

Critical Zen art history

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For twenty-odd years I have taught a course called 'Zen Meditation, Zen Art.' When I first proposed it, darts arrived from several directions. A colleague at another university assured me that I was less than qualified to teach it, my several years of Zen practice notwithstanding. My Japanese was non-existent; so was Sanskrit. Chinese we didn't talk about. And I was no buddhologist. What did I think I was doing?

Ronald L. Grimes¹

Zen today is a global term that signifies along a spectrum of ritual practices, beliefs, philosophical concepts, modes of consciousness, states of being, creative practices, and aesthetic qualities. One might assume that seated meditation (Japanese: *zazen*), long part of the Chan/Sŏn/Zen/Thiền Buddhist traditions, would be essential in present-day perceptions and practices of Zen, especially since contemporary Zen teachers stress the importance of meditation and formal teacher-to-pupil training.² Through the transnational convolutions of global Zen, however, meditation may become secondary or unnecessary, and one's perceptions of Zen, and even one's 'Zen life,' may emphasize instead Zen philosophy, Zen art and aesthetics, or a 'Zen

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¹ Ronald L. Grimes, 'Zen and the Art of Not Teaching Zen and the Arts: An Autopsy', in Victor Sōgen Hori et al., eds., *Teaching Buddhism in the West: From the Wheel to the Web*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, 155.

² Generally I use Zen when referring to the Japanese Zen Buddhist tradition or the modern collapse of multiple, non-uniform religious traditions, cultures—Chan/Sŏn/Zen/Thiền, and so forth—into the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese character *Chan* 禪. Although I employ the tripartite Chan/Sŏn/Zen in order to acknowledge an East Asian interregional space and circulations, this essay focuses on Chan and Zen art and its related Japanese and Euro-American scholarship, an emphasis (or blindness) that I admit to and which is symptomatic of a particular historiographical formation related to modern transnational circumstances. The visual cultures of Korean Sŏn have received considerably less attention—so too those of Vietnamese Thiền—and I look forward to the critical work of others on these traditions.

attitude' – with anything that suggests the ornaments, rituals, and devotional behaviours of traditional Buddhism dismissed as all too much *religion*. Even so, premodern works of art produced by Chan and Zen monastics or lay Zen Buddhists—Chinese landscapes, real or imagined, calligraphic circles (J. *ensō*), portraits of forbidding or antinomian patriarchs, 'abstract' rock gardens, and so forth—typically remain indispensable to explanations of Zen and Zen culture as well as personal Zen belief systems (of varied ilk). The world of Zen has also come to include modern avant-garde painting, music, and performance, often inspired by Zen philosophical concepts, as well as architecture in concrete, steel, and weathered wood designed with Zen-associated aesthetics in mind (e.g. subtlety and imperfection, rusticity and patina; J. *wabi, sabi*). Zen also turns up in 'borrowed interest' marketing campaigns for commercial products from which one may apparently benefit from purportedly Zen holistic and therapeutic qualities. One may even utter Zen-hued aphorisms and admire 'Zenny' characters in popular culture, such as The Dude in the Cohen brother's film, *The Big Lebowski* (1998).³

For the past century or so, following a long history of monastic and lay engagement with the visual arts in East Asia (especially the 'brush arts,' calligraphy and painting), works of Chan/Sōn/Zen Buddhist art have been the focus of emphatic and euphoric interest in private collecting and in museum and art gallery spaces well outside traditional religious communities. The steady stream of books, articles, and blogs that take up the topics of Zen art, aesthetics, both for self-identifying Zen followers as well as non-practicing admirers, attests to their enduring art historical and popular interest. Although much of this writing tends towards essentialism and ahistorical gushing, scholars writing from the perspectives of the history of religions, the history of art, East Asian history and literature, and cultural studies have been probing anew the relationship between the Chan/Sōn/Zen traditions and the visual arts. This has yielded new sorts of essays, books, and exhibitions, distinct from those of earlier decades, that propose critical frames of inquiry for artefacts associated with Zen and seek deeper understanding of the ways in which these objects mediated relations between monastics, patrons, and the surrounding society and then reverberated into wider, enduring cultural reception.⁴ Robes, calligraphies, portraits, poem-picture scrolls, and gardens, in particular, have been re-examined in formal and material terms in tandem with study of doctrinal, literary, institutional, and political contexts, and as objects that are related dialectically to ritual and vital to assertions of sectarian orthodoxy and individual charisma. Such publications may introduce previously unpublished archival and material evidence that challenges conventional definitions and boundaries of analysis, and offer micro-histories of

³ See my *Long Strange Journey: On Modern Zen, Zen Art, and other Predicaments*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, forthcoming 2017.

⁴ A compilation of Western-language exhibition catalogues and books and articles on Zen art appears in Gregory Levine and Yukio Lippit, eds., *Awakenings: Zen Figure Paintings in Medieval Japan*, New York: Japan Society Gallery in Association with Yale University Press, 2007, 202-207.

production and circulation that throw into question broad characterizations and arguments. China and Japan in interregional exchange during the premodern and early modern eras figure prominently, but there is growing interest in modern global flows of people, teachings, and material and visual cultures as well as historiographical and methodological critique. It seems clear, at least to many in the academy, that Zen art should be removed from the realm of the inscrutable and studied critically in relation to diverse material, visual, social, and historical dispensations and interpretive ambitions.

This essay sketches a history of the academic study of Zen art from the late nineteenth century to post-war reconsiderations, leading towards what I term 'critical Zen art studies,' a project undertaken by historians of art and others to challenge normative definitions of Zen art based on modern constructions, revise understanding of the types and functions of visual art important to Chan/Sōn/Zen monasteries and their patrons, and study iconographies and forms not as a transparent aesthetic indices to Zen Mind or No Mind (J. *mushin*) but as rhetorically, ritually, and socially complex, even unruly, events of representation.⁵ But why, one may ask, should the seemingly ever-trendy but still somehow parochial topic of Zen art be of interest and importance to the discipline of art history? First, I will strike a bargain with the reader that art history still has a way to go in terms of engaging non-Western art-objects, theories and practices of picturing, visual and material ontologies, communities of reception, and alternative modernities, and so forth—and that Zen art, familiar as it may be to many art historians and acknowledged in fine arts narratives, offers a fertile space in which to extend such work. (One might suppose, incorrectly, that post-structuralist and postcolonial turns would have some time ago sent packing the sorts of nationalist and orientalist grand narratives of Zen art that developed from the early twentieth century.) Second, the Zen art case—in relation to the modern processes by which Zen itself has come to exist as an object of knowledge production and consumption—provides ample opportunity to consider the interrelationships and tensions existing between religion and spirituality, images and objects, and historical study.⁶ Third, and more narrowly, an examination of modern discourses on Zen art allows us to consider some of the characteristics of intellectual exchange taking place between art historians working in East Asia, particularly Japan, and those based in other regions of the Global North.

⁵ Rather than the discourse of Critical Buddhism (J. *hihan Bukkyō*), this phrasing evokes 'critical theory' in the humanities and social sciences.

⁶ See my essay, 'Two (or More) Truths: Reconsidering *Zen Art* in the West', in Levine, Lippit, eds., *Awakenings*, 52-63, and *Long Strange Journey*.

Zen Buddhism: not what it used to be?

The past three decades or so have witnessed the growth of a new literature that we might label critical Zen studies.⁷ Therein one can read deeply on topics such as sectarian formation, politics and patronage, orthodoxy, lineage transmission, ritual, hagiography, gender, and modern practice. It is not that such topics were entirely ignored previously, but recent texts are often avowedly revisionist, hermeneutically suspicious, and critical of modern shibboleths including Zen wordlessness, anti-ritualism, iconoclasm, and purely cloistered monasticism.

As an institution, we now read, Chinese Chan (the source of teachings and lineages that gave rise to Korean Sōn and Japanese Zen) did not exist per se before the Song Dynasty (960-1279 CE), its preceding Tang dynasty (618-907 CE) 'golden age' a strategic fiction engineered in a competitive sectarian landscape and later re-nounced uncritically, some argue, by modern scholarship in Japan.⁸ There are new studies of individual Chan/Sōn/Zen monks and nuns that reconsider biography in juxtaposition with hagiography. Bodhidharma, the first Chan patriarch, for instance, is no longer the literal transmitter of Indian Zen meditation to China but a fabricated ancestor, and the antics of the Chan patriarchs are no longer taken at face value as evidence of iconoclasm and antinomianism.⁹ We now have many more biographies and autobiographies of modern and contemporary monks and nuns as

⁷ See James Robson, 'Formation and Fabrication in the History and Historiography of Chan Buddhism', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 71, 2 (2011): 311-349; Bernard Faure, 'Chan/Zen Studies in English: The State of the Field(s)', in Bernard Faure, ed, *Chan Buddhism in Ritual Context*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, 1-35; and John R. McRae, 'Buddhism', *Journal of Asian Studies* 54, 2 (1995): 354-371.

⁸ Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song-Dynasty China*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008; and T. Griffith Foulk, 'The 'Ch'an School' and its Place in the Buddhist Monastic Institution', PhD Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987. On the work of North American scholars as a 'tributary of the Japanese conception of an originally pure Zen', see Faure, 'Chan/Zen Studies in English', 9.

⁹ See, for instance, Bernard Faure, 'From Bodhidharma to Daruma: The Hidden Life of a Zen Patriarch', *Japan Review* 23 (2011): 45-71; Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds., *Zen Masters*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010; Jeffrey L. Broughton, *Zongmi on Chan*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2009; Jinhua Jia, *The Hongzhou School of Chan Buddhism in Eighth-through Tenth-Century China*, Albany: SUNY Press, 2007; Mario Poceski, *Ordinary Mind as the Way: The Hongzhou School and the Growth of Chan Buddhism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007; Steven Heine, *Did Dōgen Go To China?: What He Wrote and When He Wrote it*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006; John Jorgensen, *Inventing Hui-neng: Hagiography and Biography in Early Ch'an*, Leiden: Brill, 2005; Bernard Faure, *Visions of Power: Imagining Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, translated by Phyllis Brooks, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000; Jeffrey L. Broughton, *The Bodhidharma Anthology: The Earliest Records of Zen*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999; Bernard Faure, 'Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm', *History of Religions* 25, 3 (Feb., 1986): 187-198.

well as lay practitioners, whose life stories pivot around circumstances their ancestors never had to contend with and reveal their ambitions for and struggles toward modern religious reform and global transmission.¹⁰ Books and essays now focus specifically on Chan/Sōn/Zen ritual and texts, a phenomenon that might seem ‘sacrilegious’ in relation to a religion said to be without rites and scripture and manifested strictly in states of gnostic realization.¹¹ Indeed, much of what we assume today to be timelessly distinctive to Zen has been shown to be a product of the particular geo-political, intellectual, and spiritual conditions of ‘East’ and ‘West’ as they were mutually under transformation, and in tension, across the late nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries. Zen is therefore no longer walled-off from the study of nationalisms and orientalisms.¹²

We also have studies of heretofore under-attended topics: the links between monks and dynastic rulers, governments, and literati elites, for instance, as well as

¹⁰ See Kim Iryōp, *Reflections of a Zen Buddhist Nun*, translated by Jin Y. Park, Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2014; Jack Haubner, *Zen Confidential: Confessions of a Wayward Monk*, Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2013; Sor-Ching Low, ‘Seung Sahn: The Makeover of a Modern Zen Patriarch’, in Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds, *Zen Masters*, 267-285, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010; Steven Heine, ‘Humanizing the Image of a Zen Master: Taizan Maezumi Roshi’, in Heine and Wright, eds, *Zen Masters*, 243-245; Isabel Stirling, *Zen Pioneer: The Life and Works of Ruth Fuller Sasaki*, Emeryville, CA: Shoemaker and Hoard, 2006; Iswar C. Harris, *The Laughing Buddha of Tōfukuji: The Life of Zen Master Fukushima Keidō*, Bloomington: World Wisdom, Inc., 2004; and Soko Morinaga, *Novice to Master: An Ongoing Lesson in the Extent of My Own Stupidity*, translated by Belenda A. Yamakawa, Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2002.

¹¹ See Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds, *Zen Ritual: Studies of Zen Buddhist Theory in Practice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds, *Zen Classics: Formative Texts in the History of Zen Buddhism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006; Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds, *The Zen Canon: Understanding the Classic Texts*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; and Faure, ed, *Chan Buddhism in Ritual Context*.

¹² See Richard M. Jaffe, ‘Introduction to the 2010 Edition’, in Daisetz T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011, vii-xxviii; David L. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, Chapter Five; Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003; Robert H. Sharf, ‘The Uses and Abuses of Zen in the Twentieth Century’, in Inken Prohl and Hartmut Zinser, eds, *Zen, Reiki, Karate: Japanische Religiosität in Europa* (Bunka: Tübinger interkulturelle und linguistische Japanstudien, band 2), Münster: Lit Verlag, 2002, 143-154; Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and ‘The Mystic East’*, London: Routledge, 1999; Robert H. Sharf, ‘The Zen of Japanese Nationalism’, in Donald Lopez Jr. ed, *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism Under Colonialism*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995, 107-160; James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo, eds, *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto, & Question of Nationalism*, Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1994; and Bernard Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

the lives, teachings, and cultural production of nuns and female lay practitioners.¹³ New translations and analyses of Chan records and the function of koan (C. *gong'an*; J. *kōan*) have also appeared, provoking heated debate.¹⁴ Modern Chan/Sōn/Zen in East Asia has become the focus of a number of studies, which consider teachers, institutions, practices, and ideology in relation to the complex circumstances of Asian modernities, the 1931-1945 war in the Asia-Pacific theatre, and the post-war era.¹⁵ Zen is now situated among many Buddhisms, and no longer accepted, as modern apologists proposed, as the ultimate Buddhism or universal religion. More attention is being paid to the 'other Zens' of Korea, Vietnam, Brazil, and beyond.¹⁶ Scholars now routinely address cosmology, miracles, 'superknowledges' (S. *abhijñā*), and indigenous deities, and Zen is located more on and in the ground—not simply

¹³ Beata Grant, *Eminent Nuns: Women Chan Masters of Seventeenth-Century China*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008; Patricia Fister, 'Merōfu Kannon and Her Veneration in Zen and Imperial Circles in Seventeenth-century Japan', *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 34, 2 (2007): 417-442; Perle Besserman, *A New Zen for Women*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007; Martine Batchelor and Son'gyong Sunim, *Women in Korean Zen: Lives and Practices*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005; Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*; Albert Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati: The Political Ascendancy of Chan Buddhism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006; Mark Halperin, *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960-1279*, Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006; Paula K. R. Arai, *Women Living Zen: Japanese Sōtō Buddhist Nuns*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

¹⁴ Robert H. Sharf, 'How to Think with Chan Gong'an', in Charlotte Furth, Judith T. Zeitlin and Ping-chen Hsiung, eds, *Thinking with Cases: Specialist Knowledge in Chinese Cultural History*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007, 205-243; Victor Sōgen Hori, *Zen Sand: The Book of Capping Phrases for Kōan Practice*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2003, 5-15; Steven Heine, *Opening a Mountain: Kōans of the Zen Masters*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002; Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds., *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000; Steven Heine, *Shifting Shape, Shaping Text: Philosophy and Folklore in the Fox Kōan*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999; Steven Heine, *Dōgen and the Kōan Tradition: A Tale of Two Shōbōgenzō Texts*, Albany: SUNY Press, 1993.

¹⁵ For Japan, see, for instance, Jørn Borup, *Japanese Rinzai Zen Buddhism: Myōshinji, a Living Religion*, Leiden: Brill, 2008; Arthur Braverman, *Living and Dying in Zazen: Five Zen Masters of Modern Japan*, Tokyo: Weatherhill, 2003; Robert H. Sharf, 'Sanbōkyōdan: Zen and the Way of the New Religions', *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 22, 3-4 (1995): 417-458; and Kenneth Kraft, ed, *Zen: Tradition & Transition*, New York: Grove Press, 1988. The 1931-1945 war began with Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931, continued with Japan's war with China from 1937 and with the Allies from 1941, and ended with Japan's surrender in 1945.

¹⁶ See, for instance, George Tanabe, Willa Tanabe, *Japanese Buddhist Temples in Hawaii: An Illustrated Guide*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012; Martine Batchelor, *Women in Korean Zen: Lives and Practices*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006; Cristina Rocha, *Zen in Brazil: The Quest for Cosmopolitan Modernity*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006; Cuing To Nguyen, *Zen in Medieval Vietnam: A Study and Translation of Thiệu Uyển Tập Anh*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997; Robert E. Buswell Jr., *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983.

in the mind or meditating body—in architecture, relics, stūpa, and even healing hot springs.¹⁷

To study Zen today is thus to confront histories of what would previously have seemed unthinkable, at least in terms of certain sectarian representations and popular conceptions. For instance, that Dōgen, the founder of the Sōtō Zen denomination advocated not ‘just sitting’ (J. *shikan taza*), in supposed distinction from the Rinzai denomination (J. *Rinzaishū*), but koan practice and ‘traditional’ Buddhist rituals.¹⁸ Or that the Japanese Zen institution was partly complicit in modern militarism and the Fifteen Year War, and that Zen in Europe and North America has been unsettled repeatedly by cases of sexual offenses perpetrated by Zen teachers.¹⁹ We are therefore asked to consider, among other things, the creolization of Zen and the ‘other Side of Zen;’ to take stock of ‘rude awakenings;’ to ‘see through Zen;’ and to ask, ‘Will the real Zen Buddhism please stand up?’²⁰ We may wish to think twice about modern-contemporary infatuations with Zen, resist exotic notions of spiritual ‘Asia,’ and pay close attention to race, gender, and class in globalized Zen and Buddhism more generally.²¹

¹⁷ ‘Superknowledges’ is from Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, 102.

¹⁸ T. Griffith Foulk, ‘The Denial of Ritual in the Zen Buddhist Tradition.’ *Journal of Ritual Studies* 27, 1 (2013): 47-58; T. Griffith Foulk, ‘Just Sitting? Dōgen’s Take on Zazen, Sūtra Reading, and Other Conventional Buddhist Practices’, in Steven Heine, ed, *Dōgen: Textual and Historical Studies*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, 75-106.

¹⁹ On Japanese Zen and militarism, see Richard M. Jaffe, ‘Introduction’, in Richard M. Jaffe, ed, Daisetsu Teitarō Suzuki, *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki Volume 1: Zen*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014, xvi-xix; Brian Victoria, ‘Zen as a Cult of Death in the Wartime Writings of D.T. Suzuki’, *The Asia-Pacific Journal* vol. 11, Issue 30, No. 4 (Aug. 5, 2013), <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Brian-Victoria/3973> (accessed March 15, 2014); Micah Auerback, ‘A Closer Look at Zen at War: The Buddhist Chaplaincy of Shaku Sōen in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), in Vladimir Tikhonov and Torkel Brekke, eds, *Buddhism and Violence: Militarism and Buddhism in Modern Asia*, New York: Routledge, 2012, 152-171; Christopher Ives, *Imperial-Way Zen: Ichikawa Hakugen’s Critique and Lingering Questions for Buddhist Ethics*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009; Kemmyō Taira Satō, ‘D.T. Suzuki and the Question of War’, translated by Thomas Kirchner, *The Eastern Buddhist* 39, 1 (2008): 61-120; Brian Victoria, *Zen at War*, Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1997. On scandals, see Wright, ‘Humanizing the Image of a Zen Master;’ Michael Downing, *Shoes Outside the Door: Desire, Devotion, and Excess at San Francisco Zen Center*, Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 2001; and Mark Oppenheimer, *Zen Predator of the Upper East Side*, Washington, DC: The Atlantic Books, 2013.

²⁰ See Rocha, *Zen in Brazil*; Duncan R. Williams, *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005; Heisig and Maraldo, *Rude Awakenings*; John R. McRae, *Seeing Through Zen: Encounter, Transformation, and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003; Steven Heine, *Zen Skin, Zen Marrow*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

²¹ See, for instance, Jane N. Iwamura, *Virtual Orientalism: Asian Religions and American Popular Culture*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011; Jan Nattier, ‘Visible and Invisible: The

These and other interventions have been met with degrees of resistance within and outside the academy. More than one scholar who has taken issue with sectarian and popular understandings of Zen and Zen art has been chastised by individuals who feel that the academic speaker has scorned their Zen practices and beliefs.²² There are important and interesting forces at play in such encounters, and accompanying charges of ‘Zen bashing,’ and they do not necessarily end in unpleasantness. Nevertheless, it may be fair to suggest that the concerns of critical Chan/Sōn/Zen studies are more a ruckus in the ivory tower than a larger ‘reform movement.’²³ It would be a mistake, however, to assume that there are firewalls between scholar and monk or nun, between historical research and personal practice. Academics are in frequent dialog with monastic, spiritual, and general audiences, and may be teachers and practitioners themselves. Monks, nuns, and practicing communities engage in scholarship, critique the work of historians of religion and art, and respond to commercial appropriations of Zen. Nevertheless, the historian may wish to be wary of what Bernard Faure calls the ‘discursive affinities between the tradition and its scholarly study’ and be willing to give up the final word.²⁴

At stake in the critical literature on Zen is partly history, or rather the question of *which* sorts of history are heard and studied. The Chan/Sōn/Zen traditions have had their own historians prior to the modern age – the Japanese monks Kokan Shiren (1278-1346) and Mujaku Dōchū (1653-1744), among others – as well as particular formulations of time and time-space.²⁵ The Chan/Sōn/Zen

Politics of Representation in Buddhist America’, *Tricycle* 5, 1 (Fall, 1995): 42-49; bell hooks, ‘Waking up to Racism’, *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review* 4, 1 (1994): 42-45. For satirical critique of white European and North American infatuation with Buddhism, see, for instance, Justin Chin, ‘Attack of the White Buddhists’, in *Mongrel: Essays, Diatribes, and Pranks*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999.

²² My characterization of the lay Zen intellectual and teacher D. T. Suzuki during a public lecture at the University of California, Santa Barbara provoked the ire of one audience member who deemed it an ad hominem attack. On the tensions or lack thereof, between historian and practitioner, etic and emic, and scholarship and religion, see Heine, *Zen Skin, Zen Marrow*, Chapter One; Robson, ‘Formation and Fabrication’, 346; Duncan Williams, ‘At Ease in Between: The Middle Position of a Scholar-Practitioner’, *Journal of Global Buddhism* 9 (2008): 155-63; Malcolm David Eckel, ‘The Ghost at the Table: On the Study of Buddhism and the Study of Religion’, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 62, 4 (Win., 1994): 1085-1110.

²³ From the perspective of the demographics of European and North American religious affiliation and flows of popular culture, Zen has not lost its allure outside the academy as an Asian based religion as well as a non-religious spiritual practice or lifestyle calling, and has not diminished in its appeal as a fount of philosophical tropes and aesthetic qualities.

²⁴ Faure, *Rhetoric*, 3-4.

²⁵ See Marian Ury, *Genkō shakusho: Japan’s First Comprehensive History of Buddhism, a Partial Translation with Introduction and Notes*, Berkeley: University of California, 1971; Mujaku Dōchū, *Shōbōzanshi*, Kyoto: Myōshinji Tōrin’in, 1921; John C. Maraldo, ‘Is there Historical

tradition was hardly laconic in its sectarian histories and hagiographies, such as the 'Flame transmission Records' (C. *chuangdenglu*; J. *dentōroku*), or in its monastery gazetteers (J. *jishi*). One may read the treatises and discourse records of individual masters (C. *yulu*; J. *goroku*) and classic koan collections such as the *Blue Cliff Record* (C. *Biyān lu*) as texts self-aware of lineal transmission, inter-textual utterance, and polemical arguments on orthodoxy taking place over time.²⁶ Then there are the many modern, late modern, and contemporary Chan/Sōn/Zen histories written by non-practicing scholars, monastics, lay men and women, nationalists, as well as various global followers, and debates as to which of these histories ring true, which histories have been silenced, and which remain to be told.²⁷

In recent writings, academics inclined toward historical, political, and cultural critique (availing themselves of 'invented traditions,' post-colonial, and other perspectives), have issued sometimes blunt challenges to the presumption that Zen is inherent and unique and all that matters is experience (a rather modern concept according to Robert H. Sharf).²⁸ To put it one way, Zen advocates such as D. T. Suzuki (1870-1966) and Hisamatsu Shin'ichi (1889-1980) would have us accept something akin to the aphoristic appropriation of Gertrude Stein's (1874-1946) phrase, 'A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose.'²⁹ In other words, that Zen is 'what it is,' unassailable in its mystical unity and out of bounds for historical inquiry. Only someone awakened to Zen Mind, they argued, can understand and speak for Zen and its art, and when they do so, history falls away.³⁰ Those authors writing on Zen

Consciousness within Ch'an', *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 12.2/3 (1985): 141-172; Faure, *Chan Insights*, Chapter Six.

²⁶ On these categories of text, see Heine and Wright, eds, *The Zen Canon*; Albert Welter, *The Linji lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy: The Development of Chan's Records of Sayings Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

²⁷ The question of history was central to the post-war debate between D. T. Suzuki and Hu Shih. See Robson, 'Formulation and Fabrication', 320-321; Levine, *Long Strange Journey*.

²⁸ Robert H. Sharf, 'Experience', in Mark C. Taylor, ed, *Critical Terms in Religious Studies*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998, 94-116; Robert H. Sharf, 'Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience', *Numen* 42, 3 (1995): 228-283. Present-day historians focus often on segments and zones of the Chan/Zen tradition, including the formation of the Chan school during the Song Dynasty; the efforts of Japanese intellectuals to communicate to Europe and North America Japanese conceptions of Zen from the late nineteenth century in response to, indeed challenging, the European Enlightenment; the teaching of émigré Chan/Zen masters in Europe and North America and Zenny experiments during the 1960s and 70s; and more recent consumer culture deluge of Zen style this and Zen flavour that.

²⁹ Gertrude Stein first used, 'A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose', in her 1913 poem, 'Sacred Emily', published in *Geography and Plays*, Boston: The Four Seas Co., 1922, 187. On Suzuki and Hisamatsu, see Jaffe, 'Introduction'; Christopher Ives, 'True Person, Formless Self: Lay Zen Master Hisamatsu Shin'ichi', in Heine and Wright, eds, *Zen Masters*, 217-238; Sharf, 'The Zen of Japanese Nationalism', 131-135.

³⁰ See Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, 'On Zen Art.' *The Eastern Buddhist* 1, 2 (September, 1966): 24.

as more contingent to history, however, suggest to the contrary that Zen is not Zen is not Zen. It is not entirely what it seems, and what it seems to be has been not merely ineffably or spiritually transmitted but has been carefully, polemically, and quite intriguingly constructed by the Chan/Sōn/Zen traditions themselves. Thus, we find discussions of pious fabrications and complicating or counter-histories. The literal belief in the antic-filled hagiographies of Zen patriarchs, meanwhile, may not be without heuristic or expedient (J. *hōben*) importance, but pious, spiritual, and popular responses may overlook the performative and ideological dimensions of such narratives and of the behaviours they portray and pass on through time.

This 'historical turn' has also been a technological matter and material concern. On the one hand historians now have at their fingertips electronic resources that enable rapid and far-reaching searches in ever-growing libraries of scanned text that produce unnoticed or hypothesized patterns and interrelationships.³¹ On the other hand, painstaking *in situ* surveys of monasteries, temples, and convents (which began in the late nineteenth century) continue to identify previously hidden or unnoticed documents and works of visual and material culture. In some instances, new image technologies have revealed material and epigraphic evidence that alters our understanding of patronage, production, and ritual function.³² Such recent discoveries, high-tech and antiquarian-archival, suggest that there is more we can learn about the Chan/Sōn/Zen traditions in basic senses, not merely to deconstruct their claims but to reveal more fully varied soteriological, visual, material, ritual, and social-cultural practices.

Critical Zen art studies

Critical Zen art studies has arisen since the 1990s partly through the attention paid by historians of religion to visual and material cultures, prompted by anthropological methodology, fieldwork, and the enduring relationship in Buddhist Studies between texts, artefacts, and sites. Interventions were prompted in part by the instrumentalization of Chan/Sōn/Zen art by modern Zen apologists. It has strengthened as the art history of Asia has changed, picking up on theoretical shifts in the wider discipline that extend inquiry beyond connoisseurship and canon.

With the rise of such re-evaluation, drawing upon hearty critique of the Chan/Sōn/Zen traditions' self-mythologizations, particular understandings of Zen and its associated visual arts have come under scrutiny and faced qualification. It is no longer quite so easy to reduce Zen art to abstraction, asymmetry, minimalism, and monochrome or to argue that Zen permeates all of the arts of Japan and, equally, can be found in the work of any artist anywhere who has (purportedly)

³¹ Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 8-9.

³² See study of the 500 *Luohans* (Daitokuji) in Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, Tōkyō Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, *Daitokuji denrai Gohyaku Rakan zu: Meibun chōsa hōkoku*, Nara: Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, Tōkyō Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, 2011.

achieved 'Nothingness' (nonexistence; Skt. *abhāva*; C. *wu*; K. *mu*; J. *mu*), Emptiness (Skt. *śūnyatā*; C. *kong*; K. *kong*; J. *kū*), and 'No Mind' (C. *wuxin*; K. *musim*; J. *mushin*). Beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, historians of art began to ask more direct questions about the social and ritual functions of Chan/Sōn/Zen art, examine non-canonical objects and spaces, engage in historiographical study, and situate analysis more independently from the art market and collecting trends. As is true for critical Zen studies, historians of art have come to pay greater attention to tensions between emic and etic perspectives, history and belief. Given the work of historians of religion, moreover, it is necessary to accept the fact that Chan/Sōn/Zen is insufficiently stable to serve as a touchstone for works of art. It may be necessary to replace the singular 'Zen art' with the plural, just as we acknowledge multiple sorts of Zen and different Buddhisms. These developments in the academy are noteworthy, even if they have not altered popular definitions and perceptions of what Zen art is, means, and does.

In any case, the 'epochal shifts' taking place in Chan/Sōn/Zen study, as James Robson puts it, find their parallel or perhaps progeny in changing studies of Chan/Sōn/Zen art.³³ In strikes me that over the same period, modern commentators have perceived in works of art deemed to be Chan/Sōn/Zen different sorts of 'form.' Modern commentary seems to move from the relative absence of Zen art as a category during the late nineteenth century, to an interest in the 'pure form' of transcendental Zen art during the first decades of the twentieth, followed by a scholarly proclivity in the post-war years to study Zen art as 'cultural form,' and now to a plurality of forms. This is by no means the entire story, but as a glance backward it suggests the labile reception and study of Chan/Sōn/Zen art leading to the emergence of scholarship since the 1990s that reflects recent developments in Chan/Sōn/Zen studies as well as critical theory and historiography in art history.³⁴

Prior to the early twentieth century, Zen art was largely dormant in European and North American study, collecting, and appreciation of the arts of Japan and East Asia.³⁵ As the art history of Asia emerged, Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908) praised works of painting that became established in the modern Zen art canon, but he did so typically in terms of their aesthetic form rather than philosophical content or ritual functions. His primary goal, despite brief references to Zen symbolism within his larger frame of 'idealistic art,' and his own personal leanings toward Tendai Buddhism, seems to have been to elevate canonical works,

³³ Robson, 'Formation and Fabrication', 311.

³⁴ My date of the 1990s for the impact of critical theory and historiography in the art history of premodern East Asia is by no means absolute. I personally date it to 1991, when, I recall, Wen Fong assigned students in the program in Far Eastern Art at Princeton University to read Hans Belting, *The End of the History of Art?*, translated by Christopher S. Wood, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

³⁵ See Gregory Levine, 'Zen Art before "Nothingness"', in Noriko Murai and Alan Chong, eds, *Inventing Asia: American Perceptions Around 1900*, Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2014, 100-114.

such as the triptych by Muqi (active mid to late 13th c.) of *Guanyin, Gibbons, and Crane*, to aesthetic heights commensurate with or surpassing masterpieces of European fine art, with which he made direct comparison.³⁶ Certainly, some amount of groundwork for the categorization and transcendental appeal of Zen art had been laid during the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions and Columbian Exposition, when Zen itself was quickly entering the Euro-American imagination. But during the Gilded Age, Zen art had limited prominence, and the arts of Japan and Asia were infrequently judged in terms or Zen-associated concepts such as Nothingness and Emptiness.

By the 1920s and 1930s, and largely through the efforts of Okakura Kakuzō (1862-1913), Fenollosa, Kūki Ryūichi (1852-1931), D. T. Suzuki, Arthur Waley (1889-1966), and other figures in Japan and elsewhere, Zen art acquired a more specific conceptual and cultural identity, a consolidated canon, an aesthetic lexicon, a metaphysical aura, and cachet in art collecting and writing. Indeed, a fairly consistent Zen art canon, principally painting, was in place by the 1920s and circulated in reproduction internationally in bilingual luxury volumes published in Japan such as *Survey of True Beauty* (1899-1908) and *Survey of Asian Art* (1908-1918).³⁷ Zen art was not only recovered from the past, it became modern through the methods of art history and accompanying technologies of photographic reproduction.

The considerable modern energies directed by the art establishment in Japan toward identifying great works of Zen art and great Zen artists can be seen in the case of the Japanese Rinzai Zen monk-painter Sesshū Tōyō (1420-1506). To borrow from the art historian Shimao Arata, the modern 'history of Sesshū's image formation,' and the canonization of his surviving work, began in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries and was related intimately to the formation of modern art history in Japan. Shimao, a prolific and ambidextrous writer on Sesshū's painting and Sesshū Studies generally, suggests that modern scholarship on Sesshū—distinguished by new interpretive methods and proposals that incorporated early modern (Tokugawa period, 1603-1868) artist mytho-history and connoisseurship—accelerated from the 1920s and 1930s following preceding moments of oeuvre formation, reproduction, and exhibition. As Shimao and others

³⁶ For Fenollosa's discussion of the Muqi paintings, see Ernest Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art, An Outline History of East Asiatic Design*, New York: Stokes, 1913, 49-50. On Fenollosa's aesthetics, especially his theory of 'inner relations', see Tetsuhiro Katō, 'E.F. Fenollosa and the Importation of Aesthetics into Japan', *Bigaku ronkyū* 14 (Mar., 1999): 13-22. On the Muqi Triptych, see Yukio Lippit, 'Seer of Sounds: The Muqi Triptych', in Gregory P. A. Levine et al, eds, *Crossing the Sea: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Yoshiaki Shimizu*, Princeton: P.Y. and Kinmay W. Tang Center for East Asian Art and Princeton University Press, 2012, 243-266.

³⁷ *Shinbi taikan; Tōyō bijutsu taikan*. On these volumes and others, see Dōshin Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State: The Politics of Beauty*, translated by Hiroshi Nara, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011, 155-160.

have noted, the transnational interactions taking place during Japan's Meiji period (1868-1912) brought into Japan a flood of European philosophical thought, aesthetics, and art connoisseurship, as well as texts on European artists and masterworks, but long standing East Asian practices and perceptions were not simply overturned or erased. The art historian Okakura Kakuzō's lectures on Japanese art in the 1890s and Ōmura Seigai's (1868-1927) explanations in *Survey of Asian Art*, Shimao points out, do not indicate a wholesale 'paradigm shift' away from preceding methods of painting study, embodied in early modern painting treatises such as *History of Painting of the Realm* (1691).³⁸ Instead, Meiji period art historical discussions of Sesshū offer, in Shimao's words, 'old wine poured into new bottles:' existing conceptions of Sesshū's painting that had accumulated since the sixteenth century (coalescing in early modern painting treatises) were placed within large-frame, modern periodization schemes (Sesshū falls in the 'Ashikaga period') and re-enunciated in explicit or implicit relationship to transnational discourses on artistic achievement and art historical method.³⁹

What is new to Sesshū from the Meiji period onward, Shimao indicates, is the painter's incorporation into a powerful and expanding 'art authorizing system' operated by government officials, academics, new classes of collectors ('nouveau daimyo' industrialists and businessmen) and materialized in public exhibitions, the grand productions of publishing houses (especially Shinbi Shoin), and a deluge of photographic reproduction.⁴⁰ Sesshū became modern, therefore, not strictly through new decisions regarding the authenticity of particular paintings and the introduction of new-fangled art historical methods (such as that of Giovanni Morelli). Sesshū became modern by virtue of particular interpretive, institutional, social, and representational processes.⁴¹ Photography was particularly indispensable to Sesshū's modern debut, enabling comparative analysis of works associated with the painter in multiple collections, recurrent visual study, and the spread of visual knowledge beyond the collector-scholar elite and limited moments of public exhibition.

³⁸ *Honchō gashi*. See Yukio Lippit, *Painting of the Realm: The Kanō House of Painters in 17th-Century Japan*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012, Chapter Five.

³⁹ Shimao Arata, "'Sesshū kenkyūshi" zakkan', in Tōkyō Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, ed, *Nihon ni okeru bijutsushi gaku no seiritsu to tenkai*, Tokyo: Tōkyō Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, 2001, 410-411; Shimao Arata, 'Sesshūga denrai shiryō kindai hen (kō)', *Tenkai toga* 2 (Mar., 1999): 48. On Okakura's periodizations, see Kinoshita Nagahiro, 'Okakura Kakuzō as a Historian of Art', *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* XXIV (Dec., 2012), 30.

⁴⁰ Public exhibition of Sesshū's paintings may be noted from the late nineteenth century, at, for instance, the Hakurankai (National Exposition) of 1885, held in Kyoto, and at an 1890 exhibition held in Ueno Park, Tokyo. See 'Kyōto tsūshin', *Asahi shinbun* (Osaka morning edition) (March 8, 1885), 2; 'Bijutsu tenrankai reppin', *Asahi shinbun* (Tokyo morning edition) (April 25, 1890), 2.

⁴¹ Shimao, 'Sesshūga denrai shiryō kindai hen (kō)', 47-48.

We see this system energetically at work, Shimaō adds, in the first decade of the twentieth century (the Meiji 40s), specifically the years surrounding the 400th anniversary of Sesshū's death in 1906. This is the first twentieth-century 'Sesshū boom' in Japan (the second transpiring in the 1950s, around the 450th anniversary), notable for the exhibition of forty-two Sesshū-associated works at the Imperial Museum in Ueno and the earliest major array of photographic reproductions of Sesshū paintings appearing in publications such as *Selected Paintings of Sesshū* (1907) and *Collected Paintings of Sesshū* (1909).⁴² The first modern monograph on Sesshū, Numata Raisuke's (1867-1934), *Sesshū, Saint of Painting*, appeared in 1912.⁴³ By the 1920s, however, many of the paintings exhibited and reproduced in prior decades were no longer considered part of Sesshū's authentic oeuvre. Although there were additions to the canon, some eighty per cent of Sesshū-associated works, Shimaō estimates, were 'disappeared' by various art historians.⁴⁴ The survivors comprise more or less the present-day oeuvre, including six National Treasures and seventeen Important Cultural Properties.⁴⁵

There is much more to this story of Sesshū's apotheosis as perhaps the quintessential 'Zen painter' and the establishment of his oeuvre, but the prominence of particular premodern artists and works in modern and contemporary art historical and popular knowledge of Zen, leading not infrequently to commercial appropriation, owes a great deal to the sorts of procedures of examination, authorization, exhibition, and reproduction investigated by Shimaō and other scholars. It seems fair to propose then — with Sesshū being an arguably archetypal case — that Zen art became the 'Zen art' we know it as today in large measure during

⁴² *Sesshū gasui*; *Sesshū gashū*. There were earlier Sesshū 'booms', of course, notably that taking place during the seventeenth-century. The Imperial Museum exhibition was titled, 'Painting Exhibition of the Sesshū Lineage and Unkoku School' (Sesshū-ryū oyobi Unkoku-ha kaigaten; 1906). See Kosaku Katsunosuke, *Sesshū gasui*, Tokyo: Gahōsha, 1907; Tajima Shiichi, ed, *Sesshū gashū*, Tokyo: Shinbi Shoin, 1909, and *Sesshū gashū zokushū*, Tokyo: Shinbi Shoin, 1910.

⁴³ *Gasei Sesshū*. Numata Raisuke, *Gasei Sesshū* (Tokyo: Juseidō, 1912).

⁴⁴ Many works in the *haboku* ('splashed-ink') style associated with Sesshū disappeared from later publications. See Tajima, ed, *Sesshū gashū* and *Sesshū gashū zokushū*. Those works that survived the cut were often works with pedigrees linking them to the collections of premodern warrior houses. Shimaō, 'Sesshūga denrai shiryō kindai hen (kō)', 49.

⁴⁵ See Bunkachō, 'Kuni shitei bunkazai nado dātābesu', http://kunishitei.bunka.go.jp/bsys/index_pc.asp (accessed September 6, 2015). Paintings reproduced prior to the dramatic narrowing by the 1920s (late Taishō to early Shōwa period) constituted a fraction of the thousands of works associated with the painter during the Edo and early Meiji periods. Shimaō notes that a modern consensus on Sesshū's oeuvre was taking shape by the time of the publication of special issues on Sesshū in the journal *Gasetzu* in 1937 and 1939. Shimaō, "'Sesshū kenkyūshi' zakkan', 412-414. On the many paintings associated with Sesshū circulating in the art market during the early twentieth century, few of which survived the scrutiny of modern art historians, see Segi Shin'ichi, *Meiga no nedan: mō hitotsu no Nihon Bijutsushi*, Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1998, 34-35.

the early to mid twentieth century through this 'art authorizing system' as it was interrelated with the discipline of art history in Japan and national cultural policy and politics. This recent history of art historical and national work, as revealed by Shimao and others, is part of what critical Zen art studies addresses.

The modern aura and allure of Zen art arose partly, however, from its promotion to and reception in Europe and North America during the early twentieth century as the materialization of transcendental Zen truth, a pure embodiment of Zen mind. Okakura Kakuzō's writings and lectures in English, notably *The Book of Tea* (1906), were critically important in this process, and his 'nativist' Zen aesthetics, deployed as an intervention in Euro-American discourses on Japan and Asia, set the stage for later Zen advocates such as Suzuki and Hisamatsu.⁴⁶ By the mid twentieth century, one could identify and admire the thematic and graphic presences of Zen art outside the complexities of history, ritual, and social and economic contexts in Asia, not to mention modern global circumstances of intercultural cross-fertilization, industrialization, imperialism, and war—this very separation from the 'real world' being for some part of the attraction of Zen and Zen art.

Indeed, the first decades of the twentieth century suggest the emergence of Zen art as a separate category of Buddhist and Asian art distinguished by its embodiment in 'pure form' of Zen awakening as a transcendentalist state beyond evaluative and historical constraints but simultaneously distinguished by particular themes, brush techniques, and aesthetic qualities that arose as a rejection of academic painting and traditional Buddhist iconic imageries as well as conventional definitions of pictorial form. Concurrently, Zen art was fit closely to the mythic constructs of mind-to-mind transmission and Chan/Sōn/Zen's oft-celebrated iconoclasm and antinomianism.⁴⁷ These twining constructs—pure embodiment, ineffable transmission, and iconoclasm—came to inform much art historical writing on Zen art, mixing with Romanticism, Orientalism, and developments in Modernist art.⁴⁸ By the 1950s and 1960s, in the heyday of the 'Zen boom,' this pure, unfettered form as non-form rippled across Beat Zen, helped spur the growth of European and North American Zen practice, fuelled the collection of works of early modern 'Zenga,' and, as has been often noted, inspired the work of modernist artists such as Mark Tobey (1890-1970) and John Cage (1912-1992).⁴⁹ The die for Zen art, both old and new, had been seemingly cast.

⁴⁶ Okakura Kakuzō, *The Book of Tea*, New York: Fox Fuffield & Co, 1906. On Okakura, see Noriko Murai and Yukio Lippit, eds, 'Beyond Tenshin: Okakura Kakuzō's Multiple Legacies', *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* XXIV (Dec., 2012). See also Levine, *On Modern Zen*.

⁴⁷ For Song Dynasty formations of the Chan transmission and iconoclastic myths, see Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 15-16.

⁴⁸ On Romanticism and Zen, see McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, Chapter Five.

⁴⁹ On Zenga, see below. For Tobey, Paik, Cage, and Beat Zen see Bert Winther-Tamaki, 'The 'Oriental Guru' in the Modern Artist: Asian Spiritual and Performative Aspects of Postwar

What is less noted are separate epistemological developments related to Chan/Sōn/Zen art emerging from the first decades of the twentieth century and then more emphatically in the post WWII decades. Without shedding entirely the transcendental perspective that Zen art materializes Zen awakening, or fully questioning the existence of the category 'Zen art,' historians of art in Japan, Europe, and North America shifted toward new perspectives for studying the paintings, calligraphies, sculpture, and textiles of medieval and late medieval Chan/Sōn/Zen monks (and to a far lesser extent those of female monastics). Arguably, Zen art came to be studied at this time as an important Sino-Japanese 'cultural form' or 'fine arts form' within art historical scholarship on East Asia and, in turn, fed the national narratives to which such scholarship often responded. Underlying this work, rigorous in its particular efforts, was little direct challenge to the assumption that there was a unique Zen transmission and practice separate from other Buddhist schools, and a separate category of Zen representation and expressive style that found its origins in the Zen 'special transmission,' with its claim of independence from words and scriptures.⁵⁰ That said, many of these scholars worked rigorously to reconsider Zen painting and calligraphy in relation to Song and Yuan dynasty painting and calligraphy history.

Aided by newly organized surveys of temple collections in Japan, linked to national cultural properties registration, historians of art began to publish profusely on masterworks identified since the Meiji period and more recently discovered objects.⁵¹ What resulted from their efforts, which were joined by scholars based in Europe and North America, was an approach to Zen art noted for increasingly sophisticated material, formal, and contextual analyses, which reflected a shift from traditional connoisseurship and biographical study to a more 'scientific' formalist and historicist method.⁵² At the same time, this inquiry was largely segregated from

American Art', in Inaga Shigemi, ed, *Questioning Oriental Aesthetics and Thinking, Conflicting Visions of 'Asia' under the Colonial Empire*, Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2011, 321-336; Iwamura, *Virtual Orientalism*, Chapter One; Alexandra Munroe, 'Buddhism, and the Neo-Avant-Garde: Cage Zen, Beat Zen, and Zen', in Alexandra Munroe, ed, *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 2009, 199-215; McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 141-144.

⁵⁰ On the categories of and debates regarding the Fine Arts in modern Japan, see Satō, *Modern Japanese Art*.

⁵¹ See unpublished survey records of Kyoto temple treasures compiled from 1941 to 1945, Kyōto-fu, *Kyōtofu jūin jūhō chōsa* (unpublished documents), Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives (Kyōto Furitsu Sōgō Shiryōkan).

⁵² Largely unexamined is the relationship between this often positivist/historicist scholarship and the personal relationships these scholars had with Zen practice itself. Most were not themselves Zen monks or direct lay practitioners of Zen, although many were familiar with Zen in Japan and its Western forms.

the archaeological study of Chan/Sōn/Zen sites and monuments and generally uninterested in the study of images in relation to ritual contexts.⁵³

During the pre- and post-war decades, the majority of scholars in Japan writing on the arts of Zen, as well as colleagues in Europe and North America, focused primarily on painting (reflecting fine arts categories and the art market), with emphasis on figural and landscape representation in ink during the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries in China and Japan, with Korea often being ignored or 'unknown.' Mining a thickening corpus of primary documents identified at Japanese monasteries and temples, and sorting out authentic and inauthentic objects, scholars reshaped understanding of painters such as Muqi (active mid 13th century), Mokuan Reien (d. 1345), Kaō (fl. first half 14th century), and Sesshū, who worked within monastic contexts and in relation to elite patronage of the arts. Ground breaking essays considered the textual and visual evidence for distinctively Chan pictorial styles, such as 'Apparition Painting' (Ch. *wangliang hua*, J. *mōryōga*).⁵⁴ Much of this scholarship leveraged East Asian Studies area specialized methodologies and was linked to the burgeoning field of Chinese Studies in Japan during the early twentieth century. Despite these advancements, few scholars focused at this time on sculpture within Zen monasteries. Those that did typically confined themselves to portraits of Chan and Zen masters, largely because of their naturalistic physiognomies and, in turn, their manifestation of achievement in the fine arts.⁵⁵ From the 1930s and continuing through the post-war period, meanwhile, architectural historians sharpened study of extant structures within Japanese Zen monasteries, referring to Chinese antecedents (buildings and plans) and material and epigraphic evidence uncovered during modern historic preservation work and by trawling through literary compilations, diaries, and institutional documents. A

⁵³ The study of monuments and material culture at Chan sites is evident in Japanese colonial surveys, including Tokiwa Daijō and Sekino Tadashi, *Shina Bukkyō shiseki*, Tokyo: Ryūginsha, 1938. Critical re-evaluation of Japanese colonial scholarship on Buddhist art and architecture in China and Korea has grown in recent years.

⁵⁴ See Shimada Shūjirō, 'Concerning the I-p'in Style of Painting', Parts I, II; Shimada Shūjirō, 'Ippin gafū ni tsuite', *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 161 (1960): 264-293, translated by James Cahill as 'Concerning the I-p'in Style of Painting', (Part I), *Oriental Art* 7 (Sum., 1961): 66-74, Part II, *Oriental Art* 8 (Autumn, 1962): 130-137, Part III, *Oriental Art* 10 (1964): 19-26; Shimada Shūjirō, 'Mōryō-ga, jō' *Bijutsu kenkyū* 84 (Dec., 1938): 7-12; Shimada Shūjirō, 'Mōryō-ga, ge', *Bijutsu kenkyū* 86 (Feb., 1939): 8-12; Yoshiaki Shimizu, 'Problems of Mokuan Reien', PhD diss., Princeton University, 1974; Jan Fontein and Money L. Hickman, *Zen Painting & Calligraphy*, Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1970; Yoshiaki Shimizu and Carolyn Wheelwright, eds, *Japanese Ink Paintings From American Collections: The Muromachi Period*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976; Helmet Brinker, *Zen in the Art of Painting*, London: Arkana, 1987; Helmut Brinker and Hiroshi Kanazawa, *Zen: Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings*, Zurich: Artibus Asiae Publications, 1996.

⁵⁵ See, for instance, Nishikawa Kyōtarō, *Chinsō chōkoku*, Nihon no bijutsu 123, Tokyo: Shibundō, 1976.

building's material and spatial history often shed light on its visual culture and vice versa.⁵⁶

Art historians also expanded their efforts to read and interpret prose and poetic inscriptions found on paintings produced in the Chan/Sōn/Zen context. Notable in this regard was the collaborative project led by Shimada Shūjirō (1907-1994) and Iriya Yoshitaka (1910-1998) that culminated in *Paintings and Inscriptions of the Zen Institution: Reading Medieval Ink Paintings* (1987).⁵⁷ This influential publication—focused on inscribed paintings of Buddhist deities, patriarchs and 'scattered saints' (J. *sansei*); literary figures; landscapes; and flowers, birds, and animals—brought a degree of consolidation to preceding decades of research in Japan on poetry-picture scrolls (J. *shigajiku*), a modern category of visual and literary culture centered within the Zen institution and its cultural milieu in Japan during the Muromachi period (1336-1573).⁵⁸ Scholars of *shigajiku* have been concerned chiefly with the iconographies and hagiographic narratives that drew prose and poetry inscription; pictorial conventions derived from Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasty painting and their inflection in Japan; the inter-textual practices of Chan/Sōn/Zen literary discourse, drawing from Buddhist texts and Chinese classical literature; the biographies of painters and inscribers; and the literati cultures of abbots and monks within Japan's metropolitan monasteries.⁵⁹

During the post-war decades there were also ground-breaking exhibitions in Japan, Europe, and North America that brought into wider public view larger numbers of medieval and early modern monastic paintings, calligraphies, statues, robes, and ritual implements preserved within Japanese Zen monasteries.⁶⁰ Public

⁵⁶ See Kawakami Mitsugu, *Zen'in no kenchiku: zensō no sumai to saikyō*, 2nd edition, Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 2005.

⁵⁷ *Zenrin gasan: chūsei suibokuga o yomu*. The project involved several generations of scholars: Shimada and Iriya, born in 1907 and 1910, and Kageki Hideo in 1927; scholars born in the 1930s and 1940s before the end of WWII; and those born in the post-war 1950s. Shimada Shūjirō and Iriya Yoshitaka, eds, *Zenrin gasan: chūsei suibokuga o yomu*, Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbun, 1987.

⁵⁸ See Shimada Shūjirō, 'Muromachi jidai no shigajiku ni tsuite', in Shimada and Iriya, eds., *Zenrin gasan*, 10-31. Other studies of Chan/Zen paintings and inscriptions include Joseph D. Parker, *Zen Buddhist Landscape Arts of Early Muromachi Japan (1336-1573)*, Albany: SUNY Press, 1999; Charles H. Lachman, 'Why Did the Patriarch Cross the River? The Rushleaf Bodhidharma Reconsidered', *Asia Major* 3rd ser. 6.2 (1993): 237-268; Yoshiaki Shimizu, 'Six Narrative Paintings by Yin T'o-lo: Their Symbolic Content', *Archives of Asian Art* 33 (1980): 6-37; Shimizu, 'Problems of Mokuan Reien,' Helmut Brinker, 'Shussan Shaka in Sung and Yüan Painting', *Ars Orientalis* 9 (1973): 21-40.

⁵⁹ Not strictly antiquarian in character, such research may nevertheless appear now as conservative from certain vantage points within art history.

⁶⁰ See 'Zen Painting and Calligraphy', Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1970; 'Yuan Dynasty Daoist and Buddhist Figure Paintings' (*Gandai dōshaku jinbutsuga*, Tokyo National Museum; 1975); 'Obaku: Zen Painting and Calligraphy' (Helen Foresman Spencer Museum of Art,

display of works of art now well established in the Zen canon in Japan had begun during the Edo period (1615-1868), if not earlier, in the context of monastery and temple annual airings. By the eighteenth century, famous works lauded generally as Chinese treasures rather than 'Zen art' per se, were included in painting treatises and illustrated antiquarian collectanea such as Matsudaira Sadanobu's (1759-1828) *Collected Antiquities in Ten Categories* (1800).⁶¹ By the late nineteenth century, with the creation of Japan's imperial museums, heirloom works from Zen monasteries—such as the famous 'Muqi Triptych' of *Avalokiteśvara, Gibbons, and Crane* (13th c.), which was reproduced in *Collected Antiquities in Ten Categories*—were borrowed for exhibition in galleries modelled after European museums and regulated with new viewing customs. In Europe and North America, meanwhile, Chinese Chan art, principally painting and calligraphy, was increasingly visible within loan exhibitions coming from Japan or through the objects channelled into the art market by Japanese and European and North American dealers.⁶² Seen more frequently at this time outside monasteries and private collections, therefore, Zen art became an art of visual accomplishment and religious and cultural gravitas suitable for exhibition in national and public museums and arguably significant in post-war geopolitical relations between Japan and the West.

It is possible, then, to discern two general strains of Zen art study during the post-war period. One situated painting and calligraphy primarily within the modern experiential, transcendentalist frame promoted by Japanese intellectuals and their followers from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Another shifted Zen art towards historical truths within humanistic study.⁶³ In the latter, Zen art was less about Zen philosophical thought or mysticism than about fine art situated within positivist recovery of the cultural past—albeit a constrained past that did not extend, for many scholars and collectors, beyond the sixteenth

1978); and 'The Arts of Zen' (*Zen no bijutsu*; Kyoto National Museum; 1983); 'Zen: Meister der Meditation in Bildern und Schriften' (Museum Reitberg Zürich, 1993).

⁶¹ *Shūko jisshu*.

⁶² The flow of works of Chan/Zen art from Japan to Europe and North America was partly downstream from the dispersal of objects from the Meiji persecution of Buddhism and the resulting art market. See Gregory Levine, *Daitokuji: The Visual Cultures of a Zen Monastery*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005.

⁶³ An interesting juxtaposition of interpretive postures among art historians—one more interested in a narrow analysis of Chan/Zen painting within Chinese painting history and style and another to sorting Chan/Zen art out as a unique, distinctive system—may be found in Yoshiaki Shimizu, 'Zen Art?', and Dietrich Seckel, 'Zen Art', in Helmet Brinker et al, ed, *Zen in China, Japan, East Asian Art: Papers of the International Symposium on Zen, Zürich University, 16.-18.11.1982*, Bern and New York: P. Lang, 1985, 73-98, 99-113. Certain art historians writing on Zen art continue to employ the formulations of D.T. Suzuki and other modern apologists, emphasizing philosophical, experiential, and ahistorical views, while linking them to connoisseurship and artist and style-based historical study. See, for instance, Stephen Addiss, *The Art of Zen*, New York: Harry Abrams, 1989.

century.⁶⁴ Moreover, Zen painting and calligraphy were located firstly within East Asian art, rather than the art historical study of Buddhist schools and sites.⁶⁵ Thus we find works of Chan/Sōn/Zen art placed within developmental narratives of genre and style, with emphasis placed upon the biographies and oeuvres of individual monk-painters and study of elite political history and patronage. These are important frames of inquiry, but during the same period they had come under criticism in Europe and North America in the midst of anthropological, social, feminist, semiotic, post-colonial, and visual culture 'turns'. And if certain post-war art historical narratives on Zen art worked against the transcendentalist perception of Zen art in the Suzuki-Hisamatsu vein, they nevertheless shied away from inquiry into soteriology, numinous things, and ritual performance. Studies of 'traditional' Buddhist paintings enshrined and preserved within Zen temples, meanwhile, have typically been examined in terms of Mahāyāna scripture and iconography but without, in turn, reimagining categories and forms of Chan/Zen art in relation to wider Buddhist visual and ritual cultures.⁶⁶ There were exceptions. One might cite the 1940s debate between Fukui Rikichirō (1886-1972) and Tanaka Toyozō (1881-1948) regarding the meaning of the 'Muqi Triptych', in which Fukui proposed Chan literary evidence suggestive of symbolic content possibly linking the deity with the gibbons and crane in soteriological terms.⁶⁷ Art historians also took note of miracles associated with and the oneiric origins of certain pictures and considered, albeit often as side-notes to artistic biography and style, the display of paintings and calligraphies in ritual contexts.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Major collections of Chan/Zen art formed in Japan during the twentieth century, including that held by the Masaki Museum, tended to focus on medieval and late medieval works associated with Sino-Japanese literati culture and Chanoyu, while a smaller number of Japanese collectors focused on paintings and calligraphies by early modern monks, followed by collectors in Europe and the United States. On the latter, see Christine M. E. Guth, 'Nanga and Zenga in America, 1956 to 1976', in Lisa Rotondo-McCord, ed, *An Enduring Vision: 17th to 20th-Century Japanese Painting from the Gitter-Yelen Collection*, New Orleans: New Orleans Museum of Art, 2002, 206-209.

⁶⁵ This pattern appears in the work of scholars in Japan as well as Europe and North America, with the latter two communities resorting often to the Suzuki-Hisamatsu model of philosophical-transcendental explanation when discussing religious content.

⁶⁶ Study of the Southern Song Dynasty paintings of the *Five Hundred Luohan* held by Daitokuji, for instance, has advanced dramatically in the past decade and provided important redefinition of painting within Chan contexts. On the paintings, see Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan and Tōkyō Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, *Daitokuji denrai Gohyaku Rakan zu*.

⁶⁷ That said, Fukui's reference to Chan poetry was geared toward the material, visual, and cultural question of whether or not the triptych was formed in China or in Japan. See Lippit, 'Seer of Sounds.'

⁶⁸ See Shimada Shūjirō, 'Shigen Sogen zō', published in the journal *Bijutsushi* in 1953 and reprinted in Shimada Shūjirō, *Nihon kaigashi kenkyū*, Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1987, 284-292; Yoshiaki Shimizu, 'Multiple Commemorations: The Vegetable Nehan of Itō

The prevailing lack of explicit attention to icons, ritual, and soteriology resulted from multiple factors, including the question of ‘religion’ itself during the post-war period.⁶⁹ In this regard one might propose that a process of ‘secularization’ unfolded in the study of Zen arts and culture across much of the twentieth century. Namely, that heirloom paintings and calligraphies in the Zen art canon were properly studied as the humanistic production of ‘scholar-monks’ (J. *bunjinsō*) of the Five Mountains (C. Wushan; J. Gozan) monastic systems, akin to Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasty literati, with whom Chan/Sōn/Zen monks interacted directly or communed with through inter-textual and inter-pictorial practices. This a-religious (and perhaps non-spiritual) perspective aligned with public exhibitions in Japan organized around the rubric of ‘Zen culture’ (J. Zen bunka). Not all scholars have held this view. Joseph D. Parker, for one, argued for the soteriological richness of the *shigajiku* produced within Japanese Five Mountains networks, and Shimaō Arata has suggested different models for the inter-relationship of religion and cultural practice.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, many, if not most, art historians and museum curators, standing outside monastic and lay Zen practice themselves, preferred the fine arts and cultural values of Zen art in East Asian art history and its modern canon. For some scholars, I suspect, the Zen-culture-scholarship matrix as they perceived it may have partly shaped their own “neo-literatus” or counter-culture personae.⁷¹

Jakuchū’, in James H. Sanford, ed, *Flowing Traces: Buddhism in the Visual and Literary Arts of Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, 201-233.

⁶⁹ Part of this question involved modern preferences for Zen philosophical concepts, in a Romantic-Transcendentalist elevation of experience over divine beings, monasticism, ritual, and the supernatural, and the reframing of Buddhism in relation to modern science. On these topics, see, for instance, McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, Chapters Four and Five.

⁷⁰ See Shimaō Arata, ‘Zenshū kaiga sunken’, in Masaki Bijutsukan, ed, *Suibokuga, bokuseki no miryoku*, Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2008, 224-238; Shimaō, ‘Dokumento toshite no kaiga’. The conception of the ‘scholar-monk’, as well as the secularization of Chan/Sōn/Zen, which I suspect promoted cultural readings of works of visual culture, developed partly from the mid-century scholarship of Tamamura Takeji (1911-2003) and other Japanese scholars working on Five Mountains Literature (*Gozan bungaku*). See Parker, *Zen Buddhist Landscape Arts*, 25-26, 224, notes 7, 8. See also Katō Shū’ichi’s characterization of Zen during the Muromachi, noted in Shimaō Arata, ‘Dokumento toshite no kaiga: ‘Ōgishi sho senmen’ no ga to shi’, *Bijutsu kenkyū* 363 (Jan., 1996): 282-294. It finds its way into modern characterizations of particular Zen masters as being, on the one hand, predominantly literary (e.g. Musō Soseki) or, on the other, more ‘hard core’ or ‘pure’ in their Zen teaching and practice (e.g. Shūhō Myōchō). Meanwhile, if an inclination to view the art and artistic production taking place within medieval and late medieval Zen monasteries as no different from Chinese literati culture may usefully counter modern assertions of the purity and uniqueness of Zen art, it seems to deny more complex processes of cross-fertilization and appropriation. On Zen art as Chinese culture, see Sharf, ‘The Zen of Japanese Nationalism’, 134.

⁷¹ I would speculate that the prominence of the ‘Bunjinsō’ perspective is partly symptomatic of a Romantic appreciation among twentieth-century intellectuals in Japan and Europe and

In any case, Zen art has for many decades in the academy been more about Sino-Japanese art than Buddhism.⁷² The pre-and post-war period also suggests a resistance on the part of art historians committed to fine arts categories to engage a broader range of visual and material objects found within monasteries and temples. Some of these works are associated with 'traditional Buddhism,' and thereby, at least in the view of some, to have been merely tolerated by monastic communities for official observances and, thus, not 'real' Zen art. Other works may have been negatively associated by some scholars with funerary ritual, which allegedly took over and 'corrupted' Chan/Sōn/Zen from the late medieval period onward, and were therefore deemed less important than classical Zen figure and landscape paintings produced and inscribed by individual monks that were viewed in artistic and literary terms.

By the 1980s and 90s, however, well-established narratives about painters such as Muqi and Sesshū had come under scrutiny, and there was more sophisticated inquiry into the social history of Chan/Sōn/Zen art and growing attention to histories of collection, display, and replication.⁷³ Small interventions were taking place against the scholarly tendency to separate what were otherwise architecturally and ritually integrated arts into discrete fine arts categories.⁷⁴ Viewed from the vantage point of art history in Europe and North America, the contextual analysis of Zen religious spaces and their programs of art, begun in the late

North America for the premodern literati ideal and the self-perception of the modern scholar, however engaged he or she may be in more 'scientific' practices of history and art history, as a person of culture if not counter-culture.

⁷² This may have seemed odd to scholars studying images in other Buddhist schools in Japan (not to mention scholars of Byzantine and Christian art), in which icons, ritual, and the miraculous have been more central.

⁷³ See Shimaō Arata's publications reappraising Sesshū's oeuvre and Sesshū studies; Ebine Toshio, 'Mokkei no shōgai', in Gotō Bijutsukan, *Mokkei-shōkei no suibokuga*, Tokyo: Gotō Bijutsukan, 1996, 88-90; Ogawa Hiromitsu, 'The Chinese Painter Muqi', in *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 57 (1999): 33-59; Ogawa Hiromitsu, 'Chūgoku gaka, Mokkei', in Gotō Bijutsukan, *Mokkei*, 91-101; Ogawa Hiromitsu, 'Mokkei-kotenshugi no hen'yō, jō', *Bijutsushi ronsō* 4 (1988): 95-113; Quitman E. Phillips, *The Practices of Painting in Japan, 1475-1500*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

⁷⁴ Contextually-grounded discussion of the ritual functions and related reception of particular works of art has often been secondary to developing the biographical and institutional information necessary to situate works within the canon of Sino-Japanese art, artist-based models of art history, and national histories of artistic achievement. One early context-oriented intervention is Miyazaka Atsuko's 1986 study of Kano Eitoku's wall and sliding door paintings at the Zen subtemple Jūkōin, previously the focus of intense art historical analysis in terms of their place within Japanese painting history. Miyazaka Atsuko, 'Jūkōin no shiki kachōzu fusumae ni tsuite', *Bijutsushigaku* 8 (1986): 1-28. See Gregory P. A. Levine, 'On Return: Kano Eitoku's *Flowers and Birds of the Four Seasons* and the Digital World', in Levine, et al eds, *Crossing the Sea*. Also notable was Jon Carter Covell's *Zen at Daitokuji* (1974), which offered an early study of Zen art within a specific monastic context.

twentieth century, may have been laudable but was methodologically belated. Nevertheless, by the early 2000s, historians of art working on Chan/Sōn/Zen visual and material cultures were no longer imitating Ernest Fenollosa, D.T. Suzuki, and other earlier figures, swayed by the transcendental Zen explanations of the early twentieth century, or disinterested in the interventions taking place in historical study of the Chan/Sōn/Zen traditions.

Today, to base one's interpretation of premodern works of Chan/Zen art primarily on Suzuki's *Zen and Japanese Culture* or Hisamatsu Shin'ichi's *Zen and the Fine Arts*, is, at least in the academy, to engage in a form of counter-factual history.⁷⁵ What has also changed the mission is the methodological and theoretical plurality of art history in Europe, North America, and Japan, and greater collaboration generally among historians of religion and of art.⁷⁶ Consequently, the range of objects, functions, spaces, producers, and consumers, as well as the questions being asked and the means of attempting to answer them, has expanded. This is not to suggest either wholesale or uniform transformation. 'Traditional' art historical methodology, weighted toward artist, style, and historical context, has not disappeared from the study of Zen art and, arguably, is yielding deeper insights thanks in part to new imaging technology and digitalized texts. But the appearance in writings on Zen art of terms such as self-fashioning and ideology, and interests in ritual space and material culture studies signal significant methodological changes and interdisciplinary efforts.⁷⁷ In turn, works of painting, calligraphy, and sculpture associated with Chan/Sōn/Zen are less likely to be seen exclusively or predominantly as embodiments of artist style that fix into chronology and more

⁷⁵ There is arguably a 'dark side' to modern formulations of Zen Art, in particular its relationship to nationalism and discourses on Japanese exceptionalism (J. *Nihonjinron*). See Sharf, 'The Zen of Japanese Nationalism', 135-139. The Zen aesthetic may also be studied in relation to histories of orientalism and neo-orientalism. See Iwamura, *Virtual Orientalism*, Chapter Two.

⁷⁶ Generally, historians of art who presently consider Chan/Sōn/Zen art find themselves engaged with modes of historical study and interpretation (post-structuralism, semiotics, cultural studies, post-colonial studies, and gender studies) that have already changed the wider 'story of art.' There may also be a generational dimension in that many scholars who have adopted in recent years new approaches did not experience the 'Zen boom' of the mid twentieth century and came of scholarly age both as the study of East Asian painting and calligraphy reached a peak in its disciplinary and theoretical growth and as post-structuralism, post-colonial studies, and so forth began to gain traction.

⁷⁷ The failure to recognize the inventing, self-constructing processes taking place within the Chan/Sōn/Zen traditions bothers some scholars because of their commitments on the one hand to the archive, altar, and storehouse and on the other to post-structural, post-colonial critique of histories that mask operations of power and the inventions of traditions. To some degree, art historical emphasis continues to center on individual monk painters and canonical works, principally those dating to the late medieval period. There appear to be limits to the degree of theoretical experimentation in certain communities of Zen art studies, which remain to some extent historicist or transcendentalist in nature.

often studied as charismatic, numinous, talismanic, and ideological performances that had (and may have still) particular sorts of presence in monastic and lay practice and belief and social production, and not strictly in Romantic-Transcendentalist terms.

Arguably the most potent inquiry and debate in recent years has centered on portraiture, which has generated poly-harmonic consideration of diverse iconographies, literary rhetoric, and subject-recipient exchange; more sophisticated treatments of facture, verisimilitude, and presence; greater attention to ritual and the miraculous; and historiographical appraisal of portrait visuality.⁷⁸ The study of Chan/Sōn/Zen portraiture has likewise been situated in relation to the 'entourage' of visual, material, textual, and spatial embodiments of religious identity, including relics, stūpa, and 'flesh icons,' as well as robes, calligraphies, and other contact relics. One fascinating, cross-media topic is the replication in painted and sculpted portraits of the textile patterns of specific, still extant dharma robes, a practice that arguably encoded what may appear to be 'generic' figural forms with specific lineal content.⁷⁹ Portrait statuary has drawn renewed inquiry that has pointed more

⁷⁸ Art historians, informed by wider writings on portraiture in Asia and Europe, now make the case that Chan/Sōn/Zen portraiture has as many exceptions in iconography and form as it does 'generic' cases, and counter the 'one-size fits all' proposals that have in some instances accompanied otherwise important interventions in interpretations of portrait function. See Ebine Toshio, 'Chinsō kanki: seiritsu o megutte', in Nagaoka Ryūsaku, ed, *Zokei no ba, Kōza Nihon bijutsushi*, vol. 4, Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2005, 125-50; Yukio Lippit, 'Negative Verisimilitude: The Zen Portrait in Medieval Japan', in Veshaka N. Desai, ed, *Asian Art in the Twenty-First Century*, Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2008, 64-95; Ide Seinosuke, 'Chinsō ni okeru zōshu no hyōshō: Kenshin Raifuku zō no baai', *Bukkyō geijutsu* 282 (Sept., 2005): 13-33; Levine, *Daitokuji*, Part I; Yen Yamei, 'Sōgen jidai no chinsō ni okeru nisan no mondai', *Kyōto bigaku bijutsushigaku* 3 (2004): 95-129; Ebine Toshio, 'Rokuōin shozō no "Shun'oku Myōha zō"', *Rokuōin monjo no kenkyū*, ed Rokuōin monjo kenkyūkai, Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2000, 440-449; Phillips, *The Practices of Painting*; Kayaba Mayumi, 'Chinsō to keshin: Kōkokujin-bon Hattō Kokushi zō kara no kōsatsu', *Bijutushi kenkyū* 33 (1995): 93-108; Ōnishi Hiroshi, 'Ikkyū o megutte nani ga okotta ka: shōzōga ni okeru 'hakaku' no mondai', in *Hito no 'katachi,' hito no 'karada': higashi Ajia bijutsu no shiza*, Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1994; Elizabeth Horton Sharf, 'Chinzō and Ōbaku Portraiture', in Bernard Hung-Kay Luk, ed, *Contacts Between Cultures, volume 3*, Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992, 422-427.

⁷⁹ For the pictorialization of dharma robes, see Miyajima Shin'ichi, 'Kōhō Kennichi no chinsō ni tsuite', *Kanazawa Bunko kenkyū* 281 (Sept., 1988): 15-23. On relics, mummies, and robes, see Kyōtō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Kōsō to kesa: kokoro o tsutae, kokoro o tsunagu*, Kyoto: Kyōtō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 2010; Gotō Bijutsukan, *Kamakura Engakuji no meihō: 720 nen no rekishi o kataru Zen bunka*, Tokyo: Gotō Bijutsukan, 2006; James Robson, 'A Tang Dynasty Chan Mummy (*roushen*) and a Modern Case of *Furta Sacra*? Investigating the Contested Bones of Shitou Xiqian', in Faure, ed, *Chan Buddhism in Ritual Context*, 151-178. Bernard Faure, 'Quand l'habit fait le moine: The Symbolism of the *kāśāya* in Sōtō Zen', in Faure, ed, *Chan Buddhism in Ritual Context*, 211-249; Patricia Fister, 'Creating Devotional Art with Body Fragments: The Buddhist Nun Bunchi and Her Father, Emperor Gomizuno-o', *Japanese*

directly to, among other things, the material, spatial, and ritual relationships of sculpture and relics.⁸⁰ Still largely unexplored, however, are photography-based portraits of monks and nuns appearing from the nineteenth century and contemporary painting and sculpture production.⁸¹

Equally important reappraisals and analyses are taking place in other categories of Zen art. Masterworks, including Josetsu's *Catfish and Gourd* (*Hyōnen zu*; Taizōin, Kyoto) and Sesshū's *Splashed Ink Landscape*, have become the focus of earnest debate regarding their formation and meaning, and increasing attention is being paid to the artistic production of nuns and their communities.⁸² There is study of iconographies that cross traditions and suggest syncretic appropriation, such as paintings depicting the deified Japanese courtier Sugawara Michizane (845-903; Tenjin) Crossing to China (*Tōtō/tōsō Tenjin*).⁸³ Interventions in the study of

Journal of Religious Studies 27, 3-4 (Fall, 2000): 213-238; Robert H. Sharf, 'The Idolization of Enlightenment: On the Mummification of Chan Masters in Medieval China.' *History of Religions* 32/1 (1992): 1-31.

⁸⁰ See Nedachi Kensuke, 'Portrait Sculpture and Relic Veneration in Japan', in *The Interrelationship of Relics and Images in Christian and Buddhist Culture, 'Death and Life' and Visual Culture I*, *Bulletin of Death and Life Studies* 5 (2009): 75-94; Nedachi Kensuke, 'Sakuhin shōkai: Taikōan mokuzō Shōkai Reiken zō', *Kyōto bigaku bijutsushigaku kenkyū* 5 (2006): 103-117; Asami Ryūsuke, 'Nanbokuchō jidai no chinsō chōkoku' (*Nihon no bijutsu* 493) (June, 2007): 85-98; Nedachi Kensuke, 'Chinsō chōkoku' saikō: shōzōsei to risōka o chūshin ni shite', *Kokka* 111 (4) (Nov. 2005): 3-15; Asami Ryūsuke, 'Unganji no chinsō chōkoku', *Museum* 595 (March, 2005): 7-33; 'Tokushū: Chinsō chōkoku', *Kokka* 110 (Oct., 2004).

⁸¹ See, for example, the undated Meiji period photograph of a Zen monk taken by Suzuki Shin'ichi in the collection of the Nagasaki University Library. *Nagasaki Daigaku fuzoku toshokan Bakumatsu, Meiji ki Nihon koshashin metadata dātabesu*, oldphoto.lb.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/jp/target.php?id=1750 (accessed September 6, 2015). Note too the contemporary, Kyoto-based Chinsō painter Nishimura Toshio, <http://tinsoh.com/index.html> (accessed September 6, 2015). For a recent work of Zen patriarchal sculpture, see Mukoyoshi Yuboku and Nakamura Keiboku, *Portrait of Kokei Sōchin* (1532-1597), 1999, wood and color, enshrined at the subtemple Sōken'in within the monastery Daitokuji, Kyoto, Japan.

⁸² Shimaō Arata, *Hyōnenzu: Josetsu-hitsu, Hyōtan namazu no ikonorojii* (*E wa kataru* 5), Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1995; Yoshizawa Katsuhiko, 'Hyōnen zu saikō', *Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho kiyō* 26 (Dec., 2002): 581-662; Shimaō Arata, 'Haboku sansui zu' no ga to shi', *Tenkaitoga* 3 (2000): 32-46; Watada Minoru, 'Sesshū jijo o yomu', in Yamaguchi Kenritsu Bijutsukan Sesshū Kenkyūkai, ed, *Sesshū Tōyō: 'Sesshū e no tabi' ten kenkyū zuroku*, Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2006, 258-264; Watada Minoru, 'Sesshū nyūmin hoi: shimpōjiumu hōkoku to 'Haboku sansui zu' no koto', *Tenkaitoga* 6 (2006): 23-40; Aizawa Masahiko, 'Haboku sansui zu to Sōen', *Bijutsu kenkyū* 391 (Mar., 2007): 59-75; Fister, 'Creating Devotional Art with Body Fragments'; Fister, 'Merōfu Kannon and Her Veneration'; Chūsei Nihon Kenkyūsho, eds, *Amamonzeki jiin no sekai: mikotachi no shinkō to Goshō bunka*, Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, 2009.

⁸³ See Shimaō Arata and Imaizumi Yoshio, eds, *Zen to Tenjin*, Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2000.

calligraphy have likewise emerged, dealing partly with the problem of forgery (and pious copying) and taking issue with modern transcendentalist notions of 'Zen traces'.⁸⁴ Emphasis is also being placed on site-based and network analysis, in turn drawing attention to programs of art and architecture as well as institutional, lineal, and geographical flows of imageries and cults of veneration.⁸⁵

Since 2002, blockbuster exhibitions at Japan's national museums and other institutions, organized in conjunction with rites commemorating the death anniversaries of monastery founders, have offered spectacular displays of art treasures and fostered appreciation of the wider visual and material cultures of Japanese Zen monasteries such as Kenchōji and Nanzenji.⁸⁶ Although fine art

⁸⁴ See, Oka Masahiko, 'Kenkyū hōkoku: shoke uritate mokuroku shozai Ikkyū bokuseki shiryō', *Kokubungakukenyū Shiryōkan bunken shiryōbu chōsa kenkyū hōkoku* (1-3) 22 (2001): 231-287, 23 (2002): 375-416, 24 (2003): 123-138; Levine, *Daitokuji*, Part III. Recent studies on =calligraphy include Gregory Levine, 'The Faltering Brush: Material, Sensory Trace, and Nonduality in Chan/Zen Buddhist Death Verse Calligraphies', in Sally M. Promey, ed, *Sensational Religion: Sensory Cultures in Material Practice*, New Haven: Yale University Press 2014, 561-579; and Uta Lauer, *A Master of His Own: The Calligraphy of the Chan Abbot Zhongfeng Mingepen*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002.

⁸⁵ See Levine, *Daitokuji*; Fukuoka-shi Bijutsukan, *Satori no bi: Saikoku Sōtōshū jiin no jūhō ten*, Fukuoka: Fukuoka-shi Bijutsukan, 2002; Izumi-shi Kubosō Ki'nen Bijutsukan, *Zen'in no bijutsu: Kenninji Shōden Eigen'in no meihō*, Izumi-shi Kubosō Ki'nen Bijutsukan, 2000; Fukuoka-shi Bijutsukan, *Hakata Zen: Nihon Zen bunka no hassei to tenkai*, Fukuoka: Fukuoka-shi Bijutsukan, 1991. For interregional study, see recent work on Ningbo and Buddhism, including Chan/Zen, in Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Seichi Neihō: Nihon Bukkyō 1300 nen no genryū, subete wa koko kara yatte kita*, Nara: Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 2009. See also Enokimoto Wataru, 'Nicchū Zensō no koryū: Gyokuzan Sōdō no koto', in Masaki Bijutsukan, ed, *Suibokuga, bokuseki no miryoku*, Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2008, 153-179; Fukushima Tsunenori, 'Muromachi suibokuga no Zensō gakatachi to Chōsen kaiga: Shūbun, Shūbun, Bunsei soshite Josetsu o chūshin to suru kenkyūshi to sono mondaiten', *Rinzaishū Myōshinjiha kyōgaku kenkyū kiyō* 7 (May, 2009): 37-59; Kanagawa Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan, *Sōgen no butsuga: Kaikan 40 shūnen ki'nen tokubetsuten*, Kanagawa: Kanagawa Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan 2007.

⁸⁶ Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Yosai to Zen: Kaizan Yosai Zenji 800 nenki tokubetsuten*, Tokyo: Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 2014; Kyūshū Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, ed, *Ōbaku: Kyōto Uji, Manpukuji no meihō to Zen no shinpū, Ōbakushū daihonzan Manpukuji kaisō 350 nen ki'nen tokubetsuten*, Dazaifu: Kyūshū Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 2011; Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, et al, *Myōshinji: kaizan Musō Daishi 650 nen onki ki'nen*, Tokyo: Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 2009; Chūsei Nihon Kenkyūsho, *Amamonzeki jiin no sekai*; Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan et al, *Kyōto Gozan: Zen no bunka ten: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu 600 nen onki ki'nen*, Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, 2007; Fukuoka-shi Bijutsukan, *Daiō kokushi to Sūfukuji: Daiō kokushi nana-hyaku kaiki ki'nen tokubetsuten*, Fukuoka: Daiō Kokushi to Sūfukuji-ten Jikkō Sainkai, 2007; Gotō Bijutsukan, *Kamakura Engakuji no meihō* (2006); Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, Kyōto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Nanzenji: Kameyama Tennō 700 onki ki'nen*, Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 2004; Kyōto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, *Kamakura, Zen no genryū: Kenchōji sōken 750 nen ki'nen tokubetsuten*, Tokyo: Nihon Keizai

categories and a familiar canon of masterworks remain dominant, as well as the representation of Zen culture as part of a Japanese *volksgeist*, these exhibitions and their catalogues break with conventional explanations in important instances to link objects, ritual, and monastic space, draw attention to under-emphasized genre (including non-portrait sculpture and dharma robes), and introduce shifts in interpretation and historiographical self-awareness.⁸⁷

There is also renewed effort to study paintings and colophons within the Chan/Sōn/Zen milieu, building upon the 1987 volume, *Paintings and Inscriptions of the Zen Institution*.⁸⁸ The prevailing trend toward re-examination of *shigajiku* in Japan is embodied in the 2010 formation of the Painting and Inscription Research Group (Gasen Kenkyūkai) under the direction of the historian of religion Yoshizawa Katsuhiko and art historians Kawaii Masatomo and Shimaō Arata. Focusing on inscribed paintings associated with medieval and late medieval Zen, the group, including a new generation of painting scholars, has been actively re-evaluating the canonical works published earlier in *Paintings and Inscriptions of the Zen Institution* as well as a range of other paintings.⁸⁹ Employing fine-grained epigraphic, philological,

Shinbunsha, 2003; Kyōto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Keninji: Kyōto saiko no Zendera: Yōsai zenji kaisō 800 nen ki'nen tokubetsu tenrankai*, Osaka: Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 2002; Shōtenkaku Bijutsukan et al, *Daihonzan Shōkokuji, Kinkaku, Ginkaku hihō ten: Kaizan Muso Kokushi 650 nen*, Niigata: Niigata Hōsō, 2002.

⁸⁷ Essays in many of these catalogues localize particular genre and works in relation to their sites and, in some cases, include discussion of individual works in terms of architectural context. See, for instance, Asanuma Takeshi, 'Miei zukuri sorōte Sanmon ni tate mōsu beki koto: Ishin Sūden to Nanzenji Sanmon', in Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, Kyōto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, *Nanzenji*, 38-40. See also Asami Ryūsuke's essays 'Nihon bunka to Zenshū', and 'Kyōto Gozan no chōkoku', in Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan et al, *Kyōto Gozan*, 14-27 (English translation by Thomas Kirchner, v-xi), 54-59; Asami Ryūsuke, 'Kamakura: Zen no genryū', in Kyōto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, *Kamakura, Zen no genryū*, 16-17, vii-ix (English translation).

⁸⁸ Recent publications on *shigajiku* include: Yukio Lippit, 'Of Modes and Manners in Japanese Ink Painting: Sesshu's Splashed Ink Landscape of 1495', *Art Bulletin* 94, 1 (March 2012): 50-77; Akazawa Eiji, 'Muromachi shoki sansuiga ni okeru shigajiku no kōzai', *Kokka* 117, 3 (Oct., 2010): 38-45; Jōichi Mariko, 'Den Shūbun hitsu shaō zu jo, daishi', *Kokka* 113, 6 (Jan., 2008): 28-30; Levine and Lippit, eds., *Awakenings*; Hoshiyama Shin'ya, 'Muromachi jidai shigajiku no chakusan seiritsu ni okeru shosō', *Waseda Daigaku Daigakuin bungaku kenkyūka kiyō* 3, 52 (Feb., 2007): 38-45; Jōichi Mariko, 'Gakuō: Ryōan Keigo to no kakawari ni miru Shūbun-ha shigajiku seisaku no yōsō', *Philokalia* 23 (Mar., 2006): 71-110; Takeda Kazuo, 'Muromachi ki shigajiku seisaku ni okeru Gozan sō no yakuwari ni tsuite', *Niigata shigaku* 54 (Oct., 2005): 1-30; Takahashi Noriko, 'Zensō no bunyū: Ōei no shigajiku', *Hanazono shigaku* 21 (Mar., 2001): 8-12; Yoshizawa Katsuhiko, 'Gasen kaishaku ni tsuite no gimon: Gozan no shibun wa dō yomarate iru ka', *Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho kiyō* 25 (Nov., 2000): 107-161.

⁸⁹ The group comprises, in the main, art historians working in Japan. It began with a conference held at Hanazono University in Spring 2010 and thereafter has organized workshops and symposia, circulating images and writings, and discussing the reading/interpretation of inscriptions, physical conditions, biography, and so forth.

formal, biographical, and social historical analyses, the project is impressive, even if it is to some degree 'culturalist' in character, concerned with reinforcing a 'grand tradition' narrative, and at times resistant to multidisciplinary theoretical consideration.⁹⁰

Critical Zen art studies have also begun to avoid the early modern or modern tail wagging Zhaozhou's dog, as it were, by directly reconsidering the claims made for Zen art by D. T. Suzuki and others.⁹¹ Charles H. Lachman points out that, for instance, that 'The term *Chan painting* does not occur in any Tang or Song dynasty texts, and does not appear to have been recognized as a category of painting by traditional Chinese writers.' Masterworks of Chan painting such as Muqi's *Six Persimmons*, he adds, owe their status more to modernist sentiments and discussions than monastic Chan understandings of painting.⁹² As already noted, art historians have examined the early modern-to-modern formation of the image of Sesshū, and reconsideration of Zenga, a modern category for the paintings and calligraphies of early modern monks such as Hakuin Ekaku (1686-1768) and Sengai Gibon (1750-1837), has pushed productively in both historiographical and soteriological directions.⁹³ Yoshikawa Katsuhiko, for instance, has sought to shift

⁹⁰ It remains to be seen whether the results of critical re-reading and presumably more accurate studies of individual paintings and their historical context-significant in their own right will lead scholars to extend study beyond questions of biography, style, and developmental sequence within painting history.

⁹¹ 'Zhaozhou's dog' is Case 1 in the *gong'an* collection, *Wumenguan* (Gateless Barrier), compiled by Wumen Huikai (1183-1260). See Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, Chapter Five.

⁹² Charles H. Lachman, 'Art', in Donald S. Lopez Jr., ed, *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*, ed, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, 41, 46. See also Kobori Sōhaku Nanrei, 'A Dialogue: A Discussion Between One and Zero', *The Eastern Buddhist*, o.s. VIII, 3 (1957): 43-49 and VIII, 4 (1958): 35-40.

⁹³ See Shimao Arata, "'Kindai' no Sesshū", 16th Kokusai Kōryū Bijutsushi Kenkyūkai, Tōyō Bijutsushi no Tenbō, 1997; Shimao Arata, '(Kenkyū shiryō) Sesshūga denrai shiryō kindaihen', *Tenkaitoga* 2 (1998): 45-63; Yamashita Yūji, 'Kobayashi Hideo ga mita Sesshū (jō)', in *Muromachi kaiga no zanshō*, Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2000, 111-132; Yamashita Yūji, 'Sesshū ni tai suru ninshiki o megutte', in *Muromachi kaiga no zanshō*, Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2000, 63-85; Shimao Arata, 'Zenshū bijutsu no shomondai', *Hanazono shigaku* 21 (Mar., 2001): 2-7; Watada Minoru, 'Sesshū to iu orijinaru na sonzai: sakkaron no kōzai', in Tōkyō Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, ed, *Orijinaru no yukue: bunkazai aakaibu kōchiku no tame ni*, Tokyo: Tōkyō Bunkazai Kenkyūjo, 2010, 189-208; Fukushima Tsunenori, 'Dare ga Sesshū o gasei ni shite kita (iru) no ka? Gasei shinwa o meguru kinnen no kenkyū dōkō to kongo no kadai', *Bijusushi ronshū* (Kobe Daigaku) 9 (Feb., 2009): 76-93. See also study of paintings on Zen themes by professional painters in Patricia J. Graham, 'A Heterodox Painting of *Shussan Shaka* in Late Tokugawa Japan', Parts I, II, *Artibus Asiae* 51, 3/4 (1991): 275-292; 52, 1/2 (1992): 131-145. *Zenga's* formation as a product of modern art collecting, aesthetic preferences, and notions of artistic subjectivity and spirituality (related to Suzuki-derived notions of the Zen brush) is taken up in Yamashita Yūji, 'Reconsidering 'Zenga'-In Terms of America, in Terms of Japanese Art History', in Yamashita Yūji et al, *Zenga--The Return from America: Zenga from the Gitter-Yelen Collection*, Tokyo: Asano Laboratories, 2000,

interpretation of Hakuin's pictorial work away from aesthetico-spiritual responses to bold brushwork and amusing graphic appeal toward the critical study of Hakuin's paintings in relation to his written corpus and the monk's salvific concerns as a Zen reformer.

There is likewise post-orientalist and post-nationalist study that seeks to identify the conditions and ambitions of the modern construction of and adulation for the category, genres, iconographies, and aesthetic features of 'old' Zen art (as particular projections upon the premodern) and to challenge the authority of this construction to rule over the complex and varied conditions attending works of calligraphy, sculpture, and other visually compelling objects produced and functioning within Chan/Sōn/Zen monastic and lay practice. Equally important are studies of modern contexts of Chan/Sōn/Zen arts, variously defined, which clarify understandings of what, how, when, and why art becomes Zen and can contribute to the study of modern art and modernism more generally.⁹⁴

Where does this leave us now? One may jot down a list of tasks awaiting critical Zen art study. The analysis of newly discovered objects and texts, for instance, with a willingness to let them upend established definitions and assumptions. Moreover, it seems important to seek out objects that work against fine arts categories, art collecting, and popular preferences. Greater attention needs to be brought to the relationship of Chan/Sōn/Zen art and Neo-Confucianism and Daoism in East Asia. There is likewise a need to ensure that precise, historically grounded study of objects, artists, and inscribers continues, requiring the sorts of linguistic, materialist, and archival training—a local, 'artisanal' practice, to borrow from Anthony Grafton—that some in the humanities fear is disappearing in the

19-28; and Guth, 'Nanga and Zenga.' See also Yoshikawa, *Hakuin*, published in a revised English translation as Yoshizawa Katsuhiko, with Norman Waddell, *The Religious Art of Zen master Hakuin*, Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2008; Hanazono Daigaku Kokusai Zengaku Kenkyūjo, ed, *Hakuin Zenga bokuseki*, Tokyo: Nigensha, 2009; Yoshizawa Katsuhiko, 'Hakuin hitsu Fuji daimyo gyōretsu zu', *Kokka* 116, 2 (Sept., 2010): 43-45; Yoshizawa Katsuhiko, 'Hakuin gata Daruma zō no seiritsu', *Kokka* 116, 2 (Sept., 2010): 23-35. More recently, see Galit Aviman, *Zen Painting in Edo Japan: Playfulness and Freedom in the Artwork of Hakuin Ekaku and Sengai Gibon* Farham, Surrey: Ashgate Press, 2014; Katharina Epprecht, *Zen Master Sengai (1750-1837)*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014.

⁹⁴ See Levine, *On Modern Zen*; Lachman, 'Art'; Charles H. Lachman, 'Chan Art', in Robert E. Buswell Jr., ed, *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, vol. 1, New York: Thomson Gale, 2004, 125-130; Yamashita, 'Reconsidering Zenga'; Yamada Shoji, *Shots in the Dark: Japan, the West, and Zen*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009; Winther-Tamaki, 'The 'Oriental Guru''; Bert Winther-Tamaki, 'The Asian Dimensions of Postwar Abstract Art: Calligraphy and Metaphysics', in Munroe, ed, *The Third Mind*, 145-147; Alan Hockley, 'The Zenning of Shikō Munakata.' *Impressions* 26 (2004): 77-87; Bert Winther-Tamaki 'Japanese Thematics in Postwar American Art: From Soi-disant Zen to the Assertion of Asian-American Identity', in Alexandra Munroe, ed, *Japanese Art after 1945: Scream Against the Sky*, New York: Harry Abrams, 1994, 55-67.

glow of 'digitopia.'⁹⁵ The study of Zen art within East Asia, meanwhile, will benefit from more explicit cross-fertilization with the fields of literary and social history and a wider engagement of scholars across East Asia.⁹⁶ If it is insufficient to engage strictly in revisionist critique of Zen art 'facts on the ground', it also seems necessary to engage broader humanities inquiry on the visual and material cultures of religion, picture theory, paratexts, iconotexts, performance, and so forth.⁹⁷ To borrow from W. J. T. Mitchell, scholars in varied fields may wish to pay greater attention to what Zen paintings, calligraphies, and other visual-material things themselves might want, the ways they may set up or thwart particular definitions of and expectations (aesthetic, spiritual, or scholarly).⁹⁸ Perhaps such object-based study and theoretically engaged work on Zen art will intervene in the sometimes Euro-centric discipline of art history, reversing the river's flow, so to speak. Perhaps too it is time to expand and deepen the conversations taking place between the academy and temple, and between scholars, teachers, practitioners, and varied consumers around Emptiness, performance, and the things we call Zen art.

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⁹⁵ Anthony Grafton, *Codex in Crisis*, New York: The Crumpled Press, 2008, 5-6.

⁹⁶ Cross fertilization might be helpful in the study of figures such as Ikkyū Sōjun, the Ikkyū lineage, and the related visual, material, and architectural cultures. See, for instance, Yanai Kazuma, *Ikkyū-ha no kesshū to shiteki tankan no kenkyū*, Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2010; and Imaizumi Yoshio, *Ikkyū oshō nenpu* I, II, Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1998. Or, it might lead to new approaches to the study of Chanoyu and its relationship to Zen, and the blur between Zen and the aesthetico-materialist philosophies of *wabi* and *sabi*, a topic with its own modern constructions.

⁹⁷ Robert H. Sharf used the phrase 'facts on the ground' in reference to common impressions of Zen/Zen art, in his respondent comments at the 2007 Princeton symposium, 'Re-Representing Emptiness.' On recognition of the fictive, virtual, and simultaneously very real in Chan/Zen, see Robson, 'Formation and Fabrication', 348. In 2003, Bernard Faure noted that Chan/Zen studies had opened to current debates in the history of religions and human or social sciences.' Faure, 'Chan and Zen Studies', 11.

⁹⁸ See W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?: The Lives and Loves of Images*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006; Michael Ann Holly, *Past Looking: Historical Imagination and the Rhetoric of the Image*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996.