

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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Korean Sŏn Buddhism in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century:  
Paekp'a, Ch'oŭi and Buddhist-Confucian Interaction  
at the End of the Chosŏn Dynasty

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
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by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Korean Sŏn Buddhism in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century:  
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Professor Robert E. Buswell, Chair

Korean Buddhism is often described as showing few signs of creativity and being virtually dead in the latter half of Chosŏn (1392-1910), the last dynasty of Korea, because of harsh persecution by the Confucian ruling class. My dissertation explores Korean Sŏn (C. Chan) Buddhism in the early nineteenth century, focusing on the monks Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn (1767-1852) and Ch'oŭi Ŭisun (1786-1866). The purpose of this study is not only to challenge this common misperception, but also to present a more accurate picture of Chosŏn Buddhism, particularly its unique development of Sŏn theories. My dissertation, first of all, demonstrates the presence of active interactions between Buddhism and Confucianism during late Chosŏn. In particular, it shows that many Confucian literati provided extensive financial and ideological support for Buddhism and pursued their interest in the religion as an alternative for Confucianism. As a

case study of the development of Korean Sŏn theories of this time, my dissertation explores Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi's unique ideas on the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo (doctrinal studies). Paekp'a reconciled the soteriological tension between the Heze and Linji schools, regarding the utility of doctrinal studies. In doing so, he integrated the *kanhwa* (C. *kanhua*) technique of the Linji school into the Heze scheme of "sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation." With this synthetic path, Paekp'a limited the soteriological validity of doctrinal teachings or studies by describing them as unable to achieve the final perfect enlightenment on their own. Ch'oŭi, on the other hand, argued for the unity of Sŏn and Kyo by introducing new definitions of these two strands of Buddhism. He argued that Sŏn and Kyo were not fundamentally different from each other. Their different rhetorical styles not only reflect the same quality of the Buddha's enlightenment but also serve equally as skillful means to help sentient beings with different capabilities attain the ultimate Buddhist goal. Hence, for Ch'oŭi, there is no hierarchy between Sŏn and doctrinal teachings. My dissertation not only undermines the colonialist image of Korean Buddhism, but also demonstrates the uniqueness and continuity of Korean Sŏn Buddhism within the East Asian Buddhist tradition.

The dissertation of Seong-Uk Kim is approved.

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## DEDICATION

To My Father,

Kim Byeong-Su 金炳洙 (1941-2005)

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

HPC: *Han'guk Pulgyo chōnsō* 韓國佛教全書.

T: *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經.

X: *Wanzi xuzang jing* 卍字續藏經.

C.: Chinese

J.: Japanese.

K.: Korean.

- Citations from the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, or the *Wanzi xuzang jing* are listed in the following manner: Title and fascicle number of the text; abbreviation (T), text number, and volume number of the canonical collection; page number, register (a, b, or c), and line number(s).

E.g., *Yuanwu foguo chanshi yulu* 圓悟佛果禪師語錄 4, T1997.47.729c05-c07

- Citations from the *Han'guk Pulgyo chōnsō* are listed in the following manner: Title and fascicle number of the text; abbreviation (HPC) and volume number of the collection; page number, register (a, b, or c), and line number(s).

E.g., *P'yōnyangdang chip* 鞭羊堂集 2, HPC 8, 253c08-12

- Transliteration of Asian languages follows the Hanyu pinyin system for Chinese, the modified Hepburn system for Japanese, and the McCune-Reischauer system for Korean. Transliterations in the main text of the dissertation are followed by alternative language pronunciations with the abbreviations “C.” or “K.”

The title of an Asian text is introduced in its original romanization:

E.g., *Vimalakīrtinirdesa*

*Huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* 華嚴經隨疏演義鈔

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Negative Image of Buddhism in the Latter Half of Chosŏn

During the latter half of Chosŏn (1392-1910), the last dynasty of Korea, Korean Buddhism is often described as torpid and virtually dead, showing few signs of creativity due to the harsh persecution of the Neo-Confucian state. Such an image is so influential that it continues to hold sway over scholarship on Korean Buddhism. My research challenges this common perception by exploring Buddhism in the late Chosŏn through a case study of the monks Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn 白坡亘璇 (1767-1852) and Ch'oŭi Ŭisun 草衣意恂 (1786-1866).

The negative view on Chosŏn Buddhism developed mostly due to the Japanese colonialist perspectives. After colonialization, Japanese Buddhist scholars studied Buddhism in Chosŏn as a means to facilitate the Japanese imperial rule over Korea. They did the extensive bibliographical and historical research on Korean Buddhism, producing such outcomes as the *Chōsen jisetsu shiryō* 朝鮮寺刹史料 of 1911 and the *Chōsen bukkyō kankei shoseki kaidai* 朝鮮佛教關係書籍解題 of 1911. In particular, Hurutani Kiyoshi 古谷青 for the first time attempted to provide a comprehensive explanation on Chosŏn Buddhism in his “Chōsen Richō bukkyōshi kōgai” (朝鮮李朝佛教史梗概), published in the journal *Bukkyō shigaku* 佛教史學 from 1911 to 1912.<sup>1</sup> In this article, Hurutani set the tone for subsequent research on Chosŏn Buddhism. He argued that the anti-Buddhist policy imposed by the Chosŏn court had caused Buddhism to be demoted to the status of a religion for the non-elites of Chosŏn.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hurutani's serial articles “Chōsen Richō Bukkyōshi Kōgai” appear in the *Bukkyō Shigaku* 1 no. 1 to no. 3 and no.11 to no. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Yi Myōng-ho 2011: 170.

Takahashi Tōru (1878-1967) and Nukariya Kaiten (1867-1934) solidified the negative image on Chosŏn Buddhism. Takahashi characterized Buddhism in Chosŏn as stagnant in his *Richō Bukkyō* 李朝佛教, published in 1929. He argued that “the vitality of Chosŏn Buddhism was extinguished. It did not have any Buddhist vehicles (J. *shūjō*, K. *chongsŭng* 宗乘) and thus lost the key Buddhist tenets (J. *shūshi*, K. *chongji* 宗旨).”<sup>3</sup> According to him, the Chosŏn court which was hostile to Buddhism deprived the religion of the socio-political privileges that it had enjoyed in the previous dynasty; and thus, Buddhism could not but rely on women and commoners as its main supporters for its survival. Takahashi went further to say that Chosŏn Buddhism was nothing other than a poor imitation of Chinese Buddhism, without creativity or ingenuity. Nukariya shared Takahashi’s view, characterizing Chosŏn Buddhism as a mere extension of Chinese Buddhism in his *Chōsen zenkyōshi* 朝鮮禪教史 of 1930. Nukariya asserted that Buddhism had declined during this period without any major developments in terms of Buddhist idea and practice.<sup>4</sup>

The negative image created by Japanese colonial scholars had far-reaching impact.<sup>5</sup> Most of the writings on Chosŏn Buddhism, published even long after the colonial period, described Chosŏn as the period of stagnation or decrease in Buddhism. For example, such contemporary Korean scholars as Kim Yong-jo, Ch’oe Pyŏng-hŏn, Hong Yun-sik, Chŏng

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<sup>3</sup> Takahashi 1929: 893.

<sup>4</sup> Chŏng Ho-gyŏng 1992: 405.

<sup>5</sup> A few Korean scholars of the colonial period presented counter-arguments. For example, Kim Yŏng-su’s (1884-1967) *Chosŏn pulgyosago* in 1928 and Ch’oe Nam-sŏn’s “Chosŏn pulgyo: tongbang munhwa sasang e itnŭn kŭ chiwi,” *Pulgyo* 74 in 1930 advocated the independent development of Chosŏn Buddhism.

Kwang-ho, Pak Hae-dang, Yi Ki-un, and Kim Kyŏng-jip agree on this description.<sup>6</sup> The main arguments of their writings can be summarized as follows: from the very beginning of the dynasty, the ruling yangban (Confucian literati) class of Chosŏn adhered to Neo-Confucianism, rejecting Buddhism. These literati manipulated the Chosŏn court to enforce a strong anti-Buddhist policy. As a result, Buddhism lost all the social, political, and economic privileges and benefits that it had held in the Koryŏ dynasty. By the mid-Chosŏn, Buddhist clerics were deprived of legitimate social status, being treated as members of the lowest class in society. Due to the total severance from the primary source of financial support and philosophical stimulation, Buddhism of this period saw the degeneration of its clerics and the loss of its doctrinal creativity, simply mimicking Chinese Buddhist ideas and concepts. Buddhism of Chosŏn became a religion only for socially marginalized groups.

In the 2000s, several studies sought to challenge such a negative view of Chosŏn Buddhism. Some attempted to erase the torpid image of the religion, emphasizing its active presence during this period.<sup>7</sup> According to them, Buddhism neither declined nor was on the verge of extinction; rather, it penetrated deep into the life of the Chosŏn people with the flourishing of devotional practices such as *yŏmbul* 念佛 (reciting the Buddha's name); this period also witnessed the publication of various Buddhist texts such as ritual manuals, temple records, and literary collections of the eminent monks. Others demonstrated some yangban literati's interest in and acceptance of Buddhism.<sup>8</sup> However, all these writings failed to fully

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<sup>6</sup> Kim Yong-jo 1983; Ch'oe Pyŏng-hŏn 1986; Hong Yun-sik 1988; Chŏng Kwang-ho 1994; Pak Hae-dang 2002; Yi Ki-un 2004; and Kim Kyŏng-jip 2007.

<sup>7</sup> For example, Nam Hŭi-suk 2004, O Kyŏng-hu 2002, and Ko Yŏng-sŏp 2005.

<sup>8</sup> To name a few, Yu Ho-sŏn 2007, O Kyŏng-hu 2003, and Kŭm Chang-t'ae 2008.



overcome the colonialist image of Chosŏn Buddhism. They still maintained the perception that the majority of the Confucian class ignored and persecuted the religion, lacking the comprehensive research on the literati attitude toward Buddhism of the time. They also could not remove the misperception that Chosŏn Buddhism had merely adopted the Chinese Buddhist thought, unable to present any evidence of the distinctive development of Chosŏn Buddhism.

As seen so far, two main elements constitute the negative view on Buddhism in the latter half of Chosŏn: (a) the ruling literati class's persecution of Buddhism; (b) the loss of creativity and vitality of Chosŏn Buddhism.

## 2. Buddhism in Late Chosŏn: the Problems the Buddhist Community Faced

As my research will show, many Confucian literati did not persecute Buddhism, whether or not they were involved in or alienated from the central politics. Rather, they supported the religion both financially and ideologically. Many Confucian literati of this time often made huge donations for the construction or reconstruction of temples and prayer halls, as well as the publication of Buddhist texts. They also argued for the unity of Buddhism and Confucianism themselves, an argument that could not be imagined during the heyday of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy in the sixteenth century. These literati also befriended Buddhist monks, exchanging letters or forming poetry gatherings with them. Some of them showed keen interest in Buddhism and pursued their interest in the religion by reading and discussing Buddhist texts and doctrines. They even suggested the superiority of Kyo (doctrine) to Sŏn (C. Chan, J. Zen), arguing that doctrinal teachings could lead to enlightenment rather than only Sŏn meditation.

Chosŏn Buddhist efforts contributed to such a change in yangban literati's attitude toward Buddhism. During the two large-scale foreign invasions that occurred in the mid-Chosŏn,

Buddhists demonstrated their loyalty to the court, one of the cardinal Confucian ethics, by participating in the battles themselves and performing Buddhist rituals and ceremonies for the welfare of the court. Chosŏn Buddhists even transformed their doctrines to adjust Buddhism to the Confucian-dominant society of Chosŏn. They argued that practicing loyalty and filial piety could bring about enlightenment, the ultimate Buddhist goal.

Thanks to the favorable attitude of yangban literati, Buddhism in the latter half of Chosŏn enjoyed a modest revival. Most of all, though no doctrinal schools appeared in this period, doctrinal studies became popular in the Chosŏn Buddhist community still dominated by the Sŏn school. A number of Buddhist scriptures and commentaries, especially, regarding Hwaŏm (C. Huayan) philosophy, were published and circulated. Furthermore, such renowned monks as Paegam Sŏngch'ong 栢庵性聰 (1631-1700), Hwansŏng Chian 喚惺志安 (1664-1729), and Yŏndam Yuil 蓮潭有一 (1720-1799) themselves composed commentaries and performed public lectures on Hwaŏm philosophy.

The Korean Sŏn community of this time restored and re-established its practice and lineage. Chosŏn Sŏn monks employed “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation” 頓悟漸修 (C. *dunwu jianxiu*, K. *ton'ŏ chŏmsu*) as their major practical or soteriological scheme, a scheme that was first introduced by the Chinese Heze Chan master Guifeng Zongmi 圭峰宗密 (780-841) and Korean Sŏn master Pojo Chinul 普照知訥 (1158-1210). They created a monastic curriculum that substantiated this Heze soteriological system. Many novice monks during the late Chosŏn were trained according to this curriculum. Chosŏn Sŏn monks also restored the Korean Sŏn lineage, which had been interrupted during the first half of the dynasty, by publishing several genealogical texts, including *Pulcho wŏllyu* 佛祖源流 of 1764. In doing

so, they promoted T'aego Pou 太古普愚 (1301-1382), who had received the Chinese Linji lineage, as the founder of their lineage. In this way, they defined Korean Sōn tradition as the Imje (C. Linji) lineage.

The Buddhist community in late Chosōn, as shown so far, faced two different yet linked challenges: (a) How could it embrace the Confucian literati's intellectual approach to Buddhism?; (b) How should it harmonize the tension between the genealogical (Linji) and soteriological (Heze) identity of Chosōn Buddhism? These two questions are connected to the issue of the relationship between Chan/ Sōn and Jiao/ Kyo that had been recurring throughout the history of Sino-Korean Buddhism.

The terms Chan/ Sōn and Jiao/ Kyo refer to two categories of Buddhist schools in East Asia (Chan/ Sōn and Jiao/ Kyo scholastic schools) as well as two major Buddhist practices (meditation and doctrinal studies). As Chan/ Sōn formed an independent Buddhist school in East Asia, it created the tension against the established Jiao/ Kyo school. This polemical tension between the two rival schools also involved the soteriological tension between meditation and doctrinal studies. The Jial/ Kyo school argued that its text revealed the Buddha's teaching perfectly and fully while the Chan/ Sōn school maintained that its technique led directly to the Buddha's enlightenment. Even within the Chan/ Sōn school, different positions on this issue often appeared, competing for dominance. In particular, the Heze school represented the unity of Chan and Jiao; the Linji school, Chan's superiority to Jiao. By defining the soteriological and genealogical identity in terms of these two Chinese Chan schools, which held different views on the relationship between Chan/ Sōn and Jiao/ Kyo, Korean Sōn Buddhism of the late Chosōn exhibited an internal inconsistency. Furthermore, the literati's

apparent favor of Kyo over Sŏn also demanded that the Chosŏn Sŏn community respond by revisiting this age-old issue of the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo.

Considering this circumstance, this dissertation seeks to demonstrate the following two points: (1) many yangban (Confucian literati) provided extensive financial and ideological support for Buddhism and developed an interest in the religion as an alternative or supplement to Confucianism; (b) the two monks Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi developed unique theories on the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo within the socio-religious context of Korea. In particular, Paekp'a responded to the issue of the internal inconsistency of Korean Sŏn Buddhism; Ch'oŭi responded to that of the Confucian literati's approach to Buddhism.

### 3. Previous Scholarship on Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn and Ch'oŭi Ŭisun

The negative image of Chosŏn Buddhism has affected previous scholarship on Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi. With few exceptions, scholarship on these two figures argues that these two late Chosŏn monks simply appropriated Chinese Buddhist thought without any connection to the social and religious context on Korean soil.

Previous scholarship has mostly focused on Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi's Sŏn thought, overlooking their interaction with the yangban literati. The scholarly approach to these two monks began with the *Chosŏn pulgyo t'ongsa* 朝鮮佛教通史, written in 1918 by Yi Nŭng-hwa (1869-1943). In this voluminous work, Yi criticized Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi for focusing only on the scholastic interpretations of the terms and concepts borrowed from Chinese Buddhism without exploring their practical validity in Chosŏn society.<sup>9</sup> In the 1920s and 1930s, the Japanese scholars Takahashi Tōru and Nukariya Kaiten were also critical of the two monks'

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<sup>9</sup> Tongguk taehakkyo ch'ulpanbu 2010, *Yŏkchu Chosŏn pulgyo t'onogsa*: 173-194 and 212-213.

Buddhist thought. In particular, Nukariya defined the Sōn writings of these two monks as a doctrinal form of Sōn, denouncing Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi as making a serious mistake by conceptualizing the pure truth of Sōn, which Nukariya argued was in its nature ineffable.<sup>10</sup> After liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945 and the subsequent ecclesiastical turmoil in the 1950s and 1960s, the Sōn ideas of these two monks attracted the attention of many Korean scholars, some of whom showed consistent interest in them.<sup>11</sup> Han Ki-du was one such scholar. In the 1970s, Han published a series of writings on the Sōn thought of the two monks. In particular, in one of his articles, Han interpreted their thought in connection with the relationship between Sōn and Kyo. According to Han, Paekp'a emphasized the superiority of Sōn to Kyo while Ch'oŭi highlighted the equality of the two. However, Han did not connect the Sōn thought of these two monks to the socio-religious context of Korea of the time. Although several writings on the thought of the two monks appeared in the 1980s, they did not go beyond Han's arguments. In the 1990s, a few scholars took a more critical approach to the thought of the two monks. For example, Kim Chong-myōng made the following major criticisms of the Sōn thought of Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi:<sup>12</sup> (1) neither of the two Sōn monks presented a philosophical discussion on the mind, which Kim asserted is a quintessential aspect of Sōn Buddhism; (2) Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi lacked a critical attitude toward Chan/ Sōn texts, for they were not aware that some of their basic ideas were in fact based on fabricated theories such as *samch'ŏ chōnsim* 三處傳心 (three places of mind transmission); (3) both monks violated the

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<sup>10</sup> Takahashi 1929: 812-849 and Chōng Ho-gyōng 1992: 632-637.

<sup>11</sup> Han Ki-du 1969, 1970, 1971, 1976, 1984, 1991, and 1992; Yi Chong-ik 1975; Ko Hyōng-gon 1975; Kwōn Tōk-chu 1979; Han Chong-man 1985; Kim Yak-sŭl 1959.

<sup>12</sup> Kim Chong-myōng 1998: 224-261.

fundamental tenet of Sŏn Buddhism by employing conceptual frameworks, which were unsuitable for the ineffable truth of Sŏn;<sup>13</sup> (4) their thought was completely alienated from the current social situation, not showing any sign of social consciousness;<sup>14</sup> (5) their Sŏn theories were uncreative and uncritically incorporated concepts from Chinese Buddhism. Overall, Kim defined the Sŏn ideas of Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi as speculative, impractical, and isolated from the social reality in which they lived.

In the 2000s, some scholars attempted to overcome such a negative point of view by locating the thought of the two monks within the context of the Korean Sŏn tradition. Kim Pyŏng-hak argued that their Sŏn teachings were a symbol of the revival of the Korean Buddhist community, which had stagnated due to the government's anti-Buddhist policies.<sup>15</sup> Kim emphasized that these monks' different ideas of Sŏn had raised the issue of where *kanhwa* 看話 (C. *kanhua*; observing the key phrase) meditation practice should be located within the Korean scheme of Buddhist practice, though he gave little explanation of this matter.<sup>16</sup> Ha Mi-gyŏng also agreed that the thought of these two monks had been most concerned with the issue of the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo.<sup>17</sup>

While most of the research focused exclusively on the Sŏn thought of Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi, some research pointed out that the two monks had interacted with yangban literati.

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<sup>13</sup> The third criticism is probably most common. To introduce a few articles which criticize the thought of the two monks from this point, Chŏng Pyŏng-sam 1983; Chŏng Han-yŏng 1998: 237-287; Pak Chong-ho 2003: 7-27.

<sup>14</sup> Ch'oe Il-bŏm shares this point. For details, see Ch'oe Il-bŏm 1990: 379-380.

<sup>15</sup> Kim Pyŏng-hak 2006: 77-102.

<sup>16</sup> Sŏ Chae-yŏng 2009: 59-109.

<sup>17</sup> Ha Mi-gyŏng 2009.

Chŏng Pyŏng-sam listed the names of some yangban literati who had exchanged letters with the two monks, though without any analysis.<sup>18</sup> Yi Hŭi-jae and Cho Yun-ho investigated the relationship between some Confucian literati and the two monks. After explaining the relationship between the Confucian literocrat Kim Chŏng-hŭi 金正喜 (1786-1856) and Ch'oŭi, Yi and Cho argued that only reform Confucianism (K. *Sirhak*; lit. Practical Learning 實學) scholars had been interested in Buddhism in this period.<sup>19</sup> Kŭm Chang-t'ae also agreed with Yi and Cho's argument in his article about Kim Chŏng-hŭi.<sup>20</sup>

Overall, previous scholarship has generally been critical of the Sŏn thought of Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi. They described these monks' Sŏn ideas as too scholastic, overemphasizing Chinese Chan concepts and thus failing to have any religious meaning for contemporary Koreans. Although some scholars attempted to overcome such a negative viewpoint by looking at their thought in the context of the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo, they gave no detailed explanation of this critical issue.<sup>21</sup> In addition, little research was devoted to studying the Sŏn thought of Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi within the broader context of the East Asian Chan/ Sŏn tradition. Some research also shed light on the interaction between the two monks and yangban literati, but typically assumed that such yangban literati were outsiders who were alienated from central politics.

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<sup>18</sup> Chŏng Pyŏng-sam 1998: 135.

<sup>19</sup> Yi Hŭi-jae and Cho Yun-ho 2003: 371.

<sup>20</sup> Kŭm Chang-t'ae 2008: 96.

<sup>21</sup> These scholars just gave a brief history of the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo in Chosŏn Buddhism. However, their summaries of the history even contradict to each other, which can be shown in Ha's and Han's articles.

#### 4. Summary of Chapters

My research explores the Buddhist thought of Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn (1767-1852) and Ch'ŏi Ŭisun (1786-1866) in light of the broader Korean socio-cultural context in late Chosŏn. My study is in five chapters. The first chapter explores various aspects of the intersections between Buddhist monks and Confucian literati in late Chosŏn, including an analysis of these monks' interactions with yangban literati. The next four chapters examine the significance of the ideas of Paekp'a and Ch'ŏi about the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo, which the two monks presented through their interpretations of the Chinese Chan master Linji Yixuan's teaching.

Chapter One challenges the Japanese colonialist view of Chosŏn literati's approach to Buddhism and demonstrates the literati's interest in Buddhist doctrines by exploring the social and religious background of late Chosŏn, focusing on interactions between Confucian literati and Buddhist monks. Through the reading of monastery records, private literary collections of yangban literati, and epitaphs of eminent monks, I demonstrate that many yangban, regardless of their political and ideological affiliations, showed a favorable attitude toward Buddhism, and that some of them even actively followed their interest in Buddhism. This research breaks down the very foundation of the colonial image of Chosŏn Buddhism by revealing that Buddhism continued to exist and even thrive as a legitimate member of society with active interaction with Confucianism.

Chapter Two provides the background for understanding the attempts of Paekp'a and Ch'ŏi to resolve the issues that Korean Sŏn Buddhism faced in late Chosŏn. In particular, it explores three different positions on the issue of the relationship between Chan/ Sŏn and Jiao/ Kyo, which developed in Sino-Korean Chan and Sŏn history: (1) the unity of Chan and Jiao (C. *chanjiao yizhi* 禪教一致); (2) a separate transmission outside Jiao (C. *jiawai biechuan*



教外別傳); (3) relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sōn (K. *sagyo ipsōn* 捨教入禪). In particular, the third position, which was dominant in late Chosōn, created a problem in regard to the yangban literati's approach to Buddhism. This system limited the utility of Kyo in bringing about enlightenment. In this system, Kyo was considered necessary but preparatory, since it was impotent in achieving the final perfect enlightenment on its own; by contrast, Sōn was the sole means of achieving that ultimate Buddhist goal. This subordinate position of Kyo in Korean Sōn soteriology inevitably generated tension with the Confucian literati's scholastic approach to Buddhism in late Chosōn.

Chapter Three examines the Chinese and Korean Chan and Sōn interpretations of Linji's Teaching of "Three Statements, Three Mysteries, and Three Essentials" (C. *sanju sanxuan sanyao*; K. *samgu samhyōn samyo* 三句三玄三要), the teaching that Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi employed to present their different visions of the Sōn and Kyo relationship through the form of Sōn taxonomy. This chapter explores various interpretations of Linji's teaching in terms of the relationship of the Chan/ Sōn and doctrinal teachings, as well as the influence of those interpretations on Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi's taxonomies. It focuses on the discussions of Chinese masters Fenyang Shanzhao 汾陽善昭 (947-1024), Jianfu Chenggu 薦福承古 (970-1045), and Juefan Huihong 覺範惠洪 (1071-1128) and the Korean masters Pojo Chinul 普照知訥 (1158-1210) and Chinjōng Ch'ōnch'aek 眞靜天頊 (fl.13th century).

Chapter Four investigates Paekp'a's three-fold taxonomy of Sōn, which sought to resolve the tension within the Korean Sōn tradition in relation to its different genealogical and soteriological associations. Paekp'a represented the traditional Korean Sōn view of the relationship between Sōn and Kyo, in which the doctrinal studies were considered a preparatory step for Sōn training. He attempted to justify this view by correlating the Korean Sōn and Sino-

Korean Imje (C. Linji) traditions. In doing so, Paekp'a employed Linji's teaching as a juncture between the two different traditions. Based on the teaching, he laid out a three-fold taxonomy of Sŏn. In this taxonomy, Paekp'a unified the Korean Sŏn and Imje traditions soteriologically by placing the Heze scheme of practice into the Imje tradition; he also promoted the Imje school, with which the Korean Sŏn tradition claimed to be affiliated genealogically, as the supreme Sŏn school.

Chapter Five examines Ch'oŭi's claim of the ultimate identity between Sŏn and Kyo to embrace the yangban literati's scholastic approach to Buddhism. Ch'oŭi's view on these two main elements of East Asian Buddhism is revealed in his criticism of Paekp'a. Ch'oŭi criticized Paekp'a's polemical approach to Sŏn Buddhism, in particular, his promotion of the Linji lineage by arguing that Linji's teaching, in fact, represented the unity of all types of Sŏn. Then, Ch'oŭi introduced new definitions of Sŏn and doctrinal teachings, which endorsed Confucianism as well as the literati approach to Buddhism. His new definitions not only removed the distinction between the two strands of Buddhism but also drew connections between Buddhism and Confucianism. Ch'oŭi argued that Sŏn and doctrinal teachings were not fundamentally different from each other because they originated from the same source, the Buddha Śākyamuni. For Ch'oŭi, there is no hierarchy between Sŏn and doctrinal teachings. Although he did not present a systematic soteriology, Ch'oŭi showed to the literati class his willingness to adapt Buddhism to the Confucian society of Chosŏn.

Overall, I believe that my research presents a more accurate and comprehensive picture of Korean Buddhism in late Chosŏn. This research undermines the colonial image of Korean Buddhism by revealing various levels on which Buddhism and Confucianism interacted in late Chosŏn. It also demonstrates the distinctive development of Korean Sŏn Buddhism by

presenting Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi's new perspective on the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo, which responded to the social and religious context of late Chosŏn.

## CHAPTER ONE. Yangban and Buddhism in the Second Half of Chosŏn Dynasty

The colonial image of Buddhism in late Chosŏn (1392-1910) ascribes a main cause of the decrease in the religion to the yangban attitude toward Buddhism. The ruling literati class of the time adhered to Neo-Confucianism, rejecting and persecuting “heterodox” ideologies such as Buddhism; consequently, Korean Buddhism was demoted to a minority religion, losing its creativity and vitality. Recently, some scholars have challenged this perception by demonstrating that some of the yangban held a favorable view of Buddhism. These scholars mostly credit this “change” of some yangban literati’s attitude toward Buddhism to the intellectual situation during this period. According to them, the latter half of Chosŏn witnessed an intellectual openness and diversity that had been rare since the beginning of the dynasty. Some literati criticized the Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy for being too scholastic and narrow to properly respond to the contemporaneous issues of Chosŏn society, and sought for alternative ideologies. The scholars argue that such an environment allowed some yangban Confucians to examine Buddhism, which had long been branded as heterodoxy. In this line of argument, these scholars assume that the yangban literati who showed interest in Buddhism were in fact outsiders alienated from central politics such as reform Confucianism (K. *Sirhak*; lit. Practical Learning 實學) and Yangming (K. *Yangmyŏng* 陽明) learning scholars. They also assume that the majority of the yangban still held onto Cheng-Zhu learning and were critical of all heretical teachings, whether old (Buddhism) or new (Yangming learning and Catholicism).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> For example, see Kŭm Chang-t’ae 2008: 95, Kim Kyŏng-jip 2007, O Kyŏng-hu 2003: 251-259, and Kim Chun-hyök 1999: 38-42.

Though there was a certain critical attitude toward the dominant Cheng-Zhu ideology among some yangban literati, such an argument in fact distorts the reality of the yangban literati's attitude as a whole toward Buddhism, and subsequently the actual social status of the religion during the latter half of Chosŏn. In this chapter, I will attempt to draw a more accurate picture of Buddhism in the latter half of Chosŏn society by exploring the following questions: if certain Confucian literati supported Buddhism, who were they? Were they outsiders who had little opportunity to be engaged in court politics? Were they central bureaucrats who were influential in the socio-political arena? Or were they both? How did they approach Buddhism? By addressing these questions, I will demonstrate that many yangban literati—not just political outsiders but also high ranking bureaucrats—showed a favorable attitude toward Buddhism regardless of the intellectual milieu of the time and personal political or ideological positions. I will also show that even though Buddhism was still branded as a heterodox during the latter half of Chosŏn, it in fact flourished through active interaction with Confucianism.

## 1. Yangban Attitude toward Buddhism

### 1) The factionalization of the yangban class.

Let us first look at the political and social features of the yangban class in relation to the intellectual milieu of the second half of the Chosŏn dynasty before discussing the yangban attitude toward Buddhism. The Chosŏn Yangban literati were not a homogenous social group. They were in fact diverse politically, economically, and even religiously or ideologically. In particular, in the latter half of the dynasty, the yangban were divided into a few groups. The accessibility to higher governmental posts and economic benefits, as well as different political and philosophical ideologies, catalyzed such divisions.

According to Ch'a Chang-sŏp, those who passed the civil service examination and were eligible for higher governmental positions were concentrated in a few powerful clans during the Chosŏn dynasty. From the sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries, almost half of the successful examinees in the higher civil service exams came from no more than thirty clans, approximately four percent of the clans that produced such a personage. Most of these powerful clans lived in or near the capital, dominated the higher bureaucratic positions, and offered royal consorts to the court. They also entered into marriage relationships with each other to maintain their privileges and distinguish themselves from other yangban clans.<sup>23</sup>

These powerful clans were further divided into a few factions, based on their political and ideological stances. In the sixteenth century, when factionalism first appeared, a person of one faction could change his loyalty from one to another, based on his personal values or opinions, and communicate with a member of a different faction, including having marriage or master-disciple relationships. However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, in particular, during King Sukchong's reign (r.1674-1720), the factional strife grew so intense that when one faction seized power, that faction purged its opponents. As the interpretation of Cheng-Zhu ideology became an issue in court politics, factionalism led not just to political, but also philosophical and ideological strife, in which clan members inherited and transmitted their ancestors' stance from one generation to another. Since the reign of King Injo (r. 1623-1649), the factionalization led to the three major factions of Noron 老論 (Old Doctrine), Soron 少論 (Young Doctrine), and Namin 南人 (Southerner), struggling for power in the political arena of the Chosŏn court.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Cha Chang-sŏp 1994: 101-165.

<sup>24</sup> Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, *Han'guksa* vol. 32: 19-31.

The two Chosŏn kings of the eighteenth century tried to resolve this often-bloody power struggle within the ruling yangban class. King Yŏngjo (r. 1724-1776), after his ascension to the throne, attempted to stabilize the politics and strengthen royal authority by adopting the Grand Harmony Policy (K. *t'angp'yŏng ch'aek* 蕩平策) that King Sukchong had proposed. The *t'angp'yŏng* policy aimed at bringing factional balance to central politics and keeping any specific faction from monopolizing power. Despite Yŏngjo's effort, however, the Noron faction became the final victor after centuries of factional strife, due to the Soron and Namin extremists' failed coup attempt, as well as the king's affiliation with the Noron faction.<sup>25</sup> His grandson, King Chŏngjo (r. 1776-1800), continued the *t'angp'yŏng* policy. As one of the critical measures for this policy, Chŏngjo, in spite of the oppositions of the dominant Noron faction, appointed several Namin literati, who had been alienated from politics since the reign of King Sukchong, to high governmental positions. Chŏngjo's *t'angp'yŏng* policy was somewhat successful in that severe factionalism simmered down without any major bloodshed or coups, which had plagued his predecessors' courts, during the whole twenty-five years of his reign. In 1788, Chŏngjo even had the three chief councilors, the highest bureaucratic positions, appointed from all three different factions and serving at the same time. However, the balance of power among the factions was fragile, because the yangban population far outnumbered the political and economic resources available at the time, and the hostility among the factions, accumulated through the long history of purges, was too deep to suppress. The tension among the yangban factions continued throughout the king's reign beneath the surface of the seemingly successful

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<sup>25</sup> For the detailed political situations of King Yŏngjo's reign, see Haboush 1988.

*t'angp'yǒng* policy.<sup>26</sup> The yangban community of the latter half of Chosŏn was severely divided.

## 2) Emergence of alternative ideologies

This same period saw the emergence of new intellectual movements, such as Yangming learning, Catholicism, and reform Confucianism. However, these ideologies were allowed only to the extent that they would not threaten the orthodox position of Cheng-Zhu learning. The influence of these new ideologies, therefore, was limited.

Yangming learning, which enjoyed popularity in China, was introduced to Korea around 1521. This new type of Neo-Confucianism, however, ended up occupying just the periphery of the yangban intellectual community and failed to form a meaningful ideological stream until the end of the dynasty. This is mainly due to the Korean Cheng-Zhu scholars' harsh criticism from the very moment of its introduction.<sup>27</sup> In particular, Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501-1570) in 1556 defined Yangming learning as a heterodox teaching that would disrupt orthodox Cheng-Zhu learning. This branding by an authoritative figure of the Chosŏn Cheng-Zhu school determined the fate of Yangming learning throughout the latter half of Chosŏn. Yi, most of all, dubbed it as a Confucian counterpart of Sŏn Buddhism because of its emphasis on mind. He went on to say that Yangming followers were more dangerous than Sŏn monks because they disguised themselves as Confucians.<sup>28</sup> Despite such harsh criticism, however, a small number of literati,

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<sup>26</sup> Yu Pong-hak 2005: 3-8.

<sup>27</sup> Kim Yong-jae presents a list of the Chosŏn yangban literati, who composed the writings criticizing the Yangming learning. Kim Yong-jae 2012: 110.

<sup>28</sup> For Yi Hwang's criticism of the Yangming Learning, see Kŭm 1998: 103-122; Kim Se-jŏng 2007: 300-309; and Deuchler 1985: 387-392.



such as Chang Yu 張維 (1587-1638), Ch'oe Myōng-gil 崔鳴吉 (1586-1647), and Chōng Chedu 鄭齊斗 (1649-1736) showed interest in Yangming learning. In particular, Chōng devoted himself to the study of Yangming learning as an alternative ideology for Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy. After Chōng moved to Kanghwa Island, off the western coast of the peninsula near the capital, his descendants and students such as Yi Kwang-sa 李匡師 (1705-1777) and Yi Kwang-myōng 李匡明 (1701-1778) continued to study Yangming Learning. Although few members of this so-called “Kanghwa school” were politically purged during the dynasty, Yangming learning failed to become the majority doctrine of the yangban.<sup>29</sup>

A reform Confucian movement, which modern scholarship sometimes designates as “Sirhak” (Practical Learning 實學), culminated in Chōngjo’s reign.<sup>30</sup> This new Confucian movement intended to respond to various social, political, and economical issues that Chosŏn society of that time faced. Several reformist Confucian scholars, such as Yu Hyōng-wŏn 柳馨遠 (1622-1673), Yi Ik 李穡 (1681-1763), Chōng Yag-yong 丁若鏞 (1762-1836), and Hong Tae-yong 洪大容 (1731-1783), criticized the unproductive and speculative discourses as well as the ideological rigidity of Cheng-Zhu scholar officials. They also presented their reform ideas in philosophical, political, social, and economic areas, which could be categorized in the following four main areas: (a) new interpretations of the Confucian classics; (b) administrative reforms regarding governmental organization and land system; (c) technological reforms for the development of industry and commerce; (d) development in the humanities and the sciences,

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<sup>29</sup> Song Sōk-chun 2007: 6-29.

<sup>30</sup> The definition and the scope of *sirhak* are still controversial issues: See, Cho Sōng-san 2011 and Yu Pong-hak 2011.

such as history, epigraphy, linguistics, and geography.<sup>31</sup> These reformist Confucians all had different personal and social backgrounds. Even though some of them arose to high governmental positions, however, their reformist ideas never formed the mainstream to the extent that they would actually challenge the Cheng-Zhu based social order.<sup>32</sup> Some reformist Confucians even eagerly defended the orthodoxy of Cheng-Zhu learning.<sup>33</sup>

Among the four main areas of reform Confucianism, technical reforms require a little more attention. This movement was centered around a small number of yangban literati in the capital, later labeled the “School of Northern Learning” (K. *pukhak p’a* 北學派). It largely consisted of Noron literati who had visited Qing China. Impressed by the economic and socio-cultural development of Qing, such literati as Hong Tae-yong and Pak Chi-wŏn 朴趾源 (1737-1805) urged that Chosŏn should learn from Qing, and criticized the claim that Chosŏn was the center of civilization. What is important in this movement regarding the intellectual milieu of the time is that its promotion of Qing material culture contributed to the circulation of a number of late Ming and early Qing Chinese texts in eighteenth-century Korea. These texts, including such literary works as fictions and essays as well as Confucian commentarial works of the evidentiary approach (K. *kojŭnghak* 考證學), attracted many yangban literati in and near the capital. This triggered King Chŏngjo’s campaign in support of orthodox Cheng-Zhu learning as will be examined below.<sup>34</sup> Catholicism was also first imported to Korea around this time. Chosŏn yangban literati encountered this religion through several Catholic texts, written in or

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<sup>31</sup> Kalton 1975: 29-46 and Setton 1997: 10-20.

<sup>32</sup> Kim Chŏng-ho 2010: 35-36.

<sup>33</sup> Setton 1997: 16.

<sup>34</sup> Kuksa p’yŏnch’an wiwŏnhoe, *Han’guksa* 32: 35-40.

translated into classical Chinese, such as the *Ch'ŏnju sirŭi* 天主實義 (C. *Tianzhu shiyi*) and the *Ch'ilgŭk* 七克 (C. *Qike*). In the early period of its introduction, several yangban literati were interested in Catholicism, treating it as a scholarly subject and called it “Western Learning” (K. *sŏhak* 西學). Some young literati who belonged to the Namin faction even formed regular meetings to study these texts. Although most of the yangban who were drawn to Catholicism confined their interests to scholarly matters, some developed full-fledged religious devotion.<sup>35</sup> However, the social and political implications of the Catholic teachings were alarming enough for the majority of the ruling class to suspect that they would threaten Confucian social ethics. Eventually, King Chŏngjo issued an edict in 1785, banning the circulation of Catholic texts.<sup>36</sup>

There occurred an incident which Western learning of Catholicism substantiated yangban suspicions. The Namin affiliated Yun Chi-ch'ung 尹持忠 (Paul Yun 1759-1791) and his cousin Kwŏn Sang-yŏn 權尙然 (Jacob Kwŏn 1751-1791), both of whom had converted to Catholicism, challenged the Confucian social order, based on their religious faith. In 1791, following the decision of the Catholic Church in Rome, they did not make a memorial tablet for Yun's deceased mother, and even burned all of their ancestors' tablets in Chinsan, Chŏlla province. Since the memorial tablets played the major role in the Confucian mourning ritual, they were closely related to filial piety, one of the cardinal Confucian ethics. Hence, Yun and Kwŏn's deeds shocked Chosŏn Confucians.<sup>37</sup> The court had them executed and burned all Catholic texts in the royal library. This Chinsan accident, most of all, brought about serious

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<sup>35</sup> Pak Hyŏn-mo 2001: 1-25.

<sup>36</sup> *Chŏngjo sillok*: Apr. 9<sup>th</sup> of the 9<sup>th</sup> year: <http://sillok.history.go.kr>

<sup>37</sup> Baker 1999: 217.

anti-Christian sentiment among the yangban. Many Catholic yangban literati abandoned their faith, leaving Catholicism as a minority religion of the lower class of Chosŏn.<sup>38</sup>

Shortly after the Chinsan incident, Chŏngjo started a campaign that confirmed the orthodox position of Cheng-Zhu learning within the yangban intellectual community. This campaign, which modern scholars call “*munch’ e panjŏng*” 文體反正 (Restoring the right literary style), reflected the intellectual milieu of Chosŏn society of this time. In November of 1791, just a few months after Chinsan incident the king issued a following edict.

As for this [Catholic] matter, it is difficult to fully control with punishments. In dispelling heterodoxy, no other method is better than illuminating “orthodox learning” [i.e., Cheng-Zhu learning]. Therefore, when I asked a question for a recent policy essay question, I spoke at length on [the harms of] late-Ming and early-Qing literary collections.<sup>39</sup>

蓋此事難以刑政專治 闢邪學 莫如明正學 故前策題中 以明末清初文集事 盛言之

Then, Chŏngjo took actions to remove the influence of the late-Ming and early-Qing literary collections on the Chosŏn literati and to assure the orthodox position of Cheng-Zhu learning. For example, the king forbade the royal Confucian academy student Yi Ok 李鈺 (1773-1820) to take the civil service exam until Yi corrected his informal literary style. The king also ordered Pak Chi-wŏn, a renowned Northern learning scholar of Noron, to write an essay of self-reproach and banned the circulation of his *Yŏrha ilgi* 熱河日記.<sup>40</sup>

As Kang Myŏng-gwan points out, *Munch’ e panjŏng* was basically an attempt to censor new ideologies beneath the surface of these new literary styles, demonstrating the

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<sup>38</sup> Kuksa p’yŏnch’an wiwŏnhoe, *Han’ guksa* 35: 102-105.

<sup>39</sup> Chŏngjo sillok 33: Nov. 7 of the fifteenth year. <http://sillok.history.go.kr>

<sup>40</sup> For details of *munch’ e panjŏng*, see Pak Hye-jin 2006.

conservativeness of Chosŏn society.<sup>41</sup> The campaign mostly targeted Chinese fictions and essays since, Chŏngjo believed, the literary works that contained heterodox thought were threatening Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy. Although there was virtually no one who was severely punished for the informal literary style, even such minor punishments such as writing a letter of self-reproach Chŏngjo imposed on the involved literati were enough to send a warning sign to the Chosŏn intellectual society.<sup>42</sup> This campaign, consequently, stifled the possibility of the spread and development of alternative ideologies, which had been already marginalized. The new intellectual movements, critical of Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy, such as Yangming learning, Catholicism, and reform Confucianism, were almost completely shut out of the intellectual discourse of the Yangban community in the subsequent century. *Munch'e panjŏng* confirmed and reinforced the peripheral status of alternative ideologies within Chosŏn society.

The Chosŏn ruling class never allowed any alternative thought to go beyond or threaten the social paradigm defined by Cheng-Zhu ideology. New ideologies were allowed just for a very short period of time. Even in that case, they were limited mostly to a small number of political outsiders. If they attempted to go beyond that limitation, various sanctions were

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<sup>41</sup> Some recent scholars argue that this rather small-scale campaign of *munch'e panjŏng* in fact was aimed at the dominant Noron faction as Chongjo's countermeasure to rescue the Namin faction from its political predicament. Such scholars as Yu Pong-hak and Pak Hyŏn-mo argue that after the Chinsan incident, the Noron asked for the wholesale persecution of Catholics, because the faction wanted to politically utilize some Namin Yangban's involvement in Catholicism as an excuse to purge the whole Namin faction from central politics. According to these scholars, Chŏngjo, therefore, initiated *munch'e panjŏng* to protect the Namin literati he politically supported by warning the Noron faction, many of which were allegedly involved in this new Chinese literary style (see, Yu Pong-hak 1998: 150-151 and Pak Hyŏn-mo 2001). However, this interpretation leans too much toward court politics. Most of all, just as the huge difference in the severity of the punishments to these two heterodoxies showed, the ruling class regarded Catholicism as a much more serious threat to the Chosŏn Confucian social order than the late-Ming and early-Qing literary collections. Considering this fact, it is doubtful that *munch'e panjŏng* could actually have served as such a strong measure to make the Noron faction, which, according to this interpretation, should be highly motivated to get rid of its rival, fear the king's counterattack against their faction.

<sup>42</sup> Kang Myŏng-gwan 2001: 120-142.

imposed to contain them within those boundaries. The yangban society of the latter half of Chosŏn was, to say the least, not so open to or tolerant of new ideologies.

### 3) Yangban attitude toward Buddhism

As recent scholarship shows, it is true that a small group of the literati, who explored alternative ideologies, showed some interest in Buddhism.<sup>43</sup> However, such interest was also shared by other literati as well. In fact, many yangban intellectuals held a favorable attitude toward Buddhism regardless of the conservative milieu of the time and their personal political or ideological orientations. Even some major literati were supportive, or at least not so critical, of Buddhism, even in the period when factional strife grew more turbulent over the intense debate concerning the issue of the orthodox interpretation of Cheng-Zhu learning. In the following section, I will offer a few examples of such cases.

One of the controversial issues in factional strife in the seventeenth century was the enshrinement of Yi I 李珥 (1536-1584). Yi's mother died when he was sixteen. After three years of mourning for his mother, Yi went to Mt. Kūmgang at nineteen, infatuated with Buddhism. According to Yi's autobiographical record, after a year of devotion to Buddhism, he realized that Buddhism was not a proper way of pursuing the truth and returned to Confucian studies. Later, however, Song Si-yŏl 宋時烈 (1607-1689), who defended Yi in the enshrinement controversy, implied that Yi had been interested in Buddhism years before the death of his mother.<sup>44</sup> After returning to Confucianism, Yi passed the higher civil service exam at twenty nine and rose to some high posts. His theory of Cheng-Zhu philosophy became one

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<sup>43</sup> For example, see Yu Ho-sŏn 2007; Yi Chong-ju 2005; and Ku Sa-hoe 1997.

<sup>44</sup> *Sukchong sillok* 16, Sep. 30 of the eleventh year.

of the main-stream interpretations. He also became a leader of the Sŏin faction, the antecedent of the Noron and Soron factions.<sup>45</sup>

Since the issue of enshrining Yi was first raised in 1635, it had become the subject of controversy between Yi's Sŏin faction and its major factional opponent, the Namin.<sup>46</sup> The decades of debate between these two factions finally ended with the enshrinement of Yi in 1682. The main debate was about whether such figures as Yi, who had been involved deeply in Buddhism, deserved the honor of enshrinement. The Namin were opposed to enshrining Yi, allegedly criticizing that Yi had had his hair shaved, wore a Buddhist robe, and even had a Buddhist name. The Sŏin, on the other hand, pushed for Yi's enshrinement, placing little importance on Yi's involvement with Buddhism. What is interesting in the debates is the Sŏin's rationale in defending Yi, which can be summarized as follows: since Yi had significant knowledge and understanding of Buddhist doctrines through his study of Buddhist texts, he realized the falsity of Buddhism and eventually returned to Confucianism. Although Sŏn is heterodox, its theories of mind were so sophisticated that even such talented Confucian students as Yi I fell for Buddhism. Zhang Hengqu 張橫渠 (1020-1077) and Cheng Mingdao 程明道 (1032-1085) were the same as Yi. Even Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), the Chinese cofounder of the Cheng-Zhu school, studied Chan Buddhism for ten years. All these scholars became great scholars of Confucianism after coming back from Buddhism. Therefore, students only have to study what these scholars achieved after they returned to Confucian orthodoxy.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> For the life of Yi I, see Hwang 2000.

<sup>46</sup> For details of this controversy, see Pak Pyŏng-sŏn 2002: 107-121.

<sup>47</sup> May 31<sup>st</sup> of the 13<sup>th</sup> year of King Injo. *Injo sillok* vol. 31.

Here, the Sōin were not so critical of “falling for” Buddhism, though they still considered Buddhism as a heterodox teaching. According to them, since it is almost natural for an ardent Confucian student to become temporarily enamoured of Buddhism, those who have a brief devotion to Buddhism should not be excluded from being honored as a Confucian sage. This view is surprising because it was the Sōin that justified Yi’s involvement with Buddhism: the Sōin literati and their political descendants were supposedly fervent defenders of orthodox Cheng-Zhu learning throughout the latter half of the Chosŏn dynasty. Moreover, they lobbied for some Namin literati who advocated different interpretations of the Cheng-Zhu theory to be sent into exile or put to death, charging that they were “enemies of the Confucian way” (K. *samun nanjŏk* 斯文亂賊).<sup>48</sup> The Sōin may have defended Yi simply because he had been a leader of the faction. Whatever their intention, one major faction legitimized the pursuit of a heterodox teaching in the period when Confucians were keen on the issue of heterodoxy to establish orthodox Cheng-Zhu learning.<sup>49</sup>

The Sōin did not just acquiesce to a Confucian’s involvement with Buddhism; they also provided financial support for Buddhism. In the *Record of Kŭmsan Monastery*, located in Kimje, Chŏlla province, the Chief Councilor Kim Su-hang 金壽恒 (1629-1689), the Left Councilor Nam Ku-man 南九萬 (1629-1711), and other high-ranking officials during the reign

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<sup>48</sup> Such Namin literocrats as Hŏ Mok 許穆 (1595-1682) and Yun Hyu 尹鑄 (1617-1680) were branded as *samun nanjŏk* and politically disadvantaged or purged. Of course, the factional strife between the Namin and the Sōin was one of the chief reasons for their ill-fate. However, indicative to the intellectual milieu of the time was the fact that their different opinions on the Confucian classics served as an excuse for their punishment. For Yun Hyu’s new interpretation and the branding of *samun nanjŏk*, see Yi Sang-hun 2005.

<sup>49</sup> It is also unclear whether the Namin of this period were really opposed to Buddhism. Their strong opposition to enshrining Yi might have been a tactic to further a political initiative over the Sōin.



of Sukchong (r. 1674-1720) are recorded as great donors.<sup>50</sup> Kim was a leader of the Noron faction, while Nam was the patriarch of the Soron faction of this time. Most of the scholar-officials who donated to the monastery were either Noron or Soron, which were sub-factions of the Sŏin. As mentioned earlier, during Sukchong's reign, the factional strife was supposedly most severe, often resulting in the execution of the leaders of the opponent faction when a change of a regime occurred (*hwan'guk* 換局).<sup>51</sup> During this turbulent time, the leaders of major factions made donations to a Buddhist monastery, the institutional basis for an age-old heretical teaching. Their massive donations, however, brought few criticisms from their major political opponent, the Namin faction.

There is another case indicating that the intellectual and cultural milieu had little to do with yangban attitudes toward Buddhism. In the early nineteenth century, while the influence of the late King Chŏngjo's (r. 1776-1800) campaign of *Munch'e panjŏng* was still in effect, Chosŏn society became strikingly conservative: it did not tolerate any new ideas and practices that might threaten the authority of Cheng-Zhu learning. During this period, the conservative Noron, the dominant faction at the Chosŏn court of the time, initiated its first large-scale persecution of Catholicism. Namin scholar-officials who had any involvement with Catholicism were expelled from central politics or sent into exile. Reform Confucianism and Yangming Learning scholars were also excluded from politics during this period of turmoil. Any chances to pursue an official career were closed for these yangban aristocrats. During this wholesale purge in Chosŏn yangban society, there was no sign of any parallel movement against

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<sup>50</sup> Han'gukhak munhŏn yŏn'guso 1983: 223.

<sup>51</sup> There were three major *hwan'guk* in the reign of Sukchong: kyŏngsin (1680), kisa (1689), kapsul (1694).

Buddhism. Rather, the leading political figures of this time financially supported Buddhism. Besides, despite their support of Buddhism, these yangban aristocrats received no criticism from their political opponents. One such yangban literatus is Kim Hŭi-sun 金羲淳 (1757-1821), a high-ranking Noron official and member of the powerful Andong Kim consort clan. According to the reconstruction record of Sudo monastery in Taegu, Kyōngsang province, Kim led a reconstruction project for the monastery during the reign of Sunjo (r. 1800-1834).<sup>52</sup>

Few scholar-officials in late Chosŏn could save their positions or even their lives if they were branded as heretics or enemies of the Confucian way, regardless of their governmental positions or the prestige of their clans. It would have been de facto career suicide to support any heretical teaching, especially during such a dangerous time when ideological censorship was strictly enforced. However, in both cases mentioned above, no one was removed from his governmental position or put to death because of his support of Buddhism. In fact, such cases hardly occurred throughout the latter half of Chosŏn.

This fact reveals that Buddhism of this time occupied a rather unique position. Though Buddhism had been officially branded as a heretical teaching since early in the dynasty, it was different from other heretical teachings, such as Yangming learning and Catholicism. As Yi Hwang's criticism of Yangming learning shows, Buddhism did not confuse Korean people by disguising itself as a true teaching the way Yangming Learning did: neither did it challenge the Confucian moral codes as did Catholicism. In other words, Buddhism recognized its socio-political limitations and became fully assimilated to such Confucian ethics as loyalty and filial piety as will be discussed later in this chapter. As a result, Buddhism received little antipathy

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<sup>52</sup> Koryŏ sŏrim 1986: 414.

from many yangban literati. It rather attracted many literati with its philosophical sophistication.

Even some yangban literati, including high-ranking bureaucrats, affirmed the harmony of Buddhism and Confucianism, just as several monks had claimed during the early and the middle periods of the dynasty, when anti-Buddhist policies were seriously enforced.

Ch'e Che-gong 蔡濟恭 (1720-1799), a chief-council in the reign of Chǒngjo (r. 1776-1800), expressed the harmony of the two religions when he wrote a preface for a monk's private literary collection: "The ways of Buddhism and Confucianism are in concert. Why are we worried that Buddhism is a heterodoxy? Why are we concerned that its words are rejuvenated by the day and spread by the month?" (儒與佛道 通于一 何憂乎異端 何患乎其說之日新月盛乎).<sup>53</sup>

Ch'e was a patriarch of the Namin, a faction that we saw earlier had been strongly opposed to the Sŏin idea of enshrining Yi I because of Yi's history of involvement with Buddhism less than a hundred years prior. Kim Cho-sun 金祖淳 (1765-1831), a Noron official as well as patriarch of the Andong Kim consort clan, also showed a favorable attitude toward Buddhism, saying that the Buddhist way of training the mind was not different from the Confucian way. Kim Chwa-gŭn 金左根 (1797-1869), who became a leader of the clan following his father Kim Cho-sun, described the unity of the two religions in the following poem: "When I meet a foreign monk, I remember I saw his face before. In the evening when I hear a gāthā [of enlightenment] sung with a clear voice, I see a mountain shrouded in soundless clouds. The words of Buddhism are originally those of Confucianism" (邂逅胡僧舊識顏 夜聞清偈靜雲山 佛家原是儒家說).<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *Wŏlsŏng chip*, HPC 10. 390a04-06: cited in Cho Sŏng-san 1991: 318.

<sup>54</sup> *Hasil yugyo* 3: cited in *Ibid.*, 327.

A number of records from this time show that such a favorable attitude toward Buddhism was not limited to some “eccentric” yangban literati. According to such texts as monastery records and private literary collections of yangban literati or monks, many yangban, regardless of their bureaucratic positions, often made huge donations to monasteries and temples to help build prayer halls or rebuild main Buddha halls. They also wrote monastery records or epitaphs for eminent monks.<sup>55</sup> From the late seventeenth century onward, there are several records indicating that many yangban had close relationships with Buddhist monks, as will be shown in the following section. They had frequent contacts or exchanges of the letters with monks. This practice continued until the early nineteenth century when Chosŏn society grew more conservative, leaving little room for such new ideologies as Catholicism and Yangming learning.

#### 4) Yangban approach to Buddhism

Some of the Yangban pursued their interest in Buddhism by reading Buddhist texts and studying its doctrines. This scholastic approach to the religion, most of all, was related to the yangban identity as literati. The yangban were extensive readers. For example, Hong Sök-chu 洪奭周 (1774-1842) in his *Hongssi Toksŏrok* 洪氏讀書錄 introduced about 16,000 books with short reviews. Most of the books Hong read himself.<sup>56</sup> Many yangban literati also wrote about reading, the fundamental activity to their identity. For example, in his *Kyŏngmong yogyŏl* 擊夢要訣, a guideline for the Confucian life read by many literati after him, Yi I said:

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<sup>55</sup> For details of the Chosŏn yangban literati’s donation to the Buddhist monasteries and temples, see Pak Pyŏng-sŏn 2002: 14-75.

<sup>56</sup> For a brief explanation of Hong’s list, see Yi Sang-yong 2006: 8-11 and Chin Chae-gyo 2007: 146-148.

“When you read, you should neatly put your hands together and sit up straight. You should have respectful mind and exert yourself for reading. You should read with wholesome thought to deeply understand the meaning of the text” (凡讀書者 必端拱危坐 敬對方冊 專心致志 精思涵泳 深解義趣).<sup>57</sup> Chŏng Yag-yong also advised that a student should reflect on the meanings of a hundred books that he had read when he read a book, and thus he should be able to penetrate its meaning.<sup>58</sup> Considering this attitude toward reading, it is not so surprising to see that the yangban literati who attained knowledge and understanding of Buddhism from reading Buddhist texts could become so convinced of their own insight that they looked down on the monks’ understanding of the doctrines and even admonished the monks to follow their advice.

One example is Yi Ok. As mentioned before, Yi was forbidden by King Chŏngjo from taking the civil service exam because of the literary style he adopted when he was a student at the royal academy. Yi’s personal literary collection reports a dialogue he had with a monk when he stayed at the monastery of Songgwangsa 松廣寺.<sup>59</sup> Their dialogue is reported in a question-answer form. While he read the *Yuanjue jing* 圓覺經 (K. *Wŏn’gak kyŏng*), Yi happened to discuss Hwaŏm (C. Huayan) theories with a monk in the monastery who had already been ordained for about twenty years. What is surprising in their dialogue is that Yi appears to have taken the role of a master who checks his student’s level of understanding. Yi asked a question regarding Hwaŏm theory and the monk answered. Yi asked another question,

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<sup>57</sup> Yi I, “toksŏ,” *Kyŏngmong yogyŏl*:

[http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc\\_mk\\_h037&gunchaId=av027&munchelId=01&finId=001&NodeId=&setid=264104&Pos=103&TotalCount=131&searchUrl=ok](http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc_mk_h037&gunchaId=av027&munchelId=01&finId=001&NodeId=&setid=264104&Pos=103&TotalCount=131&searchUrl=ok)

<sup>58</sup> For the attitude of Chosŏn yangban literati, including Chŏng Yag-yong, toward reading, see Kim Ŭngyŏng 2006.

<sup>59</sup> Silsi Haksa Kojŏn Munhak Yŏn’guhoe 2001: 260-263.

and the monk answered again. After an exchange of a few questions and answers, the monk finally thanked Yi for his great teachings, shedding tears of gratitude. We have no knowledge of the identity of this monk. He may have been practicing *kanhwa* Sŏn for a good amount of time in his career as a monk, since Songgwangsa—where the dialogue occurred—had been the center of the *kanhwa* Sŏn technique since the Koryŏ monk Chinul (1158-1210) introduced it. The monk also may have taken the role of a student intentionally just to please a yangban who was ranked in a higher social class. Whether the monk’s expression of gratitude for Yi was authentic or not, what draws our attention is that Yi, whose only practice related to Buddhism was probably reading Buddhist texts, appears to have believed that he knew Buddhism better than the monk who began his cleric career some twenty years prior, and assumed the role of a master without hesitation.

Chŏng Yag-yong (1762-1836) is another example. In particular, he criticized the *kanhwa* Sŏn technique, preferring a more literati-like approach to Buddhism. Chŏng was a Namin politician, as well as Confucian theorist during Chŏngjo’s reign. Shortly after King Sunjo’s (r. 1800-1834) ascension to the throne, he was sent into exile during a period of persecution of Catholicism because of his previous involvement with that heterodox religion. While he was exiled, Chŏng communicated with many monks and taught the Confucian classics to them. In particular, Chŏng was close to a monk named Aam Hyejang 兒庵惠藏 (1772-1811). Chŏng and Aam exchanged letters with each other. In one of his verses to Chŏng, Aam wrote, “Who gained dynamism [in practice] through the investigation of the cypress tree *kongan*? He would only hear of the name of the Lotus world!” (柏樹工夫誰得力

蓮花世界但聞名).<sup>60</sup> About a year later, Aam died. Chŏng said in his eulogy for Aam, “Can you really see for yourself whether the monk Zhaozhou, after contemplating on the *kongan* ‘a dog has no Buddha-nature’ for all his life, has gone to rebirth in the Lotus world or not? Surely, Aam has already found it out!” (能親見趙州和尚 一生念狗子無佛性 眞已往生在蓮花世界否...兒菴既知之矣).<sup>61</sup> Here, Chŏng seems to share a view on the practice of *kongan* investigation with Aam. To determine whether he was critical of the practice, it is necessary to see what kind of a monk Aam was in Chŏng’s eyes. In his letter to his brother Chŏng Yak-chŏn 丁若銓 (1758-1816), Chŏng mentioned Aam. According to the letter, Aam was such a great Hwaŏm teacher that he attracted more than a hundred students by his age of twenty seven. Aam enjoyed reading the *Analects* and the *Mengzi*. In particular, he was interested in the *Book of Changes* and thus asked Chŏng to teach the book. According to another of Chŏng’s eulogies for Aam, other monks called him by the title of “sŏnsaeng” (teacher 先生), not Sŏn master. This is probably because “Aam acted like a Confucian literatus, even though he had a monk’s name” (墨名儒行) as explained in Chŏng’s letter to his brother.<sup>62</sup> It seems that Chŏng viewed Aam as more of a scholar-monk than a Sŏn master. A biography of Aam in his epitaph, Aam changgong t’apmyŏng 兒菴藏公塔銘, confirms this supposition: there

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<sup>60</sup> Chŏng Yag-yong, “Sang Chungssi sinmi tong” *Tasan simun chip* vol. 20.  
[http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc\\_mk\\_c001&gunchaId=av020&muncheId=01&finId=024&NodeId=&setid=48642&Pos=4&TotalCount=8&searchUrl=ok](http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc_mk_c001&gunchaId=av020&muncheId=01&finId=024&NodeId=&setid=48642&Pos=4&TotalCount=8&searchUrl=ok)

<sup>61</sup> Chŏng Yag-yong, “Che Aam Hyejang mun” *Tasan simun chip* vol. 17.  
[http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc\\_mk\\_c001&gunchaId=av017&muncheId=04&finId=022&NodeId=&setid=48642&Pos=3&TotalCount=8&searchUrl=ok](http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc_mk_c001&gunchaId=av017&muncheId=04&finId=022&NodeId=&setid=48642&Pos=3&TotalCount=8&searchUrl=ok)

<sup>62</sup> Chŏng Yag-yong, “Sang Chungssi sinmi tong” *Tasan simun chip* vol. 20. op.cit.

was no record or any implication that Aam practiced *kanhwa* Sŏn practice.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, in his eulogy, Chŏng probably implied that his close acquaintance Aam, who had been so devoted to the study of Confucian and Buddhist scriptures, should be in the Lotus world, the world of enlightened beings, while Zhaozhou 趙州 (778-897), a symbol of *kongan* investigation, should not be there. The implication in the verse is that Chŏng questioned the efficacy of the *kanhwa* Sŏn technique in attaining the Buddhist goal. Chŏng's critical attitude to the technique is also seen in his letter to another monk named Kŭnhak 勤學 (fl. 19<sup>th</sup> century). There, Chŏng advised the monk to abandon the technique.<sup>64</sup>

Another example is Kim Chŏng-hŭi, who was a high ranking official and renowned Confucian scholar in the early nineteenth century. He was deeply interested in Buddhism. Kim enjoyed reading Buddhist texts and sharing such pleasure with other literati. He sent a copy of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* (C. *Weimo jing*, K. *Yuma kyŏng* 維摩經) to his friend Kwŏn Ton-in 權敦仁 (1783-1859), who was a chief-councilor. In his letter to Kwŏn, Kim also praised the literary style of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* and the *Śūraṅgama-sūtra* (C. *Lengyan jing*, K. *Nŭngŏm kyŏng* 楞嚴經).<sup>65</sup> In a letter to another literatus, Kim even gave philosophical comments on some Buddhist texts, quoting from various Buddhist writings, including Chan/ Sŏn

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<sup>63</sup> "Aam changgong t'apmyŏng," *Aam chip*.

<sup>64</sup> Chŏng Yag-yong, "wi samun Kŭnhak Chŭngŏn," *Tasan simun chip* vol. 17.  
[http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc\\_mk\\_c001&gunchaId=av017&munchelId=10&finId=052&NodeId=&setid=68750&Pos=7&TotalCount=49&searchUrl=ok](http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc_mk_c001&gunchaId=av017&munchelId=10&finId=052&NodeId=&setid=68750&Pos=7&TotalCount=49&searchUrl=ok)

<sup>65</sup> Kim Chŏng-hi, "sŏdok 21," *Wandang Chŏnjip* 3.  
[http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc\\_mk\\_h011&gunchaId=av003&munchelId=01&finId=021&NodeId=&setid=261495&Pos=37&TotalCount=55&searchUrl=ok](http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=MK&url=/itkcdb/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=MK&seojiId=kc_mk_h011&gunchaId=av003&munchelId=01&finId=021&NodeId=&setid=261495&Pos=37&TotalCount=55&searchUrl=ok)



literature.<sup>66</sup> He was close to several monks, exchanging letters with them. He even debated with the monk Paekp'a on some issues of Sŏn as will be explained in chapter five. Here, I just would like to mention that Kim was critical of *kanhwa* Sŏn meditation. Kim pointed out that the technique began in Song China and had no direct relation to the Buddha Śākyamuni. He, then, expressed his serious doubts about the efficacy of *kanhwa* Sŏn, and asserted that a practitioner should abandon the technique in order to attain Buddhist truth.<sup>67</sup>

A favorable atmosphere for Buddhism existed in late Chosŏn yangban community. Many yangban literati were huge donors to several large scale reconstruction projects of monasteries and had close tie with Buddhist monks. Some even pursued their interest in Buddhism by reading various Buddhist texts and gained extensive knowledge of Buddhist theories and practices. This atmosphere toward Buddhism in the yangban community led to the revival of Buddhism in interaction with Confucianism in the latter half of Chosŏn.

## 2. Developmnet of Buddhism in Late Chosŏn

### 1) Buddhist accommodation to Confucian ethics.

Buddhism, which had been criticized by Confucians since the beginning of the dynasty for its apparent lack of political loyalty and filial piety, changed the yangban attitude toward the religion by accommodating itself to Confucian ethics during the latter half of Chosŏn. One primary example is its active participation in opposing the two foreign invasions by the Japanese and the Manchurian, in which the Buddhist monks formed a militia to defend the state. During

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<sup>66</sup> For details of Kim Chŏng-hŭi's interest in Buddhism, see Kŭm 2008.

<sup>67</sup> Kim Chŏng-hi, "Yŏ Paekp'a 1," *Minjok munhwa ch'ujin hoe* 1988: 155; for the original text in literary Chinese, see *ibid.*, 57b04-06.

the Japanese invasions (1592-1598), the first massive foreign invasions of the Chosŏn dynasty, Hyujŏng lineage monks led the monk military movement. Hyujŏng himself organized monk's militias with his disciples such as, Ŭiŏm 義嚴 (fl. 16<sup>th</sup> century), Yujŏng 惟政 (1544-1610), and Ch'ŏyŏng 處英 (fl. 16<sup>th</sup> century) in Hwanghae, Kangwŏn, and Chŏlla provinces. Yujŏng, in particular, contributed to recapturing P'yŏngyang, and even went to Japan as an emissary of King Sŏnjo (r. 1567-1608) to negotiate the release of Korean hostages after the invasions.<sup>68</sup>

Other Hyujŏng lineage monks such as Ch'ŏngmae Ino 青梅印悟 (1548-1623), Kiam Pŏpkyŏn 奇巖法堅 (1552-1634), and Chunggwan Haean 中觀海眼 (b. 1567) also led the monk's militia and participated in the battle themselves. During the two Manchu invasions in 1627 and 1636, the monk's militia also participated in the battles. Hŏbaek Myŏngjo 虛白明照 (1593-1661) led the militia to participate in defending Anju, Pyŏngan province in the first invasion, and took charge in logistics in the second. Pyŏgam Kaksŏng 碧巖覺性 (1575-1660) also organized the militia in the southern part of the peninsula during the second invasion.<sup>69</sup>

After the first large-scale foreign invasions, the Chosŏn court decided to utilize the labor power of the monks for the practical needs of state defense. The forts in Tongnae (present Pusan) and Kanghwa Island, two important military posts, and the royal palace were built or rebuilt in the seventeenth century mostly with the labor of Buddhist monks. The monks were also mobilized to build the Namhan mountain fort in 1626 and the Pukhan mountain fort in 1711. The monk's militia was stationed within these two forts for the defense of the capital.<sup>70</sup> The

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<sup>68</sup> Kang Hyŏng-gwang 2010: 45-66 and 71-74; Kim Sŭng-dong 1988: 175.

<sup>69</sup> U Chŏng-sang 1959: 577-595.

<sup>70</sup> Pak Yong-suk 1981: 124-132 and Yun Yong-ch'ul 1984: 457-463.

court established a system to command the monk's militia within the two forts and control the monks throughout the country.<sup>71</sup>

The Buddhist contribution to state defense was appreciated by the court. The leaders of the monk's militia were granted governmental positions and posthumous honors for their valor during the invasions.<sup>72</sup> In particular, Hyujöng and Yujöng, two of the most famous monk militia leaders, were enshrined in the three temples with official rituals, first at P'yoch'ungsa 表忠寺 at Miryang, Kyöngsang province in 1738, next at Taehüngsa 大興寺 at Haenam, Chölla province in 1788, and finally at Pohyönsa 普賢寺 at Yöngbyön, P'yöngan province in 1794.<sup>73</sup> Besides, many monks who served on the governmental construction projects were granted legitimate social status as a monk by being awarded monk-certificates.<sup>74</sup>

In addition to these direct activities for state defense, Chosön Buddhists arduously adjusted the religion to Confucian social ethics, such as loyalty and filial piety. They held several ceremonies and rituals to pray for the welfare of the royal family and for state protection, as well as for the salvation of the dead during the foreign invasions.<sup>75</sup> Many monks even compromised some Buddhist doctrines to the Confucian ethics of the ruling class. For example, Muyong Suyön 無用秀演 (1651-1719) asserted that one would be reborn with a golden body in

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<sup>71</sup> For details of the origin and application of this system, see Yö Ün-gyöng 1987: 51-85.

<sup>72</sup> Kang Hyöng-gwang 2010: 60-62.

<sup>73</sup> Chang Tong-p'yo 2000: 148.

<sup>74</sup> The regulation for a monk-certificate in the *Kyöngguk taejön* was abolished in the reign of Chungjong in 1516. It was temporarily revived in 1550 and abolished again in 1566 during the reign of Myöngjong. For details, see Hwang In-gyu 2004: 291-298.

<sup>75</sup> The writings of the renowned monks of the time such as Kiam Pöpyön 奇巖法堅 (1552-1634), Wölchö Toan 月渚道安 (1638-1715), Söram Ch'ubung 雪巖秋鵬 (1651-1706), and Wörha Kyeo 月荷戒悟 (1773-1849) record the prayers for these rituals. For details, see Nam Hüi-suk 2004: 97-112.

the highest place of Pure Land if he sought the Pure Land by practicing loyalty to the court and filial piety to their parents.<sup>76</sup> Yongdam Chogwan 龍潭慥冠 (1700-1763) also emphasized the importance of filial piety, arguing that one could not achieve the Buddhist Way without practicing filial piety.<sup>77</sup>

Buddhist promotion of Confucian ethics, along with its contributions to state defense, not just earned the religion legitimate status in Confucian society, but also encouraged a favorable attitude of the ruling class as a whole toward Buddhism. There was an incident during the reign of King Hyōnjong (r. 1659-1674), which reflected the changed social and political status of Buddhism during this period. Hyōnjong, the eighteenth king of the dynasty, solely took anti-Buddhist measures during the latter half of Chosŏn. Shortly after assuming the throne, in 1660, the king banned commoners from becoming Buddhist clerics and closed the two Buddhist nunneries Insuwŏn 仁壽院 and Chasuwŏn 慈壽院 in the capital. He adopted even stronger anti-Buddhist measures in 1663, confiscating the land and slaves of many monasteries throughout the country.<sup>78</sup> In reaction to the king's anti-Buddhist policy, Paekkok Ch'ŏnŭng 白谷處能 (1617-1680) submitted a memorial to the throne, which was called "Kanp'yesŏkkyoso" 諫廢釋教疏. What is interesting in Paekkok's rather lengthy memorial is that he took a few examples of Chinese emperors who promoted or persecuted Buddhism, and pointed out that pro-Buddhist emperors were later praised as sage rulers while the anti-Buddhist ones suffered ignominious fates. Although this memorial rhetorically attributed Hyōnjong's

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<sup>76</sup> "Kich'oe chŏngŏn sŏ," *Muyongdang chip* 2: HPC 9, 351c02-04; re-quoted from Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏn hoe 1998, *Han'guksa* 35: 143.

<sup>77</sup> Chŭngsamdut'aji kwi, *Yongdam chip*: HPC 9, 683a21; re-quoted from Kim Yong-t'ae 2008: 48.

<sup>78</sup> O Kyŏng-hu 2007: 328-336.

anti-Buddhist measures to disloyal vassals, it was almost a direct attack or even a threat to the throne.<sup>79</sup> During the Chosŏn dynasty, such memorials often led a submitter, regardless of his background, to lose his governmental position, be sent into exile, or even put to death. However, Paekkok did not face such fates. Instead, he was appointed the commander (*toch'ongsŏp* 都摠攝) of the Namhan Mountain fort in 1674.<sup>80</sup> Although it is not sure if he was influenced by Paekkok's memorial, Hyŏnjong did not continue with his anti-Buddhist measures. The king even reconstructed the monastery of Pongguksa 奉國寺 and had the monks perform the funerary ritual for his two deceased princesses in 1674.<sup>81</sup>

Buddhism firmly established itself as a legitimate member in Chosŏn society through its efforts to embrace Confucian ethics. Although the religion was still branded as heterodox, it was hardly persecuted. Buddhism during the latter half of Chosŏn rather enjoyed the support of the royal family and the prominent yangban families. Through such a renewed position in the society, Buddhism was able to engage actively with Confucianism.

## 2) Life of renowned Buddhist monks: the cases of Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn and Ch'ŏi Ŭisun

Many Buddhist monks and yangban literati had close relationships throughout the latter half of Chosŏn. They exchanged letters and poems, and often formed poetry societies, meeting at scenic sites, temples, or yangbans' mansions. Even high-ranking bureaucrats or renowned Noron scholars were members of those societies. As examples of the yangban-monk

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<sup>79</sup> For the details of the memorial, see Kim Ki-yŏng 2003: 183-222; the memorial was submitted in 1661 (Kim Sun-sŏk 2002: 82).

<sup>80</sup> Nam Hŭi-su 2006: 24-25.

<sup>81</sup> O Kyŏng-hu 2007: 349-350.

interactions, here I explore the life of Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn 白坡亘璇 (1767-1852) and Ch'ouï Ŭisun 艸衣意恂 (1786-1866). These two Buddhist monks lived in the conservative society of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, during which the voice of *wijŏng ch'ŏksa* (protecting the [Cheng-zhu] orthodoxy and rejecting the evil [teachings] 衛正斥邪) became larger.

Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn was born to a local yangban family in Koch'ang, Chŏlla province.<sup>82</sup> He was an eleventh generation descendent of King Sŏnjo's father Tŏkhŭng taewŏn'gun 德興大院君 (1530-1559). In 1783 when he was seventeen, Paekp'a went to Sŏnunsa 禪雲寺, a monastery near his hometown, to study for civil service exam at his father's advice. He became a novice monk the next year, believing that following Buddhism would be a greater practice of filial piety. In 1790, he received full ordination from Sŏlp'a Sangŏn 雪坡尙彦 (1707-1791), a fifth-generation master succeeding P'yŏnyang Ŏngi 鞭羊彦機 (1581-1644), one of Hyujŏng's disciples, and studied Hwaŏm philosophy. Paekp'a gave his first public doctrinal lecture in 1792 and continued his lecture activities for the next twenty-three years. In 1815, he began to practice Sŏn meditation, while wandering around the country. In 1822, he formed the Society of Cultivating Sŏn practice at Paegyangsa 白羊寺, Chŏlla province. In 1830, he moved to Sunch'ang in the same province and established the Society of Cultivating Sŏn and Kyo. In 1840, Paekp'a returned to Paegyangsa to stay for the rest of his life. He wrote several

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<sup>82</sup> Paekp'a's biography is recorded in the *Sorim t'ongbang chŏngan* 少林通方正眼, compiled by Ponggi 奉琪 (1824-1889), one of his students (HPC 10, 651c15-653a15) and the *Tongsa yŏlchŏn* 4 by Pŏmhae Kagan 梵海覺岸 (1820-1894) (HPC 10, 1033b15-1034a05). For modern scholarship of his biography, see Yu Sun-baek 2005: 16-24 and Kim Pyŏng-hak 2008: 18-24.

writings such as the *Sŏnmun sugyŏng* 禪文手鏡, the *Susŏn kyŏlsamun* 修禪結社文, and the *Sŏnmun yŏmsongjip sagi* 門拈頌集私記.

Paekp'a had a close tie with several renowned yangban literati such as Hong Kyŏng-mo 洪敬謨 (1774-1851), Kim Cho-sun, Kim Chwa-gŭn, and Ki Chŏng-jin 奇正鎭 (1798-1879). Kim Cho-sun, as mentioned before, was the patriarch of the Andong Kim consort clan that dominated the late Chosŏn court politics. Kim composed the preface to Paekp'a's *Susŏn kyŏlsamun*, showing his familiarity with Sŏn Buddhist literature. His son Kim Chwa-gŭn made donations to carve the woodblocks of the *Susŏn kyŏlsamun* at the request of one of Paekp'a's disciples.<sup>83</sup> Ki Chŏng-jin, who represented the movement of *wijŏng ch'ŏksa*, wrote the *Hwajangdae sorimgul sŏn'gyo kyŏlsahoe ki* 華藏臺少林窟禪教結社會記, a record of Paekp'a's Society of Sŏn and Kyo at Sunch'ang, Chŏlla province.<sup>84</sup> Besides these literati, Paekp'a also exchanged the letters with Kim Chŏng-hi. In 1843, Kim sent letters to Paekp'a, which criticized the *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, and wrote the epitaph for Paekp'a after his death in 1852.

Ch'ŏi Ŭisun was born in Muan, Chŏlla province.<sup>85</sup> Little is known of his family except the fact that his secular surname was Chang 張. He was tonsured at Unhŭngsa 雲興寺, Naju of the same province in 1800. After having a spiritual breakthrough in 1804, Ch'ŏi went to Taehŭngsa 大興寺, Haenam, Chŏlla province, to receive a full ordination from Wanho Yunu (1758-1826), a seventh generation master succeeding Ŏn'gi. For the next few years, staying at

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<sup>83</sup> *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun*, HPC 10, 548b03-05.

<sup>84</sup> *Sorim t'ongban chŏngan* HPC 10, 626b17-627a4

<sup>85</sup> The *Tongsa yŏlchŏn* 4 (HPC 10, 1039a15-b12) and Sin Hŏn's 申櫨 (1810-1888) *Ch'ŏi taejongsa t'appimyŏng* 草依大宗師塔碑銘 (HPC 10, 869b05-870b01) record Ch'ŏi's biography; for modern scholarship of his biography, see Kim Pyŏng-hak 2008: 58-65 and Lee Young Ho 2002: 34-81.

Taehŭngsa, he studied Buddhist scriptures as well as Siddham scripts and Korean traditional Buddhist painting *t'anghwa* 幀畫. In 1809, he met the renowned Namin literocrat Chŏng Yag-yong, who was in exile in Kangjin, and studied the Confucian classics from Chŏng. In 1824, Ch'oŭi built a hermitage named "Ilchiam" 一枝庵 near Taehŭngsa, and resided there for the rest of his life. He often travelled around the country, seeing many yangban and monk acquaintances. He even went to Cheju Island, southwest of Chŏlla province, to see Kim Chŏng-hi, who lived there in exile from 1840 to 1848, and stayed on the island with Kim for about six months.<sup>86</sup> Ch'oŭi was famous among fellow monks and yangban literati for his knowledge of tea, even writing in 1837 the *Tongda song* 東茶頌, the verses in praise of Korean Tea, at the request of King Chŏngjo's son-in-law Hong Hyŏn-ju 洪顯周 (1793-1865).<sup>87</sup> Ch'oŭi composed several works such as the *Sŏnmun sabyŏn manŏ* 禪門四辨漫語, the *Ch'oŭi sŏn'gwa* 草衣禪課, and the *Tasin chŏn* 茶神典.

Ch'oŭi had extensive relationships with the yangban literati, exchanging letters and verses with them and having frequent poetry-meetings. Among these literati were central bureaucrats such as Kwŏn Ton-in 權敦仁 (1783-1859) and Hong Sŏk-chu, as well as local magistrates such as Sin T'ae-hŭi 申泰熙 (fl. 19<sup>th</sup> century) and Yi Wŏn-jo 李源祚 (1792-1872). Hong Hyŏn-ju and Chŏng Yag-yong's son Chŏng Hag-yŏn 丁學淵 (1783-1859) also participated in some of Ch'oŭi's poetry meetings, along with other literati.<sup>88</sup> Many of these

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<sup>86</sup> Lee Young Ho 2002: 44.

<sup>87</sup> Kowŏl Yongun 2010: 11.

<sup>88</sup> Ch'oŭi's literary collection records a number of letters and verses that he exchanged with the yangban literati.



literati were versed at Buddhist literature, having their own insights into Buddhism. For example, Sin Wi 申緯 (1769-1845), a renowned literocrat, discussed the origin of April Eighth in the lunar calendar as Śākyamuni's birthdate, and identified the act of composing verses with the practice of cultivating Sōn in his letters to Ch'ōi.<sup>89</sup>

As the lives of these two masters show, Buddhist monks and yangban literati had close relationships, regardless of the social milieu of the time and yangbans' personal political or ideological positions. Through these relationships, Buddhism received not only financial but also ideological support from Confucians. These active interactions between the two religions allowed Buddhism to thrive in the latter half of Chosŏn.

### 3) Development of Buddhism

#### (1) Doctrinal lectures.

The latter half of Chosŏn witnessed the revival of doctrinal studies, which lost its vitality in the first half of the dynasty because of the court's anti-Buddhist policies. In the earlier period of Chosŏn, the Kyo school, which was built around the capital and the major cities of Korea, took serious blows from the surging Neo-Confucian attack against Buddhism.<sup>90</sup> Although some monks still identified themselves as Kyo-affiliated, as shown in Hyujŏng's *Sŏn'ga kwigam* 禪家龜鑑, there were few known Kyo monks as doctrinal studies decreased.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Yi Chong-ch'an 2010: 203 and 232

<sup>90</sup> Kuksa py'ŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe

<sup>91</sup> Yujŏng's postface for the *Sŏn'ga kwigam* indicated the presence of Kyo monks of this time. HWP 7, 646a16-19.

The Kyo-related activities revived again in the latter half of Chosŏn with the heightened social status of Buddhism. In particular, the doctrinal lectures on Hwaŏm philosophy were booming. The descendents of Hyujŏng and his dharma brother Puhyu Sŏnsu 浮休善修 (1543-1615) led this trend.<sup>92</sup> Hyujŏng lineage monks such as P'ungdam Ŭisim 楓潭義謙 (1592-1665), Sangbong Chŏngwŏn 霜峯淨源 (1627-1709), Wŏlchŏ Toan 月渚道安 (1638-1715), Hwansŏng Chian 喚醒志安 (1664-1729), and Sŏram Ch'ubung 雪巖秋鵬 (1651-1706) all became famous for their Hwaŏm lectures. The lineage's next generation masters such as Sangwŏl Saebong 霜月璽封 (1687-1767), Sŏlp'a Sangŏn 雪坡尙彦 (1707-1791), Yŏndam Yuil 蓮潭有一 (1720-1799), and Inak Ŭich'ŏm 仁嶽義沾 (1746-1796) held several large-scale lecture meetings. In particular, Sangwŏl Saebong and Hwansŏng Chian held meetings in which more than 1,000 Buddhists attended to listen to their doctrinal lectures.<sup>93</sup> Yŏndam Yuil even traveled around the country, giving lectures for more than thirty years. He also composed the *Hwaŏm sagi* 華嚴私記, a brief compendium of Qingliang Chengguan's 清涼澄觀 (738–839) *Dafangguang fo huayan jing shou yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔 (hereafter *Yanyi chao*), and debated with Mugam Ch'oenu 默庵最訥 (1717-1790) on the issue of the mind-nature.<sup>94</sup> Puhyu's descendants, such as Paegam Sŏngch'ong 栢庵性聰 (1631-1700), Hoeam Chŏnghye 晦庵定慧 (1685-1741), and Mugam Ch'oenu, were also famous as great lecturers on Buddhist doctrine. Hoeam Chŏnghye lectured on the *Hwaŏm Sūtra* several times

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<sup>92</sup> Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏn hoe 1998, *Han'guksa* 35: 132-136.

<sup>93</sup> Kim Ch'ang-suk 1999: 79-81

<sup>94</sup> Yŏndam argued that the Buddha and sentient beings have the same mind while Mugam argued that Buddha's mind is different from that of sentient beings. For details, see Kim Yong-t'ae 2009: 421-428.

and composed the *Hwaŏmgyŏng so ũngwa* 華嚴經疏隱科, an introduction to Chengguan's *Yanyi chao*. Paegam Sŏngch'ong published hundreds of Buddhist texts regarding Sŏn and Hwaŏm. He also held a large-scale meeting to discuss Hwaŏm philosophy in 1692.<sup>95</sup> With the emergence of these great lecturers and frequent lecture meetings, Chosŏn Buddhists' interest in doctrine was rejuvenated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

As Kim Yong-t'ae points out, this booming of doctrinal lectures had an impact even on dharma transmission. The Chosŏn monks of the time came to divide their lineages in terms of Sŏn and Kyo. For example, Hwaak Chit'ak's 華嶽知濯 (1750-1839) literary collection *Sambong chip* 三峰集 records the names of Hwaak's disciples according to these two strands: disciples who received Sŏn (*susŏn* 受禪) and Kyo (*subŏp* 受法). Hwadam Kyŏnghwa's 華潭敬和 (1786-1848) biographical record also follows this practice. T'aehŏ Nambung 太虛南鵬 (fl. 18<sup>th</sup> century) even argued that Yujŏng's lineage was Kyo while Ŏn'gi's was Sŏn.<sup>96</sup> According to Kim, Nambung's statement reflects the popularity of Kyo studies during the latter half of Chosŏn, enhancing Kyo to the same level as Sŏn by labeling the lineage of Hyujŏng's successor Yujŏng as a Kyo line, even though there was no historical basis for this placement.<sup>97</sup>

## (2) Publication of monks' literary collections

Another trend in Buddhism during the latter half of Chosŏn was the increase in publication of monks' literary collections. Monks of the time produced many writings: they

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<sup>95</sup> Kim Yong-t'ae 2008: 159-161

<sup>96</sup> *Sambong chip* 三峯集, HPC 10, 481a23-b08 and 485a04-11; T'ongdosa sŏlsongdang taesa pimyŏng 通度寺雪松堂大師碑銘, *Han 'guk kosŭng pimun ch'ongjip* 258-259: cited from Kim Yong-t'ae 2008: 143-144.

<sup>97</sup> Yujŏng not only studied Buddhist doctrines but also received Sŏn training from Hyujŏng.

composed theoretical treatises and commentaries and exchanged letters and poems with the yangban literati. These writings were collected and published by their disciples. Consequently, the literary collections of the monks, hardly found in the first half of the dynasty, drastically increased especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>98</sup> There were a few extant literary collections of such monks as Hōbaek Myōngjo 虛白明照 (1593-1661), Paekkok Ch'ōnūng 白谷處能 (1619-1680), and Paegam Sōngch'ong 栢庵性聰 (1631-1700) in the seventeenth century; and about forty extant collections in the eighteenth century (See Chart 1). Many of the writings recorded in these collections are poems, which were mostly composed in communication with the literati, confirming the increased interaction between Confucian literati and Buddhist monks of this time.<sup>99</sup>

Table 1. Monks' literary collections in the eighteenth century<sup>100</sup>

Monk	Collection title	# of poem	# of others
Wōlchō Toan 月渚道安 1638-1715	<i>Wōlchōdang taesajip</i> 月渚堂大師集	257	48
P'unggye Myōngch'al 楓溪明察 1640-1708	<i>P'unggyejip</i> 楓溪集	137	25
Sōksil Myōngan 石室明眼 1646-1710	<i>Paegu sup'il</i> 百愚隨筆	8	9
Sōram Ch'ubung 雪巖秋鵬 1651-1706	<i>Sōram chapchō</i> 雪巖雜著	806	79
	<i>Sōram nan'go</i> 雪巖亂藁	132	0
Muyong Suyōn 無用秀演 1651-1719	<i>Muyongdang yugo</i> 無用堂遺稿	78	44
Hwansōng Chian 喚惺志安 1664-1729	<i>Hwansōng sijip</i> 喚惺詩集	144	0

<sup>98</sup> Kuksa p'yōnch'an wiwōn hoe 1998, Han'guksa 35: 136-145.

<sup>99</sup> Chōng Pyōng-sam 2007: 95-96.

<sup>100</sup> Chōng Pyōng-sam 2007: 96-98.

Mugyǒng Chasu 無竟子秀 1664-173	<i>Mugyǒngjip</i> 無竟集	219	88
	<i>Mugyǒngsilchung ōrok</i> 無竟室中語錄	226	11
Yǒnghae Yakt'an 影海若坦 1668-1754	<i>Yǒnghaedaesa sijipch'o</i> 影海大師詩集抄	100	0
Hǒjǒng Pǒpchǒng 虛靜法宗 1670-1733	<i>Hǒjǒngjip</i> 虛靜集	283	31
Namak T'aeu 南岳泰宇 d. 1732	<i>Namakchip</i> 南岳集	65	5
Songgye Nasik 松桂懶湜 1684-1765	<i>Songgye taesǒnsa munjip</i> 松桂大禪師文集	163	15
Sangwǒl Saebong 霜月璽筭 1687-1767	<i>Sangwǒl taesa sijip</i> 霜月大師詩集	44	0
Hamwǒl Haewǒn 涵月海源 1691-1770	<i>Ch'ǒn'gyǒngjip</i> 天鏡集	217	44
Wǒlp'a T'aeuyl 月波兌律 b. 1695	<i>Wǒlp'ajip</i> 月波集	164	1
Yongdam Chogwan 龍潭慥冠 1700-1762	<i>Yongdamjip</i> 龍潭集	199	5
Hoŭn Yugi 好隱有璣 1707-1785	<i>Hoŭnjip</i> 好隱集	44	64
Sǒltam Chau 雪潭自優 1709-1770	<i>Sǒltamjip</i> 雪潭集	47	33
Yaun Sisǒng 野雲時聖 1710-1776	<i>Yaun taesǒnsa munjip</i> 野雲大禪師文集	30	11
Oam Ŭimin 鰲岩毅旻 1710-1792	<i>Oamjip</i> 鰲岩集	272	15
Yongam Ch'ejo 龍巖體照 1717-1779	<i>Yongamdang yugo</i> 龍巖堂遺稿	74	4
Taewǒn 大圓 b. 1714	<i>Taewǒnjip</i> 大圓集	115	10
Mugam Ch'oenu 默菴最訥 1717-1790	<i>Mugamjip</i> 默菴集	94	34
Ch'up'a Hongyu 秋波泓宥 1718-1774	<i>Ch'up'ajip</i> 秋波集	32	67
	<i>Ch'up'a sugan</i> 秋波手束	0	91
Yǒndam Yuil 蓮潭有一 1720-1799	<i>Imharok</i> 林下錄	305	88
Chinhǒ P'alguan 振虛捌關 d. cir. 1769	<i>Chinhǒjip</i> 振虛集	87	8
Wǒlsǒng Piŭn 月城費隱 d. 1778	<i>Wǒlsǒngjip</i> 月城集	61	19

Kwalhō Ch'wiyō 括虛取如 1720-1789	<i>Kwarhōjip</i> 括虛集	123	30
Ch'unghō Chich'aek 沖虛指冊 1721-1809	<i>Ch'unghō taesa yujip</i> 沖虛大師遺集	1	58
Mongam Kiyōng 蒙庵箕穎	<i>Mongam taesa munjip</i> 蒙庵大師文集	83	64
Kyōngam Ŭngyun 鏡巖應允 1743-1804	<i>Kyōngamjip</i> 鏡巖集	74	70
Inak Ŭkch'ōm 仁嶽義沾 1746-1796	<i>Inakchip</i> 仁嶽集	72	62
Hwaak Chit'ak 華嶽知濯 1750-1839	<i>Sambongjip</i> 三峰集	58	38
Chūngwōl Chōnghun 澄月正訓 1751-1823	<i>Chūngwōl taesa sijip</i> 澄月大師詩集	172	4

### (3) Establishment of the Sōn orthodox lineage

Sōn Buddhism in the latter half of Chosōn restored its lineage.<sup>101</sup> The Chosōn Sōn lineage was interrupted during the reigns of the Yōnsan'gun (r. 1494-1506) and King Chungjong (r. 1506-1544), when the court's anti-Buddhist measures were most severe. There was no historical record showing any Sōn transmission during this time. Even Hyujōng, who revived the Korean Buddhist tradition, did not recount his entire lineage. He just mentioned the dharma ancestors two generations prior to him (Pyōksong Chiōm and Puyong Yōnggwan in descending order).<sup>102</sup>

After the Japanese invasions of the 1590s, a complete lineage of the Korean Sōn tradition was first presented. The renowned literatus Hō Kyun 許筠 (1569-1618), who was close to Yujōng, composed the preface to his *Ch'ōnghōdang chip* 清虛堂集 as well as epitaphs for Yujōng in 1612 at the request of Yujōng's disciples. Hō recorded the complete Sōn lineages

<sup>101</sup> Sōn Buddhist restoration of its lineage was probably influenced by the Neo-Confucian idea of “*tot'ong*” (transmission of the orthodox way 道統), popular around this time.

<sup>102</sup> With regard to his dharma lineage, Hyujōng wrote the *Samno haengjōk* 三老行蹟 in which he records the biographies of Pyōksong and Puyong. See HPC 7, 752b07-755c21.

of Hyujöng and his disciple Yujöng for the first time in these two writings, though the lineages he presented were different from each other as follows:

In the preface to the *Ch'önghödang chip*:

Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904-976) → Tobong Yöngso 道峰靈炤 (d. 974) → Tojang Sinböm 道藏神範 → Ch'öngnyang Toguk 清涼道國 → Yongmun Ch'önün 龍門天隱 → P'yöngsan Sungsin 平山崇信 → Myohyang Hoehae 妙香懷滢 → Hyön'gam Kakcho 玄鑑覺照 → Turyu Sinsu 頭流信修 → Poje Naong 普濟懶翁 (1320-1376) → Nambong Sunüng 南峰修能 → Tünggye Chöngsim 登階正心 → Pyöksong Chiöm 碧松智嚴 (1464-1534) → Puyong Yönggwan 芙蓉靈觀 (1485-1571) → Ch'öhö Hyujöng 清虛休靜 (1520-1604).<sup>103</sup>

In the epitaph for Samyöng:

Pojo Chinul – Poje Naong – Puyong Yönggwan → Ch'öhö Hyujöng → Samyöng Yujöng.<sup>104</sup>

Hö's lineage charts lack any historical grounding. In particular, among the Korean Sön masters listed before Tünggye Chöngsim in these lineage charts, only the three Sön masters Tobong Yöngso, Pojo Chinul, and Naong Hyegün are proven to be historical figures. No records verify the historicity of the other Sön masters.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, according to the first chart, Hyujöng's lineage should belong to the Fayan (K. Pöban) school. However, Hyujöng himself regarded his lineage as the Linji (K. Imje) lineage.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>103</sup> *Ch'öhödang chipsö* HPC 7, 659c19-660a11.

<sup>104</sup> *Samyöng songun taesa sökchang pimiyöng* HPC 8, 75b11-17.

<sup>105</sup> For details of Hö Kyun's lineage charts, see Kim Sang-hyön 1998: 735-747 and Pak Hae-dang 2000.

<sup>106</sup> *Samno haengjöck*, HPC 752c02-753a06.

In reaction to such porous lineage charts, P'yŏnyang On'gi suggested a new lineage, which established T'aego Pou as the founder of the Korean Sŏn lineage. P'yŏnyang recorded his master's lineage in *Pongnaesan unsuam chongbongyŏngdang ki* 蓬萊山雲水庵鍾峰影堂記 of 1625 as follows:

The master T'aego of our East [Korea] went to Mt. Xiawu in China and received the Dharma from Shiwu. He [T'aego] transmitted it to Hwanam. Hwanam transmitted it to So'on. So'on transmitted it to Chŏngsim. Chŏngsim transmitted it to Pyŏksong. Pyŏksong transmitted it to Puyong. Puyong transmitted it to Tŭnggye [Hyujŏng]. Tŭnggye transmitted it to Chongbong [Yujŏng].<sup>107</sup>

吾東方太古和尚 入中國霞霧山 嗣石屋而傳之幻庵 幻庵傳之小穩 小穩傳之正心 正心傳之碧松 碧松傳之芙蓉 芙蓉傳之登階 登階傳之鍾峯焉。

P'yŏnyang presented this Sŏn line because he intended to define his lineage as the Linji tradition just as his master Hyujŏng had proclaimed. However, P'yŏnyang's lineage chart has the same problem as Hŏ's. There is no historical evidence supporting this lineage. Despite the historical problems, this so-called "T'aego lineage" was established as orthodox by Hyujŏng's disciples in the seventeenth century.<sup>108</sup>

The T'aego lineage theory, however, has another serious problem, in particular, regarding the Korean Sŏn tradition as a whole: it simply rejects the Korean Sŏn tradition that developed before the time of T'aego. This theory, as mentioned above, connected Chosŏn Sŏn directly to the Chinese Linji (K. Imje) lineage through T'aego Pou, who had received Dharma transmission from Shiwu Qinggong 石屋清珙 (1272-1352), a Yuan Chinese Linji master. As this theory represented the orthodox line, such monks as Pojo Chinul lost their place in the Korean Sŏn lineage. For example, the eighteenth century Sŏn master Saam Ch'aeyŏng 獅巖采永 (fl. 18<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> *P'yŏnyangdang chip* 2 HPC 8, 253c08-12; cited in Kim Sang-hyŏn 1998:748-749.

<sup>108</sup> Kim Sang-hyŏn 1998: 760-765.



century), in his *Pulcho wöllyu* 佛祖源流 of 1764, the first comprehensive lineage text in Chosŏn, promoted T'aego as the first patriarch of the Korean orthodox Sŏn lineage, and Hyujŏng as the sixth generation of that lineage.<sup>109</sup> Saam, then, designated all Korean Sŏn masters before T'aego Pou, including Chinul, as “scattered sages” (*sansong* 散聖) at the end of the text.<sup>110</sup> The Puhyu lineage master Sŏngch'ong, who praised Chinul's contribution to the Korean Sŏn tradition, also excluded Chinul from the Korean Sŏn lineage in his *Songgwangsa sawŏn sajŏk pi* 松廣寺嗣院事蹟碑 as follows:

Shiwu Qinggong became the eighteenth succession from Linji. T'aego Pou of the Koryŏ dynasty received transmission from Shiwu. Puhyu became the sixth from T'aego. This is the true eye of the Tathāgata. This is not a transmission from Mogu [Chinul].<sup>111</sup>

自臨濟十八傳而爲石屋清珙 麗朝太古普愚得珙之傳 又六傳而爲浮休 則此爲如來正眼 而非得於牧牛之傳者也。

The Chosŏn Sŏn Buddhists of this time restored their lineage by establishing this T'aego lineage as orthodox. With this lineage claim, Chosŏn Sŏn Buddhism genealogically defined itself as the Linji tradition.

### 3. Concluding Remarks

The colonialist view on Buddhism in the latter half of Chosŏn hinges on the premise that Chosŏn Buddhism was completely stopped from all interactions with the ruling literati class. According to this view, the Chosŏn court of the time continued its anti-Buddhist policies,

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<sup>109</sup> *Sŏyŏk Chunghwa haedong pulcho wŏllu* 西域中華海東佛祖源流, HPC 10, 101c13-104b08.

<sup>110</sup> HPC 10, 129a01-131a08.

<sup>111</sup> [http://gsm.nricp.go.kr/\\_third/user/viewer/viewer01.jsp?ksmno=1769](http://gsm.nricp.go.kr/_third/user/viewer/viewer01.jsp?ksmno=1769): re-quoted from Kim Yong-t'aeg 2008: 103.

initiated at the beginning of the dynasty, and persecuted Buddhism. The ruling yangban class, then, rejected Buddhism as heterodox, adhering to Cheng-Zhu ideology. Due to its total severance from financial support and philosophical stimulation, Buddhism thus decreased in size and ended up serving as mere psychological comfort for the lower classes, displaying little creativity and vitality.

As this chapter demonstrated, however, many ruling literati of the latter half of Chosŏn held favorable attitudes toward Buddhism. Political minorities or outsiders as well as central bureaucratic elites provided financial support for Buddhism, had a close relationship with Buddhist clerics, and pursued their interests in Buddhist philosophy. This yangban support for and interest in the religion, however, had nothing to do with the “intellectual openness and diversity,” supposedly created by the introduction of new ideologies, as some scholars argue. Although such alternative ideologies as Yangming learning, reform Confucianism, and Catholicism were allowed to some degree, they were sanctioned when they challenged Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy and its social order. These new ideologies, consequently, attracted only a small number of the yangban. Chosŏn in the latter half of the dynasty was a conservative society that was not so open to or tolerant of new ideologies. In this society, no one saved his bureaucratic positions or even his life when he was stigmatized as a follower of heterodox ideas. However, few were punished for their involvement in Buddhism. No one was politically discriminated against for making donations to Buddhist monasteries or having close relationships with the clerics. Although Buddhism was branded as heterodox throughout the Chosŏn period, it was never regarded as an enemy of the Confucian Way (*samun nanjŏk*) or evil teaching (*sagyo* 邪教). Buddhism was widely accepted among the ruling yangban literati class throughout the latter half of Chosŏn.

As literati, many yangban took an intellectual interest in Buddhism. They read Buddhist texts and discussed doctrine with the monks. Some obtained religious insight and even went further to express their conviction in their Buddhist insight by denouncing contemporary monks' understanding of Buddhist doctrine. In particular, they argued that the *kanhwa* Sŏn technique, the major practice of the Chosŏn Sŏn tradition of the time, would not lead to enlightenment, and suggested that their intellectual approach to Buddhism instead brought about the highest goal of Buddhism. This yangban approach, in fact, challenged the traditional Korean Sŏn Buddhist notion that intellectual activities such as reading scriptures and studying doctrine would hinder the goal. Chosŏn Buddhists, therefore, faced a challenge to embrace or deny this yangban intellectual approach to Buddhism. In response to this challenge, they developed unique theories regarding the relationship between Sŏn and doctrinal studies, as will be demonstrated in the following chapters. Buddhism in the latter half of Chosŏn was far from being torpid or dead as this chapter demonstrates. In fact, it thrived through active interaction with Confucianism.

## CHAPTER TWO. Chan (Sŏn) and Doctrinal Teachings (Jiao/ Kyo)

Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi attempted to resolve the issues that Korean Sŏn Buddhism faced in the social and religious context of the time by establishing Sŏn taxonomies that clarified the relationship between Sŏn (Chan) and Kyo (Jiao). This chapter explores the different positions on the relationship between these two forms of Buddhism which developed in Chan and Sŏn history in order to provide the background for understanding the two monks' attempts.<sup>112</sup>

There were three major positions on the issue of the relationship between Chan and doctrinal teachings in the history of Chan and Sŏn Buddhism: the “unity of Chan and Jiao” (C. *chanjiao yizhi* 禪教一致), the “separate transmission outside Jiao” (C. *jiaowai biechuan* 教外別傳), and “relinquishing Kyo (C. Jiao) and entering into Sŏn (C. Chan)” (K. *sagyō ipsŏn* 捨教入禪). The Heze (K. Hat'aek) school represented the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings. In particular, Zongmi 宗密 (780-841) systematized this position by explaining Chan from a doctrinal perspective. He also applied his taxonomy to both the Chan and doctrinal schools of his time to unify these two strands of Buddhism in terms of their teachings. His soteriological model of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation” embodied his vision of the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings.

The Linji (K. Imje) school advocated that Chan is a separate transmission outside the scriptural tradition as this school emerged as a dominant force on the Song Chan stage.

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<sup>112</sup> Each of these terms has some different yet related meanings. Chan/ Sŏn refers to meditation in general (as a transcription of the Sanskrit term *dhyāna*), meditation in the Chan/ Sŏn schools, and the Chan/ Sŏn school in general; Jiao/ Kyo refers to the scriptures, doctrinal studies, doctrinal teachings, and the doctrinal school in general. Most Chan/ Sŏn monks used each term without distinguishing one meaning from another. They rather used these terms, implying all their meanings. I will follow this usage except in cases where the term refers exclusively to one of its meanings.

Criticizing Zongmi's integrative Chan vision, the school upheld the radical Chan vision of independence. Linji partisans dismissed Zongmi's doctrinal Chan as wrong, and at the same time sought authority for their own Chan vision from the Buddha himself. They also developed the *kanhua* (K. *kanhwa*) meditational technique, which excluded doctrinal studies from Chan soteriology.

Korean Sōn Buddhism created the soteriological system of “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sōn.” This system, which developed during the Chosōn period, is based on Chinul's 知訥 (1158-1210) soteriology in the *Pōpchip pyōrhaengnok chōryo pyōngip sagi* 法集別行錄節要并私記 (Hereafter the *Chōryo*). He harmonized the two different soteriologies of the Heze and Linji school by integrating the Linji *kanhua* meditation into the Heze schema of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation.” Later, Hyujōng 休靜 (1520-1604) established the system of “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sōn” as the soteriology of his Sōn lineage in which a student would attain initial sudden enlightenment through doctrinal studies and then practice the *kanhwa* technique to reach the final perfect enlightenment. As Hujōng's descendents dominated the Sōn lineage in the latter half of the Chosōn dynasty, this Hat'aek based synthetic model became a dominant soteriology of Korean Sōn Buddhism.

This chapter examines these three positions on the issue of the Chan (Sōn) and Jiao (Kyo) relationship to understand Paekp'a and Ch'ōi's taxonomical attempts to resolve the social and religious issues of Chosōn Sōn Buddhism.

## 1. The Unity of Chan and Doctrinal Teachings: the Heze Approach to Chan

### 1) Background: The emergence of Chan and the development of doctrinal taxonomy

By the mid Tang period (618-907), both meditation and doctrinal studies were considered to be integral parts of Buddhist training. They did not have the sectarian connotations they acquired later. Although there existed certain Buddhists who were devoted exclusively to either meditative or doctrinal practices, as Chiyi 智顓 (538-597), the de facto founder of the Tiantai scholastic school, suggested, the dominant view was that these two practices could both contribute to the ultimate goal of enlightenment.<sup>113</sup>

The eminent monks of this early period held this view, which could be called the “unity of Chan and Jiao” (*chanjiao yizhi* 禪教一致). For example, Chiyi established a system into which the integrative relationship of meditational and doctrinal studies was embedded. Dushun 杜順 (557-640) and Zhiyan 智儼 (602-668), early masters in the Huayan scholastic school, also exemplified this balanced view, devoted as they were to the intensive meditation.<sup>114</sup> Shenxiu 神秀 (606-706), the founder of the so-called Northern school of Chan, unified the teachings of such scholastic traditions as the Tiantai, Huayan, and Faxiang schools from the Chan perspective, though he did not directly address the unity of meditation and doctrinal studies.<sup>115</sup> These early Chinese Buddhist masters all recognized Chan and Jiao as harmonious with, rather than opposed to, each other.

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<sup>113</sup> Faure 1997: 49.

<sup>114</sup> Gimello 1983: 149-164.

<sup>115</sup> Faure 1997: 48. For the relationship of Shenxiu’s thought to the doctrinal teachings of the time, see Faure 1997: 37-48; for the Huayan influence on the Northern Chan school, see Takamine 1956: 67-74.

As Chan emerged as a distinct religious movement in the early eighth century, a more radical view on the relationship between Chan and doctrinal teachings challenged this traditional view. Shenxiu's disciples, who advanced into the Tang capital of Chang'an, tried to establish their tradition as autonomous from the Faxiang and Huayan schools.<sup>116</sup> They produced Chan transmission records to serve this purpose. Especially in the *Chuan fabao ji* 傳法寶紀, the earliest extant Chan lineage text, compiled around 713, we can find some expressions of the embryonic idea of Chan's separation from Jiao, an idea that fully developed later in the Song period (960-1279).<sup>117</sup> The text questioned the validity of language as a way to explain reality and described the first Chan patriarch Bodhidharma as "abandoning words and departing from the scriptures and commentaries" (息其言語 離其經論).<sup>118</sup> This newly-formed image of Chan opposing the scriptural tradition was reinforced with the appearance of such phrases as "transmission of mind to mind" (*yixin chuanxin* 以心傳心) and "no-reliance on words and letters" (*buli wenzi* 不立文字).<sup>119</sup> This Chan tendency of disregarding the scriptural tradition inevitably triggered the conflict between Chan and doctrinal studies, which had since become a recurrent issue in the Chan/Sōn history.

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<sup>116</sup> For details about the early Chan movement, see McRae 1986 and Faure 1997.

<sup>117</sup> The traditional view on the Chan and Jiao relationship was also found in this early Chan movement. The *Lengia shizi ji* 楞伽師資記, another lineage text of the Northern school compiled around this period, describes Chan as harmonious with the scriptures. For details about the *Lengia shizi ji* and the *Chuan fabao ji*, see Yanagida 1971.

<sup>118</sup> Yanagida 1971: 337 and 408; the quotation is from *ibid.*, 415.

<sup>119</sup> According to Yanagida Seizan, among the earliest extant records of these two phrases are the *Xuemaï lun* 血脈論, composed sometime between the late eighth and early ninth centuries, and Zongmi's *Subcommentary to the Yuanjue jing* 圓覺經大疏鈔: Yanagida 1967: 470-471.

The fourth Huayan patriarch Chengguan 澄觀 (738-839), who had a close connection to the Chan schools of his time, was one of the first who attempted to resolve this tension.<sup>120</sup> To do so, he turned to a unique invention of the Chinese scholastic tradition: “taxonomy of teachings” (*panjiao* 判教). The *panjiao* system developed during the process of introducing Buddhism to China. Buddhism was not transmitted to China as a coherent philosophical system. A huge body of Buddhist texts was imported over several centuries, disconnected from their historical and doctrinal backgrounds. Most puzzling to the Chinese Buddhists were the diverse, even contradictory, ideas in what was believed to be the Buddha’s teachings. After centuries of trial and error, they eventually developed a system of taxonomy to address this issue. They organized all Buddhist teachings hierarchically in a comprehensive and coherent doctrinal framework; in this framework, the higher the teachings were ranked, the more consummate and perfect they were considered to be. Thus, this system often functioned as a way to justify the sectarian claims of different scholastic schools.<sup>121</sup>

Chengguan applied this *panjiao* system to harmonize Chan and doctrinal teachings. Rather than creating his own, however, he used his master Fazang’s five-fold taxonomy, in which five Buddhist teachings were hierarchically organized: the perfect teaching, the sudden teaching, the final teaching of the Great Vehicle, the initial teaching of the Great Vehicle, the teaching of the Small Vehicle, in descending order.<sup>122</sup> Chengguan identified Chan with the

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<sup>120</sup> For details of Zengguan’s connection to the Chan schools, see Yoshizu 1985: 13-64; Sō 2001: 94-126.

<sup>121</sup> For a general explanation of the doctrinal taxonomy, see Gregory 2002: 93-135; for the various taxonomical systems presented by early scholastic monks, see Mun 2006.

<sup>122</sup> Chengguan’s taxonomy is, in fact, almost identical with that of his master Fazang. For Fazang’s doctrinal taxonomy, see Mun 2006: 315-404.



sudden teaching, the second highest in Fazang's five-fold taxonomy, just below the perfect teaching of the Huayan school:

The sudden expression of the truth that transcends words is exclusively for those with a certain kind of mental capability . . . i.e., for those of the Chan school. The mind-to-mind transmission of Bodhidharma truly refers to this [sudden] teaching. . . . Relying on the wordlessness, they use words to directly express the truth that transcends words.<sup>123</sup>

頓詮言絕之理 別為一類之機. . .即順禪宗者 達磨以心傳心 正是斯教. . .寄無言以言直詮 絕言之理.

Although Chengguan unified Chan and doctrinal teachings by integrating Chan into a single doctrinal taxonomy, he placed Chan in a lower position than the teaching of the Huayan scholastic tradition. This subordination of Chan to Jiao led Chengguan's disciple Zongmi 宗密 (780-841) to seek a more complete unity of the two forms of Buddhism.

## 2) Zongmi's unification of Chan and doctrinal teachings

Zongmi, the fifth patriarch of both the Huayan scholastic and Heze Chan schools, could not accept his master Chengguan's position. Applying another taxonomy to both Chan and doctrinal teachings, Zongmi systematized the traditional view of the unity of Chan and Jiao. In doing so, he presented a new Chan definition that represented his integrative view.

### (1) Chan identified with Jiao

Zongmi regarded Chan as harmonious and identical with the doctrinal teachings. He proclaimed that Chan and doctrinal teachings were no different from each other because they derived from the same origin: "the scriptures are the Buddha's words and Chan is the Buddha's intention. All the Buddhas' minds and mouths can never be contradictory to each other"

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<sup>123</sup> *Dafangguangfo huayanjing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔 8, T1736.36.62a29-b03; the translation is with changes from Gregory 2002: 145.

(經是佛語 禪是佛意 諸佛心口 必不相違).”<sup>124</sup> According to Zongmi, this view was, in fact, Chan’s basic principle: both Chan and doctrinal teachings were implicit in the Chan lineage.<sup>125</sup> Zongmi said that such Indian patriarchs as Mahākāśyapa, Aśvaghōṣa, and Nāgārjuna were versed in the Buddhist canonical texts and even composed commentaries themselves; therefore, “[doctrinal] exegetes never disparaged Chan; Chan experts never disparaged [doctrinal] exegesis” (未有講者毀禪禪者毀講) in India.<sup>126</sup> Zongmi went further to say that Chan had been transmitted with the scriptures and commentaries in India.<sup>127</sup>

Zongmi argued that this principle of the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings had been lost in China, where people had not yet understood Buddhism and, therefore, become attached to the words of the scriptures and commentaries. According to him, Bodhidharma wanted to let them know “the moon was not in the finger [which pointed to it]” (月不在指).<sup>128</sup> Zongmi further explained that Bodhidharma had employed the phrases “transmission of mind to mind” and “no-reliance on words and letters” not to proclaim the Chan rejection of verbalization and conceptualization of mind but to urge the Chinese people to release their attachment to language.<sup>129</sup> Zongmi criticized Buddhists of his time, who did not know the origin of these phrases, for regarding Chan and doctrinal teachings as separate from each other: the doctrinal

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<sup>124</sup> *Chanyuan zhuquanji douxu* 禪源諸詮集都序 1, T2015.48.400b11.

<sup>125</sup> According to Albert Welter, Faru’s epitaph provides the earliest Chan record of an Indian transmission lineage. For the details of the development of the Chan transmission theories, see Welter 2006: 41-113.

<sup>126</sup> *Chanyuan zhuquanji douxu*, T2015.48.400b12-17.

<sup>127</sup> Kamata 1971: 141

<sup>128</sup> Kamata 1971: 44.

<sup>129</sup> *Chanyuan zhuquanji douxu* T2015.48.400b17-b21.

exegetes “did not know that cultivation and realization [which they explained] were indeed the original matters of Chan” (不知修證正是禪門之本事) while the Chan experts “did not know that the mind-Buddha [that they realized] was indeed the original intention of the scriptures and commentaries” (不知心佛正是經論之本意).<sup>130</sup>

Zongmi introduced a new Chan definition to remove such misunderstandings. He argued that the transmission of Chan in secret had ceased. According to him, from the first to the sixth patriarchs, Chan had been transmitted without explaining the essence of mind, which he designated as “awareness”: the patriarchs waited for their students to realize the essence themselves and granted his validation only after checking the students’ level of realization. However, the founder of the Heze school, Shenhui (神會 668-760), Zongmi argued, transformed Chan. According to Zongmi, Shenhui revealed the essence of mind for the first time in Chan history by saying, “The single word ‘awareness’ is the gate to all wonders” (知之一字眾妙之門).<sup>131</sup> Zongmi went further to say that Heze’s revelation even changed the Chan transmission: “Does Dharma-transmission of these days speak secret words? No. . . Only [the transmission of] old days were secret but [the transmission of] these days are revealed” (今時傳法者說密語否...但昔密而今顯).<sup>132</sup> Zongmi added that the previous “silent transmissions” (*mochuan* 默傳) had taken Bodhidharma’s robe as evidence of transmission while this new “revealed-transmission” (*xianchuan* 顯傳) took the Buddhist scriptures and

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., T2015.48.400b25 and b27.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., T2015.48.405b04-b15.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., T2015.48.405b20-b21.

commentaries as evidence.<sup>133</sup> For Zongmi, a kataphatic discourse of mind became a definite element of Chan. Furthermore, the Chan brand, which explained mind in conceptual terms, came to be recognized as the supreme Chan of all, as can be shown below.

## (2) Doctrinalization of Chan and *Panchan* (Taxonomy of Chan)

Zongmi presented a doctrinal explanation of the mind that had been transmitted from the Buddha to Shenhui. By doing so, he could apply taxonomy to both the Chan and doctrinal schools to promote the unity of the two.<sup>134</sup>

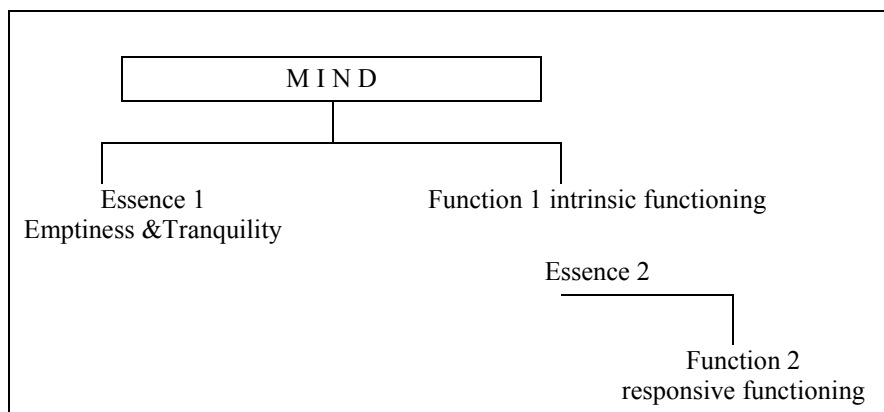
Zongmi explained the mind based on the teachings of the *Awakening of Faith In Mahāyāna* (大乘起信論), a Chinese apocryphal text. According to him, the mind had two aspects: immutability (*bubian* 不變) and conditionality (*suiyuan* 隨緣). The former corresponded to the “mind as suchness” in the *Awakening of Faith* and the latter corresponded to the “mind as birth-and-death.” Zongmi argued that these two aspects were neither one nor two; rather, they were two aspects of the same reality. He emphasized the inseparability of the two by applying Chinese terminology, such as essence (*ti* 體) and function (*yong* 用). Zongmi applied this pair of terms again to the category of the immutable essence. As a result, along with the empty and tranquil essence, he embraced two functions of the mind: the “intrinsic functioning of the self-nature” (*zixing benyong* 自性本用) and the “responsive functioning in accord with conditions” (*suiyuan yingyong* 隨緣應用). He called the former “awareness” (*zhi* 知). Zongmi’s framework of the mind can be laid out in Table 2.

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<sup>133</sup> T2015.48.405b18-b20.

<sup>134</sup> For Zongmi’s explanation of mind and Chan taxonomy, see Gregory 2002: 224-252

Table 2. Zongmi's framework of the mind<sup>135</sup>



Zongmi's doctrinal explanation of the mind allowed him to adopt the *panjiao* system as a way to harmonize the diverse Chan and doctrinal teachings. In fact, he developed a new taxonomical system that reflected his view of their unity. In this system, Zongmi not only classified the Chan schools of his time into three categories, but also correlated these Chan schools with the doctrinal schools in terms of the level of their teachings. The lowest was the “Chan that cultivates the mind by eliminating delusion” (*xiwang xiuxin zong* 息妄修心宗). Zongmi identified this Chan with the Northern school of Chan. According to him, this Chan school was dualistic because it did not know that immutability and conditionality were two aspects of one mind: it recognized the diverse phenomena produced by the conditionality of mind as external to that very mind. Zongmi related this Chan to the “teaching of the negation of objects by means of consciousness” (*jiangshi pojing jiao* 將識破境教) of the Faxiang doctrinal school. The middle was the “Chan that is utterly without support” (*minjue wuji zong* 泯絕無寄宗). Zongmi identified this Chan with the Ox-head school, which, to him, was nihilistic; it was so preoccupied with the empty aspect of the mind that it denied even the very

<sup>135</sup> Gregory 2002: 240.

presence of the true mind. Zongmi related this Chan to the Madhyamaka teaching, which he called the “teaching of hidden intent that negates phenomenal appearances in order to reveal the nature” (*miyi poxiang xianxing jiao* 密意破相顯性教). The highest was the “Chan that directly reveals mind as nature” (*zhixian xinxing zong* 直顯心性宗). Zongmi identified this Chan with the “teaching that directly reveals that the mind is the nature” (*xiangshi zhenxin jixing jiao* 顯示真心即性教) of the tathāgatagarbha doctrine. He assigned this category to two Chan schools: the Hongzhou and Heze schools. According to Zongmi, the Hongzhou school overemphasized responsive functioning at the expense of intrinsic functioning, though the school knew that all phenomena originated from the nature of the mind. This school considered every activity as a manifestation of the essence of the mind, whether good or evil. Greed, anger, compassion, good deeds, and evil deeds were all produced by the mind-as-suchness. For Zongmi, such a possible antinomian tendency was due to ignorance of “awareness” (i.e., the intrinsic functioning). According to him, only the Heze school fully and perfectly understood the nature of the mind and was therefore the supreme Chan school. The entire correspondence is charted in Table 3.

Zongmi’s taxonomy of Chan served dual functions, just like the taxonomies of the doctrinal teachings. His taxonomy reconciled the differences of the Chan schools by integrating them into this threefold Chan taxonomy. At the same time, however, although his taxonomy was intended to resolve Chan sectarianism of the time, it in fact promoted his Chan school to the highest position and made all the other Chan schools subordinate to his. Hence, Zongmi’s Chan taxonomy featured both “ecumenical” and “sectarian” functions.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Gregory 1988: 364.

Table 3. Zongmi's taxonomy<sup>137</sup>

Jiao	Chan	Chan Tradition
directly reveals that the mind is the nature	directly reveals mind as nature	Heze Hongzhou
hidden intent that negates phenomenal appearances in order to reveal the nature	utterly without support	Ox-head
negation of objects by means of consciousness	cultivates the mind by eliminating delusion	Northern school

(3) Chan and doctrinal teachings from the viewpoint of Buddhist practice

Zongmi developed a soteriological path that resonated with his view of the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings. These two forms of Buddhism constituted two essential elements of his soteriological path of “sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation” (*dunwu jianxiu* 頓悟漸修).

Zongmi's path started with “sudden enlightenment.” This initial enlightenment, according to him, referred to sudden realization that one's mind was originally nothing other than the dharma-body: a student could achieve this realization when he came across a good friend who explained the meanings of the essence and functioning of suchness.<sup>138</sup> Emphasizing the intellectual nature of sudden enlightenment, Zongmi called it “understanding-awakening” (*jiewu* 解悟). For him, this intellectual nature made sudden enlightenment different from the final perfect enlightenment and thus necessitated further cultivation of Buddhist training.

Zongmi asserted that sudden enlightenment should be followed by gradual cultivation, though he

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<sup>137</sup> Gregory 2002: 225.

<sup>138</sup> Kamata 1971: 340.

described this initial experience as “*anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi*, achieved at the time of the first arousal of resolve to attain enlightenment” (初發心時便成阿耨菩提):<sup>139</sup>

Even though one suddenly realizes that the dharmakāya, the true mind, is wholly identical with Buddha, still, because for numerous kalpas one has deludedly clung to the four elements as constituting one’s self [so that this view] has become second nature and is difficult to do away with all at once, one must cultivate oneself on the basis of [this experience of] enlightenment. When one has reduced it and further reduced it until there is nothing left to reduce, then it is called attaining Buddhahood.<sup>140</sup>

雖頓悟法身 真心全同諸佛 而多劫妄執四大為我 習與成性 卒難頓除故  
須依悟漸修 損之又損乃至無損 即名成佛。

Here, Zongmi argued that even after sudden enlightenment, a student still required cultivation because the habitual power of defilements was too strong to be removed all at once by the experience of sudden enlightenment. According to him, through the process of removing defilements and cultivating virtuous practices, the student advanced step by step into the perfect realization of reality. Zongmi designated this experience after cultivation “realization-awakening” (*zhengwu* 證悟). Hence, his soteriological path consisted of three stages: “understanding-awakening,” “gradual cultivation,” and “realization-awakening.”

Zongmi assured the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings by demanding both Chan meditation and doctrinal studies in this path. As seen before, one of the main Chan arguments against the unity of these two Buddhist practices was that doctrinal teachings hindered enlightenment while only Chan could foster it.<sup>141</sup> Zongmi refuted this Chan claim:

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<sup>139</sup> *Yuanjuejing dashu shiyi chao* 圓覺經大疏釋義鈔 6, X245.09.590b11.

<sup>140</sup> Kamata 1971: 340; the translation is from Gregory 2002: 195.

<sup>141</sup> Most Chan monks believed that Chan and Jiao were neutral; the students’ mental capabilities or tendencies made a certain teaching helpful or harmful in their spiritual journey. For example, Zongmi said, “if one gets attached to [the words], every word becomes a boil or a wart; if one penetrates [the meanings of the words], all the words become wondrous medications” (執則字字瘡疣 通則文文妙藥; T2015.48.407b12). Such Linji monks as Yuanwu also shared this view, which was shown in his



If one does not preach the teachings of the scriptures by discarding them and only points out that the mind is the teachings of the scriptures, he indeed brings trouble to the Chan school.<sup>142</sup>

棄卻經教不說 但指於云心是經教 實為帶累禪宗矣

Rather, Zongmi emphasized the complementary roles of Chan and doctrinal teachings. He gave importance to doctrinal teachings in the sudden enlightenment component of his path. As seen above, he described sudden enlightenment as the experience generated by the conceptual understanding of the nature of mind and cultivation, an experience that doctrinal teachings could provide. He further emphasized the role of doctrinal teachings in the process of gradual cultivation:

If one just depends on the sayings of the Buddha and does not infer for himself, his realization will be no more than a matter of baseless faith. If one just holds onto direct perception, taking what he perceives for himself to be authoritative without comparing it to the sayings of the Buddha, then how can he know whether it is true or false? Non-Buddhists also directly perceive the principles to which they adhere and, practicing according to them, obtain results. Since they maintain that they are correct, how else would we know they were false [without the word of the Buddha]?<sup>143</sup>

若但憑佛語不自比度證悟自心者 只是泛信於己未益 若但取現量自見為定 不勘佛語焉知邪正 外道六師親見所執之理 修之亦得功用自謂為正 豈知是邪。

According to Zongmi, the correct Buddhist cultivation required the direct experience of enlightenment through Chan meditation as well as verification of that experience through doctrinal teachings. His emphasis on the complementary role of Chan and doctrinal teachings was also shown in his detailed map of the path of “sudden enlightenment followed by gradual

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explanation of the phrases “dead words” and “live words” (see Ch. 3 for Yuanwu’s explanation of these phrases). However, despite this shared view, the Heze and Linji monks revealed their differences on the issue of the validity of doctrinal teachings in Chan soteriology, as my discussion below demonstrates.

<sup>142</sup> *Yuanjuejing lueshuzhichao* 4, X248.09.860b16; quoted from Araki 1963: 159.

<sup>143</sup> *Chanyuan zhuquanji douxu*, T2015.48.401a15-a18; the translation is from Gregory 2002: 228.

cultivation.” In the *Chanyuan zhujuan ji duxu* 禪源諸詮集都序 (hereafter the *Duxu*, he divided this path into ten stages, of which sudden enlightenment was the first stage and realization-awakening was the last. In this model, doctrinal teachings provided orientation for the experiences that would be acquired from meditation practice at each stage.<sup>144</sup>

Zongmi doctrinalized Chan by explaining the secretly-transmitted essence of the mind and identified Chan and doctrinal schools in terms of the contents of their teachings. In doing so, he introduced the hierarchical system of Chan teachings for the first time in Chan history and unified various Chan teachings under this system. He also established a soteriological path in which both doctrine and meditation played a balanced role. Although his doctrinalization of Chan was harshly criticized by later Linji masters, his view of the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings remained influential in the subsequent period.

### 3) The unity of Chan in late Tang and early Song

Zongmi’s vision of the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings continued in the period between late Tang and early Song, particularly in the territory of Wuyue 吳越 (907-978), the region that enjoyed relative peace and prosperity during the political upheaval of this time. The traditional approach to Chan in this region was linked to Fayan Wenyi 法眼文益 (885-958) and his disciples, who led a revival of Buddhism with the support of the Wuyue political leaders. These Fayan-affiliated masters advocated the unity of Chan and doctrinal traditions. Among them, Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904-975) was the most explicit in propagating their brand of Chan. In his magnum opus, the *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄, Yanshou argued that the Buddha’s

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<sup>144</sup> Kamata 1971: 222-247; Araki 1963: 161 and 179.

mind (i.e., Chan) could be realized through the Buddha's words (i.e., the scriptures).<sup>145</sup>

Zanning 贊寧 (919-1001), who hailed from the Wuyue region, played a major role in transmitting this Fayen vision of Chan to the Song court. Zanning served as the highest Buddhist official in the court and was well reputed among the literati for his erudition and literary talent. Probably because of his Wuyue origin, Zanning endorsed the Fayen idea of Chan, which prevailed until his death.<sup>146</sup>

The unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings, represented by Zongmi, was the traditional stance on the relationship between these two forms of Buddhism. This standpoint was seriously challenged by the Song Chan radicals.

## 2. Chan Outside the Teaching: The Linji Approach to Chan

The Linji lineage emerged as a dominant force in Chan Buddhism during the Song dynasty (960-1279). The monks of this lineage promoted Chan as separate from the scriptural tradition, criticizing Zongmi's view of the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings. They also developed a unique Chan meditation practice that embodied their radical Chan vision.

### 1) The Linji criticism of Zongmi

The Linji monks of the Song period criticized Zongmi to establish their vision of Chan as orthodox. Their criticism mostly focused on Zongmi's concept of awareness, which laid the foundation for his view of the unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings. Juefan Huihong

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<sup>145</sup> *Zongjing lu* 1, T2016.48.418a16-18: re-quoted from Welter 2008: 36. For detailed analysis of Yanshou's view on the unity between Chan and Jiao, see Welter 2011: 69-96 and Welter 2011.

<sup>146</sup> Zanning composed two works on Buddhist history, the *Song Gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 and the *Dasong Seng shilue* 大宋僧史略. For details of Zanning's career in the Song court, see Welter 2006: 163-172.

覺範惠洪 (1071-1128) launched an attack against Zongmi. In his *Linjian lu* 林間錄, he refuted Zongmi's criticism of the three Chan schools of the Northern, Ox-head, and Hongzhou lines. Huihong described Zongmi as someone whose level of understanding Buddhism was not profound enough to evaluate the teachings of the three Chan schools properly. In particular, Huihong compared the founder of the Ox-head school Niutou 牛頭 (594-657) and the founder of the Heze school Shenhui: “[Niutou] corrected all illnesses of intellectual view one by one while Heze openly established an intellectual view. We can see who is superior and who is inferior” ([牛頭]一一皆治知見之病 而荷澤公然立知見 優劣可見).<sup>147</sup> Huihong further criticized Zongmi's doctrinal approach to Chan. He even claimed that Zongmi's kataphatic discourse of the mind was an act that “belittled the Way” 輕道.<sup>148</sup> Huanglong Sixin 黃龍死心 (1044-1115) was also critical of Zongmi's approach. Twisting the Heze school's emblematic phrase, Sixin proclaimed, “The single word ‘awareness’ is the gate to all disasters” (知之一字衆禍之門).<sup>149</sup>

The Linji criticism of Zongmi's Heze school culminated with branding Shenhui as someone who was entrapped in intellectual defilements. The Deyi version of the *Platform Sūtra*, compiled in 1290 by the Linji master Mengshan Deyi 夢山德異 (1231-1308), introduced an episode between Shenhui and his master the sixth patriarch Huineng 慧能 (638-713).

One day the Master said to the congregation, “I have something with no head, no tail, no name, no label, no back, no front: do you recognize it?”  
Shenhui came forth and said, “This is the original source of all Buddhas, my Buddha-nature.”

<sup>147</sup> *Linjian lu*, X1624.87.249a10.

<sup>148</sup> *Zhi zheng zhuan* 智證傳, X1235.63.187a19-a23; quoted from Ingyōng 2001: 94.

<sup>149</sup> Sixin's phrase became well-known in the Chan/Sōn community.

The Master said, “I just told you it has no name or label; then you immediately called it the original source, the Buddha-nature. Later on, when you have a bunch of thatch covering your head, you will still just be a “follower of intellectual knowledge and conceptual interpretation.”<sup>150</sup>

一日 師告眾曰 吾有一物 無頭無尾 無名無字 無背無面 諸人還識否 神會出曰 是諸佛之本源 神會之佛性。師曰 向汝道無名無字 汝便喚作本源佛性 汝向去有把茆蓋頭也 只成箇知解宗徒。

This passage does not appear in the Tunhuang version of the *Sūtra*, which was compiled much earlier in the Tang period.<sup>151</sup> Neither does it appear in the related editions of the Huixin 惠昕 (d.u.) version of 967. In the *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 of 1004, the episode appeared but without the part calling Shenhui a “follower of intellectual knowledge and conceptual interpretation” (*zhijie zongtu* 知解宗徒).<sup>152</sup> In the recorded sayings of Yuanwu 圓悟 (1063-1135), published in 1134, Yuanwu was described as being familiar with the whole episode: he uses the pejorative description to refer to Shenhui though he does not detail the episode.<sup>153</sup> Hence, the entire episode took shape sometime between 1004 and 1134 and was added into the Deyi version of the *Sūtra* in 1290. The intention of the episode is obvious: to criticize the Chan vision of Zongmi, who proclaimed himself as the fifth patriarch of Shenhui’s Heze school. By

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<sup>150</sup> Juzue version 駒澤本 74; quoted from In’gyōng 2000: 257-258; the same episode is also included in the Zongbao 宗寶 version of the *Sūtra* (*Liuzu Dashi fabaotan jing* 六祖大師法寶壇經, T2008.48.359b29-c04); the translation of the episode is slightly modified from Cleary 1998: 66.

<sup>151</sup> There are three major versions of the *Platform Sūtra*: (1) Tunhuang version; (2) Huixin version; (3) Qisong 契嵩 version. Versions (2) and (3) are not extant. But the Shinpukujī, Daijōji and Tenneiji editions are related to (2) while the Deyi and Zongbao editions are related to (3). For details, see Shiina Kōyū 1989 and Schlütter 2007.

<sup>152</sup> *Jingde chuandeng lu* 5, T2076.51.245a21-a24; In’gyōng 2000: 257-258.

<sup>153</sup> *Yuanwu fogue chanshi yulu* 圓悟佛果禪師語錄 4, T1997.47.729c05-c07; In’gyōng 2000: 266. In the *Chōryō* of 1209, Chinul also designated Shenhui as the “master of the school of intellectual knowledge and conceptual interpretation” (*chihae chongsa* 知解宗師) though he did not record the episode (HPC 4, 741a03).

branding Shenhui as a “follower of intellectual knowledge and conceptual interpretation” under the authority of the sixth patriarch, Huineng, the episode branded Zongmi’s doctrinal approach to Chan as an act of generating intellectual obstructions. Whether intended or not, this episode helped degrade the view of doctrinal teachings as a whole within Chan. Although several later Chan masters affirmed the necessity of doctrinal teachings in Buddhist training, they never recovered the status they had been given in Zongmi’s system.

## 2) Separate transmission outside the teaching

The Linji lineage of the Song period was closely associated with the campaign to establish a radical Chan vision that defined Chan as a unique tradition transmitted separately from the scriptural tradition. This vision, the incipency of which existed in earlier periods as seen before, found its full-fledged expression in a phrase that was popularized in Song: “Separate transmission outside the teaching” (*jiaowai biechuan* 教外別傳).<sup>154</sup> This phrase represented the Chan break from or rejection of the scriptural tradition: it challenged the authority of the scriptures as a vehicle for maintaining and transmitting the teachings of the Buddha by describing Chan as a separate or even superior transmission. This vision developed in close relation to the Linji lineage.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> This phrase constituted the four phrases that defined Chan identity in Song period, along with the following three phrases: “directly pointing to the human mind” (*zhizhi renxin* 直指人心), “seeing the nature and accomplishing the Buddhahood” (*jianxing chengfo* 見性成佛),” and “not positing the words and letters” (*buli wenzi* 不立文字).

<sup>155</sup> The phrase “*jiaowai biechuan*” first appears in Ch. 6 of the *Zutang ji* 祖堂集: K 45, 276a26-27), but as Welter points out, the appearance of the phrase in this record is insignificant in terms of its connection to the campaign of establishing the radical Chan identity; Welter 2000: 81.

The earliest records of the separate transmission of Chan appeared in Linji-lineage related texts. The first such text was the *Baolin zhuan* 寶林傳, the lineage record that endorsed the Mazu lineage, the precursor of the Linji lineage. As Griffith Foulk points out, this record signaled the Chan departure from the scriptural tradition. It depicted the “transmission of a superior, formless dharma directly and personally from Śākyamuni to Mahākāśyapa” for the first time in Chan/ Sōn history.<sup>156</sup> The *Chuanxin fayao* 傳心法要, the teachings of Huangbo Xiyun 黃檗希運 (d. 850), the teacher of Linji, clearly stated the idea that Chan transmitted the “mind” separately from the scriptures and commentaries.<sup>157</sup>

[The Buddha] widely distributed the wondrous Way and employed expedient means to preach the existence of the three vehicles. . . [However], since all [three vehicles] were not the cardinal Way, [he] said, “there is only a path of one vehicle; the remaining two are not authentic.” However, since [he] finally could not reveal the Dharma of the one mind, he entrusted then one mind to Mahākāśyapa by sharing his Dharma-seat with him. [This is] preaching the Dharma while transcending the words.<sup>158</sup>

溥捨妙道 遂設方便說有三乘. . . 皆非本法 故云 唯有一乘道 餘二則非真  
然終未能顯一心法 故召迦葉同法座別付一心 離言說法.

According to this text, the mind-dharma was never included in the provisional teachings of the three vehicles; rather, it was taught separately by the Buddha Śākyamuni to Mahākāśyapa, the alleged first Indian patriarch of Chan, without relying on language. Although the *Chuanxin fayao* did not directly express the phrase “separate transmission outside the teaching,” the text explicitly presented the notion of Chan as an independent tradition that derived directly from the Buddha himself.

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<sup>156</sup> Foulk 1999: 225.

<sup>157</sup> It is interesting that the text was compiled in the early 850s by Pei Xiu 裴休 (797-870), a Tang lay Buddhist who was a student and patron of Zongmi and later converted to Huangbo’s Chan.

<sup>158</sup> *Chuanxin fayao* T2012A.48.382b05-08.

Albert Welter argues that the *Jingde chuandeng lu* represented the Linji lineage endeavor to establish Chan as separate from the scriptural tradition and reject the harmonious view of Chan and doctrinal teachings.<sup>159</sup> According to Welter, two different prefaces were composed for this lamp record: (1) the original, but, forgotten preface, written by Daoyuan 道原 (d.u.); (2) the extant preface by the literatus Yang Yi 楊億 (974-1020). Welter asserts that these two prefaces reveal two different interpretations of Chan, depending on their respective Chan affiliation. The preface by Daoyuan, who was a descendent of the Fayan lineage, promotes the harmony of Chan and doctrinal teachings. Daoyuan's original title for the record, the *Fozu tongcan ji* 佛祖同參集 (*Collection of the Common Practice of the Buddhas and Patriarchs*), also suggests that he compiled the record to promote the Fayan brand of Chan. On the contrary, Welter continues, the preface of the literatus Yang Yi, who supported the Linji lineage, endorses Chan independence. Yang Yi used the phrase “*jiaowai biexing*” (separate practice outside the teaching 教外別行) to refer to Chan in his preface. He also retitled Daoyuan's work as the “*Jingde chuandeng lu*” (*Record of Lamp Transmission compiled in the Jingde Era*), the title that reflected the nature of the new Chan brand.<sup>160</sup>

Though we cannot be sure how much Yang Yi transformed the contents of Daoyuan's original compilation, the present version of the *Chuandeng lu* records an episode between Bodhidharma and his disciples that expresses opposition to the traditional view on Chan and doctrinal teachings.

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<sup>159</sup> For details of the Linji lineage connection to the *Chuandeng lu*, see Welter 2006: 115-160 and 172-186.

<sup>160</sup> Welter 2000: 91-94.



After nine years, Bodhidharma wanted to return to India. Calling together his disciples, he said, “The time for me to return to India is at hand. Can each of you say what you have attained?”

A disciple named Daofu said, “As I see it, it is not attached to the words and letters, nor is it separate from words and letters. This is the functioning of the Way.”

The master said, “You have attained my skin.”

The nun Zongchi said, “What I understand is like a glorious glimpse of the realm of Akṣobhya Buddha. Seen once, it need not be seen again.”

The master said, “You have attained my flesh.”

A disciple named Daoyu said, “The four elements are all empty. The five skandhas are without actual existence. As I see it, there is not a single dharma to be grasped.”

The master said, “You have attained my bones.”

Finally, Huike bowed and stood up straight.

The master said, “You have attained my marrow.”<sup>161</sup>

迄九年已欲西返天竺 乃命門人曰 時將至矣 汝等蓋各言所得乎 時門人道副對曰 如我所見 不執文字不離文字而為道用 師曰汝得吾皮 尼總持曰 我今所解如慶喜見 阿佛國 一見更不再見 師曰汝得吾肉 道育曰 四大本空五陰非有 而我見處無一法 可得 師曰汝得吾骨 最後慧可禮拜後依位而立 師曰汝得吾髓。

This episode is also recorded in the *Zutang ji* 祖堂集 of 952. In the episode of the *Zutang ji*, however, Daofu does not appear. According to the *Zutang ji* version, the other three disciples Zongchi, Daoyu, and Huike were described as receiving Bodhidharma’s flesh, bones, and marrow, respectively, but with no explanation.<sup>162</sup> The *Chuandeng lu* version of the episode demonstrates outright rejection of the traditional stance on the relationship between Chan and doctrinal teachings. Daofu’s position in the episode coincides exactly with that of Zongmi and Yangshou on the relationship of the two forms of Buddhism. In particular, as mentioned before, Zongmi argued that Bodhidharma urged the Chinese to remove their attachment to language rather than departing from it. By describing Daofu as receiving skin, a symbol of the superficial level of understanding, and Huike as receiving the marrow of Bodhidharma’s Dharma,

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<sup>161</sup> *Jingde chuandeng lu* 3, T2076.51.219b27-c05: the translation is slightly modified from Ferguson 2000: 16-17.

<sup>162</sup> *Zutang ji* 2, K vol. 45, 245a14-16.

this episode rejects the position of the “unity of Chan and doctrinal teachings” and instead endorses that of a “separate transmission outside the teaching,” though this phrase does not appear there.

Welter also argues that the *Tiansheng Guangdeng lu* 天聖廣燈錄 of 1029 was the earliest text to connect the Linji lineage explicitly to the phrase “separate transmission outside the teaching.”<sup>163</sup> The phrase, which never appears in the *Chuangdeng lu*, does appear several times in the *Guangdeng lu*, the lamp record compiled by the Linji school patron Li Zunxu 李遵勗 (988-1038). According to Welter, the *Guangdeng lu* describes this phrase as the creation of the Linji master Yexian Guisheng 葉縣歸省 (fl. 10<sup>th</sup> century). In his biography, Guisheng connected this phrase especially to Bodhidharma: he used the phrase “separate transmission outside the teaching” as an answer for the famous *gong’an* “why did Bodhidharma come from the west?”<sup>164</sup> The biography of Shishuang Chuyuan 石霜楚圓 (987-1040) also connects the Linji school to this phrase. In explaining the same *gong’an*, Chuyuan interpreted the phrase as “direct pointing to the human mind” (*zhizhi renxin* 直指人心) and “seeing the nature and accomplishing the Buddhahood” (*jianxing chengfo* 見性成佛).<sup>165</sup> As Welter points out, because Shishuang was the master of Huanglong 黃龍 (1002-1069) and Yangqi 楊岐 (992-1049), the heads of the two Linji school branches that had dominated the Linji lineage since Song, the *Guangdeng lu* describes the Linji school as a stronghold for this vision of

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<sup>163</sup> For details of the Linji lineage connection to the *Tiansheng Guangdeng lu*, see Welter 2006: 186-206.

<sup>164</sup> *Tiansheng Guangdeng lu* 16, X1553.78.496a23-b03; Welter 2000: 84.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 18, X1553.78.504c09-10; Welter 2000: 85.

Chan independence. This link was officially recognized as the lamp record was published under imperial authority with the reign appellation of Tiansheng.<sup>166</sup>

According to Yanagida Seizan, the phrase “separate transmission outside the teaching” appears also in the *Linji huizhao chanshi taji* 臨濟慧照禪師塔記.<sup>167</sup> This inscription records a short biography of Linji, which is appended in the Ma Fang 馬防 (d.u.) version of the *Recorded Sayings of Linji* of 1120. In the inscription, Linji uses the phrase to define Chan as separate from the scriptures and commentaries: “These [scriptures and commentaries] are prescriptions for the salvation of the world, not the principles of the separate transmission outside the teaching” (此濟世之醫方也 非教外別傳之旨).<sup>168</sup> This statement, which does not appear in the biography of Linji from the *Zutang ji*, directly links the phrase to Linji, the founder of the Linji school.<sup>169</sup> Hence, by the first half of the twelfth century, the Linji school was firmly tied to this new brand of Chan by Song Linji masters. The notion of Chan as a separate transmission spread widely, for the Linji master Wumen Huikai (無門慧開 1183~1260) recorded the episode “The World-honored one holds up a flower” (*shizun nianhua* 世尊拈花), which embodied this radical notion, in his famous *gong’an* collection, the *Wumen guan* 無門關.

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<sup>166</sup> Welter 2000: 82-86.

<sup>167</sup> Yanagida 1967: 472.

<sup>168</sup> *Linji huizhao chanshi taji*, T1985.47.506c10-11; the translation is from Yanagida 1972: 73.

<sup>169</sup> *Zutang ji* 19; K vol. 45 353b25-354a21.

### 3) *Kanhua* Chan

The Linji lineage developed a new Chan meditational technique to substantialize its view on Chan and doctrinal teachings. This technique, called *kanhua* (observing the key phrase 看話), excluded doctrinal studies from the Chan soteriological path.

The *kanhua* technique developed in reaction to “literary Chan,” popular among Yunmen and Linji monks of early Song. Literary Chan was based on *gong’an* literature, which represented the Chan vision of separation from the scriptural Buddhism: the literature replaced the Buddha and his teachings, i.e., the scriptures, by the Chan patriarchs and the stories of their enlightenment, i.e., the *gong’an* stories, for the personal and textual authority. However, the growing emphasis of literary Chan on erudition and literary endeavor conflicted with the Chan principle of “not relying on language.” Dahui 大慧 (1089-1163), the inventor of the *kanhua* technique, is even said to have burned the woodblocks of his master Yuanwu’s *gong’an* collection, the *Biyān lu* 碧巖錄.<sup>170</sup>

The *kanhua* meditation technique takes the brief key phrase of a *gong’an*, not the whole *gong’an* story, as its object of practice. As such, the technique does not demand any significant knowledge of Buddhist doctrines. As Schlütter points out, Dahui presented this technique to the literati who had little doctrinal knowledge.<sup>171</sup> In fact, what is important in the practice of the *kanhua* technique is to create the sensation of doubt, which serves as the major driving force

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<sup>170</sup> George Keyworth questioned the historical validity of the story that Dahui burned the wood block, arguing that Dahui was not opposed to the literary approach (Keyworth 2001: 317). However, whether or not Dahui was against the approach, there surely existed such Chan monks as Hongying Shaowu 洪英邵武 (1012-1070) and Xinwen Yunben 心聞雲贄 (fl.12th century) who criticized the literary approach to *kongan*. In particular, Xinwen regarded the story as historical fact. For Hongying’s criticism, see *Chanlin baoxun* 禪林寶訓 1, T2022.48.1021b16-18 and for Xinwen’s criticism, see *Chanlin baoxun* 4, T2022.48.1036b19-c03.

<sup>171</sup> Schlütter 1999: 109-147.

that can lead to enlightenment.<sup>172</sup> For example, the *wu* of Zhaozhou Congshen 趙州從諗 (778–897), which Dahui often recommended to the literati as an object of *kanhua* practice, shows that the technique relies little on knowledge of Buddhism. The entire *gong'an* for this *huatou* is the following short episode:

Once a monk asked Zhaozhou, “Does a dog have Buddha-nature or not?” Zhaozhou replied, “No!” (*wu*).<sup>173</sup>

趙州和尚因僧問 狗子還有佛性也無 州云無。

According to Robert Buswell, during the *kanhua* practice of this “*wu*” (no) *huatou*, the sensation of doubt occurs when a student feels frustrated after realizing that he cannot resolve why Zhaozhou denied the basic Mahāyāna doctrine that all sentient beings, including dogs, inherently possess Buddha-nature. Here, knowledge of a rather simple doctrine is sufficient to launch *kanhua* meditation practice. In fact, Dahui did not ask or expect his literati followers who investigated this *wu* to know the whole range of Chinese Buddhist discourse on “Buddha-nature;” neither did he himself provide any in his letters for the literati.

Dahui suggested that a *huatou* could have nothing to do with Buddhism. As Miriam Levering points out, Dahui believed that an event experienced in one’s secular life could function as a *huatou*. He took birth and death as such examples:

There is no language to describe Chan. One must achieve his understanding through an awakening. Since I was seventeen years old, I had been seized with doubt concerning this matter. After I struggled for seventeen years, I finally could rest. Before I achieved enlightenment, I often thought to myself: I am now already of such and such an age. Before I was born on this earth, where was I? My mind was pitch-black and had no idea where I came from. Since I did not know my origin, this was what is called,

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<sup>172</sup> According to Gaofeng Yuanmiao 高峰原妙 (1238-1295), the sensation of doubt is one of the three essentials of the *kanhua* practice, along with great faith and great fury. For detailed analysis of the role of the sense of doubt in the *kanhua* practice, see Buswell 2004: 225-236.

<sup>173</sup> *Wumen guan*, T2005.48.292c23-24.

“Life is a great matter” (C. *sheng da* 生大). When I die in the future, where shall I go? When I thought about this, my mind was also totally dark and had no idea where I would go from here. Since I did not know my destiny, this was what Buddhism called, “Death is a great matter” (C. *sida* 死大). “Existence is impermanent and life ends quickly. Life and Death is a Great Matter.”<sup>174</sup>

禪無文字 須是悟始得 妙喜自十七歲 便疑著此事 恰恰參十七年 方得休歇  
未得已前 常自思惟 我今已幾歲 不知我未託生來南閩浮提時從甚麼處來  
心頭黑似漆 並不知來處 既不知來處 即是生大我 百年後死時 卻向甚麼處去  
心頭依舊黑漫漫地 不知去處 既不知去處 即是死大 謂之無常迅速生死事大。

Later Linji masters showed that not only such dramatic events of life as birth and death but also daily activities could be applied in the *kanhua* technique. According to Nathasha Heller, the Yuan Linji master Zhongfeng Mingben 中峰明本 (1263-1323) used the activity of reading in this way. In the preface to his explanation of the *the Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, Mingben told his lay followers not to try to understand every word:

If you cannot completely investigate it, or if your remaining doubts have not dissipated, you just must take up the word that you are contemplating, and examine oneself... One morning you will see through this *huatou* and then [think to yourself] the six hundred scrolls of this great work are the heritage within my breast.<sup>175</sup>

或究之不盡 餘惑未泮 只消提箇所參話自看...一朝看破話頭 則六百卷之雄文 皆吾胸中舊物也。

Here, Mingben suggested that an ambiguous part of readings could be *huatou*. He recommended that his lay students employ the doubt or curiosity in their *kanhua* practice rather than try to figure out what the reading meant intellectually.

The *kanhua* technique opposes the intellectual functioning of mind. Dahui expressed such opposition in his *Shuzhuang* 書狀, his letters that offered meditative guidance to his literati

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<sup>174</sup> Dahui *pujue chanshi pushuo* 大慧普覺禪師普說 16, T1998A.47.878c16-23; The translation is from Levering ???

<sup>175</sup> GL 32156a; the translation is from Heller 2010: 153.

followers. Rejecting all kinds of intellectual approaches to *huatou* practice, Dahui warned that the tendency of intellectualization, to which the literati were subject, would create a major obstacle to the practice. He explained why the literati with the intellectual tendency found it difficult to succeed in their practice:

[The literati] have a great many intellectual views. If they see a Chan teacher slightly open his mouth and move his tongue, they hastily assume all at once. Therefore, they are rather inferior to the dull people, who do not have wrong knowledge and insight, directly arouse [enlightenment] with one word and one phrase in one occasion and one realm.<sup>176</sup>

知見太多 見宗師纔開口動舌 早一時會了也 以故返不如鈍根者 無許多惡知惡覺 驀地於一機一境上 一言一句下撞發。

Here, Dahui said that intellectualization hindered Buddhist practice because it reified what a practitioner should experience himself. He went further to oppose the act of reading itself: “if one has read many books, he has many delusions; if one has read few books, he has few delusions” (讀得書多底 無明多 讀得書少底 無明少).<sup>177</sup>

Dahui’s opposition to intellectualization led him and his disciples to dismiss doctrinal studies as mere intellectual acts and, therefore, hindrances to *kanhua* practice. In the *Shuzhuang*, Dahui repeatedly asked the literati not to consult the scriptures while practicing the *kanhua* technique. He even asserted that reading the scriptures without practicing the technique would be a foolish act.<sup>178</sup> His disciple Daoqian 道謙 (d.u.) more directly stated opposition to the scriptures in *kanhua* practice. In a dialogue with a lay Buddhist who performed such practices as reading scriptures and worshipping the Buddha yet did not have a breakthrough

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<sup>176</sup> Araki 1969: 62-63.

<sup>177</sup> Araki 1969: 130.

<sup>178</sup> Araki 1969: 31.

experience, Daoqian asserted that reading scriptures and worshipping the Buddha hinder *kanhua* practice.<sup>179</sup>

The Linji lineage developed *kanhua* meditation as a practice representing the “separate transmission outside the teaching.” The technique does not rely on the scriptures and even dismisses them as a hindrance. As a matter of fact, many Linji masters, including Dahui, did indeed rely on words and letters: they read scriptures and Chan texts and often quoted these texts in their sermons. Nonetheless, the image of *kanhua* meditation technique as the rejection of the scriptures did not change. By criticizing Zongmi’s synthetic Chan vision and developing the *kanhua* technique, the Linji school represented itself as a Chan school that proclaimed a radical break from doctrinal Buddhism.

### 3. Relinquishing the Teaching and Entering into Sōn (K. *Sagyo Ipsōn* 捨教入禪): Korean Synthesis of the Heze and Linji Soteriologies

The “unity of Chan (Sōn) and Jiao (Kyo)” and the “separate transmission outside Jiao” represented two main positions on the relationship between Chan and doctrinal teachings. One of the major differences between these two positions involved the validity of doctrinal teachings in Chan soteriology. The Heze (K. Hat’aek) position regarded “doctrinal teachings” as an essential element of Buddhist practice in the scheme of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation.” In contrast, the Linji (K. Imje) position rejected the validity of doctrinal teachings in its exclusivist Chan practice of *kanhua* meditation. The systematic attempt to bridge the gap between these two positions was made in Korea, where Sōn sectarianism was not so serious. This attempt produced a soteriological system, which could be named “relinquishing Kyo and

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<sup>179</sup> *Shan nuren chuan* 善女人傳, X1657.88.405c19-406a16.



entering into Sŏn” (K. *sagyo ipsŏn* 捨教入禪).<sup>180</sup> Although this system became a dominant soteriology of Korean Sŏn Buddhism in Chosŏn (1392-1897), the idea of the system developed from the age-old tension between Sŏn and Kyo in the previous dynastic period.<sup>181</sup>

### 1) Early Korean Sŏn view on the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo

The tension between Sŏn and doctrinal teachings in Korea was as deeply-rooted as the tension in China. This tension began from the time of the introduction of Sŏn to Korea in the eighth century. The Korean monks who brought Sŏn to Korea established the Nine Mountain Sŏn schools (*kusan Sŏnmun* 九山禪門), seven of which belonged to the Mazu lineage. The founders of the Korean Sŏn schools expressed their radical interpretation of Sŏn. For example, the Kaji mountain school founder, Toŭi 道義 (d.u.), argued that one could not attain the mind-Dharma of Sŏn even after reading scriptures for years.<sup>182</sup> The Saja mountain school founder, Toyun 道允 (798-868), abandoned all doctrinal studies to cultivate Chan, proclaiming, “How could the teaching of the Perfect and Sudden (i.e. Hwaŏm) school be equal to the Dharma of the Mind-seal (i.e. Sŏn)!” (圓頓之旨 豈如心印之法).<sup>183</sup> The Sŏngju mountain school founder, Muyŏm 無染 (800-888), epitomized the Sŏn claim of its superiority to the scriptural tradition in this early stage of Korean Sŏn. He compared Kyo and Sŏn to the “tongued-realm” (*yusŏl t’o*

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<sup>180</sup> I use this phrase to refer to a specific Korean Buddhist soteriological model that synthesized the Heze and Linji soteriologies.

<sup>181</sup> The phrase “*sagyo ipsŏn*” often appears in the Sŏn texts of late Chosŏn. Even though it seldom appears in the texts compiled prior to late Chosŏn, Hyujŏng (1520-1604) firmly established it as a major practical schema for his students.

<sup>182</sup> *Sŏnmun pojangnok* 禪門寶藏錄 HPC 6, 479a06.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 474a15.

有舌土) and the “tongueless-realm” (*musŏl t’o* 無舌土), respectively.<sup>184</sup> According to Muyŏm, Kyo referred to the expedient means of relying on language. He asserted that because Kyo is entrapped in conceptual dichotomies, even the highest level of insight that can be attained through Kyo still has lingering traces of those dichotomies. On the contrary, Muyŏm continued, Sŏn referred to direct transmission beyond language. He argued that Sŏn was the truth itself without any trace of the dichotomy.<sup>185</sup> This Korean Sŏn view of the two strands of Buddhism inevitably generated a tension with the already-established Kyo schools.<sup>186</sup> This tension became so serious and intense that it lasted until the time of Chinul 知訥 (1158-1210) though there was a brief attempt to reconcile such tension in mid Koryŏ.<sup>187</sup>

## 2) Chinul’s soteriology: a basis for *sagyo ipsŏn*

Chinul introduced the soteriological model of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation” to the Korean Sŏn community in order to reconcile the tension between Sŏn and Kyo. The conflict between the two strands of Buddhism in Chinul’s time was so aggravated that it even threatened the *raison d’être* of Buddhism itself. Hyesim 慧諶 (1178-1234), the successor of Chinul, testified to this situation. According to him, Sŏn experts and Kyo exegetes

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 473b21-23.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 473b21-474a03.

<sup>186</sup> Five major doctrinal schools were founded in the early seventh century in Korea though somewhat discredited: the Keyul chong (Vinaya), Yŏlban chong (nirvāṇa), Pŏpsŏng chong, Wŏnyung (Hwaŏm) chong, and Pŏpsang (Yogācāra) chong: Buswell 1991: 6-9.

<sup>187</sup> Ŭich’ŏn 義天 (1055–1101) attempted to reconcile the tension between Sŏn and Kyo by establishing the Korean Ch’ont’ae school. Although his attempt was supported by the Koryŏ court, it failed because of his anti-Sŏn tendency as well as his early death. Consequently, his attempt to unify the two strands of Buddhism ended up adding another school to the already-sectarianized Korean Buddhist community. Buswell 1991: 14-17 and Ch’oe 2002: 29-57.

rejected and slandered each other, and eventually, the conflict between the two reached the point that neither could lead practitioners to enlightenment.<sup>188</sup> Chinul tried to lay the theoretical foundation to reconcile the conflict.

For most of his career, Chinul regarded Sōn and Kyo as harmonious and equally essential in Buddhist training. His spiritual journey embodied his view. According to his biography, Chinul had three spiritual breakthrough experiences in his life, all of which came from reading Buddhist texts: the first breakthrough experience came sometime between 1182 and 1185 from reading the *Platform Sūtra*; the second, in 1188, from reading Li Tongxuan's 李通玄 (635-730) commentary to the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*; the third, in 1198, from reading Dahui's *Shuzhuang*. As demonstrated by this list of texts, Chinul did not take any particular sectarian position. He relied on the scholastic tradition of the Hwaōm school as well as Sōn, especially the brand of Sōn that represented a "separate transmission outside the teaching." Even though Chinul emphasized *kanhwa* meditation later in his career, it is not surprising that Chinul did not reject doctrinal teachings, considering that his spiritual experiences were all mediated through texts. In fact, Chinul was sympathetic to the Heze vision of the unity of Sōn and Kyo. Although he knew that Shenhui had been branded as a "follower of intellectual knowledge and conceptual interpretation," Chinul complimented him in the *Chōryo*, the work that Chinul composed a year before his death in 1209.

Moguja [Chinul] said: Heze Shenhui was a master of our school known for his intellectual knowledge and conceptual interpretation. Although he was not the formal dharma successor to [Huineng], his awakened understanding was lofty and brilliant, and his discernment was clear.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> *Kanhwa kyōrūi ron*, HPC 4, 737b13-17.

<sup>189</sup> *Pōpchip pyōrhaengnok chōryo pyōngip sagi* 法集別行錄節要并私記 HPC 4,741a03-05; the translation is from Buswell 1983: 263.

牧牛子曰荷澤神會 是知解宗師 雖未爲曹溪嫡子 然悟解高明 決擇了然。

Chinul clearly recognized the gap between the soteriologies of the two different visions of Sŏn: the “unity of Sŏn and Kyo” and the “separate transmission outside Kyo.” As will be seen in the next chapter, he took three different approaches to these diametrically opposite visions in three of his writings: the *Wŏndon sŏngbullon* 圓頓成佛論, the *Chŏryo*, and the *Kanhwa kyŏrŭi ron* 看話決疑論. In the *Chŏryo*, Chinul introduced a model to unify these two soteriologies:

You must know that men who are cultivating the path in this present degenerate age of the dharma should first, via conceptual understanding, which accords with reality, discern clearly the mind’s true and false aspects, its arising and ceasing, and its essential and secondary features. Next, through a word, which splits nails and cuts through iron, you should probe closely and carefully. When a place appears at which your body can escape, it will be like the saying “to put a desk on the ground and have its four legs set firmly.” Whether coming out into birth or entering into death, you will have complete mastery of yourself.<sup>190</sup>

須知而今末法修道之人 先以如實知解 決擇自心真妄生死本末了然 次以斬釘截鐵之言 密密地字細叅詳 而有出身之處則可謂四稜着地 掀掬不動 出生入死 得大自在者也

Chinul integrated the *kanhwa* (C. *kanhua*) technique into the Heze schema of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation.” He applied the technique in the process of “gradual cultivation,” which followed sudden initial insight. As revealed in the cases of Hyujŏng and Paekp’a, this model suggested Sŏn’s superiority to Kyo because it presumed that only the *kanhwa* practice could bring about final perfect enlightenment. Despite his subordination of Kyo to Sŏn, Chinul provided a balanced approach to Sŏn and Kyo to harmonize the Heze and Linji soteriologies in his *Chŏryo*.

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 766a01-06; the translation is from Buswell 1983: 338-339.

After Chinul's death, Korean Sŏn Buddhism saw a short period of dominance by the Linji brand of Sŏn. This Korean version of “*kyooe pyŏlchŏn*” (separate transmission outside the teaching) was led by several Korean Sŏn monks who received the Chinese Linji transmission. One such Korean monk was T'aego Pou 太古普愚 (1301–1382). He traveled to China and received transmission from the Linji master Shiwu Qinggong 石屋清珙 (K. Sŏg'ok Ch'ŏnggong; 1272-1352) and came back to Korea in 1348. Pou advocated “*kyooe pyŏlchŏn*.” The record of his sayings repeatedly expresses Sŏn's separation from the scriptural tradition. It quotes few scriptures and records his sermons, which employed such non-linguistic pedagogical tools as shouting and beating. It is also full of his guidance to help his students in their *kanhwa* practice.<sup>191</sup> With the emergence of Sŏn masters such as Pou on the center of the Korean Sŏn stage, the vision of “*kyooe pyŏlchŏn*” and its *kanhwa* meditation technique dominated in late Koryŏ. However, as a new dynasty was founded on the Korean peninsula in 1392, Korean Sŏn Buddhism returned to Chinul's Sŏn from this exclusivist Chinese import.<sup>192</sup>

### 3) Hyujŏng's *sagyo ipsŏn*

Hyujŏng 休靜 (1520-1604) established “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sŏn” as a dominant soteriology of Chosŏn Sŏn Buddhism. He presented this system as a way to shrink

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<sup>191</sup> *T'aego hwasang ōrok* 太古和尚語錄, HPC 6, 669a01-702a26.

<sup>192</sup> The king T'aejo 太祖 (r. 1392-1398), the founder of the Chosŏn dynasty, made the Sŏn community follow Chinul's rules and regulations for Buddhist training at the request of a monk named Sangch'ong 尙聰 (d.u.); Sejong taewang kinyŏm saŏphoe 1972: 232.

the gap between Sŏn and Kyo.<sup>193</sup> Hyujŏng believed in the unity of Sŏn and Kyo. Quoting Zongmi's words in his *Sŏn'ga kwigam* 禪家龜鑑, Hyujŏng said the following:

The three places where the World Honored One transmitted the mind is the import of Sŏn. Everything that he said during his lifetime is the approach of Kyo. Therefore it is said, "Sŏn is the Buddha's mind; Kyo is the Buddha's words."<sup>194</sup>

世尊三處傳心者 爲禪旨 一代所說者 爲教門 故曰禪是佛心 教是佛語。

Just like his predecessors Zongmi and Chinul, he regarded these two major strands of Buddhism as mutually complementary in Buddhist training. According to Hyujŏng, Sŏn had the secret with which one could reach enlightenment; Kyo had the right path through which one could cultivate and remove defilements.<sup>195</sup> Although he argued for the harmonious relationship between Sŏn and Kyo, however, Hyujŏng subordinated doctrinal teachings to Sŏn. In the *Simpŏp yoch'o* 心法要抄, he said,

Sŏn and Kyo arise from one thought. Where the mind-consciousness reaches belongs to the realm of cognition. This is Kyo. Where the mind-consciousness cannot reach belongs to the realm of the investigation [of the word]. This is Sŏn.<sup>196</sup>

禪教起於一念中 心意識及處 卽屬思量者 教也 心意識未及處 卽屬參究者 禪也。

Hyujŏng made the same claim in the *Sŏn'ga kwigam*. He said, "The unobstructed Dharma that the Buddha preached eventually returns to one taste. When all traces of this one taste are removed, the one mind that the patriarchs showed will be revealed" (佛說無碍之法 方歸一味

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<sup>193</sup> This system could be also found in Hyujŏng's teacher Puyong Yŏnggwan 芙蓉靈觀 (1485-1571) and Pyŏksong Chiŏm 碧松智嚴 (1464-1534); Hwang 2004.

<sup>194</sup> Requoted from Buswell 1999: 152; *Sŏn'ga kwigam*, HPC 7, 626a18-19.

<sup>195</sup> *Sŏn'ga kwigam*, HPC 7, 638b19-c02.

<sup>196</sup> *Simpŏp yoch'o*, HPC 7, 649a24-b02.

拂此一味之迹 方現祖師所示一心).<sup>197</sup> As Buswell points out, for Hyjōng, Kyo could only bring a student to “the threshold of awakening,” and only Sōn meditation would carry him over that threshold to enlightenment.<sup>198</sup>

Hyujōng’s recognition of the harmonious and yet subordinate relationship between Sōn and Kyo led him to present the model of “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sōn” as an ideal soteriological model:

Students should first, via the verbalized teachings that accord with reality, scrutinize the two concepts of immutability and adaptability. These [two concepts correspond, respectively, to] the nature and characteristics of their own minds, and the two approaches of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation are the inception and consummation of their own training. Subsequently, casting aside doctrinal concepts, they merely take up the one thought that appears before their own minds and contemplate carefully the intent of Sōn. They then will perforce gain attainment. This is called the living road to liberation.<sup>199</sup>

學者 先以如實言教 委辨不變隨緣二義 是自心之性相 頓悟漸修兩門  
是自行之始終 然後放下教義 但將自心現前一念 參詳禪旨 則必有所得  
所謂出身活路。

Hyujōng described the path of “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sōn” in the most definite fashion. According to him, in this model, a student was first engaged in doctrinal studies, which could give him sudden enlightenment (i.e., initial insight into the nature of enlightenment and cultivation); then he abandoned his attachment to doctrinal teachings and moved on to *kanhwa* meditation practice, which could lead him to the final enlightenment. Hyujōng advocated “*sagyō ipsōn*” as a soteriological regimen to resolve the tension between Sōn and Kyo.

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<sup>197</sup> *Sōn’ga kwigam*, HPC 7, 626c13-15.

<sup>198</sup> Buswell 1999: 155.

<sup>199</sup> *Sōn’ga kwigam*, HPC 7, 627a2-6: the translation is from Buswell 1999:152-153.

With this system, he promoted the balanced practice of the two forms of Buddhism within the Heze schema of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation.”

#### 4) The popularization of “*sagyo ipsŏn*” and the establishment of the monastic curriculum

As Hyujŏng’s lineage came to dominate the Chosŏn Buddhist community in the latter half of the dynasty, this system of “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sŏn” became the standard soteriology of Korean Sŏn Buddhism. Several masters in Hyujŏng’s lineage such as Hŏbaek Myŏngjo 虛白明照 (1593-1661), P’ungdam Ŭisim 楓潭義謹 (1592-1665), Muyong Suyŏn 無用秀演 (1651-1719), and Chewŏl Kyŏnghŏn 霽月敬軒 (1544-1633) cultivated themselves and guided their students in accord with this system.<sup>200</sup> In particular, the memorial inscription of Kyŏnghŏn recorded his application of this system in training his students. According to the record, Kyŏnghŏn taught his students first to lay the foundation for subsequent training using the teachings of Zongmi’s *Duxu* and Chinul’s *Chŏryo*, and then cultivate the *kanhwa* technique through the teachings of Gaofeng’s *Chanyao* 禪要 and Dahui’s *Shuzhuang*.<sup>201</sup>

With the popularity of the system of *sagyo ipsŏn*, the interest in Zongmi and Chinul’s writings increased during this period. Several commentaries on these two masters’ major writings were published from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. Many of these commentaries focused on Zongmi’s *Duxu* and Chinul’s *Chŏryo*, the texts that advocated the schema of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation.” Following are the examples:

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<sup>200</sup> Chongbŏm 1989: 101-103.

<sup>201</sup> *Kyŏnghŏn taesa pimyŏng pyŏngsŏ* 敬軒大師碑銘并序, *Chosŏn pulgyo t’ongsa* 朝鮮佛教通史 1, 490; re-quoted from Chongbŏm 1989: 102.



Sangbong Chǒngwǒn 霜峯淨源 (1627-1709):

*Sǒnwǒn chejǒnjip tosǒ kwamun* 禪源諸詮集都序科文

*Chǒryo sagi punkwa* 節要私記分科

Sǒr'am Ch'ubung 雪岩秋鵬 (1651-1706):

*Sǒnwǒn chejǒnjip tosǒ kwap'yǒng* 禪源諸詮集都序科評

*Pǒpchip pyǒrhaengnok chǒryo sagi* 法集別行錄節要私記

Hoeam Chǒnghye 晦庵定慧 (1685-1741):

*Sǒnwǒn chip tosǒ ch'akpyǒng* 禪源集都序着柄

*Pyǒrhaengnok sagi hwajok* 別行錄私記畫足

*Pǒpchip pyǒrhaengnok chǒryo sagihae* 法集別行錄節要私記解

Yǒndam Yuil 蓮潭有一 (1720-1799):

*Tosǒ kwamok pyǒngip sagi* 都序科目并入私記

*Pǒpchip pyǒrhaengnok chǒryo kwamok pyǒngip sagi*

法集別行錄節要科目并入私記

The system of “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sǒn” was institutionalized in late Chosǒn as monks in Hyjong’s lineage established the monastic curriculum. The earliest extant record of the curriculum was Hyujǒng’s disciple Yǒngwǒl Ch’ǒnghak’s 詠月清學 (1570-1654) *Sajip sagyo chǒngdǔng yǒmsong hwaǒm* 四集四教傳燈拈頌華嚴.<sup>202</sup> The record divided the curriculum into three courses: (1) Fourfold Collection Course (*sajip kwa* 四集科); (2) Four Teachings Course (*sagyo kwa* 四教科); and (3) Great Teachings Course (*taegyo kwa* 大教科). The texts for these courses are as follows.

In the first, the Fourfold Collection Course, students read the four major texts of the Heze and Linji schools: Zongmi’s *Duxu*, Chinul’s *Chǒryo*, Gaofeng Yuanmiao’s *Chanyao*, and Dahui’s *Shuzhuang*. The second, the Four Teachings Course, taught the four cardinal scriptures of the Sino-Korean doctrinal tradition: the *Yuanjue jing* 圓覺經 (K. *Wǒn ’gak kyǒng*), the *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (C. *Jingang jing*, K. *Kǔmgang kyǒng* 金剛經), the *Śūramgama-sūtra* (C. *Lengyan jing*, K. *Nǔngǒm kyǒng* 楞嚴經), and the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-*

<sup>202</sup> HPC 8, 234b17-235b04; Kim 2008: 132.

*sūtra* (C. *Fahua jing*, K. *Pŏphwa kyŏng* 法華經). The third, the Great Teachings Course, covered the *Hwaŏm kyŏng* (C. *Huayan jing* 華嚴經) and the two large collections of the Chan lineages and *gong'an* episodes, the *Kyŏngdŏk chŏndŭng nok* (C. *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄) and Hyesim's *Sŏnmun yŏmsong* 禪門拈頌.<sup>203</sup>

The curriculum was characterized by its promotion of the harmony of Sŏn and Kyo. The three courses included some seminal texts of both Chan/Sŏn and Jiao/Kyo traditions. In particular, the Fourfold Collection Course, which was probably established first among the three, indicated the synthesis of the two Chan/Sŏn soteriologies: the list of the texts in the course suggests that the course was built on the soteriological model of “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sŏn.” With the establishment of this curriculum, Chosŏn Sŏn practice was firmly founded on the model of “*sagyo ipsŏn*,” in which the Linji *kanhua* technique was integrated into the Heze path of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation.”

#### 4. Concluding Remarks

The establishment of “relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sŏn” as the dominant soteriological model in late Chosŏn created a couple of problems with regard to the issue of Korean Sŏn identity. This model recognized both Sŏn and Kyo as the necessary elements of Sŏn soteriology and thus advocated the harmonious relationship between these two forms of Buddhism. However, Chosŏn Sŏn Buddhism defined its genealogical identity as the Imje (C. Linji) school by establishing T'aego Pou as the ancestor of the Korean Sŏn lineage. Chosŏn Sŏn Buddhism, therefore, employed two diametrically opposite brands of Sŏn in defining its

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<sup>203</sup> Publication of the texts in the curriculum, especially the four texts of the Four-fold Collection Course, had increased since early 17th century.

identity: it became a tradition that was genealogically Imje and soteriologically Hat'aek (C. Heze).

This “*sagyo ipsŏn*” system still limited the validity of Kyo in bringing about enlightenment even though it presented a balanced approach to Sŏn and Kyo. In this system, Kyo was considered necessary but preparatory because it was unable to achieve final perfect enlightenment on its own. As the monastic curriculum was established in late Chosŏn, this notion of Kyo subordination to Sŏn became the dominant and near-official view in the Chosŏn Buddhist community. This subordinate position of Kyo in Korean Sŏn soteriology inevitably generated tension with the Confucian literati's intellectual approach to Buddhism in late Chosŏn.

Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi attempted to resolve these issues by establishing their own taxonomies, in which they presented their different views on the relationship between Sŏn and doctrinal studies. In doing so, Paekp'a focused more on the first issue while Ch'oŭi focused more on the second.

### CHAPTER THREE. Linji's Teaching of

#### "Three Statements, Three Mysteries, and Three Essentials"

Both Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi looked to Linji's teaching of "the three statements, the three mysteries, and the three essentials" to legitimize the taxonomies through which they sought to embody their different visions of the Sŏn and Kyo relationship within the Korean Sŏn tradition. This chapter will examine how previous Chinese and Korean masters interpreted Linji's teaching in terms of the relationship between Chan/ Sŏn and the doctrinal teachings as well as how their interpretations influenced the taxonomies of Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi.

As shown in chapter two, the tension between Chan/ Sŏn and the doctrinal teachings (Jiao/ Kyo) revolved around the issue of the relationship between language and enlightenment, which could be encapsulated in the following question: whether a certain style of rhetoric is connected exclusively to a certain mode of experience of reality, or more specifically how the descriptive doctrinal language and the non-descriptive Chan/ Sŏn language are related to the experience of enlightenment. There was no unified view on this issue. Chan and Sŏn schools bifurcated largely into two different groups regarding the issue: One claimed that the doctrinal teachings were inferior to Chan/ Sŏn because the conceptual descriptions of the doctrinal teachings produced only intellectual understanding while non-conceptual Chan/ Sŏn rhetoric led directly to enlightenment; the other argued that Chan/ Sŏn and the doctrinal teachings were not different from each other because either of their rhetorical styles could equally lead to either enlightenment or delusion whether the rhetoric is conceptual or non-conceptual.

From the eleventh century when there was a movement to establish Chan and Sŏn as a tradition independent from the scriptural tradition, some Chinese and Korean masters turned to

an emblematic teaching of the eminent Tang Chan master LinjiYixuan 臨濟義玄 (d.867) to justify their positions on this age-old issue. Linji, the characteristic figure of the unconventional and iconoclastic branch of Chan and Sōn, is reputed to have taught the so-called “three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials” (*sanju sanxuan sanyao* 三句三玄三要) or simply “three mysteries and three essentials.”<sup>204</sup> Despite the retrospectively drawn image of Linji, this teaching appears rather theoretical though almost as incomprehensible as his other instructions, typified by such an unconventional and non-linguistic style as shouting and beating.<sup>205</sup> Since its first appearance in the *Jingde Chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 in 1009, the teaching had become well-known within the Chan and Sōn community, and was recorded in various texts. Despite its ambiguity, a few of the Sino-Korean masters deployed this teaching to develop a Chan and Sōn principle of language: the Chinese masters Fenyang Shanzhao 汾陽善昭 (947-1024), Jianfu Chenggu 薦福承古 (970-1045), and Juefan Huihong 覺範惠洪 (1071-1128) and the Korean masters Pojo Chinul 普照知訥 (1158–1210) and Chinjōng Ch’ōnch’aek 眞靜天頌 (fl. 13<sup>th</sup> century) were such masters. They discussed Linji’s teaching in relation to the above-mentioned question, along with the related question of the teaching’s

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<sup>204</sup> There are several Buddhist texts that record Linji’s acts and words. To name a few, the *Zongjing lu* 98 (compiled in 961) T2016.48.943c08-24, the *Song Gaoseng chuan* 12 (988) T2061.50.779a26-b05, the *Chuanfa zhengzong ji* 7 (1061) T2078.51.753c27-754a29, the *Jianzhong jingguo xudenglu* 1 (1101) X1556.78.646a13-a16, the *Rentian yanmu* 1 (1188) T2006.48.300a25-306c05, the *Liandeng huiyao* 9 (1189) X1557.79.81a05-90a22, the *Wudeng huiyuan* 11 (1252) X1565.80.220c08-223b04, the *Wujia zhengzong zan* 2 (1254) X1554.78.584c06-585b03, the *Fozu lidai tognzai* 17 (1333) T2036.49.643b04-c21, the *Chanzong zhengpai* 6 (1489) X1593.85.461a07-463a15, the *Zhiyue lu* 14 (1602) X1578.83.549b21-563b01, the *Wudeng yantong* 11 (1653) X1569.81.24c08-27b04, the *Wudeng quanshu* 21 (1693) X1571.81.599c18-602b23.

<sup>205</sup> According to Powell, Linji gives more emphasis on traditional doctrines than Dongshan; Linji also favors a lecture setting for educating students over such unconventional settings as a work place favored by Dongshan. For details of comparison and contrast between the *Dongshan yulu* and the *Linji lu*, see Powell 1982: 114-148.

universality. In their discussions, they provided their own interpretations of the teaching based on their positions regarding these questions.

In this chapter, I will explore these masters' interpretations of Linji's teaching. I will first deal with the Chinese discourse that laid the foundation for their further explorations of Linji's teaching and then turn to the Korean interpretations, which provided more comprehensive perspectives on the teaching and had more direct influence on the nineteenth century Korean Sŏn debate.

### 1. Linji's Teaching of "Three Statements, Three Mysteries, and Three Essentials"

Linji's teaching of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials" is related to his following dharma hall sermons.

① The master took the high seat in the hall.  
A monk asked, "What about the First Statement?" The master said:  
The seal of the three essentials being lifted,  
the vermilion impression is sharp;  
With no room for speculation, host and guest are clear and distinct.  
"What about the Second Statement?" The master said:  
How could Miaojie permit Wuzhuo's questioning?  
How could expedient means go against the activity that cuts through the stream?  
"What about the Third Statement?" The master said:  
Look at the wooden puppets performing on the stage!  
Their jumps and jerks all depend upon the person behind.  
The master further said, "Each Statement must comprise the Gates of the Three Mysteries, and the gate of each Mystery must comprise the Three Essentials.  
There are expedients and there is functioning. How do all of you understand this?"  
The master then stepped down from his seat.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> *Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao Chanshi yulu* 鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄: T1985.47.497a15-21. The translation is quoted from Sasaki 2009: 144-148. This sermon is not included in all the Linji lu texts available in the Song period. A few Chan works of this time record the Linji lu texts with small variations, which became the sources of the later versions: (1) the *Zutang ji*, compiled in 952; (2) the *Jingde Chuandeng lu* (*Record of the Transmission of the Lamp compiled in the Jingde era*) in 1009; (3) *The Tiansheng Guangdeng lu* (*Expanded Lamp Record compiled in the Tiansheng era*) in 1029; (4) the *Sijia yulu* (*Records of Sayings of Four Masters*) in 1085; (5) the *Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao Chanshi yulu* (*Recorded Sayings of Chan Master Linji Huizhao of Zhenzhou*) in 1120. The sermon ① is recorded

上堂 僧問 如何是第一句 師云三要印開朱點側 未容擬議主賓分  
問如何是第二句 師云 妙解豈容無著問 漚和爭負截流機  
問如何是第三句 師云 看取棚頭弄傀儡 抽牽都來裏有人 師又云  
一句語須具三玄門 一玄門須具三要 有權有用 汝等諸人作麼生會 下座。

② Someone asked “What about the true Buddha, the true dharma, and the true Way? We beg of you to disclose this for us.”

The master said,

“Buddha is the mind’s purity; Dharma is the mind’s radiance; the Way is the pure light pervading everywhere without hindrance. The three are one, yet all are empty names and have no real existence. With the true man of the Way, moment after moment his mind is not interrupted. From the time the great teacher Bodhidharma came from the Western Land, he just sought a person who would not accept the deluded views of others. Later, he met the Second Patriarch, who, having understood [Bodhidharma’s] one word, for the first time realized that hitherto he had been futilely engaged in striving. As for my understanding today, it’s no different from that of the patriarch-buddhas. He who attains at the First Statement becomes a teacher along with patriarch-buddhas; he who attains at the Second Statement becomes the teacher of men and gods; he who attains at the Third Statement cannot save even himself.”<sup>207</sup>

問如何是真佛真法真道 乞垂開示 師云 佛者心清淨是 法者心光明是 道者處處無礙淨光是 三即一皆是空名 而無寔有 如真正學道人 念念心不間斷 自達磨大師從西土來 祇是覓箇不受人惑底人 後遇二祖 一言便了 始知從前 虛用功夫 山僧今日見處與祖佛不別 若第一句中得 與祖佛為師 若第二句中得 與人天為師 若第三句中得自救不了。

Without any commentarial help, construing the meaning of Linji’s teaching of “three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials,” like all gong’an cases, is difficult. The ambiguity of Linji’s original teaching inevitably led to a few different interpretations.

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only in the Linji lu versions within the *Chuangdeng lu* and the *Linji Chanshi yulu* while never mentioned both in the *Zutang ji* and the *Sijia yulu* versions. The *Guangdeng lu* does not record the sermon in the section for Linji, but in that for Fengxue Yanzhao 風穴延沼 (896-973).

<sup>207</sup> *Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao Chanshi yulu* T1985.47.501c28-502a07. The translation is quoted with small changes (in italic) from Sasaki 2009: 264. This sermon is included in the Linjilu versions from the *Guangdeng lu*, the *Linji chanshi yulu*, and the *Sijia yulu* with little variations. The *Linji chanshi yulu*, compiled in 1085, is the earliest text which contains both sermons on the teaching of “three statements, three mysteries and three essentials.” Both above-quoted sermons, however, were probably well-known within the Linji lineage, if not within the entire Chan community, around the compilation of the *Guangdeng lu* in 1039.

## 2. Discussion on Linji's Teaching in China

### 1) Fenyang Shanzhao

The fourth-generation Linji master Fenyang Shanzhao 汾陽善昭 (947-1024) is the first in Chan history to deal with Linji's teaching of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials." Fenyang, well-known for his *Songgu daibie* 頌古代別, the first gong'an collection, made poetic comments to the teaching, reflecting the spirit of the "literary-Chan" style that prevailed in the Song Chan community. In his comments, recorded in the *Fenyang wude chanshi yulu* 汾陽無德禪師語錄 and the *Rentian yanmu* 人天眼目 without significant variations, he showed that Linji's teaching related to the Chan view of language. The two texts provide Fenyang's comment to each of the mysteries and the essentials, though they offer no explanation for his omission of the three statements. Below are Fenyang's comments from the *Rentian yanmu*, the six-fascicle text compiled by Huian Zhizhao 晦庵智昭 (fl. 12<sup>th</sup> century) in 1188.

Later, the master Fenyang raised the old case, asking,  
"What are the phrases of three mysteries and three essentials?  
A monk asked, "What is the first mystery?"  
The master answered,  
"[The Buddha] directly entrusted [his dharma] to Drinker of Light [i.e. Kāśyapa]."...  
A monk asked, "What is the second mystery?"  
The master answered,  
"Severing characteristics and departing from words and sentences."...  
A monk asked, "What is the third mystery?"  
The master answered, "A bright mirror illuminates impartially."<sup>208</sup>

後來汾陽昭和尚 因舉前話乃云 那箇是三玄三要底句 僧問如何是第一玄 汾陽云親  
囑飲光前...如何是第二玄 汾云絕相離言詮...如何是第三玄 汾云明鏡照無偏。

[A monk asked,] "What is the first essential?"  
The master answered, "There is no fabrication in words."...

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<sup>208</sup> *Rentian yanmu* 1, T2006.48.302a03-09; *Fenyang wude chanshi yulu* 1, T1992.47.603b02-04.



[A monk asked,] “What is the second essential?”  
The master answered, “A thousand sages enter into the mysterious and profound.”...  
[A monk asked,] “What is the third essential?”  
The master answered,  
“Outside the tetralemma and a hundred negations, one fully treads the path of  
Hanshan.”<sup>209</sup>

如何是第一要 汾云言中無作造...如何是第二要 汾云千聖入玄奧...如何是第三要  
汾云四句百非外盡踏寒山道。

Fenyang appears to treat Linji’s teaching as one of the gong’an cases: he raised the old case of Linji’s teaching to test his students. Then, without any proper response from the students, he presented his verse-comments to demonstrate his spiritual authority and show his understanding of the teaching, an understanding probably regarded as equivalent to Linji’s. As such, Fenyang’s comments on the three mysteries and the three essentials are as cryptic as Linji’s original case. We can hardly understand what his comments really mean. Even though we might guess the meanings of some of the verses, our speculations raise more questions than answers. For example, Fenyang’s comment on the first mystery, “the Buddha directly entrusted [his dharma] to Drinker of Light,” could be interpreted as describing the fact that the truth is ineffable and thus can be attained and transmitted only through direct insight beyond the purview of language. However, determining whether such an interpretation is correct or why such a comment is applied to the first mystery rather than any other mystery or essential is difficult. Furthermore, Fenyang’s two other comments seem to carry a similar implication: to the second mystery, “severing characteristics and departing from words and statements,” and to the third essential, “Outside the tetralemma and a hundred negations, one fully treads the path Hanshan.” We could not know for sure whether Fenyang’s three comments mean that the first mystery, the

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<sup>209</sup> *Rentian yanmu* 1, T2006.48.302a11-16; *Fenyang wude chanshi yulu* 1, T1992.47.603b12-15. Here, the exact meaning of “Hanshan” (寒山) is uncertain. It could refer to the legendary Zen poet Hanshan during the Tang dynasty; it might also generically refer to cold mountains.

second mystery, and the third essential all refer to the inadequacy of language; neither can we know how they might be different if they have different meanings. This uncertainty might be intentional. Fenyang might have composed his verse-comments to Linji's teaching not only to show his understanding but also to deny a theoretical and conceptual approach to the teaching.

However, despite the lack of any conceptual account, Fenyang's comments reveal that Linji's teaching is connected to the Chan view of language. As mentioned above, some, if not all, of Fenyang's comments indicate the inadequacy of language to describe reality as it is. Another of his verse-comments, more famous later within Chan circles, even addresses a more complex Chan view of language beyond simple negation:

The matters of the three mysteries and the three essentials  
are difficult to discern;  
One who is able to get the meaning and forgets the words  
is easily intimate with the *Way*;  
One statement brightly illuminates all the myriad forms;  
On the ninth day of Chongyang [festival]  
the chrysanthemums' blossoms are new.<sup>210</sup>

三玄三要事難分 得意忘言道易親 一句明明該萬象 重陽九日菊花新。

Fenyang suggested that the teaching embodied Chan recognition of the two opposite aspects of language. Citing from the *Zhuangzi* in the second line, he expressed the fundamental inadequacy of language as a medium for expressing reality as suchness.<sup>211</sup> He announced that language was inadequate or insufficient for attaining the *Way*. However, immediately

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<sup>210</sup> *Rentian yanmu* 1, T2006.48.302b01-02; *Fenyang wude chanshi yulu* 1, T1992.47.597b07-08. This verse-comment is also recorded in the *Linji zongzhi* (X1234.63.168a4-5). The translation is quoted from Keyworth 2001: 172-173 with small changes (in Italics).

<sup>211</sup> The phrase "one who gets the meaning and forgets the words" (*deyi wangyan* 得意忘言) is from the *Zhuangzi* 26.

afterward, in the third line, Fenyang turned to the affirmation of language, claiming that language could fully manifest the reality of the phenomenal realm.

Even though his comments do not provide much to help in understanding Linji's teaching, Fenyang showed that the teaching related to the Chan recognition of the dual nature of language, which conceals and discloses reality simultaneously.

## 2) Jianfu Chenggu

The second-generation Yunmen master Jianfu Chenggu 薦福承古 (970-1045) took a more conceptual approach to Linji's teaching, focusing particularly on the three mysteries, which he believed were shared by all Buddhist traditions. He looked at the teaching through the lens of the hierarchical relationship between Chan and Jiao on the basis of their different rhetorical styles.

Chenggu supposed three different levels in the linguistic and non-linguistic expressions used within Chan circles. Each level of expressions corresponds to a specific style of the Chan and doctrinal rhetoric. He correlated these three levels of expressions to the three mysteries, which he designated for the first time in Chan history as the “mystery in the essence” (*tizhongxuan* 體中玄), the “mystery in the word” (*juzhongxuan* 句中玄), and the “mystery in the mystery” (*xuanzhongxuan* 玄中玄). According to him, these three mysteries constitute the three sequential soteriological stages from the first through the second to the third mystery.

Chenggu claimed that the “mystery in the essence” referred to the expressions based on such doctrinal theories as mind-only (*weixin* 唯心), consciousness-only (*weishi* 唯識), and tathāgatagarbha. In particular, the expressions that are reminiscent of the Huayan teaching of

“non-obstructed interpenetration of myriad phenomena” (*shishi wuai* 事事無礙) characterize this first mystery. Chenggu gave the following examples:

(1) Shuiliao, after being kicked and knocked down by Mazu, stood up and said, “On the tip of a hair, I’ve understood the source of myriad forms and hundred thousands of wondrous meanings;”

(2) A monk asked Zhaozhou, “What is the self of a student of the Way?” Zhaozhou answered, “Mountains, streams, and the earth.”<sup>212</sup>

水潦被馬祖一踏踏倒 起曰萬象森羅 百千妙義 只向一毫上 便識得根源 僧問趙州 如何是學人自己 州對曰山河大地。

Chenggu called these descriptions “words that wrap up the gist [of the doctrines]” (C. *hetou yu*, K. *Haptu ō* 合頭語). According to him, these descriptions are of only secondary importance in the Buddhist soteriological path: they might help the sentient beings receive favorable rebirths in *saṃsāra* by removing evil behavior but fail to release them from the endless cycle of birth-and-death and thus not lead to enlightenment.<sup>213</sup> For, as Chenggu explained, people who only understand the mystery in the essence are trapped in a dualistic mode of thinking: such people retain their own sense of right and wrong so that they want each and every statement to correspond to the teachings of the three vehicles and properly carry the Huayan principle of interpenetration. If a statement does so, they regard it as perfect; if not, they dismiss it as partial.<sup>214</sup> According to Chenggu, because the mystery in the essence is a description that binds one to words and letters, other types of words are necessary to overcome such tendency.

For Chenggu, the mystery in the word refers to types of words that help remove dualistic thinking. He referred to this second mystery as words with few doctrinal concepts, thus more

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<sup>212</sup> *Chanlin sengbao chuan*12, X1560.79.516b16-18.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, X1560.79.516b19.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, X1560.79.517a09-13.

direct expressions to the truth. The following are the few examples Chenggu presented for this second mystery:

- (1) A monk asked Qingyuan Xingsi, “What is the ultimate meaning of the Buddha-Dharma?” Qingyuan answered, “How much is rice in Luling?”
- (2) A monk asked Zhaozhou, “I have heard that you have personally seen Nanquan. Is this true or not?” [The master] answered, “Zhenzhou produces big radishes.”
- (3) [A monk] asked Yunmen, “What is talk that goes beyond Buddhas and patriarchs?” [The master] answered, “A pancake;”
- (4) [A monk] asked Dongshan again, “What is the Buddha?” [The master] answered, “Three catties of flax.”<sup>215</sup>

僧問思和尚如何是佛法大意 答曰廬陵米作麼價 又僧問趙州 承聞和尚親見南泉來 是否 答曰鎮州出大蘿蔔頭 又問雲門 如何是超佛越祖之談 答曰餠餅又問洞山 如何是佛 答曰麻三斤。

Chenggu called these expressions “no-response words” (*buda hua* 不答話) because a Chan master gave no direct answer to his student’s question, intentionally replying with an irrelevant answer.<sup>216</sup> Such words are intended to help a student escape from the cage of concepts just as one “removes nails and wedges so that [a bird] could escape from a cage” (去釘楔脫籠頭).<sup>217</sup> Chenggu asserted that this type of language still can not lead to enlightenment because it does not remove all conceptual defilements, even though it is less reliant on concepts than the mystery in the essence. However, in Chenggu’s view, this second mystery might be more harmful than the first mystery, for the mystery in the word could threaten the very existence of Chan. He argued that the Chan way of teaching was withering because this type of words was so widespread within Chan community, in particular, within the Linji and the Yunmen schools.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> *Chanlin sengbao chuan* 12, X1560.79.516c14-18.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, X1560.79.516c22-23.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, X1560.79.516c20.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, X1560.79.516c23 and X1560.79.517a13-a15.

Chenggu criticized the Chan masters of both schools as being satisfied with the mystery in the word, and thus still entrapped by words. Chenggu's first two types of mysteries, therefore, do not overcome the harmful effects of language. According to Chenggu, one needs another type of expression to remove all traces of language in order to reach enlightenment.

The third and final type of mystery Chenggu called the mystery in the mystery. He considered this third mystery to be non-linguistic expressions, such as shouting, beating, and silence. Chenggu offered the following examples:

(1) A non-Buddhist asked the Buddha, "I do not ask about words, I do not ask about wordlessness." The World-Honored One remained silent. The non-Buddhist said, "The World-Honored One in his great compassion enabled me to gain entrance into [Enlightenment] by opening the clouds of my delusion."

(2) Linji asked Huangbo, "What is the great meaning of the Buddhadharma?" [Linji] asked three times and was hit [by Huangbo] three times.<sup>219</sup>

外道問佛 不問有言 不問無言 世尊良久 外道曰 世尊大慈大悲 開我迷雲令我得入...臨濟問黃檗 如何是佛法的的大意 三問三被打。

For Chenggu, the mystery in the mystery directly reveals the truth without the medium of language, overcomes all defilements originating from one's attachment to language, and thus leads to enlightenment.

Chenggu set up the sequential stages of a spiritual path in which one approaches genuine spriritual realization of the truth by advancing from the mystery in the essence through the mystery in the word to the mystery in the mystery. In this schema, the first mystery corresponds to Jiao and the second and the third to Chan, as shown in Chenggu's following remark.

The words, phrases, and dharma-teachings of all the Buddhas of past, present, and future derive from the mystery in the essence; the words, phrases, and dharma-teachings of all the patriarchs of past, present, and future derive from the mystery in the word; the

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid., X1560.79.517a01-03 and X1560.79.517a06.

dharma-mind of the Buddhas and the patriarchs in ten directions in past, present, and future derives from the mystery in the mystery.<sup>220</sup>

三世諸佛 所有言句教法 出自體中玄 三世祖師 所有言句并教法 出自句中玄  
十方三世佛之與祖 所有心法 出自玄中玄.

Hence, Chenggu's sequential scheme for the three mysteries suggests Chan superiority over Jiao: Jiao guides adepts to enter into the path to enlightenment but produces conceptual defilements that hinder enlightenment, while Chan leads directly to the genuine spiritual goal by removing such defilements.

Chenggu elsewhere made one important remark in relation to the universality of the teaching of the three mysteries:

This Dharma-gate of the three mysteries is the Buddhas' insight (*jñāna-darśana*). All the Buddhas liberate sentient beings within the Dharma-realms and help them attain enlightenment through this Dharma-gate. People of nowadays rather say that the three mysteries are the style of the Linji school (*jiafeng*). This is wrong!<sup>221</sup>

此三玄法門是佛知見 諸佛以此法門 度脫法界眾生 皆令成佛 今人卻言  
三玄是臨濟門風 誤矣.

Here, Chenggu argued that the three mysteries are the universal teaching, not exclusively belonging to the Linji school, because they are the soteriological tool employed by all the Buddhas, and probably by extension, all enlightened masters. For him, to start with Jiao and continue with Chan is the universal path to enlightenment. Hence, the three mysteries that represent this path should also be universal.

Chenggu's naming of the three mysteries in terms of essence, word, and mystery was generally accepted within the Chan and Sōn community, whether or not others agreed with his correlation of specific rhetoric to each of the mysteries. However, his subjugation of Jiao to

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid., X1560.79.517b18-20.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., X1560.79.516a22-a24.

Chan as well as his denial of Linji's exclusive association with the mysteries is severely criticized by Huihong, the second-generation master of the Huanglong branch of the Linji school.

### 3) Juefan Huihong

The Linji master Juefan Huihong 覺範惠洪 (1071-1128) treated Linji's teaching in a few of his writings such as the *Zhizheng chuan* 智證傳, the *Linji zongzhi* 臨濟宗旨, the *Linjian lu* 林間錄, and the *Chanlin sengbao chuan* 禪林僧寶傳. In these writings, he focused mainly on criticizing Chenggu's analysis of the teaching rather than providing his own account. However, Huihong's criticism reveals his view on the relationship between Chan and Jiao, even though it is far from systematic and sometimes even self-contradictory.

One of Huihong's main criticisms of Chenggu's accounts for the teaching is related to Chenggu's hierarchical view of Chan and Jiao. Huihong criticized Chenggu as follows:

[When I] look at [Chenggu's] establishment of the three mysteries, [he] divides [the mysteries] into the essence, the word, and the mystery. When he comes to talk about the three essentials, he does not analyze them; he rather scolds students for falling into intellectual views and of being unable to realize the Way. However, when he interprets the phrase, "a statement comprises [the three mysteries and] the three essentials," he rather quotes the meanings from the *the Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, the *Śūraṅgama-sūtra*, the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*, etc, and says, "Nature and Principle are limitless; phenomena and forms are limitless; they are put together but not mixed. They are mixed but not the same..." How could "speaking of principle" and "speaking of phenomena" not be intellectual views? Since the vehicle of Jiao already has these meanings, why is there a need to establish a school (*zongmen*) again? Since Chenggu's pride goes above people, he disparaged the vehicle of Jiao as intellectual views.<sup>222</sup>

見立三玄 則分以為體中為句中為玄中 至言三要則獨不分辯乎 方譏呵學者 溺於知見 不能悟道 及釋一句之中具三要則 反引金剛首楞嚴維摩等義證成曰 性理無邊 事相無邊 參而不雜混而不一...夫敘理敘事 豈非知見乎 且教乘既具此則 安用復立宗門 古以氣蓋人則毀教乘為知見。

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<sup>222</sup> *Chanlin sengbao chuan* 12, X1560.79.517c15-21.



Huihong's criticism of Chenggu is in fact two-fold. He first criticized Chenggu as self-contradictory because Chenggu employed doctrinal teachings for the three essentials to which Chenggu himself argued intellectual views should never be applied. The more serious reason for Huihong's criticism of Chenggu is that Chenggu subjugated Jiao to Chan. As seen before, Chenggu regarded the mystery in the essence, which could correspond to Jiao, as the lowest level of the three mysteries because it gives rise to conceptual defilements, which eventually should be removed by such Chan expressions as the mystery in the word and the mystery in the mystery. Such a subjugative position for Jiao is problematic to Huihong, who advocated the unity of Chan and Jiao. Even though Huihong was a zealous advocate of literary Chan, he emphasized the continuity of Chan and the scholastic traditions. Huihong even argued that the Chinese patriarchs relied on the scriptural teachings just as had the Indian patriarchs and that "not positing written words" and "special transmission outside the teachings" would not be the way of the patriarchs.<sup>223</sup> From this vantage point, Huihong condemned Chenggu's analysis as seriously defective, which derives from ignorance and hubris.<sup>224</sup>

Another of Huihong's criticisms of Chenggu's account of Linji's teaching focuses on Chenggu's denial of this teaching's exclusive association with the Linji school. In fact, Huihong is somewhat ambiguous and even self-contradictory on this issue. On the one hand, Huihong argued that "the three mysteries and the three essentials" were Linji's teaching, which distinguished the Linji school from the rest of the Chan schools. In the *Linji zongzhi* and the *Chanlin sengbao chuan*, he accused Chenggu of arguing without foundation that the teaching of

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<sup>223</sup> Keyworth 2001: 292

<sup>224</sup> Despite such his criticism of Chenggu, Huihong used Chenggu's names for the three mysteries except for the third mystery, which Huihong called the "mystery in the meaning" (*yizhong xuan* 意中玄), instead of the "mystery in the mystery."

the three mysteries did not belong to the Linji school. According to Huihong, Chenggu denied the Linji school's exclusive claim for the teaching because Chenggu mistakenly correlated it with the teaching of Xuansha Shibei 玄沙師備 (835-908), a monk who is not affiliated with the Linji school.<sup>225</sup> Huihong went on to say that such Chenggu's account should be condemned as wrong.<sup>226</sup> On the other hand, Huihong argued the opposite. In the *Linjian lu*, he claimed that Linji was not the only master to teach the three mysteries and the three essentials. According to Huihong, Shitou Xiqian 石頭希遷 (700-790) also taught them, employing the different set of terms “brightness” (*ming* 明) and “darkness” (*an* 暗) for the “mystery” and the “essential,” respectively.<sup>227</sup> Since Shitou is the master to whom schools other than the Linji traced back their lineages, Huihong's remark in the *Linjiann lu* implies that the other Chan schools share the teaching of the three mysteries and the three essentials. Such Huihong's apparent inconsistency in this issue damages the credibility of his views on the three mysteries. In fact, the early Qing

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<sup>225</sup> *Linji zongzhi* X1234.63.168c03; *Chanlin sengbao chuan* 12 X1560.79.517c7-8. In the *Linji zongzhi*, Chenggu's three mysteries correspond to the three phrases of Xuansha Shibei whose dharma son is Fayan Wenyi 法眼文益 (885-958), the alleged founder of the Fayan school. Xuansha's three phrases in the *Linji zongzhi* are excerpted from the *Chanlin sengbao chuan* 4 X1560.79.499c19-500a12. Huihong's analyses of Xuansha's three phrases in relation to Chenggu's three mysteries are different in the *Linji zongzhi* and in the *Linjian lu*. In the *Linji zongzhi*, Huihong correlates the first, the second, and the third mysteries to Xuansha's third, first, and second phrases, respectively. However, in the *Linjian lu*, he only employs Xuansha's first phrase to explain the third line of Fenyang's famous verse-comment for Linji's teaching, the line which Chenggu connects to the first mystery. For Huihong's analysis of Xuansha's three phrases in relation to the three mysteries in the *Linji zongzhi*, see the *Linji zongzhi* X1234.63.168c05-13. For Huihong's explanations of Fenyang's verse-comment in the *Linjian lu*, see *Linjian lu* 3 X1624.87.263c13-c19.

<sup>226</sup> *Linji zongzhi* X1234.63.168c04.

<sup>227</sup> According to Huihong, such a set of brightness-darkness appears in Shitou's Cantong qi 參同契. For Huihong's comparison of the mystery and the essential to Shitou's brightness and darkness, see *Linjian lu* 3 X1624.87.263b20-c04.

Caodong master Yongjue Yuanxian 永覺元賢 (1578-1657) severely attacked and dismissed Huihong's accounts of the three mysteries and the three essentials as disrupting the Way.<sup>228</sup>

Although Huihong provided little systematic explanation of Linji's teaching, his criticism of Chenggu's subjugation of Jiao to Chan reveals his vision that Chan and Jiao are equivalent to each other.

### 3. Discussion on Linji's Teaching in Korea

#### 1) Pojo Chinul

Pojo Chinul (1158–1210) regarded Chenggu's analysis for the three mysteries as an independent soteriological schema by rejecting its relevance to Linji's teaching. Chinul accepted Chenggu's interpretation of the three mysteries as sequential stages along the path to enlightenment and brought another factor into consideration: he looked at this schema of the three mysteries in relation to *kanhwa* Sōn practice. As shown in chapter two, Chinul was rather ambiguous in his treatment of the *kanhwa* technique: he placed the technique within his soteriological scheme of "sudden enlightenment/ gradual cultivation" in the *Exerpts* while treating it as a special technique separate from this schemain the *Kanhwa kyōrūi ron*. Such ambiguity of the position of the *kanhwa* technique in Chinul's soteriology certainly affects his analysis of the three mysteries. In fact, he presented three different configurations for the three mysteries and *kanhwa* Sōn, each of which is outlined in the *Wōndon sōngbullon*, the *Chōryo*, and the *Kanhwa kyōrūi ron*.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> *Sanxuan kao (Inquiry into the Three Mysteries 三玄考)*, *Yongjue heshang guanglu* 16 X1437.72.480b02-04.

<sup>229</sup> Chōng Yōng-sik also argues that though Chinul was influenced by Chenggu in explaining the three mysteries, Chinul's analysis is different from Chenggu's because Chinul included *kanhwa* practice in his

(1) *Wōndon sōngbullon*

Chinul explained the three mysteries without mentioning *kanhwa* Sōn in the *Wōndon sōngbullon*, published posthumously. Although he accepted most of Chenggu’s account of the three mysteries, Chinul revealed one significant difference. He denied the connection between Chenggu’s accounts for the three mysteries and Linji’s three mysteries.<sup>230</sup>

In Sōn, there are three mysterious gates: first, the mystery in the essence; second, the mystery in the word; third, the mystery in the mystery. The mystery in the essence is the approach to dharma which demonstrates the unimpeded interpenetration of all phenomena...It is a preliminary approach for inducing an awakening in those of beginning potential. Since this approach has not yet abandoned understanding based on the verbal teachings, the mystery in the word is employed. These words have no traces, are ordinary, have a cleansing effect, and eliminate grasping so that students can suddenly forget their conceptual understanding and knowledge of the Buddha-dharma. But since this approach also involves cleansing knowledge and vision and cleansing words and phrases, the mystery – the use of pauses, silence, the staff, and the Sōn shout – is also employed in training. When this last approach is used, one can suddenly forget the cleansing knowledge and vision and the cleansing words and phrases of the second mysterious gate...This is called the sudden realization of the *dharmadhātu*. (*Even though the three mysteries here are not Linji’s original intent, I have nevertheless elucidated them following the intent of the master Chenggu.*) [Italics mine]”<sup>231</sup>

禪有三玄門 一體中玄 二句中玄三玄中玄 初體中玄門...事事無碍法門以 爲初機悟入之門 此亦是言教中 解分未忘 故以句中玄 無跡平常洒落言句 令其破執頓忘佛法知解也 此亦有洒落知見 洒落言句 故以玄中玄 良久默然棒喝作用鍛鍊 當此之時 頓忘前來第二玄門洒落知見 洒落言句...是謂頓證法界處也 (此中三玄 雖非臨際本意 且順古師之意明之).

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analysis for the mysteries. However, Chōng only deals with Chinul’s accounts for the three mysteries in the *Wōndon sōngbullon* and the *Kanhwa kyōrū ron* and argues that Chinul’s position is rather consistent in his analysis for the three mysteries and *kanhwa* practice, which is revealed in the latter text. For details, see Chōng Yōng-sik 2009: 21-29.

<sup>230</sup> Chōng admits that Chinul denied the relevance of Chenggu’s accounts to Linji’s three mysteries. However, Chōng still correlates Chinul’s analysis to Linji’s three mysteries. See, *ibid*: 21-31.

<sup>231</sup> *Wōndon sōngbullon*, HPC 4, 728b16-c3: translation is quoted from Buswell 1983: 214, except the italic portion. In the text Buswell used for his translation, this interlinear note does not appear.

Chinul's explanation of the three mysteries is identical to Chenggu's. Chinul regarded the three mysteries as a process in which one begins his Buddhist practice with the doctrinal understanding and subsequently turns to more Sŏn style of practices to remove conceptual defilements and to attain enlightenment. More importantly, however, in the *Wŏndon sŏngbullon*, he asserted that Chenggu's account of the three mysteries is not Linji's original intent even though Chenggu presented his accounts as explaining Linji's three mysteries. Hence, Chinul pointed out that Chenggu must have misunderstood Linji's three mysteries as the Qing master Yuanxian criticized Chenggu.<sup>232</sup> Since Chinul provided no explanation for Linji's three mysteries in any of his writings, it is impossible to know how Chinul understood Linji's three mysteries. In the *Wŏndon sŏngbullon*, Chinul categorically stated that his account of the three mysteries was based on that of Chenggu, not Linji's original teaching.

## (2) *Chŏryo*

Chinul presented his unique interpretation of the three mysteries in the *Chŏryo*, the interpretation that was later connected by Paekp'a to Linji's teaching. In the *Chŏryo*, Chinul intergrated the *kanhwa* technique into the three mysteries, laying out his soteriological path.

Chinul regarded the mystery in the essence as a preliminary and yet necessary stage in this path. According to Chinul, conceptual understanding, acquired through the mystery in the essence, enables one to “discern clearly the mind's true and false aspects, its arising and ceasing, and its essential and secondary features” 決擇自心眞妄生死本末了然.<sup>233</sup> Even though a

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<sup>232</sup> Yuanxian criticized both Chenggu and Huihong of misunderstanding Linji's three mysteries. For Yuanxian's criticism of Chenggu and Huihong's accounts for the mysteries, see the *Sanxuan kao*, the *Yongjue heshang guanglu* 16 X1437.72.477c18-480b19.

<sup>233</sup> *Pŏpchip pyŏrhaeng nok chŏryo pyŏngip sagi*, HPC 4, 766a 02-03: The translation is from Buswell 1983: 339.

practitioner could skip the mystery in the essence and enter directly into the mystery in the word, he might arouse defilements when in contact with the various phenomena without attaining the correct understanding of the self and the world through the mystery in the essence. However, since the mystery in the essence inevitably generates its own conceptual defilements, another mystery should be administered.

Chinul introduced the *kanhwa* technique as the mystery in the word. However, his introduction changed the meanings of both the mystery in the word and the mystery in the mystery. Chinul said the following, quoting Dahui's explanation of the technique:

Dahui said further, “Zhaozhou’s *hwadu*, ‘a dog has no Buddha-nature,’ must be kept raised before you regardless of whether you are joyful or angry, calm or disturbed. It is of prime importance not to set your mind on expecting an awakening...When you raise the *hwadu*, you must put your spirits in good order and inquire, ‘what is the meaning of this?’” ...this will enable men to remove the nails and pull out the pegs and to free themselves from the bridle and yoke. If you can attend carefully to your investigation, you will be able to cleanse away the preceding defects of conceptual understanding concerning the Buddha-dharma. Then you will reach the ultimate stage of peace and happiness.<sup>234</sup>

又云趙州狗子無佛性話 喜怒靜鬧 亦須提撕 第一不得用意等悟...但舉話頭時 略料擲精神 看是箇甚麼道理...能與人去釘拔楔 脫籠頭卸角馱 若善能叅詳 可以淨盡前來佛法知解之病 到究竟安樂之地也。

Chinul revealed his unique view of the last two mysteries. Chinul's second mystery, *kanhwa* Sŏn, removes the conceptual defilements completely, not partially, as in Chenggu's description of his second mystery; not only that, it also leads to a genuine enlightenment. Chinul argued that through the investigation of the *hwadu*, i.e., the mystery in the word, one comes to have complete mastery himself over the realm of birth and death.<sup>235</sup> He went on to say that once

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<sup>234</sup> *Pŏpchip pyŏrhaeng nok chŏryo pyŏngip sagi*, HPC 4, 765c14-766a01: The translation is quoted from Buswell 1983: 338.

<sup>235</sup> *Pŏpchip pyŏrhaeng nok chŏryo pyŏngip sagi*, HPC 4, 766a03-06.

such mastery is attained, “the mystery in the mystery...will naturally come to exist therein” (玄中玄...自然在基中矣).<sup>236</sup> Hence, for Chinul, the mystery in the mystery does not refer to such non-linguistic expressions as silence and shouts to further remove conceptual defilements. It rather refers to the realm of enlightenment, attained by the mystery in the word. In this way, Chinul presented his soteriological path in which one lays the foundation for one’s practice with doctrinal descriptions of suchness (the mystery in the essence) and moves on to the *kanhwa* technique (the mystery in the word), which will remove all the conceptual defilements and eventually lead to enlightenment (the mystery in the mystery). This path of the three mysteries fits well in his scheme of “sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation”: the mystery in the essence corresponds to “understanding awakening”; the mystery in the word to “gradual cultivation”; finally, the mystery in the mystery to “realization awakening.”

### (3) *Kanhwa kyörüi ron*

The integration of *kanhwa* practice into the three mysteries in the *Chöryo* is nullified in the *Kanhwa kyörüi ron*. In this posthumous work, Chinul seems to return to the *Wöndon söngbullon* in his treatment of the three mysteries while presenting *kanhwa* Sön as an independent system of practice. The *Kanhwa kyörüi ron*, however, reveals one critical difference from the *Wöndon söngbullon* in its accounts for the three mysteries: the former text apparently supposes that the three mysteries could not lead to enlightenment. Chinul said:

Establishing three mysteries gates was the idea of *the master Chenggu*. His second mystery used *hwadu*—responses to the fundamental affair—as words designed to eliminate the defects of understanding. As long as the student does not eliminate these words of cleansing knowledge and vision, however, he cannot be self-reliant in the sphere of birth and death. Accordingly, *the master* established the third mystery: the mystery in the mystery. This was intended to destroy the previous cleansing knowledge and vision through such displays of function as pausing, silence, or shouting. Therefore it is said:

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., HPC 4, 766a17-18: The translation is quoted from Buswell 1983, 339.

“The establishment these three mysteries was originally intended to help with the abandoning of defects. But if you are still looking at the very source of the previous patriarchs, you are mistaken.”<sup>237</sup>

立此三玄門 古禪師之意 以本分事祇對話頭 爲破病之語故 置於第二玄 然未亡洒落知見言句 猶於生死界 不得自在故 立第三玄中玄 良久默然棒喝作用等 破前洒落知見 所以云三玄施設 本由遣病 若望上祖初宗 卽未可。

According to the *Kanhwa kyōrūi ron*, the three mysteries only remove conceptual defilements; they do not bring about enlightenment. Although the mystery in the word is based on the *hwadu* just like *kanhwa* Sōn, this second mystery, according to the *Kanhwa kyōrūi ron*, only serves as a part of the whole system of the three mysteries. For Chinul, the *kanhwa* technique is distinct from the three mysteries. In fact, the technique is clearly superior to the system of the three mysteries because it is a “shortcut” (*kyōngjōl*) to enlightenment. Chinul argued that if one attains one moment of realization through *kanhwa* Sōn practice, he will attain all the virtuous states of mind, along with omniscience, without any effort.<sup>238</sup>

#### (4) Implications

Chinul developed his analysis of the three mysteries with Chenggu’s explanation as the foundation, though he regarded Chenggu’s three mysteries as a separate system from Linji’s teaching. However, unlike Chenggu, Chinul explored the three mysteries in relation to *kanhwa* Sōn technique. Because of his ambiguous position on the technique, Chinul eventually presented the three different interpretations for the three mysteries: (1) the mysteries refer to the three different styles of rhetoric, which constitute a soteriological path to enlightenment; (2) the *kanhwa* technique is integrated into this soteriological path as the second mystery, consequently

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<sup>237</sup> *Kanhwa kyōrūi ron*, HPC 4, 734b21-c03: The translation is from Buswell 1983: 244-245 with small changes in italics.

<sup>238</sup> *Kanhwa kyōrūi ron*, HPC 4, 735a19-22.



redefining the third mystery as the realm of enlightenment; (3) The system of the mysteries becomes a secondary practice, which serves only to remove conceptual defilements.

All these interpretations share Chinul's view on the relation between Sŏn and Kyo: Kyo, which corresponds to the mystery in the essence, becomes an essential part of Chinul's soteriological systems. Nonetheless, it still occupies an inferior position to Sŏn. For our discussion that follows, Chinul's second interpretation is particularly important because Paekp'a applied this interpretation to Linji's teaching of three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials, even though Chinul clarified that his analysis for the mysteries has nothing to do with Linji's three mysteries.

Overall, just like his predecessors, Chinul provided little explanation of Linji's teaching. The more comprehensive accounts for the teaching first appear in the thirteenth century Korean text *Sŏnmun kangyo chip*, attributed to Ch'ŏnch'aek.

## 2) Ch'ŏnch'aek's *Sŏnmun kangyo chip*

The *Sŏnmun kangyo chip* 禪門綱要集 attributed to the 13<sup>th</sup> century Korean Ch'ŏnt'ae master Chinjŏng Ch'ŏnch'aek 眞靜天頌 (d.u.), consists of the four chapters, of which the first three chapters discuss Linji's teaching.<sup>239</sup> The discussion on the teaching in this text follows a

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<sup>239</sup> The earliest known woodblock of the *Sŏnmun kangyo chip* dates back to 1531. The authorship of the *Sŏnmun kangyo chip* is controversial because there is no indication within the text. The text is attached to the end of the *Sŏnmun pojang nok* 禪門寶藏錄, which records the great Zen master Chinjŏng Ch'ŏnch'aek 眞靜大禪師天頌 as its author. The *Mandŏksa chi* and the *Tongsa yŏlchŏn*, both of which were compiled in the nineteenth century, identify this Zen master with the thirteenth-century Ch'ŏnt'ae scholarly monk of the same name. However, such modern Korean scholars as Ko Ik-chin argue that the two monks were different persons, questioning the credibility of the two nineteenth century texts as accurate historical records. Ko even attributes the authorship of the *Sŏnmun kangyo chip* to an unknown Zen master (Ko Ik-chin 1979: 159-165). Here, I assume that the Zen master Chinjŏng Ch'ŏnch'aek, not the Ch'ŏnt'ae monk, is the author of the *Sŏnmun kangyo chip* until further evidence on the authorship is found.

question-answer format among Sŏn students and three imaginary figures, named Howŏl 皓月 (Bright Moon), Ch'ŏngp'ung 清風 (Clean Wind), and Pyŏg'am 碧巖 (Blue Cliff).<sup>240</sup>

Through the mouths of these figures, Ch'ŏnch'aek provided his own analysis of the teaching. Rather than focusing simply on the three mysteries, he looked at Linji's teaching as a whole and developed it into an integrated theory of language regarding human experience of reality as well as its implication for the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo. In doing so, Ch'ŏnch'aek presented the most comprehensive and clear account of the teaching, providing the definitions for such main terms as the statements, the mysteries, and the essentials. His analysis takes two slightly different approaches to Linji's teaching according to the number of the empirical modes or the stages along the path to enlightenment though sharing the same view on the relationship between Sŏn and kyo.

(1) Three Statements: three different levels of realization.

In most of the *Collection*, Ch'ŏnch'aek regarded the three statements as three different modes of experience or realization of reality: fully enlightened, partially enlightened or delusory, and entirely delusory modes, each of which is characterized by three essentials, three mysteries, and three phrases. For Ch'ŏnch'aek, these three statements are not limited to linguistic expressions, as the term "statement" might suggest. In the middle of the *Sŏnmun kangyo chip*, he provided a definition of the term for a student who was confused about its meaning:

From all the forms of the mundane world, large and small, and existent and nonexistent, to the long statements and short words, acting and silence, and beating and shouting of the Buddhas and patriarchs, they are all statements.

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<sup>240</sup> Their names appear only in such Korean Sŏn texts as the *Ojong kangyo*, the *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, and the *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man'ŏ*, compiled from the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even in these texts, they always appear in the quotations from the *Sŏnmun kangyo chip*.

世間一切形 大小相有無 乃至佛祖長言短語 作用默然 一棒一喝 皆各一句也。<sup>241</sup>

For Ch'ōnch'aek, all types of verbal and non-verbal, linguistic and non-linguistic, and secular and Buddhist expressions are statements, classified into one of the three statements, depending on the extent of realization that they represent.

a. First Statement

According to Ch'ōnch'aek, the first statement describes the enlightened state of mind. It represents the experience of the reality as suchness without any trace of defilements, the experience which is featured by the three essentials. Ch'ōnch'aek explained the three essentials in terms of the two interchangeable paradigms of “illumination-function” (*choyong* 照用) and “capacity-function” (*kiyong* 機用).<sup>242</sup>

The first essential elucidates illumination. It means that the great capacity responds perfectly...; the second essential unveils function. It means that the great function is fully manifested...; the third essential unveils the simultaneity of illumination and function. It means that capacity and function are given equally.<sup>243</sup>

第一要明照 即大機圓應...第二要明用 即大用全彰...第三要明照用同時 即機用齊施.

Ch'ōnch'aek used the analogy of an instrument to explain the capacity-function paradigm, which could be summarized as follows: when an instrument is touched, all its parts operate altogether;

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<sup>241</sup> *Sōnmun kangyo chip*, HPC 6, 854.b6-10.

<sup>242</sup> The illumination-function pair first appears in the Fenyang's section of the *Jingde chuandeng lu* with no further explanation in relation to the Linji's teaching while the base-function pair is never mentioned prior to Ch'ōnch'aek concerning with the teaching. It was Ch'ōnch'aek who first employed the two pairs to explain the three essentials. The illumination-function pair as Linji's teaching appears first on the Linji lu version of the *Guzunsu yulu*, compiled in 1267.

<sup>243</sup> HPC 6, 853.c11-15

when untouched and unplayed, it is called the great capacity; when touched and played, it is called function.<sup>244</sup>

This explanation is reminiscent of a well-known paradigm with a long pedigree tracing back to the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna* (*Dasheng qixin lun*, K. *Taesŭng kisillon* 大乘起信論). The treatise explains reality in terms of the two opposite yet inseparable aspects: “mind as suchness” (C. *xin zhenru*, K. *sim chinyŏ* 心眞如) and “mind as birth-and-death” (C. *xin shengmie*, K. *sim saengmyŏl* 心生滅). The former refers to the immutable aspect of reality; the latter to the conditional aspect. According to the *Awakening of Faith*, these two aspects are non-dual because they are based on the same reality. Because “mind as suchness” and “mind as birth-and-death” could correspond to capacity and function, respectively, the three essentials also represent the immutable and conditional aspects of reality as well as the non-duality of the two aspects. By linking the three essentials to Linji’s first statement, Ch’ŏnch’aek defined the first statement as expressing full and perfect enlightenment to the three essential aspects of reality. According to him, because realization on this level means attainment of both the Buddhas’ Dharma and the patriarchs’ mind, one who does so deserves to “be a master along with the patriarch-buddhas.”<sup>245</sup> The first statement is given the highest position in Ch’ŏnch’aek’s interpretation of three statements.

#### b. Second Statement

Ch’ŏnch’aek regarded the second statement as representing the middle level of realization. On this level, one attains a certain degree of enlightenment to suchness but still has

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., HPC 6, 851.b23-c3.

<sup>245</sup> The expression is in Linji’s second sermon of the teaching.

delusion. According to him, this state of the partial enlightenment and partial delusion is characterized by the three mysteries.

Ch'ōnch'aek apparently did not agree with Chenggu's account of the three mysteries though he accepted Chenggu's nomenclature: the “mystery in the essence,” the “mystery in the word,” and the “mystery in the mystery.” Rather than assigning specific Chan expressions to each of the mysteries, Ch'ōnch'aek defined the three mysteries in terms of capacity and function as he did for the three essentials:

Question: What is the first mystery?

Answer: The whole capacity responds by illuminating...

Question: What is the second mystery?

Answer: The wondrous function is everywhere...

Question: What is the third mystery?

Answer: The capacity and function are conferred equally.<sup>246</sup>

問如何是第一玄 答全機照應...問第二玄 答妙用縱橫...問第三玄 答機用齊施.

Ch'ōnch'aek explained the three mysteries in almost the same way that he did the three essentials: the three mysteries could refer to the immutable and conditional aspects of reality as well as the non-duality of these two aspects. Hence, Ch'ōnch'aek employed the analogy of an object and the shadow it casts to clarify the differences between the mysteries and the essentials and, by extension, between the first and second statements: the “essentials” can be compared to real objects while the “mysteries,” to shadows created by the objects. He further explained that a shadow merges into (C. *ji*, K. *chūk* 即) an object in the first statement while an object merges into a shadow in the second statement.<sup>247</sup> Ch'ōnch'aek probably meant by this analogy that the essentials represent full and perfect enlightenment to reality, while the mysteries refer to partial

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<sup>246</sup> Ibid., HPC 6, 851a15-21.

<sup>247</sup> For more details of this analogy, see Ibid., HPC 6, 855b8-19.

and imperfect enlightenment, and that the first and second statements express these two different degrees of enlightenment, respectively. According to Ch'öñch'aek, the realization in the second statement leads one to "become a master of the human and heavenly beings," not equivalent to the Buddhas and the patriarchs.<sup>248</sup>

### c. Language and Reality

Before moving on to the third statement, it is useful to discuss the issue raised by Ch'öñch'aek's explanation for the first and second statements. His respective accounts of the perfect and imperfect manifestation of reality in the first and second statements inevitably raise an issue about language and the reality. Ch'öñch'aek himself brought up this issue, asking the following question through the mouth of a student, who supposedly had not mastered the Sön use of language:

Question: if [you] say that the second and the third statements are linguistic statements, one who hears it would acknowledge. However, how can [you] say that the first statement is a linguistic statement?<sup>249</sup>

問若曰第二第三句 是言句之句 則或聞命矣 第一句 則奚可以言句詮哉。

This question derives from a specific view of language, a view based on the fundamental suspicion of language. According to this view, language does not represent reality as such. It rather conceals or distorts the truth of reality and is therefore inadequate for expressing that truth or the experience of it. This negative view of language seems to be justified by the Zen tradition itself. Many Zen masters of medieval China defined Zen as not relying on language. Zen, according to their definition, is a tradition that transmits the ineffable mind-dharma (C. *xinfa*, K. *simpöpp* 心法) along the unbroken lineage from the Buddha himself, as shown in the

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<sup>248</sup> The expression is in Linji's second sermon on the teaching.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., HPC 6, 852c13-15.

Zen description of its very first transmission: the Buddha Śākyamuni passed this dharma to his disciple Mahākāśyapa by holding up a flower, not uttering a word. Even Linji appeared to share such a negative view of language when he expressed his reluctance to preach about the mind-dharma at the request of a local magistrate: “If I were to demonstrate the great matter in strict keeping with the teaching of the ancestral school, I simply couldn’t open my mouth”

(若約祖宗門下稱揚大事直是開口不得).<sup>250</sup>

Ch’ōnch’aek answered this question regarding the inadequacy of language as follows:

How can [you] know that each and every linguistic statement made by patriarchs, Buddhas, and good friends is indeed incomprehensible just like the sound of a wooden person singing and clapping and a flake of snow that falls on a burning brazier. If you say that such a statement is nonexistent, you are mistaken as well. If you say that it is existent, you are also mistaken. If you say that it is neither existent nor nonexistent, or neither non-existent nor non-nonexistent, you are still mistaken. Also, you are not permitted not to say that it is existent or nonexistent, neither non-existent nor non-nonexistent, etc.<sup>251</sup>

夫豈知祖佛善知識 所發言句 一一如木人唱拍 烘爐點雪 實不可擬議 謂之無語 亦不得 謂之有語 亦不得 非有語非無語 非非有語非非無語 摠不得 又不可不謂之有語無語 乃至非非有語非非無語。

Rather than discussing language in general, Ch’ōnch’aek addressed the uniqueness of language as used by the enlightened. Such enlightened beings as Buddhas and Sōn patriarchs fully and perfectly realize the truth of reality: that everything, including language, is empty. Even though they use language, therefore, they leave no trace of attachment in their mind, just as a flake of snow completely disappears as soon as it falls on a burning brazier. By using a tetralemmic description, Ch’ōnch’aek asserted that the conceptual and intellectual speculation should not be

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<sup>250</sup> *Linji yulu* T1985.47.496b16: the translation is quoted from Sasaki 2009: 117.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 6, 853a5-10.

applied to the language of the enlightened. For Ch'ōnch'aek, the first statement is possible as language used by people who attain enlightenment.

#### d. Third Statement

In Ch'ōnch'aek's analysis of Linji's teaching, the third statement is placed on the lowest level: the statement represents various aspects of delusion. On this level of realization, one becomes attached to words and forms and develops dualistic modes of thinking: the distinctions between subject and object, enlightenment and unenlightenment, Buddha and sentient beings, etc.<sup>252</sup> According to Ch'ōnch'aek, all of the characteristics of delusion are represented by “three phrases” (C. *sanju*, K. *samgu* 三句).<sup>253</sup>

Ch'ōnch'aek is probably not the first monk in the history of Chan and Sōn to employ the expression “three phrases” to describe the deluded state of mind. For example, the expression appears several times in the *Baizhang lu* 百丈錄, where its meaning is similar to the one found in the *Sōnmun kangyo chip*. For example, Baizhang said:

When [one] penetrates through the *three phrases* only by ceasing all intellectual views of existence and nonexistence as well as all desire, it is said that [he] cleans up the shit. Likewise, when [one] seeks for the Buddhas, wisdom, and all the dharmas of existence and non-existence, it is said that [he] brings in the shit. It is not said that [he] throws it out. Likewise, creating the Buddhas' view and understanding, and merely clinging to what is seen, what is sought, and what is done are all called “the shit of conceptual proliferation” (*prapañca*).<sup>254</sup>

但息一切有無知見 但息一切貪求 箇箇透過三句外 是名除糞祇  
如今求佛求菩提求一切有無等法 是名運糞入 不名運糞出祇 如今作佛見作佛解  
但有所見所求所著盡 名戲論之糞。

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid., HPC 6, 855.b3-4.

<sup>253</sup> Here, I translate the Chinese character “ju 句” as “phrase” in order to distinguish its meaning from that of “*sanju sanxuan sanyao*” (三句三玄三要), which I translate as “statement.”

<sup>254</sup> *Sijia yulu* 四家語錄, Yanagida 1983: 22b05-09.



Whether Ch'ōnch'aek was aware of this previous usages of the three phrases, he placed the third statement on the lowest level of expression, linking the statement to the three phrases. For him, on the level of the third statement, one becomes like “a wooden puppet on stage rather than a master who operates it” because of his delusion.<sup>255</sup> Hence, Ch'ōnch'aek asserted that such a person “even could not save himself.”<sup>256</sup>

#### e. Relationship of the Three Statements

Ch'ōnch'aek did not assign any specific expressions exclusively to any of the three statements, implying that a certain expression or statement would not remain fixed as any of the three. In fact, Ch'ōnch'aek argued that a statement could be defined as any of the three statements because every statement has the potential to represent the three essentials, the three mysteries, or the three phrases.<sup>257</sup> However, according to him, a statement is defined or re-defined as one of the three statements not by the statement itself, but by its usage. To illustrate this, Ch'ōnch'aek employed the analogy of the three seals: he compared the first, second, and third statements to the seal of the three essentials stamped, respectively, on air, on water, and on clay. Ch'ōnch'aek then cited the Song Linji master Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163) to explain this analogy:

Dahui said, “That a student of high capability listens to the Way is like stamping the seal on air; that a student of middle capability listens to the Way is like stamping the seal on water, and that a student of low capability listens to the Way is like stamping the seal on clay.”<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> The expression “a wooden puppet on stage” appears in Linji's first sermon on the teaching.

<sup>256</sup> The expression is in Linji's second sermon.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., HPC 6, 853a10-13.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., HPC 6, 852a22-24. Dahui's original remark is recorded with little variation from Ch'ōnch'aek's quotation in the *Dahui pujue chanshi fayu* 20 (T1998.47.894b17-18).

大慧云 上士聞道如印印空 中士聞道如印印水 下士聞道如印印泥者。

Though Ch'ōnch'aek provided no further explanation, the definition or re-definition of a statement might happen in the following way.

An enlightened master has the Buddhas' dharma-seal and the patriarchs' mind-seal. With his enlightened mind, the master makes a statement, which could be verbal or non-verbal, linguistic or non-linguistic, or secular or religious to test his students or help them attain enlightenment. The master's statement is always the first statement because it expresses the master's enlightened state of mind. However, the very same statement also could be the first, second, or third statement, depending on the capability of the student who listens to the master's statement. When a master makes a statement, a student with high spiritual capability will instantly attain enlightenment without falling into the trap created by the statement or leaving any trace of attachment, just as there is no trace of the seal stamped on air. In this case, the master's statement becomes the first statement to his student. A student with mid-level spiritual capability would attain some degree of enlightenment. However, because the student's enlightenment would not be perfect, he would have some attachment to the statement just as there is the briefest trace of the seal stamped on the surface of water. The statement becomes the second in this case. A student with lesser spiritual capability would not attain enlightenment at all. He would merely become attached to the statement and produce all sorts of dualistic thought, just as there is a distinct trace of the seal stamped on clay. In this case, the statement becomes the third.

In most of his *Collection*, Ch'ōnch'aek connected the three statements to the three different levels of experience of reality. By positing a middle stage of partial enlightenment or unenlightenment in the three levels, he imbued a sense of progress, advancing from delusion to

enlightenment, into Linji's teaching. At the same time, Ch'öñch'aek seems to deny the hierarchical relationship between Sön and Kyo, by refusing to correlate the three levels to Sön and Kyo, of which the implication is clearly shown in his second approach to Linji's teaching.

## (2) Three Statements: Enlightenment and Unenlightenment

Ch'öñch'aek took a different approach to Linji's teaching, employing the well-known Chan metaphor of the "live word" (C. *huoju*, K. *hwalgu* 活句) and the "dead word" (C. *siju*, K. *sagu* 死句). Although his account for this new approach is rather brief, it reveals his vision of the unity of Sön and Kyo.

To the question of a student who did not understand that the first statement could be linguistic, Ch'öñch'aek responded in the following way:

An ancient virtuous [master] said, "If one realizes the dead word, he could not even save himself; if one realizes the live word, he would become a master [along with] the Buddhas and the partirarchs." How could the dead word or the live word not be a linguistic statement? Alas! When a foolish person... sees somebody refer to such type of words as "the word that leads upward," ..., "the wholesome word," "superior word," he considers them as wondrous and special, and hence says that they are different dharmas."<sup>259</sup>

先德云 死句下薦得 自救不了 活句下薦得 祖佛爲師 死句活句 豈非言句耶 噫凡愚...見說向上句...正句勝句之類 心奇特之 將謂別法.

Ch'öñch'aek linked Linji's teaching to the "live word" and the "dead word" by quoting the Song Linji master Yuanwu Keqin's 圓悟克勤 (1063-1135) remark, which shares the expressions with Linji's second sermon about the soteriological implications of the three statements.<sup>260</sup> For Ch'öñch'aek, the first statement parallels the live word that leads one to become "a master along

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<sup>259</sup> HPC 6, 852c21-853a4

<sup>260</sup> Yuanwu's remark is recorded in the following texts with small variations: the *Yuanwu Foguo chanshi yulu* 圓悟佛果禪師語錄 13 (T1997.47.774a17) and 14 (T1997.47.778.b01-b03); the *Foguo Yuanwu Zhenjue chanshi xinyao* 佛果圓悟真覺禪師心要 1 (X1357.69.453c18).

with Buddhas and patriarchs,” while the third statement, the dead word that makes a student even “unable to save oneself.”

The terms “live word” and “dead word” that Ch’ōnch’aek applied here, according to Ding-hwa Hsieh, were coined by the Yunmen monks of the early Song period and spread widely within the Chan community after being picked up by Yuanwu.<sup>261</sup> In Chan masters’ usages of the terms, the “dead word” refers to the conceptual and theoretical descriptions that lead only to intellectual understanding while the “live word” refers to any types of descriptions that bring an end to dualistic modes of thinking and bring about enlightenment. Within the Chan community, all scriptural and doctrinal teachings that describe enlightenment or reality theoretically or conceptually would be regarded as the dead word since they hinder genuine enlightenment; on the contrary, the patriarchs’ words from the Chan literature would be regarded as the live word since they point directly to the truth and lead to enlightenment. However, if the patriarchs’ words are approached conceptually and intellectually, they would lose their vitality as the live word and thus become the dead word, just as the words of the Buddha degenerated into the dead word.<sup>262</sup> Yuanwu even asserted that all the words, including shouting and beating, are the dead-words.<sup>263</sup>

Ch’ōnch’aek showed his awareness of such dual nature of language in his following remark, which also reveals his vision of the unity of Sōn and Kyo:

If one who understands in accord with the words speaks of [suchness] with his mouth, then not only the traces of the teachings of the twelve divisions of the scriptures of the three vehicles, but also holding up a flower on the Vulture Peak, the eminent monks’ mysterious words and wondrous phrases, shouting and beating, facing the wall in the

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<sup>261</sup> Hsieh 1993: 153-157.

<sup>262</sup> Buswell 1988: 246-248.

<sup>263</sup> *Yuanwu Foguo chanshi yulu* 11 T1997.47.765b15-b20: re-quoted from Hsieh 1993:163.

Shaolin temple, one word and one silence all would become the traces of the [scriptural] teachings... If one realizes it in mind, then not only holding up a flower, facing the wall would become the special transmission outside the scriptural teachings, but also the twelve divisions of the scriptures of the three vehicles and the vulgar words and the trivial speeches of the mundane world all would be a secret leading upward [to enlightenment].<sup>264</sup>

隨語生解者 說之於口 則非但三乘十二分教 是教跡 靈鷲拈花 宗師玄言妙句一棒一喝少林面壁一語一默 皆是教跡...得之於心 則非但拈花面壁 是教外別傳 三乘十二分教 乃至世間龐言細語 皆是向上一竅也。

For Ch'ōnch'aek, Sōn and Kyo are not fundamentally different from each other because, as he himself pointed out, they originate from the same enlightened mind: Kyo is based on the Buddha's dharma, Sōn on the patriarchs' mind. Their different rhetorical or pedagogical styles are just the skillful means to help sentient beings with different capabilities attain the ultimate spiritual goal. There is no hierarchy between Sōn and Kyo. Whether a certain statement is conceptual or non-conceptual, the statement becomes the dead word or the first statement if a student takes it as "the word that leads upward" (C. *xiangshang ju*, K. *hyangsang gu* 向上句) without any attachment and attains enlightenment; on the contrary, it becomes the dead word or the third statement if a student gets attached to the statement and generates conceptual defilements.

Ch'ōnch'aek's connection of the live and dead words to the three statements emphasizes the relationship between language and enlightenment. Nonetheless, his connection does not fit completely into Linji's teaching. As mentioned above, the first and third statements could be matched with the live word and the dead word, respectively. However, the second statement just remains unmatched. Hence, by introducing the live word and the dead word to Linji's teaching, Ch'ōnch'aek presented the two stages of enlightenment and unenlightenment.

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<sup>264</sup> HPC 6, 859c9-16.

### (3) The Universality of Linji's teaching

Ch'ōnch'aek made an important remark on the issue of the universality of Linji's teaching at the end of the *Sōnmun kangyo chip*. He says,

When Yunmen used it [i.e. suchness], it became “three phrases and one phrase.” When Linji used it, it became “three mysteries and three essentials.” When Xuefeng used it, it became “three wooden balls.” When Guizong used it, it became “dragging three times.” When Zhizhe [Zhiyi] used it, it became “three-fold cessation and three observations.” When Zhaozhou used it, it became “Have a cup of tea!” When Zhudi used it, it became “raising a finger.”<sup>265</sup>

雲門用之則三一句 臨濟用之則三玄三要 雪峯用之則三箇木毬  
歸宗用之則曳磨三度 智者用之則三止三觀 趙州用之則喫茶去 俱低用之則豎一指。

Ch'ōnch'aek identified Linji's teaching with those of such non-Linji affiliated Chan masters as Yunmen Wenyan 雲門文偃 (864-949), Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰義存 (822-908), and Zhaozhou Congshen 趙州從諗 (778-897) as well as the Tiantai master Zhiyi 智顛 (538-597). By doing so, Ch'ōnch'aek implied that Linji's teaching was universally shared by all Chan and doctrinal schools. Even though all these teachings are different in style, they all articulate the same principle of three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials. According to Ch'ōnch'aek, the principle supposes three different modes of experience of reality: complete enlightenment, partial enlightenment or delusion, and complete delusion. The Kyo masters explain the principle conceptually as shown in the example of the Tiantai doctrine of “three-fold cessation and three observations” while the Sōn masters embody the principle in their acts and words, as revealed in the old cases of Yunmen, Linji, Zhaozhou, Guizong, Xuefeng, and Zhudi.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> Ibid., HPC 6, 859c01-05.

<sup>266</sup> Zhiyi's doctrine is also called “the three truths or judgments” (C. *sandi* 三諦): (1) the truth of emptiness (C. *kongdi*), viz. all things are empty in their essential nature; (2) the truth of being provisionally real (C. *jiadi*), viz., all things are given a provisional reality, produced by a causal process; and (3) the truth of the mean (C. *zhongdi*), viz. all things are neither real nor unreal in the absolute sense. They are just suchness.

Ch'ŏnch'aek's claim of this teaching's universality also confirms his vision of the Sŏn and kyo unity. The teachings of the Sŏn and doctrinal schools are equal because they share the same principle of three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials even though they are different in style.

#### (4) Influence

Ch'ŏnch'aek's *Sŏnmun kangyo chip* provides a clear account of Linji's teaching for the first time in Chan and Sŏn history. However, the text received little attention probably because of its conceptual approach to one of the teachings of Linji, the representative figure of the iconoclastic and non-conventional style of Chan. Even in Korea, virtually no one paid attention to this text until the eighteenth century when there was a movement among some Korean Sŏn masters to define their tradition as the Imje school. The text, in particular, its two different approaches to Linji's teaching, occupied an important place in the early nineteenth century Korean Sŏn debate.

As seen before, Ch'ŏnch'aek's two approaches suggest two different perspectives on human experience of reality. His first approach introduces the three different modes or stages: (1) the complete and full enlightenment, represented by the three essentials; (2) the incomplete and partial enlightenment, by the three mysteries; (3) the complete unenlightenment, by the three phrases. On the other hand, his second approach supposes only two different ones: (1) enlightenment, characterized by the live word; (2) unenlightenment, by the dead word. In fact, Ch'ŏnch'aek focused on the three-stage analysis in most of the *Sŏnmun kangyo chip*, briefly introducing the second approach without much explanation. However, these two different approaches to Linji's teaching provide the rationale for the Sŏn taxonomies of Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi, respectively.

#### 4. Concluding Remarks

Sino-Korean Chan and Sŏn masters interpreted Linji's teaching of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials," based on their positions on the issue of Chan/ Sŏn and Jiao/ Kyo relationship. The two positions stood out: (1) the Chan/ Sŏn superiority to Jiao/ Kyo; (2) the unity of Chan/ Sŏn and Jiao/ Kyo.

The first position introduced the hierarchical interpretation of Linji's teaching (Chenggu, Ch'ŏnch'aek, and Chinul). It interpreted the teaching as representing different levels of realization of the truth and thus as a series of stages along which one proceeds toward the ultimate goal of Buddhism from the lowest (the third statement or the mystery in the essence) to the highest (the first statement or the mystery in the mystery). On the other hand, the second position of the unity of the two strands of Buddhism denied this hierarchical viewpoint in interpreting Linji's teaching (Huihong and Ch'ŏnch'aek). This position claimed that the teaching expresses the truth of reality that is manifested in everything in the same degree or level though its appearance is different.

As the following chapters will show, Paekp'a took the former position. In particular, he accepted Chinul's idea in the *Chŏryŏ* that Kyo or the doctrinal studies are posited as a preliminary step for Sŏn or *kanhwa* meditation technique, and established the three-fold taxonomy of Sŏn, based on Ch'ŏnch'aek's hierarchical interpretation of the three statements. Ch'oŭi stood on the second position. He used Ch'ŏnch'aek's second interpretation, which looked at the teaching in terms of enlightenment and non-enlightenment, to formulate the two-fold Sŏn taxonomy, and ultimately argued for the unity of Sŏn and Kyo.

Chenggu and Ch'ŏnch'aek's claim for the universality of the teaching was also crucial in the nineteenth century Korean Sŏn debate. In particular, Ch'ŏnch'aek argued that all Sŏn and



Kyo teachings include Linji's teaching. Although these teachings are different in their rhetorical styles, they all expressed the same principle of reality, represented by Linji's teaching. The claim of the universality of the teaching allowed Paekp'a to look at the traditional image of the Linji school from a broader perspective.

## CHAPTER FOUR. Paekp'a's Three-Fold Taxonomy of Sŏn

Paekp'a represented the traditional Korean Sŏn view on the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo, in which the doctrinal studies were incorporated into its soteriological scheme as a preparatory step for the Sŏn training. He attempted to justify this view by integrating Korean Sŏn soteriology into the Imje tradition.

Korean Sŏn Buddhism in late Chosŏn was in the process of re-establishing its own identity. The Korean Sŏn masters restored their Sŏn lineage by producing several genealogical texts. Most of these texts connected the Korean Sŏn lineage to the Chinese Linji lineage by establishing T'aego Pou, who had traveled to China and received dharma from the Linji master Shiwu Qinggong (1272~1352), as the first patriarch of the Korean Sŏn lineage. However, apart from this genealogical connection to the Linji tradition, Korean Sŏn soteriology of this time took root in the indigenous regimen, which combined the Linji and Heze practices. The regimen incorporated the *kanhwa* Sŏn technique and the doctrinal studies within the frame of Zongmi's system of "sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation." This syncretic and yet unique soteriology was embodied in Chinul's "three-mystery" path in his *Chŏryŏ*. Hence, Korean Sŏn Buddhism of Paep'a's time linked its genealogy to the Chinese Linji lineage while still maintaining the indigenous soteriology. This unique combination created an inevitable tension between the Linji and Heze lineages, on the one hand; and the Sŏn exclusivism and the Sŏn-Kyo syncretism that the two lineages advocated, on the other hand. In particular, since the Heze approach to Chan had long been branded as wrong by the prevailing Linji lineage, this tension was problematic for the Korean Sŏn masters.

Paekp'a was the first Korean Sŏn master who took the serious approach to this tension. He attempted to resolve the tension by connecting the Korean Sŏn tradition to the Imje tradition from the soteriological perspective. Pivotal was Linji's teaching of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials." As will be seen later in this chapter, this teaching served as a juncture for the two seemingly opposite soteriological approaches. In particular, based on Ch'ŏnch'aek's interpretation of Linji's teaching, Paep'a laid out a three-fold taxonomy of Sŏn. With his taxonomy, Paekp'a upheld the Imje school, with which the Korean Sŏn tradition claimed to be affiliated, as the supreme of all the Sŏn schools, and at the same time unified the Korean Sŏn and Imje traditions soteriologically.

This chapter explores how Paekp'a legitimized the traditional Korean view on the Sŏn-Kyo relationship by correlating the Korean Sŏn and Imje traditions. I will first examine how he placed Zongmi and Chinul's Heze brand of the soteriological frame into the Imje tradition, and then explore how Paekp'a's taxonomy not only promoted the Imje tradition but also defined or redefined the two traditions. I will rely mainly on Paekp'a's two major works: the *Sŏnmun sugyŏng* 禪文手鏡 and the *Susŏn kyŏlsamun* 修禪結社文.

### 1. The Two-Fold Paradigm: *Hyangsang* and *Hyangha*

Paekp'a regarded Linji's teaching as representing Zongmi's approach to Chan, which gives the basic framework to Chinul's soteriology. Zongmi, who proclaimed himself to be the fifth Heze patriarch, explained Chan in terms of dharma (C. *fa*, K. *pŏp* 法) and person (C. *ren*, K. *in* 人). Dharma indicates the nature of reality, which constitutes the ultimate ground as well as the very content of enlightenment, while person indicates the soteriological regimen for an individual, depending on his spiritual capabilities. According to Zongmi, dharma has two

meanings of immutability and conditionality; person involves two gates of sudden enlightenment and gradual cultivation.<sup>267</sup> In place of Zongmi's two categories, Paekp'a employed the new terminologies of *hyangsang* 向上 (leading upward) and *hyangha* 向下 (leading downward): the former corresponds to dharma, while the latter, to person. Paekp'a, then, connected this paradigm of dharma/ person or *hyangsang*/ *hyangha* to Linji's teaching.

### 1) *Hyangsang*

Paekp'a applied one of Linji's sermons of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials" to explain *hyangsang*, the counterpart of Zongmi's category of dharma. Paekp'a said:

*Hyangsang* is suchness of the original share...The master [Imje] says, "Buddha is the mind's purity...; dharma is the mind's radiance...; the Way is the pure light that pervades everywhere without hindrance...The three are one, yet all are empty without real existence."<sup>268</sup>

向上本分眞如...師云佛者 心清淨是...法者心光明是...道者處處無碍淨光是...三即一皆空而無實有.

According to Paekp'a, this sermon specifically reveals two aspects of mind: immutability and conditionality. Purity, radiance, and pervasion without hindrance refer to the conditional aspect of mind while the oneness of these "three essentials" of conditionality refers to the immutable aspect of mind. Following the lead of Zongmi, Paekp'a explained these two aspects. He employed Zongmi's analogy of gold and products of gold to emphasize the non-duality of the two aspects: the immutable nature underlies the conditional appearance of the diverse phenomena just as the nature of gold is present within all golden products.<sup>269</sup> Paekp'a also gave

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<sup>267</sup> Buswell 1983: 271.

<sup>268</sup> *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 515a21-b03. Linji's original sermon is in his second sermon of the teaching in chapter three.

<sup>269</sup> *Susŏn kyŏlsamun*, HPC 10, 532a12-14. For details of Zongmi's analogy, see Kamata 1979: 65.

various alternative sets of this paradigm of immutability and conditionality just as Zongmi did: essence, nature, principle, calmness, stillness, nirvana, emptiness, killing, on the one hand; function, form, phenomena, wisdom, contemplation, bodhi, wondrous-existences, saving, on the other.<sup>270</sup> These correspondences can be charted as follows:

Table 4. Two-fold paradigm for the mind

immutability	conditionality
essence	function
absorption ( <i>dhyāna</i> )	wisdom ( <i>prajñā</i> )
calmness ( <i>śamatha</i> )	observation/ insight ( <i>vipaśyanā</i> )
nature	form
suchness	birth-and-death
absolute truth ( <i>paramārtha</i> )	conventional truth ( <i>saṃvṛtisatya</i> )
extinction ( <i>nirvāṇa</i> )	awakening ( <i>bodhi</i> )
emptiness	wondrous existences
killing	saving

Zongmi’s two-fold paradigm for dharma provides the fundamental frame for Paekp’a’s understanding of mind. Although Paekp’a did not deny Zongmi’s more complex theory of “empty tranquil numinous awareness” (C. *kongji lingzhi*, K. *kongjŏk yŏngji* 空寂靈知), this opposite and yet non-dual set of immutability and conditionality becomes the ultimate ground for the spiritual development outlined under the *hyangha* category.<sup>271</sup>

<sup>270</sup> *Susŏn kyŏlsamun* HPC 10, 532a16-19.

<sup>271</sup> Chinul accepted Zongmi’s concept of “empty tranquil nouminous awareness.” Paekp’a also seems to agree with Zongmi and Chinul’s concept of mind. Just like Chinul, Paekp’a praised this concept as providing the clearest account for mind. Paekp’a also mentioned the term “empty tranquil numinous awareness” a few times in his *Susŏn kyŏlsamun* within the context of laying out his soteriological program. Despite his seeming agreement of Chinul and Zongmi’s concept of mind, however, Paekp’a provided little explanation of the term in anywhere of his writings; neither did he quote Chinul and Zongmi’s detailed accounts of the term. As will be discussed, Paekp’a even did not apply the concept of “awareness,” which serves as a key factor to distinguish the Heze from the Hongzhou schools in Zongmi’s Chan taxonomy, to his taxonomy. In explaining mind in his own term, Paekp’a simply stuck

## 2) *Hyangha*: the three different kinds of Sŏn (*Samjong Sŏn*)

Paekp'a treated the soteriological issues involving an individual's spiritual capability and a possible regimen to attain enlightenment under the category of *hyangha*, the counterpart of Zongmi's "person." Paekp'a introduced the Sŏn taxonomy to explain these issues. According to him, such a perspective for *hyangha* is also revealed in Linji's teaching. Paekp'a said:

*Hyangha* is the three Sŏns of new infusion...He who attains at the first statement becomes a teacher along with buddha-patriarchs...; he who attains at the second statement becomes the teacher of human and heavenly beings...; he who attains at the third statement cannot save even himself.<sup>272</sup>

向下新熏三禪...若第一句薦得 堪與佛祖爲師...第二句薦得 堪與人天爲師...第三句薦得 自救不了.

Ch'ŏnch'aek's account for Linji's teaching in the *Sŏnmun kangyo chip* provides the basic framework Paekp'a used to explain this sermon. As seen in chapter three, one of Ch'ŏnch'aek's approaches to Linji's teaching offers a hierarchical analysis on the basis of human empirical modes of reality. In this approach, the three statements represent the three different levels of experience of suchness: full enlightenment, partial enlightenment or delusion, and full delusion, each of which is characterized by the three essentials, the three mysteries, or the three phrases. Drawing on Ch'ŏnch'aek's account, Paekp'a regarded this sermon as revealing the three different levels of Sŏn: the first statement represents the highest level of Sŏn; the second, the middle; the third, the lowest. Under the category of *hyangha*, Paekp'a performed the three-fold taxonomy of Sŏn, connecting each level of Sŏn exclusively to the specific Sŏn schools. In particular, he categorized the six main lineages of Sŏn, which originated from the sixth patriarch

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to the two-fold category of immutability and conditionality. For Chinul's accounts for the concept, see Buswell 1986: 199-242 and Keel 1984: 66-90; for Zongmi's, see Kamata 1979: 336 and Gregory 2002: 216-218.

<sup>272</sup> *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 515b11-14.

Huineng: the Heze 荷澤 (K. Hat'aek) and the so-called “five houses” (C. *wujia*; K. *oga* 五家) of Linji 臨濟 (K. Imje), Yunmen 雲門 (K. Unmun), Weiyang 滄仰 (K. Wiang), Fayan 法眼 (K. Pöban), and Caodong 曹洞 (K. Chodong).

Paekp'a decided the hierarchy of these six Sön lineages in terms of the two standards: (1) Ch'önc'h'aek's characterization of the three different modes of experience as the three essentials, the three mysteries, and the three phrases; (2) more importantly, the level of attaining the truth of *hyangsang*. According to Paekp'a, the Linji and Yunmen schools are highest ranked, since they realize the three essentials and their oneness, and thus fully grasp the two aspects of immutability and conditinality. He asserted that both schools' understanding of the truth of *hyangsang* is so perfect that it leaves no trace of misunderstanding, just as a seal stamped on air leaves no trace. With their realization, Paekp'a argued, the schools become the masters along with buddha-patriarchs.<sup>273</sup>

Paekp'a placed the Weiyang, Fayan, and Caodong schools in the middle rank because they only understand true emptiness, the immutable aspect of mind. Paekp'a commented that the three schools's level of realization of suchness corresponds to the “three mysteries,” which carries just a part of the truth of *hyangsang* and thus still leaves the trace of such partial enlightenment or delusion just as a seal stamped on the surface of water leaves the briefest trace. Paekp'a said that with their partial enlightenment, the schools become the masters of the human and heavenly beings.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 515b15-19; Paekp'a classified these two school as the first statement Sön when he connected the first statement to patriarch Sön: *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 519c17-18.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 515b20-c02; Paekp'a argued that the Weiyang and Fayan schools are different from the Caodong school because the first two schools realize the three mysteries and the Caodong school realizes the true emptiness. However, Paekp'a asserted that all these three schools realize the immutability of suchness when he associated these schools with tathāgata Sön: *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 520b01-02.

The Heze school is located in the lowest rank in Paekp'a's Sŏn taxonomy. According to Paekp'a, the Heze masters get attached to words and letters, never seeing the truth transmitted through them. In its approach to the Buddhist teachings, they only understand such concepts of existence, non-existence, and their mean, Paekp'a's further clarification for Ch'ŏnch'aek's "three phrases."<sup>275</sup> Paekp'a compared the Heze masters' attachment to a seal stamped on clay leaving traces. According to him, the Heze followers could not even save themselves because of their conceptual attachments.<sup>276</sup>

The application of this taxonomy to the category of *hyangha* serves a dual purpose for Paekp'a: (1) promoting the Linji school, with which the Korean Sŏn masters in late Chosŏn claimed to be affiliated; (2) integrating the Korean Sŏn and Linji traditions soteriologically. As seen in chapter two, taxonomy functions as a polemical tool to promote the lineage of its author. For example, Zongmi upheld his own Heze lineage as being the supreme Chan tradition of all in his Chan taxonomy, arguing that the lineage fully realized the secretly-transmitted truth.<sup>277</sup> Paekp'a designed his taxonomy with the same motivation as Zongmi's. With his taxonomy of Sŏn, Paekp'a purported to promote the Korean Sŏn lineage by placing the Linji school in the highest position though he designated the Yunmen school as the same level with the Linji.<sup>278</sup> As Peter Gregory points out, taxonomy also has a soteriological function. Taxonomy itself

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<sup>275</sup> For Paekp'a's account of the three phrases, see *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 516a11-a15.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 515c02-05; Paekp'a designated the Hat'aek school as the first statement Sŏn, calling it principle Sŏn: *Susŏn kyŏlsamun*, HPC 10, 533c16-534a04.

<sup>277</sup> For Zongmi's taxonomy, see Gregory 2002: 224-252.

<sup>278</sup> Paekp'a provided no explanation for his treatment of the Yunmen school. In my opinion, his treatment probably derives from the early Song Chan situation in which both Linji and Yunmen lineages were influential in the *gong'an* Chan movement and the latter died out before any sectarian rivalry might have sprouted between the two lineages. For the relationship of the two lineages and their involvement in the *gong'an* Chan movement, see Hsieh 1993: 109-164.



constitutes a Buddhist path (*mārga*) in which Buddhist teachings are assigned “as a graded progress moving from the most elementary to the most profound.”<sup>279</sup> In Paekp’a’s case, the path is laid out in accord with his three-fold taxonomy, in which one proceeds from the third through the second to the first statement. As will be seen later in this chapter, Paekp’a connected this three-fold path to Chinul’s interpretation of the three mysteries in the *Chōryo*. Such connection enables Paekp’a to incorporate the Korean Sōn practice into the Linji tradition.

Now, let us consider how Paekp’a used his three-fold taxonomy to promote the Linji tradition and define the Korean Sōn soteriology in more detail.

## 2. The Taxonomy of Paekp’a: Promoting the Linji lineage

Paekp’a’s taxonomy is a polemical claim supporting the Imje lineage rather than an objective analysis of the teachings of the six Sōn lineages. He applied a few existing notions within the Korean Sōn community of his time to his taxonomy in order to serve his polemical purpose. Such notions are: (1) the distinction between tathagata Sōn (C. *rulai Chan*, K. *yōrae Sōn* 如來禪) and patriarch Sōn (C. *zushi Chan*, K. *chosa Sōn* 祖師禪); (2) the idea of the transmission of mind (C. *chuanxin*, K. *chōnsim* 傳心); (3) the analogy of a genuine-gold store (C. *zhenjinpu*, K. *chingūmp’o* 真金鋪) and a general merchandise store (C. *zahuopu*, K. *chaphwap’o* 雜貨鋪). By reinterpreting these notions, Paekp’a legitimized his taxonomy and the authority of the Imje lineage.

### 1) Patriarch Sōn and Tathāgata Sōn

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<sup>279</sup> Gregory 2002: 115.

Probably the most important and often-used terms in Paekp'a's taxonomy are patriarch Sōn and tathāgata Sōn. In order to see how he treated these two terms to justify his polemical claim, we need first to see their original meanings.

The term “tathāgata Chan” appears in various texts: for example, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (C. *Da banniepan jing*, K. *Tae pan yōlban kyōng* 大般涅槃經) and the *Avataṃsakasūtra* (C. *Huayan jing*, K. *Hwaōm kyōng* 華嚴經).<sup>280</sup> In particular, in the *Laiṅkāvatāra sūtra* (C. *Leng que jing*, K. *Nūngga kyōng* 楞伽經), the term is used in connection with Chan taxonomy.<sup>281</sup> The *Laiṅkāvatāra sūtra* distinguishes Chan into four kinds, with which tathāgata Chan is the highest.<sup>282</sup> In the scripture, as the term itself indicates, tathāgata Chan refers to the Chan which would be attained at the stage of the tathāgata's.<sup>283</sup> Heze Shenhui 荷澤神會 (668-760) used the term polemically for the first time in Chan history. He employed the term to refer to his brand of Chan in contrast to the Northern school Chan. Accusing the Northern school of being entrapped in dualistic thought, Shenhui described his tathāgata Chan as the Chan of “no-thought,” which was characterized by the non-dual state of mind.<sup>284</sup> He went further to say that this Chan had been transmitted from Bodhidharma through the four Chinese

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<sup>280</sup> *Da banniepan jing* T7.1.198b07-08 and *Huayan jing* T278.9.679a21-22.

<sup>281</sup> The scripture was influential in early Chan. For details, see Faure 1997: 145-159.

<sup>282</sup> The four kinds of Chan in the scripture are (1) the Chan (dhyāna) practiced by the ignorant; (2) the Chan devoted to the examination of meaning; (3) the Chan with tathatā (suchness) for its object; (4) the Chan of the tathāgatas. For details, see *Leng que jing* T671.16.533a02-04 and Suzuki 1999: 85-86.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 85-86.

<sup>284</sup> *Nanyang heshang wenda zazheng yi* 南陽和尚問答雜徵義 Yang 1986: 80-81; re-quoted from Pak Chong-ho 2002: 14.

Chan patriarchs eventually to his master, the would-be sixth patriarch Huineng.<sup>285</sup> Later, Zongmi, who proclaimed himself to be the fifth generation master of the Heze lineage, accepted Shenhui's notion of tathāgata Chan, using the term “pure Chan of the tathāgata” (C. *rulai qingjing chan*, K. *yōrae ch'ōngjōng Sōn* 如來清淨禪). According to Zongmi, this brand of Chan was the Chan of the “supreme vehicle” (C. *zuishang sheng*, K. *ch'oesang sung* 最上乘), which should be cultivated after awakening suddenly to the fact that one's mind is originally pure without defilements and equipped with an untainted nature.<sup>286</sup> Since he elsewhere defined the cultivation after sudden awakening as no-thought practice, Zongmi's pure Chan of the tathāgata was the very kind of Chan of no-thought that Shenhui had advocated centuries before.<sup>287</sup>

The term “patriarch Chan” first appears within the dialogue between Yangshan Huiji 仰山慧寂 (807-883) and Xiangyan Zhixian 香巖智閑 (d. 898) from the *Zutang ji* 祖堂集 (K. *Chodang chip*), the full version of which is recorded in Guishan Lingyou's 澗山靈祐 (771-853) recorded sayings.<sup>288</sup> In this dialogue, Yangshan tests Xiangyan's level of realizing the truth. Xiangyan responds with the following verse:

Last year I was not poor;  
 This year I am poor.  
 Last year I had a place to erect a gimlet;

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<sup>285</sup> *Puti damo nanzong dingshifei lun* 菩提達摩南宗定是非論 Yang 1986: 18; re-quoted from Pak Chong-ho 2002: 12.

<sup>286</sup> *Chanyuan zhuquan ji duxu* (禪源諸詮集都序), Kamata 1979: 23.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*, Kamata 1979: 95.

<sup>288</sup> *Tanzhou Guishan Lingyou chanshi yulu* 潭州澗山靈祐禪師語錄 (Hereafter *Guishan yulu*) T1989.47.580b25-c03; *Zutang ji* 祖堂集 19 K45.351a01-a06.

This year I don't even have a gimlet.<sup>289</sup>

去年未是貧 今年始是貧 去年無卓錫之地 今年錫亦無。

Based on this verse, Yangshan assesses Xiangyan's level in the following way:

You, elder brother, only know that there is tathāgata Chan.  
But, [you] do not know that there is also patriarch Chan!<sup>290</sup>

師兄在知有如來禪 且不知有祖師禪。

Then, Xiangyan responds again with another verse.

I have an opportunity and I look at you with *twinkling* eyes.  
If you don't understand, I will call another monk.<sup>291</sup>

我有一機 瞬目視伊 若人不會 別喚沙彌。

After listening to the verse, Yangshan finally reports to his master Guishan that Xiangyan has realized patriarch Chan. In the dialogue, Yangshan recognizes Xiangyan's first and second verses as representing tathāgata Chan and patriarch Chan, respectively. Although the dialogue does not give the exact meaning of these two types of Chan, it certainly depicts patriarch Chan as superior to tathāgata Chan.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> *Zutang ji* 19 K45.351a04-05. The *Guishan yulu* version is a little different: "Last year's poverty is not poverty; this year's poverty is poverty. Last year I was poor, but I still had a place to erect a gimlet; this year I am poor, but I don't even have a gimlet." (去年貧未是貧 今年貧始是貧 去年貧猶有卓錫之地 今年貧錫也無; *Guishan yulu* T1989.47.580b28-29; the translation is quoted from Jiang Wu 2008: 116 with small changes).

<sup>290</sup> *Zutang ji* 19 K45.351a05-06. The *Guishan yulu* version is as follows: "I approve that you, junior brother, have realized tathāgata Chan. But [you] won't be able to see there is patriarch Chan even in your dream!" (如來禪 許師弟會 祖師禪 未夢見在; *Guishan yulu* T1989.47.580b29-c01).

<sup>291</sup> *Guishan yulu* T1989.47.580c02: the translation is quoted from Jiang Wu 2008: 116 with small changes (in Italics). The *Zutang ji* version does not have this verse.

<sup>292</sup> Jiang Wu suggests, tathāgata Chan could refer to a type of Chan which allows a gradual progress toward enlightenment as the first verse mentions a period from the last year to this year while patriarch Chan appears to be related to the instant realization of the truth as Xiangyan describes in the second verse. For details, see Jiang Wu 2008: 116.

This notion of the superiority of patriarch Chan to tathāgata Chan probably developed in the period of late Tang and early Song. As the Mazu lineage became dominant and exerted to establish Chan as separate from the scriptural tradition, there arised the necessity for the new brand of Chan that would replace the old brand that had a scriptural origin and the strong connection to the Heze lineage, and at the same time encapsulate the lineage's campaign for the independence of Chan.<sup>293</sup> Eventually, tathāgata Chan came to refer to a type of Chan related to conceptual and theoretical principles drawn from the scriptures, reminiscent of the Heze brand of Chan; patriarch Chan indicated the Chan of the supreme level that would not be confined within the conceptual frame and thus transcend the level of tathāgata Chan. Such hierarchical distinction between these two types of Chan became widespread among the Chan community though not all Chan masters of the Song and subsequent periods agreed with the distinction.<sup>294</sup>

Paekp'are interpreted such notions of patriarch Sōn and tathāgata Sōn to justify his three-fold taxonomy. He was well aware of the age-long distinction between these two types of Sōn:

The popular view from ancient times says that there are principle Sōn and Sōn-outside-the-format in terms of dharma; there are tathāgata Sōn and patriarch Sōn in terms of person. This means that principle Sōn is nothing other than tathāgata Sōn; Sōn-outside-the-format is nothing other than patriarch Sōn.<sup>295</sup>

古來通談曰 約法名義理禪格外禪 約人名如來禪祖師禪 此則義理禪即如來禪格外禪即祖師禪也。

<sup>293</sup> In early Chan, the Heze masters were not the only Chan masters to use the term tathāgata Chan as referring to the supreme level of Chan. Huineng's biography, written in 803, also describes the rulai qingjing chan as supreme. However, as mentioned above, the Heze masters probably took the most systematic approach to this term. For the details in the usage of the term in Huineng's biography, see Jiang Wu 2008: 115.

<sup>294</sup> For example, Dahui appeared to be critical of this distinction of tathāgata Chan and patriarch Chan: see Araki 1969: 45.

<sup>295</sup> *Sōnmun sugyōng* HPC 10, 519b02-04.

Rather than using the generally-accepted correspondences of tathāgata Sŏn/ principle Sŏn and patriarch Sŏn/ Sŏn-outside-the-format, Paekp'a changed one of the correspondences.

According to him, the correspondence of tathāgata Sŏn/ principle Sŏn is simply wrong since these two are different from each other. He argued that tathāgata Sŏn is superior to principle Sŏn because principle Sŏn remains confined within the format of the conceptual and theoretical principles while tathāgata Sŏn transcends such format and becomes "Sŏn-outside-the-format" (C. *gewai Chan*, K. *kyŏg'oe sŏn* 格外禪), together with patriarch Sŏn. Paekp'a went further to say that to name principle Sŏn tathāgata Sŏn was to give an undeserved name (濫名) to principle Sŏn while to name tathāgata Sŏn principle Sŏn was to give a tainted name (累名) to tathāgata Sŏn.<sup>296</sup> By promoting tathāgata Sŏn over principle Sŏn, along with the existing notion of patriarch Sŏn superiority to tathāgata Sŏn, Paekp'a presented the three types of Sŏn in a hierarchial order: patriarch Sŏn, tathāgata Sŏn, and principle Sŏn in descending order.

Paekp'a linked these three types of Sŏn to Linji's three statements: patriarch Sŏn corresponds to the first statement, represented by the Linji and Yunmen lineages; tathāgata Sŏn, to the second by the Caodong, Weiyang, and Fayan lineages; principle Sŏn, to the third by the Heze lineage (All the connections are charted in Table 5). This linkage between the three types of Sŏn and the three statements justifies Paekp'a's taxonomy of the Sŏn lineages and at the same time characterizes the three types of Sŏn with the features of the three statements: these three types of Sŏn are now defined in terms of the level of realizing the truth of *hyangsang*: patriarch Sŏn realizes the immutable and conditional aspect of suchness; tathāgata Sŏn realizes only the immutable aspect; principle Sŏn never realizes these two aspects. For Paekp'a, tathāgata Sŏn

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<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 519b06-07.

and patriarch Sŏn belong to Sŏn-outside-the-format because these two types of Sŏn realize the truth of *hyangsang* partially or fully without falling into dualistic mode of thinking, not because they use the less or non-conceptual rhetoric. Although Paekp'a presented a few examples of the rhetorical differences of the three types of Sŏn, he was inconsistent and even self-contradictory.<sup>297</sup> Hence, for Paekp'a, the major criterion for the hierarchy of principle Sŏn, tathāgata Sŏn, and patriarch Sŏn is the extent that they realize the truth of *hyangsang*. With this interpretation of the three types of Sŏn, Paekp'a upheld the Linji school as patriarch Sŏn of the first statement, which realizes the two aspects of suchness fully and perfectly.

Table 5. Paekp'a's taxonomy of the five houses

Generally accepted view			Paekp'a's view		
patriarch Sŏn	Sŏn-outside format	The five Sŏn houses	patriarch Sŏn	Sŏn-outside format	1 <sup>st</sup> statement: Imje, Unmun
Tathāgata Sŏn	principle Sŏn	Hat'aek	tathāgata Sŏn		2 <sup>nd</sup> statement: Chodong, Wiang, Pöban
			principle Sŏn	Principle Sŏn	3 <sup>rd</sup> statement: Hat'aek

## 2) Mind-transmission

The notion of the “mind-transmission” developed in relation to the Chan endeavor to establish its own identity. As mentioned in chapter two, during the period from late Tang to early Song, there existed two different views of Chan: Chan that represented “a special

<sup>297</sup> Paekp'a gave “Mountains are mountains; waters are waters 山山水水” as an expression for patriarch Sŏn in the *Sŏnmun sugyŏng* but for tathāgata Sŏn in the *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun*; he also said that Fayān's “If you see all forms are not forms, then you do not see Tathāgata 若見諸相非相即不見如來” as an expression for patriarch Sŏn, but the Fayān school whose founder is Fayān is classified as tathāgata Sŏn in his taxonomy. For more expressions for the two types of Sŏn, presented by Paekp'a, see *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun*, HPC 10, 534c10-c17 and *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 519c04-12.

transmission outside the teaching or the harmony between Chan and the teaching.”<sup>298</sup>

Eventually, the view of Chan as an independent tradition overshadowed the rival view of the synthetic Chan. The recognition of Chan as a special transmission subsequently generated the idea that such independent Chan derived directly from the Buddha himself. The famous episode of the so-called “holding up a flower” (C. *nianhua*, K. *yŏmhwa* 拈華) was conceived to substantiate such Chan claim in this period.<sup>299</sup>

In the Sino-Korean Chan/ Sŏn tradition, more than one episode between the Buddha and Kāśyapa developed to serve for this campaign for the independence of Chan. Song Chinese and Koryŏ Korean masters produced the notion that the Buddha’s transmission of mind to Kāśyapa happened in more than one time and place. In particular, the fourteenth century Korean Sŏn master Kagun 覺雲 (d.u.) testified in his *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* 禪門拈頌說話 that different claims on the number of the Buddha’s mind-transmission were circulating in his time. Refuting these views, Kagun asserted that the transmission had occurred in three different places.<sup>300</sup> He gave the episodes regarding these three places of mind-transmission in chronological order:

1) When the World-Honored One preached to human and heavenly beings in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons, Kāśyapa arrived late. The World-Honored One shared his seat with him. (Another version says that the World-Honored One shared his seat with Kāśyapa and put a golden robe on him). The audience was puzzled.<sup>301</sup>

世尊在多子塔前 爲人天說法 迦葉後到 世尊遂分座令坐  
(一本云分座令坐以金欄圍之) 大眾罔措.

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<sup>298</sup> Welter 2000: 87.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>300</sup> *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* 2, HPC 5, 50c14-17.

<sup>301</sup> *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* 1, HPC 5, 012c17-013a02.



2) When the World-Honored One preached on Vulture Peak, four kinds of flowers rained from the sky. The World-Honored One held up and showed one of the flowers to audience. Kāśyapa smiled. The World-Honored One said, “I have the treasury of the true Dharma eye. I entrust it to Mahākāśyapa!” (Another version says that when the World-Honored One looked back at Kāśyapa with the eyes of the blue lotus, Kāśyapa smiled).<sup>302</sup>

世尊在靈山說法 天雨四花 世尊遂拈花示衆 迦葉微笑 世尊云吾有正法眼藏付囑摩訶迦葉 (一本世尊以青蓮目顧視迦葉迦葉微笑).

3) The seven days had already passed after the World-Honored one entered nirvāṇa beneath the two śāla trees. The great Kāśyapa arrived late and walked around the coffin three times. The World-Honored One showed his feet out of the coffin. Kāśyapa bowed down. The audience was puzzled.<sup>303</sup>

世尊在婆羅雙樹 入般涅槃已經七日 大迦葉後至 遶棺三匝 世尊擲示雙趺 迦葉作禮 大眾罔措.

These episodes, which were already well-known in Song China and Koryŏ Korea, were called “sharing the seat,” “holding up a flower,” and “showing the feet out of a coffin” in abbreviation.<sup>304</sup> Kagun designated these three episodes collectively as the “three places of mind-transmission.” This notion that the Buddha transmitted his mind to Kāśyapa in these three different times and places was popularized, in particular, in Korea. For example, the

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<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 5, 014a03-a07.

<sup>303</sup> *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* 2, HPC 5, 050a09-a12.

<sup>304</sup> These three episodes were clearly well-known in the Song Chan community as seen in Yuanwu’s mention of the first two transmissions and Ciming’s allusion of the third transmission episode (*Chanlin sengbao chuan* 禪林僧寶傳 21, X1560.79.533a12-13). Although Welter and Foulk demonstrate well that Song Chan masters used and developed the second transmission episode “holding up a flower” to establish Chan as a special transmission outside teaching, it needs further research to find out whether they employed all these three episodes for that purpose. However, it is certain that since Kagun, the Korean Sŏn masters have often used the collective term “three places of mind-transmission” in relation to the independent Sŏn identity. For details, see Welter 2000: 75-109 and Foulk 1999: 220-294.

renowned sixteenth century Korean Sŏn master Hyujŏng (1520-1604), mentioning all these three transmissions, affirmed that the lamp of Sŏn was transmitted to Kāśyapa in these places.<sup>305</sup>

The notion of the Buddha's three transmissions of mind inevitably raises the questions of the very nature of the mind-transmissions: Did the Buddha transmit the same mind to Kāśyapa in these different times and places? If so, what reason or need would there be for the Buddha to do so? If not, what different mind did the Buddha transmit to Kāśyapa in each time and place? It was generally accepted that the same mind had been transmitted in these different places as Paekp'a admits in his *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*.<sup>306</sup> Hence, this notion of the Buddha's three mind-transmissions also served to legitimize the Chan/ Sŏn claim for its own unique identity. However, the question of why the Buddha had transmitted the same mind to Kāśyapa in the three different times and places remained unsolved. In fact, this question functioned as one of the *gong'ans* just as Yuanwu Keqin said, "By sharing his seat [with Kāśyapa] in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons, Śākyamuni already transmitted this seal secretly. Thereafter, he held up a flower. This is the second-level *gong'an!*" (釋迦文多子塔前分座 已密授此印 爾後拈花 第二重公案).<sup>307</sup>

Paekp'a shed the new light on this issue of the nature of the Buddha's mind transmissions. He asserted that the Buddha had transmitted different minds or different levels of mind in different times and places. According to Paekp'a, the Buddha's mind was

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<sup>305</sup> *Sŏn'ga kwigam* HPC 7, 635b09-13.

<sup>306</sup> *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 519b02-06.

<sup>307</sup> *Foguo yuanwu zhenjue chanshi xinyao* 佛果園悟真覺禪師心要: X1357.69.457a24-b01; Yuanwu's words are also recorded in the *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa 2*: HPC 5, 050c17-20.

transmitted partially in the first place while it was transmitted fully both in the second and third places. Then, he correlated the first two transmissions to his Sōn taxonomy. He said:

Of the three transmission places, the first “sharing the seat” is true emptiness and the “single-edged sword to kill people.” This is the second of the three statements, which represents the original share as well as leading-upward. Since this only transmits the immutability of true suchness, it only kills, not gives life..... The second place of “holding up a flower” is the wondrous existences and the “double-edged sword to give life people.” This is the first statement which represents the three essentials of capacity (killing) and function (giving life), as well as true emptiness...and the wondrous existence of leading upward... This is equipped with both killing and giving life.<sup>308</sup>

三處傳中 第一分座(真空)殺人刀 即三句中第二句本分及向上 則但傳不變真如 唯殺無活.....第二處拈華(妙有)活人劍 即第一句機(殺)用(活)三要及向上真空...妙有...則具足殺活。

By connecting the first two mind-transmissions to Linji’s first and second statements, Paekp’a established the following correspondences: sharing the seat, true emptiness, the single-edged sword that kills people, the second statement, immutability, killing, on the one hand; holding up a flower, true emptiness and wondrous existence, the double-edged sword that gives life people, the first statement, immutability and conditionality, killing and giving life, on the other hand.

Table 6. First two mind-transmissions

first transmission	second transmission
sharing the seat	holding up a flower
true emptiness	true emptiness and wondrous existence
single-edged sword that kills people	double-edged sword that gives life people
second statement	first statement
immutability	immutability and conditionality
killing	killing and saving

<sup>308</sup> *Sōnmun sugyōng*, HPC 10, 520b10-16.

Paekp'a provided little explanation for his correlation, which seems rather arbitrary. He simply added that "sharing the seat" is the "seat of the teaching of emptiness" and that "holding up a flower" is "wondrous existence."<sup>309</sup> In my opinion, since the "seat of the teaching of emptiness" is the appellation for the seat of the tathāgata in the tenth chapter of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*, the first transmission "sharing the seat" is true emptiness since the Buddha shared with Kāśyapa his own seat, the seat only eligible for those who perfectly realize the teaching of emptiness; on the other hand, "holding up a flower" is the wondrous existence since this episode shows the Buddha's wisdom in his wondrous and spontaneous act of holding up a flower of the flower-rains.<sup>310</sup>

In the above quotation, Paekp'a also employed the analogies of "a single-edged sword that kills people" (K. *sarin to* 殺人刀) and "a double-edged sword that gives life people" (K. *hwarin kōm* 活人劍) to show the superiority of "holding up a flower" to "sharing the seat."<sup>311</sup> These two analogies almost always appear in conjunction with each other in Chan texts.<sup>312</sup> Though never fully explained, each symbolizes the different aspects of wisdom. With its single edge, the "single-edged sword that kills people" represents one dimensional functioning of

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<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 519c13 and c18.

<sup>310</sup> *Miafa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 Fashi pin 法師品: T262.9.31c27.

<sup>311</sup> As Ch'ōi points out, Kagun first connected the first transmission to the single-edged sword and the second transmission to the double-edged sword though he gave little explanation. For Kagun's connection, see *Sōnmun yōmsong sōrhwa* 2, HPC 5, 51a03-17.

<sup>312</sup> The analogies of these two types of sword were well-known in the Song Chan community. The analogies are recorded in many recorded sayings of such eminent masters of this time as Yuanwu, Dahui, and Hongzhi (1091-1157) as well as such *gong'an* collections of the *Blue Cliff Record* and the *Gateless Barrier*.

wisdom that would only “kill the defilements” on the basis of the truth of emptiness.<sup>313</sup> On the other hand, with its extra edge, the “double-edged sword that gives life people” represents the dual dimensional functioning of wisdom that would not only remove all the defilements but also allow one to act lively or freely in accord with conditions without attachment. Hence, the single-edged sword could correspond to realizing the immutable aspect of suchness while the double-edged sword, to realizing both immutable and conditional aspects. With these analogies, Paekp’a affirmed that “holding up a flower” should be superior to “sharing the seat.”

Such a bold claim of Paekp’a on the mind transmissions in fact draws on the same rationale that is often used in various doctrinal taxonomies. For example, Zhiyi’s taxonomy supposed five different periods in which the Buddha gave instructions in five different levels of teachings: the Buddha’s teaching was gradually refined over five different periods of his career and finally culminated in the fifth period when he instructed the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*. In his taxonomy, Zhiyi argued that the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* was supreme since it not only teaches the ultimate truth but also employs various skillful means which the Buddha had acquired over his career in response to the conditions of the sentient beings. What Zhiyi intended in his taxonomy was obviously to promote his Tiantai school by upholding the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*, the school’s main scripture, as supreme.<sup>314</sup> By arguing that the Buddha transmitted different levels of mind in different times and places, Paekp’a achieved the same goal as Zhiyi’s: the Linji/ Imje Sōn is promoted into the highest level in which the mind of the Buddha holding up a flower has been transmitted.

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<sup>313</sup> The analogy of the wisdom as the sword of “killing or destroying the defilements” is often used in Buddhist texts. For example, see the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra* 維摩詰所說經 3 (T475.14.554b21-22) and the *Abhidharmavibhāṣāśāstra* 阿毘曇毘婆沙論 (T1546.28.360a01).

<sup>314</sup> For Zhiyi’s Tiantai taxonomy, see Mun 2006: 123-168 and Gregory 2002: 104-105.

### 3) The analogy of a genuine-gold store and a general merchandise store

Paekp'a employed another analogy to claim Linji's superiority, on the basis of its realization of the wondrous functioning of wisdom: a genuine-gold store and a general merchandise store. The analogy first appears in the episode of Daowu Yuanzhi 道吾圓智 (769-835) and Yunyan Tansheng 雲岩曇晟 (780-841) in the *Zutang ji*, which reveals the rivalry between the Shitou and Mazu lineages. Paekp'a reinterpreted this analogy from the perspective of a different lineage rivalry to support his polemical claim. Let me first give an outline of the episode from the *Zutang ji*.

Daowu and Yunyan were brothers who had long been separated. Daowu became a government official while Yunyan became a monk at a young age and studied under Baizhang Huaihai 百丈懷海 (720-814). One day, Daowu happened to visit a hut in Mt. Baizhang and met his long-separated brother Yunyan. Shortly after their reunion, Daowu decided to become a monk and received the precepts at forty six. After studying a year with his brother under Baizhang, Daowu went to Yaoshan Weiyuan 藥山惟儼 (751-834) and became his student. Daowu experienced a breakthrough in his training and immediately sent a letter to Yunyan in which he urged Yunyan to come to study under Yaoshan since "Shitou is a genuine-gold store while Jiangxi [Mazu] is a general merchandise store" (石頭是真金鋪 江西是雜貨鋪).<sup>315</sup> Then, Yunyan also came to Yaoshan and became his student.<sup>316</sup>

As Ishii Shūdō and Ui Hakuju point out, this episode is not a historical fact. Since Daowu's secular surname was Zhang and Yunyan's was Wang, they were not brothers. Daowu

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<sup>315</sup> *Zutang ji* 4 K45.262a23-a24.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*, K45.261c24-262c01.

also became a novice monk at a young age and studied under Baizhang Fazheng 百丈法政, not Baizhang Huaihai.<sup>317</sup> However, whether this episode is historically true or not, it clearly shows the sectarian rivalry between the Shitou and Mazu lineages, involving a polemical claim to promote one lineage over the other. In this episode, the claim takes the issue of the efficiency of the teachings of the two lineages: Yunyan had little progress in his training although he had long studied with Baizhang Huaihai, whose master was Mazu; on the contrary, his brother Daowu saw a significant progress not long after he studied under Yaoshan, whose master was Shitou. The analogy in Daowu's letter directly reveals the intention of this episode to criticize the Mazu lineage and promote the Shitou lineage: just as a general merchandise store would distract the customers with its various goods and thus make it hard for them to find the genuine gold, the Mazu masters' instructions would make students go astray in their Buddhist training; on the contrary, just as a genuine-gold store only sells genuine gold, the Shitou masters instruct only the most valuable core of the Buddhist teachings and lead students to enlightenment.<sup>318</sup>

The *Zutang ji*, however, also records Yangshan Huiji's interpretation of the analogy to overturn its original intent. Yangshan says,

I will get rid of all your coarse knowledge which has been cumulated from countless eons by provisionally employing the skillful means...just as a person puts together a hundred kinds of merchandise, gold and precious things in a store, and only sells them by measuring the lightness and the heaviness of the customers. Although Shitou is said

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<sup>317</sup> Ishii 1987: 135 and Ui 1966: 23-26; cited in Jia 2006: 110.

<sup>318</sup> The description of the Mazu lineage as a convenience store in this episode is in fact not baseless. The Mazu teachings emphasize "external functioning" rather than "internal essence" of mind: it was through various functions of mind that innate suchness is manifested. Thus, in its practice, there is nothing needed to be cultivated or cut off. One has only to allow internal enlightenment to operate spontaneously and let his mind respond to the conditions without disrupting the flow of the Way. As Zongmi criticized, such Mazu's argument would be a hindrance for unenlightened students who have dualistic thought because of its possible antinomianism. The analogy of a convenience store for the Mazu lineage reflects such criticism. For details of the Mazu teaching, see, Buswell 1987: 338-343, Jia 2006: 67-82, and Poceski 2007: 157-192; for Zongmi's criticism of Mazu, see Gregory 2002: 236-244.

to be a genuine-gold store, I am a general merchandise store. For this reason, when a person comes and seeks for a general item, I will give it to him. When a person seeks for gold, I will give it to him as well.<sup>319</sup>

所以假設方便 奪汝諸人塵劫來麤識...如人將百種貨物 雜渾金寶一鋪貨 賣祇擬輕重來機 所以道石頭是真金鋪 我者裏是雜貨鋪 有人來覓雜貨鋪 則我亦拈他 與來覓真金 我亦與他。

Here, a general merchandise store refers to the functioning of wisdom with which a master could employ various skillful means in accord with students' spiritual capabilities. On the contrary, a genuine-gold store refers to the lack of such functioning of wisdom.

Probably in light of Yangshan's new perspective on the analogy, Paep'a placed this analogy into a different sectarian rivalry to promote the Linji school. He said:

Do you want to know Qingyuan?.....[He represents] the mind-transmission of a genuine-gold store and the single-edged sword that kills people...Do you want to know Huairang?...[He represents] the mind-transmission of a general merchandise store and the double-edged sword that gives life people.<sup>320</sup>

要識青原麼.....真金鋪殺人刀傳心也...要識讓師麼...雜貨鋪活人劍傳心也。

Here, Paep'a argued that Nanyue Huairang 南嶽懷讓 (677-744) is superior to Qingyuan Xingsi 清源行思 (d. 740). Qingyuan is a genuine-gold store which lacks the functioning of wisdom since he only realizes the truth of mind partially; Nanyue is a general merchandise store which carries various functioning of wisdom since he realizes the truth fully and perfectly. Such Paep'a's claim on the superiority of Nanyue to Qingyuan is in fact related to the sectarian rivalry between the Linji and Caodong schools which involved Linji masters' manipulation of the Chan lineage as a polemical tool to promote their lineage over the Caodong lineage. The Song Linji master Huihong argued in the *Linjian lu* that the four main lineages of the Linji,

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<sup>319</sup> *Zutang ji* 18 K45.345c14-c18.

<sup>320</sup> *Susōn kyōlsa mun* HPC 10, 534b15-c05.



Weiyang, Fayan, and Yunmen had originated from Mazu, the disciple of Nanyue. Whatever Huihong's original intention was, his argument was interpreted as a polemical claim to promote the Linji lineage by upholding Mazu as a common lineage ancestor of the four major Chan lineages and at the same time marginalizing the rival Caodong lineage from the majority of the five Chan houses. Although eventually dismissed as false later in the Qing and Chosŏn period, this lineage claim was supported immediately by Zhang Shangying 張商英 (1043-1121), the renowned lay patron for the Linji school, and transmitted separately from the official version of the Chan lineage in the *Jingde chuandeng lu*. For example, Hyujŏng accepted this claim and promoted the Linji school in his *Sŏn 'ga kwigam*; the Qing Linji master Feiyin Tongrong 費隱通容 (1593-1662) composed the *Wudeng yantong* 五燈嚴統, the representative text for this claim, which would trigger the legal battle between the Linji and Caodong masters in the early Qing period.<sup>321</sup> It is uncertain if Paekp'a was aware of the Qing debate. However, Paekp'a elsewhere accepted this claim, affirming that the four lineages of Linji, Weiyang, Fayan, and Yunmen originated from Nanyue.<sup>322</sup> Hence, what Paekp'a really intended in the above quotation is to promote the Linji lineage. By describing Nanyue and Qingyuan respectively as a general merchandise store and a genuine-gold store, Paekp'a accomplished the intent of this polemical lineage claim for the Linji school, which developed in the context of the Linji and Caodong sectarian rivalry: the Linji lineage is the supreme of all Sŏn lineages because the lineage, just like a general merchandise store, transmits the wisdom, which not only removes all the attachments but also allows one to respond spontaneously in accord to various conditions.

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<sup>321</sup> For Hyujŏng's view on the lineages of the five houses, see *Sŏn 'ga kwigam* HPC 7, 644b04-c04; for more details on this lineage claim and the Qing debate and legal battle, see Kim Ho-gwi 2009:111-160 and Jiang Wu 2008: 188-223

<sup>322</sup> *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* HPC 10 534b02-03.

As we have seen so far, Paekp'a's taxonomy purports to promote the Linji school with which the Korean Sŏn tradition of the Chosŏn period was affiliated. For this purpose, Paekp'a reinterpreted such existing notions within the Korean Sŏn tradition as patriarch Sŏn/ tathāgata Sŏn, mind-transmission, genuine-gold store/ general merchandise store. Another intention of his taxonomy, as mentioned before, is to integrate the Korean Sŏn soteriology into the Linji tradition, to be discussed in the following section.

### 3. Paekp'a's Taxonomy and Chinul's Three Mysteries: Paekp'a's Soteriology

As seen in chapter two, Korean Sŏn Buddhism of Paekp'a's time established the *kanhwa* practice within Chinul's schema of "sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation." This system relies mainly on Chinul's interpretation of the three mysteries in the *Chŏryŏ*: a novice student begins his Buddhist training with doctrinal studies of the "mystery in the essence," proceeds to the *kanhwa* technique of the "mystery in the word," and eventually achieves enlightenment of the "mystery in the mystery." In the *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun*, Paep'a correlated Chinul's three mysteries with his three kinds of Sŏn, which draws on Linji's teaching. By doing so, Paekp'a not only placed the Korean Sŏn soteriology within the Linji tradition, but also justified its implication for the Sŏn and Kyo relationship through the authority of Linji. Paekp'a's connection of these two seemingly opposite traditions also inevitably transforms the Linji identity.

#### 1) The integration of the Korean Sŏn soteriology into the Linji school

According to Paekp'a, Chinul's three mysteries, which represent the Korean Sŏn soteriology, correspond to the three-fold taxonomy. Paep'a first linked Chinul's "mystery in the essence" to principle Sŏn of the Heze lineage:

Since this master [Heze Shenhui] did not destroy intellectual understanding [in which he designated the inevitable truth of mind as] the “original source” or the “Buddha-nature,” he entered into the awakening with the dead word. Therefore, he was the founding master of principle Sōn and became a secondary son of the Sixth Patriarch. However, since his understanding was lofty and clear, he comprised the tenets of all the Buddhist canons of Sōn and Kyo with the four words of “empty tranquil numinous awareness.” This is like what the *Duxu* and the *Chōryo* elucidate. *This is the principle of the “mystery in the essence” mentioned above.* Many of the sentient beings of the latter age enter into awakening, following the principle. What Guifeng [Zongmi] and Mog’u [Chinul] described is nothing other than this.<sup>323</sup>

此師本源佛性之知解未亡 故爲死句悟入 即義理禪宗主 而爲六祖之孽子也 然悟解高明 決擇了然 以空寂靈知四字 括盡一藏禪教之宗趣 如都序節要中所明 即上體中玄道理是也 末世衆生 多從義理中悟入 圭峯牧牛之敘述 即其宜矣。

Here, Paekp’a devalued the Heze school as an illegitimate heir of the true Sōn lineage by depicting Shenhui as a secondary son (*C. niezi*, *K. ōlcha* 孽子), who has no legitimate right to inherit the family lineage. According to Paep’a, this is because people of the Heze lineage do not fully realize the secretly-transmitted truth of the Chan/ Sōn lineage and thus inevitably distort the truth by reifying it. This level of principle Sōn corresponds to the “mystery in the essence,” of which the doctrinal descriptions only produce conceptual understanding and never bring about true enlightenment. However, according to Paekp’a, despite the innate incompetence in effectuating enlightenment, principle Sōn or the first mystery contributes to spiritual development with its clear understanding of mind. Hence, it becomes a necessary part of his soteriological path. In particular, Paekp’a argued that principle Sōn laid the firm foundation for the subsequent Buddhist training. Quoting Chinul’s words, he warned the danger of ignoring this prerequisite condition for the Sōn practice:

Did Mog’uja not tell this? “I have observed that people of the present time who are cultivating their minds do not depend on the guidance of the written teachings, but straightaway assume that the successive transmission of the esoteric idea [of Sōn] is the path. They then sit around dozing with their minds in a haze, their labors all in vain, or

<sup>323</sup> *Susōn kyōlsamun* HPC 10, 534a03-09.

else they lose their presence of mind in agitation and confusion during their practice of meditation. For these reasons, I feel you should follow words and teachings which were expounded in accordance with reality in order to determine the proper procedure in regard to awakening and cultivation. Once you mirror your own minds, you may contemplate with insight at all times, without wasting any of your efforts.”In my opinion, what this master said is truly right and perfectly wondrous. His view of the manner [of cultivating the Buddhist practices] and presentation of the instructions are most mature and proper.<sup>324</sup>

牧牛子 豈不云乎 予觀今時修心人不依文字指歸 直以密意相傳處爲道則溟滓然徒勞坐睡 或於觀行 失心錯亂故 須依如實言教 決擇悟修之本末 以鏡自心 即於時中 觀行不枉用功爾 余謂此師所見真正圓妙 觀風設教最爲親切。

For Paekp’a, the mistakes or the difficulties during the Sōn training described above are caused by paying no attention to principle Sōn. Paekp’a, who probably saw the mistakes of Sōn practitioners of Chinul’s time also made by those of his time, emphasized the necessity of principle Sōn: a student should orient himself in the path toward enlightenment on the basis of the doctrinal teachings in order to avoid the above-quoted mistakes and have benefits from the subsequent Sōn practice. Paekp’a specified the merits that could receive from the conceptual understanding of principle Sōn: the student would “no longer raise the mind of ‘desire and dislike’ and ‘victory and defeat’ by knowing that the nature of mind is inherently pure and defilements are empty in nature” (以知心性本淨 煩惱本空故 不起憎愛勝負之心).<sup>325</sup> Nonetheless, as mentioned above, this principle Sōn of the first mystery inevitably generates conceptual defilements, caused by habituations and cannot directly lead to the final goal.

Therefore, another stage is necessary to remove such hindrances.

For Paekp’a, *kanhwa* Sōn practice is the “mystery of the word” to serve this purpose.

Following the lead of Chinul, he distinguished the practice into two types of investigation:

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<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 531c14-20. Chinul’s words are from the *Chōryō*. The translation for Chinul’s words is quoted from Buswell 1983: 263-264.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 533b07-08.

investigation of the meaning (K. *ch'amüi* 參意) or investigation of the word (K. *ch'amgu* 參句) of the *hwadu*.<sup>326</sup> The investigation of the meaning takes the intellectual approach to the *hwadu*: a student attempts to figure out the meaning of the *hwadu* or the intent of the *hwadu* intellectually. For example, as Buswell explains, in the case of the Zhaozhou's "mu" (C. *wu* 無) *hwadu*, a student explores such questions that carry intellectual curiosity or "taste" (C. *wei*, K. *mi* 味) as "With what intent in mind did Zhaozhou make the statement *mu*?" or "What state of mind did Zhaozhou have when he makes the *mu* statement?"<sup>327</sup> In this investigation, a student relies on the knowledge and skills that he obtains through the doctrinal studies: as Chinul pointed out, even though the student cultivates with less or non-conceptual *hwadu*, he is just like the people who study in the Complete and Sudden gate of the doctrinal studies.<sup>328</sup> Eventually, the student ends up with sticking on the level of principle *Sön*. Thus, he needs the investigation of the word itself in order to proceed in his Buddhist training. This investigation of a tasteless word refers to abandoning the intellectual search for the meaning or intent of the *hwadu* and just looking at the word of the *hwadu*. In this type of investigation, one simply has a single-pointed mind on the word without attempting to intellectually think through it.

Paekp'a, again like Chinul, linked these two types of investigation to the dead word and the live word: the *hwadu* word of the investigation of the meaning is the dead word because this intellectual approach leads only to conceptual understanding and even cannot save the practitioner himself; the *hwadu* word of the investigation of the word is the live word because

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<sup>326</sup> For Paekp'a's accounts for these two types of investigation, see *Susön kyölsamun* HPC 10, 538a18-24; For Chinul's accounts, see Buswell 1983: 252-253.

<sup>327</sup> Buswell 1986: 220.

<sup>328</sup> Buswell 1983: 252 and 1986: 220.

this tasteless approach frees a student from the conceptual obstruction and consummates the practitioner's spiritual development.<sup>329</sup> For Paekp'a, the investigation of the word is the true way of cultivating the short-cut gate (K. *kyōngjōl mun* 徑截門). Paekp'a advised a student who now faces the *hwadu* word to guard himself from the habitual tendency that operates on the level of the "mystery in the essence" and makes him fall for the intellectual taste in the word of the *hwadu*. He rather urged the student to undertake the investigation of the word of the *hwadu*.<sup>330</sup>

This investigation of the word is correlated with tathāgata Sōn in Paekp'a's three-fold soteriology. He said:

You should know that the wisdom of "emptiness and calmness" is empty and calm as well. In the middle of such emptiness and calmness of no-thought, only one-thought will be manifested in one's mind. [Right then, one should] investigate the tasteless live word which is outside the format.<sup>331</sup>

知空寂之智 亦復空寂 如是無念空寂之中 但將自心現前一念 叅商格外沒滋味之活句。

Paekp'a regarded the "investigation of the word" as the practice which is cultivated with the realization that the teaching of emptiness itself is empty. Even if one removes most of his attachments by realizing the teaching of emptiness through the doctrinal descriptions of nature and phenomena of mind, he still has the attachment to the very teaching of emptiness. Hence, in order to cultivate true *kanhwa* Sōn practice, a student has to realize that the teaching itself is also empty and remove the attachment to that teaching. This level of realization of the truth of emptiness is equivalent to that of tathāgata Sōn which is characterized by the realization of true emptiness.

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<sup>329</sup> For Chinul's link of the two types of investigation to the live and dead words, see Buswell 1986: 221.

<sup>330</sup> See *Susōn kyōlsamun* HPC 10, 538a18-24.

<sup>331</sup> *Susōn kyōlsa mun* HPC 10, 536a07-09.

In the above quotation, Paekp'a also endorsed Chinul's scheme of "sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation" by linking the *kanhwa* Sōn of the second mystery to "no-thought." The notion of no-thought, introduced first in the *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*, occupies an important place in the Chan and Sōn soteriology. According to Buswell, this notion means to be "non-dualistic, not distinguishing between wrong thoughts...and right thoughts" or to allow "the mind to flow freely, without any of the obstructions or value judgements that would impede the Dao."<sup>332</sup> More importantly, no-thought is defined by the Heze affiliated masters as one of the important features of the practice followed by sudden enlightenment.<sup>333</sup> For example, Chinul said as follows:

Nonetheless, although you must cultivate further, you have already awakened suddenly to the fact that deluded thoughts are originally void and the mind-nature is originally pure. Thus you eliminate evil, but you eliminate without really eliminating anything; you cultivate the wholesome, but you cultivate without really cultivating anything either. This is true cultivation and true elimination. For this reason it is said, "Although one prepares to cultivate the manifold supplementary practices, no-thought is the origin of them all."<sup>334</sup>

雖有後修 已先頓悟妄念本空 心性本淨 於惡斷斷而無斷 於善修修而無修 此乃真修眞斷矣 故云雖備修萬行 唯以無念爲宗。

By connecting the *kanhwa* Sōn technique to no-thought, Paekp'a defined the technique as belonging to gradual cultivation, the second stage of Chinul's soteriological path. Paekp'a, therefore, identified his three-fold Sōn taxonomy with Chinul's schema of "sudden enlightenment followed by the gradual cultivation." In this soteriological model, a student would attain the understanding-awakening through doctrinal descriptions of the reality, proceed

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<sup>332</sup> Buswell 1987: 332.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*, 333.

<sup>334</sup> *Susim kyōl*, HPC 4, 711b07-b10: The translation is quoted from Buswell 1983: 148-149 with small alterations.

to the investigation of the word of the *hwadu* on the basis of the realization of true emptiness, and finally reach the realization-awakening.

For Paekp'a, this realization-awakening is the mystery in the mystery or the level of patriarch Sŏn. Paekp'a regarded this level as the final stage of his three-fold journey to enlightenment rather than such non-linguistic expressions as silence, shouting, and beating. According to Paekp'a, on this final level, a practitioner sees the "place of comforting his body and establishing his life" (C. *anshen liming chu*, K. *ansin immyŏng ch'ŏ* 安身立命處) of both himself and the Buddhas and patriarchs:<sup>335</sup> The practitioner finally enters into the level of patriarch Sŏn, becoming a legitimate heir of the Sixth Patriarch Huineng. On this level, one fully and completely realizes the immutable and conditional aspects of mind as well as the universal presence of these two aspects within all sentient beings without any trace of conceptual defilements.

Paekp'a's three-fold soteriology could be regarded as the Linji recension of Chinul's three mysteries.<sup>336</sup> As seen before, on the basis of Linji's teaching, Paekp'a presented the soteriological path which consists of three stages: the first, second, and third statements or

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<sup>335</sup> *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* HPC 10, 536b09-11.

<sup>336</sup> Yugyŏng argues that Paekp'a's three mysteries in the *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* refer to Linji's three mysteries and that these mysteries represent his soteriology. She also connects Paekp'a's three mysteries to Chinul's three gates of "wŏndon sinhae," "kanhwa kyŏngjŏl," and "sŏngjŏk tŭngji." In my opinion, Paekp'a used two different concepts of the three mysteries. In the *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun*, he used Chinul's mysteries and linked them to Linji's three statements, not three mysteries, though Chinul explicitly denied the connection of his mysteries to Linji's teaching. In the *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, Paep'a used Ch'ŏnch'aek's interpretation for Linji's three mysteries to refer to the level of the tathāgata Sŏn. If Paekp'a's three mystery soteriology in the *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* explains Linji's three mysteries as Yu argues, this soteriology would just lead to the middle level of realization of the truth, which is in fact contrary to Paekp'a's argument that the *kanhwa* technique leads to the full and perfect enlightenment, as will be seen later in this chapter. Chinul also did not refer to the so-called "three gates" as constituting one single soteriology. For details of Yu's argument, see Yugyŏng 2003: 63-75; for Chinul's "three gates," see Ingyŏng 2002: 166-216.



patriarch, tathāgata, and principle Sōns. By connecting this three-fold path to Chinul’s three mysteries, Paekp’a embraced the Korean Sōn soteriology into the Linji tradition. In this soteriology, tathāgata Sōn and principle Sōn are not dismissed as wrong. Rather, they are regarded as constituting the path toward the final stage of patriarch Sōn. Even principle Sōn, criticized harshly by the Linji masters, is accepted as a necessary stage in order to achieve this final goal. The connection of Paekp’a’s taxonomy and Chinul’s three mysteries may be charted as follows:

Table 7. Soteriologies of Paekp’a and Chinul

Linji’s three statements	sudden awakening gradual cultivation	Paekp’a’s taxonomy	Chinul’s three mysteries
first statement	realization-awakening	patriarch Sōn	Mystery in the msytery
second statement	gradual cultivation	tathāgata Sōn	Mystery in the word
third statement	Understanding-awakening	Principle Sōn	Mystery in the essence

## 2) Sōn and Kyo in Paekp’a’s soteriology

Paep’a’s three-fold soteriological system not only reveals the Korean Buddhist view of the Sōn and Kyo relationship but also legitimizes this view through the authority of Linji’s teaching. In this system, Sōn, which is represented by tathāgata and patriarch Sōns, occupies the pre-eminent position over Kyo, which is represented by principle Sōn. Although Paekp’a mentioned the complementarity between Sōn and Kyo, Kyo always plays a preparatory role for Sōn in this relationship.<sup>337</sup> Kyo helps Sōn practice efficient by mapping out the path toward enlightenment: with the direction presented by Kyo, a novice student would not go astray along

<sup>337</sup> *Sōnmun sugyōng* HPC 10, 524a11-15: here, Paekp’a referred to Sōn to “seeing” (K. *kan* 看) and Kyo to “speaking” (K. *sōl* 說). He argued that both of them are indispensable since they are just like eyes and legs for a person.

the path and could reach his goal. In particular, according to Paekp'a, Kyo nurtures the true eye (C. *zhengyan*, K. *chǒngan* 正眼) for a student to discern what is wholesome or unwholesome and have the subsequent practices successful "as if a person cooks a meal with rice rather than sand."<sup>338</sup> However, for him, the role of Kyo always remains limited in the matter of achieving enlightenment because it is unable to lead directly to the ultimate goal beyond the realm of concepts due to its very nature of conceptualizing the ineffable.

According to Paekp'a, it is only through Sōn that the goal could be achieved. He presented scriptural sources to emphasize this exclusive role or faculty of Sōn to bring about enlightenment. To give a couple of examples:

(1) The *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra* says, "When one seeks for the shallow affairs of the mundane world, he could not achieve the work if he does not focus his energies. How much is this the case when it comes to learning the unsurpassed wisdom without cultivating Sōn meditation?"<sup>339</sup>

智度論云 若求世間近事 不能專精事業不成 況學無上菩提 不用禪定。

(2) The *Mahāsaṃnipata-sūtra* says, "...Calm and still is the unconditioned realm of the Buddhas. There, one could attain the pure bodhi. If there is a person who slanders the seated meditation, he will be called a person who slanders all the Tathāgatas."<sup>340</sup>

大集經云...閒靜無爲佛境界 於彼能得淨菩提 若有毀謗坐禪者 是名毀謗諸如來。

This complementary and yet subordinate relationship between Sōn and Kyo in regard to achieving the Buddhist soteriological goal in fact has a long pedigree in Korea. As seen in chapter two, since it was first suggested by Chinul, such relationship has become the hallmark of Korean Buddhism, except in the late Koryŏ period. In particular, Hyujōng explained this

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<sup>338</sup> *Susōn kyōlsa mun* HPC 10, 532c06-10.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 542a13-14; *Dazhidu lun (Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra)* 17, T1509.25.180c12-13.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 542a18-20; *Da fangdeng daji jing (Mahāsaṃnipata-sūtra)* 46, T397.13.303a12-13.

relationship by employing the analogy of a king and vassals, which Paekp'a also employed in his *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun*.<sup>341</sup> In this analogy, a king corresponds to Sŏn, the vassals, to Kyo.

For Paekp'a, the Sŏn practice that will lead to enlightenment is the *kanhwa* Sŏn rather than any other forms of the Sŏn practice:

A ball of doubt manifests alone, vast and unbenighted...Even if one acts, he abides deeply in that mark [of a ball], not losing voidness and brightness just as if he protects an infant...If he could do like this..., how could this be compared with the foolish Sŏn of abiding in silence in vain or with merely seeking for the mad wisdom that pursues words?<sup>342</sup>

疑團獨露 廓然不昧...雖有所作 如護嬰兒 不失虛明湛然相住...若能如是...豈比夫空守默之癡禪 但尋文之狂慧者也.

Here, “abiding in silence in vain” and “seeking for the mad wisdom that pursues words” could refer to two different approaches to Sŏn: the silent illumination Sŏn and the literary Sŏn.

Paekp'a clearly promoted *kanhwa* Sŏn over these two approaches which he seems to regard as inefficient, if not wrong. For him, the true Sŏn practice that could result in enlightenment is *kanhwa* Sŏn.

Even though he emphasized the *kanhwa* Sŏn technique just like such Korean Sŏn masters as Chinul and Hyujŏng, Paep'a made a unique claim in relation to its applicability. According to Paekp'a, the *kanhwa* technique should be applied universally to all students, not just to the specific ones as mistakenly claimed before. He even argued that the technique is in particular for those with the mid and low spiritual capabilities while it is not needed for the people of the high capability because when these people face the *hwadu* word, they would

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<sup>341</sup> In Hyujŏng's *Sŏngyo sŏk* 禪教釋, the analogy was recorded as originating from the Silla monk Muyŏm 無染 (800-888): HPC 7, 656a20-b01; for Paekp'a use of the analogy, see *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* HPC 10, 541a07-13.

<sup>342</sup> *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* HPC 10, 542c17-23.

immediately attain enlightenment without the need of investigating it.<sup>343</sup> However, Paekp'a elsewhere maintained that this three-fold Sŏn soteriology is the “only path toward the gate to *nirvāṇa*” 一路涅槃門 and that those who believe, understand, and uphold this teaching are the people of the highest spiritual capability.<sup>344</sup> Hence, for Paekp'a, this *kanhwa* Sŏn technique is for the students of all spiritual capabilities. Such Paekp'a's view of the applicability of the technique contradicts Chinul and Hyujŏng's view that the technique aims only for those who have the highest spiritual capability while those of the inferior capability need different practices that would be easy for them to follow.<sup>345</sup> Paekp'a himself raised a possible opposition that would come from such a viewpoint as follows:

Someone says, “When I look at what is said above one by one, [I understand that you urge] students to see the nature by investigating the tasteless and clueless ‘mystery in the word’ after firmly believing and understanding the ‘mystery in the essence’ that the nature of mind is originally pure and the defilements are originally empty... If you want the foolish and dull people of inferior spiritual capability in the latter age to do this, how would it be different from blaming a mosquito which is carrying Mt. Tai on its back?”<sup>346</sup>

或曰第觀上來所說 決定信解心性本淨 煩惱本空之體中玄然後 更以沒滋味沒摸搯之句中玄 教令叅究以冀見性...以此欲望於末世愚鈍之下根者 何以異於責蚊子以負泰山也。

Paekp'a explained the universal necessity of *kanhwa* practice, criticizing this opposition of distrusting the only path toward *nirvāṇa*. According to Paekp'a, the so-called “the practices for the latter age” such as worshipping the Buddhas, repenting, making Buddha images, temples, and pagodas would have efficacy only in the realm of the karmic law since they generate good

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<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 536b05-13.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 540c01 and 543b19-21.

<sup>345</sup> For Chinul's reference to the applicability of the technique, see Chinul, *Kanhwa kyŏrŭi ron* (Buswell 1983: 240); for Hyujŏng's, see *Sŏngyo kyŏl* 禪教訣 HPC 7, 658a05-09.

<sup>346</sup> *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* HPC 10, 540b06-11.

karmic fruits and would lead to a better rebirth. Paekp'a asserted that these practices would never be able to bring about enlightenment, which transcends the karmic law and saves sentient beings out of the endless cycle of birth-and-death just as "the Buddhist pagodas built by the Liang Emperor Wu eventually ended up generating no merits" (梁武佛塔 終歸於片無功德).<sup>347</sup> Nonetheless, Paekp'a did not argue that such practices should be abandoned entirely since some people favor these practices because of their habitual tendency. Instead, he urged these people to apply the *kankwa* approach to their practices. He explained this approach, taking an example of worshipping Buddhas:

Whenever you bow, move your body slowly, shake off defilements from your thought, and trace back the radiance and illuminate. Kneel and Bend your upper body. Bow your head and look up. When the leader recites first, echo the recitation, thinking what is this thing that is worshipping?<sup>348</sup>

每於拜時 徐徐動身抖擻精神 回光返照 能如是折旋俯仰唱和禮拜者 是什麼物。

For Paekp'a, the *kanhwa* technique on the basis of the doctrinal studies is the path toward *nirvāṇa*. In this path, Kyo plays a role of effectuating *kanhwa* Sōn practice though it is placed in the subordinate position to the Sōn practice.

This positioning of Sōn and Kyo in Paekp'a's soteriology is probably related to his personal experience as well. As seen in chapter one, Paekp'a was versed at Buddhist doctrines to the extent that he became one of the renowned lecturers of his time. Nonetheless, he abandoned the doctrinal studies, cultivated *kanhwa* Sōn practice, and eventually attained enlightenment. Through this experience, Paekp'a recognized the limitation as well as the necessity of Kyo from the soteriological viewpoint. As seen in the postface of his *Susōn kyōlsa*

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<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 541a18.

<sup>348</sup> *Sōnmun sugyōng* HPC 10, 524a05-07.

*mun*, he emphasized the importance of obtaining the correct eyes through the doctrinal studies and taught Buddhist doctrines even after his enlightenment experience.<sup>349</sup>

By founding Chinul's soteriology of "sudden awakening/ gradual cultivation" on Linji's teaching, Paekp'a legitimized the Sŏn and Kyo relationship, which Chinul's schema implies, through the authority of Imje.

### 3) Redefinition of the Linji school

Paekp'a's integration of Chinul's three mysteries and Linji's three statements redefines not only Korean Sŏn but also Linji tradition. By interpreting Linji's teaching as representing Chinul's soteriology of "sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation," Paekp'a identified the Linji school as a syncretic tradition that intergrates Sŏn and Kyo in its soteriology.<sup>350</sup>

According to Paekp'a, the most important teaching of this Linji school is the teaching of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials." The teaching overshadows all the other teachings of the Linji school, including the teachings that were recognized as the hallmark of the school. For example, such non-linguistic instructions as shouting and beating become merely a part of Linji's teaching as a feature of the first statement Sŏn; even the *kanhwa* technique, thus far regarded as "the practice" of the Linji school, is now placed in the second stage of Paekp'a's three-fold soteriology. For Paekp'a, the teaching represents the Linji/ Imje school which embraces both Sŏn and Kyo in its soteriological regimen.

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<sup>349</sup> *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* HPC 10, 548a21-b01.

<sup>350</sup> Pak Chae-hyŏn mentions Paekp'a's definition of the Imje school as advocating the harmony of Sŏn and Kyo, based on his inclusion of principle Sŏn in the taxonomy. However, Pak provides little explanation for how Paekp'a soteriologically connected the two traditions. For Pak's account, see Pak Chae-hyŏn 2005.

Paekp'a regarded the teaching as essential in understanding not only the Linji but also all Buddhist teachings. Quoting Pöphae Yujöng 法海惟精 (d.u.) and Hwansöng Chian (1664-1729), Paekp'a argued as follows:

Sön Master Pöphae Yujöng said, "What the Buddhas and the patriarchs received and put to use did not deviate from these three statements [i.e. Linji's teaching of the three statements, the three mysteries, and the three essentials]." The old master Hwansöng says, "Linji's three statements are not only the style of the Linji school but also the matter of all the Buddhas above and the ordinary beings below. If one instructs what deviates from this teaching, it would be all delusional discourse." Therefore, you should know that the words and phrases, left by not only all the Buddhas of past, present, and future and the patriarchs of all generations but also the good friends in the world, never deviate from these three statements.<sup>351</sup>

法海惟精禪師曰 佛祖受用 不出此三句 喚惺師翁曰 臨濟三句 非特臨濟宗風 上自諸佛下至衆生 皆分上事 若離此說法皆是妄說 是知三世諸佛 歷代祖師乃至天下善知識所留言句 必不離此三句也。

For Paekp'a, this teaching of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials" embodies the core of Buddhism. The teaching reveals the meaning of suchness as true emptiness and wondrous existence. It also unfolds the soteriological path of "sudden awakening/ gradual cultivation" in the form of taxonomy. Hence, this teaching is what all enlightened ones realized and all sentient beings have to realize to get enlightened. Paekp'a advised students first to clarify the meaning of Linji's teaching and resolve all the doubts about the teaching by reading Ch'onch'aek's *Sönmun kangyo chip* and Hwangsöng's *Sönmun ojong kangyo*, the excerpts from the *Sönmun kangyo chip*. The firm understanding of Linji's teaching is the basis for studying Sön and Kyo because students could see the intents and meanings of all the teachings: they would not go awry in the journey of their training with the direction presented by the teaching. According to Paekp'a, students would eventually realize the principle that the Buddhas and

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<sup>351</sup> *Sönmun sugyöng* HPC 10, 514c18-515a04.

patriarchs comfort their bodies and establish their lives, the principle that is already revealed in this teaching.<sup>352</sup> For him, the teaching is the beginning and the end of all the Buddhist soteriologies.

The Korean Imje school whose main teaching is this “three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials” is the supreme school of Chan/ Sŏn as well as all the Buddhist traditions.

#### 4. Concluding Remarks

Paekp'a regarded the traditional Korean Sŏn-Kyo syncretic soteriology as representing the orthodox path of Sŏn Buddhism. He justified his view by unifying the Korean Sŏn and Imje traditions from a soteriological viewpoint. Linji's teaching of “three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials” played the key role in his unification of the two traditions. Paekp'a presented the three-fold Sŏn taxonomy on the basis of Ch'ŏnch'aek's account of Linji's teaching to achieve his goal. By using his taxonomy, Paekp'a not only promoted the Linji/ Imje school, with which Chosŏn Korean Sŏn masters claimed to be affiliated, but also integrated the two traditions: he classified the six main Sŏn lineages which had originated from the Sixth Patriarch Huineng, and upheld the Linji/ Imje school as the highest level of Sŏn, which fully and perfectly realized the immutable and conditional aspects of mind; he also interpreted his taxonomy as the three-fold soteriological path of principle, the tathāgata, and patriarch Sŏns, and corresponded this path to Chinul's three-mystery soteriology in the *Chŏryŏ*. With this taxonomy, Paekp'a created the new Imje school of which the main teaching was the teaching of “three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials.” This school advocated the soteriology of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation,” and became the supreme school whose teaching

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<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 515a04-20.



represented the core of all the Buddhist teachings. In this way, Paekp'a legitimized his view on the Sŏn and Kyo relationship in which Kyo was subordinate to and yet necessary for Sŏn.

Paep'a's definition of the Imje school could be regarded as the Korean attempt to assimilate the Chinese Linji tradition on Korean soil. As mentioned before, the Korean Sŏn genealogy of Paekp'a's time was connected to the Linji lineage while its soteriology was still built on the indigenous scheme. By unifying the teachings of the two traditions rather than just transplanting the Chinese Linji teaching, Paekp'a completed the process of assimilation of Linji Chan into the Korean Sŏn tradition.

## CHAPTER FIVE. Ch'oŭi's Two-Fold Taxonomy of Sŏn

Ch'oŭi advocated the ultimate identity of Sŏn and Kyo. His view on these two strands of Buddhism, which is revealed in his criticism of Paekp'a, serves to connect Buddhism and Confucianism in Confucian-dominant Chosŏn society.

As shown in chapter one, in late Chosŏn, many yangban literati showed a favorable attitude toward Buddhism. They made offerings for the construction of prayer halls or reconstructions of monasteries and often had a close relationship with Buddhist monks, communicating by letter or forming poetry gatherings. Some even pursued their interest in Buddhism by reading Buddhist scriptures and went even further to express their conviction in their insights of Buddhism from their reading by denouncing contemporary monks' Sŏn-oriented practice and their understanding Buddhism. Among these literati were Chŏng Yagyong (1762-1836) and Kim Chŏng-hŭi (1786-1856), both of whom were critical of the *kanhwa* Sŏn technique. Ch'oŭi was intimate with many literati, including these two renowned literati. His extensive relationships with literati probably motivated him to proclaim the unity of Sŏn and Kyo, criticizing Paekp'a's approach, which subordinated Kyo to Sŏn.

Ch'oŭi's criticism of Paekp'a focused on the latter's sectarian approach to Buddhism. As seen in the previous chapter, Paekp'a promoted the Linji lineage and Chinul's soteriology in his three-fold taxonomy of Sŏn. Ch'oŭi criticized Paekp'a's taxonomy, nullifying the rationale behind Paekp'a's polemical claims. In his criticism, Ch'oŭi denied Paekp'a's promotion of the Linji lineage by arguing that Linji's three statements, *Samch'ŏ chŏnsim*, and the five Sŏn houses represented the same level of Sŏn. Ch'oŭi also presented little systematic soteriology, showing no preference for any specific Buddhist practice. He simply established the necessity and

efficacy of religious practice by drawing on his theory of mind. Ch'oŭi then provided new definitions of Sŏn and Kyo, which endorsed Confucianism and Confucian literati approach to Buddhism at his time.

This chapter explores how Ch'oŭi criticized Paekp'a's hierarchical Sŏn taxonomy by providing different definitions of the main terms used in that taxonomy, and how Ch'oŭi facilitated Buddhist and Confucian connections with his view on Sŏn and Kyo.

### 1. Ch'oŭi's Definitions of the Key terms used in Paekp'a's Taxonomy

Ch'oŭi presented different interpretations of the key terms of Paekp'a's taxonomy in order to undermine Paekp'a's interpretations. In doing so, Ch'oŭi divided the terms into the following four major sets: (1) true emptiness (K. *chin'gong* 眞空) and wondrous existence (K. *myoyu* 妙有); (2) killing (K. *sal* 殺) and giving life (K. *hwal* 活); (3) tathāgata (K. *yŏrae* 如來) and patriarch (K. *chosa* 祖師); (4) principle (K. *ŭiri* 義理) and outside-the-format (K. *kyŏg'oe* 格外). The first set provides a theoretical basis for Ch'oŭi's mind theory; the second applies the first set to broader aspects of Buddhism; the third and the fourth constitute his two-fold Sŏn taxonomy.

#### 1) true emptiness and wondrous existence

“True emptiness” and “wondrous existence” serve as the basic framework for the mind theories of both Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi. However, Ch'oŭi criticized Paekp'a of misunderstanding these two terms and gave them new definitions, which emphasize the difference between “truth” (K. *chin* 眞) and “delusion” (K. *mang* 忘).

Like Paekp'a, Ch'oŭi applied “true emptiness” and “wondrous existence” to mind. For both masters, “true emptiness” refers to the immutable aspect of mind while “wondrous

existence”, to the conditional aspect. Unlike Paekp’a, however, Ch’oŭi asserted that these two terms are related exclusively to the “true mind” (K. *chinsim* 真心), or, to borrow the term from the *Awakening of Faith*, the “mind-as-suchness” (K. *sim chinyŏ* 心眞如):

The *Awakening of Faith* says, “True suchness has two aspects if predicated in words. One is that it is really empty (What is real is empty; there is neither delusion nor outflows in it). This aspect can, in the final sense, reveal what is real (This refers to the untainted noble merits below). This emptiness that is not separate from existence is true emptiness. Hence, it is said that true emptiness is not empty. The other is that it is really nonempty. Its essence (which is the real emptiness above) is endowed with the non-outflow noble merits. This existence that is not separate from emptiness is wondrous existence. Thus, it is said that wondrous existence is not existence.”<sup>353</sup>

起信論云 眞如者 依言說分別相 有二種義 一者如實空(此如實之中空无妄染) 而能究竟現實故(即下無漏聖功德) 此非即有之空 爲眞空乎 故曰眞空不空 二者如實不空 以有自體(即上如實空)具足無漏聖功德 故此非即空之有 爲妙有乎 故曰妙有不有.

In the mind theories of Paekp’a, Chinul, and Zongmi, “true emptiness” and “wondrous existence” or immutability and conditionality correspond to the “mind-as-suchness” and the “mind-as-birth-and-death” (K. *sim saengmyŏl* 心生滅), respectively. These Chan and Sŏn masters, associated closely with the Heze school in their thought, explained the inseparability of these minds, employing the traditional Chinese Buddhist polar sets, such as essence-function and nature-characteristic. However, Ch’oŭi argued that true emptiness and wondrous existence are applicable only to the “mind-as-suchness.” According to him, these two aspects represent “real emptiness” (K. *yŏsil kong* 如實空) and “real non-emptiness” (K. *yŏsil pulgong* 如實不空), the two qualities of the “mind-as-suchness” from the Chinese apocryphal text: “real emptiness” is “true emptiness” since mind is empty without any defilements while “real non-emptiness” is

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<sup>353</sup> *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man’ŏ* HPC 10, 830a07-13; for the translation of the portion from the *Awakening of Faith*, I consulted with Hakeda 2006: 41

“wondrous existence” since mind is full of untainted virtues and merits. Ch’oŭi justified these attributes of the two aspects to the true mind by quoting the text titled *Hwaŏm ki* 華嚴記:

The *Hwaŏm ki* says, “When the innate pure and clean nature of mind is not united with delusion, this is called ‘true emptiness’; when the nature is endowed with myriads of virtues, this is called ‘wondrous existence.’” However, this [text] speaks of ‘emptiness’ and ‘existence’ only in terms of the true mind. That is why it is called ‘true emptiness’ and ‘wondrous existence.’<sup>354</sup>

華嚴記云 自性清淨心 不與妄合 即名真空 性具萬德 即名妙有  
然此但約真心而論空有 故曰真空妙有.

The *Hwaŏm ki* probably refers to the Chinese Huayan master Chengguan’s commentary *Huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* 華嚴經隨疏演義鈔, which records the sentence Ch’oŭi quotes above though using the terms “emptiness” and “non-emptiness” instead of “true emptiness” and “wondrous existence.”<sup>355</sup> Ch’oŭi here used this text to support his view that the two aspects belong only to the category of the true mind.

Such Ch’oŭi’s explanation of “true emptiness” and “wondrous existence” is in fact based on his rather strict distinction between the “true mind” (K. *chinsim* 真心) and the “deluded mind” (K. *mangsim* 妄心):

The true mind regards the mind to be “numinous awareness” and “calm illumination.” It regards its essence to be “non-emptiness and non-abiding;” and its characteristic to be “true characteristic.”...The deluded mind regards the mind to be “images produced by the six sense fields.” It regards its essence to be “no-nature;” and its characteristic to be the “cognition that arises in accord with conditions.”<sup>356</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Ibid., HPC 10, 830a13-16.

<sup>355</sup> It is not clear how popular the term *Hwaŏm ki* was as an alternative title for the *Huayan jing suishu yanyi chao*. Such Song Chan texts as the *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄 often quotes the phrases from the *Yanyi chao*, using the title “*Hwaŏm ki*,” instead of “*Yanyi chao*.” Korean Buddhist texts, however, hardly mention the term “*Hwaŏm ki*.”

<sup>356</sup> *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man’ŏ* HPC 10, 830a18-21.

真心以靈知寂照爲心 不空無住爲體實相爲相...妄心以六塵緣影爲心  
無性爲體攀緣思慮爲相。

According to Ch'oüi, the true mind and the deluded mind are different in essence and characteristic or essence and function: the former has untainted function within the pure non-abiding essence while the latter has tainted function in accord with conditions without such essence. He elsewhere added that “emptiness” (K. *kong* 空) and “existence” (K. *yu* 有) of the two minds are also different: emptiness and existence of the deluded mind are “nihilistic emptiness” (K. *tan'gong* 斷空) and “provisional existence” (K. *kayu* 假有) while those of the true mind are “true emptiness” and “wondrous existence.”<sup>357</sup> Ch'oüi, then, pointed out that Paekp'a's misunderstanding of “true emptiness” and “wondrous existence” comes from his ignorance of this difference between the two minds.<sup>358</sup> In particular, Paekp'a was confused with the two kinds of existence that arise from the true and deluded minds. Ch'oüi criticized Paekp'a of wrongly affirming the existence of the deluded mind as “wondrous existence”, saying, “How could it be right that recently old Yug'un [Paekp'a] stubbornly takes the ‘false names and characteristics which arise in accord with conditions’ as ‘wondrous existence’?”(近有六隱老人以隨緣所有虛僞名相 獨辦之爲妙有烏乎可哉).<sup>359</sup>

Ch'oüi, however, never made an explicit statement that would totally deny the ultimate identity between the true and deluded minds. This is probably because, if he had done so, he would have come to reject the de facto Chan/ Sōn Buddhist tenet of non-dualism, established supposedly by the Sixth Patriarch Huineng in the *Platform Sūtra*. Instead, Ch'oüi even made a

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 830a16-17.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid, 830b04.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid., 820a03-05.

reference that seems to accept the ultimate identity of the two minds though such a case is rare.<sup>360</sup> Since he did not provide any systematic explanation, it is just difficult to get the whole picture of his theory of mind. Nonetheless, Ch'oŭi emphasized the difference between the two types of mind much more than their identity, though he did not reject that identity.

## 2) killing and giving life

“Killing” and “giving life” are the qualities that serve as a criterion for Paekp'a's taxonomy. Ch'oŭi's explanation of the terms can be organized from the perspective of the following three aspects: mind, language, and wisdom.

In regard to the theory of mind, Ch'oŭi connected “killing” and “giving life” to the traditional Chinese Buddhist sets on the two aspects of mind:

The term “killing” is established in terms of essence while the term “giving life” is established in terms of function. Hence, no delusion can arise within the really empty essence...The realm in which delusion doesn't arise is originally endowed with the uncontaminated noble merits.<sup>361</sup>

殺之言依體而立 活之言依用而立 蓋以如實空體之中  
諸妄不能著到...妄不生處本自具足無漏聖功德.

According to Ch'oŭi, “killing” refers to the essence of mind which is empty and tranquil without defilements while “giving life” refers to the function of mind, manifested in the form of diverse virtues. Then, he corresponded “killing/ giving life” to other polar sets such as capacity/ function and illumination/ function.<sup>362</sup> For Ch'oŭi, these corresponding sets of “killing” and “giving life” could also involve “true emptiness” and “wondrous existence.”

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<sup>360</sup> Sang ilgi sŏnsaeng sŏ 上一味先生書, *Ch'oŭi sigo* 艸衣詩藁 2, HPC 10, 868c23.

<sup>361</sup> *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man'ŏ* HPC 10, 828c18-22.

<sup>362</sup> *Ibid.*, 820c13

Ch'oŭi introduced the linguistic perspective for “killing” and “giving life” when he explained the famous *kong'an* story involving Mañjuśrī and Sudhana.<sup>363</sup> There, he correlated the two terms to the kataphatic truth revealed by apophatic rhetoric:

Mañjuśrī, who he was gathering medicinal herbs, said to Sudhana, “In the future, gather something that is not a medicinal herb.” This is like a patriarch saying, “[It is] neither mind nor Buddha nor a thing.” What is not a medicinal herb indeed refers to [what is] neither a thing, nor Buddha, nor mind. The empty essence [decried] by these four negations, can neither be named nor be characterized. Thus, it is forcefully expressed by what is not. When a wise person faces what is not, he knows what is. . . . . When people can take the miraculous elixir of these four negations, then their mind, thought, cognition, aggregates, fields, and realms immediately disappear. When mind, thought, and cognition disappear, the pure dharma-body appears. This is why the medicine herb can kill people as well as gives life to people.<sup>364</sup>

文殊師利 因採藥謂善財曰 不是藥者採將來 此如祖師所云 不是心不是佛不是物之例也 不是藥者 即是不是物亦即是不是佛 又即是不是心者也 此四不是之空體名不能安 相不得著故但以不是 強言之 智者即其不是 而知其所是也. . . . . 人人能服此四不是之靈丹 心意識蘊處界 一時殞落 即其心意識殞落處便是淨法身活現時 此其是藥之所以亦能殺人 亦能活人者也。

Ch'oŭi suggested that apophatic rhetoric lead to the kataphatic truth. Since the truth of mind is beyond language, only apophatic rhetoric could express the truth, by describing what the truth is not. However, according to Ch'oŭi, this ineffability of the truth does not lead to the infinite enumeration of such apophatic rhetoric. He argued that this rhetoric served to eliminate all the misunderstandings of self and nature, and eventually reveals the truth of the “pure dharma-

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<sup>363</sup> The story is recorded in such Song gong'an collections as the *Wudeng huiyuan* 五燈會元 and the *Chanzong songgu lianzhutong ji* 禪宗頌古聯珠通集. It is also recorded as the sixty fifth case in Hyesim's *Sōnmun yōmsong*. The *Sōnmun yōmsong* version is as follows: One day Mañjuśrī ordered Sudhana to gather medicinal herbs, saying, “In the future, gather something that is not a medicinal herb.” Sudhana said, “There is nothing that is not medicinal herb in the mountains.” Mañjuśrī said, “In the future, gather something that is a medicinal herb.” Sudhana picked up a blade of grass on the ground and handed it to Mañjuśrī. Mañjuśrī held it up and showed it to the congregation, saying, “This medicinal herb can kill people as well as giving life to people.”

<sup>364</sup> *Sōnmun sabyōn man'ō* HPC 10, 829a09-22.



body.” For Ch’oüi, “killing” refers to apophatic rhetoric, which eradicates all mental falsity, while “giving life” is the kataphatic truth of mind, which arises from the pure state of that mind.

Ch’oüi then explained “killing” and “giving life” from the viewpoint of the function of wisdom. In particular, he compared this aspect of the terms to the famous metaphors of two types of sword: the “single-edged sword that kills people” (K. *sar’in to* 殺人刀) and the “double-edged sword that gives life to people” (K. *hwar’in kōm* 活人劍).

[The “single-edged sword that kills people”] kills people, demons, Buddhas, and Patriarchs, as well as self and mind. (One must not seek the Buddhas and Patriarchs, getting attached to them. If he gets attached to them, the Buddhas and patriarchs rather become a hated thief. The same is the case if he gets attached to mind and body...) It is called the “single-edged sword that kills people” because it can kill people.<sup>365</sup>

人也殺 鬼也殺 佛也殺 祖也殺 并與自身和心同殺 (宜乎不着佛求 不著祖求 若著之則佛祖還爲怨賊 身心愛著則亦然...) 此其所以亦能殺人處 便可名殺人刀也。

A person, a demon, a patriarch, and a Buddha are all originally in me... This means that [the “double-edged sword that gives life to people”] leaves as they are a person, a demon, a Buddha, and a patriarch. It is called the “double-edged sword that gives life to people” because it can give life to people.<sup>366</sup>

人鬼祖佛元在我...是則人也安 鬼也安 佛也安 祖也安 此其所亦能活人處 便可名活人劍也。

According to Ch’oüi, the “single-edged sword” refers to the function of wisdom, which removes the attachment to the concepts such as Buddha, patriarch, self, and mind, all of which have become the obstacles to enlightenment; on the other hand, the “double-edged sword” refers to the functions of wisdom, which enables one not only to get unattached to these expedient concepts but also to use them freely without generating attachment.

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<sup>365</sup> Ibid., 829b11-15.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid., 829b21-c01.

Ch'ōi suggested that “killing” and “giving life” serve as alternative concepts for “true emptiness” and “wondrous existence” that could be applied to the broader aspects of Buddhism.

### 3) Two types of Sōn: Tathāgata/ principle Sōn and patriarch/ outside-the-format Sōn

Ch'ōiad vocated the traditional approach to the four major Sōn categories of Paekp'a's taxonomy: “principle Sōn,”“Tathāgata Sōn,”“patriarch Sōn,” and “outside-the-format Sōn.”

Ch'ōi introduced this approach as follows.

There are tathāgata Sōn and patriarch Sōn in terms of person; there are principle Sōn and outside-the-format Sōn in terms of dharma. This is the popular view transmitted from the ancient monasteries.<sup>367</sup>

約人名如來禪祖師禪 約法名義理禪格外禪 此乃古叢林傳來之通談.

Like Paekp'a, Ch'ōi did not explain what he meant by “person” (K. *in* 人) and “Dharma” (K. *pōb* 法) as a criterion for Sōn categorization. Probably, a “person” here simply indicates such personal appellations as “Tathāgata” and “patriarch:” thus, the Sōn that the Tathāgata practices is tathāgata Sōn while the Sōn that patriarchs practice is patriarch Sōn. On the other hand, “dharma” refers to the means of dharma-transmission: when the dharma is transmitted while relying on linguistic principle, that Sōn is principle Sōn; when it is transmitted outside-the-format, that Sōn is outside-the-format Sōn.

Ch'ōi, then, explained the traditional correspondence of these four Sōn categories by providing the definitions for the categories. He first clarified the meanings of the terms “outside-the-format” and “principle.” According to Ch'ōi, the term “outside-the-format” means transcending the format of linguistic principle: in particular, it refers to the special way of

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<sup>367</sup> Ibid., 827c22-828a01.

transmitting the mind-dharma, which occurs outside the scriptures without relying on the linguistic means.<sup>368</sup> On the other hand, the term “principle” refers to an essential principle of a certain phenomenon or teaching. Ch’oŭi gave some examples of the principles: the principle of Huayan is the “perfect interpenetration without obstruction” (K. *wŏnyung muae* 圓融無礙); that of the Buddha, “permanence, bliss, self, and purity” (K. *sangnak ajŏng* 常樂我淨); and that of the Heaven’s Way, “primality, prosperity, benevolence, and chastity” (K. *wŏnhyŏng lijŏng* 元亨利貞).<sup>369</sup> According to him, even principle Sŏn and outside-the-format Sŏn also have their own principles: The principle of principle Sŏn is the revelation of mind through the language of the Buddha and patriarchs while that of outside-the-format Sŏn is the transmission of mind without relying on language.<sup>370</sup>

After defining the two terms, Ch’oŭi argued that the Sŏn categories of outside-the-format Sŏn and principle Sŏn developed to specifically refer to the other two categories.

In general, the transmission from mind to mind without relying on the oral teaching is called “patriarch Sŏn.” Since this transmission and reception is far outside the format of Kyo, it can be also called “outside-the-format Sŏn.” In general, the realization of the principle by explaining the meaning with language is called “tathāgata Sŏn.” Since this awakens people with the principle of the oral teaching, it can also be called “principle Sŏn.” This is the origin of the names, “outside-the-format Sŏn” and “principle Sŏn.”<sup>371</sup>

凡不由言教 以心傳心 謂之祖師禪 此之傳受迥出教格之外 亦可名格外禪  
凡開言而說義 因言而證理 謂之如來禪 是由言教義理而悟人 亦可名義理禪  
此格外禪義理禪之所以立名之始也。

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<sup>368</sup> Ibid., 828b02-04.

<sup>369</sup> Ibid., 828a16-20.

<sup>370</sup> Ibid., 828a20-24.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid., 827c16-21.

According to Ch'oŭi, outside-the-format Sŏn is just a different name for patriarch Sŏn, just as principle Sŏn is for tathāgata Sŏn. Ch'oŭi, thus, followed the traditional two-fold taxonomy of Sŏn: (1) tathāgata/ principle Sŏn; (2) patriarch/ outside-the-format Sŏn.

As seen above quotation, however, Ch'oŭi applied a little different criterion for this Sŏn taxonomy from the traditional approach. Instead of the two criteria of person and dharma, he used only the latter. If linguistic means is employed in Sŏn transmission, this becomes “tathāgata/ principle Sŏn”; if not, it becomes “patriarch/ outside-the-format Sŏn.” He did not regard the Sŏn of the Tathāgata as “tathāgata/principle Sŏn” and the Sŏn of the patriarchs as “patriarch/outside-the-format Sŏn.” For Ch'oŭi, Tathāgatas and patriarchs in fact practice both types of Sŏn: what they transmit by linguistic means becomes “tathāgata/principle Sŏn” whether that language is conceptual or non-conceptual; what they transmit by non-linguistic means such as silence, beating, or shouting becomes “patriarch/outside-the-format Sŏn.”<sup>372</sup>

## 2. Ch'oŭi's Criticism of Paekp'a's Theory

With his redefinitions of the main terms in Paekp'a's theory, Ch'oŭi criticized Paekp'a's three-fold Sŏn taxonomy. His criticism focuses on the following three aspects: Paekp'a's (1) connection of Linji's three statements to the three types of Sŏn; (2) correspondence of *Samch'ŏ chŏnsim* to “killing” and “giving life;” and (3) classification of Five Sŏn Houses.

### 1) Correspondence of Linji's three statements to the three types of Sŏn

Ch'oŭi criticized Paekp'a's correspondence of Linji's “three statements” to the three types of Sŏn, introducing a new correspondence of the “three statements” to the two types of Sŏn.

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<sup>372</sup> Ibid., 828b02-13.

According to Ch'oŭi, Paekp'a's correspondence is simply wrong because he completely misunderstood the four Sŏn categories. As seen in chapter four, Paekp'a presented the three-fold Sŏn taxonomy, based on Ch'ŏnch'aek's hierarchical interpretation of Linji's teaching of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials." Paekp'a regarded the first statement of Linji's "three statements" as the perfect and full enlightenment of the two aspects of mind, and correlated it to "patriarch Sŏn," the highest level of Sŏn characterized with both "killing" and "giving life." Then, he referred to the second statement as the partial enlightenment or delusion, which only realizes the immutable aspect of mind, and connected this statement to "tathāgata Sŏn, the mid-level Sŏn characterized with "killing." Paekp'a asserted that these two types belong to the category of "outside-the-format Sŏn." Finally, he regarded the third statement as the state of complete delusion, featured with the attachment to the principle of language, and corresponded it to "principle Sŏn," the lowest Sŏn without both "killing" and "giving life."

Ch'oŭi criticized such Paekp'a's correspondences as follows:

It would be most unacceptable to only select tathāgata Sŏn of the second statement and name it "outside-the-format Sŏn," or to take "new [infusion] without the original [share]" as the third statement and to separately name it "principle Sŏn."<sup>373</sup>

若第二句如來禪 獨拔之 爲格外禪 又以但新無本 爲第三句 以此別立義理禪之名 則最大不可。

Ch'oŭi's criticism of Paekp'a's connection focuses on two points: (1) the relationship between tathāgata Sŏn and outside-the-format Sŏn; (2) the characteristics of tathāgata Sŏn and principle Sŏn. For the first point, Ch'oŭi criticized Paekp'a of wrongly placing tathāgata Sŏn on the level of outside-the-format Sŏn. Ch'oŭi argued that Paekp'a in fact described tathāgata Sŏn as principle Sŏn, pointing out Paekp'a's statement, "tathāgata Sŏn leads sentient beings of mid-

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<sup>373</sup> Ibid., 823c13-15.

level mental capacity to penetrate their original share with the expedient means of three mysteries” (如來禪 以中根衆生 即於三玄權門透得本分).<sup>374</sup> According to Ch’oŭi, what Paekp’a’s statement means is that every single word of tathāgata Sŏn fits perfectly into the linguistic framework. For Ch’oŭi, this statement proves that Paekp’a himself acknowledged the fact that tathāgata Sŏn is principle Sŏn. Ch’oŭi, therefore, criticized Paekp’a’s taxonomy of being contradictory even to his own correct statement.<sup>375</sup> For the second point, Ch’oŭi criticized Paekp’a’s argument that the third statement only has “new infusion without the original share,” and that this third statement is “principle Sŏn.”<sup>376</sup> It is not clear what Paekp’a and Ch’oŭi meant by “new infusion without the original share.” However, it probably refers to the type of Sŏn which never realizes any of the mind’s two aspects. Ch’oŭi simply argued that Paekp’a’s argument was wrong because both the third statement and principle Sŏn had “new infusion” as well as the “original share” and thus realize the truth of mind fully and perfectly.<sup>377</sup>

After criticizing Paekp’a’s correspondence, Ch’oŭi presented a new set of correspondences between Linji’s “three statements” and the two types of Sŏn. In doing so, Ch’oŭi looked to Ch’ŏnch’aek’s interpretation of the “three statements” in terms of the “dead word” and the “live word.”

As for the first statement, it is the live word in which a host and a guest is not divided; verbal expression has not yet appeared; the true source that shines alone is the live word...The second statement [is as follows:] verbal expression temporarily arises and the true source gets covered in the realm where analysis cannot yet be applied and discussed. This is the neither-dead-nor-live word...The third statement is the statement that speaks of capacity and function of the three essentials as well as explains

<sup>374</sup> Ibid., 821c08-10; for Paekp’a’s statement, see *Sŏnmun sugyŏng* HPC 10, 519c09-10.

<sup>375</sup> *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man’ŏ* HPC 10, 821c11-12.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid., 821c12-14.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., 823b09-22.

expediencies and reality of the three mysteries. This is the dead word that greatly deforms the wondrous root with the use of names and numbers.<sup>378</sup>

夫第一句 主賓不分 言說未出 眞宗獨露之活句也...第二句 分釋未容擬議處 言說乍興 眞宗將隱 此不死不活之句...第三句 指陳三要之機用 開釋三玄之權實 此名數入而妙本大乖之死句也。

Like Ch'ŏnch'aek, Ch'oŭi connected the first and third statements to these famous Chan/ Sŏn metaphors. For Ch'oŭi, the first statement is the “live word” that reveals the truth beyond language; the third statement is the “dead word” that distorts the truth of the “wondrous root.” While Ch'ŏnch'aek simply omitted the second statement in his correspondence, Ch'oŭi described the statement as the word of “neither-dead-nor-live” (K. *pulsa purhwal* 不死不活) or “half-dead-half-live” (K. *pansa panhwal* 半死半活).<sup>379</sup> However, for this connection of the “three statements” to the dead and live words, Ch'oŭi did not provide much of a rationale. Instead, he assigned specific rhetorical styles to his correspondence. According to him, the first statement of the “live word” specifically refers to such non-linguistic expressions as silence, shouting, beating, and the Buddha's acts of the three mind-transmissions; the second statement of “neither-dead-nor-live” or “half-dead-and-half-live,” to the less conceptual expressions that are often found in Chan and Sŏn texts;<sup>380</sup> and finally, the third statement of the “dead word,” to the conceptual linguistic expressions that explain the first and second statements.<sup>381</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Ibid., 821c20-822a04.

<sup>379</sup> *Ch'oŭi sŏngwa* 艸衣禪課, Yong'un 1985: 352.2

<sup>380</sup> Ibid., 363.3-363.8

<sup>381</sup> Ch'oŭi argued that what the Tathāgata preached for forty-nine years and what the patriarchs and renowned masters preached all belong to the category of the third statement. For him, the third statement is the expressions which explain the first and second statements conceptually and intellectually. *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man'ŏ* HPC 10, 823b11-17

With his correspondence of the “three statements” to these different rhetorical styles of the dead and live words, Ch’oŭi provided the two-fold taxonomy of Sŏn. In the *Ch’oŭi sŏn’gwa* 草衣禪果, the commentarial text to Hyesim’s *Sŏnmun yŏmsong* 禪門拈頌, he linked the first two statements to “tathāgata/ principle Sŏn” and “patriarch/ outside-the-format Sŏn,” respectively.

Relying on outside-the-format [such as] “Holding up a flower to show” and not being associated with the linguistic teaching is patriarchal Sŏn. [This is] what Linji referred to as the first statement and what Nanquan referred to the live word. Manifesting the true sign by establishing the expedient means of questions and answers is tathāgata Sŏn. [This is] what Linji referred to as the second statement and what Chin’gak referred to as the half-dead-half-live word.<sup>382</sup>

拈花舉示格外提指不涉言教者 是祖師禪 臨濟所謂第一句 南泉所謂活句也  
開設方便問答顯示實相者 謂之如來禪 臨濟所謂第二句 眞覺所謂半死半活句。

Ch’oŭi connected the first statement of the live word to “patriarch/ outside-the-format Sŏn,” and the second statement of the half-live-half-dead word to “tathāgata/ principle Sŏn.” Although he never explicitly linked the third statement of the dead word to any of the two types of Sŏn, Ch’oŭi seems to put the statement into the category of “tathāgata-principle Sŏn” in the *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man’ŏ*.

In general, [if a statement] is not to explain, then that’s fine. If it is to explain, then it indeed belongs to the third statement.<sup>383</sup>

蓋不演暢則已 如其演暢則便當第三句也。

If you designate “what explains the principle of mysteries and essentials” as “principle Sŏn,” you are close to ancient [masters.] (Ancient masters regarded “tathāgata Sŏn of the second statement” as “principle Sŏn.”) Thus, [what you said] is not necessarily unacceptable.<sup>384</sup>

<sup>382</sup> *Ch’oŭi sŏn’gwa*, Yong’un 1985: 351.12-352.2

<sup>383</sup> *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man’ŏ* HPC 10, 823c02-03.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid.*, 823c11-13.



若以演暢玄要之義理 謂之義理禪 則近古 (古人以第二句如來禪 爲義理禪) 而未必不可矣.

Ch'oŭi here suggested that the third statement can be principle Sŏn because “explaining the principle of mysteries and essentials” is the feature of principle Sŏn and because the act of “explaining” itself is the feature of the third statement. For him, although it is usually the second statement that is related to “tathāgata/ principle Sŏn,” the third statement can also be regarded as such. All of Ch'oŭi's correspondences can be charted as follows.

Table 8. Ch'oŭi's correspondences of Linji' teaching

1 <sup>st</sup> statement	Live word	Non-linguistic expression	patriarch/ outside-the-format Sŏn
2 <sup>nd</sup> statement	Neither-live-nor-dead word	Non-conceptual	tathāgata/ principle Sŏn
3 <sup>rd</sup> statement	Dead word	Conceptual	tathāgata/ principle Sŏn

Despite all his correspondences, Ch'oŭi was critical of offering hierarchy to his two-fold Sŏn taxonomy. He argued that not only the thirty three Indian and Chinese patriarchs, but also the Chan masters of the Five Sŏn Houses never had spoken of the hierarchy between the two types of Sŏn.<sup>385</sup> According to Ch'oŭi, “tathāgata/ principle Sŏn” and “patriarch/ outside-the-format Sŏn” represent the same level of Sŏn: they transmit the same mind-dharma while they have a difference of “revelation and secrecy” (K. *hyŏnmil* 顯密) in their way of transmitting that dharma.<sup>386</sup>

<sup>385</sup> Ibid., 826c16-17.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid., 827a14-16.

2) Correspondence of *Samch ǒ chǒnsim* to “killing” and “giving life”

Ch’oŭi criticized Paekp’a’s hierarchical interpretation of the term *Samch ǒ chǒnsim*, which Paekp’a employed to justify his three-fold Sŏn taxonomy. Paekp’a argued that the Buddha had transmitted the different levels of the mind in the first and second mind-transmissions and that these had become the origin of the hierarchy between tathāgata Sŏn and patriarchal Sŏn. According to Paekp’a, the first transmission “sharing the seat” is tathāgata Sŏn because it has only “killing” without “giving life” while the second transmission “holding up a flower” is patriarch Sŏn because it has both “killing” and “giving life.”<sup>387</sup>

Ch’oŭi criticized Paekp’a’s argument for being groundless:

“Of the three places of mind-transmission, ‘Sharing the seat’ transmitted ‘killing;’ ‘Holding up a flower’ transmitted ‘giving life to people;’ ‘Showing the feet’ presents both ‘killing’ and ‘giving life.’” This is the old master Kugok’s words. Now, [Paekp’a’s statements that ‘Sharing the seat’ has only ‘killing’ and that ‘Holding up a flower’ has both ‘killing’ and ‘giving life’ cannot be found in Kugok’s words.<sup>388</sup>

三處傳心中分座傳殺拈花傳活示跌殺活齊示此龜谷老之言今分座之  
但殺拈花活之兼殺龜谷說中無之。

Ch’oŭi mentioned the monk named “Kugok” probably because he was confused between Kugok Kagun 龜谷覺雲 and his early contemporary monk Kagun who is the author of the *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* 禪門拈頌說話, the text in which the term *Samch ǒ chǒnsim* first appears.

This confusion occurs since Kugok Kagun was wrongly named as the author of the text in the preface of the early Chosŏn edition of that text.<sup>389</sup> Probably, here what Ch’oŭi meant by “Kagun’s words” is the Koryo monk Kagun’s words from the *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa*.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid., 820c07-09.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid., 820c10-12.

<sup>389</sup> Chunggan yŏmsong sŏrhwa sŏ 重刊拈頌說話序, *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* HPC 5,2b07

Ch'oŭi was right in that the *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* does not say that each mind-transmission transmitted only a certain aspect of the mind. On the other hand, he was wrong in that the text does not say that “killing” and “giving life” were transmitted in the third transmission that involved “showing the feet.”

As Ch'oŭi's mistake or rather negligence may indicate, his criticism of Paekp'a's interpretation of three mind-transmissions does not lie in Paekp'a's wrongful usage of the source material. According to Ch'oŭi, Paekp'a is wrong in his interpretation because he misunderstood “killing” and “giving life,” in particular, the relationship between these two terms. Ch'oŭi asserted that not only “killing/ giving life” but also other alternative polar sets such as “essence/ function” are interdependent and inseparable.<sup>390</sup> He explained this relationship between the two aspects of mind with the analogy of the limbs and the whole body: the limbs are only meaningful within relation to the whole body while the whole body is also meaningful within relation to the limbs.<sup>391</sup> Likewise, for Ch'oŭi, “killing” cannot be itself without “giving life” while “giving life” cannot be itself without “killing.”

Based on this understanding of the relationship between “killing” and “giving life,” Ch'oŭi criticized Paekp'a's argument that “Sharing the seat” has only “killing” while “Holding up a flower” has both “killing” and “giving life.” According to Ch'oŭi, since “killing” and “giving life” are interdependent and inseparable, they always exist together. For him, even though the *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* only says that there is “killing” without mentioning “giving life” or that there is “giving life” without mentioning “killing,” what the text really means is that there are both “killing” and “giving life.” Hence, the first transmission that Paekp'a described

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<sup>390</sup> *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man 'ŏ*, HPC 10, 820c13-14.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, 821a06-08.

as possessing only “killing,” in fact, has both aspects of the true mind just as the second transmission does.

By the same token, Ch’oüi also asserted that the “single-edged sword that kills people” and the “double-edged sword that gives life to people” always function together.

If [a sword] comes to be able to kill people, it must be able to give life to people. If [a sword] comes to be able to give life to people, it must be able to kill people. If [a sword] is only able to kill or give life, it is not being well used.<sup>392</sup>

既殺得人 須活得人 既活得人 須殺得人 若只單殺單活 則非好手也.

According to Ch’oüi, if wisdom has the function of the “single-edged sword” or the “double-edged sword,” then it in fact has both functions: it removes all the defilements and at the same time responds in accord with conditions. For him, all of the three mind-transmissions of “sharing the seat,” “holding up a flower,” and “showing the feet” are the same level of transmission in that they all transmit both aspects of the true mind fully and perfectly.

### 3) Classification of the five Sön houses

Ch’oüi criticized Paekp’a’s classification of the five Sön houses. Paekp’a classified five houses into tathāgata Sön and patriarch Sön in terms of realizing the truth of mind. Paekp’a placed the Linji and Yunmen schools on the highest level of patriarch Sön, which realizes both immutable and conditional aspects of mind; the Weiyang, Fayan, and Caodong schools on the second level of tathāgata Sön, which only realizes the immutable aspect. Ch’oüi criticized Paekp’a’s classification as follows.

From whom does he learn all the words like this? Who transmitted them? Or, does this derive from the mind-seal of self-realization? What kind of words does that belong to? Now, in assigning the Five Houses to the two Söns, what excellent principles are

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<sup>392</sup> Ibid., 821a12-14.

there [for him] to poke and pry?...For the terms, “killing,” “giving life,” “capacity,” and “function,” there is no joint [he] does not sever and paste. For the identity and non-identity of “illumination” and “function,” there is no hole [he] does not cover.<sup>393</sup>

如此諸說從何人學得來 誰之所傳 抑復自證之心印上所流出耶 蓋是當何之言也 大抵以二禪 配五宗 有何勝善好道理 如此委曲穿鑿耶...殺活機用字 無節而不貼 以照用同不同無竅而不納.

Ch’oŭi argued that Paekp’a classified the five houses because he approached Sŏn intellectually and conceptually. Ch’oŭi went further to say that only a “group of monks who are lame and one-eyed” (跛脚眇目之阿師輩) take such a Sŏn approach.<sup>394</sup>

Then, Ch’oŭi disproved Paekp’a’s classification of the five houses by taking the examples of the Weiyang and Fayan schools. For the Weiyang school, he used the episode between Weishan and Xiangyan from which the hierarchy between tathāgata Sŏn and patriarch Sŏn originates.<sup>395</sup> After quoting this episode, which I explained in chapter four, Ch’oŭi commented: “If there is finally no patriarch Sŏn in the Weiyang school, how could these two masters command [those two terms] like this?” (滂仰宗中 果無祖師禪 此二尊宿 何以如此弄現耶).<sup>396</sup> For the Fayan school, he used an example of the founder Fayan Wenyi 法眼文益 (885-958) speaking of an expression related to patriarch Sŏn:

Fayan said, “If you see all characteristics are not characteristics, then you do not see Tathāgata. This is patriarch Sŏn.” From this, Fayan already spoke of “patriarch Sŏn” as well.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> Ibid., 825b09-20.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid., 824a22-23.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid., 825a22-b03.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid., 825b03-05.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid., 825b05-07.

法眼云 若見諸相非相 則不見如來者 是祖師禪 是則法眼 亦曾說言祖師禪。

According to Ch'oŭi, the fact that the ancestors of both schools used the term “patriarch Sŏn” is the evidence that the schools reach the level of patriarch Sŏn. Although the Caodong school is not mentioned in his criticism, the three schools of Weiyang, Fayan, and Caodong, which are considered in Paekp'a's taxonomy as only realizing true emptiness or killing, in fact realize both true emptiness and wondrous existence or killing and giving life.

#### 4) The meaning of Ch'oŭi's criticism of Paekp'a

Ch'oŭi's criticism of Paekp'a's taxonomy reveals Ch'oŭi's view on Sŏn. Ch'oŭi, most of all, advocated the unity of Sŏn. When he criticized Paekp'a's hierarchical interpretation of the three Sŏn types, Ch'oŭi asserted that there is no hierarchy in the two types of Sŏn. According to Ch'oŭi, the two types of Sŏn transmit the same mind though they are just different in their way of transmitting that mind. He also argued for the unity of Sŏn in his view of the term “*Samch'ŏ chŏnsim*.” Focusing on the inseparability of “killing” and “giving life,” Ch'oŭi asserted that these two aspects of mind had been transmitted in all three mind-transmissions, and thus that “*Samch'ŏ chŏnsim*” represented one single type of Sŏn. Since the Buddha did not rely on the linguistic means to transmit his mind in the three places, all three mind-transmissions can be categorized as “patriarch/outside-the-format Sŏn,” which, according to Ch'oŭi's definition of Sŏn, is the same level with “tathāgata/ principle Sŏn.” Ch'oŭi also denied any hierarchy among the five houses. He argued that the five Sŏn houses practice the same level of Sŏn in that they all have “tathāgata/ principle Sŏn” as well as “patriarch/ outside-the-format Sŏn.”

Such Ch'oŭi's view on the unity of Sŏn directly refutes Paekp'a's polemical approach to Sŏn. Paekp'a presented the three-fold Sŏn taxonomy to promote the Linji school, with which

he identified the Korean Sŏn Buddhist tradition from both genological and soteriological perspectives. However, Ch'oŭi did not accept any polemical claim by denying all the theoretical grounds of Paekp'a's taxonomy. Ch'oŭi refuted the hierarchical categorization of the "three statements," "*Samch'ŏ chŏnsim*," and "Five Houses," which Paekp'a applied to justify his polemical endeavor. In particular, Linji's "three statements" loses its pivotal role that it plays in Paekp'a's system, and even does not fit well in Ch'oŭi's non-polemical approach. For Ch'oŭi, there is no hierarchy in Sŏn.

Ch'oŭi's mind theory, which focuses on the true mind, underlies his view on the unity of Sŏn. According to him, the diverse functions of the viturous nature are always manifested within the empty and tranquil essence of the true mind.

One thousand Buddhas are what one mind transforms and reveals... When [the mind] transforms into existence, Gold Statues as numerous as stars are shining. If [they] withdraw and return to immutability, the empty essence of one principle is completely interpenetrated. Transformation means to desire to exist as phenomena while withdrawal means to desire to be manifested as principle... Śākyamuni repeatedly revealed by showing his feet and Bodhidharma returned alone, wearing one shoe. There is nothing that does not manifest existence by facing extinction. Mañjuśrī harassed the Buddha with a sword and Danxia burned a statue with strong fire. There is nothing that does not manifest the truth by removing traces.<sup>398</sup>

千佛者 一心之變現也...以變而爲有則列星之金像燦然 收歸不變 則一理之空體圓融變之欲其存事 收之欲其顯理...夫釋迦雙趺以重顯 達摩隻履而獨歸 無非所以即滅而顯存也 文殊按劍而逼佛 丹霞烈火而焚像 無非所以奪跡而顯真也。

Here, Ch'oŭi added another traditional Chinese pair of "principle (C. *li*, K. *i* 理)/ phenomena" (C. *shi*, K. *sa* 事) to the polar sets of capacity/ function, essence/ function, killing/ giving to life, and true emptiness/ wondrous existence. According to him, all these polarities belong to the realm of the true mind or enlightenment: all diverse acts of the Buddhas and patriarchs are the

<sup>398</sup> Chung chosŏng ch'ŏnbul ki 重造成千佛記, *Ch'oŭi sigo* 艸衣詩藁 2, HPC 10, 863a16-b07.

manifestations of one and the same enlightened mind, whether they are categorized as tathāgata/principle Sōn or patriarch/ outside-the-format Sōn, whether they happen in three or more different places, or whether they belong to the style of the Linji, Yunmen, Weiyang, Fayan, or Caodong schools.

### 3. Ch'oŭi's Soteriology

While Paekp'a promoted the traditional Korean soteriological shema of "sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation," Ch'oŭi did not advocate any Buddhist practice, including the traditional schema. In fact, Ch'oŭi presented little systematic soteriological schema in his works. He just assured the necessity and efficacy of religious practice with his mind theory, which emphasizes the difference between the true and deluded minds.

There are not many clues on Ch'oŭi's soteriology or his personal Buddhist training. There are just a few records. A memorial inscription, composed by the literatus Yi Hŭi-p'ung 李喜豐 (1813-1886), says that Ch'oŭi was deeply interested in Huayan repentance practice.<sup>399</sup> However, it is not likely that Ch'oŭi really cultivated the practice or he counted it as his soteriology because the practice is never mentioned in any of Ch'oŭi's works. Another inscription by a renowned literocrat Sin Hŏn 申櫛 (1810-1888) mentions that Ch'oŭi cultivated the practice of "cessation and contemplation" (K. *chigwan* 止觀) for forty years.<sup>400</sup> Although Ch'oŭi did not give much explanation to this practice, he made the following short reference:

Delusion and disruption make things unable to return [to the original state].  
Illuminating the delusion is called brightness. Stopping disruption is called calmness.

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<sup>399</sup> *Ilchiam munjip* 一枝庵文集, HPC 12, 272a22-24

<sup>400</sup> Ch'oŭi taechongsa t'appimyŏng 艸衣大宗師塔碑銘, *Ch'oŭi sigo* 2 HPC 10, 869c12-13



Brightness and calmness are the essence of cessation and contemplation. [These] make all sentient beings follow the path of enlightenment and reach the wondrous realm.<sup>401</sup>

物之所以不能復者 昏與動使之然也 照昏者 謂之明 住動者 謂之靜 明與靜止觀之體也 使羣生行覺路而之妙境也。

Here, Ch'oŭi seems to regard “cessation and contemplation” as the practice of *samādhi* and *prajñā*, which he elsewhere referred to as the essence of Sŏn.<sup>402</sup> In the above quotation, the practice of cessation and contemplation is introduced as a practice that would lead to enlightenment. However, it is not clear what this practice really indicates because Ch'oŭi provided no further explanation for the practice.

Without presenting any solid hints on his practical scheme, Ch'oŭi just made the following remark, which gives a glimpse into his view on religious practice.

People who listen to dharma generate the intention to cultivate, realize, and adorn something. [The truth is] not a thing that can be adorned. Neither is it a thing that can be cultivated and realized...If one seeks for it, it instead becomes distant; if one does not seek for it, it is instead in front of the eyes. Supposed that someone who has toiled for a hundred years without awakening now here believes, enjoys, and gets awakened. Then, with his awakening, he should be able to become a host in accord with daily condition. If so, wherever he stands becomes true without any effort.<sup>403</sup>

聽法之人 作麼生擬修他證他 莊嚴他渠且不是莊嚴得之物 不是修證得之物...求着則轉遠 不求還在目前 若人不悟 徒勞百年 今於此 既信且樂而悟 但當與其所悟之於日用應緣處 能得隨處作主 自然立處皆真。

Ch'oŭi's statement, which at first glance seems to deny any necessity and efficacy of religious practice, can be understood from the perspective of the relationship between the true and deluded minds. As Zongmi and Chinul showed well, this relationship between the two minds raises a

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<sup>401</sup> Mihwang sa man'il hoe ki 美黃寺萬日會記, *Ibid.*, 863c20-23.

<sup>402</sup> *Ilchiam munjip* HPC 12, 263c11.

<sup>403</sup> Sang ilgi sŏnsaeng sŏ, *Ch'oŭi sigo* 2, HPC10, 869a09-17.

serious question about practice. On the one hand, when the true mind is too different or transcendent from the deluded mind, the former could not be attained by any kind of the acts of the latter. On the other hand, when they are too close to or identical with each other, there is no need for any medium to connect them. Thus, the larger the gap between the true and deluded minds, the less effective Buddhist practice becomes; on the contrary, the smaller the gap, the less necessary Buddhist practice.<sup>404</sup> The traditional Chan/ Sŏn response to this quandary, which Paekp'a followed, is to define the two minds as the two different epistemological functions originating from the same entity. By doing so, it could provide the theoretical basis for religious practice, which then aims to discover the pure innate nature of mind covered by adventitious defilements rather than attaining something inherently different from the current state.

Although Ch'oŭi had a somewhat different view on the two minds, he gained the same effect on the issue of religious practice from his theory of mind. As seen before, Ch'oŭi did not totally deny the ultimate identity of the true and deluded minds, while emphasizing the difference rather than the identity. By doing so, he accepted the idea that the deluded mind should and could be transformed into the true mind: without the explicit denial of the identity of the two minds, he secured the efficacy of religious practice; and at the same time with the strong emphasis on their difference, he defended the necessity of the practice. Thus what Ch'oŭi really intended in the above quotation is to show the characteristic of religious practice rather than rejecting the efficacy or the necessity of the practice. For him, religious practice is an action of nonattachment, even to the very religious goal as well as to the path toward that goal, in which a practitioner does not generate even the hope of attaining the true mind or thought of what

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<sup>404</sup> For more details of this issue of the relationship between the Buddhist practice and its goal, see Buswell and Gimello 1992: 21-29.

practice to cultivate or how to cultivate the practice. This view of religious practice seems similar with the traditional Chan/ Sōn description of the so-called “no-thought practice.” However, since Ch’oŭi did not give any further comment, we cannot be sure how he really thought of religious practice.

Ch’oŭi showed little interest in questions such as how the true mind is attained and what practice is more efficient to accomplish that goal. He simply established the necessity of religious practice by emphasizing the difference between the two minds while he did not go further to denying the identity of the two minds, thus not nullifying the efficacy of the practice. His emphasis on the difference between the two minds also affects his view on Sōn and Kyo.

#### 4. Sōn and Kyo

Ch’oŭi gave a new definition to Sōn and Kyo in terms of the true and deluded minds. His new definition not only removes the conventional distinction between these two strands of Buddhism, but also facilitates the connection between Confucianism and Buddhism.

As a matter of fact, Ch’oŭi accepted the conventional view that there is a difference between Sōn and Kyo. He even tried to provide some criteria to distinguish them. He first took the usage of language as a criterion, which he also used for his two-fold categorization of Sōn as seen before:

Now, what names and words could describe the Blue-Lotus Eyes (Buddha) blinking his eyes and the Purple-Gold Face (Kāśyapa) smiling subtly? If there are special names [for them], they are the traces of Kyo. Then, how would people today hear the meaning of what is called “separate transmission outside the teaching”?<sup>405</sup>

夫青蓮目之高瞬 紫金顏之微哂 有何名言可容於舌頭哉 如有名數言說 便是教跡也 其所謂教外別傳之旨 豈有聞於今日哉。

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<sup>405</sup> *Sōnmun sabyōn man’ō* HPC 10, 826c11-14.

According to Ch'oŭi, Sŏn refers to the separate transmission through non-linguistic means such as “blinking the eyes” and “smiling” as shown in the original event of Sŏn transmission between the Buddha Śākyamuni and Mahākāśyapa, while Kyo refers to the transmission through linguistic means of “names” and “words.” However, since it is just as obvious that Sŏn also employs language in its transmission, Ch'oŭi gave another criterion: the difference in rhetorical styles. He quoted Chinul as follows:

Mog'uja said, “The words and phrases of the Sŏn gate just value manifesting the truth by destroying attachment. They intend to enter awakening through a direct shortcut. They do not allow knowledge through giving descriptive explanation and establishing principle.<sup>406</sup>”

牧牛子曰 禪門語句 只貴破執現宗 務要直截悟入 不許繁辭註解 施設義理而知之.

For Ch'oŭi, Sŏn uses terse and non-conceptual rhetoric to bring about direct transmission of the ultimate truth while Kyo uses prose and conceptual rhetoric to explain that truth. However, for him, Sŏn can be defined as employing all types of rhetorical styles since “tathāgata/ Principle Sŏn” is also connected to the conceptual third statement in his correspondence of Linji's three statements to the two types of Sŏn. Ch'oŭi's correlation of these rhetorical styles to Sŏn and Kyo can be charted as follows.

Table 9. Rhetorical styles of Sŏn and Kyo in Ch'oŭi's thought

1 <sup>st</sup> statement	Non-linguistic expression	Sŏn
2 <sup>nd</sup> statement	Non-conceptual	Sŏn
3 <sup>rd</sup> statement	Conceptual	Sŏn/ Kyo

<sup>406</sup> Ibid., 826c06-08; Chinul did not make this statement. In fact, Ch'oŭi paraphrased some sentences from Chinul's *Kanhwa kyŏrŭi ron*; for example, see *Kanhwa kyŏrŭi ron* HPC 4, 733c22-23 and 736c12-13.

Most importantly, however, for Ch'oŭi, the rhetorical differences between Sŏn and Kyo does not necessarily lead to hierarchical relationship between the two. As seen in chapter four, what decided the hierarchy between Sŏn and Kyo for Paekp'a was the issue of the soteriological efficacy. In Paekp'a's schema of "sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation," Kyo is always subordinate to Sŏn though they are inter-complementary. Kyo only plays a preparatory role for Sŏn practice, which leads to enlightenment. In particular, according to Paekp'a, *kanhwa* Sŏn is the only Sŏn practice, which would bring about that ultimate goal regardless of a practitioner's mental capability. However, in Ch'oŭi's system, there is no emphasis on the soteriological efficacy of either *kanhwa* Sŏn or Sŏn in general. In fact, there is simply not a sufficient reference anywhere in Ch'oŭi's oeuvre to see what he thought of *kanhwa* Sŏn practice. Although he made a few references to the practice, they are just passing references without mentioning its soteriological efficacy.

The renowned yangban Kim Chŏng-hŭi may give some hint of Ch'oŭi's view on *kanhwa* Sŏn practice. Kim was very close to Ch'oŭi. He discussed Buddhism and even denounced Paekp'a's promotion of *kanhwa* Sŏn practice in many letters he sent to Ch'oŭi. Kim also sent a few letters directly to Paekp'a on the subject of that practice. In one of those letters, Kim harshly criticized *kanhwa* Sŏn, in particular, its soteriological efficacy, as follows:

Since [Chan/ Sŏn masters] began to teach people with the *hwadu* technique, we have yet to hear of anyone who rivaled such masters as Nanyue Huairang and Mazu Daoyi. Even though there are one or two who have attained awakening, there is no one especially outstanding. Besides, such a person is just one among thousands. Other than this person, the rest are wasting their time in vain...How could this not be misleading people? How could Dahui not be a head of such disaster?<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> Yŏ Paekp'a 與白坡 1, Minjok munhwa ch'ujin hoe 1988: 155; for the original Chinese text, see *ibid.*, 57b04-06.

話頭教人以後 更未聞如南岳馬祖者出 或有一二悟得 便無甚奇特 且十百之一耳 外是虛拋浪擲...此豈非誤人 而大慧安得不爲禍首也.

Denying any soteriological efficacy of *kanhwa* Sōn, Kim argued that the practice could hinder a practitioner's endeavor to achieve the religious goal. Kim even went further to personally attack Paekp'a in the same letter by describing him as "wasting numerous years in the hermit" and "not being able to penetrate the profound meaning of Buddhism."<sup>408</sup> Considering Kim's fierce attack against *kanhwa* Sōn practice as well as Paekp'a who promoted the practice, it is sure that Kim would have equally criticized Ch'oŭi if Ch'oŭi had expressed any favoritism toward this practice in his works, including his letters to several literati. However, there is no such criticism of Ch'oŭi found anywhere in Kim's entire literary collection. The fact that Ch'oŭi hardly mentioned *kanhwa* Sōn practice in the circumstance when Chosŏn Buddhist community endorsed the practice and that his close literatus friend Kim, who harshly criticized the practice, never criticized Ch'oŭi on that issue implies that Ch'oŭi at least did not regard *kanhwa* Sōn practice as a superior practice, even if he was not as critical as Kim.

Ch'oŭi went even further to deny any soteriological superiority of Sōn in general. He argued that other forms of Buddhist practices played the same role as Sōn. For example, according to him, reciting the scriptures could bring about enlightenment as Sōn does:

If one can read and recite Mahāyāna scriptures and wash off the maculations of his mind, he will accomplish "cessation and contemplation" without effort and easily return to the true reality. What is the true reality? It is the origin of the nature."<sup>409</sup>

能讀誦大乘 洗濯心垢 自然成就止觀 而易復於實際 實際者何 性之本也.

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<sup>408</sup> Ibid., 149 and 150; for the original text, see *ibid.*, 55b04 and b06-07.

<sup>409</sup> Mihwangsa manil hoegi 美黃寺萬日會記, *Ch'oŭi sigo* 2, HPC 10, 863c18-20.

Here, the practice of “reading and reciting the Mahāyāna scriptures” is probably related to Pure Land practice rather than the doctrinal studies since Ch’oŭi made this statement on his record of the Pure Land Society. Yet, Ch’oŭi elsewhere suggested that Kyo makes an equivalent soteriological contribution to Sŏn when he gave the following comment to a famous kongan case, which describes “Vimalakīrti’s thundering silence.”

The great import [of this kongan] is the following: The dharma-gate of non-duality is endowed with one single path leading upward, in which speaking and silence reveal [the truth] together, getting over the error of speaking only or silence only.<sup>410</sup>

其大義 不二法門惟但說但默之偏過而相与互現而具向上一路也。

By arguing that silence and words together constitute the path toward enlightenment, Ch’oŭi proposed the jointed role of Sŏn and Kyo in following that path. In Ch’oŭi’s writings, the claim of Sŏn’s superiority to Kyo, often found in Paekp’a, is almost never mentioned.

As expected from his lack of a systematic soteriological schema, Ch’oŭi gave no further hint of his view of the soteriological roles of Sŏn and Kyo. Instead, he asserted that they are never different from each other in their qualities of dharma transmission.

Since all words and phrases the Buddha and patriarchs left derive from this “full capacity” and “great function,” they become Kyo and Sŏn. There is no single word from the Twelve Divisions of the Kyo school as well as one thousand seven hundred kongan cases of the Sŏn school that is established alone, departing from capacity and function. If one gets attached to existence and non-existence in accord with what is covered and uncovered in numerous chapters of phrases [from these texts], he loses their meaning.<sup>411</sup>

佛祖之所留言句 莫不由此全機大用 而爲教爲禪 教乘之十二部 公案之千七百 未有一字離機用而獨立者 若只向許多章句之內 隨隱現而執定有無 是滯於文而迷失其義者也。

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<sup>410</sup> *Ch’oŭi sŏngwa*, Yong’un 1985: 412.1-412.2

<sup>411</sup> *Sŏnmun sabyŏn man’ŏ* HPC 10, 825c07-12.

Here, Ch'ōi referred to Kyo as scriptures in which the Buddha explains mind by conceptual linguistic expressions while Sōn as the *kong'an* texts in which the Chan and Sōn masters directly point to mind by non-linguistic or non-conceptual expressions. According to Ch'ōi, since Sōn and Kyo are the words of such enlightened persons as the Buddha and patriarchs, they reflect the same qualities of their enlightenment: both Sōn and Kyo have “capacity” and “function,” the two aspects of the true mind. For Ch'ōi, Sōn and Kyo are the same from the standpoint of mind though they are different in the rhetoric they use to express that mind.

Ch'ōi even nullified any significance of a rhetorical difference between Sōn and Kyo by giving these two strands of Buddhism a new definition:

A virtuous ancient master said, “Sōn is the mind of the Buddha; Kyo is the words of the Buddha.” Since the words are produced from mind, there are no words different from mind. Since mind is the source of the words, mind is not different from the words. Hence, if one realizes mind and forgets the words, Kyo becomes Sōn. If one is obstructed by the words and is deluded in mind, Sōn becomes Kyo. Another virtuous ancient master said, “If one who understands in accord with the words says of [suchness] with his mouth, then not only the traces of the teachings of the Twelve Divisions of the scriptures of the three vehicles, but also holding up a flower on Vulture Peak, facing the wall in the Shaolin temple, the eminent monks’ mysterious words and wondrous phrases, shouting and beating all would become the traces of Kyo. If one...realizes in mind, then not only holding up a flower, facing the wall would become the special transmission outside the teaching, but also the Twelve Divisions of the scriptures of the three vehicles and the vulgar words and the trivial speeches of the mundane world all would be a secret leading upward [to enlightenment].<sup>412</sup>

古德云 禪是佛心 教是佛語 言由心發故無異心之言 心是言本故 無異言之心故 悟心忘言 教爲禪也 滯言迷心 禪爲教也 古德云 若隨語生解者 但說之於口 則非但三乘十二分教 爲教跡 靈鷲拈華少林面壁 宗師玄言妙句 一棒一喝 亦皆是教跡 若...得之於心 非但拈華面壁 是教外別傳 三乘十二分教 乃至世間龐言細語 皆是向上一竅也。

Ch'ōi defined Sōn and Kyo in terms of enlightenment and non-enlightenment, quoting the two old masters. The first ancient master Ch'ōi quoted is Zongmi and Chinul while the second is

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<sup>412</sup> Ibid., 828b23-c09.



Ch'ŏnch'aek. With the words of these two Chinese and Korean masters who claimed the identity of Sŏn and Kyo, Ch'oŭi suggested that the rhetorical difference could not be an ultimate criterion to distinguish Sŏn and Kyo. According to him, Sŏn and Kyo are not fixed in certain rhetorical styles, but are instead decided by the relationship to the true mind or enlightenment. Whether a certain expression is linguistic or non-linguistic, or whether it is conceptual or non-conceptual, if it leads a practitioner to enlightenment without generating attachment, it becomes Sŏn; if not, it becomes Kyo.

Ch'oŭi sounds similar to Zongmi and Ch'ŏnch'aek in defining Sŏn and Kyo in this way. However, what makes Ch'oŭi different from these two “ancient masters” is that he used the implication of this new definition of the two strands of Buddhism to connect Buddhism and Confucianism. This connection can be shown in Ch'oŭi's reply to a literatus, who asked the following question:

With what samādhi could one create equality and contemplate the fact that emptiness and form are neither one nor two? With what difference could one enter the realm of non-difference?<sup>413</sup>

得何三昧 作平等 觀空色不二不二非一 以何差別 入無差別.

Although the literatus is described as “neither being born in the time of the Buddha nor coming across any practioner of the Way” (生違佛世 不遇道者)<sup>414</sup> in Ch'oŭi's reply, he clearly seems to have a certain degree of knowledge of Buddhism. Ch'oŭi praised this literatus as follows:

You, master, were born and grew in the Confucian grove, advocated the learning of the [Confucian] sages, rose early to high court rank, helped the state and comforted its people. When with so little time to spare did you get interested in the canonical scriptures [of Buddhism] and familiar with the learning of the Buddhist monks? You by yourself believed, enjoyed, and undersood all the teachings of the mundane world

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<sup>413</sup> Sang ilgi sŏnsaeng sŏ 上一味先生書, *Ch'oŭi sigo* 2, HPC 10, 868c08-09.

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*, 869a04.

which are difficult to believe, and already reached the realm of neither cultivation nor realization.<sup>415</sup>

先生 生長儒林 主張聖學 早登青雲 補國安民 何暇存心內典 以親方外之學  
一切世間難信之法 獨能信樂悟 已到無修無證之地。

From regulating the family, governing people, helping the state, to pacifying the world, there is not a single thing that is not the Buddhist work for Your Highness. This refers to the place where one does not cultivate and yet cultivates everywhere. This refers to the time when one cuts off realization and yet there is no time when it has not been realized.<sup>416</sup>

其於齊家理民 補國平天下之事物上 無一而非閣下之佛事也 是謂無修而無處不修 是謂絕證而無時不證。

Ch'oŭi exalted the literatus as reaching the realm of "neither cultivation nor realization," the highest level of Buddhism.<sup>417</sup> It is interesting that Ch'oŭi suggested that the literatus had reached that level only by practicing the Confucian ideal of the private and public life and that practicing these Confucian ideals are "Buddhist service" for that literatus. Of course, Ch'oŭi here did not explicitly state that the practice of these Confucian ideals is Sŏn. However, inferring from his new definition of Sŏn and Kyo, the practice is indeed Sŏn, at least, for that literatus. Ch'oŭi's statement that the literatus has attained the highest goal of Buddhism might be just a complimentary remark to the literatus, who belongs to high social class. However, with that statement, Ch'oŭi showed to the literatus and possibly to the literati class as a whole his willingness to accommodate Buddhism or Sŏn Buddhism at Confucian-dominant Chosŏn society. By stating that the highest level of Buddhism can be achieved by practicing Confucian ideals and by implying that anything that could bring about enlightenment is Sŏn, he endorsed, or created

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<sup>415</sup> Ibid., 868c03-06.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid., 869a17-20.

<sup>417</sup> In the same letter, Ch'oŭi described this realm as the highest level of Buddhism, quoting the *Sishierzhang jing* 四十二章經: Ibid., 868c24-a06).

an impression to endorse, Confucianism as well as the literati approach to Buddhism, whether it is reciting scriptures, practicing Sŏn, or studying Buddhist doctrines.

From this vantage point, Ch'oŭi endorsed Confucian cultures of Chosŏn. One such example was poetry composition that was widespread among Chosŏn literati not only as a practice for civil service exams but also as a leisure activity. Ch'oŭi himself was renowned for his serene and refined poetry among literati. Kwŏn Yŏn-ha 權璉夏 (1813-1896), Hong Hyŏn-chu, and Kim Chŏng-hi, all of whom were close to Ch'oŭi, even compared him to Guan Xiu 貫休 (832-912), a famous Tang poet monk.<sup>418</sup> His poems, however, are not necessarily Buddhist. Many of his more than 400 poems are not directly related to Buddhism. In the preface for Ch'oŭi's poetry collection, Sin Wi praised him, saying that even such famous Song Chinese poet monks as Daoqian 道潛 (1043-1106) and Congshu 聰殊 (d.u.) could not be compared to Ch'oŭi because "his poems shake off [the traces of those who only eat] herbs and shoots [i.e. Buddhist monks]" (其詩擺落蔬筍).<sup>419</sup> As mentioned in chapter one, Ch'oŭi often exchanged his poems and formed poetry-gatherings with many literati, writing prefaces for literati's collections. Some of these literati who befriended Ch'oŭi regarded poetry composition as Buddhist practice rather than mere literary activity or training for civil service exams. For example, Hong Hyŏn-chu, who called himself "Haegŏ toin" (a religious practitioner who resided near ocean 海居道人), said in his letter to Ch'oŭi that his sole "Buddhist service" was poetry composition.<sup>420</sup> Sin Wi even directly connected this literatus activity to Sŏn. He sent the

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<sup>418</sup> *Ilchiam munjip* 2, HPC 12, 272a4-6.

<sup>419</sup> HPC10, 831a13-14.

<sup>420</sup> *Ch'oŭi sigo* 1, HPC 10, 852b11.

following poem to Ch'oŭi, in which he compared Ch'oŭi and himself to Daoqian and Su Shi

蘇軾 (1037-1101):

Daoqian and old Po [i.e. Su Shi] mellowed around together;  
I have finally tasted this pleasure these days of old age.  
Bitter tea is potent but good for guarding against the mundane;  
Composing poetry in a scenic place accords with Sŏn meditation.<sup>421</sup>

道潛坡老共周旋 此樂衰年有此年 苦茗嚴時宜砭俗 好詩佳處合參禪.

Ch'oŭi supported this activity of poetry composition by correlating it to one of the most popular

Buddhist notions, “Maitreya’s descent” (K. *Mirŭk hasaeng* 彌勒下生):

Though I step on family hometown, there is nothing I can do there;  
The world is difficult to know even one phrase [of poetry] that is perfectly bright.  
If one phrase could be clearly understood,  
Who would complain the delay of Maitreya’s descent?<sup>422</sup>

着脚家鄉無可爲 圓明一句世難知 一句如能明得了 誰嫌彌勒下生遲.

Under Ch'oŭi’s endorsement of poetry composition lies his understanding of the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism. As shown above, Ch'oŭi’s new definitions of Sŏn and Kyo in terms of enlightenment/ non-enlightenment deny not only the distinction between the two strands of Buddhism but also distinction between the two religions. In fact, any distinctions between certain religions or certain types of practice are meaningless. What is really important for him is its relation to enlightenment. Based on this understanding, he connected Confucian cultures or ethics to Buddhism. In his postface for Hong’s poetry collection, Ch'oŭi spoke of Hong Hyŏn-chu, who confessed his little experience of Buddhist practice except poetry writing, in the following way:

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<sup>421</sup> *Ch'oŭi sigo* 1, HPC 10, 846c20-21.

<sup>422</sup> Sujongsa ch’a Sŏgok hwasang 水鍾寺次石屋和尚, *Ch'oŭi sigo* 1, HPC 10, 840c16-17

Because this one piece of numinous calyx shines brightly in the nature-heaven, whenever he [i.e. Hong] acts or stops, speaks or remains silent, takes or yields, and goes forward or backward, he always moves courteously with the mind of propriety...Speaking of his poems...they also derive from the quintessence of this nature.<sup>423</sup>

哉 由是一片靈臺 昭然獨耀於性天之內 凡行止語默 揖讓進退 無不莊以莅之 動之以禮心者也...若其詩...亦由所發於是性之精英也.

For Ch'oŭi, a poem, in particular, a good poem, even if it is not related to Buddhism, manifests the original numinous nature, and thus serves as a token for its author's attainment of Buddhahood, making it unnecessary to wait for Maitreya's descent. As Ch'oŭi stated in above quotation, this manifestation of the Buddha nature or the revelation of the innate Buddha is not limited to the activity of poetry composition; it could be achieved through the practice of "propriety" (K. *ye* 禮), the Confucian social code of conduct that regulated every dimension of life in Chosŏn. According to him, the right practice of propriety, even without actual Buddhist practice, is an undeniable sign of enlightenment or the full manifestation of one's Buddha nature. In this way, Ch'oŭi endorsed Confucian cultures and ethics in Confucian-dominant Chosŏn society.

## 5. Concluding Remarks

Ch'oŭi advocated the unity of various types of Sŏn as well as Sŏn and its archrival Kyo by criticizing Paekp'a's hierarchical understanding of Buddhism. According to Ch'oŭi, various types of Sŏn—the two types Sŏn of tathāgata/ principle and patriarch/ outside-the-format, *Samch'ŏ chŏnsim*, and Five Sŏn Houses—are the same level of Sŏn since they are all manifestations of the true mind or enlightenment; Sŏn and Kyo are also the same level since they originated from the same enlightened mind of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

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<sup>423</sup> Haegŏ toin sijip pal 海居道人詩集跋, *Ch'oŭi sigo* 2, HPC 10, 867a14-21.

Ch'oŭi's position on the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo is surely different from that of Paekp'a, who took the traditional Korean view on that issue. In fact, the tension between these two positions is caused by the age-long accusation Sŏn makes against Kyo of being incapable of leading to the ultimate goal of the religion: although Kyo might be helpful in that it gives an orientation to the soteriological journey, the conceptualizing nature of Kyo makes it incompetent in bringing about enlightenment, which is beyond all concepts. Regarding this Sŏn accusation against Kyo, Ch'oŭi suggested that the rhetoric of Kyo also leads to the ultimate goal of the religion by defining Sŏn and Kyo in a new way: if a certain expression leads to enlightenment, regardless of its rhetorical style, it is Sŏn; if not, it is Kyo. According to this definition, the conceptual explanations of Buddhism and even Confucianism could become Sŏn if they result in enlightenment. Ch'oŭi's new definition of Sŏn and Kyo, therefore, vindicates Confucianism and the literati's intellectual approach to Buddhism. However, he did not explain how this enlightenment could be accomplished. He showed little interest in outlining a systematic soteriological process.

In fact, this lack of a systematic soteriology in his works is probably related to his attitude toward the related issue of "sudden and gradual." For Ch'oŭi, enlightenment is not attained through a gradual process. Just as the two aspects of mind are inseparable, the process of realizing these aspects is also inseparable. According to him, one realizes either both or none of the two aspects of mind. Ch'oŭi did not accept any steps in the path toward enlightenment: enlightenment for him is the sudden and full realization of the two aspects of mind.

## CONCLUSION

### 1. The Legacy of the Debate

Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi's theories of Sŏn prompted controversy in the Korean Sŏn community. The preface to Udam Honggi's 優曇洪基 (1822-1881) *Sŏnmun chŭngjŏng nok* 禪門證正錄 records this situation:

The elder Paekp'a commented on the *Sŏnmun yŏmsong*, based on Linji's teaching of Three Statements, and published the *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*. His theories prevailed for a while. When compared to what is in Chungbu [i.e. Ch'oŭi]'s [*Sŏnmun sabyŏn*] *manŏ*, they contradict each other. Students of the Way are concerned about it [i.e. the contradictions].<sup>424</sup>

夫白坡老 把臨濟三句 箋詰拈頌 圖刊手鏡 其說一時盛行 偶因中孚漫語...之出 疑膜交蔽 學者病之.

Such later Sŏn masters as Sŏltu Yuhyŏng 雪竇有炯 (1824-1889), Udam Honggi, and Ch'ugwŏn Chinha 竺源震河 (1861-1926) took the side of either Paekp'a or Ch'oŭi, presenting new rationales for their positions and criticizing the other, in particular, on the issue of the relationship between the four types of Sŏn: tathāgata Sŏn, patriarch Sŏn, principle Sŏn, and outside-the-format Sŏn.

Yuhyŏng, a second generation master succeeding Paekp'a, defended Paekp'a's three-fold taxonomy of Sŏn in the *Sŏnwŏn soryu* 禪源溯流. In doing so, he accepted most of Paekp'a's rationales for the three-fold taxonomy of Sŏn: killing/ giving life; the three places of mind-transmission; a genuine-gold store/ a general merchandise store. What is interesting in Yuhyŏng's defense of Paekp'a's taxonomy is his justification for the latter's hierarchization of tathāgata Sŏn and patriarch Sŏn. As seen in chapter four, Paekp'a traced the origin of the two

<sup>424</sup> *Sŏnmun chŭngjŏng nok*, HPC 10, 1136b09-12

types of Sŏn back to Śākyamuni Buddha by arguing that the Buddha had transmitted tathāgata Sŏn and patriarch Sŏn before the Stūpa of Many Sons and on Vulture Peak, respectively. Paekp'a's explanation of the origin of the two types of Sŏn inevitably raises a question of why tathāgata Sŏn is regarded as inferior, despite the fact that both types of Sŏn had the same origin. Yuhŏng provided an answer for this question by employing a unique Korean Sŏn invention that had developed during the Koryŏ period. He argued:

Because Queen Chinsŏng asked of the meanings of Sŏn and Kyo, Pŏmil, a state preceptor of Silla, answered: The World-Honored One was awakened to the Way by seeing the morning star. He found out that the dharma to which he had awakened did not reach the ultimate and thus wandered around for ten months seeking out the patriarch. He eventually received the transmission of the ultimate tenet [from that patriarch]. What the Tathāgata awakened to is called tathāgata Sŏn. What the patriarch transmitted is called patriarch Sŏn. Because of this, tathāgata Sŏn is inferior to patriarch Sŏn.<sup>425</sup>

新羅梵日國師 因眞聖王問禪教兩義 答曰世尊見明星悟道 復知所悟之法 猶未臻極 遊行數十月 尋訪祖師 始傳得玄極之旨 謂如來悟底 名如來禪 祖師傳底 名祖師禪也 是故如來禪 劣於祖師禪。

This story of the “patriarch Returning to the Truth” (K. *Chin'gwi chosa* 眞歸祖師) first appears in Chinjŏng Ch'ŏnch'aek's 眞靜天頌 (d.u) *Sŏnmun pojangnok* 禪門寶藏錄. The Chosŏn Sŏn master Hyujŏng also mentions it in his *Sŏn'gyo sŏk* 禪教釋.<sup>426</sup> In the *Sŏnmun pojangnok*, Ch'ŏnch'aek reports that Pŏmil 梵日 (810-889) first introduced the story, citing the *Talma millok* 達磨密錄 and the *Haedong ch'iltaerok* 海東七大錄, texts whose existence cannot be verified in any other Chinese and Korean Buddhist texts. The story of *Chin'gwi chosa* directly controverts the traditional Buddhist belief that Śākyamuni's awakening under the Bodhi tree was his own unsurpassed experience of truth itself. This story of his post-enlightenment experience

<sup>425</sup> *Sŏnwŏn soryu*, HPC 10, 653b15-20.

<sup>426</sup> *Sŏnmun pojangnok*, HPC 6, 470b06-08 and 474a07-12; *Sŏn'gyo sŏk*, HPC 7, 654c08-11.



is not found in Indian or Chinese Buddhist literature. It was probably forged by Ch'ŏnch'aek himself or Korean Sŏn monks of the time. Unaware of its Korean origin, Yuhyŏng legitimized the hierarchy between tathāgata Sŏn and patriarch Sŏn by employing this story in which the former is described as the imperfect dharma awakened to by Śākyamuni Buddha, while the latter is the supreme dharma transmitted from *Chin'gwi chosa*.

Yuhyŏng also accepted Paekp'a's theory that these two different levels of Sŏn were transmitted through two separate events of *Samch'ŏ chonsim*. Yuhyŏng first connected the “sword that kills people” to the first mind-transmission before the Stūpa of Many Sons where Śākyamuni shared his seat with Mahākāśyapa; and the “sword that gives life people” to the second transmission on Vulture Peak, where the Buddha held up a flower and the disciple smiled in response.<sup>427</sup> Yuhyŏng, then, argued that “‘killing’ is called tathāgata Sŏn because it is what the Tathāgata awakened to, while ‘giving life’ is called patriarch Sŏn because it is what the patriarch transmitted” (以爲殺是如來悟底 故名如來禪 活是祖師傳底 故名祖師禪) without providing any further explanation.<sup>428</sup> For Yuhyŏng, therefore, tathāgata Sŏn corresponds to “killing,” the first transmission, and the Tathāgata's awakening; patriarch Sŏn, to “giving life,” the second transmission, and the patriarch's transmission.

Table 10. Sŏltu Yuhyŏng

tathāgata Sŏn	killing	first transmission	Śākyamuni
patriarch Sŏn	giving life	second transmission	Patriarch of Returning to the Truth

<sup>427</sup> *Sŏnwŏn soryu*, HPC 10, 655a16-18 and 22-24.

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid*, 656a08-10.

Yuhyŏng’s explanation reveals his subordination of Kyo to Sŏn. By applying the story of *Chin’gwi chosa* in order to advocate the superiority of patriarch Sŏn to tathāgata Sŏn, he shared with Paekp’a the view that only certain schools of Sŏn—i.e. Linji and Yunmen in Paekp’a’s three-fold taxonomy—possessed the supreme dharma and others, including the Kyo scholastic schools, are therefore inferior to these two schools of Sŏn.

In the *Sŏnmun chūngjŏngnok* 禪門證正錄, Udam Honggi, a tenth generation successor of Puhyu Sŏnsu, adopted Ch’oŭi’s positions on most of the issues involved in the Sŏn taxonomies of the two monks. Unlike Ch’oŭi, however, Honggi admitted Kyo’s subordination to Sŏn by employing the story of *Chin’gwi chosa*.

What is called “tathāgata Sŏn” refers to the second statement to which the Tathāgata got awakened before Mt. Chŏnggak (Correct Awakening), seeing the morning star...This is called tathāgata Sŏn because it is the type of Sŏn that the Tathāgata got awakened himself. It is like the principle of revealing favorable auspices and moving the earth. [It is also like] the signs and traces of the scriptural teaching. Thus, it is also called principle Sŏn. What is called “patriarch Sŏn” refers to the first statement that the World-Honored One finally realized [from *Chin’gwi chosa*] after he discovered that his own awakening had not reached the ultimate and thus wandered around to seek out the patriarch Returning to the Truth...This is called patriarch Sŏn because the World-Honored One received it from *Chin’gwi chosa*...This [Sŏn] stays away forever from the principle of revealing favorable auspices and moving the earth, and can go beyond the scriptural teaching. Thus, it is also called outside-the-format Sŏn.<sup>429</sup>

所謂如來禪者 如來於正覺山前 見明星 而證得第二句...此是如來自證之禪 故曰如來禪也 猶形於現瑞動地之義理 經教之朕迹 故亦名義理禪也 所謂祖師禪者 世尊自知所證 猶未臻極 尋訪真歸祖師 始證第一句...此是世尊 得之於真歸祖師 故曰祖師禪也...永脫現瑞動地義理之迹 亦能出於經教之外 故亦名格外禪也.

According to Honggi, tathāgata Sŏn refers to the Tathāgata’s own awakening, the level of which can be represented by the second statement of Linji’s three statements. This Sŏn is also identified with principle Sŏn as well as the teachings of the scriptures. On the other hand,

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<sup>429</sup> *Sŏnmun chūngjŏngnok*, HPC10, 1138b17-c10.

patriarch Sŏn is *Chin'gwi chosa*'s transmission of the dharma, which is equivalent to the first statement. This Sŏn is called outside-the-format Sŏn because it transcends linguistic expression. He also argued that the three mind-transmissions all belong to the first statement, which corresponds to patriarch Sŏn's outside-the-format (三傳 總屬於第一句祖師禪之格外).<sup>430</sup> By tracing the origins of these two types of Sŏn to the story of *Chin'gwi chosa*, however, Honggi accepted the hierarchy between tathāgata Sŏn and patriarch Sŏn, and by extension, Sŏn and Kyo, just as had Paekp'a and Yuhyŏng.

Table 11. Udam Honggi

tathāgata Sŏn	second statement	Kyo	principle Sŏn	Śākyamuni	X
patriarch Sŏn	first statement	Sŏn	outside-the-format Sŏn	<i>Chin'gwi chosa</i>	<i>samch'ŏ chŏnsim</i>

Ch'ugwŏn Chinha (1826-1926) criticized Paekp'a from Ch'ŏi's standpoint in the *Sŏnmun chaejŏngnok* 禪門再正錄, rather than offering his own account of the four types of Sŏn.

Chinha first emphasized the identity between principle Sŏn and outside-the-format Sŏn:

If we assume that the Buddha and patriarchs' words that have fallen into the weeds [i.e. the words of skillful means] are principle Sŏn, then, principle [Sŏn] does not refer to a separate dharma. It is obvious that [principle Sŏn] is also the dharma of the Tathāgata and the patriarchs.<sup>431</sup>

若以佛祖落草之談 爲義理禪 則義理 不是別法 自是如來之法也 祖師之法也 明矣.

Chinha argued, just as had Ch'ŏi, that principle Sŏn and outside-the-format Sŏn are different only in their rhetoric. According to Chinha, principle Sŏn refers to the Sŏn that follows the

<sup>430</sup> Ibid., 1138b15-16.

<sup>431</sup> *Sŏnmun chaejŏngnok*, HPC 11, 868a19-21

principle of concepts by which the Buddha and patriarchs taught sentient beings. Because principle Sōn also originated from the enlightened mind, it is not different from outside-the-format Sōn, which draws on such non-linguistic means as silence, striking, and shouting.<sup>432</sup> Therefore, based on these definitions of principle Sōn and outside-the-format Sōn, Kyo corresponds to the former while Sōn to, either type of Sōn, depending on its use of language.

Chinha, then, criticized Paekp'a for describing tathāgata Sōn as “*kyooe*” (outside the teaching 教外) and “*kyōgoe*” (outside the format 格外). In doing so, Chinha introduced new definitions of Kyo (teaching) and kyōk (format):

There are three deep and shallow types in Kyo. One is the words that are the expressions. Second is the principle that is expressed by words...Third is forgetting words and cutting off thought. This [third] is tathāgata Sōn.<sup>433</sup>

教有三重淺深 一能詮文字 二文內所詮義理之旨...三亡言絕慮之旨 今如來禪.

There are two types in kyōk (format)...One is the format of principle. The other is the format of Kyo...Tathāgata Sōn neither discards the traces of Kyo nor enters into a separate transmission.<sup>434</sup>

格有二種(此古人之不分者) 一義理之格 二教格...如來禪既未脫教迹 未入別傳

Since Chinha did not give any further explanations of the meaning of Kyo and kyōk, it is not sure exactly what he meant by these definitions of Kyo and kyōk. In my opinion, however, three types of Kyo refers to: (1) words as signifiers; (2) the concepts or ideas that are signified by those words; (3) the reality that transcends words, but can be attained through a practice based on words. The two types of kyōk are: (1) the format of the linguistic principle; (2) the traces of Kyo, which probably refers to the non-descriptive and non-referential use of language of Sōn.

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<sup>432</sup> Ibid, 868b16-c02.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid. 869c12-14.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid., 870a02-07.

Despite such ambiguity, according to his definition, tathāgata Sōn is regarded as being within both Kyo and kyōk. Defining tathāgata Sōn this way, Chinha condemned Paekp'a's definition of tathāgata Sōn. Although Chinha did not give a direct account of the relationship between Sōn and Kyo in his writings, he probably took the position of advocating the unity of these two strands of Buddhism, considering his view that principle Sōn and outside-the-format Sōn represents the same level of truth.

Although their theories sometimes became overly scholastic, Yuhyōng, Honggi, and Chinha complemented Ch'oŭi and Paekp'a's theories, presenting their own distinctive theories, in particular, on the meaning of tathāgata Sōn and patriarch Sōn.

## 2. The Religious Meaning of Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi's Discourse

The relationship between Sōn and Kyo that Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi tackled involves soteriological, ontological, epistemological, and linguistic issues. Here, I will discuss the questions regarding: (1) the nature of enlightenment and practice; (2) the soteriological role of doctrinal concepts or doctrinal studies.

### 1) The nature of enlightenment and religious practice

The relationship between the two strands of Buddhism raises the following questions in relation to the nature of enlightenment and practice: is enlightenment attained in a series of sequential stages or all at once? To put it another way, does enlightenment take place in a sudden or gradual manner? Does religious practice contribute to triggering the experience of enlightenment or does it flow out of that experience spontaneously?

In the history of Chinese Buddhism, Daosheng 道生 (355-434) first stirred up debate about awakening and practice in terms of sudden and gradual. He advocated the concept of

“sudden awakening” against that of “gradual awakening” promoted by Huiguan 慧觀 (363-443). Huiguan claimed that there were a series of steps to follow in Buddhist practice and awakening, employing the analogy of mountain-climbing in which the higher one climbs, the wider his or her view becomes. On the contrary, Daosheng asserted that since the truth itself is non-dual, awakening to it cannot be accomplished in steps. For Daosheng, awakening is a one-time experience that occurs all at once, not in a gradual manner. He, however, did not totally deny Huiguan’s gradual approach. Although he championed “sudden awakening,” Daosheng accepted a series of practices as necessary to attain the ultimate awakening.<sup>435</sup>

Shenhui (684-758) was perhaps the best-known Chinese figure to use the concepts of sudden and gradual polemically. He attacked the Northern school, the most popular Chan school of his time, as inferior because the school, he argued, taught gradual doctrines about awakening and practice. According to Shenhui, the Northern school masters prescribed a formula to gradually purify oneself along a path leading to perfect awakening: they urged followers to engage themselves in the long process of practices and cultivate their minds for achieving that ultimate goal. Shenhui despised this Northern approach as dualistic and gradual and claimed that his approach was non-dual and sudden, focusing on the realm beyond all forms of dualism.<sup>436</sup>

Daosheng and Huiguan accepted a series of steps in practice as necessary, although they differed on whether awakening is accomplished only once in its entirety or gradually as each step is completed. On the other hand, Shenhui raised a question about the very nature of Buddhist practice: how can it contribute to awakening? Is it a necessary precondition for awakening?

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<sup>435</sup> For details of the debate between the two, see Kim Young-ho Kim 1990: 29-34 and Lai 1987: 169-200.

<sup>436</sup> Gregory 2002: 17-18.

As John McRae points out, Shenhui weakened the concept of practice as an intentional and conscious effort.<sup>437</sup> According to McRae, although Shenhui admitted the concept of gradual spiritual growth, he believed it to be spontaneous and to develop naturally, as shown in his analogy of a child, who is complete at birth, growing into an adult. For Shenhui, Buddhist practice naturally flows out of the experience of awakening.

Zongmi and Chinul emphasized the necessity of religious practice, presenting a soteriological schema of “sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation.” In this schema, these two Chan/ Sōn masters reconciled sudden and gradual approach to enlightenment and practice. In doing so, they introduced two kinds of awakening: “understanding awakening” and “realization awakening.” The former is the moment one gains true awareness of the world as suchness with the study of Buddhist doctrines and always occurs in a sudden manner, whereas the latter is the process toward perfection in which one embodies the truth by removing the defilements gradually. This schema, therefore, can be reformulated in the following three stages: “understanding awakening – gradual cultivation – realization awakening.” Through this model, Zongmi and Chinul required religious practice as a necessary condition for the consummation of one’s awakening.

Paekp’a interpreted the schema of “sudden awakening/ gradual cultivation” from the Linji Chan perspective. In particular, he used Chinul’s schema in the *Chōryo*, which integrated *kanhwa* Sōn technique to bring about realization-awakening. Paekp’a presented his synthetic model that combined the Linji and Heze soteriologies by correlating Chinul’s three-mystery stages to his three-fold taxonomy of Sōn. In this model: (1) Paekp’a’s principle Sōn, or the third of Linji’s three statements, represents the first stage of the soteriological journey, which

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<sup>437</sup> McRae 1987: 254 and 227-275.

corresponds to Chinul's understanding awakening and mystery in the essence; (2) tathāgata Sōn, or the second statement, occupies the second stage, which correlates to Chinul's gradual cultivation and mystery in the word; (3) patriarch Sōn, or the third statement, is placed on the final third stage, which corresponds to Chinul's realization awakening and mystery in the mystery. In Paekp'a's correspondences, the exclusive soteriological role of *kanhwa* Sōn practice in generating the experience of enlightenment is emphasized as a gradual practice cultivated after initial sudden awakening.

Paekp'a, in his three-fold taxonomy of Sōn, also emphasized a gradual process leading to the final enlightenment, even more than had Zongmi and Chinul. Paekp'a's theory of mind, revealed in his taxonomy, justified this process. In his theory, the two aspects of mind, immutability and conditionality, can be understood separately at a certain stage of one's spiritual journey: (1) at the level of principle Sōn, one understands the two aspects of mind conceptually; (2) at that of tathāgata Sōn, one realizes only the immutable or empty aspect; (3) at that of patriarch Sōn, one finally realizes both aspects fully and perfectly. Paekp'a, therefore, could secure the necessity of religious practice in this three-stage path by emphasizing the gradual aspect in enlightenment and practice.

Ch'oŭi, on the contrary, did not regard enlightenment as occurring in a gradual manner. For him, enlightenment took place all at once without separate stages, just as the truth itself is inseparable. However, Ch'oŭi's emphasis on the differences between true and deluded minds weakens the necessity and efficacy of religious practice, though it does not deny them, as shown by the fact that he provided no specific soteriological regimen. According to Ch'oŭi, religious practice is not even necessarily Buddhist: rather, following a Confucian ideal in one's personal and public life could replace Buddhist practice. He went further to suggest that this practice of



Confucianism, in fact, flows naturally from the enlightened state of mind. Therefore, for Ch'ŏi, Buddhism does not have a monopoly on enlightenment. It can be manifested in its essence in a Confucian form. Benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom (K. *in ūi ye chi* 仁義禮智), the four main elements of the human nature in Confucianism, correspond to the essence of the true mind in Buddhism, as shown in his praise of the yangban literocrat Hong Hyŏn-ju.

## 2) The soteriological role of doctrinal concepts or doctrinal studies

Paekp'a and Ch'ŏi's discourse on the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo asks the following questions regarding doctrinal concepts or doctrinal studies: what role does the conceptual and descriptive language of the scriptural texts have in Buddhist soteriology? Does doctrine hinder Buddhist training, leading only to mental defilements? Do doctrinal studies merely reify the truth of reality, traditionally believed to be beyond the purview of language?

Mental defilements, such as greed, anger, and ignorance, bind sentient beings in the endless cycle of birth-and-death. Thus, in order to liberate from this cycle and attain enlightenment, one first has to remove these defilements. Very generally, Buddhism attributes the principal cause of mental defilements to mental constructs (*kalpanā*), which, in turn, is caused by *prapañca*. *Prapañca*, regarding Buddhist soteriology, refers to the dichotomizing tendency that produces such bifurcations as self/ others, subject/ object, and existence/ non-existence.<sup>438</sup>

*Prapañca* in its nature is closely related to linguistic activity. Therefore, an important question arises: whether doctrinal or scholastic use of language leads inevitably to *prapañca*, and

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<sup>438</sup> For details, see Tachikawa 1993: 188-192 and Harris 1991: 18-24.

thus hinders the achievement of the ultimate goal of Buddhism. Youru Wang demonstrates that many Mahāyāna scriptures and commentaries recognize the inappropriateness of doctrinal concepts, citing one of Nāgārjuna's famous statements in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 18.7: "Where the reach of thought turns back, language turns back. The nature of things is, like complete cessation, without origin and without decay."<sup>439</sup> According to Wang, this statement, in fact, intends to deny the referential and descriptive language, generally found in scriptural and commentarial texts, rather than language as a whole.<sup>440</sup> Wang, then, concludes that it is widespread perception in many Mahāyāna texts that this type of language serves as a main cause of reification.

For this reason, doctrinal concepts, and by extension, doctrinal studies do not get much credit in many strands of Buddhist soteriology. Meditation rather than these intellectual activities is considered as bringing about the experience of enlightenment. As seen in previous chapters, since meditation formed an independent branch of Buddhist schools in medieval China, doctrinal studies or even doctrinal concepts had at times been excluded from the discourse on the Chan/ Sōn soteriology, at least, rhetorically. Although some reactions to such exclusion of Jiao/ Kyo occurred within the Chan/ Sōn school, Jiao/ Kyo could not secure an equivalent status with Chan/ Sōn. For example, in the Heze-oriented practical schema of sudden awakening/ gradual cultivation, Jiao/ Kyo leads to "understanding awakening," in which the traces of intellectual approach still remain. Therefore, it serves as a preliminary step in Chan/ Sōn meditation. Chinul clearly confirmed the limits of Kyo in the following statement:

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<sup>439</sup> Emmanuel 2013: 247; Wang (2003: 110) gives the following translation for that paragraph, quoting Sprung 1979: 177; "When the object of thought is no more there is nothing for language to refer to. The true nature of things neither arises nor perishes, as nirvāṇa does not."

<sup>440</sup> For Wang's discussion on Mahāyāna view on language, see Wang 2003: 110-113.

In the Sŏn approach, all these true teaching deriving from the faith and understanding of the complete and sudden school, which are as numerous as the sands of the Ganges, are called dead words because they induce people to create the obstacle of understanding. Nevertheless, with complete descriptions which accord with the nature, they do instruct beginning students who are not yet able to investigate the live word of the shortcut approach, and they help to ensure that they have nonretrogressive faith and understanding.<sup>441</sup>

禪門中此等圓頓信解 如實言教 如河沙數 謂之死句 以令人生解 碍故 並是爲初心學者 於徑截門活句 未能叅詳故 示以稱性圓談 令其信解不退轉故。

Accepting the Heze based Chan/ Sŏn soteriology that developed in mid Chosŏn, Paekp'a shared its views of the limits of Kyo and the emphasis on Sŏn in his three-stage schema.

Ch'oŭi, on the contrary, affirmed the descriptive and referential language of Kyo by re-defining Sŏn and Kyo in terms of enlightenment and non-enlightenment. According to him, any type of rhetoric belongs to Sŏn if it leads to enlightenment. Ch'oŭi's definition, in fact, agrees with the traditional Chan/ Sŏn view of language. Language does not have any power on its own in bringing about or hindering the soteriological goal of Buddhism. Whether the language of Sŏn or Kyo, it can be the live or dead word, according to the way that language is used. Ch'oŭi even looked at doctrinal studies in more positive terms. As shown in his endorsement of the literati's approach to Buddhism by directly connecting it to Buddhist enlightenment, doctrinal studies, based on descriptive and referential uses of language, are not necessarily related to *prapañca*.

### 3) Concluding Remarks

The activities of Paekp'a, Ch'oŭi, and other Korean monks of the late Chosŏn controvert the negative image of Buddhism of the time, demonstrating that the religion was not moribund

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<sup>441</sup> *Kanhwa kyŏrŭiron*, HPC 4, 733a15-19; the translation is quoted from Buswell 1983: 240.

but was, in fact, very much alive. These monks exerted themselves to adapt Buddhism to a Chosŏn society in which Confucian ideology dominated. They practiced Confucian social ethics, such as loyalty and filial piety, and modified Buddhist doctrines to fit these ethical norms. Such efforts contributed to the yangban literati's favorable attitude toward Buddhism during this period. Although Buddhism was still nominally regarded as heterodox, the literati class did not see the religion as a threat to the Confucian social order, unlike the evil teaching (*sagyŏ*; viz., Christianity) or the enemy of orthodox Confucianism (Yangming learning). Buddhism was therefore able to attract many literati to its beliefs and practices during the latter half of the Chosŏn dynasty. These literati not only befriended renowned monks, but also cultivated Buddhist practices. One of the popular practices of the literati was to engage in such scholastic activities as reading Buddhist texts and discussing Buddhist doctrine. Thanks to this less oppressive social milieu of the late Chosŏn, the Korean Buddhist community was able to revive its tradition. Buddhist monks wrote and published a number of influential doctrinal texts, and delivered several major public lectures, in particular, on Hwaŏm philosophy. The Buddhist institution also established a streamlined monastic curriculum and restored its Sŏn lineage.

Paekp'a and Ch'ŏi were examples of the creative developments within Korean Buddhism during this period. These two monks demonstrate that Chosŏn Buddhism was inextricably woven into the socio-religious fabric of the time, developing new approaches to Buddhist thought and practice that responded to the contemporary religious needs of the Korean people. Paekp'a attempted to resolve perceived internal inconsistencies within Korean Sŏn Buddhism generated by its different sectarian affiliations in terms of genealogy and soteriology. Linji's teaching of "three statements, three mysteries, and three essentials" provided the basic framework for his attempt. With this teaching, Paekp'a presented three-fold taxonomy of Sŏn

by which he introduced a new definition of the Linji/ Imje school into Korean Sŏn Buddhism. This Linji/ Imje school would recognize “sudden awakening/ gradual cultivation” as its main practical schema. Paekp’a’s theories, which reinterpreted the Linji and Heze teachings of the Chinese Chan tradition, were a response to the reality of Korean Buddhism during the late Chosŏn in which the dominant Sŏn lineages espoused Kyo teachings.

Ch’oŭi embraced the intellectual approach of the yangban literati, who were the source of both financial security and philosophical stimulation for contemporary Korean Buddhism. In so doing, he criticized Paekp’a’s interpretation of Linji’s teaching. By rejecting Paep’a’s three-fold taxonomy and soteriology, he denied the existence of a hierarchy among the different types of Sŏn, and rejected Kyo’s subordination to Sŏn. Ch’oŭi, instead, interpreted Linji’s teaching as advocating the identity of all types of Sŏn, as well as the fundamental affinities between Sŏn and Kyo. His claim of this ultimate identity was, in fact, based on his prioritization of enlightenment. For Ch’oŭi, this final goal of Buddhism defined the highest aspirations of both Sŏn and Kyo, as well as the *summum bonum* of Confucianism and even of the activities of all human beings. Through his religious inclusivism, he secured the status of Buddhism in Chosŏn society by presenting it as a religion that fit perfectly the needs of that society.

Paekp’a and Ch’oŭi’s presentations of Buddhism have had a profound effect on subsequent developments in the Korean Buddhist tradition. The various issues regarding the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo that they examined continue to be topics of real moment in the contemporary Buddhist and scholarly communities. In the 1990s, for example, there were serious debates in Korea about whether Chinul’s soteriological schema should be excluded from orthodox Korean Sŏn Buddhism. These debates revolved around such questions as the nature of enlightenment and practice, along with the role of descriptive and conceptual language and

Kyo doctrinal studies in Sŏn soteriology. These debates, which involved the fundamental questions concerning the self-identity of Korean Sŏn Buddhism, may be slightly less heated now, but still inform deliberations concerning reforms of the monastic curriculum. Thus, the issues that Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi's tried to address continue to simmer just below the surface of the contemporary tradition. For all these reasons, Paekp'a and Ch'oŭi's views on Sŏn Buddhism continue to offer important perspectives for examining current issues in contemporary Korean Buddhism.

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