



Who Is a Bodhisattva?

誰才是菩薩？

Editor's Note: Reverend Heng Sure and Dr. Martin Verhoeven were invited by DRBU to give a two-lecture series on February 13 and April 10, 2023. In these two lectures, they read excerpts from their journals that they wrote to the Venerable Master Hua on their journey from Gold Wheel Monastery in Southern California to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas: a highway-bowing pilgrimage that lasted from 1977 to 1979. They also retold the story to the audience of the incidents that happened along the highway.

編按：2023年2月13日和4月10日，法界佛教大學邀請恒實長老和馬丁·維荷文博士舉辦了兩場系列講座。在這兩場講座中，恒實長老和馬丁·維荷文博士選讀了他們從南加州金輪寺到萬佛城這段朝聖之旅(1977-1979)中的日記摘錄。他們和聽眾們分享了他們在高速公路沿途中所發生的故事。

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The lecture began with Reverend Heng Sure and Martin Verhoeven reading excerpts from their journals which they wrote on their journey from Gold Wheel Monastery in Southern California to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (1977-1979). Both Reverend Heng Sure and Dr. Verhoeven took turns reading what they had written and then they would retell the story to the audience of the incidents which happened along the highway. Two stories that were retold stand out to me the most. The first is as follows:

Dr. Verhoeven recounted the times where he had to cook lunch for both himself and Reverend Heng Sure. Lunch often consisted of rice and what he could gather from the fields outside. Some weeds which Dr. Verhoeven found were wild mustard greens and wood sorrel and he would cook them and eat them with soy sauce. One day he had read about fennel and how it makes a good digestive tea. He had discovered some along the road.

He began to pick the fennel and suddenly a stranger drives by and gets out of his car, wearing khaki pants

講座由恒實長老和馬丁·維荷文博士揭開序幕，他們選讀從南加州金輪寺到萬佛城這段朝聖之旅(1977-1979)中的日記摘錄。恒實長老和馬丁·維荷文博士兩人輪流朗讀手記，再向觀眾敘述在高速公路沿途所發生的事。此次座談，有兩個故事讓我留下極深的印象。第一個故事是這樣的：

維荷文博士描述當時自己負責準備和恒實長老兩人的午飯。餐點通常是米飯和他在野地採集的食材。維荷文博士找到野生芥菜和木酢漿草，將其煮熟沾醬油吃。某天，他在書上讀到茴香能夠做成有助消化的藥草茶飲用，他在沿途中也有發現茴香的蹤影。

於是，他開始在路邊採集茴香。突然間，一個陌生人駛過，停車下來，這位衣著樸素，穿著卡其褲，看起來像沃利·考克斯的男子問道：「你在幹嘛？」維荷文博士回答說：「噢，我是佛教僧侶，



looking like Wally Cox and says, “Excuse me, what are you doing?” Dr. Verhoeven responds, “Well, I’m a Buddhist monk and I’m preparing lunch here and I’m cutting some fennel for tea and as a spice.” The stranger responded, “Well, I’m a plant botanist from California Polytechnic State University and that’s... hemlock that you’re cutting...and what you have in your hand for lunch is enough to drop a cow dead.” Martin responds, “But my book says fennel...”

The strange man replies, “That’s hemlock, that’s the same stuff that did Socrates in.” Martin gives a sigh of relief and thinks to himself, “I was just saved from killing Heng Sure and myself.” He then says out loud, “Well, the next chapter in this book is on mushrooms.” The strange man with a look of concern shakes his head in disagreement and says, “Son, let me tell you, there are two kinds of mushroom gatherers. There are old ones and there are bold ones. But there are no old, bold ones.” Later on both Dr. Verhoeven and Reverend Heng Sure recount this incident to Venerable Master Hua and the Venerable Master tells them that the plant botanist was a manifestation of a Bodhisattva and that they should have bowed to him.

The second story is as follows: Dr. Verhoeven and Reverend Heng Sure recall the story of Venerable Master Empty Cloud (Xu Yun) when he was on his pilgrimage to Mount Wutai in China. Those of us who have read the autobiography of Venerable Master Empty Cloud will recall that there were various accounts where Master Empty Cloud almost died because he had dysentery

正在準備午餐。我打算採一些茴香來當作香料和泡茶。」陌生男子說道：「我是加州州立理工大學的植物學家，那種草是……你正在採的是毒樅……你手裡要當午餐的毒樅足以毒死一頭牛。」維荷文博士回答：「可是書上說這是茴香……」。

陌生男子說：「那是毒樅，蘇格拉底也是被它毒死的。」馬丁聽到鬆了口氣，心想：「我差點毒死自己和實法師！」然後，向這位陌生男子說道：「嗯，這本書的下一章講的是菇類。」陌生男子不以為然的搖著頭說：「孩子，我跟你說，採菇人有兩種：

有經驗的和膽大的。但是沒有聽過有經驗又膽大的。」之後，維荷文博士和恒實長老向師父宣公上人報告這件事，上人告訴他們，這位植物學家是菩薩的化身，他們應該向他頂禮。

第二個故事是：維荷文博士和恒實長老講述虛雲老和尚到中國五台山朝聖的故事。讀過虛老自傳的人都會記得，其中有各種記載，說虛老因為得了痢疾，沒有食物，險些

and no food but was saved by the wandering beggar, Wenji, who was supposedly a manifestation of Manjusri Bodhisattva. Keeping this story about Master Empty Cloud in his mind, Dr. Verhoeven thought to himself, “Wow, we’re going to meet Manjusri Bodhisattva on our pilgrimage and I am not going to miss this chance!”

After bowing for a year and a half, both Reverend Heng Sure and Dr. Verhoeven were still hundreds of miles away from their destination. One wet and cold night, both Reverend Heng Sure and Dr. Verhoeven were reading the *Avatamsaka Sutra* under some redwood trees and the passage was about giving or *dana paramita*. Just as the both of them had finished reading about giving *paramita*, a man comes along who’s half naked with wild hair, unshaven, and really smelly and asks the two monks, “Uh... you guys got anything for me?”

Initially both the monks thought that he was just a freeloader, a mooch. [Editor’s notes: Reverend Heng Sure was upholding a vow of silence during the three steps one bow pilgrimage.] But then they started writing notes back and forth to each other, “Maybe this is a Bodhisattva, a spiritual being coming to test us?” “Maybe this is a sign that we’re spiritually blessed, we should give him some of our clothes...” came written another note. Thinking that the beggar might be some transformation of a Bodhisattva, the two monks gave the beggar a jacket, a new hat, and a new pair of shoes. But then after giving him those items he continues to ask, “You got anything else? It’s cold out here.”

The two monks think to themselves, “Oh, yes! This is a test from heaven!” Without a second thought they give the beggar their sleeping bags as well and their rubber boots, thinking to themselves: “The Bodhisattva gives unflinchingly!” The beggar then leaves and at this point both the monks have nothing left in their station wagon. Reverend Heng Sure then writes a note to Dr. Verhoeven, “We forgot to bow to him...” Shortly after this takes place, a park ranger pulls up next to the two monks and has this beggar by the scruff of the neck. He asks the two monks, “Excuse me Venerables, this guy claims that you gave him all this stuff, is that true?” The two monks nod in agreement, but the park ranger is in complete disbelief.

At this point both Reverend Heng Sure and Dr. Verhoeven place their palms together and do a slight head bow to the beggar before he is taken away by the park ranger. Three days

喪命，卻被流浪乞丐文吉所救，據說文吉是文殊菩薩所化身。維荷文博士記著虛老的這個故事，心想：「哇，我們進行朝聖的時候會見到文殊菩薩，我可千萬不要錯過！」

三步一拜大約一年半後，恒實長老和維荷文博士（前恒朝法師）兩人距離目的地還有數百英里。一個濕冷的夜晚，恒實長老和維荷文博士在紅杉樹下讀《華嚴經》中一段和布施有關的經文。正當他們兩人誦完有關布施波羅蜜的經文時，一個半裸、頭髮凌亂、滿臉鬍渣、全身臭味的男子走了過來，問這兩位和尚：「呃……你們有什麼可以給我的嗎？」

起初，這兩個和尚都認為他只是想佔便宜的人、是個乞丐。於是他們開始寫紙條討論（編註：實法師於三步一拜期間持禁語戒。），說：「或許這是菩薩來考驗我們？」，另一張紙條寫道：「這可能是我們要得到加被了，我們應該給他一些衣服……」。兩個和尚認為眼前的乞丐可能是菩薩示現，就送了乞丐一件夾克、一頂新帽子和一雙新鞋。給完這些東西後，這個乞丐繼續問說：「還有別的嗎？外頭冷啊！」

兩個和尚心想：「哦，對！這是上天的考驗！」他們不假思索地把睡袋和雨靴也給了乞丐，心想：「菩薩布施毫不吝惜！」乞丐隨後就離開了，此時兩個和尚的旅行車裡空無一物。於是，恒實長老給維荷文博士（前恒朝法師）寫了張紙條，說：「我們忘了向他頂禮……」事後不久，一名公園管理員拽住這個乞丐的脖子，把車停在兩位和尚旁邊，問他們兩人：「請問尊者們，這傢伙聲稱這些東西都是你們給他的，是真的嗎？」兩人點頭表示沒錯，但公園管理員卻完全不相信。

after this incident, both the monks were completely deprived of warm clothes and other material necessities. However, just then the Venerable Master Hua arrived and both the monks tell the Master about the beggar and the park ranger and waiting for the Master to confirm that the beggar was indeed Manjusri Bodhisattva.

The Master after listening to their story leans over and says, “Stupid! You guys have no wisdom whatsoever!” The Master continues, “Buddhism is about not seeking anything! You stop seeking pretty women, and nice cars and now you became monks and now you’re seeking spiritual attainments?! Same greedy mind just different object.” Dr. Verhoeven then says, “Wait, so you’re saying that the beggar wasn’t Bodhisattva Manjusri?” The Master says, “No, probably the Bodhisattva was the park ranger giving you a chance to get your stuff back!”

So, why did I choose these two stories? It’s because I remember a verse that Master Hua used to say, “Guanyin Bodhisattva appears right before your eyes, but you can’t recognize her!” In Venerable Master Hua’s commentary on the “Universal Door Chapter,” he states the following: “Guanyin Bodhisattva manifests in many ways. Sometimes he just appears and speaks the Dharma and vanishes. At other times, he might not necessarily use his spiritual powers and beam down a transformation body. He may be born in the world as a person, splitting off part of his soul to go to the world to be a person, study the Buddhadharma, and then teach and transform living beings.

He just manifests in that body to teach living beings. When someone believes in Guanyin Bodhisattva and makes offerings and relies on the Bodhisattva’s Dharma to cultivate, that person turns into Guanyin Bodhisattva, and Guanyin Bodhisattva has gained another transformation body.”

The point of all of this is simply that, you never really know who or when a Bodhisattva is coming to test you or to aid you. Having said this, it’s not that we should constantly be seeking out spiritual lessons, but rather, right in the mundane life, in the most practical sense, someone who gives you difficulty could very well be your good and well knowing advisor in disguise.

Usually, when someone gives you some affliction, they become a mirror to your own flaws or shortcomings. It’s not always necessarily the case that the problem lies externally (although it could be), but rather the loud mind that finds mistakes or flaws with uncomfortable conditions. Sometimes when we start cultivating,

此時，恒實長老和維荷文博士（前恒朝法師）雙手合十，向乞丐微微低頭，他隨後就被公園管理員帶走。事情發生後三天，兩位出家人完全沒有禦寒衣物和其他生活所需物資。然而，這天上人來看他們了，兩個和尚將這個乞丐和公園管理員的事情稟告上人，等著上人告訴他們這個乞丐就是文殊菩薩。

師父聽完他們的故事，俯身說：「愚痴！你們兩個真是一點智慧也沒有！」上人接著說：「佛法是不求！你們不貪漂亮的女人和好的車子，你們出家了，現在卻在求感應？！這還是貪，只是貪的東西不一樣。」維荷文博士（前恒朝法師）說：「等等，您是說那個乞丐不是文殊菩薩？」上人回答道：「不是，或許公園管理員才是菩薩，給你們一個拿回東西的機會！」

為何我挑這兩個故事呢？因為我記得上人常說「對面不識觀世音」。上人在《普門品淺釋》中提到：「觀世音菩薩現身，有的時候並不是即刻現這麼一個人，來給你說法，然後就走。他不一定是用他的神通來現一個化人——變化人，來給你說法；有的時候，他也就分靈——分開他這種性靈的一部份，來到這個世間上做人，好學佛法，然後教化眾生。

這樣也是應以什麼身得度的，他就預先造那麼一個身體，來教化一般的眾生。等到哪一個人信觀音菩薩、供養觀世音菩薩了，然後再依照觀音菩薩的法門去修行，這就又變出一個觀世音菩薩來，觀世音菩薩又多了一個化身。」講了這麼多，重點就是——你永遠不知道誰是菩薩，什麼時候菩薩會來考驗你或是幫助你。話雖如此，並不是說我們

we rub up against others. Our views conflict with theirs or they do something that you don't like and so there's friction between you and that other person. However, if one can reflect on the two stories told by Reverend Heng Sure and Dr. Verhoeven as well as *Master Hua's commentary on the Universal Door*, the person who's giving you trouble may very well just be a Bodhisattva coming to test you or they could be helping to aid you from harming yourself—you'll never really know. I suppose it's not until one has amassed a lot of wisdom that one can tell who is and who isn't a transformation of a Bodhisattva.

To depict this more clearly with a personal example, I'll relay a story of my own. I'm living in a community with over a dozen other men. Everyone has their own habits and their own way of comfort. Some people play music loudly, some talk and laugh loudly. Now, I'm someone who prefers solitude and quietness so it has taken me awhile to become accustomed to this. I would notice in myself moments of heated affliction and anger and I would want to tell people to keep quiet. But then I noticed in myself that I was paying attention to these thoughts of mine that were giving me trouble.

I was fueling the negative emotions by paying attention to the loud noises outside. We often hear the phrase, "Turn the light within" but I don't know how many of us really know how to do this. Maybe most people know how to do it, but I certainly didn't. When I noticed that I was paying attention to these 'loud noises' from the external environment, I had a small realization. I realized that these loud noises from others was the result of my mad mind wanting to grasp onto those sounds because my own mind wasn't quiet enough. Till this day I don't really know how to quiet my mind because I'm a terrible meditator, but at least I had some small realization that if I truly know how to calm my mind down, what's loud externally won't affect the solitude and peace within. ❀

應該不斷地尋求感應，在日常生活中，在最實際的情況下，找你麻煩的人很可能就是逆增上緣的善知識。

通常，當別人讓你起煩惱時，他們也成了一面鏡子，照出你自身的缺陷和不足。問題並不一定是外邊（儘管有此可能），而是在妄心中發現錯誤或不足。有時當我們開始修行，就會和別人發生摩擦。我們與別人的觀點相左，或者別人做了引起你反感的事，你和他人之間就產生矛盾。然而，如果你能反思恆實長老和維荷文博士講的這兩個故事，以及上人在《普門品淺釋》中的開示，那些讓你起煩惱的人很可能就是菩薩來考驗你，也可能是在幫助你避災——你永遠都不會知道。我想，只有累積很多智慧之後，才能知道到底誰是菩薩所示現。

用一個我的親身經歷更清楚地來說明這一點，我想分享一個自己的故事。生活在一個由十幾個人組成的社區裡，每個人都有自己的習慣和舒適圈。有些人喜歡把音樂播放得很大聲，有些人則喜歡大聲談笑。我是一個喜愛獨處和安靜的人，因此花了一段時間才習慣這個環境。我注意到當自己情緒激動和生氣的時候，我會想要叫大家保持安靜。但後來我發現，是自己鑽牛角尖，只在意那些帶給我煩惱的想法。

我關注著外邊的喧鬧聲，助長自己的負面情緒。我們經常聽到有句話說——「迴光返照」，但我不知道我們當中有多少人知道如何做到，也許大多數人都知道該怎麼做，但我真得不懂。當我注意到自己正注意那些來自外邊的「噪音」時，我有了一個小小的體悟，我意識到這些來自他人的大聲喧嘩是自己的妄心想要抓住這些聲音的結果，其實是我的心不夠安靜。直到今天，我還不知道如何讓自己的心靜下來，因為我對打坐還不在行，但至少我有一些小小的體會，如果我真的知道如何讓自己的心靜下來，那麼外邊的雜音就不會影響自己內心的獨處與寧靜。❀

