# Metaphors of "Sickness and Remedy" in Early Chán Texts from Dūnhuáng.

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Among the early Chán materials from Dūnhuáng there are some short treatises which so far have not received much scholarly attention and which operate with metaphors of "sickness" and "cure," the latter usually being related to the "proper" application of Buddhist practices. In this short paper dedicated to Jens Braarvig on the occasion of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, I will briefly deal with two of these texts.

The use of medical metaphors has a long tradition in Buddhist texts, including sūtras, commentaries, and treatises. In his study of Chinese Buddhist medieval medicine, Salguero (2014: 68) more generally differentiates between five types of metaphors employed:

- (1) The body is a collection of parts;
- (2) health and disease are rewards and retributions;
- (3) the Dharma is medicine;
- (4) deities are healers;
- (5) healing is an occult power.

The metaphors used in the material discussed here clearly belong to the third category in which the Buddhist Dharma is regarded as "medicine" for specific diseases (or rather "impurities"). *Text One*, in particular, uses this metaphor very creatively and in addition embeds it in a rhetorical structure aimed at promoting Buddhist practices as being more effective in curing ailments as compared to techniques usually related to Daoist alchemy and/or popular longevity practices. More generally, the fundamental afflictions pertaining to the human condition consist of birth, old age, illness, and death, and the Buddhist Dharma is regarded as the overall cure for them (Salguero 2014: 78–79), and—in particular—for mental impurities such as greed, anger, and delusion (ibid.: 80). The first treatise discussed here is much more specific in the description of ailments and the corresponding

<sup>1</sup> A locus classicus is the discussion of sickness in the Sūtra on the Contemplation of the Two Bodhisattvas King of Medicine and Supreme Medicine (Fóshuō guān Yàowáng Yàoshàng èr púsà jīng 佛說觀藥王藥上二菩薩經;\*Bhaiṣajyarāja-bhaiṣajyasamudgata-sūtra; T.20, no.1161: 660–666; see Greene 2012: 82, fn.18). Another influential text is the Fóshuō fóyī jīng 佛說佛醫經, (T.17, no.793), supposedly translated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> c., blending Indian and Chinese medical terminology (on this text, see Salguero 2010: 182–183).

cures. Combined with a criticism of "alchemistic" practices, the text displays a remarkable rhetorical structure, operating with both concrete and abstract concepts and terminology.<sup>2</sup>

Text One: Sēngchóu chánshī yàofāng liáo yǒulóu 稠禪師藥方療有漏

### Meditation Master Sēngchóu

There are several early Chán 襌 texts discovered among the Dūnhuáng 敦煌 corpus which feature the Northern Qí 北齊 (550-577) monk Sēngchóu 僧稠 (480-560) who is regarded as the most influential Northern Chinese meditation specialist of the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> Although this monk eventually did not become part of the orthodox Chán lineage he had considerable influence on the development of the meditation schools in China, and seems to have been an extremely important figure of identification for adherents of the emerging Chán movement during the late 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. In contrast to Bodhidharma (dates unknown) there is a wealth of extant sources on his life<sup>4</sup> and teachings. Sēngchóu was not only famous as a master who practiced meditation for extended periods of time but also as a powerful thaumaturg. Dàoxuán's biography describes several of these events when he displayed his supernatural abilities, including the conversion of robbers, his encounter with and submission of demons, his ability to reactivate springs which had been dried out for a long time, and—most importantly—his ability to separate fighting tigers with his monk's staff. In addition, he was also known for his close relationship to Emperor Wénxuān 文宣 of the Northern Qí who cited Sēngchóu to court in 551 as a royal teacher. In the biography, Dàoxuán devotes a whole section on the interaction between the emperor and Sēngchóu.<sup>5</sup> After having declined the

<sup>2</sup> For a more general discussion on the use of Buddhist terminology in the rhetorical structure of Chán Buddhist texts, see Anderl 2012.

For an unpublished monograph-size study on Sēngchóu, see Anderl 1995 (including full translations into German of the biographical material and the three Dūnhuáng treatises attributed to him).

<sup>4</sup> The main biographical information on Sēngchóu is based on Dàoxuān 道宣's (596–667) Xù gāosēng zhuàn 續高僧傳 (T.50, no.2060: 553b25–555b25; tr. in Anderl 1995: 9–33). Dàoxuán also regarded himself as a third generation successor of Sēngchóu (for the lineage of Sēngchóu, see ibid.: 62; for a recent thorough study on his significance as meditation master of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, see Chen 2002; for the contrasts between Bodhidharma and Sēngchóu, see Faure 1986). In addition to the biographical sources, his meditation cave dating from the Northern Qí period is extant in the Ānyáng area (Hénán Province). On the Xiǎonánhǎi 小南海 Cave and its iconography and inscriptions, see Hénán 1991, Yan 1995, Tsiang 1996, Ouchi 1997, Hsu 1999, Yasuo 2000, and Yasuo 2002.

<sup>5</sup> T.50, no.2060: 554a18-555a9.

invitation to court several times, an earthquake occurred at Sēngchóu's hermitage in the mountains, and he interpreted it as a sign that he should finally leave his practice in solitude and instead work for the salvation of sentient beings. Emperor Wénxuān is described as having personally welcomed Sēngchóu when he arrived at the capital of Yè 鄴. At that time, the monk was already 70 years old. According to the biography, he focused on the teaching of śūnyatā (sānjiè běn kōng 三界本空 'the Three Worlds are fundamentally without substance'), and the traditional method of Contemplation of the Four Bases of Mindfulness (sìniànchù fǎ 四念處法; Skr. caturnāṃ smṛty-upasthānānām). He personally taught meditation (chándào 禪道) to the emperor and administered the bodhisattva vows (púsà jièfǎ 菩薩戒法) to him. According to Dàoxuán's account, the emperor became vegetarian, abstained from wine drinking, uprooted garlic and onion plants in the imperial gardens, released captured animals, prohibited hunting, and ordered several yearly fasting periods for the general populace.

Indeed, he might also have been an obvious candidate for "First Patriarch" of the Chán School, a position which was retrospectively assigned to the enigmatic Bodhidharma whose "biography" could be more easily molded into an ideal founding figure, suitable for the emerging Chán School in the late 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The three texts attributed to Sēngchóu on P.3664/3559 $^6$  are clearly composed in the context of early Chán, both concerning style and terminology; in addition, the treatises appear on a manuscript containing many important texts of the East Mountain (Dōngshān 東山) School of early Chán Buddhism. Besides the "medical" Buddhist treatise discussed here, the other two texts on the manuscript associated with Sēngchóu—the *Chóu chánshī yì* 稠禪師意 (*The Intention of Chán Master* 

<sup>6</sup> The manuscript Pelliot 3664/3559 contains very important material on the Early Chán School and has been extensively studied (see especially Yanagida 1963 and McRae 1986). It is difficult to precisely date the various texts contained in the manuscript but they reflect Chán thought of the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. The terminus *ad quem* is 751 (the date on the verso side of P.3018, the continuation of P.3559; see McRae 1986: 326, fn.160 and Tanaka 1969: 207). Besides the Sēngchóu texts, the main focus of the manuscript are texts attributed to Shénxiù 神秀 (Yuánmíng lùn 圓明論 'Treatise of Perfect Illumination') and (the retrospective Fifth Patriarch) Hóngrĕn 弘忍 (Xiū xīnyào lùn 修心要論 'Treatise on the Essentials of the Practice of Mind'), in addition to the early transmission text Chuán făbăo jì 傳法寶紀 ('Record of the Transmission of the Dharma Treasure') which constructs a patriarchal lineage between Bodhidharma, Huìkě 慧可, Sēngcàn 僧璨, Dàoxìn 道 信, Hóngrěn 弘忍, Fǎrú 法如, and Shénxiù 神秀. Other materials includes a poem by the Northern School master Pǔjì 普寂 (651-739), a text entitled Five Vajra Rituals (Jīngāng wǔ lǐ 金剛五禮), some lines concerning the recitation of the *Prajñāparamitā sūtra*, and a short text entitled Xiù héshàng zhuàn 秀和尚傳 ('The Transmission of Preceptor [Shén]Xiù'), in addition to a short treatise on meditation with terminology related to Consciousness-only and Tathāgatagarbha theories.

Chóu) and the Dàshèng xīnxíng lùn 大乘心行論 (Treatise on the Practice of Mind in Mahāyāna)—are somewhat longer and composed in the form of treatises dealing with mediation and the cultivation of the mind. These texts show significant similarities to other early Chán works.<sup>7</sup>

The medical text is very different as compared to the other two, which focus on early Chán key terms and concepts. Although any context of the creation of the medical text is missing, we might speculate that it was composed in order to delimit the early Chán movement from other contemporary popular practices, including those of alchemy and the prolongation of life. After all, Chán masters often had the reputation of engaging in magic and obscure supernatural practices; the text discussed here aims at promoting meditation practice and advocates the superiority of the Buddhist (Chán) teaching.



Illustration: Sēngchóu's "meditation cave" at Xiǎonánhǎi (Ānyáng); above and to the left of the entrance, a passage from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra* (T.12, no.374) is engraved (photograph: Christoph Anderl, 2009-08-03).

<sup>7</sup> On Sēngchóu's teachings, see especially Anderl 1995: 42–144; see also Yanagida 1963, Jan 1983a, Jan 1983b, McRae 1986, Okimoto 1987, Ran 1990a, Ran 1990b, Shèng 2006.

#### The Context: Buddhist and Taoist Competition

The interaction between Buddhism and Daoism during the Táng Dynasty was characterized by an ongoing competition for attention and resources from the rulers, the aristocracy, and the literati on the one hand, and mutual influences on the other hand. As has been pointed out by Mollier (2008), during the early Táng apocryphal scriptures such as the *Huàhú jīng* 化胡經 ('Sūtra of Converting the Barbarians') had an enormous influence (to the extent that it was temporarily forbidden by Emperor Zhōngzōng 中宗 in 705). The mutual influences and rivalries are evidenced by textual and iconographic material preserved in the Dūnhuáng corpus. On the scriptural level, there can be several modes of interaction discerned, such as terminological substitution between Buddhist and Daoist scriptures, "scriptural mixand-match games," and competition concerning the quantity of scriptures produced. Both Buddhists and Daoists produced scriptures on a wide range of topics, such as liturgy, magic, spells, longevity, material prosperity, the avoidance of deceases and misfortune, the use of talisman and astrology for determining appropriate activities in daily life, salvation and afterlife, and self-cultivation.

In our Sēngchóu text, the technical terminology used in producing medical substances applied to secure longevity and cure ailments of the body is humorously transferred to a "metaphysical" level and replaced by a matching terminology of Buddhist defilements and their cure. Whereas Sēngchóu's fame concerning his practice of meditation and as an exegete of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra* and other scriptures clearly inspired the compilation of the two other manuscripts attributed to him<sup>11</sup> in P.3664/3559, the inclusion of the *Medical Prescription* might be actually

<sup>8</sup> See Adamek 2007: 8, 44, 242f. For examples of the treatment of Daoism in early Chán, see the *Lìdài făbăo jì* (ibid.: 23). "[...] the treatment of Daoism in the *Lidai fabao ji* reflects a milieu of sophisticated cross-borrowing and criticism among eighth-century Buddhists and philosophical Daoists that had its roots in fourth-century *xuanxue*." (ibid.: 30). For a more general discussion on early Chán and Daoism, see Tanaka 1978.

<sup>9</sup> See Mollier 2008: 15.

<sup>10</sup> Mollier (ibid.) also discusses different degrees of "borrowing" between the two religions: cloning of scriptures (i.e., forgeries), remodeling, terminological substitution, adaptation, and response. One of the most obvious features of the Sēngchóu treatise below is terminological substitution. At the end of the treatise there is an attack on Daoist/alchemical practices which are classified as inferior to the Buddhist teachings. Competitions between Buddhist and Daoist clergy (often concerning magic efficiency or soteriological powers) are also an important topic found on paintings in the Dūnhuáng grottos. On medical manuscripts among the Dūnhuáng findings, see the catalogues by Wang Shumin: http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo\_cat.a4d?shortref =WangShumin\_2005.

<sup>11</sup> The two Sēngchóu treatises deal with various key concepts of Early Chán, including meditation techniques such as  $\bar{a}nx\bar{i}n$  安心 'pacifying the Mind,'  $sh\check{o}ux\bar{i}n$  守心 'guarding the Mind,'  $b\grave{u}a\check{i}$  不起 'not giving rise [to deluded thinking],'  $k\grave{a}nx\bar{i}n$  看心 'contemplating the Mind,'  $w\acute{u}ni\grave{a}n$  無念 'no-mentation,' in addition to Bodhisattva precepts and practices. The treatises also cite

traced to other aspects of Sēngchóu's life, as transmitted in the biographical material. Those features concern especially his reputation as miracle worker (which would make him a natural competitor for the multitude of thaumaturgs, Daoist priests, shamans, etc., said to have been active at the courts of Northern Chinese monarchs during the period of the Six Dynasties). <sup>12</sup> In Dàoxuán's biography there are some passages which directly refer to Sēngchóu's interaction with popular religious practices (and the "civilizing force" of Buddhism), and his attitude towards longevity practices:

燕趙之境。道未通被略言血食。眾侶奔赴禮貺填充。時或名利所纏者。稠為說偈止之。聞者慚色而止。便為陳修善偈。預在息心之儔。更新其器。既道張山世望 重天心。

In the area of Yānzhào (in today's Hénán Province) the Way (i.e., Buddhism) had not penetrated yet, to the effect that people practiced "blood offerings." The people there were entangled in rituals with prayers for plentiful times or fame and profit. [Sēng]chóu recited a *dhāraṇī* for them in order to stop them. The listeners looked ashamed and halted. Thereupon, he expounded for them the *Dhāraṇī* of the Cultivation of Goodness. They should find satisfaction in a kind [of practice] which calmed the mind and [in this way] reformed their capacity (i.e., moral behavior). Thus, the Way spread to the mountain area (i.e., the area where Sēngchóu practiced as hermit), and [his reputation] reached the Majesty, the Emperor (lit. "the heart of Heaven") [?]. 14

There is indeed another passage in Dàoxuán's biography which more directly deals with the submission of demons, and his attitude toward longevity practices. The

from several key scriptures popular among Early Chán adherents, such as the *Vimalakīrti sūtra* and the *Lankāvatāra sūtra*.

<sup>12</sup> Another aspect which without doubt made Sēngchóu attractive as a person of identification for early Chán adherents was his relationship to the emperor (see also above) which is described by Dàoxuán as an ideal symbiosis of religious and secular power. He acted as teacher of the emperor and the emperor is said to have implemented Buddhists principles and practices at court and among the general populace, in addition to building several monasteries. The biography has a passage on the duties of a *dānapati* who governs the state according to Buddhist principles. There are clear parallels to Shénxiù who is the main focus of the material on P.3664/3559. As in the case of Sēngchóu, his reception in the capital by Empress Wǔ in 701 was spectacular, the Empress even kneeling down in front of Shénxiù. As in the case of the Emperor of the Northern Qí, Wǔ Zétiān 武則天 also actively used Buddhism to legitimate her rule (and the usurpation of the throne) and was one of the greatest supporters of the emerging Chinese Buddhist schools such as Huáyán, Chán, and Tiāntái.

<sup>13</sup> Xuèshí 血食 'blood sacrifices; blood and food offerings,' involving the sacrifice of animals. Stein (1979: 55) translates this ancient term with "feed on the blood [of animals sacrificed]," usually performed for local deities. Also in Daoism, xuèshí usually refers to unorthodox sacrifices to deities outside the Daoist pantheon. According to Stein, between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, some of these local practices were integrated in Daoist rituals (ibid.: 58–59).

<sup>14</sup> T.50, no.2060: 554a15-18.

passage occurs right after the famous episode of Sēngchóu's separating the fighting tigers:

即住嵩岳寺。僧有百人泉水纔足。忽見婦人弊衣挾帚却坐階上聽僧誦經。眾不測為神人也。便訶遣之。婦有愠色以足蹋泉立竭身亦不現。眾以告稠。稠呼優婆夷。三呼乃出。便謂神曰。眾僧行道宜加擁護。婦人以足撥於故泉。水即上涌。時共深異威感如此。後詣懷州西王屋山。修習前法。聞兩虎交鬪咆響振巖。乃以錫杖中解。各散而去。一時忽有仙經兩卷在于床上。稠曰。我本修佛道。豈拘域中長生者乎。言已須臾自失。其感致幽現皆此類也。

At the time when [Sēngchōu] resided at the Sòngyuè Monastery, there were 100 monks and the water from the spring was just sufficient for them. Suddenly, they encountered a woman who had a broom clasped under her arm, sitting on the steps and listening to the monks reciting the *sūtras*. The assembly did not fathom that this was a spirit. Thereupon they cursed her and chased her away. The woman got a resentful expression and stepped on the spring which immediately dried up, and [then she] disappeared. The assembly told Sēngchóu who thereupon shouted: "Upāsikā!" (i.e., female lay practitioner) He shouted three times and then the spirit reappeared. He then addressed her, saying: "The assembly of monks should more firmly maintain their practice of the Way." The woman poked the dried-out spring with her foot and the water immediately gushed forth. From time to time, [Sēngchóu] displayed his awe-inspiring powers with such extraordinary deeds.

Afterwards, he visited the Western Wángwū Mountain and practiced the previously discussed [meditation] method. He heard two tigers fighting with each other, their roars shaking the mountain, and [thereupon] separated them with his monk's staff. The tigers let go of each other and left.

At one time he suddenly found two scriptures on immortality practices on his bed (or: meditation platform). Sēngchóu said: "I fundamentally practice the Way of the Buddha. What point is there to constrain oneself to prolonging one's life in this world?" After he had said these words, the scriptures disappeared at once. His effect on supernatural phenomena were all of that kind. <sup>15</sup>

#### Critical Edition and Translation of the Medical Prescription

In the *Sēngchóu chánshī yàofāng liáo yǒulóu* 稠禪師藥方療有漏 (short: Medical Prescription)<sup>16</sup> medical/alchemical substances are not only replaced by Buddhist

<sup>15</sup> T.50, no.2060: 553c23-28.

<sup>16</sup> Yanagida mentions other similar texts on S.3177 and P.3641; however, in my opinion these texts are rather different from our Sēngchóu text. For a critical edition and German translation of the *Medical Prescription*, see Anderl 1995: 80–83; for editions and discussions of the treatise, see also Yanagida 1963: 61–63; Tanaka 1974: 47–48; Okimoto 1989: 94; Jan 1983b. However, recently I became aware of a similar text as compared to the Medical Prescription, both in terms of structure and contents. This text is partly preserved in P. 3244 and P.3777. As such, the text attributed to Sēngchóu is not unique, but seems to belong to a genre using a blend of medical and Buddhist terminology. For a very short introduction to the texts in P.3244 and

terms and concepts but they are also imbedded in a "medical" language, and quantitative expressions used for medicinal substances are followed by abstract Buddhist terms, a highly innovative linguistic and conceptual device:<sup>17</sup>

稠禪師藥方療有漏//	Chán Master [Sēng]Chóu's Medical Prescription to	
	Cure the Afflictions—	
病愈出三界逍遙散//	[Medicinal] Powder for Healing the Illness [in order to]	
	Escape the Triple World and Traverse Freely [?] <sup>18</sup>	
信受一兩/	One ounce of accepting the Faith <sup>19</sup>	
{取渴仰樂聞佛法者}	take it when you long <sup>20</sup> for the pleasure to hear the	
	Buddha-dharma.	

P.3777, see Lĭ/Shĭ/Wèi 2007: 434-437.

Faure (1991: 110) translates the title with "Dhyāna Master Chóu's Medicinal Prescription for Curing the Outflows". Lines 651–652 and 654 are translated in ibid.: "One third ounce of faithfully receiving (Take swallowing a joyful listening to the Buddha dharma in the midst of thirst); two-third ounce of pure zeal (take day-and-night concentration on practice and not falling off); one-third ounce of Voidness-gate (Take the vision of knowing internal and external) [...] Grind up the above eight flavors with the axe of kindness, and in the mortar of samādhi finely pulverize them. Take a non dual silk-strainer [...]."

- 17 Revised based on the edition and German translation in Anderl 1995: 80–83. Already Yanagida (1963: 65–67) mentioned the difficulties posed by the text. I want to thank Fălìng (Ghent University) for useful comments and suggestions (especially on the "narrative" passage of the text), and Dr. Lín Jìnghuì 林靜慧 (DILA, Taiwan) for her valuable comments on some of the variant Chinese character forms. Conventions used in the edition: '/' symbolizes empty spaces between characters in the manuscript. Parts marked with '{...}' are written in smaller characters in the manuscript. '' refers to a diacritic added occasionally on the right sight of the manuscript columns, marking that the Chinese characters should be read in reverse order. Diacritic markers and corrections can be found on many Dūnhuáng manuscripts; our manuscript has also red dots inserted in the narrative part in order to "parse" the text for the reader (often it is not clear whether these were made by the person copying the text, or whether they are later additions, for example by a reader or monastery librarian); in the edition here, the red dots are indicated by '。'.
- 18 The subtitle actually already poses several problems. I interpret sàn 散 as '(medicinal) powder' as in sànyào 散藥. However, sàn can also be 'distraction' (similar to luàn 亂), and is antonymous to dìng 定 'concentration.' Most probably xiāoyáo sàn 逍遙散 should be regarded as one term, still used in contemporary Chinese medicine, usually translated with 'Ease Powder' or 'Free Wanderer Powder.' The term for this medicine is usually traced back to the Sòng Dynasty (e.g., Tàipíng huìmíng héjì júfāng 太平惠民和利局方), and the substance has been used against liver, spleen, blood diseases, etc. The mention in our treatise is significantly earlier than the sources cited in dictionaries (although here the powder might not refer to a specific medical substance).
- 19 Xìnshòu 信受: Skr. pratīyati.
- 20 Kěyǎng 渴仰 'to intensely long for (such as a thirsty person longing for water);' lèwén 樂聞 (Skr. śravaṇīya), lit. 'take pleasure in listening > pleasant to hear;' in Chinese translations and

精勤二兩	Two ounces of vigorous effort	
{取晝夜專習不墮者}	take it to single-mindedly practice day and night without	
	backsliding.	
空門一兩	One ounce of the Teaching of Emptiness	
{取內「知(=知內)外	take it to know [all] internal and external views. <sup>21</sup>	
見者}		
息緣二兩	Two ounces of ceasing [external] conditions	
{取知畢竟無所得者}	take it to know that ultimately there is nothing to attain.	
觀空一兩	One ounce of the contemplation of emptiness <sup>22</sup>	
{取知苦空無常者}	take it to know [the truths of] suffering, insubstantiality, and impermanence.	
無我二兩	Two ounces of No-self	
{取無自他分別者}	grasp [the knowledge] that there is no difference between oneself and others.	
逆流一兩	One ounce of resisting the flow [of transmigration]	
{取不入色聲香味觸法	take it in order not to enter the dharmas of form, sound,	
者}	smell, taste, and touch.	
離欲二兩	Two ounces of distancing oneself from desires	
{取無依無處有者}//	take it in order not to depend on or dwell in existence.	
右此八唯。23	These eight flavors to the right (i.e. the above	
	mentioned),	
惠斧剉之。	cut them up with the axe of wisdom,	
於定臼中細擣(=搗)。	pound them finely in the mortar of concentration (samādhi);	
4-4 > 0		

texts, this term is often used to refer to the sound of Indic languages (*fànyīn* 梵音). This "Brahma voice" is also one of the 32 marks of the Buddha. Compare: 梵音深妙,令人樂聞。各於世界,講說正法,種種因緣 "The Brahma-sound is profound, and causes people to take pleasure in listening; Each [Buddha] in his world proclaims the Right Dharma and all kinds of *avadāna*." (*Lotus sūtra*, T.9, no.262: 2c).

<sup>21</sup> Probably *nèi* refers to views on teachings within Buddhism, whereas *wài* refers to non-Buddhist (i.e. heretic) teachings.

<sup>22</sup> On  $k\bar{o}nggu\bar{a}n$  空觀, see Nakamura 1975: 280b—c. In the Mahāyāna context it usually refers to a twofold meditation on the insubstantiality of oneself and all the dharmas ( $\dot{e}r$   $k\bar{o}nggu\bar{a}n$  二空 觀). The method became originally popular in Tiāntái 天台 Buddhism.

<sup>23</sup> Starting from here, red dots are inserted on the right side, indicating how the text should be parsed into phrases. It is unclear who added these dots. The hand is different from other diacritics added with black ink. Here, the red dots are marked with ". ".

以24不二羅飾。	and make use of the sieve of non-duality. <sup>25</sup>	
勿令麤(=粗)過。	Do not let impurities pass through;	
日服方寸匕(?)。26	daily take the dose of a medicine spoon,	
若消者不限多少。	if you digest it countless times (lit. not limited to how	
	many times);	
若悶旋塔。逍遙 27	if anguished (bewildered) you circumambulate a pagoda	
	and [as a consequence] roam freely; [?]	
穩即幽居靜坐。	[thus,] at ease [you] then sit in quit meditation at a	
	secluded place.	
其慎藥之法	As for this method of careful medication,	
逢人省出語。	meeting people one will sparingly utter words, [?]	

<sup>25</sup> *Luóshāi* 羅飾 'sieve, strainer' and *jiù* 臼 'mortar' are two of the traditional ten utensils in an alchemical laboratory.

<sup>26 &#</sup>x27;Spoon' is written with the strange character [[‡+比]; having found no other reference I assume it is a variant of 比. Compare fàngcún bǐ 方寸比, a measure in the shape of a spoon used for applying medicinal substances. It could be also an erroneous form of 批 (in Dūnhuáng characters the radicals 木 and ‡ are frequently interchanged). On 批—which is also a "new" form appearing in Dūnhuáng manuscripts meaning 'wooden ladle/spoon' (e.g., S.5431)—see Zhào Hóng 2012: 79.

<sup>27</sup> Xuán tǎ 旋塔 is a relatively rare expression for 'circumambulate a stūpa' (繞塔). According to Feng & Zheng (2006: 575a, entry 1.2), 旋 is phonetically close to 還 which again is frequently used in the semantics 'to encircle' (環繞). Xuán tǎ is occasionally used in Buddhist texts, e.g., the Fǎyuàn zhūlín 法苑珠林, citing a passage from the (not extant) Tíwèi jūng 提謂經 (Sūtra of Trapuṣa and Bhallika, T.53, no.2122: 582c), in which the efficacy of circumambulating a stūpa in terms of merit-making is praised. 逍遙 is a term frequently used both in Daoist and Buddhist texts. Originally appearing in the Zhuāngzǐ, in Chán material it describes the unrestrained and relaxed way of life of an enlightened person, free and unhindered (in later Chán texts usually in the compound xiāoyáo zìzài 逍遙自在 'to roam freely and independently'). The term also refers back to the title.

值物與 <sup>28</sup> 心 <sup>29</sup> 防貪 <sup>30</sup> 斷	Encountering beings (things), guard against craving in
31口味 32。	the mind and cut off "the taste."
特厄(= 阨?)好行	What is particularly harmful is the desire to engage in
婬。	acts of licentiousness. <sup>33</sup>
茅菴最獲樂。	A small thatched <sup>34</sup> hut will greatly yield pleasure;
任意得湯風。	willingly, one attains (> exposes oneself to) the hot
	(blazing) wind;
冝(宜)寒便處凍	adjusted to coldness, one takes pleasure in dwelling in
(?) <sup>35</sup> °	the freezing chill;
弊服益功能。	torn [monk's] robes will increase its effectiveness [of
	exposing oneself to the weather].
非但破宿結。36	Not only will it [i.e., this practice] destroy the (karmic)
	entanglements of previous lives,
亦復 37息殘徵。	but it will also bring to rest the remaining 'signs' [for
	future rebirth].

<sup>28</sup> This phrase poses many problems. A blurred character is added in red on the right side. The reading 與 is somewhat doubtful: Maybe used for 以 ('with the mind') or 於 ('in the mind',' in the medieval dialect of the Northwestern region yi/yi/yi were often read homophonous)? Or should we rather read xīng xīn 與心 'to arouse the mind,' which also would make sense in the context? 值物 is a very unusual expression; compare 值佛 'encounter the Buddha (in person);' how shall we interpret this in combination with 'taste'? Could it be that 值物 refers to 'edible' things (i.e., 殖/植物) and the sentence means that one should cut off craving and the 'taste sense' when eating? However, I interpreted the phrase above in the following way: 值物與心 'encountering things/objects, one arouses the mind.'

<sup>30</sup> Okimoto reads 貧 instead of 貪. The graph is quite clearly 貪 凰.

<sup>31</sup> Written with the abbreviated form .

<sup>32</sup> Okimoto reads the character as 味; Yanagida suggests an alternative reading for 末: 未. However, the text shows 口味 . Or is the first character not 口 but a repetition diacritic (> 斷斷) 'continuously/repeatedly cut off'?.

<sup>33</sup> Not to engage in sexual misconduct is the second of the five basic prohibitions (wǔjiè 五戒). The second fascicle of the Fànwáng jīng 梵王經 features ten major precepts (shí zhòngjiè 十重戒).

<sup>34</sup> *Máoàn* 茅菴/茅庵 refers to a small thatched hut (in the Buddhist context also used for a secluded place of retreat or small monastery).

<sup>35</sup> The original character in the text is scratched out and replaced by a character written in red ink on the right side ■, probably 凍 or 東.

<sup>36</sup> In the manuscript: , with a diacritic marking the reading in reverse order.

<sup>37</sup> A character is inserted with black ink on the right side and seemingly canceled out with red ink:

騰空林(出)38藪。	Soaring in the air [above] the woods and marshes <sup>39</sup>	
火宅不相逢。	the burning house <sup>40</sup> is not encountered [anymore].	
金丹未足比。	If golden cinnabar (> the medicine of immortality) is	
	incomparable to this (lit. does not suffice to compare),	
玉屑豈能勝 41	how then could Jade Powder surpass it? <sup>42</sup>	
莫軟墮 <sup>43</sup> /	Do not relax and backslide (degenerate)—	
勤自課 <sup>44</sup> /	Put in strenuous effort and exhort yourself!	
時可昔 45 (惜) /	Time is precious—	
莫空過	Do not spend it in vain!	

This short treatise has a remarkable rhetorical structure:

- Title/subtitle
- List of eight "substances" (of the medicinal "powder"), the eight headers consisting of four characters each, composed of a disyllabic Buddhist term, numeral, and measure word; i.e., Buddhist abstract terms are "quantified":
  - o Abstract noun + numeral + measure word

<sup>38</sup> On the right side a graph in red ink: # (maybe 出?).

<sup>39</sup> Téng kōng 騰空: On this term, see Hirakawa: 1283 (glossed as Skr. ākāśa, gagana-carin, vihāyasam-gama, vaihāyasaṃ-gamana, ūrdhvaṃ-gama). Compare ZTJ 1.020: 則於城西北角留一馬跡,令知騰空西北而去。 "He [i.e. Śākyamuni] then left one horse trace at the northwest corner of the city wall to let [the king] know that he left to the northwest soaring through the air." The ability to soar through the air is usually attributed to saintly beings (in addition, Auspicious Images 瑞相 are also described as moving through the air). However, here it is not quite clear whether the term is used literarily, or as a metaphor for quickly moving to/from a location. The motif of moving through air is also frequently encountered in Daoist scriptures; compare 或遊空青林中 "Sometimes [the Celestial Worthy] traveled through the air in the green forests." Here, it probably indicates that the practitioner dwelling in solitude finally will gain powers associated with saintly beings.

<sup>40</sup> This alludes to the famous parable of the burning house in the *Lotus sūtra*, 'burning house' being a metaphor for the existence in *samsāra*.

<sup>41</sup> Yanagida adds a question mark to this character. Okimoto has a different phrasing.

<sup>42</sup> Jan 1987: 53 translates this line: "If the Gold Elixir is inadequate to compare [with the Buddhist prescription] how can the Jade Powder surpass it?".

<sup>43</sup> 堕: 🌉; ruǎn 'be weak, dull;' a compound ruǎnruò 軟墮 is uncommon in Buddhist texts.

<sup>44</sup> 課 蘇

<sup>45</sup> Okimoto reads 惜. \*\* This is probably a phonetic loan.

"Substances" (wèi 'flavors')	"Taste" (i.e., desired effect) of the substances
'faith' xínshòu 信受	→ interest in the Buddha-dharma
'effort' jìngquàn 精勤	→ continuous practice
'emptiness' kōngmén 空門	→ knowledge of viewpoints
'ceasing conditions' xíyuàn 習	→ knowledge of non-attainment
緣	
'contemplating emptiness'	→ insubstantiality of suffering
guānkōng 觀空	
'no-self' wúwŏ 無我	→ non-differentiation of self and the other
'resisting transmigration' níliú	→ transcending contact of sense organs
逆流	-
'getting rid of desire' líyù 離欲	→ non-dependence of existence

- The subsequent part is more "narrative" in nature, dealing with the "blending" of the flavors and producing the "medicine" (and the recommendation to take a daily dose of it!). Here again, Buddhist abstract concepts are playfully embedded in the technical terminology of producing a medical elixir. Linguistically, this is achieved by producing noun phrases in which the concrete noun (N.CONCR) is modified by an abstract noun (N.AB):
  - o N.AB > N.CONCR:
  - o 惠斧 "axe of wisdom"
  - o 定臼 "mortar of concentration"
  - o 不二羅篩 "sieve (strainer) of non-duality"
- The remaining part of the narrative is semantically very difficult and deals with the advantages of a secluded life and the promotion of Buddhism as compared to "Daoist" practices.
- The treatise is concluded with an exhortation (4 x 3 characters).

Despite its briefness, the treatise features a remarkably complex rhetorical structure and differs significantly from early Chán treatises dealing with doctrinal matters or the transmission of the Chán teaching. Humorously, it promotes Buddhist practices as the superior medicine against the ailments and vexations of human existence, as well as arguing for their superiority as compared to popular practices usually associated with popular "Daoism." The treatise is part of a collection of several important texts in P.3664/3559, giving evidence to the literary creativity of proponents of the early Chán movement. In addition, it is quite remarkable that the manuscript includes three treatises associated with the Northern Qí meditation master Sēngchóu, and gives witnesses to his great influence on the formation of early Chán ideology.

## Text Two: Xiù chánshī quàn rén yào bìng jì 秀禪師勸人藥病偈

This short text can be found in ms. Shanghai Library 141, Gāthā of Chán Master [Shén?]Xiù Advising People on Cures for their Ailments. I have not found any

reference to this text so far; however, I assume that Xiù chánshī 秀禪師 could refer to the Northern School Chán Master Shénxiù 神秀 (who is also the focus of the manuscript discussed in the first part of the paper). I have not seen this text referenced as early Chán material anywhere, nor discussed in any scholarly publication. I noticed the short text by chance when working through the Shànghăi collection of Dūnhuáng texts. It is included here since it deals with "diseases" (or rather mental vexations) and their cure, and makes reference to a "Chán Master Xiù" in the title. Although this cannot be verified with certainty at this point, I assume that Xiù could refer to the famous Chán Master Shénxiù 神秀 (606? –706). Among the Dūnhuáng material on Chán there is a quite large number of "exhortations" and "appraisals," frequently written in a rhyming structure (and some even meant to be sung/chanted). 46 However, texts making ample references to the metaphors of sickness and cure are very rare among those songs. As such, the two texts discussed here are quite unique in this respect. The rhetorical structure of Text Two is rather simple as compared to Sēngchóu's and is written in the form of a gāthā (jì 偈). As the most important structural feature, the last two characters of all 22 lines are alternating between *shì bìng* 是病 "this is the disease" and *shì yào* 是藥 "this is the cure":

X (= 4 characters) 是病

Y (= 4 characters) 是藥

Below, the text is tentatively edited and translated.

<sup>46</sup> Dūnhuáng "songs" and texts of the Chán School in verse form include the so-called Siddhain Song (Fóshuō Lèngqié jīng chánmén xītán zhāng 佛說楞伽經禪門悉談章, The Siddham Chapter of the Gate of Chán [according to] the Lankāvatāra Sūtra Expounded by the Buddha; P.2204, P.2212, P.3082, P.3099, S.4583v, Beijing 鳥 64 = BD00041-1, St. Petersburg ДХН 424 = formerly Дх492), Wǔgèng zhuǎn 五更轉 - Nánzōng dìng xiézhèng wǔgèng zhuǎn 南宗 定邪正五更轉 (S.2679, S.4634, S.6083, S.6923, S.4654, P.2045, P.2270, Beijing 咸 18, Beijing 露 6). These works are usually attributed to Shénhuì 神會. Other Chán inspired works in verse form include the Wǔgèng zhuǎn-Nánzōng zàn 五更轉南宗贊, Wǔgèng zhuǎn-dùn jiàn jìng 五更轉一頓見境 (S.6103, S.2679), Wǔgèng zhuǎn-Nánzōng zàn 五更轉一南宗贊 (S.4173, S.4654, S.5529, P.2984, P.2963, Beijing 周 70, Дх1363), Qiú yīnguŏ-xiū shàn 求因 果-修善 (S.5588), Zhèng wúwéi 證無為 (P.3065, P.306), Dì-qī zǔ Dàzhào héshàng Jìmiè rìzhāi zànwén 第七祖大照和尚寂滅日齋贊文 (S.2512; Dàzhào héshàng is referring to the Northern School master Pŭjì, 651-739), Dà-Jìn Héxī Dūnhuáng-jùn Zhāng héshàng xiĕ zhēnzàn 大晉敦煌郡張和尚寫真贊 (P.3972), Wǔgèng zhuǎn—Jiǎtuō Chánshī gè zhuǎn 五更 傳假託禪師各專 (S.5996, S.3017, P.3409), Qián Héxī dū Sēngtŏng Zhái héshàng miǎo zhēnzàn 前河西僧統翟和尚邈真贊 (P.4600; referring to Zhái Fǎróng 翟法榮 who was active in the middle of the 9th century in Dūnhuáng, probably practicing a mixture of Northern and Southern Chán), Zhèng Dào gē 證道歌 (S.2165, S.4037, S.6000, P.2104, P.2105, P.3360; by Zhēnjué 真覺 = Xuánjué 玄覺), a "Chán Song" (Chánchāng 禪唱) in P.3156, and the Dòng zhū rén yī jié 動諸人一偈 (S.3017, P.3409).

秀禪師勸人藥	Chán Master Xiù's gāthā for Urging people to Remedy their	
病偈	Sicknesses	
建嗔喜怒是病	[1a] Establishing [?] rage, delight, and anger is the disease,	
柔和忍辱是藥	[1b] Gentleness and patience are the remedy; <sup>47</sup>	
邪佞諂曲是病	[2a] Falseness and flattery are the disease, 48	
慈悲喜舍是藥	[2b] Kindness, pity, joy, and equanimity are the remedy; <sup>49</sup>	
言語傷人是病	[3a] To hurt people with words is the disease,	
將護被責是藥	[3b] To protect those who are criticized is the remedy; <sup>50</sup>	
不受勸諫是病	[4a] Not to accept exhortations is the disease,	
輕聲重語是藥	[4b] "Speaking gravely with a light voice" is the remedy; <sup>51</sup>	
自讚毀他是病	[5a] To praise oneself and disparage others is the disease, <sup>52</sup>	
讚他勝己是藥	[5b] To praise others as superior to oneself is the remedy;	
倍面異語是病	[6a] To be 'double-faced' and speak inaccurately is the	
	disease, <sup>53</sup>	
憐貧愛老是藥	[6b] To cherish the poor and be affectionate to the aged is the	
	remedy;	
己滿自妄是病	[7a] To be self-satisfied and self-deluded is the disease,	

<sup>47</sup> According to Hirakawa (1997: 468), 忍辱柔和 translates Skr. *peśala*. The phrase is frequently used in Mahāyāna literature. In the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* it is used as term for the Second Perfection (T.14, no.475: 539c4).

<sup>48</sup> 邪佞諂曲 is extremely rare in CBETA. I only found one early example in Dàoshì's *Fǎyuàn zhūlín* 法苑珠林 (compiled in 668). The term is embedded in a discourse on rebirth, and the engagement in flattery will entail rebirth in the realm of Hungry Ghosts (若起貪嫉邪佞諂曲欺 誑於他。或復慳貪積財不施。皆生鬼道。從鬼命終。多生畜生道中 T.53, no.2122: 313a27—29).

<sup>49</sup> *Xǐshě* 喜舍 could be read as 喜捨 'joyful giving,' sometimes used for *bùshī* 布施, Skr. *dāna*. However, here the four terms refer to the qualities of the *sì wúliàng xīn* 四無量心 (Skr. *catvāri-apramānāṇi*), 'four immeasurable states of mind,' a type of meditation aimed to relieve sentient beings from suffering.

<sup>50</sup> Jiānghù 將護 is a standard term for 'to protect; to guard' in Buddhist texts.

<sup>51</sup> Zhòng yǔ 重語 refers to one of the many ways Buddha uses speech: 可愛重語。無塵染語。 "A lovely serious way of talking, without any defiled way of speaking" (Dàbǎo jíjīng 大寶積經 T.11, no.310: 231c15). Also used as a transitive verb: 阿難以是因緣。我重語汝莫謗此經。 "Ānanda, because of this reason, I emphatically tell you: Do not slander this sūtra!" (Dà fāngděng tuóluóní jīng 大方等陀羅尼經, T.21, no.1339: 651c2).

<sup>52</sup> Zì zàn huǐ tā (tuố) 自讚毀他 is one of the grave prohibitions (see for example the commentaries on Fànwǎng jīng where it is listed as the seventh grave prohibition in the codes of behavior for bodhisattvas; T.40, no.1815: 706b29). Described as one of the ten dharmas one has to distance oneself from. Compare also the Púsà yīngluò běnyè jīng 菩薩瓔珞本業經, T.24, no.1485: 1012b5: 七不自讚毀他.

<sup>53</sup> Yìyǔ 異語 'deviant speech,' often contrasted to shíyǔ 實語 or zhēnyǔ 真語, 'true speech.'

謙遊自卑是藥	[7b] To travers modestly [??] and humble oneself is the remedy;
好窮人過是病	[8a] To take a liking in scrutinizing the shortcomings of [other]
	people is the disease,
好自省察是藥	[8b] To like to examine oneself thoroughly is the remedy; <sup>54</sup>
嗔怒懷怨是病	[9a] To become enraged and harbor hate is the disease,
誓度眾生是藥	[9b] To vow to save the sentient beings is the remedy;
好色惡得是病	[10a] To obtain beautiful things in an evil way, [??] <sup>55</sup>
聞惡不嗔是藥	[10b] To listen to something evil and not get enraged is the cure;
自貢己高是病	[11a] To be arrogant is the disease, <sup>56</sup>
打罵歡喜是藥	[11b] To rejoice when beaten and insulted is the remedy. <sup>57</sup>

#### Pairs of contrast in the text:

"Sickness"	"Medicine/cure"	Comment
[1a] rage/anger/delight	[1b] patience/endurance	
[2a] hypocrisy/flattery	[2b] compassion/joy	[2b] Technical set of
		qualities based on mental contemplation
[3a] criticize others	[3b] protect (sb. accused/criticized)	
[4a] no acceptance of	[4b] giving advise/	
criticism	proper speech	
[5a] praise oneself /	[5b] praise others	
disparage others		

<sup>54</sup> Zì xǐngchá 自省察 'examine oneself in detail; scrutinize oneself thoroughly,' as part of meditative self-reflection (e.g., 復有二法難作。一者省察己之煩惱。二者審觀斷除一切眾生煩惱。Furthermore, there are two methods which are difficult to perform: firstly, to critically examine one's vexations; secondly, to closely examine and eradicate the vexations of all sentient beings; T.13, no.400: 501a19–20).

<sup>55</sup> This phrase is difficult to interpret. In non-Buddhist texts, *hào sè* usually means 'to like women; like female attraction; promiscuity; eroticism' (e.g., 不幸而好色 'unfortunately I like beautiful women'; *Guǎnzǐ* 管子 20.1; 以衰美之婦人事好色之丈夫 'if as a woman of declining beauty one serves a husband who is fond of beauty' *Hán Fēizǐ* 韓非子, *Bèi nèi* 備內 17. However, in Buddhist texts it is usually used as a translation of Skr. *suvarna* 'beautiful things; beauty.' As such, there are several possibilities of translating the passage. My translation here is highly tentative.

<sup>56</sup> 自貢己高 is an inversion of zìjǐ gònggāo 自己貢高 'be proud of oneself.'

<sup>57</sup> This is a frequent topic in Buddhist scriptures: when insulted or being beaten, a Bodhisattva does not give rise to a resentful mind but practices the virtue of forbearance. I did not find any combination with *huānxĭ* is canonical literatures, i.e., to instruction to "rejoice" when encountering insult or physical abuse. However, in later Chinese commentary literature passages like this can be found.

[6a] false speech	[6b] help poor/aged	Here, the relation between [a] and [b] is not obvious
[7a] self-satisfied/self-deluded	[7b] modest/humble	
[8a] critically examine others	[8b] critically exam oneself	
[9a] hatred/anger	save sentient beings	The Bodhisattva vow as medicine against hatred and anger
[10a] [?]	[10b] control anger/rage	
[11a] arrogance/pride	[11b] endure physical abuse/insult	

The eleven pairs seem to be listed rather randomly, with no obvious sequence. The emphasis is not on major transgressions, but rather on the control of anger and aversion, the ability to endure criticism and verbal abuse, as well as the right use of language (i.e., avoidance of false speech, flattery, self-praise, etc.). The ideas contained in this short text can be found scattered in the Chán "songs" and exhortations among the Dūnhuáng findings. However, these pairings and the embedding in the "disease" – "cure" structure seems to be unique.

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