

Some Thoughts on Learning Buddhadharma

學佛隨想

An Excerpt from Xiaojuan Shu's Interview with Bhikshuni Fa Ji (MA'23)

束曉娟對法積師（法大碩士部2023年畢業生）的訪談摘錄

Fa Ji Shih, a Bhikshuni from Ling Yen Mountain Temple Canada, came to DRBU with a keen interest in studying and translating Buddhist texts and making the Dharma accessible to the Western world. In class, her previous way of understanding the texts is constantly being transformed through exploring different perspectives and questions from her classmates. "It's a challenge to learn a new way of learning." And yet, she is grateful for that challenge.

法積師來自加拿大靈巖山寺，現在法大學習。她對研究和翻譯佛教典籍以及探索使西方世界能夠接觸到佛法有著濃厚的興趣。在課堂上，她以前對書本內容和經文的理解方式正在通過探索同學的不同觀點和問題而不斷改變。「學習一種新的學習方式是一項挑戰。」然而，她對這一挑戰心存感激。

I was born into a Buddhist family. I went to Buddhist temples and attended lectures with my mother as a young child. And I was part of my temple's youth program. When I graduated from that, I served as a volunteer for a long time.

It's hard to put into words, but I would have to call it a sense of homecoming. It always felt like the temple was my second home. And when the conditions arose that I had the opportunity to stay there as a resident, I almost felt a sense of calling: that was where I belonged.

Monastery life is very simple, and it's much more regimented. In Canada, we wake up at 3:30 a.m., and go to the morning ceremony from 4:00 a.m. to 5:30 a.m.

At 8 o'clock, we recite sutras, and that's usually until about 9:00 a.m. We continue our assigned work until about 10:45 a.m. Then we have the lunch service, and that's followed by a Dharma talk, usually a recording. After that we have a rest period, when you can do what you like; many people engage in their own study or practice. And then we have the afternoon work period. That usually goes to about 5:00 p.m. or so. From 5:00 p.m. to 6:30

我出生在一个佛教家庭。從小我就和母親一起去寺廟，一起聽法。我曾是我們道場青年會的一員。從那畢業後，我做了很長時間義工。

我總覺得寺廟是我的第二個家。很難用言語去表達，但我不得不稱之為回家的感覺。當因緣具足時，我開始成為廟裡的常住，我彷彿是感到一種召喚：這就是我的歸屬。

廟裡的生活很簡單，也更有規律。在加拿大，我們每天早上3:30起床，4點到5:30分是早課時間。

我們8點誦讀佛經，通常要讀到9點左右。然後我們會出坡到大約10:45，之後是午齋。午齋之會有聽法，通常是錄音。在這之後我們有一段休息時間，大家可以安排自己的功課，許多人會在這段時間裡學習或修行。然後是下午的出坡，通常會到5點左右。5:00到6:30是



另一段休息時間，通常用於沐浴，洗衣服或修行。我們的晚課是從6:30到9:00，大概10點就寢。這是我們的一天。

我覺得清晨是一天中的黃金時段，在我們的大腦還沒有開始思考各種事情之前，要抓住這段時間。在早上，我會比較有靈感。無論自己內心還是外面，清晨都是最平和，最安靜的時光。不管是參加早課，還是修行或誦經，清晨都能幫助自己為開始這一天而定下基調。

我參與寺廟裡的很多翻譯工作，我們引用了許多佛經翻譯委員會的翻譯作為參考，所以我想我一直都知道萬佛城。吸引我來這裡的原因是我想要更多地瞭解如何將中國傳統佛教與西方世界連接起來，我覺得萬佛城在這方面做得很好。我認為來法大可以幫助我很好的實現這個理念。總的來說，我想盡我所能地為把佛法從中文翻譯成英文做點貢獻。我希望能夠和西方世界來分享佛法，按照佛陀的教導來生活，分享佛陀的教導。

在法大的學習中，閱讀西方哲學著作對我來說可能更具挑戰性，因為我從未讀過這些了不起的思想家們的作品。其中一些不容易閱讀，但我發現這絕對值得投入精力。

從前都是書上怎麼寫，我就怎麼讀，而從來不會在小組討論中像其他人那樣提出問題、疑慮和擔憂。學習一種新的學習方式是一種挑戰。但與此同時，它也是非常有意義的，因為這是我在其他任何地方都不會有過的經歷。大家提出的有些問題我永遠都不會想到。對於像我這樣希望能夠與西方世界分享佛法的人來說，學習這一點非常重要。了解大家從哪裡來以及他們可能會如何看待書本內容非常重

p.m. is another rest period, usually for showers, laundry, or more self-practice. And then our evening ceremony is from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Basically, we get ready for bed and go to sleep at 10:30p.m. That's our day.

I think of early morning as this golden opportunity to capture the time when the mind hasn't started thinking about all kinds of things. My best ideas come to me in the morning. It's the calmest and the quietest, both inside and out. Whether I participate in the morning ceremony, or do my own practice or recitation, it all helps me set my intention for the day.

I'm involved in a lot of the translation work that we do at the temple. And we refer to many BTTS (Buddhist Text Translation Society) translations as references. So, I guess I've always known about this place (the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas). What brought me here was this intention to learn more about how to connect the Chinese Buddhist tradition with the Western world. That's something that I feel we do very well here at CTTB, and I thought coming to DRBU would be the perfect way to do that. Basically, I would like to make the best use of my conditions and contribute to the translation of the teachings from Chinese to English. I feel like I can use that to share the Dharma with the Western world, live the teachings, and share the teachings.

With respect to my study at DRBU, reading the Western philosophical texts is probably much more challenging for me because I've never read the works of these amazing thinkers. Some of them are not easy to read, but I find that it's definitely worth putting the effort into it.

I used to read them as they are. I never would have raised the questions or doubts and concerns that people bring up in shared inquiry. It's a challenge to learn a new way of learning. But at the same time, it is so valuable because it is something I can't experience anywhere else. I would never have thought of some of the issues that people raise. And that's so important for someone like me who wants to be able to share the Dharma with the Western world. It's so important to know where people are coming from and how people will potentially approach the text in order for me to actually be effective and be relatable to people, instead of just thinking about it from my own perspective, which is much narrower in scope. Therefore, every day, I'm becoming more open-minded. It's challenging, but it's also very rewarding.

It also makes me feel that it's hard to call Buddhism a religion because the so-called Buddhist teachings are so universal. Anybody can relate to them. You don't have to be religious to share the same ideas.

I think what makes Buddhism different is that it's really only concerned with how to reduce our suffering. And it points to the source of our suffering, which is craving and desire. In other Western texts, there are other points of consideration, whereas in Buddhism, we are mainly concerned with people's suffering and what to do about it.

Through our practice, if we can gradually reduce those desires, we can increase our freedom from the grasp that those desires have on us. And with that increase in freedom, there's less suffering. I think that's what makes Buddhism different. We're just concerned with what to do about human suffering. When I do something, is it going to cause more suffering? Is it going to cause less suffering? That's our main concern.

I think one difference would be that the common notion of suffering is not having the freedom to fulfill your desires, whereas in Buddhism, you restrain yourself from those temptations to satisfy all your desires. You restrain yourself from indulging in fulfilling all your desires. By doing so, the result is that you have freedom from those desires.

I think the Dharma can be shared in so many ways. I don't necessarily need to make a speech or write a book. I feel that just in everyday interactions with people who come by the monastery, who either have affinities with or don't have affinities with you, we can create affinities for people to want to practice. Some people can be inspired just by seeing our practice. ❶

要，這樣我才能有效地與他人連接起來，而不是僅僅從我自己的角度來思考，那樣會狹隘很多。所以每一天，我的思想都變得更加開闊。這很有挑戰性，但也非常有益。

我也覺得很難把佛教稱之為一種宗教。因為所謂的「佛教」，其教義太普世了。任何人都能和佛法產生共鳴。你不必一定要信仰宗教才能分享相同的想法。

我認為佛教的不同之處在於，它真正在關心如何減輕人們的痛苦。佛教指出了我們痛苦的根源來自貪求和慾望。在一些西方著作中有其他考慮點。而在佛教中，我們主要關注人們的痛苦以及如何來應對。

通過修行，如果我們能夠慢慢減少慾望，就能擺脫這些慾望對我們的影響，從而增加自由。當自由增加時，我們的痛苦也就減少了。我覺得這就是佛教的不同之處。我們真正地關心如何應對人類的痛苦。在做事情的時候，我會想它會造成更多的痛苦嗎？還是減少痛苦？這是我們主要關心的地方。

我覺得一個不同點是，世俗普遍觀念中的痛苦是不能隨意自在地實現自己所有的欲望。而佛教教導的是你要克制自己，不受那些要滿足你所有慾望的誘惑。你克制自己，不去沉溺於滿足你所有的慾望。這樣做的結果是你可以從這些慾望中解脫出來，得到自在。

我想佛法可以通過很多種方式來分享。我不一定非要發表演講，寫一本書或怎樣。我覺得就在與來到寺院的人的日常互動中，不論這些人和你是有緣還是無緣，我們能為大家創造緣分，讓他們想要修行。有些人只是看到我們的修行就能夠受到啟發。❷