

Unifying Buddhist Traditions: Engaging in Interfaith Sharing

融合佛教傳承，契入宗教交流

A talk given by Reverend Heng Sure during the Fifth World Buddhist Forum in Putian, Fujian, China on October 28, 2018
恒實法師講於莆田第五屆世界佛教論壇

I learned about the Mahayana Buddhist tradition of China from late Chan Master Hsuan Hua, a Buddhist reformer. He was equally critical of both the Theravada and the Mahayana traditions. For example, for thirty years, during ten consecutive ordinations of monastics which were held roughly every three years, when Master Hua transmitted the three platforms of precepts in America among the three Masters and Seven Certifiers, he invited Bhikshus from China, Taiwan, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. He said, “For too long, the Southern tradition has run far to the South; and the Mahayana, the Northern tradition, has only known to travel far to the North. In the 21st Century, it’s time now for leaders of Buddhism to turn back from the north and the south and meet in the middle, which was the Buddha’s original intent.”

Master Hua told me that I could look to Venerable Ajahn Sumedho, an American monk in the Thai Forest tradition of Elder Ajahn Cha, as my role model in cultivation. When Ajahn Sumedho was looking for a home for his first monastery in America, Master Hua offered him 120 acres of Mendocino County mountainside, and it became the foundation of Abhayagiri Forest Monastery in Redwood Valley, 20 miles north of City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. Last year the Sri Lankan elder American monk Bhikkhu Bodhi lectured on the Abhidharma for three weeks to the four-fold Assembly at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

我是從我的恩師——上宣下化老和尚——學習中國的漢傳佛教。宣公上人是一位佛教界的改革家，對於南傳佛教和北傳大乘佛教，他一視同仁。以他在美國傳授三壇大戒為例，他邀請了來自中國、越南、泰國、斯里蘭卡等的比丘，作為傳戒的三師七證。美國萬佛聖城以這種方式傳戒已經三十多年了，大約每三年舉行一次，連續下來至今已十次傳戒。宣化禪師曾經說過：「長久以來，南傳盡往南走；北傳盡往北走。現在已經是二十一世紀了，佛教界的領袖應該各自從南北回頭，大家都往中道會合。這也是佛陀的本意。」

宣公上人曾告訴我，南傳的蘇美度尊者是是我修行的榜樣，他是一位繼承泰國森林修行阿姜查長老的美國和尚。當蘇美度尊者在尋覓適當的地點，用來建立他在美國的第一座寺廟時，宣公上人提供他們一片一百二十英畝的山林，在加州曼都仙諾郡，萬佛聖城北方二十英里遠的紅木山谷區，作為他們成立無畏

So if I could create my ideal Buddhism after observing the Buddhist world for 42 years as a Bhikshu, my ideal would be to improve intra-Buddhist harmony and mutual learning of Buddhist schools. We would remove the words “Small Vehicle” from our vocabulary and instead say, “Southern Tradition,” or the tradition of the Elders (Theravada). This is a first step to heal the split between Northern and Southern traditions so that when Buddhists step out into Interfaith gatherings where non-Buddhist religions are present, we arrive as a unified body of wisdom and compassion. Surely the Buddha’s intent was not to have various schools of his disciples in competition with each other or be distant from each other and out of communication.

I was present when Master Hua demonstrated his open-hearted attitude toward religious leaders of other traditions. In Los Angeles in 1978, I was present when Master Hua met the late Paul Cardinal Yubin, the Chinese Roman Catholic Cardinal. Although they came from the same hometown in Manchuria, they had never met each other. They had gone forth to become leaders of their respective traditions. Cardinal Yubin came into the living room where they met in Los Angeles and said, “I very much like the sound of your voice, although I’ve never seen you before.” Master Hua replied, “Of course you do, we are Dharma friends.”

Later on Master Hua invited Cardinal Yubin to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and the thought occurred to him, “How shall I get the Catholic Cardinal to bow to the Buddha?” So when they came in front of the large thousand-handed image of Guan Yin Bodhisattva in the Ten Thousand Buddhas Hall at CTTB, Master Hua said, “Cardinal Yu, I have an idea. I want you to be the Buddhist among the Catholics. What do you say?”

Cardinal Yubin wrinkled up his brow and looked cross. “Don’t get upset,” Master Hua continued. “Hear me out. I want you to be the Buddhist among the Catholics and then I will be the Catholic among the Buddhists. That way when two of the world’s major religions don’t fight, we can show others that peace among religions is possible. What do you say now?” Cardinal Yubin paused a moment then slapped his thigh and said, “Let’s do it!” Then, he made a half bow to Guan Yin Bodhisattva. He went on to accept Master Hua’s invitation to serve as Director General of the Institute for World Religions at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

This collaborative spirit led the way for a joint Buddhist Catholic monastic gathering in Gethsemane Abbey in Kentucky in 2008, a meeting that brought Theravada, Mahayana and Zen Buddhists, as well as Buddhist scholars, together with Roman Catholic monks and scholars to discuss our shared attitudes toward protecting our

寺森林修行的基地。此外，菩提比丘，一位在斯里蘭卡出家的長老美國比丘，去年在萬佛聖城為四眾弟子開講阿毘達摩，長達三個星期。

我身為比丘已經四十二年，一直都關注著佛教界。若要創造一個理想的佛教界，也就是要創造「交流互鑒，圓融中道。」其中，改進佛教內部之間的和諧，以及互相學習的方式之一，就是要把「小乘」這個字眼，從我們的辭彙中刪除；代之以「南傳」或「長老部派」「上座部佛教」來稱呼。這是癒合南北傳分歧的第一步。如此，在有非佛教徒參加的宗教聯誼會，南傳、北傳走出去是一體的，是慈悲和智慧的融合。佛陀的本懷並不是要弟子以不同宗派來彼此競爭，或者彼此疏遠，互不溝通。

對於其它宗教的人士，我看過師父上人那種寬廣熱誠的態度。1978年，宣公上人在洛杉磯，會見已故的于斌樞機主教，當時我也在場。他們的家鄉雖然都是在中國東北，彼此卻從未見過面，反而在不同的宗教中，各自成為領導者。于斌樞機主教踏入會客室時說道：「雖然我以前沒見過你，可是我很喜歡你的口音。」上人回答說：「那當然，我們是知音者。」

後來，宣公上人邀請于斌樞機主教到萬佛聖城。上人突然想：「怎麼能讓天主教的樞機主教禮佛呢？」當他們走進聖城的萬佛殿，站在宏偉的千手觀音菩薩像前，上人說：「于樞機，我有個建議，你應該做一位天主教的佛教徒，你覺得如何？」

于斌樞機皺著眉，看著他的十字架。上人就說：「你別驚訝！聽我說。我要你做一個天主教的佛教徒，我也要做一个佛教的天主教徒。那麼這世界的兩大宗教就不爭了，我們

natural environment. The result of the gathering was a book entitled: *Green Monasticism: A Buddhist-Catholic Response to an Environmental Calamity*, (Gethsemani Encounters Book 3), (Lantern Books).

Although we want to join with our brothers and sisters from other religions in meaningful dialogue, if we fail to recognize the value of our own treasures of wisdom it is harder to dialogue as equals. Master Hua pointed out the need for Chinese Buddhists to open up our Mahayana sutras and translate them into the world's languages. This is a serious missed opportunity to spread the Dharma. Our sutras have such profound principles of wisdom and compassion that create genuine benefit for humanity. Before Buddhism can truly become a world religion and fulfill its potential to spread both Buddhism and Chinese culture far and wide, we must share the sutras with the world.

For example, we know that anywhere in the world hotel rooms have bedside tables. In the drawers of most of those tables, you find a copy of the Holy Bible in the local language of that country. How many times have you opened up the drawer to find a Buddhist sutra? In the ideal Buddhism that I want to design, in every hotel room in the world when you open up the drawer you will find the Holy Bible as well as a copy of the Lotus Sutra, the *Amitabha Sutra* and the *Vajra Prajna Paramita Sutra*.

Now, I would like to share a true story about wherever people cultivate the Way, humanity benefits in inconceivable ways. In October 2017, severe wildfires broke out in Northern California, causing our neighboring Buddhist community of Abhayagiri Forest monastery to evacuate in the dark of night. Twenty-eight people fled the fires, not knowing when they would return and whether or not they would find their newly renovated monastery intact when the fires were out.

The monks of Abhayagiri found shelter at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas for a week after where they received offerings from the upasakas and upasikas. During this time, the two communities blended together in ceremonies, meditation, and in daily work. After one week of anxiety about their home, the local Fire Marshalls gave permission for them to return. Driving back to the mountain, surrounded by scenes of burned-out

可以讓其他人知道，不同的宗教是可以和平相處的，你說這樣好不好？」于斌樞機想了想，一拍大腿，說：「好！就這麼做。」所以他就向觀世音菩薩問訊禮拜。後來，他接受上人的邀請，願意成為萬佛聖城世界宗教研究院的院長。

這種協同合作的精神，漸漸促成了2008年在美國肯塔基州，客西馬尼修道院所舉辦的佛教和天主教僧侶聯誼會。這個會議聚集了南傳佛教、北傳佛教、禪修人士、佛教學者，以及羅馬天主教僧侶和學者，來討論我們對於保護自然環境應有的共同態度。這次集會的成果結集成一本書，書名是「綠色僧侶：佛教與天主教對生態危機的回應」（藍燈圖書公司）。

雖然我們想要與其它宗教人士一起做有意義的對話，假如我們不能認識自家智慧寶藏的可貴，要對話也難。所以宣公上人就提出：中國佛教徒應該打開我們的大乘經典，翻譯成世界各國的語言文字。在過去，我們實在是錯失了這方面佛法的傳播。我們的經典含藏著殊勝的智慧和慈悲，能夠真正地利益人類。所以在佛教確實成為全世界的宗教之前、在盡其可能既廣又遠地傳播佛法和中國文化之前，我們必須能夠分享我們的經典給全世界。

舉例來說，我們知道世界上多數旅館在房間內都有床頭櫃，其中的抽屜大都會有一本該國文字的聖經。但是有多少次你打開抽屜，會看到佛經呢？所以，我理想中的佛教是：在世界上的旅館房間內，當你打開抽屜時，不但有聖經，還能看到《法華經》、《華嚴經》及《金剛經》。

這裡，我要分享一個真實的故事，就是不論我們在什麼地方修道，總是能夠不可思議地利益人類。2017年10月，美國北加州發生極其嚴重的森林野火，在黑暗的夜間，我們

homes and vineyards on every side, the monks worried about what they would find.

As they approached their monastery, they were greeted by a group of firefighters who had used their monastery parking lot to manage the fire trucks and equipment. One of the firefighters, an Apache Indian from New Mexico said, “We have fire-fighters here who have seen a lot but we have never seen anything like this. Your forest rejected the fires. The flames burned right up to the edge of your property and then stopped. It’s as if something was protecting your forest. Not a blade of grass burned. This is a spiritual place. Whatever you are doing inside, keep doing it.”

They discovered that both their monastery and their neighbors’, a Catholic monastery where monks live and pray all day and all year round, were spared by the forest fires that burned on every side. But next door on the same mountain was a Thai monastery. A Thai Buddhist monk had built a monastery there, but had no disciples and no cultivation going on at his place. He set up the monastery and then returned to Thailand, leaving the monastery in the hands of one caretaker. When the fires came, the monastery burned to the ground; the fierce heat even melted all the Buddha images so their faces were unrecognizable.

Of the three monasteries, only two survived the catastrophe of the forest fires, the Buddhist and the Catholic places both received the protection of the devas and the Dharma-protectors because both communities were doing spiritual cultivation inside. The empty Bodhimanda, although it held the superficial signs of Buddhism, without people doing the Buddha’s work inside, it did not get protection.

Finally, it’s time now to let go our attachments from the past when we didn’t have contact with each other, much less with believers of other religious. The old tribal views no longer apply to people of the 21st century living in the global village.

So now in the 21st century, in a time of ecological crisis, Buddhism can lead the way towards mutual learning and harmonious exchange. We can unify the Northern and the Southern traditions, and bring the teachings of wisdom and

鄰近無畏寺的人員住眾，一共有二十八位，必須撤離。他們都不知道什麼時候能夠回來，或者火滅了以後，這個才整修好的寺廟是否會完整無損？

無畏寺的比丘被接受邀到萬佛聖城住了一個星期，雙方都能彼此融合課誦儀式、打坐、接受在家信眾的供養以及日常的工作。經過一星期的擔憂，當地的消防局長允許他們回去。車子行經山區時，兩旁都是焚毀的房子和葡萄園，讓人心憂，不知寺廟會如何。

當他們快要抵達寺廟，迎來的是一群消防人員，他們借用寺廟的停車場來調動消防車和滅火設備。其中一個消防隊員是新墨西哥州阿帕契族的印第安人。他說：「我們消防隊員見過許多事情，可是從來沒有見到過像這樣子的事。你們的樹林拒絕被火燒，火焰燃燒到你們寺廟的邊界就停住了，好像有東西在保護你們的樹林，連一根草都沒被燒到。這是一個有靈性的地方，不知道你們在寺里裏做什麼，請繼續做下去。」

無畏寺的住眾發現，除了他們的寺廟，旁邊天主教的修道院，有修道士常年住在那兒，整天祈禱，也沒有被火燒到。但是同樣在鄰近地區一座泰國僧人建立的寺廟，建好後，僧人返回泰國，寺廟內沒有了佛弟子，沒有人修行，僅留一個看守的人，結果大火一來，寺廟就被燒成了平地，極端的高溫使佛像熔化而到難以辨認。

所以，三個道場中的兩個，一座佛寺和一座天主教修道院，因為平常都在修行，有天人及護法的保護，能夠避免森林大火的災難。而那個沒人修行的道場，雖然外表上是佛教寺院，但是裡面卻沒有佛事，就無法免難消災。

最後我要說的是：我們過去那種彼此不聯繫的習慣，而且很少跟其它宗教教徒溝通，現在都應該捨棄。舊有的族群觀念，已經不適合當今二十一世紀生活在地球村環境下的我們。

compassion into Interfaith conversations, and in this way, demonstrate the value of religion in solving the afflictions of our modern world.

Buddhism in China preserves the jewels of traditional Chinese culture: virtue, humaneness, filiality and the Dao, and the centuries of Buddhism in China has made them the foundation for world-transcending wisdom. Buddhists can give these gifts to living beings and share their benefits that the Chinese have enjoyed for centuries. Amitabha! ❀

二十一世紀也是生態危機的時代，佛教可以帶領大家互相學習以及和諧地交流。我們可以團結南傳和北傳的佛教，把佛法的智慧和慈悲帶進各宗教之間的對話。那麼，宗教的可貴就是能夠解決現代社會的煩惱。

中國的佛教保存了中國傳統文化的寶藏：道德、仁慈、孝順，和道。數千年的佛教在中國已把這些寶藏作為出世智慧的基礎。我們佛教徒可以把這些禮物送給眾生，分享這些中國人已經受用了數世紀之久，利生益世的道理。阿彌陀佛!❀

Putian — The Fifth Buddhist World Forum Held in China

莆田 —— 第五屆世界佛教論壇

From October 28-30, 2018, the Fifth World Buddhist Forum was held in the city of Putian, Fujian, China. The forum's theme was the "Exchange for Mutual Learning; The Middle Way to Perfect Harmony." Its thousand plus participants, from various Buddhist circles— experts, scholars, and celebrities, along with other special guests—came from 55 countries and regions. At their invitation, a delegation from the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association (DRBA) participated in this year's forum. The delegation members were Reverend Heng Sure, Bhikshu Jin Chuan, Bhikshu Jin Wei, and Upasika Madalena Tan.

This year's forum was divided into seven sub-forums, each with its own theme:

1. Buddhism and the Maritime "Silk Road;"
2. Buddhism and Charity;
3. Buddhism and Environmental Protection;
4. Buddhism in China, America, and Europe;
5. Buddhism Across the Taiwan Strait, Hong Kong, and Macau;
6. Buddhism in China, Korea, and Japan;
7. Buddhism Along the Valley of the Lancang-Mekong Rivers.

All of these themes concern the well-being and development of Buddhism itself, and are closely connected with the vision for harmony and peaceful co-existence of all people in the modern world.

Reverend Heng Sure, President of DRBA, was invited to give a talk for one of the sub-forums. On October 30, the forum's last day, he was also invited to read out the declaration of the Fifth World Buddhist Forum, together with Dharma Master Zongxing, President of the BAC (Buddhist Association of China). Sharing the stage with them to witness this declaration were many eminent monks and virtuous ones from all over the world. ❀

2018年10月29日至30日，第五屆世界佛教論壇在中國福建省莆田市召開。論壇以「交流互鑒，中道圓融」為主題，來自五十五個國家和地區的佛教界人士、專家學者及社會知名人士，共約千餘代表和嘉賓與會。法界佛教總會恆實法師、近傳法師、近威法師及譚果士居士應邀參加本次論壇。

今年設立七個分論壇，分別是「佛教與海上絲綢之路」、
「佛教與公益慈善」、
「佛教與環境保護」、
「中美歐佛教」、
「海峽兩岸暨港澳佛教」、
「中韓日佛教」、
「瀾湄流域佛教」等，均密切聯繫佛教自身發展與當代人類社會和合共生願景。法界佛教總會主席恆實法師分論壇發表演說，同時在2018年10月30日的閉幕式上，與中國佛教協會副會長宗性法師共同宣讀《第五屆世界佛教論壇宣言》，多位來自世界各地的高僧大德上臺見證。❀