

教育是最好的國防

Education is the Nation's Best Defense

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A Talk by John Chu on November 11, 2013 at the Buddha Hall of CTTB

今天晚間報告的題目是：教育是最好的國防，這裏所指的教育是學習佛法與培德。今天晚間的報告大致有三部份：首先是宣公上人有關教育的開示；第二部份是簡短的引用一部《仁王護國經》，由圓瑛大師講解的內容；第三部份就介紹一個模範的國家，哪一個國家教育辦得最好，它的國防最好。

有些人覺得我並不是學生，也不是學校的教職員，大概教育跟我沒有關係。我們不妨採用師父所講的，比較廣泛的定義，宣公上人認為：「教育是沒有開始，沒有終點，也沒有開學的尺寸，也沒有假期；走到哪裏，哪裏就是學校，沒有一個地方不是學習的地方，沒有一個時候不是學習的時候。」

接下來都是引用上人開示的，他說：「教育是最好的國防。你不能以你是強國的這種地位，就去侵略弱小的國家。你要愛自己的國家，也要愛護其他的國家；不要用這種武器、刀兵去傷人。你把人類都教導明白了，這是真正強國的根本道理。」

上人繼續講：「現在為什麼世界亂七八糟的，就是因為整個世界的教育都破產了，都令人失去了方向。」所以上人說：「教育破

Tonight the topic is: education is the nation's best defense. What this points to is that education is about learning the Buddhadharma and cultivating virtue. Tonight's presentation is composed of three parts: the first is the Venerable Master Hua's talks regarding education, the second is an excerpt from the *Sutra of the Humane King Who Protects the Country*, using the commentary of Master Yuanying, and the third is an introduction of a model country: A country where the national defense is based upon a flourishing educational system.

Some people may say, "But I am neither a student nor a member of the school faculty. Education has nothing to do with me." In that case, we should refer ourselves to the Venerable Master's broader definition of education, which is "Education has no beginning or end. The semester has no starting date and there are no vacations. Wherever you are, is the "the school". There is no place that is not the place for learning and there is no time that is not the time for learning."

The following is also from the Venerable Master's talks. He also said, "The best defense for the nation is education. A powerful country should not oppress or invade a small one, just because it has the power to do so. We should love our country, and love other countries as well. We must not use military force to harm people. You educate people to the point that they have clearly understanding, this is a fundamental cause for a genuinely powerful country."





產。教育既然破產，我們要重新做起，萬佛城就是改革教育的發源地，將來要推行到全世界去。我們教育改革頭一件事情，我們要徵求義務老師，不拿薪水，拿點車馬費這是免不了的。在這裏推行不拿薪水，多盡義務的這個政策。」

上人說：「教育的目的是要學生明理，而不是追求名利。」「明理」就是修慧，明白宇宙人生的真理，包括從最基本的明白是非善惡，諸惡莫作，眾善奉行，到最究竟的佛的境界——正遍知。

除了成立義務老師的制度，上人特別講的，他的目的是為了什麼？就是為了要讓大家都機會能夠培福、培慧。想要幫助自己培福、培慧，就要先幫助別人培福、培慧，這是我們教育下一代的一個方法。

上人講他自己是義務老師，孔子當年也是義務老師。上人這麼講：「雖然是義務教育，我還是給老師吃、住，和發一些零用錢，我不會虧負這些義務老師的生活條件，我要保證他們安定，令義務老師不用憂愁。」既然上人有這樣的保證，我們應該繼續維護上人這樣的承諾。

上人特別重視要義務教書與培德：「培德就是我們在修行上要有一點功德，否則在修行的時候，魔王會來找你；一找你，你沒有德行在那裏壓著，這就是修道的福德不夠。這一點是要緊的，所以你們各位無論是教師也好，出家人也好，立功、立德都是必須的。」

接下來就簡短的介紹《仁王護國經》，圓瑛大師講解的。他講：「護」就是擁護，

The Venerable Master continues, saying, “The world is in a mess now because education has gone bankrupt. Education is bankrupt throughout the entire world. It has lost its direction. That is way I say education is bankrupt. Since it is already bankrupt, we have to start afresh. The Sagely City of 10,000 Buddhas is the starting ground for a revolution in education. In the future we shall promote and expand our education to the whole world. The first thing we need to do for the revolution is to hire teachers—volunteer teachers who take no salary, only enough for transportation expenses. We should promote this policy.

“The purpose of education is for students to develop wisdom, rather than using learning to pursue fame and benefits”. To cultivate wisdom means to understand the principles of life and the universe, including the foundational knowledge of knowing what is right and wrong. Students should learn to refrain from all evil and practice all good actions, until they reach the final state of the Buddha’s teaching — correct and universal knowledge.

Other than the policy of having volunteer teachers at our schools, the Venerable Master said that his goal is to help everyone cultivate wisdom and blessings. If one wants to cultivate one’s wisdom and blessings, one should first seek to help others cultivate wisdom and blessings. This should be our approach to educating our next generation.

The Venerable Master himself was a volunteer teacher. Confucius was also a volunteer teacher. The Venerable Master said, “Even though the teachers are volunteering their efforts, I will provide them with room and board, as well as a stipend. These teachers will not be mistreated in terms of their living conditions. I will guarantee them a secure position, so they will not have to worry.” Since the Venerable Master made that guarantee, we should uphold that promise.

「國」就是國土；由於仁王修德行仁，化被萬民，國土就會安穩。那麼仁王是能護，國土就是所護；由於王受持了般若大法，所以有法力的加被能令國王身安穩，國界就太平。第一重的意思是這樣子的。

第二重的意思就是，保護國家的方法應該是以弘揚佛法、教化人民為先務。假如能夠以般若之法來化民，讓老百姓能夠修六度波羅蜜，國家就會積聚了千種的吉祥，那麼國家不求護而自護了。所以這是教育是最好的國防的第二重意思。

頭一段的經文就說：「爾時，佛告大眾：知十六大國王意欲問護國土因緣。吾今先為諸菩薩說護佛果因緣、護十地行因緣。」

圓瑛法師這麼解釋：國家的興衰是以人民的善惡為轉移，人民的善惡就是以國王的化導為標準。假如能夠先立內行；內行能夠成，外護就能得備。所以佛是先明要內護：護佛果與護十地就是先內護；那麼護國土以後才講，就是外護。

圓瑛法師繼續講說：佛說五戒十善人天乘法，欲令眾生斷惡修善，永離惡道，這個就是救世的方法，也就是護國的方法。國家能夠提倡佛教的因果，使之普及，就可以規範人心，輔助政治法律的不及，挽回世道，鞏固國基。各國都能這樣做的話，就是世界大同，也就是人間的淨土。

佛在講外護，護國土的時候，圓瑛法師他是這麼講，說：「佛先說護佛果位的因緣、護菩薩十地的因緣，接著才說怎麼護自己的國家。前面講的是內護，接著才是外護；因為內護做好了，外護就會有成就。國家是眾生共業所感的果報土，國運的興衰是以人心為轉移。若上至國王，下至人民都能順著般若正理，舉國無爭；全世界人類都

The Venerable Master especially emphasized volunteer teachers and the cultivation of virtue. He said, "Voluntary teaching is a way for us to increase our virtue and strengthen our goodness. Cultivators, only if you can cultivate blessings and wisdom here and develop your merit and virtue, will you be able to cultivate. Otherwise, if you have no merit and virtue, you will meet demonic obstacles in your cultivation. The demon king will come and look for you, and you will not have enough virtue to endure it. This is cultivating without sufficient blessings and virtue. Therefore we must establish merit and virtue. This point is very important. Whether you are a teacher or a left-home person, you should all cultivate blessings and wisdom and establish merit and virtue."

Next I would like to briefly introduce the *Sutra of the Humane King Who Protects the Country*. Because the humane king cultivates and practices virtue, improves all the citizens, his country is peaceful and secure. In this case, the humane king is the protector and the country is well protected. Because the king receives and upholds the great Dharma of Prajnaparamita (the perfection of wisdom), he relies on the power of this Dharma to protect himself and the country.

The second level of meaning is that the most important way of protecting the country is by teaching the Dharma and helping the citizens become better people. If one can use the Dharma of Prajna wisdom to teach the citizens to cultivate the Six Paramitas, then the country will grow in its auspicious energy. Therefore the country does not need to seek for external forms of protection but naturally will be protected.

The first part of the Sutra says, "At that time, the Buddha told the assembly, "There are sixteen great kings who have requested to hear the causes and conditions for protecting their countries. I will first speak the causes and conditions to protect the Buddha's fruition and the practices of the Ten Grounds for all you Bodhisattvas."

Master Yuanying explains the reasoning for this. The prosperity or decline of the country depends on the citizens' good or harmful actions. The people's good or harmful actions depend on how the king teaches and transforms them. If we want to protect the country, we need to emphasize on the citizens' education so that they know to practice goodness. If we want to teach, then first we must establish our inner virtue. If we can accomplish solid inner virtue, then outer protection will be very complete.

Master Yuanying continues his explanation, "The Buddha taught the Dharma of the five precepts and ten good deeds. This Dharma for people and devas can cause living beings to refrain from all evil and practice good deeds, so that they will be forever apart from the painful destinies. This is the Dharma to save the world and protect the country. If the country can teach the Dharma of cause and effect, this will regulate the minds and behavior of the citizens. This will accomplish what the politics and laws cannot. This reinforces the foundation of the country. If all countries can follow and promote this, then the world will be in great harmony; this is the pure land within the human realm.

Master Yuanying said, "The Buddha first spoke the causes and conditions of protecting the realization of Buddhahood and the Ten Grounds of the Bodhisattvas. This is inner protection. Here, he speaks about protecting the country, which is outer protection. Because when the inner protection is complete, then the outer protection will manifest. The condition of the country is the result of the collective karma of

能順著般若的正理，就全世界無爭。」這也就是藏智於民。

以上就是簡短的介紹這部經。接著介紹一個教育是最好的國防，做的最好榜樣的一個國家，也就是一個模範的國家。這個國家沒有敵人，所以它自然不需要武器，也不需要軍隊。那麼這個國家的國父是誰呢？就是西方極樂國。西方極樂國，它的國父，它的教主就是阿彌陀佛。

為什麼又說這個國家的教育是辦得最好的呢？因為這個國家，它的大學叫做「菩薩大學」，它頒發的學位是叫做「無生法忍不退轉功德」的這個學位。怎麼說它是頒發這樣的學位呢？因為只要求生、往生到這個國家去，就花開見佛悟無生，就證了無生法忍。

他的同學就是以不退轉菩薩為伴侶，所以同學都是八地以上的菩薩；同學都是菩薩，那麼鄰居呢？鄰居是怎麼樣呢？鄰居都是諸上善人；除了鄰居是諸上善人之外，他的國父是佛，校長也是佛。

雖然說，宣公上人一開始講：「教育是無始無終，沒有一個地方不是學習的地方。」而且要行菩薩道，最好也是在娑婆世界。但是真正要上「菩薩大學」，要修無生法忍的課程，具備不退轉菩薩的功德，最好還是要到佛國的淨土去進修，包括西方的極樂國，或是東方藥師琉璃光的淨土。

古德說：求生、往生、才有能力度生，這個三部曲。當然千經萬論都是導歸極樂，除非說已經取得無生法忍不退轉的學位的；否則的話，還是到佛國淨土去受最好的教育。

每天晚間我們聽完經和念咒心之後，接著就是誦〈淨土文〉。〈淨土文〉一開始就是：「一心歸命，極樂世界阿彌陀佛，願以淨光照我，慈誓攝我……」這就是如同在〈出師表〉諸葛武侯，他這麼講，就是：「鞠躬盡瘁，死而後已」；當然諸葛武侯他講的是給皇上看的，那我們現在就是鞠躬盡瘁，死歸安養，不只是說「死而後已」。阿彌陀佛！



living beings. Thus the rise and fall of a country is in accord with the heart of its citizens. If both the king and the people can follow the true principles of Prajna (wisdom), then the country will have no conflict. If all of humankind can follow the true principles of Prajna, then there will be no fighting in the world. This is the common-treasury of wisdom—the wisdom which is shared by the country and ultimately by everyone in the world—as long as the citizens have wisdom, they will not do foolish things like fighting each other.

The above section was a brief introduction to this sutra. Next I will introduce a model of education as the best national defense. In such a country, the country has no enemies and therefore no need for military or weapons of war. Who would be the founding father of such a country? This would be the Western Pure Land, whose founding father is Amitabha Buddha.

Why is it said that this country has the best educational system? It is because the university in this country is called the “University of Bodhisattvas”. The degree it confers is “Patience with the non-arising of dharmas and irreversibly established merit and virtue.” How does it confer these degrees? As long as you seek to be reborn in this land, when the lotus flower opens, you will see the Buddha and awaken to the state of non-arising. That is when you realize the patience of the non-arising of dharmas.

The students of the school have irreversible bodhisattvas as their classmates, so all of their classmates are Eighth Ground Bodhisattvas and above. What about the neighbors? The neighbors are all noble and good people. The founding father of this country is Buddha, and the president of this university is also Buddha.

Although the Venerable Master said, “Education has neither beginning nor end, and there is no place that is not a place for learning”, the best place to practice the Bodhisattva way of life is the Saha world. However, to really attend the University of Bodhisattvas, to take the course on awakening to the patience of the non-arising of dharmas, and to accomplish the merit and virtue of an irreversible Bodhisattva, it is best to continue on to the Buddha’s Pure Land for continuing studies, including the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss and Medicine Master Buddha’s Eastern Land of Lapis Lazuli.

The ancient sages said, “Seek the Pure Land, be reborn there, and then return to cross over living beings.” This is a three-part journey. Though there may be a thousand sutras and ten thousand shastras, unless one has already realized the state of patience with the non-arising of dharmas, it’s best to go to the Buddha’s Pure Land to receive the unsurpassed education there.

Every night after we’ve heard the sutra lecture and recited the Heart of the *Shurangama Mantra*, we recite the *Pure Land Text*. It starts with “With one heart I return my life to Amitabha Buddha of the Land of Ultimate Bliss. May the pure light shine on me and compassionately take me in…” This is reminiscent of the *Chu Shi Biao (Memorial for the Case to Go to War)* by Zhuge Liang. He declares that he has totally devoted himself to the country, and will not consider his duty ended until his life has ended. Of course, this is Zhuge Liang’s speech addressing the emperor. In our case we can devote ourselves totally to our common goals, but after our lives are over we go to the Pure Land. Amitabha!

