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Cover calligraphy  Yan Zhenqing 顔真卿, Tang calligrapher and statesman

Recent studies on Buddhism in the late Ming dynasty have drawn our attention to the monastery building process in this period, which saw intensive activity among local elites to rebuild society after the suppression of Wokou piracy in the second half of the sixteenth century. Though scholars like Timothy Brook have investigated how the gentry lavished their patronage upon monastery building projects, it is still largely unknown how Buddhist institutions themselves were revived as the result of an internal transformation of Buddhism. This paper explores some of the institutional changes that occurred in seventeenth-century Chinese Buddhism. For this purpose, I will focus on Huangbo Monastery in Fujian province.

There are several reasons for this choice. First, three important Chan masters, Miyun Yuanwu 密雲圓悟 (1566–1642), Feiyin Tongrong 費隱通容 (1593–1662) and Yinyuan Longqi 隱元隆琦 (1592–1673), referred to as the Huangbo masters in this study, presided over this monastery in succession. These masters made a significant contribution to the revival of Chan Buddhism in this period. Second, Huangbo Monastery (renamed Wanfusi in the late Ming) is significant in Chan history. It was the monastery where the Tang monk Huangbo Xiyun 黃檗希運 (?–850) was ordained. In addition, it was the monastery from where Yinyuan Longqi departed to Japan in 1654, where he would later build Manpukuji in Uji, Kyoto, modeled on Huangbo, thus becoming the founder of the Japanese Ōbaku 黃檗 school. Third, the sources on Huangbo Monastery are relatively rich. Not only do several editions of monastic gazetteers survive, but some rare sources are also preserved in Japan taken there by Yinyuan.¹

¹ The following editions of relevant monastic gazetteers are extant: *Huangbosi zhi* [Monastic gazetteer of Huangbo], compiled by Xingji and Xingyuan in 1637 (supplemented by Duwang Xingyou in 1652); *Huangbo shan sibiz*, [Monastic gazetteer of Mount Huangbo], compiled by Yinyuan Longqi in 1652 (supplemented by Daoxian in 1824). These editions were gradually expanded and updated. For a brief textual history of these editions, see Timothy Brook, *Geographical Sources of Ming-Qing History*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, 2002), pp.202–3. However, I rely primarily on the 1652 and 1824 editions preserved respectively in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* [Complete collections of the four treasuries, continued], 1110 vols (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1995–99), vol.719; and Du Jiexiang, ed., *Zhongguo Fosi shibi bukan* [Collection of monastic gazetteers of Chinese Buddhist monasteries] (Taipei: Mingwen Shuju, 1985), series 3, vol.4.
In this study, I observe that the revival of Huangbo Monastery represents a process that occurred in many Buddhist institutions during the seventeenth century: monasteries were first restored by members of the local gentry but then were quickly incorporated into a broader regional monastic network in which the dharma transmission of the presiding abbots (who were initially invited by the gentry) fostered institutional connections with other monasteries occupied by their dharma "relatives". This type of monastery, generally referred to as a "dharma transmission monastery" (chuanfa conglin 傳法叢林), a new creation in the seventeenth century, was organized according to the principle of dharma transmission that limited the abbacy to members of a specific dharma lineage.\(^2\) In the resulting transformation of Chan monasteries, the practice of dharma transmission was formalized and rationalized to avoid confusion and false claims. For example, as this article will outline, Chinese characters indicating a shared generation were used when monks were assigned their religious names, marking their sectarian identity; certificates were issued when the monks' master bestowed dharma transmission; and Chan histories of dharma transmission, called "lamp histories" (dengshi 燈史), were constantly updated in order to incorporate recently certified heirs to the lineage.

To investigate the various aspects of the institutionalization of dharma transmission monasteries, I will first examine how Huangbo Monastery was initially revived as a local endeavor under the imperial auspices of the Shenzong 神宗 emperor (reign title: Wanli 萬曆, r. 1573–1620) of the Ming. I will then focus on how the three Huangbo masters transformed the monastery from a local institution to a dharma transmission monastery. Finally, I will explore the various means used by these monks to strengthen the ties of dharma transmission. In conclusion, I suggest that the current discussion about the role of dharma transmission in Chan history can be enriched by focusing on its social functions in the process of institution building.

The Tale of a Local Monastery

Huangbo Monastery was initially a local monastery. It had no clearly defined ownership but was controlled jointly by clergy and local gentry. This was a common situation for Buddhist monasteries in Ming China, as noted by Timothy Brook in his study of gentry patronage in the rebuilding of local monasteries:

Ming Buddhism existed as a congeries of little institutions dispersed randomly across the country, without hierarchy, internal organization, or any regulatory body other than what the state supplied. With the exception

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\(^2\) The name "dharma transmission monastery" did not appear in seventeenth-century Buddhist sources but was widely used at the end of the nineteenth century to refer to a particular monastic system. Hasebe Yūkei adopts this term to characterize the changes in seventeenth-century Buddhist monasteries. See his Min Shin Bukkyō kyōdanshi kenkyū [Studies on the history of monastic communities in Ming and Qing Buddhism] (Tokyo: Dōhōha, 1993), p. 286. See also my discussion below.
of limited ties among sister monasteries and linked pilgrimage sites, Buddhist institutions did not participate in a larger institutional framework at any level. Unlike European Christianity, Ming Buddhism was not woven into the net of secular power.\(^3\)

Indeed from the Song dynasty, Buddhist monasteries had become increasingly local; with the exception of a few big state-sponsored temples, they relied on local resources to sustain themselves. Local patrons took control of them and monasteries served local interests, providing religious services for local devotees. Even though the Southern Song 南宋 had attempted to formulate a system of “Five Mountains and Ten Monasteries” (Wushan shicha 五山十刹) designed to impose an official hierarchy on Buddhist institutions, this system disappeared without trace in China despite its huge success in Japan.\(^4\) The revival of Huangbo Monastery in the late Ming was therefore primarily a local effort in its initial phase. Before recounting the transformation of this monastery, let

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\(^4\) This system was transplanted to Japan and became the so-called Gozan 五山 system. See Martin Colcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).

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**Figure 1**

*Mount Huangbo in 2002. Photograph by the author*
us first turn to the locality and examine
Huangbo Monastery as one of the many
local monasteries in Fujian province,
the so-called “Buddhist kingdom”.

Huangbo Monastery and its
Environs

Huangbo Monastery is located at the
southwest of Fuqing 福清 county (also
referred to as Futang 福唐), a coastal
area belonging to the larger Fuzhou 福
zhou prefecture. Close to a small town
named Yuxi 渔溪, which is on the trans­
portation route to Southern Fujian cities
such as Putian 莆田 and Xiamen 厦门,
Huangbo Monastery rests on a foothill
of Mount Huangbo. Mount Huangbo
was so named because of the exuber­
ant growth of huangbo trees on the
mountain.

In the history of Chinese Buddhism,
Fujian province gradually became sig­
ificant after the eighth century, when
the exploration of South China brought
in thousands of immigrants and nour­
ished a regional culture favorable to the
growth of the religion. From the West­
ern Jin 西晋 (265–316) there had been
scattered Buddhist establishments in
Fujian. The substantial spread of Bud­
dhism took place during the late Tang
and the Five Dynasties 五代, when Fujian
became one of the most developed
regions in China, characterized by mari­
time trade and new land cultivation.
Under the patronage of the Min 閩
ruler Wang Shenzhi 王審知 (862–925), Bud­
dhism was the major religion in the area. According to Edward
Schafer, the Min regime invested lavishly in Buddhism not only
because of its rulers’ devout belief in the religion but also for politi­
cal motives to justify their rule. Based on studies by Chikusa Masaaki,
Edward Schafer and Hugh Clark, it is clear that from the time of
the Min state, the Fujian region was “notorious” for its overwhelming

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\( ^5 \) The temple was rebuilt in 1991 under the
patronage of an Indonesian Chinese called
Chen Defa. See Xiao Timin, “Huangboshan
xiujian gongcheng zai xunsu fazhan”
[Reconstruction of Mount Huangbo is
making rapid progress], in Fayin [Sound
patronage of Buddhism.9 Recently, Albert Welter’s study of the development of Chan Buddhism there has noted that Chan lineages active in this region were instrumental in forming a national discourse of Chan dharma transmission in the early Song.10 Throughout the Song, the domination of Buddhism in the Fujian area continued to impress many sojourning officials, and descriptions of remarkable Buddhist establishments can be found in numerous historical records. The modern scholar Kenneth Dean, in his study of popular religions in Fujian, was struck by the unusually significant presence of Buddhism in its history. He provides the following statistics based on the Song Gazetteer of the Three Mountains [of Fuzhou] in the Chunxi reign (Chunxi sanshan zhi 淳熙三山志):

In the Greater Fuzhou area alone some 38 monasteries were established in the Southern and Northern Dynasties and another 80 were added in the Tang. The Min Empire saw the establishment of 267, and another 331 were added soon after. The Song dynasty saw the establishment of 1406 monasteries. Some 1523 monasteries were still active in the Song dynasty. In the seventeenth century, among 67 existing religious institutions in the area, there were 44 Buddhist monasteries, five Taoist temples, and eighteen institutions of popular religion. Of the Buddhist institutions, one was built in the Han 漢, two were built in the Northern and Southern Dynasties 南北朝, ten in the Tang, seven in the Five Dynasties, thirteen in the Song and six in the Ming. Although the Ming dynasty built fewer

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6 The main product of the Huangbo tree (Phellodendrum amurense) is the alkaloid berberine, used as a natural dye and insecticide. It was widely used for impregnating government documents and religious texts to make them resistant to insects from as early as the seventh century. For example, the oldest dated printed text found in Dunhuang by Sir Marc Aurel Stein (1862–1943), the scroll of the Diamond Sutra (AD 868), had most probably been impregnated with Huangbo extract. For details, see Waku Hakuryū, Bukkyō shokubutsu jiten [A dictionary of plants in Buddhism] (Tokyo: Kokussho Kankō-kai, 1979), p.23. The British Library has conducted research to analyse the chemical composition of the dye used in this Diamond Sutra. See Peter J. Gibbs and Kenneth R. Seddon, Berberine and Huangbo: Ancient Colorants and Dyes, British Library Studies in Conservation Science, vol.2 (London: British Library, 1998).

7 For the development of Buddhist institutions in the Song, see Chikusa Masaaki, “Sōdai Fukken no shakai to shigen” [Society and monastery in Fujian in the Song dynasty], Chūgoku Bukkyō shakaishi kenkyū [Social studies on Chinese Buddhism] (Kyoto: Dohōsha, 1982), p.147.


12 One of these gazetteers was compiled by the Huangbo monk Jiefei Ruyi 即非一 (1616–71) in Japan. See Ruyi, Fuqing xianzhi xuzhi [Continued and abbreviated Gazetteer of Fuqing county], reprinted in Riben cang Zhongguo banjian difang zhi congkan [Series of rare Chinese local gazetteers preserved in Japan] (Beijing: Shumu Wenzian Chubanshe, 1992). The editor dates this work to 1547 according to Jiefei’s preface which was written in a “Dingmo” 日末 year; however, Jiefei was not born until 1616, so the correct year should be 1667, when Jiefei Ruyi was in Japan.

13 Li Chuanjia and Guo Wenzhang, Fuqing xianzhi (1672), reprint ed. in Qingdai guben fangzhi xuan [Selection of rare local gazetteers of the Qing dynasty], series 2, no.25–26 (Beijing: Xianzhuang Shuju, 2001).

This is perhaps the most commonly mispronounced Buddhist term. Chinese Buddhists conventionally pronounce it bore. See Ciyuan [Dictionary of phrases], revised ed. (Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1997), p.1428b.


17 Tokiwa Daijō has questioned this date. See his Shinu Bunka sbiseki: kaisetsu [Investigation of cultural relics in China: explanations] (Tokyo: Hōzōkan, 1939–41), vol.6, p.135.

According to legend, Huangbo Xiyun was acquainted with the Xuanzong emperor (r. 847–60) in the Tang dynasty who had once become a novice under Xiyun’s tutelage in fear of assassination by his brother, the notorious anti-Buddhist Wuzong emperor (r. 841–46). He was also one of Pei Xiu’s most admired Chan masters. The devout Prime Minister Pei Xiu was formerly renowned as a lay disciple of another Chan master, Zongmi (780–841). However, during his encounter with Xiyun, Pei Xiu seemed to be “converted” by him and claimed to have Xiyun’s “dharma seal”. Xiyun’s most important work, Chuanxin juyao [The Essential Teaching of Mind Transmission], was compiled by Pei Xiu. In addition, Xiyun had taught the extraordinary student Linji Yixuan, who was to spread Huangbo Xiyun’s teaching and established the Linji school.

Although Zhenggan’s life is still a mystery, Huangbo Xiyun, who also came from Mount Huangbo, is much better known in Chan history. Having being ordained at Mount Huangbo, he left for the Jiangxi area to study with Mazu and became a distinguished Chan master. Later, he renamed the mountain he resided on in Jiangxi “Huangbo”, probably because Mount Huangbo in Fujian was his home monastery. Although the fame
of Mount Huangbo in Jiangxi overshadowed the original Mount Huangbo in Fuqing, the latter was very prominent in its locality at least at the beginning of the Southern Song.\textsuperscript{19} For example, the *Gazetteer of the Three Mountains in the Chunxi Reign* records that the revenue generated by Huangbo Monastery amounted to five *guan* 貢 (strings of coins) and 558 *wen* 文 (coins).\textsuperscript{20} This figure indicates how much tax money Huangbo Monastery paid annually. This figure is greater than that for most other Buddhist monasteries in the county and is suggestive of the size of the monastery at that time. Calculated according to the ratio of money that land could produce per *mu* 歷 in Fuqing county (2.4 in this case), the total amount of arable land (probably excluding orchards) owned by the monastery might have amounted to 2,316 *mu*.\textsuperscript{21}

From the Song dynasty onward, as Chikusa Masaaki observes, Buddhist institutions had been in a state of steady economic decline.\textsuperscript{22} Other studies of Fujian Buddhism in the late Ming support Chikusa's conclusion. As T'ien Ju-k'ang notes, Buddhist monasteries in Fujian in the late Ming and early Qing were in a deplorable condition, in no way comparable to their glory in the Tang or early Song. T'ien regards the moral degeneration of Buddhism and the secularization of Buddhist monks as the main causes of Buddhism's decline.\textsuperscript{23}

In contrast to this pessimistic picture, Timothy Brook's study points to an extraordinary revival of Buddhist monasteries during the late Ming. Monasteries were rebuilt under the sponsorship of the local gentry, whose patronage of Buddhism symbolised the rise of another wave of local activism that further strengthened the power of local society while weakening state control. In particular, Brook documents the revival of four local monasteries, including Tiantong 天童 and Ayuwang 阿育王 (Aśoka), which were occupied by Miyun Yuanwu and his dharma heirs.\textsuperscript{24} Similarly, Wolfram Eberhard's statistics of Buddhist monasteries in local gazetteers also indicate that in addition to the tenth century, the years between 1550 and 1700 were one of the most active time periods for temple-building activities.\textsuperscript{25} Judging from the conclusions of these studies, there would seem to be little doubt that a national movement to revive local Buddhist monasteries was taking place at that time.

Huangbo Monastery likewise experienced a revival during this period. The direct impetus for rebuilding the monastery was the destruction caused by incursions of the Wokou (made up of Chinese and Japanese bandits) during the Jiajing 嘉靖 reign (1522–66). From 1545, the year when they first attacked Fuqing, to 1564, when General Qi Jiguan 戚繼光 (1528–87) finally quelled them, pirates visited Fuqing almost every year. During an attack in 1555, the main buildings of Huangbo Monastery were destroyed. Although pirate incursions made the already declining situa-
tion of Buddhism in the region worse, a reconstruction of social life in the locality took place after their suppression. This included the rebuilding of Buddhist monasteries such as Huangbo.

**Bestowal of the Imperial Canon upon Huangbo Monastery**

While the rebuilding after the pirate incursions revived local Buddhism in Fuqing, the true resurrection of Huangbo Monastery could not be realised without the sponsorship of the Shenzong emperor (r. 1573–1620). The emperor’s personal interest in accumulating merit for his mother and himself made him one of the greatest patrons of Buddhism in late-imperial China. Under his auspices, Buddhist monasteries throughout the country were rebuilt, eminent monks were sponsored and, most importantly, the Buddhist canon was reprinted and bestowed upon his favorite monasteries as significant “symbolic capital”. It would also have become easier for those monasteries receiving imperial copies of the canon to attract further support from their local communities.  

The idea of receiving such a royal benediction became appealing to a monk named Zhongtian Zhengyuan 中天正園 (1537–1610), who was residing in the dilapidated Huangbo Monastery. Lamenting the monastery’s destruction, he was determined to restore the Buddhist tradition there. In 1601, driven by the idea of glorifying Huangbo, he decided to go to Beijing 北京 to request a complete set of the Chinese Tripitaka from the Shenzong emperor. After waiting in Beijing in vain for eight years, however, he died there without any response from the imperial house. But in 1607, a Fuqing native named Ye Xianggao 葉向高 (1562–1627) became the grand chancellor of the court. Probably as a response to his petition, in 1614, the Shenzong emperor, in order to accumulate merit for his deceased mother Dowager Empress Cisheng 慈聖 (1546–1614), finally bestowed a complete set of the Buddhist canon upon the monastery. He subsequently changed the name of the monastery from Jiandesì 建德寺 to Wanfusi.

As a Fuqing native who had become prominent in the court, Grand Chancellor Ye Xianggao must have played a significant role in this process. Though a weak politician, Ye was a significant patron of religion in his hometown because of his high social status. As a witness to the rebuilding of Huangbo, he provided a detailed report of this event:

In the autumn of the Jiayin year [1614], because the emperor could not ease the deep mourning caused by his holy mother’s death, he distributed Buddhist canons to selected famous mountains and ancient monasteries.

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27 Ye Xianggao served twice in the grand secretariat, for the Wanli and Tianqi 天啟 (r. 1621–27) emperors respectively. He was elected a member of the grand secretariat in 1607 with six other officials. Despairing of politics, he was eventually permitted to retire in 1614. From 1621 to 1624, he was again summoned by the Tianqi emperor to be the chief grand chancellor (prime minister). For details of his political career, see Leng Dong, *Ye Xianggao yu Mingmo zhengtan* [Ye Xianggao and the politics of the late Ming] (Shantou: Shantou Daxue Chubanshe, 1996). In addition, he was a patron of Christianity. He introduced the Jesuit missionary Giulio Aleni (Chinese name: Ai Rulüe 艾儒略, 1582–1649) to the Fujian region. See my dissertation, “Controversy, Orthodoxy and the Transformation of Chan Buddhism in Seventeenth-century China” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2002), ch.4.
28 His efforts in this regard are well documented in his voluminous writings, including epitaphs, inscriptions and various essays concerning religion. Huangbo was one of the many monasteries of which he was a patron. For Ye’s involvement in the revival of Buddhism in Fujian, see Hayada Yoshio, “Mindai ni okeru Fukken to Bukkyō” [Fujian and Buddhism in the Ming dynasty], *Kenkyū kōsho* [Research Bulletin] (Kyoto Joshi Gaku’en Bukkyō Bunka Kenkyūjo) 17 (1987): 111–45, especially pp.132–7. He actively participated in other Buddhist construction projects as well. For example, the magnificent Buddhist pagoda Ruiyun塔 [Pagoda of Auspicious Clouds] was erected under his and his son’s sponsorship in 1615. For an artistic and architectural analysis of this tower, see Gustav Ecke, “Two Ashlar Pagodas at Fu-ch’ing in Southern Fu-chien: with Some Additional Notes on Prime-

in order to pray for his mother's blessing. There were six such monasteries in the country, and Huangbo Monastery was among them. The eunuch Wang Ju 王舉 was ordered to accompany the set of the Buddhist canon with 300 taels of gold granted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs as travel expenses. The imperial decree reads: "You are dispatched to guard it [the Buddhist canon] to the monastery". ²⁹

Under this royal decree, Huangbo Monastery was successful in securing an important symbolic asset that no doubt went on to attract more support from the local community. ³⁰

The Transformation of Huangbo into a Dharma Transmission Monastery

The installation of the imperial canon paved the way for Huangbo's revival. Under the patronage of Ye Xianggao and the local gentry, the monastery was reconstructed. By 1629, almost all the infrastructure was complete. At that time, Huangbo Monastery included not only the main structure of the monastic compound with completed buildings such as the Buddha Hall, Tripiṭaka storehouse, kitchen and dormitories for clerics, but also some other properties in its vicinity, including nine chapels (fan 傢), one cloister (yuan 院), 346 mu of arable land and 25 mu of orchards. ³¹ No doubt by the 1630s, with strong support from the imperial house and local gentry, Huangbo Monastery was a well-established Buddhist institution in the area. It had all the prestige and economic resources that a monastery could have. At this moment, however, the Huangbo abbots Longmi 隆宓 and Longrui 隆瑞, together with other gentry patrons, made an important decision: they would invite an "authentic" Chan master to restore the "ancestral way" and transform Huangbo into "a monastery of ten directions" (shifang conglin 十方叢林, that is a public monastery) forever. ³²

The Three Huangbo Masters

The candidate they chose was Miyun Yuanwu. Miyun Yuanwu had already gained fame as an heir of the Linji Chan teaching, and claimed to have received the orthodox transmission as the dharma heir of the thirtieth generation in Linji's lineage. Led by Ye Xianggao's grandson Ye Yifan 葉益蕃 (1595–?), the monastery's gentry patrons wrote several letters to Miyun Yuanwu expressing their wish to invite him as abbot. ³³

Miyun Yuanwu was a native of Yixing 宜興 county in Changzhou 常州 prefecture. ³⁴ (For his portrait, see Figure 3.) He joined the Buddhist order at the age of 29 after reading the Platform Sutra (Liuzu tanjing 六祖壇經). His teacher was the Linji master Huanyou Zhengchuan 幽有正
(1549–1614). After many years of service, Miyun gained his teacher’s trust and eventually received the dharma transmission from him. Miyun developed an iconoclastic teaching style that emphasized the spontaneous use of beating and shouting (banghe 棒喝). He became increasingly popular among the literati and enjoyed the reputation of a true Linji master. After Huanyou died, he succeeded to the abbacy of Mount Longchi 龍池 in Changzhou in 1617. He became extremely successful in his career and finally in 1631 (after his tenure at Huangbo) he was invited to Tiantong 天童 Monastery, the most prestigious Buddhist institution in South China.35

Mount Huangbo was one of the six monasteries he presided over as abbot. In the eighth month of the second year of the Chongzhen reign (1629), Miyun received the invitation from Huangbo Monastery and decided to accept the position. (His disciple Feiyin Tongrong, as a native of Fuqing, acted as a mediator.) On 9 May 1630, Miyun Yuanwu arrived at Huangbo and was officially installed as abbot. However, just over eight months later, he received an invitation from Ayuwang Monastery in Ningbo, one of the five most prestigious monasteries in South China, and left Huangbo for his new position. For a big monastery like Huangbo with the intention of becoming a “public” monastery, if the abbacy was vacant, then another eminent monk should be invited from outside, regardless of sectarian considerations. What happened next, however, indicates a subtle change in the nature of the public monastery. A year after Miyun Yuanwu’s departure, his dharma heir Feiyin Tongrong, who had actually received dharma transmission during Miyun’s presence in Huangbo, was invited to be abbot.

Feiyin Tongrong was a native of Fuqing. (For his portrait, see Figure 4.) He became a monk when he was fourteen years old due to family hardship. He had studied first with masters of the Caodong 曹洞 school (a rival of the Linji school); however, his understanding of Chan teaching was not appreciated

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35 For Miyun Yuanwu’s biography, see “Miyun chanshi nianpu” [Chronological biography of Chan master Miyun], in Miyun chanshi yulu [Recorded sayings of Chan master Miyun], Ming-
by his teachers, who favored scholastic exegesis of scriptures and assiduous meditation. Greatly interested in Miyun's Chan style of spontaneous beating and shouting, he met Miyun in 1622 and was converted to his teaching. After several years of study under Miyun, Feiyin finally received his transmission in Huangbo Monastery during Miyun's brief residence there. Feiyin's chronological biography states that he was (as noted) actually instrumental in introducing Miyun to Mount Huangbo; according to this record, Feiyin returned to Fuqing for half a year in 1630 and introduced Miyun Yuanwu's name to the local Fuqing literati, hence the decision of the literati patrons of Mount Huangbo to invite Miyun to be abbot. As a result of Feiyin Tongrong's negotiation, Miyun accepted the position. In a public ceremony in the seventh month of 1630 Miyun conferred upon Feiyin the certificate of dharma transmission, with whisk and robe. When Miyun left in the eighth month, Feiyin was invited to Mafeng 馬峰 cloister in northern Fujian. In 1633, he was invited back to Huangbo as abbot. When Feiyin took over the monastery, he immediately appointed Yinyuan Longqi as Head of the Western Hall (xiang 西堂), the position next to the abbot in seniority and the most probable candidate to be the next abbot.

Yinyuan Longqi was also a native of Fuqing. (For his portrait, see Figure 5.) His interest in Buddhism was triggered by a trip to Mount Putuo 普陀, the famous pilgrimage site dedicated to the goddess Guanyin 觀音 (Sk. Avalokiteśvara). In 1612, when he was 21 years old, he embarked on a journey to search for his father, who had been missing since he was young. He visited Mount Putuo in 1614 and was converted to Buddhism. In 1619, he was ordained at Mount Huangbo. Bored by Buddhist exegesis, he was attracted by Miyun's teaching of the direct comprehension of truth through beating and shouting. He studied with Miyun in Jinsu 金箋 Monastery from 1624. In 1629, when Miyun Yuanwu was invited to Huangbo, Yinyuan (as a native of Fuqing) was asked to accompany him. When Miyun returned to Ningbo 寧波, Yinyuan remained at Huangbo. He was later invited to a small cloister named Lion Cliff (Shizi

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36 For Feiyin Tongrong’s biography, see “Feiyin chanshi jinianlu” [Chronological biography of Chan master Feiyin], in Feiyin Tongrong chanshi yulu [Recorded sayings of Chan master Feiyin], Mingban jiaxing dazangjing, vol.26, no.178.

37 For Yinyuan’s biography, see Nōnin Ködō, Ingen zenshi nenpu [Chronological biography of Chan master Yinyuan] (Kyoto: Zenbunka Kenkyūjo, 1999).
JIANG WU

A Dharma Transmission Monastery in the Seventeenth Century

The system of succession at Huangbo described above is typical of the “dharma transmission” monastery as it took shape in the seventeenth century. With the rise of Chan Buddhism, many local monasteries were converted to this new type of monastery. The appointment of a new abbot was significant for both the monastery and the local community; the current abbot would step down, and the monks in the community would give up the opportunity of succeeding to the position. Moreover, all monastic property would be subject to the will of the new abbot, who could be a complete stranger. For the local gentry, this meant that a social force foreign to the locality would intrude into their territory. As a study by Hasebe Yükei observes, the dharma transmission model where candidates for the abbacy were selected only from among its own dharma heirs, became a popular form of Buddhist institution.

In the dharma transmission monastery, the abbot and his successors belonged to a single dharma lineage. In principle they


39 For historical background to Yin-yuan’s migration to Japan, see my article, “Leaving for the Rising Sun: the Historical Background of Yinyuan’s Migration to Japan in 1654”, *Asia Major* (3rd series) 17.2 (2004): 89-120.

Figure 5

*Master Yinyuan Longqi (1592–1673), by Kita Genki. Reprint from Obaku bunka (Uji, 1992). Courtesy of Manpukuji, p.6*
served a tenure of three years, the position rotating within the particular dharma family according to seniority. Not all dharma heirs were available or willing to serve. Therefore, very often, the position would go to several of the most influential or active of the dharma heirs in turn, one of whom would then pass the position to his own dharma heirs; the abbacy would then remain within that lineage (an example from Tiantong Monastery will be outlined in detail below). In his study of seventeenth-century monastic orders, Hasebe concludes that there was a movement to transform more and more Buddhist institutions into dharma transmission monasteries. As Hasebe points out, dharma transmission monasteries in the seventeenth century were different from the public monasteries and private monasteries that had been institutionalised in the Song.

From the time of the Song dynasty, Chinese monasteries had been classified by the government into two basic forms: private monasteries (jiayi 甲乙) and public monasteries (shibang 十方). According to the *Compendium of Song Administrative Laws during the Qingyuan Reign* (Qingyuan tiaofo shilei 慶元條法事類) compiled in 1203, the private monastery system allowed the position of abbot to be transmitted among the abbot’s disciples (not his dharma heirs). The public monastery system required that the new abbot be chosen from outside the monastery rather than from among the ordained disciples of the previous abbot. The dharma transmission monastery system took shape as an offshoot of the public monastery system. In the seventeenth century, dharma transmission became an increasingly important criterion for selecting the new abbot. Strictly speaking, a dharma transmission monastery was neither public nor private. When Huangbo officially became a “public” monastery, it was not a genuine “ten-direction” institution consistently following the abbot-selection principle of a public monastery. Instead, as outlined above, when the first abbot Miyun Yuanwu retired, the abbacy was restricted to his dharma heirs only; and thus Huangbo changed from a “public” monastery to a dharma transmission monastery.

In the *Compendium of Song Administrative Laws*, the Song government made the following stipulations regarding the monastic system:

If the position of abbot of a ten-direction Buddhist or Taoist monastery is vacant, the prefect should commission Buddhist and Taoist administrators to convene the abbots of ten-direction Buddhist and Taoist monasteries in order to elect Buddhist monks or Taoist clerics who are senior in

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41 The origins of this system, and especially of the emergence of public monasteries, are still not clear. It is generally believed that the system was related to the monastic practice of Chan Buddhism in the late Tang and Five Dynasties period and later spread to other monasteries. *Tiantong sizhi* [Monastic
age and learned, and who are admired and supported by all. Then [the selection] should be verified and reported to the prefect, who decides the appointment after examination. If no one is reported, the authority will elect a candidate from some other area who is admired and widely supported.\textsuperscript{42}

As pointed out in a study by Huang Minzhi 黄敏枝, the benefit of being a ten-direction institution was that a monastery could have a larger pool of candidates for the abbacy, and it was therefore easier to maintain the continuity of religious training. The drawback, however, was that the frequent changes of abbot often led to chaotic management and the loss of monastic property. For this reason, in the late Southern Song, many public monasteries petitioned the government to be allowed to change back to private monastery status.\textsuperscript{43}

Dharma transmission monasteries had originally taken shape when the first Chan patriarch was invited to be abbot in a public monastery. After his tenure, the position of abbot was exclusively reserved for his dharma heirs, who either rotated the position of abbot among themselves or subsequently handed it down to their own dharma heirs.\textsuperscript{44}

Miyun Yuanwu, Feiyin Tongrong and Yinyuan Longqi, the three masters who had been abbots of Huangbo, were active in building their own dharma transmission monasteries. For example, according to Ishii Shūdō 石井修道, Mount Tiantong at Ningbo, the most famous Chan monastery in China, became a dharma transmission monastery controlled by Miyun Yuanwu's dharma heirs for almost a hundred years, from 1630 to 1750.\textsuperscript{45} After Miyun Yuanwu's death in 1642, its abbacy rotated among its dharma heirs:

1642–45: Muchen Daomin 本門道念 (1596–1674), Miyun’s dharma heir
1645–48: Feiyin Tongrong, Miyun’s dharma heir
1648–52: Linye Tongqi 林野通奇 (1595–1652), Miyun’s dharma heir
1652–54: Muyun Tongmen 牧雲通門 (1599–1671), Miyun’s dharma heir
1654–57: Fushi Tongxian 浮石通賢 (1593–1667), Miyun’s dharma heir
1657–59: Muchen Daomin, Miyun’s dharma heir
1659–71: Yuan’an Benfeng 遠庵本豐 (1622–82), Muchen Daomin’s dharma heir
1672–86: Shanxiao Benxi 山曉本皙 (1620–86), Muchen Daomin's dharma heir
1686–88: Baitang Chaojing 柏堂超靜, Shanxiao Benxi's dharma heir
1688–96: Weihong Yuansheng 慰弘元盛, Shanxiao Benxi's dharma heir
1696–1705: Tianyue Benzhou 天岳本晧 (1621–1705), Muchen Daomin's dharma heir
1705–12: Weizai Chaocheng 偉哉超乘 (1651–1724), Tianyue Benzhou's dharma heir

It is clear from this list that Tiantong Monastery was under the firm control of a lineage of dharma transmission. After Miyun Yuanwu's death in 1642, the position of abbot of Tiantong Monastery rotated among several of his most important dharma heirs. After several decades, it became clear that the position belonged to Muchen Daomin's lineage. This institutional change initiated by Miyun Yuanwu was significant in several ways. First, life became centered on a charismatic figure who had certified dharma transmission. Second, succession as abbot was restricted to that master's dharma heirs. Third, because these abbots would most probably be invited to another monastery after their tenure, these monasteries formed unofficial relationships of affiliation bonded by the dharma transmission of their presiding abbots.

The Rationalisation of Dharma Transmission

Huangbo Monastery was built upon the ideal of the dharma transmission monastery. For such a monastery, the central issue is the rationalisation of dharma transmission that governs monastic bureaucracy and organizes the clerical hierarchy among monks, as the abbacy succession hinges upon a clearly defined line of transmission. Therefore the Huangbo masters made every effort to justify, codify and perpetuate the practice of dharma transmission. Their systematic endeavors included the following: regularly updating the genealogy of dharma transmission; regulating the naming practice of dharma heirs and disciples; issuing certificates and credentials of dharma transmission; and monopolising the succession system of the abbacy. The following sections will discuss each of these practices.

Updating the Genealogy of Dharma Transmission

Just like any other lineage organization in Chinese society, a Chan lineage maintains its continuity with the past through constantly updating its records, in this case the records of dharma transmission. Recording the
Feiyin's book was provocative because the issue of Tianhuang Daowu (748-807) and Tianwang Daowu (738-819) was brought to light. Both monks lived in Jingzhou but in different monasteries. Tianwang Daowu was Mazu Daoyi's dharma heir and Tianhuang Daowu was Shitou Xiqian's. The debate concerns the lineage affiliation of Longtan Chongxin. The official Chan transmission records put him under Tianhuang Daowu, while some contended that he should be the heir of Tianwang Daowu. The change of his lineage according to his master would affect the affiliations of two sub-lineages derived from him, namely Fayan and Yunmen. For this dispute, see my dissertation, "Orthodoxy, Controversy and the Transformation of Chan Buddhism in Seventeenth-century China", ch.3. See also my book Enlightenment in Dispute: The Reinvention of Chan Buddhism in Seventeenth-century China (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). The examples set by Miyun and Feiyin greatly influenced Yin yuan and his disciples when their sense of identity started to take shape in Huangbo in China and then later in Japan. In 1657, Feiyin Tongrong's Wudeng yantong was reprinted in Japan by Yin yuan Longqi, symbolising the beginning of a stricter dharma transmission practice.

transmission fulfils two functions that are crucial to the life of a lineage: the production of new heirs is faithfully recorded, and this information is made available to the public. Through these practices a lineage, regardless that each individual member might be separated geographically, is bonded in a textualised relationship.

The production of Chan genealogies was phenomenal during the seventeenth century, when voluminous writings on Chan genealogy were composed and promoted. Monks devoted their energies to historical research in order to clarify obscure transmissions. The Huangbo masters were extremely active in compiling, modifying and publishing new versions of their genealogy, even when their efforts were met with discontent. The first systematic effort was begun when Miyun Yuanwu arrived in Huangbo. A local scholar named Wu Tong presented him with a version of the Chan genealogy that he had composed. Miyun took the project and asked his disciple Muchen Daomin to complete it. The final version, entitled Generational Genealogy of Chan Lamps (Chandeng shipu), was published in 1632. In this book the Chan genealogy is organized into a chart and the names of Chan masters are listed according to their dharma transmission relationships. The most recent recipients of dharma transmission were updated. Those eminent monks who had no proof of their dharma transmission were relegated to the category "lineage unknown" (siya weixiang).

The second major effort was Feiyin Tongrong's genealogical work Strict Genealogy of the Five Chan Schools (Wudeng yantong), published in 1654. Like his master, Feiyin Tongrong maintained a strict definition of dharma transmission. He demanded the authentication of all Chan masters, even those who were widely respected, as proven spiritual leaders. In his work, every line of transmission without exception came under critical and rational scrutiny, and the ideal principle of face-to-face transmission was supposed to be upheld. For him, if a Chan master had not studied with a teacher in person, he was not qualified to claim that teacher's dharma transmission. Feiyin Tongrong even deliberately changed the conventionally accepted genealogy on the basis of newly discovered inscriptions of ancient Chan masters. As a result, this "strict sense" of dharma transmission led to contestation and resentments in the Buddhist world. In 1654, a notorious lawsuit over Feiyin's Strict Genealogy broke out and caused turmoil in Chan communities.

The Naming Practice of Dharma Heirs and Disciples

The Huangbo masters' practice of naming newly initiated novices and dharma heirs also reflected the rationalisation of dharma transmission. For example, characters contained in transmission poems were used in
monks' names as markers of a common generation in order to construct a sectarian consciousness. The transmission poems, usually written by the founder of a lineage, provide hierarchical structures for the lineage in that each new member of a given generation will take the same word from the poem (the next word in sequence after the word used by the previous generation) as his generation character (beizi). All members of the same generation will have this identical generation character. As a result, even if a lineage develops into a multi-branched organization, its distant relatives can still identify each other through tracing their positions and ranks according to the transmission poem. In this sense, the significance of a transmission poem is not its literary merit; rather, it is a device for institution building. The key to writing such a poem is that no character can be used more than once; otherwise, members of different generations would have the same character as their identity marker and there would be confusion about their rank in the entire hierarchy. If the lineage develops to the extent that all the characters in the poem are used up, a new poem can be composed to supplement the original one. Although the use of generational names from transmission poems was not unique in the seventeenth century, the Huangbo masters greatly strengthened this practice (as is evident in their extant transmission poems).

Monastic communities in China are prototype lineage organizations based on a system of fictive reproduction that produces multiple layers of master-disciple relationships. At the bottom of this system is the ordination ceremony, which creates what Holmes Welch calls the "tonsure family" (tiju zongpai): under a certain master a disciple's hair is shaved and he is given a name carrying the generation character of the master's tonsure lineage. The novice's monastic identity is thus established as a member of this tonsure family, and he is accordingly woven into the relationship web of an ordination lineage. Beyond this, a fully ordained monk can acquire an additional identity through dharma transmission, whereby he is initiated into a more exclusive fellowship that grants him prestige and qualifies him to hold office in the monastic bureaucracy, even to become the abbot of a monastery.

A monk's name mattered, because the Chan dharma transmission closely mirrored the practice of lineage organizations in the secular world. Many secular naming practices were introduced into the Chan world. From the time of Master Dao'an (314–85), sī (at the time of Master Dao'an 道安 (314–85), sī 釋, the first character of the Chinese transliteration of the name of Śākyamuni, had been accepted as the universal "surname" for all Chinese Buddhist monks. This name was often used by officials and scholars to identify Buddhist clergy in historical sources. Besides their formal dharma names, monks also have "special names" (biehào 別號). According to Buddhist historiography, this tradition

was started by Huiyue 惠約 (452–535), who named himself “the wise one” (zhizhe 智者) in 523.⁴⁹ Therefore, a monk’s conventional name is usually a four-character compound. For Chan masters, later generations began to add titles or the names of monasteries to their names. For example, Huineng was titled “the Sixth Patriarch”; Xiyun was named after Huangbo mountain where he had resided; and the name of the founding father of the Linji 临济 school, “Yixuan” 義玄, was supplemented with the name of Linji Monastery. In the Song dynasty, Chan monks also gave themselves courtesy names or style names (zi 字) in addition to the dharma names they had received in their ordination ceremonies. For example, the monk Huihong 慧洪 (1071–1128) named himself “Juefan” 削範 and the monk Keqin 克勤 (1063–1135) called himself “Yuanwu” 圓悟.

The names of Chan monks in the Ming dynasty also followed this tradition, and because of a rising sectarian consciousness monks were inclined to record and publicize their naming practices. A common naming practice can be summarized as follows. First, a dharma name was given when a monk was ordained as a novice. This name was to be permanent, although it could be altered if the monk decided to change his affiliation. The significance of the dharma name, as we have seen, was that it carried a generation character as an identity marker, after the naming practice of secular lineage organizations. Similarly each master had his own transmission poem for his line of ordination, just as a lineage did. For example, Yinyuan Longqi had the style name “Yinyuan” and the dharma name “Longqi”. The first character in his dharma name, long 隆, indicates that he was ordained in Huangbo Monastery, as this character is taken from that monastery’s transmission poem. Feiyin Tongrong bore the character tong, which indicates that he would have been ordained under Miyun Yuanwu, whose transmission poem designates the next generation character as tong.⁵⁰ In many cases, out of respect for the lineage, this character marking the master-disciple relationship was avoided and is simply omitted from official documents or Buddhist historical sources. Thus “Miyun Yuanwu” becomes “Miyun Wu”, “Feiyin Tongrong” becomes “Feiyin Rong”, and “Yinyuan Longqi” becomes “Yinyuan Qi”.

This naming system was based on the tonsure relationship formed between master and disciple regardless of dharma transmission. Like a newborn baby, a novice was given a name by his ordination master upon initiation. This name could later be changed according to the monk’s personal wish, especially with the occurrence of dharma transmission, as dharma transmission could be regarded as a second initiation whereby a monk would be incorporated into another religious order in addition to his original tonsure family. When dharma transmission was bestowed upon a monk, he could choose to change his name according to his new master’s transmission poem, or he could keep his original name. He might also decide to continue both his new master’s tonsure transmission and dharma

⁵⁰ These poems can be found in Huangbo shanshi, in Xiuji Shiku quanshu, vol.719, p.309. More complete transmission poems can be found in “Zong Jiao Li jiu yanpai” [Lineage charts of Chan, Teaching and Vinaya schools] in Wanzi Xuzangjing, vol.150, pp.524–41 and also in Chanmen risong [Daily liturgy of Chan Buddhism] (Tianning version) (Taipei: Laogu Wenhua Shiye Gongsi, 1986). The following is the transmission poem used by Miyun Yuanwu’s lineage. It was believed to have been initiated by Xuefeng Zhuding. See Chanmen risong, p.386. The ancestral Way honors discipline and meditation. How just, broad, correct; perfect, and all-embracing is it! Its practice is so superior that it illuminates the ultimate reality. Its complete understanding will result in the realisation of the meaning of emptiness.

The ancestral teaching is cherished in mind; its merits and practices are perfect and harmonious.

Its good fruits are bliss and wisdom; the true awakenings rise and prevail.

Human nature and the Way are originally pure; they expand as such and penetrate the ultimate reality.

Compassion and wisdom are spread; the root is illuminated and the lineage is continued.

One mind can reach its goal by itself; and it can comprehend completely the center of mystery.

Forever must we penetrate the supreme teaching, and greatly glorify our ancestors.
transmission. Feiyin Tongrong, for example, initially received the dharma name “Mingmi” 明密 from his Caodong teacher. The name was changed to “Tongrong” when he received dharma transmission from Miyun, and almost all of his immediate disciples were given the generation character xìng in accordance with Miyun’s transmission poem. Another famous example was the conversion of the Japanese monk Ryōkei Shōsen 龍溪 宗藩 (1602–70), a Zen master originally from Myōshinji 妙心寺. He was attracted to Yinyuan Longqi’s teaching and changed his name (to Shōsen 性禪) in order to take on Yinyuan’s transmission character. He was eventually rewarded with Yinyuan’s dharma transmission in 1664; however, he was permanently removed from the Myashinjiha, his original sectarian affiliation.51

Usually monks would keep their original names and carry on their own tonsure tradition without interruption. Yinyuan Longqi, for instance, did not change his name upon receiving Feiyin’s transmission. He remained in the Huangbo tonsure tradition, and his disciples in both China and Japan carried the Huangbo generation characters rather than those of his masters (Miyun and Feiyin). It was also possible for a newly initiated master to begin a new transmission line based on a new transmission poem beginning with his own name. Miyun Yuanwu’s dharma heir Muchen Daomin was one such ambitious monk who composed his own transmission poem and thus started a new transmission line.52

In short, for Chinese monks in the seventeenth century, any given name had to be traceable within the large lineage structures. In this way, a sense of “family” was created and reinforced.

The Use of Transmission Certificates

For the Huangbo masters, issuing transmission certificates was the most important practice for certifying dharma heirs and avoiding frauds. Certificates were widely used in Chan communities as a means of proving the authenticity of dharma transmission. Already in the Song dynasty Chan masters were concerned with the authenticity of transmission and introduced certificates; such certificates can in fact be traced back as early as the thirteenth century when Dōgen visited China and observed their use. At that time, the certificate was called a “succession document” (sishu 嗣書). During Dōgen’s visit in China from 1223 to 1227, he saw several documents of succession. One of them was a document belonging to Chuanzangzhu 傳藏主 of the Yangqi 楊岐 branch of the Linji school. According to Dōgen, this document lists all the patriarchs’ names starting from the Seven Buddhas of the past. The line passes through Linji (the 45th patriarch), continues with the names of Linji’s successors, and ends with the last successor before Chuanzangzhu. All these names form a circle.

52 Muchen Daomin’s transmission poem is as follows:

The Way came into mysterious existence before Buddhas and patriarchs.
Its illuminates as the bright sun shines in the middle of the sky.
Its numinous origin nourishes all and
the wind of compassion reaches everywhere.
The true lamp that illumines the world
and will be upheld forever.

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Dōgen also described in some detail the Linji master Wuji Liaopai’s document of succession, which he saw in 1224:

The lineage of the buddhas and patriarchs was written on a white silk scroll with a front cover made of red brocade and a roller made of jade. It was nine ts‘un wide [approximately ten inches] and seven ch‘ih long [approximately seven feet].

This scroll was conferred upon Wuji Liaopai by Dahui Zonggao’s disciple Fozhao Deguang (1121–1203). Dōgen recorded its format as follows:

Tripitaka Master Liaopai, a native of Wuwei, is now my son [disciple]. Fozhao served Master [Zonggao of Mount Jingshan, Jingshan [Zonggao] was an heir of Jiashan [Kelqing; [Kelqing was an heir of Yangqi [Falyan,…

The text goes on until it traces the origin of transmission back to Linji.

During the seventeenth century, rather than being called sisbu, transmission certificates were generally referred to as yuanliu (origins and streams).55 The earliest record of the use of yuanliu, as Hasebe points out, indicates that Miyun Yuanwu’s master Huanyou Zhengchuan first received such a certificate from his master Xiaoyan Debao (1512–81).56 Miyun Yuanwu continued this tradition, and through him and his disciples yuanliu were promoted and widely accepted as credentials for certified dharma transmission.

Fortunately, one such transmission certificate survives from the seventeenth century. The certificate belonging to Yinyuan Longqi, issued to

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**Figure 6**


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55 Although Buddhists at that time believed that the name of the document came from Linji himself, there is no evidence to support this claim.
56 Hasebe Yükei, Min Shinhakkyō kyōdanshi kenkyū, p.362.
him by Feiyin Tongrong in the tenth year of the Chongzhen 崇禎 reign (1637), was preserved in Manpukuji. As noted above, according to Yinyuan Longqi’s chronological biography, Feiyin had already left Huangbo for Lianfeng ęd峰 cloister in Jianyang 建陽. In that year Yinyuan was living in solitude in one of Huangbo Monastery’s sub-temples; later, when he received this document from Feiyin’s messenger, he accepted the invitation to be abbot at Huangbo Monastery.

The certificate takes the form of a long scroll, with all the patriarchs’ names listed as follows:

From above laiyuan 來源 [origination] is inherited:
Under the Sixth Patriarch
Nanyue [Huairang]: the first generation
Mazu [Daoliyi]: the second generation
Baizhang [Huaihai]: the third generation
Huangbo [Xiyun]: the fourth generation
Linji [Yixuan]: the fifth generation

Yuanwu [Keqin]: the fifteenth generation
Huqiu [Shaolong]: the sixteenth generation

Yuexin [Debao]: the thirty-second generation
Huangyou [Zhengchuan]: the thirty-three generation
Miyun [Yuanwu]: the thirty-fourth generation

In the tenth year of the Chongzhen reign, Feiyin Tongrong of Lianfeng Cloister writes by hand and confers [it] upon the Chan person Yinyuan [Longqi].

Although the name of this document and the actual wording of its contents are different from those of its earlier counterpart, the function of these credentials is the same: authenticating the transmission of the Buddhist dharma. In association with the issuing of a transmission certificate, the recipient is supposed to compose a eulogy to laud his predecessors. This genre of composition, often titled “Eulogy of the Origins and Streams” (Yuanliu song 源流頌), usually consists of brief biographies of all previous masters with the new recipient’s own encomium attached after each biography. These were often published and widely circulated as a public notice of the conferral and acceptance of dharma transmission.

Selecting a New Abbot

During the seventeenth century, when the dharma transmission system was taking shape, certain conventions regarding the abbot’s succession were followed. For example, after Miyun Yuanwu took over a monastery, the next abbot would be selected from among his certified dharma heirs.

who rotated the position among themselves by drawing lots. Feiyin Tongrong, in a dispute with his dharma brother Muchen Daomin about the succession in Tiantong Monastery, described this practice as follows:

Our deceased great master [Miyun Yuanwu] had been abbot in six great monasteries during his lifetime. Every time he retired from the position and was about to propose a successor, he practised divination at the Weitou 韋陀 [Vitāsoka] hall and also drew lots before patrons and eminent monks. Later, in Tiantong Monastery, he often used this method in particular.\(^{60}\)

The same practice was followed in Huangbo Monastery. After Yinyuan Longqi's long residence, the abbacy went to his dharma heirs and rotated among them. However, this unwritten convention was not codified until 1673, when the Ōbaku Pure Rules (Ōbaku shingi 黃檗清規) were compiled in Japan. At the end of this version of monastic codes, Yinyuan's will (Rōjin fushokugo 老人附屬語) was appended as part of the codified rules for all Ōbaku monasteries. It stipulates the procedure of abbot succession in Manpukuji, which had been developed in China:

Select the third abbot and so on from among my Dharma heirs according to their rank. After they have served in turn, go on to the next generation of disciples [literally, Dharma grandchildren]. By all means select virtuous monks already deserving of esteem who will successfully promote the Dharma style ... \(^{61}\)

Other parts of Yinyuan's will articulate the same exclusiveness of his lineage and the intention to monopolise a monastic network. For example, Yinyuan stipulated that "only dharma heirs under the Ōbaku lineage can be included in the Hall of Conjoining Lamps (Liandeng tang 聯燈堂). If not in receipt of transmission, even those who are virtuous and eminent may not be intermingled".\(^{62}\) These statements set clear rules for selecting abbots: the candidate pool was limited to Yinyuan's own certified dharma heirs. The abbot's succession in a dharma transmission monastery was thus formally institutionalised. Later the codification of this system was achieved in Japan, but it had already been widely accepted and practised in Huangbo and other monasteries in China.

**Conclusion**

This paper focusses on a Buddhist institution that was revived by a group of Chan monks in the seventeenth century. I have demonstrated how the three Chan masters took control of Huangbo Monastery, a local
institution, and turned it into a dharma transmission monastery, which was to become a popular form of Buddhist institution in seventeenth-century China. By way of a series of efforts to institutionalise the changes centering on the practice of dharma transmission, Huangbo Monastery became a model Chan institution, embodying the Chan ideal cherished by Buddhist clergy and laity at that time. From the perspective of this process of institution building, it becomes clear that the practice of dharma transmission was essential in a monastery dominated by Chan monks.

When we discuss the issue of dharma transmission, we must situate it in the wider history of Chan Buddhism. Certainly, the concept and practice of dharma transmission had appeared in early Chan Buddhism and was further developed in the Song and Yuan as many studies show. It is clear from these studies that Chan dharma transmissions, though these were very often fabricated, served as a rhetorical tool for implementing Chan ideology. However, it is not enough simply to point to its rhetorical nature. The discourse of dharma transmission had profound social and institutional functions within Chan communities. As documented in this study, for Chan monks in the seventeenth century, dharma transmission was more than mere rhetoric. It had all kinds of implications in real monastic life.

As a result of the emergence of the dharma transmission monastic system, an institutional network took shape and connected once disparate and localised Buddhist institutions. Within this monastic world, dharma transmission became a powerful tool to extend an institutional network that covered most prominent Buddhist centers in China, and became the core organizational principle of monasteries like Huangbo. Even in the early-twentieth century, dharma transmission still influenced the Buddhist world. Holmes Welch, based on his study of Chinese Buddhism in the Republican era, correctly points out the role of dharma transmission in the construction of a national Buddhist network. Welch notes that dharma scrolls ($fajuan$), a modern form of transmission certificate, “were alike in contributing a network of connection that covered most of the Chinese Sangha”. For him, in many respects, a Chan lineage is analogous to a natural family relationship in China. Although the networks bonded by dharma transmission were sometimes weak, “[they were links that might grow stronger if circumstances were favorable]”. Welch’s conclusion is significant for us in understanding the constructive role of dharma transmission:

All these networks of affiliation were superimposed one upon the other, loosely and haphazardly binding together in different combinations the hundreds of big monasteries and tens of thousands of small temples in Chinese Buddhism in the Republican era, correctly points out the role of dharma transmission in the construction of a national Buddhist network. Welch notes that dharma scrolls ($fajuan$), a modern form of transmission certificate, “were alike in contributing a network of connection that covered most of the Chinese Sangha”.  For him, in many respects, a Chan lineage is analogous to a natural family relationship in China. Although the networks bonded by dharma transmission were sometimes weak, “[they were links that might grow stronger if circumstances were favorable]”. Welch’s conclusion is significant for us in understanding the constructive role of dharma transmission:

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China. Despite their haphazardness they were a more genuine cement, I think, than the various Buddhist associations that sprang up after the revolution of 1911. Even when these associations were national in scope, their main function was to serve as intermediaries in dealing with the government.  

Here Welch refers to dharma transmission as forming the fundamental network that connected all Chinese monasteries. The role of dharma transmission was considerably weakened in the Republican era, and the various Buddhist associations emerging in modern China, including those that have undergone “reform” by the Chinese government, are only superficially connected in comparison to the dharma transmission system. However, as I have shown, in the seventeenth century when the social and cultural circumstances were favorable to Chan Buddhism, dharma transmission became the essential practice for reviving Buddhist institutions.