

Who Has the Last Word in Chan? Transmission, Secrecy and Reading During the Northern Song Dynasty

JUHN Y. AHN
University of Toronto

For more than a decade, Juefan Huihong 覺範慧洪 (1071-1128)—monk, poet, and astute historian of Chan—collected stories about noteworthy Chan luminaries from the distant and not-so-distant past. Unlike other better-known Chan compilations such as the *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 (1004), the purpose of Juefan’s collection was to glorify neither a particular Chan lineage nor the Chan mythology of mind-to-mind transmission in general. Instead, Juefan had embarked on the task of collecting this rich anecdotal material primarily, it seems, to correct misperceptions about Chan and to document good learning habits from the past. Due perhaps to a mixture of diligence and good company, Juefan’s collection eventually grew to about three hundred or so tales and by then it must have seemed clear to Juefan that the time to properly collate and publish the collection was long overdue. Indeed, with a preface prepared in 1107 by the famed (Jiangxi school) poet Xie Yi 謝逸 (1069-1113) from Linchuan 臨川 county in present day Jiangxi province, the collection was finally edited into two volumes by Juefan’s otherwise little-known student Benming 本明 (d.u.) and published under the title *Linjian lu* 林間錄 or *Tales From the [Chan] Grove*.¹

While Juefan’s collection as a whole deserves our careful attention, there is one story in particular that warrants a closer look here. We begin with the following example because it seems to neatly capture some of the larger issues that this article will attempt to address.² The story goes something like this. Chan master Dagan Tanying 達觀曇穎 (989-1060)³ used to

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¹ For the *Linjian lu*, see XZJ148.585a1-67a7. For a discussion of the contents of this text and the conditions under which it was compiled, see Keyworth III, “Transmitting the Lamp of Learning in Classical Chan Buddhism,” esp. Chapter Five.

² For the entire story, see the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.606b17-607a6).

³ Juefan showed great interest in Dagan and especially in the latter’s collection of the teachings of the so-called five houses of Chan known as the *Wujia zongpai* 五家宗派; for instance, see the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.592a9 and 646a3-4). Dagan’s motivation for compiling this collection may have something to do with his decision to change lineage affiliation mid-career. Dagan had first studied under Chan

laugh at those men of Chan [*chanzhe* 禪者] who do not raise questions about the logic [*daoli* 道理] of Chan teachings and simply take what they see for granted. Within the teachings of Chan, the story tells us, there is something called the four hidden spear-tips [*si cangfeng* 四藏鋒], namely (1) engaging in principle [*jiuli* 就理], (2) engaging in phenomena [*jiushi* 就事], (3) entering by engaging in both principle and phenomena [*rujiu* 入就], and (4) emerging by engaging in neither principle or phenomena [*chujiu* 出就].⁴ But those Chan men who do not take care in inspecting the brushstrokes of the characters readily mistake *xiuli* 袖裏 [“inside the sleeves”] for *jiuli*, *chuxiu* 出袖 [“emerging from the sleeves”] for *chujiu*, and *ruxiu* 入袖 [“entering the sleeves”] for *rujiu*.⁵ In fact, these mistakes, as Juefan points out in his comments on this story, can be witnessed in a recently published collection of the sayings of a number of Chan patriarchs known as the *Deshan sijia yulu* 德山四家語錄. As a consequence, students—presumably the careless variety—have come to wonder if the four hidden spear-tips refer to some actual thing in the sleeves of the old abbots [*zhanglao* 長老]. For such clueless (and illiterate?) students, Chan master Huitang Zuxin 晦堂祖心 (1025-1100), according to our story, apparently had only this to say: “that [monk] must have left home and taken refuge in a teacher who recites [*song* 誦] the *Bayang jing* 八陽經 [for a living]!”⁶

master Dayang Jingxuan 大陽警玄 (943-1027) but later became the dharma heir of Chan master Guyin Wencong 谷隱溫聰 (965-1032), who belonged to a different Chan lineage; see Daguean’s entry in the *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* 禪林僧寶傳 (XZJ137.548b5-550a3) and the *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* 建中靖國續燈錄 compiled by Foguo Weibo 佛國惟白 (d.u.) in 1101 (XZJ136.84a6-85b2). The *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* in thirty fascicles was completed by Juefan in 1123. For the sake of convenience, I shall cite the Gozan edition of *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* reproduced in the *Zokuzōkyō* canon. For a copy of a different Gozan edition of this text published in 1295 (currently housed at the Tōyō bunko 東洋文庫 in Japan), see Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 5, 1-91. For Daguean’s entry, see *Ibid.*, 75. For a discussion of this text, see Yanagida, “Sōsetsu,” 30-57; see also Keyworth, “Transmitting the Lamp of Learning in Classical Chan Buddhism,” esp. Chapter Five.

⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the four hidden spear-tips, see the *Rentian yanmu* 人天眼目 (T48.2006.329a29). See also the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.591b18-592a3). The *Rentian yanmu* was compiled by Huiyan Zhizhao 晦巖智昭 (d.u.). A self-written preface to the text is dated 1188. There were several recensions of this text in circulation that differ significantly in content and arrangement. For the sake of convenience, I have decided to cite the edition in the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, which was based on a copy of the text published in 1654 and checked against an earlier Gozan edition (both are currently in the possession of Ōtani University Library).

⁵ Examples of this mistake can be seen, for instance, in the *Mingjue chanshi puquan ji* 明覺禪師瀑泉集 (T47.1996.692b21); *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* 天聖廣燈錄 (XZJ135.755a6-8); and *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (XZJ136.129b8-10 and 133b18).

⁶ Here, a teacher who recites the *Bayang jing* for a living stands for the clerical non-elite. For the *Bayang jing* or the *Tiandi bayang shenzhou jing* 天地八陽神咒經, see T85.2897.1422b14-1425b3. The *Bayang jing* is a relatively short scripture that contains a spell that one could recite for the purpose of securing various practical, earthly benefits (but this is not to say that the scripture does not advocate soteriological goals as well). The spell is particularly efficacious during such critical moments as house

The moral of this story seems straightforward: If you don't get the point that a *chan* formula like the four hidden spear-tips is trying to make you won't be able to detect a mistake in a reproduction of this formula when you see one. But what draws my attention to this tongue-in-cheek critique of corruption in textual transmission is not so much the lesson(s) about textual criticism that can be gained therein as the concerted effort that is being made by our story to establish a case for *comprehension* in Chan learning. We cannot, in other words, assume that Chan men read Chan teachings for comprehension and self-edification. Before Juefan and other like-minded monks began to urge fellow men of Chan to raise questions about the logic or meaning of Chan teachings, there seem to have been many different ways to demonstrate one's credentials, but none of these options seem to have required any serious level of comprehension. For instance, the simplest and, probably, most common way of doing so would have been to recite a key phrase or passage from a famous Chan text such as Yongjia Xuanjue's 永嘉玄覺 (665-713) *Zhengdao ge* 證道歌 or replicate what had apparently become an enigmatic *chan* formula like the four hidden spear-tips or three phrases [*sanju* 三句]. As a symbol of one's membership in a Chan lineage, a student could also have in his possession, and thus display when required, esoteric diagrams consisting of circles with variations in shape, color, and textual content. Or, if asked to "pass judgment on" an ancient case [*guze* 古則] or what we tend to call a koan, the student could reply with one (or perhaps several) of the handful of stock phrases or verses that came to be widely recognized as the normative "judgment" on that particular case.

As long as the student knew which koan traditionally went with which phrase or verse, having a sense of *why* the two could be paired in this manner seems to have been—that is, until folks like Dagan and Juefan began to require that their students know *why*—optional. Seldom before the eleventh century do we find, for instance, stories of Chan men making a concerted effort to raise questions about the meaning of the phrases that they assiduously collected from various teachers throughout the country. Rather, they seem to have been far more concerned, as we shall see, with where these phrases belonged in seemingly well-established but poorly understood classificatory schemes or typologies such as the "eye of the *dao*" [*daoyan* 道眼], "penetrating sound and form" [*tou shengse* 透聲色], and so on. All in all, the point of "mastering" the various *chan* teachings, formulas, diagrams, and ancient cases, it seems, was not so much to demonstrate one's comprehension of this material as to prove that one was conversant with the normative ways of their application in Chan learning. But this, as we shall see, proved to be no easy task, for these *chan* formulas, diagrams, and koan typologies seem to have been closely guarded secrets of the various Chan lineages that were

building, funeral, and marriage. Numerous copies of this text were found at Dunhuang, attesting perhaps to its popularity. For instance, see Giles, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts from Tunhuang in the British Museum*, 142-143. The *Bayang jing*'s criticism of "popular" divinatory practices has garnered some attention, see Overmeyer, "Buddhism in the Trenches," esp. 212-222; Stein, "Tibetica Antiqua I," 156-59 and passim; and also Mollier, *Buddhism and Daoism Face to Face*, 14 and 17 n. 44. I thank James A. Benn for these references.

often handed down from master to disciple behind closed doors as part of an elaborate rite of transmission.

Why, then, did men like Daguang and Juefan feel compelled to abandon these time-tested customs of learning? What, in other words, prompted these noted Chan masters of the Northern Song period (960-1127) to encourage their students to pay less attention to the imitation of ancient forms than to the substance of what was said and done by the ancients? A variety of different factors, which we cannot hastily assume to be related to the rise of a questionable print culture of the Song,⁷ are at work here and some of these factors may even be lost for good. But this article will attempt to show that the chain of events and circumstances responsible for this broad shift in the general attitude towards Chan learning had the cumulative effect of something akin to a crisis in textual authority, which seems to have deeply affected the Chan tradition throughout the Northern Song.⁸ Ironically, this crisis came on the heels of an earlier attempt to establish a firm ground for Chan learning and sectarian identity in the fixed form of a book. The *Deshan sijia yulu* mentioned in the above story from the *Linjian lu*, for instance, seems to have been a product of such an attempt.⁹ The same goes for other famous Chan texts from the tenth-to-eleventh century such as the *Zutang ji* 祖堂集 (952), *Jingde chuandeng lu* (1004), *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* (1024), and *Jianzhong*

⁷ It is still too premature to say anything definitive about the impact of print on Chan during this period, but I would like to cautiously suggest that the carving of woodblock editions did affect the Chan community not by making texts more readily available but by stabilizing these texts as “standard editions” (or, at least, they tried to do so); for more on this issue, see Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China.” I also hesitate to overstate the impact of print on Northern Song Chan because the issue of whether there was anything akin to a print revolution or even a print culture during the Song is still a matter of debate; see Brokaw, “Book History in Premodern China,” 260-262; Inoue, *Chūgoku shuppan bunkashi*, esp. 106-175; and McDermott, *A Social History of the Chinese Book*, 45-48. Cherniack herself cautiously notes the problem of hastily attributing a “print culture” to Tang and Song Buddhism; see Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China,” 32 n. 63. Although catalogues do not serve as reliable sources of readership or extent of dissemination, it also seems worth noting here that the list of Chan texts in currently extant catalogues (both official and private), as Shiina Kōyū points out, actually grew shorter over the course of the Song; see Shiina, *Sō-Gen han zenseki no kenkyū*, 403-457. Shiina suspects, and rightly so, that whereas the Northern Song catalogues recorded hand-copied manuscripts, which were in abundance, the Southern Song catalogues primarily recorded imprints; see Shiina, “Tōdai zenseki no Sōdai kankō ni tsuite,” 528.

⁸ The crisis of textual authority during the Song was not primarily, as Susan Cherniack suggests, a problem of the reliability of imprints, but also and perhaps more importantly—at least for Chan men of the Song—a problem of quantity and diversity (see n. 43 below). It also seems worth noting that this crisis was not unique to Chan. For instance, see Chikusa Masaaki’s discussion of the importance of imported books for the revitalization of Tiantai during the Song in Chikusa, *Sō Gen bukkyō bunkashi kenkyū*, 58-82; see also Brose, “Crossing Thousands of Li of Waves,” 21-62; and also Chan, “Chih-li (960-1028) and the Crisis of T’ien-t’ai Buddhism,” 409-441.

⁹ See the discussion in Yanagida, “Goroku no rekishi,” 279-287 and 384-385; see also Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 118-121.

Jingguo xudeng lu (1101) to name but a few.¹⁰ What lent credibility to these important Chan texts, among other things, is the fact that they were—at least some of them were—checked for errors by erudite members of the Chan community and also sanctioned and sponsored by prominent officials and emperors who often prepared the preface in their own hand. Through such efforts, the authenticity of the information found in these Chan texts was, it seems, determined once and for all.

Or, so many hoped. If the above story from the *Linjian lu* is any indication, the credibility of these and other similar texts seems to have been embraced not necessarily with enthusiasm but in some cases with ambivalence or perhaps even skepticism. Again, the wager of this article is that this ambivalent or skeptical attitude towards received texts, be they printed, hand copied, or orally transmitted through secret rites, was necessitated by a subtle but noticeable change in the notion of textual authority during the eleventh century and the the profound sense of unease that ensued from this change. This breakdown of textual authority was undoubtedly felt in many different ways, but some men of Chan, as we shall see, experienced it on the level of the flesh as something they preferred to call the malady of meditation [*chanbing* 禪病]. With the effects of this breakdown so palpable and immediate, the question then became, not if, but how one should respond, and the response, as I will also hope to show, was largely twofold. If we are to trust what little evidence can be garnered from such sources as the *Linjian lu* and *Dahui Pujue chanshi zongmen wuku* 大慧普覺禪師宗門武庫 (preface dated 1186; hereafter *Dahui's Arsenal*), one could, it seems, either maintain one's fidelity to the distinctive rhetoric and form of the ancient cases and formulas, which was often simply called *chan* 禪, or emphasize instead what many back then preferred to call the *dao* 道 or "Way" that the numerous styles [*feng* 風] of *chan* were all thought to convey.

Admittedly, given the lack of reliable historical sources, it is difficult, if not impossible, to draw a comprehensive picture of this crisis in textual authority during the Northern Song, but with some effort we can, I believe, reach some reasonable conclusions about this crisis and its influence on the subsequent development of Chan learning. Much of what this article will have to say about the changes that took place during this period will, in fact, be concerned only with a small group of monks whose primary stage of activity roughly corresponds to what is today Northern Jiangxi province. More specifically, this article will closely examine the activities of Chan master Huanglong Huinan 黃龍慧南 (1002-1069), some of his notable disciples such as Donglin Changcong 東林常總 (1025-1091), Zhenjing Kewen 真淨克文 (1025-1102), the aforementioned Huitang Zuxin, and their disciples such as Juefan Huihong whose work, the *Linjian lu*, we encountered earlier.

But why focus on Huanglong and his lineage? Why not focus on Chan master Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089-1163) to whom most studies on Song dynasty Chan turn their attention when speaking of reform or change in Chan learning during this period?¹¹ To be sure,

¹⁰ For a comprehensive overview of this historical development, see Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati*.

¹¹ The tendency to focus on Dahui, who is often taken as a leader, reformer, or at least an exceptionally good representative of Song dynasty Chan, has deep roots in Japanese and Korean

Dahui's contributions to the broad shift in Chan learning were significant and certainly worthy of note, but this article will attempt to show that his efforts to reform Chan—most notably his oft-cited criticism of silent illumination [*mozhao* 默照] and invention of so-called *kanhua chan* 看話禪 or “observing the phrase meditation”—were prefigured by and in large part an extension of the activities and concerns of Huanglong's community in Northern Jiangxi. If this is indeed the case, then it does not seem an exaggeration to say that only through a better understanding of Huanglong and his lineage will we reach a proper understanding of Dahui and his efforts to reform Chan learning.¹²

But that is not all. Only through a close examination of Huanglong and his lineage will we also be able to see the significance of their geopolitical stage, Northern Jiangxi.¹³ The fact that these efforts to reform Chan had taken place primarily in this hotbed of Chan and Daoxue 道學 [“Dao learning”] activity, as we shall see, was anything but a coincidence. For generations, the abbacy of some of the better-known monasteries in this area had been the exclusive property of a lineage that claimed descent from Chan master Yunmen Wenyan 雲門文偃 (864-949),¹⁴ but with the help of newly appointed local officials, who had vested interests in the area and its intellectual culture, Huanglong and other closely related figures from the Linji 臨濟 lineage seem to have systematically taken over the abbacy of some of these monasteries during the eleventh century. In the process of doing so, it became necessary for Huanglong and his cohorts to strike a neat (and perhaps impossible) balance between the need to establish a connection with the figure Yunmen himself, whose presence was still strongly felt in the Jiangxi area, and the need to distinguish themselves from Yunmen's spiritual descendants with whom they were in competition.

As part of this agenda, Huanglong and his followers seem to have initiated what, for lack of a better word, we can call the “rationalization” of *chan*, which for members of the Chan tradition referred not necessarily to seated meditation but, as we shall see, to a reflexive exercise in “pointing directly at the mind.” Under the banner of restoring a sense of coherence, which Yunmen ostensibly possessed but his descendants lacked, the systematization of

sectarian scholarship. More specifically, the attention that Dahui received is due in part to his purported role in inventing a style of koan meditation that is often believed to be still in use today. For instance, see Miura and Sasaki, *Zen Dust*. Attempts to subject Dahui and his understanding of koan meditation to a critical and contextually nuanced review have appeared in the past few decades. The most notable in this regard are: Yü, “Ta-hui Tsung-kao and Kung-an Ch'an”; Yü, “Ch'an Education in the Sung”; Levering, “Ch'an Enlightenment for Laymen”; Buswell, “The ‘Short-cut’ Approach of *K'an-hua* Meditation”; and Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*.

¹² A similar argument was made by Miriam Levering in her article on Dahui's friendship with Juefan, see Levering, “A Monk's Literary Education.”

¹³ Exceptional in this regard are the studies by Suzuki, *Tō Godai no Zenshū* (for pre-Song) and Abe, *Zōtei Chūgoku Zenshūshi no kenkyū*. In English, a similar attempt to understand the importance of this geopolitical stage for studying Northern Song Chan can be found in Keyworth, “Transmitting the Lamp of Learning in Classical Chan Buddhism,” esp. Chapter Two.

¹⁴ See Huang, “Yunmenzong yu beisong conglin zhi fachuan,” 13. See also Huang, “Experiment in Syncretism,” 115-139.

meditation as *reading*, as we shall see, was attempted at the expense of established customs of Chan learning, which, as noted earlier, consisted largely of reproducing *chan* formulas, diagrams, phrases or verses from koan typologies. In effect, what the Chan communities of the eleventh century witnessed was a call to engage in the politics of reading, a process whereby an individual is turned into what I would like to call a reading subject.¹⁵ But not all

¹⁵ The aim of this article is to serve as a corrective to a tendency in the scholarship on Chan to simply take the reading subject for granted. In other words, what I would like to challenge here is the idea that koans were always read and meant to be read. To be sure, few scholars, I think, would claim that there is only one way to read a koan or that its meaning is inscribed in the koan itself, but it is, I submit, this very notion that koans necessarily have meaning (which many students of koans seem to take as their *raison d'être*) that needs to be questioned. This, of course, is not a problem unique to Chan scholarship. We need only think here of phenomenology or reception theory. Consider, for instance, Michel de Certeau's presupposition "that reading is not already inscribed in the text with no conceivable gap between the meaning assigned to it (by its author, by custom, by criticism, and so forth) and the interpretation that its readers might make of it; and, as a corollary, that a text exists only because there is a reader to give it meaning" (Chartier, *The Order of Books*, 2). Although he rightly severs meaning from text and "intention," de Certeau (and others like Stanley Fish or Paul Ricoeur) sees reading as a practice concerned primarily with meaning.

De Certeau, however, was a cautious scholar of reading practices who also believed that the task of the historian is "to reconstruct the variations that differentiate the *espaces lisibles* – that is, the texts in their discursive and material forms – and those that govern the circumstances of their *effectuation* – that is, the readings, understood as concrete practices and as procedures of interpretation" (*Ibid.*, 2). In keeping with this understanding of the historian's task, what I would like to do is try to capture precisely that moment in Chan history when the "space" of its texts became a *readable* space (or un *espace lisible*) through their effectuation as reading for personal comprehension. In doing so, I would like to bring to light the new conditions that allowed "reading" to be more than just a means of reproducing established tradition. It is in this sense that I call the developments in Northern Song Chan a politics of reading. For de Certeau's arguments, see his *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 165-176. I borrow the notion of politics of reading also from de Certeau; see *Ibid.*, 173.

Although the present article focuses on the rise of the reading subject in Chan during the Northern Song, I would like to note here that similar developments did occur in non-Buddhist contexts as well. Yugen Wang, for instance, draws a connection between the growth in print culture and the emphasis on the importance of reading among the Jiangxi school poets during the Northern Song; see Wang, "Poetry in Print Culture." Li Yu also contends that a new culture of reading emerged in part as a result of the rising importance of the civil service examination for literati during the Song; see Yu, "A History of Reading in Late Imperial China, 1000-1800," esp. Chapter Three. The importance of the civil service examinations in studying the changes that occurred within literati culture during the Tang-Song period has also been shown in Bol, *This Culture of Ours*; see also Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, esp. 43-77. (See n. 16 below for a brief discussion of Bol's arguments.) For more on the civil service examinations, see John W. Chaffee's classic study, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China*.

While it is certainly necessary to compare the Chan example with other contemporary developments in reading practices, I have decided to focus on the case of Chan as no attempt, to my knowledge, has been made yet to systematically document and study the rise of the reading subject in Chan during the Northern Song. No mention of this development, for instance, is made by Cynthia Brokaw in her broad overview of book history and reading practices in China; see Brokaw, "Book History in Premodern

of Huanglong's admirers believed reading was simply a matter of comprehension. It was, they claimed, a matter of "knowing for oneself" [*zizhi* 自知], that is, a matter of looking beyond the immediate and literal message of the texts at hand for a *dao* that was not necessarily identical for each and every individual.¹⁶ What would it then mean, they also began to ask, for

China"; and also Brokaw, "On the History of the Book in China." The present article will hopefully encourage others to pursue the topic of reading in Chan further.

Lastly, I would also like to note here that my use of the term "reading subject" (a subjectivity defined by reading), in spite of some overlap, differs from the more common way in which this term is used in literary criticism and especially the from the way it is used in reader response or reception theory (the reader as phenomenological subject). For a helpful discussion of the emergence of the reading subject and reception theory in the modern Western context, see Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, 47-78.

¹⁶ I would also like to cautiously suggest that larger historical forces may have been at work here. Wm. Theodore de Bary has already shown that Neo-Confucians (broadly defined) had also been ruminating upon similar issues such as "getting it oneself" [*zide* 自得] or learning to get it oneself [*zide zhi xue* 自得之學]. Bearing an uncanny similarity to Chan discourses about knowing the *dao* for oneself, the Neo-Confucian scholar Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), for instance, claimed that the *dao* is to be had by silent recognition and penetration of the mind so as to "find it in oneself" [*de zhi yu ji* 得之於己]; de Bary, *Learning for One's Self*, 45. Also relevant to our discussion of Zhu Xi is his interpretation of reading as "learning done for one's own sake" and "experiencing texts personally"; see Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality*, Chapter Eight; and also Gardner, "Transmitting the Way." Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107), often heralded as the fountainhead of *Daoxue* or Neo-Confucian learning, also once wrote that "the most refined of principles should be sought and found in oneself" [*ziqu de zhi* 自求得之]; see de Bary, *Learning for One's Self*, 47. These ideas—emerging in concrete form in the Song—of seeking a knowledge of the *dao* not in ready-made interpretations but in the art of finding it out for oneself, as de Bary shows, continued to serve as a central issue, though frequently debated and interpreted in various ways, for Neo-Confucian intellectuals up to the seventeenth century.

We should also bear in mind that De Bary's observations on the emergence and spread of the need to learn and implement values for oneself in Neo-Confucian discourse are meant to serve the larger agenda of investigating the increasing focus on the individual in China beginning in the Song. He carefully distinguishes between individualism and individuality, the latter being a word that could be glossed as the right to express one's creativity; de Bary, *Learning for One's Self*, 4-5. He also rightly observes that the growing interest in the individual did not spread outside a small circle of intellectuals and thus did not amount to any significant social reforms. De Bary nevertheless employs the term individualism to describe this growing interest in intellectual and spiritual cultivation centered on the individual and this has often led to a blurring of distinction between individualism "as a descriptive label and as a self-conscious philosophy" (Bol, "Review of 'Learning for One's Self,'" 753).

To date, the best study in English on the various responses to the growing interest in acquiring values for oneself during the Song is Peter K. Bol, *This Culture of Ours*. I am reluctant, however, to draw an *explicit* connection between the rise of Neo-Confucian (or *Daoxue*) and Chan discourses about learning for oneself as they seem to be responding to two different crises. The former, as Bol shows in his book, were largely a response to what he calls the "crisis of culture after 755" (i.e., the An Lushan rebellion), the consequent transformation of the *shi* 士 from hereditary great clans to literati elite, and the latter's attempt to shift their identities away from adopting the right *wen* 文 to seeking the right values or *dao*. The Chan discourses about knowing for oneself had little, if anything, to do with radical changes in

someone to have “the last word” [*mohouju* 末後句]? Could there be such a thing in Chan? Why they felt it necessary—and it was—to ask these questions will hopefully become clear by the end of this article, but suffice it to say for now that the last word, at least during the Northern Song, was *anything but*.

Huanglong Huinan

According to his biography in the *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* and *Chanlin sengbao zhuan*,¹⁷ Chan master Huanglong Huinan’s surname was Zhang 章 and he came from a family whose roots traditionally lay in Mt. Yu 玉山 of Xinzhou 信州 (at the Northeastern tip of Jiangxi province). As one would expect of any young motivated monk from this period, Huanglong, after receiving full ordination in 1020, embarked on a pilgrimage to visit noted Chan teachers. Deciding not to venture too far from his birthplace, Huanglong first made his way to the famed public monastery Guizong si 歸宗寺 on Mt. Lu 廬山 (Northern Jiangxi province) where he studied under the newly installed abbot Zibao 自寶 (978-1054), a disciple of the renowned Chan master Wuzu Shijie 五祖師戒 (d.u.) of the Yunmen lineage.¹⁸

Exactly how long Huanglong studied under Zibao is difficult to say, but he most certainly left Zibao’s side before the latter was invited by the local prefect to serve as the abbot of another famed temple, Puli chanyuan 普利禪院 on Mt. Dong 洞山 (Northern Jiangxi province) in 1037.¹⁹ After he took leave of Zibao, Huanglong continued his training at a

social identity than with a crisis in textual authority that appeared in tandem with the growth of new Chan genres. Needless to say, this does not exclude, as Robert M. Gimello points out, the possibility of interaction between the new developments in Neo-Confucianism and Chan that appeared during the Northern Song; see Gimello, “Mārga and Culture,” 381-383.

¹⁷ XZJ136.113b13-116a16 and XZJ137.526a7-528a15 respectively.

¹⁸ For Zibao’s biography, see the *Lushan guizong chanyuan miaoyuan dashi taming* 廬山歸宗禪院妙圓大師塔銘 by Yu Jing 余靖 (1000-1064) in his *Wuxi ji* 武溪集 (Wenyuange Siku quanshu edition) 7, 16b-18b. Guizong si was granted an official plaque bearing the name Chengtian 承天 in 1006 and had thus presumably become a public monastery or “monastery of ten directions” [*shifangcha* 十方刹]; see the *Lushan chengtian guizong chansi chongxiu si ji* 廬山承天歸宗禪寺重脩寺記 (1063) also in Yu’s *Wuxi ji* 7, 5a. Zibao’s appointment as abbot of Guizong si was thus based not on the rule of hereditary succession as in the case of the Jiayi tudiyuan 甲乙徒弟院 or Vinaya temples but on his merits as a Chan master. For the significance of the public monastery during the Song, see Foulk, “Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice”; and also Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, esp. Chapters Two and Three. According to the *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (XZJ136.66a4), Zibao (who passed away in 1054) served as abbot of four great temples for about 30 or so years, which seems to imply that he became abbot of Guizong si around 1024.

¹⁹ See the *Yunzhou Dongshan Puli chanyuan chuanfa ji* 筠州洞山普利禪院傳法記 (1038) by Yu Jing in *Wuxi ji* 9, 34; see also the translation and annotation of this text by Ishii, *Sōdai Zenshūshi no kenkyū*, 415. For more than four generations the abbacy of this temple had been the exclusive property

nearby temple on Mt. Lu named Qixian si 棲賢寺. There he became a student of a certain Chengshi 澄謔, an erudite monk who was entrusted with the important task of checking the newly compiled *Zhaozhou zhenji chanshi yulu* 趙州真際禪師語錄 for errors.²⁰ Three years later,²¹ Huanglong resumed his pilgrimage and headed North to Mt. Sanjue 三角山 in Ezhou 鄂州 (Hubei province) where he formally enlisted as a student of Chan master Huaicheng 懷澄 (d.u.) who, like his dharma brother Zibao, inherited the Yunmen lineage from Wuzu Shijie.

According to the *Linjian lu*, Huanglong served Huaicheng for quite a while.²² We can, I think, therefore safely assume that the latter, more so than anyone else, exerted a considerable amount of influence on the former's growth as a Chan adept. In fact, when Huaicheng took up the abbacy of Letan si 潞潭寺 (or Baofeng si 寶峰寺) on Mt. Shimen 石門山 (Northern Jiangxi province),²³ Huanglong followed. Not long after their arrival at Mt. Shimen,

of the Yunmen lineage. Before Zibao, the abbot of Puli chanyuan was the Yunmen monk Xiaocong 曉聰 (d. 1030) who began his tenure as abbot in 1010. Seven years after Xiaocong's death, the local prefect invited Zibao to serve as the twelfth generation abbot in 1037. Zibao served as abbot of Puli chanyuan for sixteen years, after which he became the abbot of a temple on Mt. Huangbo 黃檗 in Fujian province where he passed away not too long after his appointment as abbot in 1054. Zibao was succeeded by his disciple Jianqian 鑑遷 (d.u.) at Mt. Dong.

²⁰ See also the account in the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.586b9-587a1). Yanagida Seizan points to this brief encounter between Huanglong and Chengshi as proof of the influence of the Fayan 法眼 branch of Chan on Huanglong; see Yanagida, "The 'Recorded Sayings' Texts of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism," 199-200; and also Yanagida, "Shikeroku to Gokeroku," 590-591. For Chengshi, see his entry in the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* (XZJ135.874a10-878a3). Although we do not know the year of his birth or death, we do know that Chengshi's teacher was Baizhang Daochang 百丈道常 who died in 991.

²¹ The Gozan edition of the *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* at Tōyō bunko in Japan and the *Xu chuandeng lu* 續傳燈錄 state that Huanglong's stay lasted for three years; see T51.2077.505c21 and Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 5, 61a respectively. The edition of the *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* reproduced in the *Zokuzōkyō* canon, however, states that he stayed for only nine months; see XZJ137.526a13-14.

²² *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.639a16).

²³ According to the biography of Huaicheng's dharma heir Dajue Huailian 大覺懷璉 (1007-1090) in the *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.514a8), Huailian visited Huaicheng at Letan si and studied under the Chan master for over ten years. Huailian subsequently went to Yuantong si 圓通寺 on Mt. Lu to serve as the abbot June's 居訥 (1010-1071) scribe and accepted, in June's stead, Emperor Renzong's 仁宗 (r. 1022-1063) invitation to serve as the founding abbot of the Shifang jingyin chanyuan 十方淨因禪院, located in the capital Bianjing 汴京 (present day Kaifeng), in 1050. Huailian must, therefore, have arrived at Letan si sometime between 1030 and 1040, which means that Huaicheng was already there before then. Huaicheng's move to Letan si was probably orchestrated by the Hongzhou 洪州 prefect Xu Shi 許式 (appointed in 1030) with whom Huaicheng maintained close relations; see the *Zongmen zhiying ji* 宗門摭英集 in Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 6 (*jō*), 69-70. The *Zongmen zhiying ji* is a koan collection compiled by Huaicheng's dharma heir Weijian 惟簡 (d.u.) in 1038 (and published in 1053). It contains valuable information about Huaicheng and his branch of the Yunmen lineage that is not found elsewhere.

Huanglong was appointed as the temple's scribe [*shuji* 書記] and he began to share teaching duties with Huaicheng.²⁴ Details about Huanglong's appointment to this important administrative post are not provided in his biography, but it most likely meant that Huanglong had received formal recognition from Huaicheng as a (potential) dharma heir. His acceptance of this post also meant that Huanglong was just one step away from becoming a *zhanglao* or abbot of a temple, after which he would finally become a full member of Huaicheng's Yunmen lineage.²⁵

None of this, however, is particularly remarkable. Virtually everything about Huanglong's life so far conforms to the general pattern of training that a Chan adept was expected to follow during the Northern Song. In line with this pattern, Huanglong eventually carried out the obvious next step in his career, namely his "emergence into the world" [*chushi* 出世] or his first appointment as the abbot of a temple. Like all newly appointed abbots, Huanglong even marked the occasion by performing the obligatory ceremony of "opening the hall" [*kaitang* 開堂], but it is here in Huanglong's formal introduction of himself to his new congregation that we discover some unequivocal signs of change in the Chan community of Northern Jiangxi. During this important ceremony, Huanglong did not offer incense, as expected, to his teacher Huaicheng, thereby finally becoming his official dharma heir, but to another Chan master by the name of Ciming 慈明 or Shishuang Chuyuan 石霜楚圓 (986-1040).²⁶ What happened?

While serving Huaicheng on Mt. Shimen, Huanglong, we are told, had a momentous encounter with the monk Yunfeng Wenyue 雲峰文悅 (998-1062) who, by several accounts,²⁷ seems to have raised serious doubts about the qualifications of Huaicheng as a Chan teacher. During a conversation that he had with Huanglong about the teaching methods of the great Chan master Yunmen, Yunfeng, for instance, is said to have made the following comment about Huaicheng: "Though Master [Hua]icheng is a descendant of Yunmen, their teaching methods differ so!"²⁸ When pressed for an explanation, Yunfeng made this revealing analogy: Whereas Yunmen turns metal into gold like the way one produces a ninefold cyclically transformed elixir (i.e., he purifies students through a *repeated* process of refinement), Huaicheng preaches words that are like quicksilver—the moment you try to forge something out of them his words simply flow away. Huanglong was naturally disturbed by this depiction

²⁴ See also the account in the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.639a16-b9).

²⁵ As Schlütter points out, a student could not become a full member of his Chan transmission family until he became an abbot; see Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 65.

²⁶ For a transcript of the ceremony, see the *Huanglong Huinan chanshi yulu* 黃龍慧南禪師語錄 (T47.1993.629c16) and the *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (XZJ136.113b16 & 114a6-8). The *Huanglong Huinan chanshi yulu* was published as part of a larger collection known as the *Huanglong sijia lu* 黃龍四家錄 (preface dated 1141), which was compiled by Jixing Huiquan 寂星慧泉 (d.u.); see Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 119. The possibility of (and, not surprisingly, anxieties about) a talented student switching transmission lineages before accepting his first abbacy has also been noted by Schlütter; see his, *How Zen Became Zen*, 68-69.

²⁷ See also Yunfeng's entry in the *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (XZJ136.136b3-7).

²⁸ *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.526a17-18).

of his teacher and Yunfeng apologized. But he made sure to add one last piece of advice for Huanglong whose talents, he thought, were being wasted on Mt. Shimen: “Yunmen has the force and presence of a king. How could he hand down dead words? The teachings that Master [Hua]icheng possesses are dead words that he received from someone else. How could you bring someone to life with dead words?”²⁹ If a real teacher was what Huanglong was looking for, Yunfeng suggested he give Chan master Ciming a try.

Apparently, this was enough to convince Huanglong to seek further advice from Ciming. Huanglong, we are told, reckoned he had nothing to lose and Yunfeng—a student not of Ciming but of Dayu Shouzhi 大愚守芝 (d.u.)—had nothing to gain from him paying a visit to Ciming. This, however, is only partially true. Ciming and Dayu were, in fact, fellow disciples of Fenyang Shanzhao 汾陽善昭 (947-1024) and thus belonged to the same lineage. Yunfeng, in other words, had successfully lured a talented young monk away from a rival lineage and recruited him to join the line to which Yunfeng himself effectively belonged. But is this, in fact, what happened? There is no way to know for sure, but even if we were to question its veracity, there can be no doubt about the conscious attempt that is being made here to draw a line between Yunmen and his spiritual descendant Huaicheng. This line becomes all the more explicit in Huanglong’s subsequent encounter with Ciming.

When the two eventually met in 1036,³⁰ Ciming, as a test, is said to have asked Huanglong the following question: “You [lit. the scribe] learned Yunmen’s *chan* and must have mastered its [basic] point or tenet [*zhi* 旨]. When Yunmen said he [should have] hit Dongshan three times [for answering his questions too literally],³¹ should Dongshan have been hit or not?” “He should have been hit,” was Huanglong’s reply. With a stern face Ciming then said, “If hearing the sound [that a master should have delivered] three blows [means that the student] deserves to be hit, then you deserve to be hit, from dusk till dawn, whenever you hear the sound of the crow crowing, the magpie singing, and the bell, drum, and fish-shaped board being struck.”³² The point of the story of Yunmen sparing his disciple Dongshan Shouchu 洞山守初 (910-990) three blows, in other words, lies not in the issue of whether Dongshan deserved to be hit or not but in the ability to see the subtle distinction between the literalistic and idealistic perspectives of the story. Just like Dongshan, for instance, deserves to be hit for missing the point and answering Yunmen’s leading question too literally (e.g., when Yunmen asked, “Where did you spend your summer,” Dongshan replied, “At Baoci si 報慈寺 in Hunan”) Huanglong also deserves to be hit for taking the hitting too literally. The point of this story, if we are to trust Ciming, is to see that Yunmen was referring to his interlocutor Dongshan’s state of mind and not to what he did at some real, physical location. Similarly,

²⁹ *Ibid.* (XZJ137.526b2-4).

³⁰ Huanglong’s biography tells us that their encounter lasted for about a month when Huanglong was 35 (or 34 according to the modern Western convention), which means that the two men met in 1036. *Ibid.* (XZJ137.527a13-14).

³¹ For this ancient case, see the *Wumen guan* 無門關 (T48.2005.294c23-259a10), compiled by Wumen Huikai 無門慧開 (1183-1260) in 1229.

³² *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.527a3-5).

when studying this case one must, Ciming seems to be saying, see that it is the reader's mind that hits and is hit, and the same goes for that which crows and hears the crowing, sings and hears the singing, and so on.

Ciming's next test for Huanglong lends further support to this reading of their first formal encounter. What exactly, he asked the frustrated Huanglong, did Chan master Zhaozhou Congshen 趙州從諗 (778-897) scrutinize [*kanpo* 勘破] when he investigated the old lady from Mt. Wutai 五台山? In order to investigate the old lady, Zhaozhou, as this old case usually goes, asked her for directions to Mt. Wutai and when he, like the other unenlightened monks before him, began to follow her directions to "just proceed as you were" [*mozhi renmo qu* 驀直恁麼去] he heard her say, "there goes another one" [*you renmo qu* 又恁麼去].³³ Like the first test, Huanglong was unable to produce a suitable answer and his frustration continued to grow. Matters only got worse as his visits to Ciming's room resulted each time in nothing but a scolding. Finally, Huanglong pleaded with Ciming to give him a hint and Ciming's reply was shockingly simple: "You think this is a scolding?"

We can, perhaps, unpack Ciming's reply in the following manner. First, it should be borne in mind that the old lady's response ("just proceed as you were") was a pun that could be read either as "continue what you were doing" (i.e., "seek wisdom," which is what Mt. Wutai or its famous resident bodhisattva Mañjuśrī symbolizes here) or, more literally, "continue to walk in the direction that you were walking." Not unlike the earlier case of Yunmen sparing Dongshan three blows, here we find again the literalistic reading of the story (i.e., directions to Mt. Wutai) pitted against an idealistic one (i.e., the interlocutor's mind making its way to the attainment of wisdom). Similarly, Ciming seems to have tried to show Huanglong that Zhaozhou did not scrutinize or try to figure out something or someone, which is what Huanglong was apparently looking for. Rather, Zhaozhou's wry and redundant gesture subtly reminds us that investigating the old lady is the very thing being investigated. Ciming's response can be read, I think, along these lines as well. In other words, he was not scolding Huanglong for looking in the wrong direction. On the contrary, he was trying to show Huanglong that his own investigation of Zhaozhou is precisely what he was looking for.

Regardless of whether our interpretation of Ciming's reply is accurate or not, the irony of his encounter with Huanglong should not be lost here. The person who truly understands Yunmen is not his spiritual descendant Huaicheng but the "outsider" Ciming. And the difference between their respective understandings of Yunmen seems to lie, as we have seen, in the issue of whether or not one is stuck on "dead" words, that is, on literalistic readings of the ancient cases. (It seems worth noting here that the notion of "dead words" is often attributed to Yunmen's disciple Dongshan Shouchu.) Lest there be any doubt about the distinction between the teaching styles of Ciming and Huaicheng, our story ends—rather purposively, it seems—with Huanglong murmuring under his breath this uncharacteristically

³³ This ancient case appears in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.277b4-10) and *Wumen guan* (T48.2005.297a8-13). An older version of the same story that differs to some degree from the above two examples can also be found in the *Zutang ji* (5/46/10-5/47/1). For the trope of the old woman in Chan, see Hsieh, "Images of Women in Ch'an Buddhist literature of the Sung period," 166-176.

explicit judgment: “Letan [Huaicheng’s teachings] were, indeed, dead words.”³⁴ Also worth noting here is the process through which Huanglong came to acquire these dead words. Just before their encounter, Huanglong ostensibly had the chance to listen to Ciming’s arguments against the erroneous understandings of other Chan teachers. Probably to Huanglong’s great chagrin, all these understandings or dead words, our story tells us, had been secretly entrusted [*mifu* 密付] to him as “essential points” [*zhijue* 旨決] by Huaicheng.³⁵

There is, I think, little reason to doubt the veracity of the above story from Huanglong’s biography. But I am also inclined to think that the story’s value lies as much, if not more, in the way it presents the facts as in the facts themselves. Huaicheng, in other words, may not have actually been guilty of secretly transmitting dead words to his students, but he did serve as a convenient foil for the followers of Huanglong who wished to render the differences between the literalistic and non-literalistic styles of *chan* more explicit. What his biographers would have us ultimately believe is that Huanglong’s *chan* was a non-literalistic style of *chan* and that this was the style of *chan* pioneered by master Yunmen. The lesson to be learned in the story of Huanglong’s encounter with Ciming, then, is not how Huanglong contributed to the emergence of Chan factionalism in Northern Jiangxi but how he (or his biographer) boldly tried to redefine the established order of Chan in this area. What may not be apparent at the present moment, however, are the broad implications that this redefinition has for constituting textual authority. In Huanglong’s example, what we have, I think, is a snapshot of the larger historical process through which the received text, as dead words, surrendered the authority that it once monopolized to the individual reader. “The texts,” as Susan Cherniack put it, “were now in play.”³⁶ Our story, however, does not end here.

A few months after his encounter with Ciming, Huanglong surprisingly (or expectedly) returned to Mt. Shimen and rejoined Huaicheng’s community. Needless to say, Huaicheng was delighted. But not long after his return to Mt. Shimen, Huanglong received his first appointment as abbot at the nearby temple Tongan yuan 同安院 in Northern Jiangxi. In what appears to be one of the earliest lectures that he delivered as the new abbot, Huanglong is said to have made the following comment: “The ocean of wisdom has no [self-]nature, but because of awakening and delusion [we’ve] become ordinary beings. Awakening and delusion [however] are originally empty. It is precisely the ordinary mind that sees the Buddha. If you [put your discriminating mind to] rest, I’d [lit. Tongan] say that the job isn’t done. In accordance with your perverted wishes [I’d say] the southern dipper [has] seven [stars] and the northern dipper [has] eight.”³⁷ A report of this lecture eventually reached Huaicheng’s ears

³⁴ *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.527a11).

³⁵ *Ibid.* (XZJ137.526b13).

³⁶ Cherniack, “Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China,” 27. For an excellent study of this process of criticizing received tradition and formulating a new *general* hermeneutic of subjectivity during the Song, see Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality*, esp. Chapters Six and Seven.

³⁷ *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.527b3-5). This comment also appears in the *Huanglong Huinan chanshi yulu* (T47.1993.637a16-18) and the *Huanglong Nan chanshi yu* 黃龍南禪師語, which belongs to a larger collection of texts known as the *Xu guzunsu yuyao* 續古尊宿語要 (XZJ118.857b2-4) compiled by Huishi Shiming 晦室師明 (d.u.) in 1238. The same comment also appears in the *Liandeng*

and Huaicheng, we are told, was not pleased. Why this comment disturbed him so is not clear,³⁸ but what Huanglong's biography seems to be implying here is that putting the discriminatory mind to rest [*xiuqu* 休去], otherwise known in Chan circles as dying the great death [*dasi* 大死],³⁹ *pace* Huaicheng, was not the *summum bonum* of Chan learning. Until the ordinary mind (i.e., the individual) sees the Buddha, the job, as Huanglong put it, isn't done [*wuzhehe* 無折合]. Huanglong had thus made, it seems, his first attempt to distinguish his style of *chan* from that of his former teacher. Unlike Huaicheng, his was a style of *chan* that placed greater (if not exclusive) emphasis on the mind at work than the mind at rest. Huanglong may have felt it necessary to define his approach to awakening this way because, as we shall see, he and others believed that putting the mind to rest prevented one from reading koans!

huiyao 聯燈會要 (XZJ136.648a8-10), compiled in 1183 by Huiweng Wuming 晦翁悟明 (d.u.), and the *Jitai pudeng lu* 嘉泰普燈錄 (XZJ137.66b13-16), compiled in 1202 by the Yunmen lineage holder Leian Zhengshou 雷庵正受 (1146-1208).

³⁸ No extant records associate Huaicheng with the catchphrase, “southern dipper seven, northern dipper eight” [*nandouqi beidouba* 南斗七北斗八], but his teacher Wuzu Shijie is known to have used it at least once during a sermon; see the latter's entry in the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* (XZJ135.806b14-15). But this set phrase did not belong to Wuzu. It seems to have been his spiritual grandfather Yunmen who made it popular; see the *Yunmen Kuangzhen chanshi guanglu* 雲門匡真禪師廣錄 compiled by Shoujian 守堅 (d.u.) (T47.1988.546b10) in the *Guzunsu yulu* 古尊宿語錄 (XZJ118.337a16) and the *Yunmen Kuangzhen chanshi yu* 雲門匡真禪師語 in the *Xu guzunsu yuyao* (XZJ118.878b15). When he was asked for his teaching style, Huaicheng did, however, use another famous catchphrase attributed to Yunmen as a reply: “a great month is thirty days and a small month is twenty-nine”; see *Zongmen zhiying ji* in Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 6 (*jō*), 69a. The significance of this catchphrase will become clear shortly.

Both the *Xu guzunsu yuyao* and *Guzunsu yulu* are based on an earlier collection of recorded sayings known as the *Guzunsu yuyao* 古尊宿語要 compiled by a certain librarian [*zangzhu* 藏主] by the name of Ze 蹟 at Mt. Gu 鼓山. The *Guzunsu yuyao* was first published some time between 1138 and 1144 and republished on several different occasions. In 1178, Ze's four volume, twenty fascicle text (covering twenty houses of Chan) was expanded to twenty-two fascicles with the addition of two new recorded sayings. In 1267, the twenty-two fascicle edition was expanded into twenty-nine fascicles (to cover twenty-five houses) and reprinted by a certain layman named Juexin 覺心 as the *Guzunsu yulu*. A few decades earlier in 1238, Ze's text had been expanded into ten volumes (with the addition of eighty new sayings) as the *Xu guzunsu yuyao*. A newly expanded Ming edition of the *Guzunsu yulu* (1403) in forty-eight fascicles was redacted for publication in the so-called Yongle Southern Canon (*Yongle nanzang* 永樂南藏) printed at Baoen si 報恩寺 in Jinling during the Yongle reign period (1402-1424) by a certain Dingyan Jingkai 定巖淨戒 (d.u.), a seventh generation descendant in Dahui's lineage. Not surprisingly, the new additions that have been made to the *Guzunsu yulu* are mainly recorded sayings of those belonging to Dahui's lineage.

³⁹ I have discussed the significance of the concept of resting and dying the great death elsewhere; see Ahn, “Malady of Meditation,” esp. Chapter Two.

All in all, it seems to be the case that Huanglong and Huaicheng had grown apart. Huanglong, as noted earlier, formally marked his break with Huaicheng by offering incense to Ciming during the opening the hall ceremony. To make matters worse, students subsequently began to abandon Huaicheng's community on Mt. Shimen for Huanglong's at Tongan yuan. If this did, indeed, occur and it may very well have, then it seems reasonable to expect growing hostility between the two communities. Indeed, should we, for instance, be surprised to learn that a suspicious fire consumed the temple Guizong si while Huanglong was serving as abbot after his initial appointment at Tongan yuan?⁴⁰ There is, on the other hand, good reason to believe that the strained relations between Huaicheng and Huanglong were not as irreparable as the latter's biography would have us believe.

Consider the following. As the abbot, Huanglong assumed the blame for the fire that broke out at Guizong si and was sent to prison. (Huanglong's old teacher and Huaicheng's dharma brother Zibao was then asked to return as abbot of Guizong si and oversee its restoration.⁴¹) Following his release from prison, Huanglong moved back to Mt. Shimen and sought brief respite from this disturbing incident at a small cloister named Nanta 南塔, which was probably under the administrative care of Huaicheng's temple. But Huanglong soon decided to leave Jiangxi and retire to a hermitage named Jicui an 積翠庵 on Mt. Huangbo 黃檗 in the neighboring Fujian province. During this self-imposed exile, Huanglong appears to have finally added the crowning touch to his own style of *chan* and began testing eager students with his famous three barriers [*sanguanyu* 三關語] koan. Surprisingly, as Huanglong thus fully came into his own, a letter from none other than Huaicheng arrived. "How fortunate am I," Huanglong subsequently told his assembly at Jicui an, to receive, albeit with shame and humility, "this esteemed letter sent by Chan master Letan [Huaicheng] to offer me sincere [words of] consolation."⁴² Huanglong and Huaicheng may have thus shown well-deserved respect for each other, but the damage, it seems, was already done. The stage was now set to redefine Chan learning with Huaicheng's dead words at one end and Huanglong's live words at the other. Chan learning, in other words, could no longer simply consist of one's blind reliance on or acceptance of the literalist or "dead" understandings of ancient cases and teachings (e.g., putting the discriminatory mind to rest) that are secretly handed down from one generation to the next. The individual, it seems, had to figure out each case and teaching for himself and then seek approval from a teacher well versed in the art of *chan*. But what, we may ask, were the conditions that made this "rational" redefinition of Chan learning possible?

⁴⁰ *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.536a18-b1); see also the account in *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.599b3-10) and the *Fozu lidai tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載 (T49.2036.674a22) compiled by Nianchang 念常 (1282-1323) in 1341.

⁴¹ See *Lushan chengtian guisong chansi zhongxiu si ji* (Wuxi ji 7.5a).

⁴² *Huanglong Huinan chanshi yulu* (T47.1993.633b2-9).

Chan and the Art of Extensive Reading

As the tenth century gave way to the eleventh, changes that had broad implications for Chan learning began to take place in earnest. Most notable among these changes was the outbreak of Chan's own modest version of the *Lesewut* or reading craze, which appeared in tandem with the growth (and printing) of new Chan genres known as “essential sayings” [*yuyao* 語要], “recorded sayings” [*yulu* 語錄], and “transmission of the lamp” [*chuandenglu* 傳燈錄].⁴³ What we begin to see in this time of change, for instance, are more men like Yunmen's disciple Qingbing 清稟 (d.u.) who “collected essential sayings from all over the country,”⁴⁴ Jingqing Daofu 鏡清道忞 (868-937) who—having already received recognition of his awakening from his teacher Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰義存 (822-908)—“traveled far and wide all over the country and benefited from the expedient wisdom [*quanzhi* 權智] [of other teachers],”⁴⁵ and Huanglong's spiritual grandfather Fenyang Shanzhao, who purportedly visited no less than seventy-one masters and “attained all of their wondrous styles of teaching.”⁴⁶ Signs of this craze for encyclopedic knowledge of *chan* seem to begin to appear as early as the late ninth (or early tenth) century when men like Xiangyan Zhixian 香巖智閑 (d. 898), having failed to answer his teacher Weishan Lingyou's 馮山靈祐 (771-853) questions on *chan*, burned the essential sayings that he had gathered from all over the country, saying, “a rice cake in a painting cannot satisfy one's hunger.”⁴⁷

⁴³ In a recent article, Tsuchiya Taisuke briefly touches upon this reading craze; see Tsuchiya, “Kōanzen no seiritsu ni kansuru shiron,” 281-279 (reverse pagination). Yanagida Seizan's classic study of the history of the recorded sayings genre, “Goroku no rekishi” (originally published in *Tohō gaku* 57 [1985]: 211-663), still remains an essential tool for studying these genres. Building upon Yanagida's pioneering research, Albert Welter has more recently published two separate studies wherein he provides, among other things, a comprehensive overview of the social, political, and sectarian context from which these genres emerged; see Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati* and also his more recent publication, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*.

This newfound appetite for collecting Chan texts, I suspect, had a more profound effect on Chan than the growth of print during the Song. Juefan's *Linjian lu* is a good case in point. Its preface by Xie Yi tells us that Juefan's collection was based on the conversations that he had with others from the Chan grove; see XZJ148.585a5-7. But throughout the collection what we also find are references to Juefan consulting handcopied texts (XZJ148.606a3) and the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 and the *Jingde chuandeng lu*, which were most likely woodblock prints (XZJ148.591a8-9). In fact, Juefan's collection itself had been disseminated at first as handcopied texts, but the frequent mistakes that were made in the process prompted Juefan's disciple Daoming to prepare a woodblock edition of his teacher's collection; see XZJ148.585a12-13.

⁴⁴ *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.390a29-b1).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* (T51.2076.348c2.8).

⁴⁶ *Chanlin sengbaozhuan* (XZJ137.455b1-2); see also *Linjuian lu* (XZJ148.631b5) and *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.305a16-27).

⁴⁷ *Song gaoseng zhuan* (T50.2061.785b1-2). The *Song gaoseng zhuan* was compiled by the monk Zanning 贊寧 (919-1002) under the imperial decree (issued in 982) of Emperor Taizong 太宗 (r. 976-

Pilgrimage, it seems, had become more than just a means to find the right teacher. It was now an opportunity to get to know a little something about everything. This is precisely what makes the song that Fenyang composed to celebrate his broad learning, the *Guangzhige* 廣智歌 or “Song of Extensive Wisdom,”⁴⁸ so novel. In a clean break with the past, the song celebrates erudition and diversity of style for their own sake. But “extensive wisdom” was more than just a cause for celebration. It was now a corrective to an evil trend. In praising his teacher’s song, Fenyang’s disciple Dayu Shouzhi (the teacher of Huanglong’s aforementioned friend Yunfeng Wenyue) urged his audience to “seek extensively for wisdom and travel far and wide for factional styles [*menfeng* 門風]” lest they hastily conclude after acquiring a saying or two that they had thus completely figured out the *dao*.⁴⁹ In his reading of Fenyang’s song, Juefan Huihong makes a very similar argument: “Having witnessed later generations resting content with what little they have attained by consulting [a teacher], how could [Fenyang] not warn against this by consulting far and wide?”⁵⁰

This was not a baseless argument. Juefan seems to have believed that a wisdom narrow in scope (i.e., dead words) would have the effect of restricting the teachings of Chan, which were being actively codified during this period, to the simple role of preserving tradition. There was also the danger that students and teachers alike would thus come to regard the distinctive cases devised by the various houses of Chan as but artifacts of factional identity politics that survived well beyond their intended purpose. Indeed, according to Juefan, this is exactly what some teachers began to claim out loud: “In our house there is [something called] ‘the matter of one’s original lot’ [*benfenshi* 本分事], which is nothing but a saying [that was used] by an ancient one to establish the entryway [to our house] at one time. What use would there be in investigating it?”⁵¹

No “entryway” [*menting* 門庭] saying, which, as we shall see, does not seem to predate the tenth century, was immune from this form of reification, that is, to this tendency to become a reality that no longer remembers the creative labor that ostensibly produced it. We need not look any further, for instance, than Huanglong and his three barriers. The swiftness

997) of the Song dynasty and completed in 988. See also the more elaborate account of the same story in the *Jingde chuangeng lu* (T51.2076.283c29-284a7) and the *Tanzhou Weishan Lingyou chanshi yulu* 潭州瀉山靈祐禪師語錄 (T47.1989.580b8-13). The *Tanzhou Weishan Lingyou chanshi yulu* was first published as part of the *Wujia yulu* compiled by Yufeng Yuanxin 語風圓信 (1571-1647) and Guo Ningzhi 郭凝之 (d.u.) in 1630. For a copy of a Ming edition of the *Wujia yulu*, see Yanagida, ed., *Shike goroku, Goke goroku, furoku Hōkoshi goroku, Seppō goroku, Gensha daishi goroku*. For a discussion of the *Wujia yulu*, see Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 120-121; and also Yanagida, “Shikeroku to Gokeroku.”

⁴⁸ For the *Guangzhi ge*, see *Fenyang wude chanshi yulu* 汾陽無德禪師語錄 (T47.1992.621a22-b28), compiled by Shishuang Chuyuan in 1004. A running commentary on the *Guangzhi ge* by Fenyang’s dharma heir Dayu Shouzhi can be found in his entry in the *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.508b6-509b10).

⁴⁹ *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.508b4-5).

⁵⁰ *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.635b1-2).

⁵¹ *Ibid.* (XZJ148.635b2-4).

with which this process of reification took place can be witnessed in the following testimony of Huanglong's dharma heir Yungai Shouzhi 雲蓋守智 (d.u.):

A while ago I went again to [Mt.] Huangbo. When I arrived at the reservoir I saw a monk coming from the mountain, so I asked him, "Brother, how have you been recently making sense of the words of the three barriers?" The monk said, "There are some very marvelous words that can allow you to see the intent [of the three barriers]. [In response to] 'why does my hand look like the Buddha's hand' some say 'playing the lute under the moon'⁵² and others say 'holding an empty begging bowl on a long road.'⁵³ [In response to] 'why does my leg look like an ass's leg' some say 'a white egret stands on snow and yet they are not the same color'⁵⁴ and others say 'stepping on fallen flowers in an empty mountain.'⁵⁵ [In response to] 'wherein lies the conditions of your birth' some say 'I am so and so from such and such a place.'" At that time, I made fun of him and said, "Along the way if someone asks you [lit. the chief seat] about the meaning of the Buddha's hand, ass's leg, and conditions of your birth will you answer him with 'holding an empty begging bowl on a long road' or with 'a white egret stands on snow and yet they are not the same color'? If you use both then you will bring great confusion to the Buddha's Dharma. But if you just pick one reply then the test of your aptitude [*jishi* 機事] [in *chan*] will prove to be partial and dry [i.e., underwhelming]."⁵⁶

Yungai's testimony lays bare a tendency that one can readily witness in the transmission of the lamp and recorded sayings texts, which are replete with examples of Chan men using and reusing the same phrase or saying in various contexts. In lieu of trying to produce his own response, a run of the mill student, in other words, seems to have preferred to make use of elegant, poetic responses to koans devised by others with better credentials. This seems to have been a well-accepted method of studying koans. Few before this period openly questioned the efficacy of this method. But signs of change were evident during the Northern Song. Yungai, for instance, clearly felt that other students were not doing justice to his

⁵² The *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.539b11-12) attributes this reply to Huinan's disciple Rongqing Qingxian 隆慶慶閑 (1027[6?]-1082). See also the *Rentian yanmu* (T48.2006.310b12-13) and Rongqing's entry in the *Xu chuandeng lu* (T51.2077.568c26).

⁵³ This expression was most likely borrowed from a sermon by Zhenjing Kewen, delivered at Puli chanyuan on Mt. Dong; see the sermon in the *Guzunsu yulu* (XZJ118.711b11-13) and the *Xu guzunsu yuyao* (XZJ118.929b3-5).

⁵⁴ The *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.539b12) attributes this reply to Rongqing. See also the *Rentian yanmu* (T48.2006.310b13-14) and Rongqing's entry in the *Xuchuandeng lu* (T51.2077.568c27).

⁵⁵ This expression was most likely borrowed from the sermon by Zhenjing noted above (see n. 53). In both the *Guzunsu yulu* and *Xu guzunsu yuyao* editions of Zhenjing's recorded sayings, however, we find "deep mountain" [*shenshan* 深山] for "empty mountain" [*kongshan* 空山].

⁵⁶ *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.588a9-16).

teacher's three barriers koan or to themselves by simply appropriating the words of Huanglong's disciples like Zhenjing.

Worse still, perhaps, are those students who do peruse [*yue* 閱] the words of Chan master Linji Yixuan's 臨濟義玄 (d. 866) "four types of host and guest" [*sibinzhu* 四賓主] and yet still cannot tell the four types apart.⁵⁷ Juefan, for one, was deeply concerned. Lack of cultural knowledge seems to have been a serious problem. Linji, for instance, had also once likened his shouts to the jeweled sword of the Diamond King, a golden-haired lion crouching on the ground,⁵⁸ a search pole and shadow grass (used as bait),⁵⁹ and a shout that doesn't work like a shout at all,⁶⁰ but students of his day, Juefan laments, "often don't even know what kind of words 'a golden-haired lion crouching on the ground' or 'a search pole and shadow grass' are, how could they then recognize the intention [*yi* 意] [behind them]?"⁶¹ As a result, these students tend to simply brush such teachings aside as temporary expressions conceived by the ancients to establish "entryways" to their respective houses. "What satisfaction," they say, "would there be in inquiring further about them?"⁶²

Although we can thus surmise that some students chose not to (or were not aware of the fact that they had to) read koans or the "entryway sayings" for comprehension, other than their obvious use as emblems of factional identity there is no way to know for sure what they then did with the koans that they had in their possession. That the ancient sayings were increasingly becoming important tools in establishing factional identity, however, is beyond doubt. Competition among different factions to construct a comprehensive collection and a better definition of their own style of *chan*, so as to establish it as Chan orthodoxy, became visibly apparent in the numerous Chan "histories" compiled during the Northern Song, namely the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (Fayan), the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* (Linji), and *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (Yunmen).⁶³ But, as the Zen historian Yanagida Seizan points out, there is more to these texts than the overt sectarian agenda of trying to establish the *chan* style of one's own faction as Chan orthodoxy. Subtle changes that were made to the biographies and sayings of the Chan patriarchs show that their spiritual descendents were constantly experimenting with the very stuff of orthodoxy itself.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* (XZJ148.596b1).

⁵⁸ A golden-haired lion [*jinmao shizi* 金毛獅子] refers to someone with talent and understanding, that is, an adept; for instance, see *Yunmen Kuangzhen chanshi yulu* (T47.1988.552c28-29).

⁵⁹ A search pole [*tangan* 探竿] and shadow grass [*yingcao* 影草] were both traditional tools used for fishing. A pelican's feather, tied to the end of a pole, was placed in a river or lake to draw fish. A blade of grass was set afloat as bait. In Chan and Zen literature, both are best understood as "bait." See Komazawa daigaku Zengaku daijiten hensanjo, ed., *Shinpan Zengaku daijiten*, 835.

⁶⁰ These translations are borrowed from Watson, *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-chi*, 98.

⁶¹ *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.596b4-5). For the significance of the term "intention" [*yi*] during the Song, see Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality*, 162-181, 195-207.

⁶² *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.596b5-6).

⁶³ This has been convincingly shown by Albert Welter in his *Monks, Rulers, and Literati* and *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*.

In his investigation of the evolution of Linji's recorded sayings during the Northern Song, for instance, Yanagida came to focus on an interesting passage that sheds much light on these experiments:

Someone asked, "Master, whose song do you sing? Whose style of teaching do you carry on?"

The Master said, "When I was at Huangbo's place, I asked a question three times and three times I got hit."

The monk started to say something. The Master gave a shout and then struck the monk, saying, "You don't drive a nail into the empty sky!"⁶⁴

What drew Yanagida's attention to this passage is the unnamed monk's rather innocuous question, "whose song do you sing and whose style of teaching do you carry on?" As Yanagida rightly notes, asking someone his or her factional style [*zongfeng* 宗風] seems to have been a fairly standard rite performed by students who visited a master for instruction.⁶⁵ In the early Chan text *Lengqie shizi ji* 楞伽師資記 by the monk Jingjue 淨覺 (683-ca. 750), for instance, we find Empress Wu 武 (625-705) inviting Shexiu 神秀 (606?-706) to court and asking him, "the dharma that has been transmitted [to you], whose tenet is it?"⁶⁶

That being said, the need to define one's factional style was never felt so strongly as it was during the Northern Song. Never before were the requests for one's factional style answered almost exclusively with the pithy, enigmatic sayings and behavior that we now readily associate with koans. For the Linji faction, Yanagida claims that this practice began with Fenyang's teacher Shoushan Shengnian 首山省念 (926-993).⁶⁷ According to the *Jingde chuandeng lu*, when Shoushan held the ceremony of opening the hall someone, as expected, asked him, "Whose song do you sing and whose style of teaching do you carry on?"⁶⁸ In Shoushan's entry we also find what appears to be the earliest reference to "Linji's shout and Deshan's blow" [*Linji he Deshan bang* 臨濟喝德山棒].⁶⁹ For these and other reasons, Yanagida suspects that the stylized request for the master's *jiafeng* or style and the formalization of this *jiafeng* as "Linji's shout and Deshan's blow" may have actually begun with Shoushan.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ *Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao chanshi yulu* 鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄 (T47.1985.496b20-23); Watson, *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-chi*, 10 (with minor changes).

⁶⁵ Yanagida, "Goroku no rekishi," 386.

⁶⁶ *Lengqie shizi ji* (T85.2837.1290b1); see also the critical edition and translation of this text in Japanese prepared by Yanagida Seizan in his *Shoki no zenshi* I, 298-299.

⁶⁷ Albert Welter reached similar conclusions in his study of Linji's recorded sayings; see Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 105, 107, and 112-113.

⁶⁸ *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.304a13-14.)

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* (T51.2076.304b2). Also noted in Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 105.

⁷⁰ Yanagida, "Goroku no rekishi," 386. Abe Chōichi has also attempted to show the significance of Shoushan in the growth of Linji's lineage; see especially Abe, *Zōtei Chūgoku Zenshūshi no kenkyū*, 285-

Although it is now well known among students of Chan that Linji's style is embodied in the shout, this, as Yanagida also points out, does not seem to have always been the case. Consider, for instance, Linji's entry in the *Zutang ji*. There we learn that Linji had attained a great awakening not under Huangbo Xiyun 黄檗希運 (d. 850) but a figure by the name of Dayu 大愚 (d.u.).⁷¹ Linji's entry tells us that his awakening had prompted Dayu to claim that he had thus acquired a "son," but no mention of any sort of transmission or shout is made in this oft-cited story.⁷² According to the *Zutang ji*, Linji, in other words, had not one but two teachers. In striking contrast, in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* we find at the end of Linji's biography an explicit reference to his "transmission verse" [*chuanfaji* 傳法偈],⁷³ which Yanagida (I think, rightly) suspects is a reflection of a newfound need for a "single-stream or master model of transmission" that appeared on the eve of the founding of the Northern Song.⁷⁴ A new problem, however, subsequently emerged. The verse was transmitted shortly before Linji's death, but no one was specifically named as its recipient. Although Linji's disciple Sansheng Huiran 三聖慧然 (d.u.) is clearly recorded in his own entry as having received Linji's "formula" [*jue* 訣],⁷⁵ the fact that Linji's verse had not been directly addressed to Sansheng in the anecdote from Linji's own entry seems to have quickly become a point of anxiety as we may glean from the subtle changes that were made to this anecdote in the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* and later recensions of the *Jingde chuandeng lu*.⁷⁶

In these later versions of the anecdote in question we learn that Linji, as he was about to die, voiced his concerns about the future of his "treasury of the eye of the true dharma" [*zhengfa yanzang* 正法眼藏; i.e., his lineage]. In response, his most senior disciple Sansheng boldly uttered his willingness to bear this important burden, but—as a test perhaps—Linji first asked Sansheng what he would say if someone were to ask him about his treasury. Not

286. Some of Abe's arguments, especially those concerning the relationship between Shoushan and his teacher Fengxue Yanzhao 風穴延沼 (896-973), are problematic and must be reevaluated.

⁷¹ For a discussion of the potential problems that Dayu presented for the Linji lineage of the Northern Song, see Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 90-99.

⁷² A few exchanges concerning the shout do appear in Linji's entry, but before the story of Linji's encounter with Dayu.

⁷³ Yanagida, "Goroku no rekishi," 390. For the reference, see the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.291a17). The *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* used the *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 (1316) edition of the *Jingde chuandeng lu*, which in turn was based on the Sijian 思鑿 woodblock edition of 1134. For the reference in question in the Sijian edition, see Yanagida, ed., *Sōhan, Kōribon, Keitoku dentōroku*, 99a. For a discussion of the dating of the various editions of this text, see Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati*, 116-118.

⁷⁴ Yanagida, "Goroku no rekishi," 390.

⁷⁵ *Jingde chuandeng lu* (ST51.2076.294c28). See also Yanagida, *Sōhan, Kōribon, Keitoku dentōroku*, 102b. Also noted in Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 104.

⁷⁶ For a side-by-side comparison of the different editions of the above anecdote, see Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 102-103. The later Tōji 東寺 edition, based on an earlier Northern Song edition published at Dongchan si 東禪寺 in Fuzhou in 1080, clearly identifies Sansheng as the recipient of the verse.

surprisingly, Sansheng replied that he would just shout. Linji then lamented that his treasury would perish in the hands of this blind ass (i.e. Sansheng) and conferred, instead, the aforementioned verse. Not coincidentally, perhaps, this verse is not called a “transmission verse.” It thus seems to be the case that the emphasis had shifted away from the verse and was placed instead on the transmission of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma that Śākyamuni had ostensibly transmitted to Mahākāśyapa by holding up a flower (or so we are told for the first time in the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*).⁷⁷ This solution, however, was apparently not good enough. Linji’s recorded sayings in the *Sijia yulu* 四家語錄, whose preface was prepared in 1085,⁷⁸ had dispensed with the verse altogether and allowed the exchange between Linji and Sansheng to bear the whole burden of serving as a paradigm of master to disciple transmission by itself.⁷⁹

The shout and the question of style had thus become largely synonymous with the treasury of the eye of the true dharma. But the ambivalent attitude towards the shout that we may readily sense in Linji’s (or whoever compiled the record of Linji) dismissal of Sansheng’s shout seems to have rendered the shout a precarious, if not downright questionable, emblem of dharma transmission and factional identity. This sense of ambivalence is rendered even more explicit in the recorded sayings of Linji’s disciple Xinghua Cunjiang 興化存獎 (830-888). Citing a case first used perhaps by his teacher Linji, Xinghua is said to have presented a challenging task to his students who hastily imitated the shout. The challenge was to witness monks from two different administrative units of the monastery simultaneously give out a shout and then distinguish guest from host.⁸⁰ Yanagida interprets this move by Xinghua as a sign that he had risen up from the ranks as a young leader who stood in opposition to the “shouters” represented by the senior disciple

⁷⁷ Yanagida, “Goroku no rekishi,” 392. For an invaluable account of the formation of and reaction to this apocryphal story, see Foulk, “Sung Controversies Concerning the ‘Separate Transmission’ of Ch’an.”

⁷⁸ The oldest extant edition of the *Sijia yulu*, purportedly edited by Huanglong in the eleventh century, was published in 1607 and reprinted in Japan in 1648. For a copy of this edition, see Yanagida Seizan, ed. *Shike goroku, Goke goroku, furoku Hōkoshi goroku, Seppō goroku, Gensha daishi goroku*. The recorded sayings contained in the *Sijia yulu*, however, are almost identical to the editions of the same texts recorded in the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*; see Welter, *The Linji lu and The Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 111; and also Yanagida, “Shikeroku to Gokeroku,” 596.

⁷⁹ Yanagida, “Goroku no rekishi,” 391. See *Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao chanshi yulu* (T47.1985.506c3-7); cf. Yanagida, *Shike goroku*, 58b-59a; for an English translation, see Watson, *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-chi*, 126.

⁸⁰ *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.295b4-6); *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* (XZJ135.709a5-8); and *Guzunsu yulu* (XZJ118.808b14-809a1). The following words were attributed to Linji himself: “All of you have learned my shout. I ask you now, if a monk comes from the east hall and another monk comes from the west hall, and they both shout at once. Can guest be distinguished from host here? If you can’t distinguish them, then you must not learn my shout” (XZJ118.218a5-7); see also Yanagida, “Goroku no rekishi,” 392 and 522 n. 798.

Sansheng.⁸¹ As thought-provoking as it is, given the lack of corroborative evidence, this argument should only be accepted with due caution and even with some skepticism. What Yanagida has nevertheless demonstrated with some certainty, I believe, is that a healthy mixture of enthusiasm and doubt had always accompanied the shout and, to a certain extent, the question of style during the Northern Song. And it was the onslaught of “entryway sayings” during this period, I submit, that made it increasingly clear that legitimacy and orthodoxy were not so much matters of history or fact as of style.⁸²

Secrecy and Factional Identity

Koans were, indeed, used as emblems of factional identity and style, but how exactly, we may ask, did they serve this function? Admittedly, what we do know about Chan learning before and after the rise of the Song dynasty is limited to the bits and pieces of information that are scattered throughout the relatively small number of texts that survive from this period. The little that we can glean from these sources, moreover, is heavily biased in favor of those who tried to make a strong case for coherence or, as we shall see, the *dao*. But brief glimpses of what these men tried to leave behind them and erase from their collective memory, I think, can still be had if we read carefully between the lines. Consider the following account from Juefan’s *Linjian lu*: “Alas, when the teachers of the [Chan] grove nowadays admit disciples, all of them, as a rule, prohibit understanding-via-awakening [*wujie* 悟解]. They push aside the mysterious and sublime [*xuanmiao* 玄妙] and only require a straight answer to straight question [*zhiwen zhida* 直問直答]. If [the question is about] nonexistence, then from beginning to end [they] only say ‘nonexistence.’ If [the question is about] existence, then from beginning to end [they] only say ‘existence.’ A hair’s breath of differentiation and [they] call it a crazy understanding [*kuangjie* 狂解].”⁸³ As a result, students, Juefan laments, are not only deprived of the opportunity to have a good awakening [*shanwu* 善悟] but are also deprived of the chance to raise good doubt [*shanyi* 善疑] as well. But why is it necessary for students to have a healthy sense of skepticism? Because, otherwise, Juefan contends, students would fail to grasp the *dao*.

⁸¹ Yanagida also points to an intriguing passage from the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* (XZJ135.708a16-b1) wherein it is recorded that Sansheng, Xinghua, and an elder dharma brother by the name of Dajue 大覺 (d.u.) performed a *nianxiang* 拈香 [offering of incense] ceremony together to honor their teacher Linji. Yanagida believes that this passage is evidence of an attempt to reconcile the various Linji factions during the Northern Song; see Yanagida, “Goroku no rekishi,” 393. See also Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy*, 105.

⁸² An interesting exception to this general rule is the monk Qisong 契嵩 (1007-1072), who diverges from this rule in large part because of the specific historical conditions that led him to compose his work (e.g., Tiantai attacks on Chan theories of lineage); see Morrison, “Ancestors, Authority, and History”; see also Huang, “Experiment in Syncretism.”

⁸³ *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.588b8-11).

Juefan offers an explanation. The patriarchs before Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一 (709–788) and Shitou Xiqian 石頭希遷 (700–790) and the tales of their awakening, he tells us, “can be examined with Principle and known with wisdom,” but the patriarchs who descended from Mazu and Shitou “responded to things [i.e., the needs of students] with potential and actualization” [*yi jiyong yingwu* 以機用應物] often in question and answer form, that is to say, they used what is commonly known as encounter dialogues or what we now call koans.⁸⁴ If so, then do the patriarchs before and after Mazu and Shitou (or, more precisely, their tenth-century “descendants” who seem to have first codified koans), with their approaches to awakening so seemingly different, aspire to the same *dao*? Failure to ask this question, according to Juefan, is what leads some to misleadingly claim that encounter dialogues and other similar methods such as Chan master Linji’s three mysteries and three essentials [*sanxuan sanyao* 三玄三要] are but “expedient words [that were conceived so as to] establish the [various] entryways [of Chan].”⁸⁵

What, in fact, are koans for? Are they a means to an end or an end in themselves? If they are a means to an end, then what end? And is this end—presumably the *dao*—the same for everyone? These are the sort of “good doubts” that Juefan seems to be encouraging his readers to raise here. But in doing so Juefan was not alone. Doubts about the relation between the various styles of *chan* were also raised, for instance, in a short treatise entitled the *Zongmen shigui lun* 宗門十規論 attributed to Chan master Fayen Wenyi 法眼文益 (885–958).⁸⁶ In its preface, Fayen (or whoever was responsible for its compilation) writes, “the

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* (XZJ148.588b13–14). Juefan here simply refers to this practice as “question and answer” or “dialogue” [*wenda* 問答]. For the expression “encounter dialogue” [Ch. *jiyuan wenda*, Jp. *kien mondō* 機緣問答], see Yanagida, “The ‘Recorded Sayings’ Texts of Chinese Ch’an Buddhism”; and also McRae, “Encounter Dialogue and the Transformation of the Spiritual Path in Chinese Ch’an.” For the potential link between this genre and early Chan, see McRae, “The Antecedents of Encounter Dialogue in Chinese Ch’an Buddhism.” Challenging Yanagida and McRae’s arguments about the antecedents of encounter dialogues in the Tang dynasty, Mario Poceski has recently argued that encounter dialogues can date no earlier than the mid-tenth century; see Poceski, “*Mazu yulu* and the Creation of the Chan Recorded Sayings.”

⁸⁵ *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.635b3). The three mysteries and the three essentials appear in Linji’s recorded sayings; see *Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao chanshi yulu* (T47.1985.497a15–20); for an English translation, see Watson, *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-chi*, 19.

⁸⁶ A brief mention of this text can be found in the *Wansong laoren pingzhang Tiantong Jue heshang songgu Congrongan lu* 萬松老人評唱天童覺和尚頌古從容菴錄 (1224) or *Conrong lu* for short, making this a convenient *terminus ante quem* for the *Zongmen shigui lun*; see T48.2004.267a23. The *Conrong lu* was compiled by Wansong Xingxiu 萬松行秀 (1166–1246) during his retirement at Congrong an in Baoensi 報恩寺 near present day Beijing. At the request of the powerful layman Yelü Chucai 耶律楚材 (1190–1244) Wansong added his own prose commentaries and interlineal notes to an older case collection and the this new koan collection was published as the *Congrong lu*. The earliest extant copy is a Ming reprint dated 1607. The earliest extant copy of the *Zongmen shigui lun* is a Japanese reprint (1756) of an edition first published in 1346. For an English translation, see Cleary, *Five Houses of Zen*, 131–144.

entryway artifices [*menting jianhua* 門庭建化] are strongly present in many directions [but] in responding to and benefiting beings they return to a single consideration.” Fayan did not hesitate to unequivocally state what this consideration is: Bodhidharma came from the West to point directly at the minds of people so that they may see their original nature and become buddhas; “how,” then, “could there be sectarian styles that can be held in high esteem?”⁸⁷ Fayan admits that “Deshan 德山, Linji, Weiyang 滂仰, Caodong 曹洞, Xuefeng, and Yunmen had each devised their own entryway contrivances [*menting shishe* 門庭施設],” but it was their descendants that turned these contrivances into a means of bolstering their own traditions and patriarchs thereby creating contradictions and causes for mutual attack.⁸⁸ Fayan, however, reminds his readers that “the great *dao* is without directions and the currents of the Dharma have the same taste.”⁸⁹ Caodong may thus “take tapping and singing as function” [*qiaochang wei yong* 敲唱為用],⁹⁰ Linji may “take reciprocation as technique” [*huhuan wei ji* 互換為機],⁹¹ Yunmen may “cover and cut the streams” [*han’gai jieliu* 函蓋截流],⁹² and Weiyang may use “squares and circles as silent tallies” [*fangyuan moqie* 方圓默契],⁹³ but nothing, Fayan contends, prevents them from blending harmoniously.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ *Zongmen shigui lun* (XZJ110.878a17-18).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* (XZJ110.878b4-7).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* (XZJ110.878b7).

⁹⁰ The expression “tapping and singing” is most likely a reference to the *Baojing sanmei ge* 寶鏡三昧歌 (T47.1986A.515a26 or T47.1986B.526a6) and *Gangyao song* 綱要頌 (T47.1986A.515c27). See also the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.599b18); *Rentian yanmu* (T48.2000.321a25-26 and T48.2000.319b13); Juefan’s *Zhizheng zhuan* 智證傳 (XZJ111.224b17); *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.444a2); and *Xu guzunsu yuyao* (XZJ118.895a17). Dayu Shouzhi, however, linked “tapping and singing” to the Weiyang house; see *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.509a1-5).

⁹¹ See also *Fengxue chanshi yulu* 風穴禪師語錄 in the *Guzunsu yulu* (ZZ118.240a14-15); and also *Rentian yanmu* (T48.2004.304a4).

⁹² “Covering” and “cutting the streams” are references to a famous set of three phrases, namely “covering heaven and earth” [*han’gai qiankun* 函蓋乾坤], “cutting all the streams” [*jieduan zhongliu* 截斷衆流], and “following the waves and chasing the tides” [*suibo zhulang* 隨波逐浪]. These three phrases are often attributed to Yunmen; see *Yunmen Kuangzhen chanshi guanglu* (T47.1988.576b19-29); and also *Rentian yanmu* (T48.2006.312a9-10). The *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.384c24-25) attributes these three phrases to his disciple Deshan Yuanmi 德山緣密 (d.u.). Juefan, however, attributes them to Yunmen’s teacher Xuefeng Yicun in his *Zhizheng zhuan* (XZJ111.188a13).

⁹³ For a broad overview of the circle diagram and its relation to the Weiyang house, see Murakami, *Tōdai Zen shisō kenkyū*, esp. 583-643. Murakami’s untimely death unfortunately left his research on this topic incomplete. The use of diagrams consisting of circles is also well attested in the *Zutang ji*. According to Mazu Daoyi’s entry, for instance, Mazu had once sent Jingshan Daoqin 徑山道欽 (714-792) a letter containing nothing but a circle. Upon receiving the letter, Daoqin (or Faqin 法欽) is said to have added a single brushstroke mark in the middle of the circle; see *Zutang ji* 4/41/7-8. Similarly, as a reply to a question from Nanquan Puyuan 南泉普願 (748-834), Zhaozhou is said to have simply drawn a circle and added a dot in its center; see *Zutang ji* 4/49/5-6.

A bigger concern, perhaps, for the author of the *Zongmen shigui lun* was the issue of how to secure the *dao* amidst so many different styles of *chan*. Given the numerous ways of constructing lessons about the *dao*, you can't, our text tells us, "let your crazy mind loose and make arbitrary conjectures about the intention of the sages."⁹⁵ As a solution, our text proposed that students avoid making personal assumptions [*yiduan* 臆斷] and instead actively consult well-learned teachers or "good friends" [*shanzhishi* 善知識].⁹⁶ Juefan Huihong makes the same argument in his *Linjian lu*. Despite the hundred-year gap that separates him from Yunmen, Gutazhu 古塔主 or Chan master Jianfu Chenggu 薦福承古 (d. 1045) boldly declared himself the former's spiritual heir [*si* 嗣].⁹⁷ This elicited the following sardonic response from Juefan: "[Gutazhu] takes himself very seriously and the Dharma very lightly."⁹⁸ In contrast, Yongjia Xuanjue, Juefan continues, attained awakening while reading the *Vimalakīrti sūtra* but still sought the approval of the sixth patriarch.

Juefan had good reasons to be concerned. He was writing for an audience that had already borne witness to the publication of major Chan anthologies such as the *Zutang ji*, *Jingde chuandeng lu*, and *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*. His was an audience that had the opportunity to benefit from large compilations devoted exclusively to koans such as the *Zongmen tongyao ji*

No one, however, is more closely associated with the circle diagram than Yangshan Huiji 仰山慧寂 (803-887); Yangshan and his teacher Weishan Lingyou are traditionally considered the founders of the Weiyang house of Chan. According to Yangshan's entry in the *Zutang ji*, when a prominent lay follower requested a verse what Yangshan offered him instead was a circle. In the circle he wrote, "so-and-so humbly answers" [*mouzi jinda* 某字謹答], on the left of the circle he wrote, "to think and know is to fall into second rate" [*si er zhizhi luo diertou* 思而知之落第二頭], and on the right he wrote, "to not think and know is to fall into third rate" [*busi er zhizhi luo disanshou* 不思而知之落第三]; see *Zutang ji* 5/55/1-3. To another student Yangshan is also said to have offered a circle with the character for water [*shui* 水] inscribed in its center, and in reply to the familiar question about the Patriarch coming from the West he drew a circle and added the character for Buddha [*fo* 佛]; see *Zutang ji* 5/56/3-5. A systematic analysis of the various circles can also be found in the entry for Yangshan's Korean disciple Sunji 順之 (d.u.), which seems to suggest that these circle diagrams were anything but a thing of the moment; see *Zutang ji* 5/113/2-5/137/4. For an English translation of Sunji's entry, see Buswell, "The Life of Sunji" and "Summary of Sunji's Teachings."

⁹⁴ *Zongmen shigui lun* (XZJ110.879a13-15).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* (XZJ110.880a11-12).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* (XZJ110.879b18-880a13).

⁹⁷ *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.604a5). For more on Jianfu and Juefan, see Yanagida, "Sōsetsu," 36; see also Tsuchiya, "Xuansha Shibeishi sanju gangzong yu Jianfu Chenggu sanxuan de bijiao." Juefan also mentions the example of Touzi Yiqing 投子義青 (1032-1083) who became the heir of Chan master Dayang Jingxuan 大陽警玄 (942-1027) of the Caodong lineage despite not knowing the latter personally. Touzi inherited Dayang's Dharma through the latter's friend Fushan Fayuan 浮山法遠 (991-1067), who belonged to the Linji lineage. For more on this issue, see Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 89-95.

⁹⁸ *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.604a7).

宗門統要集 (1093).⁹⁹ These men also had at their disposal verse comments and other tools for studying koans prepared by Fenyang Shanzhao and Xuedou Chongxian 雪竇重顯 (980-1052). Never before had it been so easy to access the various styles of *chan*. But the appearance of these texts was not accompanied by an authoritative and unifying vision, that is, a sense of coherence or *dao* that could bring these various styles of *chan*, which to some apparently seemed incommensurable or contradictory, together. Endorsements from reigning emperors and influential men at court, it seems, could not compensate for the lack of such a vision or standard. This, I submit, is why we find so much talk from men like Dakuan, Juefan, and others about the need for comprehension in Chan learning and why Chan master Xiangyan, as you may recall, had to burn his collection of essential sayings. Awareness of this problem is also clearly present in Chan master Yongming Yanshou's 永明延壽 (904-975) massive Chan encyclopedia, *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄 (960). Despite the great praise that Yongming received from men like Juefan for his attempt to articulate a unifying vision, “the source mirror” or “the source that mirrors” [*zongjing*] as he calls it,¹⁰⁰ anxieties about its lack persisted. Chan master Wan'an Daoyan 萬菴道顏 (1094-1164) sums up the problem nicely: Fenyang had pioneered the practice of “picking up ancient [sayings]” [*niangu* 拈古] and adding verse comments and Xuedou had perfected it, but students now preoccupy themselves with making their texts stylish and do not consider questions related to the *dao* or *de* [“virtue”].¹⁰¹ What men like Yongming, Fenyang, and Xuedou faced, in short, was nothing short of a crisis in textual authority.

Although their relationship was still very much a work in progress, Chan men during the Northern Song clearly began to sense that they had to reckon with both *chan* and *dao*.¹⁰² They could neglect neither the entryway sayings of the ancients, which continued to appear in

⁹⁹ For the *Zongmen tongyao ji*, see Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 1. For a discussion of the historical significance of the *Zongmen tongyao ji*, see Ishii, “Kung-an Ch’an and the *Tsung-men t’ung-yao chi*.”

¹⁰⁰ For the former reading, see Welter, “The Problem of Orthodoxy in Zen Buddhism”; for the latter, see James A. Benn’s translation of this title: *Record of the Principle That Mirrors [the Ten Thousand Dharmas]* (Benn, *Burning for the Buddha*, 110).

¹⁰¹ *Chanlin baoxun* 禪林寶訓 (T48.2022.1033c19-22). The *Chanlin baoxun* was originally compiled by Dahui Zonggao and Longxiang Shigui 龍翔士珪 (d. 1146) and later expanded to its current form by a certain Jingshan 淨善 (d.u.) during the Chunxi 淳熙 reign period (1174-1189).

¹⁰² This, of course, is not to say that consciousness of the various divisions within Chan and the need for a unifying (“superior”) vision was completely lacking before the tenth century. Most noteworthy in this respect is Guifeng Zongmi’s 圭峰宗密 (780-841) *Prolegomenon to the Collection of the Various Expressions of the Chan Source* (Chanyuan zhuquanji duxu 禪源諸詮集都序). But, needless to say, the historical forces that drove Zongmi to argue for a “text-based Chan” (e.g., the ascendancy of the so-called Hongzhou school and the popularity of subitist rhetoric and doctrine) were not the same forces at work in the Northern Song debate about *chan* and *dao*, the subject of this article. The latter was as much (if not more) a debate about the nature of “entryway sayings” as it was a debate about the doctrine of sudden awakening/cultivation. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for reminding me of this important point.

various standardized and officially sanctioned collections, nor the seeming connection between these sayings that justified these efforts to gather them together.¹⁰³ But things had not always been this way. Before (and even long after) these changes took place, a would-be Chan adept's encounter with the ancient cases, diagrams, formulas, and teachings of Chan seems to have been more intimate, consisting primarily of the student's sustained and repeated exposure to a relatively small, fixed, and closed corpus of texts and teachings. Beholden, it seems, to factional loyalties and tradition, few students seem to have bothered to seek beyond what they could learn directly from their teacher(s), let alone question its meaning or wording. Adherence, not coherence, was the name of the game.

Old habits die hard. In their sermons and writings a number of Chan masters from the Northern Song began to voice their concerns about the uneasy coexistence of these different habits of learning. While some, in other words, continued to reproduce, as they had always done, what appear to be fixed responses to particular koans, others seem to have begun to reduce all koans to a single understanding such as “the ordinary mind is the *dao*” [*pingchangxin shi dao* 平常心是道]. For instance, Huanglong's spiritual grandson Sixin Wuxin 死心悟新 (1044-1115) during an informal *xiaocan* 小參 sermon makes the following point:

Today many of those who investigate *chan* do not [try to] recognize the original mind and [instead] just make use of their brilliance and forceful wisdom. . . . When asked *chan* they answer *chan*. When asked *dao* they answer *dao*. When asked Buddha they answer Buddha. When asked Patriarch they answer Patriarch. They follow [the wording] of the phrases and reach an understanding. This is “going beyond” [*xiangshang* 向上] and that is “going below” [*xiangxia* 向下]. This is “eye of the *dao*” and that is “penetrating sound and form.” Today they understand one case and tomorrow another. When is there time for rest in this bag of flesh? There are also some who say, “When you see a mountain just call it a mountain and when you see water just call it water.” In every instance it is “be just-the-way-you-always-are” [*pingshi* 平實] [for them]. They just cite “the way things are” [*shi* 實] as a reply. How painful! How painful! All such sayings are the views and understandings of a fox.¹⁰⁴

Similarly, a certain Chan master by the name of Renwang Qin 仁王欽 from the Western borderland region of Shu 蜀 (present day Sichuan province), of whom otherwise almost nothing else is known, drew this revealing portrait of Chan learning during the Northern Song in a sermon for “instructing the assembly” [*shizhong* 示衆]:

¹⁰³ In a recent article, Tsuchiya Taisuke hints at this as well; see his “Kōanzen no seiritu ni kansuru shiron,” 279-278 (reverse pagination).

¹⁰⁴ *Huanglong Sixin Xin chanshi yulu* 黃龍死心禪師語錄 (XZJ120.254a4-12).

Students these days investigating [*chan*], as soon as they walk through the door, present their own views and understandings and say, “Without leaving the very spot on which [you] stand [you are] eternally and profoundly self-so. Seek for it and you shall realize that you cannot see it.”¹⁰⁵ Again, [they] say, “the function of the six senses is both empty and not empty; a flash of perfect radiance is both form and not form.”¹⁰⁶

There are some who fold their hands together on their chest, stare directly [at you] with straight eyes, and say, “Here everyone is holding on to a dead chess stone [that is bound to be captured].¹⁰⁷ What [talent] is there to weigh and measure?”

Some, having already [sought] understandings in that place where all dharmas are empty, say, “All the various dharmas are originally empty and serene and therefore [it is] said, ‘The true nature of ignorance is itself buddha nature. The empty body of illusory transformations is itself the dharma body.’¹⁰⁸ The illusory body will eventually return to ruin and the original essence of the dharma body is always self-so. Simply wrest illumination [i.e., wisdom] out of the nature of Principle [*lixing* 理性] and penetrate out of sound and form. Even if [you] pay attention to all the details [you] won’t be tainted in the slightest bit. It is all purely true emptiness and there is no other dharma.”

Again, there are Chan monks with a single-track mind [*danban chanhe* 擔板禪和], who don’t get the technique of reciprocity and only recognize words and phrases about being just-the-way-it-always-is [*pingshi*]. [They] only see that a mountain is a mountain, water is water, a monk is a monk, a layman is a layman, a board is a board, and a staff is a staff. Shifting [even] slightly to another position [*diwei* 地位] won’t do [for these monks]. This is all [because these monks] themselves are not equipped with eyes and have not yet met a [*chan*] virtuoso. [They are thus] not able to judge the Dharma or the person.

Accordingly, illumination [i.e., wisdom] is issued forth but it does not penetrate. Awakening is entered, but there is a gap. Carrying [this practice] on from one generation to the next, [they] make one mistake after another. The teacher’s eyes are not accurate and the disciples see [only] error. Transmission is coarse and superficial,

¹⁰⁵ This is a quote from Yongjia’s *Zhengdao ge* (T48.2014.396b12-13); see also the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.460c18-19).

¹⁰⁶ This is also a quote from Yongjia’s *Zhengdao ge* (T48.2014.395c22-23); see also the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.460a28).

¹⁰⁷ Here “holding on to a dead chess stone” or literally “holding on to a dead snake” [*ba ge sishetou* 把箇死蛇頭] is a common expression from the classical Chinese chess game that refers to the stubborn attachment to a fatal move (i.e., a stone placed inside a trap and thus bound to be captured by the opponent). For instance, see the *Congrong lu* (T48.2004.246a15) and *Boshan heshang canchan jingyu* 博山和尚參禪警語 (XZJ112.952a2) compiled by Chengzheng 成正 (d.u.), a disciple of Chan master Wuyi Yuanlai 無異元來 (1575–1639), in 1611.

¹⁰⁸ This is also a quote from Yongjia’s *Zhengdao ge* (T48.2014.395c10); see also the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.460a16).

resulting in such loss and gain. For exactly this reason, [they] cannot discern the true blood vessel of the buddhas and patriarchs. Each pursues their own views and opens up shop, causing future students to misrecognize the main purport. [Students] only gaze at [their *chan*] styles from afar and claim that they have [already] requested [and received] instruction.

And then, [there are students] who run around all over the country for ten or twenty years and make the self-proclamation that [their appetite for] investigating [*chan*] has been satiated. Having widely visited all the houses and factions [of Chan], [they] say that the words and phrases of the patriarchs possess a *raison d'être* and that the stories of encounters from the past each have their respective depth [of sophistication]. [They] take similar words from the various houses, compare their resemblances, and arrange [them accordingly]. [They then] record [all this] in big and small notebooks, which [they] hide under [their] robes and do not let others see. Everywhere [they go they] take the mysterious tenet of [our] tradition and set it out as, first, “illuminating the ‘eye of the *dao*’ story”; next, “selecting the ‘eye of the dharma’ saying” [*ze fayan hua* 擇法眼話]; and afterwards, “penetrating sound and penetrating form,” “brushing away the traces” [*fuji* 拂跡], and “forgetting emotions” [*wangqing* 忘情].

Noticing [students] who come to investigate [*chan*], some raise the verses by Xiushanzhu 修山主 or the theories of others [who also belong to Xuansha Shibeis lineage].¹⁰⁹ [They] ask [the students] to see that all dharmas are not separate from the original mind. The great earth is vacuous and empty and there is no dharma outside of the mind. Thus [they say], “What’s been knocked down is not anything else and what’s here and there is not dust; in the mountains, rivers, and the great earth the body of the king of the Dharma is completely exposed.”¹¹⁰ And then [they] clarify that the whole great earth is the body of a true being,¹¹¹ the gate of liberation,¹¹² the pair of eyes [that belong to] Vairocana, and the dharma body itself. If [you] see it this way, there are no dharmas outside of the mind, dharmas are truly one’s own mind, and everything is just like this [*renmo* 怎麼].

¹⁰⁹ Xiushanzhu or Longji Shaoxiu 龍濟紹修 (fl. 10th Century) is said to have left sixty or so verses; see his entry in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.400c09-410a25).

¹¹⁰ This is a verse that is often attributed to Chan master Xiaoshou 小壽 (944-1022) of Hangzhou, a disciple of Tiantai Deshao 天台德韶 (891-972); see the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.585b13-14).

¹¹¹ The earliest instance of the use of this expression appears to be the entry for Xuansha Shibeis in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.344b14-15) and the entry for Xuansha’s disciple Huiqiu Jizhao 慧球寂照 (d. 913) where the master is remembered as having said that “the whole world in the ten directions is the body of the true being” (T51.2076.372c4-5).

¹¹² This expression seems to be often associated with Xuefeng Yicun; see *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.353c5).

Some preach about “the self before the empty *kalpa* and the self in everyday function”¹¹³ . . . Some clarify [the matter of] the same color, [saying that the practice of] turning the situation around and changing positions [*zhuanwei huiji* 轉位回機] is ongoing or has come to a full stop. Only thereafter will a mix of flowers [bloom] on a withered tree. Some, when instructing students, only draw circle diagrams, sometimes completely clear or completely dark; half dark or half clear; partial or complete . . .

How can [you] not know? The teachers and houses of [our] tradition let out a word or half a phrase and extended their hands to people as part of their skillful means. At first, [the teachers and houses of Chan] did not themselves establish their own styles as the oral sayings [*shuohua* 說話] of a particular tradition. Later generations of descendants [however] forgot about the old patriarchs and [only] recognized their own respective grandfathers. Each of them established their own tenets and then took one ancient [encounter] dialogue after another and turned them into a *samādhi* of personal enjoyment [*zishouyong sanmei* 自受用三昧]. . . . If [we were to] discuss [how these later generations appropriated] the three mysteries and three essentials, four discernments [*sizhong liaojian* 四種料揀],¹¹⁴ five positions of lord and minister [*wuweijunchen* 五位君臣], three types of defilement [*sanzhong shenlou* 三種滲漏], continuing inside and continuing outside [*neishao waigshao* 內紹外紹], kingly types and ministerial types [*wangzhong chenzhong* 王種臣種],¹¹⁵ the ocean of nature is

¹¹³ In his *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.490a6), Juefan attributes this teaching to the aforementioned Jianfu Chenggu.

¹¹⁴ The four discernments are traditionally attributed to Linji, but the term itself does not appear in his recorded sayings; for instance, see the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.643b14-15) and *Rentian yanmu* (T48.2006.300b6-23). The term seems to have been first used to describe Linji’s reply to his disciple Kefu’s 剋符 (d.u.) questions about a set of phrases in tenth century. Xinghua Zunjiang’s disciple Nanyuan Huiyong 南院慧顓 (860-ca. 930), for instance, is said to have asked his disciple Fengxue about the same set of phrases, which Nanyuan specifically calls “the saying of the four discernments” [*sizhong liaojianyu* 四種料簡語]; see the latter’s recorded sayings in the *Guzunsu yulu* (XZJ118.241b7-14). Not surprisingly, Xuefeng’s student Shoushan Shengnian was also asked to offer his own take on the four discernments; see the latter’s recorded sayings in the *Guzunsu yulu* (XZJ118.253a12-17). Linji and Kefu’s dialogue can be found in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.295c26-296a3) and the vulgate edition of Linji’s recorded sayings; see the *Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao chanshi yulu* (T47.1985.497a22-29); for an English translation, see Watson, *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-chi*, 21-22.

But it does not seem to be the case that the notion of the four discernments was the exclusive intellectual property of the Linji lineage. Several references to the four discernments are made in Yongming Yanshou’s *Zongjing lu* and they refer not to Linji’s teachings but to various sets of phrases that, as a whole, seem to function as a form of tetralemma; for instance, see T48.2016.534b1-7, 631c6-11, 736b17-22, 830b8-15 etc. Cf. the *Mohe zhiguan* 摩訶止觀 (T46.1911.85b8-21).

¹¹⁵ These teachings (i.e., continuing inside and continuing outside, kingly types and ministerial types) are attributed to Ciming Chuyuan in the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.628b6).

described the same way [by everyone] [*tongquan xinghai* 同詮性海],¹¹⁶ turning around the continuous flow [of karma] [*zhuan ce liuzhu* 轉側流注],¹¹⁷ the dharma body has two types of illnesses and three types of light,¹¹⁸ and the like, it would not be possible to fully raise [all the instances for criticism].

There are [for instance] those who consistently construct a single-flavored, constructed understanding as soon as [they] hear the preaching end and then say, ‘When all the buddhas have not yet appeared in the world and the Patriarch has not yet come from the West are there any other oral sayings like these or not?’ And then [they] raise [this case]: ‘A monk asked Zhaozhou, ‘What is the mysterious in the mysterious?’ [Zhao]zhou said, ‘How long have you [lit. *ācārya*] been mysterious?’ The monk said, ‘It’s been quite a while since I’ve been mysterious.’ [Zhao]zhou said, ‘Had it not been for me [lit. old monk], the mysterious would have killed you [lit. *ācārya*].’¹¹⁹ [They] then take this story [*hua* 話] as a final seal of approval.

There are [also] those who say, ‘The mysterious and sublime expedients of the ancients—how can they be so futile?’ If [the ancients’ teachings] are understood this way, then the three mysteries and five positions would all be contrivances. It is necessary to clearly discern them one by one and only then will [you] see the workings of Linji and Dongshan.¹²⁰

If we are to trust the lengthy passage above, the good doubts that Juefan hoped to see were apparently not being regularly raised during the twelfth century. Some Chan men of this period, whose “mysterious *dao* is not based on their attainment of awakening,”¹²¹ seem to have never bothered to ask themselves how they should study the various encounter dialogues, circle diagrams, and *chan* formulas. For these Chan men, it seems to have been enough to simply collect, recite, and arrange these teachings in neat typologies.

Chan, in other words, was an end in itself. Renwang Qin or master Qin of Renwang yuan 仁王院 was obviously disturbed by this trend. To see eye to eye with the ancients, that is, the

¹¹⁶ I have been able to locate only one other instance of this expression in Xuansha Shibe’s recorded sayings (XZJ126.365a15 & 373a13).

¹¹⁷ My translation of this phrase is tentative. The phrase may be referring to one of the so-called “three types of productions” [*sanzhongsheng* 三種生] of Weishan Lingyou, namely that of the mind, phenomena, and continuous flow of the interaction between mind and phenomena; see the *Rentian yanmu* (T48.2006.321b19-28).

¹¹⁸ This ancient case, otherwise known as “Yunmen’s two illnesses” [*Yunmen liangbing* 雲門兩病], can be found in the *Congrong lu* (T48.2004.233c27-234c7); for an English translation, see Cleary, *Book of Serenity*.

¹¹⁹ *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.277c29-278a2). The last sentence here is unclear.

¹²⁰ *Jitai pudeng lu* (XZJ137.342a13-343b8). When Renwang Qin delivered this lecture is unclear, but it cannot have taken place any earlier than 1103 when the *Chanyuan qinggui* 禪苑清規 was compiled by Changlu Zongze 長蘆宗頤 (d.u.), which is mentioned in the lecture, and no later than 1202 when the *Jitai pudeng lu* was published.

¹²¹ *Jitai pudeng lu* (XZJ137.342a13).

Chan patriarchs of the past, he believed that a student must first get to the bottom of the meaning and purpose of the ancient teachings. But master Qin seems to have been speaking to a crowd that was more accustomed to the practice of using these teachings, or the simple possession thereof, as emblems of factional identity. This was also a crowd that was accustomed, it seems, to the trend of ignoring these Chan teachings outright in favor of a simpler tenet such as “everything is true emptiness” or that things are “just-the-way-they-always-are.”

In this respect master Qin was not unique. Addressing what was presumably a comparable audience, Chan master Yuanwu Keqin 圓悟克勤 (1063-1135) also delivered a series of lectures at three different temples that were located in or nearby Western Shu (present day Sichuan province).¹²² The subject of these lectures, which were collated and published together as the *Biyān jī* 碧巖集 or *Biyān lù* 碧巖錄 (hereafter *Blue Cliff Record*), was a relatively recent collection of one hundred ancient cases and verse commentaries attributed to Xuedou Chongxian, a respected Chan master from the lineage of Yunmen.¹²³ In one of these lectures Yuanwu raised the following ancient, public case [*gong'an* 公案] or koan for further comment: “Jingqing¹²⁴ asked a monk, ‘What sound is that outside the gate?’ The monk said, ‘The sound of raindrops.’ [Jing]qing said, ‘Living beings are confused. They lose themselves and follow things [or sound and form].’”¹²⁵ More important, perhaps, than the case itself is the following observation made by Yuanwu: “Everywhere public cases like this are referred to as ‘tempering words’ [*duanlianyu* 煅煉語]. If they [were meant to] temper, they would only amount to mental functions. They are also called ‘penetrating sound and form’ or clarifying (1) ‘the eye of the *dao*,’ (2) ‘sound and form,’ (3) ‘the mind source’ [*xinzong* 心宗], (4) ‘forgetting emotions,’ and (5) ‘demonstration’ [*zhanyan* 展演]. That’s quite meticulous, but what can be done about being [stuck] inside [conceptual] holes?”¹²⁶

¹²² A postface to the lectures dated 1125 informs us of the three locations at which the lectures took place; see T48.2003.224b11-12. They are Zhaojue si 昭覺寺 in Chengdu 成都, the capital of present-day Sichuan Province, Lingquan yuan 靈泉院 on Mt. Jia 夾山 in present-day Hunan Province, and Daolin si 道林寺 on Mt. Shizi 獅子山, East of Chengdu, in present-day Sichuan Province. Yuanwu is said to have resided at Zhaojue si, near his hometown, sometime between 1102 and 1112, after which he was appointed to Lingquan yuan. Two years later in 1114, he relocated to Daolin si. Yuanwu later returned to Zhaojue si in 1129 and remained there until his death in 1135. See Hsieh, “A Study of the Evolution of K’an-hua Ch’an in Sung China,” 37.

¹²³ A postface dated 1125 informs us that the *Blue Cliff Record* was based on Xuedou’s earlier work, the *Xuedou songgu baize* 雪竇頌古百則; see *Blue Cliff Record* (T48.2003.224b8). For an annotated Japanese translation of the *Xuedou songgu baize*, see Iriya, Kajitani, and Yanagida, *Setchō juko*.

¹²⁴ Jingqing Daofu 鏡清道怱 (868-937) was the disciple of Xuefeng Yicun. For his biography, see the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.348c3-350b1).

¹²⁵ *Blue Cliff Record* (T48.2003.182b19-21). The same case also appears in the Jingqing’s entry in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.349c12-13). For an English translation, see Cleary and Cleary, *The Blue Cliff Record*, 275.

¹²⁶ *Blue Cliff Record* (T48.2003.182c6-9).

Although not present at any of these lectures, Yuanwu's disciple Dahui Zonggao was no stranger to the ideas that we find in the *Blue Cliff Record*. In a sermon for the layman Dongfeng 東峰 or Controller General Chen Cizhong 陳次仲 (d.u.), Dahui launched a virulent attack against the numerous erroneous techniques that plagued the Chan community during the Northern Song.¹²⁷ Those who espouse these techniques, he tells us, take the stories of the ancient worthies, classify them into various, and now undoubtedly familiar, categories such as “eye of the *dao*,” “penetrating sound and form,” and “forgetting emotions” and place them

¹²⁷ For the sermon, see the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* 大慧普覺禪師語錄 (T47.1998A.891c19-892c8). The *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* exists largely in two different sets of texts, namely a set in thirty fascicles, which served as the basis for the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* copy, and another set in two fascicles. The latter, which largely corresponds to fascicles 1 through 12 from the thirty-fascicle set, seems to have also been known as the *Dahui Chanrong zaduhai* 大慧禪宗雜毒海 or simply *Zaduhai*. The thirty-fascicle set was printed on several occasions. In the Song, the set was first printed at Dongchan si and Kaiyuan si 開元寺 as part of the so-called Fuzhou canon. The making of the Fuzhou canon took many years. The work began at Dongchan si (1080-1112) and continued at Kaiyuan si (1112-1115); see Shiina, *Sō-Gen han zenseki no kenkyū*, 188-208. At Dongchan si, twelve Chan-related texts are known to have been printed, which includes the *Jingde chuandeng lu*, *Zongjing lu*, *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*, and the thirty fascicle set of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu*; see Shiina, *Sō-Gen han zenseki no kenkyū*, 211-232. At Kaiyuan si, one additional Chan text was added to this list of twelve; see Shiina, *Sō-Gen han zenseki no kenkyū*, 232-256. A Gozan reprint of the complete set of the Dongchan si edition of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* is currently housed at Kamidaigo ji 上醍醐寺 and a partial set at the Tenri toshokan 天理図書館 in Japan. A Gozan reprint of the complete set of the Kaiyuan si edition of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* is currently housed at Tōji and the Kunaichō 宮内庁 and a partial set is currently housed at Kanazawa bunko 金沢文庫 in Japan. The Dongchan si and the Kaiyuan si editions are virtually identical with the exception that an extra fascicle was included in the latter, making it a total of thirty-three fascicles. The *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* copy was based on the Ming edition of the Yongle Southern Canon, which in turn was based on the Dongchan si edition from the Song. Unless indicated otherwise, when speaking of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* I will be referring to the thirty-fascicle set in the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*.

Fascicles 19 through 24 of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* correspond to his *fayu* 法語 (“dharma talks”) and fascicles 25 through 30 to his famous letters (*shu* 書). These letters—said to have been recorded by a disciple known as Huiran 慧然 (d.u.) and edited again by the layman Jingzhi 淨智, Huang Wenchang 黃文昌 (d.u.)—are probably the best known among Dahui's works and have gained wide circulation independent of his other writings. Several Gozan copies of these letters are still extant and they are commonly referred to as the *Dahui Pujue chanshi shu* 大慧普覺禪師書 (hereafter *Dahui's Letters*). Shiina suspects that a Gozan edition of *Dahui's Letters* currently housed at Seikidō bunko 成篔簹堂文庫 was used by the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* editors as a proof text against which they corrected the errors of the Ming edition; see Shiina, *Sō-Gen han zenseki no kenkyū*, 396-397. The Tenri toshokan edition of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* only preserves *Dahui's Letters*. When citing these letters, I will use the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* copy and the critical edition and translation prepared by Araki Kengo. According to Araki, a Korean reprint of a Song edition of *Dahui's Letters* bears a colophon dated to 1166; see Araki, *Daiesho*, 252. A brief English summary of Araki's arguments can be found in Shinohara, “Ta-hui's Instructions to Tseng K'ai,” 194 n. 2.

into a sequence of sorts for critical evaluation and review.¹²⁸ Then there are those who gather what he calls “idle talk and long-winded phrases” such as “sitting in a ghost cave underneath a black mountain” [*zuo zai heishanxia guikuli* 坐在黑山下鬼窟裏], “constantly illuminating in silence” [*mo er changzhao* 默而常照], “being like a man who has died the great death” [*ru dasi di ren* 如大死底人], “the matter before your parents were born” [*fumu weishengshi shi* 父母未生時事], “the matter before the empty *kalpa*” [*kongjie yiqian shi* 空劫已前事], and “the message of the primordial buddha” [*weiyinnapan xiaoxi* 威音那畔消息] and transmit these catchphrases as the tenet of their lineage.¹²⁹ But how, Dahui retorts, could you not know that the truth transmitted by the ancients can “only be personally witnessed and personally awakened to” [*wei qinzheng qinwu* 唯親證親悟]?¹³⁰ Even if you investigate its meaning and attain a word or half a phrase and then create “special understandings” [*jitejie* 奇特解], “mysterious and sublime understandings” [*xuanmiaojie* 玄妙解], and “secret understandings” [*mimijie* 祕密解]—you may be able to transmit these understandings, but they would not be, Dahui claims, the true Dharma.¹³¹

In one of his general sermons [*pushuo* 普說],¹³² Dahui also tells us that the descendants of Weiyang similarly transmitted the ninety-six circles of Yangshan Huiji 仰山慧寂 (803-887)

¹²⁸ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.892a16-18).

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* (T47.1998A.892a21-26).

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* (T47.1998A.892a28-29).

¹³¹ *Ibid.* (T47.1998A.892a29-b1).

¹³² This general sermon is from the *Dahui Pujue chanshi pushuo* 大慧普覺禪師普說; see Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 206b; cited in Hirota, “Daie Sōkō no jazen hihan no shosō,” 136. This sermon is also cited in the *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu* 大慧普覺禪師年譜; see Ishii, “Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (jō),” 115-116.

As Ishii points out, there are two different sets of texts known as the *Dahui Pujue chanshi pushuo*—a set in one fascicle and another in four fascicles; see Ishii, “Daie goroku no kisoteki kenkyū (jō),” 283-306. The *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* copy of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (fascicles 13 through 18) includes the set in one fascicle. The four-fascicle set, however, was more widely circulated as an independent set of texts. When citing the four-fascicle edition of *Dahui Pujue chanshi pushuo* I will use the reproduction of the Gozan edition in Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4.

The *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu* or the *Annalistic Biography of Chan Master Dahui Pujue* was compiled by Dahui’s disciple Zuyong 祖詠 (d.u.). In compiling the biography Zuyong relied heavily on the recordings of his teacher’s sermons. A preface was prepared by a certain Zuqian 祖謙 (d.u.), which is dated 1183. According to the postscript, the *nianpu* was revised later in 1205 by Dun’an 遯菴 or Huazang Zongyan 華藏宗演 (d.u.) to correct the inconsistencies pointed out by Dahui’s disciple Yunwo Xiaoying 雲臥曉瑩 (ca. 12 C.E.) in a letter appended to his *Yunwo jitan* 雲臥紀談; see Ishii, “Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (chū),” 132; see also Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 371. In this invaluable letter to his dharma brother Dunan, Xiaoying launches a lengthy critique against the *nianpu* of their teacher Dahui. Xiaoying, for instance, laments at the absence of any reference to *Dahui’s Arsenal* in the *nianpu* and goes on to explain the provenance of its name. Arsenal (*wuku*) was said to have been chosen as a title by a fellow disciple simply referred to as Zhen 真 of Fuqing 福清 as a playful allusion to the arsenal mentioned in the biography of Du Yu 杜預 (228-294) from the *Jinshu* 晉

and the descendants of Caodong transmitted Dongshan Liangjie's 洞山良价 (807-869) five positions. In this same sermon he also recalls a monk by the name of Jian 堅, a blood relative of his former teacher Zhantang Wenzhun 湛堂文準 (1061-1115), who served as Caodong master Furong Daokai's 芙蓉道楷 (1043-1118) attendant for over ten years. Dahui also admits that he had himself also once studied under Furong's senior disciple Dongshan Daowei 洞山道微 (d.u.), but unlike attendant Jian who took over ten years to attain the Caodong tenet, Dahui claims, "in two years time the Caodong tenet was instantly attained by me."¹³³ Of what did the Caodong tenet consist? According to Dahui, although Daowei did teach his students to strive for awakening, he "indiscriminately borrowed the teachings of the various houses [of Chan] to transmit [this awakening]."¹³⁴ As proof of transmission, Dahui tells us that he had to burn the top of his head and light a stick of incense on his arm.¹³⁵ *Dahui's Arsenal* is even more explicit in the description of this rite: "when one received transmission [from Daowei] everyone had to [light] an incense on their arms as a sign that the tenet was not falsely entrusted."¹³⁶ But Dahui is said to have asked himself, "if Chan has something to transmit, then why did the buddhas and patriarchs [assert] the dharma of witnessing for oneself and awakening for oneself?"¹³⁷

Unsatisfied with the secret transmission that he received from Daowei, Dahui copied everything that was transmitted to him and hung this "wild fox slobber" as a public notice in front of the samgha hall for everyone to see.¹³⁸ While the veracity of this account is questionable at best, as the Zen historian Hirota Sōgen points out,¹³⁹ it does seem to fit well with the general impression that fellow monks had of Song dynasty Caodong *chan*. According to an amusing apocryphal anecdote recorded in Juefan's *Chanlin sengbao zhuan*,¹⁴⁰ Caoshan Benji 曹山本寂 (840-901) was privately called into his master Dongshan Lianjie's room for

書. On the importance of Yunwo's letter for studying Dahui, see Ishii, "Daie goroku no kisoteki kenkyū (jō)," 298-299.

The Song edition of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu* is no longer extant, but a Gozan edition (a reprint of a Song reprint dated 1253) is still extant and is currently housed at the Risshō Daigaku Ōzaki toshokan 立正大学大崎図書館 in Japan. A reproduction of this edition can also be found in Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4.

¹³³ Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 201a. This sermon is also cited in the *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu*; see Ishii, "Daie goroku no kisoteki kenkyū (jō)," 115.

¹³⁴ Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 206b.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 206b. On the practice of burning incense on the body, see Benn, "Where Text Meets Flesh."

¹³⁶ *Dahui's Arsenal* (T47.1998B.953b4-5). *Dahui's Arsenal* was edited by Dahui's disciple Daoqian 道謙 (n.d.) A preface to this text is dated 1186. The *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* copy of *Dahui's Arsenal* is based on a Ming edition.

¹³⁷ *Dahui's Arsenal* (T47.1998B.953b5-6). See also Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 146b.

¹³⁸ Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 206b.

¹³⁹ Hirota, "Daie Sōkō no jazen hihan no shosō," 136-137.

¹⁴⁰ See *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.443b7-11).

final instructions before his departure. Learning of what was about to happen, a fellow disciple by the name of Shushan Kuangren 疎山匡人 (837-909) hid underneath a chair and eavesdropped on Dongshan's transmission of the *Baojing sanmei* and the secret formula of the five positions to Caoshan.¹⁴¹ As the transmission rite came to a close, Sushan declared, "Dongshan's *chan* is now in the palm of my hand!" Hirota is certainly right to contend that such mockery and criticism was directed not just at the descendants of Caodong but others who similarly equated transmission of the tenet with the handing down of formulas such as Linji's three mysteries and Yunmen's three phrases.¹⁴²

But the Caodong lineage of Chan masters Dongshan and Caoshan, from whom the lineage takes its name, stands out in many of the Song sources as the most secretive. This can be seen, for instance, in the *Linjian lu*'s ostensible record of the secret instructions that Dongshan imparted to his disciple Caoshan (presumably the same instructions that Sushan overheard while eavesdropping underneath a chair) before the latter's departure: "When I [i.e., Dongshan] was at my former teacher Yunyan's place, he personally sealed [my attainment] of the *Baojing sanmei* and I exhaustively worked at its essence. Now I entrust and transmit it to you. You must guard and protect it well and must not cause it to become cut off. When you encounter a true vessel for the Dharma only then may you transmit it. [Transmission] must be done secretly and its shadow must not be exposed. [Otherwise] I fear that it will spread among the crowd and [bring about] the decline and loss of our lineage [*zong* 宗]." ¹⁴³ Dongshan then goes on to furnish Caoshan with a secret tool for determining the readiness of a student to receive transmission, namely the "three types of defilement" of views, emotions, and words.

Like Huanglong and others before him, Dahui began to challenge this culture of secrecy.¹⁴⁴ He began by exposing what he had presumably received from Daowei, which was

¹⁴¹ For the *Baojing sanmei* (*ge*), see the *Ruizhou Dongshan Liangjie chanshi yulu* 瑞州洞山良价禅师语录 (T47.1986B.525c24-526a19), which was first published as part of the *Wujia yulu*. For an English translation, see Powell, *The Record of Tung-shan*, 63-65. For the five position or ranks, see *Ruizhou Dongshan Liangjie chanshi yulu* (T47.1986B.525c1-8); and also Powell, *The Record of Tung-shan*, 11-12 and 61-62. For a discussion of the five ranks, see Yanagida, "Sōtō goisetsu no ichisokumen"; Arai, "Hensei goi Sōsan chikuiju no kaishaku"; Ishizuki, "Tōjō kotetsu ni okeru goi no seikaku"; Ishizuki, "Kunshin goi nit suite"; Kirino, "Daie Sōkō to goi." Arai (Ishizuki) Shōryū's publications on this subject are too numerous to reproduce here.

¹⁴² Hirota, "Daie Sōkō no jazen hihan no shosō," 137.

¹⁴³ *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.599b11-14). The secret transmission of Dongshan's tenet is also recorded in the recorded sayings of Caoshan; see *Fuzhou Caoshan Benji chanshi yulu* 撫州曹山本寂禅师语录 (T47.1987B.536c9-10).

¹⁴⁴ William M. Bodiford's article on the Tendai Anraku reform movement has been very helpful in thinking through the the demise of the culture of secrecy; see Bodiford, "When Secrecy Ends." I have tried to show that similar efforts were made in Rinzai Zen to transition from a culture of secrecy to that of reading or comprehension in my article, "Zen and the Art of Nourishing Life."

One of the best examples of the attempt to redefine secrecy can be found in the *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.611b13-612a10). Moved by Yang Yi's 楊億 (974-1020) declaration that the Buddha had received prediction of his future attainment of buddhahood from Dīpaṃkara but not the Dharma (or anything else!) in his preface for the *Fozu tongcan ji* 佛祖同參集 (which later became the *Jingde*

in all likelihood a set of secret instructions on how to interpret the five positions of Dongshan.¹⁴⁵ In a polemical tract known as the *Bianzheng xieshuo* 辨正邪說 or, more likely, *Bianxie zhengshuo* 辨邪正說 [“Discourse on Distinguishing Falsehood and Truth”]—an oft-cited work by Dahui that has until very recently been considered lost and no longer extant—we find an invaluable description, in the form of a polemical critique, of several specific strategies that were in vogue during Dahui’s time, and among these strategies, not surprisingly, we find some that make extensive use of the five positions.¹⁴⁶ Let me cite but one example.

chuandeng lu), Juefan sighed in amazement at Yang’s profound understanding of “the tenet that is not transmitted” (*wuchuan zhi zhi* 無傳之旨); for Yang’s preface, see Ishii, *Sōdai Zenshūshi no kenkyū*, 21 n. 4. A monk who witnessed this apparently asked him why, then, did Shitou Xiqian state in his *Cantongqi* 參同契 that patriarchs from East and West secretly and mutually entrust to each other the Buddha’s mind; see the *Cantong qi* in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.459b08). Juefan replied that “secretly entrust” [*mifu* 密符] here does not refer to the secret entrustment of skills practiced by doctors and diviners but to self-awakening and illumination [*ziwuming* 自悟明].

¹⁴⁵ See Ishii, “Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (jō),” 115.

¹⁴⁶ For several decades, Dahui’s critique of silent illumination [*mozhaio* 默照] has been the subject of many important studies and the focus of these studies has often fallen upon the issue of whom Dahui had attacked in his *Bianxie zhengshuo*. Because the *Bianxie zhengshuo* had until recently been thought to be no longer extant, various speculations as to the identity of Dahui’s unnamed foe(s) had been made. Noting the close relations between Dahui and Hongzhi Zhengjue 宏智正覺 (1091-1157), Ishii Shūdō and Yanagida Seizan, for instance, had advanced the argument that Dahui’s target was not Hongzhi but a fellow Caodong master by the name of Zhenxie Qingliao 真歇清了 (1088-1151); see Yanagida, “Kanna to mokushō,” and Ishii, “Daie Sōkō to sono deshitachi (roku).” As they are eager to point out, their arguments are supported by a statement attributed to Zhu Xi. According to the *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類, Dahui had composed a *Zhengxie lun* 正邪論 or *Treatise on the True and the Heretical* to attack Zhenxie who had apparently taught people to exclusively sit in meditation; see Li, *Zhuzi yulei*, 4853. More recently, however, the Chan historian Morten Schlütter has attempted to demonstrate that Dahui’s target was not so much Zhenxie, the individual, as the entire twelfth century Caodong tradition to which both Hongzhi and Zhenxie belong; see Schlütter, “The Twelfth Century Ts’ao-tung Tradition as the Target of Ta-hui’s Attacks on Silent Illumination”; Schlütter, “Silent Illumination, K’ung-an Introspection, and the Competition for Lay Patronage in Sung-Dynasty Ch’an”; Schlütter, “‘Before the Empty Eon’ versus ‘A Dog Has No Buddha-Nature’”; and Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*.

Following a lead from Mujaku Dōchū’s 無著道忠 (1653-1744) commentary on *Dahui’s Letters* entitled *Daiesho kōrōju* 大慧書栲栳樹, Hirota Sōgen argues that the *Bianxie zhengshuo*, as Mujaku claimed, was included in Dahui’s *Zhengfa yanzang* in the form of a *shizhong* sermon. Hirota believes that this sermon was probably delivered during Dahui’s short tenure as abbot of Yangyu 洋嶼菴 in 1134. As we shall see, the content of the sermon seems to support the idea that Dahui’s attack was directed less at a specific rival lineage with whom he competed for literati support than at the various reading practices that flourished during the Northern Song and the crisis in textual authority that followed. Particular sayings, formulas, diagrams, catchphrases, and styles of teaching (e.g., silent illumination) were not, it seems, the exclusive property of any particular lineage. Dahui’s criticism of these reading practices, I argue, were thus motivated not so much by factional rivalry as by what he

According to Dahui, some use circles to pictorially represent and transmit the five positions.¹⁴⁷ A completely black circle, for instance, represents “the primordial buddha,” “before the buddhas were born,” “before the empty *kalpa*,” and “a matter before the division of chaos,” that is, “the rank of the Real” [*zhengwei* 正位]. A circle two-thirds black and one-third white represents “the provisional within the Real” [*zheng zhong pian* 正中偏] and, conversely, a circle two-thirds white and one-third black represents “the Real within the provisional” [*pian zhong zheng* 偏中正]. Using these color schemes, one could also apparently analyze the corresponding lines in Dongshan’s famous verse commentary on the five positions.¹⁴⁸

Dongshan’s five positions were not, however, the only strategies to receive Dahui’s critical attention. According to Dahui, there are also those who “take Linji’s three mysteries and Yunmen’s three phrases and [and use them] as typologies with which [they] classify and explain the words and phrases of the patriarchs in the transmission of the lamp and extensive [record of the transmission of] the lamp by [closely] following the wording of the texts.”¹⁴⁹ They classify, for instance, familiar catchphrases such as “a mountain is a mountain and water is water,” “walking is just walking and sitting is just sitting,” or “a great month is thirty days and a minor month is twenty-nine days” as examples of the so-called “mysterious in the mysterious” [*xuan zhong xuan* 玄中玄]—one of the three mysteries of Linji.¹⁵⁰ When questioned about Linji’s three essentials, however, these same people claim that the three essentials cannot be understood through exegesis.¹⁵¹ Instead, they rely on “last words”

believed to be the lack of coherence among these practices. For the *Daiesho kōroju*, see Zenbunka kenkyūsho henshūbu ed. *Daiesho kōrōju*.

¹⁴⁷ For the following summary, see *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.152a13-b6); see also the annotated translation of this sermon in Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 162-163. This part of Dahui’s sermon was also reproduced in the *Chungp’yōn chodong owi* 重編曹洞五位 (XZJ111.250a12-251a11), which was edited together by the Korean monk Iryōn 一然 (1206-1289) in 1256; see the *Chungp’yōn chodong owi* in *Han’guk pulgyo chōnsō*, vol. 6, 232-233. The *Zokuzōkyō* copy of the *Zhengfa yanzang* is based on a Ming edition (1616). For a reproduction of the Song edition (1147) currently in the possession of the Kunaichō, see Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 1-131. For the sermon in question, see Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 124b-131a. For a study of this technique, see Lai, “Sinitic Mandalas.”

¹⁴⁸ For instance, the first line of the verse, “the provisional within the Real—third watch of the first night in front of the bright moon,” can be pictorially represented and thus interpreted in the following manner: the third watch, first night, and in front of the bright moon are all black (i.e., Real) and yet even without mentioning black one can still speak of the third watch of the first night in front of the bright moon etc.

¹⁴⁹ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.151a7-9); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 152-153. “Transmission of the lamp” [*chuandeng* 傳燈] and “extensive [record of the transmission of] the lamp” [*guangdeng* 廣燈] here probably refer to the *Jingde chuandeng lu* and *Tiansheng guangdeng lu* respectively.

¹⁵⁰ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.151a17-b1); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 153-154.

¹⁵¹ According to Juefan, Gutazhu or Jianfu Chenggu made this very claim; see *Linjian lu* (XZJ148.622b6-7).

[*mohouju*] and “indestructible barriers” [*laoguan* 牢關] such as “Nanquan cuts the cat,”¹⁵² “Baizhang’s wild fox,”¹⁵³ “Zhaozhou investigates the old woman” and so on, which they simply “transmit from mouth to ear in their secret chambers.”¹⁵⁴ But all they are actually doing, Dahui claims, is “spreading demonic theories.”¹⁵⁵ Equally reprehensible in Dahui’s eyes are those who maintain that these same ancient cases are but contrivances devised by the ancients for the purpose of establishing an entryway to their respective houses of Chan. These same men mock such entrapments for learned men and claim that, originally, there is nothing the matter.¹⁵⁶

Dahui was quick to dismiss all such skewed understandings of *chan* and *dao* as nothing but “tangled vines that are transmitted orally and handed down to the mind.”¹⁵⁷ As he sardonically puts it, “You tell me—was it (the intention of the ancients) really like this? If it was, what’s so special about it?”¹⁵⁸ If you seek a special understanding in such words and slogans as “this very mind is the Buddha” [*jixin shi fo* 即心是佛] without having personally attained awakening, then this is not, Dahui claims, a true realization or awakening.¹⁵⁹ In fact, he insists that students should give up even the idea of a “special state” [*jitechu* 奇特處] since these states just lead us to despise other beings and allow poison into the mind and consciousness.¹⁶⁰

Dahui also expressed his contempt for those who seek a “taste” of the Dharma in the learned words of the ancients. Like his teacher Yuanwu, he likened this practice to “sitting in a [conceptual] hole” from which there is no escape.¹⁶¹ In Dahui’s eyes, not only ancient sayings but also exchanges between master and student [*wenda* 問答], substitute replies [*daiyu* 代語],¹⁶² separate replies [*bieyu* 別語], words of praise and censure [*yi yangyu* 抑揚語], and words of criticism [*baobianyu* 褒貶語]—a list of the most common exegetical techniques at the time—all constitute conceptual holes.¹⁶³ To this long list of holes he also adds “those who try to taste [the Dharma] in that serene and silent place devoid of words and speech,” that is, those who “close and hide their eyes and sit motionless like the primordial buddha in the ghost cave beneath the black mountain.”¹⁶⁴ Trying to enter this vast and limitless state of

¹⁵² For this koan, see Case 63 of *Blue Cliff Record* (T48.2003.194c4-195a5); for an English translation, see Cleary and Cleary, *Blue Cliff Record*, 358-360.

¹⁵³ For this koan, see Case 2 of the *Wumen guan* (T48.2005.293a15b9).

¹⁵⁴ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.151b13-a4); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 153-155.

¹⁵⁵ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.152a4); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 153-155.

¹⁵⁶ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.152a4-7); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 158.

¹⁵⁷ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.154a2-3); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 168.

¹⁵⁸ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.154a2-3); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 168.

¹⁵⁹ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.149b12); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 168.

¹⁶⁰ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.155a4); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 174.

¹⁶¹ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.148b13); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 221.

¹⁶² One of the earliest collections of substitute replies appears in the *Fenyang Wude chanshi yulu* (T47.1992.613c12-619a25).

¹⁶³ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.148b14-17); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 221.

¹⁶⁴ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.148b18-149a2); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 221.

awakening with a limited mind [*xianliangxin* 限量心], Dahui reminds us, is like trying to scoop up the entire ocean with a small calabash.¹⁶⁵

Dahui thus calls the widespread practice of using these various techniques “ocean calabash *chan*” [*hailierchan* 海蠡兒禪].¹⁶⁶ Like Dayu and Juefan, Dahui therefore believed that it was crucial to familiarize oneself thoroughly with the extensive range of entryway sayings that were available for perusal. The goal was not to settle with just one saying or story but to master all of them by taking one story and saying at a time.¹⁶⁷ In his own case compendium, *Zhengfa yanzang*,¹⁶⁸ Dahui himself, for instance, carefully examines no less than six hundred! Lest the sayings and stories be taken too literally and approached intellectually, however, Dahui also suggested a prolonged battle with a *single* story or, better still, a *single* “critical phrase” [*huatou* 話頭] from that story like Zhaozhou’s famous “no” [*wu* 無].¹⁶⁹ Only by taking each and every case this seriously could one, as Dahui explicitly claims, personally witness and personally awaken to the *dao* of the ancients and thus know it for oneself “like a person who drinks water and knows whether it is cold or warm for himself” [*ru ren yinshui lengnuan zizhi* 如人飲水冷煖自知].¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.149b15); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 226.

¹⁶⁶ *Zhengfa yanzang* (XZJ118.150b18); see also Hirota, “Bensha shosetsu kunchū,” 150-151.

¹⁶⁷ As Van Zoeren notes, similar concerns about the enormous amount of material that a student was expected to master and the tendency to use reading for the instrumental purpose of preparing for imperial examinations can also be witnessed in Zhu Xi’s work, “On Reading” (*Dushufa* 讀書法); for an English translation of this work, see Gardner, *Learning to Be a Sage*, 128-162. In response to these concerns Zhu Xi argued that a student should “read less” (*shaokan* 少看) and “recite the texts until utterly familiar” (*shudu* 熟讀); see Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality*, 230-238. In addition to the pressures of preparing for the examinations, Daniel Gardner argues that Zhu Xi was also reacting to the sloppy reading habits that developed as a result of the growing accessibility of printed books; see Gardner, “Transmitting the Way,” 144-148.

¹⁶⁸ For the *Zhengfa yanzang*, see XZJ118.3a8-155b16.

¹⁶⁹ Although Zhaozhou’s dog koan is better known as the first case in the famous koan compendium, *Wumen guan* (T48.2005.292c23-24), the record of this koan in the *Zhaozhou zhenji chanshi yulu* in the *Guzunsu yulu* is probably closer to its earliest form; see *Guzunsu yulu* (XZJ118.314a-8-10, 321b14-16, 324a6-7). For a discussion of the intellectual context from which this koan emerged, see Sharf “How to Think with Chan Gong’an.”

¹⁷⁰ See *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.884c12-15, 921a27-28, and 942a9). Bernard Faure argues that Dahui’s emphasis on doubt and denunciation of the use of intellectual effort to solve koans is an instance of what he calls “the two-tiered subitism (or gradualism) of early Chan” or “the rhetoric of immediacy” and thus can be seen as “a typical strategy of power”; see Faure, *Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 41. By denying the usefulness of intellectual effort as a condition of awakening, Dahui, Faure argues, was able to paradoxically establish this denial itself as the condition of unconditional awakening; for a similar reading of Chan rhetoric, see Cole, *Fathering Your Father*. I agree with Faure that this rhetoric was used by Dahui, but I think it is necessary that we examine more closely why Dahui felt it necessary to employ this rhetoric in the first place (as I have tried to do here in this article) lest we conflate or draw hasty connections between Dahui’s use of this rhetoric and its use in early Chan.

But how did Dahui come to this conclusion? Was it simply a matter of reason and rational judgment? If not, could it perhaps be Dahui's response to the tension between the so-called "Protestant" and "Catholic" impulses in Chan?¹⁷¹ Or was it, as one Chan historian put it, "the culmination of a long process of evolution in Chan whereby its subitist rhetoric came to be extended to pedagogy and finally to practice"?¹⁷² The answer, I think, is none of the above, at least not exclusively. Instead, Dahui's call to know the *dao* for oneself, as I have tried to show, must be set against the background of the larger crisis in textual authority that engulfed the Chan tradition during the Northern Song. Only then can we, in fact, understand the highly politicized space from which Dahui, his teacher Yuanwu, and other like-minded men from this period emerged. Needless to say, this space was not carved out overnight. For us to get a more concrete sense of how these changes affected the Chan community of Northern Song, we must devote the rest of this article to some of the more relevant intermediary steps that the collapse of textual authority took to reach its most vocal witness, Dahui. To do so, we must, I believe, begin with the bitter rivalry that brewed between Donglin Changcong, Huitang Zuxin, and Juefan's teacher Zhenjing Kewen, three of the most influential disciples of Chan master Huanglong.¹⁷³

Chan Versus Dao

What was Huanglong's legacy? This seems to lie at the core of the dispute between his most senior disciples. Among the various factors that contributed to this dispute, the abbacies that the men under question filled were arguably the most important. According to *Dahui's Arsenal*,¹⁷⁴ the doors to this dispute were opened by Donglin Changcong or Chan master Zhaojue 照覺 shortly after he was appointed the new abbot of Donglin si 東林寺 on Mt. Lu in 1080. This was an important move for Zhaojue. The temple had just been converted from a Vinaya temple into a Chan monastery at the behest of Emperor Shenzong 神宗 (1067-1085) and the expectations attached to its new abbot were probably very high.¹⁷⁵ The local prefect

¹⁷¹ These words are borrowed from Gimello, "Mārga and Culture," 377.

¹⁷² Buswell, "The 'Short-cut' Approach of *K'an-hua* Meditation," 322.

¹⁷³ This rivalry has also been recently pointed out by Tsuchiya Taisuke in his "Shinjō Kokubun no bujizen hihan," 206-208. Tsuchiya in turn credits Yanagida Seizan as the first to take note of this rivalry. See also Tsuchiya, "Hoku Sō ki zenshū no bujizen hihan to Engo Kokugon."

¹⁷⁴ See *Dahui's Arsenal* (T47.1998B.948a22-948b19). See also Yanagida and Shiina, *Zengaku tenseki sōkan*, vol. 4, 408-409. See also *Zhaojue chanshi xingzhuang* 照覺禪師行狀 in Huang Shang's 黃裳 (1044-1130) *Yanshan ji* 演山集 (Wenyuange Siku quanshu edition) 34, 11-14.

¹⁷⁵ See also the *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (T49.2035.415b14-15) compiled by Zhipan 志盤 (1220-1275). The conversion of a Vinaya temple—not a temple that belonged to the Vinaya "school" but a temple regulated by the Vinaya—into a Chan monastery usually entailed, among other things, a radical change in the procedures for appointing the abbot. In a Vinaya temple, the tonsure disciples of the abbot held exclusive rights over the abbacy, but once it became a Chan monastery the abbacy was open to all dharma heirs of the Chan lineage (see n. 18 above).

Wang Shao 王韶 (1030-1081) had initially offered the post to Huanglong's disciple Huitang Zuxin, but Huitang, preferring to stay on as the abbot of his teacher's temple Songen yuan 嵩恩院 on Mt. Huanglong, politely declined the offer and recommended Zhaojue in his stead.¹⁷⁶ Zhaojue accepted the appointment and soon thereafter embarked on the monumental task of transforming Donglin si into a thriving Chan center.

Naturally, the first step was to set the tone and tenor of the style of *chan* that Zhaojue wished to cultivate at Donglin si, so he neatly laid this out for all to see during the ceremony of opening the hall. During the ceremony, Zhaojue displayed the broad range of skills that he had at his disposal and answered the questions from the new assembly with references to classical poetry, well-known *chan* catchphrases favored by a variety of different lineages, and lyrical expressions that had hitherto never been used by anyone else. When asked how he would pay back his debt to the emperor, for instance, Zhaojue replied with a poetic stanza that is most likely an allusion to an earlier poem about the mid-autumn moon by the Tang dynasty poet monk Ke Peng 可朋: "white clouds seal mountain peak and the bright moon reflects the mind of Heaven."¹⁷⁷ As the explanation of what it means to convert a Vinaya temple into a Chan temple, Zhaojue stitched together expressions that he borrowed from some other well-known poems: "the sun and moon in a pot; mountains and streams somewhere far beyond."¹⁷⁸ In reply to the expected query about the meaning of the Patriarch coming from the West, Zhaojue recited a catchphrase that Chan master Shoushan Shengnian once used to answer the same query, namely "the wind blows and the sun burns."¹⁷⁹ But he also answered koan queries with what appear to be new expressions of his own: "[A monk] asked, 'Within heaven and earth, inside all the cosmos, there is contained a singular treasure concealed in the form-mountain. What is this treasure?' The master replied, 'When the moon's face appears its back disappears.'"¹⁸⁰ In a different setting, he also showed some savvy and demonstrated his knowledge of local history. While commenting on his teacher Huanglong's poem about the

¹⁷⁶ According to his biography in Juefan's *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.531a10), Huitang was not particularly fond of administrative duties and this may have played an important role in his decision to forgo the opportunity to serve as abbot of Donglin si.

¹⁷⁷ See Ke Peng's poem in the *Yuding Quan Tang shi* 御定全唐詩 (Wenyuange Siku quanshu edition) 888, 2.

¹⁷⁸ "Sun and moon in a pot" (*huzhong riyue* 壺中日月) may have been borrowed from a poem by Han Wo 韓偓 (844-923); see *Yuding Quan Tang shi* 681, 22a. "Mountains and streams somewhere far beyond" [*wuwai shanchuan* 物外山川] may have been borrowed from Wang Bo 王勃 (650-676); see *Yuding Quan Tang shi* 56, 9b.

¹⁷⁹ *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (XZJ136.183b3-4). For Shoushan's use of this catchphrase, see his entry in the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.304a23).

¹⁸⁰ The koan can also be found in case 63 of the *Blue Cliff Record*. The koan was taken from a passage in the *Baozang lun* 寶藏論 (T45.1857.145b23-24); see also Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 188-189. For Yunmen's reference to the koan, see *Yunmen Kuangzhen chanshi yulu* (T47.1988.563c16); for an English translation, see App, trans., *Master Yunmen*, 207. Zhaojue's reply could be translated more literally as "White moon appears, black moon disappears" [*baiyue xian heiyue yin* 白月現黑月隱]; see *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (XZJ136.183b3-4).

autumn rain, Zhaojue made sure to quote a line from Tang Emperor Xuanzong's 玄宗 (r. 712-756) poem about the nearby waterfall on Mt. Lu: "Eventually it must return to the great ocean to billow forth as waves."¹⁸¹

If his performance at the ceremony for opening the hall is any indication, Zhaojue, like Huanglong, seems to have had no intention whatsoever of transmitting dead words at his new temple Donglin si. Lest there be any remaining doubt about his intentions, Zhaojue spelled his intentions out more concretely in a short sermon that brought the above ceremony to a close. There, he explained that the practice of asking about the Patriarch's intention in coming from the West and answering with "the essence of the Southern tradition" [*nanzong zhi yao* 南宗之要], that is, koans are but expedient devices and not yet the ultimate truth. Why not? Because the supreme *dao*, he claims, is as vast and empty as an abyss and beyond signification. As others like Yunmen had done before, Zhaojue thus declared that "the singular path of going beyond [*xiangshang yilu* 向上一路] was not transmitted by the thousand sages—the sight of students toiling away [in their study of koans] is like that of a monkey trying [in vain] to grasp its shadow"¹⁸²

Facilitated, no doubt, by his tenure as abbot of Letan si on Mt. Shimen and then Donglin si on Mt. Lu, Zhaojue's message about *chan* and *dao* reached an audience that extended well beyond the confines of the monastic community. In addition to the hundreds of men and women that made up his monastic assembly,¹⁸³ Zhaojue found himself lending his expertise to such eminent figures as Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017-1073), Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105), Yang Shi 楊時 (1053-1135), and Zhang Shangying 張商英 (1043-1122).¹⁸⁴ Due to the dearth of material related to Zhaojue that survives, what he actually taught these men is unclear. But not all is lost. In the forward that he prepared for a collection of Zhaojue's sayings and writings (which are no longer extant), Minister of Rites Huang Shang 黃裳 (1044-1130; *jinshi* in 1082) provides the following description of the Chan master's teaching style: "[his] rapid techniques strike like lightning and subtle discussions bite like an arrowhead. The person and self are both lost only to converge in the

¹⁸¹ *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (XZJ136.184a14). The poem can also be found in *Lushan ji* 廬山記 compiled by Chen Shunyu 陳舜俞 (d. 1076) (T51.2095.1044a13); see also case 11 of the *Blue Cliff Record*; for an English translation, see Cleary and Cleary, *Blue Cliff Record*, 79.

¹⁸² *Jianzhong Jingguo xudeng lu* (XZJ136.184a4-5). For Yunmen's use of this saying, see the *Zutang ji* (3/98/13). The saying is more often attributed to Mazu Daoyi's disciple Panshan Baoji 盤山寶積 (d.u.); see the *Zongjing lu* (T48.2016.657b22-23) and *Jingde chuandeng lu* (T51.2076.253b13-14). Citations of this saying, which appear frequently in the sermons of Fenyang, Xuedou, Yuanwu, Dahui, and others from the Northern Song are too numerous to reproduce here.

¹⁸³ Although not without hyperbole, the size of Zhaojue's assembly at Letan si is estimated to have been over 700 by Juefan; see the *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.536b17).

¹⁸⁴ See Grant, *Mount Lu Revisited*, 123-127; Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism*, 306-307; and also *Fozu lidai tongzai* (T49.2036.672a1-2).

dao.”¹⁸⁵ How then, Huang adds, could it be empty talk for the local prefect Wang Shao to praise Zhaojue as the “finest example of the teaching of *dao* in the Southeast”?

A more concrete example of what Zhaojue may have taught these men of learning can be found in surviving fragments of the record of his teachings kept by a certain Hongyi 弘益.¹⁸⁶ According to Hongyi, for the Neo-Confucian thinker Zhou Dunyi, Zhaojue is said to have once characterized Chan as a tradition that takes “nature itself as principle” [*xing ji li* 性即理], a characterization that he explained in the following manner: “outside of principle [*li* 理] there are no phenomena [*shi* 事] and [all] phenomena necessarily possesses principle.” Without hesitation Zhou replied, “The essence of [human] nature is quietude.”¹⁸⁷ There is only principle, that’s it.” Presumably after witnessing this battle of wits, Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077) declared, “Only our Maoshu [i.e., Zhou Dunyi] can outdo Donglin’s theory of principle.” But Hongyi also tells us that his teacher Zhaojue instructed people to devote themselves exclusively to “conquering with stillness”¹⁸⁸ [*jingsheng* 靜勝] and that is precisely what Zhou did. Hongyi even claims to have heard that Zhaojue had transmitted the teaching of nature and principle or *dao* learning [*daoxue*] to Zhou.¹⁸⁹

Needless to say, what Hongyi says cannot be taken for granted, but overall the image of Zhaojue that emerges from the surviving samples of his teachings is that of a Chan master who saw *chan* as serving a higher, ineffable *dao*. Zhaojue was more than competent at *chan*, but *chan* was not, it seems, an end in itself for him. This may be why, according to Dahui’s *Arsenal*, Zhaojue could boldly declare that his dharma brothers Huitang and Zhenjing had only acquired their former master’s *chan* and not his *dao* (implying, of course, that Zhaojue himself alone had acquired his teacher’s *dao*). In response, Dahui—a deep admirer of Zhenjing—made the following remark:

Zhaojue takes being ordinary, doing nothing, and not establishing conceptual views and understandings as the *dao*. He thus forsakes the pursuit of sublime awakening. He considers the teaching of a true sudden awakening and seeing into one’s own nature taught by the various buddhas and patriarchs [like] Deshan, Linji, Caodong, and Yunmen as mere contrivances. He considers the *Śūramgama Sūtra*’s claim that “mountains, rivers, and the great earth are all manifestations in the true mind of

¹⁸⁵ *Donglin ji xu* 東林集敘 in *Yanshan ji* 19, 6a.

¹⁸⁶ The following is from the *Hongyi jiwen* 弘益記聞, which was quoted in the *Guiyuan zhizhi ji* 歸元直指集 (XZJ108.294a6-295a6). The *Guiyuan zhizhi ji* was compiled by Tianyi Zongben 天衣宗本 (d.u.) in 1553 and the earliest extant copy of this text is a 1570 reprint.

¹⁸⁷ Here, I read *chongmo* 沖漠 as *chongmo* 沖默.

¹⁸⁸ The locus classicus for this expression is stanza 61 of the *Daode jing* 道德經.

¹⁸⁹ Here, Hongyi tries to link Zhou Dunyi and his famous *Taijitu* 太極圖 to Chen Tuan 陳搏 (ca. 920-989) and his legendary teacher Mayi daoze 麻衣道者 through Zhaojue. This claim is also made in the *Jushi fendeng lu* 居士分燈錄 compiled by Zhu Shien 朱時恩 (d.u.) and published in 1632 (XZJ147.908a14-b16).

sublime illumination”¹⁹⁰ unnecessary verbiage [*geshangyu* 膈上語]¹⁹¹ and just another contrivance. By taking the ancients’ discussions of the mysterious and their explanations of the sublime as *chan* [and not the *dao*], he has slandered the past sages and has rendered the next generation deaf. [Zhaojue belongs to] that brand [of men] who have no muscles in their eyes and no blood under their skin. He [simply] follows precedence and [remains] perverted in thought, passive, and unaware. How pitiful!

The *Perfect Enlightenment Sūtra* says, “In the final age [of the Dharma] living beings wish to attain the *dao* but do not seek awakening. They only wish to have more of what they can hear from others and increase the view of self.”¹⁹² It also says, “Living beings in the final age [of the Dharma] may seek good friends, but [if] they meet men with erroneous views they will not attain proper awakening. This is called ‘heterodox nature.’ The fault lies with the teacher and not with living beings.”¹⁹³ How could these be empty words!

Zhenjing therefore states in an informal sermon [*xiaocan*]: “Nowadays, there are men who stubbornly insist that ‘the ordinary mind is the Way’ and consider this the ultimate rule. ‘Heaven is Heaven and earth is earth. A mountain is a mountain and water is water. A monk is a monk and a layman is a layman. A great month is thirty days a minor month is twenty-nine days.’¹⁹⁴ They continue to rest on grass and trees and before they know it they end up completely deluded. If you suddenly ask them, ‘why does my hand look like the Buddha’s hand?’, they say, ‘this is the venerable’s hand’; ‘why does my leg look like an ass’s leg?’, they say, ‘this is the venerable’s leg’; ‘each person has their own conditions that led to their birth—what is the condition that led to your [lit. the chief seat’s] birth,’ they say, ‘I am so-and-so from such-and-such village.’ What sort of nonsense is this? Don’t be mistaken. [They] take the hundred artifices as the only essential thing and the single road of being ordinary as the legitimate [path]. [Their] minds are made. [They] don’t dare take another step, fearing that [they] will fall into a pit forever. This is like a blind man who can’t take even a tiny step without tightly grasping on a cane while walking down a road.”¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁰ See *Dafoding rulai wanxing shoulengyan jing* 大佛頂如來萬行首楞嚴經 (T19.945.110c28-29). On this apocryphal scripture, see Benn, “Another Look at the Pseudo-*Śūramgama sūtra*.”

¹⁹¹ My translation of this term is tentative. Literally, the term means “words above the diaphragm.”

¹⁹² *Da fangguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jing* 大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經 (T17.842.920a8-9). On this apocryphal scripture, see Müller, *The Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*.

¹⁹³ *Da fangguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jing* (T17.842.916c3-5).

¹⁹⁴ These phrases are traditionally attributed to Yunmen; see *Yunmen Kuangzhen chanshi guanglu* (T47.1988.547c11-12). For an English translation of the passage in question, see App, *Master Yunmen*, 111-112.

¹⁹⁵ This sermon is also cited in the *Baofeng Yun’an Zhenjing chanshi zhu Jinling Baoning yulu* 寶峰雲庵真淨禪師住金陵報寧語錄 in the *Guzunsu yulu* (XZJ118.745a11-b2). Zhenjing’s tenure at Baoning si 報寧寺 probably lasted sometime between 1085 and 1094. According to his biography, Zhenjing arrived at the southern capital around 1084 or 1085; see *Yun’an Zhenjing heshang xingzhuang*

Venerable Huitang used to tell learned men, “You should go to Mt. Lu [i.e., to Donglin si] and sit in the primordial [state] of doing nothing.” The current descendants of [Zhaojue] are like dead ashes. How truly regretful.¹⁹⁶

Whether this is a fair representation of Zhaojue is of little concern to us here. Whatever he may have actually taught, Zhaojue had evidently incurred the wrath of his dharma brothers Zhenjing and Huitang (and later Dahui) who disagreed with Zhaojue’s understanding of Huanglong and his *dao*. Above all else, they seem to have been most disturbed by the notion that there could be a *dao* separate from *chan*, that is, from the mysterious and sublime sayings of the ancients. They were equally uncomfortable, as we can see, with the notion that this *dao* could be reduced to some transcendent, universal principle such as “be ordinary and do nothing” [*pingchang wushi* 平常無事].¹⁹⁷ What, then, would be the point of reading the various koans? How, the above passage seems to be saying, could this be the legacy of Huanglong?

Zhenjing did more than just criticize Zhaojue from his seat at Baoning si near the southern capital. When the prefect of Nankang 南康 (Northern Jiangxi) Huang Qingji 黃慶基 (appointed in 1094) asked Zhenjing to fill the vacant abbacy of Guizong si on Mt. Lu, the aged Chan master initially declined citing his poor health. His disciples, however, urged Zhenjing to go, reminding him that “ever since the two great men [Chang]cong and [Yuan]you [taught there] the Chan grove in the mountains of Nankang has been like dead ashes.”¹⁹⁸ Zhenjing was persuaded. According to Zhenjing’s biography, by the time he arrived, it was not too difficult to witness “students wearied of words and sayings and drunk in being just-the-way-they-always-are” at the various temples on Mt. Lu.¹⁹⁹ Others like Wuzu Fayan 五祖法演 (1024-1104) and his disciples also noticed these disturbing developments on Mt. Lu. Consider the following account from *Dahui’s Arsenal*:

In Wuzu’s assembly there was a monk by the name of Fachu 法闕. When he entered the [master’s] room [*rushi* 入室] [Wu]zu asked him, “What sort of person does not engage the ten thousand dharmas as a companion?” The monk said, “Fachu is not such a person.” [Wu]zu pointed [to him] with his hand and said, “Stop! Stop! If

雲庵真淨和尚行狀 (XZJ120.212a17-b8). For more on Zhenjing’s criticism of Zhaojue, see Tsuchiya, “Kōanzen no seiritsu ni kansuru shiron,” 273-269 (reverse pagination).

¹⁹⁶ *Dahui’s Arsenal* (T47.1998B.948a26-b19).

¹⁹⁷ As Tsuchiya rightly points out, Huanglong and his lineage seems to have been regarded by some of their contemporaries as having a leaning towards such teachings and were thus often accused of teaching being just-the-way-you-always-are [*pingshi*]; see Tsuchiya, “Kōanzen no seiritsu ni kansuru shiron,” 277-273 (reverse pagination).

¹⁹⁸ *Yunan Zhenjing heshan xingzhuang* (XZJ120.213a11-12). Yuanyou 元祐 (1030-1095) was a disciple of Huanglong. For his biography, see the *Chanlin sengbao zhuan* (XZJ137.538a17-539a11).

¹⁹⁹ *Yunan Zhenjing heshang xingzhuang* (XZJ120.213a15-16).

Fachu is not such a person, then what is he?” With these words [Fa]chu had an awakening.

Later, he entered venerable Xuanmi [Si]du’s 宣秘[思]度 room at Donglin [si] and thoroughly mastered the point of being just-the-way-it-always-is. [Fa]chu one day took a flower, circled around the *chan* platform once, and pressed his hands together and placed [the flower] in the incense burner and said, “Venerable, tell me, what is the meaning of this?” Xuanbi gave him a series of sayings, but [Fa]chu did not reply. Two months passed by and [Xuanbi] finally asked [Fa]chu, “Why don’t you tell me.” [Fa]chu said, “I just took a flower and placed it in the incense burner. Besides the venerable’s doubt is anything else the matter?”²⁰⁰

What is particularly striking about this story is the obvious contrast that is being drawn between Fachu’s exchange with Wuzu and Zhaojue’s dharma heir Xuanbi (d.u.). In each instance we find a challenge, a call to duel, or a test of another’s aptitude in *chan* [*chanji* 禪機]. Fachu apparently lived up to this challenge and Xuanbi did not. Ironically, Xuanbi’s failure seems to have been caused by the betrayal of his own teaching of being just-the-way-it-always-is, that is, by failing to take Fachu’s words literally.

Again, I think we would do well to not take what *Dahui’s Arsenal* says for granted. If anything, the above story reveals more of what Wuzu and his disciples thought of their own *chan* than of what was actually being taught at Donglin si. But to garner the interest and support of the likes of Su Shi or Zhang Shangying,²⁰¹ it seems to have become necessary for men of Chan to weigh in on the bitter dispute between the disciples of Huanglong and choose a side. For instance, according to Dahui,

Among the [students who studied] under the worthy Old Nan [i.e., Huanglong Huinan] Wuzu only acknowledged Huitang and Zhenjing, the two elders, that’s it. The others [like Zhaojue] he did not acknowledge. Wuzu treated people like he had a blade wrapped in cloth. If you stumble across him he will stab you in the throat and kill you. How about Zhenjing? If [the blade] touches the leg, then he will kill you on the leg. If it touches the hand, then he will kill you on the hand. If it touches the throat, he will kill you on the throat.²⁰²

There is clearly more at stake here than a simple problem of who is worthy of being called a disciple of Huanglong. Not only is there an unequivocal line being drawn between Zhenjing

²⁰⁰ *Dahui’s Arsenal* (T47.1998B.945c23-946a2).

²⁰¹ There is now a sizable collection of articles and books on the subject of literati patronage of Chan during the Song. Arguably, no work, however, has been as influential in this respect as Robert M. Gimello’s article “Mārga and Culture.” For more recent work on this subject, see also Levering, “Dahui Zonggao and Zhang Shangying”; Halperin, *Out of the Cloister*; Keyworth, “Transmitting the Lamp of Learning in Classical Chan Buddhism”; Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*; and the essays in Suzuki, *Sōdai Zenshū no shakaiteki eikyō*.

²⁰² *Dahui’s Arsenal* (T47.1998B.951c18-22).

and Huitang who stand on one side and Zhaojue who stands on the other, but this line is being drawn according to a simplified schema that pits *chan* against *dao* or, more accurately speaking, the *chan-qua-dao* against the *dao-qua-dao*. The time had come to choose between the *dao* that can only be had by using the fearsome rhetoric of *chan* and the *dao* that can be approached more directly as the conviction that we are fine as long as we remain just-the-way-we-always-are. Either way, it was clear, at least to the Chan men who embraced Huanglong's legacy, that taking the ancient koans as an end in themselves was no longer an option. And failing to make this choice, as we are about to see, would have dire consequences.

The Malady of Meditation

Let us now take a look at a remarkable story. The protagonist of this story is Dahui's teacher Yuanwu Keqin. According to *Dahui's Arsenal*, as an itinerant Chan student Yuanwu had once studied under a certain master Fang 方—probably Zhaojue's disciple Guangbao Defang 廣報德方 (d.u.)—at a relatively obscure temple by the name of Wuya si 烏牙寺. The same story also tells us that Yuanwu's future brother in the Dharma, Fojian Huiqin 佛鑑慧懃 (1059-1117), had studied under the aforementioned Xuanbi Sidu at Donglin si.²⁰³ Both Yuanwu and Fojian, we are also told, had mastered “the-way-it-always-is *chan*” [*pingshichan* 平實禪] of Chan master Zhaojue. Confident now in their competence in the-way-it-always-is *chan*, they attempted to test their newly acquired skills against the talents of Wuzu Fayan, but to no avail. Unable to reach an awakening under master Wuzu, Yuanwu and Fojian rudely vocalized their frustrations and left the master's side. Wuzu then told them, “While you wander around in Zhe 浙 [i.e., Zhejiang] you will catch a sudden feverish illness [*rebing* 熱病] and then you shall think of me.”²⁰⁴ Yuanwu and Fojian did indeed, as Wuzu predicted, succumb to a feverish illness or some form of febrile disorder, and at least one of them—Yuanwu—did immediately think of Wuzu. Having failed to overcome the illness with his practice of the-way-it-always-is *chan*, the story tells us that Yuanwu quickly returned to Wuzu's side. But unlike Yuanwu, who was willing to make a swift return to Mt. Wuzu (or Mt. Huangmei in Qizhou), it apparently took the reluctant Fojian a bit longer to do so. In another anecdote from *Dahui's Arsenal*,²⁰⁵ we are told that it was the pride that Fojian felt in his learning of the-way-it-always-is *chan* and his belief that Wuzu's teaching advocated “an artificial transformation of the student” [*ying yihuan ren* 硬移換人] that made it difficult for

²⁰³ For the following account, see *Ibid.* (T47.1998B.946a3-b22).

²⁰⁴ In his recorded sayings, the *Yuanwu Fuguo chanshi yulu* 圓悟佛果禪師語錄 (T47.1997.775a18-20), Yuanwu admits to having suffered from a feverish illness. The *Yuanwu Fuguo chanshi yulu* was compiled by his disciple Huqiu Shaolung 虎丘紹隆 (1077-1136) in 1133 and published the following year in 1134. The *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* copy of this text is based on the Ming edition in twenty fascicles and this is the edition that I have used in this study. I have been unable to consult the earlier editions housed at Tōfukuji 東福寺 and elsewhere.

²⁰⁵ *Dahui's Arsenal* (T47.1998B.956c1-6).

him to acknowledge Wuzu as his teacher. It was Yuanwu who eventually convinced Fojian otherwise, and he did so, the anecdote tells us, by challenging Fojian to actually demonstrate the-way-it-always-is *chan*.

Failure to make this choice between Wuzu's (or Zhenjing's) *chan* and Zhaojue's *dao* continued to be experienced by men of Chan as an illness. Yuanwu himself, in fact, would have his own chance to diagnose and treat this illness with the arrival of Dahui. Under the urging of his late teacher Zhantang Wenjun (a disciple of Zhenjing) and the statesman Zhang Shangying, Dahui had come to study under Yuanwu at the grand monastery Tianning wanshou chan si 天寧萬壽禪寺 in the eastern capital Kaifeng sometime during the fourth month of 1125.²⁰⁶ By then Dahui had already purchased and read the recorded sayings of Yunmen and Muzhou, studied the verses of Xuedou, secretly received the Caodong teachings of Dongshan Daowei, and trained under Huanlong's disciple Qingyuan 清源 (1032-1129). Dahui was confident that he had a firm grasp of their principle [*li*]. But his confidence was shattered after hearing Yuanwu offer his own reading of a famous case involving Yunmen. Dahui thus had his first true awakening. But Yuanwu was not satisfied with Dahui's attainment. Why not? According to Yuanwu, although Dahui was able to die, he was unable to come back to life. Yuanwu then warned Dahui that his inability to doubt words and phrases while sitting in this state of "bare-naked purity" [*jingluoluo* 淨裸裸], that is, his inability to come back to life, was a great illness.

Dahui took this lesson on what he preferred to call the malady of meditation to heart and later offered it to his own students. While some seem to have shared Dahui's own experience of this illness, others developed new symptoms that required renewed attention as in the case of Huian Miguang 晦菴彌光 (d. 1155)²⁰⁷:

[Mi]guang one day while attending the master said, "I have arrived in this place, but cannot penetrate through. Wherein lies my illness?"

[Da]hui said, "Your illness is most grave and worldly physicians fold their hands. Why is this? Other people, having died, fail to come back to life. You [on the other hand] only know how to live and have not yet died. If you wish to reach the state of great peace and happiness you must die once to begin to attain [this state]."

[Mi]guang doubted this even more, so he entered the [master's] room.

[The master] asked, "Have you eaten your gruel and washed your bowl? Never mind the proscribed foods for your medicine and toss me a word."

[Mi]guang said, "Destroyed."

²⁰⁶ For the influence that Zhantang and Zhang exerted on Dahui, see Levering, "Dahui Zonggao and Zhang Shangying."

²⁰⁷ For Huian, see Ishii, "Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (ge)," 163. Huian is known to have been Dahui's first dharma heir and the sanctioning of his experience, according to the *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu*, is said to have taken place in 1134, a very important year, as we have seen, for Dahui.

[Da]hui let out a terrifying, commanding shout and said, “You again speak of *chan*!”
The master (i.e., Miguang) was thus greatly awakened.²⁰⁸

Apparently, hasty conclusions about *chan* (life) were as likely to give rise to the malady of meditation as hasty conclusions about the *dao* (death).

A better place to look for details on how Dahui understood the malady of meditation, perhaps, are the letters that he sent to Vice Minister of Rites Zeng Kai 曾開 (d.u.).²⁰⁹ In an undated letter, Zeng introduced himself with the flattering message that his teacher Yuanwu had greatly praised the talents of Dahui in a previous letter that he received while serving his post in Tanzhou 潭州.²¹⁰ The vice minister then expressed his regrets about not having had the opportunity to directly receive Dahui’s instructions on *chan*.²¹¹ Perhaps as a means to impress or to possibly even to test the Chan adept, Zeng went on to explain his own understanding of awakening in the following manner: “The aspiration and vow to seek salvation are not matters that can be dealt with in the realm of shallow knowledge and understanding. If I were to give up seeking awakening, then there would be nothing more to

²⁰⁸ *Rentian baojian* 人天寶鑑 (XZJ148.122a3-10). It is noted in the *Rentian baojian* (preface dated 1230), compiled by Huanglong Huinan’s disciple Tanxiu 曇秀 (d.u.), that the story was culled from someone’s recorded sayings, but the above account is not found in the a record of Huian’s sayings, the *Guishan Huian Guang zhuangyuan heshang yu* 龜山晦菴光狀元和尚語 in the *Xu guzunsu yuyao* (XZJ119.68b1-71a17). It is recorded, however, in the *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu*, according to which the above encounter took place in 1134; see Ishii, “Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (jō):” 140-142. Curiously, the version of this encounter recorded in the *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu*, however, does not include the first two lines that specifically deal with the notion of illness. The story appears in other sources with some minor variations. For instance, see *Xu chuandeng lu* (T51.2077.686a28-b5) and *Da Ming gaoseng zhuan* 大明高僧傳 (T50.2062.923b3-10).

²⁰⁹ For sources on Zeng Kai (*zi* Tianyou 天遊), see Araki, *Daiesho*, 5; see also Ishii, “Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (ge),” 166. A penetrating analysis of the letters exchanged between Zeng and Dahui can be found in Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai.” As Koichi Shinohara convincingly argues, although the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* copy of *Dahui’s Letters* seems to contain six letters from Dahui addressed to Zeng Kai (which is also how Araki divided the letters in his critical edition), there actually seem to be only four letters. Shinohara believes that the first, second, and third letter actually formed (parts of) one long letter; see Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai,” 195 n. 5. The letter that concerns us here is presumably the concluding section of this long letter.

²¹⁰ Araki, following the account of the *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu*, dates this letter to 1134; see Araki, *Daiesho*, 12, and Ishii, “Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (jō),” 140-142. Based on information from Zeng’s biography in the *Song shi* 宋史, Shinohara, however, argues that the letter was composed a year later in 1135. According to his biography, Zeng was assigned to Tanzhou in 1127 and it is here that Zeng received the letter from Yuanwu that praised Dahui. Zeng says that he wrote the letter to Dahui eight years after he received the letter from Yuanwu, which would be 1135. This also happens to be a few months after Dahui began his attack on silent illumination; see Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai,” 183.

²¹¹ This entire letter has been translated into English in Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai,” 176-177.

do. But if I am to seek awakening, then I must directly reach the state that ancient men realized themselves.”²¹² So far so good, but then he wrote, “Only after I reach this state will I be able to consider that as the ground on which to take a great rest and relaxation.”²¹³ In closing he asked, “How should I conduct spiritual cultivation in the midst of everyday life?”²¹⁴

Dahui offered a lengthy response to Zeng’s request for instruction. Due in large part to the hindrance of intelligence, many nowadays, Dahui told Zeng, “throw down and place in front of themselves the mind that objectifies, and thus cannot get to the crucial point that the ancients reached directly, cut all defilements in half with one strike of a sword, and immediately rest and relax.”²¹⁵ “This illness,” Dahui hastened to add, “applies not only to wise literati but also to experienced meditators.”²¹⁶ Dahui then turned the blame for this tendency to intellectualize on “a brand of bald heretics who, without having even cleared their own eyes, just teach people to rest and relax like a dead snubnose-dogwolf.”²¹⁷ “If [you] rest like this,” Dahui exclaimed, “[you] wouldn’t be able to attain rest or relaxation [even] by the time a thousand buddhas were to appear in this world—rather, the mind is led further and further astray.”²¹⁸ These blind, bald heretics, Dahui continued to complain, teach people to follow objects as they come and go, “fasten” [*guandai* 管帶] their mind on these objects, forget emotions, and silently illuminate [*mozhao* 默照].²¹⁹ As a result, they blind themselves and others with their poison. All they do is secure empty tranquility and thus turn themselves into dirt, trees, tiles, and rocks, stare at conditions as they rise, or take the essence that is self-so [*ziranti* 自然體] as the ultimate Dharma and thus prevent the mind from producing

²¹² *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.916b20-22); trans. Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai,” 176.

²¹³ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.916b22); trans. Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai,” 176-177 (with some minor changes).

²¹⁴ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.916c2-3); trans. Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai,” 177.

²¹⁵ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.918b16-18); trans. Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai,” 179.

²¹⁶ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.918b16-18); cf. Araki, *Daiesho*, 13-14.

²¹⁷ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.918a21-23); cf. Araki 1969: 19-20. Dahui often used this analogy of the snubnose-dogwolf [*xieju* 獬豸] to criticize the heretics who taught silent illumination. I borrow the translation “snubnose-dogwolf” from Anne Birrell’s translation of *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* [*Shanghai jing* 山海經]; see Birrell, *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*, 63. *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* offers the following description of the snubnose-dogwolf: “There is an animal on this mountain [Mt. Northcall] which looks like a wolf, but it has a scarlet head and rat eyes. It makes a noise like a piglet. Its name is the snubnose-dogwolf” (Birrell, *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*, 62-63).

²¹⁸ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.918a23); cf. Araki, *Daiesho*, 19-20 and Shinohara, “Ta-hui’s Instructions to Tseng K’ai,” 181.

²¹⁹ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.918a25); cf. Araki, *Daiesho*, 19-20.

thoughts.²²⁰ “All these illnesses,” in Dahui’s opinion, “are not matters that concern those who study the *dao*.”²²¹

As he also stated elsewhere, “nowadays not only practitioners of Chan but also the literati, who are intelligent, sharp, and extremely well read—each and every one of them suffer from two general illnesses. If they aren’t [suffering from] attachment to thoughts then they are [suffering from] forgetting emotions.”²²² As he explains, “to forget emotions is to fall into the ghost cave underneath a black mountain—in the teachings this is referred to as torpor; to be attached to thoughts is to have [your] consciousness whirl around in confusion—one thought continues to another, [but] even before the former thought has come to cease the next thought continues [in its place]—in the teachings this is referred to as agitation.”²²³ Having distorted views about either the study of ancient cases (*chan* as agitation) or silent illumination (*dao* as torpor) could, in other words, result in illness. But the teachers of silent illumination “cite the words of our patriarchs as proof” and insist that “when [you] relax like dirt, trees, tiles, and rocks this is not some profound no-knowing but rather is simply a dazzling alertness.”²²⁴ Dahui could not have disagreed more. In fact, it was precisely because literate men like Zeng were taught to rest and relax like “cold ashes, a withered tree, a strip of white silk, and an incense burner in an old shrine” that they misleadingly ended up sitting in what Dahui sardonically called “the deep pit of liberation” [*jietuo shenkeng* 解脱深坑].²²⁵

Who were these blind bald heretics who taught silent illumination? I think this is the wrong question to ask. What we need to be asking ourselves here is not who these people were but what compelled Dahui to criticize them. It could be the case, as some claim, that Dahui was reacting to a rival tradition, the Caodong, with whom he was engaged in a fierce competition for literati patronage.²²⁶ But understanding Dahui’s critique of silent illumination this way fails to explain why we find others like Zhenjing making a virtually identical argument against resting and relaxing:

²²⁰ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998.918b17-18); cf. Araki, *Daiesho*, 21-22. For partial translation and analysis of this passage see also Levering, “Ch’an Enlightenment for Laymen,” 264-265.

²²¹ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998.918b24); cf. Araki, *Daiesho*, 21-22.

²²² *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.884c17-19). As Ishii Shūdō points out, this schema of the two illnesses of “attachment to thoughts” [*zhuoyi* 著意] or torpor [*hunchen* 昏沈] and “forgetting feelings” [*wanghuai* 忘懷] or excitation [*diaoju* 掉舉] seem to have been generally accepted and eventually taken for granted; see Ishii, “Daie Sōkō to sono deshitachi (go).” These two illnesses are also part of the traditional five hindrances [*nīvaraṇa*] to meditation.

²²³ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.884c19-21). It should be noted here that the expression “ghost cave underneath the black mountain” was used by Changlu Zongze 長蘆宗曠 (d.u.) in his *Zuochanyi* 坐禪儀 to refer to the tendency to fall asleep if one closes one’s eyes during meditation; see *Chanyuan qinggui* (XZJ111.920b1-2). Zongze attributes this expression to a fellow Yunmen lineage monk Fayun Yuantong 法雲圓通 or Faxiu 法秀 (1027-1090). See also Bielefeldt, *Dōgen’s Manuals of Zen Meditation*, 113 and 180.

²²⁴ *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.867b16-17).

²²⁵ *Ibid.* (T47.1998A.885c4-5 & 25-28).

²²⁶ For instance, see Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*.

Nowadays many people attain this serene extinction of mind and body, severing both past and future. Relaxing and resting as if there is only a single thought for ten thousand years, like an incense burner in an ancient shrine, as if cold and damp, [they take] this to be the ultimate state [*jiujing* 究竟]. [But] how could [you] not know? On the contrary, as a result of the hindrance [caused by] this superior and wondrous state [you] cannot manifest before [you] your own true views and cannot emit the supernatural, bright illumination. Again, [there are those] who are attached to this [idea] that everything [can be subsumed under] “ordinary mind is the Way” and take this as the ultimate tenet. [They thus foolishly claim], heaven is heaven and earth is earth; monks are monks and laymen are laymen; great months are thirty days and minor months twenty-nine days.²²⁷

Dahui himself admits that he was fond of citing the above passage from Zhenjing’s recorded sayings, which we encountered earlier in our discussion of Zhaojue. This, to be sure, does not mean that Dahui got the idea of attacking silent illumination from Zhenjing, but it does raise the strong possibility that both men were part of a *larger* historical process that cannot be reduced to the ideological or personal agenda of either figure.

Others, in fact, were also part of this process and what they had in common, needless to say, are temples—Huanglong, Zhaojue, Zhenjing, Juefan, Zhantang, and Dahui were all residents and abbots of Letan si on Mt. Shimen—and books.²²⁸ Dahui, for one, shared his liking for Zhenjing’s recorded sayings with Wuzu and Yuanwu. When the text was published Yuanwu, as Dahui recalls in a sermon, was serving as chief seat [*shouzu* 首座] under Wuzu. Pleased to find a monk holding a copy of the newly published text, Wuzu called for his chief seat Yuanwu and read the passage above—“a well spoken essence of the dharma” [*shanshuo fayao* 善說法要] as Wuzu put it—out loud for him.²²⁹

Zhenjing’s dispute with Zhaojue may have thus made its way into the hands of Wuzu, Yuanwu, and Dahui. But, I think, these men knew that there was more at stake here than a few bad apples—be it Zhaojue, the twelfth century Caodong tradition, or whoever—who taught students to rest and relax, die the great death, and be just-the-way-they-always-are. They

²²⁷ *Baofeng Yunan Zhenjing chanshi zhu Jinling Baoning yulu* (XZJ118.745a8-13). In fact, the monk Dayou 大佑 (d.u.) specifically identifies the target of this lecture as “silent illumination” [*mozhao*] in his *Jingtu zhigui ji* 淨土指歸集 published in 1393 (XZJ108.180a4-13). In another sermon, Zhenjing provides his audience with an interesting hermeneutic. Shishuang’s “rest and relax as if cold and damp,” he says, is the enjoyment in extinction enjoyed by the followers of the two vehicles [*ersheng jimie zhi le* 二乘寂滅之樂], Yunmen’s koans embody the enjoyment of the bliss of *dhyāna* and the dharma [*faxi chanyue zhi le* 法喜禪悅之樂], and Deshan’s blows and Linji’s shouts are the enjoyment in compassion, loving kindness, joy, and equanimity of all the buddhas of the three realms [*sanshi zhufu cibeixishe zhi le* 三世諸佛慈悲喜捨之樂]; see Zhenjing’s *Zhu Lushan Guizong yulu* 住廬山歸宗語錄 in the *Guzunsu yulu* (XZJ118.729b16-730a7).

²²⁸ See Tsuchiya, “Kōanzen no seiritsu ni kansuru shiron,” 269-260 (reverse pagination).

²²⁹ See Dahui *Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.882b20-23).

knew this viscerally and they experienced the urgency of having to address the problem as an illness. There wasn't, they thus knew, an authoritative and unifying vision that could bring the various styles of *chan* together. Without such a vision, the "investigation" of Linji's three mysteries, Yunmen's three phrases, Dongshan's five positions and the like, as Dahui puts it, would amount to little more than ocean calabash *chan*. The various koans, *chan* formulas, and circle diagrams would continue to be collected for their own sake and analyzed and categorized into neat typologies on the basis of what they literally say. Chan men would continue to believe that ancient cases such as "Nanquan cuts the cat," "Baizhang's wild fox," and "Zhaozhou scrutinizes the old lady" were conceived by the ancients either for the purpose of establishing the various entryways of the different houses of Chan or for the purpose of using them literally as a sort of last word that they could transmit secretly as a final seal of approval. But Dahui and others knew, or at least believed that one should viscerally know, that a simple catchphrase such as "a mountain is a mountain and water is water" (*pace* Zhaojue) was not going to do the job of cleaning this mess up and making sense of the wide array of *chan* tools that had become available in the Northern Song. This job required something more.

Dahui tried to articulate what this would be. He tried to explain what koans are for. He offered, for instance, the following instructions on how to study koans for Military Affairs Commissioner Fu Zhirou 富直柔 (d. 1156):

Just once put down the mind of deluded ideas and perverse notions, the mind of thinking and discrimination, the mind that loves life and hates death, the mind of opinion and understanding, the mind that enjoys calm and dislikes bustle. Then where you have put down [such minds], observe this critical phrase: "A monk asked Zhaozhou, 'Does a dog have Buddha nature?' Zhaozhou answered, 'No [*wu* 無].'" This one word, "no" is a weapon that will crush a multitude of perverse perceptions. Do not try to understand it through existence [*you*] or non-existence [*wu*]; do not try to understand it with reason. Do not rely on the mind to think it through or figure it out; do not be fixated on raising the eyebrows and blinking the eyes. Do not try to make your way on the path of words; do not just float in idleness. Do not simply assent to its source; do not cite proof from writings.²³⁰

For Dahui, koans were not meant to be used as tools for figuring out the existential problem existence or non-existence. They were not meant to be read as one would (today) a textbook

²³⁰ *Ibid.* (T47.1998A.921c5-c13); trans. Bielefeldt, *Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation*, 102 (with some minor changes). According to the *Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu*, Fu received this letter from Dahui in 1138; see Ishii, "Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (chū)," 103-104. The Korean Sōn master Chinul 知訥 (1158-1210) and his chief disciple Hyesim 慧諶 (1178-1234) showed great interest in the passage quoted above; see Buswell, *The Korean Approach to Zen*, 245-246, 253 n. 1, and 338. Hyesim even wrote a short treatise on the passage entitled *Kuja mubulsōng kanbyōng ron* 狗子無佛性看病論; see *Han'guk pulgyo chōnsō*, vol. 6, 69-70. This treatise analyzes the above passage in terms of illnesses (each sentence than begins with a "do not" constitutes an illness).

or a novel either. Why not? Because they were not constructed for the purpose of reaching a foregone conclusion that one could readily identify in a catchphrase (or two). Rather, one had to read and know the koans for oneself “like a person who drinks water and knows whether it is cold or warm for himself.”

What Dahui is proposing here, however, is not a sort of mysticism in the conventional sense of the term but what I would prefer to call a mysticism of the letter. The latter is perhaps best understood as a style of learning and self-cultivation that aims at a (mystical) awakening that can only be had by actively “interiorizing” the words of the koan and making them one’s own.²³¹ The individual himself and his body must not withdraw from the koan (and its ineffable truth) for awakening to occur. Reading koans cannot be a passive endeavor. This is how Dahui hoped to overcome the crisis in textual authority that swept through Northern Song Chan. But his proposal was more than just a simple reaction to a crisis. As Dahui tells the military affairs commissioner in another letter, approaching koans this way has therapeutic effects as well. If the two illnesses of torpor and excitation rise while sitting quietly in meditation, Dahui recommends using Zhaozhou’s “no” as an effective remedy.²³²

²³¹ I borrow the notion of “interiorization” (or the manner in which the body “mines the reading in its own way”) from de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 175-176. Although de Certeau was speaking specifically of the shift from interiorized reading (i.e., reading by uttering the words of the text aloud) to silent reading as a new modern experience, I think his notion of the “distancing of the text” from the body (which resulted from the rise of silent reading according to de Certeau) applies equally well to Dahui’s response to the crisis in textual authority during the Northern Song. What we must not fail to notice here, however, are the differences between de Certeau and Dahui’s attitude towards interiorized reading. Unlike de Certeau who believed that the withdrawal of the body from the text would allow the reader to “poach” more freely and thus facilitate a politics of reading, Dahui seems to have believed that this withdrawal and distancing of the text is what transformed the reader into a passive receptacle of and overdetermined his relation to the text. It should also be borne in mind that the goal of Dahui’s reform of reading practices in Chan was not to free the reader from fixed and predetermined ways of consuming texts but to have the reader recognize these predetermined “readings” as his own.

Perhaps even more pertinent to our discussion, despite some obvious differences, is de Certeau’s work on mystical discourse—a communication between the mystic and God that replaced the institution of the church and its language, Latin (which was thought to be insufficient and lacking by the end of the Middle Ages)—and particularly his insights on mysticism as a new *modus loquendi* that legitimizes itself by establishing the place of its utterance (i.e., the “I” that speaks for the Other) through rhetoric and reading; see de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, esp. Chapters Four and Six. I leave the monumental task of looking at these developments during the Northern Song and sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe side-by-side to those more qualified than I.

²³² See Dahui *Pujue chanshi yulu* (T47.1998A.922b3-6); cf. Araki, *Daiesho*, 57-58.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude this article with one last story. According to *Dahui's Arsenal*, Zhenjing's disciple Doushuai Congyue 兜率從悅 (1044-1091) is said to have once asked Zhang Shangying if he had any remaining doubts despite having already received formal acknowledgement [*yinke* 印可] of his awakening from Chan master Zhaojue.²³³ The commissioner replied that he did, so Doushuai asked him for the specific words that caused him to have lingering doubt. Zhang then brought up the story of Deshan's bowls. This famous story goes something like this.²³⁴ Chan master Deshan Xuanjian missed his opportunity to have lunch, so he picked up his bowls and headed for the samgha hall. The cook Xuefeng Yicun witnessed this and said, "the bell hasn't been rung and the drum hasn't been beaten [to announce lunch], where does that old man think he's going?" Deshan immediately returned to his room. Later, Xuefeng told this story to a friend who in reply said, "Even Deshan, so great, doesn't understand the last word."

Let us now return to Doushuai and Zhang. Learning of Zhang's lingering doubts about the story of Deshan's begging bowls, Doushuai said, "If you have doubts about this [case], then how can you not have doubts about the rest? Tell me now, is there or is there not such a thing as the last word?" The commissioner replied that there is. Doushuai laughed out loud, returned to the abbot's quarters, and shut the door. Zhang subsequently abandoned his allegiance to Zhaojue and became Doushuai's disciple.

By the twelfth century, Chan men had to ask themselves similar questions. Was there such a thing as the last word? If not, what then is one to do? Dahui offered the following advice in a public notice that he prepared for his students at the hermitage-temple Yangyu an where he purportedly delivered the *Bianxie zhengshuo*:

Among the past worthies there was a saying, "when mixed poison enters consciousness it is as impossible to take out as oil in noodles." Nowadays, brothers who investigate *chan* cannot attain [awakening] because the poison has entered deeply into the bone marrow. Simply assuming that there is a *dao* to be attained, they just go on and practice *chan*. When their *chan* reaches its very end [*chan dao mohou* 禪到末後] and as a byproduct they attain a phrase they feel joy. These men cannot be saved even by the Buddha. From now on, when [you] approach the desk, just read scriptures and do not read other miscellaneous writings. If [you] transgress, [you] will be excused from the premises along with your desk."²³⁵

The time had come to abandon old learning habits such as transmitting koans as last words and indestructible barriers. What students now had to do was read, read, and read some more. And they did so not for confirmation but for comprehension.

Huanglong, Zhaojue, Zhenjing, Dahui, and other men from the Northern Song, as we have seen, attempted to address the growing need for a *dao* with which one could make sense out of the muddle that was *chan*. They did not, however, necessarily reach the same

²³³ For this story see *Dahui's Arsenal* (T47.1998B.952c22-27).

²³⁴ For this story, see case 55 of the *Congrong lu* (T48.2004.262a20-c5).

²³⁵ *Luohu yelu* 羅湖野錄 (XZJ142.980b10-15).

conclusions. But the pressure was mounting as men like Zhang Shangying, whose patronage became the key to any ambitious Chan man's success, eagerly sought a resolution to this crisis. As many a Chan man tried to woo Zhang and other influential statesmen by devising such a resolution, some permanent changes were inadvertently made. By the end of the Northern Song a man of Chan could, for instance, take issue with the way another man of Chan read the ancient cases, but no man of Chan could doubt that the study of these ancient cases was necessary or question the need for comprehension in this form of learning. When a Chan man from the Northern Song read, it became increasingly unlikely that he would not read for comprehension. *Chan* for *chan*'s own sake was now a thing of the past.

It is a past, however, that is often forgotten and for good reason. History seems to often take the side of those who rewrite it. But that does not mean that we too should forget this past, for we would then fail to see that the men of Chan did not always interact with themselves and with the world as reading subjects. We would also fail to realize that becoming a reading subject meant that one came to not only *see* oneself and the world differently but also *experience* them differently. Not knowing this past would make it difficult for us, indeed, to fully appreciate the fact that men and women in the past once experienced the absence of comprehension in reading koans as a malady.²³⁶

Abbreviations

T *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經, edited by TAKAKUSU Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and WATANABE Kaigyoku 渡辺海旭 (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-1932).

XZJ *Xuzang jing* 續藏經 (Taibei: Shinwenfeng, 1968-1970). Reprint of *Dai Nippon Zokuzokyo* 大日本續藏經, edited by NAKANO Tatsue 中野達慧 (Kyoto: Zōkyō shoin, 1905-1912).

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²³⁶ For an example of a nun who had to deal with this malady, see Levering, "Miao-tao and her Teacher Ta-hui."

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- Da fanguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jing* 大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經. T17.842.
- Dahui Pujue chanshi nianpu* 大慧普覺禪師年譜. In ISHII, "Daie Fukaku zenji nenpu no kenkyū (jō, chū, and ge)."
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