



***Creating the World of Chan/ Sŏn /Zen:
Chinese Chan Buddhism and its Spread
throughout East Asia***



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Hosted by the East Asian Studies Department, University of Arizona—Tucson



University of Arizona Presents

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Panel One (90 minutes) Foundational Considerations

“Language and the Spread of Chan Buddhism”

John Jorgensen (Retired Senior Lecturer of Griffith University, Australia)

The semi-colloquial nature of Chan language meant that for Chan to be spread beyond China proper Chan language had to be learnt or translated. To the west it was translated into Tibetan, Uighur, and Tangut. To the east and south Chan language was learnt and used by Koreans, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Bai. These East Asian states required their elites, including monks, to be literate in Chinese, and more than just literary Chinese. Beyond that, because of the numerous literary allusions in Chan literature, the students and translators had to be versed in Chinese culture and the Chinese Buddhist texts and issues for Chan to be assimilated in the long term. To the west, Chinese culture and consequently Chan did not take root; to the east Chinese culture was adopted and Chan took root; but this assimilation was limited in the south.

“The Chan Buddhist/Confucian Matrix: Chan Monks as Buddhist *Junzi*, Confucian *Junzi* as Chan Monks”

Albert Welter (University of Arizona)

The formation of classical Chan during the 10th to 13th centuries coincided with the development of Neo-Confucianism. While there has been a growing recognition of correspondences between Neo-Confucianism and Buddhism, especially Chan, there has yet to be an extensive analysis of how their rise is interconnected. I explore the shared matrix that generated both. Following Zhu Xi orthodoxy rooted in Han Yu, Neo-Confucianism is often regarded as stridently anti-Buddhist and anti-Chan. While anti-Buddhist sentiment is certainly a factor in Neo-Confucianism, it is also clear that many Neo-Confucians were attracted to Buddhism, especially Chan, and found inspiration in its teachings and methods. Rather than presume the assumptions of a later, rather one-sided orthodoxy, the embedded nature of Chan and Neo-Confucianism engendered a common matrix of ideas and methodologies, and shared perspectives on such things as practices, teaching methods, and literary styles. Among the topics explored are the influences of *yulu* as records of sayings of great masters and teachers, and the exegetical revolution that saw increasing concision and brevity in the delivery of teachings and interpretations. In spite of a rhetorical positioning of independence from words and letters, the literary prowess of elite Chan masters put them on a par with Confucian elites, forming what may be called a Buddhist *junzi*, complementary to their Confucian counterparts.

“An Intellectual History of Kōan: An Initial Study”

Shūdō Ishii 石井修道 (Professor Emeritus of Komazawa University, Tokyo)

Chinese Chan is said to begin from Mazu Daoyi. Moreover, the Linji lineage was established in his wake, leading to the great consensus of Dahui Zonggao’s *kanhua* Chan in the Song dynasty that formed the decisive character of Chan. Recent research into the history of Mazu’s order and it’s written records have advanced dramatically. With regard to the positioning of Xitang Zhizang and Baizhang Huihai, the results of this research make clear that Baizhang Huihai was not initially regarded highly. I will take up the kōan “Mazu’s White and Black,” and following the results of recent research, try to study the intellectual history of the kōan and show how the interpretation that Baizhang was superior to Xitang came into being.

Panel Two (90 minutes) Song Dynasty Chan: The Influence of Huihong Juefan

“The Lute, Lyric Poetry, and Literary Arts in Chinese Chan and Japanese Zen Buddhism”

George Keyworth (University of Saskatchewan)

Despite censure of his “scholastic” Chan (*wenzi* Chan 文字禪), influential friends, and devotion to literary arts by many Chan/Seon/Zen masters, Juefan Huihong’s 覺範惠洪 (1071-1128) influence upon the connections between Zen Buddhism and literary arts cannot be overlooked. I examine how Huihong’s writings influenced the teachings of an intriguing Caodong (Sōtōshū) Chinese monk who traveled to Japan: Xinyue Xingchou 心越興儔 (Shin’etsu Kōchū, 1639 -1696). I explore how Xinyue famously [re]kindled an interest in the Chinese lute among Tokugawa Mito 水戸 elite, a newfound appreciation for Chan studies of Chinese poetry using Huihong’s two *shihua* 詩話, and wooden characters at temples in eastern Japan. Finally, I ask if we can see Zen and the literary arts as promoted by Huihong and Xinyue as partly responsible for reestablishing strict Zen training in China and Japan during the eighteenth-century.

“Challenges to Conceptions of Song Dynasty Wenzi Chan”

Jason Protass (Brown University)

In this essay, I establish that there was not a *wenzi chan* (“literary Chan”) movement during the Song dynasty. Today, *wenzi chan* is used erroneously to refer to the pursuit of literary arts as a path to awakening. I show that Huihong, the putative founder of *wenzi chan*, was no proponent of any such practice. Instead, Huihong and others in the Song used *wenzi chan* as a term of disparagement to refer to poetry saturated with worldly attachments. Centuries later, in the Ming dynasty, the term was valorized and early modern Chinese scholarship also perpetuated this view. Monastic literary arts in the Song were ubiquitous, but were portrayed either as violations of monastic precepts that yielded art, or as doggerel without literary merit that could serve as expedient means to awakening. The unity of literary arts and the religious path is an anachronism to Song dynasty Chan.

“Chan Isn’t Just Meditation: The Harmony of Meditative practice and Buddhist Teachings in the *Zhizheng zhuan* 智證傳”

Yi-hsun Huang 黃繹勳 (Fo Guang University, Taiwan)

This paper plans to analyze the content and influence of *Zhizheng zhuan* 智證傳, a Song Chan text compiled by the Chan monk Huihong Juefan 惠洪覺範 (1071–1128) in 1122. This text has been neglected in Japanese scholarship and does not play an important role in Japanese Zen. However, the *Zhizheng zhuan* is cited frequently in later Chan texts. In the *Zhizheng zhuan*, Huihong selected 109 passages from Buddhist *sutras* and *sastras*, as well as works by Chinese Buddhist masters and commented on them. Notably, Huihong chose more than 10 passages from Yongming Yanshou’s 永明延壽 (904-975) *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄. The *Zhizheng zhuan* demonstrates a perfect example of the harmony of Chan and Buddhist teachings in the 12th century. Furthermore, famous late Ming Chan monk Hanyue Fazang 漢月法藏 (1573–1635) wrote a commentary on the *Zhizheng zhuan* which he later used to attract and convert Confucian literati. Based on my recent research, although the harmony of Chan and Buddhist teachings is definitely not a tradition that would be appreciated by the Japanese Zen, it represents an important characteristic of Chan and serves as a crucial bridge between clerics and lay followers in Chinese society.

Panel Three (90 minutes) Ming Dynasty Chan



“Bringing the past alive: the reinvention of textual ideals in seventeenth-century Chinese Chan Communities”

Jiang Wu (University of Arizona)

This essay offers a new interpretation about the origins of the revived Chan Buddhist tradition in the seventeenth century. Very often, such a revival was contributed to social-economic factors or the charismatic characters of religious leaders. Little attention has been paid to the role of religious texts in a given Chan community. Focusing on a prominent Linji Chan community in Wanfu monastery in Fuqing, China and its counterpart Manpukuji in Kyoto, Japan where the Chan leader Yinyuan Longqi (1592-1673) and his followers controlled, I will examine how textual ideals in ancient Chan texts were revived through reading, writing, and performing, thus giving rise to various kinds of “textual communities” in which Chan practitioners shared similar interpretative strategies.

“How a Chan Buddhist copes with the method of *hetū-vidyā*? – A case study of Miyun Yuanwu (1566-1642) in the debate on the *Thesis on No-Motion of Things*”

Chen-kuo Lin 林鎮國 (National Chengchi University, Taiwan)

At the turn of the late 16th and the early 17th centuries Zhencheng (鎮澄 1546-1617), a scholar-monk affiliated with the Huayan School, published the *Logical Investigation of the Thesis of No-Motion of Things* (*wu buqien zhengliang lun* 物不遷正量論) to challenge Seng Zhao (僧肇 384-414)’s *Thesis on No-Motion of Things* (*wu buqien lun* 物不遷論), a seminal philosophical treatise that had been highly recognized as the doctrinal foundation of Chinese Buddhism. Through employing the syllogistic method of *hetū-vidyā*, Zhencheng accused Seng Zhao for perpetuating the Hīnayānic realist ontology that squarely contradicts the Mahāyāna position. Without any surprise, Zhencheng’s provocative critique sparked wide controversy in the late Ming Buddhist circles. In this paper, I will examine the response from the side of Chan, especially from Miyun Yuanwu (密雲圓悟 1566-1642), to see how the Chan Buddhists adopted the method of Buddhist syllogism in the polemical context. The hermeneutical impact of *hetū-vidyā* on the Chan discourse in the late Ming period will be highlighted.

“The Influence of Song Chan Buddhism in the Late Ming Dynasty”

Chao-heng Liao 廖肇亨 (The Institute of History and Philology Academia Sinica, Taiwan)

The Song Chan monk Huihong Juefan 惠洪覺範 (1071–1128) is well-known as the creator of “literary Chan” (*wenzi chan* 文字禪). This paper analyzes the resurgence of interest in Huihong during the late Ming dynasty. Ming Chan monks such as Zibo Zhenke 紫柏真可 (1543–1603) and Hanyue Fazang 漢月法藏 (1573–1635) praised Huihong’s works, and utilized them as source material for their own writings. The renewed interest in Huihong’s literary Chan also caused the dispute between Miyun Yuanwu 密雲圓悟 (1566–1642) and his disciple Hanyue Fazang. This dispute lasted for over one hundred years and finally was terminated through the intervention of Emperor Yongzheng 雍正 (1678–1735) during the Qing dynasty. This dispute did not receive much attention in Japanese Zen and therefore is a valuable source for identifying the hermeneutics of Chan and the criteria for enlightenment among Chan masters in China. Finally, this paper illustrates the influence of the Chinese literary tradition on Chan during the Song and Ming dynasties.





Panel Four (150 minutes, excluding break) The Transmission of Chan to Korea and Japan

“The Transmission of the Platform Sūtra to Korea and Japan”

Morten Schlütter (University of Iowa)

The *Platform Sūtra* is a signature text of Chinese Chan Buddhism that dates back to the eighth century, but that continued to develop over the following 500 years and today is extant in several different versions. The *Platform Sūtra* was transmitted to both Korea and Japan a number of times through its history; however, it was received very differently in Korean Seon and Japanese Zen, and several aspects of the transmissions of the text have not been well understood. This paper will deal with the complex history of the transmission of several different versions of the *Platform Sūtra* to Korea and Japan, and try to understand why the *Platform Sūtra* was embraced so enthusiastically in Korea but ultimately rejected in Japan.

“The Origins of the Public Chan or Sŏn Monastery in Korea: The Monk Tamjin and his Impact on Sŏn Buddhism”

Juhn Ahn (University of Michigan)

When and how did the public Chan monastery as an institution make its appearance in Korea? This paper will try to show that the earliest attempt to import this institution from Song China was made in the late eleventh century by the Korean monk Tamjin. As part of an official Korean embassy, Tamjin visited the grand public monastery (shifangcha) Jingyin chansi in 1077 and returned to Korea with what appears to be a copy of a Chan monastic code (qinggui). What else he brought back from his sojourn in China is unclear, but a closer look at the activities of his disciples and their disciples reveals that he may have also returned with forms of Chan learning that flourished during the Northern Song. How this impacted Sŏn learning in Korea will be discussed in this paper.

“Yuanwu Keqin’s Chinese Chan Influence on the Formation of Japanese Zen”

Steven Heine (Florida International University)

This paper examines issues of textuality in relation to mythology regarding one of the most impactful Chinese Chan masters of the Song dynasty, Yuanwu Keqin 圓悟克勤 (1063-1135; J. Engo Kokugon), primarily known as the main author of the *Blue Cliff Record* 碧巖錄 (*Biyanlu*, J. *Hekiganroku*) collection of one hundred gongan (J. kōan) cases. This text was a sensation when it reached Japan in the early 1300s and became the source of commentaries throughout the medieval period. However, the question of how it was first brought over is shrouded in mystery involving the legend of Dōgen’s (1200-1253) copy from 1227 referred to as the “One Night Blue Cliff Record.” Compounding mythological questions is another enigmatic document known as “Floating Yuanwu” (Nagare Engo), a succession statement given to his main disciple Huqiu Shaolong (1077-1136) that was placed in a paupers’ boat and drifted ashore on Kyushu.

A Single Golden Dragon up my Sleeve: Chinese Emigrant Masters in Japan, 1246–1317

Steffen Döll (Hamburg University)

Traditionalist self-representations of Japanese Zen Buddhism have relied heavily on figures such as Eisai, Dōgen, the Ōtōkan-masters, and the Edo-period reformers Takuan, Bankei, and Hakuin. Notwithstanding their importance for the formation of what currently are the core practices and doctrines of Zen, this ahistoric monophthalmia has kept us from affording the period in which Zen established itself in Japan institutionally – the periods of the the Five Mountains (*gozan*) as well as the so-called proto-*gozan* in the 13th and 14th centuries – the attention it deserves.

This paper therefore proposes to address this lacuna by exploring the biographies, doctrinal positions, rhetoric strategies, and sociopolitical interactions of the main stakeholders in Zen Buddhism’s Japanese institutionalization: the Song and Yuan dynasty Chan masters emigrating to Japan from the arrival of Lanxi Daolong in 1246 until Yishan Yining’s death in 1317.

“Reconciling Chinul’s Teachings with the Song-Dynasty Linji School in the Late-Koryŏ Sŏn Tradition”

Robert E. Buswell, Jr. (University of California, Los Angeles)

Late in the Koryŏ高麗 dynasty (918-1392), the importation of the orthodox lineage of Linji Chan collided with an existing indigenous tradition of Sŏn established earlier in the dynasty by Chinul 知訥, the State Preceptor Puril Pojo 佛日普照國師 (1158-1210), and fostered by his successor Hyesim 慧諶, the State Preceptor Chin’gak 眞覺國師 (1178-1234), and their successor state preceptors at the monastery of Songgwangsa 松廣寺. This earlier tradition was strongly influenced by Korean readings of Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089-1163) and Song-dynasty Linji (K. Imje 臨濟) teachings, especially in its adoption of Dahui’s technique of “examining meditative topics” (K. *kanhwa* Sŏn, C. *kanhua* Chan 看話禪), but without having had any direct personal contact with Chinese Linji teachers. The Sŏn tradition during the middle of the Koryŏ dynasty had thus evolved independently, developing its own interpretation of both *kanhwa* Sŏn and the way in which that technique would be incorporated into Chinul’s preferred soteriological schema of an “initial sudden awakening followed by sustained gradual cultivation” (K. *tono chŏmsu*, C. *dunwu jiexiu* 頓悟漸修).

Toward the end of the Koryŏ dynasty, during the period of Yuan 元 dynasty (1271-1368) suzerainty over the Korean peninsula, several Sŏn teachers traveled to the Chinese mainland after mastering *kanhwa* Sŏn training in Korea in order to receive the imprimatur of formal transmission from teachers in the Chinese Linji school, predominantly in the Yangqi (K. Yanggi 楊岐) collateral lineage of Linji. These masters, such as Kyŏnghwan Paegun 景閑白雲 (1298-1374), T’aego Pou 太古普愚 (1301-1382), Naong Hyegŭn 懶翁慧勤 (1320-1376), and Muhak Chach’o 無學自超 (1327-1405), are the monks to whom the contemporary Korean tradition traces its own formal dharma lineages. But even after the importation into Korea of the orthodox lineages of the Song-dynasty Linji school, the earlier tradition of Chinul was not displaced; rather, it was reconciled with Song-dynasty Linji Chan in ways that were distinctively Korean. This paper will explore Chinul’s continued influence in the late-Koryŏ Sŏn tradition and specifically in the teachings of these monks who received dharma transmission in China. I will seek to demonstrate that, despite the importation of the Chinese Linji lineage, the influence of Chinul was never fully eclipsed in Korea and that Korean Sŏn remained an independent tradition in the world of Chan.

“Taixu’s 1945 Periodization of the Chan tradition”

Eric Goodell (Fo Guang University, Taiwan)

In 1945, modern Buddhist monk Taixu (1890–1947) wrote a short history of Chinese Buddhism constructed around the theme of “chan,” a term which includes meditation as well as the Chan tradition. Chapter two of that work periodizes the Chan tradition in a way not found in the works of any Japanese Zen scholar: (1) Chan (*dhyāna*) as mental cultivation in accordance with scriptural teachings 依教修心禪, (2) Chan as the attainment of Buddhahood through insight into the nature of mind 悟心成佛禪, (3) Chan of the patriarchs which supersedes the Buddha 超佛祖師禪, (4) Chan of the lamp traditions which supersedes the patriarchs 越祖分燈禪, (5) Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Chan 宋元明清禪. The final period includes various subthemes including commenting on *gongan* (Jpn. *kōan*) literature, contemplating the *huatou*, the composition of discourse records, Chan-Pure land integration, lay involvement, and interaction with Taoism and Confucianism. The first four sections cover developments up to the 10th century. The final section covers developments after that period, recognizing the importance of traditions that survived the late Tang persecution and literary activities in the 10th–13th centuries. The present paper analyzes Taixu’s periodization, identifying the factors that impelled him to create this work and its apologetical function, and discussing its reception and relevance to Chan studies .

“The Struggle of Chogyejong to Define its Identity as a Meditative School in Contemporary Korea”

Bernard Senécal (Sogang University, Seoul, South Korea)

The Chogyejong remains the most powerful Buddhist order in Korea. Nevertheless, confronted with both Buddhist and non-Buddhist competition, both on the national and the international stage, it is struggling to define its identity and retain its supremacy. On the one hand, it claims to be exceptionally faithful to the supposedly bibliophobe and iconoclastic practice of Kanhwasoŏn as taught by Dahui Zonggao (1089-1163). On the other hand, it remains deeply attached to the teachings of Pojo Chinul (1158-1210) who, albeit recognizing the value of Dahui’s keyword meditation, remained an outstanding scholiast until the end of his life. Even though these two tendencies are not necessarily incompatible, Teong Sŏngch’ŏl (1912-1993), the most towering figure of Korean Buddhism in the 20th century, has radically contrasted them with one another, thus giving rise to the contemporary sudden/gradual debate. The hermeneutics proposed by Sŏngch’ŏl to reform Korean Buddhism after the Liberation have been deeply influenced by modern Japanese Buddhist scholarship. This fact singularly adds to the complexity of Chogyejong’s identity quest. This paper will introduce the historical events which led to this crisis and to the diverse attempts being made to move beyond it.

“Rethinking T’oeong Sŏngch’ŏl’s Vision of Sŏn Buddhism and its Relation to Chinese Chan Buddhism”

Jin Y. Park (American University)

T’oeong Sŏngch’ŏl (退翁性徹 1912-1993) is one of the most influential figures in twentieth-century Korean Sŏn Buddhism. He is also known for his criticism of Pojo Chinul (普照知訥 1158-1210), the founder of Korean Sŏn Buddhism. Sŏngch’ŏl criticized Chinul’s Buddhism as gradualism and, therefore, as a heretic teaching of Sŏn Buddhism, and his devaluation of Chinul kindled a polemical debate known as the Sudden-Gradual Debate (頓漸論), which dominated Korean Buddhist scholarship in the 1990s. How does Sŏngch’ŏl define orthodoxy in Sŏn Buddhism? In several places in his writings, Sŏngch’ŏl endorses T’aego Pou (太古普愚 1301-1382) as an orthodox dharma lineage of Korean Sŏn Buddhism. Pou received his dharma transmission from Shiwu Qinggong (石屋清珙 1272-1352) and is considered as an authentic dharma disciple of Linji (臨濟). Is it because Pou received his dharma lineage from China that Sŏngch’ŏl took him as the authentic dharma teacher of Korean Sŏn Buddhism. This paper examines Sŏngch’ŏl’s vision of Sŏn Buddhism, its relation to his criticism of Chinul and support for Pou, and their relationship to Chinese Chan Buddhism.

Panel Five (150 minutes, excluding break)

The Resonances of Chan in Modern East Asia



“The Use of the *Huatou* as the Fulfilment of Doctrine”

Jimmy Yu (Florida State University)

Chan Buddhism’s self-representation as a “separate transmission outside doctrinal learning” (*jiaowai bie zhuan* 教外別傳) that “does not fall into [gradual] stages” (*buluo jieji* 不落階級) to practice and awakening is widely accepted by its apologists and early scholars as its defining axiom in both premodern and modern times. This axiom is central to the development of *gong’an* (公案) or *huatou* (話頭) as unique methods to awakening. In both premodern Chan texts and earlier modern scholarly writings, the *gong’an* and *huatou* methods are often presented as meaningless, illogical paradoxes aim to frustrate and short-circuit the rational mind in order to cut through discursive thinking and bring about awakening. Recent scholarship, however, focusing primarily on ritual, historical, and literary methods, has challenged these characterizations and argued that premodern Chan Buddhism as an institution was integral to the Chinese Buddhist monastic norms, inseparable to the historical development of Chinese monasticism in general. One scholar even contends that *gong’an* should be appreciated as a form of exegesis. Yet, little attention has been paid to how Chan methods such as *gong’an* and *huatou* were firmly grounded in Buddhist doctrine. In this paper, I discuss Chan master Sheng Yen’s (1930-2009) usage of the *huatou* method within the context of his doctrinal formulation, as the experiential fulfillment of the Buddhist soteriology. To him, Chan cannot be separated from the centuries of doctrinal development. Divorced from doctrine, Chan would lead practitioners astray to non-Buddhist paths. There should be, as he states, “a unification of Chan and the teachings” (*chan jiao heyi* 禪教合一). It is “from Chan stems doctrine” (*cong chan chujiao* 從禪出

“Chan Influence on Japanese Buddhist Progressives of Late Meiji”

James Mark Shields (Bucknell University)

In addition to the birth and development of “Imperial Way Zen,” late Meiji Japan witnessed the emergence of a number of young lay Buddhist scholars, priests and activists who attempted to reframe Buddhism along progressive and occasionally radical political lines. While it is true that groups such as the New Buddhist Fellowship (Shin Bukkyō Dōshikai, 1899–1915) were made up mainly of young men associated with the two branches of the Shin sect, several of its members did affiliate themselves with Zen, such as Suzuki Daisetsu (1870–1966) and Inoue Shūten (1880–1945). While the former’s work has been roundly appraised (and recently subject to criticism), the latter, an avowed pacifist and internationalist, has been relatively understudied in both Japanese and Western scholarship. A more radical contemporary figure, Sōtō sect priest Uchiyama Gudō (1874–1911), has received more attention, due in no small part to his being executed as one of the 24 conspirators of the High Treason Incident of 1910–11. This paper will examine the ideas of Inoue and Uchiyama, focusing on their use of Chan and Zen precedents to justify and explain their progressive positions.