
*Interpreting the Material Heritage
of the “Elephant Trunk Robe”
in Sōtō Zen*

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DURING THE TOKUGAWA period Japanese Buddhist schools met challenges about the laxity of their practice by studying monastic rules (Vinaya), relying primarily on interpretations of the Chinese Vinaya master Daoxuan (596–667). The Buddhist robe, as a physical sign of the earnestness of their practice, was a particular focus of reform in all the schools. This was a reformation based on texts, not on human example or the artistic and material witness that had shaped Japanese understanding of the robe for a thousand years. For the first time in the history of Japanese Buddhist vestments, reformers in the major Buddhist schools were trying to re-create the ancient customs and material culture of the Vinaya by studying texts and implementing their prescriptions.

Sōtō Zen reformers of this period could not rely solely on the Vinaya, however, because of the new emphasis on the writings of Dōgen. Dōgen’s own elliptical comments and his criticisms of Daoxuan’s visionary teachings about robes complicated reform efforts. To add to the confusion, brocade robes of an unusual shape called “elephant trunk” were attributed to founders of the school. In color, fabric, and shape, these robes violated Vinaya teachings (see Figures 9.1 and 9.2). Sōtō Zen clerics therefore had to consider the role of the Vinaya teachings while accepting the primacy of Dōgen’s writings and respecting the authority of their material heritage. In this chapter I investigate the methodology and claims of two Sōtō Zen scholar-monks, Gyakusui Tōryū

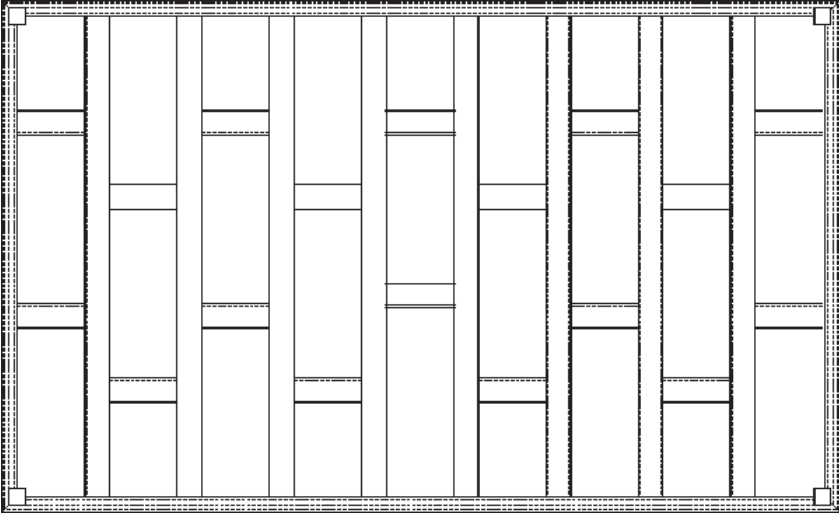


FIGURE 9.1 Illustration of the nine and twenty-five panel “great robe” that follows Vinaya regulations regarding the overall dimension and construction of the panels. Note that as the number of panels increases, their width decreases, so that both robes are approximately the same size. This illustration was created by David Riggs, based on a drawing from a reprinted edition of a handwritten copy of *Hōbuku kakushō*, privately published in 1937 by Kosaka Junni of Sengakuji, Tokyo.

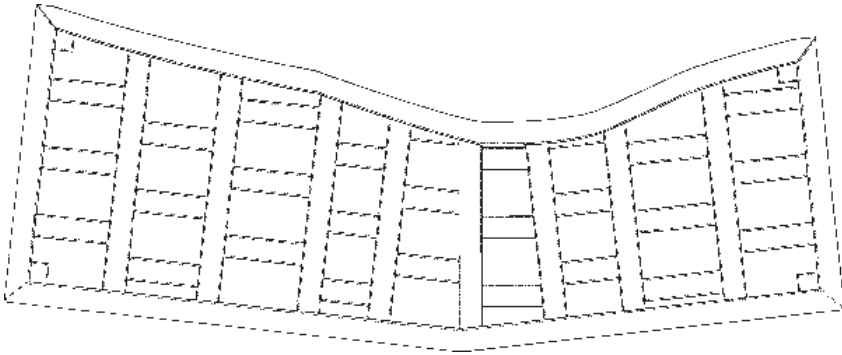


FIGURE 9.2 Illustration of an “elephant trunk” robe from Sōjiji sōin, attributed to Keizan Jōkin. Note the curved top line of the *kesa* and the variation in the size of each panel. In some robes of this style the panels themselves are not rectangular. Vertical dimension ranges from 138 cm at highest point to 98 cm at lowest point. The horizontal length is 298 cm. This illustration was created by David Riggs, based on a hand-drawn illustration from Sekiguchi Dōjun, *Nihon Sōtōshu shoki kyōdan ni okeru hōi no kenkyū* (Ichinomiya: Eirinji, 1992), 70.

(1684–1766), abbot of Daijōji, and Menzan Zuihō (1683–1769), who made the interpretation of Dōgen’s writings the basis of his life’s work.

Tōryū and Menzan addressed questions about the role of texts, art, and artifacts in resolving questions of form. Their different approaches reflect significant problems in the interpretation of Japanese Buddhist vestments. Since they arrive at diametrically opposed conclusions about the meaning of the “elephant trunk” artifacts and the meaning of Dōgen’s teachings on the robe, their works demonstrate the challenges of using texts to interpret historical artifacts. Menzan and Tōryū were writing at a time when the form of robes was not so critical, but by the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Sōtō Zen had to distinguish itself from Rinzaï and Ōbaku Zen in its doctrines, institutions, and religious forms (including robes), their arguments gained importance.

In order to explicate the issues raised in these debates, I first discuss relevant aspects of the history of Buddhist vestments in Japan. This allows us to see the work of these two Sōtō scholars as part of a continuum of perspectives on the Buddhist robe that began in the eighth century and continues to the present. The problem of interpreting artifacts through texts is as relevant today as it was then. Their debates therefore can be seen as a step toward modern thought and practice.

Perspectives on the Material Culture of Japanese Buddhist Vestments

Menzan and Tōryū began writing in the mid-eighteenth century, 150 years after Vinaya reforms had begun. The first Sōtō Zen essay on reforming robe practice was written in 1703 by Tokugon Yōson (fl. 1640–1730), so Sōtō Zen writers entered the field of robe reform rather late.¹ Numerous works on Buddhist vestments had already been written, and the characteristic plain robes of gray or brown linen and cotton of Vinaya reformers were recognized by the government.² Although the initial goal of Vinaya reform was to unite Japanese Buddhists under a single code of dress and behavior, by the mid-eighteenth century internal and external pressures increased sectarianism and shifted the goals of the movement.³ Nevertheless studies of Buddhist vestments were still active, and pressure from the government for schools to define their code of dress would not occur until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Sōtō Zen writers therefore could benefit from the scholarship of the preceding century and a half and explore issues pertinent to Zen and its teachings about the robe.

In the Tokugawa period, reform of Buddhist vestments focused on the rectangular robe, referred to as *kesa*, which is worn wrapped around the body so that it passes under the right arm and covers the left shoulder.⁴ Japanese robe practice follows customs begun in China, where the Indian practice of wearing three rectangular garments wrapped around the body, each with its own function, was replaced by the practice of wearing one of these robes (usually of five or seven panels) over garments that satisfied Chinese modesty.⁵ In practice, therefore, only the *kesa* resembled robes worn in India. In the Tokugawa period, when studies of the Vinaya made people more aware of the discrepancies between the texts and Japanese robe practice, reformers were not so extreme as to reject the Chinese-style clothing. Instead the energy for reform was almost entirely focused on the *kesa* as the only garment that remained of the original Indian monastic outfit, and therefore the only opportunity for approaching the form of garments worn by the Buddha.

In the Vinaya descriptions of the three-robe set, the great robe (*sanghati*) of nine to twenty-five panels is used to cover the body more fully when interacting with the laity. It is honored as the robe that the Buddha wore when giving sermons, and it appears in stories of exchanges between Sakyamuni Buddha and his disciple Mahakasyapa. These exchange stories reveal a fundamental tension in the Buddhist tradition between the rag robe and the golden robe of the Buddha. Vinaya rules about materials suitable for the rag robe focus on the circumstances that caused it to be discarded as unsuitable for ordinary garments. These circumstances include, for example, cloth that was chewed by animals or cloth used to wrap a corpse. The Buddhist ascetic who gathers, washes, and sews the cloth into robes transforms it through the power of his ascetic practice.⁶ In one of these narratives Sakyamuni offers to exchange his rag robe for Mahakasyapa's patchwork robe made of fine materials in recognition of Mahakasyapa's ascetic practice. In the other story Sakyamuni bestows a "golden robe" on Mahakasyapa, to be kept in trust for the future Buddha, Maitreya. This type of narrative begins with an account of Mahaprajapati's gift of a golden robe to Sakyamuni Buddha, which was subsequently rejected by both the Buddha and his community.

In one version of the story popularized in Xuanzang's seventh-century record of his travels to India, *Record of Western Lands in the Great Tang (Da Tang xiyu zhi)*, the problem is resolved when Sakyamuni gives the robe to Mahakasyapa to be held in trust for Maitreya.⁷ In both types of narratives, the exchange or gift robe is designated as a "great robe," but it takes one of two forms: the rag robe, which is evidence of the merit of the Buddha's ascetic practice, or the golden robe, which is evidence of the continuation of his

teaching. In these narratives the great robe is not presented as one of the three monastic robes; it is associated with the spiritual power of the Buddha.

More pertinent to the debate between Menzan and Tōryū is the fact that these narratives of exchange form the basis of the Zen tradition of the master bestowing a robe on his disciple in dharma transmission. Such robes are referred to as “transmission robes” or, more strictly, a “transmit-dharma robe” (*denbō e*).⁸ Xuanzang’s account of Mahakasyapa preserving Sakyamuni’s robe for Maitreya was recorded in fascicle 1 of the Zen text *Jingde Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (*Jingde Chuandenglū*).⁹ The robe of golden threads to be held in trust for Maitreya thus becomes fused with the Zen school’s account of their lineage. It was not clear to Sōtō Zen reformers, however, whether the robe given in Zen transmission reenacted the narrative of the rag robe or the golden robe. Yōson asked in his 1703 essay, “Thoughts on the *Kesa* of the Buddhas and Ancestors” (“Busso kesa kō”), “Was the robe that Sakyamuni gave to Mahakasyapa the golden robe or a rag robe?”¹⁰ Fifty years later Tōryū’s arguments in favor of the golden robe supported the use of gold brocade in Sōtō Zen *kesa*, whereas Menzan, following scripture and Dōgen’s view more closely, characterized the Zen transmission robe as the rag robe. Neither Tōryū nor Menzan, however, disputed that the great robe carries the significance of the Buddha’s teaching.

These two images, the rag robe and the golden robe of the Buddha, were expressed in the material culture of Japanese Buddhism. Beginning in the eighth century the image of the rag robe in the form of a multicolor pieced *kesa* was reproduced in *kesa* textiles and portraits of statesmen and high-ranking clerics. In the twelfth century, however, when Myōan Eisai (1114–1215) returned from the continent wearing Zen robes from Song China, the golden robe, with its lore of mind-to-mind transmission, added new challenges. By the Tokugawa period both versions of the Buddha’s robe had developed accepted traditions in art and textile.

For the rag robe, perhaps the most influential image is the eighth-century portrait statue of the Chinese Vinaya master Ganjin (Ch. Jianzhen; 688–763).¹¹ Ganjin, who introduced proper ordination ritual to Japan, resolved to make the journey in part because of the gift of one thousand *kesa* that Nagaya-ō (684–729) had sent to Tang China.¹² In the last year of his life Ganjin, who had been deeply impressed by the “true image” of the mummy statue of the Zen patriarch, Huineng (638–713), carefully instructed his disciple Sitou (fl. 750) how to make his portrait statue be an accurate representation.¹³ In the absence of Ganjin’s written instructions, the statue becomes his teaching on the *kesa*. The portrait statue depicts a multicolor pieced *kesa* worn over Chinese garments, with the surplus fabric flung over the left shoulder to the back. The

form of the *kesa* on Ganjin's statue was reproduced in Japanese art, most notably in Kaikei's (fl. 1189–1236) 1201 statue of the bodhisattva Hachiman. In addition the Hachiman statue meticulously depicted precise construction details of the multicolor stitched and pieced robe, including the running stitch that covers the surface of the cloth. These details of color and stitching also appear on Kamakura-era portraits of Prince Shōtoku Taishi (574–622).¹⁴

Many other images of high-ranking Buddhist clerics and statesmen are also depicted wearing multicolor *kesa*, some of which border on brocade-like designs.¹⁵ The image of the multicolor pieced “rag robe” was therefore an important feature of artistic depictions of *kesa* in premodern Japan. The fact that at least some of these images were regarded as true likenesses suggests an identification forged in Japanese art between the rag robe that represents the merit of the Buddha's ascetic practice and the spiritual and worldly power of statesmen and clerics. The Japanese tradition of statues and portraits providing a “true likeness,” or even the idea that certain statues such as of the Seiryōji Sakyamuni are “living Buddhas,” was the premise for Tōryū's argument that the Buddha wore an elephant trunk robe. For Menzan, however, this evidence lends support to Dōgen's arguments in “Merit of the *Kesa*” (“*Kesa Kudoku*”) about the preeminence of the rag robe as the true transmission robe of the Buddha.

Ganjin also brought gifts of *kesa* to Emperor Shōmu (701–56), including a number of multicolor pieced robes and one *kesa* using a technically advanced weaving technique to imitate the different colors of sewn patches.¹⁶ These robes were preserved at the Shōsōin as Emperor Shōmu's personal possessions. A multicolor pieced “rag robe” *kesa* preserved at Hōryūji, the temple founded by Prince Shōtoku, was periodically shown to select groups throughout the medieval period as an opportunity to come in personal contact with Shōtoku's merit.¹⁷ In the nineteenth century Hōryūji realized the commercial potential of displaying to the public these *kesa* and other objects attributed to Prince Shōtoku. Even though the *kesa* was displayed folded up in a box, the numerous images of Shōtoku wearing *kesa* would reinforce his connection with the multicolor pieced rag robe. Thus an important feature of Dōgen's essay “Merit of the *Kesa*” includes the notion that lay men wore *kesa* and kings throughout history gave homage to important *kesa* artifacts. This high regard for the authority of historical exemplar in Dōgen's writings must have left a deep impression on Tōryū, for it forms the basis of his approach to the *kesa*.

The brocade Zen transmission robes first imported to Japan during the Kamakura period and the increasingly lavish brocade robes of the early modern and modern periods of Sōtō Zen derived a portion of their significance and legitimacy from the narrative in which Sakyamuni bestows a “golden robe”

on Mahakasyapa to be kept in trust for the future Buddha Maitreya. These robes were regarded as providing evidence of the transcendent mind-to-mind transmission of the dharma from master to disciple in the Zen school, but the physical garments themselves represented the internationalization of Zen material culture in the twelfth to fifteenth centuries.¹⁸ These *kesa* attributed to founders and important clerics in the Rinzai, Ōbaku, and Sōtō Zen schools are the most important material evidence for Tōryū's claim that the true form of the transmission *kesa* must be the so-called elephant trunk robe.

Eisai, who founded the Zen temple Kenninji in Kyoto, is traditionally credited with introducing a new style of robes to Japan on his return from China in 1191. The long sleeves on his Song-style underrobe (*jikitotsu*) were shocking enough, but Eisai also brought an unusually widened style of *kesa* that dwarfed the five- or seven-panel *kesa* commonly worn by Japanese monks at the time. Over a hundred years later, in 1322, the Rinzai cleric Kokan Shiren (1278–1346) comments wryly on these garments in his *Record of Buddhism through the Genkō Era* (*Genkō Shakusho*):

In the third month of 1204 there was a typhoon in central Kyoto. The townspeople said, "Recently, Eisai has been proclaiming a new teaching of the essentials of Zen. His disciples' robes are of an unusual construction with increased dimensions and the *jikitotsu* has great sleeves. When he walks along the street, great winds swirl within the bellowing [garments]." Now, accordingly, this is the basis of the fear that Eisai will cause a fire.¹⁹

In addition to their unusually large size, the transmission robes introduced in the Kamakura period used gold brocade, or *kinran* cloth.²⁰ During the seventeenth century the Ōbaku Zen school's use of elaborate gold brocade *kesa* affected both Rinzai and Sōtō Zen monks, many of whom had trained with the Ōbaku masters.²¹ One of Tōryū's strongest arguments is that he personally viewed some of the most significant of the Gozan temple transmission robes. He mentions a *kesa* attributed to Wuzhun Shifan (1178–1249), teacher of Enni Ben'en (1202–80), founder of Tōfukuji, and Eisai's *kesa* at Kenninji. Until the Tokugawa period, when Japanese weaving techniques improved and the Nishijin weaving industry began to produce a better grade of gold brocade, such *kesa* were fairly rare. As the Japanese became less dependent on Chinese imports, however, these fabrics were adopted by many of the Buddhist schools.²²

When Tokugawa-era Vinaya enthusiasts set out to reform the *kesa*, their material culture was very much at odds with the textual materials they studied.

It appeared to them that Japan had indeed strayed from the narrow path of Buddhist robe practice. Their commentaries include criticism of current practices, including the use of tassels, gold brocade, silk, and other customs that did not follow Daoxuan's interpretations. The brocade fabrics that first appeared in Zen transmission robes had spread to other schools of Japanese Buddhism, driven in part by improvements in Japanese textile production but also supported by the East Asian tradition in which robes of valuable fabrics were awarded by the ruler to honor clerics.²³

For the Sōtō Zen school, however, the issue of whether and how to use Vinaya teachings and how to define the proper robe became increasingly an issue of determining Dōgen's approach to the Buddhist robe based on his writings. In contrast to their peers in other schools, Sōtō Zen scholar-monks were concerned with the robe as an emblem of transmission and awakening deeply connected with Zen lineage mythology as interpreted by Dōgen. The Sōtō lineage produced approximately seventeen works from 1703 to 1825 about the significance of the robe as a sign of transmission in Zen sources, placing Dōgen's writings on the *kesa* at the center of their arguments. Sōtō Zen writers were thus in a better position than other schools to fuse studies of the *kesa* with a study of the founder's teachings.

Same Evidence, Different Conclusions in Tōryū's and Menzan's Studies

Tōryū and Menzan have serious differences concerning three major questions. First, is the Vinaya relevant to Sōtō Zen studies of the robe? Second, what is the significance of the "elephant trunk" form of the robe in Sōtō Zen? Third, how should the narrative of the golden robe given to Mahakasyapa be interpreted? For both of them, the basis is Dōgen's *Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma* (*Shōbōgenzō*), which contains two sections that deal with the robe: "Merit of the *Kesa*" and "Transmit the Robe" ("Den'e").

This focus is, however, something of a departure for Sōtō writings on the robe. Yōson's groundbreaking 1703 essay does cite Dōgen, but he also uses a wide range of sources to discuss the form and meaning of the *kesa* in Zen.²⁴ Yōson asks whether the robe that Sakyamuni gave to Mahakasyapa was the golden robe or a rag robe. Would the human-size robe of Sakyamuni fit the larger frame of Maitreya?²⁵ Yōson discusses Zen kōan and the chronology of transmission stories about the robe, including, for example, the story of Huineng's "heavy" robe that cannot be lifted by those without understanding. He also writes at some length about lay people wearing *kesa*, an issue

that Dōgen raises in his essays.²⁶ Finally, Yōson presents an account of the thousand robes that Nagaya-Ō sent to China in his capacity as minister of the left and the effect of this gift on Ganjin’s decision to travel to Japan. He then reveals that in 1702 Tanshin (fl. 1660) bestowed on him one of a thousand great robes (*fu sōgyari kesa*) that Ganjin had brought with him to Japan and that had been preserved at Tōshōdaiji after Ganjin’s death.²⁷ Yōson seems thrilled to have received this historical artifact, but there is no indication that he views it as a transmission robe. Yōson’s essay brought Zen perspectives to *kesa* studies, but his goal is not limited to interpreting Dōgen. Fifty years later Sōtō writings on the *kesa* had shifted to emphasize Dōgen’s thought.

The change of emphasis was due to the context of the mid-eighteenth-century reforms called “return to the old ways.” The reforms, initiated by Gesshū Sōko (1618–96) and Manzan Dōhaku (1636–1715), established a monastic code that combined the writings of Dōgen and Keizan, founders of Sōtō Zen lineages, with regulations of the Ōbaku Zen sect (Ōbaku Shingi). This combined code was to be implemented at Daijōji and its affiliated temples.²⁸ Tōryū, who became abbot at Daijōji in 1750, was committed to establishing these reforms.

These monastic rules were criticized by Sonnō Sōeki (1557–1620), Menzan’s teacher, for incorporating Ōbaku influence. Menzan continued his teacher’s stand against Ōbaku, but because he never became abbot of a major Sōtō Zen temple, he was able to carry out reforms only in his own temple. In the late eighteenth century, however, Sonnō’s and Menzan’s intentions were bolstered by Gentō Sokuchū (1729–1807), who actively sought to excise the Ōbaku influence from the “return to the old ways” movement when he became abbot of Eihei-ji in 1795. He also supported Sōtō scholarship that used Vinaya and other Buddhist sources to interpret Dōgen’s teachings on the robe.²⁹ Through lineage and perhaps disposition Tōryū and Menzan were therefore at odds over the monastic codes that were to shape Sōtō Zen practice for the future. Their writings on the *kesa* express aspects of these differences. The following section discusses the most important of these three areas of contention.

Is the Vinaya Relevant for Sōtō Zen Robes?

In 1759 Tōryū published his first work on the *kesa*, “Chapter on Elephant Trunk Transmission Robe” (“Den’e Zōbi shōkō”; hereafter “Elephant Trunk Robe”).³⁰ Tōryū was insistent that Vinaya teachings are not suitable for Sōtō Zen, in using, for example, the following passage from “Merit of the *Kesa*,” where

Dōgen argues that *kesa* made by Vinaya lineages were unduly influenced by Daoxuan and his innovations:

Therefore, those who have aroused the mind of awakening, if they receive and wear *kesa*, then it must be a properly transmitted *kesa*, and one must not receive and wear a robe that is made in a new way according to a single individual's conception. The properly transmitted *kesa* is the lineage of transmission from Bodhidharma and Huineng, the face to face transmission of the Tathagata, without a break in the succession of generations. It was worn by their dharma heirs and it is the properly transmitted *kesa*. The new way of making it from Tang [China] is not the proper transmission. Now, as of old, the *kesa* worn by monks and their followers from India are all worn according to the proper transmission of the Buddhas and ancestors. Not one of them wears a *kesa* that is made according to the new Chinese way. They are the ones in the dark, those who believe in the *kesa* of the Vinaya scholars. Those who have come into the light abandon it.

しかあればすなはちいま發心のともがら、袈裟を受持すべくば、正傳の袈裟を受持すべし、今案の新作袈裟を受持すべからず。正傳の袈裟といふは、少林。曹溪正傳きたれる、如來の嫡嫡相承なり、一代も虧闕なし。それ法子法孫の著きたれる、これ正傳袈裟なり、唐土の新作は正傳にあらず。いま古今に、西天よりきたれる僧徒の所着の袈裟、みな佛祖正傳の袈裟のごとく著せり。一人としても、いま震旦新作の律學のともがらの所製の袈裟のごとくなるなし。くらきともがら、律學の袈裟を信ず、あきらかならものは抛却するなり。³¹

In this passage the phrases “single individual's conception,” “new way of making it from Tang,” and “*kesa* of the Vinaya scholars” refers to Daoxuan, particularly his independent works on Buddhist robes, *Vinaya Characteristics Revelation (Luxiang Gantong)* and *Chapter on Buddhist Vestments (Shimen Zhang Fuyi)*.³² In these works Daoxuan improvises on Vinaya teachings by attributing his ideas to visions granted to him by the gods. These two works contain some of Daoxuan's most controversial teachings about the robe, such as his prohibition of silk and the manner of lining the great robe, that were later criticized for their self-confessed visionary source. Here Dōgen is not critical of the Vinaya per se, as he praises both Indian monks and the Zen lineage as a source of orthodoxy. The problem, he argues, is the intervention

of Chinese styles based on idiosyncratic rules. In his view the Zen lineage through Bodhidharma allows Japanese Zen monks to return to the original teaching of Sakyamuni and avoid the pitfalls of "Vinaya scholars."

Clearly this passage could support the view that Dōgen opposes Vinaya teachings as a whole, an argument that Tōryū makes after citing it. Tōryū then intensifies the criticism in arguing that Daoxuan, by following the guidance of divine beings, has slandered the elephant trunk dharma robe transmitted by the Buddha and ancestors.³³ He asserts, "From the lineage of Shaolin [Bodhidharma] passed down from old, the transmitted great robe is properly called the elephant trunk [robe]" 少林門下從往古自伝大衣正象鼻称.³⁴ Why does Tōryū insist at this point on the form of the elephant trunk robe while admitting that the term does not appear in Dōgen's works? Tōryū has seen these robes in Zen temples. Tōryū's assertion therefore is actually an affirmation of Japanese Buddhist artifacts, saying, in effect, we have the Buddha dharma right here in Japan. All we need to do to understand the true *kesa* is to examine the robes that have been transmitted from teacher to disciple in Zen lineages.

In another passage Dōgen develops his idea about the relationship between the Vinaya and the Zen lineage that provides further support for Tōryū's position. In this passage Dōgen asserts that Sakyamuni gave Mahakasyapa the robe that he himself had received from Kasapa Buddha.³⁵ Dōgen then claims that this is the robe that was subsequently transmitted through the Zen lineage (not the robe that Mahakasyapa held in trust for the future Buddha Maitreya) and that the correct instructions for material, color, form, and care of Sakyamuni's *kesa* were transmitted from generation to generation to the present.³⁶ Dōgen appears to be setting up transmission in the Zen lineage as a parallel Vinaya lineage that preserves and transmits knowledge of the physical robe. To understand Dōgen's text, Tōryū believes, one must turn to the physical robes properly made and used in Zen lineages.

Dōgen also recounts the following dialogue between his teacher Rujing (1169–1228) and a disciple. In the dialogue Rujing is referred to as "the old Buddha":

Long ago a monk asked the old Buddha, "Was the transmitted robe [given] on Plum Mountain in the middle of the night cotton or silk, or was it, after all, any kind of thing?" The old Buddha said, "It is not cotton, it is not silk." You should know that the *kesa* is neither silk nor cotton. This is the essential training of the Buddha's way.

ある僧かつて古佛にとふ黄梅夜半の傳衣これ布
なりよやせん絹なりとやせん、畢竟じてなにもものなりとかせん。
古佛いはく、これ布にあらず、これ絹にあらず。しるべし袈裟
は絹布にあらざる、これ佛道の玄訓なり。³⁷

For Dōgen any physical feature that one can posit is not the true *kesa*, an argument that he also uses to solve the problem of whether Sakyamuni's *kesa* that is held in trust by Mahakasyapa will fit the larger frame of the future Buddha Maitreya.³⁸

Tōryū utilizes this rhetoric when he argues in favor of wearing gold brocade robes. In "Elephant Trunk Robe," Tōryū reinterprets the term "gold brocade" (*kinran*) as a generic term for *kesa* in which any color can be used, and "rag robe" as a generic term for *kesa* in which any fabric is good, whether it is gold brocade, silk, or cotton. He dissolves the boundaries between rag robes and gold brocade robes by arguing that this Zen teaching transcends the biased grasping of the inferior teachings of the Vinaya.³⁹ However, this is only one side of Dōgen. Tōryū seems to ignore passages that display Dōgen's understanding and respect for Vinaya teachings.

If the only authentic transmission of the robe is in the Zen lineage of Bodhidharma, did Dōgen ignore Vinaya teachings about the robe? In his "Merit of the *Kesa*" there are many passages in which he discusses robe-making in great detail by describing the set of three robes, the ten kinds of cloth used in rag robes, the nine types of great robes according to the number of panels, and even the methods of cutting and sewing the cloth.⁴⁰ This evidence suggests that Dōgen used his knowledge of Vinaya teachings in "Merit of the *Kesa*." For Tōryū to maintain his position that Vinaya teachings are inappropriate for Sōtō Zen monks who have "come into the light," he would have to ignore or reinterpret such passages.

Menzan disputes Tōryū's evidence and puts his methods into question in his 1763 work, "Questions about Ordination" ("Tokudo Wakumon").⁴¹ Unlike Tōryū's condemnation of Vinaya scholars, Menzan distinguishes between Vinaya texts and Daoxuan's interpretations. Various Vinaya texts indicate that there are rag robes, cut-and-sewn robes, strip-seam robes, and so on, he explains, each having its own origin and purpose. Furthermore the Buddha encouraged his monks to sew their own robes. In sum, since all these types of robes are described in the Vinaya they are by definition in accord with the Buddha's teaching.⁴² Menzan interprets Dōgen's criticism as directed only at Daoxuan's visionary commentaries, not the Vinaya itself, and perhaps not in other works in which Daoxuan stays closer to the text of the *Four Part Vinaya*.

Menzan argues that while some of Daoxuan’s teachings went beyond the Vinaya, Zen monks did not accept these deviations. He cites the four sources of authority: the word of the Buddha, the word of the teacher, the teachings of the assembly, and the teachings of a single monk. Menzan comments that if one hears a teaching that is not appropriate to the dharma, then one must reject it, citing the example of Yijing, who rejected Daoxuan’s prohibition of silk based on his reading of the Vinaya and his observations of monks he saw in his travels to India.⁴³ By appealing to the precedent of Yijing’s criticism of Daoxuan, Menzan demonstrates his awareness of the larger context of Tokugawa Vinaya studies in which this historic dispute about silk was well known.⁴⁴ The real problem, Menzan emphasizes, is that disrespect for the Vinaya is disrespect for the Buddha’s teachings, thus implicating both Daoxuan and Tōryū in his criticism. Unlike Tōryū, Menzan reads Dōgen’s “Merit of the *Kesa*” as a call to encompass all of Sakyamuni’s teachings on the *kesa*, including the Vinaya.

What Is the Elephant Trunk Robe, and Is It Appropriate for Sōtō Zen?

In his treatise “Elephant Trunk Robe” Tōryū claims that the “elephant trunk” robe is the authentic form of transmitted robes in the Zen school, even though Dōgen does not use this term. Tōryū, however, uses the term with confidence, claiming that there are full and half-size elephant trunk robes. Kawaguchi Kōfū, the author of several books on Sōtō Zen vestments, calculates that Tōryū’s description of the full-size elephant trunk robe would be 1.5 meters vertical by 3 meters horizontal.⁴⁵ Compared to directions for robes in the *Four Part Vinaya* that produce an average robe of 1.25 meters vertical by 2 meters horizontal, the elephant trunk robe is somewhat longer vertically and a full 50 percent wider horizontally.⁴⁶ How can Tōryū be so confident about the physical characteristics of the elephant trunk robe when the term never appears in Dōgen’s works?

For evidence Tōryū first discusses the statue of Sakyamuni Buddha at Seiryōji in Sagano, which is traditionally regarded as Sakyamuni’s living presence. Imported from China in the tenth century, it was revered as a “three-country transmission,” having been created in India, copied for China, and then exported to Japan.⁴⁷ In Dōgen’s time copies of the Seiryōji Sakyamuni image were used in the cult of Sakyamuni worship, which focused on the merit of five hundred vows taken by Sakyamuni during his life as a bodhisattva detailed in the *Compassionate Lotus Scripture (Karunapundarika Sutra)*.⁴⁸ The last five vows describe the merit of Sakyamuni’s *kesa* in his future Buddha

land. When Dōgen cites this passage in “Merit of the *Kesa*,” he comments that the merit of the entire five hundred vows is concentrated in the Buddha’s *kesa*, thus making it superior to the *kesa* of other Buddhas.⁴⁹ This statue therefore is a focus for worship of Sakyamuni in Japan and also has significance for Sōtō Zen.⁵⁰ Tōryū also used the statue as an example of how the Buddha wears the *kesa*, but he asserts that its *kesa* is the elephant trunk robe. His comments appear more ideological than analytic:

I, an old patched [monk], have seen in person the Saga [Seiryōji] Sakyamuni statue and other Buddha and bodhisattva statues in present day Japan. They all wear the *kesa* on both shoulders. The top corners of the *kesa* hang down in front and back, covering the left and right underarm and shoulders and encircling the whole body. It is, therefore, the construction of the Buddha’s *kesa*. These all correspond to the full elephant trunk once-received robes. One must wear the *kesa* with the deportment of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

老衲會見嵯峨釋迦尊像並扶桑國中現在佛菩薩像觀。皆同在通肩披。前頭後頭袈裟角。左右臂肩繞全身圍。然則佛袈裟之製樣。皆全象鼻一頂衣當。然佛菩薩搭袈裟威儀可。⁵¹

Tōryū uses the Seiryōji Buddha statue as evidence that Sakyamuni Buddha wore an “elephant trunk robe” but does not clarify what the physical characteristics of such a robe might be. In addition he refers to the robe as a “once-received” or “singular” robe, an issue discussed below. He is more interested in promoting the statue as an example of the authentic *kesa* of Sakyamuni Buddha and as a model for how to wear the *kesa* as a Buddha, namely, with the robe draping over both shoulders. In Tōryū’s view, if one is a disciple, one must wear the robe exactly as the Buddha. His premise, however, collapses the difference in robe practice between Sakyamuni and his disciples, with the implication that if Buddha wears a golden robe, so might his disciples.

The key to Tōryū’s confidence is the *kesa* that he believes represent the true Zen transmission robe. Among these, the most significant is a nine-panel robe that he believes Furong Daokai (1043–1118) gave to Dōgen’s teacher Rujing and that must have been transmitted to Dōgen, or so Tōryū believes. He writes that this *kesa*, which is kept in a hidden room at Eihei-ji, is a nine-panel full elephant trunk robe made of black cloth with a fastening ring made of black wood. He explains that there are twelve temples in Japan that claim to have Furong’s robe, but they are all made differently from the great robe kept in the

secret room at Eihei-ji. Tōryū also investigated transmission robes at Rin-zai temples, including a nine-panel robe at Tōfuku-ji that was believed to have belonged to the Chinese patriarch Wuzhun Shifan, teacher of Enni Ben'en, founder of Tōfuku-ji, as well as one at Kennin-ji that belonged to Eisai.

Tōryū explains that the robes at these temples are all the same type of nine-panel robe, which is meant to hang down in the back and the front as on the statue of Sakyamuni at Seiryō-ji—hence an elephant trunk robe, according to his definition. He also claims that when Ōbaku monks came to Japan they brought robes made according to the Vinaya school, but over time they converted to wearing robes using the nine-panel elephant trunk robe construction.⁵² Tōryū's point is that when Ōbaku monks came in contact with the authentic manner of wearing the *kesa* according to the elephant trunk style preserved in Japan, they abandoned their false dependence on the Vinaya as the authority of their robe practice. It is the material evidence of Zen robes dating from the Kamakura period that Tōryū uses to emphasize Dōgen's estrangement from the Vinaya.

In summary, the nine-panel *kesa* attributed to Furong, which Tōryū viewed at Eihei-ji, provides him with convincing evidence that Dōgen wore an elephant trunk robe. It is this artifact that allows him to argue that the elephant trunk robe is appropriate for Sōtō Zen monks. Believing in the inseparability of the transmission of the dharma and receiving the robe from one's teacher, Tōryū concludes that since Dōgen must have received transmission from Rujing, there must be a robe as well. Furong's *kesa* must therefore be in Japan. But which of the many robes that claim to be Furong's robe is it? Tōryū does not make comparative judgments. Having been shown the black nine-panel robe in the hidden room at Eihei-ji that has the characteristically elongated shape of his idea of the full elephant trunk, Tōryū recognizes this robe as the true robe of transmission from Furong via Rujing. Step by step the logic of belief leads Tōryū to the conclusion that Dōgen's conception of the physical characteristics of the true robe of transmission would be based on this particular robe, which he characterizes as a full elephant trunk robe.

Menzan, however, questions the idea that the robe transmitted from the Buddha to Mahakasyapa was an elephant trunk robe. He discusses the use of the term “elephant trunk” in fascicle 19 of the *Four Part Vinaya*, in which the Buddha criticizes a group of six monks for various infractions of the robe, including wearing them high or low, wearing them so that one corner hangs in front like an “elephant trunk” or with two corners hanging down in front, like a leaf of the tala tree, or making small pleats.⁵³ The term “elephant trunk,” Menzan argues, appears in Buddhist literature only as a criticism of decorum, and Dōgen does not mention it in any of his house rules.⁵⁴ Menzan therefore

challenges Tōryū's claim that Dōgen recognized the elephant trunk robe as the true form of the transmission robe.

A key area of dispute involves an elliptical sentence in Dōgen's "Transmit the Robe" that Menzan and Tōryū interpret quite differently:

Now the once-received robe, the nine-type robe, must be properly transmitted based on the Buddha dharma.

いま一頂衣・九品衣、まさしく佛法より正伝せり

*ima itchō e, kuhon e, masashiku buppō yori shōden seri.*⁵⁵

Dōgen's use of the phrase *itchō e*, 一頂衣, is idiosyncratic, as the standard counting word for *kesa* is *ryō* 領. The glyph 頂 (*chō*) appears in the compound used to translate the Sanskrit word *abhiseka* (Jp. *kanjō*), where it indicates the aspersion of water on the head in the ritual of esoteric initiation or consecration. Perhaps by using *chō*, Dōgen meant the ritual act of receiving the robe as in ordination and transmission. The earliest use of this expression outside of this passage that I was able to find is after Dōgen's lifetime, when it appears in the section on transmission in the collected verses of Kurin Seimo (1262–1329) of the Rinzaï lineage. Based on this evidence, *itchō e* in this context refers to the robe that a master gives to a disciple in recognition of dharma transmission.⁵⁶ For Menzan and Tōryū the critical point of dispute is the relationship between the two terms "once-received robe" and "nine-type robe."

Tōryū's interpretation of Dōgen is strongly influenced by the authority he grants to Zen transmission *kesa* he has seen. Having designated the true transmission robe as an elephant trunk robe, he uses this appellation as a wedge to divide Dōgen's use of Vinaya teachings in "Merit of the *Kesa*" from Dōgen's claim to be the bearer of the knowledge of the true transmission *kesa*. This is most apparent in Tōryū's interpretation of the sentence above. Tōryū argues that "nine-type robe" means a single nine-panel robe, maintaining that the iconic Zen transmission *kesa* of Bodhidharma included all nine types of great robe.⁵⁷ In spite of Dōgen's meticulous reproduction of the Vinaya descriptions in "Merit of the *Kesa*" of nine types of great robe based on the number of panels (i.e., 9–11–13–15–17–19–21–23–25), Tōryū subsumes them all within Bodhidharma's robe, thereby rendering Vinaya teachings on the robe irrelevant to Sōtō Zen. The delicate balance proposed by Dōgen in which the Zen lineage preserves these Vinaya teachings is lost in Tōryū's interpretation. His method of interpreting Dōgen is based on his study of statues and extant transmission *kesa* attributed to early Kamakura-era Zen founders. The authority he grants these artifacts directs his reading of Dōgen's text.

Menzan, on the other hand, analyzes Dōgen’s meaning in the sentence using texts, not artifacts. He comments that the two terms “once-received robe” and “nine-type robe” appear in the sentence together, but this does not mean that Dōgen equated them. Rather, Menzan argues, this sentence refers to the Buddha’s teachings of the four supports: wearing rag robes, eating once a day, sleeping under a tree, and using fermented urine for medicine.⁵⁸ Menzan explains that the rag robe, as the first support, is distinguished from all types of robes made from donated fabric, including the nine types of great robe. Thus the two terms refer to different manifestations of the Buddhist robe: first, the singular robe of the Buddha, that is, the rag robe; and second, the nine types of great robe made of donated cloth as described in the Vinaya. Here Menzan uses Buddhist texts to analyze Dōgen’s terse and elliptical sentence rather than relying on material evidence of *kesa* in Japanese temples. Menzan interprets “once-received robe” as the singular rag robe (of the Buddha), which is not divided into types.⁵⁹ Strictly speaking, in Menzan’s interpretation “once-received” does not refer to transmission robes in general. His interpretation is more in line with the dominant theme in “Merit of the *Kesa*” that the rag robe is the highest, most pure form of the Buddhist robe, a perspective that Tōryū appears to ignore in his essay.

Having shown that the term “elephant trunk” in the Vinaya is limited to a criticism of wearing styles, Menzan introduces historical and sociological evidence. He states that “elephant trunk robe” is a Japanese term that identifies a particular type of robe construction introduced by Zen monks returning from China during the Kamakura period. There are those during the time of *mappō*, he explains, who deprecate the Vinaya in changing the robes according to their own preference. Wearing secular clothing underneath the *kesa* causes the fabric to bunch up and spoil the smooth appearance of the robes, so they secretly scoop out the upper part of the garment that wraps around the body underneath the sleeve, thus breaking the rules about the dimensions of the *kesa*:

In recent times, robe makers have come to call this technique the “elephant trunk.” Ignorant Zen monks hear this term and spread it around so that now there is such a thing called the “elephant trunk *kesa*.” Thinking that it is something that comes from the Buddha’s time, they say things like, “there are full elephant trunks and half elephant trunks.” To secretly scoop out even a small amount of the *kesa* described by the Buddha changes the length and width of the panels and it is a violation. It is sad when such self-centered ideas appear in the writings of Zen monks; such a waste.

近世ノ衣屋ガ、コレヲ象鼻ト稱ス、ソレヲ文妄ナ禪僧ガ聞テ展轉シテ、今此ハ實ニ、象鼻袈裟ト稱リ、佛世ヨリアルコトト思テ、全象鼻、半象鼻ナド云様ニナレリ、佛説ノ法袍ヲ、少シモ和ニエグテハ、壇隔ノ長短ガ違邵ス、非法ハ云フニヲヨバズ、禪僧ノ經論ニウトキ私案、カナシムベシ、穴賢。⁶⁰

In direct criticism of Tōryū's argument, Menzan put the issue of elephant trunk robes versus Vinaya robes in a different light. It is not that the elephant trunk robe is the Zen answer to Daoxuan's deviations. Rather, Menzan argued, this form of robe, produced from vanity, shows a lack of respect for the teachings of the Buddha. The scooped-out portion warps the overall rectangular form of the *kesa* as well as the individual panels. These alterations originate with robe makers who copied robes imported from China for their clients. In his 1768 essay, "Guidelines for Dharma Robes of Buddhist Monks" ("Shakushi Hōekun"), Menzan described the social origins of this garment more fully.⁶¹ He suggested that the practice of gouging out the top edge of the *kesa* into a bow shape was prevalent among Song-period clerics who attended court functions wearing purple and gold brocade robes given to them by the ruler. He explained that because these outfits included secular clothing worn over the Chinese sleeved and collared garments, the voluminous *kesa* would bunch up under the right arm. The practice of altering the top edge of the *kesa* decreased the thickness.

Menzan asserted that Japanese clerics who visited Song China imitated this style, and it has continued to this day in Kyoto and Kamakura, especially among the Rinzai (Gozan) temples. The colloquial term "elephant trunk robe," which in the Vinaya (as "elephant trunk") refers to the way the corner of *kesa* may droop, developed among robe makers to distinguish this form from robes made according to the instructions of monks knowledgeable in the Vinaya. Menzan argues that it was in fact a pejorative nickname and does not reflect the Buddha's teaching.⁶² According to Menzan, the elephant trunk robe is a commercial expedient, not the hallowed form of the Buddha's robe.

In response to Menzan's criticisms, Tōryū vigorously defended his position on the elephant trunk robe in his 1764 "Critique of 'Questions about Ordination'" ("Tokudo Wakumon bengishō").⁶³ Tōryū gave detailed instructions on how to wear the elephant trunk robe and continued the argument in "Clear Mirror of Daijōji's Defense of the Dharma" ("Daijōji Gohō Myōkan"), published posthumously in 1766.⁶⁴ Forty years later Daisen's 1808 commentary gave Tōryū's "Elephant Trunk Robe" new life. Menzan's approach, on the

other hand, was developed in the early nineteenth century by Mokushitsu Ryōyō’s work, *Hōbuku Kakushō*.

Should Sōtō Zen Monks Wear Gold Brocade Robes?

Tōryū and Daisen also justified the use of the gold brocade robes in Sōtō Zen. As mentioned earlier, in “Elephant Trunk Robe” Tōryū explained that the term “gold brocade” is a common name for *kesa* in which any color can be used, and “rag robe” is a common name for *kesa* in which any fabric is good, whether it is gold brocade, silk, or cotton. This Zen teaching, he argued, transcends the biased grasping of the inferior Vinaya.⁶⁵ Daisen affirmed this position by adding that since the robe that Sakyamuni gave to Mahakasyapa was gold brocade it would be acceptable for the Zen school. Daisen’s interpretation conflates the narrative of the robe given in trust for Maitreya with the narrative of the robe given in recognition of Mahakasyapa’s ascetic practice. Daisen also suggested that the Sōtō Zen school balances the two extremes, as seen in the robes of its two most influential teachers, Dōgen and Keizan. He comments that although Dōgen wore a black robe all his life, Keizan received a colored robe by the ruler’s command, and he wore it. Dōgen, subdued on the outside, was highly decorated on the inside, whereas Keizan was decorated on the outside. The most important thing, Daisen concludes, is to ask whether the person has a way-seeking mind. According to the mind of the way, either gold brocade or ragged clothes are appropriate.⁶⁶ Tōryū’s and Daisen’s arguments proposed a justification for Sōtō Zen clerics to don decorative gold brocade *kesa*, but they garbled the scriptural narratives of these two iconic great robes by arguing that the golden robe and the rag robe refer to *kesa* regardless of color or fabric.

Tōryū’s argument explicitly dissolves the boundaries between the rag robe and the golden robe of the Buddha. He reduces the narratives of these two types of “great robe” to a material level, and then further reduces the distinction between materials by arguing that both rags and brocade may have “all colors.” Here he uses Dōgen’s observations in “Merit of the *Kesa*” that the *kesa* is neither silk nor cotton and that any fabric can be considered rags. Dōgen’s remarks open up the possibility of an “anything goes” approach that Tōryū and Daisen seized on.

Menzan firmly rejects Tōryū’s merging of the narratives of rag robe and golden robe. He argues from scriptural passages that the gold brocade robe given to Mahakasyapa by Sakyamuni was given in trust for Maitreya Buddha and was not to be worn. Mahakasyapa, he comments, was renowned for

wearing rag robes and was never referred to in scripture as wearing a gold brocade robe. Furthermore, Menzan argues, all fabrics with a design of colors (*madara*) or glittering fabric (*ran*) are also to be rejected.⁶⁷ Menzan critiques Tōryū's position on the gold brocade robe based on his knowledge of Buddhist scripture and of Dōgen, but Menzan is the only voice in Sōtō that opposes the adoption of gold brocade robes.⁶⁸ Tōryū's influence as abbot of Daijōji gave weight to his interpretation, which was preserved and later promoted by Daisen in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

The debates between Menzan and Tōryū set the stage for the mid-nineteenth-century "three-robe controversy" that resulted in an atmosphere of conflict about the *kesa* that continued into the modern era. Remarkably the controversy revolved around the physical construction and manner of wearing the *kesa*, which had become a kind of straw man for power struggles between Sōjiji and Eiheiji. The various elements of these disputes, however, cannot be reduced to conflict between these two head temples. Sōtō clerics had convinced themselves that the writings of Dōgen and/or Keizan were sufficient to establish rules concerning *kesa*. To resolve the inevitable inconsistencies and lacunae of these texts, clerics either turned to the *kesa* artifacts and art to answer their questions, as did Tōryū, or relied on the Vinaya and Zen sources, as did Menzan.

The problem of relying solely on the founding figures of Dōgen and Keizan was that disagreements over form and practice could threaten the integrity of the whole school. In comparison, Vinaya enthusiasts in other schools could occupy a specialist niche without challenging the institutional structure of their school. This might have occurred in Sōtō as well, but the insistence of reformers on establishing an institutional reform that directly challenged long-held customs of dress and practice led the Sōtō school to the brink of schism. The hard-won compromise achieved during the Meiji period meant that the definition of Sōtō Zen robes would now be firmly held by the Sōtō corporation, and decisions about dress would be based on compromise rather than an effort to establish a coherent and encompassing vision of the Sōtō Zen robe.

NOTES

1. Yōson's essay is titled "Thoughts on the *Kesa* of the Buddhas and Ancestors" ("Busso kesa kō").

2. See fascicle 1 of *Ranks of All Buddhists (Shoshū Kaikyū)*, in *Zokuzoku Gunsho Ruijū*, 17 vols., ed. Zoku Gunsho Ruiju Kanseikai (Tokyo, 1969–70 (an earlier edition was published by Kokusho kankōkai, 1906–9) [hereafter ZGR] 12, 365b, 389a, 369b, respectively.
3. Government demands that Buddhist schools define their principles and regulations promoted sectarian divisions. The government viewed Vinaya studies as a way to regulate the schools; see Tamamuro Fumio, *Zusetsu Nihon Bukkyō no Rekishi: Edo Jidai* (Tokyo: Hyōronsha, 1996), 7–9. For a discussion of growing sectarianism, see Ueda Tenzui, *Kairitsu no Shisō to Rekishi* (Wakayama Prefecture: Mikkyō bunka kenkyūjo, 1976), 38.
4. An alternative method, often seen in Buddha images, drapes the *kesa* over both shoulders.
5. The set of three robes includes a lower robe of five panels worn around the waist while working; an upper robe worn over the left shoulder and under the right arm when attending monastic events; and the great robe, of nine to twenty-five panels, worn over the other two robes when interacting with the laity. See Izutsu Gafu, *Kesashi* (Kyoto: Bunka jihosha, 1965).
6. For an extensive description of these stories, see Jonathan A. Silk, “Dressed for Success: The Monk Kasyapa and Strategies of Legitimation in Earlier Mahayana Buddhist Scriptures,” *Journal Asiatique* 291.1–2 (2003): 173–219. For a discussion of the symbolism of the *kesa*, including medieval Sōtō Zen esoteric writings, see Bernard Faure, “Quand l’habit fait le moine: The Symbolism of the kasaya in Chan/Zen Buddhism,” *Cahiers d’Extreme Asie* 8 (1995): 335–69.
7. T 51.902a.
8. For the use of the term “transmission robes” in a modern English-language context, see Yamakawa Aki, *Transmitting Robes, Linking Mind: The World of Buddhist Kasaya* (Kyoto: Kyoto National Museum, 2010), vi. In addition to *kesa*, portraits, bowls, and other objects were also used as verification in Zen; see T. Griffith Foulk and Robert H. Sharf, “On the Ritual Use of Ch’an Portraiture in Medieval China,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 7 (1993–94): 149–220.
9. T 51.364b.
10. ZS 2:523–547.
11. I am using the Japanese pronunciation, Ganjin, in order to highlight his role in Japanese Buddhism.
12. The conviction that Nagaya-Ō’s gift to Chinese monks influenced Ganjin’s decision to come to Japan was an important factor in Jiun’s decision to replicate the making of one thousand robes; see Hase Hōshū and Okumura Keishin, *Jiun Sonja: Jiun Sonja Nihyaku Nen Onki Kinen* (Nara: Kokiji, 2004); Andō Kōsei, *Ganjin Wajō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbun kan, 1971).
13. For information on Huineng’s mummy statue, see Robert H. Sharf, “The Idolization of Enlightenment: On the Mummification of Ch’an Masters in Medieval China,” *History of Religions* 32.1 (1992): 1–31. For the concept of the

- true image and its effect on art by valuing realistic representation over idealization, see Inoue Tadashi, “Ganjin wajō zō josetsu,” *Museum* 314 (1977): 17–26.
14. Hachiman was considered a bodhisattva for his role in building the Great Eastern Temple (Tōdaiji). For details on this statue, see Christine Guth Kanda, “Kaikei’s Statue of Hachiman in Tōdaiji,” *Artibus Asiae* 43.3 (1981): 190–208. For details on artworks that reproduce the image of the *kesa* on the portrait statue of Ganjin, see chapter 2 of Diane E. Riggs, “The Cultural and Religious Significance of Japanese Buddhist Vestments,” Ph.D. diss., University of California, 2010.
 15. See Andrew Goble, “Visions of an Emperor,” in Jeffrey P. Mass, ed., *The Origins of Japan’s Medieval World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Kuroda Hideo, “Shōzōga toshite no Go-Daigo tennō,” in *Ō no Shintai, Ō no Shōzō* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1993).
 16. Ganjin is recorded as having brought one thousand sewn, pieced *kesa* and two thousand cotton *kesa* (*figesa*). T 51.992a; see also Andō, *Ganjin Wajō*.
 17. Jiun Onkō (1718–1804), the founder of the “True Dharma Vinaya” (*Shōbōritsu*) reform movement, was invited to view the Shōtoku robe. His account includes the prayers and homage that he paid to the *kesa* as well as recording their dimensions and sewing styles. See Riggs, “The Cultural and Religious Significance of Japanese Buddhist Vestments,” chapter 4.
 18. For more information and color reproductions of these *kesa*, see Yamakawa, *Transmitting Robes, Linking Mind*.
 19. Michel Mohr, “Electronic Text of the Genkō Shakusho by Kokan Shiren,” accessed September 2013, http://iriz.hanazono.ac.jp/frame/data_food.en.html, 26b; DNB 101.26b.
 20. See Izutsu Gafu, *Kesashi* (Kyoto: Bunka jihosha, 1965).
 21. The influence of Ōbaku-style robes on Sōtō Zen vestments is a topic for future research.
 22. Kawaguchi Kōfū, *Hōbuku Kakusho no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Daiichi shobō, 1976), 372.
 23. Adopted from China, the custom of the emperor’s awarding of the “purple robe” to clerics was especially important to Japanese Rinzai lineages, which were closely associated with the court. The Tokugawa government attempted to curtail this long-standing religious and political custom; see Duncan Williams, “The Purple Robe Incident and the Formation of the Early Modern Sōtō Zen Institution,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 36.1 (2009): 27–43.
 24. Yōson received dharma transmission from Tetsuzan Shinyō (fl. 1660), the thirteenth abbot of Kenshōji. Kawaguchi identifies Yōson as a Sōtō cleric, although Yōson’s writings on various scriptures led others to believe that he was affiliated with Tendai or Rinzai lineages; see Kawaguchi, *Hōbuku Kakusho no Kenkyū*, 363–64.
 25. ZS 2:523–547.
 26. ZS 2:539a, 541a.

27. ZS 2:545–46. The prefix *fu* indicates that the robes were made of cotton or linen. More research must be done to determine the provenance of Tanshin’s gift to Yōson.
28. For a discussion of the movement to “return to the old ways” in Sōtō Zen, see Kagamishima Genryū, *Dōgen Zenji to Sono Shūhen* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1985), 155–68. For an English-language discussion, see David E. Riggs, “The Rekindling of a Tradition: Menzan Zuihō and the Reform of Japanese Sōtō Zen in the Tokugawa Era,” Ph.D. diss., University of California, 2002, 84–130. For a history of Daijōji in the early period of the Sōtō Zen school, see William M. Bodiford, *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993).
29. The most important work was *Hōbuku Kakushō*, completed in 1821 by Mokushitsu Ryōyō.
30. ZS Shingi, vol. 2. The original manuscript of “Elephant Trunk Robe” is no longer extant, but its content was preserved by Daisen Tamashū (1739–1814) in his 1808 *Easy Teachings from the Chapter on the Elephant Trunk Transmission Robe* (*Den’e Zōbi Shōkō Haka*), ZS 2:600–637. Daisen was the fourth generation from Tōryū. In the modern edition of his commentary, quotations from Tōryū’s original text in indented passages alternate with Daisen’s comments. Daisen also wrote his own commentary on the robe, “Questions and Answers on the Secret Explanation of ‘Transmitting the Robe’ and ‘Merit (of the *Kesa*)’ in the *Shōbōgenzō*” (“Shōbōgenzō Den’e Kudoku Setsukai Mondō”), but this work may not be extant; see Kawaguchi, *Hōbuku Kakusho no Kenkyū*, 367.
31. DZZ-1 1:627.
32. T 45.1898 and T 45.1894, respectively.
33. ZS 2:614b–615a.
34. ZS 2:605b.
35. DZZ-1 1:625.
36. DZZ-1 1:625–26.
37. DZZ-1 1:629.
38. DZZ-1 1:636.
39. ZS 2:607a.
40. DZZ-1 1:626, 629, 635, 637, respectively.
41. SZ 2:199–204.
42. SZ 2:201a–b.
43. SZ 2:202b–203a.
44. For information on Tokugawa studies of Yijing’s work on the Mulasarvastivada Vinaya, see Shayne Clarke, “Miscellaneous Musings on Mulasarvastivada Monks: The ‘Mulasarvastivada Vinaya’ Revival in Tokugawa Japan,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 33.1 (2006): 1–49.
45. Kawaguchi, *Hōbuku Kakusho no Kenkyū*, 371.
46. T 22.863a.

47. For the idea of statues as living buddhas, see Donald F. McCallum, *Zenkōji and Its Icon* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 170. For information on the Seiryōji Sakyamuni Buddha, see Gregory Henderson and Leon Hurvitz, "The Buddha of Seiryōji: New Finds and New Theory," *Artibus Asiae* 19.1 (1956): 5–55.
48. T 2.157. For the role of this sutra in Sōtō Zen, see Ishikawa Rikizan, "Shaka Shinkō to Dōgen Zen," *Indo Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū* 44.1 (1995): 229–34, 232a–b.
49. DZZ-1 1:631–33.
50. Eight years before Tōryū's "Elephant Trunk Robe," Jiun discussed this statue in his 1751 work, *Illustrated Garments of the Way (Hōbuku zugū)*, in order to illustrate the manner in which buddhas wear *kesa* over both shoulders. It is possible that Tōryū was aware of this work. Jiun Onkō, *Jiun Sonja Zenshu* (Osaka: Kokiji, 1922–26). See also Riggs, "The Cultural and Religious Significance of Japanese Buddhist Vestments," chapter 4.
51. ZSSZ 2:612b.
52. ZSSZ 2:616b.
53. T 22.698b.
54. SZ 2:200a–b.
55. DZZ-1 1:287.
56. Although Seimo's five-volume record was published in 1325, shorter works were published as early as 1309, including a selection of his verses, *shūigeju*. See *Zoku zōkyō* (Kyoto: Zōkyō shoin, 1905–12), 2.28.3; "Kurin mo zenji goroku" in Komazawa Daigakunai Zengaku Dai Jiten Hensanjo, *Zengaku Daijiten* (Tokyo: Taishukan shoten, 1985), 254c. Modern scholars have interpreted the phrase in various ways that reflect the two rituals of ordination and transmission. The entry for *itchō e* in Komazawa, "Zengaku daijiten," 47a, defines this term as the *kesa* that is properly transmitted. It adds that this *kesa* is also referred to as the gold brocade robe, *kinran e*, and as Bodhidharma's blue-black cotton robe, *kutsujun*. Which of these types of *kesa* should be the sole model for the transmission robe, however, was a matter of dispute during this period. The entry for *itchō e* in Nakamura Hajime, *Bukkyō go Daijiten* (Tokyo: Tokyo shoboku, 1981), 65a, states that *itchō* is a counter word used when one is wearing a hat (i.e., ceremonial dress). This definition, however, cites Dōgen's "Transmission of the Robe," so it is inconclusive.
57. ZSSZ 2:608a, 609a.
58. The practice of wearing the rag robe is also idealized in Vinaya literature as one of the four supports of practice: wearing rag robes, taking frugal meals, residing under a tree, and using only medications made from fermented urine. See Charles S. Prebish, *Buddhism: A Modern Perspective* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), 4.
59. SZ 2:200a.

60. SZ 2:203a–b.
61. ZS Shingi, vol. 2. This work retained its popularity through the Meiji period and claimed a readership outside of Sōtō Zen circles.
62. ZS 2:568b–569a.
63. ZS 1:149–200.
64. I have not been able to obtain a copy of this work; see Kawaguchi, *Hōbuku Kakusho no Kenkyū*, 371.
65. ZS 2:607a.
66. ZS 2:607b.
67. ZS 2:558.
68. See Kawaguchi, *Hōbuku Kakusho no Kenkyū*, 382.