



覺海慈航度香江（續）

Crossing Hong Kong on the Ship of Compassion in the Sea of Awakening (continued)

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14. 開墾旱地

1951年，上人被邀請到香港通善壇講《地藏經》的期間，每天來聽經者不下百人。臘月初旬結經後，就有多位居士提議要為上人擇地建造精舍。

這段因緣很快促成，不久就有人告知在香港筲箕灣的西灣河馬山村的山脊，有一塊荒地（編按：日本剛投降後，很多屬於政府的公地無人管理，那時就叫做「霸王地」，私人可以暫時借用），約有數十平方呎。可美中不足的是，山上沒有水源，均依賴山下馬路邊公共「街喉」，就是從街頭用自來水管接水，然後擔水攀登數百級的石階上山，山路崎嶇，辛苦至極可想而知……

14. Cultivating Dry Land

In 1951, Venerable Master was invited to Tung Sin Tan, a Daoist temple, Hong Kong to lecture on the *Earth Store Bodhisattva Sutra*. During the lectures of the *Earth Store Sutra*, around a hundred devotees came everyday. After the lectures on this sutra were complete in the early 12th month on the lunar calendar, many laypeople suggested finding a site to construct a temple (a vihara) for Venerable Master within the first ten days of the twelfth lunar month.

The causes and conditions soon ripened, and they were informed that there was a piece of land about a few tens of square feet in Hong Kong, in the district of Shau Kei Wan, Sai Wan, Ho Ma village. (Editor's note: After Japan's surrender to the Allied Forces, there was a lot of public land owned by the government that was neglected, referred to as "overlord land." It was permissible for individuals to temporarily occupy small spaces.) However, there was a flaw in an apparently perfect place: there was no water in the mountain. Residents in the area were dependent on the downhill public "water pipe" at the roadside. They got their water supply from the street, and had to carry the water uphill by climbing up hundreds of stone steps. The mountain road was rugged, so you can imagine how extremely tough it was to get water.

上人自述：

不久，我在觀音洞的鄰居法師不歡迎我住在茅蓬，勸芙蓉山的人遷我的單。我便搬到筲箕灣馬山村，在山上建了個小佛堂。西樂園以前是一塊山地，上去要爬三百多級的石階，而且山上也沒有水。雖然沒有水，我覺得那兒可以造一個小小的道場。

【後記1】譚果式居士敘述：

有一位原不信佛的記者告訴師父，在山上有一塊公有地，可以蓋間小廟，只是那在窮人區，也沒有水源。師父說：「我們看看去吧！」

師父看後繳付了租金，得到使用權。我父親沒多久就帶著我媽媽和姐姐去拜見師父；我沒去，因為那時候我在基督教學校念小學，自以為信佛是愚昧無知的人才會做的事，出家人不過趕趕經懺罷了。母親和姐姐見了師父之後，決定拜師父為師。

【後記2】譚果正居士記述：

香港有一位記者，專門報導宗教界的新聞，僧道都要買他的帳。師父說：「雖然如此，若非他，佛教在香港未必能這麼興盛，所以他在佛教的功德很大！如果他的境遇不好，佛教就是養他一家也是應該的。」師父與眾不同的胸懷，令我衷心佩服。



1952年上人在西樂園樹前。

Venerable Master Hua was in front of a tree of Western Bliss Garden, 1952.

Venerable Master Hsuan Hua narrates:

When I was in the Guanyin cave, I was quickly turned away from staying at the thatched hut by the neighboring Dharma Master. He persuaded the people at Fu Yun Mountain to “evict” me. I then relocated to Shau Kei Wan, Ma Shan village and a small temple was built in the mountain. Previously, Western Bliss Garden (Monastery) was situated on the mountain; there was no water and one needed to climb up three hundred stone steps to reach it. Although there was no water, I still felt it was possible to build a small temple.

[Postscript 1] As told by Upāsikā Tan Guo Shi:

A reporter who originally lacked faith in Buddhism told the Master about a piece of public land in the mountain

where a small temple could be built; however, there was no water supply in that poor area. The Venerable Master said: “We will go there to have a look!” From then on, the Master paid the rent and obtained the rights to use the land. Not long after that, my father brought my mother and sister to visit the Venerable Master. At that time, I did not go because I was studying in first grade in a Christian school. I thought that only ignorant people believed in Buddhism and that the left home people did nothing except conducting rituals for business. After my mother and sister met the Master, they decided to take the Master as their teacher.

[Postscript 2] As told by Upāsikā Tan Guo Zheng:

In Hong Kong there was once a reporter who covered religious news. Hence, many Buddhist monks and Daoist priests showed him some deference. Venerable Master said, “Although was the case, nonetheless, if it were not because of him, Buddhism may not have flourished in Hong Kong. Therefore his merit in Buddhism is great! If he encounters difficult situations, Buddhism should take care of and support his family.” Venerable Master’s extraordinary generosity made me deeply admire him.

☞待續

☞To be continued