

HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA: PRACTICES AND INTERPRETATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Known as "Renjian Fojiao" (Buddhism in the Human Realm) in the Chinese-speaking region, Humanistic Buddhism has emerged as a hot topic for scholarly studies on Buddhist institutions from Taiwan and their transnational networks over the past decade. Mainland China, as the birthplace of this new brand of Buddhism centering on self-cultivation, has yet to gain attention from the English-language scholarship on this paradigm. The present paper explores the practices under the banner of Humanistic Buddhism and its interpretations of the institutional level in the mainland. To that end, two months of fieldwork were conducted at Bailin Chan Si in Hebei, North China, and Hongfa Si in Shenzhen, South China. A series of semi-structured interviews were undertaken with the six senior monks and ten laypeople at these two renowned Buddhist temples, where their religious and cultural programs were attended and examined. The paper also analyzed the literature published by the Party-state of China and or under its sponsorship in the past ten years. It finds that no Buddhist temples explicitly label their practices as Humanistic Buddhism in China despite their emphatical promotion of cultivating oneself in daily life, the essential principle of Humanistic Buddhism. The temples mainly adhere to orthodox doctrines and teachings from their respective Dharma lineages for reference. Though sporadically noting the concept of Buddhism, the State's propaganda of Buddhism prioritized patriotism before the Buddhist faith. Nevertheless, in its global promotion of Buddhism as a religious version of China's soft power, the State often raised the concept of Humanistic Buddhism for international empathy and even gained particular attention. In conclusion, the paper argues that the articulation of Humanistic Buddhism in China is limited to an abstract extent and is only known by knowledgeable Buddhists or non-religious intellectuals. The concept itself has still been left far behind the Party-state's public discourse about patriotism, though sometimes it was instrumentalized to supplement the latter's soft power diplomacy abroad.

Keywords:

Humanistic Buddhism; Contemporary China; Practices; Interpretations; and Patriotism

INTRODUCTION

After over 2,000 years of development since its introduction to China, Buddhism has deeply integrated with traditional Chinese culture to form a unique Chinese Buddhist culture.¹ In this process, Buddhism not only spread widely in China, giving birth to many

¹ SHENG Kai, "Constructing the Academic Discourse System of Buddhism in China", China Social Science Daily, September 28, 2021, Issue 2259: "Buddhism in China is a process of interaction, complementarity, symbiosis and convergence between" History of Buddhism in India "and Chinese culture. In a sense, it is a historical process of conflict, fusion and comprehensive innovation between the two civilizations. China is a multi-ethnic and vast country. For History of

masters and sects but also completed the Chineseization of its doctrines and institutions. During the Song and Yuan dynasties, with the rapid development of local sects, Buddhism entered an era of "Chineseization" in China. However, Buddhism gradually revealed its shortcomings during the Ming and Qing dynasties. It fell into a low ebb in China, with monastic orders emphasizing the transcendence of the dead at the expense of their practice and liberation.

In response to these challenges, the modern era saw the emergence of the "Taixu Reforms," which sought to address the problems faced by traditional Chinese Buddhism, particularly its disconnect from real life. Venerable Taixu's theories have become an essential guide in the construction and management of modern Chinese Buddhism. His idea of "Life Buddhism" emphasized attention to real life and advocated active initiation into the world, opening up a new direction for the adaptation and development of Buddhism in modern society.

The Buddhist community faces new challenges and opportunities with socio-economic development and cultural diversification. Traditional Buddhist teachings and practices need to be adapted to modern society's needs and promote the modernization of Buddhism. Based on Venerable Taixu's "Life Buddhism", the Chinese monastic community has gradually developed the idea of "Human Buddhism".² Humanistic Buddhism focuses more on integrating spiritual practice with daily life, emphasizes humanism, and focuses on the realities of life, which is closely related to the humanistic ideology of traditional Chinese culture and thus has gained wide acceptance in Chinese society.³

Much research on Humanistic Buddhism has already been conducted in Chinese academia. However, there are still many gaps in English academia that can contribute knowledge on this topic from different perspectives. Much of the existing literature on the subject is based on historical and political perspectives rather than contemporary religious perspectives. Most of the studies conducted in English are from the perspective of outsiders rather than from the perspective of those who engage in Buddhist religious practices as insiders.

As the birthplace of humanistic Buddhism, contemporary China is bound to produce theoretical and practical innovations in the decades of inheriting and developing humanistic Buddhism. How to critically evaluate these concrete measures is a proposition that needs to be considered by both the Sangha and the academic community. With these considerations in mind, there is an urgent need to fill this gap in the existing literature to understand the significance of "Buddhism on Earth" in contemporary China.

The purpose of this study is to explore the development of Buddhism in China, with the development and future of "Life Buddhism" and its derivative "Human Buddhism" as the core issues of the study, focusing on the innovation and practice of the ideological interpretation of Human Buddhism in contemporary China. To this end, the researcher pre-selected two important monasteries in the north and south of China as the focus of this study

Buddhism in India, the communication mode of "weak organizations" just fits in with "China" as the "background" and "concept". As an academic discourse system, the sinicization of Buddhism must take into account the territory of modern China and the different branches of sinicization of Buddhism.

² SHI Taixu (January 8, 1890 to March 17, 1947), born in Chang'an Town, Haining County, Zhejiang Province, advocated the Buddhist revolution and devoted himself to the cause of Buddhism all his life. He said that he was "committed to sorting out the Buddhist system and walking in the Bodhisattva Yoga Ring Book." He was praised as the founder of Humanistic Buddhism.

³ WU Chaowei, "A Brief Discussion on Humanistic Buddhism", Zen, 2004, Issue 6: "Humanistic Buddhism" appeared as a proper term in Master Taixu's "How to Build Humanistic Buddhism", and as a modern unique Buddhist theoretical ideology, it was formed in the 20th century. As for "Humanistic Buddhism", there are many advocates. This theoretical system is the accumulation of long-term creative thinking of modern Chinese Buddhist thinkers on many issues raised by the transitional society and modern life based on the basic principles of Buddhism."

through literature analysis and case comparison, followed by two months of fieldwork, based on which this study was produced.

2. Literature Review

1. Development and Present Situation of Humanistic Buddhism

Like other religions and even philosophical ideas, Buddhism arises with the needs of a certain society and a certain era and changes with the changes of a certain social era. Ninety years ago, Master Taixu put forward the idea of "Life Buddhism", which represents an important theoretical model for transforming modern Buddhism into a modernized one, in sharp contrast to traditional Buddhism.⁴ This idea emphasizes the shift from emanation to initiation, shifting the focus of attention from the other side of the world to this side of the world, thus realizing the socialization and actualization of Buddhism. Recognizing the shortcomings of traditional Buddhism in the late Qing Dynasty and early Republican period, especially the problem of placing too much emphasis on the transcendence of the dead at the expense of the present life, Master Taixu proposed a thorough reform. He advocated the integration of Buddhism with worldly law and emphasized that Buddhism should participate in and improve social life and enhance its social functions. In addition, Master Taixu absorbed the resources of Confucianism and combined the Confucian concept of initiation into the world with Buddhism, proposing that "learning Buddhism begins with being a human being"⁵ and advocating that Buddhists participate in social service to realize the initiatory function of Buddhism. Master Taixu's thought of Life Buddhism not only requires Buddhism to actively enter the world to serve the present society and life but also relies on Buddhism to transform and Buddhize the world, which not only promotes the development of Buddhism but also points out the direction of Buddhism's future development, and is of great theoretical and practical significance.

Venerable Yin Shun proposed the concept of "Buddhism on earth" based on inheriting Master Taixu's idea of "Buddhism on life". Human Buddhism, as its name implies, is to realize the Pure Land of the Buddha's Kingdom in the human world, i.e., to put the ultimate world of the Buddha's Kingdom into reality on earth. These two are in the same vein. That is why we now generally refer to "Buddhism on Earth" as having begun with Master Taixu. According to Yin Shun, "The Buddha is the only one we can look up to; the completion is in the personality, and the realization of the human being is the realization of the Buddha, which is the name of the true reality," which is the original meaning of Taixu's Life Buddhism. Taixu's "true reality theory" focuses on the question of life. According to Shih Yin-shun, Life Buddhism and Humanistic Buddhism are similar in terms of "manifestation" but different in terms of "cure".⁶

As for the content and theoretical basis of the idea of Buddhism on earth, Yin Shun believes that Buddhism on earth is of a nature that "fits the reason and the opportunity" and that those who learn the Bodhisattva's behavior with a mortal body, and who aspire to the Buddha's way, do not need to boast of miracles, but instead start from a practical and steady place. According to Yinshun, Mahayana Buddhism has always advocated that a Bodhisattva's self-benefit is mainly derived from benefiting others and that everything corresponds to

⁴ Miao Zhan, *"The Chan Style of Laiguo Chan Master——Commemorating the Forty Years of Laiguo's Passion"*, "Southern Fujian Buddhism, No. 2, 1993.

⁵ This is the topic of a lecture given by Master Taixu at the Sino-Tibetan Academy of Teaching and Science in June of the 29th year of the Republic of China. Taixu had just returned from visiting Buddhist countries such as Myanmar, India, and Ceylon. In this speech, he talked to the students about some of his impressions of the visit and his thoughts on the reform of Chinese Buddhism.

⁶ Shih Yin-shun. *"Miaoyunji - Buddha on Earth - Introduction to Humanistic Buddhism"*:25

altruistic behavior. Therefore, anyone who does not think for himself but does what benefits all living beings with altruistic compassion is practicing the Bodhisattva's conduct and attaining the fruits of the Buddha's teachings.

Since the 1960s, Humanistic Buddhism has gradually been realized in Chinese Buddhism, and remarkable achievements have been made. In Taiwan and overseas Chinese communities, the implementation of Humanistic Buddhism has not only saved traditional Buddhism from decay but also greatly promoted the development of Buddhism through the three pillars of culture, education, and philanthropy. On the mainland, in his report *Thirty Years of the Chinese Buddhist Association* in 1983, Rev. Zhao Puchu elevated the idea of Humanistic Buddhism to the level of "Where is Chinese Buddhism headed in this day and age?"⁷ After 40 years of rapid development, the Buddhist community in mainland China has made remarkable achievements under the guidance of this idea.

Zhao Puchu joined the Buddhist cause in the late 1920s. In the 1930s, Zhao Puchu became acquainted with Master Taixu and deeply connected with him. After Taixu's death, Zhao and others inherited his unfinished business and responded to the times by proposing to eliminate the ills of traditional Buddhism and carry out Buddhist reforms. With many other great masters, he continued to promote the modern transformation of Buddhism in China, with the founding of the China Buddhist Association (CBA) in 1953, for which he was in actual charge until 2000.⁸ During this period, he vigorously promoted the spirit of Humanistic Buddhism through the CBA, combining it with patriotism and calling on Buddhists to reach out to the world and actively participate in social construction.

Zhao Puchu's greatest contribution was to place the concept of "Humanistic Buddhism" as the guiding principle of Buddhism in China, emphasizing its universal significance and actively practicing it in restoring and promoting Buddhism in mainland China. He promoted the concept of "Humanistic Buddhism" as a guideline for developing Chinese Buddhism, which is significant for the creative transformation of the Chinese Buddhist tradition. Under the guidance of this guideline, the CBA has not only done some work in cultivating monks who inherit and carry forward the concept of "Humanistic Buddhism" and "opened up a new situation in the cause of Buddhist education", but also founded and published several books and magazines to promote "Humanistic Buddhism" and "Humanistic Buddhism". It has also founded and published several Buddhist books and magazines to promote the concept of "Humanistic Buddhism", thus making substantial progress in popularizing and publicizing the concept of "Humanistic Buddhism". Under the guidance of this policy, the Chinese Buddhist community "⁹ actively supports social welfare and public welfare and relief work" and has made remarkable achievements in giving back to and caring for society, which the Government has fully recognized.

2. Practical Cases of Humanistic Buddhism in Mainland China

The practice has proved that the advocacy and practice of Humanistic Buddhism in Chinese Buddhism has strongly promoted the adaptation of Buddhism to the socialist society and is conducive to the enhancement of Buddhism's self-construction and the promotion of self-improvement and development in accordance with the requirements of the times and the people. Since the Cultural Revolution, Chinese Buddhism, in the process of gradual recovery, has taken Humanistic Buddhism as the core concept of Buddhist renewal to adapt to the times. During this period, there were numerous elders and Venerable Masters who carried out different explorations in the practice of Humanistic Buddhism.

⁷ Zhao Puchu, *Collected Works of Zhao Puchu*, p.7-8, Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House, 2003, Shanghai

⁸ Zhao Puchu, *Collected Works of Zhao Puchu*, Volume 1, p. 673, Chinese Language Publishing House, Beijing, 2007.

⁹ Zhao Puchu, *Collected Works of Zhao Puchu*, Volume 1, p. 673.

3. Hongfa Si, Shenzhen, a Contemporary Monastery in a Metropolis

Shenzhen Hongfa Si, located in Futian District, Shenzhen City, Guangdong Province, China, is a contemporary urban Buddhist monastery built by Venerable Benhuan (1907-2012), embodying the philosophy and practice of Humanistic Buddhism. Venerable Benhuan, a senior monk who experienced great changes in Chinese society, left a deep mark on the Chinese Buddhist community with his profound Buddhist training and social welfare activities.¹⁰

1. Establishment and Development of the Monastery

The founding of Hongfa Si in Shenzhen began in 1985 when the Shenzhen Municipal Government invited Venerable Benhuan to plan and build the monastery. In 1992, Venerable Benhuan officially became the monastery's abbot, beginning a new chapter in the development of Hongfa Si. ¹¹Located in Shenzhen's rapidly developing modern city, Hongfa Si has become a model of Humanistic Buddhism with its unique location and environment.

a. Practice of Humanistic Buddhism

Adhering to Venerable Benhuan's philosophy of Humanistic Buddhism, Hongfa Si emphasizes that Buddhism should serve the community and be integrated into daily life. The monastery is a place for Dharma study and practice and a center for social service and cultural exchange. In order to promote Humanistic Buddhism, the monastery has established the Buddhist Studies Research Center, the Institute of Buddhist Art, and the Benhuan College (formerly known as Hongfa Si Buddhist College),¹² which are dedicated to Buddhist education, research, and cultural dissemination.

The monastery often organizes Buddhist educational activities, such as sermons and lectures, meditation classes, youth summer camps, and vegetarian food and culture festivals, which attract many believers and public members to participate. In addition, Hongfa Si also actively participates in social and charitable causes, such as disaster relief donations, schooling assistance, and environmental protection advocacy, reflecting the Buddhist spirit of compassion and altruism.

b. Integration of Buddhism and Modern Society

Under the guidance of Venerable Benhuan, Hongfa Si actively adapts to modern society's needs and promotes Buddhism's modernization. The monastery implements modern management methods and introduces modern technology, such as establishing a website and social media platforms to promote Buddhist education and culture. In addition, the monastery focuses on preserving and transmitting Buddhist traditions, strictly observes the precepts, and maintains the purity of the Buddhist spirit.

c. Social Welfare and International Exchange

Under the leadership of Venerable Benhuan, Hongfa Si has founded a charitable foundation and carried out a series of charitable and public welfare activities, such as the construction of schools and hospitals to assist the disadvantaged in society. At the same time, the monastery actively participates in international Buddhist exchanges and establishes

¹⁰ China News Servicen:Elder Benhuan, China's leading Buddhist monk, passes away at Hongfa Si (中国佛门泰斗本焕长老在弘法寺圆寂), <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/cul/2012/04-02/3793751.shtml>

¹¹ Official website of the Chinese Government,Venerable Benhuan, Honorary President of the China Buddhist Association, passed away The Religious Affairs Bureau sent out a condolence message (中国佛教协会名誉会长本焕法师圆寂 宗教局发唁电), https://www.gov.cn/gzdt/2012-04/02/content_2105936.htm

¹² Formerly known as Hongfa Si Buddhist College, which was founded in 2010, with the first students enrolling in September of the following year.In 2014, the college was renamed Benhuan College in honor of Elder Benhuan.

friendly relations with overseas Buddhist groups to promote the internationalization of Buddhism.

d. Heritage and Development

Under the guidance of Venerable Ben Huan, Shenzhen Hongfa Monastery has become a model of integration between Buddhism and modern society, demonstrating the spirit and values of Humanistic Buddhism. The Monastery has contributed to Buddhist education and cultural dissemination and has made remarkable achievements in social welfare and international exchanges. The success of Hongfa Monastery proves that Buddhism can adapt to the changes in modern society and has made significant contributions to the development and prosperity of Buddhism in contemporary China.

All in all, under the leadership of Venerable Benhuan, Shenzhen Hongfa Si has not only inherited the Buddhist tradition but also innovatively integrated into modern society, spreading the Buddhism's dom and compassionate spirit of B As a Buddhist temple in a modern city, Hongfa Si demonstrates the charm and power of Humanistic Buddhism and has become a model of Buddhist modernization and the practice of Humanistic Buddhism.

B. Bailin Chan Si, Contemporary New Life of an Ancient Temple

Bailin Chan Si of Zhaozhou, located in Zhao County, Hebei Province, China, is a famous Chan monastery in the north with far-reaching historical influence. It is the site of the story of the Chan master's "Eat Tea". Moreover, in 1988, Venerable Jinghui, the president of the Hebei Buddhist Association, began to preside over the restoration and reconstruction of the temple. Venerable Jinghui founded the Hebei Buddhist College and Chan Magazine at the Bailin Chan Si, putting forward the concept of "Living Zen" and injecting new vitality into the temple.

Venerable Jinghui was born in Xinzhou, Hubei Province, 1933 and became a monk at 18. He entered the China Buddhist Academy in 1956 and was appreciated by many famous Buddhist teachers. After the reform and opening up, Venerable Jinghui served as the editor-in-chief of Dharma Voice magazine and the abbot of many monasteries and passed away on April 20, 2013, at the age of 81 at the Four Ancestors Monastery in Huangmei County, Hubei Province. Venerable Jinghui advocated "Enlightened Life, Devoted Life", and through activities such as the "Living Chan Summer Camp", he enabled many scholars to experience Chinese Chan culture up close and personal. His concept of Living Chan is a concrete embodiment of the idea of Humanistic Buddhism, which emphasizes the universal integration of Chan into life to enhance life's wisdom.

Venerable Jinghui promoted the restoration of the Bailin Chan Si and emphasized Buddhist education and cultural construction. He advocated a new philosophy of Buddhism rooted in real life, shifting the focus of traditional Buddhism from the worldly to the worldly, emphasizing "caring for life, realizing life, and dedicating life". Venerable Jinghui's efforts in Buddhist education are manifested in the establishment of schools, the preparation of teaching materials, and the conduct of academic research and exchanges, contributing to the cultivation of human resources who can adapt to the management of contemporary monasteries and the propagation of the Dharma to benefit the living. He was also concerned with integrating Buddhism with society and adapting Buddhism to modern society.

Venerable Jinghui has innovated the traditional way of propagating the Dharma in Chinese Buddhism. He compiled and published information on Venerable Xuyun's life and teachings and edited and printed books such as The Complete Works of Monk Xuyun, which provided a wealth of research materials for the Buddhist community and society. In addition, Venerable Jinghui actively raised funds to subsidize academic research and organized many Chan culture forums, contributing to promoting Chinese Buddhist culture.

Venerable Minghai succeeded Venerable Jinghui to continue to promote Humanistic Buddhism. Venerable Minghai graduated from the Department of Philosophy of Peking University in 1991, became a monk in 1992, practicing under Venerable Jinghui, and was deeply influenced by his "Zen for Life" philosophy. Venerable Minghai has made remarkable achievements in propagating the Dharma and promoting Buddhism to be compatible with modern society. He advocates "Living Zen", advocating the integration of Dharma into daily life and actively participating in social welfare, contributing to social harmony. Venerable Minghai has authored several books, such as "Venerable Minghai on Living Zen".

Venerable Minghai continues to carry forward Venerable Jinghui's philosophy and actively promotes Buddhist education and Chan practice. He emphasized Buddhist education and the popularization of modern knowledge and established the Hebei Province Buddhist College at the Bailin Chan Si to cultivate modern Buddhist talents. Venerable Minghai promoted the establishment of the Chan magazine by the Hebei Buddhist Association and the Bailin Monastery, spreading Buddhism through various channels and expanding the influence of Buddhism. In education and Dharma propagation, Venerable Minghai insisted on keeping abreast of the times, integrating Buddhist concepts into daily life, and contributing to the practice and propagation of Humanistic Buddhism.

4. An Analysis of the Practice of Humanistic Buddhism

Humanistic Buddhism, as an idea and movement that emphasizes the application and practice of Buddhism in the real world, originated from Life Buddhism, which was proposed by Master Taixu in 1925 in response to the social environment and the current state of Buddhism at that time. This idea asserts that Buddhism should focus more on people's real life and future rather than solely on the afterlife, ghosts, and gods. Humanistic Buddhism and Life Buddhism break away from traditional Chinese Buddhist concepts of transcendental worldly life and the afterlife and return to the Buddha's original earthly nature and life. They believe Buddhism aims to solve earthly problems rather than escape or deny real life.

The main difference between Humanistic Buddhism and Life Buddhism is their historical background, theoretical emphasis, and practical approach. Life Buddhism faced the turmoil of the Republican period. It emphasized personal practice and inner transformation, while Humanistic Buddhism adapted to the social changes of the new era and focused on social participation and environmental improvement.

The success of Humanistic Buddhism in Mainland China lies in combining Buddhist teachings with modern social needs, such as ecological conservation and mental health education, emphasizing practical experience, encouraging believers to participate in the daily affairs of monasteries and public welfare activities, and making use of new media for publicity and education. The Humanistic Buddhism movement has experienced unprecedented development but, at the same time, faces many challenges:

Some groups have deviated in their practice methods and concepts, even triggering controversies and criticisms about the pursuit of personal fame and secular influence; the use of non-transparent and improper management of funds in social welfare; over-emphasis on social services and public welfare activities, neglecting the basic teachings and practices of Buddhism; and the over-pursuit of commercialization in the promotional activities of some monasteries and the loss of religious purity.

Despite the challenges, the Humanistic Buddhism movement in mainland China has also demonstrated some successful experiences. Many monasteries have successfully integrated Buddhist teachings with the needs of modern society, such as ecological conservation and mental health education, encouraged the faithful to participate in the daily affairs of the monasteries and public welfare activities to deepen their understanding of

Buddhism through concrete practice and experience; and utilized new media for publicity and education to make the Buddhist teachings more vivid and relevant to the lives of modern people.

Overall, the development of Humanistic Buddhism in mainland China has been a complex and multifaceted process, and its future development requires in-depth research and exploration to understand its role and significance in modern society. Chinese Buddhism in mainland China has faced many problems and demonstrated a series of successful experiences in promoting the Humanistic Buddhism movement. In the face of these problems, Humanistic Buddhism in mainland China needs to strengthen its management and supervision to ensure that the behavior of practitioners is in line with ethical norms; it also needs to conduct more in-depth research and understanding of the Dharma in order to serve the society better and benefit sentient beings. These experiences provide references for the modernization of Buddhism and offer possibilities for the integration of Buddhism and society. An in-depth analysis of these experiences and challenges is of great significance in guiding the future development of Chinese Buddhism. The root of Humanistic Buddhism lies in the practice of detachment from the world, and its purpose is to seek liberation actively, not just at the level of social service and public welfare activities. If the essence of Humanistic Buddhism is correctly understood and practiced, it will contribute to the development and prosperity of Buddhism in modern society.

CONCLUSION

Humanistic Buddhism, a movement that emphasizes the practice and application of Buddhism in the real world, has faced many challenges and changes. From the Life Buddhism proposed by Master Taixu at the beginning of the twentieth century to the later Humanistic Buddhism, all aim to apply Buddhism to daily life, emphasizing the benefit of all sentient beings and social welfare. However, in the course of its practice, the movement has been plagued by the concern that Buddhism has been secularized and commercialized and has lost its sublime and divine qualities.¹³

The Challenge of Secularization

Many Buddhist rituals have become catered to secular needs and have even become commercialized, which is contrary to the original purpose of Buddhism.¹⁴ Some monasteries and monks have pursued excessive commercial interests, thus affecting the purity and independence of Buddhism. Some monks have violated Buddhist teachings and precepts, showing a tendency towards secularization, which has led to a decline in the moral standard of Buddhism.

Buddhism should not become a mere part of secular life but maintain its emanation and sanctity. As the core of Buddhism, the Sangha should abide by Buddhist precepts and teachings and avoid involvement in excessive commercial activities. Buddhist rituals and teachings should focus on spiritual upliftment rather than catering to worldly needs.

Difference between theory and reality

In contemporary China, although the theory of Humanistic Buddhism is very well developed, and many temples continue to advocate the basic principle of cultivating one's moral character in daily life, in reality, Humanistic Buddhism is more of an expression of the "Chineseization of Buddhism". In practice, no Buddhist temple explicitly labels its practice

¹³ SHI Taixu, "Re-consideration of 'Buddhism in India'", p234

¹⁴ Shih Yin-shun, "A General Discussion of the Chinese Buddhist System", p76

as Humanistic Buddhism. These temples mainly refer to their respective lineages' orthodox doctrines and teachings.

The state and government policies communicated by local Buddhist associations as a medium of communication between the Government and Buddhism publicize Buddhist concepts and policies in a way that puts patriotism ahead of Buddhist beliefs. However, they also speak at great length about the concept of Humanistic Buddhism. As the religious version of China's soft power, the state often puts forward the concept of Humanistic Buddhism in its global promotion of Buddhism to attract international resonance and even special attention.

Prospects

Seasons and karma are different, and so are the roots of all beings. A new era has a new mission to initiate and undertake. It is inappropriate for us to impose the typical standards of the ancient sages on modern monks and nuns. However, as modern monks and nuns, we should at least be ashamed of our inability to succeed in the ancient virtues of our weak behavior. Monks are spiritual guides, not direct creators of wealth. Suppose Humanistic Buddhism brings to the society the adverse effects of looking to money, putting personal interests above all else, diluting the concept of Buddhist subjectivity, lowering the level of Buddhist morality, and wavering Buddhist beliefs. In that case, Humanistic Buddhism is a failure. The spirit of Humanistic Buddhism is to leave the world without forgetting to enter the world and to enter the world without forgetting to leave the world. When propagating and practicing Humanistic Buddhism, one must not just talk about the world and ignore the fact that Buddhism is the real core. Secularization must be opposed to preserving Buddhism's sanctity in transforming the world. Only then will Buddhism be purified in the spiral of secularization and anti-secularization.

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