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Lecture by Professor Donald Lopez
at the University of Toronto

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On the 17th of April, 2017, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Centre for Buddhist Studies at the University of Toronto hosted its inaugural public lecture. The speaker was Professor Donald S. Lopez Jr., Arthur E. Link Distinguished University Professor of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Michigan. The title of his lecture was "Hyecho's Journey: The World of Buddhism." This is also the title of Dr. Lopez's [book](#), which will publish in October of 2017.

Hyecho was a young Buddhist monk who traveled west from the kingdom of Silla to China, Southeast Asia, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. He was likely born between 700-704 CE. His travel memoir was among the many documents found at Dunhuang in Northwest China in the early twentieth century, and it was titled "Memoir of a Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India." He was not as famous as other pilgrims, such as Yijing, Faxian, and Xuanzang, nor was he an eminent monk or scholar.

Nevertheless, his travel memoir is an innovative source for scholars of the Buddhist tradition.

Dr. Lopez limited this study to a short period of time (724-727 CE), but it encompasses an extensive geographic area. Each chapter of his forthcoming book begins with one of the places Hyecho visited on his journey. Hyecho's reasons for undertaking this journey remain unknown. From his memoir, we learn that he went to India in order to see the Eight Great Stupas. He visited Bodhgaya, Kusinagari, Sarnath, Kashmir, Gandhara, and Central Asia, and saw regions of the Buddhist world that were at their peak, regions that were in decline, and regions that were in a state of transformation.

From Hyecho's memoir, Dr. Lopez ascertained that his encounter with Buddhism was mostly visual—he learned about Buddhism from observation, rather than learning about it strictly from the authoritative texts. Along his journey, he reported on features of peoples' daily lives, such as animal husbandry, local diets, abandoned cities, and the number of elephants in various armies. He complained about being cold and tired, and expressed his fear of being robbed by bandits. His notes were largely concerned with the mundane, but he also included some interesting puns, metaphors, and poems. Dr. Lopez discovered an element of nostalgia in Hyecho's memoir—he was disappointed when he learned that some Buddhist holy sites were abandoned and frequented by bandits. Dr. Lopez was concerned with questions such as: Did Hyecho have a map? How did he find his way? How did he end up in Arabia? What did he eat on his journey? After attending this lecture and hearing about this sampling of Hyecho's adventures, I am really looking forward to reading Dr. Lopez's book this fall.

Before delivering his lecture, Dr. Lopez was kind enough to meet with faculty members and graduate students for an informal reception, during which he answered numerous questions and shared his experi-

ences with the group. I wish to thank Dr. Lopez for sharing his research and his time with us, and The Robert H. N. Ho Family Centre for Buddhist Studies for hosting this event.

His talk is now [accessible online](#).

Dr. Lopez is the author of “[Developments in Buddhist Studies](#)” published in the 11th edition (2016) of the Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies (CJBS). CJBS is accepting papers for its 13th edition (2018) until September 30th, 2017. For more information, please see the [Call for Papers](#).