

AWAKENINGS

ZEN FIGURE PAINTING IN
MEDIEVAL JAPAN

Gregory Levine

Yukio Lippit

Exhibition Co-Curators

Yoshiaki Shimizu

Senior Exhibition Advisor



Edited by Naomi Noble Richard and Melanie B.D. Klein

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破六宗異

單傳其一心

西天與東土

千古女身骨

龍水四祀

李春上殿

崇福南浦

以明孫贊



Patriarchs Heading West

An Introduction

GREGORY LEVINE

YUKIO LIPPIT

Form is not other than Emptiness;

Emptiness is not other than Form.

The Heart Sutra

THIS EXHIBITION is a search for new ways to understand Zen communities in medieval Japan as embodied in representations of the Zen “pantheon”: the Buddha Śākyamuni and various bodhisattvas; the First Patriarch of Chan/Zen, Bodhidharma; Chinese and Japanese masters; and various exemplars and assimilated local divinities. It proposes that figure paintings, often graced with calligraphic inscriptions, played an indispensable role historically in the fashioning of Chinese Chan and Japanese Zen Buddhists to themselves and to the communities that supported (or competed with) them.¹

Forty-seven paintings, hanging scrolls, and sets of painted sliding-door panels (*fusuma-e*) have been borrowed from Japanese, European, and American collections to address this topic. Dating from the thirteenth through sixteenth centuries and produced in China and Japan, these treasured works offer us a rare opportunity to explore the significance of figure painting in the presentation and performance of religious lineage within medieval Chan/Zen monastic settings and broader social-cultural contexts. Our attention is drawn to the visual characteristics of these paintings—their brush techniques and nuance-laden gestures, poses, and compositions—as well as to their fundamentally interregional and intercultural nature.

Gathering these treasured paintings in New York City brings to mind a beloved legend associated with Bodhidharma

(Cats. 4–7) that suggests a felicitous leitmotif for this exhibition and catalogue. Early Chan texts inform us that Bodhidharma died at the ripe old age of 150 and was buried near Luoyang, the capital of the Northern Wei kingdom in Henan Province, China. Three years later, however, a Wei envoy returning to China from Central Asia happened to meet Bodhidharma in the mountainous Pamir region. The envoy inquired after Bodhidharma’s destination. The patriarch replied that he was heading west to India; his feet were bare and a single sandal dangled from one hand (Fig. 3.1).

When the envoy returned to the capital and learned that Bodhidharma had died years earlier, he reported to the court his strange encounter with the “resurrected” patriarch, whereupon Bodhidharma’s stūpa (“burial mound”) was opened. His coffin was empty save for a single sandal.

The legend of Bodhidharma’s return to the West and the single sandal presents the patriarch as a teacher in motion, thereby complementing the famous account and well-known paintings of his meditating motionless for nine years before a cliff at the Shaolin Temple (C: Shaolinsi, J: Shōrinji).² It suggests too that Chan masters left behind miraculous traces, notwithstanding the doctrinal ideal of Emptiness (S: *śūnyatā*, J: *kū*) and an oft-declared preference for vanishing.³ Eminent masters not only left behind relics, as did their ancestor Śākyamuni, but they also produced numerous texts and commentaries, brush traces, and painted images. The latter, as this exhibition suggests, were continually on view, carefully preserved, and indeed would become ubiquitous and indis-

FIGURE 3.1

Bodhidharma Carrying a

Single Sandal. Painter unknown.

Inscribed by Nanpo Jōmyō

(1235–1308). Japanese,

Kamakura period, 1296.

Hanging scroll, ink on silk;

69.5 x 31.4 cm.

MASAKI MUSEUM OF ART,

TADAOKA, OSAKA

pensable within the devotional, literary, and artistic lives of later generations of monks, nuns, and lay followers.

The Bodhidharma legend also alerts us to the border- and culture-crossing history of Buddhism and Chan/Zen, somewhat akin to the display of medieval and late medieval paintings from East Asia in early twenty-first century midtown Manhattan. For whereas Bodhidharma traveled from Western Regions to China to introduce a particular form of meditation (S: *dhyaṇa*) and a “special transmission outside the teaching” (J: *kyōge betsuden*), his “postmortem return” to India was followed by the spread throughout much of Asia, and later the globe, of a religious tradition vested with particular ritual and institutional practices, doctrinal and exegetical preferences, and a sophisticated handling of rhetoric and representation. Bodhidharma kept walking, one might say, from Asia to Europe, North America, and beyond. One is thus tempted to ask, alluding to a classic *kōan* (an enigmatic proposition used in the Chan pedagogical tradition) about Bodhidharma’s travel to China: “What is the meaning of Bodhidharma’s coming to the West?”⁴

Finally, the legend reminds us that exhibitions of medieval religious art, Buddhist or otherwise, are a bit like tomb openings. Occasioned by our modern curiosity about art, devotion, and the past, such exhibitions offer us a chance to view ancient objects shrouded in mystery and not intended for our eyes (but therefore all the more enthralling). Like Bodhidharma’s nearly empty tomb, meanwhile, an exhibition offers only fragments of what was. A glimpse into the recess of a tomb is often fleeting, moreover, and this exhibition, once it has closed, will return its objects to their owners and thereafter to subsequent display. This catalogue leaves behind a trace of their presence in New York; some viewers, we hope, will pick up the sandal and walk on.

Since World War II, there have been two major art exhibitions outside of Japan related to medieval Japanese Zen Buddhism. The first, “Zen Painting and Calligraphy,” held at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in 1970, assembled some of the finest surviving works in Japanese collections and provided an overview of many of the principal premodern pictorial themes and genres of Chan and Zen Buddhism. Among this exhibition’s many merits was a shift from the then prevalent ahistorical and impressionistic understanding of cultural production associated with Chan/Zen to a more historically precise awareness of periods, cultures, genres, and works. The second exhibition, “Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings,” held at the Rietberg Museum in Zurich in 1993, limited its scope to Japan’s medieval period (ca. 1200–1600) but brought together an impressive selection of paintings, calligraphies, robes, and sculptures, many from temples in Japan and inaccessible to the general public. In Zurich, those works were framed within and explained largely in terms of a single concept, namely the numinous charisma attributed to the Zen religious master.⁵

The present exhibition, focusing on Japan’s medieval period and its antecedents in China, builds on the insights of

these predecessors but directs attention specifically to the visually alluring but potentially esoteric subject of Zen figure painting. This pictorial category is anchored, in our thinking, to two historical and interpretive concerns. The first is our skepticism regarding the direct value of conventional understandings of Zen Art to the appreciation of medieval Chan/Zen painting. Most mainstream commentary on this idea has tended to emphasize an aesthetic of abstraction and minimalism, the psychological state of oneness or emptiness in artistic practice or viewer response, and a sort of grab bag of often airy and muddled impressions of meditative introspection. Such postwar understandings of Zen Art have significantly shaped our conceptualization of premodern Japanese cultural production. But they are for all practical purposes a modern invention that, as Gregory Levine suggests in his essay accompanying this catalogue, is less reliable or stable than we might think. Regardless of how important and interesting modern conceptions of Zen Art may be, they tend to exclude the ritual, even magical functions of visual images within Chan/Zen religious communities and to flatten the complexities of many different types of artifacts found within medieval monasteries. This myopia, we believe, inhibits a richer sense of how the brush arts contributed to and reflected the daily lives and spiritual and institutional concerns of medieval monks and nuns. In fact, the diverse and culturally specific works of painting and calligraphy that survive from medieval Chan/Zen monastic settings, when examined closely, unsettle some of our fondest preconceptions about Zen Art. The expository framework of this exhibition, therefore, presupposes the need to reexamine and rethink medieval Zen Art.

Our dubiousness about the modern rubric of Zen Art leaves us still with the question of how to better understand, art historically and otherwise, the large corpus of medieval pictorial and calligraphic objects traditionally linked to Zen Buddhism in Japan. In this regard we turn to both the foundational efforts of postwar art historians working on East Asian painting and calligraphy and the insights that have accumulated over the last several decades in the study of the diverse traditions of Buddhism in East Asia. In the most general terms, art-historical research on medieval Chan/Zen painting and calligraphy has provided us with close studies of “prime objects” in terms of visual form, epigraphic and philological content, and authorship. Recent scholarship in Buddhist Studies, benefiting from archival discoveries and inspired by institutional and social history as well as by the interpretive strategies of poststructuralism and critical theory, has augmented traditional study of canonical texts and figures—as exemplified by the research of the influential Japanese scholar Yanagida Seizan (b. 1922)—with new concerns and methods of inquiry regarding monastic institutions, the rhetorical dimensions of Chan texts and ritual, the relationship between Chan/Zen Buddhist communities and society at large, and the motivations of modern scholars.⁶ Yukio Lippit’s essay in this catalogue demonstrates how the sometimes radical understandings of recent Buddhological study can promote new habits of thinking about Chan/Zen figure painting,

especially in relation to the tradition's claim to represent a special, intuitive transmission of the Buddha's wisdom "outside of the scriptures."

At first glance medieval Chan/Zen figure painting may seem less visually impressive as Zen Art than the bold, gestural ink circles (J: *ensō*) and sometimes humorous paintings of the Edo-period (1615–1868) Zen proselytizer Hakuin Ekaku (1685–1768) and his like or, for that matter, the rock-and-gravel gardens of Zen temples in Japan. Figural subjects are also less accessible than the evocative ink landscapes and symbolic trees and plants, such as orchid and bamboo, which have been accorded a privileged place within the canon of Chan/Zen painting. These latter subjects, it should be noted, were part of an iconography of scholar-official virtue as well as of Chan/Zen, and were executed in pictorial modes that either followed or varied only modestly from prevailing literati manners. They were not, therefore, exclusively or inherently "Zen." In contrast, it was the specialized canon of Chan/Zen figure painting that departed from scholar-official norms of representation and assumed special importance as a more distinctively Chan/Zen pictorial category.

Many of the figures that entered the Chan/Zen visual canon were part of the immediate dharma family, while others were already popular and charismatic subjects in various forms of cultic worship or were apotheosized figures from other religious systems. Depicted in intimate scale on vertical hanging scrolls, these sacred figures could set in motion an array of relational dynamics with the recipient/viewer, including appreciation, edification, veneration, emulation, and identification. Although some of the represented patriarchs, such as the Fifth Patriarch, Hongren (Cat. 8), were particular to the Chan/Zen dharma lineage, many of the deities of the broadly worshipped Mahāyāna Buddhist pantheon were incorporated into Chan/Zen visual cultures in new iconographies, such as Śākyamuni during his Descent from the Mountain (Cats. 1–3). Often, local deified figures were appropriated into Chan/Zen lore, and accorded special significance, such as the vagabond-like Budai (Cats. 9–14). To be sure, other types of figure painting were employed for ritual purposes in Chan and Zen monasteries, and many of these works, typically rendered in polychrome mineral pigments on silk, were common to multiple Buddhist schools (Cats. 26–31). Within the Chan/Zen milieu, however, the pictorial figure, regardless of its origins, served to embody the special nature of the Chan/Zen dharma genealogy, to visualize and arouse understanding of the acts and behaviors expected of an awakened Chan/Zen patriarch, and to mediate the relationships between charismatic masters and their constituencies. Paintings were also principal sites of calligraphic inscription, in which elegant and allusive poetry and prose served to express the calligrapher's veneration of spiritual ancestors and his or her own self-awareness of dharma genealogy and the nature of Emptiness.

Underlying the rhetoric of transmission that often defined Chan/Zen figure painting was a fertile loam of narrative and

memory that fed the sustained veneration of its pantheon, be it the moment when Buddha Śākyamuni wordlessly transmitted the dharma to his disciple Mahākāśyapa, when the Sixth Patriarch tore up a Buddhist sutra (scripture), or when the deified Japanese courtier Sugawara no Michizane visited China. The addition of only a few iconographic attributes on many stock compositions in seemingly repetitive poses could spark in the mind of the knowledgeable viewer recollection of such biographical, but often miraculous and even apocryphal, events, handed down within Chan/Zen communities even to the present day. The same sorts of narratives of transmission could be invoked only obliquely if at all in nonfigural subject matter. Inscriptions added to figure paintings by Chan and Zen monks functioned crucially in activating and heightening such hagiographical associations. They amplified the resonance of pictorial gestures and catalyzed the recognition of the slightest facial expressions as signifiers of awakening. The prominent abbots who versified on these scrolls were fully aware of the ability of such works to recall the past and to personalize affiliations between recipients and themselves, their monasteries, their congregations, and the Chan/Zen lineage itself. Even without inscriptive reference, however, Chan/Zen figure painting was auratic by nature—it evoked the powerful, charismatic, and compassionate presences and actions of great teachers who were distant in time or geography, bringing them, through the brush arts, compellingly close to hand.

Thus one might sense that time both "streams" and "pools" in Chan/Zen figure painting: the continuing flow of the Chan/Zen lineage across the centuries as embodied in the Buddha, Bodhidharma, and later patriarchs and masters, on the one hand, and the visualization of potent, singular moments of realization on the other. Each scroll concretized an exchange of dharma, learning, and orthodoxy from one monk to another and from the artist's and calligrapher's past to their present, long after the pictorialized events may themselves have taken place. The painted object itself, meanwhile, may reveal in its accumulation of connoisseurship documents or carefully preserved mounting its ongoing life as a treasured object of visual and religious significance.

The Anglophone word *figure*, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, can refer to "the form of anything as determined by the outline," an "attribute of body," or a visual, "embodied (human) form."⁷ Chan and Zen figure paintings operate pictorially, one might say, in the spaces between outline and embodiment; visibly present, sometimes only with the thinnest traces of form, they suggest something beyond external form. Although many of the paintings exhibited here are monochrome, they reflect a wide variety of brush techniques and tonal effects, which are explored in greater detail in this catalogue's individual entries. Some modes of Chan/Zen ink painting, such as the strikingly pale-toned "apparition painting" (C: *wanglianghua*, J: *mōryōga*), challenge the optical and perceptual process of looking (Cats. 10, 11). By diluting to an extreme the ink used to depict its subject, and contrasting this with jet black accents of ink for accoutrements and select areas of the face—such as the eyes, nostrils, mouth—appari-

tion painting expresses the illusory ambiguities of dualistic thinking through its very manipulation of ink liquidity. This and other modes of figural representation provided more than pictorial pretexts for priestly inscription; they actively complemented and catalyzed a Chan/Zen monk's performative demonstration of his awakened status.

During the medieval period, these features of narrative and pictorial expression were part of a Chan Buddhist macroculture, and indeed many of the scrolls in this exhibition were brought to Japan as part of a steady circulation of people, rituals, texts, and artifacts across East Asia from the twelfth century onward. It was at the height of Chan Buddhism's institutional dominance in China that specific institutions and practices began to be systematically introduced to Japan by Buddhist monks returning from the continent and by émigré Chinese religious masters. Through their efforts, the infrastructure for the practice of Zen was gradually established in three centers: Kamakura, the seat of the shogunate; Kyoto, the traditional imperial capital; and Hakata, located in the north of the island Kyushu and a vibrant trade entrepôt indispensable to interregional cultural exchange. In these locales warrior and aristocratic patrons helped monks establish the earliest temple compounds and monastic communities. Ultimately this phenomenon, which Martin Collcutt explores in greater detail in his essay, can be characterized as the transplantation of Song monastic culture in general to Japan under the sign of the Zen dharma transmission.⁸

Given the historical erosion of Chan monastic sites and artifacts in China, due partly to political circumstances throughout subsequent centuries, the large number of Chan paintings and calligraphies from the Song dynasty that survive in Japan have often been fitted to an argument that makes Japanese Zen the apogee of what was in fact an interdependent religious tradition and culture across East Asia. Rather than viewing Japanese Zen as the ultimate culmination, therefore, we see the trove of materials extant in Japanese monasteries, temples, and museums (and later passing into Western

collections) as a basis from which to reconstruct an explicitly interregional history of Chan and Zen visual culture, distinguished by pluralism and multi-sectarian flavor.

For example, subjects closely associated with Buddhist miraculous sites in China and not exclusively Chan, such as Mañjuśrī in a Braided Robe (Cats. 32, 33), or with literati eremitism, such as White-Robed Guanyin (Cats. 39–43), were understood in Japan primarily through the lens of the Chan special transmission. At the same time, new members were added to the pantheon by Zen communities in Japan, most famously reflected in paintings of Tenjin Visiting China (Cats. 35, 36). In Japan established figure-painting themes were also quickly assimilated to new types of formats and spaces that characterized Zen monasteries, such as interior sliding-door panels (Cats. 37, 38). In some instances the pictorial environments formed and enclosed by such panels within Zen temples—such as Yōtokuin and Daisen'in of Daitokuji, the sites featured in this exhibition—suggest the collapsing of time and space to allow the august patriarchal ancestors of the Chan genealogy, present in pictorial form, to commingle with their later dharma descendants in Japan.

The characteristics of Chan/Zen figure painting touched upon here were by no means fixed in amber throughout the premodern period. Indeed, by the Edo period the social organization, political behaviors, and rhythms of daily Zen monastic life had in some respects altered dramatically. The salons of eminent abbots, abbesses, and younger monks and nuns that were an important matrix for Zen cultural production during the medieval period, for instance, were to some extent dissipated with the formation of ever larger numbers of Zen sublineages within individual monasteries. The rise of *Chanoyu*, one of Japan's traditions of tea culture, during the sixteenth century shifted to some degree the energies of Zen monks and nuns from internal scholarly and cultural practice specific to monastic communities toward an intensified nexus of sociocultural interaction with elite warriors, merchants, and members of other Buddhist schools. The increasingly stringent control

exerted by the Tokugawa shogunate on Zen monasteries and clerics, meanwhile, forced Zen leaders to attend to the defense of age-old privileges predicated upon religious rather than kingly authority. The arrival of a new Chinese Chan community to Japan in the seventeenth century, the Ōbaku sect from southeastern Fujian Province, had an even more profound effect upon the assimilated Song-dynasty Chan that underlay the Japanese Rinzai and Sōtō institutions during the medieval and late medieval periods. With the Ōbaku community came not only distinctive amalgamations of Chan and Mahāyāna practice, but also new configurations of continental culture and different sorts of built environments that presented practitioners and patrons with a realignment of Zen in religious, spatial, and visual terms. Medieval Zen has been sustained through the early modern period to the present through remarkably resilient facets of ritual practice, institutional organization, pedagogy, and philosophical discourse, as well as the presences of treasured works of painting and calligraphy, but the religious and visual worlds in which monks and nuns pursued awakening offered new conditions and challenges. New modes of figural representation in ink during the Edo period, such as that associated with Hakuin Ekaku, reflected the changed conditions of monastic-lay relations, in which semi-itinerant proselytizers competed for spiritual attention within an ever more crowded and pluralistic environment for the transmission of dharma. In this regard, the medieval works assembled and examined here reflect a qualitatively different set of contexts and communities for Zen practice and cultural expression than what is found in early modern Japan.

Medieval Chan/Zen figure paintings, here often allied with calligraphic inscription, have special capacities that make them particular places of visual encounter with the dharma. The embeddedness of these images in their particular circumstances of painterly and calligraphic practice, their institutional contexts, their self-conscious deployment of the ideology of Chan/Zen transmission, and their rhetorical narratives of awakening compel us, we believe, to look and look again.

Notes

1. Readers should note the lexical distinctions between Chinese *Chan*, Korean *Seon*, and Japanese *Zen* that signify particular and not entirely uniform religious and visual traditions. We also adopt the usage “Chan/Zen” when referring to the interregional tradition linking China and Japan.
2. For Bodhidharma’s biography, see Jeffrey L. Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology: The Earliest Records of Zen* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Bernard Faure, “Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm,” *History of Religions*, vol. 25, no. 3 (February 1986), pp. 187–98.
3. Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 144.
4. We refer here to the ancient kōan “What is the meaning of Bodhidharma’s coming [to China] from the West?” See, for example, Wumen Huikai, *Wumenguan (Gateless Barrier)*, 1228, case 37, in Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, *Three Chan Classics: The Recorded Sayings of Linji, Wumen’s Gate, The Faithmind Maxim* (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1999), p. 99; Victor Sōgen Hori, *Zen Sand: The Book of Capping Phrases for Kōan Practice* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2003), pp. 644–45.
5. Other exhibitions have taken up the genre of *Zenga* (“Zen painting”), especially paintings executed during the Edo period by Zen monks such as Hakuin Ekaku (1685–1768) and Sengai Gibon (1750–1837). Although the MFA exhibition of 1970 combined *Zenga* with medieval Japanese Zen artifacts, there is little if any direct continuity between them.
6. See the work of Carl Bielefeldt, William Bodiford, Bernard Faure, T. Griffith Foulk, Morten Schlütter, Robert H. Sharf, Albert Welter, and others cited in the “Literature on Chan/Seon/Zen Buddhism” section of this catalogue’s Bibliography. Japanese scholars such as Takenuki Genshō and Harada Masatoshi also deserve mention.
7. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “figure,” <http://www.oed.com/> (accessed 15 September 2006).
8. Seon Buddhism flourished in the Korean Goryeo dynasty (918–1392), but unfortunately no related early works have survived, making it difficult to understand the nature of paintings in Seon communities.



“Zen Art” in a Monastic Context Zen and the Arts in Medieval Kenchōji

MARTIN COLLCUTT

TO CLARIFY the medieval Japanese monastic context in which Zen Buddhism of the Rinzai (C: Linji) tradition was practiced, this essay will closely examine the foundation and religious practice of Kenchōji, a leading Zen monastery in Kamakura. There, from the mid-thirteenth century, rigorous Zen training was pursued by Japanese monks, first under the guidance of émigré Chinese masters and then of Japanese masters, some of whom had received training in Chinese and Korean monasteries. Although Zen meditation was the core activity in Zen monasteries, and monks were actively discouraged from the distractions of reading and art appreciation, in their environment they were surrounded by Chinese/Chan art and culture, from the architecture of the buildings and the use of space; to the various Buddha images, painted and sculpted, in the Zen Hall, Lecture Hall, Buddha Hall, even the bathhouses and latrine; to the layout and design of the gardens they tended; to the calligraphy they read; and the portraits of venerable Zen masters hanging in alcoves.¹

We should also bear in mind that the Zen monastic life was far from static. Zen monks were referred to as *unsui* (“clouds and water”), reminding us that they were mendicants, traveling from master to master, monastery to monastery, in search of awakening. All they could carry with them as they walked would be contained in a wicker hamper on their backs, which held little space for books and none for paintings. They might have room for a Zen text or some other small piece of Buddhist calligraphy. Any “art” they carried, however, would be in their mind’s eye. Only when they settled in one particular

monastery, moved up through the official hierarchy, and became one of the teachers or administrators or, in time, the abbot, were they free to indulge in reading the Zen Buddhist classics, in composing poetry, or in painting or calligraphy.

Medieval Kenchōji

Kenchōji was established in 1253 in the warrior garrison town of Kamakura in eastern Japan. This event marked the consolidation of Rinzai Zen monastic practice in Japan. Kenchōji was not the first monastery in Japan in which seated meditation (*zazen*) was practiced by monks. But it may fairly be described as the first Zen monastery in which a full-scale Song Chinese-style Chan/Zen monastic setting had been created in Japan; in which the Chan monastic life would be fully realized in buildings designed for Chan practice under Chan monastic regulations (C: *qinggui*, J: *shingi*); in which all the religious, artistic, and cultural practices then in use in Chinese monasteries were emulated. At the core of Zen practice in Kenchōji was the intensive seated silent meditation—at least eight hours each day in four two-hour sessions; frequent encounters and *kōan* interviews with the Zen master; chanting of sutras; work around the monastery; brief, frugal meals; bathing; and little sleep. Many monks would leave their sleeping mats at night to sit in meditation and work on their various *kōan*. If we are looking for a specifically religious context for “Zen Art,” perhaps we may find it at Kenchōji.

FIGURE 4.1
Butsuden (Buddha Hall) of Kenchōji, Kamakura, viewed from Sanmon (Triple Gate). Roofline of Hattō (Dharma Hall) visible behind Butsuden.

Antecedents: Zen in Nara- and Heian-Period Japan

Chan/Zen Buddhism was already taking root in Japan when Kenchōji was built. In fact, the Zen meditative tradition had a long prior history within Japanese Buddhism. Meditation was practiced in the Nara period (710–794) by the eminent Hossō-school monk Dōshō (629–700), who learned of Chan in China from the great Chinese Buddhist translator Xuanzang (600?–664). Upon his return to Japan, Dōshō opened a Zen Meditation Hall at the temple Gangōji (in Nara) and taught *zazen*.²

In the Heian period (794–1185) *zazen* was one of the central practices advocated by Saichō (767–822), transmitter of the Tiantai (J: Tendai) teachings from China to Japan and founder of the Japanese Tendai school. Saichō espoused the practice of *shishu zanmai*, a system of four types of meditation set forth by Zhiyi (538–597), the Chinese founder of the Tiantai school, in the treatise *Great Concentration and Insight (Mohe Zhiguan)*. Among these four practices was *jōza zanmai* (“constant sitting meditation”), which in content was essentially *zazen*, involving silent meditation in the full lotus posture over periods of many days and nights.³

Meditation was thus intrinsic to traditional Buddhist practice in early Japan. But it was only one part of a Buddhist religious life that might concentrate on sutra study and recitation; the study of Esoteric texts, doctrines, and mandala; or devotion to the Buddha Amida and hope for salvation in the Western Paradise, expressed in repeated recitation of Amida's name (*nenbutsu*). In this setting there was little chance that *zazen* would become the central pursuit of Buddhist practice or that a Zen school would emerge as an independent and influential branch of Japanese Buddhism.

The Zen Surge from the Late Twelfth Century

Things changed in the late twelfth century. Several Japanese monks who had been trained at the traditional centers of Tendai and Shingon Buddhism, especially at Enryakuji, the great Tendai monastery on Mt. Hiei, came to feel that the Buddhism taught there was unresponsive to their own needs and the needs of the age. In response to a pervasive belief that Japan had entered the Latter Age of the Buddha's Dharma (J: *mappō*), in which salvation by one's own efforts became impossible, they questioned the efficacy of the traditional Buddhist life and looked for new teachings. Some monks advocated sincere devotion to the Buddha Amida. Several young monks went to China, the great fountainhead of Japanese Buddhism, in search of a more vital Buddhist practice. There they found Chan to be the most vigorous and challenging teaching in the monasteries they visited. It was the Chan masters, rather than the Vinaya, Tiantai, or Esoteric masters, who were drawing monks to the great monasteries.

Minnan Yōsai (Myōan Eisai; 1141–1215), a Japanese priest of the Tendai school, left Japan in 1187 to study the teachings of Chan Buddhism in Song-dynasty China. In 1191 he returned, bearing with him seeds of the tea plant and

certification of dharma transmission in the Linji (J: Rinzai) lineage of Chan. Following a brief stay on the island of Kyushu, he travelled to Kyoto intending to teach Zen; but meeting with the opposition of the Tendai authorities, he continued on to Kamakura, the headquarters of the warrior government known as the *bakufu*. There he was warmly received by the shogun Minamoto no Sanetomo (1192–1219) and the shogun's politically influential mother, Hōjō Masako (1157–1225), under whose patronage he established the Zen temple Jufukuji in the year 1200. Yōsai had practiced meditation in Chinese monasteries, and he brought back with him texts and perhaps some paintings of the kind used in the Chan monasteries he had visited. He would have been familiar with the Chan account of its own early history and of mind-to-mind transmission.

Important as Yōsai was in the history of Japanese Zen, however, his welcome in Kamakura owed less to his Zen understanding than to his expertise in the Esoteric practices of Tendai Buddhism. He maintained lifelong ties with the Tendai tradition even after becoming abbot of Kenninji, a large temple of mixed Zen-Tendai observance established in Kyoto under the protection of the Kamakura shogunate in 1202. Yōsai sought to make Chan more acceptable in Japan by arguing in his work *Propagation of Zen for the Protection of the Nation (Kōzen Gokokuron)* that, in teaching *zazen*, he was simply reintroducing a long-lost meditative practice, one that had been endorsed by Dōshō, Saichō, and other early teachers. The established Buddhist traditions, however, upheld not *zazen*, but the practices of Esoteric ritual and the *nenbutsu*. Further increasing their resistance was the difference between the Zen of earlier teachers and the Song-dynasty Chan promoted by Yōsai, which stressed meditation and enlightenment and used distinctive teaching devices such as *kōan*.⁴

Nor were Yōsai's immediate Japanese successors wholly successful in securing acceptance in Japan of the full-scale contemporary Chan teachings. Yōsai's disciples Taikō Gyōyū (1162–1241), Myōzen (1184–1225), and Eichō (d. 1247) taught, respectively, the historically important Zen monks Shinchi Kakushin (1207–1298), Enni Ben'en (1202–1280), and Dōgen Kigen (1200–1253), but even these, eminent though they were, remained in many ways peripheral to the transmission process. Shinchi Kakushin and Enni Ben'en followed Yōsai in combining the Zen teachings with Tendai Esoteric practices, and their lineages failed to form significant currents in the subsequent history of Japanese Zen.

Dōgen, who in 1223 travelled to China and studied the Caodong (J: Sōtō) school of Chan (a tradition different from that of Yōsai), was no more successful than his predecessor in spreading his teachings in Kyoto. In 1243 he removed himself, together with a few disciples, to the mountains far north of the capital. There they built the temple Daibutsuji, soon renamed Eiheiji. Though his lineage eventually developed into the influential Japanese Sōtō school, for several generations it remained relatively isolated from developments elsewhere in the country.⁵

Another notable figure in early Japanese Zen was Dainichi Nōnin (ca. 11th–12th c.), a self-enlightened monk whose understanding was later recognized by the Chinese Linji mas-

ter Zhuoan Deguang (1121–1203). Nōnin's so-called Daruma school, active in the region south of Kyoto, was one of the first proponents of the Zen teachings in Japan, but it too was suppressed by the older Buddhist traditions; in the early thirteenth century it was largely absorbed by the Sōtō school and disappeared as an independent tradition.⁶

Growing Warrior Interest in Zen

Official attitudes toward Zen started to change with the fifth shogunal regent, Hōjō Tokiyori (1227–1263). Tokiyori invited the Japanese masters Enni Ben'en and Dōgen Kigen to Kamakura, apparently in the hope that these eminent monks, recently back from China, would agree to teach traditional, pre-Song, Chinese Chan in the local temples. But both Dōgen and Enni soon left the *bakufu* capital and returned to central Japan, Dōgen to found (what was later called) Eiheiji in Echizen Province (Fukui Prefecture) and Enni to establish Tōfukuji in Kyoto. Tokiyori apparently sought in Zen an ideological basis for a new warrior culture, to counter what he saw as the decadence of Kyoto court society. It was a role for which Zen was in many respects well suited.

Here a note of caution must be sounded. Zen, in its Japanese context, is sometimes referred to as “the religion of the samurai.” And, as it turned out, members of the Japanese warrior elite did become the principal patrons of Zen in Japan. This does not mean, however, that Zen was intrinsically militant, or that Zen monks specifically sought out patrons who were warriors. Japanese and Chinese monks who pursued and promoted Chan/Zen did so in the conviction that it offered the surest and most direct path to the enlightenment experienced by the Buddha Śākyamuni. In Song-dynasty China Chan had appealed to nobles, bureaucrats, and merchants of both sexes, as well as to rulers. In thirteenth-century Japan, however, warriors proved most receptive to this new Buddhist practice from China. Some noble patrons and, later, townspeople also became devotees of Zen. But in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was the warrior chieftains in Kamakura, Kyoto, and the provinces who sponsored the visits of Zen masters, built monasteries for them, and encouraged others to practice, and to promote, Zen.⁷

The Zen masters, Chinese and Japanese, displayed a vigor and directness that commended them to the Kamakura warriors, and the path they taught stressed discipline and strength of spirit. It was, moreover, a self-reliant path, centered on meditation as a way of transcending the limitations of ego and awakening to one's innermost nature, thereby fostering a spirit of equanimity even in the face of death. Japanese warriors naturally admired the Chinese Chan monk who, when confronted by Mongol warriors, faced them down saying: “You are wielding a sword that brings death. Show me the sword that gives life!”

The direct, practical teachings of Zen did not require the doctrinal and ritual sophistication of the Tendai and Shingon schools, nor did followers have to leave the world for the monastery—“everyday mind is the Way,” in the words of the

great Chinese Chan master Mazu Daoyi (709–788). At the same time the new wave of Chan was flowing strongly from China and carrying with it a whole range of Chinese Buddhist culture. Although few warriors had the education or inclination to master all of the texts and images associated with Zen, they were given access to a spiritual, cultural, and intellectual heritage in which they could, through meditation, become as well versed as the Kyoto nobility, who had always dominated the Japanese cultural tradition.

With its emphasis on discipline and self-reliant effort, Zen was temperamentally suited to warriors, who on the battlefield required skill and courage. The ultimate goal of Zen is, of course, spiritual awakening and the attainment of Buddhahood, but the concentration and equanimity fostered by the practice of meditation and the directness of mind and expression called for in *kōan* encounters were of great practical use to even the most unenlightened of samurai.⁸



FIGURE 4.2
*Exterior view of Sairaiian Shōdō
(Patriarch's Hall), Kenchōji,
Kamakura.*



FIGURE 4.3
*Interior view of Sairaiian Shōdō,
Kenchōji, Kamakura.*

Chan Monks Journey to Japan

Hastening the acceptance of Zen in Japan was the arrival in Kamakura of several eminent Chinese Chan Masters, the first and probably most influential being Lanqi Daolong (J: Rankei Dōryū; 1213–1278) who journeyed to Dazaifu in Kyushu in 1246 and soon found his way to Kamakura.⁹ Daolong was thirty-four years old when he left China for Japan, and a fully trained Chan monk. A native of western China, having entered a monastery in Chengdu when he was thirteen, he studied in several great monasteries in the Hangzhou region under such distinguished masters as Wuzhun Shifan (1177–1249) and Beijian Jujian (1164–1246) before having his enlightenment recognized by Wuming Huixing (1160–1237).

Daolong's reasons for coming to Japan are not clear. It is known that he had not been issued a formal invitation, so it is likely that his decision to board a trading vessel at Ningbo in 1246 and sail for Japan was a personal one. He was probably urged to visit Japan by Japanese monks who were enrolling in Chinese monasteries. That would have told him that Zen was gaining ground in Japan and that a Chan monk with his experience would make a great difference in the level of Chan practice, and would find a welcome there.¹⁰

With him on the ship was Gettō Chikyō, a priest of the Kyoto temple Sennyūji of the Ritsu (S: Vinaya) school, which was closely connected with Zen. After helping Daolong make his way from the port of Hakata to the capital city of Kyoto, Chikyō—aware perhaps of Daolong's desire to teach unadulterated Chinese Zen—recommended that he travel on to Kamakura. Zen in Kyoto, though represented by the monasteries Kenninji and Tōfukuji, was forced to coexist with the dominant Tendai and Shingon traditions, and thus remained syncretized with Esoteric Buddhism. Chikyō realized that Kamakura offered Daolong a better chance of establishing a purer form of Zen practice.

Daolong was warmly received by Tokiyori. The master first resided at the temples Jufukuji and Jōrakuji, opening at the latter in 1248 a Zen Meditation Hall (J: *Sōdō*) soon filled to overflowing with monks seeking instruction.¹¹ Tokiyori and Daolong quickly conceived a plan to establish a major monastery at which contemporary Chinese Chan observances would be strictly followed. In 1253 this temple, called Kenchōji after the Kenchō era (1249–1256) in which it was founded, began operation as the first Rinzai monastery in Japan run along true Chinese Chan lines (Figs. 4.1–4.3).

Daolong's Contributions

Among the many contributions made by Daolong to the development of Zen in Japan we can mention the following.¹²

Chan Experience

Although at age thirty-four he was too young to be thought of as a venerable Zen master, Daolong was deeply experienced in Chan life and practice. As a novice and young monk he had

practiced in some of the great Chan centers of China. He had accumulated thousands of hours of meditative experience, had engaged in daily encounters (J: *mondō*) with leading Chan masters in which he had presented his understanding of the *kōan* he was working on, and finally had his own awakening confirmed by Wuming. In the process of his monastic training he had internalized every aspect of Chan meditative practice, monastic organization and administration, and Chan Buddhist culture and tradition. He was an authentic bearer of the full Chan tradition, and this was immediately recognized in Japan by monks and lay patrons alike.

Emphasis on Zazen

Daolong made it very clear to his students that the core of Zen practice was mastery of the Buddha's path, resolving the meaning of life and death and attaining the self-same enlightenment as the Buddha. Central to these attainments was *zazen*, which meant maintaining the “four daily sessions of *zazen*.” Since each of these sittings was about two hours long, this meant that monks were sitting quietly in the lotus posture for a minimum of eight hours each day. In addition, there were even more intensive monthly retreats, and monks were encouraged to sit at night instead of sleeping.¹³

Emphasis on the Monastic Rule

With the path to enlightenment so difficult, demanding, and ultimately unsure, its attainment could most effectively be pursued within the framework of rigorous Chan monastic rules, devised over time by the great masters to focus and maximize the energies of communal life and individual practice. Chan monastic codes are not the same as the Buddhist Vinaya, the traditional disciplinary code that governs the behavior of all Buddhist monks and nuns. An interesting example of the divergence is provided by the Zen monastic emphasis on manual labor. Whereas the Vinaya forbids gardening and other such work because of the inevitable deaths of insects and other small creatures, the Zen monastic codes actually mandate such labor, both as a means of providing for the monastery's needs and as a way of expressing the insights of meditation in the everyday activities of life. Such “working meditation” is known in Zen as *samu* (“work duty”).

The strict, active, meditation-centered, rule-based Zen practice introduced at Kenchōji by Daolong is reflected in a short treatise of his, the *Dharma Words and Regulations* (*Hōgo Kisoku*), a portion of which may be paraphrased as follows: “A horse that runs only when shown the whip is not a good horse; a monk who practices only when admonished is not a good monk. . . . The purpose of Zen training is to resolve the Great Matter of life-and-death. You must never indulge your feelings and become neglectful, even when resting after the bath.” In the *Hōgo Kisoku*, Daolong continues:

Elders and head monks must attend carefully to their training, without regard to the opinions of others. You wear robes and receive the donations of the faithful; if nothing comes of this, when can you repay the debt? From now on even on bath days

zazen must be practiced in the evening and early morning; those who do not go to the Meditation Hall but head for their quarters will be punished by expulsion.¹⁴

Chan Monastic Architecture and Layout

During the centuries prior to and after the building of Kenchōji, meditation was practiced in lay residences as well as monasteries. It was never believed that enlightenment through meditation could be found only on the mats of the Meditation Hall. Attainment could come during *zazen* or in confrontation with one's teacher, or while chanting before a Buddha image; but it could equally well be attained while working outside or doing some household task, or cleaning the latrines, or meditating in the moonlight, or walking a mountain path. Having said that, there was a strong tradition in Chinese Chan practice that the monastic setting should be optimized for the efficient, focused, communal meditation of several hundred monks. Thus a distinctive layout for Chan monasteries was gradually realized. Daolong may not have been a temple architect, but he knew intimately what was essential in the various monastery buildings, and he was able to ask Chinese monks coming to Japan to bring with them ground plans and details of Chinese monasteries.

No visual record seems to have survived of Kenchōji in the 1250s, when it was newly built and Daolong was its abbot. There is, however, a detailed ground plan, the *Kenchōji Sashizu* (Fig. 4.4), showing the layout of the monastery as it was in the early fourteenth century. This document has an interesting history. When in 1331 the Kyoto Zen monastery of Tōfukuji was being rebuilt after a great fire, a copy of the then surviving ground plan of Kenchōji was made for reference. This was preserved at Tōfukuji. The original Kenchōji ground plan was lost in a fire in the early seventeenth century. An inscription on an old storage box indicates that Kenchōji monks visiting Tōfukuji in 1732 learned that the plan made in 1331 was still preserved at Tōfukuji. They secretly borrowed and copied it.¹⁵ From this ground plan showing Kenchōji as it was prior to 1331, it is very clear that medieval Kenchōji was built to a plan that Daolong would have advocated.

Set in a quiet, deeply wooded valley, Kenchōji was approached from the south. The great gate, Buddha Hall (*Butsuden*) and Dharma Hall (or Teaching Hall; *Hattō*) were on a central axis (Fig. 4.1), with the Abbot's Quarters in the north of the compound. In keeping with traditional Chan layout, the administrative and service buildings were on the eastern side of the monastery, the Zen Meditation Hall, bathrooms, and latrines on the western side.

Monastic Organization and Administration

Kenchōji's layout reflected the characteristic Chan administrative organization, which Daolong would have set up, i.e., a fundamental division into eastern assembly (*tōhan*) and western assembly (*seihan*) sections. The *tōhan* section held the six administrators (*roku chiji*), including *tsūsu* (head administrative monk, in charge of overall affairs, duties shared with the *kansu*, a similar post); *fūsu* (treasurer, in charge of the

monastery's material supplies and financial affairs); *inō* (duty monk, in charge of overall supervision of the assembly); *tenzo* (head cook, in charge of the kitchen); and *shissui* (maintenance officer, in charge of the physical upkeep and repair of the monastery).¹⁶

Monks in the *seihan* section were more directly involved in the meditation practice, and held posts known as the *roku chōshu* ("six officers"): *shuso* (head monk, in charge of meditation in the Meditation Hall); *shoki* (secretary, in charge of

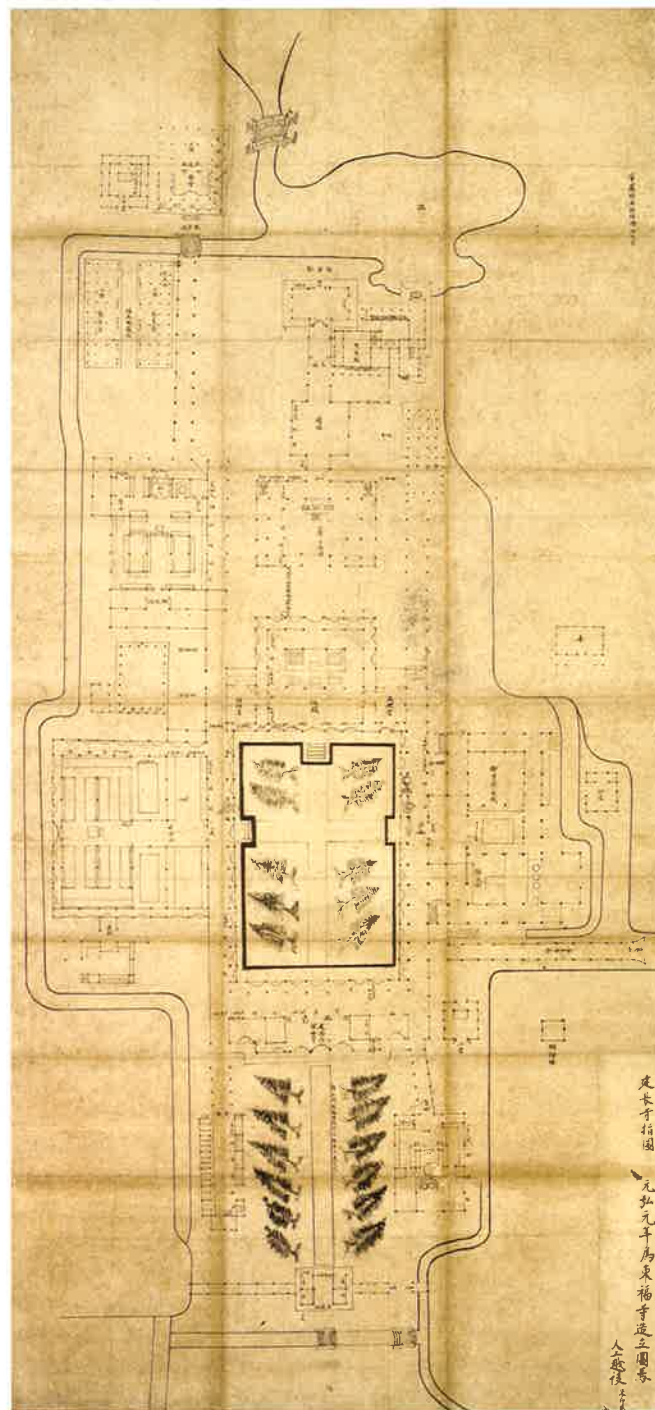


FIGURE 4.4
Diagram of the Kenchōji grounds. Painter unknown. Japanese, Edo period, 1732. Hanging scroll, ink on paper; 177.1 x 83.7 cm.
KENCHŌJI, KAMAKURA

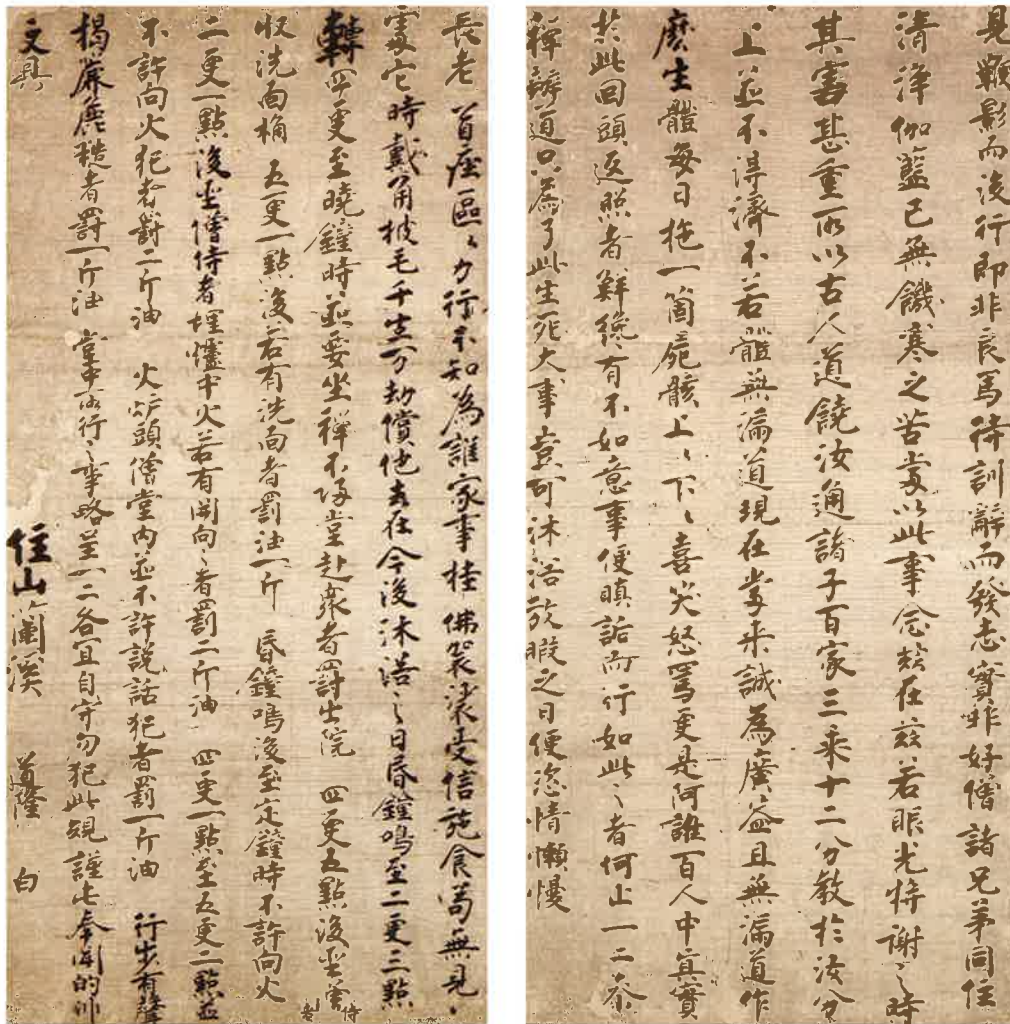


FIGURE 4.5
Hōgo (Dharma Words to Enlighten) and *Kisoku* (Regulations). Lanqi Daolong (1213–1278). Japanese, Kamakura period, 13th c. Ink on paper; *Hōgo*: 85.2 x 41.4 cm, *Kisoku*: 85.5 x 40.7 cm. KENCHŌJI, KAMAKURA

handling the various writing tasks associated with monastery correspondence and ritual); *zōsu* (librarian, in charge of the monastery's sutra collection), *shika* (guest-master, in charge of receiving visitors to the monastery); *chiyoku* (bath monk, in charge of the monastery bathhouse); and *chiden* (sexton, in charge of all matters relating to the upkeep and operation of the Buddha Hall).

These divisions are further indicated on the Kenchōji map by the presence of buildings marked, to the east, *kansuryō* (*kansu* quarters), *tsūsuruyō kyakuden* (*tsūsu* quarters and guesthouse), and *chōsaisho* (kitchen); and, to the west, "*Daitetsudō*" (the name of the Monks'-Hall complex, or *Sōdō*), *inōryō* (*inō*'s quarters), and *zendōryō* (head monk's quarters). The *inō*'s quarters, traditionally on the eastern, administrative side, are here located on the western side, reflecting the fact that the *inō*'s duties were intimately related to the activities of the Monks' Hall.

The various posts were seen not merely as administrative duties, but as integral elements of Zen training. The job of cook is a representative example of a task inseparable from the practice of Zen. The novelist Minakami Tsutomu (b. 1919), commenting on Dōgen's treatise *Instructions to the Monastery Cook* (*Tenzo Kyōkun*), writes, "The most notable feature of this text is Dōgen's emphasis on the fact that cooking is not mere kitchen work, but a task involving a level of thoughtfulness

and care that makes it the noblest of human occupations."¹⁷ In washing rice, for example, Dōgen urges the cooks to be constantly mindful lest they allow a single grain of sand to find its way into the cooking cauldron.

Brush Traces (*Bokuseki*)

The calligraphy of Zen monks is known as *bokuseki* ("brush traces"). Monks in training at Kenchōji would have read and pondered the words of masters in the Rinzai Zen tradition. They would have been surrounded by examples of fine *bokuseki*. Many would have trained as calligraphers and aspired to produce their own elegant expressions of Zen as their insight deepened and they found their awakening.

Daolong was himself a fine calligrapher and no doubt brought calligraphic scrolls and texts from China, or had them sent to him in Japan (Fig. 4.5).¹⁸ Monastic buildings were identified by plaques over the entrance doors. Monks entering the Meditation Hall, for example, might notice a plaque reading "Place Where Buddhas Are Made" (*senbutsujō*). On the walls of the Meditation Hall itself, in the chambers of the abbot and the senior monks, and in the room where monks met their master for *mondō*, calligraphic scrolls—phrases from the Chan/Zen tradition—would be prominently displayed. A young monk in the Meditation Hall, wrestling with his particular *kōan*—let us say he has been told by his master to "Show me

your original face”—may have been struggling day and night for weeks to see his “original face” and to find the words or gesture to demonstrate to his master that he had truly “seen” it. While presenting his *kōan* response to the master in his chamber, and being briskly rebuffed and told he was getting nowhere—he still cannot “see” or “show” his face—the despondent monk might notice a scroll behind his master’s back with calligraphy from one of the Zen classics, perhaps “*honrai mu-ichibutsu*” (“Originally there is Nothing”). This might provide him with a hint as he returned to the Meditation Hall to grapple again with his *kōan*. But he will also have been warned time and again that true awakening was to be found in direct experience, not in somebody else’s “words and letters,” however insightful they might seem.

Painting, Sculpture, and Visual Imagery in the Zen Monastery

Chinsō Paintings and Sculptures

“Never seek Buddha outside,” Zen teaches—“the Buddha is found within.” In line with this injunction is a tendency to think of Zen monasteries as austere meditation centers, unadorned with paintings and sculpture, and relieved only by their graceful rooflines and elegantly simple rock and gravel gardens. Certainly Zen does not encourage the kind of devotional practices performed in Pure Land Buddhism, which looks to Amida for salvation, nor are Zen monastic halls normally adorned with vivid polychrome paintings symbolically recreating the Pure Land or depicting the process of awakening. Zen has placed little or no emphasis on the accumulation of merit through the construction of temples or the carving of images. Furthermore, Zen, in its spare use of sculpted and painted religious images, stands in stark contrast to the Esoteric Buddhist schools, which employ a wide variety of sacred imagery for their elaborate mandalas and rituals. But this is not to say that the Zen monastic tradition has been hostile to painting and sculpture and has had no use for decorative art. A visit to any Zen temple will quickly reveal Buddha images in the Buddha and Dharma Halls, before which prayers and incense are offered and ceremonies conducted. The Monks’ Hall will almost certainly have a statue of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (J: Monju) as an exemplar of superior wisdom and enlightenment, to which all may aspire. Other buildings, including the kitchen, bathhouse, and latrine, will all contain statues or paintings of their various protective deities, to which prayers will regularly be offered. The Main Gate (*Sanmon*, literally, “Triple Gate”) at Kenchōji is richly decorated with statues of the Five Hundred Arhats. Zen monasteries employed a wide range of painting and sculpture throughout the monastery. Monks venerated or simply enjoyed these images, reminded by their teachers that respect and appreciation of images might help in their practice but that the search for their own Buddhahood lay within.

Among the types of images particularly prized in Zen monasteries were painted and sculpted portraits of eminent monks, known as *chinsō*.¹⁹ Zen holds a tradition of receiving,



FIGURE 4.6
Portrait of Lanqi Daolong.
 Painter unknown. Inscribed by
 Lanqi Daolong (1213–1278).
 Japanese, Kamakura period,
 1271. Hanging scroll, colors on
 silk; 104.8 x 46.4 cm.
 KENCHŌJI, KAMAKURA



FIGURE 4.7
Portrait of Lanqi Daolong in Walking Meditation. Painter unknown. Japanese, Kamakura period, 14th c. Hanging scroll, colors on silk; 90.9 x 38.5 cm. KENCHŌJI, KAMAKURA

upon completion of one's formal training, the portrait or surplice (*kesa*) of one's teacher, as evidence of dharma transmission (*inka shōmei*). These often became cherished temple possessions, as did the portraits and sculptures of eminent priests who were associated with the temple and, in many cases, buried on the temple grounds. From this there evolved the genre of Zen *chinsō* art. Temples also possessed paintings of such figures as Śākyamuni (the historical Buddha), Bodhidharma (the sixth-century Indian monk said to have transmitted Zen to China), and the various bodhisattvas and arhats (enlightened Buddhist sages), as well as collections of flower vases, candle stands, censers, incense containers, and other accoutrements necessary for the performance of ceremonies. Important temples sought the highest quality in such objects, with the result that Song-dynasty temples, and their Japanese successors, were filled with artistic masterpieces made of celadon, red lacquer, and bronze. The range and variety of these objects can be seen from the entries in the *Catalogue of Treasures Belonging to the Butsunichian* (*Butsunichian Kōmotsu Mokuroku*). This is a fourteenth-century inventory of artistic and other properties of Butsunichian, a subtemple of Engakuji in Kamakura, built by Hōjō Tokimune in 1282. According to a postscript, the catalogue was begun in 1320. The document records Chinese *chinsō*, *butsuga* (iconic Buddhist paintings), *zenki zu* (paintings of Zen in action), and *ryūko zu* (paintings of dragons and tigers), all from the Song and Yuan dynasties, as well as *bokuseki*, *hōe* (vestments), and ceramics. A key document for the study of *karamono* (Chinese objects introduced to Japan) from the thirteenth century, it also records how various warrior lords, daimyō, and Ashikaga shoguns purchased art works from the Butsunichian collection. The original document is still kept at Engakuji. The *Butsunichian Kōmotsu Mokuroku* tells not only what kind of art objects Zen temples held, but that these objects were carefully catalogued and treated as treasures.²⁰

Like other Zen monasteries, Kenchōji had many portraits of its founder-abbot Daolong, and his Chinese masters and Japanese successors, hanging in alcoves in the Abbot's Quarters or stored in its treasure house. Among the extant portraits of Lanqi Daolong, that dated Bun'ei 8 (1271) and inscribed by Daolong himself (Fig. 4.6) is one of the finest examples of the *chinsō* genre. The portrait is strikingly individual. It conveys not only the powerful physical presence of a demanding Zen master, but also a sense of the master's inner conviction. The piece was presented by Daolong to a certain Layman Rōnen (thought to be the regent Hōjō Tokimune; 1251–1284), and thus appears not to have been a certificate of dharma transmission. A portrait of *Daolong in Walking Meditation* owned by Kenchōji is another fine depiction of the master, walking quietly in meditation in a natural setting (Fig. 4.7). In this exhibition are two fine examples of painted *chinsō* (Cats. 29, 30).

Portraits of distinguished Zen masters were often sculpted as well as painted. These might be placed in the Teaching Hall, or in the Abbot's Quarters. In a seated sculpture of Daolong in the possession of the Kenchōji subtemple Sairaiian (Fig. 4.8), the master's emaciated ribs stand out, and the

numerous folds of the robes are clearly defined. Daolong's features, sensitively depicted, convey an aura of great spiritual power and energy.

Poem-Painting Scrolls (*Shigajiku*)

Shigajiku—hanging-scroll paintings inscribed with Chinese poems (*kanshi*), often by Zen monks—were also painted and written in the Abbot's Quarters in Zen monasteries. On many of these one monk would add an appropriate calligraphic inscription to a painting done by another monk. Or several monks might add suitable verses to a single illustration. Originally composed as expressions of insight or pointers to insight, over time—especially as they expanded from the monastic context into the society of lay patrons—they could quickly become part of a growing literary corpus known as the Literature of the Five Mountains (*Gozan Bungaku*), a literary tradition centered around a group of influential Zen temples known as the *Gozan* (Five Mountains). Zen monks and laypeople who seriously pursued enlightenment were aware, however, that they would not find their own enlightenment in any of these *shigajiku*, however appealing and insightful they might seem.

Ink Paintings (*Suibokuga*)

Lanqi Daolong, and the Chinese Chan monks who followed him to Japan later in the century, also transmitted Chan-related Chinese visual and literary culture to Japan. Vessels coming to the port of Hakata in Kyushu from Song- and Yuan-dynasty China were packed with art objects, books, and scrolls. These objects soon found their way to the growing number of Zen monasteries in Kyoto and Kamakura, and, by the fourteenth century, were present throughout the country. We now describe much of this influx as “Zen Art,” yet in the monastic context it was hardly considered as “art,” but rather as expressions of insight attained or as visual stimuli toward awakening—hints to enlightenment, finger pointing at the moon. Monks were not producing “art” for enjoyment or appreciation, but to help themselves and others express, deepen, or question their insight; or to remind themselves of the tradition in which they were practicing; or to depict revered masters who had found their enlightenment, or famous moments or encounters in the history of Chan.

Zen Art and Aesthetics Beyond the Medieval Monastery

Zen-related calligraphic scrolls, portraits, ink paintings, aesthetic tastes, and styles of architecture, garden design, and tea drinking were never confined to monasteries. Although Chan/Zen monasteries were the major sources of what we now call “Zen Art,” they were not the exclusive sources. From early times, in both China and Japan, some practitioners of painting or calligraphy on Zen themes were lay people, whether householders or wandering hermits. Talented Zen monk-painters left their monasteries and consorted with laymen. Laymen and women who patronized and visited Zen

monks and monasteries were eager to receive paintings or pieces of calligraphy from monks whom they revered. Some who practiced Zen deeply were given *chinsō* or verses as a mark of their attainment. Some brought sketches for monks to sign and add verses or comments.

Lay patrons admired what we might describe as a Zen monastic aesthetic. Its traits included simplicity, austerity, tranquillity, and freedom from worldly attachment. It also demanded directness, tight organization, and economy of time and movement. And in discussion with Zen monks, or in viewing painting and calligraphy by Zen monks, laymen would encounter the positive value ascribed to naturalness, eccentricity, asymmetry, simplicity, and subtle profundity (*yūgen*) or refined poverty (*wabi*). All of these qualities have been assigned as characteristics of “Zen Art” by Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, D.T. Suzuki,



FIGURE 4.8
Seated Figure of Lanqi Daolong.
Sculptor unknown. Japanese,
Kamakura period, 13th c.
Lacquered wood with inset
crystal eyes; h. 62.9 cm.
KENCHŌJI, KAMAKURA

and other commentators on the relationship between Zen practice and the arts in China and Japan. Their views have been addressed by Gregory Levine in his essay in this catalogue. Here, I would simply point out that Hisamatsu and D.T. Suzuki can be criticized for idealizing “Zen Art,” detaching it from its broader Buddhist context, and identifying it too closely with Japan and Japanese cultural ideals.²¹

By the Muromachi period (1392–1573) in Japan monks of the Zen schools, especially Rinzai Zen, had formed close ties with the warrior and aristocratic classes, and had undergone a considerable degree of secularization. Senior priests were increasingly accepted as members of the educated and cultured elite, and many of their activities seem to have been as much cultural and artistic as religious in nature.

Monks joined in poetry gatherings with warriors and nobles. Skill in impromptu poetry composition and command of Chinese poetry helped Zen priests attain social recognition, fostering the rise of *Gozan Bungaku*.²²

Art related to the tea ceremony (*Chanoyu*) is outside the scope of this exhibition, but deserves mention because it, too, had a Zen monastic origin and only later became a secularized aesthetic. Monks in Chan/Zen monasteries offered simple meals and powdered green tea (J: *matcha*) to visitors, and, as the vogue for tea drinking spread into lay society, they helped to shape its aesthetic practice. Tea masters from the time of Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591) have all practiced Zen. *Chanoyu*, the refined aesthetic of tea, particularly in its simplest form, called *wabicha*, is often presented as an archetypal example of “Zen culture.” But in fact it was created by merchants and warriors in secular society rather than by Zen monks. And the expense incurred in the building of elegantly rustic tea rooms and the acquiring of famed teabowls and other accessories belied the Zen goal of freedom from self, from human entanglements, and from material acquisitiveness in the search for enlightenment.²³

The “Zen garden”—based upon rocks and raked gravel as expressions of nature, infinity, and emptiness—was also transformed, and in some measure secularized, over time. The gardens around the Abbot’s Quarters in the early Kyoto and Kamakura Zen monasteries and subtemples may well have been conceived by Zen monks on the basis of Chan designs and an aesthetic imported from China, and constructed by them at the monastery as part of their daily work duty. As Zen temples proliferated, however, and the aesthetic of the “Zen garden” spread into lay society, gardens were designed by garden-design families and constructed by their lowly laborers (*sansui kawaramono*), in Kyoto, Nara, and Kamakura. Many of the designers and builders of such famous rock gardens as the magnificent one at Ryōanji, Kyoto, were not devotees of Zen, nor particularly inspired by the spirit of Zen. They may have consulted with Zen monks as they conceived of and designed the garden, but the aesthetic principles behind the composition were no longer exclusively “Zen.” And when, over the centuries, repairs to or redesign of a Zen garden was needed, as at Ryōanji in the eighteenth century, the likelihood

that the garden designers were professional Kyoto artisans, rather than Zen monks, was even greater.²⁴

In the graphic arts too, over time Zen principles and ideals of conception and composition extended far beyond the circle of Zen practitioners and devotees. Ink paintings, which had once been the preserve of Zen monk-artists (*gasō*), had a powerful appeal in lay society. Over time many striking ink landscapes and bird and figure paintings illustrating Zen characters, themes, and ideals were painted by artists who had been trained in the traditional style (so-called *yamato-e*), and who were requested by their patrons to produce works similar to those of Chinese painters of the Song dynasty.

Hasegawa Tōhaku (1539–1610), for example, is often presented as a representative Zen artist. Certainly, his wonderful painting of *Pine Trees*, on two long screens, embodies the underlying principles of what we think of as Zen painting in its subtle use of line and shading to depict aging mountain pines shrouded in mist. But Tōhaku was a devotee of the Nichiren school of Buddhism, generally thought of as unsympathetic to Zen. He was not a Zen practitioner, but he came to prefer the ink paintings of artists like the Zen monk-painter Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506) to the brightly colored paintings of the then dominant Kanō school of Japanese artists, including one of his own teachers, Kanō Eitoku (1543–1590). As a master of ink landscape, familiar with Chinese and Japanese landscape paintings in Zen monastic buildings in Kyoto and in the homes of merchants in Sakai, he was also sufficiently master of the Zen tradition to paint truly “Zen paintings,” much admired by Zen monks themselves. By contrast with the richly colored paintings of the Kanō school, most of Tōhaku’s later works are simple compositions in ink, created for Zen monasteries in Kyoto.²⁵ By his day, the Zen art aesthetic was out of its monastic box and available to talented artists, poets, dramatists like Zeami, and to tea masters like Rikyū, who used it creatively as part of a broad cultural expression that lay artists and their patrons were now thinking of as “Zen Art.”

As we enjoy the wonderful paintings in this exhibition, aware of the long historical movement of Zen and Zen-related monastic life and culture within China, from China to Japan, and then within Japan, we are both constrained and liberated. We are constrained to recognize that “Zen Art,” in its narrow, core definition as an expression of the Zen spiritual quest, can only emerge from Zen experience. At the same time we are liberated in knowing that over the centuries in China and Japan and the West, a richly creative interaction has occurred between monks and laymen, in which calligraphy, painting, poetry scrolls, ox-herding pictures, gardens, Nō plays, tea ceremony, architecture, and use of space have been inspired by the visual, spiritual, and intellectual depth of the culture associated with Chan/Zen and practiced for centuries in Chinese and Japanese monasteries and nunneries. This realization should allow us to enjoy the exhibition at several levels, asking ourselves as we look at the paintings, What is “Zen” about this?

Notes

1. Particularly relevant for this essay, and for this exhibition, is the volume *Kamakura: The Art of Zen Buddhism (Kamakura: Zen no Genryū)*, the catalogue of an exhibition of art from Kamakura temples held at Tokyo National Museum in June and July 2003. The catalogue was compiled by the TNM and published by Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha in 2003. The introductory essay, "Kamakura: The Art of Zen Buddhism," by Asami Ryūsuke, trans. Thomas Kirchner, is especially helpful.
2. On the introduction of Chan/Zen meditation practice in the Nara and Heian periods, see Ibuki Atsushi, *Zen no Rekishi* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2001), pp. 173–86.
3. Ibid.
4. On Yōsai's contribution, see, for example, Ibuki Atsushi, *Zen no Rekishi*, pp. 188–90.
5. There is a massive literature on Dōgen and the Sōtō school. For a lively introduction, see Hee-Jin Kim, *Dōgen Kigen, Mystical Realist* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975; paperback reprint, Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2004).
6. On Nōnin, see Ibuki Atsushi, *Zen no Rekishi*, pp. 189–90.
7. Warrior patronage of Zen in medieval Japan is discussed in Martin Collcutt, *Five Mountains: The Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 57–129.
8. D.T. Suzuki has stressed (perhaps overstressed) the relationship between the samurai spirit and Zen. See, for example, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959).
9. On Daolong, see Tsuji Zennosuke, *Nihon Bukkyōshi (A History of Japanese Buddhism)*, vol. 2 ([Tokyo]: Iwanami Shoten, 1949), which contains the posthumous *Record of Lanqi*, the *Daikaku Zenji Goroku*. Also Matsuo Kenji, "Toraisō no Seiki" (The Century of the Immigrant Monks), in *Nihon Chūsei no Zen to Ritsu (The Medieval Zen and Vinaya Schools)* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2003), pp. 122–31. *Kamakura: Zen no Genryū* contains numerous references to Daolong and Kenchōji. In English, see Collcutt, *Five Mountains*, pp. 65–68.
10. According to the monk Kokan Shiren (1278–1346), author of the *Genkō Shakusho* (completed 1322), Daolong made the trip because he had heard from Japanese monks in China that the Japanese islands offered a promising mission field for Chan. *Genkō Shakusho*, vol. 6, p. 78, in *Dai-Nihon Bukkyō Zensho*, vol. 101 (Tokyo: Dai-Nihon Bukkyō Zensho Kankōkai, 1931).
11. For the history of Jōrakuji, see *Kamakura-shi Shi, Shaji-hen (A History of the City of Kamakura, Shrines and Temples)* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1959), pp. 413–18.
12. On Daolong's contributions, see also *Kamakura: Zen no Genryū*, pp. 11–19 (also vi–x).
13. Ibid., p. 15 (also vii).
14. Ibid.
15. On Zen monastic architecture and the *Kenchōji Sashizu*, see Bruce Coats, "The Architecture of Zen Buddhist Monasteries in Japan" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1985), pp. 44–107, 209–40.
16. On Zen monastic organization and the functions of the various officers of the eastern and western ranks, see Collcutt, *Five Mountains*, pp. 221–47.
17. Cited in *Kamakura: Zen no Genryū*, p. vii.
18. Examples of Daolong's calligraphy can be found in the catalogue for *Zen Painting and Calligraphy*, an exhibition at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1970. See p. 52 for a translation of colophon added to a painting of a Red-Robed Bodhidharma and pp. 52–53 for a Buddhist hymn composed by Daolong. Illustrations of these works will also be found in *Kamakura: Zen no Genryū*, pp. 40, 41. See also Yukio Lippit's essay in the present volume for the painting and inscription.
19. On *chinsō*, see *Kamakura: Zen no Genryū*, pp. ix, xiv. The catalogue includes many examples of painted and sculpted *chinsō*. See, for example, the splendid portrait of the Chinese Chan master Wuzhun Shifan on p. 96.
20. On the *Butsunichian Kōmotsu Mokuroku*, see JAANUS (Japanese Architecture and Art Net Users System), <http://www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/deta/b/butsunichiankoumotsumokuroku.htm> (accessed 16 November 2006).
21. Hisamatsu's views on "Zen Art" will be found in his book *Zen and the Fine Arts*, trans. Tokiwa Gishin (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1971). D.T. Suzuki's many books include several devoted to Zen and the arts. See, for example, *Zen and Japanese Culture*. Critiques of Hisamatsu and Suzuki have been made by Yoshiaki Shimizu in "Zen Art?" in *Zen in China, Japan, and East Asian Art: Papers of the International Symposium on Zen, Zürich University, 1982*, ed. Helmut Brinker et al. (Berne: Peter Lang, 1985), pp. 73–98; Alexander Soper, review of Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, in *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 23, no. 2 (1960), pp. 139–40, among others.
22. On the *Gozan Bungaku* literary movement in Japan, see Marian Ury, *Poems of the Five Mountains: An Introduction to the Literature of Zen Monasteries* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1992).
23. The development of *Chanoyu* and the importance of Rikyū and other tea masters in the shaping of Japanese aesthetics of "refined poverty" is discussed in many works, including Sen Sōshitsu, *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen no Rikyū*, trans. V. Dixon Morris (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998); Herbert Plutschow, *Rediscovering Rikyū: And the Beginnings of the Japanese Ceremony* (Folkstone, Kent, U.K.: Globe Oriental, 2003).
24. The "Zen" character of Ryōanji's and other Zen monastic gardens is discussed by Loraine E. Kuck, *The World of the Japanese Garden* (New York: Walker-Weatherhill, 1968); François Berthier, *Zen in the Stones: The Garden of Ryōanji* (London: Frances Lincoln, 1999).
25. On Hasegawa Tōhaku and the painting of *Pine Trees*, see Ichimatsu Tanaka and Masao Ishizawa, *Heritage of Japanese Art* (Tokyo: Kodansha America, 1992).



Awakenings The Development of the Zen Figural Pantheon

YUKIO LIPPIT

ZEN BUDDHISM boasts a colorful and idiosyncratic cast of patriarchs and exemplary practitioners. It shares certain Buddhas and bodhisattvas with other Mahāyāna Buddhist sects, but its additional religious paragons would seem motley by most standards: figures at the periphery of medieval Chinese social life, often peripatetic or otherwise unmoored from society, characterized by ragged, unkempt appearances and inscrutable behavior; early Chinese monks who engaged in fictional debates with the opponents of Buddhism; and even a variety of practitioners known for specific acts of iconoclasm, such as Danxia (J: Tanka), who burned a wooden statue of the Buddha in order to stay warm in winter, or Xianzi (J: Kensu), who survived by eating the prawns that he caught, thereby breaking one of the foundational taboos of the Vinaya, or monastic code of behavior. The roll call of characters associated with Chan/Zen communities historically could also include figures drawn from mainstream religious culture in general—Confucian exemplars, Daoist Immortals, Japanese deities (*kami*), and even poets of renown. All of these figures, either implicitly or explicitly, were mobilized to reflect sectarian identity in highly elliptical and sophisticated ways. They were often given pictorial form in monochrome ink, accompanied by the inscriptions of prominent abbots of Chan/Zen monasteries. This practice, which began in the circles of a few highly influential and charismatic monks in early twelfth-century China, became widespread by the next century, when it expanded to the Japanese archipelago; there it flourished, and inscribed figure paintings constitute one of the most representative art forms associated with medieval Japan's Zen Buddhist culture. Hundreds of Japanese Zen figure paintings

survive from this period, as well as dozens of Chinese works, which were brought to Japan by émigré masters, returning pilgrim-monks, and merchant traders. As a whole, this corpus enables considerable insight into the myriad ways Chan/Zen communities once imagined themselves and their formation.

The present essay offers a general introduction to this body of material, as well as a historical framework for understanding how and why this “Zen pantheon” came to be. The subjects of Chan/Zen paintings are exemplars of Buddhist awakening, and some explanation is required in order to fully appreciate the specificity of the Chan/Zen purchase on this concept in relation to those of other Buddhist sects.

Chan/Zen Buddhists have for centuries claimed to represent a special, unbroken transmission of the Buddha's dharma, or wisdom, down to the present. As the tradition itself asserted, this transmission was intuitive, from “mind to mind,” and took place entirely apart from the study of Buddhist scripture. According to this understanding, whereas most other Buddhist sects attempt to access the dharma through sutras—religious texts that purport to record the Buddha's own words—Chan/Zen adherents emphasize more instinctive or somatic forms of practice, such as meditation, one-on-one encounters and training sessions with religious masters, or the study of *kōan*, that is to say, fragments of inscrutable dialogue by previous Chan/Zen exemplars that offered case studies of enlightened insight. It was through these daily activities that Chan/Zen Buddhists eventually achieved awakening (C: *wu*, J: *satori*), one of the main goals of religious practice, and became members of the lineage of special transmission.¹ Awakened practitioners became the bearers of the “lamp” or

FIGURE 5.1

Mahākāśyapa's Smile. Unkei Eiji (act. early to mid-16th c.). Japanese, Muromachi period, 16th c. Hanging scroll (middle scroll of triptych), ink and light colors on paper; 112.1 x 52.1 cm.

TOKIWAYAMA BUNKO FOUNDATION, KAMAKURA

the “flame”—the privileged metaphor for the ineffable dharma suggesting the fragility and potential evanescence of the Buddha’s knowledge in the course of transmission—and were responsible for nurturing and transmitting it to later generations.² Because of their evocativeness in conjuring up the patriarchal past, and the seemingly personalized nature of their inscriptions, Chan/Zen figure paintings are most commonly understood to be catalysts for religious training, bestowed by masters upon their disciples and lay followers to provide models of exemplary practice or awakened behavior.

Whereas the pictorial representation of religious paragons played an important role in many different traditions of Buddhist practice, its function and significance for Chan/Zen communities emerge as much more than hortatory or inspirational when examined within the framework of what will be referred to here as the “ideology of the special transmission.” Over the last several decades scholars of East Asian religious history have argued convincingly that the Chan/Zen dharma genealogy did not achieve its most elaborate and mature expression until the Song dynasty (960–1279). The historical components of this process will be presented in greater detail below; what is most significant about this collective new understanding is that it dates the emergence of the full articulation of Chan/Zen’s special transmission well after the purported Golden Age of Chinese Chan Buddhism during the Tang dynasty (618–907), and well after the era when most of the subjects of Chan/Zen figure painting were assumed to have been active. In other words, as a historical phenomenon, the emergence of figure painting as a preferred vehicle for the visualization of the school’s own lineage is not far removed from the emergence of a sustained and systematic rhetoric asserting the uniqueness of that very lineage. The argument set forth here is that these two phenomena are closely related—that painting functioned as a resonant and highly effective medium for the representation of the lineal prerogatives of Chan/Zen communities. Pictorial representation was certainly not the only arena in which genealogical premises were articulated and disseminated; the systematic promulgation of structured speech and texts in many different forums by Chan/Zen monks and authors worked to the same end. Yet in its artifactuality and its suitability to uniquely pictorial forms of persuasion, painting proved to be a particularly potent means of Chan/Zen self-definition. And its role only grew more pronounced over time; the pictorial surface came to provide a unique space in which the invention of new iconographies, the appropriation of religious charisma from beyond the borders of Chan/Zen communities, and the relationships between religious masters and their various constituencies, could be given visual and material form. These same characteristics marked figure painting once it was adopted by Japanese Zen communities during the thirteenth century; there it continued to assimilate new subjects and to facilitate the communal imagining of the special transmission, and in the process introduced a fundamentally new role for pictorial representation to the Japanese archipelago.

The idea that painting played a prominent role in the articulation of the special transmission has many implications for an understanding of the function and audience of Chan/Zen

figure painting. Until now, most accounts explaining the subject matter of such works have tended to be overly reliant upon the biographical entries for these figures that are found in contemporary texts (the “lamp histories,” see below), which were to a large degree intended to document and lend tangibility to the special transmission. We must be aware, however, that these lamp histories functioned in tandem with paintings and other texts to weave a rich mythopoeisis of Zen across East Asia. By the same token, heightened awareness of the ideological aspect of Chan/Zen figure painting strongly suggests that its audience included not only aspiring monks, but also lay followers, scholar-officials, warrior leaders, and other extramonastic constituencies. Although the specific circumstances under which these works were produced are largely unknown, circumstantial evidence and a small number of documented cases imply that the recipients of these scrolls were oftentimes situated at the peripheries of monastic communities, but precisely because of this were in a position to offer financial and various other forms of patronage. The ideology of the special transmission as acted out in Chan/Zen figure painting can be understood as a form of communication carefully crafted to speak to those peripheries. To this end of mediating monk-recipient relations, the accompanying inscriptions played a key role. Like other brush traces from Chan/Zen masters, these pithy, allusive, but at the same time highly repetitive verses allowed religious masters to demonstrate their insights into their own dharma lineages. Calligraphic commentary provided Chan/Zen monks with a forum in which to perform their own awakened status in front of the various audiences with which they interacted. Prefaced by these brief observations concerning function and audience, then, the following sections take a closer look at several of the historical and institutional conditions for the development of Chan/Zen figure painting, as well as the who’s who of its evolving pantheon.

The Special Transmission

The ideology of the special transmission was meant to radically distinguish Chinese Chan Buddhism from other Buddhist schools of the Song period, most prominently the Tiantai, Lü (S: Vinaya), and Huayan. Such distinction was significant because many religious groups vied for imperial patronage and for the favorable attention of the scholar-official class. The importance of this attention was not negligible, as scholar-official favor could often influence imperial abbacy appointments and the sponsorship of monastic infrastructure. In competing for such real-world gains, rhetorical self-presentation played a crucial role, all the more so because in daily practice Chan Buddhists did not differ all that much from other schools laying claim to a special understanding of the dharma. As T. Griffith Foulk has demonstrated, during the Song period there was little that distinguished the rituals, routines, and monastic life of Chan practitioners from those of the adherents of other sects.³ Despite their claims to “not posit words” (C: *bu li wenzi*, J: *furyū monji*), Chan Buddhists also studied many of the same sutras and religious commen-

taries as did the other sects, and performed rites for similar occasions according to comparable ritual calendars. Conversely, Buddhists of other affiliations carried out meditative practices and other forms of religious introspection similar to those of Chan Buddhists.

Even the layouts of their monasteries followed the same organizational principles, due to the similarities in their relationships with the state. The Song dynasty witnessed the emergence of a system of public monastic registration (C: *shifang*, or “ten directions”) in which the state controlled abbacy appointments and the sectarian designations of many of the largest Buddhist monastic compounds.⁴ The overwhelming majority of monasteries during this period were so registered. Participation in this system provided Buddhist establishments with the prestige of an imperially bestowed name plaque as well as, possibly, grants of land and money and protection in times of persecution.⁵ The government, for its part, was able through this system to regulate the Buddhist church more effectively, while mobilizing its supernatural assistance on behalf of the state and emperor. Such compounds could infra-structurally support a wide variety of religious activities and often, over the course of their existences, accommodated several denominations sequentially or even simultaneously. The built environments and daily practices of Chan Buddhists during the Song period did little in and of themselves to project a strong sense of sectarian identity to the outside world.

Within this general homogeneity of monastic Buddhism during the Song, modes of rhetorical self-conception, such as the ideology of the special transmission, as well as the social practices that accompanied its dissemination, played a significant role in generating a widely shared sense of distinction and particularity for Chan. Although assertions regarding the primacy of one’s own lineage were not unusual among Buddhist communities, Chan adherents made their dharma lineage the central focus of almost all of the sociocultural activity in which they engaged. To fully appreciate such a disposition requires, as historians of religion such as John McRae have shown, an “analysis of Chinese Chan religious practice as fundamentally genealogical.”⁶ Individually this practice included the authorship and delivery of lectures, homilies, eulogies, *gāthā* verses, “dharma words,” and *kōan* commentary, the writing of calligraphies, and one-on-one training sessions with disciples and lay patrons. Communally it encompassed the publication and circulation of texts such as *kōan* anthologies, the “recorded sayings” (C: *yulu*, J: *goroku*) of venerable masters, and “lamp histories” that documented the past members of the special transmission. This religious and literary production was saturated with a keen awareness of the singularity of Chan/Zen pedigree. Through word and image, those who partook of this pedigree articulated and elaborated upon a complex mythohistorical genealogy that would have lasting implications for Chan/Zen practice and influence.

As McRae demonstrates, the Chan transmission scheme as it achieved mature expression in the Song period consisted of two parts.⁷ The first section begins with the historical Buddha Śākyamuni (later amplified into the “Seven Buddhas of the Past”) and continues through the twenty-eight Indian

patriarchs—the last of whom, Bodhidharma, became the first Chinese patriarch—and five further Chinese patriarchs. Transmission in this initial section is conceived of as “straight-line succession,” a form of spiritual primogeniture in which only a single patriarch in each generation embodies the dharma and passes it on to one chosen individual in the next. During the eleventh century Chan Buddhists developed an origin myth that served to set the entire monosuccessional sequence in motion. Known as “Mahākāśyapa’s Smile,” this episode was redacted into one of the Buddha’s legendary sermons on Vulture Peak.⁸ According to this episode, when the Buddha held up a flower to the assembly, everyone in the *saṃgha*, or monastic community, remained silent, but the disciple Mahākāśyapa broke into a (knowing) smile. Upon observing this, the Buddha declared Mahākāśyapa the recipient of a “separate transmission outside the teaching,” the first such transmission within the Chan/Zen tradition. As the origination of dharma transmission, “Mahākāśyapa’s Smile” occupied a privileged place within the Chan/Zen imaginary, and was frequently made the subject of *kōan*, verses, lectures, and paintings (Fig. 5.1).⁹ So potent was the rhetorical charge of this new detail of the Buddha’s life—nothing less than the primal scene of Chan/Zen’s lineal origins—that it was explicitly refuted on numerous occasions by authors of the rival Tiantai school, and even aroused skepticism among Chan/Zen’s own exegetes.¹⁰ As opposed to the unilinearity of the first section of the Chan/Zen lineage scheme, its second part branched out after the sixth Chinese patriarch into an extensive group of sublineages, each with equal purchase on the Buddha’s teachings. The advantages of such a structure were obvious, as it encompassed the numerous dharma lineages that aligned themselves with the separate transmission during the Song period, and had the potential to accommodate a potentially infinite number of new lines of transmission as well.

Thus conceived, the special transmission was documented and given tangible form in so-called lamp histories, a genre of Chan literary production new to the tenth century. Lamp histories comprised biographies of members of the Chan dharma lineage and its many branches, and were offered to the imperial throne roughly once every generation from about 1000 CE onward. The apparent prototype to the genre, *Anthology of the Patriarchal Hall (Zutang Ji)*, was submitted in 952 to the court of the southeastern regime of Min, just before reunification by Zhao Kuangyin, founder of the Song dynasty in 960.¹¹ *Anthology of the Patriarchal Hall* included not only basic patriarchal biographies (or hagiographies), but also hundreds of early “encounter dialogues,” which would be mined and interpreted by later generations of adherents. It also stands as the earliest source of the miraculous tales and legendary episodes adhering to many members of the special transmission. In its scale, composition, and legitimizing function, the *Anthology* served as a prototype for what would eventually become the most influential lamp history in the Chan/Zen tradition, *The Jingde-Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp (Jingde Chuandeng Lu)*, which was completed in 1004 and included biographies of over 1700 members of the special transmission, compiled in some thirty fascicles.¹² The

Jingde-Era Record was offered to the Song imperial throne and promptly included in the *Tripitaka*, or official Buddhist scriptural canon. Chan compilers would continue to offer lamp histories to the throne throughout the Song period, with new texts completed in the years 1036, 1101, 1183, 1204, and 1252, each updating the Chan/Zen dharma genealogy to its own time.¹³ Members of the special transmission gained additional validation and an expanded public profile by inclusion in the lamp histories, to be sure, but these official genealogies also served a more practical purpose—one related to abbacy appointments. In the public monastery system, an abbot's term was limited, and his replacement had to derive from a different dharma lineage, thus ensuring that a monastic administration could not be continuously monopolized by a single dharma fraternity. In consequence, abbots circulated frequently, and with each opening certain complex bureaucratic protocols were enacted in the appointment of a new monastic head. The lamp histories appear to have played an important role in authenticating a given candidate and specifying the branch with which he was affiliated in the Chan/Zen dharma community.

Texts such as the *Jingde-Era Record* effectively circulated the ideology of the special transmission throughout the national networks of meaning that were being newly formed as a result of the Song unification and the emergence of an expansive print culture.¹⁴ Several other types of printed texts served a similar function, albeit with a different emphasis. One such genre specific to Chan literature was the *kōan* compilation, in which snippets of “encounter dialogues” between monks from the newly canonized classical age of Chan were gathered together, accompanied by an ever-growing body of commentary.¹⁵ The Song period also witnessed the emergence of texts known as “recorded sayings,” in which the biographies, lectures, homilies, encomiums, dedicatory sermons, funerary orations, verses, and painting inscriptions of Chan masters were gathered together and published for wider circulation by disciples.¹⁶ As the inclusion of painting inscriptions in the recorded sayings literature suggests, the emergence of Chan/Zen figure painting can be understood as part of a larger phenomenon in which the special transmission began to be communally imagined through both word and image.

Figure painting in Chan communities can be understood as a visual component of the enormous volume of commentarial literature on the Chan patriarchal past that proliferated during the Song period. This explosion of interpretive gloss stemmed directly from Chan monks being under continual mandate to publicly demonstrate their dharma transmission, upon which their assumption of spiritual authority and other entitlements were based. Despite its theoretically ineffable nature, insight deriving from the special transmission had to be continuously and performatively expressed, and one way to do so was through commentary on the inscrutable behavior and speech of earlier patriarchs. Painting, in this regard, served as a highly effective ground for the inscription of such metacommentary, intended to reveal the imprint of authentic dharma transmission on its authors. Although the inscriptions of Chan monks were frequently included in their recorded sayings,

thereby providing multiple avenues of circulation for any given verse, that verse's presence on a picture scroll gave it a materiality and context absent from most other media. Painting inscriptions were thus one type of the repeated demonstrations of awakened behavior that were expected, or indeed required, of the fully enlightened Chan/Zen master.

These same inscriptions appeared to personalize pictorial representations of awakened Chan beings for specific individuals. Whereas some figure paintings—especially those executed on silk in mineral pigments—could serve as icons in ritual settings (Cats. 26–28), and self-inscribed portraits of monks were used primarily in mortuary rites (Cats. 29, 30), the vast majority of figure paintings that survive into the present were originally pictorial objects gifted by prominent monks to as yet unidentified associates. Only infrequently was the name of a recipient included in a recorded sayings compilation, and only rarely was it mentioned in a pictorial inscription itself. Nevertheless, there is reason to assume that the initial audiences of such works were primarily of the scholar-official class. As many scholars have noted, sustained Chan cultivation of literati sympathies had created a strong symbiosis between monks and scholar-officials from the early Song period onward.¹⁷ This was fully evident by the mid-eleventh century, as witnessed by the ardent devotion to Chan of the celebrated poet and scholar Su Shi (1037–1101) and members of his circle.¹⁸ Close interaction with such literary figures encouraged Chan monks to pursue the cultural forms most favored among scholar-officials of the period, namely, the “three excellences” of poetry, calligraphy, and painting. These were exchanged with literati patrons and followers in ways that differed little from the protocols of gifting and obligation governing mainstream Chinese gentlemanly culture.¹⁹ Morton Schlütter observes that “the real audience for Song-dynasty Chan literature was the educated elite, many of whose members enjoyed reading Chan works for entertainment and edification.” “In the Song,” he continues, “the success of a Chan master was, to a large degree, dependent on his ability and willingness to participate in literati culture.”²⁰ A Chan abbot owed his institutional prominence in large part to the degree to which he could fashion his enlightenment into literary and artistic expression. Prominent monk-poets such as Juefan Huihong (1071–1128) began to appear and to publish their own verse collections, much as literati did.²¹ Monk-painters such as Huaguang Zhongren (ca. 1051–1123) developed new genres of monochrome ink painting—in his case *momei*, or ink plum—which appealed strongly to literati tastes and would eventually constitute one of the most orthodox subjects of the literati painting repertoire.²² Figure paintings can be understood as one more type of pictorial artifact that proliferated within this economy of lay-monastic exchange. Like other such artifacts, they served to mediate relations between important members of Chan communities and the elite lay followers who were so crucial to their ongoing institutional success. By possessing these pictorial objects, lay patrons were able to partake of the charisma, both past and present, of the special transmission, and even implicitly to become a part of the transmission themselves—certainly not in any official or reli-

gious sense, but as lay bystanders to the dharma community whose sense of identity derived from it.

Scholar-official viewership provides an important framework for understanding why the various traditions of Chan/Zen figure painting look the way they do. In general, their amateurish expression—conveyed through the use of monochrome ink on paper, simple compositions, abbreviated brushwork, the avoidance of any decorative gestures and details, and interdependence with their textual enclosures—was closely aligned with the aesthetic principles developed by leading scholar-official theoreticians from Su Shi's era onward. The poetic effects that began to be transposed into ink paintings at this time in scholar-official circles also conditioned the basic modes of pictorial representation that characterized Chan/Zen ink painting in later centuries. Indeed, several Chan monks studied painting with the scholar-official Li Gonglin (1049–1106), whose figural styles had a profound influence on Chan figure painting during the Southern Song period (1127–1279).²³ Li's figural styles would eventually be varied and elaborated into the wide array of compositional templates, modes of linearity, and rich spectrum of tonal effects that characterize the Chan/Zen figural tradition. Even as this tradition was professionalized over time, moreover, it continued to foreground habits of depiction that enabled the rhetoric of spontaneity and naturalness of expression in which Chinese scholar-officials were invested.

The Zen Pantheon

A limited group of figure-painting subjects appears to have been established as inscriptive spaces for Chan masters during the early to mid-twelfth century, as observed in the recorded sayings of Dahui Zonggao (1089–1163) and Hongzhi Zhengjue (1091–1157).²⁴ It is no coincidence that this practice would be developed by Dahui and Hongzhi, as these two religious masters significantly expanded the reach of Chan congregations in the early decades of the Southern Song dynasty. Both emphasized the cultivation of lay followers of both genders and many different social backgrounds, and both played leading roles in defining the nature of Chan meditative practices for the remainder of the school's history. Both also strategically employed the distribution of their self-inscribed portraits to raise funds, build networks, and disseminate their own charisma among ever-growing numbers of new constituents.²⁵

The manner in which monks such as Dahui and Hongzhi utilized pictorial objects to facilitate their social practice was greatly expanded by succeeding generations of religious leaders, and by the mid-thirteenth century a wide-ranging menu of figural subjects was graced with the brush traces of Chan masters. Judging by the recorded sayings of prominent abbots such as Wuzhun Shifan (1177–1249), Xutang Zhiyu (1185–1269), Yanxi Guangwen (1189–1263), Xisou Shaotan (act. mid to late 13th c.), and others, by this period monks were adding “verse-eulogies” (C: *zan*, J: *san*) to a vast array of subjects, everything from the historical Buddha Śākyamuni to the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (C: Guanyin, J: Kannon); from

the growling Chan patriarch Linji (J: Rinzai) to the laughing Budai (J: Hotei); from the first Chan patriarch Bodhidharma miraculously crossing the Yangzi River on a single reed stem to the Sixth Patriarch Huineng achieving awakening upon hearing a recitation of the *Diamond Sutra*; from Layman Pang's daughter selling baskets to support her parents to imaginary encounters between Chan patriarchs and prominent Confucian scholars of the classical past.

The subject matter of paintings that a monk might be asked to inscribe was taxonomized in the recorded sayings literature hierarchically, under a section titled “Eulogies for Buddhas and Patriarchs” (C: *fozu zan*, J: *busso san*). This section, as distinct from the “Self Eulogies” (C: *zizan*, J: *jisan*) or “True Eulogies” (C: *zhenzan*, J: *shinsan*) sections recording inscriptions on portraits, typically commences with a listing of subjects related to Śākyamuni, followed by Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the Mahāyāna pantheon, *luohan*, “uncommitted saints” or avatars, and finally the historical patriarchs, represented either in iconic portraits or in narrative episodes. Many dozens of Song- and Yuan-period (1279–1368) Chinese works depicting such themes have been carefully preserved in Japan, reflecting a cross-section of the cultural production of the masters, monastic environments, and dharma lineages with which Japanese pilgrim-monks came into contact in the southern Jiangnan region.²⁶ These works are assumed to have been created by monk-painters in the circles of prominent abbots; the names of several (Zhirong [1114–1193] and Hu Zhifu) have been recorded, and several works of Zhiweng (act. early 13th c.) have survived, but otherwise little is known about those Chinese monk-painters, and the anonymity of most figure paintings suggests that their makers were not of high ecclesiastical rank.²⁷ The mid-thirteenth century also witnessed the emergence of monk-painters such as Muqi (Cat. 18), who appear to have worked in a semiprofessional capacity, a trend that would continue into the fourteenth century.²⁸

The figural subjects depicted by these monk-painters closely reflect Chan's institutional dominance of—and yet rhetorically oblique relationship to—the Chinese Buddhist church. Although familiar deities such as Śākyamuni were taken up for pictorialization, they were unmoored from customary iconic settings such as his seat underneath the *bodhi* tree (the site of the historical Buddha's awakening) and situated in traditionally less recognized moments in the Buddha's life, such as his haggard descent from the mountaintop on which he had practiced austerities for six years (Cats. 1–3). Other subjects clearly reflect the mutualism of Chan and scholar-official interests, such as the White-Robed Guanyin (Cats. 39–43), a subject that depicts the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in his mythical island-abode of Mt. Potalaka (C: Putuoluoshan, J: Fudarakusan). This iconography has a complex history and its origins are overdetermined, but suffice it to say here that it appealed to scholars as a sacred embodiment of the reclusive ideal so celebrated in elite officialdom.²⁹ Another genre reflective of Chan interaction with the lettered bureaucracy was the “Chan encounter painting” (C: *chanhui tu*, J: *zen'e zu*) (Cats. 24, 25).³⁰ In works of this category, an eminent Chan patriarch was depicted in debate—typically amidst an

abbreviated outdoor setting—with a prominent Confucian official or lay follower. The most popular imaginary encounters paired the monk Yaoshan (751–834) with the Confucian official Li Ao; the renowned Tang master Mazu Daoyi (709–788) with Layman Pang; and the monk Huangbo (d. ca. 850) with his lay supporter Peixiu. The mis-en-scène of such pairings, in which the monk was always the dominant figure, was clearly intended to assert the superiority of the Chan tradition over its historical critics, many of whom were either associated with or contemporaries of the scholar-official Han Yu; Han Yu famously polemicized against Buddhism and served as a partisan model for Song-period literati such as Zhu Xi. Chan encounter paintings also served as models for contemporary laymen associates, who were provided with pictorial precedents for their own associations with Chan people and institutions. In this regard, one of the most influential models was Layman Pang, who was so popular as a painting subject in Zen circles that images of his wife, son, and most notably his pious daughter (Cat. 47) became common subjects in their own right.³¹

Another characteristic of the Chan/Zen figural pantheon is that many of its members do not actually originate from within the Chan school itself. The immigrant status of many themes reproduced in Chan/Zen environments has been continuously misrecognized. Many subjects in their initial incarnations had little or nothing to do with its dharma genealogy and accompanying lore. Mañjuśrī in a Braided Robe (Cats. 32, 33), for example, is closely associated with Mt. Wutai, a sacred religious site in Shanxi Province in northern China. Mt. Wutai was believed to be the dwelling place of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, and accordingly was a thriving monastic center as well as a popular pilgrimage site. In the painting subject associated with it, Mañjuśrī appears not as a bejewelled bodhisattva but as a long-haired boy wearing a braided robe, holding a sutra in his right hand. This particular aspect of the bodhisattva records a vision experienced by the scholar-official Lü Huiqing during the Yuanfeng era (1078–1085), which was canonized in popular Buddhist lore and eventually attracted considerable interest among Chan/Zen monks.³² Similarly, the Fish-Basket Avalokiteśvara (C: *Yulan Guanyin*) (Cats. 45, 46) reflects a popular character in Buddhist folklore as opposed to a deity or patriarch intrinsic to the special transmission. Beginning in the twelfth century, accounts relate the story of a poor but beautiful young woman who appeared in Jinshatan (Golden Sand Bay) carrying a basket full of fish. She offered herself in marriage to anyone who could memorize the *Lotus Sutra*, but disappeared after no one proved capable of meeting her challenge; later she was discovered to be an incarnation of Guanyin.³³ The legend was especially popular in coastal areas, and soon found its way into the pictorial menus of Chan and Zen monastic environments. Neither Mañjuśrī in a Braided Robe nor Fish-Basket Avalokiteśvara are, strictly speaking, Chan/Zen patriarchs: nevertheless, Chan/Zen monks assumed the authority to comment and versify upon their visual representations. Furthermore, their inscriptions often playfully alluded to the illusory or disguised nature of these deities' appearances and voiced a "Channish" interpretation of the deities and the specific episodes evoked in the paintings.

Many of the most eccentric members of the Chan pantheon, however, appear to have been originally akin to folk deities, objects of local legend or cult worship who were never officially appropriated into the Chan patriarchal line but nevertheless were associated with the awakened qualities of the special transmission through their inclusion in the lamp histories. These figures include such popular painting subjects as the paired eccentrics Hanshan and Shide (J: Kanzan and Jittoku) (Cats. 15–17) or the portly vagabond Budai (Cats. 9–14), and constitute perhaps the most misunderstood sector of the Chan/Zen figural canon.³⁴ Because they were pictorialized over and over in Chan/Zen circles, with even a separate section for their inscriptions in the recorded sayings of religious masters, these "uncommitted saints" (C: *sansheng*, J: *sansei*) are often assumed to have been Chan practitioners.³⁵ Yet what little is known about their circumstances suggests otherwise.

Hanshan, for example, appears to have been a poet of the early Tang dynasty, but his dates of activity are still debated. What little is known about this shadowy figure, including his name, is derived from a collection known as *The Poetry of Hanshan* (C: *Hanshan Shi*) and from a later pseudo-biography that was anonymously compiled to create an authorial profile to accompany the poetry. Some commentators do not even view Hanshan as a single poet, and regard his companion Shide ("gleanings" or "foundling") as an invented figure to whom several of the poems in the anthology were attributed.³⁶ For reasons unknown, Hanshan was closely linked to Mt. Tiantai in Zhejiang Province, a traditional center for the Tiantai school; perhaps he eventually became conflated with a deity associated with the site itself. Whatever the case may be, his association with Chan began sometime after Chan institutions appropriated the religious center during the ninth century, and was clinched after his inclusion in the *Jingde-Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*.³⁷

In similar fashion, Budai is associated in biographical entries with the Chan monastery Yuelinsi, but his priestly identity and affiliations are secondary to his profile as a mythical mendicant—a corpulent, half-clothed vagabond carrying a large burlap sack (the meaning of his name), who wandered through villages playing with children and laughing nonsensically and, most importantly, was understood to be an incarnation of the Future Buddha Maitreya.³⁸ These characteristics suggest that Budai too was originally an entity resembling a local folk deity, who was then elevated into the Chan sphere in part through his link to Mt. Tiantai. This trajectory suggests that Budai and the other "wandering saints" of the Chan/Zen figural pantheon were local cult figures whose charisma was appropriated by Chan and assimilated in its ongoing institutional expansion. Although the development of a hegemonic iconography by an expanding organized religion is a phenomenon that Chan/Zen shares with many other religious traditions, in this instance Bernard Faure has conceptualized Chan's embrace of the above-mentioned "wandering saints" in terms of the paradigm of the "trickster." "One strategy in Chan for domesticating the occult," writes Faure, "was to transform thaumaturges into tricksters by playing down their occult

powers and stressing their this-worldly aspect. Typical of this new ideal of Chan are characters such as Hanshan and Shide, Budai, and Puhua. Thus for several centuries, Chan chose the trickster over the thaumaturge (although there was always much overlap between the two figures), the this-worldly mediator over the other-worldly mediator.³⁹

The Chan/Zen pantheon, then, was filled with imposters, or figures whose original non-Zen character was never acknowledged as they were pressed into the service of the school. Numerous members of the special transmission, as listed in the lamp histories, appear to have followed this trajectory. The monk Xianzi, for example, otherwise known as “Prawn Catcher” or “Shrimp Eater” (Cats. 18–20), is described in the *Jingde-Era Record* as a follower of the Chan master Dongshan Liangjie (807–869), who by day caught shrimp and prawns to eat and by night slept under the paper money donated to the monastery Baimasi in Luoyang. Despite the prohibition against the Buddhist clergy eating living creatures, Xianzi is said to have achieved awakening while catching a prawn.⁴⁰ Even if it were meaningful to do so, no information is available to either corroborate or challenge the cursory narration in the *Jingde-Era Record*; what is important here is that the profile found therein bears the traces of a Chan adaptation of some idiomatic lore, perhaps an urban legend surrounding an outcast associated with Baimasi. As Faure states, “The powers and popularity of such personages made them essential, if unpredictable, allies.”⁴¹ Some of those annexed into the Chan canon never completely lost their identities as divinities of a different order. Budai, for example, always retained his status as an auspicious folk deity as well as a Chan exemplar, maintaining dual citizenship in the worlds of the Chan monastery and the village street.⁴² And his national recognition was not always framed within an exclusively Chan context, as indicated by his inclusion in the *Biographies of Eminent Monks Compiled during the Song* (C: *Song Gaoseng Zhuan*).⁴³

Even the affiliations of orthodox members of the special transmission are less stable than might seem the case at first glance. Bodhidharma, as scholars of Chan history have made clear, was more an accretion of texts and legends than an actual historical figure, and served as the “virtual focus” of a centuries-long hagiographical process that witnessed the folding of ever more fantastic episodes into his biography.⁴⁴ One of the latest of these to emerge was his miraculous crossing of the Yangzi River on a thin reed after his failed encounter with Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (Cats. 5, 6). This wondrous traversal appears to have emerged as a component of the Bodhidharma legend during the twelfth century, and applies a trope familiar to the Chinese conceptualization of the miraculous powers of enlightened sagehood.⁴⁵ Many Chinese paintings of this period, for example, depict *luohan* similarly crossing the waters without a vessel (Fig. 5.2). The reed episode, then, is paradigmatic of the way in which non-Chan pictorial and narrative tropes could be enlisted to dramatize the numinous aura of the Chan patriarchal line.

Another subject that illustrates this point is Śākyamuni Descending the Mountain, which appears to have had no



FIGURE 5.2
Luohan Crossing the River.
Zhou Jichang (act. second half
of 12th c.). Chinese, Southern
Song dynasty, ca. 1178–1188.
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on
silk; 111.5 x 53.1 cm.
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON,
DENMAN WALDO ROSS COLLEC-
TION, 06.291



FIGURE 5.3
Śākyamuni Descending the Mountain, Liang Kai (act. first half of 13th c.), Chinese, Southern Song dynasty, early 13th c., Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk; 119 x 52 cm.
 TOKYO NATIONAL MUSEUM

direct textual basis, Śākyamuni's life and its various individual episodes have been a part of the Buddhist iconographic tradition from its inception. Among the episodes of the Buddha's life described in sutras, the moment of his passage into Nirvana, and his practicing of austerities in the mountains for six years, were frequently taken up for depiction in established Buddhist iconography. Perhaps the most popular event for depiction was his meditation under the *bodhi* tree, where, despite attempts by the demon Māra to distract him, Śākyamuni attained complete and perfect enlightenment at the sight of the morning star. This climactic moment was often chosen for representation of the Buddha as a ritual icon. Among Chan Buddhist circles in Song-period China, however, a pictorial subject emerged that focused on the moment *between* the Buddha's austerities and his enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, a moment that was commonly referred to as *Descent from the Mountain* (C: *Chushan*, J: *Shussan*). Although Śākyamuni's reentry into the non-ascetic world is implied in textual accounts, the specific moment at which he left the scene of his mountain austerities is never explicitly mentioned either in Mahāyāna scripture or in biographies of the Buddha found in the flame histories. Instead, the imagining of Śākyamuni's *Descent* was carried out within the Chan sphere, and primarily in pictorial terms. Representations of this moment tended to depict a haggard, withered monk descending a rugged mountain path, seemingly tranced, world-weary, resigned to his non-enlightenment, and deeply introspective, yet somehow moving forward (Fig. 5.3).

As Helmut Brinker has written, Śākyamuni's *Descent* reflects the developing conception of the Buddha as an ideal Chan monk, one whose grueling descent was viewed as an example of inapprehensible but awakened behavior typical of many other legendary transmitters of the flame.⁴⁶ The Buddha's life was viewed increasingly as a sequence of inscrutable acts, whose true interpretation was available only to the enlightened.⁴⁷ The Buddha's own enlightenment, in turn, came to be understood less as an ultimate realization (S: *bodhi*) than as a series of momentous instants of transcendent insight (C: *wu*, J: *satori*), in keeping with a conception of awakening common to Chan communities.⁴⁸ Śākyamuni's *Descent* thus provided a Chan awakening narrative for Śākyamuni himself—a *satori* experience that could be woven into the life of the Buddha only by fundamentally changing the standard account of the Buddha's single complete epiphany beneath the *bodhi* tree. As a painting subject, Buddha's descent became a pictorial emblem of the Buddha's enlightenment as localized, mutually contingent, and cumulative *satori*.

This process of dislocation and reinscription, however, could only be realized through a juxtaposition of word and image. Paintings of Śākyamuni's *Descent* unsettled the classical narrative of the patriarch's awakening by visualizing in powerful and evocative ways a newly staged interstitial episode, one that provided a perfectly ambiguous ground for the inscription of Chan rhetoric. Their liminal settings and sense of in-betweenness, underscored by Śākyamuni's ambiguous posture, posed something of a pictorial query to which Chan

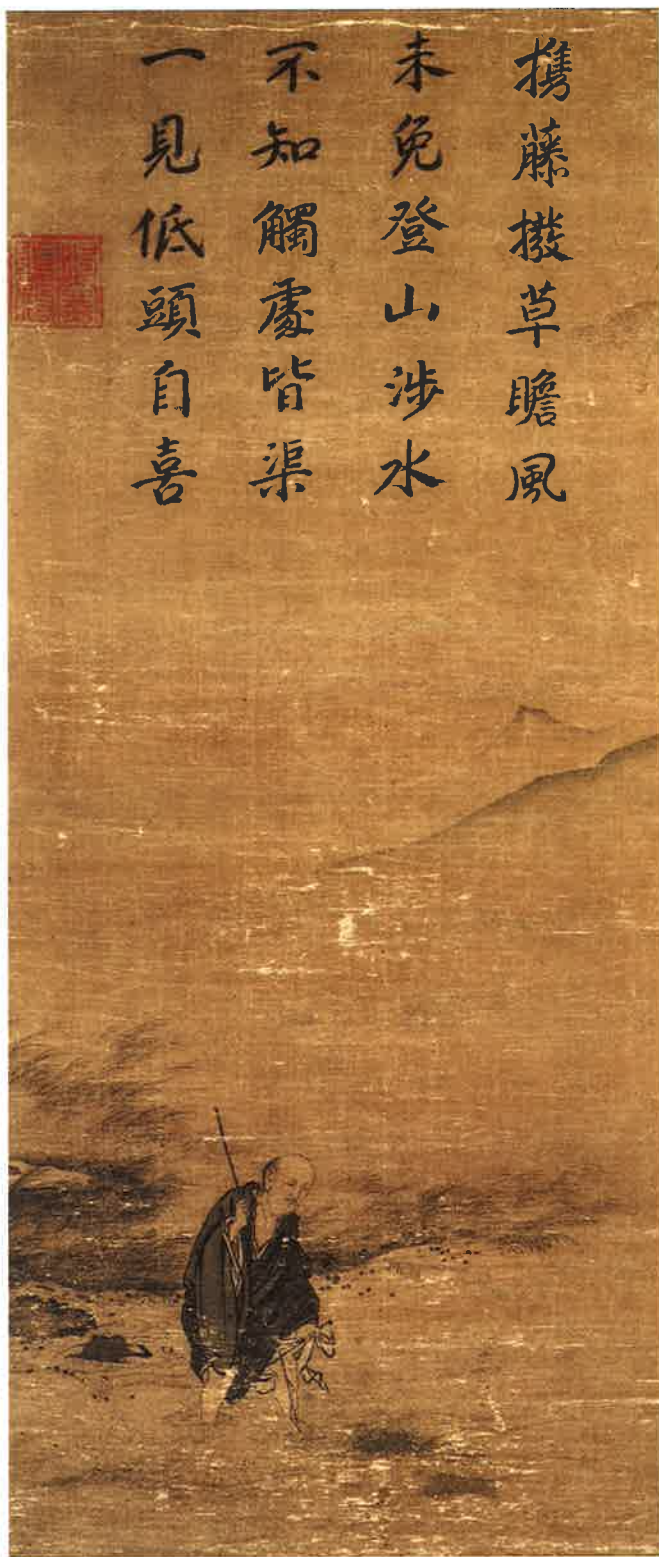


FIGURE 5.4
The Priest Dongshan Fording a Stream. Attributed to Ma Yuan (act. first half of 13th c.). Chinese, Southern Song dynasty, early 13th c. Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk; 81 x 33.1 cm. TOKYO NATIONAL MUSEUM

masters could offer exemplary responses. Indeed, it is often unclear in these works whether Śākyamuni is standing still or moving forward. A cosmic breeze wafting his robe forward implies motion, but is contradicted by the hunched pose, heavy stance, and inward stare, resulting in something like a pictorial caesura. This effect is possible because the visual conceit of the figure in transit (Fig. 5.4)—with which the Chan figural tradition is replete—lends itself well to the inscription of unexpected epiphanic moments, insights that arrive as the figure is immersed in some other activity. Although the ideology of the special transmission may have been the mechanism by which the Chan figural domain was populated, the specific ways of depicting its most revelatory moments had everything to do with preexisting compositional templates and pictorial ideas. The scenography of Chan was very much an outgrowth of the visual culture of the Song period.

From Chan to Zen

As Zen established itself in Japan during the thirteenth and fourteenth century, the dynamics that characterized the affiliations between Chan monks and scholar-officials in China were transposed to a new setting, and provided the basic templates for new relationships with military and aristocratic patrons. These religious master–lay disciple relationships were similarly mediated by paintings.⁴⁹ A prime example of such mediation in the early heyday of Japanese Zen survives in *Red-Robed Bodhidharma* (Fig. 5.5), a work dating to the 1260s and now preserved at the temple Kōgakuji in Yamanashi Prefecture.⁵⁰ This scroll, one of the earliest and most significant works of Zen figural subject matter to survive in Japan, depicts the first patriarch of China dressed and hooded in a red robe, seated cross-legged on a flat rock against a blank background. The implied setting of the painting is a mountain cave in the vicinity of the monastery Shaolinsi on Mt. Song in Henan Province, where Bodhidharma is said to have meditated facing a wall for nine years after a frustrating encounter with Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty in southern China. The inscription is by Lanqi Daolong (J: Rankei Dōryū; 1213–1278), a Chinese monk who came to Japan in 1246 and became the founding abbot of Kenchōji in Kamakura. It reads as follows:

The youngest son of King Xiangzhi,
the faithful follower of Prajñatara's lineage.
Seeing through the heretical views of the Six Sects in India
He came to China and his teaching flowered into a beautiful
five-petaled blossom, whose fragrance has now reached Japan.
Auspicious signs are as endless as the Ganges.
Shaolin Monastery—the sprouting of the miraculous bud
has not been hindered.
Now it has rooted in the presence of a noble figure
and is growing into an extraordinary flower.
Respectfully inscribed for Layman Rōnen by Lanqi Daolong,
Abbot of Kenchōji⁵¹



FIGURE 5.5
Red-Robed Bodhidharma.
 Painter unknown. Inscribed by
 Lanqi Daolong (1213–1278).
 Japanese, Kamakura period,
 1260s. Hanging scroll, ink and
 colors on silk; 108.2 x 50.6 cm.
 KŌGAKUJI, YAMANASHI
 PREFECTURE



FIGURE 5.6
Portrait of the Poet Hitomaro.
 Attributed to Takuma Eiga (act.
 14th c.). Inscribed by Shōkai
 Reiken (1315–1396). Japanese,
 Muromachi period, 1395.
 Hanging scroll, ink and colors
 on silk; 85.1 x 41.8 cm.
 TOKIWAYAMA BUNKO
 FOUNDATION, KAMAKURA

In keeping with many of the inscriptions of Chinese monks for Japanese patrons during this era, Lanqi's verse is unambiguously intended to affiliate its recipient, this "noble figure" (J: *kōmon*), with the Zen dharma lineage. In this case the inscription and painting appear to have been produced for the young Kamakura regent Hōjō Tokimune (1251–1284) sometime during the mid- to late 1260s, soon after Lanqi was reappointed abbot of Kenchōji.⁵² *Red-Robed Bodhidharma* seems to sanction the incorporation into the dharma lineage of the young Tokimune, only a teenager at the time the painting was made. It manifests an early example of how the ideology of the special transmission functioned in recruiting belief and patronage in ever newer environments throughout East Asia.

The inscriptive practices of émigré Chinese monks such as Lanqi inaugurated a radically new role for painting in the Japanese archipelago from the mid-thirteenth century onward. From 1246, when Lanqi came to Kamakura, until the middle of the fourteenth century, at least twenty-eight monks are known to have journeyed to Japan and to have established Zen Buddhism as an interregional religious macroculture encompassing several different polities in East Asia.⁵³ In addition, hundreds of Japanese monks traveled to China to study under a handful of charismatic Zen masters in the Jiangnan region; upon their return they brought current continental religious practices with them, including those related to the conferral of inscriptions.⁵⁴ Their practice of gifting paintings and calligraphies as a form of socioreligious interaction established the importance and appeal of these cultural forms among ever growing constituencies, while closely associating the arts of the brush with Zen teachings, literature, and the aura of the special transmission. Foreign monks and the communities that formed around them became centrifuges for the diffusion of entirely new painting subjects and modes of pictorial representation, first and foremost ink painting. In this regard, the history of early Japanese ink painting is most effectively understood as a by-product of the newly imported inscriptive practices of Chinese émigré masters and their circles of monks.

Among the most celebrated of the émigré monks was Yishan Yining (J: Issan Ichinei; 1247–1317), who originally came to Japan in 1299 as the head envoy of the Yuan government.⁵⁵ Before passing away he trained numerous Japanese disciples and promoted many religious and cultural practices that were new to Japan. Yishan was especially famed for his literary and calligraphic abilities, and promoted sinophilic activity among the communities he oversaw in Japan. When serving as abbot of Kenchōji, for example, Yishan is said to have required monks to pass a text in Chinese *gāthā* versification before being accepted into the monastery.⁵⁶ Yishan inscribed a great number of paintings and calligraphies during his eighteen years in Japan (1299–1317). At least fifteen paintings bearing his inscriptions survive, by far the largest number for any single monk of this era, and many more are known from later copies and from Yishan's own recorded sayings. Several of these works bear painter's seals with names such as Kakkei, Kikkei, and Shikan, indicating that the monk had ties—and may even have surrounded himself as a part of his inner circle—with both amateur monk-painters and

Buddhist professional painters. The range of subjects represented by this group is revealing of Yishan's role in establishing pictorial commentary as an accepted, if at the time still infrequent, mode of religious engagement. Some of these subjects are unsurprising, given what is known of the activities of Chan monks of the time, such as Chan/Zen portraiture, White-Robed Kannon (Cats. 41–43), Hanshan, and Bodhidharma Crossing the Yangzi on a Reed (Cats. 5, 6).⁵⁷ Other surviving works inscribed by Yishan, however, including an Esoteric Buddhist icon and the portrait of a monk of the Ritsu school, bear little or no relationship with the contemporary inscriptive practices of Chan monks, and reflect the uniqueness of Yishan's circumstances in his new Japanese environments.⁵⁸ The following generations would witness the continued influx of new painting practices and subjects under the influence of continental masters such as Qingzhuo Zhengcheng (J: Seisetsu Shōchō; 1274–1339; arrived in Japan 1326), as well as the emergence of Japanese monk-painters specializing in figural works, such as Kaō (Cat. 19) and Mokuan Reien (Cats. 12, 13, 16).⁵⁹

The Expanding Cast

As Yishan's career demonstrates, Chinese inscriptive practices underwent idiomatic adjustments in the new social and monastic environments of Japan. This phenomenon manifested itself most visibly in the make-up of the Chan/Zen figural pantheon. Over the course of the fourteenth century Japanese poets also became the object of pictorial encomiums by Zen monks, and by extension honorary members of the special transmission. A prominent example is Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (d. 710?), one of Japan's most famous early poets. Long the focus of admiration in court circles, Hitomaro eventually became the subject of commemorative poetic gatherings focused on his painted likeness displayed in front of a ritual altar.⁶⁰ Given the popularity of poetic composition—both traditional Japanese *waka* poetry and Chinese-style verse—in Zen circles from the fourteenth century onward, it is not surprising that Hitomaro portraits eventually began to emerge in Zen circles as well. There was ample precedent on the continent for the Chan production of poet-portraits; not only were poets such as Du Fu and Su Shi extolled in Chan circles, as in literati culture at large, but Su's aesthetics figured largely in conditioning the approach of Chan monks to both painting and versification. In medieval Japan painting subjects related to Su Shi were easily among the most popular (Cat. 34).⁶¹ Already in the thirteenth century the émigré monk Wuxue Zuyuan (J: Mugaku Sogen), while serving as abbot at Kenchōji in Kamakura, had accommodated local preferences by inscribing a portrait of Bai Juyi (742–846), a poet of mixed estimation on the continent but highly esteemed in Japanese court circles.⁶² Such works served as precedents for *Portrait of the Poet Hitomaro* (Fig. 5.6), a work inscribed by the monk Shōkai Reiken (1315–1396) in 1395, and the earliest dated example of its subject to survive in Japan.⁶³ This work, too, was probably used for a Hitomaro commemorative ritual. In his

inscription Shōkai calls the poet “the First Patriarch of the thirty-one syllables,” referring to Japanese *waka*, a poetic form of thirty-one syllables in lines of 5-7-5-7-7. The term “First Patriarch” likens Hitomaro to Bodhidharma, thus welcoming him into the special transmission as a patriarch by proxy.

Yet the most important addition to the Zen figural canon as it established itself in Japan was the indigenous *kami* deity known as Tenjin. A legend emerged during the early fourteenth century that Tenjin had travelled to China and achieved awakening under the renowned Chan prelate Wuzhun Shifan. Tenjin Visiting China became vastly popular as a painting subject soon thereafter, with many dozens of surviving examples (Cats. 35, 36). The manner in which it embodied both local and interregional religious prerogatives, as well as its complex amalgamation of disparate iconographic regimes, makes it nothing less than the signature subject of medieval Japanese Zen.

Tenjin was the deified spirit of the courtier Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), who, wrongfully accused of treasonous actions by rival courtiers, died in exile. A series of natural disasters and deaths at court, following his banishment and death, were attributed to his vengeful spirit, and a shrine was erected to appease the wrathful *kami*. As Tenjin’s popularity grew, the shrine Kitano Tenmangū in northern Kyoto became the head of a nationwide network of related institutions that promoted him increasingly as a god of poetry. He became the subject of iconic representation and the protagonist of his own celebrated narrative, “The Miraculous Origins of the Kitano Shrine,” which was pictorialized in handscroll format from the thirteenth century onward.⁶⁴ In Zen circles, however, Tenjin Visiting China (J: *Totō Tenjin*) became the role of choice. In this guise, Tenjin is depicted in Daoist robes and traditional Chinese scholar’s headgear, holding a plum branch and a bag containing a Zen monk’s mantle (*kesa*). The conceit behind this iconographic configuration is that, while Tenjin maintained his identity as a patron *kami* of poetry—signified by the plum branch, closely associated with both his legend and his verse—he also received a *kesa* from Wuzhun, which he kept in his bag as a sign of his authentic dharma transmission.

The development of the Tenjin legend serves as a veritable index for the institutional development of Zen Buddhism in Japan. The story itself appears to have been originated in Kyushu by monks of a dharma lineage associated with Enni Ben’en (1202–1280). It most likely developed as a miraculous origins legend (*engi*) for the temple Kōmyōji in the city of Dazaifu, a monastery founded by Enni’s disciple Tetsugyū Enshin (1254–1326).⁶⁵ This legend includes an account of

Tenjin’s dharma transmission from Wuzhun, which accords Enni a prominent role as the figure who directed Tenjin to his own Chinese master; it also goes on, however, to state that Tenjin left the *kesa* with Enshin for safekeeping, and that Kōmyōji was built to enshrine it. Intriguingly, the origins tale transposes an episode already found in Wuzhun’s own biography, in which a guardian deity for a temple (J: *garanjin*) appears to him in a dream, holding an aquatic plant known as a water shield (J: *bō*). Thus the accommodations Chan monks made to local deities were adapted and embellished to conceptualize the negotiations Zen monks made with Japanese *kami*. Indeed, *kami* were very much on the minds of Zen monks during the early history of the school’s institutionalization in Japan, and Japanese Buddhist literature is replete with stories concerning *kami* traveling to China to invite prominent abbots to Japan, and shrine deities receiving robes from or bestowing robes on Zen masters.⁶⁶

Later the story of Tenjin’s conversion appears to have been enlisted by members of Enni’s dharma genealogy in northern Kyushu to assert their claim to the abbacy of the temple Sūfukuji in Dazaifu against a rival lineage.⁶⁷ This association with Enni’s dharma lineage would continue throughout the Muromachi period (1392–1573), and the legend appears to have been one effective means of reestablishing the legitimacy of the Enni transmission in the face of the institutional dominance of the Musō Soseki (1275–1351) lineal community circa 1400.⁶⁸ At the same time members of the Musō transmission began to demonstrate a keen interest in the legend and incorporated painted representations into their own inscriptional repertoire. As the fifteenth century progressed, factionalism appeared to become less and less of a factor conditioning the production and circulation of Tenjin Visiting China paintings, and the subject was embraced as a pan-sectarian myth, one that claimed perhaps the most popular and venerated *kami* deity of medieval Japan as a part of its own transmission scheme.

The rhetoric surrounding Tenjin’s “conversion” legend within the medieval Zen community, however, was more complex than one might assume. Some monks openly expressed doubt about the veracity of Tenjin’s transmission. Banri Shūkyū (b. 1428), for example, claimed that it was a “murky tale” (*byōbō no setsu*), and one not meriting inclusion in the National Histories.⁶⁹ Even if not as strident as Banri, many monks revealed an undertone of skepticism with regard to Tenjin’s crossing, and attempted to convince doubters by first articulating and then overcoming their own suspicions concerning the legend. Kazan’in Nagachika (d. 1429), the author

of *Record of the Two Worthies* (J: *Ryōsei Ki*), one of the oldest known records of Tenjin Visiting China, had already stated in his account that for “those of ordinary bodies and shallow hearts” (*orokanaru mi no asaki kokoro ni te wa*) it would be “difficult to grasp that such a thing could have happened” (*saru koto arubeshi to sadamen koto, habakari ooshi*). In a lengthy prose inscription the Musō-lineage monk Kaimon Jōchō (1374–1443) describes how a guest one day queried why, if Tenjin is commonly depicted in formal (Japanese) court attire (J: *sokutai chōfuku*), it was necessary to depict him as a hooded Daoist sage. This alleged visitor continued by asking how Tenjin could have visited Wuzhun Shifan, when in human form he predated Wuzhun Shifan by more than three hundred years and lived several thousand *li* apart. Kaimon responded by pointing out that no fixed rules governed the appearances of the bodhisattva Kannon’s incarnations. To question the essence of a *kami* such as Tenjin was meaningless, for one was simply pursuing shadows (J: *ei*).⁷⁰

Tenjin’s overseas adventure held a special significance for those Japanese who made the crossing in medieval times, and it appears to have entered a standard menu of pictorial objects that commemorated interactions between Japanese monks and their Chinese counterparts, along with certain Chinese literati families who hosted them.⁷¹ Banri Shūkyū, the monk noted earlier as a doubter of Tenjin’s conversion, recorded in his diary coming across a Chinese “storefront painting” (*tenpitsu*) of the subject.⁷² In fact, a small group of Chinese paintings of Tenjin as a Zen pilgrim-monk have survived in Japanese collections (Fig. 5.7).⁷³ In contrast to their Japanese counterparts, Tenjin’s face, showing a barely perceptible smile, is rendered with a high degree of verisimilitude through techniques such as soft vermilion modelling, in keeping with the characteristics of Ming-period funerary portraiture. Other features, such as the angularity of the sleeve contours, ornate footwear, and the wide white sash with both ends hanging down evenly in the front, are also unique to Tenjin Visiting China paintings of continental origin. These works are believed to have been made by professional painters in the Chinese port city of Ningbo for Japanese visitors; in them, the Tenjin legend has come full circle. The subject itself is doubly marked by both the interregional transactions that characterize the macrocultural dynamism of East Asian Zen, and the complex negotiations between Chan/Zen and its many local environments and practices. It demonstrates as well as any other subject in the Chan/Zen figural canon the ways in which painting facilitated the communal imagining of the irrepressible special transmission.



FIGURE 5.7
Tenjin Visiting China. Painter unknown. Inscribed by Fang Meiya (act. early to mid-16th c.). Chinese, Ming dynasty, mid-16th c. Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk; 66.3 x 29.7 cm.

RINKAIN TEMPLE, KYOTO

Notes

1. Concerning the differences between the concept of awakening in Chan/Zen communities and the more traditional notions of awakening (S: *bodhi*) in Buddhism, see Robert Gimello, "Bodhi (Awakening)" and "Satori (Awakening)," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr. (New York: Macmillan Reference, 2004), vol. 1, pp. 50–53 and vol. 2, p. 754.
2. T. Griffith Foulk has argued that *deng* should be translated as "flame" instead of the more commonly used "lamp." See his "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," in *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), pp. 147–208, esp. p. 200 n. 20.
3. Foulk, *ibid.*; Foulk, "The Ch'an School and Its Place in the Buddhist Monastic Tradition" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1987).
4. For more on Song-period public monasteries, see Morten Schlütter, "Vinaya Monasteries and Public Abbacies," in *Going Forth: Visions of Buddhist Vinaya*, ed. William M. Bodiford (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), pp. 136–60.
5. In previous eras the Buddhist church had suffered through several notorious waves of state persecution, most notably the Huichang persecution (841–847).
6. John R. McRae, *Seeing Through Zen: Encounter, Transformation, and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. xi.
7. McRae, *Seeing Through Zen*, pp. 114–15.
8. On "Mahākāśyapa's Smile," see T. Griffith Foulk, "Sung Controversies Concerning the 'Separate Transmission' of Ch'an," in *Buddhism in the Sung*, ed. Peter N. Gregory and Daniel A. Getz, Jr. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), pp. 220–84; Albert Welter, "Mahākāśyapa's Smile: Silent Transmission and the Kung'an (Koan) Tradition," in *The Koan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, ed. Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 75–109.
9. The earliest surviving painted representations of Śākyamuni holding a flower occur in lineage charts or patriarchal portrait sets. Such a lineage chart of Chinese manufacture, dating to the thirteenth century, was given by Wuzhun Shifan to his Japanese disciple Enni Ben'en and is now in the temple Tōfukuji. See Kyoto National Museum, ed., *Zen no Bijutsu* (Kyoto: Kyoto National Museum, 1981), p. 60, pl. 28. Among the earliest extant images in Japan is a set of a Śākyamuni triad with thirty patriarchs in Rokuōin, painted by Minchō and his studio in 1426; the best reproductions of this set are found in Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum of Art, ed., *Zendera no Eshi Tachi—Minchō, Reisai, Sekkyakushi* (Yamaguchi: Yamaguchi Prefectural Museum of Art, 1998), pp. 46–49, pl. 14. The other is a Śākyamuni triad combined with portraits of forty patriarchs, also painted by Minchō, in the Tōfukuji collection.
10. For a thorough discussion, see Foulk, "Sung Controversies."
11. On *Anthology of the Patriarch Hall*, see Albert Welter, "Lineage and Context in the Patriarch's Hall Collection and the Transmission of the Lamp," in *The Zen Canon: Understanding the Classic Texts*, ed. Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 137–80.
12. The full text is found in *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, vol. 51, ed. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku (Tokyo: Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Kankōkai, 1992), pp. 196b–467a. On the production context of the *Jingde-Era Record*, see Welter, *ibid.* Portions of the text have been translated into English in Chang Chung-yūan, *Original Teachings of Ch'an Buddhism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971); Sōhaku Ogata, *The Transmission of the Lamp: Early Masters* (Wolfeboro, NH: Longwood Academic, 1990).
13. The *Tiansheng Extensive Record of the Lamp* (*Tiansheng Guangdeng Lu*) of 1036, *Jianzhong Jingguo Supplementary Record of the Lamp* (*Jianzhong Jingguo Xudeng Lu*) of 1101, *Outline of the Linked Lamps* (*Liandeng Huiyao*) of 1183, *Jiatai Universal Record of the Lamp* (*Jiatai Pudeng Lu*) of 1204, and *Outline Source of the Five Lamp Histories* (*Wudeng Huiyuan*) of 1252, continued to expand upon and update previous multibranching lineages, while in some cases subtly shifting the character of the overall presentation. For further discussion, see Foulk, "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice."
14. Susan Cherniak, "Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 54, no. 1 (June 1994), pp. 5–125.
15. See the various essays found in Heine and Wright, eds., *The Koan*.
16. On the recorded sayings genre in China, see the classic essay by Yanagida Seizan, "Goroku no Rekishi: Zen Bunken no Seiritsu Shiteki Kenkyū," *Tōhō Gakuhō*, vol. 57 (1985), pp. 211–63; Yanagida, "The 'Recorded Sayings' Texts of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism," in *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*, ed. Whalen Lai and Lewis Lancaster (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 185–205; Daniel K. Gardner, "Modes of Thinking and Modes of Discourse in the Sung: Some Thoughts on the Yü-lu (Recorded Conversations) Texts," *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 50, no. 3 (1991), pp. 574–603; Morten Schlütter, "The Record of Hongzhi and the Recorded Sayings Literature of Song-Dynasty Chan," in Heine and Wright, eds., *The Zen Canon*, pp. 181–205. For an overview of extant published recorded sayings from the Song and Yuan periods, see Shiina Kōyū, *Sōgen-ban Zenseki no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1993).
17. See Miriam Levering, "Ch'an Enlightenment for Laymen: Ta-hui and the New Religious Culture of the Sung" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1978); Gimello, "Bodhi (Awakening)" and "Satori (Awakening)."
18. On Su Shi's relationship to Chan Buddhism, see Beata Grant, *Mount Lu Revisited: Buddhism in the Life and Writings of Su Shi* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994).
19. For a penetrating analysis of such protocols in the context of the Ming literatus Wen Zhengming (1470–1559), see Craig Clunas, *Elegant Debts: The Social Art of Wen Zhengming, 1470–1559* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).
20. Morten Schlütter, "The Record of Hongzhi," quotation on pp. 189–99.
21. On Juefan, see Miriam Levering, "A Monk's Literary Education: Dahui's Friendship with Juefan Huihong," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal*, vol. 13, no. 2 (May 2000), pp. 369–84; George A. Keyworth, "Transmitting the Lamp of Learning in Classical Chan Buddhism: Juefan Huihong (1071–1128) and Literary Chan" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 2001).
22. See Maggie Bickford, *Ink Plum: The Making of a Scholar-Painting Genre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
23. On the influence of Li Gonglin on Chan monk-painters, see Ogawa Hiromitsu, "Mokkei—Kotenshugi no Hen'yō (jō)," *Bijutsushi Ronsō*, vol. 4 (March 1988), pp. 95–111; Ogawa Hiromitsu, "Chūgoku Gaka, Mokkei," in *Mokkei—Shōkei no Suibokuga*, ed. The Gotoh Museum (Tokyo: The Gotoh Museum, 1996), pp. 91–101.
24. Dahui's recorded sayings are found in *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, vol. 48, ed. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku (Tokyo: Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Kankōkai, 1992), 858b–859a.

25. Several of Hongzhi's portrait inscriptions are discussed in T. Griffith Foulk and Robert H. Sharf, "On the Ritual Use of Ch'an Portraiture in Medieval China," *Cahiers d'Extreme-Asie*, vol. 7 (1993–94), pp. 149–220. See also Schlütter, "The Record of Hongzhi," for a discussion of Hongzhi's portrait inscriptions and fundraising.
26. On specific contexts for the inscription of Chan painting, see Itakura Masaaki, "Hokkan Kyokan San Zenzai Dōji Zu," *Kokka*, no. 1181 (April 1994), pp. 9–21; Itakura Masaaki, "Enkei Kōmon o Meguru Sakuga—Ryokai, Chokuō, Mokkei," in *Nansō Kaiga—Saijō Gachi no Sekai*, ed. Nezu Institute of Fine Arts (Tokyo: Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, 2004), pp. 19–24.
27. On Zhirong, see Shimada Shūjirō, "Mōryōga," in Shimada, *Chūgoku Kaigashi Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2003), pp. 112–35. The two extant works firmly attributable to Zhiweng are *The Sixth Patriarch Huineng* (Daitōkyū Memorial Library, Tokyo), and *Budai* (private collection, Tokyo). See Tanaka Toyozō, "Sotsuō ni tsuite," in *Chūgoku Bijutsu no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Nigensha, 1964), pp. 239–42.
28. In later lineage charts Muqi was recorded as a disciple of the Chan master Wuzhun Shifan. On professionalized Chan painting during the Yuan period, see Tokyo National Museum, ed., *Gendai Dōshaku Jinbutsu Ga* (Tokyo: Tokyo National Museum, 1977).
29. On the White-Robed Guanyin as a reclusive ideal, see Ide Seinosuke, "Nansō no Dōshaku Kaiga," in *Nansō, Kin*, vol. 6 of *Sekai Bijutsu Daizenshū Tōyō Hen*, ed. Nakazawa Tomishio and Shimada Hidemasa (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2000), pp. 123–40, esp. 125–26.
30. The most comprehensive treatment of this genre is found in Yoshiaki Shimizu, "Six Narrative Paintings by Yin T'o-lo: Their Symbolic Content," *Archives of Asian Art*, vol. 33 (1980), pp. 6–37. See also Shimada Shūjirō, "Indara no Zen'e Zu," *Seikan*, vol. 5 (1940), pp. 22–32, reprint, *Chūgoku Kaigashi Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1993), pp. 161–73; Ebine Toshio, "Bun'e Zu to Zen'e Zu, Saikyō Zu," in *Bijutsu ni okeru Fūzoku Hyōgen* (Osaka: The Society for International Exchange of Art Historical Studies, 1985), pp. 62–69.
31. See Robert E. Harrist, Jr., "Layman Pang and the Enigma of Li Gonglin," in *Taiwan 2002 Conference on the History of Painting in East Asia*, ed. Naomi Noble Richard (Taipei: National Taiwan University, 2002).
32. For more on this theme, see Hwi-Joon Ahn, "Paintings of the Nawa-Monju—Manjusri Wearing a Braided Robe," *Archives of Asian Art*, vol. 24 (1970–71), pp. 36–58; Ebine Toshio, "Jōe Monju Zu, Den Sekkan Hitsu," in *Gendai Dōshaku Jinbutsuga*, ed. Tokyo National Museum, pp. 74–76; Yokota Tadashi, "Jōe Monju Zu," in *Zenrin Gasan—Chūsei Suibokuga o Yomu*, ed. Iriya Yoshitaka and Shimada Shūjirō (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1987), pp. 71–72. For more on the popular lore surrounding Mt. Wutai, see also Robert M. Gimello, "Chang Shang-ying on Wu-t'ai Shan," in *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*, ed. Susan Naquin and Chün-fang Yü (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992).
33. See Chün-fang Yü, *Kuan-yin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokitesvara* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
34. On paintings that pair Hanshan and Shide, see Tochigi Prefectural Museum, *Kanzan Jittoku—Kakareta Fūkyō no Soshi Tachi* (Utsunomiya: Tochigi Prefectural Museum, 1994).
35. Yoshiaki Shimizu provides an explanation of the translation "uncommitted saints," which he also refers to as "saintly persons of unofficial status," in "Problems of Moku'an Rei'en (?1323–1345)" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1974), p. 12.
36. See the introduction in Robert G. Henricks, *The Poetry of Han-shan* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990); Robert Borgen, "The Legend of Hanshan: A Neglected Source," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 111, no. 3 (July–September 1991), pp. 575–79.
37. For Hanshan's biography in the *Jingde-Era Record*, see *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, vol. 51, pp. 433b–434a.
38. The growth of the Budai legend in Chinese texts from the tenth century onward and his emergence as a painting subject is discussed in Yoshiaki Shimizu, "Problems of Moku'an Rei'en," pp. 179–200. A thorough treatment of Budai/Hotei iconography in Sino-Japanese painting can be found in Ōnishi Kaoru, "Hotei Zu Kō—Kanō Masanobu Hitsu 'Ganka Hotei Zu' Shūhen," *Shūkyō Bijutsu Kenkyū*, vol. 5 (1998), pp. 11–33 (Part 1), *Shūkyō Bijutsu Kenkyū*, vol. 7 (2000), pp. 65–98 (Part 2).
39. Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 115.
40. Xianzi as a painting subject is discussed in Helmut Brinker and Hiroshi Kanazawa, *Zen, Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings*, trans. Andreas Leisinger, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 40 (Zürich: Artibus Asiae, 1996), pp. 148–49.
41. Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, p. 117.
42. On the dual affiliation of Budai, see Nagai Masashi, *Chūgoku Zenshū Kyōdan to Minshū* (Tokyo: Uchiyama Shoten, 2000), pp. 125–48.
43. On the circumstances surrounding the compilation of this text, see Albert Welter, "Zanning and Chan: The Changing Nature of Buddhism in Early Song China," *Journal of Chinese Religions*, vol. 23 (Autumn 1995), pp. 105–40. This publication served as an important model for the *Jingde-Era Record* in its amalgamation of local legends from various regions throughout the empire. The section that included Budai, Hanshan, and Shide, fascicle 27 of the *Jingde-Era Record*, listed ten such figures under the heading "Those who reached the gate of Chan but who were not prominently known then." On the particular nature of fascicle 27, see Ishii Shūdō, *Sōdai Zenshūshi no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1987), pp. 93–104. Ishii discusses the manner in which fascicle 27 not only represents an addendum to the Zen genealogy, composed of figures not easily assimilable into it, but also includes entries that closely resemble kōan.
44. See Bernard Faure, "Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm," *History of Religions*, vol. 25, no. 3 (1986), pp. 187–98.
45. On Bodhidharma Crossing the Yangzi River on a Reed as a painting subject, see Shimao Arata, "Royō Daruma Zu," in *Zenrin Gasan*, ed. Iriya and Shimada, pp. 87–89; Charles Lachman, "Why did the Patriarch Cross the River? The Rushleaf Bodhidharma Reconsidered," *Asia Major*, vol. 4, pt. 2 (1993), pp. 237–68.
46. See Helmut Brinker, *Shussan Shaka—Darstellungen in der Malerei Ostasiens* (Bern, Frankfurt am Main, and New York: Peter Lang, 1983). See also Howard Rogers, "The Reluctant Messiah: 'Sakyamuni Emerging from the Mountains,'" *Sophia Review International*, vol. 5 (1985).
47. This point is made in Foulk, "Sung Controversies."
48. See Gimello, "Satori (Awakening)."
49. Sometimes Japanese lay patrons could study under a Chinese master without either crossing the sea. This was the case, for example, with Ōtomo Sadamune (d. 1333), a warrior-official for the Kamakura shogunate who carried out Zen practice under the direction of the Chinese master Zhongfeng Mingben (1264–1323). Figure painting played a role in this relationship as well. Zhongfeng inscribed a self-portrait for Muin Genkai (d. 1358), a Japanese monk patronized by Sadamune, and the portrait is now found in Senbutsuji in Kyoto. A letter by Zhongfeng survives in which he thanks Sadamune for a monetary gift and reports his conferral of an inscribed self-portrait (and therefore lineal legitimacy) upon Muin. See Nishio Kenryū, *Chūsei no Nichū Kōryū to Zenshū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1999), pp. 101–4.

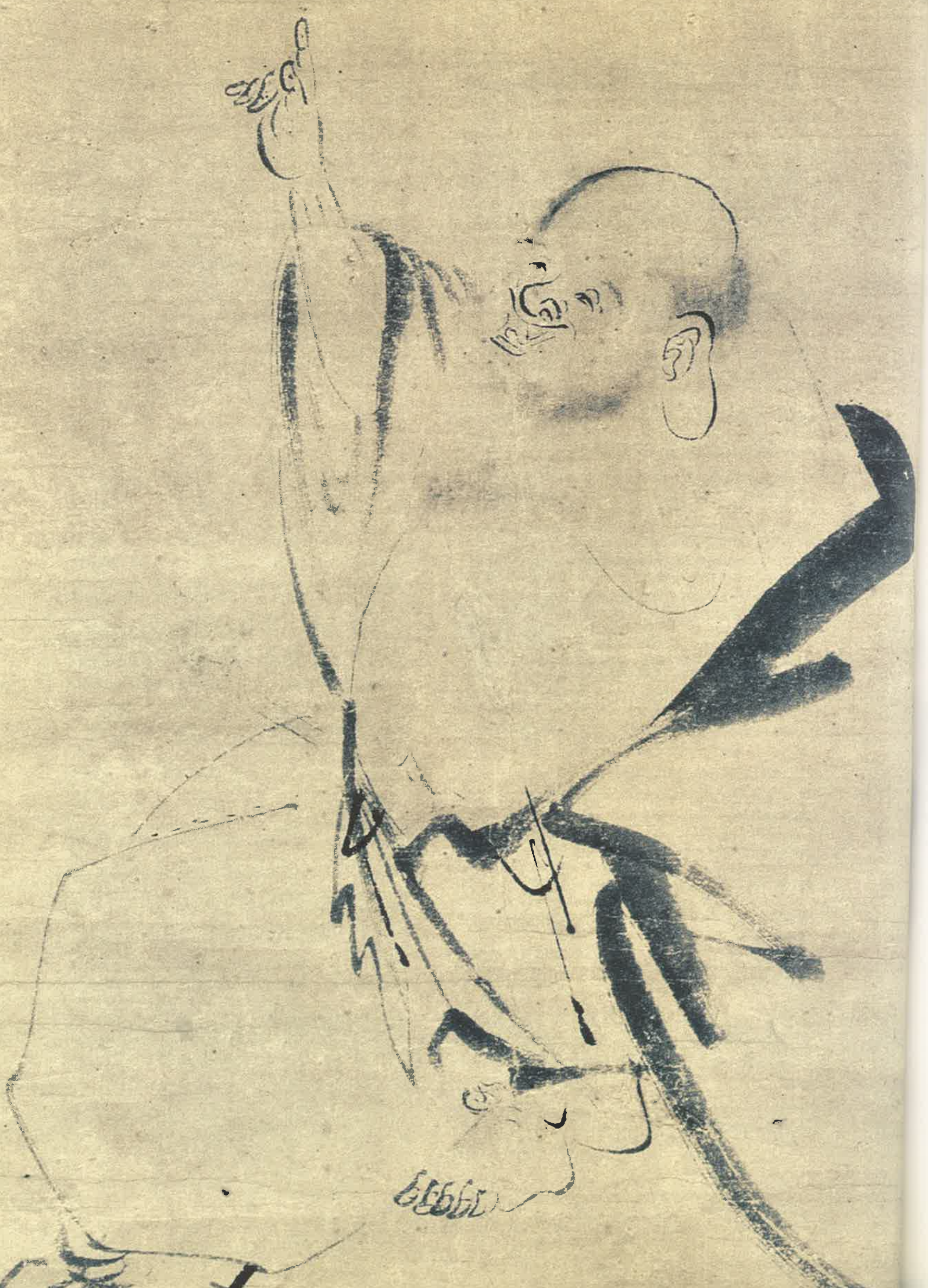
50. See Fujikake Shizuya, "Kōgakuji Shozō no Daruma Zu ni tsuite," *Kokka*, no. 468 (1929); Tanaka Ichimatsu, "Kenchōji Daikaku Zenshi Gazō Kō," *Kokka*, no. 843 (November 1962), reprint, *Nihon Kaigashi Ronshū* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1968), pp. 169–96; Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman, eds., *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1970), pp. 49–51; Shimaō Arata, "Daruma Zu," in *Zenrin Gasan*, ed. Iriya and Shimada, pp. 82–84; Kunigō Hideaki, "Daruma Zu," *Shūkan Asahi Hyakka Nihon no Kokuhō*, vol. 85 (October 1998), pp. 152–53.
51. Translation based upon Fontein and Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy*, p. 51, modified by the author.
52. Although the identity of Layman Rōnen was long the subject of speculation, Shimaō Arata convincingly argued that the sobriquet refers to Tokimune, and that Lanqi conferred it and the painting upon him as part of his reengagement with the Hōjō regency upon the return to China of his rival monk Wu'an Puning in 1265. See Shimaō, "Daruma Zu," pp. 83–84. A famous self-inscribed portrait of Lanqi Daolong in Kenchōji, dated to 1271, was also given to Tokimune. The portrait is discussed in Kumagai Nobuo, "Rankei Dōryū Zō ni tsuite," *Bijutsu Kenkyū*, vol. 10 (1932); Tanaka Ichimatsu, "Kenchōji Daikaku Zenshi."
53. See Murai Shōsuke, *Higashi Ajia Ōkan—Kanshi to Gaikō* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1995), pp. 46–81. Scholars such as Haga Kōshirō and Tamamura Takeji have traditionally seen this wave of emigration as spurred by the search for refuge (or asylum) from the political fracture in China during the years surrounding the Song-Yuan transition. Nishio Kenryū, however, argues that political asylum played a relatively minor role in the various motivations of these émigré monks for making the crossing. See Nishio, *Chūsei no Nitchū Kōryū*, pp. 1–27.
54. Kimiya Yasuhiko listed the names of 222 Japanese monks who are recorded as having travelled to China between 1300 and 1368, when the Yuan dynasty ended. Certainly many more pilgrim-monks have gone unrecorded. Most of these monks studied under the same Chinese masters, including Chushi Fanqi (1296–1370), Yuejiang Zhengyin (1267–1350?), Gulin Qingmao (1262–1329), Liao'an Qingyu (1288–1363), Pingshi Ruzhi (1268–1350?), and Zhongfeng Mingben (1264–1323). See Kimiya, *Nikka Bunka Kōryūshi* (Tokyo: Fuzanbō, 1965).
55. At the time China's Mongol ruler Khubilai Khan was attempting to reestablish diplomatic ties after two failed attempts to conquer Japan in the 1280s. As a Buddhist monk, Yishan was an unusual but highly calculated choice for such a delicate diplomatic endeavor. He was the abbot of the monastery Putuosi, located on Putuoshan Island off the southeast coast of China, a site believed to be the dwelling place of the bodhisattva Guanyin (J: Kannon). It was familiar to Japanese monks, merchants, and envoys not only as an entry port to the continent, but also as a cult center for the worship of the bodhisattva as the guardian deity of safe ocean passage; Putuosi itself was founded centuries earlier by a Japanese monk. Yishan was initially quarantined as a spy by the Kamakura shogunate on the Izu peninsula, but so impressed shogunal officials with his demeanor and the earnestness of his practice that he was invited to assume abbacies at prominent monasteries in Kamakura and Kyoto. See Nishio Kenryū, *Chūsei no Nitchū Kōryū*, pp. 40–63.
56. See Tamamura Takeji, *Nihon Zenshūshi Ronshū, ge no ni* (Tokyo: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1981), pp. 122–23. *Gāthā* is a type of metered verse expressing Buddhist teachings.
57. For an overview of Yishan-inscribed paintings, see Ebine Toshio, *Suibokuga—Mokuan kara Minchō e*, vol. 333 in *Nihon no Bijutsu* (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1993), pp. 23–26.
58. The Esoteric Buddhist icon is *Nyoirin Kannon* (1307), in the temple Matsuodera (Kyoto); the other work mentioned is *Portrait of Shinkai* in the temple Shōmyōji (Kanagawa Prefecture). The latter is discussed in Takahashi Shūei, "Kanazawa Chōrō to Issan Ichinei—Toku ni Issan no Shinkai Gazō Chakusan no Kien o Megutte," *Kanazawa Bunko Kenkyū*, vol. 198 (1972), pp. 10–16.
59. On Qingzhuo's relationship to painting, see Kōyama Rie, "Seisetsu Shōchō Shūhen no Kaiga Katsudō—Shoki Zenshū Suibokuga no Ichiyōsō," in *Nihon Bijutsu no Kūkan to Keishiki*, ed. Kawai Masatomi Kyōju Kanreki Kinen Ronbunshū Kankōkai (Tokyo: Nigensha, 2003), pp. 179–94; Iida City Museum, ed., *Chūsei Shinano no Meisō—Shirarezaru Zensō Tachi no Itonami to Zōkei* (Iida: Iida City Museum, 2005).
60. The first Hitomaro portraits began to appear in the eleventh century, and Fujiwara no Akisue (1055–1123) began the practice of ritual veneration of Hitomaro icons.
61. See Kunigō Hideaki, "Nihon ni okeru So Shoku Zō—Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan no Mohon o Chūshin to Suru Shiryō Shōkai," *Museum*, vol. 494 (May 1992), pp. 4–22; Kunigō Hideaki, "Nihon ni okeru So Shoku Zō (ni)—Chūsei ni okeru Gadai Tenkai," *Museum*, vol. 545 (December 1996), pp. 3–27; Kunigō Hideaki, "Nihon Chūsei Kaiga ni okeru Tō Enmei to So Shoku," *Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan Kiyō*, vol. 38 (2002), pp. 5–113.
62. See Shimaō Arata, "Hakurakuten Zu," in *Zenrin Gasan*, ed. Iriya and Shimada, pp. 167–69.
63. See Shimaō Arata, "Kakinomoto no Hitomaro Zu," in *Zenrin Gasan*, ed. Iriya and Shimada, pp. 148–50; Shimaō Arata, "Tokiyayama Bunko Zō Kakinomoto no Hitomaro Zō ni tsuite," *Bijutsu Kenkyū*, vol. 338 (March 1987), pp. 113–27.
64. Jinbo Tōru, *Kitano Shōbyō-e no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1996); Suga Miho, *Tenjin Engi no Keifu* (Tokyo: Chūōkōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2004).
65. This is the convincing argument recently set forth in Ōtsuka Norihiro, "Totō Tenjin Setsuwa Genryū Kō—Kannonji Shozō 'Tenjin Kesa no Ki' no Shōkai o Kanete," *Nihon Shūkyō Bunkashi Kenkyū*, vol. 18 (November 2005), pp. 79–88.
66. These legends are discussed in Harada Masatoshi, *Nihon Chūsei no Zenshū to Shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1998).
67. Ueda Jun'ichi, "Totō Tenjin Shinwa no Hasei o Megutte," *Nihon Shūkyō Bunkashi Kenkyū*, vol. 9 (May 2001), pp. 20–36.
68. As Imaizumi Yoshio writes, the Enni lineage was already concerned with its waning influence in politics and religion much earlier. Kokan Shiren (1278–1346), the most prominent member of this dharma family during the first half of the fourteenth century, consistently opposed the opinions of the Musō lineage in doctrinal debates carried out at the imperial court, and his monumental thirty-volume *Biographies of Eminent Monks Compiled in the Genkō Era* (*Genkō Shakusho*) situates the Enni dharma transmission as the culmination of the history and development of Japanese Buddhism. See Imaizumi, "Kokan Shiren no Shōgai to Gyōseki," in *Hongaku Kokushi Kokan Shiren Zenshi*, ed. Imaizumi Yoshio (Kyoto: Zen Bunka Kenkyūjo, 1995), pp. 35–187, esp. pp. 150–87.
69. Takahashi Noriko, "Banri Shūkyū no San no Aru Nifuku no 'Totō Tenjin Zō,'" in *Zen to Tenjin*, ed. Imaizumi Yoshio and Shimaō Arata (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2000), pp. 222–54, esp. p. 243.

70. See the discussion of Kaimon's inscription on p. 87 in Shīmao Arata, "Totō Tenjin Zō no Monogatari," in *Zen to Tenjin*, ed. Imaizumi and Shīmao, pp. 48–118. Ishō Tokugan (1360–1437), who played a major role in the dissemination of the Tenjin Visiting China theme from the 1410s through the 1430s, also claims to have initially doubted the veracity of the Tenjin transmission. He was only convinced after a visitor showed him painting inscriptions by two older colleagues of his, Kūkoku Myōō (1328–1407) and Chintei Kaiju (d. 1401). See Shīmao Arata, *ibid.*, pp. 87–88. Shīmao notes that Ishō was known to confirm the plausibility of certain pictorial subjects by studying the recorded sayings of earlier Zen masters.

71. As early as 1454 the leader of Japan's diplomatic trade mission to China, Shiryū Kōtō, is known to have had a Tenjin Visiting China painting inscribed by a Chinese monk of Daxinglongsi. Shiryū brought this work back to Japan with him. It has not survived, but the painting itself was possibly of Chinese manufacture.

72. This episode is recorded in his poetry anthology *Storehouse of Limitless Plum Blossoms (Baika Mujinzō)*: that a certain Seisen Jōnin, a monk from the temple Daianji, had brought him a Tenjin Visiting China painting in the hopes of acquiring an inscription; when Banri unrolled it, however, it turned out to be a Chinese "storefront painting" (*tenpitsu*) of the kind apparently popular among savants at the time; see Takahashi Noriko, "Banri Shūkyū," pp. 252–53. The visit took place about 1490.

73. See the following articles and entries on Chinese Tenjin Visiting China paintings: Imaizumi Yoshio, "Totō Tenjin Zō Sandai," *Nihon Rekishi*, vol. 485 (October 1988), pp. 90–97; Imaizumi Yoshio, "Hō Baigai ni tsuite," *Nihon Rekishi*, vol. 515 (April 1991), pp. 79–83; Murata Masashi, "Nihon no Totō Tenjin Zō to Chūgoku no Tenjin Zō," *Nihon Rekishi*, vol. 524 (January 1992), pp. 109–12; Imaizumi Yoshio, "Baigai San no Totō Tenjin Zō," in *Zen to Tenjin*, ed. Imaizumi and Shīmao, pp. 255–81; Kunigō Hideaki, "Totō Tenjin Zō Hō Baigai San," in *Tenjin Sama no Bijutsu*, ed. Tokyo National Museum et al. (Tokyo: NHK Publishing, 2001), pp. 292–93; Yamamoto Hideo, "Totō Tenjin Zō Chō Shokuken Hitsu," in *Kitano Tenmangū Shinpō Ten*, ed. Kyoto National Museum (Kyoto: Kyoto National Museum, 2001), p. 222; Imaizumi Yoshio, "Hō Baigai Ibun Hoka," *Nihon Rekishi*, vol. 633 (February 2001), pp. 66–70; John T. Carpenter, "Tenjin Visiting China," in *Kazari: Decoration and Display in Japan, 15th–19th Centuries*, ed. Nicole Coolidge Rousmaniere (New York: Japan Society, 2002), pp. 88–89.



Two (or More) Truths Reconsidering *Zen Art* in the West

GREGORY LEVINE

"EVERYONE'S LOOKING for something." Some of us have found it, or part of it, in *Zen Art*, though the types of things we look at and the sorts of Zen we draw from them may differ dramatically from one person to another. Indeed, the easily joined words "Zen" and "Art" exist in tense conjunction (and bring to mind other intersections: "East" and "West," practitioner and scholar, past and present). This essay explores some of the tensions, or perhaps currents and cross-currents, inherent in modern looking at and thinking about *Zen Art*, which I italicize, as if it were a term of foreign origin, to render it less familiar and perhaps open to reconsideration. Shared reflection and reappraisal are, in fact, what I have in mind here, for we have been in dialogue about Zen and Art for some time now and I suspect we will be for years to come.

For religious masters and practitioners in Chinese Chan, Korean Seon, and Japanese Zen religious lineages, paintings and calligraphies by monks and nuns are saintly relics, cherished in religious practice as embodiments of the awakened teachings of the Buddha, of patriarchs of old, and of living teachers. Viewers not inclined to practice Zen meditation or to seek "enlightenment" may find that the same types of scrolls focus spiritual attention, offering a way to be religious without official religion. For practitioners of *Chanoyu* (one Japanese tradition of tea-based culture), Zen scrolls are indispensable in the tea room: they evoke Buddhist philosophical concepts and religious presences that resonate with tea culture's tradition of teachers, aesthetic precepts, and social aspects. Many of us are drawn to intimations of "Buddha mind" in *Zen Art*, and made meditative by the "Zen aesthetic." Others of us sim-

ply like the monochromatic minimalism of an *ensō* ("circle") in ink (complete but incomplete against white paper), enjoy the kinesthetic traces of the spontaneous painterly or calligraphic body, and smile at the pictorial antics of "Zen Tramps" and "Zen Zanies."¹

Maybe Alan Watts (1915–1973) had it right when he described *Zen Art* as the "art of artlessness, the art of controlled accident."² Zen and *Zen Art* certainly inspired artists of the Western avant-garde during the 1950s and 1960s, whose affinity for Zen Buddhist philosophical concepts and perceived formal characteristics, often exclusive of the practice of *zazen* ("seated meditation") or of a single mode of spirituality, arose in large measure in response to the writings and lectures of D.T. Suzuki (1870–1966), Hisamatsu Shin'ichi (1889–1980), and other Japanese scholars and philosophers.³ For John Cage (1912–1992) and other Western and transnational artists, *Zen Art*, as *process* and portal to unmediated creativity, opened their eyes to unfamiliar modes of representation seemingly free of rules and schools and suggested the expressive possibilities of inward subjectivity, spontaneous gesture, silence, imperfection, empty fields, and the unity of subject/object, art/life. Since the 1950s Zen Mind has for some been counter-mind and Zen culture counterculture.⁴

Each time we purchase a miniature rake-it-yourself rock garden, simulating the famous dry landscape garden at the temple Ryōanji, or a facsimile of a famous Zen painting, we participate in the postmodern cult of the simulacrum. Followers of postmodernism's high priests may see *Zen Art*, often mediated by the concept of *ma* (space-time interval), as a visual

FIGURE 6.1

Detail of Cat. 13, *Hotei. Mokuan* (d. 1345). Inscribed by Liao'an Qingyu (1288–1363). Japanese, Nanbokuchō period, 14th c. Hanging scroll, ink on paper; 80.2 x 32 cm.

MOA MUSEUM OF ART

IMPORTANT CULTURAL PROPERTY

verification of the postmodernist critique of representation, or a Heideggerian sense of nothingness, or Japan being, as Roland Barthes (1915–1980) saw it, full of empty signs.⁵ For some, *Zen Art* may be a visual expression of engaged Buddhism, a bridge to one's family heritage, or a shorthand for distant "Japan" or "Asia." Perhaps it preserves a sense of tradition that softens the edges of scientific rationalism, capitalist consumerism, and hyper-connectivity. *Zen Art* is also an established, accessible, and relatively affordable field of art collecting. And academics of varied ilk apply scholarly skill sets to mine the visual fields of paintings, calligraphies, and sculpture produced within the Zen tradition in order to reveal biographic traces, expressive form, and layers of poetry and performance, doctrine and discourse.

These and other responses converge around *Zen Art* as if they were, to invert a metaphor, ripples returning to a stone cast into a clear pool. But perhaps the pool is less limpid than we imagine, for *Zen Art* inspires not only enchantment, but also critical comment, a gnashing of teeth, even flat disinterest. This divergence of opinion is hardly one of our so-called "culture wars," and *Zen Art* ripples come into view only occasionally, in a review, an article, a book, a conference, an exhibition. Still, some believe they "know it when they see it," others are not sure and wish to know more, and yet others doubt that there is such a thing as *Zen Art*.

Zen Art, frankly, can put an art historian in a bind. According to my colleagues in religious studies, we art historians have for decades missed the point in our emphasis on aesthetic quality, artist identity, and the development of pictorial style and our simultaneous tendency to ignore ritual and the miraculous powers often attributed to images within Chan/Zen monastic contexts. Our bread-and-butter practices as interpreters and curators of the visual are also called into question by the Zen establishment. The abbot of a renowned Zen temple, for instance, politely refuses requests to reproduce or exhibit paintings in his collection: they are not art objects, nor are they for art-historical analysis, publication, or public display. At a lecture, a lay Zen practitioner balks at my historical analysis because I lack long experience with authentic *zazen* and *dokusan* (private meetings with a teacher). Even students in a college-level survey of the arts of Japan may gripe because my lecture on *Zen Art* doesn't provide enough Zen or enough Art, or, because, in the spirit of "critical thinking," I eschew a packaged answer suitable for pre-exam memorization. As a historian, meanwhile, I wince at all too frequent statements about *Zen Art* that traffic in free-floating generality and obscure the complex and changing lives of Buddhist communities and the specific contexts of visual representation past and present. Hence, a flash of unease as I write these words.

We may not all see *Zen Art* eye-to-eye or think about it mind-to-mind, therefore, but I would offer that such differences are *Zen Art's* fascination rather than its bane precisely because they adumbrate questions that, if explored thoughtfully, may help us walk through the shadowy landscapes we call "religion," "art," and "culture."⁶ Is *Zen Art* *sui generis* and inherent to the entire culture of Japan and "Japanese mind," or is it a product of multifaceted exchanges and even competi-

tion within the visual arts? Can a work of art be called "Zen" simply because of particular formal qualities? Can one have an intuitive sense of Oneness or Emptiness as well as a knack for the spontaneous and therefore make or appreciate *Zen Art* without disciplined *zazen* and *kōan* training? One Zen master warns bluntly: "Zen arts without Zen study is just cultural junk."⁷ If *Zen Art* embodies mystical experience or relies upon a transcendental perceptive or expressive ability, then how do we engage it in historical inquiry? What happens when we apply to *Zen Art* distinctions of geography, time, status, gender, and power? If Zen is said to be antagonistic to words and images, then how are we to explain the vast number of paintings, calligraphies, gardens, teabowls, and so forth that fill Zen monasteries and temples? Does purchasing and possessing *Zen Art* contradict the religious ideal of nonattachment? Is *Zen Art* "pure experience," "pure gesture," a "gumption trap," or really nothing at all?⁸

Zen and *Zen Art* have been objects of enthrallment, skepticism, and debate in the West throughout the twentieth century and especially during the postwar period.⁹ Once Zen had taken root outside Japan, its followers emerged as an uneven bunch. Alan Watts's famous essay "Beat Zen, Square Zen, and Zen" (1958) captures one moment of slippage (and recovery). Watts suggests that the allure of Zen arises from "the 'modern' spirit in the West, the work of [D.T.] Suzuki, the war with Japan, the itchy fascination of 'Zen-stories,' and the attraction of a non-conceptual, experiential philosophy in the climate of scientific relativism." But he is skeptical of the "Bohemian affectations," "protestant lawlessness," and stridency of the Jack Kerouac-associated "Beat Zen" crowd and, equally, the hunger for orthodoxy and institutional affiliation on the part of those "Square Zen" Westerners who believe that Zen is to be found only in temples in Japan. For Watts, both Beat and Square Zen are just so much fuss; both miss what he believes is the *real* Zen, which is devoid of affectation, of the need to justify unconventional behavior, and of "anything special." Nevertheless, in the spirit of "non-grasping," he offers that, "fuss is okay too" and, waxing libertarian, concludes that, after all, "it's a free country."¹⁰ Another skeptic of the "self-styled Western Zennist" was Ruth Fuller Sasaki (1892–1967), who in 1958 became abbess of the subtemple Ryōsen'an within the Zen monastery Daitokuji, where she hosted numerous foreign students but, as her comment below suggests, took issue with the Zen Boom in the West:

Today, due in large part to D.T. Suzuki's voluminous writings in English on Zen . . . Zen is known *about* in almost every part of the civilized world. Furthermore, Dr. Suzuki's numerous followers have written on Zen from almost every possible angle. Zen has always been credited with influencing various forms of Far Eastern art and culture, and quite correctly. But now the discovery has been made that it was existing all along in English literature. Ultra-modern painting, music, dance, and poetry are acclaimed as expressions of Zen. Zen is invoked to substantiate the validity of the latest theories in psychology, psychotherapy,

philosophy, semantics, mysticism, free-thinking, and what-have-you. It is the magic password at smart cocktail parties and bohemian get-togethers alike. . . . How far away all this is from the recluse Gautama sitting in intense meditation under the Bodhi-tree trying to find a solution to the problem of human suffering!

Sasaki's opinion of Suzuki aside, her point is that Occidentals simply need to sit *zazen* and not confuse the "by-products" that arise from Zen with "Zen itself."¹¹ In a sense, her words were a sermon on religious authenticity and a critique of the "Zen flâneur."

The establishment and growth of Japanese Zen in the West has had its share of tussles between "purity" and "assimilation," yielding various interpretations of Japanese monastic ritual and teaching and, occasionally, scandal.¹² In certain respects these tensions and exchanges were embodied in D.T. Suzuki, often viewed as the "founding father" of Zen in the West: a lay Buddhist spiritual insider who experienced *satori* in 1895 at the Kamakura monastery Engakuji but remained an outsider to the monastic institution per se; an affable monkish figure who was also a modern statesman in a suit; a scholar who published dozens of books and essays but who insisted on the nonverbal, nonrational nature of spiritual Truth; and a Japanese nationalist schooled in Western thought.¹³ Perhaps because of the pervasiveness of his writings and the mythic "Suzuki scene" that arose from his lectures at Columbia University in the 1950s—attended by, among others, Thomas Merton (1915–1968), Eric Fromm (1900–1980), Philip Guston (1913–1980), John Cage, and Arthur Danto—we tend to forget that he was not without critics even in his own time and was by no means the single fount of Zen to the West.¹⁴ Contemporary historians of Chinese literature, religion, and Chan/Zen, such as Arthur Waley (1889–1966), Hu Shi (1891–1962), and Heinrich Dumoulin (1905–1995), challenged the ahistoricity, scholarly limitations, and inconsistencies of Suzuki's explanations of Zen and *Zen Art*. Arthur Koestler (1905–1983), who called Suzuki the "sensei of Zen senseis" and relied upon his writings, nevertheless seems to have found his version of Zen a bit absurd. The Japanese philosopher and cultural critic Umehara Takeshi, meanwhile, confronted Suzuki's Zennification of Japanese culture and the militarism implicit in his espousal of Zen and Bushidō.¹⁵

English-language reviews from 1959 and 1960 of Suzuki's adored and oft-cited *Zen and Japanese Culture*, which has had almost incalculable impact upon postwar perceptions of Zen and the arts, suggest as well friction between different authenticities. Although Nancy Wilson Ross (1913–1986) gushed in the *New York Times* about the "delightful book" and its description of the "inexpressibly soothing . . . old Japanese virtues of *wabi* and *sabi*," critics within the scholarly establishment were dubious of its history and art history.¹⁶ One reviewer noted that *Zen and Japanese Culture* had been written for the lay public and might therefore be excused for its lack of a "consistently historical scheme" and "technical presentation of Zen," while another noted that "Occasionally [Suzuki] descends to pure nonsense or to unbearable repetition."¹⁷ One

critic praised the book's copious plates, but questioned Suzuki's inattention to works of art themselves:

. . . this book seems at first sight to promise enlightenment on the relation of Zen to Japanese painting. In this the reader will be disappointed. Dr. Suzuki dwells at length on Zen and swordsmanship, Zen and the samurai, Zen and the art of tea, but his remarks on painting are meager in the extreme. The illustrations are left to speak for themselves.¹⁸

The eminent art historian Alexander Soper (1904–1993), surprised as well by Suzuki's emphasis on the samurai, was similarly unconvinced:

The book is generously illustrated, chiefly with reproductions of Chinese and Japanese paintings and calligraphy. By no means all of these have any connection with Zen: some provide pictorial footnotes to Japanese history . . . and others summarize the interests of rival sects of Japanese Buddhism. At the same time one finds no chapter with a title like "Zen and the Art of Painting"; and the one entitled "Love of Nature" makes no use at all of the whole *sumi-e* tradition.¹⁹

Perhaps Suzuki and his followers viewed such comments as scholarly claptrap, reflecting their critics' lack of Zen spiritual experience, but Suzuki's descriptions of individual works of art, even as they contributed to the *Zen Art* canon, were cursory at best. For Suzuki, *sumi-e*, literally "ink pictures,"²⁰ didn't require the searching gaze and explicit prodding preferred by art historians because they are self-evident embodiments of the mystical Zen experience of nothingness, which is manifested visually in suggestion, irregularity, and unexpectedness; within the confines of a piece of paper, we find infinity and absolute being. As Suzuki slyly put it, they "may not be art" but instead "perfect in [their] artlessness," because the *sumi-e* painter engages in the spontaneous transfer of artistic inspiration without the intrusion of logic or deliberation; artist and brush fuse together such that the "brush by itself executes the work quite outside the artist, who just lets it move on without his conscious efforts." This implies that the *sumi-e* painter works in an artistic void, exclusive of surrounding pictorial traditions and taste. *Sumi-e* rejects mimesis and is indifferent to form, for resemblance is subordinate to each brush stroke, within which moves the spirit of the *sumi-e* painter. The *sumi-e* artist paints, therefore, with the same *mushin* ("no mind") and *munen* ("no thought") of the awakened Zen master, and strives to give "form to what has no form."²¹ *Mushin*, in fact, "is where all arts merge into Zen," while the Zen-man "transforms his own life into a work of creation."²² Flavorsome and convincing as such exegesis may have been to some—and indeed the brush moving by itself seems to have become a trope of twentieth-century notions of mystical Asian culture—Soper and other art historians and critics found it wanting, though not so much with regard to the importance of Zen or to Suzuki's claim that Japan's artistic practices embody and express the non-duality and formlessness of Zen Mind. Rather, Suzuki didn't do the hard looking and archival digging needed

to sense the visual and historical warp and weft of specific paintings, styles, and painters. Instead of letting the paintings recount their own stories, Suzuki gave them all the same tale to tell.

Suzuki was not an art historian, and we should not insist upon his allegiance to this discipline's peculiar practices. Art historians, for their part, have been hard at work crafting different explanations of *Zen Art*. Scholars active in North America and Europe during the second half of the twentieth century, such as Shimada Shūjirō (1907–1994), Wen Fong, Yoshiaki Shimizu, and Helmut Brinker, and formidable scholars in East Asia, including Ebine Toshio and Shimaō Arata, focused upon the historical study of medieval Chan and Zen painting and calligraphy through exceedingly close visual, textual, and historical analysis of particular heirloom works. Their groundbreaking publications marshalled the energies of postwar art history, with its shift from traditional connoisseurship to a more "scientific" formalist method, and drew deeply from the equally vibrant disciplines of Sino-Japanese and Buddhist studies. What has resulted from their efforts is a strikingly new platform for the study of *Zen Art*, distinguished by deliberately shaped understandings of pictorial styles such as "apparition painting" (C: *wanglianghua*, J: *mōryōga*), and of the careers of specific artists such as Muqi Fachang (act. mid-13th c.), Mokuan Reien (d. 1345), Kaō (act. first half of 14th c.), and Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506) as they developed within monastic contexts and in relation to elite patronage of the arts.²³ More recent scholarship builds upon this highly disciplined foundation, while sometimes bending the resulting structure in surprising directions or even knocking out some of its footings.²⁴

It almost goes without saying that the postwar art-historical community and more recent scholars, who usually prefer the term *suibokuga* (literally, "water-ink painting") to *sumi-e*, have begged to differ with the still influential psychological, mystical readings of visual form that characterize Suzuki's *Zen Art*. They have been equally skeptical of the concepts and schematic terminology deployed by Suzuki's colleague Hisamatsu Shin'ichi. Hisamatsu, a follower of the renowned philosopher Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945), was the founder of the lay Zen society F.A.S. (Formless self awakening itself/All humankind/Suprahistorical history) and an avid campaigner for Zen as a transcultural truth of "Oriental nothingness" (*Tōyōteki mu*) that was simultaneously unique to the Japanese.²⁵ His lavishly illustrated and widely-read *Zen and the Fine Arts*, first published in Japanese in 1957 and appearing in English in 1971, argued that all works of *Zen Art*, whether painting, calligraphy, *Chanoyu* ceramics, Nō drama, or landscape garden design, are creative expressions that emerged from the "unitary cultural complex" of Zen and are distinguished by Seven Characteristics: Asymmetry, Simplicity, Austere Sublimity or Lofty Dryness, Naturalness, Subtle Profundity or Profound Subtlety, Freedom from Attachment, and Tranquillity. This is, to put it one way, Hisamatsu's "Magnificent Seven" of *Zen Art*: idealistic, bold, and disciplined, they ride in to save the day.

Hisamatsu was eager to clarify for his Western audiences that all seven of his psycho-aesthetic principles are Zen because of their fusion with "the Self-Awareness of the

Formless Self."²⁶ They are, moreover, always interrelated: one of the seven "standing alone, unrelated to the other six characteristics . . . remains unsuitable as a description of Zen culture." It is this aesthetic-spiritual symbiosis, in fact, that differentiates Zen Japan from the West. Thus, the architect Bruno Taut's (1880–1938) "beauty of simplicity" finds embodiment in Japan's renowned Ise Shrine but is entirely different from the simplicity evident in Japanese Zen-influenced tea-house architecture, where all the other six characteristics are also present.²⁷ Modern architecture in the West, to the extent that it lacks this interfused aesthetic structure, cannot be "Zen" architecture. Never the twain shall meet. And although Hisamatsu explained that the experience behind the Zen aesthetic is fundamentally timeless and universal, he pointedly declared that to really grasp the characteristics of *Zen Art* you "must await Zen-religious-realization." The Zen master or awakened lay practitioner, therefore, retains authority over experience and interpretation; if you haven't attained Hisamatsu's Zen Mind, you won't be able to see *Zen Art*.²⁸

Many postwar historians of religion and some art historians have discounted Hisamatsu's Seven Characteristics as unproductive, because they have little historical traction for medieval Chan and Zen. Moreover, scholars of East Asian painting traditions have been concerned first and foremost with the study of paintings as visual objects grounded in historical circumstances, and less interested in philosophical tropes that organize and explain paintings and other works of art irrespective of period and pedigree. In the art-historical gaze, paintings, their inscriptional content, and their contexts of production reveal their "Zenness" in rather different ways. Instead of discussing Zen Mind, postwar painting scholars raised their voices in discourse about painters and calligraphers related to Chan or Zen communities: how they worked within established Buddhist visual traditions, appropriated non-Buddhist pictorial modes such as the "untrammelled style" (C: *yipin*), formulated distinctive Chan/Zen pictorial styles (such as *mōryōga*) and themes (such as Bodhidharma Crossing the Yangzi or Chan encounter narratives), or dispersed Chan/Zen styles outside monastic settings and practice.²⁹

Method matters, therefore, and disciplinary and interpretive deviation, if not friction, characterize postwar Zen and *Zen Art* in the academy. Indeed, in the wake of Edward Said's (1935–2003) *Orientalism*, Michel Foucault's (1926–1984) writings, and the postmodernist critique of the author and grand narrative, strikingly different counterarguments about Chan/Zen and the arts washed ashore. Scholars of religious studies in particular have offered a sophisticated reassessment of the Chan/Zen tradition and its origins, practices, beliefs, and institutions, rendering vulnerable what seemed monolithic and customary. In their view, popular notions of Zen "enlightenment," and mystical "mind-to-mind" transmission from master to disciple, commonly held notions of *kōan* as non-rational and psychotherapeutic riddles, and an iconoclastic emphasis on Emptiness are in large measure a product of twentieth-century "Buddhist modernism."³⁰

What is this modern Zen? It is Zen stripped largely of the specific conditions and behaviors of actual monastic practices

that the Chan/Zen textual record and present-day practice preserve in large measure from centuries past: exacting regulations, pervasive ritual, copious ornament and offerings, broadly Buddhist doctrine and devotional practices, and a profusion of iconic forms.³¹ It is Zen that disparages the magic and veneration of numinous objects that was current during the medieval and early modern period, and is defined instead by particularly modern notions of experience and a psychological state of "enlightenment," absent history, culture, rational discourse, and ideology.³² It shies away from skepticism toward the rhetorical and ritualized "performances" through which Chan and Zen masters have long manifested awakening and unfettered freedom (many in fact used tried and true scripts and props).³³ This particular sort of modern Zen finds the apogee of its heritage in medieval Japan, and asserts (incorrectly) that in China Chan simply died out after the Southern Song period and in Korea Seon never found significant purchase. Study of the precise dialogue between art and monastic life and what monks and nuns wrote about works of art (often focused upon patriarchal lineage, veneration of ancestors, and broadly Buddhist ritual) is replaced with anecdotes about the antinomian behavior of Zen patriarchs and the "psychosphere," as Suzuki put it, of artistic practice within non-duality.³⁴

Disseminated actively from the 1930s onward by Japanese lay Buddhist figures such as Nishida, Suzuki, Hisamatsu, and Abe Masao (1915–2006), this sort of Zen was formulated not solely out of the Chan/Zen past, but also in response to Western philosophy, psychology, theology, and scientific rationalism. As Thomas Merton put it in his eulogy for Suzuki, the latter was so effective in the West because "he had a rather remarkable capacity to transpose Zen into the authentic totalities of western mystical traditions that were most akin to it."³⁵ In other words, don't be surprised if Suzuki-style Zen has in it traces of the medieval Christian mystic Meister Eckhart (1260–1328), the American psychologist and philosopher William James (1842–1910), and the American philosopher and educator John Dewey (1859–1952).³⁶ This Zen is also Janus-faced: universal and therefore somehow available to East or West, it is simultaneously nationalistic and implicated in assertions of Japanese uniqueness and in Japanese militarism. Japanese culture writ large and across time, meanwhile, was measured according to "Zen characteristics" of modern conception and was colonized internally by Suzuki, Hisamatsu, and others in order to assert the superiority of Japanese Zen and culture over Asia and, indeed, the West: *Zen Art*, in turn, became part of "Zen nationalism."³⁷ The universalist allure of this sort of Zen in the West during the twentieth century can be easily imagined, for it seemed able to assuage certain anxieties about modernity and to fulfill desires for spiritual experience without the encumbrances of "traditional" religion in the post-Enlightenment and postindustrial age.³⁸

But Zen and *Zen Art*, some now argue, are about power; no one who speaks, writes, paints, sculpts, inscribes, or views is neutral, and acts of expression, explanation, or interpretation, be they ancient or modern, are inherently partisan.³⁹ The

consternation that can be felt along certain hallways of the academy, meanwhile, is due not strictly to the ideas of Suzuki and Hisamatsu but rather to their reception:

I am dismayed by those Western scholars who uncritically accept these Japanese missionaries as living representatives of an unbroken tradition, and who refuse to acknowledge the ideological and rhetorical dimensions of the Zen of men like Suzuki. It is time to demand the same critical and dispassionate rigor in the study of Zen that we casually demand in the study of other religious traditions.⁴⁰

These are clearly fighting words, and they are applicable to the study of *Zen Art*. Whereas some argue that the interpretation of *Zen Art*, because of its metaphysical nature, should be left to awakened masters or knowledgeable practitioners, others (including myself) counter that the tradition's self-portrait is only one of many possible likenesses.

One thing appears almost certain. Most writers find that to explain *Zen Art* they must first explain Zen. This has certain pragmatic value, of course, but countless books and articles condense "all you need to know" into a paragraph or two or a scrawny chapter. D.T. Suzuki's *Zen and Japanese Culture* begins with a shockingly brief exegesis, "What is Zen?," which comments impressionistically on Chan's emergence from Chinese culture as a transformation of Indian Buddhism and on its departures from the prayers and texts of typical Buddhism; offers stories about Chan patriarchs and about peculiarities of "Zen verbalism" and "actional" behavior as integral within *satori*; explains the presence of Zen in daily experience as "being itself" and an "isness" free from conceptualization; and speaks of the attainment of a "structure of mentality which is made always ready to respond instantly."⁴¹ As illuminating as this précis (and many others like it) may be in certain respects, Suzuki collapses a colossal and complex institutional, doctrinal, philosophical, and social tradition into a touchstone that can turn art into Zen. And if Suzuki's Zen is a particular sort of Zen, as many have noted, this explanatory strategy leads naturally to a particular sort of *Zen Art*. Put differently, when an author begins a book on *Zen Art* by indicating, in a prefatory chapter, the wish to "acquaint the reader with the rudiments of Zen, its characteristics and those of Zen art,"⁴² we find ourselves in a land of congenial generality whose inhabitants choose not to question the "gods." For scholars as well as practitioners who believe that Zen should be more of an open question, susceptible to cultural and epistemological critique, an explanation of *Zen Art* that fails to treat Zen itself as unstable in meaning sets forth on rather wobbly legs.

As any exploration of the inscriptions found upon paintings produced within the Chan/Zen monastic milieu during the medieval and early modern eras quickly demonstrates, quotation from and allusion to canonical works of Buddhist scripture, Zen discourse and kōan records, and Chinese literature was a central preoccupation and enjoyment.⁴³ During the twentieth century, however, *Zen Art* acquired a different sort of

intertextuality. Countless publications on *Zen Art* cite as their primary sources of information and interpretation modern authors such as Okakura Kakuzō (1862–1913), R.H. Blythe (1898–1964), Nishida, Suzuki, Watts, and Hisamatsu.⁴⁴ In essence, texts such as Suzuki's *Zen and Japanese Culture*, Yasuichi Awakawa's (1902–1976) *Zen Painting* (1970), and Hisamatsu's *Zen and the Fine Arts*, became a canon of "secondary scripture." This recent canon has in many instances overwritten itself across the copious and not always univocal writings about the visual arts of Chan, Seon, and Zen communities, and has become irreducible truth for many subsequent writers. Indeed, if one looks at citations of textual authorities, and the recursive references to modern authorities as primary voices, one discovers a series of "begats" in anglophone explanations of *Zen Art*. Okakura begat, among others, Ernest F. Fenollosa (1853–1908). Suzuki begat Eugen Herrigel (1885–1955), famous for his *Zen in the Art of Archery*; the Zennophile Christmas Humphreys (1901–1983); Watts; and the art historian Hugo Munsterberg (1916–1995). Watts, in turn, begat the art historian Langdon Warner (1881–1955), while Hisamatsu begat the postwar art critic Helen Westgeest, and so on to the present. Scholarship always has its lineages, but these prophets and their modern canon who speak so loudly for the past rankle some whose allegiances lie with the delicate negotiations inherent in close historical, textual, and art-historical study. To be fair, however, the art historians and Buddhologists themselves have their own patriarchal figures, hallowed modern scriptures, and family myths that may not make sense to outsiders.⁴⁵

In the modern and postmodern world, therefore, the act of explaining Zen and *Zen Art* reveals something of a divide between believers and atheists/agnostics, between the metaphysical tradition and the secular humanist tradition of history.⁴⁶ Recent critique of the "Suzuki effect" and arguments regarding Zen modernism are likewise a meeting between Zen and critical theory and an effort to "discover the recent origins of 'age-old' Japanese traditions."⁴⁷ Alongside Bushidō, which even in 1905 was deemed by one prominent Japanologist as "fabricated out of whole cloth, chiefly for foreign consumption,"⁴⁸ Zen and *Zen Art*—especially as they are popularly understood—are wholly continuous with the ancient past and with Chan/Zen monastic communities only, one might say, in our wildest, or most cherished, dreams. While this need not compel anyone to discard beloved Zen scrolls or to suppress fondness for nonattachment, Nothingness, or the Zen aesthetic, it asks us to consider the following: far from being a free-floating, timeless, or inherent Truth, Zen and its expressions in *Zen Art*, like all religions and cultures, take shape within specific moments of realization, production, reception, and rhetoric.

If history is relating questions and ideas to particular places, things, and stories, one quickly discovers that there have been multiple sorts of Zen across time. And if Zen is full of historical diversity, then it is not surprising that there is a growing "counterhistory" of *Zen Art*.⁴⁹ The postwar creation of

the category of Japanese art known as *Zenga*—paintings of Daruma, Zen patriarchs, allegorical themes, and *ensō* produced by monks from the Edo period (1615–1868) onward—has become part of art history's recent reconsideration of commonly held assumptions about the visual traditions of Japan.⁵⁰ Art historians, directly questioning the Suzuki-Hisamatsu model of *Zen Art*, now examine the role of "traditional" icons in Zen monasteries, aside from paintings of the fierce Daruma and quirky sketches of eccentrics, and also particular ways of adorning and ritually activating and encountering images.⁵¹ Regarding ink paintings of the Muromachi period (1392–1573), there has been a sea change from fuzzy statements about the spirit of the *sumi-e* artist on the one hand, and from predominantly biographical and formal evaluations of pictorial hand and style on the other, toward more sophisticated examination of the philological content of, and aesthetic, philosophical, social, and soteriological practices behind, Zen Buddhist literary and painterly production.⁵² Ink monochrome is no longer perceived to be the sole medium of *Zen Art*, gender figures in our interpretation of Zen culture, and Zen monks and nuns appear far more art-historically savvy and commercially entangled than previously acknowledged.⁵³ In film studies we are now apt to be suspicious of critics who characterize Kurosawa Akira (1910–1998) and other Japanese directors as "Zen artists," a notion which is often symptomatic of essentialist assumptions that Japanese film, as purportedly embodying a "collective essence called the 'Japanese mind'," must necessarily be Zen inspired. If the two do meet—Kurosawa and Zen—we learn more by understanding this encounter within the particularities of postwar intellectual and religious discourse than through generalized notions of Zen and Japanese film.⁵⁴ Similarly, if the work of avant-garde artists of the postwar period is to be interpreted as "Zen," it is so by virtue of the particular understandings of Zen and *Zen Art* then in circulation. Stimulated by the explications of *satori*, Emptiness, spontaneous gesture, *sumi-e*, and the like offered by Suzuki, occasionally engaging in serious *zazen*, and bouncing off Dada, psychoanalysis, and Surrealism, these artists generated their own understandings of Zen and *Zen Art* as sets of affinities, resemblances to the modern; they lengthened the chain, creating Cage's *Zen Art*, Ad Reinhardt's (1913–1967) *Zen Art*, Yoko Ono's *Zen Art*, and so on, jazz riffs off "Suzuki Zen-like art."⁵⁵ *Zen Art*, in other words, has been changing before at least some of our eyes.

Does this sort of reappraisal matter if our responses to *Zen Art* are aesthetically subjective or guided by practice and faith? Does not an idealized, ahistorical sort of Zen still lead us to appreciate non-Western religions and visual traditions? Perhaps it's a tussle over who has the authority to pass judgment on *Zen Art*, but a historian's reply might be: if we're talking about here-now, fine, but don't impose today on yesterday (or vice versa), for the past "is another country; they do things differently there."⁵⁶ An art historian mindful of Michael Baxandall's concept of the "period eye," meanwhile, might ask us to explore the distinctive cultural and visual skills and

knowledge that different communities at different times employed when making and looking at *Zen Art*, whether a monk or nun of the fifteenth century, an avant-garde artist of the 1950s, a designer of the twenty-first century, and so forth.⁵⁷ A postcolonial critic might caution that appreciation, however sincere, may cloak unequal power relations and that fantasies of the exotic and ethnic stereotyping can sneak in and do harm.⁵⁸ Witness art criticism that seems almost invariably to see in the work of contemporary artists and architects of Japanese nationality or heritage (regardless of where they work, their dialogues with diverse currents of art and design, and so on) a “riddling Zen reticence” or “the Zen stillness of his native culture’s art.”⁵⁹ Those with affinities for New Historicism and Visual Culture Studies might propose that we consider the “mutual embeddedness of art and history” and allow our favored assumptions about *Zen Art* to be jostled, even upset, by varied categories of visual imagery (especially those previously overlooked) that flash before or subtly lure the eyes of Zen communities and sympathetic observers.⁶⁰

Rather than producing cultural anxiety, the loss of an idealized, simplified *Zen Art* is our gain. For one thing, we are likely to ask more and new questions about still more intriguing works of art, expanding our gaze beyond the canon and its “usual suspects.” A rougher but nonetheless pleasing texture may become noticeable as we trace the in-between (for example, the exchanges between monastic and professional artist, patron and consumer, native and foreign, abstract and mimetic, center and margin) or risk a touch of the unexpected (that monks were often players in the art market and even art forgers, and that there are aesthetic dimensions to *Zen Art* that the normative lexicon fails to account for). We may, in turn, come face to face with yet deeper artistic and spiritual energies, past and present.

When we look at works of art and discourses about them as visual and verbal moments that occurred in the past and kept going until they meet our eyes and thoughts, we also learn about ourselves in relation to our imaginings of the past. By risking the complications of history, moreover, we may find new meanings in the “timeliness of things” that compel us toward wonder. In fact, many of us already give *Zen Art* more than one sense of time. A Chan/Zen painting may have historical gravitas and the capacity to elicit a sense of astonishment as if we were actually “there” in medieval China or Japan when brush met paper.⁶¹ We may thrill equally to the sense that a painting has an eternal now-ness because it captures a glimmer of truth. We adore works of premodern Zen painting held in museums and cloisters because they are old and accompanied by encomia (National Treasure and such), but we may be just as awed by a traditionally garbed present-day Zen master performing calligraphy before our very eyes. Ultimately, a painting of the Sixth Patriarch attributed to Liang Kai (act. early 13th c.) and a tattoo of Liang Kai’s painting posted on a website become meeting points, places for us to think about making and viewing art and how images mean and change meaning.

Whether or not one agrees with such views or finds them interesting, the ripples appearing on the surface of Zen and

Zen Art seem less concentric and or smoothly dissipating than one might think. Put differently, they suggest a sort of differential gear set, which allows several wheels of understanding to turn at different speeds. Surely we benefit from such variation and plurality, and Zen art followers as well as Zen art skeptics are more dependent upon each other (and even alike) than we may imagine. This brings to mind two venerable doctrinal formulations in Chan/Zen and Mahāyāna Buddhist discourse: the dialectic of “sudden” versus “gradual” enlightenment, on the one hand, and the doctrine of the “two truths” on the other.⁶² Some Zen practitioners and aficionados of *Zen Art* might be likened to followers of the sudden camp in Chan/Zen who say, “I see it, it’s Emptiness, *satori* right now, right there in the painting—you either get it or you don’t, and in any case stop mumbering over the details, for they are impediments to awakening to Zen or to art.” Those scholarly inclined, meanwhile, might be likened to proponents of the “gradual” model: whatever initial wonderment and insight the painting may elicit, sustained and deliberate investigation is required to dig incrementally through the historical facts, scrutinize the pictorial and inscriptional surface, and penetrate the accumulated rhetoric of tradition before one can grasp what is really there. Each takes the other to task for particular failings. The academics just don’t get it—or, more properly, see it with a genuine flash of realization; the wide-eyed aficionados occasionally seem overzealous in their pursuit of Truth and unaware of power relationships, ideology, and the exoticism often lurking in modern explanations and reception of Zen and *Zen Art*.

This is tongue-in-cheek, of course, and no matter which way one unpacks *Zen Art*, one always repacks it in one way or another. It is also true that many monks, nuns, lay followers, and collectors do hard scholarly work while art historians, for all their aesthetic reverie or insistence on the historical, may practice *zazen* alongside what they preach and publish. For this reason, *Zen Art* is perhaps more usefully described as a shared dream, a “necessary fiction,” to borrow from Wallace Stevens, or as an amenable sign that encourages realization and knowledge.⁶³ It allows us to ask questions and seek answers, to believe certain things and build upon them and renew our thinking. This is not to say, à la Oscar Wilde’s comment about Japan, that the whole of *Zen Art* is pure invention or, à la Roland Barthes, an empty sign.⁶⁴ Rather it is to suggest that it might be likened to a Buddhist “expedient means” (S: *upāya*, J: *hōben*) that bridges between the Two Truths: absolute and conventional, transcendent and immanent, emptiness and form. After all, it is the bounding contour of the ink circle that suggests emptiness, the use of language that loosens our reliance upon language, and the *painting* of a Buddha statue being burned that urges us to move beyond outward form.⁶⁵ Difficult to come at head on, therefore, *Zen Art* seems at its clearest today when imagined as a field of converging and colliding objects, notions, and interpretations in which the visual is open to debate. Authenticity, adaptation, interpretation, and performance—this is arguably what *Zen Art* has always been and perhaps what it will always be.

Notes

1. "Zen Tramps" comes from Alan Watts, "Beat Zen, Square Zen, and Zen," *Chicago Review*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Summer 1958), p. 6; "Zen Zanies" from Conrad Hyers, "Humor in Zen: Comic Midwifery," *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 39, no. 3 (July 1989), p. 267.
2. Alan Watts, *Zen and the Art of the Controlled Accident* (sound recording) (New York: Mystic Fire Audio, 1994).
3. See Helen Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties: Interaction in Art Between East and West* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1996); Midori Yoshimoto, *Into Performance: Japanese Women Artists in New York* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005).
4. See Thomas Hoover, *Zen Culture* (New York: Random House, 1977).
5. See, for instance, Carl Olson, *Zen and the Art of Postmodern Philosophy: Two Paths of Liberation from the Representational Mode of Thinking* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000), p. 12; Graham Parkes, ed., *Heidegger and Asian Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987); Roland Barthes, *The Empire of Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (*L'Empire des signes*, 1970) (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982); Jimura Takahiko and Iozaki Arata, *Ma space/time in the garden of Ryoan-ji* (film) (New York: Program for Art on Film, 1989).
6. My phrasing borrows from Henry Berger, *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 505.
7. Yasuda Joshu Dainen Roshi, "Zen and Culture," *Zenmai* 8; reproduced on <http://www.wvzc.org/teisho/zenCulture.htm> (accessed 10 November 2006).
8. For gumption trap—anything that causes one to lose sight of Quality, and thus lose enthusiasm for what one is doing—see Robert M. Persig's famous *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), pp. 274–75.
9. A full history of the reception of Zen and *Zen Art* in the West is beyond the scope of this essay, but both were objects of fascination and knowledge formation from the first Western contacts with East Asia in the sixteenth century through the nineteenth-century "opening" of Japan to the West.
10. Watts, "Beat Zen," pp. 3–11.
11. Ruth Fuller Sasaki, *Rinzai Zen Study for Foreigners in Japan* (Kyoto: The First Zen Institute of America in Japan, 1960), pp. 2–3; Isabel Stirling and Gary Snyder, *Zen Pioneer: The Life and Works of Ruth Fuller Sasaki* (Emeryville, CA: Shoemaker and Hoard, 2006).
12. See Martin Collcutt, "Epilogue: Problems of Authority in Western Zen," in *Zen: Tradition and Transition*, ed. Kenneth Kraft (New York: Grove Press, 1988), pp. 199–207; Michael Downing, *Shoes Outside the Door: Desire, Devotion, and Excess at San Francisco Zen Center* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 2001).
13. D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959). The text, which began as lectures presented in England and America in 1935–1936, was published in 1938 by the Eastern Buddhist Society as *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* and issued in Japanese in 1940 as *Zen to Nihon Bunka*. A shorter explanation of Zen and Japanese culture appears in D.T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (3rd Series) (London: Luzac and Company, 1934), pp. 306–15.
14. On Suzuki at Columbia, see Arthur Danto, "Upper West Side Buddhism," in *Buddha Mind in Contemporary Art*, ed. Jacquelynn Baas and Mary Jane Jacob (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 54–55; Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties*, pp. 88–89, n. 45.
15. Heinrich Dumoulin, S.J., *A History of Zen Buddhism* (New York: Random House, 1963), p. 52; Arthur Koestler, *The Lotus and the Robot* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 235; Bernard Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 62–74, 89–99; William R. LaFleur, "Between America and Japan: The Case of Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki," in *Zen in American Life and Letters*, ed. Robert S. Ellwood (Malibu: Undena Publications, 1987), pp. 67–87; Fujioka Daisetz, "Suzuki Daisetz," in *Shapers of Japanese Buddhism*, ed. Yūsen Kashiwahara and Kōyū Sonoda, trans. Gaynor Sekinori (Tokyo: Kōsei Publishing, 1994), pp. 247–50.
16. Nancy Wilson Ross, quoted on the back cover of the third printing of *Zen and Japanese Culture* (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1973).
17. Masatoshi Nagatomi, review of D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 22 (December 1959), p. 294; K.B. Gardner, review of D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 102, no. 691 (October 1960), p. 459.
18. Gardner, in *The Burlington Magazine*, p. 459.
19. Alexander Soper, review of D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, in *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 23, no. 2 (1960), pp. 139–40.
20. "Sumiye" (*sumi-e*) functions in Suzuki's description as a totality for Japanese "ink painting." His use of the word homogenizes and conflates a historically diverse field of pictorial practice in ink monochrome, with antecedents, schools, styles, subjects, and commentaries that have little or nothing to do with Zen. The term *sumi-e* has often been applied by Western commentators to Chinese and Korean paintings as a result of Japanese art-historical writing.
21. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, pp. 307, 309, 315; Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, pp. 17, 31, 36.
22. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, p. 94.
23. See Shimada Shūjirō, "Concerning the I-p'in Style of Painting," trans. James Cahill, *Oriental Art*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Summer 1961), pp. 60–74; vol. 8, no. 3 (Autumn 1962), pp. 130–37; vol. 10, no. 1 (Spring 1964), pp. 19–26; Shimada Shūjirō, "Mōryōga," *Bijutsu Kenkyū*, vol. 84 (1938), vol. 86 (1939); Yoshiaki Shimizu, "Problems of Mokuan Reien" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1974); Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1970); Yoshiaki Shimizu and Carolyn Wheelwright, eds., *Japanese Ink Paintings From American Collections: The Muromachi Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Helmut Brinker and Hiroshi Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings* (Zurich: Artibus Asiae Publications, 1996).
24. Charles Lachman, for instance, points out that "The term *Chan painting* does not occur in any Tang or Song dynasty texts, and does not appear to have been recognized as a category of painting by traditional Chinese writers. . . ." and that masterworks of Chan painting such as Muqi's *Six Persimmons* owe their status more to modernist sentiments than to monastic Chan understandings of painting. Charles Lachman, "Art," in *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 41, 46.
25. Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," in *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 132–33.
26. Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, *Zen and the Fine Arts*, trans. Tokiwa Gishin (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1971), p. 45.
27. Hoseki Shin'ichi Hisamatsu, "Seven Characteristics of Zen Art by Hoseki Shin'ichi Hisamatsu," *It Is*, vol. 5 (Spring 1960), p. 64.
28. Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, "On Zen Art," *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 1, no. 2 (September 1966), pp. 28–32.

29. See Yoshiaki Shimizu, "Zen Art?," in *Zen: In China, Japan, East Asian Art*, ed. Helmut Brinker et al. (Berne: Peter Lang, 1985), pp. 73–98.
30. On "Buddhist modernism," see Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 184–91. On kōan, see Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds., *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 3.
31. On Chan monasticism, see T. Griffith Foulk, "Myth, Ritual and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," in *Religion and Society in Tang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia B. Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), pp. 147–208; T. Griffith Foulk, "Chanyuan qinggui and Other 'Rules of Purity' in Chinese Buddhism," in *The Zen Canon*, ed. Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 275–312.
32. Robert H. Sharf, "Experience," in *Critical Terms in Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 94–116.
33. See Robert H. Sharf, "Whose Zen? Zen Nationalism Revisited," in *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism*, ed. James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), p. 43.
34. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, p. 295. See, for instance, the writings of Mujaku Dōchū (1653–1745) discussed in Urs App, "Zen's Greatest Encyclopaedist Mujaku Dōchū," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*, vol. 3 (1987), pp. 155–74.
35. Thomas Merton, "D.T. Suzuki: The Man and His Work," *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 2, no. 1 (August 1967), p. 6.
36. See Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism"; Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India, and 'The Mystic East'* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 157; Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties*, p. 80.
37. Sharf, "Whose Zen," p. 46.
38. Sharf, "Whose Zen," pp. 49–50; King, *Orientalism and Religion*, p. 156; Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights*.
39. Suzuki, for instance, was partisan to his Rinzai lineage and disdainful of the Sōtō tradition. See Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights*, pp. 55–58.
40. Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," p. 145.
41. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, pp. 3–18. See also R.H. Blythe, *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1942); Hugo Munsterberg, *Zen and Oriental Art* (Rutland, VT and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1965), pp. 13–21.
42. See Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties*, p. 8.
43. See individual catalogue entries in the present catalogue as well as Joseph D. Parker, *Zen Buddhist Landscape Arts of Early Muromachi Japan (1336–1573)* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999); Shimada Shūjirō and Iriya Yoshitaka, *Zenrin Gasan: Chūsei Suibokuga o Yomu (Painting Colophons from the Japanese Zen Milieu: Reading Medieval Ink Paintings)* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1987).
44. Okakura Kakuzō's *Ideals of the East* (1903) and *The Book of Tea* (1906), which hold formative positions in twentieth-century writing on *Zen Art*, must be dealt with elsewhere. The exceptions are a handful of books and exhibition catalogues written by art historians, including Fontein and Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* and Brinker and Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation*.
45. Indeed, the authors of this catalogue's essays and entries largely embody one particular lineage of Zen and *Zen Art* study within the academy, one evolving from Princeton University.
46. Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights*, p. 89.
47. For study of entrenched terms and concepts, see Stephen Vlastos, ed., *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Maki Isaka Morinaga, *Secrecy in Japanese Arts: "Secret Transmission" as a Mode of Knowledge* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
48. Basil Hall Chamberlain, *The Invention of a New Religion* (1905), quoted in Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), p. 270.
49. Catherine Gallagher and Steven Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 52.
50. See Yamashita Yūji, "Reconsidering 'Zenga'—In Terms of America, in Terms of Japanese Art History," in *Zenga—The Return from America: Zenga from the Gitter-Yelen Collection*, ed. Yamashita Yūji et al. (Tokyo: Asano Laboratories, 2000), pp. 19–28; Christine Guth, "Nanga and Zenga in America, 1956 to 1976," in *An Enduring Vision: 17th to 20th-Century Japanese Painting from the Gitter-Yelen Collection*, ed. Lisa Rotondo-McCord (New Orleans: New Orleans Museum of Art, 2002), pp. 203–12.
51. See Gregory P.A. Levine, *Daitokuji: The Visual Cultures of a Zen Monastery* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005).
52. See Parker, *Zen Buddhist Landscape Arts*; Yukio Lippit, "Apparition Painting," in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays in Honor of Professor Wen C. Fong*, ed. Dora C.Y. Ching, Alfreda Murck, Jerome Silbergeld, and Judith Smith (Princeton: The Tang Center for the Study of East Asian Art, forthcoming).
53. See, for instance, Levine, *Daitokuji*; Institute for Medieval Japanese Studies, *Days of Discipline and Grace: Treasure from the Imperial Convents of Kyoto* (New York: Institute for Medieval Japanese Studies, 1998).
54. See Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), pp. 10–12, 74.
55. Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties*, p. 224.
56. L.P. Hartley, *The Go-Between* (London: H. Hamilton, 1953), p. 9.
57. For "period eye," see Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
58. On exoticism, see Frederick N. Bohrer, *Orientalism and Visual Culture: Imagining Mesopotamia in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 10–41.
59. John Updike, "Invisible Cathedral: A Walk Through the New Modern," *The New Yorker*, 15 November 2004, p. 106; review of Hiraki Sawa at James Cohan, *The New Yorker*, 29 May 2006, p. 14.
60. Gallagher and Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism*, pp. 7–9. Images often overlooked in discussions of Zen visual culture include those depicting local divinities, secular patrons, and "traditional" Buddhist deities.
61. On the sense of "being there," see Bohrer, *Orientalism and Visual Culture*, p. 2.
62. For sudden/gradual in Chan/Zen and the "two truths," contingent and ultimate, see Sharf, "Whose Zen," p. 41; Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, chap. 2.
63. See Bohrer, *Orientalism and Visual Culture*, p. 3. "Necessary fiction" was suggested to me by Jay Fliegelman, Stanford University.
64. For Wilde's comment on Japan, see "The Decay of Lying: An Observation," in Oscar Wilde, *Intentions* (London: James R. Osgood, McIlvaine and Co., 1891).
65. On the burning of images, see Yukio Lippit's essay in this catalogue.