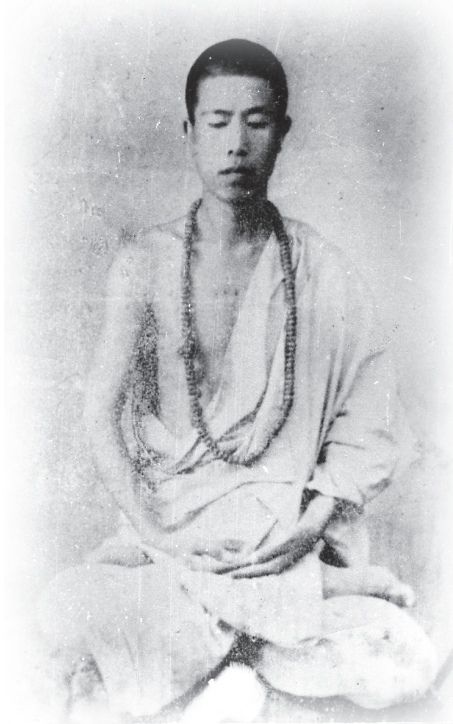


White Mountains and Black Waters Nurture Rare Talent (Continued)



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6. Searching for and Visiting Teachers (Continued)

As told by the Venerable Master:

There was a sect called “Li Men” (Gateway to Truth), which recited nothing but the “Five character Mantra.” Their so-called “supreme leader” sat on the dharma seat. He was called the “leader in uprightness” and the two people who sat beside him were called “assistants in uprightness.” All three of them were seated in that room and seemed to be performing the Buddhist ceremony of “Fang Yan Kou” (feeding the hungry ghosts). Everybody kowtowed to them, internally reciting “na mwo he la da nwo dwo la ye ye.” This was the basic practice of this sect. What did the leader teach his disciples? A “secret” dharma. He would ask people to extend their hands and then write “Guan Shi Yin (Avalokitesvara) Bodhisattva” on each one. Each person needed to remember to recite “Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva” --but only in his mind, not out loud. This is called the Five character Mantra. After that, he said, “Close your mouth, hide your tongue, and with the tip of your tongue touching the roof of your mouth, focus your mind on these five words and the Dharma will be revealed.” It was not permitted to pass this method on from father to son or from husband to wife.

The Li Men sect was principally distinguished by the fact that it enjoined its followers to abstain from alcohol and cigarettes; for this reason it also came to be known as “the society against alcohol and cigarettes” and “the temperance society.” For the past century this sect has been very popular in China. What do they rely on? “Na Mwo He La Da Nwo Dwo La Ye Ye.” Since I was there, I am aware of all this. I also attended Catholic Mass and Christian services. In addition I studied Islam, Taoism, Buddhism, and the philosophy of Confucius, learning the core teachings of each of these religions.

2) Attending Dharma lecture without food and sleep

When I was thirteen or fourteen, someone gave a series of talks on *the Earth Store Sutra* in a place two and half kilometers from my home. I attended all of them. At that time there were no cars and nor was there

06. 尋師訪道（續）

上人自述：

好像在北方有一種外道叫「理門」，他們不念旁的，就是念一句「五字真言」。那個最高的領袖裝模作樣地坐在法座上，這個人叫「領正」，坐兩旁的人叫「幫正」；三個人坐到那個地方，就像放燄口似的。人人都向他叩頭頂禮，他的心裏就專念「南無喝囉但那哆囉夜耶」這一句，這就是理門的法。他傳什麼給信徒呢？傳一個密法。他叫你伸出手來，在你手心上寫「觀世音菩薩」五個字；你從此要記住，要默念在心，念「觀世音菩薩、觀世音菩薩……」不能出聲念，這叫「五字真言」。然後告訴你：「閉口藏舌，舌尖頂上顎，繫託心念，意根法現。」這個法，父子不過，妻子不傳。

「理門」主要特色就是不喝酒、不抽菸，所以叫「勸戒菸酒會」，又叫「在理公所」。中國近一百年以來，很盛行的這種外道，它所仗著是什麼呢？就是「南無喝囉但那哆囉夜耶」這一句。因為我以前都去過，所以我都知道。我也參加過天主教的彌撒、耶

穌教的安息會，我也研究過孔教、道教、佛教、回教，我各處去研究他們的教義。

(二) 不吃不睡為聞法

十三、四歲的時候，有人講《地藏經》，離我那兒五里路，我每天都去聽。那時不是坐車去，是靠自己兩條腿跑路，來回要一個鐘頭；這麼遠，我還是天天去聽。講經的法師，有的把字都講錯了，好像颱風襲港，他說颱風「籠」港，而我專聽不會講經的人講經。他講得越不好，我越要聽；講得好的，我就不聽了。我就願意聽這個不好的，為什麼呢？在不好的裏頭，要能找出一個好的，那就是道了！

在那時候，只要能聽經，我不吃飯也不覺得餓，不睡覺也不覺得疲倦，心思時時刻刻都在經上。我聽經，不是聽的時候才聽，離開就忘了；我是念茲在茲，常常想經裏的道理，我是不是能這樣行？是不是能仿照這樣去做？總要把它收攝到自己的身心上，是否能夠實用，這才算聽經了！

記得我小的時候，聽完經回家時，耳朵裏還聽到法師在講經，我自己還一直思維講經的道理；甚至於過了幾天，還聽得到。就是沒有法師講經說法，平時只要一靜坐，也常聽見虛空裏，有很多法師在講經說法，同時能聽到幾百個法師說法，而且我都能記得很清楚。為什麼能這樣子呢？就因為專心致志，念茲在茲，一心想要聽經聞法，這是我以前聽講經的境界。

07. 俠義少年

上人生長在貧農之家，無錢讀書，失學在家幹活兒，也做過生意。當時年紀雖輕，為人行事，卻有他不同於一般人的作法。

上人自述：

我生在一個貧苦的家庭，家裏有點田地可以耕種，但只夠維持一年的生活。那時我十三歲，和我一個哥哥去收割。譬如割高粱，他割半喇子，半喇子就是割三條壟，割六條壟是整個的；我比他小五歲，他割半喇子，而我割整的。我那時個子小，高粱高，實在不容易割。沒人教我怎麼做，我先看他們割高粱的樣子，我就有方法了。我胳膊一伸，先抱住一大把，不用花多大力量，一下子就割十幾根，大人都沒我割的多。總而言之，都能勝過他們。

☞待續

any form of public transportation, so each day I walked from my home to this place and back again. Since it was far away it took me an hour but nevertheless I always attended. The Dharma teacher sometimes made mistakes in expression, like a person who says, “the hurricane hid the port” while meaning to say, “the hurricane hit the port.” But I liked listening to this Dharma teacher who did such a poor job. The worse his lecture was, the more interested I became. If he had spoken well, I wouldn't have stayed. I liked to listen to him precisely because he wasn't a good speaker. Why is that? Because if you can find something good in a bad talk, that itself is the Dao (truth, principle).

In those days I didn't feel hungry even if I hadn't eaten and I didn't feel tired even if I hadn't slept, so long as I could attend those Dharma talks. My mind was completely focused on the sutra. I was listening to it not only when I was actually listening to it, but at every other moment as well: at every moment my mind remained focused on the sutra. I constantly meditated on its meaning and asked myself whether I was capable of living according to the Buddha's teachings. We must completely absorb the sutras so that they become a part of our being and direct our behavior—only then can we claim to have truly listened to the sutras!

I remember when I was young, while on my way home from a sutra lecture, I could still hear with my inner ear the Dharma teacher lecturing on those sutras, and I never stopped contemplating their meaning. I could still hear this even a couple of days later. When no Dharma teacher was lecturing, all I had to do was sit in meditation and I could hear many Dharma teachers lecturing in space. Sometimes I could hear hundreds of them and I was able to clearly retain their words in my mind. How could I do this? Because my mind was concentrated and I wholeheartedly desired to hear the sutras. This was the state I reached by listening to sutra lectures.

07. Chivalrous Teenager

The Master grew up in poor peasant's family which could not afford to send him to school, so he stayed home and helped out. He also did some business. Although he was young, his way of doing things was different from that of ordinary people.

As told by the Venerable Master:

I was born into a poverty-stricken peasant family. We had a bit of land to cultivate but could just barely make ends meet each year. When I was thirteen, I went out with my older brother to harvest the crops. We cut such things as sorghum together. The field had six rows of sorghum and he cut half of them. Although I was five years younger, I could cut the whole field. At that time I was not tall—the sorghum was taller than I was. It was hard to cut and I had not been taught how to do it, so I watched others and learned. I would extend my arms around the sorghum and hold a big bunch of it. Without too much strength, I could cut ten to twenty sorghum stems at once—more than the adults. In short, I was capable of outdoing them.

☞To be continued