

Lessons from Raking Leaves

耙樹葉之我思



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Written by James Roberts for the Dharma Realm Buddhist University Blog at blog.drbu.org. on May 5, 2011

張嫦娥 中譯 Translated into Chinese by Daisy Chang

Today marks the beginning of my second week as a volunteer and student at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. I'm just starting to feel settled in, having found some work to do so that I can make a contribution to the community. One of the monastic trainees tells me that the City is like a jigsaw puzzle: every person has his/her own contributions to make, and like the pieces of a puzzle, all the gifts fit together to form the working community.

The dorm teacher here helped me find a little yard at one of the houses by the farm, where I can work in the morning. So for the past three days, after morning ceremony, I've been raking up the leaves in the yard and piling them on one of the fallow fields at the farm. I see the work itself is an integral part of my practice and study here. Much like meditation, raking is simple, useful work that calms the mind and helps me focus. Also like meditation, it can either be terribly boring, or it can be peaceful and pleasant, depending on what your attitude is like. I also find that the exercise in the morning helps me keep my energy up later in the day while I'm studying. Raking the leaves also contributes to the community. The leaves will be folded into the soil on the

今天是我到萬佛聖城當義工與學生的第二星期。我開始有了安定感，也找到了可做的事情，能夠有所貢獻。僧伽班學員告訴我，聖城就像一張拼圖，每個人各有其司，都有可發揮之處，就如同拼圖中的零片一般。緊密結合時，就能運作良好。

舍監老師在農場旁的房舍找到個小院子，上午我可以在那兒做工。過去的三天，早課結束後，就到那兒耙樹葉，並堆置在農場未開墾的土地上。我視這項工作是不可缺少的修行。如同打坐，耙樹葉是單純、有益的工作，能讓心情平靜且精神集中。但也像打坐一樣，耙樹葉可以是極端無聊，也可以是非常平和與愉悅，端看自己的心態而定。這項晨間活動也讓我整天上課都精力充沛。而整理落葉對生態也有助益。這些樹葉將溶入農場的土壤，供給蔬菜成長所需的空氣和碳元素；當然使庭院不那麼雜亂，也是件美好的事情。

下午，協助法師編輯英譯經典，那是讓我自嘆弗如的經歷。雖然先前曾在佛學課接觸過經典，然而聖城一些修行者對佛法深入的瞭解令我大為震撼。能與行

farm to provide aeration and carbon for the vegetables to grow. And of course, it's nice to keep someone's yard a little less cluttered.

In the afternoons, I've been helping one of the monks edit his English translations of the sutras. I find this to be a particularly humbling experience. I've encountered sutras before in classes on Buddhism, but I've been astounded by the depth of understanding of Dharma that some of the practitioners have here. It's such a precious opportunity to be able to sit down with someone who has devoted his life to the practice and study of the Buddhist tradition, and get to have such a detailed conversation about the importance of various ideas and how they might be communicated in English. Again, I am guessing I will find this work to be as important to my learning and development here as my formal practice and study.

Sometimes I wonder about what Buddhist practice was like in other ages. I imagine that at some time in the past history of Buddhist practice, before most people's lives became so busy and scattered, before so much of the population was collected in cities, and before we became so attached to various machines and media, there was a sense of connection to the earth that was close to most people's lives. I imagine that this connection to the earth, sustained over time, was a stabilizing force to practice that has become most difficult to find in this age. Just another reason, I think, to keep up with the raking.



解並重的修行者同坐，並詳談各種理念的重要，及如何譯為英文，真是很寶貴的機緣。無疑地，這份工作對於我在此地的學習成長，正如平日正規的修學般同等重要。

有時我會對其他時代的佛教修行感到好奇。想像以前大多數人還沒有變得如此忙碌紛擾，尚未聚集到城市，還沒有這般依賴各種機械與媒體，人們的生活與大地是很親近的，而這種緊密的聯繫，是修行的穩定力。如今，已難再現。我想，這是我持續「耙樹葉」的另一個理由。



譯棧小箋 *Translation Corner*

千峰頂上一間屋
老僧半間雲半間
昨夜雲隨風雨去
不及老僧半日閒

宋朝廬山歸宗志芝庵主 撰

Written by Hermit Master of Zhi Zhi of Gui Zong
(Returning to School) Monastery of Mt. Lu of the Song Dynasty

A) Translated by Tomas

Amid a thousand towering peaks
Sits a single hut;
This elder monk lives in half,
In the other—clouds.
Last night the wind and rain took away the clouds.
Even they don't have a half-day's leisure of this old monk.

B) Translated by Chris Spranger

Amid a thousand towering peaks, a single hut:
an old monk inhabits one half; clouds, the other.
Last night the wind and rain departed,
and the clouds followed close on their heels.
Not even they have half a day of this old monk's leisure.

