



處於十字路口的僧伽

Sangha at the Crossroads

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幾乎毫無疑問地，斯里蘭卡的佛教已處於十字路口，而未來面臨的問題有增無減。挑戰並非來自於數量或權力，而在於中肯性。並不是佛法本身喪失了中肯性，因為歷史的演進和文化的波濤都無法淹沒四聖諦和八正道所包含的不朽訊息。問題不在於佛法本身，而在於那些負責把法帶到現實生活中的人。最缺乏的是結合的技巧，總結為三：理解，投入和翻譯。

理解：清楚地理解如何將佛法運用到今天人類的嚴酷現實中來；運用到舊日的信念已像秋風掃落葉一樣散落的社會中來。

投入：願意按照佛法的本意來運用它，即使與傳統或世俗風氣對抗也在所不惜。

翻譯：不是框架式的「佈道」，也不是甜言蜜語的安慰或宗教催眠曲，而是堅實清楚的解釋，如何運用永恆的佛法來處理當代不同的問題和困惑。

我們站在十字路口展望未來，面臨的選擇有三種。第一種是面對聖教的式微，乾脆放棄努力。認為這是可悲而又無可奈何的歷史倒退。第二種是扭動雙手進行報怨，將責任推到旁人身上，其中包括政府，和尚或少數派。第三種是問問自己，怎樣才能逆水行舟。若採取第三種立場，我們就要意識到聖教並非存在於理想天地之中，而是存在於千千萬萬自稱為佛教徒和希望皈依

There can be little doubt that in Sri Lanka today Buddhism finds itself at crossroads, its future increasingly in question. The challenge it faces is not one of numbers and power, but of relevance. Not that the Dhamma itself, the Buddha's teaching, has lost its relevance; for neither the shifting drama of history nor the undulating waves of culture can muffle the timeless message embedded in the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path.

The problem lies not with the teaching itself, but with those responsible for bringing the teaching to life. What is lacking above all is a combination of skills that can be summed up in three simple words: comprehension, commitment, and translation.

Comprehension: a clear understanding of how the teaching applies to the hard realities of human life today, to a society and world in which the old certainties of the past are being scattered like leaves before a storm. Commitment: the willingness to apply the teachings in the way they were intended, even when this means defying the encrustations of established tradition.

Translation: not stereotyped "sermons," not sweet consolation, not religious lullabies, but solid, sober explanations of how the timeless principles of the Dhamma can resolve the distinctive problems and quandaries of our age.

As we stand at this crossroads looking towards the future, three choices offer themselves to us. One is simply to resign ourselves to the decay of the Sasana [the teaching of the Buddha], accepting it as a backward swing of the pendulum of history—sad but inevitable. A second is to wring our hands and complain, shifting the responsibility to others—the government, the monks, or the minorities. A third is to ask ourselves what we can do to stem the rising tide. If we adopt the third route we might begin by noting that the Sasana does not exist in an ideal realm of its own, but only as embodied in the millions of people who call themselves Buddhists and look for refuge in the Triple Gem.

This statement might sound obvious, even trite. However, if we

三寶的人當中。這種想法看起來既明顯又平庸。然而如果細想就會發現，這種想法雖然明顯卻有深的內涵。因為它表明，我們從根本上要對法的興衰負責。我們自己的觀念、態度，行為決定了佛法的興衰。這就是要認清佛教事業完全擔負在我們肩上，而不是在某些政府部長或宗教委員會的肩上。如同身體的健康有賴於細胞的活力，佛教的力量最終取決於其機體的細胞--我們自己。

在本文中，我想關注於當前斯里蘭卡的某一類佛教徒--比丘僧伽。我將簡要地考察一下他們所面臨的問題及其未來前景。

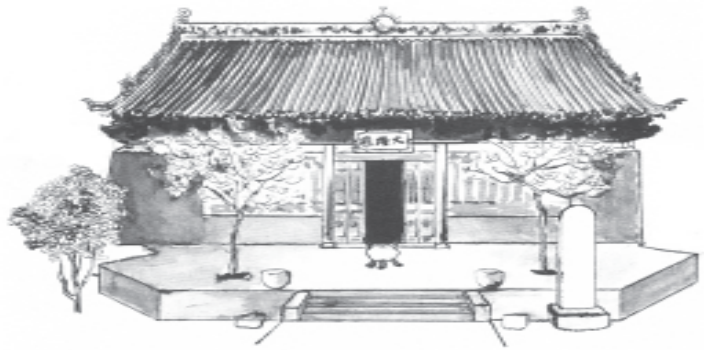
這是項至關重要的任務，因為僧伽是領導佛教發展的重心角色。很顯然，如果僧伽不能學會面對當前社會浪潮的衝擊，將來在社會中就會變得越來越無足輕重。在佛教傳統上，對僧俗彼此的責任有著清楚的規定，這種角色的配合，形成了佛教的經緯。和尚研究、修行、宣講佛經，並做道德的楷模，以此來住持佛法。在家人對和尚做四事供養：僧服，飲食，住所，醫藥。多少世紀以來，兩個團體之間的密切關係，為佛教的持續提供了穩定的基礎。

在斯里蘭卡的佛教興衰史上，有時連一個正法的僧團都找不到。可是每當佛教興盛時，僧俗關係都是其生命力的血液。在穩定農業社會中人們有明確的社會角色

，有共同宗教信仰和道德規範維繫的生活方式，這種互助的關係才有辦法發展。而今天，這些都發生了劇變。被以指數增長的技術發展和無情的自由市場所驅動的全球文化，在大地的每個角落都產生了影響

，它在去除一切障礙以取得主宰地位。劇變震撼了整個社會秩序，從政經權力機關一直波及到最偏遠的鄉村和寺院。

現代化的效果並不局限於外在世界，它還深入到了我們個人世界的最深處：我們的價值觀、世界觀，甚至自我認知。對佛教徒而言，其結果是深刻的紊亂。有如到一個陌生之處，當所熟悉的參考點喪失之後感到束手無策一樣。往回看，往昔令人感到舒適的



reflect for a few moments we will see that, though obvious, it has enormous implications, for it means that we ourselves are ultimately responsible for the prosperity and decline of the Sasana: our own views, attitudes, and conduct decide whether the Sasana is to thrive or wither. To recognize this is to see that the welfare of the Sasana ultimately rests on our own shoulders, not on some state ministry or ecclesiastical council. Just as the health of the body depends on the vitality of its cells, so the strength of the Sasana ultimately devolves on ourselves, the cells in the living organism of Buddhism.

In this article I want to focus on one particular constituency of Buddhists in present day Sri Lanka, the Bhikkhu Sangha, the order of Monks. I intend to examine, though briefly, the problems it faces and its prospects for the future. This task is especially critical because of the central role the Sangha plays in guiding the destiny of the Sasana, and it is clear that if the Sangha does not learn to deal with the momentous forces in inundating present-day society, the future will see it increasingly relegated to the sidelines.

Buddhist tradition meticulously defines the mutual duties of Sangha and laity and these roles form the warp and woof of the Sasana. The monks are to uphold the teaching by study, practice, preaching, and moral example; the lay people, to support the monks by offering them the four requisites of robes, food, lodging, and medicines. This intimate relationship between the two communities has provided a stable basis for the persistence of the Sasana through the centuries.

Despite the fluctuations of Buddhist history in Sri Lanka, which at times had sunk so low that even a proper Sangha could not be found, whenever Buddhism thrived the relationship between the monastic order and the laity has been its lifeblood. This relationship of mutual assistance, however, found its supporting matrix in a stable agrarian society with clearly defined social roles and a lifestyle governed by common religious and ethical norms.

That is precisely what has altered so radically today.

A global culture, driven by exponential technological innovation and a relentless free-market economy, has made its presence felt in every corner of this land, challenging every obstacle to its dominance. In consequence, the entire social order has been shaken by upheavals that reach from the



確定性已一去不返。往前看

，未來越來越不可預測。但在當前的疑惑之中，佛法仍可做穩定的參照物，為我們的緊迫問題提供清楚的答案，為我們解除外在的壓力。

至此，我們談到了問題的關鍵：中肯性。如何將不朽的佛教表達成一種語言，使它能適用於我們在超現代化世界中所面對的困難、獨特又複雜的問題。今天佛教所面臨的最重大挑戰，就是在「新世界秩序」中的生存問題。不僅是佛教機構的名稱與形式要保存下來，而且要有所作為；要幫助無數的男男女女找到一條路，走出理念、道德的地獄，重現普適的人的價值。

這正是僧伽的角色至關重要的地方。因為比丘，我敢說還有比丘尼，應該能夠在這個「瘋狂的世界」中提供令人信服的歸依處，提供健全的洞察力，無私的善，和在貪欲、衝突、暴力風雨中的平靜。然而正是在這裡，我們遇上了斷層問題：今天的僧伽很少能應付這種挑戰。

在我看來，現在最急需的不是加強佛教機構本身，也不是用政府政策來給佛教「榮耀的地位」，造更多佛像，天天用電台大聲廣播也不能給佛教注入急需的新血。

所需的是具備智慧、見地和敏銳力的比丘、比丘尼。他們能夠用生活、品德來展示佛法的尊貴和超凡的力量。在寺院中達成這種水準並不容易，可又不能聽天由命。首先這必須在整個寺院的剃度和教育制度上進行深刻的變化。因此僧團的長老們應該認真考慮和仔細計畫。對這件事絕不能掉以輕心，因為可以說，這個國家的佛教確實已到了存亡關頭。

☞待續

halls of economic and political power right through to the most remote villages and temples.

This modernistic onslaught does not limit itself to mere external triumphs but reaches through to the most private places in our lives: our values, worldviews, and even our sense of personal identity.

The result, for the ordinary Buddhist, has been a profound disorientation, a feeling of being stranded in a strange landscape where the old familiar reference points no longer hold. Looking back, we see a past of comfortable certainties that we can never recapture; looking ahead, a future that looks increasingly unpredictable. But amidst the confusion of the present, the Dhamma still appears as a stable reference point that can provide clear answers to our pressing questions and relief from existential stress.

This brings us right to the crux of our problem: the problem of relevance, of conveying the timeless message of the teaching in a language that can address the difficult, unique, complex problems we face navigating our way through the post-modern world.

The most critical challenge facing the Sasana today is that of surviving in this “new world order,” and not merely of surviving institutionally, in name and form, but of contributing to the recovery of universal human values, of helping countless men and women find a way beyond the intellectual and moral abyss.

It is precisely here that the role of the Sangha becomes so vitally important, for it is the monks and, I dare say, the nuns as well who should be capable of offering a convincing refuge to “a world gone mad”—a vision of basic sanity, selfless goodness, and serenity amidst the storms of greed, conflict, and violence. Yet it is just on this point that we face a gaping chasm: namely, that the Sangha today seems hardly equipped to respond to such a challenge.

What is needed most urgently, in my view, is not a reinforcement of Buddhist religious identity or a governmental policy that gives “pride of place to Buddhism.” Nor will the construction of more Buddha images and the daily broadcasting of pirith chanting over the loudspeakers give the Sasana the infusion of fresh blood it so badly needs.

What is required are monks and nuns of intelligence, insight, and sensitivity who can demonstrate, by their lives and characters, the spiritually ennobling and elevating power of the Dhamma.

To produce monastics of such calibre is not easy, yet such a task cannot be left to chance. It will require, above all, deep-rooted changes in the entire system of monastic recruitment and education, and thus will call for serious thought and careful planning on the part of the Sangha elders. The task is not one to be taken at all lightly; for one can say, in all truth, that nothing less is at stake than the future of Buddhism in this country.

☞To be continued