

**STUDIES ON  
HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM** 

**VENERABLE MASTER HSING YUN:  
A LIFE REMEMBERED  
緬懷星雲大師：人間佛教的思想與實踐**

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and  
Nan Tien Institute, Australia

**COMMEMORATING VENERABLE  
MASTER HSING YUN THROUGH  
AN INVENTED FOOD PRACTICE  
IN THE COMMUNAL CONTEXT  
OF FO GUANG SHAN**

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Food forms the basis of many interactions and transactions in Buddhist communities, stretching from the mundane to the supramundane. Food is offered as alms by lay people to the monastics who in turn give the Dharma, forming the basis of the monastic-lay relationship in the Theravāda Buddhist tradition.<sup>1</sup> Food offering is an act of generosity that generates merit. That is, it creates a store of wholesome karma. In diasporic Buddhist communities, food also becomes a cultural currency that forges Buddhist identity and cultural identity, binds community, strengthens belonging and facilitates outreach and generates economic earnings for the community.<sup>2</sup>

Buddhists generally view food as nourishment for the physical body and sustenance on the path of cultivation, although the culturally embedded view that food can be endowed with spiritual power persists in certain traditions.<sup>3</sup> Previous scholarship has examined the rituals,<sup>4</sup> regulations,<sup>5</sup> and functions<sup>6</sup> of food in Buddhism, including food substance, food preparation, and food offerings in Buddhist communities. These studies exemplify the communal, gendered, and fluid nature of Buddhist actions centered on food.

This study adopts a combination of the lived religion and material religion approach to examine a new communal food practice at Fo Guang Shan, a modern Mahāyāna Buddhist movement founded in Taiwan by Venerable Master Hsing Yun. Fo Guang Shan advocates Humanistic Buddhism that centers on resolving human issues in the present life. Humanistic Buddhist institutions take it as their mission to connect to and become relevant to the society through various forms of social engagement. In Fo Guang Shan, its implementation is guided by its Four Objectives of culture, education, charity, and spiritual cultivation.<sup>7</sup>

While both individual and communal practice approaches are encouraged, Fo Guang Shan places an emphasis on communal practice.<sup>8</sup> The emphasis on communality is aligned to the objectives of the Mahāyāna path. Mahāyāna, alternatively the greater vehicle, prioritizes the liberation of the multitude over that of the individual. Based on the foundational Buddhist understanding that sentient beings are equal in their Buddha nature, it is an affirmation of one's

own potential for liberation and thus the shouldering of one's responsibility to liberate oneself and others. This constitutes the bodhisattva path, which is central to Humanistic Buddhism. Communal cultivation at Fo Guang Shan takes myriad forms to cater to different inclinations and capacities. For example, while traditional Dharma services take the form of *sūtra* recitation and prayers, Fo Guang Shan expands this communal cultivation by redefining "Dharma service" as "an assembly centered around the teachings of the Buddha."<sup>9</sup> It encompasses not just religious ceremonies, but also lectures, study groups, retreats, and more. Ultimately, Humanistic Buddhists strive to bring their cultivation beyond the temple walls and actualize the Dharma in their daily life.

This paper examines a new food practice at Fo Guang Shan, the making of *luanzi*, a style of dumpling traditionally from the Yangzhou area. This practice began as a way to commemorate the passing of the founder of Fo Guang Shan Venerable Master Hsing Yun (1927–2023). In doing so, it aims to explore the way Humanistic Buddhist practitioners experience and negotiate religious meanings in their cultivation, mediated by the everyday object of food.

The theoretical framework developed by Arai and Trainor<sup>10</sup> is used to examine the making of *luanzi* as a Humanistic Buddhist practice. Arai and Trainor conceptualize practices as embodied actions of individual agents situated within their material surroundings and social contexts, foregrounding relationships both among humans and between humans and material objects. The material surrounds include the food ingredients, the temple kitchen, the main shrine of the temple, the Buddha images, and the image of Venerable Master Hsing Yun. The social contexts extend to include Fo Guang Shan and its branch temples around the world where the individuals engage in making *luanzi*, the daily operations of the temple, the temple community and the relationship within, all the way to Fo Guang Shan's positioning within the contemporary social context.

In many Buddhist communities, the predominant forms of cultivation

are often not hermeneutical or intellectual. Hence, the category of “practice,” rather than “ritual,” is adopted by Arai and Trainor to highlight the centrality of embodied actions. These actions are understood as having varying degrees of formalization and improvisation, without implying rigid repetition or fixed forms. Their ritualization is often fluid, open ended, and subject to adaptation and change by the individual agents who participate in them.<sup>11</sup>

The food practice of making *tuanzi* is analyzed in three registers to understand how the practitioners at Fo Guang Shan find religious meaning through this embodied practice: the material context, the individuals, and the social environment. The material components include the food *tuanzi* and the material environment where they were made. The individual agents involved are the monastic and lay *sangha* of Fo Guang Shan, and the social environment is the community of Fo Guang Shan and its operations. Textual and multimedia sources of Fo Guang Shan, including internal notices, news articles, videos, Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s published diaries and prose writings from his *Complete Works* and his disciples’ reflexive essays are analyzed. I also drew from my observations as a regular participant at Nan Tien Buddhist Temple Parramatta, New South Wales, Australia.

### **Venerable Master Hsing Yun and the Legacy of Food Practices at Fo Guang Shan**

Venerable Master Hsing Yun, the founder of Fo Guang Shan, was an accomplished Buddhist teacher, a calligrapher, philanthropist, and a prolific writer. It is perhaps less well known outside Fo Guang Shan that he was also an adept and skillful temple chef.

One of the most marked changes when Buddhism sinicized in China was the change in food production and meal practice at Buddhist monasteries.<sup>12</sup> Chan Buddhist monasteries including Fo Guang Shan, install a temple chef (典座 *dian zuo*)<sup>13</sup> system where the monastics cook their own food. The temple chef occupies a special position in the running of a Chan Buddhist monastery. There is a Buddhist saying, “The three thousand Buddhas all emerge from

the kitchen.”<sup>14</sup> Cultivation as a temple chef is often lauded as a path of deep cultivation and the kitchen a testing ground for one’s practice in mindfulness, patience, and compassion.

On multiple occasions, Venerable Master Hsing Yun voiced his longing to serve as a temple chef. In the Preface to the book *Vegetarian Recipes* (素菜譜 *su cai pu*) he wrote:

From a young age, I have always delighted in cooking and preparing food. I suppose I have the temperament of a Temple Chef. I also feel that I am naturally attuned to cooking, even without formal instruction. In my life, I would not dare claim to have any particular talents; rather, I recognize that I genuinely enjoy making offerings to the community, and for this reason, I became adept at preparing vegetarian dishes.<sup>15</sup>

This passage shows that Venerable Master Hsing Yun saw cooking as an act of giving to the community. Rather than giving food to attain merit, his act of giving accords with the spirit of the Four Givings,<sup>16</sup> specifically giving others joy and giving others convenience. One important episode in Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s life that inspired deep generosity occurred when he first arrived in Taiwan in 1949. As a foreign monk and an outsider to the Buddhist circle, he went through a period of extreme hardship, at times unable to secure even three meals a day, drifting from place to place. This experience inspired Venerable Master Hsing Yun to make a vow:

In the future, I would surely open the Universal Gate wide and warmly receive all who come. Twenty years later, I fulfilled that vow by establishing Pumen Vihara and Pumen Temple in Taipei. I taught all disciples that they must treat devotees and visitors with kindness, so that everyone would leave filled

with joy.<sup>17</sup>

The spirit of sincere giving is core to the essence of cooking according to Venerable Master Hsing Yun:

[Cooking] is not merely about preparing and serving food; what matters most is that “one cooks with one’s heart.” The process from cooking to tasting encapsulates layers of nuances, ranging from self-cultivation to one’s conduct as a person. Therefore, food prepared with sincerity and respect may be the most direct, skillful, and accessible form of offering, one that connects tacitly and immediately with people.<sup>18</sup>

Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s recipes for the ten noodle dishes, ten fried rice dishes and ten bento dishes of Fo Guang Shan<sup>19</sup> exemplify embodied knowledge of cooking and a profound understanding of ingredients, mastery of techniques and time-space-human resource management skills in the kitchen.

Venerable Jue Juh (覺具法師), who cooked for Venerable Master Hsing Yun at the Founder’s Hall (開山寮 *kai shan liao*) for more than ten years,<sup>20</sup> attributes the essence of food practices at Fo Guang Shan to be a legacy of Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s personal character and life experience.<sup>21</sup> Food at Fo Guang Shan is a skillful means to create affinity with others by giving and spreading joy. Venerable Jue Juh attributes the essence of food practices at Fo Guang Shan to Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s profound compassion and vow to always benefit others. At the heart of his compassion was the long-upheld principle to always give others joy:

Although the Master himself was never particular about food and maintained a simple and frugal approach to eating, he keenly understood that for

many people, their initial affinity with Buddhism began with enjoying a wholesome and delicious vegetarian meal at a temple. For this reason, he devoted great care and attention to using food as a means of receiving and guiding sentient beings. His efforts aimed not only to promote vegetarianism, but also to help the public understand vegetarian food, develop confidence in it, and eventually cultivate genuine interest.<sup>22</sup>

Food practices are important at Fo Guang Shan not only as part of monastic life but in the many events in its calendar. The number of attendees at events often exceed the thousands,<sup>23</sup> and feeding this number in a short time is not only a test of the individual kitchen chefs' skills, character and cultivation, but one of the key determinants for the success of these events.

When asked if the food quality in the monastery had any bearing on Dharma propagation, Venerable Master Hsing Yun answered:

In a temple, when vegetarian food is prepared well, it enables people to eat with joy, eat with fewer afflictions and worries, and gain health. A well-nourished sangha would be more inclined to reflect on the Dharma, delight in learning the Buddha's teachings, and engage in cultivation with body and mind at ease and at peace. Therefore, those who serve as temple chef must uphold such an aspiration and have this understanding.<sup>24</sup>

### **Making *Tuanzi*, an Invented Food Practice at Fo Guang Shan**

Given how Humanistic Buddhist values are embedded and intertwined with important events in the Venerable Master Hsing Yun's life, it is perhaps fitting that a food practice was initiated as one of the ways to commemorate

his passing.

February 12, 2025, the fifteenth day of the Lunar New Year, also marked the second anniversary of the passing of Venerable Master Hsing Yun. On the day, Fo Guang Shan temples around the world joined together in an initiative to hand-make Yangzhou-style dumplings (揚州糰子 *yangzhou tuanzi*). It was a directive from the Board of Directors, the highest governing body of Fo Guang Shan to commemorate the anniversary of the Founding Master's passing by making *tuanzi*.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Tuanzi*, a Yangzhou-Style Dumpling**

*Tuanzi* are alternatively known as tangyuan (湯圓 *tangyuan*) or yuanxiao (元宵 *yuanxiao*), traditionally made to celebrate the fifteenth day of the Lunar New Year. They are glutinous rice dumplings cooked in a soup, and local variations in different parts across China, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia may have sweet or savory filling. Yangzhou dumplings are vegetarian dumplings containing greens, mushrooms, and pine nuts.<sup>26</sup> It is filled with shepherd's purse (薺菜 *jicai*) thereby also alternatively known as shepherd's purse dumpling (薺菜糰子 *jicai tuanzi* or 薺菜湯圓 *jicai tangyuan*). Shepherd's purse is a wild green native to Yangzhou known for its resilience. It adds a distinct fragrance to the dumplings.

In his diary, Venerable Master Hsing Yun reminisced about his first trip back to his hometown, Jiangdu district, Yangzhou, Jiangsu province, China, in April 1994, many years after having left home at a young age. Describing the trip in his diary, he wrote, "At lunch, they (his family in Jiangdu) served us a distinctive local dish, 'shepherd's purse dumplings.' Two would have been enough, but I was greedy and had three."<sup>27</sup>

Venerable Master Hsing Yun was never one to indulge in food. It is perhaps the nostalgia of home that moved him so deeply that he ate more dumplings than usual. Having left home at a young age only to return after decades, this must have been a sentimental homecoming for him.

Responding to the call by Fo Guang Shan headquarters to make *tuanzi* on the fifteenth day of the Lunar New Year, Nan Tien Buddhist Temple Parramatta, a local Fo Guang Shan branch in Sydney, released a notice to its devotees to invite them back to the temple on the day:

To express our boundless remembrance and gratitude toward the Founding Master, Nan Tien Buddhist Temple Parramatta, together with monastics and lay devotees across the five continents, will jointly prepare Yangzhou style dumplings. Through the hands-on experience of making dumplings, participants will not only savor this traditional flavor, but also deeply feel the profound teacher-disciple bond embodied within this practice.

From kneading the dough by hand to preparing the fillings, each step carries our heartfelt remembrance of the Venerable Master. Together, we will share the rich hometown flavors of Yangzhou, allowing the dumplings to connect our hearts together, bringing the warmth of our communal gathering, and become a collective sincere offering to our Master.<sup>28</sup>

As shown in this notice, the initiative was a centralized, global initiative issued to all Fo Guang Shan branch temples around the world. It was held in conjunction with the annual commemorative hymns to Venerable Master Hsing Yun. The initiative extends to both monastics and lay devotees to specifically make *tuanzi*, a local delicacy of Venerable Master Hsing Yun's hometown. It is also a communal event, inviting devotees to gather to celebrate the Lantern Festival, which traditionally calls for reunion. In a way, the initiative skillfully integrates two important occasions that may come with contradictory rituals and etiquette according to Chinese customs. Memorials call for solemnity and restraint, while the celebration of the Lantern Festival is often festive and jovial. These two categories of events are traditionally not held around the

same time. The food item *tuanzi* has multiple layers of significance that not only qualifies its appropriateness, but integrate the two occasions seamlessly. *Tuanzi* are a Yangzhou variety of the broader category of *tangyuan* that is traditionally associated with the Lantern Festival, it is an appropriate choice for the devotees of Fo Guang Shan, the majority of whom have a Chinese cultural background.

Making *tuanzi* is also an act of offering to Venerable Master Hsing Yun. Venerable Hui Chuan, Deputy Abbot of Fo Guang Shan, described *tuanzi* as a means to a heart-to-heart connection with Venerable Master Hsing Yun, analogous to Buddhist traditions such as bathing the baby Buddha on Buddha's Birthday or Vesak (the eighth day of the fourth month in the lunar calendar), and sharing Laba Congee to commemorate the Buddha's Enlightenment (the eighth day of the twelfth month in the lunar calendar).<sup>29</sup> This elevates *tuanzi* from being seen as a grief food offered at funeral rites to the deceased, to a food affiliated with important Buddhist calendrical events. The key ingredient, shepherd's purse, is highlighted not only as a native plant of Yangzhou but a plant that exemplifies Venerable Master Hsing Yun's resilience and unrelenting propagation of the Dharma.

Venerable Master Hsing Yun was a charismatic figure, and many of his monastic and lay disciples still feel a profound personal connection to him. Affinity with Venerable Master Hsing Yun has been an important part of the sense of belonging of Fo Guang Shan disciples both monastic and lay. The practice of making *tuanzi* allows them to reconnect with Venerable Master Hsing Yun in an embodied manner. Kneading the dough, cooking the dumplings and eating the dumplings fill the senses of sight, smell, taste and touch. *Tuanzi* becomes a carrier and constructing material for the embodied memory of Venerable Master Hsing Yun.<sup>30</sup> However, *tuanzi* is intended to be more than merely a vehicle of nostalgia. As seen in the messages and news reports issued by the temples,<sup>31</sup> devotees and the public are invited to reminisce about their dharmic affinity with Venerable Master Hsing Yun as they make and consume *tuanzi*. Although started as a top-down approach, this initiative also offers agency to the individual disciples to connect with him in

a personal and embodied manner.

The main chef who recreated the recipe, Wang Huimin (汪慧敏, a female semi-monastic [師姑 *shigu*] from Dajue Temple [大覺寺]), flew to the Fo Guang Shan headquarters in Kaohsiung to teach the monastics and lay volunteers how to make *tuanzi*.<sup>32</sup> Wang recalled how her encounter with the Venerable Master Hsing Yun changed her view about her personal practice as a Buddhist. His teaching “be with the multitude” (I am among the multitude (我在眾中 *wo zai zhong zhong*)) taught her to broaden her mind. As a result, she was able to create wholesome affinity with many people through her work in the temple kitchen.

### **Making *Tuanzi* as Personal Practice: Embodied Cultivation of Humanistic Buddhist Values**

Some of the devotees shared how the practice of making *tuanzi* offered an opportunity to reflect on the Dharma and recollect their memories of Venerable Master Hsing Yun. The practice of *tuanzi* making allows devotees to engage in embodied reflections about their practice. The key to making good Yangzhou style dumplings is in kneading the dough so that it is smooth and does not crack. The process requires concentration and patience. In her interview, Wang Huimin revealed that it took more than ten trials to perfect the recipe. One of the interviewees acknowledged that kneading the dough takes time and is in itself a cultivation of patience.<sup>33</sup> Another devotee agreed that time is important and the kneading process cannot be rushed.

Thus making *tuanzi* is a simple practice yet one that demands perfection of skills through embodied action. This process helps one to cultivate patience and mindfulness. In this way this food practice becomes a means to cultivation.

### **The Individuals: The Monastic and Lay *Saṅgha* of Fo Guang Shan**

The empowerment of lay practitioners is a feature of modern Buddhist movements, and this has been promoted by Venerable Master Hsing Yun for

decades at Fo Guang Shan.<sup>34</sup> Jens Reinke, in his multi-site ethnographic study at Fo Guang Shan, noted a relatively flat organization that leads to increased interaction between the monastic and lay members.<sup>35</sup> Venerable Master Hsing Yun likened the monastic and lay *saṅgha* of Fo Guang Shan as two wings of a bird, working closely together to propel the bird to soar.<sup>36</sup> Unlike Buddhist modernist groups in the West where lay empowerment often associates with blurred monastic-lay boundaries,<sup>37</sup> the *saṅgha* of Fo Guang Shan functions with clearly demarcated boundaries and roles.

Commemoration of Venerable Master Hsing Yun through making *tuanzi* consists of different segments that were conducted in different parts of the temple, where the interactions between the monastic and lay *saṅgha* take different forms. The practice of making *tuanzi* itself is an occasion where both the monastic and lay *saṅgha* learn and work together in the temple kitchen. In the kitchen setting, the specialist could be a monastic or a lay member. The kitchen setting is also a more informal and less ritualized environment compared to, for example, the main shrine of the temple. In other segments of the day's event, the monastics conduct the religious ceremony while devotees are participants. In the ceremony, the monastics don their ceremonial robes. Devotees who have taken the precepts wear the brown precepts robe over their black chanting robes, and others are in their daily attire. Bowls of freshly made *tuanzi* were placed as offerings at the main altar, where a small bronze statue of Venerable Master Hsing Yun sits in front of the bigger Buddha statue. In this activity, the distinct roles of the monastic and the lay are clearly demarcated. After the ceremony, the community shared *tuanzi*, in the dining hall or in the main shrine at different temples.

As demonstrated in this event, the fourfold *saṅgha* of Fo Guang Shan work closely together, but their role and interactions are clearly demarcated. The systematized code of conduct for both arms of the Fo Guang Shan *saṅgha*, and how they relate to each other in different settings, manifests in this event. This relationship is codified in titles, language, terminology, and daily etiquette in formal and informal conversations, meals, internal, and external engagement. The nuances in these communications are often tacit cultural

understanding, and newer members are familiarized with this etiquette as they become socialized into the Fo Guang Shan community.

### **Empowerment of Lay Devotees through an Active, Embodied Practice**

As mentioned, many disciples at Fo Guang Shan felt a personal connection to Venerable Master Hsing Yun. For different individuals, the predominant carrier of memory may be text, art, music, sound, or in other forms. The practice of making *tuanzi* offers another accessible means to connect with the master. Since Venerable Master Hsing Yun's passing, there have been numerous Dharma services, ceremonies, musical performances, and academic conferences held in commemoration of his life and achievements.<sup>38,39</sup> Although everyone in Fo Guang Shan partakes in these activities, the majority of the devotees often assume the role of audience instead of more active roles such as ritual specialists, performers, and speakers. By actively engaging in the embodied practice of making *tuanzi*, many of these devotees are empowered to connect with Venerable Master Hsing Yun in a personal manner and create religious meaning for themselves in the process.

### **The Fo Guang Shan Community: Bonding and Fostering Belonging through Making *Tuanzi***

In various religious communities, cooking and sharing food together are communal activities and opportunities to foster bonding and belonging.<sup>40</sup> Similarly making *tuanzi* as a communal activity fosters a sense of belonging within the community that call themselves Fo Guang members (佛光人 *fo guang ren*). However, making *tuanzi* is not meant to foster a sealed circle for insiders only. Sharing *tuanzi* is a familiar Chinese tradition for the fifteenth day of the Lunar New Year. Any member of the public who comes to the temples are equally welcome to share a bowl of *tuanzi*, including those who have no knowledge of Venerable Master Hsing Yun or his passing. As they savor the flavors of *tuanzi*, they may also find out more about the founder of Fo Guang Shan.

## Conclusion

By examining the practice of making *tuanzi*, it is hoped that this article sheds some light on how Humanistic Buddhists at Fo Guang Shan practice in a communal manner. This paper adds to a small but growing body of work on food practices in Buddhism to elucidate how Dharma practice in various Buddhist communities is mediated by the everyday object of food. Here, the food practice of making *tuanzi* at Fo Guang Shan was analyzed to provide a window into Humanistic Buddhism as an embodied, lived practice by its monastic and lay *saṅgha*.

Making *tuanzi* is an invented, semi-ritualized, semi-formal communal food practice that allows both monastic and lay Fo Guang members to connect with Venerable Master Hsing Yun and with each other as a community in an embodied manner. While the practice has an institutionalized beginning, it allows individual agency to the disciples and devotees as they participate in the practice, reflect on their cultivation, reminisce about Venerable Master Hsing Yun, and find religious meaning in the process. His generous and compassionate spirit and his teachings on “giving others joy,” were recalled by those who take part in the practice.

## Notes

- 1 Lisa Grumbach, “Food Practices,” in Kevin Trainor and Paula Arai eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Practice* (Oxford Academic, online ed., 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190632922.013.28>, accessed January 13, 2026.
- 2 Jiemin Bao, “Not Simple Temple Food: Thai Community Making in the United States,” *Journal of Global Buddhism* 18 (2017): 189–209. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1116286>; Katarina Plank, “The Sacred Foodscapes of Thai Buddhist Temples in Sweden,” *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, 26 (2015): 201–24. <https://doi.org/10.30674/scripta.67454>.
- 3 Rita Langer, “The Transformative Power of Food: The ‘Milk Mothers’ in Sri Lankan Buddhism,” *Material Religion* 15 (2019:5): 529–552, DOI: 10.1080/17432200.2019.1670380.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Robban A. J. Toleno, “The Celebration of Congee in East Asian Buddhism,” *Journal of Chinese Buddhist Studies* 30 (2017): 125–168. New Taipei: Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, ISSN: 2313-2000 e-ISSN: 2313-2019; Lisa Grumbach, “Food Practices,” in Kevin Trainor and Paula Arai eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Practice* (Oxford Academic, online ed., 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190632922.013.28>, accessed January 13, 2026.

- 6 Jiemin Bao, "Not Simple Temple Food: Thai Community Making in the United States," *Journal of Global Buddhism* 18 (2017): 189–209. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1116286>; Katarina Plank, "The Sacred Foodscapes of Thai Buddhist Temples in Sweden," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, 26 (2015): 201–24. <https://doi.org/10.30674/scripta.67454>.
- 7 The Four Objectives of Fo Guang Shan are: to propagate Buddhist teachings through cultural activities; to nurture talents through education; to benefit societies through charitable programs; to purify human hearts and minds through Buddhist practices. Fo Guang Shan, "Objectives," <https://www.fgs.org.tw/en/Organizations/Objectives/>, accessed January 13, 2026.
- 8 Jens Reinke, *Mapping Modern Mahayana*. (De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021 1st edn.), accessed: 12 January 2026. <https://www.perlego.com/book/2110537>.
- 9 Venerable Master Hsing Yun, "Dharma Service," *Buddha-Dharma: Pure and Simple* 6 (Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Cultural Enterprise, 2023), 94. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JtcEAXCbwAh-w7yyXA4uv\\_M8TQvvleUZZ/edit](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JtcEAXCbwAh-w7yyXA4uv_M8TQvvleUZZ/edit)
- 10 Paula Arai and Kevin Trainor, "Introduction: Embodiment and Sense Experience," in Kevin Trainor and Paula Arai eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Practice* (Oxford Academic, online ed., 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190632922.013.40>, accessed 13 Jan. 2026.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Lisa Grumbach, "Food Practices," in Kevin Trainor and Paula Arai eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Practice* (Oxford Academic, online ed., 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190632922.013.28>, accessed January 13, 2026; Robban A. J. Toleno, "The Celebration of Congee in East Asian Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Buddhist Studies* 30 (2017): 125–168. New Taipei: Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, ISSN: 2313-2000 e-ISSN: 2313-2019.
- 13 典座: In the monastery, a temple chef is responsible for preparing and cooking food for the community.
- 14 Translated from the phrase "三千諸佛皆出在廚中." "The work of the temple chef is demanding and arduous. Since ancient times, many great masters tempered their body and mind through this role, awakening to their true nature. They went on to become towering figures in the Buddhist community, upholding the true Dharma. Hence the Buddhist saying, 'The three thousand Buddhas all emerged from the kitchen.'" Translated from the text "典座的工作繁雜辛苦，自古許多祖師大德從中淬礪身心，開悟見性，而成為佛門龍象，住持正法，故佛門有「三千諸佛皆出在廚中」之稱。" In Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *The Complete Works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, <https://books.masterhsingyun.org/ArticleDetail/article5913>, accessed January 16, 2026.
- 15 Translated from the passage "我自己生來就很歡喜煮飯、煮菜，有「典座」（即叢林中負責烹煮大眾齋粥之職稱）的性格，也自覺在烹調方面無師自通。我一生不敢說自己有什麼長處，倒是覺得自己歡喜供養大眾，因此能煮得一手好素菜。" In Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *The Complete Works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, <https://books.masterhsingyun.org/ArticleDetail/article22592>, accessed January 6, 2026.
- 16 The Four Givings are: to give others confidence; to give others hope; to give others joy; and to give others convenience. [https://www.fgsihb.org/dictionary/search-result/00408/?\\_\\_locale=en](https://www.fgsihb.org/dictionary/search-result/00408/?__locale=en), accessed January 13, 2026.
- 17 "Just as we were about to leave, a classmate asked us to wait. He took out his own money, bought two jin of rice, and cooked a pot of thin congee for us to share. I still remember that as I held the bowl in my hands, they trembled uncontrollably from hunger. After finishing the congee and expressing our gratitude to him, we once again set out on another journey, directionless, amid bitter winds and driving rain...Because of this deeply engraved and unforgettable experience, I made

- a solemn vow at that time: in the future, I would ensure that the Gate of Universal Compassion would always be wide open, welcoming all who came. Twenty years later, I fulfilled this vow by successively establishing Pu Men Hermitage and Pu Men Temple in Taipei. I instructed all disciples and members of the community that they must treat devotees and visitors with kindness and respect, so that everyone who came would return home filled with joy.” Translated from “當我正想離開之際，同學叫我等一等，他自己拿錢出來買了兩斤米，煮了一鍋稀飯給我們吃，記得當時捧著飯碗的雙手已經餓得不停顫抖。吃完稀飯，向同學道謝以後，在淒風苦雨中，我們又踏上另一段不知所止的路程...由於這段刻骨銘心的經驗，我當時立下誓願：日後我一定要普門大開，廣接來者。二十年以後，我實現了願望，先後在台北成立「普門精舍」、「普門寺」，教導所有的徒眾都必須善待信徒香客，讓大家滿載歡喜而歸。” In Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *The Complete Works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, <http://books.masterhsingyun.org/ArticleDetail/article5353>, accessed January 14, 2026.
- 18 Translated and adapted from “二一問：寺廟的素菜做得如何，與弘法度眾有關係嗎？答：寺廟裡，素菜煮得好吃，能讓人吃得歡喜，吃得健康，吃得少煩少惱，也能讓一寺大眾每天在飽食之後，都樂於思惟法義，樂於學佛修行，安住身心。所以，負責典座的人，要有這樣的發心與認知。” In Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *The Complete Works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, <https://books.masterhsingyun.org/ArticleDetail/article2627>, accessed January 14, 2026.
  - 19 These recipes are available in English now as part of the series on “One Hundred Lessons on Monastery Languages and Affairs,” <https://www.fgsbooks.com.tw/product/1015>.
  - 20 Section on Venerable Jue Juh in Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *The Complete Works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, <http://books.masterhsingyun.org/ArticleDetail/article7385>, accessed January 13, 2026.
  - 21 Venerable Jue Juh, “A Discussion on the Food Culture of Fo Guang Shan Based on Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s Concept of Eating,” in Cheng Gongrang ed., 2014 *Research on the Theory and Practice of Venerable Master Hsing Yun’s Humanistic Buddhism* (Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Cultural Enterprise, 2014), 486-549.
  - 22 Translated from: “大師一生不好吃，他個人對吃是非常的簡樸，但他知道許多人進入佛門的因緣，就是因為到寺院裡吃到一餐美味的素齋進而學佛，因此大師對於以飲食來度眾，可說是花了極大的心思，為推廣素食、讓大眾認識素食，並使大眾對素食產生信心乃至生起興趣。” Ibid. 546.
  - 23 As examples: (1) the 2023 BLIA World Headquarters General Conference in Kaohsiung, Taiwan was attended by 2,500 people from across the world, according to <https://www.lnanews.com/news/154745>; (2) the 2025 Offerings to Sangha at FoGuang Shan was attended by more than 3,000 people according to <https://www.lnanews.com/news/171600>, accessed January 14, 2026.
  - 24 Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *The Complete Works of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, <http://books.masterhsingyun.org/ArticleDetail/article2627>, accessed January 6, 2026.
  - 25 “In early 2025, the 11th Board of Directors were sworn in, vowing to uphold the philosophy of Fo Guang Shan, advance the foundation of the path, and fulfill the trust of the monastery. The Board has passed a resolution that during the Fo Guang Shan Founding Master—Ven. Master Hsing Yun Memorial Day, a commemoration Dharma service is to be held on every Lunar January 15th, and Yangzhou-style dumplings should be offered to the assembly.” In Most Venerable Hsin Bau, *A Letter to Dharma Protectors and Friends* 2026, <https://www.merit-times.com/news/495034>, accessed January 1, 2026.
  - 26 Happyfoods 幸福食堂 Chapter 98 (2025), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9E1HKNL7MIY>, accessed January 11, 2026.
  - 27 Translated from “午餐，他們特別具風味的家鄉菜薺菜湯圓招待我們，本來兩個就

- 夠了，我因一時貪心，吃了三個。” In Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *Hsing Yun's Diary* 19, (1994/04.01-04.15): 200, <http://books.masterhsingyun.org/ArticleDetail/artcle2801>, accessed January 14, 2026.
- 28 Translated from “南天講堂與全球五大洲僧信二眾為表達對開山祖師的無盡思念，將一起製作揚州大糰子，讓大家感受手作糰子的美味與背後的深厚師徒情感，並將以手工揉搓糰子的每一步到餡料的製作，寄託著對師父的緬懷，共同品嚐濃厚的揚州家鄉味，讓糰子成為連接心靈的橋樑，圓滿團聚的溫暖，共同供養給師父。” Nan Tien Buddhist Temple Parramatta notice via internal WhatsApp group, issued on February 10, 2025.
- 29 “Venerable Hui Chuan, Deputy Abbot of Fo Guang Shan, explained that the Fo Guang Shan Board of Directors resolved that on Venerable Master Hsing Yun's anniversary of passing, in addition to holding a memorial service, disciples would also connect with him by eating Yangzhou style dumplings. Just as bathing the Buddha is part of the Buddha's Birthday celebration, or sharing Laba congee marks the Buddha's Enlightenment Day, this practice would be held every year and passed down from generation to generation, allowing his spirit to remain ever present among the disciples.” Translated from “佛光山常務副住持慧傳法師表示，佛光山宗務委員會決定在大師圓寂當日，除了舉辦圓寂紀念讚頌會，也要以吃「揚州大糰子」與師父接心；如同佛誕節舉辦浴佛，佛陀成道日分享臘八粥一樣，而後佛光弟子要年年舉行，代代相傳，讓大師的精神時刻和大家在一起。” In Xu Zhen Hui, “Fo Guang People Make Yangzhou Dumplings as a Tribute to the Venerable Master on Yuanxiao,” LNA News, published February 12, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165474>, accessed January 6, 2026.
- 30 Jon D. Holtzman, “Food and Memory,” *Annual Review in Anthropology* 35 (2006): 361-378, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.35.081705.123220>.
- 31 The Chinese news articles include: Li Sheng-Feng, LNA News published February 7, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165456>; Li Ying-Ying and Li Kun-Ming, LNA News, published February 10, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165458>; Jue-Han and Chen Shu-Hua, LNA News, published February 11, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165523>; Xu Zhen-Hui, LNA News, published February 12, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165474>; Zhou Li-Shuang, LNA News, published February 12, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165583>; Ping-Min, LNA News, published February 12, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165541>; Wen-Hui, LNA News, published February 12, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165537>, accessed January 6, 2026.
- 32 Li Sheng-Feng, “Making Yangzhou-Style Dumplings: Recreating Venerable Master Hsing Yun's Hometown Flavors,” LNA News, published February 7, 2025, <https://www.lnanews.com/news/165456>, accessed January 13, 2026.
- 33 BLTV (2025), “Fo Guang members around the world make Yangzhou-style dumplings to commemorate Venerable Master Hsing Yun,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hzwTwIVBj0>, published on February 8, 2025, accessed January 6, 2026.
- 34 Cheng Gongrang, “Venerable Master Hsing Yun's Ten Great Contributions to Buddhism,” *Studies on Humanistic Buddhism* 1 (2019): 154-169, <https://journal.nantien.edu.au/>.
- 35 Jens Reinke, “Sacred Secularities: Ritual and Social Engagement in a Global Buddhist China,” *Religions*, 2018, 9, 338.
- 36 Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *The Buddha's Light Philosophy* (Los Angeles: Buddha's Light Publishing, 2010).
- 37 David L. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* (New York: Oxford Academic, online ed., 2009), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195183276.001.0001>, accessed January 15, 2026.
- 38 Most Venerable Hsin Bau, *A Letter to Dharma Protectors and Friends* 2024, <https://www.mer->

- it-times.com.tw/NewsPage.aspx?unid=872819, accessed January 14, 2026.
- 39 Most Venerable Hsin Bau, *A Letter to Dharma Protectors and Friends* 2025, <https://fgs.org.nz/english/news/2025lettertodharmaprotectors/>, accessed January 14, 2026.
- 40 Jiemin Bao, “Not Simple Temple Food: Thai Community Making in the United States,” *Journal of Global Buddhism* 18 (2017): 189–209, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1116286>; Katarina Plank, “The Sacred Foodscapes of Thai Buddhist Temples in Sweden,” *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis*, 26 (2015): 201–24, <https://doi.org/10.30674/scripta.67454>; Lisa Grumbach, “Food Practices,” in Kevin Trainor and Paula Arai eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Practice* (Oxford Academic, online ed., 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190632922.013.28>, accessed January 13, 2026.