

當代正念課程批評者的雄辯修辭 ——來自正念減壓教學者的回應*

溫宗堃**

摘 要

隨著當代正念課程全球傳播，科學研究持續長成，愈來愈多的佛教學者開始討論這些當代正念課程。一個被討論議題是，正念課程所教的正念是否為佛教的正念？若否，二者有何差異？Robert Sharf 和越建東皆對正念課程採取批判的立場，主張正念課程的正念與佛教正念大異其趣。本文介紹兩位作者的主張，藉由分析佛典文獻、近代佛教史和正念減壓創始人 Jon Kabat-Zinn 的重要著作，檢視他們的主張之正當性。最後結論，越建東的不少評論恐是基於上座部佛教思想的宗派視角，忽略了佛教思想多元的事實，而有選擇地偏好某些文獻與詮釋；沙夫的評論在文獻選擇與詮釋上有類似的現象，同時對人種誌與歷史的敘事也偏於一面。二者的批評缺乏證據且並不公正。這類對當代正念的片面評論或可由社會科學所討論的一種普遍現象來解釋，即「確認偏誤」與「動機性推理」。從佛教整體的角度來看，現代正念課程，尤其正念減壓所教的正念，不僅是西方的，也是佛教的；不僅是現代佛教的，也是傳統佛教的。本文的貢獻在於：從正念減壓教學者的視角，解析部分佛教學者對當代正念課程之批判，並指出其雄辯修辭的問題之所在。

關鍵詞：正念減壓、Robert Sharf、越建東、上座部、禪宗

2020.05.26 收稿，2021.05.20 通過刊登。

* 筆者感謝《臺大佛學研究》四位審查委員對此文的審查與建議，筆者依建議調整題目、部分行文方式，並修改錯字，補充註腳。

** 作者係法鼓文理學院佛教學系助理教授。

The Rhetoric of Critics of Contemporary Mindfulness-Based Programs: An Response from a MBSR Teacher

Wen, Tzungkuen *

Abstract

As the mindfulness-based programs (MBPs) spread globally and scientific studies continue to grow in numbers, more and more Buddhist scholars start to investigate these contemporary mindfulness programs. One debate is about whether or not the mindfulness training as taught in MBPs the same as Buddhist mindfulness, if not, what are the difference? Robert Sharf and Kin Tung Yit both explore the issue from a critical perspective and try to demonstrate how mindfulness in MBPs is not the same as traditional Buddhist mindfulness. This article introduces their criticism, examines their validity by analyzing relevant Buddhist literature, history of modern Buddhism, and the works of the founder of MBSR, Jon Kabat-Zinn. It concludes that a part of criticism by Kin Tung Yit seem to based on sectarian view of Theravada doctrine, ignore the diversity of Buddhist thoughts, and selectively favor certain literature and interpretation. Robert Sharf's comments present a similar phenomenon in terms of textual selection and interpretation, and give one-sided presentation of ethnographic data. Their criticisms are lack of evidence and unfair. Such one-sided

* Assistant Professor, Department of Buddhist Studies, Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts.

comments might be explained by a common phenomenon discussed in social science, that is, “confirmation bias” and “motivated reasoning.” With the whole picture of Buddhism in view, I argue, mindfulness as taught in MBIs, especially MBSR, is not only western but also Buddhist, not only modern but also traditional. The contribution of this article is from the perspective of a MBSR teacher, giving an analysis of some scholars’ criticism against MBIs and pointing out how their rhetoric is problematic in terms of its validity.

Keywords: MBSR, Robert Sharf, Kin Tung Yit, Theravada, Chan/
Zen