

Early 1970's San Francisco
Passing the Offerings,
Gold Mountain Dhyana Monastery

七十年代早期 三藩市
金山禪寺 傳供儀式

The Master directs the first Passing of Offerings Ceremony, while one of his Bhikshu disciples hosts the meal offering. From the very beginning, the Master trained his disciples by putting them in the leading roles and keeping a low profile himself, giving advice when needed.

上人指導第一次傳供法會，當時的一位比丘弟子為法主。從一開始，上人就訓練弟子們站在領導的地位。自己則保持低姿態，在必要時給予輔導。



我在1996年來美之前，就聽說上人，發願親近上人。到美國後，在東部馬裡蘭大學讀書，正好找到上人的分支道場——華嚴精舍，我到華嚴精舍請回來看的第一本書即是《宣化上人事蹟》。有天晚上，我在學校圖書館裡看書寫作業，一旦拿起《宣化上人事蹟》這本書來看，我就放不下了，覺得太好看了，一口氣要把它讀完。

其中有一個故事很令我感動：上人在香港西樂園時，有一個羅老太太想要孫子常來求上人。有一次上人剛從外面回來正在洗腳，羅老太太又來求上人，希望上人慈悲，賜給她一個孫子，並許諾上人要做什麼她都可以辦到，她以為上人會讓她捐一筆錢造佛像或修廟等等，她很樂意做這些事，

上人說：「你有這麼大的信心嗎？以前的修道人，師父說

Before I came to the United States as a student in 1996, I had heard about the Venerable Master Hua and made a vow to draw near to him. I studied at the University of Maryland on the east coast of the United States, where a branch monastery of the Venerable Master, Avatamsaka Vihara, was located. The first book I borrowed from the monastery was The Venerable Master's Life and Events. One night, I was in the college library doing my homework as usual, when I picked up this book and was not able to put it down. It was so interesting that I wanted to finish it all in one breath.

One story in particular really moved me. When the Venerable Master was in the Western Paradise Garden in Hong Kong, an elderly lady named Mrs. Luo wanted a grandson and frequently went to beg the Venerable Master for one. One day the Venerable Master had been outside and was washing his feet when Mrs. Luo came to beg the Master again. She asked him to be compassionate and give her a grandson. She promised to do whatever the Master wanted her to do. She thought the Master would ask her to contribute some money to construct Buddha images or repair monasteries, which she would have gladly done.

上人沒有自己

The Venerable Master Did Not Have Any Self

金曉丹 講於2010年10月5日萬佛城大殿
A talk given by Xiaodan Jin in the Buddha Hall of the City of
Ten Thousand Buddhas in October 5, 2010
呂親賜 英譯 Translated into English by Michael Lu.

什麼，都是唯命是從，因為他們什麼都能放下，才有這樣堅固的信心，這是不容易的。」羅老太太肯定地回答說：「師父，只要我能得一個孫子，什麼都聽師父的。」上人說：「那麼我滿你的願吧！你能把這盆洗腳水喝了嗎？」羅老太太做夢也想不到上人會這麼說，目瞪口呆地楞住了。上人等了好久，見她是辦不到了，就拿起這盆水，邊喝邊說道：「這是甘露水呀！」

書上有一張上人的照片，看起來很舊，不知道是不是當時的情形下照的。讀到這裡，望著照片裡上人開心地大笑，我竟然忍不住哭了起來。上人那種無我的自在瀟灑表露無遺，上人沒有自己、沒有任何執著、無拘無束、無有造作的自在解脫，那種內在真正的快樂，讓我感動。而我每時每刻活在執著和妄想中，讓自己不自在、不快樂，為自己感到慚愧而哭泣，更為上人的德行所感動。這個故事最終上人還是滿了羅老太太的願。

上人在東北期間，忍人所不能忍的，行人所不能行的。在上人的東北家鄉冬天很冷，常常是零下三十幾度，地下有三尺多深的雪，上人發願不穿棉衣服，冬天夏天只穿三層布，連襪子鞋子也不穿，在雪地上光腳走，腳不會凍壞。上人有個徒姪大約十八歲，也學上人不穿鞋、不穿襪子在雪地上走一百多步遠，他的腳就凍得腫得很大，他趕快跑到廟上，有半年不能走路。

中國東北有黑龍江省、吉林省、遼寧省三個省，上人所在的雙城縣原屬於吉林省，現已劃入黑龍江省。我的老家在遼寧省，比黑龍江省在南部一些，冬天稍暖和。記得小的時候從十一月至來年二月開春之前，有三、四個月天氣很冷，地上的積雪都不會化的，我們小孩子都要穿棉襖、棉褲、棉鞋，戴棉帽子和口罩，手上戴棉手套，渾身上下除了眼睛之外都被包住了，才不至於凍壞。

記得有一次，我到同修家鄉去，他的家鄉原在黑龍江省海拉爾市，比上人的家鄉更在北邊，離中蘇邊境坐火車只要四個小時，冬天晚上室外有零下四十多度。

The Venerable Master asked her, "Do you have much faith? In the past cultivators did whatever the master said. The disciples would do whatever the master said because they could let things go and had such firm faith. This is not easy to do." Mrs. Luo said with a definite tone, "Master, as long as you grant me a grandson, I will do whatever you tell me to do." The Venerable Master said, "Okay! I'll fulfill your wish! Can you drink the basin of water that I just used to wash my feet?" Mrs. Luo could not imagine, even in her dreams, that the Master would request her to do that. She just stood there, dumbfounded. The Master waited for a long time and seeing that she could not accomplish this task, he picked up the basin of water and said while drinking it, "This is sweet dew!"

In the book is a photograph of the Venerable Master that appears very old. I don't know if it was taken during that scene but as I read the story and saw the Master laughing happily in the picture, I burst into tears. He had that kind of altruistic self-mastery and he fully revealed it. The Venerable Master did not have any self or any attachments; he had that unrestrained, true kind of self-mastery and liberation. The Venerable Master's true kind of happiness which comes from the inside really moved me because I was always living in a world of afflictions and attachments where I was not in control and not happy. I cried because I felt ashamed of myself, but more because I was moved by the Venerable Master's moral conduct. In the end of the story, he fulfilled Mrs. Luo's wish.

During the time when the Venerable Master was in Manchuria, he endured what others could not endure and practiced what others could not practice. The climate was very cold during the wintertime; usually it would be some minus 30 degrees Celsius with more than three feet of snow covering the ground. The Venerable Master made a vow not to wear a padded cotton jacket, only to wear three pieces of clothing during both summer and winter, and to walk barefoot on the ground without wearing shoes and socks. His feet did not freeze. A disciple of the Master's Dharma brother, who was about eighteen years old, imitated the Master and walked about one hundred steps without wearing shoes and socks on the snow-covered ground. After walking that distance his feet began to freeze and started to swell severely, so he speedily ran back to the monastery. He could not walk for half a year.

Manchuria had three provinces: Heilongjiang Province, Jilin Province and Liaoning Province. The Venerable Master lived in Shuangcheng County, which was previously in Jilin Province, but now is part of Heilongjiang. My hometown is in Liaoning Province, which is slightly south of Heilongjiang Province, so it is a little warmer there. I remember when I was little, it was very cold and the snow on the ground would not melt from November to February. We children had to wear padded cotton jackets, padded cotton pants, padded cotton shoes, padded cotton hats, cotton face masks and cotton gloves. Our whole body except for our eyes had to be covered, or else we would have frozen.

I recall one time I went to my husband's hometown, which is in Haila'er city in Heilongjiang Province. This city is farther north than the Venerable Master's hometown. From there you need to take a four-hour



有一次出去辦事，我真體會到什麼是冷，儘管我比平時多穿一些，但還是感到冷，特別是風吹到臉上不是覺得冷，而是像針扎一樣的痛。我回到家裏，跑到熱炕上，過二十分鐘手脚才暖和過來。可見上人冬天只穿三層

布，光著腳在雪地上走，這種忍耐力我們常人沒有經歷過，其實是根本無法想像的。

上人更是吃人所不能吃的。上人在墳上為母親守孝的時候，有一位比丘送給上人一竹筐50多個窩窩頭，又叫裡二外八，因為做窩窩頭時，兩個大拇指放在裡邊，其他八個手指頭放到外邊做。當時天氣很熱，時間長了，裡邊、外邊都長了差不多一寸半長的綠毛。上人說他從來都沒吃過那麼難吃的東西，又辣又臭，現在想起這個味道，甚至於還要作嘔，可見有多麼難吃。

我小的時候吃窩窩頭也吃了十幾年，確實不好吃，嚼在嘴裡喳喳的很粗的，不像白麵饅頭吃起來很細很香的。去年我回國到街上還有人賣窩窩頭，比白麵饅頭還貴，但現在人買吃是為了營養，換換口味，我也買了嚐嚐，還是不喜歡吃，大概小的時候吃得太多了。

上人忍人所不能忍的，卻把自己的福報回向給法界所有的眾生。上人說他一生用「忍耐」二字作為法寶，來克服一切困難，忍寒忍暑、忍風忍雨、忍飢忍渴、上人更是忍譏忍辱、忍罵忍打，一切都忍，絕不豎白旗。上人的身教與言教，真是讓人心悅誠服，而我們常常是說的和做的差得太遠了。所以上人說：「你們不要以為就這麼有了萬佛城，這是幾十年的修忍辱力、修行功夫所成就的！」

train ride to reach the border between China and Russia. It is common for temperatures to go lower than minus 40 degrees Celsius at night. One time I needed to go out to do something and, beyond doubt, I experienced what cold is. Even though I wore more clothing than usual, I still felt cold, especially when the wind blew on my face. It did not feel cold; instead it felt like needles stinging my face. When I arrived back at home, I immediately got on the heated brick bed. After twenty minutes, my hands and feet finally felt warm. The Venerable Master wore only three layers of cloth year-round and walked barefoot on the snow-covered ground in the wintertime. Such endurance is not something that we common people have experienced; it is basically unimaginable.

The Venerable Master was also able to eat what others cannot eat. When the Master was sitting beside his mother's grave to express his filial respect, a Bhikshu brought him a basket filled with more than 50 *wowotou* [a kind of bread] which is also called 'inside two, outside eight.' Why are they called that? When making *wowotou*, you have to stick your two thumbs inside and place your other eight fingers on the outside. The weather was considerably hot. After the *wowotou* had sat for a period of time in the heat, green mold – one and a half inches long – grew on both the inside and the outside of the *wowotou*. The Venerable Master said that he never before had eaten such disgusting food. It was both pungent and stinky and, when recalling the taste, he said he felt like vomiting. So you can imagine how disgusting it was.

When I was little, I also ate *wowotou* for more than ten years. I admit that it truly doesn't taste good and it's pretty rough to eat, unlike the thin and fragrant white-flour buns. Last year when I went back to China, I saw people on the street still selling *wowotou*. It was more expensive than the buns made with white flour. Nowadays people eat it only because it's nutritious and they want a change of taste. So I bought a few and tried them once again, but I still didn't like them. That's probably because I ate too many when I was little.

The Venerable Master endured what others could not endure, yet he transferred all his blessings to the beings of the Dharma Realm. The Master said that for his whole life he used 'endurance' as his Dharma jewel, and used it to overcome all the difficulties he faced. He endured the cold, the heat, the wind, the rain, hunger and thirst. Furthermore, the Master endured slander, embarrassment, scolding and people hitting him. He endured all this and more but never raised the white flag. The Master was able to teach people by personally practicing what he taught, causing them to feel deep admiration for him, whereas usually what we say is very different from what we do.

That is why the Venerable Master said, "Don't think that the City of Ten Thousand just came into existence from nothing; this is the accomplishment of decades of endurance and practice!"