，因为他们容得下不同类别的伙伴。

想要怎样的结果，就必须有相同的容量度。在现实中，我相当欣赏本地舞蹈团——共享空间舞团，尤其是得知舞团的发展史。话说当年舞蹈文化仍不被当地社会所广泛接受，因此正当大家都在埋怨社会容不下舞蹈文化、埋怨大众不懂得欣赏舞蹈艺术之际，那时候马金泉老师和叶忠文老师决定主动走入校园里教舞蹈。现在大家不懂得舞蹈没有关系，那就由我们开始培育！如今共享空间舞团已经成为国际舞台上数一数二的舞蹈团。这个真实的例子，至今依然提醒着我：文化的延伸是出自于“容纳”而不是“排斥”，即使被排斥在外，我们也要用极大的包容度去融入别人的生活中。成功者，往往是懂得“容得下别人”的人。

## 团队之间的相容

《一只破水桶的启示》故事深深吸引着我，那是讲述一位农夫每天都得用一根扁担挑着两只水桶去河边取水。一个水桶完整无缺，另一个水桶则是有裂缝。完整无缺的水桶当然能装满河水，而破水桶最后只剩下半桶水，因此后者感到沮丧和自卑……直到农夫提醒破水桶观察开满花的路边时，它才发现原来是自己身上的裂缝才能让桶里的河水灌溉着路边的花籽。



我们都渴望成为完美无缺的人，其实更多的都是那只破水桶，带有裂缝（缺点）。承蒙故事的启发：“倘若我们怀着包容的心，容纳他人的缺点，扬长避短，缔造和谐的社会”。另外我想起有句话：“没有完美的人，只有完美的配合”。这世界上是没有完美的性格和特质，就像感性的人较不会处理系统的资讯，而理性的人却写不好富有感情的文章，每种特性都存在好处与坏处，唯有互相融入，以长补短才能完美地完成任务。在此，分享自己一个小经历，话说团队里有位作风怪异的队员，经常不按牌理出牌，让大家十分困扰，然而在一次比赛中却是靠着最后分秒出其不意的进攻，取下意外得分……后来领队解释：每个人的存在不是来考验我们，就是来协助我们，或者两者皆是。当我知道团队里有位不按牌理出牌的队员时，我想到的并不是驱赶他，而是如何接纳他並发挥我们团队独有的创造力！

## 杯中水

曾经有位长辈使用空杯子与清水讲解“色即是空，空即是色”的含义，同时让我略懂“无无明，亦无无明尽”。如今我再次对着空杯遐想，突破盲点：谁说我的空杯里只能装清水？以前或许会希望自己成为完美的女孩，如清水般纯净，如戏剧女神般的清纯脱俗，现在却发现自己不甘当一杯清水，因为一辈子当中不可能总是顺利和清白的。我往自己的杯子里倒入各种颜色的染料，如同生活里的喜怒哀乐，我静静看着他们融化。或许有人认为这杯已经被污染的水无法回到当初的清水，正如我们的人生亦不可能重来。即无法得到一尘不染的清水，何不学习欣赏属于自己的杯水呢？

我的空杯子，为何只能装清水？最后我这空杯子，好像什么都容得下，但又好像什么都容不下。这又让我想起曾经观看过网络短片《如何活得快乐》，影片中的教授把高尔夫球、碎石、沙子和酒依照次序倒入瓶子里。如果这些都是生活上的必需品，我能怎么把它们融入自己的生活中？往装满酒的瓶子里丢高尔夫球、碎石或是沙子，满溢的酒便会泻漏，这是很糟糕的人生。所以我们的生活容得下什么，还得衡量轻重，依照秩序收纳其中，才能达到理想的结果。

我的空杯子怎么装水呢？佛教经典故事《沉默就好像向上摆着的空杯子》带出一段讯息：只有在脑袋安静时，才得以听见心灵深处的声音，宛如装入和容纳真知的泉水。观察是开始，沉默是过程，容纳便是结果，接着周而复始地循环发生，每天累积点滴珍贵的泉水，成就自己独有的生命感悟。有别于我上述的体会——要勇敢表达，这个故事则是采用另一个角度告诉我，最珍贵的智慧都是从沉默中衍生而来的。故事中的大师每次问村民：“我今天要讲的内容，你们知道



吗？”村民们回复后的结果是失望归去。最后只好沉默以对时，却得到大师的开示。就像我们在生活中每把声音都是一种想法，或许是妄为自大、或许是自卑消极、又或者疑惑不解等等，当某种想法侵占脑袋时，我们就无法吸收其他珍贵的提示。因此，每日不妨挪出几分钟的时间静坐或放空，把内心给清理一遍，把杯子里的水倒掉，再听听被忽略掉的声音，收容其精华。

宰相肚裡能撐船，得以后世人赞扬；弥勒佛坦赤大肚皮，容下众生烦恼，得以平天下。人能走多远，看得多广就收获多少，决定在于心容量度能有多大。最后，不管自己是杯中水，还是山林小溪的清水，或是住家旁沟渠的污水，让众多小川流结合成大海流，才有能力泛起波涛，这是容纳的力量，却止于表面上的整合；若能把彼此的本质相容，潜伏于变化无穷，创造力更强大。容，让自己融入大世界，也让大世界融入自己内心。

# <此灯由\_\_\_\_\_点亮>

## ( Who lights up? )

邱韵颖

每逢节假日，外地工作的哥哥便会搭乘铁路回乡下老家，由于家居偏远，交通不便，下了火车还需我们开车到邻镇接送。某天，一如往常，送着哥哥到火车站时，忽然发现路上有不一样的风景。

「怎么这里的路灯灯杆上都挂起一个牌子？『此灯由\_\_\_\_\_点亮』？这是要做什么？」

我看着绿底萤光的牌子纳闷，问起身边的家人也一概不知，或许最近是要办什么活动吧！

过几周，挂上牌子的路灯又增添许多，更有些牌子的空格处找到依傍。

「此灯由陈某某点亮，此灯由王某某点亮，哇！这排好几根都是林某某的……」看着牌子上的标示，我忍不住欢喜惊呼。

原来是「认养路灯」啊！

「认养路灯」是台湾近几年的新举措，可说新其实也不新，只怪自己是个乡巴佬，没跟上时代潮流。不过，路遥知马力，连我们这样的小乡镇都能延续此一官民同乐的巧思，可见这项政策势必受到广大热烈的回响，一方面能让乡镇市公所的经费获得节流，一方面也让有心公益的民众得以发挥，上下同心，名利双收，说它是德政，一点也不为过。

台湾的民间信仰中，农历新年素有点光明灯、安太岁、烧香拜拜等习俗，来祈求新的一年平安好运，而在这些活动之中，「灯」可以说是一个很特别的表征，许多宗教都赋予它非凡的意义，例如世界名画〈阿诺菲尼夫妇〉（The Arnolfini Portrait）的画面上方，便有一根点燃的蜡烛立在吊挂的烛台，细心观察，便能发现这座烛台明显可以放置许多蜡烛，既然如此，为什么只有点燃一根？原来，它代表上帝基督见证着阿诺菲尼夫妇两人的婚礼。烛火在西方画作，特别是宗教画上，常常就是上帝的代言人。



在佛教，「光明灯」的作用更是信众们极其喜爱的，点光明灯可以使前途光明，使眼睛明亮，使皮肤变好，真是「一灯在佛，希望无穷」！为此，寺庙方面也因应需求，依灯具大小订出不同价码，或三百，或五百，或一千，服务的对象则有个人、家族之分，为了一整年能受到上天福荫，往往还不到元宵，「灯市」就热闹非凡。

今年（2017）四月，台湾跨国合制的短篇电视剧《通灵少女》，除了创下收视佳绩，还掀起一股对灵异世界探究的热潮。我这回赶上流行，在一次看节目访问《通灵少女》的主角原型索菲亚时，不经意听到她说一段很有意思的话：「欧巴马的妈妈没有帮他点光明灯，他还是选上总统。」

节目中，索菲亚对于宗教活动并不多谈，只是提到，不管什么宗教，只要从「心」相信，它就有力量。每当有人问她如何化解人生的诸多困难时，可以看到另一个世界宛如握有某种能力的索菲亚，依然说出那句让人失望的话：「靠自己啦！」

《金刚经》中，佛陀一方面说要「灭度一切众生」，一方面却又说「无有一众生实灭度者」，似乎与这句「靠自己」冥冥暗合。师父领进门，修行在个人，师父发心度众，指点迷津，教下的弟子能不能勇度彼岸，端赖自己用功与否，这句「靠自己」可把出世间法的精随说得很是透彻，学生无心向学，请再好的家教都是白费工夫。

然而，一句「靠自己」对无数渴望依傍的心灵又是多么残酷的事？人生路上难免有时颠簸、茫然、无所归依，甚至众叛亲离，种种经历，往往让苟活的人没有一丝希望，只剩一颗伤痕累累的心，对于这样一位需要向导的朋友，却还让他独自游荡，任自飘零，岂不太残忍也太可怜了吗？于是，佛陀广开八万四千方便法门，接引根器不同的众生，为众生搭鹰架、建桥梁，直到一定程度之后，再渐次谈「法尚应舍」的实情，极为人性，也极为佛性。

光明灯，明显是一方便法宝。佛弟子欢喜供养，佛菩萨随喜发心，下化众生，上达天听，仿佛连通天人感应，又是一个生佛不二的好证明，而我作为一介入门款的佛教徒，对于点灯这事，更是一点儿也不陌生。

第一个有印象的点灯大概在我十岁左右，我跟着妈妈去到甫落成的中台禅寺游览，寺方的某处大殿前摆有一盏盏光明蜡灯，提供香客发心供养，我们跟着



排队的我们跟着排队的人群依序受领，有玻璃罐装较大的光明灯，也有拇指与食指环起来大小的光明香灯，我和妈妈拿的是后者。点燃火，看着小小的火苗在风中摇曳，幼小的我心里多么着急，也不知道那天是不是风特别大，一双小手努力保护的光明灯，屡屡被风吹熄，或者莫名其妙失去光辉，「为什么只有我这样？」执着光明的心由爱生恨，好不容易奉上供桌，一阵风来，前后左右的灯炬全数挨过，就是我的那盏一觉不醒，我看得无明火从心底熊熊燃起，先不说光明灯能不能让人光明，这一念嗔心，怕是早已烧毁成片的功德林。

第二次印象深刻的点灯在我十八岁左右，那晚是除夕夜，我和妈妈哥哥来到静虑寺参拜，寺方在佛事接近尾声，同样安排点灯的活动，大殿内奏起祥和的乐音，是由星云大师填词的〈点灯〉之歌，微凉的夜风从殿外徐徐吹拂，每个人手上捧着小小的香灯，清风流淌，红光浮动，放眼望去仿若满天的星子在大海跃踊，美妙的乐声回荡其中，随着寺方的引领，我们踏着和缓的步伐，供上这一盏光明。礼成，信徒们鱼贯而出，门口站着师兄姐发送着平安糖还有新年红包，这是我第一次收到佛祖的新年红包，里面因材施教的装有新台币一百元，这是我第一次感到佛祖好亲民，像家里的长辈疼爱孙儿，让原本不能待在家看除夕特别节目的阴霾一扫而空，这意外的惊喜，没有一个人不法喜充满。

搭车回家的路上，哥哥问起大家在供灯时分别许了什么愿望，我一听，大感懊恼，因为内心存有供灯阴影的我，一心只有想着「拜托不要熄」，看着手心的小香灯火光健在，不觉喜上眉梢，满足的心灵没作它想，却原来还是与「光明人生」失之交臂，虽然如此，成熟许多的我并不因此又染无明，反而是为这能带给一车人欢笑的愿望而感到快乐，同时也由衷感谢慈悲的佛祖立即回应我当年的心愿。

随着时代进展，寺庙推出LED新型态光明灯，不但亮度强，可以点上一年365天，更重要的是，几乎不会受到外力干扰而熄灭，不会因一个碰撞，一阵风吹就堕入无明，并更降低失火的风险，只是习惯上，民众在新年还是多选择蜡烛式的光明灯，或许是觉得一株随风舞动的火苗，更能赋予这盏光明灯特殊的灵性吧！不论新型或传统的光明灯，在清香袅袅的萦绕，亦各自呈现其香光庄严。

台湾的点灯信仰十分盛行，因此，政府推出的路灯认养计画，马上令人联想到马上令人联想到点光明灯的宗教行为。这些路灯大多一次认养一年，各县市标准不一，一支路灯约略需要新台币一千元，与寺庙点灯的价位相去不远，但点亮的路灯却更高、更大，也更显现其效用。当夜幕低垂，一盏盏的路灯便悄悄亮



起，它们很谦虚，在白日不与太阳争辉，只在无明侵袭世间的时候，于头顶上放大毫相光，使小光明得自无明起；而当清早的燕雀声啁啾，路口导护的口哨声此起彼伏，大光明也从小光明芯中接力传续。光之落处常在西方，当燃尽一身的光亮，那儿是否就是光明的安居？

点一盏心灯 / 照亮黑暗的 / 心灵角落

点一盏心灯 / 带来希望的 / 每一分钟燃起的火焰……

回家途中，〈点灯〉的旋律打心底响起，我想着灯火相传，能在无尽的时脉里绵延，光摄大千，能在无垠的幽冥中透亮，一盏灯火，不正具足无量光寿？望向道路两侧那一副副尚未具名的萤光绿底灯牌，不禁自问：此灯由\_\_\_\_\_点亮？

# 你我他~相约龙华

张晓婷

提和卫国内，人人新装美饰，个个合掌欣然，正等待燃灯佛的莅临。恰好在此云游参学的云童，获知燃灯佛即将来临的消息，心生欢喜，急忙寻觅香花供佛。但走遍全城，一无所获。忽见一青衣女子，手持五朵莲花，云童转忧为喜，连忙上前问讯。

「姑娘，我愿用五百银钱，换你手中莲花。」

「这花不值几钱，公子何以高价换取？」

「以我一片至诚，以花供养燃灯佛，但愿我早日成就佛道，为众生宣说解脱之道，令其离苦得乐。」

「你以花供佛，我满您所愿，但是，您要答应我，让我生生世世做您的妻子。」

「我……」

「我虽生生世世为您妻子，但誓愿不坏您的菩萨行，我及儿女眷属，随意您所布施，请您愍念我。」

「妳将五百世为我妻，与我共修菩提，你且安心无悲愁。」

少女将莲花递给云童，男子慈容凝视，徐徐点头，许下了五百世的婚约。

五茎莲，织起了五百世的因缘。

莲花瓣上，刚睡醒的蚂蚁彤彤正好目睹这感人的一幕，心生羡慕。

「但愿我像青衣少女一般，能找到与我共修菩提的人。」

另两片花瓣上，也有两只雄蚁，在见证了这跨越五百世的因缘后，默默在心中祈愿。

「但愿我有如云童，皈依佛陀座下，勤修佛道，早日脱离苦海！」

另一段因五茎莲织起的故事，正慢慢地展开……

「慈悲伟大的诸佛菩萨，请您庇佑我的儿子、媳妇，还有即将出世的孙子，让他们都能快乐、健康与平安！」



每天早晨，为诸佛菩萨献上一柱清香，是玮妈必做的功课。今天是佛诞节，玮妈更是一早就准备好鲜花水果供养诸佛菩萨，膜拜完毕，一转身遇见从房门走出来的静彤。

「小彤，你怎么不多睡一会儿？今天身体还好吗？」

静彤轻抚着孕育着小生命的温室，从怀孕至今，除了身材越来越圆满以外，并没多大的不适，这该感谢佛菩萨的庇佑吧！

「妈，我很好！今天是佛诞节，我想随您一起到佛堂膜拜。」

「这……你的预产期就在这几天，还是留在家休息吧！」

「我身体好得很，况且预产期是在下个星期，您不用担心。而且，我会照顾自己啊！」

「这……」玮妈脸露难色，这可是她的第一个孙子，她可不想有什么差错。

「我会很小心的，让我去吧！」

面对如此诚恳的请求，玮妈也只好妥协了。

「慈悲伟大的佛陀，感谢您赐给我这美好的一切。我从没想过可以和自己心爱的人在一起，甚至孕育他的骨肉。感恩您！愿您庇佑我的家人都能健康、快乐、平安！慈悲伟大的佛陀，请您接受弟子至诚的祈愿！」

「小彤，赶快起来吧！佛陀一定听到你的祈祷。」

在一旁的玮妈担心媳妇跪得太久，影响胎儿，急忙催促。

静彤徐徐起身，虽说身体并没有什么大碍，但怀孕的身体毕竟不方便，还是必须小心翼翼。可是，正当静彤步出佛堂时，下腹突然传来阵阵痛楚。

「啊……」

或许，该是花开的时候了。

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「很爱很爱你，所以愿意不牵绊你……」

电话铃声划破寂静，静彤不情愿地放下手上的《佛陀本生故事》。

「喂，静彤，不好了。玮妈被送进院了！」

电话里头传来佛堂义工小文焦急的声音。



「刚才玮妈在佛堂帮忙，不知怎地，突然晕倒了！我们只好把她送到附近的仁济医院。」

「好，我马上过来！」

玮妈是静彤的好友一明玮的妈妈。在明玮出国深造前委托她代为关照。自从第一次在佛堂见到明玮后，静彤就情不自禁地喜欢他。抱着「喜欢一个人就应该为他付出」的理念，静彤义无反顾地扛起照顾玮妈的责任。玮妈是个伟大的母亲，身兼父职，含辛茹苦地把明玮养大，这令她非常钦佩。

「抱歉，我必须赶着去接孩子放学，这里就交给你了！」

一看到静彤步入病房，小文不好意思说道。

「子宫内有恶性肿瘤，这是妇女常见疾病。幸好发现得早，但是患者年事已高，动手术的风险会比较高。」

凝视着一脸倦容的玮妈，医生的话萦绕耳边，面对玮妈，静彤即内咎又伤心。明玮出国的这两年，与其说是她照顾玮妈，倒不如说是玮妈照顾她。玮妈对她无微不至地关怀，甚至比家人还要关心她。静彤知道，玮妈一直把她当成未来的媳妇看待。只是静彤心里明白，这个梦想，似乎遥不可及。她不敢告诉玮妈，明玮在美国除了念商业硕士外，也修读了佛教硕士，甚至近期在处理申请修读佛教博士学位的事情，未来似乎会走上出家这条路。看来，这段感情是不会有结果的，所以，她决定要学习放下。这个月来，她没到过明玮家，也没有关心玮妈的生活状况。

「小彤，你怎么哭了？别哭了！哭久了眼睛会不好看哦！」

药力渐渐退去，玮妈一睁开眼睛，就看见默默流泪的静彤。玮妈只好像哄小孩般，哄着这让她疼惜的女孩。这么善良的女孩，可惜被远在美国的不孝子给辜负了。

「玮妈，对不起！」

「傻孩子，我身体健康得很呢！我还要看明玮结婚生小孩呢！不会这么快死的，少担心啦！」

玮妈的幽默，让静彤破涕为笑，把悲伤的气氛都一一扫走了。

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幸福餐厅的某个角落，坐着一对男女。

「静彤，我……我想请你帮一件事。」男生欲言又止。

「怎么啦！有什么困难？我们是好朋友啊，我一定会帮忙的。」心上人的要求，哪会有拒绝的理由呢！

「我……」

「你怎么啦？当初你要出国，要我这个老友帮忙照顾你妈，我都没有拒绝。还有什么难题啊？难道是你出家，然后要我照顾你妈一辈子？」

「请嫁给我吧！」

「……」女生被男生这句话吓得差点把饮料喷出来了。

「咳……咳……拜托！今天可不是愚人节！」这太出乎意料了，女生简直不敢相信自己的耳朵。

「我是认真的！」

明纬坚定地说道，不过脸颊却悄悄地红了起来。静彤这才想起，这个自己暗恋多年的男生从来不会拿感情开玩笑。

「这……」这是自己梦寐以求的一刻，但为什么总觉得哪里不对劲？

「我记得你说过爱情是你不想要的烦恼，婚姻是你所害怕的枷锁。我不认为你在美国的这几年，会改变你的想法。」

「这想法没改变过。」

「汪明玮，这一点都不好笑！别再闹了！你根本不想结婚，别闹了！我受不了这种玩弄！」这男人是存心要看她出丑吗？明知道她喜欢他，他不喜欢也罢了，还要不断挖苦她。

「我并没有要玩弄你的意思！」

「那，为什么要娶我？」

「我妈希望我可以成家，而她很喜欢你……」

「所以你为了玮妈，放弃你要出家的计画？」

「我妈得了癌症，时日无多。」

「所以你想和我假结婚，让她安心？」

虽然知道会伤害到眼前的好友，明纬最终还是点头，他不想欺骗她。

「对不起！我知道我的要求很过分，你就当作我没有说过。」

「笨蛋！」

笨蛋？是他？还是她？

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「爱河千尺浪，苦海万重波。是时候放手了！」

「不，这是我的幸福，我不想放弃！」

「从迷梦中醒来吧！幸福不是靠别人的赠与的，唯有远离颠倒妄想，找寻心灵之光，你就会发现光明、纯洁原与你同在。所有的爱欲到最后就只是痛苦，



放下吧！」

「我……」

静彤睁开眼睛，发现自己躺在一间白色的房间内。

「原来是一场梦！」

是梦？虚虚实实？假假真真？

「小彤，你醒啦！」

门外传来一把声音打破了静彤的沉思，是玮妈。

「你辛苦了，我刚从家里带了衣服和食物给你。你刚生产完毕，要好好地补一补才行。」

「嗯？」

「哎呀，你是不是忘了今早才生下白白胖胖的男孩啊？」

原来不是梦，她真的当妈妈了！

「看来你是累坏了，要好好休息哦！让明玮留下来照顾妳，我先去看看我宝贝孙儿，等等再把宝宝抱过来给你哦！」

玮妈兴高采烈地离开了，病房顿时陷入一片寂静中。

「你辛苦了！」

静彤这才发现站在床边的丈夫。

「我知道这孩子困住了你，不过不要担心，他不会阻挡你未来修道的路的！」

静彤在他的脸上看不到初当人父的喜悦，心中明白他的困恼。

如果当初不是以为玮妈时日无多，他们两人就不会协议结婚。但，故事并非依据他们的版本而延续，玮妈病情得以控制，越来越健康！结婚后半年，精神很好的玮妈开始「催生」，他们当然不敢告诉玮妈事情的真相。因此玮妈的「催生」演变到了今天的人工受孕的婴儿的诞生……

「不，谢谢你！谢谢你让我妈完成心愿。这孩子是我的责任，我一定会担任好父亲的角色。」

虽然看不到为人父亲的喜悦，但是明玮坚定的眼神，让静彤觉得一切都是值得的。

五茎莲，织起三人的缘……

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告别仪式上，明玮按下电钮，让玮妈随着阵阵佛号声前往西方净土。一旁

的静彤，牵着男孩的手，想强忍眼泪，但眼泪还是不听使唤地落下了。

「妈，别伤心，奶奶往生净土，应该值得高兴！」年仅十岁的小智安慰落泪的母亲。

静彤轻拭眼泪，放下，岂是容易的事呢！

「妈，我很不舍得奶奶，也很想哭，但是我想到师父曾说过，佛陀告诉我们，人总离不开生老病死，有相聚就会有分离，我们要学习放下，也要懂得珍惜。师父还说，只要我们努力修行，以后就可以与奶奶在净土相聚了！所以，我不哭！你也不要哭哦！」

是的，该走的留不住，该放手的最终还是需要放手！

「爸……」

玮妈房里，小智的声音划破沉静。

「嗯！」

「这是你的吗？」

小智递给明玮一张泛黄的纸，打开一看，竟然是一张《出家申请表格》。看着陈旧的表格，往事历历在目。

「你想要出家吗？」

「那已经是以前的梦想了，不过当时奶奶反对，所以我打消了念头。」

「但是，奶奶现在已经不在了啊！你可以去实现自己的愿望啊！」

「孩子，这是不可能的！」虽然母亲已经不在了，但是自己还是要尽丈夫与爸爸的责任。这辈子，看来无缘入空门了。

「不，只要你有决心，没有什么事情是不可能的！」

「傻孩子，你到底知不知道什么叫出家啊！」

「出家就是像师父他们一样啊！住在寺庙里，严守戒律，弘扬佛法。」

「难道你不知道如果爸爸出家了，就无法和你在一起吗？」

「这……但是佛陀说世上没有永恒的相聚啊！总有一天，我们还是要分开，不是吗？」

「傻孩子，爸爸会好好照顾你的。」

门外，一抹黑影稍稍离去……

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幸福餐厅的某个角落，坐着一对男女。

「我们离婚吧！」

明玮惊讶地望着说话的人。此时此景，似曾相似。

「为什么？」



良久，明纬才吐出这个疑问。

静彤深深地吸了口气，缓缓说道：

「因为你并不快乐！责任已了，是该放手的时候了！」

明纬望着静彤，此刻的心情是感动，也是惭愧。

「对不起！」

「不！你并没有对不起我！这些年来是我生命中最快乐的日子，感谢你给予我的一切。但是，快乐究竟不是永恒的。喜欢一个人就会希望对方得到幸福，所以我想我是时候放手了！」

「对不起！我没有办法答应你！」

「为什么？」

这次，轮到静彤惊讶地望着他。

「孩子还小，是需要一个完整的家庭的。让我们努力做好父母的本份吧！」

「可是……」

「如果连自己份内事都处理不好，我就连最基本的佛教徒都谈不上了，还能为佛教做些什么呢？」

「这……」

生命的际遇如此多变，或许一切只能随缘！

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「不想绑着你，想让你自由地飞。离婚只是希望让你往后的路走得更方便。」

十年后，静彤依然向明纬提出离婚的要求，这一次，明纬答应了。离婚后的明纬，将资产留给静彤与小智，只身回到美国继续未完成的梦想。

因为爱，两人结合了，也因为爱，两人分开了。那条绑着却看不见的丝线，渐渐松开了两人的手指间。

美国龙华寺上，殿宇辉煌。庄严的大殿内，剃度法语高声响起，一场神圣的剃度法会正进行着。不管是新戒法师或观礼者，无不被现场庄严的气氛所感动。

终于，一切都落幕了，观礼者徐徐离开了大殿。

走在寺院的丛林小巷，静彤强忍着的眼泪还是落了下来。

「阿姨，你怎么了？」

一路陪伴的外甥女，被这一幕吓着了。她这次可是奉双亲之命，陪伴阿姨前来参加姨丈与表哥的剃度典礼。双亲还特别交代要把阿姨照顾好！



「我没事。」

「阿姨，我不懂！」即使知道自己不应该这个时候提出问题，但是外甥女还是忍不住提出自己藏在心里已久的疑问。

「嗯？」

「阿姨，既然不舍得，为什么又要放他们离开？为什么要放弃原本的幸福家庭呢？」

「因为我知道，世界上没有永恒的事情，没有一样东西是可以永远拥有的。」

「阿姨，好深奥，还是不懂！」

「喜欢一个人，其实不一定要拥有他。如果真的想要为对方付出，就应该成全对方，让对方去寻找自己的幸福。」

「但是像你这样，不辛苦吗？姨丈和表哥都出家了。你以后如何生活啊？」

「这世界本来就不会因为少了谁而无法生存的。在不认识他们之前，我不是也过得好好的吗？」

「阿姨……」

「嗯？」

「你到底爱不爱他们啊？如果爱，为什么要选择离开他们？」

爱吗？静彤微笑着回答道：

「夏威夷有个美丽的传说，凡是有缘的人，手指尖上都有一条看不见的丝线，丝线穿越时空，彼此相连。如果想用力抛开，它会越缠越紧，唯一释放的方法，就是给予彼此无条件的爱。爱一个人，不代表一定要拥有他，其实享有也是一种福气。我从来质疑自己对他们的爱，只是我把对他们的爱转成对众生的爱，把你我他变成无数个你我他……」

「哦……」外甥女还是似懂非懂地。

「时间不早了，我们走吧！」

再见，是彼此精进修行的约定。来日，我们将相逢于弥勒尊佛的龙华三会上，以法相赠……

# 顶天立地的行者

江怡慧

夏日向晚，微风徐徐吹过，带走了暑气。街上路灯依序一盏一盏地亮起，整个城市的步调，都依着某种轨则进行着。正是下课下班时间，路上的车潮也开始聚集，朝着各自的方向，缓慢地移动。这是每至薄暮，大台中市的日常。

夕阳西下，但在市中心的七期重划区，一座巴洛克风格建筑的佛寺里，有一个巨轮，才正要开始转动。这座寺院名为「佛光山惠中寺」，十余年安隐于城市里，为人们提供信仰的依归。而在三年前，法师们向社会宣告，他们即将办理为期一个月的名人讲座，邀请各界学者教授、专家翘楚讲演，并提供民众全程免费听讲。这份好消息犹如洪钟一叩，振奋人心，敲响了城市人心里对学习的盼望与渴求，从此，寺院里的法师，走出青灯古佛的印象，成为转动台中文化巨轮的舵手。

六月的这一天，也是傍晚，人群和车阵填满了城市的每个角落，壅塞的马路上，车灯与路灯相互辉映。往惠中寺方向的车潮，行进稍缓，却以一种和谐的速度进行着，宁静安和到好似一幅画。

第一年的第二十四场讲座，由陈文茜小姐主讲「时代的礼物」。这个夜晚的惠中寺，人潮如水。来自各地的朋友相会在这里，不管是慕名而来的、刚好经过的、或是朋友推荐的……当主讲人入场，响彻云霄的掌声，仿佛在向天地宣告：这个夜晚会是无比美好。

熟捻的拿起麦克风，陈文茜展露了多年媒体人的专业和自信，用世人最熟悉的方式，说起她生命里遇见的故事：两个在时代中受尽苦难的人物：「一位是现在年纪很大但年轻时很英俊的男生，一位是长得很美艳却历尽艰辛的女生；男生就是我们敬爱的星云大师，女生则是女权运动家扎伊纳布·萨勒比（Zainab Salbi）……」

在佛前、在大众面前、在惠中寺，说着星云大师自幼出家的故事，此刻的陈文茜没有光环，她只是如实地说着，她眼中、心中的一代高僧，是如何在困苦中不改初心，当年患疟疾时师父志开上人的一碗咸菜、拜师受戒时的「有理无理三扁担」、被误会当成匪谍抓进监狱时的勇敢坚毅……，一路走来困难重重、无限辛苦。她形容，这是大师生命中的逆境佛学课、生死佛学课。



智慧和愿心支撑一切，伟哉星云大师，心中眼中都是芸芸众生。二〇〇九年八八风灾，陈文茜到佛光山采访，才真正体会，大师的慈悲超越了一切。亲眼目睹不可思议的「善行」：佛光山在灾后收容了数百位那玛夏灾民，无偿提供食物、热水及住宿，甚至安排牧师和神父上山，抚慰灾民心灵，陈文茜被撼动了，星云大师的贴心、用心，至今都还在她心中绕旋。数次与大师深度交流，陈文茜发自内心地说：「星云大师是时代的礼物！」此刻，全场热泪盈眶。

名人口中的星云大师，依旧是那么伟大。从这天之后，有许多个夜晚，我都在众中，听着这些名流人士，说着他们心中的师父，感动不已。

讲座主讲者冠盖云集，其中也不乏佛光山的法师，他们各有专长、住持一方，以僧伽身分为佛教、为大众尽心尽力，例如，佛陀纪念馆馆长如常法师。长于艺文弘扬佛法、致力推广佛教艺术的他，近年衔师命负责佛馆的发展，而短短三年，佛馆已成为国际博物馆协会最年轻的会员。

要主持一个国际博物馆，有太多的故事不足为外人道，但是身在其中，如常法师有说不完的感动。他说，有一年春节，星云大师表示要邀请河北杂技团到佛馆演出，如常法师心生不忍——练杂技的孩子日子很苦，但他照做了。没想到，在春节连续一个月的公演后，每个团员的脸上都绽放了笑容，心里开始有了信仰的小苗，开始懂得合掌、懂得祈福、懂得转念。

如常法师说，直到此刻，他才明白星云大师的那句话：「我不知道我能给他们多少，但我有一壶水救一片火烧森林的心愿！」大师能够体会所有的辛苦，但盼望着给予孩子们一个信仰，一个在困难时可以依靠的坚实港湾。法师口中的星云大师，像是一座山，永远都能给予大家温暖和安定。

两岸的文学史上，都少不了文学巨擘白先勇先生的身影。近年致力于昆曲文化传承的他，应邀讲演文化复兴，却在一开场就与听众分享，获颁「全球华文文学星云奖贡献奖」时，他到佛光山拜会星云大师，在法师的一举手、一投足里，都感受到人间佛教「给人欢喜」的特色，深植心中。

一次到西安旅行，他在兴教寺礼拜玄奘大师舍利，却意外发现他的父亲曾在此捐献，惊喜不已。后来得知该寺即将成为观光区时，不忍之下声请星云大师帮忙，才顺利免除一场法难。白先勇立足文化的角度，诚恳地告诉大家：星云大师对于佛教文化的保存与复兴，有举足轻重的力量。乃至目睹佛陀纪念馆建设的



从无到有，更成为他日后，志愿以昆曲为台湾注入新文化生命的动力。

星云大师的弘法事业以教育起家，而同样致力于教育的圆神出版事业机构董事长简志忠先生，谈起「319乡村艺术工程」，依旧充满感动。他说，佛光山是成就这场善举的「秘密武器」！展演期间，佛光山各地别分院提供了团员们住宿、便当和点心，星云大师更慷慨解囊，赞助屏东、高雄地区的儿童观赏。可以说，星云大师对教育的热心，无量无尽。

再往前追溯，简先生分享，1997年星云大师《有情有义》有声书出版时，丁松筠神父曾致词说道：「每天出门前，都要看《星云法语》，再翻译成天主教的语言，为教徒指引人生迷茫；现在出版了《有情有义》有声书，终于不再担心错过了！」足见星云大师的影响力，而他自己近期探望星云大师时，大师更关心他要不要转换跑道：「现在出版很难做啊！」简志忠感动地说：「这就是师父的体贴！」

「有一个人，用飞行的方式记录我们的土地。」《看见台湾》导演齐柏林也曾分享，纪录片的拍摄前后，都受到星云大师的关心。「大师说，他要支持有梦想的人！」不仅给予提点、主动赞助，甚至在上映之后，全台的佛光人纷纷前往电影院包场观赏，这份深厚的佛光情，更是难以计量的感动和力量。虽然齐导日前在勘景时不幸坠机罹难，但他一生对台湾的热爱、鞠躬尽瘁的方式，是在最后，仍要以生命守护这片故土。

星云大师：「人要活在希望，不要活在过去的记忆中，因为未来比现在更美丽；有未来，才有无限希望。」带着师父的理念开办系列讲座，佛光山的法师和数以百计的义工，没有想过要以此赞扬星云大师，没有打算要借此宣传佛光山的功业，三年的时间，长衫的身影四处奔走邀请，为台中市民迎来了近百位各大专业领域的名家讲师，他们的初衷，只是期盼能陪伴人们，乘着希望、梦想和力量的风，向未来起飞。

然而，他们不求回报地躬身奉献，在岁月里点滴化为白莲，如今回首，已然成田成海。

如同空花水月，大雄宝殿上的主讲人遍及各界，演讲的题目也琳琅满目，但是我们永远都能在其中，感受到星云大师的伟大。听著名人们谈及星云大师，那眼眶里的泪水、面容上的感激，在在都说明着——他们的成功背后，有星云大师



的慈心悲愿支持，是大师的贴心、温暖、祝福、智慧、勇气……让他们在人生的风浪里，安然航行。

走过三年的讲座盛宴，能够成为千万因缘所成的团队之一，是多么地幸福，每一次与名家讲师结缘，都在他们的话语中感动、感激得五体投地。原来，不论「弘法」的路途有多少插曲和变异，只要心有正道，师父永远都会以无量无数的善美因缘，为我们点亮路上的灯火；不论「弘法」的步伐有多少未知与恐惧，只要仍心有正法，师父永远都会以千手千眼守护，给我们无限的力量和勇气。能够带着师父的心愿行走人间，是此生学佛最大的幸福。

星云大师曾说：「心包太虚还有一个『包』字，但『同体』就打成一片了！」从名人的视野重新认识星云大师，每一份撼动都变得很立体、很真实。因为，当我们越过藩篱，随著名人的脚步走进人间，才会发现，师父为普世幸福的每一个心愿，都已然顶天立地。

# 【工作中对《你我他》的体验】

林锦新

大学时期我才算真正成为佛弟子，皈依三宝，上佛学课等。佛陀证悟后说的一句话：“奇哉！奇哉！众生皆有如来智慧德相，只因妄想执着而不能证得”，深深烙印在我脑海里。这说明了人都能转迷为悟，只是达至“悟”的方法有别。佛陀的证悟给了我们希望，让我们知道每个人都有觉悟的可能，只是妄想执着程度不同造成悟性的差异。

我较感兴趣的是佛陀说的“三毒”，是一切痛苦的根源，三毒指的是贪欲、憎恨及愚痴。人生之所以痛苦，皆因三毒盘踞内心。“贪”让人永不满足，“嗔”令人动怒，“痴”让人产生错误的认知，错误的认知又会继续导致贪欲、憎恨及愚痴，持续在内心轮回并付诸于行动，为自己和社会带来破坏。另一点比较有趣的是佛教教导我们不该有分别心，一切分别心乃妄想，也是造成苦的原因之一。所以佛陀告诉我们众生皆是菩萨，应该礼敬任何我们生命中遇见的人，不该有任何的分别心。

人类因有了分别心造成了社会的分化，形成了个人的贡高我慢，我强你弱，我对你错，狂妄自大及歧视心。人们以贫富贵贱来决定个人在社会中的地位，以挣钱的能力来断定个人一生的成败，以身理的缺陷或精神的疾病来区分人正不正常，以成绩的优劣来区分有用及没用的孩子。佛陀提倡平等，是指自性的平等，人人生而平等具有佛性，都有顿悟的一天，不应被歧视。佛陀时代有一位名叫尼提的除粪者，被视为从事一份低贱的工作，但佛陀接受他，他过后还成为了佛陀的开悟弟子。佛陀更提倡女众也能加入僧团，而且修行有成就的比丘尼也大有人在，比较著名的有莲花色比丘尼，是其中一位在女僧团中被誉为神通第一的女出家众。倘若我们能够广泛地在社会中推动佛陀提倡的自性平等概念，那一定能造就一个人人相互尊重，平等和谐的社会。

话虽如此，要社会大众舍弃分别心及接受自性平等并非易事。人类生来就存有差异，身材有高矮胖瘦，样貌有美丑平庸，心情有喜怒哀乐，生活背景也都有贫富之分。如何摒除自己的分别心，将众生都视为有悟性的佛菩萨，这的确要在佛陀的无上甚深微妙法中了解真实义才能办得到。然而佛法其实就在生活中，2009年的一场车祸及2010年转换了工作后似乎让我上了几堂课，有了深切的体悟。



2007年7月21日，我当上了马来西亚国家电台，爱FM的主播及节目制作人，算是个名人，生活多姿多彩，引人羡慕。每当主持节目时都会收到赞美的短讯，“你的声音很好听哦”、“你主持的节目很棒呀”等等，这些赞许足以让自己高兴一整天。如果到户外主持节目或表演，结束后还可能要面对蜂拥而来的粉丝索取签名，生日的时候还会收到礼物呢。当脸书的粉丝越来越多的时候，特别有满足感。当时的我就觉得自己与众不同，有天赋合适当主播的嗓子，能说一口流利及语音标准的华语，这并非所有人能办到，于是长期的优越感油然而生。直到2009年发生了一场车祸，在医院的几个月里让自己有了一个空间思考人生。

虽然粉丝对自己的支持确实让人着迷甚至会上瘾，但是每每主持或表演完毕曲终人散时，心情却是一种莫名的落寞与孤寂。感觉美好只是在台上那时候，更准确来说可能只在众人掌声时的片刻。活动结束后的寂寞感却长时间逗留在心里。心里总在嘀咕着“为什么我需要不断获取别人肯定才得到自身的快乐？”、“为何曲终人散后寂寞感会持续那么久？”、“我是沉溺在名闻利养中吗？”、“如果不再是主播了，粉丝会离弃我吗？”、“这几年学习佛法到底都在学什么？”，“若那一场车祸夺走了性命，一切不都化为乌有了吗？”。

2010年头出院后，拿着拐杖继续到电台上班，直到2010年12月1日我正式加入了马来西亚反贪污委员会（反贪会），从生活多姿多彩的国家电台主播转行当上了打击国家贪污的官员。突然的转变引起了朋友们的好奇，纷纷问道：“这么精彩的主播生涯为何突然转行当一个吃力不讨好的官员呢？这两个工作性质简直是天渊之别呀！”，“当主播，名利双收呀，为何离开呢？”，我笑着回答：“名利似乎只换来落寞感，而反贪是为国服务的工作。再说，佛教说三毒，第一毒就是贪，反贪这工作正好契合佛法。”也许新的领域更能让我实践及体会佛法。

从电台主播转至反贪官员，优越感依然存在，常觉得自己比较清高，嗔恨贪污者，认为他们品德低贱，行为祸国殃民，理应受到应有的惩罚，能捉一个就能减少他们对社会造成的一个伤害。而面对一些冥顽不灵的民众，心里在想，若屡劝不听，他日执意违法涉贪的话，那就别怪反贪会无情了，到时被逮捕时是罪有应得。

在担任反贪官的日子，教育与执法的工作不断进行，然而涉贪者依然大有人在。因涉嫌贪污而被逮捕的人士从年轻二十几岁的小伙子到六十几岁的年长者，看了让人心寒。我看到涉贪者并非贫穷之人，有者受的教育程度还很高。贪



污贼脏摆满家中、车里，包得密密实实的钞票动也不敢动，何苦呢？有些公司高层被逮捕时摇头叹息认为自己运气差所以被逮捕了，毫无惭愧悔过之意。“因何而贪污？”、“不能就廉洁一点，奉公一点吗？”、“我能做得到，为何他们不能？”，我一直都以分别心去看待自己和嫌犯。更令我错愕的是连自己的同事也一样涉贪而被捕了，被罚款及监禁！眼看着他双手被铐上手铐，这一铐将他深锁在痛苦桎梏中，前途也许就这样荡然无存了。这一切更让我陷入了对人性的深入思考。

到底人性本善还是本恶？为何有人就是那么地清心寡欲，无欲无求？为什么有人能够出淤泥而不染？在七年里的反贪工作及平时的阅读让我对这一些疑问有了不同的体悟：

## （一）人性平等，无你我他之分

只要能投胎为人都因为有成为人的因缘条件，纵然外表身形各有差异，但心中都一样被三毒盘踞。我瞧不起贪污者，自命清高，殊不知自己在当主播时一样贪染着名利，差别只是贪染名利没有触犯法律，但心却渐变污浊，其实也只是五十步笑百步。贪污案的发生是因为身边有了让贪污发生的因缘而此人又萌起贪念时，一宗贪污案也许就这样发生了。无论是民是官，是穷是富都一样可能涉及贪污。由于我在反贪会教育部门工作，没有真正与嫌犯接触，自然接受贿赂的机率就很低，不然只要有贪污的因缘出现，我可能也会跌入贪谷深渊而不自知。因此佛陀才指引我们找回佛性，时刻观照念头，只要能及时降伏三毒，还是可以克制自己的行为，转迷为悟，避免当下犯下罪行。体悟了“人性平等”及“因缘和合”后，看每个人其实都一样，我过往的优越感渐渐地转为感恩心态，感恩我有好的因缘及正命让我持续保持正念，以工作来学佛，避免自己触犯法律，同时在工作中增长智慧。

## （二）“无常” 才有希望

佛陀早在两千六百年前就看到了宇宙真理及对治烦恼痛苦的方法，也传授给了我们。佛陀说的“无常”告诉我们世间万物瞬息万变，世间都在经历成住坏空，心念也面对生住异灭，内在思想心识活动也是生灭无常。既然生灭无常，也就表示一个坏念头不会一直持续不变。人犯错了也就有可能因为意识到自己的错失而悔过，应该被原谅及给予改过的机会。曾经有一位贪污者被判监禁，出狱后感谢我的同事因为逮捕了他，他服刑了，不需再过躲躲藏藏的生活，可以重新做人，开始了自己的生意。因为无常，不必执着把一个人的个性看成固定的，那对他来说并不公平，也不符合佛法。佛陀时代，有位杀人魔鸯掘摩罗由于误信外

道而变成凶恶残暴，但最终都能被点化还成为了佛陀弟子。佛陀善观因缘，他变成杀人魔有他的因缘，而他能被度化又是不同的因缘。众生亦如此，都有反躬自省的能力。我不再去憎恨犯人，那是因为他们还看不清真相，虽然执法还是得进行因为那是官员的责任，但带着的却是怜悯之心。学习观看因缘，人也豁达多了。现在的我打从心底衷心地祝福囚犯们能在狱中忏悔，早日出狱重新做人，并期望社会给予他们重生的机会。

### (三)名利乃过眼云烟

《金刚经》里提到“一切有为法，如梦幻泡影，如露亦如电，应作如是观”，说明了一切只是心想出来的幻影，当过了主播后才似乎真正体会了这句话的含义。一切的发生都是众缘和合而成，我能当上主播有我的因缘，从小看似文静的我念起书来却相当流利，老师也遴选我去参加演讲比赛，说话流利是被训练出来的。而语音是参加相声班被调教出来的。这是我这一世的因缘，当然可能前生也累积了不少福报因缘才能成就今日的我。当自己是主播时感觉有很多粉丝听我节目支持我，但当卸下了主播身份后，粉丝似乎都跑掉了，去追捧另外的主播了。当我静下心来把自己当成一个听众的时候，会发现其实有时我们支持的是主播这身份并非个人，所以当卸下主播的身份时，粉丝自然地转向支持另外的主播了。在任何的工作领域中，没有不能被取代的人，再有名气也始终有被遗忘的一天。外在的名利也许能让自己开心一段日子，但渐渐体悟到内在的心灵却不会因名利而变得富足，这也就解释了为什么表演曲终人散时心灵是落寞的。当了反贪官员后，发现自己贪染名利的心逐渐减低，反而不遗余力喜悦地去推动除贪工作。

### (四)富足感来自于心灵能量

被喻为意识能量学宗师的美国精神科医师，大卫·霍金斯博士经过二十多年的研究，撰写了《Power vs Force》一书，以科学的方式制作了一份人类意识能量场的实用图(图一)，主要目的就是要区分外力与真实心灵力的不同。根据图表，测定等级与意识的特定过程(如情绪，观点或态度，世界观，灵性信念等)互有关联。意识能量等级的关键点是测定值200，所有测定值低于200的态度，想法，感受，联想等都会使人变弱及对社会带来破坏，而高于200的则会使人变强及将社会带向正面。从图表来看，200以下测定值的情绪感受等都属于负面，而高于200的都倾向于正面情绪。书中也提到佛陀教导最初的真理等级是1000！而一个等级700的人可抵消七万个等级200以下的人，这也就解释了当佛陀出现时的氛围是与众不同的，人们的负能量将被抵消，因此都能臣服于佛陀。博士认为这图表是放诸四海皆准的，能套用在任何人身上。这本书提出的科学根据能够成为

佛法的佐证，也给了人们希望，就是只要持续修学佛法，我们的能量能够逐渐提高并达到开悟的境界，但是书中也提及必须向能量高的人学习，这就鼓励我们亲近法师或善知识以提升自身的能量，向证悟之道迈进。

## (五)佛法就在人间

我们不必把佛法看得那么复杂，佛说的法就是在帮助我们解决日常生活中的难题，修行就在生活中。我们一生中，扣除八个小时的睡眠时间，三分之二时间都花在生活中，只要用心好好地将佛法与生活中的一切贯穿起来，就能更透彻地看到佛法的力量。好比解答一道数学题，原本绞尽脑汁算不出来，佛法就好像提供了方程式，一刹那就把数学题给算出来了。自当上反贪会官员后，对佛法的领悟多了几分，那种感觉只能说“如人饮水，冷暖自知”。每个人都能借由各自的生活，透过信解行证来体悟佛法，达到彼岸。没有生活，又何需佛法？

“自性平等”、“三毒”、“因缘和合”等观念并非佛陀创造，而是发现这些宇宙真理后再将之告诉大众。理解这一点后让我释怀很多不必要的负面情感。而佛法也并非高深莫测之法，它其实都在我们日常生活中，用心就能体会得到。我加入反贪会后回头看自己是个主播的时候，看到了名利的幻影，过后欢喜地教育民众反贪，这其实是法布施，由发自内心转换为布施行为的满足感远胜于外在别人赋予的名利，难怪佛陀说用“布施”来对治“贪”。七年的反贪工作，体悟人性的共同点，人们一切行为皆由无始贪嗔痴驱使，但我们都可借由日常工作修习佛法来断除它。对于本来憎恨的犯人，我化嗔恨为慈悲，愿犯法者早日看清因果，放下屠刀，立地成佛。佛陀49年赤足走遍恒河两岸宣扬佛法度人开悟，我7年穿鞋踏遍全马肃贪倡廉，佛陀说的是导人开悟的出世间法，我说的算是劝人摒弃贪念的世间法，虽不能与佛陀媲美，但至少这份意义非凡的工作也是承接佛陀的使命，教化大众洁身自爱，减低贪念，打造一个廉洁的人间及心灵净土。一切事物的发生都是因缘和合而成，学习观因缘，理解有果必来自于因的道理，让自己放下高傲的态度，变得谦虚的同时也较能坦然地接受任何事情的结果。大卫·霍金斯博士通过科学制作的意识能量图证实了人们的能量是可提升至觉悟的境界，这突破性的研究让我更笃信佛法。佛教是一门开启人类智慧的教育，提供了助人消灭烦恼痛苦的方法，只要我们继续深入经藏，亲近善知识，就能了解真实义，增长智慧，让生活过得更臻完美。我目前的工作虽存在风险，需与罪犯对峙，想想佛陀何尝不是与心魔对峙，我能从这份工作中体悟佛法，为民服务，应以目前的工作感到自豪，这也是报答国家恩的行动，但愿国家远离贪污，也愿佛陀正法长存，肃贪及护持正法都是你我他的责任。

# 《身与心的容量》

杨琍钧

有人说，大海，开阔无边，海阔任鱼跃。  
有人说，天空，一碧无际，天高任鸟飞。  
但我说，人类，虽没海阔没天高，  
平均只有1.7米高，却能容纳更多。

头脑，虽只有 1.8寸大，但能容纳上千个想法，上千个知识。  
虽是如此，但人却未发现。  
碰到不如意时，只会生起负面的念头。  
眼睛，虽只有2.5公分大，但能看到上千种人，上千种事。  
虽是如此，但人却未发现。  
碰到不顺眼时，只会从一个角度看事。  
鼻孔，虽只有一只手指的圆周大，但能吸进上千种味道，上千种空气。  
虽是如此，但人却未发现。  
碰到不顺利时，只会一个鼻孔出气。

嘴巴，虽只有5公分大，但能说到上千个话，上千种语言。  
虽是如此，但人却未发现。  
碰到困难时，只会说气语。  
手，虽只有18公分长，但能写上千个字，做上千个事情。  
虽是如此，但人却未发现。  
碰到不顺心时，只会握拳头。  
脚丫子，虽只有26公分长，但什么地方都能带我们去。  
虽是如此，但人却未发现。  
碰到争执时，只会稳站在原地。

人的身，可容纳那么多，可做那么多。  
人的心呢？  
心，虽只有两只拳头合起那么大，却能决定一个人的生与死。  
人，因蒙蔽了自己的心，蒙蔽了自己的真如本性，  
才会如此的心胸狭窄。  
心乐，众生乐。心劳，众生劳。  
一切唯心造。

只要时时刻刻观自己的心，  
遇到逆境时，心念一转，人就能包容世间万物。

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