

Academy of Wisdom & Enlightenment (AWE)

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AWE 2015 Annual Report A Year-end Review of Dharma Propagation Endeavours

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

International Scholastic Exchange

The principal of the Academy of Wisdom and Enlightenment, Dr. Ching Lo was invited to give a seminar at Nalanda University in India on Nov 18, 2015.

Built in 3rd-5th Century, Nalanda Monastery was the oldest university in the world, 600 years before the University of Bologna, the first European University, was founded in 1088 AD. At its peak, Nalanda University had 10,000 students and 300 professors teaching a variety of subjects including philosophy, logic, mathematics, science and medicine. Third Century CE luminaries such as the Mahayana philosopher, “the second Buddha” Nagarjuna (龍樹) and his disciple Aryadeva, taught at Nalanda with the former also heading the institution. Destroyed and rebuilt 7 times over centuries, it was finally devastated in 1,200 CE by Muslim army.

Nalanda University is the famous university that Venerable Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664 AD) attended in the 7th Century. Venerable Xuanzang studied Consciousness (Yogacara) for 2-5 years under the University Chancellor. Xuanzang returned to China in April 645 AD with 657 Buddhist Sanskrit texts (many of them Mahayanist) and 150 relics carried by 20 horses in 520 cases, and translated 74 of the texts himself. He established the Chinese Yogacara Consciousness-only School (Chinese *Weishi* 唯識). In China, he is best known as the celebrated Tang Sanzang 唐三藏 meaning Tang Dynasty Tripitaka Grand Master or the Tang Monk.

Never before in history has so many nations today (about twenty nations including China, Japan, Korea, Australia, Singapore, Thailand and countries in the East Asia Summit), come together to build one university. Why? It is because of a global consciousness that Nalanda was the first, the epitome/leader of human civilization and can be again in the near future.

On the same trip to India, Dr. Lo worked with Professor Siddharth Singh, former Head of Pali and Buddhist Studies, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India.

International Collaboration in Dharma Propagation

LOCAL EVENTS

Toronto Dharma Activities

An ongoing achievement is the continuation of the teachings of the AWE curriculum at the Pho Hien Temple, Toronto and at the Burnhamthorpe Library, Mississauga, Canada.

- For the first time, introductory level Critical Thinking course was implemented into the Year-2 syllabus. The course was completed from March to December 2015, 2 hours per week. Professor Dr. Indar Maharaj presented two guest lectures, one on Fallacy, the other on Mind Map.
- The Year-2 students continue to teach the Year-1 syllabus on request. See audio on <http://awewb2.yolasite.com/2014.php>
- Besides the dualistic thinking mode, for the first time a new species of logic “Quadratic Thinking Mode” was introduced into the Year-3 syllabus.
- For the Year-1 syllabus, the following teachings was supplemented:

- “Death is not final” debate between Dr. Eben Alexander (Harvard Medical School) / Dr. Raymond Moody (University of Nevada) versus Prof. Sean Carroll (California Institute of Technology) / Dr. Steven Novella (Yale School of Medicine).
- “Consciousness independent of the brain” lecture by Dr. Bruce Greyson (Professor Emeritus at the University of Virginia)

Promotional Activities

- New classes were announced through numerous public websites.

Brampton Parade

AWE actively participated and supported the annual International Buddhist Parade for World Peace organised by the Brampton Buddhist Mission Centre on August 23, 2015 under the leadership of the Most Venerable W. Pannasara Thera, Chief Monk of Canada. This successful event was joined by a number of Buddhist communities in Ontario. The principal of the Academy of Wisdom and Enlightenment, Dr. Ching Lo was amongst the honoured guests.

Networking with Turkish Chamber of Commerce

In December 2015, Dr. Lo congratulated Iman Dr. Hamid Slimi on his interfaith award amongst the recipients of the 2016 Peace and Dialogue Awards.

2016 Objectives

1. Implement second level critical thinking course to the Year-2 curriculum.
2. Carry out the publication portion of the Year-3 curriculum.
3. Ensure Year-1, Year-2 and Year-3 students meet their learning objectives as specified in the syllabus.
4. Roll out more lecture materials in the AWE website
5. Produce more lecture videos for YouTube posting
6. Launch a page on classical sutra studies in the AWE website