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Ph.D. Dissertation of Humanities

Lineages, Legitimation, and the  
Materiality of Sŏn Masters in Late  
Chosŏn Buddhism (17th–19th  
centuries) in Korea

– The Role of Materiality in the Emergence  
and Development of Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng's  
Lineage at Pohyŏnsa and Taedunsa –

조선시대 후기(17–19세기) 불교의 법통과 선사  
관련 물질 문화: 보현사와 대둔사에서 전개된 청  
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# Materiality of Sŏn Masters in Late Chosŏn Buddhism (17th–19th centuries) in Korea

– The Role of Materiality in the Emergence and Development of Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng's Lineage at Pohyŏnsa and Taedunsa –

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the role of materiality in the development of Korean Buddhism during the Late Chosŏn period, between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries. The Buddhism of this period is characterized by the introduction of newly developed Dharma lineage narratives, which put the figure of the Sŏn master at the center of the contemporary religious experience. From this, a new leadership emerged, reshaping the whole Korean monastic community.

A large amount of materiality connected to Sŏn masters was produced and circulated in the Late Chosŏn period. While most of the media forming this complex corpus (including stupas, funerary/hagiographic steles, portraits, monastic robes, alms bowls) were already known in the Korean peninsula in the previous historical periods, the new developments in Buddhism since the seventeenth century attributed to the 'materiality of Sŏn masters' new meanings and functions. Crucially, this reinvented materiality had a fundamental, active role in the development and diffusion of the new Buddhist paradigm.

This dissertation is divided in two sections, each one exploring the events at two of the key Buddhist sites of the Late Chosŏn period, Pohyŏnsa on Mount Myohyang, and Taedunsa (or Taehŭnsa, as it is currently known) on Mount Turyun. Part One thus focusses on the early phases of lineage narratives in connection with the community centered around master Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng at the Pohyŏnsa monastery. Here, I argue that lineage narratives, and the related reinvention of Sŏn master materiality, were first implemented as tools to settle local issues of succession after Hyujŏng death. I first introduce the textual sources that contributed to the creation of lineage narratives and those that supported the affirmation of Sŏn masters as the central figure of Late Chosŏn Buddhism. I then attempt to demonstrate the role of materiality in the creation of these texts, as well as its practical implementation (especially through the construction of steles and stupas) in the processes of monastic succession and leadership assessment at Pohyŏnsa. In due time, I conclude, these tools proved so powerful and adaptable that the forms of Buddhism they promoted spread to all the regions of the country, transforming the nature of Korean Buddhism in its entirety.

Part Two discusses the expansion and transformation of the new

forms of Buddhism, focusing on the Sŏn master related material production of Taedunsa monastery through a series of interconnected case studies. In it, I attempt to demonstrate how the community of Taedunsa adopted and adapted the paradigms of the materiality of Sŏn masters discussed in Part One. Through the adoption of these new paradigms, Taedunsa, once a minor monastery, quickly rose to prominence to a national level. This was achieved through creative and manifold adaptations of Sŏn master materiality, which allowed the monastery to grow a solid and stable leading group, to negotiate its social and economic role on a par with the state and the Confucian community, and to maintain a lasting influence on the Buddhist community of the whole Chosŏn kingdom.

Keywords: Lineage, Pohyŏnsa, Taedunsa, Sŏn master, Material culture, Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng, Legitimation, Monk stupa

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## CONVENTIONS

Korean names, titles and terms are romanized using the McCune–Reischauer System, except for the authors of secondary sources for whom, whenever available, the transcription chosen by the single author will be used.

For the transcription of Chinese names, titles and terms the Pinyin system (without diacritical signs) is used, while the Hepburn system is used for Japanese terms, titles and names.

The names of Chosŏn period Buddhist monks were composite and might vary during their lifespan and beyond, especially in the case of the most eminent figures who could be known with different sobriquets and might even receive official titles by the Court. The most common form for monk names was the one including the taboo name (Kor. *hwi*) and the dharma name (Kor. *ho*). For instance, in the case of Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng, Ch'ŏnghŏ is the taboo name and Hyujŏng the dharma name; but he was (and still is) commonly known also with his sobriquet Sŏsan (Western Mountain, in reference to his association with Mount Myohyang).



In this thesis, monks are as a general rule referred to through their dharma name, which in most cases was the way they were best known during their lifetime. For monks whose dharma name is not known, the taboo name will be used instead. The complete name (taboo name + sobriquet) of the major figures appears, whenever known, at their first appearance and, at times, in following instances, either for reasons of clarity or of variety. A table linking the complete names with the Dharma names of the major figures cited is included at the end of the thesis.

Citations of primary Buddhist sources included in *Han'guk Pulgyo Chŏnsŏ* (Complete Works of Korean Buddhism) are given as follows: serial number (H+text number), volume, and pages. Other abbreviations for Buddhist sources are as follows: T for the Taisho Tripitaka, K for the Korean Tripitaka. Non-Buddhist Korean primary sources are based on the versions available online in the database of the Institute for the Translation of Korean Classics (<https://db.itkc.or.kr/>).

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. Relevance of the Materiality of Sŏn Masters in the Late Chosŏn Period

When entering the precincts of any historical Korean Buddhist monastery, the casual visitor naturally encounters the well-known and celebrated sculptures and paintings lavishly portraying Buddhas and their entourages, and can admire the imposing stone stupas commonly standing in front of the monastery's main hall. Besides such easily approachable 'artworks', the more scrupulous visitor might also note, paying the right amount of attention, a large and heterogeneous group of objects and monuments with the common denominator of being related, in a way or another, to Buddhist masters of the past, that for lack of a better definition I will henceforth define "Materiality of Sŏn masters" .<sup>1</sup>

This body of works includes a great variety of monuments and objects.

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<sup>1</sup> Although not all the monks to whom these objects are connected necessarily belong to the Sŏn tradition of Korean Buddhism, those who were active in the period discussed in this thesis did, and belonging to this tradition was in fact a great part of their religious identity.

Some are clearly categorized and are commonly discussed in art historical studies. Such works include monk portraits (kor. *chinyŏng*<sup>2</sup> fig. 1) and monk stupas (kor. *sŭngt'ap*<sup>3</sup> fig. 2). Other works, such as monastic robes (kor. *kasa* fig. 3) and other pieces of clothing, bowls (fig. 4), and miscellaneous personal belongings (fig. 5) can only ambiguously be included in general discourses on Buddhist art history. Setting aside larger issues of taxonomy, such a body as a whole is commonly considered by

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<sup>2</sup> For a short overview of the terminology used in premodern Korea to refer to monk portraits, see Stiller 2008a, 12–13.

<sup>3</sup> In the Korean art historical discourse, this kind of monument is still often called *budo* (ch. *futu*), although since 2012 the new legislation on Cultural Property imposed the use of the term *sŭngt'ap* in the case of monk stupas without identification, and the term *○○t'ap* (where *○○* refers to the monk's name) in the case of stupas with an identified subject. There has been a heated debate on the use of these two terms, with the proponents of the term *budo* especially critical of any innovation in the terminology popularized since the late 1970s by the earliest contemporary studies on the subject by Chung Youngho. Although it is true that the term *budo* at times recurs in written sources in reference to monk stupas, the word has, however, a wider range of meanings, not necessarily connected with stone monuments built to house the relics of a deceased master. It can mean Buddha, Buddhism, Buddhist Dharma, building, stupa, Buddhist monk, monk stupa. Thus, I find the use of the term *sŭngt'ap* more precise and adequate, especially as it univocally and unambiguously refers to a specific form of Buddhist materiality with its own formal characteristics and religious and symbolic connotations. On the issue of nomenclature see Lee Su-kyong et al., 2018 and Eom Gipyoo 2005a.

both modern casual viewers and by most Korean Buddhist art scholars of secondary relevance, an idea that directly influences how art history deals with the subject. Hence, studies of these works are numerically scarce<sup>4</sup> and are characterized by a limited range in methodological approaches and in a general lack of depth in the conclusions reached.

One particularly significant fact about these works is that, while some outstanding examples date to earlier periods of Korean history (especially in the case of monk stupas), most were created during the late Chosŏn period (principally between the seventeenth to nineteenth century). While it can be argued that earlier examples are few in number because many works went lost due to wars, natural disasters, and other external reasons, it is an undeniable fact that during the Late Chosŏn period we witness an unparalleled flourishing of the Materiality of Sŏn masters in all its forms: undoubtedly the reasons for this must be found in the nature of Korean Buddhism during those centuries.

The starting point of this thesis is the assumption that such a material

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<sup>4</sup> In introductory texts on Korean Buddhist art this tendency is even more marked. Kim Lena et al. 2011, for instance, devotes only to pages to monk portraiture and a single paragraph to (Silla Period) monk stupas.

production, given its quantitative extent and its ubiquity in Korean Buddhist monasteries, was clearly relevant for the Buddhist community of the time; thus, it should not be dismissed as a sub-product of Buddhist culture, but on the contrary must be taken into account as one of the principal forms of Chosŏn-era Buddhist materiality.<sup>5</sup> Through a selected

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<sup>5</sup> In the Korean Peninsula, the interest in materiality was extremely high during the centuries discussed in this study, as demonstrated by the continuous production of statues, paintings, and architectural spaces in Buddhist monasteries of the time. This tendency towards materiality, moreover, was not limited to the Buddhist context: for instance, the creation of shrines for family rituals during the Chosŏn Period contributed to the spread of material culture and to its ritual appreciation among the leading literati class of the *sadaebu*. Not unlike the Sŏn tradition, Neo-Confucianism is often described as strongly anti-materialist, yet its living tradition was in fact strictly connected to specific uses of material culture for its purposes. Being capable of rendering visible, both in direct and symbolic ways, the achievements of eminent scholars, countless objects were collected by families during the centuries (especially after the seventeenth c.). In many cases also written documents, including calligraphies, certificates and royal edicts, family registers, epistolary exchanges and miscellaneous private writings and so on were regularly collected and held in high esteem by the *sadaebu* and their families not only for their textual contents but, rather, for the sheer physical existence of a given object. In fact, not only illiterate people can grasp non textual meaning from textual material, but also literate people get signification from the physical presence of written texts, in not even using it in order to develop new meanings and ideas that can influence their lives and environment. (For some interesting aspects of materiality in Ming China, see Clunas 2007, especially 84.) For materiality and Chosŏn literati, see Kyŏnggido pangmulgwan 2010.

number of case studies, I will try to make sense of this inhomogeneous corpus, to understand the complex dynamics that led to its creation, and to discuss how it played an active role in the transformations that Buddhism underwent during the Late Chosŏn.<sup>6</sup>

## **2. The Historical Context**

This study covers the chronological period from the early seventeenth to the first half of the nineteenth century: it is a long and complex period that witnessed many changes in the social and political history of the Peninsula. The Japanese Invasions that plagued the peninsula at the very end of the sixteenth century functioned as a watershed in the history of Chosŏn. The crisis caused by the invasions of 1592 and 1598 became in due time the source for positive transformation from several points of view, including the social, political, intellectual, and economic spheres. In the case of Buddhism, in particular, it offered a chance for renovation and

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<sup>6</sup> Scholars offered different forms of periodization for Chosŏn Buddhism. The two most common narratives present either bi or tripartite schemes. I roughly divide the period in two halves, with the period directly following the Japanese invasions during the 1592–1598 years as the dividing line for the two periods.

for a complete reassessment of the religion's fundamental characteristics; it also allowed Buddhism to reexamine its position in the larger context of society. It is not an exaggeration to state that the Buddhism that flourished beginning in the first decades of the seventeenth century had only few connections with that of the previous centuries; religiously, it saw the emergence of a Sŏn tradition strongly indebted to the Chinese Linji (kor. Imje) sect, but mixed with significant scholastic elements (especially connected with the *Avatamsaka sūtra* (Kor. *Hwaŏmgyŏng*).<sup>7</sup> Crucially, as I will discuss in Chapter 1, the members of the Buddhist community understood themselves as an extension of the late fourteenth century Chinese Chan tradition, rather than the direct heirs of the earlier Korean meditative tradition represented by the teachings of great historical figures such as Pojo Chinul 1158–1210<sup>8</sup> (fig. 6).

The relationship between Buddhism and the state was also radically

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<sup>7</sup> Kim Yongtae 2007, 279–291 for a brief summary of the major developments of Buddhist doctrine during the Chosŏn period.

<sup>8</sup> This is especially clear in the *Songgwangsa sawŏn sajŏkpi*, in which the compilers, monks centered on Sunch'ŏn's Songgwansa, explicitly state that their line is different from the one, centered on Chinul, that originally dominated the monastery.

transformed. In the early Chosŏn this relationship was articulated through the paradigm developed during the Koryŏ period, adapted to the new political and social context that accompanied the new historical period. Administrative issues concerning Buddhist currents were still regulated by national laws<sup>9</sup> which also controlled the official succession of abbots at monasteries; moreover, official clergy recognition happened through the *sŭnggwa* examination system. The major difference was probably the fact that, unlike during the Koryŏ period, now the majority of the religious leaders did not belong to the royal family or, more in general, to the higher strata of society, a fact that negatively influenced the official exchanges between the state and the religion.

Some true, active anti-Buddhist politics were implemented during the reigns of Yŏnsangun (r. 1495–1506) and Chungjong (r. 1506–1544), when most of the established forms of Buddhism *recognition*<sup>10</sup> were

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<sup>9</sup> The Chosŏn National Code, the *Kyŏngguk taejŏn*, included norms concerning the legal status of Buddhist monks, the recognition of Buddhist schools, the official examination system for monks, and the selection of abbots. The state also administered the Kangyŏng togam, an agency created in 1461 that published Buddhist texts translated in Korean language.

<sup>10</sup> On the other side, the practical aspects of the religion were left essentially



abolished: this strongly affected the internal organization of the Buddhist community. Some attempts at reviving the tradition were done during the reign of King Myōngjong (1545–1567), when among several initiatives in favor of Buddhism, the *sūnggwa* was briefly resurrected;<sup>11</sup> yet, the circumstances were such that a simple return to the pre-Yōnsangun relationship between the state and Buddhism was not possible – nor necessary – to allow the religion to continue to exist.

During the last decades of the sixteenth century, corresponding to the first half of King Sōnjo's reign (1567–1608), official debates concerning the status of Buddhism were conspicuously absent in the public sphere,<sup>12</sup> and we have only limited information concerning the practical religious activities in this period.<sup>13</sup> These decades can be better understood as a formative period during which the seeds for the flourishing of a radically new Buddhism, consciously independent from state regulations and

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intact.

<sup>11</sup> For an overview of these events, see Kim Yongtae 2010, 39–43.

<sup>12</sup> Sohn Seong Phil 2013, 95 onwards.

<sup>13</sup> Kim Yongtae 2007, 280–281.

ideologically and doctrinally detached from previous, century old traditions, were planted. The Japanese invasions of 1592–1598 and their aftermath forced Chosŏn society as a whole to rethink its identity, and in the case of Buddhism allowed the flourishing of tendencies that were evidently beginning to emerge during the preceding decades. As I will discuss in the first chapter of this study, this resulted in the rise to prominence of a new Buddhist leadership, self-conscious and ambitious: a leadership able to revive Buddhism and infuse new power in it, and to influence its religious, social, and economic features.<sup>14</sup> This new Buddhism is defined by the centrality accorded to its leading figures, masters of the Sŏn meditative school who, by virtue of their great charisma, succeeded in the creation of large self-sufficient monastic communities that were able to last and prosper by adopting a form of direct master-disciple Dharma transmission, virtually unseen in Korea in earlier periods. If the Buddhist leaders of the earlier periods derived their authority by official recognition, in Late Chosŏn it was their charisma and

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<sup>14</sup> This obviously resulted in great developments in Buddhist materiality as well, including but not limited to that of the Sŏn context.

meticulously constructed religious personas that made them relevant.

Crucially, Sŏn master–related material culture, the material production that is the subject of this thesis, was essential in the creation of this new Buddhism and in the development of its leadership in the first half of the seventeenth century. Moreover, it also played a fundamental role in the latter transformations of the religion, supporting and at the same time driving the dynamics of identity construction of the members of the Buddhist community.

### **3. Terminology and Methodological Approach**

In this study I will avoid, wherever possible, to use the terms “art” and “artwork” in connection with the objects and buildings at the center of the discussion. Instead, I will use the expressions “material culture” and “material production”, which in my opinion better reflect the function this production had in its original contexts, as well as the understanding of it by its original creators and “users”.<sup>15</sup> In contrast to

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<sup>15</sup> Such an ambiguous term is deliberately chosen, as I am referring here to both ‘spectators’ or ‘bystanders’ experiencing the materiality of these objects, and to individuals who took already existing objects and imbued them with

more traditional art historical approaches commonly preferred by Korean Buddhist art historians, I adopt an approach influenced by studies of material culture. My focus will thus be on the contextualization of the meaning of the various media included in the internally heterogeneous category of objects and buildings I refer with the expression ‘Materiality of Sŏn masters’, rather than on issues of taxonomy, form, style, chronology and iconography commonly found in most Korean Buddhist art history studies.

A number of objects, because they are deemed aesthetically valuable by the modern gaze, have become through what I define as a process of “artification” , major subjects of art historical inquiry, regardless of the purposes of their original makers and users – for instance, sculptures originally made not to be seen by anybody became the subject of formal analysis,<sup>16</sup> and reliquaries originally inserted inside large wooden and stone pagodas (fig. 7) are extracted and classified according to their

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new meaning for a variety of sociopolitical and religious purposes.

<sup>16</sup> On this phenomenon, especially common in Japan where it is referred to with the term *hibutsu* (secret Buddha), see Fabio Rambelli, 2002, 271–307.

stylistic features;<sup>17</sup> on the other hand other objects, originally akin in character or purpose to some of the “aesthetically valuable” ones now subject of art historical inquiry, are excluded by the same enquiry due to their purportedly lower aesthetic “quality” or because they lack “originality” .<sup>18</sup> Even for studies with an iconographic approach, in which aesthetic values are supposedly not at stake, the subjects of inquiry are chosen almost exclusively among those deemed valuable according to their beauty and ‘originality’. As a result, a large corpus of works is excluded from art historical research, or judged ‘minor art’: objects that do not meet the requirements of the discipline, and that although in many instances might reveal us about the past as much as the officially sanctioned ‘art’, often remain unpublished and ignored.

The major shortcomings of traditional approaches to Buddhist art history, may be summarized as follows: focus on an artificial category of objects loosely defined as “artworks” , that were not originally seen as such by their makers and original users; overstated emphasis on formal

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<sup>17</sup> For an extensive study on Chinese reliquaries and their stylistic development, see Joo Kyeongmi 2003.

<sup>18</sup> On this problem, see for instance Gregory Levine, 2001, 79.

and aesthetic characteristics as criteria for the selection of subjects of scholastic inquiry and consequent exclusion from mainstream research of a large amount of works deemed aesthetically and formally worthless; lack of interest in in-depth contextualization of the meanings of material production and in the malleability and fluidity of such meanings; in the case of Buddhist art, excessive focus on the iconographic features of sculptures and paintings through interpretations deriving mostly from the reading of textual (i.e., sutras) sources.

These issues are all relevant in the treatment that most of the objects found in every historical Buddhist monastery in Korea receive from scholars of art history, and a solution to overcome them is to handle this production as belonging to the category of material culture, and adopt methods of research belonging to the history of material culture.

Different definitions of the term material culture do exist, demonstrating its great flexibility as an instrument of research, in contrast with the rigid constraints of traditional art historical approaches. Jules David Prown concisely defines material culture as “the manifestations of culture through material productions” and its study as “the study of material to understand culture, to discover the beliefs – the values, ideas,

attitudes, and assumptions – of a particular community or society at a given time” and concludes that it is an “object-based branch of cultural anthropology or cultural history” ,<sup>19</sup> noting that the results of the history of material culture do not represent the description of a historical reality but rather a “narrative” based on assumptions that might be more or less verisimilar. Indeed, all historical and art historical studies are “narratives” in that they represent interpretations of past facts, events and acts; yet the material culture approach allows a narrative with a much wider and varied scope, allowing much more intriguing and stimulating interpretations of the past.

Thomas Schlereth emphasizes the human factor, stressing the “strong interrelation between physical objects and human behavior” and “the complex interaction that take place between creators and their culture.” For him, moreover, material culture “simultaneously refers to both the subject of the study, material, and to its principal purpose, the understanding of culture” .<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Jules David Prown, 1993, 1.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Schlereth, 1985, 2–3.

Giorgio Riello avoids offering a single definition of material culture; instead, he focuses on the different ways in which the relationship between history and material culture can be declined. He offers a list of three different approaches to the history of material culture:

a) History **from** things, i.e., using objects as primary sources, raw materials for the discipline of history and the interpretation of the past, treated in the same way as we treat written sources. This approach encompasses the creation of a narrative, a narrative that is not supported by the very materiality of the object, and that can largely depend on the context in which, in a way or the other, the object we study is (or was) located as well as on the methodologies adopted by the scholar, stressing that objects “should not be used [simply] as an aid for providing enhanced answers, but for asking better questions” ;

b) history **of** things, the historical analysis of the relationship between objects, people and their representations. There are several gradations in this approach, ranging from focusing on a particular, individual object to the study of general, ownership patterns and the likes; in all of these cases, however, the object is always the *subject matter* of the study;



c) history **and** things, that is studying objects independently from their historical context with a more flexible and original approach, in order to get a key to aspects of the past that would be otherwise inaccessible.<sup>21</sup>

Jaques Maquet points out that, if we don't limit ourselves to the mere description of the objects' "instrumentality" , i.e., its use, which is innate to the object, but attempt to understand them as signs/signifiers (and this includes its function, which should never be confused with its use), we must be aware of the cultural context of the object itself, as "function is culture-specific" .<sup>22</sup>

This brief review offers just a glimpse of the richness and complexity of definitions of and ideas about material culture. Schlereth, for instance, presents in his article a sampler of equally varied definitions of the term which, depending on the scholar's ideas, can come to include even natural objects, if they are "culturally charged" by a given group or society.

Varied as they are, all the definitions of material culture studies recognize at least two fundamental points which, I believe, must be

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<sup>21</sup> Giorgio Riello 2009, 24–46.

<sup>22</sup> Jaques Maquet, 1993, 30–40.

especially emphasized. The first is that objects are intimately related to culture, and both categories (i.e., material culture, and culture) can be more deeply understood by means of the other: the relationship between the two is reciprocal. The second, fundamental point is the inherently interdisciplinary nature of this field of studies. As repeatedly stated in the Editorial of the first issue of the *Journal of Material Culture*, there exists no “disciplined” study of material culture; rather, the study of the rich patrimony represented by “objects” offers a great opportunity for the encounter and cross-fertilization of several fields of humanities, ranging from archaeology to art history, from history of religions to cultural anthropology, from geography to architecture, and so on.<sup>23</sup> In the case of Buddhist material culture, we must therefore be aware of the developments in fields such as art history, history of thought, ritual studies, anthropological theories and so on.

Material culture studies began to develop greatly from the mid 1980s, but it is only in more recent times that scholars of Buddhism began to explore its potentials in a conscious and constant way. Gregory Schopen

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<sup>23</sup> “Editorial” , in *Journal of Material Culture* 1, 1996, 5–14.

published several articles advocating the necessity of countering the tendency to approach the history of early Indian Buddhism exclusively through the study of literary sources, whose contents can seldom offer us a picture of what “living Buddhism” really was.<sup>24</sup>

A field in which material culture studies applied to the Buddhist context are those dealing with the ritual sphere. It is by no chance, therefore, that in an important collection of articles devoted to the study of the ritual context of Chan/Zen Buddhism, at least half of the papers included directly deal with *objects* (portraits of Chan masters, monastic robes, and even mummified monks).<sup>25</sup> These studies deal with objects used in a ritual context, and the focus is therefore on their meaning, value and practical or symbolic function in the frame of ritual activity. Another way to understand the relationship between Buddhist rituals and material culture is to concentrate on the way in which ritual activity infuses sacred

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<sup>24</sup> In his article titled “Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism”, for instance, he shows how archaeological findings and epigraphical evidence on several cases radically contradict the conclusions of traditional scholarship based on the study of sūtras and other textual sources. Gregory Schopen, 1997, 1–22.

<sup>25</sup> Bernard Faure (ed.), *Chan Buddhism in Ritual Context*, London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.

meanings into objects that would be otherwise simple, meaningless pieces of matter.<sup>26</sup>

Other scholars, focused on the theoretical aspects of materiality in Buddhism, and how this influenced the creation, use and approach to several types of objects in the past as well as the ideas people held about the material world. Fabio Rambelli, for instance, attempts to draw a comprehensive scheme of the medieval Japanese approaches to the “inanimate” (objects, but also plants and natural sceneries) from a semiotic standpoint.<sup>27</sup> John Kieschnick tries to offer a more

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<sup>26</sup> See for instance Joo Kyeongmi 2008, exploring the complex relationship between materiality, sanctity and Buddhist rituals, and Gerhardt 2009, which analyses the role played by material objects in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Japanese death rituals and ceremonies (cremation ceremonies, mortuary processions, memorial rituals etc.), pointing at the importance of the contextualization of objects in order to enrich our understanding of past habits.

<sup>27</sup> Fabio Rambelli, 2007. Rambelli’s book is remarkable as it presents an impressive number of sources on which his theories and ideas are based and for sure offers a brilliant and original discussion of the several themes it presents. It often risks, however, to overintellectualize the way Japanese used, and at some length still use, to relate to the objects they manipulated and to the environment where they lived. Indeed, Rambelli seems to suggest that many of the habits and ideas of common people originally derive from elaborated esoteric theoretical doctrines, while it should be not excluded that, in many cases, popular beliefs and customs actually “forced” Buddhist

comprehensive discussion of the complex relationship between material objects, cultural exchanges and the social and cultural transformations influenced by the introduction and use of material culture.<sup>28</sup>

Most of the studies on Buddhist material culture here mentioned seem to be mostly concerned with common objects used in everyday life. I will try to prove that the approach can be adopted with equal validity to study “higher” objects, which are commonly subjects of traditional art historical studies. Although in general Sŏn master-related works such as monk stupas, steles or portraits occupy a secondary place in the art historical discourse, they are still subjects of traditional art historical inquiry. Yet, adapting an approach inspired by material culture studies to such a peculiar material production will allow the creation of cultural narratives that can shed new light on the historical events and processes that surrounded its creation and circulation. The material culture approach makes it possible to avoid the constraints of standard Korean Buddhist art history, which for the materiality of Sŏn masters is for the most part still

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exegetes to develop ideas that could accord with what commoners believed.

<sup>28</sup> John Kieschnick, 2003.

focused on the formal characteristics of the “artworks” or on the direct circumstances of their production, with little interest to the larger religious context in which it was experienced and on its often–fluctuating meanings.

#### **4. Previous Research**

This dissertation discusses objects, issues and themes that have already been separately covered by scholars of Korean Buddhist art and of Korean Buddhist history; however, there haven’t been attempts to combine the totality of the subjects in a coherent whole, or to recognize the importance of materiality in the larger framework of Buddhism as a living religion.

Much valuable work on the historical issues addressed in this dissertation has been published since the mid 1980s by a number of important scholars. Kim Young Tae,<sup>29</sup> Ko Ik Jin,<sup>30</sup> and Choe Byong–hon,<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Kim Young Tae 1985.

<sup>30</sup> Koh Ik Jin 1984 and 1985.

<sup>31</sup> Choe Byong–hon 1988 and 1995.

in particular, identified the major sources for the study of late Chosŏn lineage narrative development, thus paving the way for more in-depth interpretation of a very rich but for a long time culpably neglected tradition. Since the 2010s century, a younger generation of scholars including Kim Yongtae,<sup>32</sup> Kim Sung-Eun (Kim Sung-Eun Thomas)<sup>33</sup> and Sohn Seong Phil<sup>34</sup> contributed to the reevaluation of the Late Chosŏn Buddhist tradition with studies revealing the liveliness of the monastic community and that of the major religious sites of the period. The main limitation of these studies is that, in line with the main current of history of Korean Buddhism, the focus is invariably on textual sources, with no space devoted to the equally influent material sources discussed in this dissertation.

The various media that I define as materiality of Sŏn masters – stupas, bodily relics, funerary/memorial steles, robes, bowls, staffs and other miscellaneous contact relics – have been studied, with different degrees

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<sup>32</sup> Kim Yongtae 2006 and 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Kim Sung-Eun Thomas 2013 and 2019.

<sup>34</sup> Sohn Seong Phil 2013 and 2018.

of depth, by historians of Korean art but never as an interconnected body. The catalogue for an exhibition on objects connected with monkhood in Korean Buddhism<sup>35</sup> presents a great array of relevant examples of materiality of Sŏn masters, but its critical apparatus doesn't include any attempt to offer a coherent, all-encompassing reading of the objects.<sup>36</sup> In general, the approach of this volume to items such as bowls, clothing, and other ritual and everyday objects used in the monastic context reflect the mainstream discourse of the subjects, one mostly based on issues of taxonomy and of form.

To this day, there are only a few general studies on Korean monk stupas, and even fewer studies concentrating on the stupas of the Chosŏn period. Scholarship on monk stupas began in earnest during the 1970s, with Chŏng Yŏnggho's Ph. D dissertation (1974) being the first lengthy

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<sup>35</sup> Pulgyo Chungang Pangmulgwan 2009.

<sup>36</sup> Excluding the introductory essay, the catalogue's critical apparatus consists of two art historical articles with strong formalistic nuances, focused respectively on seventeenth century monk sculptors and on Late Chosŏn monk painters, and on one article on the history of Korean Buddhist monks seen through the lenses of 'dharma seeking' (Kor. *kubop* 求法) and defense of the state, completely unrelated with the main material subject of the catalogue.



study of the subject. In this work the author concentrated on monk stupas made during the unified Silla Period by a purely formalistic point of view. A large number of papers on monk stupas has been published, but the vast majority follows the model set by Chǒng, with issues of dating and formal categorization at their core. Despite the vast majority of monk stupas date to the Late Chosŏn period, studies of this production are relatively limited in number and fail to explain the reasons for this unparalleled increase in the erection of monk stupa (and of the related steles).<sup>37</sup> Steles are usually approached either as written texts<sup>38</sup> (I will offer an overview of the theme in chapter 1) or in a formalistic framework aimed at the classification of the main shapes of the basis and head of the steles.

Similarly, only an extremely limited number of monographs on Buddhist portraiture exist. To date, Maya Stiller's doctoral thesis<sup>39</sup> remains the most complete discussion of the subject, but also in this case

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<sup>37</sup> See for instance Eom Gipyŏ 2005b, 2008b, 2008c, 2012, Choi Insun 2012, Hong Sung-Ik 2012, Shin Yongchul 2019.

<sup>38</sup> Kim Sung-Eun Thomas 2020, Ko Young-Seop 2015, Sohn Seong Phil 2012.

<sup>39</sup> Stiller 2008a.

the focus is on taxonomy and formalistic analysis. Chŏng Ut'aek (2000) represents a more concise example of categorization of the portraits' formal characteristics divided in chronological perspective.

Some articles on Korean kasaya have been published,<sup>40</sup> mostly covering the decorative patterns characterizing the robes of deceased monks. Although not an academic text, the short book by An Myŏngsuk, Kim Kyŏngsuk<sup>41</sup> represents the most complete treatment of the subject. In general, the subject is mostly neglected by mainstream art historians, and information on Korean Buddhist robes, also from an historical point of view, is hard to find.

In general, as this short review shows, the understanding of the materiality of Sŏn masters is still limited and unsystematic. My study will attempt to offer a preliminary solution to the current situation. Even if only partially by necessity, I will try to reveal the potential hidden in this material production and to show the richness of historical interpretations that it allows.

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<sup>40</sup> Youm Jung-Seop 2011, Kang Sunjung and Cho Woo-Hyun 2011.

<sup>41</sup> An, Kim and Kim 2005.

## 5. Structure of the Thesis

The thesis will be divided in two main parts. In Part One (Chapters One and Two) I will focus on the origins of the lineage narrative of Late Chosŏn Buddhism, as the concept set the stage for the emergence, in the Myohyansan area dominated by the community centered on master Hyujŏng, of a new idea of Sŏn–master that, in turn, allowed the flourishing of the material culture here discussed in the whole Korean Peninsula. The first chapter deals with historical issues of lineage–narrative creation with a particular focus on its original formulations. It includes a long excursus on the related textual sources through which I try to demonstrate the pervasiveness of the ideas and ideals connected with the narrative, while at the same time offering a tentative periodization of Sŏn master–related ideas. The second chapter focuses on the earliest expressions of Sŏn master related material production in the seventeenth century, with a special emphasis on the area surrounding the Mount Myohyang. It discusses the role that the materiality of Sŏn masters had in the earliest phases of the lineage narrative development when the issues at stake were rather limited in scope and centered essentially on the local

dimension: by pointing at, and by problematizing the use of the materiality of Sŏn masters in connection with the questions of Dharma succession, the chapter tries to reveal the preeminent role held by it as an instrument of legitimation and manipulation.

Part Two (Chapters Three, Four and Five) discusses the later transformations that the materiality of Sŏn masters underwent after the events described in Part One. Even if, as I argue, the early phase is essentially local in character, the ideas that emerged from it and the malleability of the interconnected material production proved extremely powerful in shaping a new kind of Buddhism not yet seen in the Korean Peninsula, that in short time came to dominate the complete spectrum of the religion. To demonstrate the expansion of the original ideas discussed in Part One, to illustrate how the materiality of Sŏn masters was functional in the diffusion of this new Buddhism in the whole Chosŏn territory, as to discuss the manifold adaptations of meaning and function that this material production underwent, I will present the case of the Taedunsa monastery. This important site was one of the most relevant Buddhist centers of the period. I will argue that it succeeded in emerging to its preeminent status due to the brilliant use its community made of Sŏn master-related material

culture. In these chapters I will address a number of issues connected with the transformations that occurred in the materiality of Sŏn masters outside its original definition. Chapter three discusses how material culture was used to export lineage ideas/ideals outside of its area of origin, and how it influenced the self-perception of the monastery's community; chapter four introduces issues of cultural cross contamination between Buddhist and Confucian traditions, discussing how forms of pre-existing Buddhist materiality were culturally manipulated, adapted and reinvented in innovative ways to allow the Buddhist community to obtain substantial gains both economically and in fame; chapter five offers a reading of how Sŏn master-related material production at Taedunsa was addressed in one major contemporary textual source, the monastery's gazetteer *Taedunsaji*, in an attempt to reconstruct how the Late Chosŏn Buddhist community understood and interpreted materiality.

The themes discussed in these two parts do not cover the full spectrum of the potentials of the materiality of Sŏn masters, yet they are sufficiently varied and rich to offer clear proof of the absolute relevance of this material production as a founding element of Late Chosŏn Buddhism, and to demonstrate the flexibility of this material production and its

stratified, rich quantity of meanings and functions.

## PART ONE

# CHAPTER ONE – THE DEVELOPMENT OF LINEAGE NARRATIVE(S) IN LATE CHOSŌN BUDDHISM

## 1. Introduction

During the mid Chosŏn era, we witness the development of a unique, in the Korean context, conception of the Sŏn Community (by this time essentially synonymous with Buddhist Community) based on two related ideas. The first is the Chan/Sŏn's self-definition as a "separate transmission outside of the teachings" (Kor. *kyooe pyŏlchŏn*; Ch. *jiaowai biechuan*), i.e., a tradition in which enlightenment is transmitted not by "intellectual" means such as doctrine or writings and their methodic study, but rather through a personal and instinctive approach occurring by direct interaction between master and disciple (Kor. *saja sangsŭng*; Ch. *shizi xiangcheng*). The second is the corollary notion of Dharma lineage transmission, i.e., the idea that the Dharma has been handed on spiritually<sup>42</sup> in an uninterrupted, direct master-disciple line dating back

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<sup>42</sup> McRae (2003, 7) notes, however, that in this kind of relationship, nothing is really transmitted, but there is rather a recognition of complete enlightenment, thus shifting the focus from the object of transmission to the personal relationship of two enlightened beings.



to the historical Buddha and beyond.

Such notions are not original to Chosŏn Buddhism and are indeed basic elements of Chinese Chan beginning at least in the Song, with origins dating back at least to the seventh century. However, this approach was apparently not internalized by Korean Buddhists of the previous ages, to the point that, once the Chosŏn Sŏn community adopted the Dharma lineage as its founding principle, it necessarily came to downplay or ignore earlier iterations of the meditative tradition in the Korean peninsula when describing its own history and development.<sup>43</sup>

The failure, or lack of interest, of pre-Chosŏn Buddhists in the adoption of the lineage paradigm helps to understand a number of characteristics peculiar to Korean Sŏn Buddhism that are difficult to understand otherwise: it explains, for instance, why the so called Nine Mountains *Kusan* 九山 of

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<sup>43</sup> Chosŏn Buddhists were of course not oblivious of the previous traditions, but their identity construction structured around lineage literature and material culture unambiguously distinguished and separated the earlier traditions of Silla and Koryŏ and the contemporary one. Some attempts of reconnection with previous religious experiences were attempted, such as in the case of Sunchŏn's Songgwansa where a rich (also from the material standpoint) tradition associated with Chinul predated the phenomena discussed in this thesis, but even there the "new" forms of lineage narrative overshadowed any previously existing form of Buddhism.

Sŏn Buddhism which represented the first long standing, organized iterations of the meditative tradition in the peninsula<sup>44</sup> remained essentially identified with their founders and, notwithstanding the efforts of modern scholars in trying to find in those groups the origins of modern Korean Sŏn Buddhism, they eventually disappeared as living traditions.<sup>45</sup>

How, when and where did Korean Buddhists begin to develop what finally became the lineage tradition that came to define its identity allowing it to not merely survive, but to flourish in forms never seen in the Korean Buddhism of previous eras? As I will try to demonstrate in Part One of this dissertation, Buddhist textual and material sources of the Late Chosŏn

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<sup>44</sup> On the early history of Sŏn in the Korean Peninsula, see KimYoung Tae 1986, 135 on.

<sup>45</sup> Although no Buddhist master of the late Chosŏn period identified himself as a descendant of these Nine Mountains, their founders were not completely forgotten, as demonstrated by the several reprints of the *Sŏnmun chosayech'am ŭi mun*, a brief illustrated manual on memorial rituals for a number of Sŏn masters of the past that includes Patriarchs from India, China, the founders of the Nine Mountains, Chinul and, in the late Chosŏn editions, also the so-called Three masters (kor. *samhwasang*) i.e., Zhikong, Naong, Chach'o. Yet, no Late Chosŏn Sŏn master considered itself or his teachings heir of that tradition, and indeed the function and meaning of the *Sŏnmun chosayech'am ŭi mun* during the last three centuries of the period is far from clear and requires further inquiry to be fully explained.

period seem to suggest that the “lineage revolution” started out as a tool to settle what was an essentially local question of religious heritage of a well-defined community active in the northern region of Pyŏngan-do, formed around the charismatic figure of Ch’ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng (fig. 1). This “revolution” of Korean Buddhism later extended its influence over the whole Korean peninsula as a result of the great symbolic power of the lineage narrative it was built on, and its great adaptability to new environments and historical conjunctures.

This chapter will present an overview of the early stages in the development of the lineage narrative through textual sources, introducing the principal actors who thus contributed to the renovation of late Chosŏn Buddhism, and will finally offer a periodization of the history of late Chosŏn Buddhism based on the subsequent adaptations of the Buddhist community around the lineage discourse. Chapter two will complement the first by focusing on the material aspects associated with the earliest phases of the lineage narrative development, both as an active factor that contributed to its success, and as a reflection of its consequences.

## 2. Lineage in Chinese Chan

Already before the period discussed in this thesis, the *idea* of Dharma lineage was not unknown to Korean monks: it was, after all, one of the founding elements of historical Chan<sup>46</sup> and thus part of the intellectual milieu on which the Korean Sŏn monks' self-understanding was based. In China, the Dharma lineage was first developed and actively implemented in the Tang, essentially as an exclusivist approach and with radical polemical nuances, as a highly effective tool to solve the power struggles in the still young and developing Chan community (or communities), while later, once Chan became the main current of Buddhism in the Song, morphed into an instrument of sectarian definition, inclusion and official

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<sup>46</sup> Lineage traditions are not limited to the Chan tradition. In a timeframe close to that of Chan's rise to national prominence in the Song, a similar narrative was also developed in the Tiantai context. Morrison, indeed, suggests that the concept of lineage was first conceived by members of the Sanlun and Tiantai schools (Morrison 2010, 45–46); another well-known early example is that of the Eight Patriarchs of the Esoteric tradition, best represented by its frequent visual depictions in the context of the Japanese Shingon sect. All these traditions, in a way or the other, are based on the premise of 'non-intellectual' transmission of the Teachings, hence the strong emphasis on their founders and masters. Yet, although such iterations are also significant in the larger context of East Asian Buddhism, it is undeniable that it was Chan to most fully and successfully explore all the potential implications of the concept of lineage.

recognition. Although there is no need here to delve in length in the history of lineage narrative formation in China, as it has been widely discussed by both Asian and western scholars,<sup>47</sup> a short review of its development might be useful to draw interesting parallels with the developments of the Chosŏn Sŏn lineage narratives that will be discussed below.

The concept of Chan/Sŏn Dharma lineage as known to us was gradually developed in China starting during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries and was first deployed as a polemical instrument to promote specific masters' teachings as the orthodox one among the several independent meditative centers that represented the still developing Chan school of the time. This first approach to lineage as a “discriminating” tool gave birth to some of the most well-known writings of the Chinese Chan canon, including the *Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch* (Kor. *Yukchodan'gyŏng*, Ch. *Liuzutangjing*),<sup>48</sup> the *Zutang ji* and the *Lidao Fabao ji*.

Later, with the progressive regulation, development and flourishing of

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<sup>47</sup> Among the many relevant studies on the subject, Foulk 1987, McRae 1986 and 2003, Jorgensen 2005, Adamek 2000 and 2007, Morrison 2010, Lin, Pei-Yin 2011.

<sup>48</sup> Yampolsky 1967.

the Chan community during the early Song period, the need for discrimination was replaced by a more universalizing need for official recognition: the Chan “School”, now a large community spread all over the territory and represented by a vast number of branches and local groups could not be any more presented as a single school based on a unitary lineage with a single master passing the dharma to a single, chosen disciple: instead, Chan, now representing the most popular and widespread form of Buddhism in China, began to consider itself as a large family, based on a common ancestor lineage deriving from Bodhidharma and passing through Huineng,<sup>49</sup> with several branches constantly growing, all related to one another. Disputes between branches of course never disappeared and were at times quite harsh, yet the general conception of Chan as an enlarged family, not unlike the confucianized clans that flourished at the same time, was never object of contention.

Scholarship mostly focused on the early phases of the Chan tradition and to its literary sources,<sup>50</sup> which are highly relevant to reconstruct the

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<sup>49</sup> Quite ironically, as Huineng’s lineage was the same one that during the Tang succeeded in suppressing its rivals in the struggle for orthodoxy.

<sup>50</sup> Representative examples include the pioneering work by McRae (1986) and Wendi Adamek’s study on a notable, but essentially secondary source as

formative process that gave birth to it. As a result, several of the sources that were most commonly circulated in the Eastern Asian area and that actually function as the foundation for the several iterations of mature Chan in China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam have been somehow neglected. Indeed, most of the early sources were lost and forgotten early on in the history of Chan, probably because they didn't fit in the agenda of the school in its mature form (the one we encounter in early eleventh century Song China); others, especially the Platform Sutra, were still circulated and read but losing their polemic, sectarian nuances and being transformed in the process. It was the Chan literature of the Song, especially the Transmission of the Lamp texts and the *Yulu* collections that set the standards on which the Chan monks based their collective religious experience creating their own "imagined community".<sup>51</sup>

A crucial element that shall not be overlooked, and one especially relevant in the context of this study, is the fact that, in all its iterations, lineage was understood in material terms. Masters used symbolically

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the *Lidai fabao ji* (Adamek 2007).

<sup>51</sup> This expression has been borrowed by Anderson 1983.

charged objects such as robes and bowls as a tangible way to recognize the disciple's enlightenment and to pass on their religious authority<sup>52</sup> and these material media also had the function to suggest spiritual identity between Chan masters and the historical Buddha.

Once Chan established itself as the leading Buddhist current in the Song and the single lineage approach was superseded by the multiple-branch approach, different forms of materiality replaced the primacy originally given to robes (and bodies) as proof of legitimate dharma transmission. Unlike robes, which are single, self-contained unique tokens that cannot be copied and can therefore be transmitted only to a single individual, pictorial portraits<sup>53</sup> can be easily duplicated to be circulated to multiple descendants, while relics either come in high number so that they can be distributed to different communities.<sup>54</sup> The duplicability of portraits also means that, in case of damage, reparation or replacement are always possible, so while robes and bowls were almost constantly kept far from

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<sup>52</sup> Griffith Foulk 1987, 104.

<sup>53</sup> See Foulk and Sharf 1993/94.

<sup>54</sup> Relics do at times miraculously multiply themselves, a pattern that we meet also in seventeenth century Korea.



the glance of the community members, portraits, displayed in specially built halls, became the focus of active ritual activity and were constantly made publicly visible both to members the Buddhist community and to secular followers.

This does not mean that transmission and keeping of robes completely terminated in the Song. Indeed, many robes were kept in monasteries not only in China, but in Korea and Japan<sup>55</sup> as well; yet it is indisputable that the focus shifted to more reproducible and easily circulatable, while equally, if not further, symbolically strong objects.

### **3. The Korean Approach to Lineage before the Late Chosŏn Period**

Lineage narrative(s) had a tremendous impact on the development of the Meditative school in China, Vietnam and Japan, and one would thus expect that comparable developments have taken place in the Korean peninsula as well; however, although the Korean Buddhist community should have been well aware of what was going on in China, or at least had an advanced knowledge of the literature that served as the foundation

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<sup>55</sup> On later usages of the kasaya, see Faure 2003, 211 on.

of the Song Chinese Chan's identity narrative,<sup>56</sup> the historical sources seem to suggest that its members did not show any special interest neither in trying to be comprised in the Chinese narratives (for instance, by 'discovering' or seeking strong dharma relationships with Chinese masters) nor by adapting it to the Korean dimension.

This only changed – radically – in the period discussed in this thesis, when the *samgha* fully adopted a religious structure developed by Chinese Chan masters in the Song but which was essentially alien to the Korean practical religious experience up to that point. Up to the sixteenth century, the knowledge Korean monks had of lineage as a universalizing structure was fundamentally intellectual in its nature, while after the reforms of the seventeenth century it became – by choice – part of the living religious experience of the Buddhist practitioners.

During the Koryŏ period lineage was not a major point of interest for the member of the Buddhist community, at least not in the way it came to be understood in the latter half of the Chosŏn period. As noted by Heo

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<sup>56</sup> All major Chan texts were widely published and read at least since the Koryŏ period. Some texts, such as the *Zutang ji* were only preserved in Korean collections while disappearing in Continental China.

Heung-sik,<sup>57</sup> references to lineage in Koryŏ steles only appear at the very end of the kingdom's history, in connection with the travels to China of the two leading masters of the last decades of the kingdom, Naong and T'aego, visits that in both cases resulted in the inheritance of the line of renowned Chinese masters of the time. The references to lineage included in these two masters' funerary steles, however, show radical differences in the approach to the concept in comparison with the seventeenth century case in at least two fundamental points: a) lineage references are not included with a long-term goal in mind (such as in Late Chosŏn's case), but are part of the narrative merely as notable events of the two masters' lives as individuals; and b) although considered relevant enough to be recorded in the masters' steles, the lineage inherited in China is in neither case highlighted nor hinted at as the major source of legitimation for the masters' religious authority, and is seen as a "plus" in the life of already relevant figures rather than a life-changing event comparable to the attainment of Enlightenment. Notably, notwithstanding the existence of a comparatively large body of epigraphic material and other written sources,

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<sup>57</sup> Heo Heung-sik 1994.

we find no other notable references to lineage dating to the Koryŏ period.

There might be several reasons that could be given for such a lack of interest in the practical adoption of structured lineage in Koryŏ, but in my opinion it likely had to do with the relationship of the Buddhist community with the state and with the direct influence the state exercised on the religion's structure and its membership. Lineage is a powerful tool for creating a community and especially for empowering its leaders (either real or imaginary,<sup>58</sup> as we are speaking of a form of narrative) and bestow them with a strong sense of authority both in the eyes of the community's members and to the external forces as well. A lineage narrative such as the one we are speaking of is thus especially significant when the leaders of a religious community have no other tools to support their authority and their position in society, and is especially effective for communities such as that of late Chosŏn, characterized by a high level of administrative independence from the state.

During the Koryŏ period Buddhism as a whole was deeply intertwined with the state, which strictly regulated its structure and operating

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<sup>58</sup> Cultural communities often create their own leaders *a posteriori* in order to legitimate their own particular agenda.

principles and had virtually the last word concerning its leadership. During this period, the primary systems for the selection of Buddhist leaders were the monastic examination (kor. *sŭnggwa*) and the connected, but independent, posts of royal and national Preceptors.

What is generally referred at with the term *sŭnggwa*, i.e., the official monastic examination aimed at the selection of the *samgha*'s administrative leaders, was first created in the early part of the Koryŏ period; and soon became a prominent element of the state's organization,<sup>59</sup> as virtually all prominent Buddhist leaders of the period, especially those granted with the title of National Preceptor and of Royal Preceptor, were among those who successfully passed the examination.<sup>60</sup> The exam thus became a standard element in the regular examination program of the state and, after the dynastic change in 1392, it was inherited by the Chosŏn administration, although current documentation does not give us much

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<sup>59</sup> In China an analogous examination began in 705, during the Tang era. John Kieschnick notes that it was essentially a form of *intellectual legitimation* of the monks who passed it, and that it was intended more than else as a means deployed by the state to limit and control the Buddhist community, rather than a truly prestigious occasion for social ascendance as was the civil-service examination. See Kieschnick 1997, 114.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 104.

information about how it was practically held in the earliest phases of the new reign.

In its earliest iterations, the exam was apparently organized in the form of a public debate,<sup>61</sup> but in due time the open debate system was replaced by a written exam on a fixed set of literary sources to be studied and mastered, in the fashion of the (secular) Confucian examinations aimed at the selection of the country's ruling class.

Control over Buddhism was achieved not only by adopting official examinations for the selection of its representatives, but also, at the highest level, through the rigorous regulation of the offices of National Preceptor (kor. *kuksa*) and Royal Preceptor (kor. *wangsa*), both appointed (in most cases) directly by the king<sup>62</sup> and who were recognized by the Buddhist community as its leaders. Notably, especially between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, both Royal and National Preceptors were chosen amongst monks belonging to the aristocracy or the royal family,<sup>63</sup> a further reminder of the strong grip of the state on Buddhist

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<sup>61</sup> Heo Heung-sik 1974, 114–125.

<sup>62</sup> Veermersch 2008, 256–257, Park Yun Jin 2006, 220–221.

<sup>63</sup> See Heo Heung-sik 1975, 29–34, and Veermersch 2008, 256.

affairs and on its leadership. Another sign of the state's influence on the religion, and of its lack of autonomy, is the well-known fact that no monument dedicated to a deceased monk, neither stupa nor stele, could be created without the explicit authorization of the crown.

In this light, the role of the state in the selection of the monastic leadership of the country might be interpreted as an instrument of control, severely limiting the *samgha*'s autonomy and liberty, but at the same time gave stability to Buddhism, as it offered a clearly identifiable, solid leadership and financial stability, as it allowed patronage from the higher strata of society.

The lack of interest for a practical application of the implications of Song lineage narratives is further substantiated by the practice of comparing the Royal and State Preceptors with notable Chinese monastic figures belonging not to the Chan community, but rather to the older pre-Tang tradition, known through classic Chinese historiography and exemplified at its best by works belonging to the *Lives of Eminent Monk* literature, first of all the *Gaosheng Zhuan* by the Liang period monk Huijiao (497–554).<sup>64</sup> While in other geographic areas of Buddhist influence such

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<sup>64</sup> T2059. This text, along with its ideal continuation, Daoxuan's (596–667)

literature was already an essential relic of the past,<sup>65</sup> well into the thirteenth century in Koryŏ a work such as Kakhun's *Haedong kosŭng jŏn* (1215),<sup>66</sup> adopting the identical structure of the Liang (502–577) era *Gaoseng zhuan* was published on royal command<sup>67</sup>, and even at a later time

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*Xu Gaosheng Zhuan* (T.2060) were highly influential works during the whole Tang period, both in Buddhist circles and among the ruling classes (Kieschnick 1997, 8–9). *Lives of Eminent Monk* books are collections of biographies of monks organized thematically, categorizing notable monks not based on their sectarian affiliations, but through inclusive macro categories such as translators, chanters of Scriptures, monks who sacrificed their bodies, and so on. In contrast to Transmission of the Lamp histories, here personal relationship between monks or chronological consequentiality are not major aspects (the *Lives* do not aim at the creation of a unitary narrative), and sectarian membership is of scarce importance. Kakhun makes explicit his indebtedness to these works in the Introductory section of the text (T50n2065\_p1015c28).

<sup>65</sup> In China, the last relevant work in the series is the *Song gaoshen zhuan* (T2061) compiled in 30 fascicles by Zanning (919–1001) between 988 and 996. Similar works continued to be published, as shown for instance by the 8 fascicle *Ming gaoseng zhuan* by Ruxing (d.u.), but their relevance and circulation waned in the exact moment the Chan tradition began its ascension and imposed new approaches to the understanding of the monastic figure. See Kieschnick 1997, 137.

<sup>66</sup> T2065/H0082. The book, completed in 1215 by the monk Kakhun (d.u.) and thought lost for centuries, was rediscovered around 1914. Currently only the first two books remain. For an English translation of the work see Lee P., 1969.

<sup>67</sup> Peter H. Lee 1969, 1.



a similar hagiographic approach, seemingly oblivious of the profound innovations brought in China by transmission of the lamp histories is adopted by Iryŏn in the *Samguk yusa* (ca. 1280).<sup>68</sup> These two works, both composed by notable members of the Buddhist monastic community with close ties to the crown and the government, clearly demonstrate the nature of the relationship between the state and Buddhism in Koryŏ and the complete lack of interest in the adoption of the Chan innovations that took place in the eleventh century.<sup>69</sup>

When the Chosŏn state was founded in 1392, it inherited the basic policies that institutionalized Buddhism in the latter part of Koryŏ, including the posts of Royal Preceptor and State Preceptor and the selection of the leaders of the religion through an examination organized by the state. The limited sources we have concerning the following period

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<sup>68</sup> The *Haedong Kosŭngjŏn* is actually among Iryŏn's textual sources. Although Iryŏn's references to this work in the *Samguk Yusa* suggest its relevance in the Koryŏ period, its outdated structure can probably be accounted for the book's disappearance in the Sŏn dominated Korea of Late Chosŏn.

<sup>69</sup> Veermersch 2007 also points out the strong influence of the Lives of eminent monks' literature in the composition of Koryŏ Buddhist funerary stele inscriptions.

seem to suggest that not much changed even after the dynastic change. In line with the previous era, for example, the construction of monk stupas and the erection of associated steles was numerically limited and restricted to National and Royal Preceptors,<sup>70</sup> with little to no reference to Chinese style lineages<sup>71</sup>. Writings on the subject, including the *Jingde chuandenglu*, were widely circulated, but one finds no attempts to include contemporary masters in it.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Only 58 steles were created during the whole Koryŏ period, invariably authorized by the Royal house. See table in Lee Kwanuey 2019, 92–95. Eom Giyo 2003 lists 146 monk stupas dating to the Koryŏ period, a number extremely limited if compared to that of the stupas build during the late Chosŏn period. For more details on official patronage of stupas and steles during the latter part of the Koryŏ period, see Eom Giyo 2003, 548–550.

<sup>71</sup> For instance, Tŭktong Kihwa (1376–1433), one of the most notable Buddhist masters of the early Chosŏn is often referred as the dharma heir of the celebrated Muhak Chach'o, however Kihwa's biography included in his Recorded Sayings, the *Hamhŏdang Tŭkt'ong Hwasang Ŏrok*, while recording that the Kihwa studied under Chach'o, it doesn't make particular reference to concepts such as that of direct master–disciple transmission of the dharma, doesn't make any reference to Chach'o's pedigree, and actually doesn't put any emphasis on their interpersonal relationship, resolving their teacher–student connection in a single sentence. (H0119 v7, p.251a02–a03).

<sup>72</sup> Among the most relevant Sŏn masters of the first half of Chosŏn is Hŏŭng Pou (1509–1565), responsible through his relationship with Queen dowager Munjŏng of a short but fundamental revival of state–sponsored Buddhism in the mid–sixteenth century. His activities, which among the others encompassed the reestablishment of the *Sŭnggwa* examination and that of

Everything, apparently, changed after the Japanese invasions at the end of the sixteenth century, when the Buddhist community developed and widely circulated newly developed Dharma lineage narratives centered on Korean masters. It is not an overstatement to assert that Late Chosŏn Buddhism as a whole is the result of the development of these lineage narratives, which impact cannot be overemphasized: in fact, the only Buddhist groups that were able, in a form or another, to leave a significant trace of their existence in the last 300 years of Chosŏn history were those that included themselves into such a narrative discourse.<sup>73</sup>

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the two distinct Sŏn and Kyo Schools suggest a traditionalist behavior in line with that of the state sponsored monks of the Koryŏ period. His actions recorded in several passages the *Chosŏn Wangjo Sillok* do also reveal a monk with a traditional approach concerning the recognition of Buddhism, based on a strong role of the state, and nowhere in his writings collected in the *Hŏungdangjip* (H0132) and in the *Naam chapchŏ* (H0133) references to lineage as a living tradition or as a subject of direct relevance are to be found.

<sup>73</sup> The *Sŏyŏk Chunghwa Haedong Puljo wŏllyu*, the most influential lineage text of the late Chosŏn period, includes a section consisting in a single page titled *Musa pyŏllok* (Separate record of [masters] outside the lineage), listing the names of a limited number of masters evidently deemed somehow relevant by the compiler. Notably, no information can be gained about these masters including geographical or chronological data: they would be virtually nonexistent were not for this single citation of their names. One can only wonder of the extremely high number of Buddhist masters active during the early seventeenth century whose teachings disappeared along with the

In the following section I will present the major Dharma lineage narratives developed by the Chosŏn Buddhist community in the first half of the seventeenth century, introducing the principal textual sources for it and the major players in the final formulation of the Korean lineage, while the principal issues concerning the birth of these narratives, with special emphasis on the role of material culture in their origin, perfection and diffusion, will be examined in the next chapter.

#### 4. Lineage Narratives of the Late Chosŏn<sup>74</sup>

##### 4.1) Lineage Narratives in the Writings of Hyujŏng

Ch'ŏngho Hyujŏng (figs. 1, 8), also known as master Sŏsan (Kor. *Sŏsan taesa*, the master of the Western Mountain) because of his association with Mount Myohyang. He is indisputably the most prominent figure in late Chosŏn lineage narratives, due both to the active role of his

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emergence of the Hyujŏng group and its expansion in all the regions of the country.

<sup>74</sup> The following section is deeply indebted to the groundbreaking studies by Kim Young Tae, Ko Ik Jin, and Choe Byong-hon. These scholars for the first time collected and presented the sources for the study of Korean lineage narratives, offering a fundamental tool for further research on the subject.

disciples in the creation of the major narratives of the period, and to the pivotal role his religious persona<sup>75</sup> has in the narratives: the common point in the lineages is that all aimed at creating a firm, authoritative background for Hyujŏng's religious pedigree. It is therefore worth to begin the exposition of the seventeenth century lineage creation process by looking at what the master that become its protagonist had to say on the subject.

Hyujŏng's background and some of his writings suggest that, although not fully developed, he must have had in his mind a at least partially structured conception of his own personal lineage that was transmitted to his followers, influencing their approach to Buddhism and their ideas of transmission.

Undoubtably the basis of his understanding of the concept of lineage was built on the thorough study of the *Jingde chuandenglu*, which not only formed the core of the requirements for the Sŏn *Sŭnggwa* examination he successfully passed in 1550, but was also among the first Buddhist writings he read at the very beginning of his religious career.<sup>76</sup> He makes

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<sup>75</sup> I use the term religious persona to contrast Hyujŏng as a historical figure and active member of the Buddhist community and Hyujŏng as a religious symbol devised by his followers after his death.

<sup>76</sup> H0142 v7, p.720b21–b22. Notably, the text was one among few scriptures

direct references to Chinese Chan lineages in a section of the *Sōnga kwigam*,<sup>77</sup> presenting the different Schools of Chan Buddhism (with a particular emphasis given to the Linji teachings).<sup>78</sup> This section is intended to offer his disciples an outlook of the various approaches developed by Chinese lineages based on canonical sources. Notably, there is no reference to any direct transmission of these lineages to Korea in the master–disciple fashion made popular by the narratives developed by his disciples, and any lineage reference appears in line with the typically ‘intellectual’ approach to the material that characterized early Chosŏn Buddhists.

On the other side, Hyujŏng’s *Samno haengjŏk*,<sup>79</sup> includes three short, but extremely significant texts which, although that was probably not the original purpose they were written, became the skeleton of the more organically developed lineage narratives created by his disciples. This

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that inspired him to become a Buddhism monk.

<sup>77</sup> H0138. Conceived as a manual for his students, this highly influential work composed in 1564 and published in printed form in 1579 is an annotated anthology of notable passages from Chinese Chan literature.

<sup>78</sup> H0138 v7, p.644a16 on.

<sup>79</sup> H0145 v7.

short volume comprises the biographies of three early Chosŏn monks which closely resemble the textual format that will dominate Buddhist biographical writings during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The three texts are the *Pyŏksongdang haengjŏk* composed in 1560, the *Puyongdang haengjŏk* composed in 1577, and the *Kyŏngsŏngdang haengjŏk* penned in 1568. These biographies, while (as is usually the case) deeply standardized, still offer a rare glimpse in the Buddhist world of the sixteenth century, revealing a community more florid and active than what one would expect based on the traditional narratives of Buddhist decline.

The *Pyŏksongdang haengjŏk* tells the life of Pyŏksong Chiŏm (1464–1534), a monk whose activity mostly centered on Mount Chiri. Notably, this specific text gives one major information concerning the master’s pedigree: while it mentions a monk, whose life and activities are otherwise unknown, called Chŏngsim 正心 as his Dharma–master, it goes in grand length in explaining that Pyŏksong actually obtained his enlightenment not through the direct encounter with this teacher, but rather through the reading of the *yulus* of two Linji masters, Dahui Zonggao (1089–1163) and Gaofeng Yuanmiao (1238–1296) and that his Buddhism was indeed

the direct extension of that of these two masters.<sup>80</sup>

The *Puyongdang haengjŏk* and the *Kyŏngsŏngdang haengjŏk* report the biographies of two disciples of Pyŏksong, Puyong Yŏnggwan (1485–1571) and Kyŏngsŏng Ilsŏn (1488–1568). After the main texts, a short coda states the relationship of the author and these three masters as follows:

Pyŏksong is the ancestor, Puyong the father, Kyŏngsŏng the paternal uncle. How could I (Chŏng[hŏ]) overlook this fact?

碧松 祖也 芙蓉 父也 敬聖 叔也 靜亦其可忽哉<sup>81</sup>

Albeit still limited in scope, this represents the first explicit lineage narrative of the Chosŏn period, especially notable as it connects the Chinese and the Korean traditions not through direct master–disciple transmission, but rather by proxy, through Pyŏksong’s reading of Chinese textual sources.<sup>82</sup> Such an approach suggests on the one side that direct

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<sup>80</sup> H0145 v7, p.752c03 – 753a01.

<sup>81</sup> H0145 v7, p.757b21–b22.

<sup>82</sup> See Choe Byong–hon 1988, 282–284.



transmission of the Dharma through the *sajasangsŭng* concept during the second half of the sixteenth century was still not considered as the most relevant proof of religious legitimacy, while at the same demonstrates that Hyujŏng indeed had an interest in questions concerning lineage transmission: he felt it important enough to be transmitted in written form and, most likely, also in the shape of direct, verbal teachings to his disciples.

In the search for the origins of Hyujŏng and his followers' self-understanding as members of a lineage based on the direct master-disciple transmission of the Dharma, it can be suggested that significant elements might have derived from the *T'ongnok ch'waryo*,<sup>83</sup> a relatively lesser studied work compiled by the early Chosŏn monk Milgye (d.u.).

Essentially an elaboration of volume 10 of the eleventh century encyclopedic text *Dazang Yilan* by Chenshi (K1504),<sup>84</sup> the *T'ongnok ch'waryo* differs from its original source for an emphasis on monks originally from Korea: a total of 33 monks from Silla and Koryŏ who do

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<sup>83</sup> H0147.

<sup>84</sup> For a detailed study of the textual sources of the *T'ongnok ch'waryo*, see Kim Ho-gui 2014. For an early presentation of the work, see Koh Ik Jin 1984.

not appear in the *Dazang Yilan* are listed, mostly only by name.<sup>85</sup> The Silla monk Taemo (d.u.) and the Koryŏ National Preceptor Hyegŏ (fl. 949) are the subject of two very short biographies directly lifted (in Hyegŏ's case with some minor changes) from the *Jingde chuandenglū*.<sup>86</sup>

While, as it will be discussed later, Hyegŏ's mention could be relevant in the context of lineage narrative creation, what makes this work especially remarkable is the great emphasis given to the figure of Naong.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Kim Ho-gui 2014, 379.

<sup>86</sup> For Taemo, see H0147 v7, p.803c09 and *Jingde chuandenglū* v.10 T51n2076, 0281a08. For Hyegŏ see H0147 v7, p.804a03 and *Jingde chuandenglū* v.25 T51n2076 0414b26. Some scholars identify this Hyegŏ 惠炬 with another Hyegŏ, whose name is written with different Chinese characters (惠居), also known through two short references in the *Koryŏsa* (19<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> year, 3<sup>rd</sup> month of King Kwangjong). Both individuals were recipients of memorial steles, the latter *Karyangsa hyegŏ kuksa pi*, currently known only through rubbings, the former the severely damaged *Yŏngguksa hyegŏ kuksa pi*, for long time known only through a partial transcription in the seventeenth century collection of inscription rubbings *Taedonggŭmsŏksŏ*, but recently (2017) unearthed at the former site of Yŏngguksa/Tobong sŏwon, on Tobong mountain in northern Seoul. These two writings make it clear that the two monks, although both National preceptor in the 10th century, were two distinct individuals, as their birthplace, name, religious career and other biographical details do not coincide.

<sup>87</sup> While most biographies included in the *T'ongnok ch'waryo* are comparatively short and, in typically Chinese Chan fashion, presented in the form of encounter dialogue, Naong's biography stand out for its length, for its narrative form which, although including long discursive questions, follows

The *T'ongnok ch'waryo* is not a lineage text in the strict sense of the term, but rather an inventory of monks belonging to the Chan/Sŏn tradition without direct, continuous links between each other. In Naong's biography, for instance, his relationship with the Chinese master Pingshan and the Indian master Zhikong is described, but there is no mention whatsoever concerning the followers of Naong after his return to Korea.<sup>88</sup> Yet, the relevance this text gives to some Korean monks cannot be overlooked when connected with the later developments of lineage narratives.

Crucially, the only current known copy of this book, published in printed form in 1529, includes a short postscript penned by Pyŏksong.<sup>89</sup> While the contents of the postscript are not especially significant, its

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the master's life from his birth to his death, as is common with lengthy stele inscriptions, and finally for a notable insertion at the end of the biography, referencing an otherwise unknown *Chisheng guangming jing* according to which Shakyamuni predicted to Ananda the transmission of Buddhism to the Korean peninsula and the inheritance of his dharma by none other than Naong himself, who will responsible for the defiance of the heretical doctrines that brought Buddhism to decline.

<sup>88</sup> This problematizes the assertion, made by scholars who dealt with this text, that it was conceived by monks belonging to the lineage of Naong and Muhak (Koh Ik Jin 1984, 171; Kim Ho-gui 2014, 381), if such a self-conscious lineage ever existed.

<sup>89</sup> H0147 v7, p.808c.

existence is sufficient to prove the master's interest, or at least knowledge, for the subject. Moreover, the volume containing Pyŏksong's postscript was published only one year prior to the encounter between him and Puyong Yŏnggwan, Hyujŏng's Dharma master. It is thus likely that Yŏnggwan saw the book, and in turn he could have shared with his pupil Hyujŏng its contents or, at least, its basic tenets.

Although there is no conclusive proof that Hyujŏng or his disciples actually read the *T'ongnok ch'waryo*, it is significant that it emphasizes the figure of Naong as the legitimate successor of the Linji line in Korea because, as discussed in the next section, this monk is the one who became the focus of the first "official" lineage narrative developed by members of Hyujŏng's group.

#### 4.2) Lineage Narratives Developed by Hyujŏng's Disciples

While Hyujŏng shows an interest in lineages that somehow departs from what was probably the norm until his times, he still had a very limited conception of his own pedigree and in no way tried to put it at the center of his religious discourse or career. The true 'golden age' of lineage

narratives began in earnest after the turn of the century, when, for the first time, complete lines directly linking Hyujŏng with Chinese masters – and, therefore, with the historical Buddha – were finally developed and widely disseminated.

This ‘revolution’ took form in 1612, when one of the principal disciples of Samyŏng Yujŏng (1544–1610) (fig. 9),<sup>90</sup> Hyegu (d.u), allegedly following the last will of his master who passed away two years earlier,<sup>91</sup> commissioned to Hŏ Kyun, the celebrated scholar – and personal acquaintance of both Hyujŏng and Yujŏng – two related, although not identical, writings: the introduction to an early, two volumes edition of the *Ch'ŏnghŏdangjip*<sup>92</sup> (Collected writings of Ch'ŏnghŏdang Hyujŏng) and the stele inscription for Yujŏng's stupa, titled *Chat'ong Hongje Chonja Samyŏng Taesa Sŏkchang Pimyŏng*, at Haeinsa, the site where Yujŏng passed away.

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<sup>90</sup> One of the most historically relevant amongst the disciples of Hyujŏng and possibly the most celebrated in contemporary Korea, due to his military and diplomatic activities surrounding the Japanese invasions of 1592–1596 and their later developments.

<sup>91</sup> H0142 v7, p.660b05.

<sup>92</sup> H0142 v7, p.659c11

This lineage narrative is usually referred to with the title of Naong transmission narrative (kor. *Naong pŏpt'ongsŏl*),<sup>93</sup> because the pivotal role between the Chinese and the Korean tradition is held by the celebrated National Preceptor of late Koryŏ. However, the way the lineage of Naong is presented is, in the eyes of the modern scholar, rather perplexing. Given the large available material, Naong's biography, including the names of the masters he studied with, are well known. His figure is especially notable in this context because, unlike any other figure before him in Korea, he indeed belonged in a direct master–disciple transmission line and capitalized on it, an approach he probably interiorized in the course of his lengthy stay (over ten years) in China;<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Among the several scholars adopting this nomenclature, see Koh Ikjin 1985, Choi Byong–hon 1988, Lee Bong Choon 1997, Kim Yongtae 2010.

<sup>94</sup> Visiting China to obtain a formal recognition certification (*inga*) from a local master was a common practice for Korean monks during the Koryŏ period. In most cases, however, the duration of stay in China was brief and, as soon as the *inga* was obtained, the monk returned to his home country. Rather than establishing a profound master–disciple relationship with Chinese masters, most of these monks, who were often distinguished figures already before they voyage to China, approached it and the *inga* approval as a custom that could add to their standing, rather than as a profoundly felt religious experience.

according to the several biographical accounts and his personal writings,<sup>95</sup> he was the Dharma-heir of the Yuan Linji master Pingshan Chulin (1279–1361) and of the Indian master Zhikong (ca. 1289–1364).<sup>96</sup>

Neither of them appears in Hō Kyun's writings, that instead presents Naong as the heir of the late Tang/early Song master Yongming Yanshou (904–975) a renowned representative of the Fayanzong branch of Chan, and, in the case of the Haeinsa stele, do also add a reference to Koryō's most celebrated Sōn master, Chinul.<sup>97</sup> Naong, in turn, is presented as the “founding ancestor” (Kor. *chosa*) of Hyujōng lineage, through the following transmission line:

1. Naong Hyegŭn 懶翁惠勤 – 2. Nambong Sunŭng 南峰修能 – 3. Chōngsim Tŭnggye 正心登階 – 4. Pyōksong Chiōm 碧松智嚴 – 5. Puyong Yōnggwan 芙蓉靈觀 – 6. Ch'ōnghō Hyujōng 清虛休靜<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> On the complex topic of Naong's dharma transmission, see Juhn Y. Ahn 2019.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>97</sup> Kim Young Tae 1985, 22, Lee Bong Choon 1997, 77.

<sup>98</sup> H0142 v7, p.660a01.

Substantially, the contents of Hyujŏng's *Samno haengjŏk* are quoted faithfully, but Chŏngsim is elevated at the role of actual dharma master of Pyŏksong,<sup>99</sup> and is in turn connected to Naong through a rather obscure monk, Nambong Sunŭng, otherwise unknown, who is here surprisingly described as Naong's main descendant<sup>100</sup> (Kor. *chŏksa*<sup>101</sup>).

The one described above is the first complete lineage narrative we

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<sup>99</sup> In contrast with the writing of Hyujŏng who referred to a proxy transmission for his "grandfather" 's case.

<sup>100</sup> The main sources for Naong's followers are the *Sillŭksa Pojejonja sŏkchonggi* (1379) and the *Ansimsa chigong naong pi* (1384), both including long lists of monks related to him. Neither makes reference to Sunŭng. On the other hand, while both are cited in the steles, neither Hwanam Honsu (1320–1392) (who probably was the main disciple of Naong during his last years of live), nor Muhak Chach'o (1327–1405) (who with the active support of the state successfully became recognized as the master's official disciple at the dynastic turn and later celebrated as one of the Three great masters (*Samdae Hwasang*) along Zhikong and Naong during the Chosŏn period), are notably included in any text related with the Naong lineage narrative. Scholars dealing with the subject have pointed out the several issues deriving by the insertion of this name in the lineage, not only in relation with his unverifiable identity, but also from a chronological standpoint, as one single monk is clearly insufficient to cover the long period between Naong's and Chongsin's lives. Although there is no definitive proof, I suspect this might have a symbolic meaning, as through such a transmission line Hyujŏng becomes the 'sixth' master of this dharma lineage, a number reminiscent of the key figure of Chinese Chan Buddhism, the sixth patriarch Huineng.

<sup>101</sup> Literally, the eldest son born of the primary wife.



encounter during the early seventeenth century, but it is not the one that will finally prevail. In 1625 a young dharma heir to Hyujŏng, P'yŏnyang Ŏngi (1581–1644) (fig. 10), wrote the *Pongnaesan Unsuum Chongbongdanggi*,<sup>102</sup> a dedicatory text for the construction of a portrait hall at Mount Kŭmgang's Unsuum hermitage enshrining the portraits of six recently departed masters, including Yujŏng. In it, the lineage of Hyujŏng is completely reconfigured as follows:

The descendants of the Four Gates<sup>103</sup> belong without questions to the Linji School. There is a root and an origin: master T'aego of our Eastern Country entered China and on mount Xiawu and inherited Shiwu<sup>104</sup>'s line. He transmitted it to Hwanam, who transmitted it to Soon, who transmitted it to Chŏngsim, who transmitted it to Pyŏksong, who transmitted it to Puyong, who transmitted it to Tŭngjae [Hyujŏng], who transmitted it to Chongbong [Yujŏng].

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<sup>102</sup> Included in the *P'yŏnyangdangjip* H0161 v8, p.253a22–254a22.

<sup>103</sup> The four main disciples of Hyujŏng according to historical narratives.

<sup>104</sup> Shiwu Qinggong (1272–1352).

今四門子孫 不失臨濟者 有本有原 吾東方太古和尚 入中國霞霧山  
嗣石屋 而傳之幻庵 幻庵傳之小穩 小穩傳之正心 正心傳之碧松  
碧松傳之芙蓉 芙蓉傳之登階 登階傳之鍾峯焉<sup>105</sup>

An almost identical account, substituting the otherwise undocumented Soon with Kugok Kagun,<sup>106</sup> also appear in another writing by Ōngi, an undated biography of Hyujŏng<sup>107</sup> and, crucially, in the text written in 1630 by the celebrated literati Yi Chŏnggu (1564–1635) for the stele erected<sup>108</sup> to accompany the stupa of Hyujŏng (originally erected by Yujŏng) at

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<sup>105</sup> H0161 v8, p.253c07–c12

<sup>106</sup> H0161 v8, p.254c16. Based on the assumption that it would be more logic to write first the biography of the teacher (Hyujŏng) and then a text about his follower (Yujŏng), Lee Bong Choon 1997, 76 conjectures that the *Chongbongdanggi* was composed later. In my opinion, the substitution of Soon with Kagun, a detail that returns in all subsequent iterations of this lineage narrative, suggests two different moments of a work in progress, with the version including Kagun being the later, ‘definitive’ one.

<sup>107</sup> H0161 v8, p.254a24.

<sup>108</sup> the current stele was erected in 1632 with the inscription dated 1630. According to Yi Nŭnghwa, a stele was first erected in the same site 2 years earlier with an almost identical inscription also by Yi Chŏnggu, that was substituted by the current stele for unknown reasons. See Chi Kwan 2003, 56.

Paekhwaam, the main hermitage of P'yohunsa monastery on Mount Kūmgang (fig. 24). This version of the lineage (1. Shiwu Qinggong 石屋清珙 – 2. T'aego Pou 太古普雨 – 3. Hwanam Honsu 幻菴混修 – 4. Kugok Kagun 龜谷覺雲 – 5. Chōngsim Tūnggye 正心登階 – 6. Pyōksong Chiōm 碧松智嚴 – 7. Puyong Yōnggwan 芙蓉靈觀 – 8. Ch'ōnghō Hyujōng 淸虛休靜) quickly spread and in short time became the principal, official lineage narrative, signaling the decline of the Naong narrative, and becoming the instrument through which virtually all Buddhist masters currently known from the seventeenth century on constructed their own religious identity.

The following chapter will discuss more in depth the process through which this lineage narrative supplanted the one based on Naong, its implications in the definition of Hyujōng community in the first decades of the seventeenth century and the role that materiality had in this all.

Before discussing these fundamental issues, I will offer a brief excursus on the numerous textual sources composed during the late Chosŏn period in connection with lineage narratives and, more in general, with Chosŏn period Sŏn masters, needed to assess the transformation of Buddhism after the turn of the seventeenth century, but also to better

understand the progressive evolution of the Sŏn–master centered Buddhism of Late Chosŏn.

#### 4.3) Textual Sources Connected with Lineage Narratives

The “cult of the masters” in late Chosŏn was built on three main coordinates: the textual, the ritual and the material. On one side, it is of foremost importance is to keep in mind that the three are deeply intertwined: textuality was used, for instance, to record the lives, words and ideas of the masters, it was often transmitted in the preeminent material form of the funerary stele, and at the same time was used to translate in a new media the religious experience firstly and foremostly created through material culture (stupa, portraiture, robes etc.). Materiality itself often found its full development in its ritual implementation, which charged “empty” objects with symbolic meanings essential in the fulfillment of their purpose of creation. Finally, rituality itself was transmitted and explained through the compilation of ritual manuals, with textuality offering normative tools concerning materiality and its practical use.

On the other side it is important to remember that not all three categories were aimed at the same target audience. In particular, I argue that while textual forms were essentially directed to an educated audience mostly formed by members of the confucianized elite, materiality (often enhanced through rituality) was the principal instrument through which monks communicated the ideas and ideals of the lineage narratives and of their primary subjects. The primary literary forms to be taken into consideration are collection of writings and funerary steles, funerary ritual manuals, lineage texts and charts, and monastery gazetteers.

a. Collections of Writings and Funerary Steles

While a small number of *yulus*<sup>109</sup> (kor. *Örok*) was created during the Koryŏ period, it is the late Chosŏn that we witness the emergence of the new literary standard of the collected writings, heterogeneous collections of a given master's discourses, dialogues, and miscellaneous writings, including epistolary exchanges with both religious and secular figures, dedications, poems, fundraising letters, biographical writings concerning

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<sup>109</sup> Schlütter 2004.

masters of the past, and so on.

In the four volumes (7–10) of the *Han'guk Pulgyo Chŏnsŏ* (Complete Works of Korean Buddhism, henceforth HBC) collecting writings dating to the Chosŏn period, a total of 76 texts (out of a total of 150 writings) represent, in a way or another, collections of writings. Most notably, only four out of these collections are devoted to monks active in the first half of the Chosŏn period,<sup>110</sup> a percentage suggesting the limited importance of the genre before the seventeenth century. This demonstrates once more the growing relevance of Sŏn masters as the central force of Buddhism during the late Chosŏn period. Collections from the most important masters received multiple editions, often with addenda, a fact further testifying the popularity of this genre.<sup>111</sup> While aimed at celebrating the master as an illuminated being, these collections are historically relevant as they often contain material revealing otherwise unrecorded ideas, personal connections and religious activities that would

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<sup>110</sup> *Hamhŏdang tŭkt'ong hwasang ōrok* H119, *Pyŏksongdang yarosong* H129, *Hŏngdangjip* H132, *Naam chapchŏ* H133.

<sup>111</sup> Hwang In–Gyu 2012 presents a comprehensive list of all the Collections included in the HBC.

otherwise be lost, thus representing an extraordinary door to the understanding of living Buddhism of the times.

Ko Yöngsöp<sup>112</sup> points out to the fact that these collections were essentially intended for a secular audience mostly formed by Confucian literati; by means of these collections, the monastic community was able, while celebrating its masters, to expand its net of patronage while accruing the relevance of the celebrated master besides the narrow boundaries of the *samgha*.

The flowering of these collection of writings is deeply intertwined with another phenomenon characteristic of the period discussed in this thesis, the revival of bio/hagiographical funerary stele. Important difference between the steles erected in the Silla and Koryŏ eras and those created in this period is that, while the former required the Royal authorization to be created and were invariably reserved to public figures officially recognized *by the state*, the production of the latter is free of such restraints, as the lack of state control over Buddhism came with the emancipation of material culture production, which allowed for the

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<sup>112</sup> Ko Young-Seop 2015, 123.

proliferation of what was once a literary genre limited to a few well defined individuals. In late Chosŏn it is not the state's recognition to legitimate the erection of a stele, but either the religious status and stature of the master in the context of the Buddhist community, or the community's will to elevate its own master with the purpose of legitimate itself. In drawing a parallel with writing collections, stele inscriptions represent the primary *written* form through which the importance of a given master was assessed and declared.<sup>113</sup>

The stone stele's form that became standard in following eras in the whole East Asian area crystallized during the later Han period, with the well recognizable tripartite structure of head (ch. *beishou*, kr. *isu*) often in the shape of intertwined dragons and with the space for the intricately carved title in its center,<sup>114</sup> the body (ch. *beishen*, Kor. *pisin*) with the main inscription on the front of the stone slab with the back and the sides

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<sup>113</sup> For an overview of the history of Chinese steles, see Wong 2004, 15–41.

<sup>114</sup> The head can either be carved separately or be part of the stone slab that forms the body. In some cases, the head is rather simply arranged, such in the case of the stele of royal preceptor Pogak at Ch'ŏngnyongsa in Ch'ungju (*Pogak kuksa chi pi*, 1394) where the head is rendered flat on the top, with the edges cut at 45 degrees, forming a simplified roof-shaped figure.



reserved for the names of the sponsors, and the base (ch. *Beifu*, kr. *pibu*) made either by a simple, rectangular block or, for the most prestigious steles, in the shape of a colossal turtle (kr. *kwibu*). Although stylistic variations are easily detectable, the general format here defined remained virtually unchanged since its inception until the modern times, both in Buddhist and non-Buddhist (mostly Confucian) contexts (fig. 11).

Steles are usually categorized based on their textual content, which can be extremely diverse.<sup>115</sup> These monuments were used to celebrate historical events such as a successful territorial expansion<sup>116</sup> or important victories in battle,<sup>117</sup> the life and deeds of notable individuals (Dorothy Wong refers to such steles as “commendatory steles” ), or to render in material form the history of a notable place, for instance that of an important Buddhist monastery.

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<sup>115</sup> See Wong 2004, 25 on, and Chung Youngho 1987, 227.

<sup>116</sup> A famous example is the *Pukhansan Silla Chinhŭng Wang Sunsubi* celebrating the expansion of the Silla Kingdom’s territory after a successful military campaign by the Silla King Chinhŭng in the mid-6<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>117</sup> A notable example is represented by the *Myŏngnyang taech’ŏp pi* in Haenam, erected in 1688 to commemorate a 1597 naval victory by the fleet led by Yi Sunsin against the Japanese invaders.

In the context of this thesis, the most notable category is that of the funerary stele. Since Han period China, the larger part of steles were funerary ones, usually erected on the path leading to the tombs of important people; inscriptions gradually evolved in lengthy, elaborated eulogies of great literary and calligraphic value.<sup>118</sup> The steles built to record the lives of notable Buddhist monks essentially belong to this category,<sup>119</sup> and were almost invariably erected in association with the stupa containing the monk's relics<sup>120</sup> (fig. 12). They are precious

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<sup>118</sup> Wong 2004, 29.

<sup>119</sup> The vast majority of steles were erected within few years from the master's death and in close association with his direct disciples, yet a small number of works exist dedicated to masters who lived decades or even centuries before the stele's creation. A notable example is offered by the *Wŏlch'ulsan Yŏngam Togapsa Tosŏn Sumi yangdaesa pi*, erected in 1653 with an inscription by Yi Kyŏngsŏk (1591–1671) dedicated, rather peculiarly, to two unrelated masters of the past, the Silla monk Tosŏn (827–898), one of the most celebrated and appropriated monks of Korean history, and Sumi (d.u.), a 15<sup>th</sup> century Sŏn monk noted for being appointed Royal preceptor by King Sejo.

<sup>120</sup> Notably, stupas were erected individually or accompanied by a stele, while funerary steles were virtually never erected without the presence of a stupa: clearly stupas were held in greater esteem, with the stele probably seen rather as an addition, albeit a prestigious one, than as a main token of material significance.

research material, often representing the only source of recorded information on the master subject of their inscription, and because they offer important elements concerning the process of erection of the stupa.<sup>121</sup>

Textually, Buddhist funerary steles were composed based on both verbal and written notes made by direct disciples of the master which were later passed, in most cases, to an expert writer, most commonly belonging to the literati elite, who had the task of “translating” them in a high literary style, full of intertextual references, lexical sophistications and recurring tropes. The introductory remarks opening most Chosŏn Buddhist funerary steles often describe at length, this process of entrustment (or appointment), a subject especially interesting in the context of the study of the interactions between Buddhism and the Confucian elite of the times.<sup>122</sup>

In the contents, a number of fixed elements can be pointed out: at the beginning, a heading includes the official titles held by the master, followed

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<sup>121</sup> In textual form, but also through stylistic features.

<sup>122</sup> Ko Young-Seop 2015, 114.

by the name and complete list of official titles held by the author of the text. This header sets the tone for the stele, emphasizing the prestige of both subject and author through impressive, while at times almost undecipherable, lists of official posts and sobriquets. A lengthy introductory section follows, discussing the relationship of the author with either Buddhism as a religion in general, or with the master subject of the writing, an element especially stressed when the two were personally acquainted. This section also includes a narration of the process through which the disciples of the deceased master entrusted the writer with the task of the Stele inscription's composition. In typical literary fashion, the author describes in length how he first refuses the task, only to accept it after the insistence of the disciples, recognizing the human merits of the master and those of the disciples.<sup>123</sup>

At this point the highly standardized biography proper follows. In

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 117–118. It is highly probable that such episodes did not really happen, and that in most cases the literati, who were also offered a generous remuneration, accepted the task without much hesitation, and that the refusal episode was included as a simple, standardized rhetorical figure. Probably we should not read too much in these episodes, at least not in connection with the problem of the relationship of Buddhism and Chosŏn period Confucian literati.

accordance with the standard biographical model for Chan/Sŏn masters, it invariably begins with basic information on the master's familiar background, immediately followed by a premonitory episode, most commonly a dream by the mother, prophesizing the extraordinary birth of a great personality. The account goes on with the infancy of the master, marked by further unusual elements, such as extremely premature intellectual developments or virtuous behaviors uncommon in children including the erection of small sand stupas or the choice of a vegetarian diet, implying the master's predestination for a holy life.

A disruptive element, such as the death of the parents or of a close acquaintance, marking the inner realization of life's impermanence and the worthlessness of worldly affairs, offers the momentum for the actual beginning to the master's religious career, at which point early travels in search for a worth master follow. In due time, the master establishes himself as a leading personality in the Buddhist community, being attended by thousands of followers who flock to get a grasp of his teachings, which are seldom described at any worth length in the inscription. Rather, glimpses of the master thought are only hinted at through referral to poems composed by him, and a few notable episodes of his life are singled

out to demonstrate his human and religious stature.

The single most important episode in all biographies is the story of the master's entry into nirvana. Foreseeing his own death, the master reunites his disciples around him, giving his last public lecture and giving instructions concerning the aftermath. The departure of the master is invariably accompanied by portentous super-natural events, demonstrating nature's response to the master's great deeds. Then the cremation of the body is described, followed by the disposal of the relics, with precise indications concerning eventual subdivision of the *sarira* amongst different monastic communities. Finally, the master's main disciples and main writings are listed. A eulogy, written in the same literary style of the introductory remarks, often accompanied by poetic inserts, completes the main inscription of the stele, and finally the date of the monument's erection is given. On the backside, and sometimes on the sides, of the stele the complete list of donors, in order of relevance, is given.

Although the biographical section offers important clues concerning the individual monk's life and deeds, one must be careful not to take it too

literally.<sup>124</sup> The main purpose of these texts' heavily standardized contents is not to present a faithful account of a human being's life, but to suggest the essential identity of the master with the historical Buddha.<sup>125</sup> The basic elements of the biographies indeed follow the pattern set by Shakyamuni's biography; thus, although most studies on Chosŏn Buddhist steles attribute a leading role of the Confucian elites and of their ideologies in the shaping of this important media,<sup>126</sup> I argue that these were indeed purely Buddhist in approach, content and message. Ko suggests that the Buddhist community turned to Confucian literati for the stele composition in order to gain profit from the literati's social prestige, and even if this idea cannot be completely dismissed, I would suggest that, more than this, the rationale for commissioning these texts to members of the Confucian elite depended on their superior literary skills and, above all, on the model represented by the steles of previous eras, which just like those of late

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<sup>124</sup> Most scholars dealing with Chosŏn monks often take these reports quite literally. For an example of this approach, see Sungsan Pak Kilchin Paksa *Hwagapkinyŏm Saŏp'oe* 1975.

<sup>125</sup> On the Paradigmatic function of Chan biographies/hagiographies, see Faure 1986.

<sup>126</sup> Ko Young-Seop 2015, 103–104.

Chosŏn were equally composed by Confucian literati.

The finished manuscript was passed to a calligrapher, again belonging in most cases to the non-Buddhist elite, who materially prepared the text to be inscribed in the stone slab that was in the meanwhile selected for the purpose. Once the calligraphic template was completed, the actual construction of the stele could begin. It was a lengthy, expensive process, in many cases requiring months to be completed: high quality stones apt to the scope had to be selected, transported to the site from places often distant from the place of erection, an expert carver had to inscribe the text on the stele body, the dedicatory remarks and the list of donors, the richly sculpted head and the base had to be finished, and finally the completed pieces had to be carefully assembled.

The earliest extant funerary steles in the Korean peninsula date to the early ninth century;<sup>127</sup> with only one particular exception,<sup>128</sup> all of the 9 known pieces dating to the Unified Silla Period are deeply linked with the

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<sup>127</sup> Lee Kwanuey 2019, 92.

<sup>128</sup> The severely damaged and only partially decipherable *Kosŏnsa Sŏdang hwasang pi*, erected between 800 and 808 and dedicated to the biography of Wonhyŏ.



meditative tradition which at the time started to flourish with the first masters learning Chan in China in the latter part of the eight century and, few decades later, with the foundation of the Nine Mountains.

During the about four hundred years of the successive Koryŏ period a total of 58 funerary steles were erected, almost invariably in connection with either a Royal or a National Preceptor.<sup>129</sup> A common and fundamental factor of the stele of these two periods is that they are invariably made by Royal order, i.e., it is the state to decide which master is worthy enough for his biography to be transmitted to future generations in the most remarkable media available for the purpose.

This trend entered also the Early Chosŏn period, when in the first 20 years of the reign four steles were erected in honor of the last state-recognized Preceptors.<sup>130</sup> Remarkably, these were the last Buddhist funerary steles created for several centuries, as after Muhak's stele erected at Hoeamsa in 1410 there is no trace of any Buddhist funerary

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> The steles are those of Mogam Ch'anyŏng (1393, at Ŏkchŏngsa), Hwanam Honsu (1394, at Ch'ŏngnyongsa), Ch'ugwŏn Chich'ŏn (1398, at Yongmunsa), Muhak Chach'o (1410, at Hoeamsa).

stele until 1612, with the Yujŏng stele at Haeinsa discussed above.<sup>131</sup> After this work's appearance, however, the creation of steles grew to a rhythm never seen before in the Korean peninsula: if during the Koryŏ period steles were created in average once every 7 years, in the Late Chosŏn period about 170 works<sup>132</sup> were created, both for recently deceased monks and for notable figures of the past. Most notably, what changes during this period is the form of sponsorship: now the initiative for the construction is only of the monastery, who directly contacts the writers, the sculptors and directly organizes the fundraising for the stele erection. This is one of the reasons for the proliferation of the media, as it is not anymore subject to the control and limitations coming from state

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<sup>131</sup> Sohn 2012, 166 suggests that the recipient of the first funerary stele after centuries was Yujŏng and not his master Hyujŏng, who is commonly considered the true patriarch of Korean Buddhism from the seventeenth century on, not due to religious reasons but rather because of his official rank obtained through his military and diplomatic endeavors in connection with the Japanese invasions and their aftermath. At the time funerary steles called *sindobi* were erected only for officials of 2<sup>nd</sup> level or above. Sohn's interpretation does not help understanding the flourishing of monk steles during the late Chosŏn period. I will offer a different interpretation of the issue in the next chapter.

<sup>132</sup> Sohn 2012, 147.

sanctioning, a fact paralleling the construction of monk stupas. The other is, simply stated, the *need* for such steles to be erected, as they were, especially between the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, a fundamental instrument for creating and perfecting lineages and establishing leadership at the local level.

When discussing steles, one point that must not be overlooked is that, although steles are approached by modern scholars essentially as textual sources,<sup>133</sup> in their original form these monuments were not meant to be read as we would read a book today. Their sheer dimensions, especially the height, make it impossible to read most steles and, even assuming that bystanders were able to decipher the non-colored calligraphic characters inscribed in the slab, the highly refined literary style in which the inscriptions are composed means that only a small part of those who approached it would be able to grasp its contents. Rather, it was the sheer *monumentality* of the stele, its imposing figure, coupled with either the pairing stupa for funerary steles or the monastic complex with all its halls and impressing infrastructures for historical steles, that appealed to

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<sup>133</sup> Jorgensen and Uhlmann 2012, 6.

almost the totality of the bystanders and that gave a rationale for their creation. For both members of the Buddhist community and laymen (including the highly educated members of the Confucian elite but also the commoners who turned to the monastic complex for their everyday religious practices) *looking* at the steles rather than *reading* them was the primary or sole approach to these monuments. Someone with a knowledge of the text's contents might have explained to some particularly curious visitor the general contents of the stele, but it is highly improbable that a complete recitation or verbatim translation of the text would have ever taken place. The creation of a stele (from the composition of the text to its final erection) is a lengthy, complex, expensive endeavor, and it is its final material form rather than its textual element that was really meant to inspire awe.

Also, the donors' names inscribed on the stele were not much a way to "show off" or to state once direct participation in the construction endeavor but, rather, a way for the donors to perpetually stand close to the Saint's relics, in a context where the burial *ad sanctos* was not a conceivable option.

## b. Manuals for Funerary Rituals

Ritual Manuals form a major part of the Buddhist literature of late Chosŏn.<sup>134</sup> Significantly, at least three manuals on funerary rituals for Sŏn masters were compiled and widely disseminated through printing, almost simultaneously, in the first half of the seventeenth century, during what can be considered the peak of “lineage creation” activities undertaken by the Buddhist community in order to reorganize itself. Included in volume eight of *Hanguk bulgyo ch’ongsŏ*, we currently possess the *Sŏngmun sangŭich’o* compiled in 1636 by Pyŏgam Kaksŏng,<sup>135</sup> the *Sŏngmun garyech’o* compiled in 1636 by Naam Chinil,<sup>136</sup> and the *Sŭngga yeŭimun*, composed by Hŏbaek Myŏngjo.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Only a limited number of ritual manuals are included in the HBC: a wider selection can be found in the *Han’guk pulgyo ūirye charyo ch’ongsŏ*, although a systematic recension of all the extant manuals, both in manuscript and printed form, is still missing. Nam Hee-sook 2004 offers an in-depth overview of the publication of dharani collections and other related Buddhist writings, centered on the works currently stored in the Kyujanggak repository but, in general, literature on the subject is still extremely limited both quantitatively and qualitatively.

<sup>135</sup> H0160.

<sup>136</sup> H0163.

<sup>137</sup> H0170. The version included in the *Hanguk bulgyo ch’ongsŏ* was published in 1670 in T’ongdosa. This book was apparently very popular, as suggested

Although these ritual manuals have been for the most part neglected by scholarship dealing with Korean Buddhism, the relevance of these texts cannot be underestimated, as their appearance represents another fundamental step in the process that led to the presentation of Chosŏn period masters as representatives of the “true” Chan/Sŏn lineage, and at the same time offer a clear, first-hand interpretative frame for the concepts and context lying at the core of the material production at the center of this dissertation.

Ritual manuals dealing with mortuary practices such as the 1542 *Tabimun* (Writing on Cremation) already circulated before the seventeenth century, however they conspicuously differed in their focus. This text is not only focused on funerary practices for monks, but offers instructions for cremating all categories of Buddhist. On the other side, the seventeenth century manuals have their focus on the monastic community, and suggest that not all the dead monks are the same by giving

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by the high number of editions still extant, maybe because of the prestige of his author. These include, besides the 1656 and the 1670 T’ongdosa edition, two different versions published at Kapsa (one dated to 1670, the other without date), a 1682 edition published at Porimsa, a second Taehŭngsa edition of 1689, and another version published at Okch’ŏnsa in 1694.

prominence to the funerary activities of great masters. This detail assumes greater importance when seen in context, i.e., when connected with the idea that these monks who deserve the ritual treatment described in these writings *already attained* illumination and are, therefore, equivalent with Sakyamuni (and by analogy to all the other monks that ‘transmitted the Lamp’).

None of the seventeenth century manuals is “original” , in the sense that all three are in fact edited compilations of preexisting, mostly Chinese, material. More notably, the contents of the *Sōngmun sangŭich'o* and of the *Sōngmun garyech'o* are, with minor differences, essentially the same, though with a different internal order, while the *Sūngga yeŭimun* presents a shortened selection of the contents included in the two other works.

The introductions of the *Sōngmun sangŭich'o* and of the *Sōngmun garyech'o* offer a list of the major works quoted in the compilation. These include the three-volume *Wushan lianruo xinxue beiyong*, also known as *Wushanji*, composed around 950 by the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period monk Yingzhi, the *Shishi yaolan*,<sup>138</sup> a Buddhist term lexicon

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<sup>138</sup> T54n2127.

compiled by Daocheng in 1019, and the *Chanyuan qinggui*,<sup>139</sup> compiled by the Chan monk Changlu Zongze in 1101–1103, the oldest extant, and the most influential, book of Chan monastic regulations,<sup>140</sup> an analysis of the contents of the two manuals, however, shows that most of the contents come from the first two cited works.<sup>141</sup>

The nature of the referenced texts is fundamental to understand the meaning of the composition of these works. While scholarship has only sporadically focused on these manuals and many details are still not fully understood, a common interpretation given is that by organizing funerary rituals comparable to those prescribed by Neo–Confucianism they represent, more than anything else, the Buddhist acceptance and adaptation of the Neo–Confucian values that became the main ideology at every social stratum of the time.<sup>142</sup>

Such an interpretation mainly derives from the section (present in both

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<sup>139</sup> X63n1245.

<sup>140</sup> For an in–depth analysis of this text and a translation in English, see Yifa 2002.

<sup>141</sup> Lee Sun–Yi 2015, 378 presents a table including the principal elements of the two books directly cited by the *Sōngmunsangŭich'o*.

<sup>142</sup> See Kim Soon–mi 2010 and Kim Yongtae 2016.



the *Sōngmun sangŭich'o* and the *Sōngmun garyech'o* with some minor differences) on the “Table on Five Monastic Garments” *sŭngobokto*, a table prescribing the period of mourning, and the related garments to be worn, for the mourning of a monk’s fellow members of the *samgha*, organized in the same fashion of the family mourning as prescribed by Neo-Confucianist literature; i.e., the *samgha* is described as a (somehow peculiar) family, with one’s two masters (the tonsure master and the dharma master) in the central and foremost place, where Confucians would put one’s parents.

The “Confucian” interpretation is, I suggest, proven wrong by the origin of the five monastic garments. Notably, this concept has been lifted essentially without alterations by the *Wushanji*, so its understanding cannot be separated by the original context of creation and the subsequent history of the source material in the Korean peninsula. In China, the *Wushanji* influenced the composition of a number of related Buddhist books, including the *Shishi yaolan*,<sup>143</sup> before disappearing around the mid-Song period. The text was however preserved in Korea; it was

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<sup>143</sup> Park Yong-jin 2009, 404–406.

published at least once during the mid-Koryŏ period and then, once again, in 1462 by the *Kangyŏng togam*, the national Directorate for the publication of Buddhist texts established in 1461 under King Sejo's reign.<sup>144</sup> The 1462 edition of this book is particularly notable, due to its official, state sanctioning. Notwithstanding the significance of this book in the history of Korean Buddhism, at least it disappeared also in Korea, before one copy of the 1462 edition was found in late 2007 in the collection of Komazawa University.<sup>145</sup>

A number of elements prove the 'Neo-Confucian' theory wrong. First of all, the composition of the *Wushanji* predates by almost two centuries that of the *Zhuzi jiali*, the basic text regulating Confucian rituality; thus the contents of the former could not be influenced by the latter. Rather than representing a Buddhist rendition of well-formed Neo-Confucian ideas, this book probably rather offers a Buddhism-infused glimpse in the complex process that, beginning with the traditional Chinese approach to family relationships in due time brought to its definitive Neo-Confucian

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<sup>144</sup> Lee Sun-Yi 2015, 380.

<sup>145</sup> A resume of the three volumes is included in Park Yong-jin 2009.

definition as crystallized in the Song period. While a philological approach such the one adopted by modern scholars in relation to this text and to its contents might show purely Chinese, non-Buddhist elements at work in the formation of the five garments table, it is debatable if such an approach was at work when Chosŏn period Buddhists consulted it. Indeed, I suggest that, although the Neo-Confucian ideas about family relationship could possibly be part of the ideological heritage of mid-Chosŏn era monks, thus making Yingzhi's ideas easy to grasp and interiorize, the approach to this book would have been purely Buddhist, i.e., for Buddhist monks this book was a Buddhist work presenting the ways Buddhists must follow, regardless of what its content's origin might have been.

While the original sources are comprehensive monastic regulations dealing with basically every single aspect of the life of (and in) Buddhist monastic institutions, these Korean compilations are notable for the exclusive focus given to funerary and commemorative rituals. The date of the original composition of these texts is also notable because, it was during the fourth decade of the seventeenth century that the practices surrounding the veneration of the great masters definitely reached maturity, after what can be called a “warm up period” that began around

the first decade of the century.

### c. Lineage Charts and Texts

Lineages are a form of taxonomy, and thus it is just natural that their contents get periodically arranged in charts, tables and synoptic texts to allow the members of the community that identifies with them to get an easy, approachable overview of their composition and ramifications.<sup>146</sup> This is exactly the nature of the Chinese Transmission of the Lamp texts discussed above, aimed at illustrating the masters' pedigrees and their interpersonal dharma relations in the clearest way possible. To this goal, two different yet related forms were adopted by the Chan circles, the lineage chart and the lineage text. The former, not unlike the genealogical tables commonly adopted in the Confucian societies to illustrate the structure of a given clan, is a chart or table usually of relatively limited dimensions, listing only the names of the relevant members of a given lineage in chronological order, connecting the various generations with

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<sup>146</sup> McRae 2003, 3 forward offers an interesting insight on the simplifying function of schematic reductions of lineages.

lines. The latter is a more complex genre, as it typically includes historical and biographical elements for the most relevant monastic figures embraced by its narrative. Notably, both lineage charts and texts seem to appear in Korea at a relatively late time, sometimes during the second half of the seventeenth century, and the most relevant works date to the eighteenth century. The chronological diffusion of these two related genres can be seen as a reflection of the developments in the history of lineage narratives, being the outcome of an advanced stage in the “living” lineage practice. The absence of similar texts before the late Chosŏn also seems to corroborate my assumption that in earlier periods the Korean Buddhist community didn’t conceive itself in terms of dharma lineages/uninterrupted master – disciple relations.

Lineage charts, in general, can be either limited to a single dharma lineage or include an extremely high number of figures and related lineages, usually deriving from a remote common ancestor. Lineage charts were compiled in China at least since the thirteenth century. Although, given the rich exchanges between Koryŏ and Yuan China, such works must have also reached the Korean peninsula at a relatively early date, these doesn’t seem to have had a lasting effect on the *samgha* and to my best

knowledge charts integrating Korean monks into a full-fledged lineage system only appear in the Chosŏn period.<sup>147</sup>

The *Puljo chongp'a chido*<sup>148</sup> (fig. 13) is commonly considered the earliest example of lineage chart produced in Korea. It has a tripartite structure, with the Chart proper, a poetic section, and an explanatory coda/colophon. Its printed version is clearly conceived as to be hanged and consulted in a single glance, representing an object midway between a text and a painting. The Chart proper is composed of a vertically developed line starting with Six Buddhas of the Past and Shakyamuni at top, continuing downwards with the Indian and Chinese patriarchs up to the fourteenth century,<sup>149</sup> finally moving to the Korean lineage. This reaches Hyujŏng's through the T'aego line discussed above, and from it

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<sup>147</sup> See Hwang Ingyu 2012, 503. This obviously excludes those Korean monks included in lineage texts and charts produced in China for a Chinese audience.

<sup>148</sup> H0113. The text is included in the 7th volume of the HBC, appearing in the collection as the opening work for the Chosŏn period. This peculiar work is discussed by Kim Jin-Young 2015, Youm Jung-Seop 2018, Youm Jung-Seop 2020.

<sup>149</sup> As noted by Pak Inn-suk (Project Unit 2015, 186), the text offers a somewhat unorthodox view of the origins of the Five Houses of Chan.

continues, somewhat surprisingly, to his direct disciples Yujǒng and Wanhǒ Wǒnjun. Naong is also acknowledged in the table, although his line dissolves with Chach'o. The second section (bottom right) presents five Seven-character-quatrain on the Five Houses of Chan, (with the Linji school in the first and foremost place), taken from the *Rentian yanmu* by Huiyan Zhizhao (n.d.), a collection of miscellaneous writings on the teachings of Chan Buddhism published around 1188 and widely circulated around the whole East Asian area.<sup>150</sup> The third section (bottom left) is an afterword including information on the origins of the chart, on its author, and on its current version.<sup>151</sup> Mostly a paraphrasis of a brief excerpt of Chach'o's stele inscription at Hoeamsa, the text presents Chach'o as the author of the table, adding that the work was republished by him in 1394, with the woodblocks kept at Nantasa monastery.

Based on the contents of this coda, modern scholars usually accept the idea that this work was composed by the late Koryŏ–Early Chosŏn monk

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<sup>150</sup> In Korea, the earliest known edition is the one printed in 1357 Kwangsŏnsa, but several subsequent editions, such as the Songwangsa edition of 1529 testimony of the lasting popularity of this work.

<sup>151</sup> H0113 v7, 9b14–b15.

Muhak (1327–1405) and later supplemented by seventeenth century monk Wŏljŏ Toan (1638–1715), a second-generation disciple of Ŏngi. One major issue with the *Puljo chongp'a chido* is, however, that there appears to be no trace anywhere that Muhak ever had to do with such a text. If, as suggested by Yŏm, we interpret the creation of the *Puljo chongp'a chido* as an instrument Chach'o used to consolidate his identity as the legitimate dharma heir of Naong, and the absence of references to Zhikong as a result of the Confucianization of Korea and the consequent will to emphasize the Chinese tradition rather than the Indian one,<sup>152</sup> one is left wondering why a work with such a fundamental purpose is never mentioned in any source on Chach'o and his works.<sup>153</sup>

In this respect, at least two other theories on this work's creation could be considered. The first is that the “original” chart might indeed be a now lost Chinese work maybe brought to Korea by Chach'o after his travel

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<sup>152</sup> Youm Jung–Seop 2020, 105–106.

<sup>153</sup> The reference to Nantasa is also suspicious, as no monastery with such a name ever seems to have existed in Korea according to extant sources. While some scholars try to identify it with Hoeamsa on the basis that Chikong once compared it with the Indian Nalanda (Nanta in its sino–korean translation) monastery, this is less than convincing, as in the same postscript Hoeamsa is directly referred with its common denomination.



to China, later mistaken for a work actually composed by him. This might help to explain the problematic lack of references to Naong's master Zhikong in a text allegedly by a master that himself greatly participated in the celebration of the Indian monk and the presence of such an elaborated lineage chart in a country that never produced such a work before.

Another hypothesis that cannot be completely ruled out is that the current text, rather than being based on an original by the Koryŏ master, might rather be an original creation of Toan, who could have referenced Chach'o in order to give authority to his chart. At any rate, an issue that will require further scrutiny is the one concerning the disciples of Hyujŏng included in the chart namely, rather unexpectedly in a work created by a descendant of Ŏngi, Yujŏng and Wonjun.

Another example of late Chosŏn lineage chart is the *Puljo Chongpado*<sup>154</sup> included in the *Chegyŏng hoeyo*<sup>155</sup> (fig. 14) by Mugam Ch'oenu (1717–1790), notably included in a book devoted to the collection of diagrams and tables illustrating major doctrinal points of a great variety of

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<sup>154</sup> H0215 v10, p.56a16.

<sup>155</sup> H0215.

scriptures; for its relative position in the *Chegyŏng hoeyo*, as it directly follows a short chapter devoted to the illustration of “The Tathagathas’s Mind-to-Mind Transmission in Three Occasions”,<sup>156</sup> thus clearly connecting the two subjects, further enhancing the symbolic power of the lineage as a direct extension of Sakyamuni’s Dharma; and finally because, being the work of a monk belonging to the lineage centered around Sunch’ŏn’s Songgwangsa and Puhyu Sŏnsu (see chapter 4), it depicts Sŏnsu’s line as the main Chosŏn lineage while sharply diminishing the absolute balance of Hyujŏng’s line (here represented by only one descendance line), offering an original point of view on the theme and a reminder of the subjective nature of these work and of the ways lineage narratives can be manipulated to champion one’s particular interests.

Lineage charts, with their schematic rendition of master–disciple relationship, were instrumental in giving Chosŏn era monks a visual rationale through which they were able to give form to their own lineage’s interpersonal relationships.

If lineage charts are aimed at creating a univocal, easy to read narrative

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<sup>156</sup> 如來三處傳心 H0215 v10, p.56a01.

and tend to simplify complex relations,<sup>157</sup> lineage texts proper do not limit their scope to plainly listing the master's names, but also offer further information on their lives, thus illustrating interpersonal elements and individual characteristics that cannot be illustrated through a simple chart.

Similar texts were mostly composed during the eighteenth century: while the seventeenth century saw the emergence of the lineage narratives with a growing number of local communities gradually adhering to it, during the eighteenth century the lineage first envisioned by Ōngi's group was, on the whole, accepted as an historical fact. At this point, the extraordinary success of the T'aego narrative and the countless number of masters it involved prompted the need for clarification and reorganization: ambiguous relations, for instance in case of monks who were not univocally associated with a single master but who rather, based on epigraphical materials, appear to have followed different teachers in different periods of their lives, were fixed by clearly assigning them to a single 'vein' (Kor. *maek* 脈), and internal ranking was established between the descendants of a master.

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<sup>157</sup> McRae 2003, 8 forward.

The most relevant lineage text, both for its scope and for the influence it played in following times, is the *Sōyōk Chunghwa Haedong Puljo wōllyu* (henceforth *Puljo Wollyu*)<sup>158</sup> composed by Saam Ch'aeyōng (d.u.), a monk belonging to Ŏngi's lineage, published in 1764 in Chōnju's Songgwangsa, a work of monumental dimensions, including the largest amount of information available on the monastic community of the seventeenth and eighteenth century.

While the core of the text is the contemporary Sōn community, represented by both Hyujōng's descendants and those of his dharma-brother Sōnsu, thus offering an all-encompassing view of the extension the T'aego lineage narrative in influencing late Chosōn's *sangha*,<sup>159</sup> the text adds abundant material on Korean masters of the past, starting from the Three Reign period, citing most historically relevant members of the

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<sup>158</sup> H0218.

<sup>159</sup> A first edition was published in 1755. This first version caused strong contrasts with the community of Sunch'ōn's Songgwansa, led in particular by the monk Pyōkdam Haeng'in (1721–1798) who accused the author of the *Puljo wōllyu* of disregarding his lineage, with his followers even burning the printing woodblocks of the original edition. Unfortunately, it is impossible to verify how the 1764 edition differs with the 1755 one. Kim Yongtae 2010, 190, surmises that Haeng'in's actions were caused by the insufficient weight of Sōnsu's lineage in general, and that the later edition corrected this issue.

Korean buddhist community from Silla and Koryŏ, although it is made clear and evident that these personalities are distinctly separated by the ‘true’ lineage brought to Korea by T’aego. Moreover, a chart describing Hyujŏng’s descendancy is also included. The text, while ecumenical, clearly elevates the line of Ŏngi while downplaying that of Yujŏng which is described as an essentially dead tradition.

This seems to have triggered the creation of the *Samyŏngdang Chip’a Kŭnwŏllok*.<sup>160</sup> This short, lesser-known lineage text was published in 1768 by Pyŏktam Hyesim (d.u.) and is completely devoted to the description of Yujŏng’s dharma lineage,<sup>161</sup> which is presented as the most relevant of its era as it derives by the foremost successor of Hyujŏng.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> H0219.

<sup>161</sup> A very early lineage text dated 1739 and not included in the HBC, titled *Samyŏngdang Sŭngson segyedo* was created by descendants of Yujŏng. This minor work, now in the collection of Seoul National University library, is one of the earliest lineage texts produced in Korea, a fact reflected in its rather crude structure, midway between a chart and a text proper. Nonetheless, this work might have exerted some influence in the creation of the *Puljo Wŏllyu*. It is notable that in at least two occasions the followers of Yujŏng opted for the composition of lineage charts limited to their own tradition, suggesting that they felt the strong necessity to justify and emphasize their identity which was probably questioned by the exploding popularity of rival groups.

<sup>162</sup> H0219 v10, p.136a05–a10.

In this sense one must always keep in mind that these texts were never impartial, neutral descriptive texts, but rather implied in their creation the particular interests of the writer(s). It is not surprising then that the most well-known work of this kind was created by a member of the most flourishing among the sister lineages of the eighteenth century.

#### d. Monastic Gazetteers

To follow Marcus Bingenheimer's definition, monastic gazetteers (Kor. *saji*) are composite works created by editing materials belonging to different genres (including, but not limited to, topographic descriptions, biographical texts, essays, poems, maps, portrait inscriptions, epigraphic sources) recording information on Buddhists sites.<sup>163</sup> While some proto-gazetteers can be dated to earlier periods, in China the genre emerged fully since the Ming period, reaching its apex in the Qing<sup>164</sup> with hundreds of works, some including information on a single monastery, other devoted

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<sup>163</sup> Bingenheimer 2012, 53–54

<sup>164</sup> About 300 hundred gazetteers compiled in China during this period are estimated to be extant. For details see *ibid.*, 58.

to discussing in a comprehensive way two or more related monastic institution.<sup>165</sup>

Gazetteers are complex works, requiring great human and financial resources for their completion and publication, thus for a monastery being the subject of such a work was a sign of great prestige in at least two ways: ecclesiastically, their existence meant that the monastery was a leading Buddhist institution, thus attracting even more attention from the monastic community at large; at the same time, the publication of gazetteers was aimed for a mostly non-religious audience, typically local literati interested in the geographical, historical, literary and architectural information that composed the bulk of the texts, thus extending the cultural influence of monasteries to the secular society.<sup>166</sup> Not only gazetteers were an exhibition of the titular monastery's established prominence, but these works also functioned as an effective instrument for granting new patronage to the monastery, thus further enhancing its sociocultural importance and its material wealth.

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<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>166</sup> Brook 1993, 178–179.

In Korea full-fledged monastery gazetteers are numerically fewer than in China, yet some relevant examples exist, dating, unsurprisingly, to the period following the seventeenth century and continuing until the modern era. Exactly as in China, also in Korea the authorship of these works was varied, with some works principally composed completely by members of the monastic community, while others were compiled by teams formed by teams formed by both monks and literati.<sup>167</sup> These works, rarely concerned with explicitly religious themes, offer a precious source of historical information on the history of the monasteries and of their communities and at the same time allow us to get an unfiltered glimpse to the understanding of what a monastery was and what was really “relevant” in the eyes of those who actually lived there. Research on this subject, still extremely limited, might surely offer a great contribution to a better understanding of late Chosŏn Buddhism.

Crucially, many gazetteers have their focus in the biographies of Buddhist masters and other related material (poems and dedications composed by them, lists of stored belongings of famous masters, portrait

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<sup>167</sup> Oh Kyeong-hwo 2002, 7.



eulogies, etc.), a clear sign that the composition of these texts belongs to the larger program of Buddhist reformation that informed all the other textual genres discussed above. This is a characteristic common to both gazetteers of monasteries that built their authority almost completely on monks belonging to the community developed during late Chosŏn, such the *Taedunsaji*, on which I will focus in the second part of this thesis, and for those, such as the *T'ongdosaji*, recording the history of monasteries with a longer documented history.

The founders of a monastery become real heroes celebrated by collecting as much material available as possible on them, to the point that often their personalities overshadow what one would expect to be the major focus of a monastery's "biography" : its religious activities, its buildings and its natural surroundings. This focus on the monks that gave authority to the monastery also means that, more than any other possible subject, these masters were deemed the most suitable subject for representing the monastery as a whole: the monastery in essence was what it was made by the masters that could be connected with its history.

Gazetteers represent the last chronological step in the literature devoted to Sŏn masters: if steles and collected writings functioned as the

first stage in the establishment of these figures' authority, ritual manuals enhanced their religious dimension and lineage texts represented the final synthesis of a finally mature lineage-based Sŏn, gazetteers might be said to be the conclusive, local expression of celebration of nationally recognized the masters and lineages.

## 5. Conclusion

Buddhist lineage theory in its late Chosŏn formulation was a powerful tool with great potential bound for success, both internally and externally. In the context of the Buddhist community, its merit derived from its capacity to give authority to leaders (or, more radically, to *create* them *ex novo*), to produce order and regularity; moreover, it is an essentially Buddhist approach to history, with notable examples from past experiences and therefore adequate to potentially the whole *samgha*, as proven by the nationwide success earned by the group that first deployed it.

However, not unlike what happened in Song China when it was first fully devised by the Chan community in order to gain leadership also through socio-political sponsorship, the lineage theory was also suited to

enhance the relationships between Buddhists and the secular, Neo-Confucianism-led world of late Chosŏn, as it was based on the idea that the Sŏn community is a bona fide family, albeit a somehow particular one, and this Family led idea was easy to grasp and to accept in the eyes of people trained to think in Confucian style terms of family relationships.

Literary sources were developed in order to develop and spread lineage theories and to increase the relevance and symbolic force of the Sŏn masters who were transformed by their followers in instruments of legitimation. The development of textual sources follows the stages that lineage underwent: in the first stage, when the identification of pivotal figures was the main issue at stakes, steles were built to amplify the power or the relics inserted in the associated stupa, and to juxtapose early lineage claims with the very ‘body’ of the master. Similarly, literary collections functioned as ways to grasp the interest of the literati class, both for cultural and economic reasons.

While such textual celebration of individual monks, and thus the creation of related textual sources, continued throughout all the Chosŏn period, the developments of lineage narratives required the deployment of new literary forms. While ritual manuals show the success of the claims

of exceptionality of Sŏn masters that lays at the base of the lineage narrative, lineage charts and texts represent the most mature stage of its development, during which its adherents grew to such a degree that regulation and arrangement was a necessity. Finally, after the basic tenets of the narrative were fixed once for all, local communities developed new ways to celebrate their particular masters, generally with new purposes and reasons: the textual expression of this were the gazetteers.

Until this point, essentially in continuity with previous studies on the subject, I described the formation, or rather creation, of the Sŏn lineage that dominated the Buddhist world of the late Chosŏn period. While the basic elements in their final iteration are rather clear, two intertwined problems need to be addressed more fully than what has been done to date. The first concerns the actual geographical origin of the theory, i.e., where and why was it first envisaged before being delineated in the early forms described above. The second concerns the question of how it spread throughout the country and especially of how it was adopted even by at least another different monastic group, independent from the one, centered on Hyujŏng and his disciples, that originally created it for its own sake.

Literary sources only partially help to solve this problem; I suggest that the study of material culture might shed new light on these complex questions, allowing a better understanding of the complex processes that resulted in the forms late Chosŏn Buddhism chose to define itself.

## CHAPTER TWO – ISSUES OF LEGITIMACY IN HYUJŎNG’S LINEAGE AND THE ROLE OF MATERIAL CULTURE IN ITS EARLY DEVELOPMENTS

### 1. Introduction

A Chosŏn era map depicting the Mount Myohyang area (figs. 15 and 16)<sup>168</sup> prominently features in its central part the monastic complex, comprising the most celebrated monastery of the P'yŏngan-do region, Pohyŏnsa, and its satellite monasteries and hermitages. The main monastery is depicted in great detail, clearly showing its two celebrated stone stupas and the countless halls in its precincts (fig. 17). The surrounding hermitages and minor monasteries are also illustrated in the map, with varying degree of detail.

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<sup>168</sup> Several versions of this map seem to exist. I first became aware of its existence through one version shown in a documentary on Pohyŏnsa broadcasted by KBS in 2001, but unfortunately no details about its whereabouts are given in the program. Another version, attributed to the late seventeenth-early 18<sup>th</sup> century court painter Kim Chin'yŏ (d.u.) can be found in the collection of the Kookmin University Museum. A third, privately owned version recently emerged in 2018: its current owner allegedly found it in Japan.

Among the illustrations of these secondary sites, one of the most peculiar is that depicting the Ansimsa site, on the direct left of the main Pohyōnsa compound. The architectural features of this small but important monastery are rendered with rather simple forms (it consists of three undefined flanking halls), but what makes this depiction stand out is the group of small, square-like objects depicted on its right (fig. 18). This is a brilliant rendition of the stupa group of the monastery, one of the largest of the Korean peninsula, centered on the late Koryō stupa of Naong and on that for Hyujōng erected immediately after his death (fig. 19).

The fact that this group is given such prominence in the map testifies the relevance it had during the late Chosōn period, when it was one of the better-known landmarks of the Pohyōnsa complex. How did this group, one of the oldest of its kind in the Korean peninsula, originate? What made it relevant enough that it appears in such detail in this map? What was its role in the larger context of the Pohyōnsa complex? How does this stupa group relate to other similar groups created during the late Chosōn period? In this chapter I will attempt to answer to these questions in association with the lineage narrative tradition(s) introduced in the previous chapter, and by doing so I will offer a first, clear example of the relevance of the

materiality of Sŏn masters in the historical period at the center of this study.

In the previous chapter I discussed the concept of dharma lineage, its origins in Tang and Song China, and the process that brought to the belated formation of dharma lineages in Late Chosŏn Korea. I then presented a brief overview of the textual sources created, adapted, and deployed in association with dharma lineage narratives by the seventeenth century Chosŏn Buddhist community and their principal protagonists.

In examining lineage narratives, I adopted a descriptive approach centered exclusively on textual sources. In contrast, in this chapter I will offer a more in-depth analysis of some fundamental practical issues, concerning in particular the reasons these narratives were conceived, and how these were developed and circulated in practice. I will do this with a specific focus on how Sŏn master-related material production contributed to this process. My thesis is based on two related assumptions; the first is that the main and foremost audience of material culture associated to Buddhist masters as a whole was the monastic community that also controlled its creation; the second is that material culture had an active and fundamental role in the processes of lineage narrative creation and in



its subsequent developments. Therefore, a better understanding of the characteristics and developments of the materiality of Sŏn masters during the period covered by this study might offer new answers or insights on fundamental historical and religious issues.

More specifically, this chapter attempts to answer an essential question concerning Hyujŏng's descendancy: how did the monk P'yŏnyang Ŏngi manage to rapidly emerge among Hyujŏng's disciples and become the de facto patriarch of the greatest part of the Late Chosŏn *samgha*, despite his extremely young age at the time of his master's death,<sup>169</sup> his relative obscurity during the Master's lifetime and his unimpressive, or at least rather unoriginal teachings and textual output?<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> In 1604 Ŏngi, who was born in 1581, was only 23 years old. Although the monastic career could sometimes begin at a very young age, at the time it was not common to receive the recognition of one's enlightened status in the first half of one's twenties, and that was an age in most cases devoted to one's self-discovery through the encounter with several masters around the country, a practice often recorded in biographical texts of the period.

<sup>170</sup> Unlike his master Hyujŏng, a prolific and versatile writer who owes much of his fame to both his poetic and his doctrinal textual output, Ŏngi stands out for exactly the contrary reason: somehow surprisingly, considered that the vast majority of Late Chosŏn *samgha* members are his Dharma descendants, the youngest disciple of Hyujŏng doesn't seem to have published in book form anything in his life, and his collected writings, the *P'yŏnyangdangchip* (H0161) published at the Pohyŏnsa hermitage Paek'unam, in three volumes, include

My basic hypothesis is that his rise was triggered by some fortuitous circumstances that physically distanced Yujǒng, who at the time was the most influential and well-known disciple of Hyujǒng, from the Mount Myohyang area. This rise to power was later perfected by Ŏngi and his closest followers through a skillful and original use of materiality that further diminished the influence of Yujǒng and at the same time accrued Ŏngi's prestige. The use of materiality, as hinted in the previous chapter, was crucial in this context because, while the written word was principally aimed at the educated, and for the most part secular elite able to appreciate the subtleties of literary composition in classical Chinese, the larger part of the monastic community would respond more promptly to material forms that monks knew either by direct experience or, for the most erudite of them, also through Chan literature.

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more writings dealing with materiality, such as texts recording newly constructed hermitages and halls, and fundraising notes, than doctrinal material.

In contrast with the assertion of Jiang Wu, who understands all East Asian iterations of Chan as an essentially text-based tradition, the case of Ŏngi seems to clearly contradict such an image of the meditative tradition. And it was not through textuality that Ŏngi constructed his undeniable authoritativeness, then one has to look elsewhere to understand how he built it.

The chapter is divided in two major sections: in the first, I will observe how the materiality of Sŏn masters interacted with issues of lineage narrative development, and for the most part I will do so through references to textual sources, directly or indirectly offering information on such material production. The focus will be on the two most outstanding figures that emerged amongst the disciples of Hyujŏng, namely P'yŏnyang Ŏngi and Samyŏng Yujŏng, whom I already introduced in the previous chapter. In the second part of the chapter I will concentrate on Pohyŏnsa, the most influential monastery of early seventeenth century Korea, where Hyujŏng spent the last years of his life cementing his community, where many of the most relevant events discussed in this chapter took place, and where the single largest example of materiality of Sŏn masters of this early period is to be found, i.e. the complex of stupa groups in the outskirt of Pohyŏnsa's precinct; I will suggest a reading of the site through which I hope to show that material culture can reveal, when correctly approached, relevant information not transmitted by textual sources.

This chapter will present, necessarily through fragmentary sources and undirect references to material culture found in contemporary textual sources, what could be defined as a history of inclusion and exclusion. It

will discuss how some figures were physically associated with the Mount Myohyang area, and transitively with Hyujŏng as represented by his bodily relics (i.e., his post-cremation material remains), while others were separated from it, and how this resulted in the development of the current that grew to dominate late Chosŏn Buddhism.

## **2. Hyujŏng's Community and the Centrality of Pohyŏnsa Monastery**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Late Chosŏn Dharma lineage narrative first appeared in association with the figure of the renowned monk Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng, and was developed through a lengthy and still not fully clear process by some of his direct dharma descendants, as in the case of Ŏngi, or by indirect followers, as in the case of Yujŏng's disciple Hyegu. For Chosŏn era monks it was common, if not even expected, to travel throughout the country and pay visit to several monasteries and hermitages and meet as many leading masters as possible, at times for rather lengthy periods, to gain as much insight of Buddhism as possible. Hyujŏng too, during his career, associated himself with a large number of Buddhist sites, including the area surrounding Mount Chiri, where his monastic career began and first developed, and the region of

Mount Kūmgang, where part of his followers was active already in the early seventeenth century. Yet, it is safe to affirm that, at least since the last decade of the sixteenth century, the master was firmly settled at Pohyōnsa monastery on Mount Myohyang, in the northern Py'ōngan-do region, and that although the Mount Kūmgang region represented a secondary but important Buddhist area dominated by some of his most distinguished disciples, the greatest part of his followers including Ŏngi and Yujōng recognized the Pohyōnsa monastic complex as their 'ancestral home'.

The Mount Myohyang region had a long history of relationship with many diverse religious traditions: <sup>171</sup> numerous monasteries and hermitages scattered over the mount's peaks<sup>172</sup> testify the rich and deep local history of Buddhist; the region was also the home of indigenous traditions, the most prominent being the one connected with the cult of the

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<sup>171</sup> For a contextualization of the site, see Heo Heung-sik 2001.

<sup>172</sup> Late Chosōn texts on Mount Myohyang, including writings by monastic figures such as the *Myohyansangji* by Sōram Ch'ubung (1651–1706), The *Hyangsangji* by Wōlp'a T'aeyul (1695–?), but also travelogues by literati like the *Myohyangsan sogi* by Pak Chega (1750–1805) offer fascinating images of what the region in the Late Chosōn and of the impressing number of Buddhist sites, past and present, that it hosted.

legendary founder of the Korean state, Tangun.<sup>173</sup> Pohyŏnsa, the central monastery of the area, had a long and prestigious history dating back at least to the Koryŏ period, as shown by the fact that Ansimsa, from which Pohyŏnsa later developed, was relevant enough to host part of Naong's relics, and which continued well into the Chosŏn period, when the site served as a votive monastery (kor. *wŏnch'al*) to shelter mortuary tablets of kings and queens.<sup>174</sup> While this function seems to have vanished by the time Hyujŏng and his followers gained control of the monastery, the complex was in all likelihood still considered among the most sacred areas of the country, and the sheer association with its religious infrastructures was source of great prestige.

As the lineage narrative was created in full by the community that saw Hyujŏng as its de facto patriarch, and as the core of this community was centered on the Mount Myohyang area, it can be surmised with a good degree of confidence that the earliest steps that brought to the creation of the narrative were taken in this region, or at least that it was here that the

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<sup>173</sup> One must note, however, that all extant sources related to the Tanggun tradition on the Mount are of Buddhist origin and relatively late in composition.

<sup>174</sup> Heo Heung-sik 2001, 112.

ideological framework that contributed to its creation originated.

I was not able to get access to the area, which is located in present North Korea, and thus in-depth studies based on direct observation of monuments has been not possible. Moreover, to my best knowledge, there are no available thorough researches on the site's material heritage. Fortunately, however, we possess several written sources that provide insightful clues concerning both the chronological developments surrounding the materiality of Sŏn masters at the site and the general impact that the site had on the growth and transformation of the Chosŏn monastic community. The numerous stele inscriptions from the area represent the primary source to get a grasp of the chronology of events at Pohyŏnsa, and these can be complemented by secondary references found in several collected writings, which include dedicatory writings and descriptive texts about the region.

### **3. Early Lineage Narratives in connection with the Materiality of Sŏn Masters**

The 'definitive' lineage text of the Chosŏn period, the *Sŏyŏk Chunghwa Haedong Puljo wŏllyu* (hereafter *Puljo wŏllyu*) presented in the

previous chapter, offers a lengthy, detailed report of Buddhist masters in the Dharma line of Hyujŏng<sup>175</sup> divided by descendance generations (kor. *se* 世). This list of major disciples offers the most complete synthesis of Hyujŏng's lineage and Dharma heirs currently available, and its contents are generally accepted by modern scholars as essentially reflecting the effective state of the Buddhist community in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. for Hyujŏng, who is incontestably the figure around whom the whole text is constructed, over thirty direct dharma descendants are listed in the text, and special prominence is reserved to a handful of them, especially to Yujŏng, Soyo T'aenŭng (1562–1649) and, above all, Ŏngi, whose descendants account for the large majority of all the individuals recorded in the book.

Although the *Puljo Wollyu* is considered the definitive authoritative text presenting Hyujŏng's true lineage, a comparison of its contents with the few, somehow fragmentary texts dealing with the theme dating to

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<sup>175</sup> It could be argued that the lineage actually presented in this fundamental work is that of Puyong Yŏnggwan, yet the focus of Saam Ch'aeyŏng's work is clearly on the figure of Hyujŏng. The generation count, that goes from 1 (T'aego) to 6 (Hyujŏng and, secondarily Sŏnsu and the other minor disciples of Yŏnggwan) is reset with Hyujŏng, and the following lineage is described in terms of generations after Ch'ŏnghŏ (清虛下 第OO世).



Hyujöng's lifetime and to the earliest period after his death reveal a different image. I already discussed the lineage related contents in Hyujöng's collected writings (or rather, the lack of such contents), here I will try to approach it from a different point of view, first looking at the earliest examples of monk related material culture produced by his followers, and then examining the developments such materiality had especially in the Mount Myohyang area.

I will first attempt to reconstruct the actual state of Hyujöng's community in the period immediately preceding and following his death. The *Pohyönsa Sökka Yörae saribi* offers some significant clues that help us in grasping the relations of power between Hyujöng's disciples in the last phase of his life. This stele, now only partially extant,<sup>176</sup> was erected during the sixth month of 1603 to commemorate the construction of a stupa made to shelter part of the Buddha's relics originally enshrined in T'ongdosa's Diamond Ordination platform (kor. *kūmgang kyedan*) and salvaged by Yujöng during the Japanese invasion of 1592–93.<sup>177</sup> The

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<sup>176</sup> Kang Byunghee 2013, 129.

<sup>177</sup> The pagoda is still extant, albeit not in its original position and, if the current form with a four-tier octagonal body topped by a full-fledged stone bell shape stupa, complete with a lotus leave basis and a richly decorated

front side included a lengthy inscription penned by Hyujŏng himself, completed less than one year before his death, which occurred in the first month of 1604.

The inscription can be divided in three major sections; the first presents a biography of Sakyamuni and an account of the spread of his teachings in India and China; the second offers a concise account of the vicissitudes that brought his relics to T'ongdosa and from there into the hands of the Pohyŏnsa community, with great emphasis on the active role of Yujŏng, who is even described as “not inferior to Chajang”<sup>178</sup> for his service to Buddhism and to the state; the third section describes the process of construction of the stupa and the inauguration ceremony led by Hyujŏng himself. The contents of the main inscription are, in relation to issues of dharma transmission and lineage narrative, rather unremarkable:

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finial, is faithful to the original configuration, it would represent one of the most peculiar shapes for a stone stupa in the whole East Asian region. A photo of the stupa is reproduced in *ibid.*, 128.

<sup>178</sup> 品秩則惟政禪子 不下慈藏法師也. Chajang was the founder of T'ongdosa, where he enshrined the relics of the historical Buddha he brought to the Silla Kingdom after a long period of study in China. He was historically recognized and appreciated as one of the most influential Buddhist figures of the peninsula.

it includes no reference at all to the relationship between Shakyamuni (nor any other Indian, Chinese or Korean master) and Hyujŏng's persona or his community.<sup>179</sup> What can be grasped, however, is the extreme relevance attached by Hyujŏng to the construction of the stupa: despite his advanced age, he presided the inaugural ceremony in person, and actively engaged in the completion not only of the monument itself, but also of a stone stele to accompany it and enhance the stupa's importance through its association with a media that, for contemporary Buddhism, was an uncommon sight.

For our purpose, more significant is the inscription on the stele's back side, which was composed not by Hyujŏng but by Yujŏng. The first section details a 1602 travel by Hyujŏng to the Kŭmgang Mount area and his return to Mount Myohyang; the second – and lengthier – section presents a

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<sup>179</sup> Its first section offers an account of Sakyamuni's life, followed by the story of how the Silla monk Chajang (590–658) brought some of the Buddha's sarisa from Tang China to Korea and enshrined them in T'ongdosa. The narration then moves to 1592, when the Japanese army attacked the Korean peninsula heavily pillaging the area surrounding T'ongdosa, detailing Yujŏng's efforts to rescue the sacred relics retrieved from the monastery's Ordination platform, their road to mount Myohyang and, finally, the construction and inaugural ceremony of the bell-shaped stupa (kor. *sŏkchong*) celebrated by Hyujŏng and by two of his lesser-known followers, Chijŏng and Pŏmnan.

comprehensive list of the donors and collaborators to the stele's erection. The list of the Master's disciples (sorted by their official religious title in decreasing order of relevance) offers direct evidence of the group closest to the master at the very end of his life: crucially, of the four masters who in the *Puljo wollyu* are identified as the originators of the four main dharma lines descending by Hyujŏng (kor. *samunp'a*), two are remarkably absent: Ilsŏn<sup>180</sup> and Ŏngi. This is particularly relevant, especially in light of the fact that later sources (mostly produced in the Ŏngi circle) describe him as one of the favored pupils of the old master.

Immediately after Hyujŏng's death in 1604 at the Wŏnjŏgam hermitage of Pohyŏnsa, where he spent the last years of his life, a stone bell shaped stupa (fig. 20) was erected by his direct followers, perhaps in continuity with what was done for his Dharma master.<sup>181</sup> Crucially, the stupa was

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<sup>180</sup> a monk named Ilsŏn, whose name is written with different characters 一先, indeed appears in a relative low position of the stele. While at times monk names were written with homophonous characters, especially when one of the characters was relatively complex or not immediately recognizable in context, this does not seem the case, as the character 禪 would have been a natural choice for monks belonging to the Sŏn tradition.

<sup>181</sup> The construction of a stupa for Puyong on mount Chiri is recorded in the *Samno Haengjŏk*.

built in proximity of the late Koryŏ period stupa of Naong at Ansimsa. This monument represented at the time the most notable example of monk related material culture at the Pohyŏnsa complex. Although those who built the stupa did not leave any written record about it, the position close to that of Naong stupa is highly suggestive if we keep in mind that the first lineage narrative was constructed around Naong's figure. Hyujŏng and his disciples at Pohyŏnsa were obviously aware of the importance of the late Koryŏ master in the development of Korean Buddhism and, although Hyujŏng probably did not actually consider himself his direct descendant, he or his disciples might have felt a qualitative affinity between the two that, in the short period following Hyujŏng's death, finally evolved in the first lineage narrative, the one included in Hŏ Kyun's writings. In other words, it cannot be ruled out that the presence of the Ansimsa Naong stupa (and stele) had a triggering function in the late Chosŏn developments of the *samgha*'s self-awareness.

Although the masters responsible for the erection of Hyujŏng's stupa didn't leave any written record about its conception, Yujŏng, who was not directly involved in the funerary rituals surrounding his master, did, and the information we can grasp from his writings is extremely precious. Two

short writings included in the *Samyöngdanjip*, the collected writings of Yujöng, the *Tünggye taesa sosangso*<sup>182</sup> and the *Tünggye könt'ap Ch'ungmun*<sup>183</sup> indeed contain the only veiled references to lineage theory in the whole textual production of Yujöng.

From these texts we learn that Yujöng wasn't able to participate in the funeral rituals for his master because, while on his way to Mount Myohyang, he received a royal order to travel to Japan in order to rescue a large number of war prisoners, and was only able to visit the stupa the following year, about 20 months after Hyujöng passed away; in that occasion, he obtained some relics of the master and brought them to Mount Kūmgang where he erected a second stupa in his honor.

Crucially, both writings also report Hyujöng's lineage in a way faithful to the one Hyujöng himself recorded in the *Samno haengjök*, namely Pyöksong as the dharma grandfather/ancestor, and Puyong as the dharma father. The adherence to Linji style of teachings is mentioned by referring to a stick and shout (ch. *banghe*, kor. *banghal*) style of teaching. Neither

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<sup>182</sup> H0152 v8, p.63a20

<sup>183</sup> H0152 v8, p.65c22

of these texts, both confidently datable to 1606, make reference to other masters of the past, nor to direct, systematized conceptions of Dharma inheritance.

What we grasp from these two writings is firstly the great relevance attributed to the master's relics, demonstrated by the fact that Yujŏng requests a part of them to be enshrined in his dwelling place. This also suggests that Yujŏng was influential enough to request and immediately obtain such a precious substance. At the same time, we notice that he was not involved directly in the funerary rituals of his Dharma master: this short stay on Mount Myohyang represents the last documented occasion he visited the focal center of his master, and indeed he died very far from it, at Haeinsa in the southern part of the country.

Through his absence at the moment of Hyujŏng's passing we could speculate that the relative role of Yujŏng who, as I previously discussed in connection with the *Pohyŏnsa Sŏkka Yŏrae saribi*, used to be almost on a par with that of Hyujŏng, who certainly considered him his major disciple, began to wane in the Mount Myohyang region, allowing other subjects to grasp control of Hyujŏng's community.

The lineage narrative construction described in the previous chapter

suggests a power struggle that probably ensued after Hyujöng's death. He was an extremely successful master in his life, able to equally manage state-related sociopolitical issues in an extremely complex, almost chaotic historical period, and to create a lively and dynamic monastic community which already in his lifetime dominated some of the most religiously relevant areas of the country, including Mount Myohyang and Mount Kūmgang. At the time of his death, he was an extremely powerful figure surrounded by several brilliant disciples<sup>184</sup> who, in due time, came to lead, or even monopolize, the whole of Buddhism of seventeenth century Korea and beyond. This also means, however, that when he passed away his most relevant disciples found themselves in a difficult position, because with such a large and active community, competition for official leadership succession couldn't be avoided. Although in the long term the lineage narratives developed by Hyujöng's community transformed Korean Buddhism as a whole, the origins of these narratives should be probably better understood as a device originally developed to

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<sup>184</sup> The back side of the 1632 stele, included in the *Yujömsa ponmalsa chi*, includes the names of 53 monks referred as direct followers (*munjöng*). See Chi Kwan 2000, 53. The *Puljo Wöillyu* lists 30 direct disciples, only partially coincident with those listed on the stele. H0218 v10, p.104c04–105a19.



gain control of a specific religious community centered on Mount Myohyang. The form it took is a reflection of the specific *forma mentis* of the members of this community.

As long as the master was alive, he was the undisputed leader of the community, but as soon as he passed away, issues of leadership and of transmission must have emerged in no time. To become the official, primary heir of Hyujŏng's Dharma would involve controlling the large monastery where the master settled during the last decades of his life, and where he formed and led his community. Controlling Pohyŏnsa would thus mean to control, in a way, the greater part of Hyujŏng's community, and I argue that it was for this purpose that lineage narratives were originally conceived.

The first texts dealing with lineage were commissioned to Hŏ Kyun by Hyegu, who presents himself as a follower of Yujŏng,<sup>185</sup> and all aimed at enhancing or rather confirming the status of Yujŏng as the direct,

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<sup>185</sup> Notably, he appears in the Pyohunsa stele among the direct disciples of Hyujŏng. It is of course possible that he entered the community before the master's death but only managed to proceed in his religious career after Hyujŏng's departure, becoming a follower of the more experienced, and probably leading figure of Yujŏng.

legitimate heir of Hyujŏng's dharma. Hŏ Kyun's writings suggest the lack of familiarity with the concept of a unilinear, uninterrupted Dharma lineage transmitted from master to disciple.

When read with in mind Yujŏng's role, or lack of it, in the rituals surrounding Hyujŏng's death and the succession matters at Pohyŏnsa, the creation of Yujŏng's stupa at Haeinsa (fig. 21), accompanied by the exceptional erection of a funerary stele (fig. 22) can be understood as a radical act, an attempt to restore Yujŏng prominence as a religious leader and as the main descendant of Hyujŏng. To achieve such a goal, no written text could have been powerful enough. What was needed was a stupa, not only to put Yujŏng in continuity with Hyujŏng as Hyujŏng was put in continuity with Puyong through the practice of stupa construction, but first and foremost because, to build a stupa, relics were necessary; relics are the material proof of the highest religious achievement in Buddhism, thus possessing relics left after Yujŏng's cremation and enshrining them into a stupa meant for Hyegu to be able to prove without doubt the eminence and sanctity of his master, and to accordingly attest his legitimate role as the true descendant of Hyujŏng as recorded in the stele inscription.

The lineage narrative cited in Hŏ Kyun's writing was been probably

less a conscious attempt to offer a reasoned, fully developed historical account of Yujŏng's ancestry, than a way to list any and every possible element that could explain the eminence and standing of the master: the Naong tradition probably widespread among Hyujŏng's community due to the presence of his stupa at Ansimsa; the short-term dharma transmission elements appearing in Hyujŏng's writings and, most likely, in his verbal teachings; other historical elements likely circulating at the time that justify the inclusion in the narrative of features such as the reference to the Pŏpan tradition.

No matter what the original purpose of Hyegu was, what is clear is that he was to some degree successful, prompting the direct response of those converging around the younger master Ŏngi who, at the same time, was beginning to dominate Hyujŏng's community's central area of interest. It is also clear that the lineage elements in the opening passage of Yujŏng's had an effective impact, triggering the creation of the alternative, and better conceived T'aego narrative. Notably, every single text which contributed to the construction of the T'aego lineage narrative created by Ŏngi and his associates, including the *Pongnaesan Unsam Chongbongdanggi*, the P'yohunsa steles and the new introduction to the

*Ch'ŏnghŏdangjip*, makes direct reference to Yujŏng, a fact that can hardly be considered a coincidence.

What is more, in most cases these writings were directly connected to materiality associated either with Yujŏng or Hyujŏng, and this too is probably not accidental. For instance, the *Chongbongdanggi*<sup>186</sup> was written to be displayed in a portrait hall in which one of the main subjects was Yujŏng:<sup>187</sup> in this way, the legitimacy claims of Yujŏng's descendants could be countered without necessarily attacking directly their master who, after all, was proven to be an enlightened being by the existence of his relics, and who still maintained to some extent some kind of influence among the members of the Pohyŏnsa community.

Erasing Hŏ Kyun's biography of Hyujŏng included in the first version of the master's Collected Writings was a relatively easy task: it was sufficient to publish a new version of the *Ch'ŏnghŏdangjip* that did not include it, and this is exactly what Ŏngi and his associates did. Yet this

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<sup>186</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>187</sup> The other masters whose portraits were enshrined in the hall were Hyujŏng, Puhyu Sŏnsu, and the rather obscure Ch'ŏngryŏn, about whom the only ascertainable fact is his connection with mount Kŭmgang and Yujŏmsa monastery.

was not sufficient, especially considering that the book was hardly the principal focus of interest of the monastic community, which better understood on-site material tokens speaking about the masters' holiness in a language well codified by Sŏn historiography.

Thus, not only they successfully replaced Hŏ Kyun's biography with a new one better reflecting their interests, but more significantly they took Hyujŏng's stupa on Mount Kŭmgang (fig. 23), a monument strongly associated with its creator Yujŏng, and juxtaposed it with a stele that radically transformed the symbolic meaning of Hyujŏng's stupa (fig. 24). By doing so they seem to follow, maybe not by accidentally, the pattern developed by Hyegu: a collection of writings primarily aimed at an educated readership, probably in large part belonging to the literati class; and simultaneously a stele, to be erected next to the stupa enshrining the holy relics of the Saint, representing a visual and textual device that functioned both as amplifier of the relics' power (by illustrating, textually as well as visually<sup>188</sup> the preeminence of the master) and as an instrument of appropriation (by drawing links between the master and the authors of

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<sup>188</sup> See the section on steles in chapter one.

the stele). In this particular case, the strategy adopted by Ŏngi was relatively simple: one major element of discontinuity between earlier biographical accounts of Hyujŏng and the new one included in the stele was the addition to the master's life of the 'new' T'aego transmission narrative championed by Ŏngi, while a second element was the suggestion, here still veiled but made explicit in his steles discussed in the following section, that Ŏngi was *the* legitimate transmitter of the master's orthodox life account and lineage: it is him who brings the draft text including Hyujŏng's biographical accounts to the stele's author, and who materially erected the stele. At any rate, it seems reasonable to argue that by this time Ŏngi's position of preeminence within the disciples of Hyujŏng was already cemented, and that his area of influence also reached out to the area of Mount Kŭmgang.

#### **4. Ŏngi's Steles at Pohyŏnsa and Paekhwaam**

When Ŏngi passed away in the fifth month of 1644 aged 64 at the Naewŏnam hermitage of Pohyŏnsa, his disciples erected on the western side of the main monastery a bell-shaped stupa to enshrine his relics. Within one year, the stupa was complemented by a funerary stele finished

during the fourth month of 1645 and commissioned by three of the master's disciples, P'ungdam Ŭisim, Ch'öngöm Söngmin and Uhwa Sölch'öng. Only one month later another stele (fig. 25) dedicated to the Master was erected, this time in the Paekhwaam Hermitage of P'yohunsa, on Mount Kūmgang, commissioned by the same three disciples. The creation of these two steles marks the final phase in the complex process aimed at defining the main Dharma heir of Hyujöng, a phase in which Öngi's primacy is no more questioned nor questionable, so that his persona can be honored through the creation of celebratory monuments built in highly symbolical places and forms.

Both steles display remarkable features especially significant in the context of the struggle for leadership described in the above sections. The stele at Pohyönsa is the first one, among those precisely datable created during the Late Chosön period, that was programmatically created since the beginning in set with a stupa. The table below offers an overview of the earliest fully dated steles in association with the stupa.

Master	Stupa	Stele
Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng	1604 Pohyŏnsa 1606 P'yohunsa	1630/1632 Paekhwaam
Wanhŏ Wŏnjun	1619 Pohyŏnsa	1632 Pohyŏnsa
Samyŏng Yujŏng	1610? Haeinsa	1612 Haeinsa
Chewŏl Kyŏnghŏn	1633 Simwŏnsa	1636 Simwŏnsa
P'yŏnyang Ŏngi	1644 Pohyŏnsa	1645 Pohyŏnsa 1645 Paekhwaam

Table 1. Date scheme of early seventeenth century monk stupas and accompanying stele

In all previous instances, several years passed before a stele was created to accompany a preexisting stupa, with the shortest gap represented by the Haeinsa stele for Yujŏng discussed above. In the earliest phases of stupa construction in the late Chosŏn, the primary goal of the endeavor was likely the ‘simple’ enshrinement of relics, and this symbolic meaning of materiality did not require the special support stele inscriptions can offer. When issues of succession emerged, the principal actors must have realized the great legitimating power that can derive by the relics of old masters, and this likely led to the delayed creation of steles such as that of Hyujŏng at P'yohunsa.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Steles during the Koryŏ period were created also long after the erection of the stupa, but in this case the reason was always the delay in receiving the



Concerning its textual contents, this stele stands in contrast with the previous examples as it highlights completely different elements. While the steles of Hyujŏng and Yujŏng dealt in great length with concrete biographical features, in this work the life of the master is only roughly sketched, and the largest biographical section is the one dealing with the death of the master and the relics he left after his cremation. Unlike earlier steles, here no references to long term lineage issues appear, but several passages stress the fact that Ŏngi is *the* legitimate inheritor of Hyujŏng's Dharma.<sup>190</sup> The poetic eulogy at the end of the inscription essentially states, in a rather direct way that avoids any lexical and conceptual intricacy, that Hyujŏng (Sŏsan) lived on Mount Myohyang, that Ŏngi is his heir and that they are equally worthy religious figures.<sup>191</sup>

Finally, the stele opens and closes with passages explicitly praising

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royal authorization for stele erection. Such an issue did simply not exist during the Late Chosŏn, when stupas were built without the influence – nor the need – of external forces that authorized the creation of the stele or dictated details about its form and contents.

<sup>190</sup> notably, this is in stark contrast with the 1632 stele for Hyujŏng at Paekhwaam, where Yujŏng was still described as an heir of master Sŏsan.

<sup>191</sup> 妙香之山西山居之 西山之後師繼其師 普賢之南不滅者存 非滅非存是足以尊.

(monk) stupas as instruments that allow the physical (material) celebration of the masters' virtue. Here we see a rare instance of text directly addressing the meaning of stupa erection, and it's significant that such a content appears in the first stele created in set with a monk stupa. The effort to religiously elevate the figure of Ŏngi is here evident, and the force of this passage of the inscription derives from the tangibility of the monuments, corresponding – as suggested by the text – to the tangibility of the monk's holiness.

The Paekhwaam stele is equally intriguing. Here too most of the relevant elements characterizing the other stele do appear with the same meaning (brevity of the biography, focus on the death of the master and on his relics, and especially the comparison/symbolic matching of the two masters). Rather than focusing on issues of stupa symbolism, however, here the relationship between Hyujŏng and Ŏngi is made explicit in two ways. First, by declaring Ŏngi's fundamental role in the creation of the hermitage *for* Hyujŏng, and secondly through a very powerful intellectual 'game' of identities and references: the author of the stele inscription is Yi Myŏngha (1595–1645), who, rather than for his personal intellectual greatness, was chosen to compose the text because his father Yi Chŏnggu

(1564–1635) composed, requested by Ŏngi, the stele inscription of Hyujŏng. The stele makes the equation quite clear, suggesting a (religious) father–son relationship between Hyujŏng and Ŏngi, a relationship paralleled and enforced symbolically by the father–son relationship between Yi Chŏnggu and Yi Myŏngha.

Once the dominant position of Ŏngi over the community that formed around Hyujŏng was secured, long term lineage issues lost their primacy, because (especially in works produced by Ŏngi’s circle) their function was not the legitimation of Hyujŏng himself, but rather to contrast the authority of Yujŏng and his followers by deconstructing the Naong narrative they first developed, thus also undermining the validity of their claims of legitimacy. On the other side, as the dominant position of Ŏngi was at this point firmly established, at the moment of his death his relationship with his master and the essential religious identity of the two as enlightened beings were made explicit and tangible by the erection of stupas openly associated with those of Hyujŏng in the two most symbolically charged areas connected with his figure. The stele inscriptions were thus conceived with the purpose of enhancing the ‘associating power’ of the stupas by translating in textual form what materiality expressed in

tangible shapes.

At this point, monks in the lineage of Ŏngi's were able to dominate the sites most profoundly associated with Hyujŏng, and this dominance was expressed in very evident material forms, in particular stupas, as demonstrated by the rich production of monk stupas around Pohyŏnsa.

### **5. The Monk Stupas at Pohyŏnsa**

In his study on lesser-known textual sources on Pohyŏnsa, Heo Heung-sik offers a comprehensive list of the monks whose stupas and accompanying funerary steles were erected around the monastery, based on documents located in the collection of the Yonsei University library.<sup>192</sup> To my best knowledge no academic study or archaeologic report on the stupas at the site has been published so far; this, along with the fact that the iconographic material available in a recently published work on Buddhist monasteries in North Korea<sup>193</sup> only includes a single, collective photograph of one of the three principal monk stupa groups at Pohyŏnsa

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<sup>192</sup> Heo Heung-sik 2001, 173–139.

<sup>193</sup> Taehanbulgyo Chogyejong, Minjok kongdongch'e ch'ujin ponbu 2011, 140.

(fig. 26), which does not allow any in-depth analysis of the works,<sup>194</sup> means that Hō's list of 39 steles/stupas, although it requires some minor additions,<sup>195</sup> represents a precious source of information on this fundamental stupa group.

According to the texts referenced by Hō, three different stupa groups of different size are present around Pohyōnsa, a fact corroborated by the available texts of stele inscriptions from the site: the largest group is the one at the Ansimsa site, also known as western group (kor. *sōbudo*) which among the others includes the late Koryō stupa of Naong and its accompanying stele, along with the first stupa erected in 1605 for Hyujōng: Hō counts a total of 26 monuments for this group. A second group of

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<sup>194</sup> Moreover, there is no proof that the site presently maintains the form it had during the Chosŏn period. Ibid. states that several of the works at the Ansimsa stupa group were damaged during the Korean war, so it cannot be ruled out that not all the stupas are still in the position in which they were originally conceived.

<sup>195</sup> According to ibid. the total number of stupas currently existent at the Ansimsa site is 44, while there are a total of 19 steles. To this number, we should also add the stupas present at the two other stupa subsites at the monastery. The information on steles is also incomplete as, for instance, Chi Kwan 2000 includes two stele inscriptions from the Pohyōnsa complex not included in the list in Heo's article on mount Myohyang (Chi Kwan 2000, 285 and 553).

stupas is the eastern group (kor. *tongbudo*) in the area behind the Kŭngnakchŏn hall; for this group, Hŏ lists a total of six stupas, the most relevant one being that of P'ungdam Ŭisim (1592–1665) the most prolific disciple of Ŏngi in terms of dharma heirs and, as it will be discussed later in this chapter, one of the key figures in the monastic history of Pohyŏnsa. The third or southern group (kor. *nambudo*) near the Kyejoam hermitage is the smallest one, but it is particularly relevant as it houses the stupas of Ŏngi and Wanhŏ, two out of the three direct disciples of Hyujŏng whose stupa was erected at Pohyŏnsa.<sup>196</sup>

The list by Hŏ does not always distinguish between stele and stupas in a clear way and, most critically, does not offer positive identification for all the masters referenced. At times it leaves space for ambiguity due to the presence of homonymies among the lineage of Hyujŏng, which cannot be resolved beyond any reasonable doubt when only the taboo name (kor. *hwi*)<sup>197</sup> of one master is given without his dharma name (kor. *ho*).<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> The third direct disciple of Hyujŏng whose relics were enshrined in the area is Poŭng Haeil (1541–1609), one of his earliest followers (he began his Buddhist career under Yŏnggwang, before becoming a disciple of Hyujŏng).

<sup>197</sup> the name attributed to masters after their death.

<sup>198</sup> The name with which masters are commonly known during their lifetime.

The three tables that follow are an attempt to reconstruct the internal relations between the masters represented in the three stupa groups of Pohyōnsa, and were created by cross-checking the names in Hō's list and the dharma relationships given in the *Puljo Wōllyu*, with supplementary data derived by the identity of the authors of the steles, which Hō records in his list. While part of the identifications is tentative, through the reading of the stupas some clearly identifiable lineage groups emerge as dominant at the site. The image that emerges can be assumed to accurately reflect the living tradition at the monastery; it offers especially valuable clues on which sub-lineages of Hyujōng rose to prominence at the site after the master's disappearance, clues that text-based historiography cannot provide.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Despite the monuments are distributed in three different zones, I will treat them as a single entity, as at times it is not possible to ascertain if a given group houses both stele and stupa for any given monk, or the two are separated from each other. Moreover, I argue that the material linking of master and disciple through the contiguity of stupas was 'invented' sometime after the first stupas at Pohyōnsa were created, a fact that helps to understand why most of the stupas are concentrated in the western group although the stupas of both Wanhō and Ōngi stand in the southern group.

		Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng 2 清虛休靜 1520-1604		
	Pŏung Haeil 5 普應海日 1541-1609 aka Yŏnghŏdang 映虛堂	P'yŏnyang Ŏn'gi 37 鞭羊彦機 1581-1644		Wanhŏ Wŏnjun 36 玩虛圓俊 1530-1619
西 Western Group				
東 Eastern Group				
南 Southern Group				

Table 2. Direct disciples of Hyujŏng with stupa at Pohyŏnsa



		Samyŏng Yujŏng X 四溟 惟政 1544-1610			
		Songwŏl Ŭngsang X 松月應祥 1572-1654			
Ch'unp'a Ssangŏn X 春坡雙彦		Hŏbaek Myŏngjo 3 虛白明照 1593-1661			
		↓			
Hŏgok Nabaek X 虛谷懶白 1604-1681		Songp'a Ŭihŭm 30 松坡義欽			Ch'ŏngp'a Kak'ŭm X 清波覺欽
Unp'a Ch'ŏngan 19? 雲坡清眼 1651-1717		Sŏrwŏl Kyeship 11 雪月繼什			Kŭmha Ilshim X 金河一諶
Wŏlbong Ssangsik 18? 月峰雙式 1679-1746		Yŏngam Chiwŏn 4 靈崑智圓	Ohŏ Kyeŏn 38 悟虛繼彦		Songam Tuhŏn X 松崑斗憲
		Hyŏnbaek Sŏnŏn X 玄白善彦			Yŏnghŏ Yŏho X 影虛呂湖
		Ch'ŏngwŏl Kuksŏn 8 清月國禪			Hwanjŏk Chinmuk X 幻寂眞默
					Ch'ŏngsong Sŭnghŏn 10?? 青松勝憲
西 Western Group					Namp'a Yukt'an 21 南波陸坦 ?-1781
東 Eastern Group					
南 Southern Group					

Table 3 Masters in Yujŏng's line with stupa at Pohyŏnsa



The first element to be emphasized (Table 2) is that the relics of only three of the direct disciples of Hyujŏng were enshrined at Pohyŏnsa, namely Wanhŏ Wŏnjun (1530–1619), Poŭng Haeil (1541–1609), and P'yŏnyang Ŏn'gi (1581–1644): as exclusion is as relevant as inclusion, the presence of these three monks and the exclusion of all the other celebrated disciples of Hyujŏng such as Taenŭng and, most conspicuously, Yujŏng, offers us some clues on who came to dominate the site in the first half of the seventeenth century after the patriarch's death.

Haeil passed away not much later after Hyujŏng, and the erection of his stele, in association with the fact that a collection of his writings<sup>200</sup> was published as early as 1635, suggests that he might have been among the most prominent masters in the first decade of the seventeenth century. However, the fact that not a single disciple of his is known probably indicates that his pupils were either unable or unwilling to capitalize on the lineage narrative developments that took place after Haeil's death.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> His writings are collected in the *Yŏnghŏjip* (H0151), which contains the first written account of mount Myohyang of the period.

<sup>201</sup> In fact, his biography included in the *Yŏnghŏjip*, the *Poŭngdang Yŏnghŏ Taesa haengjŏk* (H0151, p.44c19) doesn't contain any reference to lineage narratives of the type discussed in chapter 1, and only includes the names of

Wŏnjun was one of Hyujŏng's closest disciples and is currently best known because he actively participated in the master's post mortem celebrations as one of the primary promoters for the erection of his stupa at Ansimsa.<sup>202</sup> He passed away in 1619, in a liminal period between the creation of the Naong lineage and the outlining of the T'aego lineage. Notably, his stele<sup>203</sup> was erected only in the eight month of 1632, 13 years after his death, and about five months after the stele for Hyujŏng that first put onto stone the T'aego lineage narrative, erected on Mount Kŭmgang by no other than Ŏngi himself. Wŏnjun's stele contains a reference to this narrative, but in an abridged form that cites directly only T'aego and Hyujŏng, while later on stressing how Hyujŏng passed to Wŏnjun his robe and bowl as a sign of recognition as his own successor. In all, it seems to me that his stele should be understood as a kind of response to the stele of Hyujŏng, one last belated attempt on behalf of Wŏnjun's descendants to take part in the lineage narrative trend that was starting to gain momentum as an active instrument of sectarian authority and regain religious power

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the masters with whom he had some kind of direct relationship.

<sup>202</sup> See Hyujŏng's stele at P'yohunsa.

<sup>203</sup> Chi Kwan 2000, 76.

within the Pohyōnsa community. Yet, no disciple names appear in the text, a fact revealing the overall weakness of his followers.

In 1645 the stupa and stele<sup>204</sup> of Ōngi were erected close to those of Wōnjun by a group of disciples led by P'ungdam Ŭisim. This on the one side served to mark equality in status between two masters, Ōngi and Wōnjun, who both claimed to be the direct, legitimate descendant of Hyujōng, and at the same time marked the first case in which the disciples of a master are directly named in a stele on Mount Myohyang, an element that creates a sense of spiritual continuity missing in Wōnjun's stele.<sup>205</sup> Indeed, no descendants of Wōnjun appear anywhere among the stupa groups at the monastery, and his line steadily declined after this period, leaving only a couple of names of direct followers in the *Puljo Wōllyu*. These monuments dedicated to Ōngi also denote the earliest instance of synchronic creation of stupa and stele, signaling the wealth of his line, that

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 192.

<sup>205</sup> Another stupa and an accompanying stele were erected also on mount Kūmgang, again by Ŭisim, and in this case the inscription goes so far to declare that Hyujōng and Ōngi passed away in the same hermitage, although this is not actually the case (Hyujōng passed away at the Wōnjōgam hermitage, Ōngi at the Naewōnam hermitage). The base for such a claim was the strong symbolic meanings that can be deduced by such an account. Ibid., 196.

by this time was able to manage logistically and economically such an elaborate and expensive endeavor.

The second element of relevance concerning the Pohyŏnsa stupas is that, based on those masters' names that allow for a positive identification and excluding the direct disciples of Hyujŏng mentioned above, only two main branch lineages of Hyujŏng's descendants are represented in the monastery, one notably more numerically relevant than the other. Ŏngi's descendants (table 4) account for over two thirds of all the positively identifiable steles and stupas. More specifically, it is the line passing from Ŏngi to Ŭisim the most represented, with at least four direct disciples of Ŭisim included in the group. Among these four disciples, the major line continues through Toan and from him on to Sŏram Ch'ubung (1651–1706). A total of three descendants of Ch'ubung had their relics enshrined in stupas in the western group. We can positively argue that, by this time, the erection of stupas at the site, now concentrated on the Ansimsa site, was explicitly driven by a principle of proximity symbolizing the transmission of the Dharma from master to disciple,<sup>206</sup> and that the leading

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<sup>206</sup> The same principle is found in an almost perfect form in the stupa group of Sunchŏn's Songgwangsa. On this subject, see Park Sang-Hyun 2011.

lineage of the monastery was, by the end of the seventeenth century, the one based on the transmission line Hyujŏng – Ŏngi – Ŭisim – Toan – Ch'ubung.

A secondary lineage deriving from Ŏngi and passing through his direct disciple Ch'ŏngŏm Sŏngmin (whose stupa/stele does not appear in the list in Hŏ's article) is also represented, if my identification is correct, by a total of five monks in four consecutive generations (right side of table 4) proving that Ŏngi-related groups not descending from Ŭisim were still active at the monastery, although their religious activities were probably less relevant and they possibly tended to transmit their dharma to a lesser number of disciples at a time. Another case that could possibly be included in the group of Ŏngi-related monks not descending from Ŭisim might be that of the monk named Ch'ŏngsim, whose stupa is in the southern group, if my identification of this master with the second-generation descendant of Ŏngi, Ch'ŏngsim K'waemin<sup>207</sup> (d.u.) is correct.

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<sup>207</sup> The only reference I have been able to find concerning this monk is in the *Puljo Wŏllyu* (H0218 v10, p.118a12–a13), where he is listed among the disciples of Hwanjŏk Ŭich'ŏn, one of the numerous followers of Ŏngi whose name can also be found in the stele erected for the master at Paekhwaam hermitage on mount Kŭmgang (Chi Kwan 2000, 197).

Although the dharma descendants of Ŏngi represent the core of the western group and, more in general, of all the stupas at Pohyŏnsa, it is fundamental to notice that another well identifiable lineage is represented in material form at the site, one that has its roots in Hŏbaek Myŏngjo (Table 3). According to his biographies,<sup>208</sup> he identified Yujŏng’s disciple Songwŏl Ŭngsang as his master and thus he is in principle a second-generation descendant of Yujŏng. The presence of this group of stupas (less than ten erected in the 120 years between Myŏngjo’s death and that of Namp’a Yukt’an in 1781) is somehow surprising, given the issues described in the first half of this chapter, and might lead one to doubt my reconstruction of the events. How could it be that a Dharma line descending by a member of the lineage of Ŏngi’s greatest “rival” in the struggle for leadership that followed Hyujŏng’s death is so remarkably represented in material form at Pohyŏnsa?

I suggest that, due to a number of reasons connected to his personal history, no one but Myŏngjo’s figure could allow Yujŏng’s lineage to maintain a representative, albeit limited in number, at Pohyŏnsa. First of

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<sup>208</sup> Chi Kwan 2000, 234–5 and H0169 p.380a10–a12.



all, although his biographies agree that his Dharma father was Ŭngsang, for whom he also wrote a memorial text included in his Collected writings,<sup>209</sup> his stele erected at Pohyŏnsa in 1662 makes it clear that he studied Sŏn under Ŭngsang, but that he also was a disciple of Wŏnjun in the doctrinal (Kor. *kyo*) tradition.<sup>210</sup> Thus, his descentance was not completely univocal, and besides Yujŏng, he could claim dharma descentance relationships with other less problematic masters whose stupa was erected in the monastery. It is in this sense worth to note that Ŭngsang's stupa is conspicuously absent at the monastery, unlike that of Wŏnjun.

Secondly, his complete lineage, as recorded in his stele at Pohyŏnsa and in the biography included in his Collected writings, faithfully adheres to the T'aego narrative championed by Ŭngi's line of succession. By this time either Myŏngjo (or his descendants) apparently accepted the

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<sup>209</sup> H0169, p.394a14. Notably, this short eulogy does not delve deep into issues of dharma transmission and legitimacy. The only place in the *Hŏbaekjip* where some reference to lineage narratives is in the account of Myongjŏ's life in the beginning of the collection, where in a passage the T'aego lineage is pointed out as the one to which Myŏngjo belongs to.

<sup>210</sup> Chi Kwan 2000, 234.

narrative as legitimate and decided to adopt it for themselves. Accepting this narrative meant the acceptance of Ŏngi's claims of leadership, and thus the inclusion of Myŏngjo and of a small number of his descendants can be interpreted as the outcome of a mediation through which, by accepting Ŏngi's primacy, the lineage of Myŏngjo was allowed to still dwell at Pohyŏnsa and being granted the honor of stone stupas and steles.

Finally, the role of Myŏngjo as the author/compiler of one of the manuals for monastic funerary rituals, the widely circulated and especially popular *Sŏngga yeŏimun* discussed in chapter one, must also be taken into consideration. Rather than delving into practical issues of Dharma transmission and leadership assessment, Myŏngjo focused on an important ritual dimension that provided further forms of practical religious legitimation for the protagonists of lineage narratives and their proponents, while at the same time avoiding to take part in the problematic process that led to their definition. In this sense, then, the acceptance of Myŏngjo and Myŏngjo's line of descendants in the community of Pohyŏnsa was probably due to a less marked sense of belonging to the lineage of Yujŏng and on his – or his descendants' – acceptance of the primacy of Ŏngi's line.

It is regrettable that no academic material nor well-organized photographic evidence of the Pohyōnsa monk stupas is currently available, as it would be interesting and extremely instructive to precisely locate these stupas within the larger context of the Ansimsa stupa group and to analyze the spatial relationship between this group, the one descending from Ŭisim and that deriving from Sōkmin. For the moment, what can be safely concluded is that, based on the preceding discussion, the production of stupas at Pohyōnsa can be divided in two major phases, roughly corresponding to the two phases of the development of lineage narratives (1. formative phase aimed at championing a specific party's claims of legitimacy and 2. wider implementation as an instrument of legitimation for multiple related branches). Accordingly, the earliest stupas (approximately until the completion of Ōngi's stupa in 1645) were built in various zones surrounding Pohyōnsa as single standing monuments, often accompanied by a stele with an inscription championing the primacy of the master whose relics are there enshrined, and functioned as active instruments of authority construction. Here, materiality had an active role in the creation of new paradigms. During the second phase, corresponding to a period that saw the definitive emergence of Ōngi's disciple P'ungdam

Ŭisim's sub-lineage as the dominant tradition within the monastery, construction of stupas concentrated mostly in the western group zone, and the interrelatedness of stupas – presence of several generations of a given line in sequence – likely became an essential factor for stupa creation and arrangement. Here materiality assumed a more descriptive role, reflecting rather than influencing interpersonal relationships within the monastery.

## **6. Conclusion**

By looking at the development of lineage narratives in the first half of the seventeenth century and through an exercise of cross-referencing of its textual forms with the materiality of Sŏn masters, I attempted to reconstruct the unspoken purposes of the main actors who contributed to the narrative's creation and circulation. Specifically, I argue that the Naong and T'aego lineage narratives were the result of a power struggle internal to the disciples of Hyujŏng, who passed away in 1604 with a large number of followers but without one well defined official successor at his base monastery, Pohyŏnsa.

Did this struggle have as its principal objective the religious control

of the whole country? Probably not, as it seems safe to assume that, at least in its earlier phases, the real issue at stake was more simply the control of the Myohyangsan area, and the final result of it was the emergence of Ŏngi's lineage as the principal tradition represented at Pohyŏnsa: this is clearly illustrated by the characteristics of the stupa groups created on the site. First materiality functioned as a catalyst and an instrument to resolve the issues the disciples of Hyujŏng needed to set, and later it became something more akin to a defining symbol, an instrument that meant the ability to remain in history or disappear into oblivion.

Yet the solutions adopted by Hyujŏng's disciples to determine the question proved so successful that in the course of time allowed them to dominate the whole country, and by doing so what was once a large but local tradition became the bearer of Korean Buddhism's authenticity and orthodoxy. At the same time, the national spread of the tradition and of the ideas that defined it transformed its nature in due time, and the same happened with the materiality of Sŏn masters that so much contributed to its development. In the following chapters I will illustrate some of the new and manifold uses of the materiality of Sŏn masters made possible by the

transformations in Buddhism and the historical circumstances in which it developed.

## PART TWO

# CHAPTER THREE – THE MONK STUPAS AT TAEDUNSA: THE NATIONAL EXPANSION OF HYUJŎNG’S LINEAGE NARRATIVE AND THE INFLUENCE OF MATERIALITY IN THE SELF CONSCIOUSNESS OF A MONASTERY’S COMMUNITY

## 1. Introduction

By the mid-seventeenth century, monk stupas began to be erected in great number all over the territory of Chosŏn,<sup>211</sup> and extant textual and material sources all suggest the growing interest of the Buddhist community for the materiality of Sŏn masters. This trend continued uninterrupted through the end of the late Chosŏn period, and represents one of the most conspicuous, albeit less studied, features of pre-modern Korean Buddhist materiality.

The previous part focused on the origins and early developments of the new Sŏn Buddhism that dominated the religious landscape of late

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<sup>211</sup> Although it is far from being a complete review of the subject, the selection of stupas included in Hong Sung-Ik 2012 offers a clear overview of the territorial expansion of the newly conceived monk stupas of late Chosŏn.



Chosŏn and on the creation of the master related material production that contributed to its rise to prominence. It discussed how, through a remarkably original adaptation of concepts already well developed in Chinese Chan Buddhism, a relatively small and homogeneous religious group created a new paradigm that in the course of time influenced the whole Buddhist community of Chosŏn. It also illustrated how materiality had a fundamental role in the creation and development of this paradigm.

To discuss the expansion of the materiality of Sŏn masters outside its place of origin during the late Chosŏn period, the three following chapters will focus on the events that took place at the Taedunsa monastery in Haenam-gun, in the southernmost part of Chŏlla province (fig. 27). This area is distant and completely unrelated to the one discussed in part one of this thesis, nonetheless its community actively adopted – and adapted – the master-related approach constructed by Hyujŏng followers at Pohyŏnsa. Implementing this approach led to the religious and cultural flourishing of the monastery, and conspicuously contributed to the site's rise to prominence as one of the leading institutions of the period on a national scale. The materiality of Sŏn masters had a fundamental role in Taedunsa's prosperity, and through the

following chapters I will look at some of the manifold forms through which the materiality of Sŏn masters contributed to the self-understanding of the monastery's community and to its establishment and expansion.

In the previous chapter I discussed the creation of a number of stupas and steles, mostly in the Mount Myohyang area, through which the lineage narrative centered around the figure of Hyujŏng and his disciple Ŏngi was materially expressed and spread among the community based in that area. Here I will discuss two different but intertwined issues: the first is the process through which materiality, especially in the form of monk stupa and relics, was instrumental in the transmission and diffusion of the lineage narrative centered on Hyujŏng in an entirely different region and environment. In Southern Chŏlla province, based on the existing sources, the religious influence of the master and of his disciples was nonexistent at least until his death but by the mid-seventeenth Hyujŏng's lineage was flourishing in the region: materiality had a major role in the process that allowed the lineage to extend its influence there. The second issue concerns the way monk stupas constructed at the site influenced the later understanding of Taedunsa's history, and the means these monuments actively contributed to the definition of a new type of lineage. This lineage,

as I will argue in the second half of the chapter, was based not on the previously discussed ideal of master–disciple direct dharma transmission, but on a new and conceptually different criterion deeply intertwined with the tangibility of monk stupas.

The discussion about materiality in the chapters on the developments in the Mount Myohyang region was mostly based on textual sources, due to the lack of available publications and to the geographical position of the area that makes any direct approach to its monuments extremely difficult. In contrast, in this chapter I will discuss works still standing and easily accessible, making more clearly appreciable, and approachable, the basic tenets of this thesis, i.e., the absolute relevance of material culture in the development of late Chosŏn Korean Buddhism. I will discuss the role of monk relics (including both bodily and contact relics) in the transmission of what was originally a relatively well localized tradition in a radically different region of the country, and how the new community that identified itself with the possession of these relics materially signaled its belonging to this tradition through a peculiar spatial organization of monk stupas.

## 2. The Stupa Group at Taedunsa

Most commonly, the concept of *sarīra* in art historical discourse in South Korea is associated with the study of relics of the historical Buddha Sakyamuni present in the country, and with the reliquaries unearthed from stupas dating to the Three Kingdoms and Unified Silla periods (and, on a lesser scale, to the Koryŏ era) (fig. 28). Reliquaries created to store the remains of monks have been excavated from several sites (fig. 29), yet these are generally treated as works of secondary relevance, and failed to become the subject of serious, methodic research on a large scale. Studies on the subject usually concentrate on the physical appearance of reliquaries and on the production materials, and aim to discuss them from a formalistic approach.

As already noted in the introduction, the lack of interest in the relics of monks is reflected by the relative lack of importance attributed by modern scholarship to the monuments built to store these relics. Monk stupas are approached as a subject of research mostly through formalistic analysis, with comparative discussions aimed at tracing the lines through which a given shape was preferred over another both chronologically and regionally. This approach, pioneered by Chŏng Yŏngho in the late

seventies before its full implementation starting from the 1980ies, still remains the primary approach to the study these monuments.<sup>212</sup>

In relation to their function, monk stupas are generally described as ‘funerary and commemorative monuments’ (Kor. *kinyŏmmul*) and are seldom if ever associated in their symbolism and religious meaning with stupas enshrining the relics of Sakyamuni. This represents a major misinterpretation of monk stupas, as it fails to connect the holy status of Buddhist masters with the erection of their stupas. The idea that Sŏn masters are not merely gifted scholars with a deep doctrinal understanding of Buddhism, but rather truly illuminated beings who, in their fundamental nature, do not diverge in principle from the historical Buddha entered the religious discourse of Korean Buddhism along with the introduction of Chan/Sŏn Buddhism in Korea, and was fully

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<sup>212</sup> Besides Chung Youngho, the scholar who most published about the subject is Eom Gipyŏ, who graduated under Chŏng himself and whose scholarship can essentially be seen as an extension of his teacher’s approach. While undoubtedly important in scope, the work of these two scholars presents great limits in the strongly formalistic approach adopted, and in the underlying idea that these works are devoid of much practical significance, being mere instruments of commemoration to be understood ‘as they are’, simply made out by pure religious heart and without possible alternative readings.

implemented in all his potentials during the historical period discussed by this thesis. Modern research on Korean monks and monk related materiality, however, failed to adequately reflect on the implication of this idea, a fact that especially influenced (negatively) the quality and the conclusions of research on monk stupas. Fundamental questions concerning the reasons for the erection of such monuments, the symbolism attached to the stupas and how this symbolism changed in the course of the centuries have been neglected or understated, transforming an essential part of the religious and material experience of Korean Buddhists into a secondary form of materiality.

In this respect, a radical innovation sets apart the production of monk stupas during the late Chosŏn period and that of earlier eras. Unlike in previous periods during which a monastery housed only a limited number of stupas, in most cases only one, the late Chosŏn period is notable for the radical innovation of the stupa group, a feature found in a great number of monasteries consisting in a sometimes remarkably large assemblage of monk stupas showing interrelatedness in various forms (figs. 30, 31, 32). The swift development and diffusion of these groups, I argue, is best understood in association with the development and diffusion of Dharma

lineage narratives, and thus it is a phenomenon that could simply not happen before the seventeenth century.<sup>213</sup>

Taehŭngsa is a monastery on Mount Duryun in the Haenam county in Southern Chŏlla Province. While its current name is Taehŭngsa, the site was historically known with the name of Taedunsa, which is also the term most commonly used in historical sources, and it is therefore with its original name that I will identify the site in the following chapters.

Among the numerous monuments found at the monastery, the attention of the visitor who approaches its precincts first goes to an extremely large monk stupa group found on the way towards its entrance (figs. 33, 34, 35). The group currently includes 57 stupas and 17 steles, dating between the seventeenth and the early twentieth century, testifying

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<sup>213</sup> While a number of theories have been brought forth concerning the origin of these groups, the most relevant being the one that sees in the three stupas of Zhikong, Naong, and Muhak at Hoeamsa the oldest extant example, the truth is that no verifiable stupa group with explicitly ‘communal’ characteristics, i.e., stupas willfully erected in succession at a given site with the purpose of connect them in some sort of way, can be dated to periods earlier than the seventeenth century. On the subject see, for instance, Eom Gipyo 2004 and Hong Sung-Ik 2012.

a continuous, rich material tradition related to monk relics.<sup>214</sup> The size of the group is notable in itself, but more important is the fact that in the vast majority of cases the name of the titular monk is inscribed on the stupa body (kr. *t'apsin*, the stone forming the main section of the stupa) (fig. 36). This is extremely helpful in defining the relative dates of construction of the single stupas, and also in reconstructing the progressive stages through which the group got its present form. Part of the monks named on the Taedunsa stupas are not known through other sources and their deeds are lost in time. For others, a great amount of information is fortunately available. For these masters, this stupa group offers a great opportunity to better understand how the links between each other were understood and visualized by their contemporaries, especially in a purely Buddhist environment.

This stupa group has already been the subject of formalistic

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<sup>214</sup> Not only this stupa group is notable for its size, being the largest one in the whole Chölla-do region, but also for its interrelatedness with another large group of stupas found at the near site of Mihwangsa, which, however, unlike the Taedunsa site lost its original structure due to external (natural) factors.



scrutiny,<sup>215</sup> and I will thus not delve in depth into such an analysis. Previous studies focused on the most commonly recurring shapes of the stupas at the site, on taxonomical issues and on attempting the reconstruction of the chronological frame of the stupas' forms. By contrast, the overall layout of the stupa group did not receive the required attention, and the same holds true for the deeper meanings that can be deducted by it. There are good reasons for approaching this stupa group with a more nuanced approach.

The group stands on a slightly tilted north to south position on the way towards the entrance of the monastery, and is delimited by a low wall with a single, door-shaped entrance at its center (fig. 37). To the general onlooker, the positioning of the stupas in the group, which I suggest can be better understood as divided in three rows, appears rather haphazard. The oldest stupa at the site, and the most relevant in this discussion, is the one dedicated to Hyujŏng, standing at the center of the first row, the one farthest from the entrance, easily identifiable as it is positioned

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<sup>215</sup> See Choi Tae Sean 2001 and Yi Changan 1985 (who mostly deals with the characteristics of the central stupa of the group).

slightly backwards when compared to the other stupas of the same row (fig. 38). While *Han'guk sach'al ŭi Munhwajae – Chŏllanam-do* III<sup>216</sup> dates the stupa along with the accompanying stele, which was erected in 1647, the contents of the stele itself suggest that the stupa was erected earlier, in 1632, a date that, when compared with the developments described in the previous chapter seem to present no major issues.

In a context as that of Late Chosŏn Monk stupa research, in which the common trope is that the forms presented by the monuments are generally simplified, inelegant and somewhat clumsily made when compared with works of the previous eras, this particular stupa attracted the interest of the scholars because of its peculiar decorations. Taxonomically Hyujŏng's stupa is categorized as octagonally shaped, given the form of its main body *t'apsin*. While the stupa's body is simple and undecorated save for a simple inscription stating the dedicatory subject's name (Ch'ŏnghŏdang), the work is remarkable for its peculiar non-patterned decorative details representing several animals uncommon in Buddhist monuments, such as turtles, shells, crabs, and squirrels,

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<sup>216</sup> 396.

present on both the base and the upper section (fig. 39). The finial of the stupa itself is lavishly decorated with floral elements combined with dragon heads, a peculiar characteristic not found in any other stupa belonging to the Taedunsa group (fig. 40).

While there is no conclusive proof concerning the reasons for the inclusion of such rich decorative details,<sup>217</sup> and while I usually tend to downplay the emphasis on the formal characteristics of Chosŏn period monk stupas in the assessment of their relevance, in the sense that in most cases there is no reason to believe that there were neither explicit nor implicit purposes behind the choice of a specific form for the stupa,<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> For a discussion of the subject see Yi Chaghan 1985, 23, who interprets these decorations as the direct reflection of regional sculptural and cultural elements.

<sup>218</sup> We do not possess information on the exact process through which stupas were commissioned and created. If earlier examples such as the Hyujŏng stupa here discussed or some of the older works referenced in the previous chapter were probably built on commission with some active input by the direct disciples of the master, the proliferation of monk stupas from the latter seventeenth century forward suggests the possibility that local workshops might have specialized in the mass production of the monuments and that, rather than proceeding to request the creation of a new piece when required, the disciples of a deceased master might simply purchase an already available piece among those affordable based on their financial means.

it is hard not to notice the divergence of treatment between Hyujöng's stupa and that of all the other masters' stupas at Taedunsa, and thus to infer that there must be some specific reason for it. This reason might be the willful avoidance of similar decorative subjects in the stupas erected after this one, with the specific purpose of visually emphasizing Hyujöng's position as Patriarch and source of origin for the lineage of the community that came to control the monastery. In this sense, in contrast with previous studies on the group, rather than on the presence of decorations on Hyujöng's stupa, the emphasis might be turned to the absence of explicit decorative elements on the other works at Taedunsa.

All major forms of monk stupa prevalent in the Late Chosŏn period are represented in the Taedunsa stupa group. To offer a brief overlook, the Yöng'u, Hoejöng and the Ch'öngu stupas (figs. 41, 42, 43) are examples of the spherical stupas with octagonal base (Kor. *p'algagwönhyöngsik*); the Ŭisun, Chinbong and Yunu stupas (figs. 44, 45, 46) are examples of the spherical body stupas (Kor. *wönhyöngsik*); the Ŭisim, Myöngjo and the Paekhwa stupas (figs. 47, 48, 49) are examples of the Stone bell stupas (Kor. *sökchongsik*); the Hyönhae and Kuam stupas (figs. 50, 51) are examples of the square body stupas (Kor. *sagaksik*). The stupas thus

offer an overview of all the major forms popular during Late Chosŏn and were created over a long period of time, between the mid-seventeenth and the late nineteenth centuries. Yet, two elements of continuity in the totality of the stupas can be identified, the first being the lack of remarkable decoration, and the second the constant presence of the inscribed name of the dedicatory subject.<sup>219</sup> This suggests that, despite the changing approach to the theme of lineage in the course of time and the transformations that inevitably affected the Buddhist community's self-awareness and self-construction, the strong symbolic meaning attached to the enshrinement of a master's relics in this stupa group remained intact until the beginning of the modern era, and that there was an enduring understanding that including the master's name on his stupa was a necessary requirement.

The fact that all the stupas include the name of the monk to whom they were dedicated has deep implications in reference to the way we can approach this group of monuments. Although some of the masters are now

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<sup>219</sup> Only for two bell shaped stupas (nr.246 and 255) the name cannot be currently verified, probably because it wore off in the course of time.

only known by name through these stupas, for those whose biographies are at least partially known through other sources, it is possible not only to infer the chronological framework of their stupas' construction, but it is also and foremost possible to identify some principles, not immediately evident, that have guided the earliest phase of the group's development and which later influenced the overall understanding of the monastery's monastic history in the eyes of its community (I will discuss this point in section 3 of this chapter).

In order to understand these dynamics, it is first of all necessary to look at Taedunsa's history, to its association with master Hyujŏng and to the peculiar traits developed by the monastery's community in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth century.

### **3. The History of Taedunsa and its Association with Hyujŏng**

A stone stupa datable to the late Unified Silla period standing on the grounds of the monastery (fig. 52), and a Buddha in high relief (Kor. *maebul*) in the surroundings of the monastery (fig. 53), all datable to the Koryŏ period, suggest that the site hosted a moderately relevant Buddhist site since early times; besides these few stone remains, however, the

history of Taedunsa is almost completely undocumented for what concerns the period preceding the events of the Late Chosŏn period.

Most of the textual sources dealing with the foundation of Taedunsa and its history were composed during the latter half of the Chosŏn period, after the monastery gained prominence in the form through which is still known to the present day. Among these sources, the most relevant were two books now unfortunately lost, the *Maniram kogi* and the *Chungmigi*<sup>220</sup> written by Chunggwon Haeon (1567–?).<sup>221</sup> Fortunately, both texts were copiously quoted in later sources, especially in one of the most notable monastic gazetteers of the Chosŏn period, the *Taedunsaji*, published in 1823, and we can thus get a sufficiently complete idea of the contents. These sources disagree concerning the origins of the Monastery, as well

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<sup>220</sup> Oh Kyeong–hwo 2002, 25.

<sup>221</sup> The *Puljo wŏllyu* lists him among the main disciples of Hyujŏng, and his name appears also in the back side of the 1632 stele for Hyujŏng at Pyohunsa, however the same monk is also described as a disciple of Hyujŏng’s major dharma descendant T’aenŭng in the stele inscription of the *Soyodang T’aenŭng Pŏpsa Pimyŏng* included in the 7<sup>th</sup> prose volume of the *Tongjujip* by Yi Min’gu (1569–1670), thus suggesting the already seen pattern of a follower who, after the death of the master, begins to follow an already officially sanctioned Dharma disciple of the deceased master to obtain himself the *inga*.

as for its subsequent history. The *Maniram kogi*, in a fashion quite common for texts dealing with Korean Buddhist sites with unclear historical clues concerning their origins, dated the foundation of a Buddhist institution in the area to the Three Kingdoms period. It suggested that the current monastery originated from a small hermitage called Maniram founded in 426 by a monk named Chŏnkwan (d.u.) later restored and expanded in 508 by another unnamed monk.<sup>222</sup> The same text, however, also offered a different foundation narrative, as it stated that Taedunsa was one among the over 500 monasteries founded by the famed Silla monk Tosŏn (827–898) after his return to Korea from his voyage to Tang China.

The *Chungmigi*<sup>223</sup> attributed the foundation of the monastery to the monk Ado who, despite the total absence of historical proofs about his existence, is known in Korean Buddhist history as the cleric who first brought Buddhism to the Silla Kingdom.

The *Taedunsaji*, a text noted for reflecting the rationalizing approach promoted by the Silhak movement that was flourishing at the time of its

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<sup>222</sup> Han'guk pulgyo yŏn'guwŏn 1977, 18.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 19.



compilation as well as what Jiang Wu calls Confucian evidential scholarship,<sup>224</sup> criticizes and deconstructs the narratives offered by the two above mentioned writings. It explicitly suggests that both accounts are made with the sole purpose of increasing the prestige and the historical pedigree of the monastery; its compilers do not offer any alternative foundation narrative, a fact that suggests that no other material concerning it was available to them, a likely result of the long-standing irrelevance of the site in the pre-mid Chosŏn period. Ironically, as I will argue in the two following chapters, the continuous efforts to connect Hyujŏng with Taedunsa that began in the first half of the seventeenth century and that inform much of the *Taedunsaji*'s composition were in fact another way – remarkably successful – to accrue the relevance and the prestige of the monastery.

The period and the circumstances of the monastery's foundation are not the only undocumented facts about Taedunsa. The same holds true also for what concerns the history of the site up to the sixteenth century. The earliest existing reliable source on the monastery is a short passage

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<sup>224</sup> Wu 2008, 194–195.

in the 1631 Royal Gazetteer *Sinǒng Tongguk Yŏji Sŏngnam* (fig. 54). In the 37<sup>th</sup> volume<sup>225</sup> it is stated that “Taedunsa is on Mount Turyun. In front of the monastery stand the stupas of three monks, Sinam Saŏn and Sŏngyu” .<sup>226</sup> Once again, the lack of textual and material sources accounts for the relative irrelevance of Taedunsa, which was probably just one of the many minor Buddhist sites spread all over the southern regions of the country at the time of the *Yŏji Sŏngnam*’s publication.

Beginning from the first half of the seventeenth century, however, a growth unparalleled in speed and scale characterizes the monastery, so that it steadily became not only the most prominent Buddhist center of the region, but also one of the most recognizable and well-known religious sites of the whole country. Between the late seventeenth and the late

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<sup>225</sup> Vol. 37, *Haenam-gun – Pul’u*.

<sup>226</sup> The identity of these monks is otherwise unknown, and I have been unable to find other references to the monuments cited in the gazetteer. Han’guk pulgyo yŏn’guwŏn 1977, 19, suggests that they were monks of the Koryŏ period, without any supporting evidence. Reference to a monk called Sŏngyu can be found in the *Sŏngjong Sillok*, (vol.22, 1472, 9<sup>th</sup> month 20<sup>th</sup> day), however the fact that the monk is condemned to death penalty suggests that it is probably a different individual. At any rate, in absence of further information, one cannot exclude that the three monks might well have been active in the early Chosŏn period.

nineteenth century, Taedunsa hosted a remarkable number of notable religious figures, the most prominent of which are nowadays known with the collective names of Twelve Patriarchs (Kor. *sibi chongsa*) and Twelve Lecturers (Kor. *sibi kangsa*). The latter group, in particular, consists mostly of visiting masters who were invited at Taedunsa for large lecture sessions, which attracted a large number of attendants, revealing the lively and intricate net that connected the large Buddhist sites of the day and the vivacity of the Buddhist world of the period.

How is this sudden development of a minor site to be understood? The key lays in the ability of the Taedunsa community to create a credible link between them and Hyujŏng. What is crucial is that such a link was created not much through intangible religious means, but rather through the manipulation of material culture.

The basic textual source linking Hyujŏng with the monastery is the inscription for the stele companion to the stupa (*Haenam Taehŭngsa Ch'ŏnghŏdang Hyujŏng Taesa Pimun*), composed by the Chosŏn literati Chang Yu (1587–1638) (fig. 55). Its contents concerning the biographical details of the master are not especially original and mostly include the (by the time) standardized lineage narrative version presenting T'aego as the

original patriarch of Korean Sŏn. One notable element, however, distinguishes this biographical account from the others discussed in the previous chapters. The opening lines of the inscription begin with a concise reference to the death of Hyujŏng on Mount Myohyang and to the erection of the steles on Mount Myohyang and Mount Kŭmgang 28 years after the master's death. Then, a discussion among his followers is reported, according to which they admit that, notwithstanding the fact that his remains are preserved in the two sites in the northern regions of the country, the true place where the master entered monkhood and where he spent a long period of his life was Taehŭngsa (the alternate name for Taedunsa), and thus trace about this fact must be left. To this purpose, the inscription goes on, the monk Haeon visited Chang Yu to commission the composition of this stele. At the very end of the stele, it is written that the text was composed in the year 1631, but that the stele itself was erected in 1647. No reason for such a delay is offered.

The claim that Hyujŏng spent an important part of his formative years at Taedunsa is an extraordinary statement: such a content cannot be found anywhere else in the master's biographies nor are references, even oblique, to it in Hyujŏng's writings or in those of his direct disciples.

Yet the stele creates a well-crafted narrative that includes a section where some of the master's principal disciples (in the stele the names of Pojin, Ŏn'gi, Haeon and Ssanghŭl are explicitly given) discuss the issue and admit the importance of the Monastery in Hyujŏng's life to further enhance the authoritative strength of the stele.

Regarding this part, however, Kim Yongtae<sup>227</sup> notes that the version of the inscription recorded in the *Kyegokchip*, the collected writings of Chang Yu,<sup>228</sup> presents a notable difference with the one inscribed in the stele: in the *Kyegokchip* version there are no references at all to the Haenam region and to Taedunsa/Taehŭngsa, and the monastery explicitly cited in relation to Hyujŏng's youth is Haeinsa – the same site, as we discussed in the previous chapter, where Yujŏng's relics and stele were erected a few decades earlier.

If the suggestion of Kim Yongtae is correct, the erection of the Hyujŏng stele at Taedunsa would represent an evident forgery, created with the explicit purpose of justifying the presence of Hyujŏng's relics (of

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<sup>227</sup> Kim Yongtae 2006b, 10.

<sup>228</sup> *Kyegokchip* vol. 13.

both types, bodily and contact). With the exclusion of writings composed in the context of Taedunsa, no extant textual source includes any proof whatsoever about Hyujŏng's stays at Taedunsa during his life. In fact, it is likely that he never even approached the Haenam region at all.

The fact that, to the purpose of recording the master's relation with the monastery, a large stone stele (to be coupled with the stupa that probably already existed at the site) was chosen instead of purely textual records is of foremost importance. It proves the relevance of material production in the identity construction in the late Chosŏn Buddhist community. It also offers some hints concerning the *samgha's* understanding of the nature of monk stupas, as it seems safe to conclude that the relevance and authority of such monuments was clearly enhanced by the juxtaposition of the stele.

In relation to the delay between the composition of the text and the creation of the stele, I want to point at the fact that when this was erected in 1647, both its original writer Chang Yu and most of the masters cited in it were already dead. Thus, none of them could refute or reject the problematic passages discussed above. Although there is no decisive proof, one cannot rule out the possibility that the Taedunsa community

waited until 1647 to erect the stele to avoid criticism for using a text that was not originally conceived for the monastery. A crucial problem to be solved is the route through which this inscription arrived in Taedunsa. I will briefly try to assess it in the third section of this chapter.

Creating a material link between Taedunsa and Hyujŏng was crucial to attract the interest of the local community, but on the long term this would have been insufficient to guarantee the reputation and high standing of the clerics residing at the monastery. To this end, demonstrating that several other important masters also dwelled at Taedunsa was essential. To this purpose, once again, the materiality of Sŏn masters was deployed.

#### 4. The Stupa Group at Taedunsa

The *Sŏsan togurok*, a catalogue of material objects connected to Hyujŏng and housed at the monastery, attributed to Chungwan Hae'an but verisimilarly of later composition, states that the first material link between Hyujŏng and Taedunsa is represented by the arrival, in the year 1607, of his robe and alms bowl (kor. *ũibal*) at the monastery.<sup>229</sup> Indeed,

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<sup>229</sup> See also Kim Yongtae 2006b, 5–7.

a large number of objects that purportedly belonged to the master were enshrined at the P'yoch'ungsa shrine at Taedunsa;<sup>230</sup> these objects, now stored in the recently renewed celebratory museum built in the precincts of the monastery represent some of its most precious treasures. They are presented as proof of the relationship of the master and the sacred site. Kim Yongtae in his paper gives central relevance to these objects in the process of creating a connection between place and person.

I suggest, however, that in this phase of Chosŏn Buddhist history, during which the lineage narrative associated with the Mount Myohyang began to spread around the country, it was not the contact relics of the master, but instead his physical relics that were required to religiously sanction the master–monastery connection in the eyes of the Buddhist community. In other words, to begin identify itself with the lineage of the master, for the early local community of Taedunsa it was necessary to build the stupa discussed in the previous section.

The concept of the Twelve Patriarchs can be better understood as the result of an ongoing effort to create a local pedigree for the monastery

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<sup>230</sup> The process of creation of the shrine will be discussed in chapter four.



and its community. Once again, materiality holds a fundamental role in this process, as I will try to prove through a reading of the spatial disposition of the stupas in the Taedunsa monk stupa group centered around Hyujöng's monument.

As noted earlier, in the Chan/Sön conception masters are not simply highly educated scholars of doctrinal Buddhism with an intellectual understanding of the religion and the philosophy at its roots. Rather, they are living Buddhas, in the most basic sense of enlightened beings. This is the reason why the biographies of Chan/Sön masters structurally follow those of the historical Buddha, and also the reason they become, after their death, subjects of rich ritual processes and the focus of material culture linked to such processes.

No matter how notable during his lifetime a master is, what truly counts to prove beyond doubt the master's status as a holy being is the presence of relics (kor. *sari*) after his body is cremated. The creation of the stupa to enshrine these relics has a double function: on one side, it functions as a protective tool: it is built in stone, a resistant and lasting material allowing for the relics to be in a safe place, unlike other material articles subject to consumption by exposition or, worse, destruction due

to events such as fires; on the other side, it is also a power enhancing tool, with symbolic visual features and a bulky, bodily physical prominence, that emphasizes the sanctity of the relics it enshrines and to offer an easily approachable place to appreciate and participate in the power of the relics. The place where the relics of a Buddha are is where the Buddha is<sup>231</sup>, and in the same sense the place where a Sŏn master's relics are is the place where the Sŏn master is, even after his death.

By this period, Hyujŏng was already recognized as an enlightened being, as it is proven by the subdivision of his relics between several monasteries; the relics' miraculous powers, best represented in textual sources by their ability to multiply,<sup>232</sup> were explicitly mentioned in the stele inscriptions quoted in the previous chapter, and the extensiveness of this understanding is proven by their enshrinement in stupas built in close proximity of many of the most important sites associated with his

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<sup>231</sup> Schopen 1997, 131–133.

<sup>232</sup> One must always keep in mind that by the Buddhists' point of view, it was not even necessary to explicitly state the power of these relics, as it was for them a matter of fact that did not require to be underlined.

religious life.<sup>233</sup>

In this sense, the allegation that Taedunsa was in possession of the relics of Hyujŏng had a double outcome: on one side it functioned as a way to demonstrate in a tangible way that the Monastery was linked to the master and therefore belonged to the orthodox lineage of Korean Buddhism; on the other side the relics also functioned as instruments to enhance the religious status of the monastery, as their powers, sanctioned and amplified by the building of the stupa, transformed the place in a religiously charged field. This all must have had a great role in attracting a growing number of Buddhist practitioners around Taedunsa, allowing for its religious (and economic) growth that resulted in its regional and national prominence and in the emergence of a local group of religiously relevant Sŏn masters.

In this respect, the concept of the Twelve patriarchs can be better understood as the result of an ongoing effort to create a local pedigree for

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<sup>233</sup> The division of the relics between different sites, relatively rare in previous eras of Korean history, becomes extremely common in this period. It represents another parallel between the biography of the Buddha and that of Sŏn masters. For details on the theme, see Eom Gipyŏ 2006.

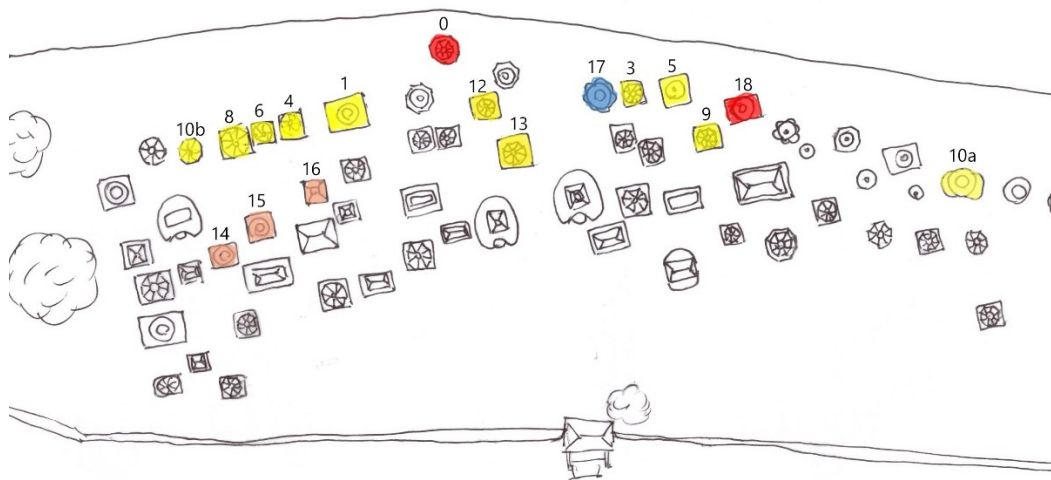
the monastery and its community. In the first book of the *Taedunsaji* they are presented as masters that, succeeding each other as central teaching figures at the monastery, were able to catalyze around them the best of the Eight regions (kor. *p'aldo*) of the Peninsula, representing the “flower” of Korean Buddhism as a whole. At the same time, at least in their definitive configuration, the Twelve Patriarchs also represent the outcome of the influence of materiality over religious thinking. Once again, materiality holds a fundamental role in the process that led to the definition of these twelve figures. A reading of the spatial disposition of the stupas in the Taedunsa monk stupa group centered around Hyujŏng’s monument will make this point clear.

The expression Twelve Patriarchs first appears in book one of the *Taedunsaji* and refers to a set of masters who, for the most part, dwelled at Taedunsa and closely associated with its community and its development during the late Chosŏn period. According to the *Taedunsaji*, which emphatically describes them as great masters able to bring to Taedunsa worthy monks from entire country, the Twelve Patriarchs are as follows:

	Name and dates	Stupa Number	Fig.
1	P'ungdam Ŭisim 1592–1665	1	47
2	Ch'wiyŏ Samu 1622–1684	n.a.	
3	Wŏljŏ Toan 1638–1715	3	56
4	Hwaak Munsin 1629–1707	4	57
5	Sŏram Ch'ubung 1651–1706	5	58
6	Hwansŏng Chian 1664–1729	6	59
7	Pyŏkha Taeu 1676–1763	n.a.	
8	Sŏlbong Hoejŏng 1677– 1738	8	42
9	Sangwŏl Saebong 1687– 1767	9	60
10	Hoam Ch'ejŏng 1687–1748	10a (10b)	61, 62
11	Hamwŏl Haewŏn 1691–1770	n.a.	
12	Yŏndam Yuil 1720–1799	12	63

**Table 5 The Twelve Patriarchs of Taedunsa**

Crucially, most of these masters' relics were enshrined in the stupa group at Taedunsa (the “stupa number” in table 5 corresponds to those included in the stupa group's planimetric table below, based on that originally included in *Munhwajaech'ŏng*, Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong munhwa yusan palgul chosadan, 2006a, vol. I, 137).



**Table 6 Main stupas at Taedunsa**

As to the group itself, the great number of monuments comprised (including both stupas and steles) gives the first-time onlooker a sense of haphazardness, as if the stupas are scattered here and there and built without a specific spatial plan in mind (fig. 35). I want to suggest, however, that the stupas of these Patriarchs, along with that of Hyujōng, represent the fundamental core of the group, that these stupas were erected with a specific order in mind that we can reconstruct, and that this order was intentionally deployed with the purpose of making explicit the relationship between their dedicatory individuals and the figure of Hyujōng.

Hyujŏng's stupa, as I discussed before, represents the heart of the stupa group, and aptly stands at the center of it, in its upper row (nr. 0). When looking at the placement of the extant stupas for the Twelve patriarchs, we see that they are positioned in a well-defined order, reminiscent of the relative position in which monk portraits are usually displayed in portrait halls.<sup>234</sup> In Chan portrait halls, the central position was granted either to a traditional figure such as Sakyamuni or Bodhidharma, or to the most relevant and chronologically earliest master associated with the monastery. The other portraits are arranged around the central one, with subsequent generations divided between the odd numbered and the even numbered aligned at the two sides of the center, with the older generations closer and the later ones progressively farther from it. Thus, for instance, the first-generation disciple of a given central master will be on its right side, the second-generation disciple on the left, the third on the right, and so on.

Table 6 above shows the relative position of the stupas belonging to

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<sup>234</sup> For a detailed analysis of the structure of Portrait halls in Song China, see Foulk and Sharf 2003 (1993).

Hyujŏng, to the Twelve patriarchs, and to Ch'oŭi Ŭisun, the most celebrated master of nineteenth century Taedunsa (and, above all, the dharma descendant of the 12<sup>th</sup> patriarch Yŏndam Yuil). What we notice is first of all that the Twelve patriarch stupas, except that of Yuil, are all lined in the upper row, all in the same line, and that they appear to be placed in the chronologically descending right–left placement of portrait halls.

The stupa of Ŭisim (1), who was one of the main disciples of Hyujŏng on Mount Myohyang, stands on the left of the Hyujŏng stupa, that of Ŭisim descendant Toan (3) on its right, that of Munsin (4) on the left of Ŭisim's stupa, that of Ch'ubung (5) on the right of Toan's stupa, that of Chian (6) at the left of Munsin's one. Hoejŏng's stupa (8) seems to be partially breaking the established rule, but it cannot be ruled out the possibility that the stupa for the seventh patriarch, Taeu, might originally have existed next to Ch'ubung's one, to disappear at a later date. Indeed, the rule seems to return with the stupa of Saebong (9), next to that of Ch'ubung although slightly farther from it when compared with the spacing between the other stupas.

Concerning Hoam Ch'ejŏng's stupa, the compilers of the *Han'guk*



*sach'alŭi Munhwajae*<sup>235</sup> identify it with the one numbered 10a in the above scheme (fig. 61). However, it should be noted that there are two stupas inscribed with the Hoam name, suggesting that two different masters may have shared the same name, most likely in different periods. Crucially, the 'second' Hoam stupa (nr. 10b, fig. 62) stands right on the left side of Hoejŏng's stupa, suggesting that this, rather than the other one, should be the one with enshrined the relics of Ch'ejŏng. Such an identification is further supported by the fact that the stupas of three of the Twelve Lecturers, Manhwa Wŏn'o, Yŏnhae Kwangyŏl and Yŏnggok Yŏng'u all stand one close to each other close to stupa nr. 10a (respectively, nrs. 14, 15, 16, figs. 64, 65, 66). This is particularly relevant, because these three lecturers were all first-generation dharma descendants of Ch'ejŏng.

Stupa nr. 17 (fig. 48), standing at the left of Toan's stupa in a position specular to that of Ŭisim's one, might have been part of the original structure of the stupa group although by the time of the *Taedunsaji*'s compilation lost, for reasons not completely clear, relevance. This work

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<sup>235</sup> *Munhwajaech'ŏng*, Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong munhwa yusan palgul chosadan 2003, charyochip, 391.

enshrines the relics of Hōbaek Myōngjo, the author of one of the ritual manuals discussed in the first chapter and, as seen in chapter two, one of the most relevant third-generation disciples of Hyujōng. Although in different areas, stupas for both Myōngjo and Ŭisim were erected also in the Mount Myohyang area. These two stupas, in connection with the fact that Myōngjo was the only dharma descendant of Yujōng who seems to have maintained some influence in the Pohyōnsa context, suggest a strict correlation between these two masters who, through the placement of their relics in the Taedunsa stupa group extended their spiritual influence in zones far from their original area of activity.

Myōngjo might even be the key to the ‘mystery’ of the Hyujōng stele inscription’s displacement. Its contents, in the original 1632 form included in Chang Yu’s collected writings, suggest that it was commissioned by Yujōng followers based in Haeinsa, and it can be surmised that it was circulated among Yujōng’s descendants in a period when they were still relevant and influent in Chosŏn’s Buddhist community. Could it be that followers of Yujōng based in Haeinsa planned to obtain some relics of Hyujōng and enshrine them in a monument to be built next to Yujōng’s stupa? If so, this could offer a key to understand the reasons

underlying the creation of an inscription that referenced both monks and stressed their master–disciple relationship (in the stele, the disciples with whom Hyujŏng spends his time before his death are Yujŏng and Ch'ŏyŏng). However, no monument for Hyujŏng ever materialized at Haeinsa, and fifteen years later the text was finally used in a totally different context. Apparently Myŏngjo was Yujŏng's closest heir to the Mount Myohyang community that by that time was dominated by Ŏngi's followers, so it cannot be ruled out that it was through this master that the inscription, after the modifications mentioned earlier, was finally transmitted and used at Taedunsa.

At any rate, it seems that at least until Ch'ejŏng's times, the founding principles of the stupa group were those discussed above. the masters whose relics were enshrined here were closely linked with Hyujŏng through a portrait–hall like disposition of their stupas, until the creation of the stupa for Yuil (nr. 12, fig. 63), when the original scheme was finally abandoned.

In the light of this discussion, in the Twelve Patriarchs list the role of the three masters whose stupa is not present is not immediately clear, but it seems in two cases to be justified by their relationship with masters

whose stupa is in the main row of the group: thus Ch'wiyŏ (patriarch nr.2), who is said to be a direct disciple of Soyo Taenŭng (another of the leading Dharma heirs of Hyujŏng) likely appears because of his role of Dharma master of Hwansŏng (nr. 6). This creates a direct link with the Chosŏn patriarch, and at the same time justifies the presence of Hwansŏng's stupa in its position of high relevance.

Less clear is the role of Pyŏkha's (patriarch nr.7) appearance in the list: his stupa and stele were erected at Mihwangsa, a major subsidiary monastery of Taedunsa, and thus his inclusion in the Twelve Patriarch list could be the result of interactions between the two monasteries that did not leave other recognizable traces.<sup>236</sup> In this context, it must be noted that he had direct ties with two masters belonging to the Twelve Patriarchs list, Hwaak (nr. 4) and Hwansŏng (nr. 6).<sup>237</sup>

Finally, the third master 'without a stupa', Hamwŏl (patriarch nr. 11), is remarkable because, while no stupa with his name engraved on it exists in the Taedunsa stupa group, his funerary stele, composed in 1773

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<sup>236</sup> For Pyŏkha's stele and stupa at Mihwangsa, see Mihwangsa 2001, 73–81.

<sup>237</sup> See his biography in vol. 1 of the *Taedunsaji*.

and erected in 1822, does (fig. 67). This represents an intriguing exception, given that in all the other cases, steles erected at the site invariably accompany, even if displaced, a stupa. When looking at the plan of the group, however, it's worth noting that next to Sangwöl's stupa stands an unnamed bell-shaped stupa (nr. 18, fig. 68). Given its position, I suggest that this might be the stupa of Hamwöl, a fact that could be further supported by the formal characteristic of the stupa, which appear to be consistent with other similar works created during the eighteenth century at the site, including that of Söram (nr. 5, fig. 58). If so, this would mean that the left-right disposition scheme of the patriarchs' stupas in fact lasted until the eleventh one, and the inclusion of Hamwöl in the Twelve patriarchs list would be completely justified.

Yöndam Yuil was the last of the so-called Twelve Patriarchs, and the Dharma master of Wanhö Yunu, main editor of the *Taedunsaji* and probably the 'creator' of the concept of the Twelve Patriarchs. His stupa was erected in the empty space in front of Hyujöng's stupa. From this time on the regular layout earlier established was abandoned and substituted by the simpler idea that the closer to Hyujöng, the better it is,

i.e., the concept of *burial ad sanctos* developed by Peter Brown<sup>238</sup> and applied to the Buddhist context by Gregory Schopen.<sup>239</sup>

It is important to note that these twelve masters do not represent a standard Dharma lineage, in the sense that they do not collectively share a single, direct master–disciple relationship, as a reading of their biographies, included in book one of the *Taedunsaji*, clearly demonstrate. Moreover, they do not seem to function as instruments of sectarian legitimation, as was the case of the masters of Pohyōnsa discussed in chapter two. The Mount Myohyan stupas reflect and reveal internal issues of monastic leadership; by contrast, those of Taedunsa show a more ecumenical approach, equally embracing masters belonging to different lineage pedigrees without apparent problems.

Indeed, they represent a unitary group only insofar as they are recognized as great lecturers of the Avatamsaka sutra, a fact that is at times only supported by short commentary notes that the compilers of the *Taedunsaji* attached at the main text of the single masters' biographies

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<sup>238</sup> Brown 1981, especially Chapter 1.

<sup>239</sup> Schopen 1997, 122.

(which are usually complete transcriptions of their funerary steles).<sup>240</sup> However, what really made the first eleven members part of this ‘honorary’ group is the position of absolute relevance of their stupas in the Taedunsa group, a position that clearly contributed to their identification as the leading monks of the monastery; as for Yōndam’s role, in line with the typical use of master related material culture already discussed earlier, it appears that his foremost function was that of substantiating the authority of his disciple Wanhō: in other words, Wanhō included his master in the list for his own profit. Indeed, I suggest that it was probably him who conceived the erection of Yōndam’s stupa right in front of Hyujōng’s one, in order to create a materially direct link between the two and highlight his preeminence in Taedunsa’s history.

## 5. Conclusion

In this chapter I tried to describe the manifold ways the transference (purported or authentic, it doesn’t really matter for its outcome) of

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<sup>240</sup> These notes usually state concisely that there are records proving the given master lectured at Taedunsa, although the fact is not referenced in the stele. See for instance the biography of Wōljō Toan.

Hyuŋjŏng's relics to Taedunsa was functional to the dissemination of his Dharma lineage's influence in territories originally not connected with it. I also described how these relics functioned as an instrument of legitimation and sanctification of a monastery that before that was of no major relevance. Relics and stupas were used to denote the orthodoxy of a series of monks who dwelled at the site and whose remains were enshrined there. In due time the existence of the stupas began to influence the self-consciousness of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century masters at Taedunsa: they were already chronologically far from the period that brought to the creation and spread of the lineage narrative, and interpreted the material remains they had in their monastery in a new form, that of the lecturing masters, more in line with the historical context of their time than with that of the seventeenth century, when the stupa group was first conceived. Materiality directly informed the understanding of the monastery's history.



## CHAPTER FOUR – P’YOCH’UNGSA SHRINE AT TAEDUNSA: THE ROLE OF MATERIALITY IN ITS CREATION AND ITS LEGACY IN THE LATTER HISTORY OF THE MONASTERY

### 1. Introduction

Among Korean Buddhist monasteries, Taehŭngsa/Taedunsa is highly remarkable for its tripartite planimetry (figs. 69, 70). The monastery is divided in three major areas<sup>241</sup> explicitly separated one from the other, all center on its own major building. According to historical sources, already since the early Chosŏn period Taedunsa was divided between the Northern precinct *Pukwon* centered around the Taeungjŏn and the Southern precinct *Namwon* centered around the Ch’ŏnbuljŏn. Besides these two sections, the monastery most crucially differs from most historical Buddhist sites in Korea for its third section, located in

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<sup>241</sup> A fourth area exists in the easternmost part of the monastery, about two hundred meters behind the Southern precincts. This area is centered around the *Taegwangmyŏngjŏn*, a hall constructed during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century by Ŭisun. Given its recent foundation and its relatively isolated position, it is not counted among the ‘historical’ three major areas of the monastery.

Taehŭngsa's southernmost end: here stands the P'yoch'ungsa<sup>242</sup> complex, a peculiar Confucian shrine-like structure including nine major edifices (seven halls and two gates) divided in three communicating walled sections (fig. 71). The innermost section (fig. 72), accessible through the Yejemun gate, houses the three most important structures of the complex: the P'yoch'ung pigak (fig. 73)– a roofed open structure housing two historical steles, respectively reporting the life of Hyujŏng<sup>243</sup> and the history of the shrine's foundation<sup>244</sup> –, the Chosajŏn (fig. 74)– a small-scale portrait hall housing the pictorial images of the major masters that dwelled at Taedunsa – and the eponymous P'yoch'ungsa shrine (fig. 75).

The portraits in the Chosajŏn are peculiar as, unlike most Chosŏn period monk portraits, masters are here depicted in group rather than individually (figs. 76, 77, 78).<sup>245</sup> Thus, in the three scrolls housed in the

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<sup>242</sup> Originally built in 1788, the buildings were briefly moved to another area in 1836, before being returned to the original location in 1860.

<sup>243</sup> *Sŏsan daesa p'yoch'ungsa kijŏkpi*, erected in 1791. See Chi Kwan 2000, 68–73.

<sup>244</sup> *P'yoch'ungsa kŏnsa sajŏkpi* 1792.

<sup>245</sup> The current portraits can be dated around the last decade of the nineteenth century. They at one time reflect the constant relevance of lineage related subjects in late Buddhist material production, and the continued

small hall, a total of sixteen monks (five in each of the portraits on the sides and six in the central work) are portrayed, including fifteen late Chosŏn era masters and, in the central position, the alleged founder of the monastery, the semi-legendary monk of the Three Kingdoms period, Ado.<sup>246</sup> This peculiar configuration (fig. 79) is likely connected, at least partially, with the size of the building, and in any case reflects late developments in Korean monk portraiture that still require to be fully explored.<sup>247</sup>

The proper P'yoch'ungsa shrine, despite its simple structure and decoration, is the central and fundamental structure in the complex (fig.

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significance of the sanctuary – and of Taedunsa as a whole – up until recent times. As usual, it is likely that the current portraits were made in substitution of essentially identical earlier works, damaged either by ritual use or by external causes.

<sup>246</sup> Other group paintings are housed in the Poryŏn'gak. It must be noted that this hall did not originally belong to the original scheme of the P'yoch'ungsa, as it was moved to its present location only recently.

<sup>247</sup> For a brief introduction to group portraits see Stiller 2008a, 189–191. Unfortunately, Stiller discusses these works through essentially aesthetic standards only, and dismisses them rather quickly due to their alleged low pictorial qualities, thus failing to address the unicity and the complex implications of their appearance during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

80). This modest size building contains the portraits of three Chosŏn era masters, Hyujŏng at the center (fig. 81) and his disciples Yujŏng on the left (fig. 82) and Noemuk Ch'ŏyŏng (d.u.)<sup>248</sup> on the right (fig. 83). The choice of these two monks is not casual: among the followers of Hyujŏng they were the two most active in the defense of the country during the Japanese invasions.<sup>249</sup> The current portraits, modern copies replacing the ones originally housed in the hall, do not show particularly innovative features and display the standard characteristics of Korean Buddhist portraiture identified by Chŏng Ut'aek.<sup>250</sup> What differentiates the layout of this hall from that of the typical Buddhist portrait hall is the presence of

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<sup>248</sup> Based on the multiple references to this monk in the 1632 stele for Hyujŏng, often in association with Yujŏng, one gets the idea that he was a rather relevant disciple of the master. The idea is corroborated by the hierarchically high position of his name in the stele, where he is named in the second position, right after Yujŏng (Chi Kwan 2000, 53), in the list of the master's disciples. For reasons unknown, however, his relevance waned early on, to the extent that he is not even mentioned in the *Puljo Wŏllyu* and not much information about his life is available in the whole Korean Buddhist canon.

<sup>249</sup> Along with Kihŏ Yŏnggyu (? –1592), who unlike the other two companions died in battle. Representations of Yŏnggyu in portraiture are indeed more common than those of Ch'ŏyŏng.

<sup>250</sup> Chung Woothak 2000, 220 on.

three expressly Confucian spirit tablets and other ritual paraphernalia set on the altar in front of the portraits (fig. 84). The internal structure of the shrine thus represents a combination of the elements of Confucian shrines and Buddhist portrait halls, revealing the peculiar nature of the P'yoch'ungsa.

The complex originally housed several other objects associated with Hyujŏng, now mostly stored in the recently built museum.<sup>251</sup> These include the monk's golden robe (Kor. *kŭmnan kasa* fig. 85) – one of the few existent in Korea –, three jade bowls, a bronze spoon (fig. 86), a large rosary (fig. 87), two pair of hemp shoes (fig. 88), several calligraphic manuscripts attributed to the master (fig. 89), Royal edicts (fig. 90), and a large selection of weapons allegedly used by Hyujŏng during the Japanese invasions – the presence of these weapons is especially telling about the opaque origin of P'yoch'ungsa's material heritage, as Hyujŏng did not participate in person to the military endeavors of the late sixteenth century monastic troops.

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<sup>251</sup> A first museum was built in 1978, while the current one was inaugurated in 2012.

The origins of this complex are multifaceted and intriguing, as equally intriguing are the implications of the shrine in connection with the later history of the monastery. While a number of important studies already explored the historical and ideological issues concerning the creation of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine at Taedunsa,<sup>252</sup> its materiality related aspects still need to be fully investigated. In this respect, several approaches are possible. In this chapter I will study the history of the complex and of its materiality by discussing issues of sponsorship – especially of sponsorship pursuit by the monastery's community, a subject rarely explored in Korean Buddhist art studies, but that can reveal a great deal about late Chosŏn Buddhists' mentality and approach to the materiality of Sŏn masters.

## **2. Issues of Sponsorship in Korean Buddhist Art**

The concept of Donor in the context of Buddhist art is a subject that in the last few decades allowed for new and stimulating readings of art

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<sup>252</sup> Kim Yongtae 2006b and 2007, Lee Cheol-Heon 2013 and 2016, Lee Jong-su 2018, Lee Wook 2019.

historical facts. Most studies dealing with it mainly focused on the nature of specific artworks sponsored by notable – and in most cases lay – donors, on the influence that the sponsor played on the artworks’ formal and iconographic contents, and on the motives and nature of the donors’ active sponsorship.

To illustrate another function assumed by the materiality of Sŏn masters, in this chapter I will try to approach the subject of sponsorship of Buddhist material culture from a different and less common point of view: rather than concentrating on the activities of the donors and the presence – or lack of – their active input in the creation of materiality, my focus will be on the pursuit of sponsorship by Buddhist communities, in particular on the seldom discussed activities undertaken by Buddhist monasteries to obtain external sponsorship and financial support.<sup>253</sup>

Wherever and whenever Buddhism flourished, external sponsorship had for Buddhist institutions great relevance from several points of view:

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<sup>253</sup> Collected writings by Sŏn masters of the Late Chosŏn include several examples of fundraising petitions, a subject that if adequately scrutinized could reveal important elements in the way Buddhism sustained itself during the last three centuries of the Chosŏn period.

there was of course the purely religious side, but equally relevant was the prestige gained by the monastery and its community through sponsorship by notable figures (nobles, high-ranking functionaries, literati, etc.). Even more significant was the financial side, as the input of liquidity generated by sponsors was what allowed the religious community to survive, and what influenced the capacity of development and expansion of the religious space and its material heritage – simply put, there was constant need for liquidity to feed monks, to erect or renew buildings and other religious structures, and to create the objects that filled monasteries either as decorations or as instruments for religious practice.

Sponsorship could be of various nature: besides cross-sponsorship between related Buddhist communities, one of the most basic forms of support derived from the relationship of the monastery and the local community, either in the form of long term semi-religious associations (kor. *kye*) or through specific fundraisings campaigns, often organized by relevant religious figures to finance specific projects such as the erection of a funerary stele or the reconstruction of a damaged building. These were not the only ways a Buddhist community financed itself, as monasteries also aimed at obtaining the favors of high-ranking public



figures and cultural personalities. Such personalities visited the monastic precincts<sup>254</sup> or engaged in epistolary exchanges with masters living at the site<sup>255</sup> and that could result in long term sponsorships. Obviously, however, the greatest form of sponsorship, not only economically, could derive by securing royal/state support, either by members of the ruling family (privately)<sup>256</sup> or by the state itself (publicly). Such sponsorship invariably manifested itself in material forms, a fact revealing how

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<sup>254</sup> Chosŏn era travelogues describing literati visiting monasteries around the Korean peninsula regularly present a well-spoken monk acting as a “touristic guide”, showing the visitor the monastery, its principal hermitages and other natural and cultural assets surrounding it while giving historical details on their construction and on the personalities linked with it. This could be interpreted as a way to obtain the favor of the visitor. In many cases visits by Confucian literati resulted in the creation of cultural tokens such as poetry or, even more notably, inscriptions to be displayed in specific buildings, and although for ‘moral’ reasons it is not normally recorded, it is likely that the visitor offered also conspicuous ‘donations’ for his stay.

<sup>255</sup> Much of the poetic sections in the Collected writings of Sŏn masters of the Chosŏn period were composed in the framework of textual exchanges with literati; in the same collections, we often find also complete letters sent to important lay figures of the time, a notable example being letters sent by Hyujŏng to Governor Ro of Wansan (see Jorgensen 2012, 322–237).

<sup>256</sup> Numerous monasteries referred to as *wŏnch'al* were associated for instance with the tombs of members of the royal family, while others included structures used for religious functions honoring its departed members.

important tangibility was not only for the Buddhist community, but also for sponsors, who undoubtedly required that their contribution could, at least in part, be made physically evident.

In the previous chapter, I already introduced Taedunsa monastery in Haenam-gun and discussed the direct role played by the materiality of Sŏn masters, especially in the form of relics and stupas, both as the catalyst for the sudden rise to national relevance of a previously minor religious site, and as an instrument through which the monastic community imagined and reinvented itself in ways that further allowed the monastery to prosper throughout the whole Chosŏn period.

I thus identified two intertwined coordinates that the religious community followed in the reinvention of the monastery and of its dwellers' identity: first, the alleged association between Taedunsa and the master that was universally perceived as the true patriarch of Chosŏn Buddhism, Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng, proved through the well-publicized possession of his bodily and contact relics and marked by the highly symbolical creation of a stupa and an accompanying stele in his name; and second, the establishment, in the monastery, of a rather innovative 'lineage' of masters based not on direct and uninterrupted master-disciple

relationship (as was the case of Pohyŏnsa discussed in Part 1) but rather on the spiritual and ‘physical’ proximity between the masters belonging to this lineage and Hyujŏng, a proximity marked by the construction of stupas centered around Hyujŏng’s one. Both coordinates, proving the power of materiality, are notable as they were developed as instruments through which monks communicated among themselves: the main audience for this material culture was, at least in its earlier phases, the monastic community.

This chapter, by contrast, will attempt to show how the materiality of Sŏn masters could also function outbound, that is, how the monastic community at Taedunsa employed forms of materiality associated with Hyujŏng to appeal to lay society and especially to the state. The selection of this master over any other was an obliged choice, so to speak, due to his outstanding biography, denoted since its early phases by continuous, relevant exchanges with officialdom and with the state.

### **3. Confucian Shrines in Late Chosŏn**

The association of Taedunsa and Hyujŏng did not only allow the monastery to increase its religious relevance: several extant

administrative records from the eighteenth and nineteenth century testify the impressive land possessions of the monastery,<sup>257</sup> in a period that is often described by traditional historiography as one during which Buddhist institutions strived to barely survive, strapped of all possessions by the confucianized state. These possessions naturally represented an instrument of material prosperity for the monastery, not only granting its community all it needed to subsist, but also allowing forms of proto-commerce that further increased Taedunsa's financial power.

Since the mid-eighteenth century, however, the Chosŏn state entered a period of prolonged economic stagnation,<sup>258</sup> which couldn't but affect also affluent institutions such as Taedunsa; the monastery, in order to ensure its own survival, had thus to look for new sources of income. Under severe economic circumstances, the best solution is always that of seeking the direct support of the state, and material and textual sources clearly suggest that Taedunsa indeed implemented the materiality of Sŏn

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<sup>257</sup> Several documents concerning the land possessions of the monastery and other economic and administrative materials are included in *Saji Charyochip* vol. 4. For a study on the administration of Taedunsa's estate, see Kim Kap-joo 1983, 237–266.

<sup>258</sup> Rhee 2014, 3–7.

masters in an attempt to gain the economic support of the government.

The direct endeavor to gain the material support of the state took tangible form in 1788, when two monks of Taedunsa, Kyehong<sup>259</sup> and Chungye Ch'ŏnmuk<sup>260</sup> presented to King Chǒngjo (r. 1776–1800) a petition requesting the authorization for the construction of a memorial hall (Kor. *sau*) to commemorate the figure of Hyujǒng and the bestowal of an official title plaque for the hall (Kor. *saaek*).<sup>261</sup> Memorial halls were originally structures built to house the funerary tablet or the portrait of one's ancestors or, in some cases, of the Sages of the past, and to enact at given intervals memorial rituals in their honor. In Chosŏn these buildings

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<sup>259</sup> The only significant reference to this monk is in the appendix of the *Yŏndamdaesa imharok* H0224 a collection of writings of Yŏndam Yuil, where he actively promotes the restoration of a memorial stele in the name of Hyujǒng at Taedunsa in 1777, a fact testifying the great attention he paid to Materiality. See H0224 v10, p.285a17.

<sup>260</sup> Not much is known about this monk: the only certain information on him is that he was among the teachers of Aam Hyejang (1772–1811), the monk whose work served as the basis for the compilation of the *Taedunsaji* (the information is included in the preface of Aam's collected writings, the *Aam Yujip* H0243). On the role of Aam in the composition of the *Taedunsaji*, see *Saji charyojip* 8, 10.

<sup>261</sup> *Taedunsaji* vol.2, folio 0011a.

were thus a common sight in Confucian contexts, and most of them were built in the precincts of local Confucian academies (kor. *sŏwon*) functioning as spaces of Confucian ritual practice.

The character of *sŏwon*, which began to emerge during the first half of the Chosŏn period, radically changed during the second half of the era. What began as a regional educational institution started, after the turn of the seventeenth century, to increasingly emphasize ritual and memorial functions. What happened is that these local institutions, based in all regions of the country, came to function as centers for the commemoration of loyal subjects (kor. *ch'ungsin*), model figures usually with Confucian background who devoted their life to the prosperity of the state.<sup>262</sup> As a direct consequence of this shift in its primary function, the physical center of the *sŏwon* became the memorial hall (called either *sau* or *sadang*). Moreover, the state started to actively recognize and sponsor *sowŏns* with especially remarkable memorial halls, an economic support materially epitomized by the bestowal of official title plaques (*saaek*). The custom or royal recognition of these private structures reached maturity

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<sup>262</sup> Lee Jong-su 2018, 204.

beginning with the reign of Hyŏnjong (r. 1659–1674); *sau*s became so relevant that in due time independent structures not grounded in the larger context of the *sŏwon* started to emerge: these structures maintained the same commemorative function, and the sponsorship relation they shared with the state was also not dissimilar.

Official recognition through the practice of *saaek* was not a purely honorific matter: *sŏwon* granted this honor gained great material benefits, including gifts of food, ritual objects and other resources required for the correct performance of Confucian Memorial rituals, but also the bestowal of lands and slaves,<sup>263</sup> and thus the number of institutions actively seeking to obtain the *saaek* steadily grew with the passing of time.

For the members of the *sadaebu*, the Confucian elite, however, the *saaek* did not exclusively have financial/economic significance. For such intellectuals, serving in ceremonies held at memorial halls officially recognized by the state implied, from the point of view of social standing, the recognition of one's elevated public status; from the Confucian intellectual's standpoint, being chosen to actively serve memorial rites in

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 207.

officially recognized halls implicitly signified the recognition of his superior knowledge and scholarship, because such rituals required profound understanding of Confucian literature, thought and culture.<sup>264</sup>

The *sau* was thus a profoundly Confucian ritual and memorial space, based on Confucian ritual culture that also dictated the (normally very limited) kind of objects housed in it, usually either a funerary tablet (kor. *wip'ae*) or the portrait of the subject or subjects<sup>265</sup> commemorated.

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<sup>264</sup> Lee Cheol-Heon 2016, 204.

<sup>265</sup> While early *saus* usually centered on a single figure, in later times progressively more Loyal subjects, generally related one to each other in some sort of way, appeared together in a single hall. Several halls, however, continuously centered on a single merit subject. This is in stark contrast with what we see at “Buddhist *saus*” : the Halls at Miryang P’yoch’ungsa, Taedunsa and Pohyŏnsa all share the same structure, invariably presenting *painted* triads of “loyal” Buddhist masters. This characteristic must have deep connections with two peculiarly Buddhist material forms, that of the Buddha triads commonly housed by monastery halls, and with the tradition of monk portraits housed in the monastery’s portrait halls. Such a reading is substantiated by some passages in the third book of *Taedunsaji* which somehow confusingly associate early portrait halls and the P’yoch’ungsa shrine discussed in this chapter. For information concerning triptychs of monk portraits, see Stiller 2008a, chapter 8.



#### 4. The Intermingling of Confucian and Buddhist Ideals at Taedunsa

Why did the monks of Taedunsa decide to erect a *sau*, so deeply imbued with Confucian culture and tradition, in a purely Buddhist environment? Despite the evident theoretical implications, both Neo-Confucianism and Sŏn Buddhism, clearly present characters of “cult” of the ancestor.<sup>266</sup> In Chan/Sŏn, this took the form of the veneration of the masters of the past linked with the actual, living community through the master-disciple based conception of Dharma transmission, already discussed in the previous chapters. This ideological frame allowed for the association and essential identification of historical masters and the Buddha Sakyamuni. Obviously, such identification had a fundamental spiritual side, represented by the transmission of the verbally unexplainable enlightenment highlighted by Transmission of the lamp literature. At the same time, we must note that the Buddha-master identification took remarkably material forms. After his ‘death’ the Buddha was cremated in a highly ritualized way that encompassed the use

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<sup>266</sup> It is not accidental that the origins of both thought schools are to be found in Song China, and I suggest that the common traits represent traces of the general Song worldview that the creators of Song Chan and Neo-Confucianism unconsciously shared.

of several ritual objects, and the same was prescribed for Sŏn masters,<sup>267</sup> and in both cases the cremation resulted in the appearance of relics imbued with supermundane powers; as the relics of the Buddha were enshrined in stupas, so it happened with Sŏn masters; as robes, alms bowls and other objects manipulated by the Buddha were believed to be infused with his power thus becoming what is referred to with the expression ‘contact relics’,<sup>268</sup> so it happened with objects belonging to Sŏn masters, that were collected by monasteries and regarded as the most precious belongings of the community, and that also became symbols of Dharma transmission.

The importance of Taedunsa’s ownership of Hyujŏng’s bodily relics has already been observed in the previous chapter, but it is necessary to note that many contact relics associated with him were also held at the monastery. The bodily relics were enshrined in the monument that became the central element of the stupa group discussed in chapter 3, while

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<sup>267</sup> The manuals for monastic funerary rituals, discussed in chapter one, clearly reveal the variety of objects required to properly carry out the funerals of Sŏn masters and their centrality in the process.

<sup>268</sup> Strong 2004, 8.

objects associated with him, such as his alms bowl, were originally enshrined in the monastery's main hall, the Taeungjŏn,<sup>269</sup> and his portrait was enshrined in the portrait hall<sup>270</sup> of the monastery.<sup>271</sup>

To put it plainly, the monastery already had sufficient buildings and structures with the purpose of commemorating and paying respect to Hyujŏng in a Buddhist framework. Thus, the surprising, radical choice of Kyehong and Ch'ŏnmuk to create a *sau* to celebrate Hyujŏng's figure and

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<sup>269</sup> *Saji charyojip* 4, 209 – 210. Notably, also a copy of the master's biography was listed among the objects enshrined in the Hall, a fact with some intriguing implications: was this text enshrined in the hall for its contents or for its material character.

<sup>270</sup> Concerning the portrait hall of the monastery, the *Taedunsaji* offers a somehow incoherent narrative. In the second book, a large portrait hall enshrining numerous portraits and centered around Hyujŏng is described in detail; in the opening part of the third book, however, a large citation of Hae'an's *Chungmigi* relates the early existence of at least three different portrait halls, one of these exclusively devoted to the portrait of Hyujŏng and allegedly built as early as 1608. Such an early erection date, along with the fact that no proof of the existence of these three halls can be found outside of this passage should warrant for caution in taking it as a fact, yet the compilers of the *Taedunsaji*, despite their usually highly critical stance towards their textual sources, accept what written here as an undeniable truth. I will explore this issue in the next chapter.

<sup>271</sup> More objects were also preserved at the monastery, as shown by the several lists cited by the compilers of the *Taedunsaji*.

to organize memorial rituals in his honor within the precincts of the monastery must be explained in another way. I suggest that the motivation must be found in the state's sponsorship that came with the *saaek* bestowal, and with the economic and social advantages deriving by such sponsorship, already enjoyed by *sŏwons*, as I described above.

### 5. The Foundation of Py'och'ungsa Shrine at Taedunsa

The Py'och'ungsa shrine at Taedunsa was not the first *sau* style memorial hall associated with a Buddhist institution. The first such instance, that in fact also functioned as a model and catalyst for the creation of the shrine at Taedunsa, was in fact the Py'och'ungsa (表忠祠) shrine at the semi homonymous Py'och'ungsa (表忠寺) monastery in Miryang, built in 1721 and officially recognized with the Royal bestowal of the title Plaque in 1738: this memorial hall (fig. 91) was devoted to the commemoration of, and hosted seasonal memorial rituals for Hyujŏng's celebrated descendant, Yujŏng.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> The circumstances surrounding the creation of this shrine are discussed by Lee Jong-su 2018, 208–213, and Jang Dong-Pyo 2000.

There is one substantial difference in nature between the shrine built at Miryang and the one at Taedunsa, despite the apparent similarities (quasi-confucian structure in a Buddhist environment based on the commemoration of a Sŏn master who actively participated in the defense of the country during the late sixteenth century Japanese invasions, triad of portraits enshrined).<sup>273</sup> This difference that must be recognized to fully grasp the essence and meaning of the two halls: while the construction of the Miryang shrine was initiated by some local Confucian literati and only at a later time picked up by monastics, the foundation of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine of Taedunsa was, from its inception, an endeavor completely managed by the religious community of the monastery.

While in Miryang's case it is not completely clear why a Buddhist figure was chosen to become the central figure to be commemorated at a *sau*, I suggest a rather elementary hypothesis: in a period, the first half of the eighteenth century, during which the construction of similar spaces

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<sup>273</sup> Just as the shrine at Taedunsa, the Miryang P'yoch'ungsa also enshrines the portraits of three masters. In this case, the central position is held by Yujŏng, flanked (in an exceptional reversal of relevance) by his master Hyujŏng and by his dharma-brother Yŏnggyu.

was a great trend, when the local literati of Miryang decided to erect a public shrine in their town, they must have realized that no other local figure could match the prestige of Yujŏng, due to his extremely relevant role in the defense of the state during the Japanese invasions and also in the normalization of the relations between Korea and Japan in the aftermath of the war.

The P'yochunsa shrine at Miryang was created by the local gentry, and only later entrusted for its everyday management to the monastic community that converged around it; moreover, it was not originally built with the direct purpose of obtaining the benefits deriving from official statal recognition, although such recognition happened in relatively short time (less than 20 years since the foundation) and thus fully enjoyed by the monastery that prospered around the shrine. On the contrary, the shrine at Taedunsa appears to have been conceived since the beginning with the purpose of receiving the *saaek* recognition and the state-sponsored benefits that derived by it.

One particular figure stands as a direct link between the two shrines,

Ŭngun Tŭngo.<sup>274</sup> This monk participated in several ceremonial rites at the Miryang shrine between 1748 and 1775; he later moved to Taedunsa, where he supervised the creation of the P'yoch'ungsa and in numerous occasions directly managed it as its director (Kor. *wŏnjang*).<sup>275</sup> It was likely through Tŭngo that the monks at Taedunsa first gained detailed, direct information concerning the shrine at Miryang, including elements concerning the benefits that came with the statal recognition of the shrine.

I argue that the purpose of the Taedunsa monks for the creation of the shrine and its official acknowledgement was not merely to honor the memory of Hyujŏng and celebrate his virtue as a loyal subject. This can be inferred by the petition that the monastery addressed in 1791<sup>276</sup> to the *Yejo*, the Ceremonial Board of the Chosŏn state, through which its promoters explicitly requested Taedunsa's shrine to be granted the same

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<sup>274</sup> The master is the original creator of the *Wŏnjang sŏnsaeng an*, a register of all the monks who were in charge of the Taedunsa P'yoch'ungsa since its inception. This short manuscript text was started in 1789 and continuously updated until 1865. See *Saji charyochip* 1, 129–148 for a reproduction of the text.

<sup>275</sup> Lee Cheol–Heon 2016, 206–207.

<sup>276</sup> See *Saji charyochip* 1, 279–281.

benefits bestowed to the Miryang shrine through the *saaek*, with specific reference to the exemption of military duties for the members of the community administered it, and exemptions from tax payment. Indeed, such benefits should already have been enacted since 1788, in the moment when the honorific title table was handed by the state to the monastery but this, for some undocumented reason, was not immediately and adequately implemented.<sup>277</sup> This document is extremely relevant, despite its short length, because it offers a glimpse in the actual way Taedunsa monks perceived the shrine they erected in the precincts of their monastery, something that is not found in official records on the P'yochungsa, such as its historical stele inscription.

The act of building a conceptually and functionally Confucian structure in the precincts of a Buddhist monastery was an exceptional fact, but this

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<sup>277</sup> It can be surmised that, although the exemption from military duties and from tax payment is included in the original royal decree that ordered the *saaek* bestowal, local functionaries failed, maybe willingly, to implement the order. Notably, while the Yejo acknowledged the monastery's right to the said benefits, it also denounced the petition as an act of impertinence towards the state even soliciting severe punishment for the monks who materially visited the capital for the petition (ibid.), a fact that sheds light to the negative view the ruling Confucian elite who held the political power at the time had concerning the official royal recognition of Buddhist institutions.



was exactly the point the Taedunsa monks who supervised the creation of the shrine emphasized in their efforts to obtain official recognition. It was exactly because of the Confucian character of the shrine that even the most anti-Buddhist bureaucrat could not argue against the validity of the economic benefits granted to Taedunsa by the king's will, and it is also because of it that the monastic community was able to apply for such benefits in the first place. The example of the Miryang shrine, which was originally developed in a fully Confucian context, offered further legitimacy to any claim by Taedunsa and at the same time made it almost impossible for the state to refuse its requests for official sponsorship.

Taedunsa needed to meet a number of requisites to be granted the authorization for the construction of the shrine and to request the official recognition through the bestowal of the title table. First and foremost, there was the need to transform Hyujŏng, the most notable *Buddhist* figure that appeared in Korea since the sixteenth century, into a loyal subject that could appeal to a Confucian perspective. To do so, the monks at Taedunsa refocused the contents of the master's biography, highlighting those elements of his life connected with the Japanese invasions and his contribution to the defeat of the invading forces.

A text extremely relevant in the process that led to the creation of the shrine, the *P'yoch'ungsa Pojangnok*,<sup>278</sup> was created in 1786<sup>279</sup> exactly for this purpose. Unlike earlier accounts of Hyujŏng's biographies, the *Pojangnok* elides most purely Buddhist/religious elements of the master's life and on the contrary concentrates only on his military activities. Moreover, despite by this time the relevance of Yujŏng's line of transmission had already faded in the general Buddhist context of the period (as it was discussed in the first part of this thesis), the *Pojangnok* explicitly highlights the master-disciple relationship of Hyujŏng and Yujŏng. This point derives by a very simple logical reasoning expressed

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<sup>278</sup> Kim Sang Young (ed.) 2014, 152–157.

<sup>279</sup> The translation included in *ibid.* incorrectly dates the text to 1846. The coda of the text, which fictionally dates the original redaction of the text in 1606 and attributes it to a team comprising the most relevant Sŏn masters of late Chosŏn, including Yujŏng, Hae'an, Myŏngjo (who in 1606 was 13 years old!), Ŏngi and Ssanghŭl, states that the current copy, brought to Taedunsa by Kyehŏng, one of the two monks who directly petitioned to the king, was written down on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the 4<sup>th</sup> *pyŏngo* sexagenary year following the Wanli era (萬曆後 四丙午二月初 九日). This corresponds to 1786 and not 1846, which is the 5<sup>th</sup> *pyŏnggho* year after the Wanli era. Thus, this text is extremely relevant as it was composed exactly at the time when Taedunsa monks were most active in the planning of the Shrine's creation. Kyehong must be probably regarded as the actual author of the *Pojangnok*.

by Taedunsa monks: the military activities coordinated by Hyujŏng made him a loyal subject who devoted himself to the benefit of the state and thus a figure worthy of becoming the subject of memorial rituals; for the exact same reasons Yujŏng, despite being only a disciple of Hyujŏng, is already recipient of (state sponsored) memorial rituals, thus Hyujŏng is equally – if not even more – worthy of becoming the recipient of rituals, and the creation of a shrine devoted to him is a rightly due undertaking. What we see here is the brilliant combination of two different sets of values, the Confucian (in the form of the loyal subject) and the Buddhist one (in the form of the master–disciple relationship).

After proving Taedunsa's right and need to create a *sau* in honor of Hyujŏng, the next task was to demonstrate that the right place to erect the master's shrine was Taedunsa, and not another site somewhere else in the peninsula. The strategy adopted by Taedunsa was one emphasizing master–related materiality as *the* instrument of validation, in the form of objects transmitted as belongings of Hyujŏng. Thus, the petition presented to the king by the Taedunsa monks Kyehong and Ch'ŏnmuk directly stated that the shrine must be built at Taedunsa *because* the robe of the master has been transmitted to the monastery. Notably the Office of Rituals

seems to have accepted as perfectly logic and legitimate this point, that was championed by the two monks through the *Pojangnok* itself, which in turn was accepted by the Office of Rituals as a perfectly acceptable text with Yujŏng as its main compiler.<sup>280</sup> Indeed, to this purpose in the *Pojangnok* an episode not seen anywhere else in Hyujŏng's biographies was inserted in a very relevant position. As the *Pojangnok* reports, right before his final moments the master gathered his disciples and gave explicit orders to send to Taehŭngsa (i.e., Taedunsa) his robe and the Royal edict (kor. *kyoji*) through which King Sŏnjo granted Hyujŏng's official denomination, Great Master of Universal Salvation, Conjointly of the Highest Rank Who Supports the Lineage (of Sŏn) and Establishes the Doctrine, Royally Granted the Purple Robe, General Supervisor of Sŏn and Doctrine, Sole Supervising Great Sŏn Master of State.<sup>281</sup>

Monks at Taedunsa were probably well aware that Pohyŏnsa would have been better suited to host a structure in honor of Hyujŏng, as from the strictly historical and religious point of view the monastery on Mount

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<sup>280</sup> *Saji Charyojip* 1, 524–525.

<sup>281</sup> *Kugilto taesŏnsa sŏn'gyo toch'ongsŏm sajabu chongsu kyogyŏm Tŭnggye Poje*. Translation taken from Jorgensen 2012, 35.

Myohyang had stronger and better documented ties with the master, unlike the Haenam region. Thus, by necessity, they had to highlight the *material* connection with the master to justify their claims, something that was possible only because of the high value attributed to what, from a purely Buddhist standpoint, were contact relics. At the same time, the *P'yoch'ung sŏllip yugongnok*,<sup>282</sup> seems to suggest that the Taedunsa monks took all the possible precautions to avoid that their plan could be appropriated by the Pohyŏnsa community: this writing is a lengthy list of donations collected in 1789 by Taedunsa monks for funding the construction of the shrine. While conspicuous donations were collected even in the most remote regions in the north of the peninsula, donations from the Py'ŏngando region are few and all unrelated to the Mount Myohyang area, as if the fundraising campaign of Taedunsa willfully avoided those communities that could claim the right to host Hyujŏng's shrine and receive the benefits Taedunsa was seeking.

At any rate, the fact that the monks at Taedunsa, in order to reach

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<sup>282</sup> *Saji Charyojip* 1, 89–128 and 513–515.

their goals, even fabricated<sup>283</sup> a whole text that stresses the value of the master-related material possessions of the monastery clearly testifies the power of such materiality for Late Chosŏn Buddhists – and seemingly for non-Buddhists as well, as the claim was accepted and resulted in the steady authorization for the Shrine construction and for its recognition by the state.<sup>284</sup>

## 6. Later Issues of Materiality connected to the Taedunsa Py'och'ungsa

The efforts of the Taedunsa community to gain economic and financial benefits through the creation of the P'yoch'ungsa were well repaid. Among

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<sup>283</sup> Ironically, the compilers of the *Taedunsaji* spend a great amount of space to deconstruct the *Pojangnok*, strongly arguing against its validity as a historically accurate document: clearly by their time this text was not useful anymore and could be treated for what it was, a rather clumsy forgery. Yet the ideas around which it was constructed, needed for sanctioning the shrine's construction, were not refused but rather corroborated through other sources by the compilers.

<sup>284</sup> The erection of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine at Taedunsa must have been an especially impressive success in the eyes of the whole Korean Buddhist community, as it proved that it was possible to receive the sponsorship of the state. In the following years, a growing number of monasteries presented similar requests to the throne, some of them successfully, including Sŏkwangsa, Pohyŏnsa, and Kŏnbongsa. See Lee Jong-su 2018, 219–222.

the direct benefits gained were, as I already discussed above, the granting of land, the exemption from most taxations, the bestowal of ritual implements and fresh food to be used for memorial rituals and the exemption from the military service for the members of its monastic community.<sup>285</sup> The bestowal of the shrine's title plaque also contributed to accrue the prestige and legitimacy of the monastery, and this in turn meant that Taedunsa became the beneficiary of new forms of patronage in a scale previously unconceivable. In this regard, the data included in the document titled *Kukch'uk wŏnsŏ*<sup>286</sup> is especially significant. This text proves that, right after the erection of the shrine, the royal family began to actively and directly support the monastery financially. For instance, through the *Kukch'uk wŏnsŏ* we are informed that in 1794 the royal concubine Kasungung Subin Pak (1770–1822) donated to the monastery a large amount of money and some land that the king directly bought for the purpose of donating them to the Monastery. The text also includes an explicit reference to the reason for this royal donation, encapsulated in a

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<sup>285</sup> *Saji charyojip* 1, 279.

<sup>286</sup> *Saji Charyojip* 2, 85–93.

very short but significant line, “because there stands the shrine for Hyujŏng.<sup>287</sup> This once again shows how relevant was, from a financial point of view, the construction of the P’yŏch’ungsa and, I would add, the possession of objects attributable to Hyujŏng with different degrees of authenticity but all equally significant symbolically.

The *Kukch’uk wŏnsŏ* stresses the relationship between the state and Taedunsa/Py’och’ungsa through a strongly ‘national’ rhetoric: the monks serving at the shrine are defined as public servants (kor. *sinha*) and its states that they constantly pray for the benefit of the state. The fact that the *Wŏnsŏ* also includes numerous auspicious prayers for the benefit of several members of the royal family further reveals the ‘national’ character of the text. However, from the standpoint of the monastery, the last section of the book is the most relevant, as it includes the detailed list of the lands donated by the king (through his concubine Subin Pak).

By Taedunsa’s point of view, the completion of the P’yoch’ungsa and the sponsorship that derived by it, especially the one associated with

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<sup>287</sup> Ibid.



Subin Pak, was without doubt a great success. But the same can be said from the point of view of the donor: Subin Pak's donation was aimed at obtaining luck and material benefits for her son born in 1790, a son that only six years later would ascend to the throne with the name of King Sunjo (r. 1800–1834).

In the recently rebuilt Sŏngbo Museum at Taehŭngsa are currently housed two peculiar objects that can be related with the royal sponsorship of the monastery originated by the construction of the shrine for Hyujŏng, two undated hall tablets (kor. *chŏnp'ae*).<sup>288</sup> On the first (fig. 92) the inscription reads *Hwanggwibi chŏnha sŏngsujenyŏn*, on the other (fig. 93) it reads *Hwangt'aeja chŏnha sŏngsu ch'ŏnch'u*. The titular figure of the first tablet is the royal concubine of King Kojong, Sunhŏnhwanggwibi Ŏmssi (1854–1911)<sup>289</sup> and, considered the title of royal spouse (Kor. *hwanggwibi*) referenced on the tablet, this must date to the period between 1903 and 1910, when she officially held that title. The other

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<sup>288</sup> Wooden tablets usually displayed in public places in areas outside the capital, symbolizing the authority of the king or, more in general, of the individual whose name is inscribed on it.

<sup>289</sup> Concerning the Buddhist donation by Sunhŏnhwanggwibi ŏmssi, see Ryu Kyunghye 2014.

tablet, despite some minor decorative details, shows forms remarkably similar to the one for the royal concubine, suggesting the idea that the two tablets might have been produced as a set. If this is indeed the case, the titular subject of the second tablet, who is only referenced as royal prince on it and does not include further information on his name, might be positively identified with Ŭmssi's son, the Royal Prince Ŭimin, Yi Ŭn (1897–1970). While precise details concerning these two tablets are unfortunately missing and we do not know when they were exactly created and in which hall of the monastery were housed, their sheer existence testimonies how deep the relationship between the royal house and Taedunsa, made possible by the creation of the Py'och'ŭngsa, was, as it lasted way into the twentieth century.

We have other proofs of this deep connection. To commemorate the completion of the shrine and its *saaek* recognition, in 1794 King Chŏngjo personally composed an inscription to be written on the portrait of Hyujŏng housed in the building, a fact that further demonstrates the success of the monastery's community, the deep relationship between the royalty and the monastery, and the relevance attached to materiality (in this case, the portrait) by both religious figures and non-Buddhist laymen

alike.

To conclude this short overview on the indirect outcomes of the Taedunsa P'yoch'ungsa's foundation, it is worthy to note a decree (kor. *wanmun*) issued in 1833 by the Office of Rituals.<sup>290</sup> This text (which once more stresses the presence of objects related with Hyujŏng in support of the monastery's claim to be the most suited place to honor the master's memory) includes a complaint by the monastery, in which local political leaders and administrators are accused of exploiting for their private interest the economic benefits derived by the creation of the P'yoch'ungsa putting the whole monastery in a severe financial situation; to this the Office responded by issuing a short list of five rules aimed at the preservation and protection of the rights acquired through the *saaek*. This short writing demonstrates one more the extreme relevance the shrine's erection had on Taedunsa as a whole, the continuing association between the monastery and the state and, as noted above, also confirms once more that the materiality of Sŏn masters was a very persuasive criterion for validating essentially religious questions such as the connection of

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<sup>290</sup> *Saji Charyojip* 1, 528–530.

masters and religious sites.

## 7. Conclusion

Since the eighteenth century, new approaches towards the materiality of Sŏn masters started to emerge into the Buddhist world. Preexisting forms of materiality, such as portraits or robes and alms bowls were given renewed attention, while at the same time new forms of materiality, such as confucianized halls honoring Buddhist masters were also developed. If such materiality was, up to the first half of the eighteenth century, an instrument mostly used by the Buddhist community to resolve internal questions or to substantiate claims for leadership within the *samgha*, the foundation of the P'yoch'ungsa demonstrates how by this time, Buddhist leaders developed a profound understanding of the materiality of Sŏn masters, and were skilled enough to adopt it in an outbound direction for purposes such as those described in this chapter. They thus expanded the possible usages – and the relevance in general – of the materiality of Sŏn masters, which by this time was important enough not only in the eyes of the Buddhist community, but in the eyes of lay followers and Confucians as well.

The creation of the P'yoch'ungsa at Taedunsa also represents a turning point in the history of Chosŏn Buddhism in the sense that it definitely marked the ascension to primacy of this monastery over those that during the seventeenth century originally led the birth of the new, Sŏn master-centered Buddhism that became synonymous with Korean Buddhism after that time; this is most aptly symbolized by the creation of the Such'ungsa shrine in Pohyŏnsa,<sup>291</sup> a step that transformed what once was the leading monastery of the country, from where the whole new Buddhist movement originated, into an institution still relevant but that, to maintain its relevance between the ever changing tides of Late Chosŏn Buddhism, had to follow the model of a site such as Taedunsa, which lacked any remarkable history and essentially constructed its greatness by copying and adapting ideas developed on Mount Myohyang.

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<sup>291</sup> For a short review of the process that led to the creation of this shrine, see Lee Jong-su 2018, 219–222.

## CHAPTER FIVE – THE MATERIALITY OF SŎN MASTERS IN THE *TAEDUNSAJI*

### 1. Introduction

The two previous chapters approached the materiality of Sŏn masters at Taedunsa by directly addressing the actual creation of material culture and its developments at the site, either in the form of stupas and the related cult of relics, or in the form of the confucianized space of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine.

The members of the monastic community of the Late Chosŏn clearly held in high esteem Sŏn materiality. This is clearly demonstrated by the variety of media involved, by the complex layers of meaning and functions attached to it, and last but not least by the sheer quantity of objects produced and circulated in Buddhist monasteries and hermitages. Discussing this rich material heritage is fundamental to understand the true character of Chosŏn Buddhism. Yet, to get a more complete idea of what such materiality meant to those who both created and primarily consumed it, it is useful to look at their actual words concerning the

subject.

Due to its dominant position in the Buddhist environment of Late Chosŏn, Taedunsa was a major site of Sŏn master-related materiality production; its religious primacy indeed originated from it, and its community was well aware of the material production housed at the site. This awareness is reflected in the creation of several textual sources, which represent a precious interpretative instrument on the subject. I already discussed some of these sources in the previous section. In this chapter I will focus on issues of perception of materiality at Taedunsa by discussing how monks thought of and spoke about these forms of materiality through a review of related passages in the early nineteenth century gazetteer<sup>292</sup> of the monastery, the *Taedunsaji*. This text represents the synthesis of centuries of ideas on the materiality of Sŏn masters, as it includes direct references of several relevant older texts on the subject; at the same time, it offers a glimpse of the specific concerns and goals of the members of the monastery's community at the time of its compilation. The readings of materiality it allows are thus

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<sup>292</sup> For a general introduction to monastic gazetteers, see Chapter 1.

manifold and highly intriguing.

The text, published in 1822 and based at least partially on an early draft by the monk Aam Hyejang (1772–1811), was compiled by a team led by the monk Wanhö Yunu (1758–1826), one of the principal figures of Chölla-do Buddhism since the late eighteenth century. The team included some of Yunu’s closest pupils, including Ch’oŭi Ŭisun, (1786~1866), the most celebrated master of nineteenth century Taedunsa and one of the better recognized thinkers of his time. This lengthy work<sup>293</sup> in two volumes is divided in four books, two for each volume. As a product of the early nineteenth century, it was compiled and published in a relatively late period. At the time, most of the monk stupas that set the character of the monastery’s community and of its leadership that I discussed in chapter 3 were already centuries old; the P’yoch’ungsa shrine too was already a well-established institution in the region and a

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<sup>293</sup> The complete work, in the version currently housed at Taehŭngsa dated around the year 1900 and reproduced as an appendix in *Saji Charyojip* 8, which I will use as the primary reference, is over 220 pages long. The website of the Archive of the Cultural Heritage of Buddhist Records currently includes in its “Newly collected Buddhist Literature” database, five different editions of the book, all around 200 pages ([https://kabc.dongguk.edu/content/list?itemId=ABC\\_NC](https://kabc.dongguk.edu/content/list?itemId=ABC_NC)).



landmark source of legitimacy and wealth for the monastery. Chronologically, then, the *Taedunsaji*'s contents are the result of centuries of developments at the site, and the way its authors discuss the material production relevant to this study reflect a mature sensibility about the subject: it reflects directly and indirectly the transformations undergone by the concepts of Sŏn master and Dharma lineage – the reasons of their existence and their relative meaning in a Buddhist tradition constantly evolving due to internal and external causes – and testifies the forms in which materiality was constantly reshaped to accommodate the new needs of the Buddhist community.

This important gazetteer, despite two different complete translations in modern Korean,<sup>294</sup> has been seldom approached as the primary subject

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<sup>294</sup> The first translation published in 1997 by Taehŭngsa is an unedited, literal translation (at times to the point of being a mere transcription in *hangŭl* of the original Classical Chinese text) which nonetheless has the merit of offering a reading experience the most closely resembling reading the original, without the interpretations that naturally come with critical translations. The second version, *Saji Charyojip* 8, was published in 2021 by Dongguk University as the eighth volume overall (and the sixth about Taedunsa) of an ongoing project devoted to the publication of newly discovered or lesser studied sources on Buddhist monasteries. This new translation, curated by Oh Kyeong-hwo, is more thoroughly referenced and includes a large number of explanatory notes, although some of these unfortunately seem to lack depth:

of academic works.<sup>295</sup> The major study that discusses its contents is the doctoral thesis by Oh Kyeong-hwo,<sup>296</sup> who describes the text principally as a reflection of the nationalistic tendencies that allegedly emerged in the later part of the Chosŏn period, and as an instrument employed by its compilers to present a comprehensive history of Korean Buddhism through a ‘modern’ approach influenced by *silhak* thought.<sup>297</sup> Other

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for notes concerning the funerary steles directly cited in the volume, for instance, the notes contain only brief information on the name of the author or on its present location, while being silent on the ways the compilers of the *Taedunsaji* edited the inscriptions into the text, a subject that could offer great insight on the compilation of the text. The name index at the end of the volume, unfortunately, is also poorly edited, with several relevant references left unlisted. Even so, this work probably represents the best modern edition of a monastic gazetteer ever published in Korea.

<sup>295</sup> This in general can be said about most material belonging to the category of Korean monastic gazetteers and related textual sources, on which scholarship is still extremely underdeveloped.

<sup>296</sup> Recently revised and published as a monography in 2018. The most recent translation of the *Taedunsaji* was also curated by Oh Kyeong-hwo, who produced several significant works on the still not sufficiently studied subject of Korean monastic gazetteers.

<sup>297</sup> While the *silhak* influence cannot be downplayed, I want to argue that such a unilineal interpretation could be limited. In my view, part of the critical approach that infuses the text could be the reflection of transformations purely internal to the Buddhist context, in a way not dissimilar to the emergence of what Jiang Wu calls “Evidential Scholarship”, i.e., a critical approach developed by Chinese Buddhists during the seventeenth century

studies, including several works on Taedunsa's history by Kim Yongtae,<sup>298</sup> directly mention and quote the contents of the book, but usually treat it as a mere secondary textual source rather than a subject of study in itself.

Unlike Oh Kyeong-hwo, who tries to understand the work in the larger framework of Late Chosŏn Buddhism and attributes it a conscious nationalistic connotation, I will attempt to offer a different reading of the book. I will avoid political/ideological pan-Korean interpretations, and through the pages of the gazetteer I will rather reflect on the living Buddhism of Taedunsa during the nineteenth century, and on how master-related materiality was read and experienced by the living masters that

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based on the rigorous investigation of textual sources and on these sources' cross referencing and comparison, in order to detect forgeries in Buddhist historiography and reconstruct historical factuality. It is worth to note that, not by chance, this approach was developed as a very polemical tool aimed at settling issues of lineage, the main focus of interest of the contemporary Chinese Chan community (see Wu 2002, 138 ff. and Wu 2008, 194 ff.). At the same time, the emphasis on Confucian influences in the composition of the work could be interpreted as a – probably unconscious – adaptation of the 'classical' *topoi* of the inferiority and subordination of Buddhism during the Chosŏn period as developed by early twentieth century historians such as Takahashi Tooru (for the clearest exposition of this view, see the introduction of Takahashi 1929).

<sup>298</sup> Kim Yongtae 2007 and 2010.

compiled the text. Crucially, these monks, the leading figures of the site at the time, understood themselves as the descendants of the late Chosŏn dharma lineage tradition(s) and, accordingly, as the future subjects of the honors reserved to the most relevant religious figures of the monastery.<sup>299</sup>

## 2. Overview of the Text

The *Taedunsaji* consists of four books divided in two volumes. The first book introduces the monastery's location and its general features, creates a direct link between the site and the lineage of Hyujŏng as discussed in the previous chapters, and then delves in the biographies of the monks who animated its history, a point I already touched in Chapter Three. There, I already attempted to prove the direct, leading role the stupa group of Taedunsa had on the creation of the peculiar Twelve Patriarchs 'lineage' of the monastery. To this lineage is devoted the primary portion, both quantitatively and in regards with the contents, of

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<sup>299</sup> This was indeed the case, as Wanhŏ Yunu or Ch'oŭi Ŭisun stupas, steles and portraits are conspicuously relevant in the later phases of material production of Taedunsa, and Ŭisun himself is celebrated as the most influential Buddhist thinker of the late phase of Chosŏn era.

the first book of the monastery's gazetteer.

The second book offers further insight in the contemporary history of the monastery, discussing and criticizing – sometimes with surprisingly harsh tones – the major historical sources on the monastery's foundation and its later history. The text then includes some interesting remarks concerning what the compilers clearly understood as some of its most relevant monuments. Crucially, almost all of these monuments are directly related to Sŏn masters.

The third book is devoted to the discussion of the foundation of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine and on the celebration of Hyujŏng, with numerous references to materiality at the site. The last book consists of what could be best described as a proto historical treatise on Korean Buddhism seen through the lives of its major religious figures. Although the fourth book once again reveals the absolute importance Chosŏn Buddhist attached to monastic figures as synonymous with Buddhism itself, it lacks explicit references to materiality, probably because unlike the previous books it does not directly deal with the human heritage of Taedunsa. Thus, in this chapter I will focus on the contents of the first three books, as these are the sections that include elements more directly related to the subject of

this thesis.

As it is commonly the case with monastery gazetteers,<sup>300</sup> the *Taedunsaji* does not only include original material, but it is rather a mixture of earlier sources of diverse origin (stele inscriptions, earlier texts on the history of the monastery, passages from Collected writings by both monks and Confucian literati, geographical texts, historical sources, catalogues of monastic properties, et cetera), interspersed with short commentaries or criticisms to the mentioned sources, and original sections<sup>301</sup> created by the compilers that reflect what must have been the monastery's official point of view at the time of the book's compilation.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> Amongst the most relevant gazetteers of the period, we can count the *Mandoksaji* (1816) which compilation is deeply intertwined with that of the *Taedunsaji*, and the *T'ongdosaji*, especially relevant for his approach to materiality associated not with Chosŏn era masters, but with Chajang. For a brief study on the compilation of the *Mandŏksaji*, see Jung Min 2017.

<sup>301</sup> For a more detailed summary of the books, including a table clarifying the main textual sources of the book, see *Saji Charyojip* 8, 13–19.

<sup>302</sup> When I speak of the monastery's official point of view, I deal with the fact that the publishing of this kind of books in the Buddhist context must always be understood in what could be best described as a framework of interests, and that the lengthy, complex and expensive process of composition and publication of such works was not the simple result of religious ardor but, rather, of well-defined social and economic goals and expectations.

Despite the obviously celebratory nature of the text which, more than else, serves the purpose of praising the monastery's present greatness and to record its history, for the most part the authors maintain a relatively critical stance in dealing with their sources, especially criticizing the foundation narrative (or narratives)<sup>303</sup> of the monastery. This critical stance, regardless of its origin, has been pointed out by the scholars who approached the *Taedunsaji* as one of the most relevant elements of the text, as it is in stark contrast with acritical readings of ancient sources characterizing much of Late Chosŏn era Buddhist literature. Yet, as I will point out, there are some relevant exceptions to this general rule.

Sections discussing or referencing the materiality of Sŏn masters in the *Taedunsaji* are not evenly distributed; in the first book we mostly find short passages that only offer a general glance at what the attitude the monastic community likely had towards such material production. Yet it is

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<sup>303</sup> For most monasteries that emerged in the Chosŏn period, historical origins are often obscure, and attributed, often without any tangible proof, to famous masters of the Silla or Koryŏ periods. This is also the case of Taedunsa, for which the *Taedunsaji*, by directly referencing earlier sources, do exist different, conflicting narratives attributing the foundation of the site to a variety of both famous and relatively obscure monks.

exactly the short and almost incidental character of these passages that might reveal deeper meanings on the subject, as such references are less prone to be the result of the compilers explicit will. In the second book we find two larger passages dealing with materiality as found at Taedunsa, and in both cases the focus is on works dedicated to Sŏn masters of the monastery's past. The third book offers the largest number of passages about the subject of materiality, and is also the one that most clearly and explicitly reveals the ideological and practical motivations underlying the production and preservation of the materiality of Sŏn masters at Taedunsa. The fourth book, centered on general questions of historiography, contains no major passages on materiality, although it is still tangentially relevant to my discussion because it presents the history of Korean Buddhism as a succession of masters, rather than as a succession of teachings. This fact once more confirms that the leading paradigm of the Buddhist community's self-understanding was one that put at the center of the game the monk/master as a living, individual person and a holy figure rather than doctrinal issues or abstract ideas and ideals. In other words, for the compilers of the *Taedunsaji*, Buddhist history means a history of monks and personal connections, rather than a history of



thought.

In the following sections I will offer a brief overview of the principal passages of the Gazetteer that deal with the materiality of Sŏn masters, and will attempt to offer an interpretation of the role of such passages in the textual context, and thus in the larger historical frame of nineteenth century Taedunsa.

### 3. The Materiality of Sŏn Masters in Books One and Two

In the first Book the compilers quote, in the form of extensive excerpts, the *Chungmigi* by Chunggwan Haeon, a text now lost but that, before the publication of the *Taedunsaji*, represented the lengthiest and best-known treatise on the monastery's history. Significantly, in one of the quoted passages,<sup>304</sup> consisting of a list of the monastery's main buildings, the only information offered about the halls consists in the identification (by name) of the master or masters who founded or restored each building. In a commentary attached to the passage, Suryong Saaeksŏng (1777–?), one of the main compilers of the gazetteer, reiterates the point that the

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<sup>304</sup> Volume 1, folio 0003b.

*Chungmigi* notes which master contributed to which building's construction. The conciseness of this commentary demonstrates that in the eyes of the Buddhist community information about religious personalities in connection with construction or renovation of religious buildings was more relevant than any key feature of the buildings' interiors such as the sculptures or paintings that would have been enshrined in the building itself. I will note later in the chapter how, in fact, the *Taedunsaji* contains only one single description of a hall's interior, one that notably included materiality of Sŏn masters.

Significantly, two intertwined themes are especially relevant in the body of the *Taedunsaji*: the first is the celebration of the great masters who either directly or indirectly contributed to the greatness of the monastery; the second is the material culture connected with these masters. In the first volume, after setting geographically the monastery and offering the basic information on its foundation, history and structure, the compilers devote most of the space to the elders that animated Taedunsa during the late Chosŏn period. Unsurprisingly, Hyujŏng is offered the foremost position; significantly, the book states that Taedunsa is the Root (kor. *kŭnbŏn*) monastery of both meditative *sŏn* and doctrinal

*kyo* traditions in the Korean peninsula, *because* the alms bowl (kor. *paru*) and robe (kor. *kasa*) of the master are housed at the monastery. We see here a first explicit reference to the power of materiality as an instrument of religious legitimation that represented the main subject of the first part of Chapter 3. It also represents a point of continuity with what I described in chapter 4 in relation with the use of materiality connected with Hyujōng as the main tool for connecting the master with the monastery. In this specific case it must be noted that, because by the time of the *Taedunsaji*'s compilation the P'yoch'ungsa shrine was already one of the main structures of the monastery, in this passage more importance is clearly attributed to his "contact relics" than to his bodily remains.

The part introducing Hyujōng as the hero of Chosŏn Buddhism is followed by a lengthy section on the Twelve patriarchs. I have already discussed it in the third chapter in my attempt to show how materiality in the form of stupas infused the religious understanding of the monastery's community to the point of allowing for the creation of a new kind of lineage based on criteria different from the master–disciple based Dharma–transmission.

Besides these celebrated masters, other less known personalities that

dwelled at the site are also addressed in book one. Quoting another now – lost text titled *Puk'amgi* (Records of the Puk'am hermitage, one of the earliest documented hermitages of Taedunsa) the *Taedunsaji* informs the readers that the Koryŏ National preceptor Chinjŏng Ch'ŏnch'aek (d.u., fl. thirteenth century)<sup>305</sup> stayed at the Puk'am hermitage in the outskirts of Taedunsa's main compound. Significantly, the proofs presented in the original source to demonstrate this fact are neither manuscripts nor printed texts, but some pieces of ceramics and a bronze teapot inscribed with Chinese characters reading *yonghyŏl* (dragon's hole), a reference to Chinjŏng himself through his association with a hermitage with that name. After the *Puk'amgi* citation, the compilers of the *Taedunsaji* offer some additional information on the whereabouts of these objects, lamenting that some were destroyed while the remaining ones are too damaged to be anymore used in a ritual context.<sup>306</sup> Even if not explicitly stated, the relevance of these objects in the eyes of the compilers seem to derive from their implicit inclusion in the category of contact relics, although the

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<sup>305</sup> Park Yun Jin 2006, 131 ff.

<sup>306</sup> Volume 1, folios 0008a–0009a.

fact they report that an “ignorant” and unnamed monk damaged them beyond repair might suggest that in earlier periods less importance was attached by the monastic community to such material tokens. Besides these considerations, the profound interest shown for these objects testifies the understanding held by Chosŏn Buddhists that the material belongings of a renowned master were the most tangible and clear way to prove his connection with a given site.

Materiality is at times the only source to prove the existence of a past master: thus, the compilers of the *Taedunsaji* decided to include in the text reference to three undated and otherwise undocumented monks, Sinam, Saŭn, and Sŏngyu, exclusively because their stupas stood close to the monastery<sup>307</sup> and despite the fact that they are devoid of any influence over either the history of the monastery and in general over the history of Korean Buddhism. Who they were, what they did, when they lived is lost in history, yet the sheer presence of their stupas was sufficient to grant them a place in the official history of the monastery.

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<sup>307</sup> Vol. 1, Folios 0009a–0009b. The stupas of these three monks cannot currently be identified.

This section is followed by the one on Hyujŏng already discussed above:<sup>308</sup> here I want to reiterate that this part's constant focus is not on the master's spiritual achievements, but on the transmission of the master's robe and bowl as the reason for the flourishing and preeminence of the monastery. The underlying idea is that sheer material objects, as they are imbued with the supernatural powers of an illuminated being, are more powerful than any lecture or doctrinal exposition: thus, even if this concept is not stated explicitly,<sup>309</sup> nothing about the master's teaching is recorded in the whole *Taedunsaji*.

The biographies of the Twelve Patriarchs, which follow the section on Hyujŏng, include some minor references to their relics, stupas, and portraits, but these mentions are less remarkable, and simply follow the standardized forms typical of hagiographic stele inscriptions.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> Vol. 1, folios 0009b ff.

<sup>309</sup> This was a commonly accepted idea, thus there was no need to explain in written form.

<sup>310</sup> Note however how such elements have never been expunged in the otherwise highly edited versions of stupa inscriptions as transcribed in the *Taedunsaji*: clearly the theme of bodily relics and stupa erection was felt as fundamental by those who selected what to include in the gazetteer.

In this way, book One mostly includes scattered but revealing references to the materiality of Sŏn masters. Different is the case of book Two, which includes two lengthier chapters on the materiality of Sŏn masters. The first is devoted to the monastery's portrait hall (kor. *yŏnggak*).<sup>311</sup> Unfortunately this building is not currently extant, but we can get a clear idea of its internal structure through the *Taedunsaji*: in fact, this building is the only one, among Taedunsa's numerous halls, for which the gazetteer offers a thorough description of the interior. The introductory passage about this pavilion, for which no information concerning the date of foundation and the circumstances surrounding its erection are given, states:

At Taedunsa there is a portrait hall. The One Patriarch (Kor. *iljo*) occupies the center of the main wall, around him six great masters (Kor. *yukjo*) are respectfully disposed, then eight elders (Kor. *p'allo*) attend in line, and eight teachers (Kor. *p'alsa*) stand with their hand united in prayer. The whole truly

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<sup>311</sup> Vol. 1, Folios 0049A ff.

represents a perfect assembly of the Sŏn school and is as spectacular view for people of later generations.

寺有影閣 一祖主壁 六宗配食 八老列侍 八師拱立 宛作禪門之大  
會 長爲後人之偉觀

The identity of all these masters is clarified in the following paragraph: the Patriarch is T'aego, while the six great masters are those belonging to his 'classical' lineage discussed in chapter one: Hwanam Honsu, Kugok Kagun, Chŏngsim Tŭnggye, Pyŏksong Chiŏm, Puyong Yŏnggwan and, finally, Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng. We can clearly see here how the T'aego lineage narrative remained relevant well into the first half of the nineteenth century. The eight elders are all direct disciples of Hyujŏng, members of the pan-Korean elite that contributed to the diffusion of the lineage descending from Hyujŏng.<sup>312</sup> Finally, the eight teachers are all members of the "Twelve patriarchs" discussed in chapter three. According to the information offered by the gazetteer, not all the twelve monks were

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<sup>312</sup> The eight elders are Yujŏng, Yŏnggyu, T'aenŭng, Ŏngi, Ch'ŏngnyŏn Wŏnch'ŏl, Myŏngjo, Ch'imgoeng Hyŏnbyŏn (1616–1684), and Haeun Kyŏngyŏl (1580–1646).



represented in the portrait hall,<sup>313</sup> but the presence of Yōndam Yuil as the last of the subjects portrayed in this group suggests that at least part of these portraits, if not the eight teachers group in its entirety, may have been created in a period chronologically close to that of the *Taedunsaji*'s compilation.

As the hall does not currently exist, there is no certainty about its actual internal structure. During the Chosŏn period, there were two principal layouts for portrait halls. The first is the open space type, in which the portraits are displayed on the three main walls of the hall, with the most prominent portrayed figure<sup>314</sup> at the center and the following masters in subsequent generation alternated at its right and left.<sup>315</sup> A notable instance of this layout is represented by the main portrait halls of Sunchŏn's Songgwansa, the Kuksajŏn (figs. 94, 95, 96). With this structure there is much room for ritual activities; moreover, all the

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<sup>313</sup> The eight teachers are Sam'u, Toan, Ch'ubung, Chian, Taeu, Hoejŏng, Ch'ejŏng, Yuil.

<sup>314</sup> Which could be either the historical Buddha, a patriarch such as Bodhidharma, or a particularly relevant local master.

<sup>315</sup> See chapter 3.4.

portraits can be all viewed at once but, due to reasons of space availability, are usually in a relatively limited number.

The second layout is the partitioned space type. In this type, the hall is characterized by the presence of partition walls dividing its interior in more chambers. With this layout, one has to move from one chamber to the other to observe all the displayed portraits, with a diminished sense of perceived unity between the paintings. On the other side, the partitioned space type allows more portraits to be housed in a single hall, overcoming the spacial issues of the open space layout. The space for ritual activities, on the other hand, is decidedly limited when compared with the open space type. Notable instances of this layout can be seen at T'ongdosa's Yōnggak,<sup>316</sup> the homonymous hall at Miryang P'yoch'unghsa (figs. 97 and 98),<sup>317</sup> and Songgwangsa's P'ungam yōnggak (figs. 99 and 100).<sup>318</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> This portrait hall is one of the largest in South Korea, with a width of nine *kan* and a total of over 80 portraits housed inside. For an overview of the portraits housed in this hall, see Sin Unn-Young 1996 which, unfortunately, doesn't make any specific reference to the significance of the architectonic structure in relation with the portraits.

<sup>317</sup> The current building was rebuilt in the 1960ies, but maintains the structure of the original Chosŏn period hall.

<sup>318</sup> The P'ungam yōnggak is less known and studied compared to the widely

The portrait hall described in the *Taedunsaji* is no more extant and its structural features are not mentioned in the gazetteer, thus there is no absolute certainty regarding the hall's type and its overall size. However, some clues concerning the disposition of the portraits can be found in the text, allowing for a hypothetical reconstruction of the hall's interiors.

An essential point of the portrait hall's description in the gazetteer is represented by the fact that its portraits are not treated as mere, individual depictions of a given master apt for individualized rituals and prayer, but rather as a comprehensive, coherently organized group epitomizing the living nature of the monastery's community, to be experienced as an organic whole and as the perfect representation of what Sŏn Buddhism is. In this sense, even though the images in this hall were most likely single-monk portraits, it is not unreasonable to speculate that the group as a whole might have functioned as a model for the collective portraits of the Chosajŏn mentioned in chapter four. The *Taedunsaji*, thus,

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celebrated Kuksajŏn, despite the fact that the two halls are standing one next to the other; yet, it is extremely significant as its portraits offer an overview of the leading lineage at late Chosŏn period Songgwangsa. For a recent study of this hall's origins, see Yi Kyep'yo 2021.

is explicit in stressing the unitary nature of the portrait group, strongly suggesting that the hall belonged to the open space type, with the portraits all displayed at once in a large room. Figure 101 offers a tentative reconstruction of the disposition of the potraits. The One Patriarch and the six great masters are indicated with the numbers, and occupy the central section of the room; the capital letters (A to H) refer to the eight elders (part of these portraits might have been on the main wall, flanking the great masters); the lowercase letters (a to h) finally refer to the eight teachers.

At any rate, it is notable how, among all the treasures housed at the monastery, comprising many outstanding sculptures and rich paintings that could be appreciated both as signs of affluence and as symbols of the site's religious strength, the compilers of the *Taedunsaji* decided that the only building worth to be described in detail was the one enshrining the portraits of the great masters that animated Taedunsa, and not a hall dedicated to the Buddhas or to bodhisattvas such as the Taeŭngjŏn or the Ch'ŏnbuljŏn, the central buildings of respectively the Northern and Southern precincts. This point offers intriguing elements useful in assessing the priorities of Buddhist monks in their approach to the spaces

where they lived and practiced their religion.

The second chapter dealing with the materiality of Sŏn masters y in Book Two directly follows the section on the portrait hall. The subject of this lengthy section is the stupa group discussed in chapter three of this dissertation.<sup>319</sup> Intriguingly and against any modern nomenclature, the *Taedunsaji* calls this space ‘stele field’ (kor. *piwon*), and stresses the presence of the steles of One patriarch (Kor. *cho*) and eight great masters. The patriarch is Hyujŏng, and the eight masters are P'ungdam Ŭisim, Wŏljŏ Toan, Sŏram Ch'ubung, Hwansŏng Chian, Sangwŏl Saebong, Hoam Ch'ejŏng, Hamwŏl Haewŏn, and Yŏndam Yuil (all belonging to the Twelve patriarchs grouping). The text continues by stating that several monk stupas are distributed *between* the steles.<sup>320</sup> The stupas, the *Taedunsaji* states,

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<sup>319</sup> Vol. 1, folios 49b ff.

<sup>320</sup> The nine masters are Ŭisim, Toan, Munsin, Ch'ubung, Chian, Hoejŏng, Saebong, Ch'ejŏng, Yuil. They coincide with the titulars of the steles highlighted in the text, with the addition of Munsin. Indeed, the transcription of a stele inscription for Munsin is included in the second book of the *Taedunsaji* (Vol. 1, folios 14a–14b), but no information about the actual whereabouts of the monument is given, and the compilers of *Taedunsaji* do not mention it in the section on the stupa group, possibly because the stele was not standing anymore. Chi Kwan 2000, based on textual sources, records two different steles for Munsin, both of which apparently were at Taedunsa:

include those of one Patriarch (again, Hyujöng), of two elders (Kor. *ro*) (Ch'ongryön Wolchöl and Höbaek Myöngjo) and of nine masters (Kor. *sa*). Finally, the section succinctly presents the identities of some the other masters whose relics are housed in the 'stele field', at times with abbreviated biographies.

Figure 102 shows the relative position of these specific steles in the Taedunsa stupa group. Of those listed in the text, only eight are currently extant (figs. 103–110), as there is no trace of the one for Ch'ubung, originally erected in 1739.<sup>321</sup> The steles are spread over the length of the stupa group and are mostly found in its foremost section, although this is not an absolute rule: for instance, the stele for Ŭisim, on the left side when seen from the entrance, is in front of the innermost stupa row, surrounded by several of stupas and steles. The following table summarizes the identity of the steles and the year of completion.

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unfortunately, there is no way to clarify the relation of the two texts and their relative chronology.

<sup>321</sup> Chi Kwan 2000, 346.

Number	Master	Competition date	Figure
1	Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng	1647	103
2	P'ungdam Ŭisim	1692	104
3	Wŏljŏ Toan	1739	105
4	Sŏram Ch'ubung	1739	---
5	Hwansŏng Chian	1822	106
6	Sangwŏl Saebong	1782	107
7	Hoam Ch'ejŏng	1822	108
8	Hamwŏl Haewŏn	1822 <sup>322</sup>	109
9	Yŏndam Yuil	1803	110

Table 7 Steles listed in the Taedunsaji

Some reflections on these steles can be made. The most notable element is that, while most of the steles can be dated to a period relatively close to that of the titular master's death, those for Chian, Ch'ejŏng and

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<sup>322</sup> The text of the stele was originally composed in 1773 by Kim Sangbok, who at the time held the post of Chief State Councillor (kor. *yŏng'uijŏng*), the highest governmental post, to be inscribed on the stele that was expected to flank the master's stupa at Sŏkwangsa. However, the stele using Kim Sangbok's text was actually erected at Taedunsa in 1822.

Haewŏn were all belatedly created in 1822, the year of the *Taedunsaji*'s publication. This timing cannot be accidental. I suggest that these three steles were erected by the same group of monks that worked on the monastery's gazetteer with the specific purpose of enhancing the significance of these figures as members of the twelve patriarchs group (this probably also worked in the eyes of the Taedunsa community as a form of validation of the twelve patriarchs group as a historical reality). Moreover, as can be noted by their relative position in the stupa group, these three monuments also contribute to collectively link all the eight steles mentioned by the *Taedunsaji* by creating a clearly identifiable line that connects all of them in the frontal part of the stupa group. Another notable point is the striking resemblance of Yuil's stele with that of Hyujŏng. Unlike the other steles with a rather wide central slab, only these two steles present a very elongated central slab standing on a large, big-headed turtle like *kwibu* and topped by a square, lotus-shaped headstone. Clearly, those who created Yuil's stele were trying to visually emphasize the affinity of the two masters, to celebrate Yuil's relevance in the monastery's history and stress his leading position. I already noted in chapter three the significance of Yuil's stupa position in relation with that



of Hyujŏng: the same logic was at work also in the creation of the master's stele, both formally by creating a stele very similar to that, rather peculiar, of Hyujŏng, and spacially by erecting in a central position flanking that of the Chosŏn patriarch.

The description of the stupa group found in the *Taedunsaji* brings to light an unexpected inversion of values: by means of lexical selection ( ' *stèle* field' rather than ' *stupa* field') and descriptive tools (stupas are distributed between the steles, and not viceversa),<sup>323</sup> steles seem to be accorded relevance over stupas by those who compiled this important section of the book. The reasons for this inversion of focus between steles and stupas are not clear, but some hypotheses can be made. One is linked to the nature of the *Taedunsaji* which, notwithstanding the monastic status of its compilers, was strongly influenced by Confucian thought as mediated by the famous scholar Tasan Chŏng Yagyong,<sup>324</sup> who actively collaborated to the volume's creation. In this sense, it is possible that the interest of

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<sup>323</sup> This description doesn't indeed convey the actual appearance of the stupa group, in which the stupas' presence is overwhelming

<sup>324</sup> On his contribution to the compilation of the *Taedunsaji*, see Oh Kyeong-hwo 2002.

the highly literate monks that compiled the gazetteer intellectually inclined toward steles rather than stupas, and that this inclination influenced the way they discussed the stupa group. Another possible hypothesis is that the diminished emphasis on stupas in the *Taedunsaji* depends on the transformations that occurred in early nineteenth century Buddhism and its approach to Buddhist materiality. In particular, it could be argued that the role previously held by stupas as proofs of succession and sources of authority was by this time held by portraits, which are easier to reproduce and thus more practical – and visually appealing – for the multi-branch lineage that characterized the latter half of late Chosŏn. In fact, the number of extant dated portraits<sup>325</sup> and the identity of portrayed subjects all point to a previously unparalleled production of portraits starting from the latter part of the eighteenth century. On one side, this fact could work as an explanation for the fact that in the gazetteer the portrait hall's description precedes that of the stupa group. On the other, this could explain the diminished interest for stupas by the *Taedunsaji*'s compilers as the effect of an unconscious reflection. At the same time, it must be reiterated that

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<sup>325</sup> See Stiller 2008a, 260–263 for a comprehensive table of extant dated portraits.

monk stupas continued to be highly relevant monuments: new monuments kept being erected everywhere in the country and, in Taedunsa's case stupas clearly influenced the creation of the Twelve Patriarchs' lineage, as I discussed earlier.

The remainder of book two only includes one last, minor reference to materiality, before closing with a list of the scenic views surrounding the site and a selection of poems devoted to the monastery. This very short paragraph consists of an extremely concise list of the stone stupas (*not* monk stupas) found in the perimeter of the monastery.<sup>326</sup> Almost nothing is stated about these works besides basic data such as their position and denomination: the limited information about these monuments included in what was meant to be the 'definitive' record of the monastery clearly demonstrates that the materiality of Sŏn masters was considered by the compilers of *Taedunsaji* (and likely by the monastic community in general) as more relevant than any other artifact of any nature present at the monastery.

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<sup>326</sup> Vol. 1, folios 51a–51b.

#### 4. The Materiality of Sŏn Masters in Book Three

The third volume is completely devoted to prove the ties between Taedunsa and Hyujŏng, a goal that the authors set to reach mostly by means of demonstrating the authenticity of the countless material tokens owned by the monastery and labelled as being originally belongings of the master, rightfully and without doubt transmitted to Taedunsa and recorded by his direct disciples. This involves referencing a number of events and constructions in a chronological timeframe that begins with the transmission of Hyujŏng's relics in the early seventeenth century and culminates in the foundation of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine at the very end of the eighteenth century.

Once more, the discussion begins by stressing the strong material nature of the ties between the monastery and master Hyujŏng. It is made clear that his robe and bowl were sent to Taedunsa after his death because of the explicit will of the master. In this respect, the most cited source in book three is the *Sŏsan Togurok*, which in itself was a materiality-centered text, a catalogue of objects recorded as originally belonging to Hyujŏng. The *Togurok* is attributed by the authors of the *Taedunsaji* to

the same Chunggan Haeon whose historical account of the monastery, the *Chukmigi*, was intensely criticized in books one and two.<sup>327</sup>

The narrative starts with an extremely succinct biographical account of Hyujŏng that only includes the year of his birth, the beginnings of his religious career, and his death (everything in between is elided). It then offers some notes concerning the creation of his first two stupas on Mounts Myohyang and Kŭmgang in line with what we already discussed in chapter two. The text includes an interesting point concerning the nature of Hyujŏng's stupa at Pohyŏnsa, which is here defined as of the same level of that of Naong<sup>328</sup>. Was there an official system of ranking between stupas? If so, what criteria did it follow? Or does this rather refer to an evaluation of the masters' spiritual elevation? Unfortunately, the small note in the text does not offer further information on this intriguing issue, that will require further research.

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<sup>327</sup> Vol. 2, folios 0001a ff.

<sup>328</sup> Vol. 2, folio 0001b. It literally says that his stupa was built in Ansimsa, to the western side of Pohyŏnsa, of the same level as the Royal Preceptor Naong.

The *Togurok* continues<sup>329</sup> by listing an impressive number of material objects purportedly donated to the monastery by direct will of Hyujŏng. Finally, we are informed that in his honor at least three different portrait halls were built at Taedunsa in a very short period (between the death of Hyujŏng in 1604 and the year 1608).<sup>330</sup> This is a fact hard to accept as verisimilar, both because portrait halls do not seem to have been so common a sight in Buddhist monasteries in the very early seventeenth century, and also because of the financial burden that it would have meant in a monastery that, as we have already discussed before, at the time was far from being a leading force in the region and thus was hardly in the position of handling the funds necessary to create multiple portraits and the buildings to store them.

What deserves special mention is the fact that, where criticism concerning the excessive number of buildings cited in the *Chungmigi* was a *leit motiv* in earlier sections of the *Taedunsaji*, here no mention is made about the surprisingly high number of portrait halls in a single monastery.

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<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>330</sup> Vol. 2, folios 0003a.

Of these portrait halls, one apparently housed the ‘Six patriarchs’ (Kor. *yukjo*) of Korean Buddhism, one those of some unidentified “Ten saints,” (Kor. *sipsǒng*) while the last one was dedicated exclusively to enshrine Hyujǒng’s portrait and used for confucianized memorial ceremonies as the ones held since the late eighteenth century at the P’yoch’ungsa shrine. This last detail clearly denounces the source as unreliable and extremely late, as it evidently appears to be part of the materials created to justify the erection of the P’yoch’ungsa shrine discussed in the previous chapter, that in the *Taedunsaji* covers the whole remaining part of the book.

Page after page, the narrative concerning the transmission of Hyujǒng’s robe (or robes, depending on the sources cited in succession by *Taedunsaji*’s compilers) and bowls becomes almost redundant as it is obsessively repeated over and over again, with explicit references to the will of the master to send these objects to a place so important for his formative year and to the role that *all* his main disciples had in the process. In conclusion, the whole endeavor of creating the P’yoch’ungsa shrine when seen through the pages of the *Taedunsaji* seems at time to be the direct outcome of the monastery’s possession of these objects. It can be confidently assumed that the process of ideological construction that

culminated in the building of the shrine was so thorough and successful that in later decades it could persuade even the most intellectually gifted monastic critic of the time. Indeed, because the objects that contributed to its development were by the nineteenth century well displayed and easily approachable to every attentive person their presence, no matter questions of authenticity, was so tangible to the monks residing in the monastery that they must have been by this time given for granted.

In fact, when discussing materiality, especially of the Sŏn master-related kind studied by this thesis, the compilers of the gazetteer are surprisingly unsophisticated and acritical: while they show a very critical approach, at times almost radical, to discussions over historical matters,<sup>331</sup> and deconstruct many basic assumptions about the history of Buddhism as it was commonly understood by the Chosŏn Buddhist community, such criticism seems to completely fade when they are dealing with stupas, portraits, and most strikingly with the authority of anything material

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<sup>331</sup> I would add that this critical stance was adopted by at least one of the compilers of the book, Ch'oŭi Ŭisun, also outside of the limits of the *Taedunsaji*, in his famous diatribe with Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn 1767–1852 on doctrinal matters. For a summary of the diatribe between Ch'oŭi and Paekp'a, see Kim Seong-Uk 2013.



connected to the figure of Hyujŏng.

The tangibility of these works has much to do with it, but in my opinion there is also another, evident reason for this: the relevance and preeminence of the monastery as a whole derived singlehandedly by the possession of these material tokens that connected the sacred site with Hyujŏng: if deconstructing the narratives concerning the earliest periods of the monastery's existence, especially its undocumented pre-Chosŏn periods, could cause no particular harm to its present prestige, negating the validity of the material objects linking Taedunsa with Hyujŏng would have meant the negation of the monastery's present source of authority. Indeed, the extreme conciseness and directness of the commentary sections in much of book three suggest that the writers were well aware of the risks involved in criticizing the material heritage of the monastery, and that they did all possible effort to make it sure that any word and object working as an instrument of authentication would be validated without doubt. They did so even when this involved a reversal of the rigorous method followed in discussing other themes, and even if the sources referenced and the points championed were blatant fabrications.

## 5. Conclusion

In this chapter I tried to approach the forms of materiality of Sŏn masters discussed in the gazetteer of Taedunsa, the *Taedunsaji*, to understand what the authors felt was more authentically relevant based on their religious experience, and how perceptions concerning materiality and predominant typologies varied in the course of time. In particular, I noticed how, in contrast with earlier historical phases, portraits and portrait halls apparently supplanted stupas as the main kind of materiality connected with the Sŏn tradition. Moreover, this study attempted a demonstration of how the P'yoch'ungsa shrine and the materiality connected to it replaced in significance every earlier instance of materiality of Sŏn masters produced at the monastery. This suggests that questions of authenticity were probably of secondary relevance when compared with issues concerning the monastery's legitimation, one point that indeed is in continuity with what discussed in the first two chapters, where I described the process through which lineage narratives were created and manipulated to legitimate particular parties in the monastic community.

## CONCLUSION

This study is an attempt to illustrate the contribution of the materiality of Sŏn masters to the transformations and innovations that Korean Buddhism underwent in the complex timeframe of Late Chosŏn, between the early seventeenth century and the mid-nineteenth century. Traditional historical narratives on Buddhism describe this period as one of great crisis for the religion. On the contrary, I interpret the period as one of vibrant religious activity as, freed from the constraints deriving from its subordinate relationship with the state, Buddhism was finally able to evolve independently in directions determined directly by its community. These evolutions involved not only doctrinal and social issues, but also and foremost the Buddhist material output. Just as the Buddhism of this epoch was extremely rich and diverse in its approaches to the scholastic and meditative traditions and in its relationship with lay society and with the state, so the meanings and functions attributed to the materiality of Sŏn masters were varied, richly nuanced, and defined by the social, political and religious context in which they were conceived.

Unlike previous scholarship, which approached the various media

encompassed in my loosely defined category of ‘materiality of Sŏn masters’ (monk stupas, funerary steles, portraits, robes, bowls and other ‘contact relics’, portrait halls, shrines etc.) separately one from another and mostly through a formalistic approach, in my study I tried to offer a more organic, comprehensive, and dynamic image of this rich material production by putting it in context. Through a focus on meaning and function, this study illustrates how our readings of the materiality of Sŏn masters should vary depending on the conditions in which it was created and, above all, on the interpretation of the will and needs of its creators. By doing so, this material production becomes a powerful tool for historical investigation, offering significant clues useful in shedding light on historical events on which textual sources remain silent. Moreover, scholarship on Buddhist masters in most cases failed to address issues concerning the understanding of monkhood and its transformations in the course of the centuries. This study, therefore, also aims at recognizing how the idea of master radically changed during the late Chosŏn period. I claim that acknowledging this point is fundamental to fully understand late Chosŏn Buddhism as a whole.

This study also represents a reassessment and reevaluation of this

vast and heterogeneous production by revealing a) its important role in shaping the character of Late Chosŏn Buddhism, b) its function as an instrument of self-understanding and community construction by the Chosŏn *samgha*, and c) its instrumentality in shaping the relationship between monasteries and society/the state.

This dissertation illustrated the different phases through which material culture associated with Sŏn masters was employed to meet the goals of its creators, and how it worked in parallel with textual sources. In the first phase, funerary monuments became instruments for the elevation of single masters, to function as sources of religious authority for those who materially created them. In the second phase, in parallel with a more defined and undisputed lineage narrative, we witness the local adoption of material artifacts to reinforce lineage claims by the same community that first created it.

In the third phase, we see the spread of such material culture to different areas of the country, either by association with figures already belonging to the lineage narrative, or by extending the lineage narrative and its ideological tenets to figures not originally belonging to it. This is

probably the most productive and creative phase, encompassing a variety of media and reinventing, or rediscussing, previous traditions, at times radically transforming the environment of a given monastery.

While the functions of Sŏn master material culture in these three phases are essentially self-referential and oriented towards an audience consisting of the members of the Buddhist community,<sup>332</sup> during the fourth phase this material production also becomes an instrument to seek external support for local communities.

In the course of time and with subsequent phases, the focus shifted towards new meanings and new media, creating stratified layers of signification adding variety and complexity to the materiality of Sŏn masters. Older approaches were not necessarily abandoned (the production of monk stupas, for instance, continues until the end of the Chosŏn period) but new ones appeared in accordance with the ever-changing needs of the Buddhist community, at times complementing or enhancing the older ones, at time supplanting them.

In the earliest phases, as I tried to prove, the materiality of Sŏn

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<sup>332</sup> When required, textual sources were aimed at the non-Buddhist counterpart.

masters was used as an instrument to settle issues that emerged within a well-defined local community. Later, its use spread to the national level, with a qualitative change in its function. By that time, what the Buddhist community of late Chosŏn was seeking through its lineage invention activities was in my opinion not as much to “regain its legitimacy” as some scholar has suggested,<sup>333</sup> but rather to create a strong and enduring leadership. Religious legitimacy, I argue, was never really at stakes, as demonstrated by the continuous patronage Buddhism received from all strata of society.<sup>334</sup>

The main issue with Buddhism in the first half of Chosŏn was that the community was unable to produce with constancy leaders able to give a defined direction to the *samgha*. My belief is that this has to do not much with the anti-Buddhist sentiment common amongst government officials,

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<sup>333</sup> Kim Sung-Eun Thomas 2020, 221.

<sup>334</sup> Some notable articles on the theme of official sponsorship in the early Chosŏn period include Choe Gyeongwon 2011 and Kim Jung-hee 2001. There was, of course, a period of actual crisis of officially sanctioned Buddhism during the reigns of Yŏnsan’gun and King Chungjong during which Buddhist institutions in the capital were dismantled and crown-related Buddhist rituals halted, but even during those times Buddhism continued to receive the support of all other strata of society.

but was rather due to dynamics purely internal to the Buddhist community. For the most part, Buddhists in early Chosŏn repeated models that, already by the end of Koryŏ, were beginning to be out of date: in due time this brought to a leadership crisis that was solved only by the introduction of the new lineage paradigm, signaling the true rebirth of the religion in the peninsula. As soon as this paradigm was developed and spread, it allowed Buddhism to flourish religiously, economically and materially in forms never seen before in the Peninsula.

My study does not cover all the uses made of the media discussed in the introduction, and further research in the field will be required to get a wider understanding of the Late Chosŏn buddhists' approach to it. My study focused on two specific geographical areas, as these represent two of the most relevant centers of the major developments that affected the materiality of Sŏn masters during the late Chosŏn period. The cases of Pohyŏnsa and Taedunsa created and enhanced models that were later adopted by other Buddhist institutions all over the country. These adaptations are equally rich and varied, and must be studied one by one to appreciate all the subtleties and nuances that characterizes them.



In some cases, such for instance that of Sunchŏn's Sŏnggwangsa, an alternative lineage not centered on Hyujŏng, but clearly based on his model, was developed. This lineage centered on Hyujŏng's contemporary master Puhyu Sŏnsu successfully flourished especially in the Chŏlla region, and is still recognized as one of the leading traditions of Korean Buddhism.<sup>335</sup> In this case too, the materiality of Sŏn masters was fundamental to allow the lineage to develop and prosper for the subsequent centuries. At Sŏnggwangsa, the materiality of Sŏn masters was also manipulated in association with the older – pre-Chosŏn – tradition at the monastery associated with the Koryŏ master Chinul, and the implications of such manipulation require serious scrutiny.

Masters of the past became subjects of production Sŏn master-related material also elsewhere, in forms not always fully explored by research up to the present day. There is for instance much need for a deep understanding of the spread of the Three masters grouping, especially in connection with portraiture.<sup>336</sup> Moreover, a number of monasteries

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<sup>335</sup> Kim Yongtae 2006.

<sup>336</sup> Stiller 2008a, 179–181 includes a short chapter on such triptychs, but their historical meaning and connotations are not explored in detail.

maintained their focus of figures of the pre-Hyujŏng past as instruments of validation, and they did so, unsurprisingly, through continuous use of material culture. A key example is presented by T'ongdosa where the figure of the Silla period *vinaya* master Chajang was during the late Chosŏn period celebrated in material forms in line with those adopted for the masters belonging to the Chosŏn Sŏn tradition. How the legacy of Chajang affected the character of the monastery's community is worth of inquiry, especially in the light of the peculiar placement of monk stupas at the monastery (despite the large number of Late Chosŏn period stupas, no large-scale stupa group existed at the site, as smaller groups of only a few monuments were originally scattered around the surroundings of the monastery).<sup>337</sup>

It could be worth, moreover, to explore and analyze the possible connections between the events described in this thesis and the revival of

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<sup>337</sup> All the monk stupas of T'ongdosa were recently moved in a new dedicated space close to the main gate of the monastery. While the view offered by the large number of monuments grouped together is surely impressing, the new configuration is in my opinion problematic because it cancels the original disposition of the stupas and, thus, makes it impossible to physically experience these works in the form and meaning they were originally conceived.

Buddhism that, almost at the same time, took place in China, showing surprising similarities with the Korean case.<sup>338</sup> In light of some intriguing similarities between the developments that took place in late Ming China and those described in this study, one is left to wonder if there are direct connections or if historical contingencies brought, by chance, to similar evolutions in the Buddhist world of the two regions.<sup>339</sup>

The materiality of Sŏn masters represents an instrument that, if approached through an interdisciplinary scheme, enables us to get a better comprehension of Buddhism as a living tradition. Such comprehension is fundamental if we want to fully grasp the nature of Late Chosŏn Buddhism and to reevaluate its qualities and peculiarities, too long obscured by methodological approaches that culpably denied the value of an essential face of the Korean religious experience.

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<sup>338</sup> On the revival of Chan in seventeenth century China, see Wu 2008.

<sup>339</sup> Jorgensen 2007 rejects any possible causal connection between the two cases, although his argument is at times not convincing, and seems to be built on a preconception about the lack of relation between the two worlds, rather than being the result of actual observation of phenomena.

## GLOSSARY

- Aam Hyejang 兒菴惠藏  
 Aam Yujip 兒庵遺集  
 Ado 阿道  
 Ansimsa 安心寺  
*Ansimsa Chigong Naong pi*  
 安心寺指空懶翁碑  
*Banghal* 棒喝  
*Banghe* 棒喝  
*Beifu* 碑趺  
*Beishen* 碑身  
*Beishou* 碑首  
 Chajang 慈藏  
*Chan* 禪  
 Chang Yu 張維  
 Changlu Zongze 長蘆宗蹟  
*Chanyuan qinggui* 禪苑清規  
*Chat'ong Hongje Chonja Samyŏng*  
*Taesa Sŏkchang Pimyŏng*  
 慈通弘濟尊者四溟大師石藏碑銘  
*Chegyŏng hoeyo* 諸經會要  
 Chenshi 陳實  
 Chewŏl Kyŏnghŏn 霽月敬軒  
 Chijŏng 智正  
 Ch'imgoeng Hyŏnbyŏn 枕肱懸辯  
 Chibong 珍峯  
 Chinjŏng Ch'ŏnch'aek 眞靜天頊  
*Chinyŏng* 眞影  
 Chirisan 智異山  
*Chisheng guangming jing* 熾盛光明經  
*Cho* 祖  
*Chŏksa* 嫡嗣  
 Chŏlla-do 全羅道  
*Ch'ŏnbuljŏn* 千佛殿  
 Chongbong 鍾峯  
 Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng 清虛休靜  
*Ch'ŏnghŏdangjip* 清虛堂集  
 Chŏngjo 正祖  
 Ch'ŏngnyŏn Wŏnch'ŏl 青蓮圓徹  
 Ch'ŏngnyongsa 青龍寺  
 Ch'ŏngŏm Sŏngmin 清嚴釋敏  
 Ch'ŏngryŏn 青蓮  
 Ch'ŏngsim 清心  
 Chŏngsim 正心  
 Ch'ŏngsim K'waemin 清心快敏  
 Chŏngsim Tŭnggye 正心登階  
 Ch'ŏngu 聽雨  
 Chŏnju 全州  
 Chŏnkwan 淨觀  
*Chŏnp'ae* 殿牌  
 Chosa 祖師  
*Chosajŏn* 祖師殿  
 Chosŏn 朝鮮  
*Chosŏn wangjo sillok* 朝鮮王朝實錄  
 Ch'oŭi 艸衣  
 Ch'oŭi Ŭisun 草衣意恂  
 Ch'ugwŏn Chich'ŏn 竺源智泉  
 Chunggwan Haeon 中觀海眼  
 Chungjong 中宗  
 Ch'ungju 忠州  
*Chungmigi* 竹迷記

*Ch'ungsin* 忠臣  
 Chungye Ch'ŏnmuk 春溪天默  
 Ch'wiyŏ Samu 醉如三愚  
 Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲  
 Daocheng 道誠  
 Daoxuan 道宣  
*Dazang Yilan* 大藏一覽  
 Duryunsan 頭輪山  
*Fayanzong* 法眼宗  
 Gaofeng Yuanmiao 高峰原妙  
*Gaosheng zhuan* 高僧傳  
*Haedong kosŭngjŏn* 海東高僧傳  
 Haeinsa 海印寺  
*Haenam Taehŭngsa Chŏnghŏdang*  
*Huŭjŏng Taesa Pimun*  
 海南大興寺清虛堂休靜大師碑文  
 Haenam-gun 海南郡  
 Haeun Kyŏngyŏl 海運敬悅  
*Hamhŏdang Tŭkt'ong Hwasang ŏrok*  
 涵虛堂得通和尚語錄  
 Hamwŏl Haewŏn 函月海源  
*Hibutsu* 秘仏  
*Ho* 號  
 Hŏ Kyun 許筠  
 Hoam 虎巖  
 Hoam Ch'ejŏng 虎巖體淨  
 Hŏbaek Myŏngjo 虛白明照  
*Hŏbaekjip* 虛白集  
 Hoeamsa 檜巖寺  
 Hŏŭng Pou 虛應普雨  
*Hŏŭngdangjip* 虛應堂集  
 Huijiao 慧皎  
 Huineng 慧能  
 Huiyan Zhizhao 晦巖智昭  
 Hwaak Munsin 華岳文信  
 Hwanam Honsu 幻菴混修

*Hwanggwibi* 皇貴妃  
*Hwanggwibi chŏnha sŏngsujenyŏn*  
 皇貴妃殿下聖壽濟年  
*Hwangt'aeja chŏnha sŏngsu ch'ŏnch'u*  
 皇太子殿下聖壽千秋  
 Hwanjŏk Ŭich'ŏn 幻寂義天  
 Hwansŏng Chian 喚惺志安  
*Hwaŏmgyŏng* 華嚴經  
*Hwasang* 和尚  
*Hwi* 諱  
*Hyangsangi* 香山記  
 Hyegŏ 惠居  
 Hyegŏ 惠炬  
 Hyegu 惠球  
 Hyŏnhae 燕海堂  
 Hyŏnjong 顯宗  
*Iljo* 一祖  
 Ilsŏn 一禪  
 Ilsŏn 一先  
*Imje* 臨濟  
*Inga* 印可  
 Iryŏn 一然  
*Isu* 螭首  
*Jiaowai biechuan* 教外別傳  
*Jingde chuandenglu* 景德傳燈錄  
 Kakhun 覺訓  
*Kankyŏng togam* 刊經都監  
 Kapsa 甲寺  
*Karyangsa hyegŏ kuksa pi*  
 葛陽寺惠居國師碑  
*Kasa* 袈裟  
 Kasungung Subin Pak 嘉順宮 綏嬪  
 朴氏  
 Kihŏ Yŏnggyu 騎虛靈圭  
 Kim Chin'yŏ 金振汝  
 Kim Sangbok 金相福

*Kinyōmmul* 記念物  
*Kojong* 高宗  
*Kōnbongsa* 乾鳳寺  
*Koryō* 高麗  
*Koryōsa* 高麗史  
*Kosōnsa Sōdang hwasang pi*  
 高仙寺誓幢和上碑  
*Kuam* 龜岩堂  
*Kubop* 求法  
*Kugilto taesōnsa sōn'gyo toch'ongsōm*  
*sajabu chongsu kyogyōm Tūnggye*  
*Poje*  
 國一都大禪師禪教都摠攝賜紫扶宗樹教  
 兼登階普濟  
*Kugok Kagun* 龜谷覺雲  
*Kukch'uk wōnsō* 國祝願序  
*Kuksa* 國師  
*Kuksajōn* 國師殿  
*Kūmgang kyedan* 金剛戒壇  
*Kūmgangsan* 金剛山  
*Kūmnan kasa* 錦欄袈裟  
*Kūnbon* 根本  
*Kūngnakchōn* 極樂殿  
*Kusan* 九山  
*Kwangjong* 光宗  
*Kwangsōnsa* 慶禪寺  
*Kwibu* 龜趺  
*Kye* 契  
*Kyegokchip* 谿谷集  
*Kyehong* 戒洪  
*Kyejoam* 繼祖庵  
*Kyo* 教  
*Kyoji* 教旨  
*Kyōngguk taejōn* 經國大典  
*Kyōngsōng Ilsōn* 敬聖一禪  
*Kyōngsōngdang haengjōk* 敬聖堂行蹟

*Kyo'oe pyōlchōn* 教外別傳  
*Lidao Fabao ji* 歷代法寶記  
*Linji* 臨濟  
*Liuzu Tanjing* 六祖壇經  
*Maebul* 磨崖佛  
*Maek* 脈  
*Mandoksaji* 萬德寺志  
*Manhwa Wōn'o* 萬化圓悟  
*Maniram* 挽日庵  
*Maniram kogi* 挽日庵古記  
*Mihwangsa* 美黃寺  
*Milgye* 密契  
*Ming gaoseng zhuan* 明高僧傳  
*Mogam Ch'anyōng* 木庵榮英  
*Mugam Ch'oenu* 默庵取訥  
*Muhak Chach'o* 無學自超  
*Munjōng* (direct followers) 門庭  
*Munjōng* (Queen dowager) 文定  
*Musa pyōllok* 無嗣別錄  
*Myohyangsan* 妙香山  
*Myohyangsan sogi* 妙香山小記  
*Myohyansangji* 妙香山誌  
*Myōngjong* 明宗  
*Myōngnyang taechōp pi* 鳴梁大捷碑  
*Naam chapchō* 懶庵雜著  
*Naam Chinil* 懶庵眞一  
*Naewōnam* 內院庵  
*Nambong Sunūng* 南峰修能  
*Nambudo* 南浮屠  
*Namp'a Yukt'an* 南波陸坦  
*Namwon* 南院  
*Nanta* 難陀  
*Nantasa* 難陀寺  
*Naong Hyegūn* 懶翁惠勤  
*Naong pōpt'ongsōl* 懶翁法統說  
*Noemuk Ch'ōyōng* 雷默處英

Ōkchōngsa 億政寺  
 Ōrok 語錄  
 Paekhwa 白華  
 Paekhwaam 白花庵  
 Paekp'a Kūngsōn 白坡亘璇  
 Paek'unam 白雲庵  
 Pak Chega 朴齊家  
 P'aldo 八道  
 P'algaŋwōnhyōngsik 八角圓形式  
 P'allo 八老  
 P'alsa 八師  
 Paru 鉢盂  
 Pibu 碑趺  
 Pingshan 平山  
 Pingshan Chulin 平山處林  
 Pisin 碑身  
 Piwon 碑院  
 Pogak kuksa chi pi 普覺國師之碑  
 Pohyōnsa 普賢寺  
 Pohyōnsa Sōkka Yōrae saribi  
 普賢寺釋迦如來舍利碑  
 Pojin 葆眞  
 Pojo Chinul 普照知訥  
 Pōmnān 法蘭  
 Pongnaesan Unsua  
 Chongbongdanggi  
 蓬萊山雲水庵鍾峰影堂記  
 Porimsa 寶林寺  
 Poryōn'gak 寶蓮閣  
 Poūng Haeil 普應海日  
 Poūngdang Yōnghō Taesa haengjōk  
 普應堂映虛大師行蹟  
 Pudo 浮屠/浮圖  
 Puhyu Sōnsu 浮休善修  
 Puk'am 北庵  
 Puk'amgi 北庵記

Pukhansan Silla Chinhūng Wang  
 Sunsubi 北漢山新羅眞興王巡狩碑  
 Pukwon 北院  
 Puljo chongp'a chido 佛祖宗派之圖  
 Puljo Chongpado 佛祖宗派圖  
 Pulu 佛宇  
 P'ungam yōnggak 楓巖影閣  
 P'ungdam Ŭisim 楓潭義誥  
 Puyong Yōnggwan 芙蓉靈觀  
 Puyongdang haengjōk 芙蓉堂行蹟  
 P'yoch'ung pigak 表忠碑閣  
 P'yoch'ung sōllip yugongnok  
 表忠設立有功錄  
 P'yoch'unŋsa (shrine) 表忠祠  
 P'yoch'unŋsa (monastery) 表忠寺  
 P'yoch'unŋsa kōnsa sajōkpi  
 表忠祠建祠事跡碑  
 P'yoch'unŋsa Pojangnok 表忠祠寶藏錄  
 Pyōgam Kaksōng 碧巖覺性  
 P'yohunsa 表訓寺  
 Pyōkdam Haeng'in 碧潭幸仁  
 Pyōkha Taeu 碧霞大愚  
 Pyōksong Chiōm 碧松智嚴  
 Pyōksongdang haengjōk 碧松堂行蹟  
 Pyōksongdang yarosong 碧松堂野老頌  
 Pyōktam Hyesim 碧潭諱諱  
 P'yōngan-do 平安道  
 Pyōngo 丙午  
 P'yōnyang Ōngi 鞭羊彥機  
 P'yōnyangdangjip 鞭羊堂集  
 Rentian yanmu 人天眼目  
 Ro (elder) 老  
 Ro (surname) 盧  
 Ruxing 如惺  
 Sa 師  
 Saam Ch'aeyōng 獅巖采永

*Sadaebu* 士大夫  
*Sadang* 祠堂  
*Saaek* 賜額  
*Sagaksik* 四角式  
*Saja sangsŭng* 師資相承  
*Saji* 寺志/寺誌  
*Samdae Hwasang* 三大和尚  
*Samguk yusa* 三國遺事  
*Samhwasang* 三和尚  
*Samno haengjŏk* 三老行蹟  
*Samunp'a* 四門波  
*Samyŏng Yujŏng* 四溟惟政  
*Samyŏngdang Chip'a Kŭnwŏllok*  
 四溟堂枝派根源錄  
*Samyŏngdang Sŭngson segyedo*  
 四溟堂僧孫世系圖  
*Samyŏngdanjip* 四溟堂集  
*Sangwŏl Saebong* 霜月璽封  
*Sanlun* 三論  
*Sari* 舍利  
*Sau* 祠宇  
*Saŭn* 思隱  
*Se* 世  
*Sejo* 世祖  
*Seosan Togurok* 西山道具錄  
*Shingon* 真言  
*Shishi yaolan* 釋氏要覽  
*Shiwu Qinggong* 石屋清珙  
*Shizi xiangcheng* 師資相承  
*Silha* 實學  
*Silla* 新羅  
*Sillŭksa* 神勒寺  
*Sillŭksa Pojejonja sŏkchonggi*  
 神勒寺普濟舍利石鐘記  
*Simwŏnsa* 深源寺  
*Sinam* 信菴

*Sindobi* 神道碑  
*Sinha* 臣下  
*Sinjŭng Tongguk Yŏji Sŭngnam*  
 新增東國輿地勝覽  
*Sipi chongsa* 十二宗師  
*Sipi kangsa* 十二講師  
*Sipsŏng* 十聖  
*Sŏbudo* 西浮屠  
*Sŏkchong* 石鐘  
*Sŏkchongsik* 石鐘式  
*Sŏkwangsa* 釋王寺  
*Sŏlbong* 雪峰  
*Sŏlbong Hoejŏng* 雪峯懷淨  
*Sŏn* 禪  
*Sŏngga kwigam* 禪家龜鑑  
*Songgwangsa* 松廣寺  
*Songgwangsa sawŏn sajŏkpi*  
 松廣寺嗣院事蹟碑  
*Sŏngmun garyech'o* 釋門家禮抄  
*Sŏngmun sangŭich'o* 釋門喪儀抄  
*Songwŏl Ŭngsang* 松月應祥  
*Sŏngyu* 性柔  
*Sŏnjo* 宣祖  
*Sŏnmun chosa yech'am ŭimun*  
 禪門祖師禮懺儀文  
*Soon* 小穩  
*Sŏram Ch'ubung* 雪巖秋鵬  
*Sŏsan daesa p'yoch'ungsa kijŏkpi*  
 西山大師表忠祠紀跡碑  
*Sŏsan taesa* 西山大師  
*Sŏwon* 書院  
*Soyo T'aenŭng* 逍遙太能  
*Soyodang T'aenŭng Pŏpsa Pimyŏng*  
 逍遙堂太能法師碑銘  
*Sŏyŏk Chunghwa Haedong Puljo*  
*wŏllyu* 西域中華海東佛祖源流



Ssanghül 雙仵  
 Such'ungsa 酬忠祠  
 Sumi 守眉  
 Sunch'ön 順天  
 Sŭngga yeŭimun 僧家禮儀文  
 Sŭnggwa 僧科  
 Sŭngobokto 僧五服圖  
 Sŭngt'ap 僧塔  
 Sunhönhwanggwibi ömssi 純獻皇貴妃  
 嚴氏  
 Sunjo 純祖  
 Suryong Saeksöng 袖龍蹟性  
 Tabimun 茶毘文  
 Taedonggŭmsöksö 大東金石書  
 Taedunsa 大茆寺  
 Taedunsaji 大茆寺誌  
 T'aego Pou 太古普雨  
 Taegwangmyöngjön 大光明殿  
 Taehŭngsa 大興寺  
 Taemo 大茅  
 Taeungjön 大雄殿  
 Tangun 檀君  
 T'ap 塔  
 T'apsin 塔身  
 Tasan Chöng Yagyong 茶山 丁若鏞  
 Tiantai 天台  
 Tobong söwon 道峯書院  
 Tobongsan 道峯山  
 Tongbudo 東浮屠  
 T'ongdosa 通度寺  
 T'ongdosaji 通度寺誌  
 Tongjujip 東州集  
 T'ongnok ch'waryo 通錄撮要  
 Tosön 道詵  
 Tüktong Kihwa 得通己和

Tŭnggye könt'ap Ch'ungmun  
 登階建塔祝文  
 Tŭnggye taesa sosangso  
 登階大師小祥疏  
 Tŭngjae 登階  
 Uhwa Sölch'öng 雨花說清  
 Ŭibal 衣鉢  
 Ŭimin 懿愍  
 Ŭngun Tŭngo 應雲登昨  
 Unsua 雲水庵  
 Wangsa 王師  
 Wanhö Wönjun 玩虛圓俊  
 Wanhö Yunu 玩湖尹祐  
 Wanli 萬曆  
 Wanmun 完文  
 Wansan 完山  
 Wip'ae 位牌  
 Wölch'ulsan Yöngam Togapsa Tosön  
 Sumi yangdaesa pi  
 月出山道岬寺道詵國師守眉大禪師碑  
 Wöljö Toan 月渚道安  
 Wöl'p'a T'aeyul 月波兌律  
 Wönch'al 願刹  
 Wonhyö 元曉  
 Wönhyöngsik 圓形式  
 Wönjang 院長  
 Wönjang sönsaeng an 院長先生案  
 Wönjögam 圓寂庵  
 Wushan lianruo xinxue beiyong  
 五杉練若新學備用  
 Wushanji 五杉集  
 Xu Gaosheng zhuan 續高僧傳  
 Yejemun 禮齊門  
 Yejo 禮曹  
 Yi Chönggu 李廷龜  
 Yi Kyöngsö 李景奭

Yi Min'gu 李敏求  
Yi Myŏngghan 李明漢  
Yi Sunsin 李舜臣  
Yi Ŭn 李垠  
Yingzhi 應之  
Yŏndam Yuil 蓮潭有一  
*Yŏndamdaesa imharok* 蓮潭大師林下錄  
*Yŏnggak* 影閣  
Yŏnggok 靈谷  
Yŏnggok Yŏng'u 靈谷永遇  
Yŏngguksa 寧國寺  
*Yŏngguksa hyegŏ kuksa pi*  
寧國寺慧炬國師碑  
*Yŏnghŏjip* 映虛集

*Yonghyŏl* 龍穴  
Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽  
Yongmunsa 龍門寺  
Yŏng'uijŏng 領議政  
Yŏnhae Kwangyŏl 燕海廣悅  
Yŏnsangun 燕山君  
*Yuŏmsa ponmalsa chi* 楡岾寺本末寺誌  
*Yukchodan'gyŏng* 六祖壇經  
*Yukjo* 六祖  
*Yulu* 語錄  
Zhikong 指空  
Zhu Xi 朱熹  
*Zhuji jiali* 朱子家禮  
*Zutang ji* 祖堂集

## FREQUENTLY CITED MASTERS REFERENCE TABLE

Dharma Name	Complete name	Chinese characters
Chach'o	Muhak Chach'o	無學自超
Ch'ejöng	Hoam Ch'ejöng	虎巖體淨
Chian	Hwansöng Chian	喚惺志安
Chinul	Pojo Chinul	普照知訥
Ch'önmuk	Chungye Ch'önmuk	春溪天默
Ch'öyöng	Noemuk Ch'öyöng	雷默處英
Ch'ubung	Söram Ch'ubung	雪巖秋鵬
Haeän	Chunggwan Haeän	中觀海眼
Haeil	Pöüŋg Haeil	普應海日
Haeng'in	Pyökdäam Haeng'in	碧潭幸仁
Haewöŋ	Hamwöl Haewöŋ	函月海源
Hoejöng	Sölbong Hoejöng	雪峯懷淨
Huyjöng	Ch'öŋghö Huyjöng	清虛休靜
Ilsön	Kyöŋgsöŋg Ilsön	敬聖一禪
Kagun	Kugok Kagun	龜谷覺雲
Kihwa	Tüktong Kihwa	得通己和
Munsin	Hwaak Munsin	華岳文信
Myöŋjo	Höbaek Myöŋjo	虛白明照
Öngi	P'yönyang Öngi	鞭羊彦機
Saebong	Sangwöl Saebong	霜月璽封
Sönsu	Puhyu Sönsu	浮休善修
Sunŋg	Nambong Sunŋg	南峰修能
T'aenŋg	Soyo T'aenŋg	逍遙太能
Taeu	Pyökha Taeu	碧霞大愚
Toan	Wöljö Toan	月渚道安
Tüŋgye	Chöŋgsim Tüŋgye	正心登階
Üisim	P'ungdam Üisim	楓潭義諶

Ŭisun	Ch'oŭi Ŭisun	草衣意恂
Ŭngsang	Songwŏl Ŭngsang	松月應祥
Wŏnjun	Wanhŏ Wŏnjun	玩虛圓俊
Yŏnggwan	Puyong Yŏnggwan	芙蓉靈觀
Yŏnggyu	Kihŏ Yŏnggyu	騎虛靈主
Yuil	Yŏndam Yuil	蓮潭有一
Yujŏng	Samyŏng Yujŏng	四溟惟政
Yunu	Wanhŏ Yunu	玩湖尹祐

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*Dazang Yilan* 大藏一覽 K.1504

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*Kyegokchip* 溪谷集

*Kyŏngguktaejŏn* 經國大典

*Mandoksaji* 萬德寺志

*Myohyangsan sogi* 妙香山小記

*Naam chapchŏ* 懶庵雜著 H0133

*Puljo jongp'ajido* 佛祖宗派之圖 H0113

*Pyŏksongdang yarosong* 碧松堂野老頌 H0129

*P'yŏnyangdangjip* 鞭羊堂集 H0161  
*Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 H0088  
*Samno haengjŏk* 三老行蹟 H0138  
*Samyŏngdang chip'agŭnwŏllok* 四溟堂枝派根源錄 H0219  
*Samyŏngdang sŭngson segyedo* 四溟堂僧孫世系圖  
*Samyŏngdang taesajip* 四溟堂大師集 H0152  
*Sinjŭng tonggu gyŏji sŭngnam* 新增東國輿地勝覽  
*Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 T.2061  
*Sŏn'ga kwigam* 禪家龜鑑 H0142  
*Sŏngmun karyech'o* 釋門家禮抄 H0170  
*Sŏngmun sangŭich'o* 釋門喪儀抄 H0160  
*Sŏnmun chosa yech'am ŭimun* 禪門祖師禮懺儀文  
*Sŏramjapchŏ* 雪巖雜著 H0187  
*Sŏyŏk chunghwa haedong buljo wŏllyu* 西域中華海東佛祖源流 H0218  
*Sŭngga yeŭimun* 僧家禮儀文 H0163  
*Taedong kŭmsŏksŏ* 大東金石書  
*Taedunsaji* 大菴寺志  
*Tongjujip* 東州集  
*T'ongdosaji* 通度寺誌

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*Wŏlp'ajip* 月波集 H0205

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Fig. 1. Portrait of Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng, Late 17th–18th century, hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 152.1 x 77.8 cm, Metropolitan Museum, New York (Public domain)



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Fig. 3. Robe of Master Yujŏng, Late 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> century, cotton, Miryang P'yoch'ungsa



Fig. 4. Alms bowls, Koryŏ period, bronze, 4 and 11 cm, Dongguk University Museum (After Pulgyo chungang pangmulgwan 2009, 15)



Fig. 5. Kasaya buckle, tr. transmitted as a personal belonging of Master Yujŏng, bronze, Miryang P'yoch'un-gsa



Fig. 6. Portrait of Pojo Chinul, Late Chosŏn, Hanging scroll, color on silk, 77.2x146 cm, Tonghwasa, Taegu (source: Chikchi sŏngbo pangmulgwan. 2000, 15)



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Fig. 13. Puljo chongp'a chido (printed version at Kyujanggak reconstructed in the form of lineage chart. Elaborated by the author).

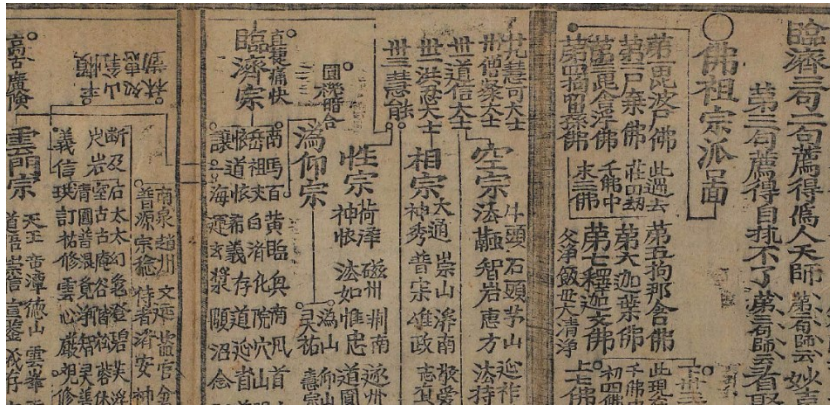


Fig. 14. Puljo Chongpado included in the Chegyŏng hoeyo



Fig. 15. Map of Mount Myohyang, late Chosŏn period, ink on paper (after <https://mnews.imaail.com/page/view/2018042500341633931>)



Fig. 16. Kim Chin'yŏ (attributed), Map of Mount Myohyang, late Chosŏn period, ink on paper, Kookmin University Museum



Fig. 17. Detail of 16: Pohyŏnsa compound



Fig. 18. Detail of 16: Ansimsa and its stupa group on the right side.





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Fig. 25. Stele for Ōngi at P'yohunsa in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (after Chosen Sōtokufu 1933, 1945).



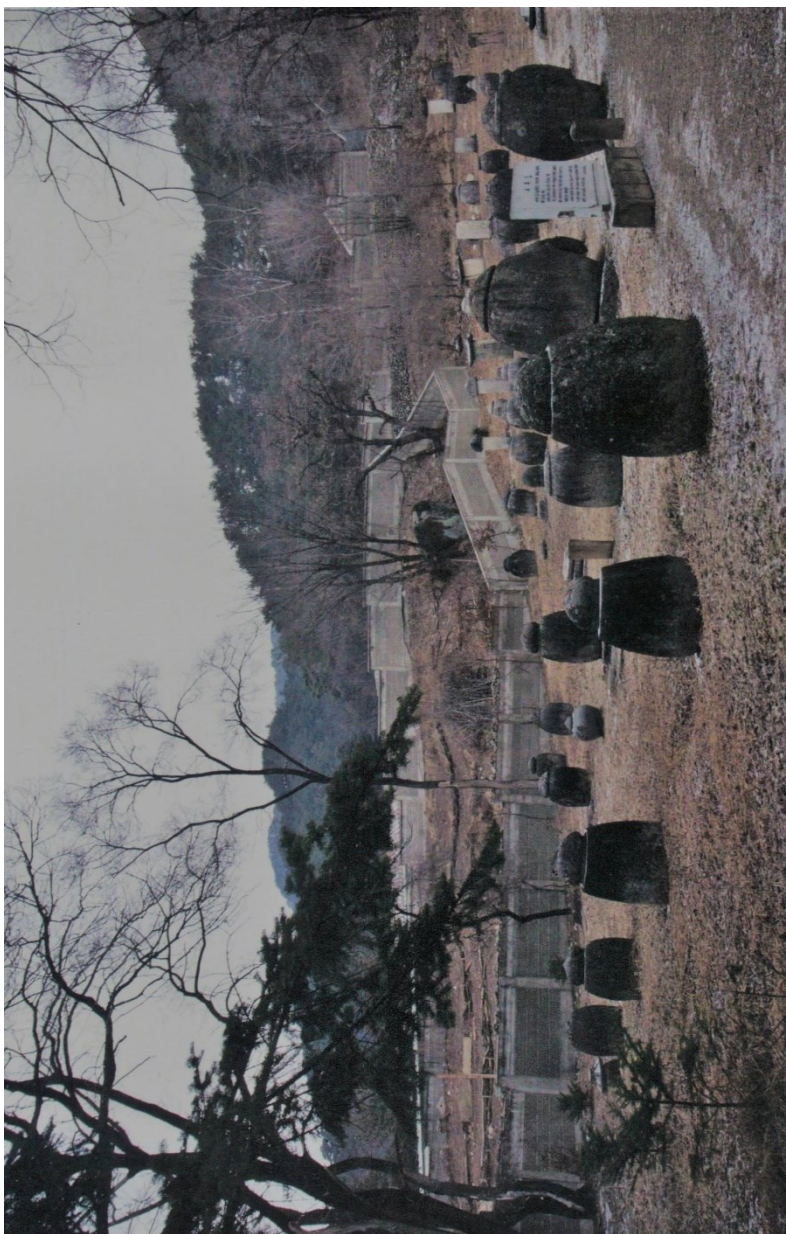


Fig. 26. Stupa group of Pohyŏnsa (after Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong. Minjong kongdongch'e ch'ujin ponbu 2011, 140).



Fig. 27. Aerial view of Taehŭngsa  
(<https://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/165816>).

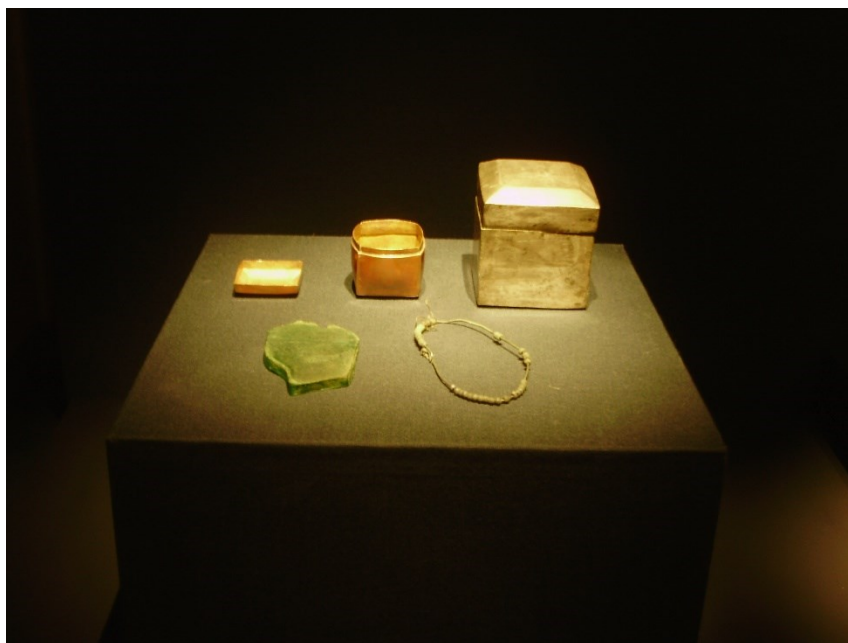


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Fig. 29. Reliquary set from the stupa of Naong Hyegün at Yöngjōnsa, 1388, Ch'unch'on National Museum.



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Fig. 31. Stupa group at T'apjŏn hermitage, Songgwangsa, Sunch'ŏn.



Fig. 32. Stupa group at Kapsa.





Fig. 33. Entrance of the stupa group at Taehŭngsa.



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Fig. 35. Stupa group of Taehŭngsa, view from the side.





Fig. 36. Detail of master Chinbong's stupa showing the name of the monk inscribed on it.

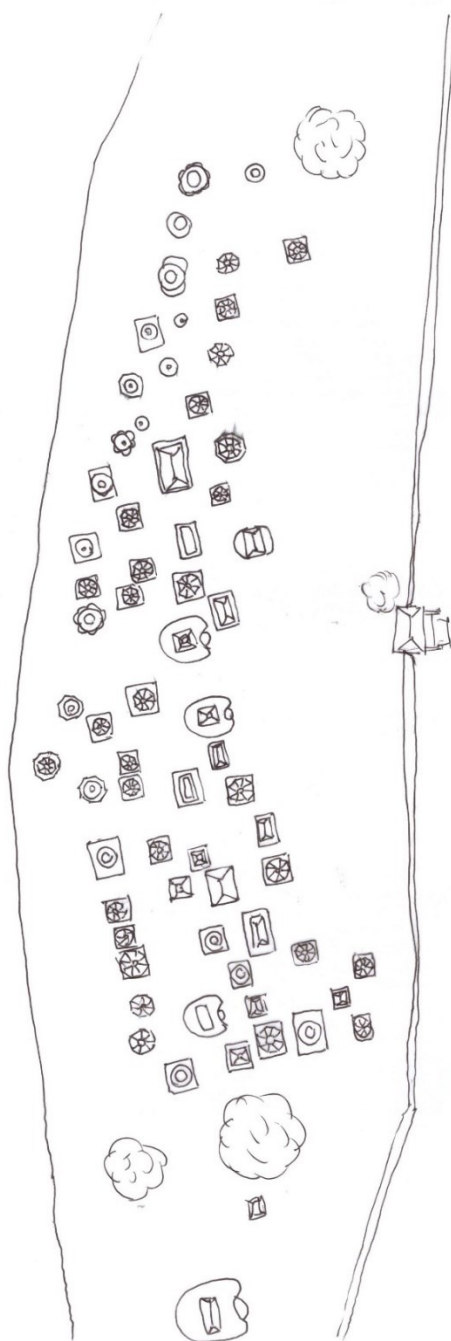


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Fig. 39. Detail of 38.



Fig. 40. Detail of 38.



Fig. 41. Stupa of Yönggok Yöng'u, Late Chosön, 241 cm, Taehüngsa.





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Fig. 46. Stupa of Wanhö Yunu, 1828, 305 cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 47. Stupa of P'ungdam Ŭisim, 1692, 321 cm, Taehŭngsa.





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Fig. 51. Stupa of master Kuam, Late Chosŏn, 174 cm, Taehŭngsa.





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Fig. 53. Maebul (high-relief Buddha), Late Silla–Early Koryŏ, 260 cm, Pungmirügam hermitage, Taehüngsa.

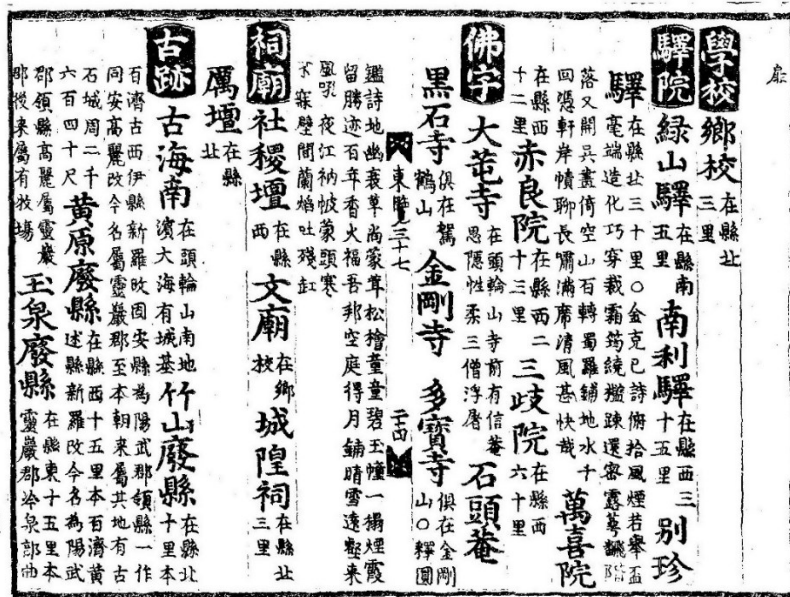


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Fig. 55. Stele of Hyujŏng, 1647, 380 cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 56. Stupa of Wŏljŏ Toan, Late Chosŏn, 209 cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 57. Stupa of Hwaak Munsin, 1709, 212 cm, Taehŭngsa (after Munhwajaech'ŏng, Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong munhwa yusan palgul chosadan 2006a, Vol. III, 270).





Fig. 58. Stupa of Sōram Ch'ubung, Late Chosŏn, 164 cm, Taehŭngsa.





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Fig. 60. Stupa of Sangwöl Saebong, 1687, 209 cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 61. Hoam Ch'ejong's stupa (according to *Munhwajaech'ŏng*, Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong munhwa yusan palgul chosadan 2006a), Late Chosŏn, 212.5 cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 62. Hoam Ch'ejöng's stupa (reconstruction of the author), Late Chosön, 211 cm, Taehüngsa.



Fig. 63. Stupa of Yöndam Yuil, Late Chosŏn, 201 cm, Taehŭngsa (after Munhwajaech'ŏng, Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong munhwa yusan palgul chosadan 2006a, Vol. III, 272).





Fig. 64. Stupa of Manhwa Wŏn'o, Late Chosŏn, 182 cm, Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 65. Stupa of Yŏnhae Kwangyŏl, Late Chosŏn, 176 cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 66. Stupa of Yönggok Yöng'u, Late Chosŏn, 241 cm, Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 67. Stele of Hamwöl Haewön, 1822, 165×61.5×23, Taehüngsa.





Fig. 68. Unnamed stupa, Late Chosŏn, 164 cm, Taehŭngsa.

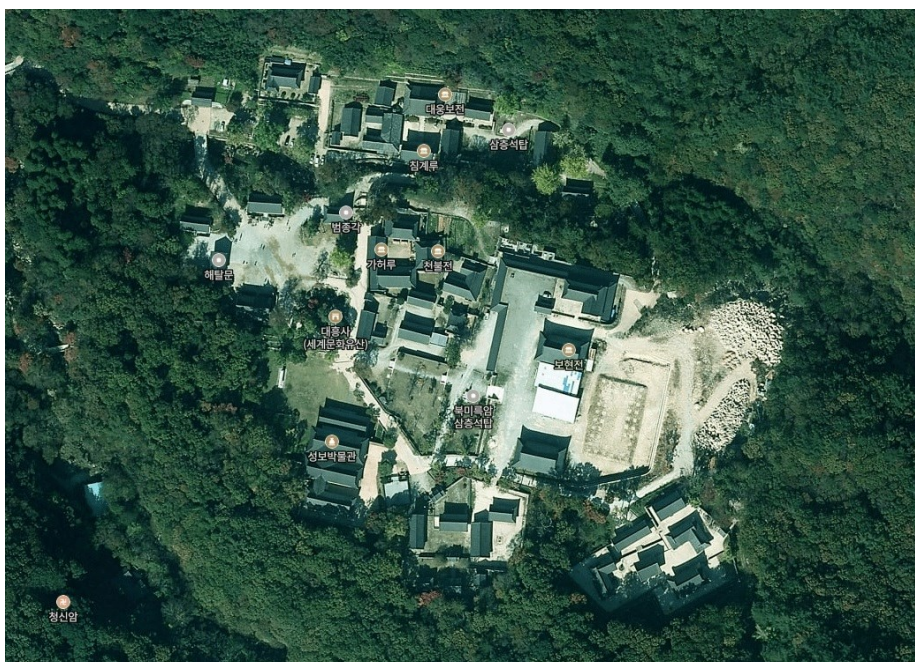


Fig. 69. Satellite image of Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 70. The three major precincts at the monastery.





Fig. 71. Main entrance of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine at Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 72. Innermost section of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine at Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 73. P'yoch'ung pigak.



Fig. 74. Chosajön





Fig. 75. P'yoch'ungsa shrine, Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 76. Group portrait, Late 19<sup>th</sup> – Early 20<sup>th</sup> century, color on silk, 108.5 × 122.2, Chosajŏn, Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 77. Group portrait, Late 19<sup>th</sup> – Early 20<sup>th</sup> century, color on silk, 105×86.7, Chosajön, Taehüngsa.



Fig. 78. Group portrait, Late 19<sup>th</sup> – Early 20<sup>th</sup> century, color on silk, 106×85.5, Chosajön, Taehüngsa.





Fig. 79. Interior of the Chosajŏn.



Fig. 80. Interior of the P'yoch'ungsa shrine.



Fig. 81. Portrait of Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng, 20<sup>th</sup> century, P'yoch'un-gsa shrine, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 82 . Portrait of Samyŏng Yujŏng, 20<sup>th</sup> century, P'yoch'ungsa shrine, Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 83 . Portrait of Noemuk Ch'öyöng, 20<sup>th</sup> century, P'yoch'ungsa shrine, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 84. Ritual tablets inside the P'yoch'ungsa shrine (detail of fig. 80).

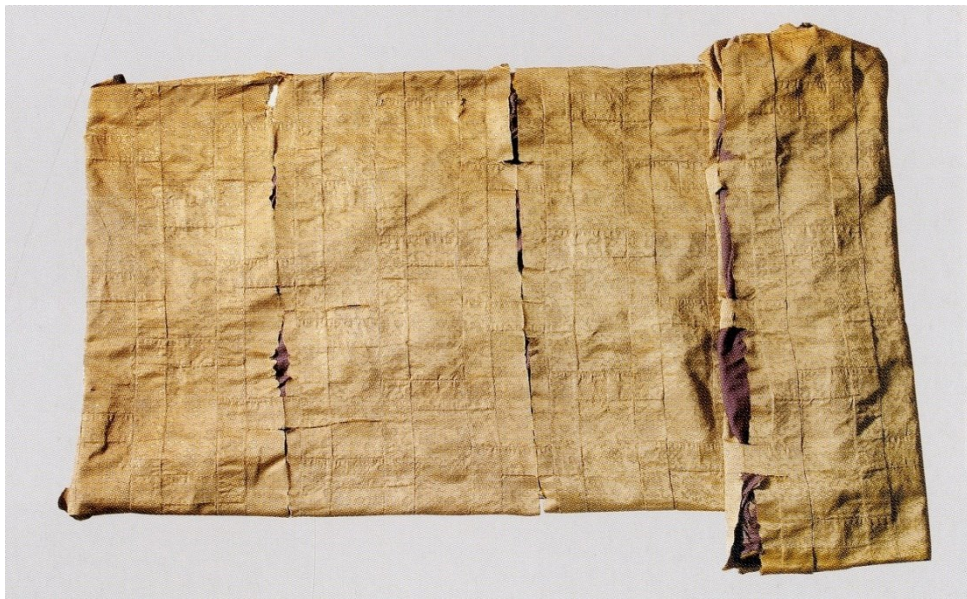


Fig. 85. Golden robe, Late Chosŏn, Taehŭngsa (after Munhwajaech'ŏng, Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong munhwa yusan palgul chosadan 2006a, Vol. III, 337).



Fig. 86. Bowls and spoon, Late Chosŏn, Jade, Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 87. Rosaries, Late Chosŏn, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 88. Hemp shoes, Late Chosŏn, Taehŭngsa.

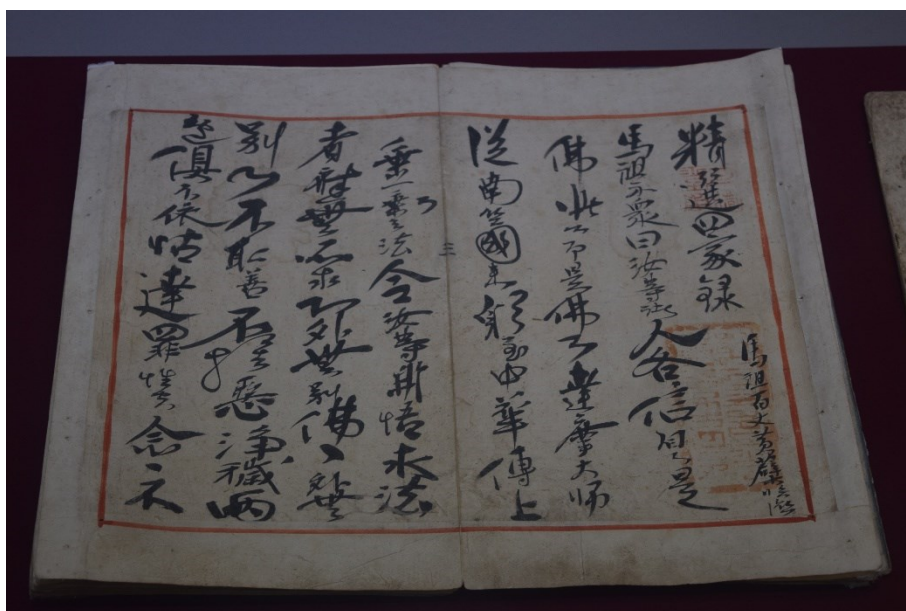


Fig. 89. Calligraphic document attributed to Hyujŏng, Late Chosŏn, ink on paper, 35x20, Taehŭngsa.

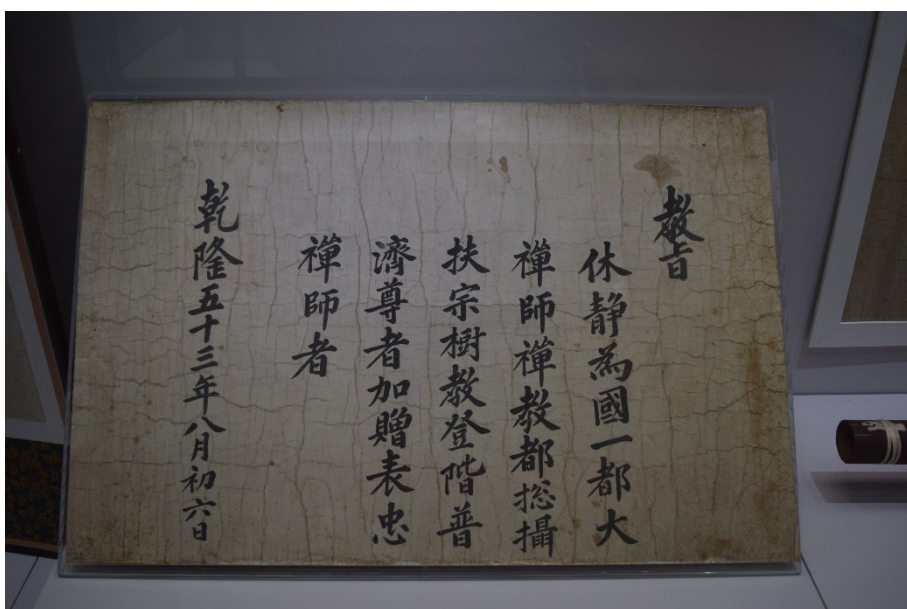


Fig. 90. Royal edict, 1788, ink on paper, 69.2×105.5, Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 91. P'yoch'ungsa shrine at P'yoch'ungsa, Miryang



Fig. 92. “Hwanggwibi chŏnha sŏngsujenyŏn” hall tablet, early 20th century, wood, Taehŭngsa (after Munhwajaech'ŏng, Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong munhwa yusan palgul chosadan 2006a, Vol. III, 260).



Fig. 93. “Hwangt'aeja chŏnha sŏngsu ch'ŏnch'u” hall tablet, early 20th century, wood, Taehŭngsa (after Munhwajaech'ŏng, Taehan pulgyo Chogyejong munhwa yusan palgul chosadan 2006a, Vol. III, 260).





Fig. 94. Kuksajŏn, Songgwangsa, Sunch'ŏn.



Fig. 95. Interior of Kuksajŏn, Songgwangsa, Sunch'ŏn.



Fig. 96. Interior of Kuksajön, Songgwangsa, Sunch'ön.



Fig. 97. Yönggak, P'yoch'ungsa, Miryang





Fig. 98. Interior of Yönggak, P'yoch'ungsa, Miryang.



Fig. 99. P'ungam yönggak, Songgwangsa, Sunch'ön





Fig. 100. Interior of the P'ungam yŏnggak (after <http://www.ibulgyo.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=151891>)

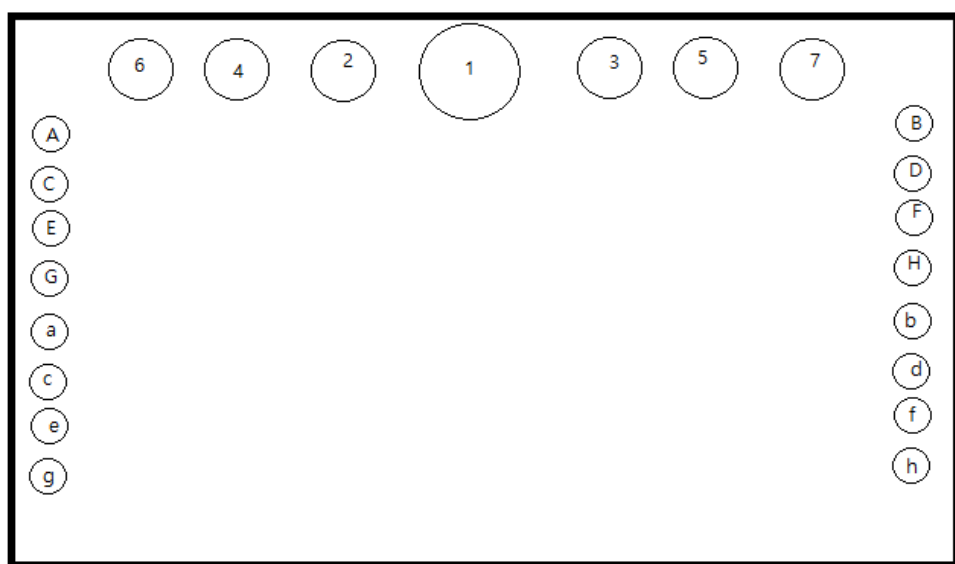


Fig. 101. Proposed reconstruction of the portrait hall described in the Taedunsaji.

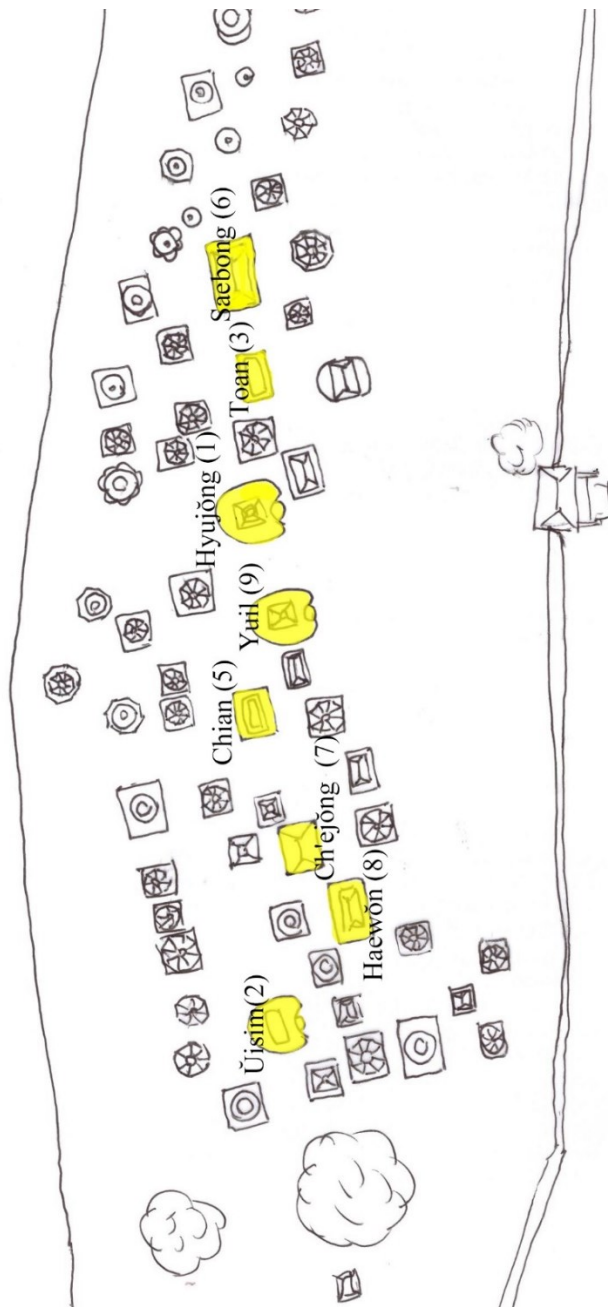


Fig. 102. Position of the steles listed by the Taedunsaji in the stupa group.



Fig. 103. Stele of Hyujŏng, 1647, 380 cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 104. Stele of P'ungdam Ŭisim, 1692, 321 cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 105. Stele of Wöljö Toan, 1739, 322 cm, Taehüngsa.



Fig. 106. Stele of Hwansŏng Chian, 1822, 337cm, Taehŭngsa.





Fig. 107. Stele of Sangwŏl Saebong, 1782, 375 cm, Taehŭngsa.



Fig. 108. Stele of Hoam Ch'ejöng, 1822, 297.5 cm, Taehöngsa.





Fig. 109. Stele of Hamwöl Haewön, 1822, 288 cm, Taehüngsa.



Fig. 110. Stele of Yöndam Yuil, 1803, 370 cm, Taehŭngsa.

## 국문 초록

조선시대 후기(17-19세기) 불교의 법통과 선사 관련 물질 문화:  
보현사와 대둔사에서 전개된 청허 휴정의 법통과 물질문화

Marco Trombetta

고고미술사학과 미술사전공

서울대학교 대학원

본 연구는 조선후기 (17-19세기)에 일어난 불교계의 변화, 그리고 이 변화와 연결된 불교 물질성의 역할을 고찰한다. 조선시대 후기의 대표적인 특징은 선종의 부흥과 법통설의 설립과 전개라고 말할 수 있다. 법통설은 선사(禪師)를 불교의 종교적 경험의 핵심적인 요소로 만들었다. 결과적으로 불교계에 새로운 지도층이 등장하면서 조선 불교의 성격은 전반적으로 변화되었다.

조선후기에 다양한 종류의 선사 관련 물질문화가 대량으로 생산되고 널리 유포되었다. 승탑, 탑비, 진영, 가사, 발우 등, 다양한 매체를 포함한 이 물질문화는 본래 한반도에 알려져 있었으나 조선후기 불교계의 변화와 함께 그의 상징적인 의미와 용도가 크게 바뀌었다. 새로운 불교의 패러다임의 설립과 전개에 선사 관련 물질문화는 근본적·적극적인 역할을 맡았다.

논문은 두 부분으로 나뉘어 있다.

1부는 법통설의 설립과 전개과정에 집중한다. 법통설은 조선 후기 불교의 새로운 패러다임이 되고 한반도의 불교를 혁명적으로 변화시켰다. 17세기 초



반에 묘향산 보현사의 교단에 의해 본격적으로 설립된 법통설 개념의 전개는 지적 작업이었으나 이 개념이 성공하기 위해 필수적인 요소 중 하나는 선사 관련 물질 문화였다. 이 물질문화는 상징성이 높고 누구나 직접적으로 접근하기가 쉽다. 선사를 불교의 핵심으로 삼는 법통설은 이러한 물질 문화의 힘 덕분에 성공적으로 확산할 수 있었다고 해도 과언이 아니다. 법통설을 설립한 교단은 이미 한반도에 현존하던 다양한 물질적 매체의 의미를 사용하고 변경했다. 선사 관련 물질성은 문헌으로 시작한 이론적인 개념한테 누구에게나 직접 경험할 수 있는 확실한 모양새를 주었다. 제1장에서는 법통설의 이론적인 면을 검토하고 제2장에서는 법통설을 탄생시키기에 선사 관련 물질문화는 어떤 역할을 가졌는지에 대해 고찰하고 그 역할의 범위를 탐색했다. 당시 선사 관련 물질문화의 생산과 그의 의미 확정을 선도한 이들은 교단의 리더가 된 승려들이었다는 사실을 밝히고나서 그들의 원래 목표에 집중하고 보현사 교단의 맥락에 나타난 결과를 연구했다. 1부에 연구되는 물질문화는 주로 선사의 사리 그리고 이와 관계 있는 '대형' 유물 (승탑, 비석)이었다는 점이 중요한 특징이다.

2부에는 해남 대흥사/대둔사가 소유하던 다양한 선사 관련 유물의 해석과 이 유물들과 연결된 여러 사건의 예를 통해 법통설의 전국적인 확산, 그리고 이 확산과 함께 일어난 선사 관련 물질문화의 개념적인 변화를 해석해 보고자 한다. 초기 법통설은 명확한 지역에 활동하던 교단의 확실한 리더십의 문제를 해결하기 위해 설립되었다. 그런데 그 힘은 상당했기 때문에 법통설을 구체화시킨 물질문화와 함께 조금씩 변경되면서 조선의 다른 지역과 각 지역의 교단에 상당한 속도로 확산되었다. 물질문화는 이 확산 과정에 상당한 역할을 맡았는데 동시에 선사 관련 물질문화의 의미는 각 지역과 종교적 상황에 맞춰서 새로운 의미를 가지게 되었다. 2부는 연구 범위의 문제로 인해 대둔사의 사례에만 집중하지만 비슷한 상황을 조선후기 동안 변창한 거의 모든

사찰에서 찾을 수 있다. 선사 관련 물질문화의 연구를 통해 조선후기 교단 구성원들의 자기 인식, 교단과 후원 추구의 문제, 불교자들과 물질성의 복잡한 관계, 사찰의 물질적 재산에 대한 승려의 인식 등 다양한 흥미로운 주제를 탐구할 수 있고, 불교사에 대해 보다 깊은 이해를 얻을 수 있다. 1부에 등장한 유물에 비해 2부에 등장하는 선사 관련 물질문화는 형식적으로나 성격적으로나 보다 다양하다는 것이 특징이다. 이 점은 선사 관련 물질문화 용도의 다양화를 반영한다.

주요어: 법통설, 보현사, 대둔사, 선사 (禪師), 물질문화, 청허휴정, 권력, 승탑

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