

# REMEMBRANCE AND GRATITUDE

## 懷念與感恩

He showed me that it is real and alive, and even more importantly,  
a possibility and practical ideal for our own lives.

他讓我知道佛經中所說的法，都是活生生的、真實的，  
而且在我們生活中是可行的，是切合實際的。

■By Ron Epstein (Guo Rong) 易象乾（果容）文

After having been invited to the United States by some disciples from Hong Kong, the Master established a Buddhist Lecture Hall in San Francisco's Chinatown in 1962. In 1963, because some of the disciples there were not respectful of the Dharma, he left Chinatown and moved the Buddhist Lecture Hall to a first-floor flat in a rundown Victorian building on the edge of San Francisco's Fillmore District and Japantown. The other floors of the building contained individual rooms for rent with communal kitchens. Those rooms were occupied by poor, elderly black people and a bunch of young Americans who were, in various ways, eagerly searching for meaning in their lives.

I first met the Master in January, 1966. I was a poor student in need of a place to stay and rented a room on the second floor of the building. The young people in the building all consciously or unconsciously knew that the Master was a very special person, but because we knew next to nothing about Buddhism, we had no categories to use to express our understanding or lack of it. We knew that the Master was a Chinese Buddhist monk, but didn't really know what that meant. One young man had actually taken refuge with the Master, but we didn't know what that meant either, or even whether it was different than leaving home. Basic Buddhist courtesy and the notions of making offerings and moral precepts were totally alien to us. The Master never mentioned that he was a Patriarch and had thousands of disciples in China and Hong Kong.

Many local Chinese Buddhists were angry at him for leaving Chinatown. Only a handful of the most loyal disciples would regularly come to see him and make offerings. Nonetheless, the Master would share what he had with the people in the building. He would put bags of rice in the communal kitchens, so that no one would have to go hungry. Sometimes, on Buddhist holidays or when he had extra food, he would invite several of us to lunch and often prepare the food himself. We all thought the food was delicious.

In those days when sometimes only one or two people who didn't even understand Chinese came to hear the Dharma, the Master lectured the same way that he did in later years when there were hundreds or even thousands. I remember going to

上人一九六二年，應香港一些徒眾之請，來到美國三藩市中國城設立了佛教講堂。一九六三年，因當地徒眾對法不恭敬的緣故，上人離開了中國城，搬到日本城附近一座破舊的維多利亞式樓房的第一層樓，樓房中其他房間的住客，則為年老貧窮的黑人，和一些到處尋求人生真義的年輕美國人。所有房客共用一間廚房。

我第一次遇見上人，是在一九六六年，那時我是個窮學生，正在找尋住處，所以我住進了二樓的一間房。當時樓中的年輕住客在下意識中，都感覺得到這位法師是一位不平常的人物。但是因為我們對佛教是一無所知，所以也弄不清楚他是怎麼回事。當然我們知道他是中國佛教的和尚，但也不懂佛教和尚是幹什麼的。當時有一位年輕人，甚至皈依了他，但是我們也不知道皈依是什麼意思，是不是和出家有什麼分別，也不知道。我們對一些最基本的佛教儀軌，及供養三寶，或持戒，則壓根兒一點概念都沒有，上人自己也從未告訴過人他是祖師，在中國和香港還有成千上萬的皈依弟子。

當時三藩市許多中國人對上人十分不瞭解，因為他搬離了中國城，只有少數幾個最忠實的弟子，選定期來拜見上人，並帶來些供養。上人在收到這些供養之後，也總是拿來與其他住客共享。有時他會放幾包米在公用廚房供大家食用，所以我們不至於挨餓。在佛教假日時，或當上人有餘餘的食物時，他也會請我們一起吃中飯，上人並且自己掌廚，做出來的飯菜還蠻好吃的。

那時，即時只有兩三個連中文都不懂的人來聽法，上人也以後來對千百人說法時一樣的態度說法。我記得我去聽上人講解《法華經》時，上人即以我

listen to him lecture on the *Lotus Sutra*. With the same awesome demeanor that we have all come to know, he would sit at the head of two fold-out picnic tables with an ancient blackboard behind him. Often there was no one to translate, and when there was, it was usually two young high school students who could not translate very well. I didn't understand the Sutra at all, but when I went, it was to be in the Master's presence and to listen to the sound of his voice.

More popular with some of the young Americans was the Master's open meditation hour from seven to eight every evening. There were usually a few people there, and I sat with him more and more the longer I lived in the building. Although the popular San Francisco Zen Center was just a couple of blocks away, I began to be sensitive to a special quality of my meditation when in the Master's presence.

It took me about six months to have a clear realization about the Master. When it finally came, I was amazed. I still knew practically nothing about Buddhism, but I understood that the Master was like no one else I had ever met in my entire life. I saw that he was truly without any vestige of selfish individuality, and thus I could never feel any real conflict of interest with him. He knew me more deeply than I knew myself, accepted me in a way that no one else did, and was compassionately concerned about my welfare, so that there was nothing to fear from him. I sensed that he had great wisdom and special psychic power, and yet there he was every day, always appearing ordinary and entirely inconspicuous. I suspect that the insights I had about him at that time were in no way special to me, but that something similar or even more profound was deeply felt by all those, Buddhist or not, whatever their ethnic background or education, who opened their awareness to him.

A few months later, with great excitement I travelled to Asia to meet the Buddhadharmā in its homeland. How strange it was for me to naively encounter for the first time the 2500-year-old shell of Buddhist institutional tradition. With precious few exceptions, I found it to be devoid of any living spirit. Shortly after my return to the United States, I entered the university world of academic Buddhist scholarship and became a graduate student first at the University of Washington and then at Berkeley. I marvelled at the extensive and keen intellectual knowledge of the Buddha's teachings possessed by some of my mentors. Yet at the same time I wondered why almost all of them vigorously resisted allowing the living spirit of the Buddhadharmā to enter their personal lives. The twofold disillusionment I experienced during those years was painful to bear. Yet perhaps for me, those difficult lessons were necessary to help me learn to cherish the rarity and the preciousness of a genuine Master.

It would have been enough for me just to have had the opportunity to be in the presence of such a genuinely selfless person. Yet the Master was so much more for me and my family. We, like so many others, literally owe our physical lives to him. And he never failed to be there for us, to counsel us in times of personal crisis, and to advise us and our children. It goes without saying that we are grateful beyond words for what we received.

Equally or even more valuable to me is that he gave ultimate

們現在所習知的莊重肅穆的態度解說。上人坐在二張摺疊式的野餐桌前，背後是一面陳舊的黑板，通常沒人翻譯，有的話也只是兩個年輕的中學生，翻得也不太高明。我那時對經文毫不瞭解，我去聽講時，只是想和上人在一起，聽聽他的聲音。

上人那時每晚七時至八時，與大家共同坐禪，這是當時有的年輕人最歡喜的活動。通常會有一些人來參加坐禪，我自在那兒住久了，也漸漸常和上人一起坐禪。雖然當時附近有一所知名的參禪中心，但我卻覺得因有上人在座，我坐禪時就有一種特殊的感覺。

大概過了半年的光景，我才認清楚了上人，認清楚了之後，我十分驚異。雖然那時我對佛教仍然是一無所知，但是我卻意識到上人和我一生中所碰到的人，完全不一樣。我發覺上人是完完全全沒有自己，一絲一毫的自我都沒有，在上人身上，一點利害衝突都找不出。他對我的了解比我自己還更深，他包容我的程度是任何人都做不到的，而且很慈悲地關懷我。所以在上人面前根本沒有什麼值得恐懼的。我也感覺到上人有很深的智慧和神通，但在日常生活中，他沒有什麼特別的表現，一點也不起眼，這種認知並不是我一人獨有的。當時認識他的人，不論他們的種族、教育背景是什麼，都有這種感覺，或者更深也可能。

幾個月之後，我滿懷興奮地到亞洲——佛法的老家去找尋佛法，也是我的無知，讓我碰上這樣的奇遇。我在亞洲碰到的，只是傳統佛教機構，二千五百年陳舊的外殼，除了少數幾個例外，其他的地方完全都沒有活的氣息。

我回美國之後，即在大學佛學學術上追求。我先進入了華盛頓州立大學碩士班，後又進入柏克萊加州大學的博士班，我學校中顧問們，對佛教義理知識的廣博多聞，使我嘆為觀止，但是我卻不明白為什麼他們不讓佛教進入他們的私生活領域中，還抗拒得這麼厲害。那幾年這雙重失望，引起我很大的痛苦。對於我，或者需要這樣的教訓，使我在遇到一位真正的大師之後，才懂得他的寶貴，才會珍惜他。

對我來說，能以常在一位像上人這樣無我的人身邊就夠了，但是上人與我和我的家人關係十分深切。上人不只救了我們，還有其他許多人的性命。上人在我們遭遇危機時，幫助我們，給我們的孩子們解決問題。對於上人賦予我們的，我們的感激之情

meaning to my life. He showed me every day in his every single action that the wonderful world of the Buddhadharma portrayed in the Sutras is not fantasy, fairy tale or intellectual abstraction. He showed me that it is real and alive, and even more importantly, a possibility and practical ideal for our own lives. I remember him saying that we should explain the Sutras as if we ourselves had spoken them, to make them our own and not distance ourselves from them. Clearly that is the example that he expressed through his own life.

The time of receiving is now over. It is time to grow up and become an adult in the Dharma. That is not easy for me, even after so many years. It is important not to be overwhelmed by the enormity of the debt owed, and the fact that, within the scope of my limited understanding, it can never be repaid. The Master always told us, "Do your best." Now more than ever before, it is time for me to do what I can, in my limited way with my limited vision, to continue his work both within myself and in this difficult world of impermanence and suffering. Although he has left his physical body, I know that the Master is still here, deep down in my heart, in the true pure land which has no inside and outside.

· 不是言語所能表達的。

更有價值的是，上人對我的生命帶來了最究竟的意義。日常生活中，他的一言一行，在在都在闡說佛經中演說的佛法不是幻想、神話，或抽象的戲論，他讓我知道佛經中所說的法，都是活生生的、真實的，而且在我們生活中是可行的，是切合實際的。我記得上人曾說：「我們講經時，要拿這部經當做是自己所說出來的，與我們合為一體，不要將自己和佛經疏遠了。」上人一生以身作則來示範這一點。

「接受」的時期結束了，現在是自己站起來的時候了，在法中做個成人。雖然經過了這麼多年，這對我還是很不容易的一樁事，不要因為我們對上人的虧欠太多而沮喪不安，因為這筆債太大了，我雖知識有限，也知道我們永遠也還不清的。上人常說「盡力而為」，現在我只能以我有限的知見，盡我有限的能力，在我自身，也在這個無常多苦的世界，來繼續上人的工作。上人雖然離開了他的肉身，但是我知道上人還在我心深處，在這一處真正的淨土裡，無內亦無外。

震旦緣熟達摩來 對朕不識機未賅  
神光熊耳跪九載 慧可積雪臂獨裁  
以心印心付大法 初祖二祖續命脈  
六次受害毫無損 隻履西歸留永懷

宣公上人作

*When conditions ripened in China, Bodhidharma arrived.  
He did not recognize who was before the Emperor,  
But potentials were not ready yet.  
Shen Guang knelt for nine years at Bear's Ear Mountain.  
As Able Wisdom, he cut off his own arm on the snow-covered ground.  
Using the mind to seal the mind, the great Dharma was transmitted.  
From the First Patriarch to the Second Patriarch, the life-pulse continued.  
He was attacked six times; not a hair of his was hurt.  
With one shoe he returned west, to be remembered forever after.*

by Venerable Master Hua