

Yin-Cheng Distinguished Lecture Series

Title: From Disciples to Student-Monks: Educational Modernization and Identity Production in Chinese Buddhism

講題: 從弟子到學僧：中國佛教的教育現代化與身份建構

Speaker: Rongdao Lai 釋融道 (McGill University)

Time: 14:00, 14th May 2024

Venue: Runcie Room, Faculty of Divinity (Sidgwick Site, Cambridge, CB3 9DP)

Abstract:

Monastic education was one of the most important aspects of the modernization project in Chinese Buddhism. It went through a fervent period of growth in the 1920s and 30s. This talk addresses the convergence of identity and institution, focusing on the emergence of modern Buddhist academies (*foxueyuan* 佛學院) and the students they produced, in this specific historical context. I identify three paradigm shifts that concretely influenced the practice of modern Chinese Buddhism. The vertical teacher-student dynamic at modern *foxueyuan* led to a new understanding of the traditional master-disciple relationship in Buddhism. Teachers, rather than having absolute authority and responsibility, provided the ideological inspiration for their students' undertaking. This ideological underpinning was the basis for the construction of a new, horizontal relationship among the students, which eventually manifested in the production of a collective student-monk identity. Lastly, Buddhist reformers and educators justified the founding of the new *foxueyuan* as a renewal rather than departure from the traditional public monastery (*conglin* 叢林) training. This re-interpretation of orthodoxy, grounded in the performance of the student-monk identity, reinforced the role of the Buddhist academies and their students in the institutional transformation of Chinese Buddhism in the twentieth century.

摘要

作為中國佛教現代化改革中重要的一環，僧伽教育在二十世紀 20-30 年代間經歷了蓬勃的發展。本次講座通過現代佛學院的興起及其學僧群體，探究上述歷史背景下中國佛教制度與身份認同的變遷。在這過程中可察見三種影響深遠的模式轉變：首先，傳統的師徒制度在佛學院中逐漸演變成學僧從老師處繼承改革的思想體系。其次，亦是最為重要的，有著共同經歷及改革抱負的學僧形成了橫向的群體身份想像。最後，佛學院師生們通過對傳統叢林及現代化佛學院制度的反思與辯證對正統佛教教育重新詮釋。綜上所述，佛教教育的發展與變遷為中國佛教百餘年的興衰、復興佛教的願景與實踐、及現當代漢傳佛教圖譜之構成提供了一個關鍵的視角。

Speaker:

Rongdao Lai is assistant professor of Religious Studies and East Asian Studies at McGill University, Canada. She was formerly assistant professor at the University of Southern California, postdoctoral fellow at the Asia Research Institute (National University of Singapore), and research fellow in the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Program in Buddhist Studies. Her research focuses primarily on the changing landscape and identity production in modern Chinese Buddhism. Her monograph *Citizen Bodhisattvas: Education, Student-Monks, and Citizenship in Modern Chinese Buddhism* is forthcoming by Brill. Her other on-going projects include historical production, lineage networks, transnational movements, and monastic economy in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.

講者簡介:

釋融道

加拿大麥吉爾大學宗教學院、東亞研究系助理教授，歷任美國南加州大學助理教授、新加坡國立大學亞洲研究中心博士後、何鴻毅家族基金佛學研究計劃學者。主要研究領域為漢傳佛教現代化、佛教教育、法脈網絡、跨國佛教與身份認同。專著有 *Citizen Bodhisattvas: Education, Student-Monks, and Citizenship in Modern Chinese Buddhism* (Brill: forthcoming).

