

**STUDIES ON  
HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM** 

**GLOCALIZATION OF BUDDHISM  
佛教全球本土化研究**

Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism, Taiwan  
and  
Nan Tien Institute, Australia

**A STUDY OF HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM  
RETURNING TO INDIA: OBSERVATIONS AND  
REFLECTIONS ON THE FO GUANG SHAN NEW  
DELHI EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL CENTRE**

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The journey of Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s Humanistic Buddhism back to India can generally be divided into two stages. The first stage spanned from 1963 to 2008, when the Venerable Master made eight pilgrimages to India and gradually affirmed his desire to bring Buddhism back there. He and some of his monastics began to develop a preliminary plan. The second stage began with the establishment of the New Delhi Educational and Cultural Centre (hereinafter referred to as the Centre). By building a temple, initiating educational programs, setting up charitable clinics, and engaging in cross-cultural exchanges, Buddhism was reestablished in India. In addition, the localization of Humanistic Buddhism was aided by the facilitation of intensive Dharma propagation throughout India. This paper is based on observation and study of the New Delhi Educational

and Cultural Centre from 2008 to 2014. The objective is to examine the current situation and the potential future of Humanistic Buddhism in India.

### **1. The Venerable Master's Pilgrimage and Establishment of the Temple**

In "I Remember the Buddha's Homeland with Emotion—India," the Venerable Master recalls that it was not until July 8, 1963 that the conditions came together for him to visit the home of the Buddha—India. His sentiment at the time was: "As long as I am in the Buddha's homeland, everything is good, even the mud where the lotuses are growing is fragrant." It seemed like time, space, and the human realm were entirely forgotten. At that moment he realized, "O Buddha, I have found you! It turns out you were here, let me also die here and accompany you!" The Venerable Master experienced "an existence without a physical body, a Buddha realm." He then made a vow, "In the future, I must return again. I must discover the Buddha. I want to meet him."<sup>1</sup>

In December 1979, the Venerable Master led the largest contingent of Fo Guang Shan pilgrims (with more than two hundred people) to India. The pilgrims were referred to as the "Chinese Fo Guang Shan Pilgrimage to India Group." And again in March 1983, he led eighty-four members of the "Fo Guang Shan Pilgrimage to India Group." During these third and fourth pilgrimages to India, each group visited the eight sacred sites of Buddhism. In his heart, the Venerable Master felt "a mixture of sadness and joy, and indescribable admiration for the Buddha, yet an intolerable sorrow because of the decline of Indian Buddhism."

From beginning to completion, the Venerable Master was determined and steadfast in his aspiration to have a temple in India. In January 1985, he led another seventy-six people on a twenty-one day pilgrimage to holy sites. At the holy site of Bodhgaya, he came up with the idea of purchasing land to establish a temple. In the 1990s, he continued his plan to revive Buddhism in India, making his sixth trip in July 1992. He led Venerable Tzu Jung, Venerable Yung Miao, Hsiao Hui-hua, and several others to Ladakh. The Venerable Master discovered that the number of Buddhist schools in the Buddha's homeland could be counted on one hand, which left him even more determined to promote education for the salvation of the people. In May 1992, the Buddha's Light International Association

(BLIA) Kolkata Chapter was established as the first Chinese-speaking Buddhist association in India. After introducing Chung Hsüeh-fang as the Chapter Elder Advisor, he acquired a place in the Tangra Chinatown of Calcutta as a temporary location for local devotees to gather for Dharma services.

In response to the requests of Chinese people living in India, Fo Guang Shan officially established the Fo Guang Shan Calcutta Chan and Pure Land Centre in May 1998. It regularly holds Ksitigarbha dharma services, prostration to thousand buddhas dharma services, cultivation services, and other activities to bring local devotees to congregate and practice. In 2006, the India Gaya Orphanage was established in Bodh Gaya.

In October 2006, suffering from arrhythmia, a weak heart, and an aging body, the Venerable Master traveled to India for the eighth time to conduct a Triple Gem Taking Refuge Ceremony at a crossroads in Hyderabad, which was attended by around two hundred thousand people. In 2008, he sent his disciple Venerable Hui Xian to establish the Fo Guang Shan New Delhi Educational and Cultural Centre, to nurture a new generation of the Saṅgha, and revive Indian Buddhism.

The Venerable Master has made eight visits to India, inspired to propagate the Dharma there by the fragrant soil of the Buddha's homeland, the kind-hearted people, and the spirit of adventure and risk of Master Xuanzang. He specifically cited advocates of equality such as the Buddha, the founder of Mahayana Buddhism Nagarjuna, and Dr. Ambedkar as role models for the future of Indian Buddhism. Learning from the great spirit of the Buddha and bodhisattvas can unite Indians to remove the shackles of the caste system. Because of the Dharma propagation from the Centre and others like it, by 2013 the Venerable Master concluded that a new era in the revival of Buddhism in India and the propagation of Humanistic Buddhism had dawned.

## **2. Propagating the Dharma at New Delhi Educational and Cultural Centre**

From August 2008 to late 2014, under the leadership of Venerable Hui Xian, the Centre propagated the Dharma mainly from the following perspectives:

i) New Delhi Educational and Cultural Centre

As an institution that propagates the Dharma, the Centre fostered close ties with Buddhist cultural and educational research organizations in India. Venerables from the center regularly took part in academic conferences hosted by the Department of Buddhist Studies at Delhi University to explore the origin and development of schools of Buddhism. The BLIA Delhi University Chapter also leveraged the opportunities offered by such gatherings of scholars to conduct a “Presentation of Books Ceremony,” donating books such as *Cloud and Water: A 50 Year Anniversary Photobiography of Master Hsing Yun* and *40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Magazine*. The Centre upheld Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s ideals by frequently conducting cultural exchanges to foster mutual understanding between different cultures and customs. To highlight localization, Venerable Hui Xian sang the song “Ahimsa” in Hindi, and was highly lauded for it. Inspired by the spirit of Fo Guang Shan, several batches of Chinese exchange students in India resolved to teach the novice monks, forging a strong friendship with the Centre in the process.

ii) Sramanera School / Sowing the Bodhi Seeds

Educational activities at the Centre involve three main aspects. The first caters to the public, particularly by education through cultivation for Buddhist youth. For example, in January 2009, Venerable Jue Ming spoke on “Humanistic Buddhism: Hope and Projects to Sow Seeds in India.” She explained the causes and conditions of the local development of Fo Guang Shan, the Venerable Master’s expectations, and his disciples’ efforts in the development of Fo Guang Shan India. In “The History and Geography of India,” Gelek Phunsok, the leader of the BLIA YAD (Young Adult Division) New Delhi Subdivision, described the changes in Indian empires and the rise and fall of Indian Buddhism from the stone age to modern times. These changes have inspired Buddhists to make the vow, “It’s for the Great Faith, why should my life be spared?” Secondly, regular short-term monastic retreats are organized to help people understand Humanistic Buddhism. Another kind of education is “holistic education,” which involves Humanistic Buddhism’s effort to adapt to modern society, and comprises moral ethics, science, and literacy education. For example, Professor Li Li-yun, an

ethnic Chinese-Indian, delivered instruction on “Personality Development” in March 2009. And finally, the most important educational program at the Centre is the Sramanera School, which aims to cultivate talent for propagating the Dharma in the future. Venerable Hsin Ding once remarked, “In order to sow the seeds of Bodhi, we established the Sramanera School, enrolling children who are the descendants of the Sakya clan. We held the Tonsure Ceremony for them and conferred the Precepts for Sramanera.”<sup>2</sup>

The Sramanera School was established in April 2010, and its educational programs are led by Venerable Hui Xian, Director of the Centre. On May 22, 2010, Venerable Hui Xian interviewed applicants at Sankassa, the place where the Buddha descended to the human world from the Palace of Trayastrimsa to teach the Dharma to his mother. One thousand years ago, it was a sacred place where Buddhism prospered and Buddhists gathered. Later, as Buddhism declined due to various factors, descendants of early Buddhists gradually lost their faith. Today Sankassa is one of the places where descendants of the Sakya clan live. Kamalpur Temple, located in Sankassa and managed by Youth Buddhist Society of India (YBS), assists with the revival of Buddhism by welcoming new Buddhists.

The requirements for enrollment at the Sramanera School are as follows: male, at least 12 years old, mentally and physically healthy, perfect in the six sense organs, and with parental consent. Twenty-six students were recruited in 2010 but only eight qualified. On December 27, 2010, the Venerable Master kindly approved the tonsure of five students. Venerable Hsin Pei, then Head Abbot of Fo Guang Shan Monastery, embarked on a pilgrimage and Dharma propagation tour to India between December 19-29, and presided over the Tonsure Ceremony at the Centre on the last stop of his tour. These five sramanera became the third generation of Fo Guang Shan disciples, with Venerable Hsin Pei as their presiding master.

In 2011, the Sramanera School recruited nineteen students but only enrolled five children, aged eleven years old. On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the School Opening Ceremony started with “Ode to the Triple Gem” as a prayer for the Buddha’s empowerment of the novices, so they would be settled in body and mind. To conclude the ceremony, the novices sang the inspiring song “We Shall Overcome” in English.

Curriculum at the Sramanera School includes three aspects. First, the Ministry of Education in India designated the following compulsory subjects for students in grades three to five: mathematics, environmental sciences, computer science, English, and Hindi. Second, students are taught Chinese (both simplified and traditional characters), yoga, Chinese martial arts (*zhongyi quan*), art, cooking, traditional Indian tabla music, and soap-making using natural ingredients. And third, the basic elements of Buddhism are taught, including meditation, Buddhist terminology, the five daily sessions of practice, and Buddhist etiquette. In addition, “pilgrimages” are occasionally organized. For example, on March 8 and 9, 2014, Venerable Hui Xian and the teacher Yong Du led thirteen novices on a pilgrimage to Ajanta and Ellora (five from grade 4, three from grade 3, and five from grade 2). They visited the sacred Buddhist sites and were thrilled by the greatness of Buddhism, thereby deepening their “spiritual sentiments.” They emulated Suddhana’s spirit of learning, visiting wise teachers and being inspired by the compassionate vows of the great patriarchs. They put the Venerable Master’s idea of “stepping out” into practice, broadening their vision by “seeing the world.”

Of the School’s nineteen teachers, seven are from India, eight are from China, two are from Malaysia, one is from Singapore and one is from Taiwan. The yoga teacher, Mr. Kaushal, has taught for twenty-six years. Ye Shujun, the former director of the Chinese Faculty at Jawaharlal Nehru University, is in charge of teaching simplified Chinese.

Every year in the first lunar month, the college holds an annual “One-day Amitabha Chanting Service.” It contains nine sessions, beginning at six in the morning and finishing in time for lights-off at ten o’clock at night. Upholding “mindfulness at each recitation,” the practice is not only to verbally chant the name of Buddha or follow the ritual of prostrating to the Buddha, but more importantly to “bear the Buddha in mind.” As remarked in the “Chapter of the Perfect and Complete Realization of Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva”: “If sentient beings’ minds recollect the Buddha [Amitabha], and are mindful of the Buddha, now or in the future, they will definitely see the Buddha.” Since January 1, 2014, the “Amitabha Chanting Service” has been extended to two days.

During the fifth enrollment of the Sramanera School, thirty-seven out of sixty applicants passed the preliminary round of evaluation, while only twenty qualified in the final round held at the Centre. On August 27, 2014, twenty new students were admitted in the company of their parents and referral organizations, and the opening ceremony of the school was held on the first of September.

Venerable Hui Xian summarized in the 2014 Dharma Propagation Report, “It has been four years since the Sramanera School was established with the Venerable Master’s kind approval. It is now the fifth year (2014-2015) and we have forty-two students in total coming from Uttar Pradesh, Ladakh, Maharashtra, and Darjeeling.” In February 2012, Most Venerable Hsin Pei wrote: “The establishment of the Sramanera School aims to cultivate a new generation of saṅgha, to embody the Venerable Master’s idea of ‘fostering talent through education’ and also to pave the way for realizing the great goal of reviving Buddhism in India.

### iii) Free Medical Camps—A Temporary Relief of Suffering

The Centre has routinely organized the resources necessary to provide free medical care to areas of India that lack healthcare resources. It has become a unique characteristic of Fo Guang Shan’s charity work in India. On October 28, 2008, under the guidance of Ng Chin Poh Jiaoshi, five people including BLIA Delhi Chapter President Gelek Phunchok, Secretary Mephram Gyalsen, and Committee Member Stanzin Chonjor Dawa visited Kee Village in the Northern Indian state of Himachal to plan a medical camp for a thousand people from five villages in the subsequent year, and to distribute teaching tools and stationery to the local schools. In June 2009, the Centre assembled Fo Guang Shan groups in different sectors in India and invited other enthusiasts to participate in this international medical camp.

On February 17-18, 2010, the University of Delhi’s Department of Buddhist Studies, Nanhua University’s Department of Natural Biotechnology, the University of Delhi BLIA Chapter, and the Centre jointly organized the “Natural Healing Medical Camp” in the University of Delhi’s Faculty of Arts. The two-day natural healing camp benefitted four hundred people. This medical camp achieved the “four accomplishments” of:

1. Promoting Nanhua University's Department of Natural Biotechnology to Indian intellectuals in India;
2. Further popularizing acupuncture therapy, which was already gaining appeal to those higher in social strata;
3. Winning the affirmation of academic organizations, culminating in invitations to promote natural healing therapy in Bhutan and Hyderabad in the following year; and
4. The attendance of diplomats from various countries coming for therapy at the camp, including the Malaysian consul, the Burmese consul, and Mr Chang, a representative from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office.

An international Free Medical Camp was held between April 22-29, 2010 in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. The Centre co-organized this medical camp with the BLIA YAD Delhi Subdivision, Shree Pranihipurna Maha Vihar, Balambu, Nepal, and the Taiwan Health Corps.

Upholding the Buddha's spirit of unconditional compassion and empathy, the Centre worked with the BLIA YAD Delhi Subdivision and the Malaysian Chinese Medical Team from July 5-15, 2010 to provide free medical care and healthcare education to relieve the suffering of the local residents in the materially and medically impoverished areas of Ladakh, India (Padum Village, Raru Village, and Zangla Village in the Zanskar district, averaging 3,500 feet above sea level). There were two reasons for choosing this region. Firstly, many Indian monastics and female semi-monastics of Fo Guang Shan originate from Ladakh. This initiative served to express gratitude towards the locals for nurturing these talents. Secondly, as the area is severely lacking in medical resources, the medical team could provide what they truly need, making their efforts even more purposeful. Approximately 710 people visited the clinic, while the free medical camp was attended by around 140.

In 2011, medical camps were conducted in four small villages in the vicinity of the small town of Mainpuri in Uttar Pradesh. The motivation for this medical camp came from a 2010 Fo Guang Shan charity trip undertaken by the Centre to provide for educational needs in that area. The monastics were deeply touched by the sincere nature of the villagers, became aware of the scarcity of healthcare

resources in the area, and championed the medical camp. With the assistance of the Chi Mei Medical Center of Taiwan and Youth Buddhist Society of India, the medical camp was a great success. Between July 19-27, 2010, free medical services were offered in Bihar following the same model.

The 2013 Delhi winter was abnormally cold and at one point temperatures fell below zero degrees Celsius. Approximately one hundred people froze to death in Delhi alone according to some reports. The “blanket donation campaign” initiated a few years ago by Venerable Jue Ming of the University of Delhi BLIA Chapter became ever more relevant in the unusual climate (Fo Guang Shan New Delhi Educational and Cultural Centre started participating in this activity in 2010). In the winter of 2013, Fo Guang Shan New Delhi Educational and Cultural Centre collected a thousand blankets for donation, benefitting 500 who were homeless.

Between November 4-9, 2014, the Centre and the Youth Buddhist Society of India organized medical camps in Uttar Pradesh. The locations included Etah, Mainpuri, Kannauj, and Hardoi districts, with a total visitor count of 6,500.

Venerable Hui Xian understands that in the current situation in India, where there is a large number of poor people: “While charity cannot immediately improve the lives of the Indian people, it is a temporary relief of their suffering.”<sup>33</sup>

To date, medical camps have been held across the land, from the capital of New Delhi to the remote Spiti in Himachal Pradesh at an altitude of nearly 5,000 meters. Such efforts have become Fo Guang Shan New Delhi Educational and Cultural Centre’s tradition of Dharma propagation. It manifests Fo Guang Shan’s excellent tradition of “benefitting society through philanthropy” and sowing the seeds of love in this impoverished land.

iv) Buddha Light Art and Living Private Limited (BLAL) - Dharma Propagation through Publications

Buddha Light Art and Living Private Limited New Delhi (BLAL) was established on July 14, 2011. Its purpose was to implement the Venerable Master’s intention “to propagate Dharma through culture,” and to propagate the faith of

Humanistic Buddhism within the Buddha's homeland. Since its establishment, BLAL has engaged in translating and publishing the works of Fo Guang Shan and Venerable Master Hsing Yun. Notably, the students of Sramanera School published their own works – *The Diary of Novice Monk* and *The Sound of Sramanera* – and the Centre organized a launch for these books and CDs.

By the end of 2014, BLAL had participated in the New Delhi World Book Fair three times. In early 2012, under the constraint of a lack of human and material resources and after half a year of preparation, BLAL participated in the 20<sup>th</sup> New Delhi World Book Fair in Pragati Maidan, New Delhi for the first time. The organizer of the book fair was The National Book Trust of India (NBT), a governmental body established in 1957 by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development of India. The book fair had more than 2,500 exhibitors, and approximately 1,300 bookstores and publishers including thirty overseas participants. With an exhibition area measuring 45,000 square meters it was massive for this type of event.

In 2013, BLAL successfully emerged from New Delhi and participated in the book fair organized by NBT in Lucknow, capital of the state of Uttar Pradesh.

The third time BLAL participated in an international book fair in India was the New Delhi World Book Fair held between August 23-31, 2014. This book fair had 1,200 local and overseas exhibitors and was visited by approximately 10,000 people daily. BLAL put together an exhibition comprising forty-three English, six Hindi, and one Tamil publications, as well as the newly published *The Diary of Novice Monk*, attracting many visitors daily. The visitors were very interested in the Venerable Master's books. The bestsellers in Hindi included *Humble Table*, *Wise Fare* and *A Look at Modern Social Issues—Buddhism and Our Changing Society*.

### **3. Reflections on Humanistic Buddhism in the Present and into the Future**

- i) Propagation of Humanistic Buddhism: Dawning of a Renaissance for Buddhism in India

Dharmapala established the Mahabodhi Society in 1891 with the aspiration to revive Buddhism and create a new era for the return of Buddhism to India. The Venerable Master presided over the Triple Platform Ordination in India in 1998, then set up the Fo Guang Shan Calcutta Buddhist Centre. He was determined to take Humanistic Buddhism to India and to pave the way for Buddhism to adapt to globalization in the future.

The campaigns by Dharmapala and Fo Guang Shan to bring Buddhism back to India were temporally separated by almost a century, but shared the background of globalization. The historical background of Dharmapala's revival of Buddhism was a time when the South Asian subcontinent was colonized and forced into the trend of globalization. Dharmapala believed that Buddhist culture was part of the 2,000 year old cultural heritage of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Given that the country was continuously suppressed by invaders from Portugal, the Netherlands, and England, and that the people were forced to convert to Christianity, the colonized people should regard the revival of Buddhist culture as the revival of the religious culture of Sri Lanka, and regain confidence in their race, language, and ethnicity. This was a necessary path of cultural self-awareness. On the other hand, the Venerable Master's endeavors in returning Humanistic Buddhism to India are endeavors to adapt Buddhism to historical developments in the era of political, economical, and cultural globalization after the Second World War, which can be seen as an important subject in the modernization of Buddhism.

In terms of the ideology behind their Dharma propagation, Dharmapala wanted to revive Buddhist holy sites and let the Buddha's light shine on India. However, the Venerable Master realized when he was young that this is an epoch of reform and innovation. Instead of only adhering to the teachings as was practiced in the past, it is important to adapt to the times and the environment.

In terms of the content and method of Dharma propagation, both Dharmapala and the Venerable Master adopted the method of establishing organizations, building temples, cooperating with Buddhist groups internationally, and publishing books. But in the pioneering era of the return of Buddhism to India a hundred years ago, Dharmapala lacked experience during his early days in his homeland of Sri Lanka. On the other hand, the Venerable Master had made significant reforms and

innovations to “adapt Buddhism to the modern society” through Buddhist choirs, CDs, Dharma propagation via television, family Dharma services, vegetarian meals, etc., in Taiwan and other regions of the world before coming to India.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, he has accumulated a wealth of profound experiences.

Notably, despite a lack of organization and the more challenging conditions during the era of Dharmapala’s revival of Buddhism in India, it was more convenient for him to propagate the Dharma in terms of the school of Buddhism, language, and geographical environment. The Venerable Master’s Humanistic Buddhism belongs to a group of revolutionary new schools of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism that have gone through extensive Sinicization since the Sui and Tang dynasties. His propagation of Dharma is more difficult in terms of the school, language, and geographical environment. Therefore, Dharmapala’s effort of returning Buddhism to India was closely related to the revival of Buddhist culture in Sri Lanka. The beginning of the Venerable Master’s effort in returning Humanistic Buddhism to India was closely connected to the revival of Buddhist culture in the greater Chinese region. This is why the arduous efforts of “localization” are necessary background for the “cultural exchange between China and India.”

Compared with Hinduism, Buddhism is still very feeble in India. Among the Buddhist organizations of India, Theravada Buddhism has entered a stable period after a century of propagation. Yet as a representative of the Chinese Mahayana school of Buddhism, Fo Guang Shan still faces many uncertainties in its attempts to disseminate Buddhist teachings. The road to truly returning Humanistic Buddhism to India to make significant impacts remains a long one.

#### ii) Time is Needed for “Bodhi Seeds” to Become “Buddhist Masters”

In 2013, the Venerable Master said to Indian sramaneras who were on pilgrimage at Fo Guang Shan, “You are the bodhi seeds that will bloom as bodhi flowers in the near future.” In an interview, Venerable Hui Xian stated his wish that the sramaneras he helped train emerge as a generation of monks who will revive Buddhism in India.

To bring about equality, which requires helping millions out of poverty,

is an essential task for Buddhists who seek to revive Buddhism in India. Given the state of India, however, it is a nearly impossible mission. Nevertheless, the Venerable Master firmly believes that India is a place with an ancient culture that has also made great accomplishments in developing modern technology. In his heart, the Venerable Master hopes that India's caste system can be eliminated, bringing equality to the people. Therefore, he ended his essay "I Remember the Buddha's Homeland with Emotion—India" with the following sentence, "For the Untouchable in India, the most devastating damage is that to their humanity and to their mind and heart. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we value equality and justice, and discrimination to this degree ought to not exist anymore!"<sup>5</sup>

During the Venerable Master's pilgrimage, India's extreme poverty left a strong impression. In 2014, his disciple Miao Hsi also lamented the issue in *Traveling in India*, where she wrote, "It pains me to not give when seeing such great need. However, to give would bring another type of pain. As we drove away, we took another look at the poverty-stricken village, and came to an understanding as to why the Buddha would have chosen to be born here, and to achieve enlightenment and begin his teachings in this land!"

Buddhism has many schools and sects in India, and revitalizing Buddhism requires collaboration and mutual learning between them. The BLIA has grown exponentially in all five continents over the last twenty years. At the same time, Fo Guang Shan monastics Man Hua, Jue Men, Man He, and others who have held the position of director of the Dharma propagation group all spent countless hours traveling in challenging conditions to all corners of India to establish non-Chinese language BLIA groups in places like Ladakh, Bodh Gaya, Andhra Pradesh, Darjeeling, the University of Delhi, Gujarat, Bangalore, Chennai, Sikkim, as well as in Nepal, Bangladesh, and other countries and regions. The eleven BLIA groups set up among non-Chinese communities in South Asia adhere to the purposes and goals of the BLIA and are actively involved in the localization and revival of Buddhism. Many lay practitioners, who were well-established in their communities, took up the Venerable Master's call for establishing Humanistic Buddhism, and committed to working to support and sustain Fo Guang Shan's mission in India. Many of these lay leaders became BLIA presidents in South Asia and shouldered the responsibility of leading the devotees.

### iii) How Should Humanistic Buddhism Engage with a Nation Where the Mainstream Religion is Hinduism?

In the past hundred years, the political environment in India has changed significantly, presenting challenges to the revival of Buddhism. The Buddhist community also faces an increasingly complicated situation in regard to engaging with Hinduism and Hindu nationalism.

In the 2009 article “The Hope of the Project to Plant the Seeds of Humanistic Buddhism in India,” Venerable Jue Ming raised the question, “How should Humanistic Buddhism engage with a nation where Hinduism is the mainstream religion?” Since the 1980s, Hindu nationalism has been on the rise in India, with a call for “one people, one language, one religion.” They argue that “everyone living in India ought to practice Hinduism and regard India as its holy land. Moreover, this movement has resulted in open attacks on other religions and cultures, creating social unrest. With this background, Fo Guang Shan monastics face many challenges in their work.

In a country where Hinduism is the dominant religion, the development of Humanistic Buddhism in India is largely dependent on Buddhism’s interaction and engagement with Hinduism. To coexist in harmony, the question to consider is, “What should Buddhism look like, should it’s revival be accompanied with fanfare?”<sup>6</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Venerable Master Hsing Yun, “I Remember the Buddha’s Homeland with Emotion—India,” in *Buddhist Affinities over a Century 10 - Places of Practice 2*, trans. Miao Guang (Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Publications, 2013), 294-295.
- 2 Venerable Hsin Ding, “Prologue: Seeds of Bodhi,” in *Diary of Novice Monk 2* (New Delhi: BLAI, 2013).
- 3 「慈善不能立即改善印度人的生活，卻是一劑能暫時止痛的藥」-Ed. See Shi Miao Xi, *Journey Through India* (行腳印度) (Gandha Samudra Culture Company: Taipei, 2014), 120.
- 4 Venerable Master Hsing Yun, “Only Beginning to Practice as a Master—My Approach to Buddhism was Somewhat Creative” in *Buddhist Affinities over a Century 12*, trans. Miao Guang (Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Publications, 2013), 153.

- 5 Venerable Master Hsing Yun, “I Remember the Buddha’s Homeland with Emotion—India,” in *Buddhist Affinities over a Century 10*, trans. Miao Guang (Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Publications, 2013), 319.
- 6 Jue Ming Shi, “The Hope of the Project to Plant the Seeds of Humanistic Buddhism in India” (unpublished).