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The *Lidai fabao ji* (Record of the Dharma-Jewel through the Ages)

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The *Lidai fabao ji* is a long-lost Chan/Zen Buddhist text, recovered from among the manuscripts discovered in 1900 in the hidden library at the Mogao caves, near the Silk Road oasis of Dunhuang.¹ Until then, it was remembered only as a fraudulent history produced by a dubious branch of Chan, the Bao Tang (Protect the Tang dynasty) school of Jiannan (modern-day Sichuan).² Previously, this sole work of the Bao Tang was known only through critical comments found in the writings of two Sichuan contemporaries, the Jingzhong Chan master Shenqing (d. 814), and the Chan/Huayan master Zongmi (780–841).³

The *Lidai fabao ji* fabrication most frequently singled out for criticism is the story that the founder of their school, the Chan master Wuzhu (714–774), was in possession of the key Chan talisman, the robe that the fifth patriarch Hongren (602–675) was said to have conferred upon the sixth patriarch Huineng (638–713). The *Lidai fabao ji* author or authors claim that the robe had been given by the empress Wu Zetian (r. 684–705) to a master in the lineage claimed by the Bao Tang school. In contrast, the accepted belief was that the robe was enshrined at Huineng's temple in Shaoyzhou, far to the south.⁴ At the same time, in the *Lidai fabao ji* the most prominent of Wuzhu's teachings is anti-institutional antinomianism, and the text ends with no indication of the fate of the robe or the succession at Wuzhu's death.

The Background of the *Lidai fabao ji* Texts

The *Lidai fabao ji* was probably composed sometime between 774 and 780 at the Bao Tang monastery in Zizhou by an anonymous disciple or disciples of Master Wuzhu. Wuzhu claimed Dharma descent from the charismatic Korean Chan master Wuxiang (684–762), who was well known as the founder of the Jingzhong school of Chengdu, but the Bao Tang cannot be traced as an independent line beyond the generation of Wuzhu's immediate disciples. The *Lidai fabao ji* is preserved in a surprisingly large number of manuscripts and fragments from the Dunhuang materials.⁵ The complete or nearly complete texts are: P 2125, S 516, P 3717, and Jinyi 304.⁶ The fragments are: S 5916, S 1611, S 1776, S 11014,⁷ part of P 3727, Jinyi 103,⁸ the manuscript from the collection of Ishii Mitsuo,⁹ Chapter 3934r,¹⁰ and Fragment 261.¹¹ Other Dunhuang texts that quote from or show the influence of the *Lidai fabao ji* include P 2776, P 2680, a separate text included in P 3727, P Tib. 116, P Tib. 121, P Tib. 813, P Tib. 699.¹²

Except in one instance, there is no way to know the circumstances in which the text survived until the early eleventh century, when the cave-temple cache was sealed.¹³ The large number of texts and fragments of the *Lidai fabao ji* in the Dunhuang cache, and the evidence of its dispersion into Turfan and Tibet, shows that it was far from being a negligible work. Moreover, Rong Xinjiang has effectively challenged the theory, promulgated by Stein and later scholars, that the Dunhuang deposit was a repository of “sacred waste.” Instead, he argues that the cache held the library collection of Sanjie Monastery, which included valuable texts and paintings collected and repaired by the monk Daozhen until late in the tenth century.¹⁴ Among the apocrypha and Chan works popular in ninth- and tenth-century Dunhuang, the *Lidai fabao ji* appears to have been considered worthy of frequent reproduction, and its subsequent disappearance thus becomes all the more puzzling. This disappearance means, however, that the *Lidai fabao ji* provides us with a rare opportunity to shed light on the historical contingencies that shape sectarian identity. The fact that the Bao Tang school was so short-lived and its remains were hermetically sealed makes it for all its fabrications a more accurate reflection of the Buddhist world of the eighth and ninth centuries, the so-called golden age of Chan, than the authoritative eleventh- and twelfth-century accounts. Indeed, the canonical accounts may be no more truthful than the *Lidai fabao ji*—merely more successful.

The *Lidai fabao ji* is one of a scant handful of Chan texts from roughly the same period, each possessing unique features that were absorbed and/or superseded by the official Chan genealogy, the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (Record of the transmission of the lamp compiled in the Jingde era) compiled in 1004.¹⁵ The lore of the Chan patriarchy was reworked in numerous iterations over the

course of several centuries, so that most traces of the particular historical valuations and tensions from which it had originally emerged were erased or submerged. The historicity of the biographies and lineages of renowned Chan masters has been undermined not only by Dunhuang finds but also by scholarly recognition that these biographical genealogies are by and large products of the Song dynasty (960–1279), when Chan enjoyed the prestige of an established religious and cultural institution, and the privilege of canonizing a romanticized view of its origins.¹⁶ Examination of the Dunhuang cache and subsequent reexamination of earlier materials have given scholars a glimpse of lost sketches and a few of the cruder attempts, such as the *Lidai fabao ji*, that nevertheless contributed to the polished and confident style of Song Chan literature.

The *Lidai fabao ji* authors' romanticized view of the origins of their school retains many traces of the historical tensions from which it emerged, which contributes to its interest for scholars today. Unlike later treatments of the masters of Chan's golden age, the *Lidai fabao ji* is not stylistically consistent, and the narrative is sometimes disjointed and unpolished. Themes and texts associated with disparate modes of Buddhist discourse are juxtaposed within the *Lidai fabao ji*, and I suggest that this in part reflects a broader social and religious transition.

The shift was signaled most dramatically by the 755 rebellion of the general An Lushan against the Tang ruling clans, but is discernible even before this critical turning point. Warring agendas in the *Lidai fabao ji* can be seen as a reflection in microcosm of a more extensive crisis of faith in the religious and secular structures of authority inherited from the early Tang. Rhetoric regarding patriarchal robes thus becomes a window on the complex relationship between Tang politics and Chan sectarian rivalries in the latter half of the eighth century.

During the century preceding the An Lushan rebellion, the Buddhist monastic establishments clustered in and around the two Tang capitals of Chang'an and Luoyang had grown into a collective force to be reckoned with. The power of the Buddhist church was maintained through relations of sometimes strained interdependence with the imperial court, in a milieu of rivalry with court Daoism, and successive emperors struggled to co-opt and/or control its increasingly pervasive influence. This kind of institutional, esoteric/scholastic Buddhism reached the height of its power under the empress Wu Zetian, who created a network of monasteries to promulgate Buddhist teachings in support of her reign and continually invited exemplary monks to court in order to pay her respects to them. After Empress Wu, the next ruler to have a significant impact on institutional Buddhism was Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756), whose reign effectively ended with the An Lushan rebellion. Even though the Tang forces subsequently rallied, the war effort resulted in the strengthening of the peripheries at the expense of the center.¹⁷

Politically as well as culturally, the eighth century saw a great deal of oscillation between the time-honored and the experimental. In particular, the nonhereditary bureaucratic class fostered by the exam system began to make inroads into the labyrinth of privilege previously negotiated by the imperial household, Buddhist and/or Daoist monastic institutions, and aristocratic factions. More significantly, with the disintegration of periphery-center tribute relations, decrease in central control of the military, and greater freedom for interprovince commerce, the middle-level officials and military governors became increasingly independent administrators in the provinces. Before the end of the dynasty in 907 there were several attempts to reinforce imperial authority, but some provincial centers such as Chengdu, the birthplace of the *Lidai fabao ji*, became nearly autonomous. There was also a trend toward secularization of social values within the newly powerful and increasingly competitive bureaucratic class. These factors all contributed to create a milieu in which received genres and cultural paradigms were seen as inadequate or decadent.¹⁸

The shifting of the balance of power from center to peripheries also weakened the influence of the Buddhist monastic complexes of the capitals, which were heavily implicated in Tang imperial politics. Decrease in resources for the older institutions of the central region, combined with new opportunities for patronage in the provinces, clearly had much to do with the development of the so-called Southern school of Chan to which the *Lidai fabao ji* claimed allegiance. Discussion of sudden awakening (*dunwu*) in Chinese Buddhist texts predates the appropriation of this soteriology as the hallmark Southern school doctrine. However, the polemical context that gave birth to the Southern school has been linked to the Chan master Shenhui's (684–758) attacks, beginning in 730, against the successors of the Chan master Shenxiu (d. 706), who had been highly revered by Empress Wu and the entire Changan/Luoyang establishment.¹⁹

Shenhui had a decisive role in creating the symbolism and the narratives that were to change what it meant to be a Chan master (*chanshi*) in the eighth century. Claiming to represent the teachings of Huineng, Shenhui advocated direct realization of the truth of one's own Buddha-nature and (falsely) contended that the teachings of Shenxiu's Northern school followers were gradualist and nurtured the delusion that awakening was a condition to be achieved, rather than one's inherent reality. Implicated in Shenhui's claims was the centuries-old struggle over Buddhist elitism, an elitism that engendered and was engendered by imperial and popular enchantment with the mystique of the adept who gained numinous power through asceticism, ritual worship, and scriptural recitation.

Although Shenhui himself did not go so far as to disavow any form of Buddhist activity whatsoever, he and subsequent Chan masters became increasingly attentive to the contradiction involved in teaching and practicing

(which are inherently gradualistic) according to the orthodoxy of the “sudden.” This sudden/gradual doctrinal divide is key to understanding the hybrid nature of the *Lidai fabao ji*. Although it has features usually associated with the so-called gradual or Northern school trends that flourished through court patronage in the eighth century, it is most heavily influenced by Shenhui’s Southern school writings. Conspicuously, it is the only text to take Shenhui’s doctrine to its logical extreme by advocating radically antinomian “formless” practice.²⁰

The *Lidai fabao ji* was also the only text in which Bodhidharma’s robe continued to play a role beyond the sixth generation of patriarchs. Shenhui had fused historical and doctrinal claims into an exclusive notion of patriarchal succession in which only one patriarch in each generation received mind-to-mind transmission of the true Dharma from the previous patriarch, linking back to Buddha Śākyamuni’s transmission to his disciple Mahākāśyapa. According to Shenhui, when Bodhidharma (d. ca. 530), the Indian patriarch who came to China, passed this unique mind-to-mind transmission to his Chinese disciple Huike (487–593), he concomitantly transmitted his robe as verification. Shenhui claimed that the Dharma and robe had then been passed through three more generations to the sixth patriarch, Huineng (638–713).

Widespread cultural acceptance of the power of talismanic objects helped the early Southern school movement establish the authority of its patriarchs, but at times the ingenious stories of the objects threatened to overshadow the teachings of those who laid claim to them. The *Lidai fabao ji* authors were not the only ones entangled in this dilemma. Any criticism of the *Lidai fabao ji* version of succession inevitably raises the inconvenient question: where *did* true patriarchal power lie? The doctrinal, ideological, and historical aspects of this question cannot be addressed separately, for each implicates the others. Doctrinally, the reconciliation of inherent Buddha-nature and temporal transmission of spiritual authority is as slippery as the reconciliation of the theory of *anātman* (no-self) and the theory of karma (the morally charged momentum of past action that shapes the actor). Spiritual lineage and spiritual discipline became theoretically equally problematic for so-called Southern school Chan, and yet the relative attention given these two aspects was the inverse of previous Buddhist discourse. Among Chan schools of the late Tang, the rhetoric of genealogy was increasingly developed, while the hagiographic value of accounts of spiritual athleticism slowly atrophied.

Reflecting Stylistic Trends, Anticipating Genres

From the eighth through thirteenth centuries, Chan doctrinal issues were closely related to the development of distinct literary and artistic forms. In Southern school Chan texts, sutra commentary, discursive explanation, and eventually even the standard question-and-answer format all gave way to new

genres. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the quintessential Chan genre had become the *yulu* (discourse record), collections of anecdotal “records” of interaction between a master and his disciples that were designed to convey a sense of everyday encounter as the true Buddhist teaching. The format clearly had antecedents in pre-Han classics such as the *Lunyu* and the *Zhuangzi*, but rather than simply reflecting the oft-cited “sinification of Buddhism,” this can be associated with a vogue in intellectual classicism, a rejection of ornate commentarial prose in favor of a terser style, as exemplified in the *guwen* (old writing) movement of Han Yu (768–824). In his prose, Han Yu favored the archaic to the point of severity, but he and other writers of the period also began to include colloquial elements in their poetry and fiction. In Chan *yulu*, champions of the “sudden”—which was increasingly identified with the quotidian immanent, as we shall see—were part of an intellectual milieu that favored skillful use of colloquial language and a deftly rendered personal immediacy.

The *yulu* were usually appended to the biographies of masters, and Chan hagiography developed, and was used, in ways distinctly different from earlier typologically arranged Buddhist biographical collections. In the eleventh century, biographies arranged as lineages, called *chuandeng lu* (lamp transmission record), became the standard means of advancing a particular school’s claim to inheritance of perfect mind-to-mind transmission from master to disciple through the generations. In the *yulu* and *chuandeng lu* genres themselves we can thus recognize a tension between the absolutely unique encounter and the genealogy of perfect replication.

The *Lidai fabao ji* is prototypical of both Chan genres, being rather neatly divided into two parts; the first is in a format analogous to *chuandeng lu* and the second analogous to *yulu*. Through the *Lidai fabao ji* we may thus gain glimpses of an earlier stage of the hagiographical sensibilities that shaped Song Dynasty Chan’s distinctive literary styles and its images of exemplary practice, which were in turn the styles and images adopted by Japanese monks who founded the Zen schools of the Kamakura period. The early texts do not, however, help greatly to establish any firmer historical basis for the Chan masters who figured most prominently in the thirteenth-century *gongan* (public case) genre, which currently enjoys widespread cultural recognition in its Japanese form, *kōan*. These short Chan anecdotes were culled from *yulu* and *chuandeng lu*, and were used as meditative aids to exemplify teaching points.

In the late Tang, both Chan literature and secular fiction developed in new directions, and the second part of the *Lidai fabao ji* reflects these trends. As with Tang *chuanqi* (transmitted marvels) fiction, what were once preparatory sketches and notes in the margins of official literature became the features of a new genre. In both Chan lore and *chuanqi*, interactions in ordinary settings are used to establish the relative spiritual or moral standing of the characters,

and in Chan literature, displays of supernormal powers and extraordinary acts of virtue almost disappeared.

It is significant that the adoption of a sparser and more colloquial mode in Chan literature coincided with similar stylistic experiments formulated and practiced by late Tang literati such as Han Yu, mentioned above. Like these experimenters, Chan writers were at pains to present innovation as excavation, or to establish reform on ancient foundations. And indeed, the new Chan genres of *yulu*, *chuandeng lu*, and *gongan* are consistent with previous patterns of development in stylistic convention.²¹ Chan genres are unique, yet complement and refer to each other in a familiar manner. Just as accounts of the bizarre (*zhiguai*) complemented official didactic “arrayed” biographies (*liezhuan*), and the brevity and wit of *qingtan* (pure conversation) characterizations were related to the more formal dialogical treatises of the third and fourth centuries, so too did the turning words, scatological references, and shouts of Chan depend on daily recitation of the sutras.²² The appeal of the *Lidai fabao ji* is that the sutras and the scatology are not yet divided into separate genres.

Content and Structure

The *Lidai fabao ji* could be called a history of origins, beginning with a legendary account of the introduction of Buddhism to China, and ending with the record of the Bao Tang school founder, Wuzhu. As the title indicates, the *Lidai fabao ji* is meant to be a record “through (successive) ages/generations.” In the presentation of the text, key successive moments in Chinese Buddhist history radiate inward like spokes of a wheel that converge upon the cardinal importance of Wuzhu and the core concerns of the Bao Tang school. Narrative choices, scriptural quotation as commentary, and occasional overt commentary all repeatedly orient one back to Chengdu in the eighth century, even as one is brought steadily forward from the first century.

The *Lidai fabao ji* constitutes seventeen pages of the Taishō shinshū dai-zōkyō edition of the Buddhist canon, or approximately twenty-five thousand Chinese characters.²³ It begins with a list of thirty-seven titles that the authors claim as sources. The narrative then opens with a version of the legend of the dream of Emperor Ming of the Han (r. 57–75) and his subsequent embassy to bring Buddhist scriptures and monks to China. This is followed by a description of a contest of magical powers between Buddhists and Daoists, a brief account of Śākyamuni Buddha, and a quotation from a work in the genre of Buddhist rebuttal to the third-century Daoist *Hua hu jing* (Scripture of conversion of the barbarians). A second version of the legend of Emperor Ming ensues. The narrative shifts to a quasi-historical anecdote involving the famous Jin dynasty monk Huiyuan (334–417). Then, quotations from two well-known

sutras are followed by a quotation from a putative fifth-century “translation” of a work (probably a Chinese compilation) chronicling the transmission from the Buddha up until the twenty-third generation in India and Kashmir. A passage from this work is altered and supplemented by the *Lidai fabao ji* authors in order to bring the transmission up to the twenty-ninth generation, to “Bodhidharmatrāta,” founder of the Chan lineage claimed by the Bao Tang school. The authors then dispute a rival claim made in an early eighth-century Chan text, the *Lengqie shizi ji* (Record of the masters and disciples of the *Lañkā [vatāra-sūtra]*).²⁴ This is followed by polemics over the origins of the *Lañkā* transmission.

For all its diversity, the rather disjointed introductory section summarized above makes up a mere tenth of the text as a whole. The *Lañkā* transmission discussion forms a segue for a more orderly but no less lively section, the biographies of the six successive Chan patriarchs: Bodhidharmatrāta (d. ca. 530), more commonly known as Bodhidharma; Huike (487–593); Sengcan (d. 592); Daoxin (580–651); Hongren (602–675); and Huineng (638–713).²⁵ The text then jumps abruptly back to the fourth century with a passage on the monk Daoan (312–385), followed by a long series of quotations from Indian sutras and from apocryphal Chinese scriptures. The biography of Huineng includes an account of the transmission of the robe and the Dharma from Hongren to Huineng; immediately following the scriptural quotations, however, the Hongren-Huineng robe transmission episode is repeated in greater detail.

Next follows the robe transmission episode set in the court of Empress Wu Zetian, which leads to short biographies of Zhishen (609–702) and his disciple Chuji (669–736). The genealogical implications are complicated by the fact that although Zhishen is actually a disciple of Hongren, he receives Huineng’s robe of transmission from the empress and passes it on to Chuji. The biography of Chuji’s disciple, the Korean monk Wuxiang (684–762), is given in some detail, including quotations from his Dharma sermons. This is followed by passages purporting to record dialogues between the above-mentioned Southern school advocate Shenhui and various interlocutors. These passages are certainly based on extant works related to Shenhui, but the *Lidai fabao ji* authors spuriously interpolate a commentary on Sichuan Chan figures into Shenhui’s discourses. The section on these various figures constitutes approximately another 30 percent of the whole.

The remaining 60 percent of the text is devoted to the Bao Tang founder Wuzhu (714–774). He is introduced giving a dramatic Dharma sermon. There follows an extended account of his early years and wanderings, his encounter with Wuxiang, the robe transmission from Wuxiang, and his ultimate recognition as the legitimate heir after Wuxiang’s death. The rest of the text is taken up by sermons and dialogues with disciples and visitors on various topics, and it concludes with Wuzhu’s death.

In a manner quite common to Tang-dynasty historical and exegetical lit-

erature, at least a quarter of the *Lidai fabao ji* is composed of freely altered quotations from a multiplicity of other works, some marked by direct reference and most not. Source materials from different times and places, changes in writing style, and strikingly innovative passages are all loosely held together by the author-compilers' arguments for formless practice as a necessary corollary to the Southern school doctrine of no-thought.

The first part of the *Lidai fabao ji* is largely a pastiche of earlier material or imitations of traditional Buddhist scholarship. In the second part of the *Lidai fabao ji*, the use of other Buddhist material is confined to Wuzhu's quotations from sutras. The impressive effect with which Wuzhu deploys his quotations reveals the *Lidai fabao ji* authors' reverence for treasures from the storehouse of Buddhist lore, but it also reveals a certain sense of editorial license to be less than exact in reproducing the originals. The quotations have an almost talismanic function, in that they are not always clearly related to the topic at hand yet invariably produce awe in the succession of Wuzhu's interlocutors. Moreover, they are imbedded in other modes characteristic of Wuzhu's discourse underlining the telegraphic, almost hypnotic, recurring *wunian* (no-thought) phrases, which we cannot help but think of as pompous, and the earthy, piquant stories.

The *Lidai fabao ji*'s Unique Version of the Indian Patriarchy

There were several different lists of Indian patriarchs produced by various factions of the nascent Chan school. A good summary is provided in the first chapter of Philip Yampolsky's study on the *Platform Sutra*.²⁶ Yampolsky made a chart of the patriarch lists found in eighth-century Chan works and compared these with the two main source texts, the *Fu fazang [yinyuan] zhuan* (Traditions [of the Causes and Conditions] of Transmission of the Dharma Treasury)²⁷ and Buddhahadra's (359–429) preface to his translation of the *Damoduoluo chan jing* (The Dhyāna-sūtra of Dharmatrāta).²⁸

The *Fu fazang zhuan* is a major source for the version of the patriarchal lineage that is found in the *Lidai fabao ji*. The *Fu fazang zhuan* identifies transmission of the Dharma with a single line of transmission from master to disciple, beginning with Śākyamuni and ending with the murder of the twenty-third patriarch Siṃha bhikṣu in Kashmir, but the *Lidai fabao ji* authors rewrote Siṃha's biography in the *Fu fazang zhuan* in order to create an unbroken lineage.

The *Lidai fabao ji* authors were not the first to use lineage in Buddhahadra's preface in order to overcome the unsatisfactory ending of the *Fu fazang zhuan*. However, the *Lidai fabao ji* is the earliest extant Chan text that tries to respond to the obvious insufficiency of Shenhui's notion of "unbroken transmission." In Shenhui's list, the gap between the five Indian "patriarchs" from

the popular *Aśokarāja-sūtra* (*Ayu wang jing*)²⁹ and the Chinese patriarchs is bridged by names derived from the Sarvāstivāda lineage: 6) Śubhamitra, an unknown figure who may be a scrambling of Vasumitra from Buddhābhadrā's list, and 7) Saṅgharakṣa, who is the figure between Vasumitra and Dharmatrāta in Buddhābhadrā's list.³⁰ Shenhui replaced Dharmatrāta with 8) Bodhidharma, but the *Lidai fabao ji* authors tried to retain both with the unique coinage Bodhidharmatrāta. The *Lidai fabao ji* uses the entire *Fu fazang zhuan* list, and interpolates the names Sāravasa and Upagupta in between Śiṃha and Shenhui's (or his source's) "Śubhamitra," making for a total of twenty-nine Indian patriarchs. Sāravasa and Upagupta are the fourth and fifth figures in the *Aśokarāja-sūtra* account of the initial transmissions, but the *Lidai fabao ji* authors distinguish the traditional fourth and fifth Indian patriarchs Sāravasa and Upagupta from the newly minted twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth patriarchs Sāravasa and Upagupta by using alternative transliterations.³¹

The *Baolin zhuan* (801) list of twenty-eight Indian patriarchs was to become the canonical version that was incorporated into the *Jingde chuandeng lu*. Its author duplicated most of the *Lidai fabao ji* list but eliminated Madhyāntika and substituted three different names after Śiṃha, ending with Bodhidharma. The *Lidai fabao ji* list was thus a key source for the standard version of the Chan lineage of Indian patriarchs. In the final analysis, the *Lidai fabao ji* authors appear to have drawn from Shenhui's ideology and his list, Buddhābhadrā's tradition linking the Indian and Kashmiri masters, and the *Fu fazang zhuan* list without its ideology.

The fifth- or sixth-century sensibilities that shaped the *Fu fazang zhuan* could conceive the continuity of the Dharma, though weakened, through preservation of the formal practices and traditional roles of the Saṅgha alone. This reflects a long-standing tendency in the Saṅgha to rely on orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy as the basis for continued viability of the Dharma. In marked contrast, eighth-century Chan sectarians' increasing dependence on lineage as the source of continuity made the *Fu fazang zhuan* account of a broken patriarchal lineage difficult either to ignore or to accept unaltered. The story of how the lineage was saved from extinction begged to be told, just as traditional Buddhism's wanton extinction of fully realized arhats had begged for the resuscitating doctrine of the bodhisattva path. The *Lidai fabao ji* authors' oft-cited freedom with sources qualified them well for the task. They included the story of the martyrdom of Śiṃha, but claimed that the crucial Dharma transmission was accomplished before Śiṃha's death.

Śiṃha bhikṣu had transmitted [the Dharma] to Saravasa, and so he went from central India to Kashmir. The king there was named Mihirakula.³² This king did not believe in the Buddha-dharma. He destroyed stupas, demolished monasteries, and slaughtered sentient beings to serve the two heretics Moman (Mani) and Mishihe (Mes-

siah, i.e., Jesus).³³ At that time Śiṃha bhikṣu purposely came to convert this kingdom, and the pathless king with his own hands took up a sharp double-edged sword and swore an oath: “If you are a sage, the [other] masters must suffer punishment.” Śiṃha bhikṣu then manifested a form whereby his body bled white milk. Moman and Mishihe were executed like common men, and their blood spattered over the ground. The king resolved to take refuge in the Buddha, and he ordered the disciple of Śiṃha bhikṣu (the Dharma had already been transmitted to Sāravasa) to enter south India to preach extensively and liberate beings.³⁴

In the *Fu fazang zhuan* there is no mention of the heretic masters and no conversion of the king. The martyrdom is summary and graphic: the king beheads Śiṃha, and the story ends thus: “in his head there was no blood, only milk flowed out. The persons who had transmitted the Dharma from one to the other were in this manner severed.”³⁵ In contrast, the *Lidai fabao ji* authors appear to have been somewhat anxious to make their main point, repeating that the transmission had already passed to Sāravasa.

The implicit message of the *Fu fazang zhuan* is that the true current of Dharma transmission runs in a narrow and hidden channel, encompassing the paradox of its destructible human vessels and its perpetual pure nourishment. The *Fu fazang zhuan*, with or without emendations, was clearly compelling to those who were engaged in spreading the Dharma in the sixth through eighth centuries. I would argue that the *Fu fazang zhuan* mystique of the “holy ones” was one of the forces in the negotiation of the relative identities of lay and ordained, state and Saṅgha, in Chinese terms. It places the “holy ones” who transmit the Dharma in a special category, precisely the special category appropriated in the “Chan master” rhetoric of the late eighth century. Like the “holy one,” the Chan master is an ordinary man in recognizable circumstances, not exactly an arhat or buddha, not bound by karma and yet pre-ordained to carry on the transmission.

The Portrait of Wuzhu in the *Lidai fabao ji*

The *Lidai fabao ji* contains the only known biography of the Bao Tang founder Wuzhu. In this biography it is claimed that he was originally of a military family in the north and initially attained some success in a military career. However, he became disillusioned and sought out various Buddhist masters, eventually becoming a monk.³⁶

As the story unfolds, Wuzhu is not content to stay long with any master, but then he meets a merchant who is astounded at his physical resemblance to the famous Master Wuxiang, prompting Wuzhu to travel to Sichuan to meet

him. In the midst of an assembly that has gathered to hear Wuxiang preach, Wuzhu understands a mysterious command that Wuxiang addresses to him, telling him to go into the mountains. In the mountains he practices an asceticism even more radical than Wuxiang's, and there we see him preaching, for the first time, a formless practice more absolute than his fellow monks can stomach. Wuzhu is deserted by the other monks because his refusal to carry out any recognizable Buddhist activity besides sitting in meditation is, it is implied, responsible for the dearth of donations to their remote temple.

Master Daoyi, [Wuzhu's] fellow inmate [at the mountain hermitage], practiced chanting, worship, and recitation of the Buddha's name, while the Venerable [Wuzhu] wholeheartedly cut through thinking and ceased all restless anxiety, and entered into the field of self-mandating [enlightenment].

Daoyi, accompanied by all the minor masters who were their fellow inmates, addressed the Venerable, saying, "I, together with all our fellow inmates, want you to join us in the daily six repetitions of the ritual of repentance. We humbly beg the Venerable to listen and accede."

The Venerable said to Daoyi and the others, "Here we are altogether cut off from provisions, [which must be] transported on foot deep into the mountains. We cannot depend on legalistic practice. You want to learn deranged [behavior], but this is not the Buddha-dharma at all." The Venerable quoted the *Śūraṅgama-sūtra*, "The deranged mind is not at rest. At rest, it is bodhi (awakening). Peerless pure bright mind fundamentally pervades the dharmadhātu.' No-thought is none other than seeing the Buddha. Thinking is none other than birth-and-death. If you want to practice worship and recitation, then leave the mountains. Below the mountains there are gracious and easeful temple-quarters, and you are free to go. If you want to stay with me, you must utterly devote yourself to no-thought. If you can, then you are free to stay. If you cannot, then you must go down from the mountains."³⁷

Daoyi does leave the mountain to go down to the Jingzhong monastery and bear tales of Wuzhu to Wuxiang. However, Wuxiang is delighted rather than dismayed by reports of Wuzhu's behavior, saying that he himself practiced thus in his youth, "When I was at the stage of learning I wouldn't get around to eating, I just sat empty and unoccupied. I didn't even make an effort to shit or piss. You lot don't realize that when I was at Mount Tiangu I didn't worship or recite, either. All my fellow students became angry with me and left the mountain. No one sent provisions and I had only smelted earth (*liantu*) for food."³⁸

The *Lidai fabao ji* authors thus defended their own standards for distin-

guishing those worthy of offerings and those not. Bao Tang survival depended on wider acceptance of these standards, yet they must have been aware that their manifesto, the *Lidai fabao ji*, would draw even more critical attention to the group. It is possible that even sympathizers might have been hard put to explain the basis of the Bao Tang claim for support as Buddhist clergy, since they did not retain the forms of monastic practice.

Beginning with the passage above and reinforced in subsequent passages featuring encounters with various challengers and followers, Wuzhu's signature teaching was no-thought (*wunian*) and nonattachment to the forms of practice. Nothing was to be set apart as Buddhist practice, and yet nothing was not Buddhist practice. It seems that Wuzhu's followers did achieve some measure of success in living up (or down) to this standard. According to the Bao Tang's ninth-century critic Zongmi, the Bao Tang were notorious for not maintaining any monastic observances, or even basic etiquette, and for tonsuring and conferring robes on people without requiring of them any evidence of Buddhist practice. Given this radical designification of the monastic robe, it becomes all the more surprising that the plot of the first half of the *Lidai fabao ji* is wrapped up in the convoluted story of how Bodhidharma's robe came into Wuzhu's possession.

In the second part, concerning Wuzhu's dialogues with antagonists and disciples, one of the more intriguing passages concerns the nun Liaojianxing (Completely seeing the [Buddha]-nature), who receives one of the most detailed treatments of any of the ordained disciples.³⁹ In this passage, it is said that Liaojianxing became a nun simply by donning robes and tonsuring herself, flaunting both Buddhist and imperial authority in a perfect enactment of Wuzhu's teachings.⁴⁰ There is no other record of this person, and we can only speculate as to why neither she nor any other disciple was named as Wuzhu's successor. Was it because his closest disciples were laypersons and women, or was it because his radical interpretation of sudden practice was incompatible with any form, including that of transmission? If the latter, then why is so much of the *Lidai fabao ji* invested in establishing a claim to legitimacy in conventional and fabricated terms?

The final talismanic evocation in the text concerns Wuzhu's portrait, not his robe. The last section of the *Lidai fabao ji* is set off by these words: "Portrait Eulogy (*zhenzan*), with Preface, for the Venerable of the Dali Bao Tang Monastery, a Disciple of Chan (*chanmen menren*) Who Transmitted Sudden Awakening in the Mahāyāna."⁴¹ It was common for an eulogy or epitaph to include a preface. Here the preface praises Wuzhu's teachings and gives the reasons for having a portrait made, and the eulogy itself praises the Buddha-dharma and the portrait. The piece echoes Wuzhu's sermons as given in other sections of the *Lidai fabao ji*, but it is written in a more polished style than that of the person or persons who wrote the rest of the text. In the preface Wuzhu is referred to as "our teacher," so the writer (who refers to himself as "the moun-

tain man Sun Huan”) identifies himself as a Bao Tang follower. Sun Huan is otherwise unknown, but he seems to have been a retired scholar and lay disciple with a Daoist background. Following the preface and eulogy, there is a short concluding description of Wuzhu’s death in the classic manner of a Buddhist master, and the style of this concluding passage seems to revert to that of the authors of the main body of the *Lidai fabao ji*. It is possible that the preface and eulogy are earlier than the rest of the text, if they were in fact written soon after his death. Below, I include the last paragraph of the preface and the last paragraph of the eulogy:

Accordingly, we secretly summoned a fine artist to paint [our master’s] portrait (*zhenji*). His appearance [in the portrait] is lustrous, his features are fine and successfully realized. Those who gaze at this rendering are able to destroy evil, those who rely on his Dharma are able to attain the mystery. The deeper places [of his Dharma] I have not yet fathomed. Bowing my head to the ground and raising my gaze with reverence, I exert my strength to write this eulogy.⁴²

Accordingly we summoned the fine artist; secretly he made the painting. [The artist] pushed the brush and produced the form, and gazing at the majestic response-body separate from characteristics and emptied of words, we see the expansive vessel of the Dharma. His virtue is like a gift from Heaven, his bones are not like those of this world. How silently mysterious and fine! [The portrait] seems to be truly breathing, the face quivers and wants to speak, the eyes dance and are about to see. “I look up and it is ever loftier, I venerate and it is ever more dear.”⁴³ Without our master, this Dharma will sink.⁴⁴

The eulogy for Wuzhu ends with a chilly breath of the “decline of the Dharma” sensibility that wafts through the *Lidai fabao ji* as a whole: “Without our master, this Dharma will sink.” At the same time, the preface claims that the portrait has magical and soteriological effect. This claim is all the more striking because much of the *Lidai fabao ji* has to do with the drama of patriarchal transmission and the story of Wuzhu’s inheritance of the true Dharma and Bodhidharma’s robe. Yet at the scene of Wuzhu’s death, no Dharma heir is named and the robe is conspicuously absent. Instead, the manifestation of Wuzhu’s Dharma becomes this painted likeness.

It may be appropriate that the Dharma of a master named Wuzhu, non-abiding, should be considered to abide in his portrait. As noted, one of the recurrent themes in the autograph inscriptions of Song Chan abbots is the idea that the true form of no-form is representation. The representation signs that it is impossible to render the true image of enlightenment, and at the same time it functions as emptiness functions, as the multifaceted transformations of *upāya*, or skillful means. Griffith Foulk and Robert Sharf write:

“According to the ritual logic of Sung Buddhist monasteries, the icon of the Buddha, the living person of the abbot, and the abbot’s portrait were largely interchangeable. It would seem that the body of the living abbot, like his portrait, had come to be regarded as the ‘simulacrum’ (*hsiang*) of Buddhahood.”⁴⁵

The notion that the abbot and his image are equally simulacra, virtual buddhas, has roots in the ninth-century notion of the Chan master as a “living Buddha.” This was a sacralization of the “sudden” teaching of intrinsic Buddha nature, the realization of the ultimate truth of the contingent, expressed in the *Platform Sutra* teaching that the self is the *Trikāya*, the three bodies of the Buddha.⁴⁶

The mysterious portrait of Wuzhu balances on the same crux that characterizes the *Lidai fabao ji* as a whole, because those responsible for creating it treated it both conventionally and absolutely, both gradually and suddenly, as an icon and as a representation of iconoclasm. It combined many qualities and abided in none—it was at once an ancestral shrine tablet, a sacred relic, a response-body, representation as the true face of the Dharma, and the unique and ephemeral image of a unique and ephemeral religious community. Wuzhu became for his followers the form of the formless practice he taught, and whether this was the revenge of suppressed devotionism or a demonstration of his disciples’ true understanding of the emptiness of reverence, we must leave it for Mañjuśrī, the bodhisattva of wisdom, to decide.

The Legacy of the Bao Tang and the *Lidai fabao ji*

It is perhaps impossible to tell how long the Bao Tang school survived as an independent Chan line. Most of the ninth-century traces involve its closely related rival, the Jingzhong school. As mentioned above, not long after the *Lidai fabao ji* was written the Jingzhong master Shenqing produced his *Beishan lu* (Record of North Mountain) and discredited the *Lidai fabao ji* claim that Wuzhu was a disciple of Wuxiang, criticized its account of the patriarchy, and condemned the antinomian practices of the Bao Tang.⁴⁷ Shenqing advocated the “unity of the three teachings” (*sanjiao yizhi*, i.e., Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism) as well as defending the Jingzhong lineage. In fact, the eulogy for Wuzhu shows elements of the “unity of the three teachings” trend as well.

Following the persecution of Buddhism in the mid-ninth century, the reconstructed Jingzhong sect and temple devoted to Wuxiang developed a syncretic and popular character. Sources for the Wuxiang “cult” include Wuxiang’s biography in the *Song gaoseng zhuan* and a piece written by the literatus Li Shangyin (813–858).⁴⁸ In a stele for the Korean monk Langkong, it is said that in 875 he went on foot to Chengdu to pay his respects at Wuxiang’s memorial hall at Jingzhong temple.⁴⁹

In the *Lidai fabao ji*, it is said that Wuxiang had a special method of chanting the *nianfo* (J. *nembutsu*) at the beginning of his precepts assemblies:

The Venerable Kim, every twelfth and first month, administered the “receiving of conditions” for countless numbers of people of the four assemblies. The teacher was magnificently arranged, and occupying the high seat [Wuxiang] would expound the Dharma. First, he would lead the vocal repetition of the Buddha’s name. When he had exhausted a single breath in recitation [of the Buddha’s name], the intoning broke off, the recitation stopped, and then he spoke: “Non-recollection, no-thought, and not forgetting: Nonrecollection is the precepts, no-thought is meditation, and not forgetting is wisdom. These three phrases are the gate of perfectly maintaining [the precepts].”⁵⁰

There may be a connection between Wuxiang’s style of chanting and that of the monk Fazhao (d. 820). Fazhao was a disciple of the Pure Land devotee Chengyuan (712–802), who was a disciple of Wuxiang’s master Chuji, and Fazhao developed a special method of chanting that was linked with visualization of Amitābha.⁵¹ The Jingzhong Monastery was primarily associated with Pure Land practices in the ninth century, so Wuxiang’s legacy contributed to Pure Land as well as Chan developments.

Wuxiang’s Dharma heir Jingzhong Shenhui (720–794) became abbot of Jingzhong Monastery after Wuxiang’s death. Jingzhong Shenhui’s patron Wei Gao, the military governor of Jiannan West from 785 until his death in 805, was even more powerful in Chengdu in his day than Wuzhu’s patron Du Hongjian (709–769) had been. Wei Gao seems to have been a devout believer in *nianfo* practice and probably helped to promote it.

Wuxiang and Wuzhu were also known in Tibet. Dunhuang was part of Tibetan-occupied territory from 786 to 848, and Chengdu and its environs were under Tibetan occupation during the tenth century. In the period between the composition of the *Lidai fabao ji* and its entombment in the eleventh century, there was a complex pattern of military, commercial, and religious interaction, interspersed with periods of isolation, among the cultural centers of western Sichuan, Nanzhao, Tibet, and Gansu. This interaction is attested by the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts; a surprising number of them include elements of the *Lidai fabao ji* version of Chan history. Moreover, the chronicle of Samye (bSam yas) Monastery in Lhasa includes a story of the meeting between Wuxiang and the Tibetan envoy to China.⁵²

There are also links between the *Lidai fabao ji* and one of the two post-Huineng lineages that continued (or were constructed) into the Song dynasty and beyond. Two Sichuan Chan texts that give evidence of connections between the *Lidai fabao ji* and the Hongzhou lineage of Mazu (709–788), namely, Zhiju’s *Baolin zhuan* (Transmission of the Baolin [Temple]) and the *Yuanjue*

jing dashu chao of the Chan/Huayan master Zongmi. The *Baolin zhuan*, compiled in 801, is incomplete, but its extant sections prove it to be closely related to the *Lidai fabao ji* in its style and ideology of transmission. The reputation of the Bao Tang school probably had some degree of influence on the Hongzhou school, which was the Chan school that best survived the Buddhist persecution of the Huichang era (841–846).⁵³ The Hongzhou founder Mazu was also a native of Sichuan, and there is some controversy over whether Mazu was more influenced by the Korean master Wuxiang or by his putative master, Huairang (677–744). The biographies of Korean monks included in the mid-tenth-century *Zutangji* (Anthology of the Patriarchal Hall) show evidence that Korean monks believed Mazu’s lineage to have stemmed from Wuxiang.⁵⁴ Discussion of this controversy becomes more complex when one takes into account issues of national bias among the twentieth-century scholars (Chinese, Korean, and Japanese) who have written about it.⁵⁵

Mazu was the common patriarch of the Linji and Guiyang schools, two of the “Five Houses” of the Song. The paradigm of Mazu as presented in his biography and the style of his “recorded sayings” reflects, like the *Lidai fabao ji*, a need to find an appropriate form for the sudden teaching, but the Mazu material mediates between poles of traditional and radical styles that are at once less extreme and also more clearly and confidently on the side of the new. Mazu was said to have stressed immanence, nondual everyday function such as simply eating and wearing clothes as an expression of Buddha-nature. This neither privileged nor precluded ordination and left more room to adapt existing monastic institutions, unlike the *Lidai fabao ji* denial of formal precepts and practices. The later Chan schools’ choice of immanence rather than anti-nomianism as the foundation of orthopraxy allowed reclamation of the conventional, whereas Wuzhu’s absolutism was bound to fall back to dualism on the symbolic level, due to its investment in the inversion of symbols.

In the ninth century, there were several competing versions of symbols of authentic transmission. As Bernard Faure has shown, the role of mummies and relics was much greater than classic Chan literature would lead us to believe.⁵⁶ The *Baolin zhuan* instituted transmission verses, and these verses were included in later biographies even though their esoteric use was abandoned. The *Jingde chuandeng lu* became the accepted history of eighth- and ninth-century Chan transmission: it has more or less the version of transmission of the robe that is in the *Caoqi dashi biezhuàn*, the patriarchal biographies and transmission verses from the *Baolin zhuan*, and an inclusive notion of Chan affiliation. It represents a coalition among the main Chan “houses” and the absorption of the patriarchal lineages into a genealogy. Thus the tensions inherent in the linear “one patriarch per generation” model of the late eighth century were resolved in a more traditional genealogical mode in which the transmission was vested in the structure of the well-defined gnostic community rather than in the realization of any single individual.

Conclusion

All of the elements touched upon in the previous section—syncretic doctrines and popular devotional practices, connections with Korea and Tibet, post-persecution opportunities, the rise of the Hongzhou lineage and the development of Chan genealogies—contributed to the unique character of Sichuan Chan Buddhism. Sichuan Chan became an important source for the styles, traditions, and practices of mainstream Chan of the Song dynasty. Therefore, these regional developments would leave their imprint upon Chinese society as a whole during the era of Chan Buddhism's greatest political and cultural influence. The influence of the Bao Tang upon Sichuan Chan was not negligible. What, in the end, is the transmission of the Bao Tang school?

The huge repository of Chan lore owes much to Wuzhu's disciples, one or several of whom created the written portrait of the master whose spirit lives on in the *Lidai fabao ji*. The *Lidai fabao ji* modified received genres or introduced new stylistic features in ways that would shape the standard genres of Song Chan literature—*chuan deng lu*, *yulu*, and *zhenzan*. Furthermore, the *Lidai fabao ji* version of the Indian line of patriarchs was the source for the version that became official. Many anecdotes that have their origins in the *Lidai fabao ji* found their way into the official annals of Chan. Yet the *Lidai fabao ji* itself was repudiated and all but forgotten.

Some of the creative fabrications of the *Lidai fabao ji* made their way into more acceptable works and passed into the realm of revered Chan lore. However, the elements that were incorporated into the mainstream of Chan underwent a trimming process in which the fervent and eccentric qualities, particularly the antinomianism, were excised. In this process, what was lost?

Due in part to a late-twentieth-century Western fascination with *kōan* literature, Chan writings are often approached, in both popular and scholarly works, as spare renderings of the spontaneous expression of realized self-presence. By presenting the *Lidai fabao ji* with its anxious and loquacious fictions exposed, I do not want to end at the other extreme and reduce it to an example of as-yet-unskilled Chan propaganda. I have no wish to imply that traces of mundane concerns and expedients necessarily invalidate the originality of insight or the purity of the motives of the unknown author or authors. To do so would merely replicate the ideological hypostasis of the tradition while attempting to unsettle it; by taking issue with the fabrications of the Chan histories one joins in the reification of a separate and unwritten transmission of Chan. In a tribute to the creativity of Wuzhu and his followers, I would like to end with a consideration of the vexed nature of Buddhist transmission itself. The very time- and place-bound paradoxes of eighth-century Chan that produced the *Lidai fabao ji* and the unique experiments of the Bao Tang school

also exemplify a perennial Buddhist dilemma—the dilemma of the necessary instability of the transmission of a specific yet unclosed canon of teachings (Dharma) by an ordained community (Saṅgha) that is predicated upon the ultimacy of the individual’s experience of truth (Buddha/*bodhi*). At the heart of this “Triple Jewel” there is always already a tension between the continuity of received forms and the formless fecundity of insight.

NOTES

1. This article consists of excerpts from various sections of my book in progress: *The Mystique of Transmission: On an Early Chan History and its Contexts*. The primary sources for this study are as follows: Dunhuang manuscripts in the Pelliot collection, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, are cited as P, and Dunhuang manuscripts in the Stein collection, British Library, London, are cited as S.

- *Ayu wang jing* (*Aśokarāja-sūtra*, Sutra of King Aśoka). Translated in 512 by Saṃghapāla. T 50 (2043).
- *Baolin zhuan* (Transmission of the Baolin [Temple]) [801], by Zhijū. In Yanagida, ed., *Sodōichin Hōrinden* (Tokyo: Chūbun Shuppasha, 1975).
- *Beishan lu* (Record of North Mountain) [ca. late 8th c.], by Shenqing. T 52 (2113).
- *Caoqi dashi bie zhuan* (Separate biography of the Master at Caoqi) [781]. ZZ 146, 483–488.
- *Chu sanzang ji ji* (Collection of notes on the translation of the tripitaka) [515], by Sengyou. T 55 (2145).
- *Damoduoluo chan jing* (The Dhyāna-sūtra of Dharmatrāta). Translated by Buddhahadra (359–429). T 15 (618).
- *E cang Dunhuang wenxian* (Dunhuang documents held in Russia [at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg Branch]) (1995–1999). 9 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai guji.
- *Fu fazang [yinyuan] zhuan* (Traditions [of the causes and conditions] of transmission of the Dharma Treasury). T 50 (2058).
- *Jian yiqie ruzangjing mulu* [934], by Daozhen. In Oda Yoshihisa, “Tonkō Sankaiji no ‘Ken issai nyūzōkyō mokuroku,’” *Ryūkoku Daigaku ronshū* 434–435 (1989): 555–576.
- *Jingde chuandeng lu* (Record of the transmission of the lamp [compiled in] the Jingde era) [1004], by Daoyuan. T 51 (2076).
- *Lengqie shizi ji* (Record of the masters and disciples of the *Lanka* [*vatāra-sūtra*]) [ca. 720], by Jingjue. T 85 (2837); P 4564, P 3294, P 3537, P 3436, P 3703, S 2054, S 4272.
- *Lidai fabao ji* (Record of the Dharma-Jewel through the ages) [ca. 780]. T 51 (2075).
- *Lidai sanbao ji* (Record of the triple jewel through the ages). T 49 (2034).
- *Liuzu tanjing* (Platform sutra of the sixth Patriarch) [ca. late 8th cent.]. S 5475.
- *Putidamou nanzong ding shifei lun* (Treatise determining the true and false

- about the Southern school of Bodhidharma). Record of Shenhui's 732 debate, by Duhu Pei. P 3047; in Hu Shih, *Xingjiaa ding de Dunhuang xieben Shen hui heshang yizhu liangzhong* (Taipei: Hu Shih jin ianguan, [1958] 1970); Suzuki and Koda, eds., 1934.
- *Song gaoseng zhuan* (Song Dynasty biographies of eminent monks) [988], by Zanning. T 50 (2061).
 - *Tang Zizhou huiyijingshe nanchanyuan sizhengtang beiming* (Stele inscription for the four exemplars hall of the Southern Chan cloister of the Huiyi Monastery in Zizhou, Tang dynasty), by Li Shangyin (813–858). *Sibu beiyao*, Fannan wenji bubian, vol. 10. pp. 1–24.
 - *Tianjinshi yishu bowuguan cang Dunhuang Tulufan wenxian* (Dunhuang and Turfan documents held at the Tianjin Art Museum) (1997–1999). 7 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai guji.
 - *Yuanjue jing dashu chao* (Subcommentary to the Scripture of Perfect Enlightenment) [823], by Zongmi (780–841). ZZ 14, 3–5 and 15, 1.
 - *Zutang ji* (Anthology from the Patriarchal Hall) [952]. In Yanagida Seizan, *Sodō shū* (*Chodangjip*) (Kyoto: Chūbun shuppansha, 1974), pp. 1625–1631.

2. The designation derives from the name of the temple occupied by the group, the Dali Bao Tang si. Chan scholar Yanagida Seizan surmises that Wuzhu's patron, the imperial minister Du Hongjian (709–769) may have been responsible for installing Wuzhu in a temple with an imperial designation, and possibly imperial support. See Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Hōzōkan, 1967), pp. 286–287. The Bao Tang monastery was situated in Zizhou in Jiannan, the southwest frontier region of China. Use of the term “school” for the loosely defined affiliations of the eighth century is vexed; the designations are usually retrospective and often motivated by later sectarian considerations. Nevertheless, this convention is difficult to avoid entirely.

3. Shenqing's criticisms of Wuzhu and the Bao Tang occur in his *Beishan lu*, T 52 (2113) 611b. Zongmi's critique occurs in his summary and evaluation of the different Chan schools of his day. He first describes Bao Tang ordination and practices, or lack thereof, and characterizes the Bao Tang as a school that preaches “extinguishing consciousness” (*mieshi*). *Yuanjue jing dashu chao*, ZZ 14, 278d. See Kamata Shigeo, *Zengen shosenshū tōjō*, *Zen no goroku* no. 9 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1971), pp. 306–307. The Bao Tang school is then included in Zongmi's more extensive criticism of the nihilistic and antinomian tendencies of the Hongzhou and Niutou schools (ZZ 14, 279a–c; Kamata, *Zengen shosenshū tōjō*, pp. 312–315. For a description of Zongmi's commentaries on the *Yuanjue jing*, see Peter N. Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Signification of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 320–321.

4. The earliest extant text claiming that Huineng received the robe is the *Putidamou nanzong ding shifei lun* by Dugu Pei, which purports to be a record of the confrontation of Shenhui (684–758) with the “Northern school” disciples in 732. In this text, Shenhui states that it was not necessary to transmit the robe after Huineng, and that the robe was in Shaozhou. See Hu Shi, *Shen hui heshang yizhi* (Taipei: Hu Shi jinian guan, [1930] 1970), pp. 280–281.

5. On the discovery and publication of the *Lidai fabao ji* texts and fragments

known before 1997, including fragments newly identified by Rong Xinjiang, see Rong Xinjiang, “Dunhuang ben Chanzong dengshi canjuan shiyi,” in *Zhou Shaoliang Xiansheng xinkaijuzhi qingshou wenji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), pp. 235–242. On the more recently discovered Tianjin and Berlin texts, see notes 6 and 10 below. My translation of the *Lidai fabao ji* is based on Yanagida Seizan’s redaction of P 2125, which includes corrections based on comparison with the other *Lidai fabao ji* manuscripts, in *Shoki no zenshi II: Rekidai hōbōki* (Early Chan history II: *Lidai fabao ji*). However, I will cite the page and line numbers in the Taishō edition, T 51 (2075) 179a–196b. I do so because it is the standard source for the Chinese canon, and the most readily available, although its *Lidai fabao ji* is not the best redaction. The Taishō editors claim that P 2125 is the base text, with notes on the variations in S 516, but there are many places where the text was changed without annotation, and a number of misprints. See Kondō Ryōichi, “Rekidai hōbō ki no shōshahon ni tsuite,” *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 21 no. 2 (1974): 313–318. I would like to revise and publish my annotated English translation of the *Lidai fabao ji*, but for the time being it is held hostage by the “this is not a book” prejudice against translations that is endemic to the current tenuring system of U.S. academic institutions. See David J. Haberman and Jan Nattier, “Whatever Became of Translation?” *Religious Studies News* (1996): 13.

6. Jinyi designates Dunhuang and Turfan manuscripts in the Tianjin Art Museum, cited by document number in *Tianjinshi yishu bowuguan cang Dunhuang Tulufan wenxian*. Jinyi 304 is in vol. 4, pp. 324–349.

7. This is the title only; see Rong, “Dunhuang ben Chanzong dengshi canjuan shiyi,” pp. 241–242.

8. *Tianjinshi yishu bowuguan cang Dunhuang Tulufan wenxian*, vol. 2, p. 199.

9. Described by Tanaka Ryosho, *Tonkō Zenshō bunken no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1983). An article in the *Mainichi Shimbun* in 1976 revealed that the manuscript was in the possession of a Mr. Hamada Noriaki. His collection was subsequently divided between the Tōyō Bunkō and the National Diet Library, but part of it ended up in a bookstore. The current whereabouts of the *Lidai fabao ji* manuscript is still unknown. See Rong, “Dunhuang ben Chanzong dengshi canjuan shiyi,” p. 237.

10. A fragment from Turfan collected during the German expeditions of 1902–1914, now in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, identified by Nishiwaki Tsuneki. See Nishiwaki Tsuneki, “Guanyu Bolin suo zang Tulufan shoujipin zhong de Chanji ziliao,” *Suyuyan yanjiu* 4 (1997): 138–139.

11. A fragment at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg Branch, published in *E cang Dunhuang wenxian* vol. 5, pp. 42–43. See Rong, “Dunhuang ben Chanzong dengshi canjuan shiyi,” pp. 237–241.

12. See Rong Xinjiang, “*Lidai fabao ji*” *zhong de Momanni he Mishihe* (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1999), pp. 136–137.

13. The *Lidai fabao ji* is listed in the catalogue of the library of the Sanjie Monastery at Dunhuang, the *Jian yiqie ruzangjing mulu* written by Daozhen in 934. One copy of the catalogue is now in the Beijing Library collection; see published edition in Oda Yoshihisa, “Tonkō Sankaiji no ‘Ken issai nyūzōkyō mokuroku,’” *Ryūkoku Daigaku ronshū* 434–435 (1989): 555–576 (the entry of the title *Lidai fabao ji* occurs on p. 560). Rong Xinjiang and other scholars have raised the question of whether or not

the Dunhuang Chan manuscript listed therein can be considered a part of the lost “Chan Canon” (*Chan zang*) compiled by Zongmi; see Rong, “Dunhuang ben Chan-zong dengshi canjuan shiyi,” p. 242. On the *Chan zang*, see Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism*, pp. 322–323.

14. See Rong Xinjiang, “The Nature of Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for Its Sealing,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 11 (1999–2000): 247–275, on the nature of the materials in the library cave. Rong also advances the theory that the cave was sealed due to fear of invasion by the Islamic Karakhanids, who destroyed Khotan in 1006, resulting in a wave of refugees to Dunhuang; *ibid.*, pp. 272–275.

15. T 51 (2076). This and other Song-dynasty Chan texts drew from the following eighth- and ninth-century Chan sectarian histories (see note 1 above): the *Baolin zhuan* of 801; the *Beishan lu* by Shenqing; the *Caoqi dashi biezhuan* of 781; and early versions of the *Liuzu tanjing*. Also relevant is the recently discovered manuscript at the Dunhuang museum edited by Yang Cengwen, (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1993). See Philip B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967).

16. For Yanagida’s extensive work on this and related topics, I refer the reader to Bernard Faure’s “Bibliographie succincte de Yanagida Seizan” in the *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 7 (1994): 45–50. For relevant works in Western languages, see Bernard Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy: A Critical Genealogy of Northern Chan Buddhism*, translated by Phyllis Brooks (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); John McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch’an Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1986); Jeffrey L. Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology: The Earliest Records of Zen* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); T. Griffith Foulk, “The Ch’an School and Its Place in the Buddhist Monastic Tradition” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987).

17. For an excellent overview of institutional Buddhism in the Tang, see Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T’ang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

18. See Denis Twitchett, “The Composition of the Tang Ruling Class: New Evidence from Tunhuang,” in Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Perspectives on the Tang* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 47–85; Charles Peterson, “Court and Province in Mid- and Late-T’ang,” in Denis Twitchett, ed., *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 3, *Sui and T’ang China*, 589–906 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 464–560; Michael T. Dalby, “Court Politics in Late T’ang Times,” in Denis Twitchett, ed., *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 3, *Sui and T’ang China*, 589–906, pp. 561–681; Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

19. See Hu Shi, “The Development of Zen Buddhism in China,” *Chinese and Political Science Review* 15 no. 4 (1932): 475–505; Jacques Gernet, *Entretiens du maître dhyana Chen-houei du Ho-tsö (668–760)* ([1949] Paris: École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1977); John McRae, “Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch’an Buddhism,” in Peter N. Gregory, ed., *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1987), pp. 232–237. The dates for Shenhui are based on the recently discovered Longmen stele of 765. See Kōdō Takeuchi, “Shinshutsu no Katakaku Jinne tōmei ni tsuite” *Shūgaku kenkyū* 27 (1985): 313–325.

20. See Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 63–65.

21. For a discussion of the emergence of the Chan *yulu* genre and its relation to earlier Buddhist genres, see Judith Berling, “Bringing the Buddha down to Earth: Notes on the Emergence of *Yu-lü* as a Buddhist Genre,” *History of Religions* 21 no. 1 (1987): 56–88. For a related discussion of the “encounter” versus “marga” paradigms of cultivation, see John McRae, “Encounter Dialogue and the Transformation of the Spiritual Path in Chinese Ch’an,” in Peter N. Gregory, ed., *Paths to Liberation: The Marga and Its Transformations in Buddhist Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1992), pp. 339–369. On Neo-Confucian *yulu*, see Daniel K. Gardiner, “Modes of Thinking and Modes of Discourse in the Sung: Some Thoughts on the *Yü-lu* (Recorded Conversations) Texts,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 50 no. 3 (1991): 574–603.

22. For a fascinating study of connections among early medieval genres, see Robert Ford Campany, *Strange Writing: Anomaly Accounts in Early Medieval China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996). On the relationship between *qingtan* and Buddhist treatises, see Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1959), pp. 93–94.

23. T 51 (2075) 179a–196b.

24. T 85 (2837).

25. The *Lidai fabao ji* gives these specific dates for Daoxin, Hongren, and Huineng, but does not give dates for Bodhidharma, Huike, or Sengcan. Dates for Bodhidharma’s death vary from text to text; see Chen Yuan, *Shishi yinian lu Jiangsu: Jiangsu guangling guji* (Jiangsu: Jiangsu guangling guji, [1939] 1991), p. 38. Huike’s dates are based on the *Jingde chuandeng lu*; see Chen, *Shishi yinian lu*, p. 42. The date for Sengcan is from the memorial inscription reported by Chen Hao in *Wenwu* 4 (1985): 8. The inscription states that it was written by Daoxin, thus corroborating their master-disciple relationship.

26. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*, pp. 8–9.

27. T 50 (2058). The origins of the *Fu fazang zhuan* are unclear. In the *Chu sanzang ji ji* it is listed as a translation completed in 472 by Tanyao (d. ca. 485) and the Indian monk Kinkara. *Chu sanzang ji ji*, T 55 (2145) 13b6–12. The compiler of the *Lidai sanbao ji* refers to the mention of a *Fu fazang zhuan* in an earlier catalogue, for which the *terminus ad quem* of 481 has been established. The *Lidai sanbao ji* notice on Tanyao claims that after the persecution Tanyao regretted leaving the mountains where he hid during the persecution. Therefore he sequestered himself in a cave temple with a group of monks and retranslated a number of sutras, including the *Fu fazang zhuan*, in order to restore the integrity of Dharma transmission that the persecution had damaged. *Lidai sanbao ji*, T 49 (2034) 62b–63a. On dating the text, see Henri Maspéro, “Sur la date et l’authenticité du fou fa tsang fir yuan tchovan,” *Mélanges d’Indianism (offerts à S. Lev. par ses élèves* Paris: E. Leroux, 1911); on the use of the text in later Chan lineages, see Elizabeth Morrison, “The *Fufazang yinyuan zhuan* and the Ancestry of Genealogy in Medieval Chinese Buddhism” (seminar paper, Stanford University, 1995).

28. T 15 (618).

29. T 50 (2043), translated in 512 by Samghapala.

30. For Shenhui's version of the Indian patriarchs, see Hu, *She-hui heshang yizhi*, p. 179. In spite of the use made of it, the *Aśokarāja-sūtra* is not a generational lineage as conceived by sixth-century Chinese exegetes such as Guanding or the unknown author of the *Fu fazang zhuan*, for the first two figures, Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda, are both presented as disciples of the Buddha, although Ānanda does succeed Mahākāśyapa in authority. Likewise the third and fourth figures, Madhyāntika and Sāravasa, are both presented as disciples of Ānanda, and Sāravasa transmits the Dharma to the fifth figure, Upagupta. Following the *Aśokarāja-sūtra*, the *Fu fazang zhuan* retains Madhyāntika as a co-disciple to Sāravasa, but Shenhui, who was probably following Buddhahadra's list, has Madhyāntika as the third Indian patriarch.

31. *Lidai fabao ji*, T 51 (2075) 180a16–b15.

32. Mihirakula was the second ruler of the conquering Hura people (related to the Hepthalites) who ruled northwest India and Kashmir from the end of the fifth century and well into the sixth. The exceptional cruelty of this ruler and his known persecution of Buddhists has led to speculation that his reign, and the consequent exodus of monks, may have been responsible for the late sixth-century development of the “decline of the Dharma” theme in China. Nattier argues that although this may have been a factor, the literature of decline is also strongly associated with the very prosperity of the saṅgha during the peaceful Kushan rule of the second and third centuries. See Jan Nattier, *Once upon a Future Time: Studies in the Buddhist Prophecy of Decline* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991), pp. 110–117, 224–227. If the “Mid-uoluojue” of the *Fu fazang zhuan* is indeed Mihirakula, then this is another indication of its sixth-century origins.

33. The *Lidai fabao ji* is the only account of Simha's murder in which these identifications are made. Rong Xinjiang discusses the possible influence of this *Lidai fabao ji* passage on the attitude of the Tibetan king Tri Songdetsen (r. 754–797) toward Manichaeism, and suggests that this is but one effect of Chinese xenophobia following the An Lushan rebellion. Since the Tang restoration depended on Uighur armies, the central government was forced to adopt tolerant policies (in contrast to Xuanzong's edict of 732 criticizing Manichaeism and barring Chinese from practicing it). Rong argues, however, that the similar northern military backgrounds of Wuzhu and his patron Du Hongjian would probably have created a Bao Tang prejudice against foreign religions. See Rong, “The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for Its Sealing.” See also G. Uray, “Tibet's Connections with Nestorianism and Manichaeism in the 8th–10th Centuries,” *Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde* 10 (1983): 399–429; Samuel N. C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1992); David Scott, “Buddhist Responses to Manichaeism: Mahāyāna Reaffirmation of the ‘Middle Path,’” *History of Religions* 35 no. 2 (1995): 148–162; Paul Pelliot and Antonino Forte, *L'inscription nestorienne de Si-ngan-fou* (Kyoto and Paris: Italian School of East Asian Studies and Collège de France, 1996); Antonino Forte, “The Chinese Title of the Manichaean Treatise from Dunhuang” (paper at the International Conference on Dunhuang Studies, Dunhuang, July 2000).

34. *Lidai fabao ji*, T 51 (2075) 180a29–b9.

35. *Fu fazang zhuan*, T 50 (2058) 321c14–18.

36. *Lidai fabao ji*, T 51 (2075) 186a15–b8.

37. Ibid., T 51 (2075) 186c28–187a8.
38. Ibid., T 51 (2075) 187a16–19.
39. The *Lidai fabao ji* also highlights Wuzhu's relationship with the prominent imperial minister in Sichuan, Du Hongjian (709–769). Although he is considered to have been Wuzhu's follower, his role is that of primary patron rather than close personal disciple.
40. *Lidai fabao ji*, T 51 (2075) 192a24–b20.
41. Ibid., T 51 (2075) 195c14–15.
42. Ibid., T 51 (2075) 196a10–13.
43. Adaptation of Yan Hui's praise of virtue in the *Lunyu*; see Arthur Waley, trans., *The Analects of Confucius* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1938), p. 140.
44. *Lidai fabao ji*, T 51 (2075) 196a22–26.
45. T. Griffith Foulk and Robert Sharf, "On the Ritual Use of Ch'an Portraiture in Medieval China," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 7 (1994): 195.
46. See Yampolsky, *The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*, pp. 141–143.
47. *Beishan lu*, T 52 (2113) 611b and 612c.
48. *Song gaoseng zhuan*, T 50 (2061) 832b–833a; *Tang Zizhou huiyijingshe nanchanyuan sizhengtang beiming*.
49. Minn Young-gyu, "Shisen kōdan shūi," *Chūgai Nippō* (1991): 24509: 1; 24510: 1; and 24511: 1–2.
50. *Lidai fabao ji*, T 51 (2075) 185a11–15.
51. Tsukamoto Zenryū, *Chūgoku jōdo kyōshi kenkyū*, Tsukamoto Zenryū chosaku-shū 4 (1976), pp. 559–565; Jeffrey L. Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet," *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983); Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 73–74; Daniel Stevenson, "Visions of Manjusri on Mount Wutai," *Religions of China in Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 203–222.
52. See Giuseppe Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts*, II ([1958] Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986); Paul Demiéville, "L'introduction au Tibet du Bouddhisme sinise d'après les manuscrits de Touen-houang," Michel Soymie, ed., *Contributions aux Études sur Touen-houang*, (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1952); Yamaguchi Zuihō, "Tora o tomonau daijūhachi rakanzu no rairek," *Indō koten kenkyū* 13 (1984): 1–10; Obata Hironobu, "Pelliot tib. No. 116 bunken ni mieru sho Zenshi no kenkyū," *Zenbunka kenkyūjo kiyō*, 8 (1974): 33–103; Ueyama Daishun, *Tonkō bukkō no kenkyū*, (1974): vol. 13, 1–10; Ryū-toku Kimura, "Le dhyana chinois au Tibet ancien après Mahayana," *Journal Asiatique* 269 (1981): 183–192; Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet"; Guilaine Mala and Ryū-toku Kimura, "Une traite tibetain de dhyana chinois," *Bulletin de la Maison Franco-Japonaise*, 11 no. 1 (1988): 1–103. For an excellent bibliography of Japanese scholars' work on Tibetan Chan texts, see Ueyama Daishun, "Études des manuscrits tibetains de Dunhuang relatifs au bouddhisme de dhyana. Bilan et perspectives," *Journal Asiatique* 269 (1981): 287–293.
53. See Mario Poceski's dissertation on the Hongzhou school, "The Hongzhou School of Chan Buddhism during the Mid-Tang Period" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 2000).
54. Minn, "Shisen kōdan shūi." The biographies of the Korean monks are in

juan 17 of the *Zutang ji*, Yanagida Seizan, *Sodō shū (Chodangjip)* (Kyoto: Chūbun shuppansha, 1974), pp. 1,625–1,631.

55. See Minn, “Shisen kōdan shūi,” where he discusses the writings of Hu Shi and of Japanese scholars on the subject. See also Yanagida Seizan, “Shinzoku tōshi no keifu: jo no ichi,” *Zengaku kenkyū* 59 (1978): 1–39.

56. See Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, pp. 132–178.