

My Trip to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas

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姚敏（美國芝加哥）寫於2010年7月21日

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2010年5月31日，末學藉出差加州首府之機，偕友人拜訪萬佛聖城。是日清晨，驅車自沙加緬度市出發，取道加州五號公路後接二十號公路，晨光熹微，景物飛馳。旭日東昇，金光萬道，似若佛光普照，更有祥雲幻如金色蓮花，余等心懷踴躍，不勝歡喜。

平原過後，皆是群山起伏，綠樹黃草，相映成趣。據言，加州此地冬日雨多，而夏日雨少，故草冬綠而夏黃。然因夏季高溫，常有山火之患。嗚呼，三界火宅，雖是加州如此發達之地，亦山火頻發，何得觀音大士持清涼甘露，護佑加州？俄頃見東北方向，有雲呈放射狀，蔚為壯觀。蓋因離此地不遠，有一大湖，水氣氤氳，從湖面出故。此大湖湖水清澈，故其名為Clear Lake清水湖。湖光山色，美不勝言。山路逶迤，步步皆景。

過清水湖後，又經群山萬重，綿延起伏，末學與友人見萬佛聖城漸近，無暇多觀。於加州101公路上短暫行駛後，終至萬佛聖城。但見聖城，好一個清幽之地！自山門看去，但見綠樹成蔭，黃牆紅瓦，點綴其中。聖城並無門房登記或警衛，四方大眾皆可長驅直入，如我佛開八萬四千法門，門門皆可修，皆可至佛果。我等心懷踴躍，須臾間穿越山門而入矣。（編按：作者初次參訪不知要去辦公室登記。）

On May 31, 2010, while on a business trip to the capital of California, I visited the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas with a friend. On Monday morning we started driving from Sacramento, taking Highways 5 and 20. On the way we quickly passed many different landscapes while bathing in the faint light of the rising sun in the morning calm. The sun gave off millions of golden rays which resembled the Buddha's light, and there were auspicious clouds like golden lotuses. Our hearts leapt for joy.

After we passed the plains, we saw the rolling hills, green trees and yellow grass flying past. Together they formed a nice contrast. We heard that the Californian winter is very rainy, but during summer it does not rain much. Therefore, the grass is green in the winter and yellow in the summer time. However, because of high summer temperatures, there is always the potential that fire will break out in the mountain forests. Alas, the Three Realms are just like a house on fire. Although California is a developed state; nevertheless, fires occur frequently in the forests. I wonder how Guanyin Bodhisattva, the great compassionate one, can bless California and bring it cooling sweet dew? A short while later we saw clouds in the northeast which gathered together and began to radiate outward,—what a splendid sight! Probably because there is a great lake not far from this place, the humidity is high. Therefore, the water from which the clouds were formed may have come from the lake. The water of the great lake is very clear; therefore, it's named Clear Lake. The lake and mountain scenery complement each other. It is beyond description. The mountain road is twisted, and at every bend there is beautiful scenery.

After passing through Clear Lake, we then drove through a seemingly endless number of rolling hills. My friend and I lost interest in sightseeing as we came closer and closer to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. After a little more time of driving on 101, we finally reached the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB). We could see at first glance what a good, quiet, and beautiful place it was. From the entrance, we saw many green trees, yellow walls and red tiles. We did not need to go through registration and nor did we see a security guard—people from all over the world can go in directly. It is like the Buddha opens



既入聖城，即見城中建築略顯老舊，但外牆皆飾以黃色，自有一番莊嚴之氣象。路旁有孔雀，顏色豔麗，悠然自得。或徜徉青草間，或駐足凝思。或長鳴以抒其志，或開屏以示其麗。其音似唵佛唵法唵僧，與聖城中鐘磬相和。友人與我泊車畢，下車徐行。先聞法會眾禮拜萬佛懺之佛名貫耳，又見大殿入口處有金色大佛安坐其上。大佛皆跏趺坐，佛首微微前傾，對眾生慈悲關愛之情，畢現無餘。

殿前廣場空無一人，但有扁柏成列，綠草如茵。有一大香爐，足有三四人高，余觀其銘文，為江蘇常州鋼鐵廠八三年所鑄造。香爐之後，循兩級台階而上，即是入門第一殿，中有宣公上人之塑像。端嚴畢備，栩栩如生。護法菩薩、韋陀關公，左右而立。時正值萬佛懺法事第一支香，大眾皆唵佛拜佛，余等逡巡於大殿四周，未敢登堂而入。見四面殿牆，皆有施主發心飾以四方天王畫像，精緻入微，色彩鮮豔，線條流暢，金粉猶存。

未久之間，第一隻香畢。法師先出，素未謀面，但直呼末學之名，似早相似。蒙法師慈悲，余等得以參觀聖城圖書展廳，見宣公上人事蹟，衲衣草履，披荊斬棘，方得在此佛法未化之地，締造出一片莊嚴道場，令人肅然起敬矣。又見上人之側，總有美國弟子及在家信眾四周圍繞，如今盛況不再，不禁心懷悲感，但欣聞上人之弟子，如今皆是法門龍象，或為其他道場主持，或為佛教研究翹楚，心中感嘆，惟願佛法發揚光大，永住世間。

聖城所出版圖書，有講經說法，

84,000 dharma doors for cultivation. Each dharma door can be cultivated and will lead one to Buddhahood. Excited and enthusiastic, we passed through the mountain gate quickly. [Editor's note: As a first time visitor, he was not aware yet of the registration office.]

Having entered CTTB, we noticed that the buildings were slightly antiquated. The outer walls were all painted yellow, which in itself gave a dignified feeling to the buildings. Beautifully colored peacocks roamed along the roads, appearing free and content. They either wandered about on the green grass, or settled down and "meditated." Sometimes they would cry out clamorously as if expressing their emotions, and sometimes they would fan out their feathers to show off

their beauty. Their sounds, resembling the prayer to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, harmonized well with the sonorous tones of the CTTB bell. We had a short walk around after parking the car. The first thing we heard was the names of the Buddhas being chanted by the assembly during the Ten Thousand Buddhas Repentance. We also saw the golden-colored Buddha on the roof near the entrance of the Buddha Hall. The Buddha sat cross-legged, with his head inclined slightly forward, showing loving concern for all living beings.

Not a single person could be seen in front of the Buddha Hall, but there were rows of cypresses and the ground was carpeted with green grass. There was also a big three-legged incense censer

the height of three to four people. The engraved inscription read: "Made in 1983, by Changzhou Iron and Steel of Jiangsu." Behind the incense censer were two levels of steps leading up to the Patriarch Hall. At its center of the hall was a statue of the Ven. Master Hua—lifelike, sublime, and majestic. The statue of the Patriarch was flanked on both sides by the Bodhisattva Dharma Guardian, Wei Tuo and Guan Gong. It was the beginning of the first period of the Ten Thousand Buddhas Repentance. The great assembly chanted and bowed to the Buddhas, while we walked back and forth and around the Buddha Hall, without daring to enter. On the four sides of the outside walls we saw portraits of the four heavenly kings which had been painted by people who had made vows. The paintings, finely drawn with colorful smooth lines, had some traces of gold powder still visible.

Shortly thereafter, the first period of bowing ended. The monk who had invited me to CTTB walked out of the Hall. Although we did not know each





有各種語言之佛法經典，亦有兒童教育，及中英文雜誌，不一而足。展廳之側，有一東瀛風格之精緻庭院，小橋流水，中有雜色鯉魚，暢游其中。展廳之後，有一片菜地，應是自給自足，供僧眾之需。時展廳唯末學及友人，戶牖開闊，清爽宜人，頓有難得浮生半日閒之感。

待參觀畢，余等亦隨大眾在大殿，拜萬佛懺之第二支香。因此次萬佛懺，有世界各地之信眾參與，大殿無法容納，另開大殿右側延生堂，供法師居士拜懺。蒙聖城義工相助，末學和友人亦尋得空餘拜墊，遂和眾人一起唸佛拜佛矣。領唱者為一比丘尼，其音嘹亮婉轉，繞樑不散。與網上領眾唱唸楞嚴咒者，似為一人。眾人隨其先唸佛名一次，拜一次，然後再唸一佛名，再拜一次，如此循序漸進，唸完一炷後方得休息。余與友人皆是第一次拜懺，拜完後頓覺腰酸腿痛，見年老法師、居士猶健步如飛，不禁慚愧有加。短暫休息後即是午餐前之上供，大眾依儀軌唸畢，魚貫而出，隨法師去齋堂用齋。

待續

other, when he called my name, I had the feeling that we had met long before. Due to his kindness and compassion, we were able to visit the CTTB Book Exhibition Center. There we saw the biography of Master Hua, which tells the story of how, setting off with only a ragged robe and straw sandals, he overcame increasingly great difficulties in the process of establishing CTTB in the West, where Buddhism was a totally new phenomenon. We were naturally filled with awe and reverence. We also saw that at that time there were always American disciples and laypeople around Master Hua. We were saddened to see that was no longer the case. But fortunately we heard that those who remained became the pillars of the Dharma in this organization—i.e. the “dragons and elephants” of the Dharma, managers of the branch temples and scholars of Buddhist studies. I was touched by this and hoped that Buddhism would spread widely and remain in the world forever.

Books published by the City include Dharma talks, different sutras which have been translated into different languages, educational books for children, and Chinese and English magazines, to name just a few. On the side of the Exhibition Hall, there was a fine Japanese-style garden, in which a small bridge spanned a flowing stream where some multi-colored carp swam freely. At the back of the Exhibition Hall, there was a vegetable garden, which I assumed was only for the purpose of providing food for the residents of CTTB and not for commercial use. During the exhibition, the door was wide open, welcoming all, giving my friend and me the pleasant feeling that as worldly members of society we were now finally able to have a half day of leisure time.

After visiting the book show, we followed the great assembly to the Buddha Hall and join the the Ten Thousand Buddhas Repentance during the second period (8:15-9:05 a.m.). Many people from different countries around the world attended the repentance. The Buddha Hall was not large enough to accommodate this number of people, so the Long Life Hall was opened as well. The volunteers helped my friends and me to find the bowing cushions, and together with the assembly we bowed to the Buddhas while chanting their names. A Bhikshuni with a beautiful, resonant voice led the session. She sounded like the same person who chanted in the online version of the Shurangama Mantra. The assembly would chant one Buddha's name and bow; and then chant another Buddha's name and bow again. The repentance progressed gradually. We did not get a break until the end of the second period—which was the very first period of bowing for us. Since this was the first repentance for us, we experienced much leg and back pain afterwards. We were so embarrassed when we saw some older Dharma Masters and laypeople walking out the Buddha Hall so quickly and easily. After a short break, the Meal Offering took place. Once we finished the chanting we followed the Dharma Masters to the Dining Hall. ❷ To be continued

