

踏隨上人的步履

Footsteps to Follow

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A few weeks ago I dismantled my altar. It was a bookcase with, on the top shelf, some statues and pictures of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, the shelf below having pictures of Buddhist teachers I deeply respect—Master Hsuan Hua and Master Hsu Yun were prominent among them. The remainder of the case was filled with Sutras, other Buddhist books, and notes on Dharma that I had collected over the past few years.

Why then did I sell that bookcase? Why did I dismantle the altar? Why did I have it in the first place? Such questions lead me to reflect on what little I know of my future and on my scattered memories of the past.

I'm leaving Leiden behind this summer to spend half a year at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. After that I plan to travel in Asia before continuing my studies, which I will most probably not do in Leiden. This explains why I sold my bookcase, but the question as to why I had an altar in the first place remains, and a new question arises: what brings this young person in the bloom of his life, who grew up with the views of Western culture and modern science, from a city in the most rural province of the Netherlands to a Chinese Mahayana Buddhist monastic community in northern California? What affinities lead me there? To answer these questions I will have to go back in time and reflect on some of the steps I took as I learned to walk my life.

My memories of early encounters with Buddhism are from when I was twelve. Seeing Seven Years in Tibet, which besides showing the suffering of the Tibetan people, impressed upon me mostly the traditional wisdom that the Tibetan characters

幾個禮拜以前，我拆了我的佛龕。其實它只是一個書櫃，書櫃頂層供奉著佛像，第二層放的是我所景仰的佛教修行者，虛雲老和尚及宣公上人其中著名的兩位。書架剩餘的空間則擺滿了佛經及佛書，還有幾年下來所寫的佛法筆記。

究竟為何要賣掉這個書架？為何要拆除這座佛龕？當初又是如何開始這一切的？這些問題，引導著我回到過去一些斷簡殘篇的記憶，同時也趨使我去思惟尚無頭緒的未來。

今年夏天，我將離開萊頓大學到萬佛聖城住半年，然後計劃去一趟亞洲，回來再繼續我的學業，估計不會在萊頓大學，所以這足以解釋我為什麼要賣掉書架。但還沒解釋這座佛龕的由來，一個新問題又出現：什麼原因讓一個在西方文化和現代科技中成長的年輕人，選擇從荷蘭最鄉下的城市住進北加州的漢傳大乘佛寺呢？為了回答這些問題，我開始回顧成長中走過的足跡。

對佛教最早的記憶，開始於12歲那年觀看《西藏七年》這部影片。透過這部電影，不僅看見西藏人民受的苦難，最令我印象深刻的是藏文展現出的古老智慧。另一個更為難忘的記憶，是在一本佛教兒童書裡第一次讀到「四聖諦」時，佛陀這麼透析的教誨所給我的震撼。事實上，至今我仍記得那頁的版面設計。

「四聖諦」之所以令我如此記憶猶新，因為它講的是非常切身的道理——誰不認識生命的痛苦？誰不明白痛苦和欲望之間的關聯？再者，它揭開了真正的自由，並且提供解脫之道；這些方法真實可行，而且能帶來真正

embodied. More prominent in my memories is the moment when I read about the Four Noble Truths in a children's educational book on Buddhism. I remember vividly how I was struck by the clarity of the Buddha's teaching—in fact, I can still recall the layout of the page where the Four Noble Truths were discussed.

These truths amazed me by coming from a clearly experiential basis—who cannot recognize the sufferings of life and its inherent link with craving? Moreover, they promise freedom and a method for becoming freer: something real to do and real transformation ahead. To me, this offered something more attractive than the Christian tradition I was being brought up in and from which I already began to feel alienated. In that tradition, the link with our actual day-to-day experience was not obvious to me, nor was there a very direct promise of personal responsibility and transformation embodied by real people. This is not to say Christianity does not offer those aspects at all; Buddhism just made them very clear and tangible to me.

However, the embodiment of Buddhist principles and of transformation was not really available to me. I was—and still am—quite a reader and in the years that followed I became well acquainted with the Buddhist, Mystical, and Spiritual sections in the local library. The Internet also provided enough Buddhist materials to read. Nevertheless, however much intellectual satisfaction books can give and however helpful learning is, they do not provide the living example and proof that one can see in Dharma teachers and Dharma friends.

But the Internet not only has a wealth of reading materials: there are also Buddhist discussion groups and forums. Through one such forum I got in touch with a Zen teacher who also does Chinese/Japanese painting. He would encourage me to be creative, practice different aspects of Buddhism, and believe in my own goodness. But the greatest debt I owe him is for giving me a couple of Internet links to things to read and listen to.

It was through those links that I “met” Master Hsuan Hua: not as a flesh and blood person face to face, but very much as a living (and lively) person through pdf's containing some of the teachings he gave, especially those he gave in the sixties and seventies. This is how I started reading his commentary on the *Shurangama Sutra*. I spent my free time slowly making my way through that very powerful text while my schoolmates were playing computer games or soccer.

I had read a lot, but Master Hua was something different: here someone seemed to be really speaking from a place of deep understanding and experience of cultivation. And although many of the concepts and stories were really weird and far out at the beginning, I kept being drawn into reading the commentary. Studying other commentaries in between, such as that on the *Diamond Sutra*, it took me a little less than a year to finish all eight volumes of commentary on the *Shurangama*.

While the teachings of the *Shurangama* were the first that the

的轉變。對我而言，這個正是佛教比基督教更吸引我的地方。雖然我是在基督教文化中成長，但是對它已漸漸感到疏離，因為所講的道理與現實生活沒有產生很明顯的關聯，而且也不強調個人應負的責任以及應去實踐的自我轉化。這並不是說基督教完全沒有提到這些教導，只是佛教更具體明確地展現它們。

雖然如此，但在我周圍卻很少有機會認識實際修行的人。我以前是（其實目前仍然是）一個好讀書的人。過去幾年，我把住處附近圖書館收藏的佛教、神秘學以及靈修類書籍都讀遍了，網絡當然也提供了不少佛教資料。然而儘管書籍能帶給我知性的滿足，儘管這些學習很管用，但是都不能取代唯有在法師及佛友身上才能看到的實例與證明。

網絡上不僅有豐富的文章可以閱讀，還有諸多討論佛法的社群與論壇。透過其中一個論壇，我接觸到一位創作中國畫及日本畫的禪宗老師。他鼓勵我要有創造性，嘗試不同的法門，並且要相信自己的善根。但我最感激他的是提供了我一些網址，要我多看多聽。

正是通過這些網址，我「遇見」了宣公上人。雖然不是與他的色身相遇，但是這些 PDF 文檔印的都是上人的教誨，特別是上人在 60 年代、70 年代的開示，讓我彷彿面見栩栩如生的他。這也是我開始閱讀上人《楞嚴經淺釋》的因緣。當我同學在玩電腦遊戲或踢足球的時候，我利用閒暇之餘，慢慢研讀這些深度有力的經文。

我讀的書不少，但是上人的書卻與眾不同。他所說的，是從他透徹的理解和真實的修行中流露出來的。雖然很多道理和故事剛聽覺得奇怪和不尋常，但我卻深受上人淺釋所吸引而無法釋手。我花了近乎一年的時間讀完八冊的《楞嚴經淺釋》，中間還穿插讀了上人其他經典例如《金剛經》的淺釋。

上人最早對美國西方人開講楞嚴大義，但是他花最長時間，可能也是最有系統教授早期弟子的其實是《華嚴經》。透過 www.dharmaradio.org 這個網址——一個神奇的時空安排——我有幸在網路上聽到恒實法師講解《華嚴經》。神奇之處，不在於我「如何」連到這個網站（因為這對在網路時代長大的我並不困難），而是我連接到了「什麼」——那就是佛陀和宣公上人的法寶，以清

Venerable Master lectured on to Westerners in America, he lectured on the *Avatamsaka Sutra* for the longest and perhaps most formative period in the training of his early disciples. It was by being given the link to www.dharmaradio.org that through the digital network—with all the miraculous time and space configurations that implies—I was able to hear the voice of Reverend Heng Sure explaining the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. The miracle was not at how I accessed it—I belong to the first generation that virtually grew up with the Internet—but what I accessed; here the deep teachings of the Buddha and of Master Hua came to life through the clear and accessible elaborations and story-telling of a native English voice. Moreover, that Western voice was from someone who had actually been through intensive cultivation himself as well. Buddhism now became not just something old and Asian; modern Westerners can bring it into their lives as well, even to the point where they end up teaching Asians.

The stories and teachings of Master Hsuan Hua and Reverend Heng Sure were encouraging and very rich in those aspects.

The wealth of their teachings had more, however: I heard the story about the Venerable Master bowing to his parents and sitting beside his mother's grave as well as other teachings on filial respect; I heard it being emphasized that the practice of the Way needs a good foundation and education as a person.

Accordingly, I followed the Master in bowing to my parents. Although it is certain that my parents had and have their worries about the choices I have made, often in connection to Buddhism, I am sure they will agree that we have actually grown closer over time and as I'm getting ready to leave for CTTB, I think my parents actually have quite some understanding of what it is I'm trying to do.

I personally feel that this practice of respecting our roots is very important as one hears a lot of stories about teenagers, who in the process of growing up, perhaps by becoming idealistic or just by living their own dreams, turn away from their parents. The broken hearts that this creates are not conducive to the openness and confidence needed



拆掉這座佛龕，內心是滿痛苦的。可是當我想清楚原因之後，反而打起了精神；甚至當買主付了 20 歐元抬走這座書架時，我內心依然充滿希望。

It was not without some pain in my heart that I dismantled this altar. Realizing, however, what made me do it, my spirit rose up and I felt very inspired even after the buyer had come to collect his bookcase for 20 euros.

楚的說明和故事，用道地的英文宣演無礙。而且，這位英文講演者本身對修行確實下過一番苦功。佛教如今已不再是古老及亞洲的代名詞，現代西方人也能夠把佛教帶入日常生活中，甚至傳授佛法給亞洲人。

上人和恒實法師所講的故事和道理都很豐富，也很激勵人心。然而道理之豐富，更多是在於對「孝順」的種種開示。我聽到上人給他父母親磕頭，還有在母親墓旁守孝的故事。上人一直強調，修行人要打好基礎，學做一個好人。因此，我也仿效上人向我的雙親磕頭，雖然他們到現在還是擔憂我的選擇（通常是關於佛教的），但我確信經過時間的證明，他們會承認我們親子間的關係是越來越緊密。等我即將啟程來到聖城時，我相信他們將會更清楚自己兒子所要追求的目標。

我覺得尊重自己所從出的根源是很重要的，尤其聽到許多關於年輕人或者因為過分理想化，或者因為追求夢想，而漸

漸遠離自己父母的故事。讓父母心碎，這是有礙靈性的修行，因為它會扼殺自性的率直與信心。雖然對於在現代西方社會長大的人而言，佛法中最難領受的部分就是「孝敬」，但是這其中是蘊含著極深廣的智慧。我認為藉著強調孝道的重要，上人已經為佛教在西方的穩健發展打下了堅固的基礎。

那些成為我人生指引的法音，它們原本的出處其實是中文的；換句話說，我是透過翻譯才有機會接觸學習佛法。我所閱讀的佛教資料絕大部份是英文，間或才會讀到荷蘭語的。上人是用中文講法，因此必須經過翻譯；恒實法師是用英文講法，但是他會點提中文的原文，並在講經時提到翻譯的經過。或許把恒實法師的講經當成一座實驗室，這樣的想法並不誇張，因

for working on the level of the mind. This teaching of filiality and respect for elders is perhaps the hardest aspect for those who grow up in the modern Western world to learn in the Buddhadharmā. Yet, there is immense wisdom in it and I think that by emphasizing that teaching, the Master has actually laid a very firm foundation for a steady growth of Buddhism in the West.

The voices speaking Dharma that became beacons in my life found their origin in Chinese, which means that my entire encounter with the Dharma was through translation. All the Buddhist material I read was either in English or, occasionally, in Dutch. Master Hsuan Hua's teachings were given in Chinese and had to be translated. Reverend Heng Sure lectures in English, but he refers back to the Chinese and talks about the translation process during his lectures. Perhaps it is not far-fetched to see Reverend Sure's lectures as a laboratory in which translations are tested and digested, quite like Master Hua's own lectures in fact, which were for a large part intended to help the translators by giving glosses in modern Chinese.

In the Netherlands we have extensive language education – besides Dutch and English also French and German – and in my secondary school we also studied Latin and Greek. Having quite a fondness for languages, I conceived of the idea to learn Chinese myself. This way, not only would I be able to understand Buddhist texts and Master Hua's teaching without relying too much on translations, I would also be able to help translating at some point! With those thoughts in the back of my mind, I not only started actually learning Chinese, I also started working on some translations from English to Dutch.

Translating turned out to be a very good way of entering the Dharma, a good Dharma-door. For one thing, I got to go through some of Master Hua's talks in a slow and steady pace, as I struggled to properly understand the meaning and find the right words in Dutch. But beyond that, I contacted people from the Buddhist Text Translation Society through the Internet and that way got to know some people who could give guidance and with some alumni from the schools at CTTB – even some from Holland! Now, not only could I read or listen to the Dharma, but I could also ask for advice through e-mail and chat online with young Dharma friends every once in a while. Very precious indeed!

作者參加法總2011年歐洲訪問團。
圖為訪問團合照於巴黎靈山佛學院。

The author joined the DRBA Europe delegation in 2011.
This group photo was taken at the Linh Son Buddhist University,
Paris.

為正是在這座實驗室裡，這些翻譯被檢測和消化吸收。就好像上人一樣，上人講經說法有很大一部分的目的，是希望藉由淺白的解釋來幫助弟子翻譯。

在荷蘭，我們有多樣化的語言教學。除了荷蘭語和英文，我們也學習法語和德語。在中學的時候，我們甚至還學習拉丁語和古希臘語。我對學習外語一向都很有興趣，於是產生了自學中文的念頭。這樣一來，我不僅可以不用這麼依賴翻譯就可以懂得佛經和上人的開示，而且將來我也可以幫忙翻譯經典！有了這些想法，我不僅開始學中文，而且也開始把一些英文的翻譯翻成荷蘭語。

出乎意料的，「翻譯」成為我學習佛法一個非常契機的法門。為了要真正懂得上人所講的意思，然後又能找到合適的荷蘭語來翻譯，我就會不疾不徐地來讀上人的開示。另外一個收穫，就是透過網路我聯繫到了佛經翻譯委員會的成員。因為他們，我認識了一群可以指導我翻譯的人，還有萬佛聖城培德中學的校友，有的甚至還來自荷蘭！現在我不僅能夠讀經聽法，而且還可以寫電子郵件發問或者在網路上和他們討論聊天，這份收穫實在彌足珍貴！

高中畢業之後，我終於實現夢寐以求的旅行計劃，我在萬佛城待了四個禮拜。一年之後，我又回到聖城住二個月，那時已經把聖城當做自己的家了。在荷蘭我也進入萊頓大學就讀，



After I graduated from school I made a journey that I had long wished to make. I spent four weeks in CTTB. One year later I returned for two months to call the City home. Meanwhile, back in Holland I had started my BA Program in religious studies, focusing on Buddhism and learning Chinese and Sanskrit at Leiden University.

Although the element of practice so essential in Buddhism is lacking in the academic program, it has enabled me to become more educated, widen my scope, and learn some useful languages. Education and moral development; the support of wholesome friends and the example of real cultivators who live the path and can speak to the heart; the work of translation and the work of cultivation. Of course there have been a lot of missteps I've taken – false views, attachments, disrespect to teachers, doubts – but the steps described above are those which come up as I reflect on what is leading me to CTTB as I am about to finish my BA Program.

These footsteps are quite diverse. All of them I think are also very much part of the Venerable Master's activities when he was in the world: stressing education and translation, embodying cultivation, teaching Westerners and speaking Dharma. The Master knew about art and wrote poetry; he was firmly founded in filial respect. He made the Dharma come alive, stressing the need of speaking Dharma and of translation. He firmly imprinted all such footsteps of his in Western soil. Yet his work is far from finished; in fact, we may each carry it on in our own ways.

Without wishing to suggest it is in any way easy to emulate the Master Hsuan Hua in any of his one activities, let alone in all of them at the same time, I think that as time ripens and people start taking up and focusing on the different legacies left by the Master, each following his footsteps in his or her own way, the Master's vast vision will continue to live and leave its mark on the world for many a heart to rejoice. These are some of the footsteps I hope to follow. ❀

主修宗教學，以佛學、中文和梵文為主。

雖然學術課程無法提供佛教中最精髓的實修部份，但是卻能豐富我的學識，幫助我開闊視野，同時學習多種語言。當然其間我也走錯了幾步路，例如錯誤的知見、執著、不敬師長、懷疑等等，然而聖城裡的道德教育、同參道友，還有翻譯工作以及大眾共修，是吸引我大學即將完成之際，決定要再回到聖城的原因。

回首走過的足跡，其實是滿廣泛多元的。但我認為大部分都是上人生前所致力推動的，例如他所重視的教育、翻譯經典、躬行佛法、教化西方人和講經說法。上人懂得藝術，也會寫詩；他篤行孝道；因為他強調講法和翻譯的必要性，所以賦予佛法新生命。上人所行的足跡紮實地印烙在西方的土地上，然而離完成的目標尚遠。其實我們每個人都可以助上人一臂之力，用自己的方法繼續上人未竟的志業。

效法任何一件上人做的事，都不是一項輕而易舉的事，更不用說像上人是同時進行每一件事。但是我仍然認為，隨著時間因緣的推移與成熟，人們會逐漸承接起上人的遺緒，不同的人會以各自的方式步其後塵，並致力於不同的志業上。如此一來，上人波瀾壯闊的願景將得以繼續傳承，並於世界留下印記，讓更多有心之士得以隨喜。這正是我冀望踏隨的步履。❀



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