

An Analysis of *Satipaṭṭhāna* and Its Relationship with *Chan*

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Abstract

Concentration and insight meditation are essentially two ways of developing right mindfulness and clear comprehension until one can see things as they are. *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* says the *satipaṭṭhāna* is “the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the attainment of the true way, for the realization of *Nibbāna*.” Chan Buddhism or Chan School was established as a community who specialized in the art of meditation. The *Suttas* mention four *satipaṭṭhānas* for contemplation: body, feelings, mind, and *dhammas*. In *satipaṭṭhāna*, *samatha* and *vipassana* cannot be divided. Gradual progress towards realization is the rule of *satipaṭṭhāna*, the time required for such gradual preparation to bear fruit varies greatly according to the individual. It seems so simple and obvious after one has studied the *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation but in reality about the methods of practice has largely remained unclear. For Chan Buddhism, meditation means the expression of attentive virtuosity which means being able to accord with each and every situation and respond as needed, whether it is a situation of utter complacency or utmost crisis. No matter *satipaṭṭhāna* or Chan Buddhism, cultivating the mind in daily life is utmost important in the progress of spiritual liberation. Clear comprehension is the basic requirement for both *satipaṭṭhāna* and Chan Buddhism practices to progress. Concentration and wisdom need to be fully developed before realization or enlightenment is achieved. The connection between *satipaṭṭhāna* and Chan Buddhism is so close and in reality can be complement to each other.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Concentration and insight meditation are essentially two ways of developing right mindfulness and clear comprehension until one can see things as they are. An analysis of the Theravada, Abhidharma Schools and Mahayana traditions shows that there are various ways of practicing concentration and insight meditation and various methods for eliminating the five hindrances, all of which aim to train the mind until one is able to maintain clear awareness, see things as they are.¹

The *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* (in Pāli), “Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness” is the tenth *sutta* in the *Majjhimanikāya*. An expanded version of the same *sutta*, titled the “Great Discourse on the Foundation of Mindfulness” (*Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasuttanta*), which adds extensive discussion on mindfulness of breathing (*ānapānasati*) is the twenty second *sutta* in the *Dighanikāya*. This *sutta* is one of the most widely commented upon texts in the modern *vipassanā* movement. The discourse enumerates twenty-one meditation practices for the cultivation of mindfulness.² The *sutta* says the *satipaṭṭhāna* is “the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the attainment of the true way, for the realization of *Nibbāna*.”³

Chan (in Chinese) means “Meditation” is the first syllable in the transcription *Channa*, the Chinese transcription of the Sanskrit term *Dhyāna*. Chan Buddhism or Chan School was established as a community who specialized in the art of meditation. The legendary Indian monk Bodhidharma was honored as the first patriarch. Six indigenous patriarchs (Bodhidharma, Huike, Sengcan, Daoxin, Hongren and Huineng) are credited by the established tradition with the development and growth of Chan Buddhism in China. The famous “Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch” composed by the followers is an important source for the history of the debate on “sudden and gradual enlightenment”. Following the sixth patriarch, the Chan lineage split into a number of collateral

¹ Dacheng, Bhikkhu. *The Direct Path to Nibbāna* (Taiwan: Buddhist Culture and Meditation Research Association, 2009), p.23

² Robert E. Buswell Jr., and Donald S. Lopez Jr., *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), p.786

³ Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, and Bhikkhu Bodhi, (tr.) *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (Oxford: PTS, 2002), p.145

lines, which eventually evolved into the so-called “five houses and seven schools” of the mature Chan tradition.⁴

The aim of this Independent Study Report is to investigate the relationship between *satipaṭṭhāna* and Chan Buddhism. Among the Mahayana Schools of the Far East, it is chiefly the Chinese Chan and Japanese Zen that are closest to the spirit of *satipaṭṭhāna*. Notwithstanding the differences in method, aim and basic philosophical conceptions, the connecting links with *satipaṭṭhāna* are close and strong, and it is regrettable that they have hardly been stressed or noticed.⁵

In modern Buddhist meditation circles, there are two Chan masters combining *satipaṭṭhāna* and Chan practices. Ven. Sheng-yen's teaching is based on Cao Dong tradition and combined with *vipassanā*. Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh from Vietnam since the age of sixteen has been a Chan Buddhist monk and his teaching is the art of mindful living.

The first objective is to extract the relevant major doctrinal background of *satipaṭṭhāna* from the resources available. The “direct path” to *Nibbāna* describes in the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* presents a comprehensive set of contemplation that progressively reveals ever subtler aspects of subjective experience. The mental qualities required for this direct path of *satipaṭṭhāna* are, according to the “definition” part of the discourse, a balanced and sustained application of effort (*ātāpi*), the presence of clearly knowing (*sampajāna*), and a balanced state of mind, free from desires (*abhijjhā*) and discontent (*domanassa*). These three qualities revolve like the three spokes of a wheel around the central mental quality of *sati*.⁶

The second objective is to extract the relevant doctrinal background of Chan Buddhism from the resources available. The story of Chan is one of cultural assimilations, border crossing, crises of faith, and realizing a muscular readiness to evidence compassionate moral clarity. It is also a story about finding in our own day-to-day relationship – the resources needed to challenge successfully the way things are and to turn our situation in a resolutely enlightening direction.⁷

⁴ Lopez Jr., p,174-175

⁵ Nyanaponika Thera, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation* (San Francisco:Weiser, 2014), p.xxi-xxii

⁶ Analayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization* (Cambridge: Windhorse, 2003), p.266

⁷ Hershock, Peter D., *Chan Buddhism* (Honolulu: Uni. Of Hawi’I, 2005), p.5

The findings from both traditions will be compared and contrasted to establish if connection points exist between these two traditions. For instance, the direct confrontation with actuality, the merging of every-day life with the meditative practice, the transcending of conceptual thought by direct observation and introspection, the emphasis on the Here and Now.⁸

⁸. Thera, p. xxii

Chapter 2: *Satipaṭṭhāna*

2.1 What is *Satipaṭṭhāna*?

The term *satipaṭṭhāna* can be explained as a compound of *sati*, “mindfulness” or “awareness”, and *upaṭṭhāna*, with the u of the latter term dropped by vowel elision. The Pāli term *upaṭṭhāna* literally means “placing near”, and here refers to a particular way of “being present” and “attending” to something with mindfulness. *Satipaṭṭhāna* can then be translated as “present of mindfulness” or as “attending with mindfulness”.⁹ However, Nyanaponika Thera hopes that the Pāli word ‘*satipaṭṭhāna*’ itself should become familiarized among Western readers of Buddhist literature.

The Buddha’s original discourses on *satipaṭṭhāna* occur twice as in *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* and as *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* of the *Digha Nikāya*. The only difference being that in *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* offers a more extensive treatment of the four noble truths, the last of the *satipaṭṭhāna* contemplation. Shorter discourses on *satipaṭṭhāna* are also found in the *Samyutta Nikāya* and the *Anguttara Nikāya*.

The *Suttas* mention four *satipaṭṭhānas* for contemplation: body, feelings, mind, and *dhammas*. The range of the first *satipaṭṭhāna*, contemplation of the body, proceeds from mindfulness of breathing, postures, and activities, via analysis of the body into its anatomical parts and elements, to contemplating a corpse in decay. The next two *satipaṭṭhānas* are concerned with contemplating feelings and mind. The fourth *satipaṭṭhāna* lists five types of *dhammas* for contemplation: the mental hindrances, the aggregates, the sense-spheres, the awakening factors, and the four noble truths.

Contemplation of the body progresses from rudimentary experience of bodily postures and activities to contemplating the body’s anatomy. The increased sensitivity developed in this way forms the basis for contemplation of feelings, a shift of awareness from the immediately accessible physical aspects of experience to feelings as more refined and subtle objects of awareness.

⁹. Analayo, p. 29

Contemplation of feeling divides feelings not only according to their affective quality into pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral types, but also distinguishes these according to their worldly or unworldly nature. The latter part of contemplation of feelings thus introduces an ethical distinction of feelings, which serves as stepping-stones for directing awareness to the ethical distinction between wholesome and unwholesome states of mind, mentioned at the start of the next *satipaṭṭhāna*, contemplation of the mind.

Contemplation of the mind proceeds from the presence or absence of four unwholesome states of mind (lust, anger, delusion, and distraction), to contemplating the presence or absence of four higher states of mind. The concern with higher states of mind in the latter part of the contemplation of the mind naturally lends itself to a detailed investigation of those factors which particularly obstruct deeper levels of concentration. These are the hindrances, the first object of contemplation of *dhammas*.

From hindrances, contemplation of *dhammas* progresses to two analyses of subjective experience: the five aggregates and the six sense-spheres. Then, the contemplation followed by the awakening factors. The culmination of *satipaṭṭhāna* practice is reached with the contemplation of the four noble truths, full understanding of which coincides with realization.

2.2 *Samatha* or *Vipassanā*

Samatha is variously translated as “calmness”, “serenity”, “quiescence”, or “tranquility”. *Samatha* is the mental peace and stability that is generated through the cultivation of concentration (*samādhi*). *Samatha* is defined technically as the specific degree of concentration necessary to generate insight (*vipassanā*) into reality and thus lead to the destruction of the afflictions. *Samatha* when fully developed leads to the attainment of *jhāna* or meditative absorption.¹⁰

Vipassanā translated as “insight” is defined as the direct intuition of the three marks of existence that characterized all phenomena which are *aniccā* or impermanence, *dukkha* or suffering and *anatta* or nonself. *Vipassanā*, when fully developed, leads to enlightenment (*bodhi*) and *nibbāna*.¹¹

¹⁰. Lopez Jr. , p. 747

¹¹. Lopez Jr., p. 978

Thus the purpose of *samatha* is to alleviate lust, which here stands for all emotional defilements, whereas *vipassanā* eliminates ignorance, that is, intelligential defilements. Both of these in the Buddha's discourses strongly emphasize the complementary, integrative nature of these two aspects of meditation. The early texts never classify the various meditation themes into either *samatha* or *vipassanā*. They are not two different kinds of meditation; rather, they are qualities of the mind that should be developed. Broadly speaking, *samatha* refers to the emotional aspects of our mind, the heart qualities such as peace, compassion, love, bliss. *Vipassanā* refers to the wisdom qualities such as understanding, discrimination, and discernment. *Samatha* soothes the emotional defilements such as greed and anger, while *vipassanā* pierces with understanding the darkness of delusion. It is apparent that all meditation requires both of these qualities. In *satipaṭṭhāna*, *samatha* and *vipassanā* cannot be separated.¹²

In *Anguttara Nikāya*'s "The Book of the Fours" *Sutta* 170 mentioned clearly there are four types of *Samathavipassanā* methods¹³, The Venerable *Ānanda* said this:

"Friends, whatever *bhikkhu* or *bhikkhuni* has declared the attainment of arahantship in my presence has done so by these four paths or by certain one among them. What four?"

(1) "Here, a *bhikkhu* develops insight preceded by serenity. As he is developing insight preceded by serenity, the path is generated. He pursues this path, develops it, and cultivates it. As he is pursuing, developing, and cultivating this path, the fetters are abandoned and the underlying tendencies are uprooted."

(2) "Again, a *bhikkhu* develops serenity preceded by insight. As he is developing serenity preceded by insight, the path is generated. He pursues this path, develops it, and cultivates it. As he is pursuing, developing, and cultivating this path, the fetters are abandoned and the underlying tendencies are uprooted."

(3) "Again, a *bhikkhu* develops serenity and insight in conjunction. As he is developing serenity and insight in conjunction, the path is generated. He pursues this path, develops it, and

¹². Bhikkhu Sujato, "A History of Mindfulness". Web. 10 Feb 2015.

¹³. Chongan, Ling. "The Earliest Samathavipassanā Method Brought in to China." (Chinese) *Dharma Light Monthly* 237 (March 2011) pp.1.

cultivates it. As he is pursuing, developing, and cultivating this path, the fetters are abandoned and the underlying tendencies are uprooted.”

(4) “Again, a *bhikkhu*’s mind is seized by restlessness about the *Dhamma*. But there comes an occasion when his mind becomes internally steady, composed, unified, and concentrated. Then the path is generated in him. He pursues this path, develops it, and cultivates it. As he is pursuing, developing, and cultivating this path, the fetters are abandoned and the underlying tendencies are uprooted.”¹⁴

In the teaching of *satipaṭṭhāna*, we can safely say that it belongs to the type three. *Bhikkhu* Soma wrote in his book, “The diamond of the Way on which we stand to fight the evil in us is virtue that always supports. The invincible armor is concentration which keeps us calm and clear-headed and the mighty weapon is wisdom born of the penetrative insight by which we see things as they are.”¹⁵

The *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* states, “And how, monks, does he in regard to the body abide contemplating the body? Here, gone to the forest, or to the root of a tree, or to an empty hut, he sits down; having folded his legs crosswise, set his body erect, and established mindfulness in front of him, mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out.”

The basic difference between mindfulness of breathing as a *samatha* or as a *vipassanā* practice depends on what aspect is taken when observing the breath, since emphasis on just mentally knowing the presence of the breath is capable of leading to deep levels of concentration, while emphasis on various phenomena related to the process of breathing does not lead to a unitary type of experience but stays in the realm of variety and of sensory experience, and thus is more geared towards the development of insight.¹⁶

In *Samyukta-āgama* , there is a simile:

“It is just as a boarder-country king who has the walls of the city well kept in order, the gates with firm foundation and the access roads level and straight. He has placed four gatekeepers at

¹⁴. Bhikku Bodhi, *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha* (Bristol:PTS,2002), p.535-536.

¹⁵. Soma, Bhikku, and Pereira Cassius A. *The Way of Mindfulness*. (USA: Kessinger, 1949), p. viii.

¹⁶. Analayo, p.135

the four city gates, all of whom are clever and wise, knowing those who come and go. In that city there are four access roads towards the couch that has been prepared for the lord of the city to sit on.

Suppose from the eastern direction a messenger comes and asks the gatekeeper: “Where is the lord of the city?” He answers: “The lord is in the middle of the city, at the end of the four access roads, seated on a couch.” Having heard this, the messenger approaches the lord of the city. (Having delivered his message), he receives an instruction and returns by the road. From the southern ... western ... northern direction a messenger comes and asks the gatekeeper: “Where is the lord of the city?” He answers: “In the middle of the city, at the end of the four access roads.” Having heard it, they all approach the lord of the city, (deliver their message), receive an instruction and return to their former place.”

The *Samyukta-āgama* continues by identifying the four gatekeepers with the four *satipaṭṭhānas*. The task of the gatekeeper in this simile is to show the path by which the messengers can reach the lord of the city who represents consciousness. Thus the gatekeeper in this simile seems to reflect the monitoring role of mindfulness in relation to insight and tranquility. Through mindfulness – be this mindfulness in general, mindfulness of the body, or all four *satipaṭṭhānas* – one is aware of the proper route to be taken in cultivating insight and tranquility. This simile thus throws into relief the function of mindfulness as the mental quality that monitors progress on the path to liberation and thereby protects one from taking the wrong route.¹⁷

As a matter of fact, full awakening in *satipaṭṭhāna* requires a purification of both the cognitive and the affective aspect of the mind. A practitioner might develop one or the other aspect to a higher degree at different times, but in the final stages of practice both calm and insight need to be combined in order to reach the final aim – full awakening – the destruction of both passion and ignorance.

2.3 Liberation in *Satipaṭṭhāna*

The *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* gives a “prediction” of realization within a variable time period,

¹⁷ Analayo, *Perspective on Satipaṭṭhāna* (Cambridge: Windhorse, 2013), p. 28-29.

“If anyone should develop these four *satipaṭṭhānas* in such a way for seven years ... six years ... five years ... four years ... three years ... two years ... one year ... seven months ... six months... five months ... four months ... three months ... two months ... one month ... half a month ... seven days, one of two fruits could be expected for him: either final knowledge here and now, or, if there is a trace of clinging left, non-returning. So it was with reference to this that it was said:

Monks, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of *dukkha* and discontent, for acquiring the true method, for the realization of *Nibbāna*, namely, the four *satipaṭṭhānas*.”

Anālayo in the *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization* discusses whether the progress towards realization is ‘gradual’ or ‘sudden’.¹⁸ Apparently, even someone of inferior ability can gain freedom from desire and aversion within a maximum of seven years, while someone of superior ability can do so within only seven days. However, in evaluating this prediction it needs to be kept in mind that the number seven might have a more symbolic character in this context, indicating simply a complete period or cycle of time.

The variation in time periods for *satipaṭṭhāna* to bear fruit suggests that the decisive breakthrough to realization can happen any time during correct practice. That is, once sati is well established, every moment is pregnant with potential awakening.

This raises the question of the extent to which progress to realization follows a ‘gradual’ pattern, as against an unexpected ‘sudden’ breakthrough to awakening. The gradual nature of the progress towards realization is in fact a recurring theme in the discourses. They explain that progress in the practice of the *Dhamma* deepens gradually, in a way comparable to the gradual deepening of the ocean. A canonical illustration of the progress towards realization is that of a hen sitting on her eggs. In due course the hen’s unrelenting sitting on her eggs will lead to the hatching of the chicks, just as, in due course, a practitioner’s unrelenting practice will lead to realization. The chicks’ sudden emergence from their shells depends on a gradual process of inner development through the hen incubating the eggs. Similarly, the sudden breakthrough to *Nibbāna* depends on a gradual process of inner development and mental cultivation. Just as the hen cannot directly cause

¹⁸. Anālayo, p. 250-256

the chicks to break their shells, the breakthrough to *Nibbāna* cannot be directly made to happen. Both will occur in their own time, if the necessary conditions are in place.

On the other hand, several realization of stream-entry described in the discourses take place in a rather ‘sudden’ manner, usually while listening to a discourse given by the Buddha. ‘Sudden’ experiences of awakening can even lead all the way to arahantship. A case in point is the ascetic *Bāhiya*, whose full awakening came within minutes of his first meeting with the Buddha, immediately after receiving a short but penetrative instruction. *Bāhiya* is certainly a prototype for ‘sudden’ awakening.¹⁹ Most of the instances mentioned so far reveal the powerful influence of the Buddha’s personal presence, which provided a potent catalyst for realization.

Additional example can be found in *Ananda*’s all-out attempt to reach realization, finally he gained full awakening at precisely the moment when he had given up striving and was about to lie down to rest. All these instances demonstrate the sudden and unpredictable nature of the event of awakening. They show that, although a gradual progress towards realization is the rule, the time required for such gradual preparation to bear fruit varies greatly according to the individual.

2.4 *Satipaṭṭhāna* Meditation

It seems so simple and obvious after one has studied the *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation but in reality about the methods of practice has largely remained unclear. The most common instructions found to cultivate *satipaṭṭhāna* is from *Ānāpānasati Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. Mindfulness of breathing in sixteen steps exemplifies the practice of the four *satipaṭṭhānas*, with each *satipaṭṭhāna* being implemented by four of the sixteen steps. This shows in a very practical manner how to interrelate the four *satipaṭṭhānas* in a single form of practice.

Not until Venerable *U Narada* from Burma, from his own experience he developed the principles and the details of *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation. His direct or indirect students spread the knowledge of his method all over the world today. Venerable *Mahāsi Sayadaw* was one of the most prominent teachers of *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation in this tradition. Nyanaponika Thera named the training “The Burmese *Satipaṭṭhāna* Method”.

¹⁹. Peter Masefield, *The Udāna* (Lancaster:PTS,2007), p. 8-9

In recent years, *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation is commonly known by people as *vipassanā* or insight meditation. The system of *vipassanā* training taught today is modern constructs by generations of Burmese monks. Contemporary *Vipassanā* movements stress on wisdom bypassing the *jhāna* stage.²⁰

Another influential lay Burmese teacher of insight meditation is *U Ba Khin*. He explored several styles of *samatha* and *vipassanā* meditation and eventually developed his own technique of *vipassanā* by drawing on his own experiences. In 1952, *U Ba Khin* established the International Meditation Centre in Rangoon where he devoted all of his time to promoting *vipassanā* practice. The late S.N. Goenka, one of his chief disciples, was a well-known meditation teacher who promoted and established *vipassanā* centres all over the world.

²⁰ Fa Qing, “*Teaching Meditation in the Present China: Chan or Vipassanā*” WBU, International Conference to Commemorate, The Centenary of the Thai Supreme Patriarch Somdej Phra Nanasangvara on “Buddhist Studies in Contemporary World” At Viangtai Hotel, Bangkok, 14 December 2013

Chapter 3: Chan Buddhism

In The Platform Sutra of the Six Patriarch, Huineng said: “Good friends, our teaching takes meditation and wisdom as its fundamental. Everyone, do not say in your delusion that meditation and wisdom are different.

Meditation and wisdom are of one essence, not different. Meditation is the essence of wisdom, and wisdom is the function of meditation. At times of wisdom, meditation exists in that wisdom; at times of meditation, wisdom exists in that meditation. If you understand this doctrine, this is the equivalent study of meditation and wisdom. All you who study the Way, do not say that they are different, with meditation prior to and generating wisdom or with wisdom prior to and generating meditation. If you view them like that, then the Dharma would have two characteristic.....

“Good friends, how is that meditation and wisdom are equivalent? It is like the light of a lamp. When the lamp exists, there is light; when there is no lamp, there is darkness. The lamp is the essence of the light, and the light is the function of the lamp. Although the names are different, in essence they are fundamentally identical. The Dharma of meditation and wisdom is just like this.”²¹ This shows that Chan Buddhism stresses meditation and wisdom must be cultivated together in the process of enlightenment.

For Chan, meditation means the expression of attentive virtuosity. It is not enough simply to be able to perceive all things calmly and with insight. Indeed, there is a liability in pressing too far in the direction of simple equanimity: an absence of reasons to act with compassion on behalf of all sentient beings. Attentive virtuosity means being able to accord with each and every situation and respond as needed, whether it is a situation of utter complacency or utmost crisis.

Throughout The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch, Huineng continuously characterizes his approach to teaching and practicing Buddhism as “sudden”, not “gradual”.²² He says, “Good friend, the correct teaching is fundamentally without either sudden or gradual - it is human nature that is either clever or dull. Deluded people cultivate gradually, while enlightened people suddenly

²¹. Jond R.McRae, *The Platform Sutra of The Sixth Patriarch* (Berkeley: Numata,2000) E-library. IBC. Web. 15 Dec 2014, p. 41-42.

²². Jond R.McRae, *The Platform Sutra of The Sixth Patrairch* (Berkeley: Numata,2000) E-library. IBC. Web. 15 Dec 2014, p. 43.

conform to the truth. If you recognize your own fundamental mind and see your own fundamental nature, there will be no such distinction! Thus it is that sudden and gradual are posited as provisional names.” The “sudden” teaching refers to a personally embodied quality, not to that of words and letters. To stress on whether people are keen or dull is not the point how long it takes people to awaken. But, is to stress on qualitative differences in people’s disposition for awakening. The sudden teaching for which Huineng is so famous is not a particular kind of doctrine but a particular kind of relationship – one that is precise, beneficial, and productive. The ‘gradual’ approach to awakening is practiced by people without the attentive and dramatic resources needed to cut through the karmic tangles of cause and effect and reveal the true, enlightening nature of things just as they are.

Huineng said in the sutra²³: “Good friend, the *samādhi* of the single practice is to always practice the single direct mind in all one’s actions, whether walking, standing still, sitting, or lying down. The Vimalakirti Sutra says, ‘The straightforward mind is the place of enlightenment, the straightforward mind is the Pure Land.’ Don’t allow your mental practices to become twisted while merely speaking of straightforward with your mouth! If you speak of *samādhi* of the single practice with your mouth, you will not practice the straightforward mind. Just practice the straightforward mind, and be without attachment within all the *dharmas*.”

The prototype for zuochan (sitting meditation) is the Buddha’s own seated meditation under Bodhi tree, as well as the legendary Indian monk Bodhidharma’s “wall gazing” (*biguan*) for nine years in a cave. In the history of Chan Buddhism, zuochan became the primary practice in the tradition. However, some masters start to critique its necessity and importance; these critiques said that Chan practice was not to be confined just to zuochan, but should also be conducted throughout walking, standing and lying down. Huineng said, “Good friend, what is zuochan (seated meditation)? In this teaching, there is no impediment and no hindrance. Externally, for the mind to refrain from activating thoughts with regard to all the good and bad realms is called ‘seated’ (*zuo*). Internally, to see the motionlessness of the self-nature is called ‘meditation’ (*chan*).” In this redefinition, zuochan

²³. Jond R.McRae, *The Platform Sutra of The Sixth Patriarch* (Berkeley: Numata,2000) E-library. IBC. Web. 15 Dec 2014, p. 42.

means not just “seated meditation” but instead encompasses a way of understanding that is to be carried through all aspects of one’s experience.²⁴

Mazu also stressed that: “The Way is not a function of cultivation ... If you want to understand your Way; everyday mind is the Way (pingchangxin shi dao) ... Just like right now, whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, responding to external activities is entirely the Way.” According to the famous story, Mazu was awakened when his teacher Nanyue likened Mazu’s sitting in meditation to the act of polishing of a roof tile. Just as a roof tile cannot be polished to make a mirror, sitting meditation, says Nanyue, cannot lead to buddhahood.²⁵

In the Platform Sutra, Huineng said, “Good friends, there are also those who teach meditation in terms of viewing the mind, contemplating tranquility, motionlessness, and no activation. You are supposed to make an effort on the basis of these. These deluded people do not understand, and in their grasping become mixed up like all of you here. You should understand that such superficial teachings are greatly mistaken!”

Why Huineng think that “viewing the mind” is the wrong method? This is because “viewing the mind” method stressed on motionless and concentrate in viewing the mind without clear comprehension. The meditator may go into delusion once the concentration is lost. Huineng wants people to clearly comprehend the true nature of mind but not seated as a statue.²⁶

In the present day, Chan practices are left only with ‘kanhua Chan’ and ‘mozhao Chan’. Kanhua Chan means “questioning meditation”, which its systematization commonly traced back to the writings of the Song dynasty Chan master Dahui Zonggao. This method used “huatou” (topic of meditative inquiry) derived from “gong’an” (public cases) that helps to free the mind from conceptualization and to lead the meditator forward toward liberation. Mozhao Chan or silent illumination meditation suggests that, since enlightenment is the natural state of the mind, there is nothing that needs to be done in order to attain enlightenment other than letting go all striving for

²⁴. Lopez Jr., p. 1062

²⁵. Lopez Jr., P. 537

²⁶. Chongan, Ling. “*Viewing the mind and comprehending the mind.*” (Chinese) *Dharma Light Monthly* 302 (November 2014) pp. 1.

that state. This method entails only maintaining this original purity of the mind by simply sitting silently in meditation.²⁷

Chapter 4: *Satipaṭṭhāna* versus Chan Buddhism

The Mahāyāna Sutras that talked about *satipaṭṭhāna* are represented by *Sāntideva*'s anthology, the Siksasammuccaya and his own masterly work, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. These works show how deeply he appreciated the importance of *satipaṭṭhāna* in the framework of the teaching.²⁸ Those who are inspired by Mahāyāna Bodhisattva Ideal will definitely require a very high degree of mindfulness and clear comprehension to maintain and develop the Perfections or *Pāramitā*, which are the requisite conditions of Buddhahood. Chan Buddhism which stresses on becoming a buddha in this life definitely needs such high achievement before full enlightenment.

There are three complete versions of the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* available, one in *Pali* and two in Chinese. In addition there is a fourth, incomplete version found in the large *Prajñānapāramitā Sutra*. This is one of the foundational texts of the Mahayana, and is usually held to have been compiled roughly 500 years after the Buddha's passing away. This text is available in versions of varying length in Tibetan and Chinese. The *Sutra* treats *satipaṭṭhāna* in the first group of the 37 factors to enlightenment as part of the Mahayana path of the Bodhisattva.²⁹ *Prajñānapāramitā* texts are among the important sutras after the Sixth Patriarch in Chan's teaching.

Satipaṭṭhāna is the direct path to realization that Buddha recommended to beginners and advanced practitioners. Until today *satipaṭṭhāna* still provides the most simple, thorough and effective method for training the mind to be freed from greed, hatred and delusion. Chan Buddhism stresses one's own *buddha nature* which through Chan practices enlightenment can be obtained in this life. In modern day, Chan practices become part of people's life to overcome the intense stress of modern life.

No matter *satipaṭṭhāna* or Chan Buddhism, cultivating the mind in daily life is utmost important in the progress of spiritual liberation. The attainments of both practices need to be practical in everyday life and it can be taught to others to repeat the cessation of suffering. Clear

²⁷. Lopez Jr., p, 415, 549.

²⁸. Thera, p. xx.

²⁹. Sujato, p.164.

comprehension is the basic requirement for both *satipaṭṭhāna* and Chan Buddhism practices to progress. Concentration and wisdom need to be fully developed before realization or enlightenment is achieved. However, the core teaching of Chan Buddhism is still sudden awakening but *satipaṭṭhāna* is a gradual process in practice.

Satipaṭṭhāna is the direct message from the Buddha as an effective way of solving present day afflictions and problems. But, the human mind is the focus point to accept the message and take the first step to know the mind, to shape the mind and to achieve freedom of the mind. Chan Buddhism developed later in China about 1300 years after the *parinibbāna* of the Buddha. It stresses the mind or buddhanature more than any other school in China. One's own mind is the cultivated subject and enlightenment is achieved in the mind.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Under globalization, interfaith dialogues become an important part of religious bodies. At the same time, Buddhism comprised of different denominations need to understand each other even more. In modern practice, meditation no matter *satipaṭṭhāna* or Chan can be seen as a type of training designed to increase one's EQ (emotional quotient), IQ (intelligence quotient) and MQ (moral quotient). It is also a kind of training and management of the mind. Mindfulness is already widely applied in psychotherapy. Chan practices are included in some industrial training programs to increase productivity. The relationship between *satipaṭṭhāna* and Chan Buddhism is very close and in reality they complement to each other. Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh shows us the perfect match of both in his mindful living teachings.

The application of concentration and insight aims at training the mind to be skilful in both *satipaṭṭhāna* and Chan. Those who are skilful in concentration will stay away from the five hindrances and always mindful with clear comprehension at the present moment. They will have a clear and sharp mind to further attain ultimate truth. In the practice of insight or wisdom, the mind is trained to have wise attention so that it focuses on the meditative object moment to moment. By realizing that they are merely concepts and ideas where there is no solid substance behind, the mind will not be misled by delusion on conventional phenomena.

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