

Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference of Humanistic Buddhism

The Conference, on the theme of Humanistic Buddhism and Culture, attended by forty-two participants from the United States of America, France, Germany, Britain, India, China and Taiwan, was inaugurated by Dr. Lewis R. Lancaster, President of the University of the West, on January 10, 2005. The following was the message of Venerable Dr. Hsing Yun, President of the Board of Trustees of the University of the West:

As the cold winds turn warm and spring shows its colors, it is a new beginning again. I pray for peace in the world and joy for all sentient beings. May we all live in harmony!

“Time and tide wait for no one.” This is truly so! As my age increases, my physical body grows old. Unlike before, I can no longer see clearly as my eyesight has become poorer. In reality, no one is exempt from graying hair or loosening teeth. However, maintaining a youthful spirit for developing the breadth and depth of our life is something within our control. I hope that by serving others, people can open up the window of their hearts letting light into the inner darkness so that they can enjoy the ease and coolness of life.

In view of the still inadequate actualization of Humanistic Buddhism by Buddhists, speaking on the theme of “Self-Awareness and Practicing the Buddha’s Way”, I raised four points as follows: use self-awareness to raise ourselves to a higher level, use localization to spread Buddhism, use new enterprises to increase income, and use great vows to practice what the Buddha taught. We can all rise to a higher standard in our faith providing guidelines for the development of Buddhism, personal cultivation to help others, and ways to conduct ourselves in dealing with situations.

In propagating the Dharma and cultural affairs, new records were also made. Buddha Light Television organized an “International Chinese Classics Recital Competition” in Hong Kong with more than a thousand children participating. Dong Zen Temple in Malaysia conducted a bi-lingual international “Refuge Taking, Five Precepts and Bodhisattva Precepts Retreat.” The Most Venerable Hsin Ting demonstrated the liturgy of Yogacara Flaming Mouth Dharma Function at Harvard University and Smith College in Massachusetts.

Seeing the great earth is about to welcome spring again, I cannot help but feel deeply touched by the attachment for life of all phenomena. As the leaves yellowed after a year, they will turn green again eventually. Within the depth between withering and flourishing, they allow us to learn the spirit to strive on, as well as the respect and tolerance for life. My blessings to you all in creating a new life and a new future in the coming new year!

Wishing you auspicious coexistence and a very successful meeting of minds in the Sixth International Conference on Humanistic Buddhism!

The Conference observed a minute’s silence in memory of the Tsunami Victims of South and South Asia.

A vote of condolence on the sudden death of Dr. David Chappell was proposed by Dr. Ananda W. P. Guruge, Dean of Academic Affairs and Director of the International Academy of Buddhism. Dr. Guruge highlighted the outstanding contribution which Dr. Chappell had made to Buddhist Studies over three decades of

instruction and research in the University of Hawaii and Soka University. A special mention was made of Dr. Chappell's pioneer role in the promotion of Christian-Buddhist Studies and his invaluable participation in the international program of a Culture of Peace of UNESCO. In seconding the vote, Dr. Lewis R. Lancaster elaborated his personal admiration of the scholarly achievements as well as the personal qualities of compassion, tolerance, and humility which characterized Dr. Chappell as scholar, teacher and friend. The Conference adopted the vote of condolence by observing a minute's silence and decided to convey its condolences to the family of Dr. Chappell.

The inauguration was followed by a Chinese and Indian cultural performance with David Liu's musical recital on the Chinese zither, Olivia Liu's Chinese ribbon dance, a tai-chi demonstration of Marvin Quon and three Bharatanatyam episodes presented by Easwar Ganesh and Mardhavi Sakuntala Rodrigo.

The following papers were presented and discussed in nine plenary sessions:

- James A Santucci (CSUF, UWest) – Religion and Culture
Lewis R. Lancaster (UWest, UC Berkeley) – Buddhism and Culture
Benjamin J. Hubbard (CSUF) – Impact of Religion on Western
Culture: A Mixed Legacy
Ananda W. P. Guruge (UWest, CSUF) – Buddhism and Aesthetic
Creativity
Ingrid Aall (UCSLB) – Postmodern Buddhist Commodification: Pilgrimage
and Tourism
Padmal de Silva (Univ. of London, UK) – Nature, Nurture and Mental Culture
Richard R. Kimball (UWest) – Buddhist Mental Culture and Western
Psychology
Baidyanath Labh (Univ. Jammu, India) – Buddhism As a Messenger of
Cultural Adjustability in the Present World Scenario
Chris Limburg (Univ. Wisconsin) – Buddhist Placemaking
Bhikkhu Pasadika (Philips, Marburg, Germany) – Indo-Tibetan Buddhist
Literature
Bruce Long (UWest) – Jataka Tales and Ajanta Murals: 'Sacred Beauty' in
Buddhist Words and Images
David Blundell (Academia Sinica/ Chengchi Univ., Taiwan) – Language
and Grammar of Sinhalese Aesthetics
Judith L. Jensen (Brea Mental Health and wellness Center, San Diego) –
Consciousness: Western Historical, Postmodern and Buddhist
Otto Chang (CSUSB, UWest) – Buddhism and Innovative Organizational
Cultural
Ming Lee (UWest) – Chinese Ch'an Buddhism and Mental Culture:
Implications of the Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra on Counseling and
Psychotherapy
Chanju Mun (UWest) – Wonhyo (617-686): A Critic of Sectarian Doctrinal
Classifications
Yun Chang Liu (UWest) – Artist's License and Buddhist Aesthetics
T. Dhammaratana (UNESCO, Paris) – Buddhist Values and World Culture
Kottegoda Warnasuriya (UWest) – Comparative Classification of Male
Offspring in Buddhist Texts and Hindu Dhammasastras

The Day 3 of the Conference (January 12, 2005) was devoted to a Panel Discussion to mark the Chinese Buddhist Culture Day. The session was chaired and animated by Dr. Cyrus Lee (China), assisted by Venerable Dr. Thich An-Hue (UWest). The following presentations were made by panelists:

- Darui Long (UWest) – Understanding the Novel Xi-you-ji (Journey to the West) in the Context of Politics and Religions
Wang Zhong Yao (Zhejiang Gongshang Univ., China) – Comparison between the Flying Figure and Kwan-yin Bodhisattva in Dunhuang Cave
Cheer Dean (UWest) – Search for Description of the Mind: the Development of Ālayavijñāna in China
John. R. Jones (La Sierra Univ.) – “Pure Land Here and Now” as a Concept Shaping Chinese Culture Today
Sharon Cheng (UWest) – Chinese Buddhist Music
Hang Hien (UWest) – Vietnam and Chinese Buddhist Culture
Yung Dong (UWest) – Buddhism and its Contributions to Culture

The discussion was led by Dr. Otto Chang, assisted by Dr. Aall, Bruce Long and Darui Long.

At the closing session on January 14, 2005, the Session Chairs reported on the discussions in each session and Dr. Lancaster delivered the Closing Address. The IAB Honoree Award Ceremony commenced with the announcement of Dr. Robert E. Buswell, Jr., Professor of Chinese and Korean Buddhist Studies and Founding Director of Center for Buddhist Studies, University of California Los Angeles as the Honoree of the Year 2004. Dr. Lancaster presented the plaque and Dr. Buswell delivered the ceremonial address on “Countercurrents of Influence in East Asian Buddhism: The Korean Case”. The Conference concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Ananda W. P. Guruge, who announced the theme of the Seventh Conference as ***Humanistic Buddhism and Economic Development***.

Harmony and beauty within our lives and within our communities often fail due to our insistence on the duality of self and others. The ultimate solution for generating peace and accord in our relationships and in our world, therefore, lies in seeing that we all are one. Never- Disparaging Bodhisattva¹ was always respectful to everyone he met, for he knew that we are all capable of becoming a Buddha one day. He did not maintain a dual, and therefore erroneous, perception that distinguished between people he deemed worthy of being treated with esteem and people he deemed unworthy. Through recognizing the interconnectedness of all beings, the perceived distance between all beings will shrink and an affirming environment will grow. If we all practice a modicum of this kind of regard for others, the world will be a much better place.

-Living Affinity, Hsing Yun, pp18-19