

## Concerning the Korean Sŏn Master Hyŏngak and Yŏngok Temple in Mt. Chiri\*

Henrik H. Sørensen (Denmark Copenhagen 大学教授)

### Introduction

It is now commonly known that the history of the Sŏn Buddhist tradition 禪宗 in Korea goes back to the early 9th century. Sŏn Buddhism from this period, i.e. the second half of the Unified Silla (668-936) and the early Koryŏ (918-1392) is characterized by the formation of a series of transmission lineages popularly known as the Nine Mountain Sŏn lineages (Kor. **kusan sŏnmun** 九山禪門).<sup>1</sup> While our knowledge and understanding of the history and nature of early Sŏn Buddhism in Korea is gradually growing, there are still large *lacunae* that need to be filled out. These 'black spots' are mainly caused by a dearth of reliable data concerning the historical formation of the different lineages that make up the tradition as well as more substantial information on beliefs, doctrines and practices. What we have at our disposal now amounts to a fairly large epigraphical material containing a blend of historical, mythological and laudatory data

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<sup>1</sup> See Henrik H. Sørensen, *The History and Doctrines of Early Korean Sŏn Buddhism*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Copenhagen, 1987.

couched in a highly formulaic and poetic form of classical Sino-Korean. Although this primary material does contain a fair amount of what can be considered historical data, the main purpose of the epigraphs was never historical in nature—at least not in the way we normally understand history—but strongly panegyric and idealized.

In addition we derive our knowledge from scattered text-passages, mostly culled from sect histories belonging to Chinese Chan Buddhism. This material consists mainly of the often formalized exchanges of questions and answers between a given master and his disciple(s), the so-called 'encounter-dialogues' (Kor. *Mundap* 問答). This material, as far as it can be considered recordings of actual events, obviously has its limitations. Indeed, as a source for historical, or even doctrinal information, not to mention beliefs and practices, it is by nature rather one-sided and narrow in scope.

Embedded in the epigraphical and sect-historical material we occasionally come across passages of what amounts to statements of a doctrinal nature. Indeed, we even find excerpts from doctrinal Sŏn texts that discuss the path to enlightenment and moreover gives us an insight into the views and ideas which shaped their authors' understandings. Although this material is both rare and limited it is that which provides us with the best understanding of the issues that shaped early Sŏn.

More than a decade ago I discussed the existence of several less well-known Sŏn lineages outside the traditional structure of the Nine Mountain lineages. These extra lineages include those founded by Hyeso 慧昭 (774-850)<sup>2</sup>, Sunji 順之 (fl. late 9th cent.)<sup>3</sup>, Ch'ungdam 忠湛 (869-940)<sup>4</sup>, and the Pŏp'an 法眼 Sŏn master Chijong 智宗 (930-1018)<sup>5</sup>. My findings

<sup>2</sup> *Han'guk pulgyo inmyŏng sajŏn* (Biographical Dictionary of Korean Buddhism), ed. Yi Chŏng, Seoul: Pulgyo Sidaesa, 1993, p.344a.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160ab.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 310b-11a.

concerning these lineages did not constitute new discoveries *per se* as they rested mainly on a reinterpretation of already existing primary sources and other well-known material. What was 'new' was that previously few scholars had paid serious attention to these minor lineages or otherwise understood their significance within the greater context of early Korean Sŏn.

When taking a closer and more critical look at the extant sources it becomes clear that some of these lesser well-known lineages were if not more important historically speaking than some of the Nine Mountain lineages, several of which appears to have been relatively short-lived, they were at least equally influential in their time. Hence I believe that by re-instating these less well-known Sŏn lineages into the history of early Sŏn where they rightly belong, we should no longer understand the name Kusan Sŏnmun as indicating the total number of lineages in existence at that time. The active lineages during the late Silla and early Koryŏ were in fact much more numerous and diverse than has hitherto been accepted.

This paper is devoted to a discussion of one of these early Sŏn lineage that history has to some extent passed over. I shall here focus my investigation on the life and times of a Sŏn master with the posthumous title Hyŏngak 玄覺 (n.d.), a relatively obscure monk and founder of a Sŏn lineage in the central parts of Mt. Chiri 智理山 in South Chŏlla province. By bringing Hyŏngak out of obscurity and into proper historical perspective, it is my hope that yet another small piece in the complicated and incomplete puzzle that is early Korean Sŏn will fall into place. In addition this study shall seek to unravel the mystery surrounding Yŏngok Temple 鶯谷寺<sup>6</sup>, which was probably re-built under Hyŏngak's

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 283b-4a.

<sup>6</sup> Name also written 燕谷寺. It is located in the district of Kurye on the border between the modern provinces of South Chŏlla and South Kyŏngsang. See *Han'guk sach'al sajŏn* (Dictionary of Korean Temples; hereafter HSS), 2 vols., comp. Kwŏn Sangno, Seoul: Ihwa munhwa ch'ulp'ansa, 1994, Vol. I, p. 1255. Note that this otherwise reliable resource wrongly places the temple in the



supervision and subsequently became the seat of the Sŏn lineage he founded. This second part will also contain a survey of the archeological material found on the Yŏngok Temple site together with an attempt at placing it in its historical context.

### 1. The Sources on Hyŏngak and Yŏngok Temple

The earliest source on Hyŏngak is a fragmented stele inscription, entitled **Yŏngok sa Hyŏngak sŏnsa t'appi** 鶯谷寺玄覺禪師塔碑 (Stele Inscription for the Stūpa of Sŏn Master Hyŏngak of Yŏngok Temple; hereafter YHST)<sup>7</sup>. Today this inscription is only extant in a highly fragmented state, for which reason it is only possible to extract very meagre information from it. Most importantly, however, is its dating which is given as 978 A.D. This indicates that Hyŏngak passed away some time prior to that date, i.e. during the early Koryŏ.

Next we encounter Hyŏngak in the late Koryŏ work, the **Sŏnmun pojang nok** 禪門寶藏錄 (Records of the Precious Collection of the Sŏn School; hereafter SPN<sup>8</sup>) compiled by the monk Ch'ŏnch'aek 天頌 (1206-after 1293)<sup>9</sup>, in 1293 A.D. The SPN is unique for containing a

vicinity of the town of Namwŏn in North Chŏlla province.

<sup>7</sup> This title is a constructed one, and not that which originally adorned Hyŏngak's stele. The most useful version of the extant text can be found in the *Namal Yŏch'o kŏmsŏk mun* (Texts on Metal and Stone from the Late Silla and Early Koryŏ), Vol. 1, comp. Han'guk yŏksa yŏngu hoe, Seoul: Hyeon, 1993, pp. 318-21. See also *Chŏsen kinseki sŏran* (Korean Inscriptions on Metal and Stone; hereafter CKS), Vol. 1, ed. Chŏsen sŏtŏfuku, Seoul (Keijō): Asea munhwa sa, 1976 (reprint of the Japanese 1919 edition), pp. 555-6.

<sup>8</sup> Contained in *Han'guk pulgyo chŏnsŏ* (Complete Works of Korean Buddhism; hereafter HPC) Vol. 6, comp. Tongguk Taehakkyo, Seoul: Tongguk taehakkyo ch'ŏlp'ansa, 1984, pp. 469c-84a. See also *Dainihon zokuzōkyō* (Great Japanese Continuation of the Tripiṭaka; hereafter ZZ), 90 vols. (new edition of the original ZZ in 150 vols.), Tokyo: Kokushō kankōkai, 1979-1989, 1276.64, pp. 807a-16c.

<sup>9</sup> See also Yi Yongja, "Ch'ŏnch'aek ūi *Hosan nok* (Ch'ŏnch'aek's *Hosan nok*)," *Han'guk pulgyo hak* (Studies in Korean Buddhism; hereafter HPH) 4 (1979), pp. 39-62. There is an ongoing discussion

number of excerpts from early Sŏn Buddhist scriptures most of which are no longer extant<sup>10</sup>. The fairly lengthy excerpt to interest us here is said to come from a work called **Hyŏngak sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang** 玄覺禪師教外豎禪章 (The Section of Sŏn Master Hyŏngak's Established Sŏn outside Doctrinal Buddhism)<sup>11</sup>. It is in the form of a dialogue between Hyŏngak and what appears to be a follower of the Hwaŏm School, but otherwise this significant source contains no direct historical information.

The last source at our disposal is the chronicle of Hyŏngak's temple, **Chiri san Yŏngok sa sajok** 智理山鶯谷寺事蹟 (Record of the Yŏngok Temple on Mt. Chiri; hereafter CYS)<sup>12</sup>. This important historical record is part of the larger, comprehensive history of Hwaŏm Temple, the **Haedong Honam Chiri san Tae Hwaŏm sa sajok** 海東湖南智理山大華嚴寺事蹟 (Record of the Great Hwaŏm Temple on Mt. Chiri in Honam, Korea; hereafter HHCTH)<sup>13</sup>, a work consisting of several scattered records and compiled by Chŏng Hŭihŏn 鄭彙憲 (d. 1968), a late abbot of Hwaŏm Temple 華嚴寺. While the first part of the CYS is devoted to a miracle tale concerning the building of a *stūpa* on the later site of Yŏngok

as to the identity of this monk. Some Korean scholars such as Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn of Seoul National University believes that there may have been two monks with the same name Ch'ŏnch'aek, one of them a Ch'ŏn'ae monk, the other a Sŏn monk and the actual compiler of the SPN. Personal communication with Choe Pyŏnghŏn.

<sup>10</sup> Presumably these lost works were written during the later part of Unified Silla and early Koryŏ.

<sup>11</sup> HPC Vol. 6, pp. 472b-3a. See also ZZ 1276:64, pp. 807a-16c.

<sup>12</sup> Included as an appendix in *Pulgyo hakbo* (Journal of Buddhist Studies; hereafter PH) 6 (1969), pp. 208b-5a. At the time it was joined to the HHCTH (see below) the last part of its text had already been lost. The last dated entry in the CYS is from 1779 A.D. which make it evident that the chronicle itself was compiled some time after this year. Judging from its style it was probably written by an unknown author during the first half of the 19th century.

<sup>13</sup> PH 6 (1969), pp. 238-5. It was compiled during the first quarter of this century. While some of the data and records contained in this work are of considerable age the majority of the texts which make it up were composed during the 19th and early 20th century. It is also from Ven. Chŏng's library that the temple history of Sŏngju Temple 聖住寺, the center of the Mt. Sŏngju Line of the Nine Mountain Sŏn Schools of Silla, was discovered. See "Sungam san Sŏngju sa sa (Record of Sŏngju Temple on Mt. Sungam)," ed. Kim Imja, *Kogu misul* (Ancient Art) 98:9 (1968), p. 450.



Temple, the second part is devoted to a lengthy account of Hyōngak and his achievements. It also includes an excerpt from the **Hyōngak sōnsa kyowae susōn chang** entitled **Hyōngak sōnsa pōbō** 玄覺禪師法語 (*Dharma-Discourse of Sōn Master Hyōngak*)<sup>14</sup>. While it is evident that whoever compiled the CYS was familiar with both Hyōngak's entry in the SPN and the YHST, which may have been more intact at the time the record was made, it is unclear whether that person had in his possession a more complete text containing Hyōngak's recorded sayings. However, as will be evident in the following, it is obvious that the compiler of the CYS had considerably more information on Hyōngak and the brand of Sōn Buddhism he taught at his disposal than is available to us today.

In addition to the above three written sources are the archaeological remains found at the site of Yōngok Temple itself<sup>15</sup>. In addition to the foundations of the old buildings, which indicate the size of the original temple, there are a relatively large number of cultural remains, including parts of stele bases, dragon tops and *śarīra-stūpas* scattered about the site. A more detailed discussion of what these remains tell us will follow below.

## 2. Hyōngak: The Man and His Teachings

It is not known why Hyōngak has been overlooked by contemporary Korean scholars in the field, but apart from the brief archaeological notes

<sup>14</sup> PH 6 (1969), p. 207a.

<sup>15</sup> Now Naedong-ri, T'oji-myōn, Kurye-gun, in South Chōlla province on the upper slopes of central Mt. Chiri below Panja Peak 般若峰. During the late 1980s a new temple has been erected on the site of the old sanctuary. The site is fairly close to Ssangye Temple in the east while Hwaōm Temple lies further to the west. For a modern description of the site, see *Han'guk ūi myōngsan taech'al* (Korea's Famous Mountains and Great Temples), *Han'guk sach'al charyo ch'ongsō* 1 (The Collected Books of Materials on Korea's Temples and Sanctuaries), comp. Han'guk gwangwang munhwa yōngu, Seoul: Kukche pulgyo tohyōpwi hoe, 1982, pp. 267-71.

by Chōng Yōnggho 鄭永鎬, who was essentially the first Korean scholar to take serious note of him, little else can be found about him in the secondary sources<sup>16</sup>. It appears that due to the fact that Hyōngak's name is written with the same characters as that of a famous Chinese Chan monk, and possible from the fact that the SPN consists mainly of excerpts culled from Chinese Chan works, his real identity has somehow eluded the concerned scholars in the field.

Due to the missing parts of the YHST we know nothing about Hyōngak's family background or childhood. Evidently he was among the many young Korean men who joined the Buddhist *sangha* during the late Silla, and gradually rose to fame in the course of the early Koryō dynasty. Interestingly, the extant sources contain no information indicating that he ever went to China to study. The CYS attempts to make a connection between Hyōngak and the famous Hyeso of Ssangye Temple 双溪寺, also known as National Preceptor Chingam 真鑑国師, whom we have already encountered above. However, on the basis of the extant information it is hard to say anything definite in this regard. The CYS has this to say:

At the end of Silla and the beginning of Koryō, the Sōn master Hyōngak reestablished the halls of the temple (i.e. Yōngok Temple) and discussed the doctrines of Sōn and the doctrinal teachings (Kor. *kyo*) with great vigour. He widely propagated both Sōn and the doctrinal teachings, teaching that they were related in the same way as man and Heaven. He also answered questions [on the *dharmā*] put to him by sixteen great masters from the Mt. Chiri [region]. In public addresses he humbly

<sup>16</sup> See Chōng Yōnggho, *Sōkcho* (Things made of Stone), *Han'guk misul chōnjip* (Complete Collection of Korean Art) 7, Seoul: Tonghwa ch'ulp'an kongsa, 1973-1980, pls. 59, 60, 61, 62, 108, and pp. 144, 153; and his *Sōkdung-pudo-pi* (Stone Lanterns - Relic Containers - Steles), *Han'guk ūi mi* (Korea's Art; hereafter HM) 15, Seoul: Chung'ang ilbo, 1983, pls. 21-4, p. 211.



explained about National Preceptor Chingam's search for the Way in China and his death. [All in all] National Preceptor Hyŏngak of Silla widely propagated the unification of Sŏn and doctrinal Buddhism according to the principles of *yin* and *yang*<sup>17</sup>.

Although we do not know their date, the following information on Hyŏngak can be gleaned from these lines of information. Firstly, the text mentions that he lived at the end of the Silla and the beginning of the Koryŏ. This is information that we have already had from the YHST. Secondly Hyŏngak is said to have renovated the buildings of Yŏngok Temple, implying that there were structures on the site prior to his arrival there. Thirdly, the text stresses that he taught a type of Buddhism that combined both Sŏn and the doctrines of the traditional Buddhist scriptures. Fourthly, the reference to the local Buddhist masters who visited him in order to receive his teaching, indicates that he was a monk of considerable fame. Fifthly, the CYS emphasizes that Hyŏngak was somehow connected to Hyeso *alias* National Preceptor Chingam. Exactly what the CYS implies in this regard is unclear, but it could be taken as an indication that some sort of link existed between the two men. Perhaps the Hyŏngak was actually a later follower in Hyeso's line of transmission?

The CYS contains no information on the master's death, which may lead us to conclude that whoever wrote the account of Hyŏngak did not have access to the original stele inscription, that is, it was probably already destroyed at the time of its writing. On the basis of what we now know about Hyŏngak, we can with some confidence say that he probably was born some time during the late 9th to early 10th century and that he passed away some time before 979 A.D. Probably he was a

<sup>17</sup> PH 6, p. 207a. I do not take this to mean that Hyŏngak actually incorporated *yin-yang* philosophy into his Buddhist teaching, but that he considered Sŏn and doctrinal Buddhism as being complementary in the manner of *yin* and *yang*.

contemporary of King T'aejo (r. 918-942), the founder of the Koryŏ dynasty. The fact that the YHST refers to him as a "royal preceptor" (*wangsa* 王師), not only makes it evident that his name is a posthumous title, but also indicates that he was a man of high status at the time of death<sup>18</sup>. This is further evident, as the inscription for his stele was composed by a Koryŏ literati of Chinese descent Wang Yung (Ch. Wang Rong) 王融 (n.d.)<sup>19</sup>. Furthermore, the calligraphy was written by a government official named Chang Sinwon 張信元 (n.d.). All in all this indicates that Hyŏngak was an eminent person in his own day. Taking into account that his stele inscription dates from the late 10th century, we may surmise that he earned his posthumous title through services rendered to one of the early Koryŏ kings, probably even to T'aejo himself. Here it is important to note that Wang Yung and his authorship of Hyŏngak's stele inscription is also mentioned in the inscription of the Sŏn master Sŏkcho 釈超 (912-964)<sup>20</sup>, who belonged to the Korean Pŏpan tradition according to the *Sŏngwon sallim* 釈苑詞林 (The Forest of Literature in the Buddhist Garden)<sup>21</sup>, compiled by Uich'ŏn 義天 (1055-1101). This piece of information may be taken as solid evidence that Hyŏngak was an older contemporary of Sŏkcho, and moreover supports my contention that he was a relatively important monk during the early Koryŏ.

As regards the type of Sŏn Buddhism which Hyŏngak taught, the *Hyŏngak Sŏnsa kyŏwae suson chang* provides us with some measure of

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 320.

<sup>19</sup> Wang Yung was a prominent scholar of the Hallim Academy 韓林 during the reign of King Kwangjong 光宗 (r. 949-975). He is mentioned in the *Koryŏ sa*. For further biographical information, see *Koryŏ Kwangjong yŏngu* (Studies on King Kwangjong of the Koryŏ), ed. Yi Kibaek, Seoul: Ilchogak, 1981, p. 39, n31.

<sup>20</sup> For information on this important Pŏpan monk and the related sources, see Hŏ Hŏngsik, *Koryŏ pulgyo sa yŏngu* (Studies in the History of Koryŏ Buddhism), Ilcho kak. Seoul, 1986, pp. 598-609.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. HPC 4, p. 648b.



information. In any case it corroborates the statement of the CYS to the effect that he was a Sŏn master well-versed in Hwaŏm doctrine. Furthermore, as will be evident in the following, he utilized Hwaŏm doctrine as a means of teaching the tenets of Sŏn. As I see it he was actually not advocating the harmonization of Sŏn and Hwaŏm, but essentially gave his own interpretation to the latter through his insights acquired through Sŏn practice. There can be no doubt that to Hyŏngak Sŏn was seen as being superior to doctrinal Buddhism as represented by Hwaŏm philosophy. However, his familiarity with the latter enabled him to let it serve as a vehicle for presenting his understanding of Sŏn doctrine and practice.

### 3. The Hyŏngak sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang

In order to get a better insight into Hyŏngak's teaching let us now take a look at the *Hyŏngak sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang* according to the the longest surviving source, the SPN. As it stands in this work, it appears to have been part of a much longer text. Indeed, as has been mentioned above the corresponding passage in the CYS appears under the title, *Hyŏngak sŏnsa pŏbŏ*<sup>22</sup>. Furthermore, the texts begins rather abruptly, which would seem to indicate that the *Hyŏngak sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang* as we have it today, is only part of a much longer collection of Hyŏngak's discourses now lost. It is possible that the teachings imparted to the 'sixteen great masters from Mt. Chiri' mentioned in the CYS may have constituted the missing parts of the original text.

<sup>22</sup> PH 6 (1969), p. 207a. It is not known which source the compiler of the CYS used. It may actually have been the SPN to which he gave a different name, or perhaps he had a different source at his disposal?

### Sŏn Master Hyŏngak's Established Sŏn Outside the [Written] Teaching

False understanding is the true law's many companions, and [hence] mistakes have [also] been handed down in the transmission of the high patriarchs<sup>23</sup>. [Consequently] some have regarded the gates of sudden and gradual [enlightenment respectively]<sup>24</sup> as the 'true stream', whereas others have elevated the Complete and Sudden Teaching<sup>25</sup>, creating with attachment schools and vehicles. However the self-essence of the ocean-like nature can not be spoken about. Phenomena and their characteristics [remain] in eternal quiescence, and one cultivates the *dharmadhātu* cause by realizing the *dharmadhātu* effect<sup>26</sup>. Therefore it is

<sup>23</sup> I.e. within Sŏn Buddhism.

<sup>24</sup> This refers to the teachings of Northern and Southern Chan, the dichotomy of which shaped the development of the tradition during the middle of the Tang dynasty (618-906). Recently some Western scholars have argued that the doctrinal and practical differences between the two brands of Chan were negligible, and that the real cause for contention rather rested on economical and political issues. See John R. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism. Studies in East Asian Buddhism* 3, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986; his "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism," in *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, ed. Peter N. Gregory, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 5, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987, pp. 227-78; and Bernard Faure, *Le bouddhisme Ch'an en mal d'histoire: genèse d'une tradition religieuse dans la Chine des Tang*, Publications de L'École Française d'Extrême-Orient Vol. CLVIII, Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1989; and his *La volonté d'orthodoxie dans le bouddhisme chinois*, Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1988

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of this teaching according to the interpretation of the Chan master Zongmi, see Peter N. Gregory, "Sudden Enlightenment Followed by Gradual Cultivation: Tsung-mi's Analysis of Mind," in *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, ed. Peter N. Gregory, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 5, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987, pp. 279-322; and his "What Happened to the 'Perfect Teaching'? Another Look at Hua-yen Buddhist Hermeneutics," in *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 6, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988, pp. 207-30. This study is of particular interest to Hyŏngak's understanding of the Hwaŏm doctrines, and it is highly likely that there may have been some sort of link between his understanding of doctrinal Buddhism and that of Zongmi

<sup>26</sup> Indicating the fruit, i.e. enlightenment, is contained in the cause, i.e. the cultivation of the various wholesome practices. This is one of the cardinal doctrines of Huayan/Hwaŏm Buddhism as expounded by the Chinese lay Buddhist master, Li Tongxuan 李通玄 (635-730). For a masterly discussion of his thought see Robert M. Gimello, "Li T'ung-hsuan and the Practical Dimensions



said: 'The cause contains its effect (i.e. fruit)!'<sup>27</sup> It is just like the wonderful meaning secretly transmitted by our schools and lineages (i.e. by the Sŏn Buddhists). Fundamentally there is no *dharmadhātu*-cause and also no *dharmadhātu*-fruit. No wisdom or realization, and no setting up of the truth, because there originally is no cause. There is no cultivation along the path of the myriad practices, because there originally is no fruit and no realization of the fruit.<sup>28</sup>

Q: In this case it agrees with the [teaching of the] Ocean Seal<sup>29</sup> [in

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of Hua-yen," in *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen*, ed. Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory, *Studies in East Asian Buddhism* 1, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983, 321-89. During the latter half of the Koryŏ dynasty Li's commentary on Avataṃsaka sūtra, the *Xin Huayan jing lun* 新華嚴經論 (Treatise on the New Translation of the Avataṃsaka sūtra) *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (Taishō Tripitaka; hereafter T.), ed. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, Tokyo: Daizōkyōkai, 1924-1935, 1739.36, exercised a tremendous influence on the development of the thought of Chinul, the great reformator and reviver of Korean Sŏn during the middle of the Koryŏ dynasty. For two different approaches to this, see Robert Buswell, *The Korean Approach to Zen*, pp. 64-5. See also his "Ch'an Hermeneutics: A Korean View," in *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, *Studies in East Asian Buddhism* 6, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988, pp. 231-56.

<sup>27</sup> This short citation can not be traced to one single work, but occurs in slightly different forms in the teachings of both Li Tongxuan and Zongmi. The idea of *dharmadhātu*-causation, i.e. in the sense of the first awakening of faith in the Mahāyāna path actually establishes the practitioner in full enlightenment, originally comes from the *Avataṃsaka sūtra*, where the seventeenth section of chapter seventeen is devoted to its explanation. See T. 279.10, pp. 89a-95a.

<sup>28</sup> This refers to the Sŏn teaching of universal emptiness (*taegong* 大空. Originally derived from the *prajñāpāramitā* literature the doctrines surrounding this concept were especially expounded by the followers of the Nīutou School 牛頭宗 in early Chinese Chan as well as their Sanlun 三論 compatriots, and as such was limited in importance to a few of the current lines of Chan. Later, however, it became a cardinal doctrine in the development of Southern Chan, and as such it is of course closely linked to the doctrine of sudden enlightenment. For more information on this see Hsüeh-li Cheng, "The Roots of Zen Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 8 (1981), pp. 451-78. In Korea Samron 三論 (Ch. Sanlun) studies developed already during the Three Kingdoms Period, and has since then been an under-current in the Korean Buddhist tradition.

<sup>29</sup> The teaching of the Ocean Seal, which is a symbol indicating that all things already are in a state of complete calm and extinction (Skr. *bhūtata*), is a major doctrine of the Hwaŏm School in Korea. It also indicates the so-called Ocean-like Samādhi (Kor. *haein sammae* 海印三昧) of total unity in which the universe is realized in oneself. Uisang's important work, the *Hwaŏm ilsŏng pŏpye* to 華嚴一乘法界圖 (The Dharmadhātu Chart of the One Vehicle *Avataṃsaka*) sums up this doctrine in verse. Cf. T. 1887A.45. For a full translation of Uisang's work, see Steve Odin,

which] one's self is the awakened essence apart from cause and effect. Does this [not] agree with the Mind Seal of the True School of Sŏn?<sup>30</sup>

A: They are [actually] alike and yet they differ. Now, why is that? Those who speak about the Ocean Seal put emphasis on [the belief] that the cause [of enlightenment] is in the effect. [However] when returning [to the truth upon attaining enlightenment] there is no cause in the effect<sup>31</sup>. If there is trace of a cause in the beginning, then there is [also] the trace of its fruit at the end. As we speak now, let us suppose that there is neither cause nor effect, and yet when investigating [we will find] that there is both cause and effect. If one agrees with Sŏn then there is fundamentally no *dharmadhātu*-cause, and one will effect nothing by getting rid of it. Originally there will be no *dharmadhātu*-effect [either]. Hence one will effect nothing by getting rid of the effect. Why should one afterwards [want] to get rid of cause and effect, when upon returning [to the truth] there is no place for either of them? Therefore an Ancient has said: 'The Sŏn patriarchs' transmission of the [enlightened] mind, is like a bird flying in the empty sky!<sup>32</sup>

Q: In the Sudden Teaching<sup>33</sup> all phenomenon are apart from what

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Process *Metaphysics and Hua-yen Buddhism: The Critical Study of Cumulative Penetration vs. Interpenetration*, Albany: SUNY Press, 1982, pp. 189-213. Two other classical Silla works devoted to the Ocean Seal are Myŏnghyo's 明孝 *haein sammae non* 海印三昧論 (Treatise on the Ocean Seal Samādhi, T. 1889.45; and the *Hwaŏm ilsŏng sŏngbul myŏwi* 華嚴一乘成仏妙義 (The Wonderful Meaning of Attaining Buddhahood according to the One Vehicle of the *Avataṃsaka*), compiled by Kyŏn Tungchi 見登之 (fl. 9th cent.), T. 1890.45.

<sup>30</sup> The Mind Seal signifies the mind-transmission of the enlightened mind from master to disciple. A central doctrine and practice in Chan/Sŏn Buddhism.

<sup>31</sup> This is the standard Sŏn approach Hyŏngak refers to here, i.e. the realization that cause and effect are both empty. For an interesting article on the concept of *karma* in early Chinese Chan, see Robert Zeuschner, "The Understanding of Karma in Early Chan Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 8 (1981), pp. 339-425.

<sup>32</sup> This metaphor is found in countless Chan/Sŏn scriptures. Hyŏngak seems here to use the simile in a negative way, i.e. birds flying in the sky leaves no traces.

<sup>33</sup> The sudden teaching refers to a certain class of Mahāyāna scriptures such as the *Vimalakīrtinīrdeśa sūtra*, the *Shoulengyan jing* 首楞嚴經 (Pseudo-Surangama Sūtra) and the *Yuanjue*



pertains to the mind. As they are apart from [the causal mind], one is able to know that which thinks. One by one, phenomena after phenomena, purely and simple without confusion. Only this is meritorious virtue. Effortlessly those who to enter it attain pure liberation. How is this any different from the teachings of Sōn?

A: All the Buddhas who manifested in the world have taught that the Absolute is beyond thought. When thought arises, then there are sentient beings. If in sentient beings not a thought arises, then we are equal to all the Buddhas, and all realms will be Buddha realms! The Three Stages<sup>34</sup> and the Ten Virtuous Levels<sup>35</sup> will be [attained] like birds flying through an empty sky!<sup>36</sup> Now, let us suppose that someone realizes suchness (Skr. *bhūtāta*) apart from names and characteristics, utterly extinguished, because he dwells in nothing. If he does not penetrate clearly and liberate those who are before him, then he will not be cultivating according to the Vinaya.<sup>37</sup> [However] if he cultivates according to it, then he will be unmindful of the world while cultivating, and in that case he will realize suchness, and awaken to the body of wisdom. He will not give rise to foolish thinking, but will give rise to true mindfulness. Being in accordance with quiet extinction with no further levels [to attain], and in accordance with faith he will arrive in the Buddha realm<sup>38</sup>. Having

*jing* 円覺經 (Perfect Enlightenment Sūtra) according to the doctrinal scheme of the Huayan patriarch Fazang. It does not originally refer to Chan or Sōn although their teachings are in some cases counted as belonging to this group. For a very informative article on the classification scheme of the Five Teachings according to Huayan, see Liu Ming-Wood, "The P'an-chiao System of the Hua-yen School in Chinese Buddhism," TP, 57:1 2 (1981), pp. 10-47.

<sup>34</sup> I.e. the ten abodes, the ten practices and the ten levels of faith required by a bodhisattva on the path towards Buddhahood.

<sup>35</sup> These are the ten *bhūmis* or stages through which a bodhisattva passes on his way to full enlightenment. See *Foguang da cidian* (The Foguang Great Dictionary; hereafter FDC), Vol. 1, comp. Foguang dazang jing bianxiu weiyuan hui, Gaoxiang: Foguang chubanshe, 1988, pp. 419a-24b.

<sup>36</sup> Here used as a metaphor of effortlessness and ultimate freedom.

<sup>37</sup> Here meaning the bodhisattva precepts.

<sup>38</sup> This explanation reveals a strong influence of *prajñāpāramitā* thought in the form of the doctrine of universal emptiness on Hyōngak's formulation of the path to enlightenment. As such it shows

arrived there one's faith will be [fully] established. In the Sōn teaching which we now discuss, originally there is not a single thought. As not a single thought is produced, what thought can there be? As thoughts are fundamentally non-existing, how can the establishment of faith come about? As the stage of faith is not established, how can the Buddha Realm come about? As phenomena and thoughts are not seen, what characteristics is one removed from? As name and words are fundamentally non-existing, what names and words can one be removed from? For this reason, it (i.e. the Sōn teaching) is not the same as that of the Sudden Teaching!

Q: Concerning being unmindful of the passions in order to accord with principle, in which way do the bodhisattvas and the patriarchs differ?<sup>39</sup>

A: According with principle has two meanings; with regard to the principle of the established teaching, it is like when the Buddha talks about Hinayāna to the Mahāyāna bodhisattvas, there is no obstruction of Hinayāna. Even when he discourses on the Mahāyāna, there is no obstruction of Mahāyāna, or when he discourses on principle (Kor. *ni* 理) and phenomena (Kor. *sa* 事), there is no obstruction between principle and phenomena. Or when he speaks about emptiness and form, there is no obstruction between emptiness and form, or when he speaks about the real and the relative, there is no obstruction between the real and the relative. In all the teachings of the Five Vehicles<sup>40</sup>, there is no destruction [in so much as] one character or one sentence. Unreal names and the absolute are completely fused into each other.

According to the principle of Sōn, then when the Buddha talks about Mahāyāna, there is basically no Mahāyāna. When he talks about Hinayāna, there is basically no Hinayāna. When he talks about principle

his indepthness to the doctrines of Southern Chan.

<sup>39</sup> This question does not occur in the SPN, but can be found as the opening question in the exerted version of the *Hyōngak Sōnsa kyowae susōn chang* in the CYS. See HP, 6 (1969), p. 207a.

<sup>40</sup> The Five Vehicles are: 1) that of men, 2) that of *śrāvakas*, 3) that of *pratyeka* buddhas, 4) that of bodhisattvas, and 5) that of buddhas.



and phenomena, there are basically no principle nor phenomena, including the Three Vehicles<sup>41</sup> and the Twelvelfold Divisions of the Teaching<sup>42</sup>. With regard to phenomenal existence in the Three Realms<sup>43</sup> it is [really] like a bird flying in the sky without leaving any traces<sup>44</sup>. Therefore the *Huayan shu*<sup>45</sup> says that the doctrine of Oneness<sup>46</sup> is above the Complete and Sudden [Teaching]<sup>47</sup>. This is to understand the meaning of 'forgetting explanations'!

Q: If one forgets about explanations, how can there be any understanding of the meaning [of the *dharmā*]?

A: Forgetting the explanations of the Five Teachings is to understand the meaning of the Five Teachings which is [in fact the very] doctrine of Sōn!<sup>48</sup>

This dialogue provides us with a highly interesting example of Hyōngak's teaching. As such it gives us an interesting insight into a late Silla attempt at harmonizing the doctrines of Hwaōm and Sōn, an attempt which doctrinally did not culminate until the advent of Chinul more than two centuries later<sup>49</sup>. While I must admit, that parts of the *Hyōngak sōnsa*

41 The Three Vehicles are: 1) Hinayāna, 2) Mahāyāna, and 3) Ekāyāna.

42 The Buddhist Canon is traditionally grouped into twelve sections.

43 The Three Realms: 1) the realm of desire, 2) the realm of form, and 3) the formless realm.

44 Because everything rests in the state of suchness.

45 This refers to the *Da fangguang fo huayan jing shu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏 (Commentary to the *Avatamsaka sūtra*) by Chengguan 澄觀 (738-840), the fourth patriarch of the Chinese Huayan School. Cf. T. 1735.35.

46 I.e. Ekāyāna as represented by the teaching on non-duality between the absolute and the relative in Sōn Buddhism.

47 This is essentially a paraphrase of a lengthier passage found in the *Da fangguang fo huayan jing shu*.

48 In other words, the essential meaning of doctrinal Buddhism is identical with the purport of Sōn which is the realization of the mind of enlightenment beyond verbalization and conceptualization. HPC 6, pp. 472b-3a.

49 Despite Chinul's success in integrating the doctrines of Sōn and Hwaōm as borne out in his

*kyowae susōn chang* is not fully clear to me, it nevertheless amply demonstrates how Hyōngak employed the Hwaōm doctrines of *dharmadhātu*-causation and universal interpenetration as points of departure in his attempt of unifying the Sōn concept of sudden enlightenment with doctrinal Buddhism. Finally he fuses the two into the state of integrated suchness through the doctrine of universal emptiness, a main tenet of Sōn Buddhism. Noteworthy here is Hyōngak's reference to the Chinese Huayan commentary *Huayan shu*, which shows his familiarity with one of the most influential and important works employed by the Hwaōm tradition.

In addition to the statement in the *CYS* to the fact that Hyōngak's type of Sōn also accommodated doctrinal Buddhism, the text of the *Hyōngak sōnsa kyowae susōn chang* clearly demonstrates that this was indeed the case. More correctly, it shows us that his teachings consisted of a type of Sōn Buddhism based on Southern Chinese Chan in which meditation and doctrinal learning—particularly that associated with the Hwaōm School—were combined to form one integrated whole. Hence his approach to practice and doctrine is in line with that taught by the followers of the newly introduced Pōpan School 法眼宗, which also taught a syncretic approach to enlightenment<sup>50</sup>. Nevertheless, if one were to see Hyōngak merely as a harmonizer between Sōn and doctrinal Buddhism, one is apt to overlook the clear line he draws between the two approaches. In other

celebrated *Wōndon sōngbul non* 圓頓成仏論 (Treatise on the Complete and Sudden Attainment of Buddhahood), the practical implications of this harmonization were never carried out, and a state of doctrinal conflict persisted between Hwaōm and Sōn in the following centuries. For this work, cf. HPC 4, pp. 724a-32b. See also Buswell, *The Korean Approach to Zen*, pp. 198-237.

50 For more information on the Pōpan School of the early Koryō, see Kim Tujin, "Koryō Kwangjong tae Pōpan chong ūi tūgjang kwa kŭ sōnggyōk (The Rise of the Pōpan School and Its Influence during the Reign of King Kwangjong of Koryō)," in *Koryō ch'ogi pulgyo saron* (Essays on Buddhist History during the Early Koryō), ed. Pulgyo hakhoe, Pulgyo hak nonjip 5, Seoul: Minjoksa, 1986, pp. 273-360. See also Sørensen, "The History and Doctrines of Early Korean Sōn Buddhism," pp. 327-52.



words, while it is obvious that he does not see Sŏn and doctrinal Buddhism as being fundamentally opposing schools of thought, it is obvious that to him Sŏn constitutes the superior path of the two. While using the terminology and language of the Hwaŏm tradition—even to the point of quoting from its scriptural sources—his interpretations are consistently in line with the doctrinal stance of Sŏn of the type associated with orthodox Southern Chan. The extent to which Hyŏngak used Hwaŏm ideology and terminology should be understood as *upāya*, i.e. as a pedagogical device designed to bring the questioner around to a 'higher' or more ultimate view. In the final sense Hyŏngak may be said to have employed the teachings of Hwaŏm to prove Sŏn's superiority over the philosophical speculations of doctrinal Buddhism. Therefore he can be seen to have remained squarely within the fold of the adherents of sudden enlightenment (Kor. *tunŏ* 頓悟), and as such he should be seen as a representative of the type of Sŏn that dominated the spiritual landscape of Korean Buddhism during the late Silla and early Koryŏ periods.

#### 4. The Archaeological Remains and the Later Fate of Yŏngok Temple

In order to complete our study of Hyŏngak we still need to look at the tangible, cultural material still to be seen at the site of Yŏngok Temple. This physical evidence—even though it is meagre and fragmented—holds additional information of interest for us, information that will shed further light on this Sŏn monk and his role in the history of Korean Buddhism.

With regard to the further history of master Hyŏngak's lineage, no written material is extant today. However it does appear that disciples of the master continued to teach in Yŏngok Temple. This assumption is

based on the archaeological evidence still remaining on the site of the temple to this day. As much as two very fine *śarīra-stūpas* and the remains of two stele turtle-bases and their stele-heads remain from the period of the early Koryŏ, i.e. from the time when Yŏngok Temple was a flourishing center of Sŏn. As mentioned above one of the destroyed steles belongs to Hyŏngak and the other, situated in the eastern part of the temple, supposedly belongs to one of his disciples, or perhaps even to an older master as suggested by the dating of Chŏng Yŏnggho. In any case he believes that the remains of the original temple on the site date back to the late Silla and early Koryŏ period<sup>51</sup>, which of course is consistent with the scriptural evidence that we have already discussed above.

The earliest archaeological remain at Yŏngok Temple is a square, three-level *stūpa* on the site designated Treasure no. 151 (fig. 1). It was evidently located within the compound of the original temple rather than outside as was the case with the *śarīra-stūpas* discussed above. It is built in the standard, late Silla style and consists of a square base with three square boxes placed on top of each other in declining scale with a dividing roof dividing each story. During a survey of the site in 1967 a cast, bronze image of a buddha was found inside the *stūpa*<sup>52</sup>.

Then there are three *śarīra-stūpas* on the site; the eastern, designated Treasure no. 53 (fig. 2), the northern, designated Treasure no. 54 (fig. 3), and the western, designated no. 154. Of these three *stūpas*, the eastern and northern are both carved in the late Silla style, something which is evident when comparing them with other similar and dated *śarīra-stūpas*

<sup>51</sup> Since Yŏngok Temple has been in ruins for several centuries, and only partly excavated in the late 1930s, it is at present hard to estimate the extent of the original temple. For pictures of the cultural remains, including the base and top of Hyŏngak's stele see, Chŏng Yŏnggho, *Sŏkcho, Han'guk misul chŏnjip* 7, pls. 59, 60, 61, 62, 108, and pp. 144, 153; and his *Sŏkdung-pudo-pi* HM 15, pls. 21-4, p. 211; and *Sŏk't'ap* (Stone Stūpas), HM 9, pl. 86, p. 236.

<sup>52</sup> See *Han'guk sach'al pogam* (The Precious Mirror of Temples in Korea), comp. Yi Tongsul, Seoul: Ūri ch'ulp'ansa, 1997, p. 290b.



in Korea such as those found in Tae'an Temple 太安寺<sup>53</sup>, Pongam Temple 鳳巖寺<sup>54</sup> and Silsang Temple 実相寺<sup>55</sup>. The western *stūpa* is clearly carved in a later, although unusually elaborate style, and is without a doubt that of T'aenūng. It has moreover been dated to 1650 A.D. This leaves us with the two early *stūpas* relevant for our present purpose.

Both the eastern and the northern *stūpas* are elaborately carved in great detail, and despite minor stylistic differences, are more or less similar. In principle both of these *śarīra-stūpas* could be that of Hyōngak, but most likely it is the northern one, since it is next to this that we find the tortoise base which held the stele recording his life. With this we must conclude that the northern *śarīra-stūpa* is in all likelihood that constructed to house Hyōngak's bodily relics. His stele (actually the base and top) is designated Treasure no. 152 (fig. 4). It consists of a large, dragon-tortoise carved in granite in accordance with Korean tradition. As mentioned at the beginning of this study the remaining parts of the fragmented stele itself has long since been removed from the site. The stele top which now rests on the back of the base still bears Hyōngak's name. According to the entry on Hyōngak in the CYS, his stele is said to have been placed in the western part of the temple, however this may be a mistake for it is T'aenūng's stele base that is found here at present<sup>56</sup>.

The Koreans associate the eastern *śarīra-stūpa* with Tosōn 道誥(827-898), the famous, semi-mythological Sōn master from the Mt. Tongni lineage traditionally known for his geomantic expertise<sup>57</sup>. However, it is unclear which reasons lie behind this assertion, especially since we have no primary source with which to corroborate a connection between him and

<sup>53</sup> Chōng Yōngho, *Sōkcho*, compare pl. 59-60 with pl. 5 and 66.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, compare pl. 59-60 with pl. 6.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, compare pl. 59-60 with pl. 7.

<sup>56</sup> PH, p. 207a. Fieldwork on the site carried out by me in August, 1979, and again in 1988, has confirmed this.

<sup>57</sup> Chōng, *Sōktung-pudo-pi*, HM 15, p. 211a.

Hyōngak. The eastern *stūpa* is clearly a *śarīra-stūpa* and as Tosōn is traditionally held to have passed away in Ongnyong Temple 玉竜寺<sup>58</sup> on Mt. Paekkye 白雞山 near Kwangyang in South Chōlla province it is not likely that his *śarīra-stūpa* should be located in Yōngok Temple<sup>59</sup>. Possibly the eastern *stūpa* is considered as having been erected to enhance a perceived *yang* deficiency in this location, i.e. for geomantic reasons, however there are no written sources to confirm whether this was indeed the case. Hence, I am of the opinion that the eastern *stūpa* was constructed for an unknown monk, possibly the master of Hyōngak, or perhaps an illustrious successor. However, in the light of the meagre data on Yōngok Temple and its history which is currently at our disposal, the correct answer to this enigmatic *stūpa* awaits future research. The stele-base of Treasure no. 153 appears to have belonged to the eastern *śarīra-stūpa*. It is slightly smaller than the base for Hyōngak's stele, but was evidently made more or less contemporaneously (fig. 6). It is clear beyond a doubt that together with their stele-bases, the eastern and northern *stūpas* constitute a pair of *śarīra-stūpas*, each of which were raised as a monument for two a leading master of Sōn.

In order to understand better the context in which the early *śarīra-stūpas* functioned let me dwell a moment on what distinguishes these important monuments during the period under discussion. It is common nowadays in Korea to refer to *śarīra-stūpas* in general as *pudo* 浮屠<sup>60</sup>. However, one should be aware that there is a significant difference in the way *śarīra-stūpas* and *pudo* look. In contrast to the distinct, pagoda-like shape of the *śarīra-stūpas*, the *pudo* are conical, dome-like

<sup>58</sup> Now known as Pōpwang Temple 法王寺. See HPSS, pp. 219b-20a.

<sup>59</sup> CKS I, p. 561.

<sup>60</sup> Otherwise *pudo* or rather *fo-tu* is a commonly used alternative term for *stūpa* in Chinese Buddhism. The name probably developed from the concept of *buddha-stūpa*, i.e. a *stūpa* containing the relics of Śākyamuni. For a brief note on this, see FDC Vol. 5, p. 4161a.



monuments carved in granite without much ornamentation<sup>61</sup>. However, they often feature the incised name of the deceased monk in a cartouche on its main body<sup>62</sup>. They are popularly referred to as 'stone drums' (Kor. *sŏkchong* 石鐘)<sup>63</sup>. Some time during the Koryŏ the *śarīra-stūpas* changed shape and were increasingly referred to as in the Buddhist literature. This is known for a fact since the stele inscriptions erected in conjunction with the *śarīra-stūpas* from the Silla and early Koryŏ clearly referred to them as 'stūpas'.<sup>64</sup> The only *pudos* found on the site date from the Chosŏn period (see below). Lastly it should be noted that there were always memorial steles erected in conjunction with the making of a *śarīra-stūpas* during the late Silla and early Koryŏ, whereas for the majority of the later *pudos* steles are rarely erected. Moreover, the steles for *pudos* belonging to important monks and nuns are usually placed in a different location.

The third *śarīra-stūpas* on the site differs on several points and shows pronounced Chosŏn-period characteristics. It has been found to date from 1650 A.D. At the end of the CYS we find information to the effect that the Sŏn master Soyo 逍遙 (1562-1649)<sup>65</sup>, better known as T'aenŭng 太能, lived in the temple during his later years. From other sources we know that the death of this master took place in Yŏngok Temple in the year 1649 A.D. Hence, it is evident that the *śarīra-stūpas* from the Chosŏn period is indeed that of T'aenŭng<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>61</sup> For examples, see Chŏng Yŏnggho, *Sŏkcho*, pls. 92-3.

<sup>62</sup> Interestingly these *pudo* are distinctly Korean in form with no documented counter-parts known from either China or Japan. In contemporary Korea famous monks still have proper *śarīra-stūpa* raised for them, whereas ordinary monks and nuns have their ashes and other remains inshrined in a *pudo*.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. *Pulgyo sajŏn* (Buddhist Dictionary), ed. Unhŏ Yongha, Seoul: Tongguk yŏkkyŏng wŏn, 1984, p. 317b.

<sup>64</sup> See the contents of the CKS for verification of this.

<sup>65</sup> See HPIS, pp. 316b-17a. Taenŭg was one of the famous Hyŏjŏng's 休靜 (1523-1604) leading disciples. For additional information on his life and times, see the records on his activities appended to the *Soyo tang chip* 逍遙堂集 (Collected Writings of Ven. Soyo), HPC 8, pp.198c-200a.

In addition to the three imposing *śarīra-stūpas* and their stele bases the site holds an additional two *pudos* carved in different styles, but obviously dating from the Chosŏn period. As they bear no legible names, it is not known for whom they were raised. Most importantly, however, is that they provide us with tangible evidence of the continued presence of the Buddhist community in Yŏngok Temple (figs. 7-8).

The CYS mentions that during the reign of King Wŏnjong 元宗 (r. 1259-1274), Ch'ŏnch'aek, the illustrious compiler of the SPN whom we have met above, repaired the halls of the temple<sup>67</sup>. This piece of information may be seen as an indication that Yŏngok Temple had fallen into disuse or perhaps even been abandoned in the previous period? Whatever the case it appears that Hyŏngak's lineage of transmission did not continue very long, since the temple had to be revived as a center for Sŏn training during the later part of the Koryŏ. Here it is also interesting to learn that the CYS mentions it was in the Naewŏn Hall 內願堂 in the royal palace in Kaesŏng that he actually compiled the SPN<sup>68</sup>.

Following Ch'ŏnch'aek, the CYS mentions that during the 16th century

<sup>66</sup> See Chŏng Yŏnggho, *Sŏkdung-pudo-pi*, pp. 222-3, pl. 68.

<sup>67</sup> PH 6 (1969), p. 207a. Hŏ Hŭngsik fails to mention this significant information in his otherwise excellent study, *Chinjŏng kuksa wa Hosan nok* (National Master Chinjŏng and the Hosan nok), Seoul: Minjoksa, 1995. While the connection between Ch'ŏnch'aek and Yŏngok Temple are important for our understanding of how the SPN came to include the *Hyŏngak sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang* it is also significant for throwing light on the later years of Ch'ŏnch'aek's life about which little is otherwise known. Interestingly the Ch'ŏnch'aek-Yŏngok Temple link is corroborated by information found in the *Haedong Chogyŏ che yukse Wŏngam kuksa kasong* 海東曹溪第六世円鑑国師歌頌 (Hymns of National Preceptor Wŏngam, the Sixth Generation of the Chogyŏ [Patriarchal Lineage] in Korea) containing the works of Ch'unggi (1226-1292), a sixth generation descendant of Chinul. Cf. HPC 6, pp. 370a-411a. Here we find two poems written in reply to 'the Sŏn Master of Yŏngok' as well as a literary piece written in his honour. *Ibid.*, pp. 382bc, and 403bc. Although the latter neither bears the name of Ch'unggi or Yŏngok Temple, the piece has been identified as having been written for him. Cf. *Wŏngam kuksa chip* (Collected Writings of National Preceptor Wŏngam), annotated by Chin Sŏnggyu, Seoul: Asea munhwasa, 1988, pp. 236-8, 203-5.

<sup>68</sup> PH 6 (1969), p. 207a.



a Sŏn master by the name of Haeŏn 海眼 (1567-?)<sup>69</sup>, another of Hyŏjŏng's disciples, was dwelling in Yŏngok Temple<sup>70</sup>. By the middle of the Chosŏn, following the Imjin War (1591-1604), the temple enjoyed a lengthy and seemingly prosperous period under T'aenŭng and his followers. The last entries on the temple as contained in the CYS date from the early years of the Kangxi 康熙(1662-1722) period, and confirms that T'aenŭng's lineage was still in control of the temple at that time.

Yŏngok Temple seems to have declined during the late Chosŏn, and in 1907 most of its buildings were destroyed in a fire. Some rebuilding took place at a later date. Towards the end of the Colonial Period a survey of the site and its monuments was carried out by the Japanese. During the Korean War in 1950-51 the temple was completely destroyed and not rebuilt until the late 1980s.

### Conclusion

By utilizing a rather diverse type of sources, including a fragmented stele inscription, an obscure temple history as well as archaeological evidence I have here tried to throw light on the life and teaching of the Sŏn master Hyŏngak, as well as establishing with some degree of certainty the historical circumstances surrounding his relationship with Yŏngok Temple.

Through the CYS we are given extensive and important information on the relationship between Ch'ŏnch'aek, the SPN and Yŏngok Temple, information that has hitherto been hard to construe or indeed confirm. Now this enables us to conclude that the hitherto obscure Sŏn master Hyŏngak established a line of transmission in Yŏngok Temple during the early

<sup>69</sup> For biographical information, see HPIS, pp. 329b-30a.

<sup>70</sup> PH 6 (1969), p. 207b.

Koryŏ.

In the *Hyŏngak sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang* which survives in two versions, i.e. that of the SPN and that of the CYS, both of which are fragmentary in nature, Hyŏngak's special brand of Sŏn is presented in the form of a dialogue between a representative of doctrinal Buddhism, i.e. the Hwaŏm School, and the master himself. As such the *Hyŏngak sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang* is in many ways typical for the kind of Sŏn discourse employed in the debate with doctrinal Buddhism that took place throughout the late Silla and Koryŏ periods<sup>71</sup>. However, despite the fact that Hyŏngak's teaching is somewhat more accommodating of doctrinal Buddhism than early Sŏn in general, in so far as his use of its concepts and terminology shows it, one must not overlook the fact that the *Hyŏngak sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang* is essentially a polemical piece meant to show the superiority of Sŏn, the 'special transmission beyond the scriptures'. As such it fits closely with several of the other excerpts from early Sŏn tracts as found in the SPN including Muyŏm's *Musŏl t'o non* 無舌土論 (The Tongueless Realm), the passage on Pŏmil's conversation with Queen Chinsŏng (r. 887-897) etc<sup>72</sup>.

Archaeological remains recovered at the site of Yŏngok Temple has provided us with additional information on the temple's history both before, under and after Hyŏngak's time. Most important are the eastern and the northern *śarīra-stūpas* as well as their stele bases. While it seems unquestionable that the northern one is that of Hyŏngak, the eastern *śarīra-stūpas* in all likelihood belonged to either a predecessor or one of his disciples. Further research will have to be done if we hope to solve this problem, however, in order to accomplish this, we shall also need

<sup>71</sup> For a discussion on this phase in the history of Korean Buddhism, see Henrik H. Sørensen, "The Conflict between Sŏn and Doctrinal Buddhism in Silla," *East Asian Institute Occasional Papers* 2 (1988), pp. 61-83.

<sup>72</sup> HPC 6, p. 474a.

further information. Hence it remains an open question, whether there was any direct connection between the two monks over whom the early *śāriira-stūpas* were raised, but in any event, they indicate the existence of a lineage of transmission during the early Koryŏ period.

Later Yŏngok Temple underwent extensive renovation during the reign of King Wŏnjong. This indicates that it was an active center of Sŏn practice during the closing years of the Koryŏ dynasty. The temple record as well as archaeological evidence further documents continued activity in the temple during the Chosŏn dynasty. Most important here is the connection with Hyŏjŏng's disciple T'aenŭng.

The information in the CYS to the effect that Ch'ŏnch'aek lived in Yŏngok Temple and repaired its halls during the late 13th century would have given him ample opportunity to become acquainted with the life and teachings of Hyŏngak. Undoubtedly he found him sufficiently interesting and important and subsequently included his teachings in the SPN. Indeed by this singular stroke of luck Hyŏngak's legacy as represented by the *Hyŏngak Sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang* has survived down to this day. Had it not been for Ch'ŏnch'aek's association with Yŏngok Temple it is doubtful whether Hyŏngak and his teaching would not have been lost for good. However, one important question remains: What data on Hyŏngak did Ch'ŏnch'aek actually have at his disposal? Did he copy the text of the *Hyŏngak Sŏnsa kyowae susŏn chang* from the YHST? If so it must have been more or less intact at the time Ch'ŏnch'aek compiled the SPN. However, it is also possible that some sort of *pŏpŏ* 法語 (recorded sayings) bearing Hyŏngak's name was circulated existed during the late Koryŏ?

No matter what, the legacy of Hyŏngak and his brand of early Koryŏ Sŏn have been partly preserved by this seemingly diverse data consisting of textual and archaeological fragments. Together they provide us with sufficient information on the life and teachings of a Sŏn master who

might otherwise have been forgotten in the obscure recesses of history.

Finally, I should add that the study of early Sŏn Buddhism could benefit by moving a bit beyond the mere textual approach, that hitherto has dominated the field, to encompass aspects of material culture as well. To be more concrete, what is needed is a more determined attempt at combining the extant textual material with the archaeological findings from the sites of the early Sŏn temples and monasteries. As I have endeavoured to demonstrate here, our investigations may indeed benefit in various ways from accessing a more diverse and complex, historical material. In any case it is self-evident that the more complete data on the Sŏn temples we have at hand, the better are our chances at understanding the reality that was early Korean Sŏn Buddhism.

#### Abbreviations

CKS	<i>Chŏsen kinseki sŏran</i>
CYS	<i>Chiri san Yŏngok sa sajŏk</i>
FDC	<i>Foguang da cidian</i>
HPC	<i>Han'guk pulgyo chŏnsŏ</i>
HHCTH	<i>Haedong Honam Chiri san Tae Hwaŏm sa sajŏk</i>
HPSS	<i>Han'guk pulgyo sach'al sajŏn</i>
HIPS	<i>Han'guk pulgyo inmyŏng sajŏn</i>
HM	<i>Han'guk ūi mi</i>
HPH	<i>Han'guk pulgyo hak</i>
HSS	<i>Han'guk sach'al sajŏn</i>
PH	<i>Pulgyo hakbo</i>
SPN	<i>Sŏnmun pojang nok</i>
T.	<i>Taishŏ shinshū daizŏkyō</i>
TP	<i>T'oung Pao</i>
YHST	<i>Yŏngok sa Hyŏngak sŏnsa t'appi</i>
ZZ	<i>Dainihon zokuzŏkyō (90 vols. edition)</i>



Figures(All photos by the author)



Fig. 1. Three-storied *stūpa*.  
Late Silla-early Koryŏ.  
Treasure no. 151.



Fig. 2. The northern *śarīra-stūpa*.  
Treasure no. 54.  
Early Koryŏ, 979 A.D.

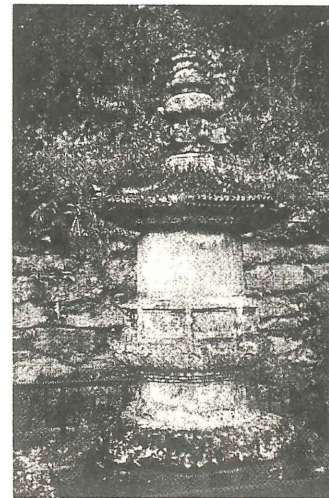


Fig. 3. The eastern *śarīra-stūpa*.  
Treasure no. 53. Early Koryŏ.



Fig. 4. T'aenŭng's *śarīra-stūpa*.  
Treasure no. 154.  
Chosŏn, dated 1650 A.D.

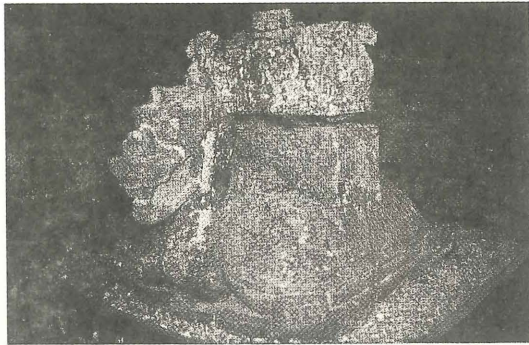


Fig. 5. Hyŏngak's stele base and stele top. Treasure no. 152.  
Dated 979 A.D.

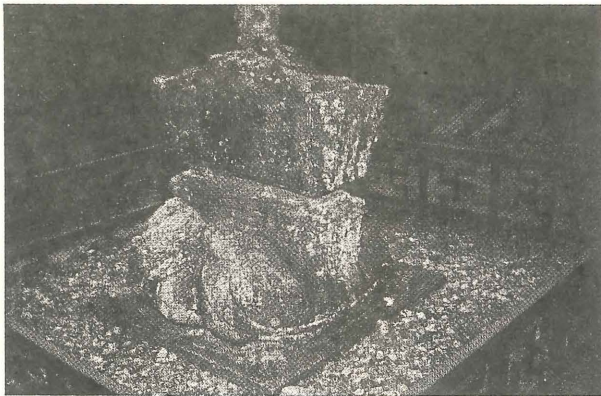


Fig. 6. Smaller stele base w. top belonging to the eastern *stūpa*.  
Treasure no. 153.



Fig. 7. Small *pūdo* carved in a style reminiscent of the earlier *śarīra-stūpas* w. base, round body and round, slanting roof.  
Second half of Chosŏn dynasty.



Fig. 8. Large, canister-shaped *pūdo*.  
Second half of Chosŏn dynasty.