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## Chan Master Xuedou and His Remarks on Old Cases in the *Record of Master Xuedou at Dongting*: A Preliminary Study

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### Abstract

This article examines Chan Master Xuedou Chongxian's 雪竇重顯 (980–1052) earliest work, the *Record of Master Xuedou at Dongting* (*Xuedou heshang zhu dongting yulu* 雪竇和尚住洞庭語錄), paying particular attention to a section regarding “remarks on old cases” (*niangu* 拈古). Xuedou's fame in Chan history for commenting on old cases is due to one of his later works, *Verses on a Hundred Old Cases* (*Xuedou xianheshang mingjue dashi songgu ji* 雪竇顯和尚明覺大師頌古集). Commenting on old cases is an important stage in the development of Chan literature, falling between the early encounter dialogues and the complicated genre exemplified by the *Emerald Cliff Record* (*Biyuan lu* 碧巖錄). Scholarship on this intermediate genre, however, is limited. The present article analyzes the section in the *Record of Master Xuedou at Dongting* entitled “Remarks on Old Cases” with the goal of elucidating the manner in which this type of teaching method was used in Xuedou's early career.

### Keywords:

Xuedou, Recorded Sayings, Encounter Dialogues, Remarks on Old Cases, Verses on Old Cases

## 《雪竇和尚住洞庭語錄》之「拈古」略探

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### 摘要

本論文為宋代禪僧雪竇重顯(980–1052)之生平與《雪竇和尚住洞庭語錄》之探討，並以分析《雪竇和尚住洞庭語錄》中之「拈古」為主要議題。雪竇因其著名的《雪竇顯和尚明覺大師頌古集》之故，特以拈古、頌古聞名於禪宗歷史。在禪宗典籍發展的過程中，特別是從拈、頌語錄或燈錄中的機緣語句擴展到《碧巖錄》完整的評唱典籍，「拈古」是此過程中不可缺少的構成因素。本文選擇雪竇七集中最早編成的《雪竇和尚住洞庭語錄》為範圍，初步分析此語錄中「拈古」的體例與內容。

關鍵字：雪竇、語錄、機緣語句、拈古、頌古

Master Xuedou Chongxian 雪竇重顯 (980–1052) is a famous Chan master of the Yunmen 雲門 branch who has been praised by well-known Song Chan monk Huihong Juefan 慧洪覺範 (1071–1128) in his *Chanlin sengbao zhuang* 禪林僧寶傳 as “the reviver of Yunman school” (X 1565, 515b1-2). In Chan history, Xuedou is especially known for commenting on old cases, an important teaching method in the Chan tradition. This method is also associated with its own type of literature, made famous by Xuedou’s *Verses on a Hundred Old Cases* (*Xuedou xianheshang mingjue dashi songgu ji* 雪竇顯和尚明覺大師頌古集).<sup>1</sup>

Xuedou’s *Verses on a Hundred Old Cases* was further commented upon by Yuanwu Keqin 圓悟克勤 (1063–1135) to become the famous *Emerald Cliff Record* (*Foguo yuanwu chanshi biyanlu* 佛果圓悟禪師碧巖錄, T 2003). Commenting on old cases is thus an important stage in the development of Chan literature from encounter dialogues to the “precedent anthologies,” the complicated genre exemplified by the *Emerald Cliff Record* (McRae 2003, 123). Griffith Foulk refers to this type of literature as “primary collections,” which consist of old cases and one level of commentary by a later Chan master (2000, 28).

This type of Chan literature, however, has not been thoroughly dealt with in previous scholarship. The present article thus analyzes the section entitled “Remarks on Old Cases (*niangu* 拈古)” in the *Xuedou heshang zhu dongting lu* 雪竇和尚住洞庭語錄 (*Record of Master Xuedou at Dongting*; hereafter, *Xuedou dongting lu*), a text representing the earliest stage of Xuedou’s teachings of his seven extant works.<sup>2</sup>

To understand Xuedou’s “Remarks on Old Cases,” the author has looked at Chan literature from the perspectives of language and culture,<sup>3</sup> relying on two Song Chan texts for assistance: Changlu Zongze’s 長蘆宗頤 (1056–1107)<sup>4</sup> *Regulations for Purity in the Chan Monastery* (*Chanyuan qinggui* 禪苑清規, X 1245) compiled in 1103, and Muan Shanqing’s 睦庵善卿 (active 1088–1108) *Collections of Topics from the Garden of the Patriarchs* (*Zuting shiyuan* 祖庭事苑, X 1261) printed in 1108. The *Zuting shiyuan* contains a section explaining difficult terms found in the *Xuedou dongting lu*.<sup>5</sup>

The author, however, does not presume that Shanqing’s or the author’s interpretations are the only possible interpretation or the final word on Xuedou. Shanqing has been critiqued by Japanese

1 The complete title of this text is from the *Secchō minkaku daishi goroku* 雪竇明覺大師語錄, the Gosan 五山 version in *Zengaku tenseki sōkan* 禅学典籍叢刊, ed. Yanagida Seizan 柳田聖山 and Shiina Kōyū 椎名宏雄 (1999, 2:60).

2 The different titles of this text found in different versions will be discussed in detail below.

3 The author’s approach of studying Xuedou’s remarks on old cases is inspired by Chan scholars such as Iriya Yoshitaka 入矢義高 and John McRae. For example, see Iriya’s “Masangin” 麻三斤 (1983) and McRae (2003).

4 Due to the lack of information, there is no scholarly consensus about Chanlu Zongze’s dates. The author has adopted the dates proposed by Lin Deli’s 林德立. Lin carefully investigated Zongze’s biographies and works and calculated that Zongze was born in 1056 and died in 1107 (Lin, 2008).

5 For a detailed research on the *Zuting shiyuan*, see Yi-hsun Huang (2006).

monk Mujaku Dōchū 無著道忠 (1653–1745), as well as modern scholars Iriya Yoshitaka 入矢義高 (1966) and Yanagida Seizan 柳田聖山 (1979), who support Mujaku Dōchū's opinions.<sup>6</sup> It is the author's hope that this article will stimulate further discussion and research on Xuedou and Shanqing.

This article first examines Xuedou's life and his *Xuedou dongting lu* in order to provide a background understanding for the discussion of Xuedou's remarks on old cases.<sup>7</sup>

## Brief Bibliography of Xuedou

The name "Xuedou" is a reference to Mount Xuedou (Xuedou shan 雪竇山), the location of Zisheng Si 資聖寺, where Xuedou lived for 31 years. In his letters, Xuedou also referred to himself as Chongxian 重顯 and Yinzhi 隱之.<sup>8</sup>

Regarding Xuedou's earliest biographical records, which date to the Song Dynasty, three major sources can be found.<sup>9</sup> Xuedou's life is first depicted with details in his funerary inscription *Mingzhou xuedoushan zishengsi diliuzu mingjue dashi taming* 明州雪竇山資聖寺第六祖明覺大師塔銘 (T 1996, 712a3-713b18). This funerary inscription is composed by literatus Lü Xiaqing 呂夏卿 (active 1025–1077) in 1065 (Zhiping 治平 2), 13 years after Xuedou's death (T 1996, 713b18).<sup>10</sup> The other two sources—a brief

6 Mujaku Dōchū's criticisms toward Shanqing are mainly included in his works, *Zenrin shokisen* 禪林象器箋 and *Wanun reiu* 盥雲靈雨. The author relies on an unpublished manuscript of *Wanun reiu* found in the *Hokuen Bunko* 北苑文庫 at the Zenbunka kenkyūsho 禪文化研究所 on the campus of Hanazono University 花園大学, Kyoto. The author would like to thank Prof. Kinugawa Kenji 衣川賢次 and Prof. Nishiguchi Yoshio 西口芳男 for providing access to this manuscript.

7 For a complete study of Xuedou's life and his seven works in Chinese, see Huang (2007).

8 See his letters *Fu cuifeng qingbie lingyin chanshi* 赴翠峯請別靈隱禪師 (*Setting off for Cuifeng Si and Saying farewell to Chan masters at Lingyin Si*) in *Wudu facheng* 吳都法乘 6, *Zhongguo foshizhi* 中國佛寺志 (3:24, 2118) and *Song yichanzhe guiyue* 送一禪者歸越 (*For Chan master Yi returning to Yue*) in the *Zuting shiyuan* (X 1261, 375b5).

9 Modern research on Xuedou's biography is found in Nukariya Kaiten 忽滑谷快天 (1925), Abe Chōichi 阿部肇一 (1983), Shiina Kōyū 椎名宏雄 (1995), Yang Zengwen 楊曾文 (2001), Feng Xuecheng 馮學成 (2002), and Thomas Cleary (2005). However, their works are brief, contain mistakes, or lack critical analysis. Some of their mistakes will be discussed and corrected in this article.

10 Japanese scholar Shiina Kōyū's article erroneously states that Lü Xiaqing finished the funerary inscription in Zhiping 3, or 1066 (Shiina 1995, 201). According to the *Songshi* 宋史 and *Dongdu shilüe* 東都事略, Lü Xiaqing was active between 1025–1077 and gained his title as a Metropolitan Graduate (*Jingshi* 進士) in 1042. He also participated in the compilation of *Tangshu* 唐書 and *Renzong shilu* 仁宗實錄 (*Songshi*, vol. 170; *Dongdu shilue*, vol. 65; Hucker 1985, 167).

biography of Xuedou in the *Zuting shiyuan* (X 1261, 322c14-20) and a longer biography of Xuedou in the *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* 禪林僧寶傳 compiled by Huihong—are both based on Xuedou’s funerary inscription (X 1560, 514c8-515b15). The latter simply adds more encounter dialogues between Xuedou and other monks to the original biography.

According to his funerary inscription, Xuedou was born in Yizhou 益州 (current Sichuan). Soon after both his parents died, Xuedou became a Buddhist monk under Renxian 仁銑 (d.u.) at Puan yuan 普安院. He received full ordination at the age of 23.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, before Xuedou became a Buddhist monk, he had completed his Confucian education. This may explain his abilities in composing verses on old cases, which requires poetic skills found in the traditional Confucian education.<sup>12</sup>

When Xuedou first began learning Buddhist scriptures and treatises, he showed a keen aptitude in understanding their profound meanings. According to his funerary inscription, after listening to monk Yuanying’s 元瑩 (d.u.) lecture on Zongmi’s 宗密 (780–841) *Dafangguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyijing lueshu* 大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經略疏 (*Commentary on the Sutra of Profound Enlightenment*) at Daci Si 大慈寺, Xuedou visited Yuanying to ask him questions four times in one night. He particularly wished to understand the meaning of two sentences in the commentary: “The true mind is originally the Buddha. It is simply because of the arising of thought that people are drifting in the river of samsara” (T 1996, 712b11-14).<sup>13</sup>

None of Yuanying’s answers, however, were able to satisfy Xuedou. Finally, Yuanying told Xuedou, “You are not a person who is hindered by the teaching of Buddhist scriptures (*fei zhijiao zhe* 非滯教者). I have heard that there are people who have attained the pure Dharma eye of the buddhas in the South. You should go study with them” (T 1996, 712b13-15). With Yuanying’s recommendation, Xuedou started off on a southward journey. This account of Xuedou’s early life not only tells us Xuedou’s predisposition toward what he was taught, but also helps us understand why he became interested in composing remarks and verses to elucidate the meaning of old cases in his later life.

During his journey south on a pilgrimage from Sichuan to Hubei, Xuedou met an important Chan master Shimen Yuncong 石門蘊聰 (965–1032). Xuedou stayed at Yuncong’s temple for 3 years, but Yuncong’s teachings were not a perfect match for Xuedou, who was more

11 Abe Chōichi (1983, 211) states that Xuedou received his full-ordination in Xianping 咸平 6 (1003), at the age of 24. However, Xuedou’s funerary inscription (T 1996, 712c19) states that Xuedou had been fully ordained for 50 years (*jiela* 戒臘) at his death, which means that he should have received his full ordination in 1002, at the age of 23, based on his dates 980–1052.

12 Chinese scholar Zhou Yukai 周裕鍇 also states in his *Chanzong yuyan* 禪宗語言 that Xuedou was well-trained in Chinese literature. Xuedou’s verses contain various poetic styles including ancient verses (*guti shi* 古體詩), curtailed poems (*jueju* 絕句) with three to seven syllables, and regulated poems (*lushi* 律詩) with five or seven syllables (2002, 152).

13 This passage can be found in Zongmi’s preface to the *Dafangguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyijing lueshu* (T 1795, 524b8).

intellectually inclined. Yuncong once admonished Xuedou, “Enlightenment has nothing to do with intellectual discrimination!” Nevertheless, Yuncong understood Xuedou’s predisposition and recommended him for study under Zhimen Guangzuo 智門光祚 (active 964–1010), whom Yuncong believed to be a more suitable master for Xuedou than himself (T 1996, 712b15-17).

Xuedou went to stay in Guangzuo’s monastery. One evening, Xuedou asked Guangzuo, “The ancient masters did not produce a single thought—where is the problem?” He achieved enlightenment after being hit twice by Guangzuo’s whisk (T 1996, 712b18-21).<sup>14</sup> After this, he stayed at Guangzuo’s temple for five years. After leaving, he traveled throughout Hunan and Anhui, visiting several Chan monks.<sup>15</sup> In 1019, Xuedou was invited to be the abbot of Cuifeng Si 翠峯寺, located beside Lake Dongting in Suzhou (current Jiangsu), where he started his teaching career (T 1996, 674b1). Finally, sometime after 1022, Xuedou received an invitation from Zenghui 曾會 (d.u.), an official of Mingzhou 明州 (in modern Zhejiang), to reside at Zisheng si 資聖寺 on the famous Mount Xuedou.<sup>16</sup>

Xuedou taught at Zisheng si on Mount Xuedou for 31 years in total, and had 78 Dharma successors.<sup>17</sup> He was bestowed a purple robe with the title “Clear Enlightenment” (*Mingjue* 明覺) due to the recommendation of the famous Buddhist commandant-escort (*fuma duwei* 駙馬都尉) Li Zunxu 李遵勗 (?–1038) and palace attendant (*shizhong* 侍中) Jia Changchao 賈昌朝 (998–1065) (T 1996, 712c9-10; X 1556, 653a12-13; Hucker 1985, 219b and 423a). Xuedou’s funeral inscription states that he predicted his time of death. His last verse (*shiji ji* 示寂偈) is only found in the *Zuting shiyuan* (T 1996, 712c11-18 and X 1261, 375c19-23).

According to Xuedou’s funerary inscription, Xuedou’s disciples compiled seven texts containing content such as Xuedou’s talks given in the Dharma Hall, verses and remarks on old cases, and critical examinations of his disciples’ questions and letters. The names of these texts are as follows: *Dongting yulu* 洞庭語錄, *Xuedou kaitang lu* 雪竇開堂錄, *Puquan ji* 瀑泉集, *Zuying ji* 祖英集, *Songgu ji* 頌古集, *Niangu ji* 拈古集, *Xuedou houlu* 雪竇後錄 (T 1996, 712c28-713a2).<sup>18</sup> According to this account, these seven works were circulating individually with independent titles by 1065, thirteen years after Xuedou’s death.

14 My translation is based on Cleary (2005, xxvi), with changes.

15 The author has relied on the website “Zhonghua wenming zhi shikong jichu jiagou” 中華文明之時空基礎架構 (Chinese Civilization in Time and Space) created by Academia Sinica, Taipei, to determine the locations of the old temples; see their website <http://cts.sinica.edu.tw>, accessed Jan. 3, 2008.

16 See *Mingzhou junfuguan qingzhu xuedou shu* 明州軍府官請住雪竇疏 (*Invitation from the Officials of Mingzhou to Abide Xuedou Temple*) in the *Secchō minkaku daishi goroku* 雪竇明覺大師語錄 (Yanagida and Shiina 1999, 2:60).

17 Cleary states that Xuedou had 84 enlightened successors (Cleary 2005, xxvi). This number is from the *Continued Record of Transmission of Lamp* (*Xu chuandeng lu* 續傳燈錄), compiled by Yuanji Juding 圓極居頂 in the Ming dynasty (T 2077, 499a12).

18 The compilation dates of these seven texts do not reflect their order in Xuedou’s funerary

It is likely that Xuedou knew of and read most or all of the seven works while he was alive. According to Xuedou's *Puquan ji*, Xuedou asked a monk, "Have you read the *Xuedou houlu*?" (T 1996, 694c7). In addition, Xuedou knew that his works had been circulated. For example, in the preface of Xuedou's *Zuying ji*, the compiler remarks that he collected the letters, essays, and verses written by Xuedou, and then showed them to Xuedou to gain his permission to publish them. This preface was written in 1032, when Xuedou was 43 years old.<sup>19</sup> As such, compared with other Chan masters' discourse records, the contents of Xuedou's seven works should be relatively accurate, representing Xuedou's thought and teaching.

The next source containing information about Xuedou's seven works is the *Zuting shiyuan*. The format of *Zuting shiyuan* resembles that of a dictionary and includes more than 2,400 entries defining difficult terms found in Chan texts. Xuedou's works comprise seven of the seventeen works treated in the *Zuting shiyuan* (X 1261, 322c13-374b4). Furthermore, the *Zuting shiyuan* also includes a section called "Xuedou shiyi" 雪竇拾遺 (*Additional works of Xuedou*), which contains materials not found in those seven texts. This is a source that scholars have long overlooked in the studies of Xuedou (X 1261, 374b5-375c23 and Huang 2007, 109-111).

The earliest extant Song version of Xuedou's records was printed in 1195, and can be found in the *Sibu congkan xubian* 四部叢刊續編, vol. 29. They are given the title *Xuedou siji* 雪竇四集, which indicates that there are only four works of Xuedou in this collection.<sup>20</sup> The most popular version of Xuedou's discourse records is the Ming version, which includes six of Xuedou's works and now is included in the Taishō canon under the title *Mingjue chanshi yulu* 明覺禪師語錄. This collection does not include Xuedou's *Verses on the Old Cases*.<sup>21</sup>

The only complete collection of Xuedou's seven works is found in the Japanese Gosan 五山 version printed in 1289 and preserved in the *Tōyō Bunko* 東洋文庫 collection (Shiina 1995, 207-216; Kawase Kazuma 川瀨一馬 1967, 51). The Gosan version has been republished in the series *Zengaku tenseki sōkan* 禪學典籍叢刊, vol. 2, under the title *Secchō minkaku daishi goroku* 雪竇明覺大師語錄, which includes all seven of Xuedou's texts. Most importantly, and different from the Taishō version, each text in the Gosan version except the *Xuedou dongting yulu* preserves prefaces or introductions which provide important compilation information about the texts (Yanagida and Shiina 1999, 2:4-99 and Nagai Masashi 永井政之 1972, 84).

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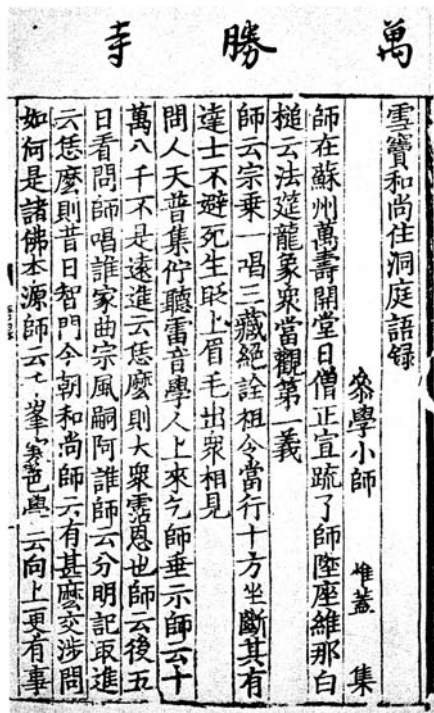
inscription (Shiina 1995, 202).

- 19 This preface can only be seen in the Gosan version. See Yanagida and Shiina (1999, 2:99).
- 20 The four texts are *Xuedou xianheshang mingjue dashi songgu ji* 雪竇顯和尚明覺大師頌古集, *Xuedou heshang niangu* 雪竇顯和尚拈古, *Xuedou heshang mingjue dashi puquan ji* 雪竇和尚明覺大師瀑泉集, *Qingyuanfu xuedou mingjue dashi zuying ji* 慶元府雪竇明覺大師祖英集. The *Sibu congkan xubian* was printed by Shanghai hanfenlou 上海涵芬樓 in 1932.
- 21 The Taishō version is based on a printed edition from 1634 (Chongzhen 崇禎 7 of the Ming dynasty) stored at Zōjō ji 增上寺 (T 1996, 669a, n. 1 and Shiina 1995, 203).

## The *Xuedou Dongting Lu*

In the Gosan version, the full title for the *Xuedou dongting lu* is listed as *Xuedou heshang zhu dongting yulu* 雪竇和尚住洞庭語錄 (Yanagida and Shiina 1999, 2:26-35) while it is called *Zhu suzhou dongting cuifeng chansi yu* 住蘇州洞庭翠峯禪寺語 (T 1996, 669a17-673c14) in the Taishō Canon. The compilation dates of *Xuedou dongting lu* span from 1019, the time Xuedou lived in his first temple, Cuifeng Si at Mount Dongting, until he was invited to be the abbot of the famous Zisheng Si at Mount Xuedou in 1021. The *Xuedou dongting lu* therefore contains the earliest material of Xuedou’s teaching career.

This text also includes Xuedou’s talks given in Wanshou si 萬壽寺 in Suzhou and Lingyin si 靈隱寺 in Hangzhou. He was invited to give talks in those temples when he was on his way to Zisheng si from Cuifeng si. An essay called “Bestowing A Title to the Master” (*Shou shi hao* 受師號) is found at the end of the text. This essay contains a talk given by Xuedou after he received the title “Mingjue” 明覺 by the emperor (T 1996, 673b27-c14 and Yanagida and Shiina 1999, 2 and 35). Therefore, the date of this essay should be later than 1021.



*Xuedou heshang zhu dongting yulu*

Gosan version from *Zengaku tenseki sokan*

The *Xuedou dongting lu* consists of six sections: 1. Xuedou’s talks given in the Dharma hall in the above-mentioned temples; 2. Remarks on old cases; 3. Raising old cases from abbot’s



chamber (*shizhong jugu* 室中舉古); 4. Critical examinations of his disciples' questions (*kanbian* 勘辯); 5. Xuedou's "Preface and Commentary on Monk Xuefeng's Inscription" (*Zhu Xuefeng heshang taming bing xu* 註雪峯和尚塔銘并序); 6. The essay "Bestowing A Title to the Master." Raising old cases is used as a teaching method in two sections of the *Xuedou dongting lu*; the genre of "remarks on old cases" appears as a formal category in the second section of this text.

## Raising Old Cases

In the "Remarks on Old Cases" section of the *Xuedou dongting lu*, each passage begins with an old case being "raised" (*ju* 舉), which is followed by Xuedou's "comment" (*nian* 拈) on it.<sup>22</sup> Based on the examples contained in the *Xuedou dongting lu*, the term "old case" (*guze* 古則) refers to narratives or encounter dialogues excerpted from Buddhist sutras or Chan texts. They are called old cases in this article because they are found under the section title "*niangu*" (T 1996, 670c26).

Before this genre developed into a formal category called *niangu*, a similar and preliminary form can be seen in the *Jingde Record of Transmission of the Lamp* (*Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄, T 2076) and the discourse records of other Chan masters.<sup>23</sup> In grammatical terms, the term "*ju* 舉" is used in Chan texts as a verb, both transitively and intransitively.

When *ju* is used as transitive verb, it is often in expressions like "raising previous exchanges" (*ju qianhua* 舉前話),<sup>24</sup> "raising an old saying" (*jugu* 舉古),<sup>25</sup> or "raising the words of a person of ancient times" (*ju gulai laosiu/gurenyu/gude* 舉古來老

22 There is some ambiguity about who raised the cases. In the *Xuedou dongting lu*, each episode opens simply with "it is raised" (*ju* 舉) (T 1996, 670c26). However, one occasion in Xuedou's other text, the *Xuedou's Remarks on Old Cases* (*Xuediou heshang niangu ji* 雪竇和尚拈古集), it is specified as "the master raised" (*shi ju* 師舉) (T 1996, 685b7). Shanqing's explanation, discussed below, indicates that it was disciples who raised the old cases.

23 William Powell refers to a similar form found in Dongshan Liangjie's 洞山良价 (807–869) discourse record as "comment case study." See the *Ruizhou dongshan liangjie chanshi yulu* 瑞州洞山良价禪師語錄 (T 1986, 525b18-22). This text was compiled in 1632 (1986, 3 and 1983, 86-87).

24 For example, see the *Zhenzhou linji huizhao chanshi yulu* 鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄 (T 1985, 503a20-21).

25 For example, see the *Yunmen kuangzhen chanshi guanglu* 雲門匡真禪師廣錄 (T 1988, 554a13). The first manuscript of the record of Chan master Yunmen 雲門 (864–949) is compiled by his disciple Shoujian 守堅 (d.u.) (T 1988, 545a15). Some contents of Yunmen's record appear in Chan texts as early as the second half of the tenth century (App 1989, 22).

宿/古人語/古德).<sup>26</sup> In these contexts, that which is raised is usually dialogues that happened between two monks or sayings from ancient texts or ancient people.

In other cases, “*ju*” is followed by an auxiliary character. Examples include “raising something for someone” (*jusi* 舉似),<sup>27</sup> “raising and showing something to someone” (*jushi* 舉示),<sup>28</sup> or “raising a question to someone” (*juwen* 舉問).<sup>29</sup> In these contexts, *jusi*, *jushi*, and *juwen* are usually followed by a recipient, such as “raising something to a master” (*jusi shi* 舉似師). Occasionally, some Chan masters were asked to “raise and compose verses” (*juchang* 舉唱). Then, the masters would compose a verse in response to the request.<sup>30</sup> The following example demonstrates how the character “*ju*” is used as a transitive verb, using both *jusi shi* and *ju qianhua*. This exchange is from the section of “Critical Examination” (*kanbian* 勘辨) of Linji’s (d. 866) *Zhenzhou linji huizhao chanshi yulu* 鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄.<sup>31</sup> The exchange happened among three people, Huangbo 黃蘗 (d. 850), the monk in charge of preparing rice, and Linji.

黃蘗因入厨次，問飯頭：「作什麼？」

飯頭云：「揀眾僧米。」

黃蘗云：「一日喫多少？」

飯頭云：「二石五。」

黃蘗云：「莫太多麼？」

飯頭云：「猶恐少在。」

黃蘗便打。

飯頭却舉似師，師云：「我爲汝勘這老漢。」纔到侍立次，黃蘗舉前話。

師云：「飯頭不會，請和尚代一轉語。」師便問：「莫太多麼？」黃蘗

云：「何不道：來日更喫一頓？」師云：「說什麼來日，即今便喫！」

26 For example, see the *Zutang ji* 祖堂集 (142b8) and the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T 2076, 411a23 and 420c3).

27 Chinese scholar Yu Gu 于谷 explains that the character “*si*” 似 is usually used after verbs such as *ju*, *cheng* 呈, or *shuo* 說 and is followed by an object (1995, 76-78). For the examples of *jusi*, see the *Zhenzhou linji huizhao chanshi yulu* (T 1985, 503a20), the *Yunmen kuangzhen chanshi guanglu* (T 1988, 559c7), the *Zutang ji* (76b7), and the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T 2076, 255c4).

28 For example, see the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T 2076, 293a14).

29 Ibid. (T 2076, 435b14).

30 For example, see the *Zutang ji* (199a12-13), the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T 2076, 230a2-3), and the *Fenyang wude chanshi yulu* 汾陽無德禪師語錄 (T 1992, 596a21-22). The first manuscript of Fenyang’s 汾陽 (947–1024) record is compiled by his disciple Shishuang Chuyuan 石霜楚圓 (986–1039) (T 1992, 595b26).

31 The first manuscript of Chan master Linji’s 臨濟 (d. 866) record is compiled by his disciple Huiran 慧然 (d.u.) (T 1985, 496b13). For a detailed description, see Akizuki Ryumin 秋月龍珉 (1972, 251).

道了便掌。黃蘗云：「這風顛漢。又來這裏捋虎鬚。」師便喝出去。  
(T 1985, 503a17-25)

One day when Huangbo entered the kitchen, he asked the head rice-cook,

“What are you doing?”

The cook said, “I’m picking over the rice for the monks.”

“How much do they eat in a day?” asked Huangbo.

“Two and a half piculs,” said the cook.

“Isn’t that too much?” said Huangbo.

“I’m afraid it isn’t enough,” replied the cook.

Huangbo struck him.

Later the cook recounted this to Linji (*jusi shi* 舉似師).

Linji said, “I will test the old fellow for you.”

When Linji came to attend on Huangbo, Huangbo brought up the previous exchange (*ju qianhua* 舉前話). Linji offered, “The cook didn’t understand.” He continued, “Reverend, kindly give a turning word that the cook might have used in reply.” He then asked, “Is that too much?”

Huangbo answered, “Well, why not say, ‘We’ll have a meal tomorrow!’”

“Why talk about ‘tomorrow’,” said Linji, “when you can have it right now!”

and gave Huangbo a slap in the face.

“This lunatic has come here to pull the tiger’s whiskers again!” said Huangbo.

Linji shouted and went out.<sup>32</sup>

In the above case, the exchange between the head rice-cook and Huangbo was first presented in full. Then, when the head rice-cook mentioned the incident to Linji (*jusi shi*), the exchange was omitted. Similarly, when Huangbo mentioned his earlier conversation with the head rice-cook to Linji (*ju qianhua*), the conversation was omitted.<sup>33</sup>

In the genre of “remarks on old cases,” however, *ju* is always used as an intransitive verb. This genre can be seen as early as the section of “Words From Abbot’s Chamber” (*Shizhongyuyao* 室中

32 My translation is based on Ruth Fuller Sasaki (1975, 40) with minor changes.

33 In Linji’s biography, it is said that after Linji achieved enlightenment with Dayou’s help, Linji returned to Huangpo. After a short conversation with Huangpo, Linji gave Huangpo a slap and Huangpo cried, “You raving idiot! Coming back here and pulling the tiger’s whiskers.” This is why in the above anecdote Huangpo said that Linji came to pull the tiger’s whiskers “again”

語要) found in Yunmen's 雲門 (864–949) *Extensive Record of Chan Master Yunmen Kuangzhen* (*Yunmen kuangzhen chanshi guanglu* 雲門匡真禪師廣錄).<sup>34</sup> A typical example is as follows:

舉  
德山問維那：「有幾人新到那？」  
云：「八人。」  
山云：「喚典座來，一時生按過。」  
師拈云：「更說什麼生按過！」 (T 1988, 560b24-26)

Raised:

Deshan said to a rector, "How many people have just arrived?"

The rector replied, "Eight."

Deshan said, "Call the cook and deal with them all together."

Master (Yunmen) commented, "Why bother to say 'deal with them all together'?"<sup>35</sup>

As the above case shows, the passage contains a raised old case and Yunmen's comment in response to the old case. Although there is not yet a formal category of "*niangu*" in the Yunmen text, this passage, representing the genre of "remarks on old cases," is complete.

Based on extant Chan texts, "remarks on old cases" finally appears as a formal category in the *Xuedou dongting lu* in the Yunmen lineage.<sup>36</sup> After understanding the preliminary development and the basic structure of "remarks on old cases," the following discussion regarding the "remarks on old cases" from the *Xuedou dongting lu* will be carried out by raising three questions: 1. Where are the old cases from? 2. What is the setting for the "remarks on old cases"? 3. What are the functions of Xuedou's remarks on old cases?

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(*Zhenzhou linji huizhao chanshi yulu*, T 1985, 504b27-505a2 and Heinrich Dumoulin 1988, 179-184).

34 For a thorough study of *Yunmen kuangzhen chanshi guanglu*, see App (1989).

35 My translation of *yishi sheng anguo* 一時生按過 is based on another old case in the *Yunmen kuangzhen chanshi guanglu*. Monk Xuansha 玄沙 asked a question that if old venerables encountered someone with three illnesses: blindness, deafness, and muteness, how can they deal with them? (T 1988, 560b17-21 and App 1994, 191-92).

36 We can see an earlier form of "verses on old cases" in Xuedou's master Zhimen Guangzuo's *Record of Chan Master Zhimen Zuo* (*Zhimen zuochanshi yulu* 智門祚禪師語錄, X 1315), compiled by Xuedou in 1031. However, "verses on old cases" is not yet used as a formal category in this discourse record.

## Sources of The Old Cases

There are in total seventeen old cases in the “Remarks on Old Cases” section of the *Xuedou dongting lu*. Of these seventeen, eight may be matched with similar anecdotes in the *Jingde chuandeng lu*. We can also find similar passages in the *Record of Chan Master Zhaozhou Zhenji* (*Zhaozhou zhenji chanshi yulu* 趙州真際禪師語錄) and *Record of Monk Yunzhou Dayu Zhi* (*Yunzhou dayu zhi heshang* 筠州大愚芝和尚) contained in the *Record of Ancient Masters* (*Guzun suyulu* 古尊宿語錄, X 1315), *Extensive Record of Chan Master Xuansha Zongyi* (*Fuzhou Xuansha zongyi dashi guanglu* 福州玄沙宗一大師廣錄, X 1445), and *Yunmen kuangzhen chanshi guanglu*. There are two old cases left that cannot be found in any extant Chan sources. Thus, the *Xuedou dongting lu* also preserves precious material that is not extant in other texts.

Furthermore, judging from the sources of these old cases and the degree of similarity, we can make the following assumptions:<sup>37</sup> There were many Chan texts available in Xuedou’s monastery. When Xuedou raised an old case, he was either reading it or reciting it from memory. Compilers may have edited the contents to accord with texts they had on hand.

### Possible Origins of “Remarks on Old Cases” in the *Xuedou Dongting Lu*

“Remarks on old cases” in <i>Xuedou dongting lu</i>	Possible Origins	Note
Mihu 米胡 and a monk (T 1996, 670c27-671a3)	Cannot be found in other texts	
King of Jibin 麴賓 and the Elder Shizi 師子 (T 1996, 671a4-7)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 434c17-21)	
Jingqing 鏡清 and a monk (T 1996, 671a8-11)	Cannot be found in other texts	
寶公 and Xuansha 玄沙 (T 1996, 671a12-14)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 436a27-28)	part
Wutong xianren 五通仙人 and the Buddha (T 1996, 671a15-18)	<i>Yunzhou dayu zhi heshang</i> in <i>Guzun suyulu</i> (X 1315, 165b9-11)	
Monk Si 思 and Shitou 石頭 (T 1996, 671a19-27)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 240b18-27)	

37 By “similar,” the author means that there is more than 50 percent of similarity in their wording.

“Remarks on old cases” in <i>Xuedou dongting lu</i>	Possible Origins	Note
Changzi 長髭 and Shitou (T 1996, 671b4-5)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 313a25-b2)	
Deshan 德山 and Longtan 龍潭 (T 1996, 671b5-8)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 313c3-5)	
An elderly monk and a monk (T 1996, 671b9-15)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 435a23-28)	
Monk Guan 觀 and a young monk (T 1996, 671b16-19)	<i>Yunzhou dayu zhi heshang</i> in <i>Guzun suyulu</i> (X 1315, 166b1-3)	
A non-Buddhist and the Buddha (T 1996, 671b20-24)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 434c6-10)	
Lay Master Fu 傅大士 and Xuansha (T 1996, 671b25-28)	<i>Fuzhou Xuansha zongyi dashi</i> <i>guanglu</i> (X 1445, 20b21-22)	part
	<i>Yunzhou dayu zhi heshang</i> in <i>Guzun suyulu</i> (X 1315, 165b21-24)	
Baogong 寶公 and Monk Si (T 1996, 671b29-c3)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 435a14-16)	
Zhaozhou 趙州 and a monk (T 1996, 671c4-9)	<i>Zhaozhou zhenji chanshi yulu</i> in <i>Guzun suyulu</i> (X 1315, 76a9, 79c18-22)	
Nanquan 南泉 (T 1996, 671c10-16)	<i>Yunmen kuangzhen chanshi guanglu</i> (T 1988, 559c4-10)	
Deng Yinfeng 鄧隱峯 (T 1996, 671c17-19)	<i>Yunzhou dayu zhi heshang</i> in <i>Guzun suyulu</i> (X 1315, 166b9-11)	
Xuansha and a monk (T 1996, 671c20-22)	<i>Jingde chuandeng lu</i> (T 2076, 244a21-22)	

## The Setting of “Remarks on Old Cases”

In the *Xuedou dongting lu*, there is section dedicated entirely to Xuedou’s talks given in the Dharma Hall. Therefore, the setting of “remarks on old cases” is less formal than those in which he ascends the Dharma hall (*shangtang* 上堂). Furthermore, because there is yet another section entitled “raising old cases in the abbot’s chamber,” the setting of “remarks on old cases” is not a private meeting with disciples who enter abbot’s chambers for individual instruction. In the *Zuting shiyuan*, Shanqing also states that giving remarks on old cases does not take place during the occasion of ascending the Dharma hall (*shengtang* 陞堂) or allowing disciples to enter the abbots chambers (*rushi* 入室).

曩游叢林，竊見大宗師陞堂·入室之外，  
復許學者記誦所謂雲門·雪竇諸家禪錄，  
出眾舉之，而為演說其緣，謂之請益。(X 1261, 313a18-20)

As I wandered and visited various Chan monasteries, I saw that great masters ascended the Dharma Hall and allowed disciples to enter their chambers. Additionally, disciples memorized Chan records, such as those of Yunmen and Xuedou. They were allowed to step forward from the assembly to raise the contents of those records, and the master would expound upon their meanings. This is called “inquiring about the meaning of profound passages.”

Thus the procedure described by Shanqing as “inquiring about the meaning of profound passages” (*qingyi* 請益) involved the master answering questions raised by student monks about passages in Chan texts.<sup>38</sup> Although Shanqing did not specify a specific occasion for “inquiring about the meaning of profound passages,” the information provided helps us narrow down the occasions described in the *Chanyuan qinggui* to one possibility—the “interactive session” (*xiaocan* 小參).<sup>39</sup> The *Chanyuan qinggui* contains the following explanation:

38 Griffith Foulk summarizes that “remarks on old cases” are “delivered orally in formal settings” while “verses on old cases” are written by Chan masters. Foulk, however, did not specify the details of the formal setting (2000, 17-18).

39 The term “*xiaocan*” is translated as “informal sermon” in Yifa’s *The Origins of Buddhist Monastic Codes in China* (2002, 138) and as “small or supplementary session” in Shohei Ichimura’s *The Baizhang Zen Monastic Regulations* (2006, 70). The author translates it as “interactive session” for two reasons. According to the *Chanyuan qinggui*, the *xiaocan* event is announced and the administrators and the abbot’s disciples are summoned (*ji zhishi tuzhong* 集知事徒眾); thus it is not an informal occasion. Second, “*xiaocan*” is not simply an occasion for Chan masters to give sermons. Instead, it also involves exchanges between masters and disciples (*bingzhu wenchao* 賓主問酬) (X 1245, 527c20).

小參

五日陞堂激揚宗旨，三八念誦報答龍神。  
請益玄言，發明今古，小參家訓綱紀叢林。  
夫小參之法，初夜鐘鳴，寢堂設位。  
集知事徒眾，賓主問酬並同早參。(X 1245, 527c17-22)

Interactive session (*xiaocan*)

Every five days the abbot ascends the platform in the Dharma Hall to inspire the monks with the principles of their tradition. On the days of the month ending in three or eight, there is chanting to repay the dragons and heavenly beings. The monks invite the abbot to give instruction on the profound teachings (*qingyi*) and explain the contemporary significance of ancient teachings. The interactive session concerns the style of training and discipline peculiar to the monastery.

The interactive session is conducted as follows: In the evening, the bell is struck and seats are arranged in the abbot's front hall. The administrators and the abbot's disciples are summoned. The master abbot and his audience engage in conversation just as in the morning session.<sup>40</sup>

According to Zongze's description, in the interactive session (*xiaocan*), disciples are called to gather in the abbot's front hall to ask the meaning of profound passages and the abbot is invited to give explanations on the contemporary relevance of ancient teachings.<sup>41</sup> Zongze said that "interactive session" is an occasion to talk about regulations concerning every member of the monastery and thus it is also called "Chan monastic discipline" (*jiaxun* 家訓).<sup>42</sup>

The examples of raising old cases in the interactive session (*xiaocan*) can be seen in Fenyang Shanzhou's 汾陽善昭 (947–1024) *Fenyang wude chanshi yulu* 汾陽無德禪師語錄. On the

40 My translation is based on Yifa (2002, 138) with minor changes.

41 Regarding to the way the "interactive session" is announced, there is an inconsistency in the *Chanyuan qinggui*. Zongze mentions in two other places that the "interactive session" is announced by striking the drum, instead of the bell (X 1245, 539c14-15 and 539c19-20). For an explanation of the location of this event, the *qintang* 寢堂, see Yifa (2002, 272).

42 Shanqing presents different information regarding the time of the interactive sessions in his *Zuting shiyuan*. He states that the interactive sessions are held at a time that is not prearranged. However, Shanqing's opinion does not exclude the possibility that the interactive sessions are held in the evening as stated in the *Chanyuan qinggui*. Furthermore, Shanqing also disagrees with the statement that "interactive session" is called "Chan monastic discipline" with a vague reason that he had never heard of it (X 1261, 431a16-21). Mujaku Dōchū then disagreed with Shanqing's criticism and argued that Shanqing's contemporary Sixin Wuxin 死心悟新 (1044–1115) had the same opinion that "interactive session" is also called "Chan monastic discipline." See *Huanglong sixin xin chanshi yulu* 黃龍死心新禪師語錄 (X 1344, 230a11) and Mujaku Dōchū's *Zenrin shokisen* (429a).



occasions of two interactive sessions, Master Fenyang first raised the contents of Linji's "three profound sentences" (*sanxuan yu* 三玄語) and one of Master Deshan's 德山 (782–865) public sermons. They were then followed by the exchanges between Fenyang and his disciples, finally ending with Fenyang's comment or beating (T 1992, 597b22-c12 and 600b15-21).

If "remarks on old cases" were indeed carried out in the occasion of the interactive session (*xiaocan*), then judging from the hundreds of "remarks on old cases" collected in Xuedou's seven texts, the occasion of the interactive session seemed to be held often in Xuedou's monastery.

## The Functions of Xuedou's Remarks on Old Cases

If the interactive session (*xiaocan*) were indeed held frequently in Xuedou's monastery, it must have been considered an important and beneficial activity by Xuedou. The selections below are representative examples chosen from the *Xuedou dongting lu* to show how old cases were raised and how Xuedou added his remarks; from this we may find out the functions of the Chan master's remarks on old cases:

舉

米胡問僧：「近離甚處？」

僧云：「藥山。」

米云：「藥山近日如何？」

僧云：「大似頑石一般。」

米云：「得恁麼鄭重？」

僧云：「也無提撥處。」

米云：「非但藥山，米胡亦恁麼？」

僧近前顧視而立。

米云：「看！看！頑石動也！」

其僧便出。

師拈云：「米胡也，縱、奪可觀，爭奈死而不弔。」  
(T 1996, 670c27-671a3)

Raised:

Mihu asked a monk, "From where have you come?"

The monk replied, "Yaoshan."

Mi asked, "How is Yaoshan these days?"

The monk replied, "Like a stubborn rock."

Mi asked, "Is it that serious?"

The monk replied, “He didn’t give me any advice at all.”

Mi asked, “Let’s not talk about Yaoshan. How about me?”

The monk stood and approached Mihi for a closer look.

Mi said, “Look! Look! The stubborn rock has moved!”

Thereupon the monk left.

Master (Xuedou) says: “Mihi is skillful at the teaching methods of indulgence and chastening. The monk, however, is like a dead person who does not deserve protection for his corpse.”

In this example, an old case was raised in which one monk criticized Yaoshan in front of Master Mihi by saying that Yaoshan was like a stubborn rock. Mihi did not rebuke him right away, instead asking him to say something about Mihi himself. The monk stood up and came closer. Then Mihi yielded, saying “Look! Look! The stubborn rock moved!” following which the monk left. In his remarks, Xuedou praises Mihi for being skillful at both the teaching methods of indulgence (*zong* 縱) and chastening (*duo* 奪).

The teaching methods of indulgence and chastening are two contrary ways for teaching students. When the monk criticized Yaoshan for being like a stubborn rock and not teaching him anything, Mihi did not rebuke him right away. This seems to be the method of indulgence Xuedou referred to. Then, when the monk stood up, eager to move closer to Mihi, Mihi immediately said, “Look! Look! The stubborn rock moved!” This seems to be what Xuedou meant the method of chastening.<sup>43</sup>

The difficult part in this exchange is Xuedou’s comment that the monk is like “a dead person who does not deserve protection for his body” (*si er budiao* 死而不弔). In the *Zuting shiyuan*, Shanqing informs us that this expression is found in two sources, the Han dynasty *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字, and the *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記). In the *Shuowen jiezi*, the character “*diao*” 弔 means a person holding a bow to guard a body from scavengers in ancient times (X 1261, 318c17-18).<sup>44</sup> According to the *Book of Rites*, however, there are three kinds of death for which such protection should not be offered: people who were slandered, but were afraid

43 The author’s interpretation of these two teaching methods is based on *Zengaku daijiten*, 479b. Fenyang Shanzhou’s 汾陽善昭 (947–1024) *Fenyang wude chanshi yulu* states, “Great masters change freely between the teaching methods of indulgence and chastening” (T 1992, 612c11).

44 Duan Yucai 段玉裁 explains that people of ancient times ate animals and birds when they were hungry; they drank mist and dew (wulu 霧露) when they were thirsty. When someone died, their body was discarded in a field and covered with wood. However, filial sons were worried about their parents’ bodies being eaten by animals. As a result, they held bows to guard their parents’ bodies from scavengers. This is the basis of the character “*diao*” (*Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注, chapter 8, 387a-b).

to defend their honor; people who insisted upon proceeding in a dangerous situation, and died; people who drowned because they did not use the bridge to cross a river (X 1261, 318c18-19).<sup>45</sup>

Master Yunmen used an expression similar to the first explanation in his *Yunmen kuangzhen chanshi guanglu*. He ascended the Dharma hall and the assembly gathered. Then, Yunmen said, “One who has something to say, but does not say it (*youli bushen* 有理不伸), does not deserve protection for his body.” (T 1988, 562a12). In Xuedou’s remarks, he first praised Mihi for being skillful at both teaching methods of indulgence and chastening. Then, he commented that the monk who had a chance to meet a great and skillful master like Mihi, chose to turn back on him and leave, is like “a dead person who does not deserve protection for his body.”

Xuedou’s style of making remarks is summarized in Yuanwu Keqin’s famous work the *Emerald Cliff Record*:

大凡頌古只是繞路說禪，拈古大綱據款結案。(T 2003, 141a15-16)

Generally speaking, verses on old cases just expound Chan in a roundabout way; the general purpose of making remarks on old cases is to bring resolution to those old cases.

In other words, when Chan masters compose verses on old cases, they simply illustrate the meaning of Chan contained in the raised old cases with their own words, in a non-linear fashion with verse. When masters remark on old cases, they bring to resolution that which is unsettled in the other monks’ questions, responses or even performances in the raised old cases.

Furthermore, in addition to Yuanwu’s representative summary of “remarks on old cases” and “verses on old cases,” there are other differences between them. In Xuedou’s seven texts, the length of old cases in these two genres does not differ significantly. The lengths of Xuedou’s remarks on old cases, however, tend to be shorter than his verses; some of his remarks are as short as only one sentence.<sup>46</sup> Most important, remarks are not in verse. Japanese monk Mujaku Dōchū states that verses on old cases are hymns to praise of the virtues of buddhas and patriarchs.<sup>47</sup> By contrast, Yuanwu’s summary gives no grounds for the argument that they were eulogistic.

45 This passage is originally from the *Book of Rites*, book II, the Tangong 檀弓. A translation provided by James Legge (1885) is, “There are three deaths on which no condolence should be offered: from cowardice; from being crushed (through heedlessness); and from drowning.” See *The LÍ KÍ (THE BOOK OF RITES)*, <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cfu/like/like02.htm>, accessed Jan. 1, 2008. My translation is based on Zhenxuan’s 鄭玄 commentary and Kong Yingda’s 孔穎達 sub-commentary on the *Book of Rites*; *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 (1999, 192).

46 Griffith Foulk suggests that old cases raised in “Remarks on Old Cases” are in abbreviated fashion, while they are cited in their entirety in “Verses on Old Cases” (2000, 18). However, the length of old cases in these two genres does not differ apparently in Xuedou’s seven texts.

47 Mujaku Dōchū states in his *Zenrin shokisen* that the style of verse (song 頌) originates with the six classes of poems mentioned in the *Book of Poetry (Shijing 詩經)*—hymns for rituals. In particular, hymns are for praising the virtues of gods. As such, “verses on old cases” are to

Besides positive comments, Xuedou sometimes expressed negative judgments in his “remarks” toward the Chan masters mentioned in the old cases that he raised. For example, Xuedou was critical of the old case involving Elder Bao (*baogong* 寶公) (418–514) and Great Master Si (Si daheshang 思大和尚) (515–577).<sup>48</sup> Although the old case itself could not have been true historically due to their age difference, the import is Xuedou’s comment.

舉

寶公令人傳語思大和尚：「何不下山教化眾生，目視雲漢作什麼？」

思大云：「三世諸佛被我一口吞盡，何處更有眾生可度？」

師拈云：「有什麼屎臭氣！」(T 1996, 671b29-c3)

Raised:

Elder Bao sent a messenger to Great Master Si, asking “Why don’t you come out from the mountains to teach sentient beings? What is the point of being so proud?”

Great Master Si replied, “Buddhas in the three times all have been swallowed by me with one gulp. Is there any sentient being who needs me to teach?”

Xuedou commented, “What a fecal stench!”

Due to the lack of detailed information, we do not know exactly what Xuedou was referring to with his comment “What a fecal stench.” However, if we compare Xingsi’s responses with Xuedou’s life—Xuedou spent 31 years at Zisheng Si teaching his disciples—it is possible that Xuedou was offering a commentary on Xingsi’s reply “Is there any sentient being who needs me to teach?” Through his comments, Xuedou also transmitted his religious values to his disciples.

The other important point is that although “remarks on old cases” are delivered orally and the author does not assume that what is written always represents historical fact, the genre of “remarks on old cases” is not in dialogue form, and only the master’s comments are transcribed. Since the late Tang dynasty, encounter dialogues had become the dominant genre of Chan texts and each encounter dialogue involves questions by an anonymous monk and responses by known teachers.<sup>49</sup> This being the case, why is that only the master’s remarks are recorded in “remarks on old cases”?

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sing the praises of the virtues of buddhas and patriarchs. It is said in the introduction of *Book of Poetry* that there are six different kinds of poems: folk songs (*feng* 風), descriptive pieces (*fu* 賦), metaphorical pieces (*bi* 比), allusive pieces (*xing* 興), songs of Zhou 周 (*ya* 雅), and hymns for rituals (*song* 頌) (*Zenrin shokisen*, 603b and *Shisanjing zhushu er shijing* 十三經注疏 2 詩經, 15).

48 This old case can be found in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T 2076, 435a14-16). The slight difference is that it is stated as simply “an elder” in the Taishō version, but it is stated as Zhi Gong 誌公 who is also known as Baozhi 寶誌 (418–514) in the Ming version (T 2076, 435, n. 2).

49 In the following discussion, the author is inspired by the format of “questions about things”

When old cases were raised, we do not know if the disciples tried to make remarks on the old case, or if they simply listened to the master's remarks. Unfortunately, whichever the case, we have only the master's remarks in the present records. Is this because only the masters' remarks were more valuable and worth recording? This perspective is consistent with Griffith Foulk's statement that making remarks demonstrated the master's authority (2000, 17).

One issue worth further consideration is the significance of the "resolution to the old cases" brought about by the masters. As Robert Buswell emphasizes, the old cases not only "expressed the enlightened state of mind of the Chan master involved in the exchange," the disciples too would gain realizations (2004, 226). In the process of making remarks on old cases especially, the disciples could receive the masters' guidance through their resolutions to the old cases. However, as mentioned above, since the students' words were not recorded, there are no accounts of Xuedou's disciples achieving enlightenment in the section "remarks on old cases."<sup>50</sup>

If we look at Xuedou's own opinions on raising and making remarks on old cases, they seem to be contradictory at first blush. On the one hand, Xuedou said in one occasion of ascending the Dharma hall, "Raising the ancient and raising the present (*jugu juqin* 舉古舉今) are like tossing sand and sprinkling mud (*paosha satu* 拋沙撒土). There is in fact nothing!" (T 1996, 670a19-20) On the other hand, there are at least 300 old cases raised in his seven works in total. They must have been important to him. To resolve this discrepancy, we need to look at a rare work written by Xuedou himself.

Xuedou wrote a preface after he finished compiling the *Record of Chan Master Zhimen Zuo* (*Zhimen zuochanshi yulu* 智門祚禪師語錄) for his master Zhimen Guanzuo in 1031.<sup>51</sup> Xuedou was 52 years old and had been living and teaching at Zisheng si at Mount Xuedou for about 10 years. The preface begins with the sentence, "To benefit sentient beings with varying faculties, one must compose his words with wisdom and compassion." He went on to criticize some monks as "big woodworms" (*judu* 巨蠹) of the Chan school, because they showed off their knowledge and misled people only for their own fame and profit.<sup>52</sup>

Although he was clearly aware of the limits in raising old cases, Xuedou exerted himself to compose hundreds of remarks and verses to benefit other people with varying faculties. We perhaps do not always need to relate Chan masters' remarks with the

described in John McRae's book *Seeing through Zen* (2003, 74-100).

50 Among Xuedou's 78 Dharma successors, only Tianyi Yihuai's 天衣義懷 (989-1060) enlightenment experience is depicted. It is said that after Yihuai finished drawing water with a bucket, the shoulder pole suddenly dropped on the ground and he achieved enlightenment. See *Jianzhong jingguo xudeng lu* (X 1556, 666a16-17).

51 It is said in Xuedou's preface that he wrote this preface on "*xinweisui bingyue zhi wuri* 辛未歲蕤賓月之五日" which was May 5, 1031 (X 1315, 259a7-8). The term "*reibing*" 蕤賓 appears in the book "Zhouyu 周語" of *Guoyu* 國語 and in his authoritative grammar and rhetoric exegesis to *Guoyu*, Weizhao 韋昭 (204-273) explains that "*reibing*" means "May".

52 *Zhimen zuo chanshi yulu* can be found in the *Guzun suyü lu* (X 1315, 258c16-259a5).

ultimate truth and expect a great enlightening impact on students. In the above examples of masters Mihi and Xingsi, Xuedou's remarks taught students about Mihi's two teaching methods, the anonymous monk's wrong attitude, and Xuedou's religious values.

## Conclusion

Xuedou had received a complete Confucian education before he became a monk and was adept in the poetic arts. He not only liked to investigate what he was taught, but also became interested in composing remarks and verses to elucidate the meaning of old cases later in his life. Hundreds of old cases were raised as a way to teach his disciples in Xuedou's monastery. Judging from the content and the number of old cases raised in the *Xuedou dongting lu*, we find that monks in Xuedou's monastery were familiar with old cases from various Chan texts and there were abundant Chan texts in Xuedou's monastery. Furthermore, if remarks on old cases were carried out in the "interactive session" (*xiaocan*), then it would be correct this such sessions occurred frequently in Xuedou's monastery. Disciples learned from the lessons contained in the old cases, from Xuedou's positive or negative judgments, and from his wise remarks and verses.

In the *Xuedou dongting lu*, the "remarks on old cases" only occupied a small section. Its importance, however, grew in Xuedou's later life. In 1032, Xuedou's disciples compiled another independent text titled *Master Xuedou's Remarks on Old Cases* (*Xuedou heshang niangu ji* 雪竇和尚拈古集) containing only "remarks on old cases." Subsequently, based on *Monk Xuedou's Remarks on Old Cases*, Yuanwu Keqin composed another famous work, *Foguo's Commentarial Record* (*Foguo jijie lu* 佛果擊節錄, X 1301).

"Remarks on old cases" thus represents an important stage in the development of Chan literature occurring after encounter dialogues but before precedent anthologies. The *Zuting shiyuan* proves that sometimes Chan masters' strange utterances are indeed explainable and can be understood in a non-mystical way. After understanding the basic elements of "remarks on old cases" in the *Xuedou dongting lu*, much remains to be investigated in that and other works by Xuedou.

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