

# **A Study on the Development of Meditation in Theravada Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism**

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## **Introduction:**

Along with the coming of 21<sup>st</sup> century, which also means the fast development of the society, our human-beings have been undergoing an enriched but fast-pace life. In the meantime, all kinds of depression appear and enter our life, which bring various physical and psychological diseases, making many people desperate or totally collapse. Our heart gets weaker and weaker, like a taut string, which would snap at any time. The traditional medicine and psychotherapy are inclined to find therapy only after the disease was found, that is to say, if the problem or disease is not exposed, no attention will be paid on it and no therapy will be given. In this mode, the seed of some serious suffering will be neglected, and have a long time to grow to a big tree. On another hand, in some countries, especially some traditional Asian countries, people still pay more attention to the physic health and are not able to accept the psychological therapy, or even regard it as something humiliating - as attending a psychological therapy almost equals telling others that you are psychotic. Traditional medicine and psychotherapy, therefore, cannot satisfy our human-beings any more.

In the 1960s, western psychologist began to show their interest in some traditional eastern thoughts and practices, believing that they would help psychology to study human being more objectively and completely.<sup>1</sup> Thus, meditation, which is a significant practice in Buddhism from the Buddha's time, is noticed and applied to modern medicine and psychotherapy, became an important adjuvant therapy. Meditation, such as Transcendental Meditation, Tranquil meditation, Insight meditation, Chan (Zen), etc., attracts more and more people gradually. So, in my opinion, it is meaningful to figure out how these Buddhist practice come up, how they differ from each other and if they can continue to develop to benefit our life together.

## **Review of the literature:**

Like I mentioned above, there are so many kinds of meditation in Buddhism, so I will only focus on the development of insight meditation and Chan meditation here. In order to find out the history and present situation of them, much existent literature should be read first. Here, there are two primary kinds of literature I will read: the first are some relevant suttas, commentaries and some works written by outstanding meditation masters; the second is academic research results by scholars.

Referring to the suttas and commentaries, actually, not so many ones concentrate on meditation, but still, some scriptures like *The Satipattana Sutta* and *The*

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<sup>1</sup> Chen Xiurong. *A Mental Health Study of Goenka's Ten-day Vipassana Meditation Course*. Master Thesis of Institute of Religious Studies in Fu Jen Catholic University, 2007, p2.

*Visuddhimagga* must be studied. Then, there are so many works written by meditation masters or edited by their followers. As my topic will cover the meditation in Theravada Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism, works by insight meditation masters, which are mainly in English (or some already have been translated into Chinese) and by Chinese masters, which are mainly in Chinese, will be involved. For Theravada Buddhist meditation, we get the ones such as Mahasi's *The Satipatthana Vipassana Meditation and Discourse on The Basic Practice of The Satipatthana Vipassana*, Goenka's *The Art of Living*, Pa Auk Sayadaw's *The Way of Right Mindfulness*, as well as Luangpor Teean's *Manual of Self Awareness*. For Chan meditation, like Huineng's *The Platform Sutra* and some Chan Masters's quotations are indispensable materials. All of this literature introduces us to the meaning, methods and theoretical principles of meditation - aiming to teach meditation skills.

In the academic circles, I find, it is the western scholars who firstly paid attention to insight meditation, which can date back to the 1960s and 1970s, when insight meditation had already spread to many countries. At that time, the scholars paid more attention on the relation between insight meditation and politics, neglecting the methods and theoretical principle of insight meditation. Coming to the 1980s and 1990s, scholars researching on insight meditation increased greatly, such as Bond, Houtman, Jordt, Gombrich and so on. In those decades, scholars started to attend insight meditation courses, connecting personal experience to academic studies. Their research covered all the aspects of insight meditation, with its origination and development discussed. They communicated with the practitioners and some even converted to meditation masters. For example, Houtman's *Traditions of Buddhism Practice in Burma* (1990) illustrated the difference between insight meditation centers and normal monasteries, basing on his personal investigation and experience from that. Or Cousins's *Traditions of Buddhist Practice in Burma* (2004) described its historical development and lineage of meditation masters, as well as introduce us the different existent meditation methods. Entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century, scholars continue the previous methods to research on insight meditation, so that a lot of researchers and research results come into our view, and the works of the previous researchers are being republished.

Coming to Chan meditation, there are already so many books and articles existing in Chinese academic circles. After reading these works, we can easily find the development from Tathagata Chan (如来禅) to Patriarchal Chan (祖师禅), though the argument about the exact time of the appearance of Patriarchal Chan still bother us. Anyway, scholars and Buddhist masters never lose their interest in the studies on Chan meditation. To say nothing about the former scriptures, such as Huineng's *The Platform Sutra* (compiled by his followers), Zongmi's (宗密) *Preface to the Collection of Chan Sources* (禅源诸论集都序) and Yanshou's *The Record of the Mirror of Orthodoxy* (compiled in 961, 宗镜录), in the modern time, there are a lot of scholars who research on this topic from different angles - for example, Ven.Taixu (太虚), Ven.Yinshun (印顺), Hu Shi (胡适), Chen Yinke (陈寅恪), Lu Cheng (吕澂), Tang Yongtong (汤用彤) as well as some Japanese scholars. Until nowadays, studies on Chan are still popular, like the famous scholars----Fang Litian (方立天), Ge Zhaoguang (葛兆光), Lai Yonghai (赖永海) have written some articles on it. For example, Fang Litian's Tathagata Chan and

Patriarchal Chan illustrates the development of these two types of Chan and discusses the difference between them. In addition, Ge Zhaoguang's History of Thought in Chinese Chan (中国禅思想史, 1995) talks about the development of Chan from the 6<sup>th</sup> century to the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

From all above, we can find easily that no matter insight meditation or Chan meditation, there are a large number of scholars or meditation masters paying a lot of attention on it. However, in my reading, I have not found any articles or books which make a comparison between them, which I think is a valuable topic as they really have something in common. In addition, when I was writing my Master degree thesis, some of my teachers also advised me to make a comparison study between them in the future.

## **The development of insight meditation**

### **1. The meaning of insight meditation**

As far as we know, insight meditation is the basic way to practice in Buddhism and is one of the world's most ancient techniques, which is firstly practiced by the supreme Gautama Buddha. Insight meditation, vipaśyanā in Sanskrit and Vipassanā in Pāli, means insight into the nature of reality, radically, is the insight into the three marks of existence, namely, impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and non-self (anattā). It is an attempt to probe into the essence of our life, requiring to be aware of what is happening to us every moment, without indulging in any joyful feeling or painful one. As Irons illustrates in the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, The aim of vipassana is the development of insight into the nature of perceived reality through full awareness of the mind and body.<sup>2</sup>

According to Buddhism, there are two aspects of meditation, samatha (tranquil meditation) and vipassana (insight meditation). For Buddhists, samatha, which is shared with other religions, is commonly practiced as a prelude to and in conjunction with wisdom practices.<sup>3</sup> It is talked about in the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*:

In this context, the word samadhi denotes a family of techniques shared by other religious systems of India, but normative Buddhist literature generally regards these techniques as preparatory or foundational, and not as aims in themselves. Although, in practice, many even today pursue states of samadhi for their own sake, the higher, normative goal is insight, which is believed to lead to liberation.<sup>4</sup>

Houtman also said in his book,

Nevertheless, samatha is what the Buddha practiced prior to his enlightenment while he had not yet found the vipassana path, both in previous lives and in his life as Gautama before the age of forty. As a Buddha, competent in all forms of mental culture, he also practiced samatha after his enlightenment.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Irons Edward. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*. New York: Facts on File, Inc, 2008. p550

<sup>3</sup> Wallace, *The Attention Revolution*, Wisdom Publications, 1st ed., 2006, p164

<sup>4</sup> Buswell E. Robert, ed. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*. New York: Macmillan Reference, 2004. p524.

<sup>5</sup> Houtman Gustaaf. *Mental Culture in Burmese Crisis Politics: Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League For*

From all above, we can easily make a conclusion that the practice of samatha is indispensable during the practice of insight meditation or vipassana. For example, Houtman finds, in all Burmese vipassana methods, samatha must be included, but not all samatha traditions need include vipassana.<sup>6</sup> What is more, the aim of samatha is only concentration, while for insight meditation is the wisdom, with which we can liberate from the suffering or samsara.

## **2. The major method to practice insight meditation**

For Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism, they share an idea that the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (Satipatthana) is a practice taught by the Gautama Buddha, and also a basic way in insight meditation. It requires to maintain moment-by-moment mindfulness and develop mindfulness through meditation. It includes four aspects:

- a. mindfulness of the body (Kaya-nupassana).
- b. mindfulness of feelings (Vedana-nupassana).
- c. establishing mindfulness of mind (Citta-nupassana).
- d. mindfulness of mental objects (Dhamma-nupassana).

As there are already so many books and articles introducing or explaining the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, with which we are able to understand it in depth, I will not elaborate on it here anymore.

## **3. The development of insight meditation**

Like the above mentioned, insight meditation is one of the world's most ancient techniques, which is taught by the supreme Gautama Buddha personally. Buddha, as we all know, saw the ultimate reality and got the enlightenment under the bodhi tree by insight meditation, after he realized that enlightenment is unavailable by enjoying luxury or ascetic life. So, in fact, it seems that Buddhism is a religion which emphasize religious practice from the beginning. Insight meditation, the special method of practice, is narrated in several suttas, like the *Mahasatipattana Sutta*, the *Satipattana Sutta*, as well as the *Anapanasati Sutta*. Scholars also hold the idea that the Buddha paid a lot of attention to insight meditation when he was live. Just as Kaw said, "In the moments prior to his passing away, the Buddha had admonished his followers to diligently practice insight meditation which is the prime means of reaching nibbana and entails mindfulness of all mental and physical phenomena."<sup>7</sup> In the mid-fifth century, the Buddhaghosa went to Sri Lanka and finished the famous book - *Visuddhimagga*, in which he introduced insight meditation in detail. Thanks to it, we can deduce that insight meditation was quite prevalent at that time.

However, later, the attention to Buddhist practice was shifted to scripture or doctrine study and attending rituals. The popularity of insight meditation was not there

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*Democracy*. Tokyo : Institute For the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 1999. p308.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 308.

<sup>7</sup> Kaw, Eugenia. *Buddhism and Education in Burma: Varying Conditions for A Social Ethos in the Path to 'Nibbana'*. PhD Diss., Princeton University Press, 2005, p. 60.

anymore. It was not only practiced by limited population but also the people from limited background. And it was only preserved in some villages or some remote forest. What is worse, in the colonial period, along with the declination of Buddhism, insight meditation was challenged even more, being on the edge of extinction.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, along with the revival of Buddhism, insight meditation attracted more and more attention, though it was still limited in the forest meditation centers at the beginning and was still strange to ordinary people. In the 1980s, Ven. Ledi began to popularize it to ordinary people, making it a popular practice method. Later, more and more famous meditation masters appeared, like Mingun, U Ba Hkin, Mahasi, Goenka, Pa-Auk as well as Luangpor Teean, all of whom made insight meditation more and more popular.

Nowaday, insight meditation is very prevalent, which is not only practiced by people from Theravadin countries, but also from western countries and other Mahayana countries. In some places, insight meditation even develops into a movement, which some scholars defines as “Insight Meditation Movement”<sup>8</sup>, or “Mass Lay Meditation Movement”.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Development of Chan (Zen):**

As mentioned above, we can find the development from Tathagata Chan (如来禅) to Patriarchal Chan (祖师禅) in Chinese Buddhism, though the argument about the exact time of the appearance of Patriarchal Chan still bother us. But in fact, it is popular for scholars to discuss about the origination of Patriarchal Chan and talk about the difference between Tathagata Chan and Patriarchal Chan. In this article, I will conclude and introduce some representative opinions, on the base of giving the meaning of Patriarchal Chan.

#### **1. What is Patriarchal Chan**

Nowadays, when we talk about Chinese Buddhism, Chan is the first thing we can recollect. Some scholars regard Chan as the essence of Chinese Buddhism, which decides the rise and fall of Chinese Buddhism.<sup>10</sup> Zongmi said, “the learners of three vehicles, who are eager for enlightenment, must practice Chan, except which no way will be effective.”<sup>11</sup>

In the existent Chinese scriptures, we can find Tathagata Chan was first talked in the The Lankavatara Sutra) (楞伽阿跋多罗宝经, 或简称楞伽经), which was translated by Gunabhadra in the Southern Dynasty (420A.D—589 A.D). In this sutta, Tathagata Chan, which possesses the wisdom to enlighten by oneself, is considered as the perfect meditation. Later, Zongmi (宗密), a Chinese monk and Buddhist scholar who first summarize the history of Chan sect systematically, also regarded Tathagata Chan as the perfect Chan. He said:

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<sup>8</sup> Jordt, Ingrid. *Burma's Mass Lay Meditation Movement: Buddhism and the Cultural Construction of Power*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007. pxii.

<sup>9</sup> Bond, D. George. *The Buddhist Revival in Sri Lanka: Religious Tradition, Reinterpretation and Response*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988, p. 130.

<sup>10</sup> Wu Limin (吴立民). A Glance at the Patriarchal Chan (略说祖师禅). *Research of Buddhism* (佛学研究), 1999,00, p. 98.

<sup>11</sup> Zongmi (宗密). *Preface to the Collection of Chan Sources* (禅源诸詮集都序). T48, 0399a.

If realized suddenly that our original mind is pure, sufferingless, and also had the uncontaminated nature, this mind is right [like] the Buddha. In essence, there is no difference. The method of practice following this way is the perfect kind of Chan, or also named Tathagata Pure Chan.<sup>12</sup>

So at first, Chinese Chan was famous for Tathagata Chan, but later Patriarchal Chan is more and more popular, even overtake the Tathagata Chan. The word “Patriarchal Chan” comes from *The Jingde Period Record of The Transmission of the Lamp* (景德传灯录). As it is promoted by Chan masters, it was named Patriarchal Chan, though the Buddhists also stressed that it was from the Buddha’s teaching. Ven. Taixu (太虚) had said as follows:

Tathagata Chan is practiced gradually while Patriarchal Chan aims at realizing the Buddha nature suddenly, that is to say, Tathagata Chan is a method which should be developed step by step, while Patriarchal Chan directly. Though both of them aim at realizing the wisdom, the methods they follow are different. The characteristic of Patriarchal Chan is entering the wisdom directly without depending on any Buddhist teaching or scriptures.<sup>13</sup>

So we can see, the aim of the Patriarchal Chan is to realize the pure nature suddenly, which does not depend on any theory. Patriarchal Chan does not require to establish any words and letters as they think it is not a must to read any scripture before practicing. Thus they believe that no matter if someone is an intellectual or illiterate, anyone can practice Patriarchal Chan. In a word, Patriarchal Chan is a special way to teach which is transmitted outside the scriptures.

## 2. The Development of Patriarchal Chan

As Fang Litian said, in the history of Chinese Chan Sect, the period between the confirming of Tathagata Chan as the perfect Chan and the rising of Patriarchal Chan mirrored the polarization and evolvement of Huineng’s Chan sect.<sup>14</sup> So Huineng is quite important in judging the real time of the appearance of Patriarchal Chan, as in Chinese academic circle, someone consider Huineng as the founder of Patriarchal Chan, while some one think that Patriarchal Chan appear before Huineng, or even for the Buddha’s time. In this part, I will introduce some significant opinions about the origination of Patriarchal Chan in Chinese academic circle. Some of the scholars think that the Patriarchal Chan can date back to the Buddha’s time. There is a story in the sutta:

When the Tathāgata was preaching the dharma on Numinous Mountain, the devas presented him with flowers. The World-Honored One took a flower and showed it to the assembly. Kāśyapa smiled. The World-Honored One announced to the assembly, “I have a treasury of the eye of the true dharma, the wondrous mind of nirvāṇa, the reality

<sup>12</sup> Zongmi (宗密). *Preface to the Collection of Chan Sources* (禅源诸论集都序). T48, 0399a.

<sup>13</sup> Wu Limin (吴立民). A Glance at the Patriarchal Chan (略说祖师禅). *Research of Buddhism* (佛学研究), 1999,00. p99.

<sup>14</sup> Fang Litian (方立天). Tathagata Chan (如来禅) And Patriarchal Chan. *Social Sciences In China* (中国社会科学), 2000,05. p130.

transcending all forms, the supreme and subtle teaching, no reliance on written scriptures, and transmission outside the scriptures. I bequeath it to Mahākāśyapa. In the future, do not let its propagation be cut off.” In addition, he entrusted Kāśyapa with his gold-brocade saṃghāti robe, to await Maitreya.<sup>15</sup>

As the Buddha taught Kāśyapa without depending on any scriptures and any words, and the teaching was transmitted from heart to heart, someone regarded it as the origin of Patriarchal Chan.

Someone thought that the Patriarchal Chan was practiced since the time of Bodhidharma. Wu Limin illustrated in his article, the Chan Sect is set up from Bodhidharma, but the Chan they refer to is not Tathagata Chan which was practiced following The Three Practices (三学) and The Six Perfections (六度). It is Patriarchal Chan which aims at realizing the pure nature and is transmitted outside the scriptures.

But master like Zongmi already denied this opinion in his time, as he said: “the (Chan) which spread from Bodhidharma is this kind of Chan (Tathagata Chan).”<sup>16</sup>

Because Huineng belongs to the lineage of Bodhidharma. A lot of people regard Huineng as the founder of Patriarchal Chan. Huineng is significant in Chan Sect or even in Chinese Buddhism, because from him, the different method to practice was more and more popular in China, which claims sudden enlightenment or realization of pure nature without the dependence on scriptures.

Some of the scholars think that the Patriarchal Chan is from Yangshan Huiji (仰山慧寂), who is one of founders of Weiyang Sect, a Chan sect deriving from Hongzhou Sect. Fang Litian said, Huiji first brought forward the word “Patriarchal Chan”, which was the antithesis of Tathagata Chan, and also regarded Tathagata Chan as a method which was inferior to Patriarchal Chan. It is recorded in the sutta:

The master (Yangshan Huiji) asked Xiangyan: “brother, how about the situation of your views recently?” Yan answered: “it is hard to say. There is a poem, the poor last year is not the real poor while the poor this year is the real poor; last year is too poor to have the place to put the awl while this year is even too poor to own the awl.” Master Huiji said: “you only get the Tathagata Chan, but not the Patriarchal Chan.”<sup>17</sup>

This conversation is so significant when talk about the question of Tathagata Chan and Patriarchal Chan. It will be quoted nearly each time. From this conversation, I can find that Xiangyan’s view of poor developed from last year to this year, during which the change was gradual as it was from no place to no awl. So Huiji thought that it was not Patriarchal Chan but Tathagata Chan and he believed that Patriarchal Chan was superior to Tathagata Chan. Fang Litian described that from the Yangshan Huiji’s time, the idea of the division of Tathagata Chan and Patriarchal Chan was accepted widely by masters from different Chan sects.

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<sup>15</sup> *The Assembling of Five Lamps* (五灯会元), X80, 0028b.

<sup>16</sup> Zongmi (宗密). *Preface to the Collection of Chan Sources* (禅源诸论集都序). T48, 0399a.

<sup>17</sup> 曰：“师问香严：师弟近日见处如何？严曰：某甲卒说不得，乃有偈曰：去年贫未是贫，今年贫始是贫；去年贫无卓锥之地，今年贫锥也无。师曰：汝只得如来禅。未得祖师禅。” *The Jingde Period Record of The Transmission of the Lamp* (景德传灯录), T51, 0283b.

## **A comparison between insight meditation and Patriarchal Chan**

In my reading, I find there are more common ground between insight meditation and Patriarchal Chan, so I will only make a comparison between them, but not refer to Tathagata Chan here. Both of insight meditation and Patriarchal Chan are method to practice in Buddhism, especially one in Theravada Buddhism and one in Chinese Buddhism. In the meaning, though as the way to practice, both of them should show their views on Buddha teaching. So in this part, I will compare each other in two points, the view of practice theory and the method to practice.

### **1.The views on scripture study**

As we know, traditional Buddhism pays a lot of attention to scripture study, as they think being familiar with the scriptures is the basic capability to be an ordinary Buddhist layman. To Buddhist monks, it is even more important to study the Buddha teaching, because they are regarded as the people to plant the seed of Buddha teaching. The former insight meditation and Chinese Buddhism also value the scripture study, but refer to the present insight meditation and Patriarchal Chan, things seem different.

Coming to insight meditation, as I have mentioned above, it got a revival in 1950s, from which there are a great number of meditation masters appearing. In 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, most of the masters teach insight meditation and write some books at the same time, spending a lot of time to study scriptures, such as Mahasi, who began to study Buddha teaching and Pali from his renouncement of family life. Nevertheless, when they started to teach insight meditation to the public, almost all of them denied the necessity to read some scripture before or during insight meditation. Like Goenka and Luangpor Teean, they teach insight meditation with understandable and easy words on the ground of personal experience, and they don't require to read scripture or other letters. Luangpor Teean said: "we needn't pore scripture, because they are just words or letters, which cannot lead to enlightenment." Goenka even are against the reading of scriptures before insight meditation, because he think it will push the practitioners to gain some results during practice, which are actually not available for them at that stage, thus it will be harmful to the practitioners.

Patriarchal Chan, likewise, claims that it is not necessary to read scripture, or we even should discard them. They think Buddhist practice is not dependent on any scriptures. The most important thing is to realize the pure mind by practicing.

Huike (慧可) said "Please, Master, put my heart at ease." The Master (Bodhidharma, 达摩) replied, "Hand me that heart, and I will put it at ease," Huike said, "Search as I will, I cannot find my heart to give you," The Master replied, "If it can be found, it is not your heart. I have now put it at ease," then he added, "Now that I have put it at ease, do you see?" Huike had a sudden realization, So he said to the Master, "Now I see, all things are ultimately nonsubstantial, and the way to Bodhi, to Wisdom, is not a matter of distance. That is why it does not take the bodhisattvas any time to reach the sea of wisdom, and it does not take them any time to reach the shores of nirvana." The Master said: "That is so, just so." Huike then asked, "Master, your way of teaching... is it recorded in written words?" Damo replied, "My way is taught through the mind, not through the written

word.”<sup>18</sup>

So we can see, from the Bodhidharma, he think the Buddha teaching it spread by heart to heart, but not by the means of words. Ven. Huineng also said, “The wonderful mysteries of Buddhist enlightenment have nothing to do with the written word.”<sup>19</sup> He also said, “if we judge the Buddha teaching according to words, it is not the Buddha’s opinion.”<sup>20</sup> In a word, Chinese Patriarchal Chan believed that the enlightenment of pure mind and wisdom is not dependent on words or reading scriptures.

## 2. The views on enlightenment gradually or suddenly

We all know, the traditional Buddhism requires his followers to practice obeying the order “sila, samatha, panna”, so we can say, it seems like a karma-collection religion but not a nirvana religion. Collecting karma is a long-term work, so it is different to collect enough karma for enlightenment in this life. Nirvana is far away from us, which we only can be closer and closer to by practicing gradually. We should take nirvana or Buddhist practice as a long-term job. Insight meditation and Patriarchal Chan, however, are different from traditional Buddhism.

Insight meditation masters believes that the practitioners are able to get enlightenment in this life. In addition, if we practice accurately, it will be very fast to reach the enlightenment. As Mahasi said, “it will not take a long time to reach this goal (nirvana), maybe a month, maybe 20 days, or 15 days; or in some occasion, someone can even get it in 7 days.”<sup>21</sup>

As for Patriarchal Chan, it even can be named Sudden Enlightenment Sect (顿悟宗). Sudden enlightenment is a important way to practice in Chinese Chan Buddhism. It is firstly promoted by Zhu Daosheng (竺道生), and later Huineng even regards it as a basic way to lead to enlightenment. As for Huineng himself, he got enlightenment suddenly when he heard someone reciting the Diamond Sutta. In the Platform Sutta, it is said, “when the sudden enlightenment is not available, Buddha is right the ordinary people; while enlighten suddenly, all will became Buddha... realize the pure nature suddenly.”<sup>22</sup> The Chinese Patriarchal Chan holds the idea that enlightenment is fast, convenient, and it don’t need to be pursued following any stages. They think the suffering is just like the cloud, which can be dispelled suddenly, after which the clear sky will reappear, like the pure mind will reappear after the sudden enlightenment.

In addition, both the Insight meditation and Patriarchal Chan believed that it is not necessary to retire the family life to practice. We can practice both at home and in the temples. Staying in remote forest is not a must.

## Conclusion

From all above, we can easily see that Insight meditation and Patriarchal Chan develop very fast in their own environment and are really different from the traditional Buddhism in some sense.

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<sup>18</sup> *A Collection from the Halls of the Patriarchs* (祖堂集), vol. 2.

<sup>19</sup> “诸佛妙理,非关文字”. *The Jingde Period Record of The Transmission of the Lamp* (景德传灯录). T51, 0235b.

<sup>20</sup> “诸佛理论若取文字非佛意也”. *Biographies of the Dignitary Monks in Song Dynasty* (宋高僧传). T50, 0754c.

<sup>21</sup> Mahasi. *The Satipatthana Vipassana Meditation*. trans. U Pe Thin. San Francisco: Unity Press, 1971. preface.

<sup>22</sup> The Platform Sutta (坛经). T48, 0351a.

In my opinion, there are two reasons for their difference from the traditional Buddhism. At first, find an easy way for the public to practice Buddha teaching. The Buddhist scriptures, quite a lot of which are recorded in obscure words, are not easy for normal people. If we require them to read the words seriously, they will lose their interest in Buddhism. And if the problem of scripture reading is gotten rid of, both the intellectual and the illiterate are able to join in the queue of Buddhism. In the other hand, some people will lose hope to the traditional Buddhism, because it teaches a gradual way to practice which cannot lead to the final enlightenment in this life. So the idea of sudden enlightenment are able to attract their attention. What is more, the idea of practicing in the family life is more feasible for ordinary people.

In a word, the change or revolution of Insight meditation and Patriarchal Chan is to attract more and more people to accept Buddhism and spread Buddhism in an easy way. Actually, I think, we cannot deny the influence of these transformations, because both of them are popular in their own areas.