

素食者的一大威脅： 食物基因處理

GENETIC ENGINEERING： A MAJOR THREAT TO VEGETARIANS

■易象乾博士 文

By Ronald Epstein, Ph.D.



試想在一個世界上，我們所吃的蔬菜之中，蕃茄中含有魚肉與煙草，玉米含有螢火蟲，馬鈴薯卻有雞肉、飛蛾及其他昆蟲，這難道是科幻小說嗎？不是。這些「動物混雜物」在今天早已存在，並且很快就會陳列在超級市場的購物架上，卻沒有任何標籤警告你；更甚的是，在短短的數年內，這些混雜物必然會增加，而其中也極可能包含人類的「遺傳基因」在內。假如您是一位素食者，您願意在不明究理的情形下，吃到「有肉的蔬菜」嗎？就算您不是素食者，大概也不願意吃到食物中含有自己同類的肉吧！

少有佛教徒瞭解「遺傳基因處理」是怎麼回事。從最微細的單細胞到人類，基因是決定所有眾生體性的基本化學信號。把基因弄亂，就是以最基本也最嚴重的方式干擾世界的自然形態。這是非常危險，可能會因此發生難以挽救的長期性災難。然而目前國際性的大企業，正濫用「基因遺傳工程」來爭取短期的利潤。他們這種漠視仁義道德，不顧嚴重後果的做法，令政府幾乎無法對治。身為佛教徒，對於這件事情，我們能做些甚麼呢？首先我們可以從佛法的觀點提醒人們正視這件事，同時聯絡政府及民意代表，請他們盡可能通知大眾，並且下達命令，食物上一定要加上標籤，以防患這種嚴重災難的繼續發展。至於這方面，美國生物技術政策中心，國家野生聯盟組織可提供有關資料。

Imagine a world in which as part of their basic substances tomatoes contain fish and tobacco, potatoes contain chicken, moths and other insects, and corn contains fireflies. Is this science-fiction? No, these plant-animal hybrids already exist today and may soon be on your supermarket shelves without any special labelling to warn you. Furthermore, in a few years the types of these genetically engineered "vegetables" are sure to increase and may very possibly also include human genes. If you are a vegetarian, do you want to be in the position of inadvertently eating vegetables that are part meat? Even if you are not a vegetarian, are you ready to become a cannibal and eat foods that are part human being?

Few Buddhists are aware of what genetic engineering is, the research that is being done, and the developed technologies that are now being implemented. Genes are the fundamental chemical codes that determine the physical nature of all living things, from the tiniest single-celled organism to human beings. When you tamper with the genes, you are tampering with the natural patterns of our world at the most basic and most dangerous level. This is extremely hazardous, and it will be difficult to escape the long-term dangers and disasters that will most certainly occur. Nonetheless, major international corporations are now greedily scrambling for the short-term profits to be gained through genetic engineering. Unfortunately, they are overlooking ethical issues and unconcerned about the serious consequences. Governments are providing little or no regulation.

What can we as Buddhists do about the situation? For a start, we can, in the light of the Buddhadharmā, educate ourselves about what is happening. Then we can inform our governments and elected officials and urge them to do whatever is possible to inform the public, label foods, prevent the most blatant dangers, and slow down the progress on the road toward major disaster.

地址：1400 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036.

即使這個單位不重視佛教徒或其他宗教反對用「基因工程」來處理食物，美國政府也很歡迎大眾直接提供意見，有助於政令的決定。讀者可以寫信到案件管理所：HFA 305 (Docket No.92 N-0139)
食物藥品行政：Rm.1-23,12420
Parklawn Drive, Rockville, MD 20857.

或者讓議員及白宮委員代表了解您的關切。在此希望世界各國的人也都能正視這個問題。

作者簡介 About the Author

易象乾博士曾與多位飽學之士，及時下知名心理學家、宗教人士，共同工作，吸取彼等專業知識。又廣游歐洲、北非，曾求學於巴黎大學，後獲哈佛大學社會關係心理組榮譽畢業生。因任麻省理工學院研究助理，而在精神病院研究個案，也主持國家科學基金會，參與多項心理單位工作。為了解中國哲學與宗教方面的文字而學中文，並對坐禪發生興趣。適宜公上人後更受教往台灣深入學習中文，並尋訪善知識，瞭解佛法。

一九六七年回美後皈依上人，先後獲中國文學碩士、博士，並鑽研佛法，參與譯經委員會多項翻譯工作，同時也擔任口譯、講解經典，幫助許多西方人士認識佛法。在一九六八年，上人開始九十六天楞嚴法會就是因為易博士帶著三十多位美國大學生由西雅圖乘向上人請法而開演大法的。

易博士有一兒一女。女兒瑞華是第一畢業於萬佛聖城中小學，接受佛教教育的學生。後畢業於史丹佛同時拿到亞洲研究的大學文學與碩士學位。易博士目前任教於三藩市州立大學哲學與宗教課程。

In the United States the Biotechnology Policy Center, National Wildlife Federation, 1400 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036 is a good source of information. Yet even they are unaware of fundamental Buddhist and other religious objections to genetic engineering. The United States Government welcomes direct public input to help them decide policy. You can write directly to Dockets Management Branch, HFA 305 (Docket No. 92N-0139), Food and Drug Administration, Rm. 1-23, 12420 Parklawn Drive, Rockville, MD 20857. Senators and members of the House of Representatives can also be made aware of your concerns. I hope that readers in other countries will also become informed about this issue.



Dr. Ronald Epstein has studied with erudite and well-known psychologists and religious people. His wide travels in Europe and North Africa included a period of independent study at the University of Paris. He received a degree with honors from the psychology branch of the Social Relations Department at at Harvard University.

He also served as a research assistant at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, held a National Science Foundation Stipend for psychological research, and served on numerous other research staffs. In order to understand the philosophical and religious writings of China, he learned Chinese and also became interested in meditation. After he met Venerable Master Hua, he was advised to go to Taiwan to study Chinese more deeply, and he looked for Good and Wise Advisors to help him understand proper Dharma. Returning to the United States, he took refuge with Venerable Master Hua in 1967. He received a Master's and Ph.D. in Chinese Language and Literature at the University of California at Berkeley. Devoted to the study of Dharma, he has been involved in translating Buddhist Sutras, and has orally translated the Venerable Master's Dharma talks. He has led many Westerners to the study of Buddhism. It was when he led over thirty students from Seattle to request the Dharma, that the Venerable Master Hua held a ninety-six day Shurangama Sutra Dharma Assembly and expounded the great Dharma.

Dr. Epstein has a daughter Shari and a son Andre. Shari was the first graduate of the elementary and high schools at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, and she recently graduated with a combined B.A. and M.A. in Asian Studies from Stanford University. Dr. Epstein currently teaches Philosophy and Religion at San Francisco State University.