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	The Will to Orthodoxy: A Critical Genealogy of Northern Chan Buddhism
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	<p>Marking a complete break with previous scholarship in the field, this book rewrites the history of early Chan (Zen) Buddhism, focusing on the genealogy and doctrine of one of its dominant strains, the so-called Northern school that flourished at the turn of the eighth century.</p> <p>The traditional interpretation of the Northern school was heavily influenced by the polemics of one of its opponents, the monk Shenhiu, who characterized the Northern school's teaching as propounding the belief that enlightenment occurred gradually, was measurable, and could be expressed in conventional language. To all this, Shenhiu and his teaching of "sudden enlightenment" were opposed, and Shenhiu's school and its version of history would later prevail. On the</p>

basis of documents found at Dunhuang, this book shows how the traditional view is incorrect, that Shenxiu's imposition of a debate between gradual and sudden conceals the doctrinal continuity between the two schools and the diversity of Chan thought in the period. The author buttresses his conclusions by placing the evolution of early Chan in the intellectual, political, social, and economic context of the mid-Tang.

The book is in three parts. The first part treats the biography and thought of the "founder" of the Northern school, Shenxiu, the nature of his followers, and his affinities for Buddhist scholasticism. The second part studies the way in which the Northern school, after Shenxiu, adapted to new circumstances: changes in imperial policies, the rise of rival schools, and changes in the nature of its followers. The third part focuses on the internecine struggles around the genealogy of Chan as reflected in the *Lengqie shizi ji* (Record of the Masters and Disciples of the Lankavatara [School]) by the monk Jingjue. A close reading of this work reveals that it foreshadowed many of the themes and issues that would later come to the forefront in Zen, and contributes significantly to our reassessment of the teachings and practices of "pre-classical" Chan.

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