

**A Study on the Buddhist Thought of Ven. Master Hongyi**

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In Partial Fulfillment

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in

Religious Studies

by

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**I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted  
as an exercise for a degree at any other institution,  
and that it is entirely my own work.**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Los Angeles in late autumn isn't cold; only a gentle breeze occasionally stirs. Looking at the thick stack of nearly 300 pages on the table, there's no need to flip through my thesis; the words and lines leap out before my eyes. However, within the thesis, there are more than just sentences. What becomes increasingly clear after reminiscing is the imminent end of my student life. From the tranquil mountains and clear waters of Tiansheng Mountain's Anfu Temple in Wenzhou, Zhejiang, China, to the sunny skies and blue seas of Los Angeles, California in the United States, it has been a journey of ten seasons pursuing education. Over the past ten years, whether walking briskly or strolling leisurely, whether deep in thought or pausing to observe, the path beneath my feet has changed, and the people on the journey have changed, but the one thing that remains unchanged is the inner sense of inspiration.

Looking back, my thoughts are innumerable. The ten-year journey of studying in a foreign land has brought moments of joy in success and moments of discouragement in failure. There are so many people and events that are worth remembering. First and foremost, I sincerely thank Professor Long Darui, my mentor, for his genuine guidance and attentive care. Throughout my learning journey, from choosing the research topic, selecting relevant literature, writing the thesis content, to the final revisions, every step has been infused with Professor Long's hard work and dedication. Professor Long's international perspective, cutting-edge academic expertise, rigorous and diligent scholarly approach, and his composed, optimistic, and open-minded personality have not only taught me how to approach matters and plan my own life but have also illuminated many

principles of interpersonal relationships and how to conduct oneself. These lessons will deeply influence my future work and life. At this juncture, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Professor Long once again!

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his study of various Buddhist sects, especially Buddhist precepts, from different perspectives. My master has always been my spiritual pillar and a guiding light in my life. Without his guidance, I wouldn't be where I am today.

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My days as a student at the University of the West are coming to an end, but the memories here will never fade. The friends who walked with me on the pine-lined avenues on campus were all so different—some were straightforward and kind-hearted, some were witty and humorous yet sharp and capable, some were knowledgeable and

independent, and some were innocent and helpful. Each of them left a unique mark on my heart. Occasional greetings from them often elicit a feeling of warmth and contentment, and they have all brought unforgettable memories to my life and thesis writing process at the University of the West over the past ten years. Wishing everyone a brighter tomorrow!

# ABSTRACT

A Study on the Buddhist Thought of Ven. Master Hongyi

By

Zijia Dong

Master Hongyi 弘一 (1880–1942), original name Li Shutong, was an outstanding representative of the Chinese modern cultural movement during the time of the Republic of China. One of the four renowned Buddhist monks from the Republic of China, he is widely considered to be the eleventh patriarch of the Vinaya school of Chinese Buddhism. He accomplished remarkable achievements in both the secular world and the Buddhist society. Not only during the period of the Republic of China but also today, Master Hongyi has been a very influential figure in Chinese Buddhism. This dissertation takes Master Hongyi's works as its main object of research. Referring to commemorative documents written by his relatives, friends, and students, the dissertation aims to analyze and present his profound thoughts on Buddhism and great contributions to Buddhism.

This dissertation first reviews the life and work of Master Hongyi and then explores the causes and conditions of his Buddhist ordination to analyze the characteristics and origins of his faith and beliefs with regard to Buddhism. On the level of his Buddhist thought, exploring his collation of the Nanshan Vinaya works, lectures and disseminations, and his practice of Vinaya precepts, it explores the connotations and



characteristics of Master Hongyi's thought on Buddhist precepts and presents his contributions to the Vinaya school of Chinese Buddhism. Further, based on Master Hongyi's commentaries, annotations, lectures, and letters to relatives and friends, this dissertation also discusses the ideological connotations and characteristics of Hongyi's thought in the Pure Land school and Huayan school. Through examining Master Hongyi's practice of reciting the Buddha's name in the Pure Land school and his interpretation of caring for the dying, this research explores Master Hongyi's views on living and dying. In addition, this dissertation also views in conjunction the compassionate spirit of Buddhism and the social environment of the time to study his views on protecting life and protecting the country. Regarding Buddhist social engagement, by exploring Master Hongyi's Yangzheng Yuan (養正院) in Xiamen and his cultivation of students, this dissertation analyzes his views on and contributions to the education of the sangha.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Although the Republic of China (1912–1949) is only a short period of several decades, it is a very important period in the history of China. The 1911 Revolution overthrew the rule of the Qing dynasty (1644–1912), ending the monarchy in China that lasted for more than two thousand years and establishing the Democratic Republic, or the Republic of China for short. The period of the Republic of China was not only a period of turbulence with internal and external troubles, but also a time full of opportunities and challenges for innovation. During this period, China’s political, economic, cultural and other social ideological trends and even people’s behavioral concepts underwent earth-shaking changes, and religion was no exception. As Wing-tsit Chan said in the book *Reliable Trends in Modern China*: “(In the time of Republic of China), religions of China started a new life... Chinese religion has new developments, new awakening moments, and new growth.”<sup>1</sup> This is particularly evident in Chinese Buddhism.

Buddhism came to China from ancient India around the 1st century CE. During the Wei (220-264 CE), Jin (265–317 CE) and Southern and Northern dynasties (386–589 CE), Buddhism underwent dissemination and popularization, and Buddhist classics and philosophies were interpreted and studied deeply. In the Sui (581–618 CE) and Tang dynasties (618–906 CE), eight major sects with Chinese characteristics were successively formed, and Buddhism reached its peak of development in China. During the Song (960–1279 CE) and Yuan (1279–1368 CE) dynasties, due to the lack of the philosophical input of Indian Buddhism and the lack of development of Buddhist philosophies in the eight

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<sup>1</sup> Wing-tsit Chan, *Religious Trends in Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), 2.

Chinese Buddhist sects, Chinese Buddhism did not witness significant achievements in Buddhist philosophy. In terms of religion, Chan Buddhism was the only sect in China that flourished. During the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing dynasties (1644–1911), as a result of advocating for the integration of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, the three religions were further culturally converged. In addition, with the rising of Exoteric Buddhism and the development of Buddhist rituals, the quality of the Buddhist monastic groups declined, and as a result, Buddhist studies became minimal. The development of Buddhism gradually declined, in a state of rapid collapse. Later, in the late Qing dynasty and the early years of the Republic of China, Buddhism fell into “ritual Buddhism,” “dead Buddhism” or “ghost religion.”<sup>2</sup> During the period of the Republic of China, Chinese Buddhism was thus described by Venerable Daojie (道階) in the “New Buddhist Youth Association” (佛化新青年会): “Only few Buddhist monasteries and temples were built in over thirty years. They were firstly suppressed by the Wuxu Reform (戊戌維新), then repressed by the Xinhai Revolution, thirdly were excluded by non-Buddhist religions, and fourthly were discriminated against by the new trend.”<sup>3</sup> This shows the seriousness of the survival crisis that Buddhism faced during the time of the Republic of China. As Taoists say, “When Yin reaches its extreme, it turns to Yang. When Yang reaches its extreme, it turns to Yin.” In the late Qing dynasty and the early Republic of China, Buddhism reached its lowest point in Chinese history. Therefore, it was a good opportunity for the development of Buddhism during the Republic of China but also a

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<sup>2</sup> Taixu 太虛, “Rensheng fojiao kaiti” 人生佛教開題, in *Taixu Dashi quanshu* 太虛大師全書 vol.5, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Taipei: Dafalun Chunbanshe, 1980), 218-219.

<sup>3</sup> Shi Dongchu 釋東初, “Minguo Zhaoxing yu fojiao xinsheng” 民國肇興與佛教新生, in *Minguo fojiaopian* 民國佛教篇, ed. Zhang Mantao 張漫濤 (Taipei: Dacheng wenhua, 1978), 50.



great challenge.

Looking back at history, in fact, the Republic of China was the best time for the revival of Chinese Buddhism, and it was also the most harvested period. During this period, Buddhism achieved fruitful results in the study of sutras, cultural promotion, education, and personal cultivation, as well as the repair and construction of monasteries, forming Buddhist organizations and monastic principles, and the establishment of morality. Although Master Hongyi (1880–1942) was born in the late Qing dynasty, throughout his entire religious life, from the time of ordaining as a Sangha member till death, all of his religious activities were carried out in the period of Republic of China. When discussing the revival of Chinese Buddhism during the time of the Republic of China or the People’s Republic of China, Master Hongyi cannot be overlooked.

Master Hongyi, whose lay family name was Li and given name Wentao, styled himself as Shutong. He was born in Tianjin in the sixth year of the Guangxu period of the Qing dynasty (1880).<sup>4</sup> Prior to his ordination as a Buddhist monk, Li Shutong was renowned for his outstanding talents and achievements in art, poetry, calligraphy, and seal cutting, as well as in music and drama. He was an eminent representative of the Chinese modern cultural movement. In 1918, Li Shutong received ordination to become a Buddhist monk in Hupao Temple (虎跑寺), Hangzhou.

After becoming a monk, Master Hongyi used the principle of "to uphold Huayan for the state of mind, to uphold the *Four-Division Vinaya* for practice, and to see Pure Land as the result."<sup>5</sup> Regarding the study and practice of Buddhism, in addition to in-

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<sup>4</sup> Master Hongyi is believed to be originally from Pinghu Zhejiang, but his birthplace could also have been in Shanxi or Tianjin.

<sup>5</sup> Shi Yihuan 釋亦幻, “Hongyi Dashi zai Baihu” 弘一大師在白湖, in *Hongyi Fashi faji*, vol.6, 弘一法師法集, ed. Cai Niansheng 蔡念生 (Taibei: Xinwenfeng chuban gufen youxian gongsi, 1988), 2572.

depth study of the Huayan school, Pure Land school, and Vinaya precepts, he also devoted himself to the reconsolidation of Buddhist literatures, the preaching and popularization of Buddhism, the promotion of Buddhist education, the cultivation of Buddhists, and the country-protection campaign of “remembering Buddhism and not forgetting to save the nation.” This had a tremendous impact on Chinese Buddhism in the Republic of China and even on society as a whole. Later generations also referred to him, along with Master Taixu, Master Yin’guang, and Master Xuyun, as counting among the four eminent monks of the Republic of China. Whether in the study of Buddhist philosophy or in the dissemination and promotion of Buddhism, Master Hongyi devoted the most time and effort to the study and promotion of the Nanshan Vinaya school, which became the most important part of his sangha life. Because of his role in the study of the Zhongxin Nanshan Vinaya school,<sup>6</sup> Master Hongyi is also known as the eleventh patriarch of the Vinaya school of Chinese Buddhism, which underscores his important role in Chinese Buddhism.

Li Shutong, as an outstanding representative of the modern cultural movement in modern China, made remarkable achievements in various fields such as culture and art. Why did he choose “dead Buddhism,” which had fallen into the status of a ritualized religion, instead of being “a secular man”<sup>7</sup>? What were the causes of Master Hongyi ordaining to become a Buddhist monk? From his ordination in 1918 at Hangzhou Runhu Temple to his death in the Wenling Nursing Home in Quanzhou in 1942, Master Hongyi devoted himself to the study and dissemination of Chinese Buddhism and the revival of

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<sup>6</sup> The Nanshan Vinaya school refers to the Dharmagupta-vinaya (*sifenli*) of the Tang dynasty, Ven. Daoxuan. Because he lived on Nanshan Mountain, later generations call it the Nanshan Vinaya school.

<sup>7</sup> Hongyi 弘一, “Nanmin shinian zhi mengying” 南閔十年之夢影, in *Li Shutong quanji* 李叔同全集 (Haerbin: Haerbin chubanshe, 2014), 60.

the Vinaya school in China, over twenty years of monastic life. What were his thoughts on the study of Vinaya? What other contributions did he make to the revival of the Chinese Vinaya Buddhist school? Although Master Hongyi is best known for his studies in Vinaya precepts, what other Buddhist thoughts did he have? In addition to focusing on his personal cultivation as a Buddhist monk, what contribution did Master Hongyi make to Buddhist education, the cultivation of Buddhists, and Chinese society in the face of chaos and unrest? What impact did he have on future generations?

This dissertation aims to explore and discuss Master Hongyi's concepts and thoughts on the Chinese Buddhist Vinaya sect, the Pure Land sect, and the Huayan sect. In addition, to comprehensively present the master's thoughts in the field of Buddhist studies, this dissertation also summarizes Master Hongyi's claims regarding Buddhist education, caring for life, protection of Buddhism, and other religious and social matters during his time.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Master Hongyi is one of the core figures in the modern Buddhist revival movement in China and has a decisive position in the history of modern Chinese Buddhism. In studies of modern Chinese Buddhism, Master Hongyi has always been an important figure to be studied. The earliest research on Master Hongyi was by Lin Ziqing (林子青) from the International Department of the Chinese Buddhist Association and the Research Department. On October 13, 1942, after Master Hongyi passed away at the Wenling Nursing Home in Quanzhou, Fujian Province, Lin published an article commemorating Master Hongyi. After visiting and writing letters to those who had in-depth contact with Master Hongyi, Lin published "The Chronicle of Master Hongyi" in September 1944, which became the earliest achievement in the study of Master Hongyi.<sup>8</sup> More than half a century has elapsed since then, and the research on Master Hongyi has yielded very fruitful results. According to incomplete statistics, many research articles have been published. From the perspective of time span, from the death of Master Hongyi till the present, studies on him and his life have never been interrupted. From the perspective of research content, the studies mainly involve different levels of the master's achievements in literature, poetry, music, art, and Buddhism. Various research has been done by the master's colleagues, teachers, fellow students, Dharma brothers, and scholars who have never met with him and only learned from the literature about Master Hongyi.

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<sup>8</sup> Zhu Xuchen 朱旭晨, "Shengming ningsi jieshuoguo, kaozheng pouxi jidacheng" 生命凝思結碩果 考證剖析集大成, in *Beixin jiaoji: Hongyi Fashi zhuan* 悲欣交集: 弘一法師傳 (Fuzhou: Fuzhou jiaoyu chubanshe, 2014), 14.

Many research institutes named after Master Hongyi and treating him as the main object of study have been established in China, mainly including the “Master Hongyi Research Association” of Shangyu, Zhejiang, “Li Shutong, the Master Hongyi Research Association” of Tianjin, “Master Hongyi and Feng Zikai Research Center” at Hangzhou Normal University, and “Master Hongyi Memorial Society” in Taiwan. At the same time, academic seminars have been held on the theme of Master Hongyi. For example, the “Master Hongyi Memorial Society” in Taiwan held four “Master Hongyi Society Meetings” and the “Master Hongyi and Feng Zikai Research Center” of Hangzhou Normal University also held six “Master Hongyi Research International Academic Conferences.” A review of these research results can be divided into the following sections:

### **Reorganization of Master Hongyi’s Works**

The main thought of Master Hongyi is reflected in his works. Therefore, to conduct a comprehensive study on Master Hongyi, reorganization of his works is necessary. Based on the existing publications, his works mainly include: *Hongyi dashi quanji*, published by Xinshijie Publishing House in 2013. This publication is divided into four volumes according to different contents: one volume of collective works on Buddhism, two volumes of letters, and one volume of literatures and poetry.<sup>9</sup> Harbin Publishing House published the *Complete Works of Li Shutong* in 2014. This publication is divided into 6 volumes based on the content of the work: one volume of Buddhist

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<sup>9</sup> Hongyi 弘一, *Hongyi Fashi quanji* 弘一法師全集 (Beijing: Xinshijie chubanshe, 2013).

miscellaneous works, including a collection of Master Hongyi's lectures, essays, miscellaneous notes, quotations from the proverbs, commentaries on sutras and vinaya texts, and various prefaces and serials; volumes 2 and 3 are on Buddhist scriptures—the second volume is *Review of Nanshan Vinaya School (Nanshanlü zaijia beilan 南山律在家備覽)*, and the third volume is a chronology and commentary on sutras. The fourth and fifth volumes are collections of his letters, and volume 6 is poetry and art works, including painting, calligraphy, seal engraving, literature, music, and poetry.<sup>10</sup>

The *Complete Collection of Master Hongyi* published by Fujian People's Publishing House in 2010 contains a total of ten volumes. The first volume is Buddhist discourses, including the *Sifenlü biqiu jixiangbiao ji 四分律比丘戒相表記*, *A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu's Precepts in the Dharmagupta Vinaya*, and his lectures and commentaries. The second to the seventh volumes are Master Hongyi's notes and explanation of the Buddhist scriptures. They include *An Abridged and Explanatory Commentary on the Dharmaguptakavinaya (四分律刪繁補缺行事鈔)*, *Additional Commentary on Dharmaguptavinaya (四分律行事鈔資持記, Sifenlü xingshichao zichiji fusangji shi 四分律行事鈔資持記扶桑集釋)*, *Explanation and Notes on the Dharmaguptavinaya (含注戒本疏)*, *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben shu xingzongji 四分律含注戒本疏行踪記*, *Sifenlü shanbu suiiji jiemo shu 四分律刪補隨機羯磨疏*, *Sifenlü shanbu suiiji jiemo suijiang bielü 四分律刪補隨機羯磨隨講別錄*, *Sifenlü shibini yichao 四分律拾毘尼義鈔*, *Sifenlü biqiuni chao 四分律比丘尼鈔*, *Commentary to the Chapter on the Bodhisattva Precepts in the Sutra of Brahma's Net (梵網經菩薩戒本疏)*, and

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<sup>10</sup> Hongyi 弘一, *Li Shutong quanji 李叔同全集* (Haerbin: Haerbin chubanshe, 2014).

*Foshuo youpose wujiexiang jing jianyao* 佛說優婆塞五戒相經箋要. In addition, the seventh volume also includes the *Huayan jiliao* 華嚴集聊, as well as his presentations, biography, prefaces and postscripts. The eighth volume is literature, miscellaneous notes, and music by Master Hongyi. The ninth volume is a calligraphy volume, including Master Hongyi's calligraphy, painting, carving, and other works. The tenth volume is the appendix, collecting the research and commemorative literatures about Master Hongyi by his friends and students in the field of Buddhism, culture, and arts.<sup>11</sup>

*Hongyi dashi faji* 弘一大師法集 compiled and edited by Cai Niansheng was published by Taiwan's Xinwenfeng Publishing Co., Ltd. It is divided into six volumes, including Master Hongyi's explanation on Buddhist sutras, essays, a compilation of famous quotes, and an appendix. The first volume includes: *Xinjing dayi* 心經大意, *Yaoshijing xiyi* 藥師經析疑, *Huayan jiliao sanbai* 華嚴集聊三百, *Yuanjue qizhang* 圓覺起章, and *Sifenlü biqiu jiexiang biaoji* 四分律比丘戒相表記. The second volume includes: *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian* 南山律在家備覽略編, *Wujie xiangben jing jianyao bushi* 五戒相本經箋要補釋, *Dizang pusa shengde daguan* 地藏菩薩聖德大觀, and *Ouyi dashi nianpu* 藕益大師年譜. The third volume includes: *Lüxue jianglu sanshisan pian* 律學講錄三十三篇, *Nanshanlü yuanwenji* 南山律苑文集 and *Hongyi dashi yanjiang ji* 弘一大師演講集. The fourth volume includes: *Hongyi dashi yanjiangji xulu* 弘一大師演講集續錄, *Wanqing shanfang shujian* 晚晴山房書簡, *Wanqing shanfang shufang shu jianxieben* 晚晴山房書簡寫本, *Qingliang geji* 清涼歌集, *Geyan*

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<sup>11</sup> Hongyi 弘一, *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010).

*bielu* 格言別錄, *Hongyi dashi bieji* 弘一大師別集. The fifth volume includes: *Husheng huaji* 護生畫集 and *Nianpu* 年譜, and the sixth volume is *Yonghuai ji* 永懷集 and *Buyi* 補遺.<sup>12</sup>

Based on the four major publications mentioned above, we can see the span of the studies on Master Hongyi is extensive; the number of works and the variety of subjects are extraordinary. In general, Master Hongyi's works can be divided into: Buddhist commentaries, miscellaneous articles, literary poems, letters, and arts. Among the four publications, the *Complete Collection of Master Hongyi* published by Fujian People's Publishing House not only includes all of his works, but also includes the master's notes on the Nanshan Vinaya, as well as his music, calligraphy, seals, and paintings in the form of pictures. It can be seen to be the most comprehensive collection of works that truly reflects Master Hongyi's thoughts and life.

In addition to the four publications mentioned above, there are many other individual studies on the subject matter of Master Hongyi's works. For example: *Hongyi dashi wenchao* 弘一大師文抄 edited by Li Fangyuan,<sup>13</sup> *Hongyi dashi Li Shutong shuxin ji* 弘一大師李叔同書信集,<sup>14</sup> *Hongyi dashi Li Shutong yinyue ji* 弘一大師李叔同音樂集,<sup>15</sup> *Hongyi dashi Li Shutong yanjiang ji* 弘一大師李叔同演講集 edited by Qin Qiming,<sup>16</sup> and *Hongyi dashi shici quanjie* 弘一大師詩詞全解, edited by Xu Zhenglun.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Cai Niansheng 蔡念生, ed., *Hongyi Dashi faji* 弘一大師法集 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1976).

<sup>13</sup> Li Fangyuan 李芳遠, ed., *Hongyi Dashi wenchao* 弘一大師文鈔 (Taipei: Tianhua chuban gongsi, 1989).

<sup>14</sup> Qin Qiming 秦啟明, ed., *Hongyi Dashi Li Shutong shuxinji* 弘一大師李叔同書信集 (Xi'an: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1991).

<sup>15</sup> Qin Qiming 秦啟明, ed., *Hongyi Dashi Li Shutong yinyueji* 弘一大師李叔同音樂集 (Taipei: Huiju chubanshe, 1991).

<sup>16</sup> Qin Qiming 秦啟明, ed., *Hongyi Dashi Li Shutong yanjiangji* 弘一大師李叔同演講集 (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1993).

<sup>17</sup> Xu Zhenglun 徐正綸, ed., *Hongyi Dashi shici quanjie* 弘一大師詩詞全解 (Taipei: Sanmin shuju, 2015).



In addition, there are many books that are individually published on the works of Master Hongyi's Buddhist thought, i.e., *Yu Hongyi fashi tanrensheng* 与弘一法师谈人生, *Li Shutong shuofu* 李叔同说佛, *Li Shutong tanchan lunfo* 李叔同谈禅论佛, and *Zhongguoren de chanxiu* 中国人的禅修. Although these books were published in a monograph format, they did not go beyond the coverage of *Hongyi dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集 published by Fujian People's Publishing House. Therefore, this review does not include these works in the scope of the study.

## **Studies on Master Hongyi**

As mentioned earlier, studies on Master Hongyi started at his death. There continue to be fruitful achievements in this field to the present day. Based on the content of the studies, they can be divided into categories as below:

### **Monographs**

#### **Studies on the Life of Master Hongyi**

There are two ways to study the life of Master Hongyi: one is to use literary methods to present the life of Master Hongyi; the other is to use scholarly methods to explore the life of Master Hongyi. The former category mainly includes: *Banshi wenren banshi seng: Li Shutong* 半世文人半世僧: 李叔同 by Jiang Xinhai,<sup>18</sup> *Jin Mei's beixin*

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<sup>18</sup> Jiang Xinhai 蒋心海, *Banshi wenren banshi seng: Li Shutong* 半世文人半世僧: 李叔同 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2012).

*jiaoji: Hongyi fashi zhuan* 悲欣交集：弘一法師傳<sup>19</sup> and *Yueyin qianjiang: Hongyi fashi Li Shutong dazhuan* 月印千江：弘一法師李叔同大傳,<sup>20</sup> *Li Shutong* 李叔同 by Su Hongyue,<sup>21</sup> *Ai shi cibe: Hongyi fashi zhuan* 愛是慈悲：弘一法師傳 by Wan Qing.<sup>22</sup> The latter mainly includes: Chen Xing's *Fangcao biliantian: Hongyi dashi zhuan* 芳草碧連天：弘一大師傳,<sup>23</sup> *Baima hupan hua Hongyi* 白馬湖畔話弘一,<sup>24</sup> *Shuobujin de Li Shutong* 說不盡的李叔同,<sup>25</sup> *Hongyi dashi kaolun* 弘一大師考論,<sup>26</sup> Chen Huijian's *Hongyi dashi lun* 弘一大師論,<sup>27</sup> *Hongyi dashi zhuan* 弘一大師傳,<sup>28</sup> Lin Ziqing's *Hongyi fashi nianpu* 弘一法師年譜<sup>29</sup> and Xu Xingping's *Hongyi dashi* 弘一大師.<sup>30</sup>

Literary works mainly illustrate the characteristics and thoughts of Master Hongyi through the reconstruction of scenes and story plots, which includes the author's excessive imagination. Thus, such depictions are based on the author's reshaping of the figure. When compared to the figure in reality, there are certain distortions. Therefore, in academic research, this type of work is not supposed to be studied as the foundation because of a lack of objectivity and rigor. Hence, this dissertation only uses the works of

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<sup>19</sup> Jin Mei 金梅, *Joys and Sorrows: The Biography of Master Hongyi* (Houston: Publish on Demand Global, LLC, America, 2013).

<sup>20</sup> Jin Mei 金梅, *Yueyin qianjiang: Hongyi Fashi Li Shutong dazhuan* 月印千江：弘一法師李叔同大傳 (Beijing: Jincheng chubanshe, 2014).

<sup>21</sup> Su Hongyue 蘇泓, *Li Shutong* 李叔同 (Beijing: Beijing lianhe chubanshe, 2017).

<sup>22</sup> Wan Qing 苑晴, *Aishi cibe: Hongyi Fashi zhuan* 愛是慈悲：弘一法師傳 (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao chubanshe, 2017).

<sup>23</sup> Chen Xing 陳星, *Fangcao biliantian: Hongyi Dashi zhuan* 芳草碧連天：弘一大師傳 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gufen youxiangongsi, 2001).

<sup>24</sup> Chen Xing 陳星, *Baima hupan hua Hongyi* 白馬湖畔話弘一 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gufen youxiangongsi, 2002).

<sup>25</sup> Chen Xing 陳星, *Shuobujinde Li Shutong* 說不盡的李叔同 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> Chen Xing 陳星, *Hongyi Dashi kaolun* 弘一大師考論 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 2002).

<sup>27</sup> Chen Huijian 陳慧劍, *Hongyi Dashi lun* 弘一大師論 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gufen youxiangongsi, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> Chen Huijian 陳慧劍, *Hongyi Dashi zhuan* 弘一大師傳 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gufen youxiangongsi, 2006).

<sup>29</sup> Lin Ziqing 林子青, *Hongyi Fashi nianpu* 弘一法師年譜 (Taipei: Tianhua chuban gongsi, 1995).

<sup>30</sup> Xu Xingping 徐星平, *Hongyi Dashi* 弘一大師 (Taipei: Shangding wenhua chubanshe, 1993).

the first category as references in the research process, not as a basis for the research.

## Studies on the Non-Buddhist Thoughts of Master Hongyi

Besides his massive works on Buddhism, Master Hongyi also wrote on secular and worldly subjects, which are considered non-Buddhist works in this dissertation. This research on the non-Buddhist studies of Master Hongyi refers to the study of Master Hongyi's thought on subjects including his achievements in literature, poetry, music, calligraphy, and seal cutting. In the past one hundred years, research on Master Hongyi's non-Buddhist achievements has also been fruitful; the contents involved each field that Master Hongyi engaged in.

In the field of literature and poetry, Xu Zhenglun wrote *Hongyi dashi shici quanjie* 弘一大師詩詞全解.<sup>31</sup> In the field of music, there is *Li Shutong gequ xunyi* 李叔同歌曲尋繹 by Chen Xing<sup>32</sup> and *Hongyi dashi gequ ji* 弘一大師歌曲集 by Qian Renkang.<sup>33</sup> In the field of fine arts, Chen Xing wrote *Hongyi dashi huihua yanjiu* 弘一大師繪畫研究.<sup>34</sup> In addition, *Li Shutong—Hongyi dashi yanjiu yibainian* 李叔同—弘一大師研究一百年 by Cao Bula is a relatively comprehensive research work. It mainly deals with the biography of Master Hongyi, his image as a contemporary eminent monk, his artistic characteristics, and achievements. Master Hongyi's Buddhist thoughts are also briefly explained.<sup>35</sup> Since this dissertation mainly studies the Buddhist thought of Master

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<sup>31</sup> Xu Zhenglun 徐正綸, *Hongyi Dashi shici quanji* 弘一大師詩詞全集 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gufeng youxiangongsi, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> Chen Xing 陳星, *Li Shutong gequ xunyi* 李叔同歌曲尋繹 (Taipei: Shijie wenwu chubanshe, 1994).

<sup>33</sup> Qian Renkang 錢仁康, *Hongyi Dashi gequji* 弘一大師歌曲集 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 1993).

<sup>34</sup> Chen Xing 陳星, *Hongyi Dashi huihua yanjiu* 弘一大師繪畫研究 (Taiyuan: Beiyue wenyi chubanshe, 2006).

<sup>35</sup> Cao Bula 曹布拉, *Li Shutong: Hongyi Dashi yanjiu yibainian* 李叔同：弘一大師研究一百年 (Beijing:

Hongyi, it does not elaborate on the study of his non-Buddhist thoughts and achievements.

## Studies on the Buddhist Thought of Master Hongyi

Although Master Hongyi has advanced talents and accomplishments in many academic fields, the most influential is his achievements in Buddhism. However, there are only a few monographs on the study of his Buddhist thought. Among the previous studies, there is only one book written by Xu Cheng, *Hongyi dashi foxue sixiang lunshu* 弘一大師佛學思想論述. This book is based on empirical evidence and applies analysis to comprehensively and faithfully describe the various aspects of Master Hongyi's Buddhist thought. It also provides a unique summary of Master Hongyi's Buddhist thought and corrects popular misunderstandings of Master Hongyi. It lays an ideological foundation for further research in studies of Master Hongyi regarding art and culture.<sup>36</sup>

In studies of the Chinese Buddhist Vinaya school and modern Chinese Buddhism, some studies on Master Hongyi's thought can be found, mainly including *Zhonghua fojiao shi: Jindai fojiao shijuan* 中華佛教史：近代佛教史卷 by Ma Tianxiang. It briefly explains Master Hongyi's life, the development of his thought, and his thoughts on Buddhism.<sup>37</sup> Wang Jianguang also has chapters in his publications—*Zhongguo lizong tongshi* 中國律宗通史 and *Zhongguo fojiao tongshi* 中國佛教通史 (volume Fifteen) —to mainly describe Master Hongyi's life, activities in the movement

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Fangzhi chubanshe, 2005).

<sup>36</sup> Xu Cheng 徐承, *Hongyi Dashi foxue sixiang lunshu* 弘一大師佛學思想論述 (Beijing: Tuanjie chubanshe, 2009).

<sup>37</sup> Ma Tianxiang 麻天祥, *Zhonghua fojiao shi: Jindai fojiao shi jian* 中華佛教史：近代佛教史卷 (Taiyuan: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 2014), 249-261.

of Chinese Buddhist Vinaya school, Buddhist works, Buddhist thought, and contributions in Chinese Buddhist Vinaya school.<sup>38</sup> Compared to non-monograph works on Master Hongyi, Wang Jianguang's research on Master Hongyi is relatively comprehensive. However, due to its own limitations, it is still impossible to fully grasp the Buddhist thought of Master Hongyi.<sup>39</sup> In Li Jiwu's book, *Yijie weishi—Lüzong jiqi zuting* 以戒為師—律宗及其祖庭, there is a chapter on Master Hongyi titled “Minguo lüzong Hongyi dashi” 民國律宗弘一大師. However, in its content, it mainly states the life of Master Hongyi based on common knowledge.<sup>40</sup> Han Min's *Minguo fojiao jielü yanjiu* 民國佛教戒律研究 studies the Chinese Buddhist vinaya precepts, the status of the Sangha vinaya system, the opportunities and challenges they faced, reforms and their characteristics during the period of the Republic of China. Inevitably, this work engages with Master Hongyi's thought regarding Buddhist Vinaya, but it lacks an individual chapter on Master Hongyi. Instead, various parts of the book discuss Master Hongyi's Buddhist thought. Therefore, it cannot directly and comprehensively present the Buddhist thought of Master Hongyi.<sup>41</sup>

## Peer-reviewed Research

### Journal Articles

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<sup>38</sup> Wang Jianguang 王建光, *Zhongguo lüzong tongshi* 中國律宗通史 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2008), 513-525.

<sup>39</sup> Lai Yonghai 賴永海, ed., *Zhongguo fojiao tongshi* 中國佛教通史 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2010), 337-372.

<sup>40</sup> Li Jiwu 李繼武, *Yijie weishi: lüzong jiqi zuting* 以戒為師：律宗及其祖庭 (Xian: Xian dianzi keji daxue chubanshe, 2016), 158-165.

<sup>41</sup> Han Min 韓敏, *Minguo fojiao jielü yanjiu* 民國佛教戒律研究 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2016).

Compared with research monographs, journal articles play a major part in this research field. As mentioned above, at the time of writing there have been at least a thousand research papers on Master Hongyi. The content involves various aspects of research on Master Hongyi. Here, we only discuss the papers related to Master Hongyi's Buddhist thought. According to content, the papers can be divided into the following categories:

Research and studies on the life of Master Hongyi: i.e., Cai Huiming's "Xiamianzun yu Hongyi dashi" 夏丕尊與弘一大師, Chen Wangheng's "Hongyi dashi chengfo zhilu" 弘一大師成佛之路, Chen Xing's "Hongyi dashi kaolun santi" 弘一大師考論三題.

Studies on the causes and conditions of Master Hongyi's Buddhist monastic ordination include: Dai Jiaxuan's "Wujin qizhen gong shiyan yilun yuanyue yao tianxin—Li Shutong—Hongyi fashi shengping sixiang ji chujia yinyuan xi" 無盡奇珍供世眼—李叔同—弘一法師生平思想暨出家因緣析 and Liu Jihan's "Jueshi tan'ai qufo puti—Hongyi dashi chujia yinyuan weitan" 絕世貪愛·趣佛菩提—弘一大師出家因緣探微.

Studies on Master Hongyi's thoughts on and contributions to the Chinese Buddhist Vinaya school include: Cai Huiming's "Hongyi lüshi yu lüxue" 弘一律師與律學, "Hongyi lüshi yu nanshanlü" 弘一律師與南山律, "Hongyi lüshi de lüxue chengjiu" 弘一律師的律學成就, and "Hongyi dashi jielü sixiang shuoyuan" 弘一大師戒律思想溯源, Gao Lingyin's "Shilun Hongyi dashi de lüxue sixiang" 試論弘一大師的律學思想, Jiqun's "Hongyi dashi dui lüxue de gongxian" 弘一大師對律學的貢獻, Liu Jihan's

“Chongxing nanshanlü, fangze bian daqian—Jinian Hongyi dashi danchen yibai wushi zhounian” 重興南山律，芳澤遍大千—紀念弘一大師誕辰一百十五週年，“Hongyi dashi zhu <Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüepian> dui zaijia jushi zhi tishi yu tese” 弘一大師著<南山律在家備覽略篇>對在家居士之提示與特色，Ma Haiyan’s “Hongyi dashi yu ‘nanshan lüzong dishiyi shiyi shizu’ lunxi” 弘一大師與“南山律宗第十一世祖”論析，Shen Quji’s “Hongyi fashi dui fojiao lüzong zhi yanjiu” 弘一法師對佛教律宗之研究，Shi Zhaohui’s “Hongyi dashi zhi shengping xingchi ji lüxue yanjiu—Zhuangyan jiefa she zhufang” 弘一大師之生平行持及律學研究—莊嚴戒筏攝諸方，“Hongyi dashi zhi yanlü yu honglü” 弘一大師之研律與弘律，“Shilun nanshan lüjia zhi ‘dacheng yuanjiao’ jieti lun—Wei jinian Hongyi dashi ‘zhuanhong nanshan’ erzuo” 試論南山律家之“大乘圓教”戒體論—為紀念弘一大師“專弘南山”而作，“Hongyi dashi zhu <Sifenlü biqu jiexiang biaoji> zai lüxueshang zhi diwei yu tese” 弘一大師著<四分律比丘戒相表記>在律學上之地位與特色。

Studies on Master’s thought regarding the Pure Land school include:

“Dingheng’s Hongyi dashi de jingtu sixiang” 弘一大師的淨土思想，Hong Xiuping’s “Cong ‘nianfochan’ kan Hongyi fashi xiuxi nianfo famen sixiang” 從“念佛禪”看弘一法師修習念佛法門思想，Huang Xia’nian’s “Hongyi fashi yu nianfo famen” 弘一法師與念佛法門，Shi Huiguan’s “Hongyi dashi nianfo zhi dianfan” 弘一大師念佛之典範，Yang Ziming’s “Hongyi dashi dui linzhong guanhuai wangsheng de zhunian de kanfa” 弘一大師對臨終關懷往生的助念的看法，Huang Jiazhang’s “Yinguang dui Hongyi de sixiang yingxiang yu hongyi de xinyang guizong” 印光對弘一的思想影響與弘一的信

仰歸宗.

Studies on Master's Huayan thought include: Dai Jiakuan's "Hongyi dashi de huayan sixiang jiqi xingyuan caiwei" 弘一大師的華嚴思想及其行願採微, Du Huangyue's "Hongyi dashi huayan sixiang mailuo zhi xunyi" 弘一大師華嚴思想脈絡之尋繹, Gong Jun's "Hongyi dashi 'huayan sixiang' zhi tanjiu yu guixiang" 弘一大師“華嚴思想”之探究與歸向, and Japanese scholar Takuya Kubo's "Hongyi fashi zhi neishan wanzao shuxin sanfeng ji 'Huayanjing shulun zuanyao' jia Hongyi fashi wengao yipian" 弘一法師致內山完造書信三封及《華嚴經疏論纂要》夾弘一法師文稿一篇.

Studies on the master's views on Sangha education include: Li Qinghua's "Min'guo sida gaoseng xing Fujian de sengjiaoyu" 民國四大高僧與福建的僧教育, Shi Guangyi's "Hongyi dashi jiaoyu guan 弘一大師教育觀, as well as Li Ai and Dao Hong's "Cong fojiao yangzhengyuan kan Hongyi dashi de sengjiaoyu sixiang" 從佛教養正院看弘一大師的僧教育思想.

Further, there are journal articles studying Master Hongyi's thought in Buddhism from various aspects, for instance, Lin Qingliang's "Hongyi dashi "lü" "jing" bense zhi yanjiu yu shijian—<Hongyi dashi chijie nianfo zhi dianfan> jianjie" 弘一大師“律”“淨”本色之研究與實踐—<弘一大師持戒念佛之典範>簡介 summarizes the combination of Master Hongyi's thoughts on the Vinaya school and Pure Land school. Chen Yongge's "Lun Hongyi dashi de xinyang tezhi jiqi yuanyuan" 論弘一大師的信仰特質及其淵源 analyzes the characteristics and origins of his beliefs based on religious interpretations. Dai Jiakuan's "Hongyi dashi foxue sixiang dui chuantong ruxue de sheru yu yuanrong" 弘一大師佛學思想對傳統儒學的攝入與圓融 explains Master Hongyi's



thought based on the combination of his views in Buddhism and Daoism. Tan Jie’s “Lun Hongyi fashi de fojiao lunli sixiang” 論弘一法師的佛教倫理思想 analyzes the master’s views on Buddhism from the aspect of morality. Ge Wujue’s “Hongyi dashi ‘Wenzhou shinian’ sengsu daoyi helun” 弘一大師“溫州十年”僧俗道誼合論 and Han Bingfang’s “Hongyi fashi yu jushi fojiao” 弘一法師與居士佛教 discusses the master’s thought on the relationship between monastics and lay Buddhists. Haibo’s “Beixi jiaoji—Hongyi fashi shengsiguan tanmi” 悲欣交集—弘一法師生死觀探秘 analyzes the master’s thoughts on living and dying. Weijun’s “Nianfo buwang jiuguo de Hongyi dashi” 念佛不忘救國的弘一大師 not only covers the master’s views on Pure Land school, but also discusses his thoughts on protection of the country.

### **Publications at Academic Conferences**

In addition to journal articles, many academic seminars have been hosted to present research results on Master Hongyi. Among them, “Haixia liang’an yanjiu Hongyi dashi zhongyao xueshu yantaohui” 海峽兩岸研究弘一大師重要學術研討會 has been held four times by the Institution of Master Hongyi’s Virtue of Taiwan to date. Published papers in the first and second conferences were compiled into the book *Hongyi dashi youguan renwu lunwen ji* 弘一大師有關人物論文集.<sup>42</sup> And the papers from third and fourth conferences were compiled into the book *Hongyi dashi renye yu sixiang lunwen ji* 弘一大師人格與思想論文集.<sup>43</sup> Both books are now published. Moreover, there is

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<sup>42</sup> Chen Huijian 陳慧劍, ed., *Hongyi Dashi youguan renwu lunwenji* 弘一大師有關人物論文集 (Taipei: Taiwan Hongyi dashi dexuehui, 1998).

<sup>43</sup> Hou Qiudong 侯秋東, ed., *Hongyi Fashi renye yu sixiang lunwenji* 弘一法師人格與思想論文集 (Taipei:

“Hongyi dashi yanjiu guoji xueshu huiyi” 弘一大師研究國際學術會議 organized by Master Hongyi and Feng Zikai Research Institute 弘一大師、豐子愷研究中心 at Hangzhou Normal University 杭州师范大学. The conference has held six sessions so far. These conferences have discussed and exchanged ideas on Master Hongyi’s view on Buddhism, art, literature, and poetry from different perspectives.

In summary, studies on Master Hongyi include fruitful and outstanding accomplishments. The content of past research covers all of the fields that Master Hongyi had engaged in. Based on the presentation of the results, most of the works are journal articles, which implies the lack of monographs in studies on Master Hongyi. From the content of the studies, it can be seen that studies on the master’s accomplishments in arts and literature are far more numerous than the studies on his influences in Buddhism. Furthermore, the previous studies on his Buddhist thought barely take on the master’s status and accomplishments in both his lay and monastic life as the foundation of analysis.

From the aspect of studies on Master Hongyi’s Buddhist views, the main subject is his thought in the study of vinaya. Some studies also discuss his views regarding the Huayan and Pure Land schools. However, there is rarely a monograph systematically and individually working on Master Hongyi’s Buddhist views. Based on this research context, this dissertation sets Master Hongyi’s views and studies on Buddhism as the object, conducting research in the fields of the Vinaya school, Pure Land school, Huayan school, protection of life, protection of the country, and Sangha education, in order to provide a systematic study of Master Hongyi’s views and contributions in Buddhism.

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Taiwan Hongyi dashi dexuehui, 2008).

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This dissertation focuses on the Buddhist views of Master Hongyi and elucidates his life events, activities, and thoughts on Buddhism. Accordingly, a comprehensive grasp of Master Hongyi is required. In terms of research methodology, this dissertation mainly uses literature as its research object to conduct a thorough analysis of the body of literature. Using methods of sociology and philosophical speculation, this dissertation provides a comprehensive understanding of the Buddhist thought of Master Hongyi, from political, economic, cultural, and other perspectives.

The literature on which this paper is based can be generally divided into two categories: the first includes poetry, letters, and Buddhist writings written by Master Hongyi, and the second contains his life stories, Buddhist thoughts, and commentaries written by his relatives and friends. The life and accomplishments of Master Hongyi are mainly reflected in the letters and miscellaneous notes collected in *Hongyi dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集. Meanwhile, through combining an analysis of commemorative articles written by the master's relatives, friends and students, this dissertation aims to produce a correct account of the master's life. In order to comprehensively present the Buddhist thought of Master Hongyi, this dissertation discusses the master's philosophy in the Vinaya school, the Pure Land school, the Huayan school, and the idea of protecting the nation in the volume *Foxue* 佛學 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集.

Furthermore, the contributions of Master Hongyi to Buddhism is also reviewed in this dissertation. Master Hongyi has exerted profound influence on the education of the Sangha and the reestablishment of the Nanshan Vinaya school in Chinese Buddhism,

which is analyzed based on journal articles on the period of Republic of China and commemorative articles by the master's relatives, friends, and students. The analysis will be presented in the context of politics, economics, culture, and society at that time. Only through an understanding of the social background of Master Hongyi's time can this dissertation provide an accurate and correct insight of Master Hongyi's contributions.

Master Hongyi's Buddhist thoughts cover a wide range of topics, and their specific contents are scattered across various literature works. His different Buddhist thoughts are mentioned and discussed in the same literature. Therefore, it is necessary to classify relevant documents according to the main contents and themes they are expounding. Meanwhile, various types of documents need to be compared according to their chronological order, to discover the formation and developmental process of Master Hongyi's Buddhist thoughts and to grasp his thought comprehensively.

As a well-known and influential intellectual in the Republic of China, Master Hongyi made great achievements in painting, music, and even education. What was the reason for him to renounce his wife and son to become a monk? What was the reason for him to choose the Nanshan Vinaya School as the method of his study and practice among numerous Buddhist schools and traditions? In what kind of context were Master Hongyi's education and patriotism born? To answer this series of questions, this study must first understand the social environment during the time in which Master Hongyi lived, to review the influence of the political system of the Republic of China on culture and education, the economic situation of society, and the suffering of the people. In addition, the devastation of Buddhism since the Ming and Qing dynasties and the damage caused by imperialist aggression inflicted on the Chinese nation should also be included in the

process of understanding the social and cultural situation during Master Hongyi's time, since all of these factors had an impact on Master Hongyi's life choices, his Buddhist practice, and career path.

Therefore, in the study of Master Hongyi, in addition to the exploration of his Buddhist thoughts in the literature, we need to combine sociological methods to understand the contemporary social background and use psychological methods to analyze Master Hongyi's psychological reactions to different social environments. This research will thus first analyze the political, economic, cultural, and other social factors in Master Hongyi's time. Only by carefully grasping the social and historical background at the time can we make an accurate evaluation of Master Hongyi's thought.

### **Limitations**

As Deng Zimei commented, "The study of contemporary Chinese Buddhism is not difficult because of lacking data but because of the intensive variety of the data."<sup>44</sup> Studies of Master Hongyi are no exception. Master Hongyi himself engaged in various fields that covers literature, poetry, Buddhism, music, opera and stage performing, calligraphy, and seal cutting. His views and contributions in each one of these fields can be studied alone from a scholastic standpoint. Therefore, to be able to research any of these subjects, the researcher needs professional knowledge of the subject, which makes the research work very difficult.

Secondly, the analysis of various literature is also difficult. The research on Master Hongyi unavoidably needs to analyze the articles and essays by the Master

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<sup>44</sup> Han Min 韓敏, *Minguo fojiao jielü yanjiu* 民國佛教戒律研究 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2016), 11.

himself and his relatives, friends, and students, as well as journals during the time of Republic of China. Therefore, the amount of literature to be reviewed is very large. Furthermore, the authenticity, rigor and consistency of the literature need to be tested and verified, which involves a huge amount of intensive and time-consuming work as well.

This dissertation focuses on the Buddhist views of Master Hongyi, but due to the difficulties that are mentioned above, it will only deal with the main views and contributions that Master Hongyi had in Chinese Buddhism, mainly in the school of Nanshan Vinaya, Pure Land, Huayan, Sangha education, and his views on protection of sangha and the country. It will produce comprehensive research and discussion of Master Hongyi's spiritual heritage and provide an important reference for the development of modern Chinese Buddhism.

## CHAPTER 4: FROM LI SHUTONG TO MASTER

### HONGYI

The end of the Qing dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China was a period of social unrest; however, it was also when talented Chinese people were introduced to the world. Master Hongyi is a shining star of this period. When he was known as Li Shutong in the secular world, he was not only proficient in poetry, music, and calligraphy but also started the first music publication in China and founded the earliest modern drama club in China. He further introduced Western music composition and Western painting to China. He is a pioneer in modern Chinese art and many other art fields in China.

Master Hongyi, in his role as a Buddhist monk, was a paragon of his times both in the study of Buddhism and in the practice of Buddhist Vinaya. He, together with Master Xuyun, Master Yin'guang, and Master Taixu, are known as the four prominent monks of the late Qing dynasty and the early Republic of China. Because of his role in the propagation of the study of Nanshan Vinaya in Chinese Buddhism, he is known as the eleventh patriarch of the Nanshan Vinaya School. Master Hongyi played a critical role in modern Chinese Buddhism: the reason why he could achieve such accomplishments is related to his special life experience, as Lin Ziqing wrote in his *The Chronicle of Master Hongyi*:

The Master studied Confucianism first and later embraced Buddhism. He was skilled in poems and writing. His talents in Western paintings and music composition have been highly praised in the art field for a long time. After taking tonsure, all the habits from his secular life were

cleansed and purified, and only Buddhist writings were read and studied. Not only focusing on books, he also concentrated on his spiritual development—mental purification and the attainment of inner peace. He only met people who were quite important. However, the master considered promoting the Buddhist Dharma to be urgent. He believed that one could live up to expectations by emphasizing propagation of Dharma texts.<sup>45</sup>

To fully understand Buddhist thought of Master Hongyi, it is necessary to start from his life story. As far as the life experience of Master Hongyi is concerned, it can be divided into two stages, namely, 1) the life of Li Shutong—the secular life before he was ordained as a Buddhist monk, and 2) the life of Master Hongyi, who strictly adhered to the Buddhist vinaya and greatly promoted the vinaya after becoming a monk.

#### 4.1. The Life of Master Hongyi

Master Hongyi, whose original surname was Li, was born in Tianjin in the sixth year of Guangxu period (1880). His childhood name was Chengxi, his formal name was Guanghou, his first name was Shutong (書同), and his other name was Shutong (漱筒).<sup>46</sup>

Master Hongyi's ancestral tree in the secular world has been difficult to examine.

According to Lin Ziqing, when he asked Master Hongyi's nephew, Li Shengzhang (also known as Linyu), Li mentioned that the master's ancestral home was in Shanxi.<sup>47</sup>

However, the calligraphy book, *Tang jingyan sima zhenji* 唐靜岩司馬真跡 by Tang

Yuhou, who taught Master when he was seventeen years old, was named by Tang as

“Danghu Li Chengxi” (當湖李成蹊). Danghu is another name for Pinghu. Meanwhile,

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<sup>45</sup> Lin Ziqing 林子青, “Author's Preface” 自序, in *Hongyi Fashi nianpu* 弘一法師年譜 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1995), 2.

<sup>46</sup> Lin Ziqing 林子青, “*Dashi xingming biehao ji qi jiaoshu gailue*” 大師姓名、別號及其家屬概略, in *Hongyi Fashi nianpu* 弘一法師年譜 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1995), 1.

<sup>47</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Fashi nianpu*, 1.



when Master Hongyi participated in the Gengzi, Xinchou Enzheng township examinations (庚子、辛丑恩正並科鄉試) in autumn of the 28th year of the Guangxu period (1902), Master Hongyi belonged to Pinghu County of Jiaxing, Zhejiang Province. Therefore, it can be confirmed that the ancestral home of Master Hongyi is Pinghu, Zhejiang Province.

Master Hongyi was born in the sixth year of the Guangxu period (1880) on October 23 (lunar date: September 20), in the former residence of Lujia Hutong (陸家胡同), located in front of Dizang Nunnery in the Hedong area of Tianjin. His father, Li Shizhen (李世珍), also known as Xiaolou (筱樓), was the imperial scholar (進士 *jìnshi*) of the fourth year of the Tongzhi period (1856–1875 CE) in the Qing dynasty (1644–1912 CE) and was the chief of the Ministry of Personnel. Later, he resigned and inherited his father's business, mainly in the salt industry, in Tianjin. He later founded a local bank and gained immense wealth to become one of the richest men in Tianjin. In the same year, Li Shutong's father was sixty-eight years old, while his mother, Wang, was only nineteen-years old. His mother used to be a maid of Li Shizhen and later became his concubine. Known as the later generation, Li Shutong was named Li Wentao in his childhood and was the youngest son of Li Shizhen, the third son in the Li family. At the age of five, his father passed away and Li Shutong was raised by his mother Wang and his brothers.

At the age of seven (that is, in 1886), Li Shutong began to receive primary education from his second brother, Wenxi, through a traditional Chinese education approach. His daily learning was based on books including *Jade Record* (玉曆寶鈔 *Yuli baochao*), *Baixiao tu* 百孝圖, *Fanxing pian* 返性篇, and *Geyan lianbi* 格言聯璧, and

other works. Meanwhile, he also studied *Selections of Refined Literature* (昭明文選 *Zhaoming wenxuan*), *Classic of Filial Piety* (孝經 *Xiao jing*), *Four Books* (四書 *Si shu*), *Erya* 爾雅, *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字, *Shihan jinghua lu* 史漢精華錄, and *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 and other works of literature and history.<sup>48</sup> In this way, Li Shutong established a profound foundation for the study of Confucianism and literature. At the age of eighteen (that is, in 1897), he was qualified as a pupil in the Confucian Examination of Tianjin County. At the age of 19, due to the Wuxu Reform (戊戌政變), he was seen as a follower of Kang Youwei (1858–1927 CE) and Liang Qichao (1873–1929 CE) by people in Beijing and Tianjin, so he took his mother to the Shanghai French Concession to avoid the turmoil. During this period, he joined the Chengnan Thatched Cottage (城南草堂). He associated with people through literature and his talents began to shine.<sup>49</sup> At the age of twenty-two (that is, in 1901), he was admitted to Cai Yuanpei (1868–1940 CE) from Nanyang College. Li mainly studied law and translated Japanese books—*Faxue menjing shu* (法學門徑書) *Conflict of Laws* by Tamagawa Jioki and *International Private Law* co-authored by Tadao Masahiro, Kato Kazuo, and Ishii Shogo, which are the earliest translation works introducing public and private rights in international law.<sup>50</sup> This stage can be regarded as the first stage of Master Hongyi's secular life. During this period, he accepted traditional Chinese Confucian education and new culture; it was also the happiest period in his life. As Feng Zikai (1898–1975 CE) shares in his book:

The happiest time in my life was the five years from age twenty to twenty-six. Since then, it has been constant sorrow and sadness, until

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<sup>48</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Fashi nianpu*, 4.

<sup>49</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Fashi nianpu*, 11.

<sup>50</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Fashi nianpu*, 29.

monastic ordination.<sup>51</sup>

Since the 31st year of the Guangxu era (1905), Li Shutong, at the age of 26, started another chapter in his life. In February of the same year, his mother Wang passed away. As a secular person, Li Shutong advocated for the reform of funerals. He eliminated unnecessary and overelaborate formalities. As an alternative, he adopted memorial services from foreign cultures. He played piano and sang the elegy by himself during the service, which was strange to his relatives and friends.<sup>52</sup> After the service was completed, he went to Japan to study in August until the third year of the Xuantong era (1911), and then he returned to Tianjin. During this period, he specialized in Fine Arts at the Ueno Art School in Tokyo and learned musical drama from Kamimasa Yukio. Meanwhile, through his own efforts, he founded *Yinyue xiao zazhi* 音樂小雜誌, publishing it in Japan and sending it back to China for distribution.<sup>53</sup> He also founded the Chunliu Club (春柳社) with his classmates and friends. They played stage dramas such as “The Lady of the Camellias” and “Uncle Tom's Cabin.” The well-known Chinese dramatist Hong Shen (洪深) regarded him as the “Chinese Drama Revolution Pioneer.” When he heard about the disaster in the Xutan of his motherland, the premiere of the Chunliu Club raised funds for disaster relief to relieve suffering compatriots.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Xuantong era (1911), hundreds of thousands of banks drafts owned by the Li family were invalidated, millions of assets were lost, and the family

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<sup>51</sup> Feng Zikai 丰子恺, “Fawei—Jinian Hongyi Dashi” 法味—纪念弘一大师, in *Hongyi Dashi yonghuailu, Hongyi Dashi faji si* (4) 弘一大师咏怀录, 弘一大师法集 (四), ed. Cai Niansheng 蔡念生汇编 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gufen youxian gongsi, 1988), 298.

<sup>52</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Fashi nianpu*, 35.

<sup>53</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Fashi nianpu*, 36.

went bankrupt. Li Shutong graduated from the Tokyo Art School and returned to Tianjin. He worked as an instructor of art at the Zhili (today's Hebei) Model Industrial School (直隸模範工業學堂). In the following spring, he moved from Tianjin to Shanghai, where he taught music at Chengdong Women's School (城東女學). He participated in Nan she (南社) and designed patterns and inscriptions for *Nan She Address Book*. He also became the art editor of the *Pacific Newspaper* (太平洋報). In the autumn of the same year, the *Pacific Newspaper* was suspended. Having been referred by his old friend Jing Hengyi (經亨頤), Li Shutong was hired and went to Hangzhou to work at the Zhejiang Liangji Normal School (浙江兩級師範學, later the First Provincial Normal School 省立第一師範學校) as an art and music instructor. During his time at the First Provincial Normal School, Li Shutong met Xia Mianzun (夏丏尊, 1886–1946), Jiang Danshu (姜丹書, 1885–1962), Ma Yifu (馬一浮, 1883–1967) and others. It was precisely because of these events that the transformation from Li Shutong to Hongyi started.

Li Shutong officially established his deep and direct connection to Buddhism while teaching at the Provincial First Normal School. In the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the Republic of China era (1916), Xia Mianzun recommended that Li read an article on fasting in a Japanese magazine, and Li became determined to experiment with fasting. Later, he was introduced by Ding Fu (丁輔) to Dinghui Temple in Hupao Daci Mountain, Hangzhou, where he spent more than 20 days fasting. From this experience, he started to admire the Buddhist way of living, adopt vegetarianism, and read Buddhist scriptures. In the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the Republic of China era (1918), moved by witnessing the Buddhist monastic ordination of Peng Xun (彭遜), Li Shutong took the Buddhist refuges

from the old, retired monk Liaowu at Hupao Temple. He became a lay disciple and was given the Dharma name of Yanyin (演音), with the alternative name of Hongyi (弘一). On the July 13th of the same year, he became a monk at Hupao Temple in Hangzhou. He received monastic precepts at Lingyin Temple in September.

As the saying goes: “Iron-made temples, flowing-water-like monks.” Traveling far and wide is a common practice and way of living for Buddhist monastics, and Hongyi Master was no exception. After becoming a monk, Master Hongyi traveled to various places and his tracks were hard to trace. Most of the temples that he lived in between his ordination in 1918 and death in 1942 were in Zhejiang Province and Fujian Province, mainly Hangzhou Yuquan Temple (杭州玉泉寺), Benlai Temple (本來寺), Changjiguang Temple (常寂光寺), Jiaxing Jingyan Temple (嘉興精嚴寺), Quzhou Lianhua Temple (衢州蓮花寺), Wenzhou Qingfu Temple (溫州慶福寺), Shangyu Fajie Temple (上虞法界寺), Xiamen Nanputuo Temple (廈門南普陀寺), Quanzhou Chengtian Temple (泉州承天寺), and Kaiyuan Temple (開元寺).

As Ma Rongjun stated in the article “Hongyi dashi zhu xifosi ji foxue yishu xueshu huodong yanjiu” 弘一大師住錫佛寺及佛學藝術學術活動研究, Master Hongyi’s monastic life experience can be divided into three stages: 1) from 1918 to 1928, the initial stage after ordination—during this period, the activities of Master Hongyi were mainly in the area of Zhejiang; 2) from 1928 to 1937, the second stage of his monastic life—during this period, Master Hongyi was mainly in Xiamen, Quanzhou, Jinjiang, Hui'an and other places; 3) from 1938 to 1942, the last stage of Master’s monastic life—his activities took place mainly in Xiamen, Quanzhou, Yongchun, Jingjiang, Hui'an, etc. The reason to adopt this method of division is that the first stage can be generally

regarded as a period of intensive study of Buddhist Vinaya. During this period, Master Hongyi compiled *Sifenlü Biqu Jiexiangbiao ji* 四分律比丘戒相表記. The second stage can be seen as the period of propagating Vinaya. During this period, Master established a Vinaya school in southern Fujian Province to cultivate monastics based on Buddhist Vinaya. He also taught and advocated Vinaya precepts in Zhejiang and Qingdao. The third period can be considered as the last period of propagation of Buddhist Vinaya. At this time, the promotion of Buddhist Vinaya was no longer limited to the monastic community, but also extended to lay Buddhists.

Master Hongyi devoted himself to the study of Buddhist Vinaya after his monastic ordination. He went on retreat several times, traveled many places to teach and propagate Vinaya, and wrote books: *Sifenlü biqu jiexiangbiao ji* 四分律比丘戒相表記, *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* 南山律在家備覽, and *An Abridged and Explanatory Commentary on the Dharmaguptakavinaya* (四分律刪繁補缺行事鈔), and as many as hundreds of inscriptions, prefaces, and Buddhist commentaries. In addition to carrying forward the Nanshan Vinaya School, Master taught on “Xinjing dayi” (心經大意, Main Thoughts of the *Heart Sutra*), “Jingangjing dayi” (金剛經大意, Main Thoughts of the *Diamond Sutra*), “Huayanjing dayi” (華嚴經大意, Main Thoughts of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*), “Huayanjing dusong yanxi rumen cidì” (華嚴經讀誦研習入門次第, Introduction to the Path and Study of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*), “Jingtu famen dayi” (淨土法門大意, Main Thoughts of the Pure Land School), “Jingzong wenbian” (淨宗問辨, Questions and Analysis on the Pure Land School) and other topics. The content involves many sects of Chinese Buddhism, including Tiantai, Xianshou, Chan, and Pure Land.

Master strongly advocated the Pure Land practice of reciting the Buddha's name in order to be reborn in the blissful Pure Land. As for the method of the Master's Buddhist studies, as Venerable Yihuan states, it is "to uphold Huayan for the state of mind, to uphold the *Four-Division Vinaya* for practice, and to see Pure Land as the result."<sup>54</sup>

## 4.2. Buddhist Background of Master Hongyi's Ordination

Master Hongyi was born at the end of the Qing dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, when society was turbulent and rife with internal and external problems. Such a social environment inevitably had a great impact on the development of Buddhism. After the country underwent the Opium War, Christianity was introduced, and the introduction and development of Christianity posed a great threat to Buddhism. Among such developments, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (太平天國) Movement grew under the banner of Christianity. The Taiping Army was led by Hong Xiuquan (洪秀全), the "Heavenly King" (天王) who believed in Christianity. Wherever he went during the Taiping Revolution (太平革命), the army burned Daoist and Buddhist temples and slaughtered monastics, which brought about great harm to the development of Buddhism. Coupled with the "confiscating temple property to set up schools" movement, Zhang Zhidong, the Viceroy of Huguang, proposed:

Today, there are tens of thousands of temples in a hundred districts, dozens of big counties, and more than ten small counties, which all possess fields and properties coming from donations. If they are converted into schools, then their buildings and fields are all known and counted. This

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<sup>54</sup> Shi Yihuan, "Hongyi Dashi zai Baihu", 2572.

is also an expedient and simple policy.<sup>55</sup>

Zhang's proposal of "confiscating temple property to set up schools" was for the transformation of Buddhist and Daoist temples into schools to meet the needs of a new style of education. As a result, demolition of temples, expulsion of monastics, and collection of superstitious donations and religious service donations began to occur.<sup>56</sup> Regarding the encroachment upon Buddhist monasteries, Makita Tairyō says, "In addition to schools, even the police and the army encroached Buddhist and Daoist temples in an imposing manner. The situation became unprecedented."<sup>57</sup>

In terms of ideological trends, the wave of reforms continued, and new Western cultures continued to flow in. With the introduction of the concepts of "*de xiansheng*" (德先生) and "*sai xiansheng*" (賽先生), Chinese religions, even Confucianism, were deemed "superstitions" and thus became obsolete relics to be abandoned. As Master Yin Shun described:

Since the resurgence of the Xinhai (辛亥光復), the introduction of Western culture has been carried out simultaneously with the overstepping of superstitions. The Christian priests know the truth of themselves—using the excuse of dispelling superstition to destroy the inherent beliefs of China, even worshipping ancestors is also considered to be superstitious. Many new intellectuals who apply Western styles do not take away the non-religious traditions of the old intellectuals. Now is the age of science, in the request of proof and testimony, and of course religions are rejected. The movement of anti-religion or overthrowing superstitions becomes more thorough, not only to overthrow superstition—religions, but also to overthrow morality and ethics.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Zhang Zhidong 張之洞, "Quanxue pian 勸學篇," in *Jindai zhongguo shiliao congkan* 近代中國史料叢刊, ed. Wang Shukou 王樹口 (Xinbei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1996), 4537.

<sup>56</sup> Huang Lianxi 黃連喜, "Zhongguo fojiao fa'nan de huigu (mingdai-xiandai)" 中國佛教發難的回顧 (明代—現代), *Shizi hou* 獅子吼. 1989.11 (28), 31.

<sup>57</sup> Makita Tairyō, "Zhongguo fojiao shi (xia)" 中國佛教史 (下), *Shijie foxue mingzhu yicong* 45 世界佛學名著譯叢 45, trans. *Trans.* Yu Wanju 余萬居, (Xinbei: Huayun chubanshe, 1985), 42.

<sup>58</sup> Yinshun fashi 印順法師, *Wo zhi zongjiaoguan* 我之宗教觀 (Taipei: Zhengwen chubanshe, 1993), 52.



It can be seen that at the time, China experienced widespread anti-religious conditions. As a major part of Chinese religion, Buddhism was naturally the first to be attacked, and China entered an era of chaos and the decline of Buddhism.<sup>59</sup> It can be said that Buddhism at this time completely collapsed and was almost extinguished.

While what is mentioned above was the influence of social external factors on the development of Buddhism, from a standpoint inside Buddhism, the situation was pessimistic and even worrisome. Surveying the history of the development of Chinese Buddhism, Buddhism began to show signs of decline since the Ming and Qing dynasties. As Shigeo Kamata states in *The History of Chinese Buddhism*: “Modern Buddhism after the Ming and Qing Dynasties can be said to be a period of decline of Chinese Buddhism.”<sup>60</sup> The decline of Buddhism was mainly due to internal reasons. Since the late Ming dynasty, problems of forest Buddhism gradually became more prominent and serious. As Jiang Cian-teng pointed out in *Wan Ming fojiao conglin gaige yu foxue zhengbian zhi yanjiu* 晚明佛教叢林改革與佛學爭辯之研究 (The Study of Forest Buddhism Reform and Debate), the main disadvantages faced by Buddhism at that time are: 1) inappropriate friendship between teachers and disciples; 2) novelties used as unscrupulous means for self-reliance; 3) uneven quality of monastics—a mixture of dragons and snakes; 4) decline in the quality of teachers—teachers lacked practical knowledge and experience but pretended to be authoritative; 5) those claimed as masters were mocked for having no new ideas; 6) behavioral misconduct for the sake of obtaining

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<sup>59</sup> Yinshun fashi 印順法師, *Wuzheng zhi bian* 無爭之辯 (Taipei: Zhengwen chubanshe, 1993), 190.

<sup>60</sup> Kamata Shigeo, ed. “Guan Shiqian” 關世謙, in *Zhongguo fojiao shi* 中國佛教史 [*The History of Chinese Buddhism*] (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chubruanshe, 1995), 241.

necessities; 7) ignorance and negligence of the precepts; 8) teachers and elders were insulted by the young.<sup>61</sup> In the late Ming dynasty, the eminent Master Lianchi also addressed the situation of Buddhism at that time in his work *Zhuchuang sanbi* 竹窗三筆; he vigorously attacked the monks of the time for their “sundry duties,” saying that they are:

They work as geographers, sorcerers, physiognomists, pharmacists, female physicists, and masters of protective talisman and alchemy.<sup>62</sup>

Besides, he also pointed out that the monks at the time also had the situation of “processing novices as servants”<sup>63</sup> and:

Among the long-distance and wide-ranging fundraisers, there are barely any Daoists but many Buddhist monastics. Some hold the book of donation like the judge in front of the land god; some loudly sing and talk about the law of causes and conditions like blind musicians; and some hold statues of Bodhisattvas and gods, playing drums and music to praise donations and persuade donors like singers. Some hold a half cymbal and play a drum made of bamboo, like children’s play. Some drag dozens of hundreds of pounds of iron chains like sinners. Some use stones to hit the body like bearing a grievance. Some wear tidy clothes and hold incense, worshipping along the way and visiting door to door, taking down the information of each household.<sup>64</sup>

Chinese Buddhism in the late Qing dynasty and the early Republic of China generally continued the trend in the late Ming dynasty, and at the same time it had its own unique trends in combination with the social background at that time. Summarizing

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<sup>61</sup> Jiang Cian-teng 江燦騰, *Wan Ming fojiao conglin gaige yu foxue zhengbian zhi yanjiu* 晚明佛教叢林改革與佛學爭辯之研究 [The Study of the Forest Buddhism Reform and Debate] (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chubanshe, 1990), 13-14.

<sup>62</sup> *Lianchi Dashi quanji vol.4* 蓮池大師全集 (四) (Taipei: Zhonghua fojiao wenhua guan, 1973), 16.

<sup>63</sup> *Lianchi Dashi quanji vol.4* 蓮池大師全集 (四), (1973), 22.

<sup>64</sup> *Lianchi Dashi quanji vol.4* 蓮池大師全集 (四), (1973), 4.

Buddhism in this period, it has the following characteristics: Firstly, due to the introduction of Western culture and thoughts, a reform movement grew in China. They advocated anti-religion and anti-tradition, which confronted the spread and survival of Chinese Buddhism with extreme challenges and threats. As Chen Xing stated in *Sida gaoseng zhong de hongyi dashi* 四大高僧中的弘一大師 (*Master Hongyi, One of Four Eminent Monks*):

The word "reform" is very fashionable. Some extreme youths abandon themselves to emotions, singing high praises of eliminating Buddhism and even destroying Buddhist temples and dispelling monastics, forcing them to disrobe.<sup>65</sup>

Such acts reflect the difficult situation experienced by Buddhism.

In terms of practice, there are two main schools: Chan and Pure Land. The practice of Chan practitioners was often limited to words, and the practice of Pure Land Buddhists merely focused on rebirth in the Western Pure Land, lacking knowledge of Buddhist philosophy and connection to the society. The dire situation of Buddhism was as explained by Master Taixu: “The precepts are relaxed, the teachings are drowning, and the sects also use deceiving words.”<sup>66</sup> In addition, Buddhism became more and more corrupted in organization and in the behavior of the order, and the drawbacks were serious.

Chinese Buddhism gradually withdrew into the mountains since the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Monasticism gradually became a kind of occupation to provide services

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<sup>65</sup> Chen Xing 陳星, “Sida gaoseng zhongde Hongyi Dashi” 四大高僧中的弘一大師 [Master Hongyi, One of four eminent monks], *Pumen xuebao* 普門學報 27 (2005): 269.

<sup>66</sup> Taixu 太虛, *Gao tuzhong shu: Taixu Dashi quanshu (17)* 告徒眾書: 太虛大師全書, vol. 17 (Taiwan: Shandaosi fojing liutongchu), 587.

for believers to eliminate obstacles and grant blessings for the dead. Chinese Buddhism in the late Qing dynasty and the early Republic of China became ritual Buddhism, “dead Buddhism” or “ghost Buddhism.” At that time, few monastics knew the Buddha’s teachings. Most monastics were busy with rituals and blessing the dead, to the extent that Buddhism became a religion serving the dead. This can be seen from the vulgar proverb seen during that time: “If there is no other way (of living), one can be a monk. When monks see money, they sell scriptures too. In front of hell’s doors, there are many Buddhists and Daoists.”<sup>67</sup>

This vulgar proverb, though exaggerated, reflects the general public's view of Buddhism at that time. As an example, when Master Hongyi’s old friend heard of his willingness of becoming a monk, his friend wrote a letter advising, “I heard you do not want to be a person but want to be a monk.”<sup>68</sup> In their views, monastics were not people. The degree of corruption of Buddhism at that time was extreme, and society gave little value or acceptance to the religion.

### **4.3. Analysis of the Relationship between Master Hongyi and Buddhism**

As an outstanding representative of the modern Chinese New Culture Movement, Li Shutong achieved significant achievements in many fields such as culture and art. He is regarded as the pioneer of modern music and painting art in China, having achieved such success in that world. At a point in his life when he was famous, highly

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<sup>67</sup> Nogami Shunjō, *Zhongguo fojiao tongshi* 中國佛教通史, trans. Zheng Qinren 鄭欽仁 (Taipei: Mutong chubanshe, 1978), 160.

<sup>68</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:60.

praised by others and supposed to continue to forge ahead bravely, he chose instead to engage in Buddhism. At that time, Buddhism was considered to be a religion for the dead and was heavily involved in rituals and services for the deceased. Further, Buddhist monks were not even regarded as equally in status to lay men. In terms of the social status of Buddhism at that time, Master Hongyi's decision was difficult to understand for ordinary people. For example, Lin Ziqing stated in *The Chronicle of Master Hongyi*:

Everyone has their own opinions, and most intellectuals seem to have pity for him. He is versatile, there is barely anything in the arts that he cannot succeed in. One writer once said, "As far as art is concerned, Master Hongyi is a rare all-rounder." In terms of his role in art, because of his passive worldview, his talents were not well played. Thus, his later life as well as his entire artistic life is an unfortunate tragedy.<sup>69</sup>

Was Master Hongyi's ordination an unfortunate tragedy? What conditions caused his ordination? The author's own words are "I don't know very well."<sup>70</sup> Was it really "not very clear"? In fact, many factors contributed to the emergence of Master Hongyi, including familial factors and other relatives and friends. Here, the author only chooses the main factors and characters for analysis.

### **4.3.1 Familial Factors**

Master Hongyi's monastic ordination was a result of collected causes and conditions, which includes influences from society and friends as well as an important factor linked to his childhood environment and family background. As Master said in his work *The Practice of Entering the Gate of Emptiness*:

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<sup>69</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Fashi nianpu*, 10.

<sup>70</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:125.

There are many factors that resulted in my becoming a monk. Many of them come from the influences of my family since I was a child, and some of them are attributed to my experience at Zhejiang Normal University.<sup>71</sup>

Li Xiaolou, the father of Master Hongyi, was the imperial scholar of the fourth year of the Tongzhi era and was the chief of the Ministry of Personnel. Later, he resigned and inherited his father's business and become one of the richest men in Tianjin, which rendered him not only a businessman, but also a bureaucrat and scholar. He excelled in business, government, and literature. As Hu Zhaifan said,

Xiaolou was skilled in the study of Confucius and Chan Buddhism and is well-known for his accomplishments. In daily life he strictly followed the words in Confucius' *Analects* (Chapter 10). In his later years, he engaged in charity, founding schools for free, setting up charity organizations, which covered many things and employed many people. They were engaged in taking care of the poor, the elderly and widows, and providing clothes and food, as well as coffins. [...] He never begrudged money for charity with huge sums. Folks in Tianjin happily called him Li, the philanthropist. He was also fond of releasing animals—he released thousands of fish and birds.<sup>72</sup>

Therefore, Li Xiaolou, though widely known as a traditional Chinese Confucian scholar, not only followed the *Analects of Confucius* as his own code of conduct, but also was familiar with the essential thoughts of Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472–1529). Li also had knowledge and practice in Buddhism. Especially in his later years, he was more enthusiastic about Chan Buddhism. Regarding the poor and widowed, acts of charity and good deeds were actually the manifestation of compassion and the practice of giving in

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<sup>71</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:125.

<sup>72</sup> Hu Zhaifan 胡宅梵, “Ji Hongyi Dashi zhi tongnian” 記弘一大師之童年 [Records of Master Hongyi's childhood], in *Hongyi Fashi quanji* 弘一法師全集, vol.10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1991), 30.

Buddhism; regarding the release of fish and birds, it was out of respect for all living beings based on the Buddhist teachings of reincarnation and compassion, which are generally attributed to those who believe in Buddhism. Hence, Li Xiaolou in his later years was not only interested in or like Chan Buddhism, but also practiced Buddhism in action. Although there is no evidence to prove whether he was converted to Buddhism, at least it can be said that he had some admiration and even belief in Buddhism.

The birth of Master Hongyi came at a later stage of Li Xiaolou's life. The joy of Li Xiaolou's Buddhist practice inevitably exerted an impact on Li Shutong's childhood. As Master Hongyi said,

Because of my father's belief in Buddhism, I was exposed to the teachings of the Buddhist scriptures at a very young age and was influenced by the Dharma.<sup>73</sup>

However, Li Xiaolou passed away when Li Shutong was six years old. Therefore, his influence on Li Shutong's Buddhist beliefs was limited, far from enough to become a key factor for his decision to become a monk.

According to the existing records, Li Shutong, even in his childhood, indeed had a very close relationship with Buddhism because of the cultivation of his family. As Hu Zhaifan stated in “Records of Master Hongyi's Childhood,”

Wang Xiaolian came back from Mountain Putuo after receiving monastic ordination and lived in Wuliang Nunnery in Tianjin. Master's elder nephew's wife became widowed young, often learned from Wang Xiaolian on Great Compassion Mantra and Pure Land Rebirth Mantra (*wangsheng zhou* 往生咒), as well as Yuan Liaofan's “ledgers of good and bad deeds” (*gongguo ge* 功過格). When Master was about seven or eight years old, he was very happy to read these teachings, often listened to them,

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<sup>73</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:119.

and was able to recite them by heart and learned to practice the ledgers of good and bad deeds.<sup>74</sup>

Also, Master Hongyi said in his work, “Chu dao shijian de kaitan” (初到世間的慨嘆),

When I was a child, I learned to read from my elder aunt, who was my father’s wife, and reciting the Great Compassion Mantra and the Pure Land Rebirth Mantra by heart. My sister-in-law often taught me to memorize the *Heart Sutra* and the *Diamond Sutra*.<sup>75</sup>

As it can be seen from above, Li Shutong was exposed to Buddhism when he was seven or eight years old. The earliest classics he recited were the *Great Compassion Mantra*, *Pure Land Rebirth Mantra*, *Heart Sutra*, and *Diamond Sutra*, which he learned from his aunt, nephew’s wife and sister-in-law. These are the most common and widely recited mantras and sutras in Buddhism. This also indicates that Li Xiaolou's influence on Li Shutong in Buddhism was indirect. There is no record showing that Li Shutong had a connection to Buddhism when Li Xiaolou was alive. Among the Li family, the most influential people on Li Shutong’s Buddhist devotion were his elder aunt, nephew’s wife, and sister-in-law.

Due to the influence of his family, Li Shutong became closely connected to Buddhism since he was a child. Not only could he recite the *Great Compassion Mantra* and *Pure Land Rebirth Mantra* by heart, but he also could memorize the common sutras, such as the *Heart Sutra* and the *Diamond Sutra*. At the same time, he also liked Buddhist rituals and had learning and practice experiences. As he stated in “My Ordination at the West Lake,”

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<sup>74</sup> Hu, “Ji Hongyi Dashi zhi tongnian”, 10:31.

<sup>75</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:119.



I often met monastics when I was five, seeing them coming to my home to recite sutras and perform repentance rituals. As a result, at the age of twelve or thirteen, I also learned to perform the Yoga Ritual of Flaming Mouth. But I did not live with monks and did not know what was inside the temple or what the life of the monk was like. This time, I went back to Hupao Temple to live and observe their monastic life. I feel that I like it and envy it.<sup>76</sup>

Hence, since he was a child, Li Shutong had seen monks perform rituals and recite sutras at home. At the age of twelve or thirteen, he also learned the Yoga Ritual of Flaming Mouth. Although he had constant contact with monks since he was five years old, he did not know the life of monastics since he did not live with monks. It was not until middle age, when he was fasting at Hupao Temple, that he had the opportunity to experience the life of monastics and began to yearn for it. This spiritual connection certainly is related to his childhood experience in Buddhism.

In fact, when Li Shutong was still a child, because of family influence, he also had some understanding of the teachings of Buddhism, which was reflected in the poems that he wrote during his youth, such as:

*Duanju*

*Life is like the sunsets in the west,  
Wealth is like morning frost on grass.*<sup>77</sup>

This verse contains the concept of impermanence in Buddhism. And as he metaphorizes wealth as “frost” that took the same metaphor meaning as “dream,”

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<sup>76</sup> Hongyi Fashi 弘一法師, “Wo zai Xihu chujia de jingguo” 我在西湖出家的經過, recorded by Gao Sheng 高勝記, in *Hongyi Fashi quanji* 弘一法師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1991), 17.

<sup>77</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 6:64.

“bubble,” “dew” and “flash” do in the *Diamond Sutra*.

Another example:

*Inscription to Teacher Chen's Small Lotus Painting*  
*One flower and one leaf, solely fragrant and utmost pure,*  
*Not stained by delusional waves and achieves wisdom.*<sup>78</sup>

In this poem, “one flower and one leaf” is easily associated with “one flower and one world, one leaf and one bodhi” in Buddhism. Also, the term “wisdom career” (*hui ye* 慧業) in the last sentence is obviously a Buddhist term. What is mentioned above is enough to illustrate Master Hongyi’s strong and deep connection with Buddhism due to familial factors before he became a monk, which certainly influenced his thoughts and monastic ordination later in his life.

#### 4.3.2. Xia Mianzun’s Influence on Master Hongyi’s Monastic

##### Ordination

Master Hong’s decision to become a monk was certainly related to influences from his family, but the most significant influence was from “experiences at Zhejiang Normal School.” The “experiences at Zhejiang Normal School”<sup>79</sup> mentioned here mainly refers to the influence of his colleague, Xia Mianzun (夏丐尊, 1886–1946).

Xia Mianzun was formerly named Zhu (鑄); he styled himself as Mianzhan (勉

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<sup>78</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 6:177.

<sup>79</sup> Zhejiang Normal School (浙江師範) refers to Zhejiang Provincial No.1 Normal School (浙江省立第一師範學校), originally known as Zhejiang Secondary Normal School (浙江省兩級師範學堂). It was the center of a new culture movement in Zhejiang and is now named Hangzhou Normal University (杭州師範大學).

旃) and in 1912 changed his name to Mianzun. His ancestral home was in Shaoxing, Zhejiang. He was a famous modern Chinese writer, educator, publisher, and translator. He was a scholar in the 27th year of Guangxu era (1901) and later studied at Shanghai Zhongxi Academy (上海中西書院), Shaoxing Fu School (紹興府學堂), and Hongwen Academy (宏文學院) in Tokyo, Japan. However, he was unable to graduate because he dropped out of school due to poverty. In 1908, he was employed as a teaching assistant and translator at Zhejiang Secondary Normal School in Hangzhou. He was a translator for the Japanese faculties hired by the school. Later, he was also a teacher of self-cultivation, a dormitory supervisor, and a Chinese language teacher. In 1920, due to student protests, Xia left Zhejiang Provincial No. 1 Normal School in Hangzhou and served at in Hunan Provincial No. 1 Normal School (湖南省立第一師範學校) in Changsha, Chunhui Private Middle School (私立春暉中學) in Shangyu, Zhejiang Provincial Fourth Middle School (浙江省立第四中學) in Ningbo, Nanping Private Girls' High School (私立南屏女子中學) in Shanghai, and as the head of the Chinese Department at Shanghai Ji'nan University (上海暨南大學). In 1925, he founded the Lida Academy (立達學園) in Shanghai with friends having the same aspiration. In 1930, he founded and presided over the *Middle School Student Magazine* (中學生雜誌) and served as the president of the *Monthly* (月報) newspaper. In 1941, by invitation of Fazang Temple (法藏寺), Xia participated in and organized the translation of the Chinese Translation of the Pali Tipiṭaka (南傳大藏經), particularly the *Jātaka Stories*.

Master Hongyi met with Xia Mianzun when Master taught at the Zhejiang Provincial No. 1 Normal School, as Xia stated:

I met Master Hongyi when I taught at the Zhejiang Secondary Normal School. The school implemented a special policy—it did not change faculties frequently. I worked there for thirteen years in total, and he taught the arts for seven years. In these seven years, we were together from morning to evening, and got along very well...<sup>80</sup>

Master Hongyi and Xia Mianzun worked together for seven years at Zhejiang Provincial No. 1 Normal School. During these seven years, they accompanied each other day and night and were close to each other. They went far beyond friendship between colleagues and became friends who were similar to each other. Their friendship, transcending common friendships, can be seen in the following aspects: Xia Mianzun was not rich—out of his five children, three passed away because of lack of medical care. Also, due to economic difficulties, the other two children could not continue their education and became apprentices. “Xia’s family lived in a small house. He treated his wife calmly even when they had to keep a frugal and plain life for survival. Xia could hardly drag along, leading a hard life until his final death.”<sup>81</sup> After Master Hongyi became a monk, Xia not only did his best to “provide financial support and necessities, but also widely promoted the master’s unexcelled capabilities and talent, virtue, and humbleness. It can be said that “thanks to Xia’s early efforts to bring the master’s talents into full play, today he enjoys great honor and respect. It would be inconceivable without Xia’s tremendous contributions.”<sup>82</sup>

While Xia was wholeheartedly and irreversibly dedicated to supporting Master

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<sup>80</sup> Xia Mianzun 夏丐尊, “Hongyi Fashi zhi chujia” 弘一法師之出家, in *Xiamianzun wenji: Pingwu zhi ji* 夏丐尊文集·平屋之輯 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1983), 245.

<sup>81</sup> Jiang Danshu 姜丹書, “Xiamianzun xiansheng zhuan lue” 夏丐尊先生傳略 [Brief biography of Mr. Xia Mianzun], in *Xiamianzun wenji: Pingwu zhi ji* 夏丐尊文集·平屋之輯 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1983), 7.

<sup>82</sup> Dai Jiafang 戴嘉枋, “Lun Hongyi Dashi yu Xia Mianzun Xiansheng zhi fayuan” 論弘一大師與夏丐尊先生之法緣 in *Hongyi Dashi youguan renwu lunwenji* 弘一大師有關人物論文集, ed. Chen Huijian 陳慧劍 (Taipei: Hongyi dashi jinian xuehui, 2011), 82.

Hongyi, Master Hongyi treated Xia Mianzun the same. From the time when Master was ordained to the final days of his life, totaling twenty-four years, Master and Xia always stayed in contact while Master traveled and stayed in temples. When Master spent time in retreat or sometimes needed to keep himself away from guests, the only person who could always find out his location was Mr. Xia, who was responsible for the Master's mail. Here is a letter addressed to Xia:

After the retreat starts, only letters with your name (the benevolent), can still be sent into the retreat hut. Other letters could be opened by others, temporarily stored, but never will be sent into the hut.<sup>83</sup>

This is enough to show that Xia Mianzun possessed a unique and extremely important position in Master Hongyi's heart, with full trust.

In addition, the friendship between Master Hongyi and Xia could also be reflected in the master's testaments to Xia, including:

Master Hongyi's Testament Respectable Mianzun,  
Today is the fourth day of September. I am about to die. I once wrote two verses and copied them here. The friendship between gentlemen is as pure as water.

Searching with attachment to the form, it is as far as thousand miles away.

If you ask where I would be in comfort, words fail when I wish to tell how big it could be.

If [you see] flowers are blooming all over the branches like in the spring and the moon becomes full in the clear sky [that is where my heart would be].<sup>84</sup>

In his final will, Master Hongyi believed that the friendship between him and

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<sup>83</sup> Hongyi, "Hongyi Fashi Zhi Xia mianzun xin hai di qishi jiu tong" 弘一法師致夏丕尊信函第七十九同, in *Hongyi Fashi quanji* 弘一法師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1991), 137.

<sup>84</sup> Xia Mianzun 夏丕尊, "Hongyi Fashi de yishu" 弘一法師的遺書 [Master Hongyi's Testament], in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 96.

Xia was a “gentlemen's friendship.” Although simple, it was extremely truthful and pure. When Xia received Master Hongyi’s final will, the master had already passed away. Xia still thought it was a rumor. He believed that Master Hongyi was in a retreat to avoid interruptions from the outside world. After reading the letter Xia was certain that Master had already passed away. He was so shocked that his face turned pale. This further illustrated the kind of true friendship between them, rarely found in ancient and modern times.

There was more than true friendship between Master Hongyi and Xia Mianzun—Master’s decision to become a monk was directly related to Xia. He wrote in “The Process of Being Ordained at the West Lake”:

Once, a celebrity came to the school to give a speech. However, Xia Mianzun and I escaped and went out to a pavilion in the center of the lake, enjoying tea and snacks. Xia said: "It is great to be a monk for people like us." It was very interesting when I heard this saying. It can be said that it was the first reason why I became a monk later.<sup>85</sup>

For Xia Mianzun, “It is great to be a monk” was just a joke that would not have much influence on Xia’s future. But in the memory of Master Hongyi, this conversation became the first reason for his decision to be a monk.

The direct reason for Master Hongyi to be a monk was still closely related to Xia Mianzun, as Master Hongyi stated in his article “The Practice of Entering the Gate of Emptiness”:

Why I chose to be a monk when others thought that I had a great reputation and should forge ahead , I cannot explain it very well. But I

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<sup>85</sup> Hongyi 弘一, “Wo zai Xihu chujia de jingguo” 我在西湖出家的經過 [My ordination at West Lake], recorded by Gao Sheng 高勝記, in *Hongyi fashi quanji* 弘一法師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1991), 17.

remember when I made my decision, my friend Xia Mianzun told me one thing. He read an article about a method of fasting practice in a Japanese magazine. This method could help the body and mind to be refreshed, so as to achieve the purpose of replacing the old with the new, changing the bad to the good, and making great spiritual improvements in life.<sup>86</sup>

When Xia Mianzun learned about the article on a Japanese fasting practice, he only thought that such a process was very interesting, and he talked about it with Master Hongyi. This casual conversation had an impact on Hongyi—he went to the temple to personally experience the life of monastics for the first time. It was precisely because of this fasting experience at Hupao Temple (虎跑寺) that Master Hongyi later had a Buddhist conversation with Ma Yifu (馬一浮, 1883–1967). He decided to take Buddhist refuge under the retired monk Liao Wu (了悟) and eventually became a Buddhist monk.

However, from the fasting experience to his monastic ordination, there was a lapse of two years. During this period, Master Hongyi admired monastic life, yearning to become a Buddhist monk. At first, he just wanted to observe Buddhist practice in a temple as a layman. For this reason, he also took refuge under the old monk Liao Wu at Hupao Temple. It was obvious that he was not completely determined to become a monk at that time. However, the reason that made Master Hongyi firmly determined to be ordained as a monk was also due to Xia Mianzun. As Master Hongyi said,

I wanted to stay at the temple as a layman, because I also took various difficulties into consideration: It was indeed to become a monk. However, my good friend's words made me completely determined to be a monk.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:125.

<sup>87</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:126.

In the article, he continues to say:

Being a layman is not a complete path, not as complete as being a monk. This is quite simple..” His words were like nectar pouring down onto me, and suddenly I became enlightened.<sup>88</sup>

The good friend mentioned here is Xia Mianzun. However, the saying “like nectar pouring down onto me” was not intended to encourage Master to become a monastic. In fact, the opposite was true. As Xia said during his recollection:

I was very embarrassed at that time. Such a good friend whom I have venerated left me to the gate of emptiness, which made me feel quite lonely..... Seeing such a friend, who made changes due to faith, is leaving me. I feel sad. Things related to beliefs, unlike ordinary fame, fortune, or relationship, can be accommodated. I am afraid I will not be able to ask him to stay, and I regret that I should not have asked.<sup>89</sup>

Hence, Xia Mianzun was afraid that his friend would leave him for the gate of emptiness and become a monk. He did not want to lose his beloved friend. However, it was precisely because of Xia’s crazy and angry words that Master Hongyi decided to become a monk, and he eventually took monastic ordination. Therefore, in terms of the causes and conditions experienced by Master Hongyi, as he himself said:

My Buddhist monastic ordination was mostly due to the supportive conditions that Xia created. Therefore, I would never forget this throughout my life.<sup>90</sup>

#### **4.3.3. Ma Yifu’s Influence on Master Hongyi’s Monastic Ordination**

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<sup>88</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:126.

<sup>89</sup> Xia Mianzun 夏丐尊, “Hongyi Fashi zhi chujia” 弘一法師之出家, in *Hongyi Fashi quanji* 弘一法師全集, vol.10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1991), 40.

<sup>90</sup> Xia, *Hongyi Fashi quanji*, 10:38.



Master Hongyi's monastic ordination was directly related to Xia Mianzun. Yet, the influence from Xia mainly provided Master Hongyi the opportunity to go to the temple and experience monastic life and encouraged Master in his decision-making to become a monk. These influences were external causes and conditions. Without any understanding of Dharma or a deep belief in Buddhism in his heart, it would have been impossible for Master to abandon his secular life merely by relying on Xia's support. It was Mr. Ma Yifu who facilitated Master Hongyi's determination on monastic ordination. Ma Yifu exerted great influence on Hongyi by inspiring and strengthening his understanding and belief in Buddhism. As Xu Zhenglun said in *Master Hongyi and Ma Yifu*:

Xia Mianzun's influence on Master Hong's decision was still emotional. Hongyi was touched and motivated emotionally. The influence of Ma Yifu was rational, and he inspired and guided Master Hongyi in understanding the Dharma. If there was only the emotional influence of Xia Mianzun without the rational influence of Ma Yifu, it would be unimaginable that Master Hongyi could make such a clear and firm determination.<sup>91</sup>

Feng Zikai (豐子愷, 1898–1975) also recalled: “He told me how Ma Yifu instructed him in the study of Buddhism.”<sup>92</sup> It is necessary to explore the relationship between Ma Yifu and Master Hongyi. How did Ma Yifu influence him?

Ma Yifu (馬一浮, 1883–1967), childhood name Futian (福田), styled himself as Gengyu (耕餘), from Houzhuang Village, Changtang Township, Shangyu County,

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<sup>91</sup> Xu Zhenglun 徐正綸, “Hongyi Fashi yu Ma Yifu 弘一法師與馬一浮” [Master Hongyi and Ma Yifu], in *Hongyi Dashi youguan renwu lunwenji 弘一大師有關人物論文集*, ed. Chen Huijian 陳慧劍 (Taipei: Hongyi dashi jinian xuehui, 2011), 31.

<sup>92</sup> Feng Chenbao 豐陳寶, *Feng Zikai wenji 豐子愷文集*, vol. 6 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe, 1992), 150.

Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province. In adulthood, Ma took the meaning of “his life seems to float along; his death is a rest” in Chapter 15 in *Zhuangzi*.<sup>93</sup> He renamed himself as Fu (浮) and styled himself as Yifo (一佛). Later, by taking meaning from “as being like a single bubble floating on the clear, vast sea, appearing from nowhere and disappearing into oblivion” in the *Surangama Sutra*, Ma renamed himself as Yifu (一浮) and styled himself as Zhanweng (湛翁); therefore, he is known by his later name.<sup>94</sup>

When Ma Yifu was young, his mother taught him to read the Chinese classics. At the age of eight, he began to study poetry. At the age of nine, he was able to recite the 楚辭 *Chu Ci*<sup>95</sup> and 昭明文選 *Zhaoming Wenxuan*.<sup>96</sup> He was gifted with an extraordinary retentive memory and local folks called him a prodigy. At the age of sixteen, he participated in the Shaoxing County Examination, ranking first. After the Hundred Days Reform Movement of 1898, he studied English, French, and Latin at the Shanghai Tongwen Academy. In 1902, he was hired to serve as the officer in charge of foreign student documents in the Chinese Embassy of the Qing government in the United States. In 1904, he traveled to Japan to study Japanese, German and Spanish from his Japanese friend Toriyama Ryūzō. In 1906, the focus of his study was on Chinese classics. During

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<sup>93</sup> *The Complete Works of Zhuangzi*, trans. Watson Burton (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 251.

<sup>94</sup> Wu Guang 吳光, ed., “Ma Yifu quanji biaoqiao shuoming” 馬一浮全集編校說明, in *Ma Yifu quanji* 馬一浮全集, vol. 1 (Hangzhou: Guji chubanshe, 2013), 1.

<sup>95</sup> The *Chu ci*, variously translated as *Verses of Chu*, *Songs of Chu*, or *Elegies of Chu*, is an ancient anthology of Chinese poetry including works traditionally attributed mainly to Qu Yuan and Song Yu from the Warring States period (ended 221 BC), and a large number of works composed several centuries later, during the Han dynasty.

<sup>96</sup> *Wenxuan* 文選 [Selected literature] is a literary anthology compiled during the Liang period (梁, 502–557) by Xiao Tong (蕭統, 501–531), Prince Zhaoming (昭明太子). The book is therefore also called *Zhaoming Wenxuan* 昭明文選. It is usually translated *Selections of Refined Literature*, is one of the earliest and most important anthologies of Chinese poetry and literature, and is one of the world's oldest literary anthologies to be arranged by topic. It is a selection of what were judged to be the best poetic and prose pieces from the late Warring States period (c. 300 BC) to the early Liang dynasty (c. AD 500), excluding the Chinese Classics and philosophical texts. The *Wen Xuan* preserves most of the greatest *fu* rhapsody and *shi* poetry pieces from the Qin and Han dynasties, and for much of pre-modern history was one of the primary sources of literary knowledge for educated Chinese.

the Republic of China period, he served as secretary in the Ministry of Education and later resigned with the excuse that “I do not know how to be an administrator, what I only know how to do is study.” Afterwards, he went back to Hangzhou and diligently studied the Chinese ancient classics, including Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism.

His thought enjoys a high reputation in modern Chinese Confucianism. Liang Shuming (梁漱溟, 1893–1988)<sup>97</sup> once praised him as “the millennial national quintessence of the Confucian School.” Ma Yifu also made remarkable achievements in Buddhism. He established the academic society of Buddhist studies in Hangzhou—the Prajna Club (般若會). At that time, abbots of main temples in Hangzhou became his guests. Monks outside Hangzhou also traveled to visit him for advice. He was once known as the “Master of Buddhist Studies.”<sup>98</sup>

The friendship between Master Hongyi and Xia Mianzun was truthful and pure, but he and Ma Yifu became acquainted much earlier. As early as during his studies at Nanyang Public School, Master Hongyi had already met Ma Yifu, as Ma Yifu said in the “To the Memorial Service of Master Hongyi’s Rebirth in the West”:

I was fortunate to meet Master in Shanghai, we first met between 1902 and 1903. Afterwards, we did not see each other for more than ten years. When Master began to teach arts in the First Normal School in Hangzhou in the beginning of the Republican Period, we were reunited. Our contact continued until he received ordination and became a monk.<sup>99</sup>

As mentioned above, the first meeting between Master and Ma Yifu took place

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<sup>97</sup> Liang Shuming was a Chinese philosopher, politician, and writer in the Rural Reconstruction Movement during the late Qing dynasty and early Republican eras of Chinese history.

<sup>98</sup> Xu, *Hongyi Dashi youguan renwu lunwenji*, 21.

<sup>99</sup> Ma Yifu 马一浮, “Zhi Hongyi Fashi shengxi jinianhui” 致弘一法師生西紀念會, in *Ma Yifu quanji* 马一浮全集, vol. 1(1) (Hangzhou: Guji chubanshe, 2013), 277.

in the years 1902 and 1903. When Master studied at Nanyang Public School, the two only randomly chatted, and then Ma Yifu went to the United States and the contact stopped. When Ma Yifu returned home, their friendship resumed. Master's desire for religion after his personal experience of fasting at Hupao Temple was further strengthened. However, Master did not have a firm determination and belief in Buddhism yet. As he said in the letter addressed to Liu Zhiping:

You have religion to worship, especially good if it is faith. Either Buddhism, Islam, or Christianity is acceptable.<sup>100</sup>

At a crossroads of life, when Master Hongyi still hesitated about the future; it was Ma Yifu who gave him the guidance.

In 1914, Ma Yifu promoted and established a folk organization of Buddhist studies, Prajna Club, with his friends. This society aimed at entering the Buddha's wisdom and enlightening the mind, transforming sentient beings and realizing the Dharma realm. It was at this social gathering that Master and Ma Yifu met again; Ma turned his focus of study to Buddhism and conducted an in-depth study of Buddhist classics. It was also a time when he was emotionally drawn to Buddhism.

Li Shutong, who had become an influential figure in the field of literature and art, consulted Ma on the Dharma. Ma gave careful and patient guidance based on his own study and experience, which was naturally reasonable. Master Hongyi's determination to uphold Buddhism was closely related to Ma Yifu's guidance at this time. Ma frequently recommended Buddhist classics and texts to Master Hongyi. For example, in the winter

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<sup>100</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:125.

of 1917, Ma gave Master following books:

1. Changshui (長水)'s *Notes on the Treatise on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* (起信論疏筆削記 Qixinlun shu bixiao ji)<sup>101</sup>
2. Four volumes of 三藏法數 *Sanzang fashu*, two volumes of *A Treatise on The Generating the Bodhi Resolve Sutra* (發菩提心文 Fa putixin wen) by Vasubandhu,
3. *Exhortation to Resolve Upon Bodhi* (勸發菩提心文 Quanfa putixin wen)
4. *Treatise on Pure Land* (淨土論 Jingtu lun) by Master Xing An.<sup>102</sup>

The above books given by Ma Yifu were mainly for beginners. They were helpful and meaningful for beginners to establish confidence and belief in Buddhism.

Master Hongyi also wrote about Ma Yifu's influence in a letter to Liu Zhiping:

Since I was guided by Ma Yifu in the twelfth month, I have been gradually awakened [to the Truth].<sup>103</sup>

In this way, Hongyi's decision to embrace Buddhism was due to Ma Yifu's influence. Xia Mianzun stated in "*Master Hongyi's Monastic Ordination*":

Mr. Ma has a friend, Mr. Peng, he asked Mr. Ma to introduce a quiet place to stay. Mr. Ma recalled Hupao Temple, which Master Hongyi had mentioned a few days ago, and sent Mr. Peng to Hupao Temple to stay. Just as Master Hongyi was there, he met Mr. Peng with the introduction of Mr. Ma. After living together for a few days, on the eighth day of the first month, Mr. Peng suddenly made vows and received monastic ordination at Hupao Temple. Master Hongyi witnessed

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<sup>101</sup> Wu Guang 吳光, ed., *Ma Yifu quanji* 馬一浮全集, vol. 2.1 (Hangzhou: Guji chubanshe, 2013), 442.

<sup>102</sup> Wu, ed., *Ma Yifu quanji*, 2.1:443.

<sup>103</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 4:27.

everything at that time and was greatly moved. However, Li Shutong did not want to be a monk. He just wanted to take refuge in the Three Jewels and honored Venerable Liaowu as his master. He was given the name of Yanyin and styled himself Hongyi.<sup>104</sup>

Hence, Master Hongyi took refuge in Buddhism because he witnessed the monastic ordination of Ma Yifu's friend, Mr. Peng. This story shows the indirect connection with Ma Yifu.

In general, Master Hongyi chose Buddhism to be his faith, and he then took refuge and became a monk. Even after he became a monk, he chose Vinaya as his own practice and research field, which was inspired by Ma Yifu. In 1918, in the third month after Master Hongyi's ordination, Ma Yifu gave him the books *Lingfeng pini shiyi jiyao* 靈峰毘尼事義集要 and *Baohua chuanjie zhengfan* 寶華傳戒正範—this was the first time that Master Hongyi encountered Buddhist Vinaya, and this contact greatly affected his thoughts. Since then, as he said in the *Sifenlü biquijie xiangbiao ji* 四分律比丘戒相表記・跋, he treated these two Vinaya works with “openness.” He read it through, infused by both sadness and happiness, and this caused himself to make a vow to study Vinaya.

After Master Hongyi's ordination, Ma Yifu continued to maintain close ties with him. “He (Ma) used the special conditions of concentrating on Buddhist scripture studies and his high status in Buddhist circles to continue his full support for Master Hongyi in the Dharma.”<sup>105</sup> He collected *Qingliang shuchao* 清涼疏鈔 for Master Hongyi, wrote postscripts and colophons on the *Brahma Net Sutra* 梵網經, *Yuanjue benqi zhang* 圓覺本

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<sup>104</sup> Xia Mianzun 夏丕尊, “Hongyi fashi zhi chujia” 弘一法師之出家, in *Hongyi fashi quanji* 弘一法師全集, vol. 10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1991), 39.

<sup>105</sup> Xu, *Hongyi Dashi youguan renwu lunwenji*, 36.

起章, and the *Amitabha Sutra* 阿弥陀经 for Master, and composed the preface for Master's work *Husheng huaji* 護生畫集(*Protection for Living Beings*). Many of Ma Yifu's works were related to Master Hongyi:

1. “*Ba Hongyi dashi huayan jiliao moji* 跋弘一大師華嚴集聊墨跡,”
2. “*Hongyi shangren wei Su An shu <Xianjun yixun juanzi> ba* 弘一上人為蘇盒書<先君遺訓卷子>跋,”
3. “*Hongyi lüzhu yibo taji bingming* 弘一律主衣鉢塔記並銘,”
4. “*Hongyi shangzuo jiangyanshi xindeng beishan qiongjuechu, yici zengbie qushen zanxi* 弘一上座將掩室新登北山窺絕處，以此贈別且申贊喜,”
5. “*Ai Hongyi fashi* 哀弘一法師,” “*Hupao xun Hongyi lüzhuta he Su An* 虎跑尋弘一律主塔和蘇盒,”
6. “*Hupao Hongyi lüzhuta cheng Zikai yue wang guanli, shiri hanyu, zhizhe shenzhong Su An you shiyu yi jizuo jian shi Zihai* 虎跑弘一律主塔成子愷約往觀禮，是日寒雨，至者甚眾蘇盒有詩予亦繼作兼示子愷,”
7. “*Ti Hongyi dashi yingxiang* 題弘一大師影像,”
8. “*Zhi Hongyi fashi shengxi jinianhui* (To the Memorial Service of Master Hongyi's Rebirth in the West 致弘一法師生西紀念會),”
9. “*Youren chuanshi Hongyi fashi jixiangxiang yinti qihou* 有人傳示弘一法師吉祥相因題其後,” and
10. “*Ti Hongyi fashi benxing ji* 題弘一法師本行記.”

The titles used by Ma Yifu to address Master Hongyi were: “grandmaster (大

師),” “master (上人),” “high seat (上座),” and “Vinaya master (律主),” reflecting his respect and veneration for Master Hongyi.

At the crossroads of life, because of the guidance of Ma Yifu, Master Hongyi became devoted to Buddhism—he took refuge in Buddhism and was ordained as a Buddhist monk. Later, in the practice and study of Buddhism, he was inspired by Ma Yifu and chose Vinaya as his own direction. As a monk, Master Hongyi was also supported by Ma Yifu. Therefore, they kept a friendship between friends and between teacher and student. As can be seen, Ma Yifu’s influence on Hongyi was tremendous.

#### **4.3.4 Personality and Psychological Analysis of Master Hongyi**

Master Hongyi’s decision on monastic ordination was certainly related to his family’s influence from his childhood and influences from his friendship with Xia Mianzun and Ma Yifu at Zhejiang No. 1 Normal School. Another important factor, however, was due his personality and mental state, which also determined the latter half of his life.

The cultivation of Master Hongyi’s personality had much to do with his original family and the historical background of his time. As Li Zaidao analyzed in the “Relationship between Xu Yaoting and Master Hongyi”:

The formation of Master Hongyi’s personality is inseparable from the living environment when he was a teenager. At that time, he not only lived in the historical background of Tianjin regional culture, but also in a family that advocated literature and rites of conduct, his father's virtuous deeds when alive, his family's admiration for Buddhism, his mother's unfortunate situation in the family as a concubine, and the subsequent family's ruin. Among all of these complicated situations, none of them left an indelible mark on the depths of his heart. His early life at that time gave him tremendous afflictions and sorrow. He loved life and pursued the



bright, but he was always suppressed by heavy burdens on the road of life; he explored the true meaning of life practice, but he could not find one to get rid of the sorrow and suffering in the secular world. The real way out of all kinds of troubles. This complicated situation greatly influenced the formation of his personality and beliefs. At the same time, some important people around him, such as his father, his biological mother, his teachers, and friends, had a great influence on him.<sup>106</sup>

Because his mother was his father's concubine, her status in the family was low: she had to endure much embarrassment and hardships and tread carefully in the family. And as her son, his status could not be equal to that of his half-brothers, which made him feel uncomfortable in his heart. Over time, he developed a reticent, introverted personality and a feeling of inferiority. In the view of Master Hongyi, this personality and mentality are related to his monastic ordination. As he said in "*Chudao shijian de kaitan*":

I felt the feeling of oppression brought by this unfair treatment from an early age, but I can only endure it. Perhaps this has laid the groundwork for me to be a monk in the future.<sup>107</sup>

It was not only the family environment in which he grew up, but also the social background at that time. China at the end of the Qing dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China was eventful; society was in the midst of dramatic change. All kinds of thoughts erupted, and war was constantly going on. Living conditions were deeply distressed, comparable to being in deep water or hot fire. Master Hongyi witnessed the corruption of the Qing court and state affairs and could not help but be worried and be

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<sup>106</sup> Li Zaidao 李載道, "Xu Yaoting yu Hongyi Dashi zhi yinyuan" 徐耀廷與弘一大師之因緣, in *Hongyi Dashi youguan renwu lunwenji* 弘一大師有關人物論文集, ed. Chen Huijian 陳慧劍 (Taipei: Hongyi dashi jinian xuehui, 2011), 8.

<sup>107</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:118.

filled with indignation. He sighed that great China would not survive without revolution. After experiencing the Reform Movement of 1898 and the Eight-Power Allied Forces invasion of China, human suffering and misfortune were everywhere in China. In this regard, he repeatedly expressed his feelings in the form of poetry, such as “the world is mixed, fish with dragons, but why does Heaven’s heart not feel unfair,” “rivers and mountains feel sadness towards the motherland, cannot help but tears coming from two eyes,” “how much a sense of ups and downs have I felt so far, old crows are not only on the bank of the dam in the Sui (dynasty),” “all before [my] eyes is the ocean of tears, for whom [I feel] sorrowful and mournful.” These are enough to show how great the sadness was in him when the motherland faced dangers. Therefore, he was eager to study in Japan with the ambition of “delivering all sentient beings, can [I] cherish my heart and liver. It is [for] the motherland, [I] tolerate the loneliness and sorrow.”<sup>108</sup>

With this aspiration, he went to Japan to study and later introduced Western music, fine arts, and drama stage performance to China. While he showed unprecedented excitement in response to political activities in the successful year of the Revolution of 1911, he participated in the revolutionary cultural group “Nan Society” and served as the editor and publisher of *The Pacific Times*. Still, he still felt deeply disappointed at the corruption in domestic politics. He was not willing to collude with dark forces, however, so he chose to stay far away from the political center and was determined to start improving academics to save the spirit of the nation and promote the development of the country. However, when he was teaching at the Zhejiang No. 1 Normal School, the attitude of the educational authorities to music, art and other literary courses once again

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<sup>108</sup> Yu She 余涉, *Li Shutong shiquanbian* 李叔同詩全編 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe, 1995), 127.

deeply disappointed Master Hongyi. At the time, the mentality of Master Hongyi was:

At that time, I was already in middle age, and I was tired of flamboyance. I was eager for peace and calm inside my heart, and so my lifestyle gradually became low profile.<sup>109</sup>

It was in this situation that Master Hongyi learned about fasting practice from his friend Xia Mainzun, after which he “found his spiritual home and eventually entered the Buddhist gate.”<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:121.

<sup>110</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:121.

## CHAPTER 5: MASTER HONGYI AND NANSHAN VINAYA SCHOOL

Master Hongyi, as an outstanding representative of China's modern new Cultural Movement, specialized in the study of Buddhism after he became a monk. He tried to propagate Buddhism with his practice. Taking a general look into Master's Buddhist ideology, one can see that many aspects of Buddhism are involved, including not only concepts regarding the Vinaya school, but also the Flower-Adornment sect, Pure Land, protection of the country, protection of lives, and others. However, based on the life stories of Master Hongyi, his main experience lies in the study and promotion of the Nanshan Vinaya School. And in the latter half of his life, he strictly followed Vinaya as the basis of Sangha cultivation. It is precisely because of his important role in the resurgent Nanshan Vinaya school that he is recognized as the 11<sup>th</sup> patriarch of the Nanshan Vinaya School by later generations. Therefore, among the many Buddhist concepts held by Master Hongyi, his thought on Vinaya school is undoubtedly the most important.

What are the doctrines of the Nanshan Vinaya school? In his process of Buddhist study, did Master Hongyi choose Vinaya first? What was the reason for Master Hongyi to become interested in the study of the Nanshan Vinaya school and to regard it as his main object of study in Buddhism? What was the content of Master Hongyi's ideology on Vinaya precepts? What are the characteristics? What are the important meanings of Nanshan Vinaya in the Chinese Vinaya tradition and even in Chinese Buddhism? This chapter analyzes Master Hongyi's Buddhist concepts and the Nanshan Vinaya School

from these perspectives.

## **5.1 Brief Introduction of Nanshan Vinaya Doctrines**

### **5.1.1 Sectarian Buddhism with Chinese Characteristics**

The system of Buddhist study and practice can be divided into three aspects: precepts (*śīla*), meditative concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*). Among these, precepts refer to the disciplines and commandments. It is a variety of codes of conduct that Buddhist monks and laymen should abide by in their spiritual practice. It is also the rules used in Buddhism to deal with the relationship between individuals and between individuals and the group. It restricts and coordinates the members of the group, to provide protection for the practice while promoting the Dharma among believers. Meditative concentration refers to meditation, which is a Buddhist practice method that aims to make the mind focus on an object without distraction. Wisdom refers to the truth about the nature of life and the universe as revealed by Buddhism. Its purpose is to distinguish affairs based on reasoning, resolve doubts, and teach people to eliminate afflictions and obtain liberation. The relationship between the three learnings is based on this principle: from precepts, there arises meditative concentration, and from meditative concentration, there arises wisdom. Based on this relationship, an effective doctrine and practice system emerges.

Buddhism has experienced different periods: pre-sectarian Buddhism, early Buddhism, *nīkaya* Buddhism or sectarian Buddhism, and Mahayana Buddhism, during more than two thousand years of development. Throughout the time of development, the

interpretation of Buddhist doctrines and principles has been modified and changed accordingly, which influenced the development of Buddhist concepts. Among the changes, the most obvious result is that one unified Buddhism has developed into two main sects: Śrāvakayāna Buddhism and Mahāyāna Buddhism. Therefore, for Buddhist precepts, there is also a distinction between the Śrāvakayāna and Mahayana precepts.

During the Han dynasty (202 BC–220 CE), Buddhism spread to China. In the initial period, due to the difference in the incoming routes and the personalities of the communicators, Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna teachings coexisted in early Chinese Buddhism. It was not until the fifth century that Kumārajīva entered China and translated many Buddhist scriptures that clearly explained some important theories of Buddhism. Consequently, Chinese people began to gain a clear understanding of Buddhism. Afterwards, Chinese Buddhism developed through the Southern and Northern dynasties (420–589 CE). Under the influence of Chinese traditional culture, Mahayana Buddhism, with the core concepts of *tathāgatagarbha* and *buddhadhatū*, finally became the mainstream of Chinese Buddhism, on this basis of which a sectarian Buddhism with Chinese characteristics was established.

### **5.1.2 Chinese Vinaya Schools and Nanshan Vinaya School**

According to the overall situation of the development of Chinese sectarian Buddhism, Buddhism is most discussed in China as a matter of Buddhist doctrine. Chinese Buddhism naturally places emphasis on ideology. However, judging from the main Mahayana scriptures favored by Chinese Buddhism, great importance is also attached to Vinaya. The *Flower Adornment Sūtra* (Skt. *Buddhāvataṃsaka-mahāvaiṣṭya-*

*sūtra*; *Chi. Dafang guangfo huayan jing*), known as the king of all sutras, says, “The precepts are the foundation of supreme enlightenment and [one] should completely uphold pure precepts; if [one] well maintains disciplines and precepts, [one] will receive praises from Buddhas.”<sup>111</sup> Also, the entry-level text *Sūtra on the Buddha's Bequeathed Teaching* (*Chi. 佛垂般涅槃略說教誡經 Fo chui boniepan lüeshuo jiaojie jing*) states, “All of you Bhikshus! After my Nirvana, you should revere and honor the *prātimokṣa*. It is like finding a light in darkness, or like a poor person obtaining a treasure. [You] should know that it is your great teacher and is not different from my actual presence in the world.”<sup>112</sup> The Sanskrit term *prātimokṣa* refers to the precepts, the upholding of which can lead to liberation from all sufferings, afflictions, doubts, and karma. In short, it refers to the Vinaya. Therefore, in both the *Flower Adornment Sūtra*, the perfect teaching in Mahayana Buddhism, and in the bequeathed teachings by the Buddha, precepts are undoubtedly an essential aspect of Buddhism. Therefore, a sect focusing on the study of precepts formed in Chinese sectarian Buddhism, namely, the Vinaya school.

Many Buddhist doctrines expound on the study of Vinaya. The existing texts include: *Mahāsaṃghika-vinaya* in the Mahāsaṃghika sect, *Daṇḍānavāra-vinaya* in the Sarvāstivādin sect, *Pañcavargika-vinaya* in the Mahīśāsaka sect, *Caturvargika-vinaya* in the Dharmaguptaka sect, *Sarvāstivādin-vinaya* in the Mūla-sarvāstivādin sect, *Sūtra on Upāsaka Precepts* (*Sujāta-sūtra*) in the Kāśyapīya sect. These Vinaya texts belong to the Vinaya piṭaka in the Pāli Canon.

After the rise of Mahayana Buddhism, Vinaya in line with the spirit of benefiting

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<sup>111</sup> 《大方廣佛華嚴經》卷六：「戒是無上菩提本，應當具足持淨戒。若能具足持淨戒，一切如來所讚歎。」(CBETA 2020.Q1, T09, no. 278, p. 433b13-14).

<sup>112</sup> 《佛垂般涅槃略說教誡經》：「汝等比丘，於我滅後，當尊重珍敬波羅提木叉，如闇遇明，貧人得寶。當知此則是汝大師，若我住世無異此也。」(CBETA 2020.Q1, T12, no. 389, p. 1110c20-22).

both self and others and the altruism of liberating all sentient beings emerged. These precepts are commonly named the Bodhisattva Precepts and the Bodhisattva Precept Ritual, based on *Brahma's Net Sūtra* (*Brahmajāla-sūtra*), *Bodhisattvabhūmi-sūtra* and *Commentary on the Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* (*Yogacāra-bhūmi-śāstra*). However, in Chinese Buddhism, the translation and interpretation of Vinaya occurred much later than for the scriptures and commentaries. The earliest record related to Vinaya is that Dharmakāla translated the *Essence of Mahasanghika Precepts* (Ch. 僧祇戒心 *Sengqi jixin*; now lost) in the years from 249 to 253.<sup>113</sup> Here, the “essence” refers to the text of precepts, that is, the most basic provisions extracted from Vinaya. During the Eastern Jin dynasty (317–420 CE), under the request of the monk Dao’an (道安), Zhu Fonian (竺佛念), Tanmochi (曇摩持), Hui Chang (慧常), and others only translated the *Bhikṣus' Precepts of the Ten-division Vinaya* (十誦律比丘戒本 *Shisonglü bijiu jieben*) and *Bhikṣuṅīs' Precepts of the Ten-division Vinaya* (十誦律比丘尼大戒 *Shisonglü bijiuni dajie*).<sup>114</sup> However, the complete and systematic Vinaya texts were not translated until after Kumārajīva came to China.

According to the Buddhist literature, these translations of Vinaya texts include:

- 1) *Ten-division Vinaya* (十分律 *Shifen lü*) translated by Kumārajīva from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> year of the Hongshi (宏始) era of the Later Qin dynasty (404–406 CE),
- 2) *Four-division Vinaya* (四分律 *Sifen lü*) translated by Buddhayaśas (佛陀耶舍) and Zhu Fonian in the 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> year of the Hongshi period of the Later Qin dynasty (410–413 CE),
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<sup>113</sup> Wang Jianguang 王建光, *Zhongguo Lüzhong Tongshi* 中國律宗通史 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2008), 55.

<sup>114</sup> Wang, *Zhongguo Lüzhong Tongshi*, 80.



*Mahasangha Vinaya* (摩訶僧祇律 *Mohe sengqi lü*) translated by Buddhahadra and Faxian (法顯) in the 14<sup>th</sup> year of Yixi's (義熙) reign during the Eastern Jin dynasty (419 CE), 4) *Five-division Vinaya* (五分律 *Wufen lü*) translated by Buddhajīva (佛陀什) and Zhu Daosheng (竺道生) in the first year of the Jingping (景平) era of the Liu-Song dynasty (423 CE); and 5) *Sarvāstivādin-vinaya* (根本說一切有部律 *Genben shuoyiqieyou bu lü*) translated by Yijing (義淨) from the first year of the Jiushi (久世) era of the Tang dynasty to the second year of the Jingyun (景雲) era under Ruizong's (睿宗) reign (700–711 CE). At this point, the translation of Vinaya scriptures from Sanskrit to Chinese were complete in Chinese Buddhism.

However, the emergence of Vinaya as a sect in Buddhism occurred during the Tang dynasty. The so-called Vinaya school is a Buddhist sect that built a complete system focusing on the study and practice of Vinaya based on the Vinaya scriptures. As previously mentioned, although Chinese Buddhism began to interpret and study the precepts since the Jiaping (嘉平) era of Wei in the Three Kingdoms period (249–254 CE), a more systematic and complete system of Vinaya was created during the first year of the Hongshi era of the Qin dynasty. After the Northern and Southern dynasties (420–589 CE), Vinaya masters known for their great studies on Vinaya scriptures emerged one after another, and they also began to explain and annotate the Vinaya texts. During the reign of Emperor Xiaowen (孝文) of the Wei dynasty (471–499 CE), Facong (法聰, 468–559) lectured on *Four-division Vinaya* in Pingcheng (平城) and orally transmitted six volumes of commentaries on *Four-division Vinaya* to his disciple Daofu (道覆). Later, the scholar master of the Southern Dilun school (南派地論宗), Huiguang (慧光, 468–

537), wrote his commentaries on *Four-division Vinaya* and dedicated himself to explaining the meaning of *Four-division Vinaya*. Huiguang's disciple Daoyun, entrusted with Huiguang's will, specially engaged in promoting the study of Vinaya and authored nine volumes of commentaries on *Four-division Vinaya*.

After Daoyun, Chinese Vinaya sect was divided into two: Daohong (道洪, 574–649) and Hongzun (洪尊, 530–608). Between these, Daohong's lineage was transmitted through Zhishou (智首, 567–635) to Daoxuan (道宣, 596–667), thus forming the Nanshan Vinaya school, and Hongzun's lineage was transmitted from Hongyuan (洪淵) to Fali (法礪, 569–635), founding their Xiangbu Vinaya school. In addition, there was another lineage focusing on the study of *Four-division Vinaya* in the Tang dynasty, namely, the Dongta Vinaya school (東塔律), founded by the Vinaya master Huaisu (懷素, 624–698). Judging from the history of the development of the Vinaya schools, Nanshan Vinaya was the most prosperous among the three major schools. The Buddhist Vinaya system established by Daoxuan through interpreting the *Four-division Vinaya* spread widely and with significant influence and is regarded as the pioneer of the Chinese Vinaya schools by later generations.

Daoxuan, the founder of the Chinese Vinaya school, whose secular surname is Qian, was from Dantu (丹徒, now Zhenjiang, Jiangsu).<sup>115</sup> In the fifteenth year of his life, he began to receive teachings from the Vinaya monk Zhiyun (智顓) at Riyan Temple (日嚴寺) in Chang'an. After his ordination, he studied from the Vinaya monk Zhishou (智首), who explained precepts based on the *Four-division Vinaya* to him. Daoxuan, on this

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<sup>115</sup> Also known to be from 長城 Changcheng (now Changxing, Zhejiang).

foundation, started to edit and compile the studies of Vinaya. As he always lived in Zhongnan shan (終南山), his Vinaya sect is referred to as the Nanshan Vinaya school to differentiate it from other Vinaya schools.

Daoxuan was diligent and knowledgeable, extensively reading the scriptures throughout his life. His main works in Vinaya studies include:

1. *Simplified and Amended Handbook of the Four-division Vinaya* (四分律刪繁補闕行事鈔 *Sifenlü shanfan buque xingshichao*),
2. *Sifenlü biqu hanzhu jieben* 四分律比丘含注戒本,
3. *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben shu* 四分律含注戒本疏,
4. *Sifenlü shanbu suiiji jiemo* 四分律刪補隨機羯磨,
5. *Sifenlü shanbu suiiji jiemo shu* 四分律刪補隨機羯磨疏,
6. *Sifenlü shibini yichao* 四分律拾毘尼義鈔,
7. *Sifenlü biquuni chao* 四分律比丘尼鈔,
8. *Jingxin guanjie fa* 淨心戒觀法,
9. *Lüxiang gantong zhuan* 律相感通傳,
10. *Jiaojie xinshu biqu xinghu lüyi* 教誡新學比丘行護律儀,
11. *Jietan tujing* 戒壇圖經,
12. *Shanding sifen seng jieben* 刪定四分僧戒本, and others.

Among these, *Simplified and Amended Handbook of the Four-division Vinaya*, *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben shu*, and *Sifenlü shanbu suiiji jiemo shu* are regarded as the “three

essential scriptures of Nanshan.” Together with *Sifenlü shibini yichao* and *Sifenlü biqiuni chao*, they are regarded as the “five essential scriptures of Nanshan.” Judging from Dao Xuan’s notes on the study of Vinaya, he emphasized the effects of precepts. He believed that Vinaya was not only the most important of the three studies, but also provided a guiding role for the actual practice. Therefore, he aimed to make the study of Vinaya practical and feasible, to perfect the theoretical system of *Four-division Vinaya* based on Mahayana theories and doctrines, and “to provide vast opportunities to society in the mainland on the basis of the content and spirit of *Four-division Vinaya*,”<sup>116</sup> which rendered Nanshan Vinaya studies the foundation of later studies on Vinaya. The three essential scriptures of Nanshan, as the primary demonstration of Daoxuan’s concepts on Vinaya, are the principal source of the ideology of the Nanshan Vinaya school. The core concept of the Nanshan Vinaya school is *Four-division Vinaya*; therefore, Nanshan Vinaya school is also referred to as the school of *Four-division Vinaya*.

## **5.2 Causes for Master Hongyi to Choose Nanshan Vinaya School**

The *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集<sup>117</sup> is the most complete of Master Hongyi’s anthologies. Based on the included works and articles by Master Hongyi, the works on the study of Vinaya are mainly explanations and annotations on the *Four-division Vinaya*, for instance, *An Abridged and Explanatory Commentary on the Dharmaguptakavinaya* (四分律刪繁補缺行事鈔), *Additional Commentary on*

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<sup>116</sup> Wang, *Zhongguo Lüzong Tongshi*, 274.

<sup>117</sup> Published Haixia chuban faxing jituan and Fujian renmin chubanshe in 2010.

*Dharmaguptavinaya* (四分律行事鈔資持記), *Sifenlü xingshichao zichiji fusangji shi* 四分律行事鈔資持記扶桑集釋, *Explanation and Notes on the Dharmaguptavinaya* (四分律含注戒本疏), and *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben shu xingzongji* 四分律含注戒本疏行踪記.

Other writings include: “Review on Nanshan Vinaya School” (南山律在家備覽), “Lüxue yaolüe” (*A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu’s Precepts in the Dharmagupta Vinaya* 四分律比丘戒相表記), and other related notes and explanation on Vinaya.

His writings and annotation work primarily focus on the *Four-division Vinaya* and are also related to *Sarvāstivādin-vinaya* and the Bodhisattva precepts. From the perspective of Śrāvakayāna and Mahayana, the Bodhisattva precepts belong to the Mahayana precepts, while both *Four-division Vinaya* and *Sarvāstivādin-vinaya* belong to the Śrāvakayāna precepts. Yet, Master Hongyi’s attitudes towards the latter two are obviously different. How did Master Hongyi choose the studies of Buddhism initially? What was the reason that he chose the *Four-division Vinaya* as the focus of Nanshan Vinaya studies?

### **5.2.1 From Sarvāstivādin Vinaya to Nanshan Vinaya**

In the *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, an article written by Master Hongyi, namely, *Yuhonglü zhi yinyuan* 余弘律之因緣, reveals the reason that he chose the Vinaya school and *Four-division Vinaya* as his object of study, practice and propagating. The full text of my translation is excerpted as follows:

When I first became a monk, I immediately read *Fanwang hanzhu* 梵網含注 and continued to read *Lingfeng zonglun* 靈峰宗論 ; therefore, I was inspired to study the Vinaya. During the ordination retreat, I always read *Chuanjie zhengfan* 傳戒正範 and *Pini shiye jiyao* 毘尼事業集要 . In the spring of the gengshen year (1920), as I requested from Japan, I received the ancient version of the three classics of Nanshan and Lingzhi, over 80 volumes. In the spring of the xinyou year (1921), I began to compile the *Jiexiangbiao ji* 戒相表記. In June, the first draft was finished. It has been revised many times afterward and copied several times by hand.

In the same year, I also read the Tripitaka monk Yijing's translation of *Sarvāstivādin Vinaya* (有部律) and *Nanhan jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 . I deeply praise these works and believe teaching early Vinaya precepts to be virtuous. Therefore, in the first and second drafts of *Sifenlü jiexiangbiao ji* 四分律戒相表記, Yijing's explanations are frequently quoted to correct Nanshan's. Afterwards, I realized that was inappropriate and defaming the ancient masters and then I smeared and removed those corrections. After many revisions, the final version was completed. Although I didn't dare to defame Nanshan, I didn't devote myself to the study of the three scriptures of Nanshan but focused on the *Sarvāstivādin Vinaya*. In two years, I compiled one volume of *Youbu fanxiang zhaji* 有部犯相摘記 and one volume of *Zixing chao* 自行抄 .

At that time, Xu Weiru's (徐蔚如, 1878–1938) scripture engraving house was in Tianjin, dedicated to scriptures of the Nanshan Vinayan school. It cost tens of thousands of yuan and lasted more than ten years and was gradually completed. As a lay Buddhist, Xu first heard that I favored *Sarvāstivādin Vinaya* and ignored the Nanshan sect and tried to persuade me. He believed that our country has been adhering to the Nanshan sect for more than a thousand years, and it would be beneficial to continue the tradition if I wanted to promote the Vinaya studies. Yet, it would not be appropriate to change. Therefore, I intended to study the Nanshan Vinaya at the same time. Until the fifteenth day of the second month of the xinwei year (1931), I vowed in front of the Buddha that I would abandon *Sarvāstivādin Vinaya* and specialize in Nanshan Vinaya, and promote it at my best, to repent my wrongdoings when I was young.

Nine hundred years after the historical Buddha's nirvana, two brothers were active in north India: Asaṅga and Vasubandhu. Vasubandhu first learned Hinayana and slandered Mahayana. Later, he heard his elder brother's explanation, he repented his ignorance and attachment to Hinayana, and was about to cut his tongue to offer an apology. Asaṅga said, "you used your tongue to slander Mahayana; therefore, you can also use this tongue to praise Mahayana." Therefore, Vasubandhu wrote five hundred volumes of commentary on Mahayana theories. Here I am, willing to put

forth my effort to focus on the study of Nanshan Vinaya, and praise as well as promote it, in order to repent the past transgressions. This is the cause and condition that I am changed from a scholar of new Vinaya to a scholar of old Vinaya, and it is also the cause and condition that I vowed to propagate in the Nanshan Vinaya school.<sup>118</sup>

Also, as he stated in the preface of *Sifenlü jiexiangbiao ji*:

In the seventh month of the wuwu year (1918), I participated in the tonsure ceremony. In the ninth month of the same year, I received the bhikṣu vows. Ma Yifu gave me *Lingfeng pini shiyi jiyao* 靈峰毘尼事義集要 and *Baohua chuanjie zhengfan* 寶華傳戒正範, with both sadness and pleasure, for I vowed to study the Buddhist Vinaya. In the winter of this year, I read *Pini zhenjing lu* 毘尼珍敬錄 and *Pini guanyao* 毘尼關要. Though I carefully studied and contemplated, I was unable to thoroughly comprehend these works from beginning to end. In the summer of gengshen (1920), I stayed at Bei Mountain (貝山) in Xincheng (新城). I borrowed three volumes of *Hongjiao lüzang* 弘教律藏 and requested *Jie shu* 戒疏, *Jiemo shu* 羯磨疏, and *Xingshi chao* 行事鈔 of the Nanshan tradition, as well as three classics of Lingzhi 靈芝. I will be sealed in the mountain and endlessly study the Vinaya.<sup>119</sup>

Master Hongyi began to study the *Fanwangjing hezhu* 梵網經合注 when he first became a monk in 1918. After receiving *Lingfeng zonglun* 靈峰宗論 from Ma Yifu, he had the thought of studying Buddhist Vinaya. When he was ordained at Lingyin Temple in Hangzhou, he read *Chuanjie zhengfan* 傳戒正範 and Master Ouyi's (滿益) *Lingfeng pini shiyi jiyao* 靈峰毗尼事義集要. Among these, *Chuanjie zhengfan* 傳戒正範 was written by the Vinaya master Jianyue (見月, 1601–1679) in Baohua Mountain (寶華山), which is known as the “first mountain of Buddhist Vinaya.” He was one of the

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<sup>118</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Yu Honglü zhi yinyuan 餘弘律之因緣,” in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 234.

<sup>119</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Sifenlü biqiu jiexiang biaoji zixu” 四分律比丘戒相表記自序 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 609.

most prestigious Vinaya masters since the Ming and Qing dynasties and his *Chuanjie zhengfan* 传戒正范 later became the foundation and source of conferring Buddhist precepts and vows since the end of the Ming dynasty (1600–1644). However, due to the inability to refer to Nanshan's works, his interpretation of *Pini zuochi* 毘尼作持 in *Suiji jiemo* 隨機羯磨 is quite different from the interpretations of Nanshan masters.<sup>120</sup>

Resultingly, when Master Hongyi was ordained, he found that modern ordination was very different from ordination in the ancient system. The ancient system of ordination was "always accessible at any time," while the modern system "only desire[s] to excite the crowd at the gate and the court, therefore many gathered," "to accommodate an assembly of hundreds of thousands of people." He criticized the number of people receiving ordination. At the same time, regarding the length of ordination process, the ancient system said, "it may proceed less than half a day, why do you need more than one day," while the ordination system in modern times takes as long as one month. Further, "In recent times, many ordination recipients gathered for a month and were only asked to help the Liberation Rite of Water and Land and other rituals. For them, there was no need to study the precepts, no need to recite Vinaya sutras, and no need to read Vinaya scriptures."<sup>121</sup> Master Hongyi believed that this means of receiving precepts was not equipped with appropriate conditions and that indeed the recipients were not receiving the precepts. However, he also stated,

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<sup>120</sup> Shi Zhaohui 釋昭慧, "Hongyi Dashi Zhi Yanliu Yu Honglu" 弘一大師之研律與弘律, in *Hongyi Dashi Youguan Renwu Lunwenji* 弘一大師有關人物論文集, ed. Chen Huijian 陳慧劍 (Taipei: Hongyi dashi jinian xuehui, 2011), 259-359.

<sup>121</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Wenda shizhang" 問答十章, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 297.



From the end of the Ming dynasty to the present, there is only one book that people used to confer ordination. A stream of light of hope in the lineage of conferring ordination still exists, which only relies on this book. Although it did not completely fit well with Nanshan works, its merits were so great that it should not be overlooked! The modern ritual text of receiving ordination precepts has been modified accordingly, and it is not the original version of Vinaya scholar Jianyue's *Chuanjie zhengfan*.<sup>122</sup>

Although Master Hongyi saw the existence of many problems at the time, he also felt hopeless—this became one of the reasons that led him to study the Vinaya.

From Master Hongyi's learning experience in Vinaya, one could see that he did not begin with studies in the Nanshan Vinaya school. In 1920, after he received the ancient version of the three classics of Nanshan and Lingzhi, he focused on studying the *Four-division Vinaya* in a retreat at Bei Mountain of Xincheng, and he began to compile *A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu's Precepts in the Dharmagupta Vinaya* (四分律比丘戒相表記), which was completed in the sixth month of 1921. Master Hongyi's earliest work is *A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu's Precepts in the Dharmagupta Vinaya* (四分律比丘戒相表記), which belongs to Nanshan Vinaya studies. However, it did not mean that Master Hongyi vowed to focus on Nanshan Vinaya as his main subject of study and practice as well as the goal of propagation at that time.

According to Master Hongyi's biography, in the third month of 1921, during the time that he was reading at Qingfu Temple (慶福寺) in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, he read Monk Yijing's *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 and *Sarvāstivādin-vinaya* 根本說一切有部毗奈耶, which are mentioned as “*youbu lü*” (Sarvāstivādin Vinaya) and

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<sup>122</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Lüxue yaolü” 律學要略, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 236.

“*xin lü*” 新律 (New Vinaya) in his works. He highly praised Monk Yijing’s “vast learning and wonderful memory, thorough studies in Vinaya, so much so that other Indian monks were incomparable to him, and he was the unprecedented Chinese Vinaya master.”<sup>123</sup> Meanwhile, Master Hongyi also regretted the situation where no one propagated the Sarvāstivādin Vinaya. Regarding Sarvāstivādin Vinaya, he relayed, “I was very excited when I first read it and spent many years studying it.”<sup>124</sup> Further, he regarded Sarvāstivādin Vinaya as his own subject of study, as recorded in *Notes on ‘Sarvāstivādin-vinaya-sutra’ Preface* (手書<根本說一切有部戒經>題記):

Buddhists in India upheld precepts from the Theravada Sect. Most monks in China understood it. The former tended to be simple and easy while the latter tended to be complicated and difficult to identify. This was because they were primarily similar with different focuses, and it was inappropriate to judge. I was fortunate to attain a human body and encounter great teaching. I wish to focus on Sarvāstivādin-vinaya to benefit myself and study other divisions to benefit others.<sup>125</sup>

In the early period, Master Hongyi was planning to treat Sarvāstivādin Vinaya as his focus of study, and therefore, he “repeatedly used Yijing’s explanation to correct Nanshan’s viewpoint in the first and second draft of *A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu’s Precepts in the Dharmagupta Vinaya* 四分律比丘戒相表記.

## 5.2.2 Reasons to Choose *Four-division Vinaya*

<sup>123</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Lüxue yaolü”, 1:236.

<sup>124</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Lüxue yaolü”, 1:236.

<sup>125</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Shoushu ‘Genbenshuo Yiqieyoubu Jiejing’” 手書<根本說一切有部戒經>題記, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 619.

Then how did Master Hongyi switch from Sarvāstivādin Vinaya to Nanshan Vinaya? *My Causes and Conditions to Propagate Buddhist Vinaya* says that it was because “lay Buddhist Mr. Xu first heard that I favored Sarvāstivādin Vinaya and ignored the Nanshan sect, and he tried to persuade me.” As a matter of fact, Xu Weiru’s persuasion can be only seen as the external reason. Internally speaking, it was based on Master Hongyi’s insights and deep understanding of Nanshan Vinaya. As he states in *Lüxue yaolüe*:

Regarding Sarvāstivādin Vinaya, I was very excited when I first read it and spent many years studying. Later due to friend’s advice, I changed to Nanshan Vinaya. The reason is that Nanshan Vinaya is based on *Four-division Vinaya*, with certain modifications, which fits the capability of monastics of our country.<sup>126</sup>

Master Hongyi believed that his study in Sarvāstivādin Vinaya was due to his interests. However, the direct reason that caused his focus to shift to the Nanshan Four-division Vinaya school was Xu Weiru’s persuasion and the actual reason was the Nanshan Vinaya school itself.

As mentioned earlier, Nanshan Vinaya was founded by Daoxuan based on the *Four-division Vinaya* (四分律 *Sifen lü*) translated by Buddhayaśas (佛陀耶舍) and Zhu Fonian. In terms of Vinaya classes, *Four-division Vinaya* belongs to the Śrāvakayāna Vinaya. Yet, Nanshan Four-division Vinaya is “Daoxuan’s thorough explanation based on the meaning of *Lotus Sutra* and *Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* (Eng. *Nirvana Sūtra*, *Chi*. 大般涅槃经 *Dabo niepan jing*) to establish the Vinaya precepts of *yuanzong* (圓宗).

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<sup>126</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Lüxue yaolüe”, 1:236.

It is the teaching for monastics.”<sup>127</sup> Thus, *Four-division Vinaya* can be explained based on Mahayana teachings and fits the spirit of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism. It also fulfills the needs of Chinese Buddhist monastic culture, and therefore, Master Hongyi believed that the *Four-division Vinaya* was well-suited to the capabilities of Chinese monastics. However, a great difference between history and reality emerged. Among the classics of the Nanshan Vinaya sect, Daoxuan’s *An Abridged and Explanatory Commentary on the Dharmaguptakavinaya* was the most prestigious. “Since the precepts are the basis of practice, scholars of any sect at that time need to study this book. From the Tang (618–906) to Song (960–1279) dynasties, more than sixty scholars wrote commentaries.”<sup>128</sup>

From this we can see the *Four-division Vinaya* influenced Chinese Buddhism greatly and widely. The inheritance of Nanshan Vinaya reached its peak with the Lingzhi Vinaya Master Yuanzhao (1048–1116), during the Northern Song dynasty. He wrote notes and explanations on Daoxuan’s three essential scriptures of Nanshan and compiled them into three books: *Xingshichao zichij* 行事鈔資持記, *Jieben shuxingzongji* 戒本疏行宗記, and *Suiji jiemoshu jiyuanji* 隨機羯磨疏濟源記, which are referred as the “three notes.” However, “after the Southern Song dynasty, Chan Buddhism became more prosperous, while the study of Vinaya was neglected. Therefore, thousands of volumes of Vinaya works that were published in the Tang and Song dynasties were lost. Until the beginning of the Qing dynasty, only one volume of *Suiji jiemo* 隨機羯磨 survived.”<sup>129</sup> Since the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368–1911), most of the Nanshan Vinaya writings were scattered and lost. The lack of nourishment of ancient Chinese Vinaya theory

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<sup>127</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Fofa zongpai dagai” 佛法宗派大概 in *Hongyi Dashi Quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 572.

<sup>128</sup> Shi Zhaohui, “Hongyi Dashi Zhi Yanliu Yu Honglü”, 358.

<sup>129</sup> Shi Zhaohui, *Hongyi Dashi youguan renwu lunwenji*, 359.

inevitably led to the relaxation of the practice of precepts and the decadence within the Sangha's guidelines.

In the period of the Republic of China, the decline of the study of Vinaya reached a low point. The situation of Chinese Buddhist monastics was indeed dreadful: "Many of them loaf around, sitting and eating from morning to evening. They are really parasites in this country. They can be endlessly destructive and not even a bit beneficial."<sup>130</sup> In terms of commandments, there was even more laxity. Few people studied and practiced the Vinaya. They barely knew what the precepts were, and they hardly understood the essential spirit of Vinaya and the intrinsic value and pursuit. In this regard, Lü Chun once said:

Most monks in modern China lack the practice of precepts. They are defeated and have no vitality. This is closely related to the lack of understanding Vinaya. Since the Qing dynasty, few have actually pursued the study of Vinaya, and the Vinaya is comprised mostly of dead texts. Its true spirit, which is to organize the Sangha and to guide behaviors, has long been neglected. Only a form exists within the Sangha based on Vinaya and the Sangha itself finally gets into a state of doldrums.<sup>131</sup>

As an outstanding representative of the New Cultural Movement, Master Hongyi was a senior intellectual in society and a leading figure of the times. Facing the decline of Buddhism, which was one of the three pillars of traditional Chinese culture, Master Hongyi was inevitably led to the idea of reviving Chinese Buddhist Vinaya. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of August in 1939, he wrote in *Jinglu lingzhi wen* 敬錄靈芝文 at Shili Vinaya Temple (十利

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<sup>130</sup> Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無, "Bian Fangbian Yu Sengzhi" 辨方便與僧制 in *Ouyang jingwu ji* 歐陽竟無集 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995), 159.

<sup>131</sup> Lü Cheng 呂澂, "Lüxue Chongguang de Xianjue Wenti" 律學重光的先決問題, in *Lücheng Ji* 呂澂集 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995), 123.

律院):

Nanshan Vinaya masters became known between the Sui and Tang dynasties (581–907). They widely learn and study various sects, and singly promote the sect of Vinaya. They are the great examples of the supreme sage, chasing the remains of essence of Dharma, reviewing the previous texts, and cherishing the younger generation. The writings from them are profound. Narratives and explanatory commentaries unify the four canons and cover the two kayas. They are distinguished from other sects, search, and debate on massive sayings, and are indeed the grand platform for maintaining and the shortcut for generating interests. Works of the masters of nine generations are not taken seriously. Their qualities are still profound and magnificent even hundreds of years after death. If it were not the Four Reliance Bodhisattvas presenting to the younger generation, how can it be like this?<sup>132</sup>

Master Hongyi regretted the decline of the Vinaya sect and his propagation for the restoration and reconstruction of the Nanshan Vinaya sect were demonstrated in his essays and speeches.

Since the Tang dynasty, the Nanshan Vinaya School was the backbone of the three major schools of Chinese Vinaya schools and played a role in carrying forward and advancing the development of Vinaya in Chinese Buddhism. The works on the Nanshan Vinaya have been vast throughout history, but since the Southern Song, due to the loss of the writings, Nanshan Vinaya studies were distorted, and its essence was lost.

In 1920, Xu Weiru returned to China from Japan with books of various Vinaya schools transmitted during the Tang dynasty, including the three classics of Nanshan. He also spent huge sums of money to print and publish them in the Tianjin Engraving Office (*Tianjin Kejing chu* 天津刻经处). In this period, when the precepts were loose, the

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<sup>132</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Sifenlü shanfan buque xingshichao” 四分律刪繁補闕行事鈔, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 610.

discipline of Sangha was decadent, and the level of misinterpretation of the Vinaya was simply unacceptable. The return of the ancient scriptures certainly ignited Master Hongyi's interest in the old tradition of Nanshan Vinaya, as he said in *Lixue yaolie*:

From the Southern Song to the Qing dynasty (1127–1911), for over 700 years works on Vinaya masters' explanations in the Tang and Song period (618–1279) barely survived. At the end of the Guangxu era of the Qing dynasty (1875–1908), only part of the Vinaya scriptures from the Tang and Song dynasties were obtained from Japan. In the past ten years, hundreds of volumes have been published in Tianjin. In addition, hundreds of volumes in the Supplementary Buddhist Canon (續藏經) remained unpublished. In the future, some people will devote themselves to study and propagation, which can restore the ancient style of the Tang dynasty.<sup>133</sup>

Master Hongyi's purpose was clear: to restore the ancient style of the Vinaya of the Tang dynasty. He devoted himself to the study and propagation of the Nanshan Vinaya. On the fifteenth day of the second month in 1931, Master Hongyi made a vow in front of the Buddha at Fajie Temple (法界寺) in Hengtang Town, expressing his vow to “abandon the Sarvāstivādin and study Nanshan Vinaya.” As stated in the oath:

As the anniversary of Sakyamuni Buddha's Parinirvana comes, disciple Yanyin (演音) respectfully makes a vow in front of the Buddha, from this day until the end of life, at the cost of my life:

Advocate and promote the Nanshan Vinaya sect. Living this life until the end, dedicating to studying wholeheartedly and endlessly notes and explanation of the Nanshan sect and Lingzhi notes. Keep improving, and vow to get through. Compile the notes and spread them from generation to generation. I hope to pay tribute to the Triple Gem and benefit the Chinese monastics. All merits of my cultivation are dedicated to all sentient beings in the Dharma realm, for being reborn in the ultimately blissful lotus land and the attainment of full enlightenment.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Lixue yaoli”, 1:236.

<sup>134</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Xue Nanshanlü shiyuanwen” 學南山律誓願文 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 305.

In Master Hongyi's understanding, "Precepts are the guidance of life and the principles of monastics"—the promotion of *Four-division Vinaya* was not a whim. In *Hongyi dashi quanji*, he expressed his wish to promote the *Four-division Vinaya*. As stated in the *Vow of Propagating Vinaya*:

Such precepts, I vow to uphold and study, throughout my future, and never be apart from them. With this merit, I wish that I and all sentient beings, all transgressions committed since the beginningless time, to be eliminated. ....May the Nanshan Four-Division Vinaya spread in the world.<sup>135</sup>

As another example, on the third day of the fifth month in 1933, on the auspicious anniversary of Master Ouyi, Master Hongyi wrote the *Vow of Studying Vinaya*:

Disciples who study the vinaya, before Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and masters, make the four immeasurable vows together and another four vows: ... First, vow to establish the Nanshan Vinaya Academy to gather the mass and widely spread the Dharma, not for fame or benefit. ....Pledge to do the utmost to promote the Nanshan Vinaya, which has been obliterated for more than seven hundred years, and spread it to the world...<sup>136</sup>

In summary, Master Hongyi chose the Nanshan Four-Division Vinaya as the object of study and propagation in vinaya, with the first reason being that the *Four-division Vinaya* had been the foundation of Chinese Buddhist Vinaya sect since the Tang dynasty. It had played an important role in Buddhist practice. Secondly, through Master

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<sup>135</sup> Hongyi 弘一, *Hongyi Dashi jiangfo* 弘一大師講佛 (Beijing: Jiuzhou chubanshe, 2006), 258.

<sup>136</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Nanshan Lüyuan zhuzhong xuelü fayuanwen" 南山律苑住眾學律發願文 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 384.



Daoxuan's explanation and interpretation, the *Four-Division Vinaya* contained the spirit of Mahayana Buddhism and met the need of Chinese Buddhist culture; thirdly, the loss of vinaya classics, misinterpretation of Buddhist vinaya concepts and the lack of practice of precepts, in addition to the revival of the Nanshan Vinaya classics and ancient works and the revitalization of Buddhism, were the fundamental reasons that Master Hongyi finally chose the Nanshan Vinaya. Without an in-depth understanding of *Four-division Vinaya* and the role of *Four-division Vinaya* in Chinese Buddhism, the full affirmation of *Four-division Vinaya*, and a sense of responsibility and devotion toward Buddhism, Master Hongyi would not have changed due to Xu Weiru's persuasion alone.

According to Hongyi Master's chronicle, since he vowed to promote the Nanshan Vinaya in 1931 in front of the Buddha at the Fajie Temple in Hengtang Town, he focused on the Nanshan Vinaya in the study and promotion of the Vinaya sect. Through the establishment of Nanshan Vinaya Academy and Institute of Buddhism (佛教養正院), systematic teachings on Nanshan Vinaya, and compiling and providing notes and explanation on the three classics of Nanshan, traveling throughout the country to teach the *Four-division Vinaya*, Master Hongyi devoted himself to practicing his vow. "Master Hongyi entrusted himself with 'shoulder Nanshan's development and future.' His research achievements in Vinaya studies should be highly respected and cherished by monastics and scholars since his explaining, proofreading, judging, categorizing, and noting were made based on great efforts over twenty years, which is beyond the reach of my achievement. This kind of 'paving the ground' project in literature is of great benefit both in practice and academic for later generations."<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Shi Zhaohui, *Hongyi Dashi youguan renwu lunwenji*, 359.

### **5.3 Master Hongyi's Perspectives on Vinaya Doctrine**

As Master Hongyi is an ancestor of the Nanshan Vinaya School, his perspectives on Vinaya are regarded as the most important among his Buddhist views. To understand his views and thoughts on Vinaya, it is necessary to reorganize Master Hongyi's writings on Buddhist Vinaya. Only by analyzing his manuscripts on Vinaya can the content and characteristics of Master Hongyi's perspectives on Vinaya be comprehended. Therefore, I use Master Hongyi's studies on Vinaya as an entry point to discuss his thoughts and views on Vinaya doctrine.

#### **5.3.1 Categories of Master Hongyi's Works on Buddhist Vinaya**

According to *Hongyi dashi quanji*, I sort out and categorize Master Hongyi's manuscripts on Vinaya as below:

Based on the manuscripts included in *Hongyi dashi quanji*, a total of seven volumes are related to Buddhist studies, which are divided into six categories: discourses on Buddhism, notes and explanations, Huayan collection, lectures, biography, and prefaces and postscripts. These categories are made based on all Buddhist-related manuscripts of Master Hongyi. But among his works on Vinaya doctrine, certain changes can be made. Here, I first chronologically sort out the main Vinaya works of Master Hongyi as follows:

1. Notes on one volume of *Sarvāstivādin-vinaya-sutra*, in May 1920;
2. The first draft of *A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu's Precepts in the*

*Dharmagupta Vinaya (Sifenlü jiexiangbiao ji* 四分律比丘戒相表記), in June 1921;

3. *Wujie chifan biaoji* 五戒持犯表記,<sup>138</sup> *Pinimu jing fenzhang biaomu* 毘尼母經分章標目, in November 1922;

4. One volume of *Youbu pinai yefanxiang zhanji* 有部毗奈耶犯相摘記, in May 1924;

5. *Genben shuoyiqieyoubu pinaiye zixingchao* 根本說一切有部毗奈耶自行鈔, *Xue genben shuoyiqieyoubulü rumen cidi ji* 學根本說一切有部律入門次第記, *A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu's Precepts in the Dharmagupta Vinaya (Sifenlü jiexiangbiao ji* 四分律比丘戒相表記),<sup>139</sup> in August 1924;

6. Vowed to renounce Sarvāstivādin and focus on studying Nanshan Vinaya on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1931;

7. *Nanshan lüyuan zalu: Zhengbian xuelüyi* 南山律苑雜錄·徵辨學律義 in May 1931;

8. *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben jiangyi* 四分律含注戒本講義, in the first month of 1933;

9. *Suiji jiemo jiangyi* 隨機羯磨講義, the second month of 1933;

10. Notes on *Nanshan chaoji* 南山鈔記, *Xue nanshanlü shiyuanwen* 學南山律誓願文, in the fifth month of 1933;

11. *Zishi shoujie pusa wen* 自誓受戒菩薩文, in the seventh month of 1933;

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<sup>138</sup> According to Lingfeng's *Wujiexiang jing jianyao* 五戒相經箋要 and Sarvāstivādin-vinaya sect 有部律 to complete *Wujie chifan biaoji* 五戒持犯表記.

<sup>139</sup> Modification completed and published in Shanghai, sponsored by a lay Buddhist.

12. *Jieben jiemo suijiang bielu* 戒本羯磨隨講別錄 and *Nanshan Daoxuan lüshi zupu* 南山道宣律師祖譜, in the eighth month of 1933;
13. *Fanwangjing pusa jieben qianshi* 梵網經菩薩戒本淺釋, in the tenth month of 1933;
14. *Sifenlü sui jiemo tiji* 四分律隨機羯磨題記 and *Suiji jiemo shuba* 隨機羯磨疏跋, in 1934;
15. *Hanzhu jieben shulüke* 含注戒本疏略科, *Hanzhu jieben keba* 含注戒本科跋 and its preface, in June 1935;
16. *Pusa shoujie suigang yaobiao* 菩薩受戒隨綱要表, in October 1935;
17. *Daojie shixiang gailüe wenda* 盜戒釋相概略問答, in 1939;
18. *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* 南山律在家備覽,<sup>140</sup> in 1940;
19. *Shou baguan zhajie fa* 受八關齋戒法 and its preface, In December 1940.

Master Hongyi's manuscripts of Vinaya can be categorized as commentaries on Vinaya, compiling and annotating Vinaya scriptures, prefaces, and postscripts of works on Vinaya, and classification and explanations of Vinaya doctrine.

### 5.3.1.a Commentaries on Vinaya

The commentaries on Vinaya refers to the works and views of Master Hongyi on Vinaya, and explanations of precepts. According to incomplete statistics, Master

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<sup>140</sup> Began to write *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* 南山律在家備覽 in 1939, completed in 1940.

Hongyi's writings on Vinaya include:

1. Monographs: *A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu's Precepts in the Dharmagupta Vinaya (Sifenlü jiexiangbiao ji)*, *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian*, *Dongying sifenlü xingshichao zichiji tongshi*;
2. Overview and Lectures of Vinaya: *Lüxue yaolüe*, *lüeshu lüxue zhi paibie*, *Pinaiye zhiyipian*, *Zaijia lüxue zhi kaishi*, *Weibian xuelü baze*, *Wenda shizhang*, *Shou shishan jiefa*, *Shou sanguiyi dayi*, *Daojie shixiang gailüe wenda*;
3. Sarvāstivādin Vinaya: *Xue genbenshuo yiqie youbulü rumen cidi*, *Genben shuoyiqie youbu pinaiye zixingchao*, *Genben shuoyiqieyoubu pinaiye fanxiang zhaji*;
4. Nanshan Four-division Vinaya: *Sifenlüzong zaizhongtu liuchuan zhi cidi*, *Sifen nanshanzong miaoyi*, *Xue sifenlü rumen cidi*;
5. Bodhisattva precepts: *Fanwangjing pusa jieben qianshi*, *Pusa yingluojing zishou pusa wuchong jiefa*, *Suifen zishishou pusajie wenxiyi*.

Among these, *A Graphical Explanation of the Bhikkhu's Precepts in the Dharmagupta Vinaya (Sifenlü jiexiangbiao ji)* and *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan yaolüe* are included in the *Puhui dazangjing*. *Dongying sifenlü xingshichao zichiji tongshi* gives notes to *Sifenlü xingshichao zichi ji*,<sup>141</sup> which combines *Xingshi chao* and *Zichi ji*. The book has over forty-thousand characters and was completed in three years. The style is similar to a dictionary, and it is one of the best references for studying *Xingshichao zichiji*. *Lüxue yaolüe* records the lectures of Master Hongyi giving precepts at Chengtian

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<sup>141</sup> Compiled by Venerable Nihon Jikou Zuihou 慈光瑞芳 at Oojimasan Jinhonrituji in Japan.

Temple in Quanzhou, and it is also the overall embodiment of Master Hongyi's views on Vinaya discourse.

### 5.3.1.b Compiling and Annotating Vinaya scriptures

Judging from the structure of *Hongyi dashi quanji*, nearly six volumes are compilations and notes to Vinaya scriptures and manuscripts, taking up 60% of the entire collection. Master Hongyi mainly focused on compiling and giving notes to Vinaya scriptures. A great amount of compiling, close reading, and noting on Vinaya works was conducted by Master Hongyi. Regarding the *Complete Works*, these writings mainly focus on compiling the five great works—*Sifenlü shanfan buque xingshichao*, *Sifenlü hanzhu jiebenshu*, *Sifenlü shanbu sui ji jiemoshu*, *Sifenlü shipini yichao*, and *Sifenlü biqiuni chao*, by Vinaya Master Daoxuan of the Tang dynasty, as well as *Sifenlü xingshichao zichiji* and *Sifenlü jiemoshu jiyuan ji*, by Vinaya Master Yuanzhao of the Song. He also added punctuations to *Yimeng manyan* by Vinaya Master Jianyue to aid understanding.

After the fall of the Southern Song (1279), the classics of Nanshan Vinaya were lost one after another. Over the ensuing 700 years, although Master Gu Xin, Master Jianyue and other Vinaya masters recovered the precepts ceremony, their understandings deviated from the Nanshan Vinaya School, and the Nanshan Vinaya was misinterpreted and lost its true colors. During the period of the Republic of China, Xu Weiru brought back the classics and commentaries of Nanshan Vinaya and published them. Meanwhile, Master Hongyi vowed to focus on the study of Nanshan Vinaya only. Therefore, the compilation of the Nanshan Vinaya works became the foundation of realizing Master

Hongyi's vow. His compilation was not only to satisfy his own needs for learning Nanshan Vinaya, but also to facilitate and benefit later generations of Buddhists. He rated each precept according to its difficulty. For instance, he marked "... " in red for those precepts that were "extremely easy to violate," red ".. " as "very easy to violate," red ". " as "easy to violate," and black ". " as "rarely violate," and "、 " as "difficult to violate," and "□ " to mean "cannot violate."<sup>142</sup> This shows that he had a high degree of rigor in compiling and reviewing the precepts.

### 5.3.1.c Preface and Postscript of Vinaya Works

In addition to compiling, close reading, and giving notes to Nanshan Vinaya works, Master Hongyi also wrote several articles such as inscriptions, prefaces, and postscripts. A total of 189 prefaces and postscripts were included in *Hongyi dashi quanji*. Among these, 37 prefaces and postscripts and 31 inscriptions were related to Vinaya studies. They were not only concerned about *Nanshan Four-division Vinaya*, but also about Sarvāstivādin Vinaya, Mahayana Bodhisattva precepts, and precepts for laity. Judging from the detailed content, some summaries, and introductions to the Vinaya works were general surveys, while some recorded brief information only, such as time and place. The inscriptions, prefaces, and postscripts manuscripts were relatively short, but they also presented Master Hongyi's views on Vinaya. Therefore, they are important sources for studying Master Hongyi's views on Vinaya.

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<sup>142</sup> Zhou Shujia 周叔迦, "Guanyu jiede Kaiyuan" 關於戒的開緣 in *Zhoushujia ji* 周叔迦集, ed. Huang Xianian 黃夏年 (Beijing: zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995), 136.

### 5.3.1.d Tabulated Explanation

The most distinctive feature of Master Hongyi's works is the use of diagrams and self-imposed textual organization to explain the Vinaya code. The so-called "self-imposed textual organization" refers to "dividing the content into several sections to facilitate the interpretation of the classics and interpreting the content of each part in a concise way." The earliest use of self-imposed textual organization was by Daoan in the Eastern Jin dynasty (266–420 CE) to explain Buddhist scriptures and commentaries, which became the most common way of interpreting Buddhist scriptures. When Master Hongyi studied the *Pini zhenjing lu* 毗尼珍敬录 and *Pini guanyao* 毗尼关要, he often failed to connect what said in the beginning when he came to an end. When reading the *Four-division Vinaya* and the *Three Explanations*, he felt the precepts of *Four-division Vinaya* to be complicated and difficult to memorize. Thus, he listed the main points one by one, arranging and comparing them according to their order. In this way, even beginners can better understand them. As he says:

[I] examined the *Four-Division Vinaya* and gathered works of many masters of this land. Due to the complication of the precepts. It was difficult to remember them. I tried to gather the essentials and listed them in the record of diagram. According to [my] personal understanding, [I] compiled several chapters. [I am] very pleased with the clarity [of its meaning] that is convenient for beginners.<sup>143</sup>

Therefore, when Master Hongyi sorted out Nanshan Vinaya works, to facilitate

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<sup>143</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Sifenlü biqu jiexiang biaoji zixu" 四分律比丘戒相表记自序," in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 609.



readers and scholars to grasp the structure and logical relationships of Nanshan Vinaya, and to better understand the content of the precepts, he adopted a combination of traditional self-imposed textual organization and modern charts. By this method, he presented the Nanshan Vinaya precepts and used different colors to mark the contents of commentaries, explanations, and notes. He omitted or added some contents accordingly.

Among the works of Master Hongyi, *Sifenlü biqiu jiexiang biaoji*, *Fanwang shichongjie zhushu suopan zuixiang huanji yitong biao*, *Fanwangjing xianshoushu daojie diliuzhonglei qingzhongmen kebiao*, *Fanwangjing gujiji kebiao*, *Biao wubiao zhangke*, *Pusajieben zongyao kebiao*, *Pusajieshou suigang yaobiao*, and *Shimen guijing yike* were explained by diagrams and self-imposed textual organized charts. Besides, in many works, he also used a lot of tables to explain and interpret, such as when cataloging the *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* and making *Kemubiao*. He used many diagrams in his detailed explanation of the book. Many charts were also used in *Sifenlü shanfanbuque xingshichao*, *Shichao chifan fangguipian biaoji*, *Shichao lüeke*, *Shichao jieye shuke bielu*, and *Shichao zongyao suijiang bielu*. *Sifenlü hanzhu jiebenshu* 四分律含注戒本疏 includes “Hanzhu jieben ke” 含注戒本科, “Hanzhu jieben lüeke” 含注戒本略科, “Hanzhu jieben lüeshi” 含注戒本略释, “Sengni shizhong shoufaliao jiantu” 僧尼十种受法料简图, and “Benzong tabu baiyi shoujie tongju tu” 本宗他部百一受戒通局图. *Pini mujing fen zhang biaomu*, *Wujie chifan biaoji*, *Sifenlü biqiuni chaoke*, *Suiji jiemo jiangbielu*, *Suiji jiemo lüeke*, and *Fanwangjing pusa jieben qianshi*, etc. were attached with charts.

As can be seen from the above sorting and classification of the Vinaya works of Master Hongyi, Master Hongyi exerted his greatest efforts on Vinaya. He made

contributions to compilation, punctuation, and giving notes and corrections. He demonstrated his works on Vinaya in the works of philosophies and views of Vinaya, especially *Sifenlü biqiujie xiangbiaoji*, *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian*, and *Lüxue yaolüe*. This dissertation attempts to present and explain Master Hongyi's thoughts and views on Vinaya as demonstrated in his works with other Vinaya manuscripts.

### **5.3.2 Master Hongyi's Views on Vinaya and Characteristics**

Master Hongyi's views on Vinaya cover a huge range, almost the entire Vinaya doctrine. In recent years, many academic studies have discussed Master Hongyi's Vinaya views, and scholars have conducted comprehensive analyses and discussions from different angles. Here, I do not intend to blindly repeat the research results of the predecessors, nor do I intend to elaborate on Master Hongyi's views in an all-encompassing way. Rather, I will focus on the part that I am more concerned about.

#### **5.3.2.a Clarify the Scope of the Precepts**

As Master Hongyi said in the *Lüxue yaolüe*, "studying Vinaya is not an easy thing." This is true! In terms of Vinaya classics, people have been familiar with five main works: *Mohe sengqi lü*, *Daśa-bhāṇavāra-vinaya* (*Shisong lü* 十誦律), *Wufen lü* 五分律, *Four-Division Vinaya* (*Sifen lü* 四分律), and *Mūlasarvāstivādin*, as well as works related to the Bodhisattva precepts. Among these scriptures, precepts can be divided into five precepts, eight precepts, novice monk precepts, novice nun precepts, Śikṣamāṇā precepts,

bhikkhu precepts, bhikshuni precepts, and bodhisattva precepts. To this extent, the precepts and Vinaya texts are various and complicated. The Vinaya of Chinese Buddhism is even more complicated. It not only includes the above content, but also involves the notes and commentaries on Vinaya by eminent monks of the past dynasties, especially Master Dao Xuan's three classics of Nanshan Vinaya and the later commentaries, which are broad and profound. Therefore, it is not easy to be proficient in the study of Vinaya. Master Hongyi said, "Although I have studied Vinaya for nearly 20 years, I am still preparing for studying Vinaya, if I have a few glimpses of the path. I need to study more years, then I can start to study." These words reflect Master Hongyi's modesty while also demonstrating the complexity and difficulty of learning this topic.

To understand the content of Vinaya, the scope of the precepts needs to be clarified first. According to the transmission and practice of Buddhist precepts, the ceremony of taking the three refuges is included in the actual transmission of precepts. So, does the ceremony of taking three refuges fall within the scope of the transmission of precepts? The so-called "taking refuges" means returning to, respecting, and relying on. The objects of taking refuge are the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Therefore, taking the three refuges is taking refuge in the virtue and power of the Three Jewels, which can bless and guide the disciples to be liberated from the boundless fear of life and death and to be free from all suffering. The three refuges are the basis for practicing Buddhism. Hence, for the purpose of taking precepts, one must understand the meaning of the three refuges, accept the three refuges, and then receive the precepts. But as far as the three refuges are concerned, they do not belong to the scope of the precepts, but only serve as a prerequisite for taking precepts.

Many Buddhist precepts can be in generally divided into two types, namely the precepts received by Buddhist monastics and those received by lay Buddhists. According to this classification, the precepts of novice monks, novice nuns, Śikṣamāṇā, bhikkhus, and bhikshunis are received by Buddhist monastics. The five precepts are generally designated for the lay devotees. The Eight Precepts Fasting Retreat (also known as the eight precepts) is formulated for lay disciples to live in the Sangha to learn the life of monastics designated by the Buddha. Therefore, it was established for lay devotees. The Bodhisattva precepts are suitable for both monastics and laity. But in the view of Master Hongyi, "The three refuges, the five precepts, and the eight precepts are suitable for both monastics and laity."<sup>144</sup>

First, from the perspective of taking the three refuges, Master Hongyi took Master Ouyi of the Ming dynasty as an example. Master Ouyi was once ordained as a monk and then gradually became a novice monk. He only took the three refuges every day, but he still did not lose his status as a monk. Therefore, Master Hongyi believed that the three refuges could also be applied to obtain the status of a monk. Secondly, Master Hongyi believed that the five precepts could also be received by monks. He believed that "after ordination, one must receive the five precepts first, and then the precepts of novice monks. Before receiving the precepts of novice monks, they were only novices of the five precepts."<sup>145</sup> At the same time, he also cites Master Ouyi's disciples, Cheng Shi and Xing Dan, for claiming themselves as Upāsaka monks as an example.

In the view of Master Hongyi, the five precepts were the prerequisites for the ten

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<sup>144</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Lūxue yaolü", 1:237.

<sup>145</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Lūxue yaolü", 1:237.

precepts of novice monks. Upholding the five precepts could also be a way to obtain the qualifications of monks. Since taking the three refuges and the five precepts could be a way to obtain the monastic status, they were also upheld by monks; thus, the eight fasts could naturally be applied to monastics. Here, Master Hongyi explains that monastics could also receive the eight precepts based on the *Bhaiṣajya-guru-vaiḍūrya-prabhā-rāja Sūtra*, and he also wrote the *Puquan chujiaren changyingshou bazhai wen* to persuade monks to practice the eight precepts. Hence, "the three refuges, the five precepts, and the eight precepts are suitable for both monastics and laity" is a major characteristic of Master Hongyi's Vinaya thought.

### **5.3.2.b Distinguishing Vinaya Doctrines and the Sequence of Vinaya**

#### **Doctrines**

Distinguishing Doctrines (*panjiao* 判教) is the method of Chinese Buddhism to classify and analyze various thoughts and theories of Indian Buddhism in accordance with the order of Buddha's teachings or the depth of Buddhist teachings. Different ways of distinguishing doctrines can reflect different people's views on the doctrines. During the development of Buddhism, according to the different ideas expressed in different scriptures, Buddhist doctrines can be divided into Mahayana and Śrāvakayāna in general. As for Vinaya doctrines, all of the Five Classics in Chinese Buddhism are inherited from Sectarian Buddhism. As early as during the Tang dynasty, Master Daoxuan had distinguished Vinaya doctrines, dividing the Buddha's teachings into "huajiao" (化

教)<sup>146</sup> and “*xingjiao*” (行教).<sup>147</sup> Vinaya belongs to *xingjiao*. From the point of view of Mahayana and Theravada, Master Daoxuan considered the *Four-division Vinaya* to run through Mahayana and established his own distinguishing Vinaya doctrines.

In the process of studying Vinaya, Master Hongyi also distinguished doctrines, and his views on distinguishing Vinaya doctrines are mainly embodied in articles such as “Lüeshu lüxue zhi paibie”<sup>148</sup> and “Sifen nanshanzong miaoyi.”<sup>149</sup> He first divided the Buddha's teachings into *huajiao* and *zhijiao*.<sup>150</sup> According to the view of the Vinaya School of Mahayana Buddhism, all the precepts belong to *zhijiao*, while the principles of the sutras belong to the *huajiao*. According to the Vinaya School of Theravada Buddhism, *zhijiao* are the commandments that the Sangha should accept, and the others belong to *huajiao*. However, Master Hongyi adopted the view of the Vinaya School of Mahayana, that is, that all the precepts belong to *zhijiao*. Further, he divided *zhijiao* into esoteric Vinaya and exoteric Vinaya.

Esoteric Vinaya refers to 無畏三藏禪要 *Wuwei sanzang chanyao* by Śubhakarasiṃha (637–735 CE) and the *Mahavairocana-sutra*. The exoteric Vinaya can be further divided into the Mahayana Vinaya and Theravada Vinaya, between which the Mahayana Vinaya includes the Bodhisattva precepts mentioned in the *Brahmajala Sutra* and *Yogācārabhūmi-sāstra*, and Śrāvakayāna Vinaya includes the rest, such as *Four-division Vinaya* and *Daśa-bhāṇavāra-vinaya*. As for the Śrāvakayāna precepts, it can be

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<sup>146</sup> Master Daoxuan classified all scriptures and treatises belonging to ideological teachings into the category of “*Huajiao*” because they are the teachings of the Buddha to educate all living beings.

<sup>147</sup> The classics that belong to the precepts of practice are called “*Xingjiao*” by Master Daoxuan. The Buddhist precepts are to standardize behavior and achieve enlightenment.

<sup>148</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Lüeshu lüxue zhi paibie” 略述律学之派别, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 234.

<sup>149</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Sifen Nanshanzong miaoyi” 四分南山宗妙义, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 235.

<sup>150</sup> Same as “*xingjiao* 行教.”

divided into “old Vinaya school” and “new Vinaya school.” Between these, the new Vinaya school refers to the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya translated by Master Yijing, while the old Vinaya school can be divided into “relying on *Mahāvaiṣṭya mahāsamghaṭṭā sūtra*” and “*Sifenlü shipini yichao suoyin sanzang kouchuan ji yijiao falijing* 四分律拾毗尼义钞所引三藏口传及遺教法律經.” “Relying on *Mahāvaiṣṭya mahāsamghaṭṭā sūtra*” primarily includes Dharmaguptaka’s *Four-division Vinaya*, Sarvāstivāda’s *Daśa-bhāṇavāra-vinaya*, Kāśyapīya’s *Sutra of the Liberating Precepts*, *Mahāsakavinaya*, *Vatsaputra*, and Mahāsāṃghika’s *Mahasangha-vinaya*.

#### Distinguishing of Vinaya Doctrines

Buddhism: Huajiao,  
 Zhijiao: Esoteric Vinaya,  
 Exoteric Vinaya: Mahayana Vinaya,  
 Theravada Vinaya: old school Vinaya,  
 new school Vinaya

Nanshan Vinaya was mainly based on the *Four-division Vinaya*. It also heavily cited *Pinimu lun* 毘尼母論 (also known as *Mulun* 母論), *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya-vibhāṣā* (*Sapoduo pini piposha* 薩婆多毘尼毘婆沙, also known as *Duolun* 多論), *Sarvāstivādanikāya-vinaya-mātrkā* (*Sapoduo mode leqie* 薩婆多摩得勒伽, also known as *Qielun* 伽論), *Wubaiwen lun* 五百問論, and *Mingliao lun* 明了論. Among these, *Mulun* belongs to Dharmaguptaka’s *Four-division Vinaya*; *Duolun*, *Qielun*, and *Wubaiwen lun* belong to *daśa-bhāṇavāra-vinaya* of Mūlasarvāstivādin; *Mingliao lun* belongs to *Sammatīya*. His points on classifying Nanshan *Four-division Vinaya* relied on Master Lingzhi’s view.

According to the *Commentary on Karman* (*Mojieshu* 羯磨疏), Master Hongyi asserted that the Vinaya was divided into three sects: *shifa zong* 實法宗 (or *youzong* 有宗), *jiaming zong* 假名宗 (or *kongzong* 空宗), and *yuanjiao zong* 圓教宗. *Daśa-bhāṇavāra-vinaya* belonged to *shifazong* of Śrāvakayāna Vinaya. *Four-Division Vinaya* “was practiced in Mahayana Vinaya, but not completely in Mahayana Vinaya, and was generally accepted.”<sup>151</sup> Therefore, it belonged to *jiamingzong*. Further, *yuanjiao zong* refers to the teachings of the convenient vehicle included in the true way for finally attaining the perfect Mahayana teaching, such as *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* 涅槃經 and *Lotus Sutra* 法華經.

Regarding the classification of Nanshan Vinaya, Master Hongyi first explained his view from the essence of precepts. He believes that the precepts referred to in Nanshan Vinaya were cited from the content of the *Lotus Sutra* and inherited their meaning from the *Lotus Sutra*, which meant Nanshan Vinaya directly manifested the words of the Buddha and comprehended the previous two sects based on the essence of the precepts. Therefore, it should be classified as *yuanjiaozong*. In addition, Nanshan Vinaya “primarily relied on *Four-division Vinaya*, but also adopted [ideas] of other sects, and thus, it embodied the advantages of all sects.”<sup>152</sup> Hence, Nanshan Vinaya “could be accepted by the two Vinaya systems, includes tripikaya, and solely flourish in the modern time.”<sup>153</sup> Master Hongyi highly regarded Nanshan Vinaya, even more than Master Daoxuan’s classification and judgement of Four-division Vinaya as part of Mahayana.

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<sup>151</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Sifen Nanshanzong miaoyi” 四分南山宗妙義, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 235.

<sup>152</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Sifen Nanshanzong miaoyi”, 1:235.

<sup>153</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Sifen Nanshanzong miaoyi”, 1:235.



This can be seen as another major characteristic of Master Hongyi's thought on Vinaya.

In general, although Master Hongyi advocated that "Nanshan Vinaya was to directly manifest the words of the Buddha and comprehend the previous two sects based on the essence of the precepts, and it could be accepted by the two Vinaya systems, includes the Tripitaka."<sup>154</sup> He did not abandon other Vinaya studies in his learning.

Master Hongyi also wrote the *Xue sifenlü rumen cidi* 學四分律入門次第 to introduce the order in which one should better master the study of Four-Division Vinaya. Based on the above, the order of Master Hongyi's studies on Vinaya is summarized as follows:

In general, the main order of the Four-Division Vinaya could be divided into "first ceasing [transgression] (先習止持), and then practicing [virtue] (後習作持)." "Cease" was to maintain the body of precepts by abandoning transgressions of body, speech, and mind, which was considered a passive approach. Meanwhile, "practice" was to engage in virtuous deeds of body, speech, and mind, to maintain the precepts through action. To simply put, the precept of "cease" (止持) referred to actions of ending, and the precept of "practice" referred to actions of engaging.

The part of "cease" (*zhichi* 止持) could be divided into four stages. Firstly, read and memorize the precept texts. Those who followed the Nanshan sect were encouraged to recite the precept texts compiled by the Nanshan sect. They studied *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben* 四分律含注戒本, *Sifen jieben* (四分戒本; *Dharmaguptaka-bhikṣu-prātimokṣa-sūtra*) translated by Buddhayaśas 佛陀耶舍, and *Sifen jieben* compiled by Huaisu (懷素, 634–708 CE) of the Tang dynasty. Secondly, thoroughly study *Sifenlü chufen* 四分律初

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<sup>154</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Sifen Nanshanzong miaoyi", 1:235.

分 and *Tiaobu pini* 调部毗尼 of the fourth division and study the first ten fascicles of *Chongzhi pini shiyi jiyao* 重治毘尼事義集 by Ouyi Zhixu (藕益智旭, 1599–1655 CE) of Lingfeng Temple (靈峯寺), sixteen fascicles of *Pini zhichi huiji* 毘尼止持會集 by Jianyue Duti (見月讀體, 1601–1679 CE), and *Sifen jieben rushi* 四分戒本如釋 by Ouyi Zhixu. In addition, explanations were given on the editions of the various documents. The *Four-Division Vinaya* and *Pini zhichi huiji* 毘尼止持會集 printed by Baohuashan (寶華山) temple were highly recommended, and *Chongzhi pini shiyi jiyao* 重治毘尼事義集要 printed in Yangzhou zhuanqiao (揚州磚橋) by masters of the Qing and Ming dynasties were also recommended to study. The *Sifen jieben rushi* 四分戒本如釋 is the edition of Yangzhou cangjingyuan 揚州藏經院. Thirdly, based on the detailed study on the preliminary part of the *Four-Division Vinaya*, one should further study Lingzhi Yuanzhao's (靈芝元照, 1048–1116 CE) *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben shuxing zongji* 四分律含注戒本疏行宗記 and *Sifenlü xingshi chaozi chiji* 四分律行事鈔資持記. Fourth, after studying the Bhikshus' Vinaya, one also needs to briefly study the Vinaya of Bhikshunis. To understand the Bhikshunis' Vinaya, mainly review the first to ninth fascicle of the second part of the *Four-Division Vinaya*, the sixteenth and seventeenth fascicles of the *Pini yishi jiyao* 毘尼事義集要, and “Nizhong biexing pian” 尼眾別行篇 of the second half of *Sifenlü xingshi chaozi chiji* 四分律行事鈔資持記.

Concerning the issue of the *Four-Division Vinaya*, Master Hongyi also advised practitioners, "People of modern times have not tried to study intensively the root Vinaya, that is, to recite the notes and commentaries. Hence, they are rarely ushered into the subject. Hope future learners study and practice in an orderly way and not to rush towards

accomplishment."<sup>155</sup> He believed that the core of learning the *Four-Division Vinaya* lay in the *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben shuxing zongji* 四分律含注戒本疏行宗記 and *Sifenlü xingshi chaozi chiji* 四分律行事鈔資持記, and that the learning process should be carried out in accordance with this order. These should not lead to quick progress. Besides, in the view of Master Hongyi, monks should not only study Vinaya within the scope of Bhikkhus' Vinaya, but they should also briefly understand the Bhikshuni vows. This could not only ensure a complete understanding of Vinaya, but also be the guidance for Bhikkhus in the study and practice of Vinaya, which suited better Buddha's purpose of formulating the precepts.

For the “practice” (*zuochi* 作持), one should start after studying how to “cease.” The study of “practice” could be divided into three stages. First, one should familiarize oneself with *Suiji jiemo* 隨機羯磨 of the Nanshan tradition and also study *Sifen sengjiemo* 四分僧羯磨. Second, one should read carefully the tenth to the last fascicles of the second part of *Four-Division Vinaya* and part of *Pini shiyi jiyao* 毘尼事義集要, which one did not read before. Subsequently, read *Sifen jiemo shuji yuanji* 四分律羯磨疏濟緣記 and *Sifenlü xingshi chaozi chiji* 四分律行事鈔資持記. Here, Master Hongyi also reminded learners of the importance of making notes when they studied *Jiemo*. He told them that based on his own experience, making notes could help them to remember the points. Note-taking could help practitioners to recall doctrines and information in the future.

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<sup>155</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Xue Sifenlü rumen cidi” 学四分律入门次第, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 240.

Master Hongyi elaborated what practitioners should study in the first stages of the *Nanshan Four-division Vinaya*, providing profound guidance and explanation for new learners and solving a core issue faced by Bhikkhus in practicing Vinaya. At the same time, he also shared his experience of learning *Nanshan Four-Division Vinaya*, showing his care for future practitioners of Vinaya studies. Although Master Hongyi regarded studying and promoting the study of Nanshan Vinaya as his goal, he also learned Vinaya studies of other traditions, especially *Mūlasarvāstivādin*. To new learners, Master Hongyi encouraged them that “if there is spare energy, widely read the writings on Vinaya in the *Continued Buddhist Canon*.”<sup>156</sup> However, *Mūlasarvāstivādin* “mixed and complicated chapters and notes in a disorderly arrangement. Therefore, to focus on the root texts of Vinaya, solely rely on *Zibu* 自部,”<sup>157</sup> which was different from *Four-Division Vinaya* and *Daśa-bhāṇavāra-vinaya*. Hence, an individual introduction was given to the study of *Mūlasarvāstivādin*.

### 5.3.2.c The Concept and Characteristics of *Nanshanlü zajia beilan*

The Buddhist community consists of seven parts—novice monks, novice nuns, bhikkhus, bhikshunis, upāśya, and upāsti. Among these, novice monks, novice nuns, śikṣamāṇā, bhikkhus, and bhikshunis are ordained monastics, and upāśya and upāsti are lay members. The precepts of Buddhism are the behavioral norms of disciples, which prevent the misbehaviors of body and mind for the purpose of stopping evil deeds.

<sup>156</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Xue Sifenlü rumen cidì”, 1:240.

<sup>157</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Xue genbenshu yiqie youbulü gumen cidì” 学根本说一切有部律入门次第, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 240.

Therefore, the range of precepts is different for different groups. Based on the characteristics of the seven groups of disciples, seven sets of precepts are established in Buddhism. However, in general, Buddhist precepts can be divided into monastic precepts and lay precepts.

Since Master Hongyi took the Vinaya studies as his principle and the promotion of Nanshan Vinaya as his responsibility, he also paid attention to the promotion of the precepts of laity. In order to facilitate lay Buddhists to better practice the Dharma and strictly abide by the precepts, Master Hongyi extracted the texts of precepts for laity from the Vinaya canon and compiled the *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* 南山律在家備覽. Among the manuscripts of Master Hongyi's studies on lay precepts in *Hongyi dashi quanji* are “Wujie chifan biao” 五戒持犯表, “Sanguì lüeyì” 三皈略義, “Bajie lüeyì” 八戒略義, “Shou sanguiyi dayi” 授三皈依大意, “Zaijia lüyao zhi kaishi” 在家律要之開示, and “Xin jishou sanguì wujie bajie fashi fanli” 新集受三皈五戒八戒法式凡例, etc.; these works indicate that he always aiming for the promotion of the precepts of lay disciples. According to Master Hongyi’s “Lüebian liyan” 略編例言, “For several years, I have been wishing to extract texts from Nanshan Vinaya and compile *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* for lay practitioners to study,”<sup>158</sup> which further explained that compiling *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* has been in his mind for many years.

"Although the three main volumes of Nanshan Vinaya are being studied by monastics, they also clarify (the meaning of) three refuges, five precepts, and eight precepts, etc. Meanwhile, chapters on the body of Dharma as well as practice and

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<sup>158</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian liyan” 南山律在家備覽略編例言, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 354.

violation, and many other chapters can also reflect (the meaning of) five and eight precepts.”<sup>159</sup>

Therefore, many texts in the three main volumes of Nanshan Vinaya are related to the precepts of laity, which are the foundation of *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* compiled and edited by Master Hongyi. In addition, he also “collected Nanshan’s ‘Shipini yichao’ 拾毘尼義鈔, ‘Shimen guijing yi’ 釋門歸敬儀, and Lingzhi’s ‘Zhiyuan yibian’ 芝苑遺編, etc. as supplementary manuscripts.”<sup>160</sup> *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* contains writings in both the Nanshan and Lingzhi traditions. Because the texts of the Lingzhi tradition are written based on Nanshan’s inherited studies and belong to the development and heritage of Vinaya studies of the Nanshan tradition, *Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* is noted as part of Nanshan Vinaya.

*Nanshanlü zaijia beilan* discusses the precepts of laity and its content is naturally not comparable to the three main volumes of Nanshan Vinaya. Still, it contains much detailed and abundant information and is organized in a strict system. The text is divided into four chapters: Chapter of General Overview, Chapter of Practice and Violation, Chapter of Repentance, and Chapter of Other Practices. Among these, the Chapter of General Overview is divided into four sections: Meaning of Precepts, Body of Precepts, Practice of Precepts, and Form of Precepts. In the section of Meaning of Precepts, precepts are first generally explained, explaining the names and functions of precepts from both sides; then, the ritual of taking refuges and precepts separately is clarified, explaining the connotation of three refuges, five precepts, and eight precepts, as

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<sup>159</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian liyan”, 1:354.

<sup>160</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian liyan”, 1:354.

well as the qualifications, rituals, and intention to receive them.

In the Vinaya system, precepts are explained through distinguishing the appearance of the precepts, their similarities, and differences, in wide or narrow contexts, and the number of precepts that are issued. The precepts do not exist in any form but affect the mind that reacts to the context. The desire when taking precepts is that of “receiving in the mind that is called precepts.” Behavior derived from the precepts is called “abiding.” There are similarities and differences between “receiving” and “abiding.” The contexts of the mind can be narrow or wide. Therefore, it needs to be explained in two aspects: the similarities and differences of receiving and abiding, and the width of the context.

Abiding precepts means “upholding them in the mind once [you have] received the precepts. One must extensively practice in skillful means and always examine the conduct of body and speech; also, single-pointedly uphold the will and admire previous sages. Understand the meaning first, and then raise the heart to observe the precepts, this is called practicing precepts.”<sup>161</sup>

The Vinaya system contains two aspects of contents: directly abiding in actions and the difference of abandoning precepts. It explains that the meaning of taking precepts is for the immeasurable sentient beings of the phenomenal world. It clarifies that the merits of practicing precepts are far superior to ordinary kind deeds, and the negative consequences of breaking the precepts are also far greater than ordinary negative deeds. By comparing the two actions of taking precepts and breaking the precepts, its advice is for lay practitioners to carefully protect their precepts as well. The practices of precepts

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<sup>161</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian liyan”, 1:418.

are “prestigious actions, which can be done according to the context. Actions that are called precepts are the manifestations of virtue, hence they are called the appearance of precepts.”<sup>162</sup>

The chapter on upholding and violating (precepts) explains from two aspects: upholding and violating the precepts, so it is divided into two parts: 1) general meaning of upholding and violating the precepts, and 2) special cases of upholding and violating the precepts. In the part of general meaning, it mainly distinguishes nine aspects, such as the names, manifestations, places of accomplishment, distinguishing the advantages and disadvantages, skillful means leading to the result, unfavorable space, the difference in situation and thought, distinguishing severe and minor violations, and widely denounced foolish teachings. In the part of special cases, it expounds upholding and violating Eight Precepts as mentioned above from 1) the aspect of immoral conducts—killing, robbing, sexual misconduct, and wrongful speech; 2) the aspect of four misconducts after becoming a Buddhist: consuming alcohol, meals after noontime, sitting on a wide and high bed, watching entertainment of singing and dancing, making up hair, and applying scented oils; and 3) from the three aspects: the condition of violation, the manifestation of violation, and non-violation. From the structure of the chapter, this chapter takes half the space of the entire book and is the main content of the *Zaijia beilan*, which directly relates to the actual practice of the precepts.

Repentance is to confess an apology in front of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, teachers, and the public, asking others to tolerate and forgive one's misdeeds in order to eliminate transgressions. According to Buddhist philosophy, all sentient beings create various

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<sup>162</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian liyan”, 1:420.



causes of suffering and feel all kinds of suffering due to their habitual ignorant mind, since beginning-less time. The purpose of taking precepts is to understand that "misdeeds start from the mind, so eliminate them from the mind." Therefore, "by not repenting after committed to misdeeds, the suffering from karma will be endless." The *Sapoduo Doctrine* 萨婆多 says: "No phenomenon creates negative karma faster than the mind. One cannot abandon (the path) perpetually because of one instance of misdeed. Therefore, repentance is needed."<sup>163</sup> In the Chapter of Repentance, it first explains through two methods, *huazhi* 化製 and *huajiao* 化教, and then distinguishes it into *lichan* 理懺 (repentance through understanding) and *shichan* 事懺 (repentance through activities), from the perspective of *huajiao*. *Lichan* is to understand the origin of misdeeds and the purpose of confession in order to prevent recurrence. *Shichan* is to achieve the purpose of repentance through related activities: chanting sutras, reciting precepts, the name of Buddha, and mantra, etc. It also promotes repentance through understanding, and activities of repentance can be applied to both monastic and lay disciples. For example, from the point of view of *zhijiao*, repentance is done through confession of karma (activities), but this method is only suitable for monastics. Therefore, if a layman breaks the precepts, he can not only use the method of *huajiao* for repentance, but he can also repent through activities. Repentance through understanding is to meditate on the empty nature of misdeeds and the impermanent nature of existence of all phenomena that also pervades transgressions; or, through prostrating at a dignified shrine, chanting sutras, making vows, etc. One sincerely repents in front of Buddhas and

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<sup>163</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Nanshanlü zaijia beilan lüebian liyan", 1:493.

Bodhisattvas to eliminate misdeeds and purify the mind.

The Chapter of Other Practices mainly introduces the principles that lay disciples need to abide by when entering a temple and the rituals to conduct when facing the Triple Gem, Buddha statues, and stupas. Its content mainly includes six parts: ritual of respecting the Buddha, ritual of entering a temple, making Buddhist iconography and statues, visiting the sick, avoiding all deeds against the Dharma, and the purpose of renunciation. Among these, the ritual of respecting the Buddha, ritual of entering a temple, and making Buddhist iconography and statues are explained in what to do and not to do in various situations, to state the importance of respect in one's mind. Visiting the sick mainly speaks about the method, virtue, and benefit of taking care of the sick. Avoiding all deeds against Dharma demonstrates what to do and what to avoid based on Dharma in cases of inviting monastics, receiving monastics' food, penalty of dropping (food), consuming meat, and having dogs and cats as pets. For the purpose of renunciation, it mainly defines the meaning of becoming a monastic, virtue of practice and persuading others to renounce, and misdeeds of preventing others from renunciation.

To summarize, *Nanshan lü zaijia beilan* was carefully collated based on the scriptures of the Nanshan Vinaya school by Master Hongyi. It aimed to help lay Buddhists learn the Vinaya for laity and provide guidance. Its detailed and comprehensive content and rigorous structural system played a very important role in the popularization and promotion of lay precepts. It is the basis for the education of lay precepts today: *Nanshan lü zaijia beilan* has a crucial role in linking the past and the future in the history of Buddhist Vinaya.

Master Hongyi's thoughts on Vinaya are rich and abundant. Although he took

the *Nanshan Four-Division Vinaya* as his principal focus and mainly studied and promoted the *Four-Division Vinaya*, his thoughts almost encompassed all studies on the Vinaya. I only outline part of the content and characteristics of Master Hongyi's thoughts on Vinaya from the above-mentioned aspects.

## **5.4 Master Hongyi's Contribution to the Vinaya School of Chinese Buddhism**

Throughout the life of Master Hongyi, he took the revival of Nanshan Vinaya as his mission, thoroughly learned the scriptures, and studied the Nanshan Vinaya. To promote the study of Vinaya, Master Hongyi collated and annotated Vinaya scriptures and wrote books, such as *Jiexiang biaoji* 戒相表記 and *Nanshan zaijia beilan*. He also lectured on the Vinaya doctrines and set an example for the monks and lay Buddhists by putting Vinaya principles into practice. Master Hongyi is also known as one of the four great monks during the time of the Republic of China based on his cultivation in Buddhist studies. As has been mentioned, because of his achievements in the Vinaya school of Chinese Buddhism, he is also known as the Eleventh Patriarch of Chinese Vinaya Buddhism. On the one hand, these highlights of his achievements in Buddhism also explain his position in Chinese Buddhism. What are the specific contributions of Master Hongyi to the study of Vinaya in Chinese Buddhism? How are they reflected?

### **5.4.1 Master Hongyi and the Eleventh Patriarch of Chinese Vinaya Buddhism**

As described, Master Hongyi played a pivotal role in the revival of Nanshan Vinaya in modern times and made outstanding contributions to the promotion of the Nanshan Vinaya sect, so he has been respected as the eleventh patriarch of Chinese Vinaya Buddhism by later generations. This title is also sufficient to reflect Master Hongyi's contribution to Chinese Buddhist Vinaya and his status in the Vinaya school of Chinese Buddhism.

Regarding the lineage transmission of the Vinaya sect of Chinese Buddhism, Vinaya Master Lingzhi (靈芝律師) has a clear analysis in *Nanshan lüzong zucheng tulu* 南山律宗祖承圖錄, which has also been widely recognized since the Ming and Qing dynasties, but he only mentions the lineage of the nine patriarch masters in the history of the Chinese Vinaya sect. The tenth patriarch of Chinese Vinaya Buddhism is related to Master Hongyi.

According to Master Daming's (大明法師) *Nanshan lüzong zucheng* 南山律宗祖承: "Master Hongyi did not seem to have published it, but he often wrote the names of Nanshan lineage masters in red, including 'the Tenth Patriarch of Chinese Vinaya—Master Lingzhi 十祖靈芝大智律師' for himself and others to make offerings."<sup>164</sup>

In this regard, Master Hongyi has been respected as the tenth patriarch of the Chinese Vinaya School. However, there are controversies about Master Hongyi being included in the sequence of Nanshan Vinaya lineage masters. Among the contradictory voices, the strongest came from the sect of Baohuashan (寶華山).

Since the scriptures of Nanshan Vinaya were lost in the Southern Song dynasty

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<sup>164</sup> Daming, "Nanshan lüzong zucheng" 南山律宗祖承 in *Minguo Fo jiao wen xian jicheng bubian* 民国佛教文献集成补编, vol. 71 (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian chubanshe, 2008), 419.

(1027–1279), Baohuashan Longchang Temple (寶華山隆昌寺) in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties became the fundamental temple of modern Chinese Vinaya school due to the role of Vinaya Master Jianyue (見月律師, 1601–1679) in the promotion and revival of Vinaya studies in China, representing the authority of Chinese Buddhist Vinaya studies in modern times. Master Hongyi is listed right after Vinaya Master Lingzhi as the eleventh patriarch, skipping Vinaya masters like Ruxin (如馨, 1541–1615) and Jianyue, and the followers of Baohuashan sect inevitably voiced different opinions. They believed that "Firstly, at that time, there were many learned monks at Longchang Temple, so there was no need (to recognize Master Hongyi as the eleventh patriarch); secondly, the years of Hongyi's monastic ordination were too short. They were skeptical that they could convince followers of the Baohuashan sect; thirdly, according to the tradition, those who were not ordained in the Baohuashan sect were not qualified to lecture at Longchang Temple."<sup>165</sup> Therefore, the Baohuashan sect held a negative attitude towards the claim that Master Hongyi was the eleventh patriarch of the Vinaya school.

To correctly and objectively evaluate Master Hongyi's contribution to the Vinaya school in modern Chinese Buddhism, we should not be limited to a certain time frame, nor should we judge only from the standards of giving and receiving precepts. Rather, we also need to take other factors into consideration, such as Master Hongyi's reconstruction of Vinaya studies and his great efforts to broadly propagate Vinaya studies. Looking back to the development of Chinese Buddhism in modern times, "Besides the Baohuashan sect, Hongyi, Cizhou (慈舟) and their sects in the 20th century promoted Nanshan

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<sup>165</sup> Chen Bing and Deng Zimei, *Ershiji Zhongguo Fojiao* 二十世纪中国佛教 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2000), 405.

Vinaya. The spirit of Nanshan Vinaya lineage seems to have been more popularized by and inherited by Hongyi and his sect."<sup>166</sup> Therefore, in modern Chinese Vinaya Buddhism, the Baohuashan sect is no longer in a unique position; Master Hongyi won the title of the eleventh patriarch not overnight, but through a long process.

The earliest honorific name given to Master Hongyi was the "patriarch of Vinaya" (*lǐzǔ*, 律祖). When Master Hongyi passed away in Wenling Nursing Home in Quanzhou on the fourth day of the ninth month of the lunar calendar in 1942, the news published in major Buddhist newspapers across the country had already called Master Hongyi the "patriarch of Vinaya." For example, the article "Rentianyan miefa liangdunzhe: Yidai dashi Hongyi lǐzǔ yuanji" (人天眼滅法梁頓折：一代大師弘一律祖圓寂) published in *Foxue yuekan* 佛學月刊 (issue 7, vol. 2) says, "the modern master and the patriarch of Vinaya, Hongyi...arrived in Fujian to propagate the study of Vinaya and Pure Land schools. He wrote many works and is the patriarch who reinvigorated the Nanshan school."<sup>167</sup> Therefore, at Master Hongyi's death, he was regarded as the Vinaya patriarch of the generation. Yet, he was clearly called "the patriarch who reinvigorated the Nanshan school," rather than the eleventh patriarch of the Nanshan Vinaya sect.

From the existing literature, Feng Zikai (1898–1975) was the first to call Master Hongyi "the eleventh patriarch of the Nanshan Vinaya sect." In 1947, on the fifth anniversary of the death of Master Hongyi, a portrait of Master Hongyi by the famous cartoonist and essayist Feng Zikai was published in the 10th issue of the 8th volume of *Jue youqing* 覺有情. It was entitled "the portrait of the eleventh patriarch of the Nanshan

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<sup>166</sup> Chen and Deng, *Ershiji Zhongguo Fojiao*, 402.

<sup>167</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., *Minguo Fojiao qikan wenxian jicheng* 民国佛教期刊文献集成, vol. 96 (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian chubanshe, 2008), 133.

Vinaya sect—Master Hongyi.<sup>168</sup> Until that point, Master Hongyi's title "the eleventh patriarch of the Nanshan Vinaya sect" appeared, but judging from the reaction of the Buddhist community, this title was not fully confirmed. For example, in 1953, Master Daming said in the *Lineage of the Nanshan Vinaya sect*, "Let us leave the issue of the 'eleventh patriarch' to be discussed by the great virtues (renowned monastics) of the whole country!"<sup>169</sup> The Buddhist community had not yet reached a consensus on the view of Master Hongyi as the eleventh patriarch. The problem to be solved here was why Master Hongyi could surpass Ven. Ruxin, Ven. Jianyue, etc., and be listed as the eleventh patriarch after Master Lingzhi.

According to Buddhist historians, Guxin Ruxin (古心如馨, 1541–1615) went to Mount Wutai to receive ordination from Manjushri Bodhisattva. He was regarded as the reincarnated first preceptor and later "Emperor Shenzong bestowed purple robes, bowl, and staff. He was invited to Mount Wutai to host Longhua Dharma gathering at the Shengguang Yongming Temple (聖光永明寺). He gave precepts to the royal and granted the great precepts of thousand Buddhas."<sup>170</sup> He was given the plaque of "Longevity of Precept Platform" (萬壽戒壇) and the title of "Huiyun Vinaya Master" (慧雲律師). He wrote *Jinglü jixiang busa yigui* 經律戒相布薩儀軌, which mainly introduced various precepts and ordination rituals. Therefore, his contribution to Chinese Vinaya Buddhism was to help ordinations continue and to determine the rituals of ordination. He is

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<sup>168</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Minguo Fojiao qikan wenxian jicheng*, 89:273.

<sup>169</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., *Minguo Fojiao qikan wenxian jicheng bubian* 民国佛教期刊文献集成补编, vol. 71 (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian chubanshe, 2008), 419.

<sup>170</sup> Wang Jianguang 王建光, *Zhongguo lüzong tongshi* 中國律宗通史 (Nanjing: Fenghuang Chubanshe, 2008), 444.

therefore also called the Revival Patriarch (中興祖師) of [Chinese] Vinaya, although he is not included in the lineage masters of the Nanshan Vinaya sect.

As the master who expanded the Baohuashan lineage, Master Jianyue “was abbot of Baohuashan for more than 30 years, held platforms, gave precepts, did retreats, and studied Vinaya, and made Baohuashan a model for other lineages.”<sup>171</sup> He is regarded as the patriarch of Baohuashan. His main contribution lies in the writing of the *Chuanjie zhengfan* 傳戒正範, which formulates the various procedures and rituals of the three-platform precepts for monks and interprets and explains the acquisition of precepts and the formation of practice of precepts according to Nanshan Vinaya. Hence, the Sangha can receive precepts “based on texts, to practice precepts based on rules, one may learn to practice, and to behave based on precepts.” Therefore, his *Chuanjie zhengfan* is still the blueprint for the transmission of precepts in Chinese Buddhism, exerting great influence on the Sangha in China today.

However, *Chuanjie zhengfan* is not perfect. Four aspects that are “not carried through” are found in it. They are either incomplete, illogical, or not abiding by the principles. Specifically, “Bodhicitta is not carried through, confession is not carried through, questions to precept receivers are inconsistent, and *jñapticaturtha-karman* is inconsistent.” Master Hongyi once also said that he was “sorry about the ritual text that lacks details.”<sup>172</sup> It was not in conformity with the Nanshan Vinaya.

In summary, although the Vinaya masters Ruxin and Jianyue played a very important role in the revival of the Chinese Vinaya school, they contributed little to the

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<sup>171</sup> Wang, *Zhongguo lüzong tongshi*, 482.

<sup>172</sup> Wang, *Zhongguo lüzong tongshi*, 482.



construction of Vinaya studies and its promotion. Nevertheless, the Baohuashan sect questioned whether Master Hongyi had status as the eleventh patriarch, claiming his achievement was based on merely external forms, such as the transmission of precepts, rituals of giving precepts, and the so-called number of monks who received precepts, while neglecting the value of inner Vinaya thoughts that were more important than external ritual processes. Yet from the perspective of the current Buddhist community, Master Hongyi has been fully recognized as the eleventh patriarch of Chinese Vinaya Buddhism, which proves the great contributions Master Hongyi made in the study of Vinaya.

#### **5.4.2 Master Hongyi's Contribution to Chinese Vinaya Buddhism**

Master Hongyi's contribution to Chinese Vinaya is mainly reflected in his compilation of Vinaya scriptures, determination of the scope of Vinaya studies, practice and dissemination of Vinaya, and Vinaya education.

##### **5.4.2.a The Compilation of Vinaya Scriptures**

As mentioned above, since the rise of Chan Buddhism in the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279), practitioners rarely showed interest in Vinaya studies in Chinese Buddhism, which also greatly influenced the classics of Vinaya studies. Thousands of volumes of Vinaya collections of the Tang and Song dynasties were lost, and Vinaya studies have since declined. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, some Vinaya masters tried to restore Chinese Vinaya Buddhism but were hampered by the lack of scriptures.

They mainly made efforts in formal rituals. It was an urgent task to fully revive Chinese Vinaya Buddhism and the scriptures that were most needed to lay the foundation of Chinese Vinaya studies.

Master Hongyi was committed to revitalizing Vinaya studies and vowed to restore Nanshan Vinaya. Therefore, he attached great importance to the compilation, editing, revision, and collation of Vinaya. The Vinaya scriptures that he edited include *Nanshan chaoji* 南山鈔記 and *Dongying sifenglü xingshichao zichiji tongshi* 東瀛四分律行事鈔資持記通釋. He also revised *Sidenlü shanfanbuque xingshichao* 四分律刪繁補闕行事鈔. Moreover, Master Hongyi gave brief explanations on *Hanzhu jieben suijiang bielu* 含注戒本隨講別錄, *Hanzhu jieben lüeshi* 含注戒本略釋, *Shanbu suiijiemo biejianglu* 刪不隨機羯磨別講錄, and *Lüchao zongyao suijiang bielu* 律鈔宗要隨講別錄. He made many distinctions between Vinaya, concisely divided the three major scriptures, and sorted out the organizational structure of the Vinaya. He also used notation and interpretation to lay out conditions that constitute a violation of the precepts. The severity of the sentence depends on the circumstances of the crime; each precept includes a condition for breaking it, and the severity of the crime is determined based on the right or wrong understanding of the circumstances. He pointed out circumstances under which, even if there is a violation of the precepts, one did not violate the precepts, which greatly facilitated future generations to learn Vinaya studies.

As discussed, the Vinaya texts compiled, edited, revised, and collated by Master Hongyi provided a textual basis for the revival of Chinese Buddhist Vinaya studies. They were tools that must be used by current Vinaya practitioners. Master Hongyi's distinguishment of Vinaya, notations, and interpretations of Vinaya provided a treasure

trove of texts for Chinese Buddhist Vinaya studies, and his contributions are also self-evident.

#### 5.4.2.b Vinaya View

In terms of views, Master Hongyi insisted that the right path for Buddhists was to keep precepts; he opposed (Baizhang) Qinggui and emphasized the importance of Vinaya in the Three Studies. Before becoming a monk, Master Hongyi was very knowledgeable and had a solid foundation of Chinese studies and artistic accomplishments. He was a representative of the New Culture Movement. After becoming a monk, he went deep into the scriptures and studied Vinaya, realizing a deep understanding of the Dharma. He once cited Master Ouyi's point of view, thinking that since he was one of the monks, he should put the study of Vinaya first. He believed that "Today's verses of wishes are derived from Huayan; various kinds of mantras are from Vajrayana."<sup>173</sup>

The *Pini riyong qiexiao* 毘尼日用切要 that has been popular since the Ming and Qing dynasties is greatly related to Vajrayana. In Master Hongyi's view, the decline of Buddhism in China was related to do with the spread of Vajrayana in the Buddhist community. He once said: "One verse, sentence, word, are seeds of the path; if one picks up only one word then it is completely wrong—Vinaya is not Vinaya, exoteric is not exoteric, esoteric is not esoteric, and they are only incomplete in virtue. This righteous dharma is gradually declining and therefore shrinking at the end of its existence."<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> "Chongzhi pini shiyi jiyao" 重治毗尼事義集要, chapter 15, in *Continuation of Taisho Tripitaka*, vol. 40 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban youxian gongsi, 1994), 467.

<sup>174</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Wenda shizhang" 問答十章, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全

Based on this quote, Master Hongyi held a negative view toward *Pini riyong qieyao*. In his letter to Deng Hanxiang (鄧寒香) in 1925, this point of view is also expressed more clearly: "The declining of Vinaya in the late generation is due to *Pini riyong qieyao*'s content. People did not notice it and thought *Pini riyong qieyao* was the principle of Vinaya. Is it different from viewing bricks as jewels and jade?"<sup>175</sup>

Therefore, he advocated that "a person of noble aspirations should specialize in Vinaya precepts so that he can take the responsibility of Buddhism." In other words, only learning Vinaya is the righteous path [for monastics]. For this reason, Master Hongyi also has reservations about the various Qinggui and pointed out that although the current Qinggui are under the name of Baizhang Qinggui, they have been repeatedly added and deleted by others. Its original meanings were changed. It was no longer the Qinggui of the Tang dynasty. He also believed as follows:

The destruction of the righteous Vinaya is entirely due to the study of Vinaya to be unclear. The original intention of Baizhang's Qinggui got lost long time ago; it was also because a vulgar monk official in the Yuan dynasty composed and decorated it, and the writing became incomprehensible to practitioners of Qinggui today, they do not understand the study of Vinaya.<sup>176</sup>

Master Hongyi asserted that "the Vinaya texts are as vast as the ocean and I have devoted myself to studying them, and some are still barely reached. Even if the original text of Baizhang Qinggui still exists, it would not be necessary to read it, not to mention

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集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 296.

<sup>175</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Zhi Denghanxiang" 致鄧寒香 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 362.

<sup>176</sup> "Chongzhi pini shiyi jiyao" 重治毗尼事義集要, chapter 15, in *Continuation of Taisho Tripitaka*, vol. 40 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban youxian gongsi, 1994), 465.

the forged one."<sup>177</sup> According to Master Hongyi, it was necessary to realize the important role of Vinaya in the Three Studies and to understand that Vinaya "applies the two yanās and contains the Tripiṭaka." Therefore, the study of Vinaya must take Vinaya scriptures as the basis and practice precepts as the right way. He reaffirmed the importance of Vinaya in Chinese Buddhism.

#### 5.4.2.c Vinaya Practice

That Master Hongyi is known as the "Eleventh Patriarch of the Nanshan Vinaya Sect" is not only because of his contributions to Vinaya texts and view of Vinaya studies, but also because of his exemplary role in the practice of Vinaya. He learned and taught Vinaya and at the same time was practicing Nanshan Vinaya.

Regarding the attitude towards Vinaya studies, Master Hongyi said, "The one who learns the precepts needs to 'discipline oneself', not to 'discipline others.'"<sup>178</sup> As a result, in his actual life, he was rigorous in maintaining his precepts, adhered to Vinaya, and all his words and deeds reflected the spirit of great ancient virtue, which garnered deep respect from subsequent generations. Most of the records about his practice of Vinaya were preserved in the writings of Buddhist friends and students who had close interactions with him. Here are some excerpts as follows:

According to the recollections of Master Ruijin (瑞今):

During the day, Master Hongyi voluntarily performed his regular duties, which included reading, lecturing, and chanting. As it approached

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<sup>177</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Wenda shizhang" 問答十章, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 296.

<sup>178</sup> Huotou Seng, "Hongyi Lüshi zai Zhanshan" 弘一律師在湛山, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 250.

sunset, he would don his prayer bead mala and go for a walk. He went to bed at night and rarely lit up the lights. Quite a legacy of the great ancient virtue of "take pity on moths by not lighting lamps." As espoused by Vinaya, one does not have more than three robes and does not eat after noon time, precepts by which he firmly abided.<sup>179</sup>

It is also noted:

Although the clothes worn by Master Hongyi could not be shaped as prescribed by the Buddhist system, he did not have more than three pieces of clothing. Even in the winter, he wore the same attire. If it was on the occasion of giving lectures from the throne, he put on the seven-panel robe. If it was an ordinary gathering for a Dharma talk, he wore a *haiqing* (that is, a monk's robe with wide sleeves). If anyone offered him thick jackets, he would pass them on to others."<sup>180</sup>

As mentioned above, Master Hongyi retired to bed at night and seldom lit up the lights. His intention was to safeguard the lives of moths and faithfully implement the Buddhist precept of non-killing, implemented it into the details of life. Simultaneously, he adhered to the Buddhist monastic three-robe system and obeyed the precepts of not eating after noon. In this regard, Liu Zhiping (劉質平) offered the following observations:

My belated teacher studied Vinaya and strictly kept his precepts. He did not eat after noon and only had breakfast and lunch, two meals a day. If someone invited him for meal, it had to finished before noon.<sup>181</sup>

Master Hongyi strictly abided by the precepts in life, maintaining unwavering

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<sup>179</sup> Shi Ruijin, "Qinjin Hongyi Dashi xuelü he banxuan de yinyuan" 亲近弘一大师学律和办学的因缘, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 309.

<sup>180</sup> Shi Ruijin, "Qinjin Hongyi Dashi", 10: 309

<sup>181</sup> Liu Zhiping, "Hongyi Dashi yimode baocun jiqi shenghuo huiyi" 弘一大師遺墨的保存及其生活回忆 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 259.

rectitude without succumbing to hierarchical influences. He consistently exemplified the ethical standards of monastic life. According to the recollection of the kitchen staff monk of Zhanshan Temple (湛山寺), a mayor once accompanied Zhu Ziqiao (朱子橋, 1874–1941) to visit Master Hongyi. They shared a meal at the temple and extended an invitation to Master Hongyi. In response, Master Hongyi “merely composed a note and sent it out as a reply, ‘It is only appropriate for me as monk to live in the valley, not appropriate to partake in a banquet with political officials.’”<sup>182</sup>

Furthermore, despite the gradual growth in Master Hongyi’s virtue and increasing recognition of his reputation, he remained humble and continued to cultivate self-discipline, never passing judgment on the behavior of others. He chose instead to discipline himself, inspiring others by doing so. Another illustrative incident is recorded by Huitian (慧田):

One day, upon Master’s return from a walk in the field behind the temple, I threw away a few small bad radishes into the mud while cooking in the kitchen. Although he had not seen that it was me who had thrown them away, he picked them up and retrieved them. With delight, he happily told me that, ‘eating raw radishes helps boost energy.’<sup>183</sup>

This incident exemplifies how Master Hongyi exercised strict self-discipline and set a good example for later generations through his quiet actions, in personally responsible manner.

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<sup>182</sup> Huotou Seng, “Hongyi Lüshi zai Zhanshan”, 1:250.

<sup>183</sup> Shi Huitian, *Wo qiannianzhe Hongyi Dashi* 我虔念着弘一大师, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 252.

#### 5.4.2.d The Spread of Vinaya Studies

Master Hongyi spared no effort in the dissemination and advocacy of Buddhist Vinaya. He traveled to many monasteries, spanning from Qingdao in the north to Xiamen in the south, leaving an indelible mark in the promotion of the Vinaya. He resided in a total of 61 monasteries over the course of his lifetime.

For instance, in the first month of 1933, Master Hongyi began to lecture on *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben* (四分律含注戒本) at Miaoshi Temple (妙釋寺); in the second month, he lectured on *Suijie jiemo* (隨機羯磨) at Wanshouyan (萬壽岩); in the tenth month, he lectured on *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben* (四分律含注戒本), *Jiexiang biaoji* (戒相表記), and *Shanbu sui jiejiemo* (刪補隨機羯磨).

On the first day of 1934, he lectured on *Sifenlü hanzhu jieben* (四分律含注戒本) at Cao'an (草庵) in Quanzhou and lectured on the same text at Miaoshi Temple in Xiamen; from the second to the fifth month, he lectured on *Suijie jiemo* (隨機羯磨) at Wanshouyan (萬壽岩) in Xiamen; in the third month, he lectured on "Adinnadana" at Nanputuo Temple (南普陀寺).

In the eleventh month of 1935, he lectured on *Lüxue yaolüe* (律學要略) at the precept transmission ceremony at Chengtian Temple (承天寺) in Quanzhou.

At the beginning of 1936, he lectured on "Four Issues that Young Buddhists Need to Note" at the Buddhist Yangzheng Institute (佛教養正院).

On the first day of 1937, he lectured on *Suijie jiemo* (隨機羯磨), *Jiemo jifayuan jiepian* (羯磨集法緣戒篇), etc. in Gongde lou (功德樓) at Nanputuo Temple.



In the fourth month of 1941, he lectured on *Lüchao zongyao* (律鈔宗要) at Tanlin xiang in Jinjiang.

The above is part of the record of Master Hongyi's lectures and promotion of Vinaya. According to incomplete statistics from scholars, he "lectured at 31 monasteries in Fujian Province, 5 Buddhist colleges and related charities, and schools, scripture halls, and private houses."<sup>184</sup>

Not only that, but he was also committed to the cultivation of youth in the study of Vinaya. In the fifth month of 1933, he founded the Nanshan Vinaya Academy (*Nanshan lüxue yuan*, 南山律學苑) in Zunsheng Institute (尊勝院) on the right side of Kaiyuan Temple (開元寺) in Quanzhou. He wrote the "Nanshanlüyuan zhuzhong xuelü fayuanwen" (南山律苑住眾學律發願文) to guide disciples to be virtuous friends life after life, to support each other, to never abandon each other, to learn Vinaya together. "He made vows that he would do the best to promote the Nanshan Vinaya teachings that had been lost for more than 700 years and spread it to the world."<sup>185</sup> In 1934, he founded the Yangzheng Institute (養正院) at Nanputuo Temple in Xiamen and wrote the charters and set up its rules. He also lectured on Vinaya in person at Yangzheng Institute.

In addition, Master Hongyi also gave great support to Vinaya education at other Buddhist colleges. He lectured on Vinaya at Minnan Buddhist College (閩南佛學院), Xiamen Vinaya Buddhist College (廈門律學院), Quanzhou Yuetai Buddhist Research Institute (泉州月台佛學研究社) and other places. As can be seen, Master Hongyi made

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<sup>184</sup> Lai Yonghai 賴永海, ed., *Zhongguo Fojiao tongshi* 中國佛教通史, vol. 15 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2010), 367.

<sup>185</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Nanshan lüyuan zhuzhong xuelü fayuanwen" 南山律苑住眾學律發願文, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 384.

great efforts in the promotion of Vinaya and education and the cultivation of monastic disciples in the Vinaya.

It was precisely through his dedication to the revitalization of Chinese Vinaya Buddhism that Master Hongyi exerted tremendous effort in the dissemination and promotion of Vinaya studies as well as the training of Vinaya disciples, which played a pivotal important role. Consequently, Master Hongyi is heralded as a guiding light of modern Chinese Buddhism. He relentlessly studied Vinaya, strictly practiced the Vinaya, and promoted the Vinaya through tangible practices. His noble example served as an inspiration for others to follow and achieve success. And he himself fully fulfilled his long-cherished wish of "swearing his life to protect the Nanshan Four-Division Vinaya sect and to make it stay in China forever." All these show that he was worth the title of "the Eleventh Patriarch of Nanshan Vinaya Sect."

## CHAPTER 6: MASTER HONGYI'S VIEW ON THE PURE LAND SECT

As one of the Chinese Buddhist schools, the Pure Land sect started with the association in Lushan (廬山) founded by Master Huiyuan (慧遠, 334–416 CE) in the Eastern Jin dynasty (317–420) and became one of the practices that is widely accepted by Chinese Buddhists. After more than a thousand years of development, although there is a sect named after the Pure Land in Chinese Buddhism, in terms of the actual practice, "Pure Land" has become a practice that is covered in major sects of Chinese Buddhism. This also applies in Master Hongyi's Buddhist practice and views. The so-called "Huayan is the object (of devotion), the *Four-Division Vinaya* is the action (of devotion,) and leading to the Pure Land is the fruit (of devotion)" can be regarded as the general outline of his Buddhist practice. Therefore, his view on the Pure Land sect occupies an important position in Master Hongyi's Buddhist views.

### 6.1 The Pure Land Concept and Chinese Buddhism

The "Pure Land concept" is the spirit of the Pure Land sect. The Pure Land sect is one of the many sects of Buddhism. It mainly features that practitioners believe that through certain methods of practice in the present world, or through the compassion of Amitabha Buddha, they can be reborn in the ultimate blissful land (Skt. *sukhāvātī*), or the

Buddha field (Skt. *buddhakṣetra*), where they will be able to attain the state of Bodhisattva without regression (Skt. *avaivartika*)."<sup>186</sup>

Land, *kṣetra* in Sanskrit, translates as *cha* (刹) in Chinese Buddhism, meaning land or world. "Pure" means clean and pristine, and the Pure Land indicates a pure place, or a solemn, pristine and wonderful world. The "pure land" and the "defiled world" exist opposite each other. The defiled world refers to the secular world that we live in, because it contains virtue, evil, suffering, and happiness. However, because of beginningless ignorance and karmic obscuration, sentient beings circulate endlessly in the ocean of life and death, suffering infinitely, so it is called the "defiled world." The Pure Land stands in opposition to this. It implies that there is no pollution in this world, no filth, no worries but wisdom, no anger but compassion, no pollution but unsullied merit. Therefore, the Pure Land is also called: the Buddha's land, Buddha's field, Buddha's continent, Buddha's realm, Buddha's world, Pure State, Pure Land, Pure World, Pure Wonderland, Pristine Land, Pure Kingdom, etc.

According to Buddhist teachings, the core of the Pure Land lies in its "purity." The "purity" also has two aspects, one is the purity of sentient beings, and the other is the purity of the world. In the *Agama Sutra*, "the heart is pure, so all beings are pure." Mahayana teachings even assert that "the heart is pure, and the land is pure." The main focus of the *śrāvaka* vehicle is the purification of the body and mind of sentient beings. Its emphasis is on how to stay away from troubles to show the purity of the heart without omission. The Mahayana vehicle not only pursues the purification of sentient beings, but also attempts the purification of the world. Because all beings living in this world, they

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<sup>186</sup> Fujita Hiroshi, *Genshi jōdo shisō no kenkyū* 原始浄土思想の研究 (Tokyo: Iwanamishoten,1970), 3.

are the result of karma, and the world is the environment that sentient beings rely on. Sentient beings rely on the world to survive, so when they are pursuing their own purity, they need to be in a pure environment.

Pure Land Buddhism is a Buddhist sect that takes the Pure Land concept as its guidance, views Amitābha Buddha as the object of devotion, and practices chanting the Buddha's name to be reborn in the ultimately blissful Pure Land after death. According to the development of Buddhism in China, the belief in Pure Land already appeared during the Southern and Northern dynasties (420–589) and had reached a certain degree of prosperity. During the Sui dynasty (581–617) and Tang dynasties (618–907), it gradually declined and began to spread among the common population. During the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) and Qing dynasty (1644–1911), Buddhism gradually declined. Tiantai, Huayan, and other sects that had higher needs for Buddhist doctrines almost died out. Even the most successful, "non-literate" sect, Chan Buddhism, failed to continue to prosper and was also in decline. Pure Land Buddhism became the mainstream in Chinese Buddhism, in a situation where “every family upholds Amitābha Buddha, and every household venerates Guanshiyin.”<sup>187</sup> Its influence goes beyond the reach of any other religious belief in China.

Pure Land practice has a very long history in Chinese Buddhism, and it has a very large number of followers as its foundation. It is one of the most influential sects of Chinese Buddhism. However, "the pure land which specifically refers to the 'Pure Land' (*jingtu* 淨土) did not appear in any 'Pure Land' scriptures translations until the middle of

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<sup>187</sup> This is a popular proverb among the people.

the eighth century.”<sup>188</sup> As Fujita Hiroshi said in his *Research of Original Pure Land*

*Concept:*

The concept of “Pure Land” appeared in the *Sukhāvātī-vyūhaḥ-sūtra* (*Wuliangshou jing* 無量壽經) once, but it refers to the Buddha's land in the general sense, rather than specifically referring to the world of ultimate bliss. This is the only time this concept has appeared in the early versions of the Pure Land scriptures before Xuanzang's translation of the *Sūtra on Praises of the Pure Land with Buddhas' Protection and Reception* (*Chengzan jingtu fosheshou jing* 稱讚淨土佛攝受經). In Xuanzang's translation, this concept has appeared in many places, even in titles of sutras. However, his Sanskrit manuscript (although not the same version based on Xuanzang's translation) did not have any Sanskrit equivalent to the concept of “Pure Land,” which led to Fujita's claim that Xuanzang's translation inserted a “Pure Land” concept that was not originally in Sanskrit.<sup>189</sup>

It becomes a standard term in Buddhism in the middle of the seventh century.”<sup>190</sup> “Pure Land' (*jingtu* 淨土) is a concept that reflects the concept of 'Pure Buddha Land' (*buddhakṣetra-parisuddhi*, *Buddhakṣetra-parisodhana*, *kṣetram parisodhayati*, etc.) related to the practice of Mahayana Bodhisattva. The 'Purity' in this context refers to the process that a Bodhisattva guides all sentient beings to abide in the state of enlightenment.”<sup>191</sup> Therefore, in the early translation of Buddhist scriptures, the "Pure Land" (*sukhāvātī*) was translated as the land of peace and bliss (*anletu* 安樂土) or the ultimate bliss (*jile* 極樂). Tanluan (曇鸞, 476–542 CE) was the first to use "Pure Land." In his *Wuliangshoujing youpotishe yuansheng jizhu* (無量壽經優婆提舍願生偈注), "peace and bliss" (*anle* 安樂) and "pure land" (*jingtu* 淨土) are used together as

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<sup>188</sup> Kenneth K. Tanaka, *Zhongguo jingtu sixiangde liming: Jingying Huiyuande Guanjing yishu* 中国净土思想的黎明：净影慧远的《观经义疏》，trans. Feng Huanzhen and Song Jie (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008), 2.

<sup>189</sup> Tanaka, *Zhongguo jingtu sixiangde liming*, 2.

<sup>190</sup> Tanaka, *Zhongguo jingtu sixiangde liming*, 3.

<sup>191</sup> Tanaka, *Zhongguo jingtu sixiangde liming*, 2.

"pure land of peace and bliss." For example:

All those who have transcended to the pure land of peace and bliss are pure in form and pure in mind. They all attain pristine and equal Dharmakaya due to the achievement to the pure land of peace and bliss.<sup>192</sup>

In *Wuliangshoujing youpotishe yuansheng jizhu* 無量壽經優婆提舍願生偈注,

Tanluan also used terms such as "transcending to Pure Land" and "the Dharma gate of Pure Land." It can be seen that "Pure Land" refers to a different form of Buddhist practice that started in the first half of the sixth century.

The Pure Land sect, as a branch of Buddhism, also originated in India.

According to Kenneth K. Tanaka's research, it is believed that the development of the Pure Land doctrines and practice has gone through five stages, namely: 1) the early stage when the concept of numerous past and future Buddhas dominated (since the 5th century BC), 2) turning to the period of asserting various present Buddhas (from the 2nd century BC), 3) the appearance of Amitabha Buddha (from the 1st century CE), 4) the period of adopting practices and names (approximately from the 3rd century) 5) the period of forming critical commentary and notes.<sup>193</sup> Although the concept of Pure Land originated in India, it did not have much influence in its native land. On the contrary, the Pure Land concept was recognized and accepted in a foreign country, so that it took root, sprouted, bloomed, and bore fruit on Chinese soil, and then spread to other East Asian countries.

According to the records of the Pure Land classics, the Pure Land is created by the aspirations of the Buddhas, so if there are unlimited Buddhas of ten directions, there

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<sup>192</sup> "Wuliang shoujing youpo tische yuansheng jizhu" 無量壽經優婆提舍願生偈注, chapter 1, in *Taisho*, vol. 40 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 828.

<sup>193</sup> Tanaka, *Zhongguo jingtu sixiangde liming*, 4.

will be Pure Lands of unlimited Buddhas of the ten directions; if there are Buddhas of ten directions and three generations, there will be Pure Lands of ultimate Buddhas in the ten directions and three generations. The number of Buddhas is infinite, and so are the number of the Pure Lands. Then, in the limited Tripitaka that the Buddha Śakyamuni provided, within a limited time, there are thousands of Buddhas and their names, usually one thousand each for the past, present, and future three generations, for a total of three thousand Buddhas.<sup>194</sup>

Numerous Buddhas' Pure Lands can be divided into the following categories. The Pure Land of Maitreya, that is, with Maitreya Bodhisattva as the object of devotion: it is believed that Maitreya Bodhisattva is still giving teachings in Tuṣita Heaven and will be born into the secular world in the future. Therefore, the believers of Maitreya vow to be reborn in Tuṣita Heaven and aspire to be born in the future with Maitreya in the human realm, where they will build a Pure Land in the human world together. Therefore, the focus of the devotion to Maitreya Pure Land lies in the Pure Land in the human realm. Vowing to be reborn in the Tuṣita Heaven solely to draw closer to Maitreya Bodhisattva, so they aspire to be reborn with Maitreya in the human realm in the future to purify the world. Master Yinshun 印順 said, “The first principal of Maitreya Pure Land is to pray for Maitreya's early birth in the human world, that is, to request the early realization of the Pure Land in the human realm. As for the aspiration for birth in the human world, it is also for the purpose of coming to the world with Maitreya, and the focus is still on the Pure Land in the human world.”<sup>195</sup> In addition, the Maitreya Pure Land was the main

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<sup>194</sup> Shengyan 聖嚴, *Jingtu sixiangzhi kaocha* 淨土思想之考察 (Taipei: Zhonghua xueshuyuan foxue yanjiusuo, 1983), 7.

<sup>195</sup> Shi Yinshun 釋印順, *Jingtu yu chan* 淨土與禪 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 17.



form of Chinese Buddhist Pure Land belief during the Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties. As folk repeatedly used the theory of Maitreya's birth to initiate armed insurrections, Maitreya faith was suppressed by the government and gradually declined.

In the Pure Land of Akṣobhya Buddha, Akṣobhya Buddha is regarded as the object of devotion. Among the Mahayana Pure Lands, Akṣobhya Buddha's Pure Land emphasizes aspiration, prajna, practice, and practice of intensified discipline. In the Pure Land of Akṣobhya, "there are few lay people, but many monastics,"<sup>196</sup> so Akṣobhya Buddha's wonderful and blissful Pure Land is where monks are highly regarded. The Pure Land of Akṣobhya Buddha is mainly for monastics. Compared with other practices of Pure Land, it lacks a foundation of lay practitioners. Therefore, the Pure Land of Akṣobhya Buddha has not formed actual beliefs and worship systems in Chinese Buddhist practice.

In the Medicine Buddha Vaidurya Light Pure Land, the Medicine Buddha is the object of devotion. Medicine Buddha is also known as the Great Healer Buddha, the Great Virtuous Healer, and the King of Twelve Vows. In ancient times, the meaning of "healer" was the same as that of doctors today. They could heal people's physical illness and tend to the wounded. But the Buddha can cure all kinds of diseases of all living beings: the supreme healer or the great doctor. In the past, the Medicine Buddha made the twelve great vows for all living beings to relieve their sufferings, to have sufficient good conditions, and to lead them to liberation. Therefore, according to his vows, he became a Buddha and lived in the Vaidurya Light Pure Land, and his land was as dignified as the kingdom of ultimate bliss. All sentient beings in the world have bad karma, and their

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<sup>196</sup> Dabao jijing” 大寶積經, chapter 20, in *Taisho*, vol. 11 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 107.

bodies and minds are full of various diseases, so they long for good health and the land of ultimate bliss. Resultingly, even in current society, people still follow the belief of Vaidurya Light Pure Land Medicine Buddha at present.

Amitabha Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss is the most common Pure Land belief in Chinese Buddhism, and it is the main form of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism. In Chinese Buddhism, when talking about the "Pure Land," if there is no specification, the term is generally regarded as referring to the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha. From this we can also see the strong influence exerted by Amitabha Buddha's Pure Land (in Chinese Buddhism).

The Pure Land sect has a history of more than a thousand years in Chinese Buddhism. During this period, Chinese Buddhist monks and great virtuous masters have conducted extensive explanations and interpretations of the Pure Land scriptures. As a result, a relatively complete system of Pure Land studies was established to explain the practice of Pure Land from different levels and aspects. From the doctrinal point of view, the Pure Land can be divided into the Pure Land of matters, the Pure Land of appearance, and the Pure Land of truth. Among these, the Pure Land of matters refers to the place where ordinary people live, and it is the result of ordinary people's impure karma. The Pure Land of matters is a land decorated with numerous jewels and treasures and is dignified by the appearance of matter, so it is called the Pure Land of matter. The Pure Land of appearances is where Śrāvaka, Pratyekabuddha, and Bodhisattvas abide. Due to their cultivation of the concept of dependent origination to polluted afflictions and obtain the transcendental wisdom, they obtain the goal of the Pure Land. This place is wonderful, magnificent, pristine, and without defilement, so it is called the Pure Land of

appearance. The Pure Land of truth is the place where the Bodhisattvas beyond the first stage and even the Buddhas abide.

This land is wonderful and pristine due to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas' actual realization of virtues, and it is permanently free from defilement; therefore, it is called the Pure Land of truth. In addition, it is said in the *Vimalakirti Sutra*, "If a bodhisattva wants to obtain the Pure Land, he should purify his mind; when his mind is pure, the Buddha's land is pure."<sup>197</sup> Thus, it is asserted that the Pure Land is obtained by one's mind. Its existence lies in the mind of sentient beings, that is, the "Mind-Only Pure Land." The concept of Mind-Only Pure Land greatly developed after the Tang dynasty. "After the Song dynasty, the scholar monks and laymen often interpreted the Amitabha Buddha Pure Land in the West as Mind-Only Pure Land. The issue of the relationship between the Amitabha Pure Land in the West and the Mind-Only Pure Land has become the focus of controversy since the Song dynasty."<sup>198</sup>

Based on the history of the development of Chinese ideology, China has always used Confucianism as its orthodox ideology and Buddhist and Daoist culture as its supplement. Since the Tang dynasty, Chan Buddhism has prospered and has become the cultural mainstream since then, and it also has influenced Confucianism and Daoism. In the Song and Ming dynasties, the Neo-Confucianism represented by Zhu Xi (朱熹), Lu Jiuyuan (陸九淵), and Wang Yangming (王陽明), while absorbing Buddhist concepts, perfected and transformed Confucianism, and finally formed Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism, which has had a great influence to this day. Under this trend of

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<sup>197</sup> "Weimoji suoshuojing" 維摩詰所說經, chapter 1, in *Taisho*, vol. 14 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 538.

<sup>198</sup> Chen Yangjiong 陈扬炯, *Zhongguo jingtuzong tongshi* 中国净土宗通史, (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2002), 53.

scholarship, Buddhism has also been greatly influenced; thus, the integration of Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism was advocated. Yet from the perspective of Buddhism, since the Song and Ming dynasties, Buddhism has gradually declined, and Buddhist sects have eventually withered. Perhaps the only Chinese Buddhist sects still in existence are Chan and Pure Land Buddhism; other sects are sects only in name.

Under the influence of Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasties and the confluence of the three religions, the Pure Land sect ushered in a historical climax. Chan, Tiantai, Huayan, and Vinaya sects have all become propagators of the Pure Land, resulting in the combination of Chan and Pure Land, Tiantai and Pure Land, Huayan and Pure Land, and even Vinaya and Pure Land. Major sects begin to merge with the Pure Land practice, and the Pure Land sect tended to replace the various sects of Chinese Buddhism. Taking the four great monks in the late Ming dynasty as an example, many of their commentaries are about the Pure Land concept. In their view, Pure Land is regarded as the destination.

At the end of Qing dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, when Master Hongyi lived, the decline of Chinese Buddhism was at the lowest point in history. Even under these circumstances, people still practiced and promoted the Pure Land sect. From the perspective of the four great monks in the Republic of China, Master Yinguang (印光) specialized in the Pure Land sect, writing commentaries on the Pure Land practice and shouldering the promotion of the Pure Land sect as his own responsibility. He played an important role in the spread of the Pure Land sect, especially in modern Chinese Buddhism. Meanwhile, Master Yinguang was even regarded as the thirteenth patriarch of the Pure Land sect in Chinese Buddhism. Master Taixu (太虛) was also one of the four

great monks in the Republic of China, an innovator in the history of modern Chinese Buddhism. He was a great Buddhist practitioner who witnessed a historic turning point in Buddhism in China and even in the greater world, when Buddhism in China regained its footing. The works of Master Taixu include numerous statements about Pure Land practice, and he attaches great importance to the Pure Land sect.

Although Master Hongyi is regarded as the eleventh patriarch of Nanshan Vinaya sect known for his studies on Vinaya, from the perspective of his Buddhist ideological guidance, "Huayan is the object (of devotion), the *Four-Division Vinaya* is the action (of devotion), and leading to the Pure Land is the fruit (of devotion)."<sup>199</sup> The Pure Land practice was still very important to him.

Many prefaces and postscripts written by Master Hongyi are related to the Pure Land practice. According to incomplete statistics, there are fourteen articles about the Pure Land in the preface and postscript, such as *Jingzong wenban xu* 淨宗問辨序, *Jingzong wenbian ba* 淨宗問辨跋, *Weiyi wuliangshoujing xu* 魏譯無量壽經序, and *Amituojing shuchao xu* 阿彌陀淨疏鈔序. In addition, Master Hongyi also wrote by hand the great name "Namo Amitabha Buddha" (*nanmo amitufo* 南無阿彌陀佛) and the Dharma words of Lotus Pond Master to give to his monastic and lay Dharma friends, which shows he promoted the Pure Land practice by various means.

The collection of essays in *Hongyi dashi quanji* include many writings related to the Pure Land. The main manuscripts are as follows: narrative works include *Jingtu famen dayi* 淨土法門大意, *Jingzong wenbian* 淨宗問辨, *Yaoshijing xiayi* 藥師經析疑,

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<sup>199</sup> Shi Yihuan, "Hongyi Dashi zai Baihu", 2572.

*Yaoshi rulai famen lüelu* 藥師如來法門略錄, *Yaoshi famen xiuchi keyi lüelu* 藥師法門修持課儀略錄, *Yaoshi rulai famen yiban* 藥師如來法門一斑, and *Quannian fopusa qiusheng xifang* 全念佛菩薩求生西方; speeches include "Wanshouyan nianfotang kaitang yanci" 萬壽岩念佛堂開堂演詞, "Puquan jingzong daolü jian chisong *Dizangjing*" 普勸淨宗道侶兼持誦<地藏經>, and "Lüeshu Yinguang dashi zhi shengde" 略述印光大師之盛德.

## 6.2 Master Hongyi's Concept of Pure Land Buddhism

According to Master Hongyi's works on Pure Land Buddhism, most of his connotations and commentaries on the Pure Land scriptures and practice belong to the "ultimate blissful pure land." As he said in "Fojiao de yuanliu ji zongpai" 佛教的源流及宗派,

Pure Land Buddhism was established based on scriptures like *Sukhāvātī-vyūhaḥ-sūtra* and *Amitabha Sutra*. Master Huiyuan 慧遠 of the Eastern Jin dynasty was the first patriarch, and Master Shandao 善導 of the Tang dynasty was the founder. Master Huiyuan organized the Lotus Society (lianshe 蓮社) at the Donglin Temple (東林寺) at Lu Mountain (廬山). This sect is also known as the Lotus Sect (*lianzong* 蓮宗). It persuades sentient beings to devote themselves to Buddhism and vow to be reborn in the Pure Land of the West. The method of practice is simple. It is said to be universally provided for [sentient beings of] three kinds of roots, whether [one has] sharp root (*ligen* 利根), higher wisdom (*shangzhi* 上智), or inferior root (*xiagen* 下根), [one can] learn and get benefits. In the Degenerate Age of Dharma, it can be said that it is the most suitable method for ordinary sentient beings to practice Buddhism.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Fojiao de yuanliu yu zongpai" 佛教的源流及宗派, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 567.

In this brief description of the Pure Land Sect by Master Hongyi, it mainly includes the following aspects. First, it was believed that the Pure Land Sect in China was established primarily based on the *Sukhāvātī-vyūhaḥ-sūtra* (*Wuliangshou jing* 無量壽經), *Sukhāvātī-vyūha* (*Amituo jing* 阿彌陀經), *Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra* (*Guan wuliangshou jing* 觀無量壽經), and *Treatise on Rebirth in the Pure Land* (*Wangsheng lun* 往生論), which are also known as the Three Classics and One Treatise of the Pure Land Sect. Second, from the perspective of the establishment of the Pure Land Sect in China, it was generally believed that Lushan Huiyuan (廬山慧遠) was the first patriarch. Yet, in the description by Master Hongyi, he regarded Huiyuan's founding of the Lotus Society in Lushan and the establishment of the Pure Land Sect as separate events. And he further believed that the Pure Land sect in Chinese Buddhism was started by Shandao (善導) in the Tang dynasty. Third, the practice of the Pure Land sect was the practice of reciting Amitābha Buddha's name. Pure Land Buddhism aimed to persuade all sentient beings to have faith in the practice of reciting Amitābha Buddha's name and wish to be reborn in the Western Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss. Fourth, the method of reciting Amitābha Buddha's name advocated by the Pure Land sect was a simple and easy practice. It was universally provided for sentient beings of three kinds of roots and was suitable for all sentient beings with a wide range of applications. Fifth, from the point of view of the spread of Buddhism in China, contemporary society belonged to the Degenerate Age of Dharma, according to the Buddha. Sentient beings were in the range of inferior root, and the Pure Land practice was the most suitable for the needs of that time.

The so-called “Degenerate Age of Dharma” is one of the periods when the Buddhist Dharma exists in the world. According to common Buddhist theory, the Dharma's existence in the world can be divided into three periods: Age of the Right Dharma, Age of Semblance Dharma, and Age of the Degenerate Dharma. The Age of the Degenerate Dharma is the last stage in the development of the Buddhist Dharma. It is a period of decline in which the essence of Buddhism is gradually lost. The characteristics of this period were that the Buddha's teachings were in decline, the monastic discipline was in disarray, people's spiritual faculties were of low quality, making it difficult for them to have strong faith in the Buddha's teachings and challenging for them to engage in practice and attain enlightenment.

Over the course of its history, Chinese Buddhism developed eight major sects (also said to be ten major sects) from eighty-four thousand Dharma practices. However, by the time of the Republic of China, these sects were basically in a state of decay. Among various sects, Tiantai, Huayan, and Yogacara sects all have highly profound philosophical ideas and exhibit deep philosophical speculation. In comparison, Pure Land Buddhism's philosophy appears to be more straightforward, to the point that many people do not consider Pure Land Buddhism to possess philosophical speculation or profound doctrines.

The Pure Land sect only required one recitation of "Amitābha" to become a Buddha, which seems to prove this point. That the actual practitioners of Pure Land Buddhism were mostly older and less-educated women made this point of view a fact. One of Master Hongyi's female disciples, Zhu Xianying (朱賢英), once asked him, “Teacher, as a practitioner who primarily and ascetically keeps the precepts, why do you



also recite the Buddha's name? As an intellectual, you study Buddhism, even though you do not study Faxiang Yogācāra, aren't you supposed to practice Chan?" It can be said that this kind of thinking also reflects most of the intellectuals' understanding of Pure Land practice and the study of Buddhism. However, Master Hongyi replied, "I single-pointedly focus on reciting Amitābha Buddha's name, I recite Namo Amitabha!" Because, in his view, "Study Buddhism; if you have faith in it, you can gradually study its profound philosophy. But one's life will never come back. Now, take hold of it first via the practice of 'reciting the Buddha's name' as a safe method. You know, in the famous foreign market in Shanghai, there are many old ladies with rosary beads. Just like them, make up your mind. If you keep reciting it, you will attain the 'Samadhi from reciting the Buddha's name!'"<sup>201</sup>

What made Master Hongyi "single-pointedly focus on reciting Amitābha Buddha's name?" And what are the characteristics of his view on the Pure Land sect in Chinese Buddhism?

### **6.2.1 Master Hongyi's Positioning on the Pure Land Sect**

The Pure Land Sect advocates that one can become a Buddha by single-pointedly reciting the Buddha's name, which is the easy path among the many Buddhist practice methods. However, the "easy practice" emphasizes the simplicity of the operation in practice and does not mean that the method of reciting Buddha's name does

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<sup>201</sup> Yang Ziming 杨梓茗, "Hongyi dashi dui jingtu jiaoyi de xinshou fengxing" 弘一大师对净土教义的信受奉行, in *Hongyi fashi youguan renwu lunwenji* 弘一法师有关人物论文集, ed. Chen Huijian 陈慧剑 (Taipei: Hongyi dashi jinian xuehui yinxing, 2011), 399.

not have its corresponding meaning or philosophy. It does not mean that the Pure Land method holds an inferior position among the many methods of Buddhism. On the contrary, compared with other sects, the fact that the Pure Land practice is still active in the Buddhist community after more than a thousand years in China is determined by its own characteristics.

First, the Pure Land method was the most suitable for the needs of the time. As mentioned above, the era in which Master Hongyi lived belonged to the Degenerate Age of the Dharma. In this time, it was difficult for people to establish deep and righteous faith in the Dharma, and it was also difficult to practice and attain fruitful results. However, Chan, Tiantai, Faxiang Yogācāra and other sects "are not very suitable for the present time," especially Chan, because "Chan is specifically for the practitioners of upper and sharp roots," and it was believed that "there is no such kind of practitioners in the present world." In his view, those who follow Chan Buddhism "mostly go astray, which is painful and sad." In the Degenerate Age of the Dharma, only the Pure Land method is universally provided for sentient beings of three kinds of roots, very easy and simple, and extremely suitable for the Degenerate Age of the Dharma."<sup>202</sup> As he said,

In the Degenerate Age of the Dharma, which Buddhist method is most suitable for the root of most sentient beings? It can be said, it is only the Pure Land practice. Because it is very difficult to briefly practice other Dharma methods at the time when there is no present Buddha and in the secular world of five turbidities. By single-pointedly focusing on the Pure Land practice and relying on the power of the Buddha's great compassion, it will be much easier for practitioners to be reborn in the Pure Land of

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<sup>202</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Fofa zongpai dagai" 佛法宗派大概 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 573.

Ultimate Bliss, to encounter the Buddha, to listen to the Dharma, and to swiftly attain the Bodhi.<sup>203</sup>

Why did Master Hongyi assert that only the Pure Land method was the most suitable for all sentient beings? This is because:

If you practice meditation, *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, or secret tantra, etc., you must renounce worldly conditions and go to the mountains to practice in silence. The Pure Land method is different. Everyone can learn it, and one can learn it in any place. Intellectuals, farmers, craftsmen, and merchants can all practice the Pure Land method according to their conditions. In addition, in social affairs, public welfare, and all virtuous deeds, one should try one's best to accumulate merits, to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. Why should you abandon it!<sup>204</sup>

Therefore, if one wanted to practice the meditation of Chan, *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* of Tiantai, and even the secret tantra in Tibetan Buddhism, one needed to meet certain requirements, such as isolating oneself from worldly affairs and practicing in silence in the mountains. These external requirements would bring various inconveniences to practitioners in the choice of methods, making it difficult for the practice to continue for a long time. Therefore, such practices were not suitable for the entire Buddhist community. However, the Pure Land method did not require these conditions and could be suitable for practice in any place, at any time, and in any group. Compared with meditation, *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, or secret tantra, it was simpler and more convenient. Therefore, the Pure Land method of reciting the Buddha's name was

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<sup>203</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchifa” 佛教之簡易修持法, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 575.

<sup>204</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Jingzong wenbian” 淨宗問辯, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 306.

deemed the most suitable method for all living beings.

Although meditation of Chan and śamatha and vipaśyanā of Tiantai had certain restrictions regarding external conditions, the Faxiang Yogācāra (*faxiang weishi* 法相唯識) sect did not seem to have such restrictions. Moreover, the Republic of China was in the period of eastward expansion of Western learning, and Western philosophy, psychology, logic, etc. were also introduced one after another. The Faxiang Yogācāra theory has a more detailed explanation of Buddhist names (i.e., terms and concepts). Its explanation and analysis of mind is more detailed than that of Western psychology. In addition, most of the sutras and theories on which the Faxiang Yogācāra sect is based are related to Maitreya Bodhisattva. Those who practice Faxiang Yogācāra often hope to be reborn in Tuṣita Heaven, to encounter Maitreya, and to accompany Maitreya to be reborn in the world for its purification in future. From this point of view, the Faxiang Yogācāra practice was more suitable for the time than the Pure Land method, and it could also meet the spiritual needs of the followers. But in the view of Master Hongyi, it was not the same. As he said,

Maitreya Bodhisattva is a great manifestation of Dharmakāya, who is in any land and at any time. Maitreya is in the land of Tuṣita and is also in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss. Therefore, why practitioners of the Faxiang sect do not want to be born in the Western [Pure Land]? Besides, be born in the Western [Pure Land] and encounter Amitābha Buddha and numerous great Bodhisattvas, wouldn't it be even better?<sup>205</sup>

As can be seen above, in the view of Master Hongyi, the Western Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss already contains the Pure Land of Maitreya. That is to say, the Pure Land

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<sup>205</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Jingzong wenbian”, 1:306.

of Amitābha was more auspicious than the Pure Land of Maitreya. Maitreya's Pure Land could thus naturally be regarded as a part of the Western Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss. Therefore, when citing the "Ten Kinds of Hearts" (*shizhong xin* 十種心) in the *Mahā-ratnakūṭa-sūtra* (*Dabaoji jing* 大寶積經), he changed "born in the Buddha (referring to Maitreya) land" to "born in the Land of Ultimate Bliss." In addition, he also mentioned that the great master of kindness, Master Kuiji (窺基), wrote three volumes *Amituojing tongzan* (阿彌陀經通贊) and one volume of *Explanation* (*Shu* 疏), and generally urged all living beings to return to Pure Land practice, which indicates that the Faxiang Yogācāra sect also advocated the Pure Land sect and the superior quality of the Pure Land practice.

In addition, Master Hongyi also asserted that the Pure Land practice belongs to the "One Vehicle Perfect Teaching" (*yicheng yuanjiao* 一乘圓教). The so-called "One Vehicle" refers to the Vehicle of Buddhahood, which is opposite to the concept of "three vehicles." In Mahayana Buddhism, the teachings of Śrāvaka, Pratyekabuddha, and Bodhisattva are considered to be skillful means, not the original intention of the Buddha: only the One-Vehicle teaching reflects the true intention of the Buddha's teaching, and it is the true teaching of the Buddha. In short, the "One Vehicle" demonstrates the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching, and the "Perfect Teaching" means the teaching of perfection. It is a classification used by Chinese Buddhism to sort Indian classics according to their role and status in various sects. According to the teachings of Tiantai and Huayan, the Perfect Teaching refers to the teachings of ultimate perfection. That is to say, the classics in the Perfect Teaching are the most ultimate and the most complete. Therefore, they are given the highest status in Buddhism. Within the multitude of

Buddhist scriptures, what position should the Pure Land Method hold? In ancient times, there were not many evaluations made by patriarchs and great masters on this matter. In the view of Master Hongyi, the Pure Land sect should belong to the "One Vehicle Perfect Teaching," as he said,

Those who only practice the teachings of human and heaven, although it is easier to practice, the result is limited to human, and heaven and one cannot renounce from this realm. That's why today's great virtuous advisors (of Buddhism) are trying their best to promote the "Dharma Gate of Pure Land"... so that no matter what kind of method people follow, they can also practice this "Dharma Gate of Pure Land" to obtain the greatest benefits. "Dharma Gate of Pure Land" should belong to "One Vehicle Perfect Teaching." However, those of deep understanding see the deep meaning, and those of shallow understanding see the shallow meaning. Those who practice the teachings of human and heaven can also practice this method, the so-called "universally provided for sentient beings of the three roots."<sup>206</sup>

Hence, Master Hongyi asserted the Pure Land Sect to be "One Vehicle Perfect Teaching" because the Pure Land Sect was considered an otherworldly path. Due to the differences in understanding and roots of people, the depth of the meaning of Buddhist teachings that is revealed by the Pure Land method varies. Therefore, the Pure Land Sect could meet the needs of people of various levels, meaning that it was universally provided for all sentient beings of the three roots. Like *Lotus Sutra* and the *Flower Adornment Sutra*, it has an important role and status among the scriptures of Mahayana Perfect Teaching.

## 6.2.2 Characteristics of Master Hongyi's View on the Pure Land

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<sup>206</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "佛法初学步" Fofa chuxue bu, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 575.

## of Ultimate Bliss

In Master Hongyi's view, the Pure Land method, as a "One Vehicle Perfect Teaching," held the same important position as the Tiantai and Huayan sects. Since it was easy to practice and suitable for all sentient beings in the Degenerate Age of the Dharma, it was the most effective and safe way of practice in Buddhism. From Master Hongyi's writings and his practice (see the next section for Master Hongyi's Pure Land practice), what he advocated for was the Western Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss, and the practice method he adopted was recitation of the Buddha's name. As he states in the *Jingtu famen dayi* 淨土法門大意, "Those who practice the Pure Land method must recite the *Amitābha Sūtra* and always recite Amitābha Buddha's name."<sup>207</sup> To recite the Buddha's name is to orally recite Amitābha Buddha's name, which is the most common way for Pure Land practitioners.

Judging from the *Jingtu famen dayi* and *Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchifa* 佛教之簡易修持法, the Pure Land practice advocated by Master Hongyi mainly has three characteristics, namely: "deeply believing in the law of Cause and Effect", "developing bodhicitta," and "focusing on the Pure Land practice."<sup>208</sup>

### 6.2.2.a Deeply Believing in the Law of Cause and Effect

As a religion, Buddhism not only has very profound philosophy, but also has very significant religious characteristics. Most of the philosophies revealed by Buddhism

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<sup>207</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Jingfu famen dayi" 淨土法門大意, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 304.

<sup>208</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchifa", 7:575.

are the knowledge of wisdom related to life. The purpose of practicing Buddhism is nothing more than to obtain the supreme wisdom taught by the Buddha, to break free from samsara, and to achieve liberation from cyclic existence. The cornerstone and core of Buddhist teachings is the theory of Dependent Origination. "The fundamental spirit of Buddhism is based on the theory of Dependent Origination. In other words, all other theories of Buddhism are the development of Dependent Origination. Dependent Origination is also what differentiates Buddhism from other schools of thought. It is fundamentally opposed to the theories of noncausality, contingency, and monocausality (transformation of God and oneself) that were popular in India at that time."<sup>209</sup> The concept of Dependent Origination is: "There is because that there is; this arises because that arises; there is not because that there is not; this ceases because that ceases." It reveals that all things and phenomena in the world are interdependent and conditional to each other. There is always a cause-result relationship between this and that. Thus, the law of Dependent Origination is actually the law of Cause and Effect. However, in the theoretical system of Buddhism, the law of karma and the law of Cause and Effect are formed based on the law of Dependent Origination. The law of karma talks about the result of contrived behaviors, and it emphasizes the force of the behavior, while the law of Cause and Effect underlines the causal relationship between behavior and result from the perspective of results. This cause-result relationship can connect the past, present, and future in time; in space, it can connect the six realms mentioned in Buddhism, such as the human realm, heaven realm and hell realm. It remains in effect for various forms of life. Therefore, the Buddhist law of Cause and Effect is universal and can be used to explain

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<sup>209</sup> Fang Litian, *Fojiao zhixue* 佛教哲学 (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin chubanshe, 2012), 151.



reincarnation and liberation. For example, Master Hongyi said in the *Foshuo bada renjue jing shiyao* 佛說八大人覺經釋要:

Karma is generated from mental affliction and the fruit is attained because of karma. The body and mind of five skandhas that experience the result is wrongly considered as "me." And "I" still create karma from the three poisons of greed, hatred, ignorance, and receive the result of karma. In this way, in numerous lifetimes, the cycle continues endlessly.<sup>210</sup>

The reason why there is a cycle of life after life stems from the lack of understanding of the law of cause and effect and the relationship between the three poisons (greed, hatred, and delusion), behaviors, and the consequences. Therefore, for Buddhist practitioners, establishing a firm and deep faith in karma is the foundation of all religious practices. Although Master Hongyi is well-known for his study of Vinaya, according to his manuscripts, he also placed great importance in the law of cause and effect in Buddhism. In his "Yaoshijing xiyi" 藥師經析疑 (Analysis of Doubts about *Medicine Buddha Sutra*, he also gives a detailed explanation of the law of cause and effect, as stated in the text:

In the principle of Buddhism, if there is no cause and condition, there is no effect. The cause is the seeds. Conditions can be divided into two: one is the condition of past karma, and the other is the present condition.<sup>211</sup>

The above is the understanding of the Buddhist law of cause and effect at the theoretical level. Master Hongyi believed that the law of cause and effect was the

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<sup>210</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Foshuo bada renjuejing shiyao" 佛說八大人覺經釋要, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 329.

<sup>211</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Yaoshijing xiyi" 藥師經析疑, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 323.

principle of Buddhism, and he thus affirmed the critical position of the law of cause and effect in Buddhism. At the same time, he also explained the inevitable relationship between cause and effect and explained both cause and condition. Not only that, Master Hongyi also analyzed the practical significance and function of the law of cause and effect in combination with actual situations. As he said in the article "Lüeshu Yingguang dashi zhi shengde" 略述印光大師之盛德 (A Brief Description of the Virtue of Master Yinguang):

The law of cause and effect is the urgent task of saving the nation and people. It is necessary to let everyone know that such a cause at present will lead to such an effect in the future. Good causes will be rewarded with good, and evil causes will attain evil. It must start from this to save the hearts and minds of people in this world.<sup>212</sup>

The law of cause and effect is not only a theory but could be practically used in reality. Because only by understanding the law of cause and effect in Buddhism will one understand the relationship between actions and results and the source of good and evil. If everyone in the world understood the law of cause and effect, then the whole of society would be able to cut off evil deeds at the source and eliminate the consequences of evil. The law of cause and effect could save the hearts and minds of the world, and thus it was the urgent task of saving the nation and the people: that's why Master Hongyi made the appeal, "Although the law of cause and effect is at the beginning level of Buddhism, it is very important, and everyone needs to believe it firmly."<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Lüeshu Yinguang Dashi zhi shengde" 略述印光大師之盛德, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 579.

<sup>213</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchifa", 7:575.

Looking at the characteristics of Master Hongyi's Pure Land thought, he established a firm belief in the cause and effect of Buddhism as the premise of Pure Land practice. He used Master Yinguang as an example to persuade learners of the Pure Land method to build a solid belief in the law of cause and effect. He writes, "Contemporary Master Yinguang taught those who wished to be reborn in the Western (Pure Land) by reciting the Buddha's name that they must first firmly believe in karma and retribution. Do not do anything that is evil and do all things that are good. Then he says, 'With the power of the Buddha's kindness, you will be reborn (in the Pure Land) with karma.'"<sup>214</sup> The belief in the law of cause and effect was not only a prerequisite for practicing the Pure Land method, but also a condition for rebirth in the Pure Land with karma.

### 6.2.2.b Generate Bodhicitta

Guiding practitioners to develop the Bodhicitta mind can often be seen in Master Hongyi's collections of works, especially when describing the content related to the Pure Land practice; words like "Bodhicitta" are mentioned more often. As he says in the *Jingtu famen dayi* 淨土法門大意 (*Brief Meaning of Pure Land Dharma Gate*),

Those practitioners of the Pure Land sect must first generate great Bodhicitta. It is said in the Sukhāvātī-vyūhaḥ-sūtra that those three generations who are reborn in the Pure Land must all generate the ultimate Bodhicitta. The Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra also says that those who wish to be born in the that land should generate Bodhicitta.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Puquan jingzong daolu chisong dizangjing" 普劝净宗道侣持诵'地藏经', in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 575.

<sup>215</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Jingtu famen dayi" 淨土法門大意, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 305.

Again, as stated in *Fofa dayi* 佛法大意 (*Brief Meaning of the Dharma*):

Those who concentrate on the Pure Land sect should first generate the great Bodhicitta. Otherwise, others would say that Buddhism is passive, pessimistic, and seeking death. If Buddhist practitioners generate this mind, others will have no such misunderstanding.<sup>216</sup>

“Generating Bodhicitta” is another main feature of Master Hongyi's view on the Pure Land practice.

So, what is Bodhicitta? Why do we want to generate bodhicitta?

*Bodhicitta* is Sanskrit and it is *anuttara-samyak-sambodhicitta*, also known as the supreme Bodhicitta, the supreme Path, that is, the mind of seeking the supreme Bodhi. Bodhi has the meaning of wisdom, so Bodhicitta can be regarded as the seed of all Buddhas, and it is a good field for the cultivation of Dharma for the long term. Those who cultivate the Path, if they generate this Bodhicitta and practice diligently, should quickly attain the supreme Bodhi. Therefore, generating Bodhicitta can be understood as a mind seeking for supreme wisdom, a mind yearning for liberation and becoming a Buddha. The purpose of practicing the Pure Land method is nothing more than making a wish to be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss, eventually becoming a Buddha, and attaining supreme wisdom and liberation. Therefore, Master Hongyi advocates that those who want to practice the Pure Land method must first generate Bodhicitta.

Bodhicitta expresses not only the desire of the one who made the mind, but also the desire to benefit all other sentient beings. As stated in *Fofa dayi* 佛法大意:

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<sup>216</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Fofa dayi” 佛法大意, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 569.

The great Bodhicitta is the essence of Buddhism. Bodhicitta is the mind of benefiting sentient beings. Therefore, those who believe in the Buddhadharma must always have a positive mind of great compassion, make a great vow to relieve all sentient beings, and strive to do various charitable services that benefit all sentient beings.<sup>217</sup>

Also, as it states in *Jingtu famen dayi* 淨土法門大意,

Those who practice the Pure Land sect should always endure suffering for the sake of all sentient beings. [They should] vow to bear all sentient beings' sufferings on their shoulders and suffer on their behalf.<sup>218</sup>

Bodhicitta is the supreme path, the mind of becoming a Buddha, and no difference exists between Bodhicitta and the mind of Buddha. Bodhicitta should have all of the characteristics of the Buddha, including the Buddha's compassion and altruism. Therefore, Venerable Hongyi said that practitioners of the Pure Land should have the will to suffer for the sake of all sentient beings and regard the suffering of all sentient beings as their own. Only in this way can they give rise to a mind of compassion and a great wish to benefit all sentient beings and generate all kinds of benefits for all sentient beings. In this way, I should “not have a single thought of regret, a thought of cowardice, and a thought of disgust. I should be very joyful to take on this cause of benefiting all beings with one body.”<sup>219</sup>

In *Jingzong wenbian* 淨宗問辨, Master Hongyi explained the ten types of Bodhicitta in detail, which are as follows:

Bodhisattvas develop ten types of minds:

First, for all sentient beings, Bodhisattvas generate the great mind

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<sup>217</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Fofa dayi”, 7:569.

<sup>218</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Jingtu famen dayi”, 1:305.

<sup>219</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Jingtu famen dayi”, 1:305.

of loving-kindness without any thought of harming.

Second, for all sentient beings, Bodhisattvas generate great compassion without forcing or anger.

Third, in the Buddha's righteous Dharma, Bodhisattvas will not hesitate to sacrifice their lives and develop the mind of willing to protect.

Fourth, in all phenomena, Bodhisattvas give rise to ultimate patience without any thought of attachment.

Fifth, Bodhisattvas are not greedy for profit, sincerely respect [others], and generate the pure and blissful mind.

Sixth, they seek the seeds of Buddha's wisdom without any thought of forgetting or always losing.

Seventh, to all sentient beings, they sincerely respect, without discrimination.

Eighth, they do not attach to worldly comments. Based on the factors of enlightenment, they give rise to a determined mind.

Ninth, they plant all good roots without defilements, and have a pure mind.

Tenth, in the presence of all Tathagatas, they let go of all appearances, and give rise to the mind of reciting by following [the Buddha].

A person who generates any one of these ten types of mind and desires to be reborn in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss, it does not make sense if he cannot be reborn in Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss.<sup>220</sup>

Meanwhile, he mentions in *Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchifa* 佛教之簡易修持法:

Those who generate Bodhicitta should have the following three types of minds: 1). The mind of great wisdom, which is not attached to the appearance of self. Although this mind is beyond what a normal person can have, it can be observed according to the factors; 2). The mind of great aspiration for widely practicing virtuous deeds; 3). The mind of great compassion, to save all beings from suffering.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Jingzong wenbian", 1:306.

<sup>221</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchifa", 7:575.

Master Hongyi divided his view on Bodhicitta into two aspects. On the one hand, there are ten types of great minds that are expressed in the way of explanation and interpretation, to warn the Pure Land practitioners in such situations. They are the great mind of kindness without harm, the great mind of compassion without forcing, the mind of willing to protect, the mind of nonattachment, the mind of purity and bliss, the mind without forgetfulness, the mind of non-discrimination, the mind of determination, the mind of purity, and the mind of reciting by following the Buddha. On the other hand, he used the terms of the three types of minds to explain the process of cultivating the Path, include the mind of great wisdom, the mind of great aspiration, and the mind of great compassion. If these two aspects are of one mind, this mind is Bodhicitta. By generating such minds, one can surely be reborn in the Pure Land. Therefore, to learn the Pure Land practice, one must develop Bodhicitta, that is, “generating genuine Bodhicitta for life and death, and to hold the Buddha's name with deep faith.”<sup>222</sup>

### **6.2.2.c Solely Focusing on Pure Land**

Judging from the characteristics of Master Hongyi's Pure Land view, believing in the law of cause and effect and generating Bodhicitta are the foundation and premise of practicing the Pure Land sect, and the practice of the Pure Land sect lies in solely focusing on the practice. So, what is “solely focusing on the practice the pure land” according to Master Hongyi? In this regard, the answer can be found in the article

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<sup>222</sup> “Chewu chanshi yulu” 徹悟禪師語錄, chapter 1, in *Continuation of Taisho Tripitaka*, vol. 62 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban youxian gongsi, 1994), 333.

"Lüeshu Yinguang dashi zhi shengde" 略述印光大師之盛德. As the text says:

Although Master (Yinguang) was proficient in all kinds of Buddhist teachings, but when he tried to persuade people, he exclusively recommended to solely focus on the practice of reciting Buddha's name. Most of his lay disciples were those who received higher education and studied in Europe and the United States. However, Master never discussed the philosophy of Buddhism with them. He only advised them to concentrate on reciting the Buddha's name.<sup>223</sup>

From the above, the "solely focusing on the Pure Land practice" advocated by Master Hongyi was to single-mindedly recite the Buddha's name.

Master Hongyi himself “upheld Huayan for the state of mind, upholds the *Four-Division Vinaya* for practice, and sees Pure Land as the result.” His Buddhist knowledge structure was very extensive, so why did he emphasize the Pure Land practice when he persuaded others to learn Buddhism? First, the practice of reciting Buddha's name in the Pure Land sect was the most suitable for the needs of all beings and the time because the beings lived in the defiled world of the five turbidities: only by relying on the great compassion of Buddha could they be reborn in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss. Among the many Buddhist practices, the Pure Land method was the easiest, so one should concentrate on it. Secondly, to practice the Pure Land method of reciting the Buddha's name was the supreme and easy way to get rid of self-attachment. As he wrote to lay Buddhist Deng Hanxiang (鄧寒香):

Master Ouyi also said, “Since beginningless time, people believed in the false existence of self, but how can one have a self? Maybe one does not have a sudden enlightenment, and one does not need to make any effort

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<sup>223</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Lüeshu Yinguang Dashi zhi shengde” 略述印光大師之盛德, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 579.



to seek enlightenment. But one can focus on upholding pure precepts, seeking rebirth in the Pure Land with deep belief and diligent effort, one will be awakened to the body of no self. When one realizes no self, one will see the Buddha and will become a Buddha.” He also said, “If one cannot truly believe in it, one does not have to be suspicious, and one does not have to take it wrong. By only believing in keeping the precepts and reciting the Buddha's name, one will naturally and eventually believe in it.” From this point of view, practitioners who focus on purifying karma do not necessarily act as those in the Chan sect. Those who follow Chan solely rely on themselves to eliminate attachment. If you recite the Buddha's name wholeheartedly and attain samadhi, the self-attachment will be eliminated naturally. Compared with those in the Chan sect, who rely solely on their own strength to transcend beyond the three realms, the difference in difficulty is even greater than what is between the sky and abyss.<sup>224</sup>

According to the above quotation, Master Hongyi believed that the method of "holding the name and reciting the Buddha" in the Pure Land sect was the supreme and easy way to get rid of self-attachment, and there was no need to study it because of doubts. In this way, Hongyi's interests are clearly revealed, including returning to primarily practice the Pure Land method, leaving the Chan method and returning to the Pure Land practice, and practicing both Vinaya and Pure Land methods.

Master Hongyi also analyzed another reason for specializing in the Pure Land method based on the actual situation in the Jiangsu and Zhejiang areas. “Specializing in the Pure Land method” indicated the possibility of not solely focusing on the Pure Land method but practicing other methods simultaneously. For example, people engaged in a special method of reciting Buddha's name in the Jiangsu and Zhejiang areas. It was divided into two kinds: long-term and temporary.

Those who recited the Buddha's name over a long term, set up an altar for tablets for the benefit of prolonging living ones' life span or on

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<sup>224</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Zhi Denghanxiang” 致邓寒香 in Hongyi Dashi quanji 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 362.

behalf of the deceased. Several or even dozens of monastics resided in the hall and performed the ritual of reciting the Buddha's name several times a day. Those temporary practitioners host the ritual of reciting the Buddha's name for one or several days, for the benefit of prolonging living ones' life, protecting from illness, or accumulating merits for the deceased. This is a transformed form of water-land sutra recitation and repentance ritual (*shuilu jingchan* 水陸經懺.)<sup>225</sup>

The “long-term practice of reciting the Buddha's name” here is the life extension and dedication service at the temple's shrine, while the “temporary practice of reciting the Buddha's name” is an ordinary Buddhist repentance ritual. These two methods of reciting Buddha's name both rely on the donation of benefactors, which is related to Buddhist repentance rituals to a certain extent. Therefore, Master Hongyi believed that the long-term practice of reciting the Buddha's name was easy to practice. The scale could be large or small, encouragement and support are especially valuable. However, the temporary practice developed from water-land sutra recitation and repentance ritual and yoga flaming-mouth summoning ritual (*yuqie yankou*, 瑜伽焰口), so it was difficult to conduct. There was a difference between this kind of recitation practice and the practice advocated by the Pure Land sect, so Master Hongyi quoted Master Yinguang's notes and said:

During seven weeks after death, always and in all matters, it is advisable to primarily recite the Buddha's name. Then a period of mourning does not exist. Given the laziness of today's monastics, many of them cannot perform sutra chanting. If they chant [the Buddha's name], they chant very fast like flowing water. If they can chant, they are not skilled, so cannot be followed. Among dozens of monastics, only a few recite. By only reciting the Buddha's name, one generates Bodhicitta, there is absolutely no disadvantage as reasons not to recite. And even if one refuses to recite, one recitation of Buddha's name can be heard through the ears to the heart, and this is of great benefit to oneself. ...As for Buddhist rituals, it is not

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<sup>225</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Wanshouyan nianfotang kaitang yanci” 万寿岩念佛堂开堂演词 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 560.

necessary to organize the water-land ritual for sutra chanting or repentance because all these can be seen as making a scene. It is more beneficial to focus on reciting the Buddha's name. ...That is, a monk single-mindedly recites the Buddha's name and will benefit from everything he sees and hears.<sup>226</sup>

Regarding the Buddhist practice of repentance, Master Hongyi believed that “inconceivable merits can be obtained from reciting the scriptures, worshipping and repentance, yoga flaming-mouth summoning ritual, water-land ritual, etc.. However, nowadays, the Sangha often views the texts as mere formalities, going through the motions, unable to adhere to the Dharma, and seldom acting with genuine intention.”<sup>227</sup> Thus, Master Hongyi believed the merits and virtues of those Buddhist rituals in a religious sense. But due to the attitude of current implementers, he expressed a discouraging attitude towards such rituals for the purpose of protecting from illness and accumulating merits for the deceased. It was easier and more beneficial to recite the Buddha's name than to conduct rituals of sutra chanting and repentance. Thus, he advocated that the recitation practice should be separated from those rituals and advised to replace the rituals with reciting the Buddha's name. This also reflects that he specialized in the Pure Land method.

In light of the above, how should one specialize in the Pure Land? Judging from Master Hongyi's manuscripts, he advocated focusing on the Pure Land. In fact, he encouraged others to understand the philosophy of Buddhism while focusing on the Pure Land practice. As he said in *Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchifa* 佛教之簡易修持法,

Books about the Pure Land sect should be read first, *Chuji jingye*

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<sup>226</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Wanshouyan nianfotang”, 7:560.

<sup>227</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Rensheng zhi zuihou” 人生之最後, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 189.

*zhinan* 初機淨業指南, *Yinguang fashi jiayan lu* 印光法師嘉言錄, *Yinguang fashi wenchao* 印光法師文鈔, etc. These books may help you to find the path of the Pure Land practice.<sup>228</sup>

Hence, focusing on the Pure Land practice also needed to be supported by corresponding knowledge and understanding. Although the practice of reciting Buddha's name in the Pure Land sect was an easy path, it was not easy to achieve a state of undisturbed single-mindedness, especially for beginners. In this regard, Master Hongyi also provided a detailed method for beginners. As Feng Zikai said in *Fawei* (法味),

For beginners, it is best to chant the Buddha's name every day. At first, you do not need a long time to do it, half an hour or an hour is fine. Just focus on your mind, do not let your mind wander among other things, you must practice mindful recitation of Buddha's name. You can ponder silently. Take every five sentences as a unit. If you recite five sentences, your mind comes to an end, or count a rosary bead. In this case, the mind will be too busy for other matters, and can concentrate on reciting Buddha's name.<sup>229</sup>

Master Hongyi's suggestion of focusing on the Pure Land method not only conformed to the requirements of the time, but also suited all living beings and could also improve the ethos of Buddhism. And he also gave the method of reciting Buddha's name for beginners, which effectively helped beginners to familiarize themselves with the form and process of the reciting practice, so as to achieve the goal of chanting Buddha's name single-mindedly and solely practicing the Pure Land method.

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<sup>228</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchifa”, 7:575.

<sup>229</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Feng Zikai: Fawei” 丰子恺: 法味 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 169.

### 6.2.3 Supplements to Pure Land Sect by Other Sects

Although Venerable Hongyi recommended focusing on the Pure Land practice, he did not have any objection to other practices related to the Pure Land sect. Instead, he encouraged everyone to use other related practices as supplements to the Pure Land practices while cultivating the Buddhist practice. The Pure Land supplementary method mentioned here mainly refers to the *Dizang famen* 地藏法門 (Kṣitigarbha method) and *Puxian famen* 普賢法門 (Samantabhadra method).

#### 6.2.3.a *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows and the Pure Land Practice*

The Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva practice mainly refers to the practice based on the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows* that embodies the great vows of Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva and describes the law of karma in Buddhism. In addition, the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows* can also be used for the practice of repentance to eliminate karmic obstacles and purify the body and mind. Thus, characteristics of the Kṣitigarbha method are completely and primarily aligned to Master Hongyi's understanding of the Pure Land practice. Therefore, the Kṣitigarbha method in Master Hongyi's practice system is incorporated into the Pure Land method as a supplement to the Pure Land practice. And he further called on Pure Land practitioners to also practice the Kṣitigarbha method and recite the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows*, as he said in "Puquan jingzong daolü chisong Dizang jing" 普勸淨宗道侶持誦<地藏經>:

The practice of the Pure Land companions is firmly based on the three classics of the Pure Land sect. Besides, it is advisable to recite the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows* as a supplement. Because Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva has great karmic connection with all living beings

on the earth. And the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows* is especially in line with the root and features of ordinary people like us.<sup>230</sup>

From the above, Master Hongyi believed that the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows* had a relationship with sentient beings on earth and could address the roots and features of all living beings. In addition to the three classics of the Pure Land sect, the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows* could be used as a beneficial supplement to practice in the Pure Land sect. He also gave an explanation in the below text:

If a disciple of the Buddha wants to cultivate the righteous Dharma that is beyond the world, wants to be free from obstacles and conditions, if he wants to annihilate the five adversities and ten evil deeds... Those who want to achieve the status of the three vehicles, if he wants to be reborn in the Buddha's land of Pure Bliss at will, want to become enlightened by entering the ultimately state of *anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti*, he should all practice this method of repentance. Why? This is Sakyamuni Buddha's exceptionally vast compassion and kindness and Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva's skillful means due to his compassionate vows.<sup>231</sup>

Praising Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva in this way can be used as a method of repentance. Through the great compassion and great vows of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, one's karmic obstacles accumulated over the years can be eliminated. Even heinous karma such as the five adversities and the ten evil deeds can be dispelled, so practitioners can obtain pure bodies and minds and have the resources and merits to practice the righteous Dharma. Therefore, praising Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva and reciting the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows* are the foundation of all Buddhist practices. For Pure

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<sup>230</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Puquan jingzong daolu chisong dizangjing” 普劝净宗道侣持诵‘地藏经’, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 577.

<sup>231</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Dizang pusa shengde daguan” 地藏菩萨盛德大观, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 339.

Land practitioners, "if you want to be reborn in the Buddha's Land of Pure Bliss at will," you must also practice the Ksitigarbha method.

In addition, descriptions of the Pure Land practice can be found in Ksitigarbha scriptures. For example, in the *Sutra of the Ten Wheels of Kṣitigarbha* (*Dizang shilun jing*, 地藏十輪經), it says, "You should be born in a Buddha's Pure Land, where your teacher resides. It also says, you should be born in a Buddha's Pure Land and stay away from all evil deeds. It also says, you will soon live in a Buddha's Pure Land and attain the unsurpassed righteous Bodhi. It also says, quickly go to the Buddha's Pure Land and attain great Bodhi."<sup>232</sup> In the Kṣitigarbha Sūtras, there are many descriptions related to the Pure Land, portraying rebirth in the Pure Land as the goal of practice. In the *Sutra of Divination and Observation of Wholesome and Evil Retribution* (*Zhancha shan'e yebao jing*, 占察善惡業報經), it states more clearly that the way to be reborn in a Buddha's Pure Land is to recite the Buddha's name exclusively, as stated below, for example:

If a person wants to be reborn in a Buddha's Pure Land, he should follow the name of the Buddha of that world and recite it single-mindedly without disturbance. By observing as mentioned above, if one decides to be reborn in that Buddha's Pure Land, the roots of virtue will grow and will swiftly attain the irreversible state.<sup>233</sup>

Therefore, the Ksitigarbha method's goal of practice is also to be reborn in the Pure Land. This practice method is consistent with the reciting practice advocated by the Pure Land sect. Therefore, the Ksitigarbha method can be regarded as a part or supplement of the Pure Land practice.

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<sup>232</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Dizang pusa", 1:345.

<sup>233</sup> "Zhan Cha shan'e yebaojing" 占察善惡業報經, chapter 2, in *Taisho*, vol. 17 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 908.

### 6.2.3.b The Pure Land Sect and the *Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*

As a supplement and assistance to the Pure Land practice, in addition to reciting the *Sutra of Kṣitigarbha's Fundamental Vows*, one can also recite the Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra (*Puxian xingyuan pin* 普賢行願品). To practice the Pure Land method, one needs to learn the spirit of Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva to make great vows. At the same time, it is necessary to learn the spirit of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's great practice and turn the power of vows into practice to play a practical role and benefit all sentient beings. Therefore, the Samantabhadra method, reciting the Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, can also be used as a supplement to the Pure Land practice, and is worth propagating. As Master Hongyi mentioned in the "Jingtu famen dayi" (淨土法門大意), the first step to practice in the Pure Land sect was to generate Bodhicitta, and the second was to recite the Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, in addition to engaging in charitable causes.

As for reading and reciting the Mahayana [scriptures], it is also stated in *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra* (*Foshuo guanwuliangshou fojing* 佛說觀無量壽佛經). Those who practice the Pure Land method should certainly recite the *Amitabha Sutra* and always recite the Buddha's name. However, one can also read and recite the Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra and wish for rebirth [in the Pure Land]. It says in the *Flower Adornment Sutra* that those who recite the vows of Samantabhadra can obtain various benefits. When they are about to die, the vows will not leave them, but guide them to be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss and even the enlightened state of Buddha. Therefore, it is most suitable for those who practice the Pure Land method to frequently recite the Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva



Samantabhadra.<sup>234</sup>

In the view of Master Hongyi, the cultivation method of the Pure Land included reciting the scriptures in addition to reciting the Buddha's name. However, the classics to recite were not limited to the “three classics and one commentary”<sup>235</sup> of the Pure Land sect but rather, included a wider selection. He believed that the *Amitabha Sutra* was a must-read classic and the *Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* should also be recited, for which he gave reasons. First, reciting the *Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* was a Pure Land method was not the personal preference of Master Hongyi, but was based on scriptures, as stated in *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra*:

The third is to generate Bodhicitta, deeply believe in the law of cause and effect, read and recite the Mahayana [scriptures], and persuade others to follow. These three things are named as pure actions.<sup>236</sup>

Also,

Again, there are three kinds of sentient beings that could be reborn [in the Pure Land]. Who are they? The first group are those who are compassionate, practice ahimsa and keep all precepts. The second kind are those who read and recite the Mahayana Vaipulya sutras.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Jingtu famen dayi”, 1:305.

<sup>235</sup> Three classics and one commentary: *Foshuo wuliangshou jing*, *Sukhāvātī-vyūhah-sūtra* 佛說無量壽經, *Foshuo guan wuliangshou jing*, *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra* 佛說觀無量壽經, *Foshuo amituo jing*, *Amitābha sutra* 佛說阿彌陀經, *Wangsheng lun*, 往生論.

<sup>236</sup> “Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra, *Foshuo guan wuliangshou jing*” 佛說觀無量壽經, chapter 1, in *Taisho*, vol. 12 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 341.

<sup>237</sup> “Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra, *Foshuo guan wuliangshou jing*” 佛說觀無量壽經, chapter 1, in *Taisho*, vol. 12 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 344.

Combining with Master Hongyi's view and practice, "upholding Huayan for the state of mind, upholding the *Four-Division Vinaya* for practice, and seeing Pure Land as the result," he believed that the *Flower Adornment Sutra* was the most victorious among Mahayana classics, and that the *Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* embodied the main theme of the *Flower Adornment Sutra* and was the essence of the *Flower Adornment Sutra*. In his view, the first choice among the Mahayana scriptures was the *Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*. Secondly, from the point of view of the merits and benefits of reciting sutras, the practice of the *Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* could also guide Pure Land practitioners to the Land of Ultimate Bliss and even attain the enlightenment of Buddha. This does not differ from the expectations of the practitioners of the Pure Land method or from the goal of reciting other Pure Land classics. Therefore, in the view of Master Hongyi, the *Chapter on Practices and Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* could be regarded as a Pure Land classic in a broad sense; at the least, it could be used as a supplement to the Pure Land classics and was worth propagating.

### **6.3 Master Hongyi's Practice of Recitation of Buddha's Name and View on Hospice Care**

Master Hongyi placed great importance on the Buddhist chanting method of the Pure Land sect. He repeatedly advised people to learn the Pure Land method, so that people could recite the Buddha's name single-mindedly. He believed that "Recitation of

Buddha's name was the beginning of learning Buddhism, the way to generate confidence (in Buddhism), the measures to increase wisdom, and home for the attainment of liberation.”<sup>238</sup> Over the twenty years Master Hongyi was a monk, in addition to the study and promotion of the Vinaya school, he also committed himself to the promotion of the recitation of Buddha's name of the Pure Land school and set an example of such practice. From the beginning of his Buddhist practice till the time of death, Master Hongyi constantly engaged in the recitation of Buddha's name. Based on the concept of the Pure Land school and the function of recitation of the Buddha's name, he established a concept of hospice care, so that the function of recitation of the Buddha's name in the Pure Land was further expanded from the wish for rebirth in the Buddha's Land of Ultimate Bliss to the care for life, adding tangible value to the Pure Land practice. This chapter mainly discusses Master Hongyi's practice of reciting the Buddha's name and his philosophy of hospice care.

### **6.3.1 Master Hongyi's Practice of the Recitation of Buddha's**

#### **Name**

Judging from the actual practice of Master Hongyi, his earliest practice of reciting Buddha's name began during his fasting period at Hupao Temple. For example, as he said in his *Fasting Diary* (*Duanshi rizhi*, 斷食日誌), during that time, either in the afternoon or in the evening, he “serves monastics in the practice of reciting the Buddha's name while meditating for one hour.” Master Hongyi had the experience of recitation of

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<sup>238</sup> Huang Xianian 黄夏年, “Hongyi Fashi yu nianfo famen” 弘一法师与念佛法门, in *Hongyi Dashi renye yu sixiang lunwenji* 弘一大师人格与思想论文集, ed. Hou Qiudong 侯秋冬 (Taipei: Hongyi dashi jinian xuehui, 2008), 23.

Buddha's name during his fasting at Hupao Temple. From then on until he became a monk, and even when he passed away, Master Hongyi never stopped chanting Buddha's name in his daily life. Mr. Huang Xianian (黃夏年) listed 22 records of Master Hongyi's recitation practice according Mr. Lin Ziqing's (林子青) "Chronology of Master Hongyi" (*Hongyi fashi nianpu*, 弘一法師年譜), which are excerpted as follows:

In 1919, [he] persuaded his old friend Yuan Xilian (袁希濂) to recite Buddha's name for the little yellow dog who is deathly ill in bed and released it from suffering according to the Dharma;

In 1920, in Beishan (貝山), Xincheng (新城), [he] engaged in a retreat to recite and transcribe Buddha's name; Master Yinguang (印光) wrote to him and advised him to "rest the mind and concentrate on the recitation of Buddha's name;"

In 1921, [he] instructed the female disciple Zhu Xianying (朱賢英) on the recitation of Buddha's name;

In 1922, [he] endured suffering from dysentery, he requested monks to recite Buddha's name when he is dying, but he eventually recovered from the disease;

In 1923, [he] vowed to close the door for a retreat to realize the Samadhi of the reciting practice, and requested Master Yinguang to give him final instructions;

In 1924, [he] transcribed a thousand pieces of paper with Buddha's name in Shaoxing City (紹興), and distributed them to virtuous friends;

In 1925, [he] replied to Deng Hanxiang's (鄧寒香)'s letter, encouraging him: "If you recite the Buddha's name wholeheartedly, protect and attain Samadhi, the attachment to self is eliminated;"

In 1926, the handwritten Buddha's name with inscription was given to Japanese lay Buddhist Takeuchi (竹內);

In 1927, [he] met with Master Yinguang;

In 1928, [he] wrote to Cai Mianyin (蔡丐因) and commented on Wangsheng lunzhu (往生論注) ... cited layman Yang Renshan (楊仁山)

that Pure Land practitioners must study the “Three Classics and One Commentary,” and Master Luan’s note was extremely exquisite and wonderful.

In 1929, [he] wrote praises of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, “doing the best practice of repentance, wishing to be born in the Land of Ultimate Bliss, and attaining supreme Bodhi soon;”

In 1931, [he] took the famous sayings of *Lingfeng zonglun* (靈峰宗論) and compiled them into *Hanjia ji* (寒笈集); also helped both monastic and lay practitioners recite the Buddha's name upon their death, including Chan Master Yuanzhao (圓照); and invented the practice of reciting the Buddha’s name by following the sound of a bell;

In 1932, [he] lectured on “The Final Stage of Life” (*Rensheng zhi zuihou*, 人生之最後) at the Buddha’s name recitation association of Miaoshi Temple (妙釋寺), summarizing ancient virtuous masters’ words, and persuading the assembly to practice reciting the Buddha’s name;

In 1933, at the Miaoshi Temple, [he] gave a lecture on “Gaiguo shiyan tan” (改過實驗談) for the Buddha's name recitation association;

In 1934, he arrived at Wanshouyan (萬壽岩) to attend the opening ceremony of the Recitation Hall, and lectured the assembly for three days;

In 1935, at Wanshouyan School, he read *Amituojing yishu* (阿彌陀經義疏) written by the Vinaya master Lingzhi Yuanzhao (靈芝元照), which was requested from Japan at the end of the Qing dynasty; and gave a lecture on "Jingzong wenbian" (淨宗問辨);

In 1937, [he] lectured at the *Riguangyan nianfohui* 日光岩念佛會, excerpting several parts of the "Virtuous Words of Master Yinguang" (*Yinguang fashi jiayan lu*, 印光法師嘉言錄); and wrote to the *Gulangyu nianfohui* 鼓浪嶼念佛會, said that "the one who has the deepest belief in Buddhism, is only the Pure Land sect; the one whom I admire the most among the virtuous masters of the current time is only Master Yinguang"; [he] moved to Nanputuo (南普陀) and transcribed the *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra*; lectured on "Introduction to Pure Land Buddhism" for Buddhist monks in the Buddhist College of Minnan (*Minnan foxueyuan* 閩南佛學院);

In 1939, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the monk's ordination, [he] gave lectures on the *Amitabha Sutra* at *Zunyuan jinglou* 尊元經樓 in Zhangzhou (漳州), dedicating the merits to all sentient beings for

the attainment of Bodhi together;

In 1940, [he] lectured on “Simple Practices of Buddhism” (*Fojiao zhi jianyi xiuchi fa*, 佛教之簡易修持法) in Quanzhou;

In 1941, in Yongchun City 永春, [he] lectured on “The Essence of Chanting *Ksitigarbha Sutra* for Pure Land Practitioners” (*Jingzong daoli jian chisong dizangjing yaozhi*, 淨宗道侶兼持誦地藏經要旨);

In 1942, [he] lectured on “A Brief Description of the Virtues of Master Yinguang” (*Lüeshu Yinguang dashi zhi shengde*, 略述印光大師之盛德) at Fulin Temple (福林寺) during the time of recitation practice; at Dakaiyuan Temple (大開元寺) in Quanzhou, he wrote "Recite the Buddha's name without forgetting to save the nation. Recite the Buddha's name to save the nation;"

In 1942, four days before his death, [he] silently recited the Buddha's name alone; in accordance with his will, the assembly recited the Buddha's name for his rebirth in the West.<sup>239</sup>

The above are the various records of Master Hongyi and his Pure Land practice.

Though incomplete, they are enough to prove that Master Hongyi engaged in the Pure Land recitation practice since he became a monk, without ceasing. This also reflects the close relationship between him and the Pure Land sect practice. It also indicates the important place of the Pure Land practice in his Buddhist cultivation. In addition, many records in the letters of Master Hongyi revealed his practice of the Pure Land recitation or his efforts at persuading other to recite the Buddha's name. The excerpts are as follows:

To layman Yang Baimin (楊白民) in the fourth month of 1920:

You will soon enter the Xincheng Mountain for a retreat and single-mindedly concentrate on reciting the Buddha's name... Therefore, you should plan to decline secular affairs and single-mindedly pursue to be reborn in the Western [Pure Land]. When returning to the secular world, you will be in the midst of secular affairs as skillful means to benefit living beings and will not abandon secular matters.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Huang, “Hongyi Fashi yu nianfo famen”, 27.

<sup>240</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Zhi Yangbaimin” 致楊白民, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 272.

He wrote to Ding Fubao at Yuquan Temple in Hangzhou on the tenth day of the fifth month, 1920:

[*Sutra on Impermanence (Foshuo wuchang jing, 佛說無常經)*] in my generation those who cultivate the Pure Land practice can also take this sutra as an evening practice. Not only can one follow the Buddha's supreme principles, but one can also be alert to impermanence, and insist on the desire to be reborn in the West [Pure Land]. Those who slander the Hinayana in the world should recite the *Ten Wheels Sutra of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva*, and they can be suddenly enlightened.<sup>241</sup>

On the eighth day of the sixth month, 1921, at Qingfu Temple (慶福寺) in Wenzhou, I told Venerable Yinxin (印心) and Venerable Baoshan (寶善):

We come here, practice silence and recite the Buddha's name, and reject secular affairs.<sup>242</sup>

On the seventeenth day of the eighth month, 1924, he wrote to layman Yang Xuequ (楊雪玖):

After Mid-Autumn, you gradually recover. From tomorrow onwards, you should diligently recite the Buddha's name for your father, wishing the old friend to eliminate accumulated obstacles, to be reborn in the human or heaven realm, to generate Bodhicitta, and to devote to pure practice. Eventually, to be reborn in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss and to attain the enlightenment.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Zhi Dingfubao” 致丁福保, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 330.

<sup>242</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Zhi Yinxin Baoshan heshang” 致印心、寶善和尚, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 442.

<sup>243</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Zhi Yangxuejiu” 致楊雪玖, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 358.

To Cui Haixiang (崔海翔) at Qingfu Temple in Wenzhou on the twenty-ninth day of the sixth month, 1925:

I am shocked to learn that layman Minfei (旻飛) has passed away... From today on, I will recite the *Brahma Net Sutra: Bodhisattva Precepts* (*Fanwang jing: Pusajie ben*, 梵網經·菩薩戒本) for forty-nine days (one volume per day). And after autumn, I will write forty-eight small pieces of Amitabha Buddha's name and mail them to you, to share with Dharma friends. All the merit is dedicated to the deceased friend Minfei. If he has not been reborn in the West [Pure Land], I wish him to be reborn as soon as possible. If he has already been reborn there, I wish to help him attain a higher state.<sup>244</sup>

The book also states:

From now on, I firmly believe in Buddhism and practice diligently... In the future, when my causes and conditions in samsara are exhausted, I will be reborn in the West [Pure Land] and be the pure companion of my mother and brother in the land of lotus forever.<sup>245</sup>

To Feng Zikai in Wenzhou on the twelfth of the ninth month, 1928:

Recently, things went smoothly with my benevolent friend. You are indeed a benevolent being who single-mindedly and sincerely venerates the Buddha and recites the Buddha's name. A single recitation of the Buddha's name can eliminate countless misdeeds and obtain infinite blessings.<sup>246</sup>

In 1929, on the last day of the third month of the lunar calendar, at Qingfu

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<sup>244</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Zhi Cuihaixiang” 致崔海翔, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 364.

<sup>245</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Zhi Cuihaixiang” 致崔海翔, 8:364.

<sup>246</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Zhi Fengzikai” 致丰子恺, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 370.



Temple in Wenzhou, he wrote to Xia Mianzun:

In recent years, I deeply felt the suffering of the secular world and want to be reborn in the Western Pure Land early.<sup>247</sup>

On the nineteenth day of the eighth month, 1932, at the Fajie Temple (法界寺) in Shangyu (上虞) to Xia Mianzun:

When I was badly ill this time, I deeply regretted that I had not prepared a will (to request others to recite the Buddha's name at my death, etc.). Therefore, I still cannot single-mindedly seek to be reborn in the West [Pure Land]. So, I hope that I will recover and repent on this.<sup>248</sup>

For another example, in the twelfth month of 1931, he said at the Buddha's name recitation association of Miaoshi Temple in Xiamen:

At that time, Vinaya Master Liaoshi (了識) was ill and could not afford to suffer day and night. Reading this speech transcript, he was filled with joy and sorrow, so he let go of the sensations of body and mind, abandoned medicine, and tried his best to recite the Buddha's name. He got out of bed even when he was still sick, and performed the Great Compassion Repentance (*dabei chan*, 大悲懺). He hummed, chanted, and knelt for a long time. He was extraordinarily brave and diligent.<sup>249</sup>

Judging from the letters quoted above, Master Hongyi was practicing the method of recitation of the Buddha's name in the Pure Land and has repeatedly expressed the need to "recite the Buddha's name wholeheartedly" and focus on the Pure Land method. To accomplish this, he barely himself involved in personnel matters and practiced

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<sup>247</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Zhi Xiamianzun" 致夏丐尊, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 305.

<sup>248</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Zhi Xiamianzun", 8:312.

<sup>249</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Rensheng zhi zuihou", 8:189.

reciting the Buddha's name in silence. Master Hongyi believed that the main purpose of the ancients' retreat was to focus on meditation or Buddha's name recitation, and further advocated that two-thirds of the time should be devoted to reciting Buddha's name or chanting the scriptures. In his view, retreats were best for concentrating on reciting the Buddha's name. For this reason, he also engaged in retreats with a schedule of courses. The course content was roughly as follows:

Recite Buddha's name before breakfast, either aloud or silently.

After breakfast, take a short break, worship the Buddha and recite sutras, and study from 9:00 to 11:00 AM; after lunch, take a break and study from 2:00 to 4:00 PM (the study time is limited to four hours a day, not more), and from 4:30 PM, worship the Buddha and recite sutras; after twilight, concentrate on reciting the Buddha's name, and not light the lamp at night, except only the offering lamp in front of the Buddha.<sup>250</sup>

Chanting the Buddha's name was one of the main pillars of his practice during his retreat. The method of reciting the Buddha's name was an easy way among the many methods in Buddhism. Reciting the Buddha's name is not limited by time and space, and it can be done to a greater or lesser degree. But from the perspective of Master Hongyi's practice, he was very energetic in reciting the Buddha's name, as he said in "Changing Habits" (*Gai xiguan*, 改習慣): "or those who recite more than 10,000 times of Buddha's name a day,"<sup>251</sup> which is enough to see his efforts in the practice of recitation.

Master Hongyi not only advocated reciting the Buddha's name, but he also used tools in daily life to help his recitation. According to his "Quanren tingzhong nianfo wen" (勸人聽鐘念佛文), listening to the sound of the bell and reciting the Buddha's name was

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<sup>250</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Wei Xingchang fashi yanguan bishi faze" 为性常法师掩关笔示法则, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 8.

<sup>251</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Gai xiguan" 改习惯, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 560.

not invented by Master Hongyi, but he strongly encouraged and promoted it and wrote an article to explain in detail. The so-called listening to the sound of the bell and reciting the Buddha's name was to match the sound of "ding dong, ding dong" of the bell with the four-character Buddha's name (that is, *a mi tuo fo* 阿彌陀佛) or the six-character Buddha's name (that is, *nan mo a mi tuo fo* 南無阿彌陀佛), as shown in the figure below. The rhythm of the bell was used to control the speed of the chanting, and the bell was used to replace the rosary, so that practitioners, especially beginners, could use the sound of the bell to keep themselves alert without holding beads, thus reducing distraction and achieving the purpose of counting to help one's recitation.

**Table 1: The Method of Chanting Buddha's Name by Listening to a Clock by Ven. Hongyi**

Chanting the Buddha's Name	Normal Chanting	Slow Chanting
<b>Four Words of Chanting Buddha's Name</b>	A (阿) { Ding Dong	A (阿) — Ding
	Mi (弥) { Ding Dong	Mi (弥) — Dong
	Tuo (陀) { Ding Dong	Tuo (陀) — Ding
	Fo (佛) { Ding Dong	Fo (佛) — Dong
<b>Six Words of Chanting Buddha's Name</b>	Na (南) } Ding	Na (南) — Ding
	Mo (无) } Dong	Mo (无) — Dong
	A (阿) } Dong	A (阿) — Ding
	Mi (弥) } Dong	Mi (弥) — Dong
	Tuo (陀) — Ding	Tuo (陀) { Ding Dong
	Fo (佛) — Dong	Fo (佛) { Ding Dong

Master Hongyi focused on the practice of reciting the Buddha's name of the Pure Land sect and his purpose was also very clear. It could be seen from the above-mentioned letters that he studied the Pure Land method and practiced reciting the Buddha's name mainly for the purpose of seeking rebirth in the Western [Pure Land], hoping to attain Buddhahood as soon as possible. This desire was especially strong when he was unwell, and he stated in his will the request to provide him with help in the recitation of the Buddha's name, which indicated the importance he placed on reciting the Buddha's name throughout his entire monastic life.

### **6.3.2 Master Hongyi's Concept of Hospice Care**

#### **6.3.2.a Thoughts on End-of-Life Chanting Assistance**

Regarding his practice of the recitation method of the Pure Land sect, in addition to advocating the recitation method, persuading people to practice and reciting the Buddha's name, Master Hongyi further promoted the recitation method by advocating hospice care for the dying use the method of reciting the Buddha's name, so as to improve the quality of the final stage of life. Master Hongyi's thoughts on hospice care were mainly reflected in the article “The Last Stage of Life” (*Resheng zhi zuihou*, 人生之最後). Master Hongyi's view on hospice care was mainly reflected in the aspect of end-of-life chanting assistance and related matters, which was to provide psychological comfort and spiritual support to the dying from a religious perspective. Master Hongyi explained the reasons and the purpose of end-of-life chanting assistance in this article:

When we are about to die, it is like the 30th day of the twelfth lunar month of our life, which is the last day of our life. If we don't prepare resources for rebirth properly, we will be in a hurry, calling out to our mother and father, and negative karma of many lifetimes will appear together. How to get rid of it? Even if you rely on others to help you when

you die, everything will be done according to the law of karma. But you also must practice it daily, so you can be at ease at the end of your life.<sup>252</sup>

Here, Master Hongyi compared a person's death to the end of the year.

According to the Buddhist law of karma and the theory of reincarnation, after this period of life ends, everything is not over in the way a lamp goes out, but rather, a new beginning will be decided based on what you did in the past. The positive and negative karma determine the form of existence in the next life. If the karma in the past is mostly virtuous, one would be reborn in the three higher realms, and if negative karma dominates, one would be reborn in the three lower realms. Therefore, dying can be regarded as a critical moment when one's current life is about to end, and the next life is about to begin. At this time, the past negative karma will appear together, which may cause the dying person to fall into the lower realms. If one wants to obtain religious redemption, one must rely on the power of the vows of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. And by relying on the power of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, one can be reborn in the Pure Land. As far as the dying person is concerned, it is necessary to maintain a clear consciousness and have full confidence in the Buddhist Pure Land, so that it is possible to be reborn in this way. On the deathbed, it is often the final moment of a disease. The patient is physically weak, mentally fragile, suffering from physical and mental pain, and is prone to confusion and often unconscious. It is difficult to maintain confidence in the Buddhadharma and in the rebirth in the Pure Land. Hence, one needs to rely on the assistance from others—the easiest way is through the help of relatives and friends. As Master Hongyi said:

The last thought of one's life is the most important. When one is about to die, the virtuous and negative karma of many kalpas will appear

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<sup>252</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Rensheng zhi zuihou”, 8:189.

together, which is terrifying. But if one maintains a clear consciousness with mindfulness and keeps reciting the Buddha's name, one will surely be reborn in the Pure Land. (Buddha Shakyamuni's words are praised by the Buddhas of the ten directions, so there is no idle word!) If one lacks self-reliance, it is especially good to have lay disciples to help recite.<sup>253</sup>

With the help of relatives, friends, and lay practitioners, one can make up for the insufficiency of self-reliance, to ensure that the thoughts of the dying can be righteous and clear. In this way, the chanting of Buddha's name can be continuous, helping one to be reborn in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss.

End-of-life recitation is the culmination of the experiences distilled through the practice of Chinese Buddhism. While there isn't clear mention of this recitation in Buddhist scriptures, its rationale can be found in scriptures.

When this foolish man was about to die, he met a virtuous teacher, who gave him all kinds of solace in order to teach the wonderful Dharma and teach him to recite the Buddha's name. The virtuous teacher said: If you cannot recite that Buddha's name, you should recite the name of the Buddha of Infinite Life (Amitābha). Such a sincere heart commands the voice without interruption, with ten recitations of Namo Amitabha Buddha (nanmo a mi tuo fo, 南無阿彌陀佛). By reciting the name of the Buddha, with every thought, the negative karma of birth and death for eight billion kalpas are removed. At the end of your life, you will see a golden lotus, like a sun wheel, standing in front of you, and you will be reborn in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss.<sup>254</sup>

If one sincerely recites the Buddha's name at the end of one's life, one will be able to eliminate the negative karma from the previous lifetimes. This karma will pave the way for rebirth in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss, since "in this *Sutra on the Contemplation of Buddha Amitayus*, the Buddha's name is repeated ten times, which means the ten vows and the ten deeds are fulfilled."<sup>255</sup> In other words, the ten vows and

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<sup>253</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Zhi Xiamianzun", 8:303.

<sup>254</sup> "Foshuo guan wuliangshoujing" 佛說觀無量壽經, chapter 1, in *Taisho*, vol. 12 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 346.

<sup>255</sup> "Guan wuliangshoufo jingshu" 觀無量壽佛經疏, chapter 1, in *Taisho*, vol. 37 (Tokyo: Dazang

ten deeds are fulfilled in the ten recitations of the Buddha's name, which can bolster one's faith in rebirth in the Buddha's Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss.

Beyond matters of religious belief, end-of-life hospice care can also be understood from a psychological perspective. Such end-of-life hospice care would be most applicable for Buddhists who have faith in the Dharma, who believe in the existence of the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss, and who believe that the world of Amitabha Buddha is free from suffering and full of bliss and yearn for it. In this way, such recitation at the time of death provides a kind of psychological comfort for the dying person. By strengthening the dying person's yearning for the blissful world and belief that he can be reborn in Pure Land where he or she will no longer suffer, the dying person's fears can be eliminated, and he or she can feel at ease, no longer experiencing the anguish of death.

### **6.3.2.b The Practice of End-of-Life Reciting Assistance**

In *The Last Stage of Life*, Master Hongyi delineated the practice of hospice care into five key aspects: the time of serious illness, the time of death, the day after death, providing assistance by chanting at the end of life, and accumulating merit for the deceased. Master Hongyi provided explanations and notes for each stage of practice.

For seriously ill patients, Master Hongyi believed that they "should put aside all family matters, including their own body, and concentrate on reciting the Buddha's name, and seek to be reborn in the Western [Pure Land]."<sup>256</sup> This unwavering commitment would ensure that the person would be able to be reborn in the Pure Land. Moreover, if

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chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 250.

<sup>256</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Rensheng zhi zuihou", 8:189.

one's life has not yet concluded, reciting the Buddha's name wholeheartedly would purge the negative karma from past lifetimes, thereby improving one's condition and expediting recovery. Simultaneously, Master Hongyi advocated that for seriously ill patients with a clarity of consciousness, it is advisable to seek guidance from virtuous teachers, who can impart the Dharma and try their best to provide solace and alleviate suffering.

Master Hongyi held the belief that in order to shield patients from emotional distress and greediness at the end of their life, certain practices should be observed. It was his recommendation not to chat with them at the end of their life, nor to inquire whether they had a will. Bathing or changing clothes should only be undertaken if the patient expressly indicates a need for it. This approach aimed to avoid aggravating the patient's pain, disrupting their virtuous thoughts, or interfering with their wish to be reborn in the Western [Pure Land]. As the patient's breath significantly wanes, others may engage in chanting on their behalf. When chanting, instruments such as chimes and wooden fish could be used, but high-pitched noise should be avoided, so as not to stimulate the weakened nerves of the patient, unsettling their state of mind, and negatively affecting rebirth. All actions at the time of death are aimed at reassuring the patient, nurturing virtuous thoughts, and preparing optimal external conditions for their eventual rebirth.

Judging from Master Hongyi's manuscripts, the hospice care that he advocated extended beyond the moment of passing and would continue for a certain period after the death of the patient. According to Buddhist beliefs, after death, the consciousness does not immediately leave the physical body and transition to the next reincarnation. Rather, there will be a certain period of transition. During this time, religious care for the deceased remains crucial. Consequently, Master Hongyi emphasized, "When one is about



to die, one must not be surrounded by family members, as this may impede right thought. Family members may enter the room to mourn one hour after death. This is very important."<sup>257</sup> Eight hours post-death, the body of the deceased can be moved, the body bathed, and clothes changed. In addition, he also advocated that family members should hold a memorial ceremony for the deceased every seventh day for forty-nine days, primarily by reciting the Buddha's name.

The above describes Master Hongyi's perspective on hospice care, which was founded on his faith in the Western Pure Land. These services were mainly done for religious groups who had faith in the Pure Land. By having relatives and friends recite the Buddha's name, one could help the dying person preserve virtuous thoughts, strengthen confidence in the Buddha-dharma, and bolster the aspiration for the blissful realm of the Buddha's Pure Land. In doing so, this approach sought to diminish the fear of death, alleviate the suffering of the sick, and provide better care and support during the final stages of life.

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<sup>257</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Zhi Xiamianzun", 8:303.

## CHAPTER 7: MASTER HONGYI'S HUAYAN THOUGHT

Master Hongyi, renowned as the Eleventh Patriarch of the Chinese Vinaya school, dedicated himself to promoting the teaching of Vinaya. He gained widespread recognition for studies in the Vinaya, and his Vinaya philosophy was regarded as the central pillar of his ideological framework. As previously discussed, in terms of the Buddhist practice, he advocated “taking Huayan as the realm, precepts as the practice, and recollection of the Buddha as the fruit.” In this context, Huayan thought constituted the theoretical foundation of Venerable Hongyi’s Buddhist thought, a fact that held equal significance. Regrettably, he left behind only a single work that systematically expounded upon Huayan thought, *Huayan Dayi* (*Huayan Essentials* 华严大意). Additionally, *Huayan Dayi* 华严大意 can only be found in catalogues, presenting considerable obstacles to systematically understanding Master Hongyi’s Huayan philosophy. In this chapter, we will examine the characteristics of his Huayan thought, exploring its origins and his Huayan practice.

### 7.1 A Brief Overview of Huayan Thought

Huayan thought is a Buddhist concept rooted in the *Huayan Sutra* (also known as the *Avatamsaka Sutra* or *Flower Adornment Sutra*). Its origin can be classified into two parts: the Buddhist thought embodied in the *Huayan Sutra* and the systematic Buddhist ideas formulated by the Chinese patriarchs of the Huayan school, who provided

commentaries on the *Huayan Sutra*. Japanese scholars refer to the former as “Huayan thought” and the latter as “Huayan teaching.” In this paper, when discussing Venerable Hongyi’s Huayan thought, the term “Huayan thought” is interpreted in a broad sense, including the Buddhist ideas found in the *Huayan Sutra* and the Huayan thought that evolved over time by historical patriarchs.

The emergence of Huayan thought, whether it is the “Huayan thought” in the eyes of Japanese scholars or “Huayan teaching,” is derived from the *Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra* (*Dafangguang Fo Huayan Jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經). As an essential scripture of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the *Huayan Sutra* (华严经), unlike the earlier Āgamas Collections preached by the Buddha himself, was formed by contextualizing and fictionalizing the early Buddhist canons based on their inheritance and development. Therefore, scholars believe that “the *Huayan Sutra* is an ideological trend of Mahāyāna Buddhism that emerged after the early Prajñā studies, which began around the 1st century AD and took shape by the end of the 3rd century AD.”<sup>258</sup>

In terms of content, the *Huayan Sutra* can be divided into three categories: the free-standing short translations (Chinese: *zhipin* 支品), the original or complete translations (Chinese: *benbu* 本部). A portion of Huayan-related texts (Chinese: *jiajing* 家经) came into existence under the influence of the complete translations. In terms of structure, its original form was shaped by the emergence of different shorter translations, such as *Dousha Jing* 兜沙经 translated by Lokāṣema (during the Later Han dynasty), *Pusa Benye Jing* 菩萨本业经 by Zhi Qian (in the Three Kingdoms period), *Zhupusa*

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<sup>258</sup> Wei Daoru 魏道儒, *Zhongguo huayan zong tongshi* 中国华严宗通史 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2001), 1.

*Qiufo Benye Jing* 诸菩萨求佛本业经 by Nie Daozhen (in the Western Jin dynasty), several translation works of Dharmarakṣa (in the Western Jin dynasty), including *Pusa Shizhu Xingdao Pin* 菩萨十住行道, *Jianbei Yiqie Zhide Jing* 渐备一切智德经, *Dengmu Pusa Suowen Sanmei Jing* 等目菩萨所问三昧经, *Rulai Xingxian Jing* 如来兴现经, *Dushi Pin Jing* 度世品经, and *Pusa Shizhu Jing* 菩萨十住经 by Gītāmītra (in the Eastern Jin dynasty), *Shizhu Duanjie Jing* 十住断结经 by Zhu Fonian, two works of *Shizhu Jing* 十住经 translated by Buddhayaśas (in the Later Qin dynasty) and Kumārajīva. In the 6th or 7th year of the Yixi reign period (410 or 411), Buddhābhaddra, who was forced to leave Chang’an after he arrived in China, joined the monastic order at Mount Lu and started to engage in translating Buddhist texts with his disciple Huiguan and more than forty others. Afterwards, he dwelt at the Daochang Temple in Jiankang, where he completed his translation of *Mahāvaiṣṭhī Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*. This undertaking culminated in the comprehensive collection of the Chinese version of the *Huayan Sūtra*.

There are four prevailing versions of the *Huayan Sūtra* today: ① *Mahāvaiṣṭhī Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*, translated by Buddhābhaddra in 420 (Eastern Jin dynasty), with a total of thirty-four chapters in sixty fascicles, abbreviated to “Sixty-fascicle Huayan” or “Jin’s translation of Huayan.” ② *Mahāvaiṣṭhī Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*, rendered by Śikṣānanda in 699 (Tang dynasty), with a total of thirty-nine chapters in eighty fascicles, abbreviated to “Eighty-fascicle Huayan.” ③ *Mahāvaiṣṭhī Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*, translated by Prajñā in 798 (Tang dynasty), with one chapter in forty fascicles, abbreviated to “Forty-fascicle Huayan.” In addition, there is an extant Tibetan version of

the *Huayan Sutra*, *Saṅs-rgyasphalpo-cheshes-bya-ba 'sin-turgyas-pa chen-poḥimdo*, translated by Jinamitra in the late 9th century.

The study of the *Huayan Sutra* in Chinese Buddhism is not confined to the integrated translations in “Sixty Fascicles,” “Eighty Fascicles,” and “Forty Fascicles” mentioned above. It covers free-standing short translations (Chinese: *zhipin* 支品) and original or complete translations (Chinese: *benbu* 本部). Among them, the *Daśabhūmika Sutra* has received significant attention in Chinese Buddhism. During the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the *Daśabhūmika* school was formed, a sect whose studies centered on this sutra. “The research and promotion of the *Daśabhūmika Sutra* have long been a preliminary of the development of Huayan school.”<sup>259</sup> The *Daśabhūmika* school also provided a rich philosophical foundation for the emergence of Chinese Buddhist theory, as well as the theoretical cornerstone for the establishment of the Huayan school of Chinese Buddhism. In terms of content, *Shidi Jing* 十地经 belongs to *Shidi pin* 十地品 of the *Huayan Sutra*, and belongs to the early free-standing short translations (*Zhipin* 支品) of the *Huayan Sutra*. In terms of the ideological system, it makes up an inseparable part of Huayan studies. “One cannot fathom the features of both Vasubandhu’s (世亲) Yogācāra philosophy and *Daśabhūmika Sutra* if he reads *the Shidijing Lun* 十地经论 only. In any case, he must penetrate the *Huayan Sutra* that includes *Shidi Jing* 十地经.”<sup>260</sup> For that reason, *Daśabhūmika* scholars tend to pay more attention to the studies of the *Huayan Sutra*.

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<sup>259</sup> Wei, *Zhongguo huayan zong tongshi*, 84.

<sup>260</sup> Kimura Kiyotaka, *Zhongguo huayan sixiangshi* 中國華嚴思想史, trans. Li Huiyin 李惠英 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 2011), 41.

Before the Sui and Tang dynasties, a very rich system of commentaries on the *Huayan Sutra* was found in Chinese Buddhism. For example, *Huayan Shu* 华严疏 in five volumes, written by Sengfan (僧范, 467–555); *Huayanjing Shu* 华严经疏 written by Tanzun (昙遵, 480–564) in seven volumes;<sup>261</sup> *Huayanjing Shu* 华严经疏 by Tanyan (昙衍, 503–581) in seven volumes;<sup>262</sup> *Huayan Shu* 华严疏 and *Huayanjing Zhigui* 华严经旨归 by Lingyu (灵裕, 518–606), a total of more than one hundred volumes; *Huayan Shu* 华严疏, seven volumes, written by Huiyuan (慧远, 523–592); and *Huayanjing Lun* 华严经论 by Lingbian (灵辩, 477–522) in more than one hundred volumes.<sup>263</sup> In addition, there were numerous lectures on the *Huayan Sutra*, which showed its widespread promulgation.

During the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420–589), Chinese Buddhist schools sprang up in great numbers. Various schools were involved in mutual exchanges, from which arose the collision of ideas that brought about new thoughts. A significant example is seen in the emergence of Chinese Buddhist sects. With the increasing popularity of the *Huayan Sutra*, the studies community centering on this sutra developed a complete ideological system of Huayan studies. Meanwhile, the Huayan school became established and recognized Venerable Dushun (杜顺) as the First Patriarch, Venerable Zhiyan as the second, and Venerable Fazang as the third. Huayan thought advanced to a new level, yielding fresh fruits in the commentaries on the *Huayan Sutra*: for instance,

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<sup>261</sup> “Huayanjing zhuanji” 華嚴經傳記, chapter 3, in *Taisho*, vol. 51 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 164.

<sup>262</sup> “Huayanjing zhuanji” 華嚴經傳記, chapter 3, in *Taisho*, vol. 51 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 159.

<sup>263</sup> “Tanxuan ji” 探玄記, chapter 1, in *Taisho*, vol. 35 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 122.

the *Huayan Wujiao Zhiguan* 华严五教止观 in one volume written by Dushun (557–640); and Venerable Zhiyan’s (602–668) works, which include *Souxuan Ji* 搜玄记 in five volumes, *Huayan Yicheng Shixuanmen* 华严一乘十玄门, one volume, *Huayanjing Wushiyao Wenda* 华严经五十要问答 in two volumes, and *Huayanjing Nei Zhangmen Dengza Kongmuzhang* 华严经内章门等杂孔目章 in four volumes. Venerable Fazang was the epitome of a master of Huayan philosophy, and he wrote as many as fifteen works concerning Huayan studies. Commentaries subsequently were produced that had a profound impact on later generations, such as *Huayanjing Shu* 华严经疏 in sixty volumes, *Huayanjing Shuchao* 华严经疏钞 in ninety volumes written by Venerable Chengguan (738–839), *Xin Huayanjing Lun* 新华严经论 in forty volumes by Li Tongxuan (635–730); and *Puxian Xingyuan Pin Biexing Shuchao* 普贤行愿品别行疏钞 in six volumes, and *Huayan Yuanren Lun* 华严原人论 in one volume by Zongmi (宗密, 780–841).

As one of the Chinese Buddhist sects, the Huayan school is characterized by its complex and massive teachings. It has an abundance of Buddhist terms and concepts, complicated propositions, and substantial philosophy. Regarding the *Huayan Sutra* as the source for their fundamental doctrines, the patriarchs of Huayan used “dharmadhātu causation” and “inexhaustible conditioned arising” to demonstrate how the world came into being and how it existed. They claimed that all phenomena are the result of the essence of Buddha-jñāna and that they are interdependent and interpenetrated with each other in a state of perfect interfusion without obstruction. Furthermore, in the discussion of “one” and “ten,” they blend propositions about “one” with “many,” and “one” with

“all” together. By expounding the concepts of “ten mysterious originations,” “perfect interfusion of the six characteristics,” and “four dharmadhātus,” they proposed the theory that “one is identical to many, and many are identical to one” and that “one contains many, and many contain one,” and the idea of “perfect interfusion without obstruction.” These theories formed the core of Huayan thought.

Among the Buddhist sects, the Pure Land school is the one that best embodies religious characteristics and best meets the religious needs of believers. People’s aversion and dissatisfaction in the real world can be effectively eradicated in the Pure Land, an ideal land outlined by Buddhism. After Master Huiyuan (慧远) founded the White Lotus Society on Mount Lu, the Pure Land faith became one of the Chinese Buddhist beliefs. After the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368–1644), it became the leading trend among Buddhist beliefs in China. Huayan studies, on the other hand, concern complicated philosophical ideas. In relation to religious practice, they satisfy the psychological needs of believers. The ideas of the Pure Land can be found in the *Huayan Sutra* in abundance as well. First, in terms of content, the *Huayan Sutra* contains an extensive exhortation to encourage for the Pure Land. Upon reviewing the sutra “Sixty-fascicle Huayan,” the phrase “*Nian Fo*” 念佛 can be found in seventy-one places, as a keyword in the doctrinal database initiated by the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CEBTA), and it can be found in fifty-nine places in the “Eighty-fascicle Huayan.” For example, it is recorded in the *Shidi Pin* 十地品 of the *Huayanjing* translated in the Jin dynasty (265–420):

A diligent practitioner who often recites the Buddha’s name is so-called because he is earnest to seek the Buddha’s ten powers, the four kinds



of fearlessness, and the eighteen distinctive abilities.<sup>264</sup>

Another example can be found in *Ru Fajie Pin* 入法界品:

Gentlemen! I only know about this universal light, observe, and keep right mindfulness on the Buddha's samādhi. How can I expect to discern the perfect, purified wisdom and practices of Bodhisattvas? The great bodhisattvas, with the perfect universal illumination and recollection of the Buddha (buddhānusmṛti-samādhi), can penetrate all Buddhas and their retinues, as well as the sublime and non-defiled Buddha-land.<sup>265</sup>

The excerpts above pertain to the means of reciting of the Buddha's name and the Samadhi of reciting the Buddha's name. The *Ru Fajie Pin* 入法界品 further explains ten kinds of Samadhi of reciting the Buddha's name and their corresponding merits. This indicates the great importance the Huayan school attaches to the method of reciting the Buddha's name. The *Huayan Sutra* depicts the Buddha-land as Pure Land, where “one sees the world through enlightenment, and discerns Suchness through a single leaf.” The Pure Land of Maitreya is one of the ten dharmadhātus in the spectrum of Huayan. As for whether this method is identical to that of reciting the Buddha's name, a more detailed explanation can be found in the *Huayan Sutra*. For example, in its chapter *Shouliang Pin* 寿量品:

Gentlemen! One Kalpa in the saḥā world, the land of Śākyamuni, equals to one day and night in the world of bliss, the land of Maitreya. One Kalpa in the world of Ultimate Bliss is one day and night in the world of Vestment Banner, the land of the Adamant Buddha.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> “Dafanguangfo huayanjing” 大方廣佛華嚴經 [Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra], chapter 25, in *Taisho*, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 556.

<sup>265</sup> “Dafanguangfo huayanjing” 大方廣佛華嚴經 [Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra], chapter 25, in *Taisho*, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 690.

<sup>266</sup> “Dafanguangfo huayanjing” 大方廣佛華嚴經 [Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra], chapter 25, in *Taisho*, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 589.

Another example can be found in the Chapter *Ru Fajie Pin* 入法界品:

Gentlemen! I see the Tathāgatas in the ten Buddha-lands of such ten directions are as numerous as atoms. If all Tathāgatas in those worlds do not come to this world, I will not go to theirs. If I want to meet Maitreya Tathāgata in the world of bliss, I can make it at will.<sup>267</sup>

A strong connection between the Pure Land depicted in the *Huayan Sutra* and the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss is found in this passage. What is more, is that in the *Forty-fascicle Huayan Sutra*, the latest edition, the last chapter of the *Huayan Sutra* is *Ru Busiyi Jietuo Jingjie Puxian Xingyuan* 入不思議解脫境界普賢行願品. It corresponds to the chapter *Ru Fajie Pin* 入法界品 respectively in *Sixty-fascicle Huayan* and *Eight-fascicle Huayan*. “Ten Great Vows of Samantabhadra” are added to emphasize the significance of rebirth in the Western Pure Land of Amitābha and highlight the sublime and extraordinary status of the very land. An example can be found in the chapter *Ru Busiyi Jietuo Jingjie Puxian Xingyuan* 入不思議解脫境界普賢行願品:

Therefore, you and others who hear this vow’s king, should not give rise to doubtful thoughts and should attentively accept it. Accepted already, then be able to study it, studied already, then be able to recite it, recited it already, then be able to uphold it, and even copy it, extensively for people speaking of it. Of all these people and others, in one thought within, all their practices and vows will all attain accomplishment. They can benefit sentient beings by delivering them from the ocean of samsāra to the world of Ultimate Bliss of Amitābha.<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> “Dafangguangfo huayanjing” 大方廣佛華嚴經 [Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra], chapter 25, in *Taisho*, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 339.

<sup>268</sup> “Dafangguangfo huayanjing” 大方廣佛華嚴經 [Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra], chapter 25, in *Taisho*, vol. 10 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 846.

For this reason, *Ru Busiyi Jietuo Jingjie Puxian Xingyuan* 入不思議解脱境界普贤行愿品 has been recognized as one of the fundamental sutras of the Pure Land school, which also reveals the connection between the *Huayan Sutra* and the Pure Land.

## 7.2 The Origin and Practice of Master Hongyi's Huayan

### Thought

Throughout *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, Master Hongyi's Buddhist thought centered on Vinaya studies but was not confined to Vinaya. Many contents, such as the foundational Buddhist theories, the Pure Land, and the Huayan school, were revealed in the sections on Buddhist discussion, speech collection, and the preface and postscript. Compared with Master Hongyi's Vinaya thought and Pure Land thought, his Huayan thought was not as conspicuous. Therefore, to analyze and grasp Master Hongyi's Huayan thought, it is necessary to examine comprehensively the works he left us.

### 7.2.1 The Origin of *Huayan* Thought

The newly revised *Hongyi Dashi quanji* published by Fujian renmin chubanshe in 2010 has been the most complete collection of Master Hongyi's works up to the present. According to *Hongyi dashi quanji*, some are related to "Huayan," such as *Huayanjing dusong yanxi rumen cidi* 华严经读诵研习入门次第,<sup>269</sup> *Huayanjing dayi* 华

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<sup>269</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 304.

严经大意, *Huayan shukefen* 华严疏科分, and *Huayan jilian sanbai* 华严集联三百.<sup>270</sup>

As for *Huayanjing dayi* 华严经大意 and *Huayan shukefen* 华严疏科分, only the table of contents are still extant. *Huayan jilian sanbai* 华严集联三百 is extracted from *Jin's translation of Huayan* and *Tang's translation of Huayan*, without a detailed description of the contents. Therefore, examining this work in a broader context is necessary to grasp Master Hongyi's Huayan thought.

In *Hongyi dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集, “Huayan” or related content can be seen in the letters of Master Hongyi and the prefaces and postscripts. Among the letters that concern Huayan are those written to Liu Zhiping, Xia Mianzun, and Chen Zemin. For example, in Master Hongyi's correspondence with Chen Zemin, he spoke many times about the practice of the *Huayan Sutra*. There are several places where he exhorts Chen to study Huayan. Further, Chen was presented with books including *Huayan huchao* 华严疏钞, *Huayanjing shu* 华严经疏, *Huayanjing huchao* 华严经疏钞, *Huayan xuantan* 华严悬谈, *Huayan xuantanhui xuanji* 华严悬谈会玄记, *Qingliang shuchao* 清凉疏钞, *Huayan dashu* 华严大疏, *Huayan shihuixiang pin chuhuixiang zhang* 华严十回向品初回向章. In Master Hongyi's correspondence with others, he also mentions documents related to the *Huayan Sutra*, such as *Huayan shulun zuanyao* 华严疏论纂要, *Huayan chuhui ganying yuanqi zhuan* 华严处会感应缘起传, *Xingyuan ji* 行愿偈, *Jingxingpin ji* 净行品偈, *Xingyuanpin shujielu* 行愿品疏节录, *Huayanjing zhigui* 华严经旨归, *Huayanjing jiaokanbiao* 华严经校勘表, *Puxian xingyuanpin biexing shuchao* 普贤行愿品别行疏钞,

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<sup>270</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 1:378.

*Huayan sanpin* 华严三品, *Huayanjung shuke* 华严经疏科, *Huayanjing shukebiao* 华严经疏科表, *Huayanjing shuke wenbiaojie* 华严经疏科文表解, *Huayanjing* 华严经纲要, *Huayan yinyi* 华严音义, *Huayan fadian* 华严法典, and *Huayan jilian sanbai* 华严集联三百. The bibliographies listed above cover almost all of the most important treatises in Huayan studies. Although this does not directly reflect Venerable Hongyi's Huayan thought, it indicates the extent of his involvement and familiarity with the Huayan canon and demonstrates the importance he attached to Huayan.

In addition, more content related to "Huayan" also can be found in the prefaces and postscripts. For example, *Handwritten Postscript to Huayanjing jingxingpin ji* 手书〈华严经净行品偈〉跋, *Foreword to Huayan shuchao* (published by the Jinling Scriptural Press) 金陵刻〈华严疏钞〉题记, *Handwritten Foreword in the Huayan jilian* 手书〈华严〉集联题记, *Preface to Huayan jilian sanbai* 〈华严集联三百〉序, *Preface to Huayanjing dusong yanxi rumen cidi* 〈华严经读诵研习入门次第〉序, *Preface to Huayanjing puxian xingyuanpin guanzizai Pusa zhang* 〈华严经普贤行愿品观自在菩萨章〉序, *Postscript to the Puxian xingyuan pin in Wenling engraved edition* 温陵刻〈普贤行愿品〉跋, *Preface to Puxian xingyuan pin biexingben presented to Cai Guanluo* 手装〈普贤行愿品别行本〉赠蔡冠洛题记, *Preface to the Collection of Verses in the Huayan Sutra presented to Liu Zhiping* 集〈华严〉偈句书赠刘质平题记, *Postscript to Verses of the Huayan Sutra Copied after a Dream Presented to Venerable Purun* 梦后忆书华严经偈赠普润法师, *Postscript to Huayan jilian Presented to Most Venerable Sengchan* 赠僧忏上人〈华严〉集联并跋, *Postscript to Huayan jilian Presented to Venerable Wanjun* 赠万钧法师〈华严〉集联跋, *Preface to Verses of the Huayan Sutra Presented to Venerable Liaozhi* 手书

集〈华严〉经句赠了智法师题记, *Postscript to the Self-preserved Sanskrit Edition of the Puxian xingyuan pin* 扶桑〈普贤行愿品赞梵本私考〉跋, and so on. The above prefaces and postscripts are related to the *Huayan Sutra*. However, in terms of the content, they do not involve too much “Huayan thought,” so they cannot reflect the characteristics of Master Hongyi’s Huayan thought. Nevertheless, his extensive attention to Huayan cannot be denied.

Master Hongyi’s extensive attention to Huayan is also reflected in his edited *Huayan Jilian Sanbai* 华严集联三百. *Huayan Jilian* 华严集联 is a collection of calligraphy works excerpted and edited in the form of couplets by Master Hongyi from the verses of the *Huayan Sutra* in three editions. *Huayan Jilian* 华严集联 contains a total of 341 verses of three versions of the *Huayan Sutra*, which are namely *Jin’s Translation of Huayan* 晋译华严 (104 verses:100 primary plus four additional); *Tang’s Translation Eighty-fascicle Huayan* 唐译八十华严 (135 verses:102 primary plus 33 additional), Zhenyuan’s translation of *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品 (102 verses:100 primary plus two additional). Among these, there are 31 four-character verses, 139 five-character ones, and 171 seven-character ones. *Huayan Jilian* adopts the editing order in which “the subsequent verse follows the previous verse.” In terms of tonality, only the last character is required to follow the level and oblique tones.<sup>271</sup> In terms of content, except for the Zhenyuan’s translation of the *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品, *Jingxing pin* 净行品 occupies the most, with 22 sentences in the Jin translation and 48 sentences in the Tang translation, totaling 70 sentences. The next is *Shizhu miaoyan pin* 世主妙严品 in the

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<sup>271</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu” 华严集联三百序, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 623.

Tang translation version, with 46 sentences; the rest are the 36 sentences of *Ru fajie pin* 入法界品, the 31 sentences of *Shixing Pin* 十行品, and the 29 sentences of *Shijian jingyan pin* 世间净眼品. In terms of content, some verses advise Buddhist followers to cultivate the wisdom of the Buddha-Dharma: “When the ocean of merit is full, a body of wisdom is to be endowed with,”<sup>272</sup> “The endless sea of wisdom, is the lamp of all the worlds,”<sup>273</sup> and “The border of the wisdom is beyond language. It shines the world for the sake of liberation.”<sup>274</sup> Some advise one to be detached from defilement: “Abiding in the pure and serene wisdom, one can stay away from defilement,”<sup>275</sup> “To eliminate all the mundane afflictions, is to acquire immeasurable merit of Bodhi.”<sup>276</sup> Some verses encourage the arising of Bodhicitta and compassion: “When one is detached from the appearances of all living beings, he is endowed with the great compassion,”<sup>277</sup> “Always rejoice in the Dharma of gentleness, peace, and endurance, and abide in the loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity,”<sup>278</sup> “Vowing to practice the purified acts of Samantabhadra is arousing Bodhicitta and great compassion.”<sup>279</sup> Some verses talk about the Vinaya practice, for example: “That the Buddha expounds the sublime doctrines, is to exhort us to cultivate wholesome faculties,”<sup>280</sup> “The Dharma regards rain as sweet dew, and takes the purified precepts as an aromatic act,”<sup>281</sup> “One should fully be ordained with the purified precepts, and always benefit all sentient beings.”<sup>282</sup> In addition, some verses

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<sup>272</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:410.

<sup>273</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:411.

<sup>274</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:475.

<sup>275</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:488.

<sup>276</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:493.

<sup>277</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:390.

<sup>278</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:424.

<sup>279</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:524.

<sup>280</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:399.

<sup>281</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:402.

<sup>282</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:421.

are about the appreciation of the Buddha and the solemnity of the Buddha-lands, including: “The Dharma Realm is as perfect as a round moon, and the merit and virtues are as clean and serene as a full pond,”<sup>283</sup> “The merit and virtues are boundless as emptiness, and the Buddha Realm is too profound to perceive.”<sup>284</sup>

Table 2: Statistical Table of *the Huayan Jilian*

序号 Number	品名 Names of Chapters (Pin Ming)	条数 Amounts	
		晋译 Jin Translation	唐译 Tang Translation
1	世间净眼品 <i>The Worldly Purified Eyes</i> ( <i>Shijian Jingyan Pin</i> )	29	
2	净行品 <i>Gocara-pariśuddhi</i> ( <i>Jingxing Pin</i> )	22	48
3	十回向品 <i>Vajradhvaja-pariṇāmanā</i> ( <i>Shihuixiang Pin</i> )	15	12
4	卢舍那佛品 <i>Lushena Fo Pin</i>	12	
5	离世间品 <i>Lokottara</i> ( <i>Li Shijian Pin</i> )	14	11
6	入法界品 <i>Entry into the Dharmadhātu</i> ( <i>Ru Fajie Pin</i> )	30	6

<sup>283</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:403.

<sup>284</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayan jilian sanbai xu”, 8:494.



序号 Number	品名 Names of Chapters (Pin Ming)	条数 Amounts	
		晋译 Jin Translation	唐译 Tang Translation
7	十地品 <i>Ten Grounds</i> ( <i>Shidi Pin</i> )	12	6
8	光明觉品 <i>Enlightenment on Light</i> ( <i>Guangming Jue Pin</i> )	12	14
9	妙胜说偈品 <i>The Most Sublime Verse</i> ( <i>Miaosheng Shuoji Pin</i> )	5	
10	菩萨明难品 <i>The Bodhisattva's Clearing up</i> <i>Doubt</i> ( <i>Pusa Mingnan Pin</i> )	1	
11	十忍品 <i>Endurance of Ten Types</i> ( <i>Shiren Pin</i> )	1	12
12	初发心功德品 <i>Chufaxin Gongde Pin</i>	6	13
13	明法品 <i>Dharmāloka</i> ( <i>Mingfa Pin</i> )	1	
14	夜摩说偈品 ( <i>Yemo Shuoji Pin</i> )	5	
15	十行品 <i>Shixing Pin</i>	15	16
16	如来性起品 <i>Rulai Xingqi Pin</i>	4	
17	兜率赞佛品 <i>Doushuai Zanfo Pin</i>	1	

序号 Number	品名 Names of Chapters (Pin Ming)	条数 Amounts	
		晋译 Jin Translation	唐译 Tang Translation
18	贤首菩萨品 <i>BhadraśrīBodhisattva</i> ( <i>Xianshou Pusa Pin</i> )	18	7
19	如来现相品 <i>Tathāgatotpatti-saṃbhava-</i> <i>nirdeśa</i> ( <i>Rulai Xianxiang Pin</i> )		17
20	兜率偈赞品 <i>Doushuai Jizan Pin</i>		4
21	普贤行品 <i>Samantabhadra-cārya-nirdeśa</i> ( <i>Puxian Xing Pin</i> )		5
22	华藏世界品 <i>Kusuma-tala-vyūhāṃkāra-</i> <i>lokadhātu-samudra-pariśuddhā-</i> <i>guṇa-samudra-avabhāsa</i> ( <i>Huazang Shijie Pin</i> )		2
23	夜摩偈赞品 <i>Yemo Jizan Pin</i>		5
24	毗卢遮那品 <i>Vairocana</i> ( <i>Piluzhena Pin</i> )		8
25	须弥偈赞品 <i>Xumi ZANJI Pin</i>		1
26	菩萨问明品 <i>Pusa Wenming Pin</i>		2
27	世主妙严品 <i>Sarva-lokendra-vyūha-naya-</i> <i>prabhāva</i> ( <i>Shizhu Miaoyan Pin</i> )		46

序号 Number	品名 Names of Chapters (Pin Ming)	条数 Amounts	
		晋译 Jin Translation	唐译 Tang Translation
28	普贤三昧品 <i>Samantabhadra Samādhī</i> ( <i>Puxian Sanmei Pin</i> )		2
29	世界成就品 <i>Lokadhātu-samudra-nirdeśa-</i> <i>vibhāvana-samudāgama</i> ( <i>Shijie Chengjiu Pin</i> )		4
30	十住品 <i>Daśa-vyavasthāna</i> ( <i>Shizhu Pin</i> )		2
31	阿僧祇品 <i>Asāṃkhyā</i> ( <i>Asengqi Pin</i> )		1

### 7.2.2 Master Hongyi's Practice of Huayan Thought

After becoming a monk, Master Hongyi devoted his life to the promotion of Nanshan Vinaya. However, many records are related to Huayan in his missionary lectures and Buddhist practice. In this paper, Master Hongyi's Huayan thought refers to his studies on Huayan and his dissemination of Huayan.

Master Hongyi's Huayan practice is primarily documented in his letters, including the records of his studies on the *Huayan Sutra* and his lectures and compilation thereof. An example can be seen in a letter written to Cai Mianyin on December 11, 1924, at Qingfu Temple in Wenzhou:

In addition to one volume of the *Huayan Sutra*, I also take one of the Xingyuanpin biexing as my daily recitation, with a vow for each. Besides, I transcribe the Jingxing pin, Shixing pin, and Shihuixiang pin (the Chapter of the 1st Dedication and the 10th Dedication). This has become my regular work and I recite them once every few days.<sup>285</sup>

Another example is the letter to Xia Mianzun written at Jingfeng Temple in Hui'an on the 28th day of the 5th lunar month in 1935, which says:

Since yesterday evening, I have been reciting the Huayan Xingyuan Pin. Someone recites the same sutra and the *Diamond Sutra*, without seeking any reward.<sup>286</sup>

Further evidence can be found in the following letter to Venerable Xingyuan written at Cao'an, a temple in Jinjiang, on the 20th day of the 12th lunar month in 1937:

Over the past few months, I have been dedicated to reading the *Huayan Sutra*.<sup>287</sup>

Moreover, he spoke about his experience of reading and transcribing the *Huayan Sutra* in the article *Breaking Habits* (改习惯). Here is the excerpt:

Attending lectures, studying, copying, and participating in the collective recitation, I also fix my ritual work and do my best to adhere to it. Sometimes I recite the *Lotus Sutra* on bent knees in front of the image of the Buddha every morning; sometimes I recite the *Huayan Sutra*; sometimes the *Diamond Sutra*, and sometimes I recite the Buddha's name more than 10,000 times.<sup>288</sup>

A dozen years witnessed the correspondences cited above, all of which recount Master Hongyi's experience of reading and reciting the works related to Huayan, such as

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<sup>285</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:338.

<sup>286</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:314.

<sup>287</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:456.

<sup>288</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Gai xiguan" 改习惯 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 560.

the *Huayan Sutra*, *Xingyuanpin biexing* 行愿品别行, and *Xingyuan pin* 行愿品. Also, he transcribed sutras, including *Jingxing pin* 净行品, *Shixing pin* 十行品, and *Shi huixiang pin* 十回向品.

Reading and transcribing the *Huayan Sutra* himself, Master Hongyi also answered the questions of the Buddhist followers with passages in *Huayan Sutra* and encouraged them to learn and recite this sutra. In 1925, for example, he cited the *Huayan puxian xingyuanpin* 华严普贤行愿品 to explain how to practice the Bodhisattva Path, and he also referred to the *Wanshan tonggui ji* 万善同归集 by Master Yongming Yanshou to encourage the Buddhist followers to develop the Mahāyāna mind.<sup>289</sup>

As an intellectual of the Republican period, Master Hongyi's taking refuge in Buddhism was driven by his faith and even transcended faith itself. Therefore, his study of the *Huayan Sutra* was not limited to reading and transcribing. Instead, he studied it from the standpoint of Buddhist thought and doctrines and then promoted Buddhism based on such studies. Thus, Master Hongyi's letters served as a record revealing his evaluation of Huayan treatises and his proofreading and research. As stated in the letter to Hu Zhaifan written at the Kaiyuan Temple in the 7th lunar month in 1932, "In addition, the *Puxian Xingyuanpin biexing shuchao* 普贤行愿品别行疏钞, five volumes in total, is so profound that I would like to recommend it to you."<sup>290</sup> Another example is the letter to Cai Mianyin written at Qingfu Temple in Wenzhou on the 7th day of the 9th lunar month

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<sup>289</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:363.

<sup>290</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:400.

in 1929: “*Tanxuan ji* 探玄记 of Master Xianshou is a very concise work.”<sup>291</sup> He referred to it again in the correspondence with Cai on the 14th day of the 1st lunar month in 1925:

If you intend to study the *Huayan Sutra* thoroughly, in addition to the *Qingliang shuchao* 清凉疏钞, you should read Master Zhiyan’s *Souxuan ji* 搜玄记... and Master Xianshou’s *Tanxuan ji* 探玄记... Besides the *Qingliang shuchao* 清凉疏钞, they are all commentaries left by the masters of the Huayan school. Master Xianshou inherited Master Zhiyan’s lineage, with a shared origin handed down for generations.<sup>292</sup>

As can be seen, Master Hongyi gave a very high evaluation and paid much attention to the Huayan commentaries by the successive patriarchs of the Huayan school in China. Not only did he study Huayan commentaries, in particular the works of Zhiyan, Xianshou, and Chengguan, but he also recommended them to others as a bibliography to study Huayan. Concerning the records of Master Hongyi’s editing and revision of Huayan’s Commentaries, he mentioned it in a letter to Cai Mianyin, written at Zhaoxian Temple in Hangzhou on the 7th day of the 4th lunar month, 1926:

Since the carved edition of the exegetical collection is an abridged version (I have made a supplement to the Shi Huixiangpin and now request your revision.), I want to borrow the Supplementary Canon (Xuzang Jing) from you to collate them.<sup>293</sup>

Another example is the letter to Xia Mianzun written at Qingfu Temple in Wenzhou on the 28th day of the 4th lunar month in 1930, which said:

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<sup>291</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:345.

<sup>292</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:340.

<sup>293</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:341.

Now everything has been done, except for Xu Weiru's compilation and revision of Huayan shuchao. He asked me to join in his work, so I am expected to keep in touch with him all the time.<sup>294</sup>

From the work of Master Hongyi revising and supplementing Huayan commentaries, his study of Huayan can be seen to transcend the scope of ordinary religious belief. The rigorous attitude of Master Hongyi toward his Huayan research demonstrate him to be a true scholar. This is undoubtedly a result of his profound cultural qualities, but his passion and sense of responsibility for Buddhism led to even more contributions.

Master Hongyi's study of Huayan was not limited to revising and supplementing the Huayan commentaries. He also promoted the *Huayan Sutra* by compiling it into the book *Foxue congshu* 佛学丛书. For example, the book series *Foxue congshu* 佛学丛书 Vol. 1, published at Nanputuo Temple in Xiamen in 1936, contained the content on Huayan, including *Huayan jingxing pin* 华严净行品, *Huayan shi huixiangpin chuzhang* 华严十回向品初章, *Huayan xingyuan pin* 华严行愿品, *Huayan yuanren lun* 华严原人论, *Huayan nianfo sanmei lun* 华严念佛三昧论. Master Hongyi also offered his collection of *Xingyuan pin* 行愿品 in Sanskrit to a Buddhist bookstore so that more copies could be made to circulate.<sup>295</sup> He also exhorted Buddhist followers to learn Huayan and promoted it by giving away books. As stated in a letter to Liu Zhiping written in Xiamen in the winter of 1934:

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<sup>294</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:309.

<sup>295</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:356.

I have copied the Huayanjing guanzizai zhang (enclosed in the letter), one volume of which was transcribed by a benevolent person in the past few years. Please sort it out and mail it.<sup>296</sup>

Another example is the letter to Xia Mianzun written at Keshan Temple in Huian in early lunar March in 1938:

Recently, I have been staying at Hui'an Temple to propagate the Dharma, and I intend to give away ten copies of the Huayan Jilian...<sup>297</sup>

From the letters included in *the Hongyi dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集, we can see that Master Hongyi also promoted Huayan in the form of lectures. For example, in a letter to Gao Wenxian written at the Wenling Nursing Home in Quanzhou on the 23rd day of the 2nd lunar month in 1939, a detailed list of his lectures is given, mainly:

On the 19th day of the 2nd lunar month, at Duolian Temple, I delivered a lecture on the Dusong Fahuajing Zhi Linggan Shiji (Records of Stimulus and Response upon the Recitation of *Huayan Sutra*);

In 1938, from the 1st day to the 10th of lunar January, I gave a lecture on the Huayan Puxian Xingyuan Pin at Cao'an Temple;

From the 1st day to the 10th of lunar February at the Chengtian Temple, I lectured on the Huayan Puxian xingyuan pin;

From the 1st day to the 3rd of lunar March, in the Qingchen Hall, I gave a lecture on the Huayan Dayi;

On the 10th day of the same month, I held a lecture on the Huayan wujiao dayi at the school's invitation.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:297.

<sup>297</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:319.

<sup>298</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:410.



The above is the main story of Master Hongyi's promotion of the *Huayan Sutra*. In terms of the content, it is mainly a general introduction to Huayan and an explanation of the sutra. The doctrines are primarily expounded based on the *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品, which is the leading characteristic of Venerable Hongyi's Huayan thought and also reflects his idea of "taking Huayan as the realm, precepts as the practice, and reciting the Buddha's names as the fruit."

### **7.3 The Characteristics of Master Hongyi's *Huayan* Thought**

Regarding the characteristics of Master Hongyi's Huayan thought, I intend to focus on the following respects: Venerable Hongyi's interpretation of the *Huayan Sutra* in various versions, the teaching taxonomy of the *Huayan Sutra*, the learning sequence of Huayan Studies, and the *Huayan Sutra* and Pure Land thought, the *Huayan Sutra* and Vinaya thought. By analyzing these factors, I hope to provide a comprehensive, all-encompassing analysis of the characteristics of Venerable Hongyi's Huayan thought.

#### **7.3.1 The Versions of *Huayan Sutra***

Concerning the integrated edition of the *Huayan Sutra*, it is generally believed that there are three versions rendered in Chinese, namely, *Jin's Sixty-fascicle Huayan Sutra*, *Tang's Eighty-fascicle Huayan Sutra*, *Zhenyuan's Forty-fascicle Huayan Sutra*. Academically, *Zhenyuan's Forty-fascicle Huayan Sutra* has always been considered a part of the *Huayan Sutra* published later. According to *Hongyi dashi quanji* 弘一大师全

集, Master Hongyi had different interpretations of the version of the *Huayan Sutra*. As stated in *Huayan jilian sanbaixu* 华严集联三百序:

There were two translations of the *Huayan Sutra*. One was the version finished in the Jin dynasty in 60 volumes with 34 chapters, and the other was completed in the Tang dynasty in 80 volumes with 39 chapters. There were more than thirty free-standing short translations of the *Huayan Sutra*. The one called *Puxian xingyuanpin* 普贤行愿品 in 40 volumes, translated in the Zhenyuan period of the Tang dynasty, has been the most widespread. It is also believed to be another translation of the Chapter of *Ru fajie pin* 入法界品, which is included in the complete sutra in both the Jin and the Tang dynasty versions.<sup>299</sup>

Master Hongyi recognized two translations of the *Huayan Sutra*, namely *Jin's Sixty-fascicle Huayan* and *Tang's Eighty-fascicle Huayan*. In terms of content, the *Huayan Sutra* can be divided into three categories, namely, the free-standing short translations (Chinese: *zhipin* 支品), the original or complete translations (Chinese: *benbu* 本部) that contain some free-standing sections, and the *Huayan*-related translations (Chinese: *juanshujing* 眷属经). Since the *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品 is attributed to the Chapter of *Ru fajie pin* 入法界品, which was translated in the Jin (285–420) and the Tang (618–907) dynasties, it cannot be viewed as the complete works of the *Huayan Sutra*. Instead, it is attributed to the free-standing short translations, including *Dousha jing* 兜沙经, *Jianbei yiqie zhide jing* 渐备一切智德经, and *Rulai xingxian jing* 如来兴现经. That is why Venerable Hongyi asserts that “there are two translations of the *Huayan Sutra*” and “over thirty free-standing short translations of the *Huayan Sutra*.” Master Hongyi had his own unique view on the versions of the *Huayan Sutra*.

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<sup>299</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “*Huayan jilian sanbai xu*”, 8:623.

### 7.3.2 Master Hongyi's Doctrinal Taxonomy of *Huayan Sutra*

Doctrinal taxonomy is a method of classifying that intends to analyze the ideas and theories of Indian Buddhism according to the stages of the Buddha's teachings or their scale of depth. It reveals Chinese Buddhism's reflections upon and interpretations and summaries of Indian Buddhism and reflects the characteristics of Chinese Buddhism. Different ways of doctrinal taxonomy manifest the ideological inclination of those who classify them. The doctrinal taxonomy of the *Huayan Sutra* existed before the establishment of the Huayan school. For example, it was classified under the teaching of Sudden Enlightenment by Master Huiguan, Master Sengrou (431–494), and Master Huiguang (468–537). It was also categorized under the teaching of Maintaining the Dharma-Wheel or the teaching of Practice and Observing by Master Paramārtha (499–569). Besides, Master Anlin (507–583) attributed it to the teaching of Abiding Truth. In the Sui dynasty, Master Jingying Huiyuan (523–592) classified it as teaching that refutes characteristics or the teaching of Reality.

Among various categories of teaching, the taxonomy of Master Zhizhe (also known as Zhiyi) from the Tiantai school exerted a profound impact on later generations. In the doctrinal classification scheme of "Five Periods and Eight Teachings" initiated by Master Zhizhe, the *Huayan Sutra* was ranked the Flower Ornament Period, regarded as when the sun shines on the mountains. This doctrine mainly focuses on the Perfect Teaching and gives attention to specialized teachings. As the founder of the Tiantai school, Master Zhizhe was an advocate of the Lotus Flower. In his doctrinal classification scheme, he elevated the *Lotus Sutra* and *Nirvana Sutra* to the highest realm, regarding

them as the purest and the best of Perfect Teachings, at the top position of all the Buddha-Dharma.

However, in the doctrinal classification system of the patriarchs of the Huayan school, the *Huayan Sutra* gained an unusual status. Master Zhiyan did not establish a unified theory of teaching taxonomy. He asserted that “there are five differentiated teachings according to the Buddha’s teachings,”<sup>300</sup> classifying the Buddha-Dharma into five categories.

Compared with Master Zhiyan’s theories of doctrinal taxonomy, Master Fazang’s appear more systematic and are thus the most representative teachings of the Huayan school. His theories of doctrinal taxonomy can be summarized as “Five Divisions and Ten Schools.” Five Divisions refer to the teachings of Hīnayāna, elementary teachings of Mahāyāna, the final teachings of Mahāyāna, the teachings of Sudden Enlightenment and Perfect Teachings. The Ten Schools are namely, the teaching that the self and dharmas are both real, the teaching that dharmas exist but the self does not, the teaching that dharmas are without past and future, the teaching that the present world has both provisional and real dharmas, the teaching that all worldly things are illusory and the Buddhist reality is true, the teaching that all things are only names, the teaching that all things are empty, the teaching that there is an unchanging truth, which is not empty to be the essence of all things, the teaching that all things and their perception are to be gotten rid of, and the teaching that all things exist in perfect harmony and mutual interrelation. In the doctrinal classification system, the *Huayan Sutra* is attributed to Perfect Teaching, “a distinct teaching of one vehicle,” and the teaching holding that

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<sup>300</sup> “Huayanjing neizhang mendeng zakong muzhang” 華嚴經內章門等雜孔目章, chapter 1, in *Taisho*, vol. 45 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 537.

“all things exist in perfect harmony and mutual interrelation.” From this, we can see the superior status that the *Huayan Sutra* enjoys.

Master Hongyi did not write any specific article to introduce his views on Huayan taxonomy. Still, his understanding of the *Huayan Sutra* can be perceived in the article *Fojiaode yuanliu ji zongpai* 佛教的源流及宗派:

The Buddha’s teachings can be classified under five periods: the first period is when the Buddha expounded the Mahāyāna teachings, including the *Huayan Sutra*, to those of great capacity. These teachings are so profound that they are not accessible to some disciples.<sup>301</sup>

We can see that Master Hongyi wholly followed the “Five-period” classification scheme of Master Zhizhe, attributing the *Huayan Sutra* to the teaching of the first period. Meanwhile, he maintained that the *Huayan Sutra* belongs to Perfect teaching.” As he argues:

It (referred to as the Huayan school) was established by Master Xianhou (also known as Fazang) in the Tang dynasty and was promoted by Master Qingliang (also known as Chengguan). Since it expounds the teachings of “four realms of reality” and “ten profound approaches,” with extensive and perfect theories, it is honored as “Perfect Teaching.”<sup>302</sup>

It remains unclear whether “Perfect Teaching” here follows the classification scheme of the Tiantai school or that of the Huayan school, but it is ascertained that the doctrines of the Huayan school are classified in the light of “Perfect Teaching.” In addition, based on the spreading influence and magnitude of the *Huayan Sutra* in the Buddhist community, he commented that “the teaching of Huayan is the most extensive,

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<sup>301</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Fojiaode yuanliu ji zongpai” 佛教的源流及宗派 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 566.

<sup>302</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Fojiaode yuanliu ji zongpai”, 7:566.

with the title of “Ocean of Doctrines” in all the Buddha-Dharma.<sup>303</sup> This statement reveals the significance Venerable Hongyi attached to the *Huayan Sutra*.

### 7.3.3 The Learning Stages of *Huayan Sutra*

According to Master Hongyi’s doctrinal taxonomy, the *Huayan Sutra*, belonging to “Perfect Teaching,” is honored as the “Ocean of Doctrines” in all the Buddha-Dharma, revealing its essential status. Therefore, the teachings of Huayan should naturally be learned. Huayan studies constitute a vast system that contains complex and profound doctrines. How can their essence be comprehended? What are the learning sequences of the teachings of Huayan? In this regard, Master Hongyi wrote an article entitled *Huayanjing dusong yanxi rumen cidi* 华严经读诵研习入门次第 to introduce the topic.

According to the text, Master Hongyi divided reciting and learning into two different parts and introduced them separately. There are two distinct groups in reciting: those who prefer concision and those who are vigorous learners. Those who prefer concision are advised to read the *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品 version translated in the Zhenyuan period or the *Jingxing pin* 净行品 chapter in the *Huayan Sutra*, both of which can be treated as daily duties. The reason why Master Hongyi recommended *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品 can be found in the following citation:

Puxian xingyuan pin (普贤行愿品) is the key to accessing Huayan, the essential to practice Huayan. Its content is concise but carries abundant connotations, which earns it considerable merit. Being concise in content

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<sup>303</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Fojiao zongpai dagai” 佛教宗派大概 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 572.

and profound in meaning, it deserves praise and preservation, practice and recognition.<sup>304</sup>

As for why Master Hongyi advised that *Jingxing pin* 净行品 be included in the daily work, it is because this chapter “leads to the ultimate goal.” Another reason is as follows:

Full of compassion to sentient beings, in every single instant. With compassion for sentient beings in every single moment, Self-attachment ceases by itself rather than by external eradication. In this case, although one fails to truly benefit sentient beings, inclusiveness of mind transcends others. It is a unique and skillful approach, and no other can surpass it.<sup>305</sup>

In addition to these two works, Master Hongyi also listed some chapters in the Tang translations of the *Huayan Sutra in Eighty Fascicles* (*Pusa wenming pin* 菩萨问明品), *Xianshou pin* 贤首品, *Chufaxin gongde pin* 初发心功德品, *Shixing pin* 十行品, *Shihuixiang chuhuixiang zhang* 十回向品初回向章, *Shiren pin* 十忍品, *Rulai chuxian pin* 如来出现品. One could choose to read any or some of these. He also explained which recitations to adopt. For example, one is supposed to read the edition issued by the Fazang Temple in Zhuanqiao, Yangzhou, if intending to go through the entire sutra. When the reciting reaches Vol. 59, *Lishijian pin* 离世间品, he recommended shifting to the chapter *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品 translated in the Zhenyuan period. This way was considered more comprehensive. Those who were vigorous learners could do a complementary reading of the Jin’s translation of the Sixty-fascicle *Huayan Sutra* based on the works listed above. The Jinling edition was strongly recommended.

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<sup>304</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Huayanjing dusong yanxi rumen cidì” 华严经读诵研习入门次第 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 1 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 304.

<sup>305</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Huayanjing dusong yanxi”, 1:304.

In terms of learners, they were also classified into two types: those who preferred concision and those who were vigorous researchers. For those preferring concision, he advised reading *Huayan ganying yuanqi zhuan* 华严感应缘起传 (*Yangzhou edition*), *Huayan xuantan diqibu leipin* 华严悬谈第七部类品, and *Diba chuanyi gantong* 第八传译感通 (*Jinling edition*). Those aiming for extensive learning could read *Huayan tunhai ji* 华严吞海集 (*Jinling edition*) and the Tang's translation of the *Eighty-fascicle Huayan Sutra*. Those desiring to understand the gist of the last volume of *Puxian xingyuanpin* 普贤行愿品 could read *the Puxian xingyuanpin disishi juanshu jielu* 普贤行愿品第四十卷疏节录. For motivated researchers who wanted to understand the gist of the *Huayan Sutra*, Master Hongyi recommended the documents in the "Huayan Division," *Dazang jiyao mulu tiyao* 大藏辑要目录提要 as favorable choices.

Judging from *Huayanjing songdu yanxi rumen cidi* 华严经诵读研习入门次第, Master Hongyi's approach to studying the *Huayan Sutra* was primarily based on the group of faithful followers who had faith as their object. The study method he advocated was mainly recitation. The reading texts were centered on the Buddhist canons, including three translation versions of the *Huayan Sutra*, from the Jin dynasty, the Tang dynasty, and the Zhenyuan period, respectively.

In studying the *Huayan Sutra*, the commentaries on the *Huayan Sutra* by the patriarchs of the Chinese Huayan school could also be relevant, as reflected in his letters. For example, on the 6th day of lunar November 1921, in a letter to Wang Xinzhan written at Qingfu Temple in Wenzhou, he wrote:



A Commentary on Huayan nianfo sanmei, although fifteen-pages long, is concise in its meaning. Have you been studying it yet? Any Huayan practitioner is expected to be familiar with this commentary first.<sup>306</sup>

Another example is in a letter to Cai Mianyin written at Qingfu Temple in Wenzhou on the day of the Winter solstice of 1923:

It has been expounded in a detailed way. After finishing Jingtu Shiyao, it is better to study Huayan Shuchao. Besides, A Commentary on Huayan Nianfo Sanmei by Peng Erlin was also recommended to learn.<sup>307</sup>

### 7.3.4 *Huayan Sutra* and Pure Land

Master Hongyi advocated the idea of “taking Huayan as the realm, precepts as the practice, and reciting the Buddha’s names as the fruit.” Therefore, there seems to be a gap between his approaches to studying and promoting the *Huayan Sutra* and those of the historical patriarchs of Huayan. From the previous analysis, reading and reciting the two translations of *Huayan Sutra* and the *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品 constituted the daily practice of Master Hongyi. In studying and promoting the Huayan school, he also introduced *Huayan nianfo sanmei lun* 华严念佛三昧论, “with an attempt to close the gap, as implied in the *Huayan Sutra*, between the Pure Land in the west and other Buddha-lands.”<sup>308</sup> In his religious practice, he integrated the *Huayan Sutra* with the Pure Land, giving equal importance to reciting the *Huayan Sutra* and recollection of the Buddha 1,000 times or more, which were included in his daily practice. We can see that

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<sup>306</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:332.

<sup>307</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:338.

<sup>308</sup> Gongjun 龚隽, “Hongyi Dashi Huayan sixiang tanjiu ji guixiang” 弘一大师华严思想探究及归向, in *Hongyi Dashi renga yu sixiang lunwenji* 弘一大师人格与思想论文集, ed. Hou Qiudong 侯秋冬 (Taipei: Hongyi dashi jinian xuehui, 2008), 542.

Master Hongyi's way of promoting the *Huayan Sutra* was not confined to preaching its philosophical doctrines but rather included persuading people to practice the Pure Land through his lectures on the *Huayan Sutra*. For example, in *Jingtu famen dayi* 净土法门大意, he wrote,

Pure Land practitioners should recite the *Amitabha Sutra* and always recite the Buddha's name. It is also advisable to recite *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品 for the sake of rebirth there because it is included in the *Huayan Sutra*, the most sublime sutra among the Buddhist canons. The gist of the *Huayan Sutra* is embodied within the 40th volume of *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品. In this section, those who recite the ten great vows of Samantabhadra can obtain all kinds of benefits. When they are about to die, this vow will not be separated from them, leading them to be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss and even become a buddha. Therefore, practitioners of the Pure Land should often recite *Puxian xingyuan pin*.<sup>309</sup>

Master Hongyi regarded *Puxian xingyuan pin of the Huayan Sutra* 华严经·普贤行愿品 as a core, fundamental sutra, as crucial as the *Amitabha Sutra* and reciting the Buddha's name. Reciting it was conducive to accumulating merit to be reborn in the Pure Land. With the help of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's great vows, the practitioners, at their dying moment, could be led to rebirth in the world of Ultimate Bliss and even become a Buddha. This fully resonated with the rebirth theory and the Buddhahood philosophy of the Pure Land school. Therefore, from the perspective of Master Hongyi's thoughts on Huayan and Pure Land,

He was not "enthusiastic about explaining the relationship between Huayan and Pure Land. Nor did he care about the penetration into the meaning of its doctrines as the scholars of doctrinal studies. What he truly cared about was self-cultivation and the missionary work."<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Jingtu famen dayi", 1:305.

<sup>310</sup> Gongjun 龚隼, "Hongyi Dashi Huayan sixiang tanjiu" 弘一大师华严思想探究, (2008), 544.

Master Hongyi's understanding of Huayan thought was also embodied in his Pure Land thought. As stated in *Jingtu famen dayi* 净土法门大意:

The Pure Land practitioners should always develop the Bodhicitta of bearing suffering for sentient beings. Be ready to be committed to benefiting all sentient beings by bearing their pains. The so-called "all sentient beings" are not limited to people from a single county or province but involve the whole world. According to the Buddhist canon, there are inexplicable worlds like this world, in infinite numbers.<sup>311</sup>

The above excerpt revealed Venerable Hongyi's sermon that Pure Land practitioners were expected to arouse the Bodhicitta of bearing sufferings for sentient beings. From the philosophical perspective, the relationship between the Bodhicitta upholder and the suffering bearer in his teachings was a philosophical proposition of "one and many," manifesting the Huayan thought of "one is all" and "all is one." In addition, the description of the number of worlds mentioned above also indicates the Huayan idea of "seeing the whole world from a single flower."

In addition, Master Hongyi often quoted the ideas of the *Huayan Sutra* to answer questions on the Pure Land. As he said in his book *Jingzong wenbian* 净宗问辨:

One reads in the Puxian xingyuan pin in the *Huayan Sutra* 华严经普贤行愿品: When arriving, one will see Amitabha Buddha, Manjushri Bodhisattva, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, and Maitreya Bodhisattva...One will be born in the world of Ultimate Bliss in an instant.<sup>312</sup>

Another example is what he said in the Inscriptions of the *Xiling huayanta xiejing tiji* 西泠华严塔写经题偈:

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<sup>311</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Jingtu famen dayi", 1:305.

<sup>312</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., "Jingzong wenbian", 1:306.

The Ten Great Vows lead to the world of Ultimate Bliss. The *Huayan Sutra* is the key. With the sutra inscribed and carved in stone, the Stupa is to be built to rejuvenate the Buddha-Dharma. I rejoice in the immeasurable merit in it. May my dedication to all sentient beings lead them to the Pure land of Amitabha Buddha.<sup>313</sup>

The above texts exhibit Master Hongyi's propagating of the *Huayan Sutra* and *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品, through which he made efforts to establish the Buddhist followers' confidence in the world of Ultimate Bliss, to persuade them to recite these two works for the sake of rebirth in the Pure Land and the refuge in Amitabha Buddha, and to lead the way to the Pure Land by integrating Huayan with it.

### 7.3.5 *Huayan Sutra* and Vinaya Thought

As the Eleventh Patriarch of the Chinese Vinaya school, Master Hongyi's thought on Vinaya naturally constitutes the core of his ideological system. Citations of the *Huayan Sutra* can also be found in his Vinaya thought. In the translation of the *Huayan Sutra* done in the Jin dynasty, there is a description in *Shidi Pin* 十地品 that talks about the Ten Unwholesome Paths and the Ten Wholesome Paths:

Of the Ten Unwholesome Paths, the most severe are causes for the realm of hell, the average degrees are causes for the realm of animals, and the least severe are causes for the realm of hungry ghosts.

The karmic offense of killing can cause living beings to descend into the realms of hell, animals, and hungry ghosts. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, a short lifespan. Second, extensive illness.

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<sup>313</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “西泠华严塔写经题偈” Xiling huayanta xiejing tiji in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 212.

The karmic offense of stealing also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, they are poverty-stricken. Second, their wealth is held in common, and they remain unable to use it freely.

The karmic offense of sexual misconduct also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, their spouses are not faithful. Second, they acquire retainers that fail to be responsive to their wishes.

The karmic offense of lying also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, they are often slandered. Second, they are constantly deceived by others.

The karmic offense of divisive speech also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, their retainers desert them. Second, their clans remain inferior.

The karmic offense of harsh speech also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, they will always hear disagreeable sounds. Second, they are constantly involved in disputes.

The karmic offense of frivolous speech also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, their utterances are neither believed nor accepted by others. Second, whatever they utter is perceived by others to be deficient in clarity.

The karmic offense of covetousness also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, they are beset by many desires. Second, they are insatiable.

The karmic offense of anger and hatred causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, they are constantly subjected to fault-finding by others. Second, they are constantly subjected to torment and trouble by others.

The karmic offense of false views also causes living beings to fall into the three evil paths. If they gain rebirth into the human realm, they encounter two kinds of retribution: First, they are always reborn into a household ruled by wrong views. Second, their minds tend toward flattery and deviousness.

Sons of the Buddha, so are the Ten Unwholesome Paths that constitute the causes and conditions for all sorts of sufferings of sentient beings.<sup>314</sup>

The above description reveals the ten wholesome karmic acts and their results in *the Huayan Sutra*. In his book *Preliminaries of the Buddhist Studies (Fofa Xuexi Chubu 佛法学习初步)*, Venerable Hongyi explained the causal relationship between good and evil in light of the citation above. He also listed the results corresponding to the ten types of unwholesome deeds and wholesome ones. It is believed that: killing living beings leads to a short lifespan and poor health conditions; stealing leads to poverty and the inability to use one's wealth freely; sexual misconduct leads to an unfaithful marriage and the failure to have ideal retinues; lying leads to frequent slanders and deception from others; divisive speech leads to a separated family and an inferior clan; harsh speech leads to constant unpleasant sounds and verbal disputations; frivolous speech leads to unreliability and inaccuracy of one's words; covetousness leads to lack of contentment and constant desires; anger and hatred lead to the troubles of fault-finding and torment by others; false views lead to rebirth in a family subject to wrong views and the arising of a mind tending to flattery. The ten wholesome karmic paths are the opposite of the ten wholesome karmic paths, i.e., the ten good deeds. The specific forms of the ten wholesome paths are explicitly expounded according to the *Huayan Sutra*: abstaining from killing refers to saving life; abstaining from stealing is trying to be generous; abstaining from sexual misconduct is to follow the path of Brahmacharya; abstaining from lying is delivering honest words; abstaining from the divisive speech is maintaining

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<sup>314</sup> “Dafanguangfo huayanjing” 大方廣佛華嚴經 [Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra], chapter 25, in *Taisho*, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Dazang chuban zhushi huishe, 1988), 549.

a relationship in harmony; abstaining from harsh speech is giving comforting words; abstaining from frivolous speech is providing useful words; abstaining from covetousness is harboring a detached mind; abstaining from malice is cultivating loving-kindness; abstaining from false views is having a proper understanding of cause and effect.<sup>315</sup>

Table 3: Venerable Hongyi’s explanation of the cause-and-effect of the ten wholesome deeds and the ten unwholesome deeds

十恶行 Ten Unwholesome Deeds		十善行 Ten Wholesome Deeds	
1. 杀生 killing	短命多病 a short life span and poor health condition	1. 不杀生 abstaining from killing	救护生命 saving life
2. 偷盗 stealing	贫穷其财不得自在 poverty and the inability to use one’s wealth freely	2. 不偷盗 abstaining from stealing	给施资财 being generous
3. 邪淫 sexual misconduct	妻不贞良不得随意眷属 an unfaithful marriage and the failure to have ideal retinues	3. 不邪淫 abstaining from sexual misconduct	遵守梵行 cultivating a Spiritual Life
4. 妄言 lying	多被诽谤为他所诳 frequent slanders and deception from others	4. 不妄语 abstaining from lying	说诚实言 delivering honest words
5. 两舌 divisive speech	眷属乖离亲族弊恶 a separated family and an inferior clan	5. 不两舌 abstaining from divisive speech	和合彼此 maintaining a relationship in harmony

<sup>315</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Fofa xuexi chubu” 佛法學習初步 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 574.

十恶行 Ten Unwholesome Deeds		十善行 Ten Wholesome Deeds	
6.恶口 harsh speech	常闻恶声言多争讼 constant unpleasant sounds and verbal disputations	6.不恶口 abstaining from harsh speech	善言安慰 giving comforting words
7.绮语 frivolous speech	言无人受语不明了 unreliability and inaccuracy of one's words	7.不绮语 abstaining from frivolous speech	作利益语 providing useful words
8.悭贪 covetousness	心不知足多欲无厌 lack of contentment and constant desires	8.不悭贪 abstaining from covetousness	常怀舍心 harboring a detached mind
9.瞋恚 anger and hatred	常被他人求其长短恒被于他 人之所恼害 troubles of fault-finding and torment by others	9.不瞋恚 abstaining from anger and hatred	恒生慈愍 cultivating loving- kindness
10.邪见 false views	生邪见家其心谄曲 rebirth in a family subject to wrong views and the arising of a mind tending to flattery	10.不邪见 abstaining from false views	正信因果 having a right understanding of cause and effect

Both the ten wholesome deeds and ten unwholesome deeds are described quite extensively in the Buddhist texts, which vary according to the themes expounded. In his book *Fofa xuexi chubu* 佛法学习初步, Master Hongyi explained cause-and-effect in the light of the ten wholesome deeds and ten unwholesome deeds, based entirely on the *Huayan Sutra*. The integration of the Perfect Teaching of Mahāyāna Buddhism and the



Vinaya thought is considered to be how Master Hongyi applied the philosophy in the *Huayan Sutra*.

In summary, Master Hongyi always attached great importance to studying the *Huayan Sutra* in his monastic life. He was well-versed in it and had extensive knowledge of the works of the successive patriarchs of the Chinese Huayan school, which he recommended as learning material to his monastic fellows and laypeople, persuading them to practice the *Huayan Sutra*. In terms of religious practice, Master Hongyi also regarded this very sutra, especially the section of *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品, as his regular work. He attached equal importance to the *Huayan Sutra* and reciting the Buddha's names. In addition to transcribing it, he compiled the *Huayan jilian* 华严集联 and gave it away to his Buddhist fellows to promote Huayan. He lectured on scriptures such as *Huayan dayi* 华严大意 and *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品, and participated in the compilation, revision, and publication of the commentaries on the *Huayan Sutra*. In terms of ideology, based on the understanding of the *Huayan Sutra*, he classified it as Perfect Teaching of Mahāyāna Buddhism, acknowledging the profundity and subtlety, vastness, and perfect interfusion of the Huayan teachings. However, in promoting the *Huayan Sutra*, he was not keen on shedding light on this sutra but combined it with the Pure Land thought, unlike the patriarchs of the Huayan school. He assured the Buddhist believers in the world of Ultimate Bliss through the *Huayan Sutra*, particularly its chapter of *Puxian xingyuan pin* 普贤行愿品, and encouraged them to study it. This also reflects his idea of “taking Huayan as the realm and reciting the Buddha's names as the fruit.”

## **CHAPTER 8: SOME OTHER THOUGHTS OF MASTER HONGYI**

In addition to his studies of the Buddha-Dharma and promotion of Nanshan Vinaya, Master Hongyi adapted Buddhism to the real world in light of the Buddhist situation and society in turmoil during his nearly 30-year monkhood. For example, he initiated Buddhist academies to cultivate monks with a higher level of Buddhist proficiency, which helped present a better image of Buddhism. Employing painting, he, together with Feng Zikai, applied the Buddhist spirit of abstinence from killing and compassion to the practice of protecting living beings. When the country suffered the war caused by Japanese imperialist aggression, he linked Buddhist prayers with patriotism, reflecting his concern for the Chinese nations and patriotism. To develop a full picture of Master Hongyi, we need to analyze his educational career, educational thoughts, his idea of caring for living beings, and his thoughts of loving Buddhism and his motherland.

### **8.1 Master Hongyi's Thoughts on Monastic Education**

As Buddhism spread to the east, Buddhist canonical texts were translated during the Wei (260–265), Jin (265–420), and Southern and Northern dynasties (420–589). Later, the Sui (581–618) and Tang dynasties (618–907) witnessed the emergence of Chinese Buddhist schools. As these schools flourished, they came to represent the foundation of Chinese culture. That being said, Buddhism began to decline after the Yuan (1206–1368) and Ming dynasties (1368–1644), when Buddhism came to be considerably

corrupted. At the end of the Qing dynasty (1636–1912), driven by the reformists and bureaucrats represented by Kang Youwei (1858–1927) and Zhang Zhidong (1837–1909), Emperor Guangxu (1871–1908) issued the "Miaochan Xingxue" 庙产兴学<sup>316</sup> decree, which abolished lewd shrines and converted them into Confucian temples. This policy involved confiscating seven-tenths of the property of various county temples and converting it into schools, while the remaining three-tenths were allocated for the residence of monks and Taoist priests. The Japanese Buddhist community also set up monasteries and Sangha in concessions in Shanghai and Beijing and carried out missionary activities in the coastal areas of China. Besides, they set up Japanese language schools in Hangzhou, Nanjing, Suzhou, and Quanzhou to spread Japanese Buddhism and the concept of slavery.<sup>317</sup> Suffering domestic turmoil and foreign aggression, Chinese Buddhism was at a critical life-and-death juncture. Buddhism collapsed and was almost on the verge of extinction during this period. Few monks could understand the Buddhist doctrines because most were busy engaging themselves chanting for the dead. As a result, Buddhism became a religion for the dead. This can be seen from the prevailing saying:

If there's no other option, become a monk. A monk will sell his sutras when he sees a profit. Nine out of ten nuns are prostitutes, and the remaining one is a lunatic. Monks take up most of those who fall into hell.<sup>318</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> At the end of the Qing dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, due to the lack of understanding of Buddhism by some intellectuals and government officials and the fact that local tyrants and evil gentry coveted temple property, temple property was annexed in the name of establishing schools, resulting in the destruction and occupation of temple property. A wave of persecution of Buddhism occurred, and monks were ordered to disrobe.

<sup>317</sup> Xin Ping 忻平, "Jindai Riben jingtu zhenzong dongxi benyuansipai duihua chuanjiao shulun" 近代日本净土真宗东西本愿寺派对华传教述论, *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 vol. 2 (1999), 255.

<sup>318</sup> Nogami Shunjō, *Zhongguo fojiao tongshi* 中国佛教通史, trans. Zheng Qinren 郑钦仁 (Taipei: Mutong chubanshe, 1978), 160.

The social status of Buddhists was on the slide, and the Sangha became increasingly decadent. It was said that when monks become narrow-minded, ignorant and incompetent, Buddhism would begin to descend.<sup>319</sup> Even when Master Hongyi was about to become a monk, a friend sent a letter to dissuade him from giving up the idea of “not to be a human being, but be a monk.”<sup>320</sup> From this, we can see that people did not treat Buddhist monks as “human beings” at the time.

As a promoter of the New Culture Movement and one of the rare senior intellectuals in the Buddhist community, Master Hongyi could not remain indifferent to the decline of Buddhism. It was incumbent upon the intellectual monks of his generation to make a radical change. They were expected to restore the image of the teachers of Devas and humans and give full play to the social role that Buddhism should have. To reverse its decline, Buddhism had to revitalize itself through education. Failing to do so would have likely resulted in the collapse of the foundation of the monastery. Establishing a Buddhist academy and developing Buddhist education not only would resist the movement of “building schools with temple property” but could also safeguard monastic property and Buddhist interests. At the same time, these measures helped cultivate talents for Buddhism, reshaped its public image, and played a social role for Buddhism.

The most influential contributor to monastic education in the Republic of China was Master Taixu. He founded Wuchang Buddhist Academy, Minnan Buddhist Academy, Bailin Institute, affiliated with Peking World Buddhist Studies Center

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<sup>319</sup> Yang Wenhui 杨文会, “Bore boluomiduo hui yanshuo” 般若波罗蜜多会演说 in *Yangrenshan ji* 杨仁山集, ed. Huang Xianian 黄夏年 (Beijing: zhongguo shuihui kexue chubanshe, 1995), 21.

<sup>320</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Nanmin shinian zhi mengying” 南闽十年之梦影 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 202.

(focusing on Chinese and English), and the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Dharma Institute, affiliated with the World Buddhist Studies Center, and the Pali Tripitaka Institute in Daxingshan Temple in Xi'an. Concerning his Buddhist education practice, he not only paid attention to the study of cultural knowledge but also emphasized the cultivation of monks' discipline and morality. He reckoned:

Precepts are essential. Among the precepts intended for the seven groups of disciples, those for bhikkhus are the foremost, distinguishing monks from the laypeople. They are also the reason why monks can uphold Buddhism. Therefore, the special nature of the Sangha lies in the discipline! ... Therefore, the community of Sangha are expected to pay due attention to precepts. It should be noted that a Buddhist disciple cannot be called so if he has no faith in Buddhism even though he is versed in the Buddhist doctrines. He will also fail to maintain the role as the Gem of Sangha, if he, though having faith in Buddhism, does not uphold any precepts.<sup>321</sup>

He also repeatedly emphasized that “the Buddhist precepts are the lifeline for Buddhism to establish the Sangha.”<sup>322</sup> And this was exactly what Master Hongyi paid attention to and what he practiced in his monastic life. Because of this, at the enthronement ceremony of Venerable Changxing at Nanputuo Temple in December 1932, Master Taixu said,

Master Hongyi was the foremost in observing precepts in Chinese Buddhism. His morality and personality were admired by the whole country, whether people knew him in person or not. He was considered the model for Chinese monks in modern times. This is what we are happy to see.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Tai Xu 太虚, “Fojiaode jiaoshi jiaofa he jinhoude jianshe,” 佛教的教史教法和今后的建设, *Haichaoyin* 海潮音 vol. 14, no. 3 (1933): 9.

<sup>322</sup> Tai Xu 太虚, “Xin yu rongguan” 新与融贯, *Haichaoyin* 海潮音 vol. 18, no. 9 (1937):10.

<sup>323</sup> Tai Xu 太虚, “Changxing Fashi ren nanputuo zhuchi” 常惺法师任南普陀住持, *Xiandai Fojiao* 现代佛教 vol. 5, no. 8 (1933): 10.

Master Hongyi's practice and understanding of the precepts paved the way for him to make his due contributions to monastic education, shaping his philosophy of monastic education.

### **8.1.1 Master Hongyi's Commitment to Monastic Education**

Concerning Master Hongyi's commitment to the promotion of Buddhism, we can see that laypeople and the monastic members were his target audience. He conducted his teaching in two ways, face-to-face and by letter. His preaching venues included Buddhist temples for monks and nuns and Buddhist educational institutions. Considering Master Hongyi's teaching practice, monastic education could be understood in a broad and narrow sense. In a broad sense, monastic education meant the recipients of education are monastic members, no matter the method or venue. In a narrow sense, monastic education was confined to Buddhist educational institutions (such as Buddhist academies and Buddhist centers) that cultivate ordained disciples. Monastic education was a systematic Buddhist education established by Buddhist educational institutions to develop Buddhist talents. Therefore, the educational thought of Master Hongyi discussed in this chapter was limited to the Dharma education he gave to monks at Buddhist educational institutions.

The educational commitment of Master Hongyi is partly recorded in *Hongyi dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集 and *Hongyi fashi nianpu* 弘一法师年谱), compiled by Lin Ziqing. Fully grasping his educational contribution to Buddhist education requires a clear review of it. Overall, the educational commitment of Master Hongyi was mainly made in

Fujian, where he spent the latter half of his monkhood. Based on the records in *Hongyi dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集 and *Hongyi fashi nianpu* 弘一法师年谱, here is a summary of the educational commitment of Master Hongyi:

According to Master Hongyi's conversation in Buddhist Yangzheng Academy 养正院, he first went to Nanmin in November of the 17th year of the Republic of China (1928). His visit there was triggered by his acquaintance with Venerable Xingyuan, Venerable Zhifeng, and Venerable Daxing of Xiamen Nanputuo Temple, when he, together with his old friends You Xiyin and Xie Guoliang, was travelling to Siam (Thailand). Unexpectedly, he was forced to stay in Xiamen. During his stay, he talked with Venerable Zhifeng about the curriculum provision of Minnan Buddhist College and shared his own opinions as a reference for curriculum reform at the college. This can also be considered the first engagement of Master Hongyi in the area of Buddhist education. From this start, he commenced preaching the Dharma and educating Buddhist talents in southern Fujian for more than ten years.

In October 1929, Venerable Hongyi paid a second visit to Nanputuo Temple and wrote the book *Beizhixun* 悲智训 for the students of Minnan Buddhist College:

If a person has compassion but no wisdom, he is an ordinary being at best. If a person is endowed with compassion and wisdom, he is called a bodhisattva. I see all of you are of great compassion. What you are expected to do is to work harder and be industrious seekers of wisdom. Wisdom is premised on precepts and concentration.<sup>324</sup>

This was his admonishment for the monks receiving educations. This could also be regarded as the earliest teaching of Venerable Hongyi to monks at Buddhist colleges.

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<sup>324</sup> Lin Ziqing 林子青, *Hongyi Dashi nianpu yu yimo* 弘一大师年谱与遗墨 (Changchun: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 2010), 178.

In the 1<sup>9</sup>th year of the Republic of China (1930), Master Hongyi went from Xuefeng Temple in Nan'an to Chengtian Temple in Quanzhou. At the same time, Venerable Xingyuan founded the Yuetai Buddhist Academy Research Society. Pleased to see its establishment, Master Hongyi taught the young monks the approach of writing calligraphy and presented the monk demonstrating academic excellence in the final exam of Yuetai Academy with his calligraphic work, which reads, “take precepts as the teacher.”<sup>325</sup>

In 1931, Master Hongyi moved from Jinshan Temple to Wulei Temple, “wishing to find a Nanshan Vinaya Academy on the top of the mountain, specializing in the promotion of preceptI. to give a speech on the three major divisions of Nanshan precepts,”<sup>326</sup> However, he left in a hurry due to a disagreement with Venerable Qilian, the abbot of Wulei Temple.

In 1933, Buddhism encountered the problems of lax Buddhist precepts, violation of precepts, and the loss of value placed on the religious community. As a response, and at the invitation of Venerable Zhuanwu of Kaiyuan Temple in Quanzhou, Master Hongyi assembled more than ten educated monks to set up Nanshan Vinaya Academy in the Zunsheng Hall of Kaiyuan Temple. After that, he published the article “Monks of Nanshan Vinaya Academy: The Aspiration for Learning Vinaya.”

In 1934, at the request of Director Changxing, Master Hongyi came to Minnan Buddhist Academy to reorganize monastic education. Yet in his opinion, it was not the right time for reform because he was not fully prepared for the implementation. Thus, the attempt was made in vain. During his stay at the academy, Master Hongyi found that

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<sup>325</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Dashi nianpu yu yimo*, 180.

<sup>326</sup> Lin, *Hongyi Dashi nianpu yu yimo*, 134.



many monks at Nanputuo Temple, where the Buddhist Academy was located, could not understand Buddhist doctrines due to their educational incapacity. Besides, their failure to meet the entry qualifications of the academy hampered their further studies. They could only participate in ritual services, such as reciting a certain sutra or conducting the confession practice for Buddhist believers, idling away the time. Master Hongyi later came up with the idea of establishing an academy to implement the right kind of education. The academy was called “Buddhist Yangzheng Academy” and aimed to improve the monks’ education and competence in Buddhism. Enrollment was accessible to all regardless of their age. In July, he specified textbooks for the academy, marking the official establishment of Buddhist Yangzheng Academy.

In the spring of 1937, the first batch of Buddhist monks graduated from the Academy. At the same time, the Academy continued to recruit new students, so that the number of monks enrolled in the Academy increased to more than 60. After the “July 7 Incident,” war against Japan broke out, and temples in Xiamen were bombed by Japanese planes one after another. Due to the tense situation, Nanputuo Temple was occupied by an aggressive army, and the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy, which had only been established for three years, was closed. Most of the teachers and monks were forced to immigrate to the South China Sea or fled to the hinterland of China, and the few who stayed behind in the monastery faced arduous conditions.

Judging from the educational commitment of Master Hongyi mentioned above, we can see he originally wanted to establish Nanshan Vinaya Academy in Wulei Temple but failed to realize this intention because of a disagreement of the abbot of Wulei Temple. Later, his aspiration to train excellent monks in Vinaya was actualized at

Kaiyuan Temple in Quanzhou, and he subsequently founded the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy at Nanputuo Temple. Only four or five years passed between the founding of Nanshan Vinaya Academy and the closure of Buddhist Yangzheng Academy. However, in terms of scale of development of the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy, the number of monks enrolled was more than sixty in 1937, almost equal to that of Minnan Buddhist Academy, the top Buddhist college in China. This is enough to prove the success of Master Hongyi and Buddhist Yangzheng Academy in monastic education.

## **8.1.2 The Philosophy and Characteristics of Master Hongyi's Monastic Education**

### **8.1.2.a The Level of Education and Curriculum Provision**

The characteristics of Master Hongyi's views on monastic education can be seen in the following aspects.

First, the rationale for founding the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy was rooted in a crucial observation. Master Hongyi noticed that many monks at Nanputuo Temple lacked the necessary educational background to grasp Buddhist doctrines. Their knowledge was limited to reciting Buddhist sutras and performing confession rituals for Buddhist followers. This not only wasted their own time but also hindered the advancement of Buddhism. Moreover, existing Buddhist academies only admitted young monks with a certain level of education, leaving out those with limited educational qualifications and older monks who were deprived of opportunities for a systematic

Buddhist education. The Yangzheng Academy for Right Knowledge aimed to provide a basic Buddhist education, so the literacy threshold for candidates was minimal candidates merely needed to be able to read and write, without age restrictions. As a result, the academy attracted monks ranging in age from 13 to over 40, as seen in their actual enrollment figures. Master Hongyi's approach to monastic education was down to earth, distinct from the image-focused education that emerged at the end of the Qing dynasty and early Republic of China. He was cultivating genuine Buddhist talents.

Second, Master Hongyi held particular views on the levels of monastic education. He detailed his educational vision in a letter to Venerable Xingyuan written at Nanputuo Temple in Xiamen on August 13, 1934.<sup>327</sup> He proposed that the monks should be divided into grades A, B, and C. The C-level, the lowest tier, was for monks under 20 years old. Their curriculum centered on promoting virtuous behavior, explaining the law of cause and effect, and introducing the basic concepts of the Pure Land. The length of schooling for C-level monks was two years. Level B, the intermediate tier, for monks aged 20 and above. Their studies consisted mainly of teachings on the Vinaya and lucid Buddhist canons. The duration of study for this level was three years. The highest level, A, imparted profound doctrines centered on the Buddhist canons. The duration of study for the A-level was also three years.

The Buddhist Yangzheng Academy founded by Master Hongyi aimed at providing basic literacy skills without imposing age limits on the applicants. After three years of education, monks could graduate based on their moral conduct, expanded knowledge, diligence and endurance, simplicity, and austerity. In view of the above-

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<sup>327</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, 8:451.

mentioned levels of education, the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy could be considered elementary Buddhist education, but it differed from the three categories mentioned above. The age of the monks and duration of schooling did not completely align with this system of education. Hence, the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy could be considered as complementary to the three levels of education. Additionally, Master Hongyi's vision of educational organization demonstrated a blend of adaptability to present conditions and practicality.

Table 4: Classification of the levels of monastic education by Venerable Hongyi

级别 Level	年龄范围 Age	学习年限 Duration of Schooling	学习内容 Learning Content
丙级 C	不满二十岁 under 20 years old	两年 two years	劝善、因果报应为主，兼学净土大意 how to encourage people to cultivate virtuous behavior, explain the law of cause and effect, the basic concepts of the Pure Land
乙级 B	二十岁以上 20 years old and above	三年 three years	律学为主，兼学浅近易解的经论 teachings of Vinaya and the lucid Buddhist canons
甲级 A	二十岁以上 20 years old and above	三年 three years	以经论为主的精微教义 profound doctrines centered on the Buddhist canons
佛教养正院 Buddhist Yangzheng Academy	不限 No age restrictions	三年 three years	通过佛学经论典籍的训话，使学僧深信灵感，深信因果 sermons in the Buddhist canons, assuring the monks of miracles and the law of causality

Regarding the curriculum, in the letter to Venerable Xingyuan written at Nanputuo Temple in Xiamen on August 13, 1934, as well as in the biography titled *Niding fojiao yangzhengyuan jiaoke yongshubiao fuji* 拟定佛教养正院教科用书表附记, Master Hongyi offered a detailed list of books for the academy to align with its teaching objectives. Specifically, the curriculum for the C-level consisted of sutra-reciting, *Anshi quanshu* 安士全书, reading and explanation of four selected books, and Mandarin studies, most of which were Buddhist courses. The curriculum and books were divided into five categories: admonitory sermons, reading, lectures, Mandarin, and calligraphy. Most of the detailed courses listed for the three-year study program Buddhist canons. The Mandarin courses were required to be “compiled by the teachers based on the Buddha’s teachings rather than adopting Mandarin books from the bookstores, as they focused only on worldly issues.”<sup>328</sup> It is evident that Master Hongyi attached great importance to Buddhist studies in monastic education, prioritizing them over literature and worldly history studies. This emphasis can also be reflected in *Nanmin shinian zhi mengying* 南闽十年之梦, where it is mentioned:

Then Venerable Zhifeng talked about the curriculum of the Buddhist academy. He said, “The subjects are divided into many categories, but the allotted time for each is very limited, so if we go on like this, I am afraid we will not achieve much educational progress, right?” Therefore, I shared my humble opinion, saying, “Delete English and arithmetic, while Buddhist studies cannot be reduced but must be increased, so just teach Buddhist studies with the time freed up.” They were all in favor of it. I heard that since then, the students’ performance has indeed been much better than before!<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:207.

<sup>329</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Nanmin shinian zhi mengying”, 8:201.

From the above passage, we can discern Master Hongyi's stance toward secular cultural courses. He also followed the Chan school tradition, emphasizing that a day without labor is a day without meals, and he integrated the subject of labor practice into the curriculum. As per his stipulations, "No servant is required in the academy. All things, such as carrying water and rice and sweeping the floor, are done by monks."<sup>330</sup>

On July 11, 1933, Master Hongyi expounded the book *Changsui foxue* 常随佛学 to the novice monks at Chengtian Temple in Quanzhou. He enumerated seven tasks that the Buddha personally performed, namely, sweeping the floor, fetching water with his disciples, renovating his living quarters, taking care of sick monks, doing tailoring for the monks, threading needles for senior monks, and encouraging monks to confess their faults. These seven actions exemplify the dedication to serving others shown by the Buddha, the founder and the greatest teacher of Buddhism. Using these seven actions, Master Hongyi set an example for future generations so that they could "stay away from arrogance, increase compassion, and cultivate the merit-field to attain Buddhahood sooner,"<sup>331</sup> adding work practice as a mandatory subject for the monks' education.

### **8.1.2.b The Idea and Characteristics of Monastic Education**

The purpose of monastic education lies in nurturing talents for Buddhism, to accomplish its vision and future. The purpose of monastic education stands distinct from

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<sup>330</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:207.

<sup>331</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "Changsui foxue" 常随佛学 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 559.

that of secular education. Its primary objective is to cultivate qualified monks, and the secondary goal is to contribute to the progress of Buddhism. For a capable monk, the foremost task is to strengthen the observance of monastic precepts. As Master Taixu said,

All the students must first be enrolled and ordained as monks before receiving monastic education... It should be noted that restraints are fundamental to the special unity, special harmony, special training, and special function of the Sangha. If a monk breaks the restraints, he is not a real monk. In other words, he can't be admitted receiving monastic education, nor can he benefit himself and others by utilizing the merit and the precious teachings of the Buddha. Therefore, it is said that monastic education is built on monastic precepts.<sup>332</sup>

Hence, the primary focus of monastic education must be the cultivation of a “monk” first and foremost, for the absence of restraint means the forfeiture of one’s qualifications to be a monk. After all, the Sangha can undertake the critical task of revitalizing Buddhism only when its members are restrained in conduct.

As a patriarch of the Vinaya school, Master Hongyi saw it as his mission to promote the Vinaya of Nanshan. His appreciation for the significance of discipline was unmistakable. Consequently, cultivating discipline was naturally his primary purpose in his career in monastic education. As mentioned above, Master Hongyi planned to establish Nanshan Vinaya Academy in Wulei Temple and Nanshan Vinaya Center at Kaiyuan Temple in Quanzhou. Both institutes had the word Vinaya in their name, illustrating the core purpose of Master Hongyi’s efforts at monastic education.

Within the curriculum of Yangzheng Academy, he emphasized, “the regulations for monks, including walking, sitting, advancing and retreating, speaking, eating,

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<sup>332</sup> Taixu 太虚, “Sengjiaoyu yao jianzhu zai senglüyi zhishang” 僧教育要建筑在僧律仪之上, in *Taixu Dashi quanshu* 太虚大师全书 (Taipei: Shandaosi fojing liutongchu, 1981), 66.

worshipping, and even reciting the sutra and playing Buddhist instrument etc., are all taught by the teacher appropriately based on the needs and abilities of the disciples.”<sup>333</sup> In other words, Master Hongyi did not merely treat Vinaya as a subject to be studied but as a part of his daily study and life, underscoring the significance he attached to Vinaya. Another example is in “Close to Master Hongyi: The Origin of Studying Vinaya and Founding a Vinaya Academy,” which states,

(Master Hongyi) not only attached importance to the study of theories, but also to the practice of precepts, which involves a balance of study and practice and a perfect integration of practice and theories.<sup>334</sup>

He often spoke of discipline in various lectures. For example, in the first month of 1933, he gave a talk on *Gaiguo shiyantan* 改过实验谈 at Miaoshi Temple in Xiamen. He pointed out ten specific principles to guide people in avoiding mistakes, namely: be modest, be prudent, be generous, suffer losses, be silent, do not talk about others’ faults, do not write off one’s faults, do not hide one’s defects, do not argue when hearing slander, and do not hate. Another example is his lecture on the theme of *Qingnian fojiaotu yingzhuyide sixiang* 青年佛徒应注意的四项 at the opening of Yangzheng Academy in 1935. In this lecture, he exhorted the monks to cherish blessings, practice labor, observe precepts and harbor self-respect, reflecting the importance he attached to the discipline.

Secondly, examining the purpose behind the establishment of Buddhist Yangzheng Academy by Master Hongyi:

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<sup>333</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:207.

<sup>334</sup> Shi Ruijin 释瑞今, “Qinjin Hongyi Dashi xuelü he banxuande yinyuan” 亲近弘一大师学律和办学的因缘, in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集, vol. 10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 161.



I believe in the spiritual response of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva, and in the consequences of good and evil, and I know why I became a monk and what I should do afterwards.<sup>335</sup>

From these quotations, it is evident that Master Hongyi believed that deep conviction preceded the study of Buddhist teachings. This implies that one should first profoundly believe in the spiritual response of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and be convinced of the theory of karma, encompassing both good and evil, in order to comprehend the purpose of becoming a monk and how to become a qualified one. Conviction in the spiritual response of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas is a matter of faith, while the conviction in the retribution of good and evil is based in Buddhist doctrine. These two forms of conviction can be viewed as a blend of spirituality and rationality.

Consequently, Master Hongyi adopted these two convictions as the cornerstone of his educational philosophy and elaborated on them repeatedly. As he said in *Nanmin shinian zhi mengying* 南闽十年之梦影:

By the way, I would like to explain my opinion about monastic education. When it comes to Buddhism, I am usually reluctant to discriminate against any sect because I think each school has its advantages. But I think there is one conviction shared by all sects: the basic principle of Buddhism, that is, to be convinced of the truth of the karma of good and evil—good is rewarded with good and evil is rewarded with evil; and to be convinced of the spiritual response of Bodhisattvas. This should be the case not only for junior monks but also for those receiving higher education within Buddhist universities.<sup>336</sup>

Another example is in his letter to Venerable Ruijin on 14<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month in the lunar calendar, 1934, in which he said:

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<sup>335</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Niding Fojiao yangzhengyuan jiaoke yongshubiao” 拟定佛教养正院教科用书表附记 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 207.

<sup>336</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Nanmin shinian zhi mengying”, 8:202.

To make scholars believe in the spiritual response of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, the truth of the consequences of cause and effect, good or evil, and know how to become a monk and what to do after becoming a monk, to develop into a monk with excellent moral qualities and right views. Arts and sciences are of secondary importance. As Confucianism says, “Scholars should prioritize knowledge and then literature and art, which makes the same sense.”<sup>337</sup>

In Master Hongyi’s opinion, monastic cultivation requires monks to believe deeply in Buddhist cause and effect and to establish a right understanding and right view of the Buddha-Dharma. This viewpoint was rooted based on an understanding of Buddhist doctrine.

Buddhism took shape when the Sramana Movement prevailed in India, during which diverse theories proliferated. As an independent school of thought, Buddhism transcended Brahmanism, the leading ideology at that time, and garnered the support of numerous kings. Its competitive edge lay in its profound, rigorous, and logical teachings. The theory of Dependent Origination is the most fundamental theory in the Buddhist canonical texts. It involves the relationship between cause, condition, and effect and belongs to the law of causality. By applying the theory of Dependent Origination to reveal the trajectory of life and other issues, we can develop the Buddhist theory of karma and retribution. Consequently, Master Hongyi repeatedly emphasized the need to deeply believe in the principle of cause and effect, which was not only a requirement of Buddhist faith but also reflected his application of the theory of Dependent Origination to reality.

Furthermore, he also paid attention to cultivating monks to establish a proper understanding of Buddhism, aligning with a flexible application of the “Noble Eightfold Path.” The “Noble Eightfold Path” comprises eight methods to eliminate afflictions and

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<sup>337</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:475.

achieve liberation. The first of the “Path” is “Right View,” which refers to establishing right concepts and practicing Buddhism under the guidance of right concepts. Therefore, the “Right View” of the “Noble Eightfold Path” is not only one of the eight methods for attaining liberation in Buddhist practice, but also the theoretical basis of the rest of the “Path.” The primary task of cultivating Buddhist talents is also to instill in monks the proper understanding of Buddhism, thus equipping them to serve the cause of Buddhist advancement.

As has been discussed, Master Hongyi was quite accomplished in the field of art prior to his becoming a monk, having served as a teacher of art at Zhejiang First Normal School. After he joined the monastic order, he combined art with Buddhism. He tried to teach novice monks how to study Buddhism and be a qualified monk through teaching Chinese calligraphy. As recorded in “The Last Lesson of Master Hongyi: Talking about the Method of Writing,” on March 28, 1937, when teaching how to produce fine calligraphic work at the Yangzheng Academy at Nanputuo Temple, Master Hongyi remarked, “If one learns Buddhism well, one can also write well.” He held that “the best calligraphic work, or the finest art, lies in the study of Buddhism; it must be studied from Buddhism to reach excellence.”<sup>338</sup> It was also because of his mastery and deep appreciation of both art and Buddhism that Master Hongyi combined the two into one.

In terms of monastic education, he was committed to always teaching the Buddhist teachings to the monks, even within the realm of calligraphy. He reckoned that the quality of writing and art was rooted in an understanding of Buddhist studies. He deemed Buddhist studies as being closely linked with artistic attainment, highlighting the

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<sup>338</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Hongyi Fashi zuihou yiyen—tan xiezide fangfa” 弘一大師最后一言一谈写字的方法 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 566.

importance of Buddhism. That was why he encouraged the monks to vigorously learn and research Buddhist teachings, a testament to his benevolent intentions.

## **8.2 Master Hongyi's Thoughts of Caring for Beings**

Buddhism attracts followers not only because it is a deep philosophical tradition, but also because it kindles inspiration and encourages compassion for all beings. The theory of Dependent Origination lies at the core of Buddhist philosophy, while compassion plays a central role in the spirit of Buddhism. Compassion is the doorway to Buddhahood, a virtue shared by all buddhas, the bedrock of all virtues, and represents a hidden treasure to be unearthed. Practicing compassion means having empathy for all beings, which is reflected in the vegetarianism of Chinese Buddhism and the Buddhist precept against killing. Consequently, it can be argued that practicing Buddhism is mainly about cultivating compassion. As one of the Four Eminent Monks in the Republican Period, Master Hongyi radiated compassion, a quality vividly seen in his daily practice. His fundamental ideas can be found in *Husheng huaji* 护生画集, a book he employed to persuade people to abstain from killing and embrace virtue.

### **8.2.1 Master Hongyi and *Husheng huaji* 护生画集**

*Husheng huaji* 护生画集, a book illustrated by Feng Zikai as a gift for Venerable Hongyi on his 50th birthday, contains illustrations and poems written by the master. In *Xu husheng huaji xuyan* 续护生画集序言, Xia Mianzun wrote:

To celebrate Master Hongyi's 50th birthday, Feng Zikai created 50 illustrations. These illustrations are accompanied by poems written by the master so that the book could reach a wider audience. This year marked the 60th birthday of the master, and it was a year of chaos: people bore hatred against each other, and the privileged tortured the unprivileged, and the world burned with fire. Although Feng Zikai was forced to run from one place to another, he still managed to complete the second volume of *Husheng huaji* 护生画集.<sup>339</sup>

*Husheng huaji* 护生画集 was co-created by Feng Zikai and Master Hongyi, and the latter's illustrations are influenced by the former, especially when it came to their compassionate attitude towards sentient beings.

Co-created by Feng Zikai and Master Hongyi, *Husheng Huaji* 护生画集 was divided into two volumes. The first volume was dedicated to celebrating the 50th birthday of the master, and the second volume commemorated his 60th birthday. The master was fully involved in the editing and publishing process, maintaining frequent correspondence with individuals like Feng Zikai and Li Yuanjing<sup>340</sup> to develop the book's content.

The first volume contains 50 illustrations created by Feng Zikai, most of which are grotesque, cruel, and harrowing scenes of killing. These illustrations serve two purposes: dispelling people's delusions and, in doing so, persuading people to refrain from taking life. In contrast, the second volume of the book contains 60 illustrations, mainly about sentient beings living happily and being cared for. By creating a stark

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<sup>339</sup> Xia Mianzun 夏丕尊, "Xu husheng huaji xuyan" 续护生画集序言 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 215.

<sup>340</sup> Li Yuanjing 李圆净 (1894-1950) assisted Master Ming Dao in founding Suzhou Honghuashe, published and circulated scriptures, and propagated the Pure Land Method, sparing no effort.

contrast between these two volumes, *Husheng huaji* 护生画集 effectively conveys its messages.

Master Hongyi summarized the conveyed moral thus: “The central message of this book is humanitarianism, and this message is delivered through illustrations.”<sup>341</sup> By seamlessly integrating the message and its medium, the book urges its readers to embrace good virtues by refraining from killing and caring for other beings. As a popular work of art, it should stir up gentle feelings in its readers so that they can sympathize with other beings—ultimately, the highest value of art. But in order to achieve a humanitarian interest, it had to take the readers into account. In order to attract non-Buddhist readers, the cover was made particularly eye-catching, with a wider audience in mind. Investing energy in the design, the content, and the message to the readers, Master Hongyi showed much dedication to the work. When the second volume was finished, he shared his thoughts on this book containing 60 illustrations, which is recorded in *The Biography of Master Hongyi* by Chen Xing.

When I turn 70, I wish that Feng Zikai can create the third volume with 70 illustrations. When I turn 80, I hope I can obtain a fourth volume with 80 illustrations. When I turn 90, I hope I can get a fifth volume with 90 illustrations. When I turn 100, I hope I can get a sixth volume with 100 illustrations, thus making this the book series complete and maximizing its merit.<sup>342</sup>

Additionally, when Master Hongyi was staying at Puji Temple at Yongchun County on December 12, 1939, he wrote to Feng Zikai and mentioned the book:

I am 60 years old now, and I am so glad to receive your picture book as my birthday gift. Impermanence is pervasive in our lives, so I do

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<sup>341</sup> Chen Xing 陈星, *Fangcao biliantian: Hongyifashi zhuan* 芳草碧连天: 弘一法师传 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1995), 144.

<sup>342</sup> Chen, *Fangcao biliantian*, 145.

not know how much longer I can live. But I still hope that you can keep creating illustrations and sharing them with me in the form of a book every ten years until I reach 100. By then, there will be six volumes in total. If I can live that long, the book series will be the best gift for my 100th birthday. If I die before that day, the book series can still be a gift in memory of me. You can complete the whole series in the name of whatever you like, but the bottom line is that I wish there could be another four volumes to complete the whole series. They will spread like wildfire and bring benefits and merits to all.<sup>343</sup>

*Husheng huaji* 护生画集 uses popular art to convey humanitarian messages, persuading its audience to embrace good virtues, refrain from killing, and purify the mind—the ultimate goal of the book series. This is the reason why Master Hongyi gave this task to Feng Zikai. His decision was not made on a whim; he entrusted the job to Feng Zikai with great expectations for the result. In 1941, when the master was seriously ill, his mind remained focused on the book. In a letter to Xia Mianzun written on June 27, he revealed his well-thought-out plan for the book:

The upcoming volumes of *Husheng huaji* 护生画集 are of great importance. I beseech you to grant my wish and lend your support to this project until it is completed. I will be enormously grateful.<sup>344</sup>

In pursuit of support, Master Hongyi invited Xia Mianzun to become involved until the book series was complete. He also gave detailed instructions to Li Yuanjing and others to help Feng Zikai with regard to collecting materials, typesetting, design and so on. His dedication to the book is palpable in his actions.

On October 13, 1942, the master passed away in Quanzhou, no longer able to participate in collecting materials, editing, and publishing. Nevertheless, his dying wish

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<sup>343</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:374.

<sup>344</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:323.

was granted, as the last four volumes were successfully published, perpetuating his vision of compassion for all beings.

### 8.2.2 Master Hongyi's Views on Caring for Beings

As mentioned above, all the poems in the first and the second volumes of *Husheng huaji* 护生画集 were written by Master Hongyi. The illustrations in the second volume were created by Feng Zikai, but they were touched up by the master, and his many thoughts were reflected in the process of creating and publishing it. Therefore, it can be argued that *Husheng huaji* 护生画集 embodies the main ideas of Master Hongyi. In the following passages, citations from the book series will be used to explore his idea of taking care of beings.

Refraining from killing and the practice of caring for other beings share a common root. The former is a passive endeavor, requiring people to refrain from taking lives; the latter is an active engagement that requires people to take actions to nurture sentient beings. Therefore, it can be argued that, in Buddhism, refraining from killing is a means to an end while caring for beings is the end itself. Master Hongyi's poems reflect both facets. For example, illustrations entitled “Jinri yu jinzhao” 今日与今朝, “Ansha” 暗杀, “Juebie zhiyin” 诀别之音, and “Qiyin” 乞命 feature sorrowful partings and cruel killings. However, from the master's perspective, these illustrations were meant to evoke gentle feelings in readers, motivating them to care for sentient beings. Therefore, while the master was staying at Qingfu Temple in Wenzhou, he wrote a letter on 21<sup>st</sup> day of the



eighth month of the lunar calendar, 1928, to Feng Zikai and Li Yuanjing, making the following request:

(The book) mainly consists of scenes of killing or hurting sentient beings; they convey a negative message and stir up a sense of uneasiness in readers. You should arrange the illustrations as I said. The book should start with the illustration entitled ‘A Couple,’ for it conveys a positive message; after that, insert the other 19 illustrations that convey a negative message (‘Farmer and Wet-nurse’ excluded). By arranging the book this way, namely from the subtle to the obvious, and from the obvious to the subtle, the maximum effect can be achieved.<sup>345</sup>

Regarding the second volume, he urged Feng Zikai to minimize the depiction of brutal scenes. In the second volume, sentient beings are being cared for rather than being hurt or killed. He asked the illustrator to do so not only because cruel scenes stir up unease, but also because some could inadvertently serve as instructions for harming or killing sentient beings. For instance, an illustration entitled “Yousha” 诱杀 exemplifies this concern, as it contains a deliberate method for killing animals. Master Hongyi wrote, “It should be deleted from the book, lest it might be learned by wicked ones to do harm out of curiosity.”<sup>346</sup> From his comments, we can see that the master selected illustrations with a balanced perspective: the illustrations should evoke compassion so as to dissuade readers from engaging in killing. Simultaneously, the illustrations should not be overly vivid or detailed, as this may inadvertently act as a trigger for violence.

Master Hongyi's compassion and his idea of caring for beings can also be found in his poems in *Husheng huaji* 护生画集. The following citations are good examples:

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*Lin (an imaginary being in traditional Chinese culture) embodies*

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<sup>345</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:378.

<sup>346</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:379.

*compassion.*

*And represents everything that is good in this world.  
It is so kind that it cannot bear to trample on plants or insects.  
In the real world, only we human beings can cultivate compassion.  
We need to be constantly careful when we walk,  
And we need to refrain from killing, either intentionally or*

*unintentionally.*

*By doing so, our compassion can be cultivated,  
And our conscience preserved.<sup>347</sup>*

Further examples:

*All Sentient Beings:*

*All sentient beings are somehow connected.  
So, we need to be compassionate to the deluded.  
We need to urge others to stop killing and to release captive animals,  
So, they will not be our meals. This is called caring for beings.<sup>348</sup>*

*Game (2):*

*Though tiny, the insect is a sentient being.  
We need to give it a helping hand before it drowns.  
When you feel such an urge to help a tiny being as such,  
Your compassion will start to develop.<sup>349</sup>*

*Parent and Child:*

*you eat them today.  
They will eat you tomorrow.  
The cycle of eating and being eaten repeats itself,  
But you two are after all related.<sup>350</sup>*

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<sup>347</sup> Feng Zikai 丰子恺 drawing, with Hongyi Fashi's 弘一法师 inscriptions, *Husheng huaji* 护生画集, vol. 1 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe Longmen shuju, 2011) 16.

<sup>348</sup> Feng, *Husheng huaji*, 1:2.

<sup>349</sup> Feng, *Husheng huaji*, 1:22.

<sup>350</sup> Feng, *Husheng huaji*, 1:12.

As seen in these quotations, the idea of caring for beings has four aspects. First, the view of equality, which means that animals may not be as privileged as mankind, but they are on an equal footing and are somehow connected with us, hence the persuasion of refraining from killing and hurting other beings. Second, the view of rebirth, which plays an important role in Buddhist philosophy. As an extension of the theory of dependent origination and the idea of karma, the theory of rebirth holds that human beings may take a new life form as another being in the animal kingdom in the next life, and vice versa. In other words, our cruelty towards other beings today will come back to us tomorrow. If readers adopt the message and refrain from killing, such behavior would be considered a form of caring for other beings. The third aspect of caring for others is vegetarianism, a part of the unique traditions in Chinese Buddhism. Being non-vegetarian means taking lives for meat; this is the reason why Chinese Buddhists encourage a vegetarian diet, to minimize killing. In other words, embracing vegetarianism is an extension of the precept of non-killing, and doing so also can contribute to caring for other beings. Fourthly, compassion comes from the act of empathizing with the killed or hurt animals that are somehow connected with us; this is the message from Master Hongyi's poem. Also, he argues that compassion is the foundation of *ren* ("humanity," "humaneness," "goodness," "benevolence," or "love"), one of the four virtues a man should possess. When one empathizes or sympathizes with other beings, one could not bear to kill or even hurt them. Therefore, caring for other beings is both a means and an end to cultivating compassion.

Based on all of these four aspects, it can be argued that Master Hongyi's idea of caring for other beings was essentially about caring for one's own mind. By eradicating

the evils in one's mind, kindness and compassion can develop. With such a cultivated mind, one could be genuine and caring in one's life and practice, hence living in harmony with other people and beings in the world.

Taking life stood in opposition to his emphasis on abstaining from killing. On May 15, 1933, the master gave a dharma talk at Kaiyuan Temple in Quanzhou. The talk was mainly about the karmic result of killing and about releasing captive animals. These two kinds of behaviors led to different results; by contrasting them he encouraged the audience to care for other beings and refrain from killing.

Releasing captive animals will bring the following benefits: one's life can be extended, illness can be cured, risks can be avoided, a son will be born into your family as you wish, and a ticket to Pure Land will be granted. Killing, on the contrary, will bring the following results: a premature death, all kinds of illness, all kinds of difficulties in life, no son born into your family, and denial of entrance to the Pure Land. Even worse, when the killer dies, he will go to hell, be reborn as a hungry ghost or as an animal and suffer many pains... such a miserable fate will keep repeating itself for aeons until the karmic results diminish and are gone. Even so, when the killer is reborn again as a human, he will still die prematurely, be prone to illness and difficulties, be unable to go to the Pure Land. It takes many aeons for him to develop good roots, which allow him to refrain from killing, do good things, stay committed to Buddhist practice and repent his previous sins; this is what a killer must go through before he is eventually free from all sufferings.<sup>351</sup>

According to the above quote, releasing captive animals can bring desirable benefits, but killing will lead to unwanted results, such as illness, difficulties in life, premature death, and denial of entrance to the Pure Land. By contrasting the benefits of releasing captive animals and the consequences of killing, Master Hongyi could convince

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<sup>351</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., "*Fangsheng yu shasheng zhi guobao*" 放生与杀生之果报 in *Hongyi Dashi Quanjī* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 557.

the audience to be virtuous and care for other beings. We may draw the conclusion that Master Hongyi used the theory of karma to support his admonitions.

Master Hongyi did not only express and support his idea of caring for other beings with the theory of karma at Husheng Huaji. He put this idea into daily practice by doing the easiest thing: releasing captive animals. According to an article entitled *Baimahu fangshengji* 白马湖放生记 from *Hongyi dashi quanji*, the master, together with Xia Mianzun and Liu Zhiping, released captive animals as suggested Xu Zhongsun, a layman in Xuzhou: “the activity is witnessed by many, who exclaims with joy.”<sup>352</sup> Releasing captive animals not only saves lives, it also spread the idea of caring for other beings. A significant incident is described in an article entitled *Sichu mianshuhuan zhi jianyantian* 饲鼠免鼠患之经验谈:

Mice-induced troubles are frequent. These creatures will damage clothes and Buddhist statues, and they will also spread diseases. They are good for nothing. To solve the problem, people would kill them, but Master Hongyi tamed them by giving them food. He will give the mice food twice a day and dedicate merits to them so these creatures can be reborn as human beings, thus expediting their progress towards enlightenment.<sup>353</sup>

It was widely believed that mice caused troubles and were good for nothing, so people killed them as a solution. However, the master took a different approach: he tamed them by giving them food and even dedicated merits to the mice for their liberation.

He treated the mouse, an animal disdained by many, in such a kind way, so it is easy to predict how he would care for other animals. For example, in the master’s diary, he mentioned a puppy with a yellow coat. When the puppy became very ill, Master

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<sup>352</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Baimahu fangshengji” 白马湖放生记 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 199.

<sup>353</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Sichu mianshuhuan zhi jianyantian” 饲鼠免鼠患之经验谈 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 209.

Hongyi, Hongji and the other five senior monks held a ritual for the poor being so it could have a better next life.<sup>354</sup> From this, we can see that the master not only spread the idea of caring for other beings but also put it into practice by showing compassion to all living beings.

Master Hongyi spread his ideas through *Husheng huaji* 护生画集 and his actions to encourage others to have the same mindset of cultivating the mind and developing compassion and empathy. Based on these qualities, people could refrain from killing and be kind to all beings. Master Hongyi's compassion was very deep, as corroborated by an account provided by Xia Mianzun. Once, the master bought a movable type printing set in Shanghai so he could reproduce Buddhist scriptures. Unfortunately, the set he purchased was of poor quality and could not function properly, so he had to make a set himself. When he was carving a character with a “knife” (Chinese radical) in it, “he hesitated because it stirred up disturbing images of killing or harming other beings.”<sup>355</sup> This account shows how pervasive the master's compassion was, functioning even when no actual harm or killing was occurring in front of him.

### **8.3 Master Hongyi's Views on Caring for China and Buddhism**

China went through a profound transformation from the end of the Qing dynasty to the beginning of the Republican Period. This period saw the emergence of various movements driven by the embrace of new, liberating values from the West, escalating conflicts within the ruling class, and a loss of government credibility. Additionally,

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<sup>354</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Chaodu xiaohuangquan riji” 超度小黄犬日记 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 8 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 205.

<sup>355</sup> Xia, “Xu hushing huaji xuyan”, 10:215.

foreign invaders sought to divide up China and rule it a colonial state. Crises within and without the country sparked unrest and mental anguish. Amidst this backdrop, patriots who embraced Western values began to take actions to save their homeland by resorting to imported cultures and values. As one of the proponents of the New Culture Movement, Master Hongyi stood among those oriented towards such change.

In a country ravaged by conflict, the Buddhist community, like many other communities, was on the brink of falling apart. Furthermore, Buddhism had been in decline since the Ming dynasty and the Republican Period, suffering critical blows from various anti-Buddhist movements, such as the “Miaochan Xingxue Movement” (building educational institutions through temple property) at the end of the Qing dynasty. These factors almost drove a nail to the coffin of Buddhism. As a member of the monastic community and a man of deep sense of responsibility, Master Hongyi could not turn a blind eye to these developments. His love for Buddhism was evident in his response.

### **8.3.1 Views on Protecting China from Invasion**

Master Hongyi was a patriot even before he was ordained. This can be corroborated by a poem he wrote in 1906, when he went back to Tianjin from Japan to recover from illness. The poem entitled *Hehuoling—Aiguomin zhi xinsi* 喝火令—哀国民之心死 states:

*The chirping of birds reminds me that spring is about to end, and the country is in deep crisis.*

*The beautiful sunset and moonlit scenes, the fresh grass and the dazzling flowers, though beautiful,*

*Making people forget about what was going on in this country.*

*They mind their only business only.*<sup>356</sup>

From this poem, we can infer that people at that time were indifferent to social unrest but that the author was concerned with what was happening at that time as well as the future of his home country. In the lyrics he wrote for “My Home Country,” “Lament for My Home Country,” “Love,” and “Great China,” he contrasted the China before the crises, a country rich in history and beautiful scenery, to the China now, a declining and war-torn country. He also wrote “long live my motherland” in his lyrics to express his sentiments towards China.

His feelings and aspirations to serve his country in deep crisis can also be found in lyrics such as *Denglun ganfu* 登轮感赋:

*The country went through ups and downs, I lamented thus.*

*When I looked beyond the horizon, I saw boats moving and the sunset appearing larger.*

*The war flags are flapping in the wind, and the war horses coming and going.*

*When I realize my home country is in deep crisis, I cannot help but cry.*<sup>357</sup>

Another poem in this regard is *Ganshi* 感时:

*My motherland is in deep crisis, but joining the army earns me nothing but fame that does not long.*

*Even though this is the case, a man should fight for his country, which is considered an honorable way to die in a time like this.*<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 1:173.

<sup>357</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 6:167.

<sup>358</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 6:166.



From these poems, we can discern Master Hongyi's emotional state during China's time of turmoil. He employed the phrase "ups and downs" to describe the series of social changes from the end of the Qing dynasty to the beginning of the Republican Period, and the phrase "my home country is in deep crisis" to express his concerns about the future of China. In such a context, he could not hold back his tears: he expressed willingness to become a martyr who fights to the last moment to protect his home country, as did the famous generals of the past. It is clear that Master Hongyi was a true patriot with unswerving loyalty to his home country.

Master Hongyi's patriotism in his younger years was not only reflected in his poems and songs, but also in his actions. As previously mentioned, in February 1907, during the Chinese New Year, when news of flooding in the Xu-Huai Basin reached overseas, Li Shutong, then studying in Japan, rehearsed the play *The Lady of the Camellias* (*Chahuanv yishi* 茶花女遺事) in Tokyo with his fellow students in Japan. This event was arranged by members of the Spring Willow Society in order to raise funds for the relief of the victims. Further, in 1915, during the patriotic campaign to boycott Japanese goods launched by Zhejiang No. 1 Normal School, he stood out as "the absolute activist. He shed his western clothes and donned a plain garment inside, a grey robe and a black jacket outside."<sup>359</sup> These stories provide further evidence of the patriotic fervor harbored by Master Hongyi before he became a monk.

Li Shutong lived in a time of great upheaval and transformation. "The country is in ruins, mountains and rivers remain; In the city, springtime, where grass and trees are green."<sup>360</sup> "China was experiencing both external humiliations and internal turmoil. In

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<sup>359</sup> Sheng Xingjun 盛兴军, *Feng Zikai nianpu* 丰子恺年谱 (Qingdao: Qingdao chubanshe, 2005), 77.

<sup>360</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., *Yinghan tangshi sanbaishou xinyi* 英汉唐诗三百首新译 (Beijing:

this context, he, deeply rooted in traditional education and influenced by Western knowledge, felt a strong urge to find a path. Education was given a noble mission to save the country.”<sup>361</sup> Li Shutong expressed patriotism before becoming a monk, and his patriotic sensibility deepened after he joined the monastic order, turning into an eagerness to save his declining country. His patriotism before and after becoming a monk was summarized in the book *Guanyu Hongyi dashi* 關於弘一大師 written by Rong Qifan, which states:

Master Hongyi grew up in the late Qing dynasty when national revolutionary thought in China was the most dynamic. At that time, the imperialist countries opened the door to China with gunboats, shackled the nation with unequal treaties, and caused various political and economic aggression. At the same time, the internal administration of the Qing Government was off track, and its diplomacy was in a vulnerable position, which meant the country was at stake. The multitude of noble aspirations, full of lament and resentment upon seeing the country in misery, raised and advocated the theory of the Hundred Days’ Reform, an evolutionary campaign. Greatly stimulated, Li joined the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance. The engagement was a way to express the enthusiasm of ordinary students and intellectuals when they were worried about the national future. But when he converted himself from a revolutionist to a monk, he had already passed a period of leisurely recluse life. This period of leisurely life gradually froze the enthusiasm for revolutionary movements that he used to have. His passion was replaced by the Buddhist thought of “saving all beings” and “attaining Enlightenment together.” Master Hongyi was a revolutionary who joined the patriotic campaign to save the country and the people and was an ascetic who vowed to liberate the world with the ambition of “I have to fight because it is a compelling obligation.” So, we were curious if there was any difference between the two titles regarding his subjective consciousness.<sup>362</sup>

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Zhongguo duiwai fanyin chuban gongsi, 1988), 151.

<sup>361</sup> Gong Xiangyang 宫向阳, “Li Shutong jiaoyu sixiang juewei” 李叔同教育思想抉微, *Yunnan minzu daxue xuebao* 云南民族大学学报, vol. 3 (2004): 155.

<sup>362</sup> Rong Qifan 容起凡, “Guanyu Hongyi Dashi” 关于弘一大师, *Haichaoyin* 海潮音, vol. 2 (1943): 190.

After becoming a monk, Master Hongyi's patriotism was particularly evident in 1937. On July 7, 1937, Japanese troops opened fire on the Chinese defenders at Lugou Bridge, southwest of Beijing, and shelled the city of Wanping. After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (卢沟桥事变), Japan started a full-scale war against China. With the outbreak of the Northern War, Qingdao became a military point of contention. At that time, Master Hongyi was lecturing at Zhanshan Temple in Qingdao. After the Qingdao war, the wealthy all fled to the south to seek refuge. Cai Guanluo invited Venerable Hongyi to move to Shanghai and settle there. However, the master replied, "I have already decided to stay elsewhere on the Mid-Autumn Festival. If I withdraw from where I should be because of the danger caused by the aggressive war, I will be severely satirized and criticized. Therefore, even though there is a perilous war in Qingdao, we will not retreat."<sup>363</sup> On July 13, 1937, on the 20th anniversary of his monkhood, Master Hongyi inscribed a banner with the word "Martyrdom" at Zhanshan Temple to clarify his aspirations and wrote, "I have been on a pure peak in southern Fujian, and it was not to avoid any disasters. I am now staying at Zhanshan Temple in Qingdao, Shandong, where the Japanese invaders poured in. I am ready to sacrifice my life for the protection of the Buddha's teachings. It is a responsibility that I can't relinquish."<sup>364</sup>

By the Mid-Autumn Festival, Qingdao restored its peace, while Shanghai was in a tense situation under gunfire. After completing his lectures at Zhanshan Temple, Master Hongyi was advised by his Buddhist fellows to stay in Qingdao. But he returned to Xiamen on September 27 via Shanghai, despite the war. After returning to Xiamen,

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<sup>363</sup> Cai Guanluo 蔡冠洛, "Kuowangyan de Hongyi Dashi" 廓尔亡言的弘一大师 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大师全集, vol. 10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 71.

<sup>364</sup> Tian Tao 田涛, *Li Shutong* 李叔同 (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003), 246.

Master Hongyi lived at Wanshi Rock (also known as Wanshi Lotus Temple), Xiamen. At the time, Xiamen was beset by the rampant Japanese invaders and the tensions caused by the war. Some cowardly monks wanted to leave the temple, but Master Hongyi proclaimed to the monks, “What we eat and drink are Chinese grain and the water of Wenling. As Buddhist disciples, if we can’t play our part to save the country from crisis, we are worse than dogs.” Facing the advice to retreat, Master Hongyi relayed in a letter to Li Yuanfang written at Wanshi Rock, Xiamen, on December 23, 1937:

I returned to Xiamen on September 27. Xiamen has been in a tense situation recently, but to protect the Buddha-Dharma, I will not fear bullets. I am determined to share the weal and woe with Xiamen.<sup>365</sup>

And as he said in his letter to Cai Guanluo:

You must have learned about the current situation in Xiamen. Some have tried to persuade me to retreat and seek refuge, but I have declined. I have decided to continue my stay at Xiamen to protect the local temples. I will share weal and woe with them. I will only move to somewhere else when peace returns to Xiamen.<sup>366</sup>

Master Hongyi was a strict Vinaya practitioner; it was impossible and unrealistic for him to organize an army and go to the front line to save the country. Yet his solid patriotism drove him to do something for his motherland. He named his room “The Hall of Martyrdom” to express his resolution to risk his life to stand together with Buddhism when the country was at stake. In his view, “The Buddha is the enlightened one. Once a person perceives all things as they truly are, he, bold and vigorous, will be ready to

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<sup>365</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:416.

<sup>366</sup> Cai Guanluo 蔡冠洛, “Kuoerwangyan de Hongyi Dashi” 廓尔亡言的弘一大师 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 10 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 71.

sacrifice his life, even everything, to save all sentient beings and the country.”<sup>367</sup> He was determined to save all sentient beings and defend the country, so he wrote a banner every day which read, “Save the country while practicing the recollection of the Buddha, and saving the country must rely on the practice of the recollection of the Buddha,”<sup>368</sup> and distributed it to encourage Buddhist disciples to play their part in defending the country during the national crisis. In this way, he rallied the people and inspired them.

In April 1938, before Xiamen was about to fall, the Japanese fleet’s commander deliberately paid a visit to Master Hongyi upon hearing of his high reputation. The dialogue between the two revealed Master Hongyi’s strong love for his motherland China. When the Japanese commander asked, “How could you forget that Japan is your wife’s motherland, a country that has blood ties with you?” Master Hongyi replied: “Japan is the country where I had the experience of studying abroad. [I know that] my teachers and classmates are there. If there is one day when the war come to an end, when peace is restored, I will revisit old haunts in Japan and see my teachers and classmates. I will tell them how much I miss them in Japanese, which has always been my wish.” The commander added, “Our country is a better place to promote the Buddha-Dharma, for it has a better environment than the poor and backward China. Master! If you are willing to go to our country, I will write to inform the emperor of Japan, and you will be sent by a special plane with the honor of teacher of the state...” However, Master Hongyi rejected his offer, saying, “As a monk, I am detached from honor and disgrace. Although China is

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<sup>367</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui 編輯委員會, ed., “Shoushu nianfo buwang jiuguo, jiuguo bixu nianfo bingba” 手书 “念佛不忘救国, 救国必须念佛” 并跋 in *Hongyi Dashi quanji* 弘一大師全集, vol. 7 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2010), 638.

<sup>368</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., “Shoushu”, 7:638.

a developing country, I love it so much. So, I would rather sacrifice my life without hesitation than leave it when it suffers.”<sup>369</sup>

Many incidents occurred, in less than a year. The refusal to avoid war and leave Qingdao, the stay at Xiamen to protect the monasteries and stand with Xiamen, the handwritten banners of “Martyrdom” and “The Martyrdom Hall” to relay his patriotism, and the banners with “Save the country while practicing the recollection of the Buddha, while saving the country must rely on the practice of the recollection of the Buddha” to mobilize Chinese people to engage in saving the country, the refusal of the Japanese commander’s invitation, are all heroic deeds conveying Master Hongyi’s fearlessness, sense of responsibility, and strong patriotic spirit that persisted throughout his life. In a letter to Zheng Jianhun written at Puji Temple in Yongchun on 25<sup>th</sup> day of the tenth month of the lunar calendar, 1939, he said:

I have already made up my mind to fight against the enemies, even sacrificing my life, which was what I spoke of to Venerable Chuanguan before. As a Chinese poem goes, ‘Don’t frown upon the old garden lacking a wonderful autumn view. You can expect the richest fragrance when the flowers turn yellow in the late autumn.’ I treat the end as the most important part of my life. I am sharing this for mutual encouragement.<sup>370</sup>

From this, we can see Master Hongyi was a determined monk with a deep love for China and Buddhism. He regarded his practice as the most crucial part of his life in his later years. He did not hesitate to do it, even if it meant sacrificing his life for Buddhism and the country, as relayed in his poem *Wei hongjuhua shuoji* 为红菊花说偈:

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369 Yu Qing 余清, “Hongyi Dashi yu Fojiao” 弘一大师与佛教, *Wutaishan yanjiu* 五台山研究, vol. 3 (2008): 36.

370 Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:437.

*The upright chrysanthemum signifies the integrity of one's later years.*

*Why is it red? Because it was bleeding on the night of martyrdom.*<sup>371</sup>

Master Hongyi (Li Shutong before he converted to a monk) showed a sense of national pride and patriotism when the nation was in danger. His spirit remained unchanged throughout his life, for it sprang from the bottom of his heart and melded with his blood as part of his personality.

### **8.3.2 Views on Protecting Buddhism**

Master Hongyi, as a Chinese citizen, reflected his strong patriotic spirit in his poems, songs, and deeds when China was in crisis. The late Qing dynasty and the early Republic of China witnessed the decline and crisis of Buddhism brought by the impact of the “Miaochan Xingxue” movement and the new cultural trend of thought. Master Hongyi, as a member of the Buddhist Sangha, resolutely took firm actions to safeguard Buddhism, change the world's attitude towards Buddhism, and establish a new image of Buddhism. His purposeful actions helped achieve the aim of protecting Buddhism.

To spread the Nanshan Vinaya, which had been extinct for more than 700 years in the world, Master Hongyi vowed to specialize in the promotion of the four divisions of Vinaya and revitalize the Nanshan Vinaya. Thus, he summed up the commentaries on the three divisions of Nanshan and spared no effort to teach the Vinaya in various locations.

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<sup>371</sup> Hongyi, *Li Shutong quanji*, 6:178.

Broadly speaking, this can be regarded as one of the deeds of safeguarding Buddhism. Amidst a cultural movement in which Western learning was spreading to the East, Buddhism was reduced to a religion of repentance and death rituals. The factors influencing this trend included a decline in talents, for one thing, as well as the competition created by the powerful influence of Western learning and Western religions. At a point when Buddhism was almost on the verge of annihilation, Master Hongyi helped revitalize Buddhist education by establishing the Vinaya School and the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy. Through monastic education, he cultivated Buddhist talents so as to reverse the situation faced by Buddhism and improve its image. Such contributions demonstrate Master Hongyi's profound respect for Buddhism.

Master Hongyi's acts of safeguarding Buddhism go far beyond what has been already discussed, the most representative of which occurred during the destruction of Buddhism and monks that happened in 1927. In the spring of 1927, when the Nationalist army started its Northern Expedition, China witnessed the Guomindang-Communist Cooperation. Against such a background, He Yingqin (1890–1987) led the Eastern Army to Zhejiang. At that time, some chaos erupted in the monasteries in Zhejiang, arousing public discontent. The government, wanting to govern Buddhism and rectify the Sangha, imposed some extreme words and harsh measures on monastics. In this regard, Lin Ziqing also recorded in *Hongyi fashi nianpu* 弘一法师年谱:

In the spring of this year, [Master Hongyi] went into retreat at Changjiguang Temple in Wushan, Hangzhou...At that time, the Northern Expedition was just finished, but the country was still chaotic and politically unsettled. Young men talked about the Buddhist persecution and the expulsion of monks. In March, the master wrote in a letter to his friend Du



Shenfu, “I must finish my retreat tomorrow because the Triple Gem is in urgent need of protection.”<sup>372</sup>

The Buddhist community panicked for a while in the face of the heresy of exterminating Buddhism and the expulsion of monks. At that time, Master Hongyi was in retreat at Changjiguang Temple on Yunju Mountain, Hangzhou. The Hangzhou Buddhist community invited him to come forward for an interview with government officials and share the views of the Buddhist community. Master Hongyi did not hesitate to leave his retreat. Notably, he entrusted Du Shenfu, an old colleague from Zhejiang No. 1 Normal School, to invite some representatives of the radical group to have a conversation. At the meeting, the master presented a piece of calligraphy to everyone, and then talked about the Buddhist contributions to the development of Chinese society during past dynasties. He politely persuaded the radicals to stop their aggressive attacks, which deeply touched the people present. After that, the heresy of “exterminating Buddhism” was discontinued. Shortly after the interview, Master Hongyi sent a letter to Cai Yuanpei, Jing Hengyi, Ma Xulun, Xuan Zhonghua and others who were in charge of the management of the Zhejiang government. In the letter, he shared his own ideas and plans to rectify the monks, and recommended Master Taixu and Master Hongsan as the coordinators of the reforms. He said:

I also heard Cai Yuanpei<sup>373</sup> and others gave speeches in the Youth Association, saying that they were not satisfied with Buddhist monks today. I have to admit that our monastic community has monks of different quality. But outsiders are not familiar with everything about the monks. So, they may take some inappropriate measures in the rectification movement. Therefore, I advise you to invite two monks as committee members who will be responsible for the rectification. It seems more appropriate if the rectifying plan is worked out in consultation with these two, Venerable

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<sup>372</sup> Lin, *Hongyi fashi nianpu*, 162.

<sup>373</sup> Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培: (January 11, 1868-March 5, 1940), courtesy name Heqing 鹤卿, Jiemin 子民. Therefore, Cai is also called “Teacher Jie” 子师.

Taixu and Venerable Hongshan, as I recommend. They, young and courageous, went to Japan in the previous year to study. They have long been eager to reform the monastic system with many new ideas. Therefore, it is most appropriate to appoint them as the committee members who will coordinate. As for how to implement it in the future, I hope you can consult with them. The group that serves the public should be advocated (this is the progressive group), and the group work that focuses on practicing spiritual life in the remote mountain should be protected (this is an old-fashioned group, but they must not be abolished). There are still many problems, such as how to tackle the group that can neither serve society nor practice spiritual life in the mountains, how to clamp down on the group specializing in reciting the sutras and conducting confession practices for Buddhist followers, how to deal with descendent temples<sup>374</sup> and how to conduct the ordination ceremony more strictly. I hope that you all will carefully consider these issues and devise appropriate solutions so that Buddhism and the Dharma can flourish. That would be incredible.<sup>375</sup>

In the letter, Master Hongyi analyzed the proposal of exterminating Buddhas and expelling monks from different angles and expressed his own position. First, he admitted that it was indeed necessary to rectify Buddhism because today's Buddhist community was of mixed quality and was lax in observing monastic disciplines. At the same time, he believed that there might be a gap or estrangement between the government and the monastery's monks. It would not be appropriate if the rectification movement was implemented by the government or was rashly carried out entirely based on the government's advice. To rectify Buddhism based on maintaining the interests of Buddhism and its positive role in society, the master advocated that Buddhism should send out monks with new ideas and willingness to carry out reform to cooperate with the government in the implementation of change. This would achieve the government's

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<sup>374</sup> This phrase is often used to refer to temples or monasteries established by or associated with the descendants of a particular lineage, family, or individual.

<sup>375</sup> Bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Hongyi Dashi quanji*, 8:375.

original goal of rectifying Buddhism while taking full consideration of the basic needs of Buddhism.

In the process of rectification, it was not advisable to treat different matters as the same and prescribe a single solution for diverse problems or groups. It was necessary to consider the functions of the monasteries and the monks' own conditions. Different Buddhist cases, such as monasteries and the descendent temples, urban monasteries and rural ones, the Sangha serving for different purposes (serving the public, individuals, or groups), should be treated separately so that each party could bring its capabilities into full play. In addition, the ordination system should be strictly managed to purify Buddhism at the beginning point of monkhood. Only in this way could the government's goal to rectify Buddhism be realized and the problems with Buddhism in the country be solved. Buddhism could help sustain the Dharma for a longer time so that it could play its part in serving society and making contributions.

The storm of exterminating Buddhism and expelling monks during the Republican period was finally quelled thanks to Master Hongyi's efforts. Although his deeds defending Buddhism were not as thrilling or arduous as those of other monks involved in similar historical incidents, he tried his best to safeguard the interests of Buddhism and the longevity of the Dharma. His success at managing this turmoil demonstrate his commitment and sense of responsibility toward Buddhism. After this period of turmoil ended, Venerable Zhumo commented on Master Hongyi, saying:

Since he abandoned his artistic career and moved to the Buddhist group, he studied Buddhist disciplines and specialized in academic work. It seems that he is indifferent to the major events of modern Buddhism and the rectification of the Sangha system, but it is not the case. Monastic discipline is the original form of Buddhist bhikkhu regulations. The discipline system

for monasteries in China, established by Master Mazu (709–788),<sup>376</sup> went off track after improper inheritance. A disciplined monastic life was no longer what it was. That is why Master Hongyi studied Vinaya, seeking the restoration of the Buddhist discipline system. In the spring of the 16th year of the Republican period, when the political situation in Hangzhou began to change, some young people called for the “extermination of Buddhism,” but later were impressed by a letter from him, so they abandoned the movement (mentioned by Jiang Danshu). Master Hongyi also offered advice on reorganizing the monastic system. He was willing to recommend Venerable Taixu and Venerable Hongsan as the rectifying committee members, which showed his concern for rectifying the monastic system and the people he valued. But he himself continued to focus on personal spiritual cultivation. This is probably because he thought that the rectification of Buddhism in China today entailed each person doing what he liked and what he was good at. It was a job that called for cooperation from different people of all walks of life.<sup>377</sup>

As Venerable Zhumo said, Master Hongyi took on the responsibility of promoting Nanshan Vinaya School, which was the deepest imprint he left on the world. This also made many consider him indifferent to major Buddhist events, the rectification of the Buddhist Sangha system, or the development and future of Buddhism. Why did they view Master Hongyi in this way? Master Hongyi said he often lamented that monks were criticized due to their failure to observe the discipline. Resultingly, after becoming a monk, he was determined to promote the precepts and maintain the image of Buddhism by setting a good example for others to follow. To cultivate talents for the development of Buddhism, he was engaged in boosting monastic education by founding the Vinaya School and the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy and lecturing on the Vinaya School. His efforts in calming the movement to exterminate Buddhism and the Sangha embody his spirit of commitment and sense of responsibility. In short, Master Hongyi took practical

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<sup>376</sup> Mazu Daoyi (709-788) is the founder of Hongzhou School, the most important sect of Zen. His common surname was Ma, and he was also known as Daoyi, a native of Shifang, Sichuan. Mazu advocated that there was no need to cultivate the Tao or cultivate one's mind. Zen Master Mazu Daoyi's school was very prosperous. Baizhang Huaihai is the most famous; he created the Linji sect and Weiyang sect of Chinese Zen.

<sup>377</sup> Zhu Mo 竺摩, “Jiehua xianfo” 借花献佛, *Jueyin* 觉音 20/21 (1994): 18.

actions to embody the spirit of caring for Buddhism: he “can’t bear to see all living beings suffer and Buddhism decline.”

## CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

Li Shutong, a charismatic and refined gentleman, was highly accomplished in poetry, painting and calligraphy, seal carving, music, and drama. He was rightly considered a pioneer of modern art and a promoter of the New Culture Movement. However, at a critical moment in his life and the high point of his career, he resolutely converted to Buddhism and joined the monastic order. During his more than twenty years of monastic life, he took it as his duty to study and promote Nanshan Vinaya. He initiated monastic education by founding Nanshan Vinaya Academy and the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy, cultivating monastic talents for the future of Buddhism. When the nation and Buddhism were at stake, he was willing to sacrifice his life to save his motherland and Buddhism, which reflected a strong sense of nationality, patriotism, and love for Buddhism.

Social factors in the era Master Hongyi lived in, as well as the influence of his family and friends, counted among the reasons accounting for his conversion to monkhood at the peak of his life. His transformation was also a result of his personality, characteristics, and mental state. From the perspective of familial factors, his father's interest in Chan Buddhism in his later years, the practices of his aunt, eldest niece, and sister-in-law in chanting scriptures and mantras, and their participation in Dharma services all had an impact on Li Shutong at a young age, which sowed the seeds of his becoming a monk in his later years. Li's first exposure to Buddhism in adulthood started with his practice of fasting, which was introduced to him by Xia Mianzun. His experience of fasting at Hupao Temple increased his understanding of and interest in Buddhism.

Meanwhile, Xia's words unexpectedly provided a motivating condition for Li's renunciation of the world. Rationally, Li's resolve was greatly influenced by Ma Yifu, who enlightened and guided Li with the Buddha-Dharma. He facilitated Master Hongyi's conversion to Buddhism and offered him help in Buddhist studies after he became a monk.

After becoming a monk, Master Hongyi devoted himself to studying and promoting the Nanshan Vinaya school. He was regarded as the Eleventh Patriarch of Nanshan Vinaya School due to his significant contributions to Vinaya school. This title was not only a recognition of his achievements in Vinaya studies but a reflection of his contributions to Chinese Vinaya studies and the Vinaya sect.

Master Hongyi's research on Vinaya was initially centered on Mūlasarvāstivāda, from which he turned to the Nanshan Vinaya school. On the surface, this switch was the result of Xu Weiru's persuasive words. However, it was because of the historical and contemporary situation of the Chinese Vinaya school and the characteristics of the Nanshan Vinaya school. It also resulted from Master Hongyi's in-depth understanding of Nanshan Vinaya. He produced various explanations to clarify the scope and stages of disciplinary practices by analyzing and annotating the three major divisions of Nanshan Vinaya. He authored *Nanshan Vinaya for the Laity* and promoted Nanshan Vinaya through lectures. His efforts at compiling, revising, and annotating Vinaya texts provided the literature basis for the revival of the Chinese Vinaya school and also tools for Vinaya studies. His doctrinal categories, graphical explanations, and Vinaya works also provided scholars of later generations guidance. His comprehensive and well-structured knowledge of Vinaya enabled monks and lay believers to appreciate and grasp the spirit of Nanshan

Vinaya, thus facilitating their religious practice.

The idea of the Pure Land has a unique position in Chinese Buddhism. Although the Pure Land school exists as an independent school, it has become a common religious practice among Chinese Buddhists, and the Pure Land has become a shared goal of every sect. The concept of the Pure Land can also be found in Master Hongyi's religious practice and Buddhist thought. In Master Hongyi's view, the teachings of the Pure Land were the most suitable to satisfy the needs of the times and the most compatible with the contemporary capacity of living beings. In terms of doctrines, it was regarded as the Perfect Teaching of One Vehicle, which was a high recognition. Master Hongyi advocated that the practitioners of the Pure Land have a deep belief in cause and effect, awaken Bodhicitta, and concentrate on the recollection of the Buddha and the Pure Land. He also recommended the *Sutra of the Fundamental Vows of the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha* and *Chapter on the Conduct and Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* as supplementary teachings for the Pure Land to better eliminate karmic hindrances and purify the body and mind. In his religious practice of Pure Land, Master Hongyi chanted the Buddha's name more than 10,000 times a day. He also initiated the method of "chanting the Buddha's name while listening to the bell ringing" to persuade his friends and relatives to practice the teachings of the Pure Land school. At the same time, he provided end-of-life care for those near death, giving them psychological comfort and spiritual support. This was how Master Hongyi manifested positive Buddhism engagement in society.

Master Hongyi's Buddhist views can be summarized as "taking Huayan as the realm, the Four-Part Vinaya as the practice, and the Pure Land as the fruit." Therefore, in addition to his views on the Vinaya and the Pure Land, Master Hongyi's Huayan thought



also occupied an important position in his philosophies. Compared with his ideas on the Vinaya and the Pure Land, his Huayan thought did not appear significant and his lectures on the topic not as extensive. However, from his work *Three Hundred Huayan Couplets* and his correspondence with his friends and relatives, in which he often urged them to recite and study it, we can see the importance he attached to the Huayan thought. Unlike the previous masters of the Huayan school, Master Hongyi's study and propagation of Huayan did not focus on Huayan philosophy but on the promotion of the *Chapter on the Conduct and Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*. The integration of Huayan and the Pure Land was the main characteristic of Master Hongyi's Huayan thought.

Master Hongyi was a monk with the spirit of commitment. In the face of the decline of Buddhism in the late Qing dynasty and early Republican period, when Buddhism was reduced to a religion that engaged in confessional practices for the dead and attached little importance to doctrinal study, Master Hongyi shouldered the responsibility of reviving Buddhism. He promoted Vinaya studies and rejuvenated the Nanshan Vinaya. Meanwhile, he developed monastic education to train monks for the tomorrow of Buddhism by founding the Nanshan Vinaya Academy and the Buddhist Yangzheng Academy. In terms of talent cultivation, Master Hongyi focused on the Buddhist canonical courses, encouraging students to cherish their blessings, practice labor, abide by precepts, and cultivate self-esteem. By stressing the faith in spiritual response and the validity of karmic effects, he particularly strengthened the religious beliefs of the monks and nuns, enabling them to realize the purpose of joining the monastic order and how to be qualified monks and nuns.

Among Master Hongyi's Buddhist causes, in addition to founding Buddhist

schools and training monks for monastic education, he collaborated with his disciple Feng Zikai to publish “Husheng Huaji.” Employing “art as an expedient measure and humanitarianism as the purpose,” they exhorted readers to abstain from killing and cultivate goodness through cartoons and poetry. Master Hongyi’s idea of caring for life was to eliminate cruel and evil mind states and cultivate compassion and loving-kindness. By doing so, human beings could maintain harmony with nature and establish a peaceful mind.

Master Hongyi’s ideas were also influenced by the times in which he lived. During the turbulent period of the late Qing dynasty and the early Republican period, Chinese society experienced both the struggles of different classes and political parties at home and the invasion by foreign imperialists. In this war-torn and chaotic society, people lived amid hardships and suffering. No matter which role he played, the artist Li Shutong or the monk Hongyi, this patriotic man conveyed deep affection for his motherland in his poems and songs. He raised funds for domestic disaster relief through charity; he expressed his resistance to Japanese goods by replacing his foreign outfits with traditional Chinese gowns. After the July 7 Incident, he sacrificed himself to engage in saving the country and Buddhism regardless of the war. He wrote a slogan on a banner every day, which read, “*Save the country while reciting the Buddha’s name. This is the must-do thing to save the country,*” trying to mobilize his Chinese fellows to work together to save the entire nation. When Buddhism was in danger, and especially when it faced annihilation, Master Hongyi stood up to call for joint efforts from all walks of life. He also put forward his own ideas and plans to oppose the movement of annihilating Buddhism and expelling monks. Master Hongyi’s proposal reflected his Buddhist spirit of

commitment and the concept of guarding Buddhism. It could be said that the social environment and religious conditions of the late Qing dynasty and early Republican period nurtured Master Hongyi's patriotism and his deep love for Buddhism.

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