

A Visit from Venerable Ajahn Sumedho

蘇美度法師來訪

阿姜蘇美度法師 六月二十二日 講於萬佛聖城大殿

AJAHN SUMEDHO'S TALK ON JUNE 22, 2008 IN THE BUDDHA HALL AT THE CTTB

蘇美度法師於二〇〇八年六月廿二日帶著僧眾蒞臨萬佛聖城，當天晚上並在大殿開示。恆實法師、恆律法師、恆江法師在行政大樓迎接他們。經過短暫參觀新裝修的貴賓室和禪修中心之後，在晚上大殿開示之前，雙方有一場非正式的佛法研討。以下是蘇美度法師的開示：

On June 22, 2008, Ajahn Sumedho with a group of monks visited the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas to give a Dharma Lecture in the Buddha Hall. The group was welcomed at the administration building by Rev. Heng Sure, Dharma Master Heng Lyu, and Dharma Master Heng Chiang. After a brief tour of the newly renovated VIP room and meditation hall, the group had an informal discussion among the monastics before the evening talk. The talk given by Ajahn Sumedho follows:

Reverend Heng Sure: It's my honor and privilege tonight to introduce Ajahn Sumedho, known to his community as Luang Por Sumedho, and for most of the residents of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas I don't need to introduce him because he is very much a familiar face. Those of you who were ordained in the many ordinations that Ajahn Sumedho presided over have a direct dharma relationship with him.

I can sum up the esteem of our founder, Master Hsuan Hua, for Ajahn Sumedho in a single anecdote. When Master Hua's health was failing, the Three Masters and the Seven Certifiers were selected for the ordination that was going to take place and Ajahn Sumedho was here with his

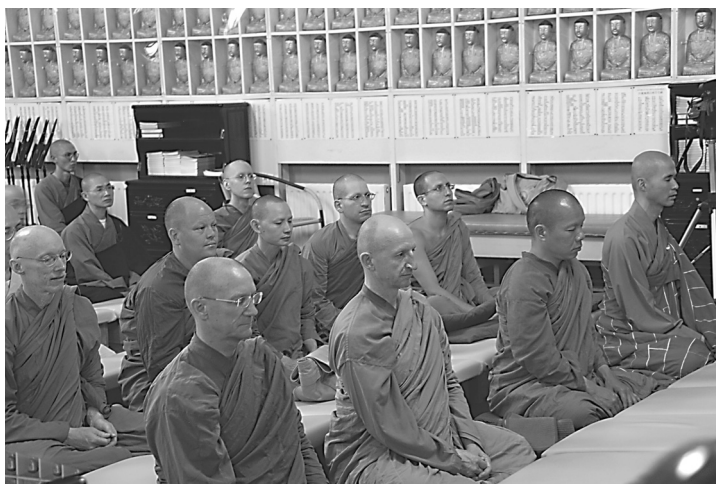


monks from Amaravati and Master Hua said, "I don't have to come down. Let Sumedho be the Upadhyaya. Let him be the Precept Master." What a statement of confidence and trust that was. For those of you who don't know tonight's speaker, he is perhaps the oldest western Bhikshu in robes. This year will be his 42nd *vassa*, 42nd year in robes. He was ordained as a Shramanera in 1966 under the renowned meditation teacher from the Thai Forest Tradition, Ajahn Chah, and then became a Bhikshu in 1967. His current status in the Thai Buddhist Theravadan tradition is that of a "Tan Chao Khun" and I believe he is the

實法師引言：

現在我很榮幸來介紹阿姜蘇美度法師，他在泰國被稱為郎波蘇美度。對聖城的住眾而言，他不是外人。他參與了許多出家眾的傳戒儀式，與大家有直接的法緣。在此我想說說上人對他的評價。師父病重時，我們在安排未來戒壇的三師七證的人選。Amaravati寺的蘇美度法師與比丘也在場。上人說「我不用下去了，請蘇美度法師做Upadhyaya(得戒和尚)。」口氣中充滿對他的信任。據我所知，在西方出家人中，他可以說戒臘最長的，已經

only non-Thai to ever attain that rank. There aren't very many "Tan Chao Khuns" in the world and we have one of them here tonight. This is another statement about the esteem that peers in the Thai Buddhist Sangha hold for Ajahn Sumedho.



I first met him personally in 1979. My Buddhist pilgrimage had finished but I was still holding silence at that time. The winter Chan retreat was being held at what was then called the Medicine Buddha Hall, which is now our small dining room. Venerable Master Hua said to me, "Guo Zhen, come over here; you should bow to this monk. Take him as your model in cultivation. He's going to stay a monk. He's been through a famine in India. He's got the Bodhi resolve. You should take him as your model." That was my first introduction to Ajahn Sumedho. And then Shr Fu added, "He and I were fellow cultivators in past lives." So that was one of those "how's that again?" moments. Clearly Ajahn Sumedho has deep and strong affinities with the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and with our teacher Master Hsuan Hua.

The next visit was at Amaravati and I remember Ajahn Sumedho had a little notebook with the names of all the men whose heads he had shaved or taken into the Buddhist Sangha and of the women, the Siladhara nuns. Every time he shaved a head, he wrote a name down in the notebook. I just asked

him how many there are at this point, and he said, "I've lost track". So this is certainly someone who is significant in the history of the Dharma in the West. Hope everybody will listen with appropriate attentiveness to the words of the Dharma we're going to hear tonight.

Ajahn Sumedho:

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhasa (3x)

(Homage to the Blessed, Holy, Perfectly Enlightened One.)

Buddham saranam gacchami (I go to the Buddha for refuge.)

Dhammam saranam gacchami (I go to the Dharma for refuge.)

Sangham saranam gacchami (I go to the Sangha for refuge.)

This evening I've been invited to address you on the Dhamma and with respect and appreciation to the Venerable Heng Sure and the abbot of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. My respect to all the Sangha members and people here this evening who have this opportunity to listen. I've always had strong affinity with the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

My first meeting with Master Hua was at the place in San Francisco,

the mattress factory as I remember it. It was on first meeting that I felt an incredible kind of affinity that I've never felt with anyone else which surprised me because I wasn't expecting that feeling to arise at that time. Since then I've had a strong connection with the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

And of course the Abhayagiri Monastery in Redwood Valley is a gift that Master Hsuan Hua offered us before his death. This time I've been residing there and very much appreciate the support and the development of that monastery because it was just kind of rough mountainous forest woodland that had no infrastructure or anything and now Ajahn Amaro and Ajahn Passano have developed it in a very useful and impressive way.

To see this interest in monasticism growing here in California of course pleases me because it is a rather new development, Buddhist monasticism in the United States. Of course, monasticism in this country of any sort is relatively new.

In Europe it traces back in memories and history; even in England there are monasteries. In England there are so many villages and little towns call "monk tent" or the "monk's way" named after obviously monasteries and monks in the past. Under Henry VIII, the monasteries were destroyed. But of course they've come back and there is a historical memory of monasticism. In European countries, there is a sense for monastics that's part of the past. Here in the United States, it seems that monasticism is a rather new development, something new within the recorded and recognizable history of this country. The thing that attracted

將要到四十二年了。

他一九六六年在阿姜查的森林派中出家做沙彌，一九六七年當比丘。以後他一直做出家人。他現已經在泰國佛教做了檀昭坤(音)，我相信他是第一位非泰籍比丘獲得這樣的殊榮，全世界也沒有幾位檀昭坤。今天我們就請到一位，這是他在泰國佛教界的地位。

一九七九年，我第一次跟他見面。三步一拜結束了，但是我仍然止語。那一年冬天的禪七在現在的小齋堂，當時稱藥師殿。上人說：「果真，你過來向這位法師頂禮，應該把他做為修行的榜樣。他會繼續做比丘，已經發菩提心。他在印度經過一個旱災。」然後上人又講一句，「他前生跟我是同參道友。」這是我第一次認識蘇美度法師。顯然蘇美度法師與上人和萬佛城的緣都很深。

又有一次我們在阿巴拉提(地方名)那邊。他每次剃度一個人，無論是男眾、女眾，他就寫他/她的名字在一個小本子上。剛剛我問蘇美度法師，現在到底剃度了多少人出家呢？他說已經忘了，不知其數了，太多了。所以在西方佛教的歷史上，這位蘇美度法師實在是很有地位的。希望各位洗耳聆聽他的開示。

蘇美度法師講：

南無無上正等正覺世尊(三稱)

我皈依佛 我皈依法 我皈依僧

在此向各位表示敬意，尤其是恆實法師、萬佛城的方丈，還有各位有緣與會的法師、居士們。我總覺得跟萬佛城有很深的緣份。

我記得第一次見到上人是在三藩市金山寺的那個床墊工廠，當時有種從來沒有過的不可思議的緣份的感覺。我對其他人沒有過這種感覺，在那個場合有這種感覺，實出意料之外。從此，我與萬佛城的密切法緣就展開了。我們現在紅木谷的無畏寺，是宣化上人圓寂前布施的。這次我看到，Ajahn Passano 及 Ajahn Amaro法師已經把無畏寺開發得相當不錯了，心中很歡喜。

我很高興看到加州寺院的發展，因為美國佛寺的發展是種相當新的趨式。當然，在這個國家任何寺院發展都是新的。在歐洲歷史上，連英格蘭都有寺廟。英格蘭許多村鎮稱為和尚棚，和尚路，這都是因為以前那兒有廟、有和尚。亨利八世國王把廟毀滅了，可是以後廟又回來了，在歷史上留下了一頁。在歐洲旅行，會感到寺廟是過去歷史的一部份。而在美國，寺廟是是種相當新的東西，在這個國家歷史上是新的。

起初接觸佛教，我很喜歡它對現實的質疑、參究。學佛之前我感到迷茫，因為感情上不快樂，由於迷茫對人生提不起興趣，面對周遭的一切都覺得沒有意義。二十一歲後遇到佛法開始追求，我覺得有了信心、希望。一九五五年我二十一歲在日本接觸佛法，那時在美國海軍服役，當時心靈深處有種觸動、覺悟。至今已經五十多年過去了，因為對佛法的追求，我出了家，禪修使我獲得巨大的法益。生命走到了這一步，我非常感激佛陀，感激我所有的師父，感激阿姜查長老與宣化上人。

我在泰國做比丘，跟阿姜查長老學習佛法，是在泰國的東北部的一個廟。現在這一派在泰國倍受推崇，可是許多年前因地處偏僻知道的人很少。現在交通發達了，有車可以去森林寺廟了，許多老寺廟都有了觀光客，以往偏僻的寺廟成了旅遊據點。

做比丘能吸引我，使我生命有受用的就是修正念，這是佛法的精髓。覺照當下的實際狀況，多麼直接了當。但是我們需要修行許多年，才能在行住坐臥中保持正念連續不斷，不帶勉強造做。我出家修「正念」已經四十多年了，獲益良多，因此對佛法僧三寶的信心與日俱增。

佛陀這個詞，在泰國森林派像念咒一樣，念它來定心。可以稱之為「勃陀」咒或佛名咒。在泰國東北一些寺廟，這是個法寶。這個詞，讓我四十多年來從中獲得真正的益處。這個詞是佛名，它本身是最有意義的，使人覺悟到實相，覺悟到法。

這個詞勃陀，在不間斷地提醒我們。目標是要向內修，不僅僅是一個思維中重複的詞，而是一種提醒，要我們去覺悟當下。它翻譯過來是覺者，是瞭知真理、法、實相的人。我們對瞭知真理、法、實相的修行是一輩子的事。

雖然我懂了許多的詞彙，對佛法也很有興趣。可是，個人的習性、我見，還有文化背景都影響到我眼中的世界。周圍的人都視之為實相，阿姜查長老常常說，這不是真實的世界。真實的世界，就是佛法。接受真實的世界，體悟絕對的實相罷！這種覺悟當下真理的覺性，是每個人有

me to Buddhism in the beginning was its approach of questioning and investigating reality.

Before I encountered Buddhism, I had felt a sense of confusion, emotional unhappiness and general disinterest in life due to this confusion of not understanding the purpose of it or the seeming futility of what I was witnessing around me. Encountering Buddhism of course was an arising of faith, of interest, which I've pursued since the young age of 21. When I was in the US Navy, we were in Japan in 1955, and that's where I first encountered Buddhism.

So at age 21 there was a kind of an awakening moment, something struck home, something touched me on a deeper level than just passing interest. Since that age—it's been over 50 years—the interest in Buddhism has led me into monastic life and into the practice of Buddhist meditation which has been of great benefit for the realization of truth of the Dhamma. At this point in my life I have tremendous gratitude to the Lord Buddha and to the teachers I've had, to Luang Por Chah in Thailand and Master Hsuan Hua.

In my years as a Buddhist monk, as a Bhikkhu in Thailand, I very much was influenced by the master known as Ajahn Chah. Of course this was a forest monastery in northeast Thailand. This particular monastic tradition is quite highly regarded in Thailand these days but for many years it was very remote and not many people knew about it. Due to the modern developments of roads and transportation and communication now in Thailand, these forest monasteries are available. A lot of the old forest monasteries are now invaded by tourists. What were once remote forest hermitages are now

popular tourist attractions.

That which attracted me and which I found useful in my life as a Buddhist monk has just been the practice of mindfulness. The real essence of the Buddhadhamma is this awakened conscious awareness in the present moment. Of course, this is a reality so simple, so direct, yet it took most of us many years to be able to really cultivate a way of being mindful in daily life, in everyday activities which was connected, which wasn't just fragmentary or dependent on very special supported conditions. So, training in this way as a Buddhist monk for over forty years, the results have been very positive because this sense of confidence and trust in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha becomes stronger and stronger.

This word now, the Buddha, in the Thai forest tradition they use as a kind of mantra for concentrating the mind. It's called the Buddhō Mantra or a kind of mantric form of the Buddha's name. This was a gem in the northeast monasteries in Thailand, this practice of Buddhō. This one word itself conveys the real essence that I have practiced and developed over forty years. The one word, the name of the Buddha, is the most significant in itself to awaken a human individual to reality or to the Dhamma.

This one word Buddhō is a kind of a continuous reminder. The aim of this practice is to internalize. It's not just a repetitive word that one thinks but a word that reminds, that encourages us to be awake, present here and now. The translation of this word is the knowing, the one or that which knows the truth.

So this knowing of the truth, this Buddhō, knows the Dhamma or the reality or the truth. This relationship

of knowing the reality, knowing the truth, knowing the Dhamma, has been lifetimes of development. Even though in many ways, I've understood the meaning of the words, I got the point and was inspired by the teachings themselves, my personal habits, emotional habits, the sense of myself, my cultural assumptions and so forth influenced my relationship to the world around me, which everyone around me seemed to regard as their reality. But Luang Por Chah was always saying: that's not the real world. The real world is the Dhamma, letting the real world in and seeing ultimate reality. This is within the possibility of any human being, this sense of awakened consciousness, seeing the truth the way it is in the present moment.

So in cultivating this sense of Buddhō and presence here and now, there are three factors that very much hide this reality. The first one is called the personality view or ego or the conditioned sense of oneself as identified with the body, the emotional habits, the thoughts, the memories that an individual might have. Thus we create ourselves as separate entities, as personalities. This is one of the main obstructions for this sustained, awakened consciousness to know the reality of the Dhamma.

☞ To be continued

能力開發的。

在修習念勃陀，面對當下時，有三種東西會障礙明白當下的實相，第一是我見或身見。包括我們的感情、習慣、思維、記憶等等，它們使我們視彼此為相互分隔的個體，這是主要障礙之一，使我們不能看到法的實相。

☞ 待續