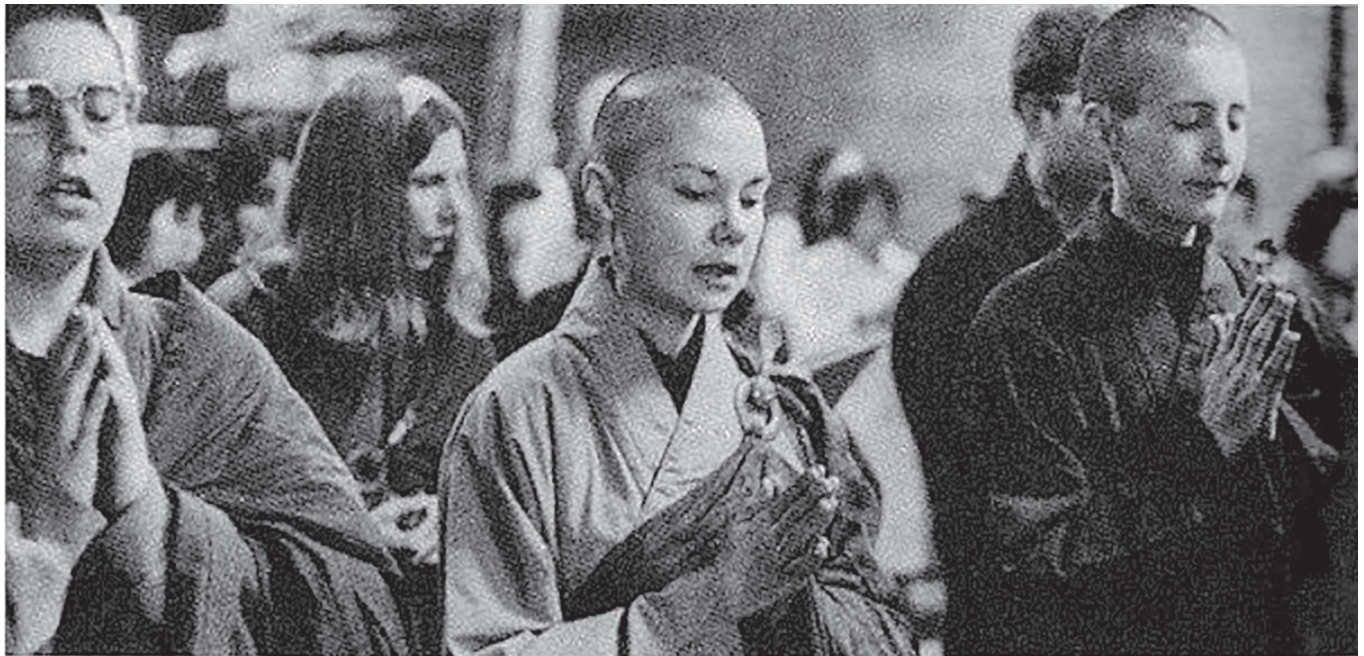


Continuing to walk on the unsurpassed path of Bodhi —In Memory of Dharma Master Heng Hsien

再續菩提無上道—懷念恒賢法師

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Dharma Master Heng Hsien (the middle).

恒賢法師（圖中）

In 1969, Dharma Master Heng Hsien, while pursuing her doctorate, learned about the eminent monk Venerable Master Hsuan Hua. Her Sanskrit classmate, Ron Epstein, introduced her to this great *kalyanamitra* (a wise spiritual mentor), inspiring her to embark on the path of spiritual practice. She officially entered monastic life in 1971 and attained full ordination in 1972.

Dharma Master Hsien was a prime illustration of a scholar-turned-monastic. She came from a scholarly family. Her father was a professor at the University of California at Berkeley and a famous economist in the United States. He had even been invited by the President of the Philippines to plan the country's economic policy. Master Heng Hsien herself received a PhD in South Asian Studies from the University of California, Berkeley, and taught courses on "Indian Civilization" and "Sanskrit" at the same university. She

1969年，還在攻讀博士的恒賢法師，在梵文課上，經由同學易果容的介紹，得知上宣下化老和尚這位大善知識，她從此走上修行路。1971年剃度，1972年受具足戒。

恒賢法師是學者出家修行的典型，她出身書香世家，父親是柏克萊加大教授，也是美國著名的經濟學者；曾應菲律賓總統邀請，規劃該國的經濟政策。恒賢法師本人則獲柏克萊加大南亞研究博士學位，曾在柏克萊加大教授「印度文明」與「梵文」課程；也在法界佛教大學教授多門課程，包括多種語文課程。

also taught many courses at the Dharma Realm Buddhist University, including a variety of language courses.

The languages Dharma Master Hsien understood and even mastered included English, French, Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, Latin, Greek, Arabic. She also studied Hebrew, Egyptian, German, Vietnamese and more. After she joined the Sangha, she soon began to translate on-site for Venerable Master Hua's lectures. When the Venerable Master went to Europe to spread the Dharma, Dharma Master Hsien gave full play to her language skills and used fluent interpretation to help the audience understand the Master's teachings that were direct to the mind. Dharma Master Hsien also served for several years as the Venerable Master's teaching assistant during his lecture series on the *Shurangama Mantra*, the *Nirvana Sutra*, and the *Confucian Analects*.

Revered as a "living dictionary," Dharma Master Hsien was often sought after for advice. Not only because she had great learning and was proficient in many languages, but also because she was very wise and could give guidance to younger generations of practitioners in just a few words. Dharma Master Hsien, who preferred solitude and quietness, could effortlessly showcase her eloquence in crucial moments. She had a remarkable ability to resolve seemingly intractable situations through her articulate communication.

One example is: when the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association applied to establish the Sangha and Laity Training Program, the authority-in-charge questioned that not all teachers in this training program had high academic qualifications. Dharma Master Hsien pointed out in her defense letter that Buddhist temples have always trained monastics to train the next generation of monastics, and the requirements for teachers are very different from the general education system. Because Dharma Master Hsien cited scriptures, her arguments were clear and convincing. Finally, the Sangha and Laity Training Program was successfully established, with Venerable Master Hua as the director.

Dharma Master Hsien's Dharma name was "Guo Pu 普" in which "pu" is Samanta in Sanskrit, and together with her monastic name Hsien (Badra in Sanskrit) is Samantabhadra. The major Buddhist scripture she translated throughout her life was the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, with Bodhisattva Samantabhadra as its Dharma host. Her doctoral thesis is also about a section of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*: "Three chapters from the *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*: a critical edition of the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts from the youth Sudhana's visits to the Bhikṣus Meghaśrī, Sāgaramegha, and Supratisthita, with English translation and commentary." Venerable Master Hua once said that Dharma Master Hsien's translation was very

恒賢法師能理解乃至精通的語文，計有英文、法文、梵文、巴利文、中文、拉丁文、希臘文、阿拉伯文。還包括希伯來文、埃及文、德文、越南文等多種她學過的語文。她加入僧團後，很快即開始為宣公上人的講經說法擔任現場口譯。上人赴歐洲弘法時，賢法師更充分發揮她的語言長才，以流利的口譯，幫助現場聽眾明白上人直指人心的開示。上人開講〈楞嚴咒〉、《涅槃經》、《論語》等課程時，也指定由賢法師擔任助教，長達數年之久。

賢法師被視為「活字典」，很多人喜歡向她請益。不僅因為她學識淵博、精通多種語文，更因為她智慧甚深，三言兩語便能為修行後輩指點迷津。喜歡安靜獨處的賢法師，在關鍵時刻，也能展現無礙辯才；看似棘手的情況，便因她的辯才而解決難題。

實例之一是：法界佛教總會申請成立僧伽居士訓練班時，主管單位質疑這個訓練班的師資並非都具備高學歷。賢法師在答辯書中指出，歷來佛教寺院培育僧才，都由僧眾負責培訓，對於師資的要求，和一般教育體系大不相同。由於賢法師引經據典，條理清晰，令人信服。最終，法總的僧伽居士訓練班順利成立，並由宣公上人擔任主任。

賢法師的法名是「果普」、與法號合起來恰是「普賢」。她畢生翻譯的佛經，正是以普賢菩薩為法主的《華嚴經》。她的博士論文也是華嚴經中的一段：《入法界品第卅九之三

precise, “not one word too many, nor too little.” Dharma Master Hsien always took notes of Venerable Master’s lectures in detail. When the members of the Buddhist Text Translation Society were transcribing the Venerable Master’s recordings, if there were any gaps or unclear points, they would think of “asking Dharma Master Hsien to see how she took notes back then.”

Dharma Master Hsien’s practice along the way was consistent with the six guiding principles strongly advocated by Venerable Master Hua: “No fighting, no greed, no seeking, no selfishness, no self-benefitting, and no lying.” Therefore, Dharma Master Hsien had a good affinity with people. Fran Laughton, who knew her for more than half a century, pointed out that Dharma Master Hsien “never compared herself to other people or compared people to each other. She never said bad things about other people, and she always lived in the present time.”

Dharma Master Heng Hsien passed away on September 25, 2023, with a life span of eighty-two years, a monastic age of fifty-two years, and an ordination age of fifty-one years. A few days before her demise, Dharma Master Hsien once said: “I’ve done what I came here to do. There is no reason to go on in this body.” Residing in the Tower of Blessings with her, Dharma Master Heng Bao extols Dharma Master Hsien as a key figure in DRBA’s history of spreading Buddhism in the West, making a glorious page.

Dharma Master Heng Bao has written a special verse to bid farewell to this widely respected bhikshuni. The translation into English is by Dharma Master Jin Jing:

*Venerable Master Hua’s brilliant disciple, a PhD.
Her oceanic wisdom surpasses the sangha,
Being well-versed in many languages,
She translated numerable sutras,
Propagating Buddhadharma to benefit living beings
Abundant merit and virtue is accumulated.
She was humble, personable and compassionate.
Over the age of eighty, she left with no regrets.
Done with her karma, she departed for the Land of Bliss.
Amitabha welcomes her with a lotus flower.
After being transformationally reborn in the lotus,
She will return riding on her vows.
Continuing to walk on the unsurpassed path of Bodhi. ❀*

梵文及藏文「善財童子參德雲比丘、海雲比丘、善住比丘」之研究》。宣公上人曾說，恒賢法師的翻譯非常精確，「一字不多，一字不少」。上人的講經說法，賢法師總是詳盡紀錄。佛經翻譯委員會成員在整理上人的錄音稿時，凡有缺漏或不清楚之處，都會想起「去問賢法師，看她當年筆記是怎麼記的」。

在修行上，賢法師一路走來，正符合宣公上人大力提倡的六大宗旨：「不爭、不貪、不求、不自私、不自利、不打妄語」。因此，賢法師的人緣很好。與她相識超過半世紀的果通居士便指出，賢法師「從不和人比較，也不比較他人。她從不說人壞話，總是活在當下」。

恒賢法師於2023年9月25日示寂，世壽八十二，僧臘五十二，戒臘五十一。往生前幾天，賢法師曾說：「今生所作已辦，無須留此色身。」與她同住福居樓的恒寶法師，推崇恒賢法師為法總在西方弘法的佛教歷史，留下了光輝的一頁，特寫偈頌，送別這位廣受敬重的比丘尼，由近經法師英譯如左：

上人高徒博士位
智慧如海超僧眾
多國語文悉通達
翻譯經典無量數
弘揚佛法利眾生
積聚資糧功德在
謙虛和藹兼慈悲
八十高齡無遺憾
業了自在往樂邦
彌陀接引上蓮臺
蓮花化生乘願來
再續菩提無上道 ❀