

## Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Humanistic Buddhism

The Third International Conference on Humanistic Buddhism of the International Academy of Buddhism held during December 16-20, 2001, was inaugurated by Dr. Naichen Chen, President of HLU. The theme was "Buddhist Education and Universal Ethics." Commenting on the conference theme, Dr. Chen remarked how vitally important it was to apply the principles, values and ideals of Humanistic Buddhism to universal ethics.

The Venerable Grand Master Hsing Yun sent an inspiring message to the Conference:

*Once again it gives me immense pleasure to congratulate the International Academy of Buddhism on its Third International Conference on Humanistic Buddhism and to welcome most warmly the national and international scholars participating in it. The theme of this Conference, namely Humanistic Buddhism and Universal Ethics, is as important as it is timely. In the global village which our planet is today, the need for values, norms, principles, and rules of conduct which humanity as a whole accepts for self-regulation and self transformation cannot be overemphasized.*

*That Buddhism and especially its humanistic character has a role to play in the evolution of such ethical principles is obvious. I am happy to see that the distinguished keynote speakers have produced invaluable documents to facilitate your deliberations not merely from a theoretical and academic angle but more importantly from a practical standpoint. I wish you every success.*

*Buddhism is an eminently practical religion because it teaches us how to live in this world. It is also the most mystical of religions because it shows us how to experience transcendental awareness in every moment of our lives. The Buddha is sometimes called "the great doctor" because he shows us how to cure ourselves of the ills of ignorance. He is sometimes called "the great teacher" because he teaches us how to free ourselves from the greed and anger that bind us to the world. He is sometimes called "the great ox" because he uses his strength to draw us toward the truth.*

*We should approach the words of the Buddha with the utmost sincerity. We should think of him as our friend and teacher, as someone who wants to help us. The Buddha's explanation of life in this world is founded on the idea of impermanence. He taught that everything changes and that nothing stays the same. The Buddha emphasized impermanence not to discourage us, but to make us realize the true nature of existence. If we understand that everything is impermanent, we will behave differently than if we mistakenly believe that this world is not subject to constant change. The Buddha taught the truths of impermanence and emptiness not to hurt us or make us sad, but to help us rid ourselves of the deluded thinking that binds us to things we cannot have or cannot have for long.*

*The Buddha says that "the mind is the source of evil" to make us realize that everything we have is of our own making. If we frequently engage in harmful or suspicious thoughts, our lives will become dark and unpleasant. If we frequently engage in beneficial and trusting thoughts, our lives will gradually become brighter and more joyful. Our minds are the turning points of our intentions and, thus, of our karma. There is no evil in the world; there is only evil in our minds. The Flower Garland Sutra says, "The mind is a painter. It paints its*

*own world." Contemplation is central to all of the Buddha's teachings, because mental clarity cannot be achieved without it. In the clarity that results from the absence of our customary confusion, we will see that our minds are far more wonderful than we had imagined before.*

*The Buddha taught us that deep wisdom can be found only by following a middle path between dualistic extremes. Too much austerity makes us hard and unsympathetic, while too much indulgence makes us soft and insensitive. Too much desire over-stimulates our senses, while too little desire enervates and makes us feel bored. When we have few desires we will be happier because our lives will be easier to manage and we will have more time to consider that which is most important. Honest introspection always leads to the truth.*

*The Buddha explains that contentment is not simply an end in itself, but also a means to an even greater end, for when we are content with what we have and "peaceful in poverty," we will always be able to uphold the Dharma. Contentment allows us to make wisdom our only concern. It is not necessary to be poor to be a good Buddhist. The Buddha did not teach us to despise wealth or to avoid money. He only taught us that wealth should be acquired righteously and used for the betterment of the world.*

*The generosity and compassion that the Buddha displayed in teaching the Dharma for so many years form the core around which all the rest of Buddhism clusters. Generosity is a deep state of mind that is based on the recognition that the well-being of others is fully as important as our own. We can be generous with our time, with our wisdom, with our skills, with our willingness to listen to others, with encouragement and so on. "The gift of the Dharma is the noblest of all gifts," said the Buddha. You are assembled here to share your knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Dharma.*

*These are some thoughts I wish to share with you as you commence your study and deliberations on Humanistic Buddhism and Universal Ethics. I wish you a fruitful and stimulating meeting of minds.*

*Hsing Yun  
President,  
Board of Trustee, HLU  
December 17, 2001*

Over the four-day conference the following presentations were made:

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES:

1. Dr. Naichen Chen, President, Hsi Lai University, *Universal Ethics in the context of Globalization and Humanistic Buddhism*
2. Dr. James A. Santucci, Professor of Religious Studies, California State University Fullerton & HLU, *A Theravada Buddhist Contribution to Universal Ethics*
3. Dr. Lewis Lancaster, Professor Emeritus of Buddhist Studies, U.C. Berkeley & Chair of Doctoral Advisory Committee, HLU, *Buddhist Ethical Concerns: The Problem of the Universal and the Particular*
4. Dr. T. Dhammaratana, Former UNESCO Consultant, Division of Philosophy, Secretary-General of the International Linh-Son Buddhist Congregation, Paris, France, *The Place of Humanistic Buddhism in UNESCO Universal Ethics Project*

5. David W. Chappell, Professor of Comparative Religion, Soka University, Aliso Viejo, *Humanistic Buddhists and Social Liberation*
6. Prof. Padmal de Silva, Senior Lecturer and Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Institute of Psychiatry, London, U.K., *Universal Ethics for Psycho-somatic Well Being: The Role of Humanistic Buddhism*
7. Benjamin Hubbard, Chair, Department of Comparative Religion, California State University, Fullerton, *The United Nations Initiative in Engaging Religion in Peace-building*
8. Dr. Ananda W. P. Guruge, Dean of Academic Affairs, HLU & Director of International Academy of Buddhism, *Bioethics: How Can Humanistic Buddhism Contribute?*
9. Dr. Thich An-Hue, Chair of Dept. of Religious Studies, HLU, *The Humanistic Ethics to Nurture the Environment*
10. Dr. Richard Kimball, Director of Buddhist Psychology and Counseling Research Center, HLU, *Humanistic Buddhism and Environmental Ethics*

PANEL PAPERS:

1. Dr. O'Hyun Park, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, *Xishan and Zen House*
2. Dr. Roger Corless, Professor of Emeritus, Duke University, Durham, NC, *The Positive Contribution of LGBT Persons to Humanistic Buddhism*
3. Dr. Bruce Long, Professor of Comparative Religion, HLU & University of Phoenix, *Ethical Teachings of the Buddha and Jesus: Resources for a Universal Ethic?*
4. Dr. Kenneth A. Locke, Assistant Chair, Department of Religious Studies, HLU, *The Foundations for Ethical Behavior: A Christian Perspective for a Dialogue with Buddhism*
5. Dr. Darui Long, Associate Professor of Chinese, HLU, Instructor of Eastern Religions, Department of Religious Studies, University of Calgary, Canada, *The Ethics in Humanistic Buddhism—Studies on Venerable Taixu and Mater Hsing Yun's Views on Ethics*
6. Mr. James R. Hodgkin, Risho Kosei-kai, Los Angeles & Ph.D. Candidate, HLU, *Measuring Satisfaction—Hoza: Applied Buddhism*
7. Dr. Otto Chang, California State University, San Bernardino & HLU, *Humanistic Buddhism and Business Ethics*
8. Ms. Melissa Rhodes, Ph.D. Candidate, HLU, *Buddhism: Pure and Simple*
9. Ven. Cheer Dean, Ph.D. Candidate, HLU, *Hsuan Tsang and Nalanda University*
10. Ven. Shin Chou, Ph.D. Candidate, HLU, *Engaged Buddhism and Humanistic Buddhism in Today's World*

At the concluding session, **Professor Stanley Weinstein**, Professor of Buddhist Studies, Yale University, was recognized the **International Academy of Buddhism (IAB) Honoree of the year 2001**.