

Monastic Asceticism as Formation for a Distracted, “Disciplinary” Age

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Our historical moment is undoubtedly a distracted one. The constant agitation provided by internet technology, unceasing news reporting, and myriad facile entertainments generates what Robert Sarah has termed “the dictatorship of noise.”¹ Anecdotal and empirical evidence point to a resulting decline in adult and student attention spans.² Unfortunately, responses to students’ difficulty with sustained focus typically fall prey to two serious errors. Within primary and secondary schools, educators often employ discipline practices that seek increased control over the bodies of students, especially students of color.³ Within higher education, students’ incapacity for deep attention is taken as a new, non-negative or even positive attribute. University instructors are encouraged to embrace the stimulus-craving minds of their students as assets and reform their teaching by providing a kind of fast-paced, multi-modal, sensory carnival in their classes. A vast literature on student “engagement” has emerged, advocating myriad instructional technologies and strategic gimmicks which serve to *captive* (in the ironic sense of “captivity”) student attention.⁴ Both of these responses suffer from implicit anthropologies marked by body-mind disintegration. In each case, the student’s body or her physical environment is treated as mere raw material to be utilized or controlled. Any notion that student bodies or course content have an inherent structure (and thus inherent dignity) often fails to find expression in contemporary teaching.

In the spirit of this year’s theme, this article proposes a radically

(here in the sense of *radix*, “root”) different response to the problem of student attention. I consider the rehabilitation of “disciplinary” student formation by a return to the monastic roots of schooling in both the East and the West. Both Buddhist and Christian traditions share a deep concern with ascetic practices which discipline (here in the sense of the Latin *disciplinare* or “train”) the bodily faculties in order to awaken the *discipulus* (student) to themselves and to reality. The result is an authentic *formatio* (fashioning) in an Aristotelian sense. In the West, monastic students are guided to discover the *formal* or metaphysical frame of their being. In the East, monastics are helped to discover their *essential* non-being.

Neither asceticism nor monastic formation is without precedent in philosophy of education. Alven Neiman, Kevin Gary, and Bruce Kimball have previously appealed to the monastic tradition to differentiate between scholastic discursion and liberal leisure.⁵ Sam Rocha and I have examined the value of Western monastic reading modalities, while Angelo Caranfa, Ana Cristina Zimmerman, and John Morgan have explored the virtue of silence.⁶ Yet none have ventured to suggest that the ascetic practices central to monastic communities might be adapted to contemporary student activity. The “ascetic ideal,” which asks teachers to sacrifice for the benefit of their students has been taken up—critically by Chris Higgins and approvingly by Darryl De Marzio.⁷

Deborah Kerdeman’s intervention into this latter conversation helpfully insists that we must examine the implicit anthropologies underlying ascetic practices in order to discern whether they have pedagogical value.⁸ This article takes a similar approach, drawing from foundational monastic texts such as the *Rule of Benedict* and the *Patimokkha* as well as contemporary manuals in order to identify adaptable principles. Despite their wildly divergent theological anthropologies, the monastic traditions in Buddhism and Christianity generate a common anthropology-in-practice.

In brief, they hold that a) the body is good (at least in a provisional sense) and must be integrated with the mind in order to understand reality, b) this integration must be effected through the direct confrontation of desires, compulsions, and attachments, and c) individual volition is inadequate to the integrative process, which must therefore be undertaken through ritual practice and in community.

The article will conclude by examining how these insights are currently being taken up in American higher education. Calvin Mercer’s *The Monastic Project* at East Carolina University and Justin McDaniel’s “Living Deliberately” course at the University of Pennsylvania provide evidence that a recovery of ascetic discipline is not only possible but sorely needed.

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL FOCUS OF ASCETICISM

“Asceticism” often strikes those swathed in the physical comforts of developed nations as rather repugnant. Unsurprisingly, philosophers of education have only taken up the question of its appropriateness in reference to teachers. To suggest bodily denial to young people seems rather abhorrent, and for that reason, I intend these remarks to refer exclusively to university students. But the conversation over teacher asceticism is worth taking up, as it provides a valuable approach for understanding monastic ascetic practice.

Chris Higgins has lamented that conversations around teacher professionalism and identity remain mired in the “myopic” reduction of ethics to morality. Philosophy of education has yet to embrace the recovery of a substantive ethics championed in the larger field by Iris Murdoch, Alasdair MacIntyre, Bernard Williams, and Charles Taylor. Rather than address the *eudemonic* question of teacher flourishing, literature on the

ethics of teaching tends to merely examine the moral dilemmas teachers may face. Higgins locates the decline of flourishing-related questions in Taylor's account of the Kantian reduction of *caritas* to duty-bound altruism. Altruism conceived as such cannot be truly ethical in Taylor's sense, precisely because it eschews the *self*. A teacher's desires are no longer a guide to good living, but "precisely our guide to the immoral."⁹

Higgins characterizes the dominant ethos in teacher ethics as Nietzschean *askesis*. In the absence of a self-affirmative ethic, self-denial becomes its own perverse aim. Unfortunately, a teacher's initial energy and selflessness are eventually transformed into positive self-loathing. In the place of authentic self-cultivation, a teacher's sense of meaning becomes entirely located in her students. As a result, students are placed in a precarious position of codependence, and the teacher fails to model the autonomy which has been lauded as the highest aim of education by theorists such as Amy Gutmann.¹⁰

It is important for our purposes to note that Higgins distinguishes the asceticism common to the culture of teaching from religious asceticism. The latter involves not self-abasement but forgoing lower goods for the sake of higher goods deemed essential for the flourishing of the self.¹¹ Darryl De Marzio's defense of asceticism in teaching contends that Higgins' dichotomy is a false one. The Desert Fathers of Christian monasticism believed that their acts of discipline were simultaneously gifts for others and sources of self-cultivation. When a teacher denies herself an object of her desire, she is not dismissing the possibility of self-fulfillment. Rather, she is orienting herself towards new, higher desires which also benefit her students.¹²

Deborah Kerdeman's helpful intervention into this conversation provides a crucial insight which points the way forward for the present analysis. She argues that accounts of asceticism can best be differentiated

by their implicit anthropologies. Higgins’ self-other dichotomy or De Marzio’s self-other unity make significant claims regarding the nature of the person and can be evaluated thereby. Further, theories of asceticism will invariably contain visions of the body, thus offering integrative or disintegrative anthropologies. Kerdeman faults De Marzio’s vision for assuming a distinctively male image of the body, where the impossibility of childbearing creates the possibility for clearer differentiation between child and parent, and by analogy, student and teacher.¹³

While I do not wish to at present take up a gendered analysis of monastic asceticism, Kerdeman helpfully points to philosophical anthropology in evaluating visions of asceticism. In examining the possibility of monastic ascetic practices for university students, I look to the implicit anthropologies contained in historical and contemporary monastic literature. My contention is that unlike the subtly Cartesian or disintegrative views of “discipline” or “engagement” which currently prevail, monastic “discipline” aims at the formation of the student after the pattern of her own, integrated nature. Indeed, as Dom Charles Dumont notes, “the formation of a monk is, literally, ‘education’ (*e-ducere*) [Lat. “to bring forth”] in the etymological sense of the word. This is, it aims at bringing out something which is already within man.”¹⁴ Guides for monastic formation in both the East and West provide models which respect the dignity and unity of the student’s body and mind and assist her in peering beyond the distractions of contemporary life.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ASCETISM IN BUDDHIST MONASTICISM

It is important to note that Buddhism and Christianity contain wildly different theological anthropologies. The Buddhist doctrine of *anatta*—“no-self”—holds that not simply the body but personhood is

ultimately illusory.¹⁵ In contrast, the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection involves an anthropology and soteriology that is intensely bodily. Both the soul and the (perfected) body remain in the Christian eschaton. However, because religious experience is carried out in bodily form, both traditions contain an anthropology-in-practice which integrates body and mind.

At first blush, Buddhist monastic formation, especially in the Theravada tradition, seems rather hostile to the body, viewing it as a hinderance to purer consciousness. The *Patimokkha*, a 5th century BCE manual of monastic discipline attributed to the Buddha, contains 227 rules for monks and 311 for nuns, most of which describe limitations of bodily comforts. In the way of example, monastics are forbidden to bathe more than twice a month, to light a fire except in serious need, or to take a second helping of food.¹⁶ Several traditional meditation practices involve dwelling on the repulsiveness of the body. The *Satipatthana* sutta of the Pali canon contains a meditation on the nine stages of the decomposition of a corpse.¹⁷

Yet some aspects of the monastic tradition contain affirmations of bodily joy. The *Digha Nikaya* sutta refers to advanced practitioners as “body-witnesses” whose outer appearance gives evidences to the sublimity of meditation. Steven Collins provides an explanation for this apparent ambiguity. A medieval Indian text “likens the body to a wound received in battle, which is anointed and bandaged, so that it might heal.”¹⁸ For the Buddhist monk or nun, the body is a precious vehicle by which one pursues liberation. Further, the *Patimokkha* consistently refers to actions occurring simultaneously through body, speech, and mind. To advance on the path toward Enlightenment, the practitioner seeks to unify, or integrate, these three aspects of being. In transforming her body, she transforms her mind, and visa-versa.

The goodness of the body in Buddhist anthropology-in-practice

is exemplified by Thich Nhat Hahn’s contemporary guide for monastics.¹⁹ Directions for meditation in the shower read, “look deeply at your body and see that you are a continuation of the stream of life.” Upon waking and placing her feet on the floor, the monastic recalls, “Each step reveals the wonderful *Dharmakāya*”—the ground of being which is a material manifestation of the Buddha. Ascetic practices such as limiting food help the practitioner become more aware of the reality of the bodily self. When drinking tea, the monastic observes, “This cup in my two hands, mindfulness held perfectly. My mind and body dwell in the very here and now.” The meditation bell brings with it the integrating thought “Body, speech, and mind held in perfect oneness.”²⁰

Gavin Flood’s synthesis of Buddhist asceticism is helpful here. Speaking of the monastic tradition, he writes:

The experience of this path is rooted in the body which, through effort and will, conforms to the shape of tradition not only in the bodily *habitus*, but also in the process of awareness...Rather than a mechanical method for eradicating impurity, asceticism becomes a moral endeavor that leads the ascetic self, after long struggle, to see things ‘as they are’ (*yathabhūta*).²¹

We should briefly note here both the similarities and differences between this account of asceticism and Foucault’s. In both cases, practices serve to bring about a new “self,” one which corresponds to relevant versions of moral ideals. However, while the Foucauldian self is fashioned according to whim in the groundless space following Nietzsche’s death of God, the Buddhist vision involves authentic (at least linguistically) *e-ducere*. The student is formed according to her own preexisting nature, which is *given*, not self-determined.

Consistent with a non-Nietzschean sense of asceticism, the *Patimokkha* insists that the solitary monastic is incapable of self-formation. Tibetan commentator Thrangu Rinpoche observes that “the tradition of relying on one another, of practicing within a group, was developed by the Buddha.”²² Bodily stability and commitment to a monastery offers the monk or nun encouragement and help in dealing with obstacles to spiritual progress. Perhaps more importantly, the monastic rule itself is an aid in formation. The vicissitudes of compulsion and attachment are too strong; the lone practitioner cannot hope to make progress by following her own plan. The *Patimokkha* serves to conform the body, and thus the mind, to the model of the Buddha. In this way, by bodily asceticism, the monastic overcomes all delusions and awakens to the true nature of reality.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ASCETISM IN BENEDICTINE MONASTICISM

The Western monastic tradition is strikingly similar to the Eastern tradition in its asceticism. Monks and nuns renounce regular family and working life, practice detachment from worldly esteem, live in solitude and seclusion, and follow a rule of life which is imbued with limits on bodily comforts.²³ As in the case of Buddhist monasticism, we may be tempted to view the *Rule of St. Benedict* as decidedly antagonistic toward the body. The *Rule* warns of “cravings of the flesh” and prescribes periods of fasting.²⁴ But Benedict also seems preoccupied with providing for the physical needs of the monks. The Abbot is to ensure that the sick are given extra food and drink, that the table provisions be increased when work is hard or the weather is hot, that the table reader be given a snack before meals, and that each monk have well-fitting clothes.²⁵ As W. Don Peter explains, the purpose of these ascetic practices is not to deny the body, but to avoid distractions from intellectual and spiritual work.²⁶ In his

commentary on the *Rule*, German Abbot George Holzherr makes clear that the rhythms of work, prayer, and study aim to effect a balance of mind and body. Indeed, when Benedict enjoins the monk to “get heart and body ready,” he indicates the intention to provide “a whole programme in opposition to a chilly intellectualism and a fragmentation of the person.” The *Rule* effects a transformation of “the whole psychosomatic man.”²⁷

Contrary to Higgins’ anxieties about asceticism, in which the denial of desires leads to self-alienation, the Benedictine ascetic ideal involves the uncovering of true desires.²⁸ When the body, through the practice of monastic discipline, is integrated with the intentions of the mind, the monastic discovers those goods most correspondent to her nature as a human person. As Thomas Merton comments in his introduction to monastic living, “Our observances are an integral part of our monastic *life*. They must *live*. They must be part of a living organism. They must *help us to live*.”²⁹ For example, forgoing sexual activity does not serve to repudiate sexual desire. Rather, consecrated virginity places sex in the larger context of human relationality and reorders sexuality’s root impulse—intimacy—towards a larger web of relationships.

Like the Buddhist tradition, Christian monasticism frames ascetic practice as a tool for awakening to a clearer vision of reality. Benedict’s Prologue announces, “The hour has come to rise from sleep” (cf. Rom. 13:11). The monk aims to “expel from the field of vision of his heart the evil one... together with his suggestions.”³⁰ As Abbot Holzherr explains, the monastic would read appeals to “purity of heart” in the context of the Beatitudes, which promise, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8).³¹

As in the East, the Western tradition also insists that the help of a community and formal practice are essential to the ascetic project. Benedict counsels, “because our nature does not have enough strength for

this, let us ask the Lord to send us the help of his grace.” A subsequent line of the Prologue reveals the key material grace in this endeavor—“We intend therefore to found a school for the Lord’s service.”³² The monastic “school” provides a forum for mutual help, and the vow of stability ensures that one would not abandon the formation process for lack of excitement or due to discomfort with the *Rule* or one’s brethren. Indeed, the patience required to live in community often provides the opportunity for the purification of desires.³³

MONASTIC ASCETICISM IN THE MODERN UNIVERSITY

How can these ancient traditions be of any help to contemporary university students? We should first note that the new techniques of engagement fail to label distraction as a hinderance. They tell the student, “You are distracted, and that’s ok, even good.” In contrast, both Eastern and Western monasticism tell the student “Your distraction is *not* good, because it is not compatible with who you are.”

The ethos behind much of the introduction of digital technology into the classroom calls for the satisfaction of immediate, sensory desires. Flitting from screen to screen to capture relevant data points for an online discussion post, being mesmerized by a catchy video clip in a professor’s presentation, using a “clicker” to complete periodic quizzes during a lecture—all of these activities rely on neurological reward pathways to lead students to master information or skills. If the “engaged” classroom offers a formation, it is a formation after one’s immediate impulses.

Monastic asceticism calls for the purification of desire by an integration of mind and body. To demonstrate how this is possible in the modern university setting, it will be helpful to examine two concrete examples. Calvin Mercer’s *The Monastic Project*, housed at East Carolina

University, invites students to partake in a rather rigorous 28-day ascetic program. Students abstain from meat, sugar, alcohol, and sexual activity. They limit their television, phone, and internet use. They practice daily “random acts of kindness” and spend time volunteering. They partake in 65 minutes of daily mindfulness meditation,³⁴ and experience communal chant. As the process is understandably difficult, each student is assigned a “support partner” and meets weekly with their professor.

Mercer’s rationale for the project is informed by a sense of the distracting bodily immediacy that marks modern life. “I think the Project speaks to a deep yearning among many in our culture for substantive experience, religious or not, that goes deeper, offers more, and—yes—requires more than the easy, quick, sensual froth offered up by much contemporary culture.”³⁵ His students report experiencing a clarity of mind, a greater interest in their studies, and an appreciation for their true nature as embodied persons. One student recalled, “The Project raised my awareness 200 percent...I actually paid attention to things around me when I walked.” Another related, “I am noticing how cool my body is. I am noticing things I took for granted, like my muscle movements, aches and pains and trying to relieve them, my social interactions, my words, my tone of voice, my laziness, my addictions, my desires, my moods, everything.” The classroom implications are just as striking: “My mind seems to have more energy; I seem to be able to study more without getting tired.” “I find myself more interested in my courses and less interested in wasting time on parties and surfing the net.” A final remark captures the academic promise of monastic asceticism perfectly—“I think now I’m beginning to see what it is professors get so excited about in books.”³⁶

Justin McDaniel, himself a former Theravadin monk and current practicing Catholic, introduces his students to similar practices in his course on monastic asceticism, entitled “Living Deliberately: Monks,

Saints and the Contemplative Life.” Over the course of the semester, students renounce coffee, digital technology, processed food, sexual activity, and even conversation. They adhere to a simple dress code and limit their spending to \$50 per week. McDaniel’s aims seem similar to Mercer’s. “It’s not about individual restrictions,” he argues. “It’s about building hyperawareness of yourself and others.”³⁷ Like De Marzio, he sees ascetic practice as integral to teaching—“It is important to show that education is not just a series of accomplishments...Education is learning how to rethink, learning to question ourselves and learning how knowledge and service go together.”³⁸

Even for those whose courses preclude such an involved project, monastic custody of the senses may provide a helpful example. The late art history professor Joanna Ziegler helped students to practice contemplative “beholding.” Her courses asked students to study a single painting for an entire semester, eschewing the temptation toward novelty and rapid stimulation in order to uncover a deeper understanding of the work. Educators in humanities fields have taken up “slow teaching”—reading a single book over a semester—with similar intentions.³⁹

Through these concrete instantiations, we can see how monastic asceticism integrates the student’s body and mind, rehabilitates desire, and leads to greater awareness. By forgoing accustomed physical comforts, the student is forced to confront her immediate desires. She is compelled to ask *why* she craves sugar, or social media, or sex. The only satisfying answers to these questions will necessarily take into account her deepest intellectual, emotional, and spiritual desires; her whole person. She will begin to see the body for what it is—not a conglomeration of sensory powers to be controlled or held in rapt “engagement,” but the vehicle by which she attains her highest aims.

1 Robert Sarah, *The Power of Silence: Against the Dictatorship of Noise* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2017).

2 Neil Bradbury, “Attention Span During Lectures: 8 Seconds, 10 Minutes, or More?,” *Advanced Physiology of Education* 40, no. 1 (2016): 509–513; Nicholas Carr, *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2010).

3 David M. Ramey, “The Social Structure of Criminalized and Medicalized School Discipline,” *Sociology of Education* 88, no. 3 (2015): 181–201; Kelly Welch and Allison Ann Payne, “Racial Threat and Punitive School Discipline,” *Social Problems* 57, no. 1 (2010): 25–48.

4 For example, see James M. Lang, “Stop Blaming Students for Your Listless Classroom,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 29, 2014) <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Stop-Blaming-Students-for-Your/149067>. For an example of “engagement literature,” see Jian-Jie Dong, Wu-Yuin Hwang, Rustam Shadiev, & Ginn-Yein Chen, “Pausing the Classroom Lecture: The Use of Clickers to Facilitate Student Engagement,” *Active Learning in Higher Education* 18, no. 2 (2017): 157–172, or Michael J. Tews, Kathy Jackson, Crystal Ramsay & John W. Michel, “Fun in the College Classroom: Examining Its Nature and Relationship with Student Engagement,” *College Teaching* 63, no. 1 (2015): 16–26.

5 Alven M. Neiman, “Pragmatism, Thomism, and the Metaphysics of Desire: Two Rival Versions of Liberal Education,” *Educational Theory* 47, no. 1 (1997): 91–117; Kevin Gary, “Leisure, Freedom, and Liberal Education,” *Educational Theory* 56, no. 2 (2006): 121–136, “Neoliberal Education for Work Versus Liberal Education for Leisure,” *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 36, no. 1 (2017): 83–94; Bruce Kimball, *Philosophers and Orators: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1986).

6 Brett Bertucio, “Paideia as Metanoia: Transformative Insights from the Monastic Tradition,” *Philosophy of Education 2015*, ed. Eduardo Duarte (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2016): 509–517; Samuel D. Rocha, “Reading, Meaning, and Being,” *Philosophy of Education 2010*, ed. Gert Biesta (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2010): 250–252; Samuel D. Rocha, “Incarnated Reading: A Cerebralist, Cows, Cannibals and Back Again,” *Philosophy of Education 2013*, ed. Cris Mayo (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2013): 120–128; Angelo Caranfa, “Silence as the Foundation of Learning,” *Educational Theory* 54, no. 2 (2004): 211 – 230; Ana Cristina Zimmerman and John W. Morgan, “A Time for Silence?: Its Possibilities for Dialogue and for Reflective Learning,” *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 35, no. 1 (2016): 399–413.

7 Chris Higgins, “Teaching and the Good Life: A Critique of the Ascetic Ideal in Education,” *Educational Theory* 53, no. 2 (2003): 131–153; Darryl De Marzio, “Teaching as Asceticism: Transforming the Self through the Practice,” *Philosophy of Education 2007*, ed. Barbara Stengel (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2007): 349–355; Darryl De Marzio, “The Teacher’s Gift of Sacrifice as the Art of the Self,” *Philosophy of Education 2009*, ed. Deborah Kerdeman (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2009): 166–173.

- 8 Deborah Kerdeman, "Ascetic Practice and Teaching as Service: A Feminist View," *Philosophy of Education* 2007 ed. Barbara Stengel (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2007): 356-358.
- 9 Higgins, "Teaching and the Good Life," 131-142, quotation from 141.
- 10 Ibid., 142-153. See Amy Gutmann, *Democratic Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987).
- 11 Higgins, "Teaching and the Good Life," 143.
- 12 De Marzio, "Teaching as Asceticism."
- 13 Kerdeman, "Ascetic Practice and Teaching as Service."
- 14 Charles Dumont, "Education of the Heart," *Monastic Education* 12, no. 1 (Michaelmas/August, 1976), 197.
- 15 Steven Collins, *Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravada Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 82-84.
- 16 *Bhikkhu-pacittiya* (BhPac) 35, 53, 56, 57 in *The Patimokkha*, ed. William Pruitt, trans. K. R. Norman (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2001), 59, 209.
- 17 Steven Collins, "The Body in Theravada Buddhist Monasticism," in *Religion and the Body*, ed. Sarah Coakley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 192-3.
- 18 Ibid., 196.
- 19 To be sure, Hahn's cosmology borrows from the Korean Huayan school's affirmation of all natural phenomenon as *dharmadhatu pratityasamutpada*—manifestations of the Buddha's wisdom. This lends a monist tone, closer to Hindu cosmology than Theravadin philosophy, to Hahn's monastic prescriptions. However, as my intention in this work is to make a case for an implicit anthropology born of practice, doctrinal disagreements should not necessarily be an obstacle. See Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching* (New York: Three River Press, 1999).
- 20 Thich Nhat Hahn, *Stepping into Freedom: An Introduction to Buddhist Monastic Training* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1997), 4, 6, 12, 20, 59.
- 21 Gavin Flood, *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory, and Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 119-120.
- 22 Thrangu Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Vinaya: A Guide to Buddhist Conduct*, trans. Sonam Palden and Chojor Radha (Delhi, India: Sri Satguru Publications), 110.
- 23 W.L.A. Don Peter, *Buddhist and Benedictine Monastic Education* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Evangel Press, 1990), 61-70.
- 24 *The Rule of Benedict*, trans. Monks of Glenstal Abbey (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1994), §4.59, 7.23, 39, 40, 49. Subsequent references denoted RB.
- 25 RB, 38, 39, 40, 55.
- 26 Peter, *Buddhist and Benedictine Monastic Education*, 71-84.
- 27 RB, Prologue, 40; George Holzherr, *Commentary on the Rule of Benedict*, trans. Monks of Glenstal Abbey (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1994), 35.
- 28 Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, trans. Walter Kauffman (New York: Vintage Books, 1987), 57-96.
- 29 Thomas Merton, *Monastic Observances*, ed. Patrick F. O'Connell (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010), 5 (emphasis in original).
- 30 RB, Prologue 8, 28.
- 31 Holzherr, *Commentary on the Rule of Benedict*, 1, 72.

32 RB, Prologue 41, 45.

33 RB, §72.3-12.

34 “Secularized” mindfulness interventions are increasingly popular in K-12 settings. While I admit these have some potential, their medicalized, Western incarnations are often marked by the same ethos of bodily control that plagues other discipline practices. See James Reveley, “Neoliberal Meditations: How Mindfulness Training Medicalizes Education and Responsibilizes Young People,” *Policy Futures in Education* 117, no. 1 (1997): 535–540. I’m grateful to Avi Mintz for raising the need to address this recent phenomenon.

35 Calvin Mercer, “Monk Manual,” document courtesy of author, 5.

36 Ibid., 52-63.

37 “Penn Class Teaches Students How to Live Like Monks,” *Buddhist Art News* (February 20, 2012), <https://buddhistartnews.wordpress.com/2012/02/20/penn-class-teaches-students-how-to-live-like-monks/>.

38 Shoba Babu, “Religious Studies Professor Draw Influence from Buddhist Experience,” *The Daily Pennsylvanian* (February 11, 2015), <http://www.thedp.com/article/2015/02/trained-monk-and-professor-justin-mcdaniel>.

39 See Joanna Ziegler, “Practice Makes Reception: The Role of Contemplative Ritual in Approaching Art,” and Anita Houck, “You are Here: Engagement, Spirituality, and Slow Teaching,” in *Becoming Beholders: Cultivating Sacramental Imagination and Actions in College Classrooms*, eds. Karen Eifler and Thomas Landy (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014).