

## ZEN RHETORIC: AN INTRODUCTION

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### *What Kind of Rhetoric...and Why?*

The division between ‘China,’ ‘Korea,’ and ‘Japan’ (expediently used in the very title of this publication) is to a certain degree artificial, and especially in the early stages of Chinese Chán 禪 and Korean Sŏn, these regional divisions only make limited sense. Korean monks, for example, took a very active part already during the formative period of Chán development (as far as in the distant area of nowadays Sichuān 四川), and there was by no means a one-way transmission from China to Korea, but rather a constant exchange between regions. In the same way that there are no clear divisions along state borders in terms of the characteristics of Buddhist practices and doctrines, Chán is no unified phenomenon but there have been many kinds of Chán, Sŏn, and Japanese Zen. Especially in the formative period of the Táng 唐 Dynasty (618–907), impulses and ideas were emerging from and pulsating between cultural and religious ‘hubs,’ for example in the form of important centers of Buddhist practice and culture, e.g., large cities such as Cháng’ān 長安, Luòyáng 洛陽, or regions at the periphery of or beyond the influence of Chinese control (e.g. Dūnhuáng 敦煌, the region of nowadays Sichuān, and Southeast China), or in the form of Buddhist communities living in secluded monasteries. In accordance with sociopolitical, geographical, sectarian, and many other settings and conditions, ideas, practices, and doctrines would at times be contained within limited spatial borders, and during other periods they would spread with great speed throughout large areas. During their journey to other areas, ideas or sets of doctrines could undergo significant modifications (e.g., in the form of the selection of texts which were circulating, or by incorporating influences absorbed during their journey, or based on the personal preferences by the human agents transmitting these ideas). In addition, having spread to specific areas, these ideas, doctrines, or practices would undergo adjustments and modifications, and be adapted to local religious and cultural contexts. Although the

study of the historical and doctrinal developments of early Chán has progressed immensely during the last decades, research of these important questions of regional variety is still in its initial phase.<sup>1</sup>

This volume does not focus on theoretical discussions on rhetoric,<sup>2</sup> or on the interpretation of Zen doctrines. Rather, it is an attempt to identify concrete linguistic and rhetorical devices and ‘rhetorical modes’ that have been used in Chán, Sŏn, and Zen texts at specific times and occasions, and relate them to sociopolitical, doctrinal, and sectarian contexts; as well as pursuing questions concerning motives, continuities or changes of rhetorical strategies, and target-audiences.

It suffices to note that in China—as in the case of ancient Greece—the relationship between language/rhetoric and ‘truth’ was a question of ardent discussion among Buddhists, especially from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards. As will be discussed below—despite the predominant negative attitude towards words frequently expressed in Zen texts, stressing their incapability to express the ultimate truth—we find ample reference in late Táng and Sòng 宋 (960–1279) sources, for example, that enlightenment was triggered/conditioned exactly by words. Linguistically, this is not indicated by constructions with coversbs/prepositions indicating ‘cause’ or ‘dependence’ (such as *yīn* 因 or *yī* 依), as we would expect, but it is idiomatically expressed by using an extended meaning of the relative place word *xià* 下 ‘under’ (typically, *yán-xià dà wù* 言下大悟 ‘he was greatly enlightened based on these words’). To my knowledge this construction *yán-xià* is not current in other text-types, and seems to be specific ‘Chán/Zen language’ (‘UNDER > AT THE OCCASION OF (?) > caused by, triggered by words’). Why was this unusual construction chosen? As will be demonstrated below, in ‘Chán/Zen language’ the semantics of common words are frequently manipulated or metaphorically extended, rare words are introduced or ‘revived,’ and even

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., the form of Chán practiced in the Northwestern regions, most importantly in Dūnhuáng during the Táng Dynasty; or, later on, the specific varieties of Chán developed in the non-Chinese context of the Liáo 遼 (Khitan), the Tangut (scholars such as Kiril Sollonin have recently addressed this issue), or the translation of Chán scriptures into Uyghur (an aspect studied by Peter Zieme, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften). Recently, a large project on Tibetan Chán has been initiated by Sam VanSchaik (“Tibetan Zen,” funded by the British Academy, 2011–2013).

<sup>2</sup> On a short discussion concerning the differences between Western and Indian/Chinese rhetoric, see the article by Jens Braarvig.

grammatical constructions are used in unusual ways. Thus we can speculate that *xià* in this usage is meant to indicate that the words that triggered the insight were not ‘common’ words, or words based on the canonical scriptures,<sup>3</sup> but rather the ‘live words’ (recorded in vernacular language in encounter dialogues) of the masters.

Posing the question concerning the relation of rhetoric vis-à-vis ‘truth’ in Western philosophy, it is probably more appropriate to focus on rhetoric and its relation to the Two Truths paradigm (i.e., a ‘relative’ vs. an ‘ultimate’ truth) in the context of East Asian Buddhism. How did Chán adepts navigate between a feeling of deep distrust towards the capabilities of language concerning its capacity to express the ultimate truth on the one hand, and a huge literary output and great creativity concerning the invention of genres and the use of language on the other hand? The following factors seemed to have played an important role: the application of multilayered literary structures and heterogeneous genre features within single texts, the introduction of written representations of the colloquial language(s) (representing the ‘live words’ of the masters of old), an extensive use of metaphorical, non-referential and poetic language, as well as the inclusion of non-linguistic signs. These were creative strategies to solve the underlying paradox between the conviction concerning the limitations of linguistic expression, and the necessity of using language to express one’s views and to spread the message of Chán, as well as attracting the attention of supporters and potential consumers of Chán/Zen/Sōn literature.

Concerning the topic of ‘persuasion,’ Dale Wright notes:

“Two basic features place this discursive practice in contrast to the rhetorical tradition of Western thought. First, we notice that the political or polis-oriented character of early Greek rhetoric and the forensic or legal context of Roman rhetoric shape this tradition toward a discourse of persuasion. Indeed, rhetoric comes to be defined and constituted as the ‘art of persuasive communication’ [...]. By contrast we have seen that the particular way in which Buddhist principles come to be manifest in medieval Chán practice renders persuasion, by rational or emotive means, irrelevant to their concern.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Of course, also in this respect we encounter many exceptions, for example, the Sixth Patriarch *in spe* Huinéng was enlightened the moment he heard somebody reciting the *Diamond Sūtra* (Skr. *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā sūtra*).

<sup>4</sup> Wright 1993:23–40.

I think that there is still a very strong element of persuasion in many Chán records—based on their ‘public’ nature and the aim to attract the attention of the potential readers and supporters.<sup>5</sup> The element of ‘persuasion’ is, thus, frequently directed towards an external readership. However, the persuasion does not necessarily concern a doctrinal issue or specific argument (although these features are also present in Chán texts), but the persuasion—in the *Recorded Sayings*, for example, embedded in sequences of dialogues—is often of a more fundamental kind: it concerns the question of the general superiority of the Chán master and by extension the Chán faction or ‘school’ he is representing. This form of persuasion often creates a two-fold rhetorical structure in the text, ‘persuading’ or defeating the opponent, and at the same time hoping to persuade the reader, as well. The matter of right or wrong concerning a specific doctrinal issue often ends with a *judgment* on a specific person (the opponent being defined as ‘ignorant’ and incapable of formulating the truth). As is amply illustrated in this volume, this device reminds us of the procedures of a court trial. Although this approach predates the appearance of *gōngàn* 公案 (J. *kōan*) literature, in the *gōngàn* genre of the Sòng this aspect of Chán rhetoric becomes prominent and embedded in specific literary structures. Even though this remains somewhat hypothetical at this point, it is tempting to reflect on the roots of this aspect of Chán literature in the broader context of Táng Buddhism and medieval Chinese culture.<sup>6</sup> Also on the level of ‘popular’ Buddhism, the procedures and power structures of the Chinese legal system had a profound impact. Most prominently, it is reflected in the depiction and description of ‘legal’ procedures which the deceased (the ‘culprit’) had to undergo in his meetings with the ten kings/judges (*shíwáng* 十王, among them King Yama) of the underworld (directly mirroring the procedures of the secular legal system). The question of ‘guilt’ or ‘innocence’ and the subsequent judgment (for example, to rebirth in one of the hells, or to one of the other forms of existence within the Six Destinies, *liùdào* 六道), is

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<sup>5</sup> It should be noted here that the earliest rhetorically charged Chán texts seem to have been written on the occasion of Chán’s entering the public light of the medieval megacities of Cháng’ān and Luòyáng during the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century and the Chán movement soon becoming closely associated with members of the imperial household.

<sup>6</sup> As demonstrated below, the appearance of typical historiographic Chán genres was inspired by imperial historiography and lineage systems.

usually beyond the influence of the culprit and the power rests ultimately in the hands of the judges.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the status of the Chán master guarantees him the judgment on ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ regardless of the arguments brought forth by his opponent or disciples. He is empowered by his participation in the Chán lineage (in the same way as the judge or official is empowered by his appointment through the imperial court) and the ‘superior wisdom’ implied by this position.<sup>8</sup>

I also think that Chán’s silence concerning questions of ethics<sup>9</sup> in a traditional Buddhist sense and the appearance of many ‘short-cut’

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<sup>7</sup> For a thorough study of this subject, see Teiser 2003. Besides the kings, also other figures could influence the process of judgement, such as the children of the culprit (through rituals and offerings) and the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha. The point is that the judgment is not necessarily based on the bad or good deeds which the deceased performed during his life, but rather on factors completely beyond the influence of the culprit.

<sup>8</sup> This view is still often echoed in the context of contemporary Zen practice in the West, stressing that a ‘regular mind’ cannot grasp the mysterious behaviour of an enlightened Zen master (and ultimately, deviant or transgressing behaviour is excused by this rhetorical device).

<sup>9</sup> On the reinterpretation of traditional ethical categories, see the contribution *Coming to Terms with Terms*. For early Chán in the context of ‘[precept] platform’ (*tán* 壇 being a translation of Skr. *maṇḍala*, Ch. *màntúluó* 曼荼羅) rituals and ceremonies, see Anderl 2011a:15f and Anderl 2011b (with a focus on the *Platform Sūtra*). These practices are also described in the *Lidài fǎbǎo jì* 歷代法寶記 (LDFBJ) and were an important part of the Chán style of the Bǎotáng 保唐 School during the 8<sup>th</sup> century in Sichuān.

On these platforms the precepts were conferred during the *guàndǐng* 灌頂 (lit. ‘sprinkling water on the forehead,’ Skr. *abhiṣeka*) ceremony, an activity which also the charismatic monk Shénhuì was known for. In his article on Dūnhuáng Chán manuscripts, Sørensen (1989) discusses the syncretic features of many Dūnhuáng Chán scriptures and mentions a rather long text which seems to be an amalgamation of practices conventionally referred to as esoteric and Chán Buddhism. This scripture (claiming to be authored by the Esoteric Master Amoghavajra) on the Dūnhuáng manuscript *Pelliot Chinois* 3913 with the elephantine name (which I will not attempt to translate here) *Jīngāng jùnjīng jīngāng dīng yīqiè rúlái shēnmào mīmì jīngāng jiè dà sānmèiyé xiūxíng sīshìèr-zhōng tánfǎjīng zuòyòng wēi fǎ yízé dà Pílúzhēnà-fó jīngāng xīndì fāmén mǐfǎ-jiè tánfǎ yízé* 金剛峻經金剛頂一切如來甚妙秘密金剛界大三昧耶修行四十二重壇法經作用威法儀則大毗盧遮那金剛心地法門秘法戒壇法儀則 is written in the style of a *sūtra* but has been identified as *apocryphon* probably dating from the late Táng. The text is more concisely also referred to as *Ritual Guidelines for the Platform Dharma* (*Tánfǎ yízé* 壇法儀則). The text is divided into thirty-five sections, each section dealing with a specific function of the Platform ceremonies. The instructions are very detailed and include the exact size and

approaches to salvation or enlightenment that appeared in the context of medieval Chinese Buddhism indirectly played an important role in this development. These issues became very significant for the development of Buddhist traditions in East Asia. Traditional Buddhists ethics was firmly rooted in the assumption that unwholesome actions, speech acts, and thoughts would necessarily entail unfavorable results, and vice versa good actions, etc. would eventually lead (at least theoretically after countless life times of spiritual practice or the performance of good deeds) to liberation/enlightenment. There was a definite theoretical ‘logical’ connection and chain of causation between the actions of an individual and the ensuing results. However, as can be evidenced by many (often non-canonical but very popular) texts of medieval Chinese Buddhism, the reality of Buddhist practice and ritual developed in a different direction.<sup>10</sup>

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material for building the platforms, as well as the dates when the rituals should be performed for the specific purposes. In addition, the decoration and the rituals to be performed are described in great detail, as well as the merits achieved through the performance of these rituals. It is noteworthy that in many sections the role of the ruler is emphasized and many rituals are connected to the protection of the state (*hùguó* 護國; on this concept, see also below) and its people. The last part of the text is the longest and most elaborate and deals with the transmission of Chán (from page 113, line 5 onwards in the *Dūnhuáng* booklet). After the description of the transmission of the Indian patriarchs, the Six Chán patriarchs from Bodhidharma (the 32<sup>nd</sup> Patriarch, page 138 of the booklet, following the sequence of patriarchs of the *Bǎolín zhuàn*) to Huinéng (37<sup>th</sup> Patriarch) are described. It is interesting that the appellation *zǔ* 祖 ‘patriarch’ (or *zǔshī* 祖師) is not used (as typically done in Chán transmission texts), but the rather long appellation *fù fǎzàng rénshèngzhě* 付法藏仁聖者 ‘benevolent sage transmitting the Dharma-treasure.’ As a special feature, the transmission between the patriarchs takes place after they ascended to the ‘Diamond Realm of Vairocana’ (*Dà pílú jīngāng jiè* 大毗盧金剛界). As such Chán transmission—mixed with the description of platform rituals for the laity—is placed in a somewhat unusual and ‘esoteric’ framework. The transmission is also placed at the stage of attainment of the ‘8<sup>th</sup> level of Bodhisattvahood.’ After the description of this transmission the text returns to the ‘Platform dharmas’ (the text enumerates 42 of those) as the essence of the Buddhist teachings and the foundation of attaining ‘unexcelled *bodhi*’ (*wúshàng pútí* 無上菩提). The object of transmission is identified as ‘the secretly transmitted mind-seal’ (*mì chuán xīnyīn dìxiàng* 蜜傳心地相, page142).

<sup>10</sup> One of the many ‘short-cut’ approaches to liberation included the practice of copying Buddhist scriptures. Specifically, apocryphal texts often promised a nearly infinite amount of merit or even the very attainment of buddhahood and liberation through the act of copying a text.

*Internal vs. External Functions of Chán Texts*

A special focus in this book will be on the ‘internal’ and ‘external’ aspects of Chán/Sōn/Zen rhetoric, i.e., the question to what audience and readership Chán discourse was directed during specific periods and circumstances, and to what degree Chán texts constituted ‘public documents’<sup>11</sup> as opposed to texts primarily directed towards an internal readership of Chán monks and practitioners (or simultaneously to several target audiences). Of great interest is also the question how the Chán clergy reacted and adapted to sociopolitical changes, sectarian and doctrinal challenges and paradigmatic shifts in the relationship to supporters, target audiences or institutional settings. How did Chán/Zen/Sōn react to these factors in terms of literary production, the invention or use of genres, as well as the range of linguistic and rhetorical means deployed in texts?

*Structure as Rhetorical Device*

Many Chán texts have a heterogeneous structure and this ‘multi-genre’ approach serves several purposes. Chinese Chán scriptures often use layers of different language styles (e.g., Literary, Buddhist Hybrid, and colloquial Chinese), possibly as an attempt to implement the ‘Two Truths’-model on the linguistic and literary level, trying to bridge the paradox that is implied in the claim of being independent of the scriptural teachings (since the ultimate truth is beyond the realm of linguistic signs) and the necessity of literary production. The implementing of the ‘spoken word’ in written form was maybe an attempt to solve this dilemma. Using the vernacular as means of expression tries to go beyond the ‘teachings based on (written) words,’ and the ‘live words’ of the master were meant to reflect an ‘ultimate truth.’

Seeking new forms of literary expression was probably also motivated by the fierce sectarian competition between Buddhists factions during the time of the emergence of the Chán School. After intense discussions and adaptations concerning Buddhist doctrines and practices during the 6<sup>th</sup> and early 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, many aspects of doctrine, practice, and ritual had become more or less common ground for the majority of Buddhist factions. Since doctrinal aspects were

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<sup>11</sup> An expression used in McRae 2003.

often difficult to distinguish, the focus shifted partially away from these discussions to the question of *how* the religious message should be conveyed and by what means support from the public could be attracted.

*The Development of the Narrative and Chán Literature*

One of the key events in the development of Chán Buddhist literature was the gradual adoption/adaptation of the narrative as means of transporting religious messages. Whereas many key texts of early Chán literature were written in the form of treatises using a language which occasionally is referred to as Buddhist Hybrid Chinese (i.e., a language based on literary Chinese intermixed with Buddhist terminology and syntactic constructions typically used in translation literature, in addition to a few vernacular elements), from the middle of the Táng Dynasty onwards the use of dialogues and ‘story telling’ became one of the prominent features of Chán texts. The first peak of this new development was reached during the Five Dynasties period (907–960) and the early Sòng, and the typical Chán genres, such as the *Transmission of the Lamp Texts* (*Transmission Texts*) and *Recorded Sayings* literature, started to enjoy tremendous popularity well beyond the limits of a strictly Chán Buddhist context. The exact circumstances concerning the emergence of these genres centered around the historiographic narratives are still not quite clear, but it seems to be grounded in the broader context of Buddhist literary production (such as the highly colloquial *Transformation Texts*) and the gradual transformation of the vernacular language into a legitimate means of expression. However, the roots for this development seem to go back to pre-Táng times and are grounded in the increasing interest in texts in which Buddhist doctrines and ethical issues are wrapped in instructive and didactic stories.

In his contribution ‘*Thus Have I Heard*’ and *Other Claims to Authenticity*, Bart Dessein addresses the setting of canonical Buddhist texts within a literary context and tradition. As an important feature the scriptural tradition is rooted in the oral tradition of Indian literature. He points out that early Indian prose usually does not aim at convincing the listener/reader of a specific truth. With the appearance of Buddhist texts the situation changed drastically, aiming at converting the audience to the truth of Buddha’s teachings. This shift also entailed the



appearance of new rhetorical devices which Dessein labels ‘inter-textual’ and ‘intra-textual.’ The process of committing Buddhist texts to a written form probably started in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Not being in the possession of a long tradition of oral transmission the adherents of Mahāyāna seem to have concentrated on the written tradition, an example which eventually was followed by the Theravādins. Writings began to serve the function of defining specific doctrinal standpoints in an increasingly sectarian environment. In addition, this entailed a dual form of transmission, one based on written texts, and the other one on oral versions, each employing different rhetorical devices. Dessein provides ample evidence of the development of this sectarian aspect within the Sarvāstivāda School, and illustrates the rhetorical strategies used to attract and convince an ‘external’ audience. By using the concepts of ‘intra-’ and ‘inter-textual’ devices, the gradual development of these strategies is shown.

Concerning the popularization of Buddhist messages in the form of entertaining and didactic stories, two of the most popular works in this respect are the *One Hundred Parables Sūtra* (*Bǎiyù jīng* 百喻經) and the *Sūtra of the Talented and the Stupid* (*Xiányù jīng* 賢愚經).<sup>12</sup>

As Christoph Harbsmeier points out in his contribution *Reading the One Hundred Parables Sūtra*, it is all about “entering *nirvāṇa* with a smile.” Narrative works like the *Bǎiyù jīng* avoid any sophisticated doctrinal and ethical discussions but rather illustrate Buddhist key issues in the form of witty and entertaining stories, which were understandable also for less educated people. Harbsmeier provides a detailed linguistic and rhetorical analysis of the preface to the text, illustrating in detail the typical mix of styles and linguistic devices, combining Literary Chinese with the lexical and syntactic items typical for the Chinese used in translation literature, as well as including vulgar expressions and colloquialisms. Harbsmeier shows that many linguistic and rhetorical features found later in Chán texts have their origin in this kind of Buddhist narrative literature. The analysis of such narrative texts also shows how much they have been adapted to a Chinese audience, rather than being directly translated from Sanskrit. Buddhists at that time were keenly aware of the fact that purely doctrinal texts had limitations for spreading the Buddhist

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<sup>12</sup> For extensive bibliographic references to the *Bǎiyù jīng*, see the bibliography in the article of Christoph Harbsmeier.

message to a broader audience and rather ‘packed’ these messages into entertaining narratives, or ‘playful *sūtras*,’ as Harbsmeier refers to them.

The *Sūtra of the Wise and the Stupid*<sup>13</sup> was so popular and widely read that many depictions of *avadānas* and *jātakas* (i.e., dramatic stories about Buddha’s previous rebirths) were based on these texts, rather than on more canonical versions of the stories. This tendency is exemplified by the wall-paintings of the Mògāo 莫高 Caves at Dūnhuáng.

Curiously, one of the earliest references to the didactic stories in the Chán Buddhist context was precisely ‘*avadāna*’ (*yīnyuán* 因緣), a term usually used for certain types of Buddhist narratives.<sup>14</sup> However, in the traditional *avadāna* accounts the seed and ‘cause’ for the future career as bodhisattva or Buddha is laid by extreme deeds of selflessness and virtue (typically, the virtues of giving, patience and perseverance, including the sacrifice of one’s body),<sup>15</sup> illustrated in the numerous *jātaka* stories which give an account of Buddha’s former lives. These accounts had on the one hand clearly didactic purposes; on the other hand they *explained* why Śākyamuni became a Buddha and how he created the foundation for his career as enlightened being and saviour. As the term *yīnyuán* suggests, there is a clear causal connection between his countless good deeds and his rebirth as Buddha. *Jātaka* stories enjoyed enormous popularity especially at the beginning of the Táng dynasty, and there was a revival of the genre at the end of the Táng and the early Sòng.

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<sup>13</sup> T. 4, no. 202: *Damamūka-nidāna sūtra*, translated in 445 by Huijué 慧覺; more generally on the genre of ‘causality texts’: “[...] are a genre consisting of stories of allegories showing the causal relationship between actions in one existence and those in a subsequent existence.” (Sasaki/Kirchner 2009:419).

<sup>14</sup> Lit. ‘cause and conditions’ or ‘primary and secondary causes’ (Skr. *hetu-pratyaya*); besides its reference to *nidāna* and *avadāna* the term was also used to translate ‘dependent origination’ (Skr. *pratītya-samutpāda*). According to Griffith Foulk “in the Japanese popular imagination, the idea that certain events were ‘bound to happen’ because they were the result of actions taken or relationships fostered in past lives.” (DDB, entry on 因緣). The term *yīnyuán* has dozens of interpretations in Buddhist dictionaries. It should be noted that it can also refer to a monk’s family background in biographies, e.g. *zúxìng yīnyuán* 族姓因緣 “causes and conditions of his clan and family” (Chen 2007:65). On Chán and ‘kinship,’ see Faure 1991:23f.

<sup>15</sup> Self-immolation was a very popular Buddhist practice in medieval China, as well as in the larger East Asian context; for a study of this issue, see Benn 2007.

It is interesting to note that early references to ‘cases’ (essential utterances by Chán masters on the basis of which the *huàtóu*, ‘catch phrases,’ and *gōng'àn/kōan* developed) exactly involved the term *yīnyuán*. In the 10<sup>th</sup> century historiographic Chán text *Zútáng jí* 祖堂集<sup>16</sup> (ZTJ, *Collection From the Patriarchs’ Hall*), *yīnyuán* was frequently used and was the most important term referring to these essential words by the masters.

“如何是無情因緣？”

“What about the *case* of non-sentients?” (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974: 1.117)

Frequently, the term *yīnyuán* is the object of transitive verbs referring to specific Chán vocabulary, e.g. *jǔ* 舉 ‘LIFT UP > bring up for discussion, cite (a case of old, story, etc.),’ or *niǎn* ‘PICK UP WITH THE FINGERS > take/bring up (for discussion), cite.’ *Yīnyuán* can be modified (e.g. by pronouns, or specified by phrases), quantified and counted, and also appears with nominal classifiers such as *zé* 則, *gè* 個, and *zhuǎn* 轉:

帝乃詔耽源，舉此因緣，問：“此意如何？”

The Emperor thereupon summoned Dānyuán and *took up this case*, asking: “What is the meaning of it?” (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:1.129)

道悟云：“有什摩佛法因緣？”其僧舉兩三因緣，道悟便歡喜。

Dàowù said: “What kind of *yīnyuán* on the Buddha-dharma are there?” The monk *cited several* (lit. ‘two-three’) *yīnyuán*, and thereupon Dàowù rejoiced. (*ibid.*:2.019)

“昨日答那個師僧一轉因緣。”

“Yesterday I *answered one* (*yī zhuǎn* 一轉) *yīnyuán* by that monk.” (*ibid.*:5.025)

The syntactic structures it is used with indicates that *yīnyuán* refers to clearly delineated ‘chunks’ or segments of narratives, countable entities of ‘cases’ and stories of the masters circulating already during the time of the compilation of ZTJ and used for didactic purposes and discussions, as well as for expounding and interpreting the Chán teachings (as illustrated by the example above, *yīnyuán* can also be

<sup>16</sup> Although during the Sòng other references to the cases of the masters of old were used, the term *yīnyuán* is still occasionally encountered in Chán texts during that period, e.g., in the LJL: 臨濟破夏因緣 (“The case/story of Linji breaking [the rules of] the summer [retreat],” LJL, ed. Sasaki/Kirchner 2009:326).

‘answered’). Why was this term used for referring to essential Chán phrases and stories which illustrate the enlightened behaviour of the masters of old? Is it a direct allusion to the popular genre of *avadāna* narratives,<sup>17</sup> indicating that the accounts of the deeds and sayings of the masters belong to the group of non-doctrinal didactic texts? Or is the emphasis rather on the notion of ‘causation’? Maybe the use of the term was meant to draw the attention of the reader to a similar function of Buddhist *avadāna* and Chán cases: in the same way the heroic deeds by the protagonists described in the *jātaka* and *avadāna* narratives eventually conditioned the rebirth as a buddha or bodhisattva and the attainment of salvation (as well as encouraging the reader of the stories to take a similar path), the enigmatic and densified Chán cases were thought to encapsulate the insight of the masters and the essence of the Buddha, having the power to *cause* (and transfer) this insight and *trigger* similar experiences in the mind of the practitioner or succeeding masters (who use these stories as didactic and expedient means).<sup>18</sup> The above assumption must remain tentative at this point and the relationship of the development of Chán Buddhist genres and expedient teaching devices in relationship to narrative literature will need more thorough research.

### *Early Chán Texts from Dūnhuáng*

The Chán texts discovered at Dūnhuáng<sup>19</sup> in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century gives us unique insights in developments concerning the early Chán movement. They are doctrinally, structurally, and linguistically were different from the ‘classical’ Chán literature produced during the Sòng Dynasty.<sup>20</sup> One of the first major paradigm shifts can be

<sup>17</sup> *Yīnyuán* referring to *avadāna* also appears in an early text which became important for the formation of Chán transmission theories: *Fù fǎzàng [yīnyuán] zhuàn* 付法藏 [因緣]傳 *Account of the [Avādana] of the Transmission of the Dharma Treasure* (T.50 no.2058: 297a-322b): “This is a Buddhist transmission history compiled in China from a number of different sources. It narrates the sequential transmission of the Dharma from Mahākāśyapa to Śimha Bhikṣu and is the basis of the *Lidài fābǎo jì* author’s account of the transmission of the Indian patriarchs” (Adamek 2007:516).

<sup>18</sup> This hypothesis about the ‘conditioning’ power of Chán utterances would also fit well to the parallel development of the image of the Chán master into a ‘living Buddha.’

<sup>19</sup> On early Chán texts from the Dūnhuáng findings, see also the contribution *Coming to Terms with Terms*.

<sup>20</sup> Sørensen (1989:117) on the Dūnhuáng Chán manuscripts: “One of the main

observed when early Chán (often referred to as Dōngshān 東山, ‘East Mountain’ School) enters the public light of the Táng capitals during the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century:

“As environments of rhetorical exchange and religious discourse, there was a radical difference between East Mountain and the two capitals, with its literate society and incomparable larger urban scale, that well-written texts were required for disseminating the teachings.”<sup>21</sup>

The rhetorical shift towards the public is also accompanied by a growing focus on lay-orientation, and Buddhist practices were often illustrated in the framework of activities of daily life. This orientation towards a lay audience became even more significant from the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century onwards, for example in texts attributed to the rhetorician Shénhuì 神會 (670–762),<sup>22</sup> the Dūnhuáng versions of the *Platform Sūtra*,<sup>23</sup> as well as in the *Lidài fǎbǎo jì* 歷代法寶記 (LDFBJ) of the Sichuān Bǎotáng 保唐 faction of Chán.

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characteristics of the Dūnhuáng Chán manuscripts is their great diversity in terms of literature. Despite the fact that several manuscripts testify to a relatively high literary standard, a large number of them have been written in a decidedly provincial or even countrified form, not to mention the countless basic scribal errors, something which can only be explained as a lack of proper schooling at the part of the writer.”

<sup>21</sup> McRae 2003:49.

<sup>22</sup> “Shénhuì’s success is due in large part to his skilful manipulation of the symbols of ritual politics so that the literati audience (mainly bureaucrats, but also some monks) were captivated and won over by his propaganda. Shénhuì used the literati ideal of the orthodox lineage, or rather the idea of the legitimate imperial clan lineage, to try to convince his audience that his was the legitimate line of succession, and that the leading lights of Northern Chán were pretenders to the ‘throne’ of Chán Buddhism” (Jorgensen 1987:96; on Chán transmission, see also below); and generally, on the relationship between lay people and Chán masters: “On the whole, Chán teachers were successful in presenting their doctrines and traditions in ways that appealed to the spiritual predilections and horizons of expectation of elite segments of Táng society. Cultivated literati and officials of the imperial bureaucracy—including many of the leading figures in the Táng’s intellectual, literary, and political spheres—were key supporters of various Chán teachers and the monastic groups associated with them, as well as main recipients of their teachings in their oral and textual forms. The need to reach out to and communicate with this important audience was undoubtedly a contributing factor to the manner in which Chán monks conveyed their personal insights and formulated their ideas about diverse facets of the Buddhist path. Moreover, the literati were also actively involved in the recording of Chán history, as they typically wrote the stele inscriptions that became main sources of information about the lives of individual Chán teachers” (Poceski 2007b:10).

<sup>23</sup> Concerning the *Platform Sūtra*, McRae (2003:66) comments in the following way: “In addition, the text clearly admits laypeople to full participation in this process,

In the early *Xiū xīnyào lùn* 修心要論 (*Treatise on the Essentials of Cultivating the Mind*), a work reflecting the teachings of the ‘Fifth Patriarch’ Hóngrěn 弘忍 (601–674), there is already a clear multi-layered rhetorical structure. On the one hand doctrinal issues are discussed in the form of dialogues with anonymous disciples (in the alternating pattern *wèn yuē* 問曰... *dá yuē* 答曰... ‘[somebody] asked..., [the master] answered...’), on the other hand the text is also directed to an (not necessarily monastic) external audience, i.e., the reader of the text. In the dialogues there are not only doctrinal expositions but the master is also directly addressing his disciples in the form of exhortations. Typical topics current among Buddhists at that time are taken up in the conversations and explained with the repertoire of certain key terms, usually relating to the mind or mental activities.<sup>24</sup>

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something that the monastic recruiter and fund-raiser Shénhuì never did. (For him laypeople were potential converts to the monastic life or, in some cases, prominent scholar-officials who lent prestige to his activities.) The *Platform Sūtra* inherits the style of reinterpreting conventional Buddhist pronouncements as meditation instructions that had been originally developed by Shénxiù and that was maintained to some extent by Shénhuì and to an even greater degree by the Oxhead [Niútóu 牛頭] School.”

<sup>24</sup> David Chappell notices an emphasis on direct teachings styles and ‘experience’ already in early Chán texts (however, I think, many of these texts still used a rather conservative style typical for treatises), connecting to the ‘Pure Conversation’ *qīngtán* 清談 tradition of argumentation, and rhetorical contests popular during the Six Dynasties period. Chappell refers to this as the earliest hermeneutical phase of Chán, exemplified by texts such as Dào xīn’s 道信 (580–651) *Rùdào ānxīn yào fāngbiàn fāmén* 入道安心要方便法門 (*The Dharma-gate of Essential Expedient Means of Entering the Way and Pacifying the Mind*), and Hóngrěn’s 弘忍 (600–674) *Xiū xīnyào lùn*. Another group includes texts attributed to Shénxiù 神秀 (606?–706) and his circle, such as the *Yuánmíng lùn* 圓明論 (*Treatise of Perfected Insight*), *Guānxīn lùn* 觀心論 (*Treatise on the Contemplation of Mind*), a text traditionally attributed to Bodhidharma, but written in the circle of the ‘Northern School’ master Shénxiù, and the *Dàshèng wǔ fāngbiàn* 大乘五方便 (*The Five Expedient Means of the Mahāyāna*, ed. in T.85, no.2834), with many references to *sūtras* such as the *Vimalakīrti* and *Lankāvatāra*: “As a hermeneutical device, the doctrine of an esoteric teaching was used (1) to justify the role of the enlightened master, (2) to allow a certain measure of freedom from scholasticism and literal interpretation of texts, (3) to support the idea that each text had a ‘cardinal meaning,’ and (4) to protect the central article of faith that the underlying meaning was the same in all authentic Buddhist writings.” (Chappell 1988:194). Another group of texts include the early *Transmission Texts* such as Fārú’s 法如 *Epitaph* (689 AD), the *Chuán fābǎo jì* 傳法寶紀 (*Record on the Transmission of the Dharma Treasure*, by Dù Fěi 杜朮, ed. in T.85, no.2838),

*Chán Poetry*

Sections in verse-form have traditionally been an integral part of Buddhist literature, frequently summing up key passages of the preceding narratives. Already in the Dūnhuáng corpus sections in verse-form played an important role in the structure of Chán texts. At the latest since the *Platform Sūtra*'s famous description of the poetry competition between the 'Northern School' monk Shénxiù and the illiterate Huinéng, poetry has been regarded as a legitimate way of expressing a monk's degree of insight, and instances of enlightenment have often been 'verified' by the composition of stanzas.<sup>25</sup> As

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and the *Léngqié shīzī jì* 楞伽師資記 (*Record of the Masters and Disciples of the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*), by Jingjué 淨覺, ca. 714; ed. in T.85, no.2837): "This lineage and its transmission of an elitist and esoteric teaching of the Buddha based on the *Awakening of Faith* and the *Laṅkāvatāra* tradition became formalized in the early eighth century in the *Chuán fābǎo jì* (Annals of the Transmission of the Dharma-treasure). In spite of the Chán emphasis on mind and nonreliance on any external authority, the role of the enlightened master and the importance of an explicit line of transmission were used in this text to form a substitute structure of authority and legitimacy" (*ibid.*:196). For bibliographic references to the Dūnhuáng manuscripts and editions of these texts, see Yanagida 1974b; for a description and a discussion in the context of early Chán, see McRae 1986; for extensive references to Chinese Chán texts, see also the bibliographies of Adamek 2007 and Sasaki/Kirchner 2009:365–436; for a useful discussion of Dūnhuáng Chán texts (including their relation to esoteric texts), see Sørensen 1989.

<sup>25</sup> For a collection of Chán poetry found on Dūnhuáng manuscripts, see Wāng Fànzhōu 2002:152–181. Poetry also played a prominent role in Chán transmission, see for example the 'transmission verses' in the *Bǎolín zhuàn* 寶林傳 (BLZ, 801; see also Poceski 2007a:29) and the *Zūtáng jí* 祖堂集 (ZTJ, ca. 952). For examples dating from the Sòng Dynasty, see the transmission from the Chinese master Fózào Déguāng 佛照德光 (1121–1203) to Nōnin 能忍, the founder of the sect Dharmashū 達磨宗. The transmission was actually performed in the form of a literary device, i.e., a poem (Bodiford 1991:424f.). Sòng Dynasty models of Chán poetry set the standard which was followed also by Japanese Zen monks of the Kamakura and Muromachi periods (1185–1568); on this issue, see Pollack 1979:504: "These poems are successful partly because of the apparent ease with which the poets observe the Chinese rules of tonal regulations, antithesis, and rhyme while making apt use of Japanese vocabulary" (*ibid.*:507). On the role of death poems in Japanese funeral rituals, see Bodiford 1992:151,160; see also Faure 1991:187–191. On poetical language in Chán, see Faure 1993:205f., on the identity of Chán and poetry, see *ibid.*:208–209, in the Japanese context, *ibid.*:209–211; "Mujū [無住] deems necessary to reinforce this conception with notions derived from Japanese literary theories and esoteric Buddhism. The equation between Japanese poetry (in particular the *waka* genre) and esoteric *dhāraṇī* (J. *waka soku darani* [和歌即陀羅尼]) is a recurrent

Carmen Meinert has recently shown, by analyzing Chán poetry in Dūnhuáng texts, that sections of poems were frequently reused similar to the use of ‘*Textbausteine*’ in narrative texts.<sup>26</sup>

In his paper *Beyond Perfection – The Rhetoric of Chán Poetry in Wáng Wéi’s Wǎng Stream Collection*, Halvor Eifring analyzes the phenomenon of how famous poets retrospectively were linked with Chán, and how ‘Chán-like feelings’ were discovered in poems—quite detached from Chán institutional settings, a situation not unlike the modern reception of Chán in the West when typical cultural phenomena in China and Japan were retrospectively linked to Chán/Zen. Through this device Chán/Zen is divorced from its religious and institutional settings and reduced to its esthetic dimension. Eifring stresses the important lay Buddhist perspective of literati based on which the difference between the effects of Chán and poetry disappear. Through reinterpretations of Chán during Míng 明 (1368–1644) times the Táng poet Wáng Wéi becomes closely related to Chán. Analyzing the structural, linguistic, and rhetoric features of the Wǎng Stream collection—usually not associated with Buddhist poetry—Eifring shows that Wáng Wéi employs devices that aim, for example, at creating the impression of an unrestrained and liberated mind; aspects which were very attractive to the Míng readers and at that time associated with Chán literature. Wáng Wéi’s literary devices were thus reinterpreted as an expression of ‘subtle enlightenment,’ which was regarded as a basic feature of both Chán and poetry.

### *Strategies of Recording the Spoken Word*

#### TRANSCRIBING THE SPOKEN WORD

Victor Mair has pointed out the great impact Buddhism had on the creation of the written vernacular in Asia: “[...] nearly all of the written vernaculars east of the Pamirs to the Pacific Ocean were a

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theme in medieval Japanese Buddhism, and the syncretistic theories (*honji suijaku* [本地垂迹]) of esoteric Buddhism played a significant role in the Buddhist legitimization of poetry” (*ibid.*:209–210).

<sup>26</sup> See Meinert 2008; on ‘Textbausteine’ taken from a ‘text pool,’ see also Sørensen 1989:126–127, and “hence it is apparent that there was a sort of ‘text pool’ or ‘source pool’ of Chán literature in Dūnhuáng from which the local authors made their own compositions according to the circumstances” (*ibid.*:134).



direct result of the Buddhist missionary enterprise”<sup>27</sup> and that basically all vernacular or semi-vernacular writing before Sòng times were done by Buddhists: “With such tremendous emphasis on the presumed orality of the canon, there might have been resistance to rendering it in stilted, ‘unsayable’ LS [Literary Sinitic].”<sup>28</sup> This preoccupation with orality was manifested by an unprecedented focus on sound, i.e., systems to indicate pronunciation, rhyme dictionaries, *dhāraṇī*, recitation of the Buddha’s name, psalmody, popular lectures, sacred singing and chanting, and the use of *mantras*.<sup>29</sup>

One of the most important features of Chán genres is the integration of the ‘spoken word’ in textual form. This development reached an initial peak with the introduction of the colloquial *Transmission Texts* in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, paralleled and preceded by the appearance of the popular Buddhist *Transformation Texts* (*biànwén* 變文),<sup>30</sup> which were designed as didactic stories directed towards a lay audience. One of the many differences between the genres of *Transmission* and *Transformation Texts* seems to be the targeted audience: whereas the *Transformation Texts* have been composed in the context of multimedia performances (including iconographic materials, story-telling, recitations, maybe also accompanied by music and other types of performances) targeted at a general (and not necessarily very educated) audience, already the earliest Chán historical texts, on the other hand, seem to have been written rather for an elite audience. The ZTJ, for example, was composed for the military commanders and local rulers of the Southeast, and Sòng texts first in the context of imperial sponsorship, and later on with the educated literati as clear target-readership. This marketing strategy

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<sup>27</sup> Mair 1994:722; for example, written Tibetan (7<sup>th</sup> century), Sogdian, Khotanese and Tocharian, later Tangut, and in the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century the Korean alphabet *han’gul*.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*:714; and: “The first vernacular Buddhist texts in Sinitic did not appear until the middle of the eighth century (the *biànwén*, after the vernacular revolution had already taken place in Central Asia)” (*ibid.*:718).

<sup>29</sup> “*Dhāraṇī*, for example, were thought to be potent only if properly pronounced, hence they were transcribed in their entirety, not translated” (*ibid.*:719). Esoteric Buddhism played an important role in this development: “During the Táng, esoteric Buddhism, recently introduced, provided a further rationale for this tendency to extol words with its stress on *mantra* (a Sankrit term translated in Chinese as ‘true words’) and *dhāraṇī*” (Faure 1993:202); and: “Esoteric Buddhism and its theory of language significantly influenced early Chán and later Japanese Zen” (*ibid.*:202).

<sup>30</sup> On this genre, see below.

during the Sòng was very successful and guaranteed a dominating status of the Chán factions during that period. As such, the use of the colloquial language had different functions in the two genres.

Since there did not yet exist any specific Chinese characters for transcribing items of the spoken language during the late Táng, many function words were recorded phonetically by ‘loaning’ the pronunciation of other characters. In the texts found at Dūnhuáng, for example, the use of phonetic loans was a common feature found in many types of manuscripts.<sup>31</sup> Whereas the majority of phonetic loans found in the manuscripts are for full lexical words, from the late Táng period onwards an increasing number of colloquial function words (such as interrogative pronouns, verbal complements, and sentence final particles) were transcribed by this method. Often, the same function word could have several written forms. These graphic representations are already relatively homogenous in texts such as the ZTJ, and this suggests the possibility that there already existed certain standards for graphically representing vernacular grammatical markers during that time.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> One example is the phrase *yimò shí zuòwùshēng* 異沒時作勿生 ‘if it is like this what shall one do (lit. how about it)?’ found in the 8<sup>th</sup> century *Shénhuì yǔlù* 神會語錄 (Pelliot Chinois 3047). In Late Middle Chinese the pronunciation would be something like *ji`-mut ʃhi tsak-vjyt(mut?)-ʃa:jŋ* (reconstructed according to Pulleyblank 1991). The only Chinese character which is *not* used phonetically in the phrase is *shí* 時 (the phrase corresponds roughly to Modern Mandarin 這麼時怎麼樣!) During the early Sòng the vernacular morphemes were assigned specific graphical forms in order to make them immediately recognizable in this function: 沒 (磨, 摩) ⇒ 麼 (么); 作 ⇒ 怎. Suffix 生 survived until today in the Wú 吳 dialect.

<sup>32</sup> The scholar Méi Zūlín 梅祖麟 suggests that there already existed a *koine* during the Táng Dynasty. Many vernacular grammatical markers that have their origin in the language of the capital spread to other areas by waves of migration during periods of war and unrest. These waves also led to the spread of function words and syntactic patterns, eventually becoming part of many Chinese dialects (e.g., the Modern Mǐnnán 閩南 dialect). The ZTJ actually represents several features of this dialect (see Mei Zulin 1991:39 ff.). The studies of early vernacular Chinese and Buddhist Hybrid Chinese were for a long time neglected areas in the field of Chinese linguistics. Even in China, systematic studies were very rare prior to the 1980s. In the West, already at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Thomas Watters noticed the influence of Buddhism on the Chinese language and devoted an interesting chapter to this problem in his book ‘The Chinese Language’ (see Watters 1889:379–496). Another scholar who devoted several studies on the vernacular vocabulary in Buddhist texts is Erich Zürcher (e.g., Zürcher 1978). One of the earliest systematic studies of an early vernacular text was conducted by M.A.K. Halliday (Halliday 1959), and not long afterwards Michael Sawyer (1969) wrote a Ph.D. thesis on the language of a number of

As an important development during the early Sòng, the ‘standardization’ of the written forms of colloquial function words progressed quickly, and many syntactic markers received specific graphical written forms, e.g., the Late Middle Chinese morpheme /*mua*/ appearing as part of colloquial interrogative pronouns, or as interrogative sentence final particle, had several written forms before it assumed its final form 麼; in the following example as part of the pronoun *shénme* 什麼 (‘what’):

[*hévù* 何物 (WHAT THING > what)] ⇒ 是物 / 是勿 / 是沒 (8<sup>th</sup> cent.)  
 ⇒ 是沒 / 甚沒 / 甚物 (8<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> cent.) ⇒ 什摩 / 什磨 (9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> cent.)  
 ⇒ 什麼 (‘standard form’ from the 11<sup>th</sup> cent. onwards)

Occasionally, the different graphical forms possibly also represent different stages of development in the pronunciation of a function word, as in the following example:<sup>33</sup>

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early *Recorded Sayings* texts. Unfortunately, this concise and insightful work is nearly forgotten today.

Alfredo Cadonna conducted studies on several aspects of the vernacular grammar of the Táng (e.g. Cadonna 1978–1979, Cadonna 1981, and Cadonna 1983). For the study of the vernacular language of the *Transformation Texts* (*biànwén*) and the influence of Buddhism on the development of Chinese, see the works of Victor Mair (see bibliography). A person who contributed significantly to the study of Chinese historical syntax and the development of the vernacular language is Alain Peyraube, who, as the first Western scholar, systematically applied the methods and theories of historical linguistics to the study of the development of Chinese. For a recent systematic study of the language of ZTJ in the perspective of historical linguistics, see Anderl 2004b (including an extensive bibliography with further references in vol.2). During the last decade the study of aspects of medieval Chinese and early colloquial Chinese has virtually developed into an industry in China (with results of greatly varying quality).

For a description of the vernacular in the Korean context, see Plassen, *forthcoming* (on producing vernacular lecture notes, see *ibid.*:8f.; on the imitative use of the ‘vernacular’ Chinese in the production of Korean *Recorded Sayings*, see *ibid.*:14; on texts written with the Korean alphabet invented in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, see *ibid.*:16f.; on the project of producing Buddhist scriptures in the vernacular, see 20f. “All *ŏnhae* texts follow the same layout, basically constituting an interlinear commentary to the source text(s): For a given portion of the main text (very often only a sentence, at times also a longer passage) usually first the wordings of the Hanmun [Ch. *hànwén*, J. *kanbun* 漢文] source would be given, with annotations directly inserted into the main text. These parts are the ones which in the editorial information to some of the texts [...] are labeled as *kugyŏl*. Then, a translation into the vernacular would follow” (*ibid.*:23).

<sup>33</sup> According to Jiang Shaoyu 1994:142.

/ʃhimiʉət/ (early 8<sup>th</sup> cent.) ⇒ /ʃhimiʉət/ (mid-8<sup>th</sup> cent.) ⇒ /ʃhima/ (late 8<sup>th</sup> cent.) ⇒ /ʃhi<sup>m</sup>ma/ (9<sup>th</sup> cent.) ⇒ /ʃhimma/ (mid 10<sup>th</sup> cent.) ⇒ /ʃhimmo/ (late 10<sup>th</sup> cent.)

#### LINGUISTIC RESTRAINTS ON RHETORIC: INFLATION OF FUNCTION WORDS AND THE INFORMATIVENESS OF WRITTEN TEXTS

The early vernacular texts written during the Late Táng and Five Dynasties periods did not only integrate elements of Literary Chinese in their structure, but in addition also made use of syntactic and semantic patterns deriving from previous stages of language development. This led to a great variety of function words deriving from Literary Chinese, several periods of medieval Chinese, as well as integrating the function words of the respective contemporary vernacular language. In the early vernacular texts, this led to a situation where many different grammatical markers would frequently be used for the same or similar function, in addition to representing the same function word with a variety of Chinese characters. On the one hand, these special linguistic features are responsible for the particular charm of the early colloquial Chán texts, in contrast to the linguistically and rhetorically streamlined texts from the Sòng period. However, similar to the contrast between the textual versions as represented in the Dūnhuáng materials, as compared to the later edited versions of the Sòng, these heterogeneous features were unacceptable for the highly educated readership of Chán works during the Sòng dynasty, and many linguistic features were standardized and adapted to the spoken language of Sòng times.

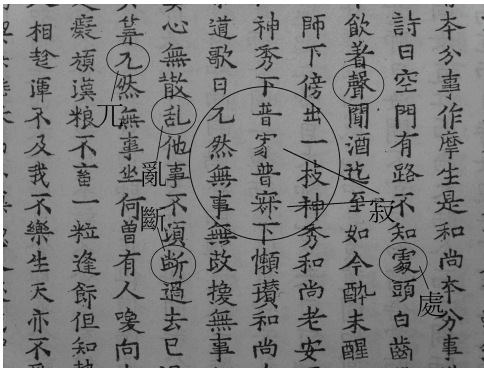


Figure 1: Detail of a printed page of ZTJ. Although the text was carved on wooden blocks in Korea during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, many variant forms of characters (including abbreviations) were preserved. Many forms are typical for the Táng and Five Dynasties periods. Note the two different variants of 寂 in the same line (see circle)!

The rhetorical structure of texts is heavily dependent on the array of linguistic features which can be applied in a text. The adaptation of

the vernacular language and the imitation of actual speech acts in the written form opened for new forms of expression. The introduction of the vernacular is an event the significance of which cannot be overemphasized, both in terms of the success of the Chán School during the Sòng and, more generally, for the development of literary genres in China.<sup>34</sup> One linguistic aspect which underwent significant changes was the system of modal markers, typically used to express ‘forces’ and ‘barriers’ in speech acts (e.g., requests, commands, prohibitions),<sup>35</sup> as well as expressing the speaker’s attitude towards the addressee or the truth value of a proposition (e.g., ‘necessity,’ a statement is necessarily true, or ‘possibility,’ a statement is possibly true). All these functions are of great importance in the rhetorical structure of the (semi-)vernacular Chán texts.

#### HOW TO RECORD THE WORDS OF THE ENLIGHTENED MASTERS?

The accounts found in early *Transmission Texts* such as ZTJ and *Jīngdé chuándēng lù* 景德傳燈錄 (JDCDL, 1004) centered around conversations between the masters—who were frequently regarded as ‘living’ or ‘embodied’ buddhas or bodhisattvas (*ròushēn púsà* 肉身菩薩)—and their disciples, and it was quintessential to record these encounters in the way they were thought to have happened, i.e., in

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<sup>34</sup> For a short discussion of the development of vernacular literature, see Hanan 1981: 1-16. On *Transformation Texts* and other vernacular Dūnhuáng texts, see the works of Victor Mair (especially Mair 1980, Mair 1983a, Mair 1986, Mair 1989, Mair 1992, and Mair 1999). Mair refers to the language used in early vernacular literature as ‘semilitrary-semivernacular’ (*bànwén-bànbái* 半文半白, Mair 1994:708). He also points out that Literary Chinese and Vernacular Chinese are to a great degree structurally compatible, which makes it easier to intermix them (*ibid.*:709). It is important to note that the ‘vernacularization’ of certain narrative genres of Chinese Buddhist texts was maybe also influenced by a phenomenon which Mair calls the ‘second vernacular revolution’ (*ibid.*:717f., the ‘first vernacular revolution’ being the appearance of Buddhist Hybrid Chinese (or ‘Sinitic’) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century onwards). This second revolution is characterized by the appearance of non-Sinitic and non-Indian written languages from the 7<sup>th</sup> century onwards, e.g., written Tibetan.

“Probably more important in raising the consciousness of some Chinese that the simple sounds of language were just as essential as their elaborate and exalted script, if not more so, was the Buddhist penchant for psalmody. There was no precedent in the indigenous literary and religious traditions for the flood of sacred singing and chanting that engulfed China with Buddhism. [...]” (*ibid.*: 719).

<sup>35</sup> For a study of the evolution of the system of modal markers with an emphasis on ZTJ, see Anderl 2004b, vol.1:385–435 and Anderl 2006a.

their *situational context* and by recreating the encounter in the ‘spoken’ language. In addition, the conversations often involved lively argumentations, including imperatives, requests, prohibitions, suggestions, suppositions, insults,<sup>36</sup> highly subjective views on the doctrinal proposition, and so on. All this added immensely to the rhetorical complexity of the texts. It would have been virtually impossible to transcribe these subtle nuances of the speech acts into Literary Chinese (or Buddhist Hybrid Chinese),<sup>37</sup> using its rather restricted and rigid system of grammatical and modal markers.

In addition, Literary Chinese also lacked the refined vocabulary of the contemporary colloquial language, and also to a certain degree the syntactic flexibility necessary for transcribing dynamic dialogues into the written form (e.g., highly complex modifications of the head-noun, the use of multiple coverbal phrases in the same sentence, appositions).<sup>38</sup> In written vernacular texts, it is often said *more than what is necessary* in order to convey a certain mood or modality. This is done in order to express the speaker’s subjective attitude toward the proposition or his dialogue partner (e.g., multiple modal marking). This is in striking contrast to the economical use of language in Literary Chinese.

Below is an example of the use of vernacular modal markers:

*yì xū zhuó jīngshén hǎo* 亦須著精神好！

“You really should put in efforts!”

(ZTJ, fascicle 7; ed. Yanagida 1974:2.101)

In this short example, there is a complex interaction of several function words, the intensifying adverb *yì* 亦, the modal verb *xū* 須 expressing obligation, and the semi-grammaticalized vernacular sentence final *hǎo* 好, reinforcing the request. In addition, the colloquial expression *zhuó jīngshén* 著精神 ‘ATTACH MIND > put in efforts, concentrate’ is used.

<sup>36</sup> For a study of the syntax and semantics of insults in early *Transmission Texts*, see Anderl 2006b.

<sup>37</sup> The term ‘Buddhist Hybrid Chinese’ was designed parallel to the earlier term ‘Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit,’ according to Mair a “[...] Prākṛit with augmented elements from Sanskrit” (Mair 1994:723).

<sup>38</sup> In polemical exchanges, appositions are a useful device to define the opponent already in the address (e.g., LDFBJ, ed. Adamek 2007:315; tr. *ibid.*: 316 “汝大風患人，見我何益？” “For you, person afflicted with palsy, what good is it to meet with me?”).

The significance of the linguistic and rhetorical aspects in the development of Chán genres can hardly be exaggerated.<sup>39</sup> ‘Chán/Zen language’ is as such not only restricted to certain types of semantics, terminology, metaphorical extensions, figures of speech, etc., but can also include semantic and syntactic elements preserved from earlier stages of language development or typical for specific literary genres. In addition, already in early Chán literature specific grammatical markers are seemingly restricted to Chán texts and are not found in other types of genres.<sup>40</sup>

#### LANGUAGE ‘STANDARDS’ AND REGIONAL VARIETIES

Many early Chán texts show intrusions of regional varieties of the colloquial language. Examples are the Dūnhuáng versions of the *Platform Sūtra*, which use phonetic loans typical for the Northwestern dialect of the period of the mid- and late Táng.<sup>41</sup> Another example is the LDFBJ (originating in the area of nowadays Sìchuān), which uses a number of specific syntactic construction.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Concerning this question, see also McRae (2003:99): “Most readers approach Chán recorded sayings literature quite naively, taking the words as simple and basically accurate transcriptions of what was actually said during the event depicted. But the impression of vivid immediacy that we gain through reading these texts is primarily a literary effect, a direct result of their rhetorical style.”

<sup>40</sup> Examples are the ‘semi-grammaticalized coverbs’ *lán* 攔 and *mò* 騣 which first appeared in ZTJ and later in Chán works of the Sòng period. The use of the two words is highly specialized and seems to be restricted to Chán texts, marking an object (which has to be a body part!) affected by an unpleasant action (such as being beaten, spat at, dragged, pulled, etc.): 師便騣面唾 ‘The master spat *into* his face.’ (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:2.026); 我早是將一塊屎騣口抹了 ‘I have already smeared a piece of shit *on* your mouth!’ (*Gǔ zūnsù yǔlù* 古尊宿語錄, CBETA, X68, no.1315:256c1); 攔胸把柱(=住)叫云 ‘He grasped him *by* the chest and exclaimed.’ (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:5.048). Another example is the preposition *sì* 似 attached to verbs referring to speech acts (*shuō-sì* 說似 ‘speak *to*,’ *jǔ-sì* 舉似 ‘cite *to*, bring up *to*,’ etc.), a function which became ‘frozen’ in this usage and is only encountered in vernacular Chán texts.

<sup>41</sup> For a list of the many regular phonetic loans, dialect loans, erroneous characters, and other features of the Dūnhuáng versions of the *Platform Sūtra*, see the *Appendix* in Anderl 2011b (forthcoming); concerning the Northwestern dialect (which also features influences of the Tibetan language), see Takata 1987 and 1988. On multilingualism in Dūnhuáng (and how this reflected on texts), see Takata 2000.

<sup>42</sup> E.g., throughout the text the interrogative final particle *fōu* 否 is used, a feature which seems to be specific to this Chán text.

On the other hand, there probably existed the notion of something like a ‘standard language’ or *koine*<sup>43</sup> (used in a trans-regional context) during the late Táng Dynasty. Based on the dialect spoken in the capital, this was most likely the only variety of the spoken language for which certain standards of transcription into the written form existed. For example, although the ZTJ was written in the Southern province of Fújiàn 福建, the language rather resembles the one spoken in the Northern part of China at the time of the late Táng and Five Dynasties periods.<sup>44</sup>

“We know, moreover, that vernacular authors took some pains to avoid words and idioms with too narrow a currency and tended to choose a vocabulary intelligible within the whole Northern area.”<sup>45</sup>

The monks who assembled in the South after the collapse of the Táng came from many different areas of China and possibly used this *koine* for oral communication.

#### TEXT EDITING AND ‘SANITATION’

Based on the features of Dūnhuáng manuscripts of the Táng described above, in addition to those of the vernacular texts of the Five Dynasties period, we can identify a very strong tendency towards *orality*. Influenced by the popularity of sermons expounded in the vernacular language, the medium of didactic story telling, as well as the immense success of esoteric Buddhism from the 8<sup>th</sup> century onwards (with its focus on the chanting of *mantras* and *dharaṇīs*), there was a clear shift towards the spoken language in the framework of Buddhism, as well as towards the perception of texts *the way they were heard*. Phonetic studies flourished and contemporary dictionaries and word lists frequently focused on the pronunciation of Chinese characters. In addition, non-Chinese people from Central Asian

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<sup>43</sup> On ‘*koine*’ as supradialectal forms of speech (as opposed to regional ‘topolects’) in the Chinese context, see Mair 1994:728–730.

<sup>44</sup> However, there are also several words and grammatical markers typical for Modern Southern dialects in ZTJ. But this is not necessarily proof of an influence of Southern dialects of the late Táng on the language of ZTJ, since many words typical for the spoken language of the North in the area of the capital Cháng’ān were actually preserved in the South. The *Transformation Texts* are representative for the language spoken in the Northwest in the area of the capital. The system of grammatical markers in ZTJ is not quite identical with the one of the *Transformation Texts*, but the two systems overlap significantly.

<sup>45</sup> Hanan 1981:2; see also McRae 2003:99–100.



regions had started to create their own writing systems based on their spoken languages. It is not surprising that under these conditions the Chinese started to create written texts based on the vernacular and, in addition, included an increasing number of vernacular elements in texts written in Literary or Buddhist Hybrid Chinese.

As a byproduct of this development, many Buddhist manuscript texts became increasingly difficult to decipher, since they included large amounts of phonetic loans, sometimes even dialect loans, as well as many non-standard character forms based on vernacular writing styles, in addition to erroneous characters or mistakes made in the process of copying texts.

As a consequence, many Chán texts originating from the Táng were unacceptable for the educated Sòng Dynasty readership—both in terms of their ‘form’ and their frequently outdated doctrinal and lineage formulations. ‘Textual sanitation’ (i.e., the adaptation of earlier texts to the Sòng readership) became thus an important feature of the transition between the Táng/Five Dynasties periods and the beginning of the Sòng Dynasty.

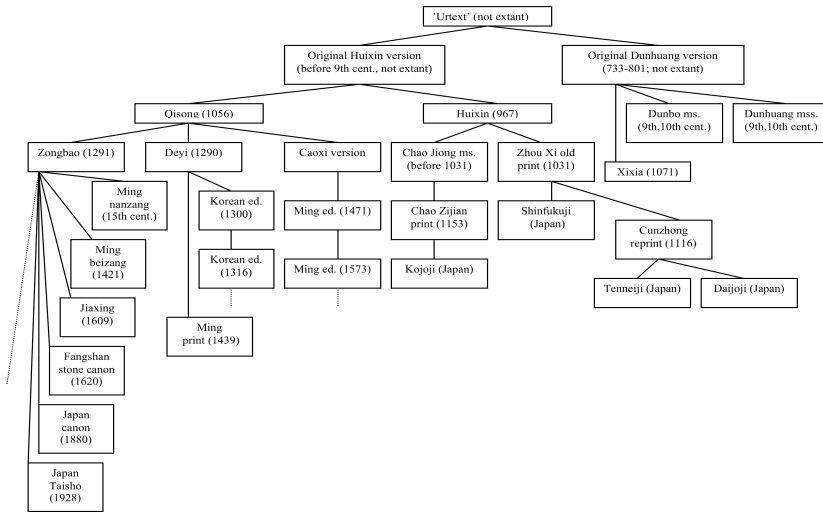


Figure 2: Reconstruction of the relations between the many versions of the *Platform Sūtra*, based on Yáng Zēngwén 1993:297 and Lǐ Shēn 1999:19; Yáng and Lǐ assume the existence of an ‘Urtext,’ on which the Dūnhuáng versions of the text are based on. From the early Sòng onwards the Huixīn 惠昕 (967) version became popular, resulting in the dominant Zōngbǎo 宗寶 version of 1291 (which was integrated in the Míng Dynasty Buddhist canon), adapted to the contemporary doctrinal and stylistic framework. For an alternative theory on the origin of the Dūnhuáng versions, see Anderl 2011b.

Good examples are the development of the different versions of the LJJ and the *Platform Sūtra*.<sup>46</sup> The extant versions of the *Platform Sūtra* differ significantly from the later versions of the Sòng and Yuán dynasties.

Through the heavy editing and revision processes performed in the process of ‘text sanitation,’ the language was to a certain degree adapted and homogenized, including orthography and grammatical markers. Phonetic loans were removed or reduced, the rhetorical structure became more stringent, and dialect influences were removed. Passages that doctrinally or structurally did not fit into the context of the Sòng Dynasty, were modified, and elements of current popular literary genres and techniques were added (e.g., passages in the style of *Recorded Sayings* were inserted into the *Platform Sūtra*).<sup>47</sup>

### *Narrative Blocks and the Reemergence of Commentary*

Structurally, many of the same stories or ‘narrative blocks’ (*Textbausteine*) were used in different texts at different times, often with modifications, abbreviations, deletions, added commentaries, etc.

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<sup>46</sup> For a recent study on the textual features of the Dūnhuáng versions of the *Platform Sūtra*, see Anderl 2011b (forthcoming). This text has an extraordinarily complicated history; in the article I argue that the textual features of the Dūnhuáng versions open for the possibility that *tán jīng* 壇經 originally might not have referred to the text as ‘*sūtra*’ at all, but referred to the *sūtra* used during Platform ordination ceremonies, i.e., the *Varjracchedika* (*Diamond*) *Sūtra*, and the text of the *Platform* scripture originated as a sermon on this *sūtra*.

On the differences between parallel sections found in Dūnhuáng materials and the Sòng standard *Transmission Text* JDCDL: “When comparing the *ghātas* and songs [...] with the text included in the JDCDL, we find that they match to a surprisingly high degree. This is not to say that they are identical, since even in the cases of the same work, we can normally find a number of differences. However, it is abundantly clear that the versions from Dūnhuáng are more primitive and less homogenous both as literature and with regard to their contents” (Sørensen 1989:131).

<sup>47</sup> John McRae (2003:100f) discerns several stages in the emergence of vernacular Chán literature, including the initial stage of transcription during which a variety of contemporary spoken Chinese is rendered into a written form. During the second stage, the texts undergo a process of ‘editorial modification’ (usually done during the Sòng Dynasty). On the evolution of the LJJ until it assumed its final ‘standard’ form (*Zhènzhōu Línjì Huìzhào chánshī yǔlù* 鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄, edited by Yuánjué Zōngyǎn 圓覺宗演; T.47, no.1985) in 1120, see Welter 2008:109–130 (Welter refers to the final version of the text as “the product of a collective Chán consciousness;” *ibid.*:109).

Thorough research on how these ‘blocks’ were assembled, modified, and circulated would be very awarding for our understanding of Chinese Buddhist literature in general, and Chán Buddhist literature in particular.

In the article *Some Preliminary Remarks to a Study of Rhetorical Devices in Chán Yǔlù Encounter Dialogues*, Christian Wittern conducts a case study on the rhetorical structure of encounter stories in Chán texts, with an emphasis on the *Jīngdé chuándēng lù*. He analyzes the responses to one of the most frequently used questions used for initiating ‘encounter dialogues,’ specifically questions concerning the ‘Meaning of the Coming of the Patriarch [Bodhidharma],’ identifying several patterns of responses. Although answers to the questions varied, several basic rhetorical devices can be singled out, most importantly the use of poetic diction. Wittern points out several possibilities of using these methods of analysis based on the electronic corpus of Chán texts included in CBETA for future research, as well as the necessity of refining electronic texts and search methods for this purpose. This kind of studies will be of significance for a more thorough understanding of the development and distribution of Chán stories as ‘Textbausteine,’ the variations of the stories, as well as their rhetorical function in specific Chán texts.

The use of these stories was an important device to connect to the tradition and authority of previous Chán masters and the texts attributed to them. On the other hand, modifications and the addition of commentaries gave room for challenging this authority (or rather reestablishing it in the context of a specific Chán or Zen master, as well as ‘actualizing’ the narrative in the respective contemporary context), and adding innovative interpretations. As such, the use of narrative blocks fulfilled a similar function as interlinear commentary literature for the Neo-Confucian scholars of the Sòng period.<sup>48</sup> Certain stories (one narrative block usually consisting of one story or an exchange in dialogue form) became so commonly known that short allusions to it (in the form of a phrase for example) would be sufficient to recreate the whole story in the mind of the reader.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> However, there are also significant differences; for example, in the Neo-Confucian context, the source text usually could not be altered and the ‘innovative’ aspect had to be packed into the commentary.

<sup>49</sup> This technique is also common in many other forms of Buddhist literature, for example, in the allusions to popular stories known from the *avadāna* literature. In commentary literature, a short phrase would often represent the entire story.

Commentaries on stories and passages contained in the Chán classics—although not written in the traditional form of interlinear commentary style—seemed to have developed a similar function as commentaries in the Confucian tradition.<sup>50</sup> Based on a set of ‘sacred’ and ‘orthodox’ texts, these commentaries and reinterpretations allowed a constant reflection and reinterpretation of the tradition. Frequently, enigmatic and obscure passages enjoyed great popularity and were subject to constant interpretations and reinterpretations. As Daniel Gardner observes in the Neo-Confucian context:

“[...] every word, every sentence, every paragraph of the canonical text is profoundly significant, deserving of the most genuine and thorough reflection” (Gardner 1998:401)

Similar to the Confucian context, there developed a ‘dialogic’ relationship between the classics and the commentaries<sup>51</sup> in Chán/Zen Buddhism (e.g., on the *gōngàn/kōan* literature).<sup>52</sup> The words of the ‘masters of old’ turned into ‘classical/orthodox’ literature, commentaries on them at the same time served the function of relating to the alleged wisdom, authority, and lineage of the former masters, as well as being an opportunity to ‘actualize’ the masters’ experience and add one’s own understanding and interpretation.<sup>53</sup> However—in contrast to Confucian commentary style—in the rhetoric of the Chán commentaries, the authority of the masters is often challenged and at the same time confirmed by this act, i.e., the masters’ *significance* is established by using them as the basis for the commentaries.<sup>54</sup> This

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<sup>50</sup> “Commentary is a genre, then, that illuminates the diversity of philosophical reflection in the Confucian tradition; that points to the Confucian canon as a vital, on-going source of inspiration, one capable of generating its own interpretation; and that shows the classics as both complex and indeterminate enough to allow the Chinese tradition its necessary pluralities” (Gardner 1998:398); in the Chán context, Faure introduces the concept of ‘rhetorical exegesis’: “After their earlier criticism, Chán commentators could not simply return to traditional exegesis. Thus, despite its intrinsic conservatism, Chán exegesis retained at least an appearance of freedom and displayed a strong rhetorical tendency; it was a rhetorical exegesis” (Faure 1993: 240).

<sup>51</sup> Gardner 1998:401.

<sup>52</sup> For an example, see below.

<sup>53</sup> In the Neo-Confucian context: “Commentary thus is capable of giving *new* meaning to a text; and by giving this new meaning to a text, the commentator is in a very clear sense creating a new text” (*ibid.*:415)

<sup>54</sup> Similar to the Confucian context: “In writing commentary to a text a person is acknowledging that that particular text has value and importance [...]” (*ibid.*:404).

stylized act of challenging the Buddha, the patriarchs or the masters of old is a ritualized confirmation of the Chán/Zen doctrines of ‘not relying on the written word,’ and the ‘transmission from Mind to Mind,’ aiming at establishing a specific master as living embodiment<sup>55</sup> of the wisdom and realization (and the authority accompanied by it) of his predecessors.

In the contribution *Dōgen’s Appropriation of Chinese Chán Sources: Sectarian and Non-sectarian Rhetorical Perspectives*, Steven Heine focuses on Dōgen’s approach to texts and language, analyzing his major writings, the *Shōbōgenzō* (written in the vernacular), and the *Eiheikōroku* (composed in Chinese). It is shown that rhetorical and linguistic devices used in these texts are directly related to key concerns of Zen, such as questions concerning transmission, spiritual authority, and sectarian identity. For example, the vernacular language is used as means of challenging Dōgen’s illustrious predecessors. Although Dōgen uses the method of selective citations to connect and pay respect to the Chinese Chán masters he studied with, he often imposes his own interpretations as a means to create ‘self-identity’ as a Zen master as well as a sectarian identity in the Japanese context. Other methods in the approach of ‘transgressing while transmitting’ include outright criticism of the former masters, or a combination of praise and criticism (as frequently encountered in the *Eiheikōroku*), the rephrasing or rewriting of the sayings of the master of old, or the emphasis on a ‘trans-sectarian’ standpoint.

During the Sòng Dynasty, there are also parallels between the processes of writing commentaries on enigmatic Chán dialogues or *huàtóu* as compared to, for example, writing commentaries of the equally cryptic (and popular) *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經). As Gardner points out:

“The outpouring of commentarial activity on the *Yijing* in the Sòng period, for example, attests to a pronounced struggle over the way an increasingly central work is to be read and used; but it also points to an intent by literati to rein in a particularly unwieldy and cryptic work”<sup>56</sup> (Gardner 1998:406)

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<sup>55</sup> On the Chán master as ‘concrete embodiment of ultimate truth,’ see Heine 1994:44–45; and as Faure remarks: “Paradoxically the rejection of the Buddhist canon allowed the canonization of the Chán patriarchs” (Faure 1993:240).

<sup>56</sup> On the motives of writing Confucian commentaries, see Gardner 1998:404.

Zhū Xī's 朱熹 (1130–1200) comments on the approach to Confucian commentary literature are surprisingly close to the description of the use of *gōng'àn* in the context of Sòng Dynasty Chán Buddhism:

“In this sort of intense, concentrative engagement with the classic, the words of the sages are, in Zhū's language, to be ‘chewed’ over their flavor fully ‘savored,’ so that their true taste might be known.”<sup>57</sup>

Even today, Chán/Zen masters often engage in *line-by-line commentaries* on important Chán works in dharma talks during meditation retreats.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Gardner 1998:406; and: “The Sòng reformation of the canon, to which we have alluded, was likewise, in large part, a response to ‘cultural and religious tension.’ This tension was one that had evolved over centuries with the introduction of new issues and new questions into the culture. Since the post-Hàn period, ‘Neo-Taoism’ and, especially, Buddhism had raised concerns more metaphysical and ontological than those addressed traditionally by the Confucian school [...]” (*ibid.*:412).

<sup>58</sup> The sermon on and the interpretation of a passage is usually embedded in a specific ritual setting. During several years in the 1980s, I had the opportunity to regularly attend the dharma talks of the Japanese Zen Master Jōshu Sasaki 承周佐々木 (born in 1907) during retreats in his monasteries in the United States. The lectures were an integral part of the intensive retreat periods (J. *sesshin* 接心) and were usually based on his favourite Chán scripture, the LJL (J. *Rinzairoku*). After the monks, nuns, and participating lay people had formally walked from the Meditation Hall to the Dharma Hall, the *Heart Sūtra* (Skr. *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya sūtra*) was chanted in Sino-Japanese pronunciation. Thereafter, the Zen Master would climb up the high-seat and be formally invited by the head monk (performing a number of ritual bows) to give a Dharma-talk. Next, the master would recite in a rather dramatic way a short passage from the text, first reading it in the traditional *bungo* 文語 style based on the original Chinese, followed by a version in Modern Japanese, after that being translated into English by the interpreter. In this setting, a short and often enigmatic passage of the text would serve as a point of departure for expounding his teachings in the form of a ‘response’ to the text. Often, each phrase or even each word would be explained or reinterpreted in order to display their ‘deeper meanings,’ actually a process which reminds me of the technique of ‘contemplative analysis’ *en vogue* already during the early days of the Chán School. Since a short passage of a couple of lines of the LJL entailed a lengthy Dharma-talk, it would take a year or more to ‘read’ through the text and comment on it. After he was finished with the text, Sasaki would typically start again at the beginning of the LJL; a procedure that has been repeated for nearly 50 years during his time as Zen teacher in the United States. As such, this type of oral ‘commentary’ and communication with the classics is very specific and embedded in a ritual setting. It is worth adding that these talks are literarily ‘recorded sayings’—in fact, recorded on a tape recorder.

On aspects of the interplay of Chán/Zen rhetoric devices and ritual settings, see also the contribution by William Bodiford in this volume.

*Speaking is Not Just Speaking...*

言語道斷 心行處滅

The way of words is cut off and the *locus* of mental activity is extinguished<sup>59</sup>

Is the way of words really cut off in Chán texts? On the contrary, there is an amazing variety of words referring to speech acts; indicating the great emphasis on the ‘recreation of the spoken word.’ Below is a list of a few of these expressions appearing in Chán literature of the later part of the Táng and the Five Dynasties periods:<sup>60</sup>

*bái* 白 ‘say to; address’ (this is originally an elevated expression for addressing the Buddha, 白佛曰 ‘address the Buddha, saying;’ also used in the pattern 白 X 云 Y ‘tell X Y; report Y to X’)

*chányǔ* 讒語 ‘slander’

*chū* 出 ‘CAUSE TO COME FORTH > utter’

*chū huì yán* 出穢言 ‘utter rude/insulting words, saying Y’

*cí* 詞 ‘word; speech’ (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:4.108 空拳黃蘗止啼之詞 [...] ‘[like the] *words* of empty-handed Huángbò stopping the wailing [of the infant]’)

*dá* 答/*dáyuē* 答曰 ‘answer Y’ (introducing direct speech)

*dài yuē* 代曰 ‘REPLACE SAY > say as a comment; comment, saying Y’ (this is a technical term introducing a comment on a master’s statement in the rhetorical structure of the *Recorded Sayings*; also *dài yún* 代云 is common but—since 云 typically introduces a quotation—not \**dài shuō* 代說)

*dào* 道 ‘speak; speak up; say’ (rarely used as introduction to direct speech; commonly used in imperative sentences in which somebody is requested to speak up or make a statement)

*dàohuà* 道話 ‘words; speech’ (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:2.088 “道無橫經，立者皆危。與摩道只是說道話道，未審如何是道？” “The Way is without side-roads, those standing [still] are all in danger. Talking like this is just expounding the Way (i.e., the Truth) *with words*; I wonder, how is the Way?”) (note this play with words here, including in one phrase several words referring to speech acts, in

<sup>59</sup> *Zhōnglùn* 中論, T.30, no.1564:25a.

<sup>60</sup> Based on Anderl 2004b, vol.2:565, fn.1508. X refers to a nominal phrase with the feature [+HUMAN]; Y refers to an object of a transitive verb referring to a speech act, Y typically consisting of a phrase, direct speech, or quotation.

- addition to playing with the ambiguity of meanings of *dào*, which means both ‘WAY > Truth’ and ‘to speak, words’)
- dào* 道著 ‘SPEAK AND ATTACH > convince; nail down with words’ (probably 著 should be regarded as verbal complement here)
- duì* 對 ‘TO FACE > RESPOND > reply’
- gào* 告 ‘to address somebody; to report to’ (can also introduce direct speech, often in the pattern X1 告 X2, or X1 告 X2 曰/言 Y)
- jiǎngshuō* 講說 ‘lecture; to lecture’
- jǔ* 舉 ‘TO RAISE > to bring up; raise the topic Y’ (this is a technical term; Y is usually a phrase or statement by a master which is brought up/cited in order to initiate a discussion or dialogue)
- jǔ* 舉似 ‘bring up to X’ (*sì* 似 is an unusual colloquial preposition from the Late Táng)
- kǒu* 口 ‘MOUTH > WITH THE MOUTH > verbally; orally (adverbial usage);’ there are also nominal usages as in *sēngkǒu* 僧口 ‘the words of the monks’ (以口亂說 ‘chaotically expound [the teaching] with words’)
- kǒután* 口談 ‘verbal; oral’
- kǒutóu* 口頭 ‘oral’ (this is a very interesting example of a Late Táng compound, a word referring to a speech act being combined with suffix *tóu*, e.g.: ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:2.067: “口裡道得有什麼利益，莫信口頭辦！” “Being able to speak up with words, what’s the use of it? Do not trust oral discussions (or: discussions based on words)!”)
- liánshēng* 連聲 ‘join somebody speaking; chime in [saying Y]’
- míng* 名/*míngwéi* 名為 ‘be called; be named’ (usually with a nominal object)
- niān* 拈 ‘TO PICK UP WITH ONE’S FINGERS > quote’ (a case of old for discussion; this is a technical term in *Chán Transmission Texts and Recorded Sayings*; it is common in the construction: X1 拈問 X2 Y ‘X1 raises the case/question asking X2 [about] Y’)
- shuō* 說 ‘speak’ (often used with coverbal constructions introducing the addressee, but rarely used as introduction to direct speech); ‘expound’ (with direct object); sometimes *shuō* is also used as a noun as in *zuò cǐ shuō zhě* 作此說者 ‘if one makes this (doctrinal) statement/proposition’
- wèi* 謂 ‘be called Y’
- wèiyán* 謂言 ‘state, claim that Y’
- wénzì* 文字 ‘written/canonical words’
- wèn* 問/*wènyán* 問言/*wènyuē* 問曰 ‘ask’ (introducing direct speech; often in the pattern 有 X 問言 Y ‘a certain X asked Y’)



- xù* 敘 ‘account; description; narration; talk’ (e.g., ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:3.015 “特教阿誰敘?” “Whose phrases, in particular, are you teaching?”)
- yán* 言 can introduce direct speech similar to *yuē* and *yán* (*xiàng* 向 X *yán* 言 Y ‘tell X that Y’); ‘be called’ (凡言聲者 ‘as for what is called *sound*’); nominal usage: ‘phrase, statement, saying’ (can be counted!); adnominal usage: ‘oral’ (similar to *kǒu* 口)
- yáncí* 言詞 ‘words; speech’ (言詞所說法 ‘the dharma expounded with words/speech’)
- yánjiào* 言教 ‘teaching based on words’ (usually refers to something written down or transmitted in written form, not necessarily transmitted orally; compare *yánshuō* ‘speech’)
- yánshuō* 言說 ‘spoken words, speech; verbal usage: to speak’
- yánshuō wénzì* ‘spoken and written words’
- yán-xià* 言下 ‘UNDER WORDS > based/caused/triggered by words’ (very frequent in the formula *yánxià dàwù* 言下大悟 ‘he was greatly enlightened caused by these words/when he heard these words’)
- yányǔ* 言語 ‘speak, speech’ (*yányǔ jiǎnsè* 言語蹇澀 ‘his speech was stammering (i.e., difficult to understand); to stutter;’ *yányǔ xué* 言語學 ‘teachings based on words’)
- yányǔ dàhé* 言語大曷 ‘SPEAK WITH A BIG/LOUD VOICE > to brag (?)’
- yǐn yún* 引云 ‘quoting (Z) saying Y’
- yǔ* 語 ‘words’ (*wú yǔ* 吾語 ‘my words;’ often emphatic and elevated in combination with pronoun *wú* 吾; ‘sayings;’ verbal usage: ‘say Y; tell that Y;’ there is also the rather exotic pattern X1 語 X2 言 Y ‘X1 addressed X2 saying Y’)
- yǔhuà* 語話 ‘to speak; words; the sound of speaking’ (a word not common before the Táng Dynasty)
- yǔjù* 語句 ‘words and phrases; speech’ (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974: 2.091 “我宗無語句，實無一法與人。” “My central doctrine is not based on words (lit., ‘is without *words and phrases*’) and truly there is not a single teaching to pass on to people.”)
- yǔyún* 語云 ‘say Y’ (introducing direct speech)
- yuē* 曰 ‘say Y’ (introducing direct speech, more rarely quotations from scriptural sources)
- yún* 云 ‘say Y’ (introducing a citation or quotation; often *yuē* 曰 is used in the same way; note that the mood of speech acts can of course be specified such as in 其婦更嗔口云 ‘his wife said even more angrily’)

*The Eloquence of Silence*

The vocabulary concerning the description of ‘silence’ is nearly as diverse and sophisticated as the one describing speech acts. From the very beginning, references to the incapability of responding to the questions of a master have been an important element in the rhetorical structure of the dialogues in Chán texts. In early Chán this ‘passive silence’ (i.e., the incapability of giving an adequate response) efficiently signaled the defeat of the opponent, often emphatically described in the form of four-letter phrases, for example: *dù kǒu wú cí* 杜口無詞 ‘BLOCK MOUTH NOT HAVE WORDS;’ *liàngjiǔ bù yǔ* 量久不語 ‘be not able to speak for a long while;’ *wú cí gǎn duì* 無詞敢對 ‘having no words daring to respond with;’ *mòrán wú duì* 默然無對 ‘be silent and not able to answer;’ *mòrán bù yǔ* 默然不語 ‘be silent and without words;’ *wú cí kě yán* 無詞可言 ‘unable to utter any word;’ *qián kǒu jié shé* 鉗口結舌 ‘RESTRAIN MOUTH BIND TONGUE> keep silent; to silence somebody;’ *tǔ-bù-chū* 吐不出 ‘SPIT OUT NOT COME FORTH > not be able to speak out; not be able to utter a word.’

Silence (or certain types of silence) eventually developed into positive concepts,<sup>61</sup> and the silence of the master developed into one of the standard responses to the questions of the students (by contrast to the dumbfounded silence of the ignorant disciple), indeed, the story of Mahākāśyapa’s silence (accompanied by a smile, though!) as response to the Buddha holding up a flower became one of the iconic stories, expressing the ‘special transmission outside the teachings [based on canonical texts]’ (*jiàowài biéchuán* 教外別傳; J. *kyōge betsuden*) and the ‘transmission from Mind to Mind’ (*yǐ xīn chuán xīn* 以心傳心; J. *ishin denshin*).<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup> On the emphasis on silence in the context of the promotion of ‘silent illumination’ by the Cáodòng 曹洞 School (J. Sōtō) during the Sòng Dynasty, see Schlütter 1999:130. On the story of the ‘thundering silence’ by Vimalakīrti as response to a question by Mañjuśrī, see Faure 1993:197.

<sup>62</sup> See Welter 2000; on the development of this story into a *gōngàn*, see *ibid.*:94f. Another interesting interpretation of silence appears in Sōtō funeral rituals, in the context of the postmortem bestowal of the precepts: “A corpse, however, can offer no indication that it hears and understands the questions of the precept administrator. The silence of the corpse presented medieval Sōtō monks with a *kōan*—a Zen problem to be resolved through Zen insight. In resolving this *kōan*, medieval Sōtō monks reinterpreted silence as the ultimate affirmative response, the proper Zen expression of the ineffable” (Bodiford 1992:160).

Indeed, silence can be a powerful rhetorical device—also in terms of *what is not mentioned* or topics which are neglected or suppressed in specific Chán/Zen texts.

One of the most striking features of Táng Chán texts is the nearly complete silence on ethical issues (and even the ‘Pure Rules’ of the Sòng predominantly deal with ritualistic behaviour in monastic settings rather than with ethical or moral issues). On the one hand, the Chán Buddhist clergy was firmly embedded in the *vinaya* regulations of the Táng period concerning ordination and precepts; on the other hand, ethical discussions are basically absent in Chán texts or transformed into the ‘teachings of the Mind.’<sup>63</sup> The reintroduction of ethical issues and the discussion (and criticism) of the moral dimension of Buddhist concepts eventually played an important role in the Neo-Confucian *yúlù*, and added to their popularity among literati.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> See the article *Coming to Terms with Terms*.

<sup>64</sup> On this issue, see also Gardner 1991:595. On the study of one of the few remains concerning the view of Táng Chán monks on *vinaya* and regulations, see Poceski 2006 (a study of *Guīshān’s Admonitions*, *Guīshān jīngcè* 嵩山警策, preserved on Pelliot Chinois 4638). It shows that Chán monks were subjected to the common regulations and restrictions concerning the Buddhist clergy during the Táng (*ibid.*:20). It also shows the awareness concerning monastic corruption and the decline of moral behaviour during that time: “Even though the problem of monastic corruption was a perennial issue and not unique to the ninth century, there was a sense of a steady worsening of the quality of the clergy that was related to the increase of its size. Part of the problem can be traced back to government’s policy of selling ordination certificates in order to raise cash for its treasury” (*ibid.*:21); and on the attitudes toward discipline and morality: “Notwithstanding the call for radical transcendence invoked by the Chán idea, the text repeatedly makes it clear that normative monastic practices and observances are the foundation of authentic spirituality” (*ibid.*:35). This fits also well in the soteriological scheme of sudden awakening followed by gradual cultivation. On *Rules of Purity* (*qīngguī* 清軌, J. *shingī*) in the Japanese context, see, for example, Foulk 2006. Both Dōgen and Eisai were also concerned with the Hīnayāna rules in addition to the Bodhisattva precepts (*ibid.*:146). However, the *Chányuàn qīngguī* 禪苑清規 and later texts on monastic rules seemed to have had a dominating role in establishing Japanese monasticism and eventually led to the abolishment of the ‘Hīnayāna’ precepts (*ibid.*:147f.). For authoritative texts on Rinzaï and Sōtō monastic rules in contemporary Japan, see *ibid.*:162f.; for an interpretation of the precepts as the ‘essence of the Buddha’ by Dōgen and his disciple Kyōgō, see Bodiford 1992:157; the (re)interpretation of the basic Mahāyāna precepts is actually very close to those found already in early Dūnhuáng Chán texts in the context of ‘contemplative analysis.’ Kyōgō’s interpretation of ‘not killing’: “The Mahāyāna precept ‘not to kill’ should be interpreted not as a vow against killing, but as a realization of living enlightenment that clears away the ‘dead,’ static entities of our

Through the *device of exclusion* specific doctrinal issues or questions of lineage/transmission can be effectively suppressed or superseded. This method is often much more effective than direct attacks or criticism. However, these processes are of course not always conscious strategies but rather the result of sectarian, historical, or doctrinal developments. As in the case of Chán, the whole formative period was retrospectively rewritten in the context of Sòng orthodoxy, with the effect that this entire formative period became ‘deleted’ (and replaced by a normative account) in historiographical works. Fortunately, the discovery and study of the Dūnhuáng materials enable us to get a glimpse of this early period.

Finally, another version of silence should be mentioned: one which is retrospectively broken and where a discourse or state of affairs is projected onto earlier historical periods. Examples of this are the Sòng Buddhists’ projections of lineages, doctrines, and ‘encounters’ into the Táng period, thus creating a ‘golden age of Chán’ (an issue which has been widely discussed and studied in Japanese and Western secondary literature). More recent examples can be found in the period of adaptation of Zen to the sociopolitical and religious context of the Meiji period, and the introduction and adaptation of Zen to a Western audience.<sup>65</sup>

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illusions” (*ibid.*:158).

<sup>65</sup> For an interesting case study on the introduction of the notion of ‘Zen experience’ (and the Japanese neologisms used in this discourse: “The irony of this situation is that the key Japanese terms for experience—*keiken* 経験 and *taiken* 体験—are rarely attested in premodern Japanese texts.”), see Sharf 1993:21f; on ‘Zen enlightenment’: “Zen ‘enlightenment’ far from being a transcultural and trans-historical subjective experience, is constituted in elaborately choreographed and eminently public ritual performances” (*ibid.*:2); on the rhetoric of Zen and its compatibility with science, technology, and philosophy, see *ibid.*:9; on Zen war rhetoric, see *ibid.*:9. More generally, concerning the supposed close relationship between Zen and Japanese culture and art (one of the stereotypes created in the course of the transmission of Zen to the West), Bodiford states: “Zen artists and Zen monks can be found in limited numbers. But at the vast majority of Zen temples—and there were about twenty thousand Zen temples versus only seventy-two monasteries—no one practices art, no one meditates, and no one actively pursues the experience of enlightenment. The popular image of Zen known in the West and the image promoted by scholars both fail to reflect this reality. Neither tells us what religious functions truly occur at Zen temples. Surveys of Zen priests reveal that most monks stop practicing meditation as soon as they leave the monasteries at which they receive their basic training. Once monks return to their local village temple, lay-oriented ceremonies, especially funeral services, occupy their energies to the total exclusion of either Zen art or Zen meditation” (Bodiford 1992:149).

As demonstrated above, the vocabulary referring to speech acts was very diverse and sophisticated in the Chán texts of the Táng and Five Dynasties periods. Parallel to the development of specific Chán genres during the Sòng, the reintroduction of often multi-layered commentaries, as well as the export and further development of these genres in Korea and Japan, the technical terminology underwent further expansion and sophistication. Kenneth Kraft<sup>66</sup> cites a few examples from the *Blue Cliff Record*, referring to terms related to ‘capping phrases’<sup>67</sup> in *kōan* literature, e.g., *zhuóyǔ* 著語 (J. *jakugo*), still the most common term for this type of phrases in Japan; *xiàyǔ* 下語 (J. *agyo*) “to give a turning word” (*ibid.*), *yī zhuǎnyǔ* 一轉語 (J. *ittengo*) “one turning word” (*ibid.*), *biéyǔ* 別語 (J. *betsugo*) “a response to a *kōan* that differs from an answer already given by someone else” (*ibid.*). *Dàiyǔ* 代語 (J. *daigo*), which was already common in *Transmission Texts* from the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, assumed a more technical meaning, “an answer given on behalf of another person (i.e., when a monk in a recorded dialogue cannot answer the master’s question)” (*ibid.*). In Japan, several additional terms became current, such as *sego* 俗語, referring specifically to phrases that originated in Japan, *heigo* 評語 “ordinary Japanese expressions, taken from daily life rather than published anthologies” (*ibid.*), *zengo* 前語 “phrase that presents only one aspect of a *kōan*” (*ibid.*), and *hongo* 本語 “phrase that caps a *kōan* in a final or comprehensive manner” (*ibid.*), *omote no go* 表の語 “surface word” used to “comment from a conventional standpoint,” *ura no go* 裏の語 “inside words,” which were used to “comment from an absolute standpoint” (*ibid.*) and *sōgo* 総語 “combined words” which are supposed “to express the integration of the ultimate and the conventional” (*ibid.*:133).<sup>68</sup>

Thus, this terminology concerning speech acts and literary references developed into an important tool for navigating through the increasingly vast and complex Chán/Zen/Sōn literature, marking and identifying sections in multilayered and complicated Chán texts.

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<sup>66</sup> Kraft 1992:132.

<sup>67</sup> On ‘capping phrases,’ see Hori 2003.

<sup>68</sup> Needless to say, many of these technical terms reflect the underlying hermeneutical systems of the texts which employ them.

In his contribution *The Rhetoric of Chinese Language in Japanese Zen*, William Bodiford focuses on the ways in which medieval Japanese monks handled the large amount and variety of Chán literature imported from China. Chinese literary forms were regarded as an authentic medium for transporting the message of the Buddha. The bulk of Chinese Chán literature was introduced to Japan during a period of significant political and social changes, and at a time when Japanese Zen searched for an own identity as well as a supreme status among the Buddhist schools. Zen institutions became not only religious centers but also introduced many aspects of Chinese material culture, Sòng-style Confucianism, and Chinese learning. Zen monks were confronted not only with new ritual and literary texts, but also with numerous new terms and nomenclature, as well as the vernacular language of the Sòng and new readings of Chinese characters. Bodiford analyses various characteristics of the ‘rhetoric of Chinese’ practiced by Japanese monks and the creation of a specific Sino-Japanese style of expression; a type of language which eventually also spread beyond the confines of Zen monastic institutions and developed into a medium of communication between temples and secular officials. It is shown that the genre of *Recorded Sayings* (*J. goroku*) developed a very clear reference in the Japanese context, referring to the “records of Chinese sayings pronounced by Zen teachers as part of their official monastic duties,” with basically 13 types of *goroku* found in the libraries of Japanese Zen temples. The dynamics between different styles of expressions, including texts written in ‘pure’ Literary Chinese, mixed-style texts, as well as those written in Japanese, became one of the defining characteristics in the development of Zen language, literature and genres. Bodiford emphasizes the high demands on the literary abilities of Zen teachers, expected to produce sermons and texts in a variety of specific genres, styles, and pronunciations (leading occasionally to a situation where the very same text can be read in three different ways!). Even in contemporary Japan these skills are still expected from Zen priests, often in the context of funeral services, which are of great importance for the interaction with lay believers and the income of the temples. Faced with the high demands on their linguistic and rhetorical skills, Japanese Zen priests nowadays often rely on sophisticate computer software assisting in the composition of their funerary sermons.

*Ambivalence Towards the Written Word*

“[...] the negation of language had to be attempted in nonlinguistic ways, through ‘skillful means’ (*upāya*) and ‘body language’ (blows, shouts, gestures, facial expressions) or some kind of ‘qualified’ or paradoxical silence.”<sup>69</sup>

‘Non-reliance on the written word’ (*bù lì wénzì* 不立文字)<sup>70</sup> became one of the most important Zen slogans, despite the fact—as has been pointed out many times previously—that no other East Asian Buddhist school produced so many written and printed words in the course of its history. This slogan was an important rhetorical device (in written texts...) to distinguish oneself from more scholarly and canonical approaches to Buddhism, and to justify the claim of a transmission of the truth beyond the realm of language (functioning from person-to-person and Mind-to-Mind). As such, the ambivalent attitude<sup>71</sup> towards the written word and language *per se* was an important feature already found in early Chán works and reappearing throughout the history of Chán/Sōn/Zen.

Language and its soteriological function, as well as its relationship to an ‘ultimate truth,’ were issues frequently addressed in canonical Buddhist literature, both in the translated *sūtra* and *śāstra* literature, and in pre-Chán Chinese commentary literature. The topic of ‘language’ was thus familiar during the formative period of the Chán movement during the late 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. In addition, the

<sup>69</sup> Faure 1993:198.

<sup>70</sup> The slogan appeared in the 8<sup>th</sup> century (see *ibid.*:196).

<sup>71</sup> For a good example, see the legend of Dàhuì Zōnggāo (1089–1163) destroying the woodblocks of the famous *gōngān* collection *Blue Cliff Record* (*Biyán lù* 壁巖錄): “This episode suggests the tensions at play in Chán’s attempt both to condemn and to create texts. Although the work had been produced by his own teacher, Dàhuì felt strongly that the circulation of these texts were a detriment to Chán. Handwritten notes presented similar dangers” (Heller 2009:111; see also Levering 1978:32–33). For letters (*shūjiǎn* 書簡, *chídú* 尺牘) as important media for the exchange between Sòng Chán master and their lay followers, see Heller 2009:112. Another example is Línjì’s criticism of Chán students taking notes of the lectures of their teachers, encouraging his students not to blindly trust even his own words: 道流，莫取山僧說處。說無憑據，一期間圖畫虛空，如彩畫像等喻 “Followers of the Way, *don’t accept what I state*. Why? Statements have no proof. They are pictures temporarily drawn in the empty sky, as in the metaphor of the painted figure.” (LJL, ed. and tr. in Sasaki/Kirchner 2009:278; emphasis added). Note that the LJL does not generally devalue words but rather assigns them a function of expedient means valid temporarily under specific circumstances.

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries had witnessed massive scholarly efforts by Buddhist monks to sort out and adapt the many (often contradictory) doctrinal statements found in the scriptures, and many Buddhist schools of thought had formed around sets of doctrines. One aspect of the emergence of the Chán movement was certainly as a reaction against dominantly scholastic approaches trying to cut their way through the doctrinal and terminological jungle of Buddhist texts.<sup>72</sup>

In Christoph Anderl's contribution *Coming to Terms with Terms: The Rhetorical Function of Technical Terms in Chán Buddhist Texts*, the approach to terms and concepts during different periods of development of Chinese Chán is analyzed. Certain techniques of tackling the enormous amount of terms and doctrines circulating during the Táng Dynasty can be singled out, such as the creative reinterpretation of key terms and assigning them a specific 'Chán flavour,' often interpreting traditional Buddhist concepts as functions of the Mind (*xīn* 心), the analysis of terms using a Two-Truths model, the 'conventional' truth being valid in the realm of a canonical meaning of a term, and the 'absolute' truth applying to the Chán interpretation. As important device, the amount of terms discussed by Chán masters became restricted to a number of key terms. In the course of time many of these terms became specifically associated with the Chán school(s).<sup>73</sup> Other important techniques were the simplification

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<sup>72</sup> "The rhetorical discourse of Chán was partly a response to this exegetical excess, which was itself an attempt to overcome the closure of the Buddhist canon" (Faure 1993:237–238); for a discussion of the shift from the hermeneutical to the rhetorical model, see *ibid.*:238; on the notion of 're-oralizing' the scriptural tradition, see *ibid.*:239; on the survival of the hermeneutical tradition in the theory of the 'harmony between the canonical teachings and Chán' (*jiào Chán yīzhì* 教禪一至), see *ibid.*:239.

<sup>73</sup> Including the term 'chán' 禪 itself, by the way. Originally, *chánshī* 禪師 generally referred to a monk specialized in the practice of meditation (Skr. *dhyāna*). However, by the end of the Táng *chánshī* had acquired a sectarian notion and referred to a master related to the Chán School. This re-definition of 'chán' started already at an early stage: "[...] early Chán ideological tracts redefine the term 'chán' (also one of the six perfections), such that it no longer refers to a particular practice, but rather denotes the enlightened perspective itself. The claim that Táng Chán actually rejected ritual and formal meditation practice is in part founded upon a misunderstanding of this polemic use of 'chán' or 'zuòchán' 坐禪 in early Chán ideological tracts (i.e., texts attributed to the East-Mountain or Northern School teachings). According to these works, 'chán' does not refer to a specific practice or activity at all, but is used as a synonym for 'seeing directly one's true nature'" (Sharf 1991:89). And, more generally on the process of integrating Buddhist terms and concepts in a 'Chán



of the meanings of terms (often by limiting their semantic range and their references) and the integration of them in Chán slogans, the ‘personalization’ of terms (i.e. assigning sets of terms and phrases to specific masters, these terms and phrases consequently becoming easily identifiable trademarks of these Chán masters and their styles of teaching). Eventually, important terms were integrated in the linguistic and rhetorical structure of vernacular texts of popular genres such as the *Recorded Sayings* and the *gōng'àn* collections, and underwent creative transformations and re-interpretations.

Another example of an attempt to justify the use of language is the division into ‘live words’ (Ch. *huójù* 活句; K. *kwalgū*) and ‘dead words’ (Ch. *sǐjù* 死句; K. *sagu*).<sup>74</sup> The latter refers to the writings of canonical Buddhist literature whereas ‘live words’ are able to cease conceptual thinking and trigger enlightenment. Naturally, the ‘live words’ are attributed to the utterances of the Chán masters:

“By resorting to the device of the ‘live word,’ Chán exegetes justified their use of conceptual ideas—provided of course that such ideas were intended to catalyze awakening—without belying their claim that such descriptions differed fundamentally from those used in the scholastic schools.”<sup>75</sup>

Also the scholar and Chán monk Guīfēng Zōngmì 圭峰宗密 (780–841) marginalized the role of canonical scriptures in the process of attaining realization, and for Chinul (知訥, 1158–1210) only *hwadu* (Ch. *huàtóu* 話頭) qualified as live words.<sup>76</sup>

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environment’: “Much like the boy with the golden finger, everything touched by Chán rhetoric turns to Chán. This tendency—latent in Mahāyāna and blatant in Chán—to swallow up rival traditions in a rhetorical slight of hand which refuses to recognize significant differences persists to the present day” (*ibid.*:91). Also in more modern times certain terms became ‘hyped’ and meanings and interpretations projected upon them. One good example is the word *jiki* (直, Ch. *zhí*) which in Chinese Chán texts was used as an adjective meaning ‘straight, direct, straightforward,’ etc. In Meiji Japan it was promoted to expressing the ‘essence’ of Zen with several sub-meanings: “[...] (1) going forward without hesitation, (2) direct mind-to-mind transmission, and (3) ‘the spirit of Japan’ [!] [...]” (Sharf 1993:12).

<sup>74</sup> “As these terms are used by Chán teachers, any type of theoretical description, whether found in Chán or in scholastic writings, would be considered a ‘dead-word,’ while any teaching that is intended not to explain but to enlighten would be a ‘live-word’” (Buswell 1988:247).

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*:247.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*:248.

In the *Recorded Sayings* of Chán Master Yuánwù Kèqín 圓悟克勤 (1063–1135)—one of the most important precursors of *kánhuà* Chán (‘Chán observing the *key phrase*, *huàtóu* 話頭’) and commentator on one hundred *gōngàns* (*Sòng gǔ bǎi zé* 頌古百則) compiled by Xuědòu Zhòngxǎn 雪竇重顯 (980–1052)—there is an interesting discussion on this topic (a tentative translation is added); it becomes also clear from his discussion that *huójù* should be translated with ‘live phrase’ in this case rather than with ‘live words,’ since Yuánwù Kèqín refers to fixed units of popular phrases uttered by the former masters:

他參活句不參死句。活句下薦得。永劫不忘。死句下薦得。自救不了。只如諸人。即今作麼生會他活句。莫是即心即佛是活句麼沒交涉。莫是非心非佛是活句麼沒交涉。不是心不是佛不是物是活句麼沒交涉。莫是入門便棒是活句麼沒交涉。入門便喝是活句麼沒交涉。但有一切語言盡是死句。作麼生是活句。還會麼。

They [i.e., the Táng masters Déshān 德山 and Línjì 臨濟] consulted *live words* (or: *live phrases*) and did not consult *dead words* (or: *dead phrases*). If one makes achievements<sup>77</sup> based on *live words* (*phrases*) then they will not be forgotten for eternal *kalpas*. If one makes achievements based on *dead words* (*phrases*) then one will not even be able to save oneself. As for all of you people, how do you understand their [i.e. those masters’] *live words* (*phrases*)? Isn’t ‘this very mind is the Buddha’ a *live phrase*?—It is of no relevance! Isn’t ‘it is not the Mind, it is not the Buddha’ a *live phrase*?—It is of no relevance! Isn’t ‘it is the Mind and not the Buddha’ a *live phrase*?— It is of no relevance! Isn’t ‘entering the gate and then use the staff [to hit]’ a *live phrase*?—It is of no relevance! Isn’t ‘entering the gate and then shouting’ a *live phrase*?<sup>78</sup>—It is of no relevance! There are just all these utterances and all of them are *dead phrases*. How then are *live words* (*phrases*)? Do you understand?” (*Yuánwù Fóguǒ chánshī yǔlù* 圓悟佛果禪師語錄, fascicle 11, T.47, no.1997:765b13-20)

It is quite clear that according to Yuánwù’s opinion the transmitted phrases and teaching methods of the famous Táng master have themselves turned into ‘dead words/phrases’ and have assumed a

<sup>77</sup> *Jiàn-dé* 薦得 here in the sense of ‘achieving realization;’ this is a colloquial expression frequently found in Sòng Dynasty Chán scriptures. It could be also translated ‘hit the jackpot’ (lit. ‘ATTAIN [FROM] THE MAT’) since it originally refers to obtaining all the money placed on a straw-mat while gambling.

<sup>78</sup> I.e., teaching methods typical for the famous Táng masters.

status not different from the written words found in canonical Buddhist literature. After the above passage, the text continues with the description of several encounters, including short enigmatic phrases. Without further specifying it, Yuánwù seems to regard these utterances as real ‘live words/phrases.’<sup>79</sup> Seen from a linguistic angle, Yuánwù excludes the phrases of the former masters based on the fact that they still have a transparent structure, both in terms of their grammar and semantic contents. Only the enigmatic and often paradoxical statements seem to qualify as real ‘live phrases.’

Another solution to the problematic status of language and written words is the device of reverting to *non-linguistic* signs, such as symbols (for example, in the form of circular graphics), a practice probably initiated by Nányáng Huìzhōng 南陽慧忠 (675–?), and also used by Dòngshān Liángjié 洞山良價 (807–869) and Gāofēng Yuánmiào 高峰原妙 (1238–1295). In the Korean context this was initiated by Sunji 順之 (fl. 858) and revived by Hamhō Tūkt’ong 涵虛得通 (1376–1433) and Paekp’a Kūngsōn 白坡互璇 (d. 1852).<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> As already mentioned above, based on this interpretation and the fear that ‘live words’ may turn into ‘dead words’ it is not surprising that Yuánwù’s famous disciple Dàhuì Zōnggǎo 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163) (one of the most famous promoters of *kànhuà* 看話 meditation) later on supposedly tried to destroy the wooden printing blocks of the *Blue Cliff Record*; see Schlütter 2008:110. In Chán literature there are of course cases in which enlightenment is achieved based on the words of the canonical scriptures, most prominently the Sixth Patriarch Huinéng who—according to the *Platform Sūtra*—achieved sudden enlightenment when hearing the *Diamond Sūtra*.

<sup>80</sup> For the use of diagrams in the Korean context, see Plassen’s contribution to this volume. On the issue of non-linguistic signs, see also Buswell 1988:248–250. For symbols related to the teachings of the Korean monk Sunji, appearing in fascicle 20 of ZTJ (ed. Yanagida 1974:5.114–5.121), see Anderl 2004b, vol.1:31, fn.192. For the design and format of ‘succession certificates’ (J. *shisho* 嗣書) in the Japanese context and other documents related to transmission, see Bodiford 1991:447:

“The format of the succession certificate (*shisho*) that has been used since at least the sixteenth century depicts the names of all the buddhas and patriarchs (legendary and historical) down to the present master and disciple, arranged in a large circle around Shakyamuni’s name, which occupies the center. An unbroken, wavy red line winds circles through and connects all the names. The circular arrangement depicts not so much a linear, historical transmission from one generation to the next, but rather the simultaneous enlightenment of all beings with Shakyamuni. The second document, the blood lineage (*kechimyaku*) chart, records the genealogical transmission of the mythical Zen precepts (*zenkai* [禪戒]) that embody enlightenment. Here all the patriarchs are listed in sequential fashion, one after the other. The third chart, known as the

Therese Sollien's contribution *Sermons by Xū Yún: A Special Transmission within the Scriptures* investigates Chán rhetoric and language, as well as the use of authoritative scriptures in a more modern Chinese context, concretely, in a study of the Chinese Chán master Xū Yún (1840–1959) who played an important role in revitalizing Chán Buddhism in China. The emphasis of the study is on an analysis of his approach to doctrines and language in his writings. Sollien observes that already in his biographical/hagiographical account the model of the 'classical' Chán masters is followed, including the account of severe hardships and oral and physical abuse by his teacher, eventually leading to his enlightenment experience and mirroring the prototypical disciple-master relationship between Huángbò and Línjì. It is shown that his approach to Chán did not attempt to be innovative or iconoclastic but rather characterized by a heavy dependence on the traditional Chán literature, and his role defined as transmitter of the classical texts of Chán. This close relationship to the classics is also characterized by his use of language, often recreating the Chán idiomatic language based on the Sòng period colloquial Chinese. By comparing his sermons to a variety of source texts, Sollien demonstrates the heavy reliance on these texts, the incorporation of the passages being one of the most important components in the rhetorical structure of his sermons. Having committed many of the Chán classics to his memory, he verbatim quotes passages throughout his sermons.

### *Genre and Rhetoric*

#### *Chán Hagiographies and Transmission Texts*

“Never an institutionally distinct or independent entity in China, the Chán school was not distinguished by its practices but indeed by its rhetoric and mythical genealogy—two powerful ideological weapons

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‘Great Task’ (*daiji* [大事]), a reference to the statement in the *Lotus Sutra* that all buddhas appear in the world for the sole task of leading beings to enlightenment, is the most problematic of the three documents. Its appearance and format vary widely, even among versions bestowed by the same master. Usually it consists of geometric diagrams that symbolize the wordless content of Zen enlightenment.”

On transmission certificates in 20<sup>th</sup> century China, see Welch 1963. On the ‘blood lineage’ documents (J. *kechimyaku* 血脈), see also Faure 2000:64f.

that were used successfully to create a socially and politically privileged elite of ‘enlightened masters’ within the Buddhist clergy.”<sup>81</sup>

Typical Chán genres, such as the *Transmission Texts*<sup>82</sup> or the *Recorded Sayings*, are characterized by their heterogeneous structure: they constitute multifunctional texts combining several features, layers, and sub-genres. Each sub-genre has specific rhetorical and linguistic features (see *Figure 3*).

The short narrative passages in ZTJ, for example, have a larger number of Literary Chinese features as compared to the language of the dialogues. Occasionally, sentences in the narrative passages are even rephrased in the dialogues in order to fit the vernacular structure, as for example in the following passage. It is based on the *Bǎolin zhuàn* 寶林傳 (BLZ) from the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, an early *Transmission Text* composed in the context of the Hóngzhōu 洪州 School.<sup>83</sup>

心生歡喜，則往寶鉢羅窟，擊其石門。爾時迦葉在於窟中問：“是何人敲我此戶？”

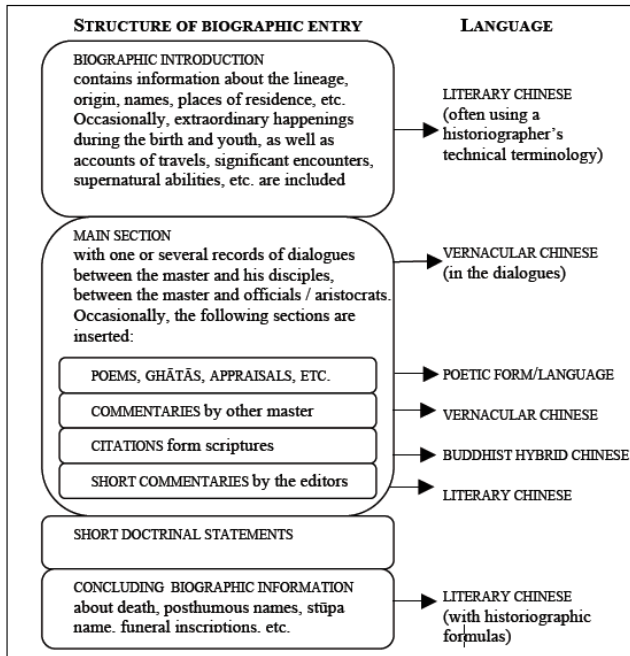
His mind produced joy and consequently he went to the Pippala cave and *knocked at the stone-gate*. At that time Kāśyapa was in the Pippala cave and asked: “Who is *knocking at this door of mine?*” (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:1.027, based on BLZ)

In the dialogue, Literary Chinese *jī qí shí mén* 擊其石門 is rephrased in a much more colloquial style, using the vernacular *qiāo* 敲 ‘to knock’ (which was virtually absent in texts dating from before the Six Dynasties period) instead of Literary Chinese *jī* 擊 ‘to strike,’ and the unusual combined usage of a personal and demonstrative pronoun in adnominal position (‘MY–THIS–DOOR’).

<sup>81</sup> Foulk 1992:526.

<sup>82</sup> There is abundant secondary literature on Chán *Transmission of the Lamp* texts (*chuándēng lù* 傳燈錄): for a systematic studies on early historical Chán texts, see Yanagida 1967; for a concise overview of the evolution of this genre, see McRae 1986:73-97; see also McRae 2003; for a very good recent study (with a focus on the Dūnhuáng transmission text LDFBJ, as well as the symbols of transmission), see Adamek 2007.

<sup>83</sup> For a study on the Hóngzhōu School, see Poceski 2007a and Jia Jinhua 2007.



*Figure 3: Structure as Rhetorical Device*

This is an example of the heterogeneous build-up of a typical bibliographic entry in Chán historiographical works such as ZTJ. The 'frame narrative' provides biographic information and assigns a monk's place in the lineage (or 'clan'), basically using Literary Chinese as linguistic means, heavily intermixed with historiographical terminology (similar to the structure of secular historical writings). The main focus is on the account of a monk's encounters and deeds. Also here, the frame narratives to the dialogues use a more conservative language, whereas the dialogues themselves are mainly written in the vernacular, expressing the 'live words' of a master (contrasted to the 'dead words' of the canonical scriptures).

*Notes on the Beginnings of the Chán Historiographic Genre*

The *Zútáng jí* 祖堂集 (ZTJ, 952 AD)<sup>84</sup> is the first comprehensive Chán transmission history and as such a milestone in the development of the Chán historiography. There are certain particularities that differ from the somewhat later JDCDL (1004 AD), which became the first imperially sanctioned Chán history, eventually being incorporated in the Sòng Dynasty Chinese Buddhist canon.<sup>85</sup>

## STRUCTURE AND SOURCES

As a special feature of ZTJ, there are ‘empty slots’ in the sequence of the bibliographic entries and occasionally only minimal information on the lineage of a given monk is provided. When there are no other records other than the basic lineage association, then this is marked by the phrases *wèi dǔ xínglù* 未覩行錄 (or *wèi dǔ xíngzhuàng* 未覩行狀) ‘we have not (yet) read the *Record of Deeds*’<sup>86</sup> or *wèi dǔ shílù* 未覩實錄 ‘we have not yet read the *Veritable Records*.’ By contrast, this kind of reference to missing information is not recorded in the JDCDL. A typical entry in ZTJ is introduced by biographic information that varies considerably in length. However, all entries

<sup>84</sup> On the background of ZTJ and its lineage system, see Anderl 2004b:1–95; see also Jorgensen 2005:729–752. The ZTJ represents an inclusive lineage system with a focus on the lineage of Xuēfēng Yícún 雪峰義存 (822–908): “The Southern Táng rulers supported Buddhism as a source of legitimacy for their regime, and it is thought that a number of representatives of different regional Chán movements gathered in the Southern Táng area, bringing the lore and lineage mythology of their traditions together and making possible the construction of a unified vision of Chán as a large family” (Schlütter 2008:21). By contrast, the JDCDL favoured the Fāyǎn Wényì 法眼文益 (885–958) lineage, whereas the *Tiānshèng guǎngdēng lù* 天聖廣燈錄, compiled by Lǐ Zūnxù 李遵勗 (988–1038) in 1029, promoted the Línjì Yìxué 臨濟義玄 (d. 866) lineage.

<sup>85</sup> On the imperial sanctioning of Chán transmission texts, see Schlütter 2008:13; Emperor Rénzōng 仁宗 (r. 1022–1063), for example, wrote the preface for the *Tiānshèng guǎngdēnglù* 天聖廣燈錄 (*Expanded Record [of the Transmission] of the Lamp from the Tiānshèng Era [1023–1032]*); concerning texts sponsored by emperors, Schlütter adds: “Rather than expressing Huizōng’s personal feelings about Chán Buddhism, his preface can be understood to mirror a sentiment widely shared by all levels of the educated elite, and it shows how thoroughly Chán Buddhism had become established and integrated into elite culture by the late eleventh century.”

<sup>86</sup> *Xínglù* typically contain information on the name, background, place of birth, monastic affiliation and career, etc.

record the line of succession, and this seems to be the most essential information provided by the authors of ZTJ. Usually, there follows information about the place of birth, the main locations of the teaching activities, the canonical name as master (*shīhuì* 師諱), the family name (*xìng* 姓), and the courtesy name (*zì* 字). Occasionally, the name of a monk's father, supernatural occurrences during the pregnancy of the mother or during birth, special events during the childhood or adolescence, the age of ordination as monk, physical or mental characteristics, and special happenings at the time of death are recorded.

At the end of each entry, usually the posthumous name (bestowed by the emperor) and the pagoda name (*tǎmíng* 塔名) are recorded. As opposed to traditional Buddhist hagiographies, biographic information is limited and obviously not the main concern of the compilers of ZTJ.<sup>87</sup> The central section of each biographic entry consists of one or several dialogues between the master and his disciples or between the master and other masters, officials, occasionally also lay people. Sometimes, commentaries by other masters are inserted between the dialogues, usually introduced by the phrase *dài yuē* 代曰.<sup>88</sup> Long doctrinal discussions are comparatively rare as compared to earlier Chán texts. Exactly this focus on the dialogue form written in vernacular Chinese is the most striking feature of ZTJ (and subsequent *Transmission Texts*), marking the dawn of a new literary genre, usually referred to as *Recorded Sayings* (*yǔlù* 語錄).<sup>89</sup>

In the year 1004, the monk Dàoyuán 道原<sup>90</sup> edited the *Jīngdé chuándēng lù* 景德傳燈錄 (*Record of the Transmission of the Lamp of the Jīngdé Era*, JDCDL) in 30 fascicles, and submitted it to Emperor Zhēnzōng 真宗 (r. 993–1022). Subsequently, the work became officially recognized as the first 'official' historiographic work of the Chán school, and in 1011 the text was incorporated in the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka sanctioned by the emperor. By the time when the JDCDL was compiled, the printing techniques in China had already developed significantly; this facilitated the large-scale

<sup>87</sup> A feature already encountered in the early Chán text LDFBJ.

<sup>88</sup> There are 115 instances of *dài yún* 代云 and fifteen of *dài yuē* 代曰 in ZTJ.

<sup>89</sup> The early *Recorded Sayings* of the Sòng consisted basically of the dialogues extracted from the *Transmission Texts*, with minimal biographic information added.

<sup>90</sup> He is regarded as the third generation successor in the Fǎyǎn 法眼 School of Chán.



distribution of Buddhist texts among monks and lay people. All these factors contributed to the popularity of the JCDL and probably led to the situation in which a work, such as ZTJ (which had not undergone a thorough process of revision and editing), became superfluous and eventually disappeared. The compilers of ZTJ used materials from the BLZ and the *Xù Bǎolín zhuàn* 續寶林傳 (not extant) as sources for the sections on the buddhas and patriarchs.<sup>91</sup> As basis for the information on Chán masters they seem to have used written (probably in the form of notes which had been taken by students) and oral sources circulating at that time.

#### HISTORIOGRAPHIC TERMINOLOGY

In ZTJ there is an abundant usage of terminology<sup>92</sup> used by secular historiographers, such as *xíngzhuàng* 行狀 ('account of deeds/behavior'): *xíngzhuàng* originally referred to records on a person's dates of birth and death, place of birth, as well as a person's major actions and achievements. Alternative names are *xíngzhuàngjì* 行狀記, *xíngshù* 行述, *xíngshí* 行實, *xíngyè* 行業, and *xíngyèjì* 行業記.<sup>93</sup> Early mention of the term *xíngzhuàng* is made in the historical work *Records of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sānguó zhì* 三國志, written in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD), in the section on the State of *Wèi* 魏, fascicle 6 (*xiān xián xíngzhuàng* 先賢行狀 'Records on the Deeds of Former Virtuous Men'). There is also mention of this term in the *Jìnshū* 晉書 (*Book of Jin*, written during the early Táng), fascicle 18 (*gōng chén xíngzhuàng* 功臣行狀 'Records of Deeds of Meritorious Ministers'). Thus, the term can be traced back to secular historiographical works of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

In the Buddhist context the term seems to have appeared at a much later date, e.g., in the *New History of the Táng* (*Xīn Táng shū* 新唐書, fascicle 59, *xīnchóng zhī sēngqié xíngzhuàn* 辛崇之僧伽行狀), and in the *Guǎng hóngmíng jí* 廣弘明集,<sup>94</sup> fascicle 23, where several *xíngzhuàng* of monks are recorded (also in Volume 50 of the Taishō

<sup>91</sup> In addition, information on the life of the previous buddhas and Śākyamuni was based on several texts of the Chinese *avadāna* literature.

<sup>92</sup> This discussion is based on Anderl 2004b:9–12; more recently, see also Welter 2008:60–61.

<sup>93</sup> These terms are not used in ZTJ.

<sup>94</sup> Included in T.52, no.2103, compiled by Dào xuán 道玄 (596–667).

there are several *xíngzhuàng*). Seemingly, in ZTJ *xíngzhuàng* refers to records that provide basic biographic information on monks, including the canonical name, the family name, the place of birth, and important locations of the teaching career. It does not necessarily include direct information on a monk's teachings since after the remark *wèi dú xíngzhuàng* 未覩行狀 '[we] have not read his *xíngzhuàng*' occasionally accounts of the respective monk's encounters with disciples or other teachers are recorded (unless these records were inserted in ZTJ—which did not assume a printed form before the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century—at a later date of compilation). Thus, it seems possible that these accounts circulated separately.

In ZTJ, the term *xíngzhuàng* occurs only five times, whereas *xínglù* 行錄 'Records of Actions/Deeds' is used 27 times. *Xínglù* is a term which is specifically used in ZTJ and seems to be very rare in other Chán texts.<sup>95</sup> From one passage in ZTJ it can be concluded that *xínglù* contained information on concrete teachings, including dialogue exchanges with disciples and other masters:

自餘法要，及化緣之事，多備《仰山行錄》。

Other dharma-essentials besides this and the circumstances of his teaching activities are amply provided in the *Yǎngshān xínglù* (*Record of Deeds of Yǎngshān*). (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:5.080)

The term *shílù* 實錄 'Veritable Record' is used 18 times. From one passage in a *Transmission Text* it can be concluded that *shílù* probably also included accounts of a monk's teaching methods (in dialogue form):

有僧製得雪峰實錄云：“師每至上堂，良久顧視大眾。遂云：‘是什麼？’”師云：“雪峰只有此語，為當別更有。”僧云：“別更有。”

There was a monk who wrote the *shílù* of Xuěfēng: “Every time the master ascended the hall, he was silent for a long time and looked at the great assembly. Then [Xuěfēng] would say: ‘What is it?’”<sup>96</sup> The master

<sup>95</sup> I found one example in the *Wūdēng huìyuán* 五燈會元 (*Compendium of the Five Lamps*, compiled in 1253 by Dàchuān Pǔjì 大川普濟; CBETA, X80, no.1565) and two examples in the *Sòng gāosēng zhuàn* 宋高僧傳 (compiled by Zānníng 贊寧 in 988), and in the (*Chóng kè*) *Gǔzūnsù yǔlù* (重刻)古尊宿語錄 (*Recorded Sayings of the Ancient Worthies*, compiled by the lay woman Juéxīn 覺心 in 1267; CBETA, X68, no.1315) the term occurs twice.

<sup>96</sup> The simple question *shì shí mó* 是什麼? ‘what is it?’ became by the way one of

said: “Did Xuěfēng only use this phrase [for teaching] or were there any other [phrases].” The monk said: There were other phrases.” (*Gǔzūnsù yǔlù* 古尊宿語錄, CBETA, X68, no.1315:244b04)

Thus, *shilù* primarily seem to contain records of encounters between the masters and their disciples. Significantly, these records were also produced by lay people; at the end of the biographic entry on the monk Wénzhì 文質 in the *Sòng gāosēng zhuàn* 宋高僧傳, there is the following phrase:

越州刺史萬式為行錄焉。

The governor of Yuè province, Wànshì, wrote a *xínglù* on [Wénzhì]. (*Sòng gāosēng zhuàn*, T.50, no.2061:881c14)

*Shilù*, ‘Veritable Records,’ probably also included records of the succession from masters to disciples:

石上者，秀大師弟子磨卻南宗碑，神秀欲為六代，何其天之不從，乃得會大師再立實錄，故有功勳。

‘On the rock’ means that the disciples of Grand Master Xiù were grinding away the stele of the Southern School;<sup>97</sup> Shénxiù wished to become the sixth generation (i.e. the Sixth Patriarch) but what can one do if Heaven does not agree to this and consequently caused Grand Master [Shén]Hui to re-establish the *Veritable Record* [of succession], therefore it says [in the prophecy]: ‘there will be merit.’<sup>98</sup> (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:1.069)

It should be emphasized that *shilù* is an important term in secular historiography, relating to the *proof of legitimate succession*. For example, Emperor Xuánzōng 玄宗 (685–762) legitimated the reign of Empress Wǔ Zétiān 武則天 by accepting her ‘Veritable Records’ along with those of previous emperors.<sup>99</sup>

The related terms *xíngzhuàngjì* 行狀記, *xíngshù* 行述, *xíngshí* 行實, *xíngyè* 行業, and *xíngyèjì* 行業記 are virtually absent in other Chán texts and seem to be restricted to secular historiographic texts. It

the most commonly used *huátóu* in Korea.

<sup>97</sup> *Nánzōng bēi* 南宗碑 is preserved in Shénhui’s *Pútídámó nánzōng dìng shì fēi lùn* 菩提達摩南宗是非論; on this text, see Yanagida 1990:368, fn.156.

<sup>98</sup> However, this passage is written in small characters as commentary to a prediction in the Bodhidharma biography and was possibly added in Korea at the time of printing in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>99</sup> Jorgensen 1987:105; the usurper Empress Wǔ Zétiān used Buddhism in order to legitimate her rule, claiming to be a Cakravartin King (*ibid.*:108).

can be concluded that the terms *xíngzhuàng*, *xínglù*, and *shílù* are terms particularly used by the compilers of ZTJ. These terms did not seem to have become common in later Chán historiographic texts or texts belonging to the *Recorded Sayings* genre.

Another historiographic term is *zhōngshǐ* 終始 ‘END-BEGINNING> FROM END TO BEGINNING> the entire process of a matter from the beginning to its end.’ In ZTJ it probably refers to the (main) events that happened in the process of a person’s career as a monk and teacher (and sometimes just indicating the dates of birth and death). Liáng Tiānxí 梁天錫 thinks that the term refers to records on the place of birth, the family name, the date of ordination as monk, the date of death, the pagoda name, etc.<sup>100</sup> However, I think that this basic information is covered by the term *xíngzhuàng* 行狀 and that *zhōngshǐ* includes the main facts of a monk’s life, including the circumstances of his teaching activities. In ZTJ, there is the following phrase:

自餘化緣終始年月，悉彰實錄。

‘Besides this, the years and months of *the main events of his life and teaching career* [?] are provided in his *Veritable Records*.’ (ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:5.092)

There is another term, *huàyuán* 化緣 ‘TRANSFORM/TEACH-REASON > the reason for the Buddhist teaching.’ The word originally referred to the buddhas and bodhisattvas that constitute the ‘reason (basis)’ for the Buddhist teaching.<sup>101</sup> In ZTJ the word seems to refer to the teaching career of a monk. It is actually difficult to grasp the exact meaning of this word in ZTJ since it is always used in the same context, when the compilers obviously did not have any substantial information regarding a monk’s biographic background. As term, *huàyuán* usually does not appear independently, but only in combination with *zhōngshǐ* in the phrase (*bù jué*) *huàyuán zhōngshǐ* (不決)化緣終始 ‘(cannot determine) the circumstances of his teaching career,’ and as such it modifies *zhōngshǐ*. I think that *huàyuán zhōngshǐ* specifically refers to information about a monk’s teaching career whereas *xíngzhuàng* contains more general biographic

<sup>100</sup> Liang Tianxi 2000:45.

<sup>101</sup> I did not find any reference to this word prior to the Táng dynasty. The word also acquired the secondary meaning ‘to beg for alms’ but this meaning is of even later origin.

information. In addition, the compilers used a number of other sources, such as songs (*gē* 歌), appraisals (*zàn* 讚), *gāthās* (*jì* 偈), funeral and pagoda inscriptions. Since the place where the ZTJ was compiled (in the southern city of Quánzhōu 泉州) had attracted numerous monks from all over China, it can be assumed that informal notes on the teachings of masters produced by their respective disciples were one of the important sources of information.<sup>102</sup> Rarely is there also reference to *biélù* 別錄 ‘separate records.’<sup>103</sup> However, there is no information on the nature of these records.

A study of the historiographic terminology in ZTJ shows that the compilers modeled their biographic accounts on imperial historiographic writings,<sup>104</sup> hoping to authorize the claim that the lineages of contemporary masters go all the way back to the buddhas of the past, Śākyamuni, and the Indian and Chinese ‘patriarchs.’ As an important rhetorical device, the records of the masters’ dialogues are embedded within the biographic frame of legitimate transmission, recorded in the contemporary vernacular language as their ‘live words,’ echoing and at the same time actualizing the enlightenment that Śākyamuni experienced. After Chán records had become imperially sanctioned at the beginning of the Sòng and integrated in the official Buddhist canon, this reliance on secular terminology in order to legitimize transmission became less important.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Compare the preface of ZTJ in which Wéndēng 文登 (884–972) states that fragmentary information on the teachings of the masters is scattered all over China, and that the main motivation of compiling the ZTJ was the fear that the records of the teachings of the masters of old will be lost (see Anderl 2004b, vol.1:15–17). None of these ‘notes’ by Chán adepts of the Táng are extant and, thus, the assumption of their importance in the compilation process of the sayings of the masters is hypothetical at this point. However, the role of notes made by students in the compilation of the Neo-Confucian *yǔlù* is more directly attested (see Gardner 1991:574).

<sup>103</sup> On *biélù*, see Welter 2008:61–62.

<sup>104</sup> As John Jorgensen has pointed out, many monks came from families of literati and officials and were familiar with Confucian ritual and ethics: “The exemplary rituals were those conducted by the emperor and his court, so it should not be surprising that Chán Buddhism reflects some of the court-ritual concerns of the state and their political ramifications” (Jorgensen 1987:90); and on the relationship between master and disciple: “The state even legally recognized that a monk had to treat his teacher like a father, in the same way that a layman was required to serve his father. Pupils even inherited their master’s property at times” (*ibid.*:97). On the ideas of transmission in Northern Chán, see *ibid.*:103; on the importance of lineage in Shénhui’s thought, see *ibid.*:104–111.

<sup>105</sup> At the beginning of the Sòng the goal of establishing Chán as dominant Buddhist

*Adaptations to Lineages during the Sòng*

Descriptions of transmissions are often characterized by the extensive use of metaphorical language.<sup>106</sup> Although the core lineage of Six Previous Buddhas, Śākyamuni, 27 Indian and Six Chinese Patriarchs, as well as the lineage of most of the Chinese Táng masters had been firmly established by the early Sòng, the lineages of succeeding masters could occasionally be opportunistically changed and adapted according to circumstances.<sup>107</sup>

One case in question is the revival of the Cáodòng lineage, which was broken off in the beginning of the Sòng, and creative measures had to be taken in order to recreate a convincing line of transmission:

“The transmission Yiqīng [義青, 1032–1083] is said to have received from Jingxuán [警玄, 942–1027], however, was highly unusual, because Yiqīng never met Jingxuán and, indeed was not even born when Jingxuán died. Instead, Yiqīng received Jingxuán’s transmission from the Línjì master Fúshān Fǎyuǎn [浮山法遠, 991–1067], who was acting on behalf of Jingxuán. [...] Since, according to the tradition, there were no other heirs to Jingxuán or no other Cáodòng lineage in existence at the time, it was only through this unusual transmission that the Cáodòng tradition survived. The way this transmission is said to have taken place is unique in Chán history, and it is remarkable that it seems to have been accepted as completely valid by almost all of the Chán community.”<sup>108</sup>

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school had been achieved, and the line of succession was generally recognized. For the increasingly important lay supporters and readership of literati, the aspect of literature became a more and more important aspect of Chán: “However, among the Sòng secular elite, just like in modern popular understanding, Chán was considered distinctive not so much for its lineage as for its unique literature and its depictions of iconoclastic Chán masters” (Schlütter 2008:15).

<sup>106</sup> For the function of ‘transmission poems,’ see above. Body parts often played an important role in the metaphorical language, for example, the Second Patriarch Huikē is said to have received the transmission by Bodhidharma only after cutting off his left arm. Frequently, the transmission between successive masters is compared to a ‘bloodline,’ e.g., the Japanese monk Gikai received a succession certificate called ‘Bloodline Transmitted by the Patriarchs’ (*soshi sōden kechimiyaku* 祖師相傳血脈); see Bodiford 1991:427.

<sup>107</sup> “Even in the Sòng, the Chán lineage was subject to constant manipulation and reinterpretation in order to legitimize the lineages of certain masters and their descendants or to bolster polemical and religious claims” (Schlütter 2008:15).

<sup>108</sup> Schlütter 1999:127; in this respect, the production of hagiographies was crucial, as well as the establishment of a distinct identity (for example, in terms of specific practices connected to the school); as Schlütter remarks in the context of the

There are several examples of the adaptation of lineages at the beginning of the Sòng (e.g., in the LJJ), and in later periods also in Japan. There are examples with no face-to-face encounter between a master and his dharma heir at all,<sup>109</sup> or not even involving a living master.<sup>110</sup> In the Japanese context,<sup>111</sup> Sōtō Zen lineages could be changed according to which temple a monk resided over.<sup>112</sup>

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promotion of ‘Silent Illumination’ (*mòzhào* 默照) propagated by the (reestablished) Cáodòng School: “This emphasis was accompanied by a distinctive vocabulary with many expressions for silence and stillness” (*ibid.*:130).

<sup>109</sup> On the ‘Transmission by Distance’ (*J. yōfu* 遙附), see Bodiford 1991:426.

<sup>110</sup> On the ‘Transmission by a Representative,’ see *ibid.*:427 (there are some cases dating back to the Sòng Dynasty).

<sup>111</sup> Japanese terms concerning transmission include ‘inherit the dharma’ (*shihō* 嗣法) and the formal acknowledgement is called *inshō* 印證 or *inka shōmyō* 印可證明, “[granting] the seal of approval to a realization of enlightenment” (Bodiford 1991: 424).

<sup>112</sup> A practice called *in'in ekishi* 因院易嗣, common until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*:424); Rinzai Zen accepted only direct transmission from one master (*ibid.*:436). For the rhetoric of ardent debates between Sōtō factions in the context of the reform movements in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, see *ibid.*:434f.: “They [i.e., Manzan and Jikushin] briefly outlined the traditional account of the Zen teachings being transmitted from buddhas and patriarchs, from India to China, placing emphasis on Dōgen’s role as the Japanese patriarch of Sōtō Zen. They compared the master-disciple bond to the Confucian relationship between lord and minister, father and son. Manzan and Jikushin declared that the switching of Dharma lineages in order to become abbot of a temple was practiced by monks who ‘upon seeing profit, forget righteousness’ (*ri wo mi, gi wo wasaru* 見利忘義), and they likened this to a scion of the imperial family who constantly switched back and forth between the Genji, Taira, Fujiwara, and Tachibana lines of descent. The two monks argued that while such a person might acquire great wealth, his family fortune was not founded upon the proper samurai virtues of administration and martial arts, but upon the merchandising skills of a townsman” (*ibid.*:437). In the debate, the rhetorical device of blending the voices of tradition and authority with one’s own opinion was deployed (*ibid.*:439). Interestingly, also the use of language was of great importance in this sectarian conflict: Jōzan used Japanese (as Dōgen did) in his replies to Manzan (who used Chinese in his polemics); *ibid.*:441. The complex pro- and contra arguments used by both sides also show the ‘flexibility’ of the fashion ‘authoritative’ texts (such as Dōgen’s *Shōbō genzō*) could be used by both factions. One central point of argument/disagreement is the way how language is used in these authoritative writings, referring to particularities of Zen language, i.e., does the text mean what it says or is language used metaphorically, or as expedient means to lead to insight, etc.). In other words, basically everything could be interpreted into the text!

On Dōgen and linguistic practice, see also Faure 1993:242, stressing the element of ‘persuasion’ in his writings: “[...] truth does not precede words but it comes into being together with speech, Chán texts are necessarily rhetorical in the sense that they imply a departure from an ontological conception of truth towards a more

As recent studies of ‘transmission’ in the modern Chán/Zen context have shown, there are many continuities concerning the rhetoric of transmission. Stuart Lachs analyzed the ‘hagiographies’ of the famous Taiwanese Chán master Sheng Yen (Shèng Yán 聖嚴), and of the American ‘Zen Master’ Walter Nowick, as they were presented in the Buddhist magazine *Tricycle*:<sup>113</sup>

“Recently the popular Buddhist magazine *Tricycle* presented biographical articles about two modern day Zen teachers: the American Zen teacher Walter Nowick coming from the Japanese tradition and the recently deceased Taiwanese Chán Master Sheng Yen. Both are presented as iconic, fully enlightened Chán/Zen Masters, following model of the classical ideal from the Sòng Dynasty (960–1279). In examining their actual lived lives, it can be shown how real people are sanitized and transformed into hagiographic figures. Mechanisms very similar to those that created iconic Chán Masters during the Sòng dynasty continue to be at work today, creating modern day fully perfected Masters.” (Lachs 2011, abstract to the podcast)

Note also Lachs’ observation of how elements typical for Chinese Buddhist Chán hagiographies are translated into modern terms:

“Instead of living among wild animals, Sheng Yen translates this into roaming among the wild, often drugged and/or intoxicated and dangerous homeless population of New York City. Instead of living in a cave or a rickety self-built hut, Sheng Yen sleeps in front of churches or in doorways and in parks or passes the night in all night diners with other homeless denizens of the night. Instead of foraging for nuts, berries and roots in the mountains of China as Chán stories of the Táng dynasty tell us, Sheng Yen picks through dumpsters for discarded and no doubt damaged fruits and vegetables or discarded bread, or drinks coffee in cheap all night diners with other homeless and most likely dangerous people.” (Lachs 2011:13)

### *Some Remarks on the Recorded Sayings*

Whereas *Transmission Texts* already included lengthy sections with records of dialogues between masters and their disciples, the *genre* of

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performative and dialogical conception.”

<sup>113</sup> The articles referred to are *The Wanderer* (in *Tricycle* 18 no.2, Winter 2008) and *Down East Roshi* (in *Tricycle* 18 no.3, Spring 2009).



*Recorded Sayings*—recording the encounters and dialogues of specific masters—did not emerge until the early Sòng.<sup>114</sup>

It is still a matter of discussion when the word *yǔlù* as term for a new genre appeared. Christian Wittern (1998:62) cites the phrase *yǔ lù ér xíng yú shì* 語錄而行於世 from the *Sòng gāosēng zhuàn*,<sup>115</sup> correctly interpreting 語錄 not as compound (*Recorded Sayings*) but as noun + passivized verb construction: “*His words were recorded and spread throughout the world.*” In the same text there is also the following sentence: 語錄大行為世所貴也; this phrase is more difficult to interpret; one interpretation would be ‘the records of his

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<sup>114</sup> Precursors of the term *yǔlù* 語錄 included *yǔběn* 語本 ‘Booklet of Sayings,’ *yánjiào* 言教 ‘Oral Teachings,’ *guǎnglù* 廣錄 ‘Extended Records,’ *yǔyào* 語要 ‘Essentials of Conversations,’ *lüèlù* 略錄 ‘Concise Records,’ *biélù* 別錄 ‘Separate Records;’ see Wittern 1998:66 and Yanagida 1974:229; for a recent thorough overview of this kind of terminology, see Welter 2008:56–64; for an overview of the antecedents of ‘encounter dialogue,’ see McRae 2000; see especially the section of the style of Chán explanation in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, *ibid.*:59–61, and ritualized dialogue (including the concept of ‘rhetorical purity’), *ibid.*:63–65. For a recent discussion of the development of the *yǔlù* genre, see Welter 2008:47–75, with a very useful appendix of Neo-Confucian *yǔlù* (*ibid.*:76–78): “[...] the impulse to edit, evaluate, and publish the *yǔlù* materials became strong at the beginning of the Sòng 宋. The stimulus for this activity was the Fǎyǎn 法眼 lineage situated in Wúyuè 吳越 and Nán Táng 南唐. Members of this lineage were immediately responsible for publishing the *Zōngjìng lù* 宗鏡錄 and the *Chuándēng lù*. Associates of an affiliated lineage in the same geographical area compiled the *Zútáng jī*” (*ibid.*:52). In the Neo-Confucian context, the *Recorded Sayings* had developed into an independent and important genre by the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Gardner 1991:575). In contrast to traditional line-by-line commentaries the voice of the student played an important role in this genre (*ibid.*:581), and being more flexible (also because of the adaptation of the vernacular language!) it allowed a more free and creative exegesis (*ibid.*:583). Having witnessed the success of the Chán *yǔlù*, Confucian scholars were certainly motivated to experiment with this genre, realizing its potential for reaching a larger audience. Despite the paramount importance of the written word in the Confucian tradition, Sòng scholars debated the limits of expressiveness of the written word and the relationship to an oral transmission (*ibid.*:590). In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, critical voices among Confucian scholars started questioning the legitimacy of the Confucian *yǔlù* and promoted a return to the canonical traditions (*ibid.*:598).

Already early Chán texts employ the dialogue form (see also Wittern 1998:62), such as the *Juéguān lùn* 絕觀論 (*Treatise on the Cessation of Notions*, a text attributed to the founder of the Oxhead School of Chán, Niútóu Fǎróng 牛頭法融 (594–657); on this text, see Sasaki/Kirchner 2009:395).

<sup>115</sup> T.50, no.2061:842b26–c23.

sayings spread greatly and were appreciated by the world.’<sup>116</sup> According to Wittern’s analysis, the phrase (interpreting the last part correctly as passive construction) could be interpreted in the following way:

“Seine Reden und kritisch prüfenden [Dialoge], sowie sein untadeliges Voranschreiten auf dem Weg des Bodhisattva wurden in der Welt geschätzt.”<sup>117</sup>

However, I tend to analyze *yǔlù* and *dàxíng* as two compound words, ‘recorded sayings’ (or: ‘records of the dialogues’) and ‘great deeds’ (i.e., his actions and deeds as monk): “His *recorded sayings* and *great deeds* were appreciated by his contemporaries (lit. ‘his generation’).”

There is no evidence to suggest that the term was used as reference to a genre in the Chán Buddhist context before the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>118</sup> *Yǔlù* thus appeared first in the context of historiographic writings *before* it was adopted as a genre name in the Chán Buddhist context in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Besides the spread of the genre-term to non-Buddhist traditions such as Neo-Confucianism and Daoism, the term also was used in secular sources and referred, for example, to the protocols of transcriptions from diplomatic missions.<sup>119</sup>

The adaption of the vernacular language for this genre is still a matter of ardent discussion (see the discussion above). Wittern makes the interesting observation that some versions of dialogue exchanges become more ‘vernacular’ in later textual versions: “Die Veränderungen erhöhen den umgangssprachlichen Charakter und unterstreichen die rhetorischen Elemente des Textes.” Wittern concludes that the *Recorded Sayings* did not necessarily develop based on their closeness to the spoken word but as literary style aimed at imitating the spoken word.<sup>120</sup> The development is highly complex and there are probably several factors involved.

As for the emergence of the *Recorded Sayings* we can single out various components. The *Recorded Sayings* aim at recording the utterances of the masters and describing their deeds, often in lively interactions with their disciples, and the authors and compilers of

<sup>116</sup> Wittern 1998:54, citing an interpretation by Yanagida Seizan.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*:54.

<sup>118</sup> In the *Tóuzǐ héshàng yǔlù* 投子和尚語錄 from 1021 (Wittern 1998:55).

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*:348.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*:348.

these utterances and deeds must have felt the need to record them as closely to actual conversations as possible. However, many of these records dated from several hundred years after the death of the masters they described, and it is difficult to assume that the records as such were transcriptions of actual dialogues or descriptions of actual events (during the Sòng<sup>121</sup> this temporal gap between the actual life of a specific Chán master and the compilation of his *Recorded Sayings* would become more narrow, indeed, occasionally Chán masters would already prepare their *Recorded Sayings* as testimony of their teaching activities and literary production when still alive). It is rather likely that the strategy of using the oral language was aimed at *evoking the impression* that these conversations and deeds actually had taken place, and one of the important factors is the *performative* aspect of these texts. Since numerous Buddhist schools and factions were in competition with each other—in addition to rivaling with other religious and philosophical schools for support and money—many texts that were produced by the Chán Buddhist communities ceased to be mere scholarly treatises to clarify matters of doctrine (as in the case of the early Chán School), but they certainly also aimed at impressing upon the reader the validity of the author's understanding of particular practices or doctrines, and by these means propagate their teachings.

Thus, *Recorded Sayings* make use of numerous linguistic and rhetorical devices in order to record the performative behaviour of the masters, as well as highlight the superiority of Chán masters as compared to other masters and/or secular officials, occasionally even emperors. Many 'non-linguistic' means in the didactic repertoire of the masters are described, as well as linguistic means that do not employ conventional types of semantic referencing or syntactic structures.<sup>122</sup>

As is well known through recent scholarly investigation, basically all *yǔlù* of the Táng masters were edited or produced during the Sòng, a period characterized by increasing institutionalization and state control of the Chán School. It is in genres such as the *Recorded Sayings* and *gōng'àn* that the independence and freedom of the ideal Chán teacher is evoked and projected to the 'golden' period of the Táng. During the Sòng the freedom from sociopolitical norms

<sup>121</sup> More than a hundred *Recorded Sayings* of Sòng masters are extant.

<sup>122</sup> Dale S. Wright (1993:24) discerns four kinds of rhetoric in 'classical' Chán texts: (1) the 'rhetoric of strangeness,' (2) the 'rhetoric of direct pointing,' (3) the 'rhetoric of silence,' and (4) the 'rhetoric of disruption.'

(including linguistic norms!) in the figure of the Chán master as described in the *Recorded Sayings* and *gōng'àn* literature became an important rhetorical device, and crucial for attracting a large readership.<sup>123</sup>

*Recorded Sayings* can vary significantly in their form and rhetorical structure and lay Buddhist literati played an important role in their compilation.<sup>124</sup>

The *Tóuzǐ héshàng yǔlù* 投子和尚語錄, for example, is one of the earliest *yǔlù*, and has a simple structure as compared to the complex and rhetorically sophisticated LJL<sup>125</sup> and other *Recorded Sayings* texts. The *Tóuzǐ héshàng yǔlù* is rather short and starts immediately with questions and answers, as well as accounts of the master's teaching activities. It basically consists only of dialogues, and short biographic information is attached at the end of the text.

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<sup>123</sup> It is noteworthy to mention in this context that the main target-readership of the *Recorded Sayings* during the Sòng actually were the literati and officials, a social class often wrapped up in a bulk of duties and social norms, notoriously known for their (at least occasional) longings for 'freedom' and a life independent of numerous restrictions and obligations. These longings were traditionally projected onto the ideal figure of the Daoist recluse, but it seems that (Chán) Buddhism in this respect also played an important role, especially from Sòng times onwards: I try to imagine an official returning home after a long day of work at the imperial court or a local magistrate, and after dinner opening the LJL or another work of a famous Chán master and projecting himself into the world of the utterly liberated masters of old. Matching this set of often diffuse longings and emotional needs seems to have been important also during other periods and circumstances, including the strong attraction Zen scriptures (and the projected 'Zen culture') exercised on Western intellectuals from the 1960s onwards.

<sup>124</sup> Wittern 1988:77–78; see also Anderl 2011a. On the relationship of literati and Chán monks during the Táng, see Poceski 2007b: "On the other hand, monks associated with the Chán movement, like monks outside of it, interacted with the larger society and their monasteries were integrated into the broader cultural matrix of Táng China. The points of contact and patterns of interaction with the secular world beyond the monastic enclaves were especially evident at the elite level, as many literati and officials were deeply involved with Chán teachings and had close ties with noted Chán teachers, many of whom originally came from local gentry families. The keen interest in Chán doctrines and methods of cultivation among the cultural and political elites was among the notable features of the religious milieu of mid-Táng China, although of course there was also attraction to other Buddhist traditions that flourished at the time" (*ibid.*:3).

<sup>125</sup> On certain aspects of the complex rhetorical structures of the LJL, see Anderl 2007; for a new edition with a heavily annotated translation, see Sasaki/Kirchner 2009; on a general discussion of Chán and lay supporters, see Anderl 2011a.

The admonitions by the master with subsequent dialogues are introduced by the phrases *shī shì zhòng yún* 師示眾云 ‘the master instructed the assembly, saying...,’ *shī shàng táng yún* 師上堂云 ‘the master ascended to the [Dharma] Hall and said...’ The questions are usually posed by anonymous monks (*sēng wèn* 僧問 ... *shī yún* 師云 ... ‘a monk asked... and the master answered...’) and very rarely a specific monk is mentioned (usually only the monks who are selected to become dharma heirs). Occasionally, a eulogy is attached to the narrative part, as in the following passage.<sup>126</sup>

師示眾云。人人總道投子實頭。忽若下山三步外。有人問你投子實頭底事。你作麼生向他道。問。和尚年多少。師云。春風了。又秋風。問。如何是截鐵之言。師云。莫費力。師問翠微。二祖見達磨。有何所得。微云。你今見吾。有何所得。師又問。如何是佛理。微云。佛即不理。師云。莫落空否。微云。真空不空。翠微有頌送師。其有識矣。佛理何曾理。真空有不空。大同居寂住。敷演我師宗。

The master instructed the assembly, saying: “People everywhere are talking about the *true head of Tóuzǐ*. If I descend from the mountain, after three steps there will be somebody inquiring about the matter of the *true head of Tóuzǐ*. How do you speak to such a person?”

Somebody asked: “How old are you, Preceptor?” The master said: “When the spring winds have ceased, there again are the autumn winds.”

Somebody asked: “How about the words which cut through iron?” The master said: “Do not waste your strength!”

The master asked Cuiwēi: “How about the principle of the Buddha?” [Cui]wēi said: “Buddha is just there not being a principle.” The master said: “Haven’t you fallen into [the fallacy of] Emptiness (i.e., nihilism)?” [Cui]wēi: “True Emptiness is not empty.”

Cuiwēi had an eulogy he presented to the master, and which included a prophecy:

When ever in the past did the Buddha-principle have a principle  
True Insubstantiality is constituted of not being insubstantial  
Dātōng dwells at a quiet place  
Expounding the doctrine of my master.

As already in many early Chán scriptures, lay supporters play an important part in the rhetorical structure on the *Recorded Sayings*. The

<sup>126</sup> The text *Recorded Sayings of Preceptor Tóuzǐ* is included in fascicle 36 of the collection *Gǔ zūnsù yǔlù* 古尊宿語錄.

examples below show the significant differences between the ways of integrating powerful lay Buddhists in the structures of the text.

In the LDFBJ—an early transmission text and a product of the 8<sup>th</sup> century Sichuān Bǎotáng School, which by the way probably was the most iconoclastic and anti-traditionalist among the early Chán factions (...and seemingly not only restricted to the textual and rhetorical level as paper tigers in the iconoclasm depicted in Sòng Chán literature and projected back to the Chán masters of the ‘Golden Age’ during the Táng Dynasty) the ‘name dropping’ of important officials and the listing of titles of texts (in a text otherwise very concerned with the refutation of canonical or traditional approaches to Buddhism) is so excessive that it occasionally disturbs the otherwise consistent rhetorical structure that is characterized by highly entertaining dialogues written in a rather colloquial language. The names of important officials (in the translation below italics are added to names and titles) are extensively inserted throughout the text and their involvement in the spread of the Buddha-dharma is emphasized, as illustrated in the following example. Note that the vivid account of the splendid welcome of the master includes basically all important local officials of the Shǔ area (Sichuān) as well as the general population, and is accompanied by supernatural events; all this evokes the notion of an *embodied buddha* arriving in the outlands of Sichuān:

永泰二年九月二十三日。慕容鼎專使縣官僧道等。就白崖山請和上。傳相公僕射監軍請頂禮。願和上不捨慈悲。為三蜀蒼生作大橋樑。懇懃苦請。和上知相公深閑佛法愛慕大乘。知僕射仁慈寬厚。知監軍敬佛法僧。審知是同緣同會不逆所請。即有幡花寶蓋。諸州大德恐和上不出白崖山。亦就山門同來赴請。即寶輿迎和上令坐輿中。和上不受。步步徐行。欲出山之日。茂州境內六迴震動。山河吼虫鳥鳴。百姓互相借問。是何祥瑞。見有使來迎和上。當土僧尼道俗再請留和上。專使語僧俗等。是相公僕射意重為三蜀蒼生。豈緣此境約不許留。

On the twenty-third day of the ninth month of the second year of the Yǒngtài era (766), the *Imperial Entertainments Chief Minister Mùróng Dǐng* acting as *special messenger*, the *district officials*, Buddhists, Daoists, and such, all went to Mt. Bǎiyán to invite the Venerable [Wúzhù]. Conveying the invitations and obeisances of the *Lord Minister (Du Hongjian)*, the *Vice-Director*, and the *Army Supervisor*, they implored the Venerable: “Do not forsake mercy, for the sake of beings of the Three Shǔ, make a ‘Great Bridge’,” they beseeched him fervently. The Venerable knew that the *Lord Minister* profoundly

defended the Buddha-Dharma and cherished the Mahāyāna, he knew that the *Vice-Director* was benevolent and generous, and he knew that the *Army Supervisor* honored the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha. He judged that these were associates of the same karmic destiny and did not turn down the invitation. And so there were “fine pennants and a jeweled parasol” (i.e., a procession befitting a Buddha). *All the worthies* of the region, fearing that the Venerable would not come out from Mt. Báiyán, also went to the mountain gate to join in the invitation. They welcomed the Venerable with a jeweled sedan-chair and would have had him sit in it; but the Venerable declined and proceeded step by step in a slow and dignified manner. When he was about to leave, the earth quaked six times in the MàoZhōu area, the mountains and rivers roared, and the insects and birds cried out. The *ordinary people* all asked one another, “What good omens are these?” When they saw that *official representatives* had come to welcome the Venerable, then the local monks, nuns, followers of the Way, and *laypersons* redoubled their pleas that the Venerable remain. The *special messenger* told the monks and laypersons and the others, “*The Lord Minister and the Vice-Director* consider this important for the benefit of all the beings of the Three Shǔ. Of what account is this area, when we have promised not to let him be detained?” (LDFBJ, T.51, no.2075; ed. Adamek 2007:357 (punctuation modified); tr. *ibid.*:359)

The passage continues with enumerations of dozens of officials and their acts of veneration of Master Wúzhù, as well as describing the expounding of his essential doctrines (centered on the doctrine of *wúniàn* 無念 ‘No-thought’). This passage—and many other in the LDFBJ—are constructed in a way that suggests a complete merging of clerical and secular interests, and an immense impact by the main protagonist Wúzhù on all strata of society (with a great emphasis on the military and civic officials of the Sichuān era who act as lay supporters of the master), transforming his secular surroundings in a Buddhist-inspired way.

In the LJL, several frame-narratives within which the sermons or dialogues unfold consist of invitations by officials to give a Dharma-talk. Also here a certain ambivalent relationship with the secular powers is expressed; however, in contrast to the description of the rulers and officials in the LDFBJ, the relationship in the LJL is completely demystified. Below is the opening paragraph of the LJL (emphasis added):

府主王常侍，與諸官請師昇座。師上堂云，山僧今日不獲已，曲順人情，方登此座。若約祖宗門下，稱揚大事，直是開口不得，無爾措足處。山僧此日以常侍堅請，那隱網宗。

The *Prefectural Governor, Councilor Wáng*, along with the *other officials*, requested the master to address them. The master took the high seat in the Dharma Hall and said:

“Today, I, this mountain monk, having no choice in the matter, have perforce yielded to customary etiquette and taken this seat. 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 and there wouldn’t be any place for you to find footing. But since I’ve been so earnestly entreated today by the councilor, why should I conceal the essential doctrine of our school?” (LJL, ed. and tr. Sasaki/Kirchner 2009:117)

Línjì also frequently addresses the audience using appellations that can refer both to clergy and lay persons, as, for example, *dàoliú* 道流 ‘followers of the Way.’ Also the ideal person who has grasped the truth is not referred to with specific Buddhist terms but the LJL often uses the expression *dà zhàngfū hàn* 大丈夫漢 which has rather military and ‘masculine/manly’ connotations, such as ‘heroic person.’ This kind of terminology<sup>127</sup> and the refined rhetorical and linguistic structure of the LJL, including many poetic allusions, creative re-interpretation of traditional Buddhist terms, the inclusion of many non-monastic references, as well as the straightforward and ‘tough’ (and often insulting) language used in the dialogues are ample evidence that the work was primarily targeted at an educated audience with a refined taste for literature, expecting to be entertained by a

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<sup>127</sup> In Kirchner/Sasaki 2009 translated with ‘resolute fellow;’ the expression *dà zhàngfū* appears already in classical Chinese literature; compare *Hánfēizi* 韓非子 20.9: 所謂“大丈夫”者，謂其智之大也。 “The ‘great fellow’ refers to his wisdom being great;” *Huáinánzi* 淮南子 1.4: 是故大丈夫恬然無思，澹然無慮，以天為蓋 “Hence, the person of great stature: Being placidly free of all worries and serenely without thoughts for the morrow, has the heavens as his canopy.” The word also appears three times in the *Mèngzǐ* 孟子 (translations based on search results in the *Thesaurus Linguae Sericae* database, TLS). Besides the 大丈夫漢 the LJL uses the equally vernacular variant *dà zhàngfū-ér* 大丈夫兒 (translated by Burton Watson with ‘really first-rate fellow’). One of the first occurrences in the Buddhist context is probably in the ZTJ, fascicle 4: 大丈夫當離法自淨，焉能屑屑事細行於布巾耶？ “A great hero should transcend the dharma and purify himself, how can I thoroughly engage in trivial matters until I die?” (tr. Anderl, TLS).



text.<sup>128</sup> Since its compilation until now the work has been one of the key texts of Chinese and Japanese Chán/Zen, and more recently has been also highly appreciated by Western Zen teachers and lay students.

There are *Recorded Sayings* texts that were exclusively authored by lay persons (*jūshì* 居士), or in which a lay person is the main protagonist. The most famous work is probably the *Recorded Sayings of Layman Páng*, *Páng jūshì yǔlù* 龐居士語錄.<sup>129</sup> Here, tendencies towards a lay audience and the idealization of the lay practitioner as observed in texts such as the LDFBJ and the *Platform Sūtra* are further developed and brought into a sophisticated and entertaining literary form.<sup>130</sup> However, the structure of the text is not very different from regular *Recorded Sayings* texts and Layman Páng fills the ‘slot’ in the structure of the narrative in the same way as an ordained Chán masters would do, speaking similar ‘enigmatic’ phrases and performing similar acts, with the little difference that also his wife occasionally appears in the stories (and also she acting like a Chán master...). Here is a short example of a section of one of the stories involving his wife:

丹霞天然禪師一日來訪居士。纔到門首。見女子靈照携一菜籃。霞問曰。居士在否。照放下菜籃。斂手而立。霞又問。居士在否。照提籃便行。霞遂去。須臾。居士歸。照乃舉前話。士曰。丹霞在麼。照曰。去也。士曰。赤土塗牛。孀霞隨後入見居士。士見來。不起亦不言。霞乃豎起拂子。士豎起槌子。[...]

One day Chán Master Dānxiá Tiānrán came to visit the Layman. Just when he arrived in front of the gate he saw [the Layman’s] wife Língzhào carrying a food basket. [Dān]xiá asked her: “Is the Layman at home?” [Líng]zhào set down the food basket and stood there doing nothing. [Dān]xiá asked again: “Is the Layman at home?” [Líng]zhào lifted up the food basket and then walked away. [Dān]xiá thereupon

<sup>128</sup> On a study of some aspects of rhetorical devices in the LJL with an emphasis on the term *jìng* 境, see Anderl 2007; on insulting expressions in Chán texts, see Anderl 2006.

<sup>129</sup> This refers to an account of the lay person Páng Yūn 龐蘊 (d. 808), a dharma heir of Mǎzū Dàoyī 馬祖道一 (709–788). The earliest extant edition of the text dates back to the Míng Dynasty.

<sup>130</sup> As Wendi Adamek (2007:180) remarks: “The account of Layman Páng, whose entire family was able to manifest deep realization in everyday encounters, is a paradigmatic example of idealization of the one who ‘cannot but have gone forth’ and the monastery without walls.”

left. After a short while the Layman returned and [Líng]zhào told him what had happened. The Layman asked: “Is Dānxiá in?” [Líng]zhào answered: “[He] has left.” The Layman said: “Barren land, muddy water buffalo (i.e., buffalo covered with mud).” Soon afterwards [Dān]xiá entered to see the Layman. When the Layman saw him coming, he neither raised up nor talked to him. [Dān]xiá thereupon lifted up his fly-whisk<sup>131</sup> and the Layman raised a mallet. [...] <sup>132</sup>

Another example—with a very different structure—is the *Recorded Sayings* of Yán Bǐng 顏丙 alias Rúrú jūshì 如居士 (d. 1212), a second generation dharma heir of Chán Master Dàhui Zōngǎo 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163).<sup>133</sup> The record does not have the typical structure of *Recorded Sayings* of the Southern Sòng but seems to have been adjusted specifically to the needs of lay people. Although Rúrú emphasizes *huàtóu* 話頭 contemplation—the prevailing Chán mediation practice during the Southern Sòng—an array of other topics are included in the text, including the cultivation of merits, chapters on Buddhist precepts, and the pursuit of Amitābha’s Pure Land.<sup>134</sup> The diverse chapters include transmission verses based on the *Transmission of the Lamp* histories, chapters on ‘Ritual Invocations’ (*Yīnshēng fóshì mén* 音聲佛事門), ‘Ritual Protocol for Liberating Living Beings’ (*Fàngshēng kēyí mén* 放生科儀門), ‘Expressing Wishes’ (*Chén yì mén* 陳意門), ‘Dedication of Merit’ (*Huíxiàng mén* 迴向門), ‘Guiding the Souls of the Dead as They Enter the Bath’ (*Yīn wánguǐ rù yù mén* 引亡鬼入浴門), etc.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>131</sup> The fly-whisk is one of the items symbolizing the authority of a Chán master.

<sup>132</sup> CBETA, X69, no.1336:131c7–12; attached is a very tentative translation.

<sup>133</sup> On this lay Buddhist, see the recent study of Wagner (2008). On the background and extant versions of the text, see *ibid.*:2 ff. On Dàhui and his teachings for lay students (often consisting of a Neo-Confucian audience), see Mohr 2000:251. The focus on lay practitioners of Zen was also a special concern of Hakuin—who followed the model of Dàhui in this respect: “In comparison with other Sòng teachers, Dàhui gives more explicit descriptions of practice. In particular, his *Letters* provide a firsthand account of how lay practitioners were advised to handle the *gōngàn*. Dàhui’s emphasis on sharpening the spiritual inquiry while engaged in secular labor represents a significant departure from teachings centered on the purely monastic environment. This emphasis on integrating spirituality with secular activity was later also stressed by Hakuin [Ekaku 白隱慧鶴, 1686–1769] when he addressed the lay community. In his Orategama [遠羅天釜], Hakuin writes that ‘Master Dàhui too said that [meditative] work in movement is infinitely superior to that in stillness’” (*ibid.*:250).

<sup>134</sup> Wagner 2008:iv.

<sup>135</sup> Titles and translations according to Wagner 2008, for the complete list of the 58

*The Contextualization of Chán Literature*

In recent scholarship, more comprehensive approaches have been pursued in order to study the emergence of specific Chán genres such as the *Recorded Sayings* and *gōng'àn* literature. Traditionally, scholars concentrated on Buddhist literature and precedents, ignoring the fact that the emergence of these genres is as much a phenomenon within the field of literary studies and linguistics as it is in the context of East Asian religions. Recently, Albert Welter<sup>136</sup> has focused on the *chuánqí* 傳奇 ('miraculous tales') as possible influence, while Victor Sōgen Hori has studied the possible influence of Chinese literary games on *gōng'àn* literature.<sup>137</sup> One of the future important tasks will be the study of these Chán genres in even a broader context (also including the Neo-Confucian and Daoist *yǔlù*, for example). It will be also necessary to contextualize Chán literature within the larger field of narrative traditions (primarily the immensely popular *avadāna* literature, including their visual 'transformations,'<sup>138</sup> see also the discussion on the term *yīnyuán* above), and focus on performative presentations of the Buddhist teachings during the Táng Dynasty. Important for the study of the adaptation of the written vernacular in Chán literature is also what Victor Mair refers to as the 'Second Vernacular Revolution,' and the oral culture prevailing in the Buddhist context, especially from the mid-Táng onwards.

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chapter headers (which even include 'Verses on Confucianism' and 'Verses on Daoism'), see *ibid.*:22–29.

<sup>136</sup> Welter 2008:131–156; this approach is promising, however, there are certain problems connected to focusing on *chuánqí* 傳奇 in this respect, and further studies will be necessary in order to verify a possible influence (for a response to Welter's approach, see also Anderl 2009).

<sup>137</sup> Hori 2006:194f.

<sup>138</sup> There are clear parallels between the concept of 'key phrases' (as used in Chán/Zen/Sōn Buddhism) and the depiction of important events in the lives of the buddhas and bodhisattvas (iconographic motives which were all-pervasive during the Táng Dynasty). Conceptually, both operate with the notion of an *essential part extracted from a larger context*: in the case of Chán, a *key phrase* or *key phrases* had to be selected from the frame narrative or a dialogue between a master and his disciple; in the case of iconographic depiction, one or several *key scenes* had to be chosen from an *avadāna* (*yīnyuán* or *yuánqǐ* 緣起) or another type of Buddhist narrative. Both were regarded as important didactic and expedient devices reflecting and condensing an *essential truth*, expected to impact the reader or viewer, respectively, on her or his path to enlightenment/salvation. However, the 'visual context' of Chán has to await more thorough studies.

*Remarks on the Literary Structure of Gōng'àn/Kō'an Literature*

“The *kō'an*—a brief, enigmatic anecdote or dialogue between two contesting parties—defines the heart of Zen Buddhism and is the single most distinctive feature in the thought and practice of the Zen sect.”<sup>139</sup>

Many of the utterances of the masters developed into ‘cases of the masters of old,’<sup>140</sup> which were used again and again for pedagogical and rhetoric purposes, amassing multiple layers of commentaries in the course of time. During the Sòng, these ‘cases’ were often condensed into the famous ‘*gōng'àn*’<sup>141</sup> (J. *kō'an* 公案) collections, which are still among the most important primary texts in Japanese Zen Buddhism today.<sup>142</sup> From these and the *Recorded Sayings* collections ‘essential/key phrases’ (*huàtóu* 話頭)<sup>143</sup> and ‘catch phrases’ (*zhuóyǔ* 著語; J. *jakugo*) were extracted, developing into important soteriological devices in the context of *kànhuà* 看話 meditation.

<sup>139</sup> Heine 2002:1, and: “Rhetorical devices that use paradox, wordplay, and ambiguity to communicate a message about the maddening quality and inherent limitations of language” (*ibid.*:5).

<sup>140</sup> Secondary literature on *gōng'àn/kō'an* is abundant (see, for example, Miura/Sasaki 1966; Rosemont 1970; Heine 1990; Heine 1994; Heine 2000; Heine/Wright 2000; Hori 2000; Wright 2000; Welter 2000); on the function of *kō'an* in Sōtō funeral sermons, see Bodiford 1992:161.

<sup>141</sup> On issues of terminology concerning *kō'an*, see Heine 1994:38–43.

<sup>142</sup> For a case study (the development of the doctrine ‘Non-sentients teach the Dharma,’ *wúqíng shuō fǎ* 無情說法, into an essential phrase), see Anderl 2004a.

<sup>143</sup> One of the earliest occurrences of this word seems to be ZTJ, but it is not clear whether it had already developed into a term in this text. Suffix *tóu* 頭 usually appears with concrete nouns in the language of the Late Táng; however, it could also combine with abstract nouns referring exclusively to speech acts. As in the case of many function words in Chinese, traces of the original lexical meaning frequently adhere to the grammaticalized word (the phenomenon of ‘persistence’ in the context of historical grammar). In the case of *tóu* combining with abstract words traces of the meaning ‘HEAD > MAIN > ESSENTIAL’ adhered to it. As such *huàtóu* is an ‘essential phrase, key phrase;’ *wèntóu* 問頭 an ‘essential question; key question’ (e.g., ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:132: 師云: “好個問頭!” The master said: “Good question!” On suffix *tóu*, see Anderl 2004b, vol.1:133–140). Although there probably did not exist any formal *gōng'àn* practice in monastic settings at the end of the Táng/Five Dynasties period, ‘essential phrases’ played an important role, used as ‘expedient means’ in the teaching process. As stated in the preface to ZTJ: 最上根器，悟密旨於鋒銳未兆之前；中下品流，省玄樞於機句已施之後。‘Those of supreme capacity enlighten to the secret teaching before the ‘point of the weapon’ has become manifest yet; those with

Even more so than the *Recorded Sayings*, *gōngàn* literature is highly constructed and adapted to the literary taste of the educated reader. Below is a short analysis of the rhetorical structure of one of the cases of the famous collection *Chánzōng Wúmén guān* 禪宗無門關 (J. *Zenshū Mumonkan*),<sup>144</sup> compiled by the monk Huikāi 慧開 (1183–1260).

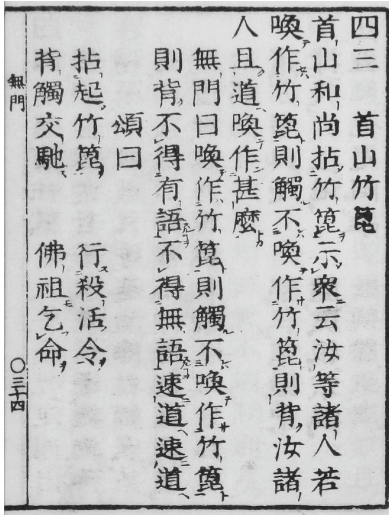


Figure 4: A page from a 19<sup>th</sup> century Japanese edition of the *Mumonkan* (with diacritics added, indicating the word order for reading the text in Japanese *bungo* 文語).

[Title:]  
首山竹篋

[Translation:]<sup>145</sup>  
The Bamboo Staff of Shōushān

{The title always consists of four Chinese characters in the *Wúmén guān*}

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medium and inferior capacities investigate the mysterious essence after it has been exposed in *key phrases* (or ‘expedient phrases,’ *jījù* 機句);’ see ZTJ, ed. Yanagida 1974:1.001; tr. in Anderl 2004b, vol.1:15.

<sup>144</sup> The example is taken from T.48, no.2005:298b15–22; Schlütter discerns three types of *gōngàn* in the Sòng Dynasty, ‘*gōngàn* stories,’ ‘catchphrase *gōngàn*,’ and ‘situation *gōngàn*’ (Schlütter 2000:171–172).

<sup>145</sup> For an alternative translation, see Sekida 1977:124–125. My notes on the rhetorical structure and the language of the *gōngàn* are added in ‘{ }’ brackets. For a translation of this case, see also Hirata 1969:154–156.

[Case:]

首山和尚拈竹篋示眾云：「汝等諸人，若喚作竹篋則觸，不喚作竹篋則背，汝諸人且道：喚作甚麼？」

[Translation:]

Preceptor Shōushān took up the bamboo staff and instructed the assembly, saying: “All you people, if you call [this] a bamboo staff then this is ‘attachment/clinging,’ [?] if you do not call this a bamboo staff than this is ‘turning against,’ [?] all you people, tell me: what do you call it?”

{The cases in the *Wúmén guān* are always introduced with the name of the main actor of the *gōng'àn*, in this case Shōushān, a master in the Línjì lineage. In the first line, the central topic is introduced, the lifting of the bamboo-staff, a symbol of authority of the master, occasionally used to ‘punish’ the students or to encourage them to greater efforts.<sup>146</sup> The address of master Shōushān is formulated rhythmically, the 7-character couplets in the middle are arranged parallel to each other; in this couplet the main proposition of the case (in the form of an address to the disciples) is formulated. The direct speech is introduced by a second person pronoun (*rǔ* 汝) affixed with the plural indicator *děng* 等 and a quantifying apposition ‘all you people’ (*zhū rén* 諸人). In order to preserve the 7-character phrase the second part of the couplet deletes the sentence initial *ruò* 若 ‘if.’ After the middle couplet, the audience is emphatically addressed again, this time including a small *variatio* by dropping the plural suffix after second person pronoun *rǔ*. The address is formulated in the form of a request/mild imperative, indicated by the adverb *qiě* 且. The last phrase features the colloquial question pronoun *shènmó* 甚麼 ‘what.’ At this point, the main case stops and no answer by the students is included—through this device the feeling of suspension is kept and the question is transferred from the disciples in the text (i.e., the ‘internal’ audience of disciples as part of the textual structure) to the reader (i.e., the ‘external’ audience). Another special feature typical for *gōng'àns* is the inclusion of commonly used words, attaching a very specific ‘Zen meaning’ (frequently differing also from their common use in Buddhist texts) and unusual semantics to them. In this case, the common verbs *chù* 觸 ‘TOUCH > attach to, cling to (?),’ and *bēi* 背 ‘TO TURN ONE’S BACK TOWARDS > oppose (?)’ are used. Note that the verbs are transitive but the object is consciously deleted (and not understood from the context!). By applying this rhetorical device, the riddle-like and enigmatic features of the phrases are preserved and the reader wonders about the reference of the deleted object. This ambiguity also leaves ample room for future commentaries on the passage.}

<sup>146</sup> For a description of the function of the *zhúbì* 竹篋 (*J. shippei*), see the entry by Griffith Foulks in the DDB (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E7%AB%B9%E7%AF%A6>). He translates the term with ‘bamboo clapper.’

[*Commentary by Wúmén:*]

無門曰：「喚作竹篋則觸，不喚作竹篋則背。不得有語，不得無語，速道！速道！」

[*Translation:*]

Wúmén comments: “Calling it a bamboo staff then this is ‘attachment,’ not calling it a bamboo staff then this is ‘opposing.’ It is not allowed to use words, it is not allowed to be silent. Speak up quickly! Speak up quickly!”

{Wúmén starts his comment by repeating the central couplet of the main case; the initial particle *ruò* ‘if’ is deleted in the first phrase and the parallel construction (and repetition of Wúmén’s proposition) is rendered slightly off-balance; however, the comment continues with a strictly parallel (semantically and grammatically) and nearly identical couplet (only differentiated by the antonyms *yǒu* 有 ‘have’ and *wú* 無 ‘not have,’ which are among the most important contrastive terms in Chán Buddhist texts). The comment ends with another couplet, a repeated imperative phrase, as such constituting an identical couplet. As in the main case, Wúmén’s commentary ends with a request, however, this time the reader is confronted with a straightforward imperative, the repetition of the phrase is adding to the sense of urgency: “Speak up quickly, speak up quickly!”}

[*Verse:*]

頌曰：

「拈起竹篋，行殺活令；背觸交馳，佛祖乞命。」

[*Translation:*]

The verse says:

Lifting up the bamboo-staff

Executing the order of either killing or letting live (i.e., pardoning)<sup>147</sup>

‘Opposing’ and ‘attachment’ race with each other

The Buddhas and Patriarchs are begging for their lives

{The *gōngàn* concludes with a short stanza of 4x4 characters, the last character of the second line rhyming with the last character of the fourth line, *ling* 令/ *ming* 命/. In the first line, the central topic of the *gōngàn*, the ‘lifting of the staff’ is repeated; followed by a phrase referring to legal procedures, i.e., dramatically and metaphorically comparing Shōushān to a judge deciding over the release of the accused or the execution of a ‘death’ sentence;<sup>148</sup> the dynamic and urgent mood is maintained in the third phrase, resuming the two central verbs *chù* and *bēi* (which indicate the possible

<sup>147</sup> Sekida (1977:123) translates “Holding up the shippei, He takes life, he gives life.” This seems to be imprecise and ignores the construction *xíng* 行...*ling* 令 ‘to execute an order’ (*xíngling* being a current compound in that meaning), ‘order’ being specified by *shā* 殺 and *huó* 活.

<sup>148</sup> Legal terminology is frequently encountered in the language of *gōngàn*s/*kōān*s.

reactions to Shōushān's raising the staff): the two (nominalized) abstract verbs are put in relation with a verb usually associated with concrete motion: they are actually *racing* with each other.<sup>149</sup> In the fourth line the link to the founders of the tradition/the authoritative lineage is established—and at the same time challenged: the tradition is actualized and revived by actions of the master.}

### *On Some Rhetorical Moods and Modes*

#### *Rhetoric of Urgency*

The 'rhetoric of urgency,'<sup>150</sup> the 'rhetoric of pending threats,' and the 'rhetoric of control' are often encountered in Chán historiographic works, including the accounts of immanent threats to the adherents of Chán, often by 'enemies' or rivals of the school. Note the following example of a rhetorically very terse passage from the LDFBJ, from the section on the first Patriarch Bodhidharma. In this short passage several central themes and rhetorical devices are compressed. It includes an account of the (fictive) poisoning attempts by the monk Bodhiruci (i.e., a polemical attack against somebody who is perceived as a rival of the Chán School). Bodhidharma is also described as possessing the powers of knowing the thoughts of others (i.e., the intentions of Bodhiruci) as well as knowledge of the past<sup>151</sup> (he knows the reason why he is poisoned, expressed by the statement *wǒ yuán cǐ dú* 我緣此毒), and of predicting future events (i.e., the pending troubles for the Second Patriarch *in spe* Huikě 慧可 and the future line of transmission). In addition, the crucial topics of the patriarchal transmission (until the sixth generation, i.e., Huinéng), the symbol of transmission in the form of the monk's robe (in many other Chán hagiographies also the monk's bowl is mentioned), and the relative understanding of his successors (i.e., until the Sixth Patriarch there can be only one main successor who carries on the lineage, in this case, Huikě). The topic of transmission is further dramatized through metaphorical expressions, his disciples actually receiving parts of the body of Bodhidharma (an act of 'metaphorical cannibalism,' so to say,

<sup>149</sup> The rhetorical device of combining abstract nouns or verbs with words referring to concrete actions or motion is frequently encountered in Chán scriptures.

<sup>150</sup> Concerning rhetorical devices and the creation of a notion of urgency, see the analysis of the *gōngān* example above.

<sup>151</sup> These are skills traditionally attributed to a buddha.



Huikē receives the ‘marrow’ of Bodhidharma, i.e., the very essence of his teaching, thus qualifying him for the succession). As additional rhetorical elements, the notion of urgency and the great danger involved in transmitting the dharma are emphasized. Besides the description of the wicked attempts by Bodhiruci of poisoning Bodhidharma, it is also stressed that even these events are fundamentally caused by Bodhidharma himself,<sup>152</sup> who, thus, remains in *complete control* of the situation.

其詩魏有菩提流支三藏光統律師於食中著毒餉。大師食訖索盤吐蛇一斗。又食著毒再餉，大師取食訖，於大磐石上座，毒出石裂。前後六度毒。大師告諸弟子，“我來本為傳法，今既得人，久住何益？”遂傳一領袈裟以為法信。語惠（惠）可“我緣此毒，汝亦不免此難。至第六代，傳法者命如懸絲。”言畢遂因毒而終。每常自言，“我年一百五十歲。”實不知年幾也。大師云“唐國有三人得我法，一人得我髓（髓），一人得我骨，一人得我肉。得我髓（髓）者（惠）可，得我骨者道育，得我肉者尼惣也。”葬于洛州熊耳山。

Now it happened that in the Wèi the Trepiṭaka Bodhiruci and the Vinaya Master Guāngtōng put poison in some food which they offered [to Bodhidharma]. When the Great Master had finished eating he asked for a dish and vomited up a pint of snakes. Once again they offered him poisoned food. When the Great Master had taken the food and eaten it, he sat atop a massive boulder, and when the poison came out the boulder cracked. Altogether they tried to poison him six times. The Great Master informed his disciples, “I originally came in order to pass on the Dharma. Now that I’ve gotten someone, what’s the good of lingering?” Then he transmitted the *kāṣāya* robe as a verification of the Dharma transmission. He said to Huikē, “My destiny is this poison; you also will not escape these tribulations. Until the sixth generation, the life of the Dharma heir will be as a dangling thread.” He finished speaking and immediately died of the poison. He himself used to say, “I am one hundred and fifty years old,” but it was not known how old he actually was.<sup>153</sup>

Note also another feature that is in contrast to the structure of traditional Buddhist historiographic/hagiographic writings: The section giving an account of his background, his teacher, his

<sup>152</sup> Indicated by the interesting phrase *wǒ yuán cǐ dú* 我緣此毒, lit. ‘I conditioned this poison,’ i.e., Bodhiruci’s act of poisoning has been caused (and thus foreseen) by Bodhidharma’s actions in the past.

<sup>153</sup> LDFBJ, based on ed. Adamek 2007:310, tr. in *ibid.*:312 (slightly modified).

enlightenment and his activities as master (topics which would occupy ample room in more traditional historiographies such as the *Xù gāosēng zhuàn* 續高僧傳)<sup>154</sup> is actually compressed into one line!

菩提達摩多羅禪師者，即南天竺國王第三子，幼而出家，早稟師氏，於言下悟。闡化南天，大作佛事。

Chán Master Bodhidharmatrāta was the third son of a South Indian king. He became a monk while still young, and as soon as he received instruction from his master he was immediately awakened. He preached in South India and greatly furthered Buddhism.

In contrast to this compressed section, the detailed sections of the entry consist of dramatized prose and dialogues. Here, we already see a distinct tendency away from the traditional historiographic/hagiographic style of writing and towards narratives including dramatic accounts and dialogues.

#### *Antinomian and Anti-authoritarian Rhetoric*

Accounts of iconoclastic, antinomian, anti-authoritarian, and anti-traditionalist behaviour of Chán masters, as well as their rejection of the canonical texts and traditional Buddhist practices, are important topics in Chán/Zen scriptures, suggesting a nearly unlimited power and freedom of enlightened masters. These accounts are of course in startling contrast to the institutional and socio-political realities and restrictions (including the financial dependency on secular powers and laity, in addition to the fact that ordinations had to be authorized by secular officials) the clergy usually had to submit to.

“Rather, Sòng Chán monasteries were strictly governed, large institutions where students lived highly regulated lives, engaging in ritualized lectures and encounters with the master according to an established schedule.” (Schlüter 2008:16)<sup>155</sup>

<sup>154</sup> *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, compiled by Dào xuán 道玄 (596–667) in 654, including the hagiographies of 485 monks (T.50, no.2060).

<sup>155</sup> As Robert Sharf points out: “Táng Chán monastic life was preoccupied with sitting meditation, chanting scriptures, and worshipping patriarchs. Rather, passages disparaging seated meditation, scriptural recitation or indeed *niànfó* are better viewed in the context of Mahāyāna soteriology: They were injunctions against attachments that would have been particularly intransigent within a monastic setting. The rhetorical as opposed to the literal rejection of all forms of practice became a hallmark of

This kind of rhetoric often consists of emphasizing the superior wisdom of a Chán master as compared to secular authorities, typically expressed by the refusal to follow orders (e.g., of an imperial edict), or the mocking of persons of high status, or other eminent Buddhist monks, preferably lecture master. These stories have the function of stressing the special status of the Chán master even vis-à-vis the highest authorities. They are also great topics for adding suspense and drama to the hagiographies of famous masters. Already in the 8<sup>th</sup> century LDFBJ, the Fourth Patriarch Dàoxìn's 道信 (580–651) dialogical exchange with an envoy sent by the emperor actually occupies more than half of the biographic entry. After several futile attempts by the unlucky envoy to convince Dàoxìn to move to the capital the exchange ends in the following way:

勅又遣使封刀來取信禪師頭。勅云：“莫損和上！”使至和上處云：“封勅取和上頭；禪師去不不？”和上云：“我終不去！”使云：“奉勅云：‘若禪師不來，斬頭將來。’”信大師引頭云：“斫取！”使反刀乙頭。信大師唱言：“何為不斫，更待何時？”使云：“奉勅不許損和上。”信大師大笑曰：“教汝知有人處。”

The emperor again sent off the messenger, [this time] wearing a sword with which to get Chán Master Xin's head. He ordered him, "Do not harm the Venerable!" The messenger arrived at the Venerable's place and said, "The emperor orders me to get the Venerable's head. Will the Chán Master go or not?" The Venerable replied, "I absolutely will not go." The messenger said, "The emperor orders that if the Chán Master will not come, I am to cut off his head and bring it." Great Master Xin extended his head and said, "Chop it and take it." The messenger turned the blade and bent [Dàoxìn's] neck. Great Master Xin sang out, "Why don't you chop, how much longer must I wait?" The messenger replied, "The emperor ordered me not to harm the Venerable." Chán Master Xin gave a great laugh and said, "I've taught you to recognize someone who stays put." (LDFBJ, ed. Adamek 2007:31 (punctuation modified); tr. *ibid.*:318)

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orthodoxy in Chán" (Sharf 2002:303). And, as Griffith Foulk remarks: "As I have shown elsewhere, neither the Chán slogans pertaining to 'separate transmission' and 'non-reliance on scriptures,' nor the iconoclastic rhetoric attributed to Chán patriarchs, can be taken as descriptive of any actual state of affairs among the historical promoters of Chán ideology. Generally speaking, the monks who spread and benefited from the Chán discourse throughout the Táng and Sòng resided in mainstream Buddhist monasteries and engaged in a full range of traditional Buddhist religious practices" (Foulk 2007:454); for a description of monastic Chán practice and ritual during the Sòng, see Foulk 1993.

*Rhetoric of Persuasion, Defeat and Submission*

As Jens Braarvig in his contribution *Rhetoric of Emptiness* points out, rhetoric aims at persuading the listener or reader to adopt a particular view, or—specifically in the Buddhist context—to bring about the realization of a particular truth. Ideally, this realization aims at achieving liberation from ignorance, the cycle of life and death, or any other goal in the context of the Buddhist *mārga*. However, especially in Mahāyāna Buddhism there is an inherent ambivalence towards the use of words in the pursuit of the truth. They are unavoidable in spreading the message of Buddhism, on the other hand they are by definition limited in their capacity to express the truth, since the ultimate truth is beyond any linguistic expression. As such they belong to the realm of expedient means, often used not to establish a proposition but rather to refute any particular view and demonstrate the insubstantiality of all material or mental phenomena.

By comparing Buddhist and Greek rhetorical practices, Braarvig demonstrates that this ambiguity exists for both traditions. In the Greek context, rhetoric was criticized of being a practice similar to magic since it intentionally projects certain opinions and views into the mind of the listener, at its worst it is used as a skillful tool by tyrants in the controlling of their subjects. However, whereas the Greek discussed rhetoric mostly in a political and juridical context, the Buddhists would refer to it concerning the realization of an ultimate truth or a truth enabling personal liberation. Eloquence has to serve a higher purpose of furthering progression towards the ultimate goal of Buddhahood. Otherwise, rhetoric will be empty words and the source of false views and discursive thinking. As such, rhetoric skills in the form of memory (*dhāraṇī*) and eloquence (*pratibhāna*) have to be part of the repertoire of skillful means, which the Bodhisattva ideally possesses. Braarvig also investigates the relationship of the frequently blurred borders between rhetoric and logic. He argues that a system of logic applied in the Mahāyāna context aims at refuting any view *without establishing another view*, and can therefore easily slide into the realm of rhetoric. Another important element in the rhetorical structure of certain Mahāyāna texts is the inclusion of lay persons who surpass even the direct students of Buddha in their realization of wisdom. Their superior insight is often described through their great abilities in using rhetorical devices, by ridiculing the religious specialist, the

*śrāvaka*. As Braarvig shows, as a crucial device *the opponent is defined before he is able to define himself*.<sup>156</sup>

Another important aspect highlighted by Braarvig are specific features of many Mahāyāna scriptures, which place them in the vicinity of genres associated with fiction and fantasy, boundaries of time and place are constantly transcended and the mind of the reader is bombarded with the imagery of phenomena in infinite worlds at infinite times. However, this grandeur of style is often interrupted by repetitive and tedious enumerations of concepts. By analyzing aspects of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* and *Bodhisattvacaryānirdeśa* Braarvig illustrates another feature which is also of central importance for Chán genres, i.e., the dialectical and logical form of dialogues. Already in Mahāyāna scriptures, these dialogues often feature clearly ‘extra-doctrinal’ aspects, such as the humiliation of the opponent and the assignment of inferior views and modes of understanding to him.

This ability to defeat the opponent by displaying greater wits and superior eloquence is of course also important in the context of the interaction with the broader public and worldly supporters of the Buddhist clergy. The public humiliation of the opponent in front of large audiences (often including the ruler) is a popular topic in the religious literature of both India and China. It is the ultimate test of the spiritual insight and powers of a famous religious figure, and—maybe most importantly—his worthiness of receiving financial and institutional support by the secular powers.

For an example, see the rhetorically sophisticated passage on Chán master Huizhōng and his interaction with the Chán guest from the South (probably hinting at his rival Shénhuì).<sup>157</sup> Huizhōng does not persuade exclusively with arguments (although he uses semi-logical chains of persuasion, too), but by convincing the interlocutor that his spiritual attainment was inferior. Typically, the interlocutor will finally ritually signal his submission and defeat. Here, we clearly witness a shift from using convincing arguments or chains of (pseudo-) logical sequences of doctrinal statements towards the authority of the master generated by his alleged enlightenment. The Chán master may say A, B, or C, it does not matter, he always will be right based on his superior status derived from his ‘insight’ and

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<sup>156</sup> A device that in later vernacular texts would be reinforced and developed by the frequent use of appositional constructions, defining the opponent already in the very address (for an example, see above).

<sup>157</sup> For a thorough rhetorical analysis of this encounter, see Anderl 2004a.

position in the tradition (at least until he encounters an opponent who even has deeper understanding: this kind of interaction—based on the display of ritual superiority and submission—is especially prominent in the rhetorically superb LJJ), and would remain one of the main features of Chán literature to this day.

*The Secular Powers and Zen Rhetoric*

The interaction between Chán/Zen/Sōn and the secular powers has been diverse and very complex throughout history, and a thorough analysis of how these interactions are reflected in Zen literary products is far beyond the scope of this book. However, certain tendencies and types of interaction with powerful lay supporters will be briefly dealt with here.<sup>158</sup>

Already in the rhetorical structure of early Chán scriptures the mentioning of secular powers such as emperors, high-rank officials, military governors, etc. were of great importance. On the one hand, this is evidence that Chán monks were concerned and interacting with important lay supporters, on the other hand, the integration of powerful lay people in literary products was also a rhetorical device in order to enhance the significance of the text and the masters mentioned in it, as well as indicating that the importance of Chán extended far beyond the walls of the monasteries.<sup>159</sup>

There are significant differences concerning the integration of lay supporters, according to the respective period and type of literary product. For example, in the LDFBJ (which is otherwise known for its anti-traditionalist rhetoric) the names and titles of military and civil officials figure so densely in the text that it breaks up the otherwise quite coherent rhetoric characterized by the many entertaining dialogues.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> On this issue, see also Anderl 2011a.

<sup>159</sup> As is well known, already from the earliest period on Chán monks actively sought the vicinity of powerful supporters, e.g., the Northern School monk Shéxiù had close relations to Empress Wū Zétiān, and Shénhuì used his popularity to collect money for the imperial army by selling monks' certificates; on the 'rhetoric of Chán fund-raising,' see McRae 2003:107 ("His religious vocation was not in the private sanctuary of the meditation hall but on the very public venue of the ordination platform, where he made exciting and highly theatrical public presentations that inspired his listeners to begin the path of Buddhist spiritual cultivation").

<sup>160</sup> For an example, see above.

The ‘protection of the state’ (*hùguó* 護國; J. *gokoku*; K. *hoguk*) was an important concept in the evolution of the Chán/Sōn/Zen schools, originally based on a number of *sūtras* and Chinese apocryphal texts which had been composed for the purpose of dealing with the relation between Buddhism and the state.

“The importance of Buddhism for affairs of state in Japan was reaffirmed in the Nara (710–794) and Heian periods (794–1185), when three Buddhist scriptures provided the cornerstones of state Buddhist ideology in Japan: the *Myōhō renga kyō* (*Sūtra of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*, better known simply as the *Hokke kyō*, the *Lotus Sūtra*), the *Konkōmyō kyō* (*Sūtra of the Golden Light*), and the *Ninnō gokoku hannya kyō* (the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra Explaining how Benevolent Kings Protect Their Countries*, or simply, the *Ninnō kyō*). These three scriptures became collectively known in Japan as the ‘three *sūtra* for the protection of the country’ (*chingo kokka no sambukyō*).” (Welter 2006: 68)<sup>161</sup>

Eisai 榮西 (1141–1215) played an important role in establishing Zen as an independent institution.<sup>162</sup> One of his major concerns was the relation between Zen and the Japanese state, as, for example, dealt with in his work *Kōzen gokokuron* 興禪護國論 (*The Promotion of Zen for the Protection of the Country*). He based this relation on the above set of texts, most importantly the *Ninnō kyō* 仁王經. In the

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<sup>161</sup> The *Myōhō renga kyō* (Ch. *Miàofǎ liánhuá jīng* 妙法蓮華經; Skr. *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka Sūtra*), T.9, no.262, probably the most popular *sūtra* in East Asia; the *Konkōmyō kyō* (Ch. *Jīnguāngmíng jīng* 金光明經, Skr. *Suvarṇa-prabhāsottama-sūtra*) is extant in several translations (most importantly translations done between the 5<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries, T.16, Nos. 663, 664, and 665). The efficacy of these *sūtras* for the protection of the state is generated through the worship and recitation of the text. Most important for the ideological foundation for the idea of ‘state protection’ in the Buddhist context is the *Ninnō gokoku hannya kyō* 仁王護國般若波經 (short: *Ninnō kyō*). In Japan, these three scriptures are known as *chingo kokka no sambukyō* 鎮護国家三文: “The security of every king and the happiness of all the people are said to depend completely on this. For this reason, the Buddha continues, the *Ninnō kyō* has been entrusted to the kings of various countries and *not to the Buddhist clergy or faithful*” (Welter 2006:71).

Zen nationalistic rhetoric before and during the Second World War is an important topic that unfortunately could be not covered within the scope of this volume; on this topic, see, for example, Sharf 1993; for a concise description, see Welter 2008:15–24; for the ideological foundation which Zen and Buddhism provided for militarism, see Brian 1998.

<sup>162</sup> Welter 2006:66.

view of Eisai, Zen should play a prominent role in the protection of the state, and according to the *Ninnō kyō* “the preservation of Buddhism is inextricably bound to the preservation of their own country.”<sup>163</sup> It is also interesting to note that according to this ideology the ruler has the main responsibility for protecting Buddhism, as opposed to the *saṅgha*.<sup>164</sup> As Welter points out, in contrast to China, medieval Buddhism in Japan was not regarded as ‘foreign’ and did not constantly justify its position among other religions and ideologies:

“As a result, ideological debates in Japan tended to be sectarian, that is, between different factions that shared a common vision, rather than cutting across fundamental ideological boundaries. [...] many Buddhist sectarian debates were politically inspired” (Welter 2006:73)<sup>165</sup>

As in the case of Chán and Zen, the reaction of Korean Sōn to unfavorable sociopolitical circumstances, and the interaction of Sōn and Confucianism led to specific rhetorical responses. In this volume, three contributions are devoted to this aspect of Sōn rhetoric:

In his article *Hyujōng’s Sōn’ga Kwigam and its Historical Setting and Soteriological Strategies*, Jongmyung Kim deals with Hyujōng’s *Compendium* dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, focusing on soteriological and rhetorical issues as response to historical and intellectual developments during his time, characterized by a dominating position of Confucianism. One of the important aspects of Hyujōng’s approach concerns the attempt to harmonize Sōn and canonical Buddhism, as well as making Sōn compatible with issues important for Confucian audiences. The structure and organization of Hyujōng’s work provides important information on his main interests: although it is divided into three sections (‘ontology,’ ‘phenomenology,’ and ‘soteriology’), the last part is the most elaborate and clearly his main concern. In this part he focuses on persons on ‘medium and lower spiritual capacity’ and recommends practices usually not directly associated with Chán/Zen/Sōn, namely the recitation of Buddha’s name and the use of *dhāraṇī*. In addition, there is a strong

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<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*:69.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*:71.

<sup>165</sup> It is also interesting to note that despite sectarian differences Eisai aimed at integrating several Buddhist approaches in his system (Tendai, *prajñā* teachings, meditation practices, concern for morality) and combing them and “*Ninnō kyō* ideology into a singly, seamless whole” (Welter 2006:74). In this rhetorical approach, Zen is pictured as the official religion of the state.



concern with ethical issues, clearly a response to a discourse dominated by Confucian scholars. Through this device of dividing the text into several sections dealing with practitioners of different capacities and practices suited for them, Hyujöng manages to be faithful to traditional Zen tenets such as sudden awakening, as well as providing a useful response to the contemporary religious and sociopolitical framework, i.e., pleading for a harmony between the teachings as well as a ‘moderate’ approach to Buddhism suited for people of lower capacities.

In his contribution *From Apologetics to Subversion*, Jörg Plassen deals with Buddhist literary production when Sön was increasingly suppressed by Neo-Confucian state ideology. Although Buddhism generally was marginalized between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the late 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, as compared to Neo-Confucian ideology, Plassen provides a more nuanced description of the relationship and interactions between Buddhist monks and the state authorities and the literati. Despite widespread anti-Buddhist sentiments many important printing projects of Buddhist literature were conducted during that period. As in the case of Sòng China, influential Chán/Sön Buddhist monks were often recruited among the literati, resulting in a natural relationship between classical and Buddhist literary production. There is also a shift in the linguistic and stylistic features of Sön works, a move towards literati-style writings and the spreading influence of the Chinese movement of *wénzì Chán* 文字禪 (Literary Chán or ‘Letters’ Chán), the Sòng colloquial style becoming frozen as a ‘sacred’ language of the *Recorded Sayings*. Plassen specifically analyzes the hermeneutical and ‘subversive’ rhetorical devices through which a synthesis between Sön and Confucianism was achieved. In his *Chodong owi yohae*, the Sön monk Sölcham ultimately claims the identity between the two teachings. In his approach, Sölcham uses one of the most important concepts of the Cáodòng tradition of Chán, the Five Positions (*wūwèi* 五位), weaving Buddhist and Confucian terminology together. In addition, these combinations are illustrated in the form of diagrams. Through these subtle rhetorical devices Sölcham evokes in the reader the notion of the identity between the Two Teachings.

The adaptation of Buddhism and Sön to changing sociopolitical environments can be also demonstrated in a more recent context, as shown by Vladimir Tikhonov’s case study of Han Yongun 韓龍雲:

In his contribution *Manhae Han Yongun's Attempt at Producing an All-inclusive Modern Buddhist Compendium: Pulgyo Taejŏn*, Vladimir Tikhonov deals with Han Yongun, an innovative Buddhist thinker of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century who tried to reform Buddhism and produce a modernist Buddhist discourse. He conducted his project during a time when the suppression of Buddhism by the Neo-Confucian state ideology had come to an end (although state control tightened again considerably from ca. 1910 onwards), and in competition with his Christian rivals. Han's ambition was directed towards producing a compendium of scriptural sources that would fit into the reemergence and modernization of Buddhism. Although his *Great Buddhist Compendium* consists of traditional sources it is rearranged and restructured in accordance with Han's intentions of picturing Buddhism as a universal religion, compatible with Confucian values as well as fitting into modern times. Linguistically, he slightly changed the original "Text-Bausteine" by inserting Korean vernacular grammatical particles. He also used words relating to state and society that were newly coined in the course of Japan's modernization and imported to Korea. As another rhetorical device, religious terms are related to and re-interpreted in terms of socio-political concepts and 'patriotic' ideas and the responsibilities of the individual *vis-à-vis* the state. In addition, he uses this structural arrangement for addressing traditional Confucian domains such as the relationship between different strata of society as well as the relationship between the sexes (listing 14 ways of how a wife should serve her husband, as well as the ideal of the 'slave-like wife'). Through the technique of restructuring and 'cross-interpretation' (transferring an interpretation from one domain to another) Han tries to address several key issues and at the same time attempts to adjust them for several strata of audiences, in addition to countering Confucian and Christian rivals.

*Sectarian Disputes: Confrontational Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of Accommodation*

The ranking of teachings has a long tradition in Chinese Buddhism and was an important hermeneutical tool for linking specific doctrines and practices to stages on the path (*mārga*) or adapting them to the capacities of the listeners.<sup>166</sup> These sequential listings were often done

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<sup>166</sup> In this context, the paradigm of *shànggēn* 上根 'superior roots (capacity)' and *xiàgēn* 下根 'inferior roots (capacity)' is frequently used. Interestingly, this paradigma reappears in D.T. Suzuki's works as part of a nationalist rhetoric, and later on in post-war times also in the characterization of the (dull!) capacity of Western Zen

in the form of hierarchical taxonomies and were essential in handling the diverse and often even contradictory teachings encountered in the numerous translations of Buddhist *sūtras* and treatises.<sup>167</sup>

“For example, Buddhist schools often sought to associate particular stages along the *mārga*, usually lower ones, with various of their sectarian rivals, while holding the higher stages to correspond to their own doctrinal positions. [...] The purpose of such rankings was not purely interpretive; if often had an implicit polemic thrust.”<sup>168</sup>

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students (see Sharf 1993:28).

<sup>167</sup> Famous representatives of this approach were Huiyuǎn 慧遠 (334–416), Zhiyǐ 智顛 (538–597) and Guǐfēng Zōngmì 圭峰宗密 (780–841). Another famous ‘reconciler’ was Yǒngmíng Yánshòu 永明延壽 (904–975), the author of the encyclopedic *Zōngjìng lù* 宗鏡錄, who attempted a fusion between Chán and Pure Land thought. As Robert Sharf points out, faith in Amitābha was universal in Chinese Buddhism and references to *niànfó* 念佛 (J. *nenbutsu*) practices can already be found in the earliest Chán scriptures preserved among the Dūnhuáng findings (Sharf 2002:301). For citations concerning the practice of *niànfó* in early Chán texts, see *ibid.*:303f. Schlütter points out at the beginning of the Sòng the relationship between the Chán factions was rather harmonious, following the model of coexistence based on a the idea of kinship, i.e., all Chán factions ultimately belong to the same ‘family’ which splits up in several branches (e.g., the idea of the ‘Five Houses,’ *wǔ jiā* 五家 of Chán); this harmony was eventually broken when competition for lay support erupted between the Línjì and the newly re-established Cáodòng faction; on these issues, see Schlütter 1999. This conflict is also a good example of polemics triggered by sociopolitical changes, i.e., after a period of strong imperial support at the beginning of the Sòng, sponsorship shifted to a great degree to local officials and members of the literati class, entailing competition for limited material support and positions in the abbacies of public monasteries (*shífāng* 十方); see *ibid.*:135–137; on a thorough discussion of public monasteries, see also Schlütter 2008:36–49. Schlütter emphasizes the crucial role of the establishment of public monasteries (as opposed to hereditary monasteries) for the success of the Chán School: “Most significantly, had the state not favored the institution of public monasteries, the Chán school would never have acquired its dominant position in monastic Buddhism” (*ibid.*:53).

Concerning the topic of internal sectarian struggles, a thorough analysis of the use of the term *wàidào* 外道 ‘[FOLLOWER OF AN] ‘OUTSIDE’ WAY > heretic’ would be of great interest. To use this term in order to label rivals is one of the recurring topics in Chán polemics. Often the Chán rivals are associated with ‘real’ heretics, i.e., followers of ‘inferior’ forms of Buddhism such as the Hīnayānists, lecture masters, or even followers of non-Buddhist schools.

Polemics at rivals could include a variety of elements, pinpointing the opponent to specific ‘inferior’ practices and doctrines, personal attacks, and even direct insults.

<sup>168</sup> Buswell/Gimello 1992:20; more generally, Sharf (1991:88) remarks about Mahāyāna rhetoric: “[...] powerful methods of exalting one’s own position, not by denouncing rival positions as false, but by insisting they are correct but provisional

Also in Chán Buddhism, this approach became an important hermeneutical tool, often having an important rhetorical and polemic dimension. Attacks on rivals usually prospered during periods when there were shifts in the sociopolitical and institutional settings, during struggles for material support or for the favours of the respective elites, and during times of pending crisis or persecution. Disputes often developed along well-known complementary and contrastive paradigms, typically the ‘sudden-gradual’ axis, teachings based on words, or the rejection of any Buddhist scriptures. Examples are the attacks by Shénhuì on the members of the ‘Northern School’ (initiated in the 730s), disputes concerning the right lineage or other sectarian issues, such as the competition between the Línjì and Cáodòng factions during the Sòng Dynasty. Morten Schlütter has shown that these rivalries were conducted on the level of disputes concerning different approaches to meditation (*mòzhào chán* 默照禪 ‘Silent Illumination Chán’ and *kànhuà chán* 看話禪 ‘Introspection Chán,’ respectively); however, on a deeper level these attacks were also motivated by the competition for support from the lay patronage.

Besides these ‘factors’ in the form of competition or sectarian disputes, and confrontational rhetoric, there is also an ‘internal’ dimension in terms of the formulation of the self-identity of Chán factions (i.e., by defining the ‘other’ one is defining oneself). One frequent claim vis-à-vis other Buddhist factions is the one that Buddhism<sup>169</sup> culminates in Chán and rhetorical devices are used to defend this position:

“Chán hermeneutics developed in direct response to pressures from polemics in the scholastic schools, and by examining the interaction between these rivals, we may adduce much about the ways in which the Chán school selectively employed sacred texts in order, first, to uphold its own sectarian position and, second, to counter aspersions cast on it by its rivals.”<sup>170</sup>

Often, different hermeneutical and rhetorical devices are used for different stages of development of the student; as such rhetorical devices are distinctively used as expedient means. Buswell exemplifies this based on the concept of the ‘Three Mysterious Gates’ (K. *samhyŏn-mun* 三玄門, Ch. *sānxuán mén*) teachings used by

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and limited.”

<sup>169</sup> In the Chinese context usually the Tiāntái and Huáyán traditions.

<sup>170</sup> Buswell 1988:231.

Chinese Chán masters, and later more systematically described by Chinul (1158–1210).<sup>171</sup>

In his contribution *Pojo Chinul* 普照知訥 and *Kanhwa Sŏn* 看話禪, Robert E. Buswell Jr. examines the doctrinal and rhetorical context of the introduction of *kanhwa* practice to Korea. The interpretation of the sudden/gradual paradigm (K. *tono chŏmsu*) in relation to enlightenment and spiritual cultivation was of crucial significance in this process, thus interpreting it differently as compared to the Chinese *Línjì* 臨濟 (K. Imje) tradition. Buswell labels this approach ‘moderate subitism’ as compared to the ‘radical subitism’ propagated in the Chinese context, and analyzes how Chinul achieves his goal by balancing the moderate and inclusive language of *Guīfēng Zōngmì* with the radical iconoclastic rhetoric of the *Recorded Sayings of Línjì*. Chinul also presupposes a thorough knowledge of the canonical Buddhist scriptures and develops his system based on *Zōngmì*’s. Central in his system is the term ‘understanding-awakening’ (K. *haeo*), an initial enlightenment experience which has to be cultivated subsequently, as contrasted to the more radical approach of sudden awakening/sudden cultivation. Rhetorically, the paradigms of sudden/gradual and sets of complementary and contrastive concepts are used to formulate and argue for Chinul’s own position. In the Chinese context *kànhuà* was also referred to as a ‘short-cut’ approach to enlightenment and Chinul was not exposed to this subitist technique before late in his life. Buswell analyzes how this concept was eventually integrated into and synthesized with Chinul’s soteriological system. Using the method of establishing a taxonomical system grading the

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<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*:246; and: “As Chinul explains, Chán practice is not simply concerned with the removal of the discriminative processes of thought; it also involves the positive reinforcement of wholesome qualities of mind, which can then be applied in the conditioned realm for the benefit of all sentient beings. Hence, Chán meditation purports to overcome limited perspectives concerning the absolute realm of the *dharmadhātu* and, at the same time, to produce both the capacity to transfer the merit deriving from one’s understanding to other beings as well as the ability to use the power inherent in that merit as an expedient means of guiding others” (*ibid.*:240). Buswell also observes the interesting interplay between *kataphasis* and *apophasis* in the discussion of this doctrine: “Here we see once again that Chán discourse is not intended to be merely an imitation of the Mahāyāna inception or final teachings, but instead mirrors the progression of Chinese hermeneutical structures from naïve *kataphasis*, to radical *apophasis*, to perfected *kataphasis*” (*ibid.*:246); on this issue, see also Buswell’s contribution to this volume.

capacity of practitioners, he differentiates two approaches to *hwadu*: Investigation of its meaning and investigation of the word (the culmination of this practice), in addition to applying a threefold hermeneutical system of the ‘three mysterious gates,’ a system progressing from a conceptual understanding of scriptures, to *hwadu* practice, and finally to an understanding free of all conceptualizations. This device allows Chinul to fully integrate the ‘radical’ subitism as represented by the *kanhwa* approach with his system of moderate subitism. This approach of a rhetoric of reconciliation and integration was short-lived, however, and Chinul’s successors nearly exclusively favoured the radical *kanhwa* technique and an iconoclastic approach to language.

## *Bibliography*

### *Conventions*

In order to maintain consistency in the presentation of the materials, terms and proper names in citations from secondary literature were transferred to *pīnyīn* 拼音 transcription, whenever possible. Occasionally, Chinese characters (and sometimes also other information) are provided in square brackets within citations.

### *Abbreviations Used in the Introduction*

BLZ	<i>Bǎolín zhuàn</i> 寶林傳
Ch.	Chinese
DDB	<i>Digital Dictionary of Buddhism</i>
CBETA	Chinese Electronic Tripitaka
J.	Japanese
JDCDL	<i>Jīngdé chuandēng lù</i> 景德傳燈錄
K.	Korean
LDFBJ	<i>Lìdài fǎbǎo jì</i> 歷代法寶記
LJL	<i>Línjì lù</i> 臨濟錄
Skr.	Sanskrit
T.	Taishō shinshū daizōkyō 大正新修大藏經
TLS	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Sericae Database</i>
X	Taiwanese re-edition of ZZ.
ZTJ	<i>Zūtáng jí</i> 祖堂集
ZZ.	Dai Nihon Zokuzōkyō 大日本續藏經

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