



How I encountered the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*

我如何遇到楞嚴經

An Excerpt from Xiaojuan Shu's Interview with Norbel Casas (BA'22)

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束曉娟對武明覺（法大大學部2022年畢業生）的訪談摘錄

張親法 中譯

I was very interested in meditation, primarily because I was interested in martial arts, and I just found out there was a synergy with them that I didn't know was there before. I had been meditating on my own for a bit; however, my qigong teacher said, "You need to find someone to teach you because you might hurt yourself." I said, "okay." And I found one in the mountains and learned from him.

But after learning from him, I still felt as if something was missing. Then I discovered a book about spiritual paths and their meditation techniques, which basically explains all the world's spiritual traditions, legends, meditation techniques, and it seemed that while each culture has a different language, but they somehow all point to the same thing.

The authors recommended that if you walk on the spiritual path, no matter which way, which religion, or which path you take, one should read the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* and the Perfect Enlightenment Sutra. I started with the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*, and I did not know what I had got myself into. It took me a lot to get started, but once I started reading it, my whole world just turned upside down, especially when I got to [the part] where Ananda was talking to the Buddha. And the Buddha said, "Your thinking consciousness is not your mind."

I closely identified with what I was thinking at that time. Then I read about Master Hua and his explanation of that part of their discussion. [I thought,] "Why didn't they just say that? Why did they have to speak so eloquently that I could not understand what they really meant?" Then I thought, "Wait a

我之前對打坐很感興趣，主要是因為我對武術感興趣，而且我發現它們之間有一種我以前不知道的相互促進的作用。我一直在自己打坐。但是，我的氣功老師說：「你得找人教你，因為你可能會傷到自己。」我說：「好吧。」我在山裡找到了一位並向他學習。

但是跟他學了之後，我還是覺得好像少了點什麼。然後我發現了一本書，介紹靈修之路及其冥想技巧，它基本上解釋了世界上所有的靈修傳統、傳說和冥想技巧，似乎每種文化都有不同的語言，但它們都指向同一個東西。

作者建議，如果你走在靈修的道路上，無論是哪種方法、哪個宗教、或走哪條路，都應該閱讀《楞嚴經》和《圓覺經》。我從《楞嚴經》開始，我不知道自己陷入了什麼境地。我花了很多時間才開始，但是當我開始閱讀它時，我的整個世界就天翻地覆了，尤其是當我看到阿難和佛陀對話[那部分]的時候。佛陀說：「你的思想意識不是你的心。」

這與我當時的想法密切相關。然後我讀了宣化上人和他對那段對話的

second, who is this Master Hua? He sounds like he knows what he was talking about.”

At the end of the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* was his biography, so I started reading about him. I was very surprised by the kind of person he was, how much he had accomplished, and how much resolve he had. And then as I was reading, it struck me, “Wait, he is the founder of DRBA, that’s in San Francisco. That’s in California! I’m in California!” Then I found out about DRBU through DRBA.

I was here (DRBU) because of the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*. Our cohort may be the first BA cohort that read the entire sutra in class! I just felt that it was a great opportunity. I know, I would not be able to penetrate it by myself. It was as if I was going on an expedition with a group of people. People are able to find more treasures, explore more, and go deeper into the jungle. You could run into trouble with wildlife if you were by yourself or misinterpret what a text actually means.

In my first year at DRBU, I memorized the entire *Śūraṅgama Mantra*. I think I need to be very humble and explain how I did it.

During the summer after my first year, I memorized around 400 lines. And then the school started, and I just kept learning a little bit more until I memorized the entire mantra. But then for one class, I burned out. But with help from Tomas, [who is in my cohort], I learned how to recite it by listening like a typical memorization process.

This winter break I went to a three-week hybrid Chan retreat at Berkeley Buddhist Monastery. I talked to a Dharma Master about my experience. He said it’s great that I can recite it by listening, but he still encouraged me to memorize it by heart, so it felt as if I re-started again. Basically, I’m relearning it by heart this semester. So no matter where I am in the world, or no matter what crisis is occurring, I can always call out to and tap into this mantra.

In the mornings, I usually do my own morning ceremony [which includes the *Śūraṅgama Mantra*]. Usually, I follow along with a recording. It just feels very natural like falling water, just by listening. Then in the evenings, I try to just recite from the heart. For some people it may feel like a practice, but for me, it just feels ordinary every day. ❀

解釋。[我想，]「他們為什麼不這麼說呢？為什麼他們要說得如此複雜，以至於我無法理解他們真正的意思？」接著我想：「等等，這位宣化上人是誰？他好像知道他在說什麼。」

《楞嚴經》的最後附了宣公上人的傳記，於是我開始讀他的故事。我對他的人格、成就和決心感到非常驚訝。然後當我閱讀時，我突然想到，「等等，他是法界佛教總會（法總）的創始人，就在舊金山。那是在加州！我在加州！」之後我就通過法總而得知法界佛教大學（法大）。

我就讀法大是因為《楞嚴經》。我們這個年級可能是第一批在課堂上閱讀整部《楞嚴經》的本科生！我覺得這是一個很好的機會。我知道憑我一個人是無法理解它的。就好像我和一群人去探險一樣，大家一起可以找到更多的寶藏，探索更多，到叢林更深處。如果你獨自一人也許會遇到野生動物的麻煩，或者你可能會誤解文字的實際含義。

在法大的第一年，我背誦了整個楞嚴咒。我認為我需要非常謙虛並解釋我是如何做到的。

在我大一的暑假，我記住了大約400句。然後學校開學了，我只是繼續學習一點點，直到我記住了整個咒語。但有一堂課，我筋疲力盡了。不過在湯瑪斯的幫助下[他在我們這一年級]，我學會了如何像通常的背誦過程一樣，通過聽來背誦它。

今年寒假，我到柏克萊聖寺參加了為期三週的混合禪修。我和一位法師談了我的經歷。他說我能通過聽而背誦下來很好，但他還是鼓勵我能在心裡背下來，我感覺好像又重新開始了。基本上，這個學期我正在從心裡重新學習它。所以無論我在世界的哪個地方，或者無論發生什麼危機，我都可以隨時念出並用上這個咒。

早上，我通常會做自己的早課（包括《楞嚴咒》）。一般我會跟著錄音，聽著感覺就像水流就下一樣自然。然後在晚上，我會試著從心裡來背誦。對某些人來說，這可能感覺像是一種修行，但對我來說，每天都感覺很平常。❀