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## Humanizing the Study of Late Ming Buddhism

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### Abstract

This article contributes to the historiography of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Chinese Buddhist traditions through a detailed examination of Shi Shengyan's 1987 publication, *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* 明末佛教研究. Given its breadth and depth, this reference work is unsurpassed in its introduction to late Ming (1600-1644) Chan, Pure Land, and Yogācāra monks and their exegesis, as well as lay Buddhist networks. This article first reviews other biographical collections relevant to late Ming Buddhism and then proceeds to evaluate Shengyan's work, while offering many suggestions for future research. Research on late Ming Buddhism is also discussed in relation to primarily English-language scholarship on late Ming Buddhist topics from the 1980s to the present. Shengyan's *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* is still a must-read for anyone pursuing scholarly work on late Ming Buddhist monks, Chan, Pure Land, Yogācāra, and Tiantai exegesis; and lay Buddhist networks.

### Keywords:

Late Ming Buddhism, Historiography of Late Ming Buddhism, Shi Shengyan, Late Ming Yogacara, Lay Buddhist Circles

## 明末佛教研究的人性化

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### 摘要

本文通過詳細探究釋聖嚴在 1987 年所出版的《明末佛教研究》，來看學術界對十六、十七世紀時期中國佛教史的學術史發展脈絡。釋聖嚴此書在討論晚明時期禪、淨土、唯識僧人群體及其佛學研究與在家居士團體方面功績很大，尚未被後代學者超越。本文首先評論其它跟這一時代有關的佛教傳記合集，然後詳細評價聖嚴此書，同時提出未來可以思考和研究的新課題。本文也會在一個更大的學術史背景下再檢討上世紀八零年代以來至今英文學界所發表的有關晚明佛教史的論著。本文認為，對於想要研究晚明佛教僧人的禪、淨土、唯識、天台思想以及在家居士的佛教網絡，聖嚴此書應該被積極重視。

**關鍵詞：**明末佛教、明末佛教學術史、釋聖嚴、晚明唯識、居士團體

The scholar-monk Shi Shengyan's 釋聖嚴 (1930-2009) 1987 publication, *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* 明末佛教研究, is a must-read for anyone embarking on the study of late Ming Buddhist history (1573-1610).<sup>1</sup> Part biographical dictionary, part compendium of topics and texts, this reference work is still the most comprehensive overview of late sixteenth-century Chan, Pure Land, and Yogācāra monks and the texts they wrote. The book also includes the first brief attempt to survey elite male lay Buddhist participation. Shengyan's stated purpose in producing this volume was to inspire other scholars to work on late Ming Dynasty sources. Shengyan began work on this handbook in the 1970s. By the time of publication in 1987, there had been a noticeable increase in scholarly attention to four eminent Ming monks: Lianchi Zhuhong 蓮池祿宏 (1535-1615), Hanshan Deqing 憨山德清 (1546-1623), Zibo Zhenke 紫柏真可 (1543-1603), and Ouyi Zhixu 藕益智旭 (1599-1655). However, neither then nor now has anyone produced a reference work with the breadth of Shengyan's *Research on Late Ming Buddhism*, nor fleshed out any of the many Buddhist networks and lay associations that thrived during that time.

To better appreciate the enormity of this volume's contribution, with its biographical sections, annotated bibliographies, detailed charts, research hypotheses, and comments on how to shape modern Taiwanese Buddhist practice, this study begins with a brief overview of English-language scholarship from the 1980s as well as available reference works from that time. I will then proceed to analyze various sections of this handbook and concurrently address the historiography of English-language publications on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Buddhist topics outlined in the handbook. Brief mention will also be made of other bibliographic sources and post-2000 publications and dissertations that are beginning to contribute to our knowledge of this important time period.

At the time Shengyan published *Research on Late Ming Buddhism*, one important English-language reference work for the Ming Dynasty had already been made available: *Dictionary of Ming Biography 1368-1644*. Edited by L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang and published in 1976, *The Dictionary of Ming Biography* (hereafter *DMB*) was the result of a ten-year

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<sup>1</sup> Shengyan calls 1573-1610 "late Ming," but claims that the book covers 1500-1702 because some of the figures he discusses were born before 1573 and others lived beyond the Wanli reign period (1573-1620). Other scholars much prefer that the term late Ming be reserved for the period from 1625-1644, and argue that it is misleading to lump the vast changes that took place between 1600 and 1644 under one vague reference.

collaborative project involving 126 contributors. This biographical collection remains an extraordinarily valuable work—so important that it was translated into Chinese. However, the *DMB* has a dearth of references to sixteenth-century monks and to the Buddhist activities of examination elites discussed therein. Two factors likely contributed to this: with the exception of Chün-fang Yü and Pei-yi Wu, the contributors were not scholars of Buddhist traditions and thus had neither the inclination nor training to determine which sixteenth-century monks deserved inclusion. Additionally, Kenneth Ch'en's influential 1967 thesis that Buddhism slowly waned after the Tang Dynasty, losing its ability to shape elite society, likely also played a role.<sup>2</sup>

Under these circumstances, the *DMB* contains a few haphazard, idiosyncratic entries for Buddhist monks and a limited number of references to the Buddhist activities of the 3000-some examination elites whose biographies comprise the bulk of the work. In fact, more Christian missionaries received individual entries than did late Ming monks. The only prominent monks given substantial—and, I might add, still useful—entries were the “four great monks of the Ming”: Zhuhong, Zhenke, Deqing, and Zhixu. There are some surprising biographical entries for little known fourteenth- and fifteenth-century monks. Herbert Franke (1914-2011), a historian of the Jurchen and Mongol empires, contributed two biographies of monks who were most active during the Yuan-Ming transition: Fanji Chushi 梵琦楚石 (1296-1370) and Tianjie Zongle 天界宗泐 (1318-1391). Fanji Chushi's connection to the Ming is especially weak. The biography of the Yuan monk Zhongyou Zuchan 仲猷祖闡 (fl. 1360-1373), written by Hok-lam Chan (1938-2011), and the biography of the Indian monk Paṇḍita by Yun-hua Jan are certainly interesting, but hardly representative of Ming Dynasty monks.<sup>3</sup> The few entries for “painter-monks” are welcome, but have more to do with a particular scholar's interests than with providing a comprehensive grasp of influential monks in any particular Ming reign period. In short, the *DMB* contributors did not

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<sup>2</sup> Kenneth Ch'en was born in Hawaii in 1907. His Chinese name is: Chen Guansheng 陳觀勝. Kenneth Ch'en's arguments of demise are well known and have been criticized from various quarters. For further discussion of the topic, see Eichman 2005, and Wu 2008, chapters one and eleven, for an excellent overview of demise theories.

<sup>3</sup> The biography of Paṇḍita certainly serves as a warning not to take all primary sources at face value. Yun-hua Jan sorted out the numerous erroneous representations of this monk that still continue today. As a case in point, the DDBC Person Authority Database established by Dharma Drum suffers from this problem, as the site repeats later historical sources with incorrect attributions. <http://authority.ddbc.edu.tw/person/index.php?fromInner=A010045> (accessed 2.10.2013).

consult the traditional lamp histories 燈錄 nor the historical writings of famous monks like Zhuhong or Deqing, who both acknowledge the impact of Konggu Jinglong 空谷景隆 (1387-1466), Tianqi Benrui 天奇本瑞 (d. circa 1509), and Dufeng Jishan 毒峰季善 (1419-1483?), none of whom have entries in the *DMB* (Zhuhong T 2024, 1104b13-c18; 1992, 3851). Chushan Shaoqi 楚山紹琦 (1403-1473) was also an influential early figure.<sup>4</sup>

For the novitiate, the *DMB* is still a handy reference tool, but in light of new research on both monastic and lay Buddhist figures, it is in need of expansion and revision. It must be said that there are also a number of other prominent *jinshi*-degree holders that deserve biographical entries. For instance, the following examination elites active in Buddhist or Daoist circles in and around the West Lake in Hangzhou should be added to this collection: Yu Chunxi 虞淳熙 (1553-1621), Tao Wangling 陶望齡 (1562-1609), Huang Hui 黃輝 (1554-1612), Feng Mengzhen 馮夢禎 (1546-1623), Ge Yinliang 葛寅亮 (1570-1646), and Huang Ruheng 黃汝亨 (1558-1626). Some entries need to be revised to better reflect the cultivation activities and multiple religious modalities adopted by some examination elites. The playwright Tu Long 屠隆 (1542-1605) is a prime example of someone who declared himself a disciple of the three teachings (*sanjiao dizi* 三教弟子), and yet the *DMB* entry does not adequately reflect Tu Long's religious activities. The biography of Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1541-1620), a major contributor to three teachings theories, was published previously in the 1943 *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)* (hereafter *ECCP*), and thus was not included in the *DMB*. It must be added that the *ECCP* was even less generous than the *DMB* in its attention to monks. Scholars of the Ming-Qing transition who want to know which officials fled to monasteries and took the tonsure to avoid serving the Qing court will find a number of useful entries, but these figures often took tonsure late in life and are hardly representative of late Ming or early Qing monastic practice.

The *DMB* focused rather narrowly on Confucian intellectual history and official life, leaving the impression that Yangming Confucians and Cheng-Zhu followers were the dominant contributors to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century discourse on self-cultivation.<sup>5</sup> However, the research of Shi Shengyan and Araki Kengo demonstrates conclusively that Buddhists and Daoists also

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<sup>4</sup> For more on Jinglong, Dufeng, and Shaoqi, see Chün-fang Yü, 1998. Benrui is not included in that discussion.

<sup>5</sup> Some historians have also criticized the *DMB's* singular focus on intellectual history at the expense of social and economic information. See He, 2006.

made substantial contributions. In fact, it is well known that many late sixteenth-century examination elites participated to a greater or lesser extent in all three traditions. Unfortunately, the *DMB* gives the false impression—an impression corrected by Shengyan—that Zhuhong, Zhenke, Deqing, and Zhixu are the only late Ming monks who enjoyed a stature worthy of our attention; this will be discussed in detail below. First, I would like to turn to a discussion of 1980s monographs on these four eminent monks, works that also inadvertently reinforced this view.

The late 1970s witnessed a short-lived American surge in the study of late Ming Buddhist figures, resulting in monographs on three of the four most eminent monks. The first volume, Sung-peng Hsu's 1979 *A Buddhist Leader in Ming China: The Life and Thought of Han-shan Te-ch'ing*, has yet to be superseded. Hsu did not so much provide a translation of Deqing's annalistic "autobiography" as summarize its contents while creatively sketching in some scenes. The work is packed with detail and despite its more free flowing style remains quite faithful to the text. Chün-fang Yü's ground-breaking *The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chu-hung and the Late Ming Synthesis* appeared shortly thereafter in 1981, and has inspired the work of a new generation of scholars. In 1987, Shengyan's disciple Guoxiang 果祥 published *Research on Master Zibo* 紫柏大師研究. In 1989, J.C. Cleary published his translations of some of Zibo Zhenke's work under the title *Zibo: The Last Great Zen Master of China*. This work also gives an impressionistic, though less historically-grounded, reading. At the time, these works were a much needed and welcome contribution to the field. However, despite this promising start, American scholars soon turned their attention elsewhere.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the two most influential scholars of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Buddhism were the Taiwanese scholar Jiang Canteng 江燦騰<sup>6</sup> and the Japanese scholar Araki Kengo 荒木見悟. Araki Kengo is the only scholar in recent history to devote his entire forty-some-year career to the study of late Ming Buddhist and Confucian texts.<sup>7</sup> Araki Kengo has mentored a number of younger Japanese scholars and some Taiwanese scholars, most notably Liao Zhaoheng 廖肇亨, who has recently published a number of innovative articles on the intersection of late Ming

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<sup>6</sup> Jiang Canteng has also written extensively on modern Taiwanese and Chinese Buddhism. Some of his works on the Ming have been reprinted in various editions using either traditional or simplified characters (1990; 1996).

<sup>7</sup> Araki Kengo was a prolific scholar. See the reference list for a representative sample of his book publications. Listing all his articles would take up too much space, though the reader is urged to consult them when relevant.

Buddhism and literature on topics including dreams, theatrical production, and Chan poetry (Liao 2008). In the 1980s a few Mainland Chinese scholars wrote historical surveys (Guo 1982; Ge 1986). English-language scholarship did not pick up again until the start of the new millennium, a topic that will be discussed at the end of this article.

In comparison, Shengyan's *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* called attention to the work of numerous educated monks and laypersons, many of whom have not yet received much scholarly attention. The first section of the handbook, devoted to Chan texts and practices, analyzed fourteen biographical collections, including six lamp histories. For the period 1573-1661 alone, Shengyan included 117 Chan practitioners: 60 Linji monks, 42 Caodong monks, 15 monks of "lineage unknown," and 6 laymen. Other monks unaffiliated with a Chan lineage are listed under the Pure Land and Yogācāra sections of this work. Although he was well apprised of the limited research value of lamp histories, with their generic life accounts and lack of sustained discussion of a given monk's innovative doctrinal contributions, Shengyan nonetheless thought such lineage texts shed light on monastic reputations. That is, they reveal how contemporaries judged each other and tell us who warranted greater consideration, having been so recognized by their peers. These monks were not low-level illiterates who lacked discipline. Rather, many were respected abbots with disciples of their own. The lamp histories were based on primary biographical sources such as a monk's own writings, *stūpa* epitaphs, and biographies written by lay disciples or other monks. Primary biographical sources are still extant for 16 of the 111 monks Shengyan listed. Though greatly diminished, this number still represents considerably more monks than are currently discussed in the scholarly literature (Shengyan 1987, 45).

In a departure from standard biographical dictionary format, Shengyan included a number of helpful charts that break down biographical information into the following categories: names and sources for biographies, geographic distribution, and their publications, including separate charts for discourse records, non-Chan Buddhist publications, and non-Buddhist publications. The charts throughout this volume are very clear and quickly reveal a number of interesting facts. According to Shengyan's criteria, Chan lineage affiliation and promotion of Chan cultivation are what made these monks "Chan." However, another chart further lists the 65 non-Chan books written by these so-called Chan monks. Shengyan noted that Chan monks often wrote on Pure Land, Tiantai, Huayan, Yogācāra, and other Buddhist topics. Some also tried their hand at commenting on Confucian and Daoist texts. Many Chan monks

in this list wrote or had compiled discourse records, yet very few wrote sūtra commentaries. Geographically speaking, the majority of monks included in the examined lamp histories hailed from the Jiangnan region. These and other facts can be gleaned quickly from Shengyan's analysis.

Clearly, Shengyan's analysis of the 111 monks he categorized under Chan represents a substantial contribution to our knowledge of late Ming Buddhist personnel. The list of monks in general, whether specifically Chan or not, could be expanded further by incorporating 29 monk biographies written by Deqing (Deqing [17<sup>th</sup> c.] 1992). In addition, one should consult the 1698 *Short Biographies to the Poetry Collection of Successive Dynasties* (*Liechao shiji xiaozhuan* 列朝詩集小傳) written by Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664). Organized by reign periods, the text lists 21 eminent monks (*gaoseng* 高僧) and 35 famous monks (*mingseng* 名僧) for the Jiajing reign (1522-1567). For 1573-1620, Qianyi listed 4 eminent monks and 37 famous monks. As stated in my previous work, Qianyi did not include Ouyi Zhixu under the category of eminent monks. After all, Ouyi Zhixu is of a slightly later generation than Zhenke, Deqing, and Zhuhong. Rather, at Deqing's urging, Qianyi added the now forgotten monk Xuelang Hongen 雪浪洪恩 (1545-1608). A contemporary of Zhuhong, Zhenke, and Deqing, Hongen's formative years were spent in the same Nanjing monastery as his dharma brother Deqing. A Huayan and Yogācāra exegete, Hongen was known for his Buddhist lectures in the Jiangnan region. Shengyan categorized Hongen under Yogācāra monks, but did not comment on what caused the precipitous decline in the reputation of a monk so revered by Deqing—some scholars speculate Hongen broke the precepts (Liao 1996).

Shengyan's sources say little about monks from Yunnan or from the north, though Shengyan did note that the evidence suggests that there were very few famous monks north of the Yellow River. Be that as it may, the eminent Mainland scholar Chen Yuan 陳垣 (1880-1971) collected the biographies of many Yunnan monks and laymen in his 1959 *Mingji Qian-Dian Fojiao Kao* 明季滇黔佛教考.<sup>8</sup> Should someone decide to undertake a revised and expanded edition of *Research on Late Ming Buddhism*, Chen Yuan's research, Deqing's collection of 29 biographies, Zhuhong's 1600 *Spurring Through the Gate* (*Chan guan ce jin* 禪關策進), and Qian Qianyi's work should all be consulted, as well as other sources.

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<sup>8</sup> Chen Yuan's other publications are worth a second look, potentially yielding a wealth of information about now forgotten monks.



Temple and provincial gazetteers are another little studied source. Compiling charts with the names of monks found in gazetteers would fill out our knowledge of local histories for a number of provinces and allow for greater assessment of regional differences in monastic culture (Bingenheimer 2012). Besides gazetteers produced by individual monasteries, broader publications such as Ge Yinliang's 1607 publication, *Gazetteer of Jinling Monasteries* (*Jinling fan cha zhi* 金陵梵剎志), would also expand our knowledge of Buddhist culture. In addition, *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* lists only 7 lay women and 3 nuns under the Pure Land section: Zhuhong's former wife, one of her disciples, and one of his disciples (Shengyan 1987, 96; 101).<sup>9</sup> Beata Grant's 2009 publication, *Eminent Nuns: Women Chan Masters of Seventeenth-Century China*, contributes specifically to the list of Chan nuns. Seven figures she studied were dharma heirs of the Linji Chan Master Miyun Yuanwu 密雲圓悟 (1566-1642) or part of one of his sub-lineages. Provincial gazetteers, temple gazetteers, compilations of Pure Land rebirth biographies, and other primary source collections should also help scholars broaden our understanding of nuns more generally.

Shengyan's handbook is an academically rigorous reference tool that also offers invaluable insights into how Shengyan's research shaped his views of contemporary Buddhist practice. Shengyan was not a disinterested scholar, but one who sought to adhere to the principles of academic research while simultaneously appropriating the past as a vehicle through which to contemplate the formation of the contemporary Taiwanese *saiṅha*. Scholars of modern Taiwanese monasteries and those researching Shengyan himself will find Shengyan's evaluation of Ming practices to be insightful reflections on *saiṅha* formation and spiritual direction. It would be nice to know to what extent his 1978 ruminations informed his later decisions about the shape and direction of Dharma Drum or whether his views evolved over time. Although

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<sup>9</sup> This so-called nun-disciple of Zhuhong's may have been a monk. The disciple had the dharma name of Guanggui 廣貴, lived at Miaoyi Temple 妙意菴, and wrote a preface to a collection of Pure Land poetry (*Lianbang shi xuan* 蓮邦詩選). Called Miaoyi in that text, there are also poems by this person. This text, which is the only extant source on this person, does not indicate gender. Shengyan may have decided this person was a nun because he or she lived in an *an*. *An* 菴 is often translated as "nunnery." However, in the sixteenth century, the term *an* could designate a temple or monastery and was often occupied by monks, not nuns.

this was not Shengyan's intent, *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* is also a primary source for the study of his thought.<sup>10</sup>

With respect to lineage transmission, Shengyan cautioned his monastic readers against imitating certain seventeenth-century practices. In a demonstration of his ambivalence toward lineage transmission, Shengyan noted that it served as a control mechanism and could be used to enforce standards. And yet, he thought lineage construction was ripe for abuse, and voiced his disapproval of the extremes to which it had been taken by the monks Hanyue Fazang 漢月法藏 (1573-1635), Miyun Yuanwu 密雲圓悟 (1566-1643), and Feiyin Tongrong 費隱通容 (1593-1661). Between 1573 and 1615, Chan lineage associations were much less important. However, after the rise of Miyun Yuanwu and his circle, there was renewed interest in lineage transmission: strict control of the Linji lineage became a vehicle for asserting both temporal and spiritual power. Shengyan felt that the internecine lineage controversies stirred up by Hanyue Fazang and Miyun Yuanwu in their relentless attacks on Caodong were, in retrospect, quite damaging. Shengyan was not alone in making this assessment. Notably, the 1714 monk-compilers of the *Zongjian falin* 宗鑑法林 (X 1297) also attributed the demise of Chan critical phrase cultivation and distrust of Chan to Linji-Caodong lineage controversies.

From Shengyan's perspective, Linji and Caodong monks both defined the ultimate level of spiritual liberation—that is, awakening—in largely the same terms. Thus he saw no reason for them to have engaged in largely gratuitous attacks on each other's lineages. This is especially the case because these lineages had been discontinued and were revived at some point. Although Shengyan did not pursue further research on seventeenth-century lineage debates, his reservations about the effect of narrow transmission criteria, the souring of monk relationships, and shallowness of controversial judgments have proved to be well-founded. Jiang Wu's protracted study of lineage debates and theories of transmission has thoroughly demonstrated the absurd lengths to which Linji monks were prepared to go in attacking each other and Caodong monks (Wu 2008). Caodong retaliation only sped up the implosion when it became impossible for either side to settle disputes about historical disruptions to either lineage.

Shengyan was partial to the teachings of monks like Zhixu who emphasized spiritual attainment over lineage transmission. Zhixu thought it

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<sup>10</sup> On this subject, look for future publications by Jimmy Yu who is working on Shengyan's biography and Dharma Drum's lineage construction.

important to see and hear a teacher, but he did not see the need for face-to-face verification of awakening. In contrast, Tongrong insisted that verification required face-to-face meetings. In support of the former view and to further distance himself from the lineage debates of Fazang, Yuanwu, and Tongrong, Shengyan also took the added step of citing excerpts from the works of monks who were either ambivalent or critical towards lineage transmission: Zhenke was ambivalent toward transmission; Zhanran Yuancheng 湛然圓澄 (1561-1626) emphasized attainment over verification; and Deqing disparaged those whom he thought casually chose to align themselves with a lineage. Shengyan also cited Wuyi Yuanlai 無異元來 (1575-1630), who claimed that a false transmission did more harm than severing a lineage (Shengyan 1987, 52-3). During their lives, Zhuhong, Deqing, and Zhenke all enjoyed positive reputations. However, by the mid-sixteenth century, lamp histories classified Zhuhong, Zhenke, and Deqing under lineage unknown—in effect, diminishing their standing *vis à vis* the Chan mainstream. Shengyan's writings demonstrate great respect for the work of Zhenke, Deqing, and Zhuhong. Their writings have been republished in contemporary Taiwan and Mainland China, whereas Fazang and Yuanwu are largely forgotten.

Most scholastic reference sources would likely not include the chart Shengyan constructed of cultivation methods and documented experiences of awakening. But Shengyan saw doctrine refracted through the lens of practice, which he believed—contrary to growing Western skepticism—to be the foundation upon which the textual corpus rested (Carrithers 1983, 228-9; Buswell 1992; Foulk 1987; Hori 2000, 280-316; Maquet 1980; Sharf 1995, 228-83). In Shengyan's view, textual study was primarily for the purpose of supporting cultivation practices. For this reason, he paid attention to first-person accounts of awakening: without awakening, a monk was not qualified to teach (Shengyan 1987, 71). His chart reveals that most monks claimed to be awakened sometime between the ages of twenty and forty, and that many divided their experience into at least two stages: realization (*sheng* 省) and awakening (*wu* 悟). Awakening took years of diligent Chan practice and required monks first to generate great doubt (Shengyan 1987, 70). Shengyan's ten-point analysis of the process of cultivation leading to awakening, while largely descriptive, reads like a prescriptive list for future monks to contemplate in sorting out that paradigm from present ones (Shengyan 1987, 71-2). In fact, Shengyan claimed that late Ming monks were popular in contemporary Taiwan not because of their erudition or level of culture, but because they had had deep religious experiences or been awakened (Shengyan

1987, 57). In following through with this theme, Shengyan further added a short annotated bibliography of five Chan texts on cultivation techniques.

Shengyan hypothesized that Chan how-to manuals were a new development not seen in earlier periods. To date, despite the robust English-language publishing on Tang-Song Chan topics, these later works have yet to be studied in any depth. From Wuyi Yuanlai's 1611 book for beginning students, *Master Boshan's Words of Warning on Chan Cultivation* (*Boshan heshang canchan jingyu* 博山和尚參禪警語),<sup>11</sup> to Huishan Jiexian's 晦山戒顯 (1610-1672) ca. 1661 manual written for abbots, *On Chan [Cultivation] Exercises* (*Chanmen duanlian shuo* 禪門鍛鍊說), there is much here to dissect.<sup>12</sup> The latter volume was based on Sunzi's *The Art of War* and compared running a monastery to ordering a country. A close consideration of these texts and others would shed light both on how advanced monks were instructed to teach Chan techniques to novices, and on how novices fared. It would also help us better understand the frustrations and difficulties monks and laymen encountered, something rarely revealed in any detail in discourse records or carefully managed lamp histories. The production of how-to manuals also provides a counter example to scholarly claims that meditation was cultivated only by a select group of elite monks (Sharf 1995, 228-83; Buswell 1992).

In contrast, there is a plethora of evidence from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources that both monks and laymen attempted various modes of Chan practice, including critical phrase cultivation. How successful they were, I would argue, is a separate question (Eichman 2005). Mailang Minghuai's 麥浪明懷 (d. 1630) *Chan Response to Difficult Questions* (*Zongmen she nan* 宗門設難) and Zhanran Yuancheng's *Chan Queries* (*Zongmen huowen* 宗門或問), a 1595 conversational *wenda*-style (問答) text, are also deserving of further attention. Minghuai's text sheds light on Buddhist apologetics, especially in defense of the synthesis of Wang Yangming's 王陽明 (1472-1529) concept of innate knowing (*liangzhi* 良知) with the Buddhist idea of true knowing (*zhenzhi* 真知). Shengyan also added some of the scattered pieces of advice Deqing offered his disciples, noting too that Zhuhong and Zhenke dispensed advice on Chan cultivation through epistolary writing, general lectures (*pushuo* 普說), and individual instruction

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<sup>11</sup> The preface to this text interprets the term *jing* 警 in several ways: to warn the practitioner of the inevitability of death and rebirth, and to awaken or stimulate the practitioner to develop further understanding (X1257, 755a5-7).

<sup>12</sup> There is one article on this text (Lin 1980).

(*shi* 示). Although such references would be too numerous for a handbook, scholars should keep them in mind.

Most of the Chan monks who promoted Pure Land cultivation were Caodong monks. Linji monks, Shengyan asserted, wielded stricter control (Shengyan 1987, 104). Shengyan did not write a separate section on late Ming Tiantai or Vinaya monks. However, under Pure Land traditions, he included the Tiantai monk Wujin Chuandeng 無盡傳燈 (1554-1627) and the Vinaya master Jianyue Duti 見月讀體 (n.d.) (Shengyan 1987, 103). Shengyan certainly identified Zhuhong and Zhixu—and to a lesser extent, Deqing, Zhenke, Yuancheng, Yuanxian, and others he had already categorized under Chan—as Pure Land promoters. Chan and Pure Land are the two most substantial sections in *Research on Late Ming Buddhism*. Shengyan's decision to separate Pure Land and Chan, despite the overlap in personnel, allowed him to produce easily graspable charts and focused lists of respective textual corpora. There are also some historical reasons to separate Chan from Pure Land, especially with respect to polemical texts, soteriological goals, and the formation of organizations promoting exclusively one or the other, such as Pure Land societies. However, the divisions were not always so clear-cut; thus, Shengyan incorporated 8 monks from the Chan section under Pure Land personnel.

Shengyan rightly pointed out that Chinese Pure Land ideas were incorporated within Huayan, Tiantai, and Chan writings. Attempts to produce a Pure Land lineage never really gained traction in China, nor does one find the development of a separate institution of the sort witnessed in Japan. Zhuhong was variously called the eighth or ninth Pure Land patriarch, but compared to Chan lineage formation, testing methods, and attempts at strict control, the Pure Land lineage amounts to little more than a list of great Pure Land exegetes. For this reason, Shengyan's criteria for the inclusion of monks under the heading Pure Land are based in part on whether the monk wrote Pure Land texts, propagated Pure Land cultivation, or vowed to be reborn in the Pure Land. In constructing his list, Shengyan relied on one 1923 collection of monk biographies and three distinct Pure Land biographical collections: Zhuhong's 1984 *Compilation of Rebirth Biographies* (*Wangsheng ji* 往生集), and Peng Shaosheng's ca. 1783 *A Record of Pure Land Sages and Worthies* (*Jingtu shengxian lu* 淨土聖賢錄) and 1776 *Biographies of Laymen* (*Jushi*

*zhuan* 居士傳).<sup>13</sup> Shengyan's Pure Land chart includes 132 persons: 65 monks, 3 nuns, 57 laymen, and 7 laywomen.

Beginning in the late Ming and on through the Qing, there was a marked increase in the publication of Pure Land biographical collections. Many of these texts simply expanded Zhuhong's *Compilation of Rebirth Biographies* by republishing his collection under a new name with the addition of contemporary biographies. See, for instance, the *Record of Those Who Took the Western Boat* (*Xifanghuizhenglu* 西舫彙征錄) compiled by the Qing monk Ruizhang 瑞璋. This text replicates the format of Zhuhong's collection and repeats almost verbatim some of the biographies. Peng Shaosheng's work also exhibits some overlap with Ruizhang's collection. Two other biographical collections also fit this pattern: *A Record of Experience with the Diamond Sūtra* (*Jingang chi yan ji* 金剛持驗記), and *Morning Bell in the Pure Land* (*Jingtu chen zhong* 淨土晨鐘)—preface for the latter dated 1659—compiled by Zhou Kefu 周克復. Despite possible historical inaccuracies in attempts to claim someone as a devout Pure Land practitioner rather than a Chan adherent, these texts are an especially rich—and often the only—source that sheds light on the religious practices of elite males who served in official capacities. In comparison, biographical sources like the 1739 *Ming History* (*Ming shi* 明史) compiled by Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉 and provincial gazetteers rarely include religious practices.

However, some texts, such as Peng Shaosheng's *Biographies of Laymen*, present a one-sided view of religious practice. Shaosheng was more interested in Pure Land cultivation and sometimes skewed the biographies in that direction, leaving out an individual's Chan cultivation or other practices.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See forthcoming dissertation by Daniel Burton-Rose on the Peng family's religious activities. Hongyu Wu is also completing a dissertation that draws substantially from Peng Shaosheng's biographical collections, "Leading the Good Life: Biographical Narratives of and Instructions for Lay Buddhist Women in the High Qing Period (1683-1839)."

<sup>14</sup> Shengyan realized that, despite his partial reliance on Peng Shaosheng's *A Record of Pure Land Sages and Worthies*, the text was not historically reliable. Because some of the biographies are very short, Shengyan speculated that the primary intent of the text was Pure Land propagation, not the preservation of historical materials. The same could be said for Peng Shaosheng's *Biographies of Laymen*: the collection correctly lists lay Buddhists, but does not concern itself with the finer point of who practiced Pure Land or Chan when they did so. The biography of Yuan Hongdao is a case in point: Araki Kengo has already pointed out that Hongdao's Pure Land interest was short-lived despite having written the 1599 *Comprehensive Treatise on the West* (*Xifang helun* 西方合論).

Surely there were groups that cultivated Pure Land exclusively, but examination elites were predominately catholic in their willingness to try a variety of Buddhist and non-Buddhist cultivation techniques. In the oft-repeated words of Jonathon Z. Smith, “map is not territory” (1993). With respect to collections of Pure Land biographies, one should not read the texts literally as a historical record of exclusive Pure Land activity. Of course, if the map *is* the territory—that is, if the object of study is the production of biographical collections as such, rather than just their content—the texts reveal much about attempts to promote Pure Land activity to a literate audience.

Shengyan’s chart of Pure Land texts and annotated bibliographies is exceptional. The descriptions of texts read less like typical handbook material and more like substantial beginnings for a variety of research projects: Shengyan offered a number of theses and some argument. All that is needed is a more detailed consideration of the sources and the incorporation of secondary scholarship. Shengyan observed a shift from the earlier popularity of the *Amitābha Visualization Sūtra* to a greater late Ming concern with the shorter *Amitābha Sūtra*, particularly its single four-character phrase, “one-mind, undistracted” (*yixin bu luan* 一心不亂). Zhuhong, Chuandeng, Zhixu, and many others all wrote exegesis based on this idea. Shengyan also discovered a major split between the majority of late Ming monks, who thought of the Pure Land as a mind-only phenomenon, and those monks who advocated, literally, rebirth in a Pure Land. In addition, many exegetes adhered to the following basic three-part formula: belief, recitation, and vow to be reborn in the Pure Land. Yet there were a significant number of Chan exegetes who incorporated Pure Land recitation techniques within an essentially Chan regimen with no mention of rebirth. Evidence of this trend can be found in the *Essential Method of Reciting the Name* (*Nianfo fa yao* 念佛法要), a text by Wuming Huijing 無明慧經 (1549-1618). Huijing, like other Chan exegetes, elaborated on how to recollect the Buddha’s name, recite the name, and use recitation in the cultivation of a critical phrase, but did not advocate rebirth in the Pure Land.

Zhuhong stands out as a primary sponsor of the method, “investigating through reciting the name” (*canjiu nianfo* 參究念佛). He combined Pure Land and Chan methods, which he defended through an elaborate Pure Land exegesis based on the Huayan idea of the interpenetration of principle and phenomenon. On the other hand, Shengyan thought that Zhixu relied on the Tiantai doctrine of phenomenon and principle and thus rejected the idea that one could combine Chan investigation (*canjiu* 參究) with Pure Land

recitation. The distinctions made here and above in reference to other methods deserve further investigation. Shengyan also made brief reference to the poetry Yuanlai wrote in defense of his and Zhuhong's position. Zhixu responded with 15 poems of his own. This is yet another topic deserving of further research. Readers should consult Shengyan's annotated bibliography of Pure Land texts (Shengyan 1987, 132-78) for more on topics already briefly discussed here and other avenues worthy of future research.

The chart of Pure Land texts and annotated bibliography refer to the following types of canonical works by 16 authors: 8 commentaries, 15 Pure Land books, and 1 historical work. Of the 16 authors, 5 are, quite surprisingly, laymen. With the exception of the work of layman Wang Rixiu 王日休 (d. 1173), texts by laymen had not been incorporated into the Buddhist canon during the preceding 1,000 years. Thus Shengyan felt that this was a new trend. However, not all of the laymen were strictly Pure Land practitioners: Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568-1610) wrote only one Pure Land text; most of his Buddhist writing is on Chan. Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602) could hardly be considered a Pure Land practitioner, despite the inclusion of his *Resolving [Questions] about the Pure Land (Jingtu jue 淨土決)*. In fact, as Shengyan noted, Li Zhi stands out for his individualistic approach wherein he was neither monk nor layman, neither Confucian nor Buddhist. Deeply admired and abhorred during his own time, Li Zhi has continued to be a fascinating, though atypical, research subject.

Of the two Pure Land charts Shengyan constructed, the first incorporated only books wholly devoted to Pure Land topics. The second chart listed titles of short Pure Land texts, such as prefaces, short essays, and poems that are part of larger collections devoted to a number of miscellaneous topics. For example, Zhuhong's *Jottings by a Bamboo Window (Zhuchuang sui bi 竹窗隨筆)* series includes many short essays on Pure Land topics mixed in with a broad array of essays on morality, other Buddhist practices, and opinions about certain monks or customs. The second chart lists 120 short texts by 8 authors: Zhenke, 10; Deqing, 9; Huijing, 1; Yuancheng, 14; Yuanlai, 4; Yuanxian, 4; Zhixu, 41. This chart further demonstrates that monks who also wrote on Chan, Tiantai, or other branches of exegesis still paid substantial attention to Pure Land issues, contributing to a broader discourse on Pure Land topics. In fact, Shengyan gave more consideration to the Chan monks Yuancheng and Yuanxian in this section than he did in the Chan section.

Of those who wrote on Pure Land topics, Shengyan found that only Zhuhong, Chuandeng, and Zhixu stood out for their particularistic views and systematization of Pure Land ideas. Others, both laymen and monks, wrote



about Pure Land demonstrating how important it was to them; however, in Shengyan's view, these writers had nothing special to say. The little studied laypersons Zhuang Fuzhen 莊復真 (n.d.) and Lu Tian 淥田 (n.d.), for instance, repeated already established views. Yuan Hongdao had a new structure for his presentation, yet his ideas broke no new ground (Jones 2009, 89-126). In reviewing various dissenting opinions, Shengyan further revealed his openness to a variety of perspectives. For example, he does not take sides in the disagreements between Zhuhong and Zhixu. Rather, following a well-known Buddhist doctrinal position, Shengyan acknowledged that there are many expedient techniques (*upāya*). He does, however, raise some fundamental issues about the relationship between Tiantai and Chan and what differentiates them and their attitudes toward Pure Land. Shengyan suggested that Pure Land techniques could be, in some instances, merely a convenient instrument, or *upāya*, that helped practitioners master the more difficult demands of Chan and other exegetical traditions.

How monks framed their objections to Pure Land or Chan is yet another topic ripe for further research. In one short section, Shengyan briefly touched upon the views of those who objected to Pure Land teachings. In reading against the grain, Shengyan teased out a counter discourse—a technique that, due to the work of Michel Foucault and scholars inspired by him, has become a required skill in post-1990s scholarship. A study of counter discourses could extend beyond internecine Buddhist battles to objections found in non-Buddhist and non-canonical writings (Shengyan 1987, 153). My only criticism of the section on Pure Land personnel and texts is a minor one. In his evaluation of the epistolary exchange between Zhuhong and the layman Cao Yinru 曹胤儒 (n.d.), Shengyan wrote that he found Zhuhong's response to be rather weak. One could imagine Shengyan constructing a stronger rebuttal of Cao Yinru's ideas. Despite Shengyan's reservations, it is important to note that Zhuhong was so proud of his responses he had the entire epistolary exchange printed in booklet form, composed a self-satisfied postface, and had it distributed to others (Zhuhong [1899] 1992, 4242-3).

The third section of the handbook may well be the first real consideration in any language of late Ming Yogācāra texts and advocates. Shengyan presents a brief doctrinal overview of the relationship between Mādhyamika, Tathāgata-garbha, and Yogācāra positions. By the early Ming, Yogācāra study had fallen to the wayside, in part because major Yogācāra texts by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664) and Kuiji 窺基 (632-682) were no longer available. To learn about Yogācāra, late sixteenth-century exegetes instead relied on secondary works such as Yongming Yanshou's 永明延壽 (904-975) *Record of the Source-*

*Mirror* (*Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄) published in 961. Shengyan attributed the revival of Yogācāra study to a little known early sixteenth-century monk, Lu'an Putai 魯菴普泰 (ca. 1511). One story circulated by Wang Kentang 王肯堂 (1549-1613) has it that Zhenke studied Yogācāra under Putai, further propagating his teachings. According to Shengyan's research, the 14 persons discussed in this section all started as Chan practitioners. Shengyan hypothesized that the Chan rejection of non-Chan textual study had created a gap in understanding that late Ming Buddhists attempted to fill by starting a movement promoting the compatibility of Chan and scriptural study (*chan jiao yi zhi* 禪教一致). The study of Yogācāra was one attempt to fill the lacuna left by inattention to doctrinal matters. In fact, the movement to combine Chan and doctrinal teaching (*jiao* 教) extended beyond just the study of Yogācāra. Another little studied early seventeenth-century monk, Juelang Daosheng 覺浪道盛 (1592-1659), used the occasion of a dharma talk at Zhuhong's monastery to impress upon his audience the compatibility between Chan and doctrinal teaching. In this instance, doctrinal teaching/scriptural study referred more specifically to the study of Pure Land texts (J 311, 642c10-643a26).

Fourteen late Ming Yogācāra scholars are included in this section: 12 monks and 2 laymen. Of these 14 authors, only 3 monks enjoyed broad recognition: Zhenke, Deqing, and Zhixu. The 2 laymen, Wang Kentang and Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692), were famous elite officials known for their contributions in the areas of medicine and statecraft, respectively. Monks such as Shaojue Guangcheng 紹覺廣承 (ca. 1606), his disciple Xinyi Dazhen 新伊大真 (1580-1650), and the prolific writer Yiyu Tongrun 一雨通潤 (1565-1624) are all deserving of further research for their contributions to both Yogācāra thought and to other aspects of the Buddhist tradition. Even lesser known monks such as Dumen Zhenghui 度門正誨 (ca. 1589), Zhenjie Huanju 真界幻居 (n.d.),<sup>15</sup> and Gaoyuan Mingyu 高原明昱 (died after 1611) should be given more scholarly attention. Although I have already stated this above, it bears repeating: there are many educated late sixteenth-century monks that have yet to be studied. The names here are mainly of monks not discussed previously in either the Chan or Pure Land sections of the handbook, yet they were not lone monks who worked in relative obscurity. Shengyan produced a helpful chart of their intellectual genealogies and demonstrated that most were well connected to the larger tradition through teachers, disciples, and friends.

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<sup>15</sup> He was a disciple of Yueting Mingde 月亭明得 (1531-1588). This would indicate that he was an early seventeenth-century monk.

In a nutshell, the 35 texts discussed in this section reveal two main tendencies in late Ming Yogācāra thought: to use Yogācāra to supplement another orientation such as Chan, Tiantai, or Huayan; or to think about Yogācāra in terms of its practical application. This latter aspect led to the study of *hetu-vidyā* (*yinming* 因明).<sup>16</sup> Although Kuiji's normative explanations of this technique did not circulate during the late Ming, many practitioners tried their hand at using *hetu-vidyā* analysis. Even Zhuhong, whom Shengyan did not include in this section, demonstrated his facility with the technique in a short text entitled *Liangzhi* 良知. Zhuhong criticized Wang Yangming's concept of innate knowing (*liangzhi* 良知) (Eichman 2005; n.d.). Zhuhong's disciple, Huang Hui, also tried the technique and wrote Zhenke asking for further instruction. Research on lay practitioners would likely turn up more instances of its use. In all, the late Ming produced seven commentaries on the subject of *hetu-vidyā*. In Shengyan's view, despite the re-introduction of Yogācāra thought, neither Deqing nor Zhixu had a firm enough grasp of Yogācāra concepts to transmit it properly and would have been criticized by Tang Dynasty exegetes. On the other hand, Shengyan thought both monks had a sufficient grasp of Yogācāra concepts to apply them effectively to Chan methods of cultivation.

The history of Chinese Yogācāra serves as a cautionary tale. We should never assume access to texts or the continuation of an exegetical tradition, ritual, or idea over centuries. The differences between ninth-century Yogācāra study, sixteenth-century Yogācāra study, and contemporary understandings would make for a great research project. William Chu's nascent work on the Yogācāra resurgence during the Ming Dynasty and new unpublished work on contemporary Yogācāra will certainly contribute to this effort. There is, however, room for many other scholarly endeavors on this front. Another research question that has yet to be answered: At what point between 1650 and the twentieth-century did the late Ming comprehension of Yogācāra fall out of favor?

In light of current complex discussions of what constitutes Chinese philosophy, more attention to Yogācāra systems of argument, both past and present, would add another dimension to that debate (Raud 2006a, 2006b;

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<sup>16</sup> Developed in India and transmitted to China, this style of reasoning is a syllogism comprised of three parts: a proposition (*zong* 宗 [命題]), reason (*yin* 因), and example (*yu* 喻). One *hetu-vidyā* treatise was translated by Xuanzang and another by Yixing. For an extensive discussion of their work and substantial article on *hetu-vidyā*, see *Foguang da cidian* 佛光大辭典 (1988, 2276-89).

Defoort 2006). With the exception of work by the monk Taixu 太虛 (1889-1947), twentieth-century Yogācāra scholars and monks have all but ignored late Ming Yogācāra exegesis.<sup>17</sup> This may be because the late nineteenth-century re-import of Yogācāra texts from Japan revived interest in Tang era publications by Xuanzang, Kuiji and others, many of which were not available during the Ming and later periods (Ge 2006). Twentieth-century scholars have expended more energy studying the contemporary impact of texts by Xuanzang and Kuiji, and the consequent exegesis produced by such famous Confucian exegetes as Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885-1968), who was inspired by Yogācāra ideas, evident in such publications as his 1944 *New Treatise on Consciousness-only* (*Xin weishi lun* 新唯識論),<sup>18</sup> and the monk Yinshun's 印順 (1906-2005) response (1963). In contrast, late Ming Yogācāra exegesis is currently less philosophically relevant and more a matter of historical interest.

The final section of *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* is devoted to the study of lay practitioners. For this section, Shengyan examined only a single biographical collection, Peng Shaosheng's *Biographies of Laymen*. Such a narrow focus brings a few limitations with it, especially when attempting to draw broad conclusions. However, Shengyan analyzed the data from a number of different angles and produced 9 separate charts. In 1987, this type of work was well ahead of its time. No other scholar had focused so intensively on lay practitioners, let alone attempted to analyze the data in such detail. Araki Kengo has written extensively about various individual lay practitioners, occasionally mentioning their connections to others, but has not been greatly concerned with issues of religious community or network formation. Rather, his scholarly output falls within the field of intellectual history, not social or cultural history. There have been a few recent surveys of lay practitioners, but most, such as the 2000 work of the Mainland scholar Pan Guiming 潘桂明, continue to rely on Peng Shaosheng's *Biographies of Laymen* and simply repeat biography after biography.

In contrast, my own research—inspired by Shengyan's detailed analysis of *Biographies of Laymen*—focuses on community engagement, particularly the decades-long networks established among elite laymen. I further divide them

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<sup>17</sup> The one current exception to this is John Jorgenson's forthcoming translation of a late Ming Yogācāra commentary on the *Ālambana parīkṣa* (*Guan suoyuan yuan lun* 觀所緣緣論).

<sup>18</sup> See John Makeham's forthcoming translation of Xiong Shili's treatise and edited volume, *Transforming Consciousness: The Intellectual Reception of Yogācāra Thought in Modern China*.

into multiple subgroups. Because I did not rely solely on Peng Shaosheng's biographical collection, but instead analyzed a number of epistolary collections, prefaces, postfaces, and temple gazetteers, my research uncovered more personal connections and semi-private discourses on Buddhist praxis (Eichman 2005; n.d.). Shengyan's charts list 103 lay practitioners (78 in the section on laymen and the rest from other sections), but do not indicate how well any of them knew each other. The next stage in our research on lay practitioners should seek to uncover their relationships to other lay practitioners and to monastic communities. Significant progress could be made through the study of epistolary sources, local temple gazetteers, and lay societies. He Zongmei's 何宗美 extensive work on local societies is a good example of this kind of work (2003).

Biographical collections like those mentioned previously should not be overlooked; they provide a quick reference to names and other data. Not only should we look for religious connections between examination elites with no familial ties to each other, but we should also look vertically at relations between family members and their servants. Some biographical collections, such as Wang Qilong's 王起隆 seventeenth-century *An Imperial Record of New Miracles [Associated with] The Diamond Sūtra* (*Huangming jingang xin yi lu* 皇明金剛新異錄), hint at a family practice that extended from the head of the household to the servants. A native of Shaoxing, Zhejiang, Wang Qilong recorded regionally-specific biographies of prominent officials and their family members in the environs of Gui'an 歸安 city. The collection includes a biography of a servant who worked for the locally prominent Mao 茅 family, and another of a lowly commoner who rented a Mao property (Eichman 2005). To what extent servants knew about or participated in the same religious activities as their employers is another avenue yet to be fully explored.

Shengyan analyzed the 67 main biographies and 36 sub-biographies of Peng Shaosheng's work for geographic distribution, educational attainment, monastic relations, relationship to Confucianism, and cultivation methods. He also included charts on the texts they read, the texts they wrote, and their encounters with governmental abuse and criminal charges. Geographically, Peng Shaosheng's collection is comprised mainly of lay practitioners from the Jiangnan region, especially Jiangsu (31 practitioners) and Zhejiang (17 practitioners). Peng Shaosheng provides only two names for Guangdong. In general, Jiangnan was the center of late Ming Buddhist activity. However, the geographic distribution is biased by Peng Shaosheng's use of sources and for the most part favors Zhuhong's disciples, albeit only a small number of his

seventy-some precept-disciples.<sup>19</sup> Shengyan realized that Peng Shaosheng's text produced an incomplete picture, but he defended the text because he thought it recorded the biographies of those who were most influential at the time and had the greatest impact on later generations. There is some truth to this; however, Peng Shaosheng left out Deqing's disciples altogether and only mentioned 4 of Zhenke's disciples. In short, there are many, many more disciple networks deserving of further scholarly attention.

Because the Jiangnan monks Deqing and Zhenke both spent time in the capital and sojourned in a number of different geographic locations, both had extensive networks of lay disciples covering a broad geographic range. They traveled outside Jiangnan far more often than Zhuhong, and were constantly engaged in construction and publication projects that required the help of the court and high officials. When Deqing was exiled to a Leizhou garrison in 1595, he made the most of his time there by recruiting numerous disciples. His revival of the Southern Splendor Monastery 南華寺 in Caoxi 漕溪 presented yet another opportunity to mentor both young monks and the larger lay community. His annalistic (auto)-biography and epistolary collection both include a substantial number of important lay practitioners from Guangdong and Shandong. These laymen need to be added to any expanded list of late sixteenth-century Buddhist practitioners. Peng Shaosheng included only one layman biography for the province of Fujian. This can be corrected through the inclusion of the monastic and lay disciples surrounding Yongjue Yuanxian 永覺元賢 (1578-1657), who resided at Drum Mountain Monastery 鼓山寺. As extensive as his network likely was, it represents only a fraction of the monks and laypersons residing in Fujian, many more of whom should be added.

Understanding the networks of monastic and lay practitioners associated with just these three monks would increase our knowledge of the breadth and

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<sup>19</sup> At the conclusion to his third chart, Shengyan again offers not only an appraisal of why Zhuhong became extremely popular, but also extends his analysis to what, in general, makes it possible for a monk to be fully accepted by his lay disciples and not simply taken as a "friend outside one's circle" (方外的朋友). Shengyan attributed Zhuhong's popularity to his concern with propagating the tradition through releasing-life rituals and the production of didactic works aimed at a lay readership over the pursuit of purely scholarly interests. Shengyan asserted that the kinds of interactions Zhuhong had with his disciples and the choices he made in balancing scholarship with propagation became a model that extended to the end of the Qing and the beginning of the Republican era. In this respect, Shengyan again appears to be offering his fellow monastic disciples a paradigm for their further reflection (Shengyan 1987, 266).

depth of lay practitioner engagement in Buddhist activities many times over. If one researched the practitioners associated with even half of the monks listed in *Research on Late Ming Buddhism*, the number of lay practitioners and what we could learn about their Buddhist activities would contribute exponentially to the religious and cultural history of the late Ming. Through the analysis of epistolary collections, temple gazetteers, and literary collections (*wenji* 文集) published by various examination elites, Shengyan's chart could be further expanded. In charting these relations, the resulting collection of networks should not be based on a simple hub and spoke model with a monk at the center surrounded by his disciples. Rather, individuals often participated in more than one network. Monks, too, formed bonds that brought groups into contact and even cooperation with each other. The end result of this research would surely reveal the intersection of overlapping networks and shifting allegiances.

The fourth chart provides a tentative list of 11 late Ming laymen who were also Confucian disciples. Though, again, the list could be expanded, Shengyan's observation is quite accurate in that there were two kinds of disciples: those who sought relationships with monks, and those who read Buddhist texts but did not interact with the monastic community. Shengyan cross-checked his list with Huang Zongxi's 黃宗羲 (1610-1695) 1676 *Sourcebook of Ming Confucians* (*Ming ru xue an* 明儒學案) and found that there were several individuals whom Huang Zongxi categorized as Buddhist that Peng Shaosheng did not include, such as Zhao Dazhou 趙大洲 (1508-1577) (Shengyan 1987, 270). The fifth chart on cultivation methods highlights the prevalence of Pure Land devotion and reflects Peng Shaosheng's own predilections. The sixth chart lists the texts these men were known to read. In the late Ming, examination elites read only a handful of available Buddhist texts. Like their monk counterparts, they were particularly fond of the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*, the *Sūtra of Complete Awakening*, and the *Diamond Sūtra*. Shengyan further divided lay practitioners' Buddhist publications into two groups: those incorporated into the supplement to the canon (*Wan xuzang jing* 卅續藏經) and those that were published elsewhere, especially many releasing-life texts and short essays on Pure Land practice (Shengyan 1987, 284).

Shengyan's seventh chart deserves special mention. Shengyan wanted to debunk the notion that Buddhists were unpatriotic pacifists, concerned only with otherworldly liberation. This chart maps the activities of elite male Buddhists who, in their official capacity, served the state by quelling uprisings, getting rid of pirates, and generally making military sacrifices for their

country. Though the chart and accompanying explanation are brief, the questions raised here could be pursued further in contemporary scholarship. Scholarship on contemporary Japanese Buddhism has addressed the relationship between Buddhism and militarism, and several recent publications discuss Buddhism and violence. However, much less research has been done on the Chinese side, especially in relation to the everyday punitive decisions made by Buddhist officials who presided over legal cases.

*Research on Late Ming Buddhism* certainly affords the novice a list of many topics and figures that have yet to be thoroughly studied. I am still amazed that Shengyan's short presentations of many monks have yet to be surpassed. To name a few of them: Yuanlai, Yuancheng, and Huijing. In 2009, Fan Jialing 范佳玲 published the first book-length monograph on Yuanxian. When these monks are mentioned in secondary scholarship, it is usually only in passing or in a short synopsis. Given that each left substantial written collections, these monks could be studied in much greater detail. Research on their work could extend in many directions. One topic that immediately comes to mind is the question of continuity and change. Yuanlai, Yuancheng, and Yuanxian were all influenced to some extent by Zhuhong. In what ways did they keep his ideas alive or modify them? To what extent can we see the continued viability of late sixteenth-century Pure Land cultivation? Do we know when such ideas fell from favor and what replaced them? Additionally, the plethora of extant sources—both canonical and historical—allow for more detailed study of both monastic and lay communities in the late Ming. Scholars would do well to revisit *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* from time to time, both to facilitate research on still overlooked topics and to see how much progress has been made in covering persons, texts, and topics first raised in this volume.

To conclude, Shengyan's detailed analysis of Peng Shaosheng's *Biographies of Laymen* demonstrates that one can tease a wealth of information from a single biographical collection, and serves as a model for the level of analysis one can extract from such formulaic sources. Throughout his *Research on Late Ming Buddhism*, Shengyan's use of charts and quick overview of numerous doctrinal issues, presentation of Chan and Pure Land monks, and—most significantly—attention to lay practitioners offer easy access to a wide variety of data and an introduction to late Ming discourse and its various players.

Having laid out the contents of *Research on Late Ming Buddhism*, I would now like to shift the conversation briefly to new research, especially in the context of English-language scholarship. After the short-lived flurry of



publications on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Buddhist topics in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the field again turned its attention elsewhere. It was not until after the new millennium that we began to see an increase in publications on the late Ming period. In the interim, the environment for this kind of research has improved greatly. Earlier scholars had to contend with limited access to rare books and the scarcity of modern reprints of hard-to-find texts. The internet has of course changed all that. The creation of massive databases like the *Sikuquanshu* 四庫全書 and CBETA as well as the steady reprinting of multi-volume works pertaining to Ming-Qing history and of the “collected works” (*wenji*) of well-known examination elites has made more resources readily available. Long neglected sources like the Jiaxing Canon have garnered new visibility from their electronic versions. It must be added that as these sources come to light, Shengyan’s 1987 volume is looking more and more prescient. Without the advantage of digital databases, Shengyan managed to produce what is essentially a handbook of who’s who in late Ming Buddhism.

Post-2000 scholarship includes a number of dissertations written on various aspects of Deqing’s work (Epstein 2006; Yen 2004), yet Sung-peng Hsu’s 1979 book has yet to be superseded. Two articles have taken Deqing’s awakening experiences as their subject matter (Wu 1990; Struve 2012). Chün-fang Yü’s publication on Zhuhong inspired my own work on late Ming lay Buddhist networks associated with this influential monk. However, little English-language work has been done on Zhuhong’s doctrinal oeuvre. Fan Jialing 范佳玲 produced a 2001 Chinese-language monograph on Zhenke’s life and thought, followed by Sebastian Gault’s 2003 German monograph (see also Kern 1992). Suffice it to say that, like Zhuhong and Deqing, Zhenke is still little studied in English-language scholarship. As for Zhixu, Shengyan produced his own hefty Japanese-language dissertation, which was also published in Chinese (1975; 1988). However, the first protracted English-language study on Zhixu is the 2009 Ph.D. dissertation (and forthcoming book from Columbia University Press) by Beverley Foulks titled *Living Karma: The Religious Practices of Ouyi Zhixu (1599-1655)*. Yungfen Ma’s 2011 dissertation, “The Revival of Tiantai Buddhism in the Late Ming: On the Thought of Youxi Chuandeng (1554-1628),” is the first sustained work on Chuandeng’s thought.

Most new work is thematically organized and has moved away from the study of any one individual monk. Jennifer Eichman’s 2005 dissertation, “Spiritual Seekers in a Fluid Landscape: A Chinese Buddhist Network in the Wanli Period (1573-1620),” (forthcoming under a different title), reconstructs

a network of elite male practitioners and examines their construction of late sixteenth-century Buddhist culture in terms of the relationship between intellectual debates and self-cultivation. Jimmy Yu's 2008 dissertation, "Bodies and Self-inflicted Violence in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-century China," which has been reworked and published under the 2012 title, *Sanctity and Self-Inflicted Violence in Chinese Religions, 1500-1700*, is also representative of this new trend. Two scholars have taken a more expansive approach to Buddhist history, surveying a century of practice. Thanks to Jiang Wu's 2008 work, *Enlightenment in Dispute: the Reinvention of Chan Buddhism in Seventeenth-century China*, we know much more about Hanyue Fazang and Miyun Yuanwu and their lineage debates. Dewei Zhang's 2009 dissertation, "A Fragile Revival: Chinese Buddhism under the Political Shadow, 1522-1620," is a study in history and politics, not doctrine. Although this article is focused mainly on Western publishing, there are two Chinese-language scholars whose work does bear special mention. Chen Yunü 陳玉女 (2001; 2010; 2011) and Chen Yongge 陳永革 (2007) have both worked extensively on monastic history and culture. For the foreseeable future, the renewed interest in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century topics is only likely to increase, adding further to our knowledge of this important time in Chinese Buddhist history.<sup>20</sup>

In conclusion, one might ask: How does Shengyan's *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* "humanize" the study of late Ming Buddhism? Starting in the early 1980s, American scholars slowly began to turn their attention to institutional history and the communities of lay practitioners who participated in a variety of Buddhist rituals. Until that time, most studies focused on doctrine and the historical position of certain eminent monks, not on the historical contexts and cultural negotiations of the larger community of lesser known monks and Buddhist practitioners. While Shengyan was not part of this particular Western shift, his interest in religious practice led him to focus not just on doctrine and textual production, but also on people—that is, both monastic and lay participants. His volume presents those who debated the doctrines, produced the texts, and tried various cultivation techniques.

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<sup>20</sup> I have restricted my comments to works in the field of Buddhist Studies; however, other fields have also shown renewed interest in late Ming Buddhism, among which the art historical scholarship of Marsha Weidner bears special mention. Interdisciplinary in its scope, some of her recently edited publications have included the work of such Buddhist Studies scholars as Chün-fang Yü and Daniel Stevenson (1994; 2001).

When taken as a whole, *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* puts a human face on late Ming Buddhist participation by bringing the readership closer to the lives of actual practitioners. As scholars contemplate the connections between various practicing communities and question the definitions of community itself, *Research on Late Ming Buddhism* offers an accessible look at one approach while also pointing the way toward further research. Among scholarly attempts to forge stronger links between doctrine, practice, and community, this handbook undoubtedly will remain relevant to future work on the reception of Buddhist traditions in the late Ming period. This volume is certainly a must-read for any scholar interested in a quick overview of late sixteenth-century Buddhist history. Shengyan's book provides scholars with the basic knowledge of persons and available resources needed to quickly grasp a number of topics related to late Ming Buddhist history without losing sight of the larger historical picture.

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