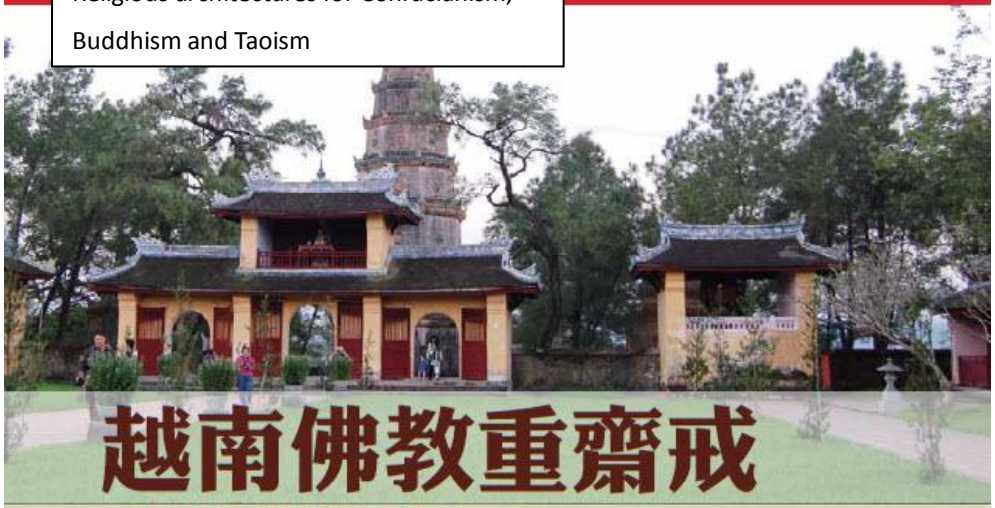
Religious architectures for Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism



越南佛教重齋戒

民間崇尚素食文化

在越南人口約有九千多萬，信仰佛教約有一千多萬人。越南當地人及越南華裔與華僑的主要信仰則是佛教。佛教約在公元前六至五世紀發生於印度，到公元一世紀前後，佛教內部起了改革與變化，從原有的「南傳上座部佛教」分出了一派，這一派自稱是「北傳佛教」，跟原來的「南傳上座部佛教」在飲食戒律上大為不同。與泰國和一些亞洲國家不同，在越南所有的出家人一定要吃素，這也成為越南修行家的一種文化特色。

圖／新越南雜誌　文／秋草

吃素，漢字原為齋，意思就是保持內心乾淨。往年，在東方文化裡有齋戒習俗，也就是每一次向天地祈禱或祭祀，必須先前三天吃素食（亦叫齋），先前七天維持祈禱的誠敬信念（亦叫戒）。越南人吃素有段長久的過程且維持至今。

吃素也有祭祀緬懷祖先的意味

在封建時代，皇帝在南郊壇祭天前三天必須封閉關口，要齋戒沐浴且禁慾。今日，在一般生活裡，許多人雖然沒有到寺廟歸依三寶但還願意吃素。吃素也是許多家庭的傳統習俗，為了祭祀緬懷祖先，後代仍保持吃素習俗。

許多人把素食視為信仰佛教的指標。其實，佛教最早從印度傳入越南時，並沒有規定僧人不許食肉。《大般涅槃經》裡，佛陀言：「食肉者，斷大慈種。」於是後人為了實踐慈悲精神，而倡導吃素。

依據長久的習俗，越南南傳佛教的信徒雖然尚未長期吃素，不過到了每年農曆七月份的盂蘭節，信徒們常願意吃素一整個月或半個月。民間觀點認為這是祭祀緬懷祖先的一種方式。實際上，最初的佛教時期，出家人仍然能吃不是他們親手殺的魚肉，不過到佛教變成普遍的時候，北傳派之佛教徒絕對不食魚肉。

在越南，吃素在李-陳時代開始引起了風潮。最典型的是在順化省之阮福朱（1691－1725）時代，此地方成為佛教的首府，吃素習俗屬泛於所有貴族階層，因此在順化省，烹飪素食料理要特別講究，比其他地方要求更高，更完美。佛教雖然沒有要求學佛者一定要吃素，但是吃素的好處還是很多，例如增加耐力、調適情緒、助於修行，也可減低腸胃的負擔，對人體的健康有莫大的幫助。

Buddhism in Vietnam focuses on fasting precepts

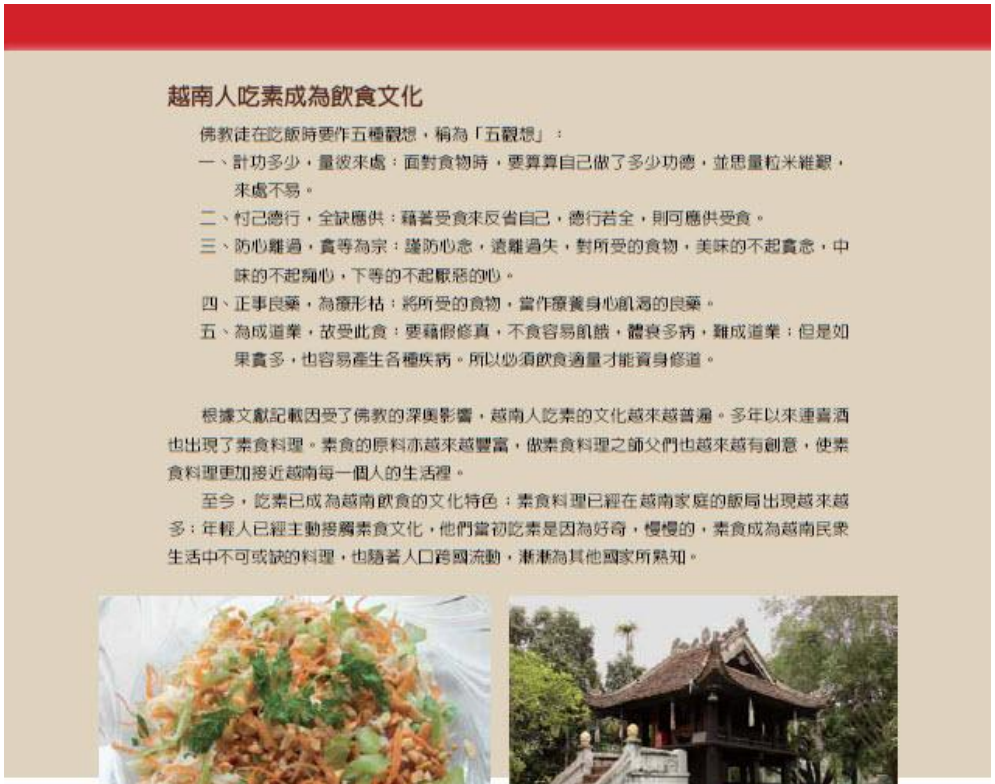
Folk advocates vegetarianism culture

There're ninety million population in Vietnam with Buddhism believers ten million. The major belief in local people and ethnic Chinese in Vietnam and overseas Chinese is Buddhism. Buddhism was originated in India in the sixth to fifth century BC. Reformation and change in interor Buddhism around the first century AD had developed another sect from the original "Southern Theravada Buddhism", and called "Northern Buddhism" by themselves which has quite different dietary restrictions from those in Southern Buddhism. All monks and nuns in Vietnam must be vegetarians, as distinct from Buddhists in Thailand and other Asian countries, becoming a cultural feature for Vietnam Buddhists.。

Vegetarian diet is called "Zhai" in Chinese, meaning mind is kept clean. In the past, there was a fasting habit & custom in oriental culture, i.e. vegetarian diet is required 3 days before praying or sacrificing the Heaven and Earth (also called "Zhai") and sincere worship belief 7 days before (also called "Jieh"). It has been a long history for the Vietnamese vegetarian diet.

The implication of vegetarian diet is to honor ancestors through sacrifice

In the feudal age, the emperor must close all gates three days before the worship of heaven in the altar in the southern suburbs, along with ablution and abstinence. Nowadays, many people would rather being vegetarians



越南人吃素成為飲食文化

佛教徒在吃飯時要作五種觀想，稱為「五觀想」：

一、計功多少，量彼來處：面對食物時，要算算自己做了多少功德，並思量粒米維艱，來處不易。

二、忖己德行，全缺應供：藉著受食來反省自己，德行若全，則可應供受食。

三、防心離過，貪等為宗：謹防心念，遠離過失，對所受的食物，美味的不起貪念，中味的不起煩心，下等的不起厭惡的心。

四、正事良藥，為療形枯：將所受的食物，當作療養身心飢渴的良藥。

五、為成道業，故受此食：要藉假修真，不食容易飢餓，體衰多病，難成道業；但是如果貪多，也容易產生各種疾病。所以必須飲食適量才能資身修道。

根據文獻記載因受了佛教的深廣影響，越南人吃素的文化越來越普遍。多年以來連喜酒也出現了素食料理。素食的原料亦越來越豐富，做素食料理之師父們也越來越有創意，使素食料理更加接近越南每一個人的生活裡。

至今，吃素已成為越南飲食的文化特色；素食料理已經在越南家庭的飯局出現越來越多；年輕人已經主動接觸素食文化，他們當初吃素是因為好奇，慢慢的，素食成為越南民眾生活中不可或缺的料理，也隨著人口跨國流動，漸漸為其他國家所熟知。

Vietnam vegetarian food-cold rice noodles dressed with sauce

▲越南的寺廟。

Vietnam's temples

▲越南清

Vietnam's refreshing vegetarian food-cold vegetable dish in sauce

than being buddhists in temples. Vegetraian also becomes a traditional custom in many families. The descendants would like to keep this tradition to hornor their ancestors.

Many people deem vegetarian to be a goal of Buddhism belief. In fact, buddhists were not been abstained from meat when Buddhism had been introduced into Vietnam from India. According to "Mahaparinirvana Sutra", "Meat-eater will decrease great kindness" said Buddha. Therefore, the followers began initiating vegetarian to practice spirit of compassion. Although Southern Buddhists in Vietnam have not been vegetarians for a long time, the belivers would like to be vegetarians for the whole month or half month on every Ghost Festival in the lunar calendar in July. It was supposed a way of ancestor worship at folk point of view. Actually, buddhists could eat fish and meat not killed by themselves in earlier Buddhism. However, buddhists of Northern Buddhism should abstain from fish and meat when Buddhism became popular.

In Vietnam, being a vegetarian became popular in Li-Chen Dynasty. Thun Hóa in the ruling age of Nguyen Phuoc Chu (1691-1725) becoming the capital of Buddhism was the most typical event. Vegetarian diet custom was popular in all nobilities. Cooking vegetarian food was specially stressed in Thun Hóa with higer requirements than the other places. Buddhism learners were not even allowed to be vegetarians but indeed many advantages to human health, for example, increase of endurance, adjustment of mood, cultivation of religious doctrine, and reduction of burden of intestines and stomach.

The Vietnamese vegetarian diet becomes diet culture

Buddhists on their dinning should conduct the so-called “the Five Contemplations”.

1. Reflecting on my conduct, "Am I worthy of a share?": One reflects that every morsel of food including the smallest grain of rice is made possible for our consumption as a result of the collective efforts of countless beings.

   2. Seeing food as medicine, I take only what I need: One reflects on whether we have garnered enough goodness through our deeds to be deserving of the meal.

   3. Be wary of the poisons, the foremost being greed: One reflects that there should be no attachment to the good or bad taste of the food.

   4. Solely for cultivation, to realize the Buddha Way: One reflects that food and drink should be used only as medicine to cure our recurring disease of hunger and thirst.

   5. With gratitude I accept this offering today: One reflects on the resolution to use the energy harnessed from the food to the practice of the Dharma for the sake of all beings.

   The Vietnameses are gradually popular in vegetarian diet culture after being deeply affected by Buddhism according to literature records. Vegetarian food has been appeared on the wedding party for many years. Plentiful vegetarian materials allow cooking maters to make more creative cuisines, bringing vegetarian dishes to everyone’s life.

   So far, vegetarian diet has become diet culture in Vietnam; more and more vegetarin dishes has appeared on dinning tables in Vietnamese families; young men have contacted vegetarian diet culture with curiosity in the beginning. Vegetarian food has gradually become a part of Vietnamese life, been well-know to other countries through transnational flows of population.