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Book Review: The Discovery of Differences in Thought and Universal Paradigms: *In the Context of the Interactions between Confucianism and Buddhism*

Yugyo-wa bulgyo-ui daehwa: Bulgyo sasang-gwa yugyo sasang-ui sotong-gwa johwa 유교와 불교의 대화 : 불교사상과 유교사상의 소통과 조화 (Dialogue Between Confucianism and Buddhism: Communication and Harmony of Buddhist and Confucian Thought), edited by Doil Kim and Yongbin You. Hapcheon: Janggyeonggak Publishing, 2024, 400 pages. ₩ 30,000. Hardcover. ISBN: 9791191868487.

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I. Building a Comprehensive History of the Interactions Among the Three Thoughts

A scholarly work that meticulously explores the interactions between Buddhism and Confucianism has been published, titled *Yugyo-wa bulgyo-ui daehwa: Bulgyo sasang-gwa yugyo sasang-ui sotong-gwa johwa* 유교와 불교의 대화 : 불교사상과 유교사상의 소통과 조화 (Dialogue Between Confucianism and Buddhism: Communication and Harmony of Buddhist and Confucian Thought, 2024). As suggested by the title and subtitle, the editors' intention to maintain an unbiased perspective is evident from the deliberate alternation in the order of Buddhism and Confucianism. The book cover features the renowned painting *The Three Laughers on the Bridge of Tiger Ravine* (*Huxi sanxiao tu* 虎溪三笑圖), symbolizing the communication among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. It is noteworthy that the book frequently references Taoism, indicating that while the title emphasizes Buddhism and Confucianism, the actual content encompasses the historical interactions among the three thoughts.

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The significance of this book can be summarized in three main points. First, it offers a diachronic perspective on the interactions among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, which are central themes in the intellectual history of China. Second, it adopts a synchronic approach by delving deeper into the scholarly relationships of various figures than previous academic discussions have done. Third, fundamentally, by examining the dialogue between Confucianism and Buddhism, it provides an excellent academic foundation for understanding the philosophies of Korea and China.

In particular, this work distinguishes itself from previous studies, which primarily focused on the debates about Buddhism and Confucianism between key figures like Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139–1193), and Wang Shouren 王守仁 (1472–1529). It expands the scope of research significantly by including a comprehensive introduction and additional chapters. Chapters 1 and 4, in addition to the introductory overview, extend the temporal framework of the study. Furthermore, Chapter 2 introduces figures such as Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163), while Chapter 3 discusses Yunqi Zhuhong 雲棲袾宏 (1535–1615) and Ouyi Zhixu 藕益智旭 (1599–1655). These inclusions enrich the existing research on the interactions among the thoughts, making the book a more comprehensive resource.

This work further elucidates the intricate academic networks among thinkers, presenting them in an evolved manner. The preface and the general introduction sketch the relationship between Confucianism and Buddhism throughout Chinese history. In Chapter 1, Seok Gil-am delves into the unique aspects of Buddhist theories as an external thought system and explores the heart-mind and human nature (*xinxing* 心性) of the Chinese as its recipients.[1] In Chapter 2,

[1] The approach taken by Seok Gil-am in examining the history of interactions between Buddhism and Confucianism can be characterized as a nuanced methodology. He highlights several points: First, the attempt to merge the concepts of "Buddha-nature" (佛性, *Buddhatā*) or "the pure mind of sentient beings" (如來藏, *Tathāgatagarbha*) with "the fundamental human consciousness according to Buddhist spiritualism" (阿賴耶識, *Ālayavijñāna*) was already present in Indian Buddhism (62n3); Second, the pursuit of notions such as essence (*benti* 本體) or true nature (*benxing* 本性) may have inadvertently influenced Chinese Buddhists' understanding of Buddhism without their conscious intent (74); And third, alternatively, the understanding of Buddhism by Chinese

discussions include the "Influence from Buddhism to Confucianism" by Lee Wonseok and Lee Haeim, "Distinct Differences between Buddhism and Confucianism" by Byun Heewook, and "Criticism of Buddhism from the Confucian Perspective" by Jeong Sang Bong and Kim Jin-moo. Notably, this chapter centers on Zhu Xi, with a sequence of essays that follow the intellectual trajectory from Dahui Zonggao to Liu Zihui 劉子翬 (1101–1147) and Zhang Jiucheng 張九成 (1092–1159), then Zhu Xi, Lu Jiuyuan, and finally Wang Shouren. This sequence provides a comprehensive view of the intellectual currents from Chan Buddhism to Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism and the Lu-Wang school of thought. In Chapter 3, Chen Yong-ge looks at the critiques of Yangming Learning by Yunqi Zhuhong and Yongjue Yuanxian 永覺元賢 (1578–1657) from a Buddhist standpoint, while You Yongbin discusses Ouyi Zhixu's *Annotations on the Analects* (*Lunyu dianjing* 論語點睛), highlighting the perceived superiority of Buddhism. Lastly, in Chapter 4, Kim Je-ran introduces the perspectives of Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885–1968), Tang Junyi 唐君毅 (1909–1978), and Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 (1909–1995), who sought to reinterpret traditional thoughts of Buddhism and Confucianism in response to Western philosophical challenges.

While addressing the overall interactions among the three thoughts in China, the book also meticulously details the intellectual influences between individuals, the maintenance of their "identities" as Confucians or Buddhist monks,[2] and their assertions of the "superiority" of their respective schools. Through this work, readers can discern the "universal patterns" of claims emphasizing both the "differences"

adherents could be viewed as a process rooted in their traditional cognitive frameworks and potentially intended by the recipients (74). Considering Seok's methodology, La Yong-hai's 賴永海 perspective that the greatest influence of Confucianism on Buddhism was in terms of human nature (*renxing* 人性) and mind-nature (*xinxing* 心性) (73) aligns with the third approach. Given my belief that oversimplifying the relationships of philosophical influence is not appropriate for studying intellectual history, I concur with Seok Gil-am's detailed analysis.

[2] For instance, from the standpoint of Confucian scholars, they seek commonalities with other elements while maintaining their identity as "Confucians." This perspective is reflected in how numerous thinkers introduced in this book are remembered primarily as members of specific schools or sects.

and "commonalities" among the thoughts.[3] These patterns can be effectively used as a framework to understand the philosophies of China and Korea.

II. Differences in Thought: A Multidimensional Guidepost

Examining the content of this book reveals several intriguing points. One of its notable strengths is the presentation of "multidimensional interpretations" of specific thinkers. Chapter 3 exemplifies this by offering contrasting views on Ouyi Zhixu 藕益智旭. Below, I will delve into this in detail.

Chen Yong-ge, in his examination of "Pre-Modern Confucian-Buddhist Relations in China," categorizes Yunqi Zhuhong 雲棲袾宏 and Yongjue Yuanxian 永覺元賢 together for their criticisms of Yangming Learning (274–93). In contrast, he understands Ouyi Zhixu from the standpoint of a Buddhist integrating Confucianism and Buddhism (294–308). Chen evaluates Zhixu's approach of interconnecting the concept of "practice is the essence" by Wang Yangming with the concept of "deterring delusions arising from worldly ideas" (*zhiguan* 止觀) by Tiantai Zhiyi 天台智顗 (538–597) (308). Furthermore, Chen focuses on why Zhixu ceased his commentary in Chapter 12 of *Commentary on the Analects* (*Lunyu jie* 論語解),[4] where Confucius's disciple Yan Yuan 顏淵 (521–490/481) inquires about "benevolence" (*ren* 仁). Chen interprets that if Zhixu had comprehended the overall context of Wang Shouren's 王守仁 *Study of the Mind* (*Xinxue* 心學) on the innate knowledge of good (*liangzhi* 良知), he would have regarded Yan Yuan as the culminating

[3] For example, Hae-im Lee critiques Ari Borrell's interpretation of Zhang Jiucheng's 張九成 concept of "investigating things" (*gewu* 格物) (144–45n27). Lee suggests that although Zhang Jiucheng ostensibly explains *gewu* as investigating the principles of things, underlying this explanation is a substantial incorporation of Chan Buddhist mind theory, which reflects phenomena as they are. Lee's argument provides a more detailed analysis of Zhang Jiucheng's thought in terms of its "differences" and "commonalities."

[4] The formal title of Ouyi Zhixu's book is *Ouyi's Annotations on the Four Books* (*Sishu Ouyi jie* 四書藕益解), which includes *Annotations on the Analects* (*Lunyu dianjing* 論語點睛). It appears to have been mistakenly referred to or translated as *Commentary on the Analects* (*Lunyu jie* 論語解), given its role as a commentary on the *Analects*.

figure of the sacred teachings of Confucius and Wang Shouren as the successor of the sacred Confucian learning (310). Thus, Chen concludes that Zhixu appraised Wang Shouren as having reopened the doors to the sacred learning (*shengxue* 聖學) (310). In this view, Chen argues that while interpreting the core Confucian text, the *Analects*, Zhixu held Wang Shouren in high regard.

In Chapter 3, the arguments presented by You Yongbin, following Chen Yong-ge's essay, appear to offer a contrasting perspective. In his essay, "An Examination of 'Using Buddhism to Interpret Confucianism' in Ouyi Zhixu's *Annotations on the Analects*," You argues that Zhixu employed the Buddhist concept of "the true suchness (*zhenru* 眞如) of Buddha-nature (*foxing* 佛性)" to interpret the Confucian virtue of *ren* 仁. You contends that Zhixu aimed to synthesize Confucianism and Buddhism, ultimately asserting the superiority of Buddhism over Confucianism (326–27). He also notes that Zhixu, while integrating various Buddhist doctrines without being constrained by sectarian boundaries, adopted an inclusive approach within Buddhism (327). This suggests that Zhixu acknowledged the unification within Buddhist teachings but set Buddhism apart from Confucianism. Moreover, You highlights Zhixu's interpretation in *Annotations on the Analects*, where he suggests that the way (*dao* 道) of Confucius was transmitted to Yan Yuan. This interpretation challenges Zhu Xi's 朱熹 established theory on the orthodox transmission of the Dao from Confucius through Zengzi 曾子, Zisi 子思, and Mencius (*daotong lun* 道統論), which could be seen as a broader critique of Confucianism as a whole. Essentially, Zhixu's view implies that after Yan Yuan, no true successors to Confucianism existed (331-32).

The juxtaposition of these divergent interpretations of Ouyi Zhixu by Chen Yong-ge and You Yongbin is particularly intriguing. According to Jin, Zhixu can be seen as a thinker striving for harmony between Confucianism and Buddhism. In contrast, You presents Zhixu as advocating the superiority of Buddhism over Confucianism. This raises the question: should we view these contrasting interpretations as a logical inconsistency arising from the compilation of multiple essays? In reality, this juxtaposition is a deliberate editorial choice, reflecting an exceptional conceptual design. The preface of the book emphasizes

the themes of "intellectual variation and fusion" (10). These themes are not confined to discussions within the contexts of "historical change," "temporal shifts," or "contemporaneous thinkers." Rather, they can be explored within the multifaceted and complex ideological systems of individual thinkers themselves.[5] Moreover, intellectual variation and fusion can also emerge from the interpretations of the thinkers by different scholars.

Ouyi Zhixu is commonly remembered as a "monk." This perception persists because, despite his engagement with Confucian texts like the *Analects*, his philosophical identity is fundamentally rooted in Buddhism. Chen Yong-ge's perspective focuses on Zhixu's efforts to harmonize Confucianism within a Buddhist framework, emphasizing mutual integration. On the other hand, You Yongbin highlights the aspect of Zhixu's pursuit of "Buddhist superiority" even within his efforts to merge Confucian and Buddhist thoughts. Thus, in the dialogue or integration between Confucianism and Buddhism, You effectively illustrates the core values Zhixu aimed to uphold. Together, the essays by Chen Yong-ge and You Yong-bin offer complementary insights, each contributing to a more nuanced and multi-dimensional understanding of Ouyi Zhixu.

III. Universal Paradigms of Thought: *Another Perspective on Korean Philosophy*

We previously explored Ouyi Zhixu's 藕益智旭 tendencies from two perspectives: the "harmonization of Confucianism and Buddhism" and the "assertion of Buddhism's superiority over Confucianism." However, fundamentally, if we revisit the "debate history of the three thoughts (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism)" mentioned at the beginning, we can identify a "universal pattern of thought" that is remarkably pervasive. This pattern revolves around "finding commonalities" and "determining superiority" between Confucianism and Buddhism. These

[5] A representative example from this book is the essay by Lee Won-seok. He effectively traces how Liu Zihui 劉子翬 adjusted his philosophical ideas after being critiqued by Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (93).

dual tendencies can be observed in almost all thinkers who discuss the integration of the three thoughts. Moreover, this occurs within the framework of either "Confucian scholars" or "Buddhist thinkers." In the field of philosophy, we can, for a moment, set aside the chronological order and focus solely on the "universal paradigms of thought." These paradigms can then be used as tools to examine the specific history of ideas.

To better illustrate the value of this book, I will briefly introduce the debate history of the three thoughts. After the Four Great Persecutions (*Sanwu yizong* 三武一宗),[6] during which Buddhism faced substantial suppression in China, the debate over the superiority among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism became a central theme in Chinese intellectual history, particularly during the Song dynasty.

Before Zhu Xi 朱熹, notable figures like Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824), with his *Memorial on the Bone of the Buddha* (*Lunfo gubiao* 論佛骨表), and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 (1007–1072), with his *Original Discussion* (*Benlun* 本論), had already expressed anti-Buddhist sentiments. In response, Zhang Shangying 張商英 (1042–1122), in his *Essay on Defending the Dharma* (*Hufa lun* 護法論), argued that Buddhism, an external religion, benefited Chinese culture and thought, advocating for the coexistence and harmony of the three thoughts (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism).[7] This logic continued to counteract the anti-Buddhist tendencies of Neo-Confucianism. The argument for the equality of the three thoughts persisted in works like Liu Mi's 劉謐 (?–?) *Theory on the Equal Minds of the Three Thoughts* (*Sanjiao pingxin lun* 三教平心論) during the Yuan dynasty and Shen Shirong's 沈士榮 (fl. 1385) *Supplement to the Original Discussion of the Thoughts* (*Xuyuan jiaolun* 續原教論) in the Ming dynasty (Mori 2004, 34–36). Ouyi Zhixu, prominently discussed in Chapter 3 of this book, attempted to reconcile Confucianism and

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6 This refers to the persecutions of Buddhism carried out by the emperors Taiwu 太武帝 of Northern Wei, Wu 武帝 of Northern Zhou, Wuzong 武宗 of Tang, and Shizong 世宗 of Later Zhou.

7 Originally, Zhang Shangying 張商英, a Confucian scholar and prime minister during the Song dynasty, later converted to Buddhism and ardently defended it. To understand the academic relationship between Zhang Shangying and Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲, which is also emphasized in this book, see Levering (2000).

Buddhism through Buddhist reinterpretations of Confucian classics, such as the *Four Books* (*Sishu* 四書) and the *Book of Changes* (*Zhouyi* 周易) in works like *Ouyi's Annotations on the Four Books* (*Sishu Ouyi jie* 四書藕益解) and *Zen Interpretation of the Zhouyi* (*Zhouyi chanjie* 周易禪解). Similarly, in the early Qing dynasty, Liu Yiming 劉一明 (1734–1821) advocated for the fusion of the three thoughts in his *Collected Works of Harmonizing the Mind* (*Huixinnei ji* 會心內集).

This recurring logic also emerged in the relationship between Neo-Confucianism and Buddhism in East Asia. In Korea, the debate over the three thoughts has been prominent, especially in the context of the "Reverence for Confucianism and Suppression of Buddhism" (*sungyu eokbul* 崇儒抑佛) policy. When Neo-Confucianism from the Song dynasty was fully adopted during the late Goryeo period, Seon Master Hwanam 幻菴 (1320–1392) actively disseminated Zhang Shangying's *Essay on Defending the Dharma* in 1379, arguing for the unity of Confucianism and Buddhism. The widespread circulation of the *Essay on Defending the Dharma* is evident in the anti-Buddhist memorials for the exclusion of Buddhism in 1391.[8] In the early Joseon period, the monk Gihwa 己和 (1376–1433) also discussed the non-difference between Buddhism and Confucianism in his works, *Theory on Clarifying the Correct* (*Hyeonjeongnon* 顯正論) and *Debate on the Questions Between Confucianism and Buddhism* (*Yuseok jiruiron* 儒釋質疑論).[9] During the mid-Joseon period, Master *Hyujeong* 休靜 (1520–1604) sought harmony among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism in his *Guidance for the Three Thoughts* (*Samga gwigam* 三家龜鑑). These intense intellectual debates about the three thoughts were not confined to China but were a continuous feature in Korea as well.

Furthermore, during the Ming and Joseon dynasties, there was active dissemination of knowledge related to Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Emperor Yongle 永樂帝 (r. 1402–1424) of the Ming dynasty not only published significant Confucian texts like the *Great Compendia of Comments on the Four Books* (*Sishu daquan* 四書大全) and the *Great*

[8] For more detailed information, refer to Gwak (2021, ch. 4).

[9] Uri Kaplan (2019) considers Zhang Shangying's 張商英 *Essay on Defending the Dharma* and Gihwa's 己和 *Debate on the Questions Between Confucianism and Buddhism* as exemplary Buddhist apologetic works and studies their thematic similarities.

Compendia of Five Classics (*Wujing daquan* 五經大全) but also texts like the *Great Compendia of Nature and Principle* (*Xingli daquan* 性理大全). Additionally, he compiled works promoting moral behavior, such as *The Accumulation of Goodness* (*Weishan yinzhi* 爲善陰騭) and *Stories of Filial Piety* (*Xiaoshun shishi* 孝順事實). Particularly, *The Accumulation of Goodness*, a Daoist text encouraging virtuous deeds, was published by his order in 1417 and quickly introduced to Joseon. The *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty* (*Joseon wangjo sillok* 朝鮮王朝實錄) record that in 1434, King Sejong 世宗 (r. 1418–1450) ordered the creation of new metal type, known as *gabinja* 甲寅字, based on texts like *The Accumulation of Goodness and the Analects*, which were stored in the royal lectures (See *Sejong sillok*, 1434). Furthermore, instances of Buddhist and Daoist texts being published by local governments in early Joseon,[10] and the presence of these texts in the catalogs of Kyujanggak (奎章閣),[11] the royal library in late Joseon, indicate that the dissemination of the three thoughts' literature was active even in official domains. This implies that the intellectual environment in Joseon was similar to that of China, where the debates and dialogues among the three thoughts were perpetually active.

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[10] Haruyama (1943) lists early Joseon-period printing woodblocks, including editions of the *Song of Enlightenment* (*Zhengdao ge* 證道歌) made in Samcheok 三陟 and Pyeongyang 平壤, an edition of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 made in Gyeongju 慶州, and an edition of *Miscellaneous Disputations of the Buddhists* (*Bul Ssi japbyeon* 佛氏雜辨) made in Yecheon 醴泉. However, the *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty* suggest that the *Song of Enlightenment* might have been published for the study of calligraphy (See *Sejo sillok*, 1459). *Miscellaneous Disputations of the Buddhists*, on the other hand, seems to have been published to criticize Buddhism. For the circumstances surrounding the publication of the *Zhuangzi* in Gyeongju, refer to Roh (2019).

[11] The *Total Catalog of Kyujanggak Royal Library* (*Gyujang chongmok* 奎章總目), first published in 1781 with an extant version estimated to be from 1805, is a kind of annotated catalog created during the early reign of King Jeongjo 正祖 in the late Joseon dynasty. Its compilation, led by Seo Ho-su, was part of an effort to organize foreign books housed in the Kyujanggak 奎章閣 Royal Library. In the "Zibu 子部" section of this catalog, searching under "Buddhist Texts" (*Seokga ryu* 釋家類) reveals records of Buddhist commentaries such as the *Commentary on the Śūrangama Sūtra* (*Lengyan Zhengjie* 楞嚴正解). Similarly, under "Daoist Texts" (*Doga ryu* 道家類), there are entries like the ten volumes of *Explanations on the Laozi and the Zhuangzi* (*Lao Zhuang yi* 老莊翼; 老子翼 and 莊子翼), including a preface by Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1540–1620). The original text of this catalog can be accessed through the Kyujanggak Original Document Search Service (See Seo, 1781 (1805)).

The sustained debates and the circulation of knowledge regarding the three thoughts in both China and Joseon highlight a long historical continuum. Paradoxically, this suggests that knowledge of the three thoughts was a crucial lens for understanding the world. In this context, the value of this book becomes even more significant. While it primarily focuses on the Song and Ming dynasties following the introduction of Buddhism to China, the book serves as a "prism" for exploring the broader intellectual landscape, not only of China but also of Joseon. Thus, the publication of this comprehensive academic work on the dialogue among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism is of profound significance.

The emphasis on Qisong 契嵩 (1007–1072) in the general introduction is particularly noteworthy. Qisong extensively discussed "filial piety" (*xiao* 孝), a core value in Confucianism (36-37),[12] and connected the Buddhist Five Precepts (*wujie* 五戒) and the Confucian Five Constants (*wuchang* 五常) around the concept of filial piety (37). This intellectual approach is also found in early Joseon.[13] For instance, Gihwa 己和 argued similarly in his *Theory on Clarifying the Correct*, equating the Five Precepts of Buddhism with the Five Constants of

[12] Strictly speaking, it is important not to assume that "filial piety" is exclusive to Confucianism, even though it is highly valued in Confucian ethics. Previous research has shown that even in Indian Buddhism, filial piety was emphasized, including among those who had renounced worldly life. Additionally, core Daoist texts, while adopting some aspects of Confucian ethical thought, also elevate filial piety as the supreme virtue necessary for attaining immortality. For a critique of understanding Chinese Buddhism's concept of "filial piety" as merely a transformation of Indian Buddhist ideas, see Schopen (1984). Also, for an in-depth discussion of early Daoist texts like *Book of the Great Peace* (*Taiping jing* 太平經) which describe "filial piety as the highest virtue among all matters under heaven" (天下之事, 孝爲上第一), refer to Park (2023, 159–62).

[13] Guang Xing draws attention to the phrase "Observing the precepts is filial piety, a repayment of the parents' kindness" (持戒乃孝順, 報父母恩耳) from the *Sūtra on Abusive Speech* (*Foshuo mayi jing* 佛說罵意經) (Guang 2022, 531n11). This indicates that the concept of linking filial piety with observance of precepts was already present during the time of An Shigao 安世高 (fl. 148–180) (142). This demonstrates that, both before and after Qisong 契嵩, there is a pervasive pattern of connecting major Buddhist virtues with filial piety. Additionally, Guang Xing has written extensively on *The Sutra on the Deep Kindness of Parents* (*Fumuenzhong Jing* 父母恩重經), a key Buddhist text that illustrates a Buddhist understanding of filial piety, which is believed to have been compiled before 695 (See Guang 2014).

Confucianism.[14] Although in his *Debate on the Questions Between Confucianism and Buddhism*, Gihwa slightly adjusts the hierarchical relationship by stating that "the Buddhist Five Precepts open the way to the Five Constants,"[15] the essential link between the two sets of concepts remains consistent. Like Qisong, Gihwa also emphasized "filial piety" and adopted a defensive stance in protecting Buddhism against anti-Buddhist arguments.

I highly recommend a thorough reading of the book's footnotes. For instance, You Yongbin, in his footnotes, provides a detailed comparison of the philosophical positions of Ouyi Zhixu and Tongrun 通潤 (1565–1624), both monks of Ming China. You explains that while Zhixu interpreted Confucian concepts through a Buddhist lens, Tongrun used Confucian ideas to elucidate Buddhist concepts (326n21). This distinction is critical because it captures the typological characteristics of thought in intellectual history. Additionally, among the commentaries on the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* (*Lengyanjing* 楞嚴經) prevalent in Joseon, Yi Ui-bong 李義鳳 (1733–1801), a Joseon Confucian scholar, often cited Tongrun's *Harmonized Commentary on the Śūraṅgama Sūtra* (*Lengyanjing hezhe* 楞嚴經合轍) in his encyclopedic work, *The Forest of Explanations of Past and Present* (*Gogeum seongnim* 古今釋林). This indicates that some Joseon Confucian scholars engaged with Buddhist concepts through Tongrun's works, suggesting that a particular Chinese thinker's interpretations served as a bridge facilitating their understanding of Buddhist ideas.

IV. Conclusion

As we have seen, this book provides a comprehensive overview of the ongoing debates and attempts at harmony between Confucianism and Buddhism on the Chinese mainland. It meticulously explores the interactions between these two philosophies, particularly through

14 See the following passage in Gihwa (n.d., H0118, vol. 7, 217, b23–c02): "儒以五常而爲道樞. 佛之所謂正戒. 即儒之所謂五常也. 不殺. 仁也. 不盜. 義也. 不婬. 禮也. 不飮酒. 智也. 不妄語. 信也."

15 See the following passage in Gihwa (n.d., H0120, vol. 7, 267, a04): "佛之五戒. 所以開示五常之端"

the perspectives of major thinkers from the Song and Ming dynasties, including Zhu Xi 朱熹, Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵, and Wang Shouren 王守仁. The book details their significant intellectual engagements with Buddhism and how these engagements shaped their philosophical views. Moreover, it offers a nuanced analysis of how Buddhist monks interpreted Confucianism.

Unraveling the commonalities and differences among thinkers, especially considering their intellectual exchanges, backgrounds, and the socio-cultural contexts in which they operated, is indeed a challenging task. This book successfully systematizes the history of intellectual exchanges in China, paving the way for future works. It is hoped that this volume will be the first in a series that explores the history of interactions among Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism across the broader East Asian cultural sphere, including Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

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