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INTRODUCTION

The compilation of Ch'an *kung-an* (public case) texts during the Sung dynasty (960-1279) was aimed at producing literati literature.¹ Once the iconoclastic styles of Ch'an pedagogy had been written down as texts annotated with elusive poetry and polished prose, only people with substantial literary credentials—dominantly male—could approach them. This delimitation is further reflected by the fact that Ch'an monks of the Sung had close associations with Sung literati (*shih-ta-fu*). Ch'an Buddhism in the Sung may thus be generally labeled as a type of "literati Buddhism."² The literary approach to Ch'an (*wen-tzu* Ch'an), however, would seem to contradict Ch'an's doctrine of "not depending upon words and letters" (*pu-li wen-tzu*). This paper is a study of the practice of Ch'an *kung-an* taught by Yuan-wu K'o-ch'in (1063-1135), a monk of the Lin-chi school from the Szechuan region. He played a significant role in transforming the literary approach to *kung-an* into the practical *k'an-hua* Ch'an (Ch'an of investigating the critical phrase or word, *hua-t'ou*, of *kung-an*). Moreover, it is in part through the teachings of Yuan-wu that the Ch'an tradition of Szechuan which had been

1. See Robert M. Gimello's discussion of the relationship between Ch'an and literati culture during the Sung in "Mārga and Culture: Learning, Letters, and Liberation in Northern Sung Ch'an," *Paths to Liberation: The Mārga and Its Transformations in Buddhist Thought*, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr. and Robert M. Gimello, *Studies in East Asian Buddhism* 7 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992) 371-437.

2. This term is derived from Erik Zürcher; see his definition of using "gentry Buddhism" to label Chinese Buddhism in the fourth and the fifth centuries, in *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959) 4-6.

marginalized (both geographically and culturally) strove to merge into the mainstream of Sung religious and cultural life.

In recent decades, much has been written about Ch'an *kung-an* and *k'an-hua* Ch'an. Scholars have discussed the use of *kung-an* in the Lin-chi Ch'an school, ascribed the emergence of *k'an-hua* Ch'an to Ta-hui Tsung-kao (1089-1163), and analyzed the process of using *hua-t'ou* in Ch'an *kung-an* praxis. However, little attempt has been made to link an individual Ch'an monk's regional background with his treatment of Ch'an teaching and practice, nor has there been much focus on the transition from the literary study of *kung-an* to the practical *k'an-hua* Ch'an. Moreover, some scholars, who have held the view that Ch'an during the Sung was in a period of decline, blame the deterioration of Ch'an on the emergence of *wen-tzu* Ch'an by using Yuan-wu's *Pi-yen lu* (Blue Cliff Record) as an example.³ The present paper, then, aims to introduce Szechuan as an important place in the case of Ch'an's response to Sung literati culture and to give much more positive recognition to Yuan-wu K'o-ch'in, the master of Ta-hui Tsung-kao, in the evolution of the mature *k'an-hua* Ch'an.⁴

CH'AN IN SZECHUAN: A SHIFT TOWARD LITERARY ENGAGEMENT AFTER THE FOUNDING OF THE SUNG

Geographically, Szechuan was a peripheral, landlocked area that had not been brought under effective central control until the founding of the Sung empire. Though Szechuan had long been in contact with Central Plain culture, geographical seclusion and the lack of central regulations and restraints allowed the local people to pursue their own cultural and religious life, which might even appear "unorthodox" to those who in the capital region. Moreover, without the patronage of the central authorities, Buddhism, Taoism and even the local elite had to rely more on the support from the common people and, therefore, paid more attention to their needs.

3. See, for example, Kenneth Ch'en, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964) 403-4.

4. Furuta Shōkin, however, recognizes the great importance to Yuan-wu's teaching of Ch'an *kung-an* in the evolution of *kung-an* practice, in "Kōan no rekishi-teki hatten keitai no okeru shinrisei no mondai," in *Bukkyō no kompon shinri*, ed. Miyamoto Shōson (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1956) 820-6.

In the case of Buddhism, both Tao-hsuan's (596-667) *Hsu kao-seng chuan* (Further Biographies of Eminent Monks) [645-667] and Tsan-ning's (919-1001) *Sung kao-seng chuan* (Biographies of Eminent Monks compiled during the Sung) [988] indicate that among the thirty-three eminent monks in Szechuan during the T'ang dynasty (618-907), those who were engaged in translating the Buddhist scriptures (1) and interpreting the Buddhist doctrines (6) were less numerous than those who were famous for mystical communication (8), reciting the scriptures (5), practicing meditation (4), producing merit (4), and so on.⁵ Apparently, in Szechuan Buddhism during the T'ang the common people were the target audience, in particular, in the Buddhists' struggles with the Taoists.⁶ The Ch'an history in T'ang Szechuan further shows that during the eighth century the major tendency in the Ch'an school here was toward a radical anti-textual, antinomian movement.⁷

We do not know much about the development of Buddhism in Szechuan under the two independent regimes, the Former Shu (907-925) and the Latter Shu (934-965). The extant historical records focus mainly on the Five Dynasties in north China and the kingdoms around the Lower Yangtze Valley such as the Wu-yueh (907-978) in Chekiang, the Min (909-960) in Fukien, and the Southern T'ang (937-975) in Nanching (in the Kiangsu province).⁸ All one can say is that during this

5. See the statistics by Kiyoshi Fuji, in "Tōdai Shoku chihō ni okeru shomin to Bukkyō," in *Bukkyō shigaku* 3:4 (1953), 19.

6. See *HKSC*, in *T.* 50, 530c-531a, 600b-601b, 642b-643a, 688a-b, 698a, etc. Also see Kiyoshi Fuji, *ibid.*, 20-2.

7. See the study by Yanagida Seizan, "The *Li-tai fa-pao chi* and the Ch'an Doctrine of Sudden Awakening," trans. Carl Bielefeldt, in *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*, ed. Whalen Lai and Lewis Lancaster, Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series 5 (Berkeley, Calif.: Asian Humanities Press, 1983) 13-49.

8. The kingdoms in southeast China were regarded as the most flourishing regions for Buddhism during the period of Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms. See Chih-p'an (1220-75), *Fo-tsu t'ung-chi* (A Comprehensive Chronicle Record of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs; hereafter cited as *FTTC*) [1269] 51, *T.* 49.451b, 453a, 454b; Nien-ch'ang (1282-1323), *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai* (A Comprehensive Record of the Successive Generations of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs; hereafter cited as *FTLTTT*) [1341] 17 & 18, *T.* 49.650b-659c; so can be seen in Tsan-ning's *SKSC*. Indeed, the biographies of the Szechuan monks (including those who were from and those who were active in Szechuan) between the ninth century to the mid-tenth century recorded in the large, officially-sponsored Buddhist historical texts are very few; Kuan-hsiu (832-912) [in *SKSC* 30, *T.* 50.897a-b] and Ta-sui Fa-chen (833-919) [in *CTL* 11, *T.* 51.286a-b] were probably the most eminent

period of disunity, Ch'an in Szechuan did not play a prominent role in Chinese Ch'an Buddhism. In terms of the development of the use of "encounter dialogue" (*chi-yuan wen-ta*), which became mainstream in the Ch'an movement during this time, Ch'an in Szechuan was neither significant nor influential. Though, as Yanagida Seizan has pointed out, Ma-tsu Tao-i (709-788), the founder of the Hung-chou school and the pioneer of the use of the "encounter dialogue," came from Szechuan and was deeply influenced by the Szechuan Ch'an movement of his time, his school later flourished mainly in the Kiangsi region, far away from Ma-tsu's native place.⁹

This point becomes even clearer as we examine the two early Ch'an lamp texts: the *Tsu-t'ang chi* (Collection from the Patriarchal Hall; hereafter cited as *TTC*) [952] and Tao-yuan's (n. d.) *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu* (The Record of the Transmission of the Lamp Compiled in the Ching-te Era; hereafter cited as *CTL*) [1004]. The *TTC* was the earliest of the Ch'an lamp histories extant in complete form. It was compiled at Fukien by two disciples in the lineage of Hsueh-feng I-ts'un (822-908). It contains some two hundred cases of the exchanges between Ch'an Buddhists in the form of "encounter dialogue," with the main focus on Fukien, Kiangsi, Hunan and Chekiang.¹⁰ The geographical seclusion of Szechuan was certainly one reason why the compilers of the *TTC* included very few Szechuan Ch'an figures. But even in the *CTL*, a comprehensive, state-sponsored Ch'an historical text that records the biographies of some nine hundred and sixty Ch'an monks, the Ch'an

ones, but Kuan-hsiu was actually a native of Chekiang and went to Szechuan until the founding of the Shu regime. For the modern studies of Buddhism in this period, see Michihata Ryōshū, *Chūgoku bukkyōshi* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1958) 175-8; Makita Tairyō, *Godai shōkyō kenkyū* (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1971).

9. Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1967) 335-347; and idem, "The 'Recorded Sayings' Texts of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism," trans. John R. McRae, in *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*, 185-205.

10. *TTC*, compiled by Ching (n. d.) and Yun (n. d.) of Southern T'ang. Re-edited by Yanagida Seizan, in *Zengaku sōsho* 4 (copied by Kyoto: Chūbun shuppan sha, 1984). I only found out five biographies of Szechuan monks included in *TTC*: 2.31-36, 108-110; 2.44, 114; 4.33-44, 260-5; 5.34-35, 330-1; and 5.107, 367. Among them, actually only Ta-sui Fa-chen was from and active in Szechuan during the Five Dynasties period; the other four were from Szechuan but active outside the Szechuan regions in the T'ang.

monks in Szechuan who had sayings recorded were still very few, especially compared to those in south-east China.¹¹

The situation in Szechuan changed after the founding of the Sung. The state was now eager to bring Szechuan under more effective central control. The huge project of the Sung ruling house to print the entire Buddhist canon in Ch'eng-tu, was certainly not simply because Szechuan by the end of the T'ang had developed into an important center of wood-block printing;¹² it had political considerations: to strengthen central surveillance over Szechuan and to unify both Han and non-Han peoples in this area by using Buddhism as an ideological tool. In addition, the imperial patronage of printing the Buddhist canon was also a result of the early Sung court's decision to establish a civil (*wen*) order through promoting literary learning and activities extensively.¹³ Thus in 972, orders were given by Sung emperor T'ai-tsu (r. 960-975) that the task of cutting woodblocks be started in Ch'eng-tu. In 983, the printing of the first edition of the Chinese *Tripitaka* was completed.¹⁴

While the state wanted to integrate the Szechuan region with the rest of the empire, the Szechuan literati, who had been on the margins of the Chinese culture for hundreds of years, were also eager to join the mainstream of all aspects of Sung Chinese life. For many descendants of the "great families," whose ancestors had fled from the Central Plain to

11. The number of the monks in or of Szechuan during the ninth and the tenth centuries recorded in *CTL* is less than twenty; see *CTL*, T.51: 11, 285c, 286a-b, 287c; 12, 296b-c; 17, 339b; 19, 359c; 20, 365a; 22, 387a-b; 23, 390c, 393a-b, 395a and c, 397a; 24, 404c, 405c; 26, 421b.

12. *Chiu Wu-tai shih* [6 vols.], compiled by Hsueh Chü-cheng (912-981) et al. (Beijing: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1976) *chüan* 43, in vol. 2, 588-9. For the reference to the privately printed almanacs in Szechuan, see Wang Tang (fl. 1101-1110), *T'ang yü-lin* (reprint, Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1939) *chüan* 7, 203-4. In English, see Thomas F. Carter, *The Invention of Printing in China*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1955); *Ancient China's Technology and Science*, compiled by the Institute of the History of Natural Science, China Academy of Science (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1983) 383-91.

13. Peter K. Bol, *"This Culture of Ours": Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) 150-5.

14. *FTTC* 43, T.49.396a, 398a-b; *ibid.* 53, T.49.463b. For the Sung records about the tasks of translating the Buddhist scriptures and the monasteries built for translating scriptures, see *Sung hui-yao* (The Important Documents of the Sung) (copied by National Pei-p'ing Library, 1936), "Tao-shih" (Taoism and Buddhism), vol. 200, 2/4-9. Also Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, 374-5.

Szechuan in the rebellions of An Lu-shan [744-757] and Huang Ch'ao [874-884] and during the period of turmoil that followed the end of the T'ang empire, they saw in this newly reunited Sung Chinese empire a chance to resume their leading political and cultural roles. According to the *Szechuan T'ung-chih* (Szechuan Gazetteer) [1816], the biographies of the *Sung shih* (Sung History) included more Szechuan men than did those in the preceding dynastic histories.¹⁵ Winston W. Lo's study of Sung Szechuan officials furthermore suggests that Szechuan literati played a relatively important part in Sung political life.¹⁶

The tendency toward literary pursuits among Szechuan men as a response to the new Sung civil order is found not merely in the secular circles but also in the Ch'an circles. And if Sung Szechuan literati were anxious about participating in the mainstream of Sung culture and politics, Ch'an monks of Szechuan might also have felt an urgent need to move from their obscure situation to a dominant position in Sung religious life. The creation of *kung-an* literature with its distinctive language and elegant style was therefore a result of Ch'an's response to the Sung court's promotion of literary endeavors. That poetry, the apex of Chinese literary products, became an indispensable element in Ch'an *kung-an* anthologies is an indication that men of the letters were the target lay audience of Ch'an *kung-an* texts. Moreover, although it was the emperor who patronized the huge task of printing the Buddhist canon, scholar-officials must have played an influential role in the selection of Buddhists texts. The production of refined literary writings by Ch'an Buddhists of the Sung, then, aspired to the secular standard and tastes of their contemporary literati, in the hope that their works could be included in the Sung *Tripitaka*. All this accounts for a shift toward literary engagement in the Ch'an of Szechuan after the founding of the Sung.

Hsueh-tou Ch'ung-hsien (980-1052), the fourth patriarch and reviver of the Yun-men Ch'an school, is a good example of a Ch'an monk from a humble family in the marginal Szechuan region who eventually became well known in national literati circles.¹⁷ A native of Sui-chou, Hsueh-

15. SCTC, compiled by Yang Fan-ts'an et al.; information is drawn indirectly from Winston W. Lo, *Szechuan in Sung China: A Case Study in the Political Integration of the Chinese Empire* (Taipei: The University of Chinese Culture Press, 1982) 157-8.

16. Lo, *ibid.*, 148-156.

17. For Hsueh-tou's biography, see his tomb epitaph, in T.47.712a-713b; also Ruth Fuller Sasaki and Isshū Miura, *Zen Dust: The History of the Koan*

tou was one of the two Ch'an masters of his time engaged in compiling *kung-an* anthologies; the other was Fen-yang Shan-chao (947-1024), a Ch'an master of the Lin-chi school who was active in Shansi of north China.¹⁸ With his extraordinary poetic talent, Hsueh-tou was fond of using poetry as a vehicle to express his appreciation for the gist of Ch'an *kung-an*. His *kung-an* text, the *Pai-tse sung-ku* (One Hundred Old Cases and Verses [to the Cases]; hereafter cited as *PTSK*), demonstrates both his literary effort and talent. It is a collection of one hundred most representative "old cases" to which Hsueh-tou also added his own explanatory verse; approximately eighty-two were taken from the 1700 cases in the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu* and eighteen were drawn from the *kung-an* originated by Yun-men Wen-yen (864-949), the founder of the Yun-men school. Hsueh-tou's *PTSK*, together with his other works, earned him a literary reputation and a successful monastic career.¹⁹ More than this, Hsueh-tou brought his way of Ch'an to the Sung cultural center; he lived in Chekiang, which was one of the most prosperous provinces in south China, for thirty-one years until he died in 1052.

Literary activity no doubt facilitated Ch'an's growing acceptance within the literati circles. But it might well have resulted in the degeneration of the spirit of Ch'an and hence put an end to Ch'an. The task of revitalizing the written Ch'an *kung-an* in the context of Ch'an praxis was what Yuan-wu K'o-ch'in, a tenth-generation heir in the Yang-ch'i [Fang-hui (992-1049)] branch of the Lin-chi school and a native of Szechuan, sought to accomplish.

Study in Rinzai (Lin-chi) Zen (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1966) 159-160.

18. The collections of *kung-an* is in Fen-yang's *yü-lu* (in *T.47.595b-629c*), *chüan* 2. Also see the discussion in *Zen Dust*, 12 and 355-6.

19. There is no independent version of the *Pai-tse sung-ku* in the *Taishō* canon or *Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō* (hereafter cited as *ZZ*). The independent version in one volume, however, can be found in *Šsu-pu ts'ung-k'an* (Various Collections in the Four [Traditional Bibliographic] Categories), ser. 2, vol. 370 (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1935). For a study of Hsueh-tou's *Pai-tse sung-ku*, see Yanagida Seizan, "Kaisetsu," in *Setchō juko, Zen no Goroku* 15 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1981) 281-311; also *Zen Dust*, 12-3. For Hsueh-tou's other works, see *T.47.712c29-713a2*.

YUAN-WU K'O-CH'IN'S MONASTIC CAREER AND HIS ASSOCIATIONS WITH LITERATI ELITE

Yuan-wu was born into the Lo family of P'eng-chou, Szechuan, in 1063. From the record, we know that his family "had been studying Confucianism for generations" and that "in his early youth he could memorize one thousand words every day."²⁰ The brief description of his family background and his acquisition of elementary literacy suggests that, first, some of his ancestors or contemporary family members may have obtained minor official positions through passing the civil service examination (they were certainly not so exalted as to be recorded in his biography); and, second, Yuan-wu may have received his literary education for the purpose of taking civil examinations. As for his devotion to Buddhism, we are told: "When he occasionally visited the Miao-chi Monastery near his home, he read the Buddhist scriptures and felt very moved. He, then, said to himself: 'In my previous lifetime, I must have been a Buddhist monk.' Yuan-wu then left home and received the tonsure in the Miao-chi Monastery."²¹

Considering the overwhelming influence of the examinations on the lives of numerous youth during the Sung period, we may also speculate Yuan-wu did not do well in the civil examinations, and chose with his parents' permission to enter the Buddhist monastery, a center that could provide him with the best conditions for continuing his intellectual pursuits without too much secular (i. e., Confucian) restraint and pressure. Whatever the truth of Yuan-wu's motive to become a monk, his later engagement in the teaching of *kung-an* practice demonstrates that what he opposed most was exactly the study of the "dead words" (*ssu-chü*), words that led only to literary knowledge and textual mastery.

When Yuan-wu finally finished his study under Wu-tsu Fa-yen (1024?-1104) and began to build his national reputation, he was in his forties. On the whole, Yuan-wu had a very successful monastic career; not only did he have close connections with some powerful scholar-officials but he also, mainly on their recommendation, received patron-

20. *Wu-teng hui-yuan* (The Collated Essentials of the Five Lamp [Records]; hereafter cited as *WTHY*) [1252] 19, ZZ 2B.11.4, 369d5-6.

21. *WTHY* 19, 369d6-7. According to Abe Chōichi, Yuan-wu became a Buddhist monk probably at the age 17; see Abe, *Chūgoku zenshū no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Seishin shobō, 1963) 435.

age from the Sung court. Kuo Chih-chang (n. d.), who was a *chin-shih* (metropolitan graduate) of the year 1065 and a military commander of Ch'eng-tu at that time, had supported Yuan-wu's Buddhist activities in Szechuan; he invited Yuan-wu to preach in the Chao-chueh Monastery near Ch'eng-tu when the latter returned to Szechuan to take care of his old mother during the Ch'ung-ning period (1102-1106).²² Chang Shang-ying (1043-1121), a former Chief Councilor, met Yuan-wu in Heng-chou, Hunan, during the Cheng-ho period (1111-1117); Chang was very impressed by Yuan-wu's teachings. Later, Yuan-wu was further invited by the prefect of Li-chou (Hunan) to reside in the Ling-ch'üan Monastery at Mount Chia.²³ Teng Hsun-wu (styled Tzu-ch'ang; 1055-1119), a Palace Secretary, was impressed by Yuan-wu's distinctive teaching and reported to Emperor Hui-tsung (r. 1100-1125); the emperor then bestowed upon Yuan-wu a purple robe and the honorable title "Fruition of Buddha" (Fo-kuo) in 1114.²⁴ In 1127, mainly owing to the recommendation of the Prime Minister Li Kang (styled Po-chi; n. d.), Yuan-wu was appointed by Emperor Kao-tsung (r. 1127-1162) to the T'ung-yu Monastery in Chin-shan, Kiangsu.²⁵

An examination of Yuan-wu's private instructions or letters also indicates that he was closely involved in the literati circles; more than one-third of his letters were written to laymen who were men of letters or civil bureaucrats.²⁶ Yuan-wu was well acquainted with Keng Yen-hsi (n. d.) and Chang Chün (1079-1164); the former was a court academician and the latter a chief military officer leading the Imperial Armies against the Jurchen invasion. Both of them studied Ch'an with Yuan-wu and each wrote a preface for Yuan-wu's *Recorded Sayings* (*yü-lu*)

22. *WTHY* 19, 370a12-13. Kuo, *Sung shih*, 355/22B.

23. *WTHY* 19, 370a13-b12. Chang, *Sung shih*, 351/2B.

24. *WTHY* 19, 370b12-13. Teng, *Sung shih*, 329/5.

25. *FLTTT* 20, T.49.686b13-14. Li's biography, *Sung-shih*, 358/1.

26. Yuan-wu's instructions or letters written to individuals, about 145 pieces altogether, were collected under the title *Fo-kuo K'o-ch'in ch'an-shih hsün-yao* (Essentials of Mind [Expounded] by Ch'an Master Fo-kuo K'o-ch'in), 2 fascicles, in *ZZ* 2.25.4, 349c-395c. It was compiled by Yuan-wu's disciple Hung-fu Tzu-wen (n.d.) after Yuan-wu's death and published during the Chia-hsi era (1237-1240). All the *fa-yü* (Dharma-teaching delivered to the individuals) in Yuan-wu's *Recorded Sayings*, in T.47.714a-810c, can be found in this *Hsin-yao* text.

published in 1134.²⁷ In addition, the scholar-officials with whom Yuan-wu was associated include: Ch'en Huan (1057-1122), who had been appointed as Erudite of National University and called himself Layman Hua-yen; Hsu Fu (1075-1141), a Han-lin Academician; Li Mi-hsun (1089-1153), a *chin-shih* of the year 1109; Su Fu (d. 1156), who was a grandson of the famous literary man Su Shih (1036-1101); Chao Ling-chin (d. 1158), who was a descendant of Sung royal family and called himself Layman Ch'ao-jan; and so on.²⁸

During his monastic career, moreover, Yuan-wu had been summoned by the emperors and was frequently assigned by imperial orders to reside in several major monasteries. In 1128 when Emperor Kao-tsung (r. 1127-1162) journeyed to Yang-chou (Kiangsu), he summoned Yuan-wu and furthermore bestowed him with the name "Ch'an Master Perfectly Enlightened" (*Yuan-wu ch'an-shih*), which became a well-known name in Ch'an history. After Yuan-wu's death in 1135, the posthumous title "Ch'an Master Truly Enlightened" (*Chen-chueh ch'an-shih*) was bestowed upon him.²⁹

As the above account shows, Yuan-wu made a candid alliance with power and stood successfully between the two leading groups—the emperor on the one hand and the scholar-officials on the other. Apparently, Yuan-wu understood well that without official patronage his Buddhist mission would be hard to carry out and that to seek patronage from the ruling classes, he should first cultivate close contacts with the local elite, in particular, his fellow Szechuan citizens. A survey of Yuan-wu's monastic career further reveals that he had a strong sense of regionalism; though he went to many other provinces, he finally still returned to Szechuan and stayed there for the rest of his life from 1129 to 1135. Thus we find that among Yuan-wu's lay associates, Chang Shang-ying, Teng Hsun-wu, Ch'en Huan, Chang Chün and Su Fu were all natives of Szechuan. Moreover, not only was Yuan-wu's master,

27. Keng's preface (1133) in T.47.713b20-c28. For his biography, see *Sung shih hsin-pien* (Revised Edition of the Sung History), 122/9B. Chang's preface (1134) in T.47.713c29-714a15. For his biography, *Sung shih*, 361/1.

28. *Sung shih*: Ch'en Huan, 345/10B; Hsu Fu, 372/7; Li Mi-hsun, 382/20; Su Fu, 338/18; Chao Ling-chin, 244/20.

29. *WTHY* 19, 370b; and *FTLTTT* 20, T.49.686a-b

Wu-tsu Fa-yen, a native of Szechuan but also many of his disciples were from the Szechuan region.³⁰

The sense of regionalism, or the concern for making alliance with men from Szechuan also helps explain why Yuan-wu would use the Yunmen master Hsueh-tou Ch'ung-hsien's *PTSK*, not his Lin-chi predecessor Fen-yang Shan-chao's *kung-an* anthology, as his basis for teaching Ch'an *kung-an*. Yuan-wu's specific emphasis on the proper *kung-an* practice might also have been a deliberate move to distinguish his branch from the Huang-lung [Hui-nan (1002-1069)] branch of the Lin-chi school, or to differentiate himself from his contemporary Chueh-fan Hui-hung (1071-1128), a third generation of the Hung-lung line who was an active advocate of *wen-tzu* Ch'an and had close associations with Kiangsi literati.³¹

Starting from the year 1112 on, some sixty years after Hsueh-tou's death, Yuan-wu then began to give a series of lectures on the *PTSK*. The result is the *Pi-yen lu*, the most famous of all *kung-an* anthologies.³² And as we shall see, in terms of content and structure, the *Pi-yen lu* was very different from the *kung-an* texts written by Fen-yang and Hsueh-tou; that is, instead of indulging himself in writing elusive poetry or elegant prose, Yuan-wu provided his audience with clear instructions not only about the correct approach to Ch'an *kung-an* but also about the proper way to read Hsueh-tou's appended verses.

30. Abe Chōichi has listed twenty-four disciples of Yuan-wu; the number of disciples who were from Szechuan is six, the highest portion of this group. But Abe also points out that most of Yuan-wu's disciples were active in the Chekiang province (Ta-hui, who was a native of Anhui, was one among them), i. e., thirteen out of twenty-four; see his *Chūgoku zenshū*, 442-453.

31. For Hui-hung's biography, see *WTHY* 17, 342c2-343a7; Nukariya Kaiten, *Zengaku shisōshi*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Genkōsha, 1923; reprint, Tokyo: Meisho kankōsha, 1969) 219-228. For the alliance between the Huang-lung branch and Kiangsi literati, see Abe Chōichi, *Chūgoku zenshū*, 284-335. This is not to suggest that Yuan-wu and Hui-hung attacked each other; Yuan-wu had a high regard for Hui-hung's literary talents and eloquence; see Tsu-hsiu (n. d.) of the Sung, the *Seng-pao cheng-hsu chuan* 2, ZZ 2B.10.4, 291d6. Nor does this mean that Hui-hung had no alliance with the literati outside the Kiangsi region; Chang Shang-ying, for example, was one of his supporters.

32. T.2003.48.140a-224b. The *Pi-yen lu* was published in 1128 and was said to have been burned by Ta-hui Tsung-kaō around 1140. The present version in the *Taishō* is a Yuan (1280-1368) edition published in 1300. The complete text has been translated by Thomas and J. C. Cleary, *The Blue Cliff Record*, 3 vols. (Boulder: Shambhala, 1977). For a general analysis of the *Pi-yen lu*, see Sasaki and Isshū, *Zen Dust*, 356-8.

FROM HSUEH-TOU'S *PAI-TSE SUNG-KU* TO YUAN-WU'S *PI-YEN LU**Hsueh-tou's Real Intention for Writing the PTSK*

In his commentaries and annotations, Yuan-wu tried hard to elevate the value and function of Hsueh-tou's literary composition in the context of Ch'an *kung-an* instruction and praxis. He admired Hsueh-tou as an excellent writer who could grasp the key points of each *kung-an* and expressed them in a clear and concise way.³³ In some cases, he would explain to his audience why Hsueh-tou selected that case in particular and made a verse for it. Or, he pointed out to his students the particularly outstanding poems in the *PTSK*.³⁴ But fearing that some people would not benefit from reading these poems and would become entangled in them, Yuan-wu usually annotated the poems line by line. Indeed, many of these poems are not only highly symbolic but also rich in allusions to both Chinese secular literature and Ch'an history; one can hardly understand them without Yuan-wu's additional annotations.

As a monk of the Ch'an school, however, Yuan-wu did have more to do with such a refined literary Ch'an work. One urgent task for Yuan-wu was to exculpate Hsueh-tou from the charge of making Ch'an merely a literary activity. He explained to his students the real intention of Hsueh-tou's literary engagement:

If Hsueh-tou were not so compassionate [in the attempt] to make people see [the import of the *kung-an*] by bringing it out in verse, how could he obtain fame as a good friend [of Ch'an practitioners]? When men of the past acted like this, it was all something they had to do. Because later practitioners become attached to their words and give rise to conceptual interpretations (*ch'ing-chieh*), they fail to see the former masters' intention.³⁵

For Yuan-wu, Hsueh-tou was unselfish in the sense that after he achieved his own enlightenment, he still tried to help others obtain awakening, even though he would bear the notoriety for violating the Ch'an tradition of "not depending upon words and letters." Hence the motive behind Hsueh-tou's *PTSK* was nothing more than the hope to

33. *PYL* 1, T.48.147c21-3; 2, 159c25-6; 6, 189c18-20; etc.

34. *PYL* 10, T.48.215a26-27; 3, T.48.165b14-5; etc.

35. *PYL* 1, T.48.148c17-19.



annihilate people's habitual ways of thinking and to let them see into their intrinsic buddha-minds.³⁶ In other words, it was because of Hsueh-tou's fear that people would pursue intellectual understandings of the *kung-an* that he picked up the ancient cases, put forth his own explanations, and composed the verses.

In the view of Yuan-wu, moreover, it was not Hsueh-tou who should be blamed for "depending upon words and letters"; rather, the people who misunderstood the master's intention behind his words should take the responsibility for the deterioration of Ch'an. "If you produce words upon words, phrases upon phrases, and meaning upon meaning, making up interpretations and conceptualization," Yuan-wu warned his audience, "you will not only get me into trouble, but you will also turn your back on Hsueh-tou." Yuan-wu certainly understood well that he was doing what he himself warned against, but he maintained that an enlightened Ch'an master's explanation of the real message of Ch'an was different from a practitioner's conceptual interpretation of the *kung-an*. His defense of Hsueh-tou in the *Pi-yen lu* was a self-defense; as he went on to say, "Although the phrases of the men of the past appear so [contradictory to Ch'an doctrine], their intention is not so; they never create any principle to dominate people."³⁷

The Attempt to Legitimize and Consolidate the Ch'an Tradition

Through a series of lectures on Hsueh-tou's *PTSK*, Yuan-wu thus clarified that this Yun-men Ch'an master's intention was much more than the display of his own literary skill and poetic talent. But as a member of the school of Ch'an, Yuan-wu also felt an urgent need to consolidate Ch'an's legitimacy and perpetuate Ch'an's tradition. In his lectures in the *Pi-yen lu*, Yuan-wu then made apologies for his religion.

The school of Ch'an, Yuan-wu argued, was transmitted by a living succession of human exemplars. Ch'an, therefore, could be practiced by students of various levels of understanding under different circumstances and hence was superior to other Buddhist teachings, which appeared bookish and static. And since the experience of enlightenment was supposed to be personal and intuitive, "none of the teachings con-

36. *PYL* 3, T.48.162b6-7; 2, 155c1-2.

37. *PYL* 1, T.48.145b29-c2.

tained in the *Tripitaka* can explain it thoroughly," Yuan-wu said.³⁸ Or, he would say to his audience:

The men of the past clearly told you: "In terms of this matter [i. e., enlightenment], it is not in words and phrases." If it is in words and phrases, then, do not the twelve parts of the teaching of the three vehicles contain words and phrases? What further need is there for Bodhidharma [the first patriarch of the Chinese Ch'an school] to come from the West?³⁹

For Yuan-wu, Ch'an' superiority to other Buddhist schools lay mainly in its unique pedagogical methods. Yuan-wu argued for the efficacy of Ch'an teaching devices, saying: "In all the great teachings of *Tripitaka*, in the five thousand and forty-eight fascicles of the Buddhist canon, they cannot avoid discussing the mind, the nature, the sudden, and the gradual. Still, has there ever been this kind of information [like Ch'an that would awaken people to the truth]?"⁴⁰ Or, after explaining a *kung-an* about Yun-men Wen-yen, Yuan-wu then pointed to the students:

As soon as [Yun-men] picks up his staff, we immediately see the boundless, marvelous function [of this gesture]. . . . Monk Ch'ing (n. d.), who was in charge of the *Tripitaka* Hall, had said, "Has there ever been such teaching in the five thousand and forty-eight fascicles [like Yun-men's]?"⁴¹

In order to emphasize the supremacy of Ch'an Buddhism, Yuan-wu also told his audience about the glorious history of the Ch'an school whenever he had the chance. For example, Yuan-wu mentioned that the T'ang Emperors Su-tsung (r. 756-762) and Tai-tsung (r. 763-779) not only liked to study Ch'an but also showed their respect to National Ch'an Master Hui-chung Nan-yang (?-776).⁴² Apparently, by using these T'ang emperors as exemplars, Yuan-wu tried to provide a legitimate precedent for a good relationship between Sung rulers and Ch'an monks.

From a Confucian viewpoint, however, the bold language used by Ch'an monks was often regarded as disrespectful to the emperor, or

38. *PYL* 1, T.48.141b23.

39. *PYL* 2, T.48.155b4-6.

40. *PYL* 1, T.48.148b6-8.

41. *PYL* 6, T.48.192b29-c1.

42. *PYL* 2, T.48.158a5-11; also, 10, 222b.

even subversive to the state. In the poem appended to case three, Hsueh-tou wrote:

The sun faces the Buddha, the moon faces the Buddha;
What were the so-called Five Emperors and Three Kings?⁴³

When Emperor Shen-tsung of the Sung (r. 1068-1085) was on the throne, he refused to include this verse in the Buddhist canon for the reason that the above lines subordinated the emperors to the Buddha. Yuan-wu, then, explained, "People generally do not see Hsueh-tou's meaning [behind his words], but only blame him for ridiculing the state. Such conceptual interpretation is really a misunderstanding [of his verse]."⁴⁴ In Yuan-wu's view, the message behind Hsueh-tou's verse was simply to tell people that because every one in essence is equal and has the same potential to achieve enlightenment, any ordinary person can become a sage-king.

The whole process in forming the *Pi-yen lu* itself demonstrates an ironical phenomenon in the development of Ch'an Buddhism: Ch'an monks eventually had to pile words upon words in an effort to explain clearly the nonconceptual essence of Ch'an doctrine. The Yun-men Ch'an master Hsueh-tou Ch'ung-hsien first collected one hundred *kung-an* to which he also appended his own explanatory verses. Since the elegant poetry in the *PTSK* by Hsueh-tou easily led people to assume that Ch'an was nothing but a literary game, Yuan-wu K'o-ch'in of the Lin-chi school now had to provide introductory remarks, additional commentaries and interlinear annotations to elucidate the soteriological intents of the original cases and Hsueh-tou's verses as well. Thus came the *Pi-yen lu*.

But on the other hand, we may also see the *Pi-yen lu* as a Ch'an master's effort to rectify people's tendency toward the literary approach to Ch'an *kung-an*. Instead of writing elegant poetry to epitomize the main gist of *kung-an*, as the former Ch'an masters had done, Yuan-wu endeavored to explain and annotate the original old cases and also the appended verses. Throughout the *Pi-yen lu*, Yuan-wu taught that a *kung-an* anthology should not be read as a collection of "dead words" but should be used effectively as "live words" (*huo-chü*), words that can

43. *PYL* 1, T.48. 142c29-143a1.

44. *PYL* 1, T.48.143a5 & 21-2.

lead to true insight into the enlightened nature of the mind. The distinction between “investigating the meaning” (*ts’an-i*) and “investigating the word” (*ts’an-chü*) then played a pivotal role in Yuan-wu’s teaching of *kung-an* practice. Yuan-wu’s emphasis on the investigation of the “live words,” moreover, had significant impact on Ta-hui Tsung-kao, a native of Anhui who is known as the most vigorous advocate of *k’an-hua* Ch’an during the Southern Sung period.

FROM YUAN-WU’S TEACHING OF *KUNG-AN* PRACTICE TO TA-HUI TSUNG-KAO’S *K’AN-HUA* CH’AN

“Live Words” versus “Dead Words”

The polemical issue in *kung-an* practice exists in the tension between “investigating the meaning” and “investigating the word.” The former concerns understanding the *kung-an* in terms of conceptual, rational analysis whereas the latter is to renounce conceptual thoughts and to discover the ultimate truth, which is literally inconceivable and is originally present in all sentient beings’ minds.⁴⁵ But since a Ch’an *kung-an* consists of these two elements—“words” (*chü*) and “meaning” (*i*)—we might wonder how the practitioner could investigate the word without becoming entrapped in the danger of “investigating the meaning.”

45. The distinction between the “live word” and the “dead word,” as Chang Chung-yuan has pointed out, was first made by the Yun-men Ch’an master Tung-shan Shou-ch’u (?-990); see his *Original Teachings of Ch’an Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1969) 271. But the source is found not in the *CTL*, the text on which Chang’s translation is based, but in Chueh-fan Hui-hung’s *Lin-chien lu* (Records Drawn from [Ch’an] “Groves”) [1107], ZZ 2B.21.4, 299b11-13. In addition, Te-shan Yuan-mi (n. d.), a contemporary of Tung-shan and also a disciple of Yun-men Wen-yen, was said to teach students to investigate the “live words”; see *WTHY* 15, 281c1-2. For a discussion of the distinction between the “live word” and the “dead word,” see Robert E. Buswell, Jr., “Ch’an Hermeneutics: A Korean View,” in *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Studies in East Asian Buddhism* 6 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988) 246-248; idem, “The ‘Shortcut’ Approach of *K’an-hua* Meditation: The Evolution of a Practical Subitism in Chinese Ch’an Buddhism,” in *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, ed. Peter N. Gregory, *Studies in East Asian Buddhism* 5 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987) 348. Robert M. Gimello also discusses this issue in “Marga and Culture,” 376.

Yuan-wu's teaching of *kung-an* practice enables us to see how he tried to resolve this tension in Ch'an *kung-an* practice.

For those who approached Ch'an *kung-an* practice, Yuan-wu's suggestion was: "Hear clearly the words outside the voice; do not seek for anything within the meaning (*wen-ch'ing sheng-wai chü; mo-hsiang i-chung ch'iu*)." ⁴⁶ He often took his own enlightenment experience as an example. One day when Yuan-wu was studying with Wu-tsu Fa-yen, an official came to visit Wu-tsu with questions about the way of Ch'an. Wu-tsu gave him a verse of which two lines read as follows:

Repeatedly calling Hsiao-Yü actually has nothing [to do with her];
All this is only to let Lover T'an (*T'an-lang*) recognize my voice.

The verse was about a lady who, when her lover came, felt too shy to leave her bedchamber and therefore called her serving girl, Hsiao-yü, as a means to let her lover know that she was in. Although the official might not have gotten the point of this verse, Yuan-wu, who was beside them, immediately understood what his master intended to say. ⁴⁷

Yuan-wu's caution against "seeking for anything within the meaning" in *kung-an* practice becomes clearer with his example which indicates that the "truth" was comprised "outside the voice." Were one to use the ordinary, conceptual way of thinking to analyze why this woman called the name of her maid, Hsiao-yü, one would be led to the false presumption that the woman had need of her maid when in fact she did not. By the same token, if one approached the paradoxes or riddles in Ch'an *kung-an* by "investigating the meaning," this would reveal but "dead words" since conceptualization is useless and would furthermore lead the practitioner to be entrapped by the words.

Yuan-wu's attitude toward the proper approach to *kung-an* can be further seen from his interpretation of the dialogues between a monk and the Yun-men Ch'an master Chih-men Kuang-tso (d. 1031) in *kung-an* twenty-one of the *Pi-yen lu*.

One monk asked, "What is the lotus flower like when it has not yet come out of the water?"

Chih-men said, "A lotus flower."

46. *Yuan-wu yü-lu* 2, T.47.719b4.

47. *WTHY* 19, 370a1-6; also *Yuan-wu yü-lu* 13, in T.47.775b1-4.

The monk asked, "How about after it has come out of the water?"
 [Chih-]men said, "Lotus leaves."

Yuan-wu then said to his students:

Tell me, what does the master in the past try to mean [in this *kung-an*]? Actually there are not so many concerns. . . . If you pursue words and follow after phrases, there will never be any connection [with awakening]. If in the midst of words you can penetrate through words, in the midst of meanings you can penetrate through meanings, and in the midst of encounters you can penetrate through encounters, letting yourself be unbound, only then can you see the point of monk Chih-men's response. . . . Practitioners these days do not realize the intention of the men in the past; they just go forward to argue, trying to distinguish "[the lotus flower that] has come out of the water" from "[the lotus flower that] has not yet come out of the water." What is the connection [with spiritual awakening]?⁴⁸

Through the above case, Yuan-wu warned his audience that the correct approach to *kung-an* was not to give a logical solution to the "meaning" of *kung-an* but to penetrate to the real message of the *kung-an*. Implicitly, Yuan-wu seemed to suggest that if one recognized that the "encounter dialogues" contained in the *kung-an* cases were intended to transmit the nonconceptual essence of Ch'an doctrine, one would realize that any attempt to analyze the paradoxes or riddles of the *kung-an* in terms of ordinary conceptual thought was actually meaningless. One would, then, reject any kind of intellectualization of the *kung-an*.

The futility of "investigating the meaning" warned against by Yuan-wu becomes even more significant when the vast number of Ch'an *kung-an* published during the Sung is taken into account. Yuan-wu admonished Ch'an practitioners that the textual study of numerous Ch'an *kung-an* as a means of assimilating the enlightened minds of ancient Ch'an masters would itself become an obstacle to enlightenment. As he said, "If you only look for phrases and mysteries [of the *kung-an*], when will you achieve enlightenment? There were thousands of persons, and each of them had different ways of interpretation [of the *kung-an*]. So whose words should you follow?"⁴⁹

48. *PYL* 3, T.48.161c18-20 and 161c29-162a28.

49. *Yuan-wu yü-lu* 13, T.47.772b6-7.

Yuan-wu's practical teaching of *kung-an* arose as a result of his attempt to spread the correct approach to Ch'an among Sung literati. In a letter to an Edict Attendant surnamed Chiang (Chiang tai-chih), Yuan-wu criticized the attitude the scholar-officials generally held towards the practice of Ch'an:

Every time I met with the scholar-officials, many of them said that they are entangled in mundane things and do not have free time for this [i. e., the practice of Ch'an]. When these [mundane] things have been taken care of, they said, they will then wholeheartedly engage themselves [in Ch'an practice]. Although what they said is honest, they only regard [their] secular pursuits [of fame and wealth] as important and so busily run in and out of a pile of the rotten bones (the "dead words"; here probably refers to the ancient Confucian classics). Having become well-versed [in these classics], they merely call this the mundane task; [they feel] only when they further clear away all the involvement in the mundane world can they turn to [Ch'an practice]. Well, this [kind of attitude toward Ch'an practice] is exactly what we [Ch'an Buddhists] would say: "[Even if] he practices [Ch'an] all day long, he has never [truly] practiced; [even if] he uses [his mind] all day long, he has never [really] used it." How can there be any other great causes and conditions [for achieving enlightenment] outside the mundane world?⁵⁰

The above words of Yuan-wu were certainly addressed to Confucian scholar-officials, who pursued "dead words" and regarded Ch'an as something totally unrelated to their everyday activities. These men failed to realize that the mundane world was the only true ground for practicing Ch'an and attaining enlightenment. And even if they did practice Ch'an, they would usually approach *kung-an* in one of two ways: either through rational, logical analysis, or through simple memorization. Yuan-wu told those who studied Ch'an *kung-an* through logical analysis that conceptualization could never enable them to transcend the perception of birth and death; as he said, "To transcend birth and death, one has to open and penetrate the mind-ground (*hsin-ti*). The *kung-an* is, then, a key to opening the mind-ground."⁵¹ By the same token, he cautioned those who simply memorized the entire *kung-an* that memorization was not unlike "drawing cakes" as a means of overcoming starva-

50. *Ibid.* 15, T.47.784c28-785a4.

51. *Ibid.* 15, T.47.785a21-4.

tion and that the result would be nothing but “a pile of bones” (*ku-tung*).⁵² Literary study of Ch’an *kung-an*, Yuan-wu thus repeatedly warned, would be a great hindrance to awakening.

Nonconceptualization, that is, investigating the “live words,” was therefore the path to the proper use of the *kung-an*. As Yuan-wu said:

Hold your tongue and do not give rise to any conceptualization. One should investigate the “live words” and not investigate the “dead words.” What is realized and achieved through the “live words” will ensure that one never forgets for an eternity of *kalpas*. What is realized and achieved through the “dead words” cannot even make one save oneself.⁵³

For Yuan-wu, only when one renounced ordinary conceptual thinking could he be said to investigate the “live words.” The “live words” are thus the words that directly point to one’s enlightened mind and readily manifest one’s intrinsic wisdom.

An even more concrete illustration of the purpose of using *kung-an* in Ch’an practice was given by Yuan-wu as follows:

For the neophytes or the senior students, who wanted to practice [Ch’an] but had no way to get the point, the former virtuous masters showed their kindness by asking them to investigate the ancients’ *kung-an*. They tried to use this means to bind [the practitioner’s] wild thoughts and perverse plans, causing him to calm his consciousness and anxiety so as to reach the state of concentration and oneness. He, then, would suddenly discover [the fact] that the mind was not obtained from outside. The *kung-an* is always [used as] nothing but a tile to knock the door. . . . You should keep quiet, serene, calm, and observant before you dwell upon (*chü*) and investigate [the *kung-an*]. After [investigating] a while, you then should know where your root exists. If you use language and words to interpret language and words, you merely get the benefits of understanding more, but you do not have the conditions to enter into this [Ch’an] Dharma gate.⁵⁴

As an interpreter of Ch’an *kung-an* himself, Yuan-wu thus warned his students that though the teacher’s teaching of *kung-an* was instructive

52. *Hsin-yao*, 358b7-9.

53. *Yu-lu* 11, T.47.765b12-14. In *WTHY*, however, the language similar to Yuan-wu’s is found in the section of Te-shan Yuan-mi; see *WTHY* 15, ZZ 2B.11.3, 281c1-4.

54. *Hsin-yao*, 385a7-13.

and necessary, the attainment of enlightenment still had depended on the practitioner himself.

Soteriological Role of Faith and Doubt in the Kung-an Practice

So far we have seen that Yuan-wu taught Ch'an practitioners not to conceptualize Ch'an *kung-an* by advising them to investigate the "live words." Still, we might wonder how people who were so used to habitual ways of thinking could totally relinquish all random or false thoughts in a single moment during the course of *kung-an* investigation. In other words, though the practitioner now understood well the futility resulting from conceptualization, about which Yuan-wu cautioned, he might still have the problem of how to effectively keep himself "quiet, serene, calm, and observant before he dwells upon and investigates the *kung-an*." Here, we may take a look at the differences between Yuan-wu's soteriology and that of his disciple Ta-hui Tsung-kao.

It should be said that Yuan-wu did not go beyond the Lin-chi tradition in which the cultivation of faith (*hsin*) was regarded as the most essential foundation of Ch'an practice.⁵⁵ Like Lin-chi, Yuan-wu similarly emphasized that one should believe in one's intrinsically enlightened mind and that the "faculty of faith" (*hsin-ken*) was of vital importance for one's achieving enlightenment.⁵⁶ By developing faith in his originally enlightened mind, one simultaneously generates "counter-illumination" (*hui-kuang fan-chao*).⁵⁷ That is, the practitioner, motivated by sufficient faith, is now able to "trace back the radiance emanating from the mind,"⁵⁸ and comes to realize his inherent buddha nature.

55. For Lin-chi's teaching of faith, see *Chen-chou Lin-chi Hui-chao ch'an-shih yü-lu* (Recorded Sayings of Ch'an Master Lin-chi Hui-chao of Chen-chou), T.47.496b29-c2; 497b5-10; 499a4; 501b14; etc. Also see Yanagida Seizan, "Kanwa Zen ni okeru shin to gi no mondai," in *Bukkyō ni okeru shin no mondai*, ed. the Nihon Bukkyō Kyōkai (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1963) 147-8; and Miriam L. Levering, "Ch'an Enlightenment for Laymen: Ta-hui and the New Religious Culture of the Sung," diss., Harvard University, 1978, 288-293. As Buswell further concludes, Lin-chi's emphasis on the cultivation of faith can be seen as an attempt to repair Ma-tsu Tao-i's radical subitism, in "*K'an-hua*," 338-343.

56. *Hsin-yao*, 358d18-359a1.

57. *Yuan-wu yü-lu* 5, T.47.737b14-15, etc.

58. This translation is Robert Buswell's; see "*K'an-hua*," 347.

The emphasis on faith also led Yuan-wu to assert that the practice of *kung-an* was not so crucial in Ch'an training as long as one had sufficient faith in one's self-nature. As Yuan-wu once said:

If one is endowed with the great faculty [i. e., faith], one does not need to look into the ancients' words or *kung-an*. [Every day] starting in the morning one just needs to rectify the precarious thoughts and to tranquilize the precarious mind; no matter what one encounters, one achieves [this task] without fail. After achieving this, one then further picks up [the *kung-an*] to investigate it more closely. One [now] understands where it comes from and what it is made of.⁵⁹

What Yuan-wu means here is that if one has sufficient faith in the innate wisdom of his own mind, he will then fully develop the enlightened source of the mind in the midst of ordinary life. As a result, every aspect of one's daily conduct is a natural expression of the enlightened mind. By the same token, one's practice of *kung-an* may also be seen as one of the phenomenal activities (*shih*) guided by the inherent principle (*li*) of the mind. Hence, only when one believes sufficiently that the mind is always enlightened and untainted are one's activities in the phenomenal realm truly validated. In this sense, then, the *kung-an* in Yuan-wu's teaching is used more like a test, rather than a catalyst, for one's attainment of enlightenment. As a corollary to his emphasis on the faculty of faith, Yuan-wu regarded "doubt" (*i*) as the primary obstacle that Ch'an practitioners should make an effort to overcome. That is, in the view of Yuan-wu, the "sensation of doubt" (*i-ch'ing*) was harmful to one's faith and should never occur in the mind, let alone during the course of *kung-an* investigation. In Yuan-wu's teaching, the word "doubt" was thus still treated in its traditional, negative sense as a great mental hindrance to enlightenment.⁶⁰

The main difference between Yuan-wu and his disciple Ta-hui Tsung-kao, the most active proponent of *k'an-hua* Ch'an, lies in the fact that the latter, without precedent, gave the "sensation of doubt," rather than the "faculty of faith," a role to play in Ch'an *kung-an* investigation. That is, in the view of Ta-hui, the sensation of doubt was not only a powerful

59. *Yuan-wu yü-lu* 15, T.47.758a6-9.

60. For Yuan-wu's use of "doubt," see *ibid.* 3, 723c12; 6, 740c24-25; 8, 750b20-21; 14, 776b4-6; etc.

antidote to one's conceptual thinking but also the indispensable force which drove the adept toward awakening.

On the whole, the mind is not enlightened through reading scriptures or doctrinal teachings, nor through reading the causes and conditions by which the virtuous masters in the past entered into the way. [Rather,] it is only at the time when you feel confused, frustrated, and bored—just as if you were biting an iron bar—that you can rightly make effort [for achieving enlightenment].⁶¹

Ta-hui thus claimed: "A great doubt will definitely be followed by a great awakening."⁶²

For Ta-hui, the investigation of *hua-t'ou* (the critical phrase of Ch'an *kung-an*) was exactly the most effective way of generating doubt. Through the single-minded investigation of the *hua-t'ou*, the practitioner would find that his rational, conceptual ways of thinking were really useless at this moment. The illogical *hua-t'ou*, then, worked as a catalyst which enabled the practitioner to foster in his mind the sensation of doubt to the maximum extent. The pressure of doubt in turn forced the person's mind urgently to seek a sudden breakthrough. As Ta-hui taught his students:

Just investigate a single *hua-t'ou* of [the *kung-an* by which] men in the past entered the way. Shift the mind which day after day produces deluded thoughts here [to the *hua-t'ou*]. [Focus your attention] on the *hua-t'ou*, then no [conceptual thought] would ever be generated. A monk asked Chao-chou [Ts'ung-shen (778-897)]: "Does a dog have buddha-nature or not?" Chou said: "No!" (*wu*) Just this one word (i. e., *wu*) is exactly "the knife that cuts off the road leading to birth and death" [i. e., the way to transcend birth and death]. Just dwell upon this word *wu*. Dwell on it over and over again. Abruptly information [through conceptual thought] is severed. It is then at this point that you return home and sit firmly.⁶³

61. *Ta-hui P'u-chueh ch'an-shih yu-lu* (Recorded Sayings of Ch'an Master Ta-hui P'u-chueh) 19, T.47.891a22-23. This, however, does not mean that Ta-hui did not value faith. As Yanagida Seizan has pointed out, Ta-hui also first emphasized the significance of faith in his teaching of Ch'an practice, and it was from his emphasis on faith that he developed the theory of doubt in *k'an-hua* meditation; see Yanagida, "Kanwa Zen," 152.

62. *Ta-hui yu-lu* 17, T.47.886a28.

63. *Ibid.* 22, T.47.903b29-c5.

Unlike Yuan-wu, who did not specifically mention the investigation of *hua-t'ou* in his teaching, Ta-hui consistently taught his students to investigate the *hua-t'ou* rather than the entire *kung-an*.

But although Ta-hui should be credited with providing a systematic theory of the role of doubt in *k'an-hua* soteriology, Ta-hui himself nonetheless attributed the idea of doubt to his master Yuan-wu. According to him, when he was studying under Yuan-wu, the latter gave him several *kung-an* to work on and warned him: "It is not easy for you to get to this stage. [However,] it is a pity that you, having died, are unable to be alive. Not having doubt for words and phrases is a great illness."⁶⁴ But since we find no mention of this anecdote in Yuan-wu's sayings and writings, we may assume either that doubt here did not yet have the technical sense in Yuan-wu's mind, or that the story was Ta-hui's deliberate attempt to portray his idea as deriving from the orthodox transmission of Ch'an teaching through his teacher, Yuan-wu.

The differences between Yuan-wu and Ta-hui regarding the teaching of *kung-an* now become clearer. While doubt in Yuan-wu's terms means lack of faith in one's inherent buddha-nature, in Ta-hui's interpretation it came to mean the loss of confidence in the conceptual and intellectual approaches to attaining ultimate enlightenment. For Yuan-wu, innate faith was the preliminary requirement for Ch'an practice, but for Ta-hui, the force in the process of "counterillumination" was mainly derived from doubt through encountering the *hua-t'ou* of the *kung-an*. Whereas "counterillumination" might appear as a more static term in Yuan-wu's teaching of meditation practice, it was definitely regarded by Ta-hui as a dynamic process in which doubt served as an introspective force drawing the meditator to look into his inherently pure and enlightened mind.

A comparison of Yuan-wu and Ta-hui, moreover, shows that Yuan-wu, while teaching the practitioner of *kung-an* why he should eliminate the mental tendency toward conceptualizing *kung-an*, failed to provide an effective solution of how one could succeed in doing so. That is to say, although Yuan-wu provided Ch'an practitioners with a concrete explanation of those terms like *ts'an-chü*/*ts'an-i* and *huo-chü*/*ssu-chü*, he did not specifically value the practice of *hua-t'ou* as a primary means to enlightenment, as did Ta-hui. Ta-hui, on the other hand, was more understanding of human beings' difficulties in casting away habitual

64. *Ibid.* 17, T.47.883a21-22.

patterns of perception and so was more practical in the approach he taught in meditation practice. His advocacy of *hua-t'ou* investigation appeared as the most effective way in which one could avoid the danger of investigating the “meaning” of *kung-an* and attain, via the sensation of doubt, the enlightened mind.

CONCLUSION: YUAN-WU'S SIGNIFICANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CH'AN KUNG-AN PRACTICE

The practice of Ch'an *kung-an* taught by the Szechuan Ch'an monk Yuan-wu K'o-ch'in presents us with a case of Ch'an's attempt to integrate itself into the mainstream of Sung literati culture without losing its identity and integrity. Yuan-wu used a highly literary *kung-an* text—the *PTSK* by Hsueh-tou Ch'ung-hsien—as his stepping stone to spread Ch'an within the cultured elite. But rather than merely making himself a famous monk of his day, Yuan-wu made great contributions to both his religion and sect. In the *Pi-yen lu*, Yuan-wu thus tried hard to shift people's attention from the literary meaning and value of the *PTSK* to its instructive aspects and practical function. By so doing, he revitalized the life of this collection of Ch'an words; that is, they were not “dead words” but “live words.” From Yuan-wu's *Pi-yen lu* on, the pedagogical and meditative function of Ch'an *kung-an* texts became both more visible and more feasible.

In order to direct Ch'an practitioners toward the proper approach to *kung-an* practice, Yuan-wu furthermore gave a clear explanation of the differences between “investigating the word” and “investigating the meaning” in the course of *kung-an* practice. Although Yuan-wu was not the first monk to teach that any attempt at conceptualization should be renounced in Ch'an practice, he was the first Ch'an master in the Yang-ch'i branch of the Lin-chi school to adopt the term “live words” to refer to “nonconceptualization” and to explain clearly why one should investigate the “word” and not investigate the “meaning.”⁶⁵ His advo-

65. This point is clear as we read the *Recorded Sayings* of Yuan-wu's predecessors: Yang-ch'i Fang-hui's *Recorded Sayings*, in T.47.640a-648c; Pai-yun Shou-tuan's (1025-1072) *Recorded Sayings and Kuang-lu* (A Comprehensive Record [of Sayings and Writings]), in ZZ 2.25.3, 191a-200a and 200d-225a; and Wu-tsu Fa-yen's *Recorded Sayings*, in T.47.649a-669a. In

cacy of "investigating the word" exerted significant influence on his disciple Ta-hui's teaching of *hua-t'ou* investigation, an approach through which one concentrated on the critical phrase of the *kung-an* and hence might avert the mind from being distracted by the "meaning" of the case.

Yuan-wu K'o-ch'in's teaching of *kung-an* practice thus marked a turning point in the evolution of Ch'an *kung-an* practice; the task of systematizing the *k'an-hua* technique by giving "doubt" a specific soteriological role had to wait for his disciple Ta-hui Tsung-kao. While Yuan-wu's instructions of Ch'an *kung-an* practice indicated his awareness of the crisis of the ossification of Ch'an's soteriology and his consequent attempt to resolve this perceived crisis within the Ch'an movement, Ta-hui's advocacy of *hua-t'ou* investigation with a systematically elaborated theory revealed a further sensitivity among Ch'an masters to the practical need for narrowing such a gap in Ch'an praxis. Finally, it can be said that Yuan-wu's engagement in the teaching of Ch'an *kung-an* practice proved to be a decisive move, for neither the Yun-men school nor the Huang-lung branch of the Lin-chi school could retain their prominence in the next generations. Later, Ta-hui Tsung-kao further succeeded in spreading *k'an-hua* Ch'an to the important cultural centers of the Lower Yangtze Valley. The Lin-chi Yang-ch'i branch eventually became the most dominant Buddhist school in Southern Sung China.⁶⁶ In this regard, *k'an-hua* Ch'an may also be viewed as a successful attempt by the Lin-chi Yang-ch'i masters to revitalize the life of the written Ch'an *kung-an*.

their teachings of Ch'an, none of them used terms like *huo-chü/ ssu-chü, ts'an-chü/ ts'an-i*, etc.

66. Tao-jung, *Ts'ung-lin sheng-shih* (The Glorious Events in Ch'an Monasteries) [1197], in ZZ 2B.21.1, 45c4.

CHARACTER LIST

An Lu-shan	安祿山
Anhui	安徽
Chang Chün	張浚
Chang Shang-ying	張商英
Chao-chou Ts'ung-shen	趙州從諗
Chao-chueh ssu	昭覺寺
Chao Ling-chin	趙令衿
Ch'ao-jan chü-shih	趙超然居士
Chekiang	浙
<i>Chen-chou Lin-chi Hui-chao</i>	鎮江臨濟慧照禪
<i>ch'an-shih yü-lu</i>	師語錄
Chen-chueh ch'an-shih	真覺禪師
Ch'en Huan	陳瓘
Ch'eng-tu	成都
<i>chi-yuan wen-ta</i>	機緣問答
Chia-shan	夾山
Chiang tai-chih	蔣待制
Ch'ien Shu	前蜀
Chih-men Kuang-tso	智門光祚
Chih-p'an	志磐
Chin-shan	金山
<i>chin-shih</i>	進士
Ching	靜
<i>Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu</i>	景德傳燈錄
<i>ch'ing-chieh</i>	情解
Ch'ing Tsang-chu	慶藏主
<i>Chiu Wu-tai shih</i>	舊五代史
<i>chü</i>	舉
Chueh-fan Hui-hung	覺範慧洪
<i>fa-yü</i>	法語
Fen-yang Shan-chao	汾陽善昭
Fo-kuo	佛果
<i>Fo-kuo K'o-ch'in ch'an-shih</i>	佛果克勤禪師心
<i>hsin-yao</i>	要
<i>Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai</i>	佛祖歷代通載

<i>Fo-tsu t'ung-chi</i>	佛祖	統紀
Fukien	福建	
Heng-chou	衡州	
Hou-shu	後蜀	
Hsiao-yü	小玉	
<i>hsin</i>	信	
<i>hsin-ken</i>	信根	
<i>hsin-ti</i>	心地	
Hsu Fu	徐俯	
<i>Hsu kao-seng chuan</i>	徐續高	僧傳
Hsueh Chü-cheng	薛居正	存
Hsueh-feng I-ts'un	薛峰	義存
Hsueh-tou Ch'ung-hsien	雪竇重顯	
<i>hua-t'ou</i>	話頭	
Hua-yen chü-shih	華嚴	居士
Huang Ch'ao	黃巢	
Huang-lung Hui-nan	黃龍慧南	南陽
Hui-chung Nan-yang	慧忠	南陽
<i>hui-kuang fan-chao</i>	迴光	反照
Hunan	湖南	
Hung-chou	洪州	
Hung-fu Tzu-wen	洪福	子文
<i>huo-chü</i>	活句	
<i>i</i>	疑	
<i>i-ch'ing</i>	疑情	
<i>k'an-hua</i> Ch'an	看話	禪
Keng Yen-hsi	耿延	禧
Kiangsi	江西	
Kiangsu	江蘇	
<i>ku-tung</i>	骨董	
Kuan-hsiu	貫休	
<i>kung-an</i>	公案	
Kuo Chih-chang	郭知	章
<i>li</i>	理	
Li-chou	澧州	
Li Kang	李綱	(伯紀)
Li Mi-hsun	李彌遜	

<i>Li-tai fa-pao chi</i>	歷代法寶記
<i>Lin-chi</i>	濟臨
<i>Lin-chien lu</i>	林間錄
<i>Ling-ch'üan ssu</i>	靈泉寺
<i>Lo</i>	駱
<i>Ma-tsu Tao-i</i>	馬祖道一
<i>Miao-chi ssu</i>	妙寂道寺
<i>Min</i>	閩
<i>Nan-ching</i>	京
<i>Nan T'ang</i>	唐南
<i>Nien-ch'ang</i>	常念
<i>Pai-tse sung-ku</i>	百則頌
<i>Pai-yun Shou-tuan</i>	白雲守
<i>P'eng-chou</i>	彭州
<i>Pi-yen lu</i>	碧巖錄
<i>pu-li wen-tzu</i>	不立文
<i>Shansi</i>	山西
<i>Seng-pao cheng-hsu chuan</i>	僧寶正續
<i>shih</i>	事
<i>shih-ta-fu</i>	士大夫
<i>ssu-chü</i>	死句
<i>Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an</i>	四部叢刊
<i>Su Fu</i>	蘇符
<i>Su Shih</i>	蘇軾
<i>Sui-chou</i>	遂州
<i>Sung hui-yao</i>	宋會要
<i>Sung kao-seng chuan</i>	宋高僧傳
<i>Sung shih</i>	宋史
<i>Szechuan</i>	四川
<i>Szechuan T'ung-chih</i>	四川通志
<i>Ta-hui P'u-chueh ch'an-shih</i>	大慧普覺禪師語
<i>yü-lu</i>	錄
<i>Ta-hui Tsung-kao</i>	大慧宗杲
<i>Ta-sui Fa-chen</i>	大隋法真
<i>T'an-lang</i>	檀郎
<i>T'ang</i>	唐
<i>T'ang yü-lin</i>	唐語林

Tao-hsuan	道宣		
Tao-jung	道融		
Tao-shih	道釋		
Tao-yuan	道原		
Te-shan Yuan-mi	道德山	緣密	
Teng Hsun-wu	鄧洵	武	(子常)
<i>ts'an-chü</i>	參洵		
<i>ts'an-i</i>	參意		
Tsan-ning	贊寧		
Tsu-hsiu	祖琇		
<i>Tsu-t'ang chi</i>	祖堂	集	
<i>Ts'ung-lin sheng-shih</i>	叢林	盛事	
Tung-shan Shou-ch'u	洞山	守初	
T'ung-yu ssu	童游	寺	
Wang Tang	王謙		
<i>wen</i>	文		
<i>wen-ch'ing shen-wai chü, mo-</i>	聞清	身外	句, 莫
<i>hsiang i-chung ch'iu</i>	向意	中禪	
<i>wen-tzu Ch'an</i>	文字		
<i>wu</i>	無		
<i>Wu-teng hui-yuan</i>	五燈	會元	
Wu-tsu Fa-yen	五祖	法演	
Wu-yueh	五越		
Yang-ch'i Fang-hui	吳楊	岐方	會
Yang-chou	揚州		
Yang Fang-ts'an	楊芳	燦	
<i>yü-lu</i>	語錄		
Yuan-wu K'o-ch'in	圓悟	克勤	
Yun	筠		
Yun-men	雲門		
Yun-men Wen-yen	雲門	文偃	