

# Writing and Criticism on the Zen Buddhism in Zen Notes During the Song Dynasty\*

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Zennotes in the Song Dynasty are based on the use of scattered essays to record trivial fragments of Zen Buddhist monks' daily life, including Hui Hong's *Lin Jian Lu*, *Da Hui Pu Jue Chan Shi Zong Men Wu Ku* edited by Dao Qian, Xiao Ying's *Luo Hu Ye Lu* and *Yun Wo Ji Tan*, Dao Rong's *Cong Lin Sheng Shi*, and Huan Wu's *Ku Ya Man Lu*. Through Zennotes, it is possible to learn more about the life of Zen Buddhist masters in the Song Dynasty and the actual development of Zen Buddhism, which were seldom investigated in past studies. Firstly, this study explains the cultural environment generated by Zennotes and the creative development of Zennotes in the Song Dynasty, and then discusses the main content of Zennotes. Zennotes highlight the characters through the description of specific events and make the images and characters of Zen Buddhist monks become vivid on paper. They are the most direct historical material for mastering Zen Buddhist monks in the Song Dynasty. Secondly, Zennotes in the Song Dynasty record anecdotes about Zen Buddhist monks and the literati talking about Zen at that time, demonstrating the lively and witty interactions between the two. Lastly, the authors of Zennotes often revealed their personal concerns about the growth and decline of temples in the narrative. Based on the above, Zennotes have the value of historical recordings of trivia, and they are first-hand historical materials for constructing the history of Zen in the Song Dynasty.

*Keywords:* Zennotes, essays of the Zen, Song Dynasty, Zen Buddhist historical materials, Interactions between literati and monks, Zen Buddhist monks

## Introduction

Notes are a genre of writing that record all kinds of miscellaneous feelings. They are often independent and have no overall structure. This style of writing was popular in the Song Dynasty and was regarded as an independent genre. Promoted by the creative style of notes in the Song Dynasty and the flourishing development of Zen Buddhism, many Zen Buddhist monks wrote Zennotes to reflect the actual situation of Zen Buddhism in the Song Dynasty. Zennotes are mostly about life anecdotes or the interesting words and deeds of Zen Buddhist masters. Such miscellaneous records of trivia and anecdotes, on the contrary, more specifically reflect the life of Zen Buddhist masters in the Song Dynasty and the true appearance of the development of Zen Buddhism.

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In the Song Dynasty, Zen Buddhism entered the era of text interpretation. In addition to monk biographies, lamp records, and quotations, Zen temple notes, which received less attention in the past, reflected more lively and diverse content. Compared with the note's genre, monk biographies mainly record the complete life deeds of eminent monks, while lamp records mainly document the key process of Zen Buddhist masters' enlightenment, such as the Zen speech and the interesting words and deeds of the master and disciple. "Quotations" are a record of enlightenment talks by Zen Buddhist masters. The narrative focus of notes is different from monk biographies, lamp records and quotations. This genre makes up for the shortcomings of the above-mentioned Zen historical materials. It mainly records specific fragments of Zen Buddhist monks in daily life. These fragments seem scattered and trivial and tended to be ignored. Zennotes in the Song Dynasty originate from *Lin Jian Lu* 林間錄 written by Hui Hong 惠洪 (1071-1128), followed by *Da Hui Pu Jue Chan Shi Zong Men Wu Ku* 大慧普覺禪師宗門武庫 edited by Dao Qian 道謙 (year unknown), *Luo Hu Ye Lu* 羅湖野錄 and *Yun Wo Ji Tan* 雲臥紀談 written by Xiao Ying 曉瑩 (1122-1209), *Cong Lin Sheng Shi* 叢林盛事 written by Dao Rong 道融 (year known), and *Ku Ya Man Lu* 枯崖漫錄 written by Huan Wu 圓悟 (year unknown). The above-mentioned notes mostly take the daily and trivial words and deeds of Zen Buddhist monks in the Song Dynasty as the main content. In the past, academic circles paid less attention to the above Zennotes, and mainly regarded them as auxiliary historical materials. Therefore, the research results are quite limited.<sup>1</sup>

This study selected the above-mentioned Zennotes recording the trivial anecdotes of Zen Buddhism in the Song Dynasty as the main research objects. Firstly, this study intended to understand the development process of Zennotes in the Song Dynasty, and then use these Zennotes to explore the true appearance of Zen Buddhist monks in the Song Dynasty and understand the internal drawbacks of Zen Buddhism in the Song Dynasty and the authors' criticism, which specifically reflects the true appearance of Zen Buddhism in the Song Dynasty.

### Publication and Development of Zen Buddhist Notes in the Song Dynasty

Zen Buddhism in the Song Dynasty continued its heyday in the Tang Dynasty. Except that the inheritance of Guiyang school 為仰宗 was interrupted, the Fayan school 法眼宗 gradually disappeared in the Northern Song Dynasty, and the Yunmen school 雲門宗 was passed down to the Southern Song Dynasty and then declined. The Linji school 臨濟宗 had many believers. One of its sects, the Huang-Long Sect 黃龍派, was very popular in the late Northern Song Dynasty, while the Yangchi Sect 楊岐派 was more vigorous in the Southern Song Dynasty. The Soto school 曹洞宗 was not as popular as Linji, but it was continuously passed down.

<sup>1</sup> The current research results on Zennotes in the Song Dynasty mostly focus on *Lin Jian Lu*, followed by *Luo Hu Ye Lu*. Most of them are version inspections and content introductions, such as the three short articles, S. Q. Chen's *Lin Jian Lu Li Ce*, Da Hui Pu Jue Chan Shi Zong Men Wu Ku Yan Yu, *Luo Hu Ye Lu Zhi Yan*. A basic introduction to the versions, authors, time of creation, content style, and writing features. Japanese scholar Kobayakawa, Kodai's "*Lin Jian Lu's Publications*" inspects *Lin Jian Lu's* various versions that were in circulation. "*Lin Jian Lu's Investigations—the focuses and problems*" discusses the issues of Hui Hong's narrative viewpoints. "*Lin Jian Lu's Citation of Sen Bao Zhuan*", "*Changes of Juefan Huihong's Perspective on the Five Schools of Zen in her Late years—differences with Lin Jian Lu's Descriptions*" discuss the relationship between Zennotes and historical books. Shiina, Koyu's "*Zen Books Research of Song and Yuan Dynasties (VI) Luo Hu Ye Lu, Yun Wo Ji Tan*" explains in detail the spread of two books since the Song and Ming Dynasties and even in Japan.

*Lin Jian Lu* is the earliest Zennotes seen today. Hui Hong inherited the Dharma from Zhen-jing Ke-wen 真淨克文 (1025-1102) in the Huang-Long Sect. *Lin Jian Lu* is his collection of observations in the Zen Buddhism, including those of monks and high-level teachings, the teachings in the Zen Buddhism, the decrees of the Buddha, the talks of wise men and the literati, and every event, which were recorded as they occurred. Hsieh, Y. "Introduction to Temple Collection" said: A total of more than 300 events were collected and recorded in ten years (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 87, p. 245a). Every event was recorded in a casual and independent manner to present anecdotes about Zen Buddhism in the Tang and Song dynasties from the author's perspective. Each short sketch contains one hundred to one thousand characters, and each is vivid and interesting to read.

*Da Hui Pu Jue Chan Shi Zong Men Wu Ku* (abbreviated as *Zong Men Wu Ku*) is a collection of the application of principles of fate and destiny in Buddhism to everything in life, as well as self-comments from Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089-1163) in the Yangchi Sect by his disciple Dao Qian (year unknown). *Zong Men Wu Ku* is different from quotations, as is the notes of talks and anecdotes in the Zen Buddhism, Zen Buddhist masters' deeds and other miscellaneous records mentioned by Zonggao in daily life without a title or fixed order. The descriptions in the entire book are presented in spoken language without embellishment and are simple and plain.

Zonggao's disciple *Xiao Ying* explains in the introductions of *Luo Hu Ye Lu* and *Yun Wo Ji Tan* that the cause of writing was the impact of Hui Hong. The narrative method and style were both passed down. *Yun Wo Ji Tan* should be the subsequent creation of *Luo Hu Ye Lu*. The introduction, time of publication, and content style, all reveal that these two books are interrelated. These two books include notes of the last words and anecdotes of the various Buddhist masters, wise words, and the anecdotes and poems of the Zen Buddhist monks and literati at that time without categories and titles. The two books preserve the works of "the broken stone remains, tablets eroded by bookworms and ancient book" of Zen Buddhist masters that were not passed down and are of great literature value. Mr. Yuan-An Chen 陳援庵 commented on *Luo Hu Ye Lu* and *Yun Wo Ji Tan*: "They are both notes; although they are not as exquisite as *Lin Jian Lu*, they present the facts. Since the Southern Song Dynasty, many monk historians have needed to use these books" (Chen, 1983, p. 143).

*Cong Lin Sheng Shi* is Daorong's reminiscence of daily life: "I have seen and heard the words that can be recorded by the predecessors in modern times, and they are compiled into a series." Daorong is the inheritor of Tudu Chiche 塗毒智策 (1117-1192) in the Huang-Long Sect. He said that when he read *Luo Hu Ye Lu* by chance, he was deeply impressed, so he compiled his observations in Zen Buddhism into a book over the course of 30 years. This book collects sketches one by one, and there is no table of contents. It records the exchanges of words and poems between famous masters in Zen Buddhism, disciplines and literati. Daorong often added personal comments to certain narratives. However, in order to reflect the actual situation of Zen Buddhism and reflect on the pros and cons, he was wary of the content. The end of the book preface states, "Those who know me shall blame the guilt on me and shall not laugh at me" (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 86, p. 685a), showing his mission of writing history books to leave historical traces of Zen Buddhism, and deeply blaming himself for exposing the disadvantages of Zen Buddhism in the Song Dynasty.

Yuanwu in the Southern Song Dynasty inherited the narrative style of Zennotes. It is said that his *Ku Ya Man Lu* is based on the narrative transcripts, praises, criticisms, words, or documentary records and may serve

as reference for words and deeds. The preface by Shuzhen Chen affirms the book: “This book collects observations about Zen Buddhist monks in the past, whose names have not been recorded in the lamp records” (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 87, p. 24b). Apparently, it has the value of supplementing those missing in the category of “lamp records” in Zen history.

The overall content of these Zennotes records the words and deeds of wisdom and comprehension of the Zen Buddhist monks, records the poetry and exchanges or anecdotes of the interactions between the famous literati and the Zen Buddhist monks, or records and criticizes the actual situation of Zen Buddhism at the time. *Song Gao Sen Zhuan* 宋高僧傳 collected information on very few Zen Buddhist monks in the Song Dynasty. It was not until *Tian Sheng Guang Deng Lu* 天聖廣燈錄 that the words of a few monks in the Song Dynasty began to be collected. However, the narrations of the monks in the Song Dynasty found in the monk biographies and lamp records are too simple or only abstract discourse records, and it is difficult for them to present the specific appearance of monks in the Song Dynasty. Readers can only get a glimpse of the specific image and life situation of Zen Buddhist masters in the Song Dynasty, as well as the cultural customs and developmental drawbacks of Zen Buddhism at that time, from Zennotes. Some authors often added their own personal opinions or criticisms at the end of the articles during narration. Although some authors did not add comments at the end of the notes, they faintly revealed the personal criticisms and opinions at the beginning and the end of the narration of events. Therefore, these Zennotes are not only historical materials reflecting the development of Zen Buddhism but also specifically embody the true appearance of the social culture of Zen Buddhism in the Song Dynasty.

### Records of the Life Details of Zen Buddhist Monks

Zennotes often focus on narrating a specific event, reflecting the image and character of Zen Buddhist monks on paper. Some examples are given as follows. *Lin Jian Lu* Volume 1 records the changes in Deputy Chief Imperial Censor Wang Sui 王隨 (973-1039) after two visits with Zen Buddhist master Xiao Shou 小壽 (year unknown) in Xingjiao Temple, Hangzhou. At the first visit, Xiao Shou was wearing a monk's clothing and basking in the sun. When he saw Wang Sui coming, he treated Wang Sui as an ordinary person, so he pushed a cattail hat sock to him. They sat on the floor together and chatted all day long with a smile on their faces. Afterwards, Wang Sui left. Wang's disciples blamed Xiao Shou for not welcoming the noble minister with courtesy, and said, “The minister came here, why did you not receive him with courtesy?” Therefore, at Wang Sui's second visit, the people in the temple gathered, rang the big bell, and Xiao Shou stepped forward to greet him. Wang Sui held the hands of Zen Buddhist master Xiao Shou when he got out of the sedan chair and said, “Why did you not meet me like the day before? Why are you suddenly so polite and paying attention to formality?” In the end, Wang Sui felt this meeting was less enjoyable than the previous meeting (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 87, p. 245b). This sketch was transcribed by Ming He in *Bu Xu Gao Sen Zhuan* 補續高僧傳, Volume 23 “Hang Zhou Xing Jiao Xiao Shou Chan Shi Zhuan” (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 77, p. 517a).

There is also a short sketch in *Lin Jian Lu* Volume 1 recording Zen Buddhist master Hui Nan (1002-1069) of the Huang-Long Sect, who encountered a fire while living in Guizong Temple on Lu Mountain. The noise of people surrounded the valley, but Hui Nan sat as usual. There was a disciple eager to help him escape from the

fire, but he was scolded by him, revealing that Hui Nan handled accidents calmly in daily life and that his mood did not change with the external environment (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 87, p. 252b). There is also a short sketch in Volume 2 recording how the disciple Hui Yuan (1038-1092) shared a similar character with his master, Zen Buddhist master Hui Nan, who had a solemn and composed attitude. One time, after begging for alms and returning to the temple by boat, he encountered bandits, who threatened him with a blade. Hui Yuan sat in a composed manner and said, “I am willing to give you all I have. Please do not hurt anyone.” His attitude of treating life, death, misfortune and blessing in a composed manner was the same as his master Hui Nan (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 87, p. 274c).

*Cong Lin Sheng Shi*'s Volume 1, “Erling temple abbot”, records that Zen Buddhist master Chihe 知和 (? -1125) of Erling temple abbot to feel that there was a tiger sitting beside him due to the blessing from heaven. Originally, he had made a vow with Zen Buddhist master Puchiao 普交 (1048-1124) about not engaging in society. Afterwards, Puchiao broke his vow and went to Tiantong Temple on Taibai Mountain to serve as the abbot. Chihe then broke off his friendship with Puchiao. Chihe lived in Chungfeng Mountain alone for a long period of time. He refused the invitations from temples on other mountains and insisted on not engaging in society. However, afterwards, edict attendant Chen “used poetry to attract his attention”. Therefore, Chihe agreed to serve as the abbot of Erling temple. Several years later, his reputation spread widely. The imperial court frequently asked him to serve as a court minister, but he was unmoved (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 86, p. 696b). Apparently, although Chihe avoided imperial right, he was fond of poetry and even began to engage in society due to poetry, thereby revealing his preference for literature. Detailed descriptions like these enable readers to understand the unknown preference or life details of Zen Buddhist masters in a specific and subtle way, which are invisible in historical materials such as monk biographies, lamp records, and quotations.

### **Records of Literati and Monks Discussing Zen Anecdotes**

In the Song Dynasty, the literati and Zen Buddhist monks had frequent exchanges. Therefore, the content about Zen notes is mainly anecdotes about literati and monks, as well as their poems and exchanges, revealing that at that time, Zen Buddhist monks' speech wisdom and elegant demeanor were very popular among the literati. Most of these contents are not found in other Zen histories or miscellaneous literati records. Therefore, such contents can be regarded as supplementary historical materials for understanding the daily life of Zen Buddhist monks or literati, and they are very precious.

The Zen speeches wisdom recorded in notes is not lamp records, which are “Koan” that have been simplified and sorted out. Notes describe in detail the process of discussion about Zen between the literati and Zen Buddhist monks. Some of the interactive details of the literati and monks are full of Zen suggestiveness and are as beautiful as a poem. For example, Volume 1 of *Luo Hu Ye Lu* records the exchanges between Huang Ting-jian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105), who mourned for his mother during the Yuanyou years, and Zen Buddhist master Huitang Tsuhsin 晦堂祖心 (1025-1100). Tsuhsin took the saying of Confucius as an example, stating: “My students, do you think I reserve anything in teaching? I reserve nothing. I do everything with you like Confucius did.” Huang Ting-jian was asked to explain this saying, but Tsuhsin did not agree with his explanation. Huang thus became angry and remained silent for a long time. At that time, the summer was

coming to an end and the entire courtyard was filled with the atmosphere of autumn. Tsuhsin said, “Have you smelled the fragrance of the osmanthus flowers?” Huang said, “I have smelled it.” Tsuhsin said, “For you, I reserve nothing.” Huang then happily realized what Tsuhsin meant (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 83, p. 376a). Teaching students unreservedly and without concealment, and staying open-minded to the students to arouse their own thinking reflected Confucius’ attitude towards students. Tsuhsin also shared the same attitude towards Huang. Because words could not convey the complete Zen speech wisdom, Tsuhsin used the scent of osmanthus floating in the natural environment to inspire Huang to open the door of awareness in a way that was unspeakable and could only be perceived.

Some Zen Buddhist monks originally had no intention of composing poems, but their handwritten poems were rich in meaning and favored by the literati. *Cong Lin Sheng Shi*’s Volume 1, “A Court Minister Inscribing a Poem on Jiao Mountain”, records a court minister who visited Jiao Mountain and inscribed a poem on the Wind and Moon Pavilion: “When the wind comes, it is difficult for the top of the pine to remain unmoved. 風來松頂清難立 When the moon reaches the middle of the water, moonlight appears so faded as it seems to set. 月到波心淡欲沈 Realizing that the wind is outside of my mind-heart. 會得松風原物外 Then I feel that my mind-heart is similar to the moon in the water.” 始知江月似吾心 This poem was admired by all the readers. Zen Buddhist master Yuehan Shanko 月菴善果 (1079-1152) happened to visit this pavilion and said after reading the poem: “This poem is great. It’s a pity that the essence is missing.” Therefore, he rephrased the poem to present the focus: “Realizing that the wind is [never] outside of my mind-heart. 會得松風[非]物外 Then I feel that mind-heart is [exactly] the moon in the water.” 始知江月[即]無心 All the people at the site agreed that the rephrased poem was superior (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 86, p. 690a). “Essence” actually means the critical meaning of a poem. Zen Buddhist master Shanko never learned to write poetry. However, his personal outstanding wisdom made it easy for him to rephrase the poem by adding [never] and replacing [similar to] with [exactly] to convert an ordinary poem to superior creation. The spirit of the entire poem became vivid, conveying the perspective of a desire for nothing and everything being the shadow of a heart in Buddhism. His ability to convey the spirit of Buddhism by rephrasing a poem was admired by the literati at that time.

The exchanges and anecdotes between Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) and Zen Buddhist master Fo Yin 佛印 (1032-1098) have been collected in a number of Zen notes. Volume 1 of *Cong Lin Sheng Shi*, “Fo Yin Untying Su Shi’s Jade Belt”, records that Su Shi visited Fo Yin one day without prior notice. Fo Yin said, “There is no seat cushion here, so I cannot keep you company.” Su Shi said, “I may borrow your [Four Elements] as the seat cushion.” Fo Yin said, “If you can answer my question, you may sit here. However, if you cannot answer my question, you will have to leave your jade belt here.” Su Shi agreed gladly. Fo Yin said, “You said that you would like to borrow my [Four Elements] as the seat cushion. However, my [Four Elements] are empty and the [Five Aggregates of Clinging]<sup>2</sup> are invisible. So, where should you sit?” Su Shi could not answer this question after careful thinking. Therefore, Su Shi untied his jade belt, laughed and left. Fo Yin sent him the Yunshan

<sup>2</sup> The “Four Elements” refer to the earth, water, fire and wind. Buddhism believes that these elements are the basic elements constituting the universe and human body. The “Five aggregates of clinging”, a.k.a. “Five Yun” are perceived in Buddhism as the five elements of life of the general public. The “Five aggregates of clinging” are form (or material image, impression), sensations (or feelings, received from form), perceptions, mental activity or formations, and consciousness. Yun means aggregation. Among them, only form is the material component that makes up the body, while the others belong to the spiritual level.

robes as a gift in return (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 86, p. 686b). The interesting conversations between these two people reveal their friendship. Su Shi said that he would like to borrow Fo Yin's Four Elements as the seat cushion, which was a joke. Fo Yin replied to him that the Four Elements were originally empty and asked where Su Shi should sit. They both knew the truth of Buddhist principles, but intentionally joked with each other. After untying the jade belt, Su Shi laughed. Fo Yin sent him the Yunshan robes as a gift in return, suggesting that they cherished their friendship. Only friends with an equivalent level would be able to pleasantly interact with each other using Zen speech wisdom.

Volume 2 of *Zong Men Wu Ku* records Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086), who visited Zen Buddhist master Chiangshan Zan Yuan 蔣山贊元 (year unknown). Zan Yuan intended to persuade Wang Anshi into practicing meditation. The next day, Wang told Zen Buddhist master Zan Yuan that "Practicing meditation is really beneficial". I have spent years writing "Hu Qie Shi Ba Pai" 胡筭十八拍 and have not completed them. It never occurred to me that I could complete it after practicing meditation at night." After listening to what Wang said, Zan Yuan laughed out loud (*TaishōTripiṭaka*, 47, p. 954c). Apparently, practicing meditation inspired Wang and was beneficial to creation. These notes show that Zen Buddhist monks and the literati discussed Zen in a variety of ways with wisdom, which changed the literati's usual thinking and inspired them in an unprecedented way.

### Concerns and Criticisms About the Actual Situation of Zen Buddhism in Song Dynasty

Notes have the value of historical materials documenting trivial records. The authors inherited the tradition of straight writing in the miscellaneous records of wild history. The records can not only make up for the shortcomings of the official history but also provide certain personal judgments. The authors of Zennotes often added personal judgments at the end of each article or added comments in the narrative. Therefore, it is easy to read the authors' sarcasm or criticism of the disadvantages of Zen Buddhism in the era. Xiao Ying's "Preface of Luo Hu Ye Lu Xu" states, "In order to avoid Zen Buddhist monks' deeds being rumored to be erroneous due to the change of times, which might insult their virtues, it is beneficial to record such deeds in the form of notes that can be used as historical materials to make up for the shortcomings when people are willing to write the biography of monks in the future" (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 83, p. 375a). Apparently, the authors of notes had a rigorous attitude in providing faithful historical materials.

In the Song Dynasty, Zen Buddhism was extremely popular and Zen speech wisdom became mature. There were various talents in a variety of sects and schools. Undoubtedly, there were Zen Buddhist monks with various personality traits. Volume 2 of *Zong Men Wu Ku* records Yuantung Hsiuyun 圓通法秀 as saying: "On snowy days, there are three types of monks. The high-level monks will practice meditation in the hall; the medium-level monks will grind the ink stick to make ink to write poems about snow; the low-level monks will gather around the stove to talk about food" (*TaishōTripiṭaka*, 47, p. 956b). This description reveals that among the Zen Buddhist monks in the Song Dynasty, there were true monks who perceived life and death profoundly, as well as general monks who followed the literary and artistic trends, and finally monks who were similar to ordinary people who only talked about clothing, food, and trivia. Afterwards, Zonggao personally witnessed these three types of monks at Tiger Hill and could not help but laugh because he understood that what the senior had told him was true.

Although *Cong Lin Sheng Shi* records many elegant events between the Zen Buddhist masters and the literati, the author was full of worries about this phenomenon. Volume 1, “Gui Yun RuBen’s Cong Lin Bian Ning Pian”, records the phenomenon of close interactions between the literati and Zen Buddhist monks in the Song Dynasty, which had a negative influence on the development of Zen Buddhism. Zen Buddhist master Guiyun Ruben 歸雲如本 (year unknown) was disappointed about the fact that the close interactions between Zen Buddhist masters of various sects and schools and the elite literati at that time had caused the Zen Buddhist masters to win their reputation but gradually lose their attitude. In Sunhsi Dingyu year (1177), he wrote the “Cong Lin Bian Ning Pian” 叢林辨佞篇 to directly point out how Zen Buddhist monks at that time flattered the literati, so as to warn his disciples of such behavior (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 86, p. 694c.). This article, with its significant literature value, is not found in other literature of Zen Buddhism and is collected in *Cong Lin Sheng Shi*. Volume 2, records the fact that Yetang Puchong 野堂普崇 (year unknown) was not famous for his practice of Zen and was only famous for his poetry. Daorong criticized him as Qiji 齊己, Guanxiu 貫休 and other poetry monks to remind the disciples not to act like them (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 86, p. 703c). In another article in Volume 2, “Temple Name and Buddhist Name”, Daorong criticized the trend of monks picking up Buddhist names from the temples on their own. In the past, the names of Zen Buddhist masters were prefixed with mountain names, place names or temple names, such as Nanyue 南嶽, Qingyuan 青原, Baizhang 百丈, and Huangbo 黃檗. Such names of the Zen Buddhist masters were widely spread because they gradually became famous and were not intentionally made by Zen Buddhist masters on their own. However, the Zen Buddhist monks in the Song Dynasty had their name prefixed with “name of mountain, place or temple” before they were famous for their Zen practice to establish a reputation in Zen Buddhism. They really lost the demeanor of the past (*Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō*, 86, p. 702a).

Zennotes reveal how the author was worried about the phenomenon of frequent interactions between Zen temple monks and literati in the Song Dynasty. *Chan Lin Bao Xun* 禪林寶訓 Volume 1 records what Zen Buddhist master Wutsu Fayen 五祖法演 (? -1104) said: “Nowadays, it is difficult for disciples in Zen Buddhism to win the trust of believers, because they are unable to set examples and they also pursue fame and fortune like ordinary people. As a result, they are ridiculed by the world” (*Taishō Tripitaka*, 48, p. 1018b). Apparently, the author of Zennotes was very worried about the influence of Zen Buddhist monks befriending ministers with power and fortune to seek a reputation in the Song Dynasty on the future development of Zen Buddhism.

### Conclusion

In Zen Buddhism historical materials in the Song Dynasty, compared to notes, monk biographies are limited to a fixed narrative pattern that takes into account the complete life of the monks and sometimes lacks uniqueness. In particular, *Song Gao Sen Zhuan* does not mainly collect the data of monks in the Song Dynasty, and there are no monk biographies mainly recording monks in the Song Dynasty. Lamp records focus on key conversations between the masters and disciples of Zen Buddhism and do not focus on recording the daily life of the Zen Buddhist masters. Quotations are just a record of the words of enlightenment spoken by Zen Buddhist masters in the temple. Each Zen short sketch in the Song Dynasty is less than a thousand words and focuses on a detailed description of a single event. From these events, they can more specifically show the daily



deeds of the Zen Buddhist masters and reflect their personalities and spiritual appearance without being limited to monk biographies with a complete account of the protagonist's life, especially with the advantage of focusing on the narrative to highlight the character. They are livelier and more interesting to read than lamp records and monk biographies. Those interactions between Zen Buddhist masters or between Zen Buddhist masters and the literati are full of Zen metaphors and rhetorical hints. The Zen Buddhist monks' calmness and responsive demeanor were the main reason why the literati were impressed. Even though the authors of Zen notes had memory or writing exaggerations or errors, personal vision or limitations due to likes and dislikes, and critical consciousness or unintentional criticism in the narration, the events they recorded are not literary creations made out of nothing, but rather true events collected by the authors based on their observations of Zen Buddhism in real life. In addition to their value as historical materials, notes also reflect the actual situation of Zen temple culture in the Song Dynasty. Moreover, the authors of notes revealed through the criticism and criticism of Zen temple at that time. The authors of notes revealed their personal worries and concerns about the development of Zen temple through the criticism and sarcasm of Zen temple at that time, making these works important historical material for understanding the development of Zen Buddhism in the Song Dynasty.

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