



ANSWERS TO COMMON
QUESTIONS
ABOUT BUDDHISM

赵朴初 著
赵 桐 译



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佛教常识问答

Answers to Common Questions about Buddhism

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花落還開
水流不斷
我兮何有
誰歟安息
明月清風
不勞尋覓

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序

赵朴初

这本书是我三十多年前开始写的，因为事务冗忙，时作时辍。原来计划，除现在的五章外，还有三章是有关中国与外国佛教关系史的，因佛教协会已有这方面资料的编辑和著作，所以不重复了。

我写成第一章后，曾以楞严经“如人饮水，冷暖自知”这句话用“饮水”的笔名陆续在《现代佛学》杂志上发表。有一位朋友问我：“你为什么用这样一个小题目？”我说：“我喜欢‘小题大做’，而不愿‘大题小做’，更害怕‘有题空做’。”这本英译的书名很好，很合我的心意。

几年前，一位青年僧人用日文翻译这本书，我应他的要求写序时，曾记下与本书有关的一件事：1957年我陪一位柬埔寨僧人见毛泽东主席，客人未到之前，我先到了，毛主席便和我漫谈。他问：“佛教有这么一个公式——赵朴初，即非赵朴初，是名赵朴初，有没有这个公式呀？”我说：

Author's Preface

Zhao Puchu

I began to write this book over thirty years ago. Owing to the heavy load of work, I could only write intermittently. In addition to the five chapters as they appear now, I intended to write three more chapters dealing with the history of relations between China and other countries in the Buddhist sphere. Since the Buddhist Association of China has undertaken to compile and write on this topic, there is no need to duplicate their work here.

When I finished writing the first chapter, it was published in installments in the *Journal of Modern Buddhism*. I used the pseudonym, "Yin Shui" (drink water), derived from the text *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* that reads "One perceives whether the water is cold or warm only when one drinks it." A friend of mine asked why I chose such an insignificant title. I replied, "I prefer to make a fuss about trifles rather than underplaying a big issue, not to mention completely ignoring significant subjects." The title of the English version of my book is in conformity with my wish.

A few years ago a young monk translated my book into Japanese. In the preface, which I wrote at his request, I referred to a story connected with the subject of this book. In 1957, I accompanied a Cambodian monk to see Chairman Mao Zedong. Before the guest arrived I had the opportunity to chat with the Chairman. He told me,

“有。”主席再问：“为什么？先肯定，后否定？”我说：“不是先肯定，后否定，而是同时肯定，同时否定。”谈到这里，客人到了，没有能谈下去。后来，我在写这本书的第二章时，想起这一次未谈完的问答，我想，书中谈到缘起性空的思想，可能补充了当时我在毛主席面前所想讲的话。

我曾看到一本毛主席的勤务员李银桥写的书。有一天，毛主席在延安出门散步，毛主席对李银桥说：“我们去看看佛教寺庙，好不好？”李银桥说：“那有什么看头？都是一些迷信。”毛主席说：“片面片面，那是文化。”我因而想起文化大革命结束后，周建人先生写信给我说：文革初期范文澜先生向他说，自己正在补课，读佛书。范老说，佛教在中国将近两千年，对中国文化有那么深厚的关系，不懂佛教，就不能懂得中国文化史。1987年，我到四川一个佛教名胜地方看到被人贴迷信标语的事实，回来写了一份报告，钱学森博士看见了，写信给我说：“宗教是文化。”

“There is a formula in Buddhism: Zhao Puchu is not Zhao Puchu (in the sense of Paramattha), but Zhao Puchu by name. Is this true?” “Yes.” I replied. He added, “Why, then, do you affirm it before negating it?” “It is not affirmation before negation,” I said, “but simultaneous affirmation and negation.” Then the guest arrived and the conversation was interrupted. Later when I worked on Chapter II of this book, I recalled that unfinished talk. I think the idea of the voidness of nature because of Dependent Origination (Paṭiccasamuppāda) in the book might constitute what I would have said to the Chairman at that time.

I have read a book written by Li Yinqiao, one of Chairman Mao's bodyguards. According to this book, when Chairman Mao was taking a walk with Li in Yan'an one day, Mao said to him, “Let's go see a Buddhist temple, shall we?” Li said, “What's the point? It is nothing but a symbol of superstition.” “One-sided, one-sided your thinking is. It is culture.” This also reminds me of a letter to me from Mr. Zhou Jianren after the end of the Cultural Revolution, in which he told me that in the early period of the turmoil, Mr. Fan Wenlan had sent word to him that he was making up for a missed lesson by reading Buddhist books. Fan said that Buddhism in China has lasted about twenty centuries, it had such a profound influence on Chinese culture that one can hardly understand the cultural history of China without some knowledge of Buddhism. Finally, in 1987, I visited a Buddhist historical site in Sichuan Province and found that anti-superstition slogans were visible everywhere. Therefore, on my return, I wrote a report. Seeing the report Dr. Qian

这三个人，一是伟大的革命家，一是著名的历史学家，一是当代的大科学家，所见相同，都承认佛教是文化，而今天还有不少人的认识水平和当年李银桥的一样。

我最初写这本书的动机只是为了和外国朋友谈话时，翻译人员因缺乏佛教知识而感到困难，想为他们提供一些方便。但这许多年来，得到国内不少人的关怀、鼓励，也得到一些外国朋友的注意。事实说明，这一本小书对于增进人们对佛教的了解，增进国际朋友对中国佛教的了解，不无少许贡献。

我感谢译者为此书所付出的宝贵的心力。我虔诚期待国际朋友对于此书内容给予指教。

Xuesen wrote to me, "Religion is a part of culture".

It is noteworthy that all three of these men, the first, a great revolutionary, the second, a famous historian, and the third, a great contemporary scientist, shared the same view that Buddhism is a part of culture. Yet there are still many people today whose perception remains like that of Li Yinqiao at that time.

At the very beginning, I was impelled to write this book by the desire to help those interpreters who had difficulty in performing their work due to a lack of knowledge in Buddhism. In recent years, however, I have received kindly consideration and encouragement from many people at home as well as friends from abroad. This indicates that this pamphlet has made more than a negligible contribution towards enhancing the public comprehension of Buddhism and helping foreigners understand Chinese Buddhism.

I am indebted to the translator for her arduous endeavors in accomplishing this task. I sincerely look forward to forthcoming comments on the book from friends all over the world.

译者前言

《佛教常识问答》一书是赵朴初先生一生对佛学进行研究的总结之作。本书的前三章按照佛、法、僧三宝的顺序精辟地阐释了何为佛、何为法、何为僧。第一章对佛教的创立及创始人作了历史的而不是神话的阐述；第二章深入浅出地阐释了佛法的基本内容，介绍了佛教典籍的形成及其流布；第三章对僧团的建立、僧侣的生活、戒律与仪轨作了生动的描述。本书的后二章不啻是一部印度佛教、中国佛教小史，第四章叙述了佛教在其发源地——印度的发展、衰灭和复兴；第五章是本书内容最详实、最能体现作者本怀的一章，其中深入论述了佛教在中国的传播、发展和演变，分析了佛教与人们日常生活的关系，佛教对于社会的思想与文化发展所起的作用，从而阐发了发扬人间佛教的优越性，使之服务于当今社会文化与生活的主旨。

本书用问答的方式实际上回答了佛教两千五百年来所涉及到的大多数问题，因此，这本书可以说是朴老提出的佛学大纲，对于一般人想全面了解佛教将起到正确导入的作用，对于学者要深入研究佛教与佛学将起到启发思路，找到切入点的作用，对于外国人想了解佛教，尤其是中国佛教的全貌提供了全方位的素材。

Translator's Preface

Answers to Common Questions about Buddhism is the final fruit of a lifetime of study on Buddhism made by Mr. Zhao Puchu. The first three chapters give respectively a succinct exposition of the Buddhist Three Gems, i. e. Buddha, Dhamma (Buddhist doctrine), and *Sangha* (the Buddhist Order). Chapter One gives a historical, rather than mythological, account of the founder and the founding of Buddhism. Chapter Two gives in simple language a profound explanation of Buddhist doctrine, as well as its spread and the compilation of its canonical literature. Chapter Three gives a vivid account of the formation of the *Sangha* as well as their life and disciplines. The last two chapters are nothing short of a brief history of Indian and Chinese Buddhism. Chapter Four describes the rise and fall and resurgence of Buddhism in its birthplace—India, while Chapter Five is packed with detailed information, and expresses the innermost feelings of the author. By giving a thorough analysis of the spread, the development and evolution of Buddhism in China, and of the relationship between Buddhism and everyday life, the impact of Buddhism on social, intellectual and cultural development, the last chapter contends that we should carry forward the advantages of popular Buddhism, and make it serve contemporary social and cultural life.

In the form of questions and answers, the book addresses and answers practically all the questions raised by Buddhism over the past 2,500 years. The book may be regarded as Zhao Puchu's general survey of Buddhist studies, giving the ordinary public a proper introduction to Buddhism, while giving to the scholars inspiration and points of entry into in-depth study of Buddhism. It also furnishes the foreigners wishing to learn about Buddhism, especially Chinese Buddhism, a comprehensive outline of the field.

本书用活泼的、通俗易懂的、开启心智的方式回答了那些似乎莫测高深的佛学问题，妙语机锋间透露出一位大家的睿智，一位善知识的亲切，一位学者治学的严肃与公允的态度，以及一位真正的佛教徒对佛教正信的立场，因而与一切迷信、假信和伪信划清了界线。

译者于 1996 年受中国佛教文化研究所的委托，开始着手翻译此书。受命之时，万没想到这是如此艰巨的任务，是对译者佛学知识、中文修养，尤其是外语水平的全面挑战。为了不使译者的浅陋有损于原作的光辉，在翻译过程中参阅了大量参考书，务求作到言出有据。对于绝大多数佛教术语，尽量找出它们的巴利语（梵语）原词以及被广泛接受的英文译法，并且，为了方便广大信众、学者掌握佛学英语、巴利语，译者还编辑了《巴、英、汉佛教术语对照表》（附书后）。对于较为复杂的思想、义理，力求在阅读巴利语、英语、汉语原典的基础上理清了思路，领会了作者的意趣之后再遣词运笔。历时三载，数易其稿，方成现在这个样子，此稿虽得到赵朴初先生亲自审阅，并予以嘉许，然自知还有许多不尽人意之处，祈请方家大德、广大善信施慧赐教。

在反复翻译、修改过程中，得到了各方专家的指教。译稿始成，便邀请了不懂汉语、不懂佛教，不懂汉语、但懂佛教，既懂汉语、又懂佛教的多位外国专家予以审读，听取他们的意见，尽量使译文的风格不失去原作的原汁原味。在此，译者要特别向柯马凯先生、魏海伦女士、提瑟·嘎里奥桑姆先生致以最诚挚的谢意，如果译文尚令人满意，全都有赖于他们使之增色。同时，在翻译过程中还参阅了此

The language is vivid yet colloquial, and answers in an enlightening way even those seemingly incomprehensible and abstruse points of Buddhism. Through the apt wording one detects the wisdom of a great philosopher, the sympathy engendered in one with intimate knowledge, the serious and magnanimous approach of a true scholar, and the orthodox stand of the true Buddhist, clearly demarcating it from any superstition or heresy.

This translation was begun in 1996 at the request of the China Institute of Buddhist Culture. At that time, I had no idea what a challenge this work would prove to be of my knowledge of Buddhism, my Chinese skills and my English level. In order that the limitations of the translator do not detract from the splendors of the original work, over the course of translation I consulted a large number of reference books, strove to ensure that translations were made on a sound basis, and for most technical terms, sought out the original Pāli (or Sanskrit) terms, as well as those English forms most sanctioned by usage. For the convenience of the reader wishing to learn English or Pāli Buddhist terms, I compiled a Pāli, English and Chinese glossary (see appendix). When dealing with more complex ideas, I tried through reading works in the original Pāli, English or Chinese to arrive at a clear grasp of the ideas and the intentions of the author before setting pen to paper. The present translation is the culmination of work over three years and many revisions, and while it has been checked by the author, and earned his praise, I am aware that there remain many areas that fall short of total satisfaction. I earnestly beseech the readers indulgence and criticism.

Over the course of translation and its revision, I have benefited from the help of many experts. In order that the translation would not lose its original flavour, from the very first I have consulted a range of foreign experts, including some who know neither Chinese nor Buddhism; some who do not know Chinese but know Buddhism, as well as some who know both Chinese and Buddhism. Here I wish particularly to thank Michael Crook, Helen Wiley, and Tissa Kariyawasam. If the translation brings satisfaction, it is they who have helped it do so. At the same time, through the course of translation, I consulted translations of this work, in other languages as well. For the hard

书的其他几种译文,对于这些译家所付出的艰辛,译者表示由衷的敬意。在翻译过程中,始终得到了赵朴初先生、中国佛教文化研究所的信任、支持与鼓励,使翻译的过程成为我修习的过程,因此真诚地感谢朴老以及佛教文化研究所给了我这个提高与丰富自己的机会。

这本译作是集中了许多人的智慧的成果,译者决不敢专擅其功,这一点也是要特别加以说明的。

赵 桐

1999. 12.

work of these translators, I would like to extend my heartfelt respect. And throughout the work, the constant trust, encouragement and support of Mr. Zhao Puchu and the China Institute of Buddhist Culture has made it a learning experience for me. For this, I am sincerely grateful to Mr. Zhao Puchu and the Institute of Buddhist Culture, who gave me this opportunity to better myself.

This translation is the fruit of the labour and wisdom of many people. I make no claim to the credit—this is a point I wish to make clear.

Zhao Tong
Dec. 1999

编辑凡例

1. 本书为中、英文对照本，以问题序号相对应。
2. 本书出现的重要佛教术语都给出了对应的巴利文原词。本书的中文版本中原注有一些梵文或巴利文术语，此次出版前，根据赵朴初先生本人的意见，除个别词语外，一律改为巴利文。此项改动是出于佛教巴利语较之佛教梵语应世更早的原因。巴利语原是古印度摩揭陀国一带所使用的大众语，一些专家认为，这一带是佛陀弘法的主要地区，佛陀弘法使用的就是这种语言。在阿育王时期（公元前三世纪）派遣到斯里兰卡弘法的玛亨陀长老把用巴利语记述的三藏带到斯里兰卡，并于公元前一世纪结集为用僧伽罗字母书写的巴利三藏流传下来。这套巴利三藏历两千年而不变，成为当今世界保留得最完整、最系统、最古老的佛教宝典。梵语是古代印度婆罗门经典所使用的语言，或称为雅语，用梵语编定成书的佛教典籍目前已没有完整成套版本留存。
3. 本书译文所使用的缩略语：S.（梵语），P.（巴利语）。
4. 本书附有《巴、英、汉佛教术语对照表》，是按章节和问题序号排列的。