

Changing Attitudes of Precepts in Modern Taiwan: The Debate between Brahmā's Net Precepts and Yogācāra Precepts

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Abstract

This paper discusses the bodhisattva precepts in practice in modern Taiwan. The Brahmā's Net Precepts have been long been accepted as the mainstream praxis in China since the fifth century. Endowed by Master Zhiyi's 智顓 (538-597) commentary, it gained the dominance among the Chinese audience for centuries. Such dominance, however, was turned over when Master Taixu 太虛 (1890-1947) advocated the Yogācāra Precepts actively. Several modern Buddhist leaders in China and Taiwan followed Taixu's call, including Yinshun 印順 (1906-2005) and Sheng Yen 聖嚴 (1931-2009) in Taiwan. These crucial figures shaped the picture of contemporary Buddhist practice primarily, and I will discuss from the larger pattern among these by investigating their discipleship (or, in a narrower sectarian sense, their lineages) and the reasoning in their writings on the bodhisattva precepts. It will become clear that opting for the Yogācāra Precepts has been a measured choice by these figures, out of considerations for the society and the Sangha. The Taiwanese nuns picked this issue up from their masters and illustrate a similar picture of their choice of the precepts.

Introduction

The Brahmā's Net Precepts (*Fanwang pusajie* 梵網菩薩戒) have been upheld long in China since the fifth century. Endowed by Master Zhiyi's 智顓 (538-597) commentary to the *Brahmā's Net Sutra* (*Fanwangjing* 梵網經, T.1484), it had taken the lion's share for many centuries in China. Such dominance, however, was turned over when Master Taixu 太虛 (1890-1947) began to advocate the Yogācāra Precepts (*Yuqie pusa jie* 瑜伽菩薩戒) actively from 1924.¹

The *Brahmā's Net Sutra* is certainly a distinctive scripture in the development of Chinese Buddhism.² It has been, first of all, proven a Chinese apocryphal text, which in turn helps to

¹ For this Yogācāra Precepts, others may call it "Yoga Bodhisattva Prātimokṣa" instead, eg. Bianchi (2017) and Ritzinger (2017).

² For a comprehensive study on the overall development of Chinese monastic disciplines, see Ōno Hōdō (1954) and Satō Tatsugen (1986). For the composition of the *Brahmā's Net Sutra*, see Funayama Tōru

explain why it consists of several unusual concepts quite alien to Indian Buddhists, such as its emphasis on the filial piety and the Buddhist autonomy against the secular sovereign. As the compositional history of this scripture versus the evolution of Chinese Buddhist precepts have been well studied by Japanese scholars and scholars of other countries, it can be better understood a work disclosing the sociology of Chinese Buddhists. This scripture may come out of particular Chinese needs in the fifth century and then encounter certain changing attitudes toward it in a reinvigorated society of modern China.

Since the bodhisattva precepts are for both the monastics and the laity, the precept conferral is an important aspect in the institutional management as well as to the practitioners of Buddhism. There existed different theoretical underpinnings concerning the bodhisattva precepts, one being that of the *Brahmā's Net Sutra* and the *Necklace Sutra* (*Pusayingluo benyejing* 菩薩瓔珞本業經, T.1485), the other being that of the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* (*Yuqie shidilun* 瑜伽師地論, T.1579).³ The Brahmā's Net Precepts emphasised the ten grave transgressions and forty-eight minor precepts, whereas the Yogācāra Precepts highlighted the 'three-clusters pure precepts' (*sanju jingjie* 三聚淨戒). These two systems coexisted but the Brahmā's Net Precepts had always been the mainstream in practice.

We have seen a remarkable growth and revolution of Buddhism in recent Taiwanese achievements in Buddhist education and their engagement in social welfare. Even today, the precept-conferral ceremony is still one of the most important events in many temples in Taiwan. Buddhist attitudes towards the Brahmā's Net Precepts have, however, changed in this century. I will illustrate in the current paper in what way this happened due to Taixu's initial call. What I am particularly interested is that it seems more likely that most choice of the Buddhist precepts in fact came out from soteriological concerns that were implemented most frequently by ones' own masters. I would term this approach a sociology of knowledge.

This paper will start from Taixu's advocacy of the Yogācāra Precepts against the social background. The second part of this paper will analyse Taixu's influence on his contemporaries, who immigrated to Taiwan. The third section will then move to Taiwan, focusing on the initial

(2011). For a detailed study of its role in East Asian Buddhism, see the introductory chapter in Muller (2012). Cf. Batchelor's (2004) translation of the second scroll of this scripture from a practitioner's perspective.

³ For a compact comparison of the these two systems, and the precept conferral of the Brahmā's Net Precepts, see Lin (2017a). For the theory of the mind of the Brahmā's Net Precepts, see Lin (2017b).

precept reforms in Taiwan and the following development of monastic education on precept and vinaya through Buddhist institutes, including several active female communities.

1. The Split between the Old and the New Sangha

We have, including Taixu himself, got used to call Taixu the leader of the New Sangha while Dixian 諦閑 (1858-1932), Yinguang 印光 (1862-1940), and Yuanying 圓瑛 (1878-1953) became representatives of the Old Sangha.⁴

Despite the antagonism between them, Yuanying and Taixu in fact received instruction under the same master Jichan 寄禪 (1851-1912). Both of them were extremely close just like brothers for a very long period of time until Yuanying became the leader of the Buddhist communities of the Zhejiang region. Yuanying was known for his Chan observance in combination with Pure Land practice.⁵ Yuanying, just like his master Jichan, maintains a milder approach towards Buddhist reforms, which gradually became incompatible to Taixu's radical reformist attitude.⁶

These two camps officially split in 1930, on the 3rd National Buddhist Congress 全國佛教代表大會 held in Shanghai.⁷ Taixu won the election and Yuanying resigned reluctantly. Many temples in the Zhejiang-Jiangsu area refused to submit the membership fee, and therefore Taixu stepped down angrily. Yuanying then took over, but criticisms arose from many provinces of China. Regarding this tension, Taixu wrote,

Buddhists in Shanghai of that time were divided into three groups, led by Dixian, Yinguang, and me respectively. Zhikai 志開 was not even one of them, and Yuanying did not gain much fame yet. This division is simply speaking from the number of the followers. As for the separation of the Old and the New, then I am the New (Sangha)

⁴ For a concise introduction of the life and thought of these figures, see Chen Bing and Deng Zimei (2003), pp. 343-453.

⁵ Ibid, pp. 343-345.

⁶ For their relationship, see Huiyan (2004: 215-242). Also see He Jianming (2004: 1-20).

⁷ Miaoran (1995), pp. 151-152. Chen & Deng (2003), pp. 43-55.

while Dixian the Old, succeeded by Yinguang, Zhikai, and so on. ... Seventeen years later, it seems, after Dixian retired, Yinguang took over and stood against me. Twenty years later, Yuanying replaced the retired Yinguang to stand against me.

當時滬上佛徒，大抵以諦閑、印光和我為中國現在三大派，冶開等已說不上，而圓瑛等皆聲望未著。然此就信徒眾多各成派別以言。若就新舊分派，則我為新派，而舊派以諦閑為首，附從以印光、冶開等。... 十七年後，似乎諦閑引退了，由印光與我來對峙，二十年後，似乎印光引退了，由圓瑛師與我對峙。⁸

Taixu and Yinguang represent two types of ideals for Buddhist practitioners. They have different emphases on Buddhist practice. The former is known for his radical reformist view, while the latter supports a traditional Amitābha Pure Land belief and practice. We will not go into the details of their teachings, and I will focus on their teachings on bodhisattva precepts. They contrast to each other in several interesting aspects.

1.1 Yinguang's View of Precepts

Yinguang is respected for his devout practice of Buddha-name chanting. In his writings, he mentions the *Brahmā's Net Sutra* rather frequently. For example, in the *Yinguang fashi wenchao* 印光法師文鈔, he cited the scripture with the following sentence for numerous times:

“That you will, in the future, become buddhas; I have already become a buddha, once you have generated this kind of faith, the category of the moral discipline is already complete.” (*Muller's translation, 2012, p. 243*).

我是已成佛，汝是未成佛，當作如是信，戒品已具足。⁹

⁸ *Autobiography of Taixu (Taixu zizhuan 太虛自傳)*, in *Taixu dashi quanshu 太虛大師全書*, p. 259.

⁹ For example, see the repeated occurrence of this quotation in his own writings as collected in the *Yinguang fashi wenchao* 印光法師文鈔: p. 1196 (*Yangzhou Puzhaosi tongjielu 揚州普照寺同戒錄*), p. 1201 (*Jinshan Jiangtian chanshi chuanjiexu 金山江天禪寺傳戒序*), p. 1253 (*Fanwangjing pusajie jizheng 梵網經菩薩戒集證序*), p. 1460 (*Yangzhou Puzhaosi tongjielu 揚州普照寺同戒錄*), p. 1460 (*Fanwangjing Xindipin pusajie shuzhu jieyao ba <梵網經心地品菩薩戒疏注節要>跋*), etc. Note that there are many more other places he mentions the name of *Fanwangjing* and it is often accompanied by the *Sūramgama Sūtra (Lengyanjing 楞嚴經)*.

Yinguang relied upon the authority of the Vairocana Buddha for conferring the bodhisattva precepts. Furthermore, he emphasised on the filial piety as indicated in the scripture.¹⁰ Yinguang basically conforms to the traditional Chinese taking on the *Brahmā's Net Sutra*. It is only curious to some of us to infer the relationship between Pure Land Buddhism and the *Brahmā's Net Sutra* in his thought. Yinguang has an answer to this question. He explained it thoroughly in an epilogue of his own commentary:

For advocating and expounding Pure Land Buddhism, why [do I] elevate the *Brahmā's Net Sutra* to the highest importance? It is well because for those wish to be reborn in the Pure Land, he must purify his mind. For purifying the mind, there is no other way than upholding the Buddha's pure precepts. ... How could one regard himself high, belittle the precepts and Pure Land, by saying that since Self is inherently pure how could there be good and bad or clean and filthy of oneself or the other? ... When you listen to his speech, it sounds like all the higher than the ninth heaven. Yet, when you observe his behaviour, it is in fact lower than that of the ninth level below the underground.

夫宏闡淨土，何以首列《梵網》？良以欲生淨土，當淨其心。隨其心淨，則佛土淨。欲淨其心，非持佛淨戒不可。... 其有自詡高明，藐視戒律，及與淨土，謂自性清淨，有何善惡持犯自他淨穢？... 聽其言，則高出九天之上。察其行，則悲入九地之下。¹¹

Here Yinguang criticises strongly those who do not uphold the precepts. He also points out that upholding the precepts is essential in maintaining a pure mind, and hence the most important qualification for attaining the successful rebirth in the Pure Land.

Not just Yuanying inherited Yinguang's views, Hongyi 弘一 (1880-1942) was also influenced by Yinguang.¹² Hongyi values the Brahmā's Net Precepts greatly. He devoted himself in vinaya studies. He also made endeavours to systematise the bodhisattva precepts, and in his systematisation the principles of the Brahmā's Net Precepts locate at the centre.¹³

¹⁰ When Yinguang refers to the filial piety, he usually cites this sentence from the *Fanwangjing*: 孝名為戒，亦名制止，孝順至道之法。(T.1484:1004a25).

¹¹ *Fanwangjing Xindipin pusajie shuzhu jieyao ba* <梵網經心地品菩薩戒疏注節要>跋, in *Yinguang fashi wenchao*, p. 1461.

¹² For Hongyi, see Raoul Birnbaum's serial articles (2007 ; 2016).

¹³ For example, see the chart he composed in the *Fanwangjing pusajie ben qianshi* 梵網經菩薩戒本淺釋 (Introduction to the text of the Brahmā's Net Precepts)

1.2 Taixu's Views

As a crucial figure for the modernisation of Buddhism, Taixu's life is very well studied by modern scholars.¹⁴ His engagement with political affairs and enthusiastic attempts to reform Chinese Buddhism make him a unique figure in the Chinese Buddhist history. He also inspired numerous Buddhists. Taixu's idea of Pure Land is tightly connected to his view of the bodhisattva precepts. He regards Maitreya's Pure Land the most suitable one for people of this world, and such a pure land is the Human Pure Land (*rensheng jingtu* 人生淨土). If we go to Maitreya's Pure Land, then we will come back to this world with Maitreya to help relieve our contemporaries. This is a compassionate attitude owned by a bodhisattva. Taixu demonstrated this point clearly, and greatly inspired Yinshun.¹⁵

Taixu dedicated himself to Buddhist institutionalisation in China. He was not interested in secular matters in his early years, but after being introduced to some radical ideas of several influential political thinkers of his time, he realised that changes and reforms were necessary to the society in general and to Buddhism in particular.¹⁶ He even saw himself a revolutionist for Buddhism, with plenty experiences of failures. It has been noticed that he had gone through important changes in his ideas about Buddhist doctrines and practices. For the scope of the current paper, I will only discuss his views on Buddhist precepts. He paid special attention to the lack of discipline of modern Buddhists, and thought that was the cause for the decline of Buddhist Order in China. This is expressed in his *Zhendān fōjiào shuāngluò yuānyīn lùn* 震旦佛教衰落原因論 (On the reason for the decline of Chinese Buddhism, 1914 A.D.), in which he mentioned the

¹⁴ For the topic of Buddhist modernisation, we have Holmes Welch's trilogy (1967; 1968; 1972). For a more recent overview of this topic, especially Taixu's work in relation to some key issues in monastic life, see Raoul (2003). For the mechanism between modern Buddhist institutional innovations and the social changes, see Ji Zhe (2016).

¹⁵ Yang Huinan (1991).

¹⁶ The life of Taixu is well documented with his own autobiography, and it has been studied by quite a few modern scholars, such as Yinshun, Holmes Welch, Don Pittman, Sheng Yen, and Eric Goodell. For a very helpful and detailed study on the sources and the formative years of Taixu, see Goodell (2008).

importance of bodhisattva precepts.¹⁷ In his *Zhengdun sengqie zhidu lun* 整頓僧伽制度論 (On the reformation of the Sangha, 1915 A.D.), he explained the method to confer the Brahmā's Net Precepts, and he preached on the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra* in Beijing in 1920.¹⁸ In 1924, however, he started to select Yogācāra texts at Wuchang Buddhist School 武昌佛學院 and also singled out Yogācāra Precepts to formulate a consistent set of praxis. From then on, he began to preach and confer the Yogācāra Precepts only. He explained,

“To uphold the [Yogācāra] precepts and to wish to be reborn in [Maitreya's] Inner Court, such is simple and of vital importance. This is indeed easily achievable by anyone!” (持此菩薩戒，祈此內院生，既簡而要，洵為人人之所易能！)¹⁹

Therefore, it is clear that a turning point happened to him in 1924, when Taixu declared at Wuhan in his *Zhixing zishu* 志行自述, “I aspire to strengthen the Sangha and my act abides by the Yogācāra Precepts.” (*Zhi zai zhengxing jiehui, xing zai yuqie jieben*. 志在整興僧會，行在瑜伽戒本。) Following this proclamation, Taixu began to write extensively on the prominence of Maitreya.²⁰

Taixu also promoted the *Sūtra of the Upāsaka Precepts* (*Youposejie jing* 優婆塞戒經) to be practised jointly with the Yogācāra Precepts by publishing multiple lecture notes on it, ie. the *Youposejie jing jianglu* 優婆塞戒經講錄.²¹ Moreover, when he lectured on it, there was said to have an auspicious miracle because of his lecture. It was reported on a Buddhist newspaper *Foxue zhoukan* 佛學週刊 (Buddhist Studies Weekly) that after Taixu gave a talk on this scripture, the draught was terminated and it rained for over a day and a night.²²

According to the abovementioned *Youposejie jing jianglu*, Taixu's main reason for teaching this particular scripture was to reinforce the Humanistic Māhayāna Buddhism (*Renjian*

¹⁷ *Taixu dashi nianpu* 太虛大師年譜 (A chronological biography of master Taixu) by Yinshun, in *Taixu dashi chuanshu* 太虛大師全書 (Collected works of master Taixu), edited by Yinshun (1998),

¹⁸ See Han Min (2010), p. 73.

¹⁹ *Taixu dashi nianpu* 太虛大師年譜, in *Miaoyunji zhongbian* 妙雲集中編 no.6, p. 169.

²⁰ *Cizun sanyao* 慈尊三要, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*.

²¹ *Zhonghua lüzang*, V. 45, pp. 438-442.

²² *Taixu dashi xuanyan Youposejiejing zhi ganying* 太虛宣演優婆塞戒經之感應, in *Zhonghua lüzang*, V. 58, p. 78.

dasheng fojiao 人間大乘佛教).²³ He first expounded on the close relationship between Buddhism and human life, that one should cherish the opportunity of having this human body and that the Buddha came down from the Tuṣita heaven to the earth in order to guide and relieve us. He pointed out that the number of the laymen is greater than that of the monastics and we must remember Māhayāna Buddhism, as well as this scripture, is for both assemblies. Only if the laity can abide by this scripture and follow the six perfections of a bodhisattva, the spirit of Māhayāna Buddhism can be revived.

The rise of the Yogācāra Precepts is largely due to Taixu's efforts and was part of a larger development of the revival of Chinese Yogācāra Buddhism, as has been pointed out by modern scholars.²⁴ While I agree that the Yogācāra scholars, such as Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無 (1871-1943), Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1896-1989) and others played an important role for the Yogācāra movement, for the purpose of returning to the Indian origin, I would hold that Taixu was in fact coming from a pragmatically soteriological reason.²⁵ As he stated himself, the Yogācāra precepts are easier to uphold, hence more achievable by everyone. It is also better to be reborn in Maitreya's Inner Court, not entirely because of the superiority of the Yogācāra teaching, but also because Maitreya is the Future Buddha.

Following Taixu, his contemporaries also expressed supportive statements. For example, Shengren 勝忍 published on the newspaper *Fohua xinwen* 佛化新聞 Issue no. 97 (June 16, 1937) introducing the outline of the Yogācāra Precepts and emphasised that Maitreya represents the hope for current *kalpa*.²⁶ His teachings are suitable to our time. Hence whoever wishes to be “registered” (for attaining the Buddhahood) at the Longhua meeting 龍華會 must uphold the Yogācāra Precepts. Another example, Yang Mu 楊木, in “Revisiting the Bodhisattva Precepts Texts” (*Zailun pusa jieben* 再論菩薩戒本), expressed a strong disapproval against the Brahmā's Net Precepts.²⁷ His reasons are mostly based on the authenticity of *Brahmā's Net Sutra*. Since its Indian origin has been questioned since the medieval period—categorised as a “dubious scripture” in a Sui dynasty catalogue—its translator and preface author were certainly not as claimed in the

²³ *Zhonghua lüzang*, V. 45, pp. 438-442.

²⁴ See Bianchi (2017) and Ritzinger (2017).

²⁵ Justin Ritzinger (2017) has a thorough analysis on Taixu's Yogācāra understanding in relation to the socio-political background of China.

²⁶ Reprinted in *Zhonghua lüzang*, V. 58, p. 310.

²⁷ Reprinted in *Zhonghua lüzang*, V. 58, pp. 418-422.

scripture itself, as Yang Mu pointed out. Even though Yang received the Brahmā's Net Precepts earlier, he felt uncomfortable with it and supported Maitreya's teachings and the Yogācāra Precepts. Yang Mu's doubt about the *Brahmā's Net Sutra* was probably a main reason shared by many other Buddhists who gave up their faith in the Brahmā's Net Precepts.

1.3 Other Voices: Harmony or Contradiction

The debate between Brahmā's Net Precepts and Yogācāra Precepts must have bothered many Buddhists. Mingxing 明性, for instance, represents a more neutral standpoint. Recognising the effect of Taixu's thriving appeal to the Yogācāra Precepts, Mingxing picked up several points to compare the two texts literally. His purpose was to harmonise these two systems.²⁸ After comparing them in fourteen points, he concludes that the Yogācāra Precepts are the looser type, while the Brahmā's Net Precepts are stricter and more detailed. In the concluding paragraph, he also points out that the contemporaries are not upholding the precepts, especially the Chan monks took the scriptures as empty talks (*juwen* 具文) and did not take them seriously. He presumes this is the background of Taixu's sermon on the Buddhist practice, giving precepts and vinaya the highest priority.²⁹ He is disappointed by the fact that most Buddhist communities of his time did not comply with the Buddha's teachings, and the only two exceptions were the Buddhist Schools in Wuchang 武昌 and Minnan 閩南. Regarding his contemporaries, the models for real practitioners can be divided into the following two strands: (A) Yogācāra promoters: Maitreya belief together with Yogācāra Precepts, and (B) Pure Land promoters: Amitābha belief together with the Brahmā's Net Precepts.

Longhui 龍慧, on the contrary, counteracts Taixu's attempts.³⁰ Seeing so much disputes on the newspaper and journals, he felt his contemporaries had misunderstood Buddhist precepts.

²⁸ (修學大士行者，想將此兩種戒本，圓融無礙，不可不詳明大同小異之點。) *Yuqie pusa jieben yu Fanwang pusa jieben bijiao zhi yanjiu* 瑜伽菩薩戒本與梵網菩薩戒本比較之研究 (A Comparison of the texts of Brahmā's Net Precepts and Yogācāra Precepts) in *Zhonghua lüzang*, V. 45, pp. 344-351.

²⁹ (虛師又云：所謂修行，雖但以持律一名代替之亦無不可。) *Ibid*, p. 350.

³⁰ "Fangwang yu Yuqie" 梵網與瑜伽 (On Brahmā's Net Precepts and Yogācāra Precepts), in *Zhonghua lüzang*, V. 58, pp. 195-202.

He agrees that the Brahmā's Net Precepts are more thorough than the Yogācāra Precepts, and even though Taixu valued the latter, it is still difficult to claim that the latter is better than the former. He actually argues that the Brahmā's Net Precepts is in every sense more profound than the Yogācāra Precepts. According to Longhui, the Yogācāra Precepts target at the seven assemblies of the Smaller Vehicle; even though its contents comprise both the Greater and Smaller Vehicles, it is not a set of strictly defined Greater Vehicle precepts. On the contrary, the Brahmā's Net Precepts are good for both laymen and monastics.³¹

Besides the above distinction, he holds that the Brahmā's Net Precepts integrate the 'three-cluster pure precepts' (*sanjujing jie* 三聚淨戒) in the 'ten grave transgressions.' So there is no reason to criticise the Brahmā's Net Precepts for not teachings on the 'three-cluster pure precepts.'³²

The only problem for Chinese Buddhists, though, is that since we cannot give up the vinayas of the Smaller Vehicle, we might just take the precepts encompassing the Smaller Vehicle (ie. the Yogācāra Precepts) for the sake of consistency.³³ Having said so, he does not mean that the Yogācāra Precepts should be the best solution for Chinese. If one sees oneself a Mahāyāna Buddhist, he proposes, the only way to overcome the disadvantage is to bolster his faith in Mahāyāna Buddhism and reform our world into a land of Mahāyāna Buddhism altogether.³⁴

Drawing from above arguments, the reasons for advocating the Yogācāra Precepts include the following:

- (1) The authenticity of *Brahmā's Net Sutra* is questionable.
- (2) Maitreya is the future Buddha and his teaching targets at our contemporaries.
- (3) Out of compassion, one would like to come back to this world together with Maitreya.
- (4) The superiority of the three-clusters pure precepts.

2. Chinese Influence on Taiwanese Buddhism: An Early Stage

³¹ Ibid, p. 199.

³² Ibid, p. 198.

³³ Ibid, p. 197.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 202.

The development of contemporary Taiwanese Buddhism went through a period of ethnic tensions and negotiations. The Japanese Occupation (1895-1945) spurred on ample responses of nationalist views against Japan among the intellectuals on one hand, and stimulated mutual collaboration and manipulation through Buddhism on the other hand.

Meanwhile, many mainland Chinese monks moved to Taiwan after 1949.³⁵ The models of Sangha's education could be divided roughly into two groups during the first two decades after the immigration peak: a) Taixu—Yinshun, and b) Yuanying—Baisheng 白聖. These two dominant camps represented two different views of bodhisattva precepts: Master Baisheng holds on to the Brahmā's Net Precepts, whereas the Yinshun and Sheng Yen supports the Yogācāra Precepts. For the following section, I will focus on the following figures: Baisheng, Yinshun, and Sheng Yen.

2.1 Baisheng (1904-1989)

Master Baisheng was a disciple of Yuanying, the Old Sangha in Shanghai. Throughout his life, Baisheng conforms to Yuanying and Yinguang's teaching in his own thought and practice. When Yuanying founded the Śūraṅgama Buddhist College (*Lengyan Zhuanzong Foxueyuan* 楞嚴專宗佛學院) in Shanghai in 1949. As the name indicates, the curriculum is predominantly on the Śūraṅgama Sūtra. Yuanying's emphasis on this particular scripture came from Yinguang's teaching: the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra* and Śūraṅgama Sūtra are the foundation of the precepts. This structure is later integrated into the curriculum in the Buddhist College of Chinese Tripiṭaka (*Zhongguo Fojiao Sanzang Xueyuan* 中國佛教三藏學院) that Baisheng established in 1957 in Taipei and terminated in 1963.

2.2 Yinshun (1906-2005)

Yinshun was greatly inspired by Taixu since his youth. Because of Taixu, Yinshun holds views favourable to Maitreya's teachings and the Yogācāra Precepts. Yinshun studied with Taixu for a short period of time, but they have totally different personalities. As Yang Huinan (1991:

³⁵ For a complete survey of these monks from Mainland, see Hou (2016).

110-118) and Hou Kunhong (2004) pointed out, Taixu was a broad-minded leader, whereas Yinshun was sharp and less tolerant to injustice and erroneous understanding of Buddhism. Even as a reformist himself, Taixu once admonished Yinshun for being too harsh in criticising others. This young and incorruptible Yinshun broke up his discipleship with Taixu for several years but he eventually turned to Taixu's guidance again.

Yinshun admits that his very ideas of the Maitreya's Pure Land were taken directly from Taixu's teaching. He also maintains that the teachings and practices pertaining to vinaya/precepts and Pure Land Buddhism should not be two independent schools of Buddhism, for both of them are the foundations of all of the three vehicles.³⁶ Yinshun's ideas of Maitreya and the Yogācāra Precepts directly influenced many Taiwanese Buddhists, including monks and nuns.

2.3 Sheng Yen (1931-2009).

Before speaking about Sheng Yen, let's we should look at his master, Dongchu 東初 (1907-1977). Dongchu received transmission under the Chan lineages. The major ordination centre of Dongchu's time was at Mt. Baohua 寶華山.³⁷ The ordinations at Mt. Baohua had been strictly following the Nanshan Vinaya 南山律, and observed the standard rule: a full ordination period must be 53 days.³⁸ Monks who were ordained at Mt. Baohua would be usually highly proud of it. Dongchu received the ordination from Monk Jingchan 靜禪 at Mt. Baohua. So, like Jingchan himself, Dongchu also belongs to two Chan lineages: Caodong 曹洞 and Linji 臨濟.³⁹ After receiving the full ordination, Dongchu left Mt. Baohua in 1930 and went to Mt. Jiuhua 九華山, Anhui province, and later moving to the Minnan Buddhist School 閩南佛學院. Dongchu once studied under Taixu and aspired to reform Chinese Buddhism. However, his approach is slightly different, that he holds on his Chan tradition firmly, and he paid much more attention to overseas

³⁶ Yinshun (1992), "Jingtu xinlun" 淨土新論, pp. 1-4.

³⁷ Guodeng (2004) . Sheng Yen (1999) , p. 99. Yanzheng (2017), p. 153-156

³⁸ See Zunping (1991). Compared to other monasteries, Mt. Baohua's ordination period is much longer, for instance: Mt. Putuo 普陀山 is 18 days, and Quanyong Monastery, Gushan, Fuzhou) 福州鼓山泉湧寺 8 days. See Chen & Deng (2003), p. 460.

³⁹ Sheng Yen (2004) , p. 51.

education for spreading the Buddhist culture. This is why he strongly encouraged Sheng Yen to study in Japan. Sheng Yen hence went to Japan for his graduate degrees.

Coming back from Japan, Sheng Yen became one of the most prolific writers on Buddhism of our time. In terms of the topics in his work, on top of those on Chan Buddhism that he inherited from Dongchu, he spent much efforts on the reinforcement of vinayas and precepts to both monastics and the laity. His earliest work in this area, the *Jielixue gangyao* 戒律學綱要 (Guidelines for Buddhist Disciplines) finished in 1965, is very lucid and useful for Buddhist readers. While not being clearly against the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra* in the *Jielixue gangyao* yet,⁴⁰ he was very explicit, in his two later articles, about his appeal to abandon the Brahmā's Net Precepts and his preference of abiding on the 'three-cluster pure precepts' of the Yogācāra Buddhism.

In his article on the 'three-cluster pure precepts,' referring to the Japanese scholarship on Chinese Buddhism, he states that the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra*, as a product of medieval China good for that specific social context, is no longer suitable for modern Chinese society.⁴¹ Moreover, he holds that the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra* is actually difficult for the laymen to obey, and it contradicts with the Yogācāra scriptures as well as the *Śrīmāla Sūtra*. Hence it does not fit into an integrated and preferred Buddhism encompassing all Buddhist traditions.⁴² His conclusion is that "we should consider making readjustment of bodhisattva precepts for our society and, under the guidance of the 'three-cluster pure precepts', think about how we can simplify the precepts so everyone can uphold it sincerely."⁴³ He again published in 1995 to restate the appeal to abandon the Brahmā's Net Precepts and to replace it with the Ten Good Deeds (*shishan* 十善). He cited his earlier articles to explain the ten grave and 48 minor precepts in the are not practicable in our time.⁴⁴ He further refers to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, where the the Brahmā's Net Precepts are not fortified, and rather, the Ten Good Deeds are valued.⁴⁵ It is very clear to us that Sheng Yen's standing point is

⁴⁰ See the part on the the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra*, pp. 252-55.

⁴¹ Sheng Yen (1993), p. 20.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 21.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 22.

⁴⁴ Sheng Yen (1995), p. 18.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 36.

that the Brahmā's Net Precepts are not viable and the Yogācāra Precepts are the practical option for modern Buddhists.

3. Precept Reforms and Rectification of Buddhism in Taiwan

3.1 The Remarkable 1853 Ordination

Baisheng was insightful to foresee the fall of the Nationalist Party in Mainland China and began to look for a Buddhist centre in Taiwan even before 1949. He found that the Shipu Monastery 十普寺 was looking for a new abbot and immediately filled the vacancy. The Shipu Monastery then became an effective refugee centre during the first few years when a large number of Buddhist monk immigrants flooded into Taiwan. Starting from this small and deficient monastery, Baisheng reached out to thousands of monks and nuns by holding full ordination ceremonies, which were improved even compared to the mainland tradition, and not compromising at all if compared to the Japanese custom in Taiwan. The contribution of his precept reforms was significant not only to the monks, but also to the nuns. Again, I will focus on the history relevant to the bodhisattva precepts conferral in the following section.

When Baisheng first arrived in Taiwan with the KMT government, he felt the Sangha in Taiwan was not well-disciplined due to the disagreeable Japanese influence, and that the only way to remedy it was to rectify the vinayas and precepts.⁴⁶ All his remaining years in Taiwan were devoted to putting the ordination platform right and to building Buddhist colleges. For the aim of establishing a rectified Sangha, he insisted that the ordination period should be extended to 53 days in order to provide sufficient lectures on the Buddhist laws.

The first ordination ceremony after the end of the Japanese Occupation was organised by Baisheng at the Daxiansi 大仙寺, Tainan in 1953. What happened behind the scene of this ordination is very informative of the real situation of Taiwanese Buddhism. According to Jiang Canteng's (2005) investigation, the ordination ceremony, given that it was to be the first one after the KMT took over Taiwan, received a lot of attention. It was initially planned, however, to be conducted in a simple and insufficient manner, that is, having only seven days for the ceremony,

⁴⁶ See Baisheng (1984).

hence no lectures on the precepts, and allowing the “representative recipient” (*jijie* 寄戒) which means the ordinand did not have to participate in person, and yet he must pay for the certificate. Once Baisheng found it out, he negotiated with the abbot of the Daxiansi and eventually set it right to be a legitimate and recognised full-ordination ceremony.

This ordination was the first triple-platform ordination (*santan dajie* 三壇大戒) after the Retrocession of Taiwan in 1945.⁴⁷ The preceptors were all well respected monks called up by Baisheng. This successful event made Baisheng’s influence extend to the dominant Dagangshan sect 大崗山派 of southern Taiwan. Moreover, it was the first time that the Taiwanese nuns could receive a legitimate ordination. A good number of important nuns came out from this ordination, including Yuanrong 圓融, Tianyi 天乙, Lühang 律航, and others.

As one can see, Baisheng forced the Taiwanese Sangha to reform, and he made it through the Chinese Buddhist Association (*Zhongguo fojiao hui* 中國佛教會).⁴⁸ With Baisheng’s persistence throughout several decades to come, the austere model of Mt. Baohua made its way to Taiwan, while, ridiculously, Mt. Baohua cannot maintain it anymore. Nevertheless, Baisheng made thoughtful modifications in his new model: (1) the scar on the scalp is reduced from 12 to 3; (2) abolishment of physical punishment to the ordinands; and (3) the “representative recipient” still had to pay, but must receive lectures and instructions on the precepts later. Baisheng’s success in this ordination reform largely transformed and absorbed Taiwanese Zhaijiao 齋教 (vegetarian school) followers into Buddhism. It remained the dominant model for ordination up to the 1980s.⁴⁹

This 1953 ordination was a big step to take but was not an easy one. The older monastics in Taiwan were half secular, and many even kept their family while wearing their monastic robes. He rejected to confer the precepts to these “monk” candidates resolutely and made the rules stricter. Following that, another important step by him was the 1959 ordination at Shipu Monastery in Taipei: Baisheng made it free of charge for the ordinand as the very first time in Taiwanese history. During this period, most Taiwanese temples were not affluent yet, and they heavily relied on the major income by selling the ordination certificates.

⁴⁷ The Retrocession refers to the end of 50 years of Japanese rule of Taiwan and Penghu, and their handover to the Republic of China on October 25, 1945.

⁴⁸ For the significance of the Chinese Buddhist Association, see Kan (2009).

⁴⁹ Chen & Deng (2003), p. 466.

With Baisheng's arrival, it had come to the time that Taiwanese monastics became more eager for restoring the accurate Buddhist ordination. While the 1953 ordination included ordinands of both monks and nuns, that is "to bestow the precepts by a sangha consisting of bhikshus only" (*yibu shoujie* 一部受戒), Baisheng later made it happen to restore an ordination of separate transmission to bestow the precepts separately to bhikshu-only and bhikshuni-only assemblies (*erbu shoujie* 二部受戒).⁵⁰ Baisheng received a lot of criticism from some other Buddhists, especially for reinforcing the mainland Chinese and yet his efforts turned out to nourish the considerably influential nuns who were active in later times.

Baisheng's strict style in the precept transmission and education had strengthened the Buddhist monastic culture in Taiwan. It forced the Taiwanese Sangha to take vinaya/precepts seriously; he and his disciples established ordination platforms relentlessly across Taiwan. His nun disciples, chiefly in southern Taiwan, then followed his spirit faithfully.

3.2 The Development of Buddhist Education

Just like the division of the two camps in Shanghai, the Taiwanese communities also split into two branches, one following the lead of Yinshun (and Taixu), and the other following Baisheng (and Yuanying). With a preliminary survey, I offer an abridged list of these two camps as the following:

The educational institutes that were influenced by Yinshun include:⁵¹

- 1) Xinzhu nūzhong foxueyuan 新竹女眾佛學院 (1957-1960), at the Yitong Nunnery 一同寺. This is affiliated to Yunshun's Fuyan Vihāra (Fuyan jingshe 福嚴精舍).
- 2) Lingyin Buddhist College 靈隱佛學院, also in Xinzhu (1957-1963). Here the Yogācāra Precepts were taught by Monk Xuming 續明, and no course on the Brahmā's Net Sūtra.

⁵⁰ Regarding this important issue to both Chinese and Tibetan Buddhists, Ven. Hengqing 恆清 at the National Taiwan University convened the "Symposium on the Transmission of Chinese and Tibetan Nuns" 漢藏佛教比丘尼傳承研討會 in 1997 Taiwan out of H.H. Dalai Lama's request. A year later, the "First Seminar of Vinaya Scholars Concerning the Lineage of Bhikkhuni Ordination" consisting representatives from the Mulasarvastivada, Theravada, and Dharmagupta schools was held in India in 1998, also by H.H. Dalai Lama's request. Ven. Huimin 惠敏 then published a lucid essay on the discussions at the conference. See Huimin (1999).

⁵¹ Cf. Zhou Yuru (2013), pp. 129-145.

- 3) Fuyan xueshe 福嚴學舍 (1961-1964). Courses on precepts were also taught by Monk Xuming 續明. It officially became the Fuyan Buddhist College 福嚴佛學院 later in 1969.
- 4) Taixu Buddhist College 太虛佛學院 (1967-1969).

The educational institutes that were influenced by Baisheng include: ⁵²

- 1) *Zhongguo Fojiao Sanzang Xueyuan* 中國佛教三藏學院 (Buddhist College of Chinese Tripiṭaka) (1957 to 1963). Their teachers include: Baisheng (Novice regulations and *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*), Wuyin (Yogācāra Buddhism), Mingqin 明欽 (Bodhisattva precepts), Jingxin 淨心, etc.
- 2) *Zhongguo fojiao yanjiuyuan* 中國佛教研究院 (Academy of Chinese Buddhism), founded in 1960 to be a further degree for the students of the Buddhist College of Chinese Tripiṭaka.
- 3) *Linjisi jieguang foxueyuan* 臨濟寺戒光佛學院 (Jieguang Buddhist College of the Linji Monastery), founded in 1964; mostly in the same model with the Buddhist College of Chinese Tripiṭaka.
- 4) *Jingjue foxueyuan* 淨覺佛學院, founded by Baisheng's disciple Jingxin in 1967.

The first group affiliated with Yinshun basically reflected Yinshun's view, and are all located in northern Taiwan. It is worth noting that the second group of Buddhist educational institutes affiliated with Baisheng have ardently incorporated vinayas and precepts in their curriculum. In particular, the mission statement of the Buddhist College of Chinese Tripiṭaka is: "Earnestly purify the *Vinaya*; equally practise meditation and wisdom." (毗尼嚴淨，定慧等持) . It follows Yinguang's teaching: the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra* are the foundation of the precepts. To be precise, the curriculum, integrating Yinguang's idea, included the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra* and *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* a separate course on the Bodhisattva Precepts, *Lotus Sūtra*, as well as major Chan scriptures such as *Diamond Sūtra* and the *Platform Sūtra*.⁵³ It is obvious that the teaching put a weighty emphasis on the Brahmā's Net Precepts and Chan Buddhism. This tendency is consistent with Yuanying's teaching. Baisheng also held the summer retreat 結夏安居 for the monastics to study Buddhism and he focused his lectures on the *Lotus Sūtra*, *Brahmā's Net Sūtra* and *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*.

This list of Buddhist colleges is nevertheless not at all complete. There are many other temples which promoted vinayas and precepts with different approaches. There are other

⁵² Ibid, pp. 145-157.

⁵³ Tong Mianzhi and Yang Fengbin (2013), p. 361.

communities known for teaching precepts rigorously and having boosted lay participation in doing so. For instance, some temples hold various forms of Buddhist summer camps intended for the youngsters to attend during their winter and summer vacations.⁵⁴ The most well-known representative would be Lianyin Monastery's 蓮因寺 (Nantou) "Zhaijie xuehui" 齋戒學會, first convened by Master Chanyun 懺雲 (1915 – 2009, also known as Changgong 懺公), who holds a reputation for upholding monastic disciplines extremely strictly. Chanyun modelled after Yinguang and Hongyi, promoted a combined practice of Pure Land and precepts, but he never joined the dispute on bodisattva precepts or wrote on it. He simply carried out his stringent practice and trained his disciples.⁵⁵

Institute Name	Location	Affiliation	Founder	Lecturers of precepts
新竹女眾佛學院	新竹 一同寺	(印順)福嚴精舍	妙峰	印順、演培、印海、 續明 (瑜伽菩薩戒)
靈隱佛學院	新竹	(印順)	無上	續明 (瑜伽菩薩戒)
福嚴學舍	新竹	福嚴佛學院	印順	演培、印海
圓光佛學院	桃園中壢	(印順)	如悟	
法光佛學院	台北	(印順)	如學道宗	
中國佛教三藏學院	台北 十普寺		白聖	白聖、悟因、明欽、 淨心
臨濟寺戒光佛學院	台北	(白聖)	白聖	白聖、淨心
淨覺佛學院	高雄	(白聖)	淨心	
香光尼僧團	嘉義	(白聖)	悟因	

3.3 Nuns in Taiwan

⁵⁴ For a condensed survey on the Buddhist activities targeting at college students, see Huang Shiru (2010).

⁵⁵ His dedicated disciples include Zhaoyin 照因, Xingyin 性因, Tianyin 天因, and Benyin 本因, who all became active teachers on Buddhist precepts in middle and southern Taiwan. They now teach at Jinglü Monastery 淨律寺 (Nantou) and Yide Nunnery 義德寺 (Jiayi). There is also Ven. Guoqing 果清, who founded Zhengjue Jingshe 正覺精舍 (Nantou). Guoqing is respected for teaching the Brahmā's Net Precepts actively at various temples including the Yide Nunnery. While it is worth further researching on this topic, it is beyond the scope of the current paper.

It is noteworthy that the difference between the northern and southern Taiwanese nuns was as clear-cut as the division between Taixu and Yuanying in the Mainland. It was partly because the Taixu and Yuanying's different beliefs were fostered by Yinshun and Baisheng separately in Taiwan, and partly due to the regional differences in Taiwan proper. Nuns in northern Taiwan tended to be closer to Yinshun, whereas nuns in southern Taiwan were closer to Baisheng. According to Ven. Huiyan's investigation (2009: 33-50), for the period before 1945, northern Taiwanese nuns were much shaped by Jueli Fuyuan 覺力復願 (1881-1933) of the Fayun Nunnery 法雲寺; southern nuns were mostly from the Longhu'an Nunnery 龍湖庵 of the Chaofeng Temple of Dagangshan 大崗山超峰寺 under the guidance of Yongding Hongjing 永定宏淨 (1877-1939). These two monastic bases provided the foundation in nurturing the two "Her Majesty The Nun" (*nigu wang* 尼姑王) later: Ruxue Daozong 如學道宗 (1913-1992) in the north, and Yuanrong Fazhi 圓融法志 (1906-1969) in the south.

Jueli's disciples, including Ruxue, tended to be closer to Yinshun, having a higher proportion of studying abroad in Japan, on one hand, and were less involved in ordination platforms on the other hand. Nuns in southern Taiwan, like Yuanrong's disciples, mostly did not study abroad; having helped Baisheng in the 1953 ordination in Tainan, many of them got involved in the precept movement throughout the decades. The 1953 ordination at Daxian Monastery in Tainan was a big event and thereupon Yuanrong and her leading disciple Tianyi Yinyi 天乙印儀 (1924-1980) became actively participating in *jiechang* 戒場, ie. The centres for precept conferrals and ordination.

Tianyi's most well-known disciple was Wuyin 悟因 (1940~), the founder of the well-known Xiangguang Nunnery 香光尼寺 (Luminary Buddhist Temple).⁵⁶ She studied under Baisheng and admitted that she inherited Baisheng's principle of education loyally.⁵⁷ Wuyin has once recalled how Baisheng lectured on the *Brahmā's Net Sūtra*, *Śūramgama Sūtra*, *Lotus Sūtra*, and the *Treatise on the Awakening of the Māhayāna Faith* all by himself.⁵⁸ In other words, the three generations of Yuanrong, Tianyi, and Wuyin were all close to Baisheng.

⁵⁶ For a detailed study on this unique community, see Yu (2013).

⁵⁷ Zichun (1992), p. 11.

⁵⁸ Wuyin (1997), p. 5.

In contrast, take Nun Ruwu 如悟 (1938~) for example, the three Buddhist Colleges that she went all followed Yinshun's guidance: 1) Taichung Buddhist School (Taizhong foxue shuyuan 台中佛學書院), 2) Lingyin Buddhist College, and 3) Fuyan School (Fuyan xueshe 福嚴學舍).⁵⁹ She later founded the esteemed Yuanguang Buddhist College (Yuanguang foxueyuan 圓光佛學院) in northern Taiwan.

Similarly, Ruxue Daozong was ordained at the Yitong Nunnery. Coming from a very wealthy family in Xinzhu, her ordination was reported on the newspaper. After the ordination, she had studied abroad in Nagoya (Kansai nisō gakurin 關西尼眾學林) and Komazawa University 駒澤大學 in Japan. Upon her return, after teaching at several Buddhist colleges, she eventually established the Faguang Buddhist College in Taipei in 1978.⁶⁰

One of Ruxue's disciples, Ven. Zhaoyin 照印, is teaching actively bodhisattva precepts at her nunnery in Taipei, the Puyiyuan 普宜苑. Her open lecture points out that, regarding the bodhisattva precepts in Taiwan in practice, the Brahmā's Net Precepts were in use earlier on and has been replaced by the Yogācāra Precepts to be practised jointly with the Upasāka Precepts.⁶¹ This view is in accordance with Ruxue's teaching inherited from Yinshun.

4. By Way of Conclusion: The Choice

Despite the longstanding predominance of the Brahmā's Net Precepts, the Yogācāra Precepts began to gain its weight during the early 20th century first in Mainland China and later in Taiwan. In order to understand how the attitudes towards the Brahmā's Net Precepts have changed in this century, I tracked down the debate between the Brahmā's Net Precepts and the Yogācāra Precepts starting from the earliest proclaim by Taixu to the end of the twentieth century in Taiwan. This study started from Taixu's initial advocacy of the Yogācāra Precepts and the responses from the Buddhist community, followed by an analysis of Taixu's influence on his disciples, especially those who immigrated to Taiwan. The last section then moves to Taiwan, focusing on the precept

⁵⁹ Zhou Yuru (2013), p. 118.

⁶⁰ Ibid, pp. 190-191.

⁶¹ See her lectures on the nunnery's website (<http://www.pu-yi-yuan.org.tw/index.php?action=information&cid=64&p=2>), Ven. Zhaoyin's first and second lectures on the bodhisattva precepts: (照印和尚尼開示菩薩戒 第一堂課 & 第二堂課).

reforms in Taiwan and the development of Buddhist education on precept and vinaya, including several active female communities. Overall, we see a sturdy continuity from the Mainland to Taiwan in terms of the monastic views of the bodhisattva precepts.

To sum up, the views supporting the Yogācāra Precepts include the following:

1. The authenticity of *Brahmā's Net Sutra* is questionable.
2. Maitreya is the future Buddha and his teaching targets at our contemporaries.
3. Out of compassion, one would like to come back to this world together with Maitreya.
4. The superiority of the three-clusters pure precepts.

Among the mainland monks, the proponents of the Yogācāra Precepts include Taixu, Shengren, and Yang Mu in Mainland China, and Yinshun and Sheng Yen in Taiwan. Taixu's argument was taken by Yinshun and Dongchu. The former had a great influence on nuns in the north, including Ruwu, Ruxue and her disciple Zhaoyin. The latter had influenced Sheng Yen, whose wrote explicitly about forgoing the Brahmā's Net Precepts.

Likewise, the proponents of the Brahmā's Net Precepts include Yinguang and Yuanying in Mainland, and Baisheng and Chanyun in Taiwan. Yuanying's stance passed down to Baisheng, who accomplished remarkable precept reforms in the first Chinese triple platform ordination in 1953. Ever since then, his impact remained a strong force in southern Taiwan, which is vividly visible in the wide range of pursuits of precept movement by Yuanrong, Tianyi, and Wuyin. In addition, Yinguang's stress on the Brahmā's Net Precepts was taken by another line of the transmission: Chanyun in Nantou. Chanyun trained and inspired many monks and nuns, who uphold the Brahmā's Net Precepts strictly in Nantou and Jiayi, in middle and southern Taiwan.

We have seen a remarkable growth and revolution in the recent achievements in Buddhist education and social welfare engagement by Taiwanese Buddhist temples. The conferral of the bodhisattva precepts, for both the monastics and the laity, is an important aspect in the institutional management as well as to Buddhist practitioners. The precepts are ultimately for the society and from the society. While several scholarly monks, such as Taixu, Yinshun, and Sheng Yen had articulated the doctrinal justifications for asserting the priority of the Yogācāra Precepts, their underlying rationale is out of the spirit of compassion, that is the Yogācāra Precepts are easier for most Buddhists and hence more suitable for our society, and that we should be encouraged to

accompany the next Maitreya Buddha to come back to this world to relieve other sentient beings. These are soteriological concerns rather than doctrinal classifications like the Chinese *panjiao* 判教 tradition. Most monastics, on the other hand, followed their lineages in observing the rules. In other words, one's choice of the Buddhist precepts is implemented most often by one's own master. Taken all together, the bodhisattva precepts, in the spirit of Mahāyāna Buddhism, answer the needs of the people, and are decided by the people of their time.

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