

## Southwestern Chan: Lineage in Texts and Art of the Dali Kingdom (937–1253)

Megan Bryson

University of Tennessee

In the 1990s John McRae's research took him to the Dali region of Yunnan Province in China's deep southwest. What initially drew him there was a portrait of Shenhui 神會 (684–758) in the 1170s *Fanxiang juan* 梵像卷 (Roll of Buddhist Images), the masterpiece of Dali-kingdom Buddhist art containing images of rulers, arhats, familiar buddhas and bodhisattvas, and wrathful-looking dharma guardians. Shenhui appears in a Chan lineage that extends from Śākyamuni to Indian patriarchs, through the standard six Chinese patriarchs, and finally to figures tied to Sichuan and Yunnan. His inclusion in this lineage, and the inclusion of the Chan lineage in the larger work, raise questions about how Dali-kingdom Buddhists understood Shenhui and the Chan lineage to which he belonged. Unfortunately, McRae only published two short articles on this image of Shenhui that came out long before more sources about Dali-kingdom Buddhism became available. Additional textual sources and better understandings of Dali history now allow us to locate Shenhui's image more precisely within its larger religious landscape.

In this paper I use funerary inscriptions from the Dali kingdom and the sequence of Chan patriarchs in the *Fanxiang juan* to argue that Shenhui's image represented dominant trends in Dali-kingdom Chan, which largely came from Sichuan and favored the works of Zongmi. Moreover, I suggest that while Shenhui—and the entire Chan lineage—in the *Fanxiang juan* was meant to legitimate the Buddhist tradition of the Dali kingdom as a whole, Chan lineages also served as proxies for the ruling Duan kings and the more powerful prime ministers of the Gao clan, who by the twelfth century wielded the real political influence and regularly intermarried with the Duan family. The main sources for Dali-kingdom Chan are the *Fanxiang juan*, which was sponsored by the

emperor Duan Zhixing 段智興 (r. 1172–1199), and an epitaph for his nephew Gao Chengzhong 高成忠 (1149–1214), whose monastic name was Zhiyuan 智元 and who was known posthumously as the “Chan Master of Sudden Awakening” (Dunjue chanshi 頓覺禪師).<sup>1</sup> Finally, Dali-kingdom Chan shows how regional lineages developed beyond political boundaries and how people engaged with different forms of Buddhism, in this case Chan, Huayan, and esoteric teachings.

#### BUDDHISM IN THE DALI KINGDOM

Duan Siping (r. 937–944) founded the Dali kingdom (see fig. 1) after a series of short-lived regimes that filled the vacuum left by the fall of the Nanzhao 南詔 kingdom (649–903). Dali was the last in a series of independent kingdoms based in the Dali region that governed an area encompassing modern-day Yunnan Province as well as parts of Guizhou and Sichuan provinces, Vietnam, Laos, and Burma. Its location on the Southern Silk Road made it a hub for transportation and trade routes linking China, Southeast Asia, India, and Tibet. Dali’s geographic position gave it the potential to draw from each of its neighbors in developing an eclectic regional culture, and many who have studied the Dali kingdom identify elements from Tibet, India, Southeast Asia, China, as well as distinctive local contributions. These multiple sources have received particular attention in studies of Dali-kingdom Buddhism. Each region bordering Dali followed a different form of Buddhism and used a different script, meaning that Dali-kingdom Buddhists had several options for their textual, iconographic, and ritual traditions.

Buddhism has been a natural focus for studies of the Dali kingdom because the vast majority of extant materials from this period are Buddhist images and texts. Scholars generally agree that Buddhism entered Dali through multiple routes, but disagree on the relative importance of different channels. Hou Chong, the leading scholar of Buddhism in the Dali region, sees it as a form of Han Buddhism (Hanchuan fojiao 漢傳佛教) that came primarily from Sichuan; he even rejects widely accepted theories that images of figures such as Acuoye Guanyin 阿嵯耶觀音 (Ajaya, “Invincible,” Avalokiteśvara) arrived in Dali via

1. Gao Chengzhong is also known as Gao Chengzong 成宗. See *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu* 大理國淵公塔之碑銘并序, in *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* 大理丛书：金石篇, ed. Yang Shiyu 杨世钰 and Zhang Shufang 张树芳 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1993), vol. 10 (10).

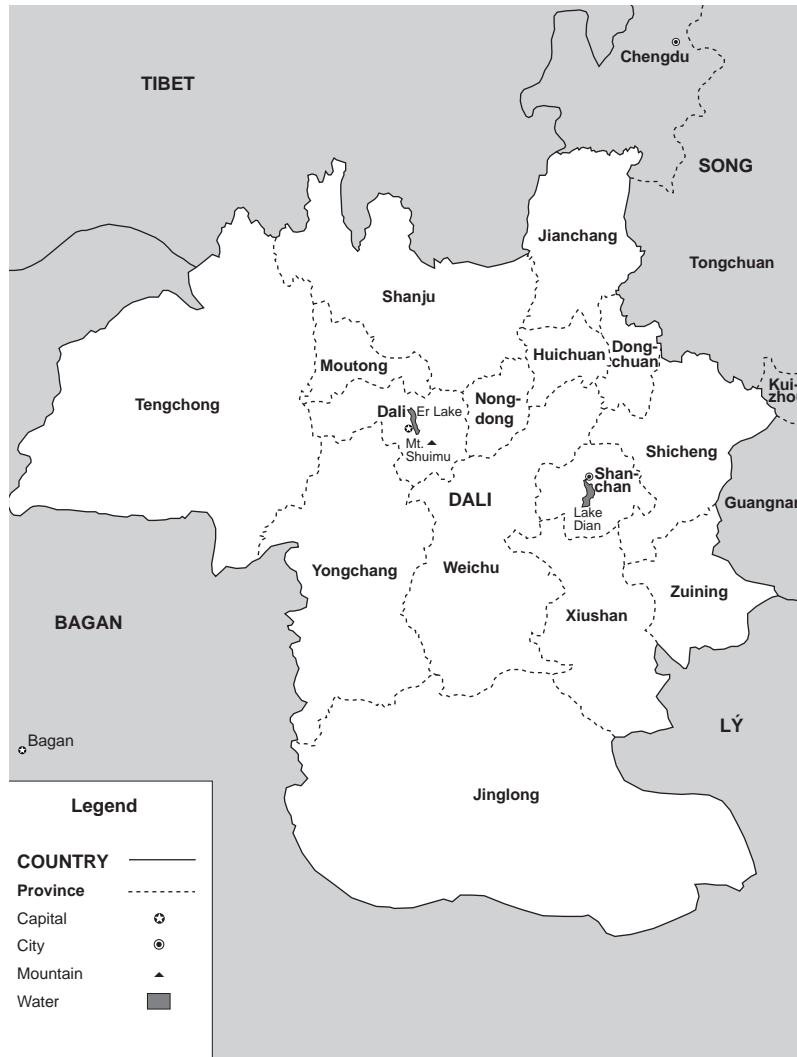


Figure 1. Dali kingdom (latter half).

Southeast Asia.<sup>2</sup> While Hou may overstate the singular importance of Chinese routes in Dali Buddhism, his work has done much to correct anachronistic readings of Dali's history that trace more activity along Indian routes. Many scholars have accepted Ming sources' claims that the esoteric Indian monks, including one known as Candragupta (Ch. Zantuojueduo 贊陀崛多), took leading roles in introducing Buddhism to the Nanzhao kingdom.<sup>3</sup> Though the *Fanxiang juan* does include an image of Candragupta (in the Chan lineage, no less), Hou convincingly argues that later stories about him and similar figures only developed after the fall of the Dali kingdom.<sup>4</sup>

2. Hou Chong 侯冲, *Yunnan yu Ba Shu fojiao yanjiu lungao* 云南与巴蜀佛教研究论稿 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2006), 5. Art historians agree that an Acuoye Guanyin statue probably came to the Nanzhao kingdom from Southeast Asia. See Albert Lutz, ed., *Der Goldschatz der drei Pagoden: buddhistische Kunst des Nanzhao- und Dali-Königreichs in Yunnan, China* (Zürich: Museum Rietberg, 1991), 186. However, they disagree on the source of Acuoye Guanyin's features. For example, Helen Chapin and Li Yumin trace the figure's iconography to Pala territory in northeast India, Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann argued for the central-western Indian region of Mahārāṣṭra or the southern port region of Mahabalipuram, Nandana Chutiwongs posited that the figure developed in Champa, and John Guy locates its origins in Śrīvijaya, Mon, Pyu, and Cham. Helen B. Chapin, "Yünnanese Images of Avalokiteśvara," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 8, no. 2 (Aug. 1944): 182; Li Yumin 李玉珉, "Zhang Shengwen *Fanxiang juan zhi* Guanyin yanjiu" 張勝愷梵像卷之觀音研究, *Dongwu daxue Zhongguo yishushi jikan* 15 (Feb. 1987): 233; Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann, "Notes sur les bronzes du Yunnan représentant Avalokiteśvara," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 14, 3-4 (Dec. 1951): 572; Nandana Chutiwongs, "The Iconography of Avalokiteśvara in Mainland Southeast Asia" (PhD diss., Leiden, 1984), 477-483; John Guy, "The Avalokiteśvara of Yunnan and Some South East Asian Connections," in *South East Asia & China: Art, Interaction & Commerce*, eds. John Guy and Rosemary Scott (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 1995), 64.

3. There are too many examples to list here, but some include Angela F. Howard, "Buddhist Monuments of Yunnan: Eclectic Art of a Frontier Kingdom," in *Arts of the Sung and Yüan*, eds. Maxwell K. Hearn and Judith G. Smith (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 234; Wang Haitao 王海濤, *Yunnan fojiao shi* 云南佛教史 (Kunming: Yunnan meishu chubanshe, 2001), 119-27; and Zhang Xilu 张锡禄, *Dali Baizu fojiao mizong* 大理白族佛教密宗 (Kunming: Yunnan minzu chubanshe, 1999), 215-36.

4. Hou Chong 侯冲, *Baizu xinshi: Bai gu tong ji yanjiu* 白族心史——《白古通记》研究 (Kunming: Yunnan minzu chubanshe, 2002), 261-66.

There is no question that Buddhist images, objects, and people entered Dali from multiple routes, but Dali's position alone does not determine the nature of its Buddhist traditions. Traffic along these different routes was far from uniform, and people in Dali did not equally embrace all that flowed into their territory. Historical interactions, political considerations, and frequency of contact shaped Buddhism in the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms. Even when there was diplomatic or military contact, this did not necessarily translate to the Buddhist realm. For example, Nanzhao had an alliance with Tibet in the second half of the eighth century but there is little evidence that Nanzhao rulers adopted Tibetan Buddhist images, texts, or rituals. Instead, as Hou Chong argues, elites in the Dali region acquired more Buddhist materials from routes linking them to China. This orientation grew out of Chinese regimes' earlier interest in Yunnan for its mineral resources and its potential as a conduit to Southeast Asia, India, and Central Asia. As early as the second century BCE Han Wudi (r. 141–87 BCE) sent the official Zhang Qian to find a route to Bactria through the Dian kingdom, and in 109 BCE the Han dynasty established Yizhou Commandery in what is now the Kunming region.<sup>5</sup> Subsequent Chinese dynasties maintained administrative outposts in Yunnan but did not impose direct rule on the region.

The earliest Buddhist records related to the Dali region reflect the established Chinese presence in Yunnan: images of the buddhas Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna appear on the 698 funerary stele for the Tang (and Zhou) official Wang Renqiu, who spent his career in Dali.<sup>6</sup> The Chinese presence also shaped Dali's textual culture by encouraging local elites to use Sinitic script. As a result, most texts from the Dali kingdom, including Buddhist texts, are written in Sinitic script, and the surviving Sanskrit texts (mostly *dhāraṇī*) also circulated in Song

5. *Shiji* 史記 v. 116, Sima Qian 司馬遷 (d. ca. 86 BCE) (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1981), 2995–7.

6. Wang Renqiu's official title was Hedong Prefect 河東州刺史, and his stele was erected in his hometown of Anning, just west of modern-day Kunming. See *Da Zhou gu Hedong zhou cishi zhi bei* 大周故河東州刺史之碑, *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* 大理丛书：金石篇, eds. Yang Shiyu 杨世钰 and Zhang Shufang 张树芳 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1993), vol. 10, 2–3. For an image of the stele, see Li Kunsheng 李昆声, ed., *Nanzhao Dali guo diaoke huihua yishu* 南诏大理国雕刻绘画艺术 (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe and Yunnan meishu chubanshe, 1999), 48.

China. Despite Dali's greater proximity to India, it does not appear that Dali Buddhists used Sanskrit more than their Chinese counterparts.

Most extant Buddhist texts from the Dali kingdom entered the region from Tang-Song territory. These include familiar sūtras and commentaries such as the *Diamond*, *Lotus*, and *Vimalakīrti* sūtras, as well as commentaries on the *Yuanjue jing* and *Huayan jing* (Skt. *Avatamsaka sūtra*). Aside from these, seven texts from the Dali kingdom or earlier have only been found in this region.<sup>7</sup> All seven were found at Fazang si 法藏寺, family temple of the Dong 董 clan that served as national preceptors in the Dali kingdom. One of these texts is a 908 subcommentary on Amoghavajra's version of the *Renwang huguo boreboluomiduo jing* 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經 (hereafter *Renwang jing*; Prajñāparamitā Scripture for Benevolent Kings to Protect Their Countries) titled *Huguo sinan chao* 護國司南鈔 (Compass for Protecting the Country Subcommentary). The remaining six texts are ritual manuals that draw heavily on esoteric texts translated or composed in the Tang dynasty, as well as food distribution (*shishi* 施食) ritual practices that probably came to Dali from Sichuan, which was a regional center of this tradition.<sup>8</sup> More research remains to be done on many of these texts, particularly the *Zhu fo pusa jingang deng qiqing yigui* 諸佛菩薩金剛等啟請儀軌 (Rituals for Inviting Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Vajra Beings, Etc.) and *Jingang daguanding daochang yi* 金剛大灌頂道場儀 (Ritual of the Bodhimaṇḍa of the Great Vajra Consecration), which have a more pronounced esoteric bent. However, as a whole they rely on identifiable texts and practices from Tang through Song China.

In addition to these scriptures and commentaries, Dali-kingdom inscriptions quote Buddhist texts as well as Chinese classics such as the

7. For a detailed account of Dali-kingdom Buddhist texts, see Hou Chong 侯冲, "Dali guo xiejing yanjiu" 大理国写经研究, *Minzu xuebao* (2006 no. 4). These texts have been reproduced (though not with high quality) in the five volumes of *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* 大理丛书：大藏经篇, eds. Yang Shiyu 杨世钰, Zhao Yinsong 赵寅松, and Guo Huiqing 郭惠青 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2008).

8. For example, the *Tongyong qiqing yigui* 通用啟請儀軌 (Invitation Rituals for General Use) quotes from thirteen texts composed or translated in the Tang dynasty, and the *Wuzhe dengshi fahui yi* 無遮燈食法會儀 (Ritual of the Bodhimaṇḍa of Unrestricted Light and Food) and *Guangshi wuzhe daochang yi* 廣施無遮道場儀 (Ritual of the Bodhimaṇḍa of Widely Offering Without Restrictions) center on food distribution rituals.

*Yijing* (Book of Changes), *Mengzi* (Mencius), *Daode jing* (Classic on the Way and Its Virtue), and *Lunyu* (Analects).<sup>9</sup> Dali-kingdom ruling elites appear to have followed their Nanzhao predecessors in embracing classical Chinese education: Nanzhao elites sent their sons to school in Chengdu and Nanzhao troops raided the city to acquire skilled labor and other resources.<sup>10</sup> Song records recount how representatives of the Dali court sought to trade their prized horses for Chinese texts, including the *Wujing guangzhu* 五經廣注 (Extensively Annotated Five Classics), *Wuzang lun* 五藏論 (Treatise on the Five Viscera), and *Sanshi jiazhu* 三史加注 (Annotated Three Histories).<sup>11</sup>

Elites in the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms, like their counterparts elsewhere in East Asia, embraced Sinitic script and classical Chinese learning, and acquired most of their Buddhist texts from the Tang and Song. Through a text-centric lens it would appear that Dali Buddhism developed solely through the channels connecting the Dali region to the north and east. However, a slightly different picture emerges when we consider visual materials. It is true that the styles of Dali-kingdom Buddhist art and architecture drew on Tang and Song conventions: art historians agree that Zhang Shengwen 張勝溫, the painter in charge of the *Fanxiang juan*, was trained in Chinese techniques, and the Buddhist carvings at Shibao shan 石寶山 followed Tang and Song models.<sup>12</sup>

9. This is especially apparent in funerary inscriptions for members of the Gao family. See *Hufa Ming gong deyun beizan* 護法明公德運碑贊, in *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* 大理丛书：金石篇, eds. Yang Shiyu 杨世钰 and Zhang Shufang 张树芳 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1993), vol. 10, 57–58; *Dali guo gu Gao ji muming bei* 大理國故高姬墓銘碑, in *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* vol. 10, 11; and *Xingbao si dehua ming bing xu* 興寶寺德化銘並序, in *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* vol. 10, 7–8.

10. *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1981), vol. 222b, 6281–2; vol. 215a, 6027; *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Taipei: Minglun chubanshe, 1975), vol. 249, 8078.

11. *Gui hai yuheng zhi* 桂海虞衡志, Fan Chengda 范成大 (late twelfth century), in *Yunnan shiliao congkan* 云南史料丛刊 vol. 2, ed. Fang Guoyu 方国瑜 (Kunming: Yunnan daxue chubanshe, 1998), 232. The same anecdote is summarized in the *Song shi* 宋史 v. 198, Toqto'a, a.k.a. Tuotuo 脫脫 (1314–55) (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1980), 4956.

12. Matsumoto argues that the *Fanxiang juan* artists drew primarily on Song styles, rejecting Helen B. Chapin's conclusion that the painting followed Tang models. Moritaka Matsumoto, "Chang Sheng-wen's Long Roll of Buddhist Images: A Reconstruction and Iconology" (PhD diss., Princeton University,

Dali's ninth-century Qianxun ta 千尋塔 (Thousand-League Pagoda) also resembles Xi'an's eighth-century Xiaoyan ta 小雁塔 (Small Goose Pagoda).<sup>13</sup> However, the iconographies of several Nanzhao- and Dali-kingdom Buddhist figures do not resemble their Tang-Song counterparts.

Chief among these figures is Acuoye Guanyin, whose adornments and lithe form suggest stronger ties to Southeast Asia than to Tang-Song China.<sup>14</sup> Acuoye Guanyin plays a central role in the 899 *Nanzhao tuzhuan* 南詔圖傳 (Illustrated History of Nanzhao) as the bodhisattva who introduces Buddhism to the Dali region and confers a royal mandate on the first Nanzhao kings.<sup>15</sup> Dali-kingdom rulers also embraced Acuoye Guanyin as a guardian of their regime, as shown by reproductions of *Nanzhao tuzhuan* scenes in the *Fanxiang juan* as well as bronze statues of the bodhisattva sponsored by the Duan family.<sup>16</sup> Though Acuoye Guanyin probably came to Dali via Southeast Asia, the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* and *Fanxiang juan* present the bodhisattva as an Indian figure who has come from the western regions and takes the form of an Indian monk. I suspect that Nanzhao- and Dali-kingdom rulers took Acuoye Guanyin as a tutelary deity in part because of his Indian image, which conferred authenticity on Dali Buddhism. Another example of this appears in the worship of Mahākāla, whose many Dali-kingdom images resemble Indian statues of the god more than depic-

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1976), 355–56. Li Yumin, “Zhang Shengwen *Fanxiang juan* zhi Guanyin yanjiu,” 244; “Nanzhao Dali fojiao diaoke chutan” 南詔大理佛教雕刻初探, in *Yunnan Dali fojiao lunwen ji* 雲南大理佛教論文集, ed. Lan Jifu 藍吉富 (Gaoxiang: Foguang chubanshe, 1991), 367.

13. Fang Guoyu 方國瑜, “Dali Chongsheng si ta kaoshuo” 大理崇聖寺塔考說, *Sixiang zhanxian* (1978 no. 6), 51.

14. See note 1 above.

15. Li Lin-ts'an 李霖燦, *Nanzhao Dali guo xin ziliao de zonghe yanjiu* 南詔大理國新資料的綜合研究 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1982), 140–50.

16. Frames 58, 86, 99, and 101 of the *Fanxiang juan* depict scenes from the *Nanzhao tuzhuan*. See Li Lin-ts'an, *Nanzhao Dali guo xin ziliao de zonghe yanjiu*, 97, 106, 110–11. One bronze Acuoye Guanyin statue sponsored by the Duan family is currently held in the San Diego Museum of Art. It has an inscription stating that the Dali ruler Duan Zhengxing 段正興 (r. 1147–71) sponsored the image on behalf of his sons, the princes Duan Yizhang Xing 段易長興 and Duan Yizhang Sheng 段易長生. Duan Yizhang Xing is none other than Duan Zhixing, sponsor of the *Fanxiang juan*. Images of the statue and inscription are reproduced in Li Lin-ts'an, *Nanzhao Dali guo xin ziliao de zonghe yanjiu*, 70–73.



tions in Dunhuang and Japan. I have argued elsewhere that Dali rulers embraced Mahākāla for his Indian appearance and relative obscurity in Tang-Song Buddhism, even though textual sources for his worship came from China.<sup>17</sup>

Elite Dali-kingdom Buddhists drew from multiple sources in developing a tradition that could, among other things, support their right to rule. Esoteric Buddhism in particular offered techniques for rulers to identify with powerful, enlightened beings.<sup>18</sup> One of these techniques was the *abhiṣeka* (Ch. *guanding* 灌頂) consecration rite modeled on royal coronation in which the practitioner became one with a deity.<sup>19</sup> The end of the *Nanzhao tuzhuan*'s illustrations featured an *abhiṣeka* rite in its scene of the penultimate Nanzhao ruler Meng Longshun 蒙隆舜 (who also went by the title Mahārāja) standing in a devotional posture before a statue of Acuoye Guanyin. Two attendants holding vases stand behind the ruler, who is barefoot and dressed only in a *dhoti*, far different from the standard tall crown and robe worn by Nanzhao kings.<sup>20</sup> According to the corresponding text, “the emperor was sprinkled by the basin in the ninth year of Cuoye [897], *dingsi* annum.”<sup>21</sup> In addition to this example, the Dali-kingdom *Jingang daguanding daochang yi* also centers on the esoteric *abhiṣeka*, suggesting that the ritual remained important in court Buddhism.

*Abhiṣeka* was not just a rite for individual empowerment, but part of the state-protecting system of esoteric Buddhism the Indian monk Amoghavajra promoted in Tang China.<sup>22</sup> Dali rulers looked to Amoghavajra's version of the *Renwang jing* for its models of esoteric Buddhist kingship. Two copies of this text were found at Fazang si along with the *Huguo sinan chao* subcommentary, and the *Fanxiang juan* includes a “country-protecting precious pillar” (*huguo baochuang* 護國瑤幢) right before its final scene of sixteen kings that is also based on the

17. See Megan Bryson, “Mahākāla Worship in the Dali Kingdom (937–1253): A Study of the *Dahei tianshen daochang yi*,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 35, nos. 1–2 (2012 [2013]), 19, 25–27.

18. Ronald M. Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 121.

19. *Ibid.*, 123–31. Charles D. Orzech, “On the Subject of *Abhiṣeka*,” *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ser., no. 13 (Fall 2011), 117.

20. Li Lin-ts'an, *Nanzhao Dali guo xin ziliao de zonghe yanjiu*, 137.

21. *Ibid.*, 150.

22. Orzech, “On the Subject of *Abhiṣeka*,” 113.

*Renwang jing*.<sup>23</sup> As Charles Orzech has shown, Amoghavajra's *Renwang jing* presented state protection and awakening as interdependent processes, and championed the esoteric *ācārya* (preceptor) as advisor to the emperor.<sup>24</sup> *Ācāryas'* importance in Dali court Buddhism probably stemmed from the *Renwang jing's* popularity among the ruling elites.<sup>25</sup>

Buddhists in the Tang through Song dynasties adapted esoteric Buddhism to their Chinese milieu, but the Brahmanical background of esoteric ritual and the wrathful, muscle-bound deities of the esoteric pantheon meant that in China this form of Buddhism retained closer associations with the “exotic” power of India.<sup>26</sup> Dali-kingdom ruling elites mobilized this power by claiming a direct Indian source for their Buddhist transmission through Acuoye Guanyin, and by presenting an overall Indian image for their Buddhist tradition. Though this conflicts with the historical record, which shows stronger ties to

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23. Li Lin-ts'an, *ibid.*, 121–23. Other texts only known in Dali-kingdom Buddhism have connections to the *Renwang jing*: the *Dahei tianshen daochang yi* 大黑天神道場儀 (Rituals for the *Bodhimaṇḍa* of the God Mahākāla) uses a title from Amoghavajra's *Renwang jing*, and the *Zhu fo pusa jingang deng qiqing yigui* reproduces a diagram described in the ritual text *Renwang huguo boreboluomiduo jing tuoluoni niansong yigui*, T. 994p519b1–17. See *Dahei tianshen daochang yi*, in *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* 大理丛书：大藏经篇, eds. Yang Shiyu 杨世钰 and Zhao Yinsong 赵寅松 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2008), vol. 1, 426; *Zhu fo pusa jingang deng qiqing yigui*, in *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* vol. 2, 125.

24. Charles D. Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 170, 174.

25. For example, a 1233 copy of fascicle 41 of the *Dabore boluomiduo jing* 大般若波羅蜜多經 (Skt. *Mahā-prajñā-pāramitā sūtra*) lists the “Dali Kingdom Consecration Great *Ācārya* Zhao Taisheng” (*Dali guo guanding da azuoli Zhao Taisheng* 大理國灌頂大阿左梨趙泰升) and “Consecration *Ācārya* Shi Zhisheng” (*Guanding azuoli Shi Zhisheng* 灌頂阿左梨釋智生) as sponsors of the text; and the Dali-era epitaph for the monk Xi Zhi 溪智 claims that his ancestor served as an *ācārya* under the Dachanghe 大長和 kingdom (903–927). *Dabore boluomiduo jing juan sishiyi* 大般若波羅蜜多經卷四十一, in *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* vol. 2, 357, 438; *Gu Xi shi yi yue Xiangxing yide lüjie dashi muzhi bing xu* 故溪氏謚曰襄行宜德履戒大師墓誌並敘, in *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* vol. 10, 11.

26. Marc S. Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 72–75.

Tang-Song territory, it fits the Dali kingdom's geopolitical position. Dali elites could not compete in the realm of Chinese culture, but their greater proximity to India meant they could claim a closer connection to Buddhism's source.<sup>27</sup> This explains why Dali-kingdom rulers would embrace Acuoye Guanyin, Mahākāla, and the esoteric ritual program, but raises questions about why the *Fanxiang juan* and funerary inscriptions would include a Chan lineage that entered Yunnan from Sichuan. The answers lie in the Dali-kingdom materials' specific lineage claims, changing attitudes toward India in Song Buddhism, and internal power relations among the Duan and Gao families.

RE-EXAMINING SHENHUI'S PORTRAIT:  
CHAN LINEAGE IN THE *FANXIANG JUAN*

The Chan lineage in the *Fanxiang juan* consists of sixteen figures ranging from Mahākāśyapa in frame 42 to an unidentified monk in frame 57; it mirrors the set of sixteen arhats in frames 23 through 38.<sup>28</sup> Both sets begin with the figure of Śākyamuni in frame 40: the buddha sits in the center of a white lotus, and a gold thread extends from a symbol on his chest through the same symbol on each lotus petal, and finally to the heart of the Mahārāja Meng Longshun, who kneels in the lower

27. Megan Bryson, "The Transformations of Baijie Shengfei: Gender and Ethnicity in Chinese Religion" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2010), 87.

28. Matsumoto includes frame 58 (Indian Monk Guanshiyin Bodhisattva) in the lineage, too, while Li Yumin argues that this would ruin the symmetry of the arhat and patriarch sequences. Indian Monk Guanshiyin is one of the images that draws directly on the *Nanzhao tuzhuan*, in this case depicting a scene in which the wives of the first two Nanzhao rulers offer food to the Indian monk who is an avatar of Acuoye Guanyin. Li would place Indian Monk Guanshiyin with other images of the bodhisattva based on the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* (frames 86, 99, 101), but the size of the figures in frame 58 and the bodhisattva's aureole fit the Chan lineage better than these later sequences. At the same time, Indian Monk Guanshiyin has golden skin and clouds or smoke emanating from his head that distinguish him from the other figures in the sequence. I read him as a transitional figure that is possibly out of place, but which thematically ties the Chan lineage to later images of Guanyin based on the *Nanzhao tuzhuan*. Matsumoto, "Chang Shengwen's Long Roll of Buddhist Images," 194–96; Li, "Fanxiang juan Shijia fohui, luohan, ji zushi xiang zhi yanjiu," 203.

left corner of frame 41.<sup>29</sup> Another small figure, Mahākaśyapa holding a robe, appears below Śākyamuni in frame 40; the larger Mahākaśyapa in frame 42 holds the same robe. Ānanda follows in frame 43, but the Indian lineage then jumps to Bodhidharma in frame 44. Frames 45 through 49 depict the standard set of six Chinese patriarchs from Huike to Huineng, each with distinctive facial features, and each transmitting the robe to the next patriarch.

Starting with Shenhui in frame 50 we are on less familiar ground. Shenhui first appears in frame 49 as Huineng's disciple. As Huineng teaches, the young Shenhui wears an anxious expression; the sixth patriarch's robe lies in a gold tray on a small table. The Shenhui in frame 50 is an old man whose lined face bears a gentle expression (as McRae remarks, this image of Shenhui clearly diverges from Hu Shi's "firebrand").<sup>30</sup> He sits with his legs folded under him and holds a *ruyi* scepter. Unlike most of the other patriarchs in the lineage whose disciples stand beside or in front of them, Shenhui's disciple stands behind his chair. Frame 50 also marks the first scene since Ānanda that does not include the robe.

Chan monks and other figures from the southwest follow Shenhui. Frame 51 features "Heshang (monk) Zhang Weizhong 和尚張惟忠," a monk from Chengdu whom Song records connected to both the famous Heze 荷澤 Shenhui and Jingzhong 淨眾 Shenhui (720–794) of Sichuan. He is followed by the layman Xianzhe (Worthy) Mai Chuncuo 賢者買純嵯, and the monks Chuntuo Dashi 純陁大師 and Faguang Heshang 法光和尚 in frames 52 through 54 (see fig. 2). These appear to be Buddhist figures from the Dali region who would have lived during the Nanzhao kingdom, but the only information about them comes from Ming sources. Except for frame 52, where the kneeling disciple Chuntuo holds the dharma robe while Mai Chuncuo sits in a chair, these images do not include the robe as a sign of transmission. Frame 55 brings back the Mahārāja of frame 41 in an identical posture, and recalls the Mahārāja's image in the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* through the two

29. McRae noted that the character *wang* 王, "king," appears within this symbol, which could relate to the Mahārāja's royal status. However, I have seen no conclusive explanations of this symbol. John R. McRae, "The Portrait of Shen-hui (684–758): Hagiography and Politics in the Nan-chao/Ta-li Kingdom," in *Contacts between Cultures. East Asia: History and Social Sciences, Volume 4*, ed. Bernard Hung-Kay Luk (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1992), 76.

30. *Ibid.*, 79.



**Figure 2.** Zhang Weizhong (L) and Shenhui (R) in frames 52 and 51 of the Fanxiang juan. The Collection of National Palace Museum.

attendants standing behind the *dhoti*-clad ruler. The Mahārāja and the monk Faguang of frame 54 sit facing each other, and neither interacts with any other teachers or disciples, suggesting that the Mahārāja studied with Faguang. The final two figures in the sequence are the Indian monk Candragupta in frame 56 and a Chan monk in frame 57 whose name has become illegible. There are two smaller figures in each frame who could be students or devotees, but who in any case differ from the single disciples that appear in frames 44–53.

The entire Chan lineage in the *Fanxiang juan* makes us ask why rulers who otherwise emphasize the direct Indian source of their Buddhist tradition would invoke a line of transmission from Chinese territory. The set of figures from Shenhui through the mystery monk in frame 53 raises several additional questions: Why does a twelfth-century Chan lineage include Shenhui as the seventh patriarch? What does the Mahārāja's inclusion in this lineage say about the relationship between statecraft and Chan in the Dali kingdom? Why does the Indian esoteric monk Candragupta, who is shown with a conch shell and vajra implements, appear alongside these Chan masters?

Of these questions, that of why Shenhui's image appears in the *Fanxiang juan* has received the most scholarly attention. Yanagida Seizan read this Shenhui as a dual figure that signified both Heze Shenhui and Jingzhong Shenhui. He argued that the *Fanxiang juan* artists depicted Heze Shenhui due to his importance in the short-lived

Bao Tang 保唐 Chan school based in Sichuan, but that the subsequent figure in the lineage, Zhang Weizhong, actually studied with Jingzhong Shenhui. Yanagida further pointed out that Jingzhong Shenhui and Zhang Weizhong were connected to Wei Gao 韋皋 (d. 805), the Tang official who brokered a peace treaty between Tang and Nanzhao in the 790s.<sup>31</sup> He hypothesized that Wei Gao introduced Sichuanese Chan to Nanzhao at this time, such that Nanzhao Buddhists followed the lineage of Zhang Weizhong and the double Shenhuis. Perhaps Bao Tang influence explains the *Fanxiang juan*'s emphasis on transmitting the dharma robe and Heze Shenhui, both of which feature prominently in the eighth-century Bao Tang *Lidai fabao ji* 歷代法寶記 (Record of the Dharma-Jewel through the Ages).<sup>32</sup> However, the inclusion of these themes in the *Fanxiang juan* does not necessarily reflect Bao Tang influence: the Sichuan native Guifeng Zongmi 圭峰宗密 (780–841) rejected Bao Tang lineage claims, located himself in the lineage of Heze Shenhui and Zhang Weizhong, and presented Shenhui as the seventh patriarch

31. Yanagida Seizan 柳田聖山, "Jinne no shōzō" 神会の肖像, *Zen bunka kenkyūjo kiyō* 禪文化研究所紀要 15 (Dec. 1988), 237–42; *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1981), vol. 197, 5282–84.

32. Yanagida, *ibid.*, 234; Wendi L. Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission: On an Early Chan History and Its Contexts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 157–58.

and Huineng's true heir. As I discuss below, some of Zongmi's works were known in the Dali kingdom, which means that his vision of Chan lineage could have been known there, too.<sup>33</sup>

The close connections between Nanzhao and Sichuan, especially Chengdu, support the theory that Nanzhao elites encountered Chan traditions associated with Bao Tang and Jingzhong. As Luo Zhao has observed, an episode in the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* offers additional evidence for this.<sup>34</sup> The Korean monk Musang 無相 (684–762; Ch. Wuxiang), who had the natal surname Kim (Ch. Jin 金), was understood to have founded Jingzhong Chan and was also taken as a patriarch of the Bao Tang school.<sup>35</sup> According to the *Nanzhao tuzhuan*, in 819 a Nanzhao delegation in Yizhou 益州 (the Chengdu region) encountered a monk named Kim (Ch. Jin heshang 金和尚), who explained to them that, contrary to Tang rumors, it was not the pilgrim Xuanzang who introduced Buddhism to Nanzhao, but Lotus-Family Acuoye Guanyin of the western regions.<sup>36</sup> Though the dates do not match, by the time the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* was created in 899 Musang had become a legendary figure. Based on Nanzhao's proximity to Chengdu, it is entirely possible that the Monk Kim of the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* was none other than the Musang associated with Jingzhong and Bao Tang Chan.

Shenhui's image in the *Fanxiangjuan* thus ties the mainstream Chan lineage to the Jingzhong and Bao Tang Chan lineages of Sichuan, and finally to Chan figures of the Dali region. Unfortunately, these Nanzhao-era Chan figures do not appear in any sources from the Nanzhao or Dali kingdoms, so frames 52 through 54 are difficult to analyze in terms of their historical significance. Accounts of two figures in the Wanli-era (1572–1620) *Yunnan tongzhi* 雲南通志 (Comprehensive Gazetteer of Yunnan) might correspond to Mai Chuncuo and Chuntuo, but these

33. Peter N. Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 35.

34. Luo Zhao 罗昭, "Dali Chongsheng si Qianxun ta yu Jianji dazhong zhi mijiao tuxiang: jiantan Nanzhao tuzhuan dui lishi de cuangai" 大理崇圣寺千寻塔与建极大钟之密教图像——兼谈《南诏图传》对历史的篡改, in *Dali minzu wenhua yanjiu luncong* 大理民族文化研究论丛, vol. 1, ed. Zhao Huai ren 赵怀仁 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2004), 476.

35. Wendi L. Adamek, "Robes Purple and Gold: Transmission of the Robe in the 'Lidai fabao ji' (Record of the Dharma-Jewel through the Ages)," *History of Religions* 40, no. 1 (Aug. 2000), 60.

36. Li Lin-ts'an, *Nanzhao Dali guo xin ziliao de zonghe yanjiu*, 145.

identifications are tentative.<sup>37</sup> The Mahārāja in frame 55, however, is a familiar figure that brings us clearly into the realm of Buddhism and statecraft, suggesting political dimensions to the preceding Chan lineage.

Understanding the Mahārāja's role in this sequence requires understanding whether the sequence still follows its original order. Matsumoto argues that frames 56 and 57 belong between frames 51 and 52, which would make the lineage culminate with the Mahārāja (followed by Indian Monk Guanshiyin in frame 58). He justifies this on the basis of historical sequence, claiming that the dates of Candragupta and the mystery monk following him fall between those of Zhang Weizhong and Mai Chuncuo, and argues that the pairing of Mahārāja and Indian Monk Guanyin is appropriate because of their relationship in the *Nanzhao tuzhuan*.<sup>38</sup> Matsumoto also notes that the backgrounds of frames 55 and 56 do not match and sees this as another sign of their incorrect placement. However, Li Yumin offers a convincing critique of this rationale by showing that mismatched backgrounds in themselves do not prove the sequence is out of order.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, the dates that Matsumoto uses for these figures come from unreliable later sources.

If the Mahārāja is in his proper place, what does this placement mean? In the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* he venerated Acuoye Guanyin in an esoteric mode, but in this sequence of the *Fanxiang juan* he appears first

37. The Wanli-era *Yunnan tongzhi* includes an entry for Zhang Weizhong, who is followed by “Worthy Li” (Li xianzhe 李賢者), whose given name of Maishun 買順 has led some scholars to identify him with the “Worthy Mai Chuncuo” of the *Fanxiang juan*. Scholars have also identified the subsequent figure “Dhūta Shi” (Shi toutuo 施頭陀) as Chuntuo of the *Fanxiang juan*. The lineage in the *Yunnan tongzhi* also includes figures from Gao Chengzhong's funerary inscription, which I discuss below. [Wanli] *Yunnan tongzhi* [萬曆]雲南通志, ed. Li Yuanyang 李元陽, in *Dali congshu: fangzhi pian* 大理丛书：方志篇, eds. Yang Shiyu 杨世钰 and Zhao Yinsong 赵寅松 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2007), vol. 1, 503. Li Yumin 李玉珉, “*Fanxiang juan* Shijia fohui, luohan ji zushi xiang zhi yanjiu” 梵像卷釋迦佛會、羅漢及祖師像之研究, *Zhonghua minguo jianguo bashinian yishu wenwu taolunhui* 中華民國建國八十年藝術文物討論會 (1992), 208–9; Yang Xiaodong 杨晓东, “Zhang Shengwen *Fanxiang juan* shu kao” 张胜温《梵像卷》述考, *Meishu shi yanjiu* no. 2 (1990), 66; Nie Geming 聂葛明 and Wei Yufan 魏玉凡, “Dali guo Gao shi jiazhu he Shuimu shan fojiao” 大理国高氏家族和水目山佛教, *Dali xueyuan xuebao* 14, no. 3 (March 2015): 8.

38. Matsumoto, “Chang Sheng-wen's Long Roll of Buddhist Images,” 194–96.

39. Li, “*Fanxiang juan* Shijia fohui, luohan, ji zushi xiang zhi yanjiu,” 203.



receiving a transmission directly from Śākyamuni, then as a student of Faguang. However, the esoteric monk Candragupta directly follows the Mahārāja, and frame 58 draws on the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* in its figure of Indian Monk Guanshiyin. Li Yumin, who does not consider Indian Monk Guanshiyin part of this sequence, reads the Mahārāja as a Chan patriarch who is followed by two important figures from Nanzhao Buddhism, but not specifically Chan.<sup>40</sup> I see the Mahārāja instead as a pivotal figure who inherited both the Chan transmission that started in India, went through Tang China, and culminated in Nanzhao, as well as the esoteric transmission that Candragupta introduced directly from India. His inclusion at the very beginning of the Chan lineage signifies his connection to Śākyamuni's awakening: though spatially and temporally distant, their minds are one.<sup>41</sup> Through the Mahārāja, the Dali region becomes a Buddhist center, and the regimes based in Dali become Buddhist kingdoms.

John McRae interpreted the Mahārāja's inclusion in the *Fanxiang juan*'s Chan lineage as evidence of Longshun's political savvy in looking to China as well as India for Buddhist legitimation.<sup>42</sup> Including the Mahārāja in this lineage certainly mobilizes Chan transmission for political legitimation, but for Duan Zhixing of the Dali kingdom rather than the Mahārāja himself. Like many other Chan works from the Song period, the *Fanxiang juan* lineage is a retroactive reconstruction that reflects twelfth-century concerns more than eighth- or ninth-century concerns. While it might offer clues into Nanzhao-Tang Chan history, it is still a product of the Dali kingdom. The question then becomes, "How did this lineage of Tang and Nanzhao Chan figures, including the Mahārāja, legitimate Dali-kingdom rulers such as Duan Zhixing?"

First, the *Fanxiang juan* presents Dali-kingdom rulers as heirs to Nanzhao's Buddhist mandate, so for the Mahārāja to belong to a Chan lineage signifies continuity of that lineage to the later rulers of the Dali kingdom. Second, by the Southern Song (1127–1279) Chan had become a dominant form of Buddhism in China's elite culture, and Chan lineages proliferated that tied Song figures to their mythologized Tang predecessors. By claiming their own Chan lineage, Dali-kingdom Buddhists participated in contemporary trends in Sinitic Buddhism.

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40. *Ibid.*, 210–11.

41. McRae, "The Portrait of Shen-hui (684–758)," 80.

42. *Ibid.*, 78–79.

Finally, Dali-kingdom elites married Chan and esoteric Buddhism in a way that echoes in the *Fanxiang juan*'s inclusion of the Mahārāja and Candragupta alongside Bodhidharma and Shenhui. This last feature probably developed in Nanzhao Buddhism, but our only sources for it come from the Dali kingdom.

The *Fanxiang juan*'s Chan lineage shows how Dali-kingdom Buddhists used the double image of Shenhui to connect themselves to the mainstream Chan lineage of the six patriarchs and the regional traditions of Jingzhong and Bao Tang Chan. Other sources from the latter part of the Dali kingdom provide additional support for Sichuan's importance in Dali Chan, for the esoteric-Chan synthesis, and for the political dimensions of Chan lineage claims. For this, we turn to Zhiyuan's funerary inscription and related texts about the illustrious Gao family.

“CHAN MASTER OF SUDDEN AWAKENING”:

LINEAGE AND LEGITIMACY IN THE DUAN AND GAO CLANS

The relationship between the Duan royal house and the Gao clan resembles the well known ties between the Japanese imperial family and the Fujiwara clan during the Heian period. Duan rulers regularly married Gao women, and by the end of the Dali kingdom the Gao prime ministers wielded more real power than the Duan emperors. In 1094 Gao Shengtai 高昇泰 even established his own regime, the Great Central Kingdom (Dazhongguo 大中國), but it only lasted until his death in the following year.<sup>43</sup> Most surviving inscriptions from the Dali kingdom date to this latter period and concern members of the Gao family, including Zhiyuan, himself an imperial relation.

Members of the Gao family, like the Duan rulers, were tied to important Buddhist temples, statues, texts, and other such projects during the Dali kingdom. Among these was an 1118 copy of the *Vimalakīrti sūtra* that Gao Shengtai's son Gao Taiming 高泰明 (a.k.a. Gao Guanyin Ming 高觀音明) sponsored and gave to Song envoys; a twelfth-century *dhāraṇī* pillar that Prime Minister Yuan Douguang sponsored on behalf of Gao Taiming's son, General Gao Mingsheng 高明生; and Xingbao si 興寶寺, which Gao Taiming's great-grandson Gao Yucheng Guang 高

43. *Yunnan zhilue* 雲南志略, Li Jing 李京 (Yuan), in *Yunnan shiliao congkan* 云南史料丛刊, ed. Fang Guoyu 方国瑜 (Kunming: Yunnan daxue chubanshe, 1998), vol. 3, 127.

踰城光 had built in 1186.<sup>44</sup> Gao nomenclature, like that of Dali's Duan rulers, followed the patronymic linkage system (also used earlier by Nanzhao rulers) in which the son's given name starts with the last character of the father's given name. In addition, Gao names followed the widespread Dali-kingdom practice of inserting Buddhist terms between the family name and given name, as seen in the above examples of Gao Guanyin Ming and Gao Yucheng Guang.

Zhiyuan (a.k.a. Gao Chengzhong) belonged to the same generation as Gao Yucheng Guang, so he was also the great-grandson of Gao Taiming. Zhiyuan's father, Gao Liangcheng 量成, may have been the same figure as Gao Miaoyin Hu 妙音護, husband of the imperial princess Duan Yizhang Shun 段易長順, herself the sister of Duan Zhixing (who also went by Duan Yizhang Xing).<sup>45</sup> Regardless of whether Zhiyuan's mother was Duan Yizhang Shun or another imperial princess, his maternal uncle was certainly Duan Zhixing, sponsor of the *Fanxiang juan*. This is made clear in Zhiyuan's 1220 funerary inscription *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu* 大理國淵公塔之碑銘并序 (Stele Inscription and Preface for the Pagoda of Duke Yuan of the Dali Kingdom).

44. This *Vimalakīrti sūtra* is currently held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Li Lin-ts'an explains its background and reproduces its frontispiece and colophon in *Nanzhao Dali guo xin ziliao de zonghe yanjiu*, 19–21. For the connection between the Gao family and the *dhāraṇī* pillar, see Angela F. Howard, "The *Dhāraṇī* Pillar of Kunming, Yunnan: A Legacy of Esoteric Buddhism and Burial Rites of the Bai People in the Kingdom of Dali (937–1253)," *Artibus Asiae* 57, nos. 1–2 (1997): 35–36. Gao Yucheng Guang's ancestry and construction of Xingbao si is recounted in *Xingbao si dehua ming bing xu*, 7–8.

45. The funerary inscription explicitly states that Gao Chengzhong's mother was an imperial princess and that his father was Gao Liangcheng, who was known as the Dharma-Protecting Duke (Hufa gong 護法公). It also identifies the Lizhen Emperor (Duan Zhixing) as his uncle. *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu* 大理國淵公塔之碑銘并序, 10. From other inscriptions we know that a Gao Miaoyin Hu was married to Duan Yizhang Shun and participated in Buddhist projects. *Dali guo gu Gao ji muming bei*, 11; *Dali guo Shi shi Jiejing jianhui Gaoxing lanruo zhuanzhu bei* 大理國釋氏戒淨建繪高興蘭若篆燭碑, in *Dali congshu: jinshi pian* vol. 10, 9–10. While sources do not explicitly identify Gao Liangcheng and Gao Miaoyin Hu as the same person, and while it is possible that Gao Chengzhong's mother was a different imperial princess than Duan Yizhang Shun, the shared *hu* 護 character in the titles Dharma-Protecting Duke and Miaoyin Hu hint at this identification.

The funerary inscription was written six years after Zhiyuan's death, when the emperor had given him the posthumous title "Chan Master of Sudden Awakening."<sup>46</sup> Nothing is known about its author, Zhao You 趙佑 of Chuzhou 楚州, other than what the text indicates about his knowledge base.<sup>47</sup> The stele was located in Shuimu si 水目寺 on Mt. Shuimu, a few dozen miles southeast of Dali proper in what is now Xiangyun County. Mt. Shuimu is probably the mountain to which Zhiyuan retired in 1200 after falling ill.<sup>48</sup> Later records describe Shuimu si as a Chan site, and from Zhiyuan's epitaph we know that this association began at least as early as the Dali kingdom.<sup>49</sup>

Zhiyuan's funerary inscription emphasizes the glory of both his natal lineage and his Chan lineage. Of the former, it states:

Our Duke Yuan [i.e., Zhiyuan] followed his karma to the white [Bai] land, where he was born pure among the clan of the Gao surname.<sup>50</sup> He was the great-grandson of Prime Minister Gao Taiming, grandson of the Duke of State Administration [*zhengguogong* 政國公] Mingliang, and son of the Duke of Dharma Protection [*hufa gong* 護法公] Liangcheng. His mother was a princess. His posthumous name is Chengzhong. Now, examining the Duke of Dharma Protection, he [...] martial means settled the empire, and used benevolent governance to follow Heaven and Earth. His mighty conduct was like autumn;

46. The original stele was probably damaged in the Qing, and only a few chunks of stone survive. The version recorded in *Jinshi cuibian* became the basis for other

47. Fang Guoyu surmised that Chuzhou refers to the Dali kingdom's Weichu Prefecture seat, i.e., Weichu fu 威楚府, which was located almost equidistant between Kunming and Dali near what is now Chuxiong. *Xinzuan Yunnan tongzhi* 新纂雲南通志, ed. Li Chunlong 李春龍 (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 2007), vol. 5, 204–5.

48. *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu*, 11.

49. For example, the Kangxi-era (1661–1722) *Shuimu shan zhuzu yuanqi beiji* 水目山諸祖緣起碑記 (Stele Record of the History of the Patriarchs of Mt. Shuimu) opens with an allusion to Śākyamuni holding up a lotus on Vulture Peak and, as its title suggests, recounts the lineage of patriarchs associated with the temple. *Shuimu shan zhuzu yuanqi beiji*, 141.

50. It is unclear from the text whether the term *bai di* 白地 means "white (or bare) land" (which connotes wilderness), or whether it means "Bai land," referring to the region of the Bai people. No other sources from the Dali kingdom or earlier attest to the use of Bai as an ethnonym, so I hesitate to read it as the latter.

his benevolent conduct was like spring. The *rong* and *yi* barbarians [dropped their armor and] fled far away; the palace slept soundly and peacefully.<sup>51</sup> The Central Kingdom [i.e. Dali] received his wisdom; the hinterlands quaked at his name. His kindness nourished every place equally, moistening the vegetation; his virtue cloaked the people and served as a model for the empire.

Zhao You uses the language of the Tang official Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) in describing Zhiyuan’s father as a righteous civilizing force. The inscription also foregrounds the official titles of Zhiyuan’s forebears, from Prime Minister to Duke of State Administration to Duke of Dharma Protection. We learn of Zhiyuan’s ties to the emperor and, at the end of the inscription, it becomes clear that junior members of the Gao clan were responsible for securing imperial support for Zhiyuan’s funerary stele. One of the inscription’s main functions was to present Zhiyuan as yet another illustrious member of the Gao clan.

The inscription also presents Zhiyuan as the member of an illustrious Chan lineage. According to the inscription, Gao Chengzhong became a monk at age twenty-one, whereupon he took on the religious name Zhiyuan and the style Jiaoyuan 皎淵. He studied with the monk Xuanning 玄凝, whom the inscription locates in the following lineage: “Guanyin transmitted [the dharma] to Shi 施; Shi transmitted it to National Preceptor Daowu 道悟; Daowu transmitted it to Xuanning; and Xuanning transmitted it to the Duke [i.e., Zhiyuan].”<sup>52</sup> The inscription identified this as a Chan lineage: “Since Bodhidharma came from the West the dharma has been passed on from patriarch to patriarch, like a flame passing from torch to torch. From the Han to the Southern Kingdom [i.e., Dali], the transmission has not been lost.”<sup>53</sup> Zhiyuan’s master Xuanning appeared as “Chan Master Xuanning” in

51. These lines from “his mighty conduct” through “soundly and peacefully” come from a letter by Han Yu, *Yu Fengxiang xingshangshu shu* 與鳳翔邢尚書書 (Letter to the Fengxiang Minister of Justice), in Han Yu, *Wubai jia zhu yinbian Han Changli xiansheng quanji sishi juan* 五百家注音辯韓昌黎先生全集四十卷 (Place of publication not identified: Liangyi tang, 1763), vol. 18, 1a. I have used Han Yu’s letter to fill in characters missing in the inscription, though there appears to be a difference in one of the terms used for “barbarian”: Han Yu refers to *rong* 戎 and *di* 狄 barbarians, while the inscription refers to *rong* and *yi* 夷 barbarians.

52. *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu*, 10–11.

53. *Ibid.*, 10.

an 1198 record about building a Buddhist temple on the east side of Er Lake; Gao Miaoyin Hu and Emperor Duan Zhixing also supported this project.<sup>54</sup> Xuanning probably lived in or near the Dali capital and had strong ties to the royal house and its powerful affinal kin.

Aside from Xuanning, the other figures in this lineage do not appear in contemporary sources. According to Hou Chong, the regional Chan lineages from the Ming and Qing in which they *do* appear are based on the early Ming *Bai gu tong ji* 白古通記 (Comprehensive Records of Bai History) that introduced stories not found in earlier records.<sup>55</sup> These later lineages include the version in the *Yunnan tongzhi*, which places Zhang Weizhong alongside figures that appear to be based on the lineage in the Gao Chengzhong inscription, such as this entry for Shi Toutuo 施頭陀 (Dhūta Shi): “He followed Chan meditation to attain awakening, but did not discard rites and recitation. His lineage believes that he obtained Guanyin’s mind-seal of complete penetration (*yuantong xinyin* 圓通心印). Shi transmitted [the dharma] to Daowu, who transmitted it to Xuanning.”<sup>56</sup> Of Daowu, the *Yunnan tongzhi* merely states, “He took meditation and wisdom as the principle of the Chan school.” The text also claims that the patriarchs from Shi Toutuo through Xuanning’s disciple Ningzhen 凝真 all resided at Chongsheng si.<sup>57</sup>

What, then, are we to make of the lineage’s originator, Guanyin? While it is possible that this referred to a specific historical figure (several people from the Dali kingdom had Guanyin inserted between their family and given names), the bodhisattva Guanyin’s centrality in the *Nanzhao tuzhuan* and *Fanxiang juan* suggests that the funerary inscription was referring to him. However, these Dali sources present the bodhisattva Guanyin as having taken human form to spread the dharma, which we also find in Chan lineages outside of Dali. In fact, it was not uncommon for Chan patriarchs to be identified with Guanyin: several Tang-dynasty texts claimed that Bodhidharma was an avatar of the bodhisattva; some sources identified the sixth patriarch Huineng with Guanyin; and in the eighth century portraits of the six patriarchs and

54. *Dali guo Shi shi Jiejing jianhui Gaoxing lanruo zhuanzhu bei*, 9–10.

55. Hou, *Baizu xinshi*, 257.

56. [Wanli] *Yunnan tongzhi*, 503.

57. *Ibid.*

Heze Shenhui were installed in a Guanyin Hall.<sup>58</sup> This supports the possibility that the Guanyin in Zhiyuan's funerary inscription was a patriarch who had been identified with the bodhisattva. Guanyin's inclusion supports the lineage's authority and legitimacy, and hints that the Indian Monk Guanshiyin in frame 58 of the *Fanxiangjuan* is connected to the preceding Chan figures.

Zhiyuan's funerary inscription not only locates him in an illustrious Dali-kingdom Chan lineage, it also offers insights into the kinds of Buddhist texts and teachings that circulated in the latter part of the Dali kingdom. Of course, the texts quoted and referenced in the inscription reflect its author Zhao You's expertise rather than that of Zhiyuan himself, but I suspect these materials would have been accessible to elite monastics such as Zhiyuan as well. Overall, the inscription draws from Huayan commentaries, the *Sūraṅgama sūtra*, the work of Guifeng Zongmi, and to a lesser extent the recorded sayings of Yuanwu Keqin 圓悟克勤 (1063–1135). In the style of the genre, Zhao depicts Gao as a master of Confucian and Buddhist morality, and emphasizes his realization of nonduality and emptiness.

As was common in Tang and Song China, Chan and Huayan intertwined in Dali-kingdom Buddhism. The two texts quoted most frequently in the inscription are the *Xin Huayan jinglun* 新華嚴經論 (Treatise on the New Huayan Sūtra) by Li Tongxuan 李通玄 (635–730) and the *Da fangguang fo Huayan jingshu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏 (Commentary on the Huayan Sūtra of the Great Vast Buddha) by Chengguan 澄觀 (738–839). Zhao You peppers the inscription with short passages from these texts rather than quoting long blocks. For example, the inscription draws from both texts in describing Gao's attainments: "He uses the deep speech of no speech to explain the principle of cutting off speech. He uses the sublime practice of non-action to respond to the sublime mind of non-creation."<sup>59</sup> He synthesizes the true and the conventional without traces; he fuses the still and the chaotic without bias."<sup>60</sup>

58. Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 105; John J. Jørgensen, *Inventing Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch: Hagiography and Biography in Early Ch'an* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 215–19; Tanaka Ryōshō 田中良昭, *Tonkō Zenshū bunken no kenkyū* 敦煌禪宗文獻の研究 (Tokyo: Daito Shuppansha, 1983), 102.

59. *Huayan jingshu*, T. 1735p508a3–4.

60. *Xin Huayan jing lun*, T. 1739p770b14–16.

Zhao's use of these texts enhances our understanding of Dali-kingdom Buddhism by reinforcing certain characteristics and fleshing out others. First, his quotations from Chengguan's commentary on the *Huayan jing* fit the image of Dali Buddhism that emerges from surviving texts. In addition to an extant (but partial) Dali-kingdom manuscript of Śikṣānanda's translation of the *Huayan jing*, there is a partial manuscript that combines Chengguan's commentary with Śikṣānanda's translation.<sup>61</sup> References to Huayan concepts such as "lotus storehouse" (*huazang* 華藏), "perfumed seas" (*xiangshui hai* 香水海), and "Vairo[cana]'s ocean seal *samādhi*" (*Pilu haiyin sanmo* 毗盧海印三摩) appear throughout the ritual text *Dahei tianshen daochang yi* 大黑天神道場儀 (Rituals for the *Bodhimaṇḍa* of the God Mahākāla) that has only been found in Dali.<sup>62</sup> Such examples show that Dali-kingdom Buddhists were familiar with important Tang commentaries and translations of Huayan texts.

The other oft-cited text, Li Tongxuan's *Xin Huayan jinglun*, further suggests that Dali-kingdom Buddhists viewed Huayan through a Chan lens or at least in relation to Chan. As Robert Gimello explains, Li Tongxuan was a Tang layman whose works on the *Huayan jing* offered practical guides to an otherwise abstruse sūtra. Though his *Xin Huayan jinglun* had the distinction of being the first text of recognized Chinese provenance to be incorporated into the Chinese Buddhist canon, Li's writings did not circulate widely until the Song dynasty, when members of the Linji Chan lineage embraced them.<sup>63</sup> For Zhao You to repeatedly draw from the *Xin Huayan jinglun* in composing Gao's funerary inscription suggests that Dali-kingdom Buddhists engaged with Linji Chan, which had a foothold in neighboring Sichuan.

61. The partial manuscript of the *Huayan jing* comes from Fotu ta 佛圖塔 (Buddha Pagoda) on the west side of Er Lake and consists of fascicle 62 and most of fascicle 63, both from the "Entering the Dharma Realm Chapter" (i.e., *Gaṇḍavyūha* chapter, Ch. *ru fajie pin* 入法界品). See *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* vol. 5, 411–516. The text that combines the scripture and Chengguan's commentary comes from Fazang si and consists of part of fascicle 54, from the "Detachment from the World Chapter" (Ch. *li shijian pin* 離世間品). See *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* vol. 4, 167–240.

62. *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* vol. 1, 422–23, 429.

63. Robert M. Gimello, "Li T'ung-hsüan and the Practical Dimensions of Hua-yen," in *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen*, eds. Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), 328–30.



The Linji connection finds additional support in the inscription's quotations from Yuanwu Keqin's recorded sayings. Yuanwu Keqin, teacher of Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163) and purported compiler of the *Biyān lù* 碧岩錄 (Blue Cliff Record), hailed from Pengzhou, Sichuan (near Chengdu). In the funerary inscription we learn that Zhiyuan,

stirred up the wind of the ancient buddha lineage and investigated the public cases [*gong'an* 公案] of the patriarchs: originally distinguishing between the maker and the method; measuring the tongs and hammer for casting a buddha; cursing the pearls of dew and flashes of lightning, and praising the moon in the water and flowers in the sky.<sup>64</sup>

Dali-kingdom Chan monks apparently maintained their connections to Buddhist developments in Sichuan, especially those connected to the Linji lineage.

The Chan-Huayan synthesis and Sichuan connection manifest in the inscription's quotations from Zongmi's *Yuanjue jingshu* 圓覺經疏 (Commentary on the Scripture of Perfect Enlightenment) and *Zhu Huayan fajie guanmen* 註華嚴法界觀門 (Notes on the Teachings for Perceiving the Huayan Dharma Realm).<sup>65</sup> According to the funerary inscription, after Zhiyuan became a monk but before he started studying with Xuanning he thought to himself, “Do not take the holy teachings to be a carpenter's line marker, or a brilliant master as a compass,” which comes from Zongmi's commentary.<sup>66</sup> This same passage appears in the partial manuscript of the same text from the Dali kingdom (though this manuscript does not match the Taishō version exactly).<sup>67</sup>

64. The references to “originally distinguishing between maker and method” and “measuring the tongs and hammer for casting a buddha” come from *Yuanwu foguo chanshi yulu* 圓悟佛果禪師語錄 (Recorded Sayings of the Chan Master Yuanwu Foguo), T. 1997p782a12–13 and p743a17–20, respectively.

65. The full title of the commentary is *Da fanguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jinglue shuzhu* 大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經略疏註 (Commentary on the Abbreviated Scripture on Understanding the Meaning of the Great Vast Sūtra of Perfect Awakening).

66. *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu*, 10; *Yuanjue jing shu*, T. 1795p568c16–17.

67. *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* vol. 1, 366–67. This passage generally accords with the text in the Taishō canon, but includes a short note that identifies the “four maladies” (*sibing* 四病) as establishing names (*biaoming* 標名), discerning

Considering how the Chan lineage in the *Fanxiang juan* conforms to Zongmi's lineage claims, it would appear that Zongmi's works played an important role in Dali-kingdom Buddhism.

Among the Dali-kingdom scriptures found at Fazang si is a printed copy of the *Yuanjue jing* itself, which suggests a deeper interest in the scripture. Zongmi embraced the *Yuanjue jing* for its relative simplicity in contrast to the massive *Huayan jing*, and he elevated the former over the latter in his doctrinal classification system.<sup>68</sup> The *Yuanjue jing* was likely composed in China, and its author(s) took the similarly indigenous *Lengyan jing* (*Sūramgama sūtra*) as one of its main sources.<sup>69</sup> It is thus not a coincidence that the *Lengyan jing* is the third most frequently quoted text in Zhiyuan's funerary inscription. Zhao You cites the text in recounting Zhiyuan's attitude toward embarking on the Buddhist path: "It is impossible for one in the causal stage to use the mind of birth and death as the cause for cultivation in seeking the buddha vehicle that is beyond birth and death."<sup>70</sup> As with several other texts quoted in the inscription, a partial manuscript of the *Lengyan jing* from the Dali kingdom survived at Fazang si, reinforcing its importance for Dali-kingdom Buddhists.<sup>71</sup> Chan Buddhists from the Tang through Song dynasties embraced the *Lengyan jing* as well as the *Yuanjue jing*, which further demonstrates the many connections between Dali Buddhism and Tang-Song China.

Zhiyuan's funerary inscription uses these Chan-Huayan texts to depict the late monk as a learned, moral Buddhist who belonged to illustrious familial and religious lineages. Zhao You's use of these texts gives us a better understanding of Dali-kingdom Buddhism in general, but further shows that these texts were seen as conferring authority and legitimacy. In many places Zhao You presents Zhiyuan as an

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characteristics (*bianxiang* 辨相), pointing at form to reach a breakthrough (*zhi ti yi po* 指體以破), and joining names (*jieming* 結名). Each of these terms appears in the *Yuanjue jing shu*, though all in the section of the first malady, contrivance (*zuo* 作).

68. Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism*, 54.

69. *Ibid.*, n92. The full title of the *Lengyan jing* is *Da foding rulai miyin xiuzheng liaoyi zhu pusa wanxing shoulengyan jing* 大佛頂如來密因修證了義諸菩薩萬行首楞嚴經.

70. *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu*, 10; *Lengyan jing*, T. 945p122b1-3.

71. The extant manuscript from Fazang si covers the section T. 945p106b3-112b20. See *Dali congshu: dazangjing pian* vol. 2, 513-74.

erudite scholar who studies the sūtras and commentaries to the extent that he thinks to himself in the texts' language. Significantly, and perhaps appropriately for the genre, this inscription does not paint Zhiyuan as an irreverent or transgressive figure in any way. Zhiyuan investigates *gong'an* but does not himself have encounters modeled on those precedents. He comes across as a serious, respectable monk who, as his funerary inscription proclaims, "could be taken as a model for future generations."<sup>72</sup>

### CONCLUSIONS

Having examined Zhiyuan's familial and religious lineages, as well as the various Chan and Huayan texts quoted in his funerary inscription, the question that arises is how this image of Chan relates to the Chan lineage in the *Fanxiangjuan* sponsored by Zhiyuan's uncle. Answers lie in the two works' shared connections to Sichuan's Chan traditions, the apparent goals of each work, and the political background of the late Dali kingdom. These two Dali-kingdom Chan lineages operated on multiple semiotic levels, but their politico-religious significance comes to the forefront.

Together the *Fanxiangjuan* and *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu* offer the consistent picture that Chan entered the Dali region from Sichuan, probably during the Nanzhao kingdom. The timing of this transmission is difficult to determine because both Dali-kingdom works have strong connections to the past. The late-twelfth-century *Fanxiangjuan* depicts figures from the Tang and Nanzhao, and even the funerary inscription, which recounts the life of a Dali-kingdom monk, mainly quotes texts written or translated during the Tang dynasty. Though we know that Dali-kingdom officials continued to seek texts from their Song counterparts, extant Buddhist sources from the Dali kingdom suggest that most of what they had acquired came from the Tang.<sup>73</sup> This is important for understanding Dali-kingdom Chan because, with the sole exception of Yuanwu Keqin's recorded sayings, there is little evidence that other works from the vast corpus of Song-dynasty Chan writings had reached Dali. Instead, it seems that Dali-kingdom elites looked to Tang and Nanzhao figures and texts as sources of authority.

72. *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu*, 11.

73. See note 7 above for the example of the *Tongyong qiqing yigui*.

In the *Fanxiang juan* this retrospective orientation established the Dali-kingdom rulers as heirs to the Buddhist tradition of their Nanzhao predecessors, which we see in the reproduction of *Nanzhao tuzhuan* scenes and the claim that the Chan lineage culminated with the Mahārāja Longshun. Shenhui, who had faded from Song-dynasty Chan lineages, still had an important role to play in the Dali kingdom. The Chan lineage to which he belonged was just one form of legitimation in a work that included images of buddhas and bodhisattvas, arhats, and esoteric dharma guardians. It may seem at odds with claims that Buddhism entered the Dali region directly from India, but though the Chan lineage included Chinese figures it ultimately began with Śākyamuni and included the Indian-looking Mahārāja. In addition, it did not refute claims of a direct Indian transmission through Acuoye Guanyin, but instead added another source of legitimation. At a time when India was beginning to lose its cachet as the center of the Buddhist world, Dali-kingdom Buddhists looked to the increasingly authoritative Chan lineage to reinforce their religious authority.<sup>74</sup>

Zhiyuan's funerary inscription similarly traced Zhiyuan's Chan lineage to Guanyin (though this figure's identity remains unclear) and Bodhidharma, while also drawing heavily on Buddhist and literary texts by Tang-Song figures as well as the Chinese classics *Yijing* and *Shijing* (Book of Odes).<sup>75</sup> Zhao You is less concerned with establishing the Indian source of Zhiyuan's religious authority than with depicting the late monk as an accomplished Chan master from the powerful Gao family. While the *Fanxiang juan*, as a product of the Dali court, can be read as a symbol of the Dali kingdom, it is hard to make the same case for Zhiyuan's epitaph. However, both works participate in the lineage claims of the intertwined Duan and Gao families.

Over the course of the twelfth century members of the Gao family sponsored several large-scale Buddhist projects in central Yunnan. By the time of Gao Liangcheng and his son Zhiyuan, Gao Shengtai's Great

74. Tansen Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600-1400* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 105.

75. For example, the inscription quotes the following passage from the *Yijing* that Chengguan also uses in his commentary on the *Huayan jing*: "Modesty brings glory to superiors, and in inferiors cannot be surpassed." *Zhou yi* 周易, in *Duanju shisanjing jingwen* 斷句十三經經文 (Taipei: Taiwan kaiming shudian, 1991), 6. *Huayan jingshu*, T. 1735p663b26; *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu*, 10.

Central Kingdom may have been a distant memory, but Gao officials remained a threat to Duan control. Gao Liangcheng, the Duke of Dharma Protection, famously suppressed a rebellion of the “four *yi* and eight *man* [barbarians],” showing the family’s military might.<sup>76</sup> Zhiyuan’s funerary inscription celebrates this accomplishment while also cementing Gao’s inclusion in the Chan lineage of Shuimu si. As Nie Geming and Wei Yufan recently suggested, Shuimu si seems to have become a Gao family temple that was analogous to the capital’s Chongsheng si, which had a more esoteric focus and remained under Duan control.<sup>77</sup>

Given Duan Zhixing’s sponsorship of the *Fanxiang juan* and the painting’s identification of the Dali-kingdom rulers with their Nanzhao counterparts, the inclusion of the Mahārāja in the Chan lineage symbolically extends it to the Dali rulers as well. Though the *Fanxiang juan* was created in the 1170s, before the emperor’s nephew Zhiyuan could have made a name for himself as a Chan monk, the Gao clan had already sponsored several large-scale Buddhist projects. We might read the *Fanxiang juan* as a claim not only about the legitimacy of Dali-kingdom Buddhism in general, but also about the Buddhist authority of the Duan rulers specifically. The different Chan lineages in the *Fanxiang juan* and Zhiyuan’s funerary inscription could reflect attempts to distinguish the two families’ Chan authority.

Aside from the general adoption of subitist rhetoric, synthesis with Huayan, and *gong’an* meditation, extant sources from the Dali kingdom give few hints about specific Chan doctrines and practices that appealed to the ruling elite, but they do suggest that distinctively Chan notions of lineage and transmission found favor. Chan seems to have offered the Duan and Gao families a model for constructing authority that combined Buddhist and political power in a different way than the esoteric model centered on *abhiṣeka* ritual. This did not entail rejecting the esoteric model, but instead involved adding Chan lineage as an additional source of legitimation. While esoteric Buddhism doubled the ruler and the awakened being to sacralize the realm, Chan lineage doubled the religious and familial lineages to strengthen both. Like Chan

76. This episode is mentioned in *Hufa ming gong deyun beizan*, 7 and *Dali guo Yuan gong ta zhi beiming bing xu*, 10. Both stele inscriptions identify the rebels as “barbarians” and describe Gao Liangcheng as protecting the “Central Kingdom” (*zhongguo* 中國), which here seems to mean Dali.

77. Nie and Wei, “Dali guo Gao shi jiazuo he Shuimu shan fojiao,” 9–10.

lineages, the Duan and Gao families were intertwined but remained distinct. The *Fanxiang juan* appealed to both the esoteric and Chan forms of legitimation in presenting the Dali kingdom as a Buddhist regime with divinely ordained rulers. For the Gao clan, who may have lacked the royal status to claim esoteric authority, Chan lineage appears to have offered a more accessible form of Buddhist legitimacy.

Understanding Shenhui's image in the *Fanxiang juan* thus requires understanding not only the connections between Nanzhao and Tang Sichuan, but also the context in which the *Fanxiang juan* was created. Shenhui's image served as a crucial link between the mainstream set of six patriarchs and the regional lineage of Sichuan and Yunnan, which reflected on the Buddhist legitimacy of the Dali kingdom as a whole. However, his image also played a role in establishing the Buddhist legitimacy of the Duan emperors in particular. Zhiyuan may have been the "Chan Master of Sudden Awakening," but Zhao You did not locate him in Shenhui's lineage. The seventh patriarch was immortalized in the *Fanxiang juan* more for his connective role than for his subitist rhetoric.