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From prominence to obscurity : a study of the Darumashū : Japan's first Zen school

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CHAPTER TWO
DAINICHIBŌ NŌNIN: FRAGMENTS OF BIOGRAPHY

NŌNIN IN *GENKŌ SHAKUSHO* AND *HONCHŌ KŌSŌDEN*

The term biography is perhaps an overstatement for the two textual notices we have on Dainichibō Nōnin, the founder of the Japanese Darumashū. The earliest description of Nōnin's career is embedded in a biography of Eisai in the Buddhist history *Genkō Shakusho* (Record of Buddhism from the Genkō era) (1322) by Kokan Shiren (1278-1346):

> In the *tsuchinoto-tori* year (1189) there was someone called Nōnin. Having heard about the flourishing of the [Zen] school in the country of Song, he put his students on a ship to enquire with Chan master Fozhao Guang from Yuwang. Fozhao took pity on the foreign believers and was moved to console them. He presented them with a dharma robe and a painting of Bodhidharma, inscribed with a verse of praise. Nōnin boasted about Guang's courtesy gifts and deceivingly propagated the Zen school. He lacked transmission from a master and [observed] no restrictive precepts. In the capital they despised him. When Eisai started to propagate the Mind school nobles and commoners rejected him because they confused him with Nōnin.
>
> A person called Ryōben, from Chikuzen Hakozaki, was jealous of Eisai's Zen activities and persuaded the clergy of Mount Hiei to petition the court to expel him. In year six (1195), on account of an imperial decree, the Fujiwara Great Minister summoned Eisai to his office and had him questioned by Administrator Nakasuke. Left Aide to the Imperial Secretary Muneyori participated.[86] Eisai denounced [Nōnin's] bogus group 僞黨 and championed the True Vehicle. While the hatted officials listened in awe, he thoroughly clarified the matter. Eisai said: "My Zen teaching did not begin just now. Long ago great master Dengyō of Mount Hiei composed the *Naishō buppō kechimyakufu*: this beginning is none other then my Zen teaching of Bodhidharma who came from the West. As for this Ryōben, he is a muddle-headed fool who persuaded Tendai followers to falsely accuse me. If the Zen school were wrong then Dengyō was wrong. If Dengyō were wrong then Tendai teachings would not have been established. Without the establishment of Tendai teachings how can it be that Tendai followers are rejecting me? The followers darken the intention of the founder. Is this not a grave matter?" Eisai and Nōnin debated on doctrinal topics many times. Nōnin closed his mouth and retreated. Thereupon the ways of Eisai prospered in the capital.[87]

The next substantial piece of writing we have on Nōnin is a biographical entry in the Edo period *Honchō kōsōden* (Biographies of Eminent Monks of Our Country) (1702) by the Buddhist

[86] In 1195 the Great Minister (Sōkoku 相國) was Fujiwara no Kanefusa 藤原兼房 (1153-1217). Meant here is probably Kanefusa's older brother, the powerful Fujiwara no Kanezane (Kūjō Kanezane 九条兼実), who at the time held the rank of Regent (Kanpaku 関白). From Kanezane's diary *Gyokuyō* 玉葉 it is known that Muneyori 宗頼 and Nakasuke 仲資 were both stewards (Keishi 家司) in Kanezane's service. See Taga Munehaya, *Eisai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1965), pp. 109-10.

[87] DNBZ 62, p. 156.

historian and Zen monk Mangen Shiban (1626-1710). In Shiban's view Nōnin's life merited a distinct biographical entry. Shiban's interest in Nōnin may have been informed by the retrospective currents in the Zen schools of the time. Like many Zen monks in the early Edo period Shiban was of the opinion that the Zen tradition had gravely detoriated; this sentiment gave rise to a reformist movement that sought to restore the tradition by reexamining its medieval origins. Compared to Shiren's fleeting description, Shiban's account is extensive and detailed; it mentions Nōnin's students, their connection to Dōgen, and other particulars, including a report of Nōnin's death, to which we will return later. First the biography:

> Biography of śramana Nōnin from Sambōji in Settsu. Monk Nōnin was called Dainichi. He was an uncle of the Heike officer Kagekiyo. From a young age he attended lectures and studied sūtras and commentaries. By nature he enjoyed meditation. He polished his spirit, made effort, and suddenly attained the state of awakening. In Suita, in the province of Settsu, he established Sambōji and fervently propagated the dharma of Zen. Many white and black robed followers from the Kinki region were attracted to his style. But he was also slandered, because he lacked transmission from a teacher. In the summer of Bunji *tsuchinoto-tori* (1189) Nōnin dispatched two of his students – Renchū and Shōben, bearing letters and gifts – to China to have audience with Chan master Zhuoan Deguang from Mount Ayuwang and demonstrate his awakening. Zhuoan fully confirmed [Nōnin's awakening] and transmitted a dharma robe, a Buddhist name and a portrait of Bodhidharma inscribed with a verse of praise. Renchū and Shōben had an artist paint a portrait of Zhuoan and asked [Zhuoan] to write a verse on it. Zhuoan wrote: "This rustic monk has no face. He knocks over heaven's barrier and inverts the earth's axis. Master Nin cast off the body and discerns intimately. Deviants and demons scurry into hiding." After the two students had returned to Japan, Nōnin's fame increased and spread to Kyoto and beyond. His foremost student Kakuan received Nōnin's written certification. [Kakuan] resided at Tōnomine in Yamato and widely propagated the essentials of Zen. Koun Ejō from Eiheiji followed Kakuan for a long time. On his deathbed Kakuan urged Ejō to depend on Zen master Dōgen. He also gave him [a treatise entitled] *Shinyō teishi* that he had written himself, [88] as well as precious objects that he had received from master Nōnin. When Dōgen saw this *Teishi* he greatly admired it and in praise said that master Kakuan had been a clear-eyed man. Thenceforth he always used [the honorific] "Venerable" when speaking about Nōnin. Shōkō from Chinzei visited Nōnin's assembly and questioned him on essential passages from the *Sugyōroku*.[89] One evening Kagekiyo visited. [Nōnin], delighted in this fortuitous meeting, sent out a student to buy sake from the liquor store. Kagekiyo, suspecting that he was being reported to the authorities, took his sword and cut [Nōnin] to death. Further data may be found in various writings that occasionally make reference to Nōnin.

[88] *Shinyō teishi* 心要提示 (Exposition on the Essentials of Mind) is known only by title. It probably was a comment on the Chan treatise *Chuanxin fayao* 傳心法要 (*Denshin hōyō*). An edition of the *Chuanxin fayao* was published in Japan by Nōnin. See Chapter Five.

[89] "Essential passages from the *Sugyōroku*" (*Sugyōroku yōmon* 宗鏡録要文) possibly refers to a synoptic recension of the hundred volume *Sugyōroku* (Ch. *Zongjinglu*). The *Shokyōzō mokuroku* 小経蔵目録, a catalogue compiled by the monk Ken'a 釼阿 (1261-1338), lists a three-volume work with the exact same title, *Sugyōroku yōmon*. The Kanazawa Bunko collection preserves what may be the same work under the title *Sugyōroku yōsho* 宗鏡録要処. See Kagamishima Genryū, *Dōgen Zenji to sono shūhen* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1985), p. 54, note 4. In *Shōkō Shōninden* (Biography of Venerable Shōkō) (1287) Nōnin is said to discuss "the three books of the *Sugyōroku* – discourse on the teaching, dialogues, citing scriptural evidence," which likewise suggests a tripartite version of the *Sugyōroku*. The biographical entry on Shōkō in *Honchō kōsōden* simply reads: "Nōnin brilliantly lectured on the *Sugyōroku.*" DNBZ 63, p. 215.

> Appraisal: On the whole this episode has the merit of having been a helpful first step. Chen Sheng of the Qin dynasty was a child of a poor family and a man of low caste. Once he made a stand at Yuyang, the lords of the six states rose up to attack the Qin. The Han house was eminently founded and stability was finally brought to the realm. These events had their basis in Sheng's initial action. Would this be why Sima Qian, when editing the *Historical Records*, placed Chen Sheng's genealogy next to the biography of Confucius? In the time of Emperor Saga (r. 809-823), after Yikong 義空 (786-842), the Zen teaching did not flourish for almost four hundred years. Then Nōnin revived it and it thrived again. Matters that went beyond this common man 庸人 stacked up ten stories high. After Nōnin had paved the way, many teachers roamed through the east and roved through the south, jointly making [the Zen school] prosper. Without [Nōnin's] merits this helpful first step would never have been made. Yet, in *Genkō Shakusho*, Master Saihoku [i.e. Kokan Shiren], under the pretext of speaking about Eisai, slandered [Nōnin]. We can probably attribute this to [Shiren's] partiality. It may be considered a public statement that when in Ōei *tsuchinoe-inu* (1418) Koten [Shū]in of the Tenryūji composed his *Busso shūhazu* 佛祖宗派図 (Lineage Chart of Buddhas and Patriarchs),[90] he placed Nōnin in the lineage of Chan master Foxing (*sic*). Having gathered the remaining data and their traces I composed this monk's biography and entrust it to the criticism of future scholars.[91]

The above translated biographical notices are the most comprehensive historical records we have on Nōnin. *Genkō Shakusho* and *Honchō kōsōden* roughly agree on the following: in 1189 a monk named Nōnin dispatched two of his students – Renchū 練中 (n.d.) and Shōben 勝辨 (n.d.) – to China with the aim of procuring documents of certification. These documents would counter criticisms on Nōnin's masterless status and legitimize his propagation of Zen. The two envoys had an audience with Chan master Fozhao Deguang, abbot of the Ayuwang monastery in Mingzhou. Deguang granted the envoys their request and bestowed various items on them, such as a monastic robe and an inscribed portrait of Bodhidharma. Equipped with these items the envoys returned to Japan. Empowered by this Chinese affirmation, Nōnin continued to spread his Zen teachings.

In their assesment of Nōnin, the two exposés reveal striking differences. Shiban's *Honchō kōsōden* appraises Nōnin as a famous reviver of a dormant Zen tradition. Nōnin's propagation of Zen is said to have flourished in Kyoto and beyond. Though Nōnin's understanding is judged limited, he is commended for having paved the way for subsequent Zen teachers. The indirect method of Nōnin's dharma transmission is not criticized. In contrast, Shiren's *Genkō Shakusho* depicts Nōnin as an infamous braggart. Nōnin, we are told, was despised in the capital, and misleadingly preached Zen on the authority of sheer courtesy gifts.

Kokan Shiren's partiality

How to account for the contrast in these sources? First, Mangen Shiban wrote from a distance of several centuries. The hostility that followed Nōnin's eruption on the Buddhist scene had faded. In Kokan Shiren's time the reverberations of Nōnin's activities were still sensed. Shiren's account

[90] Koten Shūin 古篆周印 (n.d.) was a Rinzai monk who studied under Shun'oku Myōha 春屋妙葩 (1311-1388). He resided at Tenryūji and later moved to Kenninji. ZGDJ, p. 480. The *Busso shūhazu* lineage chart is extant. It places "Dainichi from Japan" (Nihon Dainichi 日本大日) among the direct dharma heirs of Fozhao Deguang. See Takahasi Shūei, "Dainichibō Nōnin to Darumashū ni kansuru shiryō 2," *Kanazawa Bunkō kenkyū* 22/7-23/1 (1977), p. 31.

[91] DNBZ 63, pp. 273-274.

of Nōnin's disfavorable reception is no doubt based on fact, but it tells only half the story. The untold other half would inform us on Nōnin's popularity and his successful propagation of Zen.

Shiren's one-sided portrayal is tainted by a particular ideological agenda. In writing *Genkō* Shakusho, Shiren – a Zen monk and abbot of Tōfukuji in Kyoto – sought to create an authoritative national history of Buddhism in Japan that incorporated the Zen school as an orthodox tradition, a project intended to consolidate the powerful but still contested position of the Zen school amid the religious institutions of the day.[92] Shiren's political intentions can already be gleaned from the work's title, which mimics that of official Chinese histories. The same politics are at work in his attempts to have his tome officially sanctioned, by submitting it to Emperor Go-daigo, and later to northern Emperor Kōgon, with the request to include it in the Buddhist canon. Though, at the time, this was not granted, *Genkō Shakusho* did gain currency as a normative historical record.

Shiren patterned his work after Chinese secular and Buddhist historiographical writings. The bulk of the work is taken up by a section of biographies of Buddhist monks; the biographies are distributed over subsections according to the achievements of the protagonists. Nōnin briefly surfaces in the lengthy biography of Eisai. Eisai's biography is rubricated under the prestigious section of "Wisdom Transmitters" (*Denchi* 傳智), which comprises biographies of monks who are credited with transmitting orthodox Buddhist traditions from China to Japan. Nōnin, in this configuration, merely functions as a heterodox prop opposite Eisai. As China was the touchstone of orthodoxy, Shiren selected Eisai as the chief transmitter of Zen to Japan, for Eisai, unlike Nōnin, had personally entered the continent to receive proper dharma transmission directly from a Chinese master.

Shiren's preference for Eisai may have further been guided by additional lineage considerations. Shiren belonged to the so-called Rinzai Shōichi lineage, named after the Rinzai monk and founding abbot of Tōfukuji Enni Ben'en (Shōichi Kokushi, 1202-1280). Enni studied in China for several years (1235-41) and received dharma transmission from Chan master Wuzhun Shifan 無準師範 (1178-1249). Prior to this, Enni had practiced Zen and Esotericism under several of Eisai's students in Japan and had received an esoteric ritual tradition that had been transmitted by Eisai.[93] As a lineage descendant of Enni, and abbot of Tōfukuji, Shiren was obviously inclined to privilege Eisai.

The proscription of the Darumashū

Kokan Shiren mentions hostilities towards Eisai's activities in Kyoto and tries to explain these away by suggesting that Eisai was being conflated with the disreputable Nōnin. Shiren also mentions the schemings of the monk Ryōben who persuaded the Tendai clergy to petition the court for a ban on the budding Zen school (Darumashū). This petition is historical and led to a temporary proscription, issued by the court in 1194. The imperial edict is mentioned in the *Gyokuyō* 玉葉 (Pearl Leaves), the diary of the courtier Kūjo Kanezane (1149-1207):

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[92] See Bielefeldt, "Kokan Shiren," pp. 295-317.

[93] Before entering China, Enni studied at Jūfukuji in Kamakura under Eichō (d. 1147), one of Eisai's dharma heirs to whom Eisai had transmitted both his Zen and esoteric lineages. A document in Enni's own hand records that Enni inherited an esoteric ritual text from a monk named A'nin 阿忍, who in turn had received it from Eisai. See *Shōitsu kokushi mitsuju A'ninryū ki* 聖一国師密授阿忍流記, quoted in Yanagida Seizan, "Eisai to Kōzengokokuron no kadai," in *Chusei zenke no shisō*, Nihon shisō taikei 16 (Iwanami shoten, 1976), pp. 452-53. A colophon to an esoteric Tendai text entitled *Hachigo fuzoku sanmairyū* 八五付属三昧流 similarly records this esoteric transmission and traces it back to Eisai's *Taimitsu* teacher Kikō Ajari 基好阿闍梨. See Taga, *Eisai*, pp. 280-82.

> As a result of a petition from the clergy of Enryakuji, the promulgation of the Zen school by the monks Eisai and Nōnin has been put to a stop. [94]

The text of the edict partly survived in the thirteenth century chronicle *Hyakurenshō* 百錬抄 (Document of a Hundred Polishings):

> Kenkyū five, month seven, day five, *kinoe-ne*. Monks of the Tendai school have reported to the Emperor that Venerable Eisai who entered China, and Venerable Nōnin who abides in the capital, are said to have established the Bodhidharma school (Darumashū): they [requested] that it should be proscribed. The Emperor has proclaimed that it must be proscribed. [95]

It is often assumed that Eisai's propagation of Zen was prohibited because he became mixed up with Nōnin. By the time the edict was issued, however, Nōnin had been propagating Zen for at least five years, if not longer, apparently without provoking any restrictive legal measures. That the ban on the "Bodhidharma school" was strongly connected to Eisai's activities is hard to deny.

NŌNIN IN *GIKAI FUHŌJŌ*

In line with *Genkō Shakusho*, Eisai is generally regarded as the founder of Zen in Japan. Nōnin's activities are seen as faltering attempts at best.[96] An alternative view on the introduction of Zen in Japan is voiced in a document given the title *Gikai fuhōjō* 義介附法状, written in 1306 by Tettsū Gikai (1219-1309). Gikai was both a Zen monk in Dōgen's Sōtō line of succession as well as an heir to Nōnin's (Rinzai) Darumashū lineage. This dual commitment obviously prejudiced Gikai, and his view on Nōnin can therefore not be taken at face value. *Gikai fuhōjō* is a short record written to confirm the transmission of the Sōtō and Darumashū lineages from Gikai to his pupil Keizan Jōkin (1268-1325). It briefly touches on the transmission of the Darumashū in Japan:

> In the year Chunxi sixteen of the Great Song, the year Bunji five in Japan (1189), Chan master Fozhao, the Venerable Deguang of King Aśoka monastery, citing the precedent of the continuous dharma-lifespan of the Buddha in this world, transmitted [the dharma] from afar via two envoys – Chū and Ben – and from a distance conferred a Rinzai House certificate of succession, a patriarchal lineage chart, and relics of the Six Patriarchs and Samantabhadra to Venerable Nōnin of Sambōji in Sesshū, posthumously decreed Zen Master Jinpō, making him the fifty-first generation patriarch after the Worthy Śākyamuni. These were sealed documents that verified the mind of trust. [Nōnin], therefore, immediately requested official judgement. Master [Nōnin] was ordered to come to the imperial palace and disclose [the documents]. Though he was a Lecturer of the Eight Schools, [Nōnin] was

[94] 延暦寺衆徒ノ訴ニ依リテ、僧榮西能忍等ノ禪宗ヲ弘ムルコトヲ停ム。 (DNS 4, 4, p. 610).

[95] 七月五日甲子、入唐上人榮西、在京能忍等、令建立達磨宗之由風聞　可被停止之旨。天台宗僧徒奏聞云々。可従停止之趣被宣下云々。(DNS 4, 4, p. 610. Kanbun markers omitted). The petition is also alluded to in the fourteenth century *Taiheiki* (Tale of Heike), Nihon kotenbungaku taikei 35, pp. 418-20. Also see the fourteenth century Tendai record *Sanmon soshin* 山門訴申 (Petitions of the Mountain): "Since olden times the Mountain Gate persistently lodged formal complaints against this promotion of Zen doctrine. In the reign of cloistered Emperor Go-Toba, in the Kenkyū period, Eisai and Nōnin propagated this school in the capital. Their disturbing activities extended from the northern ridges to the southern areas." *Sanmon soshin*, cited in Takahashi, *Darumashū ni kansuru shiryō* (2), p. 30.

[96] See for example Heinrich Dumoulin, *Zen Buddhism: A History – Japan* (MacMillan Publishing Company, 1993), p. 14.

> promoted by imperial proclamation to First Patriarch of the True School of Bodhidharma. From that time on the Bodhidharma school was revered in the country of Japan. This dharma was conferred on Venerable Kakuan of Higashiyama. Kakuan transmitted it to Master Kakuzen of Hajakuji in Esshū. Kakuzen transmitted it to me, Gikai. These documents, together with the relics of the Six Patriarchs and Samantabhadra (one grain), I likewise pass on to Elder Jōkin, who must regard them as subsidiary verification to the Sōtō certificate of succession. I also entrust Venerable Nōnin's letter, Chan Master Fozhao's reply, as well as Renchū and Shōben's *Record of a Sojourn in China*.
> Gikai, founder of Daijōji in Kasshū, fourth year of Kagen (1306), *hinoe- uma,* mid-winter (month eleven), day three.[97]

Nonin's visit to court

According to *Gikai fuhōjō*, Nōnin was summoned to court to disclose the documents he received from Fozhao Deguang. Apparently the audience went well, for by imperial proclamation Nōnin was acknowledged as Japan's "First Patriarch of the True school of Bodhidharma" (*Daruma shōshū shoso* 達磨正宗初祖). Official recognition by the court of Nōnin as Japan's first Darumashū patriarch appears at odds with the 1194 imperial proscription in which Nōnin is actually charged with establishing the Darumashū. It would, however, not have been unusual for the court to summon a religious figure like Nōnin. In the late Heian period the long interrupted official diplomatic relations with China were resumed and Japanese interest in Song culture was mounting. In 1175, the court summoned the monk Kakua who, as mentioned earlier, had studied in Song China and returned to Japan as a Chan lineage initiate. Nōnin, a charismatic monk in possession of Chinese paintings and documents, may similarly have been instructed to present himself to court. Nōnin's court audience is in fact alluded to in another source, *Shōkō Shōninden* 聖光上人傳, a biography of Nōnin's contemporary Shōkō 聖光 (1162-1238), composed in 1287 (some twenty years prior to *Gikai fuhōjō*):

> Long ago there was Zen master Dainichi [Nōnin]. He loved to inquire and debate. He subtly accorded with the intention of the patriarch. Then, in the summer of the year Bunji five (1189), he dispatched envoys to the country of Song to request the dharma from Fozhao (abbot of King Aśoka Monastery). Fozhao certified him and conferred a patriarchal name. Thereupon Zen master [Dainichi] reported to the Emperor (*insō* 院奏) and propagated the Darumashū. [98]

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[97] 大宋淳熙十六年日本文治五年、育王佛照禪師德光 拙庵 和尚引佛在世之生主法壽例、遙付中辨二使、以臨済家嗣書、祖師相傳血脈、六祖普賢舍利等, 遠授攝州三宝寺能忍和尚、勅諡深法禪師、為釋尊五十一世祖。此印信心印文、依有速請官裁、師命即在皇居開之、雖八宗講者進以為達磨正宗初祖、蒙宣下、自爾日本國裏初仰達磨宗。 其法授東山覚晏上人、晏附越州波着寺覚禪和尚、禪附義介。 此書并六祖普賢舍利 一粒同寄紹瑾長老、以可為当家曹洞 嗣書之助證。 能忍和尚信牒、佛照禪師返牒、練中勝辨在唐記委在之。 嘉元四年丙午十一月仲冬三日加州大乘寺開闢義介授之。(*Sōtōshū komonjo* 1, p. 526). Cited in Washio Junkei**,** *Nihon bukkyō bunkashi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Fujisanbō, 1938), p. 130; Ōkubo Dōshū, *Dōgen Zenjiden no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993) (reprint), p. 484. Murata Tadashi, "Kōfuku, Daijōji ni okeru Sōtōshū denpō monjo," *Nihon rekishi* 308 (1974): pp. 18-19.

[98] 昔有大日禪師者。好索理論。妙契祖意。遂令文治五年夏遣使於宋國。請法於佛照。(育王山長老也)。佛照印可賜祖號。於是禪師經院奏。弘達磨宗。(*Zoku gunshoruijū* 9, p. 32.) The term *insō* 院奏 refers to reporting to the Emperor, especially the imperial headship (*chiten no kimi* 治天の君). In 1189 the reigning Emperor was the nine year old Go-Toba 後鳥羽天皇 (1180-1239) (r. 1183-1198), a grandson of Emperor Go-Shirakawa 後白河天皇 (1127-1192). Nōnin's audience would have been with Go-Shirakawa, who had abdicated in 1158 and as a retired Emperor exerted political power until his death in 1192.

If we can rely on this record there may indeed have been a court audience and some kind of official recognition for Nōnin and his group, but details remain unclear.

Zen master Deep Dharma

Gikai fuhōjō mentions that Nōnin was awarded a posthumous title: Jinpō Zenji 深法禅師 (Zen master Deep Dharma). Such a court-awarded title would indicate an officially recognized status. In China, the earliest documented cases of the bestowal by the court of the title Chanshi (Zenji) are that of Shenxiu (d.706) who posthumously received the name Datong Chanshi 大通禅師 (Chan Master Great Penetration) and Zonggao (1089-1163) who in his lifetime received the name Dahui Chanshi 大慧禅師 (Chan Master Great Wisdom). The first documented bestowal of this type of Zenji title in Japan by the court is that of the Chinese émigré monk Lanqi Daolong 蘭渓道隆 (Rankei Dōryū 1213-1278), who posthumously received the name Daikaku Zenji 大覺禅師 (Zen Master Great Awakening) in 1278, long after Nōnin.[99] Nōnin's receiving of the Zenji title cannot be confirmed from materials exterior to the tradition.

Lecturer of the eight schools

Prior to becoming Japan's first Darumashū patriarch, Nōnin, according to *Gikai fuhōjō*, was a "Lecturer of the eight schools" (Hasshū kōsha 八宗講者). This title is not known to indicate an official rank. Though its exact meaning is unclear, the title obviously points to a recognized expertise in Buddhist teachings and scriptures that were acknowledged in the Buddhist establishment of the time. According to Yanagida Seizan the appellation "Hasshū kōsha" may reflect a moderate, scholarly aspect of Nōnin's teaching activities which got obscured by the biased charges of the Tendai establishment.[100] This aspect markedly contrasts with the radical image that is generally associated with Nōnin. Martin Colcutt, for instance, describes Nōnin as "an uncompromising opponent of any form of accommodation between Zen and Japanese scholasticism", typical of Nōnin's "aggressive purism." [101] This characterization implies a sharp divide between the "old Buddhism" of the Nara and Heian periods and the so-called "New Kamakura Buddhism," and supposes that the latter consisted of radical, purist reform movements (Zen, Jōdo, Nichiren) seceding from a decadent Buddhist establishment. In a critical reassessment of this long-established paradigm scholars have increasingly recognized continuities and interaction between "old" and "new." [102] Perceptions of Nōnin being a "Lecturer of the Eight Schools" point to this more fluid reality and further underscore the limits of positing a strict dichotomy between "old" and "new" Buddhism.

[99] Frédéric Girard, "Les zenji dans le Japon ancien," *Revue d'Etudes Japonaises du CEEJA*, Publications Orientalistes de France, Centre Européen d'Etudes Japonaises d'Alsace, Département d'Etudes Japonaises de l'Université Marc Bloch (November 2005), p. 10.
[100] Yanagida Seizan, "Kūbyō no mondai, in *Kū* (2), Bukkyō shisō 7, edited by Nakamura Hajime, et al. (Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1982), pp. 757-798.
[101] Martin Colcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Harvard University Press), p. 39.
[102] For instance, Richard K. Payne (ed.), *Re-visioning "Kamakura" Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press), 1998.

Dharma transmission from afar

Gikai's letter to Keizan plainly states that Nōnin and Fozhao never met in the flesh: the dharma was "transmitted from afar" (*yōfu* 遙附).[103] Scholars have typified the case of Nōnin's indirect dharma transmission as unprecedented, inauthentic and bizarre. Chan literature, however, does report on cases of indirect transmission. The literature reveals the acceptance of "transmission by proxy" (*daifu* 代附), that is, the conferral of the dharma from a deceased master to a living student by way of a representative of the late master – a paradigmatic case being that of Chan master Yiqing (1032-1083) of the Caodong (Sōtō) lineage.[104]

The term *yōfu* (transmission from afar), which Gikai uses in his account, can be found in Chan related materials. The preface to the stele inscription for Chan master Shenxiu reads:

> The Tathāgatas transmit the essential way with the mind and vigorously uphold their virtues. Throughout myriads of kalpas they have long passed down the seal of the dharma (Ch. *yaofu fayin*; *yōfu hōin* 遙付法印). In one moment they suddenly confer the dharmakāya.[105]

Here the term *yōfu* simply denotes the chronological extension of the Chan lineage by way of the successive transmissions from one Buddha to the next. Another use of this term is found in the account of the transmission between the Chan masters Wuxiang 無相 (a.k.a Venerable Kim 金和上) (684-762) and Wuzhu 無住 (714-774) in the early Chan record *Lidai fabaoji* 歷代法寶記 (Record of the Dharma Jewel throughout the Ages). *Lidai fabaoji* relates how Venerable Kim briefly meets Wuzhu at a precept ceremony at the Jingzhong monastery in Chengdu, where Kim presided as abbot. Following Kim's instructions Wuzhu leaves the monastery and enters the mountains. The two monks never meet again but continue to maintain a mysterious long-distance bond. Nearing the end of his life Kim dispatches a messenger to the mountains to give Wuzhu a kāṣāya as a token of legitimate dharma transmission. After various complications the kāṣāya is delivered to Wuzhu: thus "the transmission was settled from a afar" (Ch. *yaofu zhuqi* 遙付囑訖).[106] Here the term *yaofu/yōfu* clearly refers to dharma transmission over a spatial distance by way of a messenger.

Gikai's letter to Keizan may, perhaps, reveal a hitherto unobserved detail about the indirect transmission from Chan master Fozhao to Dainichi Nōnin. Gikai writes that Fozhao transmitted the dharma to Nōnin "from afar" and in doing so cited a precedent concerning "the continuous dharma-lifespan of the Buddha in this world." My tentative translation of this somewhat cryptic line follows an emended reading by Menzan Zuihō: *Butsuzaise no shōshō hōju no rei wo hiite* 引佛在世之生主法壽例.[107] Menzan was apparently doubtful about the compound *shōjū* 生主 in the original manuscript and replaced it with *shōshō* 生生. What, indeed, to make of *shōjū* 生主? Could it not refer to "Daishōjū" 大生主, that is, Mahāprajāpatī 摩訶波闍婆提, the aunt and

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[103] In another letter to Keizan, Gikai similarly writes that Nōnin inherited the dharma from afar (*yōshi* 遙嗣), without having met Fozhao in person (*fukenmen* 不見面). This letter, dated Kagen 4/8/28, is given the title *Gikan fuhōjō* 義鑒附法状 as Gikai signed it with his Darumashū name Gikan 義鑒. See *Gikan fuhōjō*, *Sōtōshū komonjo* 2, pp. 408-409. Cited in Washio, *Nihon bukkyō bunkashi kenkyū*, p. 129. Ōkubo, *Dōgen Zenjiden*, p. 476-77. Murata, "Kōfuku, Daijōji," pp. 20-21.

[104] See William Bodiford, "Dharma Transmission in Sōtō Zen: Manzan Dōhaku's Reform Movement," *Monumenta Nipponica* 46/4 (1991), pp. 427-28.

[105] 如來有意傳要道力持至德。萬劫而遙付法印。一念而頓授佛身。(*Quan tang wen*, vol. 231.)

[106] *Lidai fabaoji* (T. 2075, 185a07). A study and a translation of the *Lidai fabaoji* are found in Wendi L. Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission* (Columbia University Press, 2007).

[107] *Kenzeiki*, p. 146.

adoptive mother of the Buddha and first Buddhist nun? If so, the life of Mahāprajāpatī (a.k.a Prajāpatī) must contain a feature that would relate to indirect transmission. One thing that comes to mind is Prajāpatī's induction into the saṃgha. The Buddha initially refused her request to become a member of the saṃgha on account of her being female. It was only when the Buddha's student Ānanda – *acting as an intermediary* – beseeched the Buddha that her request for ordination was granted. A more tantalizing connection between Prajāpatī and "indirect transmission" is found in Buddhist lore relating to the transmission of the Buddha's kāṣāya. According to a story recorded by Xuanzang (602-664), cited by Wendi Adamek in her study of the Chan text *Lidai fabaoji*, the Buddha, about to enter nirvāṇa, transmitted a gold-embroidered kāṣāya to his disciple Mahākāśyapa and then predicts that Mahākāśyapa will at the time of his own nirvāṇa be encased inside Mount Kukkuṭapāda to await the coming of the future Buddha Maitreya; when the future Buddha comes, the mountain will open and Mahākāśyapa will transmit the golden robe to Maitreya. Variant robe narratives have the Buddha's aunt Prajāpatī offer a gold-embroidered kāṣāya to the Buddha; the Buddha refuses this gift but Prajāpatī finds a monk in Buddha's assembly to accept it: this monk turns out to be Maitreya. The kāṣāya, in this case, is transmitted from Buddha Śākyamuni to Buddha Maitreya *through the mediation of Prajāpatī*.[108] According to Adamek this narrative influenced the pattern of indirect transmission that surfaces in the *Lidai fabaoji*:

> …a pattern favored in the *Lidai fabaoji*, whereby an intermediary passes the robe as a symbol of authority between *two links in a chain that are not in direct contact*. This pattern is repeated twice in the *Lidai fabaoji*: the transmission of the robe from Huineng to Zhishen via empress Wu prefigures the transmission of robe and Dharma from Wuxiang to Wuzhu via a servant of Wuxiang's.[109]

If Gikai's letter indeed refers to Prajāpatī, it was perhaps this episode that Fozhao invoked as a precedent for the indirect transmission to Nōnin. The fact that a precedent is offered at all may suggest that the proceedings were considered exceptional and thus in need of scriptural support.

More details concerning the transmission from Fozhao to Nōnin are likely to have been contained in two documents that are mentioned by Gikai: a letter by Nōnin to Fozhao (*Nōnin Oshō shinjō* 能忍和尚信牒) and Fozhao's reply to it (*Busshō Zenji henjō* 佛照禅師返牒). In addition Gikai mentions an account written by Nōnin's students Renchū and Shōben about their sojourn in China (*Zaitōki* 在唐記). Unfortunately none of these documents seem to have survived.

NŌNIN IN *SHŌKŌ SHŌNINDEN* (BIOGRAPHY OF VENERABLE SHŌKŌ)

Nōnin's biography in *Honchō kōsōden* notes that he discoursed with Shōkō 聖光 (1162-1238). Shōkō, a native of Chikuzen Province in Chinzei 鎮西 (Kyūshū), is revered as the second patriarch of the Pure Land school in Japan and the founder of the dominant Chinzei branch.[110] Shōkō (also known as Ben'a 辨阿 and Benchō 辨長) was ordained as a Tendai monk in 1175. In 1183 he ascended Mount Hiei, where he studied with Kan'ei 観叡 (n.d.) and Shōshin 証真. In

[108] Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, p. 186-187
[109] Ibid., p. 186. (italics mine).
[110] *Nihon bukkyōshi jiten*, p. 907.

1190 he returned to the region of his birth, but after a few years again went up to Kyoto; in 1197 he became a close student of the Pure Land teacher Hōnen 法然 (1133-1212).

For its description of the meeting between Shōkō and Nōnin, *Honchō kōsōden* relied on the earlier mentioned *Shōkō Shōninden* (Biography of Venerable Shōkō) (1287), written by the Pure Land monk Dōkō 道光 (1243-1330).[111] The *Shōkō shōninden* describes the encounter as follows:

> Venerable [Shōkō] visited [Dainichibō's] Zen hermitage. He interrogated him about the gate of the dharma and the buddhahood of non-eliminated delusions (doctrinal meanings); about the three books of the *Sugyōroku* (discourse on the teachings, dialogues, citing scriptural evidence); about the three truths of the Tendai school (empty, provisional, middle); and about the five lineages of the Darumashū (Isanshū, Rinzaishū, Hōgenshū, Umonshū, Sōtōshū). Zen master [Dainichibō] kept his lips locked and tongue tied. He did not answer, and then in praise said: "You are Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, appearing here to instruct me!" The Zen master's followers – Shinren Tokugō and Ācārya of the Third Rank – were all red-faced with embarrassment and did not help out. Aged forty-three, in the first year of Genkyū (1204), *kinoe-ne*, in the beginning of month eight, [Shōkō] left Higashiyama's dens of learning and went to the old villages of Chinzei; he propagated the True school and recommended reciting the name [of Buddha Amida]. More than two thousand people, both laity and priests, took refuge [in his teachings]. Man and woman flocked to him in numbers beyond count![112]

Shōkō shōninden is a hagiographical work intended to exalt Shōkō as a Pure Land patriarch. The work depreciates Nōnin, yet it is clear that its author considered Nōnin important enough to include him in the narrative as a device in enhancing Shōkō's prestige. Shōkō himself must also have been aware of Nōnin's renown, and he probably consulted Nōnin for that very reason. The passage thus implies Nōnin's prominence and a perceived (though allegedly disappointing) expertise in matters relating to Tendai, Zen and the *Sugyōroku*.

The passage moreover identifies two of Nōnin's followers: Shinren Tokugō 心蓮得業 and Ācārya of the Third Rank (*San' i ajari* 三位阿闍梨).[113] *Tokugō* 得業 is a title that was given to priests who passed doctrinal examinations at one of the three prestigious Buddhist ceremonies that were annually held in Nara, known as the *Nankyō san'e* 南京三會 (Three Ceremonies of the Southern Capital).[114] The term *san-i* 三位 (third rank) indicates an official court rank. If reliable, this would indicate that Nōnin's Darumashū community counted members of significant clerical/social status.

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[111] Dōkō, also known as Ryōe 了慧, was a scholar monk of Mount Hiei. He became a pupil of Shōkō's student Ryōchū (1199-1287). Dōkō is especially known for compiling and editing the *Kurodani Shōnin gotōroku* 黒谷聖人語燈録 (1275), the earliest collection of talks and writings by Hōnen.

[112] 上人到彼禪室。難問法門。不斷惑之成佛。(宗門意。) 宗鏡錄之三章。(標章問答引證。) 天台宗之三諦。(空假中。) 達磨宗之五宗(爲仰宗。臨済宗。法眼宗。雲門宗。曹洞宗。)等[是]也。禪師閉口結舌。不答而讃曰。汝是文殊師利菩薩。爲訓我而來歟云云。禪師門資(心蓮得業。三位阿闍梨。) 皆赧然而不輔。行年四十三。元久元年甲子八月上旬。辭東山學窓。赴鎮西之奮里。弘於眞宗。勸於稱名。道俗歸者二千餘人、男女去者其數幾耶。(*Zoku gunshoruijū* 9, p. 32).

[113] An augmented edition of *Shōkō Shōninden* from 1818, included in *Jōdoshū zensho* (JZ 17, pp. 378-397), adds "a person from Nara" (*Nara no hito* 奈良人) and "a person from the Northern Capital" (*Hokkyō no hito* 北京人). JZ 17, p. 387.

[114] The *Nankyō san'e* are the *Yuima-e* 唯摩會 (Ceremony for the Vimalakīrti sūtra), *Hokke-e* 法華會 (Ceremony for the Lotus sūtra) held at Kōfukuji and the *Saishō-e* 最勝會 (Ceremony for the Golden Light sūtra) held at Yakushiji. See Marinus Willem de Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan: Sutras and Ceremonies in Use in the Seventh and Eighth centuries A.D. and their History in Later Times* (Leiden: Brill 1935), p. 445.

Interesting are the lines on Nōnin's silence in response to Shōkō's interrogation. The expression "lips locked and tongue tied" (*heikō ketsuzetsu* 閉口結舌) implies that Nōnin was silenced by the superior arguments of his opponent and thus defeated in debate. A similar incident is reported in *Genkō Shakusho* with regard to Nōnin's debate with Eisai, which is likewise said to have ended with Nōnin keeping his mouth closed. It seems that Nōnin was not much of a debater. Or is there more to his silence? If we accept that Nōnin's silence is to be taken literal, then another interpretation is possible. In the earliest Chan texts we already find warnings against verbal anwers to questions about the dharma. Bodhidharma, for instance, is said to have declared: "Dharma is speechless and an answer is having speech. Dharma is without interpretation and an answer is interpretation."[115] In classical Chan, silence (alongside grimacing, finger pointing, shouting, kicking, clubbing and so forth) represents a performative act of an accomplished master's awakened state, "not reliant on words and letters." In this sense Nōnin's speechless response to dharmic inquiry might mimic a traditional model. Such a reading of the event also proposes itself by taking into account Nōnin's subsequent mention of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, which reads as an allusion to the *Vimalakīrti sūtra*.[116] In a seminal passage of this sūtra Mañjuśrī asks the layman/bodhisattva Vimalakīrti to express the nondual truth. Vimalakīrti responds with silence and thereby surpasses the wordy answers given earlier by a host of Bodhisattvas, including Mañjuśrī himself.[117] The Chan/Zen tradition accords great significance to this episode. In this light, reports of Nōnin's silence in debate and his subsequent mentioning of Mañjuśrī may point to Nōnin's use – or fabled use – of Zen style Vimalakīrtian silence.

After describing Shōkō's awkward meeting with Nōnin, *Shōkō Shōninden* relates how Shōkō left Higashiyama to preach in Chinzei in the first year of Genkyū (1204). From the narrative it is hard to tell whether these two events immediately followed one another. If they did, Nōnin resided in Higashiyama as late as 1204, almost a decennium after his reputed murder. We will return to Nōnin's death shortly.

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[115] Jeffrey Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology* (University of California Press, 1999), p. 19.

[116] The thematic similarity between Nōnin's silence and Vimalakīrti was noted by Ishii Shūdō, "Shōbō-ji monjo yori mitari nihondarumashū no seikaku toku ni Kōzengokokuron no Nihondarumashū hihan to kanren shite," *Bukkyōgaku* 35 (1993): pp. 1-20.

[117] The relevant passage in the *Vimalakīrti sūtra* reads:

> When the various bodhisattvas had finished one by one giving their explanations, they asked Mañjuśrī, "How then does the bodhisattva enter the gate of nondualism?" Mañjuśrī replied, "To my way of thinking, all dharmas are without words, without explanations, without purport, without cognition, removed from all questions and answers. In this way one may enter the gate of nondualism." Then Mañjuśrī said to Vimalakīrti, "Each of us has given an explanation. Now, sir, it is your turn to speak. How does the bodhisattva enter the gate of nondualism?" At that time Vimalakīrti remained silent and did not speak a word. Mañjuśrī sighed and said, "Excellent, excellent! Not a word, not a syllable – this truly is to enter the gate of nondualism!" (*The Vimalakīrti Sutra*, translated by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press), pp. 110-111. Slightly changed).

NŌNIN IN *TETSU SENCHAKUSHŌ*

Nōnin also emerges in a related Pure Land work entitled *Tetsu senchakushō* 徹選擇鈔 (1260), written by Shōkō's disciple Ryōchū 良忠 (1199-1287).[118] Ryōchū's text reads:

> Late master [Shōkō] said:
> One time Venerable [Hōnen] asked me: "Would there be a qualitative difference in merit between a foolish and a wise person reciting the name [of Buddha Amida]?" I thought to myself: "Original Vow *nenbutsu* is recitation with faith, so what difference can there be between that of a foolish and a wise person?" But slanderously I answered: "How could the *nenbutsu* of a fool ever compare to your *nenbutsu*, Venerable?" Exasperated, [Hōnen] said: "You do not yet know the intent of the Original Vow. A distinction is made between those who have established faith and those who are without faith, but you must not be concerned with this. For *nenbutsu* of the Original Vow no contemplative methods are needed. This being so, the *nenbutsu* of [the simple man] Awa no Suke and the *nenbutsu* of Genkū [i.e. Hōnen] are simply the same thing."
> A story says:
> When I [Shōkō] visited the dwelling of Dainichibō, this man declared: "*Nenbutsu* is the charming practice of just doing *namu Amida butsu*, rythmically reciting the name and dancing to a beat." Lots of people think it is like this. The meaning of the Original Vow is not so. By simply reciting *namu Amida butsu* we are in accord with the Original Vow and will be born in the Pure Land. I wrote this down in a simple way so as to make you understand the meaning.[119]

Nōnin is cited here as commenting on a form of *nenbutsu* practice that involved dancing and rhythmical chanting. The description recalls the so-called "dancing *nenbutsu*" (*odorinenbutsu* 踊念佛) that had been popularized long before by the itinerant *hijiri* Kūya 空也 (903-927). Kūya invoked Buddha Amida while dancing to the beat of a small, hand held gong. In the late thirteenth century this style of *nenbutsu* was revitalizated by Ippen 一遍 (1234-1289) and widely practiced by the itinerant preachers of Ippen's Ji school (Jishū 時宗). The practice was also popular among wandering Zen monks of the Hottō faction 法燈派 (known as *kandō hijiri* 萱堂聖, "grass hut sages") and adopted by eccentric lay practitioners such as Jinen 自然居士 (n.d.) and Tōgan 東岸居士 (n.d.), who were associated with the Zen monk Enni Ben'en.[120] In the above cited passage from *Tetsu senchakushō* the story about Nōnin is raised as a rhetorical device to contrast Shōkō's orthodox *nenbutsu* with a type of heteromorphic dancing *nenbutsu* that was re-emerging in Ryōchū's own time. Nōnin calls this practice "*okashi*," a multivalent word that connotes something odd, interesting, amusing, or beautiful – "something that brought a smile to

[118] *Tetsu senchakushō* is a synopsis of Shōkō's *Tetsu senchaku hongan nenbutsushū* 徹選擇本願念佛集 (T. 2609), which in turn is a commentary on Hōnen's *Senchaku hongan nenbutsushū* 選擇本願念佛集 (T. 2608).
[119] 先師云有時上人問予云智者稱名愚者稱名功德可有勝劣乎。予心中謂爲本願念佛但信稱名也。智者愚者有何分別乎。然存譏嫌答申愚者念佛何齊上人御念佛乎。云云　上人彈云汝未知本願之趣故。設信不信而有差別不顧本願念佛者不用顴法等然アノ阿波介念佛源空念佛只同事也。云云　物語云大日房處マカリタリシニ彼人被申念佛但南無阿彌陀佛勸ナルソヲカシキ事也。稱名拍子也舞折拍子也。云云　人人皆如此思也本願意サハナシ。只唱南無阿彌陀佛相應本願可生淨土也。此意爲令知見易如此書也。云云。 (JZ 7, pp. 113-14) (Japanese Kanbun markers omitted).
[120] Harada Masatoshi, *Nihon chūsei Zenshū to shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1998), pp. 170-173.

the face."[121] The reference is perhaps too obscure to extrapolate anything reliable about Nōnin's position vis-à-vis *nenbutsu* practice, but, as we will see later, *nenbutsu* did in fact play a significant role in Darumashū communities.

The story about Nōnin in *Tetsu senchakushō* appears after a gloss on a passage in Shōkō's *Tetsu senchaku hongan nenbutsushū* 徹選擇本願念佛集. The gloss describes a Buddhist practitioner who prematurely died after a life of uncompleted practices; the moment that this practitioner reincarnated he got instantly severed from all the spiritual merits that he had obtained from having observed the precepts in his previous existence: "He ignored the cultivation of wisdom and concentration, lost his determination, became deeply involved in worldly pleasures and hugely entangled in the three harmful acts. He entered straight into hell from which it is difficult to escape, even in immeasurable eons!"[122] Though this gloss does not directly refer to Nōnin, it shows the negative context in which Nōnin's story figured.

Whatever the facticity of the above two references to Nōnin, it is clear that in Pure Land circles, too, Nōnin was an object of criticism.

NŌNIN'S SOLITARY AWAKENING

Why did Nōnin not go to China to pursue his interests in Zen, like his contemporaries Eisai and Kakua? Traveling to China was a hazardous undertaking and required funds, imperial permission (though this could be circumvented) and, no doubt, mental and physical stamina. Nōnin might have been deficient in one or more of these conditions. Or, perhaps, Nōnin initially did not perceive the need to go abroad because the Zen tradition was right there at his doorstep on Mount Hiei. Nōnin, in any case, eventually dispatched two of his pupils to the mainland. His decision to do so may have arisen from a desire to have his personal, spiritual insights confirmed by a genuine authority. The wish to obtain documents from a renowned Chinese institution so as to legitimise the propagation of Zen in Japan must, of course, also be counted as a probable motive. Reflecting on why Nōnin did not cross the sea himself, Nakao Ryōshin writes that Nōnin might at the time already have been in the winter of his life; he may also have been pre-occupied with teaching and managing the burgeoning community at Sambōji. Reports that Nōnin did in fact journey to China go back as early as 1218.[123] Such reports were no doubt constructed within Darumashū communities to counter criticisms on Nōnin's credentials and the legitimacy of the Darumashū.

Most likely then, Nōnin remained in Japan. Nōnin's formative studies in Japan are described in *Honchō kōsōden* in very general terms: "From a young age he attended lectures and studied the sūtras and commentaries. By nature he enjoyed meditation. He polished his spirit, made effort, and suddenly attained the state of awakening." This does not divulge very much. Also, due to the source's late provenance, we cannot read too much into it. Still, we can assume that Nōnin somehow came to a point that he regarded himself truly awakened. As a Yokawa-based Tendai

[121] "The Vocabulary of Japanese Aesthetics," in *Sources of Japanese Tradition: From Earliest Times Through the Sixteenth Century*, edited by William Theodore de Bary, et. al. (Colombia University Press, 2001), p. 199.
[122] JZ 7, p. 113
[123] *Daie Zenji kesa rokuso shari mokuroku.* Entry for the year Kenpō 6 (1218). See Chapter Three. Nōnin's visit to China is also mentioned in writings of the Edo period. For example, *Shiojiri* 塩尻 (Buttocks of Salt) by Amano Nobukage 天野信景 (1660-1733), in *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* 15, p. 101-102.

monk he must have done so in the context of the doctrinal and practice traditions available on Mount Hiei.[124] From a purely doctrinal point of view it might be argued that Nōnin acted in line with the early Chan teachings that were preserved on Mount Hiei. A verse by Baozhi, for instance, says: "Why look outward in search of a treasure? Your body-field itself possesses a bright pearl."[125] The *Xuemailun*, attributed to Bodhidharma, admits to the rare possibility of awakening without a teacher, and even considers it superior: "If through a coming together of conditions one grasps the Buddha's intention it is not necessary to study with a good teacher. Being a natural way of knowing, this is superior to study." [126] Radical currents in the Tendai discourse of "original awakening" (*hongaku*), moreover, asserted that a plain and simple exposure to the Buddhadharma – through a good friend or a Buddhist text – instantly occasion the attainment of full buddhahood.[127]

NŌNIN AND ESOTERIC BUDDHISM

The multifaceted Tendai system at Nōnin's disposal included esotericism (*mikkyō* 密教), commonly referred to as Taimitsu 台密 (in contradistinction to the Tōmitsu tradition 東密 associated with Kūkai and the Shingon school). Nōnin doubtless absorbed esoteric ideas and practices, which by then had thoroughly permeated Buddhist culture. Nōnin's residential name "Dainichibō" 大日房, containing the name Dainichi (Skt. Mahāvairocana), the central Buddha of Japanese Esoteric Buddhism, is in itself suggestive of an esoteric background.[128]

Nōnin's association with esotericism is attested in *Ryōinketsu* 了因決, a thirteenth century anthology of secret Tendai teachings (*kuden* 口傳), compiled by the monk Ryōe 良惠. In this text, Nōnin – referred to as Dainichibō – briefly surfaces in a passage that discusses the socalled "five kinds of samādhi" (*gojū sanmaya* 五種三昧耶). The five kinds of samādhi represent five stages of esoteric initiation: (1) The aspiring esoteric practitioner is allowed to view and venerate a maṇḍala from a distance. (2) The practitioner is allowed inside the esoteric altar enclosure and is taught the names of the various esoteric deities, and is allowed to throw a flower on a maṇḍala to establish a personal connection with a particular deity (*kechien* 結縁). (3) The teacher constructs a maṇḍala and teaches the practitioner mantras, mudras and ritual practices. (4) The practitioner learns to construct a maṇḍala himself, and is further instructed in esoteric teachings and rituals. (5) Finally there is the "secret samādhi" (*himitsu sanmaya* 秘密三昧耶), a spiritual union of master and student for which no ritual implements are required. The passage that briefly features Nōnin reads as follows:

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[124] Nōnin's student Kakuan and the latter's students Ekan, Ejō and other Darumashū adepts came from Mount Hiei's Yokawa precincts. It is inferred that Nōnin, too, came from this particular Tendai area. Imaeda Aishin identified the name "Dainichibō" as typical for Tendai lineages. I would further point to *Shōkō Shōninden*, which mentions that Nōnin lectured on the "threefold truth of the *Tendai school*." A note in *Tetsu senchaku honmatsu kudensho* 徹選擇本末口傳抄 (1428) by the Pure Land monk Shōsō 聖聡 (1366-1440) identifies Nōnin as a resident of Mount Kōya, the centre of Shingon esotericism (JZ, 7, p.130).

[125] From the verse "Buddha and ordinary beings are nondual" (Ch. *Fo yu zhongsheng buer* 佛與眾生不二) attributed to Baozhi. *Jingde chuandenglu* (T. 2076, 450c19-24).

[126] *Xuemailun* (T. 2009, p. 373c26-c27).

[127] See Jacqueline Stone, *Original Enlightenment*, pp. 190-236.

[128] Dainichi 大日 is the Sino-Japanese rendering of the Sanskrit Mahāvairocana, the central Buddha of Esoteric Buddhism. The suffix *bō* 房 (chamber) defines the name as that of a Buddhist monk and originally referred to the monk's dwelling place. Dainichibō might thus indicate that Nōnin resided in a temple named Dainichiji or Dainichi-in, but this is highly conjectural.

> Master Kō said: "The second samādhi is a consecration for establishing a connection." Someone said: "Consecration at Enryakuji corresponds to the third samādhi. Consecration at Tōji corresponds to the second samādhi." Master Kō said: "The five samādhis are broad. The three consecrations are narrow. Remember that "fifth samādhi" is the same as "mind consecration." Godai-in [Annen] maintained that they are different, but this is not accurate. The first and second of the five samādhis [usually] do not involve a consecration. This alternative second samādhi amounts to a consecration for establishing a connection. "Secret consecration" is the same as "fifth samādhi". Dainichibō said: "Kōin said that the fifth samādhi is an explanation by the Buddha. People do not know this." Master Kō said: "That is something else. The fifth samādhi I always talk about and the mind consecration are one and the same. [It means that] master and disciple jointly attain mystical integration. People should study this."[129]

Though lacking in contextual detail, the above passage indicates that Dainichibō Nōnin moved in Esoteric Buddhist circles. Under a certain Master Kō 江師, Nōnin participated in a discussion about esoteric samādhi practices and consecration rituals (Skt. *abhiṣeka*; *kanjō* 灌頂). Prior to this, Nōnin had apparently heard of the "fifth samādhi" from the Kōin 公胤 (d. 1216), a renowned esoteric ritualist who presided over the Tendai monastic complex Miidera 三井寺 (Onjōji 園城寺).[130] The "fifth samādhi" or "mind consecration" (*shin kanjō* 心灌頂) discussed in the above translated passage, is considered the most profound of three forms of consecration that are distinguished in Esoteric Buddhism. The *shin kanjō* (also called *ishin kanjō* 以心灌頂) is a highly condensed type of consecration in that it omits or abbreviates many of the otherwise prescribed ritual forms and customary stipulations. Basically, the esoteric yoga instructor (*yūga ajari*) and his student (*gyōja* 行者) visualize their own bodies as maṇḍalas and enter a state of samādhi (i.e. the fifth samādhi). At that time a spiritual merger between the master and the student is believed to take place – a merger that allows the student to spontaneously attain the essence of each and every esoteric teaching.[131] Though the brief passage in *Ryōinketsu* provides no details about the nature of Nōnin's interest in this mind consecration, it is easy to imagine how the concept of esoteric *ishin kanjō* would invite comparisons to the concept of the wordless "mind to mind transmission" (*ishin denshin*) of the Zen tradition. In esoteric circles in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it is known, such comparisons were indeed considered.[132]

That Nōnin himself was an accomplished esoteric practitioner is suggested by a document recently discovered at Shinpukuji in Nagoya. This document (dated approximately 1260) refers to

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[129] 江師云。第二ノ三昧耶ハ結縁灌頂也 云云 或人云。延暦寺灌頂ハ第三ノ三摩耶ナリ。東寺ノ灌頂ハ第二ノ三昧也 云云 江師云。五種ノ三摩耶ハ廣。三種ノ灌頂ハ狹。第五ノ三昧耶與トハ心灌頂同シ物ト覺ルヲ。五大院別也ト宣へ給。不得意 五種ノ三昧耶ニハ第一第二ハ不ル及灌頂ニモ物也。此ノ不同ナル第二ノ三昧耶ハ結縁灌頂也。祕密灌頂與トハ第五ノ三昧耶同物也。 大日房云。公胤ハ第五ノ三昧耶ハ佛ノ所説也。人不知之ヲ 云云 江師云。夫ハ別ノ物也。常ニ所ノ云フ第五ノ三昧耶并ニ祕密灌頂ハ一物也。師資共ニ得タラム瑜伽ヲ人可習之ヲ。云云。(T. 2414, 167b14-c03).

[130] Kōin of Onjōji maintained close ties with the Kamakura *bakufu* and was repeatedly summoned to Kamakura to conduct esoteric rituals. Kōin wrote a treatise against Hōnen's propagation of *nenbutsu*, but later in life altered his views and turned to the practice of reciting Amida's name. Kōin is also said to have counselled the young Dōgen. Reportedly it was Kōin who advised Dōgen to study Zen. According to *Honchō kōsōden*, "When Dōgen asked Kōin about the dharmakāya and the self-nature, Kōin answered: "This question is difficult to answer. Our house does not properly transmit this. The Buddha mind school can shed light on this matter. If you want to investigate this further, you must go to that school and ask"." See Tachi Takashi, "Miidera no Kōin ni tsuite" (1), *Bukkyōgakubu ronshū* 37 (2006): pp. 335-364 and "Miidera no Kōin ni tsuite" (2), *Zenkenyūsho nenpō* 18 (2007): pp. 227-251.

[131] *Mikkyō jiten*, p. 22.

[132] See Chapter Nine (Shingon criticisms).

Nōnin with the esoteric title "Kongō Ajari" 金剛阿闍梨 (Vajra Master).[133] Nōnin's temple Sambōji, moreover, is known to have preserved esoteric texts (See Chapter Five).

FUNDRAISING FOR KAIKEI'S AMIDA

Another aspect of Nōnin's career can be deduced from the appearance of his name on a document recently extracted from inside a statue of Buddha Amida (Amitābha). From the late Heian period onwards there developed in Japan the practice of depositing objects inside Buddha statues. Among the items frequently inserted were relics, crystals, texts, coins, images, tufts of hair, as well as socalled *kechien kyōmyō* 結縁交名, i.e. lists of names of persons (*kechiensha* 結縁者) who through donations, devotions or other efforts contributed to the making of a Buddhist statue and so created a meritorious bond (*kechien* 結縁) with that Buddha and with the temple enshrining the statue. In Kyoto, in 1194, numerous documents and objects were deposited inside a new effigy of Amida, carved by the renowned sculptor Kaikei 快慶. The statue was placed in the Kenkō-in temple 遣迎院, founded in 1199 by Shōkū 證空 (1177-1247), a student of Hōnen, under the aegis of the powerful Kūjō family. As is known from comparable cases, Kenkei's Amida was established in the context of commemorating and pacifying the spirits of the many dead resulting from the natural disasters and military battles of the period. The statue incorporated tufts of hair, written vows and a *kechien kyōmyō* document that lists approximately twelve thousand names, written inside printed Buddhas (*inbutsu* 印佛). [134]

In his study of this *kechien kyōmyō* document Aoki Atsushi distinguishes various configurations in the donor groups (*kesshū* 結衆) that supported the project of establishing Kaikei's Amida statue, revealing clusters of Taira, Minamoto and Fujiwara affiliates. Aoki also draws attention to the important role of fundraising monks (*kanjinsō* 勧進僧) that are mentioned in the document. Highlighting Chōgen 重源, Eisai, Myōhen 明遍 (1142-1224), Kenshin 顕真, Tangaku 湛斅 and Insai 印西, Aoki demonstrates that the project drew on extensive *kanjin* networks which centred on Mount Kōya, Tōdaiji, Mount Hiei and several Tendai temples in Ohara and Nishiyama. [135]

For our purposes it worthy of note that Nōnin's name is also included in this deposited *kechien kyōmyō* list.[136] Though details remain unclear, this document reveals that in the late twelfth century, Nonin was actively involved in organized fundraising activities.

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[133] Nagoya Daigaku daigakuin bungaku kenkyūka, *Pure-kanfuarensu Shinpukuji Ōsu Bunko seikyō tenkan – Chūsei shūkyō tekusuto no sekai* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku, 2008), p. 21.
[134] Aoki Atsushi, "Kaikei saku Kenkōin Amida Nyoraizō kechien kōmyō: zōnai nōnyūhin shiryō ni miru chūsei shinkōsha no kesshū to sono kōzu," *Bukkyō shigaku kenkyū* 38/ 2 (1995): pp. 47-98.
[135] Ibid.
[136] A photo reproduction of the documents is found in Aoki Atsushi, *Kenkōin Amida Nyoraizō zōnai nōnyūhin shiryō* (Kokusai Nihon bunka kenkyū sentaa, 1999).

NŌNIN'S ANCESTRY AND DEATH

The account of Nōnin's death at the hands of Taira no Kagekiyo 平景清, as recorded in *Honchō kōsōden,* suggests that Nōnin died not later than 1196, the supposed year of Kagekiyo's death, which is said to have been caused by self-imposed starvation.[137] Placing Nōnin's death in 1196 hinges on two related notions: one, that Nōnin was actually killed by Kagekiyo, and two, that Kagekiyo died in 1196. Both notions are problematic in that they are based on pseudo-historical sources and relatively late accounts.

Kagekiyo is said to have been a Fujiwara adopted into the Taira clan, who fought for the Taira against the Minamoto in a number of battles during the Genpei war (1180-1185). His exploits gave rise to a widespread folklore and are recited in warrior tales and theatrical plays. He is mostly described as a crude soldier with a death-defying attitude. A wellknown episode from the *Heike monogatari* tells how Kagekiyo clashed with the Minamoto warrior Jūrō during the battle at Yashima and victoriously snatched the neck-plate from his helmet. Kagekiyo is often referred to as Akushichibyōe Kagekiyo 悪七兵衛景清. The prefix *aku* 悪 (evil) is usually associated with vengeful spirits of those who suffered a violent death, but in the case of Kagekiyo it is said he appropriated the epithet while alive. According to some sources he did so after having murdered his uncle Nōnin.[138]

A recurring theme in the legends surrounding Kagekiyo is his failed assassination of the military ruler Minamoto no Yoritomo during the 1195 Great Buddha Ceremony (*Daibutsu kuyō* 大佛供養) at Nara's Tōdaiji. The attempt is featured in several theatrical plays. In the *kōwakamai* play *Kagekiyo*, for instance, Yoritomo's assassination is averted and Kagekiyo is captured. About to be executed, Kagekiyo is saved through the intercession of the bodhisattva Kannon. Yoritomo eventually pardons Kagekiyo but banishes him to distant Hyūga, whereupon the humiliated warrior shamefully gouges out his own eyes.[139] The Noh play *Kagekiyo* by Zeami (1373-1455) follows Kagekiyo's daughter Hitomaru in her travels to Hyūga in search of her exiled father. Eventually she finds him living in a thatched hut, eking out a living as a lonely, eyeless beggar.[140]

Partly through the medium of blind itinerant singers (*biwa hōshi* 琵琶法師), tales about Kagekiyo dispersed throughout Japan and interacted with local traditions, producing a variety of narratives. [141] The story of Kagekiyo and the killing of Nōnin surfaces in various Edo period guidebooks to famous places. According to these guidebooks Kagekiyo, hiding from the victorious Minamoto clan, finds shelter at the residence of his uncle Nōnin – the Sambōji in Settsu. Nōnin kindly provides his nephew with a safe refuge, but the suspicious Kagekiyo mistakenly believes that he is being betrayed by his uncle and angrily beheads him. Shedding

[137] According to the *Heike monogatari*, Kagekiyo died in Kenkyū 7/3/7 (DNS 4, 4, p. 914). Interestingly the *Hōryūji bettō shidai* 法隆寺別当次第 (DNS 4, 14, pp. 909-10) mentions a monk named Nōnin 能忍 officiating as a lecturer (*kōshi* 講師) at the *Shōman-e* 勝鬘會 (Ceremony for the *Śrīmālādevī sūtra*), at the the Hōryūji in Nara in 1218 (Kempō 6). The reference is problematic; it cannot be determined if this is indeed Dainichi Nōnin. Theoretically Nōnin might still have been active in 1218, but not later than 1218/5/15, at which date Nōnin is referred as "late master" (*senshi* 先師). See Chapter Three (*Relic Inventory*, entry 2)

[138] *Setsuyō gundan* 摂陽群談, in *Dainihon chishi taikei* 9, p. 25.

[139] See Harada Masatoshi, *Nihon chūsei Zenshū to shakai*, p. 61.

[140] The Japanese text of Zeami's Kagekiyo and several translations in English are available online via the database of the University of Virginia.
http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/noh/kageindex.html.

[141] Many stories about Kagekiyo involve gods and buddhas that cure eye diseases. See *Nihon minzokugaku jiten*, pp. 398-400. *Shinwa densetsu jiten*, pp. 129-130.

tears of remorse Kagekiyo then runs off and halts at a nearby pond to wash his bloodstained sword. The pond is accordingly known as the "pond of blood" (*chi no ike* 血の池) or "pond of tears" (*namida no ike* 涙の池).[142] The same incident is recorded in several miscellanea (*zuihitsu* 随筆). *Shiojiri* 塩尻 (Buttocks of Salt) by Amano Nobukage 天野信景 (1660-1733), for instance, has the following:

> A monk called Dainichi went to Song China, studied under Chan master Fozhao Deguang, and then returned to Japan. He was an uncle of Akushichibyōe Kagekiyo. After the Taira clan was destroyed [Kagekiyo] visited Dainichi's hermitage. Kagekiyo looked tired, so Dainichi told his attendant to buy sake. The attendant ran off through the gate. Kagekiyo, suspecting he was being reported to the Minamoto clan, drew his sword and cut Dainichi to death. [Note:] What is the source text for this incident? I must further investigate it. [143]

Amano and the authors of the various guidebooks invariably remark on the story's unclear origins and note that they simply recorded hearsay. The motif of the temple attendant who is dispatched to buy sake and Kagekiyo's misguided fear of being betrayed is similar to the description in Nōnin's biography in *Honchō kōsōden*; when writing this biography, Mangan Shiban probably consulted the abovementioned guidebooks or similar sources.[144] The biographical sketch of Nōnin in the much earlier *Genkō Shakusho* (1322) does not mention Kagekiyo at all. The deadly incident, then, appears to be a later accretion to Nōnin's life story. The family kinship between Nōnin and Kagekiyo in itself is a different question which, because of the murky historicity of the person known by the name Taira no Kagekiyo, and the lack of supporting sources, is hard to answer. In view of the above, Nōnin's death at the hands of Kagekiyo might be best understood in terms of Kagekiyo legends (*Kagekiyo densetsu* 景清伝説). If, however, Nōnin was indeed associated with the defeated Taira clan, it might help explain why Nōnin was apparently unsuccessful in establishing strong ties with the Kamakura *bakufu* and so create a more enduring presence in Japanese Buddhist history.

The theme of a Zen patriarch's violent death, in addition, has significant antecedents in Zen literature. As Yanagida Seizan observed, Nōnin's death fittingly echoes traditions concerning the cruel end of several patriarchs included in the Zen lineage.[145] Bodhidharma "died" from repeated poisonings. Nāgārjuna was made to behead himself with a blade of grass. A classic case is that of the patriarch Siṃha, who bled white milk when beheaded by the King of Kashmir. Violent death in these cases serves to convey notions of spiritual fulfilment: the victim recognizes the grim circumstances as a manifestation of residual karma and seeing the ultimate emptiness of phenomena he fearlessly accepts death. In this sense the story of Nōnin's beheading echoes a Buddhist theme that involves spiritual attainment and affiliation with the Zen lineage.

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[142] *Ashiwakebune* 蘆分船 (The Reed-parting Boat) (1675). *Setsuyō gundan* (compiled 1698-1701). Quoted in Harada, *Nihon chūsei no zenshū to shakai*, pp. 60-61.

[143] 大日という僧入宋して、佛照徳光禅師に参じて帰朝せり。是悪七兵衛景清が伯父なり。景清平家滅て後、大日が菴に来る。大日侍者を呼で、景清つかれたる色あり、酒を買れと。侍者即ち走て門を出ツ、景清我を源家に訴へて押んとするかといぶかり、太刀を抜て大日を切殺しという。〔割註〕此事出書何にありや、猶尋ねべし。(*Nihon zuihitsu taisei* 15, p. 101-102.) Similar accounts are found in *Shōsaihitsuki* 蕉斉筆記 (1794) by Hiraga Hakusan 平賀白山 and *Baison saihitsu* 梅村載筆 by Hayashi Razan (1583-1657). See *Dōgen no shisō no ayumi,* vol.1 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1993), pp. 103-104.

[144] Harada, *Nihon chūsei zenshū to shakai*, p. 59-60.

[145] Yanagida Seizan, *Daruma* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1988), p. 78.

NŌNIN MENTIONED BY NICHIREN

Disparaging comments about Nōnin are found in the writings of Nichiren (1222-1282). In these comments Nōnin and his student Kakuan are presented as conceited monks that came to prominence in the Kennin era (1201-1203). In the *Ankokuron gokan yurai* 安論御勘由來 (The Reason for Submitting the *Ankokuron*) (1268), Nichiren (in a characteristically tempestuous tone) remarks:

> During the reign of Retired Emperor Gotoba, in the Kennin period, there were two arrogant men, Hōnen and Dainichi. Possessed by evil demons they misled people of high and low station throughout the country. After a while all became practitioners of *nenbutsu* or turned to the Zen school. [146]

Nichiren's *Kyōkijikokushō* 教機時國抄 (Treatise on Teaching, Capacity, Time and Country) (1272) reads:

> During the fifty or more years since the Kennin era, the priests Dainichi and Butchi [Kakuan] have spread the teachings of the Zen school, casting aside all the various sūtras and postulating a doctrine that is transmitted outside the scriptures, while Hōnen and Ryūkan have established the Pure Land school, contradictiong the teachings of the true Mahāyāna and setting up schools based on the provisional teachings. They are in effect casting aside gems and gathering stones instead, abandoning the solid earth and endeavoring to climb up into the air. Men such as this know nothing about the order in which the various doctrines should be propagated. The Buddha warned of such men when he said: "Better to encounter a mad elephant than an evil friend."[147]

Nichiren's *Kaimokusho* (Treatise on Opening the Eyes) (1272) reads:

> In the Kennin years Hōnen and Dainichi appeared. They propagated the Nenbutsu and Zen schools. Hōnen said: "In the *mappō* period not even one out of a thousand persons can obtain [buddhahood] on the basis of the *Lotus sūtra*." Dainichi said: "[The mind] is separately transmitted, outside of the scriptural teachings." These two teachings have pervaded the country. Tendai and Shingon scholars grovel for the patrons of Nenbutsu and Zen, like dogs that wag their tails for their masters, and mice that are afraid of cats. [148]

In a letter known as *Sado gosho* 佐渡御書 (Letter from Sado) (1272) Nichiren writes:

> They call their schools the Nenbutsu and the Zen sects. Hōnen applies the four characters "discard, close, ignore, and abandon" to the *Lotus sūtra*, and calls for its rejection, and advocates the exclusive calling of the name of the Buddha Amida, a Buddha who appears in the provisional sutras. The followers of Dainichi speak of a separate teaching outside the

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[146] 然後鳥羽院御宇建仁年中法然大日二人有増上慢者。惡鬼入其身誑惑國中上下擧代成念佛者、毎人趣禪宗。STN 1, p. 423.

[147] *Kyōkijikokushō*, in *Letters of Nichiren*, translated by Burton Watson and others, edited by Philip Yampolsky (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 26. (Modified)

[148] 建仁年中ニ法然大日ノ二人出來シテ。念佛宗禪宗ヲ興行ス。法然云。法華經ハ末法ニ入テハ。未有一人得者。千中無一等 云云　大日云。教外別傳等 云云 此兩義國土ニ充滿セリ。天台眞言ノ學者等。念佛禪ノ檀那ヲヘツライヲソルル事。犬ノ主ニヲヲフリ。ネスミノ猫ヲヲソルルカコトシ。 (T. 2989, 232b03-b10).

> scriptures and deride the Lotus sūtra, saying that it is no more than a finger pointing at the moon, a pointless conglomeration of words. These priests must both be followers of the six non-buddhist teachers, who only now have entered the stream of Buddhism.[149]

Nichiren criticizes what he sees as an erroneous rejection of Buddhist scriptures, the *Lotus sūtra* in particular, and presents Nōnin and Kakuan as its main agents in Japan. Nōnin is paired off with Hōnen, the founder of the Pure Land school, and portrayed as an arrogant monk who spreads false teachings. In begrudging the widely felt influence that Nōnin and his pupil Kakuan exercised as religious figures, Nichiren in effect assigns the Darumashū a key position in the rise and spread of Zen in Japan. The passage thus indicates the perceived prominence of Nōnin and his successor Kakuan and shows the impact of these monks on the religious world of the Kamakura period.

DAINICHIBŌ IN THE THEATRE

A monk named Dainichibō appears as a stage character in various theatre productions of the Edo period. Several of these productions specifically identify this character as the uncle of Taira no Kagekiyo.

One of the earliest kabuki dramas featuring Dainichibō is *Kazari ebi yoroi Soga* 飾鰕鎧曽我, first performed in 1748 at the Nakamura theater in Edo. It presents Kagekiyo in the guise of an armed monk who plans to kill Minamoto no Yoritomo during the Great Buddha Ceremony in Nara. Kagekiyo is found out by his uncle, the monk Dainichibō. Dainichibō runs off to expose his nephew but Kagekiyo chases his uncle, cuts him to death and snatches in his robes. Wearing a hat, hiding his sword and dressed in Dainichibō's clothing, Kagekiyo manages to escape. [150] The drama *Chanoyu Kagekiyo* 茶湯景清 has a similar scene in which Kagekiyo slays his uncle Dainichibō, slips into his robes and makes his way out. Another kabuki piece that features both Kagekiyo and Dainichibō is *Tsukisenu haru hagoromo Soga* 常磐春羽衣曾我, first performed in 1777 at Edo's the Ichimura theatre. In a bloody scene, known for its first documented use of *chiwata* 血綿 (threads of dyed cotton that simulate blood), Dainichibō is killed by Kagekiyo's lover, the courtesan Akoya. The subject matter of these dramas clearly builds on the pre-existing notion of Taira no Kagekiyo beheading his uncle, the monk Dainichibō. To a degree, then, the Dainichibō character can be said to be a fictionalized representation of the historical Nōnin.

In several plays of the Edo period the Dainichibō character was sometimes conflated with another monkish stage character: Hokaibō 法界房. Hokaibō first briefly appears as a mountain ascetic (*yamabushi* 山伏) in Chikamatsu's (1653-1725) *Futago Sumidagawa* 雙生隅田川 (1720).[151] In later Kabuki plays Hokaibō became a pronounced character, invariably figuring as a debauched monk. This later Hokaibō character is thought to have incorporated traits that were

[149] 法然が一類大日が一類、念佛宗禪宗と號して、法華經に捨閉閣抛の四字を副へて制止を加て權經の彌陀稱名計を取立、教外別傳と號して法華經を月をさす指、只文字をかぞふるなんど笑ふ者は、六師が末流の佛教の中に出來せるなるべし。うれへなるかなや。STN 1, p. 615. The translation is taken from *Letters of Nichiren*, edited by Philip Yampolsky (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 57.

[150] The play was also known as *Daibutsu kuyo* 大佛供養 and *Yobimodoshi Kagekiyo* 呼戻景清. See Ibara Toshirō, *Kabuki nenpyō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958), p.4.

[151] *Futago Sumidagawa* 雙生隅田川, in Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei 92, edited by Matsuzaki Hitoshi, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995), pp. 3-78. "Twins at the Sumida River," in *Chikamatsu: Five Late Plays*, edited and translated by Andrew Gerstle (Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 36-117.

ascribed to the True Pure Land monk Eigen 穎玄 (1751-1829), a historical figure who is said to have been active in the redlight quarters of Kyoto and Edo, soliciting alms and promulgating the dharma among prostitutes.[152] In 1784 the *kyōgen* piece *Sumidagawa gonichi omokage* 隅田川続俤 presented Hokaibō as a depraved and murderous monk soliciting alms for a temple bell whilst indulging in food and prostitutes. Hokaibō's unrequited love for the shopgirl Okumi induces him to steal a scroll belonging to her aspiring lover Yosuke, who in reality is the warrior Matsuwaka of the Yoshida clan. In the ensuing intrigues Hokaibō tries to rape the shopgirl and kills Matsuwaka's fiancée. Hokaibō is eventually slain, but shortly returns as Okumi's ghost double.[153] This *kyōgen* piece is in part based on the earlier drama *Iromoyo aoyagi Soga* 色模様青柳曽我, first performed in 1775, which deals with a similar plot but designates the depraved monk as "Dainichibō." Similarly *Edo meisho midori Soga* 江戸名所緑曾我 (1779), *Shunshoku Edo ye Soga* 春色江戸輪曾我 (1791) and *Shinobugusa tamuke no hosshin* 垣衣草手向発心 (1808) all feature perverted, alms soliciting Dainichibō figures that are eventually murdered.

The stage character Dainichibō is frequently depicted on eighteenth and nineteenth century woodblock prints (*nishiki-e* 錦絵). Portraits of actors (*yakusha-e* 役者絵) were cheaply printed in large amounts to promote stage productions that were being performed and also served to popularize the starring actors. Dainichibō seems to have been a favorite subject of the artist Katsugawa Shunshō (1726-1792), who designed several prints of Kabuki actors in the role of the devious monk.[154] In the pictorial tradition Dainichibō is invariably portrayed as an unkempt figure in tattered or messily tied up robes; sometimes he wears a dilapidated hat or holds a torn umbrella that frames his head in a ragged nimbus, symbolizing perhaps his crooked religiosity. Unlike conventional Buddhist monks he is not shaved but sports a unruly hair.[155] Obviously these prints do not depict the historical Dainichibō Nōnin but are pictorial representations of particular actors in the guise of the Dainichibō character; the antecedents of this character hearken back to Nōnin and also absorbed elements from the Hokaibō tales.

In summary, the stage character Dainichibō represents the archetypical debauched Buddhist priest. In woodblock depictions of actors in the role of Dainichibō, Japanese painters and printmakers translated the character's depravity into graphic imagery. In this way Edo period cultural expressions built on, added to, and reinforced the deviant image of the actual Dainichibō Nōnin.

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[152] Eigen 穎玄 (1751-1829), also known as Ryōkai 了海, resided at the Jōbonji temple 上品寺 in present-day Shiga prefecture. Biographical accounts of his life are highly embellished and may partly derive from theatrical imagination, making it hard to separate fact from fiction. It is, however, evident that his activities caused quite a stir. Eigen reportedly travelled the country between 1768 and 1776 to solicit donations for the renovation of his temple. At first he was active in Kyoto's pleasure district Toriimoto. Later he appeared in the Yoshiwara quarters in Edo, where he preached the dharma to two famous courtesans. Impressed, the courtesans gave him a bronze temple bell, which he then transported back to Jōbon-ji on a cart. *Nihon bukkyōshi jiten*, p. 55-56.

[153] *Sumidagawa gonichi no omokage* 隅田川続俤 (Latter Day Memories of the Sumida River), also known as *Hokaibō* 法界坊, was written by Nagawa Shimesuke 奈河七五三助 (1754-1814) and first performed in Osaka in 1784. A translation in English is included in Unno Mitsuko (et al.), *You mean to say you still don't know who we are?: Seven Kabuki Plays* (Ashiya: Personally Oriented, 1976).

[154] See for instance *Actors Ichikawa Danjūrō V as Kagekiyo and Ōtani Hiroemon III as Dainichibō*, by Katsukawa Shunshō, reproduced in Timothy Clark & Osamu Ueda (eds.), *The Actor's Image*: *Print makers of the Katsukawa School* (Princeton University Press, 1994), catalogue number 364. This print, and several other featuring "Dainichibō", are also viewable online in the digitalized collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: http://www.mfa.org/collections/libraries-and-archives (keyword: dainichibo).

[155] An exception to this are prints which show Dainichibō as the ghost double of the shopgirl Okumi, disguised as a fernseller, such as *Actor Nakamura Nakazō I as the ghost of Dainichibō*, by Katsukawa Shunshō, preserved at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Ibid., (accession number: 21.4175).

NŌNIN IN *DAITOKUJI YAWA* (EVENING TALKS AT DAITOKUJI)

Mention must be made here of a reference to Nōnin recently presented by Takahashi Shūei.[156] Nōnin briefly appears in *Daitokuji yawa* (Evening Talks at Daitokuji), a collection of Zen talks that is thought to have been compiled in the sixteenth century by the Rinzai monk Kogaku Sōkō 古岳宗亘 (1465-1548). The collection includes the following:

> Venerable Dainichi received the Zen dharma from Guang Fozhao, a student of Dahui. Later he went to a temple and brought along fish and meat. Finding this objectionable the Estate Constable put a stop to it. Facing the empty sky [the Constable] exclaimed: "Venerable Dainichi is extremely clear-eyed, but he brings fish and meat into the temple. It is crooked behaviour that must be stopped!" Later when [Dainichi] was being allowed to enter the temple as of old, he again brought fish and meat into the temple.[157]

Without additional context we can only speculate on the intended meaning of what must have been an instructional anecdote. As Takahashi notes, the caption of this entry – "On the proscription of bringing fragrant sake into the monastery" – seems to reflect the wellknown story about Nōnin sending out his attendant from Sambōji to buy sake for his refugee nephew and soon to be killer Kagekiyo.[158] A sympathetic reading of the anecdote would appreciate Nōnin's infraction of the rule as a humorous example of radical Zen freedom, unbound by literal conceptions of the Buddhist precepts. The reference, in any event, reveals an ambivalent view on Nōnin. On the one hand he is an "extremely clear-eyed" (*daimyōgen* 大明眼) Zen master in the Dahui lineage, admired by the local authorities. On the other hand he flouts the Buddhist prohibition on bringing meat and fish into the monastery, causing censure from the same local authority. The lingering image is that of a transgressive and maverick monk.

Concluding remarks

Nōnin remains an elusive figure. The above examined mishmash of references does, at the least, show that he was a highly noticed figure. Evidently his presence in the Buddhist world could not be ignored. The negative evaluation that characterizes several of the reports cannot be taken at face value and is better understood as the outcome of rivalry among various Buddhist groups in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries that were trying to establish their own orthodoxy, or saw their already established position threatened by an increasingly popular upcomer. Nōnin's prominence is perhaps best gauged from the writings of Nichiren, who persistently coupled Nōnin to Hōnen. Nichiren's evaluation is evidently negative, but it suggests that in Nichiren's time the perceived role of Nōnin in the formative history of the Zen school was seminal.

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[156] Takahashi Shūei, "Darumashū ni kansuru hosoku jikō," *Komazawa Daigaku bukkyōgakubu kenkyū kiyō* 67 (2009): pp. 267-283.

[157] 大日上人伝禅法、於大恵弟子光仏照。後寺へ推出テ、魚肉ヲ入タ。地頭、依嫌之停止。虚空叫云、大日上人ハ、大明眼テ、魚肉ヲ寺ニ入テ、停止サスル曲事チヤ。如旧入寺サセヨト、其後復魚肉ヲ寺ニ入タ也。Ibid.

[158] Ibid.