

Article

The *Chikchi* and Its Positions in Fourteenth-Century Korea

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to examine the historical and ideological positions of the *Chikchi*, a Korean Zen text. Originally composed of two fascicles, the book was published with metal type in 1377 and in woodblock print in 1378. The metal type print only remains. In its second fascicle, which is currently preserved in the La Bibliothèque nationale de France, registered in the Memory of the World by the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Memory of the World list. However, the woodblock print remains in two fascicles, including the teachings of Buddhas, recorded sayings, enlightened verses, and transmission records of more than one hundred patriarchs and masters of India, China, and Korea. The role of the *Chikchi* shines more in modern times. As a rare book in Korea and as the oldest extant book printed with metal type in the world, it has a great significance in the world history of printing culture. The *Chikchi* also has originality in terms of soteriology, ideological flexibility, an open interpretation of Buddhist teachings, and an integration with Confucianism, thus suggesting its possible contribution to a better understanding of the characteristics of Korean Buddhism in particular and, by extension, East Asian Buddhism in general.

Keywords: *Chikchi*; Confucianism; Korea; metal type; no-mind/no-thought; position; Zen

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper¹ is to examine the historical and ideological positions of the *Paegun Hwasang Ch'orok Pulcho Chikchi Simch'e Yojŏl* 白雲和抄錄佛祖直指心體要節 (Excerpts from the Essence of Mind Directly Pointed out by the Buddhas and Patriarchs, hereafter, *Chikchi* or *Jikji* 直指),² a Sŏn 禪 (Chan/Zen)³ text of medieval Korea (918–1392),⁴ when Buddhism was the most popular in Korea history.

Originally consisting of two fascicles, first and second, the *Chikchi* was written by Paegun Kyŏngha (白雲 景閑, 1298–1374)⁵ in 1372.⁶ The book was printed in two editions: a metal type

¹ This paper was originally presented at the conference in celebration of the retirement of Professor John B. Duncan at the University of California at Los Angeles on 25 May 2019 (J. Kim 2019). I sincerely thank Mr. Pete Suberlak and Mr. Shant Immanuel Davidian for their proofreading and Professor Pori Park and anonymous reviewers for their comments.

² Regarding the romanization of terms in Korean, mainly two types are being used in academia, and they are the McCune–Reischauer system and the revised system. The former is usually used internationally, while the latter is mainly used within the Republic of Korea or South Korea. While the *Chikchi* is a notation according to the former, the *Jikji* is a notation according to the latter. In this paper, the McCune–Reischauer system is applied.

³ In this paper, the notation of the Zen Buddhist traditions of each country in East Asia follows the native pronunciation of each country. In other words, the Zen tradition of Korea is Sŏn, that of China is Chan, and that of Japan is Zen. However, in the general sense, it is written as Zen, a well-known concept.

⁴ For Buddhism in medieval Korea, see (D.-S. Nam 2003, pp. 30–58).

⁵ Paegun is his pen name, and Kyŏngha is his personal name. Sources of information about the life of Paegun are *Paegun Hwasang Ŏrok* (白雲和語錄 Discourse Records of the Monk Paegun) (HPC [1984] 1990, 6: pp. 637c–68c) and the *Chikchi* (I. Hwang 2004, p. 218).

⁶ According to his “Postface” (Palmun 跋文), he said, “The year was imja (壬子).... Written out by hand at the age of seventy-five” (p. 216) Here, the year of imja corresponds to the year 1372 (H. Yi [1971] 2005, p. 84).

print and a woodblock print. The metal type was published in 1377,⁷ but its first fascicle was lost to history; only its second fascicle remains and is currently preserved in the La Bibliothèque nationale de France (National Library of France), registered in the UNESCO Memory of the World list.⁸ The woodblock print was published in 1378, and both fascicles remain in Korea,⁹ thus allowing us to know its full contents (HPC [1984] 1990, 6, pp. 604–36), which include the teachings of Buddhas in the past, recorded sayings, enlightened verses, and transmission records of more than one hundred patriarchs and masters of India, China, and Korea. In my previous research (J. Kim 2003, pp. 33–65), I examined the *Chikchi*'s Sŏn thought and its significance, and I suggested the need for further research on its historical and ideological positions. This paper is a follow-up to this previous research.

The *Chikchi* is difficult to access because of its simplicity, symbolism, logical leaps, and the novelty of terminology (Sung 2016, p. 2). In addition, although the book consists of two fascicles, there is no noticeable difference in the contents of either fascicle,¹⁰ and the contents of each fascicle are not distinguishable by era. Moreover, the paragraph distinction is also unclear. In this context, academic research on the *Chikchi* itself is limited (C. Yi 2005, p. 54). In addition, studies on it have mainly been conducted from a bibliographical perspective (Choi 2017, p. 1),¹¹ and research on it from a historical or a philosophical point of view has been rare (Y.H. Kim 2012, p. 120).¹²

The *Chikchi* reflected Paegun's ideas, especially in his comments contained in this book. There are few examples of comments attached to Zen texts, but the *Chikchi* includes twenty comments of Paegun on certain Zen words, constituting 1/15 of the total 282 public cases (Ch. gong'an 公案, K. kong'an) in the book (S. Hwang 1997, p. 37).

2. The Historical Position of the *Chikchi*

The *Chikchi*'s historical position shines more in modern times than in the time of Paegun, when he himself kept distance from politics and was disinterested in forming a dharma lineage.

2.1. The *Chikchi* in Human History

The targets of the Zen words, which constitute the main contents of the *Chikchi*, include the Buddha's disciples, the public, merchants, monks, and heretics of India, as well as the poets, the public, officials, emperors, and lay people of China. In particular, in terms of the number of Zen words by nation, China has the overwhelming majority, followed by India. In spite of the role of Korean monks in the development of East Asian Buddhism (Buswell 2005), the *Chikchi* includes only one Korean monk, Sŏn Master Taeryŏng (大嶺, ?-?),¹³ who was reportedly active during the Unified Silla 新羅

⁷ The end of the *Chikchi* indicates that the year when it was published with metal type was the seventh year of Xuanguang (宣光, 1371–1378), which was a reign title of the North Yuan [北元] dynasty (1368–1635) and corresponds to the year 1377. In H. Yi (2005, p. 132), the date of Xuanguang was misrecorded as 1369–1377.

⁸ As of 2020, the Republic of Korea has the largest number of UNESCO Memories of the World in all Asia, with the number reaching sixteen; refer to <http://english.cha.go.kr> (accessed 28 January 2020). For an introduction to the *Chikchi*, its different editions, source data, translations into Korean, and history of research, see (J. Kim 2003, pp. 34–37).

⁹ There are three types of woodblock prints known to date. Each of them is preserved in the Changsŏgak (藏書閣) Archives of the Academy of Korean Studies [韓國學中央研究院], National Library of Korea, and Pulgap Monastery (佛甲寺). Among these, the Changsŏgak edition has the most complete form of the original woodblock print being passed on, and the other two are in a state of no preface (Ok 2012, pp. 10–11).

¹⁰ On the core contents of the *Chikchi* in two fascicles, refer to (J. Kim 2003, pp. 40–44); on the *Chikchi*'s system and core contents, see (C. Chŏng 2005, p. 124).

¹¹ There are 23 articles on the *Chikchi* in the *Sŏjihak Yŏn'gu* (Journal of the Institute of Korea Bibliography) published from 1986 to 2017, and these focus on research on the *Chikchi* from a cultural perspective and metal type casting methods (Kim and Hwang 2017, pp. 92–93). For bibliographical research on the *Chikchi*, see (Chen 2000, pp. 23–45).

¹² Research on the philosophical features of the *Chikchi* includes that of S.-S. Kim (2013, 2016) and Sung (2008, 2015, 2016). However, they do not seem to have done sufficient analysis of the Sŏn thought itself of the *Chikchi*. In addition, research on the Buddhist history of the late Koryŏ (高麗, 918–1392) dynasty lacks a systematic understanding of Buddhist doctrines (Ch'ae 1991, p. 228). In this context, the article by J. Kim (2003) is considered to be the first article that examined the philosophical characteristics of the *Chikchi*.

¹³ His identity is unknown. For example, Chŏn 1996 is a representative encyclopedia of Buddhism in Korea, but it does not mention him.

(676–935) period (HPC [1984] 1990, 6: 626b4–8). In other words, the *Chikchi* has fewer records of Korean monks compared to the same kind of Zen texts compiled earlier in China and Korea such as *Jingde Zhuandeng Lu* (景德傳燈錄 Records on the Transmission of the Lamp during the Jingde Era, hereafter, Records, 1004) and *Sōnmun Yōmsong Chip* (禪門拈頌集 Collection of the Sōn School's Enlightened Verses, hereafter, Collection, 1226).¹⁴ Moreover, the *Chikchi* does not even mention Wōnhyo (元曉, 617–686), the most seminal thinker in the history of Korean Buddhism and the author of the *Kūmgang Sammae Kyōng Non* (金剛三昧經論, *Treatise of the Adamantine Absorption Scripture*),¹⁵ the second oldest work of the Sinitic Chan tradition, and Chinul (知訥, 1158–1210), the philosophical founder of Korean Sōn Buddhism.¹⁶

Metal letterpress printing is arguably one of the best human achievements over the past 1000 years (Friedman 1998, p. 166), and the reason for this is its role in the spread and dissemination of knowledge. The metal type print of Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1398–1468), a German who is regarded as the ‘inventor’ of the metal type printing technology in the West,¹⁷ is said to have become a signal of the development of European civilization and industrialization and to have had tremendous influence on the births of the religious revolution, the civil revolution, university, and democracy. While the *Chikchi* was not published in large quantities and was used only as a textbook, primarily for the education of Sōn monks (S. Kim 2000, pp. 3–4), it has a significant value, in particular, in modern times.

2.2. Textual Distinctiveness of the *Chikchi*

The *Chikchi* was not a political product, but it was an educational textbook. It was not intended for the transmission of Paegun's dharma lineage either. The Sōn text also presented a distinctive soteriology different from the mainstream salvific theory of the time. As the oldest extant book printed with metal type in the world, the *Chikchi*'s role shines in modern times.

In the second half of the thirteenth century in Korea, Confucian intellectuals participated in the Buddhist community organized by Ch'ōnch'aek (天, 1206–?), National Master Chinjōng (靜) (J. Kim 2006, pp. 359–88).¹⁸ Many Koryō literati were still in favor of Buddhism in Paegun's time. At that time, Buddhism was also fully integrated into Koryō literati's political, social, and religious life. Buddhism was thus deeply rooted in everyday literati life in the late Koryō period (Duncan 2000, p. 252). In that context, the Buddhist community promoted Chan teachings by importing a new practice method from China.

However, in the late Koryō dynasty, it was difficult for Korean monks to come into direct contact with the Chinese Buddhist community. Under these circumstances, the Sōn monks of Koryō collected the enlightened verses (Skt. *gāthās*) of eminent Chan patriarchs and masters or excerpted them from Chan texts. Paegun's *Chikchi* was also a product of that intellectual context (S. Kim 2000, pp. 5–7), and it was a supplement to the *Fozu Zhizhi Xinti Yaojie* (Excerpts from the *Essence of Mind Pointed at by Buddhas and Patriarchs*) that he received from his Chinese master, Shiwu Qinggong (石屋珙, 1270–1352). In addition, *Kanhua Chan* (K. *Kanhwa Sōn* 看話禪, Keyword Meditation)¹⁹ was popular in Korea at

¹⁴ The *Records* include thirty-nine public cases related to Korean monks (Chen 2000, p. 6) and the *Collection* includes twenty-three public cases relevant to Korean Buddhism out of 1125 public cases. For its new version, see (Jorgensen 2006, p. 17) and for the digitization of the *Collection*, see (P. Kim 2000, pp. 69–83).

¹⁵ For an examination of the broad implications of the *Adamantine Absorption Scripture* for the development of East Asian Buddhism, see (Buswell 1989). For an English translation of the complete texts of the *Treatise of the Adamantine Absorption Scripture*, refer to (Buswell 2007).

¹⁶ For the collected works of Chinul and his Sōn thought in them, see (Buswell 1983).

¹⁷ Regarding this, Niōl Pōgōsūn (Niall Ferguson, p. 157) says, “Printing technology existed in China much earlier than the 15th century, but no printmaker in China could do the same thing as Johannes Gutenberg,” though he does not mention Korea as the inventor of metal type. For Korea's possible contribution to the metal type printing technology in Europe, see (J. Kim 2018, pp. 147–88).

¹⁸ For his life and thought (see Heo 1995).

¹⁹ *Kanhua Chan* is a method of meditative practice that began with Wuzu Fayān (五祖法演, 1024–1104), passed through Yuanwu Keqin (圓悟克勤, 1063–1135), and completed by Dahui Zhonggao (大慧宗杲, 1089–1163). In this paper, *Kanhua Chan*, *Gong'an Chan* (公案禪, *Meditation of Public Cases*), *Huatou Chan* (話頭禪, *Keyword Meditation*), and *Zushi Chan* (祖

that time. Paegun, T'aego Pou (太古普愚, 1301–1382), who was National Master Wŏnjŭng, and Naong Hyegŭn (懶翁惠勤, 1320–1376), who was Royal Master, were the three key figures who made Keyword Meditation the major practice of the time; it is still a major Buddhist practice in contemporary Korea.

The *Chikchi* has novelty in that it was not a political product, making it unlike Chinese *Chan* texts. Sponsored by the political community, the Chan school of China was able to occupy the central position among various Buddhist schools of the Tang (唐, 618–907) dynasty, and it became the mainstream of Chinese Buddhism in the early Song (宋, 960–1279). The literati of the Song respected Chan monks, exchanged with them, and participated in the compilation of the recorded sayings or transmission records.

Paegun lived during the time when academia was not separated from politics, and the ups and downs of customs, including Buddhism, depended on the wishes of the despotic monarch (J. Kim 2013, p. 4). In addition, the Buddhist community after the mid-Koryŏ period was in a common interest with the ruling class as an owner of large land. The upper echelon of monks usually came from the ruling class of the time (H. Kim 1992, pp. 1–2). This trend continued during the time of Paegun. The frequent replacement of the National Master and the Royal Master was related to the political reality of his time. In particular, T'aego's background itself was close to the political world. As the author of *Samguk Yusa* (三國遺事, *Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*), a treasure house of Korean Buddhist culture, Iryŏn (一然, 1206–1289) was Kukchon (國尊, National Venerable)²⁰, who was affiliated with the Mt. Kaji (迦智山) school of Korean Sŏn Buddhism. The Mt. Kaji school grew rapidly as a pivotal religious force after the thirteenth century in Korea, and T'aego was also from the same school (Ch'ae 1991, p. 231).

In contrast, Paegun²¹ was not relatively close to politics. Paegun participated in the *Kongbusŏn* (功夫選), the monastic service examination, as an examiner, during the reign of King Kongmin (恭愍王, 1351–1374), and in his later life, he also maintained a certain relationship with the royal family as an abbot of monasteries sponsored by the queen (I. Hwang 2004, p. 216). However, Paegun's relations with the political world were at the recommendation of others, and the period was short. In addition, he went so far as to refuse an invitation as a temple head from King Kongmin in 1357 (Y.H. Kim 2012, p. 235). Paegun did not come to the front of the Buddhist community of his time, and his dharma lineage was not continued by his disciples (I. Hwang 2004, p. 215).²² Instead, Paegun devoted himself to spiritual cultivation as a Sŏn monk throughout his life. In that context, he composed the *Chikchi* at the request of his disciples, and the Sŏn text was an educational product for them.

The *Chikchi* is also said to be a history book to transmit the lamp of Chan teachings, and its compilation aimed at the succession of the dharma lineage (Pak 1999, p. 243). However, unlike the Chan monks of China, Paegun did not compile the *Chikchi* to emphasize his dharma lineage.²³ While

師禪, Patriarchal Meditation) are used as synonyms—as are the Korean versions of these respective terms: *Kanhwa* Sŏn, *Kong'an* Sŏn, *Hwadu* Sŏn, and *Chosa* Sŏn. Keyword Meditation emerged against the quietism of the *Mozhao* Chan (默照禪 Meditation of Silent Illumination), which emphasized the serenity of mind. However, over time, Keyword Meditation was abused or even altered into an imitation of smacking or shouting in later years, which led to interest in No-Mind Meditation as another viable method of Chan practice. The Chinese Keyword Meditation was imported into Korea by Chinul (知訥, 1158–1210), and developed by the three masters, Paegun, T'aego, and Naong, in the fourteenth century, and it has become the mainstream practice of Korean Buddhism (Choi 2017, pp. 7–15).

²⁰ This position was another name for the National Master during the Mongol rule.

²¹ T'aego, Naong, and Paegun went to Yuan China and accepted the dharma lineage of Linji 臨濟 (?–867) (Y.H. Kim 2012, p. 233). After returning to Korea, they were active as the three eminent monks who were affiliated with the Chogyŏ 曹溪 Order at the end of Koryŏ. As the founder of the Imje 臨濟 lineage, the Korean version of the Linji school, T'aego became the National Master, and Naong became the Royal Master and revived the Sŏn tradition of the Chogyŏ Order. Huineng is regarded as the original ancestor of the Chogyŏ Buddhist Order in contemporary Korea (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 192), and the Korean version of the Chinese Keyword Meditation is called *Kanhwa* Sŏn and constitutes the main practical method of the Chogyŏ Buddhist Order of Korea, the mainstream of modern Korean Buddhism (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 186).

²² At that time, it was a custom that an epitaph in honor of an eminent monk was established by his disciples. However, an epitaph in honor of Paegun was not set up by his disciples (I. Hwang 2004, p. 215).

²³ For research on the thought and dharma lineage of Paegun, see (Y.H. Kim 2012, p. 234), footnote 6. For the ideological lineage of Chinese Chan Buddhism from Bodhidharma to Shiwu Qinggung, see (Choi 2017, pp. 7–8).

taking an open attitude to Buddhist teachings, he also avoided sectarianism (Sin 2006, p. 4). Paegun's keeping distance from politics and disinterest in forming his lineage made his *Chikchi* shine more in modern times than in his time.

Its historical position is highly evaluated in Korea and abroad in modern times. The existing Sŏn texts from the Koryŏ period consist of only 45 different editions, and they have an absolute value even in quality (Shiina Kōyū 1984, p. 237). The *Chikchi* is one of them. It is still used as a textbook in the independent course (suŭi *kwa* 隨意科), which corresponds to a graduate course, in contemporary Korean monasteries (Sin 2006, p. 6).²⁴ Overseas, it is now regarded as the oldest extant book that was printed with metal type in the world, and it has value in the world history of printing culture.

In short, the *Chikchi* was neither a political product nor aimed at forming its author's dharma lineage. This Sŏn text has a great bibliographical significance in the modern world as one of the rare books of Korea and as a memory of the world.

3. The Ideological Position of the *Chikchi*

The thought of the *Chikchi* can be explored through its text and Paegun's comments on it. Therefore, for an examination of its ideological position, the core ideas of the *Chikchi* and Paegun's comments on some Zen words by Buddhas, patriarchs, and masters are examined.²⁵

3.1. The Core Ideas of the *Chikchi*

The core ideas of the *Chikchi* are no-mind,²⁶ motivations for enlightenment, non-duality, no discriminative thinking, a prospective interpretation of Buddhist precepts, an emphasis on *yŏmbul* (念佛) or the recollection of the Buddha's name with one's heart.

While the contents of the *Chikchi*'s first fascicle are composed of the teachings of Buddhas in the past²⁷ and the recorded sayings of Indian and Chinese patriarchs, those of its second fascicle mainly consist of the sayings of Chinese patriarchs who flourished until the thirteenth century, followed by an epilogue at the end. The key ideas in the first fascicle are impermanence, emptiness, non-duality, Buddha-nature, ordinary mind, and a lack of attachment to words and letters. In particular, special emphasis is placed on the emptiness of existence and a lack of attachment to words and letters. The central themes of the second fascicle include occasions for enlightenment, salvific methods, a lack of attachment to words and letters, no discriminative thought, the significance of daily activities, the emptiness of existence, the unity of meditation and doctrine, all being's possession of Buddha-nature, sudden enlightenment, Patriarchal Meditation, the duration for attaining enlightenment, an open posture to precepts, the emphasis on the recollection of the Buddha's name with one's own heart, and the maintenance of enlightened mind. What are especially emphasized among these are the motivations for enlightenment, salvific methods, and no discriminative thought to realize the emptiness of existence.

The central concept of the *Chikchi* is *chikchi simch'e* (直指心體), which means directly pointing at the essence of human mind. In the *Chikchi*, it is also expressed as *munyŏm* (Ch. *wunian* 無念, no thought) or *musim* (Ch. *wuxin* 無心, no-mind),²⁸ meaning the grasp of non-duality and the abolition

²⁴ For the Zen monastic experience and Buddhist practice in contemporary Korea, see (Buswell 1992). In particular, for seminary study, see pp. 95–102.

²⁵ My discussion of the core ideas of the *Chikchi* and Paegun's comments on some Zen words are based on (J. Kim 2003, pp. 33–65) and (Reverend Baegun (1299–1375)), respectively.

²⁶ It is important to recognize that no-thought or no-mind does not mean a blank mind that is contrary to a substantial entity; instead it refers to true mind (P. Kim 2000, p. 54), which means "no-mind," "a mind without a discriminative thought of existence," or "free from cares," "There is nothing called a heart" and "no anxieties" according to the context of praises (S.-S. Kim 2012, p. 119).

²⁷ For the theme of the Buddhist verses by the past seven Buddhas, see (S.-S. Kim 2012, p. 135).

²⁸ The notions of no-thought and no-mind have almost the same meaning, but the former has come before the latter. The concept of *wunian* (K. *munyŏm*) in the *Chikchi* was first used by Huineng (慧能, 638–713) in the latter period of the seventh century (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 194), and the notion of no-mind was emphasized by Nanyang Huizhong (南陽慧忠, ?–775) in the

of discriminative thought. There is an opinion that the thought of no-mind was unique to Paegun (Han 1992, p. 499). However, this is hardly the case. The idea of no-mind in the *Chikchi* was based on the Chan thought of Bodhidharma (fl. 6th c.), which originated in Huineng's thought and was completed by Nanyang Huizhong (南陽慧忠, 675–775), who also first used the concept of no-mind (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 198); it was further succeeded by Mazu Daoyi (馬祖道一, 709–788) and by Shiwu, the Chinese master of Paegun (S.-S. Kim 2014, pp. 83–119; Choi 2017, p. 18). In particular, the recorded sayings of Shiwu hardly mention Keyword Meditation and emphasize no-thought. Paegun's thought of no-mind was directly transmitted from Shiwu (Sin 2006, p. 6; Choi 2017, pp. 12–13), and it constitutes the most important part of the *Chikchi* (H. Kim 2011, p. 165). The thought of no-mind that Paegun emphasized in his *Chikchi* was quite different from Keyword Meditation. Paegun argued that attachment to words and letters was a disease, but the obsession with Keyword Meditation was no less than that, and true study was to maintain the state of no-mind. In addition, other topics that are emphasized in the *Chikchi* appear to be a means for the embodiment of this no-mind.

Though T'aego devoted himself to the spiritual cultivation through Keyword Meditation, Paegun stressed the importance of no-mind (P. Chŏng 1977, pp. 273–81; P. Kim 2000, pp. 46–51). This ideological feature of Paegun is also found in the work of his other master, the Indian monk Dhyānabhadra, better known as Zhikong 指空 or Tidibota 提納薄他, who reached Koryŏ in 1326 and stayed there for two and a half years. Zhikong placed the core of meditation at *wuxing* (K. *muhaeng* 無行, no action) and emphasized no-mind, which was quite different from Keyword Meditation (Heo 1997, pp. 101–4),²⁹ thus showing that Paegun was ideologically influenced by Zhikong (Heo 1996, p. 51).

The system of Sŏn thought in the *Chikchi* appears as follows: A practitioner must first attain sudden enlightenment, which means the theoretical understanding of the nature of existence, and then through the practice of no-mind he can realize perfect enlightenment, implying that the Sŏn thought of the *Chikchi* is basically built upon Chinul's (知訥, 1158–1210) theory of sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation,³⁰ showing that Chinul's soteriology was still influential at the end of the Koryŏ dynasty (P. Kim 2000, pp. 31–33).

Though the *Chikchi* emphasizes the concept of no-mind, the greatest part of its contents is the motivations for enlightenment. This means that through emphasis on these occasions Paegun attempted to convince his readers, which consisted of his disciples and lay Buddhist followers,³¹ that they could attain enlightenment. Paegun thought that a practitioner could become an ideal figure by realizing the impermanence of existence and its emptiness and non-duality through no-mind. However, he warned practitioners not to stick to the keyword or public cases. Though Paegun followed the tradition of the Linji (臨濟) school, he was not bound to Keyword Meditation as his viable method of practice. The purpose of the keyword method was to get people out of their discriminative thought. However, contrary to its purpose, the soteriological method was becoming an object of attachment during the time of Paegun. Therefore, Paegun tried to correct that reality (P. Kim 2000, p. 58) and proposed No-Mind Meditation as an alternative soteriology.

What Paegun emphasized most was no-mind and he made it clear that his salvific thought was not a method for entering the Buddhist paradise. However, he did not just claim his No-Mind Meditation and encourage practitioners to find the most appropriate way to develop their spiritual

mid-eighth century (Choi 2017, p. 15). In addition, No-Mind Meditation was completed over five generations from Huineng to Huangbo Xiyun (黃檗希運, d. 850) before the founding of the Linji 臨濟 school (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 184; Choi 2017, p. 15).

²⁹ For Zhikong's no action, see (P. Yi 1996, pp. 33–35).

³⁰ Sudden enlightenment here refers to conviction that anyone can be a Buddha, which is an intellectual understanding, and gradual cultivation means to make a steady effort to achieve this goal based on that conviction. According to this soteriology, a practitioner should first intellectually understand that according to the teachings of the Buddha and patriarchs, he can become a Buddha; however, since it takes time for understanding to become an action, he must gradually cultivate himself until he achieves the ultimate goal of enlightenment through salvific ways such as the practice of meditation. For in-depth studies of this soteriology, see (Buswell 1983, 1991; Keel 1984; Shim 1999).

³¹ At the end of the *Chikchi* (HPC [1984] 1990, 6: 636b17–23), there are the names of the sponsors, who are Paegun's disciples and lay Buddhist followers.

faculties (Choi 2017, p. 16). Paegun accepted Keyword Meditation, and he regarded it as a means for attaining enlightenment. Therefore, he also embraced other soteriological methods such as the unity of meditation and doctrine, and he maintained an open attitude to Buddhist precepts. The people of Koryŏ, hoping for a happy future, were intent on accumulating Buddhist merit. The Buddhist clergy flourished and was regarded as a “field of blessings” (*pokchŏn* 福田) in which seeds of well-being can be harvested. In that context, the verbal recollection of the Buddha’s name was very popular as a means of achieving that goal, and people devoted themselves to the practice. However, Paegun rejected the verbal recitation and emphasized the recitation with heart.

In short, Paegun’s system of thought in the *Chikchi* appears to be the theory of sudden enlightenment and gradual cultivation. While representing the examples that previous patriarchs and masters triggered enlightenment and advocating No-Mind Meditation, his soteriology had flexibility, accepting Keyword Meditation as a viable way to enlightenment. He also allowed for other soteriological methods such as the unity of meditation and doctrine, newly interpreting Buddhist precepts and emphasizing the recollection of the Buddha’s name with heart.

3.2. Paegun’s Comments in the *Chikchi*³²

In the *Chikchi*, Paegun made his comments on some Zen words by Buddhas, Patriarchs, and masters in three parts. In Part One, Paegun commented on the words of the four Buddhas of the seven past Buddhas, emphasizing empty mind and existence, the integration of mind and body, no-thought, and the Buddha’s teachings. In Part Two, Paegun commented on the words of only two patriarchs of the twenty-seven Indian Patriarchs³³: Kāśyapa and Ānanda. Here, Paegun emphasized the importance of reality and singles out Kāśyapa as the First Patriarch of the Chinese *Chan* school. In Part Three, Paegun commented on the words of 139 Chinese Chan Patriarchs and masters, stressing emptiness, Buddha-nature, sudden enlightenment, Patriarchal Chan, no-thought, and the unity of doctrine and meditation.

Therefore, the first part focuses on the essence of the Buddha’s teaching, the second part emphasizes Patriarchal Chan as a viable way of salvation based on the essential teachings of the Buddha, and the third part stresses the attainment of sudden enlightenment followed by complete enlightenment, i.e., the realization of Buddha-nature through the unity of doctrine and meditation and Patriarchal Chan. Paegun also warns against hubris, and emphasizes occasions for enlightenment, no particular way to attain enlightenment, no dependence on words and letters, courage, and openness to thoughts, body, and the country.

In sum, the core ideas of the *Chikchi* through its text, Paegun’s comments in it, and his “Postface” are summarized as follows: While advocating the possibility of enlightenment for all through the practice of No-Mind Meditation, Paegun’s soteriology emphasized the true mind and has flexibility, but it is not obsessed with Keyword Meditation, the mainstream soteriology of his time.

3.3. The Ideological Characteristics of the *Chikchi*

The *Chikchi* is characterized by its ideological originality. Most of the Buddhist canonical texts mentioned in the *Chikchi*, which included the *Huayan Jing* (華嚴經 *Flower Garland Scripture*), were those emphasized in the Mahāyāna Buddhist community, but early Buddhist texts were not referred to, which historically led Koreans to focus more on the Sinicized form of Buddhism.³⁴ No one can be

³² English translations of this part are from Reverend Baegun ((Reverend Baegun 1299~1375, pp. 22–209)).

³³ For the theme of the recorded sayings by some of Indian patriarchs, see (S.-S. Kim 2012, p. 138)

³⁴ Choi did not define the notion of early Buddhism in his article. In this paper, its definition was in accordance with (J. Kim 2006, p. 71, no. 1), in which it referred to the Buddhism up to 100 years after the death of the Buddha and before the birth of Abhidharma Buddhism. The tradition of lack of knowledge of early Buddhism has continued to the present (J. Kim 2006, pp. 71–105), but in particular, with a paper (J. Kim 2001b, pp. 485–518) in mind, it seems to be in the midst of some changes; refer to “Isibil Segi Sūnim Tūrūn Irŏk’e Kongbu Handa (Haeinsa Sūngga Taehak)” (Monks in the

free from the context in which he lived, and in this respect Paegun was no exception. In particular, Paegun's No-Mind Meditation is said to be the most clear succession of the essence of the meditative practice of Bodhidharma,³⁵ Huineng, and Linji (Y.H. Kim 2012, p. 143). In particular, the ideological originality of the *Chikchi* is found in its emphasis on no-thought, ideological flexibility, an egalitarian attitude to Buddhist precepts, and integration with Confucianism.

3.3.1. Emphasis on No-Mind

When Paegun went to China in the fourteenth century, the Linji School took Keyword Meditation as a new practice and that tradition was transmitted into Korea, becoming the mainstream Buddhist practice of the time of Paegun. However, the teaching of Linji was characterized by shouting (Ch. *he* 喝, K. *hal*), and Keyword Meditation was criticized because of its literalism. Emphasizing No-Mind Meditation, Paegun did not mention Linji and his Chan words in the *Chikchi*, illustrating that the Sŏn thought of the *Chikchi* was distinct from the then major practice. Regarding this, Paegun said, "Many practitioners cannot give up a fishbowl [skill-in-means] attached to discriminative thought." (HPC [1984] 1990, 6, 651b5); "If a practitioner is not attached to both mind and [outer] object, he can calm himself. If he does not attach to the object, his mind becomes calm. This is called the true teaching of no-mind." (HPC [1984] 1990, 6, 663a13-14); "You monks, please follow what I say. If you are in the state of no-mind not attached to mind and body all day,..... you will be able to succeed anywhere." (HPC [1984] 1990, 6, 650c22-24).

3.3.2. Ideological Flexibility

One of the ideological features of the *Chikchi* is its ideological flexibility. While accepting Keyword Meditation as a viable way to attaining enlightenment, Paegun did not stick to it alone and allowed for other appropriate practices for people with various spiritual faculty. He said, "Patriarchs used skillful means to teach people..... they spoke their own teachings directly, or they often used clever tricks or they said, 'Mind is the Buddha,' or they said, 'Neither mind nor the Buddha.'" (HPC [1984] 1990, 6, 641c6-9). In addition, unlike Shenhui (神會, 684–753), who stressed the knowledge of the empty mind, Paegun's No-Mind Meditation did not presuppose knowledge, instead emphasizing the idea of being free of all outer objects (Y.H. Kim 2012, p. 236).

Unlike his contemporaries, who basically disregarded doctrinal teaching in favor of meditative practice, Paegun insisted on a combination of meditative practice and doctrinal study. Zen Buddhism considers language to be an important factor that causes egotism. Therefore, language is denied in Zen Buddhism to get rid of egotism. However, Paegun thought that the method of practice of his day to stress only the keyword was a hindrance to enlightenment and, instead, emphasized the unity of mediation and doctrine (Sin 2006, p. 8). While T'aego took the position of abandoning doctrine and entering meditation by putting meditation over doctrine, Paegun maintained the unity of the two from the standpoint that meditation and doctrine are basically not different, that is, while meditation is the Buddha's mind, doctrine is His words. In this way, he is more like Ŭich'ŏn and Chinul.

Through the *Chikchi*, Paegun showed flexibility in his interpretation of Buddhist precepts. Wine and meat were forbidden in traditional Korean Buddhism. However, Paegun allowed them if they were used in ancestor worship, stressing that what was important was the true mind. In the same context, he allowed for the eating of banned pungent roots.³⁶ These attitudes of Paegun were quite

Twenty-First Century Study Like This [The Monastic College at Haein Monastery] 2020), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDnmhdekPZ4> (broadcast 16 April 2019).

³⁵ There is no exact record of the biographies of Bodhidharma, but the important thing is that Chinese Chan masters in later years admitted them as facts (Atsusi 2005, pp. 36–37).

³⁶ They are garlic, three kind of onions, and leeks; if eaten raw, they are said to cause irritability of temper, and if eaten cooked, to act as an aphrodisiac; moreover, the breath of the eater, if reading the sūtras, will drive away the good spirits (Soothill and Hodous [1962] 1990, p. 128a).

different from those of the Buddhist tradition of the time. In addition, Paegun's ethical view was also different from Zhikong's, who argued that people should not use meat and instead only use vegetables in ancestral rituals (J. Kim 2003, p. 47). Zhikong's ethics not only spread widely across all layers of Koryŏ but also greatly influenced government officials (Heo 1997, pp. 98–101). However, Paegun's ethics did not conform to Zhikong's, and he emphasized the true mind, rejecting the perfunctory observance of precepts.

The *Chikchi*'s open attitude toward Buddhist teachings is one of its ideological traits. It appears through its non-sectarianism and a prospective interpretation of Buddhist teachings. While T'aego and Naong took Keyword Meditation as the principal soteriology, Paegun took a more open stance than the other two and accepted a variety of soteriologies (Sin 2006, p. 6; S.-S. Kim 2012, p. 121).

Huangbo Xiyun was the Tenth Patriarch of Chinese Chan Buddhism. His core idea was that the mind is a Buddha. He criticized the existing Buddhism centered on sitting in meditation, and emphasized the attainment of enlightenment in everyday life. He also presented a concrete method to reach the stage of no-mind in the early ninth century and completed the practice of No-Mind Meditation (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 210; 2016, p. 35). Paegun cited Huangbo fifteen times in his *Chikchi*,³⁷ which is the largest number of Chan words in the first fascicle of the *Chikchi* (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 209), suggesting that Paegun's primary concern was with the notion of no-mind.

In addition, in the *Chikchi*, the public cases of monks who were affiliated with the Fayen (法眼) school were greatest in number. The Fayen school was one of the Chinese Chan schools that opposed the "special transmission of Buddhism distinct from the teachings" [外別傳] and emphasized the unity of meditation practice and doctrinal study. These ideas in the Fayen school are well reflected in the *Chikchi*. However, in general, the *Chikchi* escaped sectarianism by evenly recording the teachings of various Chan lineages (Kang 2004, p. 89).

The ideological underpinnings behind major Buddhist rituals in medieval Korea were not Buddhist doctrines; instead, they were the traditional Chinese philosophical systems of thought such as geomancy (J. Kim 2001a, pp. 206–72). However, the *Chikchi*'s open attitude toward Buddhist precepts conforms to the teachings of early Buddhism. The early Buddhist monks begged for food and were to eat as given, some of which included meat. The tradition of vegetarianism also existed in India. Brahmins lived a vegetarian life in the age of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which occurred around the first century B.C.E., and Buddhist canonical texts such as the *Great Sūtra of Perfect Liberation* around 400 C.E. included records on vegetarianism (Lambert Schumithausen 2002, p. 37, recited from C. Yi 2003, p. 243). However, vegetarianism in East Asia's Buddhist tradition was initiated by Emperor Wu (武, 502–549) of Liang (梁, 502–557) China through his *Duan Jiu Rou Wen* (斷酒肉文, *A Decree Prohibiting Alcohol and Meat*), which is considered to have been written between 519 and 523, and whose focus was on a ban on meat. This decree was the product of the strong will of the emperor who attempted to control the Buddhist community (So 2009, pp. 138–43). However, the key to keeping the precepts is not in its form but in one's true mind. In this regard, the *Chikchi*'s open interpretation of the precepts matches well with early Buddhist teachings, which were practical in orientation.

Unlike the practice of his time, which focused on the verbal recitation of the Buddha's name, in the *Chikchi*, Paegun emphasized the recitation of the Buddha's name not with one's mouth but with the heart, resonating with conventional Zen approach. Paegun also maintained that the recollection of the Buddha's name was not intended to be reborn into the western pure land, as it was instead for the purpose of enlightening one's mind. In this context, Paegun argued that the recollection of the Buddha's name was a means of practicing no-mind. This tradition was continued by Hyujŏng (休靜, 1520–1604)³⁸ and later Sŏn proponents.

³⁷ In comparison, the book contains ten Huineng's words (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 193), three Shenhui's words (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 195), nine Huizhong's words, five Mazu's words, and five Panshan Baoji (盤山寶積, 720–814)'s words (S.-S. Kim 2013, p. 206).

³⁸ He is better known in Korea as Sŏsan Taesa (西山大師, Great Master of Mt. Sŏ [Myohyang 妙香]) and the grandfather of modern Korean Buddhism (J. Kim 1995, p. 420; 2017, p. 9).

3.3.3. Integration with Confucianism

Confucian influence is seen in the *Chikchi*. Holding memorial services for deceased ancestors, an important expression of filial piety, is a typical Confucian custom, and this custom is mentioned in the text. The *Xiao Jing* (孝經, *Book of Filial Piety*) is a basic text on filial piety, one of the Confucian virtues. The *Chikchi* mentions this Confucian text and emphasizes true filial piety: “*The Book of Filial Piety* says, ‘Even though a child makes three sacrifices [gives meat to his parents] three times a day, it is not filial piety’ If he wants to repay his parents’ endless grace, nothing is better than the merit-making of leaving behind his home.” (HPC [1984] 1990, 6, 635a10–11). However, the *Chikchi* was probably influenced not by the newly imported Neo-Confucianism as a philosophy but by traditional Confucianism as a moral teaching. This is because the interaction between Buddhism and Confucianism had been routine until the time of Paegun, and Neo-Confucianism did not yet begin to take root in Korea until the following century.³⁹

In fact, it is difficult to achieve desirable results in the study of Korean Buddhism in history without paying due attention to the role of Confucianism. The eminent monks of each era in Korean history such as Wŏnhyo, Chinul,⁴⁰ Hyujŏng, and Sŏngch’ŏl (性徹, 1912–1993) all studied Buddhism and Confucianism together. In addition, all kings of Koryŏ never missed Buddhist memorial rituals for their ancestors, which were the most important symbol of expressing their filial piety (J. Kim 2013, pp. 71–204). Nevertheless, Korean Buddhist scholars have rarely studied Buddhism’s relationship with Confucianism, and Confucian scholarship and the international academic community are the same. Therefore, in-depth research on the interaction between Buddhism and Confucianism in Korean history will be of great help to better understand the characteristics of Korean Buddhism in particular and, by extension, East Asian Buddhism in general.

In short, the *Chikchi*’s ideological features are: the system of sudden enlightenment and gradual cultivation, emphasis on no-mind, ideological flexibility, open postures to Buddhist precepts, an emphasis on the recollection of the Buddha’s names with one’s heart, overcoming Buddhist sectarianism, and the acceptance of religious pluralism.

4. Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to examine the historical and ideological positions of the *Chikchi*. Paegun’s distancing himself from political circles and his disinterest in forming a dharma lineage made the *Chikchi*’s historical and ideological positions less known in his time. Unlike other books of the same kind in China, the *Chikchi* was not a political product but an educational textbook. In particular, its role shines more in modern times. As a rare book in Korea and as the oldest extant book printed with metal type in the world, it has a great significance in the world history of printing culture. The *Chikchi* also has originality in terms of soteriology, ideological flexibility, an open interpretation of Buddhist teachings, and an integration with Confucianism. In addition, the ideological features of the *Chikchi* have many implications for the Buddhist academic circles in modern times. The book is still used as a graduate textbook in contemporary Korean monasteries. Moreover, the fact that Paegun served as a ritual organizer⁴¹ raises the need for a wider view of modern Zen Buddhist studies. The influence of Confucianism reflected in the *Chikchi* also suggests the need for in-depth research on the interaction

³⁹ An Hyang (安, 1243–1306) is considered the first Neo-Confucian scholar in Korea. During the time of Paegun Koryŏ, society was entering a transition period between Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism. Scholar-officials such as Chŏng Tojŏn (鄭道傳, 1342–1398) criticized Buddhism on both philosophical and ethical grounds (Duncan 2000, p. 251). However, the influence of Neo-Confucianism on Paegun is uncertain. In fact, the systematization of Neo-Confucianism in Korea was established in the sixteenth century.

⁴⁰ There is no direct textual evidence that Chinul studied Confucianism. However, the facts that his father was a Confucian scholar and his chief disciple Hyesim (慧諶, 1178–1234), who was National Master Chin’gak (覺), passed the Confucian civil service examination before his becoming a monk, suggest Chinul’s affiliation with Confucianism.

⁴¹ As for the discussion of Chan and Zen Buddhism as a ritual, see (Heine and Wright 2007). For a Korean case, refer to (J. Kim 2017, pp. 7–34).

between Buddhism and Confucianism for a better understanding of the characteristics of Korean Buddhism in particular and, by extension, East Asian Buddhism in general.

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