SKILLED EATING: KNOWLEDGE OF FOOD IN YICHU'S SHISHI LIUTIE, A BUDDHIST ENCYCLOPEDIA FROM TENTH-CENTURY CHINA

by

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Abstract

A common approach in studies of food and religion is to understand food taboos as emerging out of a symbolic system based on notions of the sacred. Religion is understood in this view to construct meaning on the basis of symbolism, which is grounded in sacred authority. In Chinese Buddhist discourse on eating contained in a tenth-century Buddhist encyclopedia, however, in place of food taboos one finds a doctrine of equanimity and moderation in eating. Using the Chinese Buddhist encyclopedia *Shiobi liutie* as source, I argue that Chinese Buddhists framed the morality of eating not by sacral authority but by a notion of skill. This theoretical frame describes Buddhist ethics generally: *kuśala* (Ch. *shan* 善) is that which is skillful because it is wholesome, good, virtuous, or meritorious; and *akuśala* (Ch. *huoban* 不善) is that which is unskillful, because it is unwholesome or lacking in virtue. Viewing morality as a problem of skill helps explain the variation of interpretations on how to best eat as a Buddhist, which are found in different Buddhist writings. Buddhist teachings on food are provisional forms of knowledge rather than authoritative pronouncements. Most central to Buddhist attitudes on food in the *Shiobi liutie* are proper knowledge and proper attitude—both of which allow individuals to skillfully obtain the benefits of eating while avoiding pitfalls such as gluttony and illness. By highlighting skill over sacral authority, I question the commonly held notion that religious knowledge is by definition fundamentally symbolic. In medieval China, Buddhist knowledge of eating was practical and provisional, evolving with society to meet contemporary needs.
Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Robban A. J. Toleno. The project evolved out of an earlier investigation of taste 味 in Buddhist literature. I conceived of the project in its present form after coming across the *Shio bi liutie* in a collection of Buddhist lexical works (Fanchi Jushi et al., *Foxue ciwu ji cheng*). I realized that working with a Buddhist encyclopedia could solve my methodological conundrum of having too many scattered sources. While in Tokyo on a BDK fellowship, I worked from a facsimile of the oldest woodblock print edition, using trackpad writing on my computer to manually input the source text. The *Shio bi liutie* is not contained in digitized Buddhist canons (CBETA and SAT). All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.
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This dissertation uses Pinyin for all Chinese, except in cases where published material uses another Romanization scheme. Although “Tao” and its cognates have entered English dictionaries, these early adoptions from Chinese are based on a phonetic system that has harmed the general ability of English speakers to pronounce these terms in close approximation with Mandarin sounds. “Dao” and its derivatives help correct this, so I adopt them in my writing.

Japanese and Chinese names are given with the surname first, according to the practice of these cultures, unless the order has been reversed in English publications. I use caps to indicate the surname in cases where there could be confusion.

Spacing of words in Chinese titles is sometimes arbitrary, or nearly so. I have tried to be consistent with the educated opinions behind DDB entries, but have sometimes made my own decisions. I have not adopted Library of Congress standards, because adding spaces between every syllable makes for onerous reading—it is simply too messy, and it does not allow recognition of important instances of cognates.
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For Bill Holiday of BUHS
Introduction: Chinese Buddhist Perspectives on Food and Morality

Opening

How to eat well is a perennial problem. Even people who profess disinterest in this problem make daily choices regarding what to eat and what not to eat. We make decisions for reasons that are sometimes straightforward and sometimes complex. Those who think that eating is a non-issue in human experience are deluded by the false assurances of habit or by hidden social ideologies. What and how to eat has always been an open question for humans; there is no natural human diet, in history or now. In step with ecological, social, and technological change, the human diet is constantly evolving, as are theories of how to eat well.

This dissertation looks at a particular articulation of how to eat well, found in a tenth-century encyclopedia of Buddhist teachings in China. The views therein are decidedly colored by Buddhist notions such as karma and rebirth, but also by concerns for bodily health. Collectively they offer vivid illustration of how different thinkers approached this perennial problem of how to eat, which is inextricably bound up with notions of morality—the good, as a quality of self or in regard to the suffering of others.

A key assertion of this study is that morality and skill are integral concepts in Buddhist discourse on the efficacies of eating. Eating is presented as a skilled act, not an act made moral by adherence to arbitrary prescriptions and proscriptions. As a skilled act, we can eat with little skill (paying consequences in health or moral status) or with great skill, reaping benefits in health and moral status. My main source celebrates approaches to eating that contribute to efficacy on a number of fronts, especially those we might label as nutritional, medical, moral, and spiritual.

The presentation in my Buddhist source of exemplary models for how to eat is more akin to virtue ethics than to deontology or consequentialist ethics. The compiler, Yichu, chose to emphasize the logic of Buddhist attitudes toward eating, rather than highlighting food rules used in Chinese monastic contexts. Knowledge, as a universal human pursuit, takes precedence here over insular religious authority, suggesting that
Yichu viewed Buddhist food rules as *interpretations* from accumulated Buddhist knowledge on eating.

In discussing Buddhist morality of eating in terms of skill, I intend to draw attention to the engagement of Buddhism with a larger context of knowledge building in premodern Asia. Authors posit different ends coming from the act of eating: nutritional, moral, spiritual, medical, hedonic, or social gains, for example. Knowledge of eating is central to building efficacy toward any of its aims. In practice, however, knowledge is empty of inherent value; skill is what propels efficacy, even if it is built upon the foundation laid by knowledge. The end results of a particular approach to eating validate (or invalidate) the means, giving rise to discourses on the efficacy of different eating practices.

It was not just the means—such as vegetarian diet—that was debated in China, but also the ends. For early Chinese prior to Buddhism’s arrival, food was already implicated in notions of sagehood that linked the sensory world with the transcendent spirit realm. In the centuries before and after Buddhism’s arrival in China, diet was subjected to experimental manipulation in the belief that the right kind of diet could even transform people into spirit-like beings.

Debates in Buddhism over what and how to eat should not be viewed in isolation from the larger context of knowledge building. In tenth-century China, religious knowledge is not limited to the knowledge of a symbolic system constructed through a set of sacred rites. Chinese Buddhism participated in provisional knowledge building, proposing exemplary models for testing in human experience. To pigeonhole Chinese Buddhist ideas about food as primarily a matter of vegetarianism is to vastly oversimplify a long evolution of provisional knowledge, which formed in interaction with many societies and thinkers. These premodern thinkers linked food, medicine, and soteriology in ways that can only be appreciated against the backdrop of history.

Chinese Buddhist ideas about eating were not simply Indian Buddhist ideas in

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1 Responses to seemingly irrational practices in religion or in dietary practice vary widely. Many scholars dismiss such cases as evidence of arbitrary social construction. Another possible reaction is to see these as attempts to achieve true knowledge, even if their authors failed to achieve good information from the perspective of modern knowledge. I take the latter view.

2 Sterckx, *Food, Sacrifice, and Sagehood in Early China*, 1-5.

3 Campany, “Meanings of Cuisines of Transcendence in Late Classical and Early Medieval China.”
translation, but multiple layers of Indian ideas reinterpreted in China through a
drawn-out process of interaction with Chinese contexts.

Food, by nature, is interdisciplinary. I have chosen here to frame my thesis on
Chinese Buddhist attitudes toward food as primarily a topic in Buddhist studies with
implications for religious studies and food history. Inevitably, other aspects of history
are drawn into the discussion, such as social history, cultural history, and the history of
medicine in China. Below I outline my general thesis, justifying my proposal that
Buddhist eating be understood as a skilled act, and setting the stage for the more
in-depth analyses of the proceeding chapters.

Food, Durkheim’s social thesis on religion, and the case of Buddhism

A common approach in studies of food and religion is to understand food taboos as
emerging out of a symbolic system based on notions of the sacred. Émile Durkheim
and Mary Douglas championed this approach in seminal works that shaped
subsequent studies of food and religion. In Chinese Buddhist discourse on eating,
however, it is difficult to see how the notion of sacred and profane construct a symbolic
system of food rules, because in place of food taboos early Buddhists set out a doctrine
of equanimity and moderation in eating. The scholarly approach of using evidence of
sacral authority to understand patterns of food practice is not fruitful in Buddhism,
where food rules take shape in interpretive texts, rather than in authoritative texts such
as the Book of Leviticus. The literature of Buddhism forms a vast, cumulative tradition
lacking a central authority on eating. To see Chinese Buddhist vegetarianism as
analogous with Muslim halal and Jewish kosher food rules (kashrut) is to
misunderstand the structure and history of Buddhist teachings. We must distinguish
between religion as ethnic identity and religion as creed, between cases where religion

4 See Norman, “Food and Religion.”
5 Durkheim, Elementary Forms of Religious Life; Douglas, Purity and Danger.
6 See for example Freidenreich, Foreigners and Their Food; Gillette, Between Mecca and Beijing, 114-144;
Fabre-Vassas, Singular Beast, see esp. 5-6; Elverskog, Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road, 227-260.
interacts with (or even constructs) insular communities and where it modifies thought and behavior while leaving ethnic identifications largely intact.

“Chinese” and “Buddhist” are two bases of identification, interacting but distinct. It seems that Western scholars are prone to excitement over opportunities to analyze and divide, applying theories of boundary maintenance even in social contexts where identities were hybrid, complex, and relative—where, for example, Sogdians participated in Chinese government and Xianbei-Chinese aristocrats competed for the imperial throne. Buddhism’s success in China (and in Asia generally) may be attributed, in part, to its cross-cultural adaptability and its relative lack of alterity-producing food rules. At the very least, Buddhist teachings could be—and were—pitched with the intention of bridging differences. This dissertation looks at such a case.

The ability to speak generally about Buddhist food practices is limited by their diversity across time and place, but there is still some coherence in Buddhist attitudes toward eating. Using a tenth-century Chinese Buddhist encyclopedia (the Shiōbi liutie) as my main source, I argue that Chinese Buddhists framed the morality of eating not by sacrality but by a notion of skill. This notion of skill necessarily shifts our attention away from the collective to focus on the individual.

Another way to articulate this position is to make use of Robert Ford Campany’s distinction between “internalist” and “externalist” culinary choices in Chinese history: internalist choices are those justified as having intrinsic effects, whereas externalist choices are those which associate or disassociate eaters from some cluster of values (or a social group representing these). Internalist positions make claims about intrinsic efficacy, while externalist positions are relational.

My source weighs heavy on internalist food practices and even pokes fun at externalist positions. Buddhists in Chinese history did use externalist food choices to shape their identity vis-à-vis other groups, but Yichu’s tenth-century Buddhist encyclopedia privileges explanations for Buddhist dietary practice that posit human universals as their basis. The de-emphasis of externalist positions is likely connected with Yichu’s intention to pitch the knowledge of his encyclopedia to a general readership in

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7 Yanagida and Shiina, Zengaku tenockeyōkan, v.6 (shimo). I provide a detailed introduction to this text in Chapter Two.

8 Campany, “Meanings of Cuisines of Transcendence,” 2.
China (as I discuss in Chapter Two). I have chosen to scrutinize the *internalist* perspectives, since these are dominant here and because the existing modern scholarship on Buddhism and food places emphasis on *externalist* views, distorting our understanding of the *internalist* logic. Both are necessary perspectives, as Campany suggests.

According to my source text, Chinese Buddhists understood moral eating to be supported by proper knowledge and proper attitude—“proper” in that they were held to be efficacious models. These were informed by the *Buddhadharma* (the moral law taught by the Buddha) but nonetheless needed interpretation in practice. Buddhist teachings on food support the ability of individuals to skillfully obtain the benefits of eating while avoiding pitfalls such as greed and physical illness.

**Meat-eating in Buddhism**

The case of meat eating in Buddhism is a prime example of how attempts to delineate a collective morality from Buddhist food practices can give misleading results. Meat, now popularly considered a taboo food in Buddhism, was not originally taboo but became so in China through a complicated history of negotiation that included the efforts of sixth-century Chinese emperor Wu of Liang (Liang Wu Di) and many lay Buddhists, in addition to the voices of eminent tonsured Buddhists eager to promote Mahāyāna Buddhist ideals of compassionate action toward food animals.9

Scholars of Chinese food history are prone to invoking a false dichotomy between the supposed universality of meat eating among Chinese and a stereotyped image of the vegetarian Indian Buddhist: “The first Indian Buddhist monks to arrive in China (around the beginning of the first century A.D.) were pious men who brought with them a commitment to vegetarianism, but who found widespread meat eating and animal sacrifice. …it was only with the introduction of Buddhism that vegetarianism became commonplace.”10

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10 Simoons, *Food in China*, 51. Simoons expressed some hesitation about the origins of vegetarian practice in China despite presenting this simplistic historical model. He later conducted a detailed study of flesh
There is a popular conception—in the Anglophone world, at least—that Buddhists are, as a rule, vegetarians. Bernard Faure, a scholar of Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, includes this topic in his book *Unmasking Buddhism*, which aims to debunk popular myths about Buddhism. Noting widespread belief that Buddhism advocates a strict vegetarianism, he outlines how this is not true for many Buddhists today and is not a consistent aspect of Buddhist history and doctrine. As Faure observes, vegetarianism is a more complex issue than it at first appears.

In early Buddhist writings that arrived in China in the first centuries of the Common Era, there was no clear authority on whether or not the eating of meat was acceptable for Buddhists, only a set of differing positions from different schools and periods of Buddhism’s history. Today, scholars often point to the precept against killing and to the associated virtue of abhinivāṇa, non-harm, to explain the practice of vegetarianism in Buddhism’s history, but this view posits a coherent ethical practice where there is none.

In his widely-read introduction to Buddhism, Peter Harvey gives a concise overview of ethical vegetarianism in Buddhism, discussing the early practice of monastic Buddhists accepting donations of foods containing meat, so long as these meat-foods met several criteria that helped distance the Buddhist from the slaughter of the animal—not having seen the killing or suspected that the animal was killed specifically for the purpose of the donation. In written lore on the Buddha’s community, we read of the Buddha accepting food donations that include meat. Devadatta, cousin of the Buddha and erstwhile member of the Buddha’s saṃgha, is infamous among Buddhists for creating frictions in the community when he proposed greater austerities, among which was a call for strict vegetarianism. The Indian Buddhist saṃgha rejected Devadatta’s position as a form of extremism, deemed incompatible with the Middle-Way philosophy.

* avoidance around the world, *Eat Not This Flesh,* where he concludes that a great number of factors are involved in flesh avoidance, with religious identity only one piece of a larger picture that includes ethnic identities, socioeconomics, and human psychology. Nonetheless, he reiterates his original model for the introduction of vegetarianism to China. See 292-293.

12 p.120.
14 The ethics of abhinivāṇa are integral to Buddhist teachings, but they did not result in consistent food practices across Buddhist communities.
15 Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, 273-274.
of the Buddha.\textsuperscript{16} For most of Buddhist history, meat eating was accepted under certain conditions. Today, many forms of Buddhism—especially in Southeast Asia, Tibet, and Japan—continue to permit the eating of animal flesh.\textsuperscript{17}

The supposed taboo on the eating of meat in Buddhism proves a poor basis for understanding the construction of group solidarity for Buddhists when considered cross-culturally and over broad time spans. In micro-histories of social interactions between individuals or local groups in China, vegetarianism may still be a valid tool for understanding the dynamics of group identity, but the assumption that it was the definitive issue when speaking of food and Buddhism is false. We appear to be projecting our own preoccupations with the ethics of meat eating onto the history of Buddhism. If the fixation on vegetarianism has distorted our understanding of food and Buddhism, then how can this be corrected? Below I will demonstrate that Buddhism has something more to teach its practitioners about food and eating, which has been overlooked. But first I want to consider how the conventional theoretical approach to food and religion is a poor match for the case of Buddhism.

From social symbolism to the efficacy of normative attitudes

The details of Buddhism’s doctrinal approach to food need to be understood better if we wish to compare notions of food and religion cross-culturally. In studying food and Buddhism, if we focus on Buddhist vegetarianism or fasting practices, as is often the case, we risk misunderstanding the nature of Buddhism as a religion, seeing only the familiar patterns of taboo and construction of social identity.\textsuperscript{18} In the interest of refining general theory on food and religion, we cannot afford to be complacent regarding potential problems raised by the case of Buddhist discourse on food and eating.

I am not arguing against Durkheim’s thesis that religion reflects social values. I also accept that Chinese Buddhists did engage in the construction of group solidarity

\textsuperscript{16} Kieschnick, “Buddhist Vegetarianism in China,” 189.
\textsuperscript{17} E.g., Xu, Zhongguo yinshi shi, v.3, 195: Buddhists in Tibet and Mongolia do not have a taboo on eating meat.
\textsuperscript{18} See Ulrich, “Food Fights,” as an example of how this approach can work for understanding historically situated interactions between different social groups that are defined by religion. What this approach does not readily provide is an ability to reconcile the diversity of Buddhist food practices across time and place.
through establishment of normative teachings on food. This social approach does have validity for understanding particular moments in the history of Chinese Buddhism, such as in the critical attitude of a Chinese Buddhist author toward certain Daoist food practices that permitted the eating of meat, the drinking of alcohol, and extended fasting (see entry #44 in Appendix 5). My point, rather, is that because Buddhist attitudes toward eating do not easily bifurcate along a fault line of sacred and profane, this is a poor starting point for understanding the logic of Buddhist teachings on food.

I am arguing here against a strong social-constructivist understanding of Buddhism and food, because this theoretical frame marginalizes practical forms of knowledge that are integral to Buddhist discourse. Buddhist knowledge of food is misunderstood if approached through a social-constructivist lens that highlights taboo and permitted foods within a symbolic system of sacred and profane. The pioneering work on food and religion by Émile Durkheim19 and the social approach to understanding taboo championed by Mary Douglas20 have steered scholars away from natural explanation of food rules—explanation that establishes coherence in religious knowledge of food outside of socially-generated symbolic systems. For Durkheim, religion is a manifestation of society and its moral ideals; food serves as an opportunity for constructing fictional kinship around dietary communion, especially when a sacred food is involved. He was skeptical that natural or ecological explanation had a legitimate role in understanding religious phenomena.21 Douglas’s study of taboo shares this basic view of the socially unifying power of ritualized taboos, even though she disagreed with Durkheim’s distinction between sacred and profane, between religion proper and magic as primitive hygiene—for Douglas, both sets of rites (religious and magic) are based in socially generated symbolic systems.22

Durkheim and Douglas’s position that food choices are patterned in socially generated symbolic systems found further expression in Pierre Bourdieu’s sociological study of taste in French society, Distinction. Rather than drawing attention to religion, however, Bourdieu’s work on the social construction of food preferences focuses on

19 *Elementary Forms of Religious Life.*
20 *Purity and Danger.*
21 Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life,* 70 (note).
class ideologies. In Bourdieu’s influential study, class forms the basis for shared social identification. Groups eat according to different class ideologies. Class shapes food choices, which function actively to socially differentiate groups.\(^{23}\) Along with Douglas, Bourdieu has played a key role in making social relativity the default theoretical frame for analyzing differences of food practice.

Bourdieu makes a methodological claim that I wish to challenge here. He held that by analyzing the choices actually made by social actors from different groups, and by not judging their knowledge claims he could achieve a science of taste, an empirical study of preference. He saw forms of knowledge—such as nutritional knowledge that led particular groups to favor the eating of salads and other light foods—as socially relative ideologies. He refused to consider whether certain ideologies might be more apt to circumstances than others, more knowledgeable about the human condition and its needs. Using Campany’s wording, we might say that Bourdieu only analyzed *externalist* (relational) food choices and refused comment on *internalist* positions. Bourdieu’s study is masterful and full of penetrating insights, but because his theoretical lens ignores *internalist* positions he can only represent social difference and not the catalytic action of knowledge flowing between individuals and transforming them in meaningful ways. He stopped his analysis at the level of class distinctions—at a social scale of analysis, above the level of analysis that looks at the impact of ideas in personal experience. His approach exemplifies the strengths of sociology, but lacks insights on religion that emerge only at a finer scale of analysis, such as that used by William James in analyzing the psychology of religious experience.\(^{24}\)

The sociological approaches championed by Durkheim, Douglas, and Bourdieu can easily miss how doctrinal attitudes on food in Buddhism offer the practitioner more than just an opportunity to express social solidarity with the religious group and its idealized system of symbols. There is still value, I wish to suggest, in trying to understand the *internalist* positions claimed by Buddhist authors. Observing that food is central in constructing social solidarity (including religious solidarity) is no longer a novel observation, but it is also potentially misleading in the case of China, where ideas that

\(^{23}\) Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 177-200.

\(^{24}\) James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*. 
we tend to label as “Confucian,” “Daoist,” or “Buddhist” could sometimes occupy a highly permeable cultural space. We need to understand internalist positions in order to analyze the relational politics between groups that were sometimes antagonistic, sometimes sympathetic, and always conversant with each other’s positions.

Some scholars have sought to move beyond the narrowness of explanations of food and religion that treat cultural patterns as arbitrary social constructions. For example, the anthropologist Marvin Harris made contributions that stimulated a set of theoretical debates over how to best understand food rules. Harris has been criticized for relying too strongly on a pet theory, ‘materialism’ or ‘environmental determinism’, to explain a broad set of taboos cross-culturally. While his ideas about protein hunger and some technical aspects of nutritional science may be controversial, his contributions added nuance to the social approach to food and religion by proposing that ecological, nutritional, and economic information was part of the calculus, whether conscious or not, by which religious groups patterned their eating. Harris, by considering ecological constraints, extended the thesis that religion manifests the ideals of the collective, giving these ideals not a symbolic but a practical basis (i.e., in knowledge about the functioning of material life). I think this remains an important contribution to our thinking about patterns of eating associated with religion. The controversy surrounding some of his views is connected with an ideological current in modern academia that militates against the idea that religious ideas and other cultural patterns can be explained as rational and pragmatic, rather than as arbitrary cultural constructions.

Harris is well known for his “etic” explanations of food and religion, which rely on explanations outside of the “emic,” or internal cultural logic. While I focus mostly on emic explanations in this dissertation, I do use perspectives from modern science in parts of this dissertation. Used appropriately, etic perspectives—drawn from such fields as psychology and cognitive science—can elucidate our understanding of the history of

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25 E.g., Harris, Good to Eat; “Foodways: Historical Overview and Theoretical Prolegomenon.”
26 Simoons, Eat Not This Flesh, 320.
27 Against the critique that ecological explanation projects modern scientific meanings onto actors who are entirely unaware of these, Harris proposed an emic—or insider—form of knowledge, and one that is etic, belonging to outside observers.
28 E.g. Harris, "Foodways," 68-72.
Buddhist ideas about food. Where reasonable to do so, I have diversified the tools available for analysis by bringing in modern perspectives. I would argue that this enriches rather than harms my reading of the material, situating it in the present intellectual environment. Of course I cannot claim to offer an orthodox reading of my complex historical materials (if there could be such a thing). I see my work as historian one of uncovering—to the best of my ability—the internal logic of my material, of seeking coherence in the complex palimpsest of accumulated statements on Buddhist attitudes toward food and eating. My reading is shaped by my methodological decisions.

It is necessary to address the features of Buddhist teachings as they manifest in my source text from China. Given the stochastic format of the encyclopedia’s entries under the topic of food, and the complexity of these materials, I have chosen to interpret them as exemplary models associated with the complex body of thought and practice that constitutes what we collectively refer to as Chinese Buddhism. These models are presented in a manner conducive to the reflection and potential adoption of individuals, so I have oriented my scholarly apparatus in the direction of the individual.

Plural Buddhisms and religious repertoires

In *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim raises questions about the different orientation of Buddhist teachings in comparison with other religions and he uses this divergence to support his thesis that the basis of religion is in the social collective and not in a belief in gods and spirits. While his thesis of the social basis of religion remains an important contribution with profound implications for the study of religion, his understanding of Buddhism appears rudimentary and incomplete—belief in the presence of gods and spirits does come to play a role in many schools of Buddhism, so lack of these in some philosophical forms of Buddhism cannot be generalized to the religion as a whole. Some scholars of Buddhism now get around these difficulties by proposing that there are “Buddhisms” rather than a singular religion.
Another approach is to view religion in Chinese history not as comprised of doctrinally discrete teachings practiced by mutually antagonistic social groups, but as repertoires offering people an assortment of teachings and practices that were amenable to selective exploration.\textsuperscript{31} This view of Chinese religion helps clarify the inclusion in a tenth-century Chinese Buddhist encyclopedia of material from a wide variety of schools of Buddhism, and even from Confucian learning. The present study takes this approach, on the basis of evidence from Chinese history (outlined in Chapter One).

Buddhist doctrine on food contains ideas on how selfhood is patterned and salvation obtained. Buddhists have sophisticated ideas about food, holding that food is not a singular but a multiple category, nourishing at multiple levels (as discussed in Chapter Four). In Buddhist teachings, morality is not merely an expression of adherence to social ideals, but a skill to be learned and practiced as part of a normative path toward ultimate awakening.\textsuperscript{32} Lack of adherence to a moral precept such as the avoidance of meat is not viewed as a problem of transgressing against a high god or of going against the social order; rather, it is problematic for being a clumsy and ignorant action that does not nourish the individual in ways conducive to the soteriological goal of achieving liberation from suffering through an ultimate awakening to truth.

Following clues from my tenth-century Buddhist encyclopedia, I propose that we gain an improvement of understanding by shifting our gaze from the collective to the personal level, investigating the psychology of eating as a Buddhist. In other words, in the fashion of William James,\textsuperscript{33} we must consider the inner world of the Buddhist in order to find coherence in the multitude of food practices evident in different schools of Buddhism spread throughout Asia.

By shifting attention to psychology, we can approach Buddhist teachings on food and eating as attempts to construct exemplary models on the basis of knowledge about individual experience. This approach can be shown compatible with social approaches such as Bourdieu’s class-based analysis if we understand that the scale of analysis is different. Class-based foodways develop as strategies, which are viewed by each group

\textsuperscript{31} Campany, “On the Very Idea of Religions.”
\textsuperscript{32} Harvey, \textit{An Introduction to Buddhism}, 264-265; Prasad, “Ethics in Buddhist Philosophical Literature,” 219-220.
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Varieties of Religious Experience}. 
as exemplary for the concerns and ideals of the group. Each group has narratives of eating that form a base of knowledge and shape eating practices. In Chinese society, literate individuals participated in an exchange of ideas that allowed repertoires of one group to be shared beyond the confines of an adhering community of individuals. This dynamic in medieval Chinese society demonstrates fluidity of religious identities to some extent, but it also suggests that competition among groups was sufficient to require written expositions of group narratives. Writings such as Yichu's Shishi liutie suggest that medieval Chinese intellectuals (including learned Buddhists) scrutinized for coherence the content of group narratives on eating, with coherence measured on the basis of efficacy in experience. And now I, the modern critic, likewise scrutinize these models for coherence—in theory if not in practice.

Eating as an attitudinal problem in Buddhism

Let us step back for a moment and consider the context in which Buddhism emerged in India. Prior to (and coinciding with) the teachings of the Buddha, elite Indo-Aryan society widely practiced a Vedic religion of sacrifice, often called Brahmanism, which through rites aimed at caring for ancestors perpetuated the Vedic family structure and a male-dominant, caste-stratified social order. When the Buddha appeared in the sixth century BCE, he rejected the Vedic religion of sacrifice and its idealized social relationships, framing its status quo of rebirth into the World of the Fathers as a form of suffering. As an anti-Vedic religion of renunciation, Buddhism teaches release from suffering as the goal of practice, offering a Path (Skt. mārga) for achieving this end.

The basis for this Path is in moral law (Skt. dharma), a concept shared across Indian religious thought in the Buddha’s time: “Dharma refers to the idea of a moral law that is eternal, unchanging, and universal, being limited in neither time nor space. Unlike the religions of the Bible, the moral law is not thought of as the will of a personal deity, but as uncreated and changeless. It is part of the immutable order of the universe.” The

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54 Trautmann, India, 42-47, 103.
55 Ibid., 48-54.
56 Harvey, An Introduction to Buddhism, 8-31.
57 Trautmann, India, p.115.
positing of a universal and immutable moral law places authority outside of the Buddha’s spoken word, into the arena of direct experience.

The Buddha spoke out against religion based on authority, such as the Vedic religion of the priestly brahmin class, and instead emphasized self-reliance and experiential testing of teachings. The following translation by Peter Harvey of a quote from the Buddha is worth representing here, because it is directly relevant to understanding how Buddhist teachings developed into a flexible and interpretive religion, rather than one based on authority:

“...you should not go along with something because of what you have been told, because of authority, because of tradition, because of accordance with a transmitted text, on the grounds of reason, on the grounds of logic, because of analytic thought, because of abstract theoretic pondering, because of the appearance of the speaker, or because some ascetic is your teacher. When you know for yourselves that particular qualities are unwholesome, blameworthy, censured by the wise, and lead to harm and suffering when taken on and pursued, then you should give them up.” (An Introduction to Buddhism, 30-31)

With this emphasis on the testability of the truth of teachings in human experience, the Buddha likened his (and all) teachings to a raft, giving us the now famous analogy of using the teachings as an expedient for reaching the other shore, upon which the raft is discarded. If this quote can indeed be traced back to the Buddha, then the Buddhist teachings have from their inception contained an anti-authoritative element that works against declarations of strict orthodoxy.

The Buddhist teachings did develop a large body of monastic codes (Skt. vinaya), which prescribe normative behaviors for the Buddhist community of monks and nuns (Skt. saṃgha). Nonetheless, this body of codes has no single text that can be considered more authoritative than others, since competing schools in Indian Buddhism each devised their own codes, based on an interpretation of the core Buddhist teachings and the moral precepts left by the Buddha. Even in these written monastic codes, there is a tendency for rules to show more concern for the contexts and conditions in which eating

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38 Heirman, “Vinaya from India to China,” 167.
is permitted, rather than stipulating precisely which foods may or may not be eaten.\textsuperscript{39} To some extent, Buddhist communities have always recognized the need to adapt behavioral codes to local circumstances.

In the course of its long history of development and spread, Buddhism acquired devotional aspects, magical practices, belief in deities, and other features that confound attempts to characterize it as a singular religion with a definitive corpus of sacred texts. Buddhist texts are many and varied, not easily conforming to normative ideas on what is more or less important. Rather than being authoritative, a large portion of Buddhist texts must be considered interpretive in nature, since they are redactions and commentary on previous works. The varied structure of written Buddhist teachings has resulted in Buddhist practice resting less on definitive textual authority than on interpreting communities—communities that chose to emphasize and implement a particular interpretation. For this reason, discussions of Buddhism morality need to be situated in particular historical contexts.

It is possible, still, to apply a retrospective gaze from a particular point in history, as I do in this study. Here, that retrospective perspective comes from tenth-century medieval China and looks back at the Indian and early Chinese sources.

Sources and methods

My research here takes as a point of departure the \textit{Shi\r{u}hi liutie} 释氏六帖, a Buddhist encyclopedia compiled by the monk Yichu in tenth-century China during a time of warfare and political disunity (see Chapter Two for details on Yichu and his work). Modeled on Chinese encyclopedias that sought to bring together citations from classical literature on all aspects of human knowledge, this encyclopedia includes an entire chapter on food-related themes, citing the Chinese Buddhist literature of the time, which included many works of Indian Buddhism translated into Chinese, in addition to works composed in China. The result is a kind of literature review, frozen in time, on what an

\textsuperscript{39} See, for example, Ulrich, “Food Fights,” 242.
educated tenth-century Chinese Buddhist viewed as significant statements on Buddhist attitudes toward food.

Translating and analyzing a set of fifty-seven topics on food (ṣābi), I found that Yichu did not highlight Buddhist strictures on meat-eating, but instead hovered around a number of other themes, especially the role of karma (moral causation) in eating and the importance of cultivating equanimity, moderation, and generosity. For Yichu, who lived during a time of political volatility and the tragedies of warfare, the question of whether or not one subscribed to the Chinese Buddhist practice of vegetarianism was not a central issue. He emphasized not what a Buddhist may or may not eat, but rather how a Buddhist should eat. More central than vegetarianism is the problem of attitude.

Buddhist rejection of ritual purity and social construction of in-groups

One entry on food in the Shōshū liutie underlines the Buddhist rejection of Brahmanism’s categories of ritual cleanliness and pollution, casting the attempt to ascribe purity and impurity to foods in the world as a futile project destined for eventual failure:

Foods are unclean. The [Dazhidu] lun ⁴⁰ says, There was a brahmin who cultivated the dharma of joy and purity. Something came up and he had to go to an unclean country. While thinking about pure food, he saw an old woman come along, selling marrow brecads. She came day after day to sell them. After eating some, the brahmin suddenly found them flavorless, so he asked the woman, saying, “Why haven’t they any flavor?” The woman replied, “My lord suffers ulcers on her genitals, so I regularly take buttered flour to stick together medicine and cover [the ulcers]. Taking it off, I mix it with strong-flavored wine and sell it as marrow breads. Now the ulcers have healed and I haven’t the ulcer-soaked flour. These have only oil.” The brahmin upon hearing this was retching without end and very nearly wishing he would die (#35). ⁴¹

⁴⁰ T25 n1509, 231c09-22. For the Chinese text and for notes on passages from Yichu’s presentation on the topic of ṣābi, see the full set of translations in Appendix 5. I have numbered the entries for ease in locating them.

⁴¹ E.g., this is Appendix 5, entry number 35.
While some foods—as this hapless brahmin discovered—are very unclean, Chinese Buddhists held that all foods are intrinsically unclean to some degree. Yichu cites an "Essential Collection" (Yaoji) holding this view: “…in the place from which the food comes, there is much filth and little food, so it inherently becomes unclean (#15). Another source helps clarify the position:

Reckoning for [just] one begging bowl of rice, if we collect together and measure the sweat of the farmer who made [it], [we would find that] the food is less than the sweat. This food’s measure of exertion and its toil being like this, it becomes impure as soon as it enters the mouth and reaches the belly” (#26).

Yichu comments, “To not arrive at gluttony, it is necessary to hold this view.” The Buddhist emphasis on attitude also comes through in a humorous anecdote that pokes fun at overly literal Buddhists, whose rule following and social construction of in-groups and out-groups is taken too far:

A bhikṣu was walking with a non-Buddhist and noticed his fruit tree. The non-Buddhist invited him to climb up and take some fruit. The bhikṣu replied, “The Buddhist teachings do not permit climbing of trees.” The non-Buddhist climbed up and brought [some fruit down] to the ground, but the bhikṣu would not take it. The non-Buddhist asked why. The bhikṣu said, “The Buddha directed that, should we receive too much from outside Buddhism, we will give rise to belief and submit.” (#17).

The monk here is overly anxious about his interactions with the non-Buddhist layperson and is unable to enjoy some sincerely offered fruit. Yichu clarifies his interpretation of the passage by titling it, “To eat fruits, you must receive them,” and by stating “a Buddhist monk receives fruit but distances himself from his denigrators.” Here, the non-Buddhist is not threatening or denigrating the Buddhist, so his designation as a non-Buddhist (waidao 外道, “outside the Path”) merely denotes that he has not joined the Buddhist Path—he has not taken refuge (guiyi 歸依) in the Buddhist teachings.

These few examples help demonstrate the reluctance of Buddhists to view themselves as hermetically distinct from other groups, as morally superior due to
adherence to norms of ritual purity. Instead of apologetics in defense of Buddhist vegetarianism, we find in the *Shíshí liútìe* a practical humility: foods are by nature impure, so we are all alike in our need to cope with the problem of how to eat wisely.

**Skillful attitude as a Buddhist solution**

Citations on food in the *Shíshí liútìe* suggest that Buddhists recognized ethical dilemmas associated with eating, but did not call for a strict set of proscriptions. Rejecting the view that Buddhists should refuse food from non-Buddhists or arbitrarily divide the edible world into ritually pure and polluting foods (as the above brahmin did), the citations instead point in the direction of exploring the nature of eating, understanding its benefits and dangers, and identifying some of the better practices of eating. They suggest that Buddhists saw eating as an activity fraught with the dangers of excessive desire but navigable with the proper tools. Here, ignorance in practice results in clumsiness and wisdom in practice results in skill. Through Buddhist wisdom, one can learn to eat with skill.

I am arguing here that the Buddhist moral frame for eating is one of skill, which warrants some clarification. This notion of skill is both embodied in the practice of eating and also attitudinal. One could argue, as some have done for Buddhist ethics generally, that its features constitute a form of virtue ethics due to celebration of a set of virtues and the suggestion that high levels of skill in eating align with high levels of spiritual accomplishment displayed in the lives of Buddhist exemplars: buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other adepts. Another influential interpretation holds that Buddhist ethics combine elements that compare well with not only virtue ethics, but also Kantian ethics (deontology) and Utilitarianism. Rather than belaboring these comparisons, however, I will use the space here to substantiate the claim that Buddhists framed the morality of eating as a matter of skill.

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42 Monastic codes did set many proscriptions for communities of tonsured Buddhists, but these were based on interpretation of core teachings, and were adapted to different social contexts. There was no absolute authority on the specifics of what could or could not be eaten.

43 Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, 265. See also Keown, *Nature of Buddhist Ethics*, 119-128.
Morality as a problem of skill

That Buddhist morality as a whole entails a notion of skill is well attested in the literature on Buddhism, albeit with some scholars quibbling over the choice of wording. This notion of skill derives from the structure of Buddhist teachings on moral action. Acting out of a blameless and morally healthy state of mind, or acting in a way that uplifts one toward such a mental state, is described as *kusala* (Ch. *shan* 善): wholesome, good, virtuous, or meritorious. Such an action is skillful in the sense that it is informed by wisdom and leads to karmic benefits, sending the actor along a path toward a brighter future. Actions that do the opposite are *akusala* (Ch. *bu Shan* 不善): unwholesome or lacking in virtue. In Yichu's Buddhist encyclopedia, this topic appears in the table of contents (see Appendix 4):

(3.10) Conditioned phenomena and the Dharma of mind. Skillful [behaviors] have four [types]: belief, delight, affection, and mindfulness. Unskillful [behaviors] have seven [types]: wickedness, poison (i.e., hindrances), anger, delusion, pride, perverse views, and the five heinous crimes [plus stinginess, greed, and jealousy].

Buddhist morality emphasizes the state of mind producing an action, rather than focusing on the action itself. Buddhists treat intentions and attitudes as actions of moral significance because they reflect the moral status of the individual, even before they lead to physical acts. The skill of enacting moral behaviors has levels, with those less capable of applying to individual circumstances a complex moral calculus following, instead, sets of rules (precepts and monastic codes) established on the basis of the main teachings.

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47 Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki ōkan* 62, 7, 54.
As Susanne Mrozik has argued, "Buddhist ethics also contains a physical dimension that leaves marks of virtue in the bodies of practitioners. Though many studies of Buddhist morality emphasize cognitive elements, the focus on mental categories does not exclude consideration of physiological outcomes. To apply a Cartesian separation of body and mind to Buddhist ethics would greatly distort what is in fact a nuanced and holistic treatment of morality in human experience."

"It is to these moral frames of reference—and not to a concern with moral vegetarianism—that Yichu draws attention in his Buddhist encyclopedia. The view of eating as a skilled activity becomes apparent when comparing lists of benefits coming from good practices with statements pointing to the harms of bad practices. For example, we read in Yichu's presentation on the topic of food how “food is fundamentally to sustain the body” (#13) and how the Buddhist practice of fasting after the midday meal is for both psychological and physiological wellbeing, having benefits that include improving sleep, concentrating the mind, reducing flatulence, and maintaining a body that is at ease and free of illness (#14). Documenting deleterious practices, Chinese Buddhists enumerated the harms of overeating: much stool, much urine, troubled sleep, a heavy body, and many ailments and indigestion (#43)."

"Yichu’s Shishi liutie is not unique in framing the morality of Buddhist approaches toward eating as a matter of skill (or an activity divisible into ‘wholesome’ and ‘unwholesome’ approaches). Later Buddhist encyclopedias from the Song and Ming dynasties also suggest that medieval Chinese Buddhists applied this moral frame to the problem of eating. For example, two such encyclopedias list reasons why Buddhists accept the need to eat—and not engage in extended fasts, in the manner of some Daoist groups. The reasons are these: 1) Benefiting the body is the Path; 2) Nourishing the worms of the body [is necessary for health]; 3) [Accepting food offerings helps] almsgivers give rise to merit; and 4) [Buddhist acceptance of the need to eat] destroys the fasting practices of non-Buddhists.""
vis-à-vis an ‘other’—but the objection made is that Daoists misuse the opportunities present in eating and adopt practices that are morally and physically harmful. This example shows how Buddhist approaches to eating carried forward a coherent moral logic even when Chinese Buddhists were adapting to new social contexts and responding to the practices of other groups.

Meat-eating monks

Even after the Chinese Buddhist community had widely adopted vegetarianism as a standard component of monastic discipline, accounts of meat-eating monks persist in Buddhist records. These narratives can be read as an antinomian element in the history of Chinese Buddhism, but they also serve as potent statements in the politics of public relations. Not all monks saw vegetarianism as a necessary Buddhist practice, so Buddhists needed to frame the narratives in a way that defended their religion from the critique of hypocrisy. The way that Buddhists did so is by highlighting attitudinal skill. This produces an explanation that is defensible in light of scriptural sources and effective in clearing social blame from these non-conformers.

John Kieschnick, who documented and analyzed many such cases appearing in biographies of eminent monks, invokes the cross-cultural archetype of the ‘trickster’ to explain the tension in Buddhist literature between celebrating monks who strictly adhere to monastic disciplines and celebrating those who openly transgress the same rules by eating meat and sometimes even drinking wine (which is subject to a more explicit prohibition in Buddhism). In one vivid example, we read of a well-respected monk who regularly partook of wine and meat, inadvertently influencing a group of monks to model their own behavior on his. After warning them against adopting unorthodox practices before abiding in a state of pure mind (attained through Buddhist discipline and learning), he prepared some bread and took this group of monks to a graveyard. He filled his bread with rotten meat from an abandoned corpse and

50 Under Sili xuobi 四利須食 in the Shōbi yuolana and Daming sanzang faobu. See Yiru, Daming sanzang faobu, 216-217.

51 Eminent Monk, 51-66.
swallowed it with an expression of pleasure, warning his retching companions that they should avoid meat until they are able to digest even such meat from a rotting corpse. The biographer, Zanning 贊寧 (919-1001), explains this case by acknowledging that those with high spiritual attainment may resort to unorthodox means of teaching, as this monk did, but that this should not be imitated by those who have not yet attained fruition on the Path. Chinese Buddhists tolerated the image of transgressing monks in order to focus attention on the transcendence of dualistic ideas about pleasure and pain, gain and loss—and to defend their monastic communities against critiques on their moral character. In Chinese society, depictions of meat-eating monks were tolerable only to the extent that apparent shortcomings in the virtue of compassion could be counterbalanced with a demonstration of wisdom capable of framing the (now) unorthodox behavior of meat-eating as an example of skillful means (Skt. upāyakauśalya, Ch. fangbian shanqiao 方便善巧), an extraordinarily skillful method used by the enlightened to teach Buddhist wisdom.

Meat foods are a locus of heightened moral concern in the history of Buddhist thought, despite the unevenness of rules about meat-eating in the various monastic codes. But to weigh too heavily on meat as a taboo food is to miss the distinction between interpretive struggles over meat eating in the social history of Chinese Buddhism and general moral frames for eating in Buddhist teachings. It is to the latter that Yichu draws attention under the topic of food in his Buddhist encyclopedia. For example, the Shiobi liutie presents eating of any food as a grave matter on par with not just meat-eating, but even cannibalism: “Think of the provenance of food. …As if eating the flesh of your son, think of the almsgivers’ great hardships, accumulating and collecting property. As if slicing off skin and flesh, he gives it to me as alms” (#28). The trope of cannibalism draws attention to the general suffering of householders who work hard to accumulate wealth. The Buddhist recipient of alms must not take for granted the gifts that sustain them. The trope of cannibalizing one’s own child, which invokes an extreme situation about which no one can feel unmoved, appears also in a

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citation calling for a balanced attitude in eating: “When practitioners eat, they should not be greedy about amounts, should not fuss over much or little, should not be fond of flavors—as if eating the meat of one’s child…they should give rise to remorse” (#8). As we saw earlier, Yichu suggests that eating is fundamentally to sustain the body and is not to be engaged as a hedonistic pursuit.

In light of these citations from the Buddhist literature, even the corpse-eating monk shows some consistency with core teachings on maintaining an attitude of equanimity and humble appreciation for food offerings. What seem like moral aberrations in the Chinese Buddhist records can be explained on the basis of moral frames that emphasize attitudinal skill.

Buddhist antinomianism can be read as a defense of flexibility in eating, connected with the Indian Buddhist idea that monks and nuns should beg for their food. In China, however, begging practices never gained widespread acceptance and in place of begging rounds Chinese monastics came to rely on food donations made directly to monasteries, where food was prepared and consumed by the cloistered community. This shift in food practice also entailed a shift of emphasis in the virtues associated with proper attitude in eating. In short, social history is important for understanding how Buddhist values evolved in China. We cannot easily identify core Buddhist teachings on food unless we understand their history of change (my topic in Chapter One).

Vegetarianism revisited

The doctrine of non-harm (abhīṣā) toward food animals, often cited as the basis for Buddhist vegetarianism, fits within a larger moral framework for eating that called for a skillful moral attitude grounded in generosity and compassion. Buddhist vegetarianism was not based on an authoritative pronouncement or even on the example of the Buddha himself, but was based on interpretation of the requirement to skillfully apply Buddhist wisdom in choosing what and how to eat.

For lay Buddhists in China, who were not formally required to give up the eating of meat (though many did), the beginning of a meal was a time to orient attitude toward values held dear to Buddhists: “When first wanting to eat, one should recite some thoughts. The first spoonful must cut off all evils, the second must cultivate all good, and the good roots cultivated by a third spoonful must be turned around and given to all sentient beings as a universal offering for achieving buddhahood” (#55). This mental orientation toward the cultivation of goodness is the enduring flavor of a Buddhist morality of eating. Attitudinal skill is the very basis of nourishment, which Buddhist teachings depict in somatic terms that are inclusive of mind and body as a non-Cartesian, integrated whole. I turn now to brief discussion of the component chapters that elaborate on the ideas set out in this introduction.

Overview of chapters

This study is divided into two parts. Part I contains three chapters that discuss the historical context and substance of Yichu’s statements on food. Part II consists of two case studies selected from amongst the themes from the analysis in Part I, developed in greater detail with the help of additional sources. These five chapters are on social history, textual genre, analysis of themes, Buddhist theories of nourishment, and the Buddhist celebration of a particular food—in that order.

Chapter One is a meta-historical analysis of the shifting social environment of Chinese (and Indian) Buddhism, showing how this social environment created a discourse on vegetarian diet that transcended Buddhism. I challenge the conventional narrative that Indian Buddhists were the main agents promoting a vegetarian diet in China. Building on previous research,55 I discuss how Chinese monastics came under increasing pressure from lay Buddhists and non-Buddhists to give up meat eating. This development can be traced back to a chain of events in Indian society: the promotion of a meatless diet by brahmins as devotional Hinduism emerged from Vedic roots, a reconfiguration of Buddhist teachings in new Mahāyāna scriptures, and a repositioning

by Mahāyāna proponents in India regarding the meat issue (apparently in response to brahmin ideas about ritual purity). In China, Mahāyāna teachings, which portray meat-eating as inconsistent with the ideal of a compassionate bodhisattva, resonated with other intellectual elements of Chinese thought. Buddhists did come to embrace Mahāyāna teachings, widely adopting and promoting a vegetarian diet, but lack of a clear historical basis in many earlier Indian Buddhist writings meant that the corpus of Chinese translations of Indian Buddhist scriptures was inconsistent on this point. The issue remained open to interpretation for much of the history of Chinese Buddhism leading up to Yichu’s scholarly Buddhism of the tenth century. In the Song period, when Yichu’s encyclopedia of Buddhist knowledge was in circulation, extant recipe collections show that the vegetarian ideal in Buddhism was just one of several moral discourses promoting the virtues of a plant-based diet. Daoist and Confucian influences had a larger role than is often admitted.

Chapter Two deals with the genre to which Yichu’s Shishi liutie might belong. As an extra-canonical work, it is not currently classified under a heading in the commonly circulating Buddhist canons, though at least one editor included it in a collection of lexical works. Several features of the Shishi liutie suggest that it was modeled on the non-Buddhist genre of encyclopedic compilations, leibu. I argue that it is in fact meant to serve as an encyclopedia of Buddhist knowledge, and that Yichu meant to pitch it to an audience of non-specialists outside of cloistered Buddhist circles. This approach has implications for how we read the entries in his compilation, which I explain in detail.

Chapter Three provides a thorough analysis of the material that Yichu presents under the topic of food 食 in his Shishi liutie. I organize the material according to emergent themes: kinds of food, intrinsic properties of food, ritualized eating, the Middle Way of eating, karma and merit, and food narratives. Although placed in the middle of my study, this analysis informs the entire study. Expecting to read about vegetarianism, I was surprised to find that Yichu did not cite this as a major theme. The discovery that vegetarianism was conspicuously underrepresented led me to question whether the conventional approach to food and religion—a sociological method that views food strictures as a tool of identity construction—might be leading to a distortion of our understanding of the centrality of vegetarianism in Chinese Buddhist food
history. The themes developed in this chapter pointed me toward a different interpretation of how Chinese Buddhists may have understood their creed’s teachings on food.

Chapter Four outlines a Buddhist theory of nourishment, the doctrine of Four Foods. Buddhism posits four main types of food. According to a Buddhist origin story, heavenly beings sustained by joy-in-meditation learned to partake of food from the newly formed earth, and gradually transformed from subtle beings to coarse-bodied beings reliant on material food for life. This material food is called “morsel food,” because it is material and divisible into lumped portions. The human world exists in the desire realm (Skt. kāma-dhatu, Ch. yuē 欲界), where three other foods provide nourishment: sensory food, thought food, and consciousness food. Sensory food refers to the nourishing aspect of positive sensation, registered through the sense faculties when one enjoys such things as soft clothing, fragrant flowers, and parasols to block the harsh sun. Thought food refers to all cognitive activity, whether in response to external stimuli or imagined internally; it nourishes on the basis of the intentions behind the thoughts, through the action of moral causality (karma). Lastly, consciousness food is understood as perceptual awareness—all things known to the mind, coming from the sense faculties and bound together by a sense of unified consciousness. This last forms the basis for a self-concept, albeit with Buddhists understanding that this self-concept is an aggregate of sensation and thought and lacks a permanent basis. All of the Four Foods have a role in nourishing humans at different levels, but because they are ultimately grounded in craving (Skt. āṭā, “thirst”), each must be managed with care to achieve balance between extremes: fasting–gluttony, asceticism–hedonism, scruples–recklessness, and poor self esteem–bold arrogance. The skill of morality is thus in achieving the balanced mean.

The doctrine of Four Foods illustrates why a Buddhist morality of eating does not center on the question of what to eat, but also entails a careful consideration of how to eat. Attitude, understood as mental states derived from intentionality, is morally active. The eating of morsel food, whether of plant or animal origin, only nourishes the body. How and with what intentions one eats has a direct impact on one’s moral status in Yichu’s Buddhism, so meat-eating needs a larger context before it becomes problematic.
Chapter Five, the final chapter, returns attention to ‘morsel’ food and explores a food raised up to special status in Buddhism: rice porridge. The special status of porridge originates with the story of Buddha’s full awakening under the bodhi tree, in which he is said to have regained his strength after accepting gifts of rice cooked in milk from a young woman of the nearby village. His body revitalized, he regained his resolve to achieve awakening and meditated under the tree until he became a buddha, a fully awakened being. I argue that although historical narratives have a central role in raising porridge to special status, the choice of porridge is not arbitrary, having a basis in observations made about the physiological benefits of this water-rich, easily digested food. It is the qualities of the food itself that justify for Buddhists the ongoing celebration of porridge. Porridge came to epitomize, in Buddhism, a skillful approach to the eating of morsel food. It came to symbolize the Middle Way between asceticism and hedonism in eating, and serves as an ideal food for the Buddhist laity to offer tonsured monks and nuns. The longstanding Buddhist celebration of porridge is closely associated with a set of ten purported benefits from porridge. I show how the list of ten benefits combines two lists of five: a set of karmic benefits gained from presenting food offerings to the Buddhist community of monks and nuns (moral causality), and a traditional list from the Pali Buddhist literature enumerating physiological benefits associated with the direct eating of porridge. As a beneficial food, porridge mirrored its virtues through moral causation when gifted, giving both sets of benefits to monastics and laity. The image of porridge as a simple yet beneficial food gave Buddhists a model for how even morsel food can be used with skill, serving cloistered Buddhists and laity alike. It is no accident that the offering of food figures so prominently in the Buddhist celebration of porridge, because skillful use of food, for Buddhists, should involve a generous and compassionate attitude of helping others to thrive—the function of moral causation is linked with any physiological benefits that might derive from the food itself.

The Buddhist approach to eating suggested by Yichu’s Shìshì liútì is thus skillful in an integral way, combining the attitudinal skill of morality with the enactment of good body practices. This approach to eating is not just an arbitrary set of relations—a culturally constructed symbolic system—but rather constitutes a body of knowledge. It references not just Buddhist doctrine, but also understandings of how the world and our
human physiology (including mental phenomena) function. In Yichu’s Buddhism, we
can glimpse an aspiration for Buddhist knowledge to encompass the totality of what it
means to be human and to thrive. This body of knowledge incorporates elements that
we might today divide between religion and science as separate spheres of knowledge
with distinct epistemologies, but here mind and body are not strictly dualistic. To what
degree Yichu’s Buddhist peers shared this understanding of Buddhist teachings on food
is open for debate.
Part I

Eating in Medieval Chinese Buddhism and Yichu's Shiōbō liutie
1. Historicizing Chinese Buddhist Attitudes Toward Food

1.1 Opening a vegetarian can of worms

How did historical processes shape Chinese Buddhist ideas about food? This chapter will revisit what we know about the origins of Buddhist vegetarianism and then apply this to food writings from the Song-dynasty, when Yichu’s *Shiši liutie* was in print. A diachronic view provides a corrective lens for the synchronic view that posits Buddhism as a symbolic system using vegetarianism as a marker of identity. Social distinction is not, on its own, sufficient explanation for Buddhist ideas about food, but in a macro-history of vegetarianism, social factors are centrally important. Other relevant factors include the diffusion of ideas cross-culturally, ecological and economic concerns, and a widening interest in documenting knowledge on the practical efficacies of foodstuffs.

This chapter challenges the view that vegetarianism was a natural feature of Buddhism. I argue that Buddhist vegetarianism is best understood as a cultural innovation with Buddhist and non-Buddhist influences. It was a supplement to Buddhist teachings that was appended under social pressures from outside the saṃgha in both India and China, and was not native to pre-Mahāyāna Buddhist teachings. It was contrived as an ingenious patch to meet changing social needs in India.

Vegetarianism is represented irregularly in the extant Chinese Buddhist canon. Examining early Chinese Buddhist sources points toward meaningful links between Daoist, Confucian, and Buddhist ideas. Daoist writings on the efficacies of food materials stimulated formation of a broad knowledge base on eating in China that did not differentiate physiological and moral causality (i.e., science and religion), promoting the idea that experimental diets could potentially lead to moral transformation, with the associated benefits of long life or immortality. Mahāyāna calls for Buddhists to adopt a full vegetarian diet resonated with existing Chinese ideas, stimulating both harmony and
dissonance. Chinese Buddhist vegetarianism is misunderstood when not viewed in the context of a broader cultural phenomenon.

My approach here holds several implications. Methodologically, a focus on vegetarianism in Chinese Buddhist attitudes toward diet can probe the strengths and limitations of a relational approach for understanding the place of food in religion. Understanding how ideas about food took shape in Buddhism through a process of interaction with particular social circumstances can actually lead us back to my main thesis that Buddhist ideas about food fit under a rubric of skill. We can affirm that vegetarianism came to be associated with Buddhist identity in China while avoiding the view that vegetarianism was from the time of its introduction a natural feature of Chinese Buddhist identity. Because vegetarianism is a product, initially, of social negotiation between lay sponsors and the saṃgha, it is best understood from the lens of social relationships. In support of my introductory remarks, where I argued in favor of a skill-based model for understanding Chinese Buddhist attitudes toward food, here I want to show how an investigation of vegetarianism does indeed entail analysis of social relations, and even reveals beliefs in ritual purity that map onto a model of sacred and profane foods. The historical record does contain evidence of such views in association with vegetarianism. But in providing this historical overview, I can also suggest why Yichu, a tonsured Buddhist, did not highlight vegetarianism when compiling a set of Buddhist teachings on the topic of food 食.

The commonly held view that vegetarianism diffused into China as a package along with Indian Buddhism is only partly true and needs qualification. Vegetarianism is not doctrinally intrinsic to Buddhism, as often assumed, but is a cultural innovation with Buddhist and non-Buddhist components. Yichu reveals this discrepancy in the way he frames the topic of food in the Shíshí liùtìe. In the macro-historical view of this chapter, Buddhists found doctrinal justifications for vegetarianism after recognizing the need to cater to new social discourses that vilified the moral status of meat-eating. In India and in China, vegetarianism took shape through a process of social negotiation involving problems of class.

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56 Buddhist rejection of Daoist grain avoidance is an example of the latter.
Recognizing that relational concerns were imposing pressures from outside the Buddhist community, we can better appreciate how Buddhist teachings on food represent different responses to social contest. Buddhist vegetarianism emerged as a provisional innovation, a solution to social critiques. The case of vegetarianism illustrates how Buddhists took an active role in interpreting for local circumstances what amounts to a provisional body of knowledge. For an innovation like vegetarianism to succeed in the body of Buddhist teachings, its coherence had to be supported with ample justifications. Even when grafted onto other compelling teachings, the Chinese saṃgha still needed pressure from secular society before accepting vegetarianism as a norm. Proponents of vegetarianism needed to demonstrate that it was more skillful than alternatives, which required both doctrinal justifications and practical considerations regarding the close relationship between the saṃgha and the laity. Because the saṃgha relies on the laity for its material needs, it could not determine monastic food practices without considering social demands coming from lay society.

In the course of translating Indian Buddhist scriptures and negotiating which views to celebrate above others, Chinese Buddhists found ambiguity in the available approaches to food. The ambiguity led to formation of a longstanding tension between moderate antinomianism and strict food rules. Both approaches have textual support. I will revisit aspects of the history of Buddhist vegetarianism in order to lay bare the processes of social negotiation, transmission, and acculturation that led to this ambiguity. Ambiguity in regard to food helped Buddhist actors in Chinese history to play their teachings in the direction of social distinction or commonality based on need. The alterity of in-group, out-group politics is a two-edged sword that was contrary to the inclusive spirit of Buddhist teachings and could alienate Buddhists from secular allies. We should not assume that social distinction through diet was always desirable or necessary.

Buddhist teachings served as a variable base of identity in Chinese society of different periods, and action on whether or not to strengthen this identity through food strictures has not been uniform. Vegetarianism should not be seen as a discourse native to Buddhism, but as a discourse that resonated with ideas about food already present in Chinese society. Cross-culturally, Buddhism has generally followed local food practices.
The case of Chinese Buddhist vegetarianism is cited as differing from this pattern: Indian Buddhist vegetarianism went against the grain of meat-loving society in China but nonetheless triumphed as an ethical ideal. That this model departs from the general pattern of accommodation to local practices should be cause enough to question its accuracy.

1.2 Vegetarianism as a red herring in Buddhist food history

It is not true, Mahāmāti, that meat is proper food and permissible for the Śrāvaka when [the victim] was not killed by himself, when he did not order others to kill it, when it was not specially meant for him. …Thus, Mahāmāti, meat-eating I have not permitted to anyone, I do not permit, I will not permit. Meat-eating, I tell you, Mahāmāti, is not proper for homeless monks.

——Laṅkāvatāra sūtra\textsuperscript{57} (translated to Chinese in 443)

The five pure [conditions] for meat eating. The Shoulengyan jing says that the Buddha told Ānanda, “I permitted eating of five kinds of pure meat due to the land of the brahmins being mostly low in moisture and having a scarcity of the various vegetables.” The Buddha made open to bhikṣus five kinds of pure meat, birds that had died on their own, and lowly [critters].

Permitted to eat downed meat. The Wenshu wen jing\textsuperscript{58} [says,] If you see it killed, you may not eat it, but if it is already downed [and] like wood (i.e., rigor mortis has already set in), then you may eat it, though you must recite a mantra.

——Yichu, Shōbōlijie (10th century)\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{57} Suzuki, trans., Lankavatara Sutra, 217, 219.
\textsuperscript{58} Sutra of the Questions of Mañjuśrī (Skt. Mañjuśrī-pariprcchā), trans. to Chinese in 518. T14 n468.
\textsuperscript{59} Yanagida and Shiina, Zengaku tenseki sōkan, v.6:2, 356-337. These entries are found under the topic of meat 肉 in Yichu’s food section.
A vegetarian diet is often seen as Buddhism’s primary contribution to Chinese food history. The history of Buddhist attitudes toward the eating of meat is, however, no simple matter and has caused much confusion, as I discussed in my introduction. It was a point of contention among Chinese Buddhists, taking centuries to reach some consistency.

The question of vegetarianism becomes a red herring, suggesting a model of straightforward cultural diffusion that is inaccurate and which distracts attention from more central Buddhist teachings on food. How did this happen? Vegetarianism represents an ideological interpretation not just of Buddhist teachings, but also of general Chinese ideas about the power of diet to transform the whole individual, physically and morally. Buddhists became involved in contests over ritual purity, perceived in tangible terms (diet) and enacted as knowledge-building projects on the efficacy of foods in self-cultivation practices. Chinese Buddhism was not a passive recipient of Indian ideas about vegetarianism, but adopted vegetarian practices in spite of early Indian Buddhist ideas about food. In interpreting Chinese Buddhist attitudes toward food and influences on Chinese food history, it is important to first clarify several points regarding how scholars have understood Chinese Buddhist vegetarianism. Many scholars of Chinese food history tend to uncritically associate Chinese vegetarianism with Buddhism, but the Chinese historical record contains a welter of ambiguity on the issue.

John Kieschnick has elegantly summarized the history of vegetarianism’s eventual adoption by Chinese Buddhist clergy, documenting how the practice became increasingly institutionalized in the centuries leading up to Song China (when the Shiobi liutie was published). Lay Buddhists played a major role in this historical development. His paper makes the important point that Buddhist vegetarianism in China is not easily distinguished from a more general interest in vegetarianism in Chinese society. This point about the indeterminate nature of Chinese vegetarianism warrants further development, because it calls into question whether Chinese vegetarianism should be associated so strongly with Buddhism.
Directly linking Chinese vegetarianism to Buddhist morality amounts to uncritically accepting the machinations of Buddhist-vegetarian ideologues in history. Yes, vegetarian ideologues eventually won their case in Chinese Buddhism, but they did so on the basis of social discourses that transcended Buddhist justifications for vegetarian practice. Vegetarianism can be understood in the context of social history as a form of cultural knowledge—a technology of eating.

The case of vegetarianism illustrates how religion in China was constituted by repertoires of knowledge that did not necessarily carry the marks of group identification that modern scholars often assume to be present. Ideas about eating in Chinese society acted as provisional forms of knowledge and constituted a broad discourse on how to eat to good effect.

1.3 Questioning the thesis of straightforward diffusion between India and China

In my introduction I noted that the food historian Frederick Simoons, in his well-researched study *Food in China*, presented vegetarianism in China as a case of cultural diffusion from India. In his later (important) study of flesh avoidance worldwide, he reiterates the same diffusion model:

The first Indian Buddhist monks to arrive in China (around the beginning of the first century A.D.) were committed to ahimsa and vegetarianism. Since that time, Confucianist and Taoist views of vegetarianism have been influenced by Buddhism. The Buddhist religion, however, has remained the nation’s most vigorous advocate of those practices, whether through direct action by laymen and clergy or by royal decrees. Simoons is not alone in suggesting the model of diffusion. The new food history of China by E. N. Anderson (an update of his earlier study) is more careful in its wording.

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60 Kieschnick, “Buddhist Vegetarianism in China,” 208.
62 Simoons, *Eat Not This Flesh*, 292-293.
but also intimates that vegetarianism in China can be attributed to the arrival of Buddhist teachings.\(^63\)

The diffusion thesis entices with straightforward logic: Confucianism did not have a strong discourse of vegetarianism and Daoism also lacked such a discourse as a defining element, so vegetarianism must have come from the introduction of Indian Buddhism.\(^64\) This line of reasoning has some general merits, but also multiple problems. While there is no doubt that Buddhist ideas contributed a strong impetus for Chinese thinkers to explore the idea of an exclusive vegetarian diet, moral ideas about simple vegetable foods predate Buddhism’s arrival. Confucian-trained scholars did discuss the moral implications of eating meat, celebrating meat-forgoing frugality as a virtuous form of modesty. And so-called Daoism was in fact multiple schools of thought with different approaches, some of which adopted vegetarian dieting.

In the epigraph at the start of this chapter are two conflicting positions on meat eating. Yichu highlighted in his tenth-century encyclopedia that the eating of meat was permitted for the saṃgha under certain conditions, despite the influential position of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, translated to Chinese in the fifth-century, which forbade all meat-eating by the saṃgha.

The simultaneous co-occurrence of different positions on the issue of vegetarianism suggest that straightforward cultural diffusion from India should be rejected—and indeed it has been by several scholars who have researched the history of Chinese Buddhist vegetarianism.\(^65\) Kieschnick and others have shown that Chinese Buddhist vegetarianism was negotiated over the course of centuries and was not a straightforward introduction from Indian Buddhism.\(^66\) There is no need to repeat all the arguments here, but I will run through some key points to substitute the diffusion thesis with a better model.

\(^{63}\) Anderson, *Food and Environment in Early and Medieval China*, 135, 170, 177. His hesitancy in drawing a direct causal relationship suggests that he was aware of problems with the diffusion model.

\(^{64}\) See Simoons, *Food in China*, 31-34.


Let us test the assertion that Indian Buddhists entered China as committed vegetarians. Buddhist teachings entered China around the start of the Common Era. In 65 CE, an aristocratic ruler named Liu Ying 莊英 who had an interest in the teachings of Huang-Lao 黃老 and the Buddha (futu 浮屠) is said to have treated a community of Buddhist monks and pious laymen to a feast. Buddhist historian Kenneth Ch’en writes that this was a sumptuous vegetarian feast, but the source only tells us that the monks and laymen were treated to a sumptuous meal (shengzhuan 盛饌)—it may have been a vegetarian feast, but we cannot know for sure.

Richard B. Mather observes that the institution of holding “maigre feasts” (zhai 齋 or bai 會) for Buddhist communities arose gradually in China, not all at once with Buddhism’s arrival. Such feasts were at first an extension of the periodic communal feasts held in the countryside to honor the earth gods. The institution of these communal feasts, Mather says, had been co-opted by Daoists even earlier than their adaptation by Buddhists. One example of such a feast associated with Buddhism occurs in the Sanguo zhi 三國志, clearly indicating that animals were slaughtered and much meat and alcohol was placed out on cloth settings laid out along an avenue. In the historical Buddha’s time, donations of food for feasting the saṃgha were not necessarily vegetarian. The early Buddhist community in China likewise appears to have

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67 Kamata, Chūgoku budkkyōshi, 18-19; Zürcher, Buddhist Conquest of China, 22-25.
68 This is in the biography for Chu Wang Ying 楚王英, in the 42nd fascicle of the Houhan shu 後漢書, pp. 1428-1429. Accessed via SS.
69 Ch’en, Buddhism in China, 53.
71 Mather, “Bonze’s Begging Bowl,” 419.
72 Ibid.
73 Xu, Zhongguo yinshi shi, v.3, 194. This is in fascicle 49 of the Sanguo zhi, under the biography of Liu Yao 劉繇 (156-197 CE), p. 1185 in SS: 羅融者，丹楊人，初聚眾數百，往依徐州牧陶謙。謙使督廣陵、彭城運漕，遂放縱擅殺，坐斷三郡委輸以自入。乃大起浮圖祠，以銅為人，黃金塗身，衣以錦采，垂銅槃九重，下為重樓閣道，可容三千餘人，悉課讀佛經，令界內及旁郡人有好佛者聽受道，復其他役以招致之，由此遠近前後至者五千餘人戶。每浴佛，多設酒飯，布席於路，經數十里，民人來觀及，就食且萬人，費以巨億計。
conformed at first to existing practices, without insisting on vegetarian fare or abstention from alcohol.

The only other suggestion that Liu Ying may have been influenced by Buddhist ideas to modify his diet is the statement that he underwent a fast of purification (jiezhai 潔齋) for three months at some point, but this too gives no conclusive evidence of Buddhist vegetarian ideals. No details of the fast are provided. Purification fasts were not a new concept at the time—fasting of the senses was a concept important to notions of sagehood in the Confucian tradition, and was likewise celebrated in the Zhuangzi and other works associated with Daoism. A search for the term jiezhai in historical texts shows that it was used in Confucian writings during the Han period. The term is extremely rare in Buddhist writings. The purification fast may have been an avoidance of meat, but this would have been consistent with a Confucian practice that served to demonstrate Liu Ying’s humble frugality and moral worth. The view proposed by Eric Zürcher is that Liu Ying’s fasting and sacrifice are expressions of Daoist practices in vogue at the time, perhaps with Buddhist modifications. In any case, we have no evidence here of a foreign creed or foreign monks stimulating a new vegetarian practice.

A more direct way to test the question of vegetarianism among the early Buddhists in China is to look at biographies of eminent monks. The Japanese scholar Suwa Gijun has done just this. He analyzed the Gaoseng zhuan 高僧傳 for evidence of vegetarianism and found that after the start of the Eastern Jin in 317, a portion of biographies explicitly mention adherence to a diet of vegetable foods (shushi 蔬食). For the earliest period of Buddhism’s development in China, before the Eastern Jin, we lack good sources to tell us whether or not some monks opted for a vegetable-based diet. Nonetheless, in the period for which we have this data, we can see that excluding meat from one’s diet was an act of renunciation worthy of mention in biographies, because it was not yet the norm for Chinese Buddhists. Terms such as shushi that appear in the

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74 Sterckx, Food, Sacrifice, and Sagehood, 185.
75 For example, SS shows it appearing in the Han obu.
76 Zürcher, Buddhist Conquest, 26-27.
77 Suwa, Chūgoku chūsei bukkyōshi kenkyū, 46-50.
78 See Kieschnick, Eminent Monk, 22-25.
early biographies are not yet specific to a Buddhist institution of vegetarianism, but borrow Confucian and Daoist terminology to suggest avoidance of meat as a voluntary precept.

If lack of mention can be taken as evidence of a non-restricted diet, the ratio of vegetarians to meat-accepting monks is weighted heavily on the side of meat acceptance. The data for Indian monks is the same. Judging from Suwa’s data from the biographies, some Indian Buddhist monks such as Guṇabhadra (394–468) did practice a vegetable-based diet, but this was an exception from the general trend. Of sixty three biographies of translator monks, only two were noted for eating a vegetable diet.79

Moreover, that Guṇabhadra’s name should appear in the context of a vegetable-based diet may be more than an indication of personal initiative, for reasons that I will discuss next.

1.4 Mahāyāna vegetarianism

Guṇabhadra is remembered for his mastery of Mahāyāna teachings and produced in 443 a translation of the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra (Ch. Lengqie abaduolu bao jing 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經), one of the Mahāyāna scriptures associated with a new Buddhist discourse calling for complete vegetarian practice among all Buddhists. Whereas early monastic codes and teachings from Indian Buddhism had permitted the eating of meat under certain conditions, several Mahāyāna texts translated to Chinese in the fifth century contradict the earlier works by holding an uncompromising stance on meat-eating. In addition to the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra, other texts that espoused the new position include the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra (Ch. Niepan jing 涅槃經), the Angulimālīya-sūtra (Ch. Yangjuemoluo jing 央掘摩羅經), and the Scripture of Brahma’s Net (Ch. Fanwang jing 梵網經).80 Guṇabhadra was an agent in the spread of a new ideological vegetarianism.

79 Suwa, Chūgoku chūsei bukkyōshi kenkyū, 53.
80 Ibid., 51.
Suwa gives the date 418 as the starting point for this new discourse on Buddhist vegetarianism in China, based on its first appearance in a Chinese translated text, the \textit{Mahāparinirvāṇa-ūśtra}. The arrival of Mahāyāna teachings in China was enormously important to the development of Chinese Buddhism, and by extension East Asian Buddhism as a whole. This branch of Buddhism eventually became mainstream in China, but it was a marginal movement in India.\footnote{Schopen, \textit{Figments and Fragments}, 3-24.}

Both the \textit{Laṅkāvatāra-ūśtra} and \textit{Mahāparinirvāṇa-ūśtra} are noted for being especially influential in espousing Buddhist vegetarianism (in this context a taboo on the eating of meat), but the way in which each of these texts does so is also noteworthy. In the case of the \textit{Laṅkāvatāra-ūśtra}, an eighth chapter devoted to the topic of meat-eating was appended to what the Japanese scholar Suzuki Daisetsu (“Daisetz”) characterizes as a text with many layers of added passages.\footnote{Suzuki, \textit{Lankavatara Sutra}, xlii-xlvi. Suzuki’s English translation of the eighth chapter is pp. 211-222.} The chapter aims to overrule the Buddha’s previous permission regarding meat-eating.

From a modern perspective, the eighth chapter is clearly the work of a revisionist movement, using the authority of this text to put words in the mouth of the Buddha and establish an all-out ban on meat-eating among the saṅgha. According to Suzuki, the chapter “has no organic connection with the text proper,” though other parts of the \textit{Laṅkāvatāra-ūśtra} do corroborate the position against meat-eating.\footnote{Suzuki, \textit{Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra}, 368.} The scholar Takasaki Jikido agrees: the chapter is out of context with the sutra as a whole and is regarded as having been appended at a relatively late date in the compilation of the sutra. Even the earliest Chinese translation contains the meat taboo, however, so it is likely that the chapter is connected with the emergence of a doctrine of vegetarianism in Mahāyāna Buddhism.\footnote{Takasaki, “Sources of the \textit{Laṅkāvatāra} and Its Position in Mahāyāna Buddhism,” 547-548.} In explaining the presence of this material, Suzuki suggests a thesis of social distinction: there is evidence in the body of the text that other religious groups such as the Lokāyatas (aka Cārvākas, philosophical materialists) were commenting unfavorably on the meat-eating of the Buddhist community, leading the community of monks involved in compiling the \textit{Laṅkāvatāra-ūśtra} to reposition itself as adhering to a meat-avoiding creed.
The revisionist community mustered a number of justifications for the shift in thinking, which I will briefly recount based on Suzuki’s analysis: 1) Transmigration places us in close relationship to all creatures, making meat-eating akin to eating our own children; 2) meat eating is incompatible with the great compassion of the bodhisattva; 3) meat-eating causes a stench in the body of a bodhisattva, causing fear in animals; 4) the bad example of meat-eating bodhisattvas cause people to lose faith in the Buddhist teachings; 5) meat-eating alienates a bodhisattva from the devas (deities), interfering with efforts in self-cultivation; 6) animal food is filthy; 7) meat-eaters pollute themselves spiritually, and even pollute their descendants by eating animal food; and 8), the proper food of a bodhisattva is “rice, barley, wheat, all kinds of beans, clarified butter, oil, honey, molasses, and sugar…”85

These justifications for meat-avoidance include both relational concerns and intrinsic rationale (Campany’s externalist and internalist positions). We see here a belief in ritual purity and the apotropaic possibilities of a restricted diet. Somatic aspects of eating, such as bodily smells, are understood here to be morally compromising and meat-avoidance becomes not just desirable but a necessary requirement of successful spiritual cultivation. Finally, all of these justifications center on the Mahāyāna ideal of the bodhisattva, the Buddhist sage who delays entering nirvana in order to save other sentient beings. In short, the eighth chapter of the Laṅkāvatāra-ūttra is as much about constructing the model image of a bodhisattva as it is about setting a new standard of dietary practice for the Buddhist community. Because the bodhisattva ideal is meant to serve as an exemplary model for practitioners, the two purposes are interrelated.

The Mahāparinirvāṇa-ūttra likewise has a complex textual history. Conflicting versions are extant in several languages. Scholars working on this important scripture have had difficulty dating the scripture’s appearance in India, because the text is layered with older and newer portions. Shimoda Masahiro has argued that the Chinese edition can be divided into primarily three layers: one that forms a body of older, pre-Mahāyāna content, a second from a transitional phase, and a third that boldly states a new orientation which had begun to appear in the transitional layer of text.86 A shift in

86 Shimoda, Nehangyō no kenkyū, 160-162, 298-304.
thinking about meat-eating is one of the features marking a transformation in the Indian social background, which resulted in the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra having distinct and sometimes conflicting layers.

Shimoda shows that the question of meat-eating tells us much about the social context in which the Mahāyāna scriptures were compiled. They demonstrate how strictures on meat eating are not integral to the early Buddhist teachings, but developed in Indian society under new social pressures regarding diet. There is not space to run through all the evidence that Shimoda discusses, but because his findings make a number of important points regarding the emergence of new attitudes toward meat eating in Indian Buddhism, I provide here, at length, a roughly paraphrased translation of his conclusions.87

The original Buddhist society accepted meat-eating. When the Buddhist community began to split into factions, some of these treated meat as a delicacy and issued apologetic statements explaining to secular society why they continued to accept it. Little by little, the number of permitted meats was restricted. Several reasons for this may be noted, but social relations pertaining to the varna caste system appears to be an important factor, especially in relation to the chandala untouchable caste. The different factions of Indian Buddhism are inconsistent in their stance on certain meats, such as dog meat and hunted meats, suggesting that the relevant materials are from a period of Buddhism’s development coming somewhat later than the time of division into factions.

The notion of three types of pure meat is a related development. This notion is not simply an ethical position based on compassion, but it is, rather, closely connected with the idea that meat is unclean. Furthermore, the idea of impurity comes not from within the Buddhist teachings, but from the demands of the surrounding social environment. The idea of purity and impurity functions to establish and maintain the varna caste system and can be treated as two sides of the same coin. Buddhists were compelled to respond to the strengthening of the varna system by setting down rules on ‘pure’ meats and by prohibiting certain meat varieties.

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87 For the details of his analysis of meat eating in Mahāyāna scriptures, see Shimoda, Nebangyō no kenkyū, 388-419.
The different ways in which Buddhist factions responded to the challenge presented by Devadatta’s proposal that the community adopt five ascetic practices (including foregoing flesh food) illustrates how divisive and important the meat question had become in Indian society as these Mahāyāna works were compiled. In the midst of a society-wide shift toward stigmatizing the eating of meat, the Buddhist saṃgha may even have split over the issue of how restrictive to make the food rules in monastic codes that were being compiled around this time.

The attitude toward meat eating varies across the different monastic codes. Variance in the monastic codes upheld by different Buddhist factions also reflects the social contexts of each group. Roughly stated, the Pali vinaya, Sifenlü, Wufenlü, and Shiwonglü hold almost the same attitude toward meat eating, while the Moboengqìlì and Genbenyoubulì have opposing characteristics. The Moboengqìlì discusses a prohibition on raw meat not seen in the other codes, and the stipulation on the ‘three kinds of pure meat’ is reframed as a requirement coming from within the Buddhist community rather than as a response to criticism outside the Buddhist community. The five customs proposed by Devadatta and said to have split the Buddhist community are not touched on at all. The Moboengqìlì can be understood as taking a proactive stance of the proscription of meat. One the other hand, the Genbenyoubulì permits even raw meat as medicine, does not prohibit dog meat, which the other codes treat as unclean, and in the restrictions on the types of meat suitable for eating does not look at the meats on the basis of purity and impurity. Nor does it raise as a concern the problems with the varna caste system that the other monastic codes bring up. It seems probable that the period of compilation and geographical factors must be closely interacting in the formation of the extant monastic codes, but it is not possible with the available materials to confirm this thesis.

With the appearance of Mahāyāna Buddhism came scriptures calling for a complete prohibition on meat eating. In terms of later influence, the Nirvana Sutra played a large role in this move toward complete prohibition. Nonetheless, that each faction had to move in the direction of proscribing meat suggests that this was indicative of the increasing impact of brahminism (Hinduism) in the society which forms the background of Buddhism’s
development at this time. The Nirvana Sutra bears a close relationship to the *Mohweengqilü*, which actively prohibited meat. The primary function of the prohibition of meat is to respond to the social circumstances, and is not in itself the *tathāgatagarbha* thought that is born out of the Nirvana Sutra.

Nonetheless, what is discussed in the Nirvana Sutra seems to have exerted an influence, providing a doctrinal justification for the prohibition on meat based on the notion that all sentient beings have the capacity for buddhahood (*tathāgatagarbha* or *jīva, ātman*). As we see in the positions taken in the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* or the *Mañjuśrī-paripṛccchā*, from this time on the presence of ātman in bodies has a role in the reasoning behind avoidance of meat eating.

Shimoda’s analysis reveals how the simple diffusion model with which we began this discussion is quite off mark. In light of the historical record, it would be inaccurate to treat vegetarianism as a natural feature of Buddhism that was diffused to China along with the other teachings. On the contrary, what came to China was a complex set of conflicting teachings grounded in the varying interpretations of different factions that were responding to changes in Indian society. In Shimoda’s view, Mahāyāna vegetarianism arose primarily as a response to social tensions brought by the *varna* caste system and its basis in ideas about purity and impurity. This bears some explanation.

Brahmins, the caste of priests and scholars in Vedic society, used a doctrine of ritual purity to maintain their position at the top of a ritually stratified society. They used sacrificial rites to maintain the structural order of the family, of society, and (purportedly) of the cosmos. Buddhism emerged as an anti-Vedic teaching that rejected not just worldly relationships in the abstract, but this whole ritual order of the brahmins, with its emphasis on wedlock for reproducing patrilineal lines of descent and sacrificial rites for perpetuating social inequalities. Whereas the Vedic society of Indo-Aryan invention made sacrifice, including animal sacrifice, the primary mode of communication with a spiritual order, Buddhist teachings taught a doctrine of moral causation (karma) and release from suffering (*nirvāṇa, mokṣa*)—a soteriology based on disciplined moral

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89 Shimoda, *Nehangyō no kenkyū*, 416-419. Note that this is not a word for word translation; I have elided phrasing that seemed overly verbose in order to make the ideas more accessible in English.
training. Jainism emerged around the same time as Buddhism and shared with the latter the doctrine of non-harm toward sentient beings (*abhimaṇa*). In the wake of Jain and Buddhist critiques of Vedic society, the upper strata of Indian society adopted a vegetarian diet and raised up cattle (previously used in sacrifices) to protected status. Several centuries after Buddhism appeared, Vedic brahminism experienced revival in a devotional form: Hinduism. The belief that devotion to a high deity could circumvent the need for austere disciplines presented Buddhists with a new challenge. It is in this third phase of Indian religion (following the order sacrifice—> renunciation—> devotion), that Mahāyāna writings appear, containing a new emphasis on devotion to bodhisattvas and multiple buddhas.\(^90\) Religious ideas were thus shared around Indian society in a dialogical fashion, changing the structure of society as new ideas were implemented by different groups. Just as the concept of a keystone at the top of an arch could be put to use in different architectural styles, ideas such as vegetarianism or devotion produced different results in brahmin and Buddhist intellectual frameworks. To brahmins, vegetarian diet became a tool for claiming moral superiority over meat-eating groups, based on a complex set of rules regulating ritual purity in Indian society. For the early Buddhists who begged their food from all levels of society, vegetarianism was an ideal that could not be imposed on their patrons; beggars could not be choosers. With the Mahāyāna teachings, this began to change.

As increasingly large numbers of Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese, Chinese Buddhism came to be an accumulation of teachings representing different factional positions.\(^91\) It is often commented that Chinese adopted Mahāyāna Buddhism, but it is more accurate to say that Chinese Buddhists came to champion Mahāyāna teachings above those of other schools. Gregory Schopen has argued that although Mahāyāna Buddhism rapidly gained popularity in China from the third century, it was at the outset a marginal voice in Buddhism and remained so in India.\(^92\) We already saw that the influential Mahāyāna scriptures arguing for a complete taboo on meat arrived in the fifth century—several centuries after other Buddhist teachings had arrived. These

\(^{90}\) Trautmann, *India*, 50-54, 62, 70-72, 102-111, 118.
\(^{91}\) For example, Zürcher, *Buddhist Conquest of China*, 34.
\(^{92}\) Schopen, *Fragments and Fragments*, 4-5, 11, 17.
joined rather than displaced the teachings of other schools. Yichu’s *Shiōbi jītō* of the
tenth-century reflects the coexistence of these multiple layers.

Because different interpretations of the Buddhist teachings commingled in China,
Chinese Buddhism remained a provisional body of knowledge. There could be no clear
claim to orthodoxy, only a complex ecology of ideas with many shared doctrines. Even
with the emergence of a new Mahāyāna discourse of uncompromising vegetarianism,
the Buddhist community in China was slow to shift over to vegetarian practice.93 For
Mahāyāna vegetarianism to gain acceptance as the norm, proponents needed to argue
against the precedent set by other schools. The prohibition on meat in Mahāyāna is not
just a response to social pressures, but also represents an effort to bring greater moral
consistency and virtuous conduct to the community. A well-known effort to achieve this
aim occurred in the sixth century in China. Records from the Liang dynasty (502-557)
suggest that when Liang Wu Di 梁武帝 (aka Xiao Yan 篤衍, 464-549) inquired about
vegetarian practice for temples in Jiankang 建康, he was told that only two temples
practiced a strict vegetarianism—and one of these was Guangzhai si 光宅寺, a temple
he himself had established.94

The strong push for the adoption of vegetarianism as a norm for tonsured Buddhists
really begins around this time, under the policies of Liang Wu Di and pressures from lay
Buddhists.95 These aspects of the emergence of Buddhist vegetarianism in China are
adequately discussed elsewhere, so I will not repeat them here. Instead, I turn back now
to the Chinese cultural context that helped make sense of the idea of vegetarianism.

1.5 Cultural resonance in China

There is ample evidence for reading the early history of Buddhist vegetarianism in
China as a case of a minority practice getting amplified through cultural resonance. In

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93 Suwa, *Chūgoku chiōei bukkōshōkenkyū*, 53-54.
94 Ibid., 54.
95 Xu, *Zōnggō jīnōshū*, v.3, 194-195; Michihata, *Chūgoku bukkōshōkenkyū*, 474-480; Suwa,
*Chūgoku chiōei bukkōshōkenkyū*, 64-91; Mather, "Bonze's Begging Bowl"; Kieschnick, "Buddhist
Vegetarianism in China."
the first centuries after its arrival to China, Buddhism appears to have been closely associated with fangshì 方士, hermits 隱士, and Daoists 道士. These groups practiced experimental dieting and alchemical practices aimed at immortality, long life, or good health. Notable diets included the eating of (only) foods from trees 木食 and abstention from eating grain (pigu 辟穀). Suwa Gijun suggests that the wording used to indicate cases of vegetarian diet in the early Gào sēng zhuan biographies connects Buddhists with these groups and may have indicated that they found the dietetics of such groups a convenient way to justify practicing a vegetarian diet (ostensibly to act on the precepts of not killing other sentient beings). On the basis of Buddhist teachings on karma, a vegetarian diet also allayed fears about karmic retribution from eating meat.96

Even before the arrival of Buddhist ideas such as karma, Chinese literature shows glimpses of hesitation regarding animal slaughter. The Zhuangzi, for example, contains a passage about the relativity of perspective that has a ritual specialist looking at things from the perspective of the pig that he is preparing to sacrifice:

The Invocator of the Ancestors, dressed in his black, square-cut robes, peered into the pigpen and said, "Why should you object to dying? I'm going to fatten you for three months, practice austerities for ten days, fast for three days, spread the white rushes, and lay your shoulders and rump on the carved sacrificial stand—you'll go along with that, won't you? True, if I were planning things from the point of view of a pig, I'd say it would be better to eat chaff and bran and stay right there in the pen. …"97

Confucian teachings likewise exhibit some ambivalence toward meat eating, even if they do not advocate a vegetarian diet. In one passage of the Analects, the disciple Zigong wants to do away with the sacrifice of a lamb to mark the beginning of each lunar month. Traditional commentary interprets this in economic terms, suggesting that Zigong saw the loss of a lamb each month as wasteful and unnecessary,98 but we might also ask if he was motivated by compassion. Confucius valued the continuation of this

96 Suwa, Chūgoku chūsei bakkyōshi kenkyū, 58-65.
98 Ibid., 24 (3.17).
old rite more than he valued the lamb, so the teaching does not lead Ru 儒 scholars toward scorn for animal sacrifice.

Nonetheless, awareness of the suffering of these sacrificial animals is evident in Ru writings. In the Mengzi we encounter the famous passage of King Xuan of Qi taking pity on an ox that he saw shuddering as it was led to slaughter for the consecration of a new bell. Mencius (Mengzi) uses this case to reveal to the king his innate virtue in taking pity on the ox, remarking, “The attitude of a gentleman toward animals is this: once having seen them alive, he cannot bear to see them die, and once having heard their cry, he cannot bear to eat their flesh. That is why the gentleman keeps his distance from the kitchen.”

This bears some similarity with the early Buddhist practice of eating only meats that one did not see killed or suspect to have been killed specifically for oneself. Both positions accept the social context of meat eating while shrinking from the realities of animal slaughter.

On Confucian grounds, vegetarianism could evoke images of the filial son mourning for a lost parent through a simple diet, a form of renunciation. In the logic of Confucian teachings, meat aligned with luxury, and pleasure and was appropriate as a celebratory food for happy occasions; sad occasions such as mourning the death of a parent called for austerities including a simple diet of coarse grain and vegetables—the shushi mentioned earlier. In another passage of the Analects, Confucius praises his beloved disciple Yan Hui, who, out of poverty, subsisted on only grain and water and yet retained his joy in life. This theme of joy in poverty is similar to the spirit of voluntary poverty in Buddhism.

Although early Confucians did not create an explicit discourse on avoiding meat (an integral component of the rites they defended), their celebration of frugality as a form of moral discipline had longstanding impacts on the food practices of educated elite in China. It is tempting to draw a structural parallel between Chinese and Indian society, due to brahmins and Confucian scholars both treating a simple vegetable-food diet as

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99 Lau, trans., Mencius, 9-10.
100 See Slingerland trans., Confucius Analects, 209-210 (17.21); Li Zehou, Chinese Aesthetic Tradition, 10-29.
101 Slingerland, trans., Confucius Analects, 56 (6.11).
morally superior to the meat-eating of the ruling class, but the parallels break down on close inspection. Brahmins in India integrated meat-avoidance into a doctrine of ritual purity that maintained the structure of the caste system. Early Confucian thinkers, on the other hand, treated meat as a luxury food to which commoners often had little access; the Confucian concern was not ritual purity of social actors through their abstinence from meat, but the immorality of extravagance. We might say that social ethics were to Confucianism what ritual purity was to Hindu thought: a central tool for organizing social relationships. Before and after the arrival of Buddhism, meat served as a symbolic locus of moral distinction in Chinese society. Eventually, however, Chinese thinkers also came to utilize ideas about ritual purity in association with diet.

Confucian ideals were just part of the intellectual heritage that came to interact in complex patterns in ancient and early-medieval Chinese society. There is not space here to go into detail regarding the intellectual history of apologetic discourse between, say, Mohists and Confucians, between Daoists and Confucians, between Buddhists and Daoists, and between Buddhists and Confucians—to name only some of the more salient episodes of intellectual contest. Proponents of these forms of knowledge distinguished themselves by putting out creeds with definite dimensions, in contradistinction with the ideas of other groups, but they also borrowed from one another and evolved in dialectical relationship. In the wake of the Later Han, as the Confucian government of the Han dynasty unraveled and ushered in a period of political turmoil and disunity, we can observe a period of eclectic intellectual activity: the rise of new Daoist schools of thought, of Xuanxue 玄學, and of Chinese Buddhism. Xuanxue might be characterized as a blend of Confucian and (older) Daoist ideas, while Daoism of this time (especially Lingbao in the early fifth century) borrowed heavily from Buddhist ideas.

One might observe that these Chinese knowledge-building activities were less focused on divinities than what we find in Vedic India, and much more concerned with

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103 See ibid. Also Kieschnick, Eminent Monk, 22-23.
practical efficacy—in moral self-cultivation, in social harmony, and in health. A focus on practical efficacy was more amenable to the sharing of ideas than a focus on divine authority.

1.6 Daoists and experimental diets

Ideas about restrictive diets and ritual purity spread through a process of cross-fertilization among different groups in China. We already saw in early biographies of eminent Buddhist monks that a restrictive vegetable-based diet was indicated by *shushi*, the term used by Confucians for a diet of grievance in mourning. Buddhists (and perhaps non-Buddhist observers) eventually switched over to the term *swabi* 素食 (plain food), which can also be connected with Confucian mourning, and which has continued up to the present day to mean Buddhist vegetarian food. What about food that is not ‘plain’, i.e., that is tainted by proscribed ingredients? These foods came to be described as *bun* 菇 or *bunxin* 菇辛.

*Hun* and *bunxin* did not originally have any association with meat, but denoted strong-tasting vegetables such as alliums (onion-family plants). Mahāyāna texts prohibited alliums along with meat and alcohol. Suwa Gijun studied the history of the taboo on these pungent vegetables and concluded that aspects of the taboo are of Chinese origin. In Indian sources, some alliums (green onion, garlic, and Asian leek) are named individually, but in Chinese Buddhism these are bundled together into a formula of “five pungent [vegetables]” (*wuxin* 五辛). Starting with Buddhist texts from the

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105 For a Han-dynasty example, see the biography of Huo Guang 霍光 in fascicle 68 of the *Hanshu* 漢書. Accessed through SS.

106 The Buddhist use of *swabi* goes back at least to the sixth century, where it appears in the *Dasheng hanyun jing* 大乘寶雲經 (*Mahāyāna-ratnaeqbawāitra*); T16 n659, 269a04.

107 The Song-dynasty *Fanyi mingyi ji* 翻譯名義集 differentiates the two, saying that asafoetida (Ferula resin) is *bun* but not *xin*, while ginger and mustard are *xin* but not *bun*; those plants that are both *bun* and *xin* comprise the five pungent vegetables. T54 n2131, 1108b19-20.

Eastern Jin 東晉 (317-420) we find proscriptions of “the five pungent vegetables, alcohol, and meat” (wuxin jiurou 五辛酒肉) in Buddhist literature. In Indian Vinaya, the primary concern with alliums was that they were associated with greedy thoughts (—for delicious flavors?), and that their socially embarrassing smell could lose monks opportunities to benefit from the dharma or from meetings with elite members of society (guiren 貴人). Suwa speculates that the wuxin vegetable taboo was connected in China with the meat taboo in order to keep practitioners from stimulating an appetite for meat dishes and also to curb sexual lust.\(^\text{109}\) Some of the later-appearing Buddhist literature presents such arguments,\(^\text{110}\) but Suwa provides little explanation that would justify accepting these interpretations.

I suggest that we think of the allium taboo as originating in Indian society on the basis of brahmin ideas about ritually pure foods. Alliums are pungent vegetables that have long been used to mask the strong smells of meat (xingwei 腥味), making meat more palatable. In India and in China they were associated with meat-eating, substantially if not exclusively. Mahāyāna authors in India bundled them into the prohibitions on meat and alcohol, probably because elite members of Indian society had come to scorn them as ritually impure foods due to their lingering smell, their association with meat foods, and perhaps their popularity among commoner classes. In Chinese society, before the influence of Indian Buddhism, meat and alliums seem not to have been subject to any outright taboo, though meat was in scarce supply for the poor and some rich people seem to have scorned alliums as a food of commoners.\(^\text{111}\)

The formula of wuxin may be connected with the Chinese cultural practice of eating a dish of five pungent vegetables, wuxinpan 五辛盤, on the first day of the New Year, ostensibly to benefit the five viscera. This practice is recorded in Zhou Chu’s 周處

\(^{109}\) Suwa, Chūgoku chūei bukkyōbi kenkyū, 183-198.

\(^{110}\) Most famously the Shoulengyān jīng 首楞嚴經, a work that many scholars suspect to be an apocryphal scripture compiled in China: T19 n945, 141c04-13.

\(^{111}\) Yū, “Han China,” 53-85 (esp. 76).
The three major alliums (green onion, garlic, and Asian leek) are here joined by knotweed \((Polygonum)\) and an \(Artemisia\) species to constitute the five. The identities of the five plants in \(wuxin\) formulae differ over time and from source to source, so the number five is probably more important to the formula than the precise identities of the plants. Due to the influence of Five Phases thought, many things come in clusters of five: the five flavors 五味, the five viscera 五臟, the five grains 五穀, etc. The number five can be understood in the sense of “several,” with alliums most consistently indicated. Centuries after its appearance in the \(Fengtu ji\), Han E 韓鄂 of the late Tang and Five-Dynasties period mentions the dish in his \(Suibua jili\) 廿華紀麗 as a tool for promoting longevity. In the context of the New Year’s dish \(wuxinpan\), the five pungent vegetables are presented in a favorable light.

There is some evidence that Daoists were the first to use the \(wuxin\) formula in a proscription. Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283-363) \(Baopuzi\) 抱朴子, published in 317 in the Eastern Jin, describes the process for cultivating \(jindan\) 金丹, the Golden Elixir: “One must enter into the famous mountains and perform a fast for one hundred days, not eating the five pungent vegetables \((wuxin)\) or raw fish. One must not see ordinary people. One can then make great medicine. 必入名山之中, 齋戒百日, 不食五辛生魚. 不與俗人相見. 爾乃可作大藥.” \(Wuxin\) is here made taboo for the duration of the fast out of a concern for ritual purity.

Suwa is quick to dismiss this appearance of \(wuxin\) as a Chinese construct that is likely different from the one that appears later on in Buddhist contexts, but I think this is misinterpreting the evidence. We do not need to show here that Ge Hong borrowed
the phrase *wuxin* from Buddhists; it is likely the other way around. Furthermore, identifying this use of *wuxin* with the others seems justifiable. Raw fish was (and is) a dangerous food due to parasites. Its proscription may have been a practical way to avoid falling ill during such retreats in the mountains. In the populous lowlands, alliums may have been used to improve the flavor of raw fish, with the added benefit (whether understood or not) of lessening the risk of illness through their natural antiseptic properties. Even if they are meant as discrete items in this context, the co-occurrence of *wuxin* and raw fish is suggestive of a more fundamental relationship: both have strong, lingering smells (*xingwei*). I think the real issue for Ge Hong is ritual purity, based on a rejection of lowland stenches that would pollute the pure experience of residing in the mountains.

Ge Hong’s ideas belong to an alchemical strain of Daoist thought. Theorizing about the interface of materials and spiritual efficacy, this strain of Daoism holds that materials can be morally and spiritually transformative. This is similar to the way brahmin’s approached the material world; in both cases, diet becomes bifurcated into ritually pure and impure foods. From inchoate ideas about transcendence in the *Zhuangzi* and other early Daoist literature, Daoist thought develops greater sophistication and complexity in the first several centuries of the Common Era. As Robert Campany observes, the Daoist tradition develops “esoteric biospiritual practices” for becoming a transcendent immortal, *xian* 仙. Daoist beliefs about the efficacy of restrictive diets in spiritual transcendence are grounded in ancient Chinese theories regarding the action of *qi* 氣 in the human body, and the potential for its refinement into *jing* 精. This explains attitudes about ritual purity: polluting materials can interfere with *qi* and prevent the refinement of *jing*. Because materials are not neutral in Daoist spiritual self-cultivation, they must be carefully controlled. Ge Hong thus singles out *wuxin* as materials that must be avoided during the hundred-day fast in the mountains.

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The earliest instances of wuxin that Suwa points to in Buddhist literature appear in texts from the Eastern Jin: The Qīfó bāpúsa suōshuo dà tuōluōnì shénzhōu jīng 七佛八菩薩所說大陀羅尼神咒經, and the Jīn’gāng mìmì shānmen tuōluōnì jīng 金剛秘密山門陀羅尼經. The titles of both these works suggest that they are Mahāyāna scriptures of a devotional, esoteric nature. We know that Buddhism and Daoism interacted closely in the first centuries of the Common Era before becoming more clearly differentiated through apologetic positions (as I stated earlier). And there seems to be a tendency in esoteric Buddhism to treat materials in ritually distinct ways that are reminiscent of Daoist beliefs in the “biospiritual” unity of material interactions. Could there be a connection between Daoism and Chinese esoteric Buddhism, through a shared belief in the efficacy of materials in spiritual practice? There is not space to develop this further, so I will leave this as an open-ended question, only commenting that the Daoist Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (452-536) acknowledges Buddhist influences on his medical knowledge, in his preface (dated 500 CE) to an enlargement of Ge Hong’s collection of prescriptions.120 In this we can observe an intersection between medical, Daoist, and Buddhist bodies of knowledge. It is not unreasonable to conjecture that Buddhist translators of Mahāyāna texts could have picked up the term wuxin from Daoists—even from the Baopuzi—upon recognizing in it a similar attitude regarding alliums.

1.7 Moral vegetarianism in Song recipe collections

I am going to jump now to the Song dynasty, when the Shi bì liutie had been published and was in circulation. Song thinkers still viewed ideas about food, medicine, and nutrition as intersecting with moral and religious concerns. Ideas about eating in Song society form a porous milieu of clustered knowledge, where strains of thought from the major traditions are only vaguely recognizable when they appear in literati

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120 Unschuld, Medicine in China, 149.
writings. Song intellectuals do not seem to have yet differentiated knowledge-building on the topic of food into secular and religious modes, but often point to different ideas about eating as general forms of knowledge. The question of vegetarian diet appears in some contexts as a Buddhist influence, but in others it is unmarked. Evidence from two Song-dynasty recipe collections, the Benxin zhai zhuobi pu and the Shanjia qinggong, calls into question the reliability of the strong association between Buddhist thought and vegetarian practice in the Song. Here, a vegetable-based diet is a default diet of the less affluent members of society and is associated as much with Confucian or Daoist ideals as with those of Buddhism.

Food in the Song was an especially strained site of moral contest, due to changing historical circumstances following the demise of the Tang dynasty. With the rise of an increasingly meritocratic government system, the families of the Tang-period aristocracy were increasingly outcompeted for positions in government by scholars of humble origin. The aristocracy had fallen, and in the Song period they were not able to regain their hold on political power. The Song government played an active role in wining and dining generals and government officials in an effort to soften potential challengers to the new dynasty, which helped stimulate the rise of urban food cultures. Food historians observe that the Song is when haute Chinese cuisine, as we know it today, emerges. The question of vegetarianism in the Song must be understood against the backdrop of a highly stratified society, where the wealthy had not only meat, but meat dishes prepared in elaborate ways, while the common people were restricted to eating a plant-based diet.

In the Northern Song, some of the most prominent scholar officials took positions on the new food culture that was developing, often to criticize what they viewed as a decline in morality in eating. Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) left scattered food writings that greatly influenced subsequent intellectuals. His protégé Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105) adopted a vegetarian diet and left statements on his moral convictions regarding eating.¹²¹

The two above-mentioned recipe collections illustrate how the concept of plant-based diet (i.e., vegetarianism) was, in the Song, caught up in a set of intellectual
frameworks that transcended direct association with Buddhist teachings. These collections show influences from primarily Confucian and Daoist teachings, with only a hint of Buddhism. There may even be a trace of influence from Chinese Judaism.

The *Benxin zhai shushi pu* 本心齋蔬食譜 was compiled by Chen Dasou 陳達叟, disciple to a learned hermit called Old Man Benxin 本心翁. Chen Dasou recites a set of twenty recipes for the guests. These recipes are strictly vegetarian. The collection begins with Chen Dasou's introduction:

Old Man Benxin idly sat in hermitage, taking enjoyment in the Book of Changes, facing a *Baoshanlu* incense burner, [surrounding himself in] paper curtains [with painted] plum flowers, tea leaves in a stoneware pot, providing his own necessities in austere simplicity. Guests came from outside, conversing elegantly all day, each having the appearance of hunger. [I] called to a mountain youth to provide some vegetable dishes. The guests, tasting these and commenting that they were free of tainting by the smoke and fire of the human realm, asked for the recipes. I dictated twenty items, eulogizing each in sixteen characters, providing them with rich meanings.

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121 Chen, *Beisong wenren de yinshi shuxie*.
122 Wang, ed. in chief., *Congshu jicheng chubian*, v. 1473.
123 Chen Dasou is identified in association with Youshan Academy in Qingzhang. Qingzhang zhen 清漳鎮 was a town during the Northern Song (960-1127 C.E.), lying just north of the Northern Capital of Daming Fu 北京大名府, on the Hebei Western Road 河北西路. By the Southern Song (1127-1279 C.E.) this town was deep within territory conquered by Jurchen 金 armies, and is no longer attested in maps for this period in Tan, ed., *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji*. This suggests that the collection can be dated to the Northern Song.
124 *Xiantian yi* 先天易 refers to the *Yi* 易 (a version of the Book of Changes) ascribed to Fú Xī 伏羲, a legendary sovereign purported to have lived around the 29th century, B.C.E.
125 A bowl-shaped censer with a domed lid decorated as a small hill (Bo Mountain) with various creatures.
The lifestyle of Old Man Benxin has elements that are suggestive of Daoist interests. The comment of a guest that the food is free of tainting by the smoke and fire of the human realm hints at a Daoist ideal of eremitic living, removed from the hustle and bustle of human society. Despite hints of a potential Buddhist allusion in the old man's pseudonym, *benzhai* (“original mind”), and in the reference to vegetarian fare in the title, the literary allusions which embellish each recipe reveal the hermit (or Chen Dasou) to be steeped in Confucian and Daoist learning. For example, the first recipe references Confucian literature:

Chuòshú (sipped bean). Shú [means] bean. Tofu is sliced into strips, boiled in water, and dipped into a broth of five flavors. Does the [Book of] Rites not say [it]? How sipping beans and drinking water can be sufficiently filial. How brilliance is set off by plainness. How they made clear their purity.

126 Yú 脣 is the fat belly meat of a pig. Here I understand *weiōo* 味道 to be used in the metaphorical sense as interest, meaning, or significance.

127 The tofu is to be dipped in a liquid flavored with any (or all?) of the five flavors: sour 酸, bitter 苦, pungent 辛, salty 咸, and sweet 甘.

128 From the *Liji* 禮記 (Tang Gong II 檀弓下):

子路曰：“傷哉貧也！生無以為養，死無以為禮也。”孔子曰：“啜菽飲水盡其歡，斯之謂孝；斂⾦⾜ 形，還葬而無槨，稱其財，斯之謂禮。”

129 From the *Analects* (Ba Yi 八佾):

子夏問曰：‘‘巧笑倩兮，美⽬盼兮，素以為絢兮。’’何謂也？”子曰：‘‘繪事後素。’’曰：“禮後乎？”子曰 ：‘‘起予者商也！始可與言詩已矣。’’

130 From the *Book of Poetry* (Zhen Wei 溯洧):

溱與洧，瀏其清矣。⼠與女，殷其盈兮。⼥曰觀乎。⼠曰既且。且往觀乎。洧之外、洵訏且樂。維⼟與女、伊其將諸、贈之以勺藥。
Each recipe follows this pattern. Description of a simple food is followed by, mostly, an erudite Confucian allusion. There is also a reference from the *Zhuangzi* (*chaosan musi* 朝三暮四), as well as a recipe that refers to the Daoist aim of becoming a transcendent immortal:

Yùyán (pulled jade). Mountain medicine (i.e., *Dioscorea*)\(^\text{131}\). Cook and slice; purify with raw honey.

The mountains have an efficacious medicine, recorded in Daoist medical prescriptions. Break off several pieces of jade, [purify with] the fragrance of a hundred flowers.

This collection of exclusively vegetarian foods has no obvious relationship to Buddhist teachings. In the concluding commentary, which gives advice on how to serve these dishes, there is a statement about the social practice of toasting with an alcoholic beverage that suggests a Confucian virtue of moderation: “If mutually offering toasts with wine in goblets, gratifyingly share deeply felt emotions, but do not get drunk. 或樽酒醻酢, 暢敍幽情, 但勿醺酣。” Buddhism, with its strong arguments against alcohol, seems to be absent from this intellectual mix of Daoist and Confucian ideas.

Lin Hong’s  林洪 *Shanjia qinggong* 山家清供 from the Southern Song (1127-1279) is likewise more than just a collection of recipes.\(^\text{132}\) It contains anecdotal information on the moral dimensions of eating in Song society. Lin Hong was an intellectual from a moderately wealthy family in Quanzhou 南州 (coastal Fujian) who travelled around to visit with many scholars of his day. He lived in Lin’an 臨安, capital of the Southern

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\(^{131}\) *Dioscorea opposita*, an East Asian root vegetable. The text also supplies the name now commonly used in Mandarin, 山藥. Another name is *shuyu* 薯蕷. The flesh of the raw tuber has a white, jade-like translucence.

\(^{132}\) The edition of the *Shanjia qinggong* that is based on Song-dynasty manuscripts of the *Baichuan xuehai* 百川學海 collection and reprinted in Wang, *Congshu jicheng chubian*, v. 1473 has considerable differences with that of the *Wenjin ge siku quanshu*. I use the *Congshu jicheng* edition for my translation.
Song, for many years. Skilled in poetry, he was able to make many contacts, visiting
Confucian scholars in their academies or homes. At least one recipe has him eating a
meal with monks in a Buddhist monastery. He also seems to have associated with
Daoists, or at least to have had a keen interest in Daoist ideas. He recorded not only the
foods that he encountered, but also the context, or literary allusions associated with the
food.

Lin Hong’s collection contains just over one hundred recipes, the majority of which
are plant-based foods. The title of his collection, “Pure Offerings of Rural Households,” is
suggestive of the rustic fare that it represents. A few recipes do contain fish (e.g.,
“Muyuzi 木魚子”), crab (e.g., “Chiao gong 持螯供”), and hunted meats such as rabbit
(e.g., “Boxia gong 撥霞供”) or muntjac venison (e.g., “Zhizhang 炙獐”)—this is not an
exclusively vegetarian collection of recipes. There is, however, a conspicuous celebration
of plant-based foods running through many of the recipes. Consider the recipe for
“jade-filled lung” (“Yuguan fei 玉灌肺”):

[Collect together] bean starch, deep-fried dough, sesame, pine nut, walnut. Remove skins. Add a little dill, white sugar, a little ‘red ferment’ ground into powder. Mix it together, put it in a rice pot, and steam until cooked. Cut it to appear like pieces of lung and serve it with a spicy sauce. Now, as in the past, the imperial name [for this dish] is "court-favored jade-filled lung." You want it to be served as no more than a vegetarian dish. From this [dish], we [can] see the intention of the imperial court to celebrate frugality and dislike killing. How, then, could it be appropriate for rural dwellers to be extravagant [by eating meat]?

133 For basic biographical information, see Chang, Songren zhuanji ziliao suoyin, v.2, 1343.
134 For more information on red ferment, see my chapter on porridge.
In the portion of text that I have italicized, Lin Hong emphasizes that this is a vegetarian recipe from the kitchens of the imperial court. Is this an instance of Buddhist influence? Perhaps, since there is mention of the imperial court looking unfavorably on the slaughter of animals. As we saw earlier, however, the pre-Buddhist Mengzi also suggests that compassion toward animals is a virtue, especially for rulers. If we take this to represent a Buddhist-influenced vegetarianism in the imperial court, it would have to be a diffuse influence. More likely is that this reflects Confucian values, since the court is celebrating frugality and not wanting to be extravagant by eating lots of meat while the common people eat only plant-based foods.

Lin Hong did engage with monks and record some of their recipes. In at least one case, the monk is famous enough to be named:

Tú mí zhoū (Roseleaf bramble porridge)

...One day I went to Língjiú to visit the monk Pínzhou Dèxiù and stayed for the mid-day [meal]. The porridge was extremely fragrant and delicious. Inquiring about it, [he said] it was roseleaf bramble flower. ...

This porridge made with the flowers of a small bush is a concrete example of a meatless dish enjoyed by tonsured Buddhists of this time. But it is just that: a meatless dish. There is in this recipe no discussion of the need to be compassion toward animals, or any other motive given for excluding meat. Other recipes are more overt in setting out reasons for excluding meat. For example, a recipe for noodles, Zhen tangbing 真湯餅, shows a jiushi 居士 appreciating meatless food for its “true” flavor:

An old man [came] to a garden of gourds to see the jiushi Ningyuan, who in the course of their conversation ordered a servant to make up some “true noodles.” The old man remarked, “In the world, is there such a thing as fake noodles?” Then he saw that it was just boiled broth stirred together with deep-fried dough, one cup per person. The old man said, “So in this case, if broth and cooked rice are stirred together, it can likewise be called ‘true simmered rice’?” The jiushi explained, “With the products of sowing and
reaping (i.e., plant agriculture), if there is nothing to overwhelm the qi of the food, then it is 'true.'” 翁瓜圃訪凝遠居士，話間命僕作真湯餅來。翁曰：「天下安有假湯餅。」及見，乃沸湯炮油餅，一人一杯耳。翁曰：「如此，則湯

The term jushi is ambiguous in the Song period. It could indicate a lay Buddhist (according to the more traditional usage), a Daoist, or a literatus fashioning himself as a man in search of the Way. Here Ningyuan is apparently suggesting that meat overwhelms the natural qi of plant-based foods, an attitude that is suggestive of the dietetics of Daoist thought. Since several people styled themselves “Ningyuan” in the Song dynasty, Ningyuan’s religious identity is not clear, but the evidence leans in the direction of Daoism. This is perhaps Fu Zhu 傅佇 (1084-1151), a scholar remembered as a seeker of Daoist truth 仙遊人.

Another recipe tells a story from early medieval China, many centuries before Lin Hong’s time. The whole story is needed to appreciate the position that it takes on how to achieve longevity, so I give here the full recipe:

Lántián yù (Lantian jade)

The Han [dynasty] Dìlì zhì [records that] Lantian [in Shaanxi] produces good jade. Li Yu of the [Northern] Wei [dynasty] (386-535 CE) often envied the ancients for their method of eating jade [to achieve longevity], so he went to Lantian and did indeed obtain seventy pieces of good jade. He [ground them to] powder and swallowed [it as a tonic], but did not abstain from alcohol and sex. He happened to get seriously ill and said to his wife, "In taking jade [as a health tonic], one must live in seclusion in the mountains and rid oneself of lust, in which case it would greatly [manifest] a divine efficacy. But I did not stop alcohol or sex, and have brought myself even unto death. It is not a fault of the medicine." One should know that, as regards the method for achieving longevity, one can cultivate one’s mind and abstain from desires, and although one does not take jade, it will also work. Now, the method

135 The Congzhu jicheng edition omits this character, which some later editions provide. The context suggests that it should be included. Here I have consulted Wu, trans., Shanjia qinggong, 50-51.
is to use one or two [fresh] bottle gourds, remove the skin, cut into pieces two-cun square, steam until soft and eat with soy sauce. One does not need skill in Daoist alchemy, but only needs to remove all worries and deluded thoughts. If for a long time one maintains a state of natural ease, pure spirits, and bright qi, it is relatively more effective than the previous method. Therefore I call this "using dharma to make Lantian jade."

**Lin Hong’s own comments are instructive here.** To achieve longevity, one need not pursue Daoist alchemy by eating jade as the ancients did. One can instead remove all worries and deluded thoughts. This is Buddhist language, as is his suggestion that this be called Lantian jade made by dharma. This attitudinal approach to eating is the strongest evidence yet discussed here for an intellectual influence coming from Buddhist teachings. But as with the other material, it is not clearly marked as Buddhist and may merely demonstrate how Buddhist ideas had thoroughly interpenetrated Daoist theorizing on methods for health and longevity. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the intellectual culture of the Song dynasty was more inquisitive than sectarian in its appropriation of ideas regarding how to eat and thrive. Again, we have a recipe with traces of Buddhist thought, without any overt concern with vegetarian diet.
The Taiwanese scholar Chen Suzhen has produced a detailed study of the food writings of Northern Song intellectuals who influenced the food trend to which the *Benxin zhai shushi pu* and *Shanjia qinggong* are connected. She suggests that vegetarian cookery took shape as a distinct branch of cooking only in the Song period, even though it had deep roots in earlier Chinese history. She points to the Buddhist precept of not killing (*jiesha* 戒殺) as a motivating factor in the writings of such influential figures in the simple-eating discourse as the eminent statesman and scholar Su Shi 蘇軸 (1037-1101) and his protégé Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105). Su Shi was in his youth a gourmand who loved to eat meat, but after being jailed during a political crisis and facing the realities of suffering and death, he turned away from meat. Huang Tingjian became a more committed vegetarian, penning Buddhist-inspired statements on adopting a vegetarian diet: his *Fayuan wen* 發願文 ("Vow") and *Jiesha shi* 戒殺詩 ("Poem on Giving Up Killing"). Nonetheless, Chen Suzhen also concludes—as I have on the basis of these two recipe collections—that for these educated elite, the intellectual origins of the precept of not killing is not so clearly Buddhist as it might seem at first. Ru (Confucian) discourse has a corresponding idea in the natural capacity for benevolent sympathy 仁恕悲憫的天性. An ethics of compassion toward animals in the writings of Song intellectuals can be attributed to several interacting factors. On one level it is a kind of spiritual consolation for the hardships experienced in exile, and for the necessity of getting by on vegetable foods. It is also a critical reaction to the vogue of extravagant eating among affluent urbanites.

There is a class struggle in the background of the celebration of vegetable foods. Yi Yongwen’s study of urban life in the Song shows how the affluence of this period gave rise to a highly commodified urban culture. Brothels were plentiful and prostitutes were divided into different grades. Towering brewpubs 酒樓 lined the main boulevards, rubbing shoulders with equally numerous tea houses 茶肆. Both of these institutions

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provided food, some of which could be lavishly prepared. Female acrobats 女伎 and male wrestlers 相撲 provided entertainment.¹³⁷

Life in the countryside contrasted with this urban affluence, hence Lin Hong’s reference to the food of rural people in the title of his collection of recipes. Due to the Song government extending the imperial exam system to non-aristocratic members of society, people of humble background could enjoy upward social mobility, but even high ranking scholar-officials were sometimes exiled to miserably rural posts if they got caught in political intrigues. Faced with the inevitability of getting by on mostly vegetable foods, some members of Song society looked for ways to make the most of this situation. Celebrating the virtues of simple foods allowed the scholar class to claim moral high ground in the face of urban inequalities and excess. Social inequalities fueled critiques of Buddhists and Daoists that framed them as gluttons with no moral scruples, such as this statement from the Qingyi lu 清異錄:¹³⁸ “In recent generations, those who work as Daoists do not endeavor to limit their desires, but often seek out yellow and white zbu (a digestive aid); they are avaricious and insatiable and it is fitting to call them taotie transcendents (i.e., voracious and wicked Daoists) 近世事仙道者，不務寡欲，多搜黃白朮，貪婪無厭， 宜謂之「饕餮仙」.”¹³⁹ Such depictions are probably best read as defamatory statements that show the intensity of social contest for resources in the Song. They also reveal a disdain for what was perceived as hypocrisy amongst people who ostensibly had renounced the pleasures of secular living. Through such attitudes, Song scholars policed the borders of acceptable moral rectitude and created a kind of vegetarian subculture.

Some of Lin Hong’s recipes are for faux meat. We saw this in the recipe for ‘jade-filled lung’ from the imperial kitchen. Modern observers are prone to associate faux meats with Buddhist vegetarianism: “Wheat gluten has long been separated from

¹³⁷ Yi, Songdai shimin shenghuo, esp. 23, 163-204.
¹³⁸ Composed by Tao Gu 陶榖 (903-970), a contemporary of Yichu.
¹³⁹ Xu, ed. in chief, Zhongguo yinshi shi, v.4, 308. Taotie is mythical, ferocious animal that serves as a metaphor for the human failings of cruelty and gluttony.
the starch and made into imitation meats for vegetarian cookery (Buddhist-inspired).”¹⁴⁰ In this recipe collection, that view does not hold up well. There is another explanation. Most of Song society ate a largely vegetarian diet by default, and meat, as discussed earlier, was associated with the most affluent members of society. The cultural historian Yi Yongwen suggests that the appearance in Song texts of all manner of faux假meats is a reflection of the increasingly artful sophistication of cooking techniques in urban settings, where the mainstay of most peoples diets remained plant-based. The increasing mention of faux meats around this time was driven by culinary artistry for the meat-desiring masses who could not afford to eat meat on a regular basis—if at all. Fake meat dishes假荤菜 could serve as a treat for urbanites with only moderate income.¹⁴¹

Turning mushrooms and wheat gluten into meat-like foods may have had little to do with Buddhist proscriptions on meat, and more to do with the economics of meat versus plant-sourced foods.

This brief foray into Chen Dasou’s Benxin zhai shuohi pu and Lin Hong’s Shanjiaqinggong shows that in the Southern Song a plant-based diet was seen as morally respectable for any number of reasons. Buddhist vegetarianism—the influence of Mahāyāna teachings—was just one part of a broader intellectual discourse on the virtues of vegetables. Confucian-trained intellectuals could readily cite Confucian virtues of frugality and sympathy as motives in promoting vegetarian diet, and in both these collections we see how Daoist—not Buddhist—ideas are more thoroughly integrated with the Confucian learning in the allusions embellishing each food.

1.8 Daoist medicine and the nourishing of life

The ‘Daoist’ elements apparent in much of this Song-dynasty discourse on the virtues of simple eating warrant further comment. For lack of space in this meta-historical overview of vegetarian diet in China, I have followed convention in

¹⁴⁰ Anderson, Food of China, 144.
¹⁴¹ Yi, Songdai shimin shenghuo, 192-193.
pointing to Daoism to explain a concern over the health-promoting qualities of certain foods and the idea that foods provide a vital force, *qi*, which can nourish if it is pure or interfere with the refining of *qi* into *jing* when it is impure. But there is ambiguity in whether such ideas belong to some amorphous body of thought that we designate as ‘Daoist’, or whether this interest in the efficacies of food materials should be classed as medical (*yi* 醫 or *yijia* 醫家).

The Song celebration of a simple vegetarian diet is also connected with medical thought generally and *yangsheng* 養生 discourse specifically. *Yangsheng*, the “nourishing of life,” can be traced back at least to the Warring States period (403-221 BCE), when ideas about cultivating moral potency (*de* 德) were integrated with new *qi* practices that treated foods as having a prominent role in healing and longevity.142 Daoists such as Ge Hong and Tao Hongjing were participants in a long line of developing Chinese medical literature, where food therapy 食療 and the quest for prolonged life 延壽 went hand in hand. The medical genre of literature was more than just a branch of ‘Daoist’ learning; it was a provisional and growing body of knowledge on the therapeutic potentials of materials, including foods.143

There should be no surprise that Confucian-trained scholars in the Song dynasty engaged with Daoist-influenced medical literature, leaving traces of enthusiasm for the virtues of vegetable foods such as we see in the *Benxin zhai shuobu pu* and *Shanjia qinggong*. One way to understand the intellectual eclecticism of Confucian intellectuals is to frame it as a process leading to the emergence of Neo-Confucianism: scholars and scholar-officials sought to salvage Confucianism by integrating ideas from Buddhism and Daoism. In the Northern Song, scholar-officials took an increasing interest in all things medical, reading the medical literature, editing old medical works, compiling new ones, and implementing public policies related to medicine.144

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142 Cook, “Pre-Han Period,” 14.
143 E.g., Chen, *Beisong wenren de yinshi shuxian*, 581-586.
1.9 Chapter conclusions

Other scholars have already demonstrated that Buddhist vegetarianism in China was adopted into monastic practice only through a complex set of forces, including the arrival of Mahāyāna texts and pressures from lay Buddhists. Some aspects of my analysis here merely amplify these views. Beyond this, what I have tried to do is bring more attention to the larger cultural and intellectual milieu in China that was already amenable toward ideas about the moral implications of restrictive dieting. Vegetarianism in China does not have a taproot running straight down into Indian Buddhist bedrock. Its root system is more complicated than that.

Historical analysis shows the full prohibition on meat foods to be a development in Indian Buddhism that only appears with Mahāyāna thought. Despite this, Chinese Buddhist vegetarianism need not be seen as a corruption; it is rather an innovation of significance in the global history of Buddhism and has become a key feature of Chinese Buddhism. What started as a response to social pressures in caste-stratified Indian society found a new social environment in China that welcomed the idea of vegetarianism for different reasons. (Indian) Buddhist authors initially resisted the pure/impure dichotomy of ritual purity that brahmins espoused in India, but with the development of Mahāyāna, some Buddhists integrated aspects of the brahmin worldview into Buddhist thought, creating dissonance between older and newer teachings on food practice. Chinese Buddhists leading up to the sixth century seem to have treated vegetarianism as a noble yet optional discipline, until social pressures began to demand that it be made a requirement for tonsured Buddhists.

Previous research has pointed to the discrepancy between lay Buddhists who voluntarily adopted vegetarianism and tonsured Buddhists who cited Buddhist teachings allowing meat to be eaten under certain conditions; the lay Buddhists

145 It shows, arguably, more consistency between moral theory and practice than forms of Buddhism that have justified keeping meat in monastic diets. We should not assume that in places like Tibet where Buddhists eat meat, all Buddhists have remained silent and complacent—the case of Shabkar arguing for vegetarianism in the nineteenth century suggests that meat-eating can be in uneasy tension with ideals even where a meatless diet is impractical due to environmental limitations. See Shabkar, Food of Bodhisattvas.
appeared more morally rigorous in the comparison. I want to go further, suggesting that the comparison was also with Daoists, who were becoming increasing adept at the social game of claimed ritual purity. Fasting retreats and other disciplines described by Ge Hong (among others) captured the attention of secular society, and cloistered Buddhists had to compete for this attention. As in Indian society during the rise of devotional Hinduism, another group claiming superior moral status through a restrictive dietary practice put pressure on Buddhists to keep up appearances. Not just group identity but also the purported efficacy of the group’s path was at stake in the struggle to establish new food strictures in China. Chinese Buddhists had to cater to patrons who had expectations about the moral standards of renunciants that were shaped in the broader intellectual environment of Chinese society.

Could it be that Mahāyāna Buddhism ascended to such heights in China (and not in India, where it was marginal) in part due to the cultural resonance of its approach to moral discipline? The compelling ideal image of the bodhisattva from the Mahāyāna literature resonated with Confucian virtues of frugality and sympathy. The bold prescription of a vegetarian diet resonated with Daoist interest in building knowledge of the efficacies of materials in self-cultivation. Daoist alchemy, Confucian frugality, and Buddhist compassion all suggested that how one eats can make a profound difference in one’s moral cultivation.

No clear boundaries were set between what was religious, moral, or physiological. Plants (such as tea) could have apotropaic powers and deities could influence the course of an illness. Premodern Chinese did not live in a world with strong mind-body dualism, but rather experimented eclectically with ideas of efficacy in experience, integrating what in the modern day appear to be discrete knowledge spheres: science, religion, and morality. In Song China, while Yichu’s Shiobi liutie circulated, these spheres were not yet differentiated. Nonetheless, there are indications that this may be a turning point. The secularization of medicine at the end of the Tang and into the Song is one indication that some intellectuals were interested in stripping from Buddhism its status as a global system of knowledge, such as was represented in Yichu’s encyclopedia.
Vegetarianism in China, then, was tied to tricky questions of moral status and the politics of resource distribution between groups. It was not one thing, “vegetarianism,” but several interrelated and interacting cultural phenomena. For scholar monks like Yichu, vegetarianism may have seemed like something running against the grain of the early Buddhist teachings. Or perhaps he chose not to emphasize vegetarianism because it was not very distinctive of Buddhist thought in the larger context of Chinese society. Whatever his reasons, it did not figure much in the citations on food that form the basis for the chapters that follow. My hope is that by dealing first with the problem of vegetarianism, we are now in a position to discuss what Buddhist teachings on food were about. We can now pose the question, “If not vegetarianism, then what?”
2. Lexicon or Encyclopedia? Assessing Genre for Yichu’s Extra-Canonical \textit{Shiobi liutie}

2.1 Origins

Toward the end of summer in 954, Emperor Shizong 世宗 of the Later Zhou Dynasty (951-960) received at court in the Eastern Capital 東京 a Buddhist monk who had just finished compiling a sizable text. At the time, China was splintered into independent kingdoms in the south and short-lived dynasties in the north; a climate of war and political instability pervaded. In the \textit{Cefu yuangui} 冊府元龜 (Oracle of the Literary Storehouse) we read,

This [ninth] month [of the first year of Shizong’s Xiande reign], śramaṇa Yichu of Qizhou presented at court the \textit{Shiobi liutie} in thirty fascicles.\textsuperscript{147} Yichu, who enjoyed a reputation for integrity from his early years and was well versed in Confucian learning, organized eloquently worded matters from Buddhist literature into categories, collating [these] in the manner of Bai Juyi’s Confucian work. The Emperor looked over [Yichu’s compilation], praised it, conferred [on him] purple (honorary) robes, and handed over his books to the Bureau of Historiography. 是⽉月 [世宗顯德元年九月]，齊州沙門義楚進釋氏六帖三十卷。義楚少負名操，亦通儒學，將

\textsuperscript{146} Kaifeng, presently in Henan Prefecture.

\textsuperscript{147} The oldest extant manuscript is divided into six books 帖, containing in total fifty sections 部. Fascicles 卷 are used as the measure word for the six “books,” so the record here of thirty fascicles may be in error, or may refer to an earlier organizational scheme that was later replaced.
This monk was Yichu 義楚 (fl. 945-954), whose dharma name means “clear in meaning.” Yichu, a scholar-monk specializing in the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise (Ch. Apīḍāma jyābe lun 阿毘達磨俱舍論, Skt. Abhidharma kośa-bhāṣya), had labored for nearly a decade to produce a massive text on all aspects of Buddhism as he understood it, filled richly with citations from a wide range of sources. He began compiling it in 945 during the Later Jin Dynasty, finishing the work in 954, the year that Shizong ascended the throne of a new dynasty that had only begun in 951. In the course of his work, Yichu had nearly lost his vision. Frustrated and doubting the value of his work, Yichu had nearly abandoned the project, but a period of self-reflection set him back on track.

Having handed over his scholarship to Shizong’s court, the fate of Yichu’s compilation now rested with scholars and officials connected with the Bureau of Historiography (shiguan 史館). In tenth-century China, scholars and craftspeople continued to raise woodblock-printing techniques to new levels of sophistication, printing a wide range of subject-matter and taking on increasingly ambitious projects such as anthologies and canonical collections. The technology was ripe for such projects as Yichu presented, but the age was in political turmoil.

Shizong may have shown interest in Yichu’s text more out of deference to the scholar-official Wang Pu’s 王朴 (?-959) endorsement than out of intrinsic interest in Buddhism. Ouyang Xiu 欧陽修 (1007-1072) records in his history of the Five Dynasties that in summer of 955—less than a year from Yichu’s court

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148 Scripta Sinica’s digitized text gives 臘, a variant of 鼻, skull, but this appears to be an error, since 以類相從 is a common phrase, while 以髏相從 is unheard of.

149 In the section Chong shishi di’er 崇釋氏第二, fascicle 52 of Diwang bu 帝王部. Also cited in Makita, Giso rokujō ni tsuite, 3.

150 Tsien, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, 154. Discussion of the origins of woodblock printing span 146-159. See also Mote, Imperial China, 21.
appearance—Shizong’s court struck a firm blow to Buddhist institutions and their activities: “On the seventh day [of the fifth month], Buddhist temples were widely destroyed; the court also prohibited commoners with parents lacking caregivers from becoming Buddhist clerics and proscribed private conversions to the clergy.”

Social instability and warfare continued for the next several years. Shizong died during a military campaign in 959 and the Later Zhou Dynasty was soon eclipsed by the rise of a new dynasty, the Song (960-1279), which not only succeeded in reunifying China, but which also led to a great cultural and economic flourishing. Work on Yichu’s manuscript continued under the new government and in the sixth year of Kaibao (973), almost two decades since Yichu presented his work to Shizong, printing blocks were completed and the Shishi liutie 閃氏六帖, the “Six Books of the Śākya Clan,” was published.

Requiring three decades from conception to publication, the Shishi liutie is a magnificent achievement. That the project was finally published is testament to the high levels of support that sustained it even under the Northern Song government. Yet despite its initial praise and support, the Shishi liutie gradually faded into obscurity in China, not to reappear there until the mid-twentieth century, when Chinese scholars rediscovered it in Japan. Based on the woodblock-print edition preserved in Japan, a typeface edition now circulates in China, but the Shishi liutie is still poorly understood and little researched. Never having entered the Buddhist canon, it lacks a digital presence in online databases and remains an obscure text. Because it is an extra-canonical work, we are well served by asking a most basic question: To what Buddhist genre of writing does the Shishi liutie belong? The answer requires some explanation.

Glancing over the Shishi liutie, one sees that an entry consists of a four-character phrase, followed by the name of a text and a citation that draws content from the text. This is the presentation format for leišbu, but there appears to be little historical

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151 Davis, *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*, 109-110. Ouyang Xiu’s records of Shizong’s reign say nothing of Yichu’s presenting a text to the court. We might ask if Ouyang Xiu was cherry picking events to serve an anti-Buddhist agenda, for which he is remembered.

152 Or perhaps even “Mr. Śākya’s Six Books,” i.e., a primer of the Buddha’s teachings.
precedent for recognizing leibu as a genre of Buddhist writings.\textsuperscript{153} In the late twentieth century, the Shiobi liutie was included in a set of Buddhist lexica (cishu 辭書) called the Foxue cishu jicheng 佛學辭書集成, suggesting that to Chinese Buddhists it is a lexicon—that it is concerned primarily with the language of Buddhism, providing citations for key phrases.

Stephen F. Teiser, who supplies a brief English-language introduction to this work in Scripture of the Ten Kings, describes it as “...a tenth-century encyclopedia designed as a Buddhist version of the lists of flowery vocabulary available to men of letters” (49). This characterization is in reference to Yichu’s overt modeling of the Shiobi liutie on Bai Juyi’s similarly titled Baishi liutie, which is incontrovertible. But while he calls the Shiobi liutie an encyclopedia, his wording suggests that 1) the value of the work (and that of Bai Juyi) is primarily lexical in nature, with emphasis on the four-character headings (“flowery vocabulary”) with which entries begin, and 2) that the work is primarily an advanced lexical tool for intellectuals (“men of letters”).\textsuperscript{154} Teiser appears to be echoing MAKITA Tairyō, the scholar who initiated research on the Shiobi liutie in Japan and whom he cites. Makita writes that Yichu compiled the work in the manner of Bai Juyi, “…collating Buddhist terminology for use as flowery language [in poetry, etc.] 佛教用語を収採して詞藻の用に供して…”\textsuperscript{155}

I will argue that treating the Shiobi liutie as a lexicon is an error, and understanding it as a merely lexical tool for use in literary embellishment is misleading.\textsuperscript{156} The confusion may derive from overly hasty assumptions of parallelism with the Baishi liutie or from the

\textsuperscript{153} Miyai Rika, in “Dōki den ni tsuite,” 2003, raises the issue of whether we are justified to recognize the notion of Buddhist leibu. Scholars who have studied the Shiobi liutie generally agree that it is a Buddhist leibu, though giving little space to discussion of the implications for such a view. While the argument for viewing the Shiobi liutie as a leibu is strong from the literary perspective, such a designation appears to be anachronistic in terms of historical genre categories, and we have the problem, also raised by Miyai, of what to include or exclude from the notion of Buddhist leibu. My analysis in the following pages will address these issues.

\textsuperscript{154} Teiser’s and Makita’s phrasing reflects longstanding characterizations of Bai Juyi’s work and also Wang Pu’s mention of aesthetics in a statement from his preface to the Shiobi liutie, so they are not unjustified to so write. Nonetheless, the emphasis appears to miss the mark in some important regards, explained below.

\textsuperscript{155} “Giso rokujō ni tsuite,” 1.

\textsuperscript{156} Though on my observation, it may be accurate for Bai Juyi’s work.
tendency for scholars to focus their knowledge on either Buddhist or secular writings, whose genres tend to be dealt with separately.\textsuperscript{157} I suggest that the \textit{Shiobu liutie} is best understood as a \textit{leishu}, akin to our notion of encyclopedia, and that it is more concerned with knowledge and its organization than with terminology per se.\textsuperscript{158} Using examples from my research on representation of food and eating in the \textit{Shiobu liutie}, I will illustrate that it has features of the \textit{leishu} genre, emphasizing categories and concepts rather than the language used for these. This would make the \textit{Shiobu liutie} more philosophical and less philological in purpose, but the nuances of its genre bear explaining.

To understand Yichu’s \textit{Shiobu liutie}, we need to better understand how it relates to its non-Buddhist models and the types of knowledge that those texts preserved. In the intellectual exchange that took place through reading and appropriating a \textit{leishu} style of presentation, we find evidence of a negotiation of norms, a push and pull between categories for (in this case) food or eating that were sometimes celebrated and sometimes vilified. This kind of negotiation of norms constitutes the evolutionary trajectory of culture and of the themes and categories that feed notions of civilization.

In what follows, then, I address several questions: To what genre does this work belong? For whom was it written and how was it used? Lastly, what value does it hold for present-day scholars of Chinese Buddhism? Each of these questions hinges on the others, with genre serving as a pivotal issue in how to use Yichu’s compilation. At stake in each of these questions is the problem of what knowledge Yichu recorded in the \textit{Shiobu liutie} and how to read this knowledge today. This encyclopedic work that nearly disappeared into the cracks of history becomes more intriguing if we can clarify what it is and how to use it.

\textsuperscript{157} Appropriation of secular genres for non-Buddhist forms of knowledge is also seen in two Northern-Song texts, the \textit{Chan bencao} 禪本草 and \textit{Paozhi lun} 炮炙論, where medical metaphor suggests that Buddhist knowledge has efficacy comparable to that found in the practice and transmission of medical knowledge. See Toleno, "Zen honzō to En Chūdō no Zenmon honzō ho."

\textsuperscript{158} One additional reason to emphasize \textit{leishu} as the relevant genre is that our English terms "lexicon," "encyclopedia," and "dictionary" can also be misleading if not specifically defined. For example, \textit{The Brill Dictionary of Religion} is what I would call an encyclopedia.
2.2 Buddhist leishu? A problem of genre

To locate the Shiobi liutie in relationship to both Buddhist and secular genres we can consider a broad set of literary elements—such as title, organization, content, prefaces, and colophons—as well as historical information drawn from Yichu’s biography. I have already stated the importance of understanding the Shiobi liutie as an example of leishu, but before we look at this secular genre I want to clarify why it is not easily adopted into the ranks of Buddhist lexicons.

2.2.1 Organization of the Shiobi liutie

I first became interested in the Shiobi liutie when I found it in the above-mentioned Foxue cishu jicheng and recognized its usefulness for my study of moral attitudes toward food and eating in Chinese Buddhist thought. I then learned that a superior edition preserved in manuscript form at Tōfukuji in Japan had been published. Using this earliest edition, I observed that the overall layout of the work is thematic in organization and logically hierarchical.

The entire work is divided into six tie 帖, or books, each of which contains topically coherent sections 部, fifty in total. These sections bring together a cluster of topics (or “subsections”) that are listed in the table of contents simply by number. For example, my research has focused on the topic of food and eating (obi 食, coming second in the 37th section, which is devoted to various topics associated with human eating and drinking: alcoholic beverages 酒, eating 食, porridge 粥, cooked rice 飯, soup 羹, and so forth. Twenty-five such topics are listed in this 37th section, though other sections may have fewer or more. Topics such as obi 食 are the smallest organizational unit to be

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listed in the table of contents, but in the body of the manuscript each topic is populated with individual entries headed by a four-character phrase.

Proceeding with translation of material from the Shishi liutie, I began to sense that the four-character phrases with which Yichu begins an entry are typically key concepts rather than conventional Buddhist formulae. For example, Yichu begins his subsection on eating 食 with this entry:

[When] morsel food\textsuperscript{160} was first received [by humans]. The \textit{Juoh \textit{liu}\textsuperscript{161}} says: At the beginning of the kalpa of formation (i.e., formation of the present universe), the flavor of joy-in-meditation gradually gave rise to the flavor of earth, its scent deeply fragrant, its taste sweet and delicious. At that time there was someone habituated from a prior lifetime to indulge in flavors, to smell fragrances, to take food. That time is known as the first receipt of morsel food, after which arose forests, vines, and scented paddy rice. Of old, it was called \textit{tuanshi} (lumped food); now it is newly [referred to] as \textit{duanshi} (piecemeal food).

段食初受『俱舍』云: 成劫之初, 禪悅為味, 漸生地味, 其香鬱馥, 其味甘美。時有一人, 宿習魘味, 臭香取食。尤時名為「初受段食」, 次生林藤香稻。舊云「團食」, 今新為「段食」。

The phrase \textit{duanshi chushou} 段食初受 is what I am calling an entry heading. These are represented in large characters that fill the entire width of a single line, followed by a citation in half-size characters that fit as two columns within a single line. This size difference visually emphasizes the entry headings, suggesting their importance in the organizational scheme. Citations begin with the name of a text and “\textit{yun} 云” to indicate that Yichu is either directly citing or paraphrasing content from the text. I have added punctuation to the entry to show how I read the Chinese, but the original manuscript has neither punctuation nor any indication of how to distinguish Yichu’s voice from

\textsuperscript{160} This is one of four types of food 四食 identified in Buddhist doctrine, referred to in this way because it is eaten piece by piece, sequentially and periodically. The other three foods are sensory food connecting with emotion, thought-food, and nourishment connected with the six consciousnesses. See Chapter Four for my analysis of this doctrine.

\textsuperscript{161} Abbr. of Apidamo juoh \textit{liu} 阿毘達磨俱舍論, the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise, Skt. \textit{Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya}, T29 n1558 and n1559. The cited material is an origin myth that occurs in T29 n1558, 65b15-c20. For an English translation of this passage, see Vasubandhu’s \textit{Abhidharmakośabhāṣya}.
cited material. As this example illustrates, the entry heading is not defined so much as explained via citation. This basic anatomy of an entry is consistent in all parts of the _Shiobi liutie_ through which I have read.

In the above example, the entry heading elements are inverted in the explanatory text, suggesting that the order of this four-character phrase, _duanshi chushou_, is not fixed. If Yichu’s purpose were primarily lexical, he would have focused on the fixed compound _duanshi_, which warrants explanation since it is a technical term in Buddhist doctrine. But rather than isolating and defining it, Yichu has his _Shiobi liutie_ accomplish clarification of this lexical item by identifying its larger context in a Buddhist scripture.

The issue of whether entry headings are conventional formulae or Yichu’s original phrasing cannot be decided by this single example, but needs to be tested with a larger set of data, and I aim to do this in the next section.

2.2.2 Analysis of Entry headings

One way to test my thesis—that Yichu’s four-character headings are not primarily chosen as lexical terms but are his own phrasing—is to trace them in historical literature, both in works preceding his (to see if he borrowed them from other texts) and in subsequent writings (to see if they attained status as idiom at any point in time).

Of fifty-seven headings in the _obi_ 食 subsection, twelve—or about 20%—occur in texts found in the two major databases of Chinese Buddhism (SAT and CBETA) or in _Scripta Sinica_, a database containing a broad set of Chinese writings not limited to those associated with Buddhism. Close examination, however, suggests that these twelve headings occur in contexts of straightforward wording and in most cases do not appear to have been used as set-phrases representing key concepts.

For example, “foods are of ten varieties 食有十種” appears in contexts that do not match Yichu’s citation, but rather enumerate the ten benefits of eating (食有十種利),

_v.2, pp.487-489. See also Benavides, “Economy,” in Lopez, _Critical Terms_, for a discussion of the origin_
the ten merits associated with eating (食有十種功德), and the ten types of leftover food (食有十種殘食)—Yichu’s entry under this phrase enumerates actual foodstuffs.

Another heading, “their colors each differ 其色各異” is a statement so general that it has many occurrences even outside the Buddhist literature. Other phrases refer to events that were widely discussed by Buddhist authors: “Ananda begs for food 阿難乞食,” and “the Buddha eats milk porridge 佛食乳糜.”

The phrase with the greatest number of occurrences is “take a[long] a bhikṣu 將一比丘,” appearing over twenty times in the SAT collection and having nearly 150 total hits in the CBETA database. Tracing back even to the Longer Āgama sūtra, this phrase was not coined by Yichu, but nor does it seem to have represented a key concept with status as idiom. The only modern dictionary where I find this phrase listed is Hirakawa’s Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary, 392, which supplies the Sanskrit phrase, “dvitīyaṃ bhikṣu mārgeta.” As a phrase from the classic literature, it stands testimony to the longstanding practice of tonsured Buddhists avoiding solitary excursions.

At least one of the twelve phrases with occurrences outside of Yichu’s Shiobi liutie does represent a key concept that could have become a common formula: “begging for alms food 乞食分衞.” But this formula has only one occurrence outside of Yichu’s use, suggesting that placing together the two terms for begging, qiōbì and fenwei, was not a common phrasing used to represent begging practice.

While this subsection cannot be used as representative of the overall reception of the Shiobi liutie, parts of which were probably more read and used than others, it can at least help us gauge the basic status of his entry headings. The overall picture gained from an analysis of the previous and subsequent occurrences of Yichu’s four-character headings from the subsection tested here—which is still a limited sample—suggests that these phrases are largely his original work, that they frame key ideas in his citations rather

—myth from the perspective of Pali literature.
than serving as established linguistic formulae, and that they do not appear to have influenced subsequent monastic or secular writings to any significant degree. They most likely are meant to anchor each item with a simple linguistic formula—that is, with a mnemonic.

These conclusions strengthen my position that Yichu’s *Shiobi liutie* is not a lexicon, but we have yet to look at concrete examples that would illustrate what this means. We will now look at several types of Buddhist lexicons and discuss how Yichu’s work differs. There are no clear boundaries between Buddhist lexicons and encyclopedias, which often serve similar purposes, but through a comparative analysis I believe we can identify enough criteria for recognizing family resemblances and sketching out simple genealogies of related texts. These understandings can then help us locate the *Shiobi liutie* in the larger landscape of literary genres.

2.2.3 Buddhist lexicons, reading aids, and character dictionaries

Chinese Buddhists had to grapple with difficult concepts from Sanskrit, Pali, and other Indic languages, so they had a need for lexical guides. Some of these guides are still extant and can be viewed in volume 54 of the Taishō Daizōkyō Buddhist canon (hereafter “Taishō,” abbreviated as T in notes). Cross-language lexicons likely supported translation work into Chinese by establishing normative equivalents for basic words.

Sanskrit lexicons

Chinese-Sanskrit lexicons include texts such as the *Fanyu qianzi wen* 梵語千字文,163 collated by Yijing 義浄 (635-713) of the Tang Dynasty, the *Tangfan wenzi* 唐梵文字164

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162 This Taishō volume constitutes a section on Affairs and Lexicons, *Shibui bu* 事彙部.
163 T54 n2133. This is a single-fascicle lexicon providing Sanskrit equivalents for one thousand commonly-appearing Chinese characters, designed as a convenient study aid for Chinese who were just getting started with Sanskrit. Ono, *Busshō kaisetsu daijiten* v.10 p.218.
164 T54 n2154. A single-fascicle lexicon with Chinese terms and Sanskrit equivalents. The order of words is similar to that of the *Fanyu qianzi wen* by Yijing, so Quanzhen’s work appears to be based on this other, but aspects of this assumption are still under debate. Ono, *Busshō kaisetsu daijiten* v.8 p.227.
by Quanzhen 全真 (fl. 839), the *Fanyu zaming* 梵語雜名 compiled by Liyan 禮言 (fl. 839) and edited by Zhenyuan 真源, and the *Tangfan liangyu shuangdui ji* 唐梵兩語雙對集. This last is a Chinese to Sanskrit lexicon that groups loosely associated Chinese terms from everyday use and supplies transliterated Sanskrit equivalent terms using Chinese characters. For example, under *wei* 味 is *luosuo* 喔娑, which transliterates the Sanskrit term *rasa*. The thematic clustering of terms bears some resemblance to how the *Shiobi liutie* is structured, but the content is purely lexical.

*Yinyi* reading aids

Another kind of lexicon, *yinyi* 音義, served Buddhists who encountered technical terms while reading Chinese translations of Buddhist texts, providing information on pronunciation (*yin*) and meaning (*yi*). *Yinyi* are reading aids prepared by well-read scholar monks. The most representative *yinyi* are Xuanying’s 玄應 (d.u.) *Yiqie jing yinyi 一切經音義* (A Lexicon of the Entire Buddhist Canon), the first major *yinyi*, Huilin’s 慧琳 (737-820) expansion of Xuanying’s project (also called *Yiqie jing yinyi 一切經音義*), and Kehong’s 可洪 (d.u.) *Xinji zangjing yinyi suiban lu* 新集藏經音義隨函錄 from the Five-Dynasties period, a massive culmination of the work started by Xuanying.

*Yinyi* developed as a genre to cover not just translated works, but to provide reading aid even for works authored in China. Notable examples are the *Zuting obiyuan* 祖庭事苑, compiled in 1108 by Lu’an Shanqing 陸菴善卿 of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), and Dajian’s 大建 (fl. 1635) *Chanlin baoxun yinyi* 禪林寶訓音義, both of

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which give pronunciation and definitions for terms appearing in well-read texts of the Chan Buddhist corpus.

*Yinyi* are arranged by the text that they cover in each section; they are reading aids and not dictionaries. An example of the latter, for looking up difficult characters used in Buddhist writings, is Xingjun’s 行均 (d.u.) *Longkan shoujian* 龍龕手鑑. Its organization is based on tones (*píng* 平, *shāng* 上, *qù* 去, *rù* 入) and radicals, such that specific characters (though not compound terms) can be searched.

Yichu’s *Shishi liutie* bears little resemblance to these Buddhist reference tools, as it is not an *yinyi* or a dictionary. Like the Sanskrit-Chinese lexicon *Tangfan liangyu shuangdui ji*, it organizes things and ideas in a logically connected structure that permits efficient searching, but it supplies complex citations and not just simple definitions. There are other Buddhist writings that do similarly, so it is to these that we now turn our attention.

### 2.2.4 Buddhist encyclopedias

More than the lexicons already discussed, the *Shishi liutie* resembles a set of texts that are encyclopedic in scope and rich in content. In my understanding, encyclopedias organize human knowledge using organizational schemes that reflect semantic structuring—categories with similar meaning are clustered together—rather than using text-based structuring (*yinyi*) or arranging only simple lexical data (cross-language lexicons). Encyclopedias differ from lexicons especially in the richness of the data presented, which reflect an interest in the ideas of human knowledge that extends beyond defining simple lexical units. I make this distinction not as an argument about how Chinese understood their own literary genres, but as a tool for refining understanding of how the notion of *leibu* might apply to the case of the *Shishi liutie*.

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166 T54 n2136. One fascicle, compiled in the Tang Dynasty by 僧怛多蘖多 Tathāgatapāla and 波羅瞿那那難捨沙 Guṇaviśeṣa (the identities of these monks is tentative). See Ono, *Busōbo kaiōtō daijiten* v.8, p.227.
Japanese scholar MIYAI Rika explicitly raises the question of whether or not we are justified to identify certain encyclopedic Buddhist works as Buddhist lewbu. Working on an extra-canonical Buddhist encyclopedia called the Jinzang lun 金藏論 by Daoji 道紀 (late 6th c.), she aligns her text with some of the Buddhist works that I will discuss in this section, and suggests that these could be considered Buddhist lewbu. While I am sympathetic to her position, which parallels my basic argument for the Shishi liutie in this chapter, one reason to hesitate in using the secular genre of lewbu for Buddhist works is that secular catalogues and collections, and even contemporary discussions, seem to stay silent on the matter, failing to mention Buddhist examples.

We need to critically assess these issues before accepting the notion of Buddhist lewbu. How to clearly organize Buddhist knowledge is a perennial problem for Buddhist authors going back to the Buddha himself, so it is unwise to assume a pathway of influence from secular to Buddhist literature even though some Buddhist writings do conform closely to the style of secular lewbu. Buddhist encyclopedias may have developed under the influence of Buddhist precedents before they adopted features of secular lewbu, so here I will first discuss the logic of this view before looking into the details of lewbu as a secular genre, the topic of the next section.

Jinglǔ yixiang

Perhaps the earliest extant Buddhist encyclopedia is the Jinglǔ yixiang 經律異相, a text that was commissioned by Emperor Wu 梁武帝 (464-549) of the Liang Dynasty (502-557), a famous patron of Buddhism. Emperor Wu had Baochang 寶唱 (5th-6th c.), Senghao 僧旻 (d.u.), and others compile this fifty-fascicle collection of stories and anecdotes, correcting and improving upon a work that had been completed by Sengmin

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167 Miyai, “Dōki den ni tsuite.”
168 Pereira and Tiso, “Evolution of Buddhist Systematics.”
Organized according to Buddhist cosmology, the *Jinglü yixiang* begins with heavens 天 and ends with hells 地獄, covering the different realms and their beings in the course of thirty-nine sections. This organizing principle is closely associated with Buddhist doctrine, and the early date further weighs against the view that the Buddhist collators had secular models in mind while they worked. Nonetheless, Miyai sees this work as the first example of a Buddhist leishu. Ono Genmyō, on the other hand, refers to this work as a soulu 蒐錄 (Jp. shūroku), “assembled record,” though we should note that his citation of a preface includes the phrase yilei xiangcong 以類相從, “to order by categories,” which gets picked up as a descriptor of the organizational style of leishu.

*Jinzang lun*

Although scattered in the course of history and nearly lost, Daoji’s *Jinzang lun* from the late 6th century, mentioned above, is a Buddhist encyclopedia that presents teachings from Buddhist literature on such themes as temples and towers 寺塔, banners and lamps 幡燈, scriptures and statues 經像, and taking refuge and precepts 歸戒. The thematic organization leads Miyai to propose that it be considered a Buddhist leishu, though she does not say that it bears stylistic influences from secular leishu—just a similarity in style and purpose. She suggests, rather, that Daoji may have taken stylistic hints from the *zhang 章* mode of presentation found in the *Chengobi lun* 成實論, which he studied closely. Hers is thus not a very strong argument for connecting Buddhist

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169 Muller, “經律異相,” DDB.
171 Like the *Shiobi liutie*, it was never entered into the Buddhist canon, a fate that has often harmed the longevity of Buddhist works.
173 Ibid., 7-8.
encyclopedias with the genre of leishu, but there are reasons, yet to be discussed, why the notion of genre interaction or overlap may yet be justified.

Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra

Another potential ancestor of Buddhist encyclopedias is the Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra (Ch. Yuqie shidi lun 瑜伽師地論), composed in India between 300-350 CE. It provides encyclopedic treatment of key facets of Yogācāra thought and practice and is the definitive text for this school of Buddhism. Xuanzang 玄奘 (ca. 602-664) made a translation of the entire work between 646-648, resulting in a Chinese text of 100 fascicles. Its organization follows seventeen stages of Buddhist practice leading up to buddhahood. While this organizing principle derives directly from Buddhist doctrine and is still far from the broadly encompassing organization of the Shishi liutie, it may have informed later leishu-style Buddhist compilations by setting a standard of comprehensive doctrinal treatment and clarity of organization.

Faishu

For clarity and easy referencing, one of the more effective tools for organizing doctrinal concepts is numerical ordering. An early extant example of a Buddhist lexicon or encyclopedia using this method is Li Shizheng’s 李師政 (fl. 618-626) Famen mingyijì 法門名義集, “Collection on the Meanings of Well-Known Buddhist Doctrine,” produced in the Tang dynasty. It gives a concise overview of essential Buddhist concepts, taking advantage of the fact that these are often associated with numbers. For example, the Six Roots 六根 [of sensory experience] are enumerated as eyes 眼, ears

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174 T30 n1579. See Ono, Buddhism daijiten v.11, p.74-75.
175 Dan Lusthaus and Charles Muller, “瑜伽師地論,” DDB.
176 One could argue that it serves primarily as a lexical guide and should not be considered an encyclopedia, but it is a borderline case and worth bringing to the discussion.
This concise text of a single fascicle clusters such numerical concepts in themed chapters and does not strictly follow numerical ordering. Nonetheless, it may have influenced the development of a more strictly numerical genre of texts that came to be known as fashu 法數.

Buddhist authors after the Tang period continued to utilize numerical ordering in similar reference works. The Indian scholar monk Shihu 施護 (Skt. Dānapāla, fl. 982), who was active in translation work at the beginning of the Northern Song and thus a contemporary of Yichu, produced the Fashuo faji mingshu jing 佛說法集名數經, a relatively short text with a narrative exposition of Buddhist terminology. The organization uses numerical concepts, but these are approached discursively: "What are the eight things with form? They are earth, water, fire, wind, smell, flavor, touch, and dharma."^{177}

In the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), this notion of organizing doctrinal concepts according to their numerical values culminated in two encyclopedic works: the Daming sanzang fashu 大明三藏法數, compiled by Yiru 一如 (1352-1425) and others, and the Chongding jiaosheng fashu 重定教乘法數 by Chaohai 超海 (d.u.). Yichu may have been aware of the earlier examples of this developing genre, but he did not choose for his own work a numerically-based organizing principle.

**Fayuan zhulin**

Several decades after Xuanzang’s translation the Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra and compilation of Li Shizheng’s Famen mingyi ji, a Chang’an-based scholar monk involved in translation work, Daoshi 道世 (?-683), produced a magnificent collection called Fayuan zhulin 法苑珠林, publishing it in 688. The Fayuan zhulin is a Buddhist
encyclopedia in 100 fascicles that has been much celebrated for its literary value. Ono Genmyō characterizes it as a Buddhist leibu, saying, “As this book collates by category and collects together a multitude of items from the various sutras and śastras, we can say that this is in fact a large Buddhist leibu.”

Organization of the Fayuan zhulin fits sixty-eight themes (marked as chapters 篇 and comprised of smaller sections 部) into the one-hundred fascicles. These themes begin with the calculation of time in Buddhism 劫量, theory of the three realms 三界, topics related to sun and moon 日月, and so forth, ranging quite broadly through topics in Buddhist doctrine. While grandly comprehensive, organization in the Fayuan zhulin is less hierarchically structured in comparison with Yichu’s Shbi bi liutie. We might say that the Fayuan zhulin uses a chain of linked associations, where themes in succession can be understood as more similar than themes in other parts of the text.

This could perhaps also be said of the Shbi bi liutie, but there are subtle differences. The hierarchical groupings of the Shbi bi liutie are more obvious. My search for discussions on moral aspects of food and eating yielded a whole section populated with food-related topics in the Shbi bi liutie, as discussed above, but in the Fayuan zhulin passages of interest were scattered in chapters devoted to disparate themes such as Alcohol and Meat 酒肉 and Filth and Purity 穢濁. The most relevant set of passages was in a subsection titled Eating Porridge 食糜, nested within another section on Completing the Path 成道, and falling within the chapter Thousand Buddhas 千佛 (篇). Such organization follows a doctrinal logic that differs greatly from the pattern of

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177 T17 n764, p.661a02. 云何八有色色。所謂地水火風香香味觸法。
178 Ono, Buso bō kaijō tō daijiten v.10, p.5b: “本書は諸経論に於ける百般の事項を類別集成せるもの、この意味に於て本書は実に仏教の一大類書であると称してよい。” There seems little justification from his description for calling the Fayuan zhulin a Buddhist leibu while not doing the same for the Jingliu yixiang, but he is stating an analogy rather than arguing a case for direct influence from the secular leibu genre.
organization found in non-Buddhist leibu, and likely made the Fayuan zhulin less accessible to a readership outside of Buddhist circles. At the very least, it makes the Fayuan zhulin more of a spiritual masterpiece for browsing on its own terms than a reference work for looking up citations.

The Shibi liutie as an accessible Buddhist encyclopedia

The handful of works brought into discussion here could be supplemented with many more, especially if we look beyond Yichu’s time to the Song period and later. For instance, the genealogy outlined here produced the Shibi yaolan 释氏要覽 by Daocheng 道誠 (fl. 1019) during the Northern Song and Fayun’s 法雲 (1088-1158) Fayi mingyi ji 翻譯名義集 in 1145 of the Southern Song, two topically organized reference works that blur the boundaries between lexicon and encyclopedia. While I draw a distinction between lexicons and encyclopedias for the purpose of refining our understanding of the Shibi liutie, we must bear in mind that historical authors and readers may have understood genre without resorting to such overarching categories. A plurality of genres was recognized for Buddhist works, as we see from Wang Pu’s preface: “There are [explications]180 in scriptures, monastic codes, treatises, collections, records, eulogies, chronicles, paeans, and accounts. 有經、律、論、集、記、讚、誌、頌、錄之[說].” Wang Pu makes the point that the original teaching of Buddhism was singular, but by the tenth-century in China it had given rise to such a plethora of writings that those trying to extract the essential meanings become lost. He says, “[Though] seeking and desiring broad knowledge, it cannot be obtained. 求欲旁通博達，不可得也.” Yichu’s compilation serves the purpose, then, of allowing easy navigation of these abundant teachings:

179 As above, I refer to Section 37 Food, Drink, and Assisting Flavors 酒食助味部第三十七
180 The manuscript is damaged and we have only a piece of this character, so this reading is tentative.
Master Yichu is a scholar of wisdom and abundant learning. Apart from his lecturing as a teacher, he is industrious with written commentary. He has selected from among the myriad sayings of the Great Teaching complete passages of essential meaning, ordering them by their characteristics into a total of fifty sections and 440 categories, comprising six books. This allows scholars, every time they discuss a particular thesis, to then, in accordance with [Yichu’s] sections, peek through the door of classical passages from five thousand scrolls, unimpeded.

In the course of this endorsement Wang Pu uses the phrase yilei xiangcong, “to place in order according to kind.” This is a key notion underlying the identification of leishu as a literary genre. We also read that Yichu has selected essential meanings from amongst the many sayings of the great teaching, suggesting that Wang Pu viewed this work as a guide to ideas rather than terminology. Scholars of the Shiobi liutie are justified, then, in seeing it as a Buddhist encyclopedia, and also warranted, it seems, to think of this work as a leishu. But what exactly are leishu? We turn now to the origins and characteristics of the leishu genre.

2.2.5 What are leishu?

Historians of leishu tend to ignore the existence of the Shiobi liutie and other Buddhist candidates for the genre. For example, an index of 824 leishu by Taiwanese scholar
Zhuang Fangrong does not list Yichu, his work, or even the *Fayuan zhulin*. Again, HU Daojing, the leading expert on the history of *leishu* as a genre, makes no mention of the *Shiobi liutie* or other Buddhist works in his survey, *Zhongguo gudai de leishu*.

A purpose in this section is to show that the history of cataloging and classifying literature in China gave rise to a bias against including Buddhist texts, which perpetuates an unnatural rift between secular (non-Buddhist) and Buddhist writings. While I, too, have employed this dichotomy as an expedient in the writing above, in this section I want to deconstruct it and suggest that we replace it with a more nuanced understanding of *leishu* as a loose genre category that broadly encompasses different approaches to human knowledge, whether Buddhist, Confucian, or otherwise.

*Leishu* origins

Several competing theories exist for the origins of the *leishu* genre, but the oldest example of a text that has the two definitive characteristics of a typical *leishu*—encyclopedic organization and assembly from various written materials—is the *Huanglan*, compiled at the start of the Cao Wei Dynasty between 220-222 CE. This work had over forty sections, each containing twenty or more chapters, and is said to have been over eight-million characters in length. By the time of the Sui Dynasty it had been lost, so we do not know exactly what themes it covered, but we do know that it was commissioned of scholars in imperial employ by Cao Pi (187-226), ruler of the Wei empire newly established by his father, and that it appears to

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183 But its present obscurity should be considered. Although the *Shiobi liutie* was printed at the start of the Northern Song Dynasty, it is even not included in Li Guoling’s catalog of Buddhist works from that period, *Songgong zhuo yao kao*.
186 Ibid., 53.
have been a hitherto unprecedented effort to collect together different aspects of human knowledge.\textsuperscript{188}

Cao Pi’s government commissioning of an ambitious collection of human knowledge set a precedent that was repeated by Emperor Wu 梁武帝 (464-549) of the Liang dynasty (502-557), who set scholars to work compiling at least three works that are now identified as early examples of lei\textsuperscript{\textit{s}u}: \textit{Shouguang shuyuan} 壽光書苑, \textit{Leiyuan} 類苑, and \textit{Hualin bianl\textit{i}ü} 華林遍略.\textsuperscript{189} While there is not space here to discuss these works, we should note that this literary activity under Emperor Wu, accomplished with the help of his noted statesman Shen Yue 沈約 (441-513), prompted later scholars who had never seen or heard of the \textit{Huanglan} to develop a misleading theory that \textit{lei\textsuperscript{s}u} originated in the Liang Dynasty.

Many impressive \textit{lei\textsuperscript{s}u} projects in Chinese history conform to this model of court commissioning at the start of a new dynasty or with a new emperor. The \textit{Yiwen leiju} 藝文類聚 in the Tang, the \textit{Taiping yulan} 太平御覽 in the Northern Song, and the \textit{Yongle dadian} 永樂大典 in the Ming exemplify this genealogy of imperial ambitions to gather all human knowledge into massive tomes. But smaller projects by independent scholars also arose and entered the genre of \textit{lei\textsuperscript{s}u}, such as the celebrated \textit{Chuxue ji} 初學記 by Xu Jian 徐堅 (659-729) and others.\textsuperscript{190}

While organizational aspects of the \textit{lei\textsuperscript{s}u} genre have been proposed to trace back to sources as early as the \textit{Liu\textit{bo} chunqiu} 呂氏春秋 and the \textit{Erya} 爾雅, the true origins of the genre are to be found in the genealogy outlined above, beginning with the \textit{Huanglan} in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} century.\textsuperscript{191} Catalogers from the Jin (265-420) and Sui dynasties (581-618),

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid., 7-8, 52-56.
\textsuperscript{189} Ibid., 57-62.
\textsuperscript{190} Sakai, \textit{Chūgoku nichiyō ruisōshi no kenkyū}, 22.
\textsuperscript{191} Hu, \textit{Zhongguo gudai de lei\textsuperscript{s}u}, 7-11.
traditionally divided works into classics 經, histories 史, works of philosophers 子, and collections 集. Within this scheme, *leishu* have traditionally been placed alongside the works of philosophers, in or next to the miscellany category 雜家.\(^\text{192}\)

Eventually, catalogers came to see this genealogy as representing a distinct genre, separating it out as *leisbi jia* 類事家 perhaps as early as the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, when the no longer extant catalog *Gujin shulu* 古今書錄 was compiled. The earliest extant evidence for this reassignment is in the *Jingji zhi* 經籍志 chapter of the [Jiu] Tang shu [舊] 唐書 by Liu Xu 劉昫 of the Five-Dynasties period.\(^\text{193}\) Since that time, different genre names have been applied: *leishu lei* 類書類, *leisbi lei* 類事類, *leijia* 類家, *dian'gu lei* 典故類. *Leishu lei* was used in the *Xin Tang zhi* 新唐志 and has become the most common name for the genre.\(^\text{194}\)

Designed for reference

The simple genealogy outlined above illustrates that some *leishu* arose as literary projects designed to put broad swaths of human knowledge at a ruler’s fingertips. *Leishu* are designed for reference.\(^\text{195}\) This is a basic feature of the genre; some *leishu* became so massive that they are impractical for anything but reference. The ideal-type *leishu* matching our genealogy collects and collates different areas of human knowledge into a searchable structure.

But as precedent invites imitation and innovation, many borderline cases also came into existence, collecting surnames, information on governance, official posts, records of

\(^{192}\) Ibid., 2.

\(^{193}\) Ibid., 3.

\(^{194}\) Ibid., 4.

\(^{195}\) Ibid., 7. Also Shiina, “Kaidai,” 529.
historical events, classical essays, and so forth. The content of leishu is thus not determined by the genre category, but can encompass different aspects of human knowledge. This content does, though, tend to serve one or more of a limited set of goals, including providing evidence of certain matters, corroborating evidence of matters while also collecting relevant verse, serving as reference for literary embellishment, helping with rhyming, and emphasizing images. Some works bring together combinations of these different aims.

These different aims are also reflected in how leishu were used in practice. They were used for general reference, for looking up literary allusions, to aid study for imperial exams, for elementary education, and for daily use to keep a household functioning.

Bai Juyi’s Baishi liutie is of the type that was used to look up literary allusions and support achievements in the flowery language of poetry. This is significant, because much confusion over the nature of the Shishi liutie as a Buddhist leishu stems from the comparison made with Bai Juyi’s work. Differences between the two works turn out to be as important as the similarities. Yichu’s Shishi liutie aims to provide evidence of certain matters in Buddhist thought and to supply citations for finding these matters in Buddhist literature. It is not, however, much concerned with literary embellishment, if I can so judge based on my limited investigation of Yichu’s entry headings.

Similarly, if Yichu was influenced by Bai Juyi’s organizational scheme, he nonetheless did not slavishly imitate it. Despite superficial resemblances, close examination suggests that Yichu was highly selective of his categories, excluding topics that did not fit his Buddhist project (and including ones that did). This is evident when we compare, for example, Yichu’s Section 37 (酒食助味部) on food-related themes with Bai Juyi’s similarly themed section. Points of overlap are indicated below (Table 1) by a translation into English.

197 Ibid., 14.
198 Ibid., 15.
199 Ibid.
Table 1. Comparison of food topics in the *Shishi liutie* and *Baiobi liutie*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yichu's section on food and drink in the <em>Shishi liutie</em> 釋氏六帖</th>
<th>Bai Juyi's section on food and drink in the <em>Baiobi liutie</em> 白氏六帖</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>酒食助味部第三十七  37. Food, drink, and assisting flavors (i.e., salt and sauce)</td>
<td>卷第五凡五十四門內十九門  Fifth Fascicle. No.19 of 54 categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>酒一得二失  37.1 Alcoholic beverages, benefit and harm</td>
<td>酒第一酒德 戒酒 ·?酒 ·?酒 禮飲 軍中飲 樂飲 夜飲 賜酒 御酒 令罰附  1. Alcoholic beverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>食二  37.2 Food and eating</td>
<td>飲第二</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>糜三  37.3 Porridge</td>
<td>糜三</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>餓(飯)四  37.4 Cooked rice</td>
<td>餓(飯)四</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>羹五  37.5 Soup</td>
<td>羹第五  5. Beverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>餅六  37.6 Flour products</td>
<td>餅六</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>饂七  37.7 Dry-roasted and milled grain</td>
<td>食第七加膳奢盛儉薄廉食貪食附  7. Food and eating, appending sumptuous meals, frugality, honest eating, and greed for food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>鹽八  37.8 Salt</td>
<td>鹽八</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>蘇九  37.9 Butter (酥200)</td>
<td>蘇九  37.9 Butter (酥200)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>乳十  37.10 Milk</td>
<td>乳十  37.10 Milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>酪十一  37.11 Yogurt</td>
<td>酪十一  37.11 Yogurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>甘露十二  37.12 Ambrosia</td>
<td>甘露十二  37.12 Ambrosia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>蜜十三  37.13 Honey</td>
<td>蜜十三  37.13 Honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>肉十四  37.14 Meat</td>
<td>肉十四  37.14 Meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>麥十五麥附  37.15 Flour, appended with wheat</td>
<td>麥十五麥附  37.15 Flour, appended with wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>油十六  37.16 Oil</td>
<td>油十六  37.16 Oil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

200 Terminology for dairy products in both Sanskrit and Chinese is complex, due to instances of overlapping usage, such as Sk. ghṛta being rendered in English as ghee, fat, or cream. The associated Chinese terms and attempts to translate them into English have perpetuated this lack of clarity. Thus, I have translated the three dairy terms with what I identify as their most basic meanings in the Buddhist literature, with archaic lexical descriptions stripped away.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>漿十七 37.17 Beverages</td>
<td>脩十六</td>
<td>魚第十六</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>稻十八 37.18 Rice</td>
<td>鮮第十七</td>
<td>醤第十八</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>米十九 37.19 Millet</td>
<td>醤第十八</td>
<td>醤第十九</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>穀二十 37.20 Grain</td>
<td>鹽第二十 20. Salt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>糠二十一 37.21 Sugar</td>
<td>酪第二十一 21. Yogurt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>小豆二十二 37.22 Small [mung?] beans</td>
<td>蜜第二十二 22. Honey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>種植二十三 37.23 Planting</td>
<td>餅餌第二十三 23. Flour products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>飢渴二十四 37.24 Hunger and thirst</td>
<td>嗜好第二十四</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>飽二十五 37.25 Satiation</td>
<td>食器第二十五</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>賜食二十六202</td>
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<td></td>
<td>與食二十七乞食附</td>
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<td></td>
<td>饋食二十八</td>
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<td></td>
<td>異味二十九</td>
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<td>天子食三十</td>
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<td>柴薪三十一</td>
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<td>菜三十三</td>
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<td>炭三十四</td>
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<td></td>
<td>廚三十五爨附</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Yichu has only twenty-five categories, to Bai Juyi’s thirty-five. Both compilers begin with alcoholic beverages, suggesting that this category may have seemed especially important to both, albeit for different reasons, perhaps. About twelve categories overlap, meaning that the *Shiobi liutie* has less than half of its categories in common with those of

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201 The body text lists 米 and gives 米 as appended.

202 No 第 for last ten items. In the Kyūko edition, 也 is dropped from 25 on. This appears to be merely a space-saving practice.
the *Baishi liutie*. Most of these that overlap are such basic categories that Yichu may have been unable to exclude them even if he wished to distinguish his set from those of his professed model. In other words, a comparison of the two sets seems to weigh against the thesis that the *Baishi liutie* influenced Yichu’s choice of categories, suggesting, rather, that Yichu exercised a fair level of independent thinking, choosing categories more for their connection with Buddhist contexts of meaning than for their presence in his model text.

Yichu may have taken certain stylistic hints from Bai Juyi’s work, but any parallels appear to have been overemphasized by later commenters. Yichu’s own statements about his work tell a slightly different story of his motivations. We turn now to prefaces and histories that can help us clarify how Yichu intended his work to be used.

### 2.3 The *Shishi liutie* as a Buddhist *leišbu*:

For whom was it written and how was it used?

The *leišbu* genre, we have seen, is broad enough to include works of Buddhist knowledge, even if catalogers have traditionally excluded these on the assumption that they belong to the category of Buddhist works (*sūja 釋家*). Despite the breadth of the *leišbu* genre, Buddhist authors in imperial China do not appear to have applied the term to any Buddhist works.\(^{203}\) Still, Yichu’s *Shishi liutie* is, de facto, a Buddhist *leišbu*. It organizes a broad set of human knowledge into an encyclopedic, searchable work. One can use it to look up various themes pertaining to life generally or to Chinese Buddhism—in its history and ideas—and then read what topics Buddhist sources raised on these matters. Thinking of it as a Buddhist *leišbu* helps us address the problem of whether Yichu had a particular audience in mind. For whom did Yichu compile this work?

Prefaces and other historical statements can help us test the thesis that Yichu was trying to reach a general audience and especially officials and intellectuals who would
otherwise not be motivated to seek an understanding of Buddhism by wading through its voluminous literature. By implication, he appears to be aiming this work at a non-tonsured, secular readership.

An overstated comparison

Yichu cites widely from the *Jinglu yixiang* and the *Fayuan zbulin*, so we know that he was familiar with these earlier models, but these influences are overshadowed by comparisons with Bai Juyi’s work of a similar title, the *Baiòbi liutie*. The overzealous comparison may stem from a statement by the scholar-official Wang Pu in his preface to the *Shishi liutie*:

> Is the rarity of that which is called marvelous in transmitting the dharma [an indication of] holiness? From this we know that Bai Juyi could not naturalize beauty to the Confucian Way (i.e., Confucian learning cannot claim a monopoly on beauty). 所謂妙於傳法，其希聖者歟？所以知白氏不能專美於儒道矣。

Wang Pu is praising Yichu for his literary accomplishment, but the suggestion that Yichu was doing for Buddhist aesthetics what Bai Juyi had done for those of Confucian learning is perhaps hyperbole, since Yichu’s work is not lexically oriented. Perhaps Wang Pu (and even Yichu himself) hoped that one day the four-character headings would, through popular use of the *Shishi liutie*, attain status as idiom in poetry and other forms of formal writing. More likely, this praise was calculated to draw attention to the structural similarities with Bai Juyi’s work and suggest to non-Buddhist scholars that they would be able to use it in similar fashion, as a reference tool.

Zanning 贊寧 (919-1001), author of the Northern Song update to the biographies of eminent monks, also picked up the comparison for his biography of Yichu:

> Modeling his work on Bai Letian’s (Bai Juyi’s) *Liutie*, he compiled doctrine, passages, various matters, and assortments of things, arranging them by type,
estimating their categories, which in entirety encompass fifty sections. 擬白

樂天六帖。纂釋氏義理、文章、庶事、群品，以類相從，建其門目，總括大
綱。計五十部。

In this biography, the comparison helps clarify the structural arrangement of Yichu’s
text, saying nothing about flowery vocabulary for use in literary allusions. Zanning’s
emphasis is on doctrine 義理, passages 文章, and various matters 庶事.

Yichu’s own preface to the *Shiobi liutie* makes no mention of the comparison with Bai
Juyi’s work, but only expresses how voluminous and difficult to navigate is the
Buddhist literature. He then goes on to say how he was motivated by a desire to make
these teachings more accessible:

… Therefore [we] know [how it is that people pursuing] the ten ranks [of
bodhisattva-hood] are still confused by the teachings of the two vehicles. 204

How is one to fathom that Buddhist priests seldom exhaust the foundational
[teachings], while erudite Confucian scholars rarely investigate [even] the
great waves? If we do not collect the names of categories, arranging them by
type, it will be difficult to gather together essentials, and not easy to seek
them. Thus, I, Yichu, having served from a young age the King of Emptiness
(i.e., the Buddha), grew up investigating the Great Teaching and from its
views have collected together these passages, inclusive of all the main
principles, comprising fifty sections, allowing matters to be separately listed
in 440 categories. I hope that curious and knowledgeable people studying
diligently in the future can consult [my compilation] when writing
commentary [on Buddhist ideas]. They will then know that the Śākya clan
(i.e., the saṃgha) is good and long lasting, and believe that the teachings of
the dharma are profound. I began the draft in the forty-second year
(945)… 是知十地，猶迷二乘，豈測縵侣罕窮根蒂，鴻儒尟究波瀾。若非攢
族門名，以類羅列。故難備要，不易尋求。然義楚幼事空王，長窮大教，輒
於所見，集成此文，總括大綱，計五十部；隨事別列，四百四十門。冀好事

204 The Hinayāna (Theravāda) and Mahāyāna.
通人，將來勤學，述作之次，聊可檢尋。知釋氏優長，信法門深邃。起[草]

乙已...

As with all analogies, the comparison with Bai Juyi’s compilation has explanatory potential only to a point. Yichu is not offering a tool for referencing flowery vocabulary, but is rather trying to promote appreciation and understanding of Buddhist teachings. We learn in his biography by Zanning that the title of the work may not have come as an influence from the Baishi liutie, which further undermines the overstated parallel:

He had [experienced] a sudden [insight when he noticed that] an old stone by the gate of his monastery had the two characters “liu tie” (six books, i.e., primers for study) naturally appearing on it. Seeing this divine sign, he then knew [that his work was] predestined, so he searched through [writings of] the present and went through [those of] the past, his brush never stopping its compiling. 忽因本院門古石上有「六帖」二字，天然分明。睹此靈符，乃知宿定。搜今斡古，筆不停綴。

A reference on Buddhism for a lay audience

The above evidence suggests that a leishu model best served Yichu’s motivation to make the complexity and vast size of Buddhist writings accessible to a general audience. But his choice of the leishu model also caused problems for his project. Apart from Yichu’s four-character headings, there is little original phrasing in the Shishi liutie. Yichu sacrificed originality and clarity of presentation in order to maximize comprehensiveness of coverage. His paraphrasing of cited content is frequently condensed to the point of being stilted—sometimes a mere suggestion of an idea explicated elsewhere and needing to be looked up. The lack of fullness in his treatment appears to have greatly troubled Yichu, whose biography says he came close to abandoning his project, fearing that he might be destroying the value of the Buddhist literature he was citing: “…worrying lest he abridge and destroy the text of the Teachings…慮刪碎教文…”
In comparison with the sophisticated literary value of the *Fayuan zhulin*, content in the *Shiobi liutie* is truncated and plain, but paraphrasing the content of citations was necessary in order to achieve the structure of a searchable encyclopedia with comprehensive coverage of Buddhist ideas about our world. Given the *Shiobi liutie*’s scope of coverage, full citations would have resulted in a project of immense proportion, difficult to finish and expensive to publish.

Yichu’s compilation achieved a new level of structural clarity for such Buddhist works by borrowing its organizational scheme from the *leishu* of "Confucian" scholars—and specifically from Bai Juyi’s *Baishi liutie*. Nonetheless, it remains in content and intention a Buddhist work, spreading the dharma by offering non-specialists a handy reference on the essential features of Buddhism as Yichu understood it in tenth-century China.

## 2.4 Implications of a conceptual orientation

In the introduction to this chapter I suggested that understanding the genre, the intended audience, and the practical value of the *Shiobi liutie* would have implications for how we understand the value of this work in contemporary studies of Chinese Buddhism. At this point we can make several comments on this point.

As a general reference on the essential teachings of Buddhism in tenth-century China, this text lends itself to exploration of Chinese Buddhist attitudes toward a broad range of topics. Knowing that entry headings are not necessarily lexical formulae helps us get past the fixation with terminology that fills dictionaries and glossaries, so that we can consider Buddhist teachings on basic ideas.\(^{205}\) For example, Yichu has included topics from everyday life: wives 妻室, battle 鬩戰, friends 朋友, father and mother 父母, grapes 葡萄, dancing 舞, and dragons 龍, to name just a few of the hundreds of topics.

\(^{205}\) Such as we find in Lopez, *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*. 

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The early timing of Yichu's compilation (mid-tenth century) allows scholars interested in specific historical or doctrinal developments, or in biographies of individuals, to obtain references and biographical information that may otherwise be rare or lost. We can read, for example, tenth-century perspectives on the destruction of Buddhist institutions in the Huichang 会昌 era (841-846), or see if Yichu’s statements on meditative concentration 禪定 were, in the tenth century, showing an influence from the developing school of Chan Buddhism, which was soon to make a sectarian fuss in the Song Dynasty.

Only a handful of Japanese, Chinese, and Western scholars have studied or utilized the *Shiobi liutie* in their research,\(^\text{206}\) though it is a rich source for explorations of Chinese Buddhism.

Rising print culture and visions of holistic knowledge

That the *Shiobi liutie* was never entered into the Buddhist canon raises a set of interesting problems that deserve more attention elsewhere. In particular, the issue touches on the political context of knowledge-building activities in the Northern Song, when the *Shiobi liutie* was published. The rise in print culture during Yichu’s lifetime coincided with questions about what knowledge was worthy of printing and what forms of knowledge were ethical. In a society shaken by war and rising use of new technologies, people asked not just if knowledge was true, but if it was efficacious, and if so, whether it was moral. Ronald Egan has written eloquently on these issues in regards to the Northern Song,\(^\text{207}\) so I will not elaborate here, but I want to frame our understanding of the *Shiobi liutie* within this view of a transitioning society very much concerned with the task of finding a place for Buddhist knowledge within a complex and uncertain intellectual environment.

\(^{206}\) The most notable Western examples are Stephen F. Teiser, *Scripture on the Ten Kings*, and James Benn, *Burning for the Buddha.*
2.5 Concluding thoughts

In this chapter I have argued that the Shiobii liutie is written as a Buddhist leishu and is best understood for an English-language readership as an encyclopedia, rather than as a ciōbu, or lexicon. The searchable table of contents, its broad inclusiveness, the hierarchical ordering of topics, the four-character key phrases (entry headings), and certain parallels with Bai Juyi’s Baiobii liutie all support this view.

But I have also shown that the same fuzzy borders of the leishu genre that allow us to claim the Shiobii liutie as a de facto Buddhist leishu also require us to clarify what kind of a leishu it aims to model. Parallels between Yichu’s and Bai Juyi’s leishu break down on close inspection. Evidence from prefaces and from Yichu’s biography in the Song gaoweng zhuang suggests that Yichu aimed to produce an encyclopedia of Buddhist ideas, information, and passages, without sharing Bai Juyi’s interest in literary technique. Yichu’s work is designed to make accessible to a lay audience the complex corpus of Chinese Buddhism, by offering a thematically organized text that is both comprehensive and concise, facilitating improved knowledge of basic teachings.

Whether the Shiobii liutie is a lexicon or an encyclopedia matters for several reasons. Here are some that I wish to highlight.

If the Shiobii liutie were to be digitized and included in online collections such as CBETA or SAT Daizōkyō Text Database, we would want to know what texts it resembles and where it might fit in different schemes organizing Buddhist texts.

Other Buddhist writings that resemble encyclopedias in their topical organization and emphasis on concepts rather than terminology include the Jinglu yiuxiang and the Fayuan zhulin. The SAT database lists these two texts under Taishō volume 53, the first volume in a set of three Taishō volumes collectively encompassing a section on matters and lexicon (shihui bu 事彙部), on external teachings (waijiao bu 外教部), and on catalogues (mulu bu 目錄部). Were the Shiobii liutie to one day find a home among the

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207 The Problem of Beauty.
canonized Buddhist texts, we might guess that it would be here, under the shibui bu, and following the Fayuan zbulin.

Genre and Lack of Canonization

A second reason to care about genre is because it may help us understand the puzzle of why the Shishi liutie was never canonized, despite representing a magnificent accomplishment of compilation and printing that could not have succeeded without imperial sanction and support from high-level officials. Genre may have played a role, especially a negative role, in the reception history of the Shishi liutie.

We might look into the question of whether the secular orientation of Yichu’s compiled reference interfered with its potential bid for canonization. There could, for example, have been a perception among tonsured Buddhists and officials who oversaw the work of adding to the Buddhist canon that it was not of sufficient value as reading for tonsured Buddhists, due to its truncated and paraphrastic style. Having a secular audience may have hurt any hypothetical bids during the Song period to have it canonized, as it may have caused other Buddhists to view Yichu’s work as merely derivative and lacking original contribution. More research is needed to see if lack of canonization was an accident of history or an artifact of political interference from parties with an agenda to block the kind of knowledge that the Shishi liutie represented at the time.

Similarly, it may have been the target of Chan Buddhist polemics against wenzi shengren—‘saints of words and letters’ who labored to understand the textual history of Buddhism while neglecting the call to achieve full awakening. Although first printed through state-of-the-art printing technology and with official endorsement, the Shishi liutie represented what may have been seen as old-fashioned ‘teachings’ that just muddied the waters with a confusion of cultural details and convoluted cosmology. The rise of Chan, its vogue among intellectuals, and the developing intellectual strain that would come to be called Neo-Confucianism are all elements of Yichu’s time that could

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208 Welter, Yongming Yanshou, 75. Also see Kieschnick’s discussion in Eminent Monk of changing ideal images of monks in the transition from Tang to Song.
have overshadowed or otherwise constrained the popularity of the *Shìshì lìutiē*. The fierce intellectual revisionism of the Song period may have created a hostile environment for a text so inclusive of broad swaths of Chinese Buddhism and so focused on the nitty-gritty details of the cultural and intellectual legacy of Buddhism in China.

Nonetheless, from our current perspective, a text from the tenth century that purports to represent a holistic reference to Buddhism is a fascinating find. Though Western scholars have come to speak of Buddhism and to acknowledge that the monolithic unity of teachings suggested by the term ‘Buddhism’ is difficult to defend, we nonetheless continue to explore these teachings in grand encyclopedic volumes attempting, like Yichu’s *Shìshì lìutiē*, to bring associated forms of knowledge into a unified textual body. Here, we have a historical example of Buddhist teachings as a unified body of human knowledge.
3. Food Themes: The Topic of Shi 食 in the Shishi liutie

3.1 Opening

In this chapter I argue that a customary focus on identity construction in research on food and religion has limited explanatory power and needs to be augmented with a broader theoretical frame.

Socio-cultural explanation that treats food as a tool for cohering religious identities operates with a narrow definition of religion that rejects efforts by religious authors to provide pragmatic solutions to worldly problems. Instead, food rules are understood as arbitrary symbolic systems driven by belief in the sacred and profane, which in ritualized interaction help to structure relationships among religious adherents and any sacred beings of the system. While such a view provides important insights into food and religion, it suffers from an implicit assumption that “religion” is one thing and not another, hiding from view phenomena that might be considered religious despite a lack of emphasis on group cohesion. This chapter investigates such a case, which reveals aspirations for Buddhism to be a universal system of knowledge, with religious discourse serving the psychological and physical needs of the individual. Discourse on food in Buddhism is not just socially but also personally relevant, so we need to apply a theoretical frame that does not restrict our understanding of “religion” to problems of social identity. The case study of this chapter addresses the problem of how to read discourse on eating in religious history without gerrymandering the findings through premature assumptions regarding the work of religious knowledge.

If we accept that Yichu’s Shishi liutie is a reference work of Buddhist knowledge, as I argued in Chapter Two, we might then ask what purpose is served by having a section devoted to food themes (Jiushi zhuwei 酒食助味, the 37th section). Deducing an answer to this question based on the dominant theoretical approach to food and religion in
modern scholarship, we could surmise that an investigation of this section will reveal statements showing food’s role in the maintenance of religious identity, emphasizing, especially, fasting and food taboos that help distinguish Buddhists from other members of medieval Chinese society. This theoretical approach to the interplay of food and religion has roots in Émile Durkheim’s *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, where he describes foods as subject to differentiation into sacred and profane, a bifurcation of valence associated with the ritual operation of food taboos. Taboo foods become powerful tools in ritual conduct, helping to socially construct aspects of religion. Durkheim’s general thesis that society generates religion has greatly influenced subsequent scholarly approaches to food and religion, such as Mary Douglas’s seminal study of taboo, *Purity and Danger*. Douglas endeavors to illustrate that “rituals of purity and impurity create unity in experience,” echoing Durkheim’s social thesis.

Like Durkheim, Douglas rejects the view that religious forms of knowledge are grounded in pragmatic concerns such as hygiene, insisting that rituals of purity and impurity are symbolic patterns or systems. And she furthermore proposes that the body can be understood as a symbolic microcosm of society: “We cannot possibly interpret rituals concerning excreta, breast milk, saliva and the rest unless we are prepared to see in the body a symbol of society, and to see the powers and dangers credited to social structure reproduced in small on the human body.” Because eating entails embodiment and is central in many religious rites, this social approach has proved useful in analyzing the relationship of food and religion. For example, it helps to

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211 *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 313: “...we have seen that this reality—which mythologies have represented in so many different forms but which is the objective, universal, and eternal cause of those *sui generis* sensations that make up the religious experience—is society.”
212 *Purity and Danger*, 2.
213 *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 70 n1. Durkheim’s polemical note is worth quoting: “This argument does not convince those who see religion as a technique (notably a hygienic technique), whose rules, while sanctioned by imaginary beings, are none the less well founded. But we will not linger to discuss an idea that is so untenable and that has never really been argued in a systematic way by anyone even remotely familiar with the history of religions. It is difficult to see how terrible initiation practices can enhance the health they put at risk; how dietary prohibitions against perfectly healthy animals are hygienic; how sacrifices that took place during the building of a house could make it more solid, etc. No doubt there are religious precepts that do serve some practical purpose; but these are lost amidst the others, and very often this purpose has its price. If there is religious prophylaxis, there is religious filth that derives from the same principles. [...] In technical matters, magic is often more useful than religion.”
explain “dietary polemics” of Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain authors in South India, where different food practices became topics of group identity politics. A social approach is now common in scholarship on religion and food history for various parts of the world.

Reading Yichu’s section on food themes as a statement on Buddhist identity in contradistinction with other social groups is possible. China is no exception to the general pattern that food has served often as an important marker of identification for particular groups, and, conversely, as a way to disassociate from rival groups. We see this in Yichu’s observation (#44) that approaches to food differ, the citation for which states that Daoist dietary practices (grain fasts and use of meat and alcohol) are at odds with Buddhist food practice. Furthermore, Yichu suggests in his preface that he compiled his work for an audience of non-specialists with little access to the sea of Buddhist writings—he appears motivated to clarify notions of Buddhist identity in greater Chinese society. Notwithstanding the validity of identity-construction as a theoretical approach to food and religion, in the present context it may hinder our reading as much as facilitate explanation, because it tells us little beyond what we already know. That Buddhists used food in ways that distinguished them from other religious groups should be expected, given what we know about identity politics. As a compendium of Buddhist knowledge (a reference tool for knowledge of the “Śākya clan”) the entirety of Yichu’s Shištī liutie can be understood as serving the purpose of establishing basic parameters of Buddhist identity in Chinese society, utilizing doctrine, narratives of the Buddha, cosmology, views on self cultivation, and so on. Food was used as a tool for constructing aspects of Buddhist identity. We are better served by asking specifically how Buddhist modes of eating were distinct in Chinese society, and how a focus on food practices is helpful for understanding the place of religious traditions in greater society.

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215 Douglas, Purity and Danger, 115.
216 Ulrich, “Food Fights.”
217 Examples include Anderson, Everyone Eats, 154-161; Wilkins and Hill, Food in the Ancient World, 79; Montanari, “Peasants, Warriors, Priests,” 178-185; Montanari, “Food Models and Cultural Identity,” 189-193. There are of course also examples of writing on food and religion that approach the topic with greater nuance, such as Soler, “Semiotics of Food in the Bible;” Etkin, Foods of Association, and papers in Korsmeyer, ed., Taste Culture Reader, section IV “Body and Soul.”
One justification for highlighting food as having a special role in the construction of group identity is to observe that in India and China, religion has tended to emphasize orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy, prioritizing behavior over belief. Citing the anthropologist Mary Douglas’s analogy between bodily and social boundaries, one study of food and religion in South India reaches the following conclusions on why food became a topic of religious polemic:

In contrast to other activities—studying religious texts, speaking Tamil, or engaging in ritual activities—food consumption is an unavoidable and very tangible requirement for human life. Thus the food polemics exist not simply because in India food is important; they exist because of all the bodily practices, eating involves concrete substances that are necessary to life, are other than us, and are intimately connected. And so policing food practices became a key part of constructing community solidarity and insularity in a social and religious context of fluid hierarchies and boundaries, where food rituals, regulations, and literature abounded and donors were funding a wide range of institutions.

From this view, food plays a special role in religion due to its providing necessary sustenance, the materiality of which affords unique opportunities for ideologues and patrons to shape community-defining institutions. That food is a key leitmotif in religious orthopraxy is no accident.

A focus on identity construction vis-à-vis non-Buddhist groups (Jains, Daoists, Confucians, etc.) is useful insomuch as it illuminates the historical process of negotiating the relative status of Buddhist food practices in society for purposes of patronage and group cohesion. Nonetheless, such an approach does not easily reveal the history of debates among different Buddhist authors, who over the centuries reinterpreted Buddhist food practices as teachings evolved and society changed. Buddhist teachings are a plurality, despite the singular label that we tend to use today, so to understand Chinese Buddhist discourse on food, we need to see it as a set of historical narratives that may or may not show coherent elements. Different food practices between Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhists illustrate this point: Mahāyāna developed a

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218 Ulrich also refers to observations by Jain scholar James Laidlaw.

discourse of vegetarianism, while Theravāda maintained an acceptance of meat in begged foods.\textsuperscript{220} Divergences between Buddhist groups can be as important as those with non-Buddhist groups, and internal debates do not necessarily define in-group and out-group relations, but may be more akin to family bickering.

The notion that religions’ contributions to food history are primarily negative—arbitrary restrictions that help construct group identity—becomes an impediment to understanding Buddhist teachings on food. For example, Westerners often associate vegetarianism with Buddhism and assume it to be a major feature of Buddhist attitudes toward eating.\textsuperscript{221} But historical research on Buddhist vegetarianism shows it to have developed relatively late in the history of Buddhism in China, stimulated most notably around the first half of the fifth century by a set of Mahāyāna texts that constitute a form of revisionism of earlier doctrinal precedents. Buddhist vegetarianism built significant momentum only after the sixth century, following popularization efforts spearheaded by Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (464–549; reigned 502-549), when a subsequent shift in expectations of the laity put pressure on monastics to adopt a vegetarian diet.\textsuperscript{222}

Chinese Buddhist vegetarianism was not as doctrinally central in Buddhist discourse on food as popular conceptions sometimes lead people to think. In Yichu’s \textit{Shiobi liutie}, vegetarianism appears as just one issue among many. Yichu left the view of Buddhist vegetarianism doctrinally inconsistent, as if to historicize its development, bracket it, and thereby have space to present other Buddhist topics on eating. So this chapter helps to clarify the relative weight of vegetarianism in Chinese Buddhist discourse on eating, and it provides answers to a resulting question: If not vegetarianism, then what?

Buddhist authors had much to say about food and eating, and under close scrutiny we find a set of coherent themes that help make sense of the seeming contradiction between Buddhism that do not practice monastic vegetarianism and those that do. Furthermore, Yichu’s inclusion of even “Confucian” material serves to remind scholars

\textsuperscript{221} E.g., Faure, \textit{Unmasking Buddhism}, 118-122.
of Chinese religion that religious entities in China are, as Robert Campany has helpfully illustrated, not so much belief systems as “repertoires” that historical actors engaged selectively and creatively. Borrowed discourses, points of contrast, and internal coherence all need to be delineated before we can understand what might be considered core aspects of Chinese Buddhist discourse on food.

There may be no general Buddhist teachings on food to which all schools would concur, but this is a problem for analysis and should not be taken as axiomatic. Lurking behind the common theoretical emphasis on fasting and taboo as markers of group identity is the assumption that such food rules are arbitrary cultural constructions. Buddhist statements on food, however, suggest that Buddhist authors took interest in general effects of different eating practices, constructing a discourse with non-arbitrary dimensions. In modern theoretical analysis, we might say that Buddhist discourse on eating contains elements that serve as markers of Buddhist identity, and other elements that represent generalized statements on the experience of being human. These latter elements reveal in Buddhist knowledge production an aspiration to achieve general explanations that are applicable whether one does or does not follow a Buddhist path.

For example, Buddhist justifications for fasting after the midday meal include physiological effects such as needing less sleep, having less flatulence, and enjoying greater bodily health. These claims can be tested in human experience, using empirically measurable indicators. We should not dismiss claims of a universal human discourse in Buddhist thought, since universal truth-claims reveal Buddhism’s bid for acceptance as general theory in Chinese society. This aspect of Buddhism is often overlooked when we think of it as a “religion” in contradistinction with “science,” but

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224 E.g., Tannahill, Food in History, 59. Consider also the emphasis on religious and social causality in this statement by Latham and Gardella, “Food,” 3167: “Historians of religion and cultural anthropologists face an extraordinarily difficult task when they attempt to analyze food customs on a worldwide basis. Dietary laws, food taboos, and the religious and social environments that have molded them are as varied as humanity itself.”
225 My scope of analysis here is necessarily limited to Yichu’s compilation of Chinese Buddhist statements on eating.
226 These are often phrased as “benefits 利, but also including negative effects—cf. James Gibson’s notion of affordances in “Theory of Affordances” and the reworking of this theory in Ecological Approach to Visual Perception, 127-143.
the distinction is an anachronism in the production of knowledge taking place in the period leading up to Yichu’s compilation. Buddhist knowledge aspires, in works such as Yichu’s *Shiushi liutie*, to be more than a guide for believers; it represents an effort to penetrate the deeper meanings of being human in an interactive universe where meanings are grounded in intellectual arguments about universal categories of human psychology and philosophy in relation to a knowable earthly environment.

Before concepts homologous with science and religion differentiated knowledge-building activities, authors often integrated a broad set of intellectual resources in order to synthesize a coherent statement on religious practice (conceived in China as a Way 道, even in Buddhist writings). This integral view is how I understand Buddhist knowledge of eating in Yichu’s *Shiushi liutie*, which shows a tendency to analyze and test knowledge of human experience, producing only tentative conclusions about how to best eat (and sometimes how to best eat as a Buddhist in Chinese society). Yichu’s general guide to Buddhist knowledge, aimed at a general readership, carries undertones of this aspiration for Buddhist thought to be a total system of knowledge, rather than that of a minority cult aiming to distinguish and elevate its members through association with an unseen deity.

In light of its aspiration to universal truth, some scholars have argued that Buddhism is more philosophical than religious.228 In practice, Buddhism can be characterized as a set of teachings sharing transformation of the individual as a common goal: “In its long history, Buddhism has used a variety of teachings and means to help people first develop a calmer, more integrated and compassionate personality, and then ‘wake up’ from restricting delusions: delusions which cause attachment and thus suffering for an individual and those he or she interacts with. …Buddhism thus essentially consists of understanding, practicing and realizing Dhamma.”229 Such a characterization highlights Buddhism’s commitment to orienting individuals toward truth, but there is no pure philosophical Buddhism, which remains an ideal construct in the minds of scholars.

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227 See Yichu’s entry #14 in the Appendix.
228 Even Durkheim concedes that Buddhism has features which set it apart from other religions. See *Elementary Forms*, 32-33: “...there are great religions in which the idea of gods and spirits is absent, or plays only a secondary and unobtrusive role. This is the case with Buddhism... …Buddhism consists above all of the notion of salvation, and salvation merely requires one to know and practice the good doctrine.”
Chinese Buddhist thought incorporated customary narratives, belief in folk deities, rigid formalism, and other elements that are not easily viewed as philosophical in nature.

Rather than argue for a particular philosophical or religious identity for Buddhism, my approach here is historical. The Buddhism with which I am concerned is Yichu’s Buddhism, of tenth-century China. Or even more precisely, I am concerned with Yichu’s collated teachings on eating, presented within a collection of knowledge associated with Buddhists (the Śākya clan) in China. Knowledge producers around or just after Yichu’s time were beginning to discuss knowledge production in ways that helped precipitate a bifurcated understanding of Buddhist and secular knowledge, manifesting in the Song period through the rise of secular print culture and through institutionalization of an idealist Chan Buddhism stripped of general speculation on problems other than awakening. I view Yichu as a disapproving witness to these intellectual transitions, presenting to his society an integrated body of Buddhist knowledge informed by the Abhidharma-kośa tradition in China.

My findings suggest that Yichu was aware of the role of food in the construction of Buddhist identity in China, but that he downplayed this role and instead highlighted doctrinal tools which pertain to the psychology of individual eaters, with some discussion of physiological effects. For Yichu, these functions are all relevant inclusions in his body of Buddhist knowledge, so I see no justification for rejecting any of them as falling outside of the analytical frame of religious phenomena. In short, this case study suggests that theorists of food and religion would do well to attend to both the social functions characterized by Émile Durkheim’s approach to religion and the psychology of the self discussed by William James. Furthermore, we need to recognize that knowledge production in the history of religion did sometimes inform practical understandings of human physiological processes and that whether or not these were based on arbitrary doctrinal notions is a historical problem, not a purely theoretical problem. My historical approach thus leaves open the definition of religion, so that it may include at very least the material that Yichu has in his set of teachings on food.

In what follows, I discuss my methodology more concretely, then introduce in turn major themes that emerge from my reading of Yichu’s citations. For each theme, I have

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tried to assess the degree to which the materials engage the construction of religious identity. The chapter finishes with a discussion of the larger interpretive frameworks used by scholars of food and religion. I reassess the utility of the identity-construction approach for the Chinese Buddhist context, asking whether Yichu’s presentation of food themes can point us toward hitherto hidden harvests in the investigation of Chinese Buddhist food history, if not in investigation of food and religion more generally.

3.2 Method

The Shishi liutie stands out among Chinese Buddhist texts for its vision of creating an ordered set of categories covering all key aspects of Buddhist knowledge. Yichu seems to have wanted not just a testament to the broad wisdom and profundity of Buddhist knowledge, such as we find in the Fayuan zhulin, but, as he states in his preface, a clearly-structured text that would facilitate its use as a reference for Buddhist ideas. Thus, a focused look at a particular topic falling anywhere in the text is entirely in keeping with the way Yichu intended the text to be used.

In the previous chapter I argued that Yichu’s Shishi liutie is best understood as an encyclopedia of ideas, a compendium of Buddhist knowledge rather than terminology. This suggests that citations in the 37th section of the Shishi liutie illustrate ideas about food and are not definitions of terms. The Shishi liutie thus serves a purpose similar to that of Donald Lopez’s edited volume of topical studies, Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism. Contributors to Lopez’s volume take general topics (“Buddha,” “Art,” “Death,” etc.) and investigate how Buddhist authors have treated them. Yichu, a tenth-century Buddhist monk, has done similarly in the Shishi liutie, but, unlike Lopez’s contributors, he has not strung together his findings into a consistent narrative. This means that Yichu’s interpretations are less readily apparent and his cited materials are more or less equally weighted. These features of Yichu’s work have influenced my choice of method.

Yichu’s headings act as mnemonics or simple formulae for ideas associated with a Buddhist body of knowledge (knowledge of the Śākya clan), providing his reader
semantic anchors for interpreting the content of his citations. The relationship between the headings and the citations thus constitutes an important interpretive space wherein we can glimpse Yichu’s understanding of cited material, even if we cannot know his full intentions. For example, one entry (briefly alluded to above) states in the heading that “[Approaches to] food differ 食有不同,” and then it cites polemics in the Hongming ji on how Daoist grain fasts (pigū 辟穀), use of alcohol, and eating of meat are contrary to Buddhist teachings. Yichu’s heading helps us read the body of the statement as evidence that food practices are, in Buddhist thought, significant and not arbitrary:

[Approaches to] food differ. The Hongming says, Daoists do not eat (i.e., they fast) and [they] permit the partaking of alcohol and meat. Why is it that the Buddhist teachings are opposite to this? The answer is that the “Five Thousand [Words]” (i.e., the Laozi) has no discussion of fasting from grain, and the Seven Confucian Classics lack techniques for omitting grain [from one’s diet]. [The Hongming ji touches on] four foods and that is all. (#44)

This particular example conforms to much modern scholarship on food and religion, portraying food as deeply involved in the construction of group identity. In present-day research on Chinese Buddhism, this theoretical tendency is expressed as a preoccupation with the development of Buddhist vegetarianism, restrictions on eating alliums, and the taboo on drinking alcoholic beverages. Though these topics are important, I have chosen not to cherry pick my citations based on modern-day assumptions of relevance, but instead ask what frames Yichu chose to supply for 食 in tenth-century China. I survey several major themes before offering an inductively reasoned conclusion.

230 The Lunyu (Analects), Xiaojing (Classic of Filial Piety), Shijing (Book of Songs), Shujing (Book of Documents), Liji (Book of Rites), Yijing (Book of Changes), and the Chunqiu (Spring and Autumn Annals).
231 The four foods mentioned here may refer to grains, greens, meat, and qi. See Appendix 6, entry #19.
233 Suwa, Chūgoku ehūsei bukkyōshi kenkyū, 183-201.
Different analyses are possible for this material. I could have chosen to divide Yichu’s citations into categories based on the schools and periods to which the cited works belong, separating, for example, sutras, commentaries, and works written in China. There are some merits to this approach, and I do consider the dating of texts, but it is not the method that I use to organize my analysis in this chapter. For Yichu, all of the works he cites represent the teachings of the Śākya clan—of Buddhism. I have avoided too much deductive thinking so that I can first link Yichu’s entries inductively, according to themes that probably would have been coherent in tenth-century China.

A clarification is warranted for how I am reading these themes, and from where. As discussed in the previous chapter, the 37th section of the Shishi liutie includes twenty-five topics associated with food. Among these are the topics of alcoholic beverages 酒, of meat 肉, etcetera—twenty-four topics that I do not include in the analysis of this chapter. My focus here is on the single topic of 食, which translates as a verb or a noun depending on its context. In classical Chinese usage, this character can be ‘food’ or ‘eating’. Yichu’s citations sometimes concern food and sometimes eating.

My readers are justified in asking why I have not performed an analytical reading for the entire 37th section, all of which relates to food and Buddhism. The answer is that although this might be desirable, it is arguably not necessary for reaching an understanding of major themes. The choice to focus on 食 for the present analysis, rather than one of the other twenty-four topics, is justified by signs of its relative importance. While other categories cover more narrow food topics, this category provides a general frame.

食 forms part of the title to the 37th section (酒食助味), which refers to alcoholic beverages, food, and “assisting flavors” (‘flavors’ here serving as a metonym for foods). The section begins with alcoholic beverages and then food, in the order given in the title, suggesting that Yichu wished to highlight these two topics. 食 is further marked as a category of special interest by the volume of its citations relative to all other topics: four and a half woodblock print pages. The second most voluminous topic is alcoholic
beverages, with two and a half pages. None of the remaining topics gets more than a page and a half, and most are less than a page. The following table lists topics by the number of entries they contain, marked by Yichu’s headings (in one case he uses the topic as a heading for a citation, so I have included this as an entry):

Table 2. Number of entries per topic in Yichu’s section on food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Number of Entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>酒一得二失 37.1 Alcoholic beverages, benefits and costs</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>食二 37.2 Food and eating</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>粥三 37.3 Porridge</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>飻(飯)四 37.4 Cooked rice</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>羹五 37.5 Soup</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>餅六 37.6 Flour products</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>麪七 37.7 Dry-roasted and milled grain</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>鹽八 37.8 Salt</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>蘇九 37.9 Butter (酥)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>乳十 37.10 Milk</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>酪十一 37.11 Yogurt</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>甘露十二 37.12 Ambrosia</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>蜜十三 37.13 Honey</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>肉十四 37.14 Meat</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>麪十五麦附 37.15 Flour, appended with wheat</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>油十六 37.16 Oil</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>漿十七 37.17 Beverages</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>稻十八 37.18 Rice</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>禾三十九 37.19 Millet</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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235 Terminology for dairy products in both Sanskrit and Chinese is complex, due to instances of overlapping usage, such as Sk. ghṛta being rendered in English as ghee, fat, or cream. The associated Chinese terms and attempts to translate them into English have perpetuated this lack of clarity. Thus, I have translated the three dairy terms with what I identify as their most basic meanings in the Buddhist literature, with archaic lexical descriptions stripped away.

236 The body text lists and gives as appended.
穀二十 37.20 Grain……………………………………………………[6]  "
糠二十一 37.21 Sugar……………………………………………………3  "
小豆二十二 37.22 Small beans………………………………………………3  "
種植二十三 37.23 Planting……………………………………………………10  "
飢渴二十四 37.24 Hunger and thirst…………………………………………15  "
飽二十五 37.25 Satiation…………………………………………………… 8  "

From this table showing number of entries, one can see that analysis of all topics in the section would be an arduous task. Under just the topic of obi, Yichu provides fifty-seven entries, each of which had to be read from an ancient woodblock print, punctuated, translated, and connected (where possible) with source materials still extant in the Chinese Buddhist canon that has survived to the present day. For a full analysis of the section, an additional 226 entries would need to be handled in like manner, for a total of 283 entries. This is a long-term goal of the present research, but is not feasible for this study. I justify my focus on obi by showing that it is the most highly weighted in terms of number of entries and that it is a more general category than others in the list. I do not, however, ignore the presence of the additional material. In subsequent chapters, I will supplement with materials from the other twenty-four sections, where doing so facilitates deeper investigation of individual themes.

To save my readers from tedium, I will not list the full entries from which I draw my reading of themes, but provide instead a synthesis of my reading of the material. For convenience, I have numbered Yichu’s fifty-seven entries in the obi section, so that readers can easily refer to them in the Appendix. Since these fifty-seven entries form the primary body of evidence for this chapter, I invite interested readers to examine the entries, my translations, and notes in the Appendix.
3.3 Themes

In my reading of 食 in the Shiṣi liutie, vegetarianism and the alcohol taboo do not appear as central concerns; Yichu hardly mentions them here. This can be partially explained by coverage elsewhere in the 37th section, under separate topics for meat 肉 and for alcoholic beverages 酒. Yichu used the topic of 食, rather, for a set of more general doctrinal themes on eating as a Buddhist. From a modern perspective, we might recognize functions such as the moral transformation of the individual (the psychology of eating as a Buddhist), health objectives (Buddhist dietetics), and metaphorical representation of subtle doctrinal teachings (doctrinal elaboration and embodiment). These are useful perspectives, and they will inform my reading to some extent. They are, however, somewhat too far removed from the language and concepts that Yichu supplies to serve as a frame for the present analysis. A close reading of the material aimed at identifying more specific categories yielded the following set:

- Kinds of food
- Intrinsic properties of material food (including its intrinsic impurity)
- Ritualized eating
- A Middle-Way approach to eating: balance, moderation, equanimity
- Merit and karma
- Food narratives as a teaching device

The first two themes address the question of what to eat, the next three the problem of how to eat, and the last shows the utility of narratives about food for conveying Buddhist ideas. These categories result from a particular reading of Yichu’s cited materials (which is initially colored by 仏 reading) and thus cannot be considered definitive for Chinese-Buddhist discourse on food, but I believe that organization into these six themes provides a useful heuristic for understanding Yichu’s presentation of the topic. All fifty-seven entries can be read as falling within one of these six thematic
categories, with some entries spanning more than one. Below, I discuss each theme in turn.

### 3.3.1 Kinds of food

Underlying the problem of what to eat is a basic question: what is food? Yichu begins coverage of his topic with a citation (#1) that ascribes a primordial origin to food, entailing a shift from joy-in-meditation at the beginning of the formative kalpa (i.e., the origins of the present universe) to a learned taste for the fruits of the soil. Material food is thus not taken for granted as definitive of the category of food, but has terminology to distinguish it from other ‘foods’. Material food is referred to as *tuanshi* 團食, lumped food, or *duanobi* 段食, piecemeal food.

The concept of multiple ‘foods’ reappears in another entry (#11) that sets out a doctrine of multiple foods for the different realms inhabited by sentient beings. Yichu heads the entry, “The nourishment of sentient beings.” This includes Four Foods 四食 associated with the human realm 人間: morsel 段 food, thought 思 food, sensory 觸 food, and the food of consciousness 識. Buddhist cosmology posits a desire realm 欲界 that also has four foods, and form realms 色界, some of which lack material food. In the hell realms, iron pills temporarily extinguish the pangs of starvation. Finally, the citation concludes by stating that food in the form realms is joy in meditation 禪悅. These doctrinal and cosmological teachings frame nourishment as a much broader function than our narrow concept of nutritional sufficiency.\(^{238}\)

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\(^{237}\) Due to the complexity of the material, I cannot claim an objective assessment of Yichu’s headings and citations, but only a reading. I encourage my readers to refer to the Appendix for the full translation and to independently assess this material.

\(^{238}\) See Chapter Four for a discussion of this broad schema for nourishment.
A later entry (#33) also places material food in a larger context of nourishment: “Foods give benefit according to their root.” In Buddhist theories of perception, the objects of perception are received by the six roots 六根 of consciousness, and each has at least one ‘food’ that nourishes it. The citation says, “The resource, benefit, and meaning of foods each follow their root.” Thus sleep is food for eyes, sound for ears, aromas for noses, flavors for tongues, touch for bodies, and the modes of dharma, nirvana, and asceticism for cognition. Because there are entailments to these theoretical notions that are worth further discussion, Chapter Four will develop the theme of broad conceptions of food in more detail.

Despite the intriguing notion of multiple sources of nourishment, material food of the human realm figures in the majority of citations. Yichu’s second entry (#2) deals with kinds of material food, stating in the heading that “Foods have ten types.” Yichu enumerates these based on Tang-dynasty monk Yijing’s account of his travels to India: 1) rice, 2) wheat kernel, 3) pan-roasted rice or wheat flour, 4) meat, 5) cakes, 6) roots, 7) stems, 8) leaves, 9) flowers, and 10) fruits.

Such a list may seem uninteresting in a modern context, but for many centuries Buddhists participated in group polemics over what foods are suitable for human consumption. We can read from this list an affirmation of foods forbidden or restricted by Jain food rules: meat and roots. Chinese Buddhists had to interpret Indian Buddhist practices for use in domestic contexts, and the question of meat was long debated. That Yichu includes meat in this list may seem like an endorsement and a confirmation that food choices in religious groups are primarily markers of group identity: Buddhists eat meat while Jains do not. But such an interpretation may be hasty. Out of context, this citation does not condone or condemn use of these food types by Buddhists; it merely lists them. The last sentence supports that this is an observation of Indic practices, and no more: “If the number of types is humble there are thirty or twenty; if lavish there are a hundred or more varieties fit for a king.” References to secular eating and to numbers of dishes produced for a meal suggest that Yichu is using this citation to observe that Indians ate a variety of foods. Elsewhere (#13) we see

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suggestion that even Buddhist practitioners need variety for health—Yichu may have been arguing against a purist tendency among some tonsured Chinese Buddhists to eat a monotonous diet that poorly supported health (consider the celebrated image of the Buddhist recluse eating sweet potatoes in the cold while turning away offers of official patronage), but more likely this was directed at secular society, which tends to project unrealistic expectations of asceticism onto members of monastic religion.

Some entries do subtly suggest which foods are appropriate for Buddhists. For example, Yichu’s citation (#23) of the Chinese legendary figures of Shennong, said to have invented agriculture, and Suiren, credited with teaching the use of fire, shows that some Chinese Buddhists adopted a belief in these figures and held that human society improved through their technological innovations. Integration of this Chinese lore on the civilizing function of agriculture gives evidence that Chinese Buddhists allied with agrarian society—in subtle opposition to herding or hunting and gathering modes of human ecology (the allies of Daoists?). This Buddhist celebration of agriculture appears in some themes explored below, but I also investigate it in more detail in Chapter Six.

What these discussions help show is that *shi* was a contested category. From the nourishment of states of consciousness to recognition of the edibility of meats, Chinese Buddhists recognized a broad range of sources of nourishment and various approaches to labeling these as acceptable for consumption by Buddhists. Next I will discuss some of the reasoning used to understand how some foods might be more appropriate than others.

3.3.2 Intrinsic properties of material food (including its intrinsic impurity)

This theme reflects responses to the question of what to eat as a Buddhist and reveals further aligning of Chinese Buddhist food choice with the products of agriculture. Whereas the last theme was on kinds of food—definitional concerns—this theme is on the properties of foods in human consumption. As if in response to the position that a choice of which edible materials to eat is largely arbitrary and morally irrelevant—an antinomian position—some cited materials reveal a belief that different
foods have natural properties and that these foods produce non-arbitrary effects in eaters. There is tension between these positions that is not fully resolved here. Yichu’s citations sometimes suggest that what Buddhists eat matters greatly, and sometimes that what is eaten is less important than how one eats—the topic of the remaining themes (3.3.3 – 3.3.6).

An historical view may offer a potential solution to the tension. The antinomian position seems to be consistent with Indic sources on Buddhist teachings, while the view calling for disciplined adherence to food rules appears to be a later Chinese discourse. I will weight the veracity of this thesis as I develop the contours of this present theme. As reflected in the title, the theme has two components: belief in the intrinsic properties of foods and a sub-theme holding that foods are inherently impure.

The sub-theme is connected conceptually with the antinomian position. Several entries (#s 5, 15, 26, and 35) suggest that attitude and intention are the true source of ritual purity, not strict adherence to a diet of specific foods deemed ritually pure. One entry (#35) vividly portrays the futility of attempts to restrict consumption of foods deemed impure by making fun of a brahmin who unwittingly consumes food tainted by the effluents of ulcerous genitals while traveling in a foreign kingdom. Yichu heads this narrative, cited from the Dazhidu lun, with a straightforward conclusion: “Foods are unclean.” Other entries (#15 and #26) locate the source of foods’ impurity at their origin, discussing the toil and sweat of peasants who produce food. These entries urge an awareness that eating is inherently connected with the impurity of this material realm, in order to foster humility and guard against greed. By branding all foods as intrinsically impure, this discourse aims to undermine the polemical bickering over foodstuffs that attends much of the history of group identity formation between such groups as Buddhists and Jains, and which constitutes the customary interest in taboo foods among scholars of food and religion. In other words, these Buddhist statements recognize that diet has often been used as a tool for claiming moral superiority, but they ridicule rather than condone this social function, turning the emphasis toward attitudinal purity: humility, gratitude, and the absence of greed.

But moral antinomianism has its limits among these entries, because foods and how they are eaten have physiological effects with non-arbitrary entailments. For example, a
citation from the Dharmapāda, an Indian Buddhist work, holds that excessive eating and drinking leads to five harms: much stool, much urine, troubled sleep, a heavy body, and ailments and indigestion (#45). This points to the general wisdom that less is more, when eating. Buddhists institutionalized this approach to eating in monastic codes, requiring tonsured Buddhists to not eat solid food after midday. Another entry (#14) lists five benefits for this half-day fasting: sleeping less, having fewer misbehaviors, obtaining a concentrated mind free of disorder, having less flatulence, and having a body at ease and free of illness. Skilled eating has three basic benefits for Buddhists: lightness and suppleness of the body, purity, and accordance with the Dharma (#57 “Eating has three virtues”). Here we see how Buddhist knowledge blurs boundaries between physiology, cognition, and moral behavior—or perhaps it is our concepts that assign awkward borders to areas of human experience that are highly interactive.

Yichu highlights an aspect of this fluid interaction between physiology and mental categories in an entry (#5) with the heading, “Help from flavors to change one’s mood.” A celebration of sweet breads from an esoteric Buddhist dhāranī collection, the citation stands as evidence that Chinese Buddhists did not hold a strictly ascetic attitude toward eating, but openly appreciated that tasty foods can shift our mood.

Chinese Buddhists did not share Daoist concerns that grain products could lead to ill health. On the contrary, Yichu’s citations suggest that Chinese Buddhists looked very favorably on a grain-based diet, viewing these products of agriculture as appropriate food for Buddhists. Yichu points us to an old narrative (#19) of King Agnidatta giving the Buddha and his retinue a gift of inferior grain for horses. Rather than acting insulted, the Buddha accepted the gift, which nonetheless became good food.

A second citation in this entry comes from the Hongming ji, a Chinese text noted for an apologetic stance in relation to Daoism. It holds that certain food categories are associated with specific qualities in the eaters: “Those who eat grain are wise, those who eat weeds are foolish, those who eat meat are brave, and those who eat qi are long-lived.” This can be read as a gross generalization of social trends, such as meat eating amongst the military and subsistence on crude plant foods among the poorest

240 E.g., Damasio, Descartes’ Error.
241 Zürcher, Buddhist Conquest, 13; Keenan, How Master Mou Removes Our Doubts.
peasants, but it could also be a reflection of observations made of non-human eaters, later recast as a statement about humans. In this latter view, ruminants might be seen as unintelligent animals relative to pigs and humans (fed by agriculture); tigers and other carnivorous animals display ferocity; and mythical beings associated with longevity or immortality are said to live on qì.

The view that observations about animals stands behind these generalizations is more apparent in another entry (#54), where Yichu’s heading reads, “That which we eat has differences”—in other words, all foods are not created equal. Citing the Fayuan zhulin, a Tang-dynasty Buddhist encyclopedia, Yichu highlights a set of correspondences between a food and a quality: clay with mental extinction; grain with wisdom; meat with anger; grass with strength; mulberry with production of silk; qì with long life; and complete fasting with immortality. Because humans do not become strong by eating grass or spin silk after eating mulberry leaves, we know that these generalizations were derived in part from observation of non-human animals.

This list also shows that Daoist ideas about achieving longevity and immortality were gaining acceptance with some Chinese Buddhists, leading to ambivalent doctrinal positioning on the qualities of foods and the prospects that their consumption or avoidance might achieve. This emphasis on the intrinsic properties of foods and the potential to use modes of eating as a technology for achieving longevity or immortality is a distinctly Chinese departure from the antinomian view with which we began this theme. How to read the Daoist-Buddhist relationship reflected through this material is not straightforward, because on the one hand the Buddhists seem to adopt Daoist goals and the techniques for achieving these, while on the other they ridicule Daoists for fasting and for consuming alcohol and meat (#44).

In summary, the picture that emerges is that Chinese Buddhists, faced with a strong discourse in China on the intrinsic properties of different foods, had to reconcile Buddhist teachings on food with an interest in dietetics that enjoyed a broad base of support in Chinese society. With Mahāyāna texts and indigenous discourses shifting Chinese Buddhists toward greater expression of compassion toward food animals, multiple positions arose to challenge antinomian arguments for emphasizing the inherent impurity of food, for prioritizing attitudinal purity, and for accepting that meat forms
part of the human diet. In Yichu’s tenth-century survey, these positions—antinomian and prescriptive—retain an element of tension. But as we will see in the following themes, believe in the efficacy of attitude is firmly established in Buddhist discourse on eating. Whereas prescriptive rules for what to eat changed in the course of Buddhist history, doctrine associated with attitude remained fairly consistent. This challenges, again, the notion that Buddhists used food practices as a central tool for constructing identity. It would be more accurate to say that Buddhist precepts on eating are operative at the level of attitude—how one eats trumps what one eats.

3.3.3 Ritualized eating

Buddhist teachings have much to say on the problem of how to eat as a Buddhist. In many of Yichu’s citations, eating is highly structured by ritual and etiquette. “Food divided in fifths” (#24), for example, describes five ritual acts of regifting that a bhikkhu performs before eating begged food. Dividing the food into five parts, “the first is offered to passersby on the road, the second to people on waterways, the third to people on land, the fourth to those who have passed away before him, and the fifth to hungry ghosts.” What remains, the bhikkhu then eats.

Some teachings required tonsured Buddhists to beg for their livelihoods rather than engage in self-sustaining economic activities. An anecdote of the disciple Śāriputra (#25) vilifies four categories of economic activity: “A bhikkhu should not feed himself by engaging in astrology, by planting, by being a servant of the wealthy, or by netting profits through medicine mixing, sacrifices, and spells.” Yichu may have intended to show Chinese society, both secular and monastic, that Buddhist teachings clearly call for tonsured Buddhists to beg their food, because of a perceived lack of adherence to this practice in China. One entry (#46) even points out that begging is one of “the seven kinds of conditions” for retaining the dharma as a tonsured Buddhist.

Three consecutive entries (#36, #37, #38) discuss begging. Perhaps because begging was more heavily stigmatized in Chinese than Indian society, Buddhist scholar-monks debated the terminology for Buddhist begging: qiōbi 乞食 and fenwei 分衞 (#36). At
issue was not just the translation of Pali or Sanskrit into Chinese terms that were intelligible in Chinese society, but also the accuracy of the interpretation of cultural practices that helped Buddhism function in society. Yichu’s citations on the etiquette used in begging supports the notion that Buddhist begging was not a clumsy plea for scraps, but a structured technique with codes of conduct: taking along another bhikṣu as a companion, proceeding slowly, covering one’s chest under robes, and not showing teeth (#37, #38). These are not merely forms that help signify Buddhist identity; these are behaviors geared toward successful begging. Despite the presence of teachings on begging in Chinese Buddhist literature, mendicant begging did not become widely practiced in Chinese Buddhism, which developed monastic institutions that allowed tonsured Buddhists to dine collectively on donated foods, circumventing the need for daily begging rounds.²⁴²

Images of strict etiquette display the discipline of the saṃgha and its respectfulness regarding the giving of food. “Eating has strict rules,” declares Yichu, citing a record (#18) of Khotanese Buddhists eating donated food in great halls with hierarchical seating, using hand gestures to quietly receive what they need (much as Chinese monastics eat in the present day). Etiquette and orderliness convey the worth of Buddhist practice to potential patrons, and steer practitioners toward appropriate attitudes of respectfulness. The stakes were high, as history has shown; Buddhists accused of being freeloaders suffered greatly in persecutions such as that of the Huichang era toward the end of the Tang dynasty, but also on a smaller scale when social stigma entailed hunger.

Much in Yichu’s material on food ritual can be read as constructing and reinforcing Buddhist group identity, but it is doing more than this. Buddhist rituals for mealtime also shape attitude, a component of psychology that reflects character, or notions of self identity. Stating that “eating requires thoughtfulness,” Yichu cites (#55) a form of mental preparation for lay Buddhists to practice before a meal, which, like Christian “grace,” may be thought internally if oral recitation is not possible: “The first spoonful must cut off all evils, the second must cultivate all good, and the good roots cultivated by

the third spoonful must be turned around and given to all sentient beings as a universal offering for their achieving buddhahood." The Buddha himself is said to have passed on any surplus food to others, rather than hoarding it (#56). Any natural tendencies toward greed or gluttony are offset by ritualized giving and receiving, promoting a psychology of generosity and mutual interconnection.

In summary, these entries do not reveal a clear line between ritualized behaviors (i.e., begging) and proper attitudes (e.g., generosity, gratitude, and thoughtfulness). Prescribed attitudes are as important to the orthopraxy of eating as a Buddhist as forms of etiquette and other bodily practices. This mental and physical comportment, furthermore, was not just about making a show of Buddhist identity, but was geared toward successful begging and success in spiritual cultivation. This suggests that the question of how to eat as a Buddhist was an important question to Chinese Buddhists, approached from multiple angles. It cannot be reduced to mere formalism, to an orthopraxy with arbitrary signifiers of Buddhist identity.

3.3.4 A Middle-Way approach to eating:
Balance, moderation, and equanimity

The notion that full awakening can be achieved without ascetic eating practices is a central theme in the narrative of the Buddha’s awakening. Siddhartha is said to have tried extreme ascetic practices, including fasting, but eventually abandoned these in favor of meditation under a tree, his stamina reinvigorated by a milk porridge that the second daughter of the village head was bringing to him as an offering. Having turned from extreme fasting to a more nutritionally sustaining diet, Siddhartha achieved final awakening and became known as the Buddha. Yichu presents this narrative in an entry (#53) worth presenting here in entirety:

The Buddha eats milk porridge. The Benxing jing says, When the Buddha finished six years [of ascetic practices] and by the sixteenth day of the second month spring had fully arrived, he thought to himself, “I need good food.

243 For this episode see the Fo benxingji jing T3 n190 771b02-772b16.
After eating I will attain the fruit of awakening.” At the time a low-level god informed the favorably-born second daughter of the village head, ordering her to make delicious food. The girl then took milk from a thousand cows, mixing it together. When she took milk and simmered porridge, the milk porridge manifested a sign, leaping out of the pot by several chi, giving the appearance of ten thousand words—virtuous words. She offered it to him in a golden alms bowl; the Buddha ate and attained completion of the Way.

In what is regarded as his first sermon after his awakening (Ch. *Zhuan falun jing* 轉法輪經; Skt. *Dharmacakrapravartana-sūtra*), the Buddha teaches a Middle Way (Ch. *zhongdao* 中道; Skt. *madhyamapratipada*) between the extremes of hedonistic indulgence and self-mortifying asceticism.244

The theme of moderation, which manifests prominently in Yichu’s entries on eating, is thus an aspect of Buddhist doctrine more fundamental than vegetarianism (which was considered too extreme by early Buddhists). We can certainly say that the theme of moderation has a role in constructing Buddhist identity, but not in the traditional sense understood through general theory on food and religion. Moderation, on the contrary, tends to work against the grain of polemics of group identity formation vis-à-vis group rules for fasting and for avoiding taboo foods. It undermines extreme positions that would separate people on the grounds of what early Buddhists might say is an arbitrary social basis. The error is illustrated in the narrative of Siddhartha’s ascetic companions shunning him when he chose to accept the offerings of milk porridge, only to later discover that his choice had some role in his achieving the fruit of awakening.

While “Buddhism” is the name we now use for multiple traditions developing out of the teachings of the Buddha, a general claim underlying these teachings is that they are a reflection of universal truth, rather than an idiosyncratic fabrication of a creative (even brilliant) individual. Other religions also make claims to universal truth (such as pointing toward a divine revelation of the Ten Commandments), and modern scholars tend to bracket such claims as tools for establishing authority. Early Buddhist teachings,

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however, do not claim a divine origin through revelation, but instead posit the existence of a normative soteriological method that can be discovered by any individual supported with the right causes and conditions. This doctrine of pre-existing soteriology has implications for understanding Buddhist epistemology, including doctrine of the Middle Way, so it is worthwhile to provide a brief overview here.

In his first sermon, the Buddha describes a path (Ch. 之道; Skt.  mārga) leading from the suffering of saṃsāra to the liberation of nirvāṇa, a noble eightfold path that constitutes the fourth teaching of the four noble truths (Ch.  四諦). The eight aspects of this path are right or correct views, intentions, speech, conduct, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration. Over the centuries these eight aspects have been variously interpreted, sometimes through distillation into a threefold scheme that subsumes them into aspects of the practice of morality, concentration, and wisdom. Such normative schemes constitute the Middle Way of Buddhist teachings, setting boundaries of a Buddhist orthopraxy that is neither lax nor extreme for practitioners. Elaborations of right effort, for example, suggest that too much effort is undesirable, because it can cause a collapse of effort through bodily harm—steady effort is more sustainable.

In Yichu’s entries on food, we find similar logic expressed as a celebration of balance, moderation, and equanimity in the face of imbalance. One entry (#16) warns in the heading that “One must be measured in eating,” and gives a citation from the Zenyū aban jing stating that overeating and under-eating both lead to trouble, illustrated with an object lesson of a young bhikṣu collapsing in the midst of an assembly due to undernourishment. The entry further reports that the Buddha said not to go to extremes and advocates being like a centered steelyard (Ch.  秤)—a hanging balance with a long arm that sways up and down. The balance metaphor appears also in an entry (#8) urging proper attitude, which forms part of the orthopraxy of the noble eightfold path.

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246 Ch. xingzhe 行者—literally, one who walks [the Buddhist path], an itinerant monk or a lay person following the Buddhist way. The metaphor of walking a path is central in Buddhist identity, where practitioners are people who ‘learn and walk the Buddhist path’ 修行佛道之人.
discussed above—proper attitude is an outcome of holding right views, right intentions, and right mindfulness. The citation, from the Supobu tongzi qingwen jing, employs the trope of cannibalizing one’s own child to underline the grave importance of practitioners avoiding greed and fondness for flavors when eating. Elsewhere (#15), Yichu cites instructions for manipulating one’s attitude before a meal: “When you wish to eat, think of yourself carrying out virtuous acts and planning meritorious achievements, give some thought to the provenance of the food, and think of giving offerings to the wise and relief to the many starved and exhausted people.” Danger lies not so much in the food as in the attitude that we bring to eating, so a bhikṣu is to “make his attitude free of desire for flavors” when he eats.

The prescribed attitude toward food is one of equanimity, a practical awareness of the necessity of food, along with a refusal to make much ado about its lesser or greater quality. “Food is without coarse and fine”—so reads the heading for one entry (#4), which entreats people to not seek splendor, but to see eating as a way to benefit the body. Yichu makes a similar point in another heading (#13): “Food is fundamentally to sustain the body.” This entry cites the analogy of medicine used in the healing of battle wounds, suggesting that fine foods of many flavors are needed by religious practitioners to sustain bodily health and practice the Way: “Just as the King once had arrow wounds on his body after a battle, and, spreading medicine on bandages, was not covetous of the medicine in using it to heal wounds, so it is with a religious practitioner eating fine foods of many flavors.” This could be read, cynically, as a justification for indulgence, but it likely has some basis in the observation that a monotonous diet more readily leads to malnourishment and illness. There is something in human psychology that gravitates toward extreme displays of self-mortification, with an external social component projecting the expectation onto renunciants, and an internal mental component driving renunciants toward asceticism. Even with the Buddha having taught his community that this is a mistaken approach to spiritual development, the Middle Way of eating appears easier to locate in theory than in practice, resulting in a need for clarifying statements such as these.

The parable (#35) of a traveling brahmin who inadvertently eats unclean food warns Buddhists not to externalize their search for purity, as discussed above. Foods are either
slightly tainted or very tainted, so elaborate control of eating is a futile approach to purity. The parable comes from a passage in the *Dazhidu lun* establishing justifications for an attitude of despising foods 食厭想, a mental exercise for overcoming strong desire for delicious foods. The message has a general component: do not base your status on what you eat, thinking that you eat in a way that is superior to others. Whether in sumptuous feasting or selective fasting, the food matters less than the attitude with which one eats.

Narratives where Buddhists do not eat celebrate the attitude of equanimity, rather than the fast itself. Even when faced with situations that are far from moderate, an attitude free of fear is the appropriate response. For example, in an entry (#39) where Ānanda begs for food, he exemplifies an attitude free of grievances: “When Ānanda departed, no meal was provided by donors. He held his alms bowl, his mind dwelt in equality, and he did not discriminate differences between noble and humble.” One can imagine how a great disciple like Ānanda might be tempted to feel snubbed by the lack of a donated meal, but he chose a different attitudinal response to the situation. Another great disciple, Subhūti, sought wealth but dwelt in an attitude free of grievances (#39), so he becomes an object of Vimalakīrti’s jests (#40). Rebuked upon arriving to Vimalakīrti’s house to beg for food, Subhūti wants to take his alms bowl back and leave, prompting Vimalakīrti to tease him: “If a manifestation of the Tathāgata is questioned like this, will he or will he not be frightened?” In other words, any fearful attitude is a departure from the normative ideal of the Buddhist path: equanimity.

Doctrinally, then, eating entails a prescription of attitude, but not rigid prescription of what to eat or of fasting. Citing the *Benxing jing*, Yichu tells us (#51) that it was not due to the Buddha’s making himself hungry that he completed the path to awakening. While monastic codes do call for Buddhists to adhere to fasting after the midday meal (#14), this practice was justified with reference to the attending benefits (as discussed above), rather than with calls to penitence and self-mortification. While Yichu may well have cherry-picked his citations, the theme that eating should align with doctrine of the Middle Way is vivid in his entries.
The theme of the interaction of karma 業 and merit 福, also prominent in Yichu’s entries on eating, helps explain the emphasis on equanimity in attitude discussed above, which is a wise response to ebbs and flows of fortune that are the natural outcome of previous actions (including mental activity). Quite a number of entries suggest that feast or famine in this life is ultimately determined by karma, actions influenced by intentionality. Eating is an important site where the inevitabilities of karma and the possibilities of merit play out in vivid, tangible patterns. Holding a proper attitude and accruing merit is more advantageous than direct pursuit of worldly goods, because even the latter will be thwarted if one has insufficient merit.

One of the best ways to gain merit, unsurprisingly, is to make offerings of food to the Buddhist sangha, earning future benefits of good appearance, strength, long life, joy, and discernment of purity and ease (#31, #54). Giving of food for gaining merit is not, however, just a doctrinal tool for encouraging societies to feed Buddhist renunciants, but is a general concern for all people. Numerous entries repeatedly emphasize the importance of giving food, the consequences of not being virtuous (or generous), and the benefits of generous actions. Yichu advises to “Plan meritorious acts and guard against greed” in the heading to an entry discussing the origins of food in the sweat and toil of peasants (#26). We cannot avoid the intrinsic impurity of food, as discussed above, but we can guard against improper desires by holding food’s origins in our awareness when we eat. And we can defend against karmic entailments by planning meritorious acts that will prepare us for a brighter future.

“Think of the provenance of food,” entreats another entry (#28), which offers ways to shape proper attitude for receiving food. The gravity of the sacrifice made by almmsgivers is expressed through the analogies of cannibalizing “the flesh of your son” and of the almmsgiver “slicing off skin and flesh and giving it as alms.” Thus, gifts of food are not windfalls, not resources that can be taken for granted. Reciprocity of offering is required, in spirit if not in kind: “To faultlessly receive and use it, I must return the almmsgiver’s kindness, causing him to reap the excellent realization [of full awakening];
he [too] will benefit.” In what specific form this kindness is to be paid is not specified in Yichu’s citation, though the suggestion here is that the giving itself constitutes a reciprocal relationship of merit-building that can help propel the almsgiver toward eventual release from the sufferings of saṃsāra.

A view of the workings of karma and merit places the vagaries of human life on transcendent scales. In the example of Gavāṃpati vomiting, picking up the food, and eating it again, we learn that karma does not correspond with wisdom (#43), that karma is not a reflection of proximate manifestations of character. In an entry (#45) headed, “Nirvana of not attaining,” the ability to receive food is linked to a non-random order, expressed in the story of Bhikṣu Losakāśya, who had little merit and had exhausted his conditions for obtaining food: “…he begged food for seven days without obtaining any, looked upon the Unconditioned, and entered nirvana.” Here Losakāśya’s fruitless begging rounds are understood as an outcome of karma, rather than a failing of proximate conditions. Proximate circumstances are the conditions for failed begging, while karma is the ultimate cause. Another entry (#49) provides additional details on the story of Losakāśya’s hunger, illustrating how karma is inexorable. His life in danger, friends tried to get food to him: “Food given by fellows on the path was stolen by crows. Food given through supernormal powers by Maudgalyāyana transformed into mud. When Śāriputra gave him food, his mouth closed on its own. Only when the Buddha gave him food did he arouse the [necessary] resolve and obtain the fruits of awakening.” The Buddha’s giving of food as in intervention in the starvation of a truth-seeker echoes the story of his own final awakening and reinforces the centrality of giving of food in the structure of the path to awakening.

In Losakāśya’s case, the causes of his hunger are not revealed, but in another entry (#50), a bhikṣu named Lekuṇcika suffers chronic shortages of food his entire life before finally eating clay for seven days and dying. Yichu’s citation only says that among the causes was that he had once denied his mother food, but the fuller account in the Baiyuan jìng (Avadānaśātaka) relates that the causes were from a past life. The individual had participated in making offerings to a buddha and saṃgha until his father died. When his mother chose to distribute still more of their food, in anger he locked her up and caused her to die of starvation. His life as a hungry bhikṣu who eventually
starved to death reflects his merit in having participated in food offerings to a past
buddha and saṅgha, while also mirroring the pattern of suffering that he inflicted on his
mother.

The story of Aṅkura obtaining food (#42) further develops this doctrine of karma
transcending life boundaries of death and rebirth. Again, Yichu has abbreviated the
narrative, so we must go to a short sutra called the *Foobuo ajiuliu jing* (T14 n529) to make
sense of the context. The sutra narrates a story told by the historical Buddha of a
merchant who learns to donate food and is eventually reborn in a heaven. In the past,
there was a rich merchant named Aṅkura (Ch. Ajiuliu 阿鳩留) who did not believe in
rebirth or karma. He and a retinue of merchants were making their way to the sea to
search for precious items, but they entered a barren area with neither food nor water
and after three or four days were in danger of death. Aṅkura searched the area while his
retinue despaired, and eventually he sighted a green tree with a man sitting beneath it.
Thinking that there must be water beneath the tree, he went over to investigate.
Explaining his needs to the seated man, Aṅkura obtained water and food through the
man’s miraculous powers, then brought the retinue over and helped them obtain water
and food as well. Questioning this miracle-worker, who also conjured up treasure for
them to take back to their villages and use to care for those in need, they learned that he
was a great spirit 豪薜荔, the ghost of a deceased man. This ghost tells of his past life as
a poor but pure-hearted man in the time that Kāśyapa Buddha entered parinirvāṇa. For
his acts of goodness and of piety toward Kāśyapa, he obtained an ability to conjure up
things from his fingertips, but was reborn as a ghost for drinking alcohol 飲酒 and not
having practiced abstinence 未曾齋. Aṅkura takes the treasure given by this ghost back
to his country and provides for the needs of all people who come to him, turning away
no one. He is reborn in the heaven of the thirty-three celestials忉利天 living at the top
of Mt. Sumeru, but is far from the seats of honor surrounding the king of heaven, Śakra
Devānām-Indra 天帝釋. Kowtowing to Buddha, he comments that although as a rich
man he spent the latter half of his life providing offerings to thousands of people who
were in need, his rebirth into heaven was far outmatched by a woman who as a poor beggar had given a mere bowl of rice porridge to the Buddha’s disciple Mahākāśyapa. The narrative of Aṅkura illustrates not only how merit influences rebirth, but it vividly demonstrates the power of sincere giving, which is measured not by quantities but by context. Intentionality, it seems, colors merit in ways that transcend the physicality of giving.

This potential for merit to magnify according to circumstance is evident also an entry (#48) headed “Merit for seven lifetimes,” in which Yichu cites the case of Aniruddha, who became aware of his past lives and recalls a decisive act of generosity that propelled him through a series of favorable rebirths: “When in a previous life I was in a society suffering starvation, locust [infestations], drought, and failing crops, a pratyekabuddha entered the walled city to beg food and came out with an empty alms bowl. I, as a fuelwood carrier, saw him and invited him to follow me back home, [where I] divided my own food and gave it to him. [This act] aroused the sympathy of the heavenly realm and I returned to the human realm seven times, receiving rich [karmic] results, even to the extent that I obtained the Way.” Here, the context of famine, the worthiness of the pratyekabuddha, and Aniruddha’s sincere generosity, despite his humble means, created conditions for profoundly lasting merit.

An entry (#29) concerning the heavens inhabited by gods presents merit, and even its variability, as perceptually tangible. In certain heavens, the beverages and other items of gods exhibit a hierarchical ordering of merit via a color scheme: “Superior merit is of a white color, middle [merit] is blue-green, and lesser [merit] is yellow.” Clothing, palaces, and even musical pieces are in this way colored by a manifestation of their merit. This substantiation of merit probes into areas of human knowledge that are ultimately untestable, but at the very least we can appreciate how such discourse on merit serves to reify and draw attention to the concept. That merit literally colors the gods’ beverages, garments, and palaces highlights the long-term work that merit exercises in the karmic careers of sentient beings. Great acts of merit-building are not limited to the deeds of social elite—the building of stupas, bridges, temples, and wells, for example—but can be as simple as a generous offering food. In this way, Buddhist
discourse highlights the utility of food as a tool for even those of humble means to rise to better circumstances.

Sub-theme: Transcendent Powers

Related to merit is the theme of transcendent power, an expression of the accumulation of merit. Transcendent powers are evident in depictions of the heavens inhabited by gods, discussed above, but even ordinary humans can obtain access to the beings or realms that exhibit supramundane powers. One entry (#52) relates the story of Nāgakanyā, daughter of the dragon king, being saved by an ordinary human when she was walking in the wilds and encountered people who wanted to kill her. She took her savior home and offered him (or her?) a meal containing, as she explained, “items that digest in seven days and those that digest for an entire lifetime.” In the context of Yichu’s other citations on food, this one is not so much highlighting the sluggishness of reptilian digestion as demonstrating that the merit brought by generous acts can equip us with resources transcending the usual worldly limits. Nāgakanyā continues, “I also present you with a continually renewed segment of gold, which upon selling persists as of old.” Generous actions reap rich rewards.

The Buddhist path is efficacious in generating merit and producing transcendent power because, it seems, the universe is structured to reward generosity, a central virtue in Buddhist teachings. Ritual offerings to hungry ghosts (#34) are another example of the theme of transcendence, but this time oriented toward beings with very little merit and with great suffering. By saying incantations over food and offering it at the right time, the food transforms into a liquid that can satiate the voracious hunger of hungry ghosts, passing down their needle-thin throats. Furthermore, when hungry ghosts receive just a little food, it increases and becomes much more. These rituals are thus a kind of technology built on understandings of the operation of meritorious acts achieving transcendent efficacy.

Yichu cites not just Indian sources on the belief that practicing the Buddhist path leads to accumulation of merit and acquisition of transcendent powers. The entry “Personally unaffected by accidental poisoning” (#6) relates the story of Dhyāna Master
Zao stopping in his travels to have a meal with a rural host. The host boils up some berries, they eat, and Zao continues on his way. When his host later throws up and becomes almost deathly ill, he realizes that he had mistakenly collected poisonous berries and sends a neighbor to chase after Zao with some counteracting medicine. Catching up with him, the man tells Zao that he had eaten poison, but Zao merely thanks him for troubling to come to his aid, explaining that he personally was not poisoned. The last sentence concisely sums up the transcendent power of merit-building on the Buddhist path: “The powers of the Way are beyond understanding 道力不思議也.”

The Buddha himself is an embodiment of the power of accumulated merit, and the golden standard in that regard. As a citation (#27) from the Dazhidu lun puts it, “the merit of the Buddha is greatest 佛福最勝.” The great merit of the Buddha causes a miracle to occur when he once begged for food. Another entry (#32) further illustrates the Buddha’s exceptional merit by citing the twenty-sixth sign, obtaining supreme flavors, from a list of the thirty-two signs of a great being. Buddhas are said to have in their throats two springs of milk that transform to delicious flavors all foods that they eat, regardless of their quality. The entry concludes that meritorious karma leads to such different outcomes among sentient beings.

Why does merit lead beings to such different outcomes, such as to great suffering or to transcendent powers that allay suffering? The doctrinal themes that I discuss here point toward a coherent vision of the Dharma as favoring—in terms of merit—a spirit of generosity. Perhaps it is not that Dharma is personified and ‘cares’ what sentient beings suffer, but rather that, from the perspective of sentience, the suffering brought on by negative acts is ultimately an unskillful and undesirable way to be, while embodying such virtues as generosity, compassion, wisdom, and so forth, is intrinsically more desirable. Yichu seems to be gesturing us in this direction with an entry (#41) headed, “Extraordinary compassion.” Citing what may be different editions of the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra, the entry suggests that the great disciple Kāśyapa received begged food according to his practice of renouncing wealth and dwelling in equality: the
Dharma responded by having him arrive at neither great or little fortune. A second citation relates how Vimalakīrti recognized the hunger of the beings in his gathering who had passed the night in talk; he transformed himself into a bodhisattva in the realm of the Buddha of Accumulated Fragrance (Gandālaya) and returned with an alms bowl filled with fragrant rice, “the aroma permeating all Vaiśāli and fully satiating the assembly.” He then took the bowl of rice to humans and “the humans all ate, collecting as much as Mt. Sumeru.” For those above to compassionately feed the less advantaged below is, apparently, built into the fabric of the cosmos.

Returning to the question of how Yichu’s entries on food reflect the conventional approach in food and religion of highlighting identity construction via fasting and taboos, or other group-based food rules, I would like to suggest that the interacting themes of karma, merit, and transcendent powers frame food as part of a universal order that holds true for Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. From these doctrinal perspectives, adherence to specific food rules is far less important than cultivating a spirit of generosity, since it is acts performed with great compassion that build merit and propel sentient beings toward a higher rebirth.

One can find identity construction in this theme if one looks for it; acceptance of this doctrine of karma could be understood as one form of identification. But because many of the narratives involve individuals who are not identified as Buddhist, I would emphasize that faith and social identification with a “Buddhist” group are not the operative categories in this doctrinal milieu. Buddhists, rather, are those who follow the path established by the teachings of the Buddha, conforming to the truth of the universal order so as to gain merit and evolve toward transcendent powers, and even full awakening. The Buddha did not establish strict rules for food consumption, instead advocating moderation, as we saw earlier. Yichu’s inclusion of so many citations dealing with karma and merit—rather than the monastic rules that Buddhist teachers gradually developed for governing their communities—suggests that he saw karma and merit as the more relevant topic in Buddhist teachings on food. I would also argue that Yichu’s choice to downplay monastic codes and highlight the universal functioning of karma reveals his intention to pitch his work toward a non-Buddhist readership. So on two levels, doctrinal and interpretive, we have here a strong orientation toward the position
that what Buddhism has to say about eating is not a partisan discourse. If this reasoning is correct, then themes discussed here constitute a potential contribution to prevailing theory on food and religion.

3.3.6 Food narratives as a teaching device

The final theme I will discuss is the use of narratives on food as a vehicle for expressing various Buddhist teachings. We have seen already examples of narratives in the form of parables or containing analogy, so much of what I covered above could be included here. But rather than revisit previously presented material, this discussion will include only those entries not yet covered. In so doing, this final theme is at risk of becoming a mixed bag of entries not included in the above themes, yet I see here the potential for a coherent theme—I just choose to leave it less developed by excluding repetitious material. At the end of this section, the discussion will have touched on all fifty-seven entries on the topic of oubi at least once.

Food serves as a useful topic in religion in part due to its centrality in human experience. Everyone knows food. Being so concretely familiar allows food to more readily convey subtle teachings. An entry titled “Like a starving person being told to eat” cites the analogy of a person encountering an abundant meal after suffering starvation and hesitating to dig in. Only with repeated reassurances from the king does the person dare to eat. The analogy illuminates the psychology of privation, which leaves a person timid in the face of abundant resources; too great a contrast of fortune engenders fear, because the person has learned all too intimately the unpredictability of life’s hidden pitfalls. But for what is this an analogy? Yichu does not say, but this appears in the sixth chapter of the Lotus Sutra, in which the Buddha makes predictions about his disciples’ future attainment. In response to the Buddha’s prophesy of Kaśyapa achieving buddhahood in the distant future, several disciples speak this analogy in their display of gratitude. The Buddha is the king in the analogy, offering up a feast of hope and assurance to his timid disciples.

This metaphorical feasting on the words of the Buddha is a general analogy that appears in other contexts. Under the heading, “Dharma study is food, differentiating
meaning is the sauce,” Yichu uses an entry (#20) to cite two versions of this idea: “Reciting and studying the scriptures is to be taken as food, differentiating the meaning of the scriptures is to be considered the sauce…” and “The bliss of dharma and the joy of meditation is the food, the taste of liberation the sauce.” The analogy depends on the positive valence of food and sauce, understood here as desirable goods. The transfer of positive valence, and not just the idea of consumption, is what makes food metaphors apt for the teachings that sustain Buddhists.

Another form of the ‘good food’ metaphor is found in an entry (#12) headed, “Even clothing is not coveted.” The analogy is of a small child that hardly notices its clothing being removed if it is distracted by some good food. This serves as a guide for practitioners to envision the equanimity that they aim to cultivate: “In this manner, a bhikṣu obtains benefit, loss, precepts, mental concentration, wisdom, and so forth.” What is not made explicit is the identity of ‘food’ in the case of the bhikṣu—we might guess that this is having access to the Dharma, this opportunity itself being that which sustains the bhikṣu through fluctuations of loss and gain toward the goal of awakening.

The flip side of the ‘good food’ metaphor also appears. Yichu presents the analogy (#10) of a clumsy almsgiver who provides people with food and drink, but mistakenly uses poisoned water and causes the people to die. This analogy appears to stand for ill-informed teachers who unwittingly lead people astray. Thus, to have good teachings is to feast, to have misinformed teachings is to be poisoned, and to lack teachings is to starve. There is some tension, still, between the positive valence of material food and the earnestness with which Buddhist authors suggest its substitution by alternatives such as joy in meditation 禪悅. I will address this tension in Chapter Four.

Other uses of food in Buddhist discourse include a parable (#30) warning against deception and a vengeful attitude. The parable relates how two people were preparing to eat together when one stole a bite. The other felt cheated and slipped medicine into some food, poisoning his companion. With his companion in agony, the poisoner declared, “You took food and deceived me; I grabbed medicine and deceived you!” One could argue that this is the flip side of the spirit of generosity infusing Buddhist teachings on eating.
A milder form of distrust is evident in an entry (#17) colored by humor, which seems to poke fun at Buddhists who make too much of the distinction between Buddhists and non-Buddhists:

A bhikṣu receives fruit [but] distances [himself] from his denigrators. A bhikṣu was practicing with a non-Buddhist and noticed his fruit tree. The non-Buddhist invited him to climb up and take some fruit. The bhikṣu replied, “The Buddhist teachings do not permit climbing of trees.” The non-Buddhist climbed up to take [some fruit, but] the bhikṣu on the ground would not take it. The non-Buddhist asked why. The bhikṣu said, “The Buddha directed that, should we receive too much from outside Buddhism, we will give rise to belief and submit.”

Yichu heads the entry, “To eat fruits, one must receive them.” This heading helps us read the passage as ironic, rather than taking it at face value as an instance of Buddhist authors drawing rigid boundaries around their group identity and warning other Buddhists to refuse contact with non-Buddhists. While Yichu cites the Zengyi aban jing for this passage, I do not find it there. I do, however, find it in the Sifenlü xingobi chao zīchī ji 四分律行事鈔資持記 (T40 n1805, 319b19-29), a work by Yuanzhao 元照 (1048-1116). Yuanzhao’s account is slightly longer and more specific in its wording, but does not cite a source. Yichu’s citation predates that of Yuanzhao, but the proximity of their accounts, in terms of time of appearance and wording, suggests that this may have been a Chinese Buddhist response to social pressures that emerged in China around Yichu’s time. I am tempted to read it as an ironic portrayal of Confucian attitudes toward Buddhists, since Han Yu and other Confucians leading into the Song period left similar statements. In any case, taken with Yichu’s heading, the passage suggests that Buddhists are not to be so insular and rigid. If my reading is correct, then this attitude pushes Buddhist doctrine away from the conventional emphasis on the role of food restrictions in constructing Buddhist identity. This passage simultaneously acknowledges the social tendency toward group insularism and undermines it in favor of reciprocity.

247 E.g., Han Yu’s argument that “…gradually, and before anyone was aware, it beguiled and confounded men’s minds so that the multitude have been increasingly led astray,” in his “Edict of the Eighth Month,” translated by Burton Watson, p.585 of De Bary and Bloom, Sources of Chinese Tradition.
A parable (#7) taken from the Sutra of One Hundred Parables (Baiyu jing) also develops its narrative around the theme of whether or not one can trust that provided food is safe for eating. A woman tries to poison her husband when he goes to a neighboring country on business, but when the husband encounters a brigand on the road, he surrenders his food to the brigand, who eats it and dies. The brigand had stolen the king’s horse, so the husband takes this back to the king and is rewarded greatly for his courage in killing the brigand—even though is was the poisoned food that did it, and not his own calculations. With the badge of courage projected onto him, he gets wrapped up in a hunt for a menacing lion, climbs a tree when the lion chases him, and out of fear drops his sword onto the lion, killing it. The accolades flow to him again, and eventually his wife is brought to join him, but he nervously swallows the food she makes, knowing that she had a role in the poisoning of the brigand. What this parable is trying to say at a deeper level would require a careful consideration of the full version, since it is long and filled with subtleties needing clarification. Yichu’s heading reads, “Due to food, feigned courage.” This suggests that he read it as a case of false appearances caused by the poisoned food.

The last entry (#47) reveals something of the humility and fear that accompany begging for food. Terrified of dogs, a begging practitioner comes to hold an angry and violent attitude toward them, beating them with a stick and scolding them: “I do not obtain food even though I multiply my skillful means. How can you merely lie there, lethargic in your guarding?” Begging for food as a Buddhist cannot have been easy, even when lay devotees were relatively forthcoming. This anecdote reminds that the struggle to survive on begged food was a burden difficult to bear for centuries of Buddhist practitioners. While fairly old (coming from the Dazhidu lun), it illustrates a tension in the mendicant tradition that may have helped Buddhists in China justify alternative sources of livelihood and to eventually abandon begging in favor of other institutions for food donation—donation to monastic communities eating in mess halls.
3.4 Chapter conclusions

The above analysis of Yichu’s selections from Buddhist sources on the topic of 食 in his encyclopedic Shiobi liutie give a rudimentary intellectual history of food in Chinese Buddhist writings of the tenth century and earlier. My reading here provides an overview organized according to six major themes: kinds of food, intrinsic properties of foods, ritualized forms of eating, middle-way eating, karma and merit, and narratives using food as a teaching device. These themes are the product of a close reading of all fifty-seven entries, taking into consideration both Yichu’s headings and cited materials. My findings suggest that we would misread Chinese Buddhist discourse on food if we fail to recognize that the emphasis in these entries is not on the problem of prescribed and taboo foods, nor on fasting practices, but on the attitude with which practitioners especially, and humans generally, should approach the problem of needing nourishment.

Some of Yichu’s material aligns well with the conventional theoretical emphasis on the role of fasting and taboo foods in the construction of religious identity, but I have tried to show that such an approach is insufficient here. If we look for Buddhist identity construction, we can find it, but we should also note entries such as the one mocking the overly literal Buddhist who would not receive fruit from the non-Buddhist. Yichu plays down group identity and presents much of the material as general knowledge. The material here departs somewhat from Émile Durkheim’s social approach and shows more affinity with the psychology of the self discussed by William James—Yichu’s presentation suggests a concern with providing intellectual tools to help readers hold a proper attitude toward eating, thereby promoting more skillful practice among his readership. My point is not to say that James is right and Durkheim wrong, but to show that the practice of Chinese Buddhism incorporated elements of religion described by both theorists. That Buddhist modes of eating reflect social concerns affirms aspects of Durkheim’s thesis, while at the same time James’s approach is reflected in the notion that attitudinal performance is a skill that individuals can improve through contact with the teachings and practices of Buddhism, even though karmic outcomes are not dependent on religious affiliation. The relatively poor fit with Durkheim’s approach may
derive partly from differences in the materials under study: here we are dealing with short citations reflecting doctrinal beliefs in Buddhism, whereas Durkheim based his seminal study on ethnographic descriptions of rites. Analysis of a monastic mealtime ritual might yield a different result.

The *Shishi liutie* is not a liturgical guide for tonsured Buddhists, but a topically organized overview of teachings aimed at a general readership. Yichu’s entries help readers understand aspects of both *what* and *how* those who follow the teachings of the Śākya clan are to eat. Nonetheless, rather than merely reflecting monastic rules on eating in the Vinaya literature, Yichu draws from a wide range of sources for a smorgasbord of ideas on eating. In the fifty-seven entries, vegetarianism is not a prominent theme. Yichu has elsewhere (especially in the *rou* 肉 topic) addressed the question of whether Buddhists may eat meat (generally supporting the vegetarianism encouraged by several Mahāyāna texts and by historical developments in Chinese society), but here, in his general treatment of the topic of eating, he has other priorities. He presents a general theory on human eating that is colored by Buddhist doctrinal concepts such as karma, merit, and rebirth. Cited materials point overwhelmingly toward the need to conform to normative attitudes in eating. One should be deeply grateful to have food and should exercise generosity to the largest extent possible, in order to build the kind of merit that propels us toward improved opportunities for practicing the path (Ch. пут; Skt. mārga) out of suffering. Several narratives illustrate how even simple acts of giving food to those who are sincerely engaged with this path to awakening can lead to favorable rebirth and acquisition of even worldly goods such as handsome features and physical health. Furthermore, the theme of moderation or middle-way eating serves to critique the tendency for groups to overzealously establish food rules as markers of group identity.

Rather than reinforcing the distinctiveness of Buddhist identity, Yichu appears eager to show how Buddhist knowledge of eating forms a coherent system that is generally applicable, whether one is Buddhist or not. At a theoretical level, we might observe from this brief survey that Yichu’s emphasis on the importance of attitude in eating highlights Buddhism’s rich discourse on the relationship of moral attitudes with sensory aesthetics. The aesthetics of eating, it would seem, is not neutral in itself, but dangerous and reliant
on attitude for mitigation. This is true for anyone, because greedy or generous intentionality has implications that play out in human lives irrespective of whether one follows a Buddhist path. In Yichu’s Buddhism, one is not saved by faith.

Yichu suggests in his preface that he tailored his work for a general readership that would have included lay Buddhists and even non-Buddhists interested in learning about Buddhism, so his emphasis on doctrinal theories of eating (rather than monastic rules) may be a frame deliberately employed for the purpose of achieving relevance for a broader audience. Whether his presentation here can be considered representative of general Chinese Buddhist discourse on eating is a problem for further investigation.

The chapters of the second section will pick up themes from this analysis as case studies for deeper investigation. In the next chapter, Chapter Four, I return to the doctrine of Four Foods with which Yichu begins coverage of his topic and to which he returns several times. This notion of Four Foods raises the basic question of what nourishes us: What, fundamentally, can be considered food? We cannot understand Buddhist discourse on eating until we probe deeper into the notion that material food is but one of four sources of nourishment.
Part II

Case Studies
4. Transcendent Eating: Doctrine of Four Foods in Chinese Buddhism

4.1 Chapter Introduction

How are we to understand 'food' in Buddhist thought? It would be easy to assume that such a basic category has cross-cultural coherence, but Buddhist thinkers developed this category in significantly distinctive ways that require explanation. Yichu, in his first entry on food, cites a Buddhist origin story describing sentient beings undergoing a primordial transition from sustenance through the joy of meditation to a learned indulgence in the material foods of the earth:

At the beginning of the kalpa of formation (i.e., formation of the present universe), the flavor of joy-in-meditation gradually gave rise to the flavor of earth, its scent deeply fragrant, its taste sweet and delicious. At that time there was someone habituated from a prior lifetime to indulge in flavors, to smell fragrances, to take food. That time is known as the first receipt of morsel food, after which arose forests, vines, and scented paddy rice.248

This passage illustrates the notion that beings can obtain sustenance from different sources and that material food ("morsel food") is but one of these. The eating of material food is, furthermore, a learned behavior associated with a transformation from subtle to coarse embodiment, as we read in the origin story alluded to here. In this story, told by the Buddha in the Aggañña Sutta, the "Discourse on What is Primary," self-luminescent celestial beings who are born into a newly evolving world gradually acquire a fully material embodiment in our world as they learn to participate in sensory indulgences, especially those involving flavors, smells, and sexual contact.249

Because Buddhist thinkers recognized more than just material foods as sources of nourishment, in this chapter the category of "food" is treated as an indeterminate variable awaiting explanation. A working definition of food might be this: anything that

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provides nourishment, broadly conceived, to sentient beings. This may include joy in meditation and morsel (material) food, as the passage above suggests.

Another passage in Yichu’s *Shōōbi liutie* (entry #11)\(^{250}\) presents a doctrine of Four Foods 四食. The Buddha is said to have taught that all sentient beings abide through reliance on food 一切有情皆依食住, and that these foods are of four kinds. In straightforward language, these Four Foods can be understood as providing nourishment at four levels: matter, sensation, cognition, and consciousness (I will return to questions about the accuracy of this interpretation).

A third passage (#33) treats food as connected with appetite and satiation of the faculties of perception:

> The *Zengyī f’ahan*jing\(^{251}\) says, The resource, benefit, and meaning of foods each follow their faculties. Eyes take sleep to be their food, ears take sounds, noses take aromas, tongues take flavors, bodies (skin) takes touch, and cognition takes dharma, nirvana, asceticism\(^{252}\), and so forth.\(^{253}\)

Collectively, these citations point toward a dialogue in Buddhism regarding the problem of what most deeply nourishes us. Physical food is but one aspect of a complex Buddhist psychology of eating, which encompasses the senses and emotion, cognition, and states of consciousness as additional sources of nourishment. Our perceptual faculties all have appetites, in the sense that certain things nourish (refresh) these


\(^{251}\) This citation frames ‘food’ as objects of desire for the senses and cognition, and not just as material sustenance for the body. The cited passage is *T2 n125, 656c09-25*:

(四)聞如是: 聲聞中所食諸類入口之物可食噉者，是謂名為摶食。云何名更樂食? 所謂更樂食者，衣裳繖蓋雜香華薰火，及香油與婦人集聚，諸餘身體所更樂者，是謂名為更樂之食。彼云何名為念食? 諸意中所念所思惟者，或以口説，或以體觸，及諸所持之法，是謂名為念食。彼云何為識食? 所念識者，意之所知，梵天為首，乃至有想無想天，以識為食，是謂名為識食。是謂比丘有此四食，衆生之類，以此四食，流轉生死，從今世至後世。是故，諸比丘當共捨離此四食。如是諸比丘聞佛所說，歡喜奉行。

\(^{252}\) [An attitude of] not seeking comfort.

\(^{253}\) Yanagida & Shiina, *Zengaku tenoeki sōkan* 6:2, 331.
faculties, while, by implication, other things may be deleterious. Indeed, from the perspective of this Buddhist theory of nourishment, all forms of nourishment are connected with potential for moral pollution, because they all entail appetite (i.e., a craving for that which nourishes).

This chapter will thus address this basic question of what constitutes a notion of food 食 in Chinese Buddhism and will outline a Buddhist theory of nourishment. I will focus on the four posited ‘foods’ and their interpretation in Chinese Buddhist sources. I will also, by necessity, attempt to clarify some related problems:

First, did Chinese Buddhists interpret the doctrine of Four Foods in a manner similar to earlier Indic sources, or diverge from these? I provide a brief review of the general Buddhist literature on Four Foods to examine this issue as a problem in translation and interpretation.

The second related problem is whether the doctrine of Four Foods is best understood as metaphor or to be taken literally. The issue is whether sensation, for example, really nourishes us at some level, or if the notion of sensory food is just an analogy based on material food. I will suggest that for at least some Buddhist authors, Four Foods doctrine is to be taken at face value, because each food can be located within a rubric of appetite and fulfillment that is not limited to material food.

The third related problem is the question of whether nourishment from the joy of meditation is to be understood as a fifth ‘food’ independent of the Four Foods, or is connected with the fourth: nourishment from consciousness. Commentarial literature suggests that Buddhist thinkers took different approaches on this issue and that it was identified as a problem for discussion.

Finally, the fourth and last related problem is the question of valence: Did Buddhist authors regard the Four Foods positively, neutrally, or negatively? My findings suggest that only joy in meditation garners unreserved celebration, while the Four Foods are generally treated as potentially polluting, morally speaking (moral pollution is understood here as an increase in cyclic existence,254 samsāra, which constitutes a hindrance on the path to favorable rebirth and awakening). Some thinkers, however,

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254 E.g., Hopkins, *Absorption in No External World*, p.36.
appear to exonerate the nourishment of consciousness based on its ubiquity in all the realms, its fundamental role of cohering consciousness derived from different sense faculties, and its association with the uncontaminated food of joy in meditation.

These four problems—connected with the question of how Buddhists understood food—are interrelated. The next section (4.1) will look first at Indic interpretations and will be followed by a comparative discussion (4.2) of Four Foods doctrine as represented in Chinese Buddhist encyclopedias.

4.2 Interpreting the doctrine of Four Foods

Above I proposed that we understand Yichu’s list (in entry #11) of four types of food found in the human realm as nourishment occurring at the levels of matter, sensation, cognition, and consciousness. Some discussion is warranted on whether this list accurately represents the doctrine of Four Foods. For example, a tighter translation of Yichu’s list of Chinese terms might give the four types as segmented 段 food, thought 思 food, contact 触 food, and consciousness 識 food. Even after Yichu’s second and third terms are swapped to match the more traditional ordering of these four, translations of the terms can vary widely. For example, a bilingual dictionary of Chinese Buddhist terms provides the following explanation:

四食 The four kinds of food. 即(1)段食 food for the body and its senses; (2)触食 food for the emotions; (3)思食 food for thought; (4)識食 food for wisdom i.e. for alayavijnana [sic.] (八識中的第八識阿賴耶識).

Here the same Chinese term that I translated above as “contact food” is called “food for the emotions,” while “consciousness food” is rendered “food for wisdom.” Focusing in on the (traditional) second of the four terms, 触 of 触食, interpretations that I have

255 Chen and Li, A Chinese-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terms, 316.
presented so far span from “contact” to “sensation” to “emotion,” a considerable interpretive discrepancy. Am I justified, then, to interpret Yichu’s list as a reference to nourishment coming through matter, sensation, cognition, and consciousness?

Because Yichu’s list consists of Chinese translations of Indic Buddhist terminology, seeing how scholars of Indian Buddhism have discussed the doctrine of Four Foods is informative. Yichu was himself a scholar of Abhidharma teachings, so his Buddhism is closely informed by this Indian commentarial tradition, which was translated into Chinese. A doctrinal foray can provide a kind of triangulation of interpretation, helping to clarify the intellectual background of the doctrine and its significance in Buddhist thought. Furthermore, we can explore through scholarly interpretation the problem of whether the Four Foods are to be understood literally or as analogy. I want to first look at statements on the four taken as a whole, and then focus in on each one in turn.

A useful point of entry from the literature on Indian Buddhism is a concise statement by Richard F. Gombrich, who mentions the Four Foods in passing:

A little later in the same text the Buddha says that there are four foods which keep living beings in the cycle of rebirth: food in the literal sense, contact, intention and consciousness. All four arise from craving, this in turn from feeling—and he traces dependent origination in the standard way back to ignorance. So here the dependence refers to a different process, or at least to a different part of the all-important process of our entanglement in the world, the process we have to reverse.256

Gombrich suggests that only the first term in the list is ‘food’ in the literal sense, and that the others (by default) are analogy. But he also says that all four arise from craving, that they all share an origin in desire and have a role in worldly entanglement. This common origin and function means that Buddhist thinkers may have understood the category of food (Skt./P. āhāra, Ch. 食) in a broader since than our own, treating these as actual—not metaphorical—sources of nourishment. Gombrich’s statement, “food in the literal sense,” is a reference, perhaps, to English-language convention.

But other scholars explicitly mention metaphor or analogy in referring to the Four Foods. Joanna Macy, for example, describes how “…sensory perception is seen as

256 How Buddhism Began, p.48
formative of the sense of self, along with physical sustenance, volitions, and mental constructs. This teaching is made vivid by the metaphor of food (āhāra). Her explanation is that the metaphor of food suggests that the reality with which we contend is not merely external, but something that we must process in the manner of ingestion. In other words, she sees the metaphor as helping to overcome the error of dualistic thinking; our perceptions and consciousness are shaped by a reality that is neither external nor internal, but integral to both.

This explanation has merits, but the three foods other than morsel food need not be considered metaphor for the point on non-dualistic process to hold. Another view maintains that āhāra is “... ‘food,’ i.e., ‘nutriment’ in the broadest sense, which nourishes everything associated with the body and mind.” This is the view that I adopt here, because it holds up best in light of the evidence in Buddhist sources. While we must in English simplify the issue by using “food” in translations, readers should keep in mind that Buddhist thinkers likely had something closer to “nutriment” in mind, as we will see in discussions of specific foods, below.

So far we have considered the larger context of the Four Foods in Indian Buddhism, while skipping over discussion of the foods themselves. Now I want to focus in on how the individual types of food are interpreted in studies of Indian Buddhism.

Arguably the most detailed statement on Four Foods in English is Alex Wayman’s translation and analysis of Asaṅga’s views on food. Asaṅga (Ch. 無著) lived in the 4th c. CE, and together with his half-brother Vasubandhu was a co-founder of Yogācāra Buddhism. Asaṅga and Vasubandhu were prolific scholars of Buddhist thought, both drawing upon the commentarial Abhidharma literature, which Yichu also made the focus of his scholarship. We know from Yichu’s biography that he lectured on Yuanhui’s commentary (俱舍論頌疏論本) on Vasubandhu’s treatise on the Abhidharma literature, the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise (Skt. Abhidharmakosābhyāya, Ch. 阿毘達磨俱舍論). The connections between Yichu’s scholarly approach to Buddhism and the

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257 Mutual Causality in Buddhism and General Systems Theory, p.58
258 Buswell and Lopez, PDB, 21: “āhāra”
Yogācāra Buddhism of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu is very close, so Asaṅga’s views on food are relevant to how Yichu presents food in his Shīṣi liutie.

Wayman’s discussion of food is based on statements by Asaṅga in his Yogācārabhūmi and Śrāvakabhūmi, especially a section of the latter treating the topic of “bhojane mātrajñātā (‘knowing the required amount of food’)”. Wayman observes that the importance of attitude is a key feature of Asaṅga’s views on food. He translates the Four Foods as “…morsel food (kavaḍāṃkāra-āhāra), contactual food (sparṣa-āhāra), volitional food (manalḥsañcetanā-āhāra), and perceptual food (vijñāna-āhāra)…”

Even if “morsel food” is fairly intuitive in English, food of contact or volition is not, and we have seen the fourth term interpreted variously as food of consciousness, mental constructs, or perception. Wayman explains that the standard order of the four is connected with the notion that the first two, morsel and contactual food, nurture the being that is already born, while the latter two, volitional and perceptual food, play a role in enabling future rebirth. Using a Tibetan sub-commentary on Asaṅga’s Abhidharma-samuccaya, he elaborates on the interpretation of these Four Foods:

…the first or morsel food involves the three ‘sense bases’ (āyatana) of smell, taste, and the tangible. The second or contactual food is the contact attended with ‘flux’ (sākrava) that enhances the ‘senses’ (indriya) and the ‘great factor elements’ (mahābhūta). The third, or volitional, food is the ‘volition’ (cetanā) possessed of ‘intention’ (āśaya) toward desired things. The fourth or perceptual food implies the set of six ‘perceptions’ (vijñāna), because the text says ‘of eleven realms’ (ekādaśāṇāṃ dhātuṇāṃ), as well as the chief perception, the ‘store-consciousness’ (ālayavijñāna).

Here we see that from a Buddhist theoretical standpoint, perception and consciousness are closely related, which explains the discrepancy that occurs in translation of the fourth type of food. Jeffrey Hopkins, outlining the Four Foods based on the same Tibetan sub-commentary by Gyel-tsap (a.k.a. Rgyal tshab rje), opts to translate the last food as ‘consciousness’ rather than ‘perception’. Hopkins’s interpretation of the sub-commentary differs from that of Wayman, so it is worth considering here:

259 Untying the Knots in Buddhism, 337.
260 Wayman, Untying the Knots in Buddhism (“Asaṅga on Food”), 337
1. morsel food, which has a nature of odor, taste, and tangibility (visible form being excluded because it does not function in nutrition)
2. contact food, which is contaminated touch increasing the great elements associated with the sense powers
3. intention food, which is intention (or attention) that involves hope for a desired object
4. consciousness food, which is the six collections of consciousness and mainly the mind-basis-of-all.\textsuperscript{262}

These definitions, especially the latter three, remain highly technical and contingent for clarity on doctrinal explanations. This was apparently as true in the past as it is now. Hopkins observes that Tibetan Buddhists discussed the above list associated with Asaṅga and Vasubandhu along with an alternative (and less traditional) list from Tibetan commentary that interprets the food types as morsel, contact, mind, and meditative stabilization.\textsuperscript{263} At issue is whether the third term should be understood as mental activity or as, specifically, intention. And replacing the fourth terms interpretation as ‘perception’ or ‘consciousness’ with ‘meditative stabilization’ entails a large conceptual shift.

Looking at interpretations of these terms in the scholarship on Indian (and Tibetan) Buddhism does not greatly clarify what each is meant to signify, so we need to look at each type of food individually and also place them in a larger analytical framework. My effort to do so in the pages that follow has benefited greatly from the scholarship of FUKUNAGA Katsumi, who in his detailed study of Buddhist medicine and nutrition, \textit{Bukkyō igaku jiten}, provides a systematic overview of Four Foods doctrine based on texts in the Chinese corpus. He also considers how terms have been translated between languages (i.e., Pali or Sanskrit to English and German). Fukunaga’s explanations thus retain links to Indic Buddhism while taking us closer to an understanding of Chinese interpretations of the doctrine of Four Foods. My aim in the following sections is to clarify each term, not to represent the full breadth of Fukunaga’s discussion. I

\textsuperscript{261} Ibid., 337-338.
\textsuperscript{262} Hopkins, \textit{Absorption in No External World}, 35.
\textsuperscript{263} Ibid.
encourage interested readers to consult his study for further details on food and nutrition in Buddhism.

4.2 Morsel food

Morsel food (P. kavaḍaṃkāra-āhāra/kavaḍīṃ-kāra-āhāra) has various translations in Chinese scriptures, but is most often represented as tuansē 摶食/揣食 or duansē 段食. This is food with material form, but we have to be careful here not to assume that this is “ordinary food,” “food in the literal sense,” or “solid (bodily) food,” since the Buddhist category includes more than just solid food (i.e., such things as butter and honey). It can even include things that we would not usually consider food, such as wind that blows on the insides of hell beings. In the twentieth fascicle of the Chang’aban jing, this first category is given as ‘lumping, fine, and smooth nutriments’ 摶細滑食, which includes comestibles that we would recognize as such, but also clothing and bathing. The Qishi jing 起世經 (“Scripture on the Origin of the World,” P. Aggañña sutta) refers to a ‘coarse segmented food’ 麤段食 and to a ‘nutriment of subtle form’ 微細色食, which may include bathing, wiping [the body] clean, and applying ointment. Fukunaga suggests that we understand this category as encompassing all forms of physical nutriment. We might rather interpret it as physical nourishment, in recognition that it can include care for the body that is not ingested.

264 See Fukunaga, Bukkyō igaku jiten, 104-106 and 110 for charts showing the different translations of all four types of food and where they occur in scriptural sources.
265 Bruce Matthews, Craving and Salvation, p.28
266 Warder, Indian Buddhism, 115; Gombrich, How Buddhism Began, p.48
267 Fukunaga, Bukkyō igaku jiten, 106, citing W.T. Rhys Davids’s translation from Pali.
268 Wayman, Untying the Knots in Buddhism, 338, citing Asaṅga’s Yogācārabhūmi.
269 As above, see Collins, Aggañña Sutta, for an English translation of the Pali edition.
270 Fukunaga, Bukkyō igaku jiten, 106.
271 Ibid.
The distinction, alluded to above, between coarse 糙 and fine 細 is a characterizing feature of discourse on morsel food, that warrants more comment. It may distinguish between the size of morsels eaten by small or large water creatures, refer to differences of refinement among foodstuffs, some requiring extensive chewing and others not, or it may characterize the difference between foods that produce waste (stool and urine) versus those such as the ambrosia of heavenly beings, which is fully absorbed and produces no waste.272

4.2.2 Sensory food

What I interpret here as sensory food is often translated from Indic contexts as “contact” food (Sk. sparśa-āhāra), in that it refers to nourishment coming from a sensory stimulus or impression (Skt. sparśa, P. phassa). The most common translation into Chinese appears to be chuōshi 触食, which uses the contact of touch synecdochically to refer to all sensory impression. Another common Chinese translation is gengleshi 更樂食, which perhaps273 conveys the sense that it is nourishment in the form of fleeting pleasures—the basic creature comforts of human life. The tenth fascicle of the *Aṣṭamahājātaka* (Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise) explains that this food is a function of the mind responding to the interaction of the objective sensory faculties 根, subjective states 境, and the conscious awareness 識 appearing out of the interaction of these two. It is not limited to tactile sensation, but encompasses sensation and perception more generally. Examples include coolness, warmth, and wind.274

273 Gengle (other readings are also possible) is not a compound common to other Chinese usage, so it appears to be a neologism devised specifically to translate this doctrinal concept in Buddhism. The basic meaning of geng is to change, transitively or intransitively.
Fukunaga suggests that there are three different approaches in the Chinese Buddhist literature regarding understanding of the second of the Four Foods. The first approach is to connect the notion with the nourishing touch of a parent bird for its egg and newborn chicks.275 The second is to raise as example various items used by women in the care of the body for its protection and enjoyment: clothing, parasols, fragrant flowers, scented smoke, scented oils, and so forth.276 The third and last approach is to observe that sensory contact has a role in nourishing growth of the mind277.

Fukunaga does not make explicit what is meant here by the ‘mind’, though by supplying xinfa 心法 in addition to xin 心 he suggests that what is nurtured are the eight bases of conscious awareness discussed in Yogācāra thought: visual consciousness 眼識, aural consciousness 耳識, olfactory consciousness 鼻識, taste consciousness 舌識, tactile consciousness 身識, thinking consciousness (manovijñāna) 意識, self-aware consciousness (kliṣṭamanas) 末那識, and store consciousness (ālayavijñāna) 阿賴耶識/藏識. The first five are sense consciousness—awareness coming from sensory perception. ‘Contact’ or ‘sensory’ nourishment, then, is sensation coming through the five sense faculties and nourishing the mind’s conscious awareness. This ‘food’ is not perception but sensation, prior to overt cognition.278

Understanding the second food as sensation helps clarify the alternative translation, gengleshi 更樂食, which suggests that Buddhist thinkers had in mind conceptual links between sensation, pleasure, and emotion, given that le 樂 refers to a state of joyfulfulness or happiness. Sensation and emotion are processed by parts of the brain that are

275 An example is in the twentieth fascicle of the Chang aban jing. Fukunaga, Bukkyō igaku jiten, 107-108.
276 An example is in the twenty-first fascicle of the Zengyi aban jing. Fukunaga, Bukkyō igaku jiten, 108.
277 An example is in the tenth fascicle of the Zaxin lun. Fukunaga, Bukkyō igaku jiten, 108.
278 Note that in Buswell and Lopez, PDB, 194, 828, and elsewhere, these terms are clearly denoted by separate terms. Sensation or feeling (vadanā, Ch. 受) and perception or discrimination (saṃjñā, Ch. 想) each count as one of the five aggregates (skandha, Ch. 雲), along with materiality (rūpa, Ch. 色), conditioning factors (sāṃskāra, Ch. 行), and consciousness (vijñāna, Ch. 識).
precognitive, that is, not overtly involved in self-aware thought processes. Thus, it is no accident that Buddhist thinkers following Yogācāra teachings understood sensation as feeding or nourishing those aspects of mind that give rise to conscious awareness and narrative thought. Above, we saw that even translated as *cbuññi* this second food is sometimes interpreted as nourishing the emotions. All of the Four Foods have their origin in desire, but the second food is particularly associated with emotion. If we read the *geng* 更 in *genglōśi* as *gēng*, the phrase could mean ‘nourishment that changes (i.e., impacts) joyfulness’. Reading *gēng*, it might be ‘nourishment that increases joyfulness’. Either way, it suggests that the simple pleasures and comforts of sensory experience settle the stronger emotions and promote joyfulness. Of course sensation has the opposite effect when it is uncomfortable, destabilizing the emotions, but here we are dealing with those things that have a positive, nourishing effect on the body and mind.

### 4.2.3 Thought food

For the sake of simplicity, I have rendered this third term as ‘thought food’, but it is more properly interpreted as “volitional food” or nourishment by intention (Sk. *cetanā-āhāra*, P. *manosañcetana-āhāra*). I believe that ‘thought food’ is defensible, especially in the Chinese context, where this third of the Four Foods is most often translated by words suggestive of the mental activity of thought and memory: *yìsīshí*, *sīshí*, *yinianshi*, and *nianshi* 念食. Regardless of which English translation is used, however, this term requires doctrinal context for clarification.

Rhys Davids interpreted the concept as “Food of motive or purpose,” which can help us steer clear of a potential misinterpretation that the term simply refers to the consumption of intellectual ideas. Chinese scriptures also contain hints that although

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279 E.g. Damasio, *Descartes’ Error*, 89-90.
280 Wayman, *Untying the Knots in Buddhism*, 337.
282 Ibid.
‘thought’ characterizes the third food, emphasis is on the moral significance of thought as action—that is, on volition or intention. This point is made clear in a threefold division of foods that serves as a complimentary explanation of the doctrine of Four Foods, found in the *Aṇḍatāṃ daṇḍikaṇṭha-lūṇ* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, translated by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664). This list of three types of food refers to *yeṣe*, ‘karmic food,’ which is equated with thought [food]:

Several teachers explain that foods are of three types. The first is karmic food. The second is generative food. The third is nourishing food. Karmic food refers to thought [food]. Generative food refers to consciousness [food]. Nourishing food refers to morsel and sensory [food].

有餘師説食有三種. 一者業食. 二者生食. 三者長養食. 業食謂思. 生食謂識. 長養食者謂段與觸.

In the same text we find a further explanation of this notion of three types of food that include karmic nourishment. Raising the problem of how heaven-dwelling beings without conceptual thought or morsel food can still be said to have food and live, the author (Kātyāyanīputra) invokes a twofold and then a threefold division of nourishment, discussing again the notion of karmic food. Because the explanation of karmic food is couched in a larger context, I provide some of the prior text that helps clarify how the concept of karmic food is being used here:

[Question:] As the World-Honored One said, all sentient beings reside by way of food. By what foods do sentient beings without conceptualization reside? Answer: Sensation 触, thought 意思, and consciousness 識.

Question: For what reason do we make up this theory? Answer: We want to make doubters obtain certitude. Someone may say that the Heaven-of-No-Thought must lack morsel food [and that] sensation, thought,
and consciousness also extinguish, with nothing remaining. Do not harbor any doubts about it. If [sentient beings of the Heaven-of-No-Thought] reside without food, then this is not in accord with the World-Honored One saying that all sentient beings reside by way of food. In order to remove those doubts we must clarify that the place of no-thought, while lacking morsel food, has the other three. Because it accords with the scriptures, we set up this theory. Question: If in this place of no thought the [other] three foods also extinguish, how can we say they exist [there]? Answer: Foods have two varieties: 1) those which [eaten] at an earlier time can project [karmic influence] and 2) those which are manifest and incidental to the present moment. Although this state [of being sentient in a Heaven-of-No-Thought] is without manifest and incidental foods that are held (i.e., tangible), it does have food from previous times that can project [karmic influence]. Therefore we call this having food. There is an explanation that posits three types of food in their midst: 1) karmic food, 2) generative food, and 3) food of similar and immediately antecedent conditions. 'Karmic food' refers to their previously created karma base enabling them to live. 'Generative food' refers to the incarnated mind having existence, which leads them for a period to have continuity. 'Food of similar and immediate antecedent conditions' refers to entering into ideation-free sensation, volition, and consciousness as similar and immediately antecedent conditions. This can lead to an ideation-free awakening of mind and makes them establish a cause for not achieving permanent elimination [of afflictions]. It is because of this that [the World-honored One] explained that all sentient beings reside on the basis of food.

如世尊説：「一切有情，皆由食住。」無想有情，由何食住？答：觸、意、識。問：何故作此論？答：欲令疑者，得決定故。謂無想天，必無段

287 The Chinese term here is Xuanzang’s translation of a technical term from Yogācāra theory, in Sanskrit samanantara-pratyaya-bhāva. One of the Four Causes and Three Supports, the term signifies a flow of conditioned existence in which one moment leads directly into the next without interruption from extraneous thoughts. See Muller “等無間緣,” “四緣,” and “三所依,” in DDB.

288 Note that ‘thought’ does not work well here.

289 Skt. vyuttāna-citta, a rising up or awakening of mind. A synonym is chiquanxin 出觀心, Skt. niśkramaṇa-citta.
This equation of thought food, from Four-Food doctrine, with karmic food in a threefold division of food types also appears in commentary on the Nirvana Sutra by Guanding 灌頂 (561–632), fourth patriarch of the Tiantai school of Chinese Buddhism. In his Daban niepan jing shu 大般涅槃經疏, he says, “Thought food is karmic food. 思食是業食.”

‘Thought food’, then, is to be understood as full-fledged action with moral status—it is volition or intention with power to nurture (or poison) sentient beings. Depending on the source text, Buddhist authors have posited different types of mental activities as having a nourishing role. The main ones are hope, memory, faith, and discerning thought.

The twentieth fascicle of the Chang aban jing suggests that this food encompasses hopes for the future and memories of the past. Examples illustrating the concept include narratives of hope: a starving boy during a time of famine extends his life by the hope engendered when his father passes off a bag of ashes as a bag of grain. Passengers of a
sinking ship renew the vigor of their struggle when they mistake for land the white breaking waves on the horizon.\textsuperscript{293}

The nourishing role of memory is illustrated by the example of turtle eggs buried in sand hatching despite the absence of the parent. In one case,\textsuperscript{294} the explanation is that the eggs continue to think of the parent, but other sources\textsuperscript{295} flip this around and say it is because the parents continue to think of the eggs. From the perspective of modern biology, this ambivalence about the mechanism for nourishment in the case of turtle eggs underlines a failure of understanding regarding eggs amongst early Buddhist thinkers, but it does not necessarily undermine the Buddhist notion that mental activities involving intention can create powerful causal conditions leading to future outcomes.

In the human context, intention connects with Buddhist doctrine on karma: “intention projects future lifetimes (in that it is the main feature of karma).”\textsuperscript{296} As discussed earlier in this dissertation, karma, as ‘action’, includes mental activities. This results in Buddhists sometimes emphasizing how one eats more than what one eats—one’s mental state is an arena of action, not a private arena of pre-embodied thoughts beyond the reach of moral judgment. In Buddhism, the mental activity of intention is highly significant to moral status. Physical actions flow from intention as derivative products of mental activity. Thus we saw earlier in Chapter Three that Yichu’s citations on eating place great emphasis on cultivating such qualities as generosity, equanimity, and moderation.

Such attitudes, along with hope, memory, and faith constitute a form of nourishment. What is being nourished? Buddhist thinkers appear to have understood this ‘nourishment by intention’ to be the basis for future embodiment and eventual nirvana. Crudely stated, this teaching suggests that our future is formed by our present thoughts.

\textsuperscript{293} Ibid., 108.
\textsuperscript{294} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{295} Tenth fascicle of the \textit{Apidama juobe lun}, and eighteenth fascicle of the \textit{Zhengfanian jing} 正法念經. Ibid.
\textsuperscript{296} Jeffrey Hopkins, \textit{Absorption in No External World}, 55.
4.2.4 Consciousness food

The last of the Four Foods is usually interpreted in English as consciousness food, but we saw it earlier also as perceptual food. Vijñāna-āhāra in Sanskrit, the term is suggestive of a food of discerning knowledge. Most Chinese texts translate the term as shìshí, literally ‘food of knowledge’ or of conscious awareness. A notable exception is the Zhengfa niánchu jìng, which provides three different translations of the term in different fascicles. These are shìshí, as above, chánshí, ‘food of meditation’, and shì’ārshí, ‘food of knowledge and fondness’. Putting aside for now the inclusion of chánshí in this list, Chinese interpretations of the term emphasize conscious awareness and the role of discerning mental activities in the formation of that awareness. In the system of Yogācāra thought, food of consciousness is understood as connected with the six consciousnesses, which are perceptions originating from the eyes, nose, ears, tongue, tactile faculties, and mind. Covering all phenomena of an aware mind, food of consciousness includes feelings and spiritual activity.

One might raise here the question of how consciousness food, connected as it is with sensory awareness, is different from sensory (‘contact’ or ‘stimulus’) food. I have chosen to refer to the six consciousnesses as perceptions in order to draw a distinction between these two. In other words, the interpretation that I adopt here is that Buddhist thinkers had in mind a distinction between sensation, understood as direct sensory experience, and perception, understood as conscious awareness of stimulation or of a mental state. Early Buddhist thinkers did make this differentiation, calling sensation vedanā (Ch. shòu 受) and perception saññā (P. saññā, Ch. xiáng 想). This long-standing recognition for different levels of neural activity regarding sensory stimulation demonstrates that

297 This latter in Wayman, Untying the Knots in Buddhism, 337.
298 See Monier-Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 961.
300 Fukunaga, Bukkyō igaku jiten, 105.
301 Buswell and Lopez, Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism, 161, 754, 964. Note that Buddhist schemata of mental factors (they are plural) are more complex than my straightforward distinction here.
Buddhist thinkers held a sophisticated model of the human mind. Subtle sensations do often escape conscious awareness until reaching a threshold (or some other trigger) suddenly alerts the conscious mind that it should pay attention. For example, a light headache may slip in and out of perceptual awareness, even though the sensation is constant. The implication of the Buddhist doctrinal position is this: while both sensation and perception can nourish, they do so at different levels of experience, nourishing different aspects of our human embodiment.

Buddhist thinkers connect sensation, as we saw earlier, with stimulation from the senses and with emotion. This understanding aligns fairly well with notions from modern cognitive science of the simultaneous presence of conscious and pre-conscious cognitive functions. What is meant, then, by ‘consciousness food’ is the dancing of sensory perceptions as they arise in the mind, lit by the spotlight of conscious awareness.

Fukunaga and other secondary literature provides no clear illustrations of this last term of the Four Foods, perhaps because it has always been subject to some conjecture. One useful interpretation from the Tibetan sub-commentary holds that ‘thought food’ and ‘consciousness food’ are placed together because they both pertain to karma. The volitional aspect of ‘thought food’ projects future outcomes, while the experiential aspect of ‘consciousness food’ actualizes these.

How different Buddhist thinkers in South Asia, Tibet, China and elsewhere interpreted the food of consciousness is an historical problem that is beyond the scope of this present discussion. I must, however, return briefly to the Zhengfa nianchu jing including chanobi, ‘meditation food’, in Chinese translations of the term, since this interpretation is also found in Tibetan commentaries as an alternative to ‘consciousness food’ as fourth term. In the Zhengfa nianchu jing, the term appears in the context of a discussion of the ways that sentient beings are bound to the world in cyclical rebirth. Two ways are posited: bondage by food 食縛 and bondage by sensory desires 触縛. The foods causing this bondage are then enumerated as four, following the pattern of the doctrine of Four Foods, but chanobi is given in place of consciousness. The

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302 E.g., Damasio, *Feeling of What Happens*, 42-43, 47-49.
subsequent explanation of the Four Foods gives not examples of these foods but
patterns of rebirth. The ‘food of meditation’ is associated with devas of the form realm
who practice meditation as their sustenance, and in the context it is supplied
matter-of-factly as an enfettered rebirth alongside piscine, avian, and hellish destinies.
The fact that it is not singled out for celebration here seems significant, because it tells
us that early Buddhist doctrine held even nourishment by conscious awareness or
meditation to be a form of bondage to cyclical rebirth—this fourth food is not
intrinsic in its karmic entailments. All Four Foods, then, carry a negative valence in Buddhist thought.

This negative valence in the Four Foods raises the question of whether there is not
also a form of nourishment with emancipatory rather than enfettering karmic
entailments. Buddhist thinkers were in fact interested in this problem and provided
doctrinal explanations for how a negative valence in eating could be turned toward the
positive end of eventual awakening. The solution involves an additional set of
world-transcending ‘foods’, hinted at in allusions to nourishment through joy in
meditation 禪悅 and other similar phrasing. Through the action of moral causality in
each of the Four Foods, beings transmigrate from one life to the next, through the Three
Realms of Buddhist cosmology: the desire realm, the realm of form (Skt. rūpa-dhatu, Ch.
sejie 色界), and the formless realm (Skt. ārūpa-dhatu, Ch. wuwejie 無色界). In the realms
of form and formlessness, there is no morsel food; beings in these realms have more
subtle bodies that do not require material nourishment. In recognition of a plurality of
forms of nourishment, Chinese Buddhist texts also speak of five world-transcending
foods (Ch. churenjianobi 出人間食). These are meditation food, vow food, thought food
(overlapping with the previous set), food of the eight liberations, and food of joy.306
Because the five world-transcending foods are more spiritual than corporeal in their
ability to nourish, Buddhist authors sometimes promote them as ideal foods that should
gradually replace reliance on the Four Foods.

306 T17 n721, 26a17-b01.
306 Ch. chanobi 禪食, yuanobi 願食, niangobi 念食, bajietuobi 八解脫食, and xibi 喜食.
I discuss this alternative set of foods in the following section, which provides a survey of Four Foods doctrine in Chinese Buddhist encyclopedias.307

4.3 Four Foods in Chinese Buddhist leishu

In the previous section I used a variety of sources, secondary and primary, to achieve some coherence regarding Four Foods doctrine. In the history of Chinese Buddhism, however, this doctrine was subject to interpretation at multiple junctures, such as in translation of terms, given an ahistorical treatment above. In this section, I want to return to an historical mode by looking at a particular set of occurrences of the doctrine that were likely influential in Buddhist intellectual history.

In order to better assess how Chinese Buddhists understood this doctrine, I briefly consider here the concept of Four Foods as it appears in several topically organized overviews of Buddhist knowledge: leishu—texts that may be considered Chinese Buddhist encyclopedias (or terminological study aids, in at least one case). For this section, in addition to the tenth-century material from Yichu’s Shishi liutie, I also searched the sixth-century Jinglu yixiang 經律異相, the seventh-century Fayuan zhulin 法苑珠林, the eleventh-century Shishi yaolan 釋氏要覽, the twelvth-century Fanyi mingyi ji 翻譯名義集, and the fifteenth-century Daming sanzang fasbu 大明三藏法數.

The sample here is not meant to be exhaustive, but merely sufficient for better understanding what sources medieval Chinese Buddhists used to represent Four Foods doctrine and the general orientation of doctrinal explanations. Because these texts that I refer to here as Buddhist encyclopedias are, as I argued in Chapter Two, general overviews of Buddhist knowledge organized in a fashion that allows relative ease in searching for ideas by topic, they played a role in disseminating basic Buddhist ideas to

307 See my subsection, below, on the Four Foods in the Fayuan zhulin, where the Zengyi aban jing is cited as positing an additional set of world-transcending foods (churenjianshi 出世間食), bringing the number of types to nine.
individuals lacking scholarly expertise. As reference guides and primers, then, these works constitute authoritative statements in the unfolding of Chinese Buddhist intellectual history. Used together, they provide a chronological glimpse of the reception history of the doctrine of Four Foods.

4.3.1 Jinglì yìxiāng

The sixth-century Jinglì yìxiāng, commissioned by emperor Wu of Liang and introduced in Chapter Two above, does not mention the doctrine of Four Foods as outlined above. It does, however, present a legendary account enumerating “four foods,” which in this context are modes of food procurement cast in an unfavorable light. This appears in a narrative coming from the *Hailongwang jìng* on dragons, in a section titled “Four Great Dragon Kings Troubled by Garuḍa call on the Buddha.” The dragon kings entreat the Buddha to protect them from four types of gold-winged birds (garuḍa) that are regularly coming to eat various dragons living in the sea. The Buddha gives Sāgara, the Ocean Dragon King, one of his robes, which expands across the sea and protects the dragons from their aviary predators. Hearing of this and growing fearful, the Garuḍa King (king of the birds) immediately seeks audience with the Buddha and asks, “For what reason does the World-Honored One take away our food?” The Buddha replies,

“All have four foods, creating interest in the three realms. What are these four? The first is ensnaring birds and beasts, cruelly harming herds of animals, murdering life for a twisted livelihood in order to have food and drink. The second is to carry weapons, staves, knives, and halberds to cut and stab, to constrain, hinder, and shoot, and to steal the belongings of others to use as food and drink. The third is to covet and flatter, and in disordered

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308 T15 n598. 佛說海龍王經, Scripture on the Dragon King of the Ocean Spoken by the Buddha, Skt. Sāgaranāgarāja paripṛccā sūtra. Translated to Chinese in the Western Jin (roughly around the turn of the fourth century) by Dharmaraksā ढचफूँ. Another translation, by Dharmakṣema and completed in 418, is no longer extant—see Chen, “Indian Buddhist Missionary Dharmakṣema,” 225. This scripture came to be used in China for rainmaking rites. The story cited in the Jinglì yìxiāng can be found at 151a05-c02.

309 Dong, ed., Jinglì yìxiāng zhengli yu yanjiu p.730. T53 n2121, 256b07-c05.
The avian host then consents, proclaiming that they will uphold the precepts, protect the Buddha’s teachings, and stop terrorizing the dragon kings. This narrative nowhere suggests that the four foods mentioned here should be connected at some level to the doctrine of Four Foods found elsewhere.

One might ask whether enumeration of evil modes of food procurement into four categories was not meant to resonate with the doctrine of Four Foods, which has deep roots in the Buddhist literature. The pro-vegetarian ideology contained in the message here suggests that this text belongs to a corpus of Mahāyāna texts that explicitly condemn the eating of animal flesh and which began to sway sentiment in Chinese

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310 Other editions give kuiluan 慄亂.
Buddhist circles upon their arrival into the Chinese Buddhist intellectual milieu. There is also a possibility of interpolation around the time that Emperor Wu of Liang was pushing for wider adoption of vegetarianism—if these lines are apocryphal, the reference to “four foods” would have helped add an aura of authenticity to the fabrication. But I have no further evidence for this conjecture, so the problem must await further research. In any case, the Jingliü yixiang does not otherwise engage the doctrine of Four Foods.

4.3.2 Fayuan zhulin 法苑珠林

The seventh-century Fayuan zhulin contains three discussions of the doctrine of Four Foods, covering a wide set of doctrinal notions associated with this doctrine. The notion of four foods taken from the Hailongwang jing is not among them, suggesting that Daoshi, compiler of the Fayuan zhulin, did not view that discourse as representative of orthodox Buddhist teachings on the Four Foods. He would have been aware of the material in the Jingliü yixiang, so the omission is deliberate. Because his statements chosen to represent Four Foods doctrine draw upon multiple discourses, it is useful to outline these in detail here, in preparation for comparison with later compilations.

The first discussion cites the Qishi jing (Sutra on the Arising of Worlds)312, but the passage appears to be pieced together from a number of sources, each presenting different ideas. The narrative sets out the four kinds of food and then discusses them as falling into categories of coarse and refined, a feature of the doctrine that we noted earlier. A question is posed, “What class of sentient beings should eat coarse morsel and delicate (refined) foods 何等衆生，應食麁段，及微細食?” The answer is “Such as the people of Jambudvīpa (the great continent to the south of Mt. Sumeru, serving as the locus of human existence).” Coarse morsel foods are illustrated with the examples of rice, provisions, beans, and meat; delicate foods include massage, bathing, and anointment. Humans and other inhabitants of the desire realm make these their food,
while those beings of the form realm and formless heavens make joy in meditation and delight in the Dharma their food. They do not return to coarse morsel and delicate foods. This positing of a contrasting binary of coarse and delicate foods is for foods of a material nature and does not form a natural hierarchy in Buddhist thought—both are creature comforts. Rather, it is the transcendent foods of the heavenly deities that Daoshi celebrates.

What follows is a discussion of karmic outcomes associated with the Four Foods, similar in wording to an account of Four Foods appearing in the Zhengfa nianchu jing 正法念處經 (Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness of the True Dharma). This interpretation of Four Foods is closely connected with the doctrine of Four Births, which enumerates four differing destinies in the transmigration caused by rebirth, each characterized by a mode of embodiment: egg-born, womb-born, birth from moisture, and spontaneous transformation (as with celestial deities who manifest based on prior karma). The passage relates that in the case of contact (sensory) food, those beings whose bodies are born from eggs make sensation their food. Those that make thinking their food are fish, turtles, snakes and such, since for such creatures the act of thinking moistens and allows various roots to increase (these animals are thus understood to be sustained by moisture—like plants—and to be gradual in their growth). Hell dwellers and denizens of certain unlimited heavens of consciousness and touch take

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312 T1 n24. This is a Chinese translation of the Aggañña Sutta, Dīgha Nikāya 27. Benavides, “Economy,” 78 notes that a Pali edition has been translated by Maurice Walshe, Long Discourses of the Buddha, 407-415.
313 Zhou and Su, Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu, 88-90 (v1). T53 n2122, 291c10-17. Where there are discrepancies in the text, I follow what is given in Taishō, according to the SAT Daizōkyō Text Database.
314 Skt. Saddharma-pomṛtyupāññhāna sūtra, T17 n721, translated by Gautama-prajñāruci 瞿曇般若流支 (fl.516-543) between 538-541.
consciousness as their food. The topic then turns to the eating of nectar (ambrosia) by heavenly beings:

"Those in the heavens of the four Heavenly Kings partake of nectar (*nīdā), eating a small handful in the morning and a small handful in the evening, the food transforming into bodily matter immediately upon ingestion. This nectar arises spontaneously from both garden pools and groves of trees and it can transform into any of eight forms of food and drink, such as [one called] *qutuoni* 佉陀尼 (Skt. *khādanīya*). The eating of all heavenly beings of the desire realm is also like this. Heavenly beings in the form realms take as their food [all encompassed between] the first state of meditative concentration and pervasive purity in joyfulness. Heavenly beings of the formless realm and above take mental activity as their food."

A question is posed: What is eating and drinking like in the various heavens? The answer is that it is like the scriptures describe: The various heavenly [beings] of the desire realm are differentiated according to noble and base, good and bad. Those whose merit is thick are, in accordance with their intentions, not lacking. Should they wish to drink, sweet dew fills their glasses. Should they wish to eat, a hundred flavored [dishes] arrive. For those whose merit is thin, although they have food and drink, they always feel dissatisfied. Because there is not enough, it is as if inferior food has come.

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315 Zhou and Su, *Fayuan zhulin jiāozhu*, 89 (v1). T53 n2122, 291c17-23. This passage and the one above are from the seventh fascicle of the *Qōbī jīng*, according to Zhou and Su, editors of the *Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu*. 問曰：何等衆生以觸爲食？答曰：一切卵生得身故，以觸爲食。何等衆生以思爲食？若有衆生意思資潤，諸根增長，如魚、鳖、蛇、蝦蟆、伽羅瞿陀等，及餘衆生，以意思潤益諸根壽命者，此等皆用思爲食。何等衆生以識爲食？所謂地獄衆生及無邊識處天等，皆用識持以爲其食。

316 The next several lines are also in *Foshuo liōbi apitan lān* 佛說立世阿毘曇論 T32 n1644, 200c17-c22, a scripture translated by Paramārtha 眞諦 in the sixth century.
Therefore the scriptures\textsuperscript{318} record the example of various heavenly beings sharing a meal in jeweled vessels. The color of the rice differs according to their merit: for superior ones it is white, for middling ones it is yellow, and for inferior ones it is red. The heavenly beings of the form realm take joy in meditation as their flavor (i.e., food). If stating this in terms of Four Foods [doctrine], they have only the concept of sensory food.” 問曰：諸天飲食云何？答曰：如經説云：欲界諸天，隨其貴賤，好惡不同。其福厚者，隨其所思，無不具足。飲則甘露盈杯，食則百味俱至。其福薄者，雖有飲食，恒不稱心。以不足故，猶下食來。故經云：「譬如諸天共寶器食，隨其福德，飯色色有異。上者見白，中者見黄，下者見赤。色界諸天，以禪悅為味。」若以四食言之，唯有觸食法也。\textsuperscript{319}

The leitmotif of these passages is that sentient beings eat according to their merit—we reap what we sow. Karma is central to eating, which in this view is any activity bringing nourishment to a sentient being. Food is illustrated vividly as coming in many forms appropriate to a being’s status and place in the cosmological order and eating is not only ingestion of material foodstuffs but may include even activities such as meditation. In just one short passage Daoshi has compiled together an illustration not only of the doctrine of Four Foods, but also a justification for viewing meditation as a practice associated with a superior form of nourishment. It is superior because of the moral (i.e., karmic) status of the beings who use it for nourishment.

The second passage of the \textit{Fayuan zhulin} that mentions Four Foods doctrine also develops the theme of multivalent modes of eating that match the moral status of sentient beings. Daoshi cites from the Abhidharma literature a passage discussing absorption of the four foods and how the different realms have broader or narrower sets of these. An example illustrates how, in the hells, iron pills and molten bronze serve as food. Though taking them increases suffering, they are named morsel foods because

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318 Zhou and Su, \textit{Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu}, 89-90 (v1), give this following passage as coming from the thirteenth fascicle of the \textit{Chang ahan jing}.
319 Zhou and Su, \textit{Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu}, 89-90 (v1). T53 n2122, 291c29-292a07.}
they assuage hunger and thirst. Even cold and warm winds, in hells with light afflictions, are considered morsel food, due to their alternating bodily contact. Only the two upper realms (form and formless) have no morsel food, because the bodies of beings there are light and marvelous. Daoshi then offers a short verse to summarize the main points: “Four Foods in the desire realm; same for the four birthed destinies. Three Foods in the upper two realms, where they lack morsel food.”

The third and final passage is in a section devoted specifically to the doctrine of Four Foods. Citing the *Zengyi aban jing*, it first explains the Four Foods in straightforward language, giving concrete examples:

At that time the World-Honored One said to the multitude of bhikṣus, “Among the class of sentient beings there are four kinds of food that nourish these sentient beings. What are these four? The so-called morsel food, whether large or small, food that increases pleasure, thought food, and food of consciousness. These are called the Four Foods. You say, what is morsel food? This in reference to all those things eaten amongst the people of today that enter the mouth and can be ingested. These are called morsel foods. What is food that increases pleasure? This is in reference to clothing, parasols, various fragrant flowers, incense, fragrant oils, and all the accessories collected by women that increase pleasure for the body. These are called foods that increase pleasure. What is thought food? This is in reference to that which is recollected, conceptualized, or pondered in the mind, whether spoken by mouth, or making bodily contact, or the many upheld dharmas (i.e., true knowledge). This is called thought food. What is food of

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320 *Fayuan zhubin jiaozi* pp.2150-2151 (v5). T53 n2122, 831b12-19. 問: 四食相攝云何？答: 如毘曇中說: 「總而言之，六趣之中，皆具四食。然有寬陜不同。如地獄中得有段食者，如有鐵丸及洋銅汁，雖復增苦，以壞飢渴，故名段食。又如輕繫獄中，得具冷煖二二風，更互觸身，亦名段食。唯上二界無有段食，以彼身輕妙故。論偈云：

四食在欲界 四生趣亦然
三食上二界 段食彼則無


322 The Chinese terms depart slightly from other lists, giving *duanshi* (段食), *gengleshi* (更樂食), and *nianshi* (念食) for the first three (instead of *tuanshi*, *sishi*, and *chushi*). The last, *shishi* or nourishment through consciousness, remains consistent with other lists.
consciousness? This is in reference to that which is known to the mind. It is the taking of consciousness for food in primarily the Brahma heaven, but also the heavens with thought and without thought. This is called food of consciousness. With these Four Foods [sentient beings] transmigrate through life and death. 稣時世尊, 告諸比丘：「眾生之類，有四種食，長養衆生。何等為四？所謂段食，或大或小、更樂食、念食、識食。是謂四食。彼云何段食？謂今人中所食諸入口之物，可食噉者，是謂段食。云何更樂食？謂衣裳、纖蓋、雜香華、薰火，及香油，與婦人集聚，諸餘身體所更樂者，是謂更樂食。云何念食？謂意中所念、所想、所思惟者，或以口説，或以體觸及諸所持之法，是謂念食。云何識食？謂意之所知，梵天為首，乃至有想無想天以識為食，是謂識食。以此四食，流轉生生死。」(T53 n2122, 1015c25-1016a06)

The passage then turns to the Buddha’s teaching to Aniruddha that the organs of perception are nurtured by their objects: “All of the many dharmas are sustained by food. The eyes take sleep as food; the ears take sound as food; the nose takes fragrance as food; the tongue takes flavor as food; the body takes smoothness as food; the mind takes dharma (i.e., truth) as food; and nirvana takes lack of self-indulgence 無放逸 as food.” That nirvana is included here as dependent on nurturing is significant, in light of Western popular interpretations that the Buddhist path is one of letting go. The view here suggests that careless or frivolous indulgences work against progress on the path to nirvana; something akin to self-discipline is that which nourishes nirvana. The implication of this teaching is that all states, even nirvana, are contingent. One cannot merely stumble through life and hope that acceptance of one’s lot will lead to an awakening of sorts; some discipline is necessary in order to skillfully nourish the more

323 T53 n2122, 1016a07-10. 又增一經云。「世尊告阿那律曰：一切諸法由食而存。眼以眠為食，耳以聲為食，鼻以香為食，舌以味為食，身以細滑為食，意以法為食，涅槃以無放逸為食。」
desirable states. These issues are further addressed in the passage directly following, which places Four Foods doctrine into a larger schema:

At that time the Buddha told the multitude of bhikṣus, “The wonderful truth is like this. Look upon eating as having nine matters 食有九事. In the human realm there are Four Foods: 1) morsel food, 2) food that increases pleasure, 3) thought food, and 4) food of consciousness. There are a further five kinds. These are foods for transcending (“exiting”) the world 出世間食: 1) meditation food, 2) vow food, 3) thought food, 4) food of the eight emancipations, and 5) food of joy. These are the [foods] for transcending the world. You should all concentrate your thoughts, abandoning the four kinds of food and seeking to practice the Foods for Transcending the World.

爾時佛告諸比丘：如此妙法，夫觀食有九事，人間有四食：一、段食，二、更樂食，三、念食，四、識食。復有五種，是出世間食：一、禪食，二、願食，三、念食，四、八解脫食，五、喜食。是出世間之表食。當共專念，捨除四種之食，求辦出世之食。

Daoshi lists three other citations under the topic of Four Foods, but these make no mention of the doctrine itself. Still, the fact that these are included in a section devoted to doctrine of Four Foods implies a deliberate attempt to associate the ideas with this doctrine, so they warrant attention. The first of these last three passages is a citation from the Zhengfa nianchu jing explaining that if sentient beings hold an attitude of faith and compassion, taking various foods to give to people, then upon completion of their lives those sentient beings will be reborn into favorable conditions in their next lives—either into heavens where they will experience all kinds of joyfulness, or into a human life with rich endowments and the ability to practice the true dharma.

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324 The Zengyi aban jing (T2 n125, 772b18) refers to this set as a bia食, an outward appearance or representation, but there seems to be some question as to whether this should have been simply a repetition of shi食, food. The latter interpretation is more logical, so I adopt it here.

325 T53 n2122, 1016a11-16.
The second of the three passages, also coming from the *Zhengfa nianchu jing*, states that if there are sentient beings who see the many ill people and give them medicinal broths to ease their suffering, upon their lives ending they will be born into various favorable circumstances. Similarly, those who provide sweet drinks for people who are thirsting on their deathbeds will likewise be reborn into favorable circumstances that reflect the merit of their actions.

The very last passage in the section on Four Foods is of a very different nature. A citation from the *Wufenlü* 五分律 (Five-Part Vinaya), the passage states that the monk in charge of food for the month may taste the food—for whether it is raw or cooked or needing salt or vinegar—by placing it in the palm of his hand and sticking his tongue down to taste it. Annotation preserved in the text of the *Fayuan zhulin* explains that to taste with the mouth is a greedy way of tasting that is frowned upon, and is therefore an offense (in the monastic codes). Perhaps Daoshi included this issue because it was a topic of debate in his day, coming up whenever food was discussed. Or could he have wished to say, This is the gravity with which Buddhists are to treat the dangers associated with appetites for the Four Foods?

In any case, Daoshi was thorough in his overview of Four Foods doctrine, illustrating that the doctrine was significant in the seventh century when he compiled his magnificent overview of Buddhist ideas. His *Fayuan zhulin*, then, provides a benchmark by which to measure attention to the doctrine of Four Foods in subsequent Buddhist encyclopedias.

### 4.3.3 Shiobi liutie

I began this chapter by looking at Yichu’s entries that touch on the doctrine of Four Foods, so I will not repeat that material here. Instead, it is worthwhile to consider his sources and themes in light of the previous presentation on material in the *Fayuan zhulin*. Yichu alludes to the Four Foods through a citation (#1) from the *Apīdāmọ jīvobhū lan*, which relates the myth on the origins of the present world (i.e., the desire realm where sentient beings eat material food). Above, we saw this origin myth and discussion of the Four Foods cited from the *Qiūbi jīng* (P. Aggañña sutta). The point seems to be that
indulgence in the flavors of material food has an origin in the fall from grace experienced by sentient beings who had previously nourished more subtle bodies on more transcendent foods. The eating of material food should thus not be seen as the only source of nourishment.

Yichu, like Daoshi above, also uses the Zengyi aban jing to make the point that foods are directly associated with the various sense faculties and the mind, nourishing these as objects (see #33). This is the conceptual basis upon which the doctrine of Four Foods is based. Yichu does not here mention the doctrine itself, though we know from Daoshi’s citation that the Zengyi aban jing does develop the doctrine of Four Foods in much detail. Yichu’s citation merely hints at it.

Where Yichu does spell out the doctrine of Four Foods is in a citation (#11) from the Dawede tuoluoni jing, a text that Daoshi did not utilize to represent the doctrine. Translated to Chinese around the end of the sixth century, this text, as Yichu presents it, gives a basic summary of the cosmological aspect of Four Foods—they are associated with the desire realm, while the other realms have only three of the four…and so forth. Daoshi has presented such views based on the Qiobi jing. The concept that foods differ depending on the realm in question helps underline the point that the Four Foods are not an inevitable feature in all sentient life. Ultimately, our moral status, defined by karma, determines what we will eat in our future lives.

4.3.4 Shiobi yaolan

Compiled subsequently to Yichu’s Shiobi liutie, the Shiobi yaolan from the Northern Song dynasty seems like a likely place to encounter the doctrine of Four Foods, but it is noticeably absent. The food-related section has only a coincidental overlap in wording, which points to a discussion of the times of day when mealtimes are permitted for tonsured Buddhists.326

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326 T54 n2127, 274a20-23.
4.5.5 *Fanyi mingyi ji*

The *Fanyi mingyi ji*, from the Southern Song dynasty, is arguably more of a lexical aid than an encyclopedia, but because its organization is topical, it too can serve as a useful window onto the reception history of the doctrine of Four Foods in Chinese history. Fayun 法雲 aka Purun dashi 普潤大師 (1088-1158), who studied Tiantai Buddhism, completed this work in 1143. Here we do find the doctrine covered in a section that mentions it by name in the title, attesting to its continued importance.

The section begins with an introduction, heavily annotated, and is then followed by subsections headed by individual terms associated with food in Buddhist literature. The entire section is worthy of study, but here I will focus on the doctrine of Four Foods as represented by the introductory material.

This introduction first sets up a basic understanding of food, using the *Fodi lun* 佛地論: “Maintenance is named food. This is to say that [food] is able to maintain the body of form, keeping it from breakage and rot and allowing the nurturing of skillful ways. The body resides on the basis of food; one’s life depends upon food for its preservation. [Food] flows into the five viscera, saturating the four limbs, augmenting vital energy, benefiting the skin, and [allowing] satisfaction of body and mind.”

This recognition of the need for food places body and mind together and suggests that the satisfaction gained from physical nourishment is not an end in itself, but a means for cultivating good dharmas ("dharma" here meaning a custom or practice). Good dharmas may includes such things as good actions, thoughts, and

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327 Li, Songseng zhushu kao, 413-415.
329 T54 n2131, 1172b18-20.
attitudes—the better, more skillful ways of being. This position should be distinguished from a dualistic treatment of mind and body that raises up the mind as a disembodied locus of holiness, denigrating the body and leading to ascetic fasting. It also does not accord with a physicalist attitude toward eating that privileges enjoyment of the body and leads to food connoisseurship or other forms of gustatory indulgence.

Directly following this frame for understanding food is a citation from the Shoulengyanjing stating that “the twelve kinds of life in our world cannot be complete of themselves, but rely on the Four Foods for their existence: the so-called morsel, contact, thought, and consciousness foods. Therefore the Buddha said that all sentient beings depend on food for their residing.” In the Shoulengyanjing, the narrative launches from this point into a polemic on the five kinds of pungent herbs 五種辛菜 (mostly alliums, taboo in the diet of tonsured Buddhists), but here Fayun chooses to stay on topic, turning next to an explanation of the Four Foods in the Zuili, a text of uncertain identity. The explanations of each food type contain annotation from other sources—especially from the Qishi jing, which we encountered already as an important source for Four Foods doctrine. The body text from the Zuili, minus the annotation, interprets the Four Foods with a negative valence that reveals their association with the potential moral contamination involved in the satiation of appetites:

The Zuili explains: In speaking of ‘duanshi’ (morsel food), the ‘duan’ refers to its form being in segments. Its substance is formed by the three dusts (contaminants of spiritual practice) of fragrance, flavor, and texture. Entering the belly it spoils and benefits the several [sense] faculties. It is thus referred to as morsel food.

In speaking of ‘chushi’ (sensory food), the ‘chu’ refers to [sensory] contact. Because it [involves] association among the six consciousnesses (the function of the five sense organs plus reasoning 意) with a manifest object, giving rise to joy and pleasure, it is called sensory food.

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330 T54 n2131, 1172b21-23.
331 T19 n945, 141c03-13.
332 Zuili 楸李 is an old place name. This may be a lost text titled Jiezuii 解欖李.
In speaking of ‘sishi’ (thought food), the ‘si’ refers to thought. Because it involves the sixth consciousness (i.e., reason) associating thought with a pleasing condition and giving rise to yearning, it is called thought food.

In speaking of ‘shishi’ (consciousness food), the ‘shī’ is expression of the eighth clinging consciousness (ādāna-vijñāna). It profits from a portion of the force of the preceding three foods, making this consciousness grow. This is because it is able to appropriate (i.e., bind together) the several [sense] faculties and the ‘great seeds’ (the four great elements: earth, water, fire, and wind).

If differentiating these [Four Foods] according to the three realms, morsel food is only in the desire realm. Having form and formlessness, and lacking the two ‘dusts’ of fragrance and flavor, the remaining three foods are found throughout the three realms. This, then, is an overview of the Four Foods. 『檇李』釋曰：言段食者，段謂形段，以香、味、觸三塵為體，入腹變壞，資益諸根，故言段食；言觸食者，觸謂觸對，取六識中相應觸對前境而生喜樂，故名觸食；言思食者，思謂意思，取第六識相應思，於可意境生希望故；言識食者，識即第八執持之相，由前三食勢分所資，令此識增勝，能執持諸根大種故。若約三界辨之，段食唯在欲界。以色、無色，無香味二塵，餘之三食，遍通三界。此乃總叙四食也335。

Even without examining the annotation woven into the above account, we can conclude that the *Fanyi mingyi ji* contains a rich presentation of the doctrine of Four Foods, employing some sources not used in the *Fayuan zhulin* and *Shishi liutie*. While food is initially cast as a pragmatic necessity for supporting the bodily health needed to cultivate good attitudes and behaviors, the doctrine of Four Foods presented here displays a palpable wariness regarding the dangers of appetite associated with these foods.

4.3.6 *Daming suanzang faobu*

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333 T54, n2131, 1172b23-c10.
The latest-appearing encyclopedic work that I consult is the *Daming sanzang faibu* (hereafter *Faibu*) compiled by a monk named Yiru 一如 under imperial commission in the Ming-dynasty. The doctrine of Four Foods appears in the nineteenth fascicle, in a citation taken from the *Huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* 華嚴經隨疏演義鈔, a work of subcommentary on the Flower Garland Sutra by the Tang-dynasty monk Chengguan 澄觀 (738-839). Three annotated notes further develop or clarify the ideas presented in the subcommentary.

Yiru’s use of this source is significant in that it is a Chinese work and not an older translation from an Indic source text. The choice is also somewhat surprising in that other commentaries on the Flower Garland Sutra do not appear to have any mention of Four Foods doctrine—Chengguan’s use of Four Foods doctrine appears anomalous in the body of texts associated with Huayan thought. In the Chinese commentarial literature, discussions of Four Foods doctrine appears more consistently in subcommentaries on the *Cheng weishi lun* (Skt. *Vijñaptimātratāsūtra*)，a key text of Yogācāra thought in China, and in commentaries on the *Shou lengyan jing* (Skt. *Śūraṃgama-sūtra*). Yiru’s choice to use Chengguan’s presentation of Four Foods is more understandable, however, when we compare it with previous rather complex

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534 Full title *Dafang guangfo huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔. The discussion of Four Foods is at T36 n1736, 379a02-b12.
535 Tang-dynasty Śramaṇa Chengguan of the Great Huayan Temple in Qingliangshan 唐清凉山大華嚴寺沙門澄觀. The *Huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* serves as a continuation of his earlier commentary—the *Dafang guangfo huayan jing chuo* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏, T35 n1735—on the *Huayan jing* (Skt. *Avatamsaka sūtra*), the Flower Garland Scripture.
536 I do not find discussion of Four Foods doctrine in any of the commentaries on the *Huayan jing* found in volume 35 of Taishō, which includes famous commentaries by Fazang. Nor does such a discussion appear in volume 9 or 10, which contain texts associated with Fahua and Huayan thought.
537 T31 n1585.
538 T19 n945. Although this work is traditionally held to be a sutra translated in 705 by Pramiti 般剌蜜帝, a central Indian monk, the account of his translation work and the authenticity of the sutra are contested by most modern scholars. The issue of authenticity aside, the *Shoulengyan jing* stimulated discussions of Four Foods doctrine that would be worthy of further research, but for which there is not space here.
presentations such as that of the *Fayuan zhulin*. Chengguan has placed the doctrine in a straightforward narrative with useful glosses of terminology, making it more accessible:

1. **Duanshi** (morsel food). ‘Duan’ is segmentation. ‘Food’ has the meaning of nourishment. It is said to have the ‘three dusts’ of fragrance, flavor, and tactile qualities as its substance. Upon entering the belly it spoils and nourishes the several [sense] faculties. Thus it is called morsel food. Old translations of scriptures and monastic codes all had it as ‘tuanshi’—using the hands to form a ball was called ‘tuan’. Later translations further say that things like beverages, which cannot be formed into a ball, are likewise to be interpreted as morsel food. 「一段食」，段即分段。食有資益之義，謂以香
   味、觸三塵為體，入腹變壞，資益諸根，故言段食。古譯經律皆為摶食
   以手團曰摶，後譯復言漿飲等不可摶，遂譯為段食。

2. **Chushi** (sensory food). ‘Chu’ is response [between facing entities], which refers to the several ‘dusts’ (sensory stimuli) such as form that correspond with the six consciousnesses. Softness, smoothness, coolness, warmth, etc., make contact [with the consciousnesses, i.e., senses and intellect], giving rise to joy and pleasure, which have the ability to nourish the several [sense] faculties. Thus it is called sensory food. [Annotation:] The six consciousnesses are that of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind (Skt. cakṣuṣṭājñāna, śrotavijñāna, ghrāṇavijñāna, jīvāṇavijñāna, kāyavijñāna, and manovijñāna). The *Fanyi mingyi ji* explains [this]: To be attached to form is called ‘food’. How could this not be the meaning of sensory food? If we suppose that it is not sensory food, what [can we make of those who] watch plays and such all day long without eating and do not starve? 「二觸食」，
   觸即對也，謂六識所對色等諸塵。柔軺、細滑、冷煖等觸，而生喜樂，俱
   能資益諸根，故名觸食。（六識者，眼識、耳識、鼻識、舌識、身識、意
   識也。按翻譯名義註釋云：「見色愛著名食。豈非觸食義耶？設非觸食，
   何以觀戲劇等終日不食而不饑也？」）
3. Siābi (thought food). ‘Si’ is thought, which refers to the sixth consciousness thinking of desirable circumstances, giving rise to thoughts of yearning and nourishing the several [sense] faculties. For example, when a starving and thirsting person arrives at a place with food and drink, has hope of attaining food and drink, and does not [suffer] death of the body. Thus it is called thought food. [Annotation:] The sixth consciousness is mental consciousness (Skt. manovijñāna). 「三思食」，思即意思，謂第六識思於可愛之境，生希望意，而能潤益諸根。如人飢渴，至飲食處，望得飲食而身不死，故名思食(第六識即意識也)。

4. Shiābi (consciousness food). ‘Shi’ takes ‘appropriation’ as its meaning and is the eighth consciousness. A portion of the force of the preceding three foods nourishes it, making this consciousness grow and appropriate (i.e., bind together) the several sense faculties. Thus it is called consciousness food. [Annotation:] The eighth consciousness is store consciousness (Skt. ālayavijñāna, also rendered “store-house consciousness”). The Fanyi mingyi ji explains: Regarding consciousness food, from the sentient beings of hell to the heaven of infinite consciousness in the formless realm, all [beings] use grasping to consciousness as their food. 「四識食」，識以執持為義，即第八識也。由前三勢分所資，能令此識增勝執持諸根，故名識食(第八識即藏識也。按『翻譯名義』註釋云：「識食，地獄眾生及無色界中無邊識處天等，皆用識持以為其食」。339

This brief survey of Chinese Buddhist encyclopedias regarding the reception in Chinese Buddhist thought of Four Foods doctrine has shown a trend of adoption and dissemination. The doctrine remained of interest to Chinese Buddhist thinkers for the periods covered, sixth through fifteenth centuries.

While old sources of Four Foods doctrine translated from Indic texts would have remained available, newer Chinese sources such as Chengguan’s subcommentary also

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339 CBETA gives the Daming sanzang faobu discussion of Four Foods in the Northern Yongle Edition of the Canon, P181 n1615, juan 15, 872b02-873a05.
served to spread the doctrine. The doctrine remains fairly consistent across these sources, though later sources de-emphasize the view, detailed in the *Zhengfa nianchu jing*, that each category of food can be associated with a particular type of rebirth, such as sensory or “contact” food being associated with rebirth as an egg-born animal. Over time, Chinese appear to pay more attention to the notions couched in Yogācāra theory, which offer more constructive perspectives on the nature of human desires. It is often commented that the Chinese tend to be more pragmatic in their religious engagements, in contrast with the theoretical musings of Indian religion. The case of Four Foods doctrine appears to illustrate a case of gradual evolution of doctrine toward more practical ends.

4.4 Chapter conclusions

I began this chapter by posing the question of what "food" is in Chinese Buddhist thought and practice. If seeking to understand food and Buddhism, we must clarify how Buddhist authors define and discuss food.

In the Chinese Buddhist sources surveyed in this chapter—a set of Buddhist encyclopedias spanning the sixth through fifteenth centuries—'food' is not only material foodstuffs (*duanwei* 段食), but also several additional categories of things that nourish sentient beings. Buddhist doctrine posits Four Foods, which include (also) nourishment gained from sensation (*chuwei* 触食), cognition (*siwei* 思食), and consciousness (*shiwei* 識食). Each of these four is connected with a notion of yearning or appetite, which can become deleterious if not properly managed.

This doctrinal position on food has profound implications for how Buddhists understand the nourishment and soteriology of the individual. For example, arguments for avoiding meat-eating do not emphasize sacred status for animal foods, but rather point to the attitudinal risks of eating meat—it is likely to interfere with development of a compassionate attitude, the cornerstone of Buddhist notions of soteriology. Attitude and other intentional thought activities are considered moral actions with karmic
consequences and are thus a ‘food’ in their own right. Buddhist doctrine places greater emphasis on attitude than on specific acts, and cares less about the objects of consumption than the intentions behind their use. The doctrine of Four Foods helps justify this position by showing that individuals are also stimulated toward growth (or degeneration) through sensory and cognitive interaction with the world, and not just through the status of consumed material foods. Consciousness, the fourth food, serves to bind together perceptual awareness (i.e., awareness of smells, sights, sounds, etc.) into a unified mental state that also entails a yearning appetite and counts among the Four Foods.

My introduction to this chapter posed several questions associated with the doctrine of Four Foods in Chinese Buddhism. I will now return to each one for some brief discussion. One of these questions was whether the doctrine of Four Foods is to be understood as a metaphor or is to be taken literally. I think the most sensible way to answer this question is to affirm that the latter three foods of the set are metaphorical extensions based on the most familiar notion of food: material food. Nonetheless, Buddhist proponents of Four Foods doctrine do appear to convey that nourishment of sentient beings takes place on all four of these levels—the factuality of an appetite and potential for nourishment is common to each of the four. Whether we see all four as true forms of nourishment or as analogies depends on one's linguistic and cultural perspective and is perhaps a moot point.

A second question is whether there is evidence that Chinese Buddhists interpreted the doctrine differently from what we read in early Indian sources. Based on a literature review of scholarship making use of Indian and Tibetan sources, as well as a survey of Chinese statements on Four Foods doctrine in Chinese Buddhist encyclopedias, I found that the doctrine has always been difficult enough to inspire creative interpretation throughout its history, but that Chinese interpretations of the doctrine do not appear to significantly change its nature. If any difference can be discerned, that would be a possible increase in the emphasis on the negative valence of the Four Foods, which because they are grounded in the appetites of worldly yearning hold potential for moral corruption. If not approached skillfully, each of these foods can
ensnare sentient beings in ignorance and greed, perpetuating cyclical rebirth and suffering.

The problem of valence was itself one of our questions. Some statements on the Four Foods sound matter-of-fact in tone: these are the things that sustain sentient beings in the human realm, the realm of desire. Numerous sources hint at the negative valence of the Four Foods by noting that only the realm of desire has material (“morsel”) food, while the form and formless realms have only the other three. A vertical hierarchy is implied in the ordering of these three realms and in the heavens associated with the upper two realms, where (we are told) beings often take joy in meditation as their food.

At this point we might conclude that we are born into the circumstances, such as being human, that will determine how we eat. Still, not just the kind of being—whether hell dweller, animal, human, or heavenly deva—but also the actions and intentions (karma) of our previous lives determine to a large extent how we will eat. In the overview of food themes in Chapter Three, we saw already this emphasis on the role of karma in eating. This, then, is the basis for the hierarchy of foods. Karma is at play, especially, in thought food, the cognitive activity that shapes our intentions and projects our moral status into the future. And the clustering of our perceptual awareness into a unified sense of self is a realization of our past actions, the moment that our karmic careers break as waves on the shore of our awareness.

The negative valence of the Four Foods does suggest a potential bifurcation of eating into a symbolic system with a vertical hierarchy akin to the notion of the sacred and profane, but the Buddhist system is focused on the moral status of the beings in question, and not on dividing foods into those that are sacred or profane. Taboo, the pet concept of scholars of food and religion, has almost no role in the doctrine of Four Foods. 540

The shift between profane and sacred, if there is one, is not made through treating something in the world as sacred, but rather by applying skill in neutralizing the

540 Except in the *Shoulengyan jing*, where a discussion of Four Foods doctrine very suddenly swings into a polemic against the eating of the five pungent vegetables, telling us that people who eat such stinky foods will lose the patronage of guiding deities, attract hungry ghosts, and perhaps even fall into hell. This
dangers inherent in the appetites associated with the Four Foods. Each of the Four Foods has positive potential to nourish something. Material food nourishes the body (and the brain contained therein). Sensory food nourishes the emotional mind, our sometimes-subconscious reactions to environmental stimulation. Cognitive food nourishes our attitudes and constitutes, as actions, our moral status (projecting our karmic careers). Consciousness food nourishes our perceptual awareness into patterns that coalesce into a sense of self. Though the materials surveyed in this chapter have not made explicit the dark side of the Four Foods, we can easily see how these appetites can swing out of balance and produce common vices: gluttony, hedonism, maleficence, and egoism. Skillfully engaged, the body and mind are nourished appropriately, giving expression to Buddhist virtues: equanimity, moderation, generosity, and humility in the awareness that the self is an aggregate of different perceptions. This view derived from Four Foods doctrine shows remarkable agreement with the major themes culled, in Chapter Three, from Yichu’s section on the topic of food.

This brings us to the final question that I posed at the beginning: whether nourishment from the joy in meditation is to be understood as part of the food of consciousness or as a separate kind of nourishment. The answer is that traditionally it is separate. From the overview of Four Foods doctrine in the Fayuan zhulin, we read that the Zengyi aban jing proposes to place the Four Foods, which are foods of the human realm (renjian/wi 人間食), alongside and in opposition to another set of foods: foods for exiting the human realm (churenjian/wi 出人間食). This set of five foods has one term in common (thought food), but the others are distinct: foods of meditation, vows, joy, and of the eight emancipations. Buddhist practitioners are entreated to shift increasingly toward nourishment gained from this latter world-transcending set.

In conclusion, the doctrine of Four Foods in the Buddhist teachings encountered in this chapter have no immediate relevance to devotion to a deity, so sacrality and profanity have no basis here for associative mapping onto foods and into patterns of taboo. This is not to say that Chinese Buddhists did not adopt or invent taboos—they polemic feels out of place with other discussions of Four Foods doctrine, supporting the notion that the Shoulengyan jing departs from the traditional literature and is likely apocryphal.
did. What I mean here is that the interest Chinese Buddhist authors showed for the Yogācāra doctrine of Four Foods allowed them to place notions of food and eating into a psychological frame, rather than into an arbitrary symbolic system. The emphasis then falls on food as a mode of nourishment, rather than a source of pollution. Like other religions, eating is viewed as a potential source of moral pollution, but the solution is not ritual management (in this doctrinal view). At least at a theoretical level, this Buddhist doctrine espouses an engagement with food that neutralizes the dangers of appetite by offering skillful responses to their push and pull. These skillful responses include a set of alternative ‘foods’ posited as superior, in that through their consumption world-transcendence is more readily achieved. Does this not sound like bifurcation into sacred and profane? It is not, because in the Buddhist metaphor is not one of separation (in profanity) and return (to sacrality), but rather of gradual perfection of being through skilled cultivation of good dharmas over many lifetimes, until one finally achieves full awakening. This is a significant difference.

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341 This psychological frame is, of course, a particular understanding of human psychology that is colored by Buddhist doctrinal understandings. I do not mean to say that Buddhist and modern-day psychology should be equated, but only wish to point to some points of affinity.
5. The Celebration of Porridge 粥 in East Asian Buddhism

5.1 Chapter introduction

In the last chapter, I discussed how Buddhist teachings suggest a negative valence for the Four Foods of the kāma-dhatu, the realm of desire, because these four types of food all have a basis in desirous appetites. To mitigate the inherent troubles associated with desire for these four foods, each must be skillfully managed. Bringing the focus back to tangible material food (tuanshi/duanshi), I ask in this chapter whether Chinese Buddhist sources make any positive statements about this category of food. They do. I investigate below an instance of celebration for a particular food (porridge), and discuss its implications for how we understand Chinese Buddhist attitudes toward food and eating.

Defining porridge and framing the problem

In Chinese Buddhism, no food other than porridge粥 has the same historical depth and centrality in Buddhist literature. Porridge is the poster child of Buddhist discourse on food. By “porridge” I mean here the broader sense of the word, derived from “pottage:” a semi-liquid mush obtained by boiling grain (and sometimes legumes or other additions) in water or another liquid. “Congee” might also be an appropriate rendering in English, albeit less familiar to a general readership. In its basic form, porridge is just a common food, a starchy staple without much distinction, though it can

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This negative view of food was appended in one source with a supposedly untainted set of five additional ‘world-transcending’ foods, which include meditation and joyfulness.

Several terms are used for similar foods in Chinese, but the most common is zhou粥. All these terms, Chinese and English, are loosely applied to what amounts to a fuzzy category lacking clear definition. Porridge, as I understand it here, is a soupy liquid thickened by the starches of a grain (cereal). It may be thick or thin, may have other ingredients added or be plain, and may or may not contain salt. In contemporary China, it is usually prepared plain and unsalted from rice, millet, or other grain and served with various flavorful condiments. For related English terms, see Davidson and Jaine, Oxford Companion to Food, 210, 625, 630.
be made fancy with the addition of savory or sweet ingredients. Easy to make, easy to
digest, it is a food of the poor and the sick—and a favored food of Buddhists.

The Buddhist celebration of porridge is connected to the narrative of the Buddha’s
final awakening under a pipal tree at Bodhgaya, where he is said to have accepted an
offering of milk porridge from a young female villager named Sujātā. Yichu cites the
story of Sujātā’s gift under the topic of food 食 in his Shìshí liùtiè, where it appears
embellished with auspicious signs:

[53] The Buddha eats milk porridge. The Benxing jìng says, The Buddha’s
six years [of ascetic practices] completed, upon the arrival of spring in the
second month and on the sixteenth day he thought to himself, “I need good
food. After eating I will attain the fruit of awakening.” At the time there
was a low-level god who informed the favorably-born second daughter of the
village head, ordering her to make delicious food. The girl then took milk
from a thousand cows, mixing it together. When she took milk and simmered
porridge, the milk porridge manifested a sign, leaping out of the pot by
several chì, giving the appearance of ten thousand words—virtuous words.
She offered it to him in a golden alms bowl; the Buddha ate and attained
completion of the Way.

Often embellished with other miraculous occurrences, this story has multiple
versions, some ascribing the gift of porridge not to Sujātā but to two sisters, Nándā
and Nándabālā. Setting aside questions about the historicity of the story or its miracles,
we can understand the tellers of these tales to be using miraculous signs to mark these
events as having profound importance. As John Strong observes, the offering of milk
porridge marks the beginning of the process by which the Buddha achieves his

\[344\] For this episode see the Fo benxingji jìng T3 n190 771b02-772b16.
\[345\] Reading 已 as 已.
\[346\] Compare, for example, Mitchell, Buddha, 39–40, and Strong, Experience of Buddhism, 20–21.
awakening. The richly condensed milk porridge is supposed to be an especially nutritious meal that will sustain him for the following forty-nine days, a liminal period in which he takes no more food as he transitions from a truth-seeker to a buddha, one who is fully awakened.\footnote{Strong, Buddha, 69.} Having abandoned aristocratic luxury to practice austerities as a mendicant, the Buddha-to-be takes this meal in abandonment, in turn, of asceticism, which he recognizes as a failed approach to the release of suffering. The meal of milk porridge thus represents the beginnings of the Buddha’s Middle Way, a moderate discipline that rejects the extremities of hedonism and asceticism.\footnote{Mitchell (Donald), Buddhism, 17.}

This narrative of the Buddha’s awakening frames the specialness of porridge in the context of history. Buddhists in different parts of the world continue to make a special meal of porridge to commemorate the Buddha’s final awakening.\footnote{For one example, see Strong, Buddha, 69. Later in the chapter I will discuss Chinese and Japanese examples.} This suggests some parallels between Buddhist porridge and the bread of the Christian Eucharist, but porridge is not as clearly demarcated by sacred status.\footnote{In drawing a comparison between the bread of the Christian Eucharist and Buddhist porridge, we have to differentiate between a ritual or symbolic context and an ordinary context. Bread was a common food in Biblical times, just as porridge was a common food in India and China. Nonetheless, parallels between the two break down on close scrutiny, because Buddhist statements on porridge show more interest in its inherent qualities and only some interest in its symbolic meaning within Buddhist lore. I do not intend to work out details of the comparison here, but merely provide it as a conceptual point of reference for understanding the significance of porridge in the Buddhist context.} Buddhist discourse on porridge does not declare it to be the body of the Buddha and its commonality did not allow Buddhists to readily construct a cultural identity around the eating of porridge; they could have no monopoly on this ancient and ubiquitous food. History—or legend—clearly contributes much to the Buddhist celebration of porridge, but Chinese Buddhists appear to have adopted it also on the basis of its own virtues.

We cannot draw a clean line here between a doctrinal religious knowledge and empirical forms of knowledge. This is exactly what a social constructivist framing of the specialness of food in religion tends to do: it shows how food in religion becomes a tool for constructing social identities by coordinating points in a symbolic system,\footnote{Cf. Durkheim, Elementary Forms of Religious Life, 56, 40, 46; Douglas, Purity and Danger, 2-5.} but it stops short of accepting religious knowledge as encompassing empirical knowledge of the world. If Buddhists treat porridge as special merely for its historical role in the
narrative of the Buddha’s awakening, then the choice of porridge is indeed arbitrary and is little more than a cultural detail. This is the view that appears to hold sway in academia today. I find reason to question this view.

I will argue that Buddhists thinkers grounded their celebration of porridge not just in the historical narrative, but in a working knowledge of porridge as food. The Buddhist celebration of porridge is no accident of religious history. I would like to suggest that the nature of discussions of porridge in Buddhist contexts provides evidence that Buddhist knowledge encompasses forms of knowledge associated with empirical observation of physiological, medical, and nutritional concerns. There is no clear line drawn in Buddhism between properly religious and non-religious knowledge.

5.2 Porridge in Buddhist mealtime liturgy

There is no shortage of evidence that porridge was and is important in the history of Buddhism. In August of 2015 I had the opportunity to share meals with the monastic community at Lingyin si 灵隐寺 in Hangzhou, a well-known Chan Buddhist monastery. The mealtime liturgy that the community chanted on mornings when porridge was served (which was frequent) included a special line for the occasion: "Porridge has ten benefits. It profits those on the path (i.e., Buddhist practitioners). Its fruits of karmic return are without limit, [leading] ultimately to permanent bliss. 粥有十利，饒益行人。果報無邊，究竟常樂。" 553

This strong praise for porridge is not raising up porridge as sacred, saying that it is a holy food only permitted in such and such an occasion. Rather, the praise posits benefits from porridge and suggests that it is especially good for practitioners of the Buddhist path, helping to lead them to better karmic returns and finally to the bliss of nirvana. The ten benefits are not here spelled out, but I will show in a moment that at least a

552 “Retribution” has a negative connotation—the nuance here should be neutral.
553 Lingyin si, Fojiao niansong ji, 114.
portion of them reference physiological processes. The praise for porridge, then, contains both doctrinal and practical elements.

The doctrinal elements suggest that porridge is a good tool for practitioners to orient themselves toward Buddhism’s ultimate aim, which is awakening to the bliss of nirvana. Porridge helps practitioners skillfully walk the Buddhist path, the law of moral causation leading them out of unfavorable circumstances. As we shall see, porridge came to be associated in Chinese Buddhism with positive moral activities: cultivating greater and greater levels of compassion, wisdom, and other Buddhist virtues, while helping other sentient beings to do similarly.

What, then, are the benefits of porridge? The ‘ten benefits of porridge’ is a common formula in Chinese Buddhism and in the Buddhism from other East Asian regions that borrowed from Chinese models. This customary formula appears in Yichu’s Buddhist encyclopedia, so let us next look at it there.

5.3 The ten benefits of porridge in the *Shišhi liutie*

In Yichu’s *Shišhi liutie* porridge is the third topic of his section on food, coming after alcohol 酒 and food 食, but before rice 飯, soup 羹, and wheat-flour products 餅, among others. This prominent position is likely significant, showing a heightened status for porridge. Yichu’s citations on porridge exhibit at least three major themes: an emphasis on the practical benefits of porridge, a tradition of giving porridge to the saṃgha, and the notion that porridge is an ancient and respectable food.

I will take up first the practical benefits of porridge, which Yichu presents through the formula just mentioned:

*Porridge has ten benefits.* The *Sifenlì* says, Giving porridge to the saṃgha secures ten beneficial merits: (1) [healthful] appearance, (2) strength, (3) longevity, (4) joy, (5) eloquence, (6) removal of indigested foods and (7) of wind [pathologies], (8) [elimination of] hunger and (9) of thirst, and (10)
According to Yichu’s citation, the benefits are obtained through karmic recompense, rather than directly through physiological action, yet the benefits appear to have been conceived as a listing of positive health outcomes noted by those with experience in eating porridge. His next entry on porridge suggests that vinaya literature recognized physiological benefits as directly associated with the eating of porridge:

There are eight types of porridge. The Shiwoong lists [these]: 1) butter, 2) oil, 3) sesame, 4) milk, 5) small bean, 6) ground [bean] powder, 7) hemp seed, and 8) plain porridge. [These] can have five benefits: Elimination of hunger and thirst, calming (of temper or excitement), removal of chill, and [good] digestion of food.

5.3.1 Benefits of porridge and the question of causation

The ten benefits of porridge may have begun as a list of five. The Pali canon contains a short statement on the benefits of porridge, the Yāgu-sutta, in the Anguttara-Nikāya. As translated for the Pali Text Society by E. M. Hare, the statement reads,

‘Monks, there are these five advantages from gruel. What five?
It checks hunger, keeps off thirst, regulates wind, cleanses the bladder, and digests raw remnants of food.
Verily, monks, these are the five advantages of gruel.’

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354 See Furuyama, “‘Shukuyūjūrī’kō,” for a strong case in favor of the reading given here. A more logical placement of breaks, suggested in the Shiibishi yōdan, would divide ciqingbian into two terms and place xiao as part of jike, but Furuyama shows that such a reading is not in accord with Pali sources. Nonetheless, we might ask whether the ‘correct’ reading is the one that accords best with early sources, or the one that most Chinese adopted as standard. Since Yichu did not supply punctuation or otherwise comment, we cannot know his preference for where to place the breaks.

355 Variant 台+辛.

356 This content cited by Yichu can be found in the Shiwoong lī: T25 n1435, 188c14-21.

357 Hare, Book of the Gradual Sayings, p.183. Translation of the Yāgu-sutta is in v.3 of the Pali Text Society’s complete translation of the Anguttara Nikāya. It is contained in the Book of Fives, chapter 21 "Kimbila," topic #7 (#207 in the cumulative count for the Book of Fives).
This list of advantages has close parallels with Yichu’s list from the *Shiwong lü* of five benefits, above, suggesting that Chinese Buddhist literature absorbed from Indic sources the notion of five physiological benefits, even if no ‘porridge sūtra’ (*粥經*) can be found translating the Pali statement word for word. The third and fourth terms from Hare’s translation do not closely match the Chinese in Yichu’s list, producing a discrepancy of interpretation. I will not take time here to investigate this discrepancy, but we should note that the notion of five benefits from eating porridge likely fed into the historical development of the formula of ten benefits. My immediate concern here is understanding why the benefits are sometimes associated with the giving of porridge and sometimes with its consumption. Both the *Shiwonglì* and the *Yāgu-sutta* list material (physiological) benefits, which is significant. If only karmic benefits were recognized, then the specialness of porridge would have to rest on a purely symbolic (doctrinal) foundation.

Furuyama Ken’itsu has published a detailed study on the ‘ten benefits of porridge’, taking as his point of departure Sōtō-school founder Dōgen’s (1200-1253) interpretation of the list, which, due to the lack of punctuation in literary-Chinese texts, retained an element of ambiguity regarding how to divide the ten terms. Furuyama’s purpose is to clarify the parsing issue, but in the course of his study he cites passages in which porridge is understood as benefiting the eater, rather than the donor. While my purpose here diverges from his, his literature review can help us gauge the prevalence of karmic and physiological interpretations. For example, he cites Changlu Zongze’s 長蘆宗賾 (d. ca. 1107) influential set of monastic codes, the *Chanyuan qinggui*, which adds to the mealtime liturgy for porridge (cited above) another phrase: “Porridge is great medicine, capable of removing hunger and thirst, causing [people] to reap morality (Skt. śīla) and together obtain the highest path…粥是大良藥，能消飢渴，施受獲清涼，共成無上道.”

Zongze thus gives porridge status as medicine, with benefits going to its eaters (understood here as members of the saṃgha).

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58 Furuyama, “‘Shukuyū jūri kō.’” 167.
Zongze’s monastic codes represent one of the earlier adaptations of the *vinaya* teachings to local Chinese conditions, yet in these Northern-Song codes arrive on the scene only after many centuries of Chinese Buddhism. We have to look earlier if we hope to understand what sources may have influenced Chinese Buddhist statements on porridge. A useful early source is the *Mohe sengqi lü 摩訶僧祇律* (Skt. Mahāsāṃghika vinaya, monastic codes of the Mahāsāṃghika school of Buddhism), translated to Chinese during the Eastern Jin dynasty (317-420):

...At that time the World-Honored One spoke a verse of invocation: “Received in two hands by pure people upholding the precepts, respectfully according with the time for porridge to be given; ten benefits profit those on the path: [healthful] appearance, strength, longevity, joy, eloquence, removal of indigested foods and of wind [pathologies], [elimination of] hunger and of thirst, and [benefits to] digestion.” These names are what was spoken by the Medicine Buddha (Skt. Bhaiṣajyaguru). If wanting to be born in the human heavens and obtain everlasting joy, then one should give porridge to the samgha. ...

This passage states that the ten benefits profit practitioners who receive porridge.

Nonetheless, to say that Yichu’s citation on the ten benefits of porridge mistakes karmic and physiological causality would be overly hasty, since the passage from the Mahāsāṃghika vinaya also indicates a reciprocity of benefit associated with the gift of porridge: the donor gains merit from the gift and may be born in heavens of everlasting joy. Two forms of causality are at play here: material and karmic. Yichu’s conflation of the two seems like a corruption, but there is still another explanation.

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359 Following Furuyama, “Shukuyūjūri’kō.” I have chosen not to add full punctuation to the verse, because the breaks remain an issue worthy of debate. I do not want to distract from my purpose here, which is to investigate whether sources connect physiological benefit with the eating of porridge.

360 T22 n1425, 462c19-24.
Let’s return to Furuyama, who in order to investigate the problem of how to parse porridge’s ten benefits consults a Pali edition of monastic codes, *Mahāvagga-pāli*, and provides a translation into Japanese, which I render here in English:\(^{561}\)

“…Oh, Brahmans, these ten are the benefits of porridge. What are the ten? One who gives porridge gives long life; gives [good] appearance; gives ease; gives strength; and gives eloquence. One who drinks porridge avoids starvation, removes thirst, adjusts the bodily winds, purifies the lower gut, and ripens (i.e., digests) any raw remaining [foods that sit undigested in the gut]. One who respectfully gives porridge according to the [proper] time to those who out of self-control eat what is given by others (i.e., one who feeds porridge to worldly renunciants) gives the basis for [all] ten. Long life, [good] appearance, ease, and strength—from these, to this person eloquence arises, hunger and thirst are removed, bodily winds [are adjusted], the lower gut is purified, and food is ripened (digested). This is the medicine praised by Sugata (the Buddha). Accordingly, if people seek ease, they should regularly give gifts of porridge…”\(^{562}\)

If Furuyama’s Japanese translation from Pali is accurate, the source represents the causality of the ten benefits as simultaneously material and karmic. An initial set of five benefits is associated with giving—this is karmic causality. Then a second set of five benefits is associated with the drinking of porridge—this is physiological causality. But then the two lists of five are brought together into a list of ten based on the logic of moral causation. Doctrinally, to give a material benefit is to set up oneself for a karmic return in kind, thus the person who gives porridge “gives the basis for all ten.” To give porridge to others is to obtain physiological benefits through the action of karma, the law of moral causation.

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\(^{561}\) I am not qualified to translate from the Pali, but those who are may see the next note.

\(^{562}\) I provide here the relevant Pali text, as cited by Furuyama (172), in case a reader wishes to check my English translation against the original: “…dasāyime, brāhmaṇa, ānisamsā yāgyā. katame dasa, yāgum dento ayum deti, vanāṃ deti, sukhaṃ deti, balaṃ deti, paṭibhānaṃ deti, yāgu pīṭa khuddaṃ paṭihanaṭi, pipāsaṃ vineti, vātaṃ anulometi, vatthiṃ sodheti, āmāvasesaṃ pāceti. ime kho, brāhmaṇa, dasānisamsā yāgyāyāti. / yo saññātānaṃ paradattaṭhoṇīnaṃ, kālāṇa sakkacca dādāti yāgum. / dasassa thānāṇi anupavvecchati, āyuṭaṇa vaṇāṇaṭa sukkhaṃ balaṭca. / paṭibhānāmassa upajāyate tato, khuddaṃ pipāsāṇca byapaneti vātaṃ. / sodheti vatthiṃ pariṇāmeti bhattam, bhesajjametaṃ sugatena vaṇṇitaṃ. / tasmaṃ yāgum alameva dātum, nīcmaṃ manussena sukhaṭṭhikenā. …” Furuyama cites as source the *Mahāvagga-pāli*, 6th collected edition from Myanmar, pp.315-316.
That porridge is here invested with physiological benefits is further emphasized by its status as medicine. To call porridge a medicine raises it above the status of basic food, tainted by the desires of appetite, to a special level of efficacy. Medicinal food not only satisfies appetites, but it heals problems in the body. Medicine is a necessity, in contrast with food’s potential of indulgent use—the two are distinguished by need versus want. The trope of medicine is widespread in Buddhist writings and serves here to confer a positive valence to porridge.

A last observation on this Pali passage is that the intended audience appears to be the elite members of society who were in a position to patronize Buddhist renunciants. The passage addresses the brahmin (“brāhmaṇa”) varna, the priestly class of Indian society. This is significant for understanding the use of the doctrine of karma as a way to extend the benefits of porridge from the eaters to the donors. Rather than simply asking donors to give porridge to the saṃgha, Buddhist authors sent out a doctrinally reasoned statement: “By benefiting us with porridge, you are benefitting yourselves.” This is a much more sophisticated way to encourage the giving of porridge. Because Indian Buddhism was a religion of renunciation that relied on elite patrons for the feeding of the saṃgha, the Buddhist community could not directly act on food preferences. I believe that this social dynamic explains why some Buddhist authors do not directly list the benefits of porridge in strictly material terms.

5.3.2 The Wufubao jing and moral causation

This strategy of encouraging the giving of food to the samgha by emphasizing karmic returns for donors is not limited to porridge. In the Chinese Buddhist canon, the logic of this position is detailed in a short sutra called the Foshuo shishi huo wufubao jing

佛說食施獲五福報經 (Sutra Spoken by the Buddha on the Five Blessings Reaped

Salguero, Translating Buddhist Medicine in Medieval China, 1-2, 12, 67-95.
from the Bestowal of Food, hereafter “Wufubao jing”). Under the topic of food 食, Yichu cites this sutra (and the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise) as sources for the notion that five blessings are associated with food:

[31] **Food furnishes the five blessings.** The Wufu jing records [the following]: Obtain a marvelous and strong appearance, prosperity, joy, long life, [and] eloquence. The Juwe [lun] also says, Obtain a marvelous appearance, reputation, people’s admiration, a soft and flexible body, and be at all times in comfort (sukha-saṃsparśa).

食施五福『五福經』云：得妙強色
、富、樂、寿命、詞辯。又『俱舎』云：得妙色、好名、衆愛、柔軟身、有隨時樂觸也。

The five blessings from the Wufubao jing match five of the ten benefits of porridge, suggesting doctrinal overlap.

Yichu does not clarify whether these blessings are obtained physiologically or through karmic causation, but the Wufubao jing speaks of these two modes of causation as intimately connected and places greater emphasis on moral causation. This relationship becomes clear only when the opening to the sutra and the discussion of individual blessings are considered together—below I include up to discussion of the first blessing, to illustrate integration of the two modes of moral causality in the giving of food:

Thus have I heard: At one time, the Buddha was at [the park] Jetavana Anāthapiṇḍada-ārāma in Śrāvastī. The Buddha addressed the monks, “When

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364 This is T2 n132, 854c05-855a11. Two editions have been entered into the Chinese canon, both coming from the Records of the Eastern Jin 東晉錄. I am using the first: 132A. The name of the translator has been lost. See my appendix for a full translation of 132A.

365 From verse in the Apidamo jiuobelun T29 n1558, 96b01-2:

財異由色等 得妙色好名
衆愛柔軟身 有隨時樂觸

(This is in a discussion that appears to use theory of karma to address how differences in wealth and whatnot arise. I cannot yet tell if Yichu was justified in interpreting these as benefits accruing to people who give food offerings to the saṃgha. See Cited by Yichu folder.)

366 The character is cramped down against bottom border line and unclear. FCJ edition gives 隨, which seems probable.

367 See Appendix 6 for my full translation of the Wufubao jing.
you know to eat in moderation, you can receive [food] without harm.” The Buddha said, “When people take rice food and offer it to [other] people, there are five advantageous virtues that make (help) people attain the Way. If the wise settle into a broadminded view, then they will reap the five blessings. What are the five? One is the bestowal of life; two is the bestowal of [good] appearance; three is the bestowal of strength; four is the bestowal of ease; and five is the bestowal of wit.”

“What is meant by the bestowal of life? When people do not obtain food, their facial complexion is wan and sallow and [their vitality] cannot be vividly manifested. Before the passage of seven days their lives abruptly end. Because of this, the wise do a bestowal of food, this bestowal of food in turn bestowing life. This bestowal of life [allows them], in life after life, good longevity and birth into heavens or human society (i.e., favorable birth); their lifespan extends, they do not suffer early death, they naturally receive advantageous rewards, and their riches are without measure. This is the ‘bestowal of life.’”

Discussion of the latter four blessings follows a similar pattern, wherein the physiological benefits of food are recognized, but moral causation is proposed as the more desirable point of intervention. The wise bestow food to others in order to bestow the five blessings, that they may experience a benefit in kind, if not in this life, at least in lives to come. This long view of the transmigration of beings from life to life is the greater concern in Buddhism, so there should be no surprise that moral causation
receives here greater emphasis than physiological benefit. Nonetheless, we must note that without the observation of physiological benefit, all discussion of the blessings obtained from giving food would be illogical. Belief in the physiological benefits of food is a necessary condition for the doctrine of the five blessings obtained from food donations.

To summarize, it seems the list of ten benefits from porridge resulted from the amalgamation of two traditions. The list of five blessings such as we see in the Wufubao jing was understood as karmic recompense for food donations to the saṃgha, in contrast with the list of direct physiological benefits contained in the Yāgu-sutta. Because porridge was closely associated with food donation, the two lists were brought together to form a list of ten benefits, creating ambiguity on the question of causality.

5.3 Chinese Buddhist institutions and food donations

Returning to Yichu’s Chinese context, we should note that Buddhists came to rely on communal meals in monastic mess halls, and that the begging practices of Indian Buddhism (as a religion of renunciation) never took hold. Because donated foods could be stored in monastic kitchens until needed, Chinese Buddhists had more control over their diet and had less need to appeal to their patrons for gifts of preferred foods, such as porridge. They could make their own porridge from the grain they received. They had less reason to persuade donors that gifts of porridge—rather than uncooked rice—would benefit them through moral causation.

Nonetheless, the same doctrinal logic of the moral causality of food gifts remained relevant in Chinese Buddhism. Yichu’s overview of porridge includes the following:

First with Viṣākhā. The Sengqilü (Mahāsāṅghika-vinaya) says, when Mother Viṣākhā had attained sagehood, she was replete with meritorious virtues and was first to provide breakfast porridge for the saṃgha. 初毗舎伽

『僧祇律』云：毗舎伽母巳得聖果，具大福德，始為僧置開齋粥。

This citation suggests that the giving of porridge to the samgha is a tradition founded on virtue and superior merit—a position that surely helped donors to feel even better about the generous act. The message that faithful lay Buddhists, too, could attain great merit helps frame porridge as a food of mutual benefit.

Yichu thus perpetuated through his Buddhist encyclopedia the call for donations of porridge (or rice for porridge) to the samgha. Institutional changes in eating practice did not change the role of porridge as an ideal form of gifted food. Another of Yichu’s citations on porridge also frames it as a food to offer the samgha:

**Six kinds [of ingredient] made into porridge.** The *Wufen* [*lü*] says, There was a brahmin whose cart was loaded with offerings. Following the Buddha, he wanted to make offerings to the Buddha and samgha, but because of the prior invitations of various kings, great ministers, and elders, he was unable to obtain precedence. …The Buddha … had them cook porridge and give it to the samgha as a donated breakfast and lunch. The elder took butter, milk, oil, cheese, fish, and meat and cooked them at one time into porridge, presented it to the Buddha and returned home. 六種為粥『五分』云: 有婆羅門車載供物, 隨佛, 欲供養佛及僧衆, 被諸王、大臣、長者先請, 不得次第. …佛…令將煮粥與僧, 開齋福與齋等. 長者將蘇、乳、油、酪、⿂魚、肉一時煮粥, 施佛而歸.

This narrative shows people on different tiers of elite society taking turns to present their food offerings to the samgha. Viewed this way, the giving of porridge is hardly about filling basic needs but is more centrally focused on merit building. If the porridge provided by even this socially outcompeted brahmin was so richly composed of dairy, fish, and meat, then what of the meals offered by kings? By Yichu’s time, the tenth-century, Chinese Buddhists had largely adopted vegetarianism as a monastic norm, so this narrative must have struck Yichu’s contemporary readers as luxurious feasting.

Even if ideas such as attitudes toward eating meat were revised by Chinese Buddhist authors, the accretionary nature of Buddhist teachings has meant that old ideas remained part of the intellectual milieu, even as new ideas emerged on the scene. In
Chinese Buddhism, porridge has remained a trope for prosocial caring grounded in the longstanding relationship between lay supporters and a dependent saṃgha. The ambiguity over whether porridge (or other foods) held benefits for donors or for eaters among the saṃgha may have been, for scholars such as Yichu, a moot point. Due to karma, both parties benefit from gifted food. The claim that porridge is good food with physiological benefits appears to be accepted in either case, and we can see that this claim is intimately connected with the longstanding practice of giving porridge to the saṃgha.

5.3.4 Porridge as an ancient Chinese food

Finally it is time to turn to the last major theme of Yichu’s citations on porridge: the idea that porridge is a time-honored food. Yichu’s Shiōhi liutie is, as I argued in Chapter Two, properly understood as Buddhist, in that it is a presentation of teachings of the “Śākya clan.” The title references the Buddhist community of monks and nuns, the saṃgha. Those who in China leave home for the Buddhist path adopt the surname Shi 釋, abbreviated from Shijia 释迦 (Śākya), and are thus considered members of the clan of the Buddha 释氏. Yichu’s choice, then, to cite a statement on porridge from the Book of Zhou (Zhoubu) stands out as a departure from the Buddhist literature:

**Zhanzhou miyu (porridge).** The Zhoubu says, The Yellow Emperor first cooked grain to make zhouni, which is porridge. [He] also exchanged (traded) zhan, which is thick porridge. Adding “nu” to [the term zhouni] is redundant. "粥粥糜鬻『周書』曰: 黄帝始烹穀為粥糜, 即粥也. 又貨易粥, 即厚粥也. 糜加之餘也."

The passage acknowledges a Chinese mythological belief that the Yellow Emperor originated the practice of making porridge. Yichu’s inclusion of this passage in his brief overview of Buddhist ideas about porridge seems calculated, but toward what end?

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369 Variant or damaged character. I do not find an exact match in DCCV, but the extant form of the character and the context point toward peng 煮.
Perhaps the assumption that porridge is a Chinese food was so strong in his day that he felt compelled to forestall potential objections from his Chinese readers encountering the notion that porridge is native to the Indian Buddhist context. I think it is more likely, however, that this recognition was meant to help the status of Buddhism in Chinese society by showing that a preferred food of Buddhists is none other than the familiar porridge known in China since prehistory. The sameness is emphasized by saying that the mi in *zhoumi* is redundant: *zhoumi* is just *zhou*, porridge. Yichu makes no effort to say that Buddhist porridge is special, that it is made differently, that it distinguishes Buddhists from non-Buddhists in China. Quite to the contrary, Yichu seems to be saying that Buddhist porridge is just porridge (*zhou*), a food with a parallel celebration in China.

By this logic, porridge is not culturally special to Chinese Buddhists as an exotic cultural object imported with Indian Buddhism. It garners celebration through historical, doctrinal, and ritual contexts—that is, through its modes of use in Buddhism—but it is recognized as having intrinsic, tangible benefits. Buddhist notions of the specialness of porridge are grounded in a belief in its inherent worth.

5.4 Commemorative porridge

Belief in the intrinsic worth of porridge has helped keep it in monastic meals for centuries. And porridge is by no means only a monastic food in China—Taiwanese scholar CHEN Yuanpeng published a history of porridge in China that says nothing of Buddhist porridge.\(^{370}\) Porridge figures prominently in the history of medicine in China, and in cultural history, becoming especially popular as a healthful food from the Song dynasty (960–1279) onward.\(^{371}\) Chen observes that porridge was celebrated in medical literature before the Song, but because of the relatively late rise in its widespread popularity, it seems probable that Buddhists could have had a role in boosting

\(^{370}\) Chen, *Zhou de lishi*.

\(^{371}\) Ibid., 93.
awareness of porridge, much as they did with tea. In any case, both Buddhist and Chinese medical sources are in agreement that porridge has inherent merits. At the time that Yichu wrote his Buddhist encyclopedia, porridge would have been just on the cusp of a broad popularization, if Chen’s assessment is correct.

How did the Buddhist celebration of porridge influence East Asian Buddhist practice? Yichu’s citations help us understand that Chinese Buddhist teachings perpetuated a celebration of porridge in Chinese society, but there is evidence that this celebration also entered other parts of East Asia. For example, Chinese Buddhist models led to the introduction to Japan of practices and beliefs regarding porridge. Myōan Eisai (1141-1215), a Japanese Tendai (Ch. Tiantai) monk who is credited with introducing Rinzai (Ch. Linji) Zen Buddhism to Japan, wrote in praise of mulberry porridge in his treatise on the medical benefits of tea and mulberry, the *Kissa yōjōki* 啖茶養生記. And his contemporary, Dōgen (1200-1253), who established Sōtō (Ch. Caodong 曹洞) Zen practices in Japan after visiting China, included in his monastic codes, the *Eihei shingi* 永平清規, a chapter titled “The method for attending breakfast and lunch” (*fu shuku ban pō* 赴粥飯法), which uses “porridge” as a metonym for breakfast and “rice” as a metonym for lunch. Such was the basic pattern of meals in East Asian monasteries following the Chinese model, a pattern that remains relevant today. Porridge is not required for breakfast, but it is common enough to warrant a special verse in the mealtime liturgy, as we saw earlier.

Though Buddhists have made porridge a regular part of monastic life, there is also a special porridge served—for the Buddhist holiday now called *fabaojie* 法寶節—in the

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373 If Chen is judging popularity on the basis of porridge appearing in literati writings, we should question whether earlier use may have been widespread but not discussed. The transition from Tang to Song ushered in new standards for what literati could write. Improvements in woodblock print technology at the time of this transition also helped broaden the scope of what could be published, leading to a proliferation of recorded knowledge on many aspects of life, including food. The proliferation of texts in the Song gives the impression that many things did not become popular until this time, but it may just be that literati were not writing about them until the Song. Chen’s slim history of porridge provides a useful outline, but lacunae such as Buddhist porridge suggest that it is not an authoritative history.
twelfth lunar month to commemorate the meal eaten by the Buddha just before his awakening under the pipal tree at Bodhgaya. In the cultural translations of this commemorative porridge, we can glimpse yet another example of how the specialness of Buddhist porridge remains grounded in practical knowledge rather than a dogmatism based on doctrinal precedent. In the Indian context this porridge begins as a milk porridge: rice and milk boiled down together into a richly nutritious food. In the legend of the Buddha’s awakening, the milk porridge is described as being especially concentrated—sixteen times reduced, according to some accounts.\textsuperscript{374} Having weakened his body through self-inflicted austerities, Gautama recognized the need to rebuild his strength, so he accepted the offering of this rich food. The specialness of this particular porridge, then, is not just that it was made with milk rather than water, and not just that it was eaten by Gautama just before his final awakening. This porridge is special because it is highly nutritious. I do not intend to argue anachronistically that ancient Indian and Chinese Buddhists had a nutritional science akin to that of our modern day,\textsuperscript{375} but I do wish to suggest that Buddhists have placed emphasis on the nourishing aspect of this particular porridge.

5.4.1 Milk, mold, and beans: making porridge special in the right way

In parts of China, milk products have not always been available—or even desirable—to members of the saṃgha. The commemorative porridge was given a new form in China and then further reinterpreted in Japan. This process of cultural reinterpretation led to some confusion regarding the ingredients in the commemorative porridge.

For example, an English translation of the \textit{Chixiu Baizhang qinggui}, monastic regulations for the Chan school of Buddhism compiled shortly after 1333 during the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368), lists under the twelfth lunar month the following event: “Eighth Day: The Commemorative Day of the Buddha’s Enlightenment. The

\textsuperscript{374} Strong, \textit{Experience of Buddhism}, 20.
administrative office beforehand prepares special rice gruel cooked with red beans.\textsuperscript{376} "The Taishō edition of the monastic codes used for this translation are in fact much more terse: “Twelfth month. Eighth day. Buddha obtained the Way. The administrative office beforehand prepares hongzao. 十二月 初八日 佛成道. 庫司預造紅糟."\textsuperscript{377}

The term in question is hongzao, literally “red lees.” In modern usage this is rice fermented by addition of a starter culture known in English by the misinformed translation “red yeast rice,” an attempt to directly translate the name of its dried form, hongqumi 紅曲米 (紅麴米/紅麴米). Qu 曲/麴/麹 should be understood as a mold-based fermenting agent, not as yeast (jiào 曹), though in practice it was often contaminated with yeast.\textsuperscript{378} Hongzao is the wet ferment made by cultivating a red mold called Monascus purpureus\textsuperscript{379} on cooked rice, using a starter culture (the just-mentioned hongqumi). The mold breaks down the starches of the rice into simple sugars, which can be retained for sweetness or can be further fermented by yeast (Saccharomyces cerevisiae or a similar yeast) to create an alcoholic beverage. The process of using a mold to convert grain starches to simple sugars is the basis for much of the production of alcoholic beverages in Chinese history (and today), but Monascus purpureus is not the only mold for the task and does not seem to be preferred for alcohol production.\textsuperscript{380} Hongzao was used historically as a food additive for preserving meats and, at least since the Qing dynasty, has been used as a base to age fermented soy products.\textsuperscript{381} For example, a deep-red, savory condiment called [nan]furū [南]腐乳 is obtained by combining hongzao with fermented bean curd. Furū can translate as “fermented milk,” or “milk obtained from fermentation,” although the term could also have formed in

\textsuperscript{375} If indeed modern nutritional knowledge can be counted among the sciences. Some observers, such as Pollan, \textit{In Defense of Food}, are critical of the contributions of modern nutritional knowledge, saying these have done little to deliver the promise of a healthful approach to food.

\textsuperscript{376} Ichimura trans., \textit{Baizhbang Zen Monastic Regulations}, 407.

\textsuperscript{377} Chixiu Baizhang qingui, T48 n2025, 1155a24. The English translation is mine.

\textsuperscript{378} Huang and Needham, \textit{Science and Civilization in China}, v.6 p.5, 154.

\textsuperscript{379} Ibid., 280.

\textsuperscript{380} Aspergillus and Rhizopus species are more commonly employed in wine-making. See Huang and Needham, \textit{Science and Civilization in China}, v.6 p.5, 167.

\textsuperscript{381} Ibid., 202, 326-327.
association with Chinese cheese, *rufu* 乳腐 or *rubing* 乳餅. Either way, *furu* was viewed as an analog for milk or its derivatives. There are regional variations and different names for similar products, one of which is *zaodoufu* 糟豆腐, or bean curd combined with *zao*糟, lees from the fermenting process. I suspect that the appearance of *hongzao* in the Yuan monastic codes may have been for making *furu* or a similar condiment for porridge, but the case is hard to support with evidence. It is clear that we are dealing here with a class of fermented products, which could be used to impart a rich, savory flavor to bland dishes such as porridge.

How then did Ichimura, translator of the monastic codes just cited, interpret this as a special porridge (“gruel”) cooked with red beans? To answer this question, it is useful to consult the Japanese Zen monk Mujaku Dōchū (1653-1744[^382]), who was a great scholar of Chan (Zen) Buddhism. In his encyclopedic *Zenrin sbōkisen* 禪林象器戔 he takes up *hongzao* as a topic, citing the passage from the Yuan-dynasty Baizhang monastic codes that we just encountered, above, and discussing commentary on its interpretation:

> A commentator says that long ago, when the Buddha attained the Way, he followed a female herder, begging cow’s milk from her to drink. The *hongzao* of today is [used] to mimic the cow’s milk. It is not known what red product is added. *Hongzao* is also called *wenzao* (“warm ferment”). 解者曰：「昔佛成道，隨牧牛女乞牛乳喫，今紅糟學牛乳者也，未知加何紅物矣。紅糟或作温糟。」

Dōchū says: Given that the Tang pronunciation for 紅 was [defined by the initial phoneme of] 俱 and [the vowel of] 牟, and the Japanese character 俱 was similar to 字 [in form], it was mistakenly defined as [a combination of] 字 and 牟, hence the

[^382]: Some sources give 1745 as his year of death.
mispronunciation [of 紅糟] as wenzao 温糟.\footnote{Dōchū’s understanding of historical pronunciation does not appear to be supported by modern-day scholarship such as Pulleyblank, \textit{Lexicon of Reconstructed Pronunciation}, 125, 162, 219, 323, and 382. Nonetheless, Ding Fubao’s dictionary also says that wenzao is an erroneous rendering of hongzao: 誤紅糟為溫糟.} Wenzao 温糟 is a case of erroneous characters [produced on the basis of] erroneous pronunciation. 忠曰：按紅，唐音俱牟，而和字俱似字，故錯為字牟，仍(乃)作溫糟。温糟，訛音而訛字者。

Gidō [Shūshin 周信 \footnote{See Mochizuki, \textit{Bukkyō daijiten}, v.3, 2261.}] (1325-1388) writes in his [Kāge] nikkuwā, “Regarding the eating of hongzao on the eighth day of the twelfth month, people ask about the originating circumstances of hongzao. I reply that the female herder offered milk porridge to the World-Honored One and the hongzao of today is its legacy.” 義堂 『日工集』云：「十二月八日喫紅糟，有入聞紅糟緣起。余曰：牧牛女獻乳糜於世尊，今紅糟其遺意也。」

Dōchū says: Hongzao is none other than Five Flavor Porridge, eaten on the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month. The Kagakushū (a dictionary published 1444) says, “Hongtiao porridge is the adzuki bean porridge eaten on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month,” in which case the red [in hongzao] is the color of red [adzuki] beans, but the Kagakushū’s giving tiao 調 for zao 糟 is an error. I furthermore maintain that when fruit products and different grains are mixed together to make porridge, the white color of the rice is changed by these and is therefore called ‘red’. It is called zao (grain ferment) only because several flavors are combined. 忠曰：「紅糟卽五味粥也，臘八噉之。『下學集』云：「紅調粥，正月十五日所食赤豆粥也。」然則紅是赤豆色，『下學』糟作調，訛矣。余又謂：果品,
Dōchū comes to the conclusion that *hongzao* is a special porridge cooked with adzuki beans, mixed grains, and fruit products (i.e., dried fruit). It seems that in Japan this interpretation held sway, as the technique of fermenting rice with *Monascus purpureus* does not appear to have been transmitted along with the terminology from China.

Dōchū’s conclusion on the identity of *hongzao* is not simply cultural ignorance. His Chinese sources discuss a porridge popularly called “*labazhou* 腊八粥,” named after the Buddhist holiday on the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month (臘月), and cooked from “beans, fruit, and mixed grains 果果果豆米.” Dōchū was deeply interested in Buddhist porridge, beginning his chapter on eating and drinking with first a general discussion of porridge, then six other porridge-related topics, before turning to other topics not directly associated with porridge. In his survey of statements on Buddhist porridge, he cites sources such as the *Shiwen leiju* 事文類聚 that equate *labazhou* with a ‘seven-treasure, five-flavor porridge’ (Ch. qibao wuweizhou 七寳五味粥):

Those in the south dedicate the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month for Buddha-washing [ceremonies]. In the Eastern Capital of the imperial court, on the eighth day of the twelfth month, all the great temples of the city hold gatherings for washing the Buddha and give out a porridge of seven treasures and five flavors, calling it *labazhou*. 南方專用臘月八日灌佛。皇朝東京十二月初八日，都城諸大寺作浴佛會。並送七寳五味粥，謂之「臘八粥」。  

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385 This can be found in *Foguang dazang jing*: Chan zang 禪藏: zaji bu 雜集部; series 4, v.7, 1259-1260. If using another edition, go to the first chapter on eating and drinking, (Ch. yindanlei shang) 飲啖類上.

386 Dōchū cites Liu Tong’s 劉侗 (scholar status in 1634) *Dijing jingwu lue* 帝京景物略, a description of Ming-period Beijing. This citation comes right after the passages translated above: *Foguang dazang jing*: Chan zang: zaji bu; series 4, v.7, 1260.


The porridge described in the thirteenth-century Shiwen leiju is made from a variety of ingredients ("seven treasures 七寳") and is not specified as hongzao. A tradition of eating a ‘seven-treasure porridge’ (qibaozhou 七寳粥) is attested in various sources in late imperial China, such as Chen Jie’s 陳堦 Rishe pian 日涉篇 from 1611, where it is described as containing milk, mushrooms, walnuts, and lily—and to alternatively be called salted porridge, xianzhou 鹹粥. While not well attested in formal Buddhist writings, qibaozhou does have some scattered mentions in the recorded-sayings (yulu 語錄) literature of Chan and Zen Buddhism. The various porridges encountered in these sources—labazhou, wuweizhou, qibaozhou, and xianzhou—appear to be synonyms for a celebratory porridge eaten on the eighth day of the twelfth month. In China, different terms came to be used for a general practice that had no doctrinally specified name or recipe.

The Japanese interpretation of this celebratory porridge is consistent with a body of practice. Based on a broad survey of literary sources, Dōchū made a logical assessment on hongzao, returning attention to a vague but enduring Chinese Buddhist tradition. Nonetheless, Dōchū is still wrong to equate hongzao with this ‘five-flavor porridge’, for at least two reasons. First, the statement in the Chixiu Baizhang qinggui says that the administrative office is to make the hongzao beforehand (預造紅糟). This indicates a fermented product that needs time to culture, not a motley mix of beans, grains, mushrooms, walnuts, and such—ingredients that could be made in several hours into a large vat of porridge and distributed to a public crowd. Second, hongzao has a distinct cultural identity in China that is unambiguous. It was associated early on with the south of China, where rice was the staple food and basic material for fermenting alcohol, but it came to be widely known in China (even in the north) between the Song and the Yuan.

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389 Accessed through SS, the citation is on p.1406 of Yiwen yinshuguan, Suishi xisu ziliao huibian. Or if using another edition of the Rishe pian, see fascicle 12, shieryue er 十二月二, bari 八日.
dynasties, when the monastic codes encountered above (Chixiu Baizhang qinggui) were compiled.

5.4.2 Interpreting the presence of hongzao in the Chixiu Baizhang qinggui

Mention of hongzao in the Chixiu Baizhang qinggui is a rarity in Chinese Buddhist literature. A search of the Taishō canon of Buddhist texts, using the SAT Daizōkyō Text Database, reveals only the one instance from the Yuan-period monastic codes. A more comprehensive search using the CBETA collection shows only a modest number of hits, all occurring in recorded-sayings (yulu 語錄) literature of late imperial China (and in Japanese Zen). This presents us with an interpretive dilemma. Was hongzao rarely discussed because no one had any issues with its mention in the codes, or perhaps because it was hardly known in practice outside of the south of China?

That earlier monastic codes and other sources are silent on hongzao is actually no surprise, because prior to the Yuan dynasty there was little knowledge and interest in the red ferment using Monascus purpureus, which was still relatively new. Various Chinese Buddhist sources do, on the other hand, mention lees (zao or jiuzao 酒糟) more generally. There has long been a practice of using fermented grain, the byproduct of alcohol production, as a food ingredient, but this food was generally forbidden to tonsured Buddhists in monastic codes and associated commentaries. Daoxuan 道宣 (596-667), the influential Vinaya scholar-monk, wrote that “sweet-vinegar wines (i.e., crudely fermented alcoholic beverages) and the eating of the ferment culture or lees is to be considered jiluo 吉羅 (Skt. kṛta),” a misdemeanor. Even drained of wine, the lees would have contained some alcohol (jiuqi 酒氣), and for some food preparations the wine might be left in the lees. Because the products of fermentation (qu and zao) have

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390 Huang and Needham, Science and Civilization in China, v.6 p.5, 194.
391 Its use as a preservative and flavoring for meat is attested from as early as the 3rd and 4th centuries in China. Huang and Needham, Science and Civilization in China, v.6 p.5, 408.
the potential to inebriate people, they are generally considered off limits to Buddhists, so we have reason to wonder by what logic the Yuan-period monastic codes justified the making of hongzao in a monastic context. As we saw, the Yuan statement on hongzao leaves much unsaid, but being made in preparation for the day commemorating the Buddha’s awakening suggests that it was intended for use in a porridge, or even as a porridge.

A clue can be found in the circumstances surrounding the compiling of the Chixiu Baizhang qinggui, properly titled the ‘Imperially-Commissioned Baizhang Pure Rules’. The Yuan imperial court commissioned this new edition of Chan Buddhist monastic codes in 1335, appointing Dongyang Dehui 東陽德輝 (fl. 1529-1355), who was then abbot of Baizhang si 百丈寺, a temple established by Baizhang Huaihai 百丈懷海 (720-814). Baizhang Huaihai is traditionally credited with having compiled an initial set of monastic codes for Chinese Chan monasteries, but his set of codes was lost by as early as the twelfth century. A number of other codes were in use, but Dehui had aspirations to settle discrepancies between them by compiling a new set and having them circulated throughout the Yuan empire. The Yuan court supported Dehui’s project and promulgated the new codes in 1336. What is important for the present topic is that Baizhang si is situated in the south of China, in what is now Fengxin County in Jiangxi Province. This southern location is close to the Min region, where production of hongzao and the alcoholic beverage produced from it, hongjiu 紅酒, were well attested from earlier times. Dehui denied in his postscript to the codes that he made any modifications based on personal interpretation, so it seems probable that hongzao entered the codes as a straightforward reflection of common practice in his area.

But how could Buddhists of southern China justify the use of lees, when the Chinese Buddhist literature generally proscribes its use by tonsured Buddhists? One explanation

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392 In Daoxuan’s commentary on the Sifenlü: Sifenlü shanfan buque xingshi chao 四分律删繁補闕行事鈔, T40 n1804, 85b10-15.
393 Referred to as the Baizhang gu qinggui 百丈古清規.
394 Ichimura, Baizhang Zen Monastic Regulations, xv.
395 Ibid., xvi.
is that in the south of China, *hongzao* was widely recognized as a foodstuff outside of the context of alcohol production. For example, the scholar of medicine Zhuang Chuo 莊綽, active around the end of the Northern Song (roughly twelfth century), noted the culinary use of *hongzao* in the south when commenting on regional customs:

In Jiangnan and throughout the Min [region], publicly and privately people practice fermentation, always for a wine made with red ferment. In the autumn they eat their fill of *hongzao*. Vegetables, fish, and meat are harmoniously mixed in proportion and they then do not eat vinegar. In Xinzhou during the winter months, again, [the locals] sell the flesh of carp stewed in *hongzao*.

The popular use in the south of *hongzao* as a base for preserving other foods during the colder months could have helped to override any Buddhist conservativeness on the question of whether or not the ferment was inebriating. In this form it was likely not inebriating, especially if the food thus preserved had to be cooked before serving. Used as a base for pickling vegetables, as we see in a collection of recipes from a Yuan-period householders’ manual, the *Jujia biyong shibei quanjì* 居家必用事類全集, souring lees could hardly have called up images of drunkenness.

5.4.3 Lees as medicinal food

In addition to Buddhists justifying its use based on local practice and experience with *hongzao*, they may have viewed it as medically efficacious, having a status somewhere between food and medicine. It is often commented that in China the

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596 Ibid., xvii.
597 From the *Jilei pian* 雞肋編, second fascicle, “Nüjiulangyi deng shusu 女酒郎衣等殊俗,” p.118, accessed via SS. Zhuang Chuo’s exact dates are not certain.
598 Nakamura trans., *Chūgoku no shokufu*, 9, 176-179.
boundaries between food and medicine were (and are) blurry. We see this in Li Shizhen’s (1518-1593) influential medical compendium from the Ming dynasty, *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目, which regards lees favorably:

Wine-making lees are sweet, spicy, and without toxin. They heat the [body’s] core and digest food, remove cold qi, rid [food of] animal stench, detoxify herbs and vegetables, moisturize the skin, and regulate the organs. 酒糟

甘、辛，無毒。溫中消食，除冷氣，殺腥，去草菜毒，潤皮膚，調臟腑. 399

The entry on lees 400 suggests that at least by the Ming dynasty, people had enough experience eating lees to be aware of their medical benefits—or what we might consider their nutritional benefits.

We have seen earlier how Buddhist attitudes toward food have long favored a medical mode of eating, spurning eating that is indulgent. Even in the earlier Indian monastic codes, proscribed substances such as lees were allowed in true cases of medical need. In China, with its engrained culture of fermentation (please excuse the punning), we can see a fairly relaxed attitude among some Buddhists regarding the major precept of avoiding inebriating substances. Even Daoxuan, writing in the seventh century, had commented 401 that alcohol was sometimes permitted, given certain conditions:

If an illness is not cured by other medicine, one may use alcohol as medicine.

If one uses it externally to rub onto a wound, in all such cases there is no infraction. 若病餘藥治不差，以酒爲藥；若用身外塗創，一切無犯. 402

In the centuries intervening between Daoxuan’s studious comments and the Yuan codes under discussion, Chan Buddhist revisionists reworked monastic codes to better adapt both teachings and practices to the times and local cultural conditions. If

399 Accessed via SS: P.1569; gu bu穀部(grains), fascicle 25, gu zhi si穀之四 "zaonianglei ershijuzhong 造釀類二十九種.” zao 糟.
400 Hongzao is an ingredient in one of the prescriptions that follows Li Shizhen’s entry on wine-making lees, but I do not see it assessed independently of other lees.
401 This is in the same discussion where he proscribed the eating of lees.
402 T40 n1804, 85b16-18.
conservatives launched a protest on seeing *hongzao* used in the commemorative porridge, this is not easy to see in extant records.

Records do indicate that Chan monasteries of late imperial China adopted the practice of making *hongzao* on the eighth day of the fifteenth month, and in some cases it may have been an inebriating drink. If no outright debate is extant, we do at least have cryptic sarcasm, or perhaps a metaphor with didactic intent. The Qing-dynasty *Tianan sheng chanobi yulu* 天岸昇禪師語錄 (Recorded Sayings of Chan Master Tianan Sheng) records the monk Bensheng 本昇 (1620–1673) alluding to the practice in verse:

Eating *hongzao* on the eighth of the twelfth month 腊八喫紅糟,

How grand is the mood of the monastery 叢林意氣豪!

Merrily stumbling in deep drunkenness 酣酣沉醉倒,

Even more so keeping away from worldly temptations 更不惹風騷. 405

These verses seem to have been of interest to others in the Chan Buddhist community, since they recur in a number of places. 404 There is not space here to try to determine what the verses say of Tianan Bensheng’s attitude toward the practice of eating *hongzao* on the day commemorating the Buddha’s awakening, but we at least have evidence that the practice persisted at some level into the Qing dynasty. If the Yuan codes did give official sanction to consumption of an alcoholic mash on this Buddhist holiday, we might also ask whether the festivities ever became a euphoric ritual, a Dionysian 405 celebration (like, say, Purim in Judaism) that permitted transgression of the precept against consuming alcohol for just one day each year.

This discussion has raised as many questions as it has answered. The recorded-sayings literature of Chan Buddhism is filled with metaphor, exaggeration, and didactic phrasing that cannot be taken at face value, so we should hesitate before accepting Tianan Bensheng’s verse as factual representation of monastic practices. We

403 Accessed via CBETA: J26 nB187, fascicle 10, in the paragraph between 703c14-704a05. A similar sentiment also appears in the second fascicle: J26 nB187, fascicle 2, 667a19-30.

404 They may, in fact, not be original to Bensheng, but I will not pursue the issue here.

405 In the sense discussed by Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, 78-79.
still have little concrete information on how Buddhist monastics were actually using the hongzao, whether as an alcoholic mash, as a savory condiment made with fermented bean curd and stirred into porridge, or as something else. Furthermore, we still have questions regarding how the Chinese Buddhist community—within or without Chan sectarian identity—responded to the appearance of wine-making lees in a set of monastic codes. Did northern Buddhists ignore hongzao and continue eating ‘seven treasure, five flavor porridge’ based on such foods as beans, grains, nuts, and dried fruits, or did hongzao spread northward after promulgation of the Yuan codes? We also might ask whether these ingredients represent discrete versions of the celebratory porridge, or were mutually compatible.

Despite these and other remaining questions, I think we can at least conclude that we are dealing here with distinct examples for how to recreate the specialness of the original pre-enlightenment milk-porridge: one the one hand, a nutritious ferment (hongzao), and on the other a porridge enriched with ingredients that could raise the nourishing quality of the porridge well above that of plain rice (or millet) porridge. For locales lacking access to fresh cow’s milk, the nourishing quality of the porridge had to be constructed by other means and East Asian Buddhists found creative ways of doing so. Fermented rice, nuts and fruits, and adzuki beans were some of the creative ways that Buddhists enriched their porridge to align it with the meanings of the Buddhist holiday.

5.5 Chapter conclusions

In this chapter I have endeavored to argue that the Chinese Buddhist celebration of porridge is grounded not just in symbolism, but also in knowledge of physiological responses to food. Through numerous examples, I have shown that Buddhist authors have long been interested in the intrinsic properties of porridge as a food, in addition to any symbolic meanings of porridge derived from historical narratives of the Buddha. This interest in physiological outcomes on the part of Chinese Buddhists calls into question a common distinction in Western academic research of religion between
knowledge based on socially-constructed symbolic patterns and knowledge that pertains to natural phenomena of our world. In a nutshell, this distinction reflects the enduring belief in an epistemological divide between ‘science’ and ‘religion’. My contention here is that, when analyzing the cultural and intellectual history of food in Chinese Buddhism, we must be careful to avoid projecting this cherished distinction into an historical context where symbolic and empirical forms of knowledge intertwined.

Indic Buddhist sources very early secured a celebrated place for porridge in the Buddhist community. Apart from the narrative of the Buddha’s having eaten a milk porridge just before attaining awakening while seated under the Bodhi tree, we have sources that proclaim porridge to be beneficial on its own terms. The Yāgu Sutta in the Pali canon posits a set of five physiological benefits from eating porridge. A list of ten benefits from porridge becomes a common formula in Chinese Buddhism, combining five benefits from the Yāgu Sutta with another set of five benefits discussed in the Buddha’s exhortation to charitable giving, the Wufubao jing in the Chinese canon. The amalgamation of these two lists of five into a larger list of ten benefits creates ambiguity on the question of the causality behind each benefit, but this process is readily explained as an outcome of the strong association of porridge with food offerings to the saṃgha. The law of moral causality, karma, blurs the distinction between direct physiological benefit and benefits gained as a return on charitable action, but in either case porridge is associated with benefits that highlight desirable physiological states.

Investigating the celebration of porridge in Chinese Buddhism affords an opportunity for better understanding how Buddhist authors treated aspects of their inherited body of teachings as provisional knowledge. Seeking a place for porridge in practice, Buddhists interpreted and adapted knowledge of porridge to local conditions, shaping the celebration of porridge in interaction with Indian, Chinese, and Japanese knowledge of food.

The conspicuous absence of doctrinal specificity on how to make an orthodox Buddhist porridge suggests that there was no such orthodoxy. Yichu cites records of porridge eaten by the Buddha’s direct community of followers that contained such ingredients as milk, butter, meat, and fish. In China, where Mahāyāna teachings and local pressures shifted monastic diets toward vegetarianism, porridges were enriched
sometimes with milk products (milk and butter), but especially with plant products such as sesame, beans, mushrooms, walnuts, dried fruits, and lily—and, it would seem, the mold-cultured ferment *bongzao*.

Although Chinese Buddhists revere porridge as the food eaten by the Buddha just before his full awakening, plain porridge was in itself not special enough to serve as the commemorative porridge. The Buddhist commemorative porridge, while differently interpreted across time and cultural geography and lacking a singular appellation, has maintained a thread of coherence around the notion that it represents a modestly rich food with good ability to nourish. A plain rice porridge was not sufficient for the purpose. Buddhist commemorative porridge cannot be viewed, at least in the context researched here, as an analog of the bread of the Christian Eucharist, which is made special purely by its ritual context.

Several centuries after *bongzao*, a deep-red ferment, entered Yuan-period monastic codes in China, the Japanese-Buddhist encyclopedist Mujaku Dōchū interpreted the commemorative porridge as taking on a red color from the addition of adzuki beans combined with other grains, revealing a point of confusion over the plurality of solutions for making this holiday porridge special. Buddhist commemorative porridge is, in the traditions outlined here, not made special in an arbitrary, symbolic way, but rather in a provisional way grounded in knowledge of physiological outcomes.
Conclusion

Has Western scholarship of food and religion distorted our understanding of Chinese Buddhist attitudes toward eating, by focusing too much on the role of vegetarianism in the construction of relational religious identities? I argue that it has. We have tended to view the relationship of Buddhists and food in terms that are too narrow: as fundamentally a problem of social identity based on a socially constructed morality. Such morality is posited as arbitrary—an abhorrence of pigs in one religion or a protective worship of bovines in another, for example. From this limited perspective, vegetarianism appears in the history of Chinese Buddhism as a cultural trait that shapes Buddhist identity and distinguishes Buddhists from others, but which ultimately is irrelevant to non-Buddhists.

History permits another view. Buddhist statements on food in Yichu’s Shishi liutie suggest an alternative approach: these statements can be understood to represent provisional models of exemplary practices, sample repertoires for dealing with a set of food-related problems posited as universal to the human condition. Taken together, these models point toward a notion of skilled eating that is both practical and attitudinal. Both the practice of eating and the skill of attitude described in Yichu’s Buddhist citations are grounded in a non-Cartesian embodiment. In the context of this study, religious knowledge of food is found to be not just social but also psychological. Is religion, then, to be considered solidly in the domain of culture—to be understood as an arbitrarily constructed symbolic system? In this study I have shown how forms of knowledge now bifurcated into religion and science were intertwined in the evolution of Buddhist ideas about food. This warrants a pause for reflection on how we understand the category of religion today. Here, I suggest that Chinese Buddhism has elements of provisional knowledge-building that evolved in social contexts on the basis of non-arbitrary ideas about nourishment and the workings of the human mind.

Based on the Shishi liutie’s citations from Buddhist sources available in tenth-century China, Chinese Buddhist discourse on eating focused on the primal importance of proper attitude, but with entailments that included physiological outcomes such as a
healthy body. Vegetarianism was practiced widely by this time, but Yichu’s presentation under the topic of food (ṣāri) in his Buddhist encyclopedia does not highlight it. This is not because Buddhist institutions in Yichu’s time did not hold to a vegetarian diet—we know from other sources and from Yichu’s citations under other topics in the food-related chapter that Chinese Buddhists had by the tenth century largely accepted the Mahāyāna position that Buddhists should avoid meat. Nonetheless, Yichu demonstrates and awareness that strict vegetarian practice was largely the outcome of an interpretive shift in Chinese Buddhism, connected to the discrepancy between the begging practice of India and the donor-supplied monastic meals of China. Why Yichu downplayed vegetarianism under the topic of ṣāri is not clear, but recipe collections from the first couple centuries after he completed his encyclopedia show that other groups in medieval Chinese society also ate a simple, plant-based diet. Vegetarianism was not then as distinctive a marker of Buddhist identity as it is in today’s Chinese society.

For Yichu, the key issue is how to hold a proper attitude toward eating, and how to use this attitude to nourish the full person in beneficial ways. Eating as a Buddhist involved adopting ideal models of practice that were primarily attitudinal, but also involved knowledge of food and physiology. Careful consideration of experiential categories of nourishment allows practitioners to ground Buddhist morality in their individual experience of eating, rather than in a moral authority.

The doctrine of Four Foods delineates the psycho-physical model by which educated Buddhists like Yichu understood nourishment. The Four Foods originate in yearning. Nourishment, in this view, is a form of satiation of appetite. Our appetites bind us to cyclical embodiment (samsāra) through action (karma), which is primarily driven by our mental life and specifically our intention. The outward, physical expression of intention is not treated in this doctrine as a separate, real arena of moral activity, distinct from a private arena of imagination. Our intentions determine our future unfolding, whether we give them physical expression or not, because our minds, bodies, and outer world are interactive and interpenetrating—sensation, perception, and cognition interact as an arena of desire for life and its forms of nourishment. Morality is not simply about following rules or about orienting action to achieve the greatest good; morality is also about gaining skillful control over our destinies by cultivating the right kind of
ment. We self-incriminate when we give free reign to desirous thoughts that we know to be hurtful to others or unwholesome, because our intentions are the seeds of actions that will cause us to reap negative outcomes. Our desire for the Four Foods sets up the causes and conditions by which our lives unfold. Nourishment, then, can be engaged skillfully or clumsily, because all desires are not equal. The food of joy in meditation (chanyue) is a kind of intervention into the gravity field of the Four Foods, offering a wholesome alternative to the less wholesome objects of desire in the perceptual arena of ordinary consciousness. Meditation rests the perceiving mind beset with a welter of appetites and schemes for satiating these. In the quiet space of meditation, the mind gains skill in setting priorities and making attitudinal choices with more favorable outcomes. These choices are, for example, equanimity over anxiety, moderation over excess, and generosity over covetousness—the themes that Yichu’s presentation of food suggests as Buddhist virtues associated with eating. The doctrine of Four Foods makes explicit the non-dual nature of embodied consciousness and points Buddhist practitioners toward a skillful approach to nourishment.

Buddhist teachings do provide normative moral structures—rules—on eating. Nonetheless, a precept is not a commandment and the Buddhist morality of eating has proved malleable within even the Chinese tradition. In practice, most Chinese Buddhists seem to have followed normative monastic codes once these became institutionalized. The various codes of behavior (whether translated from Indian Vinaya or written in China) can be understood as skillful in the sense that we now speak of a best practice—they provided monks and nuns with exemplary models for behavior.

Despite the implementation of monastic codes in China, the attitudinal emphasis of many Buddhist teachings on eating helped to justify antinomian aberrations such as meat-eating, alcohol-drinking monks. While Buddhist narratives of corpse-eating monks may be a rhetorical fabrication, they remind us of the Buddhist commitment to attitudinal management as a skilled activity, which trumps rigid adherence to moral codes. Narratives depicting antinomian attitudes in regard to foodstuffs suggest to practitioners that moral agency is located in the intentions of the eater.

I do not mean to suggest that medieval Chinese Buddhism was characterized by an antinomian sentiment regarding the eating of meat, or that Chinese Buddhists ignored
the doctrine of non-harm and the precept of not killing. This would be a ludicrous, misguided reading of Chinese Buddhist morality. What I have endeavored to show is that because Chinese Buddhism is a cumulative, conflicting set of teachings, formed of different layers, the problem of how to eat as a Buddhist could not be easily settled on the basis of any single textual authority. The story does not begin and end with Indian Buddhists teaching Chinese Buddhists to be vegetarian. Lack of a clear textual authority meant that Buddhists in China had to argue for particular interpretations of how to eat, and meat was just one of the issues. This resulted in a drawn-out negotiation over the morality of Buddhist foodways that came to involve the larger cultural discourse on food and morality in Chinese society. Non-Buddhists also had a role in shaping Chinese Buddhist food practices, because all the major intellectual groupings of Chinese society had stakes in the question of how diet connects with moral status. Because Yichu selected viewpoints from Chinese Buddhist texts available in the tenth century, his presentation represents his personal reading of the evidence, and is perhaps a calculated intervention in the moral discourse on eating that colored his own society.

In interpreting Yichu’s position, we must consider both Yichu’s intellectual orientation and his intended audience. Yichu’s biography remembers him as a scholar of Vasubandhu’s *Abhidarma Storehouse Treatise*, suggesting that his approach to Buddhism was learned, systematic, and conceptual. His compilation of a Buddhist encyclopedia to represent the good teachings of the Śākya clan fits a conservative mould, one that places value in understanding the breadth and depth of Buddhist teachings. He points his readers to early Indian Buddhist approaches to eating, suggesting that he believed in the possibility of finding coherence among the cacophony of viewpoints. Yichu was a traditionalist at a time when Chan revisionist tendencies were beginning to assert greater influence in Buddhist circles, but he succeeded in finding compatibility. The emphasis on attitudinal skill shows remarkable consistency across this potential sectarian divide.

In his preface, Yichu pitches his Buddhist encyclopedia to a general readership, expressing frustration that the Buddhist teachings are often misunderstood. Could he have meant to correct the viewpoints of anti-scholastic proponents of Chan? Perhaps, but his inclusion of Chan literature in the *Shiobi liatie* suggests that he was more likely
responding to anti-Buddhist sentiments in society at large and did not see Chan as the problem, per se. More likely to have troubled him are the critiques of Buddhism voiced by elite intellectuals and rulers toward the end of the Tang dynasty, and the political instability that came in the wake of the Tang’s fall. Contextual evidence suggests that Yichu aimed his project at re-instilling confidence in the goodness of Buddhist teachings for implementation and patronage in Chinese society. Themes such as equanimity and moderation in eating would have resonated with Confucian values. Yichu’s materials on the topic of food evince some friction with Daoists, who were playing a different game: extreme dieting as a way to claim superior ritual purity and transcendence. Though some Buddhist authors became involved in the social contest for ritual purity, Yichu mounts a case for viewing this contest as a dead-end that was rejected by the early Buddhist community.

Several questions regarding the historical context of Yichu’s work remain under-explored in this study: How significant to understanding Yichu’s particular approach to food is his association with the teachings of the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise? How does Yichu’s approach compare with that of Chinese monastic codes compiled in the centuries after the Shishi liutie was published? What evidence exists for piecing together a reception history for his ideas about food? Did anyone pay attention to this section of his encyclopedia? A short answer to the last question is available, though not satisfying. There seems to be little in the way of a reception history for the Shishi liutie as a whole, let alone the material that I consider in this study. I suspect that his work was largely overshadowed by the Song-dynasty vogue for Chan ideas and Chan methods for achieving awakening. Yichu’s scholarly approach to Buddhist learning must have seemed cumbersome and overly complicated to new generations wooed by the soteriological potentials of dharma talks given by charismatic Chan masters who spoke in riddles and whooped dramatically. Still, there are further stories to be told about Yichu’s Shishi liutie, which was cherished enough to be preserved until the present. Forgotten in China but preserved in Japan, the Japanese reception history is especially worthy of more attention.

The most obvious shortcoming of this study has to do with its scope, which was constricted due to limitations of time and space. I based my analysis primarily on a
translation of the topic of food/eating 食 in Yichu’s section devoted to food-related
themes, but as we saw in Chapter Two, Yichu’s coverage of food contains quite a lot
more material than what I have translated. I have read the entire section on food topics
and incorporated material from other topics (such as statements under porridge 粥 for
use in Chapter Five and statements on meat 肉 for Chapter One), but translation of the
entire set of food topics was not feasible under the time constraints of the present study.
A colophon and some prefatory materials also remain untranslated. I look forward to
translating the remaining material as a future evolution of the current project. This
future project would also benefit from further comparisons with food 食 in other
Buddhist leishu, such as the Jinglü yixiang, Fayuan zbulin, and the Shìwū yaoalan. A
comparison with the topic of food in Bai Juyi’s Baishi liutie is also warranted. Looking at
secular leishu can help us gauge the mutual interaction of Buddhist ideas with the
intellectual culture of different periods.

Because leishu are compilations of citations, more work could also be done to analyze
the sources from which Yichu drew. His sources on food include many layers of
Buddhist teachings from different periods of the development of Chinese Buddhism, but
I have not yet endeavored to organize these sources chronologically or by school. For
Yichu, these sources, and even some from Confucian learning, seem to be equally
relevant to the intellectual legacy of Chinese Buddhist thought, so an attempt to sort
these based on the philological work of modern scholars would yield a decidedly
anachronistic lens, but might help us differentiate sectarian voices from the mix.
Analytical differentiation could help us better understand the components that Yichu
tolerated in his synthesis of Śākya clan teachings.

Bringing in modern forms of knowledge can potentially help us find logical
coherence in both past and present societies. A future extension of this project might
analyze the alignment of the Chinese Buddhist diet with settled agrarian society,
utilizing frames from human ecology. Buddhist diet emphasizes the products of
agriculture: grains, cane sugar, and vegetables. The Daoist practice of avoiding grains,
辟穀, suggests just the opposite: a distancing from the products of organized agricultural society. From a dietary (nutritional) perspective, this discrepancy produces a tension very similar to what we see today between vegetarians and practitioners of a "paleo" diet. But the cultural implications are more to the point here: Buddhist teachings suggest an approval of and reliance on agrarian civilization, whereas the Daoist transcendents adhering to a grainless diet could be said to practice a pre-agrarian form of human ecology. This would align Buddhists with Confucians in affirming the social (and human-ecological) order of mainstream Chinese society, and mark these grain-avoiding Daoists as counter-culture. Yet we saw in Chapter One how Daoist themes are present in Song-dynasty recipe collections celebrating simple vegetarian foods—how did this Confucian-Daoist diet take shape? Does it reflect rural patterns of human ecology where scholar officials made their living—a provincial subculture? The interaction of diet, human ecology, and intellectual history in China is a topic deserving of more attention.

Methodologically, I hope to have demonstrated that the Shiobi liutie and other Buddhist encyclopedias have merit for studying Buddhist frames used for key aspects of human life. In conducting this research, I had in mind the studies collected together by Donald Lopez for his edited volume *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*. Each chapter in that volume focuses not on a point of Buddhist doctrine, but on a general category from everyday life. In Lopez's introduction to that volume, he raises the question of how Buddhism has been understood in different periods and in different societies, critiquing the narrowness of a particular image of Buddhism that has taken form in the last century:

This Buddhism has been regarded above all as a religion of reason, dedicated to bringing an end to suffering. It is strongly ethical and is devoted to nonviolence, and as such is a vehicle for social reform. The Buddha himself is represented as the exemplar of these virtues, speaking out against the caste system and the practice of animal sacrifice. It is, however, an atheistic religion because it denies the existence of an omnipotent deity. And because it places a strong emphasis on rational analysis, it is, more than any other religion, compatible with modern science. The essential practice of Buddhism
is meditation, with the rituals of consecration, purification, and exorcism so common throughout Asia largely dismissed as late accretions of popular superstition. This Buddhism has been embraced in the West as both an alternative religion and an alternative to religion.406

My aim is not to be an apologist for any particular image of Buddhism, especially an idealized one such as this, or one assuming that there is only one correct interpretation of Buddhism. I believe, rather, that engaging different images of Buddhism helps us to identify those aspects of Buddhist teachings that are most coherent or in some way relevant to present-day concerns, while also revealing heterogeneity in Buddhist ideas and practices. An ideal image is a model, an interpretation based on criteria set by the authors of the model. As Lopez suggests, the terms of the above model are still in need of much debate and can benefit from further historical analyses. For this purpose, Yichu’s Shishi liutie is a useful tool, because it represents a tenth-century position on how Buddhist teachings treat everyday themes, serving a purpose similar to Lopez’s volume. The global identity of Buddhism and appreciation (or critical reception) of its teachings remains an ongoing project in today’s world. It is my hope that this dissertation will have contributed something useful, however small, to this continuing effort to understand the history of Buddhist teachings.

406 Lopez ed., Critical Terms, 2.
REFERENCES

Abbreviations
(Collections and Online Resources)

CBETA Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association 漢文大藏經。

DCCV Ministry of Education, R.O.C. Dictionary of Chinese Character Variants 異


Ding Fubao DING Fubao 丁福保. Foxue dacidian 佛學大辭典.

FCJ Foxue ciou jiebeng. —> FANCHI JUSHI, et al., Foxue ciou jiebeng.


J Jiaxing dazang jing 嘉興大藏經. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic
Text Association), http://www.cbeta.org/index.htm; accessed July 2014;
in notes as (J [volume #] n [text #], [page-column-line]).

K Korean Canon 高麗大藏經. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text
Association), http://www.cbeta.org/index.htm; accessed July 2014; in
notes as (K [volume #] n [text #], [page-column-line]).

L Qianlong dazang jing 乾隆大藏經. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic
Text Association), http://www.cbeta.org/index.htm; accessed July 2014;
in notes as (L [volume #] n [text #], [page-column-line]).

Mochizuki —> MOCHIZUKI Shinkō, Bukkyō daijiten

P Yongle beizang 永樂北藏. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text
Association), http://www.cbeta.org/index.htm; accessed January 2015; in
notes as (P [volume #] n [text #], [page-column-line]).

SAT SAT Daizōkyō Text Database 大正新脩大藏経テキストデータベース.

**Primary Sources (by title)**

*Aggaña Sutta*. Dīgha Nikāya 27 (Pali Canon).


*Arūḍāmo jwo be laṃ* 阿毘達磨俱舍論, (Skt. *Abhidharma-kṣaṭa-bhāṣya*, Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise). Vasubandhu 世親 (ca. 5th c.). Trans. ca. 563-7 by Paramārtha (499-569) and ca. 651-654 by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664). T29 n1559 and n1558, respectively.


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407 For English translations of titles, I follow those given in Muller, *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*, unless there is a no title given or I have a difference of opinion. For the sake of improving consistency across Buddhist Studies, I have chosen not to treat titles as subject to intellectual property rights.
**Baishi liutie** 白氏六帖 (Mr. Bai's Six Books). Bai Juyi 白居易 (772-846 CE).

**Baiyu jing** 白喻經 (Sutra of the One Hundred Parables). Composed 5th c. by Samghasena 僧伽斯那 (d.u.); trans. to Chinese in 492 by Guṇavṛddhi 求那毘地 (fl. 479-502). T4 n209.

**Baiyuan jing** 百緣經 aka Zbuanji baiyuan jing 撰集百緣經 (Skt. Avadānāśataka; Sutra Collating the Hundred Conditions). Trans. by Zhiquan 支謙 (fl. 223-253). T4 n200.


**Bao’en jing** 報恩經 — Da fangbian fo bao’en jing

**Baopuzi** 抱朴子 (Master of Simplicity). Published 317 by Ge Hong 葛洪 (283-363).


**Benxing jing** 本行經 — Fo benxingji jing

**Benxin zbai obuboi pu** 本心齋蔬食譜 (Vegetable Recipes from Benxin Studio). Chen Dasou 陳達叟 (d.u.). Wang, ed. in chief, Congshu jicheng chubian, v. 1473.

**Bianzenglun** 辯正論 (Treatise on Discerning the Correct). Falin 法琳 (572–640). T52 n2110.


**Cefu yuan gui** 籍府元龜 (Oracle of the Literary Storehouse). Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (962-1025) et al. SS.
Chang aban jing  長阿含經  (Longer Āgama Sutra; Skt. Dīrgāgama). Trans. in 412-13 by Zhu Fonian 竺佛念 (4th c.) and Buddhayaśas 佛陀耶舍 (5th c.). T1 n1.


Chongding jiaosheng fashu  重訂教乘法數  (Revised Numbered Concepts of the Teaching Vehicle). Revised prior to 1735 by Chaohai 超海 (d.u.) et al. based on the original compilation by Yuanjing 圓潚 (ca. 15th c.). L162 n1666.

Chuxue ji  初學記  (Record for the Beginning of Learning). Xu Jian 徐堅 (659-729) et al.

Chuyao jing  出曜經  (Skt. Dharmapādā; Sutra of the Appearance of Light). Trans. by Zhu Fonian 竺佛念 (4th c.) in 374. T4 n212.

Da banniepan jing  大般涅槃經  (Skt. Mahāparinirvāṇa-vūtra; Sutra of the Great Decease). Referring to a trans. by Darmakṣema 暱無識 (385-433), T12 n374; and to a trans. by Huiyan 慧嚴 (363-443), T12 n375.


Dabei zhou — Qianzhou qianyan guanbihiin puwa wu'ai dabeixin tuoluoni
Da fangbian fo bao’en jing 大方便佛報恩經 (Great Skillful Means Sutra on the Buddha's Repayment of Kindness). Eastern Han dynasty, 25-220 CE (author/trans. unknown). T3 n156.


Da foding rulai miyin xiuzheng liaoyi zhu pusa wanxing shou lengyan jing 大佛頂如來密因修證了義諸菩薩萬行行首楞嚴經 (Śūraṅgama sūtra). Trans. (705) attr. to Pramiti 般刺蜜帝 (d.u.) but thought by many scholars to be an apocryphal Chinese work. T19 n945.

Da foding wanxing shoulengyan tuoluoni 大佛頂萬行首楞嚴陀羅尼 (Great Buddha-Peak Heroic March Dhāraṇī of the Ten Thousand Practices). Found in fascicle 7 of Da foding rulai miyin xiuzheng liaoyi zhu pusa wanxing shou lengyan jing.

Da piluzhena chengfo shenbian jiachi jing 大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經 (Skt. Mahāvairocana-sūtra; Sutra of the Transformations and Empowering Presence of the Manifest Enlightenment of the Grand Resplendent One; aka Dari jing 大日經). Trans. Śubhakarasiṃha 善無畏 (637-735) and Yixing 一行 (683-727) in 724. T18 n848.


Daobeng benqing xindiqian jing 大乘本生心地觀經 (Mahāyāna Sutra of Contemplating the Mind Ground in the Buddha's Life). Trans. attr. to Prajñā in 791, but now thought to be later work by someone else. T3 n159.

Daobeng baoyun jing 大乘寶雲經 (Mahāyāna-ratnameghavītra; Jewel Cloud Scripture). T16 n659.

Daweide jing —> Daweide tuoluoni jing

Daweide tuoluoni jing 大威德陀羅尼經 (Dhāraṇī of Greatly Powerful One; Skt. Mahābhāsūdhāraṇī-ūttra). Trans. by Jñānagupta 阇那崛多 (523-600/605?). T21 n1341.

Dazhidu lun 大智度論 (Skt. Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra; Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom [Sutra]). Attr. to Nāgārjuna 龍樹 (2nd-3rd c.); trans. by Kumārajīva 觀摩羅什 (544-413). T25 n1509.

Dijing jingwu lü 帝京景物略 (Summary of Scenes and Objects of the Imperial Capital). Liu Tong 劉侗 (scholar status in 1634).

Dongjin lu 東晉錄 (Records of the Eastern Jin). [Identity not clear]


Fajiyao song jing 法集要頌經 (Scripture of Collected Essentials for Recitation; Skt. Udiṇa-varga / Dharmapada). T4 n213.

Famen mingyi ji 法門名義集 (Collection on the Meanings of Well-Known Buddhist Doctrine). Li Shizheng 李師政 (fl. 618-626). T54 n2124.
Fanwang jing  梵網經 (Scripture of Brahma's Net). Trans. attributed to Kumārajīva, but now thought to be apocryphal.


Fanyu qianzi wen 梵語千字文 (Sanskrit Words for a Thousand Characters). Collated by Yijing 義淨 (635-713). T54 n2133.

Fanyu zaming 梵語雜名 (A Miscellany of Sanskrit Terms). Compiled by Liyan 禮言 (fl. 859) and edited by Zhenyuan 真源, T54 n2155.


Fengtu ji 風土記 (Record of Local Customs). Zhou Chu 周處 (238-299).

Fo benxingji jing 佛本行集經 (Skt. Abhinirmukamaṇa-sūtra; Sutra of the Collection of the Past Activities of the Buddha). Trans. by Jñānagupta 閻那崛多 (523-600). T3 n190.


Foding zhou — Da foding wanxing shoulengyan tuoluoni

Foshuo ajiliu jing 佛說阿鸠留經 (Sutra on Aṅkura spoken by the Buddha). Trans. unknown. T14 n529.

Foshuo chaoriming sanmei jing 佛說超日日明三昧經 (Sutra Spoken by the Buddha on the Samadhi Brighter Than the Sun). Trans. attr. to Nie Chengyuan 聶承遠 (fl. 290-306). T15 n638.

Foshuo daji famen jing 佛說大集法門經 (Sutra of the Great Collection of Teachings Spoken by the Buddha). Trans. in 1005 by Dānapāla 施護 (fl. 982-1005). T1 n12.

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**Foshuo faji mingshu jing** 佛說法集名數經 (Sutra of the Numbered Concepts in the Collected Teachings Spoken by the Buddha). Dānapāla 施護 (fl. 982). T17 n764.

**Foshuo hailongwang jing** 佛說海龍王經 (Scripture Spoken by the Buddha on the Dragon King of the Ocean; Skt. Sāgaranāgarāja parīṣeṭṭhā sūtra). Trans. ca. 300 by Dharmaraks 竺法護 (230?-316). T15 n598.

**Foshuo liobi api tan lun** 佛說立世阿毘曇論 (Abhidharma Treatise on the Establishment of Worlds as Spoken by the Buddha; Skt. Lokaśārabidharma śāstra). Author unknown. Trans. attr. to Paramārtha 真諦 (499-569) (now under question). Tn1644.

**Foshuo obodi buo wufubao jing** 佛說食施獲五福報經 (Sutra Spoken by the Buddha on the Five Blessings Reaped from the Bestowal of Food). Ca. Eastern Jin (317-420), translator unknown. T2 n132.

**Foshuo weimоjie jing** 佛說維摩詰經 (The Vimalakīrti Sutra Spoken by the Buddha). Trans. between 222-229 by Zhiqian 支謙 (fl. 225-253). T14 n474.

**Gaoseng Faxian zhuаn** 高僧法顯傳 (The Biography of Faxian). Faxian 法顯 (320?-420?). T51 n2085.

**Gaoseng zhuаn** 高僧傳 (Biographies of Eminent Monks). Compiled by Huijiao 慧皎 (497-554). T50 n2059.

**Guang hongming ji** 廣弘明集 (The Broad Collection Aggrandizing and Clarifying [Buddhism]). Compiled 7th c. by Daoxuan 道宣 (596-667). T52 n2103.

**Guоqu xianzai yinguo jing** 過去現在因果經 (Scripture on Causes and Effects of Past and Present). Trans. between 435-443 by Gunabhadra 求那跋陀羅 (394-468) et al. T3 n189; K 777.

**Hailongwang jing → Foshuo hailongwang jing**

**Hanfeizi** 韓非子 (Master Hanfei). Han Fei 韓非 (d. 233 BCE). SS.
Hanshu 漢書 (History of the Han). Multiple authors; completed 2nd c. SS.

Hongming ji 弘明集 (Collection Aggrandizing and Clarifying [Buddhism]). Sengyou 僧祐 (445–518). T52 n2102.


Hualin bianlüe 華林遍略 (Concisely Edited Flowered Grove). Listed in the Jiu tangshu 舊唐書: Compiled by Xu Mian 徐勉 in six hundred fascicles.

Huanglan 皇覽 (Magnificent Readings). Listed in the Jiu tangshu 舊唐書: Compiled by He Chengtian 何承天 in one-hundred twenty-two fascicles; appended with an additional eighty-four fascicles by Xu Yuan 徐爰.

Huayan jing suishu yanyi chao — Dafangguangfo huayan jing suishu yanyi chao

Jilei pian 雞肋編 (Chicken Breast Book). Zhuang Chuo 莊綽 (ca. 12th c.). SS.


Jin'gang bore lun 金剛般若論 (Treatise on the Diamond Sutra) aka Jin'gang bore boluomi jing lun 金剛般若波羅蜜經論 (Skt. Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitopadeśa; Treatise on the Sutra of Adamantine Transcendent Wisdom). Referring to two different treatises: one by Asaṅga 無著 (d.u.), trans. by Dharmagupta 達摩笈多 (d. 619), T25 n1510b; and one by Vasubandhu 世親 (d.u.), trans. by Bodhiruci in 509, T25 n1511.

Jinglü yixiang 經律異相 (Representations of the Sutras and Vinaya). 516 CE.

Jinzang lun 金藏論 (Treatise on the Golden Treasury). Daoji 道紀 (late 6th c.).

Jiumianran eqiu twoluoni shenzhou jing 救面燃餓鬼陀羅尼神呪經 (Dhāraṇī for Saving the Burning-Mouth Hungry Ghosts). Trans. by Śikṣānanda 實叉難陀 (ca. late 7th c.). T21 n1314.
Jiyi menzu lun 集異門足論 aka Apiḍamo jiyi menzu lun 阿毘達磨集異門足論  
(Collection of Different Aspects of the Abhidharma Path Treatise;  
T26 1536.

Jujia biyong obilei quanjí 居家必用事類全集 (Complete Collection of Topically Ordered  
Essentials for the Householder). Yuan (1271-1368), authorship unknown.

Juòbe lun —→ Apiḍamo juòbe lun

Juòbelun songbì óbù 俱舍論頌疏—→ Juòbe lun songbì óbù lun ben

Juòbe lun songbì óbù lun ben 俱舍論頌疏論本 (Root [Meanings] of Treatises,  
Commentaries, and Eulogies of the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise). Yuanhui  
圓暉 (8th c.). T n1823.

Kīwa yōjiki 喫茶養生記 (Notes on Drinking Tea to Nourish Life). Myōan Eisai 明庵  
榮西 (1141-1215).

Leiyuan 類苑 (Topical Collection). Listed in the Jiu tangshu 舊唐書: Compiled by Liu  
Xiao 劉孝, one-hundred twenty fascicles.

Lengqie abaduoluolo bao jing 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經 (Skt. Laṅkavatāra-sūtra). Trans. by  
Guṇabhadra 求那跋陀羅 (394-468). T16 n670.

Longkan shoujian 龍龕手鑑 (Hand Mirror of the Dragon Shrine). 997 CE, Xingjun 行  
均 (d.u.). FANCHI JUSHI, et al., Foxue cishu jicheng. Also accessed through  
DCCV.

Mahāvagga-pāli, (The Great Section [of the Pali Vinaya]).  

Miaofa lianhua jing 妙法蓮華經 (Skt. Saddharma-pundarikā-sūtra; Sutra of the Lotus of  
the Wonderful Dharma, aka the Lotus Sutra). Trans. by Kumārajīva (344-413)  
in 406. T9 n262.
Mūhāsaibū beixi wufenlǜ 弥沙塞部和醯五分律 (Vinaya of the Mahīśāsaka School).
Brought in 413 to China by Faxian 法顯 (ca. 320-420); transl. ca. 423-434 by Buddhājīva 佛陀什 (fl. 423-424) and Daosheng 道生 (355-434). T22 n1421.

Mōbe vęngqí lǜ 摩訶僧祇律 (Skt. Mahāśāṃghika vinaya; Monastic Codes of the Mahāśāṃghika School of Buddhism). Trans. in the Eastern Jin dynasty (317-420) by Buddhabhadra 佛陀跋陀羅 (359-429) and Faxian 法顯 (ca. 337-422). T22 n1425.

Mouzi lǐu wǔzhòng wǔzhū lún 牟子理悟正誣論 (Master Mou's Treatise on Correcting Error and Removing Doubt). Traditionally dated to ca. 2nd c. Contained in the Hongming ji 弘明集, T52 n2102.

Nanbài jìguì nèifá zhuan 南海寄歸內法傳 (A Record of Buddhist Practices Sent Home from the Southern Sea). Completed in 691 by Yijing 義淨 (635-713). T54 n2125.

Nàxiàn bǐqiù jīng 那先比丘經 (Sutra on the Questions of King Milinda). Trans. unknown; ca. Eastern Jin (317-420). T32 n1670A and n1670B.

Niepān jīng 涅槃經 (Skt. Maha-parinirvāṇa-ūttra; Nirvana Sutra). Refers to a group of related sūtras.

Pǔsā shànjìe jīng 菩薩善戒經 (Sutra on the Wholesome Morality of Bodhisattvas).
Trans. in 451 by Guṇavarman 求那跋摩 (567-451). T30 n1582 (9 fascicles) and n1583 (1 fascicle).


Qǐshì jīng 起世經 (Sutra on the Arising of Worlds; assoc. with Pali Aggañña Sutta).
Trans. 585-600 by Jñānagupta 阇那崛多 (523-600/605?). T1 n24.
Rishe pian 日涉篇 / Rishe bian 日涉编 (Book of the Wading Sun). 1611, Chen Jie 陈曜 (fl. 1611). SS.

Shanjia qinggong 山家清供 (Pure Offerings of Rural Households). Compiled in the Southern Song by Lin Hong 林洪 (d.u.). Wang, Congobu jicheng chubian, v. 1473.

Shijing 詩經 (aka Maoshi 毛詩; Book of Odes). SS.

Shiobi buo wufubao jing 食施獲五福報經 (Sutra on the Five Blessings Reaped from the Bestowal of Food). Trans. unknown. T2 n132b.


Shiobi yaolan 釋氏要覽 (Manual of Buddhist Practices ["Essentials of the Śākya Clan"]). 1019 CE., Daocheng 道誠 (d.u.). T54 n2127.

Shiwen leiju 事文類聚 (Citations on Matters in Topical Arrangement). Preface to Zhu Mu's initial compilation dated 1246, Zhu Mu 祝穆 (?-1255), Fu Dayong 富大用 (d.u.), and Zhu Yuan 祝淵 (d.u.).

Shi zhu egui yinshi ji shui fa 施諸餓鬼飲食及水法 (Method for Giving Water and Food to the Various Hungry Ghosts). T21 n1315.


Shoulengyan jing —> Da foding rulai miyin xiuzecheng liuqi zhu puwa wanxing shou lengyan jing

Shuo wugoucheng jing 說無垢稱經 (Sutra Spoken on the Immaculate Reputation [of Vimalakīrti]). Trans. in 650 by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664). T14 n476.
Sifenlü 四分律 (Four-Part Vinaya). Trans. by Buddhayaśas 佛陀耶舍 (5th c.) and Zhu Fonian 竺佛念 (4th c.). T22 n1428.

Sifenlü shanfan buque xingshi chao 四分律删繁補闕行事鈔 (Summary of the Four-Part Vinaya Eliminating Repetition and Augmenting Overlooked Services). Composed ca. 626-630 by Daoxuan 道宣 (596-667). T40 n1804.

Sifenlü xingshi chao zichi ji 四分律行事鈔資持記 (Record Upholding the Value of Perpetuating the Services in the Vinaya of the Four Categories). Yuanzhao 元照 (1048-1116). T40 n1805.


Suibua jili 歲華紀麗. Han E 韓鄂 (ca. late Tang to early Five Dynasties).

Sou shen ji 搜神記 (Record of the Search for the Supernatural). Gan Bao 干寶 (?-336 CE). SS.


Taiping yulan 太平御覽 (Imperial Readings from the Great Peace). Completed in 984 by Li Fang 李昉 (925-996) et al.

Tangfan wenzi 唐梵文字 (Chinese-Sanskrit Glossary). Quanzhen 全真 (fl. 839). T54 n2154.

Tangfan liangyu shuangdui ji 唐梵兩語雙對集 (Chinese-Sanskrit Bilingual Glossary). Attributed to 恒多葉多 Tathāgatapāla and 波羅瞿那彌捨沙 Guṇaviśeṣa.

Tianan sheng chanshi yulu 天岸昇禪師語錄 (Recorded Sayings of Chan Master Tianan [Ben]Sheng). Recorded by Shengyue 昇說 (ca.17th c.) and Yuanyu 元玉 (ca.17th c.). J26 nB187.
Tongzi wen jing  童子问经 =?Tongzi wen fo qishi shi jing  童子问佛乞食事经 (Sutra of a Neophyte Inquiring of the Buddha About the Matter of Begging for Food). See T55 n2145, 25c06.

Tuoluoni ji jing  陀罗尼集经 (Skt. Dhāraṇī-samuccaya-sūtra; Dhāraṇī Collection Scripture). Trans. in 654 by Atigupta  阿地瞿多 (d.u.). T18 n901.

Weimojie suoshuo jing  维摩诘所説經 (Sutra Spoken by Vimalakīrti). Trans. by Kumārajīva  鳴摩羅什 (344-413). T14 n475.

Wenshuwen jing  文殊问经  —> Wenshushili wen jing  文殊师利问经 (Sutra of the Questions of Mañjuśrī). T14 n468.

Wufenlu  五分律  —> Miobasaibu beixi wufenliu

Wufubao jing  五福報經  —> Foshuo shishi huo wufubao jing

Xinji zangjing yinyi suiban lu  新集藏经音义随函录 (Comprehensive Record of Pronunciations and Meanings in the Newly Compiled Canon). Kehong  可洪 (fl. Later Jin 936-946). K34 n1257 and K35 n1257. Also in FCJ.


Yaoji  要集  = 诸佛要集论?
Yiqie jing yinyi 一切經音義, aka Huilin yinyi 音義慧琳 (Pronunciations and Meanings for All Scriptures, or, Huilin's Pronunciations and Meanings). Huilin 慧琳 (737-820). T54 n2128.

Yiqie jing yinyi 一切經音義, aka Xuanying yinyi 玄應音義 (Pronunciations and Meanings for All Scriptures, or, Xuanying's Pronunciations and Meanings). Xuanying 玄應 (7th c.). X35 n1-2 and other collections.

Yinming zhengli men lun ben 因明正理門論本 (Skt. Nyāyamukha; Gateway to Logic). By Dignāga 陳那 (ca. 480-540); tran. 649-650 by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664). T32 n1628.

Yiwen leiju 藝文類聚 (Topically Presented Arts and Letters). Completed in 624 by Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557-641) et al.

Yongle dadian 永樂大典 (Great Reference Work of the Yongle Era). Officially completed 1408. A collective effort of Ming scholars in the employ of the Court. Only partially extant.


Yuqie 瑜伽 = Yiqie jing 瑜伽經 or Yuqie shi di lun 瑜伽師地論?


Za aban jing 雜阿含經 (Saṃyuktāgama-sūtra; Āgama of Combined Discourses). Trans. by Guṇabhadra 求那跋陀羅 (394-468) between 455-443. T2 n99.

Zaxin lun 雜心論 aka Za apitan xin lun 雜阿毗曇心論 (Heart of Scholasticism with Miscellaneous Additions). Dharmatrāta 法救 (ca. 2nd c. CE). Trans. in 454 to Chinese by Samghavarman 僧伽跋摩 (5th c.) et al.
Zengyi aban jing  增壹阿含經 (Skt. Ekottarāgama-sūtra; Increased by One Āgama Sūtras). Trans. in 397 by Gautama Saṃghadeva 瞿昙僧伽提婆 (fl. 383-398). T2 n125.

Zenrin shōkūen  禪林象器箋 (Encyclopedia on Zen Monasticism). Published 1741.


Zhengfa nianjing  正法念處經 (Sutra on the True Dharma as the Base of Mindfulness; Skt. Saddharma-upasthāna-sūtra). Trans. 538-541 by Gautama Prajñāruci 若流支譯. T17 n721.

Zhengli  正理 = 阿毘達磨順正理論? Makita and Yamaji point to the Bianzhenglun 辯正論

Zhilun  智論 = Dazhidu lun ?


Zhoushu  周書 (Book of Zhou). 656 CE, Linghu Defen 令狐德棻 (582-666).

Zhouyi  周易 (aka Yijing 易經; Book of Changes). SS.

Zhuangzi  莊子 (Master Zhuang). Attr. to Zhuang Zhou 莊周 (ca. 4th c. BCE). SS.


Zuting shiyuan 祖庭事苑 (Patriarch Garden Affair Villa). Compiled 1108 by Lu’an Shanqing 陸菴善卿 (d.u.)

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PEREIRA, José, and Francis TISO. “The Evolution of Buddhist Systematics From the Buddha to Vasubandhu.” *Philosophy East and West* 38, no. 2 (1988): 172-86.


YICHU 義楚 (fl.945-954). *Śākya Clan.* 954 CE. In YANAGIDA and SHIINA. *Zengaku ten'eki sōkan Dai 6, Vol.2.*


APPENDICES
Appendix 1: Biography of Yichu from the *Song gaoseng zhuan*

Biography of Yichu of Kaiyuansi in Qizhou during the [Northern] Song

Shi Yichu’s secular surname was Pei. His ancestors were people of Anyang in Xiangzhou. At seven years of age Chu paid a visit to Lixia, where Preceptor of Great Virtue Xiujin became the teacher under whom he would take tonsure. Xiujin was Chu’s paternal uncle. Xinglun, youngest of his paternal uncles, resided at Xiangyan Cloister. Xiujin recited the "Guanyin pin" and the "Pumen pin" (two chapters of the *Lotus Sutra*) nearly 100,000 times, made standing obeisance to the *Lotus Sutra*, prostrating once for each character and in such manner completing all its sections. Xinglun was the magistrate of Qingqiu and lived mostly in meditation. He recited both the *Dabei* [zhou] and the *Foding* [zhou] a hundred-million (i.e., countless) times.

Yichu modeled himself on the example of his uncles, all parties mutually benefiting from teaching and learning. Climbing in this way to near perfection, he diligently studied without slacking. His intellect maturing early, he realized the profundity and reached the zenith of the school of Abhidharma. He lectured more than ten times on Yuanhui’s commentary (the *Juwelun songobi sbu* 俱舍論頌釋疏). Later he read completely through the Buddhist canon three times, sighing over writings treated by Confucians as Buddhist teachings and over the many misinterpretations. The interpretations thus corrupted, many [Buddhist] matters were misconstrued. Modeling on Bai Letian’s (Bai Juyi’s) *Liutie*, he compiled doctrine, passages, various matters, and assortments of things, arranging them by type and establishing their categories, which in entirety encompass fifty sections. Within these he separately lists 440 categories, beginning with the section “Beneficial glimpses of the King of the Dharma (i.e., the

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408 Present-day Anyang County, Henan Province.
409 Now part of Jinan City in Shandong Province.
410 *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, T9 n262.
411 Guangrao County in Shandong Province.
412 E.g., *Qianshou qianyan guanshiyin puwa wui debeixin tuoluoni* (Sk. *Mahākāśākācitta-dhāraṇī*) or a version of this incantation.
413 This incantation is known variously as the *Lengyan zhou 楞嚴咒*, *Baisan’gai foding zhou* 白傘蓋佛頂咒, and *Baisan’gai shen zhou* 白傘蓋佛神咒.
414 Buddhist lineage based on the teachings of the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise.
415 Shiina, *Kaidai*, 530. I.e., the *Juwelun song sbu lun ben* 俱舍論頌疏論本, T41 n1823.
416 I.e., the *Baishi liutie*.
Buddha)" and ending with the section “Lions and beasts.” The categories among these are thoroughly investigated, such that when writing one should have no reason to complain of not finding something. For a decade Yichu applied himself diligently and tirelessly, beginning in Kaiyun 2 (945) of Jin and finishing in the first year of Xiande (954). He presented [his compiled work to the court of] Shizong, who decreed that it be given to the Bureau of Historiography, conferred on him purple robes, and gave him the title Mingjiqiao Dashi (Great Master who Elucidates the Teaching). During the Kaibao era (968-976) he passed away at Longxing qielan (Longxing Monastery). By secular reckoning, his age was 74; since being ordained, 54 [years had passed].

From when Yichu first planned this work, he wrote things down as he encountered them, decreasing [the text] in cases of abundance and augmenting in cases of paucity. As days and months passed by, a compiled record magnificently took shape. He had [experienced] a sudden [insight when he noticed that] an old stone by the gate of his monastery had the two characters “liu tie” (six books, i.e., primers for study) naturally appearing on it. Seeing this divine sign, he then knew [that his work was] predestined, so he searched through [writings of] the present and went through [those of] the past, his brush never stopping its compiling. At the time, the Military Affairs Commissioner and Chief Minister of State, the Honorable Wang Pu, wrote Yichu a preface to crown the compilation, which today is disseminated throughout the country. At first, when Yichu was compiling, his mind toiled and his eyes lost their clarity, which could not be healed through medical means. Thereupon he searched deep into his mind in repentance of his faults, [and] worrying lest he abridge and corrupt the Teachings, he trimmed and selected, [working] cautiously like this with even less time for rest. When in the following year his eyesight returned, people said this was a divine response to his effort.

大宋齊州開元寺義楚傳 修進 省倫

釋義楚，俗姓裴氏，祖相州安陽人也。楚七歲來省歷下，臨壇大德修進因為出家師也。進乃楚之諸父也。季父省倫居香嚴院。進也誦觀音普門支經向十萬遍。

417 A Confucian allusion. This is what the Gentleman is said to do. 君子以裒多益寡。
立禮法華經，字字各拜，拜且徹部焉。倫則青丘主宰，禪居，誦大悲、佛頂俱一億遍。

楚執柯伐木，熏習相資。登此近圓，勤學不懈，敏慧夙成。俱舍一宗，造微臻極。遂傳講圓暉疏十許遍。後該覽大藏三遍，乃慨儒家為佛教之文而多謬解。解既謬歟，事多誤用。擬白樂天六帖，纂釋氏義理、文章、庶事、群品，以類相從。

建其門目，總括大綱，計五十部。隨事例列，四百四十門，始從「法王利見部」，終「師子獸類部」，其間物類，檢括周旋，令供筆之時，必無告乏矣。一十年中，孜孜罔倦，起晉開運二年，至顯德元年畢。進呈世宗，敕付史館，賜紫衣，仍加號明教大師。

以開寶中，終於龍興伽藍。俗壽七十四，法臘五十四。

楚始謀此作，隨得便書，裒多益寡，日日居月月，鬱成編錄。忽因本院門古石上有「六帖」二字，天然分明。睹此靈符，乃知宿定，搜今幹古，筆不停綴。時樞密相國王公朴為楚作序，冠於編首，今行於寰海矣。初，楚著述心亦勞止，而雙目喪明，monary(醫)工莫療。遂冥心懺過，慮刪碎教文，裁量差脫。如是虔虔，更無間息。再歲還明，人謂其徵感焉。

(《宋高僧傳》捲第七）

419 Song gaoeng zhuan, fascicle 7; Zhonghua shuju (1987), vol.1, pp.159-160. I made minor modifications in the punctuation.
420 The Zhonghua edition uses the other form: 者 + 見.
Appendix 2: Preface by Wang Pu

Comments on the Six Books

By distant cousin Wang Pu, Acting Regent of the Eastern Capital (Kaifeng), Acting Grand Guardian, Supervisor of Kaifeng prefecture, and Military Affairs Commissioner.

The way of the Tathāgata, being something that arises in the mind and is practiced [in the] material [world], is a teaching. That which manifests in form and qualities, let us call this appearance. That which depends on emptiness and words [for expression], let us call this dharma. Forms, qualities, emptiness—all these belong to language. Thus, those who spoke [the teachings] are called sagely, those who transmitted [it] are called worthy, and those who study [it] are called faithful. Had nothing been spoken or transmitted, how could the faithful study it? What was spoken originated from the one voice [of the Buddha]; those transmitting it proliferated it into the three parts of the [voluminous] Buddhist canon; and those who study it gallop out [to explore] along its various tracks. There are thus explications in scriptures, monastic codes, treatises, collections, records, eulogies, chronicles, paeans, and accounts. Upon each reading [of a scripture], winter and summer alternate, one's energy fails, and one cannot accomplish the task. In the end, those who are left wandering about the eight directions encounter many detours and give up the chase. Those who would drink up the four seas bow down to ladle water and [immediately] fill their bellies. [Though] seeking and desiring broad knowledge, they cannot obtain it. Master Yichu is a scholar of wisdom and abundant learning. Apart from his lecturing as a teacher, he is industrious with written commentary. He has selected from among the myriad sayings of the Great Teaching complete passages of essential meaning, ordering them by their characteristics into a total of fifty sections and 440 categories, comprising six books. This allows scholars, every time they discuss a particular thesis, to then, in accordance with [Yichu’s] sections, peek through the door of classical passages from five thousand scrolls, unimpeded. The one who compiled it exerted great efforts, but those who learn from it exert little. Is the rarity of that which is called marvelous in transmitting the dharma [an

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421 Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tensokei okan* 6:2, 6a-b.
indication of holiness? From this we know that Bai Juyi could not naturalize beauty to the Confucian Way (i.e., Confucian learning cannot claim a monopoly on beauty). Vice Minister of Appointments Situ Xu (894-959) respects the teachings of the Buddha, thinks highly of the abilities of teachers, and wishes to see this book brought into society. So accordingly, I, Wang Pu, [Situ Xu's] disciple, Military Affairs Commissioner, and Regent of the Eastern Capital, expound on the essential meanings of this compilation.

六帖述

從表姪孫 權東京留守 櫦 ④②密使 判開封府 檢校太保 王朴 述

如來之道，發於心而施於物者，教也。著於色相者，謂之色; 假於空
言者，謂之法。乃色，乃相，乃空，皆之於言也。故說④③者之謂聖，傳
者之謂賢，學者之謂信，若不說不傳，信者何學之矣? 是以說者肇乎一
音，傳者播為三藏，學者騁其殊軌④④輀。於是乎有經、律、論、集、記、
讃、誌、頌、錄之詩(說)。[每]④⑤一覽，則寒暑[遷]④⑥實，精力罷頓而
不能辦。遂使遊八極者，臨多歧而投策; 飲四海者，揖勺水而滿腹。求欲
旁通博達，不可得也。義楚上人，智慧多聞之士。講授之外，以述作為

④② The original is in error, supplying 櫦.
④③ Variant has on right 公 over 儿.
④④ Variant uses 億 on right. Note that the parallel structure in this sentence suggests that either 軌 or 輀 is redundant. The previous 一音 and 三蔵 should be followed by a parallel 殊軌 or 殊轍, but 殊軌轍 breaks this parallelism.
④⑤ Text partly obscured by damage. 1669 edition gives 說每.
④⑥ Character partly obscured by damage.
業。於大教群^{427}言之內，取其全文精義，以類相從，凡五十部，四百四十門，為六帖焉。將令學者每討論一說，則按部闚門五千卷之典章，無不涉矣。著之者用力多，學之者用力寡。所謂妙於傳法，其希聖者歟？所以知白氏不能專美於儒道矣。吏部侍郎司徒謝敬佛之教，善師之能，欲行其書於世，俾^{428}門生樞密使東京留守王朴述其撰集之旨焉。

^{427} Variant vertically arranged.
^{428} Variant used.
Appendix 3: Yichu’s preface

(Attached to the title of his work and followed by the table of contents)

Yichu’s Six Books, with preface 義楚六帖

Collated by Yichu, Purple-Robed Śramana of Kaiyuan Temple in Qizhou who Lectures on the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise. 齊州開元寺講俱舍論賜紫沙門 義楚 集

With [great] reverence have I heard that the Buddha was from India and that his teachings flowed to eastern lands (i.e., China). With many years passing, the ages drifting along, literary works grew numerous and translations and commentarial literature [became] especially expansive—a surging sea of dharma [teachings], lofty pinnacles of meaning. Therefore [we] know [how it is that people pursuing] the ten ranks [of bodhisattva-hood] are still confused by the teachings of the two vehicles. How is one to fathom that Buddhist priests seldom exhaust the foundational [teachings], while erudite Confucian scholars rarely investigate [even] the great waves? If we do not collect the names of categories, arranging them by type, it will be difficult to gather together essentials, and not easy to seek them.

Thus, I, Yichu, having served from a young age the King of Emptiness (i.e., the Buddha), grew up investigating the Great Teaching and from its views have collected together these passages, inclusive of all the main principles, comprising fifty sections, allowing matters to be separately listed in 440 categories. I hope that curious and knowledgeable people studying diligently in the future can consult [my compilation] when writing commentary [on Buddhist ideas]. They will then know that the Śākya clan (i.e., the sangha) is good and long lasting, and believe that the teachings of the dharma

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429 Yanagida and Shiina, Zengaku tensoei ôkan 62, 7a.
430 The Abidharma juoke lun 阿毘達磨俱舍論, Skt. Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya, T 1558, 1559.
431 The Hinayāna (Theravāda) and Mahāyāna.
are profound. I began the draft in the forty-second year (945) and finished work in the fifty-first year (954) on the tenth day of the second summer month.  

恭聞佛出西天，教流東土，歲月綿邈，時代推移，部帙寔繁，翻述尤廣，滔滔法海，嶷嶷義山。是知十地，猶迷二乘，豈測緇侣罕窮根蒂，鴻儒ascii
究波瀾。若非ascii族群門名，以類羅列。故難備要，不易尋求。

然義楚幼事空王，長窮大教，輒於所見，集成此文，總ascii括大綱，計五十部；隨事別列，四百四十門。冀ascii好事通人，將來勤學，述作之次，聊ascii可檢尋。知釋氏優長，信法門深邃ascii。起ascii乙巳，畢功甲寅，仲夏月之十日耳。

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432 The dates are given in the  干支  system of sixty-year cycles.

433 I.e., the tenth day of the fifth month in the first year of Xiande, or 13 June 954.

434 Variant combines 甚 + 少.

435 Variant has two 乎 in place of 先. The character is also written with 木 and 木 radicals. I do not find the compound listed, but both characters have the meaning of “to gather together,” suggesting they can be read as the single word zǎncù or cuán cacù.

436 Variant 扌 + 怔.

437 Variant has 八 in place of 北.

438 Variant used.

439 Variant used.
Appendix 4: Table of Contents for the *Shishi liutie* (釋氏六帖 目錄)*

All variant characters have been verified in the *Dictionary of Chinese Character Variants* (DCCV), but to save from tedium I have not marked these with footnotes.

For definitions, I consulted the *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* (DDB) first, then verified, adjusted, and augmented definitions using other sources, as necessary. Because only in some instances did I use the body text of the *Shishi liutie* to verify that content matches my interpretations of headings, some definitions remain tentative.

義楚六帖并序 [Book One of] Yichu’s *Six Books*, with preface.

(The preface by Yichu goes here.)

法王利見部第一 1. Beneficial glimpses* of the King of the Dharma (i.e., the Buddha)

名姓行業 1.1. Names and activity* of the Buddha

相好光明 1.2. Primary and secondary marks [of the Buddha] and [his] radiance

降生時代 1.3. Era of [the Buddha’s] descent into the world

所居國土 1.4. Land where [the Buddha] lived

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* Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan* 6:2, 7a-9b.
* Lijian is a term from the *Zhouyi* 周易, and seems to have come to refer to leadership by great people. Nakamura, *Bukkyōgo daijiten*, 1720c, defines the term in Buddhist use as benefit derived from an encounter [with a great person].
* Karma, behavior. The Buddha’s actions, speech, and deeds.
入滅舍利 1.5. [The Buddha’s] entering into nirvāṇa and [his] relics

像化靈異 1.6. [The period of] teaching through images and of wonderful experiences

信奉誹毀部第二 2. Belief [in] and slander [of the Buddha’s teachings]

王侯信奉 2.1. King’s and lord’s belief in [the Buddha’s teachings]

卿相發心 2.2. Arousing the minds of great ministers [toward the great goal of awakening]

道門歸崇 2.3. Reverence returns to the gate of the way (i.e., the Buddha’s teachings)

誹毀報應 2.4. [Karmic] results of slander [against the Buddha’s teachings]

大法真詮部第三 3. The correct exegesis of the great Dharma

法寶名數 3.1. Dharma treasures by name and number

說法相式 3.2. Teaching Dharma [by] form and ritual

說法時處 3.3. Times and places of the teaching of Dharma

諸法名相 3.4. Names and forms of the various dharmas
Groups of disciples who listened to Dharma

Seeking and upholding Dharma

Arousing the vow to transfer one’s merit to others

The eminent power of Dharma

Causes and conditions of the disappearance of Dharma

Conditioned phenomena and the Dharma of mind. The ten kinds of skillful [behaviors] have four [types]: the one belief, the two kinds of delight, the three kinds of attachment, and the four kinds of mindfulness. Unskillful [behaviors] have seven [types]: wickedness, poison (i.e., hindrances), anger, delusion, pride, perverse views, and the five heinous crimes.

Suffering and sentient

Birth

Previous lives

Aging

Three more are appended in the table of contents found in the body of the text: stinginess, greed, and jealousy.
病 4.4. Disease

死 4.5. Death

還魂 4.6. Rebirth

苦難 4.7. Tribulations

地獄 4.8. Hell

六到彼岸部第五 5. The six perfections (“six [methods for] arriving at the other shore”)

布施 5.1. Giving. Initial [giving] and comprehensive [giving] treated separately

持戒 5.2. Upholding precepts

忍辱 5.3. Forbearance

精進 5.4. Effort

禪定 5.5. Meditative concentration

智慧 5.6. Wisdom

義楚六帖第二 Book Two of Yichu’s Six Books
6. Great leaders and the samgha

6.1. The samgha treasure

6.2. Bodhisattvas

6.3. Voice-hearers (i.e., disciples; Sk. śrāvaka)

6.4. Receiving assurance [that one will attain enlightenment]

6.5. Leaving home (i.e., renouncing secular life)

6.6. Returning home (i.e., returning to lay life)

6.7. Breaking of precepts

6.8. Novice monks (Sk. śrāmaṇera)


6.10. Practitioners

7. Teachers, students, and instruction

7.1. Masters

7.2. Disciples (good and bad)

7.3. Attendants

7.4. Treatise masters
7.5. Dharma masters
7.6. Regulations
7.7. Officers
7.8. Instruction
7.9. Satiation of knowledge
7.10. Understanding
7.11. Having something to ask
7.12. Irrelevant
7.13. Inapplicable
7.14. Difficult to understand
7.15. Difficult to fathom
7.16. Difficult to attain
7.17. Extraordinary occurrences
7.18. Unavoidable circumstances
7.19. Peace of mind
7.20. Shame
威儀禮業部第八  8. Deportment and ritual activity

禮儀  8.1. Ritual / Etiquette

行歩  8.2. Walking

位立  8.3. Position

坐起  8.4. Sitting and rising

眠臥  8.5. Sleeping

避嫌  8.6. Avoiding the arousal of suspicions

懺謝  8.7. Repentance / Apology

供養  8.8. To make offerings

齋會  8.9. Gatherings [of monks receiving] offerings of food

溫浴  8.10. Warm Bath

福業  8.11. Meritorious activity


語論樞機部第九  9. The crux of [Buddhist] discourse

語言  9.1. Language

論義  9.2. Explaining meanings
嘲戯 9.3. Joking

辯才 9.4. Rhetorical skill

笑 [哂] 9.5 Laughter

離間 9.6 Sowing dissent

呵責 9.7 Criticism (severe scolding)

欺詐 9.8 Deception

謗毀 9.9 Slander

妄語 9.10 False speech

不聰 9.11 Unintelligence

止諭 9.12 Ending remonstration

九流文藝部第十 10. Letters and arts of the different professions

道俗著述 10.1 Works [by members] of the clergy and of secular society

九流文字 10.2 Words of the different professions

名利 10.3 Fame and profit

書檄 10.4 Correspondence and public declarations
能書五 10.5 Literacy

詩頌六 10.6 Eulogy / Poetry

儒墨七 10.7 Ruists (Confucians) and Mohists

志學八 10.8 Dedication to learning

紙素九筆墨附 10.9 Paper and silk [for calligraphy and painting]

(brushes and ink appended)

醫藥十 10.10 Medicine

術數十一 10.11 Prophesy

占卜十二 10.12 Divination

占夢十三 10.13 Oneiromancy, the interpretation of dreams

相法十四 10.14 Distinctive marks

工巧十五 10.15 Fine arts

畫塑十六 10.16 Painting and sculpture

商賈十七 10.17 Merchants

高行諸尼部第十一 11. Various nuns of lofty conduct

八敬從道一 11.1 Complying with the way of the eight [special rules for nuns]
11.2 Beings manifested in the present

11.3 Lofty conduct [of nuns] listed in biographies

12. [History of] not paying homage [to the saṃgha]

12.1 Talented [people] of the Jin dynasty

12.2 Emperor Wu of the Liu Song dynasty (363-422) orders obeisance

12.3 Helian Bobo's（381-425）homage paid to the saṃgha

12.4 The sifting [of the saṃgha by] Emperor Wu of Southern Qi (440-493)

12.5 Renewed debates [on Buddhism] during the Sui and Tang dynasties

12.6 Destruction [of Buddhist institutions] in the Huichang era (841-846)

12.7 [Debates on] the order of imperial preference for Buddhists and Daoists

12.8 Yancong’s (fl. mid 7th c.) *Futian lun*
13. The Great Way (i.e., Daoism) and [its] immortals

道君 13.1 Noble Daoists

道法 13.2 Daoist teaching

道士 13.3 Daoist priests

奉道 13.4 Obeying (i.e., conforming to) the Way

捨道 13.5 Parting with (i.e., non-conformance to) the Way

444 Book Three of Yichu’s Six Books

14. Spread of the Great Teaching (i.e., Buddhism)

譯經求法計一百一人 101 people who translated scriptures, sought the dharma, and recorded [it]

總 14.1 Comprehensive introduction

法式 14.2 [Buddhist] methods and rites

444 The body text of the woodblock print edition has this as 五, indicating 第五冊, then lists 14 to 23, while covering only 14 and 15 in the fifth booklet and 16 to 23 in the sixth. The division of fifty bu 部 into six tie 帖 is not reflected in the number of bound booklets, which are twelve.

445 總
法施傳燈部第十五 15. Giving dharma teachings and passing on the lamp[-flame]

解義二百六十二人 262 people who understood the meaning [of Buddhism] 446

神通化物部第十六 16. Supernatural ability [to] convert beings

神異十七人感通一百一十四人 Seventeen people [associated with] miracles and 114 people [associated with] response [from buddhas and bodhisattvas] 447

靜慮調心部第十七 17. Quieting thoughts and harmonizing the mind

習禪二十一人下續高僧九十四人 Twenty-one practitioners of meditation [from the Gaoweng zhuan, Biographies of Eminent Monks],

446 Makita and Yamaji, Giyo rokuji in'yō shomei sakurin, have this in two sections that should equal 266 people. Here and elsewhere, the information provided in the Tōfukuji edition’s table of contents conflicts with the body text, the latter being more reliable. The wording in the body text, however, cannot easily be used to improve the table of contents, because it too has discrepancies of wording. See for example the next (sixteenth) section, which the table of contents lists as 17 + 114 = 131 people; on p.142 of Yanagida and Shiina, Zengaku tenseki sōkan 6:2, the number of biographies is given as 28 + 78 + 5 = 111; on p. 191 the same (sixteenth) section is listed with the numbers 18 + 78 +5 = 101. Because of these problems, I have deferred mostly to the wording in the table of contents.

447 See the above note regarding the numbers of biographies in this section.
followed by ninety-four from the *Xu Gaoseng zhuān* (Further Biographies of Eminent Monks)

持犯開遮部第十八  18. Rule adherence and [moral] prescription and proscription

明律一十三人下續高僧二十六人  Thirteen people who elucidated the monastic rules, followed by twenty-six from the *Xu Gaoseng zhuān*

捐身為法部第十九  19. Casting away one’s body for the dharma

亡身十一人下續高僧一十三人護法十八人  Eleven self-immolators, followed by thirteen more and eighteen dharma protectors from the *Xu Gaoseng zhuān*

持誦貫花部第二十  20. Holding gāthās [and scriptures] in memory through chanting

誦經二十一人  Twenty-one people who chanted scriptures

荷負興崇部第二十一  21. Uplifting and promoting [the Dharma]

興福十四人續高僧正紀十八附見五人  Fourteen people who promoted the merits [of Buddhism], followed by eighteen from the main
biographies of the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* and five who are appended in notes [to the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan*]

抑揚半滿部第二十二  22. Modulated, partial, and complete [Buddhist teachings]

經師十一人續高僧正紀十八人附見八人  Eleven masters of scripture, eighteen [more] from the main biographies of the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan*, and eight who are appended in notes [to the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan*]

化導人天部第二十三  23. Instruction of humans and gods

唱導一十人[後雜科八人附見正傳十二人]\(^{449}\) Ten preachers [after which are eight people of miscellaneous categories, and twelve found in notes appended to the main biographies of the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan*]

義楚六帖第四  Book Four of Yichu’s *Six Books*

威靈神衆部第二十四  24. Gods and deities

梵王— 24.1 King of the Brahma Heaven

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\(^{448}\) Makita and Yamaji give twenty-seven.

\(^{449}\) See Yanagida and Shiina, p.142, 232. On pp. 232-233 I only count twelve biographies in the miscellaneous category, so it is unclear to what the "eight people" refers.
帝释 24.2 Indra

魔王 24.3 Māra (demon king of the sixth heaven)

天王 四 24.4 [The four] heavenly kings [of the desire realm]

世主人王部第二十五 25. Lords of the world and kings of men

转轮王— 25.1 Wheel-turning kings

西土有道粟散王 25.2 Scattered kings of western lands 450 who possessed the Way

无道 25.3 [Those of western lands] without the Way

东土有道粟散王 四 25.4 Scattered kings of the eastern lands who possessed the Way

无道 五 25.5 [Those of eastern lands] without the Way

储君臣佐部第二十六 26. Various lords, ministers, and assistants

太子—忠孝贤智等 26.1 Crown prince (the faithful, filial, virtuous, and wise)

450 Most likely this refers to Central Asia and South Asia, with "eastern lands" referring to China, but this assumption needs to be checked against the citations in the body text.
26.2 Great ministers (the good, virtuous, faithful, correct, upright, talented, wise, fawning, and flattering)

27. Immortal men (and women?) of excellence

27.1 Seers

27.2 Non-Buddhists

27.3 Teachers of the Way

27.4 Brahmins

27.5 [Upright] householders

27.6 Lay practitioners

27.7 Male devotees

27.8 [Socially reclusive] men of moral character

27.9 Hermits

27.10 Men of broad learning

28. Human relations, family, and friends

28.1 Human possessions
父母  28.2 Father and mother

兄弟  28.3 Older and younger brothers

舅伯  28.4 Uncles and in-laws

童子  28.5 Children

孝子  28.6 Filial sons

逆子  28.7 Rebellious sons

朋友  28.8 Friends

賓客  28.9 Guests

端正  28.10 The elegant (i.e., beautiful people)

醜陋  28.11 The ugly

奴僕  28.12 Slaves and servants

使役  28.13 Attendants

伴侶  28.14 Companions

孤獨  28.15 The lonely

貧窮  28.16 The poor

乞人  28.17 Beggars

非男  28.18 Hermaphrodites
軍旅雄勇部第二十九 29. Troops and those of great courage

軍旅 29.1 Troops

鬪戰 29.2 Battle

劫賊 29.3 Robbers

竊盜 29.4 Pilferers

不律 29.5 The undisciplined

殺生 29.6 Killing of life

打縳 29.7 Tying up

相撲 29.8 Wrestling

漁人 29.9 Fishermen

獵師 29.10 Hunters

欠負 29.11 Owing debt

失物 29.12 Lost articles

有過 29.13 Wrongdoing

稅利 29.14 Tax and interest

斷事 29.15 Settling matters
大權現化部第三十  30. Great potentiality for manifestation

聖女  30.1 Noblewomen

寶女  30.2 Precious maidens

魔女  30.3 Daughters of Māra (i.e., temptresses)

天女  30.4 Goddesses

后妃公主部第三十一  31. Empresses, imperial concubines, and princesses

后妃  31.1 Empresses and imperial concubines

公主  31.2 Princesses

宮人  31.3 Palace women

婦女賢亂部第三十二  32. Women virtuous and licentious

室女  32.1 Unmarried girls

嫁娶  32.2 Daughters marrying out and brides marrying in [to a household]

妻室  32.3 Wives
偏室 32.4 Concubines
婢妓 32.5 Slave girls and prostitutes
逃亡 32.6 Fugitive [women]
姪濫 32.7 [The] sexually unrestrained

幽冥神鬼部第三十三 33. Netherworld deities and ghosts

閻羅 33.1 Yama
金剛 33.2 Vajra (Vajra-warriors)
修羅 33.3 Asura
神 33.4 Deva king[s]
鬼 33.5 Ghost [generals]
夜叉 33.6 Yakṣa
羅刹 33.7 Ogres (Sk. rākṣasa)
精魅 33.8 Evil spirits
妖怪 33.9 Monsters
靈変 33.10 Unexplainable phenomena
自在光明部第三十四 34. Sovereign radiance

天— 34.1 Heaven
道門天≡ 34.2 Heaven of the Daoists
曰≡ 34.3 Sun
月四 34.4 Moon
星五 34.5 Stars
風六 34.6 Wind
雲七 34.7 Clouds
雨八 34.8 Rain
雷九 34.9 Thunder
雹十 34.10 Hail
電十一 34.11 Lightning
霓十二 34.12 [Double] rainbows
雪十三 34.13 Snow
旱十四 34.14 Drought
34.15 Years

34.16 Kalpa chronology

34.17 Holiday feasts

34.18 Cold and heat

34.19 Day and night

35. Solid land and numinous waters

35.1 Ground

35.2 Mountains, appended with [small] rivers and valleys

35.3 Ocean

35.4 Vast rivers (like the Yangzi)

35.5 Great rivers (like the Yellow River)

35.6 Waters

35.7 Springs

35.8 Ponds

35.9 Wells

35.10 Caves and ravines
塵十一 35.11 Dust

泥十二 35.12 Mud

土十三[沙附] 35.13 Soil, appended with sand

灰十四 35.14 Ash

火十五 35.15 Fire

燈十六 35.16 Lamps

草木果實部第三十六 36. Plants and fruits

園一 36.1 Gardens

林二 36.2 Woods

樹三 36.3 Trees

花四 36.4 Flowers

果五 36.5 Fruits

棘六 36.6 Thorny plants

草七[芭蕉附之] 36.7 Herbaceous plants, appended with apple banana

甘蔗八 36.8 Sugarcane

竹九 36.9 Bamboo
葡萄 36.10 Grape

蘿蔔 36.11 Radish

瓜菜 36.12 Gourds and melons

芥刺 36.13 Mustard [greens] and thorns

[雜草 36.14 Miscellaneous plants]

酒食助味部第三十七 37. Food, drink, and assisting flavors (i.e., salt and sauce)

酒一得二失 37.1 Alcoholic beverages, [their] benefit and harm

食二 37.2 Food and eating

粥三 37.3 Porridge

飰(飯)四 37.4 Cooked rice

羹五 37.5 Soup

餅六 37.6 Flour products

麨七 37.7 Dry-roasted and milled grain

鹽八 37.8 Salt

\[451\] Why Yichu put these two together is not clear, but the entries show that the heading refers to these two separate items.
Terminology for dairy products in both Sanskrit and Chinese is complex, due to instances of overlapping usage, such as Sk. ghṛta being rendered in English as ghee, fat, or cream. The associated Chinese terms and attempts to translate them into English have perpetuated this lack of clarity. Thus, I have translated the three dairy terms with what I identify as their most basic meanings in the Buddhist literature.

The body text lists and gives 米 as appended.
種植二十三 37.23 Planting

飢渴二十四 37.24 Hunger and thirst

飽二十五 37.25 Satiation

寶玉珍奇(奇)部第三十八 38. Treasure, jade, and rarities

寶 - 38.1 Treasure

金 - 38.2 Gold

金剛 - 38.3 Diamond

銀 - 38.4 Silver

琉璃 - 38.5 Glass

珠 - 38.6 Pearl

水晶 - 38.7 Crystal

玉 - 38.8 Jade

錢 - 38.9 Cash

財 - 38.10 Wealth (i.e., capital)

鐵 - 38.11 Iron

富貴 - 38.12 Riches and honor
雅樂清歌部第三十九 39. Refined music and pure songs

樂 - 39.1 Music

琴 - 39.2 Stringed instruments (lute and zither)

琵琶 - 39.3 Pipa

鼓 - 39.4 Drums

鍾 - 39.5 Large bells

[鈴 Small bells]

[磬 Chimes]

歌 - 39.6 Song

舞 - 39.7 Dancing

碁 - 39.8 Board games (go and Chinese chess)

五境為緣部第四十 40. The five conditioned external objects [of perception]

色 - 40.1 Colors and form

聲 - 40.2 Sounds
六根嚴相部第四十一 41. The adorning outward forms of the six [sense] faculties

眼一一 41.1 Eyes

耳二 41.2 Ears

鼻三 41.3 Nose

舌四[口脣齒] 41.4 Tongue, appended with mouth, lips, and teeth

身五燒捨賣易附之 41.5 Body, appended with burning, abandoning, selling, and altering

意六 41.6 Mind

隨根諸事部第四十二 42. Various things associated with the faculties

頭一 42.1 Head

臂二 42.2 Arms
29.3 Hands

29.4 Fingers

29.5 Feet

29.6 Legs

29.7 Eyebrows

29.8 Head hair

29.9 [Other] hair

29.10 Skin

29.11 Bone

29.12 Blood vessels

29.13 Tears and sweat

29.14 Vomit

29.15 Feces

29.16 Urine

29.17 Breath

義楚六帖第六  Book Six of Yichu's Six Books
States, cities, regions, and markets

43.1 States

[Walled] cities

43.3 Regions

Markets, appended with directions and places

Temple, shelter, stūpa, and hall

Temples, of eastern lands and India, appended with Daoist temples, ruined temples, and so forth

[Palatial] halls, appended with [extensive] pavilions and tall buildings

Stūpas / Pagodas

Halls, appended with pavilions and rooms

Residences

Doors, appended with gate

Pillars

Kitchens
階

44.9 Stairs

臺

44.10 Stage, appended with open gazebo

擅

44.11 Platforms

壁

44.12 Walls

廁

44.13 Latrine

貯積秤量部第四十五

45. Storing, weighing, and measuring

藏

45.1 Storehouse

匱

45.2 Cabinet

斗

45.3 Dou [scoop] measure, appended with ladle

秤

45.4 Steelyard scale

盆

45.5 Bowl and jar, appended with cauldron

助道資身部第四十六

46. [Things that] aid the Way and benefit the body

衣服

46.1 Clothing

袈裟

46.2 Kaśāya, [appended with] monastic garb and secular clothing
如意 ᆙ 46.3 *Ruyi* scepter

数珠四 46.4 [Buddhist] rosary

剃刀五 46.5 Shaving knife

淨瓶六 46.6 Water bottle

澡罐七 香爐附之 46.7 Water basin, appended with censer

鉢盂八 鍬附之 46.8 Alms bowl, appended with spoon

錫杖九 46.9 Monk’s staff

鞋履十 46.10 Footwear

淨巾十一 46.11 Hand cloth

幡十二 46.12 Banner

拂十三 46.13 Fly whisk

扇十四 46.14 Fan

帳十五 46.15 Curtain and canopy

床十六 46.16 Bed (or raised platform for meditation)

枕十七 46.17 Pillow

座十八 張之 46.18 Seat, appended with table

氈褥十九 46.19 Felt mattress
席 46.20 Straw mat

璎珞 46.21 Necklaces and bracelets (of precious stones, flowers, etc.)

釵 46.22 Hairpins and bracelets (i.e., feminine jewelry?)

鏡 46.23 Mirror

釱 [sic] 46.24 Needle, appended with tweezer

線 [sic] 46.25 Thread, appended with thread and cocoons of silk

綿 46.26 Cotton / silk floss

絹 [sic] 46.27 [Thin] silk fabric, appended with brocade

織 46.28 Finely woven wool fabric, appended with cloth of coarse cotton or hemp

麴 46.29 Hemp or linen

武備安邦部第四十七 47. Weaponry for protecting a country

印 47.1 Seal

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454 Whether this refers to cotton or to silk floss needs to be checked against the body text. Some sources suggest that cotton was present in China but not widely known in the north before the Song period.

455 In the body text, "布" is placed together with "織" as the 28th item.

456 Pronounced die. See DCCV, character C06045.
杖 = 47.2 Staff
甲 = 47.3 Armor
兜鍪 = 47.4 Helmet
槍戟 = 47.5 Spear and halberd
刀劔 = 47.6 Knife and sword
弓矢 = 47.7 Bow
箭 = 47.8 Arrows
杵 = 47.9 Club
斧 = 47.10 Axe
輪 = 47.11 Wheel
蓋 = 47.12 Parasol
網 = 47.13 Net
索 = 47.14 Rope
梯 = 47.15 Ladder
車 = 47.16 Cart
船筏 = 47.17 Boat and raft
橋 = 47.18 Bridge
水族鱗鱗 部第四十八 48. Fish and critters of the water

龍 48.1 Dragon

龜二鱗龜附之 48.2 Turtle, appended with sea turtle

魚三 48.3 Fish

螺四 48.4 Snail

蛤五蜃附之 48.5 Clam, appended with leech

獺六蝦蟹附 48.6 Otter, appended with shrimp and crab

蛇七蜃附之 48.7 Snake, appended with lizard

蝦蟆八 48.8 Frog and toad

蟲蟻九 48.9 Insects

蚤蝨十 48.10 Flea and louse

金翅羽族部第四十九[飛鳥有四千五百種] 49. Garuḍa and the feathered clan (i.e., birds)

457 In the body text this section is titled longwang shuizu 龍王水族, Dragon King and water critters. See Yanagida and Shiina, Zengaku tenseki sōkan 6:2, 409.
金翅

鳳凰

孔雀

鶴

鸚鵡

鷹

鷹

鳥

鳳

鴿

雞

鴿

梟

蝙蝠

蜂

蠅

Any similar bird of prey.
螢十七 49.17 Firefly
蚊十八 49.18 Mosquito
雜類十九 49.19 Miscellaneous

師子獸類部第五十[獸有四千五百種] 50. Lion and other beasts

師子一麟附之 50.1 Lion, appended with unicorn
象二 50.2 Elephant
虎三熊附之 50.3 Tiger, appended with bear
鹿四 50.4 Deer
駝五 50.5 Camel
馬六 50.6 Horse
驢七驢附之 50.7 Donkey, appended with mule
牛八 50.8 Cattle
羊九 50.9 Sheep
豬十 50.10 Swine
狗十一狼附之 50.11 Dog, appended with wolf
狒猴十二猿附 50.12 Macaque, appended with monkey
兔

狐

野豻

貓

鼠

雜類

[end]
Appendix 5: Translation of all entries under the topic of 食 in Yichu's Shishi liutie

Part Two. Eating

食二

[1] [When] morsel food was first received [by humans]. The Juwe lun says: At the beginning of the kalpa of formation (i.e., formation of the present universe), the flavor of joy-in-meditation gradually gave rise to the flavor of earth, its scent deeply fragrant, its taste sweet and delicious. At that time there was someone habituated from a prior lifetime to indulge in flavors, to smell fragrances, to take food. That time is known as the first receipt of morsel food, after which arose forests, vines, and scented paddy rice. Of old, it was called tuanshi (lumped food); now it is newly [referred to] as duanshi (piecemeal food).

段食初受『俱舍』云: 成劫之初，禪悅為味，漸生地味，其⾹香鬱馥，其味⽢甘美。時有⼀一人，宿習耽香取⾷。時名為「初受段食」，次生林藤⾹香稻。舊云「團食」，今新為「段食」。
[2] Foods have ten types. The *Jigui zhuan* records [the following list]: 1) rice, 2) wheat and beans, 3) roasted grain, 4) meat, and 5) wheat-flour products. The latter five: 1) roots, 2) stems, 3) leaves, 4) flowers, 5) fruits. Regarding the number [of types of food], [for] the poor there are twenty or thirty, [for] the rich a hundred or more varieties fit for a king.

食有十種 『寄歸傳』云: 一飯, 二麩豆飯, 三麨, 四肉, 五餅。後五: 一根, 二䔲,三葉, 四花, 五果。其般數, 貧者三二十般, 貧與王等百餘般。

[3] Flavorings create interest. The *Baolouge jing* lists [the following breads]:

Steamed buns, butter breads, granular sugar [breads], sesame breads, Aśoka breads, Marvelously Flavored [breads], and pan-roasted breads.

助味變興 『寶樓閣經』云: [𢀋+夾]餅, 蘇餅, 沙糖, 油麻, 無憂, 妙味, 煎餅。

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466 Variant 口+呂
467 A variant of er 風.
468 Variant 禾+焰-火. FCJ edition gives 稱.
469 Abbr. for Tang-dynasty Yijing's 義淨 (635-713) *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 (A Record of Buddhist Practices Sent Home from the Southern Sea). Completed in 691, this text records Yijing's travels in India and other parts of South Asia. The relevant passage is T54 n2125, 210b18-20. The translation by TAKAKUSU Junjirō 高楠順次郎, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (CE 671 ~ 695)* by I-toy, 43, gives "1. rice; 2. a boiled mixture of barley and peas; 3. baked corn-flour; 4. meat; 5. cakes." Takakusu must mean "corn," otherwise this is an anachronism.
470 Whether ground to a flour or kept whole. The passage in the Taishō edition (cited above) gives another character with the same meaning: 糧.
471 *Dabao guangbo louge shanzhu mimi tuoluoni jing* 大寶廣博樓閣善住秘密陀羅尼經 (Most Secret, Well-Established Dhāraṇī of the Vast, Gem-Encrusted Tower), T19 n1005A, p628a13-15. A different translation with a slightly different title, shows similar content in passages at T19 n1006 p644a13-14 and 651b28-c01.
472 This may refer to a bread named after the famous ruler of the Mauryan Empire, or one named after the Aśoka tree, *Saraca indica*, the celebrated "sorrowless tree" under which the Buddha is said to have been born.
473 Jiá a wheat flour product similar to steamed buns, also written 𢀋+合
[4] Food is without coarse and fine. The *Luzbe’na chengfo jing* says, What we eat benefits the body, [so] do not seek splendor. Just as grease lubricates a cart, or fragrant oils give aroma to fats, [eating] is the same as adjusting lubrication.

食無麁細『盧遮那成佛經』云：所食資身，無求光澤。如脂膏車，香油脂，等同調滑也。

[5] Impure thoughts return to food. The *Yinguo jing* says, A bhikṣu gave his begging bowl to a woman for food and saw that she was of graceful appearance. Impure thoughts arose. The bhikṣu said, “I do not need food; I cannot make use of it now.” The woman said, “If you repent, you can [still] receive the food.” He then repented and received it.

邪念還食『因果經』云：有一比丘與女人鉢與食，見女端正，邪念即生。比丘曰：

「我不須食，今不消也。」女曰：「悔可受食。」卽悔，受之。

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474 T 18 n848 Da Piluzbena chengfo shenbian jiachi jing 大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經. This scripture has been translated to English by Rolf Giebel, under the title *The Vairocanaābhisaṃbhodhi Sutra*. Similar content to Yichu’s citation occurs on 54a06-13:

次奉摶食。用獻本尊。更作隨意食法。若故有餘。更出少分。為濟飢乏乞求故。當生是心。我為持身器。安隱行道。受是段食。如膏車轄。令不敗傷。有所至到。不應以滋味故。增減其心。及生悦澤嚴身之相。然後觀法界心字。遍淨諸食。以事業金剛。加持自身。是中種子。如鑁字眞言所説復誦施⼗力力明⼋遍。方乃食之。

The analogy of lubricant for a cart is also used in the *Sifenlü* T22 n1428, 963c24-27:

以藥塗之取令瘥差。比丘食以知足。取令身安亦復如是。譬如人以膏膏車為財物故欲令轉載有所至到。比丘食知止足取令支身亦復如是。

See also MORI Shōji, *Bukkyō biyu reiwa jiten*, 56, for a concise discussion of this analogy.

475 (臭)

476 *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing* 過去現在因果經 (Scripture on Causes and Effects of Past and Present.), T3 n189; K 777. I do not find the episode in the cited text. I do, however, see similar content in the *Zengyi aban jing* 增一阿含經 T2 n125, beginning p687c15 and running through five variations of a similar scenario of temptation.

477 The nuance of the bhikṣu’s words is that he has not met the proper conditions for accepting a donation of food; he admits that he cannot use the food to cultivate merit and make a return on the gift, because his
[6] Personally unaffected by the accidental poisoning. The Xu gaoqeng

[zhuan]⁴⁷⁸[has the following story]: While on the road, Dhyāna Master Zao sought some food. His host mistakenly boiled up poisonous berries. [Zao] finished eating and departed. The host ate afterward, throwing it all up and nearly dying. A neighbor saw this, grabbed some medicine, and pursued [Zao]. Only catching up with him after a ten li chase, [the neighbor] told him he had eaten poison. Zao replied, “I personally am not poisoned, [but] thank you for troubling to come to my aid.” The powers of the Way are beyond understanding⁴⁷⁹.

毒瞑自無『緘高僧』璪禪師路次求食。主人悞煮毒葚。食畢而去。主人後食，皆吐欲死。隣人見之，持藥而逐，十里方及，曰食毒來。璪曰：「我自無毒，勞來相救」。道力不思議也。

[7] Due to food, feigned courage. The Baiyu jing⁴⁸⁰ (Sutra of the One Hundred Parables) records [the following parable]: A wife strongly desired to kill her husband. On the occasion of his going on a distant outing, she made him provisions for the road, putting poison within the food. The husband went on the road, but before eating he encountered a brigand who had stolen the king’s horse, [so he] groped for the food and gave it to him. The brigand ate it and died. He took the horse to the king and the king regarded him to be courageous, capable of killing a terrible brigand, and so awarded him a high position. Then, because a lion was a menace to the people of the kingdom, the king came to kill it. The previously mentioned person held a sword, [but] seeing [the lion⁴⁸¹] he climbed a tree. Terrified, he lost his sword, which fell

intentions have gone astray. See the discussion in the Zhu weimojie jing 注維摩詰經 (Annotated Vimalakirti Sutra) T38 n1775, 401a13-26.

⁴⁷⁸ T50 n2060 pp585c20-26. [智璪 (556-638)] 瑭又因事出往會稽。路由剡縣孝行村乞食。主人誤煮毒椹設。璪食竟進趣前途。主人於後噉此余殘。並皆吐痢若死等苦。隣人見之。即持藥追璪。十里方及。見璪快行無恙。問曰。何故見尋。具陳上事。便笑容答曰。貧道無他可棄藥反蹤。不須見逐。璪曰。驗之道力所薰。故毒不能傷也。

⁴⁷⁹ Beyond logic, thought, conventional knowledge.

⁴⁸⁰ This is parable number 65 of the collection, T4 n209, pp. 552c13-553b05. The last bit of dialogue when reunited with his wife is not included in the present text of the Baiyu jing found in the Taishō canon and its meaning is not fully clear.

⁴⁸¹ The 1669 edition includes this in the Chinese text.
onto the lion, causing it to die. He again reaped the highest merit, and the king’s retinue did not
die. [It is] further said that when someone went to the far off country to seek his [old] wife, his
new wife made him food, which he repeatedly swallowed in haste. His wife asked, “With no
brigand chasing [after you], what is the occasion for this haste?” He replied, “This is a secret.
Do not ask about it.” His wife said, "Since I do not understand, I need to ask [you about it]." He
said, “I learned from what people of previous generations liked.”

因食詐勇『百喻經』云：有人妻濫，欲殺其夫，邁夫遠出，爲作路糧，安毒食中
。夫至路未食，逢偷王馬賊，索食，與之。賊食而死。將馬上王，王爲之勇，能殺惡賊，
乃賜重位。又因師子與國人爲災，王徠殺之。前人執刀，見而上樹。戰怖遺刀落師
子上，囚是而死。又獲上功，王者不死。又云：有人遠國索妻，後妻為造食，急復吞之。
妻曰：『無賊趁，何急？』曰：『此宻，莫問。』妻：『不知，須問。』曰：『習先人好
也。』

[8] Need to be equipoised, like a steelyard balance. The Tongzi wen jing says, When practitioners eat, they are not greedy about amounts, do not [fuss over] much or
little, [and] are not covetous of flavors—as if eating the flesh of one’s own son, as when a
steelyard weighs things it is neither high nor low. [They] must be appropriate [in obtaining
food] and give rise to shame and remorse.

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482 (遠)
483 (糧)
484 Variant: 甫 over 心
485 Variant 來+力, lái, to come; also lài
486 FCJ edition gives ...見師子而...
487 FCJ edition/ 1669 edition gives 因. Reading qú here makes no sense, so I follow the 1669 edition,
reading yīn.
488 Variant 走+余
489 T18 n895 Supobu tongzi qingwen jing 蘇婆呼童子請問經 (Tantra of the Questions of Subāhu; Skt.
Subāhuparipracchā-tantra). Content similar to that cited by Yichu appears in two places: roughly
721b07-c08 and 737a18-29.
須平如矜『童子問經』云：行者食時，多少無貪，勿多勿少，無愛其味，如食子肉，如秤稱物，不高不低⁴⁹⁰．合須得所，而生慚愧。

[9] Like a starving [person] being told to eat. The *Fahua jing⁴⁹¹* says,

[It⁴⁹² is] like coming from a country [with] starvation,
Abruptly encountering the fine foods of a great king,
And not daring to begin eating.
But if one repeatedly obtains permission from the king,
Thereafter one dares to eat.

如飢教食『法華經』云：

如從飢國來，
忽遇大王膳，
未敢即便食。
若復得王教，
然後乃敢食。

[10] Food distributed, people poisoned. The second [fascicle of the] *Bao’en jing⁴⁹⁵* says, [It is] like the stupid almsgiver, providing people food and drink, [but] mistakenly using poisoned water and having the people die.

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⁴⁹⁰ Variant 係-小
⁴⁹¹ *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 (Sutra of the Lotus of the Wonderful Dharma), Kumārajīva’s translation of the Lotus Sutra. T9 n262. Yichu’s cited material appears in some verse, fascicle 3 pp21a02-15, in Chapter Six: Prediction 授記品第六. It also appears in Jizang’s commentary on the Lotus Sutra, the *Fahua yishu* 法華義疏. See T34 n1721, 567b18-24.
⁴⁹² The analogy comes from verse sung by members of the Buddha’s audience, who praise the Buddha for predicting that they will all become buddhas but express that they have doubts that this could be so—just like a starving person hesitating before a king’s lavish banquet.
食施人毒 『報恩經』二云：如癡施主，設人飲食，誤用毒水，食者死。

[11] Nourishment of sentient beings. The *Daweide jing*\(^{493}\) records that food is of many varieties. The human realm has four types [of food]: morsel, volitional, contact, and [that of] consciousness. The desire realm [also] has four, [while] the realm of form upwards lacks morsel food. Therefore [it is] theorized that morsel [food is tied to the] desire [realm], and its substance is three [dusts: aroma, flavor, and tactile qualities.]\(^{496}\) The iron pills of the three hell destinies temporarily extinguish [the pangs of] starvation. [The food of] the realm of form [is] joy in meditation.

資益有情 『大威德經』云：食有多種。人間有四種：段、思、觸、識。欲界具四；色界已(已)上，並無段食。故論「段欲體唯三」。三塗地獄鐵丸，暫息飢義。色界禪悦\(^{497}\)也。

[12] Even clothing is not coveted. The *Baiyu jing*\(^{498}\) says, As with [the parable of] the honey cake ("joy-ball"), [wherein] a small child obtained food (i.e., a honey cake) and

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\(^{493}\) *Da fangbian fo bao'en jing* 大方便佛報恩经 (DDB: "Great Skillful Means Sutra on the Buddha's Repayment of Kindness"). T05 n.156. The story of the foolish almsgiver runs roughly 132b13-133b12.

\(^{494}\) Variant 心+呉

\(^{495}\) *Daweide tuoluoni jing* 大威德陀羅尼經 ("Dhāraṇī of the Greatly Powerful One"). T21 n.1341 and X11 n.8, plus many other editions in different canons. Translated between 561-600 by Ṣaṅgaha. 遍那崛多.

\(^{496}\) Yichu appears to have in mind a discussion of foods in the *Apiyada jātaka lun*, T29 n.1558, 55a01-56a10. Commentarial literature on the Abhidharma Storehouse Treatise contains explanations of these ideas, which I have used here to clarify this passage. See Yuanhui’s 圓暉 (8th c.) *Jātaka lun songshu lunben* 俱舍論頌疏論本, T41 n.1825, 877a28-b01.

\(^{497}\) Variant 心+公 over 儿

\(^{498}\) As above, T4 n.209. This is parable number 92, 556c20-27: (九二)小兒得歡喜丸喩
had his clothing stripped from his body, his mind not registering any disappointment [over the loss of their clothing], likewise a bhikṣu may obtain a [small] benefit, but lose his precepts, mental concentration, or wisdom.

衣亦不惜 『百喻』云：如歡喜丸，小兒得食，被脱身衣，心亦不惜，如比丘得利，失戒、定、慧等。

[13] Food is fundamentally to sustain the body. The Naxian jing⁵⁰⁰ says, A king asked a religious practitioner, "Why is it necessary to eat fine foods of many flavors?" [The religious practitioner] replied, "To sustain the body and practice the Way, just as Your Majesty once had arrow wounds on his body after a battle and spread medicine on bandages, not loving the medicine for its healing the wounds. So it is with a religious practitioner eating fine foods of many flavors."

昔有一乳母，抱兒涉路。行道疲極，眠睡不覺。時有一人，持歡喜丸，授與小兒。小兒得已，貪其美味，不顧身物。此人即時解其鉗鎖瓔珞衣物都盡，持去。比丘亦爾：樂在衆務憒閙之處，貪少利養，為煩惱賊奪其功德戒寶瓔珞，如彼小兒，貪少味故，一切所有，賊盡持去。

Note how the analogy of this story is used in the Sifenlü 四分律, T22 n1428, 96c18-24, to emphasize that tonsured Buddhists are to eat for sufficiency and to support health, but not for indulgence in flavors:

比丘亦如是。於六觸入中，善學護持善學調伏善學止息。彼有如是聖戒得聖眼根。食知足亦不貪味。以養其身。而不貢高憍慢取自支身。令無苦患。得修淨行。故苦消滅。新苦不生。無有増減。有力無事。令身安樂。猶如男子女人身患瘡以藥塗之取令瘡差。比丘食以知足。
食本支身『那先經』云：王問道人「何須美食百味？」曰：「支身，行道。如王曾戦身有箭瘡，藥塗綿裡亦非愛藥以療瘡，如道人食百味也。」

[14] No eating after midday. The Vinaya says that [Buddhist] fasting has five benefits: 1) sleeping less, 2) having fewer misbehaviors, 3) obtaining a concentrated mind free of disorder, 4) having less flatulence, and 5) having a body at ease and free of illness. Food not to be taken after midday is the foods of the three evil destinies.

食不中後『律』云：齋有五利：一少睡、二少非行、三得一心不亂、四少下風、五身安無病。不中後食、三塗食也。

[15] Visualize impurity when eating. The Yaoji records that when a bhikṣu eats, he first takes this view. In order to not covet flavors, he must know that in the place from which [the food] comes there is much filth and little food, so it inherently (i.e., by karma) becomes impure. Therefore the Treatise (the Zhufo yaoji lun or Jushe lun?) says that when [you] wish to eat, think of your own virtuous acts (i.e., whether these suffice to receive the food) and estimate how much labor [went into producing the food]. Give some thought to the origins of the food. Think of giving offerings to the wise and the worthy, and of relieving the many starved and exhausted [people].

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501 Variant has 舟 on left.
502 Variant 重 on top of 衣
503 Compare with guowu bushi 过午不食.
504 Which set of monastic codes Yichu intended to cite is not clear. I do not find his formula in searches using CBETA and SAT.
505 This may point to 諸佛要集論 (諸佛要集論). Trans. Dharmaraksạ 竺法護. T17 n810.756b-770a. I do not yet see an exact match for Yichu’s content in this text, however.
食観不淨『要集』云：比丘食時，先作其觀。無貪味故，須知來處，汙多食少，宿成不淨。故『論』云：將欲食時，想己德行，計功多少，念食來處，思供賢聖，濟諸飢羸。

[16] [One] must be measured in eating. The Zengyi [ahan] jing509 records [the following]: Overeating leads to trouble (e.g., illness). In years past, a young bbikṣu ate little [in order to] increase his blessings, [but] his physical strength was not sufficient and he collapsed in the midst of an assembly. The Buddha said, "Do not go to extremes. [Be] like a steelyard balance holding things but resting at the mean510, not making [the arm] swing up and down."

須量其腹『增一經』云：多食致患。昔年少比丘少食増福，氣力力不充，衆中⽽倒。佛言：無至過度，如秤持物，但處中⽽已，無令低昂。

[17] To eat fruits, you must receive them. The Zengyi [ahan] jing511 records [the following]: A bbikṣu receives fruit [but] distances [himself] from his denigrators. A bbikṣu was walking with a non-Buddhist and noticed his fruit tree. The non-Buddhist invited him to climb up and take some fruit. The bbikṣu replied, “The Buddhist teachings do not permit climbing of trees.” The non-Buddhist climbed up and brought [some fruit down] to the ground, but the bbikṣu would not take it. The non-Buddhist asked why. The bbikṣu said, “The Buddha directed that, should we receive too much from outside Buddhism, we will give rise to belief and submit.”

506 1669 edition gives 已。
507 Variant  工+刀 (DCCV). 1669 edition gives 功。
508 1669 edition gives 齋。
509 Zengyi ahan jing 增一阿含經, also 增壹阿含經 (Increased by One Ágama Sūtras; Skt. Ekāṭṭhāgama-sūtra), a collection of sutras in 51 fascicles, T2 n125. Yichu attribution of the content cited here to the Zengyi ahan jing is consistent with several other sources, but SAT does not readily serve up a direct match.
510 Chūzhōng, being situated in the middle. This term connects with the Buddhist doctrine of the Middle Way and Confucian doctrine of the mean through a metaphor of balance.
食果須受『增一』云：比丘受果，離其讒謗。有比丘與外道行，見其果樹。外道令上取果。曰：「佛教不許上樹。」外道上取在地，比丘不取。外道曰：「何也？」曰：「佛令，過受外道，生信歸伏矣。」

[18] Eating has strict rules. The Faxian zhuân⁵¹⁴ records [the following]: The people of Khotan⁵¹⁵ revere the good practice (i.e., Buddhism) and have small stupas. Mahāyāna monks and nuns number three thousand, every day ascending to the hall, with donated food and lay-Buddhist servers. They sit according to a hierarchical scheme, not daring to speak, having what they need set before them by means of hand gestures. There are four great temples, taking the Buddha’s image in procession on the first day of the fourth month, in beautiful decorum.

食有嚴制『法顯傳』云：于填國人家崇善門，有小塔。大乘僧三千人，每日上堂，益食淨人，依大小坐，無敢語者，設有所要，以手指揮。有四大寺，四月一日行像，威儀嚴麗。

[19] Foods have grades. The Bao'en jing⁵¹⁶ records [the following]: King Agnidatta [fed] the Buddha [and his retinue] grain for horses. The Buddha still accepted it and

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⁵¹¹ I do not find this anecdote in the Zengyi aban jing, but it is in a Song work by Yuanzhao 元照, the Sifenlü xingbi chaosi chiji 四分律行事鈔資持記 T40 n1805, 319b19-29. Yuanzhao’s account is slightly longer and more specific in its wording, but does not cite a source.

⁵¹² 1669 edition gives 傳。

⁵¹³ Variant 隨 over 天

⁵¹⁴ Gaoseng Faxian zhuân 高僧法顯傳 (The Biography of Faxian) T51 n2085, 857-866. Faxian’s travel writings, recording his observations of Indian kingdoms. Legge, A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms, translates the related passage (857b03-29) in Chapter III, consultation of which has benefited my own translation. The account given in the Shiši liutie is highly condensed, drawing short excerpts from about the first half of the account translated by Legge.

⁵¹⁵ Skt. Udayana. Also written 優填, 于闐. Ding Fubao records that the king of Khotan 填王 was the first to have carved Buddhist likenesses.

⁵¹⁶ Introduced above. This content may be adapted from the passage beginning T03 n156, 137a02, which discusses how six spiritual teachers, appalled by Gautama’s complete disregard for social status,
transformed it into the tastiest food, because the Buddha's merit made a difference. One also reads in the *Hongming ji* 517, “Those who eat grain are wise, those who eat weeds are foolish, those who eat meat are brave (or ferocious), and those who eat qi are long-lived.

食有等級『報恩經』云：阿耆達王施佛馬麥518。佛亦受之，變成上味，佛福別故。又『弘明』云：食穀者智，食草者憨519，食肉者悍，食氣者壽。

[20] Dharma [study] is food; [differentiating] meaning is the sauce. The *Riyan sanmei jing* 520 says, “Reciting and studying the scriptures is to be taken as food, differentiating the meaning of the scriptures is to be considered the sauce, and cultivating the six perfections is to be regarded as virtuous.” Additionally, the *Jingming jing* 521 says, “The bliss of dharma and the joy of meditation [is the] food, the taste of liberation the sauce.”

法食義漿『日嚴三昧經』云：誦習經典以為食，分別經義以為漿，修行六度為賢良。又『淨名』云：法喜禪悅食522，解脫味為漿。

attempted unsuccessfully to sway his following with warnings about his impure associations and tolerance of morally tainted followers.

517 In the *Mouzi lihuo zhengwu lun* 牟子理惑正誣論, contained in the *Hongming ji* 弘明集, T52 n2102 juan1, 6a12-21:
問曰。為道者或辟穀不食。而飲酒啖肉。亦云老氏之術也。然佛道以酒肉為上誡。而反食穀。何其乖異乎。牟子曰。衆道叢殘凡有九十六種。澹泊無為莫尚於佛。吾觀老氏上下之篇。聞其禁五味之戒。未覩其絕五穀之語。聖人制七典之文。無止糧之術。老氏著五千文。無辟穀之事。聖人云。食穀者智。食草者癡。食肉者悍。食氣者壽。世人大不達其事。見六禽閉氣不息秋冬不欲飲而為之。不知物類各自有性。猶礠石取鐵不能移毫毛矣。

518 (麥) This is just grain for horses, not a particular variety.

519 Character not clear. It appears to be a variant of 憨 hān, similar in appearance and meaning to 瘩 chì. 1669 edition gives 馴.

520 No text with this title appears in CBETA or SAT, but this likely refers to the *Foshuo chaoriming sanmei jing* 佛說超日日明三昧經 T15 n638, where we find the cited content 538a16-18: 誦習經典以為飯食。分別經義以為飲漿。修六法行以為賢良。

521 The *Jingming jing* is a Chinese translation of the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra* that is no longer extant, having been overshadowed by Kumarajiva’s popular translation.

[21] Food has three whites. The *Bukong*\(^{525}\) says, Those who adhere to Zhenyan (True Word Buddhism) eat three white foods. Millet, [other] grain, and white milk are [their] foods. Eliminating various alcohols and meats [from their diet], needing to maintain purity, and fasting their minds, their wishes are fulfilled.

食有三白『不空』云：為持真言者食三白食。粳、糧\(^{524}\)、白乳為食。斷諸酒肉，常須清淨，齋潔其心，所求如願。

[22] Send off food to exorcise illness. The *Tuoluoni ji jing*\(^{525}\) (Dhāraṇī Collection Sutra) says, Use vinegar and sweet preserved fish, one bowl each on top of the diseased body. Spin [the bowls] to the southwest and send them off. Do not look back. Reciting the spell seven times, [the illness] is immediately improves.

送食禳病『陀羅尼』云：用醋、甜鲊\(^{528}\)，各一椀於病身上。轉西南，送之。不得迴顧。誦咒七遍，立荖\(^{31}\)矣。

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\(^{525}\) Similar content can be found in the *Bukong juanwu shenzhou xinjing* 不空羂索神呪心經 T20 n1094, 405c01-06, in a passage describing a purification fast. T20 n1092 to n1098 all contain “bukong” in the title, but only 1094 contains a close match of Yichu’s cited content, suggesting that this may have been the text that he cites as “Bukong.”

\(^{524}\) (糧)

\(^{525}\) This content, with some variation, appears in "Foding daoyin zhou" number 22 佛頂刀印呪第二十二, a spell for treating illness that is presented in the first fascicle of the *Tuoluoni ji jing*, T18 n901, 792a13-20: 即取一椀醋飯一椀甜漿水一椀氷水。取其飯椀。於病人頭上心胸身上。右輪旋轉呪三七遍。以椀暫著病人頭上。令一人當前。一淨器。以椀中飯。瀉淨器内。餘二椀亦爾。呪師受取淨器三物。攪令相和。頭上遶身轉三匝已。遣人急送瀉西南上。勿令迴顧。此送食法。初夜五更二度為之。

\(^{526}\) (陀)

\(^{527}\) Variant 戸+工

\(^{528}\) Reading zhā, fish preserved through a pickling process. Exact variant not found in DCCV. 1669 edition gives 食+卞（飯), but the Tōfukujō edition clearly uses the fish radical. If 卞 was sometimes used in place of 反, then reading bān（飯) a type of fish, might also be possible.

\(^{529}\) Pronounced čē. Information in the DCCV suggests that 顧 was in close relationship with the character gù 顧.
[23] Before the distinction of fire-cooked [versus raw] food. The Zhenglì⁵³⁰ says that in ancient times [people] resided in nests and stayed in holes, making clothes of skin and eating meat. Later, Shennong⁵³¹ tasted the hundred grains, Suiren⁵³² drilled wood to get fire, [and they] ate cooked [food].

燧食未分『正理』云：上古，巢居穴處，衣皮食肉。後神農嘗百穀，燧人鑽⽕，熟食。

[24] Food divided in fifths. The Tongzi wen jing⁵³⁴ says, The food obtained through begging by a bhikṣu should be divided into five parts: The first is given to passersby on the road,
the second [to people on] water[ways], the third [to people on] land, the fourth to those who have passed away before [him], and the fifth to the various hungry ghosts. [Any] remainder he then eats himself, making a meditation on impurity.

**食分五分**『童子子問經』云: 比丘所乞得食，當分五分: 一施路行人、二水、三陸、四過去先亡、五諸餓鬼。餘即自食，作不淨觀。

[25] Eating, seated facing a wall. The Bore lan⁵³⁵ says, Sāriputra was eating while seated facing a wall. There was a brahmin woman named Piṅgala (“Blue Eyes”) who asked...
Śāriputra saying, “Do you [or do you] not go up, down, all around, or ensnare, in begging food for a living? A bhikṣu should not feed himself by looking up at stars and gazing at the moon (i.e., engaging in astrology), by [bending] down to engage in planting, by [going] in all directions being a servant [of the wealthy], or by netting [profits] through engaging in medicine-mixing, sacrifices, spells, and such. To make a living from these is called the four evils.Śāriputra replied, “I am not like this.”

食向壁坐『般若論』云：食向壁坐，舍利子也。有梵志女名曰青目，問舍利子曰「無仰、下、方、維求食活命否。比丘不應仰口為瞻星望月，下為種植，方即為使，維為合藥、祭、咒等。以此活命，名為四邪。」曰「我非此也。」

[26] Plan meritorious acts and guard against greed. The [Da zhidu] lun records [the following]: “This food, [requiring] cultivation and weeding, bringing in the harvest and trampling [the grain] to process [the chaff], grinding to a polish [in a pestle] and washing, and blowing [on a fire] to cook it [before it] is done, uses very heavy exertions. Reckoning for [just] one begging bowl of rice, if we collect together and measure the sweat of the farmer who made [it], [we would find that] the food is less than the sweat. This food’s measure of exertion and its toil being like this, it becomes impure as soon as it enters the mouth and reaches the belly.” To not arrive at gluttony, it is necessary to hold this view.

方口食。邪命之相。如舍利弗為青目女説。三者阿蘭若處。檀越送食。四者於僧中潔淨食。有此等食縁具足。

536 For a brief discussion of the foods of right livelihood and of wrong livelihood, see Fukunaga, Bukkyō igaku jiten, 100-102.

537 Variant with only slight stroke differences that I cannot represent. 1669 edition gives 梵, a reading that can work in the context, but which departs from the language of the Tōfukuji edition.

538 This text is a commentary on the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra. The citation is from the passage T25 n1509 (23rd fascicle) 251b29-c03. 復次，思惟此食，墾植耘除，收穫蹂治，舂磨洮汰，炊煮乃成，用功甚重；計一鉢之飯，作夫流汗集合，量之食少汗多。此食作之功重，辛苦如是，入口食之，即成不淨，無所一直，宿昔之間，變為屎尿。本是美味，人之所嗜；變成不淨，惡不欲見。
Food and Buddha a gushing spring. The *Dazhi du lun*\(^{544}\) says, The Buddha arrived at a brahmin's house, avidly begging for food. He (the brahmin) thought the Thus-Come-One (i.e., the Buddha) seemed to be carrying debt. The Buddha knew and spoke a

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\(^{539}\) In the DCCV, similar though not exact variants are listed under 泄. Another possibility would be a variant for 泄. But the 1669 edition gives 洮, which allows us to read “taotai 洭汰,” to wash away. CBETA’s edition of the *Dazhi du lun*, T25 n1509 (juan 23, p231b29) also has taotai, so I take it to be the standard reading.

\(^{540}\) Variant? The last horizontal is missing from 作, but I can find no such character in DCCV. The FCJ and 1669 editions give 作, which is also in related text in CBETA’s *Dazhi du lun*.

\(^{541}\) The character used is 工・刀, which DCCV gives as a variant of 工・刂, meaning 锋, zhi, a sickle. The context suggests that 功 was intended here, which is what appears in the 1669 edition and FCJ editions.

\(^{542}\) Variant

\(^{544}\) The cited passage is at T25 n1509, 225a20-b17:

佛一時舍婆提乞食。有一婆羅門姓婆羅埵逝。佛數數到其家乞食。心作是念。是沙門何以來數數如負其債。佛時説偈

時⾬⾬數數墮五穀數數成數數修福業數數受果報數數受⽣生法數數死聖法數數成誰數數⽣生死婆羅⾨門聞是偈已。作是念。佛⼤大聖⼈人具知我⼼心。慚愧取鉢入舍盛滿美食以奉上佛。佛不受作是⾔言。我為説偈故得此食我不食也。婆羅⾨門言。是食當與誰。佛言。我不⾒見天及⼈人能消是食者。汝持去置少草地若無⾍虫⽔水中。即如佛教持食著無⾍虫⽔水中。⽔水即⼤大沸煙⽕火倶出。如投⼤大熱鐵。婆羅⾨門見已驚怖言未曾有也。乃至食中神⼒力如是。還到佛所頭⾯面禮佛⾜足。懺悔乞出家受戒。佛言善來。即時鬚髮⾃自墮便成沙門。漸漸斷結得阿羅漢道。復有摩訶憍曇彌。以⾦金⾊色上下寶衣奉佛。佛知衆僧堪能受⽤用告憍曇彌。以此上下衣與衆僧。以是故知佛寶僧寶福無多少。檀越言。若為佛布施。僧能消能受。何以故。婆羅埵逝婆羅⾨門食佛不教令僧食。諸沙彌答言。爲顯僧⼤大力力故。若不⾒見食在⽔水中有大神力者。無以知僧力力為大。若為佛施物而僧得受。便知僧力力為大。...
verse. The brahmin said, “If the Buddha knows my mind, then I will fill his begging bowl with abundant foods.” The Buddha did not consent to accept, saying, “I am out to preach the dharma; I cannot take food. I will not take the Dharma and exchange it for food.” [The Buddha] ordered that the food be put into water and there was a great upwelling. Why is this? Food donated to the Buddha could not be received by others. Making the water [boil] like this, the merit of the Buddha was most excellent (i.e., sufficient to cause this supernatural event).

食佛泉涌『智度論』云：佛至婆羅門家，數數乞食。彼念如來，猶似負債。佛知，説偈。婆羅門言「佛知我心，即盛食滿鉢。」佛不肯受，曰「我因說法，無得取食，不以法換食也。」食令致水中，即大沸涌。何也？施佛之食，餘無能受。致水如是，佛福最勝。

[28] Think of the provenance of food. The *Yuqie lun* teaches [the following]:
As if [I] am eating the flesh of [my] son, [I] think of the almsgiver’s extremely great hardships in accumulating and collecting property. As if slicing off his skin and flesh, [he] gives it to me as alms. I eat it and abide at ease, faultlessly receiving and using it. Returning the almsgiver’s kindness, I cause him to reap the excellent realization [of enlightenment]; he too will benefit.

食想來處『瑜伽』云：如食子肉，想施主甚大艱苦，積集財寶，如割皮肉相施。我食而自安處，無倒受用，報施主恩，令獲勝果，彼俱利也。

[29] Their colors each different. The *Chang aban* records [the following]:
When gods of the six heavens are born and come to be hungry, jeweled vessels fill on their own

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545 Zhi is missing from the 1669 edition.
546 Tofukuji edition appears to have 『』. 1669 edition gives 中, which better matches the context. The missing horizontal may be a print-quality issue in the facsimile.
547 The *Yuqie shidi lun* 瑜伽師地論 T 30 n 1579 p.409a21-a27 has similar content: 如子肉想食於段食。應作是念。彼諸施主甚大艱難積集財寶。具受大廣追求所作種種過患。由悲愍故求勝果故。如割皮肉及以刺血而相惠施。我得此食宜如是方便受用。謂應如法而自安處。無倒受用報施主恩。令獲最勝大果大利大盛。
548 1669 edition: 想
with the flavors of heavenly nectar. Superior merit is of a white color, middle [merit] is blue/green, lesser [merit] is yellow. Their various beverages are also like this, [as are their] clothing, music, and palaces.

[30] Induced to deception because of food. The Zhong aban [jing] records [the following parable]: Two people shared a meal. One first stole a bite. [The other one thought,] “This [guy] is able to cheat me!” He then took [poisonous] medicine and gave it to him, that person nearly dying. [The first] said, “You took food and deceived me, I took medicine and deceived you.”

因食致欺『中阿含』云：有二人共一處食。一先盗喫一口。「此能欺我！」遂以薬[與]之，其人欲死。曰：「汝以食欺我，我以薬欺汝。」
Food furnishes the five blessings. The Wufu jing\textsuperscript{554} records [the following]:

Obtain a marvelous and strong appearance, prosperity, joy, long life, [and] eloquence. The Jushe [\textit{lun}\textsuperscript{555}] also says, Obtain a marvelous appearance, reputation, people’s admiration, a soft and flexible body, and be at all times in comfort (sukha-saṃsparśa).

食施五福『五福經』云：得妙強色、富、樂、壽命、詞辯。又『俱舎』云：得妙色、好名、衆愛、柔軟身、有隨時樂觸也\textsuperscript{556}。

Possessing milk springs [when] eating. The [\textit{Apidamo da pī}]	extit{pañca} [\textit{lun}]\textsuperscript{558} says\textsuperscript{558}, When buddhas eat, all [foods] regardless of their coarseness or fineness become the most delicious flavors, by virtue of buddhas having in their throat two springs of milk. [The outcomes of] meritorious activities differ [from being to being].

食有乳泉『婆沙』云：佛食時，隨其麁細，皆成上味者，以佛喉中有二乳泉。福業別矣。

\textsuperscript{554} Makita and Yamaji, \textit{Giso rokujo sakuin}, point to the \textit{Foshuo shishi huo wufubao jing} 佛説食施獲五福報經/\textit{Shiobi huo wufubao jing}, T2 n132a and n132b. DDB is completely silent on this short scripture. SAT has only the former title but includes also the “b” edition of CBETA’s Taishō. Searches in CBETA suggest that T2 n132a and n132b are the only digitized editions.

\textsuperscript{555} From verse in the \textit{Apidamo juwelun} T29 n1558, 96b01-2:

財異由色等 得妙色好名
衆愛柔軟身 有隨時樂觸

\textsuperscript{556} Character cramped down against bottom border line and unclear. FCJ edition gives 隨, which on close observation seems probable.

\textsuperscript{557} 1669 edition omits 也.

\textsuperscript{558} T27 n1545 juan177, 888c16-25. The cited content comes at the end of a long passage on the thirty-two signs of a great being in the \textit{Apidamo da pipha\, lau} 阿毘達磨毘婆沙論, \textit{Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā-sāstra}, the Treatise of the Great Commentary on the Abhidharma. Yichu cites the twenty-sixth sign, that of obtaining supreme flavors: “二十六者得最上味相。謂佛舌根淨故。令所飲食變成上味。有說。佛舌根上有一切世間悅意美妙勝味種子。若諸苦酢等物至舌根時，此種雜變皆成上味。有說。如來舌根有如是勢力。若諸飲食來至舌根，於中悅意美妙性便生舌識。麁鄙性者不生舌識。有說。佛咽喉中有二乳泉。若飲食時其乳流出。雜諸飲食皆成上味。然於此中舌根淨故令味殊勝。此理應然。
[33] Foods give benefit according to their faculties. The Zengyi [aban] jing\textsuperscript{559} says, The resource, benefit, and meaning of foods each follow their faculties. Eyes take sleep to be their food, ears take sounds, noses take aromas, tongues take flavors, bodies (skin) take touch, the mind takes dharma (i.e., truth), and nirvana takes lack of self-indulgence [as its food].

食隨根益『增一經』云：食者，資、益、義，各隨其根。眼以睡為食，耳以聲\textsuperscript{560}，鼻以香，舌以味，身以觸，意以法，涅槃無逸等。

[34] Incant over the food then offer it. The Jiaomian jing\textsuperscript{561} says, When one is to eat, speak incantations for the various ghosts and others. This is no less than setting up a heavenly assembly, [the food] turning to sweet dew, all [the hungry ghosts] opening their throats and being satiated; they will obtain both food and treasures. [When] ghosts and deities obtain a little food it can become much, with one mouthful increased immeasurably.

\textsuperscript{559} This citation frames ‘food’ as objects of desire for the senses and cognition, and not just as material sustenance for the body. The cited passage is T2 n125, 656c09-25:

(四)聞如是。一時佛在舍衛國祇樹給孤獨園。爾時世尊告諸比丘。眾生生之類有四種食長養眾生生。何等為四。所謂摶食或大或小。更樂食念食識食。是謂四食。彼云何名摶食。彼摶食者。如今人中所食諸入口之物可食噉者。是謂名為摶食。云何名更樂食。所謂更樂食者。衣裳繖蓋雜⾹⾹華熏⽕。及⾹油與婦⼈人集聚。諸餘身體所更樂者。是謂名為更樂之食。彼云何名為念食。諸意中所念想所思惟者。或以⼜⼝⼝説或以體觸。及諸所持之法。是謂名為念食。彼云何為識食。所念識者。意之所知梵天為⾸。乃至有想無想天。以識為⻝。是謂名為識食。是謂比丘有此四⾷。眾生之類以此四食流轉生死。從今世至後世。是故諸比丘。當共捨離此四食。如是諸⽐丘當作是學。爾時諸⽐丘聞佛所說。歡喜奉行...

\textsuperscript{560} Variant

\textsuperscript{561} Makita and Yamaji, Giso rokujō sakui, point to the Jiumianran egui tuoluoni shenzhou jing, 救⾯燃餓鬼陀羅尼神呪經, T21 n1314. See the passage on page 466a26-c26 for a description of the method to use when providing offerings to hungry ghosts, which loosely matches the content that Yichu cites. Note also the next Taishō text, Shi zhu egui yinshi ji shui fa, 施諸餓鬼飲食及⽔法, T21 n1315, which also explains ritual for offering food to hungry ghosts, citing this content as coming from the previous or similar source: 施燋⾯面餓鬼一切鬼神陀羅尼經要決.
[35] Foods are unclean. The [Dazhidu] lun\textsuperscript{565} says, There was a brahmin who cultivated the dharma of joy and purity. Something came up and he had to go to an unclean country. While thinking about pure food, he saw an old woman come along, selling marrow cakes. [She came] day after day to sell [them]. After eating [some, the brahmin] suddenly found them flavorless, so he asked the woman, saying, “Why haven’t they any flavor?” The woman replied, “My lord suffers ulcers on her genitals, [so I] usually take buttered flour to stick [together] medicine and cover [the ulcers]. Taking it [oft], I mix it with strong-flavored wine and sell it as marrow cakes. Now the ulcers have healed and I haven’t the ulcer[-soaked] flour. These have only oil.” The brahmin upon hearing this was retching without end and very nearly wishing he would die.

食不浄\textsuperscript{566} 『智論』云：有婆羅門修樂淨法，有事，須至不浄之國。當思浄食，見一老母\textsuperscript{567}來，賣髓餅，日日賣。食後，忽無味，乃問母曰「何無味也？」母曰「我大家隱處

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\textsuperscript{562} 面. 1669 edition gives the more common form.

\textsuperscript{563} T25 n1509, 231c09-22. This parable appears in a passage that sets out justifications for an "attitude of despising foods 食厭想.”

\textsuperscript{565} T25 n1509, 231c09-22. This parable appears in a passage that sets out justifications for an "attitude of despising foods 食厭想.”

\textsuperscript{566} Variant uses ² at top, rather than full height ²

\textsuperscript{567} Variant has solid center vertical, not two dots.
[36] Begging for food: qibi and fenwei. The [Yiqie] jing yinyi says, The expression fenwei (“rotating duty”) is erroneous and elliptical. It should read bintujia (Skt.)
piṇḍikā / piṇḍakā, alm’s food, literally a lump or ball of food) or hintuge (P. piṇḍāya [carati], to go begging for food)\(^{574}\), which refers to a lump of food. This is to carry out begging. It also goes on to say that [fenwei] is not “begging for food.” This is still not translated correctly.\(^{575}\)

乞食分衛\(^{576}\)『經音義』云：言分衛者，此言詭略。應云賓荼迦，或云賓荼夜，此云食團。為行乞，此也。又便言乞食，非也。亦非翻對等。

[37] Proceed slowly [if you] see someone. The Vinaya\(^{577}\) says, When a ṛhīkkhu begged for food, he straightaway entered people’s homes, turned around when he did not obtain anything, swayed his body and covered his head, and swung his hands, arms, and legs [in hasty retreat]. Seeing someone come out [of a home], if you silently respond and go, there will be treasure (i.e., an offering). Seeing someone depart, proceed slowly and do not cause trouble. Other sayings [in the Vinaya] are like this.

見人徐進 『律』云：比丘乞食，直入人舍，不得東西後顧\(^{578}\)，搖\(^{579}\)身覆頭，棹手臂脚。

[38] Take along a ṛhīkkhu [companion]. The Fahua jing\(^{580}\) says, “Upon entering a village to beg food, take along a ṛhīkkhu [companion], and if there is no ṛhīkkhu [to accompany...
you], focus your mind on thinking of the Buddha; do not bare your chest; do not reveal your teeth in laughter,” and so forth. Furthermore, the Jin’gang jing says, “When [the Buddha wished] to eat, he put on [proper] clothing, held his alms bowl in hand, and entered homes, feudal states, and walled cities.”

將一比丘『法華經』云：「入里乞食，將一比丘，若無比丘，但一心念佛」，「不現胸臆」，「不露齒笑」等。又『金剛經』云：「食時，著衣，持鉢，入舍、衞、大城。」

[39] Ānanda begs for food. The Da foding fang and other works say, [For]

Ānanda, no departure meal was provided by donors (fuqing). He held his alms bowl, his mind dwelt on equality, and he did not discriminate between noble and humble. [This] differs from the Great Kāśyapa following [the path of] poverty and from Subhūti seeking wealth; one accorded with compassion, [the other] with absence of grievances (i.e., dwelling in peace).

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Miaofa lianhua jing, the Lotus Sutra, one of the most important scriptures in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism. The citation comes from two passages in close proximity, T9 n262, 37b07-08 and 37c07-08.

This passage comes from the Jin’gang bore boluomi jing, Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, The Diamond Sutra, translated by Kumarajiva, T8 n235, 748c20-22.

如是我聞。一時佛在舍衞國祇樹給孤獨園。與大比丘衆千二百五十人俱。爾時世尊食時著衣持鉢入舍衞大城乞食。

x DDB. Makita and Yamaji do not clarify. Searching SAT and CBETA for clues only tells me that there are a few texts with Da foding in the title, but none of these includes fang 方. Nor is there mention in all the digitized canon of “Da foding fang.” This may be a reference to the Shou lengyan jing T19 n945, which has Da foding in its full title: Da foding rulai miyin xiuzheng liaoyi zhu pusa wanxing shou lengyan jing 大佛頂如來密因修證了義諸菩薩萬行首楞嚴經. The Shou lengyan jing does have much discussion between Ānanda and the Buddha, so Yichu’s paraphrasing could represent content found there, though I am unable to find a close match anywhere—perhaps because this material is highly condensed from long narratives?
[40] Get the alms bowl and run! The Jingming jing\(^{586}\) says, Subhūti obtained the samādhi of freedom from grievances. Arriving at Vimalakīrti’s house to beg food, he was rebuked and wanted to get his alms bowl and leave. Vimalakīrti said, “Take your alms bowl and do not be afraid. If a manifestation of the Tathāgata is questioned like this, will he, or will he not, be frightened?”

致鉢而逃 『淨名經』云：須菩提得無諍三昧。詣 ∧ 淨名家乞食，柀 呵，欲致鉢而去。淨名曰：「取鉢，勿懼。如來所作化人。若以是詰，寧有懼不。」

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\(^{584}\) Variant uses 雲 in place of 世

\(^{585}\) 富

\(^{586}\) This is a reference to the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra, which was translated into Chinese multiple times. Only three of these have reached present times: 佛說維摩詰經 T14 n474, Weimojie suoshuo jing 維摩詰所說經 T14 n475, and Shuo wugoucheng jing 說無垢稱經 T14 n476. Yichu’s phrasing most closely matches the exchange between Vimalakīrti and Subhūti (minus the preamble that frames the episode as a conversation between Subhūti and the Buddha) in Weimojie suoshuo jing T14 n475, 540c13-15, the influential translation by Kumārajīva: 不知以何答。便置鉢欲出其舍。維摩詰言。唯須菩提取鉢勿懼。於意云何。如來所作化人。若以是事詰。寧有懼不。The similar wording suggests the thesis that for this “Jingming jing,” Yichu was referencing this translation by Kumārajīva. In the next entry, he cites a “Weimo jing,” using the alternative, transliterated title of the scripture, but still seems to be choosing phrasing most closely associated with Kumārajīva’s translation. Could he be citing a translation that was lost? There seems little justification for citing the same text by two different names. Note also that in the chanding 禪定 subsection (p73 of Yanagida and Shiina, Zengaku tenseki sōkan) he cites an Wugoucheng jing 無垢稱經, which likely corresponds with T14 n476, Xuanzang’s translation of the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra. He then goes on to cite “Jingming” and “Weimo jing,” suggesting that he was indeed treating the different translations as different sources. Consulting Makita and Yamaji, Gisōrokujo sakuit, we see that he cites “Weimo jing” some thirty times, “Wugoucheng jing” twice (never “Shuo wugoucheng jing”), “Jingming” sixteen times, and “Jingming jing” about thirty-six times. The latter two are probably equivalent, as he seems to often abbreviate titles. Whether or not his “Weimo jing” and “Jingming jing” are distinct translations needs to be tested through the phrasing of his citations—based on my work for the two entries here, both appear closely connected with T14 n475, Kumārajīva’s influential translation, but one could represent a translation that is no longer extant.

\(^{587}\) Variant has 〜 over 日

\(^{588}\) 1669 edition gives bei 被.
[41] Extraordinary compassion. The *WeimofţieJţing*\(^{390}\) says, The Great Kāśyapa followed [the way of] poverty and begging, abandoning power and wealth, and dwelling in the dharma of equality. Begging in response to these conditions, he arrived at neither great fortune nor little fortune. The [Vimalakīrti] sutra also records\(^{391}\) [the following]: Dawn was approaching. Vimalakīrti asked [the assembly], “Are you coming for the Dharma or for food?” He then transformed [himself] into a Bodhisattva in the realm of the Buddha of Accumulated Fragrance and took an alms bowl of fragrant rice, the aroma permeating all Vaiśāli and fully satiating the assembly. He then came to humans and the humans all ate, collecting [as much food] as Mt. Sumeru. As in [this] example, [one’s resources] do not run dry, [one] obtains fruits [of the Dharma], reaps benefits, and so forth.

\(^{389}\) 1669 edition adds 有: 請有懼否.

\(^{390}\) Yichu’s phrasing most closely matches Kumarajīva’s translation, where the cited material is found at T14 n475, 540a28-b11:

唯大迦葉。有慈悲心而不能普。捨豪富從貧乞。迦葉。住平等法應次行乞食。爲不食故應行乞食。為壞和合相故應取揣食。爲不受故應受彼食。以空聚想入於聚落。所見色與盲等。所聞聲與響等。所嗅香與風等。所食味不分別。所觸如智證。知諸法如幻相無自性無他性。本自不然今則無滅。迦葉。若能不捨八邪入八解脱。以邪相入正法。以一食施一切。供養諸佛及衆賢聖。然後可食。如是食者非有煩惱非爾煩惱。非入定意非起定意。非住世間非住涅槃。其有施者無大福無小福。“O Mahākāśyapa, you have the mind of sympathy and compassion but are unable [to apply it] universally. You have abandoned the wealthy to beg from the poor. "Kāśyapa, while abiding in the Dharma of universal sameness, you should proceed in sequence in your begging.

"It is because of not eating that you should practice begging. It is because of the destruction of one’s physical integrity that you should take that lump of food. It is because of not receiving that you should receive that food.

"You should enter a village with the idea that it is an empty aggregation.

12. “The forms you see are equivalent to [what] the blind [see]; the sounds you hear are equivalent to echoes; the fragrances you smell are equivalent to the wind; the flavors you eat should not be discriminated; your tactile sensations are like the realizations of wisdom; and you should understand that the dharmas are like phantasms. That which is without self-nature and without other-nature originally was not burning and will not become extinguished now.

13. “Kāśyapa, if you are able to enter the eight emancipations without renouncing the eight perversions, using the characteristic of perversion to enter into the correct Dharma, and using a single meal to give to all, making offerings to the buddhas and the assembly of worthies and sages, only then should you eat.

"To eat in this fashion is neither to have the afflictions nor to transcend the afflictions, it is neither to enter into concentration nor to arise from concentration, it is neither to abide in the world nor to abide in nirvana.

"Where there is charity, there are neither great nor small blessings, …” John McRae, *The Vimalakīrti Sutra*, 97-98.

\(^{391}\) The following material is from the tenth chapter, which begins in Kumārajīva’s translation at T14 n475, 552a06. See especially cited phrasing in the passage running 552b27-c05.
Bai Xin Bup [Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra] says: When one is virtuous, he is not dissimilar. One who gives away, one who receives, and one who is equal, should give away, and thus one is without great and small benefits.

[42] Aṅkura obtains food. The Jiuliu jing says, An elder (Aṅkura) and five hundred people entered the lands near the sea and their food and drink all ran out. Coming to the base of a tree, [Aṅkura] saw a man and questioned him. The man raised his right hand and produced food. The company was satiated, all obtaining food, treasure, lodging, karmic blessings, etc.

鸠留遇食 [鸠留经]云：长者与五百人入海，其食饮皆尽。至一树下见人，问之。即举右手，出食。衆饱足，兼得食、寳、宿、業福报等。

[43] The five harms of overeating. The Chuyao jing says, Excess in eating and drinking has five harms: 1) much stool, 2) much urine, 3) troubled sleep, 4) a heavy body, and 5) many ailments and indigestion. Furthermore, the Zbi lun says, Gavāṃpati vomited, picked up [the vomited food] and ate [it]. Karma does not follow (or correspond with) wisdom.

592 The 1669 edition inserts a second 無: 無大福, 無小福等.
593 Variant C05878 in DCCV. St, meaning 死 or 盡, or st, a variant of 湧, to exhaust, to drain dry.
594 From Foobuo ajialiu jing 佛説阿鳩留經, T14 n529, a short sutra in a single fascicle, whose translator is not known. Note also Fujimoto, "Aṅkura-Petavatthu と『仏説阿鳩留経』", which very concisely documents a set of parallels between the Chinese text and a narrative from a set of ghost stories in the Pali literature, suggesting that these are overlapping narratives representing slightly different tellings of the same story.
595 Dharmapāda, Sutra of the Appearance of Light, T4 n212, 655c11-15. This comes from a passage discussing why Buddhists uphold precepts associated with eating.
596 Dazhīdu lun, T25 n1509, 251b01-02: 如僉梵波提比丘。雖得阿羅漢。自食吐面更食。是業不随智慧。
食多五失『出曜經』云：食飲過多，當有五失：一大便多，二小便多，三飢睡，四身重，五多患，食不消化。又『智論』云：憍梵波提吐而取食。業不隨智也。

[44] [Approaches to] food differ. The *Hongming* ⁵⁹⁸ says, Daoists do not eat (i.e., they fast) and [they] permit the partaking of alcohol and meat. Why is it that the Buddhist teachings are opposite this? The answer is that the "Five Thousand [Words]" (i.e., the *Laozi*) has no discussion of fasting from grain, and the Seven Confucian Classics ⁵⁹⁹ lack techniques for omitting grain [from one's diet]. [The *Hongming ji* touches on] four foods ⁶⁰⁰ and that is all.
Nirvana of not obtaining. The Bore lun⁶⁰¹ says, Bhikṣu Losaka[-tisyā⁶⁰²] was a great arhat. [His] merit little and [his] conditions exhausted, he begged food for seven days without obtaining [any], looked upon the Unconditioned, and then entered nirvana.

不獲涅槃『般若論』云：羅頻比丘，是大羅漢。褌少緣盡，七日乞食不得，觀無緣者，乃入涅槃。

The seven kinds of conditions⁶⁰³ [for retaining the dharma as a tonsured Buddhist]. The Shanjie jing⁶⁰⁴ records [them as follows]: 1) giving up ornamentation (i.e., beautification) of the body; 2) shaving the head and facial hair; 3) donning a

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⁶⁰¹ This would usually refer to the Jin'gang bore lun 金剛般若論 T25 n1510 or the Jin'gang bore boluomi jing lun 金剛般若波羅蜜經論 T25 n1511. I do not, however, see evidence that the anecdote appears in either of these two texts. See next note.

⁶⁰² Hirakawa, Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary: 羅頻珠. This three-character name leads to the following passage of the Dazhidu lun, T25 n1509, 172c07-10, which accords with Yichu’s citation:

如羅頻珠比丘。雖得阿羅漢道乞食七日日不得空鉢⽽而還。後以禪定⽕火⾃自焼其⾝身⽽而般涅槃。以是故知。

非但福徳⼒力故得道。欲成佛道要須懃⼤大精進。Another passage of the same scripture, Dazhidu lun T25 n1509, 278c02-13, records the story in more detail, giving the name with a different character that has a similar pronunciation:

如舍利弗弟⼦子羅頻周比丘。持戒精進乞食。六⽇日⽽而不能得。乃至七⽇日命在不久。

有同道者乞食持與。鳥即持去。時舍利弗語目目揃連。汝大神力守護此食令彼得之。即時目連持食往與。始欲向⼜⼝口變成爲泥。又舍利弗乞食持與⽽而⼜口口⾃自合。最後佛來持食與之。以佛福徳無量因縁故令彼得食。是比丘食已。⼼心⽣生歡喜倍加信敬。佛告比丘。有薄福衆生罪甚此者佛不能救。

⁶⁰³ 七種之緣 etc. x DDB, though 七緣 points to Hirakawa p19, where it and 七種因緣 are listed with a Skt equiv: saptabhiḥ...kāranaīḥ. The short form makes many appearances in the canon, while the longer formulae are few, but the sense found here does not seem common. For the meaning cited by Yichu, I find neither formula in the Ming-period encyclopedia of Buddhist categories, the Daming sanzang fashu 大明三藏法數 (Yongle beizang) P181-183 n1615.

⁶⁰⁴ Taishō contains two editions of this sutra, by the same translator and bearing the same title: Pusa shanjie jing 菩薩善戒經. T30 n1582 and n1583. The cited content is in T30 n1583, 986b03-09:

是名威儀苦。攝法苦者有七種一者身捨飾好。二者剃除鬚髮。三者著割截衣。四者一切世事不得⾃自在命屬於他。五者乞求活命。六者遠離⽣生業少欲知⾜足。七者捨離親族五欲之樂。是名攝法苦。乞求苦者。供身之物衣服飮食房舍臥具病痩醫藥。一切仰他不得不嫌得時知⾜足。
pieced-together robe; 4) not obtaining ease; 5) [begging to] make a living; 6) distancing [oneself from] particularizing karma and having few desires; and 7) abandoning family [relations] and begging for food.

七種之緣 『善戒經』云：一捨身飾好、二剃鬚髪、三著割截衣、四不得自在、五活命、六離生業，少欲、七捨離親族，乞食。

[47] Fear of encountering dogs. The Zhi lun⁶⁰⁵ says, In begging for food, a practitioner came to fear dogs and beat them with a stick, saying, “I do not obtain food, [even though] I multiply my skillful means. How can you merely lie there, lethargic in your guarding?”⁶⁰⁶

遇狗之怖 『智論』云：道人乞食，遇狗之怖，又以杖打，曰：「我種種方便，不得食。汝何空臥⁶⁰⁷戒慵？」

[48] Merit for seven lifetimes. The thirteenth fascicle of the Zhong‘aban [jing] records⁶⁰⁸ [as follows]: Aniruddha said, “When in a previous life I was in a society suffering starvation, locust [infestations], drought, and failing crops, a pratyekabuddha entered the walled city to beg food and came out with an empty alms bowl. I, as a fuelwood carrier, saw him and invited him to follow me back home, [where I] divided my own food and gave it to him. [This

⁶⁰⁵ Dazhidu lun T25 n1509, 658a23-27: 如受乞食道人。至一聚落從一家至一家乞食不得。見一餓狗飢臥。以杖打之言。汝畜生無智。我種種因緣家家求食尚不能得。何況汝臥而望得。須菩提問世尊。有是供養諸佛等。This analogy does not, however, contain the reference to fear with which Yichu frames the entry. The surrounding discussion, not quoted here, suggests that the analogy was in illustration of how one can cultivate merit yet still encounter hardships and frustrations.

⁶⁰⁶ This last line may have some humorous punning, as the language also suggests a different reading appropriate for how some people may have derogatorily described monks: “lying around and lax in observing precepts.”

⁶⁰⁷ Variant has 卜 on right

⁶⁰⁸ See T1 n26 fasc.13, paragraphs beginning 508c19. Here, Aniruddha tells how in a past life he shared some food during a time of famine with a pratyekabuddha who was unable to beg food from the hungered masses. The merit of the act multiplied exponentially, sending him through a series of favorable births as heavenly kings, then as human kings, and finally as one able to leave home and learn the Way. (DDB points to a paper by Anālayo that may discuss the textual history of this Middle Agama.)
act] aroused the sympathy of the heavenly realm and I returned to the human realm seven times, receiving rich [karmic] results, even to the extent that I obtained the Way.”

七生之福『中阿含』十三云: 那律曰: 我於往昔時，世飢餓、蝗、旱、不熟，有獨覺入城乞食，空鉢而出。我為檐薪人，見便請歸，分自食施，感天上，人間七返，受大富果，至今得道。

[49] Obtaining the Way because of food. The Zhi[du] lun⁶⁰⁹ records [the following]: Bhikṣu Losaka[-tisya], a disciple of Śāriputra, upheld the precepts and exerted himself in practice, [but] for six days he begged for food and did not obtain any, [such that] on the seventh day his life was close to its end. Food given by fellows on the path was stolen by crows. Maudgalyāyana (one of the ten major disciples of the Buddha) used supernormal powers to give food, which transformed into mud. [When] Śāriputra gave [him] food, his mouth closed on its own. Only when the Buddha gave [him] food, did he arouse the [necessary] resolve and obtain the fruits [of awakening].

因食得道『智論』云: 舍利弟子羅頻比丘持戒精進，六日乞食不得，至七日命在不久。同道與食被烏銜去。目連神力與食，化為泥。舍利與食，口即自閉。佛與食，方得發心得果也。

[50] Eating clay for seven days. The Baiyuán jìng (Avadānaśataka) says,⁶¹⁰ There was a bhikṣu (Lekùncika 梨軍支) who from birth was short of food. Whether from various

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⁶⁰⁹ Dazhidu lun T25 n1509, 278c02-13. For the text, see note above under “Nirvana of not attaining 不獲涅槃.”

⁶¹¹ Character appears to be xián, given here. The combination 鳥銜 appears in classical texts in connection with a story about an official (or envoy?) whose meat is stolen by a crow when he goes to eat by the side of the road. Not in DDB. The next entry also uses wuxian, in the context of food being stolen by animals.

⁶¹² T4 n200, 251c01-252b16, case number 94 in the tenth fascicle. This is a story about the conditions from a past life that caused a bhikṣu to be chronically short of food his entire life, while nonetheless
people’s giving it or from begging, he would not receive [food]. In some cases he forgot; in
others it was stolen by dogs or crows. Among the causes [for this state of affairs] was that he
had once denied his mother food, [leading to] seven days of karmic retribution, wherein he ate
clay and died.

食沙七日 『百緣經』云：有比丘生便闕食。諸人與，乞，亦不得。或忘，或遇狗奪
鴉銜。以自因中，曾不與母食，七日感果，食沙而死。

[51] To overcome painful karma. The Benxing jing\textsuperscript{613} says, The Buddha practiced
asceticism for six years, mastering the various non-Buddhist methods [of self-cultivation].
Whether eating one meal per day, or one meal per seven days, or one sesame seed and one grain
of wheat, he overcame the various practices of the non-Buddhists and furthermore came to the
point of fruition of the Way, which he obtained upon eating three \textit{dou} and six \textit{beng} (three and a
half bushels) of milk porridge. This shows that it was not due to making himself hungry that he
completed the path [to awakening]. [The Buddha’s] having\textsuperscript{614} crossed the river [near] Śāketa\textsuperscript{615},
a well-accomplished non-Buddhist [practitioner] asked the Buddha, “Relying on what should all
sentient beings reside?” The Buddha said to rely on food for residing, explained the meaning of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{613} Abbr. of \textit{Fo benxingji jing} 佛本行集經. Skt. Abhinīśkramaṇa-sūtra, Sutra of the Collection of the
  Original Acts of the Buddha (DDB). T3 n190. The story of Siddhattha eating rice porridge is in fascicle
  25, p.771b02-772b16. In the \textit{Fo benxingji jing}, I do not find the anecdote of a non-Buddhist questioning the
  Buddha, but it does appears in various other sources, such as T1 n12 227c02 (佛説大集法門經), T5 n159
  314b04 (大乘本生心地觀經) and T26 n1536 (阿毘達磨集異門足論), beginning p.367b27, in a section
titled 集異門足論一法品第之. The more common wording is 一切衆生皆依食住 and 一切有情皆依食住.
  \item \textsuperscript{614} Reading 己 as 已.
  \item \textsuperscript{615} Pali Śāketa. Equivalent to Suoqi 婆祇, a city in the Buddha’s time. See Mochizuki 1-6; 2134b, which
  lists quite a number of synonyms. This city is known elsewhere in Chinese texts as Shaqi 沙奇 and was
  located in the eastern part of the Kushan empire (Silk Road Seattle online project, \textit{Wei lue} notes, Kingdom
  of Juli, n.7.5—accessed 26 May 2013).
  The compound 婆祇 only appears in the \textit{Za aban jing} T2 n99, 145c18 and 146a22, while Poqi 婆祇 has
  many more occurrences in the Buddhist canon. Yichu’s use of the latter compound is in accord with other
textual evidence, despite the apparent phonetic mismatch.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the four foods and so forth, whereupon [the practitioner] gave rise to firm conviction and obtained passage [out of delusion].

Nāgakanyā serves food. The Yangi says, For the entertainment of snakes, Nāgakanyā (daughter of the dragon king) was walking about in the wild [when she encountered] humans who wanted to kill her. A person saved her. Entering the [dragon king’s] palace, she invited her savior to a meal, saying, “This food has items that digest in seven days and those that digest for an entire lifetime. I also present you with a continually renewed segment of gold, which upon selling persists as of old,” and so forth.

As noted above, this may point to the Zbu fo yaoji jing, aka Zbu fo yaoji lun 諸佛要集論, aka Zbu fo yaoji jing 諸佛要集經, T17 n810. In this text, however, I do not find the cited story, which appears rather in the Mohe sengqi lu 摩訶僧祇律, T22 n1425, 488c07-29, and in other sources.
[53] The Buddha eats milk porridge. The Benxing jing\textsuperscript{623} says, The Buddha’s six years [of ascetic practices] completed, upon the arrival of spring in the second month and on the sixteenth day he thought to himself, “I need good food. After eating\textsuperscript{624} I will attain the fruit of awakening.” At the time there was a low-level god who informed the favorably-born second daughter of the village head, ordering her to make delicious food. The girl then took milk from a thousand cows, mixing it together. When she took milk and simmered porridge, the milk porridge manifested a sign, leaping out of the pot by several\textit{chi}, giving the appearance of ten thousand words—virtuous words. She offered it to him in a golden alms bowl; the Buddha ate and attained completion of the Way.

佛食乳糜 『本行經』云：佛六年既滿，至春二月十六日時，心自思惟「我須好食，食已而證佛果。」時有天子，告善生村主二女，令作美\textsuperscript{625}食。女乃取千牛乳，\textit{互}\textsuperscript{626}飲。取乳煮糜時，乳糜現相，踊出高數尺，現萬字德字相。\textit{金}\textsuperscript{627}鉢獻之，佛食成道矣。

[54] That which [we] eat has differences. The Fayuan\textsuperscript{628} says, [Those beings that] eat clay lack forever a [discriminating] mind. [Those that] eat grain have much wisdom. [Those that] eat meat have much anger. [Those that] eat grass have much strength. [Those that] eat mulberry [spin] silk. [Those that] eat\textit{qi} are long lived. [Those who] do not eat do not die. [The Fayuan zhulin says] also\textsuperscript{629} that the offering of food reaps the five merits, namely [good]

\textsuperscript{623} As noted above, for this episode see the Fo benxingji jing T5 n190 771b02-772b16.

\textsuperscript{624} Reading 巳 as 已.

\textsuperscript{625} Variant 羊 over 火

\textsuperscript{626} Near matches for the variant are listed in the DCCV under both 互 and 牙.

\textsuperscript{627} Variants in the DCCV suggest 金, though I did not find a perfect match.

\textsuperscript{628} Fayuan zhulin 法苑珠林, T53 n2122, 530b23-c04. The content Yichu cites comes from a passage that quotes the Sou shen ji 搜神記 by Gan Bao 干寶 (?-536 CE) of the Jin dynasty (265-420 CE), a collection of tales and hearsay regarding the supernatural. Note the English translation by DeWoskin and Crump, \textit{In Search of the Supernatural}.

\textsuperscript{629} See Fayuan zhulin, T53 n2122, 611b-c12.
appearance, strength, long life, joy, and [the ability to] distinguish purity and ease. Therefore, [food offering] allows one to obtain the five constants\(^{630}\).

[55] Eating requires thoughtfulness. The *Youposai jie jing* says\(^{631}\), When first wanting to eat, [one] should recite some thoughts. The first spoonful must cut off all evils, the second must cultivate all good, and the good roots cultivated by a third spoonful [must be] turned around and given to all sentient beings as a universal offering for their achieving buddhahood. If unable to recite these orally, recalling each as a thought when wanting to eat will also bring [merit].

食須作念 『優婆塞戒經』云：初欲食時，當須作念：一匙須斷一切惡，二匙修一切善滿，三匙所修善根迴施衆生，普供成佛。若不能口口作念，臨欲食時，都作一念亦得。

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\(^{630}\) This commonly refers to celebrated virtues of the Ru (Confucian) school: benevolence 仁, righteousness 義, ritual propriety 禮, wisdom 智, and fidelity 信. They sometimes appear in Chinese Buddhist writings. See for example the *Guang hongming ji* T52 n2103, 107b21-25, where Daoxuan makes a case for equating these five virtues with the five most basic Buddhist precepts:内外兩教本為一體。漸極為異深淺不同。内典初門設五種之禁。與外書仁義禮智信五常符同。仁者不殺之禁也。義者不盜之禁也。禮者不邪之禁也。智者不酒之禁也。信者不妄之禁也。But "wuchang" is not mentioned along with the content cited from the *Fayuan zhulin*, so connection with the "five merits" is tenuous.

\(^{631}\) T24 n1488. I do not find this formula in the cited text. For this entry, Yichu appears to have relied on the *Fayuan zhulin*, T53 n2122, 612b19-26, where we find similar wording and an attribution to the *Youposai jie jing*: 又優婆塞戒經云。若自造作衣服鉢器。先奉上佛。並令父母師長和尚先一受用。然後自服。若上佛者。以華香贖。凡所食噉要先施於沙門梵志。然後自食也。正下食時復須作念。初下一匙飯時。願斷一切惡盡。下第二匙時。願修一切善滿。下第三匙時。所修善根迴施衆生普共成佛。若不能口口作念。臨欲食時總作一念亦得。
Buddha ate, then offered [the remainder to others]. The Vinaya\textsuperscript{632} says, When the Buddha had surplus, he fed his attendants. Bhikṣus obtained food and laypeople attended the Buddha. [They] also obtained regular offerings; after the Buddha ate [from these], the saṃgha received food.

Food has three virtues. The Niepan jing\textsuperscript{633} records [these virtues as follows]: 1) lightness and suppleness [of body], 2) purity, and 3) accordance with the dharma, etc.


\textsuperscript{632} Because Yichu does not specify a specific text, this content is difficult to locate. I do find a statement with some similar phrasing in Daoxuan’s Sifenlü shanfan buque xingshi chao 四分律刪繁補闕行事鈔, T40 n1804, 57b24-27, which is an important Chinese commentary on the Vinaya: 四者獻佛物。律云。供養佛塔食治塔人得食。善見云。佛前獻飯侍佛比丘食之。若無比丘白衣侍佛亦得食。The point here is to designate who can rightfully consume food offerings placed before Buddhist stupas, images, alters, etc.—here “Fo” is clearly not the historical Buddha, though Yichu’s phrasing suggests that interpretation.

\textsuperscript{633} This could refer to one of two texts with the title Da banniepan jing 大般涅槃經, T12 n374 or n375. I find the cited content in the first at T12 n374, 366c23-27: 諸優婆塞為佛及僧。辦諸食具種種備足。皆是栴檀沈水香薪。八功德水之所成熟其食甘美有六種味。一苦二醋三甘四辛五醎六淡。復有三德。一者輕軟。二者淨潔。三者如法。作如是等種種莊嚴。In the second it is at T12 n375, 606a28-b03:諸
Appendix 6: Appended Material for Chapter Five (Porridge)

Appendix 6A

The following is a translation of Porridge 粥, third topic in the 37th section on food themes in Yichu’s Shisbi liutie.⁶³⁴

[37.]3 Porridge 粥三

Porridge has ten benefits. The Sifenlü says, Giving porridge to the saṅgha secures ten beneficial merits: [healthful] appearance, strength, longevity, joy, eloquence, removal of indigested foods and of wind [pathologies], [elimination of] hunger and of thirst, and [benefits to] digestion.⁶³⁵

Porridge has ten benefits. The Sifenlü says, Giving porridge to the saṅgha secures ten beneficial merits: [healthful] appearance, strength, longevity, joy, eloquence, removal of indigested foods and of wind [pathologies], [elimination of] hunger and of thirst, and [benefits to] digestion.⁶³⁵

There are eight types of porridge. The Shiwoong lists [these]: 1) butter, 2) oil, 3) sesame, 4) milk, 5) small bean, 6) ground [bean] powder, 7) hemp seed, and 8) plain porridge. [These] can have five benefits: Elimination of hunger and thirst, calming (of temper or excitement), removal of chill, and [good] digestion of food. 粥有八種『十誦』云：一蘇、

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⁶³⁴ The following text on porridge is from Yanagida and Shiina, Zengaku Tenseki Sōkan 6:2, 332.

⁶³⁵ See Furuyama, “Shukuyūjū’īkō,” for a strong case in favor of the reading given here. A more logical placement of breaks, suggested in the Shiōbi yuōan, would divide cijingbian into two terms and place xiō as part of jīke, but Furuyama shows that such a reading is not in accord with Pali sources. Nonetheless, we might ask whether the ‘correct’ reading is the one that accords best with early sources, or the one that most Chinese adopted as standard. Yichu did not supply punctuation or otherwise comment, so we cannot know his preference for where to place the breaks.

⁶³⁶ Variant 台+辛.
Six kinds [of ingredient] made into porridge. The *Wufèn* [li]⁶³⁸ says,

There was a brahmin whose cart was loaded with offerings. Following the Buddha, he wanted to make offerings to the Buddha and samgha, but because of the prior invitations of various kings, great ministers, and elders, he was unable to obtain precedence. An elder said [on his behalf], "My lay disciple also has domestic obligations." He (the disciple) said to the Buddha, "I would like to scatter the offerings. Wherever the Buddha will go, I hope the Buddha will tread on [the offerings], in order to express my intention." The Buddha said no and had them cook porridge and give it to the samgha as a donated breakfast and lunch. The elder took the butter, milk, oil, curd, fish, and meat and cooked them at one time into porridge, presented it to the Buddha, and returned home.

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⁶³⁷ *Shōson lü*: T23 n1435, 188c14-21.
⁶³⁸ A similar narrative can be found in the *Wufèn lü* at T22 n1421, 54c06-19.

於是世尊，進至安那頻頭邑。時有大婆羅門，名曰「沙門」，以五百乘車重載飲食逐佛。五月餘日，求次設供，竟未能得。其家追言，農時欲過，可還附業。時婆羅門到阿難所，語阿難言，「我五百乘車載諸飲食，欲供佛及僧。逐佛已來，五月餘日，猶未得設。家信見迫，不得復住。欲以食具，散布道中，令佛及僧，踏上而過。於我宿心，便為得遂。」阿難答言，「當白世尊。」即以白佛。佛語阿難，「汝可將婆羅門看供食家。若有所無，教令作之。」阿難受教。將婆羅門看供食家，見無粥，及油蜜煎餅。彼便作七種粥，二種餅。晨朝白佛，「餅粥已辦。」佛語阿難，「汝助下之。」阿難受教，助下粥餅。
First with Viśākhā. The Senggili (Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya) says, not until Mother Viśākhā had attained sagehood and was replete with meritorious virtues did she start to provide breakfast porridge for the saṅgha. 

Zhanzhou miyu (porridge). The Zhoubu says, The Yellow Emperor first cooked grain to make zhoumi, which is porridge. [He] also exchanged (traded) zhan, which is thick porridge. Adding “mi” to [the term zhoumi] is redundant。

639 This seems to be an alternative rendering of Pisheqiamu Viśākhā (Viśākhā Viśākhā, also Viśākhā), later called Mṛgāra-mātṛ after her husband’s name. She was a wealthy patron of the Buddha who with her husband provided a retreat center (vīhāra).

640 Reading 已.

641 Variant or damaged character. I do not find an exact match in DCCV, but the extant form of the character and the context point toward peng 煮.
Appendix 6B

Sutra Spoken by the Buddha on the Five Blessings Reaped from the Bestowal of Food 佛說食施獲五福報經

Name of translator lost. It is now attached to (included in) the Records of the Eastern Jin 失譯人名，今附『東晉錄』

Thus have I heard: 閱如是:

At one time, the Buddha was at [the park] Jetavana Anāthapiṇḍada-ārāma in Śrāvastī. The Buddha addressed the monks, “When you know to eat in moderation, you can receive [food] without harm.” The Buddha said, “When people take rice food and offer it to [other] people, there are five advantageous virtues that make (help) people attain the Way. If the wise settle into a broadminded view, then they will reap the five blessings. What are the five? One is the bestowal of life; two is the bestowal of [good] appearance; three is the bestowal of strength; four is the bestowal of ease; and five is the bestowal of wit.”

“何等為五？一曰施命，二曰施色，三曰施力，四曰施安，五曰施辯。”

“What is what is meant by the bestowal of life? When people do not obtain food, their facial complexion is wan and sallow and [their vitality] cannot be vividly manifested. Before the passage of seven days their lives abruptly end. Because of this, the wise do a bestowal of food, this bestowal of food in turn bestowing life. This bestowal of life [allows them], in life after life, good longevity and birth into heavens or human society (i.e., favorable birth); their lifespan extends, they do not suffer early death, they naturally receive advantageous rewards, and their riches are without measure. This is
the ‘bestowal of life.’” 「何謂施命？人不得食時，顏色憔悴，不可顯示，不過七日，奄忽壽終。是故，智者則為施食，其施食者則為施命；其施命者，世世長壽，生生天世間；壽命延長，而不夭傷，自然福報，財富無量，是為施命。

“What is what is meant by the bestowal of appearance? When people do not obtain food, their facial complexion is wan and sallow and [their vitality] cannot be vividly manifested. For this reason the wise do a bestowal of food, this bestowal of food in turn bestowing [good] appearance. This bestowal of appearance [allows them], in life after life to be handsome, to be born into the heavens or human society, their faces shining and beautiful, such that people who see them feel fondness, kowtowing and being courteous. This is the ‘bestowal of appearance.’” 「何謂施色？人不得食時，顏色憔悴，不可顯示。是故，智者則為施食。其施食者則為施色；其施色者，世世端正，生生天世間，顏華煒曄，人見歡喜，稽首作禮，是為施色。

“What is what is meant by the bestowal of strength? When people do not obtain food, their bodies thin and wills weak, they cannot accomplish that which they set out to do. For this reason the wise do a bestowal of food, this bestowal of food in turn bestowing strength. This bestowal of strength [allows them] in life after life to have much strength, incarnating in heavens or among humans with strength that has no equal. Whether entering or leaving, advancing or stopping, their strength is not diminished. This is the ‘bestowal of strength.’” 「何謂施力？人不得食時，身羸意弱，所作不能。是故，智者則為施食；其施食者則為施力；其施力者，世世多力，生生天人間，力無等雙；出入進止，力不耗減，是為施力。

“What is meant by the bestowal of ease? When people do not obtain food, their minds worry and their bodies are in danger. They do not sit still and they cannot be at ease
with themselves. For this reason the wise do a bestowal of food, this bestowal of food in turn bestowing ease. This bestowal of ease [allows them] to be secure in life after life, to incarnate in heavens or among humans, to not encounter a host of calamities, but to always encounter virtuous goodness in the places to which they arrive. [They] have immeasurable wealth while avoiding harm and early death. This is the ‘bestowal of ease.’”

“何謂施安？人不得食時，心愁身危，坐起不定，不能自安。是故，智者則為施食；其施食者則為施安；其施安者，世世安隱，生天人間，不遇眾殃，其所到處，常遇賢良，財富無量，不中夭傷，是為施安。

“What is meant by the bestowal of wit? When people do not obtain food, their bodies are emaciated, their will is weak, and their mouths cannot speak. For this reason, the wise do a bestowal of food, this bestowal of food in turn bestowing wit. This bestowal of wit [allows them] to be intelligent in life after life, to be eloquent in speaking, to be without hindrance, [and] to understand wisdom with penetrating [intellect]. They are born into the heavens or human society, those who hear them taking joy, none [refusing to] kowtow and listen to and accept the words of truth. These are the rewards of the five blessings of food bestowal.”

The Buddha said, “If the sons and daughters of great clans give rise to aspiration for enlightenment (bodhicitta), bestowing on all [beings] beverages, food, clothing, and bedding, upon their rebirth they are manifested before the Buddha to learn [from him] the three types of dharma, the four intentions and the three liberations; to attain the ten powers, the thirty-two marks [of a buddha], and the eighty minor marks. [They] advance and retreat in the ten directions like the rising of the sun, brilliantly radiate

643 I read this as a reference to the four [deeper] meanings,  siyiqu 四意趣, points of doctrine that help resolve seeming dilemmas in Buddhist thought.
light throughout all the ten directions, educating all, continuing to manifest the doctrine of the scriptures after parinirvāṇa (extinction of afflictions), and upholding it and obtaining the other shore (i.e., awakening), no differently from a Buddha.” 佛言：「若族姓子、族姓女，若發道意，施一切飲食衣被，在所生處，見現在佛，諮受三法，四意三脫，致十種力，三十二相，八十種好，進止十方，猶如日出，暉暉有光，遍照十方，教化一切，般泥洹後，經法續現，奉之得度，與佛無二。」

When the Buddha spoke this, of the celestials, snake spirits, ghosts, and deities, the people of human society, the lords and great ministers, and the four groups of Buddhist disciples, none did not rejoice and they paid obeisance to the Buddha. 佛說是時，天龍鬼神、世間人民，帝主大臣、四輩弟子，靡不歡喜，為佛作禮。