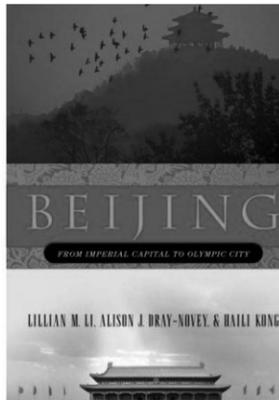


Bookmarked

Beijing: From Imperial Capital to Olympic City

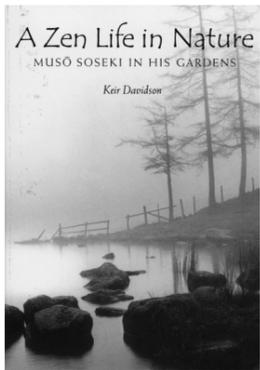
By Lillian M. Li, Alison J. Dray-Novey and Haili Kong
Palgrave Macmillan. 2007. ISBN 978 1 4039 6473 1

Few world cities have a record as long, as fascinating, or as well-documented as Beijing's. A capital almost continuously for more than a thousand years, the city has been Khubilai Khan's Mongol headquarters, home to emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties, and the main stage for Communist-era achievements and upheavals. Beijing is the first book in English to trace this vibrant city's history from its earliest days to the present. It highlights recent changes in the city as its more than fifteen million people live through record-level economic growth and intensive preparations for the 2008 Olympics. Focusing on the lives of ordinary residents and rulers alike, the authors examine the controversial destruction of historic districts as well as the construction of new residential and business districts and Olympic venues. Extensive photographs and paintings, many not previously published, offer a window onto Beijing not only in major phases of its past, but also in its startlingly different present. Compelling and revealing, Beijing arrives just in time for the city's turn in the Olympic spotlight.



A Zen Life in Nature: Musō Soseki in his Gardens

Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan. 2007.
ISBN 978 1 929280 41 4



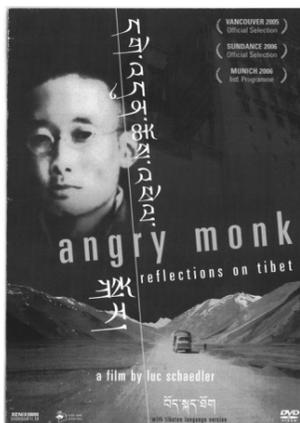
A Zen Life in Nature examines the design style and aesthetic of the medieval Japanese Zen monk Musō Soseki (1275 – 1351), who built gardens as places to meditate and to escape his busy public life. The book begins with a discussion of Soseki's rural upbringing and the spiritual background to it, his quest for enlightenment as a Zen monk, and his role as mediator in the turbulent times that surrounded the Kemmu Restoration and the establishment of the Ashikaga shogunate. Other chapters look in detail at the spiritual and cultural influences that are crucial to understanding Soseki's artistic and design sense and the development of his garden building. Finally, the book provides a detailed look at the beautiful Upper Garden at Saihōji, built by Soseki in 1339. A Zen Life in Nature will appeal to a broad audience, including students of medieval Japanese history and religion, those interested in Zen Buddhism and Zen gardens, and people with a general interest in garden design.

DVD Angry Monk: reflections on Tibet

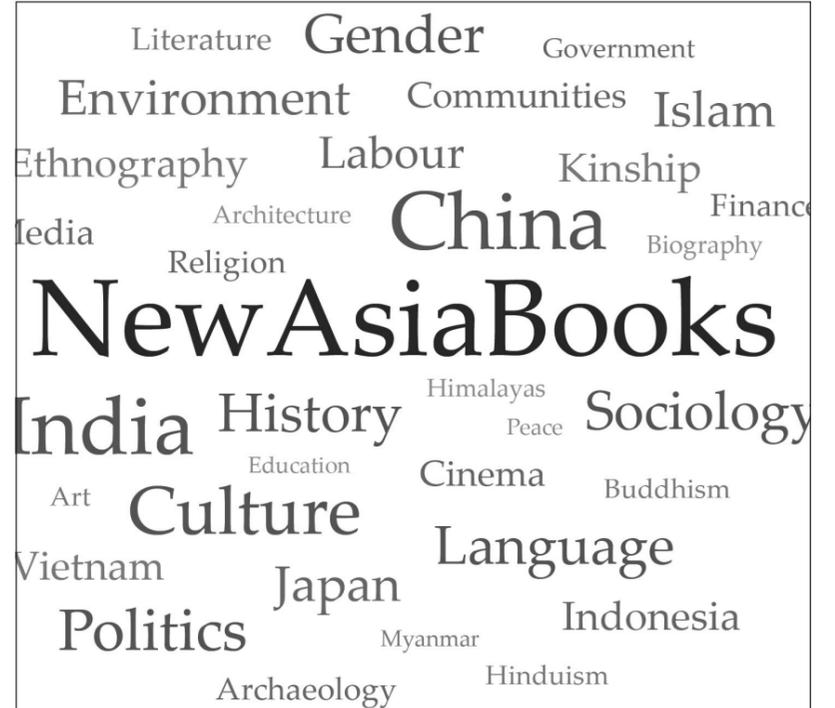
A film by Luc Schaedler
Switzerland 2005
97 minutes
DVD cover

Tibet - the mystical roof of the world, peopled with enlightened monks? Only one of them wouldn't toe the line: Gendun Choephel, the errant monk who left the monastic life in 1934 in search of a new challenge. A free spirit and multifaceted individual, he was far ahead of his time and has since become a seminal figure, a symbol of hope for a free Tibet. A rebel and voluble critic of the establishment, Gendun Choephel kindled the anger of the Tibetan authorities. The cinematic journey through time portrays the life of this unorthodox monk, revealing a face of old Tibet that goes against popular clichés. The film makes an abundance of unique and rare historical footage available to the general public for the first time. But it does not dwell on the past; rather it skilfully oscillates between tradition and modernity. Archival images of ancient caravans and monasteries give way to scenes of discos and multi-lane highways in Lhasa, where pilgrims prostrate themselves as they circle the holy temple. Angry Monk offers a fascinating insight into a country whose eventful past is refracted in the multiplicity and contradictions of everyday life.

Ultimately, this road movie also tells the story of a man who left home to search for something that could have liberated traditional Tibet from its rigidity. An outsider who was always open to new things, he eventually became a stranger in his homeland and homeless in foreign lands — a wanderer between worlds.



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