

The Influence of Sino-Japanese Zen Communication on Five Mountain Poetry: A Case Study of Zekkai Chuushin

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Abstract: Five Mountain culture, a unique Sino-Japanese exchange, shaped Japan's development via Zen monks. These monks in China and Japan infused Zen's allure into Japan, initially captivating aristocrats and later the masses. As Five Mountain culture spread, it met the ruling party's needs, blending Chinese culture with local roots to form a distinct Japanese culture. Zen monks, especially Zekkai Chuushin, who studied in China, played pivotal roles. Zekkai Chuushin's Zen mastery, appreciation of Chinese customs, and study of Ming Dynasty calligraphy and poetry influenced the spread of Chinese culture. His masterpiece, "Jiao Jian Gao," epitomizes Chinese poetry in Five Mountain, encompassing nostalgia for China, yearning for homeland, and critiques of Japanese politics. Zekkai Chuushin's works reflect a deep exchange between Chinese and Japanese Zen literature, illustrating China's profound impact on Japanese Zen during the Muromachi period. This study explores how Japanese Zen monks, especially Zekkai Chuushin, drew inspiration from Chinese poetry. Through analysis of his poems, the authors examine the influence and adaptation of Chinese poetry in Japanese Zen literature. The comparative analysis highlights similarities and differences with native Chinese poets, shedding light on Japan's reception of Chinese culture in the Five Mountain period. Zekkai Chuushin creatively embraced Chinese poetry, leaving a profound mark on Japanese literature, skillfully merging tradition with originality and enriching Japanese literary culture while preserving Chinese poetic heritage, showcasing Japan's connection to Chinese culture through the Han language.

Keywords: Muromachi period, Five Mountain literature, Zekkai Chuushin, Sino-Japanese exchange

1. Introduction

Five Mountain culture is a cultural school with Han culture as the main body from the end of the Kamakura period to the Muromachi period in Japan, which has an important and long-term significance for the development of Japanese Han culture and Buddhism. The study of the development history and cultural connotation of the Five Mountains Culture is beneficial to a better understanding of the integration and development of Japanese Zen Buddhism in Chinese and Japanese religion, literature and art.

The main body of the creation of Five Mountain Culture is the "Five Mountain Sect" monks in the late Kamakura and Muromachi periods of Japan, many of whom have the experience of going to China for Buddhist study and exchange. In addition to the basic doctrines of Buddhism, Five Mountain Zen monks made outstanding contributions to the introduction of Chinese poetry into Japan and the formation of Five Mountain literature, which also promoted Five Mountain culture to become the second peak of the development of Chinese literature in the history of Japanese literature. Among them, the most famous Zen monk is Zekkai Chuushin, who was a Zen master of the Linji Sect in the early period of the Muromachi shogunate in Japan. He lived in China for nearly ten years and was active in various fields of Japanese literature, religion, and politics after returning to China.

For Zekkai Chuushin, both Chinese and Japanese historians and literary circles have conducted relevant academic research, including Ren Ping, a Chinese scholar, who systematically discussed Zekkai Chuushin's academic work "The Zen of Multicultural Identity: A Study of Japanese Five Mountain Monks in the Middle Ages [1]." From the aspects of poetics, Buddhism, and politics, the book discusses the great significance of Five Mountain culture and Zen monk groups to Japanese medieval culture, politics, and even foreign relations with the help of the representative figure of Zekkai Chuushin, among which the influence on Zekkai Chuushin needs to be further studied.

This paper explores the impact of Zen monks' exchanges between China and Japan on Five Mountain Chinese poetry and Zen Buddhism's growth in Japan. It analyzes Zekkai Chuushin's work, enhancing our understanding of this valuable aspect of Chinese poetry.

2. The Development of Buddhism in Muromachi from the Perspective of Sino-Japanese Buddhist Cultural Exchange

2.1. The Development Pattern of Japanese Buddhism in the Muromachi Period

During the Kamakura period, Zen Buddhism was introduced into Japan. Zen Buddhism was introduced into Japan by Song monks such as Rongxi, Daoyuan, and Yuaner Bianyuan, and was established as an independent sect in Japan by Song monks such as Lanxi Daolong, Daxiu Mindfulness, and Wuxue Zuyuan [1]. Hojo Tokiyori (1227-1263) vigorously developed Zen Buddhism and invited the Song monk Lanxi Daolong to build a long temple. Zen gradually developed in Japan. The Muromachi shogunate inherited the policy of the Kamakura shogunate and established a religious policy centered on Zen. The reason why the political, literary, and social aspects of the rapid penetration of Zen into the Muromachi period were valued by the Japanese ruling group was that the Muromachi shogunate gained power in the war. As rulers with low cultural literacy, they hope to promote and consolidate their rule with the help of emerging cultural forces in order to compete with the inherent aristocratic culture. The nobles with high cultural literacy could not become the object of the shogunate regime to rely on and use in culture because they were robbed of the real power of state rule by the shogunate, so the Shogunate naturally turned its attention to the disseminator of the new Zen culture, that is, the monk class [1].

Therefore, in the Muromachi period, the Linji Zen Sect had a dual role as both a closely aligned religion and an influential political advisor, earning high respect within the regime.

2.2. Zen Buddhism and the Spread of Chinese Culture in Japan

The period from Kamakura to Muromachi was an important period of Sino-Japanese exchanges. At this time, China was in the Song Dynasty, the social economy was very prosperous, and the improvement of shipbuilding technology greatly promoted the development of overseas trade. Japan also actively promotes policies to encourage trade with China, which lays a foundation for religious and cultural exchanges between China and Japan [2]. According to historical records, only more than 120 Japanese monks entered the Southern Song Dynasty, most of whom were Five Mountain Zen

monks, the most famous of whom was Mingan Rongxi, the founder of Zen Buddhism in Japan. He went to the Southern Song Dynasty twice to learn from Xu'an Huai Chang and concentrate on spiritual practice. Emperor Xiaozong of the Song Dynasty bestowed on him the honorific title of "Master Qianguang". After returning to China, Rongxi spread Zen Buddhism in various places and founded many temples such as Shengfu Temple. The exchanges between Japan and China during this period promoted the blending of culture and religion between the two countries and had a profound impact on the development of Japanese Buddhism [3].

With the continuous infusion of Chinese Buddhist thought, Sino-Japanese culture has been more widely exchanged. Because of their admiration for Chinese Buddhism, Japanese monks actively advised Chinese monks to pass on the Dharma directly to Japan. The first monk to cross the sea to pass on the Dharma was Lanxi Daolong, the heir of Yangshan Wuminghuixing Dharma in the Song Dynasty. At that time, the Southern Song Dynasty of China was at the peak of culture, Confucianism was highly developed, and Neo-Confucianism was popular in academic and ideological circles. Influenced by this trend of thought, the Japanese monks who entered the Song Dynasty also introduced Neo-Confucianism into Japan as a kind of knowledge when they introduced Zen. Its own literariness has attracted wide attention in Japanese Buddhist circles. While practicing Zen, Five Mountain Zen monks have constantly improved their cultivation of Song learning and used it as a means of preaching. At the same time, Zen monks devoted great enthusiasm to the writing of poetry and prose. At that time, the combination of Zen and literature prevailed in the Chinese Zen forest, and with the introduction of Zen into Japan, it became the mother of Japanese Five Mountain literature. With the introduction of Zen culture into Japan, the combination of Zen literature and Chinese Zen has developed rapidly in Japan. The name of Five Mountain Literature comes from the main creators, the Zen monks of Five Mountain School, and almost all literary works are created by them. This form of literary expression is closely related to the inheritance of Zen in Japan and also shows the acceptance and absorption of Chinese culture in Japan during this period.

2.3. Five Mountain System and the Establishment of Five Mountain Literature in Japan

The Five Mountain Zen culture in the Song Dynasty is one of the important stages in the development of Chinese Buddhism. The five mountains refer to the five major Zen temples identified in the Southern Song Dynasty, namely, Yuhang Jingshan Temple, Qiantang Lingyin Temple, Jingci Temple, Ningbo Tiantong Temple, and Yuwang Temple. The ten temples are ten secondary temples attached to these temples. The system originated early, but it was institutionalized in the Southern Song Dynasty, mainly affecting the southern region. The establishment of this system promoted the development of Zen culture but also brought about the problem of mutual interference between politics and religion. The establishment of the system made Zen recognized by the central government and promoted its status but also led to the influence of the government on religious activities. The introduction of an official rank system in the selection of five mountains and ten temples and the selection of abbots promoted the secularization of Zen. The system of Five Mountains and Ten Temples in Japan was also influenced by this, and the culture of Five Mountains Zen in the Southern Song Dynasty affected the development of religious culture in Japan to a certain extent.

It is generally believed that the rise of Zen Buddhism in Japan was about the middle of the Kamakura period, and the embryonic form of the Five Mountain system appeared in the late Kamakura period and was finalized in the early Muromachi period. Japan has set up ten temples and mountains under the five mountains, forming a huge temple system. The establishment of the Five Mountain system lasted about 100 years, covering the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, reflecting the complex changes in Japanese history. The Five Mountains System constituted the dual political structure of the Japanese imperial court and the shogunate, which had a profound impact on the development of Japanese Zen culture.

Five Mountain literature refers to the literary works produced in the development of Zen Buddhism in Japan, which were mainly created by Zen monks under the Five Mountain Shisha system. With the establishment of the system of Five Mountains and Ten Temples in the Song Dynasty, especially in the Southern Song Dynasty, the communication between Zen and secular society deepened, and the integration of Buddhism and Confucianism gradually emerged.

In this literary tradition, some Zen monks, such as Yongming Yanshou, Dahui Zonggao, and Mingjiao Qisong, advocated the integration of Zen and Confucianism and integrated Confucian elements into Zen. In the interaction with the secular society, Zen monks had frequent contact with officials, scholar-bureaucrats, and literati, such as Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, and Wang Anshi. Zen monks were gradually influenced by the literary atmosphere, and many literati Zen monks emerged. These Zen monks are not only erudite and talented but also can write poems and compositions, which contribute to the formation of Five Mountain literature.

Five Mountain literature in Japan was first defined by the Zen monk Kamimura, mainly referring to the literary works created by Five Mountain Zen monks from the end of Kamakura to the Muromachi period, including Chinese poetry, Chinese, diaries, essays, and so on. This literary school is mainly composed of Chinese poetry and prose, which can be divided into Zen poetry and non-Zen poetry. Zen poetry includes quotations and eulogies of eminent monks, while non-Zen poetry includes poems, commentaries, notes and sayings. From the late Kamakura period to the Muromachi period, Five Mountain Zen Monks experienced three hundred years of literary evolution, and gradually moved from imitating the works of the great masters of the Tang and Song Dynasties to creating their own unique poetry. Influenced by Yan Yu's Canglang Poetry Talks, the Zen monks gradually transformed "poetry" into "poetry", which promoted the development of Chinese poetry in Japan. Five Mountain literature became the mainstream literature of Japanese medieval society and reached its peak in the history of Chinese literature, and its influence even surpassed that of Zen literature in China, its birthplace.

3. Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Significance in Japanese Zen Buddhism and Chinese Literature

3.1. The Life of Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin

Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin (1336-1405) was a Zen monk of the Rinzai school's Mokusho lineage during Japan's Muromachi period. He was born in Tosa Tsuno, affiliated with Tenryu-ji Temple in Kyoto, and studied under Zen Master Musou Soseki. In 1368, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin traveled to the Ming Dynasty in China, where he paid homage to Zen Masters Qingyuan Hua Wei at Huizhou Daochang Temple and Jitan Zongmiao at Hangzhou Zhongtian Temple. He initially served as an incense burner and later became the temple's abbot. During his stay in China, he also visited the Lingyin Temple in Hangzhou and the Wanshou Temple in Huzhou, establishing connections with scholars like Yong Zhenfu and Qingyuan Huai Wei. In 1376, he was summoned by the Ming Emperor Taizu to discuss matters related to the Xu Fu Shrine and composed a poem titled "Yingzhi Fu San Shan," which earned him the emperor's recognition and gifts, after which he returned to Japan.

In 1380, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin was appointed as the abbot of Kai Eirin-ji Temple by the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu. In 1386, he moved to Kyoto and served as the abbot of To-ji Temple and, in 1392, became the sixth abbot of Shokoku-ji Temple. He held the position of abbot at Shokoku-ji Temple three times, in 1397, and 1401, and finally until his passing in 1405 at the age of 70. As a representative figure of the "Five Mountain Literature," Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin left behind two major literary works: "Recorded Sayings of Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin" (2 volumes) and a collection of poems and essays titled "Shoukenkou" (2 volumes). He is often mentioned in conjunction with Yudo Shushin as the "Twin Jewels of Japanese Five Mountain Literature."

From the above biography, it is evident that Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin represents the typical profile of a Japanese Zen monk during the Muromachi period. He not only sought spiritual guidance from eminent monks within Japan but also embarked on a journey to China to study Buddhism and Chinese culture. Considering the unique relationship between politics and Buddhism during the Muromachi period, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin also played a significant role in the political landscape, becoming a central figure in the administration of the Ashikaga shogunate under Ashikaga Yoshimitsu [4].

3.2. Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Significance in Japanese Zen Buddhism and Chinese Literature

Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin excelled in the realm of poetry and prose. His work "Shoukenkou" consists of 128 Chinese poems, including five-character-regulated poems, seven-character-regulated poems, five-character quatrains, and seven-character quatrains. This collection comprises carefully selected masterpieces created during his lifetime, edited by his disciple Etsugaku Hiei. The collection is not only crucial for understanding his unique creative style and cultural depth but also holds a distinctive position in the history of Chinese literature in Japan. Japanese scholar Takemura Takeji once remarked about Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Chinese poetry: "His poems completely depart from the style of verses and are akin to the literature of common people, hence they are considered poems free from the odor of the kitchen [5]."

Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's output of poetry and prose is relatively limited. Compared to his contemporary Yudo Shushin, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's literary works represent less than one-tenth in quantity. This is primarily due to Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's stringent selection standards for his own works, choosing only the finest pieces as his legacy. This selection reflects his pursuit of poetic artistry and his awareness of his own literary value. Examining the forms of poems and prose included in "Shoukenkou," it becomes evident that Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin primarily focused on regulated poems and quatrains. During his studies in Ming China, he concentrated on regulated poems, influenced by the revival of ancient Chinese poetry during the early Ming Dynasty. Under the tutelage of eminent monks like Jitan Zongmiao, he also delved into the creation of regulated verse, laying the foundation for his later proficiency in this form. Upon returning to Japan and following the evolving trends in Zen Buddhist literature during the Muromachi period, quatrains gradually supplanted regulated poems as the dominant form in his works. This shift reflects the changing nature of poetic expression among the Five Mountain Zen monks, as quatrains became the mainstream form in the Muromachi period Japanese Zen literature.

Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's poetry and prose were deeply influenced by classical Chinese poetry. During his stay in Ming China, he immersed himself in the study of Zen Buddhism, interacted with renowned Chinese poets, and gained a profound understanding of classical Chinese poetry. His regulated poems were primarily influenced by the "Three Styles of Tang Poetry," while his quatrains drew inspiration from the traditional techniques of Chinese classical poetry. Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's regulated poems created during his Ming studies showcased remarkable technical prowess, reflecting the literary trends of the Chinese cultural scene during that era.

Furthermore, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's poetic and prose creations were influenced by the literary trends of the Muromachi period. The complexity of the rules governing regulated poems and quatrains, including tone, rhyme, and parallelism, made it challenging for Japanese Zen monks of the time who lacked formal education in Chinese phonetics and pronunciation. Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's choice to focus on quatrains upon his return to Japan aligns with the evolving trends in Muromachi period Japanese Zen literary circles, where quatrains became the prevalent form.

3.3. Overview of Research on Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Chinese Poetry and Prose

In the realm of Japanese literary history, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin is undeniably a representative figure of Chinese literature among the Five Mountain Zen monks. In the field of research on Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Chinese poetry, Japanese scholar Hideo Kageyama's work "Medieval Zen Temple Poetry History" was the first to categorize Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Chinese poems from a stylistic perspective into three distinct periods [6]. It provides an in-depth analysis and exploration of the themes, forms, and creative background of his poems, making him a notable figure in Japanese scholarship on Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's poetic works [7]. Several comprehensive works on the history of Japanese Chinese literature written by Chinese scholars have also recognized Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's significant contributions in this area. They offer insights into his role in the cultural exchange between China and Japan's Zen Buddhism and the creation of Chinese-style poetry by Japanese Zen monks [8].

In the field of Chinese studies, Five Mountain Zen poetry, including the works of Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin, has garnered increasing attention from Chinese scholars. Chinese scholars who have written comprehensive histories of Japanese literature have introduced and evaluated figures like Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin. Furthermore, there are scholarly works analyzing Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Chinese poetry and its links to Chinese classical poetry. For example, Ren Ping's "The Zen Practitioner with Multicultural Identity" delves into Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's contributions to Japanese literature, Buddhism, and politics. Additionally, many studies focus on analyzing the links between Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's poetry and Chinese classical poetry collections like the "Three Styles of Tang Poetry," as well as the influence of Chinese poets like Du Fu and Su Shi on his work. In conclusion, the field of research on Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's poetry, particularly his contributions to Japanese Five Mountain Chinese poetry, presents a compelling avenue for further exploration within Chinese literary studies.

4. The Influence of Five Mountain Chinese Poetry

4.1. Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Borrowing and Application of the "Three Styles of Tang Poetry"

The "Three Styles of Tang Poetry" is a poetry collection compiled by the Song Dynasty poet Zhou Bi, containing over five hundred poems from the Tang Dynasty categorized according to the forms of Qi Jue (seven-character regulated), Qi Lu (seven-character regulated), and Wu Lu (five-character regulated) poems. Zhou Bi extracted regulated poems from numerous renowned Tang Dynasty poets in his book and systematically summarized the structural theories of Qi Jue and Wu Lu poems. These theories included techniques like the use of empty and solid elements, patterns of beginning and ending lines, and others, making it highly suitable for contemporary readers to recite and learn the art of creating regulated poems. As a result, the "Three Styles of Tang Poetry" gained popularity among the Japanese Five Mountain monks. Besides collections of poems by Du Fu, Su Shi, and Huang Tingjian, as well as their commentaries, the most frequently published works in books and manuscripts produced in Five Mountain monasteries were compilations of poems by various poets, with a special emphasis on the "Three Styles of Tang Poetry" and commentaries on it [9].

From Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Wu Lu poems found in "Shoukenkou," it is evident that Five Mountain Chinese poetry exhibits characteristics akin to the "Three Styles of Tang Poetry" and, by extension, the broader context of Tang Dynasty regulated poetry, known for its "Five Regulated, Four Real" composition. The term "Five Regulated, Four Real" refers to the structural characteristics of five-character regulated poems, consisting of four couplets (eight lines), with the opening and closing couplets primarily describing scenery and blending emotion with the landscape, creating a sense of

expanded artistic expression and robust power. "Three Styles of Tang Poetry," particularly in volume three, articulates clear requirements for "Five Regulated, Four Real," emphasizing its ornate and dignified nature, as well as the fusion of scenery and emotion, which constitutes its charm.

Fan Xiwu also mentioned in "Dialogue by the Bed at Night" that if the "Four Real" elements are expressed improperly, the lines of the poem may appear hollow and superficial. This viewpoint underscores the requirements of "Five Regulated, Four Real," emphasizing the need to balance formal beauty with profound artistic expression. Below, the authors will analyze Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's "Ancient Temple" and Sikong Shu's "Baoqing Temple in Ruins," both of which depict the theme of ancient temples and share many similarities.

"Ancient Temple"

*In which direction does the ancient temple's gate face,
With wisteria vines entwined deeply on all sides?
Eaves blossoms fall with the rain,
Wild birds sing to the people.
Grass obscures the seat of the World-Honored One,
The foundation erases traces of the old gold.
The broken stele bears no mark of years,
Tang and Song, in the end, are hard to find [10]."*

Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's "Ancient Temple" portrays the scene of an ancient temple, describing a situation where the direction of the gate is unclear and wisteria vines grow densely. The poem conveys a sense of desolation in the temple and the absence of records on an old stele. The line "The broken stele bears no mark of years" expresses the idea that the temple's history has become blurred over time, evoking a sense of the passage of years.

"Ruins of Baoqing Temple"

*Yellow leaves in front of the ancient temple,
No monks, the cold hall opens.
The pond clears, a turtle emerges and basks,
At dusk, pine trees close as cranes return.
Ancient walkways, inscriptions hidden by grass,
In the shady corridor, paintings covered with moss.
The Zen palace has also vanished,
The dust of the world has transformed; it's worth lamenting [10]."*

Sikong Shu's "Ruins of Baoqing Temple" also depicts an abandoned temple through imagery such as yellow leaves, the absence of monks, an open hall, and various natural elements. The poet portrays a desolate scene and expresses a sense of lamentation for the impermanence of worldly affairs with the line "The dust of the world has transformed; it's worth lamenting." Both poems share a similar structure, starting with two lines describing an ancient temple, followed by four lines detailing the scenery, and ending with two lines expressing emotions. They also share common vocabulary such as "temple," "grass," "stele," "ancient," and "erases," among others. Both poems convey a theme of contemplation on the passage of time and the impermanence of worldly affairs through vivid imagery, reflecting the requirements of "Five Regulated, Four Real" and showcasing the exceptional skills of ancient literati when expressing emotions and thoughts.

In summary, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's "Ancient Temple" and Sikong Shu's "Ruins of Baoqing Temple" both depict ancient temples, employ detailed descriptions of scenery, and express feelings of transience. These two poems embody the requirements of "Five Regulated, Four Real,"

demonstrating the profound artistic expression and technical prowess of ancient literati when contemplating the passage of time and the impermanence of worldly affairs.

4.2. Absorption and Skillful Application of Chinese Allusions in Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's Poetry

Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's poems can also be examined from the perspective of allusions to Chinese history and poems that express nostalgia and historical sentiments. Lü Xiang's "Yongshi Shi" explicitly defines the nature of poems that sing praises to history. Such poems aim to convey the poet's current thoughts and emotions by observing historical figures and events, ultimately culminating in the poet's personal insights and commentary. In contrast, poems of nostalgia and historical sentiments focus more on historical relics or specific locations as their foundation and often reach their climax in the expression of emotions. There is no strict boundary between these two poetic themes, and they can interweave depending on the poet's creative inclination. In the Han poetry of the Five Mountain period, poems of nostalgia and historical sentiments are mostly exceptional works, often revolving around ancient Chinese history and culture. Through these themes, the poets expressed their contemporary emotions or provided insights into the political situation in Japan at that time. This creative genre reflects the familiarity of Japanese Zen monks with Chinese allusions and their profound understanding of Chinese culture. Among the poets of the Five Mountain period, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin stands out as an exemplary representative. For instance, in his poem "On Mount Gusu," he depicted the scene on Mount Gusu, where the north wind blew fiercely, and travelers ascended the mountain to admire the setting sun.

"On Mount Gusu"
On Mount Gusu, the north wind blows,
Travelers ascend as the sun sets.
The deer roam freely, their splendor extends,
A thousand miles of landscape shift.
Loyal ministers willingly wield their engraved swords,
Generals sadly gaze at the flag of Gumi.
Looking back at the ancient gardens of Changzhou,
The broken jade trees are equally desolate [10]."

As the poem progresses, he uses the image of "roaming deer" to metaphorically suggest that once-prosperous places have long since turned into ruins, alluding to the rise and fall of a flourishing era and the passage of history. In the second part of the poem, he describes the tragic fate of Wu Zixu, who suffered betrayal and assassination, as well as the downfall of the Wu kingdom. Finally, he reminisces about the scene on Mount Gusu, lamenting the dilapidation of palaces and the desolation of historical sites, effectively conveying the weight of history's emotions in his poetry.

Additionally, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin was skilled at incorporating historical allusions into his works, cleverly drawing from stories found in books like "Records of the Grand Historian" and "Zhuangzi." These allusions enriched the content and meaning of his poems, most prominently in his poems of nostalgia and historical sentiments. For instance, in his poem "Visiting Qiantang and Recalling the Past," composed during his travels in the Qiantang region, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin expressed his reflection on the rise and fall of dynasties.

"Visiting Qiantang and Recalling the Past"
As Heaven's eye shifts towards Mount Tiantai,
The southeast's regal spirit bestows its grace upon the vast plains.

*The drums resound, shaking the land of the Three Provinces,
Dances and songs dissipate as they cross ten miles of lake.
Ancient temples are revisited, mingling with fragrant grass,
Where are the various tombs, obscured by drifting clouds?
A hundred years in Jiangnan, of elegance and heroism, exhausted,
The small sea now encircles the old territory [10]."*

In this poem, "Heaven's eye shifts" refers to the traditional Chinese cosmological belief that associates Tiantai Mountain with the heavenly gaze. "The southeast's regal spirit" alludes to the Southern Song Dynasty's rule over the southeastern coastal region. The poem, composed during Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's travels in the Qiantang region, reflects on the changes in political power. Using the metaphor of the fleeting glory of the Southern Song, conveys Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's realization of the impermanence of all things.

Furthermore, during his residence in Hangzhou, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin composed "The Tomb of Yue Wang," an ode to Yue Fei's tomb, which also demonstrates his deep understanding of Chinese classical culture and history.

*"The Tomb of Yue Wang"
Entering deep into Zhu Xian by the northern room,
Unaware that green blood swiftly flowed to the south.
Over hills and clouds, Wuyuan Temple cloaked,
Endless lake waters have no fixed destination.
Four heroes, once mighty, now quietly rest,
Two emperors, their dreams fading away.
In the future, when the sky temporarily bridges man's flight,
The addition of heroes will bring eternal sorrow [10]."*

The first couplet of the poem depicts Yue Fei's great victory over the Jin invaders in the North, symbolizing the glory of the Southern Song Dynasty. The second couplet utilizes the stories of Wu Zixu and Fan Li to illustrate that loyal and capable officials were often slandered and harmed by treacherous and petty individuals, which is highly relevant to the theme of mourning Yue Fei. Beyond creating poems during his travels in China, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin also composed poems of nostalgia and historical sentiments in Japan. For example, his poem "Akamagaseki" pays homage to the ancient battlefield of the Genpei War in Japan [11]. In terms of both description and emotional expression, it is closely connected to traditional Chinese poems of nostalgia. Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's works demonstrate his profound understanding of Chinese history and culture, as well as his reverence for ancient Chinese culture. Through the composition of poems that sing praises to history, he successfully conveyed the poet's emotions and respect for history, making his works outstanding representatives of poems of nostalgia and historical sentiments in the Five Mountain period. These works reflect the deep love of Five Mountain Zen monks for Chinese culture and their reverence for history. These poems are not only literary treasures but also important witnesses to the social and cultural context of the time.

5. Conclusion

Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin drew upon Chinese classical poetry forms and themes, opening up new realms of expression and contributing significantly to the development of Japanese poetry. In summary, Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's poems were deeply influenced by Chinese classical culture. He not only actively learned from and borrowed the poetry of ancient Chinese poets but also

creatively integrated his own thoughts and insights. By referencing historical allusions and showcasing a unique poetic style, he infused his poems with profound meaning and artistic beauty. Zen Master Zekkai Chuushin's poems not only enriched Japanese literature but also made significant contributions to the inheritance and development of Chinese poetic culture. He became a representative of Japanese Five Mountain literature and, alongside other Zen monks, contributed to another peak in Japan's study of Chinese culture through the Han language.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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