

中國與美國：

佛教及宗教的聯誼 (續)

CHINA AND AMERICA: BUDDHIST AND INTERRELIGIOUS CONNECTIONS



A talk by Prof. Ron Epstein at a meeting of the China Buddhist Association,
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3) Interests and Perspectives of American Buddhists

I want to briefly mention a number of interests and perspectives of American Buddhists that reflect the unique cultural and historical context of contemporary American Buddhism.

Is Buddhism a Religion?

Some Americans do not consider Buddhism to be a religion in the sense that the term is used in the West. For that reason they feel comfortable belonging to one of the traditional Western religions and also identifying themselves as Buddhists. Other Buddhists understand Buddhist practice more in the mode of contemporary psychotherapy than as a traditional religion. Particularly among many American Buddhists of the Southern Buddhist tradition, it is commonplace for Euro-American lay teachers to be professional psychologists with their own private practices.

Buddhism and Science

Because of the cultural conflicts that historically took place in the West between Christianity and science, from the

美國佛教徒的興趣和觀點

我想簡單的介紹幾項美國佛教徒的興趣和觀點，由此可反應出，在這個時代裡美國佛教的文化與歷史的獨特處。

佛教是個宗教嗎？

有些美國人，根據在西方所認知「宗教」一詞之範疇內，認為佛教不是一個什麼宗教。基於此，他們很心安地覺得自己雖屬於西方傳統某宗教中的成員之一，同時也都認為自己是一位佛教徒。其他佛教徒所瞭解的佛教，更多的是從現代心理療法的角度，而非從一個傳統宗教的角度。尤其在一些南傳的美國佛教團體裡，一些在家的歐美導師，以心理醫師為專業的，已是司空見慣了。

佛教與科學

在西方的歷史，基督教與科學在文化上曾起衝突，而佛教，自從在19世紀末、20世紀初傳入西方，其信奉者認為佛教在本質上是科學的，或者可說佛教與近代科學的最新之世界觀是互相融洽的；對佛教與科學

time of the introduction of Buddhism into the West in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, its proselytizers characterized Buddhism as being scientific in nature or compatible with the latest worldviews of modern science. This interest in the relationship between Buddhism and science is an ongoing and vigorous one.

Socially Engaged Buddhism

A controversial aspect of American Buddhism is 'socially engaged Buddhism,' about which there has been ongoing vigorous debate. Most but not all of the social activism engaged in by American Buddhists is by laypeople and not by monastic communities per se. There are many significant exceptions. Among the reasons for this strong interest is the propensity in American society to help those one doesn't know, often before members of one's own extended family. This is, of course, the exact opposite of the Chinese Confucian extended family model of social welfare.

American Buddhists have also shown considerable interest in the relationship between the Buddhist ideal of respect for all sentient life, environment problems, and global warming. To offer a few examples, this manifests in Buddhist participation in the animal rights movement, Buddhist efforts to educate about environmental and health benefits of vegetarianism and veganism, and interest among some Buddhists in the relation between increasing levels of consumption of meat and global warming.

Because of the interest in Buddhist meditation in the West, Buddhist activists often stress the importance of both of developing a proper state of awareness and intention and also of doing a cause and effect analysis before deciding on a path of social action.

4) Interreligious Dialogue

The Buddhist tradition of mutually respectful interreligious dialogue that goes back to the Buddha himself continues in an active and vigorous fashion among American Buddhists. The activity takes place on many levels: academic, clergy to clergy, and between lay Buddhists and devotees of other religious traditions. A journal of Buddhist-Christian Studies has been published since 1981, and the Dharma Realm Buddhist University has published a scholarly journal entitled Religion East and West since 2001. The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in Ukiah and the Institute for World Religions in Berkeley, California, regularly host inter-religious events as do many other American Buddhist institutions. As early as the 1980s, the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua invited Catholic priests to hold mass in the main Buddha Hall at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, a tradition that continues to the present day.

"The [DRBA's] Institute for World Religions is an educational and religious center dedicated to the study of the Asian and Western religious and cultural traditions. ...The Institute interprets essential aspects of Chinese culture and religions for dialogue with the other major religions of the world. Dedicated

彼此之間的關係的這種興趣，正繼續蓬勃地發展著。

入世佛教

美國佛教裡，有著一個具有爭議性的一面——那就是「入世佛教」；此爭議引發經久不衰的激烈爭論。大部份的，雖然不是全部的，佛教社會活動，是由美國在家信徒在從事，而非出家眾。當然也有許多特殊的例外。其對入世佛教活動的強烈興趣的原因主要是，在美國社會人們傾向幫助那些不懂的人——甚至是在幫那些大家庭的成員之前；這當然是與孔老夫子在大家庭模式的大同世界觀相違背。

對如下幾方面，美國佛教徒也有著相當的興趣：在尊重所有有情眾生生命之佛教理念，與環保問題、和全球暖化問題之間的關係。如佛教徒參與動物權益保護活動，佛教徒從事推廣有關素食和純素食對環境以及健康的益處；有些佛教徒有興趣瞭解吃肉與增加全球暖化間的關係。

因為西方的佛教徒喜歡打坐，所以佛教活動人士在決定參與一項社會活動之前，都經常強調發展正心正念的重要性，並對將所參與的活動做一次因果層次上的分析。

宗教間的對話

宗教間彼此尊重、並進行相互對話，此傳統可回溯到佛陀本身；宗教對話在美國佛教裡則是蓬勃發展著。對話活動在多階層展開：如學術座談、傳教士與傳教士的對話、在家居士與其他傳統宗教虔誠信仰者之間的對話。在1981年就有「佛教與基督教之研究」期刊出版；在2001年「法界佛教大學」也出版了一學術性期刊——「東方與西方的宗教」，而萬佛聖城(位於加州瑜珈市)與「法界宗教研究院」(位於加州柏克萊市)也經常舉行宗教聯誼活動。在1980年初，宣化上人曾邀請天主教的神父來萬佛聖城的佛殿，舉行彌撒儀式，此傳統延續至今。

「法界宗教研究院」是一個教育與宗教的中心，從事研究亞洲與西方的宗教和文化傳統……該院著力詮釋出中華文化與宗教的精髓，來與其他主要宗教進行對話。

to creating a sanctuary where one can engage in conversation about theological principles, religious beliefs and spiritual practices, the Institute encourages the interfaith search for universal values in an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual respect. It aims to challenge the boundaries of our minds and avoid attachment to narrow sectarian differences.”

Possibilities for Future Cooperation between the CBA and American Buddhists and for Inter-religious Dialogue between CBA and American Religious Groups

Here are just a few suggestions for future consideration.

I am impressed with the continuing improvement in both the quality and quantity of Buddhist monastic education in China. Yet very little is known about it in the West. American Buddhists would welcome more opportunity to learn more and to have more personal contact with Buddhists in China.

American Buddhists view Chinese Buddhism with great respect and appreciation, yet they also realize that they will have to adapt Buddhism to Western culture for it to truly take root in the West. For that reason, it would be most helpful if Chinese monks who wish to come to the West to teach Buddhism were well educated not only in the Buddhadharma but also in both the English language and in Western culture.

Large segments of the American Buddhist population are not yet entirely clear about the central role of the Sangha, moral precepts and study of the Buddhist teachings in Buddhism. Given the emphasis on these important matters by the CBA, the CBA has an opportunity to help to educate and influence, in a wholesome and appropriate ways, the course of American Buddhism. Thus CBA has an opportunity to teach by example in encouraging visits by serious American practitioners to outstanding Chinese Buddhist monastic communities.

Finally, I have been personally impressed by the teachings of the great Chan Master Xu Yun that emphasize the role of Buddhism in strengthening the wholesome strands of other religious and philosophical traditions in China.

The Foundation for Successful Dialogue

The major world religions teach that all sustainable changes for the better come from changes in the hearts of human beings and not through external pressure. And so all dialogue, whether it be interreligious dialogue or intra-Buddhist dialogue, must be based on personal relations that are characterized by mutual respect and loving compassion. All of us in the ACMFRE delegation have come to China to learn out of an attitude of deep respect for China and Chinese culture.

My teacher, the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua, summarized in his Six Principles of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas the intentions that one can foster to reach an open and respectful state of mind: 1) not contending, 2) not being greedy, 3) not craving illicit gratification, 4) not being selfish, 5) not seeking

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該院致力於提供一個神聖的殿堂，讓人們可以在那裏研討神學理論、宗教信仰、心靈的修持，並鼓勵人們在合作與互敬的氛圍下，秉承探討普世價值；該院旨在挑戰人們心量之極限，並避免分門別派而產生的執著。

「中國佛教協會」與美國佛教界未來合作的可能性，以及「中國佛教協會」與美國宗教團體彼此間的宗教對話的可能性

這裡有幾項建議作為未來的參考。

中國的佛教僧人培訓及教育，在質與量上的持續進步，給個人留下深刻的印象，西方人士卻對此所知甚少。美國佛教徒很高興能有更多的機會來學習，同時也希望與中國佛教徒有更多的聯誼。

美國佛教徒是以十分的尊重與感激看待中國佛教，不過他們也明白要有適當調整才能融入西方文化的佛教，如此，佛教才能真正在西方紮根。因此，中國出家人若想來西方弘揚佛法，他們必須具備不僅在佛法方面，也必須在英語和西方文化都要有很好的教育程度。

大部份的美國佛教徒對僧伽、戒律和佛學，都還不是很清楚。因為「中國佛教協會」也注重這幾點的重要性，所以「中國佛教協會」可藉此機會以有益又合適的方法，來教育和影響美國佛教。「中國佛教協會」也可以用鼓勵方式，讓美國真正想修行的人，到中國水準優秀的寺廟參學。

最後，我想說一段虛雲老和尚所強調的教誨，而本人銘記於心的：要加強聯貫在中國眾多宗教以及傳統哲學裡，佛教有著應所扮演的角色。

成功對話的基礎

世界的主流宗教皆教導「世風之向善，源自人心之改變，而非來自外在的壓力。」同理，所有的對話，不論是宗教間的對話，或者佛教內的彼此對話，都必須基於互相尊重與慈悲的彼此關係。我們訪問團來到中國是來學習的——是以抱著對中國和中華文化崇敬的心態來的。

我的老師宣化上人，教人栽培心地，以達到開放與存敬的心胸——簡而言之可總括在他的萬佛聖城六大宗旨裡。這六大宗旨是：1)、不爭，2)、不貪，3)、不求，4)、不自私，5)、不自利，6)、不打妄語。為了要幫助弟子們做自我反省，他作了如下偈頌：「真認自己錯，莫論他

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人非；他非即我非，同體名大悲。」

人生也有限，故所知也有限；因此對話要成功的，其關鍵之一就是要謙恭；此謙恭來自於知道兩者之區別：

一)、知何者於我有益、於我生命可行，二)、只稱說自己知道何者對於人人可行(有好處)。

總結一下：希望我今天所說的，對各位有所裨益。凡有錯謬之處，請勿客氣，個人誠心歡迎大家指正及建設性的批評。

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personal advantage, 6) not lying. And to help us do internal checks on our own states of mind, he wrote the following verse:

Truly recognize your own faults; Don't discuss the faults of others; Others' faults are just my own. Affirming our identity with all Is what is meant by great compassion.

Human beings are finite, and so there are limits to our understanding. Thus one of the keys to successful dialogue is the humility born of knowing the difference between what is right for me and works for me in my life and claiming to know what is right for everyone.

In conclusion, I hope that you have found something useful in what I have had to say today. Where I have made mistakes, please do not be polite; I sincerely welcome your corrections and constructive critique.