

Introduction

Zen enthralled the scholarly world throughout much of the twentieth century, and Zen studies became a major academic discipline in its wake. Interpreted through the lens of Japanese Zen and its reaction to events in the modern world, Zen studies incorporated a broad range of Zen-related movements in the East Asian Buddhist world. As broad reaching as the scope of Zen studies was, it was clearly rooted in a Japanese context, and aspects of the “Zen experience” that did not fit modern Japanese Zen aspirations tended to be marginalized and ignored. The current edited volume, *Approaches to Chan, Sōn, and Zen Studies: Chinese Chan Buddhism and Its Spread throughout East Asia*, acknowledges the move beyond “Zen studies,” to recognize the changing and growing parameters of the field. The volume focuses on Chan Buddhism and its spread across the greater East Asian region with special attention to impacts on Japanese Zen and Korean Sōn. The volume also includes aspects of the modern dynamics in each of these traditions.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, some of the biases inherent in Zen studies, barely a half century old, began to be exposed, and the parameters of the field shifted markedly into new directions. These included a growing recognition that the Zen label was a mark of its Japanese context, and as much as Korean Sōn and Chinese Chan were included, these were incorporated very much in Japanese Zen terms. As a result, Chinese Chan and Korean Sōn began to be recognized in their own right, independent of Japanese Zen, but still framed in large measure by it. In addition, the Japanese Buddhist sectarian framework, including Zen sectarianism, began to be exposed as products of the Japanese context and not universally valid frames of reference. Furthermore, a consensus formed that the so-called golden age of Zen forged by Tang dynasty masters was largely the product of an early Song dynasty Chan revisionism, and that it was actually in the

post-Tang period when classical Chan teaching was framed in the terms it came to be known throughout various East Asian contexts. As important as the Dunhuang manuscripts were in revolutionizing our understanding of early Chan, we now know that this background was far less central to the formation of classical Chan than was once supposed. It was really during the tenth to thirteenth centuries that Chan identity was consolidated and major aspects of classical Chan emerged: *denglu* (燈錄, K. *tŭngnok*, J. *toroku*) transmission histories, *gong'an* (公案, K. *kongan*, J. *kōan*;) case studies, *yulu* (語錄, K. *ŏrok*, J. *goroku*) dialogues and interactions, and *qinggui* (清規, K. *ch'ŏnggyu*, J. *shingi*) rules for Chan monastic conduct as key elements of Chan. Beyond China, the developments during this period were foundational for the Sŏn tradition in Korea including seminal figures like Chinul and Dōgen for the Zen tradition in Japan.

One of the questions raised by this volume is whether the three traditions of Chan, Sŏn, and Zen can or should be held in common. The contents and structure of the volume speak to the shared heritage of the three traditions, even while their modern iterations are largely independent. Obviously, each of the traditions may be studied independently, and efforts to do so are highly encouraged. Yet, historically, the three are intertwined by shared texts, customs, and institutional conventions, not to mention a common distribution of human personnel, especially during formative periods.

Section and Chapter Summaries

The current volume is organized around four sections. Section I: “Chinese Chan and the Greater East Asian Region” explores Chan as an instrument of regional dynamism.

John Jorgensen’s “The Spread of Chan Buddhism: Linguistic and Cultural Constraints” provides the broadest scope for considering Chan in the volume, surveying the spread of Chan within and beyond China, including not only Korea and Japan but also Tibet, the Tanguts, Khitan, Jurchen, Bai, and Vietnam. Jorgensen contends that the appetite for Chan was mixed, depending on the region, and that it was an uneven process determined by such things as the Chan use of colloquial versus literary language and the agrarian values of common people. Jorgensen proposes a unique scheme to account for Chan’s spread: radical Chan used colloquial language that carried the values of ordinary farmers and people that Literary

Chinese did not; conservative Chan preferred Literary Chinese in order to attract the elites. While the Zen persona prided itself in idiosyncratic, colloquial dialogues interpreted as gateways into the profound, Jorgensen shows how this was not necessarily the case and that Chan colloquialisms were often seen as impediments, rather than conduits, to understanding.

Albert Welter's "The Hangzhou Region and the Spread of East Asian Buddhism" outlines the rationale for a paradigm whereby Chan functions as inspiration for regional identities built on a new religious model. It reviews how an earlier paradigm in Buddhist studies served to ignore, denigrate, or marginalize East Asian developments, except as contributors to an Indo-centered narrative. It explores how Chan actively reimagined itself from around the tenth century, while acknowledging residual passive influences from the Indian Buddhist tradition, transforming Chinese Buddhist customs and practices to create a new intrinsic East Asian tradition. The geographical area integral to this new creation was the greater Hangzhou region, including roughly the boundaries of the Wuyue kingdom during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period of Chinese history (contemporary Zhejiang province). The Hangzhou region pioneered new conceptions of Buddhism that became influential not only in the rest of China but also in Korea and Japan, creating a triangular nexus of interrelated Chan, Sōn, and Zen traditions. It introduces a conception of Chan/Sōn /Zen studies that firmly distances itself from the Japan-based Zen studies model, a move already current in scholarly circles, and affirms the focus of an intrinsic East Asian regional model, making explicit a turn that has become implicit to the field.

Jiang Wu's "A Greater Vehicle to the Other Shore: Chinese Buddhism and Sino-Japanese Trade in the Seventeenth Century," explores the role of Chinese Buddhism in Sino-Japanese Trade during the seventeenth century. It is noticeable but often neglected that along with the boom in trade volume and the number of ships calling at Nagasaki, a group of Chinese monks, under the leadership of Yinyuan Longqi (1592–1673), settled in Japan successfully during the latter half of the seventeenth century and founded the unique Ōbaku tradition. Despite their religious contribution, these Chinese monks were actively involved in Sino-Japanese interactions and the Chinese monasteries where they resided were patronized by Chinese merchants in Nagasaki. Drawing upon sociological concepts, this study shows that in Nagasaki, Chinese Buddhism had become the source of human, social, and cultural capitals for building Chinese merchants' collective identity.

In short, the three chapters in Section I may be measured in terms of their approaches to the study of Chan: as an assessment of the linguistic appetite across regions for colloquial idioms or literary conventions, as a force of regional dynamism and creativity, and as an influential partner in regional trade networks.

Section II explores “The Japanese Zen Nexus,” unraveling ways in which Japan built upon and fostered a tradition rooted in the new paradigm.

Steven Heine’s “The Transmission of the *Blue Cliff Record* to Medieval Japan: Textuality and Historicity in Relation to Mythology and Demythology,” examines issues of textuality and historicity in relation to mythology and symbology regarding one of the most impactful Chinese Chan masters of the Song dynasty, Yuanwu Keqin, author of the *Blue Cliff Record*. The analysis shows how scholarly engagement is useful in trying to disentangle the complications of invented tradition complicated by various legends and rumors about the origins and fate of the text in order to ascertain a more genuine historiographical account of Yuanwu’s influences on early Japanese Zen.

Jason Protass’s “Interpreters, Brush-Dialogue, and Poetry: Translingual Communication between Chan and Zen Monks,” examines how in the early stages of the transmission of Chinese Chan to Japan, especially during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, monks from both countries often struggled to communicate with one another. Based on their shared poetic skills and meditative practice, however, they found creative ways to overcome any gaps through techniques such as matched rhyme poems and brush-dialogue conversations, which allowed for constructive interactions even if one party did not understand the other’s language.

Steffen Döll’s “Doves on My Knees, Golden Dragons in My Sleeves: Emigrant Chan Masters and Early Japanese Zen Buddhism,” moves beyond the figures that have thus far defined our understanding of Zen (Kamakura period founders Eisai and Dōgen, the Ōtōkan-masters, and the Edo-period reformers Takuan, Bankei, and Hakuin) to the period in which Zen established itself in Japan institutionally—the periods of the Five Mountains (J. *gozan*) as well as the so-called proto-*gozan* in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It looks specifically at 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.

George Keyworth’s “The Lute, Lyric Poetry, and Literary Arts in Chinese Chan and Japanese Zen Buddhism,” outlines reasons why Xinyue

Xingchou (J. Shin'etsu Kōchū, 1639–1696) has been virtually ignored by scholars in East Asia and in the West and provides an overview of him as a poet, artist, lute player and instructor, and scholar-monk in seventeenth-century Japan. It examines how Xinyue wrote poetry to express the taste of Chan and also explores how Xinyue famously rekindled an interest in the Chinese lute and the special relationship between Zen and the literary arts among Buddhist monastics and secular intellectuals.

In terms of their approaches, these chapters employ methods such as textuality and historicity in relation to mythology and symbology, examine the role of techniques such as matched rhyme poems and brush-dialogue conversations, introduce a cadre of monks who have often been ignored and their instrumental role in shaping actual rather than imagined Zen institutional culture, and in looking at Zen and the literary arts through the Zen master as poet, artist, lute player and instructor, and scholar-monk.

Section III: “The Korean Sōn Nexus” explores ways Korea shaped the Chan tradition inherited from China in its own unique ways.

Juhn Ahn’s “Pure Rules and Public Monasteries in Korea,” responds to the question of when and how Sōn Buddhism became an institutional reality in Korea by examining the biographies of so-called Sōn pioneers and also the rise of the public Chan monastery as an institution in Korea. It shows that the earliest attempt to import this institution from Song China was made in the late eleventh century by the Korean monk Tamjin who visited the grand public monastery (C. *shifangcha*) Jingyinchansi in 1077, as a result of an official Korean embassy to China, how Susōnsa lineage monks creatively borrowed elements from Song-style public monasteries to establish legitimacy and give themselves a competitive edge, and how Chinul’s *Admonitions to Beginning Students* was chosen as a substitute over the Song Chan manual, *Pure Rules for Chan Monasteries*, as a monastic system native to and best suited for the immediate needs of Chosōn. As such, Ahn shows the dynamism of adoption and adaptation at play in establishing Pure Rules at public monasteries in Korea.

Jin Y. Park’s “Gender and Dharma Lineage: Nuns in Korean Sōn Buddhism,” examines the role of nuns in Korean Sōn Buddhism by examining materials from three different time periods in Korean Sōn history relating to nuns’ practice. In addition to the precedents from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that the first two examples provide, Park discusses the characteristics of the nuns’ dharma lineage in modern Korea and raises fundamental questions regarding the patriarchal and authoritarian

character implicit in mind-to-mind transmission and the way it inhibits and serves to delegitimize nun practitioners and their attempts to form their own authentic Sŏn lineages. For this, she points directly to the claims of T'oeong Sŏngch'ŏl (1912–1993), who questioned the validity of the Sŏn tradition established by Pojo Chinul (1158–1210), the putative founder of the Jogye Order, and his more accommodating style that leaves room for more scope and flexibility in interpretation. This issue is joined further in the contribution of Bernard Senécal in the next section.

Kevin Cawley's "Mindful Interactions and Recalibrations: From Chinul to T'oeogye," examines how Chan and Sŏn penetrated and redrew the Confucian understanding of the mind, emphasizing the need for seriousness, restraint, and mindfulness. Specifically, it compares T'oeogye's ideas on self-cultivation with Chinul's ideas on continued gradual cultivation. Methodologically, Cawley draws on the broader intellectual "history of effect," taken from Gadamer's term "effectual history" (*G. Wirkungsgeschichte*), to examine the "after-effects" of Chan Buddhism that cross-fertilized the spiritualism of Neo-Confucianism, especially its "study of the mind" (*C. xinxue*, *K. simhak* 心學). Cawley exposes how the influential redrawing of the Confucian tradition, known in the West as Neo-Confucianism, is nearly impossible except as an "after-effect" of the Chan tradition.

In terms of approaches, these chapters address issues relating to the institutionalization of Sŏn Buddhism in Korea, the history of female participation in Sŏn Buddhism and its modern dispensation, and the continuum between Sŏn and Confucian understandings of the mind.

While previous chapters, especially Park's, have drawn us into how these traditions may affect understandings in the modern world, Section IV: "Chan, Zen, and Sŏn in the Modern Period" takes us squarely into it.

Eric Goodell's "Taixu's History of the Chan Tradition" looks at the figure of one of Chinese Buddhism's most important reformers. It contextualizes Taixu's (1890–1947) work in historical, biographical, and religious terms, and discusses Taixu's perspective on Chan's relationship with intellectuals. It identifies his implicit references to Hu Shih's works and concludes with an analysis of Taixu's approach to continuity in the Chan tradition and his decision to include Chan as an explicit component of his program of Humanistic Buddhism, the movement that has been so impactful for modern Chinese Buddhism.

James Mark Shields's "Zen Internationalism, Zen Revolution: Inoue Shūten, Uchiyama Gudō and the Crisis of (Zen) Buddhist Modernity in

Late Meiji Japan” examines the work of two late Meiji Buddhist reformers who affiliated with Zen: Inoue Shūten, a contemporary of Suzuki Daisetsu, was an avowed pacifist and internationalist, and Sōtō sect priest Uchiyama Gudō. It compares and contrasts the “radical” ideas of Inoue and Uchiyama, focusing on their use of Chan and Zen precedents to justify and explain their progressive positions, while setting their arguments in the broader context of Meiji intellectual debates, both within and outside of Japanese Buddhism. It also explores the reasons why Zen was more often than not a “conservative” force in modern Japan.

Bernard Senécal’s “The Struggle of the Jogye Order to Define its Identity as a Meditative School in Cotemporary Korea” investigates the sudden/graduate debate in modern Korean Buddhism, ignited by T’oeng Sōngch’öl (1912–1993) who challenged Pojo Chinul’s (1158–1210) position as the founding patriarch of the Jogye Order. Through a critical appraisal of Sōngch’öl’s life, thoughts, and publications, the chapter challenges the authenticity of Sōngch’öl’s claim for sudden/sudden awakening and practice.

Collectively, these three chapters provide windows into important aspects of Chan, Zen, and Sōn, and suggest how these modern traditions, while built upon common roots and trunks, have each developed in unique ways. While Chan, Zen, and Sōn continue to be an important aspect of Buddhism in China, Japan, and Korea, respectively, they struggle—as many religions—to maintain relevance in the face of the challenges of modernity and secularizing forces. Whether projected as an element in a tradition of Humanistic Buddhism, as a force in the pull between progressive and conservative Buddhist movements, or in terms of doctrinal debates in the dynamics of factional identity, Chan, Zen, and Sōn continue to resonate religiously and culturally. Contemporary practitioners continue to struggle over how to interpret their traditions and how to conceptualize authentic models of cultivation based on it. These chapters, each in their own way, demonstrate the importance of Chan, Zen, and Sōn’s pasts to the present. Born of a common heritage, their traditions deviate in the face of the unique challenges they each face.

While the volume hopes to sharpen the refocusing of Chan, Sōn, and Zen studies that has occurred in recent decades, it is far from the final word and should be seen as contributing to larger conversations. Our attempt here is to be suggestive rather than comprehensive and to inspire future studies that will continue to reinvigorate the field in some of the ways suggested by the chapters in this volume.