

Buddhist Initiatives for Social Well-Being in Chinese History, With Special Reference to Modern Exponents of Humanistic Buddhism

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ABSTRACT

It was in the 1920s that Venerable Taixu introduced his notions on Humanistic Buddhism and called for a reform movement in Chinese Buddhism. The present paper traces briefly the historical background for his eloquent call for such a transformation. The first section touches on how Chinese Buddhists were involved in social well-being in the past. The second section traces how and why Buddhism declined in the last six hundred years due to the restraint imposed on Buddhism by emperors. The third section deals with views of Venerables Taixu, Cihang, and Yinshun on the restoration of Buddhist tradition to make contributions to social well-being. The last section examines the trend that Chinese Buddhists follow in regard to social well-being, with an in-depth analysis of the role and impact of Venerable Grand Master Hsing Yun.

The Chinese Buddhist Tradition in Social Well-Being

From the early time when Buddhism was introduced into China, Buddhists showed their compassion for the suffering people and made endeavors to aid the poor, the sick and even the environment. They were involved in many activities for social well-being. According to the earliest records in the end of Eastern Han dynasty (around third century CE), a temple in Xuzhou in current Jiangsu Province offered food when monks held ceremonies to wash the image of the Buddha. Thousands of people came to observe the ceremony and shared the food. This earliest record showed that Buddhists would offer food to the people on the day they celebrated the birthday of the Buddha.

In a scripture entitled *Fo Shuo Zhude Futian Jing* translated by Fa Li and Faqu in the Western Jin dynasty, we find seven types of activities that constitute merit-making. These include:

1. Construction of stupas, monastic halls, and pavilions
2. Establishment of fruit gardens, bathing tanks, and trees
3. Dispensing medicine for sick
4. Construction of sturdy boats to ferry people
5. Construction of bridges
6. Digging of wells along traveled roads
7. Construction of toilet facilities for the convenience of the public.¹

Except the first point, the other six were aimed at the well-being and convenience of the public.

The sources of these offerings usually were the royal court and rich donors. During the reign of Emperor Wenxuan (r. 550 – 559) of the Northern Qi (550 – 577),

Narendrayāśas was appointed as controller of the Office for the Clarification of Buddhist Profundities.² The emperor was generous to him in Temple Tianping in the capital. A record speaks of how Narendrayāśas used such charitable donations:

He received many donations, but he did not reserve them as his private property. Enjoying expanding enterprises for good merit, Narendrayāśas would offer help to those who were poor. The prisoners were gathered and taken good care of. In the busy center, they dug many wells. The water in the wells was supplied to the masses.³

Venerable Tanyao 曇耀, another famous monk in the earlier years of Heping period in Northern Wei (386 – 534), made a memorial to the court.

The households of Pingqi 平齊 and those of the people able to supply sixty hu 戶 of grain each year to the Office of Buddhist clergy (sengcao 僧曹) should be designated as donors of “sangha millet” [seng qi su 僧齊粟]. This grain was to be distributed to the starving in years of famine.

Tanyao also requested that felons and state slaves be classed as assigned to Buddha households and charged with the maintenance (“sprinkling and sweeping”) of the monasteries as well as working the fields and bringing in the harvests. Emperor Gaozu (Wencheng Di, r. 452 – 465) granted these two petitions, and the two institutions as well as that of monastery households (si hu 寺戶) subsequently spread throughout the prefectures and garrisons.⁴

Although the office in charge of Buddhist affairs used the grain for usury, it provided relief to the people in disaster-stricken areas. “Sangha millet” was a special storage for grain by Buddhists in the Northern Wei dynasty as a safeguard against a lean year. In the sixth year of Wuping (575), people suffered an enormous flood disaster. The emperor issued a decree in the first month of the next year to enable those who suffered from hunger due to their failure to store up grain, to go to big monasteries and families for food in order to survive.⁵ We find numerous references to such relief work by Buddhists in China. In addition, Tanyao also wrote a memorial to the emperor to set up Fotu Hu (Buddhist households) to house criminals and captives. They received Buddhist education in the temple while working as its labor force. At the same time, they could remold themselves in education.⁶

The second function Buddhist monasteries in ancient times was medical treatment to patients. *Biographies of Eminent Monks* details this activity. Many monks were good doctors as well. According to the book, Indian monks who came to propagate Buddhism also practiced medicine. They were able to cure chronic and stubborn diseases. In the Northern and Southern dynasties (420 – 589), many monks were involved in the work of treating patients in plagues.⁷ Chinese Buddhists must have been greatly influenced by some Buddhist scriptures, including *Suvarṇa-prabhāsa (uttamarāja) Sūtra* (金光明最勝王經), *Sarvarogaprasāmanidharānī Sūtra* (除一切疾病陀羅尼經), *Caksurvośodhanavidyā* (佛說咒目經), *Luo Fu No Shuo Jiu Liao Xiao Er Ji Bing Jing* (Sutra on Relieving a Sick Child by a Spell 囉縛拏說救療小兒疾病經), *Zhou Chi Jing* (Sutra on Relieving Toothache by a Spell 咒齒經),⁸ etc. In addition, books of medicine written by Buddhist monks are referred to in “Jingjizhi” (經籍志 Catalogues of Classics) in *Sui Shu* (History of Sui Dynasty 隋書). It is not surprising to find among the Buddhist monks in China a number who were proficient

in medicine. Indeed, the Chinese acceptance of Buddhism had something to do with these monks who offered medical help to people. An Shigao (second century), Fo Tudeng (fourth Century), and Buddhayaśas (fifth century) were acknowledged masters in the art of healing. One part of Chinese tradition has been the constant concern for good health and longevity.

The third function was the establishment of hospitals within the compound of the temple in the Tang dynasty (618 – 907). Thus, the poor and the sick were cared for in the temples. In the earlier period of Tang, the Court attached importance to taking care of orphans and the poor. The Court emphasized respect to elders and taking care of the sick. During the reign of Empress Wu Zetian (r. 684 – 704), monks in two capitals of Chang'an and Luoyang had already arranged rooms for hospitals within the temples. Some hundreds of patients might have been housed and treated. The Court appointed officers whose were responsible for the supervision and administration of hospitals in temples.

The Tang dynasty also saw the establishment of a land grant system, called *Jingtian* (敬田 the field of reverence; Skr. Satkārapunyaksetra) and *Beitian* (悲田 the field of compassion; Skr. *Karunāpunyaksetra*). A passage from Garland Sutra says, "The bodhisattva emits a radiance named "revealer of jewels" that enables the poor and destitute to discover treasures. It is by their gifts to the Three Jewels and thanks to their Inexhaustible Treasury (無盡藏 *Wujin Cang*) that they acquire this radiance capable of revealing jewels."

The Chinese Buddhist temples received donations from many sources, including royal families, high officials, and ordinary people. In the Northern and Southern dynasties (420 – 589), thousands of temples were built in all parts of China. The Sui (581 – 617) and Tang (618 – 907) dynasties witnessed the high tide of donations from the gentry and commoners. The Buddhists of Three Stage Sect (San Jie Jiao 三階教) were remarkable in their combination of donations and cultivation.⁹ The sect acquired huge wealth. The Buddhists of the Three-Stage Sect started their *Wujin Cang* (無盡藏) at the end of Northern and Southern dynasties and continued the practice in the Sui and Tang dynasties. This term *Wujin Cang* literarily means the inexhaustible treasures accumulated in the temple. It refers to thins that believers of Buddhism donate to the temple; monastics gather them, and store them in the temple for future use.

Such donations were used for the repair of temples and their maintenances. The donors felt that they could accumulate merit by giving properties to the temple. The followers of Three Stages Sect collected donations from the people such as cloth, money, precious objects, gold and silver. Huadu Monastery in Chang-an was the center for *Wujin Cang*, or Inexhaustible Treasuries, as the following account shows:

At the Huadu monastery [化度寺 in Chang-an] there was a Cloister of the Inexhaustible Treasury (Wu-jin zang yuan). It had been instituted by the monk Xin-xing (信行). As a result of the donation that he received at the capital, this treasury flourished steadily. After the Zhenguan reign (貞觀 627 – 650), it held incalculable quantities of money, cloth, gold, and gold embroideries. Monks of repute were permanently assigned to oversee this treasury. Its assets were used for the restoration of monasteries (samghārāma) throughout the empire. Those intending to carry out such renovations came to the Inexhaustible

Treasury from Yan (Xuzhou, Sichuan), Liang (Wuwei, Gansu), Shu (Chengdu, Sichuan), and Zhao (Zhaozhou, Hobei) for supplies (取給 qu ji). The volume of daily loans was beyond measure. Those who went there seeking loans, regardless of interest, came away without even having drawn up a deed in writing; they simply repaid their debts when there were due.¹⁰

The donors of these treasures belonged to all social classes, including great personages, royal family members, nobles, high officials and also commoners. A decree issued in June in the ninth year of Kaiyuan (開元 721) says:

We have determined to distribute the entire holdings of the Inexhaustible Treasury of the Huadu monastery among the Buddhist and Daoist monasteries in the capital: valuables and commodities, lands and houses, and domestic animals. These goods shall be employed, first, for the repair of statues, halls, and bridges; the remainder shall be allocated to the permanent assets (常住 changzhu) [of the monasteries] and may not be divided among the private cells (私房 si-fang [i.e., the monks]). The distribution shall benefit the poorest monasteries.¹¹

Although the records of this Inexhaustible Treasuries were controversial, the fact in which monks practiced charity on their own initiatives cannot be denied. Many of them were engaged in the activities of providing care for the sick, making gifts of cures, distributing food to the hungry. Empress Wu Zetian 武則天, who was a firm follower of Buddhism, instituted lay commissioners to oversee all the activities of the Buddhist Church pertaining to the field of compassion: support for orphans, the destitute, the elderly, and the sick.¹² Emperor Xuanzong 唐玄宗 forbade begging within the walls of the capital and created hospitals (bingfang 病坊) where the beggars were to be fed. At that time, hospitals were established within monasteries where the sick were supported, thanks to the concept of 'field of compassion' which was of Buddhist origin.¹³

The Song dynasty (960 – 1279) continued the policy of the previous Tang. The Buddhist Sangha communities were active in projects for social well being in building bridges, roads, and water conservation. They were also involved in relief work such as taking care of the elderly and the poor, running orphanages and hospitals and the reconstruction of disaster-stricken areas.¹⁴

Vimalakīrti Sūtra (維摩詰經) was one of the most favorite Buddhist scriptures in China. Many lay Buddhists have been particularly fond of it because Vimalakīrti, the main character of the scripture, was a lay Buddhist. He is said to have been so eloquent that Śāriputra, Moggallana, Kāśyapa, and Ānanda refused to go to see him on the ground that they were not worthy. It is also said that Vimalakīrti has attained to profound knowledge of the true nature of things and is, therefore, able to preach the essence of the law; he is in possession of unique eloquence and unimpeded wisdom; and he is well acquainted with the exemplary manner of a bodhisattva. All in all, he is a layman, who remained a householder. He is reputed to have reached the highest state of being perfect in wisdom and the necessary means. A passage from the Teaching of Vimalakīrti says:

For all those who are poor and destitute, the bodhisattva instituted Inexhaustible Treasuries. In this manner, they encourage them to do good and engender in them a spirit of bodhi.¹⁵

Both terms refer to fields under cultivation in China. The revenue and produce of these fields were provided for the care of the sick and the poor. As this scripture has been widely read, it is not surprising that lay Buddhists would follow what the scripture says.

As all Buddhist establishments were required to receive lay visitors and provide necessary accommodation, the most important pilgrimage temples operated veritable hostleries; they gave shelter not only to travelers, but also to vagabonds. In addition, the temples offered funeral services. However, when Buddhists in China restricted their services to ordinary people to funeral service alone in the last two dynasties from the 14th century to the early 20th century, there was much criticism.

The Decline of Chinese Buddhism.

The *Wujin Cang* came to an end at the end of the Song dynasty or the beginning of the Yuan dynasty in the thirteenth century.

The period of the Ming (1368-1644 CE) and Qing (1644-1911 CE) dynasties saw the decline of Chinese Buddhism. We notice that the first emperor of the Ming was a monk himself and showed his protection and support for Buddhism. Emperor Yongzheng (1723-1735 CE) called himself “Yuanming Jushi” (圓明居士) and “Pochen Jushi” (破塵居士). The word “Jushi” 居士 means a lay Buddhist. He made a vow to revive Buddhism in his reign. It might be assumed that with the support of these emperors, Chinese Buddhism could have flourished. But on the contrary, these very emperors promulgated strict rules that led to the decline of Chinese Buddhism.

The first Ming emperor (1368-1398 CE) was a rebel monk before ascending the throne. As he spent a number of years in the Buddhist monastery, he knew Buddhism inside out. He also joined the peasant uprising army, which rose against the Yuan dynasty under the banner of Manichaeism and Maitreya.¹⁶ The policies towards religions as laid down by Zhu Yuanzhang were strict. In the first year of his reign, he banned the White Lotus Society, the Maitreya Sect, and the Ming Sect (evolved from Manichaeism) and labeled them as heretics. The *Daminlü* (大明律 The Constitution of the Ming Dynasty) said,

The sect of the Maitreya Buddha (the Future Buddha), the White Lotus Society, the sect of Manichaeism, the White Cloud Society, and so forth were heresies. Hiding their images and burning incense, they gathered in the evening and dismissed early in the morning. They pretended to do good things for the people but actually were agitating them for trouble. The head of such heretic society must be hanged. The followers must be flogged one hundred times and sent to exile in a region a thousand miles away.¹⁷

In the third year of Hongwu (1370 CE), the emperor summoned old monks in various places to divide the monasteries in the country into three kinds: the Chan (禪 Meditation), the Jiang (講 Lecture) and the Jiao (教 Doctrines) so that temples were under the supervision of the authorities. The Chan temple referred to the temples of Chan Buddhism, in which monks did not “care for the establishment of the written word,” “Pointing directly to the human mind, and seeing the innate nature, one becomes Buddha.” The Jiang temples were where monks were engaged in propagation through lecturing on scriptures of various sects. In the Jiao temple, monks followed the practice of Yogacāra and were invited to conduct Buddhist services. In the twenty-

fifth year of Hongwu (1392 CE), the emperor further determined the colors of robes for monks of each of these three kinds of temples.

As the first emperor of Ming was a monk himself, he knew that a religion might become rebellious if it was not under strict control. Thus he regulated that each temple displayed the name of its feature at the gate. In other words, some temples were Chan temples and others were designed for lectures. He decreed the establishment of special offices in charge of Buddhist affairs. These offices under the Rites Department in the court were responsible for the appointment of abbots of the key monasteries in the country. They supervised the examinations for the ordination of monks and rituals. The emperor ordered the offices of Buddhist affairs to check the number of traveling monks and gather them together in monasteries. He especially banned the contacts between monks and officials.

The emperor regulated:

If monks and nuns follow my instructions to live in the mountains or in their permanent residence or travel around, without contacts with ordinary people, if they do not trespass into towns or villages, if officers and ordinary people ask monks and nuns for services of reciting the scriptures, that would be wonderful. Buddhism will certainly flourish if they follow these rules. After reading this notice, those who dare to make comment on or oppose what I said must be severely punished.¹⁸

The emperor drew a demarcation line for the monastic and lay people, thus greatly restricting the religious freedom of the Chan. The inevitable decline of Chan Buddhism must have something to do with these restrictions. The emperor often meddled with the inner affairs of Buddhism. He demanded that monks follow their own sects and gather in their own temples. This gave the Chan sect a fatal blow.¹⁹

The emperor attached great importance to the teachings of the Buddhist scriptures. He issued a decree in the tenth year of Hongwu (1377 CE) that monks in the country teach the Heart Sutra, the Diamond Sutra and Lankāvātara Sutra. He even wrote a preface to the Heart Sutra expressing his views on this scripture. He ordered some eminent monks to make annotations and explanations to these scriptures so that the Buddhist community must follow these explanations as a unified ideology. He also decreed that two monasteries be built to receive traveling monks for their convenience in learning. Actually, all these measure restricted the free movement of monks. Traveling was an important part of Buddhist education. The designation of these two monasteries was aimed at reducing contacts between monks. According to the emperor, the ideal monks of Chan were those who kept the ascetic life in the mountains or quiet halls.

As a result, the policies for Buddhism as designated by Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang weakened the strength and vitality of the Chan sect. We notice, however, that those who implemented his policies were Chan masters. These masters were active in offering lectures, annotations to the scriptures and taking charge of Buddhist services. These activities were different from the tradition of the Chan.²⁰

Among all emperors of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911 CE), the one who understood the Chan Buddhism best was Emperor Yongzheng (雍正, reigned 1723-1735 CE). He read widely the literature of Chan and made many commentaries on it. He interfered with the internal affairs of Chan Buddhism. He made a comprehensive

analysis on the theories and practice of Chan and even made regulations for the development of Chan. It may be said that Emperor Yongzheng was one of the emperors who knew how to prevent Buddhists from making any trouble and how to make use of them.

In his earlier years, the emperor showed his negative attitude towards the transmission from mouth to the ear. He disdained the study of records of words of Chan masters, demonstrating his contempt for Chan.

However, the Chan sect of Buddhism in the early period of Qing dynasty had many followers in East China. Sensitive in politics, Emperor Yongzheng began to take measures in the pretext of getting rid of the corruption in the Chan sects. In the name of defending Buddhism and Chan sect, the emperor initiated large scale investigation and criticism of the Chan tradition. He even composed two works entitled *Yuzhi Jianmo Bianyi Lu* (禦制揀魔辨異錄 Records of Picking out “Bogies and Distinguishing the Difference of Them”) and *Yuxuan Yulu* (禦選語錄 A Royal Selection of Recorded Utterance of the Dhyāna-bhadantas).

Monk Fazang and his disciple Hongren belonged to the Linji sect (Rinzai sect) in East Zhejiang Province. Many scholar-officials of the previous Ming dynasty kept close ties with these monks of Chan sect. Apparently, they still cherished the memory of the dethroned dynasty. The Manchus felt suspicious of the contacts between monks and these scholar-officials. Regarding them as heresies, the emperor issued a decree that their books be burnt and they not be allowed to be abbots of any temple.²¹

In his *Yuxuan Yulu*, the emperor decided what Chan should be concerned with: (1) the combination of sects; (2) the practice of both Chan and Pure Land; (3) the ban of criticizing the patriarchs and cursing of the Buddha; and (4) the ban of praising the past and the establishment of a kind of Chan named after Emperor Yongzheng. In a word, the emperor meddled into the Chan, pretending himself as a Chan master and trying to eliminate the elements of resistance from Chan believers who were rebellious. As a result, he brought the Chan into the court control. With the further consolidation of the totalitarian rule of the Manchus, the Chan under the straightjacket could no longer restore its original characteristics. Thus, we see a clear sign of decline of Chan after the reign of Yongzheng (1722-1735 CE).²²

Lai Yonghai pointed out that in the end of Qing dynasty, Chinese Buddhism was already separated from the human world. The Buddhist monks either hid somewhere to practice or made a living on the Buddha. They showed no concern for the human life or society. To a certain extent, Buddhism became a kind religion that just offered funeral service for the dead. A group of Buddhists with far-sightedness, and dissatisfied with the status quo, began to call for reform in Chinese Buddhism. They said that in this era in which science develops so rapidly, Buddhism could not survive if it does not make reform. The old Sangha system could not sustain itself if it did not change its orientation to self-reliance by engaging in agricultural production and forestry. The first monk to call for reform was Venerable Taixu.²³

The Reform Movement in the 20th Century in China

The twentieth century China witnessed unprecedented national crises: the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 which triggered the Eight Allied Forces' invasion; the 1911 Revolution which brought to an end of the monarchy of thousands of years; the May Fourth Movement which vehemently attacked all Chinese traditional values; the Civil Wars, the Japanese invasions from 1930s to 1940s, the civil wars between Nationalist Party and Communist Party in 1946 – 49; the numerous political campaigns under Communist rule; the Cultural Revolution; etc. These crises did much more harm to Chinese Buddhism than the persecutions against Buddhism by Four Chinese Emperors in Chinese history.²⁴ For Chinese Buddhists, they faced the confiscation of the temple property in 1898 when Zhang Zhidong (張之洞), governor of Hunan and Guangdong Provinces, proposed that seventy percent of the property and land of the temples be used as schools for education. In the May Fourth Movement in 1919, radical intelligentsia challenged traditional values and ethics, reducing the influence of Buddhism to minimum and Buddhists to despair.

When tremendous changes took place in China, many things from the West, including thoughts, culture, values, religion and so on, were introduced into China. The whole nation could not feel secure when the Manchu Court suffered humiliations from imperialist aggression and unequal treaties. The intellectuals could not find the way in which they could settle their bodies and minds. Previously, it was Confucianism that played the key role in their life as the learning of the body and mind. The traditional Chinese culture came under heavy attack during the May Fourth Movement in 1919. In fact, the overthrow of the imperial rule did not solve the crisis, but worsened the situation when the country fell into confusion. The name of the state was changed to "Republic," but it was ruled by new warlords who divided China among themselves. Ordinary people still were deprived of the right to decide their destiny.

In such a situation, Buddhism lost its position in society in the collapse of the empire. Previously, Buddhists could rely on the support of the Court or royal family. Now their rituals and worship were criticized as "superstition" by those who accepted new thoughts coming from the West. Obviously, the way in which Chan masters meditated in mountains like hermits was rejected when the nation faced deep crisis.

Taixu was one of the key reformers in Chinese Buddhism in the twentieth century. He was born in 1889 in Zhejiang Province, China. He lost his father when he was a baby. He was raised by his grandmother who was a devoted Buddhist follower. Taixu left his grandmother's home and became a Buddhist monk in 1904. He received full ordination from Venerable Jing'an (敬安), who was later elected the president of Chinese General Buddhist Association established in 1912. In all these years, Taixu read widely and understood many things. He made up his mind to defend and develop Chinese Buddhism.

During these decades, Buddhism was often criticized and challenged by radical intelligentsia. The Nationalist Government issued orders to confiscate the Buddhist property for schools. Facing these crises, Taixu was clear-headed. He noticed that the crisis came from two sides: one was the decline of Buddhism among Chinese Buddhists themselves. Even the lay Buddhists, lamented its decline, and challenged the dilapidated institutions of Chinese Buddhism because offering funeral

services in exchange for sustenance or practicing meditation for one's own benefits became the mainstream in Chinese Buddhism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During the May Fourth Movement era in which new thoughts emerged rapidly, people called for social reforms in order to build a strong and prosperous China. Intelligentsia launched vehement criticisms against Buddhism and traditional Chinese institutions. Various political factions wanted to intervene in Buddhist affairs. They aimed at getting more property by confiscating Buddhist and Daoist temples for their own purposes. Facing these challenges, the Chinese Buddhists were in more difficult times than during the previous four persecutions aimed at eliminating Buddhism.²⁵

Taixu was greatly influenced by T.H. Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, translated into Chinese by Mr. Yan Fu (嚴復).²⁶ Huxley was an outspoken defender and advocate for Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection. The theory of "the survival of the fittest" became an inspiration to young Chinese during the time when China was humiliated. Taixu, who was not an exception, accepted the theory of the survival of the fittest as he says:

That the strong overwhelms the weak does not show kindness or equality, or any sound of virtues of broad-mindedness. It is an example that one can hardly escape from the five *kaśāya* periods of turbidity, impurity, or chaos, i.e. of decay.²⁷ If one wants to ascend the other shore of enlightenment as he enters the sea of miseries, he has to strengthen himself and fight the evils. those who can unite people together become the strong and survive. Those who cannot unite people become weak and get defeated. unless all Buddhists are united as one and seek the way to protect themselves.²⁸

Taixu did not simply consider that the challenges to and criticism of Buddhism were "another persecution against Buddhism." He fully understood that the cause of the decline of Buddhism lay in Buddhists themselves. The cause did not essentially come from outside persecution as the reform movement prevailed in China during these years. If Chinese Buddhists failed to adapt themselves to the changing era, Buddhism would be doomed as the theory of *Evolution* claimed. This was the impetus for Taixu's efforts in the reform movement of Buddhism.

Taixu was called "a political monk" as he was deeply involved in politics. As a matter of fact, he was sensitive to politics. He knew that in order to save Buddhism, he had to deal with politicians, especially those who had great power. He skillfully used his ties with the Nationalist Government and Mr. Chiang Kai-shek who was also a native of Zhejiang Province like Taixu. Besides, confrontation would be unavoidable when Buddhists faced challenges and confiscation of their properties. They had to make endeavors to weather the storm. He was disappointed at the failure of Nationalist Government to protect the property of temples. Unlike those monks who stubbornly opposed the government's unfavorable policy, Taixu made efforts to appeal to the government to revise the unreasonable articles of the regulations, exploring the space in which Buddhism might develop in accordance with the law. He even tried to use the government orders to implement his reform. On the one hand, he hoped that the government would not intervene religious affairs, and on the other hand, he hoped that the government would protect and even support Buddhism like the previous emperors.²⁹

Taixu carefully considered the issues of existing laws and regulations. The Law of Republic China clearly stated that people enjoyed freedom of religious beliefs. The law did not show any preference to any religion or disapproval of any religion. Why were Buddhist monks being looked down upon? Why was their property confiscated? Taixu, in deep and painful retrospect, said:

We have to blame ourselves for our lack of knowledge and virtues, lack of abilities, lack of unity, lack of organization. We did not propagate Buddhism. We have made no contributions to our nation and people. What we have done are not enough to arouse people's respect to us.³⁰

Taixu held that there were three corrupt practices in Chinese Buddhism:

- First, influenced by a few Chan monks, many Buddhists stayed out of social life. They were criticized for sharing the social benefits without making a contribution.
- Second, among the folk religious beliefs, there was a tendency for divinization.
- Third, the hereditary system was widely practiced among Buddhist sects whose abbots hand over the property of the temple to their successors in the same way as a traditional Chinese family.

Taixu ascribed all these corrupt practices to “patriarchal society” which has been a part of Chinese culture. Due to the influence of Confucianization and agrarian economy, the early Buddhist Sangha system had patriarchal.

Facing the challenges and crises from many aspects, Taixu raised his cry for reform by reintroducing the notion of Humanistic Buddhism in the early 1910s. When Taixu delivered his lecture on human life Buddhism in 1928, he already made reflections on the future prospect of Humanistic Buddhism. In 1934, he published his essay “How to Build up Humanistic Buddhism?” This marked a milestone of his views on Buddhist reform and the role of Buddhism in society and human life.

What was the aim of Humanistic Buddhism? Taixu holds that human life can be improved and purified by five precepts of the Buddha Dharma. Taixu raised the question: how can people live and work in peace and contentment? Our life is supported by the masses of society. How can society make life in peace? Certainly, there is a need for a state. Whenever there is a state, there must be politics, law, and army that defends the borderlines of the state and prevents invaders. The state machine eliminates the evil social unrest and even natural disasters. Without the state, there is no guarantee of defense against foreign invasions, no security for people's life and property, and no peace. Therefore, we must repay the grace of the state by demonstrating patriotism as *a priori*.³¹

As Buddhism in the last hundred years declined and played, in Taixu's words, only the role of “a dead religion” and “a religion of ghosts,” some people who believed in Buddhism held that their aim to learn and practice Buddhism was to die a good (perhaps a peaceful) death and enjoy a good life after death. Taixu refuted these ideas. He said that Humanistic Buddhism aims at the improvement of human life here and now. Buddhists, being human beings, should do things in human life and understand what life means. It is necessary to understand life and then be able to understand death. If one cares for understanding death instead of life, he fails to understand both. Understanding the negative meanings, one may get rid of wrong views on Buddhism and improve the real life, expanding the positive meaning.³² Taixu stressed that the Buddha and Bodhisattvas are

not ghosts. “Buddhism is in the world; It is not realized apart from the world.” Taixu had two aims:

- one was to correct the wrong trend in Chinese Buddhism – the trend that focused on death and ghosts.
- the other was to restore the old and good tradition of Chinese Buddhism in which Buddhism emphasized life in the world.

There were two essential problems, which Chinese Buddhists encountered in the twentieth century:

- one was the anti-superstition movement advocated by intellectuals; and
- the other was the confiscation of Buddhist property for educational purposes on the ground that Buddhists offered so little to the prosperity of society.

The intelligentsias had sharply criticized the Chinese Buddhists for their inordinate preoccupation with the “dead people.” Buddhist monks were offered money and other benefits for funeral services. Obviously, reform was necessary – Buddhists should demonstrate their enthusiasm for the construction of the society and for the solution of social problems. Once they wanted to engage in the social affairs, their engagement would affect their benefits.³³

In order to solve these issues, Taixu held that the property of the temple should be used for social well-being. First of all, the Sangha should take strict measures when they ordain new novices. The temples should streamline the Sangha by removing monks and nuns who were unable to meet the basic monastic standards. In this process, the Sangha communities had to make themselves more professional. Those who are removed from the Sangha may work on farms, in factories, shops, factories, hospitals and elsewhere. Those who are old or handicapped may enter special houses designed for them. Some ex-monks and nuns may take charge of the work in the elementary and intermediate schools set up by temples.³⁴

Taixu made a detailed instructions on orphanages run by Buddhist monasteries. Every orphanage should accept 40 orphaned children each year. The kids must be raised in accordance with the regulations for nurseries. When they are seven-year-old and cannot find someone to adopt them, they may enter kindergarten run by the monastery. Twenty-five girls, aged 11 – 18 from the nursery, who are accepted in each temple, receive education, learn Buddhist scriptures and take care of babies. For admission to nursery school, they must be over eight years of age. Those between 7 and 10 had to study elementary school courses. The language and arithmetic studies are the main subjects for their study. A monastery may have six hundred boys and girls. Those aged 11 – 14 may continue their studies. During this period, morality and benefits will be emphasized to perfect their personality. Other children learn various subjects, including agriculture, industry, commerce and so on. For those who are talented, the temples would recommend and support them to enter secondary and higher educational institutions for further studies.³⁵

Chinese Buddhists have followed the famous maxim: “Every day that you do not work, you shall not eat.” (一日不作，一日不食) This was a rule established by Baizhang (百丈禪師) who stressed the importance of Chan work ethic. In 1920, Taixu published two articles entitled “To Take Part in Labor and Study Buddhism: the

New Way for Buddhists”³⁶ and “The Chan Buddhism in the Tang Dynasty and its Social Trend of Thought.”³⁷ He called upon Chinese Buddhists to restore the tradition established by Venerable Baizhang so that they could follow the social trend. Monks may become self-supporting and raise their own food, working in the fields like the farmers around them. This is called farming Chan. They may also produce goods as workers, combining Buddhist Chan with their work and making adjustments to the commercial society.

In 1928 and 1930, a professor of Central University and Minister of Interior proposed to the National Parliament to confiscate the property of monasteries for schools. Facing the challenges, Taixu had to appeal to the Nationalist Government to issue orders for protection. Taixu realized that the only way out was to self-reliance. He also appealed to Buddhist monks and nuns to get involved in social well-being, including education, culture and charity. The essential spirit of education is in conformity to the spirit of Bodhisattva – to help all to ferry to the other shore of salvation. Many temples in China in 1930s started their schools. Many orphans were able to study and live in the monasteries. Tuition fees were waived to students coming from poor families.

During his trips to Europe and America in 1929, Taixu was impressed by the efforts that Christians devoted to education and schools and charity. In his “Outline on the Establishment of Sangha” (建僧大綱), Taixu hoped to establish three layers of Sangha:

- The first is Bhiksu system, totaling 10,000 monks.
- The second is the professional Sangha system, who practice Bodhisattva vows, totaling 25,000 monks and nuns in the whole country
- The third is a system of virtuous Sangha (or Veterans).

The professional Sangha was further divided into five kinds and were associated the following social services:

1. Five thousand schools should be established with each school having one to seven faculties, totaling 9,000 people.
2. Hospitals, nurseries and kindergartens, homes for the aged and handicapped, charitable institutions should be established with facilities for 7,000 people.
3. Five thousand faculty members should work on Vinaya institutions, doctrine institutions and other cultural enterprises, and
4. Three thousand people should work for education as faculties.³⁸

In a speech, Taixu divided the work that Buddhist monks who study Buddhist scriptures, Vinaya and commentaries should do.

- First, they should be able to propagate Buddhism in both oral and written forms. Being able to do both research and propagation work., they may go to factories to explain Buddhism.
- Second, they should be engaged in charity enterprises. Taking an active in charity, they bring the compassionate love of the Buddha to the human world. Taixu emphasized that Chinese already started such practices as building orphanages and nurseries in Quanzhou and that the Buddhist association in Wuhan was involved in distributing medicine and taking care

of the sick and wounded soldiers.

- Third, Buddhists should devote themselves to education. Taixu emphasized that Buddhists should benefit all people with compassionate love. There should be no one who does nothing on the pretext that he wants to focus on Buddhist studies.³⁹

Taixu holds that Buddhist monks and nuns should keep good relations with lay Buddhists. Lay Buddhists established not only Buddhist schools, but also temples for themselves. The typical example was China Inner Institute (支那内學院) established by Yang Wenhui (楊文會) in Nanjing in early twentieth century. There was a trend that lay Buddhists became the mainstream of Buddhism due to their influence in education, research, reprinting the Buddhist literature and Buddhist charity activities. Taixu and Ouyang Jingwu (歐陽竟無) had quarrels on many issues. In 1925, Ouyang criticized Chinese Buddhists with harsh words:

There are probably a million of monks and nuns in China. Only few can understand the basic principles of Buddha Dharma and possess compassionate wisdom. They may live up to the title of Bhiksus. Most of them, idling about, doing nothing except eating from morning to evening, are parasites of the state. They do harm to the state. It will be a great pity if the revolution cannot eliminate them.⁴⁰

Taixu holds that the Sangha is the mainstream of Buddhism and lay Buddhists belong to the peripheral organization of Buddhism. They play different roles in Buddhism, but they show no difference in their beliefs and practices. He designed a relationship between the Sangha and laymen – a mutual cooperation which can accomplish the task of protecting Buddhism and purifying the society.

Those who have left the household are called monks. They aim at first self-cultivation and self-realization and then propagation of Buddha's teachings. The lay Buddhists are organized as Right Belief Society. They show respect to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Believing in the retribution of cause-effect, they practice ten good characteristics. They work for a new Buddhist society characterized byethics, politics and economy.⁴¹

Thus, the reform of Buddhism had to solve two difficulties: one was intellectuals' criticism of "being superstitious," and the other was the confiscation of temple property as intellectuals considered that Buddhists had made little contribution to the nation. The rituals for funeral ceremony were under severe criticism. However, the funeral service was the key source of income for monasteries according to ancient Sangha system in China. If Buddhists changed their ways to offer services, they might make contributions to society and solve some practical problems, however, this would affect the economic interests of the temples.

Taixu realized the difficulties of these issues. On the one hand, he believed that Buddhists could use their temple property to start enterprises beneficial to social well-beings. On the other hand, they should remove monks and nuns who could not meet the basic standards. He believed that it was necessary to reduce the number of unqualified monks and nuns and improve the quality of the Sangha.

How many monks and nuns could be organized as the Sangha? According to Zhou Xuenong, Taixu worked out four plans for Buddhism. The first plan stated that there should be 800,000 monastics. The second plan reduced the number to 200,000 monks and

nuns. The third was 40,000 and the fourth 20,000. Taixu believed that monasteries could set up public enterprises in order to arrange for the rest of the monastics who were to be removed from the Sangha.⁴²

The second plan was the most obvious. Taixu wanted to make arrangements for the 100,000 monastics who were considered mediocre to engage in agriculture, industry and commerce. In order to solve these issues, Taixu held that, first of all, the Sangha should adopt strict measures to ensure quality and suitability when they ordain new novices. The temples should then streamline the Sangha by removing monks and nuns who were unable to meet the basic monastic standards. In this process, the Sangha communities had to make themselves more professional.⁴³

The temples must be kept solemn for novices, monks and high monks. The rest of the property of the temple should be used for training classes for monks. In addition, elementary schools, middle schools, farms, factories, shops, hospitals and so on can be set up to house those monks and nuns who return to lay people.⁴⁴

The novices, the teachers and the retired teachers are qualified monks and nuns. The rest are removed from the Sangha. Those who are removed may be novices or lay Buddhists. A part of monastery property may be used to run the farms, factories, tree farm, shops and so on. They may do such businesses. They can live on half work and half self-cultivation until the end of their life. Thus, they can make contributions to both Buddhism and the state.⁴⁵

Thus, Taixu made an attempt to solve the problem by combining the enterprises for social well-being with the removal of unqualified monastics. In his third plan, he added elementary schools and middle schools. In the last plan, he added homes for the elderly, homes for the handicapped and relief work.

Taixu stressed that the propagation of Buddhism and benefiting all sentient beings are the bounden duty of Buddhists. He designated a way to combine labor with learning Buddhism – the monastics to work to earn their income. He held that it did not aim at solving the issues of clothing, food or housing, but it was instrumental in helping practitioners to reach the ultimate goal, which was a kind of boundless true moral spirit.⁴⁶

To Taixu, the bodhisattvas are supermen or sages coming from common people, who, however, are never separated from the human world. They should be social moralists, reformers, willing to sacrifice themselves for the benefits of others. Humanistic Buddhism takes four things as its maxims: compassion, commiseration, love and sacrifice. The four immeasurable heart is further explained as “to love others,” “to sympathize with others,” “to praise others,” and “to assist others.” In a word, they must “benefit” others. This is the basis of the Buddha’s teaching. To implement the spirit of “benefiting others” in social practice, Taixu called Buddhists and followers to participate in the sacred cause of saving the nation and saving the people.

When China was in a critical moment as Japanese occupied more than half the territory of China, Taixu urged his followers to share the responsibility of saving the nation. Some asked Taixu, “Why do some of your students not live in the monastery but engage in some other work as they take part in the new Buddhist movement under your guidance?” Taixu replied, “Yes, I have taught them. As long as they can work

for the happiness of the nation and the people, it is much better than living in the monastery.”⁴⁷

Chinese Buddhism has been characterized by the latter notion. Chinese Buddhists, being in this world, pursue the spirit of the other world. Humanistic Buddhism stresses the importance of “benefiting others” and “helping the world” as the essence of Buddhism. Buddhists in Mainland China and Taiwan are progressively accepting this concept of Humanistic Buddhism as the mainstream.

We can understand why Venerable Taixu, on behalf of the Chinese Buddhist Association, made an appeal to the government to exempt Buddhists from fulfilling military duty when the Nationalist Government issued a decree that monastics must take part in military training. When Taixu’s appeal was rejected, he tried to persuade the government to arrange monastics to take a number of other responsibilities, including praying to the Buddha to stop aggression and for world peace and taking caring of the wounded soldiers. Many monks went to the battlefield to carry stretchers for the wounded, bury the dead, take care of the refugees, keep social order and teach people to defend themselves from poison gas. Thus monks were organized as ambulance corps in Wuhan, Ningbo, Chongqing, Guangzhou, Xi’an, Chengdu and other places.⁴⁸ This is what Chinese Buddhists could do in the basic interest of their country.

Venerable Cihang (慈航), one of Taixu’s followers, called for immediate action to save Buddhism from three crises: education, culture and charity. In fact, he regarded these three things as the last resort to save Buddhism. He went to Taiwan in 1948, bringing Taixu’s concepts and ideals there. Many Taiwanese young monks were deeply touched by his lectures on Taixu’s concepts of reform, on how ordinary people in Shanghai were attracted by Christians due to their devotion to education and charity in contrast to loitering Buddhist monks. Although Venerable Cihang died in early 1950s, these Taiwanese young monks, later becoming the cornerstone of Buddhism in Taiwan in 1970–90s, devoted themselves to the cause of education, culture and charity. Venerable Cihang initiated the journal *Renjian Fojiao* (Humanistic Buddhism) in Singapore.

Venerable Yinshun, who has also been a follower of Venerable Taixu, further elaborated Taixu’s Humanistic Buddhism. He holds that the focus of the Humanistic Buddhism is the whole Dharma. He explained the term “to benefit” in the following terms:

We may benefit others in two main ways. The first is by providing material benefits to others, such as money or alms. We may give food and clothing, when we see people suffering from poverty and cold. We may provide medical treatment for people suffering from illness. Perhaps we may also build roads, or provide gardens or parks for those without such facilities. We may also use our own body and life to help and save others.

The second way of benefiting others is through spiritual help, that is the giving of Dharma and knowledge. We may teach knowledge to the ignorant, give consolation to the worried, or encourage the timid and weak. Through many types of cultural endeavor and literature, we can influence people for a better, brighter, and safer life by the correct and middle path.

The gift of Dharma is certainly more beneficial than the giving of

monetary gifts. For example, giving clothing and food aids to the poor is a monetary aid. The gift is helpful, but very temporary. It only solves an immediate problem, but not its root. If we can guide others in a good way, teaching them knowledge and skills, and helping them to find employment, (with the exception of the young, elderly, weak, sick, and handicapped), then they may find independence for themselves. This is much better than temporary aid.⁴⁹

Venerable Yinshun pointed out that Buddhism always stressed the importance of collective life. He believed that the teachings of the Buddha aimed at saving the people in the world.

The term “donation” in Buddhism means that things are donated to those who are respected, or those who are miserable, for instance, the poor, the widowed, the lonely, the handicapped, and so on. In modern sense, it refers to charity or social well-being. The donation in Buddha’s teaching has profound meaning – it does not refer to the donation of property only. It means that one is willing to make sacrifices for others. Apart from what they have for their daily necessities, the rich, as long as they have extra money, should help the poor and those who are miserable. In ancient times, people donated money for building bridges, roads and schools. Functionally, donation may bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. The poor who receive aid would fall into misery or cause unrest while the donors would perfect themselves by sacrificing one’s own interests for the sake of others and stopping excessive pursuit of material good.⁵⁰

Yinshun believed that it was necessary to understand fully the teachings of the Buddha. Buddhists should apply the spirit and teachings of the Buddha to themselves, to their families, to the society, to politics, with materials, knowledge and unity. In this way, they may reach the goal of saving the world.⁵¹

The Developing Trend of Chinese Buddhism in Social Well-being: Role and Impact of Grand Master Hsing Yun

Master Hsing Yun, who has evolved into to be the most successful and widely known exponent of the relationship between Humanistic Buddhism and modernity of Buddhism further elaborated Taixu’s concept of Humanistic Buddhism. First of all, he is not only convinced of the importance of education, culture, and environmental preservation as foundations of social well-being, but is also most competent in mobilizing both charity and human resources for a wide program of spiritual, religious, literary and educational activities. He believes that it is necessary to amalgamate the early Buddhist teachings of Sakyamuni Buddha with all Buddhist traditions and make the best use of the entirety of wisdom and values of the twenty-six thousands of Buddhist history and culture.

Venerable Hsing Yun holds that Buddhists should actively be involved in social affairs and politics, but with pragmatic moderation. They should demonstrate their support and loyalty to the state. On the first and fifteenth day of every month, they must pray for peace and prosperity of the state. He called upon his followers to do ten things:

- They should help in production and in environment protection. Temples should be self-sufficient and make contributions to agriculture.
- develop transportation by building bridges, ferries and roads, and dredging

the waterways. This would not only make things more convenient for people to travel, but also develop social economy, which could be greatly improved.

- make contributions to environmental protection as many temples have good ecological environment. The good environment of temples are in favor of birds and animals due to the fact that monks abstain from killing any living beings. They keep a pure land in the world.
- Provide facilities and services to travelers, as had been traditionally done by Buddhists.
- make contributions to culture with sculpturing Buddha images, building temples, pagodas and pavilions.
- host soldiers and provide them humanitarian services at times of war, as temples had often done in the past., and make temples places of study. Many successful ministers and generals received their education in the temple.
- offer medical assistance and relief work to the sick. In modern times, Buddhist communities build hospitals and clinics for common people.
- engage in suitable financial services. In early times, temples set up pawn shops to help the poor. They also built mills for grinding rice and oil.
- contribute continuously in the field of science and technology as their theories on atoms and tiny particles have been verified. They also enrich Chinese literature as many novels, poems reflect the influence of Buddhism.

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Venerable Hsing Yun shows a great concern for the social illnesses in current world. He listed many illnesses in today's society. The high speed of development of industry and commerce has caused environment pollution. Frustrated by the damage of the environment, people lose balance in their body and mind. The spiritual corruption in the industrial and commercial circles causes the most serious pollution. When the inner self is polluted, they are going to pollute the social morality and virtues degenerate. Venerable Hsing Yun offered a number of solutions:

1. People should set up the concept of cause-effect in dealing with morality.
2. They should follow regulations and behave themselves.
3. They should establish the good virtues of frugality and gratitude.
4. They should repent for their mistakes and purify themselves.⁵³

Venerable Hsing Yun also laid down some principles for adjusting Buddhism to needs and challenges of modernity. Let me summarize them as the following.

1. Buddhists should attach more importance to save the living from miseries instead of offering services to the dead. This is the first most important task for Buddhists.
2. There should be more emphatic on practical contribution than mere prayer.
3. They should stress life rather than death. Monastics should learn skills to serve society. Monks of the Fo Guang Shan Monastic Order are required to be able to teach and nuns are required to be trained as nurses and kindergarten teachers. The monastics may build their enterprises by their own efforts, without relying on society.
4. They should concentrate on their causes instead of the temples. Master Hsing Yun reminded people that temples should be the place to propagate the Buddha's teachings and offer spiritual services. They are not, as some

believed, places for individual purification and self-cultivation or the home for the aged, or home for the escapees. If they are such places, Buddhism would be criticized for taking in too much from society but failing to make contributions to social well-being.

5. Buddhists should concentrate on masses instead of individuals. Venerable Hsing Yun stressed the need to return the grace of the masses. The true spirit of modern Buddhism is to take interest in the masses as benefiting others is benefiting oneself.
6. Buddhists should pursue Dharma happiness instead of material happiness.
7. Buddhists should love their country. They should also emphasize nationalism instead of personal considerations of individuals and families.

The Grand Master called on his followers to push forward the modernization of Buddhism in four ways:

1. Buddhists should help the development of the state. The need of the nation is the need of Buddhism. They should show concern for the stability of the country and the future of the nation.
2. Buddhists should actively improve the quality of life, including the bettering of people's behavior. In other words, Buddhists should take responsibility for the quality of social morality.
3. It is necessary to build up the morality based on a sound mind.
4. Buddhists should create a peaceful and beneficial society.

The Master emphasized that the aim of the modernizing Buddhism is to extend the Buddhist compassionate love, the spirit of tolerance to society in the hope that the society follows the Buddha's teachings on equality, interdependent cause, and cause-effect and becomes perfect. ⁵⁴

For social well-being, Chinese Buddhism shows promising signs of being more actively involved in social charity, and cultural, social, and educational causes. There is much room for them to develop further to help the poor, the juvenile delinquents, children and youth and even transform criminals. They can encourage and lead followers to take care of social life, and environment protection. Certainly, they can bring many functions into full play, such as social work, mental health, purification of mind and so on. They may show concern for social problems in real life. They can certainly engender national and community unity and friendship and thereby usher in World Peace. They certainly play a major role in the mutual understanding between the East and West.

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Notes

¹ Ch'en, Kenneth. *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, p.296.

² This was an agency of the Court for Dependencies (hong lu si) responsible for monitoring the teaching of Buddhism throughout the state; headed by a Controller-in-Chief with the assistance of a Controller and a Chief Buddhist Deacon (tu wei-na). See Charles Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), No. 285, pp.116 – 117.

³ See “Biography of Narendrayaśas” in *Xu Gaoseng Zhuan* (A Continuation of Biographies of Eminent Monks), part 2. Also see Zhang Gong, *Han Tang Fosi Wenhua Shi* (The Cultural History of Buddhist Temples in the Han and Tang Dynasties). Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1997, p. 1032.

⁴ See Jacques Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History From the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*. Translated by Franciscus Verellen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p.210

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 100. The quotation is slightly different.

⁵ Zhang Gong 張弓. *Han Tang Fosi Wenhua Shi* (漢唐佛寺文化史 Cultural History of Buddhist Temples in the Han and Tang Dynasties). (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1997, p.1032.

⁶ Master Hsing Yun illustrated ten major public causes served by Humanistic Buddhism in Chinese history. These public causes include planting trees, opening wild land, digging wells, building water conservancy projects, building bridges and roads, setting up mills for grinding grain and oil, hotels, emergency aid, public bathrooms and Buddhist households. See 星雲大師. “Renjian Fojiao de Shehui Gongyi Shiye” in *Renjian Fojiao* (人間佛教 Humanistic Buddhism). Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Chubanshe, 1995, p. 525.

⁷ Zhang Gong 張弓. *Han Tang Fosi Wenhua Shi* (漢唐佛寺文化史 Cultural History of Buddhist Temples in the Han and Tang Dynasties). (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1997, pp.1033 – 1037.

⁸ See *Taishō*, Volume 21, pp.489 – 494. A number of scriptures on how to cure diseases are found in this volume.

⁹ The Three Stage Sect believed that the implementation of Buddhist Dharmas can be divided into three stages: In the first stage, people take Avatamsaka Sutra and other scriptures for sudden enlightenment as the main scriptures. The second stage focuses on teachings of Three Vehicle. The followers believed that as they were in the third stage, the “destiny for Dharma age,” they must do all they could to display the spirit of saving others from the suffering with the full respect to all human beings. The believers of Three Stage Sect donated their property to Wujin Cang, Inexhaustible Treasuries for the public cause of society. Due to their involvement in social life, Empress Wu Zetian and Emperor Tang Xuanzong took measures to restrict and even ban the activities of The Three Stage Sect. Venerable Taixu admired the spirit of this sect and hoped that Chinese Buddhists could re-invigorate their positive role in saving the world. See *Taixu Dashi Quanshu*, volume 56, pp.515-520.

¹⁰ See Jacques Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History From the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*. Translated by Franciscus Verellen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p.210. My quotation is slightly different from Jacques Gernet's book.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 212

¹² *Tanghuiyao* 唐會要 49.863.

¹³ Jacques Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History From the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*. Translated by Franciscus Verellen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p.222.

¹⁴ Huang Minzhi 黃敏枝. *Songdai Fojiao Shehui Jingji Shi Lunji* 宋代佛教經濟史論集. Taipei: Xuesheng Shuju, 1989, pp.422 – 436.

¹⁵ Jacques Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History From the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*. Translated by Franciscus Verellen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p.215.

¹⁶ The White Lotus sect prophesied that the empire was about to plunge into chaos and that the Buddha Maitreya, the future Buddha, would descend to the world to save mankind. Thus the authorities banned this sect and Maitreya worship. See Daniel L. Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp.73-108. Also C.K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), pp.232-234.

¹⁷ Du Jiwen and Wei Daoru 杜繼文、魏道儒, *Zhongguo Zongjiao Shi* (中國禪宗史 A History of Chinese Chan Buddhism) (Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji Chubanshe, 1995), p.518.

¹⁸ Wang Zhipin 王志平. *Diwang He Fojiao* (帝王與佛教 Emperors and Buddhism) (Beijing: Huawen Chubanshe, 1998), p.217.

¹⁹ Du Jiwen and Wei Daoru, *Zhongguo Chanzong Shi* (A History of Chinese Chan Buddhism) (Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji Chubanshe, 1995), pp.517-522.

²⁰ Li Guorong, *Foguang Xia De Diwang : Zhongguo Gudai Diwang Foshi Huodong Miwen* (Emperors under the Buddha Light) (Beijing: Tuanjie Chubanshe, 1995), pp.305-310.

²¹ Yan Yaozhong, *Jiangnan Fojiao Shi* (A History of Buddhism in East China) (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2000), p.373.

²² Du Jiwen and Wei Daoru, *Zhongguo Chanzong Shi* (A History of Chinese Chan Buddhism) (Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji Chubanshe, 1995), pp.580-587.

²³ Lai Yonghai 賴永海, *Foxue He Ruxue* (佛學與儒學 Buddhism and Confucianism) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Renmin Chubanshe, 1996), p.221.

²⁴ Chinese Buddhism suffered four major persecutions from emperors. They were Taiwu Emperor in the Northern Wei Dynasty (北魏太武帝 r. 424 – 451), Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou (北周武帝 r. 561 – 578), Emperor Wuzong in the Tang dynasty (唐武宗 r. 840 – 846) and Emperor Shizong of Latter Zhou (後周世宗 r. 954 – 958).

²⁵ Zhou Xuenong 周學農. *Chushi Rushi Yu Qili Qiji* 出世、入世與契理契機 (This Worldliness and that Worldliness with Doctrines and Chances). Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Shan Wenjiao Jijinhui, 2001, pp. 119 – 120.

²⁶ Yan Fu (嚴復 1853 – 1927), a native of Fuzhou in Fujian Province, was one of the many translators at the turn of the 20th century. He was sent to Britain to for naval studies in the 1870s. Strongly stimulated by the defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, he began his career as a translator. His translation of T. Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* had a much stronger impact on Chinese intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century. Yan showed the truth to the Chinese public that struggle for existence, natural selection and survival of the fittest were the fundamental laws governing the world, so that unless China could readjust herself to the world, she would be doomed. To the Chinese public, such a theory of evolution was something entirely new and unheard of, and the publication of his book was like a bomb bursting amidst the intellectual circles of China.

²⁷ The five *kaśāya* periods include (1) the *kalpa* in decay, when it suffers deterioration and gives rise to the ensuing form; (2) deterioration of view, egoism, etc., arising; (3) the passions and delusions of desire, anger, stupidity, pride and doubt prevail; (4) in consequence human miseries increase and happiness decreases; (5) human lifetime gradually diminishes to ten years. (For details see Ananda W. P. Guruge: *The Human Right to Peace, Security and Prosperity – the Buddhist Perspective* in this issue of the Journal: p. ----)

²⁸ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 34, pp.341 – 342. CF note 25.

²⁹ Zhou Xuenong 周學農. *Chushi Rushi Yu Qili Qiji* 出世、入世與契理契機 (This Worldliness and that Worldliness with Doctrines and Chances). Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Shan Wenjiao Jijinhui, 2001, pp. 132-133.

³⁰ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 35, p. 120.

³¹ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 5, p.234, and p.174.

³² *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 5, pp.218 – 220.

³³ Zhou Xuenong 周學農. *Chushi Rushi Yu Qili Qiji* 出世、入世與契理契機 (This Worldliness and that Worldliness with Doctrines and Chances). Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Shan Wenjiao Jijinhui, 2001, pp.138 – 139.

³⁴ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 33, p.265.

³⁵ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 33, pp.71 -76.

³⁶ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 35, pp.163 – 166.

³⁷ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 40, pp.206 – 236.

³⁸ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 33, pp.195 – 212,

³⁹ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 56, pp.616- 617.

⁴⁰ Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無. “Bian Fangbian Yu Sengzhi” (辨方便與僧制 On Convenience and

Sangha System) in *Ouyang Dashi Yiji* (歐陽大師遺集 Collection of Ouyang Jingwu). (Taipei: Xinwenfeng Chuban Gongsi, 1976), p. 1488 – 1489.

⁴¹ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 35, p.585.

⁴² Zhou Xuenong 周學農. *Chushi Rushi Yu Qili Qiji* 出世、入世與契理契機 (This Worldliness and that Worldliness with Doctrines and Chances). Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Shan Wenjiao Jijinhui, 2001, pp.??/78.

⁴³ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 33, p.265.

⁴⁴ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 35, p.275.

⁴⁵ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 34, p.488. CF Zhou Xuenong 周學農. *Chushi Rushi Yu Qili Qiji* 出世、入世與契理契機 (This Worldliness and that Worldliness with Doctrines and Chances). Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Shan Wenjiao Jijinhui, 2001, pp.138 – 143.

⁴⁶ *Taixu Dashi Quanshu* (Complete Works by Venerable Taixu), volume 40, 229.

⁴⁷ Lai Yonghai, *Foxue He Ruxue* (Buddhism and Confucianism) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Renmin Chubanshe, 1996), pp.224 - 225.

⁴⁸ Deng Zimei 鄧子美. *Chuantong Fojiao Yu Zhongguo Jindaihua: Bainian wenhua Chongzhong yu Jiaoliu* 傳統佛教與中國近代化：百年文化衝撞和交流 (Traditional Buddhism and China's Modernity: Cultural Collisions and Exchanges in the Last Century). Shanghai: Huadong Daxue Chubanshe, 1995), pp.273 – 274.

⁴⁹ Yinshun. *Selected Translations of Miao Yun*. (Homebush: Hwa Tsang Monastery, Inc., 1998), Part III, pp. 239 – 241.

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⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.204.

⁵² Hsing Yun 星雲大師. *Renjian Fojiao* (人間佛教 Humanistic Buddhism). Kaohsiung: Fo Guang Chubanshe, 1995, pp. 362 – 366.

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