

MINDFULNESS AND MINDLESSNESS IN EARLY CHAN

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The Chan tradition is renowned as the “meditation” school of East Asia. Indeed, the Chinese term *chan* 禪 (Jpn: *zen*) is an abbreviated transliteration of *dhyāna*, the Sanskrit term arguably closest to the modern English word “meditation.” Scholars typically date the emergence of this tradition to the early Tang dynasty (618–907), although Chan did not reach institutional maturity until the Song period (960–1279). In time, Chinese Chan spread throughout East Asia, giving birth to the various Zen, Sōn, and Thiền lineages of Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, respectively. Today these traditions continue to promote, at least in theory, meditation practices, and these have been the subject of considerable scholarly interest.¹

It may then come as a surprise to learn just how little is known about the meditation techniques associated with the “founders” of this tradition—the masters associated with the nascent (or proto-) Chan lineages of the seventh and eighth centuries. It was during this fertile period—which, following scholarly convention, I will call “early Chan”—that the lineage myths, doctrinal innovations, and distinctive rhetorical voice of the Chan, Zen, Sōn, and Thiền schools first emerged. Although hundreds of books and articles have appeared on the textual and doctrinal developments associated with early Chan, relatively little has been written on the distinctive meditation practices, if any, of this movement.

This essay emerged from an attempt to answer a seemingly straightforward question: what kinds of meditation techniques were promulgated in early Chan circles? The answer, it turned out, involved historical and philosophical forays into the notion of “mindfulness”—a style of meditation practice that has become popular among Buddhists (and non-Buddhists) around the globe. Accordingly, I will digress briefly to consider the roots of the modern mindfulness movement, and will suggest possible sociological parallels between the rise of the Buddhist mindfulness movement in the twentieth century and the emergence of Chan in the medieval period.

The Nature of the Sources

I would note at the outset that the Chan, Zen, Sōn, and Thiền traditions that survive today are of little help in reconstructing early Chan meditative practices. Take, for example, the two largest and best-known schools of modern Japanese Zen: Sōtō and Rinzai. The former is most closely associated with the practice of *shikantaza* 只管打坐 or “simply sitting,” while Rinzai is renowned for its *kōan* 公案 practice—meditation on cryptic utterances of past masters. Both of these practices are relatively late. The Sōtō school holds that *shikantaza* originated in China and was

transmitted to the founder of Japanese Sōtō, Dōgen Kigen 道元希玄 (1200–1253), by his Chinese teacher Tiantong Rujing 天童如淨 (1163–1228). However, the term *shikantaza* does not appear in surviving Chinese documents, and most nonsectarian scholars now approach “simply sitting” as a Japanese innovation, based on Dōgen’s idiosyncratic understanding of the “silent illumination” (*mozhaō chan* 默照禪) teachings he encountered in Song dynasty China. As for Rinzai, the notion that *kōans*, which developed as a literary genre, could serve as objects of seated contemplation dates no earlier than the Song, and even then it may originally have been intended as a simplified exercise for laypersons rather than a practice befitting elite monks who aspired to become abbots. Moreover, the approach to *kōans* altered over time in both China and Japan as the literary and scholastic skills necessary to engage the *kōan* literature qua literature were lost (Sharf 2007). In short, contemporary Asian practices cannot be used, in any simple way, as a window onto early Chan.²

What practices, if any, were propagated within the communities that gave rise to the early Chan lineage texts—texts that appeared centuries before the advent of *kōan* collections or talk of “simply sitting”?³ As mentioned above, this question has received little sustained attention, and for good reason: the sources for the study of early Chan—primarily the Dunhuang Chan manuscripts and the writings of medieval “witnesses” such as Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) and Guifeng Zongmi 圭峰宗密 (780–841)—have much to say about competing Chan schools and ideologies but little to offer in the way of concrete descriptions of practice.⁴ Zongmi acknowledges the difficulty he himself had in finding materials on the subject. At the beginning of his *Introduction to a Collection of Materials on the Sources of Chan* (*Chanyuan zhuquanji duxu* 禪源諸卷集都序) he notes that the materials at his disposal “speak a lot about the principles of Chan but say little of Chan practice” (多談禪理小談禪行).⁵

One common scholarly response to this lacuna in the early Chan corpus has been to argue that early Chan was not, at least initially, an independent school or tradition. Rather, early Chan was a “meta-discourse” or “meta-critique” that remained parasitic on traditional forms of monastic life. This Chan was, in short, an attempt to “Mahāyānize” the understanding of practices that had their roots in the pre-Mahāyāna tradition. Early Chan communities did not tinker with existing practices or institutional forms so much as they tinkered with the doctrines underwriting these practices.⁶ The early corpus should be read, therefore, as a witness to ongoing tensions between normative practices of considerable antiquity on the one hand, and Mahāyāna philosophical critiques of said practices on the other.

If this theory is correct, then the Chan assault on seated meditation was not intended to be taken literally, just as the Chan critiques of image worship, scriptural study, and adherence to precepts were not meant to be taken literally. This position finds support in the writings of Zongmi, who addresses the issue repeatedly in, among other places, his *Introduction to a Collection of Materials on the Sources of Chan*. Near the beginning of this text, Zongmi’s imaginary interlocutor challenges him:

淨名已呵宴坐。荷澤每斥凝心。曹溪見人結跏曾自將杖打起。今問。汝每因教誡即勸坐禪。禪菴羅列遍於巖壑。乖宗違祖。

Vimalakīrti ridiculed quiet sitting. Heze [Shenhui] rejected “freezing the mind.” When Caoqi [Huineng] saw someone sitting cross-legged he would take his staff and beat him until he got up. Now I ask you why you still rely on teachings that encourage seated meditation, [resulting in] a proliferation of meditation huts filling the cliffs and valleys? This runs contrary to the principles and opposes the patriarchs.⁷

In his response, Zongmi distinguishes between methods that are intended as antidotes to specific afflictions and a more exalted practice that Zongmi calls the “single-practice *samādhi*” (*yixing sanmei* 一行三昧). The antidotes include traditional seated meditation practices; while these are mere “expedients” appropriate for those of lesser spiritual faculties, Zongmi insists they still have their place. Zongmi writes:

淨名云。不必坐不必不坐。坐與不坐任逐機宜。

Vimalakīrti says that it is not necessary to sit, but not that it is necessary *not* to sit. Whether one sits or not depends on how best to respond to circumstances.⁸

In contrast to such expedients, the single-practice *samādhi* is for those of superior faculties who understand that mind itself is buddha-nature, that the afflictions are *bodhi*, and thus that there is ultimately no need for antidotes. In short, Zongmi avails himself of the venerable doctrine of the two truths.

Writing in the early ninth century, Zongmi was seeking to recover and make sense of the origins of a movement from which he was already several generations removed, and his reconstruction of early Chan lay in the service of his own declared lineal affiliations and exegetical agenda. As such, he is an invaluable but not entirely reliable source on the Chan teachings of the previous century. Nevertheless, the Dunhuang materials do provide support for Zongmi’s position: despite their antinomian rhetoric, some early Chan patriarchs are on record as endorsing seated meditation. In the *Record of the Transmission of the Dharma Treasure* (*Chuan fabao ji* 傳法寶紀), for example, the fourth patriarch Daoxin 道信 (580–651) exhorts his students as follows:

努力勤坐。坐為根本。能作三五年得一口食塞饑瘡即閉門坐。莫讀經。莫與人語。能如此者久久堪用。

Make effort and be diligent in your sitting [meditation], for sitting is fundamental. If you can do this for three or five years, getting a mouthful of food to stave off starvation and illness, then just close your doors and sit. Do not read the scriptures or talk with anyone. One who is able to do this will, after some time, find it effective.⁹

Daoxin’s support for seated meditation is reaffirmed in his work *Fundamental Expedient Teachings for Calming the Mind to Enter the Way* (*Rudao anxin yao fangbian famen* 入道安心要方便法門), if the traditional attribution to Daoxin is to be believed. As this text, known from various Dunhuang documents, is one of the few early Chan texts containing detailed instructions for seated *dhyāna*, we will return to it below.

Daoxin is associated, albeit anachronistically, with the so-called East Mountain (Dong Shan 東山) tradition, a line later associated with (or subsumed under) Northern Chan. It might then be argued that he was more conservative in his approach to

meditation than were the later Southern or “subitist” teachers. But even the quintessential text of the Southern School, the *Platform Scripture of the Sixth Patriarch* (*Liuzu tanjing* 六祖壇經), seems to countenance, if only in passing, seated practice. Near the end of this work, the patriarch Huineng 惠能 (638–713), approaching his death, instructs his disciples to persevere in communal seated meditation:

如吾在日一種一時端坐。但無動無淨無生無滅無去無來無是無非無住[無往]。但然寂淨即是大道。吾去已後但衣法修行共吾在日一種。吾若在世。汝違教法。吾住無益。大師云此語已。夜至三更。奄然遷花。大師春秋七十有六。

“Be the same as you would if I were here, and sit all together [in meditation]. If you are only peacefully calm and quiet, without motion, without stillness, without birth, without destruction, without coming, without going, without judgments of right and wrong, without staying and without going—this then is the Great Way. After I have gone just practice according to the Dharma in the same way that you did on the days that I was with you. Even were I still to be in this world, if you went against the teachings, there would be no use in my having stayed here.” After finishing speaking these words, the Master, at midnight, quietly passed away. He was seventy-six years of age.¹⁰

Given the negative valuation of meditation found throughout this text, this passage is striking. Huineng is famously depicted as gaining awakening without *any* prior study or meditative training: he had no exposure to Buddhist practice before he heard the *Diamond Scripture* chanted in a marketplace, yet he immediately grasped its meaning. When he proceeded to enter the monastery of the Fifth Patriarch, he was placed not in the monks’ hall but in the threshing room, where he spent his time treading the pestle. Yet despite his lack of experience in meditation, he quickly succeeded to the patriarchy.

The implied critique of traditional seated practices in Huineng’s autobiography is accompanied by an explicit critique in his sermons. The critique is tied to the Southern School notion of “sudden enlightenment,” which affirms the identity of means and ends—meditation and wisdom. Accordingly Huineng repeatedly and rigorously castigates instrumental approaches to religious practice. The following passage is typical.

若座不動是。維摩詰不合呵舍利弗宴座林中。善知識。又見有人教人座看心看淨不動不起。從此置功。迷人不悟。便執成顛。即有數百盤。如此教道者。故之大錯。善知識。定惠猶如何等。如燈光。有燈即有光。無燈即無光。燈是光知體。光是燈之用。即有二體無兩般。此定惠法亦復如是。

If sitting without moving is good, why did Vimalakīrti scold Śāriputra for sitting quietly in the forest? Good friends, some people teach men to sit viewing the mind and viewing clarity, not moving and not activating [the mind], and to this they devote their efforts. Deluded people do not realize that this is wrong, cling to this doctrine, and become confused. There are many such people. Those who instruct in this way are, from the outset, greatly mistaken. Good friends, how then are meditation and wisdom alike? They are like the lamp and the light it gives forth. If there is a lamp there is light; if there is no lamp there is no light. The lamp is the substance of light; the light is the function of the lamp. Thus, although they have two names, in substance they are not two. Meditation and wisdom are also like this.¹¹

A similar rejection of quiet sitting is found in the writings of Huineng's disciple and publicist, Heze Shenhui 荷澤神會 (670–762). In his disquisition on seated meditation, Chan Master Cheng 澄禪師 asserts:

今修定者自有內外照即得見淨以淨故即得見性。

Now for one who cultivates meditation, inner and outer are naturally illuminated, and this is to attain the perception of clarity. It is by means of this clarity that one is able to perceive one's [original] nature.

To which Shenhui responds:

性無內外，若言內外照，元是妄心。若為見性。經云：若學諸三昧，是動非坐禪。心隨境界流，云何名為定。若指此定為是者。維摩詰即不應訶舍利弗宴坐。

[Original] nature has no inside or outside, so any talk of illuminating inner or outer is deluded from the outset. What is seeing one's original nature? The scripture says: "The practice of all the *samādhis* is movement, not seated *chan*. As for the mind [simply] following the flow of objects—how could you call this meditation?" If that is what were meant by meditation, then Vimalakīrti ought not to have scolded Śāriputra for quiet sitting.¹²

Yet despite these pointed attacks on seated practice, the *Platform Scripture*, a text closely associated with Huineng and Shenhui, depicts Huineng encouraging his followers to continue in their seated practice after he is gone. This seeming disparity would appear to support the view that early Chan critiques of seated meditation were not intended to be taken at face value.

There is another related explanation for the reticence to promote meditation practices in early Chan texts. The sudden-enlightenment polemic, as illustrated by the *Platform Scripture* passage above, was directed against dualistic distinctions between means and ends, path and goal, meditation (*dhyāna*) and wisdom (*prajñā*). The doctrine of inherent buddha-nature and the rhetoric of sudden enlightenment rendered it difficult if not impossible to champion *dhyāna*, since to countenance any technique was to betray an instrumental and hence misguided understanding of the path. This had the effect of instituting a rhetorical taboo against prescribing, or even discussing, specific techniques. Hence, the silence with regard to meditative practices in early Chan materials is not, in and of itself, evidence that the monks did not engage in such practices.¹³ Zongmi would appear to have it right: seated meditation is not sufficient and perhaps not even necessary, but it still has its place.

In discussing the rise of early Chan, I am making a distinction between what might be called "small-c" *chan* and "large-C" Chan. The former refers to Chinese Buddhist *dhyāna* techniques writ large, and encompasses a wide array of practices that made their way from India to China beginning in the first and second centuries C.E. These practices include meditations on impurity (*bujingguan* 不淨觀, Skt: *aśubha-bhāvanā*—often referring to meditations on a corpse or meditations on the parts of the body), breathing meditations (*anban* 安般, Skt: *ānāpāna*—including counting or "following" the breath), cultivation of the four immeasurable states (*si wuliangxin* 四無量心; Skt: *catvāri-apramāṇāni*—namely kindness, compassion, joy,

and equanimity), recollection of the buddha (*nianfo* 念佛), recitation of the buddhas' names (*foming* 佛名), and so on. Such practices were widespread throughout the medieval Chinese Buddhist world, irrespective of one's ordination lineage or monastic affiliation.¹⁴ In contrast, large-C Chan refers to a specific lineage or school (*chanzong* 禪宗) that was based on the mythology of an unbroken, independent lineage of enlightened masters stretching from Śākyamuni Buddha through Bodhidharma down through six generations to Huineng and beyond.¹⁵

So in answer to the question as to why the earliest documents associated with large-C Chan say so little about the practices associated with small-c *chan*, the response has been to disaggregate rhetoric from practice. Early Chan is not distinguished by forms of monastic practice and meditation technique so much as by its mythology, doctrine, and literary style. In time, the full-blown Chan institutions of the Song dynasty felt the need, despite the rhetorical taboo, to create their own instruction manuals for seated meditation. That these later Chan meditation primers are closely modeled upon non-Chan prototypes is further evidence that early Chan was more about innovations in doctrine and rhetorical style than about innovations in technique.¹⁶

As elegant as this explanation may be, it may not tell the whole story. That Zongmi is repeatedly drawn back to this issue, and that he references a number of Mahāyāna scriptures (some of them now known to be apocryphal) to buttress his apologia for seated practice, bespeaks a degree of defensiveness and unease. Zongmi was acutely aware of the apparent contradiction between what famous Chan monks and missives say on the one hand, and what Chan monks were actually doing on the other.¹⁷ Like many modern scholars of Chan and Zen, Zongmi's approach is to brook a distinction between theory and praxis—a distinction between how one understands meditation and what one actually does. There is evidence, however, that at least some early masters, particularly those associated with the rhetoric of subitism, found the theory/praxis distinction objectionable, and this led to a spirited eighth-century controversy concerning the value of traditional meditation practices, as well as to attempts to devise alternatives. But it is not easy to recover precisely what the alternatives looked like, both because of the philological and hermeneutical problems that attend the surviving texts, and because the topic matter itself—the nature of meditative practice and experience—is so elusive.

Chan Mindfulness

As mentioned above, small-c *chan* referred to a vast array of practices, from corpse meditations and breathing exercises to repentance rituals and the recitation of the names of the buddhas. Large-C Chan masters tended to deprecate or even reject such techniques.¹⁸ In their place they championed a distinctive practice, or cluster of similar practices, that went by a number of related names, including “maintaining mind” (*shouxin* 守心), “maintaining unity” (*shouyi* 守一), “pacifying the mind” (*anxin* 安心), “discerning the mind” (*guanxin* 觀心), “viewing the mind” (*kanxin* 看心), “focusing the mind” (*shexin* 攝心), and so on.¹⁹ All these terms appear repeatedly in the

early Chan corpus, particularly in texts associated with the East Mountain tradition of the fourth and fifth patriarchs. The usage of these phrases differs somewhat from text to text, yet they seem to refer to a more-or-less similar approach to practice—an approach predicated on two seminal doctrines. The first is that all beings possess inherent “buddha-nature” (*foxing* 佛性), and thus buddhahood is not something to be gained or acquired from outside but rather something to be discovered or disclosed within. The second is that buddha-nature refers to mind itself. Thus, whether one talks of “maintaining mind,” “discerning mind,” or “viewing mind,” the object is the same: to attend to the apperceiving *subject*—conscious awareness—rather than to the transient *objects* of experience. Early Chan documents employ a variety of related analogies to illustrate the nature and inherent purity of mind: the mind is like a mirror covered by dust; one must focus on the innate luminosity of the mirror rather than the fleeting images that appear within it. Or the mind is like the sun covered by clouds; the sun is always shining irrespective of the clouds that conceal it. In meditation, one attends to the abiding luminosity of mind or consciousness, which is to realize one’s inherent buddha-nature.

As mentioned above, one of the few detailed descriptions of meditation practice in the literature of early Chan is found in the *Fundamental Expedient Teachings for Calming the Mind to Enter the Way*, attributed to Daoxin. Here “maintaining unity” is presented as a kind of mindfulness practice (Skt: *smṛti*; Pali: *sati*; Chin: *nian* 念; sometimes rendered “reflection” or “recollection”), coupled with a contemplation of the emptiness of phenomena. I present here a few key sections from the text:

何等名無所念。即念佛心名無所念。離心無別有佛。離佛無別有心。念佛即是念心。求心即是求佛。所以者何。識無形。佛無形。佛無相貌。若也知此道理。即是安心。 . . . Why is it called “reflecting without an object”?²⁰ The very mind that is reflecting on buddha is called “reflecting without an object.” Apart from mind there is no buddha. Apart from buddha there is no mind. Reflecting on buddha is identical to reflecting on mind. To seek the mind is to seek the buddha. Why is this so? Consciousness is without form. Buddha too is without form and without manifest attributes. To understand this principle is to pacify the mind.

無量壽經云。諸佛法身。入一切眾生心想。是心是佛。是心作佛。當知佛即是心。心外更無別佛也。 . . .

The *Scripture on the Discernment of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life* says, “The dharma bodies of all buddhas penetrate the minds of all beings. This very mind is buddha. This mind creates buddha.”²¹ You should know that buddha is identical to mind, and that outside of mind there is no other buddha.

諸經觀法備有多種。傳大師所說。獨舉守一不移。先修身審觀以身為本。又此身是四大五蔭之所合。終歸無常不得自在。雖未壞滅畢竟是空。 . . .

There are many varieties of contemplation methods specified in the various scriptures, but according to the teachings of Layman Fu [497–569], one need only maintain unity without moving. First you cultivate the body, taking the body as the basis for attentive contemplation. Note that this body is an amalgam of the four elements [earth, water, fire, and air] and the five aggregates [form, sensation, perception, impulses, and consciousness]. In the

end [this body] returns to impermanence without achieving freedom. Although it has not yet decayed and disappeared, ultimately it is empty.

又常觀自身空淨。如影可見不得。智從影中生。畢竟無處所。不動而應物。變化無窮。空中生六根。六根亦空寂。所對六塵境。了知是夢幻。如眼見物時。眼中無有物。如鏡照面像。了極分明。空中現形影。鏡中無一物。當知人面不來入鏡中。鏡亦不往入人面。如此委曲。知鏡之與面。從本已來。不出不入。不來不去。即是如來之義。如此細分判。眼中與鏡中。本本常空寂。鏡照眼照同。²²

Also, constantly contemplate your own body as clear empty space, like a reflection that can be seen but not grasped. Wisdom arises from the midst of the reflection and ultimately is without location, unmoving and yet responsive to things, transforming without end. The six sense organs are born in the midst of empty space. As the six sense organs are empty and still, the six corresponding sense fields are to be understood as like a dream. It is like the eye seeing something: there is nothing in the eye itself. Or like the image of a face reflected in a mirror: we clearly understand that the various reflections of forms appear in empty space, and that there is not a single thing in the mirror itself. You should know that a person's face does not come and enter into the mirror, nor does the mirror go and enter the person's face. From this analysis we know that at no point in time does the face in the mirror emerge or enter, come or go. This is the meaning of "thus come" (*tathāgata*). According to this detailed analysis, what is in the eye and in the mirror is inherently and permanently empty and still; what is reflected in the mirror and reflected in the eye is the same.

The objects of our perception, in other words, are like the reflections in a mirror: the mirror or mind is real; all else is mere appearance. Doctrinally, there is nothing distinctively Channish about this, as such fundamental Mahāyāna notions as emptiness and the identity of mind and buddha are found throughout Chinese exegetical writings of the period. What may be more specific to early Chan is the attempt to link such Mahāyāna notions with a specific technique. Note also that, despite the unusual level of detail for an early Chan text, the description of the technique remains sketchy. However, that the account begins with a contemplation of the body, that the body is the basis for reflecting on impermanence, and that the goal is to reflect on the nature of mind, is reminiscent of approaches to "mindfulness" as taught by modern Theravāda teachers.

There are, of course, daunting hermeneutic problems involved in what might be called the comparative phenomenology of meditation (Sharf 1998). But consider the following: in Daoxin's text, as in some modern Buddhist "mindfulness" traditions, the focus of attention is not an artificial or constructed object (be it a physical image or icon, *kaśiṇa*, *mantra*, corpse, or some other structured visualization), but rather the moment-to-moment flow of sensation, beginning with the sensation of touch and eventually extending to the other senses. This culminates in a meditation on the nature of conscious awareness itself. The goal is a kind of figure/ground shift wherein the yogi's attention is directed toward mind or awareness or "witness consciousness" itself, rather than to the fleeting phenomena that transpire *within* the mind. In the language of Daoxin's text, one meditates on the chimeric nature of the reflections so as to know (inductively?) the mirror. Sustained attention to the mind-mirror is be-

lieved, among other things, to thwart attachment to the ephemeral phenomena of unenlightened experience, and to reveal the intrinsic purity (or buddha-nature) of mind.

Mindfulness, Bare Attention, and Pure Mind

It is necessary to pause for a moment and consider the vexed term “mindfulness.” The popular understanding of Buddhist mindfulness can be traced to the Theravāda meditation revival of the twentieth century, a revival that drew its authority from the two scriptures on “Establishing Mindfulness,”²³ as well as Buddhagosa’s *Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, and a handful of other Pali sources. The techniques that came to dominate the *satipaṭṭhāna* or *vipassanā* (“insight”) movement, as it came to be known, were developed by a few Burmese teachers in the lineages of Ledi Sayādaw (U Nyanadhaza) (1846–1923) and Mingun Jetavana Sayādaw (U Nārada) (1870–1955).²⁴ Mingun Sayādaw’s disciple, Mahāsī Sayādaw (1904–1982), developed an approach to *satipaṭṭhāna* that was particularly suited to laypersons, including persons with little or no prior exposure to Buddhist doctrine or liturgical practice.²⁵ The “Mahāsī method” de-emphasized the acquisition of concentration exercises (*samatha*) leading to states of absorption (*jhāna*) as a necessary prerequisite for insight practice. Instead, Mahāsī placed singular emphasis on *sati* even for beginning students. Mahāsī interpreted *sati* as the moment-to-moment lucid awareness of whatever arises in the mind. One of Mahāsī’s most influential students, the German-born Theravāda monk Nyanaponika Thera (Siegmond Feniger) (1901–1994), coined the term “bare attention” for this mental faculty, and this rubric took hold through his popular 1954 book *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*:

Bare Attention is the clear and single-minded awareness of what actually happens to us and in us, at the successive moments of perception. It is called “bare,” because it attends just to the bare facts of a perception as presented either through the five physical senses or through the mind which, for Buddhist thought, constitutes the sixth sense. When attending to that six-fold sense impression, attention or mindfulness is kept to a bare registering of the facts observed, without reacting to them by deed, speech or by mental comment which may be one of self reference (like, dislike, etc.), judgement or reflection. If during the time, short or long, given to the practice of Bare Attention, any such comments arise in one’s mind, they themselves are made objects of Bare Attention, and are neither repudiated nor pursued, but are dismissed, after a brief mental note has been made of them. . . . (Nyanaponika 1973, p. 30)

Bare Attention is concerned only with the *present*. It teaches what so many have forgotten: to live with full awareness in the Here and Now. It teaches us to face the present without trying to escape into thoughts about the past or the future. Past and future are, for average consciousness, not objects of observation, but of reflection. And, in ordinary life, the past and the future are taken but rarely as objects of truly wise reflection, but are mostly just objects of day-dreaming and vain imaginings which are the main foes of Right Mindfulness, Right Understanding and Right Action as well. Bare Attention, keeping faithfully to its post of observation, watches calmly and without attachment the unceasing

march of time; it waits quietly for the things of the future to appear before its eyes, thus to turn into present objects and to vanish again into the past. (Nyanaponika 1973, p. 40)

As Mahāṣī's method did not require familiarity with Buddhist literature and was designed to be taught in a delimited period of time in a retreat format, it proved easy to export beyond the realm of Burmese Theravāda. The method has been influential not only in Southeast Asian Theravāda but also among modern Tibetan, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese religious reformers. By the end of the twentieth century, Mahāṣī's approach to *sati* or mindfulness, interpreted as "bare attention" and "full awareness of the here and now," had emerged as one of the foundations of Buddhist modernism—an approach to Buddhism that cut across geographical, cultural, and sectarian boundaries.²⁶

Modern mindfulness practices spread well beyond the confines of Buddhism as well. Catholic monastics, Jewish rabbis, Episcopal priests, yoga instructors, martial arts teachers, and countless others can be found touting mindfulness as the essence of their own spiritual traditions. The very notion that "spirituality" can be disaggregated from "religion" has been aided and abetted by the seemingly value-neutral and culture-free notion of bare attention. Mindfulness techniques are used therapeutically for the treatment of pain, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and various addictions, and they have found their way into prison programs as well. Of late they are being used in grade-school classrooms to help with behavioral problems and attention-deficit disorders. Proponents of mindfulness often have little interest in, or understanding of, the Theravāda roots of their practice—they treat it as a nonsectarian, empirical, and therapeutic exercise in self-awareness. And of those who *are* familiar with its Southeast Asian Buddhist origins, few seem to appreciate the historical, doctrinal, and philosophical problems that attend the reduction of *sati* to "bare awareness."

The interpretation of the term *sati/smṛti* has been the source of considerable research, discussion, and debate that can only be touched upon here.²⁷ *Smṛti* originally meant "to remember," "to recollect," "to bear in mind"; its religious significance can be traced to the Vedic emphasis on setting to memory the authoritative teachings of the tradition. *Sati* appears to retain this sense of "remembering" in the Buddhist Nikāyas: "And what, *bhikkhus*, is the faculty of *sati*? Here, *bhikkhus*, the noble disciple has *sati*, he is endowed with perfect *sati* and intellect, he is one who remembers, who recollects what was done and said long before."²⁸ Moreover, the faculties of recollection and reflection are unarguably central to a variety of classical Buddhist practices associated with *smṛti*, including *buddhānusmṛti* or "recollection on the Buddha," which typically involves some combination of recalling the characteristics of the Buddha, visualizing him, and chanting his name.

Even in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, the term *sati* retains a sense of "recollecting" or "bearing in mind." Specifically, *sati* involves bearing in mind the virtuous dharmas so as to properly apprehend, from moment to moment, the true nature of phenomena. At least this is the explanation found in early Pali exegetical works such as the *Mil-indapañha*, in which Nāgasena explains *sati* as follows:

Just as, Your Majesty, the treasurer of a king who is a *cakka-vattin* causes the *cakka-vattin* king to remember his glory evening and morning [saying], “So many, lord, are your elephants, so many your horses, so many your chariots, so many your foot soldiers, so much your gold, so much your wealth, so much your property; may my lord remember.” Thus he calls to mind the king’s property. Even so, your Majesty, *sati*, when it arises, calls to mind *dhammas* that are skillful and unskillful, with faults and faultless, inferior and refined, dark and pure, together with their counterparts: these are the four establishings of mindfulness, these are the four right endeavors, these are the four bases of success, these are the five faculties, these are the five powers, these are the seven awakening-factors, this is the noble eight-factored path, this is calm, this is insight, this is knowledge, this is freedom. Thus the one who practices yoga resorts to *dhammas* that should be resorted to and does not resort to *dhammas* that should not be resorted to; he embraces *dhammas* that should be embraced and does not embrace *dhammas* that should not be embraced. Just so, Your Majesty, does *sati* have the characteristic of calling to mind. . . .

Just as, Your Majesty, the adviser-treasurer of the king who is a *cakka-vattin* knows those things that are beneficial and unbeneficial to the king [and thinks], “These things are beneficial, these unbeneficial; these things are helpful, these unhelpful.” He thus removes the unbeneficial things and takes hold of the beneficial. Even so, Your Majesty, *sati*, when it arises, follows the courses of beneficial and unbeneficial *dhammas*: these *dhammas* are beneficial, these unbeneficial; these *dhammas* are helpful, these unhelpful. Thus the one who practices yoga removes unbeneficial *dhammas* and takes hold of beneficial *dhammas*; he removes unhelpful *dhammas* and takes hold of helpful *dhammas*. Just so, Your Majesty, does *sati* have the characteristic of taking hold.²⁹

Buddhaghosa provides a similar gloss in his *Path of Purification*:

By means of it they [i.e., other *dhammas*] remember, or it itself remembers, or it is simply just remembering, thus it is *sati*. Its characteristic is not floating; its property is not losing; its manifestation is guarding or the state of being face to face with an object; its basis is strong noting or the *satipaṭṭhānas* of the body and so on. It should be seen as like a post due to its state of being firmly set in the object, and as like a gatekeeper because it guards the gate of the eye and so on.³⁰

Rupert Gethin has undertaken a careful analysis of such passages, and notes that *sati* cannot refer to “remembering” in any simple sense, since memories are, as Buddhists are quick to acknowledge, subject to distortion. Rather, *sati* “should be understood as what allows awareness of the full range and extent of *dhammas*; *sati* is an awareness of things in relation to things, and hence an awareness of their relative value. Applied to the *satipaṭṭhānas*, presumably what this means is that *sati* is what causes the practitioner of yoga to “remember” that any feeling he may experience exists in relation to a whole variety or world of feelings that may be skillful or unskillful, with faults or faultless, relatively inferior or refined, dark or pure” (Gethin 1992, p. 39). In short, there is little that is “bare” about the faculty of *sati*, since it entails, among other things, the proper discrimination of the moral valence of phenomena as they arise.³¹

There are philosophical objections to construing *sati* as “bare attention” as well. Nyanaponika’s notion of bare attention presumes, it would seem, that it is possible

to disaggregate pre-reflective sensations (what contemporary philosophers refer to as “raw feels” or *qualia*) from perceptual experience writ large. In other words, there is an assumption that our recognition of and response to an object is logically and/or temporally preceded by an unconstructed or “pure” impression of said object that can be rendered, at least with training, available to conscious experience. Mindfulness practice is then a means to quiet the chatter of the mind and keep to this “bare registering of the facts observed.”

Superficially, this notion of bare attention would seem predicated on an epistemological model that Daniel Dennett calls the “Cartesian theater” and Richard Rorty dubs the “mirror of nature,” wherein mind is understood as a *tabula rasa* that passively registers sensations prior to any recognition, judgment, or response. The notion of a conscious state devoid of conceptualization or discrimination is not unknown to Buddhist exegetes; indeed, various Mahāyāna (more specifically, Yogācāra) texts posit a “nonconceptual cognition” (*nirvikalpañāna*; *wu fenbie zhi* 無分別智) that operates by means of “direct perception” (*pratyakṣajñāna*). This state is sometimes understood as preceding (or undergirding) the arising of conceptualization, or as an advanced stage of attainment tantamount to awakening.³² But while the notion of nonconceptual cognition is foregrounded in certain Yogācāra systems (not to mention Tibetan Dzogchen), it remains somewhat at odds with the Theravāda analysis of mind and perception.³³ In Theravāda abhidharma (as in Sarvāstivāda), cognition is “intentional” (in the Husserlian sense) insofar as consciousness and its object emerge codependently and are hence phenomenologically inextricable. That is to say, the objects of experience emerge not upon a preexistent *tabula rasa*, but rather within a cognitive matrix that includes affective and discursive dispositions occasioned by one’s past activity (*karma*).³⁴ The elimination of these attendant dispositions does not yield “nonconceptual awareness” so much as the cessation of consciousness itself.³⁵

Arguing along similar lines, Paul Griffiths suggests that the closest thing to a state of unconstructed or pure experience in early Indian Buddhist scholasticism is *nirodhasamāpatti*—a state in which both objects and conscious experience cease altogether (Griffiths 1986, 1990). In such a framework, it seems misleading to construe any mode of attention or perception as “bare.” In short, the understanding of *sati* as “bare attention” may owe more to internalist and empiricist epistemologies than it owes to canonical Theravāda formulations (Sharf 1998).³⁶

Given the conceptual ambiguities surrounding *sati*, it is not surprising that the Mahāśī method has come under fire from a number of quarters, including both Theravāda traditionalists in Southeast Asia and practitioners and scholars in the West. Critics object to (1) Mahāśī’s devaluation of *samatha* techniques leading to *jhāna*; (2) claims that followers of the Mahāśī method are able to attain advanced stages of the path (*ārya-mārga*) in remarkably short periods of time; and (3) the amoral implications of rendering *sati* “bare attention,” which devalues or neglects the importance of ethical judgment.³⁷

It may not be coincidence that the objections to Mahāśī’s interpretation of *sati* seem of a kind with the objections raised in regard to practices associated with early Chan. “Viewing mind,” “discerning mind,” “reflecting without an object,” and so on

were, like “bare attention,” touted as direct approaches that circumvented the need for traditional *dhyāna* attainments, for mastery of scripture and doctrine, and for proficiency in monastic ritual. The East Mountain teachers were popularizers: they touted a meditation method that was simple, promised fast results, and could be cultivated by laypersons as well as monastics. Indeed, Daoxin himself acknowledged that he adopted his technique from a *layman*, namely, Layman Fu.³⁸ The technique revolved around a seemingly simple figure/ground shift wherein attention is shifted away from objects of any kind toward the abiding luminosity of mind or awareness itself.

I do not mean to imply a common subjective experience or cognitive state behind terms like “viewing mind” and “bare attention.”³⁹ Rather, I would draw attention to certain sociological and institutional parallels. Some of the early Chan patriarchs, like their counterparts in the modern Theravāda *vipassanā* movement, were interested in developing a method that was simple enough to be accessible to those unschooled in Buddhist doctrine and scripture, who were not necessarily wedded to classical Indian cosmology, who may not have had the time or inclination for extended monastic practice, and who were interested in immediate results as opposed to incremental advancement over countless lifetimes. Note that Layman Fu, credited with innovations in early Chan meditation technique, is also credited with the invention of the rotating *sūtra* repository, another “technical” advancement that mitigated the need to literally *read* Buddhist scriptures.⁴⁰ It is thus not surprising that the East Mountain teachers found themselves in the same position as Mahāsi: castigated by their “subitist” rivals for dumbing down the tradition, for misconstruing or devaluing the role of wisdom, and for their crassly “instrumental” approach to practice.

Chan Mindlessness

There are a number of eighth-century Chan manuscripts that are relentless in their critiques of “maintaining mind,” “viewing mind,” and indeed of “mindfulness” (*nian*) itself. In direct opposition to the injunction to “maintain mind” (*shouxin*), these texts speak of “no mind” (*wuxin* 無心); instead of “to discern mind” (*guanxin*), we find “cut off discernment” (*jueguan* 絕觀); rather than “mindfulness,” we find “no mindfulness” (*wunian* 無念).⁴¹ It is no easy task, however, to determine if this was mere rhetoric aimed at mitigating the reification of mind that attends notions of “mindfulness,” or if these texts were advocating an alternative method.

Take, for example, the *Treatise on No Mind* (*Wuxin lun* 無心論),⁴² a text believed to have been authored by someone associated with the so-called Ox-head lineage (Niutou Zong 牛頭宗).⁴³ In contrast to the Buddhist writings of the period that place an unremitting emphasis on “mind”—on observing mind, on the mind as the locus of purity, on mind as buddha, and so on—the *Treatise on No Mind* insists that “mind” is a mere fiction that must be abandoned:

弟子問和尚曰。有心無心。答曰。無心。問曰。既云無心。誰能見聞覺知。誰知無心。答曰。還是無心既見聞覺知。還是無心能知無心。問曰。既若無心。即合無有見

聞覺知。云何得有見聞覺知。答曰。我雖無心能見能聞能覺能知。問曰。既能見聞覺知。即是有心。那得稱無。答曰。只是見聞覺知。即是無心。何處更離見聞覺知別有無心。。。。問曰。若為能得知是無心。答曰。汝但子細推求看。心作何相貌。其心復可得。是心不是心。為復在內為復在外為復在中間。如是三處推求覓心了不可得。乃至於一切處求覓亦不可得。當知即是無心。

The student asks the teacher, "Is there mind or not?" The teacher answers, "There is no mind."

Question: "Since you say that there is no mind: who then is able to see, hear, feel, and know? Who knows that there is no mind?"

Answer: "It is the absence of mind that sees, hears, feels, and knows. It is the absence of mind that is able to know the absence of mind."

Question: "If there is no mind, it must follow that there is no seeing, hearing, feeling, and knowing. So how can you claim that there is seeing, hearing, feeling, and knowing?"

Answer: "Although I have no mind, I am able to see, able to hear, able to feel, and able to know."

Question: "That you are able to see, hear, feel, and know proves that there is mind! How can you deny this?"

Answer: "This very seeing, hearing, feeling, and knowing is the absence of mind! In what location apart from seeing, hearing, feeling, and knowing could there be the absence of mind? . . ."

Question: "But how could one ever be able to know this absence of mind?"

Answer: "You must simply observe intently and carefully: Does the mind have any manifest features? And the mind that can be apprehended: is this in fact the mind or not? Is it inside or outside, or somewhere in between? As long as one looks for the mind in any of these three locations, one's search will end in failure. Indeed, searching for it anywhere will end in failure. That's exactly why it is known as 'no mind.'" ⁴⁴

The *Treatise on No Mind*, it would seem, is uninterested in techniques for quieting or discerning the mind; such energy is misplaced since there is no mind to discern. But does such Madhyamaka-style dialectical inquiry rule out seated practice? The few references to seated meditation practice in this text seem to suggest otherwise:

如是眾生若遇大善知識教令坐禪覺悟無心。一切業障盡皆銷滅生死即斷。譬如暗中日光一照而暗皆盡。若悟無心。一切罪滅亦復如是。

If such people encounter a great teacher who instructs them in seated meditation, they will awaken to the absence of mind, all karmic hindrances will be completely eliminated, and the cycle of life and death will be cut off. It is like a single ray of light shining into a dark place—the darkness is completely gone. Should you understand no mind, all sin is eliminated in precisely the same way.⁴⁵

Here the text seems to countenance seated meditation, but the specific content of such practice is nowhere specified. The closest we come to a discussion of technique proper is the following laconic exchange:

問曰。今於心中作若為修行。答曰。但於一切事上覺了。無心即是修行。更不別有修行。故知無心即一切。寂滅即無心也。

Question: "Now, there is activity within my own mind. How should I practice?"

Answer: "Simply be wakeful with respect to all phenomena. 'No mind' itself is practice. There is no other practice. Thus know that no mind is everything, and quiescent extinction is itself no mind."⁴⁶

The object, then, is not to eliminate mental activity—in quiet sitting, for example. Instead, the emphasis is on understanding or *gnosis*.

A similar approach is found in the *Treatise on Cutting off Discernment* (*Jueguan lun* 絕觀論), another short work associated with the Ox-head lineage and dating to the eighth century:⁴⁷

問曰。云何名心。云何安心。答曰。汝不須立心亦不須強安。可謂安矣。問曰。若無有心云何學道。答曰。道非心念。何在於心也。問曰。若非心念。當何以念。答曰。有念即有心。有心即乖道。無念即無心。無心即真道。問曰。一切眾生實有心不。答曰。若眾生實有心即顛倒。只為於無心中而立心乃生妄想。問曰。無心有何物。答曰。無心即無物無物即天真。天真即大道。問曰。眾生妄想。云何得滅。答曰。若見妄想。及見滅者不離妄想。問曰。不遣滅者得合道理否。答曰。若言合與不合亦不離妄想。問曰。若為時是。答曰。不為時是。

Question: "What is mind? How do I put my mind to rest?"

Answer: "You must neither posit a mind nor endeavor to put it to rest. This can be called putting [mind] to rest."

Question: "If there is no mind, how does one study the Way?"

Answer: "The Way is not something the mind can contemplate; how could it reside in the mind?"

Question: "If it is not something the mind can contemplate, what is the point of contemplation?"

Answer: "If there is contemplation, there is mind. If there is mind, it runs contrary to the way. If there is no contemplation there is no mind, and no mind is the true Way."

Question: "Do all living beings in fact have minds or not?"

Answer: "That all living beings in fact have minds is a perverted view. Deluded thought is simply the result of positing a mind where there is no mind."

Question: "What sort of thing is this no mind?"

Answer: "No mind is no thing, and no thing is reality itself. This reality is the great Way."

Question: "Sentient beings have deluded thoughts. How do they eliminate them?"

Answer: "One who perceives either deluded thoughts or the elimination of them has not escaped deluded thought."

Question: "Is it possible to be in accord with the Way if one has not eliminated [deluded thought]?"

Answer: "If you speak of being in accord or not in accord, you still have not escaped deluded thought."

Question: "Then what should I do?"

Answer: "Don't do anything."⁴⁸

Much of the text continues in the same vein. Again, seated meditation is mentioned only in passing:

問曰。若不存身見。云何行住坐臥也。答曰。但行住坐臥。何須立身見。問曰。既不存者。得思惟義理不。答曰。若計有心。不思惟亦有。若了無心。設思惟亦無。何以故。譬如禪師淨坐而興慮。猛風亂動而無心也。

Question: "If one does not have a view of a self, how does one go or stop, sit or lie down?"

Answer: "Simply go and stop, sit and lie down; what need is there to posit a view of self?"

Question: "For one who [achieves this] non-abiding, does such a one come to comprehend the principles or not?"

Answer: "If you reckon there is a mind, then you posit the existence of non-comprehension. If you fully understand no mind, there is no positing of comprehension. Why so? It is like a Chan master who sits in clarity allowing thoughts to arise. No matter the howling winds and raging tempests, he remains without mind."⁴⁹

Here the *Treatise on Cutting off Discernment* makes explicit allusion to a Chan master "sitting in clarity." The rhetoric of no mind need not entail a rejection of sitting practice, but rather a rejection of the notion that wisdom lies in inner stillness. These Ox-head works are preoccupied with the desultory effects—both philosophical and soteriological—of the reification of mind, and they offer, by way of an alternative to "mindfulness," a critique of mind. Sitting or not sitting would seem beside the point: in the words of the *Treatise on No Mind*, "no mind itself is practice."

This seems to be the thrust of the few passages in the *Platform Scripture* that deal directly with sitting meditation as well:

善諸識。此法門中。座禪元不著心。亦不著淨。亦不言[不]動。若言看心。心元是妄。妄如[幻]故無所看也。若言看淨。人姓本淨。為妄念故蓋覆真如。離妄念本姓淨。不見自姓本淨。心起看淨。却生淨妄。...

Good friends, in this teaching from the outset sitting *chan* does not concern the mind nor does it concern clarity; we do not talk of steadfastness. Should you speak of "viewing the mind," [I would reply that] from the outset such a "mind" is delusion, and as delusion is a mere phantasm there is nothing to be seen. If you speak of "viewing clarity," [I would reply that] man's nature is fundamentally clear, but because of deluded thought True Reality is obscured. If you are free from deluded thought then original nature reveals its clarity. If you activate your mind to view clarity without realizing that your own nature is originally clear, then you will give rise to delusions of clarity.

今記汝是此法門中。何名座禪。此法門中一切無礙。外於一切境界上念不去為坐。[內]見本姓不亂為禪。何名為禪定。外[離]相曰禪。內不亂曰定。外若有相。內姓不亂。本自淨自定。只緣境觸。觸即亂。(離相不亂即定)。外離相即禪。內(外)不亂即定。外禪內定故名禪定。

Now that we know that this is so, what is it in this teaching that we call "sitting *chan*"? In this teaching "sitting" means without any obstruction anywhere, outwardly and under all circumstances not to activate thoughts. "*Chan*" is internally to see the original nature and not become confused. And what do we call *chan* meditation? Outwardly to exclude form is *chan*; inwardly to be unconfused is meditation. Even though there is form on the outside, when internally the nature is not confused, then, from the outset, you are of yourself clear and of yourself in meditation. The very contact with circumstances itself causes confusion. Separation from form on the outside is *chan*; being untouched on the

inside is meditation. Being *chan* externally and meditation internally, it is known as *chan* meditation.⁵⁰

Again, one might conclude, for the reasons given above, that the critique was directed at the objectification of mind rather than at seated meditation. It is difficult to determine the precise impact of this critique on the practice of meditation per se. What, exactly, would the subitists recommend?

While evidence is scanty, there is one curious bit of indirect testimony that at least some of the subitists who championed “no mind” were associated with a distinct approach to practice in which the object of contemplation was the absence of mind itself. The testimony comes from the *Treatise on the Essentials of Cultivating the Mind* (*Xiuxin yaolun* 修心要論)—a text associated with the East Mountain teachings of Daoxin and Hongren 弘忍 (601–674) but likely compiled somewhat later, in the early eighth century. This makes the text roughly contemporary with Huineng and Shenhui.

問曰：諸至行人求真常寂滅者。但樂無常龜善。不樂於第一義諦。真常妙善未現。只欲發心緣義。遂思覺心起。即是漏心。只欲正心無所。即無明昏住。又不當理。只欲不正心不緣義。即妄取空。雖受人身。行畜生行。爾時無有定慧方便。而不能得了明見佛性。只是行人沈沒之處。若為進起得到無餘涅槃。願示真趣。答曰：會是信心具足。至願成就。緩緩靜心。更重教汝。自閑淨身心。一切無所攀緣。端坐正身。令氣息調。徵其心不在內不在外不在中間。好好如如。穩熟看。即及見此心識流動。猶如水流陽炎。葉葉不住。既見此識時。唯是不內不外。緩緩如如。穩看熟。即返覆融消。虛凝湛住。其此流動之識。颯然自滅。滅此識者。乃是滅十地菩薩眾中障或。此識滅身等滅已。其心即虛凝恬怕。皎潔然。吾更不能說其形狀。汝若欲得知者。取涅槃經金剛身品。及維摩經見阿閼佛品。

Question: There are advanced practitioners who seek perfect and eternal stillness and cessation, yet who end up delighting in a virtue that is transient and coarse; they do not delight in ultimate truth. Before they have manifest true, permanent, and marvelous virtue, they merely aspire to cultivate a mind in accordance with [their grasp] of the meaning. Accordingly, they *give rise to a mind that thinks about awakening*, but this is a defiled mind. *They are merely intent on fixing the mind on no object*, but this is to abide in the darkness of ignorance and does not accord with the [true] principle. *Or they are merely intent on not fixing their mind and not according with meanings*, which is to grasp mistakenly at emptiness. Although they have received a human body, their practice is that of animals. At that very moment they lack the expedient means of meditation and wisdom and are unable to see clearly their buddha-nature. This is a deep pitfall for practitioners. We beseech you to explain the true path so that we might progress toward and achieve *nirvāṇa* without remainder.

Answer: When you are endowed with a mind of faith, your ultimate wish will be fulfilled. Gently quiet your mind, and I will teach you once again. Make your body and mind pure and relaxed, utterly devoid of external objects. Sit properly with the body erect. Regulate the breath and concentrate the mind so it is not within you, not outside of you, and not in any intermediate place. Do this carefully and naturally, observing tranquilly but attentively; see how consciousness is always in motion, like flowing water, a glittering mirage, or [rustling] leaves that never cease. When you come to perceive this consciousness there is no inside or outside, and things are relaxed and natural. Observe tranquilly

and attentively, until the veils melt away and you abide in a vast, empty clarity. The flow of consciousness will cease of itself like a puff of wind. The cessation of this consciousness is accompanied by the cessation [of all hindrances], including even the hindrances of the bodhisattvas of the tenth stage. With the cessation of this consciousness, the body and everything else cease as well, and the mind becomes peacefully stable, simple, and pure. I cannot describe it any further. If you want to know more about it, you should examine thoroughly the “Adamantine Body” chapter of the *Nirvāṇa-sūtra*, or the “Akṣobhya” chapter of the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*.⁵¹

This is a fascinating document insofar as it refers to a group of practitioners who, despite their accomplishment, err in mistaking the contemplation of “no mind” or “no object” as an advanced state of meditation. In other words, these misguided souls confuse *thinking* about awakening or *thinking* about nothing with awakening or *nirvāṇa* itself. In proffering the dialectic of “no mind” as an alternative to the reification of mind and gainful practice, they end up reifying “no mind.” Nāgārjuna would call this grasping a snake by the wrong end. To mitigate such self-delusion, the *Treatise on the Essentials of Cultivating the Mind* offers a practice similar to Daoxin’s method discussed above: posture, breathing, and attentive mindfulness are used to bring the yogi to a state of stillness and clarity. Only the cultivation and experience of calmness and clarity will ensure that the yogi does not mistake contemplating awakening with awakening proper.

Of course, there were a lot of masters peddling Chan wares in the eighth century, as Zongmi documents in his *Introduction to a Collection of Materials on the Sources of Chan*, so it is impossible to determine precisely to whom this critique was directed. Moreover, if teachers associated with the *Treatise on No Mind*, the *Treatise on Cutting off Discernment*, and the *Platform Scripture* were the intended target, then the *Treatise on the Essentials of Cultivating the Mind* is an unreliable witness: the teachers who came to be associated with the Ox-head and Southern lineages appear to have *rejected* the goal of “perfect and eternal stillness and cessation.” Nonetheless, the *Treatise on the Essentials of Cultivating the Mind* may be evidence, however biased, of the controversies surrounding attempts to ameliorate the gap between theory and technique and, more specifically, the controversy over the place of mindfulness and its polemical counterpoint: “mindlessness.”

Conclusion

How is it possible that any “conditioned” (*saṃskṛta*) religious discipline—whether ritual practice, meditation, asceticism, ethical action, textual study, or what have you—could bring about an “unconditioned” (*asaṃskṛta*) state such as *nirvāṇa*? This was a seminal problem for Buddhist scholiasts of all stripes, and Mahāyāna doctrines such as *śūnyatā* (emptiness), *ālayavijñāna* (store consciousness), and *tathāgatagarbha* (womb of buddhahood) can all be viewed as attempts at a solution: each, in its own way, elides the ontological gap between the world of defilement and the world of awakening, thus mitigating the soteriological quandary. The buddha-nature approach that came to be favored in China, drawing (sometimes simultaneously and incoher-

ently) on *sūnyatā*, *ālayavijñāna*, and *tathāgatagarbha* ideas, argues that awakening is intrinsic, and thus religious practice is not intended to *produce* awakening so much as to discover what has always been present.

Drawing on the authority of both canonical and extra-canonical sources, early Chan identified this inborn buddha-nature with the nature of mind itself. The mirror analogy, sanctioned by works such as the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* (*Da-sheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論) and the apocryphal *Scripture on Perfect Awakening* (*Yuanjue jing* 圓覺經), provided an easily grasped analogy for the relationship between the essential and unchanging nature of mind on the one hand and the transient, ephemeral, and ultimately unreal nature of what appears in the mind on the other.⁵² The reflections that appear on the surface of the mirror, whether beautiful or ugly, defiled or pure, leave the mirror's true nature unsullied. Of course, the mirror analogy can be, and was, utilized in diverse ways, as Demiéville noted years ago, and in some of these uses the mirror was not strictly passive (Demiéville 1987). Be that as it may, in the examples explored above, the mind-mirror is reminiscent of Dennett's "Cartesian theater," re-presenting the world on its surface. The aim of Chan practice is not to transform what appears on the mirror, but rather to transform our understanding and response. If we can appreciate that the reflection is a mere phantasm, the images will no longer hold us captive.

The East Mountain and Northern Chan masters availed themselves of the mirror analogy in their explications of practice. Rather than engaging the transitory images that appear, one must, from moment to moment, focus on the innate purity of mind—the seeming transparency of conscious awareness itself. Such practice is intended, among other things, to undermine the givenness of the external domain, along the lines of "representation-only" (*vijñaptimātra*) or mind-only (*cittamātra*) teachings. The subitists reject this approach, since it simply substitutes one givenness (that of the mind) for another (the world). In something akin to the deconstruction of the metaphysics of presence, the subitists insist that mind, too, cannot be attained (*bu ke de* 不可得), and thus even notions such as "mindfulness" and "maintaining unity" must be abandoned. In their place, one should focus on absence (*wusuo* 無所) so as to let go of everything. The Northern School's response to the attacks of the subitists is to accuse them of false consciousness—of mistaking conceptual understanding and critique for authentic attainment.

In the West, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Sellars, Derrida, and others have contributed, each in their own way, to the deconstruction of the metaphysics of presence. Drawing from and building on such predecessors, Richard Rorty, in his *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979), invokes the mirror metaphor in an extended critique of representational models of mind and associated correspondence theories of truth. Rorty's attack on foundationalism—his rejection of epistemological theories that appraise the truth-value of propositions according to their supposed fidelity to the external world—is reminiscent of Huineng's famous "Bodhi has no tree; The bright mirror has no stand." The subitists reject any articulation of the path and any form of practice that takes the terms "mind" and "mindfulness" as referencing discrete and determinable states or objects or meditative experiences. For the Chan

subitists, like the modern antifoundationalists, the image of the mind as mirror epitomizes a widespread but ultimately wrongheaded understanding of mind, cognition, and our relationship to the world.

The Dunhuang materials, coupled with Zongmi's account of the early Chan lineages, suggest that the diversity of views that characterize early Chan may have been accompanied by a diversity of practices, including attempts to redefine the parameters of practice itself. The institutional culture of early Chan was characterized by strident polemics and animated debate, as competing lineages grappled with doctrinal conundrums and confusions that sit at the heart of Buddhism. The evidence above suggests that some early Chan patriarchs were experimenting with alternatives to orthodox forms of seated meditation, although they themselves struggled to articulate precisely what they were after.

It is not clear what became of these alternatives. Luis Gómez notes how radical subitist positions (Prajñāpāramitā, Tantra, Southern Chan) often start out as antinomian movements, but end up being appropriated by the very institutional hierarchies they once opposed (Gómez 1987, p. 70). Even the early Chan subitists, as suggested by Huineng's parting injunction to continue, after his death, to "sit all together [in meditation]," may have quietly come home to roost. But the later Chan, Zen, and Sōn traditions never entirely shook off the confusions and controversies that proved central to their early creativity. Even today, Japanese Sōtō teachers struggle to articulate precisely how to practice *shikantaza*, and Rinzai teachers do not have it any easier with *kōan* practice. In both cases, advanced practitioners candidly confess to the confusion and bewilderment that often surround the topic of meditation in contemporary Japanese *sōdō* 僧堂 (monastic training halls). And the same is arguably true of the traditions in Korea, China, and Taiwan. Of course, apologists for Chan, Zen, and Sōn see this as a mark of spiritual depth, and are quick to take refuge in the ineffability of mystical experience. But it is equally possible that this is, in part, the legacy of the early controversies surrounding mindfulness and mindlessness outlined above.

There is thus reason to question the claim that early large-C Chan was merely a meta-discourse that had little effect on practice and technique per se. After all, the claim is at odds with some of the fundamental teachings of Chan, notably the subitist position associated with Huineng and Shenhui that adamantly rejects the technique/theory distinction. These teachers may have tendered a simplified practice accessible to laypersons that would circumvent the need for extended monastic training, for attainment of trance states, and for scriptural study. Their method conflated meditation and wisdom (*dhyāna* and *prajñā*)—two domains that were traditionally considered distinct if interrelated. It is here that we see remarkable parallels with contemporary Theravāda meditation movements.

Note that the success of the modern *vipassanā* movements lies precisely in the way they operationalize *vipassanā* or "liberating insight." *Vipassanā* was traditionally understood as a kind of analytic discernment cultivated through memorizing, internalizing, and "bearing in mind" (*sati*) key abhidharmic categories. This required, among other things, a serious grasp of Buddhist epistemology. Reformers like Mahāsi could jettison this by approaching *sati* as "mindfulness" and treating *vipassanā* as

the meditative experience of “bare awareness.” Path and goal become one, and advanced stages of insight are available to anyone willing follow a simple technique.

In conflating meditation and wisdom, the early Chan patriarchs similarly may have taken recourse in something akin to the modern notion of mindfulness. While scholars have seen the equation of meditation and wisdom as a rhetorical ploy intended to foreground Mahāyāna insight while still conceding a place for “Hīnayāna” practice, the evidence above suggests that it may have been otherwise. Like the twentieth-century Burmese, the Chan reformers may have sought to democratize enlightenment by touting a new approach to practice that *operationalized* wisdom. The heated controversy that ensued came to structure Chan and Zen discourse down to the present day.

Notes

This article is dedicated to the memory of John McRae.

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Texts in the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經, edited by Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊海旭 (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1932), are indicated in the Notes below by the text number (“T. ———:”) followed by the volume, page, register (a, b, or c), and line number(s).

- 1 – The literature is vast; on modern Japanese Zen and Korean Sōn meditation practice in English see, for example, Buswell 1992, Hori 2000, and Hori 2003. On the history of these practices see Bielefeldt 1988, Buswell 1987, Collcutt 1981, Foulk 1993, and Schlütter 2008.
- 2 – Modern Chan training in China and Taiwan is no more reliable a witness to medieval practice. Chan monastic practice had to be reconstructed largely from scratch at several points in Chinese history, including the early Ming, the late Qing and the Republican periods, and most recently following the Cultural Revolution. The practices of modern Korean Sōn are shaped by recent renewal movements that reconstructed “authentic” Sōn monastic life on the basis of Song dynasty monastic codes and living Japanese models.
- 3 – By early Chan lineage texts I am thinking of the *Record of the Transmission of the Dharma Treasure* (*Chuan fabao ji* 傳法寶紀), the *Record of Masters and Disciples of the Laṅkāvatāra* (*Lengjia shizi ji* 楞伽師資記), the *Record of the Successive Generations of the Dharma Treasure* (*Lidai fabao ji* 歷代法寶記), and so on.

- 4 – On Daoxuan’s reports of the competing Chan lineages of his day see esp. Chen 2002 and Greene 2008. On Zongmi see esp. Broughton 2009 and Jan 1972.
- 5 – T.2015: 48.399a24. David Chappell noted this some time ago; see Chappell 1983, p. 99.
- 6 – Among those who take this approach, see Donner 1977; Faure 1991; Foulk 1993; Gómez 1987, p. 119; and McRae 1986.
- 7 – T.2015: 48.401b8–11; Kamata 1971, p. 59.
- 8 – T.2015: 48.403c20–21; Kamata 1971, p. 116.
- 9 – Yanagida 1971, p. 380; trans. McRae 1986, p. 262, with changes.
- 10 – T.2007: 48.345a21–25; Yampolsky 1967, 二十九; trans. Yampolsky 1967, pp. 181–182, with changes.
- 11 – T.2007: 48.338b23–29; Yampolsky 1967, 六; trans. Yampolsky 1967, p. 137, with changes. The quotation is from the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra* (*Weimojie suoshou jing* 維摩詰所說經), T.475: 14.539c19–25.
- 12 – Hu Shi 1968, pp. 116–117; see also idem, pp. 133–134 and 136–137, and Gómez 1987, pp. 80–81, 145 n. 52. The embedded quotation is from the apocryphal *Dharmapada* (*Faju jing* 法句經; T.2901: 85.1435a21–22), which is believed to date to the first half of the seventh century. The same passage is also cited in the *Record of the Successive Generations of the Dharma Treasure* (*Lidai fabao ji* 歷代法寶記; T.2075: 51.183a23; Yanagida 1976, p. 108), as well as in Zongmi’s *Introduction to a Collection of Materials on the Sources of Chan* (T.2015: 48.405b29; Kamata 1971, p. 145). At first sight the passage may seem ambiguous, but note that the phrase “the mind following the flow of objects” (心隨境界流) is found in the sixth fascicle of Śikṣānanda’s translation of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (*Dasheng ru Lengjia jing* 大乘入楞伽經; T.672: 16.625a29): “The mind follows the flow of sense objects, like iron drawn to a lodestone” (心隨境界流，如鐵於磁石). The valence of this term would seem to be negative, referring to the inability to control or discipline the mind, which is at the mercy of the senses.
- 13 – See Bielefeldt 1988, Faure 1991, McRae 1988.
- 14 – On early Chinese meditation techniques, see Greene 2012 and Zacchetti 2003 and 2008.
- 15 – Pace Foulk, I am placing the origins of “large-C” Chan in the eighth century. This represents a compromise between those scholars who insist that Chan only takes institutional shape some two centuries later in the Song period and those who would give some credence to the Bodhidharma legend, which would place the beginnings of Chan in the fifth or sixth century. The eighth century is when the notion of Chan as a distinct lineage with its own unique approach to Buddhist literature and teaching is first clearly articulated in lineage texts such as the *Record of Masters and Disciples of the Laṅkāvatāra*, *Record of the*

Successive Generations of the Dharma Treasure, and so on. The early Chan materials to be discussed below all date to this period.

16 – Note the degree to which the influential Chan meditation manual *Instructions for Seated Meditation* (*Zuochan yi* 坐禪儀) by Changlu Zongze 長蘆宗蹟 (appended to the *Chanyuan qinggui* 禪苑清規) was based on the widely disseminated Tiantai manual *Shorter Calming and Discernment* (*Xiao zhiguan* 小止觀) by Tiantai Zhiyi 天台智顓 (538–597); see Bielefeldt 1988.

17 – See, for example, T.2015: 48.405b21 ff., where Zongmi cites passages from *Awakening of Faith*, the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*, the [apocryphal] *Dharmapada*, the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*, and so on.

18 – See, for example, the *Record of the Successive Generations of the Dharma Treasure*:

諸小乘禪及諸三昧門。不是達摩祖師宗旨。列名如後。白骨觀。數息觀。九相觀。五停觀。日觀。月觀。樓臺觀。池觀。佛觀。

The various Hīnayāna *dhyānas* and the *sāmadhi* methods are not the tenets of the school of the ancestral master [Bodhi]dharma. Examples of such practices are those called the white bone contemplation, counting breaths contemplation, nine visualizations contemplation, five cessations of the mind contemplation, sun contemplation, moon contemplation, tower contemplation, pond contemplation, and the buddha contemplation. (T.2075: 51.183a11–13; trans. Adamek 2007, p. 326, with changes)

The *Record* goes on to explain that these Hīnayāna practices are mere expedients—antidotes to mundane problems encountered by practitioners—and that the visions that accompany such practices are “empty delusion.” As such, these practices are not authentic *chan*.

19 – The term *shou xin* is believed to be related to *shou yi* 守意, *shou yi* 守一, and so on. There is a large literature on these practices; on the Buddhist usage, see, for example, Buswell 1989, pp. 137–157; Faure 1986, pp. 112–114; McRae 1986, pp. 138–144; and Sharf 2002, pp. 182–184. For reasons that will become clear below, it is often difficult to discern precisely what these practices entailed or whether there were meaningful differences between them.

20 – The phrase *wu suo nian* 無所念 is ambiguous; it could be read as “nothing on which to reflect,” “to reflect on the absence of an object,” “to reflect without a locus,” and so on.

21 – The actual quote in the scripture is:

諸佛如來是法界身，遍入一切眾生心想中。是故汝等心想佛時，是心即是三十二相，八十隨形好。是心作佛，是心是佛。

All buddha-tathāgatas are the bodies of the dharma realm. They enter into the minds of all living beings. Therefore when you contemplate the Buddha, this very mind is identical with the thirty-two major marks and the eighty secondary attributes [of the Buddha’s body]. This mind produces Buddha. This mind is Buddha. (*Guan Wuliangshoufo jing* 觀無量壽佛經; T.365: 12.343a19–21)

- 22 – T.2837: 85.1287a–1288b; Yanagida 1971, pp. 192–225; cf. Chappell 1983, pp. 108, 114–115.
- 23 – *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (*Majjhima-nikāya* 10) and *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (*Dīghanikāya* 22); cf. the Chinese *Nian chu jing* 念處經 (T.26: 1.582b–584c).
- 24 – On Ledi Sayādaw see esp. Braun 2008; on Mingun Sayādaw see Houtman 1997, p. 311.
- 25 – On Mahāsī’s pivotal role in the Burmese lay meditation movement see Jordt 2007. Braun believes that the lay orientation can be traced back to Ledi, who was influenced by, among others, his mentor Hpo Hlaing, a layperson working in the court environment. Hpo Hlaing wrote two books on meditation with a lay audience in mind: *Taste of Liberation* (*Vimuttirasa*) (1871) and the *Meditation on the Body* (*Kāyanupassanā*) (1874). According to Braun, these works “reveal specific developments in the use of meditation as a tool for dealing with the modern world and Western knowledge that connect to Ledi’s presentation of meditation, including a concern for a wide, lay readership and a concern to show meditation’s relevance to knowledge about the world” (Braun 2008, p. 64). Indeed, Ledi believed that laypersons were capable of advanced stages on the path, that enlightenment was possible in this very lifetime, and that a layperson who follows a pure life “can be called a *bhikkhu*, even though he is just a normal layperson” (Braun 2008, p. 338). Mingun Sayādaw may have established the first meditation center open to laypersons as well as monastics (Houtman 1997, p. 311).
- 26 – The secondary literature on the “Mahāsī method” is vast. On the complex doctrinal issues surrounding Mahāsī’s method see esp. Cousins 1996, as well as the references in note 27 below. On the influence of the Mahāsī method in contemporary Thai monastic and lay practice see Cook 2010; for its influence in Nepal see LeVine and Gellner 2005.
- 27 – In the brief discussion on the meaning of *sati/smṛti* that follows I am particularly indebted to Gethin 1992, pp. 36–44. See also Anālayo 2003; Gyatso 1992; Kuan 2008; Nyanaponika 1976, pp. 68–72; and Shulman 2010. The relationship between premodern versus modern notions of *sati* has recently become a subject of considerable discussion and debate; see, for example, the special 2011 issue of *Contemporary Buddhism* on the topic “Mindfulness: Diverse Perspectives on Its Meaning, Origins, and Multiple Applications at the Intersection of Science and Dharma,” in which I found the articles by Bodhi, Dreyfus, Dunne, and Gethin particularly useful.
- 28 – *Samyutta-nikāya*, Feer 1998, pp. 197–98; trans. Gethin 1992, p. 36.
- 29 – *Milindapañha* 37–38; trans. Gethin 1992, pp. 37–38.
- 30 – *Visuddhimagga* XIV, 141; trans. Gethin 1992, p. 40.
- 31 – On the relationship between *smṛti* and memory and *smṛti* as mindfulness, see also Cox 1992.

- 32 – The notion of a nonconceptual state of consciousness was the subject of considerable discussion in the later scholastic tradition, as it was by no means easy to square with earlier systems of Buddhist thought (see Deleanu n.d.). One problem was how to disambiguate states of “nonconceptualization” from states in which there is simply no cognition whatsoever, such as *nirodha-samāpatti* and, perhaps, *nirvāṇa* (Sharf 2014). The complex relationship between direct sense perception (*pratyakṣa*) and conceptuality (*vikalpa*) was also a topic of debate among those interested in logic (*pramāṇa*); the notion of “self-awareness” (or “reflexive awareness,” *svasaṃvedana*, *svasaṃvitti*), which is usually traced back to Dignāga (but see Yao 2005), may have emerged in part as a strategy to link the two. The literature on the mature systems of Buddhist logic and epistemology—particularly the systems that trace back to Dignāga and Dharmakīrti—is vast, but see esp. Arnold 2005 and 2012, Coseru 2012, Dreyfus 1996, Hattori 1968, Matilal 1986, Williams 1998, and the excellent collection articles in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 38, no. 2 (2010).
- 33 – Dunne 2011 includes an excellent discussion of the role of nonconceptual cognition in Dzogchen, along with reflections on its relationship with modern notions of mindfulness.
- 34 – Some recent findings in cognitive neuroscience seem to resonate with classical Buddhist “intentional” models; see Varela et al. 1991.
- 35 – The closest thing in early Buddhist psychology to a “raw feel” might be *sparśa* or “contact” (Pali: *phassa*; Chin: *chu* 觸), but properly speaking *sparśa* is not a conscious event so much as a subliminal or pre-conscious stage in the temporal emergence of a moment of cognition.
- 36 – Some have argued that the emphasis on *bare* or *non-judgmental* awareness should be understood pragmatically; in other words, it is part of an instruction set intended to bring about a particular cognitive state, and does not entail commitment to a theoretical or epistemological position (Bodhi 2011). However, while those trained in Theravāda abhidharma may subscribe to such a distinction, I suspect that most lay teachers and practitioners, particularly in the West, understand the practice in decidedly “perennialist” terms. In other words, they believe the goal of mindfulness practice is a “state of consciousness” that is unmediated and unconstructed and thus universal (transcultural and transhistorical). This universality is needed to underwrite the claim that the practice of mindfulness is not sectarian or indeed even “religious” (Sharf 1995).
- 37 – For traditionalist critiques see the overview and bibliography in Sharf 1995, pp. 262–265. The appropriateness of “bare attention” as a way to understand *sati* is the subject of a dialogue between Alan Wallace and Bhikkhu Bodhi (Wallace and Bodhi 2006).
- 38 – On the rather obscure figure Fu Xi 傅翕 (a.k.a. Fu Dashi 傅大士) (497–569) see Hsiao 1995, pp. 50–224; Yanagida 1971, p. 236; and Zhang 2000. A text

attributed to him, the *Shanhui Dashi lu* 善慧大士錄 (edited 1143; *Dai nippon zokuzōkyō* 大日本續藏經 no. 1335 [vol. 69 in the 1968 Taipei reprint edition]), while celebrating Fu Xi's meditative achievements, contains little with regard to actual meditation technique.

- 39 – Elsewhere I have argued that to do so would be to misconstrue the rhetorical import of “subjective experience”; see Sharf 1998.
- 40 – The notion that Fu Xi invented the revolving bookcase is no doubt apocryphal, but still conveys something about the popular perceptions of this famous layman. On the origins of the revolving bookcase see Goodrich 1942; Guo 1999; Hsiao 1995, pp. 110–111; and Schopen 2005.
- 41 – Much has been written on these terms. The phrase “the mind is in essence free of reflection” (*xin ti li nian* 心體離念) is found in the *Awakening of Faith* (T.1666: 32.576b12). The term *linian* is used in a variety of materials associated with Northern Chan, including the *Dasheng wusheng fangbian men* 大乘無生方便門 (T.2834, T.2839); see Zeuschner 1983, p. 146 n. 2. Note that Northern School texts prefer *linian*, while the texts associated with the Southern School prefer *wunian*.
- 42 – Attributed to Bodhidharma (Stein no. 5619; Giles no. 5847); this has been reproduced in the Taishō canon: T.2831: 85.1269a17–1270a28. For a recent critical edition see App 1995 (cf. the earlier edition in Suzuki 1968–1971, vol. 2, pp. 216–219). An overview of contemporary scholarship on the *Wuxin lun* can be found in Shinohara and Tanaka 1980, pp. 193–198; see also the Japanese translation and study in Yanagida 1978, pp. 64–66, 80–91.
- 43 – The Ox-head lineage was closely associated with Chinese traditions of Madhyama exegesis; see esp. McRae 1983.
- 44 – T.2831: 85.1269a25–b13; trans. App 1995, pp. 34–45, with changes.
- 45 – T.2831: 85.1269b20–23; cf. App 1995, pp. 44–45.
- 46 – T.2831: 85.1269c16–19; cf. App 1995, pp. 55–56.
- 47 – Six manuscript copies of this text were recovered from Dunhuang. An edition of the *Treatise on Cutting off Discernment*, along with Japanese and English translations, can be found in Tokiwa and Yanagida 1973. See also the overview of the extensive scholarship on the text in McRae 1983, pp. 171–175.
- 48 – Tokiwa and Yanagida 1973, 八七 a–b.
- 49 – Tokiwa and Yanagida 1973, 九四 b.
- 50 – Yampolsky 1967, 七–八; trans. Yampolsky 1967, pp. 139–140, with changes.
- 51 – Edition from McRae 1986, 十四; cf. McRae 1986, pp. 130–131. There are nine different manuscripts and one printed Korean edition of this text. For textual information see the detailed analysis in McRae 1986, pp. 309–312 n. 36.

52 – The mirror analogy has been explored in depth by a number of scholars, rendering it unnecessary to rehearse their findings here. See, for example, Demiéville 1987; McRae 1986, pp. 144–147; Gómez 1987; and Wayman 1974.

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