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口述上人教化
The Oral History Project



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**It Is
Hard
to
Encounter
a Good
Spiritual
Teacher:
My
Teacher,
the
Venerable
Master
Hsuan Hua**
(continued)

IX. Stories about the Shurangama Session

Victor: What about Buddhism in San Francisco?

Epstein: At that time in San Francisco, most young Americans interested in Buddhism were at San Francisco Zen Center, which was run by Suzuki Roshi. It was very formal. Very few people there followed the five precepts, and the Zen Center was not totally vegetarian. So it had a very different feel to it. At Berkeley at that time, there was Tartang Tulku, who was a Tibetan meditation teacher who was married and had a couple of kids. There were also -- this is historically interesting -- a bunch of American so-called Buddhist teachers, who were feeling displaced as these Asian Buddhist teachers arrived. They would come around the temple to try to get some kind of seal of legitimization from the Venerable Master, so they could continue to attract disciples. There were a number of these people who would hang around the Venerable Master. Some of them were more deviant than others. But they were all very colorful.

Victor: So how did you arrange for the students from the University of Washington to come?

四、楞嚴法會

鄭偉德：三藩市的佛教是怎樣的情況呢？

易象乾：那時在三藩市，大多數對佛教感興趣的年輕美國人都去三藩市禪修中心——那是鈴木(Suzuki Roshi)開辦的。那裏很正式，但只有很少人遵守五戒，也不是全部吃素，所以感覺起來很不一樣。那時在柏克萊，有一位Tartang Tulku的西藏禪修老師，結了婚並且還有幾個孩子。那時還有一段歷史趣事。這些亞洲的佛教老師來了之後，有一群號稱是佛教老師的美國人感覺被取代了。他們跑到上人的廟上來，想得到上人的印證，這樣就能夠繼續吸納弟子了。有很多這樣的人圍繞在上人身邊，有一些比其他人更離經叛道，但都很有特色。

鄭偉德：那你是怎樣安排華盛頓大學的學生過來的呢？

易象乾：就像我前面講過的，最早的一次是在一九六八年春天，我們一起南下參加禪七。我們

Epstein: As I said, at first we came down in the spring of 1968 for the week Chan session. We were all very happy with the Chan session and we wanted to do more. We asked the Venerable Master whether we could come back in the summer for another Chan session. Then he basically sprung a plan on us that completely blew our minds, that we should do a summer study and meditation session for 96 days. This is beyond our wildest expectations, none of us thought we could do something like that. But he somehow inspired us, and talked us into doing it, got us through it and changed all our lives.

Victor: So it was his idea actually.

Epstein: Oh yes, the whole thing was his idea. Most of the people at the Chan session didn't even know what the *Shurangama Sutra* was. I thought it was pushing, I don't know about the other people, to do two weeks, let alone, 96 days and on a very strict schedule every day. At least it seemed strict to us at the time. Compared to the monastic schedule at the City, it doesn't seem like much. But for us, who were then living a pretty undisciplined life, it was a pretty big change.

Victor: Can you tell us the schedule?

Epstein: I think that the first sit was not until seven in the morning. I can't remember exactly. We probably had five or six sits a day. We would alternate sitting and studying, sitting and studying. For most of the summer, the Venerable Master would lecture on the Sutra two times a day, once after lunch and once in the evening. We started out with just a very short recitation -- the Master taught us the very short recitation before lunch, not the long formal ceremony in the Buddha Hall. He started out a very short evening ceremony also and gradually lengthened it over the years to what it is now. The lectures were somewhat shorter to begin with than they were later too. He took us along gradually, step by step. And so we would meditate and we would do some exercise, study the sutra, and try to memorize the *Shurangama Mantra*. Those of us who were translating would prepare the material for the lecture. We divided up into teams to cook meals. It was this very tiny, tiny place with one tiny bathroom and one tiny kitchen. There was not very much room, and everybody was on top of everybody else.

Victor: Who were the people that came?

Epstein: There were basically two main groups of people that came. There was a group of students from University of Washington whom I had met up there. Among those were Dharma Master Heng Chih, Loni Baur (the former Dharma Master Heng Yin), there was Steve Klarer (the former Dharma Master Heng Jing), and David Fox who later became the first Westerner to leave home as Heng Qian. Randy and Theresa Dinwiddie, Jon Babcock and a few other people from Seattle also

都很滿意那次禪修，想要有更多的機會來打坐。請示上人夏天時可否再回來參加禪修。於是上人就初步制訂了一長串計畫，把我們的頭腦都脹爆了，上人說應該舉辦一個九十六天的夏令營和禪修法會。這個計畫完全超出我們最大的預期，沒人相信大家可以完成這些計畫。但上人給了我們很多鼓勵，他告訴我們去做，讓我們完成了這些，並改變了我們所有人的生活。

鄭偉德：所以，實際上這是他的計畫。

易象乾：是的！所有的事情都是他的計畫。而當時參加法會的多數人甚至都不知道《楞嚴經》講的是什麼。我想它是帶有一些強迫性，不知道大家都是怎麼做到的——兩個禮拜都很長了，更何況是九十六天，而且每天都有嚴格的時間安排！至少當時對我們來說，是非常嚴格的。比起聖城的時刻表，這似乎不算太多；但對我們這些沒經過正規訓練的人來說，這可真是一個相當大的改變。

鄭偉德：能告訴我們當時的課程嗎？

易象乾：第一支香是早上七點才開始，我記得不是很清楚了！差不多一天要坐五、六次。我們是打坐、聽經學法、打坐、聽經學法輪番上陣。那個夏天大部分的時候，上人每天都要講兩次經：一次是在中午飯後，一次是在傍晚。剛開始，我們只是做很簡短的念誦——上人教給我們午飯前一個非常短的念誦，而不是大殿裏那種長且正式的儀式。上人還以簡短的晚課儀式做為開始，並在之後的幾年間逐漸延長，直到現在這樣。另外，一開始上人的講經時間也要比後來短一些。他循序漸進、一步一步地教導我們。這樣子，我們參禪打坐，做一些運動，並試著背誦〈楞嚴咒〉。我們這些翻譯的人需要（為翻譯上人的講經說法）準備資料。我們分成了小組來學著做飯。當時就是在這麼一個極小極小的地方，只有一個很小的浴室和很小的廚房。沒有多大的空間，大家都擠在一起。

鄭偉德：當時都有哪些人來呢？

易象乾：來的人基本上有兩組。一組是我在華盛頓大學那兒所認識的學生。其中有恒持法師，朗妮·褒爾（Loni Bau，果逸，前恒隱法師），還有史蒂夫·柯拉爾（Steve Klarer，果寧，前恒靜法師）和大衛·福克斯（David Fox，果前）——他是後來第一位出家的西方人，就是恒謙法師。

此外，嵐地（Randy Dinwiddie）和德瑞莎·丁偉第（Theresa Dinwiddie）夫婦，喬恩·白考克（Jon Babcock，中文名叫白文天）和其他一些來自西雅圖的人也參加了法會。還有一些住在三藩市的人也

came. And there were some people who were living in San Francisco who had started coming to the monastery. There were the Mechlins, Janice Vickers, Nancy Lovett, Gary Linebarger (the former Dharma Master Heng Tso), and Steve Mechling, a friend of Dharma Master Heng Tso. Basically these two groups. And there were also people who would come and go. All kinds of people. It was mostly young people, but there were also some older people who would come and stay for varying lengths of time.

Victor: How did you get them to come?

Epstein: People just heard about it and came. There was no effort to recruit or do advertising or anything like that. Word of mouth.

Victor: Can you describe what the atmosphere like at the Shurangama Session?

Epstein: On the one hand, it was an atmosphere of incredible optimism. We all felt that we were spiritual pioneers; I think that's a good way to put it. We were doing something wonderful and new, that nobody had done in the West. We were going to work very hard, really transform ourselves and enter new realms of consciousness and understanding. On the other hand, many people there were coming out of 60's lifestyles that included many bad habits, of not following the precepts, of being involved in messy personal relationships. There was a kind of polarity between an incredible amount of enthusiasm and optimism, and sorting out all the messy karma on the other hand. The Venerable Master was constantly encouraging us and babying us, trying to sort out all this interpersonal stuff, in very crowded quarters with a very intense meditation schedule. At the same time, he was trying to teach us, in addition to the *Shurangama Sutra*, the very basics of Buddhism--about karma, and cause and effect, and precepts, about basic Buddhist ceremonies, and the kind of stuff that I think most of the people at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas take for granted. So on the one hand, we were incredibly naive, but on the other hand, I think that we were not distracted by stuff that was not important or secondary. We really had our eye on the ball about what Buddhism was fundamentally about. We were sincerely in wanting to make as much progress as possible. The Buddhism we received was very direct.

Victor: You mentioned that everyone was living an undisciplined life before. How did the Venerable Master convey the message about the precepts, that you need to lead a disciplined life?

Epstein: First of all, there were rules for living at the monastery. That was a big lifestyle change for most of the people. So people had an opportunity to live during the whole summer according to the five precepts, to be vegetarians, which was a big change for most of the people. Close to the end of the summer session, he had a big refuge ceremony and a Five Precepts ceremony. Most of the people took refuge, if they hadn't already, and took the Five Precepts. During the *Shurangama Sutra* lectures, he had explained

參加了。包括麥克林夫婦（the Mechlins，果理和果珊），珍妮絲·費克爾斯（Janice Vickers，果進），南希·婁威特（Nancy Lovett，果欽），加里·林百克（Gary Linebarger，果佑，前恒佐法師），還有史蒂夫·麥克林（Steve Mechling，果等），他是恒佐法師的朋友。基本上是這兩組。還有一些人來了又走了。各種各樣的人都有。大多數都是年輕人，但也有一些年紀較大的人也來過一段時間。

鄭偉德：你是怎樣讓他們來的呢？

易象乾：大家都是聽到這個消息就來了，沒有做廣告或者舉行招募之類的事情，只是口碑相傳。

鄭偉德：能描述一下當時楞嚴法會的氣氛嗎？

易象乾：一方面，法會的效果是令人吃驚的積極，我們都感覺到自己就是精神上的先鋒——我想這是一種好的方式來這麼下定義。我們正做著西方前所未有的、美妙而且新鮮的事情。我們正準備努力修行，真正地改造自己，並進入覺醒而知性的新境界。另一方面，很多參與的人，都從六十年代那種生活方式（包括許多壞習氣、不守規矩以及捲入混亂的人際關係）當中走了出來。但是也有一種介於極度的宗教狂熱與樂觀主義之間的極端現象，而在另一方面，可以說是造了各種混亂的業。上人不斷地鼓勵我們，像對待孩子一樣來照顧，在這麼擁擠的地方和這麼緊湊的打坐日程裏，還要試著去理清這一切的人際關係。同時，上人在講《楞嚴經》之餘，還試著教我們最基本的佛學知識——比如業、因果、戒律，還有基本的佛教儀式，而大部分的這些，我想萬佛聖城中的大多數人都會認為是理所當然了。所以一方面，我們還很幼稚；另一方面，卻不會為其他不重要或是次要的事情而分心。我們都專注於佛法的內容當中。我們都非常專注於佛法的本來面目，我們都真心誠意地力求進步。我們所接受的佛法是非常直接的。

鄭偉德：你提到之前每個人都是過著散漫的生活。上人是怎樣教你們戒律的，並引導你們過著守規矩的生活呢？

易象乾：首先，住在寺廟中有寺廟的規矩。這對大多數人來說，都是生活方式的一個大改變。而大家有這麼一個機會，能在夏季過著遵守五戒和吃素的生活，這對我們大多數人來說，是一個大的改變。夏令營接近尾聲的時候，上人舉行了一個大型的皈依和受五戒儀式。之前沒有皈依的

the rationale, the reasons, for holding the precepts, so by that time, people were pretty clear about it. And they were pretty clear about desire and cause and effect, about what causes suffering according to basic Buddhist teachings. That was all very new to most of the people there. Many of the people there came initially just because they wanted to get high without drugs. They thought, "We can meditate and we can get permanently high." That was their idea of what enlightenment was, so there was a great deal of teaching that had to be done.

☞ To be continued

人大多數都皈依了，並且受了五戒。在之前講《楞嚴經》的時候，上人已經解釋了守戒的理由及原因；所以到了那個時候，大家對這些都很清楚了。大家也都清楚什麼是欲，什麼是因果，根據基本的佛法也都清楚什麼是苦因。對於那裏的多數人而言，全部都是很新奇的。許多人最初之所以來，只是因為想要不通過吸毒就能達到提升的目的。他們想：「我們可以在禪定中獲得永久的提升。」這是大家一開始對開悟的認識，所以還要進行很多的教育。

☞ 待續

