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何为法身、报身、化身？临济祖师说：“一念清净心光即法身佛，一念无分别心光即报身佛，一念无差别心光即化身佛。法报化三身，本性全具，不用向外别求。

What are the dharmakāya, sambhogakāya, and nirmāṇakāya? Patriarch Linji said: “The pure light of mind in a single thought is the dharmakāya Buddha; the non-discriminating light of mind in a single thought is the sambhogakāya Buddha; and the non-differentiating light of mind in a single thought is the nirmāṇakāya Buddha. The three bodies—the dharmakāya, sambhogakāya, and nirmāṇakāya—are fully inherent in our intrinsic nature; there is no need to seek them elsewhere.”

”所谓一念清净心光，就是当我们不生一念时什么念头都没有而了了分明非同木石的灵知。要有一个念头存在，就不清净。同样，有一个佛念，有一个念咒的心，都非清静。须当能念之心与所念之咒一时脱落，能所双亡时，方是一念清净心光，这就是法身。我们修法老是说明心见性，就是见这个本性。

The pure light of mind in a single thought means the spiritually aware knowing that is utterly clear, unlike wood or stone, when not a single thought arises. So long as even one thought remains, it is not pure. Likewise, a thought of Buddha or a mind that recites mantras is not pure. Only when the mind that recites and the mantra being recited both fall away at once, and subject and object are both gone, is there the pure light of mind in a single thought. This is the dharmakāya. When we practice the Dharma, we constantly speak of realizing the mind and seeing one's true nature; it is this intrinsic nature that we see.

一念无分别心光，就是报身佛。一念无差别心光，那就是化身佛。这分别心光和差别心光，分别在哪里呢？分别、差别不是同样的意义吗？怎么无分别心光就是报身佛，无差别心光就是化身佛呢？因为报身佛是光明身，一片光明，没有其它色相，更何有差别的相？所以说一念无分别心光是报身佛。

The non-discriminating light of mind in a single thought is the sambhogakāya Buddha. The non-differentiating light of mind in a single thought is the nirmāṇakāya Buddha. Wherein lies the distinction between this non-discriminating light of mind and non-differentiating light of mind? Do not discrimination and differentiation mean the same thing? Why, then, is the non-discriminating light of mind the sambhogakāya Buddha, while the non-differentiating light of mind is the nirmāṇakāya Buddha? Because the sambhogakāya Buddha is a light-body, a single expanse of radiance with no other forms or appearances; how could there be differentiating appearances? Thus, the non-discriminating light of mind in a single thought is the sambhogakāya Buddha.

要证果地报身佛，须悲智双运、广度众生、积累功德才行。我们证到本性以后，大悲之心就油然而生了。我们觉悟了，晓得世界上的种种现象都是虚假不实的、幻化的，如水中月影一样不可得，而不去造业，超脱了苦轮。	To realize the sambhogakāya Buddha at the fruition stage, one must engage compassion and wisdom in tandem, liberate sentient beings extensively, and accumulate merit and virtue. After we realize our intrinsic nature, great compassion naturally wells up within us. Once awakened, we know that all the phenomena of the world are false, unreal, and illusory—unobtainable like the moon’s reflection in water. We therefore cease creating karma and transcend the wheel of suffering.
可众生不知道，业识茫茫地不断造业受报，出苦无由。大悲心不禁油然而生，发起大愿，广度众生。这个大悲是从大智生出来的，没有智慧生不出大悲心；没有大智也不能度众生。因为要度众生，须识众生的根基，方能对机说法，所以度生要悲智双运，不是懂得些理论即可成事的。功德圆满了，感得的报身是果德大光明的报身。	But sentient beings do not know this. Amid the vastness of karmic consciousness, they continually create karma and undergo retribution, with no means of escaping suffering. Great compassion naturally wells up, and one gives rise to great vows to liberate sentient beings extensively. This great compassion arises from great wisdom; without wisdom, great compassion cannot arise, and without great wisdom one cannot liberate sentient beings. To liberate them, one must know their capacities in order to teach the Dharma suited to them. Thus, liberating sentient beings requires compassion and wisdom to operate together; merely understanding some theory will not accomplish it. When merit and virtue are complete, the sambhogakāya one realizes is the great luminous sambhogakāya, the virtue of fruition.
如善财童子见到弥勒佛（就是在我们要去的兜率内院，弥勒菩萨在那里），弥勒佛对善财童子讲：你根本智得到了（根本智就是证到的本性），但是差别智没有得到。	For example, when Sudhana saw Maitreya Buddha—in the Inner Court of Tuṣṭita, where we are to go and where Maitreya Bodhisattva dwells—Maitreya Buddha said to Sudhana: “You have attained fundamental wisdom. Fundamental wisdom is the intrinsic nature realized through direct realization. But you have not attained differentiated wisdom.”
差别智是后得智，即在度生的过程中，将尘沙惑与微细无明消尽所得的大智慧。能随众生不同的根基、习气，教以相应的佛法，度他出苦海。这个差别智你没有，还要在世界上磨练，广度众生，方能圆满差别智。度生功德圆满，你就感得和我一样的报身了。我弥勒佛得到这个紫金身，就是广度众生，突然之间就生出来的呀！	Differentiated wisdom is differentiated wisdom acquired subsequently. It is the great wisdom attained through eliminating dust-like delusions and subtle ignorance in the course of liberating sentient beings. It enables one to teach sentient beings the Dharma appropriate to their differing capacities and habitual tendencies, and to ferry them out of the sea of suffering. You do not yet possess this differentiated wisdom. You must still temper yourself in the world and liberate sentient

	beings extensively before it can be perfected. When the merit of liberating sentient beings is complete, you will realize a sambhogakāya like mine. This violet-gold body that I, Maitreya Buddha, have attained arose suddenly through extensively liberating sentient beings!"
任何人证到的报身都是光明身，所以它是无分别的。化身则不然，化身是有相的，有相则有差别。如男女老少、草木鱼虫、日月天地，都有差别。	The sambhogakāya realized by anyone is a light-body and therefore non-discriminating. The nirmāṇakāya is otherwise: it has appearances, and wherever there are appearances, there are differences. Men and women, young and old, plants, trees, fish, insects, the sun, moon, heaven, and earth all differ.
既有差别，为什么说一念无差别心光即化身佛呢？因为相虽有差别，而生起诸相的自体——法身是无差别的。一切众生都是佛，因为都有佛性；一切世界景象都是我们的佛性所成所显现的。	Since there are differences, why is the non-differentiating light of mind in a single thought called the nirmāṇakāya Buddha? Although appearances differ, the fundamental body—the dharmakāya—from which all appearances arise is without differentiation. All sentient beings are Buddhas because all possess Buddha-nature. All the scenes of every world are formed and manifested by our Buddha-nature.
无论什么好的境界或坏的境界，既然都是佛性所成所显现，那就平等无二了。故无论是我们五浊恶世，还是西方净土，都是平等无别的。世间诸有俱由我们一念无差别心光所化，所以一切事物就是化身佛。	Whether a state is good or bad, since it is formed and manifested by Buddha-nature, it is equally without duality. Therefore, whether it is our Saha world of the five turbidities or the Western Pure Land, all are equal and without distinction. All worldly existents are transformed by our non-differentiating light of mind in a single thought; therefore, all things are nirmāṇakāya Buddhas.
差别者在相上是有不同的，但生起诸相的性体是平等的，故一念无差别心光是化身佛。把这道理搞通了，就不致怀疑同一意义的无分别心光和无差别心光怎么既是报身又是化身了。	Differences exist at the level of appearances, but the intrinsic substance that gives rise to all appearances is equal. Thus, the non-differentiating light of mind in a single thought is the nirmāṇakāya Buddha. Once this principle is fully understood, one will no longer wonder how the seemingly synonymous non-discriminating light of mind and non-differentiating light of mind can be, respectively, both the sambhogakāya and the nirmāṇakāya.
我们认识了一念清净心光，毫不猜疑，就当下见性了。用不着到什么地方去找，它就在你自己面门上放光芒嘛！一念清净心光，就是根尘脱落，就是当我们修法时	Once we recognize the pure light of mind in a single thought without the slightest doubt, we see our true nature immediately. There is no need to seek it

忽然能念之心与所持之咒一齐脱落，身心世界统统消融，但歇灭当中，不是断灭，而是了了分明的灵知显现。这灵知就是我们的本性，也就是法身、报身、化身。	anywhere; it is shining right before your face. The pure light of mind in a single thought is when the sense faculties and their objects fall away: while practicing the Dharma, the mind that recites and the mantra being held suddenly fall away together, and body, mind, and world all dissolve. Yet amid this cessation, there is not annihilation; rather, spiritually aware knowing, utterly clear and distinct, manifests. This knowing is our intrinsic nature; it is also the dharmakāya, sambhogakāya, and nirmāṇakāya.
至于要真正证到千百亿化身，能分身十方世界，广度千百亿众生，像封神榜那样的变现，那就非证成圆觉大智不可。就是说最最微细的妄念，也除罄尽了才行。我们的妄心、妄念分粗的妄、细的妄、微细的妄、极微细的妄。	As for truly realizing countless transformation bodies, being able to manifest bodies throughout the ten directions and liberate countless sentient beings, with transformations like those in Investiture of the Gods, this requires realization of the great wisdom of perfect enlightenment. That is, even the most exceedingly subtle deluded thoughts must be completely eliminated. Our deluded mind and deluded thoughts include coarse delusions, subtle delusions, very subtle delusions, and extremely subtle delusions.
极微细的叫微细流注，就像微细的水流，你看它不动，实际在运动！它下面动得太快太厉害，看起来反而不动了。把这个都截断了，不动了，那就能证到百千万亿个化身，度千百亿众生，起大妙用了。	The extremely subtle are called the subtle continuous stream. They are like a fine current of water: you see it as motionless, but it is actually moving. The movement beneath the surface is too swift and intense, so it appears motionless instead. Once this too is severed and there is no movement, one can realize millions upon millions of transformation bodies, liberate countless sentient beings, and exercise great wondrous functioning.
我们做功夫，就是要先断人我见，次断法我见。人我见，就是有人和我的区别。法我见，还有个法在。法我是什么呢？像罗汉，他们知道肉身、色身是不可得的，世界是虚幻的，要离苦得乐应离开这个世界。	In our cultivation, we must first eliminate the personal-self view and then eliminate the dharma-self view. The personal-self view is the distinction between persons and self. The dharma-self view retains a dharma. What is the dharma-self? Arhats, for example, know that the physical body and material form are unobtainable and that the world is illusory. To leave suffering and attain happiness, they believe that they should leave this world.
但他们于中又生了一个法我。他们以为有法可修，有生死可了，有涅槃可证。同时又以佛性的四大种性——地、水、火、风为我。	Yet they then give rise to a dharma-self. They believe there is a dharma to cultivate, birth and death to transcend, and nirvāṇa to realize. At the

	same time, they take the four great elements of Buddha-nature—earth, water, fire, and wind—to be a self.
我们的佛性本有七大种性，就是地、水、火、风、空、根、识，七大种性中以地、水、火、风最为主要。世界是地、水、火、风组成的，我们的身体也是地、水、火、风组成的。	Our Buddha-nature inherently possesses seven great elements: earth, water, fire, wind, space, the faculties, and consciousness. Of these seven great elements, earth, water, fire, and wind are the principal ones. The world is composed of earth, water, fire, and wind, and our bodies too are composed of earth, water, fire, and wind.
他们修道发悟不执着肉身，改执佛性中元素——地、水、火、风为我，以为这是真的，而肉身子是假的。殊不知佛性中的地、水、火、风四大种性只是佛性的部分元素而非全体，如我人之有眼、耳、鼻、舌，非整个人体。	Having cultivated the Way and awakened, they no longer cling to the physical body, but instead cling to the elements of Buddha-nature—earth, water, fire, and wind—as a self. They regard these as real and the physical body as false. They do not realize that the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and wind within Buddha-nature are only partial elements of Buddha-nature, not its entirety—just as the eyes, ears, nose, and tongue are parts of a human being, not the whole body.
今误认为我有个物在，故为法执，而不得究竟。所谓种性者，乃“种子”能生义。譬如稻种种下去能生出稻子来，麦种能生出麦子一样。我们这个肉体既是四大种性生起的，世间的一切一切都离不开四大种性。	They now mistakenly believe that there is something that is a self; this is attachment to dharmas, and so they cannot attain the ultimate. The term “element” means that which, as a “seed,” is capable of giving rise to something. For example, when a rice seed is planted, it produces rice; a wheat seed produces wheat. Since our physical body arises from the four great elements, everything in the world is inseparable from these four great elements.
罗汉和辟支佛经过佛法的洗炼，知道了由四大生起的色相都是假的，不可执取，但又误认四大种性为实我，殊不知一有住执，即非真实，何况四大种性乃佛性部分元素，并非全体。所以他们未真见性，被佛呵为焦芽败种。	Having been refined through the Buddha Dharma, arhats and pratyekabuddhas know that material appearances arising from the four great elements are false and should not be grasped. Yet they mistakenly take the four great elements to be a real self. They do not realize that wherever there is abiding attachment, there is no reality. Moreover, the four great elements are only partial elements of Buddha-nature, not its entirety. Thus, they have not truly seen their nature and were reproached by the Buddha as scorched sprouts and rotten seeds.
我们用功既不能假执四大为我，也不能住在佛性上。一有所住，便落窠臼，所以真成佛者，连个佛影也无。假	In our cultivation, we must neither falsely cling to the four great elements as a self nor abide in

如你说“我成佛了”，那你未成佛，是成魔了。因为你还有个立脚点，胸中还有一个物，未曾空尽。	Buddha-nature. The moment there is any abiding, one falls into a fixed pattern. Therefore, one who truly becomes a Buddha has not even the shadow of a Buddha. If you say, “I have become a Buddha,” then you have not become a Buddha; you have become a demon. For you still have a foothold, some thing remaining in your breast that has not been emptied away.
我们的法身和虚空一样，一丝不挂，一尘不染，既无时间相，亦无空间相。所以我们做功夫，须剿绝一切，绝对不能有丝毫住着。但要真做到人我消灭，须证到七地菩萨才行。	Our dharmakāya is like empty space: utterly bare and unstained by a single speck of dust. It has neither the appearance of time nor the appearance of space. Therefore, in our cultivation we must cut off everything; absolutely no trace of abiding attachment may remain. But to truly eliminate the personal self, one must realize the stage of a seventh-bhūmi bodhisattva.
“不动地前才舍藏”（不动地就是第八地菩萨），“金刚道后异熟空”（金刚道是第十地菩萨），到十地菩萨之后，法我才能取消。不然，还住在法我上。所以，常说“百尺竿头住的人，虽然得入未为真。	“Only before the Immovable Ground is the storehouse relinquished” (the Immovable Ground is the eighth-bhūmi bodhisattva); “after the Vajra Path, the maturation consciousness is empty” (the Vajra Path is the tenth-bhūmi bodhisattva). Only after reaching the tenth-bhūmi bodhisattva can the dharma-self be eliminated. Otherwise, one still abides in the dharma-self. Thus it is often said: “Though one may ascend the hundred-foot pole, it is not yet true attainment.”
”就是坐在竿头上还有个立脚点在。所以要“百尺竿头更进步，十方世界现全身”。十方世界都是你的身，立脚点也拿掉，法我就取消了。到这地步后，你就是圆觉大智了，可化百千万亿化身。我们做功夫，就是这么做的。	This means that one still has a foothold while sitting atop the pole. Therefore: “Advance one step beyond the hundred-foot pole, and the whole body appears throughout the worlds of the ten directions.” The worlds of the ten directions are all your body; once even the foothold is removed, the dharma-self is eliminated. Having reached this stage, one has the great wisdom of perfect enlightenment and can transform into countless nirmāṇakāyas. This is how we cultivate.
你们总问：“我们到家还差多远哪？”往前看，路途遥远得很。你就想：“哎哟，不得了，还相差很远很远哪！”就难免失去信心了。向后看，比比过去，看到自己进步了，心就安稳多了。	You always ask, “How far are we from arriving home?” Looking ahead, the road seems immensely long. You think, “Oh no, it is terrible—we are still so very far away!” Inevitably, you lose confidence. But if you look back and compare yourself with the past, seeing your own progress, your mind becomes much more settled.

所以，佛很慈悲，他说：“你们众生的气魄不够，胆量小，现一个化城让你们住住，休息休息，没到佛这个地步，先到西方极乐世界去安安身，歇歇脚，或到兜率天也好。	Therefore, the Buddha, in his great compassion, said: “You sentient beings lack courage and are timid. I will manifest a phantom city for you to stay in and rest. Before you reach the Buddha’s stage, first go to the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss to settle yourselves and rest your feet, or go to Tuṣṭita Heaven.”
”但大心菩萨说：“我都不去！地狱不空，我誓不取佛位，我要度尽地狱众生。”地狱并不可怕，你们证到时就不怕了。上面说一念无差别心光，地狱、天宫一般同，有什么美好、丑恶、享乐、受苦的差别呢！？	But great-resolve bodhisattvas say: “I will not go anywhere! Until the hells are empty, I vow not to attain Buddhahood. I will liberate every sentient being in hell.” The hells are not truly frightening; once you realize this, you will not fear them. As said above, in the non-differentiating light of mind in a single thought, hells and celestial palaces are alike. What difference is there between beauty and ugliness, pleasure and suffering?
那时我们师父在北京说法。有两个不是人的徒弟，一个是狐狸，一个是蟒蛇。狐狸先来的，后又介绍蟒蛇来，来时是现人相的。他们说：“我们都做好事，给人采药、治病，从不作恶，想学佛法，修成正果。	At that time, our master was teaching the Dharma in Beijing. He had two disciples who were not human: one was a fox and the other a python. The fox came first and later introduced the python. They appeared in human form when they came. They said: “We both do good deeds, gathering medicinal herbs and treating people’s illnesses. We never do evil. We wish to learn the Buddha Dharma and cultivate ourselves to attain fruition.”
”他们对师兄弟们讲：“你们得了人身，不好好用功，太可惜了。我们为了得到人身，就要修很长时间，才能现人身，才能修佛法。”一天师父讲法，让他们坐到前面来，前面还有两个位子。	They told their fellow disciples, “You have obtained human bodies, yet you do not apply yourselves diligently. What a pity! In order to obtain human bodies, we must cultivate for a very long time before we can manifest in human form and practice the Buddhadharma.” One day, when the Master was giving a Dharma talk, he asked them to sit in front, where two seats were still available.
他们说：“不好来啊！前面有天狐啊！（天上的狐狸）”他是地狐。后来，我们师父回南方来，他们送行，送到黄河边说：“我们不能过黄河，只能送到这里为止，不能再送了，请师珍重！”这事你们听来似很玄虚，犹如听《天方夜谭》，但确系事实。因为一切众生都有佛性，他们也能成道。你们不能因未看见，就怀疑没有。	They said, “We dare not come forward! There are celestial foxes in front!” (Foxes from heaven.) They themselves were earth foxes. Later, when our Master returned to the south, they saw him off. At the Yellow River, they said, “We cannot cross the Yellow River. We can accompany you only this far and can go no farther. Master, please take care!” This may sound fantastical to you, like a tale from The Thousand and One Nights, but it is indeed true. Since all sentient beings possess buddha-nature,

	they too can realize the Way. You must not doubt that something does not exist simply because you have not seen it.
比如我们的法身，一些不修法的人因未看见，总说没有，但它是实有，大家经过如法勤修，亲自证得，就深信不疑。法身——佛性——确是真空妙有，具足万能的大宝藏，而且一切众生都具有，真实存在，而非虚无飘渺的。	Take our dharmakāya, for example. Some people who do not practice the Dharma, having never seen it, always say that it does not exist. Yet it truly exists. Once everyone cultivates diligently in accordance with the Dharma and realizes it directly for themselves, they will have unwavering faith in it. The dharmakāya—buddha-nature—is truly true emptiness and wondrous presence. It contains the great treasury of all capacities; all sentient beings possess it. It truly exists and is not vague or illusory.
讲到真空妙有，非但佛性如此，一切事物无不如此。	Speaking of true emptiness and wondrous presence, this is true not only of buddha-nature; all things are likewise so.
例如一只杯子，它的体性是空的，因杯子无本体（不是本自有的），如玻璃杯，是用玻璃制成的，而玻璃也无本体，是矿藏开发出来的，矿藏是经过多少世纪地质变迁与气温压力等变化而成的，所以都无本体，犹如佛性无相可见，故名真空；但一切事物，本体虽无，而假相不无，能尽其用，如佛性妙用无边，故名妙有。	Take a cup, for example. Its intrinsic nature is empty, because a cup has no independent substance—it does not exist inherently. A glass cup is made of glass, but glass itself has no independent substance: it is produced from mined minerals, and those mineral deposits were formed through geological changes over countless centuries, together with changes in temperature, pressure, and so forth. Thus, none has an independent substance. Like buddha-nature, which has no form that can be seen, this is called true emptiness. Yet although all things lack an independent substance, their provisional appearances are not nonexistent, and they can fully perform their functions. Like the boundless wondrous functioning of buddha-nature, this is called wondrous presence.
上面说过，一切事物皆佛性所化所成，佛性是真空妙有，一切事物当然也是真空妙有了。	As stated above, all things are transformed and brought forth by buddha-nature. Since buddha-nature is true emptiness and wondrous presence, all things are naturally also true emptiness and wondrous presence.
或有人问：为什么地、水、火、风四大构成的人有情感，而四大合成的事物无有感情呢？答曰：如果一口气不来，这肉体还有情感吗？可见情感不在肉体上，而在灵性上。	Someone may ask, “Why do humans, formed from the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and wind, have feelings, whereas things composed of the four great elements have no feelings?” The answer is: if one breath does not return, does this

	physical body still have feelings? This shows that feelings do not reside in the physical body but in spiritual nature.
人们之所以有人体、物体之别者，因凡夫的心量不广，只掇取少分四大，钻在肉壳子里以为我，而不能广遍一切物，故造成有情无情之别。	The distinction people make between human bodies and material objects arises because the mind-capacity of ordinary beings is not expansive. They grasp only a small portion of the four great elements, burrow into this shell of flesh, and take it to be the self. Since they cannot extend throughout all things, they create the distinction between sentient and insentient.
其实，当一个人断气时，这肉体岂不也和木头、石块一样，哪里有什么知觉、情感！岂不也是无情之物？我们做功夫，做到身心、世界化空，证到尽虚空、遍法界广大无边的真性时，即能遍一切物，而无有情、无情之别了。	In fact, when a person breathes their last, does this physical body not become just like wood or stone? Where then are its awareness and feelings? Does it not become an insentient thing? When we do the work of cultivation until body, mind, and world all dissolve into emptiness, and realize the vast, boundless true nature that fills the whole of empty space and pervades the dharma realm, we can extend throughout all things, and there is no longer any distinction between sentient and insentient.
如“生公说法，顽石点头”，即是明证。所以说日月星辰、草木丛林、森罗万象无一不是我们的化身。劝大家赶快做功夫，勿要放逸贪玩，粘着声色货利，而置此大宝藏于不顾，辜负了自己，白白到世界上来走一遭，如入宝山空手而回，未免太可惜，太不值得，太冤枉了，望大家珍重！	The saying, “When Master Shengong expounded the Dharma, even stubborn stones nodded,” is clear proof of this. Thus, the sun, moon, stars, grasses, trees, forests, and the myriad forms of existence are all manifestations of ourselves. I urge everyone to undertake the work of cultivation without delay. Do not be heedless and indulge in amusement, clinging to sensual pleasures, wealth, and gain while ignoring this great treasury. Do not betray yourselves and come into this world only to depart empty-handed, like entering a mountain of treasures and returning with empty hands. That would be far too regrettable, too unworthy, and too unjust. I hope you will all take this to heart.