

# 西方的拓荒者

## Pioneers in the Wild West

記2012年佛根地夏季禪修營  
A General Impression from the  
Buddha Root Farm 2012 Retreat



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The retreats held at Buddha Root Farm have become an annual tradition for the past nine years. This year, from August 12<sup>th</sup> to August 18<sup>th</sup> some 90 people gathered on Turtle Mountain, Oregon to investigate the *Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel*. True to the fact that the Buddha Dharma is new on Western soil, there was an overall sense of being pioneers; true to the diversity and scope of the Buddha's teaching, the assembly and the events were all very diverse.

The participants were truly from all ages and backgrounds. There were Vietnamese, Chinese, Malaysian, and American people; there were monks, nuns, doctors, builders, businessmen, housewives, IT specialists, and too much more to enumerate. This year was especially enriched by the coming of a group of novice monks from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. They had a great opportunity to listen to Reverend Heng Sure speak the Dharma and the laity highly appreciated the chance to connect to the novices. At the end of the retreat, one young cultivator shared seeing the novices fall asleep

過去9年，佛根地禪修營成為年度傳統活動之一。今年8月12日至18日，90多位學員聚會在奧立岡州龜山一起研學《六祖法寶壇經》。緣於佛法在西方方興未艾，一股拓荒者的心情油然而生；亦緣於佛陀教法的善廣方便，此次活動內容和參與者也顯得十分多元不同。

參加的人老少皆有，年齡及工作背景亦是各異，其中有越南人、中國人、馬來西亞人、美國人；有男眾法師、女眾法師，也有醫生、建築工人、商人、家庭主婦、電腦行業技術人員等等。更因為有萬佛聖城沙彌的加入，個個顯得充滿生氣與活力。沙彌們有機會聆聽恆實法師說法，居士們也非常珍惜和聖城沙彌交流的機會。活動尾聲，一位年輕的參與者說，當他打坐看見一些新出家沙彌打瞌睡，他倍感安慰，因為自己不是唯一感到修行不易的人。

during meditation. He found this quite comforting, seeing that he was not the only one struggling in cultivation.

Beyond the range of backgrounds, people's ages ranged from primary school to retired. Because also the languages people spoke differed, one could hear English, Chinese and Vietnamese – during the lectures there was simultaneous translation to Chinese. In the midst of all this variety, the overall harmony was quite amazing. In fact, people were not just harmonious; I would say we were all "one big family." How wonderful that in the period the Turtle Mountain is free from rain, we have such a chance to shower in the rain of Dharma spoken by our Dharma Masters. The Dharma Rain which nourished us in Oregon rained down according to people's different needs.

The basic schedule was very similar to the schedule in DRBA monasteries. The morning started with morning ceremony and meditation. As most of the laity went down the mountain for breakfast, the novices practiced Universal Bowing. The rest of the morning consisted of a Sutra lecture, a period for exercise, and meditation. After walking down the mountain together, reciting Guan Yin Bodhisattva's name, we shared a delicious lunch. At the end of lunchtime, the monastics continued Master Hua's vow to speak the Dharma by taking turns and sharing their stories and insights.

In the afternoon people could meditate again and then join the discussion. For children and college aged young adults however, there were special programs. This way, everyone had a chance to explore life's questions in a fitting and friendly way, as well as a chance to make good friends – such an important step in our Path, whatever stage we're at.

During the discussion sessions, different topics were discussed: the importance of vows, the vastness of the spiritual universe and the existence of spiritual entities, dealing with fear, and so on. One session led by Dharma Master Heng Lai was especially captivating. He talked about Chan cultivation and answered questions from the audience. His firm yet gentle appearance made a deep impression on people; his kind humor brought many smiles and laughs.

Another special feature of the week was an Avatamsaka translation session with all the participants. Everybody joined together in the inspiring work of translating, and although most participants were not translators, this time's translation went faster than the committee usually works. Reverend Heng Sure was clearly delighted seeing so many people connect to the work of translating the Buddha's words and create affinities with the *Avatamsaka Sutra*.

The main focus of the retreat was the *Sixth Patriarch's Sutra*—one of the first sutras lectured by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua as he brought the Dharma to the West. Bringing the Dharma Westwards

非僅背景不同，大家的年齡亦是從小學到退休皆有。由於所講的語言亦不相同，經常可以聽到英文、中文、越南文的交談，上課則有中文的同步翻譯。雖然有種種的相異處，但是大家相處得卻是意想不到地和諧，什至可以用像「一個大家庭」來形容。天公作美，在龜山停留的期間沒有下雨，讓我們有機會沐浴在法師們宣演的法雨之中，一雨普潤，各得滋長。

這裡的作息和法總各道場的十分相近。一早開始



做早課，結束後接著打坐。居士們下山用早餐的時間，沙彌則在佛殿裡普佛。上午的時間有講經、運動和打坐，然後大家一起稱念觀世音菩薩的聖號，下山享用美味的午齋。午齋後，每一位法師效法上人「一口氣在，就要講經說法」的精神，輪流為大家講法，分享他們修行的經歷和感想。

午後，又有一支香的打坐時間，然後繼續上午的討論。對於年紀較輕的小朋友或是學生，則有另外的安排。這樣每個人都有機會從事適合自己的活動，也更容易交到志同道合的朋友——這在修行過程中，無論我們目前功夫程度如何，都是很重要的一步。

研討的時候，各種不同的話題都被提出來討論，例如發願的重要、精神世界的廣闊和精神實體的存在、如何克服恐懼等等。其中一天，恆來法師為大眾開示，所有的人都聽得津津有味。他談到參禪，也回答聽眾的問題。來法師剛柔並濟的氣質，令人印象深刻；他和善的幽默，也帶給大家很多歡笑。

這次活動的另一個特色，就是翻譯《華嚴經》，所有來的人都加入了這項極富啟發性的翻譯工作。儘管其中大部分的人沒有參與譯場的經驗，但是翻譯的速度反而比平日譯經會的進度還快。實法師





definitely requires skillful means, and it was fascinating how Reverend Heng Sure used this Sutra, known mostly for its focus on meditation and deep teachings, to teach on virtues such as filiality, respect for elders, humility, and basic human kindness — virtues that are needed so much in modern societies.

Indeed, if one carefully reads the Sixth Patriarch's story, he was a very filial child. Toiling hard, he looked after his aging mother. When he first awakened and was to go to the Fifth Patriarch's monastery, he was hesitant. This was not because he feared the harsh monastic life or thought he could not be without worldly enjoyments; no, he feared his mother would not make it without him. Luckily some wholesome affinities enabled him to leave his mother with a heart free of worries to cultivate the Way and practice ultimate filiality.

Having taken a week off from busy lives to cultivate the Buddha's Path, the participants were filled with joy and wholesome energy as they left early Sunday morning. Before them was still a long way back home; but meanwhile, we had realized that our real home is right where our true heart is. ❀

*If people in the world practice the Way,  
They are not hindered by anything.  
By constantly seeing their own transgressions,  
They are in accord with the Way.*

— from the “Six Patriarch's Sutra”

非常欣慰看到這麼多人合作來翻譯經典，並與《華嚴經》結下這個緣。

這次禪修營的研讀主題是《六祖法寶壇經》，這是上人在西方最早期所講的經典之一。在西方弘法需要種種方便法門，實法師十分善巧地用這部以著重參禪、教義深奧而出名的經典，來演繹孝敬、謙虛以及人性種種的基本美德。這些美德，正是現代社會極為需要的。

的確，如果認真讀六祖的故事，他是一個非常孝順的孩子，辛苦勞作來奉養日益年邁的母親。當他明心見性後想去拜謁五祖，他猶豫了；不是因為害怕寺院的艱苦或是捨不得世間的享受，而是擔心母親往後的生計。幸虧遇到了善緣，幫助他安頓好母親之後，才能夠專心修行，實踐最究竟的孝道。

經過7天遠塵離囂、心無旁騖的研修佛法，禮拜天早上要離開時，個個都是精神抖擻、法喜充滿。在大家面前，是回家漫長的旅途；但我們明白，真正的家，就是天真本然的真心。 ❀

世人若修道 一切盡不妨  
常自見己過 與道即相當

— 《六祖法寶壇經》