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## Did Dōgen Go to China?

### Problematizing Dōgen's Relation to Ju-ching and Chinese Ch'an

According to traditional accounts, the foundation of Dōgen's 道元 approach to Zen was formed during his travels to China from 1223 to 1227 and through the attainment of enlightenment under the tutelage of master Ju-ching 如淨. How much do we really know about this trip that is not rooted in Sōtō 曹洞 sect hagiography? Why are there contradictions in modern biographical studies of Dōgen about whether he traveled between the Five Mountains temples in China by land or by a sea route? Are accounts of Dōgen's trip not similar to the "Travels" of Marco Polo, another thirteenth-century visitor of China and observer of Chinese religions, which has been questioned by recent historiographical studies? This paper examines a variety of documents and materials, including the Tokugawa-era *Teiho Kenzeiki zue* 訂補建擻記図絵 as interpreted by Nara Yasuaki and the recent award-winning book by He Yansheng on Dōgen's relation to China, in addition to cataloguing a variety of works by Dōgen dealing with his journey and impressions of Ju-ching.

KEYWORDS: Dōgen – China – Ju-ching – hagiography – *Shōbōgenzō* – historiography – *Eihei kōroku*

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IN SENDING THEM away [Ju-ching] said, “If they are lacking in the essentials, what can they do? Dogs like that only disturb others and cannot be permitted to stay in the monastery.” Having seen this with my own eyes and heard it with my own ears, I privately thought to myself the following: Being natives of this country, what sin or crime must they have committed in a past life that prevents them from staying among us? What lucky star was I born under that, although a native of a remote foreign country, I was not only accepted in the monastery but allowed to come and go freely in the abbot’s room, to bow down before the living master and hear his discourse on the Dharma. Although I was foolish and ignorant, I did not take this superb opportunity in vain. When my late teacher was holding forth in Sung China, there were those who had the chance to study with him and those who did not. Now that my late teacher, the old master, is gone, it is gloomier than a moonless night in Sung China. Why? Because never before or since has there been an old master like my late teacher was an old master.

Dōgen, SBGZ “Baika” 梅華 (DZZ II, pp. 71–72)

### *A Tale of Two Travelers*

In the thirteenth century there were two famous foreign travelers to China and keen observers of Chinese religions whose accounts are still heavily relied on for an understanding of the condition of religious practice in the Sung era.

One visitor traveled a great distance from the West and stayed in China for a long period. His entire journey lasted twenty-five years (1271–1295), with seventeen years spent in various parts of China. While not a religious practitioner or someone primarily concerned with this realm, he recognized the crucial role that diverse religious traditions played in Chinese society and was able to offer some insightful and generally unbiased comments, at least for his time. His travelogue provided Europeans with one of their first insider glimpses of Buddhism (which he referred to as “idolatry,” suggesting some degree of bias) as well as other traditions in China, including Nestorian Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, and Manicheism, which had preceded his pathways on the Silk Road (POLO 1958).

The other visitor traveled a short, though at the time arduous, distance from Japan, primarily in search of a purer form of Buddhism than he experienced in his native country. He stayed for several years (1223–1227) and returned to Japan tremendously impressed and influenced by the style of practice he found in the

Five Mountains Ch'an monasteries, particularly in several temples in Chekiang Province. But he was also willing to leave us with a severe and at times scathing critique of some features of Buddhist practice that did not live up to his expectations or ideals. Not surprisingly, both visitors, a half century apart, spent a good deal of their time in the vicinity of Hang-chou, a cosmopolitan capital city located close to the central Buddhist temples.

The records of these journeys have long been admired and studied, and are still today considered reliably informative sources for this period of Chinese history, especially when other kinds of materials and documents are so sparse or unreliable. Frances Wood debunks the idea that Marco Polo's travel record is a historical fact and values it primarily as an incomparable literary feat and cultural phenomenon. Nevertheless, she remarks that

Marco Polo's description of places in China and beyond form, perhaps, his most lasting contribution to our knowledge of the East in the thirteenth century. The first, traditionally "eyewitness," account of the great cities of China is of special significance because many of the places he describes have either vanished...or been transformed beyond recognition. (WOOD 1986, p. 81)

Similarly, Dōgen's depictions—and criticisms—of the Sung Ch'an monastic system are one of the key historical sources for examining that period (FOULK 1987). His literary citations and allusions to Sung texts remain a major vehicle for interpreting Chinese Ch'an materials that became increasingly popular in Japan as their use diminished in China. The main sources include the records of Ts'ao-tung predecessor Hung-chih and mentor Ju-ching—both of whom Dōgen (1200–1253) refers to as "old master" (*kobutsu* 古仏)<sup>1</sup>—as well as voluminous transmission of the lamp and kōan collections.

One of the main common features in the narratives about Marco Polo and Dōgen is that an inexperienced, uninformed foreigner is plucked from obscurity and placed in a position of great respect and responsibility by the mainstream system, whether that is secular/political or religious/monastic, which gives their observations of the Chinese religious and social orders great weight and authority. The respective narratives are driven by the high status of the foreign visitors awarded by China, and this element is what also makes them rather questionable. Could it really have happened in this way? In Dōgen's case, is it plausible that a young monk from Japan, who was at first not even allowed into the summer retreat program because he lacked the prerequisite precepts, was at the time of his mentor Myōzen's death, which left him in an even more vulnerable position in terms of the monastic system, invited by the abbot of a Five Mountains temple to come to his private quarters and offered the chance to become the head monk?

1. Dōgen also referred to Ju-ching as "former teacher" (*senshi* 先師).

The title of this paper emulates Wood's recent controversial, thought-provoking revisionist tract, *Did Marco Polo Go to China?* Among numerous parallels in the accounts of the two travelers, it seems that in both cases some of the claims that are most basic and central to the narrative of their journeys have become suspect when examined in light of modern historiography. For example, Marco Polo's descriptions contain some misleading or inaccurate passages and exaggerations as well as glaring oversights such as not mentioning the Great Wall. Also, he probably did not bring back noodles and ice cream to Italy, despite the widespread legends that are still frequently told to schoolchildren. WOOD concludes, "Beginning with the negative, *The Descriptions of the World* [or *Travels*] is not an itinerary or a straightforward account of travels" (p. 140). Wood speculates that the book was a fiction woven together in 1298 by Polo's prison-mate Rustichello with an eye toward commercial success, based on stories Polo had heard and the writings of other thirteenth-century adventurers to the East.<sup>2</sup>

In Dōgen's case, the most famous saying that he attributes to his mentor as the epitome of Ch'an teaching—*shinjin datsuraku* 身心脱落 or "casting off body-mind"—was almost certainly not something Ju-ching or Sung Ch'an masters ever uttered (HEINE 1986).<sup>3</sup> There are many other aspects of Dōgen's relation with and citations of Ju-ching that are questionable. Dōgen also probably did not bring back to Japan the "one-night *Blue Cliff Record*" (*ichiya Hekiganroku* 一夜碧巖録), an edition of the *Pi-yen chi* (J. *Hekiganroku*) kōan collection he supposedly copied in a single night with the help of the deity of Hakusan 白山, the major mountain in the region where Eihei-ji 永平寺 was established. This story, which appears in numerous traditional biographies along with other supernatural tales and embellishments, forms a central part of Sōtō sect's portrayal of the founder's journey and its impact on Japanese Zen (SATŌ Shunkō 1990–1991; TAKEUCHI 1992). How much do we really know about Dōgen's trip, and what are the problems in examining the records?<sup>4</sup> To what extent is the trip an "invention of tradition" (HOBSBAWM 1983)? To look at the issue from another angle, for the sake of upholding Sōtō-shū's religious claims and basic sectarian concerns did Dōgen have to have gone to China, or can this belief be maintained despite historiographical objections?

In *Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation*, Carl Bielefeldt overturns conven-

2. According to Jonathan SPENCE, "the book is a combination of verifiable fact, random information posing as statistics, exaggeration, make-believe, gullible acceptance of unsubstantiated stories, and a certain amount of outright fabrication" (1998, p. 1).

3. Note that although Dōgen frequently refers to *shinjin datsuraku* as a notion that Ju-ching stressed, there is no direct testimony in Dōgen's writings mentioning his having had this experience while training in China.

4. For a comprehensive study of the main events in Dōgen's travels and studies in China, see SATŌ Shūkō 1996 and 1998.

tional theories about the dating of the *Fukanzazengi* 普勸坐禪儀, generally considered one of Dōgen’s earliest writings that was composed in the year of his return to Japan. Bielefeldt points out the following about the trip to China:

Perhaps this is what happened [in China], but the account I have summarized here depends heavily on the hagiographic literature of early Sōtō. This literature includes considerable material not confirmed by earlier sources and introduces many fanciful elements into its story of Dōgen’s life. Though modern biographers now reject at least the most obvious of these latter [fanciful elements in the story], they have yet to question seriously the basic account of Dōgen’s itinerary in China. (BIELEFELDT 1988, pp. 24–25)

The aim of this paper is to take up the challenge by reconsidering the traditional sources and conventional conclusions concerning what Takashi James KODERA has called “Dōgen’s formative years” (1980). My goal is not so much to question or deny the veracity or historicity of the basic events or of the notion that Dōgen received direct transmission from Ju-ching in 1225.<sup>5</sup> Evidence that supports the trip includes a couple of artifacts, such as stele at Mt. T’ien-t’ung 天童山 (though these are clearly of more recent vintage, including a marker installed in the 1990s to commemorate the eight-hundredth anniversary of Dōgen’s birth), a poem written on Dōgen’s return trip supposedly inscribed on a boat, Dōgen’s *shisho* 嗣書 (transmission) document, and a portrait of Ju-ching held at Hōkyō-ji temple.<sup>6</sup> Other evidence includes the exchange of visitors, such as the monk Jakuen, Dōgen’s Dharma-brother in China who joined his community at Kōshō-ji, and the disciple Giin, who traveled to China after Dōgen’s death to show his collected sayings to the Mt. T’ien-t’ung monks who remembered him. Yet it is Dōgen’s considerable literary production and its remarkably extensive reliance on Sung texts that makes the most compelling argument for his intimate familiarity with Chinese Ch’an.

Rather than debunk the trip, my aim is to show how problematic it is for us to understand convincingly or to present as factual the most fundamental details of the journey, including the itinerary and key aspects of Dōgen’s meet-

5. Other topics mentioned in the traditional biographies that are problematic range from birth to death, including his aristocratic family background and parents, meeting with Eisai in 1215, trip to Kamakura in 1247–1248, declining of the imperial offer of a purple robe in the late 1240s, and final return to Kyoto with illness in 1253.

6. Despite the claim in *Eihei kōroku* no. 1.48 that Dōgen returned from China “empty-handed” (*kūshu genkyō* 空手還郷), the “Shari sōdenki” indicates that he returned with the relics of Myōzen, which were given away to a lay female disciple before Dōgen’s arrival in Kyoto (DZZ III, p. 34 and DZZ VI, pp. 216–18). However, as William Bodiford has pointed out to me, the *shisho* document supposedly given to Dōgen by Ju-ching and now designated a national treasure by the Japanese government most certainly is a medieval forgery. It is noteworthy that the document Dōgen describes is a long, thin scroll just like modern Chinese Ch’an “Dharma Scrolls” depicted by Holmes Welch, which is completely different from the *shisho* attributed to Ju-ching.

ings and experiences. On the one hand, the title of this paper is deliberately yet playfully provocative, in part to mock those who would take historical deconstruction to its extreme by denying just about any religious claim. At the same time, it is important to recognize that even when we eliminate the blatantly hagiographic references in the narrative—such as to the Hakusan deity, Inari (another Japanese god who supposedly helped heal an ailing companion of Dōgen), and Kūan-yin (J. Kannon), who helped Dōgen navigate back to Japan during a typhoon—there remain significant discrepancies in accounts of the dates and locations of his travels in China.

For example, as illustrated in the maps on the following page, there are two theories about Dōgen’s supposed lengthy period of itinerant travels (*tangaryō* 且過寮)<sup>7</sup> to various temples in pursuit of an authentic master before he settled on studying with Ju-ching at Mt. T’ien-t’ung in 1225. One is a “land-route” theory, which suggests that Dōgen traveled in circular fashion from Mt. T’ien-t’ung westward to Mt. Ching 徑, the leading Five Mountains temple, and then to Mt. T’ien-t’ai in the south and back to the first temple (IMAEDA 1976, p. 52).<sup>8</sup> The other is a “sea-route” theory, which suggests that Dōgen actually made two trips, one to Mt. Ching and back by land and another to Mt. T’ien-t’ai by sea.

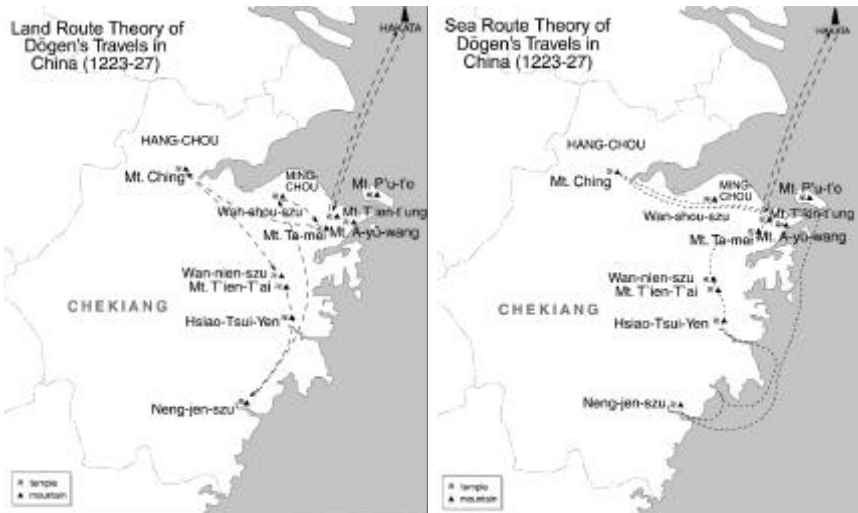
Kagamishima Genryū has proposed the sea-route theory, in part because of the forbidding mountain terrain located between Mt. Ching and Mt. T’ien-t’ai, although other scholars suggest that this area could have been crossed by horse or in a small caravan (KAGAMISHIMA 1985, p. 310). Would Dōgen have traveled by himself or with a group? The sea-route theory rests on the idea that Dōgen visited Mt. P’u-t’o Island, considered the earthly abode of Kūan-yin, in 1224, as a port of embarkation to the south. However, the only evidence for the side trip to the island is an undated *kanbun* 漢文 poem (*Eihei kōroku* 永平広録 no. 10.45). But this could well have been written at some other time, such as either on the way to or back from China. Or, it could even refer to an island just off the coast of Japan that borrowed the name and goddess worship from China.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to the issue of how and where he traveled, there is also a dispute about when Dōgen journeyed to various temple locations. Did the itinerancy

7. A period of itinerancy is called so because the monks arrived in the evening and left in the morning (*tanshin*).

8. The ranking of the Five Mountains temples was: 1. Mt. Ching-shan Wan-shou Ch’an szu, of Hang-chou; 2. Mt. A-yü-wang-shan Kuang li Ch’an szu, of Ming-chou; 3. Mt. T’ai-pai-shan T’ien-t’ung Ching-te Ch’an szu, of Ming-chou; 4. Mt. Pei-shan Ch’ing-te ling-yin Ch’an szu, of Hang-chou; 5. Mt. Nan-shan Ch’ing tz’u pao en kuang hsiao Ch’an szu, of Hang-chou. The system actually consisted of some fifty temples in a three-tiered ranking. Japanese temples were influenced by a small handful of Sung Chinese temples, which are depicted with diagrams in the *Gozan jissatsu zu* held at Gikai’s Daijō-ji temple in Kanazawa and in the *Kenchōji sashizū* based on Mt. T’ien-t’ung (COLL CUTT 1981, pp. 175–77).

9. The heading of the verse that precedes this one in the *Eihei kōroku* collection refers to Shimane Prefecture.



FIGURES 1 &amp; 2. Land-Route and Sea-Route Theories

begin in the fall of 1223 during Dōgen's first year in China, or in the following year? Or, perhaps, as the sea route theory suggests, there were two trips that occurred in different years. What are the sources for the respective theories, and how are they documented and argued by scholars today? There are numerous other problematic aspects of Dōgen's journey to China. These include a controversy concerning his qualifications for receiving admission to the summer retreat and challenges to the Ch'an monastic system; his viewing of a variety of *shisho* documents; conversations with a number of masters and monks he encountered; a series of prophetic dreams that steered his path to find Ju-ching; apparitions of the moon that he saw at Mt. A-yü-wang on two separate occasions; and the conditions of his departure from China relative to the death of Ju-ching as well as tales of supernatural occurrences during the return trip.

A careful examination must acknowledge that the conventional chronology of Dōgen's trip to China has been derived by modern scholarship through piecing together snippets of clues amid scattered references in a wide variety of writings, such as *Hōkyōki* 宝慶記, *Tenzokyōkun* 典座教訓, *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* 正法眼藏隨聞記, and SBGZ "Shisho," as well as the traditional biographies *Den-kōroku* 伝光録 (Taishō vol. 82, no. 2589) and *Kenzeiki* 建撕記 (KAWAMURA 1975). This process has created a compelling, if not necessarily accurate, narrative of Dōgen's quest for the true Dharma. The narrative encompasses a series of dialogues, visions, and dreams that led him to connect with Ju-ching, who had taken over as abbot of Mt. T'ien-t'ung in fall of 1224 upon the death of Wu-chi after serving at several Five Mountain temples in the early 1220s. Most modern approaches to Dōgen's biography have been greatly influenced by hagiographi-

cal elements in the eighteenth-century *Teiho Kenzeiki*, Menzan Zuihō's elaboration on the fifteenth-century *Kenzeiki*. This has Dōgen encountering various deities in addition to other embellishments during his pilgrimage to China (KAWAMURA 1975). A series of *ukiyoe*-style illustrations known as *Dōgen zenji go-eden* 道元禪師後絵伝 (or *Teiho Kenzeiki zue*) created in 1806 is fascinating but compounds the gap between history and hagiography.<sup>10</sup>

One basic concern is that all the sources used to reconstruct the journey either are attributed to Dōgen or are sectarian biographies written generations or even centuries after his death, and there are simply no objective, third party accounts to verify traditional claims. There are no independent property or travel records to consult. Because no particular source of evidence is strongly supported, once key elements of the account are effectively challenged, such as the visit to Mt. P'u-t'o Island in the sea route theory, much of the rest of the narrative begins to unravel, at least in terms of the standards of historiographic verification. It is possible to question whether the whole idea of itinerancy was invented by the Sōtō tradition to link Dōgen with the most prestigious Five Mountains temples and leading patriarchs of the day.

There are several main issues involved in interpreting Dōgen's relation to China and Chinese Ch'an, many of which are discussed in a recent award-winning book by a scholar from China currently conducting research in Japan (HE 2000).<sup>11</sup> The controversy surrounding the historicity of Dōgen's travels to China is directly linked to an examination of his attitudes toward Chinese Buddhism. These range from high praise to a devastating critique of doctrines and practices he apparently found there, especially in the laxity of monks regarding the trimming of nails and hair, washing of face and hands, and wearing of the robe.<sup>12</sup> The controversy also sheds light on the influence Dōgen received from Hung-chih, Ju-ching, and other sources, as well as the impact of the Chinese legacy on his handling of sectarian disputes in Japan. These issues, including Dōgen's views on such topics as Buddha-nature and mind (vs. form), language and the sutras, the precepts and monastic routine, or the various Ch'an lineages and the notion of the "unity of three teachings" (*sankyō itchi* 三教一致), are especially important for understanding the period when Dōgen was evangelizing the group of followers who converted to Sōtō Zen from the proscribed Daruma-shū 達磨宗 school. The mass conversion took place in 1241, shortly

10. These have been reproduced and re-released by Sōtō-shū in two different editions edited by SAKAI (1984) and NARA (2001), the latter in conjunction with the text of the *Shushōgi* in honor of memorials for Dōgen's 800th birth and 750th death anniversaries. See also the recent "manga" version of Dōgen's life (NAKANO 2001).

11. For other important studies of Dōgen and Chinese Ch'an, see also ISHII 1987, 1988, and 1991; YANAGIDA 1984.

12. See especially SBGZ "Senmen," "Senjō," "Den'e," and "Kusa kudoku."

before he moved to the Echizen mountains and established Eihei-ji nearby Hajaku-ji temple, which was a Daruma-shū stronghold.<sup>13</sup>

Around the time of this move, Dōgen began to eulogize Ju-ching and the Ts'ao-tung lineage and attack the Lin-chi school leader Ta-hui, under whose lineage the Daruma-shū followers were ordained (FAURE 1987). Dōgen stressed that experience of a direct, unimpeded, and unmediated “face-to-face” transmission (*menju* 面授) is the only legitimate way to earn and to perpetuate the transfer of a lineage.<sup>14</sup> This was unlike the case of Daruma-shū founder Dainichi Nōnin, who sent disciples to China to gain transmission in the Ta-hui lineage but never himself had a personal encounter with a Ch'an master. After an investigation of Dōgen's itinerary in China and what this shows about his relationship with Chinese masters, I will focus on how Dōgen appropriates the texts and perhaps invents the significance of his mentor in the crucial transitional, evangelical period of the early 1240s. A key factor here, as He's book shows, is the question of the corruption of the Ju-ching records and the extent to which they were heavily edited or fabricated by Tokugawa-era Sōtō scholastics (pp. 111–40).

#### *The Itinerary for the Itinerancy: Sources and Re-sources*

One of the first main points that become evident in examining Dōgen's trip to China is the diversity and the questionability of sources that have served as the mainstay of modern studies of this period. The source that might be considered the most likely candidate for learning about the travels is the *Hōkyōki*, a record of about fifty dialogues Dōgen had with Ju-ching over a two-year period lasting from 1225 to 1227, or the first through the third year of the Pao-ch'ing era (J. Hōkyō). This text is translated in Kodera's book. However, it turns out that the *Hōkyōki* is not particularly useful or reliable as a historical source for several reasons. First, the text simply does not deal with the initial two-year period before his meetings in the abbot's quarters began, when Dōgen apparently became Ju-ching's most intimate disciple. Also, even for the period of Dōgen's training under Ju-ching during his last two years in China, the *Hōkyōki* is questionable because the date for the composition of the text is highly uncertain.

13. Ejō was the first Daruma-shū follower to join Dōgen; he visited him in Fukakusa in 1228 and then became a permanent fixture and key recorder (*jisha*) at Kōshō-ji in 1234. Also, in the early 1240s Enni Ben'en returned from China and with the aid of the government established Tōfuku-ji as the leading Rinzaishū temple in Kyoto modeled on Sung temples. Tōfuku-ji was placed nearby, and it dwarfed, Kōshō-ji.

14. Note that this fascicle was written at a hermitage in the Echizen mountains during the eleventh month of 1243.

15. According to TAKEUCHI (1992, p. 136), a third of the dialogues in the text focus on doctrine, a third on zazen, and the rest on rituals, precepts, ceremonies, people, and texts.

16. According to *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* no. 1.1, as a foreigner Dōgen declined Ju-ching's offer to be his personal attendant (DZZ VII, pp. 52–53).

The text was discovered posthumously by Ejō several months after Dōgen's death in 1253, as indicated by the first colophon, but was not noticed again until Giun rediscovered it in 1299 at Hōkyō-ji temple, according to the second colophon (DZZ VII, pp. 48–51).

The *Hōkyōki* was long thought to have been a journal kept by Dōgen in China or transcribed from notes shortly after his return to Japan. Perhaps it even preceded the *Fukanzazengi*. But, based in part on the posthumous discovery of the text, the main theory held today, which has been put forth by MIZUNO Yaoko (1980), is that the *Hōkyōki* was actually written near the end of Dōgen's life. Another possibility is that it was composed in the early 1240s, after Dōgen received a copy of the recorded sayings of his mentor, the *Ju-ching yü-lu* 如淨語錄, which was edited by I-yüan and then transported from China in 1242. According to this theory, Dōgen was disappointed that the recorded-sayings text was not truly representative of his mentor's teachings, so he felt that he needed to amplify the record based on his own personal conversations. This was the time when Dōgen developed a new, or at least renewed, interest in Ju-ching as reflected in numerous citations and allusions in a variety of other texts from this period, which will be discussed more fully below. However, there remain significant discrepancies with the doctrinal content of the mentor's recorded sayings.

Once the *Hōkyōki* is set aside as authoritative, there is nothing that resembles a single sustained narrative source prior to the *Kenzeiki*, which was composed over two hundred years after Dōgen's death. Rather, there are a host of references to the trip scattered among as many as two dozen sources. These are autobiographical observations or reminiscences contained in sermons, journals, lineage records, or sectarian biographical works, in which there is some mention, however brief or ambiguous, of conversations, dreams, or transmission documents. Modern scholarship, in trying to track down the sources for the accounts in the *Kenzeiki* and *Teiho Kenzeiki*, has culled and pulled all of these together to create a sense of how the traditional biographers came up with the sequence of events. The problem occurs when modern scholars merely echo the traditional account instead of critically evaluating it. It is particularly important to note that there are very few sources that are considered to have been written by Dōgen while he was in China. The only ones available are a couple of short remembrances for Myōzen, his teacher at Kennin-ji who died in China in 1225, and a selection of *kanbun* poems that are included in the tenth volume of the *Eihei kōroku* (DZZ IV, pp. 246–97).

It seems that Dōgen left Kennin-ji for China in the second month of 1223, accompanying Myōzen 明全 and a couple of other Japanese monks after a long

17. Both colophons talk about having a mixed sense of joy at the discovery and of loss because there may be other undiscovered or missing works.

period in which not many Japanese Buddhists were traveling to the mainland. There had been years of constant internal political turmoil in Japan and conflicts between leading factions in Kyoto and Kamakura. But with the end of the Jōkyū War between ex-Emperor Go-Toba and the shogun Yoshitoki that lasted from 1221–1222, the opportunity for travel opened up (KODERA 1980, pp. 31–32).

We know very little about what Dōgen was doing or studying in the seven years (1216–1223) before leaving for China, which he spent at Kennin-ji after Kōin, the abbot at Onjō-ji, recommended that he practice Zen meditation. Kennin-ji, known as the first Zen temple in Japan, actually followed a mixed practice of esoteric, exoteric, and meditation training as initiated by Eisai in 1202.<sup>18</sup> Also, it is not clear how important Myōzen’s role was at the temple or whether he was really Eisai’s primary successor. Like Ju-ching, his primary claim to fame is being known as Dōgen’s teacher.<sup>19</sup> It is interesting to note that while Dōgen eulogized Eisai in the *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* sermons recorded in the mid-1230s, his remembrance of Myōzen with sermons on memorial days as recorded in the *Eihei kōroku* was not until no. 435 on 5/27 in 1251 and no. 504 in 1252 (DZZ IV, pp. 24 and 86).<sup>20</sup>

The trip from the point of embarkation in Kyushu to the port at Ching-yüan (now called Ning-po) in Chekiang Province took forty days. The following is a reconstruction of the sources for the itinerary in China based on the research of Itō Shūken, who supports an earlier date (fall 1223 to winter 1224) for the time of the itinerant journey to various temples, and of Ikeda Rosan and Kagamishima Genryū, both of whom support a later date, which is in the next year. In this listing, the primary source is indicated in parenthesis, and the use of an asterisk indicates that the item is particularly questionable in terms of dating or basic historicity (ITŌ 1998, pp. 118–20; IKEDA 1997, pp. 431–34; KAGAMISHIMA 1985, p. 325).

Year: 1223

2/22

Dōgen travels with Myōzen as well as Kakunen and Ryōshō from Kennin-ji to Kyushu to depart Japan for Sung China (*Myōzen oshō kaichō okugaki*)

18. Jūfuku-ji in Kamakura, established by Eisai at the behest of the shogun, had an even greater emphasis on esoteric, thaumaturgic rituals.

19. Dōgen’s dual lineage stemming from Myōzen (Huang-lung branch of Lin-chi school) and Ju-ching (Ts’ao-tung school) was one of several such examples in Japanese Sōtō, including Ejō and Keizan who had mixed Daruma-shū and Sōtō-shū transmission affiliations.

20. Also, “Bendōwa” refers briefly to Myōzen, and in *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* no. 6.15 Dōgen discusses Myōzen’s decision to leave Japan while his teacher was dying, as Dōgen was the only one to encourage him by valuing pursuit of the Dharma and the need to not waste precious time over human life. In the same text he eulogizes Eisai in nos. 1.14, 2.1, 2.8, 2.21, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 3.9, 4.4, 5.8, 5.10, and 6.9. In *Eihei kōroku*, Dōgen memorializes Eisai on 7/5 in 1251 (no. 441) and 1252 (no. 512). Note that the numbering system used for *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* citations is based on IKEDA 1993, rather than DZZ (which does not number the passages).

3 mo.

Departs from Hakata Port

4 mo.

Arrives at Ching-yüan Prefecture in Ming-chou Province (SBGZ “Senmen”)

Suffers from diarrhea while aboard ship but dispenses with illness through power of concentration (*Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* no. 6.19)

Myōzen visits teacher, Miao-yün, at Ching-te szu temple (*Myōzen oshō kaichō okugaki*)

5/4

Meets cook from Mt. A-yü-wang while staying on board at port of Ming-chou Ching-yüan city (*Tenzokyōkun*)

5/13

Myōzen joins Mt. T’ien-t’ung (*Shari sōdenki*) [but Dōgen is apparently disallowed because he lacks full precepts]

7 mo.

Joins Mt. T’ien-t’ung at end of summer retreat and trains under Wu-chi, and speaks to Mt. T’ien-t’ung cook (*Tenzokyōkun*)

After close of summer retreat, he meets again the Mt. A-yü-wang cook, who visits Mt. T’ien t’ung to see Dōgen on his way back home west on retirement (*Tenzokyōkun*)

From Shih-kuang, Dōgen hears about the *shisho* document of Wu-chi (SBGZ “Shisho,” *Teiho Kenzeiki*)

\* Files official complaint with emperor about seniority system in the Mt. T’ien-t’ung monastery (*Teiho Kenzeiki*)

Fall

Ryūzen, another monk from Japan, shows Dōgen *shisho* document of the *chuan-tsang-chu*, a descendant of Fa-yen Ch’ing-yüan of the Yang-ch’i branch of the Lin-chi school (SBGZ “Shisho”)

Visiting Mt. A-yü-wang, sees vision of full moon while looking at portraits of the 33 patriarchs but does not comprehend the meaning (SBGZ “Busshō”)

\* Visits Mt. Ching and meets abbot Che-weng, with whom he has dialogue (*Kenzeiki*)

\* Learns from an elderly monk about greatness of Ju-ching (*Tōkokuki, Teiho Kenzeiki*). [The monk may have been at Arhat Hall, and he may have been considered the reincarnation of an arhat. Ikeda and Kagamishima both date this at another time, 1224, because it needs to be after Wu-chi’s death and Ju-ching’s ascension to abbacy]

Ju-ching leaves Jui-yen temple (*Ju-ching yü-lu*)

10 mo.

Ju-ching becomes abbot for second time at Ching-tz’ü temple (*Ju-ching yü-lu*)

Meets two Korean practitioners in Ching-yüan (*okugaki* of “Den’e” and “Kesa kudoku”) [Ikeda dates this as 1224.]

Sees robe ceremony in China (*okugaki* of SBGZ “Den’e” and SBGZ “Kesa kudoku”)

Year: 1224

1/21

Shown *shisho* document of Wu-chi by Chih-sou, who smuggles it out (SBGZ “Shisho”)

Before 3 mo.

\* In Pao-ch’ing era, travels “on a cloud” to Wan-nien temple on Mt. T’ien-t’ai (SBGZ “Shisho”) [but this could be seventeenth year of Chia-ting era]

\* Hears of “plum twig” dream of abbot at Mt. Ta-meï and has his own similar dream (SBGZ “Shisho”)

\* Returns to Mt. T’ien-t’ung from Mt. T’ien-t’ai [Kagamishima dates this as 1225]

Before 4 mo.

\* Wu-chi dies (*Ju-ching yü-lu*) [or this could be 10 mo.]

7/5

Myōzen performs memorial service for Eisai at Mt. T’ien-t’ung (*Shidōki*)

From 7/15 to 8/1

Ju-ching leaves Ching-tz’ü and enters Mt. T’ien-t’ung and gives inaugural sermon (*Ju-ching yü-lu*) [Dōgen thus begins training in Ju-ching-led monastery]

7–8 mo. or Fall

\* Visits Mt. P’u-t’o Island (*Eihei kōroku* vol. 10)

\* Travels to various mountains in Ming-chou, Hang-chou, and T’ai-chou [according to Ikeda and Kagamishima]

11/25

Imperial edict declaring new era (*Sung-chi*)

Year: 1225

1–2 mo

\* Meets Che-weng at Wan-shou, P’an-shan at Hsiao-ts’ui-yen near Mt. T’ien-t’ai (SBGZ “Shisho”), and stops at Hu-sheng on Mt. Ta-meï [dream of plum blossom occurs now, according to this dating]

Before 4 mo.

\* Ju-ching has dream of Tung-shan incarnation appearing before him (*Kenzeiki*)

\* Returns to Mt. T’ien-t’ung from travels to various mountains (SBGZ “Shisho”)

5/1

Burns incense and prostrates for first time in Miao-kao-t’ai, the private residence of “old Buddha” Ju-ching of Mt. T’ien-t’ung, as part of face-to-face transmission (SBGZ “Menju”)

5/27

Myōzen dies (*Shari sōdenki*)

5/29

Discovery of over 360 relics of Myōzen (*Shari sōdenki*)

During Summer Retreat

“I realize the act of prostrating to, and humbly receive upon my head, this Bud-

dhist Patriarch; it was a realization only between a buddha and a buddha” (SBGZ “Busso”)

Has enlightenment experience of *shinjin datsuraku*, or casting off body-mind (*Kenzeiki*)

Visits Mt. A-yü-wang, and again sees vision of full moon while looking at portraits of the 33 patriarchs but this time understands the meaning (SBGZ “Busshō”)

“From now on” he is invited to Ju-ching’s *hōjō* to receive instructions and special teachings (*Hōkyōki*)

“When I was in China,” Ju-ching offers appointment as temple attendant, but Dōgen as a foreigner declines, deferring to Chinese monks (*Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* no. 1.1)

7/2

Begins recording *Hōkyōki*

7 mo.

Che-weng dies

9/18

Receives *Busso shōden bosatsu kaisahō* (*Kaisahō okugaki*)

Year: 1226

3 mo.

Hears nighttime sermon of Ju-ching at Miao-kao-t’ai, and hears about ascetic practices of Fa-chang of Mt. Ta-mei (SBGZ “Shohō jissō”) [see also *Eihei kōroku* no. 2.128, *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* no. 30, SBGZ “Gyōji” 2]

Hears Ju-ching speak of his 65 years (*Hōkyōki*)

Year: 1227

Spring

Receives *shisho* document from Ju-ching (*Shisho zu*)

Receives Dharma Robe of Fu-yung Tao-k’ai, texts of *Pao-ching san-mei* and of *Wu-wei hsien-chüeh*, and Ju-ching’s portrait (*Kenzeiki*)

Ju-ching no longer abbot of Mt. T’ien-t’ung, resides in hermitage (*Ju-ching yü-lu*)

7/17

\*Ju-ching dies (*Ju-ching yü-lu*)

Fall

\* Dōgen leaves to return to Japan (*Kenzeiki* [a debate over whether this was before or after Ju-ching’s death])

\* Receives *Pi-yen-chi* (J. *Hekiganroku*) of Yüan-wu with aid of Hakusan Gongen Myōri (*Kenzeiki*)

\* Subdues tiger, and heals sick with aid of Inari, while traveling (*Kenzeiki*)

\* On return, during typhoon receives aid from Kannon (*Teiho Kenzeiki*)

10/5

Resides again in Kennin-ji temple (*Shari sōdenki*)

\* *Fukanzazengi* and *Fukanzazengi shujutsu yurai*

The following is a year-by-year summary of sources. For 1223, there was *Myōzen oshō kaichō okugaki*, *Shari sōdenki*, SBGZ “Senmen,” *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*, *Tenzokyōkun*, SBGZ “Shisho,” SBGZ “Busshō,” Keizan’s *Tōkokuki*, *Teiho Kenzeiki*, *Ju-ching yü-lu*, and SBGZ “Kesa kudoku” and SBGZ “Den’e” *okugaki*. The year 1224 was covered by SBGZ “Shisho,” *Ju-ching yü-lu*, *Kenzeiki*, *Eihei kōroku* vol. 10, as well as two non-Dōgen related sources, *Shidōki* and *Sung-chi*. For 1225, there was SBGZ “Shisho,” SBGZ “Menju,” *Shari sōdenki*, SBGZ “Busso,” SBGZ “Busshō,” *Hōkyōki*, *Kenzeiki*, and *Busso shōden bosatsu kaisahō okugaki*; from 1226, SBGZ “Shohō jissō” and *Hōkyōki*. Finally, 1227 included *Shisho zu*, *Kenzeiki*, *Teiho Kenzeiki*, and *Ju-ching yü-lu*. Additional sources for information on China include *Gakudōyōjinshū*, SBGZ “Baika,” SBGZ “Ganzei,” SBGZ “Nyorai zenshin,” and Keizan’s *Denkōroku*, among others.

In considering problematic elements of the traditional account, we note that of the seventy illustrations in the *Teiho Kenzeiki zue* nearly a third cover the trip to China, and of these almost half are clearly hagiographical as indicated by the asterisk (NARA 2001):

1. Leaves by boat from Hakata with Myōzen and others, after departing on 2/22 in 1223 from Kennin-ji
2. Still on ship at Ming-chou port in the fifth month, meets the cook from Mt. A-yü-wang
3. Joins Mt. T’ien-t’ung following the summer retreat, though still lacking Hinayana precepts, with Wu-chi as abbot
4. Ranking of monks—as foreigner, Dōgen is kept at end of line even if he has seniority in terms of when he took the precepts
- \*5. Petitions the emperor for a reversal of the ruling about seniority
6. Robe ceremony—while doing zazen at Mt. T’ien-t’ung another monk every morning places the robe on his head and recites the *kasaya gatha*
- \*7. Visits Mt. Ching (lead temple in the Five Mountains monastic system) during the following year’s summer retreat
- \*8. Talks to an old monk, and hears about greatness of Ju-ching
9. Visits Wan-nien szu temple at Mt. T’ien-t’ai, site where Eisai practiced
- \*10. Dream at Mt. Ta-mei about receiving plum blossoms foreshadowing a great encounter
- \*11. Ju-ching’s dream of meeting a new embodiment of Tung-shan
12. Face-to-face meeting with Ju-ching—their spiritual encounter
13. Death of Myōzen and attendance at his funeral
14. Experience of *shinjin datsuraku* based on Ju-ching’s strict style of training
15. Prostrates in appreciation of Ju-ching

16. Sees at Mt. A-yü-wang the image of the patriarchs manifested as a round moon for the second time
- \*17. Legend of subduing the tiger through the power of the Dharma
- \*18. Healing of Dōshō through the beneficence of Inari
19. Receives *Shisho zu* in winter of 1227 before return to Japan; becomes the fifty-first generation patriarch
- \*20. Copying of *Ichiyū hekiganroku* with assistance of Hakusan Gongen Myōri
- \*21. Appearance of One Leaf Kannon during monsoon at sea while returning to Japan

### *Meetings with Remarkable and Unremarkable Men*

Dōgen's experience during the first two years in China was primarily characterized by a series of encounter dialogues with a variety of monks who became, at least for the moment, his teachers, even if in some cases what they taught was taken in a negative way or as an approach to avoid. According to the diverse sources, Dōgen met some of the most prominent masters of the time, including Wu-chi 無際, abbot of Mt. T'ien-t'ung, Che-weng, abbot of Mt. Ching, and the abbot of Mt. Ta-mei. In addition to the leaders of the Five Mountains temples, who did not always impress him, Dōgen also met and learned from a number of what HE refers to as anonymous, unknown, or "no name" monks that Dōgen mentions in his writings (2000, p. 17). For Dōgen, of course, the most remarkable teacher was Ju-ching, who is generally considered somewhat less than that by the standards for evaluating the merit of the teachings of Sung masters, which is generally based on their recorded-sayings collections (KAGAMISHIMA 1983).

On their arrival in China, Myōzen quickly disembarked and entered training at Mt. T'ien-t'ung but Dōgen's entry was long delayed. According to the *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*, the reason for this was illness, but the *Kenzeiki* and other sources report that Dōgen lacked the full (Hinayana and Mahayana) precepts, which was required in China though no longer in Japan. In fact, Mt. Hiei did not offer the Hinayana precepts, but apparently Myōzen had gone to Tōdai-ji to receive them, which raises the question of why Dōgen, knowing of the issue, did not prepare better by visiting Nara before his departure. We must also be skeptical of the account of Myōzen, which presumes that the precepts were available for the asking.

In any case, Nara Yasuaki theorizes that the delay Dōgen experienced ended up working to his advantage (NARA 2001, p. 45). Myōzen died in 1225, and Nara feels that the challenge of entering immediately into the rigorous Chinese system and undergoing the strenuous discipline of the summer retreat that began less than two weeks after his arrival in China caused Myōzen great stress and led to his deterioration. But Dōgen's inability to enter Mt. T'ien-t'ung until after



1. Mt. Ching-shan Wan-shou Ch'an ssu, of Hang-chou
2. Mt. A-yü-wang-shan Kuang II Ch'an ssu, of Ming-chou
3. Mt. T'ai-pai-shan T'ien-t'ung Ching-te Ch'an ssu, of Ming-chou
4. Mt. Pei-shan Ch'ing-te ling-yin Ch'an ssu, of Hang-chou
5. Mt. Nan-shan Ch'ing tz'u pao en kuang hsiao Ch'an ssu, of Hang-chou

These are the five main temples in the Zen monastic system of Sung China, but there were dozens of additional temples that constituted the entire network.

FIGURE 3. The Location of the Five Mountains Temples

the summer retreat ended in the middle of the seventh month actually gave him the opportunity to adjust to the Chinese language, culture, and monastic style. Dōgen's first summer retreat would not be until the following year, when he entered Mt. Ching, according to some of the sources, leaving him invigorated and primed for his eventual meeting with Ju-ching.

This meeting occurred the same month Myōzen died. With the death of the senior, fully ordained monk from abroad, Dōgen would have been faced with a crisis in losing his status as Myōzen's attendant and becoming just another unordained novice like thousands of other unofficial (or unrecognized) itinerant quasi-monks in China. As unsupervised and un-ordained novices, they were normally not even allowed in the Guest Hall (*undō*) let alone the Samgha Hall (*sōdō*). Dōgen was helped out by Ju-ching's allowing him to stay at the temple, and this, his second retreat, became the time of his enlightenment experience of *shinjin datsuraku* in 1225.

Meanwhile, Dōgen's stay on the boat docked at the harbor led to the first significant encounter dialogue he experienced in the fifth month of 1223, according to *Tenzokyōkun* (DZZ VI, pp. 2–25). This was the first of two instructive conversations with the chief cook of Mt. A-yü-wang, who later visited Dōgen at Mt. T'ien-t'ung on his way back to his home province since he was retiring from the monastery. Dōgen was also very much impressed by the cook at Mt. T'ien-t'ung. Both cooks, who were willing to forego the privilege of rank, demonstrated a positive work ethic and commitment to single-minded dedication and perseverance in pursuit of mundane tasks that exemplify the interconnectedness of all things with the true reality of the Dharma.

It is not clear how or why Dōgen was accepted into Mt. T'ien-t'ung. Perhaps it was due to Myōzen's intercession or to a petition filed by Dōgen, as some sources suggest. Shortly after joining the monastery another procedural issue led to Dōgen filing an official challenge to the monastic system in an appeal that, according to the *Kenzeiki*, went all the way up to the imperial level for review (NARA 2001, pp. 47–49). Apparently, once Dōgen's precepts were accepted, he felt dissatisfied that the seniority system practiced in China was based on age rather than on the length of time since the precepts were received, as indicated in the classic monastic rules attributed to Pai-chang. Because of this custom, Dōgen was subordinated to novices. He lost the appeal because other Japanese monks visiting China had endured the same treatment. At the same time, Dōgen was also becoming concerned about other kinds of corruption and laxity he witnessed among some of the monks in China.

In addition to the conversations with the cooks, another experience that deeply impressed Dōgen was his viewing of five different *shisho* documents representing three branches of the Lin-chi school (the Yang-ch'i and Yün-men branches, in addition to three streams of the Fa-yen branch). The following was recorded in the "Shisho" fascicle Dōgen saw (SBGZ I, pp. 423–35):

1. Fa-yen of the Yang-ch'i branch from the *chuan-tsang-chu* monk, with the assistance of the Japanese monk Ryūzen, in fall of 1223 at Mt. T'ien-t'ung
2. Yün-men branch from Tsung-yüeh Ch'ang-tao, later to become abbot of Mt. T'ien-t'ung after death of Wu-chi Liao-p'ai, in 1223 [Dōgen remarks that this document "looks different"]
3. Shih-kuang, the director of Mt. T'ien-t'ung monastery under Wu-chi, shown secretly from Chih-sou, a junior monk who smuggled it out on 1/21 in 1224 [Dōgen notes that this is magnificently adorned and written by Te-kuang, Wu-chi's teacher]
4. Kuei-shan from Yüan-tzu, successor to Tsung-chien as abbot of Wan-nien monastery at P'ing-t'ien on Mt. T'ien-t'ai, in 1225 [the abbot tells Dōgen about his dream of an eminent monk who resembled Fa-chang of Mt. Ta-mei to whom he handed a branch of plum blossoms, and said, "if you meet a true man you should not hesitate to give him this branch"; the document was written on plum silk, and Dōgen feels it conveys the "invisible favor" of buddhas and patriarchs]
5. Fa-yen branch from Wei-yi Hsi-t'ang of Mt. T'ien-t'ung, formerly head monk of Kuang-fu known for teaching laymen and from the same region as Ju-ching in 1225 [Dōgen notes that it is a "rare privilege" to see this kind of ancient writing]

In weighing the historical as well as the religious implications of the fascicle, it is interesting to note that “Shisho,” which links Dōgen to the Lin-chi school without actually providing him with the necessary credentials (although he had already had a connection through Myōzen), was composed on 3/27 in 1241, just around the time that a number of Daruma-shū followers joined Dōgen at Kōshō-ji.<sup>21</sup> This fascicle (edited by Ejō on 2/15 in 1243) was first a written record rather than a sermon. It was subsequently delivered as an oral sermon two times, on 12/12 in 1241 at Kōshō-ji (edited on 10/23 in 1243 at Yoshimine-dera in Echizen) and on 9/24 in 1243 at Yoshimine-dera (no information available on the editing). This shows that discussing lineage became increasingly important as Dōgen collected disciples and then entered new territory in Echizen. This is especially important when we consider that two other fascicles focusing on the face-to-face transmission with Ju-ching were from this same transitional period—“Busso” delivered on 1/13 in 1241, and “Menju” on 10/20 in 1243.

The next part of the traditional account of Dōgen’s trip focuses on his *tangyō* travels and conversations with leading masters and anonymous monks at various locations. The aim of the itinerancy was to visit the places where Eisai had trained and to look for a true teacher since Wu-chi was ailing. The goal of the narrators of the itinerary seems to be to place Dōgen in proximity with prominent Ch’an monasteries and figures, particularly at Mt. Ching, and to show how he was left unimpressed with some of the famous abbots, especially Che-weng.

The dialogue with Che-wang did not satisfy Dōgen’s need for an authentic teacher but instead became emblematic of his dissatisfaction with China. “According to the *Denkōroku*,” Nara writes, “the first discussion with Che-weng developed as follows”:

Che-weng, serving as head monk of Wan-shou monastery, said, “When did you arrive in the land of Sung China?” and Dōgen replied, “In the fourth month last year.” Che-weng said, “Did you come here following the crowds?” and Dōgen replied, “Well, I came here with my companions; is there something wrong with that? I think this is a good thing.” Che-weng said, clapping together the palms of his hands, “You are a young novice who is never at a loss for words.” Dōgen replied, “Maybe it is so. But what is the matter with that?” Che-weng said, “Let’s sit down for a while and drink a cup of tea.”

Dōgen was disappointed with Che-weng and his experience at the Buddhist temple on Mt. Ching. (NARA 2001, p. 57)

21. Following Ejō’s arrival at Kōshō-ji in 1234, the next wave of Daruma-shū followers to come to Dōgen appeared in 1241, including Gikai, Gien, Giin, and Gijun, who were all associated with Ekan and the temple at Hajaku-ji in Echizen.

Dōgen had another disillusioning meeting with P'an-shan of the Ta-hui lineage whom he met at Hsiao-ts'ui-yen and asked, "What is Buddha?" The master responded, "He is inside the temple," and Dōgen said, "If he is inside the temple, can he be in every grain of sand in the river?" The master replied, "He is in every grain of sand in the river." "The matter is settled," concluded Dōgen, meaning that he was disturbed by the lack of a compelling response from the master (NARA 2001, p. 63).

As with the two cooks met shortly after arriving in China, Dōgen was learning the most not from abbots but from anonymous monks who showed a simple, single-minded determination to pursue the Dharma. In *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* no. 1.4 he tells us that he met a monk from Szechuan in Sung China who came east to the temples of Chekiang with no provisions or possessions (DZZ VII, pp. 54–55). Somebody recommended that he return to his homeland to get properly clothed but he refused due to his determination to stay at the Five Mountains. Dōgen comments that this monk is typical of Buddhist trainees in China—unlike the case of Japan—who do not worry about poverty or any other obstacle to their practice.

In no. 3.15 of the same text, Dōgen relates the story of another monk from Szechuan who asked why Dōgen was studying recorded sayings and kōan collections (DZZ VII, pp. 90): "What's the use of reading these Zen sayings?" Dōgen responded, "To understand the old masters," and the monk said, "What is the use of that in the long run?" Dōgen comments that he stopped reading the Zen sayings and other writings because "you don't need to use a single word [to express the Dharma], and I was able to gain a great awakening to the great matter." In a postscript to *Shōbōgenzō* entitled "Kesa kudoku" 袈裟功德 Dōgen notes that he was also impressed when he met two Koreans, Chi Hyun and Kyung Oon, "who had come to Ching-yüan in 1224, not as monks but scholars from a[nother] small, out-of-the-way country" (SBGZ, in DZZ II, pp. 330–31).

According to the traditional account, Dōgen was so discouraged by the lack of wisdom in the famous masters—although he was impressed by the integrity of some but by no means all of the rank-and-file—that he was contemplating returning to Japan in 1224. As Nara explains, during his itinerancy Dōgen thought to himself, "No one in China and Japan is my equal." Then a remarkable event happened when he was at Mt. Ching with a monk who was standing at the Arhat Hall, or who was himself the incarnation of an Indian arhat, according to Keizan's presentation. Nara writes:

According to the *Tōkokuki* 洞谷記 (from the selected writings by Keizan 瑩山), at one time Dōgen met an old man in front of the hall of the arhats on Mt. Ching. He was called Rōshin 老璣 [Japanese pronunciation]. The "shin" (from Rōshin) means jewel. It was a name that makes us somehow imagine a pilgrim coming from India or the lands to the west of China.

They started to have a lively chat. Dōgen explained that, although he had gone all the way to Mt. Ching, he felt sad that he had not found someone in whom he could place all his confidence as a teacher. Rōshin said, “In the country of the great Sung dynasty the only one who possesses true insight for teaching the Dharma is Ju-ching. If you go see him, that will be a great opportunity for your training in Buddhism.” That is the way the conversation is recorded in the *Denkōroku*.

Yet, Dōgen was doubtful. He didn’t feel like going off to visit Ching-tz’ü temple where Ju-ching was then residing as abbot, which was some distance away from Mt. Ching. The *Denkōroku* states, “More than a year passed before he had the time to study with the master.”

Then, Dōgen decided to return to Mt. T’ien-t’ung, and he would begin summer retreat there for the first time. He immediately left Mt. Ching.

(NARA 2001, p. 59)

At this point in the traditional account, the controversial issues involving dating and itinerary make it difficult to pin down exactly where and when Dōgen was traveling, especially as the narrative begins to involve more out-of-the-ordinary experiences following on the arhat episode. The occurrence of three dreams guided Dōgen to find the ultimate teacher, Ju-ching. The first dream was told by Yüan-tzu at Mt. Ta-mei, and was kept secret until it was finally disclosed by Dōgen in *Shōbōgenzō* “Shisho” in 1241. According to this account, Dōgen had an overnight stay at Hu-sheng monastery on Mt. Ta-mei on his way back to Mt. T’ien-t’ung from Mt. T’ien-t’ai. A key question is, how did Dōgen get from Mt. Ching, where he met the arhat, to Mt. T’ien-t’ai? Was it by land or by sea, and when did this happen, since the sea route theory would then require two trips to Mt. Ching? In some accounts, the old monk at the Arhat Hall recommends Ju-ching after Dōgen has learned of Wu-chi’s death in late summer or fall of 1224, although at that time Dōgen would not have realized that Ju-ching was soon to be appointed abbot of Mt. T’ien-t’ung.<sup>22</sup>

In any case, the Mt. Ta-mei patriarch handed Dōgen a branch of plum blossoms because he had a dream in which a master he supposed to be the disciple of Ma-tsu, who founded the monastery, told him to give a plum tree twig to an authentic seeker who would come by boat to study in China. That night, Dōgen reports, he also had a mystical dream in which the original Mt. Ta-mei patriarch handed him a branch of blooming blossoms that were more than a foot in diameter as reflected in the patriarch’s mirror, which is “the most reliable of instruments,” and Dōgen takes this to be the flowers of the *udambara* (*udonge*

22. It is interesting to note the significance of deaths surrounding key experiences in Dōgen’s life, including his father in 1202 (when he was 2), mother in 1207 (he was 7), Eisai in 1216 (a year after their supposed meeting), Kōin in 1216 (shortly after their meeting), uncle Ryōkan in 1217, Wu-chi in 1224, Myōzen in 1225, Che-weng in 1225, Jien in 1225, and Ju-ching in 1227 (or 1228).

優曇華) (SBGZ, in DZZ I, p. 433).<sup>23</sup> The third dream occurred, Dōgen learned, when the night before his arrival back to Mt. T'ien-t'ung, where Ju-ching had been installed as abbot for just about a month in the fourth month of 1225, the Chinese master dreamt that Tung-shan appeared in the form of a reincarnation (NARA 2001, p. 65).

Another episode with supernatural implications is Dōgen's account in the SBGZ "Busshō" fascicle of a vision of the round full moon at Mt. A-yü-wang temple while looking at portraits of the thirty-three patriarchs. This section of the fascicle follows a lengthy philosophical discussion of an anecdote in the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu* 景德伝燈錄 vol. 1, in which Nagarjuna is manifested as the moon. Dōgen says that "in former days, while traveling as a cloud," he went to Mt. A-yü-wang in the first year of his journey to China but when he saw the paintings he did not understand the meaning (SBGZ I, pp. 31–33). Then he returned to this site about two years later, during the summer retreat of 1225, apparently a short time after his enlightenment experience under Ju-ching. This time he alone among the monks understood the vision, whereas the others either took it too literally or did not see it at all. Dōgen sensed the deficiency of the others, for whom there is "no nostrils in their complexion" and "no sword in their laughter." This episode marks the moment in the traditional account of when Dōgen becomes clear and confident of his spiritual authority and superiority.

### *Face-to-Face Transmission?*

In light of questions about the historicity of the trip to China, the main argument in support of the journey seems to be Dōgen's own significant literary production that clearly owes so much to the records of his Chinese mentor and predecessors, along with Sung Ch'an textual materials. Dōgen's main works—beginning with the *Mana Shōbōgenzō* 真字正法眼藏 collection of 300 kōan cases and including the *Shōbōgenzō* and *Eihei kōroku*—comment extensively on hundreds of kōan collections and texts of recorded sayings, including citations or allusions to passages that are quite obscure. In examining the full extent of his writings, there is an overwhelming question: Would all these texts have been available in Japan, so that Dōgen could have comprehensively studied and absorbed them at Mt. Hiei or Kennin-ji without having taken the trip to China?<sup>24</sup>

23. Plum blossom imagery is especially important in SBGZ "Baika" and throughout the *Eihei kōroku*; see also SBGZ "Udonge."

24. In both the *Hōkyōki* and *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*, Dōgen mentions the influence of four collections of the transmission of the lamp, namely, the *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, the *T'ien-sheng kuang-teng lu*, the *Chien-chung ching-kuo hsü-teng lu*, and the *Chia-t'ai p'u-teng lu*. He does not, however, mention the *Tsung-men t'ung-yao chi* or the *Tsung-men lien-teng hui-yao*, although ISHII argues for the importance of these texts, especially the former (1988). SBGZ "Kokyō" is an example of a fascicle that cites numerous kōan cases beyond what is found in the main transmission of the lamp records.

However, the main issue in evaluating the trip from the standpoint of religious conviction based on lineal genealogy is not a matter of considering literary influences or doctrinal tendencies, but of reflecting on Dōgen's relation to Ju-ching and the credibility of the claim of direct, face-to-face transmission "with my late teacher, the old master." Dōgen, whose experience of *shinjin datsuraku* was never recorded in his writings but appears in later biographies, praises Ju-ching as the one exception to the general mediocrity and disappointment he found in China and as the kind of leader who only appears "once in a thousand years," according to *Eihei kōroku* no 2.128 (DZZ III, p. 72). Furthermore, Dōgen argues that the transmission received from his mentor "resolved the one great matter," according to SBGZ "Bendōwa" (DZZ II, p. 461), and "is only present in our Tung-shan house; others have not experienced it even in a dream" as in SBGZ "Menju" (SBGZ II, p. 55); see also SBGZ "Butsudō" 仏道 (SBGZ I, pp. 471–88).

Did Dōgen experience something truly unique and special with Ju-ching that led him to negate other lineages, or did he exaggerate the importance of this relation? Or is it even possible that the role of Ju-ching was invented, if not by Dōgen alone then by subsequent sectarian leaders who controlled the editing of the works of both Dōgen and Ju-ching? While the full implications of the latter point are beyond the scope of this article we can reflect on some key questions. On the one hand, if his connection with Ju-ching was so special, why did Dōgen not discuss it, with a couple of prominent exceptions, until the transitional years of the early 1240s? On the other hand, if he were engaged in inventing his lineal tradition in China for sectarian purposes in Japan, why would he pick out of the bunch Ju-ching, who from all other indications was not so highly regarded? One possibility is that Dōgen did have a significant experience with Ju-ching, but then came to focus on this encounter as being exclusive to his school for sectarian reasons at a critical turning point relatively late in his career.

Much of what is known about Ju-ching (1163–1227) is from Japanese sources, including *Shōbōgenzō* "Gyōji" 行持 (part 2) and Keizan's *Denkōroku*, in addition to the *Ju-ching yü-lu*. He was a patriarch in the Chih-hsieh line of the Ts'ao-tung school that Dōgen transmitted to Japan. The other main Ts'ao-tung lineage, the Hung-chih line, was subsequently transmitted to Japan by Tōmyō E'nichi. Ju-ching was born in 1163 in Yüeh-chou in Chekiang, and first practiced in 1181, according to "Gyōji" (part 2), under the lineage of the prominent twelfth-century reviver of the Ts'ao-tung school, Fu-yung Tao-k'ai; and then he trained under Sung-yüan Ch'ung-yüeh and Wu-yung Ching-ch'üan, a disciple of Lin-chi school leader Ta-hui who Dōgen severely criticized in SBGZ "Shohō jissō" 諸法実相. Ju-ching was enlightened in 1184 under Hsüeh-tou of the Ts'ao-tung school, and was a monk at Mt. Ching in 1193 under a Lin-chi lineage abbot. After that he became abbot at several Five Mountains temples, although like

Fu-yung Tao-k'ai he was said to have turned down the purple robe granted by imperial decree.

Ju-ching was abbot at Ch'ing-liang in Chin-ling in 1210, at Jui-yen in T'ai-chou in the fall of 1215, at Ching-tz'ü in Lin-an in Hang-chou in the spring of 1216 (which he left in the fall of 1220), at Jui-yen again in the spring of 1222 for a short residency, at Ching-tz'ü again in the winter of 1223 for a nine-month stay, and finally at Mt. T'ien-t'ung Ching-te szu in the fall of 1224. Ju-ching retired from the abbacy in the spring of 1227, but there is a controversy about whether he died on 7/17 in 1227 or 1228 and, if the former, whether Dōgen departed China just before or a couple of months after his mentor's demise.

In any case, if Dōgen had a life-altering experience with Ju-ching in 1225, we might expect that he would have given great emphasis to this upon his return to Japan. The assumption that *Hōkyōki* was written at the time of the return would reinforce a view that Dōgen highly valued Ju-ching all along. However, as indicated, the main theory accepted today is that this text was actually written near the end of Dōgen's life. One of the main points is that the ideology expressed in this text, which is attributed to Ju-ching through the question-answer discussion format, is well attuned with the approach Dōgen espouses in other late-career texts written in the last five or so years of his life in the late 1240s or early 1250s. For example, the *Hōkyōki* emphasizes the doctrine of causality (*inga* 因果) and a refutation of the unity of the three teachings (of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, *sankyō itchi*) that is in accord with the teachings of the 12-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō* and the volumes of the *Eihei kōroku* produced during the same late period. This emphasis stands in contrast to the teachings evident in the *Ju-ching yü-lu*. A larger issue is that while Dōgen's portrayal of Ju-ching is consistent throughout his writings, there are numerous inconsistencies between Dōgen's presentation of Ju-ching and what is known about Ju-ching's approach from his recorded sayings.

Before 1242, when Dōgen supposedly received a copy of the *Ju-ching yü-lu*, there were two main examples of references to his mentor. The first is a rewriting of Ju-ching's "windbell" poem that is cited in *Hōkyōki* as a "supremely excellent teaching unlike anything found" in other Ch'an writings. Dōgen also cites the verse in "Makahannyaharamitsu" that was first delivered in 1233 and edited in 1242, and he again cites and rewrites it in *Eihei kōroku* no. 9.58 in 1236 (DZZ IV, p. 220; HEINE 1997, p. 141).<sup>25</sup> Ju-ching's original verse reads:

The bell looks like a mouth, gaping,  
Indifferent to the wind blowing in the four directions;  
If you ask it about the meaning of wisdom,  
It only answers with a jingling, tinkling sound.

25. The Ju-ching verse was later mentioned in SBGZ "Kokū" in 1245 and also alluded to in the "Immo" fascicle of 1242.

Dōgen's rewriting provides more rhetorical flourish with an emphasis on the continual ringing of the bell and the elimination of any trace of duality between instrument and sound:

The bell is a voice articulating emptiness,  
 Playing host to the wind blowing in the four directions,  
 Expressing in its own elegantly crafted language  
 The tintinnabulation: the ringing of the ringing.

The other prominent example of pre-1242 writings on Ju-ching is a series of references in the *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* collected from 1236–1238 that emphasize Ju-ching's commitment to ongoing, persistent zazen meditation practice. In no. 2.16 Dōgen says, "While staying in China in the assembly under Ju-ching we had lengthy discussions during which I came to know of his life and teachings, but I realized the truth by practicing zazen day and night with a real Zen teacher" (DZZ VII, p. 74). In no. 2.9 he says that Ju-ching would strike the monks with his slipper to keep them from dozing off during zazen and scold them (DZZ VII, p. 69–70). They were grateful for the reprimand; and then he lectured them about removing delusions and when he finished his lecture the monks all wept. Also, no. 3.30 in *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* states that Ju-ching practiced zazen until about eleven o'clock at night, and then got up at two-thirty or three, and started in again (DZZ VII, p. 99). In this lengthy passage, Dōgen praises Ju-ching for not being easygoing with regard to zazen, and for shaming monks and striking them or striking a bell or summoning an attendant to stir and awaken them. Also, during a candlelight lecture before the whole assembly, an attendant asked if exhausted monks could sleep and Ju-ching replied, "Absolutely not!"

Dōgen notes receiving Ju-ching's recorded sayings in *Eihei kōroku* no. 1.105 on 8/6 in 1242 (DZZ III, p. 69),<sup>26</sup> although the first indication of renewed interest was in SBGZ "Gyōji" (part 2), which was written several months before this and contains four citations of Ju-ching (DZZ I, pp. 196–202). This indicates that a main factor may have been the arrival at Kōshō-ji of the erstwhile Darumashū followers. But it seems clear that the most important factor contributing to the appropriation of Ju-ching was Dōgen's move to Echizen, which is when he began citing Ju-ching extensively and in some cases exclusively. The list on the following page shows that in addition to SBGZ "Gyōji" (part 2) all the *Shōbō-*

26. Senne, the compiler of this volume of the *Eihei kōroku*, notes that, "Many words were not recorded." Presumably, Dōgen spoke more, but Senne only wrote down what is included here. This sermon is also notable for Dōgen's emphasis on the role of language in relation to silence in communicating the Dharma. He mentions Tan-hsia (Hung-chih's teacher), who once reported that Te-shan said, "There are no words and phrases (*goku*) in my school..." but Tan-hsia said, "In my school, there are words and phrases..." Dogen adds, "I would not have spoken like this. Great assembly, do you want to hear what I have to say? In my school *there are only words and phrases (yui-goku)* [emphasis added]...."

*genzō* fascicles containing multiple citations of Ju-ching stem from this period (the asterisk indicates that the passages are not found in the *Ju-ching yū-lu*).

Of the compositions from the critical transitional period focusing on Ju-ching, three fascicles consist almost entirely of commentary on the mentor's teaching, with a strong emphasis on lyrical imagery as a symbol for enlightenment in SBGZ "Baika" and "Ganzei." The fascicles in which Dōgen cites passages that are not found in the *Ju-ching yū-lu* deal to a large extent with a sectarian agenda of criticizing the Ta-hui lineage in SBGZ "Shohō jissō" and the other branches of Zen in SBGZ "Butsudō" and SBGZ "Bukkyō" (Buddhist Sutras). In these passages, which Dōgen may have misquoted or invented, Ju-ching sounds considerably more partisan and combative in tone than in passages that can be traced back to the *Ju-ching yū-lu*.<sup>27</sup>

The main image of Ju-ching that emerges in the writings of this period is a deliverer of dynamic, often spontaneous sermons, or as a master who breaks out of the mold of the formal monastic setting. He gave lectures not only in the Dharma Hall at a fixed hour but at any time of day or night when the inspiration struck. *Shōbōgenzō* "Shohō jissō" was presented by Dōgen in 1243 after "eighteen years had swiftly passed" since the original occurrence in the fourth watch of the night in the third month of 1226 (SBGZ I, pp. 457–70). At that time, Ju-ching gave a midnight sermon in the abbot's quarters, and the drum was beating with signs hung around the temple announcing the occasion. Monks were burning incense and waiting anxiously to hear, "You may enter [the abbot's room]." Dōgen says that this was a unique method of intense, personal training not practiced in other districts.

Dōgen's detailed description of the layout of the interior of the temple, of how he climbed the stairway between chambers, and where the monks were congregating in relation to the private quarters of Ju-ching known as the Miao-kai-t'ai is interesting because this varies from what was known about the typical Five Mountains temples. Tokugawa era Sōtō monks apparently were concerned and questioned his description, assuming it was a later, off-base invention, but modern investigation tends to confirm that it was accurate, thereby lending credence to Dōgen's first-hand knowledge of the Chinese monastery.

In *Eihei kōroku* no. 2.128, which was presented in 1244 as an evening sermon that resonates with what is said about Ju-ching, Dōgen describes the excitement that was so unusual and unique in his teacher's approach:

Regardless of what the regulations in monastic rules manuals actually prescribed, at midnight, during the early evenings or at any time after the noon-day meal, and generally without regard to the time, Ju-ching convened a talk. He either had someone beat the drum for entering the abbot's quarters (*nyūshitsu*)

27. For example, in SBGZ "Butsudō" Ju-ching says, "In recent years the truth of the patriarchs has degenerated into bands of demons and animals" (DZZ I, p. 481).

| Date       | Fascicle           | Place          | Citations |
|------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1243/9/16  | <i>Butsudō</i>     | Kippō-ji       | 2         |
| 1243/9     | <i>Bukkyō</i>      | Kippō-ji       | 2*        |
| 1243/9     | <i>Shohō jissō</i> | Kippō-ji       | 2*        |
| 1243/11/6  | <i>Baika</i>       | Kippō-ji       | 8         |
| 1243/12/17 | <i>Ganzei</i>      | Yamashibu-dera | 7         |
| 1243/12/17 | <i>Kajō</i>        | Yamashibu-dera | 5         |
| 1244/2/12  | <i>Udonge</i>      | Kippō-ji       | 2         |

to give an open talk (*fusetsu*) or he had someone beat the drum for small meetings (*shōsan*) and then for entering the abbot's quarters. Or sometimes he himself hit the wooden clapper in the Monks Hall three times and gave an open talk in the Illuminated Hall. After the open talk the monks entered the abbot's quarters. At other times he hit the wooden block hanging in front of the head monk's quarters and gave an open talk in that room. Again, following the open talk the monks entered the abbot's quarters. These were extraordinary, truly exceptional experiences! As a disciple of Ju-ching, I am also conducting evening meetings that are taking place for the very first time in our country. (DZZ III, p. 72)

Perhaps the emphasis Dōgen put on the extraordinary sermon style of Ju-ching was but a device to conceal an awareness that Ju-ching's sermons were not so remarkable in terms of the content or substance of what he said.

NAKASEKO Shōdō (1997) suggests that by analyzing differences in the teachings of master and disciple we see contradictions in Dōgen's appropriation of Ju-ching. According to Nakaseko, there are two sets of doctrines—one is how Ju-ching is portrayed in Dōgen's writings, and the other is how he is expressed in the *Ju-ching yū-lu* (assuming its authenticity). As seen in the works of Dōgen, Ju-ching was a strict advocate of intensive *zazen* training, which was the only

28. For other comments on the role of giving sermons and related topics in introducing Zen monasticism to Japan, see in addition to *Eihei Kōroku* no. 2.128 on the first evening discourse (*bansan*) in Japan the following: no. 2.138 on Dōgen's being the first to transmit the role of the chief cook (*tenzo*) to Japan; no. 3.244 in which Dōgen says, "I am expounding Zen discourse all over the country"; no. 4.319 on dedicating the Monks Hall on Mt. Kichijō in Echizen; no. 5.358 on Japanese monks "listening to the name of *jōdō* 上堂 sermons for the first time since I transmitted it"; no. 5.378 about Dōgen's delivery of sermons being "the most extraordinary thing"; no. 5.406 on ceremonies in Japan to celebrate the birth of Sakyamuni Buddha, in which Dōgen says, "I, Eihei, imported [this ritual] twenty years ago and held it. It must be transmitted in the future."

form of religious practice he consistently followed since he began his training at the age of nineteen, according to SBGZ “Gyōji” (part 2). Ju-ching was also portrayed as a severe critic of reliance on kōans as well as the corrupt lifestyle of many of his contemporary monks.

In addition, according to Dōgen, Ju-ching criticized a variety of doctrines that found currency in Chinese Ch’an. The objects of his criticism include a variety of factors:

1. the unity of the three teachings (according to SBGZ “Shohō jissō”)
2. the *kikan* 機関 or developmental, intellectual approach in the notions of the three phrases of Yün-men
3. the four relations of Lin-chi, the five ranks of Tung-shan, and numerous other doctrinal formulas (SBGZ “Butsudō” and “Bukkyō” [Buddhist Sutras])
4. the sectarian divisiveness of the five houses of Ch’an that defeats the unity of all forms of Buddhism (SBGZ “Butsudō”)
5. the autonomy of the Zen sect (*Hōkyōki*)
6. a view that advocates the separation of Ch’an from the sutras (*Hōkyōki*)
7. the “naturalist fallacy” that affirms reality without transforming it (*Hōkyōki*), and
8. the tendency in some forms of Ch’an thought toward the negation of causality and karmic retribution (*Hōkyōki*).

Furthermore, Dōgen puts a strong emphasis on lyrical poetic imagery as the key to Ju-ching’s approach in the citations in SBGZ “Baika” and SBGZ “Ganzei,” which were written while Dōgen stayed in temporary mountain hermitages, such as plum blossoms blooming amid the late winter snow as representing the emergence of enlightenment within the world of samsara.

As Nakaseko points out, much of this stands in contradiction with the thought that is seen in the *Ju-ching yū-lu*, which is for the most part a conventional recorded-sayings text reflecting the doctrines and literary styles of the period (NAKASEKO 1997, pp. 206–9; KAGAMISHIMA 1983). In this text, there is not so much emphasis on zazen or the rejection of kōans, or criticism of a laxity in the lifestyle of monks. Furthermore, Ju-ching did not dismiss Confucius or indicate that the other teachings were inferior to the Buddha Dharma, and he did not express concern with the five houses, or the autonomy of Ch’an, or the view that separates Ch’an from the sutras. He did not criticize the *kikan* formulas or the naturalist heresy. Nor did he stress causality or emphasize lyrical imagery in a way that varies from what was typical for Sung Ch’an masters appealing to an audience of literati.

Dōgen’s view of Ju-ching is complicated by an approach found in several

*Eihei kōroku* fascicles from this period, in which he shows an independent, irreverent attitude. Throughout the text he criticizes and rewrites the words of his Chinese Ch’an predecessors, including Hung-chih, whose work is cited most frequently.<sup>29</sup> Even his mentor is not immune to this treatment, as seen in *Eihei kōroku* no. 3.194 (DZZ III, p. 132):

[Dōgen] said, “I remember, a monk asked an ancient master, ‘Is there Buddha Dharma or not on a steep cliff in the deep mountains?’”

The master responded, “A large rock is large; a small one is small.”

My late teacher T’ien-t’ung [Ju-ching] said, “The question about the steep cliff in the deep mountains was answered in terms of large and small rocks. The cliff collapsed, the rocks split, and the empty sky filled with a noisy clamor.”

The teacher [Dōgen] said: “Although these two venerable masters said it this way, Eihei [Dōgen] has another way of putting it. If someone were to ask, ‘Is there Buddha Dharma or not on a steep cliff in the deep mountains?’, I would simply say to him, ‘The lifeless rocks nod their heads again and again. The empty sky vanishes completely. This is something that exists within the realm of the buddhas and patriarchs. What is this thing on a steep cliff in the deep mountains?’”

[Dōgen] pounded his staff one time, and descended from his seat.<sup>30</sup>

### Concluding Remarks

At the end of *Did Marco Polo Go to China?* Frances Wood comments on the value of the travelogue, even if “Marco Polo himself probably never journeyed much further than the family’s trading posts on the Black Sea and in Constantinople, and was not responsible for Italian ice-cream or Chinese dumplings...” (WOOD 1986, p. 150). According to Wood’s assessment, when combined with other sources the work attributed to Polo is significant for its useful descriptions and for inspiring latter day travelers like Aurel Stein who remained dependent on Polo centuries later. This is like the case of “Herodotus who did not travel to all the places he described and who mixed fact with fantastic tales, but whose work is nevertheless not to be discarded lightly” (WOOD 1986, p. 150).

However, Dōgen must be evaluated not as a historian or adventurer/tradesman but as a religious thinker whose central tenet about lineal transmission is the requirement of direct, first-hand, face-to-face experience. For any devotee,

29. Although influenced by Ju-ching, Dōgen clearly favored Hung-chih as the model for the formal, Chinese, *jōdō*-style sermons in the *Eihei kōroku*.

30. According to Shohaku Okumura and Taigen Dan Leighton, who are preparing a translation of the *Eihei kōroku* to be published by Wisdom, the phrase, “The lifeless rocks nod their heads again and again,” is a reference to Tao-sheng, Kumarajiva’s great disciple and early Chinese Buddhist scholar, who, based on a passage in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* that all beings can become a buddha, went to the mountain and preached the Dharma to the rocks, which nodded in response.

a particular gap or lacuna in the tradition's account may not be a serious detriment to an acceptance of the religion's claim that stands behind and yet does not depend on historical verifiability. Since Albert SCHWEITZER's *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1906) nearly a century ago, it is commonly recognized that there is an interconnection but ultimately a separation between what Van HARVEY calls "The Historian and The Believer" (1966).

In the case of Dōgen, debunking from a historiographical perspective much, if by no means all, of the traditional account of his journey to China may not have an impact on the believer. To suggest that Dōgen's presentation of Ju-ching, especially in the *Hōkyōki*, says more about Dōgen's own positions than his mentor's is not necessarily enough in itself to negate that the trip took place or the religious claims based on its veracity. After all, the *Kenzeiki* and other sources dealing with Dōgen's Buddhist pilgrimage are far from the mythology of *Journey to the West* in terms of a distance from and distortion of historical reality. Some aspects of the trip have become the subject of literary imagination, such as a recent *kyōgen* play on his meeting with the cook from Mt. A-yü-wang (MOMOSE and SUGITA 1999, p. 63). Yet, maintaining a belief in Dōgen's transmission despite doubts about its historicity does not require the same degree of acceptance of the "offense" of belief in the incarnation of Christ as found in Kierkegaard's view of subjective religious truth.

In any case, the construction of an image or a simulacra may well eclipse the importance of what is portrayed or (partially) remembered. Like "a painted rice cake that satisfies hunger," according to SBGZ "Gabyō," an impression of reality is often more real than reality (DZZ I, p. 273).

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