



The 30th Anniversary of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas:



感恩回顧 精進前瞻

萬佛聖城開光三十週年法會



Reflecting with Gratitude and Renewing with Vigor (continued)

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Ajahn Amaro(continued):

One of the reasons Master Hsuan Hua was so friendly and interested in making a connection with Ajahn Sumedho was because he was very impressed with the standard of vinaya and discipline that we try to embody in our community, and he wished to try to introduce that into the community that he was part of. Master Hua's thought then served as a great encouragement to us to be worthy of being an example.

During that time, also due to the visits of Reverend Heng Sure and Heng Chao in 1983, a connection built up. One of the things that really impressed us was that, shortly after Ajahn Sumedho came back from that trip, a check arrived in the mail from Master Hsuan Hua, which contained the largest cash donation that the

阿姜·阿莫若法師(續):

上人如此友善、熱誠地與蘇美度法師建立情誼的另一個原因，是因為他很讚嘆我們僧團對戒律的重視和行持。上人希望將這種精神介紹給他所屬的僧團，並且運用在修行上。上人的想法，對我們是一大鼓勵。

一九八三年恆實法師和恆朝法師的來訪，開始了兩個道場間的互動聯誼。使我們印象深刻的另一件事，就是蘇美度法師回來後不久，我們就收到一張上人寄來的支票，那是我們有始以來收到最多的現金捐獻。起初我們還不太確定這支票是不是真的，因為從沒見過一張五千元元的支票。對我們而言，五千元真的是最大的一筆金額，因為我們太窮了。那時候，我們住



monastery had ever received. We weren't quite sure it was real at first. We had never seen a check for five thousand dollars before. We were very poor; we lived in a broken down Victorian mansion that we were fixing up in slow stages. And so, it was a very powerful way of Shrfu cementing (no pun intended) the relationship between us, for it helped us do many repairs on the building.

During those years, I became very inspired and did a lot of wolfing down of those teachings published by DRBA, and I tried to follow many of the standards that were kept within this community [CTTB] as well as our own dhutanga practices. This developed over a number of years. I kept the practice of not lying down for several years and would observe many of the food restrictions, and so forth. I cultivated these practices covertly until I found myself becoming a kind of undercover City of Ten Thousand Buddhas' monk.

During that time I was living up in the north. I had walked from the monastery in the south of England via a winding route all the way up to the monastery in the north, near the Scottish border. And, at that time, I had some dreams of Shrfu, several very clear, helpful, significant dreams of him. What I remember of the first dream is this: he appeared very clearly and spoke, in very good English and with an English accent, and what he said was, "Bright, loud, and mobile is the false; subtle and indistinct is the true." And then I woke up – that is, from the dream, not from samsara!

That really had an impact on me, I thought: what does that mean? I reflected on it and had all kinds of ideas about what it might be pointing to. But it was obviously a clear message. And so I reflected and pursued the meaning of it. But it must have not got through to me clearly enough; I say this now in retrospect, but at the time I could only guess what that particular dream was about. I now realize that it was pointing out that I was attaching to the external characteristics of this tradition and this community and these practices, and I wasn't really noticing the essence, the subtle, indistinct part of the Dharma itself.

And, so, a little later on, I had another dream. Let me tell you a story before I talk about the second dream. Ajahn Sumedho had just come back from a visit to Thailand, and he was talking about some travels that he had made there, visiting some of the branch monasteries of northeast Thailand. And he also was recounting when he'd been to visit the monastery of Luang Por Kao in earlier years. I think he'd been traveling with Ajahn Chah at that time.

On that occasion they were visiting a very old and venerable disciple of Ajahn Mun, Luang Por Kao. He described how when Luang Por was receiving visitors, he would give them a wonderful Dharma talk, wonderful teachings on loving-

在一個破舊的維多利亞式公寓，一邊住，也一邊整修，但是進度非常緩慢。因此上人的這筆錢，就像一劑強力膠似地，凝聚了兩個道場的關係，同時也修補了我們公寓多處的破漏。

因此那段時間，我受到很多鼓勵，也狼吞虎嚥地「吞」了許多上人的開示，於是便試著在修行苦行以外，也遵循萬佛聖城的家風。我練習夜不倒單，也學習日中一食等等的家風，就這樣修行了好幾年，沒讓我們僧團裡的人知道，直到我發現自己像個「特務」和尚——就是在蘇美度法師的僧團裏，當個萬佛聖城的比丘。

當時我們住在北方，我開始從英國南方的寺院，一路蜿蜒地行腳到北方的寺院，靠近蘇格蘭邊界。有一晚，我夢見了上人。我曾經夢見過上人幾次，都是非常清晰、有幫助，而且意義深遠的夢。這是我所記得的第一個夢，夢裏上人的影像非常清楚，說著一口流利的英文，而且還有英國腔。他說：「光鮮、響亮、搖動不定，是假的；微細、幽隱，是真的。」然後我就醒了——是從夢中醒了，不是從生死輪迴裏醒了。

那個夢對我影響很大。我在想，這句話是什麼意思？我反覆思索種種可能影射的意思。很顯然地，這個夢有個非常清楚的訊息，因此我不斷地思考，希望找出它真正的含意。現在回頭看，上人當時的那個夢，還不夠清楚讓我猜中到底他想表達的意思。從某種程度來說，這個夢是在提醒我正執著於傳承、僧團或修行的外相，而忽略了修行的精髓——也就是「法」的本身，甚深微妙的那部分。

所以不久之後，我又夢見上人。在我說第二個夢之前，讓我先說一個故事。那就是當蘇美度法師剛剛從泰國訪問回來，對我們描述他訪問泰國東北部一些分支道場的見聞，同時也提到他早年訪問 Luang Por Kao 寺院的經歷。我想，那時他應該是和阿姜查長老在一起。

有一次，他們一起去訪問一位年長而且尊貴的法師，他是阿迦曼尊者的弟子 Luang Por Kao，這位法師對他們描述他接見訪客情形。他給大家開示講法，教導他們如何培養慈悲和智慧，講得非常地好，大家也聽得法喜充滿。可是這些人聽完法後，就向法師要痰盂裏的東西。痰盂就是用來裝指甲、檳榔汁、檳榔渣和口水這些髒東西的容器，而這些人就希望得到這些東西。他勸這些人，記得他所講的法，比帶這些東西回去更重要。但是他們只想要他的垃圾，作為紀念品或護身符。

等這些人離開後，法師對阿姜查和蘇美度說：「



kindness and wisdom. At the end of this wonderful Dharma talk, lay people would ask for his spittoon, into which he had been spitting his betel-nut juice. Along with this he had been clipping his fingernails and had dropped them into the spittoon, along with the saliva, juice from the betel nut, and other kinds of garbage. He tried to persuade them that it was much more important that they took the Dharma away with them, and that this was really the only significant thing, but they really wanted his garbage, to make it into kind of mementos or sacred medallions for themselves.

So after the lay-people had left, he made this comment to Ajahn Chah and Ajahn Sumedho: “You know, it is amazing, isn’t it, how upside down living beings are. You offer them these liberating teachings, and all they want are your leavings, your debris. Aren’t people strange?”

That was the story I heard prior to my second dream. I dreamed of Shrfu again after hearing the story. Apparently, the first dream was a bit too subtle, making it difficult for me to get the point. Shrfu perhaps knew that I needed something louder. So, in the second dream I had, Shrfu appeared, again very clearly, he looked at me, and said, again in very good English, “Do you want my toenails?” and then disappeared. I woke up from that one and I thought, “Ah, right.” I think I am beginning to get the message here.

I realized that it was a very helpful teaching that I was being offered, for I was attaching to these external forms and practices, while overlooking what the heart of these practices leads to and helps to awaken, which is the only truly significant thing. It also pointed to the suggestion that it was more important for me to be true to my own practices, my own traditions, and my own community rather than trying to have some kind of surreptitious, secret and alternative monastic life that I had to keep hidden from everyone else around me. Shrfu’s appearances in these dreams were saying: “Wake up. What are you doing? You don’t have to be some kind of undercover monk. Don’t cultivate this stupid attitude of secrecy. Just do what you do as a monk of the southern school, and you will be fine.”

So in the year after that I had a much more balanced practice. Also, from 1990 on, I had the chance to visit California; and we had the idea of opening a branch monastery. Thus, during those years, I would come from England for a few months, and travel in the United States and teach. And, during those times, I was very honored and happy to have the chance to come and pay respect to Shrfu and to visit here, the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and also the other branches of DRBA that had opened up.

During those years the Bay Area community that was inviting us gathered together the resources, and established the organization, to help a branch monastery to open. However, we had had some difficulties in our community in Britain, in

你看，很奇怪吧！眾生就是這麼顛倒。你給他們的法，是能令他們得到解脫的，但是他們卻只想得到你不要的東西、你的垃圾。這豈不是很奇怪的事嗎？」

這是我第二次夢見上人前聽到的故事。聽完這個故事後，我又夢見了上人。很顯然第一個夢太微妙了、太不好懂了，上人知道我需要一個更大聲的。這次在夢裏，上人出現了，還是這麼清晰，依然說著流利的英文。他看著我說：「你要我的腳指甲嗎？」然後就消失了。醒來後我想：「啊，我明白了！」我明白這個夢的意思了。

這教導對我是很有幫助的，因為我始終執著修行的形式，而忽略了修行的本質是要導引、幫助我們覺悟的，這才是重要的東西。更重要的是，我應該忠於自己修行的法門，忠於自己的傳承和僧團，而不是做個偷偷摸摸的出家人，不敢給周圍的人知道自己在做什麼。上人就是要我清醒，看看自己在幹什麼。他不要我偷偷摸摸地做個「特務」的和尚，他要我好好做個南傳的比丘，按照自己的傳統好好修行，這樣就沒問題了。

從此以後，我就讓自己的修行保持平衡。1990年，我有機會到了美國加州。因為我們打算在美國建立一座分支道場，因此在往後的幾年，我都有機會從英國飛到加州以及美國各地停留幾個月，四處走走並且教化眾生。我很榮幸，也很高興能在那段期間親近宣化上人，同時參訪萬佛聖城和它的分支道場。

當時有人希望我們到美國建立分支道場，他們費了很多心思，也收集許多資料。但是那時候我們在英國的僧團遇到一些困難，有些人就離開了，所以猶豫是否適合建立新的道場，還是應該等僧團穩定一點再說。

等到1995年，僧團比較穩定了，於是我們在英國的永生寺（Amaravati Monastery）開一個長老大會。大家認為現在因緣成熟了，決定派我前往加州接受信眾的邀請，開始找地方建立道場。開會的那天是1995年5月31日，就這樣決定了。

隔天早上，也就是六月初一，有位長老叫我到他的辦公室。他說剛剛蘇美度法師打電話來，他人正在加州跟宣化上人在一起，上人現在病得很重，但是他準備把在北加州一塊120畝地捐給我們。他問我覺得怎麼樣啊？

我的第一個念頭是：「哎呀，上人動作真的很快！」距離我們開完會不到一天的時間，他就把地送給我們了，而且他人當時還重病在床。恒實



the form of people leaving the robes, and so there was some uncertainty whether we were really ready to open up a new monastery or not, or whether people would want to wait until the Sangha got a bit more settled.

It wasn't until 1995, when we had a meeting at Amaravati in England, and the community finally decided that things seemed to be more settled and that we could take up the invitation of the lay community in California. This meant we had the green light for the project and that we could start looking for land, in order that we could open up a new branch monastery there. That meeting took place on May 31st in 1995.

On the morning of June 1st, the next day, one of the senior monks called me to his room and said, "We just got a called from Ajahn Sumedho in California. He's been down in Long Beach visiting Master Hua, who's really sick but, nevertheless, he just offered us a hundred and twenty acres of land in Northern California. What do you think of that?"

My first thought was: "Master Hua is pretty quick." Less than a day after we got permission to look for land, he provides it – from his deathbed. Reverend Heng Sure was there at that time, with Ajahn Sumedho, and he could tell probably a little bit more of the story. [Reverend Heng Sure adds during translation: Shrfu was in the wardroom, very sick at that time, and yet he requested Ajahn Sumedho to come to Los Angeles. I accompanied Ajahn Sumedho to Los Angeles. Shrfu asked Ajahn Sumedho about his willingness to accept the land. Ajahn Sumedho consented, and was extremely happy.] It was a wonderful gift from Shrfu to help us to start a monastery and the outcome was, exactly one year later, on June 1st, 1996, we opened up Abhayagiri, and we've existed in a close and fruitful friendship with Wanfocheng, the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, and the other branch monasteries, very gratefully ever since. Some people might say, "Oh... come on!" because they know that I'm somewhat prone to exaggeration and hyperbole, but it's absolutely true, that's the way it was. Master Hsuan Hua was extremely ill at that time and so it was even more amazing that the gift was made, right at that very moment.

Today is a day to reflect upon gratitude and renewal. Abhayagiri Monastery's presence in our beautiful quiet valley, and the very fact that we could be here and have established ourselves to the degree that we have is very much due to the generosity and extraordinary kindness of Venerable Master Hsuan Hua, and also to the timing of his gift. Towards Shrfu, our gratitude is immense and we have tried to do our best to repay that gratitude by doing what left-home people are supposed to do, through living in a way that Shrfu would be pleased to see, through conducting ourselves according to the precepts and vinaya, in a way that honors his own faith and generosity, his kindness in making the gift to our community.



無畏寺比丘於2009年來聖城參加法大的佛學講座
Bhikkhus from Abhayagiri Monastery attend a special lecture at Dharma Realm Buddhist University on 2009.

法師當時和蘇美度法師在一起，他也許可以做個補充。（恒實法師翻譯時補充：當時是我跟隨蘇美度法師到了洛杉磯。那個時候師父上人躺在病房，很不舒服的，可是他就吩咐要蘇美度下來洛杉磯。他問他是否願意接受這塊土地，蘇美度法師說：「好！我非常的高興。」）上人真的送了個很好的禮物給我們，幫助我們成立這個道場。一年之後，也就是1996年，無畏寺就開光落成了，也使得我們與萬佛聖城以及它的分支道場，結下更深厚的友誼。

所以在今天這個「感恩回顧、精進前瞻」的日子，我們非常地感恩上人，讓我們能在那麼安靜、合適的山谷建立我們的道場。我們得以有今日的成績，可以說完全是依靠上人的慈悲和布施。尤其是這份禮物來的時間，實在是太妙了。有的人會說：「拜託！你講故事總是講得那麼誇張。」但是這是真的，事實就是這樣。而且上人當時還重病在床，卻能這麼即時地送來這份禮物，實在是太不可思議了。

對上人，我們充滿無限的感激。而報答上人最好的方式，就是做出家人該做的事，過一種上人贊成、鼓勵的修行生活，跟著戒律每天修行，這樣才不會辜負他的用心，也才能報答他老人家的恩德。

☞ To be continued

☞ 待續