

畢 生 難 遇 的 大 善 知 識

我的師父宣公上人（續）



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

Spoken by Dr. Ron Epstein 易象乾教授 口述 Compiled by Editorial Staff 編輯部 整理

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V. The translators on strike

Victor: The Venerable Master got you guys started translating sutras; how did that happen? A bunch of students coming here and he transformed you guys into starting translating sutras.

Epstein: There was a handful of us who were graduate students in Chinese at the University of Washington. I had only done one year of graduate student there, so my Chinese wasn't that good, but there were some other people whose Chinese was better. They started out translating. They just did the best they could. We all made rapid improvements. As you probably heard, there was a time when the translators went on strike, so there was nobody to translate. The Venerable Master gave a couple of lectures in English. Then he talked to me privately and said, "I'd like you to translate." I replied, "Oh, my Chinese isn't good enough." So he said, "It's good enough. It'll get better quicker. But will you try?" I said, "Sure, I will try." I was the strike breaker, so when the on strike translators saw that I was translating, even though I wasn't doing a very good job, they came back to work.

In addition to learning about Buddhism and learning more about how to meditate, I learned more Chinese that summer than the whole previous year as a graduate student at the

五、翻譯者罷工

鄭偉德：上人讓你們這些小夥子開始翻譯經典，那是怎麼發生的？一大堆學生來到這邊，上人竟然改造了你們，讓你們去翻譯經典。

易象乾：我們當中有少數人是華盛頓大學中文研究所的學生。那時我在學校裏才做了一年的研究生，所以我的中文並不是很好；但有些人的中文是很不錯的。他們開始翻譯，只是盡力而為。我們都進步得很快。也許你曾聽說過，有一段時間，翻譯的人罷工了，於是就沒人來翻譯。上人用英語上了兩節課，後來他私下和我講：「我希望你能來翻譯！」我回答說：「喔！我的中文還不是很好！」他說：「已經不錯了。你很快就會翻得更好了。你能來試試嗎？」我說：「當然！我會盡力的。」我是罷工的中斷者，所以罷工的翻譯者看到我在翻譯，儘管我做得並不是很好，他們就也都回來翻譯了。

除了學習佛法，還有更深入地學習如何打坐，我在那個夏天學到的中文，比過去一整年在華盛頓大學所學的還要多。暑期班對我的中文學習非常有幫助。

University of Washington. The summer session was very good for my Chinese.

Victor: Can you tell us the story about the translators on strike?

Epstein: I don't remember exactly why they went on strike. I think they were unhappy having to hold the precepts as strictly as the Master wanted them to. There was a disagreement, and they said, "Well, if we can't have it our way, we're going on a strike." They couldn't have it their way, so they went on strike.

You have to remember, that in Western culture and particularly in that enclave of Western culture, it was an anti-authoritarian time. Almost all of the authority figures in the culture were thought to be hypocritical and had lost their moral authority. The whole world was in rebellion against the old structure of authority, so the idea that you should be respectful towards a Chan master in a way that is second nature for us now was going against the grain of what was happening in the culture. Of course there was a basic respect, otherwise the people there wouldn't have been there, but the way that this respect manifested itself wasn't always clear. The traditional Buddhist forms of respect were not part of the culture that everybody had learned. Even though it sounds shocking that people would act that way, in the context of the people and the culture, the people who went on strike didn't have the background and the context to realize that it was absolutely not okay to act the way they did.

There were also some people there who had a lot of bad habits; because they had a lot of bad habits, they didn't stick around. So the Venerable Master worked with all kinds of people, not just people who were really sincere and had good roots. But he always worked with everybody who came, no matter what their potential was, whether it was this much potential or that much potential. The rain fell equally. The people with more roots sucked up more of the Dharma rain; people with fewer roots sucked up less. There was this tremendous Dharma light that emanated from the Master. The Dharma protectors were there too. People would come in, and they'd just get blown out again because they had too much dark energy and they couldn't take it. So it was very, very interesting time.

Victor: But at the end people began to leave home, afterwards?

Epstein: I was in awe when people started leaving home. Even during the summer, people began to do things like, eating one meal a day, not lying down to sleep at night. This was not because the Venerable Master said you should eat one meal a day. It's just that, that's what he did and people wanted to try it out. I think that's part of American culture; there's this very pragmatic streak. 'Well, this is very interesting. Let's out for ourselves and see if that works.'

Victor: How did the change happen? People come to the idea

鄭偉德：能告訴我們翻譯者罷工的事情？

易象乾：我不確知到底他們是什麼原因不幹了。我想是不高興按照上人要求的那樣來嚴格地守戒吧！當時有些爭議，他們就說：「如果不能按照我們的要求，就要罷工！」他們不能如願，所以就罷工了。

你應該記得，在西方文化當中，尤其是在西方文化的那個圈子裏面，那是個反獨裁的時代。在西方文化中，幾乎所有權威者的形象，都被認為是虛偽而喪失其道德威信的。那時，整個世界都在反抗舊體制的權威。

所以你應該尊敬一位禪師的思想，儘管現在在某種程度上說是我們的第二天性，但是在當時是與當時的文化完全相對立的。當然，基本的尊敬是有的，否則人們就不會聚在那裏了；但是這種尊敬本身所表現的方式，往往不是很明確的。傳統佛教的尊敬禮儀，並非每個人所受文化的一部分。即使人們會這麼做聽起來令人震驚，但是在人們和文化的條件下，罷工的人沒有背景和條件去體會到他們的行為是絕對不可以的。

那裏還有一些人有很多的壞習慣，因為有這麼多壞習慣，使得他們不能夠堅持留在那兒。因此上人對各種人都是有教無類，而不只是接引那些誠心而有善根的人。他總是來者不拒，不論根性是什麼樣的；是否有很多這個潛能或那個潛能都無所謂，雨水是平等地降落的，而善根多些的人會汲取更多的法雨，善根少些的人則汲取得少一些。上人就是這樣散發著巧妙的佛法之光。道場裏還有一些護法。人們來這裏，但卻因為具有太多陰暗的能量而又被轟走。因此那是一段非常、非常有意思的時期。

鄭偉德：但是後來，不是有人決定出家了嗎？

易象乾：有人開始出家的時候，我懷有敬畏之心。即使是還在那個夏季的時候，就有人開始做這類事情：日中一食，夜不倒單。這不是因為上人要求你要日中一食，而是上人就是這樣身體力行的，所以人們都願意去嘗試。我覺得這部分是一種美國文化——充分的實踐主義傾向：「好！這很有意思，我們自己也來試試吧！」

鄭偉德：改變是怎麼發生的呢？人們是為什麼而想要出家呢？還遵守戒律、日中一食、夜不倒單？這幾乎是一種戲劇性的變化，他們是怎麼在96天的時間裏決定以後這麼做呢？

易象乾：我個人無法回答這個問題，因為我不是那些人中的一個。我的改變是日積月累的，儘管從那個夏令營以來，是有些東西在我的整個生

that they want to leave home? And follow the precepts? Eating one meal a day? Sleep sitting up? That seems like very dramatic change. How did that happen in the 96 days?

Epstein: I can't tell you personally because I wasn't one of those people. The change in me was very gradual, although since that summer, it's something that's lasted my whole life. But other people who had stronger affinities with the Buddhadharm, immediately, or very quickly, resonated more deeply with what was going on. We all saw the changes that were taking place in our bodies and in our minds. It was very exciting. It was very, very hard, but it was very exciting. These people, because of whatever reasons, were able to plunge in afterwards, because, I guess you would say, of their karma from past lives. The seeds sprouted and bore fruit. They resolved to leave the home-life. I don't know what else to say. It's an internal thing. But they were in this very rich atmosphere where the seeds could sprout and grow with an incredible amount of Dharma nourishment every day. It happened very quickly for those people who had the potential.

Tina: What is it that moved you the most about the Venerable Master at that time?

Epstein: He was utterly empty of self, and very compassionate. He was much wiser than I was. He was just fun to be around. There was nobody more fun to be around than him. It was just exciting just to be around him all the time. He was the most humorous person I've ever met. Every day was a new adventure; it was like going on a safari of the mind. It was very exciting. All this stuff was happening every day--new ideas, new experiences, new people, incredible interactions to watch between the Venerable Master and the people who showed up. It was much better than anything else I've ever experienced. I hate to say incredible entertainment because that's cheapening it in a way, but it was very, very exciting to be a part of or just to observe what was going on. Amazing stuff was happening all the time. But I don't want to give you any idea that he was in any way showing off any special powers or making special claims. He didn't do that.

I think we first started putting out *Vajra Bodhi Sea* the fall after the summer session. In one of the very first issues of *Vajra Bodhi Sea*, the Venerable Master had us put in the "Demon-cutting Sword" from the 42 Hands. There was a guy who did zen mountain climbing and fire walking. He called himself Ajari Warwick. He took the "Demon-cutting Sword" comments personally, felt that they were aimed at him and was very outraged. He came with all these disciples, were very military in their bearing. They marched up to the fourth floor to have it out with the Venerable Master, because they were unhappy with what was published in *Vajra Bodhi Sea*. They couldn't even get in the door, probably because the energy was too pure for them or

命中持續著。但是其他與佛陀有著很深的宿緣的人，能夠立即或者很快地在學習過程中產生深深的共鳴。我們都看到了自己的身心變化，這非常令人興奮。這過程非常、非常艱苦，但是很令人興奮。不管是基於什麼理由，這些人之後能夠投身佛門，我猜你可能會說，是因為他們過去生的宿業，種子已經發芽、結果了，他們才下決心出家。我不知道還有什麼可以解釋的，這是一種內在的事情。但是他們在這種佛法氛圍非常濃厚的環境裏，每天有不可思議的大量法食之滋養，他們的種子就得以發芽、成長。而對於那些有潛能的人來說，這種變化就更加快了。

婷娜：當時上人最打動你的是哪一點呢？

易象乾：他是絕對的無我，又非常的慈悲。他比我有智慧多了！和他相處相當有趣，沒有人比他更平易近人了！和上人在一起，總是很令人興奮，他是我見過最幽默的人。對我來說，每一天都是新的冒險，就好像精神之旅，非常令人興奮。所有的事情——新想法、新體驗、新人——每天都在發生；看著上人和來的人之間一些「不可思議的互動」這比我所經歷過的任何事情都要好。我不喜歡說是「不可思議的娛樂」，因為這樣說會降低價值。但是參與其中，或僅僅只做壁上觀，都是非常令人興奮的事情。各種令人驚奇的事情不時在發生。但我不想讓你有上人顯示神通或是做特別斷言的任何聯想，上人不做這種事！

記得我們是在夏季法會之後，準備發行《金剛菩提海》雜誌。在《金剛菩提海》最早幾期裏面的一期，上人要求我們把介紹「四十二手眼」中的《斬魔劍》這篇文章放進去。有一個人，這個人能夠在定中爬山和火上行走，他給自己取名為阿加里·沃維克；他看了《斬魔劍》的評論就「對號入座」，認為那篇文章是針對他而寫的，於是就非常憤怒。他和他的弟子一起跑來，表現得非常激進；到上人住的四樓集體抗議，因為他們對發表在《金剛菩提海》上面的那篇文章非常不滿意。但他們甚至連門都進不來，或許是因為這兒的能量太純潔了，也或者是護法神阻止了他們。他們跑到臺階的最上面，自己就很困惑了；最後還是什麼也沒說，就灰溜溜地離開了。

鄭偉德：是不是他們各種方法都用盡了，然後才走的？

易象乾：是的！還有一個很有趣的故事。我想那是我們從一九六八年的春季禪七法會回來

because the Dharma-protectors stopped them. They got up to the top of the stairs, got very confused, and just left without saying a word.

Victor: They got all the way then just left?

Epstein: Yes. Here is another interesting story. I think this is from the period after we got back from the spring Chan session in 1968. I was still a graduate student in Seattle, and I used to spend a lot of time with Randy and Theresa Dinwiddie, who had attended the session. They had a neighbor, a young woman who was the wife of an architect. She would often hear us talking about the Venerable Master. Even though she wasn't a Buddhist, she then decided that she would go down to San Francisco to check him out. After she came back, we didn't see her for several days. When we finally saw her we asked her, "Did you go down to see the Master?"

She turned white and she said, "Yes." She was obviously very upset. We said, "What happened?" She said, "It was the most horrible experience of my life." We were really perplexed and asked, "What happened? What was so horrible?" She said, "Well, I got to the place and I saw the sign. I then walked up to the fourth floor where the temple was. I opened the door to the temple and the Master was standing there as if waiting for me to come. I looked up at him and he looked down at me. He saw right through me, and that was the most horrible experience I've ever had, that he could see everything going on in my mind, and I was horrified. I turned around and ran down the stairs as fast as I could. We said, "Well, did you feel like he had any bad intentions?" "No, no, nothing like that, but the thought that he could see what's going on in my mind, I couldn't take." That was that.

Victor: Was it very scary or strange that he knew what you were thinking all the time?

Epstein: For me, it never was. Although I had bad habits and unwholesome thoughts, I was sincere in my attitude. The Master was very compassionate. Usually when we don't want to open up to people, we feel like we have something to fear from them. But I never felt like I had anything to fear from the Venerable Master. Part of what Buddhist cultivation is about is opening your mind, not being afraid to see what's there, and dealing with it. He did that in a way so that sometimes people could open up with him privately, rather than to do it publicly with everybody. But he would also on certain occasions, push to have people make things public that they needed to make public, particularly when people were doing formal public repentances. Unfortunately, there is no longer much ongoing practice of public repentance anymore since he passed away. Maybe nobody feels like they know how to do it the way he did, to preserve the proper atmosphere and sense of trust and support that is necessary for people to open up and repent in public. But that was a very powerful teaching.

☞ To be continued

之後那段時期發生的。當時我還是個在西雅圖念研究所的學生，大多數時間都是和董偉第、德瑞莎·丁偉第夫婦在一起，他們也參加了那一次的禪七。他們有位鄰居，是位年輕的女性，她丈夫是建築師。她經常聽到我們談論上人的事蹟，所以即使並不是佛教徒，她還是決定要去三藩市查驗一下上人。她回來後，我們有好多天都沒有看到她。終於碰到她時，就問她：「妳去見上人了嗎？」

她臉色變得煞白，然後說：「去見了！」她顯然非常煩亂。我們問道：「發生了什麼事啊？」她說：「是我這輩子最可怕的經歷！」我們都很困惑，然後就問：「發生什麼了？是什麼讓你這樣害怕？」她說：「去了你們說的那個地方，看到了標牌，然後走上寺廟所在的四樓。我打開樓梯間通往寺廟的門，就看到上人站在那裏，他好像知道我要來一樣在那等著我。我仰頭看著他，他也往下看著我。他好像看穿了我，這是我從來都沒有遇到過的最可怕的事情，他似乎知道我腦海裏所想的東西，我非常害怕，於是轉身就跑，要多快就有多快！」我們說：「妳感覺上人有什麼壞的企圖嗎？」她說：「不！不！不是這樣！但是他好像能知道我在想什麼，我接受不了這一點！」就是這樣的一件事。

鄭偉德：是不是上人知道你都在想些什麼，是件很令人害怕或者奇怪的事情呢？

易象乾：對我而言，從沒有這樣的感覺！儘管我有一些壞習慣和不好的想法，但我的態度是很虔誠的，上人則是非常慈悲。一般來說，人們不希望把自己完全展現給別人，就是或多或少有一些害怕別人知道的東西；但是我從沒害怕被上人知道我的什麼隱私。佛教修行的一部分，就在打開心，不必害怕看到什麼在那兒，而是去面對它。上人以一種特別的方式，因此有時候人們可以私下對他打開心扉，而不是公開地面對每個人。但上人也因為某些機緣，推動那些需要面向大眾的人去面對大眾；特別是他們需要當眾正式懺悔的時候。不幸的是，在上人去世之後，再也沒有進行過這樣公開的懺悔了。也許是因為沒有人知道應該怎樣按照他的方式去做，去保持那種正當的氛圍和信任感，以便給予那些打開自己心扉來公開懺悔的人所需要的支持。但那是一種非常有力的教育方式。

☞ 待續