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Three Places of Mind-Transmission (三處傳心): The Polemical Application of Mind-Transmission Stories in Korean Sŏn Buddhism

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This article explores the Korean application of “mind-transmission” (K. *chŏnsim*, C. *chuanxin*) episodes to the intra-Sŏn (C. Chan) polemics. Korean Sŏn masters, unlike Chinese counterparts, sought for the religious meaning of the existence of multiple transmission episodes that circulated in East Asia from the Sŏn polemical perspective. In particular, Kagun and Paekp’a used the term “*samch’ŏ chŏnsim*” to promote their own visions of Sŏn within the situation in which different visions of Sŏn competed for dominance.

In medieval China, Chan Buddhists established a unique image of their tradition to represent its difference from and superiority to other forms of Buddhism, particularly scholastic Buddhism. This image portrayed Chan as the vehicle by which the supreme mind-dharma had been transmitted separately from the scriptural vehicle. Chan Buddhists even attempted to legitimize that image by developing special episodes, episodes that attribute its origin to the Buddha Śākyamuni’s transmission of the mind-dharma to his disciple Mahākāśyapa. As previous scholarship has shown, these episodes came in for criticism not only from Chan’s archrival, the doctrinal (C. *Jiao*; K. *Kyo*) school, but also from within the Chan school itself.¹ Nonetheless, they were believed to be historical or quasi-historical facts by most Chan adherents and even tacitly accepted by some doctrinal exegetes. These episodes thus succeeded in justifying the Chan claim to the legitimacy and authority of its own lineage and served as a basis for the privileges the Chan school enjoyed during the Song dynasty (960–1279).²

This article explores polemical aspects of the so-called “mind-transmission episodes,” in particular, the Korean interpretation of those episodes within the context of the Sŏn (C. Chan) internal rivalry. The episodes of mind-transmission involved issues of Chan/Sŏn self-definition in terms of the relationship between Chan/Sŏn and doctrinal studies, including the questions of how Chan/Sŏn followers looked at their own tradition and how they presented it to others, especially to the rival Jiao/Kyo doctrinal school. These episodes inevitably generated tension not only within the Chan/Sŏn school but also between the Chan/Sŏn and doctrinal schools. With respect to Chan/Sŏn internal conflict, the fact that several mind-transmission episodes were circulating in medieval East Asia deserves our attention. Textual records show that in China this fact did not receive much consideration in relation to the internal polemics of Chan. Instead, the evidence suggests that it was in Korea that those episodes were treated collectively through the introduction of the concept of *samch’ŏ chŏnsim* 三處傳心, the concept that mind-transmission from the Buddha to Mahākāśyapa

1. Griffith T. Foulk, “Sung Controversies concerning the ‘Separate Transmission’ of Ch’an,” in *Buddhism in the Sung*, ed. Peter N. Gregory and Daniel A. Getz, Jr. (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai’i Press, 1999), 220–94, and Albert Welter, “Mahākāśyapa’s Smile: Silent Transmission and the Kung-an (Kōan) Tradition,” in *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, ed. Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000), 75–109.

2. Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai’i Press, 2008), 13–17.

occurred in three different places. This notion, which became widely known in Korea after it first appeared late in the Koryŏ era (918–1392), raised an important question that inevitably arose from accepting more than one transmission episode or theory: did the Buddha transmit in three different places (1) the same mind or (2) different minds or levels of the mind? This article explores the Korean application of mind-transmission episodes to intra-Sŏn polemics by examining how important Sŏn masters such as Kagun 覺雲 (fl. 13th century) and Paekp'a 白坡 (1767–1852) answered this question. Thereby, it reveals a unique aspect of Korean Sŏn development that was distinct from the Chinese Chan tradition.

DEVELOPMENT OF MIND-TRANSMISSION EPISODES IN CHINA

Mind-transmission episodes went through a long and complex process of development in medieval China. They appeared in various Chan texts to support the Chan claim that the supreme mind-dharma of the historical Buddha had been transmitted along the direct and unbroken line of the Chan lineage. The variety of Chan texts in which mind-transmission episodes were found included recorded sayings (*yulu* 語錄), such as the *Chuanxin fayao* 傳心法要 of 857; genealogical histories (*denglu* 燈錄), such as the imperially ratified *Jingde chuangdeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 of 1009 and the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* 天聖廣燈錄 of 1036; and gong'an anthologies, such as the *Zongmen tongyao ji* 宗門統要集 of 1093, the *Chanzong songgu lianzhutong ji* 禪宗頌古聯珠通集 of 1175, and the *Wumen guan* 無門關 of 1228. As Griffith Foulk points out, “viewed chronologically,” the transmission episodes in these texts became “bolder and bolder in the claims they make concerning the separate transmission of the formless Chan dharma and the Buddha Śākyamuni’s role in initiating it.”³ Some of the episodes in their final form explicitly stated that the Buddha had entrusted the “treasury of the true dharma eye” (*C. zhengfayan zang* 正法眼藏) to Mahākāśyapa and, depending on the episode in question, asked him to preserve it for future generations.

Probably two of the most famous transmission episodes are known as the “sharing the seat in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons” (*C. Duozi ta qian fenban zuo* 多子塔前分半座) and the “World-Honored One holding up a flower” (*C. Shizun nianhua* 世尊拈花). The representative versions of these episodes are as follows:

I. Once the World-Honored One came in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons and ordered Mahākāśyapa to share the seat. [The World-Honored One] draped him in a robe, and then said, “I secretly entrust the treasury of the true dharma eye to you. You must guard it and transmit it in the future and not let it be cut off.”⁴

世尊昔至多子塔前 命摩訶迦葉分座令坐 以僧伽梨圍之遂告云 吾以正法眼藏密付於汝 汝當護持傳付將來無令斷絕。

II. The World-Honored One was once at an assembly on Vulture Peak, and held up a flower to show the congregation. At that time, all in the congregation remained silent. The venerable Mahākāśyapa alone broke into a subtle smile. The World-Honored One said, “I have a subtle and wondrous dharma-gate that is the treasury of the true dharma eye, the wondrous mind of nirvāṇa, and the true sign that is signless. [This dharma-gate, which is] not established on words and letters and is a special transmission outside the teaching, I entrust to Mahākāśyapa.”⁵

世尊昔在靈山會上 拈花示眾 是時眾皆默然 惟迦葉尊者破顏微笑 世尊云 吾有正法眼藏涅槃妙心實相無相微妙法門 不立文字教外別傳 付囑摩訶迦葉

3. Foulk, “Sung Controversies,” 285.

4. *Wumen guan*, *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (CBETA edition, hereafter T) 2005.48.293c13–c16.

5. *Zongmen tongyao ji*, in *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, ed. Yanagida Seizan and Shiina Kōyū (Tokyo: Rinsen shoten, 1999), 7a9–11.

The first episode, also known as “sharing the seat” (C. *fenban zuo*), originates from an *avadāna*, which was translated into Chinese in 207 under the title *Zhongben qijing* 中本起經.⁶ The second episode, also called “holding up a flower and [making] a subtle smile” (C. *nianhua weixiao* 拈華微笑) or “holding up a flower” (C. *nianhua*), first appears in the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*. Although the origins of these two episodes were different, they took the form of a Chan transmission-episode by the eleventh century. About two centuries later in the thirteenth century, they became well known not only to Buddhist clerics in general but also to the literati class, since they were recorded in famous Chan gong’an texts such as the *Zongmen tongyao ji* and the *Wumen guan*.⁷

Along with these two episodes, other transmission episodes or theories circulated in the Song period for the same purpose of establishing Chan as a separate transmission outside scriptural teaching. Those stories, however, do not seem to have been as popular as the “sharing the seat” or “holding up a flower” episodes; they are not found in full-fledged form in any Buddhist text. Some of them are never even alluded to in Chan texts, and in fact it was a Tiantai text that confirmed the existence of such episodes or theories. The Song Tiantai master Fadeng 法燈 (fl. 1194) introduced them in the context of criticizing the Chan claim of separation from and superiority to the scriptural tradition in his *Yuandunzong yan* 圓頓宗眼:

Some say, “At the assembly on Vulture Peak, the World-Honored One held up a flower and Kāśyapa smiled subtly; that is the mark [of the dharma transmitted].” But that theory has no basis at all in Indian scriptures and must be considered merely a metaphor created by people of later times.

Some say, “When [in the fourth of the five periods] the Buddha taught the *Prajñā* sūtras, that was the transmission of dharma.” But that theory still does not specify the mark of that which is transmitted. Moreover, in the *Prajñā* sūtras it is Subhūti and Śāriputra who are directly infused [with the Buddha’s wisdom], not Kāśyapa.

Some say, “The Tathāgata transmitted the dharma everywhere he went; how could it be restricted to a single time and single place?” But that theory is vague and unfocused in the extreme.

According to some explanations, when the World-Honored One transmitted the robe, that was the transmission of dharma. Others say, “When the World-Honored One entered nirvāṇa, Kāśyapa arrived later and the Buddha displayed both his feet; that was the transmission of dharma.” When we examine these two explanations, however, they only have to do with external signs. How could [these signs] possibly be the mark of the dharma that is transmitted?⁸

或曰靈山會上 世尊拈華迦葉微笑即其相也 此說於竺典殊無稽據 蓋後人所喻耳 或曰般若轉教即是付法 此說亦未見的傳之相 且般若被加 即空生身子非迦葉也 或曰如來處處付屬 豈局一時一處耶 此說通漫之甚 或說世尊付衣即付法也 或曰世尊入滅 迦葉後來 佛現雙足 即是付法 觀此二說 但可表示而已 豈付法相耶

In his critique, Fadeng demonstrated that the issues caused by these episodes revolved around the question of whether the Chan lineage had carried a special dharma that could distinguish Chan from the scriptural tradition. After this statement, Fadeng argued that the dharma transmitted along the Chan lineage was not different from the dharma recorded in

6. *Zhongbenqi jing* 2, T196.4.161a18–a25; this episode was first connected to the Chan image of independence from the scriptural tradition in the *Chuanxin fayao*, the recorded sayings of Huangbo Xiyun 黃壁希運 (d. 850) (T2012A.48.382b03–b09).

7. For a detailed analysis of the development of these two episodes, see Foulk, “Sung Controversies,” 220–94.

8. *Yuandunzong yan*, *Xu zangjing* (CBETA edition, hereafter X) 0958.57.92c13–19; the translation is taken with minor alterations from Brook Ziporyn, “Anti-Chan Polemics in Post-Tang Tiantai,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 17.1 (1994): 56.

the scriptures.⁹ As a Tiantai scholar, he even went to say that this dharma was revealed in its entirety only in the teaching of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* (*Lotus Sūtra*), the central scripture of the Tiantai school.¹⁰

Fadeng's criticism demonstrates that two different types of Chan were seen to be possible in the interpretation of mind-transmission: (1) Chan transmitting a special formless dharma separately from the scriptures; (2) Chan transmitting an identical dharma with that in the scriptures. These "fundamentalist" or "liberal" visions of Chan, as Foulk has called them, were actually competing in the Song dynasty Chan community.¹¹ However, there seems to have been little concern about the circulation of multiple theories of mind-transmission inside the Chan community. In particular, even though the two episodes of "sharing the seat" and "holding up a flower" appear in tandem in some Chan texts, virtually no attention was paid to the intra-Chan polemical implications of the existence of these two different transmission episodes, as shown in the recorded sayings of Cishou Huaishen 慈受懷深 (1077–1132):¹²

Myriads of followers rain [from the sky]. [They became] various adornments and offerings. This was indeed at the assembly on Vulture Peak. How could it be different from in front of Stūpa of Many Sons . . . Some praised and some complimented all wondrous functioning.¹³
花雨繽紛 種種莊嚴 種種供具 便是靈山會上 何殊多子塔前 . . . 或讚或揚皆妙用

Huaishen here suggested that the Buddha had transmitted the same mind in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons and on Vulture Peak—in other words, that the complete mind-transmission had taken place in both places. What Huaishen, along with many other Chan experts of the time, failed to address are the questions raised earlier: if the Buddha transmitted the same mind to Kāśyapa in those different places, what reason or need would there be for the Buddha to do so?¹⁴ If not, what different minds or different levels of the mind did the Buddha transmit to Kāśyapa in each place?

A statement by Yuanwu Keqin 圓悟克勤 (1063–1135) in his *Xinyao* 心要 is one of the rare references that seems to have recognized the significance of multiple transmission episodes:

9. *Yuandunzong yan*, X0958.57.93a02–06.

10. *Ibid.*, X0958.57.93a12–14.

11. Foulk, "Sung Controversies," 285.

12. For example, texts such as the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*, the *Zongmen tongyao ji*, the *Chanzong songgu lianzhutong ji*, and the *Da Fantianwang wenfo jueyi jing* all record these two episodes.

13. *Cishou Shen heshang guanglu* 慈受深和尚廣錄, X1451.73.122b06–08.

14. Foulk introduces an interesting interpretation of the relationship between the two episodes not connected directly to the Chan internal rivalry. Foulk argues that the "sharing the seat" episode was a real transmission that was secret and private while the "holding up a flower" episode was an "outward sign" of the real one. He goes on to say that the Chan claim to the separate and superior transmission required positing "real one" and "outward sign" because that claim had two contradictory needs: it needed not only to pin down the time and place of the Chan dharma-transmission historically, but also to locate the transmission beyond the realm of historical verification. Foulk then concludes that the two episodes were often connected because of the tension created by these two contradictory needs (Foulk, "Sung Controversies," 286). However, Chan Buddhists of the time seem to have paid more attention to providing historical or scriptural evidence to that Chan claim than to solving this "subtle" tension, because both episodes were criticized most often for lack of evidence, as shown in Qisong's (1007–1072) criticism. They either presented (or forged) a scriptural record of a mind-transmission episode or created other episodes that have more solid scriptural support (see the section on Kagun below). Moreover, many Chan texts do not treat these two episodes together, but simply mention one of the two episodes. Even in the majority of cases where both episodes are discussed, these episodes simply appear together without implying the interpretation suggested by Foulk, as we see in Huaishen's recorded sayings and also in Mengshan Deyi's 蒙山德異 (1231–1308) preface to the *Lizuo dashi fabao tanjing* 六祖大師法寶壇經 (T2008.48.0345c08–11).

By sharing his seat [with Kāśyapa] in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons, Śākyamuni already transmitted this seal secretly. Thereafter, he held up a flower. This is a second-level gong'an!¹⁵
 釋迦文多子塔前分座 已密授此印 爾後拈花 第二重公案

Yuanwu provided little explanation of this statement made in his letter to his student Faji 法濟 (fl. 12th c.). The two mind-transmissions in this statement, however, do not seem qualitatively different. Although Yuanwu contributed to the spread of two different approaches to Chan in medieval China, i.e., the “dead word” (C. *siju* 死句) and the “live word” (C. *huoju* 活句), these two mind-transmissions in the statement do not correspond to the two different approaches.¹⁶ In fact, Yuanwu never mentioned these approaches in the letter, nor did he show any interest in explaining the relationship between the two episodes. Rather, he was critical of regarding them as “special episodes” that generated “five houses and seven schools” (C. *wujia qizong* 五家七宗),¹⁷ and he instead emphasized the importance of accomplishing the “great man’s task” (C. *dazhangfu shi* 大丈夫事), or enlightenment.¹⁸ Yuanwu treated the two episodes between the Buddha and Kāśyapa as nothing different from other mind-transmission cases between Chan masters and their disciples. For him, each of these two episodes served as a gong'an case. In his statement, the term “level,” a translation for the Chinese word *chong* (重), implies a difference of order rather than a difference of quality between the two episodes. Thus Yuanwu argued that the “sharing the seat” episode was the first of the two sequential gong'an cases, and the “holding up a flower” episode the second. As we have seen, in medieval China there were few serious attempts to take a polemical perspective on the existence of several mind-transmission episodes for the Chan internal rivalry. There was virtually no Chan claim against another Chan group, school, or even different vision of Chan that treated multiple mind-transmission episodes collectively for such a purpose.

KOREAN APPLICATION OF MIND-TRANSMISSION EPISODES TO SŌN POLEMICS

The mind-transmission episodes developed in China also became very well known in Korea. However, the Korean Sŏn community diverged from the Chan context in their reception of these Chinese imports. Unlike their Chinese counterparts, some Korean Sŏn masters sought the meaning of the existence of more than one transmission episode from a Sŏn polemical perspective, due to the historical context of different visions of Sŏn competing for dominance.

Samch'ŏ chŏnsim (*Three Places of Mind-Transmission*)

During the late Koryŏ (918–1392) period, a few centuries after Sŏn was first introduced to Korea in the eighth century, Korean Sŏn Buddhists became divided over two different visions of Sŏn in terms of the relationship between Sŏn and doctrinal studies (K. Kyo). By

15. *Foguo yuanwu zhenjue chanshi xinyao* 佛果圓悟真覺禪師心要, X1357.69.457a24–b01; Yuanwu's statement is also recorded in the *Yuanwu Foguo chanshi yulu* 圓悟佛果禪師語錄 16, T1997.47.786c22–23, and the *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa 2*, *Han'guk pulgyo chŏnsŏ* (hereafter HPC) 5, 050c17–20.

16. According to Ding-hwa Evelyn Hsieh, “dead word” refers to investigating the meaning of a Chan text that focuses on conceptual and rational analysis, while “live word” refers to investigating the word itself that transcends the dualistic processes of thought. For details on these definitions, see Hsieh, “A Study of the Evolution of K'an-hua Ch'an in Sung China: Yüan-wu K'o-ch'in (1063–1135) and the Function of Kung-an in Ch'an Pedagogy and Praxis” (PhD diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1993), 153–64.

17. *Foguo yuanwu zhenjue chanshi xinyao*, X1357.69.0457b02–06.

18. *Ibid.*, X1357.69.457b09.

the mid-Koryŏ, a harmonious approach to the relationship between these two strands of Buddhism prevailed in the Korean Buddhist community. This trend resulted chiefly from the dominance of monks affiliated with the Fayan (K. Pŏban) school during this period. In particular, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, with the support of the royal court, a number of Sŏn monks travelled to China to study with renowned Chinese Fayan masters such as Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904–975) and Longce Xiaorong 龍冊曉榮 (920–990), and then returned to Koryŏ. For example, Chŏgyŏn Yŏngjun 寂然英俊 (932–1014) and Wŏn'gong Chijong 圓空智宗 (930–1018), who received dharma from Yanshou, spread the Fayan vision of the harmony between Chan and Tiantai to Koryŏ as a state preceptor.¹⁹ Later, many Koryŏ Pŏban monks joined the ecumenical Ch'ont'ae (C. Tiantai) school founded by the monk Ŭich'ŏn 義天 (1055–1101), who was a son of Koryŏ King Munjong (r. 1046–1083).²⁰ During this period, it was not merely Pŏban monks who had this integral vision. Hyejo Tamjin 慧照曇眞 (fl. 1076–1116), who studied with the Chinese Linji master Jingyin Daozhen 淨因道臻 (1014–1093), also advocated this harmonious understanding of the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo. Tamjin's descendants T'anyŏn 坦然 (1070–1159) and Chiin 之印 (1102–1158) also shared this view.²¹ Although there were some monks, such as Hagil 學一 (1052–1144), who emphasized differences between Sŏn and Kyo, a more balanced approach was dominant during the first half of Koryŏ.²²

It was Pojo Chinul 普照知訥 (1158–1210) who brought to the Koryŏ Buddhist community a more radical vision of Sŏn. Although for most of his career Chinul advocated a harmonious view of Sŏn and Kyo, accepting the Heze Chan master Zongmi's 宗密 (780–841) practical schema of “sudden awakening/ gradual cultivation,” late in his career Chinul radically gravitated toward the more exclusive brand of the Linji kanhua (K. kanhwa) Chan practice, which he himself introduced to Korea for the first time. Influenced by this practice, he expressed a negative view of Kyo in his posthumous work *Kanhwa kyŏrŭi ron* 看話決疑論:²³

In the Sŏn approach, all these true teachings that derive from the faith and understanding of the complete and sudden school [i.e., the Huayan scholastic school], which are as numerous as the sands of the Ganges, are called “dead words” because they induce people to create obstacles of understanding.²⁴

禪門中此等圓頓信解 如實言教 如河沙數 謂之死句 以令人生解碍故

Chinul's negative view of Kyo, along with his emphasis on Sŏn, in particular, kanhwa technique was intensified by his successor Chin'gak Hyesim 眞覺慧諶 (1178–1234), who compiled the first Korean kongan (C. gong'an) collection *Sŏnmun yŏmsong* 禪門拈頌. In

19. Kim Tu-jin, “Koryŏ Kwangjong tae Pŏbanjong ŭi tŭngjang kwa kŭ sŏngkyŏk,” in *Koryŏ ch'ogi pulgyo-saron*, ed. Pulgyo hakhoe (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1986), 273–360, and Yi Chin-wŏl, “11 segi Han'guk pulgyogyŏ ŭi Sŏnjong sanghwang kwa t'ŭkch'ing,” *Pulgyo hakpo* 56 (2010): 93–95.

20. Approximately two-thirds of roughly a thousand monks who joined Ŭich'ŏn's Ch'ont'ae school were affiliated with the Pŏban school. See Kim Sang-yŏng, “Koryŏ sidae Sŏnmun yŏn'gu” (PhD diss., Dongguk Univ., 2007), 105–13.

21. Ibid., 114–26, and Chŏng Su-a, “Hyejo kuksa Tamjin kwa Chŏnginsu,” in *Yigibaek sŏnsaeng kohŭi kinyŏm Han'guk sahak nonch'ong sang*, ed. Kanhaeng wiwŏnhoe (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1994), 616–39.

22. Hoping to preserve the way of Sŏn patriarchs, Hagil refused to join the Ch'ont'ae school, founded by Ŭich'ŏn, who was critical of the Sŏn claim of its separation from the Kyo scholastic tradition. See Hŏ Hŭng-sik, *Koryŏ pulgyosa yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1986), 464–69.

23. Because of the dramatic change in Chinul's view of Kyo in the *Kanhwa kyŏrŭi ron*, Pak Kŏn-ju even argued that the text was in fact forged by Hyesim, who advocated the exclusive brand of Sŏn. See Pak Kŏn-ju, “Pojo Sŏn e taehan Chin'gak Hyesim ŭi Kanhwa Sŏn wijo,” *Chindan hakpo* 113 (2011): 33–56.

24. *Kanhwa kyŏrŭiron*, HPC 4, 733a15–19; the translation comes from Robert E. Buswell, *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 1983), 240.

his recorded saying *Chin'gak kuksa ōrok* 眞覺國師語錄, the first Korean recorded sayings that followed the Chinese *yulu* style, Hyesim taught his students with the paradoxical and irrational rhetoric that was typical in Chan texts, and he established *kanhwa* technique as the principal Buddhist practice in his Sŏn community.²⁵ Further, he rarely mentioned Zongmi, whom Chinul had focused on in his earlier career to advocate for a harmonious view of Sŏn and Kyo. Hyesim instead criticized “sudden awakening,” an experience that could be triggered by doctrinal studies in Zongmi’s practical schema, for generating mental defilements, and he rejected the integrative approach to Sŏn and Kyo.²⁶ Thus by the late Koryŏ there existed two different visions of Sŏn in terms of the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo, one vision of Sŏn that advocated the unity of these two strands of Buddhism and another that emphasized Sŏn over Kyo. It was in this context that a new interpretation of the theories of mind-transmission emerged.

Hyesim’s disciple Kagun (fl. thirteenth century) attempted to answer the question that arose from the existence of multiple transmission episodes in his *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* 禪門拈頌說話, a commentary to Hyesim’s *Sŏnmun yŏmsong*. In so doing, Kagun developed the notion of *samch’ŏ chŏnsim* (three places of mind-transmission). In the commentary, Kagun employed *samch’ŏ chŏnsim* as an umbrella term for the following three episodes, which had long circulated in Song China. The *Sŏnmun yŏmsong* version of these episodes is as follows:

1) When the World-Honored One preached to human and heavenly beings in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons, Kāśyapa arrived late. The World-Honored One then shared his seat with him. (Another version says that the World-Honored One shared his seat with Kāśyapa and draped him in a golden robe.) The audience was puzzled.²⁷

世尊在多子塔前 爲人天說法 迦葉後到 世尊遂分座令坐 (一本云 分座令坐 以金襴圍之) 大眾罔措。

2) When the World-Honored One preached on Vulture Peak, four kinds of flowers rained from the sky. The World-Honored One held up one of the flowers to show the congregation. Kāśyapa smiled. The World-Honored One said, “I have the treasury of the true dharma eye, which I entrust to Mahākāśyapa!” (Another version says that when the World-Honored One looked back at Kāśyapa with his blue-lotus eyes, Kāśyapa smiled.)²⁸

世尊在靈山說法 天雨四花 世尊遂拈花示衆 迦葉微笑 世尊云 吾有正法眼藏 付囑摩訶迦葉 (一本世尊 以青蓮目顧視迦葉 迦葉微笑)。

3) Seven days had already passed after the World-Honored One entered *nirvāṇa* beneath the twin śāla trees. Mahākāśyapa arrived late and circumambulated the coffin three times. The World-Honored One stuck his feet out of the coffin. Kāśyapa bowed down. The audience was puzzled.²⁹

世尊在婆羅雙樹 入般涅槃已經七日 大迦葉後至 遶棺三匝 世尊擲示雙趺 迦葉作禮 大眾罔措。

25. *Chin'gak kuksa ōrok*, HPC 6,01a01–49c11.

26. Pak Chae-hyŏn, “Hyesim ūi Sŏn sasang kwa *kanhwa*,” *Ch'ŏrhak* 78 (2004): 29–49; Chŏng Yŏng-sik, “Pojo Chinul kwa Chin'gak Hyesim e mich'in Chungguk Sŏn ūi yŏngnyang,” *Han'guk minjok munhwa* 28 (2006): 264–67; Kwŏn Ki-jong, “Hyesim ūi Sŏn sasang yŏn'gu,” *Pulgyo hakpo* 19 (1982): 201–17; and Kang Sŏng-gyu, “Chosŏn hugi Chin'gak kuksa Hyesim yŏn'gu” (PhD diss., Chungang Univ., 1986), 13–14. There is a minority opinion on Hyesim’s view of Sŏn and Kyo. For example, based on some examples of Hyesim’s citation of scriptures in his work and his relationship with a few Kyo-related monks, Kim Ho-sŏng argues that Hyesim in fact held the harmonious view of these two strands of Buddhism (Kim Ho-sŏng, “Hyesim Sŏn sasang e issŏsŏ kyohak i ch'ajihanŭn ūimi,” *Pojo sasang* 7 [1993]: 103–31).

27. *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* 1, HPC 5, 012c17–013a02.

28. *Ibid.*, HPC 5, 014a03–a07.

29. *Sŏnmun yŏmsong sŏrhwa* 2, HPC 5, 050a09–a12.

After tying these three episodes together under the term “*samch’ō chōnsim*,” Kagun tried to give historical authenticity to the term. To serve this purpose, he looked to Yuanwu’s statement that we have discussed earlier:

Samch’ō chōnsim [Three places of mind-transmission] is a notion widely known throughout the world. It is not a theory created by any one person. Yuanwu gave a dharma talk to the head monk Sūng (Sheng), saying, “By sharing his seat [with Kāśyapa] in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons, Śākyamuni already transmitted this seal secretly. Thereafter, he held up a flower. This is a second-level gong’an,” and so forth . . . How could [Yuanwu as] a legitimate descendant of Linji falsely say an unreliable word without any evidence?³⁰

三處傳心 天下之公論 非一人造端之說也 圓悟示勝首坐 法語云 釋迦文 多子塔前分座 已密授此印 爾後拈花 是第二重公案云云 . . . 爲臨濟嫡孫 豈可妄爲無實游言乎。

Kagun here attempted to dispel any doubt that *samch’ō chōnsim* was historically valid and was not created by a single person by presenting it as a “notion widely known throughout the world” (K. *ch’ōnha chi kongnon* 天下之公論) and claiming the authority of Yuanwu, who, in fact, had neither mentioned the term nor treated those three episodes together as a transmission episode. Kagun then went on to comment on each of the episodes, employing the enigmatic rhetoric that was typical of the Chan and Sōn gong’an (K. kongan) texts.

When the World-Honored One in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons preached the dharma to human and heavenly beings, [he] transmitted the false to one person and the real to tens of thousands of people. Since Mahākāśyapa arrived late, he should have been alert. It is wrong that the World-Honored One shared his seat [with Kāśyapa]. This is as if to say that the “single-edged sword that kills people” is needed to kill people. Negligences are indeed many. . . . When the World-Honored One was on Vulture Peak, four kinds of flowers rained from the sky. A petal, two petals, a thousand petals, and ten thousand petals fell. It was wrong that the World-Honored One held up a flower to show the congregation. This is as if to say that the “double-edged sword that gives life to people” is needed to give life to people. Therefore, disorders are indeed many. . . . “When the World-Honored One was under the twin śāla trees, and so on” means, “Ah, heaven! Ah, heaven!” “Mahākāśyapa arrived late and circumambulated the coffin three times” means that the track of the seal was created. If ancestors are not clear, disaster will befall their descendants. It was really wrong that the World-Honored One stuck his feet out of the coffin!³¹

世尊在多子塔前 爲人天說法 一人傳虛 萬人傳實 迦葉後列惺惺着 世尊分座 令坐錯 殺人須是 殺人刀 漏逗也不少 . . . 世尊在靈山 天雨四花 一片兩片 千片萬片 繽紛而下 世尊拈花 示衆錯 活人須是 活人鈎 狼籍也不少 . . . 世尊在沙羅雙樹下 云云 蒼天蒼天 迦葉後至 遠棺三匝 印文生也 祖禰不了 殃及子孫 世尊擲示雙趺 錯錯。

It is not clear why Kagun selected the episodes of “sharing the seat,” “holding up a flower,” and “displaying the feet” as constituting *samch’ō chōnsim*, and in particular why he selected the “displaying the feet” episode as the third of the three episodes, given that the first two episodes appeared together in some Chan texts. One of the reasons for his selection could be related to the issue of the historical validity of the term as well as of all the transmission episodes. The mind-transmission episodes were mostly criticized as being historically dubious. The historicity of these episodes was questioned even within Chan itself. For instance, the Song Chan master Qisong 契嵩 (1007–1072) cast doubt on the historical authenticity of the episodes of “sharing the seat” and “holding up a flower.”³² Even an apocryphal scripture

30. Ibid., HPC 5. 050c16–051a01.

31. Ibid., HPC 5. 051a03–23.

32. Foulk, “Sung Controversies,” 258.

titled “*Da Fantianwang wenfo jueyi jing*” 大梵天王問弗決疑經 appeared to respond to such criticism.³³ As shown in Fadeng’s criticism, however, these episodes of the transmission of the mind-dharma remained subject to historical criticism. Kagun, therefore, may have been motivated to provide a stronger case to legitimize the historical validity of *samch’ŏ chŏnsim* and the transmission episodes: he may have added the “displaying both feet” episode as the third transmission episode because it appears in various Chinese renditions of the famous Indian scripture *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and thus its historicity was difficult to challenge.³⁴

Although Kagun provided few reasons for his selections, his explanation of the episodes of *samch’ŏ chŏnsim* has important implications for the polemical power of the term. In the passage cited above, he implied that the Buddha had transmitted different levels of the mind in these three or at least two different places.³⁵ According to Kagun, the mind-transmission in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons was connected to the “single-edged sword that kills people” (K. *sarin to* 殺人刀), while that on Vulture Peak, to the “double-edged sword that gives life to people” (K. *hwarin kŏm* 活人劍). These two analogies of the “single-edged sword” and the “double-edged sword” often appear in conjunction with each other in Chan texts.³⁶ Though never fully explained, each symbolizes different aspects of wisdom. With its single edge, “the single-edged sword that kills people” represents one-dimensional functioning of wisdom that would only “kill defilements” on the basis of the truth of emptiness.³⁷ On the other hand, with its extra edge, the “double-edged sword that gives life to people” represents the two-dimensional functioning of wisdom that would not only remove all defilements but also allow one to live and act freely in accord with conditions without attachment. Kagun, therefore, in introducing the term *samch’ŏ chŏnsim* to substantiate the idea that the Buddha had transmitted the different levels of the mind in different places, argued that the first transmission in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons was partial, transmitting only the “killing” aspect of the mind, while the second on Vulture Peak was full and perfect, transmitting the “giving life” aspect. It is clear that Kagun created the term in response to the situation that Korean Sŏn Buddhism faced during his lifetime, in which two different visions of Sŏn were competing for dominance. Although he did not connect his *samch’ŏ chŏnsim* directly to the two visions, he implied that the later vision, i.e., his master Hyesim’s more exclusive brand of Sŏn, was superior to the earlier one by arguing that the second mind-transmission was more complete than the first.

33. One of the earliest references to this scripture is the *Rentian yanmu* 人天眼目 of 1188. The scripture is recorded only in the Japanese canon of *Dainihon zokuzōkyō* in two versions without the name of a translator or the date of the translation. See *Zengaku daijiten*, ed. Komazawa daigaku daijiten hensanjo (Tokyo: Daishūkan shoten, 1978), 816d–17a.

34. Examples of such texts include the *Da banniepan jing* 大般涅槃經卷 3, T7.1.206c22–26 and the *Fo ban-nihuan jing* 佛般泥洹經, T5.1.173c16–174b11.

35. It is unclear why Kagun provided an ambiguous explanation of the third transmission of the mind. Paekp’a is also ambiguous about this transmission. However, he attempted to clarify his ambiguity, connecting the third transmission to the Chan transmission after the sixth patriarch. See the section on Paekp’a below.

36. The analogies of these two types of swords were well known in the Song Chan community. They are recorded with little explanation in many recorded sayings of eminent masters of this time such as Yuanwu, Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163), and Hongzhi Zhengjue 宏智正覺 (1091–1157), as well as in gong’an collections such as the *Biyān lu* 碧巖錄 and the *Wumen guan*.

37. The analogy of wisdom as the sword of “killing or destroying defilement” is often used in Buddhist texts. For example, see the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra* 維摩詰所說經 3, T475.14.554b21–22 and the *Abhidharmavibhāṣā* 阿毘曇毘婆沙論 T1546.28.360a01.

Samch'ŏ chŏnsim and Doctrinal Taxonomy

The term *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* appears again in the works of the Chosŏn Sŏn masters Pyŏksong Chiŏm 碧松智儼 (1464–1534) and Ch'ŏnghŏ Hyujŏng 清虛休靜 (1520–1604) in a way that suggests how it could serve as a polemical tool. Under the section titled *Samch'ŏ chŏnsim* in his *Hunmong yoch'o* 訓蒙要抄, Chiŏm mentioned the three episodes as follows:

When the World-Honored One was in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons, he shared his seat. This is the first place.

When the World-Honored One was on Vulture Peak, he held up a flower to show the congregation. This is the second place.

When the World-Honored One entered *nirvāṇa*, he stuck his feet out of the coffin. This is the third place.³⁸

世尊在多子塔前 分座令坐 是第一處 世尊在靈山 拈花示衆 是第二處 世尊入涅槃時 擲足雙趺 是第三處。

What is particularly interesting in this passage is that Chiŏm's remark appears immediately after his summary of the two major doctrinal taxonomies, the Tiantai fourfold and Huayan fivefold taxonomies. Chiŏm first introduced the Tiantai taxonomy, giving it a different reading from that found in traditional descriptions. He connected the "four types of teaching in contents" (C. *hua fa sijiao*; K. *hwabŏp sagyo* 化法四教) to the "five teaching periods" (C. *wushi*; K. *osi* 五時) of Śākyamuni Buddha. He linked (1) the tripiṭaka teaching to the Āgama period; (2) the common teaching to the Vaipulya period; (3) the distinct teaching to the Prajñā period; and (4) the perfect teaching to the Huayan period.³⁹ Chiŏm then presented the Huayan fivefold taxonomy. He accepted the same five categories from the third Huayan patriarch Fazang's 法藏 (643–712) taxonomy but matched the list of the scriptures to each category differently: (1) the lowest of the five, the teachings of the lesser vehicle, corresponded to the teaching of the *Āgama Sūtras*; (2) the elementary teaching of the great vehicle corresponded to that of the Yogācāra teaching of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*; (3) the advanced teaching of the great vehicle to the tathāgatagarbha teaching of the *Lotus Sūtra* and *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*; (4) the sudden teaching to the teaching of the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* and the *Yuanjue jing*; (5) the perfect teaching to the teaching of the *Huayan jing*.⁴⁰

This sequential enumeration of *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* and doctrinal taxonomy is also found in Hyujŏng's *Sŏn'ga kwigam* 禪家龜鑑.⁴¹

The three places where the World-Honored One transmitted the mind is the import of Sŏn. Everything that he said during his lifetime is the approach of Kyo. Therefore it is said, "Sŏn is the Buddha's mind; Kyo is the Buddha's words." Regarding the three places, the Buddha sharing the seat in front of the Stūpa of Many Sons is the first; the Buddha holding up a flower on Vulture Peak is the second; the Buddha sticking his feet out of the coffin under the twin śāla trees is the third. This is what is meant by "Mahākāśyapa separately transmitted the lamp of Sŏn." The Buddha preaching for forty-nine years throughout his life refers to the five teachings. The teaching

38. *Hunmong yoch'o*, HPC 7. 387c04–06.

39. Ibid., HPC 7. 387a08–b05. For the traditional interpretation of the Tiantai taxonomy, see Chanju Mun, *The History of Doctrinal Classification in Chinese Buddhism: A Study of the Panjiao Systems* (Lanham: Univ. Press of America, 2006), 123–68.

40. *Hunmong yoch'o*, HPC 7. 387b11–c02. On Fazang's Huayan taxonomy, see Mun, *The History of Doctrinal Classification*, 315–403.

41. The *Hunmong yoch'o* and the *Sŏn'ga kwigam* were intended to impart the basic teachings of both Sŏn and Kyo to Chiŏm's and Hyujŏng's students. It is likely that by the mid Chosŏn the notion of *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* was well known in the Korean Buddhist community.

of human and heavenly beings is the first; the teaching of the lesser vehicle is the second; the teaching of the great vehicle is the third; the sudden teaching is the fourth; the perfect teaching is the fifth. The so-called ocean of the teachings that Ānanda unleashed are these.⁴²

世尊三處傳心者 爲禪旨 一代所說者爲教門 故曰禪是佛心 教是佛語 三處者 多子塔前分半座一也 靈山會上舉拈花二也 雙樹下櫛示雙趺三也 所謂迦葉別傳禪燈者此也 一代者四十九年間所說 五教也 人天教一也 小乘教二也 大乘教三也 頓教四也 圓教五也 所謂阿難流通教海者此也。

Here, Hyujŏng placed *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* and doctrinal taxonomy in sequence as the explicit and concrete content of Sŏn and scriptural teachings.

Although Chiŏm and Hyujŏng never raised any of the questions pertaining to the existence of several transmission episodes, their serial positioning of *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* and a doctrinal taxonomy gives the impression that *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* could be interpreted in the same way as doctrinal taxonomies. A doctrinal taxonomy supposes that the Buddha taught different levels of teachings in different periods over his career: his teaching was gradually refined and it culminated in the final period, at which point it was considered a full and perfect revelation of his wisdom. From this premise, doctrinal exegetes organized the teachings of various scriptures into one single system and placed the teaching of a particular scripture, associated with their doctrinal positions, into the final and highest place. In so doing, they promoted their own positions over all other doctrinal stances. *Samch'ŏ chŏnsim* could provide the same type of premise for the Sŏn polemical claims. Just as the Buddha taught a more profound level of teachings later in his career, he transmitted a more complete mind-dharma of Sŏn later. Thus, in order to promote his own vision of Sŏn, a Sŏn expert would only have to put it later in *samch'ŏ chŏnsim*. This polemical implication of the term *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* that Chiŏm and Hyujŏng suggested in their sequential enumeration of the term and a doctrinal taxonomy went on to be articulated explicitly by the late Chosŏn Sŏn master Paekp'a.

Samch'ŏ chŏnsim and Sŏn Taxonomy

Paekp'a Kŭngsŏn 白坡亘璇 (1767–1852) applied the term *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* to his Sŏn taxonomy in the unique situation Chosŏn Buddhism faced during the latter half of the dynasty. During this period, Korean Sŏn Buddhists made efforts to restore their lineages, which had been interrupted during the early period of the dynasty when the Confucian state enforced severe anti-Buddhist measures. Even Hyujŏng, who revived the Korean Buddhist tradition, did not recount his entire lineage. After the Japanese and Manchurian invasions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, however, Hyujŏng's descendants, who dominated the Buddhist order in late Chosŏn, presented the complete lineages by producing several genealogical texts such as the *Pulcho wŏllyu* 佛祖源流 of 1764. Most of these texts established T'aego Pou, who had received dharma from the Chinese Linji master Shiwu Qinggong 石屋清珙 (1272–1352), as the founding patriarch of their lineages and defined Korean Sŏn as the Imje (C. Linji) lineage.⁴³

42. *Sŏn'ga kwigam*, HPC 7, 635b09–17; in translating this passage I have consulted Robert Buswell, "Buddhism under Confucian Domination: The Synthetic Vision of Sŏsan Hyujŏng," in *Culture and the State in Late Chosŏn Korea*, ed. JaHyun Kim Haboush and Martina Deuchler (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Asia Center, 1999), 152, and Hyon Gak, *The Mirror of Zen* (Boston: Shambhala, 2006), 10–11.

43. Kim Sang-hyŏn, "Sŏsan mundo ūi T'aego pŏpt'ongsŏl," in *T'aego Pou Kuksa*, ed. Taeryun pulgyo munhwa yŏn'guwŏn (Seoul: Taeryun pulgyo munhwa yŏn'guwŏn, 1998), 727–67; Pak Hae-dang, "Chogyejong ūi pŏpt'ongsŏl e taehan pip'anjŏk kŏmt'o," *Ch'ŏrhak sasang* 11 (2000): 51–74; and Kim Yong-t'ae, "Chosŏn hugi pulgyo ūi Imje pŏpt'ong kwa kyohak chŏnt'ong" (PhD diss., Seoul National Univ., 2008), 105–21.

During this period, Korean Imje lineage monks developed the practical schema of “Relinquishing Kyo and entering into Sŏn” (K. *sagyo ipsŏn* 捨教入禪), which emphasized the Linji kanhua technique, assigning a limited role to Kyo doctrinal studies.⁴⁴ According to Hyujŏng, in this schema a student first engaged in doctrinal studies, which could give him an initial understanding of the nature of enlightenment and cultivation; he then abandoned his attachment to doctrinal teachings and moved on to kanhua technique, which would lead him to final enlightenment. Here, Kyo was regarded as producing mental defilements and served only as a preliminary step for kanhua Sŏn practice.⁴⁵ Many Sŏn masters of this period cultivated themselves and guided their students according to this approach.⁴⁶

Certain Sŏn monks such as Ch’oŭi Ŭisun 艸衣意恂 (1786–1866) and Chinha Ch’ugwŏn 震河竺源 (1861–1925) posed a challenge to this Sŏn trend, a trend that was characterized by claiming Kyo’s subordination to Sŏn and the superiority of the Linji school.⁴⁷ In particular, Ch’oŭi advocated the unity of all types of Sŏn, as well as Sŏn and doctrinal studies.⁴⁸ He argued that various Sŏn schools are only different in their styles of teaching and there is no hierarchy between them because they all carry the Buddha’s wisdom. Ch’oŭi, then, applied the same rationale to the relationship between Sŏn and Kyo, arguing that these two strands of Buddhism were not different from each other because they had the same origin, Śākyamuni Buddha.⁴⁹ Ch’oŭi also denied any exclusive importance of the Linji kanhua practice in Sŏn training by suggesting that other practices such as reading scriptures and reciting the name of Amitābha Buddha also led to enlightenment.⁵⁰

Ch’oŭi’s contemporary Paekp’a, who was well aware of this challenge, justified the superiority of the Linji school.⁵¹ As part of his broader argument, he presented a threefold taxonomy of Chan, which employed the notion of *samch’ŏ chŏnsim* as a rationalizing tool. He built his taxonomy on the *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論. Based on the well-known framework of the mind in the Chinese apocryphal treatise, Paekp’a argued that the mind has

44. Kim Yong-t’ae, *Chosŏn hugi pulgyo*, 122–25.

45. Buswell, “Buddhism under Confucian Domination,” 150–57, and Sin Pŏb-in, “Hyujŏng ŭi sagyo ipsŏn kwan,” *Han’guk pulgyohak* 7 (1982): 123–42.

46. Chongbŏm, “Kangwŏn kyoyuk e kkich’in Pojo sasang,” *Pojo sasang* 3 (1989): 101–3.

47. Chinha Ch’ugwŏn, along with Udam Honggi 優曇洪基 (1822–1881), criticized Paekp’a’s position from Ch’oŭi’s standpoint. For details, see Han Ki-du, *Han’guk Sŏn sasang yŏn’gu* (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1991), 567–96, and Kim Pyŏng-hak, “Chosŏn hugi pulgyo Sŏn suhaeng nonjaeng e kwanhan yŏn’gu” (PhD diss., Won’gwang Univ., 2008), 92–106.

48. Ch’oŭi argued for this ultimate unity, criticizing Paekp’a. Many modern scholars agree that Ch’oŭi’s criticism of Paekp’a focused on the latter’s claim of the superiority of the Linji school and of the Sŏn superiority to Kyo. For example, Kim, “Chosŏn hugi pulgyo sŏnsuhaeng nonjaeng e kwanhan yŏn’gu”; Pak Chae-hyŏn, “Han’guk pulgyo ŭi kanhua sŏn chŏnt’ong kwa chŏngt’ongsŏng hyŏngsŏng e kwanhan yŏn’gu” (PhD diss., Seoul National Univ., 2005); and Han Ki-du, “Chosŏn hugi sŏn nonjaeng kwa kŭ sasangsajŏk ŭiŭi,” in *Kasan Yi Chi-kwan sŏnim hwagap kinyŏm nonch’ong: Han’guk pulgyo munhwa sasangsa, sang kwŏn*, ed. Nonch’ong kanhaeng wiwŏnhoe (Seoul: Kasan mun’go, 1992), 1307–28.

49. Pak Mun-gi, “Ch’oŭi Ŭisun ŭi suhaengpŏp kwa Sŏn ŭi ponjil,” *Han’guk pulgyohak* 36 (2004): 19–50; Pak Chong-ho, “Ch’oŭi ŭi ijong sŏn ilgo,” *Pulgyo Hakpo* 40 (2003): 7–27; and Han Ki-du, “Ch’oŭi ŭi Sabyŏn manŏ,” *Wŏn’gwang Taehakkyo nonmunjip* 5 (1970): 45–65.

50. Ch’oŭi *sigo* 艸衣詩藥 2, HPC 10, 863c18–20.

51. Paekp’a recognized the opposition to the Linji-centrism in the Korean Buddhist community. In fact, he even debated with the Confucian literatus Kim Chŏng-hi 金正喜 (1786–1856), who was influenced by Ch’oŭi in his view of Buddhism, on issues regarding the Linji/Imje oriented view of Sŏn and Kyo. For details of the debates, see Kŭm Chang-t’ae, “Kim Chŏng-hi ŭi pulgyo insik kwa sŏnhak nonbyŏn,” *Chonggyo wa munhwa* 14 (2008): 95–119; Kim Pyŏng-hak, “Chosŏn hugi Paekp’a wa Ch’usa ŭi sŏn nonjaeng,” *Wŏn’gwang Taehakkyo taehagwŏn nonmunjip* 37 (2006): 77–102; and Yi Chong-ik, “Chŭngdap Paekp’asŏ rŭl t’onghae pon Kim Ch’usa ŭi pulgyo kwan,” *Pulgyo hakpo* 12 (1975): 1–22.

Table 1. Two Aspects of the Mind

Immutability	Conditionality
essence (<i>ch'e</i> 體)	function (<i>yong</i> 用)
nature (<i>sŏng</i> 性)	sign (<i>sang</i> 相)
principle (<i>i</i> 理)	phenomena (<i>sa</i> 事)
calmness (<i>dhyāna</i>)	wisdom (<i>prajñā</i>)
stillness (<i>samatha</i>)	contemplation (<i>vipaśyanā</i>)
extinction (<i>nirvāṇa</i>)	awakening (<i>bodhi</i>)
true emptiness (<i>chin'gong</i> 真空)	wondrous existence (<i>myoyu</i> 妙有)
killing (<i>sal</i> 殺)	giving life (<i>hwal</i> 活)

two different aspects, immutability and conditionality.⁵² The former refers to the unchanging aspect of the mind, which is originally empty and tranquil, while the latter refers to the diverse phenomenal appearances of the mind that arise in accord with conditions. Paekp'a employed various alternative polarities to this paradigm of immutability and conditionality: on the one hand, essence, nature, principle, calmness, stillness, *nirvāṇa*, true emptiness, and killing; on the other, function, sign, phenomena, wisdom, contemplation, bodhi, wondrous-existence, and giving life.⁵³ These sets of immutability and conditionality became the primary criteria for his threefold taxonomy (see Table 1).

In terms of the level of understanding the truth of the mind, Paekp'a categorized the six main lineages of Chan, which originated from the sixth patriarch Huineng 慧能 (638–713): the Heze (K. Hat'aek) school and the so-called five Chan houses (C. *wujia* 五家) of the Linji (K. Imje), Yunmen (K. Unmun), Guiyang (K. Wiang), Fayan (K. Pöban), and Caodong (K. Chodong) schools. According to Paekp'a, the Linji and Yunmen schools ranked highest since they fully realized the two aspects of immutability and conditionality. He asserted that both schools' understanding of the truth of the mind was so perfect that it left no trace of misunderstanding, just as a seal stamped on the air leaves no trace.⁵⁴ Paekp'a placed the Guiyang, Fayan, and Caodong schools in the middle rank because they only understood true emptiness, which is the immutable aspect of the mind. Paekp'a commented that these three schools' level of realization of the mind still left a trace of such partial enlightenment or delusion just as a seal stamped on the surface of water leaves the briefest trace.⁵⁵ The Heze school he located in the lowest rank of his Sŏn taxonomy. According to Paekp'a, the Heze masters were attached to "words and letters" (C. *wenzi* 文字), never seeing the truth transmitted through them. Therefore, in their approach to Buddhist teachings, they only produced intellectual defilements. Paekp'a compared the Heze masters' attachment to a seal stamped on clay leaving a trace.⁵⁶

Paekp'a justified this threefold Chan taxonomy with the notion of *samch'ŏ chŏnsim*, thereby accepting Kagun's position that the Buddha had transmitted different levels of the

52. This framework was often used not just in Chan/Sŏn but also in the scholastic tradition. For Tiantai usage, see Brook Ziporyn, *Evil and/or/as the Good: Omniscience, Intersubjectivity and Value Paradox in Tiantai Buddhist Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2000), 230–35; for Zongmi's usage, see Peter Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 232–34.

53. *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun* 修禪結社文, HPC 10, 532a16–19.

54. *Sŏnmun sugyŏng* 禪文手鏡, HPC 10, 515b15–19 and 519c17–18.

55. Paekp'a argued that the three schools of Guiyang, Fayan, and Caodong all realized only the immutable aspect of the mind, though the first two schools were rather different from the third in terms of its understanding of this point (*ibid.*, HPC 10, 515b20–c02 and 520b01–02).

56. *Ibid.*, HPC 10, 516a11–15.

mind in different places. In particular, Paekp'a argued that the different transmissions had occurred at least in the first two of the three places. According to him, the Buddha's mind was transmitted partially in the first place but only transmitted fully in the second place. He said,

Of the three transmission places, the first, "sharing the seat," is true emptiness and the "single-edged sword that kills people." . . . Since this only transmits the immutability of true suchness, it only involves killing, not giving life. . . . The second place of "holding up a flower" is wondrous existence and the "double-edged sword that gives life to people." . . . [This represents] the three essentials of base (killing) and function (giving life), as well as true emptiness . . . and wondrous existence of leading upward . . . [This second transmission] is endowed with both killing and giving life.⁵⁷

三處傳中 第一分座真空殺人刀 . . . 則但傳不變真如 唯殺無活 . . . 第二處拈華妙有活人劍 . . . 機(殺)用(活)三要及向上真空 . . . 妙有 . . . 則具足殺活.

Here Paekp'a established the following correspondences: For the first transmission, which was partial, he applied only the immutable side of the polar sets that represent the two aspects of the mind: sharing the seat, true emptiness, the single-edged sword that kills people, immutability, and killing. For the second transmission, which was full and perfect, he applied both immutable and conditional sides: holding up a flower, true emptiness and wondrous existence, the double-edged sword that gives life to people, immutability and conditionality, and killing and giving life. Paekp'a then correlated these correspondences to the five Chan houses.⁵⁸

"Sharing the seat" is a reference to the "seat of the teaching of emptiness"; this is the tenet of the three schools of Fayan, Caodong, and Guiyang. . . . "Holding up a flower" is a reference to "wondrous existence"; this is the tenet of the two schools of Yunmen and Linji.⁵⁹

分座(法空座)消息 而爲法眼馮仰曹洞三宗旨也 . . . 拈華(妙有)消息 而爲雲門臨濟二宗旨也.

With this taxonomy of Chan, Paekp'a promoted his Sŏn lineage by placing the Linji school in the highest position. Although he put the Yunmen school at the same level with the Linji school in this taxonomy, he asserted that there was a hierarchical difference between these two schools.⁶⁰ Paekp'a, according to Ch'oŏi, argued that the Linji school is superior to the Yunmen school because the former could explicitly explain "base" and "function," the two aspects of the mind, while the latter could not, though both schools fully realized the truth of the mind.⁶¹ This correlation is charted in Table 2. In the table the second set of correspondences is superior to the first.

Paekp'a's connection of *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* to his Chan taxonomy was not without problems. For example, Paekp'a took a rather ambiguous position on the third transmission. On the one hand, he associated it with both "killing" (K. *sal* 殺) and "giving life" (K. *hwal* 活), the same qualities he attributed to the second transmission. On the other hand, he suggested

57. *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 520b10–16.

58. Paekp'a argued that the Heze brand of Chan could not belong to the "outside-the-format Chan" (C. *gewai* Chan 格外禪, K. *kyŏg'oe* Sŏn), a type of Chan which the term *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* represented.

59. *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 519c13–18.

60. *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 520b05; Paekp'a provided no explanation for the reason he put the Yunmen school at the same level with the Linji school in his taxonomy. In my opinion, his favor for the Yunmen school probably was influenced by the early Song Chan situation in which both the Linji and Yunmen lineages were influential in the gong'an Chan movement and in which the latter died out before any serious rivalry arose between the two lineages. On the relationship of the two lineages and their involvement in the gong'an Chan movement, see Hsieh, *A Study of the Evolution of K'an-hua Ch'an*, 109–64.

61. *Sŏnmun sabyŏn manŏ* 禪門四辨漫語, HPC 10, 823c18–20.

Table 2. The Mind-Transmissions and Sŏn Taxonomy

first transmission	second transmission
sharing the seat	holding up a flower
immutability	immutability and conditionality
true emptiness	true emptiness and wondrous existence
single-edged sword that kills people	double-edged sword that gives life to people
killing	killing and giving life
Fayan, Guiyang, Caodong	Linji, Yunmen

that the third transmission was superior to the second by arguing that the third had been cut off after the sixth patriarch and thus those who came after the patriarch could no longer be entitled to the title “patriarch” (K. *chosa*; C. *zushi* 祖師).⁶² However, in most of his writings, when Paekp’a correlated *samch’ŏ chŏnshim* with his Chan taxonomy, he merely omitted the third transmission and treated the second transmission as the transmission of the supreme Sŏn.

Paekp’a also provided scant explanation for the correlation charted in Table 2, in particular, why “sharing the seat” should be placed in the column of immutability while “holding up a flower” stands in that of both immutability and conditionality, rather than the other way around. He simply added that “sharing the seat” was the “seat of the teaching of emptiness” while “holding up a flower” was “wondrous existence.”⁶³ To expand on Paekp’a’s comment, the first transmission, “sharing the seat,” can be seen as true emptiness since the Buddha shared with Kāśyapa his own seat, the seat only for someone who realized the teaching of emptiness, the immutable aspect of the mind. On the other hand, “holding up a flower” can be considered wondrous existence because this episode shows the Buddha’s wisdom in his wondrous and spontaneous act of holding up a flower, which could be achieved by understanding both immutable and conditional aspects of the mind.

Paekp’a did not provide much evidence for his statement that “sharing the seat” was the tenet of the three Chan schools of the Fayan, Caodong, and Guiyang, while “holding up a flower” was that of the Yunmen and Linji schools. Although Paekp’a presented a few examples of the rhetorical differences in this distinction, this line of reasoning seems inconsistent and even self-contradictory.⁶⁴ In fact, Paekp’a’s correlation of the two transmissions to the five Chan schools was ultimately a polemical claim. His hierarchical interpretation of mind-transmissions gave his taxonomy the same rationale used in various doctrinal taxonomies. By arguing that the Buddha transmitted the higher levels of the mind later in his career, and applying this notion to his new taxonomy, Paekp’a achieved the same goal as the doctrinal school counterparts had done: the Linji school, with which his lineage claimed to

62. *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 520c18–20; one of the earliest records on the prophecy of the decrease or extinction of the transmission of the supreme dharma after the sixth generation of Chan is the *Zutang ji*. In the *Zutang ji* Bodhidharma foretells the decrease of his dharma after the sixth generation (K 45.245a16–17).

63. *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 519c13 and c18.

64. Paekp’a gave “Mountains are mountains; waters are waters 山山水水” as an expression of the second transmission in the *Sŏnmun sugyŏng* but for the first transmission in the *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun*. He also said that Fayan’s statement “If you see all forms are not forms, then you do not see Tathāgata 若見諸相非相 即不見如來” was an expression of the second transmission. However, in his taxonomy he classified the Fayan (K. Pŏb’an) school (whose founder was Fayan) as one of the three schools representing the first transmission. For more expressions for the two types of Sŏn presented by Paekp’a, see *Susŏn kyŏlsa mun*, HPC 10, 534c10–c17, and *Sŏnmun sugyŏng*, HPC 10, 519c04–12.

be associated, was promoted to a higher level above other Chan schools, in which the mind of the Buddha holding up a flower had been transmitted.

CONCLUSION

Various mind-transmission episodes between the Buddha Śākyamuni and his disciple Mahākāśyapa appeared in medieval China to justify the self-declaration of Chan as a separate transmission outside the written scriptural tradition. It is not clear why several such episodes were created for the same purpose. One may surmise that more historically verifiable episodes were needed to respond to the repeated challenge to the historical authenticity of the episodes, which came not just from the scriptural school but also from within the Chan school itself.

Some Korean Sŏn masters explored the religious meaning of the existence of the multiple number of transmission episodes regarding the Sŏn inner polemics. The Koryŏ Sŏn master Kagun substantialized the idea that the Buddha had transmitted different minds in different places throughout his career. He introduced the term *samch'ŏ chŏnsim*, a term that for the first time in Chan and Sŏn history treated the three transmission episodes of “sharing the seat,” “holding up a flower,” and “displaying the feet” collectively, and applied these transmission episodes to the intra-Sŏn polemics. The Chosŏn Sŏn masters Chiŏm and Hyujŏng suggested a way in which the term could function as a polemical tool by placing *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* and doctrinal taxonomy in sequence. In the late Chosŏn, Paekp'a employed the term to legitimize his threefold Sŏn taxonomy, intended to promote the Linji/Imje school. He argued that the Buddha had transmitted the mind-dharma fully and perfectly to Mahākāśyapa on Vulture Peak by holding up a flower, and that the transmission of this highest truth of the mind had been eventually carried over to the Chinese Linji and Korean Imje lineages. With little theoretical explanation, Paekp'a's taxonomy basically served as a polemical assertion for the priority of the Linji/Imje school with which his lineage masters claimed to be associated. In this taxonomy, *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* was thus employed as a rationalizing tool.

Nonetheless, the polemical application of the term *samch'ŏ chŏnsim* was not the main trend of interpretation in Korea. The term became widely used to exemplify and legitimize the Sŏn separation from the scriptural tradition. However, such an application of the transmission episodes in Sŏn internal polemics represented a distinctive aspect of the Korean Sŏn Buddhist community, in that it actively utilized—whether transformed or expanded—a Chinese Chan import in response to its religious needs rather than merely being a passive recipient of it.